

DESIGN STATEMENT

for

2 Houses at Straw Hall, Farren Street, Cork

by

CORK CITY COUNCIL

July 2025



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Contents

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Planning Context

3.0 Project Proposal

4.0 Public Consultation Process

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

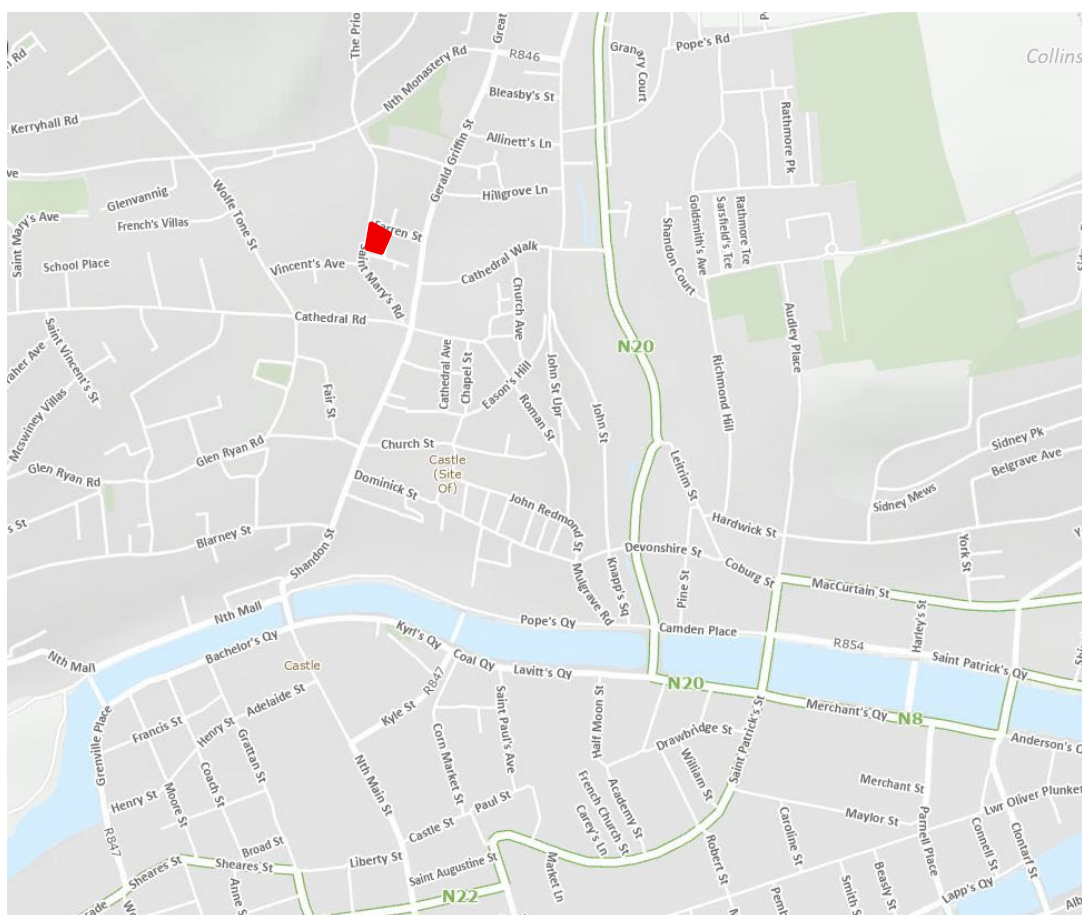
Appendices

Appendix A – Site Location & Plan Drawings

1.0 Introduction

This Part 8 application seeks approval for the construction of two houses on a brownfield site under the ownership of Cork City Council at Straw Hall, Farren Street, Cork City.

The scheme proposes 2 no. two-bed houses: a 2-storey house and a one-and-a-half-storey house – i.e. using the roof attic space - with each having their own front door access and rear gardens.



Site Location of Straw Hall marked in red from ArcGIS City Map.

2.0 Planning Context

2.1 Site Description

The subject site is located in close proximity to the North Cathedral, approximately 1 km north of Cork City Centre and 1km south of Blackpool District Centre.

The overall site area is approximately 0.0288 ha and is currently in the ownership of Cork City Council. The area surrounding the proposed development is primarily residential in character with the lands immediately adjoining the site to the south, east and north generally comprising single or two-storey dwellings. The surrounding residences are relatively small and densely arranged. St. Mary's Road bounds the site to the west at a higher level (approx. 5m level difference) with a large retaining wall forming the site boundary on this side.

The northern and southern boundaries of the site are bounded by a series of rear yard walls in poor condition which are located to the rear of the mainly single storey dwellings fronting onto Farren Street to the north and 'St. Patrick's Square' to the south.

The western boundary is a high sandstone rubble retaining wall with a steep sloping garden area sloping down to the existing boxing club building.

The site is bounded to the east by the Straw Hall street.

The area lies within the Blackpool Architectural Conservation Area (ACA).



Site at Straw Hall outlined in red from Google Earth.

Many of the houses in the area would have originally been single storey with pitched roof but over time, many have had their roof spaces converted, extended or raised to increase accommodation.

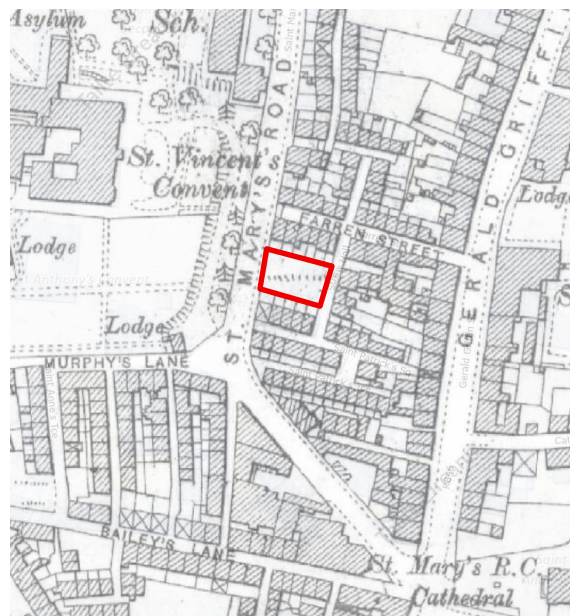
The rear of the site has been used as a dumping ground for mainly household waste over the years, most of which has been cleared, so the proposed design should reduce potential for such behaviour and regenerate the site.



Extract from 6 inch map (1837-1842) - site at Straw Hall outlined in red.



1869 map from UCD Historical OS Maps - site at Straw Hall outlined in red.



Extract from 25 inch map (1888-1913) - site at Straw Hall outlined in red.

2.2 Site Characteristics and Sustainable Communities

The site is located in close proximity to the North Cathedral, approximately 1 km north of Cork City Centre and 1km south of Blackpool District Centre.

It is generally accepted that 400m (5-minute walk) to 800m (a 10-minute walk) represents the 'pedshed' - a suitable distance from which residents should be able to access local services and convenience shopping (ref QHfSC pages 7, 31).

Within 400m:

- Shandon Street - access to shops, pubs, cafes, pharmacies etc.
- Blackpool Pharmacy Watercourse Road
- Primary and secondary schools: St. Vincents, North Monastery, North Presentation
- St Mary & St Anne's R.C. Cathedral (North Cathedral)
- Neptune Stadium
- Watercourse Road Garda Station
- Medigroup medical centre

Within 800m:

- Shandon Cultural Centre and amenity area
- Bell's Field
- Maldron Hotel
- Arc Cinema
- Bridewell Garda Station
- The Moxy Hotel

The 202/202A bus route services Cathedral Road with stops approximately 300m from the site. The 203 and 215 bus routes are also accessible at Watercourse Rd, approximately 400m away. Site is within approx. 1 km of several large workplaces including Collins Barracks, Heineken Ireland, the Mercy Hospital and Revenue Regional Office.

The scheme will also benefit from the proposed BusConnects programme, which aims to greatly improve bus services in Cork and other cities, with a proposed Blackpool to Cork City route proceeding south from Blackpool to Cork City via Watercourse Road.

The site lies within an area (small area population) identified by the 2022 Pobal Deprivation/Affluence Index as 'marginally above average'.

Given these criteria, the development of the site for residential use will offer an appropriate location for social housing and would contribute to the creation of sustainable mixed communities.

2.3 Site Area

The overall site area is approximately 0.03ha.

2.4 Flood Zone

The site is not located within a flood zone.

2.5 Statutory Environmental, Archaeological and Architectural Designations

The proposed site does not impact on statutory environmental designations such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) or Special Area of Conservation (SACs). The proposed site does not contain any protected structure or recorded monuments.

The site lies within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). This was taken into consideration in the design of the proposed development.

2.6 Infrastructural Constraints

The scheme does not impose any infrastructural constraints. All infrastructure required to service the property is available.

It is proposed to upgrade the public realm and boundary on the east side of the site as part of this development.

2.7 Services

All existing main services such as water, sewage, gas, electricity, phone and broadband services are available along the street. Any requirements for service connections can be accommodated therefore service provision should not pose any constraint to the required works.

2.8 Topography

There is a significant change in level from the front to the back of the site. The site rises by approximately 5.5m from the Straw Hall Street to St. Mary's Road over a distance of 21 metres. The western boundary of the site is bounded by a high stone retaining wall and a steep landscaped area of which there is a rise of 2.5m over 11 metres.

2.9 Planning History

There is a record of one valid planning application for the site on the Cork City Council Planning portal website:

Cork City Council Ref. No. 21/39965

In March 2021, an application for planning permission was lodged to Cork City Council to carry out demolition of the existing boxing club and to construct a terrace of 3 no. town houses in 2 storeys (each with 2 bedrooms) and associated site works at 11, 12 and 13 Straw Hall, Gerald Griffin Street, Cork.

The application was refused permission on the grounds that the proposal would be 'visually intrusive' and 'impact on light reaching existing residences in the vicinity of the subject site'.

2.10 Planning Policy

The site is zoned ZO.01 'Sustainable Residential Neighbourhood' in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-28. The site is within the "Inner Urban Suburbs" area which is generally suited to high density 3-4 storey dwellings. However, it is in an older area of the city and surrounding buildings are one or two storey residences.

The site is an under-utilised derelict site with existing single storey derelict boxing club and large rear sloping garden. It has close proximity to some services, road and utility infrastructure is already in place and it is located close to a bus route.

The Development Plan 2022-2028 refers to the: 'Urban Density, Building Height and Tall Building Study.' From this report, the site falls within the Inner Urban Suburbs area '7. North West'.

The table on page 95 refers to the '7. North West' area and gives a target density of 40-80 Dwellings per hectare.

Site Area at Straw Hall = 0.0288 hectares

$0.0288 \text{ ha} \times 40 \text{ (Dwellings per ha)} = 1.152 = 1 \text{ unit}$

$0.0288 \text{ ha} \times 80 \text{ (Dwellings per ha)} = 2.304 = 2 \text{ units}$

From the same table, the Target No. of Storeys is 2-4 storeys.

Thus, the proposal of 2 houses achieves a density which is consistent with delivering best use of the site.

The proposed development respects the existing context, and the provision of these new houses will improve the area by utilising an existing under-developed site in the heart of an established community. The 'Design Manual for Quality Housing' and the 'Employer's Requirements for Detail Design of Quality Housing' were consulted in the design of the housing solution. Where possible, individual room floor areas will be consistent with the target areas of the QHfSC.

2.11 Planning Assessment

It has been determined that the proposed development is consistent with the objectives of the City Development Plan and Zoning Objective ZO.01 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods. The proposed use of the buildings as dwellings is considered appropriate in this regard.

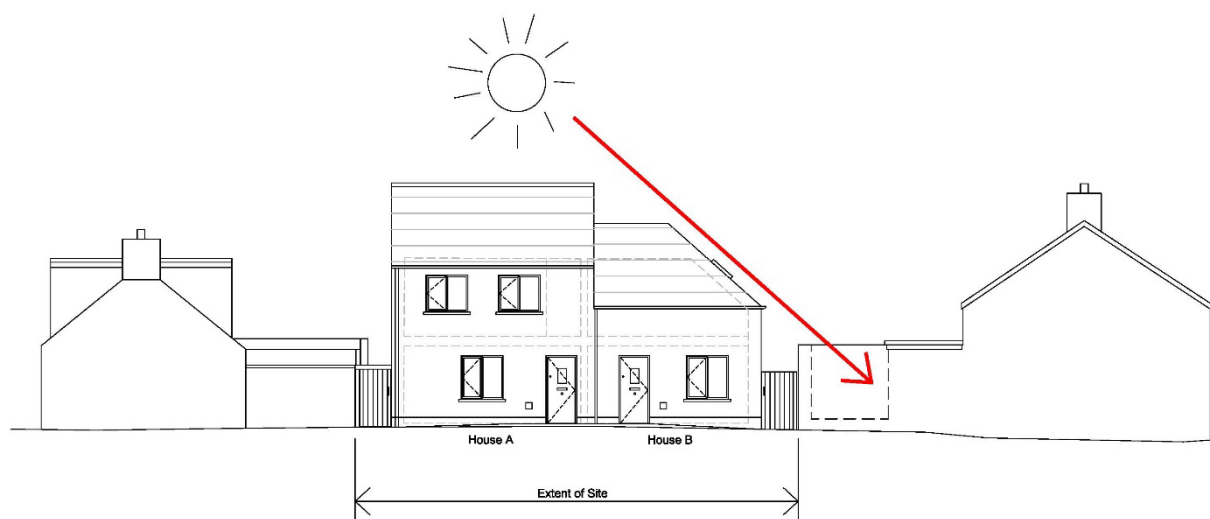
3.0 Project Proposal

The proposed scheme includes the construction of 2 No. 2-Bed Houses (Floor Areas: 74m² and 70m²). Drawings for the proposed scheme are included in Appendix A.

The basic site strategy adopted was to continue the existing dense pattern of 1 and 2-storey terraced housing in the area to reinstate the street front of the site.

The design aims to:

- reinstate the built street edge.
- minimise overshadowing on the rear yards of the existing adjoining houses to the north of the site.
- maintain the scale, form, and materiality of the local houses as much as possible.
- provide ample private open space.



Proposed front elevation showing how roof form allows sunlight into neighbouring property.

The design strategy adopted to achieve this was to create a street edge consisting of a 2-storey house to the south and a lower 1.5-storey house to the north in order to minimize overshadowing of the neighbours to the north. As the site lies within the zone of an architectural conservation area, the proposal seeks to follow the building form typical of the area.

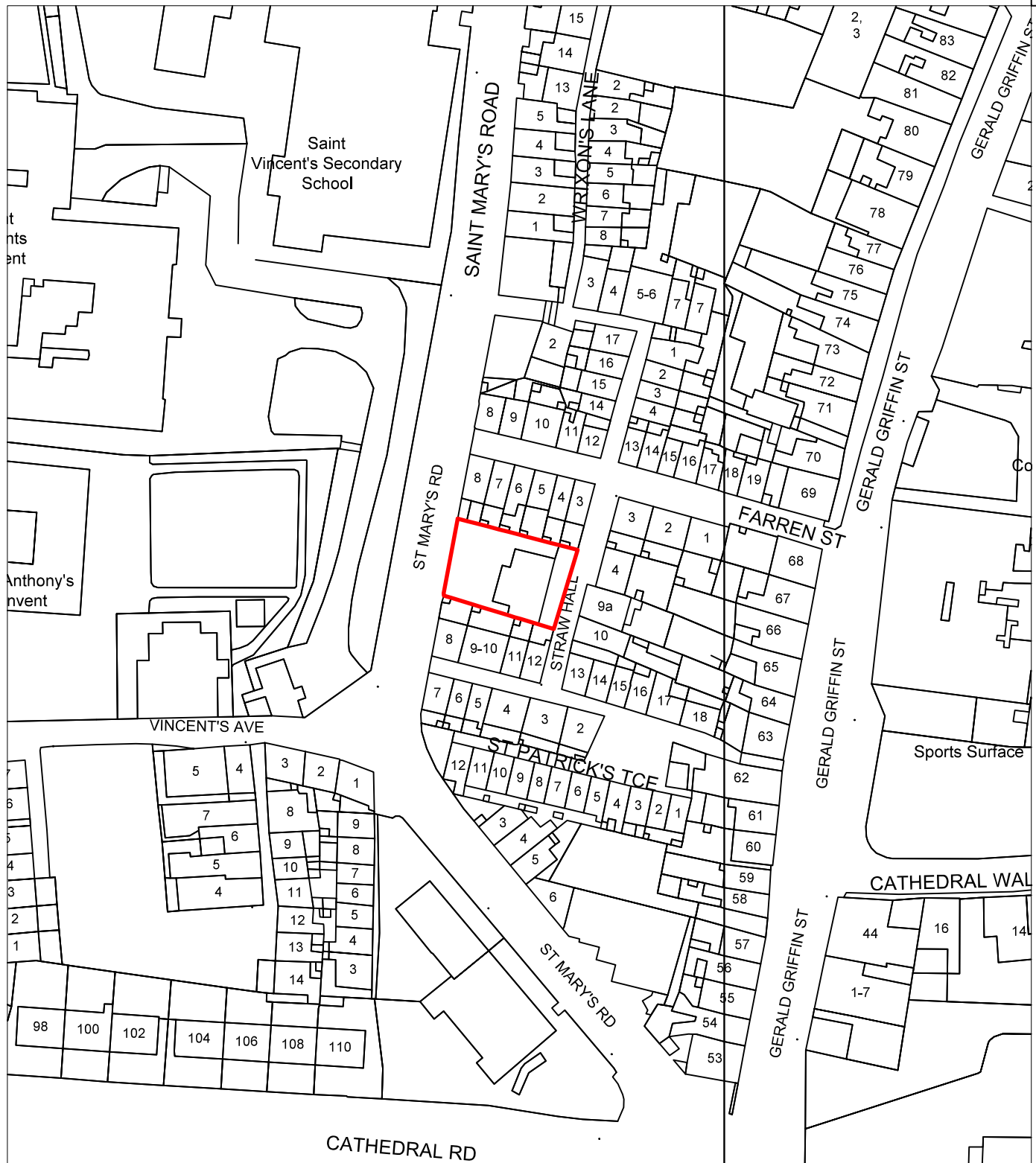
In order to achieve ample floor space within the roof of the upper floor of the 1.5-storey house, it is necessary to extend its footprint towards the rear, terminating in a gable overlooking the rear garden.

Unit Address	Storeys	Unit Area	Private space	Open	No. of Bedrooms
Straw Hall (A)	2	74 sq.m	82 sq.m		2No.
Straw Hall (B)	1.5	70 sq.m	77 sq.m		2 No.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The site for the proposed development lies within an established primarily residential neighbourhood. Given its close proximity to local services and the city centre along with easy access to public transport, the site affords an ideal location for a social housing scheme. The development of a vacant site, returning it back into residential use, will also help to mitigate the risk of it reverting to being a dumping ground for local household waste. The development will be positive for the neighbourhood.

Appendix A - Site Location & Drawings



E 567,030 ; 572,614 - I.T.M. Co-ordinates

Cork City Council, Property Section



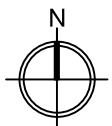
Corporate Affairs & International
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Floor 3, New Civic Offices,
Anglesea Street,
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Tel: (021) 4966222 / Fax: (021) 4924530
Email: property@corkcity.ie

PROJECT TITLE

Site Location Map

LEGEND

 **SITE BOUNDARY**


File Ref: DS - 1710	Date: 05 / 06 / 2020	Scale: 1:1000
Drawn By: AH	Checked:	OSi Ref: 6382 - 4/5
File Ref: G:\TS\ 1710 DS Straw Hall\ Straw Hall 1.dwg		



01 Site Location

1:2000



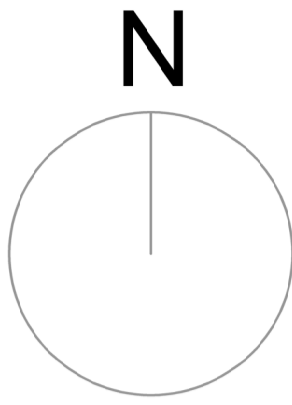
02 Site Location

1:1000



03 Site Layout

1:250



Do not scale from drawings. Use dimensioned figure only.
Contractor to check all dimensions on site.
City Architect to be informed of any discrepancies before work proceeds.

Notes

SITE AREA: 302 sq.m

SITE BOUNDARY:

CITY ARCHITECT'S
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Project Architects	City Architects Department
Project Technicians	-
Project Supervisor	-
Quantity Surveyor	Jonathan Magnier, CuddyQS
Civil/Structural Consultant	Ciarán Cronin, Crocon Engineers
M & E Consultant	Tim Healy, Healy Consulting Engineers
Landscape Architect	
Fire Consultant	-

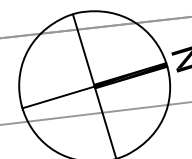
Title	Scale	as shown A1
	Date	February 2026
SITE LOCATION AND LAYOUT PLAN	Drawn By	AD
	Checked By	-

H:\1. PROJECTS\Housing\New Build
Straw Hall\CAD\Planning

Drawing Status	Job No.	Drawing No.	Rev.
Part 8	SH-XXX-DTM-DR-CCiC-AR-0099-P8		-

Project

Site at Straw Hall, Farren Street, Cork



Notes

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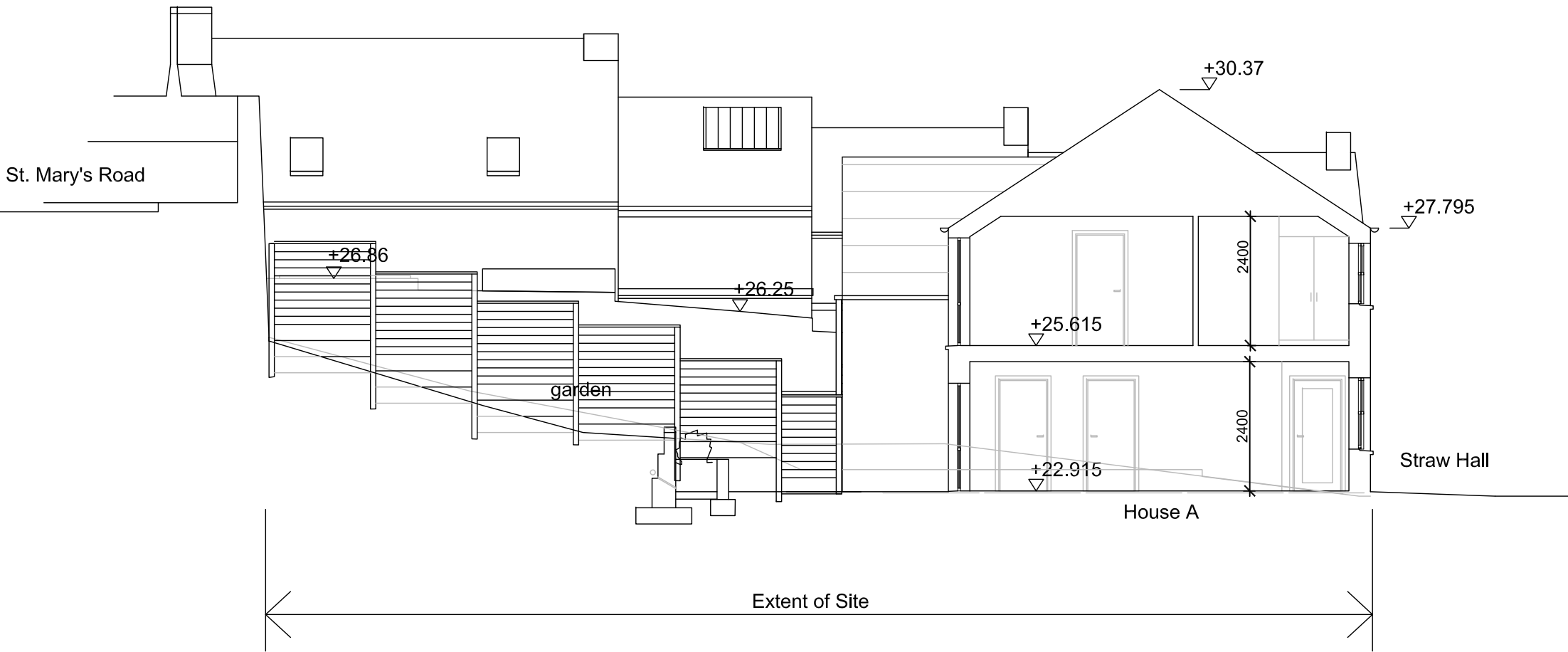
The coat of arms of Cork City Council features a shield divided into three sections. The top left section contains a castle tower, the top right section contains a sailing ship, and the bottom section contains another castle tower. Below the shield is a ribbon with the motto 'Sic utere Fluo Curia' in Latin.

<p>Title</p> <p>Proposed Site Layout Plan</p>	<p>Scale 1:200 @ A3</p> <p>Date February 2026</p> <p>Drawn By AD</p> <p>Checked By</p>
	<p>Plotfiles Ref.</p> <p>H:\1. PROJECTS\Housing\New Build\Straw Hall\CAD\Planning</p>

Project	Proposed 2 Houses at Straw Hall, Farren St., Cork.
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Do not scale from drawings. Use dimensioned figure only.
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City Architect to be informed of any discrepancies before work proceeds.

Notes



Rev.	Description	Date

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Team Leader	City Architects Dept.
Project Architects	City Architects Dept.
Project Technicians	
Project Supervisor	
Quantity Surveyor	Jonathan Magnier of CuddyQS
Civil/Structural Consultant	Clarán Cronin of Crocon Engineers
M & E Consultant	Tim Healy of Healy Consulting Engineers
Landscape Architect	
Fire Consultant	

Title Proposed Site Section	Scale	1:100 @ A3
	Date	February 2026
	Drawn By	AD
	Checked By	
	Plotfiles Ref.	H:\1. PROJECTS\Housing\New Build\Straw Hall\CAD\Planning

Drawing Status	Job No.	Drawing No.	Rev.
Part 8	SH-XXX-ZZZ-DR-CCIC-AR-2302-P8		

Project	Proposed Houses at Straw Hall, Farren St., Cork.
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Proposed Site Section A-A looking north

1:100 @ A3