



# Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ("LVIA")

**FOR**

Proposed mixed-use development

**AT**

Greenhills Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24

**PREPARED BY PHILIP J LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ON BEHALF OF  
O'Mahony Holdings SPRL**

**SUBMITTED**

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**REVISED**

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## TALLAGHT TOWN CENTRE

- Tallaght is considered by South Dublin County Council to be the County Town, with development objectives reflecting its status as the County's primary urban centre.
- As per the Tallaght Town Centre Local Area Plan 2020-2026 (Figure 1.2: Landuse Zoning, p. 7), the site and Greenhills Road is under land use zoning objective 'VC' to protect, improve and provide for the future development of Village Centres, with particular focus on conservation of the special character of traditional villages.
- A small area directly east of the site is under objective 'OS' to preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities. A public green lawn space exists there today, with Bancroft Park to the north and Main Rd. to the south.
- An urban space with public seating is located on Main Street west from the development.

## CONSERVATION

### Record of Protected Structures

- The South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022 notes no existing conservation efforts on the site.
- Directly north of the site is Record of Protected Structure 268: St. Basil's Training Centre, Greenhills Road, Tallaght (detached ten-bay single-storey building c.1940) (*National Inventory of Architectural Heritage*).
- Three additional protected structures, all related to St Mary's Priory, are located to the west of Old Greenhills Road and the proposed development. They are separated from the proposed development by Old Greenhills Road, footpaths, a stone wall, mature tree and shrub planting, and a parking area in use by St Mary's Priory.

### Record of Monuments and Places

- The proposed development sits within the boundaries of the recorded archaeological site of Tallaght Town, with map reference number DU-021-037. Related monuments numbered 01-14 include ecclesiastical remains, all west of Old Greenhills Road and with none mapped on the site.
- This is further referred to as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in the County Development Plan; however, the ACA does not include the site but instead borders it. This is reflected in Appendix C.

## Landscape effects

The proposed development's surrounding landscape is urban and similar to existing developments in the locality. While there are natural effects, and some mentioned below, the landscape here focuses on the townscape (in effect, a "townscape assessment").

## VILLAGE CENTRE

- The Village Centre, also referred to as the "Village", is a moderately sensitive receptor. As an area with historical significance and character that South Dublin County Council intends to maintain and promote, it can be considered somewhat susceptible to changes in views.

- By being much more integrated with urban development features, its use is limited from a scenic and recreation perspective. Known detractors include litter and water quality.
- The above water bodies are expected to experience no change, or negligible change, as a result of the proposed development. Any effects are minor, if not negligible, and are not significant in the context of this LVIA.

#### MATURE TREES AT ST MARY'S PRIORY

- Several of the LVIA's viewpoints (Appendix B and Photomontage document) featured the mature trees on the grounds of St Mary's Priory.
- As detailed in the Natura Impact Report, (p. 17) these trees provide biodiversity benefits.
- The property is separated from the site by Old Greenhills Rd in addition to a stone wall. The development's impact on the mature trees is expected to be negligible to minor.
- This summary is based on the distance between the development and trees on the grounds of St Mary's Priory. Further, St Mary's Priory already borders Main St to the south with no clear impediment on its mature trees.

#### SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Impact	Significance
Townscape effects				
Village Centre	Medium	Medium	Moderate/Minor	Significant
Physical landscape effects				
River Dodder	High	Negligible	Minor	Not significant
Whitestown Stream	Low	Negligible	Minor	Not significant
Poddle River	High	Negligible	Minor	Not significant
Mature trees	Medium	Negligible	Minor	Not significant
Natural heritage landscape effects				
ACA	High	Negligible	Minor	Not significant

#### MITIGANTS OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

The proposed development's closest intersection with Main Street and the Village Centre has been designed to feature a ground-level public retail unit (currently titled as 'Cafe'; see the Architect's Design Rationale document prepared by TOT Architects). The proposed development will also feature a sharply angled corner that will reduce the building's footprint and help maintain legibility within the Village Centre.

The Landscape Character Assessment does recommend the mitigation of tree planting in open space in housing areas to "improve their character" (p. 79), as well as the use of hedgerows (p. 82). The proposed development has dedicated green space, including ground level private and public open space. In addition, it was proposed that 730sqm will be dedicated to green open space, with 247sqm dedicated to public space. The total green space represents 31% of the site's 2,342sqm footprint (as indicated in the Architect's Design

## VIEWS FROM MAIN STREET/MAIN ROAD

### Existing

- Looking east down Main Street towards the site (View 5), the existing vacant site and its fencing is prominent in the distance.
- Further east on Main Street is a small urban space with public seating. Parking, traffic, street planting and St Mary's Priory largely obscure the existing vacant site and five-storey development (View 6).
- Main Street turns into Main Road after crossing Greenhills Road.
- Looking west down Main Road towards the site (View 2), views are currently dominated by the roadway, ground floor retail units (including Spar, Lloyd's Pharmacy and Bank of Ireland) and the four storey residential apartments above the retail units.
- Fencing around the existing vacant site is visible on the right, but not prominent. The mature trees of St Mary's Priory can be seen above it.
- The existing five storey development on the site is not visible from View 2.

### Proposed

- Views of the terraced mixed-use properties on Main Road, just past the site, will be partially obstructed by the proposed development's six-storey building. These create some sense of legibility as to the scale of the Village Centre and the road direction, but this effect will not be fully lost.
- Some elements of the six-storey building, and all other aspects of the development, will be obstructed by the existing mature trees and stone walls of St Mary's Priory. This will be particularly true from View 6 (the urban space with public seating).
- From Main Road (View 2), the six-storey building will be visible. Some planting of St Mary's Priory will be obscured.

### Effects

- The overall effect on Views 5 and 6 is 'Minor/negligible' and 'Minor', respectively.
- View 6 may be considered slightly more sensitive than View 5, given that the proposed development is more visible from the urban amenity and that viewers may be more focused on the townscape and landscape elements.
- Views from Main Street experience a moderate magnitude of change as the mixed-use residential style (vernacular architecture described above) is not as visible from these receptors as others, making the proposed development more of an outlier. A higher magnitude of change was not appropriate given the limited visibility of the proposed development.
- The magnitude of change for both views is moderate, with some alteration of the Village Centre expected but very much in line with elements of the immediate existing landscape.
- From View 2, a 'High' magnitude of change is expected via both obstruction (mainly of foliage on the property of St Mary's Priory) and inclusion of new visual elements. However, given the presence of similar architecture, the overall sensitivity is 'Low'. This considers the emphasis on maintaining an aesthetic, historic experience in the Village Centre.
- The overall effect is at most considered 'Minor' and is therefore not significant.

## Effects

- View 3 is a moderately sensitive receptor, as a public recreation area. The recreation area is exposed and may not be considered as scenic or developed as other nearby options.
- The magnitude of change will be moderate, with some aspects of the skyline changing as a result of the three- to six-storey buildings.
- The overall effect on View 3 is 'Minor', with the proposed development consistent with the receiving landscape and obstructing little to no visual amenities.
- View 4 is a moderately sensitive receptor, with the visual amenity of the Dublin Mountains available to residents and those traveling along Greenhills Road to the Village Centre.
- It has been recommended in the Landscape Character Assessment that views from South Dublin to the Dublin Mountains be maintained.
- The impact on these views is expected to be negligible to minor. This negligible to minor effect is as a result of obstruction of the existing built environment and inclusion of new visual elements (primarily that of the six-storey building).

## VIEWS FROM ST MARY'S PRIORY

### Existing

- From the front of St Mary's Priory, View 7a, the west facade of the existing development is visible but largely concealed by several mature trees. Both deciduous and evergreen species allow for all-season coverage.
- Moving towards the parking area, the existing development is still visible (View 7b). Other developments in the Village Centre are visible to the right.
- View 7c is from a walkway access point to the same parking area, north from View 7b. The mature trees provide more coverage for the development from this viewpoint. Other developments in the Village Centre are more visible to the right.
- View 7d enters the parking area via a footpath at the northwest corner. Views of the proposed development are largely screened by the mature tree growth and stone wall, with limited features discernable.
- Views of existing developments in the Village Centre are largely open via the end of the parking lot.

### Proposed

- The proposed three- and six-storey buildings are expected to be largely concealed, benefiting from the same mature tree coverage as the existing development.
- The highest visibility is towards the southeast corner of St Mary's Priory, given a gap due to the branching point of the existing trees. Views of the lower levels of the proposed development's three- and six-storey building may be possible. This is pending any development of the vacant site that sits in the line of sight between the six-storey building and View 7a, 7b, 7d and 7d.

## Effects

- All four receptors are of high sensitivity, given their location with a site of spiritual, cultural, social, archaeological and tourism significance.
- Viewers are most likely to focus on on-site elements when visiting St Mary's Priory vs. views from the site.

## Conclusion

The proposed development at Greenhills Rd, Tallaght, Dublin 24 is not expected to have a significant effect on any visual amenities but is expected to have an effect on the Village Centre (a landscape/townscape receptor). This is due to the inclusion of a new feature in a prominent location within the Village Centre, but the visual assessment notes that several receptors are not affected. Further, the change is consistent with and a potential improvement upon the Village Centre's current vernacular. No mitigation steps are recommended beyond the public green space described in documents prepared by TOT Architects. Lastly, no significant effect is expected on other landscape receptors, including waterways in the assessment area.

## Process

This LVIA was conducted via desktop analysis and site survey:

- A site visit was undertaken on 22 March, 2021 to assess the existing environment, establish existing visual resources and highlight sensitive receptors;
- Details on the proposed development, including plans, elevations and other documents prepared by TOT Architects, were evaluated in the context of the baseline established;
- Annotated viewpoints were prepared to accurately represent the proposed development within its landscape and highlight visual amenities (Appendix B);
- Landscape and visual effects were assessed;
- Appropriate mitigants or enhancement measures were considered and outlined.

## Extent of assessment area

This assessment focuses on landscape and visual receptors within a 1-km area from the southeast corner of the proposed development's site boundary.

While visual receptors that may be affected by the proposed development were considered as part of the assessment (in line with GLVIA, para. 6.16 – 6.24, 2013), viewpoints were not selected outside of this assessment area given that visibility is low in built areas and that the development will not impact those Views and Prospects outlined in the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022.

## Phase consideration

This assessment primarily reports upon the development's intended operational phase.

The construction phase has the potential for landscape and visual disturbance, primarily in the form of roadway access or increased traffic on Old Greenhills Road or Greenhills Road and general construction activities, including demolition of the existing three storey structure, scaffolding, craneage and other temporary appendages.

This has the potential to impact visual receptors in the Village, but is least likely to impact those receptors relating to St Mary's Priory due to the existing mature tree screening. No effect is expected on landscape receptors, although during the construction phase there is potential for noise and light disruption for any biodiversity existing in the mature trees at St Mary's Priory.

<b>Scarcity</b>	Does not contain rare features or characteristics	Contains distinct but not rare feature or characteristic	Contains at least one rare feature or characteristic
<b>Conservation</b>	No/limited cultural and/or nature conservation interests	Some cultural and/or nature conservation interests	Strong cultural and/or nature conservation interests
<b>Recreation</b>	No/limited recreational opportunity	Some recreational opportunity	Strong recreational opportunity
<b>Perception</b>	Prominent detractors already present	Some detractors	No noticeable detractors
<b>Culture</b>	No known cultural association	Moderately valued or limited cultural association	Highly valued or strong cultural association

<b>Susceptibility to change</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Pattern, complexity and physical susceptibility</b>	Simple, monotonous and/or degraded landscape with common or indistinct features	Some pattern and/or with a degree of complexity and features in good condition	Strongly patterned or distinctive, with intact and high value features
<b>Visual susceptibility</b>	Enclosed, with views limited or filtered and with an absence of landmarks and intervisibility with designated landscapes	Partially enclosed, with views partly contained or filtered, and with some features and potentially limited intervisibility	Open or exposed, with limited or no filtering of views and with extensive intervisibility and prominent landmarks
<b>Experiential susceptibility</b>	Prominent visual and/or aural intrusion, to potentially include numerous light sources, light pollution and/or a close relationship with large-scale infrastructure or development	Limited visual and/or aural intrusion, to potentially include some light sources and some built development	Limited or no noticeable visual or aural intrusion, with few light sources allowing for dark skies

### Sensitivity matrix

The overall sensitivity, based on the combination of ratings on both value and susceptibility, can then be determined on a scale of Low, Medium, High or Very High, where higher ratings would result in a higher level of sensitivity and the converse true for lower ratings.

	Susceptibility to change		
Value	Low	Medium	High
Low	Low	Low	Medium
Medium	Low	Medium	High
High	Medium	High	Very High

### MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE

This is a combination of the size and scale of the change, extent of area affected, and duration and reversibility of the effect. The magnitude of change for each receptor was assessed using the definitions below. Landscape features that are uncharacteristic with a landscape's overall character would be considered a negative change, while those that are characteristic would be a positive.



## VISUAL RECEPTOR SENSITIVITY

Sensitivity of visual receptors depends on how people use the assessment area and the extent to which their attention will be focused on views and visual amenity while in said area, according to the GLVIA. The following sensitivity ratings are applied in this LVIA.

Sensitivity	Description
Very high	Viewers that are primarily focused on views from this particular location, such as visitors to popular destinations identified for their outstanding views or residents in close or medium proximity whose primary view will be in the direction of the development.
High	Viewers in medium proximity to the viewpoint, at influential heritage, tourist, or recreational areas (where the view may not necessarily be the primary focus) or scenic routes.
Medium	Viewers who have some susceptibility to a change in view, including views from local recreational areas or moderately scenic routes.
Low	Viewers engaged in activities where the focus is not the landscape or view; for example, commuting, views from a workplace, or views from a sports facility where the sport does not relate to the landscape.

## MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE

The scale of change, extent of the area to be affected, and duration and reversibility of the effect all determine the magnitude of each viewpoint's visual change. The following magnitude of change ratings are applied in this LVIA.

Magnitude of change	Description
Very high	Total loss or major alteration to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline (existing) landscape or view, and/or the introduction of totally uncharacteristic elements with the receiving landscape.
High	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the existing landscape or view and/or the introduction of the elements that may be prominent but not uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape.
Medium	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the existing landscape or view and/or the introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape.
Low	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the existing landscape or view and/or the introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape - approximating the 'no change' situation.

## VISUAL EFFECTS SIGNIFICANCE MATRIX

The significance of landscape and visual effects was arrived at by combining the 'sensitivity' and 'magnitude of change' classifications, using the assessment matrix below.

Sensitivity	Magnitude of change			
	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Low	Negligible	Minor/negligible	Minor	Moderate/Minor
Medium	Minor/negligible	Minor	Moderate/Minor	Moderate
High	Minor	Moderate/Minor	Moderate	Major/Moderate
Very high	Moderate/Minor	Moderate	Major/Moderate	Major

## Appendix B: Annotated viewpoints

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The following annotated viewpoint photographs were selected as appropriate given the likely overall effects of the proposed development, in line with Section 3.5, 6.3 and 6.4 of the Landscape Institute's Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 06/19. Photowire outlines and massing is used to visualise the proposed development. The existing or base view without annotations is also included.

For Views 1, 2, 3 and 4, photomontage views were prepared by Redline Studios based on elements drafted by TOT Architects. These were determined to be appropriate given the proposed development's visual effect from these viewpoints. Please refer to the Photomontages document prepared by Redline Studios for visuals, while the viewpoints are detailed in writing in this document.

The annotated viewpoint photographs for Views 5, 6, and 7a-7d were prepared by superimposing a 3D model of the Village Centre, with elements drafted by TOT Architects and Philip J Landscape Architecture, and proposed development on photographs taken by Philip J Landscape Architecture. An example of this method is included below, with the annotated viewpoints following.





	View No.	5 - proposed	GPS	53.2878248, -6.3624294
	Viewpoint description	Corner of Main Street and Old Bawn Rd	Direction of view	Northeast



	View No.	6 - proposed	GPS	53.287793, -6.361753
	Viewpoint description	Urban public space on Main Street	Direction of view	Northeast



	View No.	7a - proposed	GPS	53.2883403, -6.3609328
	Viewpoint description	St Mary's Priory	Direction of view	East



	View No. 7b - proposed	GPS 53.2884367, -6.3600996	Direction of view East
	Viewpoint description St Mary's Priory west parking lot entrance		

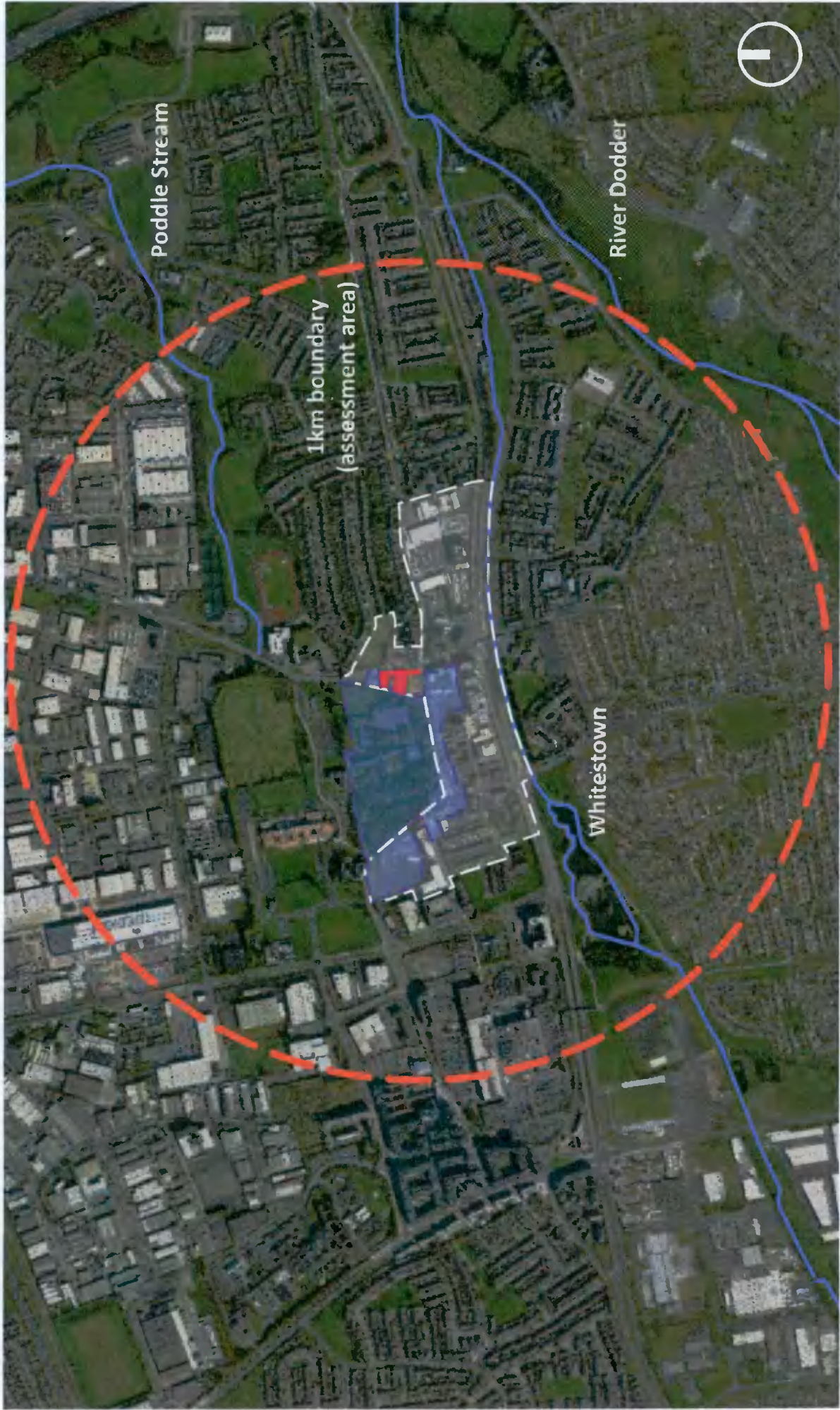



	View No.	7c - proposed	GPS	53.2887189, -6.3602180
	Viewpoint description	St Mary's Priory path to parking A (south)	Direction of view	East



	View No.	7d - proposed	GPS	53.2891825, -6.3598207
	Viewpoint description	St Mary's Priory path to parking B (north)	Direction of view	South





	Map	Key map of locality	Scale	NTS
	Source	Ordnance Survey Ireland ("OSI") Aerial Premium map		



Architectural conservation area boundary  
South Dublin City Council boundary for Tallaght Village  
Site of proposed development at Greenhills Rd, Tallaght, Dublin 24  
Waterways (individually labeled)