

COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS
SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL



MEETING OF SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

Monday, 12th October 2020

HEADED ITEM NO.12

Chief Executive's Report on Public Consultation in relation to the proposed construction of an affordable rental housing development on Council owned lands, west of the new link road connecting Fourth Avenue, Cookstown and Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

1. Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (the Act) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) (the Regulations), South Dublin County Council is seeking planning consent to construct an affordable rental housing development on SDCC lands west of the new link road connecting Fourth Avenue and Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

The purpose of this Chief Executive's Report is to present the outcome of the consultation, to respond to submissions made during the consultation period and to make recommendations in relation to the proposed development where appropriate.

2. Site Description

The 0.4903-hectare site is located near the centre of Tallaght, north of The Square Shopping Centre, Council Offices and Civic Theatre. The site is bounded to the north by Cookstown Industrial Estate and Exchange Hall apartments and the Grain Hall buildings to the south. Tallaght Hospital campus lies to the west with a surface carpark located directly adjacent to the shared boundary. The eastern boundary of the proposed development is currently a construction site for a new road that will link Fourth Avenue and Belgard Square North and facilitate access to the development. The site also lies on the western end of the Tallaght Zip Link/Greenway with the final section of that route, terminating at Tallaght Hospital, to be provided as part of this development.

3. Scheme Description

The development will consist of the construction of 133 affordable rental apartments and a community facility with a total area of approximately 12,918m², in three blocks, ranging from

three to eight storeys with associated balconies/terraces for each apartment and roof mounted solar panels, linked by a single storey podium. The blocks are broken down as follows:

- Block A (west- c. 5,162m²) accommodates 2 no. studios, 31 no. 1 bed apartments and 28 no. 2 bed apartments.
- Block B (east – c. 5,903m²) accommodates 1 no. studio, 33 no. 1 bed apartments, 35 no. 2 bed apartments, 1 no. 3 bed apartment and the community facility.
- Block C (south – 255m²) accommodates 2 no. 3 bed 3 storey maisonette apartments
- Podium (c. 1598 m²) accommodates 39 no. car parking spaces which includes 3 no. universal access spaces, 246 no. secure bicycle spaces, ESB substation/switch room, plant rooms, bins and other maintenance stores.

Ancillary site development works include the provision of pedestrian zip link/ greenway, access roadway, footpaths, 24 no. bicycle spaces, hard and soft landscaping, new boundary treatments and a landscaped courtyard at podium level.

Plans and reports for proposed development are shown on the following links:

[Sheet 1 - Site Location Plan](#)

[Sheet 2 - Site Layout Plan](#)

[Sheet 3 - Proposed Ground & First Floor Plan](#)

[Sheet 4 - Proposed Second & Third Floor Plan](#)

[Sheet 5 - Proposed Fourth & Fifth Floor Plan](#)

[Sheet 6 - Proposed Sixth & Seventh Floor Plan](#)

[Sheet 7 - Proposed Roof Plan](#)

[Sheet 8 - Sections AA + BB \(East & West Courtyard Elevations\)](#)

[Sheet 9 - South & West Elevations](#)

[Sheet 10 - North & East Elevations](#)

[Sheet 11 - Apartment Type Plans](#)

[Sheet 12 - Apartment Layout Type A, A1, A2 & A3](#)

[Sheet 13 - Apartment Layout Type A4, A5, B & B1](#)

[Sheet 14 - Apartment Layout B2, B3, B4 & B5](#)

[Sheet 15 - Apartment Layout Type C, D & D1](#)

[Sheet 16 - Apartment Layout \(Type E\)](#)

[Sheet 17 - Podium Courtyard Layout](#)

[Sheet 18 - Area Plans \(Unit Area\)](#)

[Sheet 19 - Area Plans \(Gross Floor Area\)](#)

[Sheet 20 - Topographical Survey](#)

[Sheet 21 - Proposed Site Layout](#)

[Sheet 22 - Proposed Drainage Layout \(Page 1 of 2\)](#)

[Sheet 23 - Proposed Drainage Layout \(Page 2 of 2\)](#)

[Sheet 24 - Proposed Watermain Layout \(Page 1 of 2\)](#)

[Sheet 25 - Proposed Watermain Layout \(page 2 of 2\)](#)

[Sheet 26 - Drainage Details \(Page 1 of 2\)](#)

[Sheet 27 - Drainage Details \(page 2 of 2\)](#)

[Sheet 28 - Attenuation Tank Details](#)

[Sheet 29 - Watermain Details](#)

[Sheet 30 - Proposed Road Layout](#)

[Sheet 31 - Road Cross Sections](#)
[Sheet 32 - Swept Path Analysis Fire Tender \(Page 1 of 2\)](#)
[Sheet 33 - Swept Path Analysis Medium Car \(Page 2 of 2\)](#)
[Sheet 34 - Proposed Visibility Splay](#)
[Sheet 35 - Proposed SUDS Elements](#)
[Appropriate Assessment Screening Report](#)
[Appropriate Assessment Determination](#)
[Architects-Design Statement](#)
[Aviation Impact report](#)
[Childcare Provision Report](#)
[Daylight Sunlight Report](#)
[Engineering Services Report](#)
[Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report](#)
[Environmental Impact Assessment Determination](#)
[Lighting Schedule 1](#)
[Lighting Schedule 2](#)
[Mobility Management Plan](#)
[Outline Construction Management Plan](#)
[Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment](#)
[Sustainability Report](#)
[Traffic & Transport Report](#)
[Waste Management Plan](#)

4. Public Consultation

Plans and particulars of the proposed development were on public display for over six weeks from 6th August 2020 to 18th September 2020 (inclusive). During the public consultation, information on the proposed affordable rental housing development was disseminated to the public and submissions were invited.

The public consultation on the proposed affordable housing development included the following statutory and non-statutory elements:

- Notices in the Echo and the Gazette newspapers.
- Public consultation displays in South Dublin County Council offices at County Hall in Tallaght.
- Information on social media (Facebook and Twitter).

Submissions and observations on the affordable rental housing development could be made online and in writing for a period of over six weeks from 6th August 2020 to 18th September 2020 (inclusive).

5. Legislative Background

Section 179 (3) (a) of the Act, requires that the Chief Executive shall, after the end of the public consultation period, prepare a written report in relation to the proposed development and submit the report to the members.

Section 179 (3) (b) of the Act outlines that a report shall—

- i. Describe the nature and extent of the proposed development and the principal features thereof, and shall include an appropriate plan of the development and appropriate map of the relevant area.

- ii. Evaluate whether or not the proposed development would be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development relates, having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan and giving the reasons and the considerations for the evaluation.
- iii. List the persons or bodies who made submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development.
- iv. Summarise the issues, with respect to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the proposed development would be situated, raised in any such submissions or observations, and give the response of the Chief Executive thereto. and,
- v. Recommend whether or not the proposed development should be proceeded with as proposed, or as varied or modified as recommended in the report, or should not be proceeded with, as the case may be.

Under Section 179(4) of the Act, the elected members shall, as soon as practicable, consider the proposed development and the report of the Chief Executive. Following the consideration of the Chief Executive's report, the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's report, unless the local authority, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development, otherwise than as recommended in the Chief Executive's report, or decides not to proceed with the development. A resolution must be passed not later than six (6) weeks after receipt of the Chief Executive's report.

6. Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

The proposal has undergone an Appropriate Assessment Screening under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). This Council has determined that the implementation of the proposed development is not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity or conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 network of sites.

It has also undergone a preliminary examination for an Environmental Impact Assessment and the Planning Authority has concluded that there will be no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

As a result of the above, in accordance with Part XI of the Act, the elected members of the Council can consider the proposed construction of an affordable rental housing development on SDCC lands west of the new link road connecting Fourth Avenue and Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24, under Part 8 of the Regulations.

7. Outcome of Public Consultation Programme

A total of seven (7) submissions/observations were received (including two (2) from Tallaght Community Council, which have been grouped in the links to submissions received below).

A list of all persons, organisations and bodies that made submissions is provided in the table below together with links to copies of the submissions received:

Person/Prescribed Body	Link to Submission
Councillor Eoin Ó Broin	Link
Inland Fisheries Ireland	Link
Marie Kelly	Link
Tallaght Community Council (x2)	Link
Belgard Area Residents Association	Link
Irish Water	Link

The categories of issues raised in submissions received is below:

(a summary and responses to issues raised is provided in Section 8 of this report)

No.	Category of Submission	Count
1	Mix of Homes	2
2	Height, Density and Plot Ratio	3
3	Visual Impact of design	4
4	Residential Amenity	2
5	Environmental Considerations	3
6	Statutory Bodies Submissions	2
7	Matters outside the scope of the development	2

8. Summary of Issues Raised and Chief Executive's Responses and Recommendations

In addressing the submissions raised it is important to provide the context that the proposed development is a flagship development for an affordable rental model in the County that is proposed as an exemplar in terms of design, management and partnership. The site, while very well-positioned in a town centre, is limited in area and not suitable for houses or indeed larger homes generally. The proposal should also be considered in the context of the Council's overall proposals for the development various tenure mixes on various large sites in the County that elected members are briefed about on an ongoing basis.

Submission Category 1 – Mix of Homes

Concerns raised regarding the proposed mix of homes in the development against the objective in the Tallaght Local Area Plan to deliver a minimum of 30% 3-bedroom units in new developments. Additional reference to a lack of "family focused" accommodation in the town centre and proposal to reduce the number of homes in the proposed development to eight while incorporating a larger number of larger (3-bedroom) homes.

Response:

While the need for a strong mix of typologies in Tallaght is supported by the recently adopted LAP, it must be highlighted that the proposed development is the first proposed 100% affordable rental development in South Dublin County and is specifically designed to be viable for management of that tenure by maximising the number of homes included.. This includes

utilising the specific provision in the Local Area Plan (Section 5.2.2 Housing Options) which states that “It is policy of the Council to support the provision of Affordable Housing in the area. Flexibility with regard to the housing tenure and typology mix will be considered where it is demonstrated that 50% or more of the dwellings in a residential development are provided for Affordable Housing, as defined by the Council (Objective RE 7)”. Accordingly, the requirement for a minimum of 30% of the homes to be three-bedroom homes is appropriately set aside in this instance.

There are specific challenges for the delivery of such developments (evidenced by the small number of similar projects and the special provision set out in the LAP in support of the delivery of such schemes) particularly relating to the challenges with the commercial viability of delivering three-bedroom apartment homes. The Elected Members should be aware conditioning the suggested reduction to just eighty homes in the development to incorporate more three-bedroom homes as proposed in one of the submissions received (from Tallaght Community Council) would render the project unviable and it would not be able to proceed.

The mix of homes proposed has been formulated to meet the demand of the affordable rental housing model for this area in extensive collaboration with the selected Approved Housing Body partners that will manage and operate the development. It will deliver 66 homes (63 no. two-bedroom apartments and 2 no. three-bedroom townhouses) that would be suitable for certain sized families, accommodating 3 to 4 persons, noting that households requiring 1- and 2-bedroom homes constitute the majority of current housing demand with there being two and a half times more such households than appropriately-sized homes available for them.

The development has also been developed to meet the standards for mix of home type set out in the “Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities” with the proposal compliant with the national planning guidelines limiting the number of 1-bed and studios in the proposal to 50% of overall number of homes in the development.

Submission Category 2 – Height, Density and Plot Ratio

Concerns were raised regarding compliance of the proposed development with the requirements of the LAP in relation to plot ratio, building height and density with related questioning of the need for a rental apartment development in Tallaght Town Centre.

Response:

To reflect the importance of placemaking at key public transport stops and key public spaces, the Local Area Plan permits flexibility in relation to the plot ratio range (20% increase) and the potential for higher buildings (2-4 storey increase on typical levels set in the LAP) in proximity to certain locations which are considered to be key or landmark sites, one of which is the proposed ‘New Urban Square’ north of Belgard Square North in the Centre neighbourhood of the LAP.

The Plot Ratio identified in the LAP for Central Tallaght is 1.5-2:1 but this is further qualified (in section 2.6 of the LAP) “where there is a compelling case of a significant public or economic benefit” and “reflect(ing) the importance of placemaking at key public transport stops and key public spaces” (of which the proposed adjacent Innovation Square is identified), “flexibility in relation to the plot ratio range and the potential for higher buildings” is

permitted. The proposed development delivers development at a plot ratio of 2.24, which is within the additional 20% allowed in such circumstances.

In addition, the LAP sets out specific building height requirements for the Tallaght Centre zoning are for Primary Frontage with six to seven storeys of residential development plus one additional recessed storey and Secondary Frontage with four to six storeys of residential development. The aforementioned LAP flexibility on height and plot ratio applies for this development given that it is directly adjacent to the 'New Urban Square' north of Belgard Square North while the entirety of the application site is also within a 500m LUAS catchment area. These factors provide justification for a two to four storey increase on the typical levels permitted in the LAP subject to design quality, provision of mixed use at ground floor, allowing for Primary Frontage with ten to eleven storeys and Secondary Frontage of eight to ten storeys. Notwithstanding this, Block B of the proposed development addresses the new urban square and forms its primary frontage and, being seven to eight storeys, is consistent with the typical LAP heights with the eighth storey predominantly set back from the parapet edge, save for the south east corner at the junction of the new urban square, zip/greenway, and the new link road. At this key node, the block rises to the full 8th floors expressing the importance of this location. Block A is the block to the west of the site and extends to 6 storeys with a setback storey. Therefore, the proposed development is clearly demonstrated to be compliant with the LAP in this regard.

While sample densities are referenced in the LAP, no minimum or maximum densities are prescribed. The density of the proposed development is $133/0.4903 = 271$ units per hectare (a computational error in the original Architect's Report resulted in the misstating of the density at 303 dwellings per hectare). The density is reflective of the high proportion of one-bedroom homes proposed in the affordable rental housing model.

The Council, in accordance with "Project Ireland 2040" the National Planning Framework, promotes policies supporting compact growth, seeking to deliver homes and jobs adjoining facilities. The subject site in this instance is centrally located near a multitude of such amenities, supporting the higher densities achieved by apartment developments such as those proposed at this location. More traditional and lower density housing is proposed and being progressed by the Council at other locations throughout the County that will deliver a wider range of housing typologies and tenure across larger sites. The scale of the subject site, at less than half a hectare, does not provide sufficient area to deliver lower scale, lower density typologies.

Submission Category 3 – Visual Impact of Proposed Development

Concern raised regarding visual impact of scheme to include the proposed design for the balconies, management of balconies (including preventing use for drying clothes and storage of items (e.g. bicycles)), the use of red brick on this building (and on public housing in general), potential effects of overshadowing and impact on daylight.

Response:

The proposed development includes private open space for each of the residences in accordance with the design standard for new apartments. The proposed balconies will not have glass surrounds, but rather galvanised steel railings, which will improve privacy for

tenants. The balconies are typically stacked vertically to provide shelter, the block has been positioned so that the terraces are within a landscaped strip and the public thoroughfare does not run beneath balconies

The development will be managed by an Approved Housing Body with tenants subject to tenancy agreements and management rules – it would be expected that such rules will include prohibition on drying clothes on balconies especially as ventilated storage areas within the apartments will allow for drying of clothes. A secure bicycle parking facility will be provided within the parking area as alternatives to balcony use for same.

All efforts have been made to ensure an economic and efficient design for the development to support and enhance its viability for affordable rental housing. The design has also been carefully developed to meet the specific needs of this development including the dual demands of high-quality housing and associated amenity combined with quality streetscape, considering the proportions of the façade and its components. The brick proposed is a buff brick, rather than red brick and similar examples of similar brick used recently on affordable rental apartments in the Netherlands and social housing in Germany are illustrated below.



Above: Affordable Housing in Haarlem, Netherlands



Above: Affordable Housing in Haarlem, Netherlands



Left: Social Housing in Lübeck, Germany

A detailed study of the daylight impact by the scheme and the results of the design decisions for this development will see over 80% of the habitable rooms in the development achieve the BRE target Average Daylight Factor, exceeding the recognised daylighting criteria in international assessment standards, even taking account of the shadow from Exchange Hall as referred to in one of the submissions, with modelling of each home showing high levels of daylight throughout the development.

Submission Category 4 – Residential Amenity

Matters raised included suggestions in relation to the uses for the proposed community facility, enhancements for the play area and use of the proposed green roof as a viewing point. Additional issues raised included the proposed connection to the Tallaght District Heating Scheme and clarification on the Childcare Provision report.

Response:

The proposed uses of the community room will be decided by the AHB managing the development, but a small kitchen facility is currently proposed as part of that facility. At the design will be developed in further detail for tender, consideration will be given to a covered area within the play space such as requested a submission. It is not currently proposed to allow a viewing point from the roof given the additional design, cost, health and safety, and management implications.

As referred to above in the previous submission category, the development will be managed by an Approved Housing Body with tenants subject to tenancy agreements and management rules – it would be expected that such rules will include prohibition on drying clothes on balconies especially as ventilated storage areas within the apartments will allow for drying of clothes. A secure bicycle parking facility will be provided within the parking area as alternatives to balcony use for same. In addition, the storage provision in all cases meets or exceeds minimum requirements without considering the potential additional storage within bedrooms/kitchens etc.

The development has been designed to connect to the Tallaght District Heating scheme and it is envisaged that it will do so.

The following clarifications are provided in relation to the childcare provision report:

- a. The report is based on the extant situation in Tallaght without relying on the future commencement of any Strategic Housing Developments. The provision within third party schemes are simply identified to illustrate that these schemes will provide childcare facilities for their residents.
- b. The cited floor space provision 2.32m² is the national figure for the regulation of childcare operators and calculations include additional area for shared, staff and support areas. It is beyond the scope of this application to detail the creche facilities within third party schemes. The use of the notional floor area serves to examine potential pipeline provision of childcare but the conclusion that there is sufficient existing provision does not rely on this.

Submission Category 5 –Environmental Considerations

Water conservation and sustainability measures referenced and proposed.

Response:

Thorough examination of the enhanced water conservation measures including use of recycled water for external plant watering and general maintenance will be explored at detailed design stage along with the potential to provide high performance white goods, and low water usage sanitary ware as part of the development where feasible.

Similarly, all opportunities to include construction methods and materials that support low embodied energy and green procurement will be incorporated into the detailed design of the project.

Submission Category 6 –Submissions from Statutory Bodies

Inland Fisheries Ireland: submission outlined requirements to complete statutory obligations in respect of review of capacity of foul and surface water infrastructure, surface water management measures, compliance with policies and recommendations made under the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS), petrol/oil interception, and silt fencing of discharge streams during construction.

Irish Water: submission outlined the requirement to complete statutory requirements and specified conditions in respect of the installation of water and waste-water infrastructure on the site.

Response:

The submission received from Inland Fisheries Ireland is noted and it is confirmed that all works for the proposed development will be in line with a project specific Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that will identify potential impacts and mitigate measures and provide a mechanism for ensuring compliance with environmental legislation and statutory consents. The CEMP will also detail and ensure best construction practices including measures to prevent and control the introduction of pollutants and deleterious matter to surface water and measures to minimise the generation of sediment and silt.

The submission from Irish Water is noted and it is confirmed that the conditions as set out therein will be met as part of the wider infrastructure works being carried out in the Belgard Square North area.

Submission Category 7–Matters Outside the Scope of the Public Consultation

Tallaght's growing population referenced in requesting provision of an additional Garda station in the Tallaght area, and proposed that the Council consider lands earmarked for a school within the Belgard Square North Master Plan for greenspace and recreational or business use rather than housing should a school not be supported by the Department of Education and Skills.

Response:

The comments made in these submissions are noted but, being beyond the scope of the proposed development, are not addressed further in this report.

9. Recommendation

Following detailed contemplation of the submissions as outlined above it is considered that the issues raised in those submissions are appropriately responded to and can be satisfactorily addressed where appropriate as outlined in the foregoing report. In particular, the requirements of Inland Fisheries Ireland and Irish Water as outlined in their submissions, can be incorporated into the proposed development as advertised.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development, as advertised, is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the County Development Plan 2016-2022 and the Tallaght Local Area Plan with no amendments required and therefore it is recommended that the Council adopt the following Motion:

“As the proposed development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the Council approves the development of affordable rental apartment development comprising 133 homes, a community facility and all associated works on Council owned lands west of the new link road connecting Fourth Avenue and Belgard Square North, Tallaght, Dublin 24.”

Daniel McLoughlin

5th October 2020

Chief Executive

Date