

Tom Murphy
Apartment Number Four
Charleston Heights
Ranelagh
Dublin 6

**The Planning Department
South Dublin County Council
Tallaght
Dublin**

**Planning Application reference number SD21A/0101
Location Nutgrove Avenue, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14
Application by Sirio Homes**



A Chara

I refer to the above-mentioned planning application which relates to a proposed residential development of twenty eight Apartment Homes located at the former filling station site, Nutgrove Avenue, Rathfarnham. I have the benefit of many friendships in the Nutgrove and Rathfarnham area, who are too concerned to commit their opinions to paper, I write on their behalf and also to share my own views and to bring a balanced view in front of you and your colleagues, ahead of making your decision.

We are in the mist of a unprecedented housing crisis, the challenges of which are well document and reported upon, the societal impact of which is immeasurable. Developments such as this are a very large part of the solution; as Planners the weight of obligation to provide leadership at this time is significant; for many of us with young families, our greatest concern to ensure that there is ample supply of new homes available in the marketplace to meet the future needs of the next generation. This development is proposed by an experienced Irish based company, and is designed to meet the build to sell criteria, these new homes will offer an opportunity to twenty eight families to establish themselves in safe and comfortable surroundings, this grounding will enable them to make a positive contribution to society, for decades and beyond.

There are many families in the immediate area, whose children have matured and have gone on to establish their own family units outside the original family home; this has left their parents living in homes that are too large for their current and future requirements; the prospect of them been afforded the opportunity to down-size in their area is for many of them a future living option full of security and will offer companionship within a secure apartment development. This will free up their larger family home to allow next generation an opportunity to enjoy it. The benefits to society and future generations will be measured in a positive way for a very long time to come.

In summary

- The Site represents all that is wrong with the planning process, but equally has the potential be demonstrate all that can be right with the planning process into the future;
- Observations made in previous applications on the Site have been adequately addressed by the Applicant and the Design Team showing a significant level of respect for those concerns previously raised;
- The Design is of great quality and will represent a significant planning gain for Nutgrove Avenue and the wider Rathfarnham area;
- The Landscaping proposal represents a significant commitment to quality and has the potential to act as a reference point for future developments of similar scale. Thoughtful consideration has been given to the quality and location of the play and rest areas, which will deliver practical and useable areas of open space;
- The available data suggests that the choice of homes within Rathfarnham is less than 2%, accordingly twenty eight new Apartment homes on this vacant and derelict site has to be a very welcomed prospect;
- Overall the Applicant and Design Team are proposing a development that is respectful of the existing character on the avenue and represents a significant planning gain for entire neighbourhood.

I have set out my observations, for your careful consideration across the following headings :

1. Background
2. Site
3. Design
4. Housing need

1. BACKGROUND

The old filling station, having traded for decades was decommissioned back in 2008. Today the site represents everything that is wrong with the planning process. Previous applications have been objected to by residents in the Stonepark Orchard and Abbey and while it is their right and entitlement to lodge an observation, it would appear that most of the observations on the previous applications are, in the main carbon copies of each other, which strongly suggest that they are orchestrated by an single individual or maybe a small cohort of people, who have brought considerable influence to bear on members of their immediate community. I too could have printed multiple copies of this submission and encouraged neighbours, family and friends to pen their signature to them, however I suspect that you and your colleagues will see beyond such a ruse and consider such duplications as stemming from a single point of origin.

The main issues raised within the observations lodged under previous planning applications where;

- a. Access from the Site onto Stonepark Orchard
- b. Height

Access from the Site onto Stonepark Orchard

I can understand their views, and while I think an equally strong argument could be deployed to advocate the opening up of an access route between Stonepark Orchard and Nutgrove Avenue which would allow those living within the greater Stonepark Estate enjoy easier access to the many Bus routes that are available on Nutgrove Avenue.

I note that the current application does not include such an access point. This should be acknowledged by the previous objectors. the Applicant and the Design Team should be commended for making this concession to appease the concerns previously raised.


Height

There has been much debate around the subject of height and in particular what height is appropriate in any given location. The national Guidelines which the Council must abide by specify that applications made on urban in-fill sites, such as this, should have a default objective of four stories.

The proposed design of three full stores (*each with an average of 8 residential units*) with a set-back fourth story of 3 residential units, is an attempt by the Applicant and the Design Team to abide

by the Government Guidelines, while at the same time showing respect for the views expressed by the objectors within Stonepark Orchard and Abbey.

This application shows that careful attention has been paid to avoid any overlooking, I suspect the proposed measures will add a significant cost to the development and demonstrates a willingness by the Applicant to appease those that have raised voiced concerns previously. I hope, that such measures will be welcomed by the previous objectors.

	<p>Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland</p>	<h1>Urban Development and Building Heights</h1>
<p>Guidelines for Planning Authorities</p>		<p>December 2018</p>
<p><i>1.9 Reflecting the National Planning Framework strategic outcomes in relation to compact urban growth, the Government considers that there is significant scope to accommodate anticipated population growth and development needs, whether for housing, employment or other purposes, by building up and consolidating the development of our existing urban areas. For example, if much of the future development in and around existing urban areas, where two- storey development is currently the norm, was of four-storey form as the default objective, it would be possible to provide substantially more population growth within existing built-up areas where there is more infrastructure already in place, rather than in greenfield locations which would need services. Therefore, these guidelines require that the scope to consider general building heights of at least three to four storeys, coupled with appropriate density, in locations outside what would be defined as city and town centre areas, and which would include suburban areas, must be supported in principle at development plan and development management levels.</i></p>		

In my opening paragraph, I mention that the site represents everything that is wrong with the planning process and while this is the case, I am certain that the site can also demonstrate all that potentially can be right with the planning process; to this end I have listed below some of the important and positive aspects that the planning application offers. I hope and pray that you and your colleagues have the courage and conviction to see beyond any potential malicious objections and provide the decision that will allow this application to proceed and be enjoyed by generations to come.

2. SITE

The site has remained idle since 2008 and has become an overgrown ghastly eyesore.



The redevelopment of the subject site will provide a rejuvenated appearance to this piece of land which extends 90m (or nearly 300ft) along Nutgrove Avenue. The proposal presents an opportunity to that would contribute positively to the local streetscape.

The development offers a sympathetic appearance from various viewpoints along Nutgrove Avenue.



Cognisant of strategic planning policies that promote compact growth and regeneration of cities, this development highlights the important role in facilitating higher density redevelopment and regeneration opportunities that align with the national and regional planning framework to achieve sustainable patterns of development and boost housing supply.

In previous applications, your offices have been asked by the occupants of Stonepark Orchard and Abbey to consider the potential impact on them, equal consideration should be afforded to those people living on, and travelling through Nutgrove Avenue, who have been asked to endure the slight of this derelict overgrown site.

The subject site is suitably placed directly adjacent to an existing bus stop which offers excellent connectivity to City Centre, along with all of the key employment centres across Dublin.

The subject site is also located within walking distance to a number of excellent Retail locations and Hospitality business, such as:

- Local business (*Hardware, Food Takeaways, Beauticians, etc*) all located on Nutgrove avenue – with a 2 minute walk
- Local hostilities such as the Yellow House, Kavanaghs and the Bottle Tower (*to name a few*) – all within an easy 10 minute walk
- Nutgrove Shopping Centre – with in a 5 minute walk
- Nutgrove Retail Park – within a 5 minute walk

The Site also benefits from its proximity to numerous local amenities such as:

- Loreto Park
- Rathfarnham Castle Park
- St. Endas Park
- Marley Park
- Castle Golf Club

There are also a number of well established local sports clubs in the immediate area, such as:

- The 13th Rathfarnham Scouts
- Leicester Celtic FC
- St. Enda's GAA Club
- Eanna Basketball Club
- Loretto Hockey Club
- Nutgrove Boxing Club
- Rathfarnham Athletics Club

There is a great selection of excellent Schools in the area, which include

- Rathfarnham Educate Together National School
- St. Marys Boys National School
- Loretto High School

There are sufficient places of worship in the locality to cater for people of all faiths and beliefs, to name a few;

- Church of the Good Shepard on Nutgrove Avenue
- Church of the Annunciation in Rathfarnham
- The Church of the Devine Word in Rathfarnham

In addition to existing public transport, a mere 16 car parking spaces (*including 2 no. electric vehicles spaces and 1 no. accessible space*) are proposed to within this application and as a result minimal impacts in terms of traffic generation and traffic movements will occur.

A total of 62 bicycle parking spaces are included in the application, together with the existing cycle lane and pedestrian path that traverses the front of the Site along Nutgrove Avenue will entice the use of more sustainable forms of transport, reducing the reliance on private car ownership and provide for a development which promotes a reduced carbon footprint and healthy lifestyle.

3. DESIGN

Good design is often a matter of opinion, but even the most objective mind would be challenged to be critical of what is purposed in this application.

Each of the apartments are very spacious and well designed in a way that will allow the occupants to enjoy a comfortable standard of living; all exceed the minimum area guidelines. Nearly 90% of the Apartments will be dual aspect, well in excess of the 50% mandated by the regulations. Excellently planned orientation means they will benefit from good quality natural light and ventilation.

From the application I note that its intended that a professional management company will oversee the management and maintenance of the development. The standard of quality and security will be maintained long after the building has been completed

The development will have three sperate front door entrances, all facing onto Nutgrove Avenue along with access from the courtyard located to the rear. These will encourage a sense of involvement and inclusion with Nutgrove Avenue, enriching the avenue and the wider community. Each entrance is proposed to be of a different colour, which will identity the different building cores from both approaches along the avenue

The building design offers visual interest, which will greatly enhance Nutgrove Avenue.



The light coloured brickwork to the front, onto Nutgrove Avenue will compliment the existing character of the locality. There is a good amount glazing included which allows the building to integrate well onto the avenue.

It's delightful to see that the Applicant and the Design Team have decided to exceed the minimum guidelines for Apartment sizes (*which a number of other developments seem to adopt as a rule*), by over 23%.

Apartment Type	Number	Average Size (sq.m)	Minimum Guidelines (sq.m)	% over the minimum guidelines
1 - Bed	8	51	45	13%
2 - Bed (3P)	4	87	63	38%
2 - Bed (4P)	13	87	73	19%
3 - Bed	3	110	90	22%
Average over the minimum				23%

The proposed mix of apartments will entice a variety of Individuals and Families to settle in this development, helping to form an environment where all of the occupants will benefit from a genuine sense of community.

Attention to detail is evident from plans of all Apartment Types;

- There are eight 1- bedroom apartments included, each of which are generous in size; the design is practical and will allow for a comfortable lifestyle
- The application includes a total of seventeen 2-bedroom apartments. These are different but in a way similar and will allow a family to live comfortably; in particular the inclusion of storage areas demonstrates an appreciation of what is needed in a happy and active home
- There are three large 3-bedroom family apartment homes, located on the fourth floor, which are well setback from the buildings edge. The design offers privacy to the occupants while at the same time the very smart use of opaque screens mean that they will not over-look the existing homes located in Stonepark Orchard.

Throughout, the balconies are functional with ample space for a table and chairs as well as some outdoor plants. These are well designed spaces that will encourage and facilitate practical use on a daily basis.

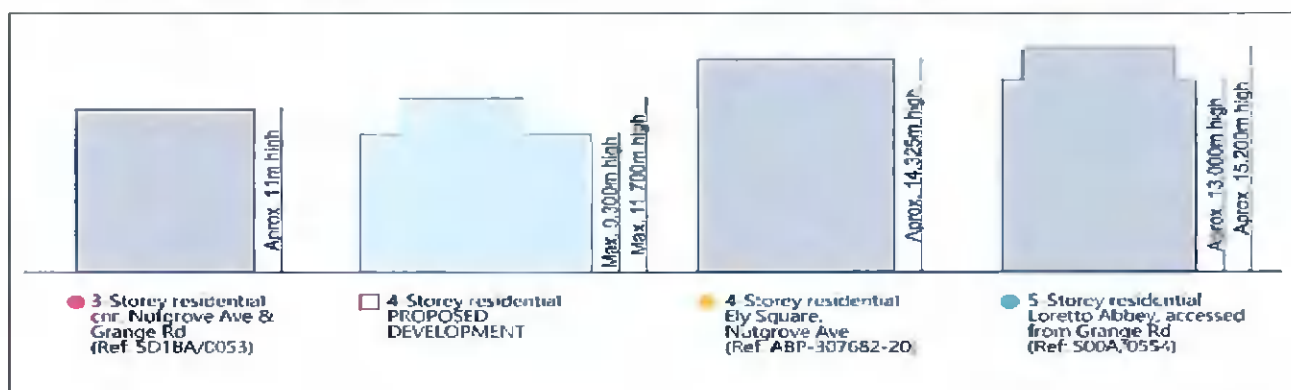
It is encouraging that the Applicant has offered 3 nice apartments (*1x 1-Bed and 2x 2-Bed*), to meet the Part V requirements; rather than try and avoid their social housing obligations by offering apartment units elsewhere (*as unfortunately has been permitted within other developments*). This shows a genuine intent to integrate people into the community; this will have significant social benefits for generations to come.



An important aspect of this development is height, and while other Applicants may have sought to push through a 5 or 6 storey or even taller building, the Applicant and Design Team should be commended for the sensitive approach they have taken and respect they have shown to the existing community. Government guidelines mandate that vacant Urban sites (*similar to the subject site of this application*) should have a default objective of four stories, this application seeks to meet this requirement, while recognising the potential concerns of the local community.

Recent planning permissions granted in the locality are of similar or greater scale and density. It is interesting and worthwhile to note that the Applicant and Design Team have identified a few of the local buildings that clearly show that the height proposed in this application is well within an acceptable level of tolerance:

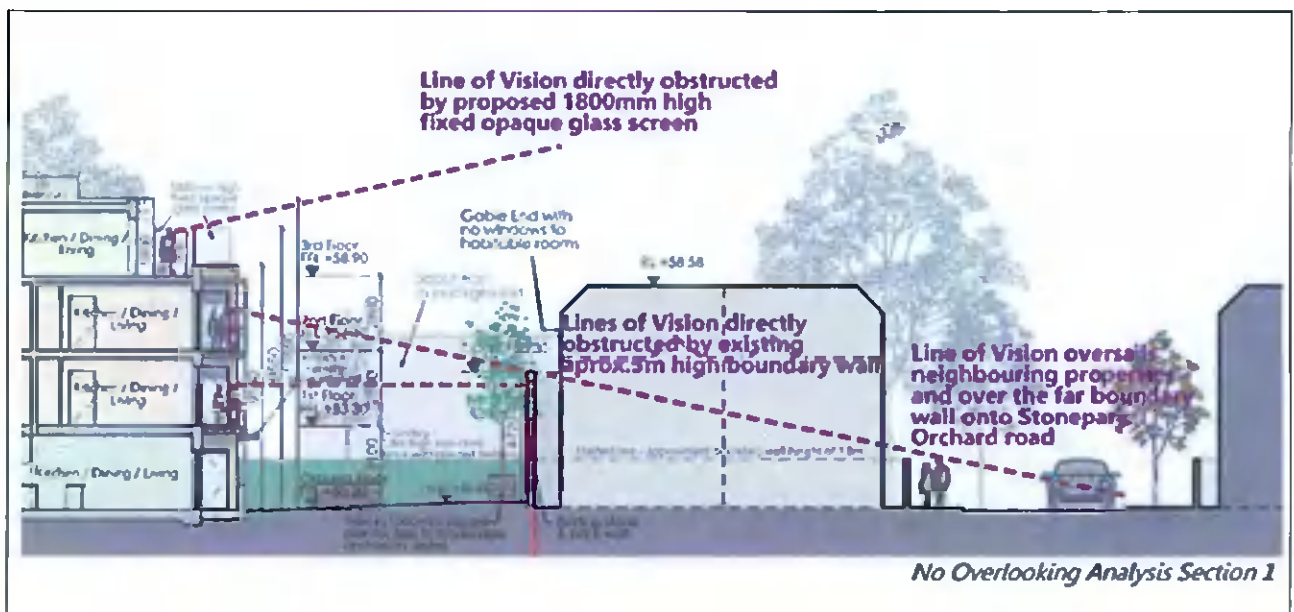
- There is a 3 storey building on the corner of Nutgrove Avenue & Grange Road which has a height of 11meters
- A recent (& very welcomed) approval was given around the corner from the subject site, in Ely Square for a 4-Storey residential building, which will extend to an overall height of 14.325 meters (this will stand 2.625meters <or 22%> taller that the building proposed in this application)
- An existing 5 Storey residential building in Loretto Abbey stands at 15.2 meters (this stands 3.5 meters <or 30%> taller that the building proposed in this application)



The subject site has an existing stone and brick boundary wall, which is over 5m high. This prevents all views from ground to second floor levels, while on the top floor level the fixed 1.8m high opaque glass screen obstructs any view outward from the terraces.



It is abundantly obvious, that the Applicant and the Design Team have given careful consideration to ensure so that the design will avoid overlooking those few houses located in Stonepark Orchard, to the rear, which are located beyond the sites existing 5meter perimeter wall



The application demonstrates in a clear and simple manner that there is no overlooking into neighbouring gardens in Stonepark Orchard. Allowing those neighbouring properties to maintain the level of privacy that they are accustomed to.

The very smart use of opaque glass panels will guarantee that occupants cannot overlook any of the existing houses within Stonepark Orchard.

Coupled with the commitment for large tall mature trees, these measures go beyond what would be reasonably expected.

I would note that while those residents in Stonepark Orchard and Abbey have a valid right and entitlement to make observations, when living in urban settings one should have an appreciation that vacant sites need to be developed and that there are other people with equal rights and entitlements to be afforded an opportunity to live within the community.



It is an unfortunate consequence of living in an urban setting that some element of diagonal overlooking is unavoidable, however the proposed development is designed in a way that simply does not allow future occupants of this proposed development to overlook those few properties in Stonepark Orchard.

I genuinely hope that this significant compromise, on the part of the Applicant and the Design Team would be acknowledged by the occupants within Stonepark Orchard and that they would have the strength of character to respond in a positive way and welcome this application.

Landscaping

It would be a fair comment to state that any small amount of landscaping would be a significant and welcome improvement to what has unfortunately become an overgrown and ghastly eyesore on Nutgrove Avenue. What the Applicant and the Design Team have offered, is a transformation that most developments would be envious of, and included are:

- 433 square meters of communal amenity space
- 286 square meters of public open spaces
- 288 square meters of green roof
- 40 Tress (*plus numerous shrubs*)
- 62 Bicycle Parking Spaces

The application includes a landscape plan that is of a very high specification, and shows a commitment to quality from the Applicant that is sadly lacking in most other developments of similar size. There are nearly too many benefits included within the proposed landscape plan to list individually, and I would encourage you and your colleagues to set aside a sufficient amount of time to carefully understand and evaluate the scale of the offering.



The selection of tress and scrubs portrays an in depth knowledge of can work together, in an urban setting. The selection will exist in harmony and compliment the design creating useable open spaces and present a significant planning gain for the area.

The Applicants commitment to mature trees and carefully selected shrubs is refreshing and surely represents a significant investment that will benefit the occupants of this development, along with the residents of Nutgrove Avenue and Stonepark Orchard and Abbey for decades and beyond.



The generous and well-planned mix of mature trees and shrubs will avoid the creation of a concrete metropolis and help to enrich the lifestyles of the occupants.



Plant Mix 1 - Precedent Image



Verbena 'Bonariensis'



Hydrangea 'Annabelle'



Salvia Nemesosa 'Caradonna'



Buxus Sempervirens

Thoughtful consideration has been given, not just to the quality of the play and rest areas that are included within the application, but also to the location and in particular how each of the areas will interact with each-other. The recent covid restrictions will no doubt have longer term impacts on how we all work and play long into the future and the spaces proposed in this application are certain of being used.

This concept of "*being used*" is a simple one – but in many developments Open Play & Rest areas are included without proper consideration; the spaces included in this application are well capable of "been used" and enjoyed on a daily basis.



The quality of the landscaped open spaces and the inclusion of Seating Areas and activity units, will act as a relevant and useful reference point for future developments of similar scale.

4. HOUSING NEED

The proposed development which will facilitate twenty eight residential units in an accessible location is welcomed and will assist in alleviating the pressing need for increased housing supply and choice in the Rathfarnham area.

- At the time of writing there are only 93 homes for sale in the Rathfarnham Area
 - Rathfarnham 64
 - Churchtown 14
 - Knocklyon 10
 - Templeogue 6

**source www.daf.ie 84/05/2021*

- The measured population of Dublin 14 is 17,478

**source CSO data for the Rathfarnham electoral areas 2016*

- The average household size in Dublin is 2.75

**source www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp1hll/cp1hll/od*

**This data demonstrates that the choice of available homes
within the Rathfarnham area is less than 2%**

There are many people who have enjoyed living on Nutgrove Avenue and the wider Rathfarnham area, who now find themselves living in a home that exceeds their requirements (and which may actually be beyond their ability to maintain and manage), but because of the lack of choice in the area, they have no alternative. This application offers that choice and with it the potential to release larger homes in the locality for new families to enjoy.

CONCLUSION

I welcome the proposal and believe that the redevelopment of this vacant site will present a positive contribution to Nutgrove Avenue and the greater Rathfarnham area.

The general design will create an environment that promotes a sense of community and supports the continued success of this well established neighbourhood.

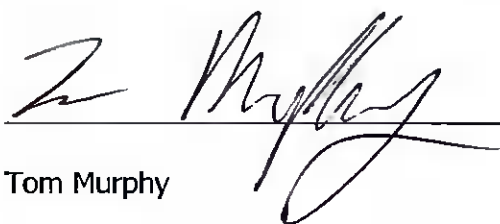
Based on the proposed mix and generous floor areas, this application would ensure that apartment living would be an attractive and desirable housing option to a range of household types and sizes.

It is my considered opinion that the application meets the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

Everyone has a valid right and entitlement to make observations on planning applications and rightly so, but when living in urban settings one should have an appreciation that vacant sites need to be developed and that there are many other people with equal rights and entitlements to be afforded an opportunity to live within the community.

On behalf of myself and my friends in the Nutgrove and Rathfarnham area respectfully ask that you and your colleagues give careful consideration to the points documented and grant permission for this application.

Beir beannacht agus go raibh maith agat



Tom Murphy

Land Use, Planning & Transportation Department
Telephone: 01 414 9000 Fax: 01 414 9104

An Rannóg Talamhúsáide, Pleanála agus Iompair
Email: planningsubmissions@sdblincoco.ie

Mr. Tom Murphy
Apartment 4
Charleston Heights
Ranelagh
Dublin 6

Date: 01-Jun-2021

Dear Mr. Murphy,

Register Ref: SD21A/0101
Development: Residential development comprising a total of 28 apartments, in a building up to 4-storeys in height; the cumulative gross floor area is proposed to be 2,640sq.m on the 0.3157 hectare site including the site of the former filling station (0.2821 ha - under applicant's ownership) and a portion of land (0.0326ha) located to the north of the filling station site, where the existing traffic lights and pedestrian crossing are located along Nutgrove Avenue; to accommodate access to the site, it is proposed to relocate the existing traffic lights and pedestrian crossing which traverses both South Dublin County Council and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council boundaries: a development with a maximum height of c.11.7m and a total gross floor area of 2,640 sq.m comprising of 28 residential units comprising 8 1-bedroom apartments, 17 2-bedroom apartments and 3 3-bedroom apartments; communal amenity space (433sq.m) and public open space (286sq.m) located to the rear and western side of the site; at grade car parking is proposed to the rear of the site which will provide 16 residents' car parking spaces (including 2 electric vehicles spaces and 1 accessible spaces) and 2 motorcycle parking spaces; 2 resident waste bin storage areas are proposed along the north-western and north-eastern corner of the site, fronting Nutgrove Avenue (total 25sq.m); a new vehicular entrance from Nutgrove Avenue; a total of 62 surface level bicycle parking spaces comprising 48 spaces located at the rear of the site and 14 spaces within the residents' communal area, located along the north-western portion of the site; relocation of the existing traffic lights and pedestrian crossing located on Nutgrove Avenue to the west of its existing position to accommodate access to the site; all ancillary site development works including installation of drainage and water supply infrastructure, lighting and provision of an ESB substation and switch room.

Location: Nutgrove Avenue, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14
Applicant: Sirio Investment Management Ltd t/a Sirio Homes
Application Type: Permission
Date Rec'd: 27-Apr-2021

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your submission in connection with the above planning application. The appropriate fee of €20.00 has been paid and your submission is in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as