

**Report on informal public consultation with residents directly adjacent to proposed Age Friendly Scheme at Sarsfield Park, Lucan, Co. Dublin.**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023**



## **Introduction:**

A presentation was made to the Lucan/Palmerstown/ Fonthill Area Committee Meeting (ACM) on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2023, to outline proposals for a scheme of Age Friendly apartments on a site at Sarsfield Park, Lucan. The elected members were advised that the Council were planning to progress the scheme by availing of Section 179A of the Planning and Development and Foreshore Act 2022, which temporarily dis-applies the section 179 Part 8 planning approval process for local authority housing developments in strictly defined circumstances.

Several issues were raised by the Councillors at this meeting, and while many of these issues were responded to at this time, a further commitment was given to engage with the residents directly affected by the proposed scheme.

Following the completion of this process, several revisions have been made to the proposal to address the concerns raised, and these revisions are outlined at the end of this report and in the attached drawings.

## **Informal Public Consultation**

Following the presentation of the draft proposals to the ACM on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023, a commitment was made to meeting directly with the residents adjoining the proposed development. Individual meetings were held on-site between SDCC representatives and six of the residents in all of the properties adjoining the proposed development except for one of the properties as the resident indicated that in correspondence that they had already made all relevant observations through their Elected Representative and did not require an in-person meeting.

During the meetings with residents several issues were raised, both about the specific impact that the proposal would have on their individual property, and about general issues relating to the scheme and its placement into the existing estate. In addition, members representatives and customer care enquiries were also received in relation to the proposed scheme. A summary of the issues raised is provided below in the table below which outlines the mains concerns expressed by the residents.

**Summary of Issues raised via in person meetings, members representations and customer care enquires:**

<b>Category of Submissions</b>	<b>Number of Times Raised</b>
1. Site suitability, construction method and disruption	10
2. Site access	10
3. Privacy, overlooking and overshadowing	6
4. Existing pedestrian routes during construction	12
5. Lack of car parking provision and existing traffic	14
6. Potential further development in the area	5
7. Scheme design	2
8. Loss of play area	14
9. Subsidence & capacity of existing foul and water infrastructure	6
10. Anti-social behaviour	3
11. Height, density, orientation, changing landscape	9
12. Future management and operation of the proposed development	
<b>Issues raised outside scope of this proposed development</b>	
a. Concerns around general maintenance of public areas	2
b. Concerns around existing age friendly development	4
c. Value of existing properties	3
d. Loss of trees- Greenway scheme	1
e. Public consultation/meeting	6

**1. Site suitability, construction method and disruption**

- A general concern of the suitability of the development for the site and the proposed density.
- Pedestrian and vehicular traffic management during the construction of the proposed homes on the site
- Damage to surrounding properties during the construction.

**SDCC Response:** As approved by members, the subject site is zoned residential in the current County Development Plan 2022-2028. An objective of the current county development plan to build homes on Council owned lands. The appointed contractor will be required to carry out a condition survey of all properties directly adjacent to the site prior to commencement and a copy of this survey will be made available to the affected residents. The contractor will be required to prepare a traffic management plan and methodology for constructing the project, to be approved prior to the commencement of works on site. The proposed density has been amended following consultation and the revised proposals and amendments are included later in this report.

## 2. Site Access/operation of proposed development

- Requirement for access for emergency vehicles.
- Query regarding the situation for grocery and other day to day deliveries.

**SDCC Response:** Access for emergency vehicles and delivery vehicles is available from the existing road at Sarsfield Park and is similar to many other housing estates and apartment buildings in the Dublin Area.

## 3. Privacy, overshadowing and overlooking.

- Concern regarding the privacy of the existing dwellings, and potential overlooking of back gardens.
- Proximity and scale of gable wall to the west end of the site at the adjacent property.
- Overshadowing of solar panels on surrounding homes.
- House currently under construction.
- End of terrace.
- The proximity to the adjacent homes to the east of the scheme and the potential to allow a side access to the rear of the property for maintenance.

**SDCC Response:** The scheme has been modified to address insofar as practicable the issues raised regarding overlooking, privacy and proximity to adjacent dwellings. More detail is provided later in this report and in the accompanying drawings. Due to the comparable scale of the proposed scheme, there is no expected impact on adjacent solar panels. As the scheme is located to the North-East & North-West of the majority of homes, there is very little impact on daylighting throughout most of the day. Additionally, the modifications made to the scheme address insofar as practicable the issues raised regarding the issue of access and maintenance to adjacent dwellings. More detail is provided later in this report and the accompanying drawings.

## 4. Existing pedestrian routes during construction

- Pedestrian routes and the potential temporary closure of the existing laneway during construction and inconvenience to the residents of the estate.

**SDCC Response:** To build the scheme safely, it is very likely that a temporary closure of the existing laneway will be required for at least some time during the build period. It is noted that an alternate route is available resulting in an additional three-minute walk along existing footpaths. Please see the accompanying aerial views notated to show the existing and alternate routes. This will also form part of the traffic management plan to be prepared by the appointed contractor prior to commencement of the work.

## 5. Lack of Car parking Provision and Existing Traffic

- General concerns expressed about the availability of visitor parking in the estate and the potential impact of the proposed development on same.

- Concerns over current traffic at school times

**SDCC Response:** The proposed units are for Age Friendly housing, and in this instance no parking provision is being provided in this scheme proposal. Potential residents will be made aware that parking will not be available in this location prior to them being allocated a home in this scheme. It is noted that there is some visitor parking available to the north of the adjacent green but as residents have noted this is limited. The location of the development close to the centre of Lucan village with services, amenities, and facilities as well as access to bus stops aligns with a core strategy of the County Development plan to promote active travel and public transport.

## 6. Potential further development in the area

- Concern regarding further potential development on green spaces within the existing estate.

**SDCC Response:** The subject site is zoned for residential provision in the current County Development plan. There are no current proposals to re-zone any of the surrounding lands for residential use. As part of any re-zoning of lands during the mid-term review of the current County Development plan a public consultation period will take place and any amendments to the plan will be agreed or rejected by elected members.

## 7. Scheme Design

- Concerns expressed over the visual appearance and impact of the proposal and a desire to ensure that it is not visually detrimental to the existing estate.
- Concerns expressed regarding the lack of lift provisions in the proposed development.
- Two storey housing unsuitable for age-friendly development

**SDCC Response:** The scheme has been designed to ensure that the built form is not at odds with the existing context in terms of scale, and the elevations and materials employed will be so designed to be robust, high quality and contemporary while integrating with the existing estate. Additionally, Age Friendly accommodation at first floor without lift access is a common model employed by the Council and other local authorities. The first-floor units are accessed via a staircase with potential to install a stairlift if required in the future. Potential tenants will be made aware of the stairs prior to being allocated a first-floor unit and any proposed tenants with mobility issues will not be allocated a unit on the first floor.

## 8. Loss of Play area

- Concerns raised in relation to the loss of a play area.

**SDCC Response:** The site is zoned for residential development in the County Development plan and is it not zoned open space. There are public open spaces/play areas located within the Sarsfield Estate with the most notable areas of public open

space within the Sarsfield Park Estate and environs being a public green directly adjacent to the site: Ca 2000 SqM, a Courtyard Green at the end of the laneway: Ca 1250 SqM, Sarsfield Park Play Area is noted within Sarsfield Park (120m distance from site) and Sarsfield Park: Grass area (Excluding trees):Ca 1.8 Ha.

#### **9. Subsidence & capacity of existing foul and water infrastructure**

- The subsidence of the previous dwelling (No 62) was highlighted, and discussion took place about what measures we may have to take regarding site investigations and foundation design to prevent a recurrence.
- Concern regarding the existing foul and surface water drainage systems on the site and the impact of the proposed homes.

**SDCC Response:** Site surveys and investigations are being undertaken to finalise the site layouts and determine the most suitable foundation type and construction methods. In addition, a full investigation will be carried out to determine the condition and capacity of the existing services and utilities serving this site.

#### **10. Concerns regarding Anti-Social Behaviour**

- Concerns about anti-social behaviour in the proposed development.
- Common staircase access and potential for anti-social behaviour
- Anti-social behaviour in laneway

**SDCC Response:** This concern is noted and will be monitored by the Council. Age Friendly developments do not typically attract this type of behaviour, however any occurrences of anti-social behaviour should in the first instance be reported to An Gardaí Síochána. Both first-floor homes will be accessed from a single staircase with a main door to the lane. This access will be controlled and limited to the upper floor residents only.

#### **11. Height, density, orientation, changing landscape**

- General concern of the suitability of the development for the site and the proposed density.

**SDCC Response:** The proposed density has been amended following consultation, and the revised proposals and amendments to the scheme are included later in this report. As the proposed development is in an urban area on Council owned lands the existing landscape will change however, we feel the scheme designed will enhance and complement the existing residential homes and will provide much needed housing for persons over 55 years.

#### **12. Future management and operation of the proposed development**

- Location of refuse storage and management on collection days

**SDCC Response:** Each home will have their own external refuse storage area for standard wheelie bins. The detail of these stores will be finalised through the design process.

**13. Issues raised outside the scope of the proposed development.**

- a. Concern regarding the general maintenance of the public areas in the estate.
- b. Concerns regarding the existing Age-Friendly scheme at Sarsfield Close to be reviewed.
- c. Value of existing properties.
- d. Loss of trees due to new cycle platform
- e. Lack of public consultation

**SDCC Response:** The section 179(a) derogation removes the statutory public consultation period for Part 8 developments. However, the Council has committed to engage and share plans with locally elected members in advance of any scheme being advertised availing of the derogation. The members were encouraged to share details of these proposals with the local community. Additionally at the request of members meetings were held on site with residents directly affected by the proposed development. Several customer care enquiries and members representations were received on behalf of the local community with the scheme being revised to address where practicable issues raised.

In relation to the loss of trees due to the new cycle platform the Part 8 report for this scheme states “An independent Ecological Impact Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment (AA) were completed by JBA Consulting, and an independent Arboricultural Assessment Report and Tree Protection Plan were completed by TreeSpace. The assessments have concluded that no significant environmental impact will arise as a result of the proposed scheme “

Any specific issues in relation to the general maintenance of the public areas or existing age-friendly scheme at Sarsfield Close should be brought to our attention.

The Council cannot comment on property valuations.

**Proposed amendments to the scheme to take account of concerns expressed:**

Note: Please review these amendments in conjunction with the revised proposal drawings attached to this report. It should also be noted that these drawings are not yet fully complete but are included to adequately illustrate the proposed amendments at this time.

14. The scheme drawings have been updated to better reflect the current situation on site and have been informed by the recently completed site survey. The home currently under construction is also shown for information.
15. The total unit numbers have been amended as follows:

<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Original Proposal</b>	<b>Amended Proposal</b>
One Bedroom apartment	4	5
Two Bedroom Apartment	2	0
<b>Total No. of Units</b>	6	5

The overall unit numbers have been reduced from 6 to 5 apartments, with all units now proposed as one-bedroom apartments. This represents a reduction of occupancy to maximum 10 persons in total.

16. The unit directly adjacent to the western boundary has been lowered to a single story in height and will be constructed with a hipped roof to reduce the impact of the gable to the new home currently under construction. The proposed home in this location has also been allowed a side passage to further set it back from the proposed boundary to further reduce the impact.

The reduction in height at this location also serves to minimise the potential overlooking of No's 62 & 63. Furthermore, we are proposing to include some screening to the balconies at first floor level directly adjacent to No 63, to further mitigate against any potential overlooking.

17. The apartment plans have been amended to relocate all Balconies, living rooms and kitchen areas to the North side (adjacent to the existing laneway) of the development at first floor level, in order to minimise the potential overlooking of adjacent properties. All rooms to the south of the development at first floor level are bedrooms only, with a reasonable distance between these windows and the adjoining properties to the South.
18. A side passage has been included to the east side of the scheme to allow rear access for the adjoining residents at No 61, and to reduce the impact of the proposal in this location.



19. The access to the first-floor apartments is now by way of a single shared staircase, with access control to be provided at the ground floor level for the residents of these apartments only.

**List of Attachments:**

20. Original scheme drawings as presented to the ACM on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023.
21. Revised scheme proposals addressing the concerns raised above (3 in total).
22. Aerial views of the existing and proposed pedestrian route in the event of a temporary lane closure.