

Planning and Design Statement

For Development at Knockgriffin (Townland), Midleton, Co. Cork
on behalf of Haven Falls Ltd.

November 2022



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1. Introduction

This Planning and Design Statement has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning to accompany a planning application submission to Cork County Council for a large-scale Residential Development consisting of the following:

A ten-year planning permission for the following Large-Scale Residential Development comprising the construction of 330 no. residential units (199 no. 3 and 4-bed dwelling houses and 131 no. 2 bed apartment units). 136 no. dwelling houses will have an option to include side ground floor windows. The 131 no. apartments are arranged in 11 no. two-storey buildings, 4 no. three-storey buildings and 1 no. four-storey neighbourhood centre building which includes a creche, retail unit, medical centre, pharmacy and café at ground floor level. All associated ancillary development works including footpaths, pedestrian and cycle lanes, car and bicycle parking, drainage, bin storage, lighting, landscaping and amenity areas at Knockgriffin (Townland), Midleton, Co. Cork.

Access to the site will be via a new vehicular access point on to the permitted Services Link Corridor to be delivered under the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund.

A Natura Impact Statement is submitted to the Planning Authority with this application. The Natura Impact Statement will be available for inspection or purchase at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy during office hours at the offices of the Planning Authority.

A design team with extensive experience in residential applications has been appointed by the applicant including McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants, Gittens Murray

Architects and O'Shea Leader Consulting Engineers while additional expertise was also secured in relation to Landscaping (Derek Howlin Landscape Architect), Public Lighting (MHL), Ecology and Environment (Malone O'Regan Consulting Engineers), Roads and Traffic (MHL) and Tree Protection (Cork County Tree Care) to ensure a high-quality design and a robust and comprehensive submission is made to Cork County Council.

This report has been structured as follows:

1. Introduction;
2. Site Context & Development Description;
3. Planning Context;
4. Site Characteristics & constraints;
5. Design Concept – Neighbourhood;
6. Development Principles;
7. Proposed Layout;
8. Recreation & Amenity;
9. Detailed Design; and
10. Conclusion

2. Site Context and Development Description

2.1 Site Context

The proposed development site of 9.49 ha is located within the townland of Knockgriffin and within Waterrock Urban Expansion Area (UEA). The site is located to the west of the Metropolitan town of Midleton. The site is located within the Midleton development boundary, as designated by the Cork County Development Plan 2022. The subject site gently slopes from north to south and is relatively flat in nature. The lands are currently utilised for agricultural purposes. To the immediate north lies agricultural lands with 2 no. permitted developments to the west and south under County Council Ref. No.'s 21/7264 and 21/7265 (currently on appeal). Bounding the site to the south is Nordic Enterprise Park with an agricultural field located to the east which is further bound by the Owenacurra River.

The site is located approximately 1.4km to the northwest of (Midleton) town centre. The site is located 1km from Midleton Train Station and the R626 and is located within walking distance of several bus stops.

The area has a number of local services located within proximity of the site including schools, creches and medical facilities. A number of convenience stores are also located within close proximity of the site.

The site is in close proximity of the 241 (Cork -Midleton-Whitegate-Trabolgan) and 261 (Cork-Midleton-Ballinacurra) bus routes along the R907 and Cork Road.

These bus services are frequent and operate 7-days per week with the first bus leaving Midleton at 8:30am and the service continues to run at 15-20 min intervals throughout the day. Both services stop at bus stops located on R907 and the Cork Road which are both circa 1.2km from the site's pedestrian access.

The site is also located within close proximity of Midleton train station which serves the Mallow – Cobh and Midleton route. The train station can be reached from the site in a 12-minute walk or 5-minute cycle. The service operates every half an hour at peak times and every hour off peak from 6am to 10.30pm Monday to Friday. There are also 9 No. services on a Sunday between 8.30am and 8.30pm. The railway line links Midleton to Cork City and Mallow. Commuters can also access other major cities and towns using connecting services.



Figure 1 Site Location at Knockgriffin, Midleton. Site outlined in red

2.2 Development Description

The proposed development will function as a natural extension to the town and contribute to the long envisioned Waterrock Urban Expansion Area by consolidating development in the area and ensuring the provision of a compact settlement.

Permission is sought for the following development:

A ten-year planning permission for the following Large-Scale Residential Development comprising the construction of 330 no. residential units (199 no. 3 and 4-bed dwelling houses and 131 no. 2 bed apartment units). 136 no. dwelling houses will have an option to include side ground floor windows. The 131 no. apartments are arranged in 11 no. two-storey buildings, 4 no. three-storey buildings and 1 no. four-storey neighbourhood centre building which includes a creche, retail unit, medical centre, pharmacy and café at ground floor level. All associated ancillary development works including footpaths, pedestrian and cycle lanes, car and bicycle parking, drainage, bin storage, lighting, landscaping and amenity areas at Knockgriffin (Townland), Midleton, Co. Cork.

Access to the site will be via a new vehicular access point on to the permitted Services Link Corridor to be delivered under the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund.

A Natura Impact Statement is submitted to the Planning Authority with this application. The Natura Impact Statement will be available for inspection or purchase at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy during office hours at the offices of the Planning Authority.

The proposed development will see the extension of the Midleton residential area and will promote compact growth in a

location contiguous to the existing urban footprint where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.

The design of the proposed scheme has been informed by detailed Section 247 and Section 32B discussions with Cork County Councils Planning, Architectural, Engineering and Environmental Departments, as well as the relevant planning policy documents at national and local levels, including in particular the National Planning Framework, The Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region, the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages), the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2020 and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a national level, and the 2022 Cork County Development Plan and Waterrock Urban Design Framework at a Local Planning Policy level. The proposed site layout designed by Martin Gittens Architects proposes a density of 35.6 units per hectare, which is considered suitable for the subject site and consistent with national policy which seeks higher densities on residential sites. The proposed density is also compliant with the objectives outlined for the site in the Cork County Development Plan 2022.



Figure 2 Site Layout Plan

The proposed development has been designed to provide high-quality homes that will contribute positively to the Middleton area where demand for housing has been consistent. The proposed Site Layout focuses on the creation of four new distinct residential neighbourhoods that will enhance and integrate with the wider Water rock and Knockgriffin area. A new entrance to the site is proposed as part of the layout for the proposed development of the permitted Services Link Corridor, ensuring that the scheme integrates in a cohesive manner with the adjacent permitted and proposed developments located to the south and west and makes a positive contribution to the Knockgriffin and Waterrock area. To ensure the visual integration of the site, the proposed development will promote the protection and enhancement of areas of biodiversity value where possible, including hedgerows, and tree lines, particularly those

located along the Central Spine Road and along the boundaries of the site.

The town benefits from the permitted Services Corridor Link from which the site will be accessed, will connect the Middleton Northern Relief Road to the Water Rock Road. The proposed road and services corridor will facilitate the construction of 2500 houses within the Water Rock Urban Expansion Area as well as improving connectivity for local residents. The new road caters for all road users with 2.25m cycle tracks and 2m footpaths provided along both sides of the road. Vulnerable road users will be segregated from traffic by a 3m planted verge. This will improve both comfort and safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

Provisions have been made along the Services Corridor Link Road to allow for access to the development lands to the north of the road. The proposed development will tie into the Services Corridor Link Road at one of these points.



Figure 3 Water Rock Infrastructure Upgrade Works

3. Planning Context

The relevant local policy documents for the application site are:

3.1 National planning

Framework Project Ireland

2040



The Department of Housing Planning and Local Government, on behalf of the Government, has prepared and published the finalised National Planning Framework (NPF) under Project Ireland 2040, the overarching policy and planning framework for the social, economic and cultural development of our country.

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

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

3.2 The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the southern Region (RSES)

The Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region sets out a 12-year strategic development framework for the Southern Region.

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

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

Section 3.4 of the RSES states that sustainable regeneration and growth (particularly compact growth) will be achieved through effective sustainable transport and spatial land use planning. It emphasises that the distribution of growth must follow a spatial hierarchy that underpins delivery of the CMATS.

The RSES outlines the transport priorities for the Cork Metropolitan Area which includes the development of new commuter rail stations in Metropolitan Cork (see the CMATS for details), including upgrading existing and new stations on a network serving Blarney/Stoneview (park-and-ride station), Monard, Blackpool/Kilbarry, Kent Station, Tivoli Docks, Dunkettle (park-and-ride station), Little Island, Glounthaune, Carrigtwohill West, Carrigtwohill, Water Rock, Midleton, Fota, Carrogaloe, Ballynoe, Rushbrooke and Cobh.

In relation to water, the RSES outlines the need for a new Wastewater pumping station and rising main from Midleton to Carrigtwohill and from Killumney to Ballincollig.

Section 7.3 of the RSES outlines the Strategic Residential and Regeneration Areas including Midleton.

Location	Brief Description and Indicative Yield: <small>Yields are indicative only, will be revised in the context of compact growth targets, departmental guidelines and development plans.</small>	Infrastructure Priorities subject to required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes
Midleton	<p>Midleton is the largest town in East Cork, building on the success of the town's rail connections to Cork City, building on its industrial base and specialist roles in the food and beverage sector and building on its tourism assets. Urban Expansion Area of Water Rock.</p> <p>Potential Residential Yield: 5,255 units (includes Water Rock UEA 2,460 units).</p>	<p>As per Chapter 3: Objective on investment for holistic infrastructure for metropolitan areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Rock Urban Expansion Area Phased Infrastructure Packages. New rail station. Pump station and rising main solution to Carrigtwohill WWTP (medium term solution). Midleton Water Supply upgrade. Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy. Implementation of CMATE sustainable transport measures (walking, cycling and public transport) connecting with and within Midleton. N25 Upgrade including interchange and slip road improvements. Improvements to Lakeview Roundabout and Banshane junction with N25. New Bridge over rail line connecting to N25 upgrade. Midleton Northern Relief Road. Waste Water Management Strategy for Cork Harbour. Investment in retrofitting infrastructure and services (physical, social and recreational) to improve quality of life for communities.

Figure 4 Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022

3.3 Cork County Development Plan 2022

The 2022 Cork County Development Plan (CDP 2022) includes a number of objectives which are particularly relevant to Midleton. Objective CS 2-3 states the following in relation to the Cork Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area which includes Midleton:

Within the Cork Metropolitan Area, and most notably along the existing rail corridor, plan for development to provide the homes and jobs that are necessary to serve the long term planned population prioritised in the

following locations, Midleton, Carrigtwohill, Cobh and Little Island.

In the CDP, Midleton is identified as a Metropolitan Town. Objective CS 2-7 of the Cork County Development Plan states the following as the strategic for Metropolitan Towns:

Growth in population and employment so that the Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) can compete effectively for investment and jobs in line with the key enablers identified in the RSES for the Southern Region and the Cork MASP. Consolidate employment at existing employment locations with improved supporting infrastructure, and in particular public transport improvements including those identified in the CMATS (2020). Continue with the strategic rebalancing of the city and county through the development of the UEAs along the East Cork Corridor and the Monard SDZ. Critical population growth, service and employment centres within the Cork Metropolitan Area, providing high levels of community facilities and amenities with infrastructure capacity high quality and integrated public transport connections should be the location of choice for most people especially those with an urban employment focus.

Section 4.8.7 of the CDP provides guidance on densities achievable in County Cork and indicates that the achievement of higher densities will be supported in appropriate locations. Section 4.8.7 of the CDP states that:

The Plan will support increased densities in appropriate locations as identified by the Guidelines to facilitate the Council's commitment to integrated land-use planning and the greater efficiency of land use

Section 4.8.6 of the plan goes on to state that the Plan includes policies for housing density that respects the Governments wish to deliver a sound return on infrastructure investment, particularly in relation to public transport, and to provide flexibility for developers to adapt to market conditions.

This County Development Plan, therefore, includes policies for housing density that respects the Government's wish to deliver a sound return on infrastructure investment, particularly in relation to public transport, but provides a new tiered, locally tailored approach to respond to the different scales of settlements within the County. The new approach continues to maintain flexibility for developers to adapt to new market conditions and broaden the range of house types that can be built on zoned land so that, in future, more households will be attracted to locate in the County's towns, especially in the County Metropolitan Area where employment, public transport and community assets are best aligned.

The CDP states that Medium 'A' (i.e. 30-50 dwellings per hectare) will be applicable in 'city suburbs, larger towns over 5,000 populations and rail corridor locations.'

Furthermore, Policy HOU 4-6 aims to secure residential development which provides a mix of house types and sizes to meet the needs of a range of households and to provide for mixed communities and tenures:

a) Secure the development of a mix of house types and sizes throughout the County as a whole to meet the needs of the likely future population across all age groups in accordance with the guidance set out in the Joint Housing Strategy and the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas.

In relation to car parking, Table 12.6 of the County Development Plan outlines the car parking requirements for new developments. It is stated that in the case of residential developments 2 spaces are required per dwelling unit and 1.25 spaces are required per apartment. These are maximum standards.

In the 2022 Cork County Development Plan (CDP) the vision for Midleton is to:

Build on the success of its rail connections to Metropolitan Cork and promote the continued development of the town and its hinterland as a residential, employment, tourist and service location. Key aims in delivering this vision include:

- *Strengthen the economy of the town, attracting new investment in employment, services, retail and tourism uses.*

- *Strengthen the role of the area around the Main Street as the town core, as the primary retail area and the centre of the community.*
- *Secure investment in essential infrastructure including water services and national road improvements.*
- *Promote the continued use of all forms of public transport within and around Midleton and improve opportunities for walking and cycling around the town*

In terms of residential development, the Plan notes that *"most significant area of future growth in Midleton is to be in the form of a new residential neighbourhood located to the north of the rail line at Water-Rock. This site was chosen to form the basis of a major urban expansion of the town of Midleton because of its proximity to the Cork – Midleton rail line and has been a feature of statutory plans for the area since 2005 and has been carried forward in this Plan."*

In the new CDP the lands are zoned for residential use (see Figure 4). The lands have two separate objectives as follows:

MD-R-11 - Medium A Density residential development to include a mix of house types and the provision of a greenway (MD-U-06) to comprise a shared pedestrian/cycle pathway and primary ecological corridor.

Provision shall also be made for a local neighbourhood centre to provide a primary local retail and services function.

*Development on this site requires provision to be made for the delivery of the infrastructure described in Tables 4.3.5 and 4.3.6.**

MD-R-12 - Medium A Density residential development to include a mix of house types and the provision of a greenway (MD-U-06) to comprise a shared pedestrian/cycle pathway and primary ecological corridor.

*Development on this site requires provision to be made for the delivery of the infrastructure described in Tables 4.3.5 and 4.3.6.**

To the north the MD-U-06 objective applies as follows:

The provision of a greenway to comprise a shared pedestrian/cycle pathway and primary ecological corridor, which forms part of an attractive, continuous, and safe route between the public parks and incidental green spaces throughout the Urban Expansion Area. The Greenway shall be designed in accordance with the DMURS Guidance document and the Water-Rock Urban Framework Plan to a standard which meets the approval of Cork County Council. The Greenway shall be constructed as part of the residential developments to the south. Each segment of the greenway must be linked up to provide east/west permeability through the site to the Linear Park.

The MD-U-03 objective trespasses the centre of the site and states as follows:

Provision of a Loop Road designed and constructed in accordance with the DMURS guidance document for a Link Street, and to a standard which meets the approval of Cork County Council.

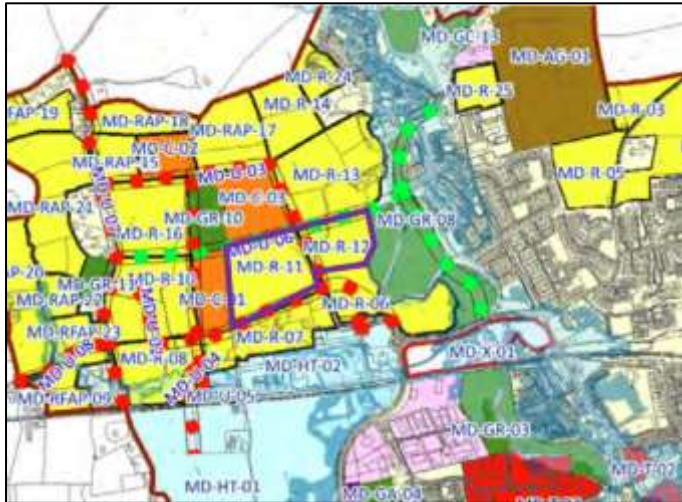


Figure 4 Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022 – Site outlined in purple

The existing planning policy context is supportive of residential use on the land.

Table 4.3.5 Water-Rock Urban Expansion Area Core On-Site Infrastructure Programme Delivery Agency: Cork County Council (Wastewater and Drinking Water services are the responsibility of Irish Water)			
On-Site Infrastructure Bundle	Key Projects	Notes	Delivery Programme
A	Services Corridor Link Road extension to rail stop and school site (Northern Relief Road to Water-Rock Road) and associated Surface Water Network	To include water and wastewater networks and surface water disposal network	Proposed initial infrastructure bundle Delivery of Bundle A will facilitate development on the following zones: MD-R-06 MD-R-07 MD-R-08 MD-R-10 MD-R-11 MD-R-12 MD-C-01
	Water-Rock Pumping Station and Rising Main		
	W Network Extension Drinking/Potable Water Supply		
	Upgrade/Realignment of Water-Rock Road (L3618)		
B	Linear Park Phase 1: Bridge & Pathway Infrastructure for Pedestrian/Cyclist Connectivity	To include water and wastewater networks and surface water disposal network	Delivery of Bundle B will facilitate development on the following zones: MD-R-13 MD-R-14*** MD-R-16 MD-RAP-21 MD-RAP-22 MD-C-02 MD-C-05
	Pocket Park 1 &		
	Pocket Park 2		

Figure 5 Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022 - Water-Rock Urban Expansion Area Core On-Site Infrastructure Programme

Table 4.3.3 Water-Rock Urban Expansion Area Core On-Site Infrastructure Programme Delivery Agency: Cork County Council (Wastewater and Drinking Water services are the responsibility of Irish Water)			
On-Site Infrastructure Bundle	Key Projects	Notes	Delivery Programme
C	Linear Park Phase 2 – Development of Amenities and Facilities		Delivery of Bundle C will facilitate development on the following zones: MD-RAP-15 MD-RAP-17 MD-RAP-18 MD-RFAP-19 MD-RFAP-20 MD-RFAP-23 MD-RFAP-09 MD C-03
<p>* Individual developers will be required to provide surface water attenuation on site.</p> <p>** Access to serve individual dwellings will not be permitted. New access will be to estate roads only.</p> <p>*** Provision must be made for appropriate vehicular and pedestrian access to Tir Clain Housing Estate which is located beyond the north eastern corner of the site.</p> <p>Note no 1. Development of zones linked to Infrastructure Bundles B & C may commence in parallel with the delivery of Infrastructure Bundle A if the following can be secured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landowners with lands in multiple bundles must build out their bundles in sequence, e.g. A to B to C. - Appropriate connections to water services infrastructure and surface management systems; and - Relevant on/off site road infrastructure. <p>Note no 2. Individual Developers will be required to provide for the Loop Road MD-U-03 and Internal East-West Greenway MD-U-06 as part of their planning applications to appropriate standards in agreement with Cork County Council.</p> <p>Note no 3. Appropriate densities for each particular zone are set out in the 'Habitat Specific Policy Objectives' of this Chapter, further detail for which is available in Chapter 4 Housing and Chapter 18 Zoning and Land Use.</p>			

Figure 6 Extract from Cork County Development Plan 2022 - Water-Rock Urban Expansion Area Core On-Site Infrastructure Programme

The delivery of objective MD-R-11 and MD-R-12 involves the provision of the following key infrastructure projects:

- Services Corridor Link Road extension to rail stop and school site (Northern Relief Road to Water-Rock Road) and associated Surface Water Network;

- Irish Water Network Extension Drinking/Potable Water Supply; and
- Upgrade/Realignemtn of Water-Rock Road (L3618).

3.4 Water Rock Urban Design Framework 2020

The Urban Design Framework (UDF) is a non-statutory document which is consistent with the objectives of the statutory documents within which all future developments on the Urban Expansion Area (UEA) lands will operate, the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and the East Cork Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017, now superseded by the Cork County Development Plan 2022.

The aim of the UDF is to act as a development guide to illustrate to the public the proposed nature of the Water-Rock settlement, and to act as a communication tool between the Local Authority and all stakeholders.

The objectives of the UDF are as follows:

- To assess the physical, environmental and infrastructural constraints and opportunities available to the zoned lands (circa 160 hectares) as set out in the Water-Rock Framework Masterplan 2015;
- To provide a site strategy for development, identifying the necessary elements of placemaking, open space, permeability, access and surveillance per development area;

- *To recommend a design code for landscape, street and building typologies;*
- *To have regard to existing and permitted developments on and adjoining the lands;*
- *To ensure that the framework proposal for built forms is economically appropriate, and reflects the market demand in the area;*
- *To inform the provision of a sustainable settlement which examines density, parking, orientation and SUDS which may inform a possible phased delivery of the lands;*
- *To provide a framework which delivers a clear vision for the lands, with guidance on scale, massing, connectivity and the expected quality of both the public realm and the built environment.*

The proposed development has had full regard to the objectives of the UDF 2020.



Figure 7 Extract from the Waterrock UDF – Indicative Concept Design



Figure 8 Indicative Character Areas as outlined in Waterrock UDF

3.5 Planning Guidelines

3.5.1 Urban Design Manual 2009

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

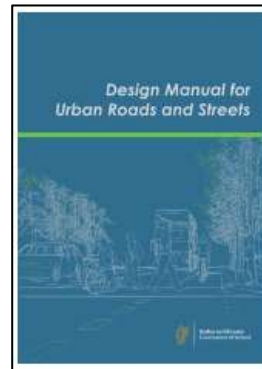


The core of the documents are the 12 criteria which have been both a helpful guidance and checklist since their publication, its structure leading from the wider context referring to the neighbourhood, towards site specific matters and detailed design represent master planning principles.

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

3.5.2 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets

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

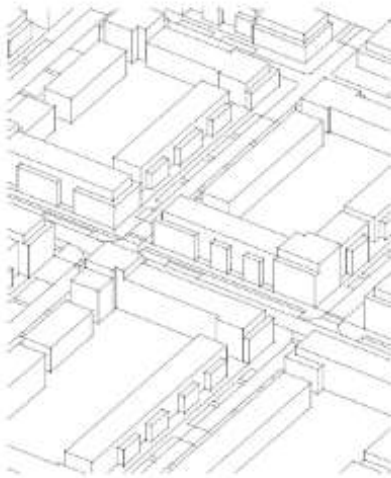


The four design principles of DMURS are:

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

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





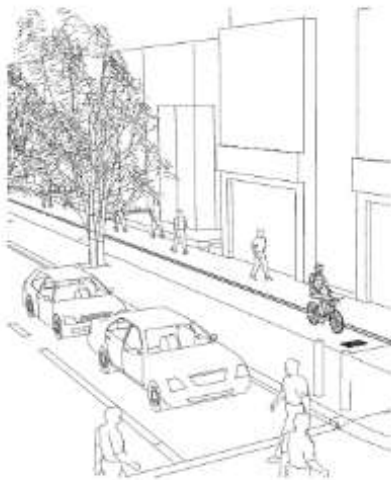
Design Principle 1 - Connected Networks

To support the creation of integrated street networks which promote higher levels of permeability and legibility for all users, and in particular more sustainable forms of transport.



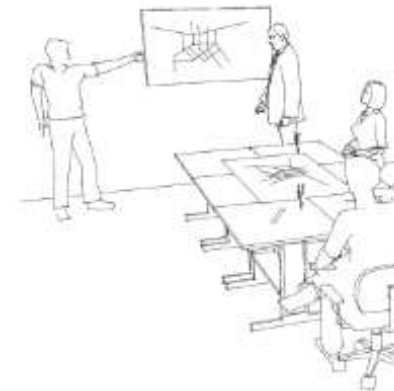
Design Principle 3 - Pedestrian Focus

The quality of the street is measured by the quality of the pedestrian environment.



Design Principle 2 - Multi-Functional Streets

The promotion of multi-functional, place-based streets that balance the needs of all users within a self-regulating environment.



Design Principle 4 - Multidisciplinary Approach

Greater communication and co-operation between design professionals through the promotion of a plan-led, multidisciplinary approach to design.

4. Planning History

There are no planning permissions associated with the subject lands. 2 no. applications were recently permitted by Cork County Council on adjoining lands as follows:

4.1 Cork County Council Ref. 21/7264

In December 2021, EMR Projects Ltd., applied to Cork County Council for permission for the demolition and removal of existing derelict buildings, structures, outbuildings and hardstanding (total 842sq.m) and the construction of a mixed-use scheme comprising 284no. residential units, a Childcare Facility, a Retail unit, a Café unit, a Medical clinic, Office units and all associated ancillary accommodation, site and development works at Knockgriffin, Waterrock, Midleton, Co. Cork.

The application is currently on appeal.

4.2 Cork County Council Ref. 21/7265

In December 2021, Dawn Meats applied to Cork County Council for permission for the demolition and removal of existing derelict buildings, structures, outbuildings and hardstanding (total 1661sq.m) and the construction of a mixed-use scheme comprising 434no. residential units, a childcare facility, a Research and Development building, a Neighbourhood Centre, a 90-bed Nursing Home and all associated ancillary accommodation, site and development works at Water rock and Knockgriffn, Midleton, Co. Cork.

Both applications have been appealed to An Bord Pleanála and await decision.

5. Site Characteristics

5.1 Site Access and Accessibility

The main vehicular access to the proposed residential area is taken from permitted Services Link Corridor ensuring that the scheme integrates in a cohesive manner with the adjacent permitted and proposed developments located to the south and west and makes a positive contribution to the Knockgriffin and Waterrock area. It is proposed to construct a new vehicular entrance to the north of the Services Link Corridor. This access will also provide facilities for pedestrians and cyclists to tie into the permitted road improvements for the area and allow immediate access to a new and existing services and facilities. A pedestrian access is located at the centre of the site and to the southwest. This will allow a direct and easy access to the Services Link Corridor and bus services and Midleton Train Station.

Provision for a Greenway has been provided in accordance with the MD-U-06 current zoning objective in the Cork County Development Plan 2022.

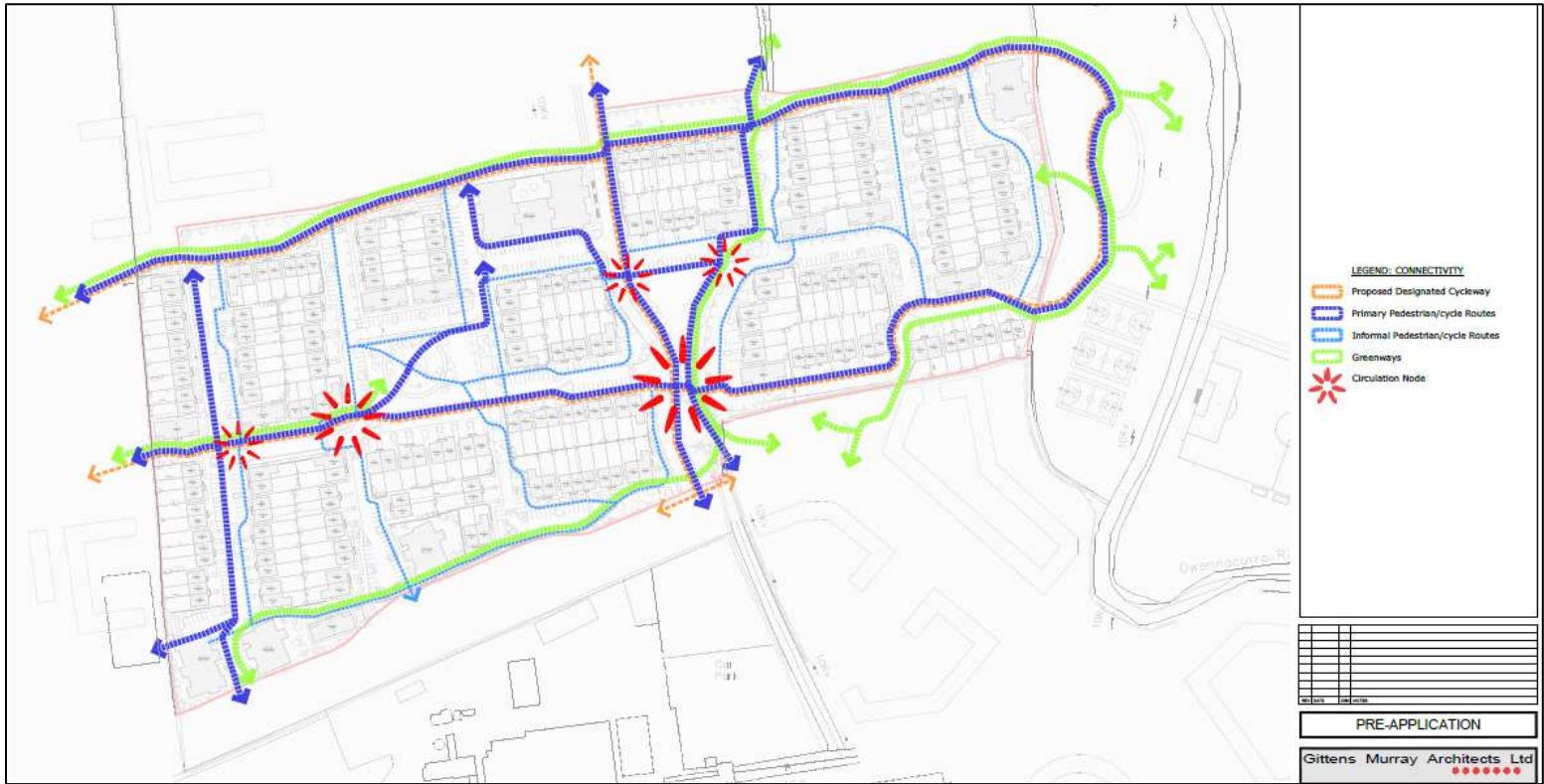


Figure 9 Proposed Access Points

5.2 Topography

The Site relatively flat in nature and slopes from north to south.

To the immediate north lies agricultural lands with 2 no. developments located on agricultural lands to the west and south under County Council Ref. No.'s 21/7264 and 21/7265. Bounding the site to the south is Nordic Enterprise Park with an agricultural field located to the east which is further bound by the Owenacurra River.

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



Figure 10 Existing topography and boundaries

5.3 Infrastructure and Services

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

5.3.1 Water

A pre-connection enquiry has been made by Haven Falls Ltd. The Pre-Connection Enquiry Feedback has been received from Irish Water. A water supply and foul water connection is feasible for the proposed development.

5.3.2 Wastewater

The foul sewer for the proposed units is a gravity flow system connecting into the existing Foul pipes 225mm diameter located within the existing LIHAF road.

The entire foul sewer network on located within the public road and green area is a combination of 150mm & 225mm diameter sewer.

A pre-connection enquiry was submitted to Irish Water and a Confirmation of Feasibility Letter was subsequently received in November 2022. This letter of feasibility (Connection Reference No CDS20001567 pre-connection enquiry) outlines that a connection the Irish Water Network(s) can be facilitated to the new foul sewerage infrastructure network extension project scheduled to be completed in 2023.

5.3.3 Surface Water Drainage

The proposed network will outfall to the new surface water drainage infrastructure to be constructed as part of the LIHAF funded road scheme being provided by Cork County Council. The LIHAF funded road scheme has been designed to take runoff from the development at a rate of 2l/sec/ha. Surface water from

the site will be collected and attenuated on site, with a peak discharge rate of 2l/s/ha for the 1 in 100 Year rainfall event (including an allowance for climate change). As part of the development, several different SuDS measures will be provided to minimise the impact on water quality and water quantity of the runoff and maximise the amenity and biodiversity opportunities within the site.

Please refer to Engineering Report by OSL Consulting Engineers for further details.

6. Design Concept and Development Principles

6.1 Site Constraints / Potentials



6.1.1 Potentials

- Services Link Corridor approved
- Existing public transport links
- Natural extension to existing development to the East
- New Greenway in accordance with LAP objective MD-U-06
- Part of designated Urban Expansion Area
- Existing landscape features on site boundaries to be retained
- Compliments proposed/permitted developments to south and west



6.1.2 Constraints

- Services Link Corridor yet to be constructed
- Irish Water upgrades to be installed



6.2 Site Context

The 9.49ha site gently slopes from north to south and fronts onto the L-7698-3 and will tie into the permitted Services Link Corridor. The lands are currently utilised for agricultural purposes and are bound to the west and north by existing agricultural lands. Bounding the site to the south is Nordic Enterprise Park with an agricultural field located to the east which is further bound by the Owenacurra River.

As outlined in section 2.1 above, the site is within easy walking distance of a number of commercial and community facilities including local shops, churches and schools. The native hedgerows which define the existing field boundaries and are part of the local green infrastructure network will be retained where possible. The site will be accessed via a new entrance from the permitted Services Link Corridor. It is also proposed to include a greenway facility to the north of the site. Pedestrian connections are facilitated to the west and south to allow immediate pedestrian access to the Services Link Corridor and adjoining lands.

6.3 Connections

Connectivity is a core design principle for the proposed scheme.

In the wider urban context, connectivity focuses on the accessibility to the L-7698-3. The site also benefits from connections to public transport including the 223-bus route connecting the site to Middleton town centre with access to bus services and Middleton Train Station. The proposed development allows for a potential pedestrian and cycle connection to the lands to the west, east and south of the subject site.

Pedestrian connections are provided in two locations fronting onto the permitted Services Link Corridor to the middle and southwestern boundary.

6.4 Inclusivity

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



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

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

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

All apartment units will be provided with a patio and/or balcony space, with each unit having a private amenity space. The design

and layout of the proposed development will meet the requirements of all relevant documents, in particular Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents which deal with accessibility and inclusivity. In this regard, the design of the proposed development is also guided by the principles of universal design. The proposed scheme has been designed so that it can be accessed and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or desirability.

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

6.5 Variety

In accordance with the zoning, the proposed use is primarily residential with the provision of a neighbourhood centre to include a creche, pharmacy, café and medical centre. The focus therefore is to provide a variety of homes for all age groups to allow all-day activity in the neighbourhood.

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



Figure 11 Landscape Plan of development

The proposed new development will add choice in the Middleton and Water rock area. The development will also support local facilities in the surrounding area and provide a new café, medical centre, creche, pharmacy and retail unit. The proposed layout of 330 no. dwelling houses will consist of a range of different unit types and sizes that will appeal to a broad range of purchasers. The proposed unit types provide a mix of style, size and type of housing to cater for all ages and lifestyles.

6.6 Design Approach

The layout responds to the natural features that exist on site with the hedgerows and trees retained and integrated into the scheme where feasible. The proposal includes a significant nett gain in terms of green infrastructure on site.

As detailed in Section 6.1 of this report, while the site is ideally located within the Midleton Urban Expansion Area and will add much needed variety to the existing housing mix in Midleton. A key principle to the design was ensuring that all parts of the site were included in the overall masterplan for the site including the internal roadways and the pedestrian pathway/cycleways. These areas will be appropriately landscaped to allow for extra pedestrian activity throughout the site to ensure that there is a viable, active use in these areas. For this reason, these areas are included in the net developable area of the site even though their use within the overall scheme is restricted.

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

- The decision to position the neighbourhood centre in line with the Waterrock Urban Design Framework, enabling the development of synergies and improving access to and the viability of the facility.
- The establishment of a pedestrian/cycle route to the permitted Services Link Corridor to allow pedestrian/cycle access.
- The provision of a greenway to the north of the site in accordance with the MD-U-06 objective.
- The provision of connections points to the planning application to the west currently under review with Cork County Council and the provision of access to the potential park lands to the east in accordance with the Waterrock Urban Design Framework.
- All other open spaces are located to progress through the development and create a sense of place and awareness for residents and visitors alike. These open

spaces are carefully positioned given the existing site constraints and position of units on site.



Figure 12 Site Plan Southwest



Figure 13 Site Plan Middle



Figure 14 Site Plan East

The proposed dwellings are orientated to overlook the open spaces and create passive surveillance for these areas. The apartment units are scattered throughout the site close to the access points and will complement the overall development.

The open spaces vary with a mix of soft and hard landscaping to further enhance the quality of life in the area. Distinct corner units with individual features address the main corners along the main streets and on the open spaces to provide distinctiveness to the site.

The proposed layout includes 330 no. residential units comprising a mixture of 199 no. 3 and 4 bed dwelling houses and 131 no. 2 bed apartments. The net density is 35.6 units/ha which is in accordance with local and national guidelines.

6.7 Landscape Design Rationale

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

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

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

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

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



Figure 15 Site Connectivity Plan

6.7.1 Open Space Hierarchy

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

- Create a pedestrian & cycle path network through the site which can be extended over time;
- Provide open space that is overlooked and framed by the residential units providing an attractive setting and passive surveillance;
- Incorporate the objectives of planning policies for the area, in particular, 'Water- Rock urban Design Framework 2020' and 'Cork County Council Recreation & Amenity Policy';

- Public open spaces with high amenity and visual values, to facilitate both active & passive recreation
- Promote ecology & biodiversity through the retention and enhancement of existing natural features;
- Respond to both the existing landscape and potential future development by retaining the existing landscape features where appropriate and facilitating linkages through the proposed development;
- providing a landscape structure of specimen trees, robust ornamental shrubs and hedge planting to soften and compliment the appearance of the built elements whilst also enhancing the local landscape for pollinators;
- creating a public open space that is overlooked and framed by the proposed residential units, providing passive surveillance and enclosure in an environment that facilitates social interaction between future residents and the local community;
- installing a clearly defined defensible private open space with active frontages which will allow householders to maximise the potential amenity value of their open space;
- designing a complimentary range of hard landscape features and finishes to subtly define vehicular and pedestrian surfaces and to also differentiate between private and communal open space.



Figure 16 Featured elements of designed open space



Figure 17 Featured elements of designed open space

6.7.2 Useable Open Space

In total, 1.44 ha of public open space is provided within the development, equating to 15% of the net development lands.

6.7.3 Amenity Provision

1.44 ha of public space is provided within the development, equating to 15% of the net development lands. As part of the amenity provision, it is proposed to provide 3 no. neighbourhood play areas, 4 no. local play areas, recreational walks and jogging routes and 1 Ball Court.



Figure 18 Location of Proposed Amenity Areas

6.7.4 Softscape Strategy

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

The inception of the approach has been to retain the site assets where possible, the existing hedgerows and trees. Due to the

nature of their function, as agricultural field boundaries, there has been minimal maintenance during their lifetime to date. With consideration to their future use as prominent landscape features for a new community, appropriate tree works will take place to ensure successful progression of the hedgerow takes place.

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

Each dwelling houses is provided with a private garden space to the rear of the dwellings and each apartment unit will have a private amenity space in the form of a balcony/patio area.

6.7.5 Main Entrance - Arrival Space

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

The following is also proposed as part of the access and circulation to the site:

- Shared surfaces / raised tables to enhance the amenity value of the adjacent public open space, regulate traffic speed and facilitate a pedestrian friendly east-west corridor through the proposed development;
- Discernible road hierarchy through the proposed scheme;
- Design concept to provide a flexible path network which can be extended over time;
- Formal entrance & associated boundary treatments to make a positive contribution to the aesthetic value of the Loop Road, (MD-U-03) and provide a sense of place

- & arrival at the access point to the proposed development; and
- Neighbourhood and local play areas located throughout the scheme for ease of access for future residents.

6.7.6 Integrated Open Spaces

There are a series of open spaces interwoven throughout the proposed built scheme.

The recreational infrastructure required in a proposed scheme of this size, (see Cork County Council Recreation & Amenity Policy), was carefully considered during the design and layout of the open spaces associated with the proposed development. The open spaces are defined and overlooked by the built elements to provide passive surveillance, whilst shared surface access roads and raised tables facilitate safe and convenient access for future residents.

Other landscape elements such as tree and shrub planting, together with robust seating and lighting have been incorporated throughout the development to ensure that the recreational infrastructure which forms an integral part of the proposals is aesthetically pleasing, functional and welcoming for children of all groups in a safe and stimulating environment.



Figure 19 Proposed Landscape Plan

6.8 Character Areas

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



Figure 20 Extract from Landscape Report

6.9 Traffic

A single vehicular access will be provided off the permitted Services Link Corridor to the south of the site. This will include the provision of a footpath and cycleway to tie into the permitted facilities for the area.

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

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

6.10 Proposed Development/Phasing

The proposed development comprises the construction of 330 no. residential units comprising a mixture of 299 no. 3 and 4 bed dwelling houses and 131 no. 2 bed apartments; A neighbourhood centre to include creche, medical centre, pharmacy and café; The provision of landscaping and amenity areas and all associated infrastructure and services including a new vehicular and pedestrian/cycle access point on to the permitted Services Link Corridor, roads, parking, lighting and drainage at and Knockgriffin, Midleton, Co. Cork.

It is proposed to construct the development over three phases. A Phasing Drawing is included with this planning application prepared by Martin Gittens Architects.

6.11 Housing/Proposed Density

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

The proposed development comprises the construction of 330 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre to include creche, medical centre, pharmacy and café, play areas and all associated site development works with a density of 35.6 units per hectare which demonstrates an efficient use of the site. The scheme, which will act as a natural extension to the surrounding area, will provide a varied housing mix that will contribute positively to the urban fabric of Midleton.

House Type	No. of Units
4 bed house	14
3 bed house	185
2 bed apartments	131
Total	330

6.12 Schedule of Accommodation

A summary of the range of dwelling types and sizes proposed is located in the Housing Quality Assessment prepared by Martin Gittens Architects as part of this preapplication.

6.13 Proposed Social Infrastructure

The proposed development makes provision for a crèche of approximately 600sqm which will facilitate approximately 86 no. childcare places. This facility is located to the north of the site, in close proximity of the Loop Road which will allow for convenient accessibility. The proposal includes parking for both staff and visitors as well as a drop off area.

The location of the site, within 1.2km of the main street of Midleton town centre, ensures an adequate provision of essential services and amenities.

6.14 Archaeology

There are no protected structures or national monuments located on the subject site. The proposed development will not have any impact on any national monuments or protected structures.

6.15 Flooding

As noted in the attached Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) by IE Consulting, the location of the proposed property is within Flood Zone C. In accordance with the OPW's Guidelines for Planning Authorities, table 3.1 classifies that development has a "low to negligible probability of flooding" which is acceptable in a Zone C flood zone. The proposed development has been subject to a justification test in accordance with national guidance and concludes that the development would not be at risk of flooding.

The FRA concludes that the development as proposed is not expected to result in an adverse impact to the existing hydrological regime of the area or increase flood risk elsewhere

and is therefore considered to be appropriate from a flood risk perspective.

6.16 Ecology

An Ecological Impact Assessment was prepared for the proposed development by Malone O'Regan Consulting Engineers (MORCE).

Based on the findings of a detailed desk-based study, a review of all the ecological information available for the Site and wider area and a field survey by MORCE, it is considered reasonable to conclude the following:

- The site itself is currently considered to be of low local ecological value;
- The site is currently zoned as '*residential*'. The Site is located in an area predominantly made up of arable cropland and improved agricultural grassland.
- The site is not considered to be of high suitability or a site of importance for any Annex I or Annex II species or red listed birds; and,
- The proposed development will not result in any significant impacts on ecological receptors identified both onsite and in the surrounding area following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.

Please refer to Ecological Impact Assessment for further details.

6.17 Appropriate Assessment

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared by Malone O'Regan Consulting Engineers. The NIS concludes the Proposed Development and all associated site works, alone or in combination with other projects, will not adversely affect the integrity, and conservation status of any of the qualifying

interests of the Great Island Channel SAC and the Cork Harbour SPA.

7. Detailed Design

7.1 Materials Palette

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

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





Figure 21 Types of Material Palette

7.2 Building Design Components

The external materials of the units were selected to have a positive contribution to the locality. A proposed mix of render, brick, metal/larch cladding, and blue/black slate will provide for a contemporary development whilst respecting the vernacular of

the wider Midleton area. The buildings will be constructed of traditional construction methods, with external materials selected for their durability. The placement of materials (i.e. brick location), elevational treatment and feature treatment will differ in various locations throughout the site to create distinct character areas. Generous open space with landscaping will enhance the overall design of the estate. The design of the buildings and public space will facilitate easy maintenance.

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

7.3 Adaptability

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

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

7.4 Home Zones

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



Figure 22 Homezone/Shared Space areas marked in yellow

7.5 Part V Proposal

Part V, s.96 of the Planning and Development Act (PDA) 2000 (as amended) applies to this application. As highlighted above the proposed development will result in an overall development of 330 no. residential units and the applicant proposes to provide 33 no. units to meet the requirements of Part V.

As outlined in Appendix 2 of the Part V Proposal by BHK Solicitors, the site was acquired by the applicants Havenfalls Limited on April 17th, 2020, and is within the 10% Part V requirements timeframe (i.e. after September 1st, 2015 and before July 31st, 2021).

The applicant proposes to meet the site-specific Part V obligation through the transfer of 33 no. dwellings on site, specifically 10 no. 3-bed houses and 23 no. 2 bed apartments. These units are dispersed in clusters throughout the proposed development.

And have been agreed in principle with Cork County Council - see enclosed letter.

Please refer to Dwg. No. 20033-LRD-S-153 by Gittens Murray Architects for further information.

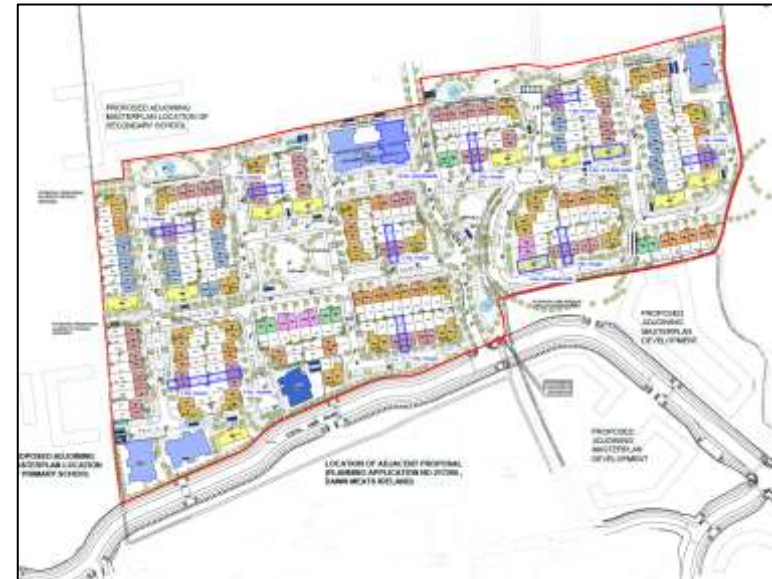


Figure 23 Location of Part V units outlined in blue

7.6 Compliance with DMURS

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

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

8. Conclusion

This Planning and Design Statement provides an assessment of the design approach of the proposed scheme having regard to the relevant planning policy documents at national and local levels, including in particular the National Planning Framework, The Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region, the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages), the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2020 and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a national level, and the 2022 Cork County Development Plan at a Local Planning Policy level.

It is submitted that the proposed LRD development is consistent with each of these documents and will provide a positive and significant contribution to the housing supply at Midleton, Co. Cork as envisaged by the Waterrock Urban Design Framework.