

Planning Report

For Development at Gerald Griffin Street
on behalf of MMD Construction

November 2025



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1. Introduction

This planning statement has been prepared on behalf of MMD Construction to accompany a planning application under the Planning and Development (Section 179) Regulations 2023 for a proposed residential development at Gerald Giffin Street, Cork City.

The proposed development includes 67 social housing units and a community facility, consisting of the following unit breakdown:

- 29 no. 1-bed apartments
- 2 no. 1-bed duplex units
- 29 no. 2-bed apartments
- 4 no. 3-bed apartments
- 3 no. 3-bed duplex units

The proposed Part 8 development is a suitable use given the designation of the site; it is classified in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (CDP) under 'Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods'. We believe this site presents a key development opportunity due to its close proximity to neighbouring urban centres and supports proper planning and sustainable development, as this development promotes a range of sustainable modes of transport.

The proposed Part 8 development, at Gerald Griffin Street, will provide 67 much needed apartment units to meet a mixture of housing solutions with regards to size, and tenure on an under-utilised infill site within the existing built footprint of Cork City. It will deliver a high-quality affordable and social residential scheme that is sympathetic to the existing urban environment and sensitive to the natural environment of the immediate surrounds, that will help address the current housing shortages in a highly desirable City.

The proposed development will deliver a high quality social residential scheme on an under-utilised infill site, while being sympathetic to the existing urban environment.

This report is submitted in support of the proposed scheme and is presented under the following headings:

- Site Context
- Proposed Development
- Planning History
- Planning Policy Context
- Assessment of Proposed Development
- Appropriate Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Conclusion

2. Site Context

2.1 Site Context

The site is located approximately 0.9km North of Cork City. The site is located between North Monastery Road and R846 and is a corner site at the junction of St. Marys Road and N Monastery Road (see Figure 1).

The subject site is currently an unoccupied infill site bounded to the east and south by residential dwelling, to the west by North Monastery Road and to the north by a sports complex. The area surrounding the subject site is primarily residential with elements of commercial, educational and community uses dispersed throughout the locality. In relation to nearby services in the area the St Vincents Catholic Secondary School is located southwest of the site, along with healthcare and sporting facilities.

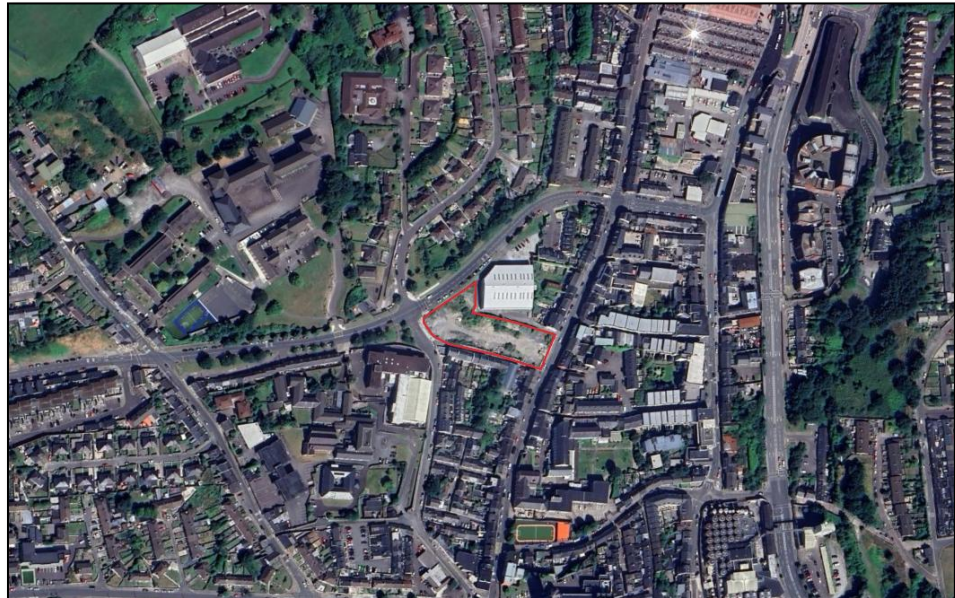


Figure 1: Site location approximately 0.4 hectares in size

The subject site is in close proximity to Cork City and has access to various bus routes within walking distance of the subject site. Existing public bus stops are located on Watercourse Road approximately 150m from the proposed development site (bus route 203 and 215) and Cathedral Road approximately 250m away (bus route 202, 202A and 210).

The eastern side of the subject site is located within the 'Blackpool Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)', this has been taken into consideration for the design phase of the proposed development as it is proposed that the building height fronting onto Gerald Griffen Street will be 3 storeys. This is considered an appropriate scale and building height to enhance the streetscape of the existing area.

2.2 Site History

The site is currently an unoccupied vacant site. There have been several previous planning applications on the site, further details are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Planning History of Site

Planning Ref. No.	Development Description	Decision
Cork City Council Part 8 Development – P8.HCP.16.08	A residential development comprising of 19 no. 2-bedroom apartments, 20 no. 3-bedroom apartments, 2 no. 2-bedroom duplex houses, 1 no. community facility, and all associated site development works.	Part 8 Approval Granted.
06/30581	To carryout demolition, site clearance and construct 12 no. apartments on 4 storeys and 3 no town houses on 3 storeys and associated site works	Withdrawn
04/28841	To carry out demolition and site clearance to construct 16 no. apartments on four floors and 3 no. town house on three floors	Refused
03/27961	To carry out demolitions and site clearance	Refused
02/26140	Demolish existing structures and construct 21 no. residential units comprising 1, 2 & 3 bedroom dwellings & full site development	Granted
99/23594	Entrance door to backyard	Granted

Planning Ref no. 06/30581, 04/28841 and 03/27961 were all located on the eastern end of the site. P.A. Ref no. 02/26140 was located on the western end of the site and 99/23594 was located in the south eastern corner. It is noted that under planning reference no. P8.HCP.16.08 and 02/26140, an established use of residential accommodation was accepted on site. This proposed development aims at revitalising the subject site while increasing the housing supply of Cork City.

3. Proposed Development

The proposed development is for an apartment/duplex scheme comprising of 67 no. social housing units and 1 no. community facility with associated landscaping, utilities and boundary treatments on a brownfield infill at Gerald Griffin Street, Blackpool. The site is currently an unoccupied infill brownfield site, directly adjacent from the site is a sport facility, with large volumes of residential units in the area.

The proposed development has been carefully designed to account for the adjacent ACA, as the building block facing onto Gerlad Griffin Street will consist of a 3-storey building that will align with the existing streetscape. The site utilises the existing topography of the site by having various building heights strategically located to incorporate it into the existing built area. The building height sets up from 3 to 4 stories within block A and to 4 to 5 stories within block B before transitioning to 6 stories in block C, D and E (see Figure 2 for layout).

The dwelling mix ranged from 1-bedroom apartments to 3-bedroom duplexes with the following breakdown:

- 29 no. 1-bed apartments
- 2 no. 1-bed duplex units
- 29 no. 2-bed apartments
- 4 no. 3-bed apartments
- 3 no. 3-bed duplex units

As part of this proposed development a community facility of approximately 88.3m² in size is proposed to be located in block A. There is no vehicle parking. There are 121 bicycle spaces internally and 12 external bicycle racks.

It is proposed that the existing boundary wall currently enclosing the subject site will be demolished to enhance the permeability of the area and increase mobility to the area. This is in line with a shared space approach. The walkability of the proposed development can be seen in Figure 2. The proposed development will also include new footpaths and opens area located south of the site.



Figure 2: Proposed Layout of site

4. Planning Policy

The following is the relevant planning policy with respect to the proposed development.

4.1 Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) provides the high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development in Ireland until 2040. It is linked to the National Development Plan 2018, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and the applicable County and City Development Plans.

As a key element of the NPF strategy to grow Ireland's three regions, build more accessible centres of scale and to ensure more compact and sustainable forms of development that will be supported by focused investment, and new governance arrangements, it will be necessary to encourage proportionally higher levels of population growth in Ireland's five cities.

The development of residential apartments would be aligned with National Policy Objective 3a. By creating additional housing stock on existing urban lands. This objective aims to reduce urban sprawl, utilise existing infrastructure efficiently, and create more sustainable urban environments.

National Policy Objective 3a

'Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements'.

National Policy Objective 3b encourages the development of new homes to be located within the existing footprint of cities. Infill development directly supports this by transforming unused or underused land within existing urban areas into productive, vibrant spaces, thereby contributing to the efficient use of land and existing infrastructure.

National Policy Objective 3b

'Deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the five Cities and suburbs of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, within their existing built-up footprints'

As outlined in National Policy Objective 8, Cork is projected to grow significantly with at least an additional 125,000 people by 2040 to support a minimum population of 314,000 within the City and Suburbs alone. In order to meet these expected growth levels an increase in housing supply will be required.

National Policy Objective 8:

To ensure that the targeted pattern of population growth of Ireland's cities to 2040 is in accordance with the targets set out in the below figure.

City	Population 2016	Population Growth to 2040 ²⁷		Minimum Target Population 2040
		% Range	People	
Dublin - City and Suburbs	1,173,000	20-25%	235,000 - 293,000	1,408,000
Cork - City and Suburbs	209,000	50-60%	105,000 - 125,000	314,000
Limerick - City and Suburbs	94,000	50-60%	47,000 - 56,000	141,000
Galway - City and Suburbs	80,000	50-60%	40,000 - 48,000	120,000
Waterford - City and Suburbs	54,000	50-60%	27,000 - 32,000	81,000

Figure 3 Extract from NPF - Population growth of Ireland's Cities for 2040

The NPF has a policy that place an emphasis on renewing and developing existing settlements, instead of continual expansion and sprawl of cities and towns into the countryside. *“The target is for at least 40% of all new housing to be delivered within the existing built-up areas of cities, towns and villages on infill and/or brownfield sites”* (NPF 2018, page 11). Compact growth is therefore the first of the ten national strategic outcomes of the NPF.

In order to facilitate this new policy, National Policy Objective 35 provides for:

“Increase residential density in settlements, through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights.”

As part of the compact Growth National Strategic Outcome there has been a particular focus on the use of public transport by having access to amenities and public transport increases the liveability of the area. The NPF has outlined that for new developments in or near the centres of the five cities across Ireland (including Cork) they do not need to provide car parking spaces and in the inner suburbs of all five cities that there will be a significant reduction in car parking (NPF 2018 pg. 67). This is to try and reduce car dependency and use the ample supply of public transport and cycle lanes and help reduce high carbon emissions.

National Policy Objective 13:

‘In urban areas, planning and related standards, including in particular building height and car parking will be based on performance criteria that seek to achieve well-designed high-quality outcomes in order to achieve targeted growth. These standards will be subject to a range of tolerance that enables alternative solutions to be proposed to achieve stated outcomes, provided public safety is not compromised and the environment is suitably protected.’

4.2 Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region

The RSES for the Southern Region has outlined a set of goals to apply to each of the Regions metropolitan areas. There is a particular focus on encouraging compact growth throughout the regions. This is seen in Goal 1 Sustainable Place Framework to seek compact urban development, achieving brownfield and infill targets through innovative design approaches to appropriate density and height and Network of compact metropolitan settlements and employment areas offering quality residential and working choices, interconnected with sustainable public transport, pedestrian and cycling networks.

This is outlined further with the RPO 10(a) as it aims at achieving compact growth, by:

'Prioritise housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.'

There is a need to support the development of social housing and improving the rental sector, this is seen with RPO 33 - Rebuilding Ireland:

'To support Government policy and targets of the Housing Agency under "Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness" and local authority actions that contribute to progress under the key pillars of addressing homelessness, accelerating social housing, building more homes, improving the rental sector and utilizing the existing building stock within our Region.'

There has been particular focus on the Cork Metropolitan Area a planned growth rate (50-60%) to 2040 in the Cork City and suburban area of between two to three times the national average and up to 50 % for the rest of the metropolitan area.

In order to support this growth, there is a need for infrastructure led development this is seen with Cork MASP Policy Objective 1(e)

'Support communities in Metropolitan Towns through regeneration initiatives, investment to support retrofitting holistic infrastructures (physical, social, recreational, public transport, active travel networks including enhanced filtered mobility for pedestrians and cyclists inter alia), seek vibrant metropolitan communities with a high quality of life, mixed uses and services and seek the infrastructure led sustainable compact growth of metropolitan settlements.'

4.3 Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2022

The Guidelines for Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, provides guidance in relation to the provision of apartment schemes. The Guidelines state that Planning Authorities must prioritise the objective of more effective usage of existing underutilised sites. The Guidelines note that Local Authorities determine suitable locations for the provision of apartments, having regards to a broad description of proximity and accessibility considerations. For locations within central and accessible urban areas, proposals of small to large-scale and higher density development, sites are deemed suitable whereby the following may apply:

- Sites within walking distance (up to 15 minutes or 1,000- 1,500m), of principal city centres, or significant employment locations, that may include hospitals and third level institutions;
- Sites within reasonable walking distance (up to 10 minutes or 800- 1,000m) to/from high-capacity urban public transport stops (such as DART or Luas); and
- Sites within easy walking distance (up to 5 minutes or 400- 500m) to/from high frequency (min 10-minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services.

4.4 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements 2024

The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities “the Guidelines” will constitute Ministerial Guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Section 28 provides that planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála shall have regard to Ministerial Guidelines and shall apply any specific planning policy requirements (SPPRs) of the Guidelines, within the meaning of Section 28 (1C) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), in the performance of their functions.

Table 3.1 of the ‘Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ refer to areas and density in Cork City and Suburbs and notes the following in respect of ‘City – Urban Neighbourhoods’:

The city urban neighbourhoods category includes: (i) the compact medium density residential neighbourhoods around the city centre that have evolved overtime to include a greater range of land uses, (ii) strategic and sustainable development locations, (iii) town centres designated in a statutory development plan, and (iv) lands around existing or planned high-capacity public transport nodes or interchanges (defined in Table 3.8) – all within the city and suburbs area. These are highly accessible urban locations with good access to employment, education and institutional uses and public

transport. It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 50 dph to 250 dph (net) shall generally be applied in urban neighbourhoods of Dublin and Cork.

They note in terms of 'Consideration of Proximity and Accessibility to Services and Public Transport'. Paragraph 3.4.1 of the guidelines states that "Densities above the ranges are 'open for consideration at accessible suburban and urban extension locations to the maximum set out.'" Table 3.8 defines the requirements for defining the accessibility of suburban and urban extension locations as follows:

Intermediate Location

- Lands within 500-1,000 metres (i.e. 10-12 minute walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. 10 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services; and
- Lands within 500 metres (i.e. 6 minute walk) of a reasonably frequent (minimum 15 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus service

The specific planning policy requirement no. 3 address car parking standards:

'It is a specific planning policy requirement of these Guidelines that: (i) In city centres and urban neighbourhoods of the five cities, defined in Chapter 3 (Table 3.1 and Table 3.2) car-parking provision should be minimised, substantially reduced or wholly eliminated. The maximum rate of car parking provision for residential development at these locations, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority, shall be 1 no. space per dwelling.

(ii) In accessible locations, defined in Chapter 3 (Table 3.8) car- parking provision should be substantially reduced. The maximum rate of car parking provision for residential development, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority, shall be 1.5 no. spaces per dwelling.

(iii) In intermediate and peripheral locations, defined in Chapter 3 (Table 3.8) the maximum rate of car parking provision for residential development, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority, shall be 2 no. spaces per dwelling Applicants should be required to provide a rationale and justification for the number of car parking spaces proposed and to satisfy the planning authority that the parking levels are necessary and appropriate, particularly when they are close to the maximum provision.'

The maximum car parking standards do not include bays assigned for use by a car club, designated short stay on-street Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations or accessible parking spaces. The maximum car parking standards do include provision for visitor parking. This SPPR will not apply to applications made in a Strategic Development Zone until the Planning Scheme is amended to integrate changes arising from the SPPR.

4.5 Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2022

This Strategy will deliver an accessible, integrated transport network that enables the sustainable growth of the Cork Metropolitan Area as a dynamic, connected, and internationally competitive European city region as

envisaged by the National Planning Framework 2040. As part of this strategy the reduction in parking for new developments in and near the city are highlighted. This strategy supports the NPF guidelines on new developments that, prioritises the use of sustainable transport:

'Set out car-free or low car standards in development areas within an 800m walking catchment area of Cork city centre and/or of quality public transport. The application of low-car or car free development is an increasingly common tool to facilitate higher density development and prioritise sustainable transport.'

Principle 2 outlines the need to prioritise active and sustainable transport and reduce car dependency within the CMA.

Implementation of CMATS will result in a step-change in public transport provision and builds upon existing walking and cycling strategies adopted in the Metropolitan Area. The need for private car ownership (and dependency) will be reduced through the adoption of demand management and supporting measures including car clubs and Mobility as a Service (MaaS).

This prioritisation of active and sustainable modes and the decarbonisation of the public transport fleet is in line with the growing recognition of the negative impacts of motorised vehicles and carbon emissions on the environment and people's health and wellbeing. Principle 2 is aligned with Measures 1 and 2 of the Climate Action Plan 2019 for Transport to deliver targets.

4.6 Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (Volume 1)

The site is zoned 'ZO 01 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods' the development plan has outlined that the main objective of this zoning is:

'To protect and provide for residential uses and amenities, local services and community, institutional, educational and civic uses.'

With key policy for this designation outlining the appropriate uses for this zoning to include residential and mixed-use developments in ZO 1.1:

'The provision and protection of residential uses and residential amenity is a central objective of this zoning. This zone covers large areas of Cork City's built-up area, including inner-city and outer suburban neighbourhoods. While they are predominantly residential in character these areas are not homogenous in terms of land uses and include a mix of uses. The vision for sustainable residential development in Cork City is one of sustainable residential neighbourhoods where a range of residential accommodation, open space, local services and community facilities are available within easy reach of residents.'

Objective 3.1 - Planning for Sustainable Neighbourhoods

Cork City Council will seek to:

'a. Utilise the Urban Towns, Hinterland Villages and City Neighbourhoods as spatial units to develop sustainable neighbourhoods, employing the 15-Minute City concept;

b. Require development proposals to put placemaking at the heart of their design concept and clearly demonstrate how neighbourhood integration, health and wellbeing and enhancement is central to this;

c. Plan for communities in accordance with the aims, objectives and principles of 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide', Universal Design principles and any updates;

d. Ensure that an appropriate level of supporting neighbourhood infrastructure is provided in conjunction with, and as an integral component of, residential development in New Sustainable Neighbourhoods;

e. Undertake a Cork City Neighbourhoods Strategy during the lifetime of the Plan to identify strategic gaps in the provision of services / infrastructure / resources within existing and proposed neighbourhoods;

f. Create healthy and attractive places to live consistent with NPO 4 of the NPF and Goal 3: Sustainable Place Framework of the RSES.

Objective 3.4 – Compact Growth

*'Cork City Council will seek to ensure that **at least 66% of all new homes** will be provided within **the existing footprint of Cork**. Cork City Council will seek to ensure that at least 33% of all new homes will be provided within brownfield sites in Cork.*

Optimising the potential for housing delivery on all suitable and available brownfield sites will be achieved by:

a. Cork City Council acting as a development agency to kickstart regeneration of sites and buildings, utilising acquisition as required;

b. Progress housing and employment delivery in urban centres and strategic regeneration sites;

c. Active land management utilising the range of tools available (including the Derelict Sites Act 1990 and the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015);

d. The redevelopment of surplus utility and public sector owned sites;

e. The development of small and infill sites and the re-use of existing designated and undesignated built heritage assets including those on development sites;

f. The utilisation of planning and urban design tools to provide a framework for the development of sites (e.g. masterplanning, framework plans, neighbourhood strategies, historic area regeneration strategies, site specific briefs);

g. Optimising the use of land (see Objective 3.5: Residential Density);

h. Establishing ambitious and achievable build out rates at the planning stage to help ensure that homes are built quickly and to reduce the likelihood of permissions being sought to sell land on at a higher value;

i. Influencing Government to update the legislative, guidance, fiscal and financial framework to the benefit of housing delivery on brownfield sites;

j. Combining its role as planning authority and housing authority to bring about residential development to meet demand and need;

k. Where new sustainable transport infrastructure is planned, land use designations will be reviewed and updated where appropriate to provide for housing or mixed-use development (including housing);

l. Unlocking the development potential of brownfield sites to be used as an evidence base and business case for intervention;

m. Ensuring that all new housing developments contribute to the creation and / or maintenance of successful neighbourhoods;

n. Identifying and promoting the development potential of brownfield, small sites, regeneration areas and infrastructure packages to enable progress towards achieving compact growth targets;

o. Encouraging the retrofitting and reuse of existing buildings, rather than their demolition and reconstruction.'

Objective 3.5 – Residential Density

Cork City Council will seek to:

- a. Promote compact urban growth by encouraging higher densities throughout Cork City according to the Cork City Density Strategy, Building Height and Tall Building Study and resultant standards set out in Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development and Mapped Objectives; and*
- b. Ensure that urban density is achieved by development proposals providing for high quality sustainable residential development, ensure a balance between the protection of the established character of the surrounding area and existing residential amenities;*
- c. Ensure that urban density is closely linked to creating successful neighbourhoods and ensuring that neighbourhoods are integrated and permeable to ensure short trips are possible to urban centres, local services and amenities;*
- d. Ensuring high-quality architectural, urban and public realm design. Guidance is set out in Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development.*

In terms of “City Fringe, Primary Corridors and Major Urban Centres”, section 11.37 of the Plan states that for “City Fringe, Primary Corridors and Major Urban Centres Existing building heights typically range from 2-6 storeys in the city fringe and principal urban corridors, 2-5 in Mahon and Blackpool and 2-4 in Wilton. To seek to ensure the best use of land is achieved in whilst responding to local context, new development should respect this context.” Section 11.38 of the CCDP states that the “Inner Urban Suburbs” includes a number of sub-areas, including ‘The Urban North’ which is described as “encompassing the Glen, Dillon’s Cross, Ballyvolane and Mayfield areas and the hinterland of the R635 North Ring Road which loosely follows the axis of The Glen River.”

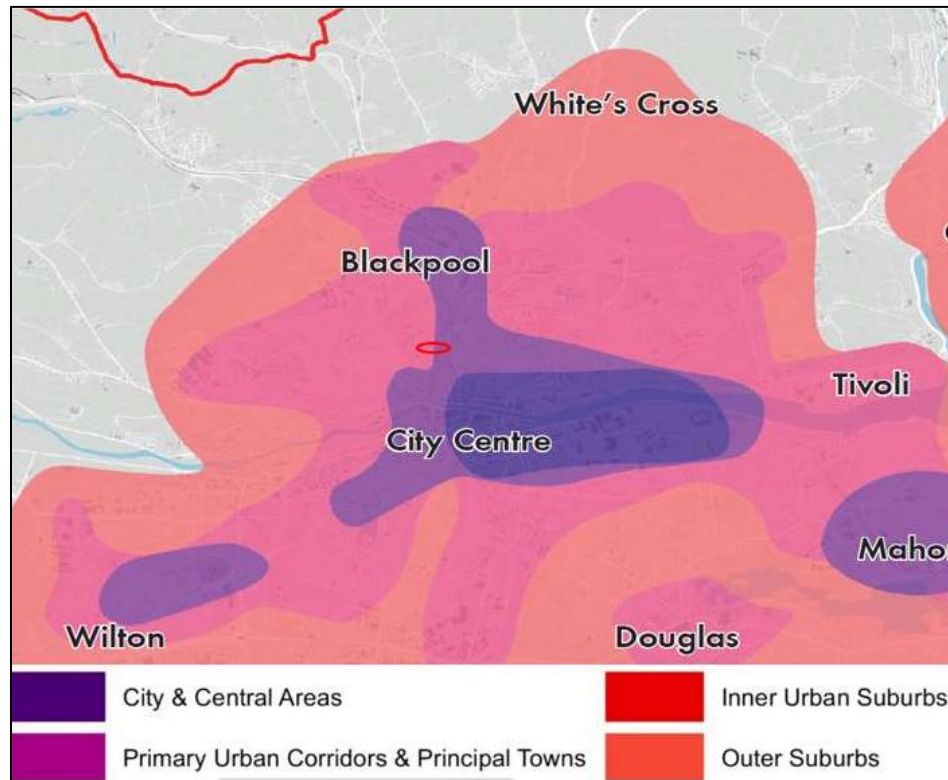


Figure 2.6: Extract from Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. Indicative location of site outlined in red.

Based on Table 11.2 of the CDDP, areas designated 'City Fringe, Primary Corridors and Major Urban Centres', have a density range of 50-150 dwellings per hectare and a height range of between 4-6 storeys, while areas designated 'Inner Urban Suburbs' (i.e. the Urban North), have a density range of 50-100 dwellings per hectare and a height range of between 3-4 storeys.

The need for increasing housing supply is outlined in section 3.46 of the CDDP, in particular to infill developments.

'Cork City Council will support infill development to optimise the role that small sites in the city can play in providing new homes for Cork's expanding population. Within historic parts of the City currently used as commercial urban centres (e.g. the City Centre and historic spine) there is considerable underutilisation of upper floor space. Bringing this space back into productive use as homes will make a valuable contribution to providing new homes, investment in historic buildings and regenerative benefits for commercial areas.'

Table 3.9 of the CDDP (Figure 4) outlines the housing sizes that are needed in Cork City. The 2-person household is currently in the height demand it is predicted to continue with this trend.

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total	
Household Size								No.	%
1-person	337	674	674	675	675	675	338	4045	25
2-person	402	803	801	800	798	797	398	4799	29.5
3-person	242	482	481	481	480	478	239	2884	18
4-person	221	445	447	450	452	454	228	2697	16.5
5/5+ persons	151	302	301	301	301	301	150	1807	11
Total	1353	2706	2706	2706	2706	2706	1353	16,236	100

Table 3.4: Household Size forecast for additional households in Cork City (Source: Cork City and County Joint Housing Strategy, Section 4: HNDAs Components).

Figure 4: Extract from the CDP on household size forecasted for additional housing.

Table 3.5 of the CCDP outlines the estimated delivery of both social housing and affordable units on annual basis from 2022-2028.

Year	2022 H2	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028 H1	Total
Social Housing	276	552	552	552	552	552	276	3,312
Affordable Housing	172	344	344	344	344	344	172	2,064

Figure 4a: Extract from the CDP. An overview of social and affordable housing requirements.

Objective 4.3 - Strategic Location of New Development

'To ensure that all new residential, employment and commercial development are focused in areas with good access to the planned high frequency public transport network.'

Objective 4.4 - Active Travel

'To actively promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy, and environmentally friendly modes of transport by securing the development of a network of direct, comfortable, convenient, and safe cycle routes and footpaths across the city.'

'To support the 15-minute city concept and walkable neighbourhoods with adequate walking and cycling infrastructure connected to high-quality public realm elements, including wayfinding and supporting amenities (benches, water fountains, bike stands).'

'To support the expansion of the Cork Bikes scheme. To accommodate other innovations such as electric bikes, public car hire, and other solutions that will encourage active travel.'

'To support the rollout of the NTA 5 Year Cycle Plan. To support and engage with the Safe Routes to School programme.'

The site is partially located in the 'Blackpool Architecture Conservation Area', therefore **Objective 8.23 – Development in Architecture Conservation Areas** is of relevance to this site. It states the following:

Development in Architectural Conservation Areas should have regard to the following:

- a. Works that impact negatively upon features within the public realm, such as stone setts, cobbles or other historic paving, railings, street furniture, stone kerbing etc. shall not be generally permitted;*
- b. Design and detailing that responds respectfully to the historic environment in a way that contributes new values from our own time. This can be achieved by considering layout, scale, materials and finishes and patterns such as plot divisions in the surrounding area;*
- c. Historic materials and methods of construction should be retained and repaired where this is reasonable, e.g. historic windows and doors, original roof coverings, metal rainwater goods should be retained along with original forms and locations of openings etc;*
- d. Repairs or the addition of new materials should be appropriate and in keeping with the character of the original structures.*

Objective 11.3 – Housing Quality and Standards

'a. High quality functional design: Housing developments should be of a high-quality design and provide adequately sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts, which are fit for purpose without differentiating between tenures;

b. Housing quality: Qualitative aspects of development are key to ensuring successful sustainable housing. Table 11.10 sets out key qualitative aspects that should be addressed in the design of housing developments;

c. Dual aspect dwellings: Housing development should maximise the provision of dual aspect dwellings and normally avoid the provision of single aspect dwellings. A single aspect dwelling should only be provided where it is considered to be a more appropriate design solution than a dual aspect dwelling, and it can be demonstrated that it will have adequate passive ventilation, daylight and privacy, and avoid overheating;

d. Daylight Sunlight and Overshadowing: The design of developments should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to new and surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, whilst, minimising overshadowing and maximising the useability of outdoor amenity space;

e. Waste: Housing should be designed with adequate and easily accessible storage space that supports the separate collection of dry recyclables, food waste and residual waste;

f. Minimum spatial standards: Housing developments are required to meet the minimum standards defined below.'

Objective 11.1 Sustainable Residential Development

Residential developments shall be sustainable and create high quality places which:

(b) Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, and minimise the need to use cars;

(f) Are easy to access for all and to find one’s way around, with a focus on permeability within sites and integration and connectivity into the surrounding urban environment to enable short trips by walking and cycling;

(h) Provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand;

The proposed site is located within the City Suburbs catchment resulting in the CCC designation this site to be car parking zone 2. This has outlined maximum standards of parking.

Land Use Category	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
	City Centre & Inner City	Ballincollig, City Suburbs and areas accessible to mass transit (existing or proposed LRT, Core Bus Network)	Blarney, Glanmire, Tower, Rochestown	Hinterland and Hinterland Villages.
Maximum Standards: 1 space for each unit of gross floor area sq m unless otherwise indicated				
Residential				
Residential (1-2 Bedroom)	0.5	1.0	2	Case by Case
Residential (3 - 3+ Bedroom)	1.0	2.0	2 + 0.25 Spaces for Visitor Parking	2 plus 0.25 Spaces for Visitor Parking
Docklands	These areas have different car parking standards. Please refer to Chapter 10.			
Tivoli				
Elderly Person Dwellings				
Warden Supervised Group Housing Schemes	0.25	0.5	0.5	1.0
Sheltered Housing				
Residential Institution	None	1 per 20 Bed Spaces	1 per 10 Bed Spaces	1 per 10 Bed Spaces
Student Housing	None	1 per 20 Bed Spaces	1 per 30 Bed Spaces	Case by Case

Figure 5: Extract from CDP - Table 11.3, pg. 523.

With policy 4.106 which outlines the aim of setting out car-free or low car standards in development areas within an 800m walking catchment area of Cork city centre **and/or** of quality public transport.

- *Set maximum parking standards across the City including the Urban Towns, taking into account accessibility to public transport and / or access to local services including education and employment;*
- *Set out car-free or low car standards in development areas within an 800m walking catchment area of Cork city centre and / or of quality public transport;*

Policy: 4.2 outlines the need for a modal shift within Cork City and it is a key objective of CMATS to support more sustainable transport modes.

Therefore, it is important that transport plans for Cork City consider the implication for climate change mitigation. Cork City Council, working with partners such as the NTA, TII, CIE and Iarnrod Eireann, will work to achieve a considerable modal shift to reduce the car dependence for residents of Cork City.

4.7 Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (Volume 3)

Volume 3 of the CDP outlines the Built Heritage objectives. As the site is partially located in the 'Blackpool Architecture Conservation Area', the following objectives and policies are relevant.

The area is centred on the main thoroughfare running south-north from Old Chapel Lane and Cathedral Street to Thomas Davis Street and the Link Road. It is bounded to the east by the western boundary of Watercourse Road and to the west by the rear of properties fronting onto the area's central spine of Gerald Griffin Street, Great William O'Brien Street and Thomas Davis Street.

Policy 1.28 outlines the Statement of Character which states the following:

'The character of the area, of architectural, archaeological, historical, and social significance, varies as you move northwards away from the city centre. It is made up of three sections, firstly: Gerald Griffin Street to the south, secondly: the central section of Great William O'Brien Street and thirdly: Blackpool Village centre, situated in the area focused on the church in the north.'

The area's building stock ranges from the 18th to 20th century but is mainly characterised by the 19th century residential two and three-storey buildings that line the principal thoroughfare. Several examples of 18th century buildings, are also evident, identified by their steeply pitched roofs and narrower openings on the upper floors. As is traditional in the area, buildings are generally constructed of rubble-stone or brick, usually rendered and painted.

The area around Blackpool Village centre and the northern part of Great William O'Brien Street benefitted greatly from the Blackpool Renewal Scheme

which improved the aesthetic quality of the streetscape by introducing features such as mature trees, attractive iron lamp standards, and simple, well-designed paving and soft landscaping. Other sections of the street would benefit from a similar scheme both to enhance their environmental quality and to emphasise the continuity of the character of the historic route

5. Planning Assessment

5.1 Principle of Development

The principle of the proposed development is to construct a residential development, that is supported by national, regional and local planning policies in terms of compact growth and sustainable mobility. The NPF recognises that in order to transition to a low carbon economy and facilitate the growing population there is a need to carefully manage the growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work.

The site is located in the North area of Cork City and is zoned 'ZO 01 – Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods' as per the CDP (see Figure 6). The objective associated with the land use zoning supports the development of residential uses on the site.

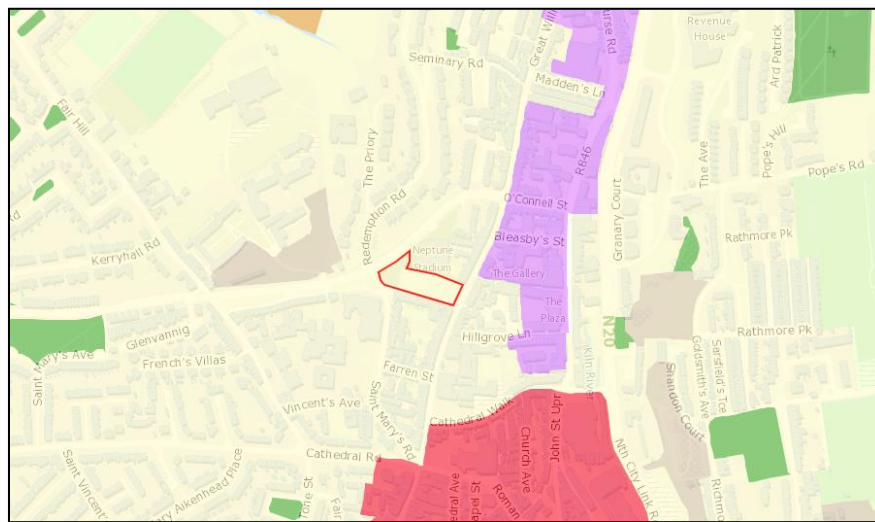


Figure 6: Site Location - Zoning Map

The Cork Joint Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment outlines existing and future housing requirements across both local authority areas and to set out measures for the authorities to plan for and address these needs.

This policy outlines several policy objectives for Cork.

PO7 It is the objective of the Councils that new housing delivery over the strategy period will deliver compact and sustainable growth in Cork City and Cork Metropolitan, Key, Ring and County Towns and Villages, to ensure the achievement compact growth and regeneration under the NPF, RSES and Cork MASP area, including the requirement that at least 50% of all new homes in Cork City and suburbs and at least 30% of all new homes in other settlements be delivered within the existing built-up footprint.

PO12 The Council will support the creation of attractive and vibrant places through the renovation and re-use of obsolete, vacant and derelict homes.

The Councils will incentivise bringing empty homes into use through various means including the application of a vacant site levy in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015. The Council will also promote the conversion of vacant properties into new social and affordable homes through schemes including the Repair and Leasing Scheme, the Buy and Renew Scheme, and long-term leasing. The Councils will endeavour to promote these schemes and encourage owners of vacant properties to avail of these schemes, directly or in co-operation with Approved Housing Bodies.

Therefore, is it considered that the principle of this development is acceptable on this site and is in line with national, regional and local policies by increasing the housing supply in Cork City within the existing footprint.

5.2 Layout

The overall approach of the proposed housing development on lands at Gerald Griffin Street and Burkes Avenue will be an aesthetically pleasing and highly efficient new residential scheme that will provide homes in a central location to Cork City, while contributing positively to creating liveable communities and supporting compact growth and sustainability development.

The proposed infill development will benefit from excellent walking connectivity to Cork City with links to public transport, employment areas recreation, community and educational facilities. The layout provides for universal access and has a diverse range of open spaces and amenities for the use of residents of all ages and stages. The layout is legible and easily accessible by all.

There are a total of 67 residential units as part of the proposed development, ranging from 1 bedroom apartments to 3-bedroom duplexes. A community space is also being proposed.

All units comply with the standards set out in the CDP and guidance provided in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG, 2022). The mix of unit sizes and types allows for a diverse range of occupants to become residents in the area, this promotes a strong diverse community of residents.

Table 2: Proposed units and bedspaces

Unit Type	Quantity	No. Bedrooms	Bedspaces
1	31	1	2
2	29	2	4
3	7	3	5

The use of duplex units on the ground and first floors provides active frontage onto the public realm on Gerald Griffin Avenue while enabling the

private open space to face onto the shared and controlled open space (see Figure 7).



Figure 7: Proposed Layout

The proposed development forges strong links with Neptune Stadium, an important social node in the area, visually through the roof profile and physically through the new footpath on Burke's Avenue. This will allow for the creation of strong pedestrian connections with the surrounding community. The public open space is located south of the subject site and is defined by the proposed apartment blocks.

5.3 Blackpool Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

The eastern side of the subject site is located within the Blackpool Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). Objective 8.23 outlines the development in architectural conservation areas should have regard to:

'b. Design and detailing that responds respectfully to the historic environment in a way that contributes new values from our own time. This can be achieved by considering layout, scale, materials and finishes and patterns such as plot divisions in the surrounding area'

The proposed scheme is the result of extensive discussions with Cork City Council commencing in November 2023 with regard to the potential of the site, appropriate design and existing character. As a result of these discussions and careful consideration taken for existing character, the design of the proposed development has evolved. These changes were introduced to mitigate visual impacts on the immediate ACA and assist in integrating the scheme more successfully into the wider built historic environment.

The proposed layout makes the most efficient use of the subject site, while carefully considering the existing structures and character of the area. This is

seen with Block A, as the building was redesigned to be narrowed and subdivided with a stepped roof to minimise its impact on the ACA. It is a 3 storey block that follows the existing building line found on Gerald Griffin Street (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Photomontage outlining the streetscape of Gerald Griffin Street

Block B to D was reduced in height along with a redesign for blocks A, B and C to be stepping which the levels at Block D and E (see Figure 8a). This was to reduce the height of the proposed development that would be seen from the east of the site. To ensure minimum impact on the adjacent ACA. The proposed development is sympathetic to its surrounding area while trying to regenerate the unoccupied site.



Figure 8a: Photomontage outlining the streetscape onto Gerald Griffin Avenue.

5.4 Height & Density

The subject site is located within two density designations as outlined in the CDP they include 'City Fringe/ Corridor area' and 'Inner Urban Suburbs', the site is located where the two boundaries meet. The proposal is for 67 residential units within an area of 0.4ha, resulting in a density of 167.5 units per hectare.

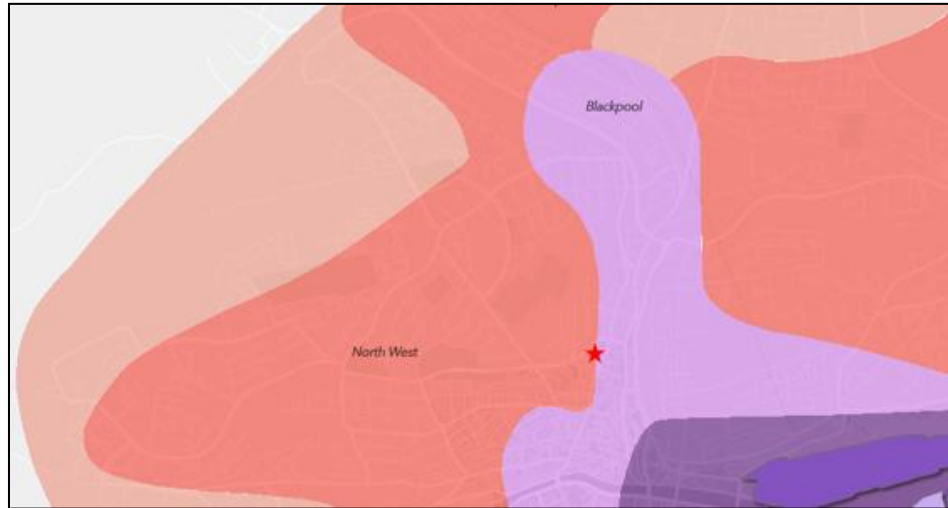


Figure 9: Extract of Density Map from CDP 2022-2028.

The proposed development consists of 5 blocks as seen in Figure 7. The proposed development takes into consideration the character of the area and the topography. There is a steep gradient within the site as it falls from west to east by approximately 12 meters. As a result, the proposed development was design to have varying heights throughout the site. Block A onto Gerald Griffin Street is three storeys over ground rising to 4 over ground. Blocks B steps from 4 to 5 storeys over ground following the rising site contours. At Blocks C, D and E the building is at its highest at 6 storeys. It is worth nothing that, due to the site level variations, Blocks B – E all present as a storey height lower onto the proposed communal open space, no taller than 4 storeys over ground along Gerald Griffin Avenue.



Figure 10: Proposed elevation - Height variation

The development exceeds the density and height target ranges as indicted in table 11.2 of the Cork City Development Plan for the 'Inner Urban Suburbs' and 'City Fringe/Corridor area'. However, the site is located within close proximity to public infrastructure and walking distance to Cork City.

It is considered that the density and height is consistent with the '*Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' and given its proximity to both the city centre and public transport links, the approach to development is appropriate to the site specific context.

Table 3.1 of the '*Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' refer to areas and density in

Cork City and Suburbs and notes the following in respect of 'City – Urban Neighbourhoods':

The city urban neighbourhoods category includes: (i) the compact medium density residential neighbourhoods around the city centre that have evolved overtime to include a greater range of land uses, (ii) strategic and sustainable development locations, (iii) town centres designated in a statutory development plan, and (iv) lands around existing or planned high-capacity public transport nodes or interchanges (defined in Table 3.8) – all within the city and suburbs area. These are highly accessible urban locations with good access to employment, education and institutional uses and public transport. It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 50 dph to 250 dph (net) shall generally be applied in urban neighbourhoods of Dublin and Cork.

They note in terms of 'Consideration of Proximity and Accessibility to Services and Public Transport'. Paragraph 3.4.1 of the guidelines states that "Densities above the ranges are 'open for consideration at accessible suburban and urban extension locations to the maximum set out.'" Table 3.8 defines the requirements for defining the accessibility of suburban and urban extension locations as follows:

Intermediate Location

- Lands within 500-1,000 metres (i.e. 10-12 minute walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. 10 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services; and
- Lands within 500 metres (i.e. 6 minute walk) of a reasonably frequent (minimum 15 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus service

Existing public bus stops are located on Watercourse Road approximately 150m from the proposed development site (bus route 203 and 215) and Cathedral Road approximately 250m from the proposed (bus route 202, 202A and 210).

In terms of planned urban bus services there are two routes that will service the site as part of BusConnects, these include Routes 5 and 11. There are a total of 4 bus stops within a 150m-300m distance from the proposed site. It is planned that Route 5 will service this route every 15 minutes during peak hours. Route 11 also provides a direct link to Mahon.

It is therefore considered that although the density exceeds the target ranges in table 11.2 of the Cork City Development Plan, the proposed density for this scheme complies with the density standards in the 'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities' given the sites immediate proximity to both existing and planned public infrastructure services.

It is also outlined in Section 11.72 of the Cork City Development plan that 'minimum density targets will be applied in the development of all sites apart from

in exceptional circumstances'. The site is in a strategic location with ample access to public transport and walking distance to Cork City (approximately 0.9km). This development has placed a key focus on utilising the existing facilities in its surroundings, to support sustainable travel by modes of bus, cycling and walking.

Furthermore, it should be noted that in the supporting study for the Cork City Development Plan an *'Urban Density Building Height and Tall Building Study'*, this document states that the density and building heights strategy *"is not a blueprint"* and that *"each case should be considered on their own merits"*. It further sets out at the start that:

"Renewed emphasis must now be placed on ensuring all new development makes the very best use of land and exploits embedded capacity in existing urban areas which are supported by infrastructure and services".

This further supports the provisions of the Cork City Development which recognises that density and height can be increased in 'exceptional circumstances' and the *'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities'* which sets out that densities above the ranges are open for consideration' at accessible suburban and urban extension locations to the maximum set out. Given the proposed development location and accessibility to existing and planned public transport infrastructure, it is considered that the density of 67 units and height of 3 to 6 storeys is an appropriate scale for this site.

5.5 Bin Storage

It is proposed that each apartment block will have allocated bin storage units located within each apartment block.

Communal waste rooms will be located in each podium basement for each building block, representing one communal waste room per two blocks. Communal bin storage has been calculated to provide 1,819L for one bedroom-apartments, 3,404L for the two-bedroom apartments and 1,232L for three-bedroom apartments. The calculations are based on and in accordance with EPA household waste generation.

5.6 Access & Parking

The Site Strategy provides a pedestrian-friendly, permeable framework that permits pedestrians to have ease of access within the development as well as extending connections beyond the site.

Access to the site will be from Gerald Griffin Avenue and Gerald Griffin Street, with a new footpath on Gerald Griffin Avenue and Burkes Avenue. Considering the proximity of the site with Cork City Centre, nearby access to high frequency and well-linked public transport, the development does not propose any on-site vehicular parking. Instead, a high volume of bicycle storage/ parking is proposed for the site.

This will include 121 bicycle spaces internally and 12 external bicycle racks. Cycle parking provision is made in accordance with DHPLG New Apartment Guidelines 2020. Spaces are provided at ground floor within apartment buildings in interior rooms by way two-tier parking rack systems. Rooms are to be accessible only by residents and will be well lit and maintained by the management company.

The subject site is located in a strategic location that will promote sustainable development to Cork City. There are several developments throughout the City which have been approved where it was considered from a sustainable travel perspective, limiting parking spaces serves to force end users to adopt alternative travels modes, as opposed to the private car. This strategy aligns with national transport policy and also with the objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022.

Given the urban location of the proposed development, the quality of pedestrian and cycle facilities in the area and the level of public transport available to residents, it is considered having no vehicle parking facilities is acceptable as other forms of transport is achievable in this location

5.7 Open Space & Amenity

In total, 0.0987 ha of public open space is provided within the development, equating to 25% useable open space. The communal open space provides amenity space boundary to the existing residential buildings on Gerald Griffin Avenue. The layout provides for universal access and has a diverse range of open spaces and amenities for the use of residents of all ages and stages. The layout is legible and easily accessible by all. The Open Space Strategy is to clearly differentiate between areas of public, communal and private open space and ensures that areas of open space are accessible, usable and available for all.

A Daylight and Sunlight Analysis Report has been prepared by DKPartnership. This report provides information on daylight and sunlight studies within the proposed new development and also assesses the impact on daylight and sunlight to the surrounding areas/existing environment.

In relation to sunlight reception in existing amenity areas, the report concludes that all existing amenity spaces received 2 hours of sunlight or more on at least 50% of the area before and after the introduction of the new development. The report concludes that the proposed development's effect on daylight reception in the neighbouring rooms are all within the constraints and minimum recommendations of the BRE Report – Site Layout and Planning for Daylight and Sunlight BR209 2022. Therefore, the proposed development is deemed to be compliant with this element.

6. Appropriate Assessment

According to the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EC) and Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), member states are required to designate areas in order to protect priority habitats and species. These sites are known as Special

Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) respectively. Collectively, these sites are known as Natura 2000 sites. An “Appropriate Assessment” (AA), means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge of the potential impacts of a plan, on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and the development where necessary of measures to preclude negative effects. The impact assessment must include indirect and cumulative impacts of approving the plan considered, with any current or proposed activities, development or policies impacting on the site. All plans and projects should aim to identify any possible impacts early in the plan making process and then either alter the plan to avoid them or introduce mitigation measures to the point where no adverse impacts remain.

An Appropriate Assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon either individually or in combination with other plans or projects shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment of its implication of the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provision of paragraph 4, the competent National Authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

Article 6(4) states;

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons or overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

The AA screening report prepared by Malone O'Regan Environmental concludes that the proposed development, either alone or in combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives. The report further notes that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

7. Environmental Assessment

In accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and current government and EU guidance, the Planning Authority must screen the proposed development for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and decide whether the planning application for the proposed development does or does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Having regard to the nature, extent, and the characteristics of the likely impacts we consider that when screened in accordance with EU Screening Guidelines that the proposed development is not a project defined by Part 1 and Part 2 Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as requiring an EIAR and would not warrant a sub threshold EIAR in accordance with Article 10 of the Regulations.

With regard to EIA requirements, the proposal is well below the mandatory EIAR threshold for residential developments of 500 units (which is the statutory test in this regard) and is also below the 10ha EIAR threshold for development within a built-up area. Any potential impact on the environment is likely to be confined to the immediate site area, is likely to be limited in magnitude and the site is not one of special environmental sensitivity.

A formal EIA screening has been carried out by McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants and is submitted as part of this application. Based on the findings of the EIA screening assessment, the proposed development does not require a mandatory EIA. With regards to the nature, extent and characteristics of the likely impacts for the construction and operational phase of the proposed development, the EIA screening considers that the proposed development will not give rise to any likely significant environmental effects and accordingly a sub-threshold EIA is not required.

8. Conclusion

The proposed Part 8 development, located at Gerald Griffin Street, will provide 67 residential units to meet a mixture of housing solutions with regards to size and tenures on an under-utilised and longstanding undeveloped infill site within the existing built footprint of Cork City.

The scheme has been carefully designed by a multidisciplinary team to ensure the delivery of a high-quality development that is in line with all the relevant national, regional and local policies. It will deliver a high-quality social residential scheme that is sympathetic to the existing urban environment and sensitive to the natural environment of the immediate surrounds, achieving a high-density housing scheme that will help address the current housing shortages in Cork City.