

A Proposed Strategic Housing Development with
Neighbourhood Centre,
Edmondstown, Whitechurch Road,
Rathfarnham, Dublin 16



Landscape + Visual Impact Assessment

10th March 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Áit Urbanism and Landscape to assess the landscape and visual impact of the proposed Strategic Housing Development (SHD) at Whitechurch Road in Edmondstown, Dublin 16.

The proposed development, which is the subject of this LVIA includes the derelict Kilmashogue House (southern lands) and Coill Avon house (northern lands) on lands that extend to 6.77ha, adjacent roads in the control of South Dublin County and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Councils and includes the following :

- The proposed development on a site that extends to 6.77 hectares includes the derelict Kilmashogue House (southern lands) and Coill Avon house (northern lands), adjacent roads in the control of South Dublin County and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Councils and consists of the following developments: -
- Demolition of Kilmashogue House and outbuildings and demolition of Coill Avon house and outbuildings;
- The refurbishment and re-use of 2 no. stone outbuildings for community use, to be incorporated into an area of public open space on the southern lands;
- The construction of a mixed-use development comprising neighbourhood centre and 178 no. residential units comprising 72 no. houses, 38 no. apartments and 68 no. duplex apartments;
- The 72 no. houses will comprise 2, 2.5 and 3-storey detached, semi-detached and terraced units to include:-
 - 6 no. 2-bed houses;
 - 45 no. 3-bed houses;
 - 21 no. 4-bed houses;
- The 38 no. apartments and 68 no. duplex apartments are located across 7 no. buildings ranging in height from 3 to 5-storey consisting of 1 no. Block A/B, 1 no. Block C, 1 no. Block E, 1 no. Block S and 3 no. Blocks T-type as follows: -
 - **Block A/B:** 5-storey over basement and podium accommodating 10 no. 1-bed apartments, 16 no. 2-bed duplex apartments and 1 no. 3-bed duplex apartment with associated balconies/terraces;
 - **Block C:** 5-storey over basement accommodating 4 no. 1-bed apartments and 8 no. 2-bed duplex apartments with associated balconies/terraces;

- **Block E:** 4-storey over basement accommodating 8 no. 1-bed apartments and 16 no. 2-bed duplex apartments with associated balconies/terraces;
 - **Block S:** 3-storey accommodating 2 no. 2-bed duplex apartments and 1 no. 3-bed apartment and 1 No. 3-bed duplex apartments with associated balconies/terraces;
 - **Block T:** 3no. 3-storey buildings accommodating 6 no. 1-bed apartments, 18 no. 2-bed duplex apartments, 9 no. 3-bed apartments and 6 no. 3-bed duplex apartments, all with associated balconies/terraces;
- Block A/B and Block C are arranged around a landscaped podium. The neighbourhood centre is located below this podium and accommodates a 2-level creche (313m²) at lower ground and ground floor level, and 3 no. retail/non-retail/cafe service units (470m²) at ground level;
 - The basement below Block A/B and Block C accommodates 50 no. car parking spaces, bicycle parking, bin stores, plant and staff service area (80m²);
 - The basement below Block E accommodates 35 no. car parking spaces, bicycle parking, bin store and plant;
 - A section of link street with footpath and cycle path (approx. 438 linear metres) extending from the junction of Whitechurch Road and College Road on an alignment parallel to the M50, to provide access to the southern development lands and incorporating a bus turning circle;
 - Upgrade works to College Road including a new two-way cycle track and relocated footpath from the Whitechurch Road junction to provide connectivity to the Slang River pedestrian/cycle Greenway;
 - A new signalised crossroads junction to connect the proposed link street with Whitechurch Road and College Road;
 - Upgrade to the existing vehicular access at the entrance to Coill Avon house on Whitechurch Road;
 - Foul sewer drainage works along Whitechurch Road from the Kilmashogue junction to the existing junction at Glinbury housing estate;
 - All landscaping, surface car parking, boundary treatments, infrastructure works, ESB substation, and associated site works and services.

The retention and enhancement of the existing hedgerows and riparian edge planting adjacent to Whitechurch Stream is an important feature of the proposed development as a means of fostering biodiversity and protecting existing ecological corridors.

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment report describes the existing receiving environment and contiguous landscape and the methodology utilised to assess the impacts. It evaluates the visual extent of the proposed development and the proposal's visual effects on key views throughout the study area. It describes the landscape character of the subject site and hinterland, together with the visibility of the site from significant viewpoints in the locality. The report summarises the impact of the proposed development on the visual and landscape amenity of the subject site and contiguous area.

The following visual receptors are addressed in this assessment:

- Local Amenity and Heritage Features
- Local community views to assess the landscape and visual impact of the proposals on those who live and work in proximity to the proposed development as well as those utilising local amenities
- Relevant local settlement nodes
- Major routes adjacent to the site

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Overview

Landscape and visual impact assessments are two separate but closely related topics. The assessment of visual impact focuses on the extent to which new developments can be seen. Visual analysis forms one part of a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), the process by which the potential significant effects of a proposed development on the visual resource of an area are methodically assessed. In turn, VIA forms just one part of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and the wider process of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Landscape assessment focuses on the character of the landscape, examining responses which are felt towards the combined effects of the new development.

2.2 Desktop Study

A site assessment was first undertaken in April 2020. Desktop studies were conducted to evaluate the existing site conditions such as topography, vegetation, settlement patterns, contiguous land use, drainage, landscape character as well as overall visibility of the site from surrounding areas. Information was also collated on protected views, scenic routes, special and protected landscapes etc.

The following documents and web resources were consulted for the desktop study:

- South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022 www.sdcc.ie
- Landscape Character Assessment of South Dublin County 2015
<https://www.southdublindevplan.ie/>
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Interactive Mapping and Aerial Photography - www.npws.ie
- Ordnance Survey Ireland – Interactive Mapping and Aerial Photography – www.osi.ie

This LVIA has been prepared utilising the following guidance documents:

- ‘Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Statements’ Environmental Protection Agency, 2002
- ‘Revised Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements. Draft’ 2015.
- ‘Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports. Draft August 2017’.
- ‘Advice notes on current practices (in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement)’, Environmental Protection Agency, 2003
- ‘Advice notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements. Draft’. Environmental Protection Agency, 2015.

- ‘Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines’, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) 2000
- ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’, The Institute of Environmental Assessment / Landscape Institute (2nd& 3rd Ed 2002).
- ‘A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment – Guidance on the Environmental Impact, Scottish Natural Heritage (SHN) - Assessment’ 2009. Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- DoEHLG, ‘The Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities’.

2.3 Glossary of Impacts

The glossary of impacts used in the assessment are as per EPA Guidelines:

2.3.1 Quality of Impacts

Positive Impact

A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity; or the improving reproductive capacity of an ecosystem or removing nuisances or improving amenities).

Neutral Impact

A change which does not affect the quality of the environment.

Negative Impact

A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem; or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).

2.3.2 Significance of Impacts

Imperceptible Impact

An impact capable of measurement but without noticeable consequences.

Slight Impact

An impact which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.

Moderate Impact

An impact that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging trends.

Significant Impact

An impact which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.

Profound Impact

An impact which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

2.3.3 Duration of Impacts

Short-term Impact

Impact lasting one to seven years.

Medium-term Impact

Impact lasting seven to fifteen years.

Long-term Impact

Impact lasting fifteen to sixty years.

Permanent Impact

Impact lasting over sixty years.

Temporary Impact

Impact lasting for one year or less.

2.3.4 Type of Impact

Cumulative Impact

The addition of many small impacts to create one larger, more significant, impact.

'Do Nothing Impact'

The environment as it would be in the future should no development of any kind be carried out.

Indeterminable Impact

When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.

Irreversible Impact

When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.

Residual Impact

The degree of environmental change that will occur *after* the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.

'Worst case' Impact

The impacts arising from a development in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.

Other terminology used within this chapter is set out below.

2.3.5 Definition of Visual Impacts

The following terminology, used in this visual assessment, is defined as follows:

Visual Intrusion: where a proposed development will feature in an existing view but without obstructing the view.

Visual Obstruction: where a proposed development will partly or completely obscure an existing view.

Sensitivity and Significance: The significance of impacts on the perceived environment will depend partly on the number of people affected, but also on value judgments about how much the changes will matter. In this respect it is important to identify actual visual and physical connections between the site, its adjacent occupiers/land owners and those who interact with it from further afield, in the context of the existing and the proposed situations.

While our visual sense is generally acknowledged to represent the dominant contribution to our perception of place and its context, other factors also contribute. Hearing/sound, smell and a variety of social/cultural factors relating to the land-use, function or business conducted on the land (or indeed, memory) can sometimes over-rule or outweigh the visual aspects and lead to individual perceptions which could be described as relatively subjective. The relevance of these non-visual aspects to our perception of our environment and the impact made by proposed changes is considered in other sections of this assessment document. The purpose of this section is to objectively examine and assess the nature and extent of the visual impact created as a result of the development proposal.

3.0 VERIFIED VIEW METHODOLOGY

3.1 Choice of views

The views were chosen to accurately represent the likely visual impact from all directions. Views from the Public Domain were given priority, particularly those from main roads and access routes. The views submitted are considered to be the most important and representative, having regard to the requirement to examine the greatest likely impacts. Additional views including winter views were added to the assessment at the request of the local authority.

3.2 Photography of the Site (Refer to Dune Visuals, Visual Impact Assessment Document for Verified Views)

Photography

Each of the chosen views was photographed using a high-resolution digital camera set horizontally, with a surveying level, to eliminate any possible distortion and to make an accurate match with the computer rendering. The camera positions were then surveyed to establish their ITM (Irish Transverse Mercator) co-ordinates. Control points on existing buildings were also surveyed to ensure an accurate match between the photograph and the computer rendering. The survey was carried out by CPO Surveying, a Northern Ireland based professional land surveying company.

3D Computer Modelling

A highly accurate 3D-computer model of the proposed development was created with realistic materials, finishes and colours, built using the architect's design drawings in CAD format to ensure accuracy. Control points and contextual elements were added where relevant.

3.2.1 Size of Print and Viewing Distance

When the angle of view (field of view) is known, then the correct size of print to view is a function of this angle and distance from the eye. When the photomontages are printed at approximately A3 size (in width), and if they are viewed at approximately 300mm, (normal reading distance) objects seen in the image will appear at approximately the same scale as if viewed in reality from the location from which the photograph was taken.

3.2.2 Rendered View

Rendered views of the proposed development were generated to match the site views. This is achieved by programming in all of the data recorded at the time the site photos were taken i.e. surveyed position in relation to the development, angle of view and direction of view. This ensures that the size, position and height of the proposed development in the photograph is correct to at least an accuracy of 0.33%, i.e. +/- 1mm on an A3 print. Careful consideration is given to the direction of sunlight, time of day, weather conditions and distance of the viewer, so that the photomontage will match reality in terms of lighting, sharpness, density of colour etc.

3.2.3 Photomontages

Each rendered view of the proposed development is superimposed onto its matching photograph. The mathematical accuracy is then checked visually by ensuring that existing prominent features which are also modelled, line up exactly in the photo. Careful consideration is given to establishing which existing (retained) landscape features are in the foreground and therefore mark the proposal and those which are in the background.

4.0 EXISTING SITE AND ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Site Description and Context

The site of the proposed strategic housing development is located in South County Dublin, approximately 1.3km south of Edmondstown village and 9km from Dublin city centre. The development site consists of two sections of land located immediately to the north of the M50 motorway. Whitechurch Road lies adjacent to the eastern site boundary, whilst existing residences are present to the north and open grassland to the west. On the eastern side of Whitechurch Road lies Marlay Park and Grange Golf Club. Further to the north-west are the grounds of Edmondstown Golf Club. Whitechurch Parish and Whitechurch National School are located north of the site, with access available from Whitechurch Road.

The proposed development is split across two separate character areas. The Edmondstown North parcel covers an area of c. 1.58ha whilst the Edmondstown South parcel occupies a larger area of c. 4ha. Both portions of land currently comprise large expanses of open agricultural grassland with mature hedgerows delineating field perimeters. A number of semi-mature and mature trees are located amongst hedgerows, with groups of trees and large overgrown shrubs also present throughout the site. Grassland in Edmondstown South is currently used for pastoral grazing. Two vacant residential dwellings in a state of disrepair and derelict sheds and out-buildings are scattered throughout the site, with the remnants of former old stone walls also evident. Unmaintained dirt tracks and access paths lead to the derelict dwellings and outhouses. Whitechurch Stream runs along the eastern perimeter of both the Edmondstown North and Edmondstown South character areas, running parallel to Whitechurch Road. The stream is of high ecological importance and habitat value and is surrounded by dense riparian edge planting.

4.2 Topography and Drainage

The topography of both the Edmondstown North and Edmondstown South character areas may be described as gently sloping. The highest point of approximately 124.00 OD is situated along the southern character area boundary adjoining the M50 motorway. The land slopes gently downwards from south to north at a gradient of approximately 1:21. The northernmost corner of Edmondstown South lies at a level of 115.79 whilst the water levels of Whitechurch Stream lie at approximately 111.00 OD within the Edmondstown South character area.

The Edmondstown North character area occupies a slightly less elevated position with the lowest point approximately 107.26 OD at the bank of Whitechurch Stream. The southern boundary of the Edmondstown North character area sits at a level of approximately 113.50 OD whilst the northernmost point lies at 110.00 OD.

4.3 Vegetation

The majority of Edmondstown South is occupied by open grassland which is currently used for agricultural grazing. Fields are enclosed by mature boundary hedgerows. The trees present on site are primarily located in the vicinity of the derelict house and outbuildings and consist of a range of species including Oak (*Quercus spp.*), Willow (*Salix spp.*) Cypress (*Cupressus spp.*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus.*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), Lawson Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), Leyland Cypress (*Cupressus leylandii*) and Elm (*Ulmus spp.*). Much of the tree planting is of a mature age however bands of younger tree planting can be found near to the eastern boundary adjacent to Whitechurch Stream and the southern boundary with the M50. There is also a tree belt of species including Birch (*Betula spp.*), Alder (*Alnus spp.*), Beech (*Fagus spp.*), Larch (*Larix spp.*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus.*) which extends from the entrance gates along the southern boundary.

The Edmondstown North character area is largely occupied by agricultural grassland with shelterbelt planting present in perimeter locations. These shelterbelt plantings along the southern and western boundaries are composed of coniferous species including Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Larch (*Larix decidua*) and Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*). A scattering of Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) trees is also evident across the site, featuring as specimen trees and amongst shelterbelt planting. The derelict house present on site features beech hedging at its entrance point and Leyland cypress (*Cuprocyparis leylandii*) planting to the east of the house. The area adjacent to Whitechurch Road and Whitechurch Stream comprises a mixture of self-seeded deciduous species and a section of coniferous shelterbelt planting. The northern and eastern boundaries of the Edmondstown North character area are formed by hedgerow planting of mainly bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and occasional hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

4.4 Contiguous Land Use

The land to the immediate north is occupied by private detached residences. A parcel of agricultural land under third party ownership is situated between the Edmondstown North and Edmondstown South character areas. Whitechurch Road delineates the eastern perimeter, beyond which lies the grounds of Grange Golf Club. The site is bound by the M50 motorway to the south with Ballinascorney Golf Club and agricultural grassland situated further to the south. To the immediate west, the land comprises agricultural grassland with field boundary hedgerow planting, extending to meet the boundary of Edmondstown Golf Club.

4.5 Local Settlements

The subject site is located in South Dublin City approximately 1.3km south of Edmondstown village which consists of a small number of fast-food services, local shop and local services. The neighbourhoods of Prospect Manor, Brookwood and Boden Park are situated to the north-west. Tallaght town lies approximately 6km to the west whilst Sandyford and Dundrum both lie approximately 4km east and north-east respectively. Other nearby residential areas include Marley Grange and Ballinteer to the north-east.

4.6 Visual Analysis

The open grassland nature of both character areas allow for relatively open views to the surrounding landscape. The most expansive views to contiguous lands can be captured looking west, with occasional scattered trees and low hedgerows visible in the skyline acting to marginally obscure views. Views to and from the M50 are mostly obstructed by the semi-mature and mature trees lining the motorway and the existing concrete boundary wall. However, partial views are captured of higher land within the Dublin Mountains to the south. Views to the eastern part of the Edmondstown South character area are captured from Whitechurch Road, near to the junction with College Road. Views to and from the Edmondstown North character area from Whitechurch Road are obstructed by the dense and mature riparian corridor vegetation. Mature hedgerows along the northern boundary act to restrict views to and from the site from the adjacent residential properties situated immediately to the north. Some visual intrusion exists within the landscape in the form of electricity pylons and overhead cables in neighbouring lands.

Overall, the visual landscape quality of the site may be described as good, attributed to the undeveloped nature of the lands and the maturity and presence of vegetation cover. The presence of Whitechurch Stream along the eastern perimeter and dense riparian edge planting is of high visual merit, creating a dense green canopy and a lush woodland setting. However, many of the trees are generally of a poor quality with structural issues and evidence of decay. In the Edmondstown North character area in particular, vegetation cover surrounding the former house and at the entrance point is overgrown and unmaintained and of a poor quality.

Visual dereliction of the built fabric present is evident – the existing houses and outbuildings are abandoned and in states of disrepair. Occasional piles of rubble are visible adjacent to outhouses and in locations around the perimeter. However, some elements of high architectural visual merit exist including the remnants of natural stone boundary walls and outhouses, adding to the visual quality of the landscape setting.

The adjacent public realm on Whitechurch Road is of a medium quality. The existing footpath is surfaced in a combination of concrete and tarmac with concrete kerbing. The two-way road carriageway is narrow and paved with tarmac. A low natural stone wall forms the boundary between the eastern perimeter and the public realm on Whitechurch Road; ivy can be found training this wall in some locations. The southern portion of the wall appears to be newer and is of a higher visual quality. Pedestrian circulation is provided solely on one side of the road.



Fig 4.6.1 View of mature tree planting and informal access paths



Fig 4.6.2 View of open grassland and mature perimeter tree planting



Fig 4.6.3 View of vacant and derelict residential dwelling



Fig 4.6.4 View of vacant and derelict residential dwelling and perimeter wall



Fig 4.6.5 View looking west of open grassland and hedgerow planting



Fig. 4.6.6. View looking south on Whitechurch Road with the eastern perimeter located in the right of the view



Fig. 4.6.7. View of mature tree canopy and open grassland



Fig. 4.6.8. View looking south of southern character area boundary wall with M50 motorway



Fig. 4.6.9. View of derelict farmhouse in southern character area



Fig. 4.6.10. View looking west of open grassland used for pastoral grazing



Fig. 4.6.11. View of out-buildings present on site and the Dublin Mountains in the distance

5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 Landscape Planning Policy Context

Landscape Planning policies and objectives relevant to the assessment of the impacts of the proposed development are laid out in the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022 in the following chapters:

- *Chapter 7: Infrastructure and Environmental Quality*
- *Chapter 8: Green Infrastructure*
- *Chapter 9: Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes*

The development site is categorised within Land Use Zoning Objective RES in the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022, which is defined below:

“Zoning Objective RES: To protect and/or improve residential amenity”

“Permitted in Principle

Housing for Older People, Nursing Home, Open Space, Public Services, Residential, Residential Institution, Retirement Home, Shop-Local, Traveller Accommodation.”

“Open for Consideration

Advertisements and Advertising Structures, Allotments, Agriculture, Bed & Breakfast, Betting Office, Camp Site, Car Park, Caravan Park-Residential, Cemetery, Childcare Facilities, Community Centre, Crematorium, Cultural Use, Doctor/Dentist, Education, Embassy, Enterprise Centre, Funeral Home, Garden Centre, Guest House, Health Centre, Hotel/Hostel, Home Based Economic Activities, Industry-Light, Live-Work Units, Motor Sales Outlet, Office-Based Industry, Offices less than 100 sq.m, Offices 100 sq.m - 1,000 sq.m, Off-Licence, Petrol Station, Place of Worship, Primary Health Care Centre, Public House, Recreational Facility, Recycling Facility, Restaurant/Café, Service Garage, Shop-Neighbourhood, Sports Club/Facility, Stadium, Veterinary Surgery.”

“Not Permitted

Abattoir, Aerodrome/Airfield, Boarding Kennels, Concrete/Asphalt Plant in or adjacent to a Quarry, Conference Centre, Fuel Depot, Heavy Vehicle Park, Hospital, Industry-Extractive, Industry-General, Industry-Special, Nightclub, Offices over 1,000 sq.m, Outdoor Entertainment Park, Refuse Landfill/Tip, Refuse Transfer Station, Retail Warehouse, Rural Industry-Food, Science and Technology Based Enterprise, Scrap Yard, Shop-Major Sales Outlet, Social Club, Transport Depot, Warehousing, Wholesale Outlet, Wind Farm.”

Other zoning objectives relating to the lands in the surrounding vicinity include the following:

Use Zoning Objective LC: *To protect, improve and provide for the future development of Local Centres.*

Use Zoning Objective OS: *To preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities.*

Use Zoning Objective RU: *To protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture.*

The lands immediately north, east and west of the site are categorised under Zoning Objective OS. The lands south of the M50 are categorised under Zoning Objective RU. The Edmondstown village centre area approximately 1km north-west of the site is categorised under Zoning Objective LC.

Furthermore, the development site is categorised under a Specific Local Objective (SLO) pertaining to the provision of accommodation for older people in residential and mixed-use areas. It underlines the following:

H3 SLO1:

“To facilitate the development of lands at Edmondstown (former Kilmashogue House) for the purpose of low density residential development at a net density of not more than 12 dwellings per hectare, and to promote housing for older people (nursing home, independent and semi-independent) as a fully integrated part of such development with an increased density of not more than 20 dwellings per hectare to apply to independent and semi-independent housing for older people. All residential development, including housing for older people, shall be integrated within a sustainable residential neighbourhood that is served by shared public open space, community and local facilities. Permissible densities may be increased in accordance with the relevant ministerial guidelines where issues of accessibility have been fully resolved in an appropriate manner. Any future development should have regard to the boundaries with and the protection of the existing amenity and function of Edmondstown Golf Course.”

5.2 Infrastructure and Environmental Quality

The relevant objectives in relation to the proposed development and site are laid out **in Chapter 7: Infrastructure and Environmental Quality, South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022.**

IE1 Objective 6	To protect the natural resources of the County which are the foundation for the Green Infrastructure network and a basis for growth and competitive advantage in the tourism, food and fisheries sectors
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IE1 Objective 9	To liaise with the relevant stakeholders, to ensure the implementation of BS8515-2009 rain & grey water harvesting, subject to class of use (SI 600 2001) and the economic viability for the end user.
IE1 Objective 10	To promote water conservation and best practice water conservation practices in all developments, including rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling and supporting the implementation of BS8515: 2009 Rainwater harvesting systems – Code of practice.
IE2 Objective 1	To maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of our surface waters and groundwater by implementing the programme of measures set out in the Eastern River Basin District River Basin Management Plan.
IE2 Objective 2	To protect the regionally and locally important aquifers within the County from risk of pollution and ensure the satisfactory implementation of the South Dublin Groundwater Protection Scheme 2011, and groundwater source protection zones, where data has been made available by the Geological Survey of Ireland.
IE2 Objective 3	To maintain and enhance existing surface water drainage systems in the County and promote and facilitate the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), including integrated constructed wetlands, at a local, district and County level, to control surface water outfall and protect water quality
IE2 Objective 4	To incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) as part of Local Area Plans, Planning Schemes, Framework Plans and Design Statements to address the potential for Sustainable Urban Drainage at a site and/or district scale, including the potential for wetland facilities.
IE2 Objective 5	To limit surface water run-off from new developments through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and avoid the use of underground attenuation and storage tanks.
IE2 Objective 8	To protect salmonid water courses, such as the Liffey and Dodder Rivers catchments (including Bohernabreena Reservoir), which are recognised to be exceptional in supporting salmonid fish species
IE2 Objective 9	To protect water bodies and watercourses, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains, within the County from inappropriate development. This will include protection buffers in riverine and wetland areas as appropriate (see also Objective G3 Objective 2 – Biodiversity Protection Zone).
IE3 Objective 4	To support and facilitate the delivery of flood alleviation schemes in South Dublin County, including the following schemes: Poddle Flood Alleviation Scheme. Ballycullen Flood Alleviation Scheme. Whitechurch River Flood Alleviation Scheme (at Rathfarnham); part of the Dodder CFRAMS.

The relevant policies in relation to the proposed development and site are laid out **in Chapter 7: Infrastructure and Environmental Quality, South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022.**

IE Policy 1	It is the policy of the Council to work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water and drainage infrastructure and to promote investment in the water and drainage network to support environmental protection and facilitate the sustainable growth of the County.
IE Policy 2	It is the policy of the Council to manage surface water and to protect and enhance ground and surface water quality to meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive.
IE Policy 3	It is the policy of the Council to continue to incorporate Flood Risk Management into the spatial planning of the County, to meet the requirements of the EU Floods Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive.

5.3 Green Infrastructure

The relevant objectives in relation to the proposed development and site are laid out **in Chapter 8: Green Infrastructure, South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022.**

G1 Objective 1	To establish a coherent, integrated and evolving Green Infrastructure network across South Dublin County with parks, open spaces, hedgerows, grasslands, protected areas, and rivers and streams forming the strategic links and to integrate the objectives of the Green Infrastructure Strategy throughout all relevant Council plans, such as Local Area Plans and other approved plans.
G1 Objective 2	To prepare and implement a South Dublin County Green Infrastructure Strategy during the lifetime of this plan that will form the basis for the identification, protection, enhancement and management of the Green Infrastructure network within the County.
G2 Objective 1	To reduce fragmentation of the Green Infrastructure network and strengthen ecological links between urban areas, Natura 2000 sites, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, parks and open spaces and the wider regional Green Infrastructure network.
G2 Objective 2	To protect and enhance the biodiversity value and ecological function of the Green Infrastructure network.
G2 Objective 3	To restrict development that would fragment or prejudice the Green Infrastructure network.
G2 Objective 4	To repair habitat fragmentation and provide for regeneration of flora and fauna where weaknesses are identified in the network.

G2 Objective 5	To integrate Green Infrastructure as an essential component of all new developments.
G2 Objective 6	To protect and enhance the County's hedgerow network, in particular hedgerows that form townland, parish and barony boundaries, and increase hedgerow coverage using locally native species.
G2 Objective 7	To incorporate items of historical or heritage importance in situ within the Green Infrastructure network as amenity features.
G2 Objective 8	To provide for the incorporation of Eco-ducts and/or Green Bridges at ecologically sensitive locations on the County's road and rail corridors that will facilitate the free movement of people and species through the urban and rural environment.
G2 Objective 9	To preserve, protect and augment trees, groups of trees, woodlands and hedgerows within the County by increasing tree canopy coverage using locally native species and by incorporating them within design proposals and supporting their integration into the Green Infrastructure network.
G2 Objective 10	To promote a network of paths and cycle tracks to enhance accessibility to the Green Infrastructure network, while ensuring that the design and operation of the routes responds to the ecological needs of each site.
G2 Objective 11	To incorporate appropriate elements of Green Infrastructure e.g. new tree planting, grass verges, planters etc. into existing areas of hard infrastructure wherever possible, thereby integrating these areas of existing urban environment into the overall Green Infrastructure network.
G2 Objective 12	To seek to control and manage non-native invasive species and to develop strategies with relevant stakeholders to assist in the control of these species throughout the County.
G2 Objective 13	To seek to prevent the loss of woodlands, hedgerows, aquatic habitats and wetlands wherever possible including requiring a programme to monitor and restrict the spread of invasive species such as those located along the River Dodder.
G3 Objective 1	To promote the natural, historical and amenity value of the County's watercourses and address the long-term management and protection of these corridors in the South Dublin Green Infrastructure Strategy.
G3 Objective 2	To maintain a biodiversity protection zone of not less than 10 metres from the top of the bank of all watercourses in the County, with the full extent of the protection zone to be determined on a case by case basis by the Planning Authority, based on site specific characteristics and sensitivities. Strategic Green Routes and Trails identified in the South Dublin Tourism Strategy, 2015; the Greater Dublin Area Strategic Cycle Network; and other government plans or programmes will be open for consideration within the biodiversity protection

	zone, subject to appropriate safeguards and assessments, as these routes increase the accessibility of the Green Infrastructure network.
G3 Objective 3	To ensure the protection, improvement or restoration of riverine floodplains and to promote strategic measures to accommodate flooding at appropriate locations, to protect ground and surface water quality and build resilience to climate change.
G3 Objective 4	To uncover existing culverts and restore the watercourse to acceptable ecological standards and for the passage of fish, where possible.
G3 Objective 5	To restrict the encroachment of development on watercourses, and provide for protection measures to watercourses and their banks, including but not limited to: the prevention of pollution of the watercourse, the protection of the river bank from erosion, the retention and/or provision of wildlife corridors and the protection from light spill in sensitive locations, including during construction of permitted development.
G4 Objective 1	To support and facilitate the provision of a network of high quality, well located and multifunctional public parks and open spaces throughout the County and to protect and enhance the environmental capacity and ecological function of these spaces.
G4 Objective 2	To connect parks and areas of open space with ecological and recreational corridors to aid the movement of biodiversity and people and to strengthen the overall Green Infrastructure network.
G4 Objective 3	To enhance and diversify the outdoor recreational potential of public open spaces and parks, subject to the protection of the natural environment.
G4 Objective 4	To minimise the environmental impact of external lighting at sensitive locations within the Green Infrastructure network to achieve a sustainable balance between the recreational needs of an area, the safety of walking and cycling routes and the protection of light sensitive species such as bats.
G4 Objective 5	To promote the planting of woodlands, forestry, community gardens, allotments and parkland meadows within the County's open spaces and parks.
G4 Objective 6	To take steps, in conjunction with communities and businesses, to plant existing areas of grassed open space to promote the development of multifunctional amenity areas with enhanced biodiversity value.
G4 Objective 7	To avoid the cumulative fragmentation and loss of ecologically sensitive areas of the Green Infrastructure network to artificial surfaces and to position recreational facilities that incorporate artificial surfaces at appropriate community-based locations.

G5 Objective 1	To promote and support the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) at a local, district and county level and to maximise the amenity and biodiversity value of these systems.
G5 Objective 2	To promote the provision of Green Roofs and/or Living Walls in developments where expansive roofs are proposed such as industrial, retail and civic developments.
G6 Objective 1	To protect and enhance existing ecological features including tree stands, woodlands, hedgerows and watercourses in all new developments as an essential part of the design process.
G6 Objective 2	To require new development to provide links into the wider Green Infrastructure network, in particular where similar features exist on adjoining sites.
G6 Objective 3	To require multifunctional open space provision within all new developments that includes provision for ecology and sustainable water management.

The relevant policies in relation to the proposed development and site are laid out **in Chapter 8: Green Infrastructure, South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022.**

G Policy 1	It is the policy of the Council to protect, enhance and further develop a multifunctional Green Infrastructure network by building an interconnected network of parks, open spaces, hedgerows, grasslands, protected areas, and rivers and streams that provide a shared space for amenity and recreation, biodiversity protection, flood management and adaptation to climate change.
G Policy 2	It is the policy of the Council to promote and develop a coherent, integrated and evolving Green Infrastructure network in South Dublin County that can connect to the regional network, secure and enhance biodiversity, provide readily accessible parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.
G Policy 3	It is the policy of the Council to promote the natural, historical and amenity value of the County's watercourses; to address the long term management and protection of these corridors and to strengthen links at a regional level.
G Policy 4	It is the policy of the Council to provide a hierarchy of high quality and multi-functional public parks and open spaces.
G Policy 5	It is the policy of the Council to promote and support the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in the County and to maximise the amenity and biodiversity value of these systems.
G Policy 6	It is the policy of the Council to support the protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure in all new development in urban areas, to strengthen Green

	Infrastructure linkage across the wider urban network and to achieve the highest standards of living and working environments.
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5.4 Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes

The relevant objectives in relation to the proposed development and site are laid out **in Chapter 9: Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes, South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022.**

HCL7 Objective 1	To protect and enhance the landscape character of the County by ensuring that development retains, protects and, where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the landscape, taking full cognisance of the Landscape Character Assessment of South Dublin County (2015).
HCL7 Objective 2	To ensure that development is assessed against Landscape Character, Landscape Values and Landscape Sensitivity as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment for South Dublin County (2015) in accordance with Government guidance on Landscape Character Assessment and the National Landscape Strategy.
HCL8 Objective 1	To protect, preserve and improve Views and Prospects of special amenity, historic or cultural value or interest including rural, river valley, mountain, hill, coastal, upland and urban views and prospects that are visible from prominent public places.
HCL15 Objective 1	To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on rare and threatened species, including those protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992.
HCL15 Objective 2	To ensure that, where evidence of species that are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992 exists, appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.
HCL15 Objective 3	To protect existing trees, hedgerows, and woodlands which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/ or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management in accordance with Living with Trees: South Dublin County Council's Tree Management Policy 2015-2020.
HCL17 Objective 1	To review the number of Tree Preservation Orders within the County and maintain the conservation value of trees and groups of trees that are the subject of any Tree Preservation Order.

The relevant policies in relation to the proposed development and site are laid out **in Chapter 9: Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes, South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022.**

HCL Policy 7	It is the policy of the Council to preserve and enhance the character of the County's landscapes particularly areas that have been deemed to have a medium to high Landscape Value or medium to high Landscape Sensitivity and to ensure that landscape considerations are an important factor in the management of development.
HCL Policy 8	It is the policy of the Council to preserve Views and Prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest including those located within and outside the County.
HCL Policy 15	To protect existing trees, hedgerows, and woodlands which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/ or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management in accordance with Living with Trees: South Dublin County Council's Tree Management Policy 2015-2020.
HCL Policy 17	It is the policy of the Council to review the number of Tree Preservation Orders within the County and maintain the conservation value of trees and groups of trees that are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

5.5 Protected Structures

Three protected structures exist in the nearby vicinity of the site. These include:

- Moravian Cemetery and Entrance Gateway with Cast Iron Gates at Whitechurch Road (RPS reference number 345)
- Whitechurch Church of Ireland, school, graveyard and gateway (RPS reference number 354),
- Cross base fragment of a former Whitechurch structure (RPS reference number 352), located on the opposite side of the road from Whitechurch Church of Ireland.

5.6 Record of Monuments and Places

An area of archaeological and prehistoric value (RMP number DU022-029) is located near to the western edge of the subject site. The protected area is described as a flat cemetery site in the Record of Monuments and Places.

5.7 Landscape Character

The Landscape Character Assessment illustrated and outlined in Landscape Character Assessment of South Dublin County (2015) divides South Dublin County into **5 Landscape Character Areas** (LCAs) and subdivides these LCAs further into **10 Landscape Character Types** (LCTs).

The Landscape Character Area in which the proposed development site is located is defined as LCA 5: *Suburban South Dublin*. The site is further categorised within the *Foothills* Landscape Character Type.

The 'Recommendations' outlined in the Landscape Character Assessment of South County Dublin (2015) for developments within the *Foothills* Landscape Character Type are as follows:

- 1. Form an important backdrop to the urban and should be protected by exclusion of inappropriate developments – turbines etc. - that would diminish their landscape and visual value.*
- 2. Hedgerows of native species remain a feature of the agricultural lands so should be encouraged as a boundary treatment -will improve screening and locally enhance biodiversity*
- 3. Viewpoints and laybys – better boundary treatment*

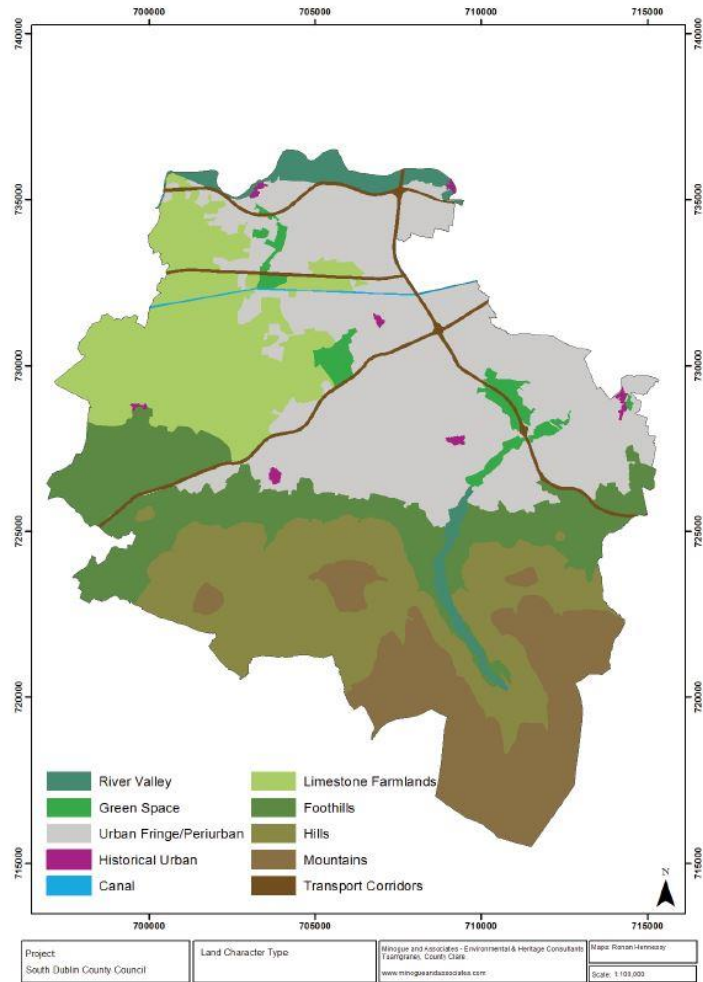


Fig. 5.7.1. Landscape Character Types

6.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The characteristics of the proposed development are as follows:

- The proposed development on a site that extends to 6.77 hectares includes the derelict Kilmashogue House (southern lands) and Coill Avon house (northern lands), adjacent roads in the control of South Dublin County and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Councils and consists of the following developments: -
- Demolition of Kilmashogue House and outbuildings and demolition of Coill Avon house and outbuildings;
- The refurbishment and re-use of 2 no. stone outbuildings for community use, to be incorporated into an area of public open space on the southern lands;
- The construction of a mixed-use development comprising neighbourhood centre and 178 no. residential units comprising 72 no. houses, 38 no. apartments and 68 no. duplex apartments;
- The 72 no. houses will comprise 2, 2.5 and 3-storey detached, semi-detached and terraced units to include:-
 - 6 no. 2-bed houses;
 - 45 no. 3-bed houses;
 - 21 no. 4-bed houses;
- The 38 no. apartments and 68 no. duplex apartments are located across 7 no. buildings ranging in height from 3 to 5-storey consisting of 1 no. Block A/B, 1 no. Block C, 1 no. Block E, 1 no. Block S and 3 no. Blocks T-type as follows: -
 - **Block A/B:** 5-storey over basement and podium accommodating 10 no. 1-bed apartments, 16 no. 2-bed duplex apartments and 1 no. 3-bed duplex apartment with associated balconies/terraces;
 - **Block C:** 5-storey over basement accommodating 4 no. 1-bed apartments and 8 no. 2-bed duplex apartments with associated balconies/terraces;
 - **Block E:** 4-storey over basement accommodating 8 no. 1-bed apartments and 16 no. 2-bed duplex apartments with associated balconies/terraces;
 - **Block S:** 3-storey accommodating 2 no. 2-bed duplex apartments and 1 no. 3-bed apartment and 1 No. 3-bed duplex apartments with associated balconies/terraces;
 - **Block T:** 3no. 3-storey buildings accommodating 6 no. 1-bed apartments, 18 no. 2-bed duplex apartments, 9 no. 3-bed apartments and 6 no. 3-bed duplex apartments, all with associated balconies/terraces;

- Block A/B and Block C are arranged around a landscaped podium. The neighbourhood centre is located below this podium and accommodates a 2-level creche (313m²) at lower ground and ground floor level, and 3 no. retail/non-retail/cafe service units (470m²) at ground level;
- The basement below Block A/B and Block C accommodates 50 no. car parking spaces, bicycle parking, bin stores, plant and staff service area (80m²);
- The basement below Block E accommodates 35 no. car parking spaces, bicycle parking, bin store and plant;
- A section of link street with footpath and cycle path (approx. 438 linear metres) extending from the junction of Whitechurch Road and College Road on an alignment parallel to the M50, to provide access to the southern development lands and incorporating a bus turning circle;
- Upgrade works to College Road including a new two-way cycle track and relocated footpath from the Whitechurch Road junction to provide connectivity to the Slang River pedestrian/cycle Greenway;
- A new signalised crossroads junction to connect the proposed link street with Whitechurch Road and College Road;
- Upgrade to the existing vehicular access at the entrance to Coill Avon house on Whitechurch Road;
- Foul sewer drainage works along Whitechurch Road from the Kilmashogue junction to the existing junction at Glinbury housing estate;
- All landscaping, surface car parking, boundary treatments, infrastructure works, ESB substation, and associated site works and services.

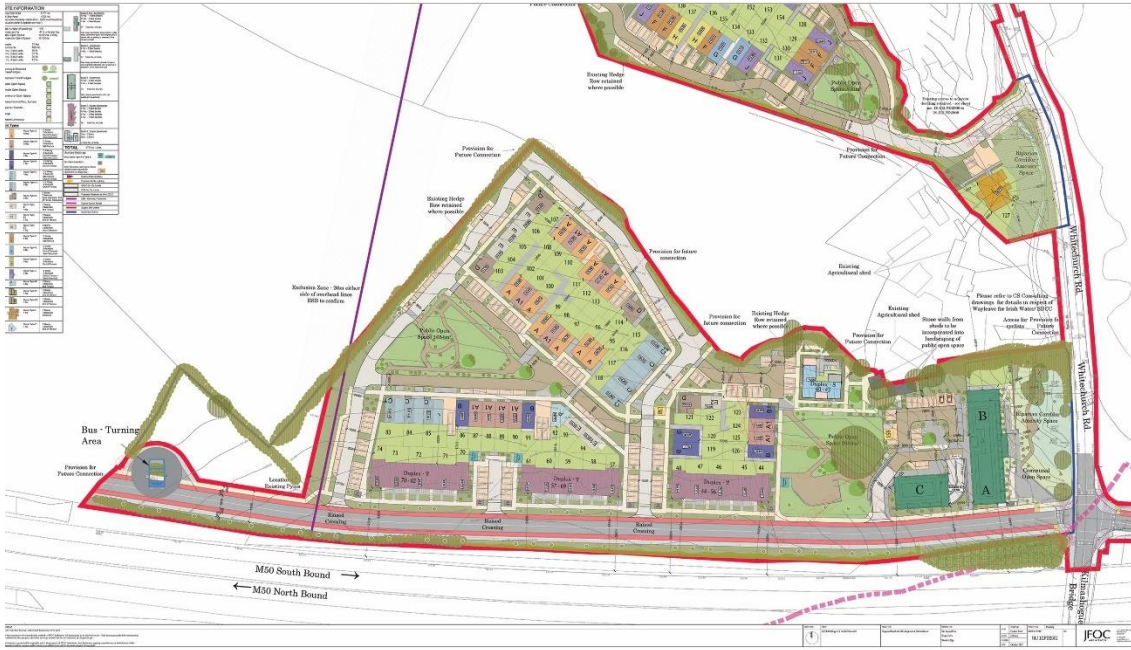


Fig. 6.1.2. Edmondstown South Layout

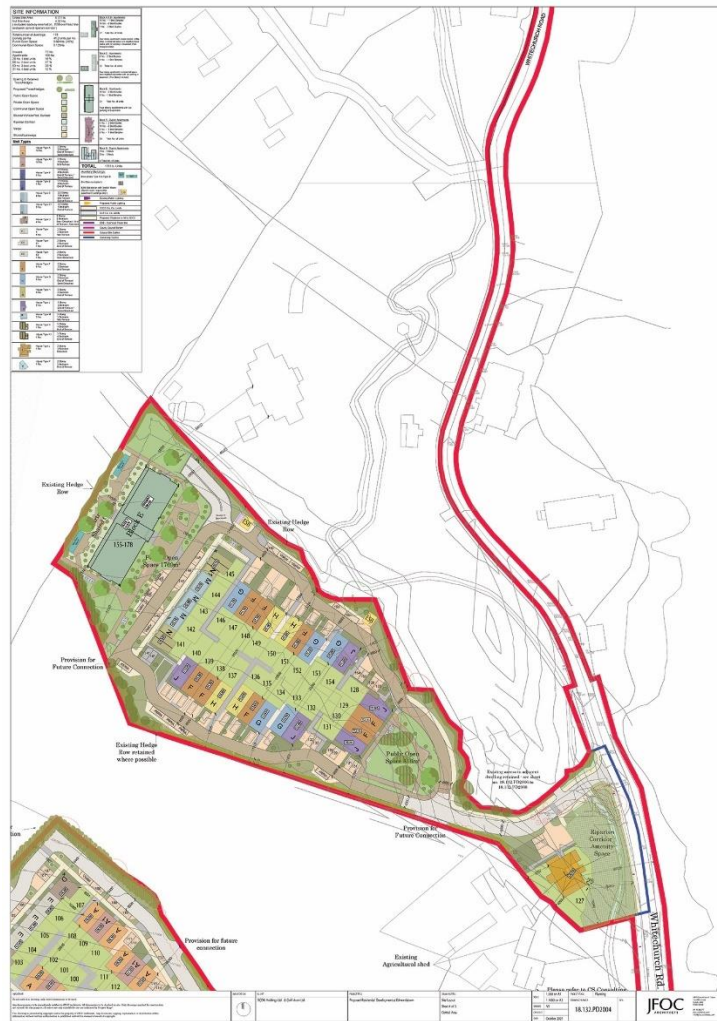


Fig. 6.1.3. Edmondstown North Layout

7.0 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 Potential Impacts of the Proposed Development

7.1.1 Construction Stage

The visual impacts due to construction will be short term, terminating upon completion of the development. There is potential for a significant and negative short-term impact during construction from the following elements associated with construction and demolition work:

- Dust
- Site huts
- Building materials
- Ground disturbance (e.g. topsoil, stockpiles, etc.)
- Site hoarding/security fencing
- Construction/demolition work

There is potential for a significant and negative short-term visual impact from the use of temporary buildings and machinery necessary for construction works at proposed works, as well as stockpiling of materials.

There is potential for a significant and negative short-term impact from the transportation of the material to be recycled and the recycled material to and from the site.

There is the potential for a significant and negative short-term visual impact on views into the site, particularly from the residential properties to the north of the site itself.

The main stages of the construction phasing will include the following:

- Site preparation works
- Site establishment and erection of temporary structures
- Diversion and connection of services and utilities
- Construction of foundations and structures
- Mechanical and electrical installation
- Fit-out and external works

7.1.2 Operational Stage

The potential impacts from the proposed development, once it is operational and construction is complete, will arise from the presence of the new residential units including apartment blocks, duplex units and houses. The patterns of use from day to day will alter as pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular movement will increase both within the site itself and in the adjacent communities and streets approaching the redevelopment, particularly along Whitechurch Road and College Road.

The proposed design will encompass the following elements:

- A variety of quality hardscape materials including high-quality concrete block and flag paving, stone setts, in-situ exposed aggregate concrete, stone sett paving, firm gravel and artificial lawn.
- Two new local access roads off Whitechurch Road and road upgrade works to Whitechurch Road and College Road including a new two-way cycle track on College Road.
- A hierarchy of native and ornamental planting including trees, shrubs, clipped hedging, groundcovers, perennials, bulbs and wildflower meadow. Existing trees and hedgerows will be retained wherever feasible. The retention and enhancement of the existing hedgerows and riparian edge planting adjacent to Whitechurch Stream is an important feature of the proposed development as a means of fostering biodiversity and protecting existing ecological corridors.
- The first section of a new link road from Edmondstown Road to Whitechurch Road / College Road.
- Hard and soft surface open spaces including public open spaces with kickabout lawns, seating areas, a formal playground, a 'dry river bed', active open space, public plaza, creche garden, river walk and streamside seating areas, as well as an apartment communal amenity garden, seating terraces and a shared duplex garden.
- Permeability through the site and within the neighbourhood centre through the creation of a series of local cyclist and pedestrian routes and shared surfaces which are integrated with the open space strategy.

7.2 Mitigation Measures

7.2.1 Construction Phase

The following mitigation measures will be implemented:

- Height of temporary stockpiles to be restricted to a practicable minimum to avoid impact on local sensitive receptors.
- Hoarding will be erected around site boundaries to reduce visual impact of construction works
- Plants will be held in designated compound on site
- Protective fencing will be installed around the existing boundary trees

Visual impacts during the construction phase will be mitigated somewhat by appropriate site management measures and work practices to ensure the site is kept tidy, dust is kept to a minimum, and that public areas are kept free from building material and site rubbish. Appropriate site hoardings will be put in place around the perimeter of the site where required to minimise the landscape and visual impact.

7.2.2 Operational Phase

The major visual remediation of the project will be accomplished through the following mitigation measures which have been incorporated into the design:

- Through the positioning of various elements of the development on site to enhance the appearance of the residential blocks as a whole through the design of the site layout and built form.
- The creation of high-quality public and semi-public spaces for the use and amenity of the users of the development and the wider community. This includes a neighbourhood centre with public plaza, kickabout lawns, seating areas, a formal playground, a 'dry river bed' nature play area and SuDS feature, active open space, public plaza, creche garden, river walk and streamside seating areas, as well as an apartment communal amenity garden, seating terraces and a shared duplex garden.
- The architectural treatments on the façade of the proposed development include brick, render, cut stone and glazed facades.
- The retention and augmentation of existing mature hedgerows, shelter belt planting, tree planting and riparian edge planting. The existing Whitechurch Stream will be protected and enhanced as a riparian corridor.

- Outdoor amenity spaces within the development that protect the existing trees and therefore aid in enhancing the biodiversity and amenity value of the area.
- The provision of basement level car parking to apartment units.
- The creation of a shared surface homezone treatment throughout the residential streetscape, creating an equal priority environment.
- Through the creation of a series of universally accessible pedestrian routes through the development in order to provide safe pedestrian access for all ages and abilities. A pedestrian connection is provided between the Edmondstown North and Edmondstown South character areas by way of an existing footpath on Whitechurch Road.

7.3 Residual Impacts

As outlined above, mitigation measures will be implemented to reduce the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development. Control of individual building forms, materials and colour will ultimately be determined by the Planning Authority. The landscape and visual impacts will be negative and significant in the short-term during the construction stage and will move to neutral and significant at pre-establishment of proposed planting. In general, the landscape and visual impacts will be neutral and significant in the long term.

All planted installations within the project will be subject to an on-going maintenance programme and monitoring by a qualified landscape contractor, to ensure its satisfactory establishment. The proposed development, together with the comprehensive landscape design, will create a positive visual and landscape impact at local level.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON VIEWS

Eighteen viewpoints were chosen for the purposes of this visual assessment. The views assess the potential visual impacts of the proposed Strategic Housing Development and were chosen as being representative of the key views in terms of impacts on local receptors. The views are taken from the public domain. As requested by the local authorities, nine of the views depicts both a summer and winter scenario when deciduous trees are not in leaf for assessment purposes. **(Please see Dune Visuals , Visual Impact Assessment Document for Verified Views in A3 format).**



Fig. 8.1.1. Viewpoint location map

Viewpoint 1

Location: R113 College Road, south of Marlay Park sports pitches

Distance from the site: 275m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the southern side of College Road immediately to the south of an all-weather pitch located in the west of Marlay Park. The view looks west towards the site. The view captures a two-way road, with a concrete surfaced footpath present along the northern side of the road. An attractive natural stone boundary wall of over 2m in height which forms the interface with Marlay Park dominates the middle-ground of the view. Street lighting and a grass verge on the southern side of College Road are also visible within the streetscape. Dispersed specimen trees situated along the southern perimeter of Marlay Park are visible beyond the boundary wall. In the background of the view, a mature tree canopy is visible.

Proposed View



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening boundary walls. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 2

Location: R113 College Road, opposite the southern boundary of Grange Golf Club

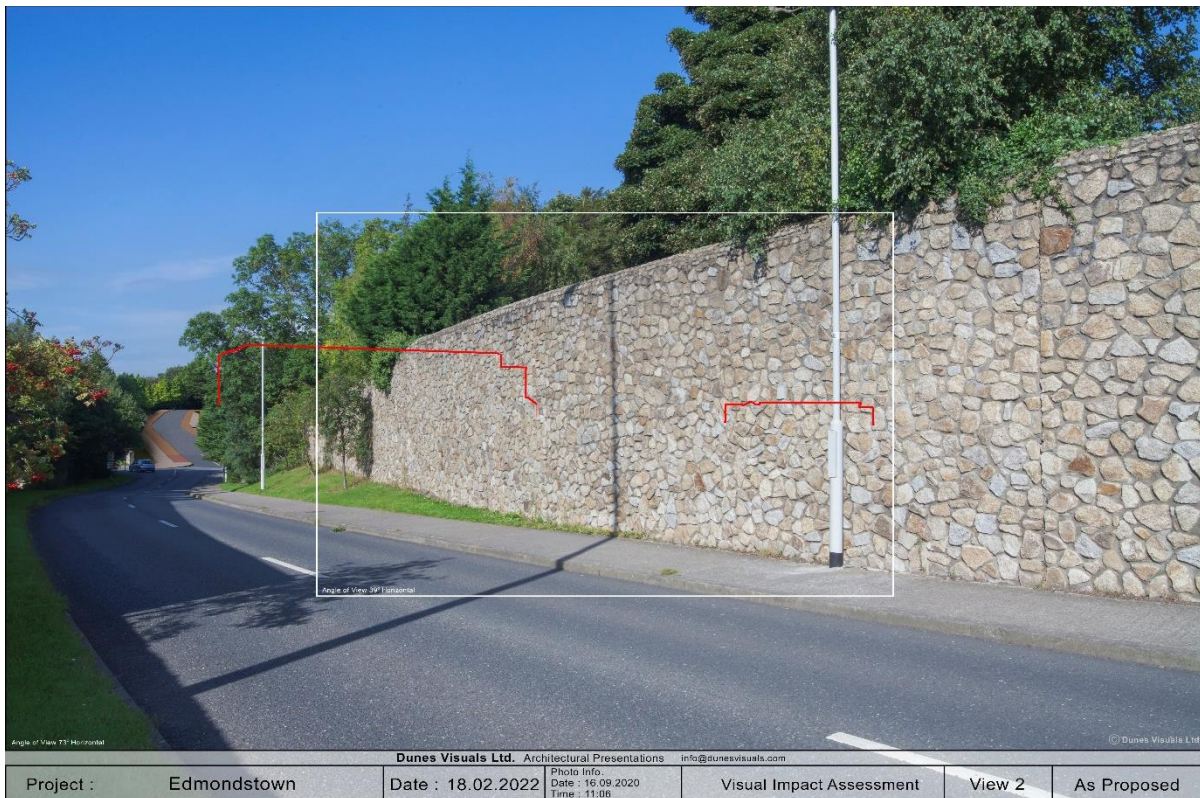
Distance from the site: 130m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the southern side of College Road, immediately to the south of Grange Golf Club. The view looks west towards the site. The view captures a two-way road with concrete surfaced footpath on its northern side and a grass verge lining its southern edge. A high natural stone boundary wall at the interface with the grounds of Grange Golf Club is dominant within the foreground of the view. Mature tree planting with a dense tree canopy is visible immediately beyond the wall. In the background of the view, the entrance gate to the Edmondstown South character area is visible. A mature tree canopy located within the Edmondstown South character area is also visible at an elevated position in the background of the view.

Proposed View (Summer View)



The built fabric of the proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location, however elements of the landscape and new link road and cycling infrastructure will be visible in the background of the view. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the built fabric of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening boundary walls, topography and vegetation. The visual impact will be neutral and moderate in the short term during the construction stage of the project. This will be reduce to neutral and slight during the operational phase when construction works are complete and all planting has established.

Proposed View (Winter View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. It will be screened from view by intervening vegetation, boundary walls and distance from the site. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 3

Location: The junction of R113 College Road and Whitechurch Road

Distance from the site: 40m (approx.)

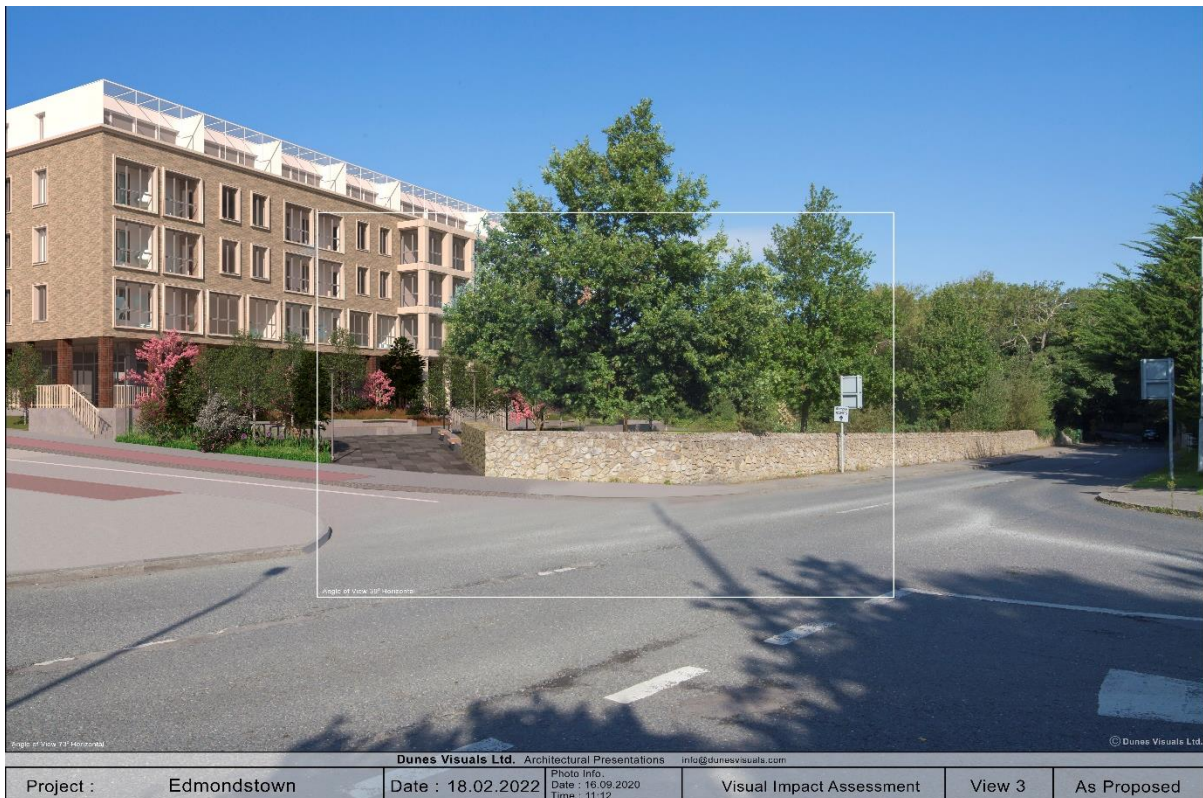
Existing View



Project : Edmondstown		Date : 18.02.2022	Photo Info. Date : 16.09.2020 Time : 11:12	Visual Impact Assessment	View 3	As Existing
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This viewpoint is located at the junction of the R113 College Road and Whitechurch Road and looks north-west towards the site. The Whitechurch Road is visible centrally within the foreground of the view and features a concrete footpath along both sides of the road. A natural stone boundary wall of approximate height 1.5m and metal entrance gate forming the interface with the Edmondstown South character area and the public realm on Whitechurch Road is visible in the middle-distance of the view. A number of mature specimen trees situated within the site and boundary tree planting to the perimeter of Whitechurch Road are visible in the background and middle distance of the view, forming a dense and mature canopy.

Proposed View (Summer View)

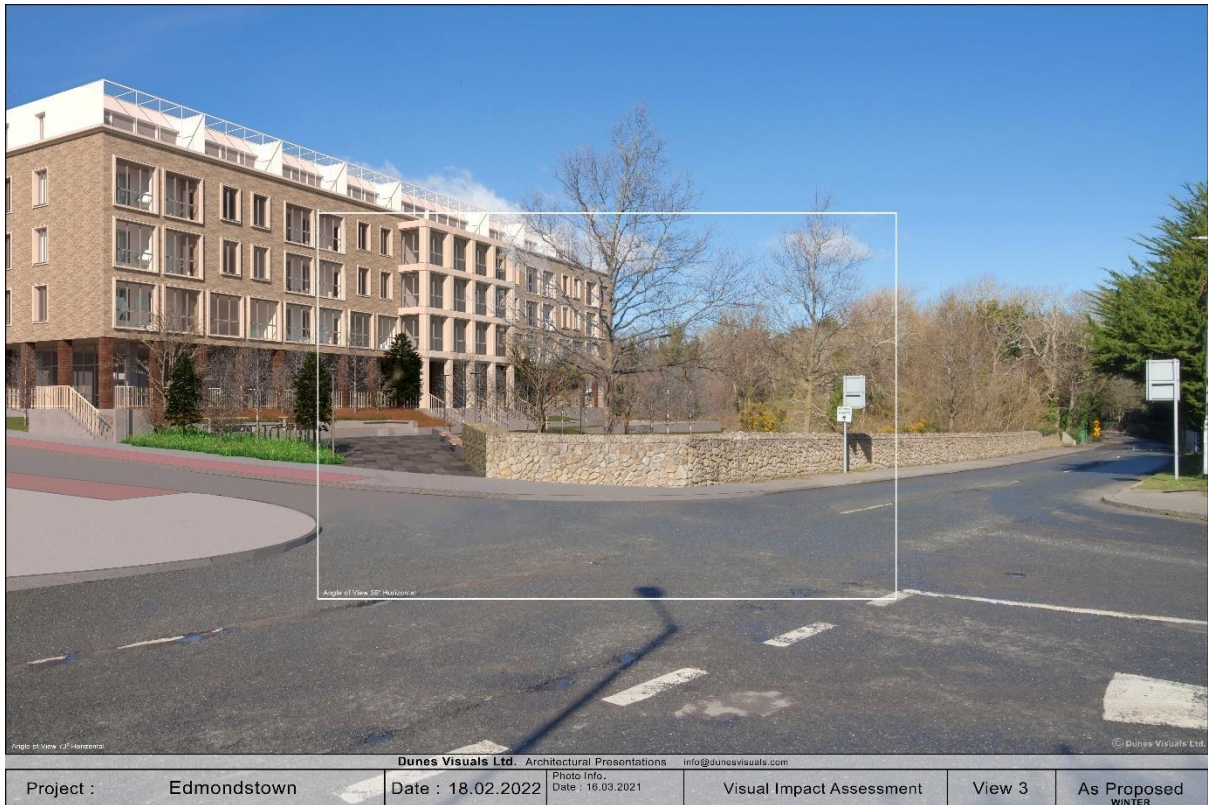


The proposed development will be visible from this viewpoint location. All floors of Block A and a portion of the façade of Block B of the Edmondstown South development will be visible from this viewpoint. Views into the undulating landscape of fields, hedgerows and trees will be removed and replaced by the built environment of a five storey mixed use apartment building/s. Existing trees and hedgerows to Whitechurch Road will be retained, and will assist in screening views of the a large portion of the façade of Block B from view from this viewpoint location.

Block A/B (Block C not in view) are arranged around a landscaped podium. The neighbourhood centre is located below this podium and accommodates a two-level creche at lower ground and ground floor level with and 3 no. retail/non-retail/cafe service units at ground level. There are a variety of materials of finishes en façade that enhance the architectural quality of the built environment at this location.

The visual impact will be negative and significant in the short-term, during the construction stage of the project. This will reduce to negative and moderate during the operational phase when the construction works are complete and all planting has established. However, in time, it would be expected that this would reduce further to neutral and moderate when the ground floor units and external courtyard spaces are successfully active with users of the space and all soft landscape interventions have matured.

Proposed View (Winter View)



The proposed development will be visible during winter months when trees are not in leaf. The façade of Block B will be more visible during this season. Views into the external courtyard space adjacent to the ground floor retail and non-retail units will also open up, reinforcing the set back of the block from Whitechurch Road and reinforcing the presence of the public realm to the east of the built environment.

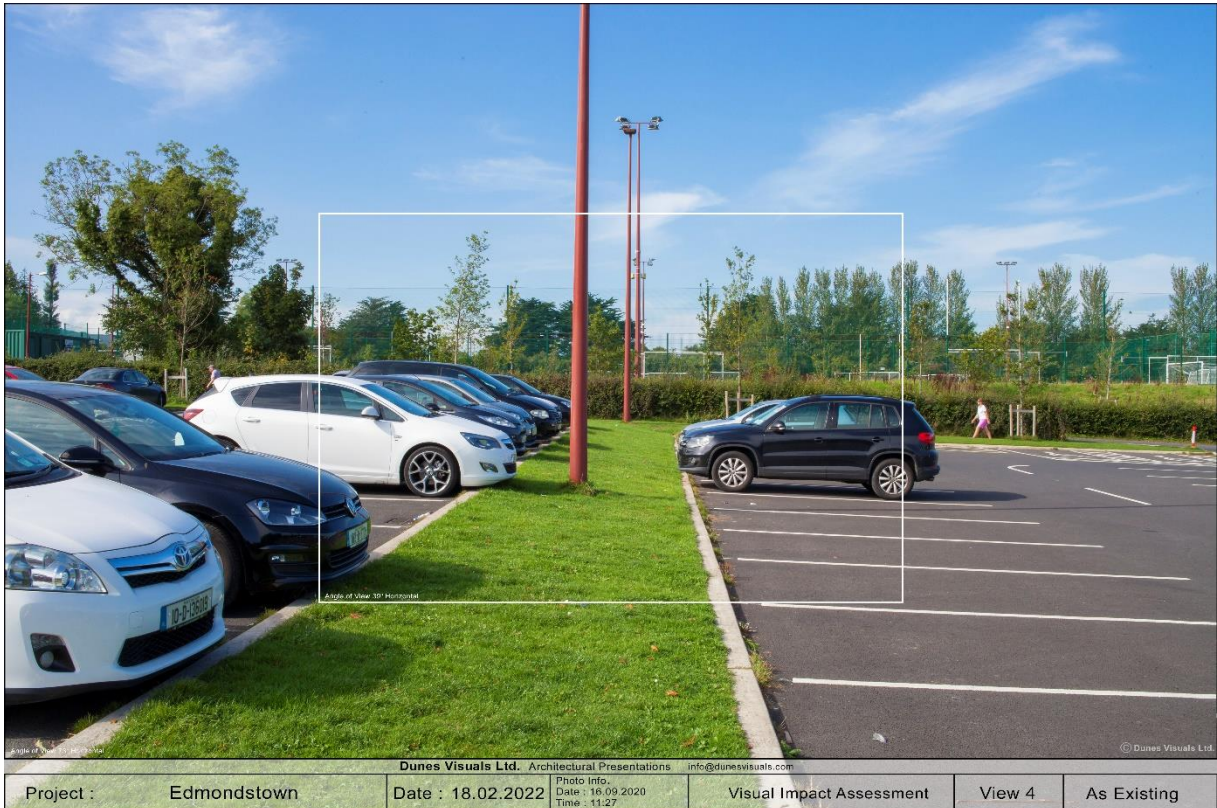
The visual impact will be negative and significant in the short-term, during the construction stage of the project. This will reduce to negative and moderate during the operational phase when the construction works are complete and all planting has established. However, in time, it would be expected that this would reduce further to neutral and moderate when the ground floor units and external courtyard spaces are successfully active with users of the space and all soft landscape interventions have matured.

Viewpoint 4

Location: Carpark in the south of Marlay Park

Distance from the site: 450m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located within the carpark situated in the southern portion of Marlay Park, immediately to the east of the All-weather sports pitch. The view looks west towards the site. The car park featuring tarmacked parking bays, grass planted verges and lighting columns are visible within the foreground of the view. In the background of the view, young tree planting, a neat boundary hedgerow, and boundary fencing to the perimeter of the All-weather pitch are visible. Mature boundary tree planting is visible in the background of view, to the western perimeter of Grange Golf Club.

Proposed View (Summer View)



Dunes Visuals Ltd. Architectural Presentations info@dunesvisuals.com				
Project :	Edmondstown	Date : 18.02.2022	Photo Info: Date : 18.09.2020 Time : 11:27	Visual Impact Assessment
			View 4	As Proposed

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Intervening boundary treatments and vegetation cover screen all elements of the proposed development from view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View (Winter View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Intervening boundary treatments and vegetation cover screen all elements of the proposed development from view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 5

Location: The vehicular road within Marlay Park, accessed off R113 College Road

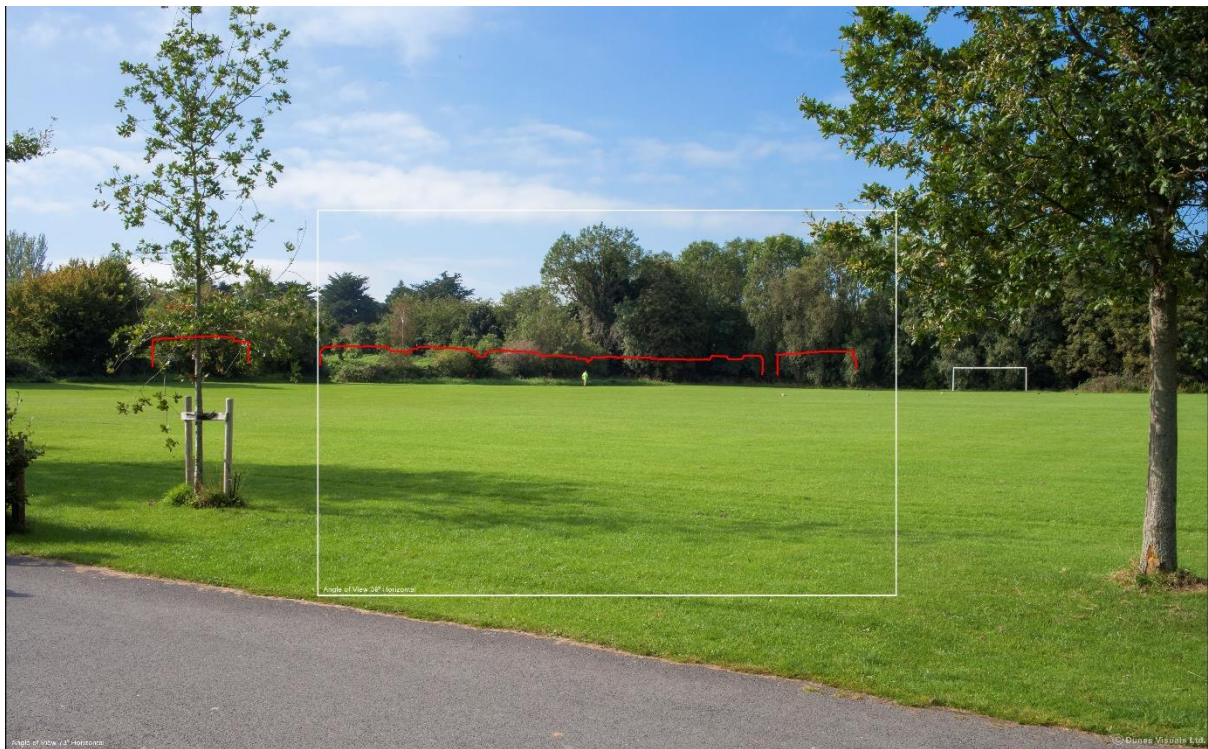
Distance from the site: 500m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the access road within Marlay Park, located near to Marlay Park Tennis Courts. The view looks south-west towards the site, across grass sports pitches associated with Stedfast United Football Club. A line of young tree planting to the edge of the road is partially visible in the foreground of the view. Mature tree and hedgerow planting which form the boundary between Marlay Park and Grange Golf Club is visible in the background of the view.

Proposed View (Summer View)



Dunes Visuals Ltd. Architectural Presentations info@dunesvisuals.com				
Project :	Edmondstown	Date : 18.02.2022	Photo Info: Date : 18.09.2020 Time : 11:39	Visual Impact Assessment View 5 As Proposed

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation and distance from the site. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View (Winter View)



Project : Edmondstown		Date : 18.02.2022		Photo Info. Date : 16.03.2021	Visual Impact Assessment	View 5	As Proposed WINTER
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The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during the winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation and distance from the site. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 6

Location: The intersection of R133 Brehon Field Road and R822 Grange Road

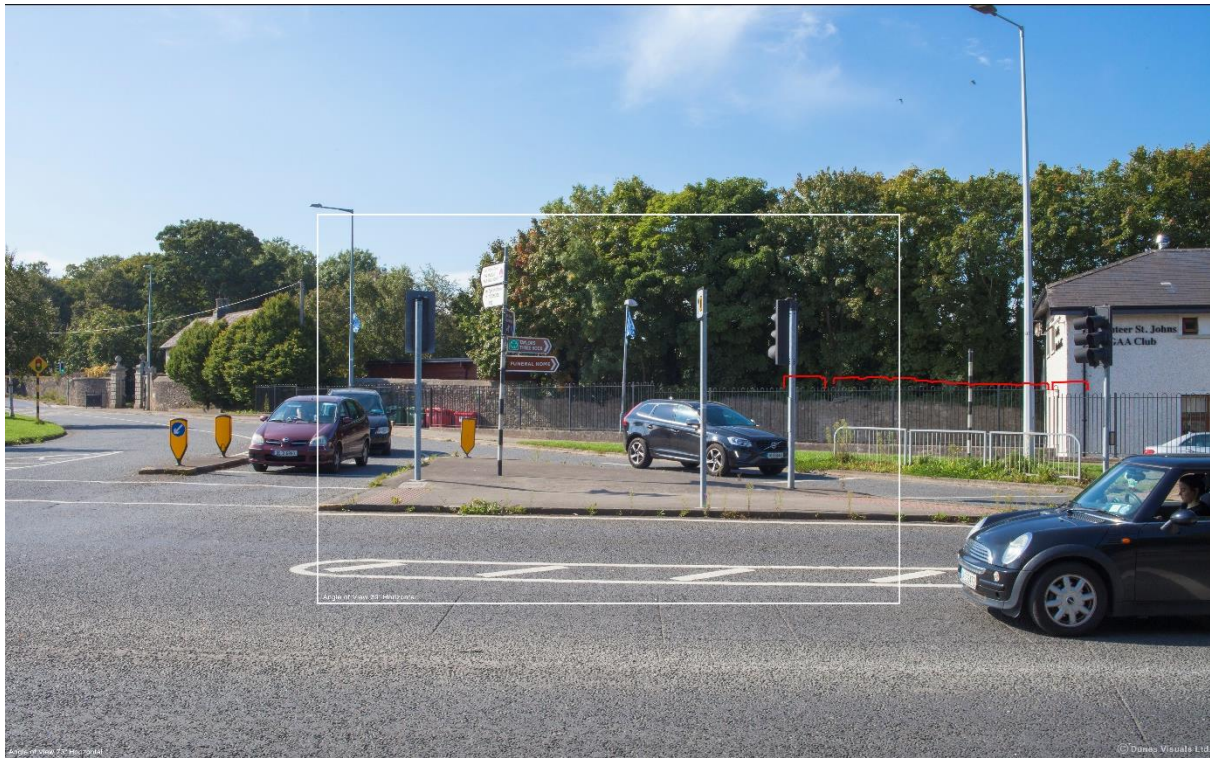
Distance from the site: 1.35km (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the eastern side of the R133 Brehon Field Road, opposite the intersection with the R822 Grange Road. The view looks south-west towards the site. The majority of the foreground of the view is occupied by road infrastructure. Visual intrusion exists within the streetscape in the form of street lighting and road signage, acting to reduce quality of the landscape setting. The built fabric of Ballinteer St. Johns GAA is partially visible in the right of the view. A natural stone boundary wall to the eastern perimeter of Marlay Park and the mature tree canopy of trees located within Marlay Park is visible in the background of the view beyond the road network.

Proposed View (Summer View)



Dunes Visuals Ltd. Architectural Presentations info@dunesvisuals.com					
Project :	Edmondstown	Date :	18.02.2022	Photo Info: Date : 18.09.2020 Time : 12.02	Visual Impact Assessment View 6 As Proposed

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location and is screened from view by intervening vegetation, boundary walls and distance from the site. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View (Winter View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. It will be screened from view by intervening vegetation, boundary walls and distance from the site. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 7

Location: Footpath south of Marlay Park Main Car Park

Distance from the site: 1.25km (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the public footpath adjacent to the south-west corner of Marlay Park Main Car Park. The view looks south-west towards the site. The view depicts an open parkland landscape setting featuring large areas of open mown lawn surrounded by a dense mature tree canopy. A network of tarmac surfaced paths are evident dividing the grass lawn into segments. In the background of the view, the Dublin Mountains are visible beyond the canopy of tree planting to the perimeter of Marlay Park.

Proposed View_(Summer View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation, topography and distance from the site. There will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View_(Winter View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation, topography and distance from the site. There will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 8

Location: To the north of Marlay House, Marlay Park

Distance from the site: 1.28km (approx.)

Existing View



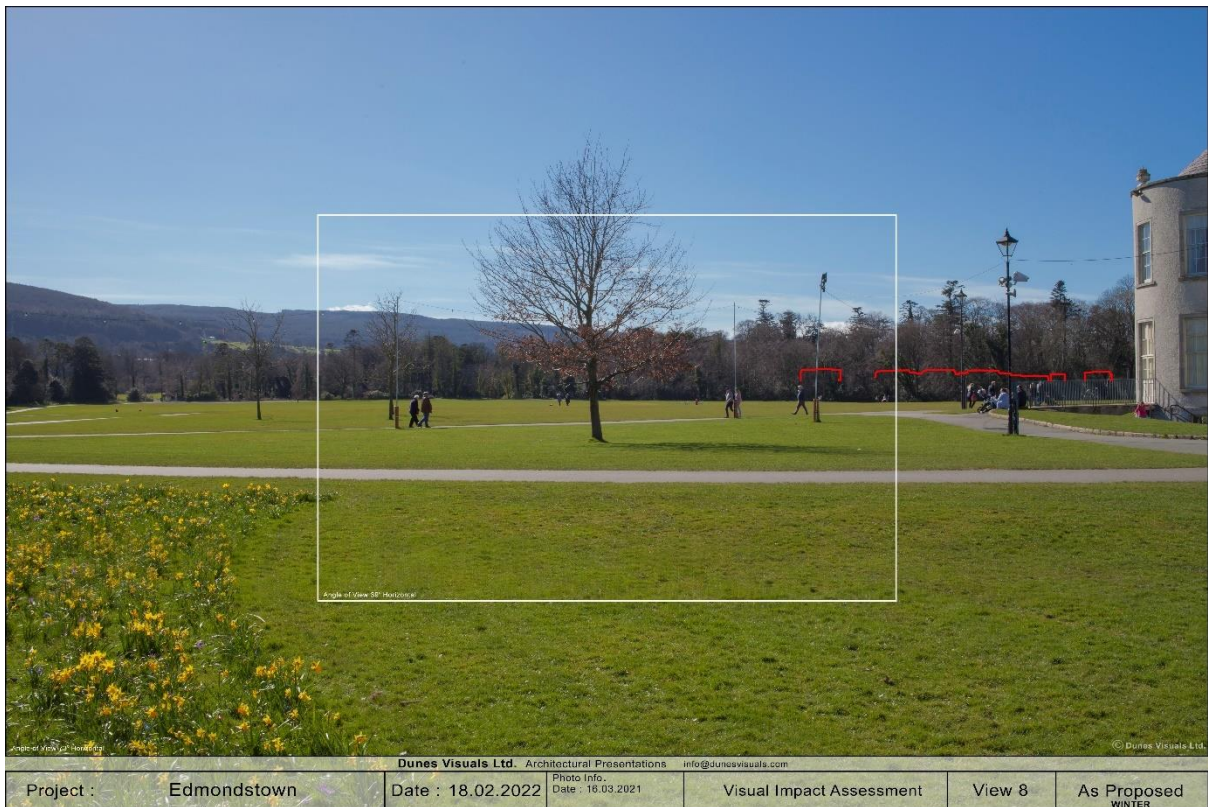
This viewpoint is located on an area of grass lawn immediately to the north of Marlay House, within the grounds of Marlay Park. The view looks south-west towards the site. The view depicts a parkland setting featuring large open areas of grass lawn surrounded by a mature tree canopy in perimeter locations. Younger specimen trees are also evident dispersed amongst the areas of grass lawn. In the right of the view, the built fabric of Marlay House is partially visible. Traditional design lighting columns are evident lining the path network in the right of the view. The Dublin Mountains are visible in the background of the view beyond the perimeter tree canopy.

Proposed View (Summer View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location due to intervening vegetation, topography and distance from the site screening the proposed development from view. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View (Winter View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during the winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf due to intervening vegetation, topography and distance from the site screening the proposed development from view. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 9

Location: R822 Grange Road, to the east of Pearse Museum

Distance from the site: 1.30km (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the western side of R822 Grange Road, to the east of the grounds of Pearse Museum. The view looks south towards the site. The view depicts a two-way road with on-road cycle lanes in both directions. A tarmacked footpath is present on both sides of the road. On the western side of the road the footpath is bound by a low natural stone wall of approximate height 0.5m, with a gentle grass slope leading to the natural stone wall boundary surrounding the grounds of Pearse Museum. A dense mature tree canopy cover of trees located within the grounds of Pearse Museum is visible in the right of the view overhanging the boundary wall. A large canopy of trees situated within the northern portion of Marlay Park is also visible in the background of the view.

Proposed View



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation, the topography of the landscape and as a result of distance from the site. Therefore, there will be no visual impact at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 10

Location: The intersection of Whitechurch Road and Taylor's Lane

Distance from the site: 1.25km (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the pedestrian island at the road intersection of Whitechurch Road and Taylor's Lane and looks south towards the site. The entrance gate, piers and boundary wall to the grounds of Grange Golf Club are visible in the right of the view. A two-way road network with cycle lanes are displayed in the foreground of the view. Some visual intrusion exists within the streetscape in the form of ESB poles and cables, road signage and safety barriers. The rooftops of two-storey residential properties and their associated front garden boundary treatments on the western side of Whitechurch Road are visible in the middle ground of the view. A small portion of the Dublin Mountains are partially visible in the background of the view beyond the intervening built fabric of residential properties on Whitechurch Road and vegetation to the perimeter of Grange Golf Club.

Proposed View



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Intervening vegetation, topography, built fabric and distance from the site effectively screen all elements of the proposed development from view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 11

Location: Whitechurch Green

Distance from the site: 885m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on Whitechurch Green, on the northern edge of the local green space. The built fabric of Whitechurch Community and Youth Centre and one and two storey residential properties on Whitechurch Heights are visible in the middle distance of the view. In the foreground of the view, a large open area of mown grass is visible. The Dublin Mountains are visible in the background of the view above the rooftops of intervening residential properties.

Proposed View



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened by intervening built infrastructure and landform and distance from the site. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 12

Location: Public path adjacent to Moyville green space

Distance from the site: 1.05km (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located adjacent to the public path within the local green space adjacent to Moyville. The view looks south-east towards the site. The foreground of the view depicts an open area of local green space comprising mown grass lawn. The natural stone boundary wall and mature tree planting to the northern perimeter of Edmondstown Golf Club is visible within the middle distance of the view. Glimpses of the Dublin Mountains are partially visible in the background of the view beyond the intervening mature tree canopy.

Proposed View (Summer View)



Dunes Visuals Ltd. Architectural Presentations info@dunesvisuals.com						
Project :	Edmondstown	Date : 18.02.2022	Photo Info. Date : 21.09.2020 Time : 11:07	Visual Impact Assessment	View 12	As Proposed

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location due to intervening vegetation, boundary walls and distance from the site screening the proposed development from view. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View (Winter View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. The proposed development will be screened intervening vegetation, boundary walls and distance from the site. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 13

Location: Edmondstown Golf Club

Distance from the site: 750m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located within Edmondstown Golf Club and looks south-east towards the site. A parkland golf course setting is represented within this view – closely mown grass with a variety of tree planting enclosing the space is visible. A mixture of mature broadleaved and coniferous trees are visible in the background of the view. Glimpses of the Dublin Mountains are visible in the right background of the view through the intervening mature tree canopy.

Proposed View



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening topography, vegetation and distance from the site. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 14

Location: Main entrance to Edmondstown Golf Club, R116 Edmondstown Road

Distance from the site: 1.05km (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the Edmondstown Road at the main entrance to Edmondstown Golf Club. The view looks east towards the site. The boundary wall, hedge planting and metal gate to the entrance of the golf club dominates the foreground of the view. A tall Leyland Cypress hedge restricts views further into the distance.

Proposed View



Dunes Visuals Ltd. Architectural Presentations info@dunesvisuals.com					
Project : Edmondstown	Date : 18.02.2022	Photo Info: Date : 21.09.2020 Time : 11:35	Visual Impact Assessment	View 14	As Proposed

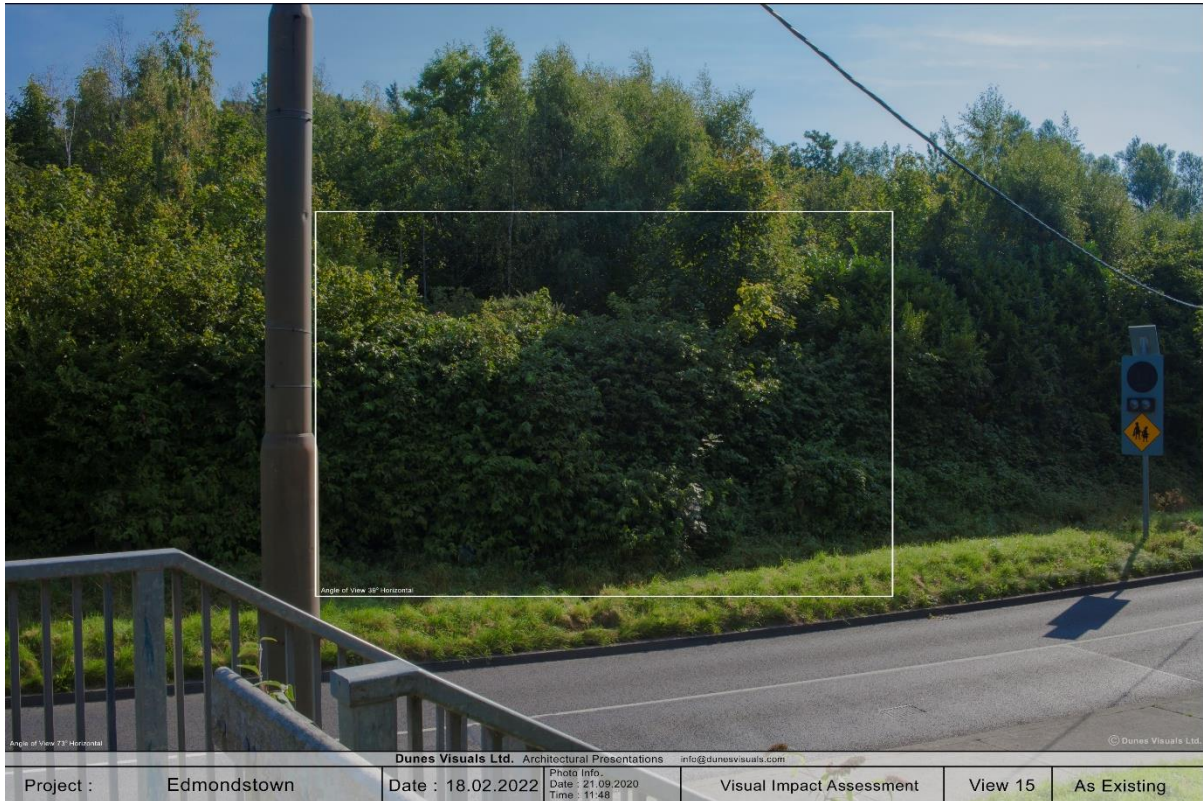
The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Intervening topography and vegetation screen all elements of the proposed development from view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 15

Location: Footbridge crossing the stream running parallel to Edmondstown Road

Distance from the site: 900m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located on the footbridge crossing a tributary of the River Dodder, on the western side of the Edmondstown Road. The view faces east towards the site. A dense hedgerow and mature tree planting to the perimeter of the grounds of Edmondstown Golf Club are dominant within the view and restrict views further into the distance. Some visual intrusion exists within the streetscape in the form of ESB poles and overhead cables, reducing the visual quality of the landscape. The Edmondstown Road flanked by maintained grass verges is visible in the foreground of the view.

Proposed View



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation and topography. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 16

Location: Carpark at Kilmashogue Cemetery

Distance from the site: 625m (approx.)

Existing View



This viewpoint is located in the car park in Kilmashogue Cemetery and looks east towards the site. Tarmacked surfaced parking bays are evident in the foreground of the view, whilst in the middle distance of the view, rows of gravestones within the cemetery setting are visible. A tall neat hedgerow encloses the northern and eastern perimeter of the cemetery grounds. Glimpses of the Dublin Mountains are visible in the far right of the view beyond the intervening tree canopy.

Proposed View



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location due to intervening topography and distance from the site screening all elements of the proposed development from view. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 17

Location: The front of Whitechurch Parish, Whitechurch Road

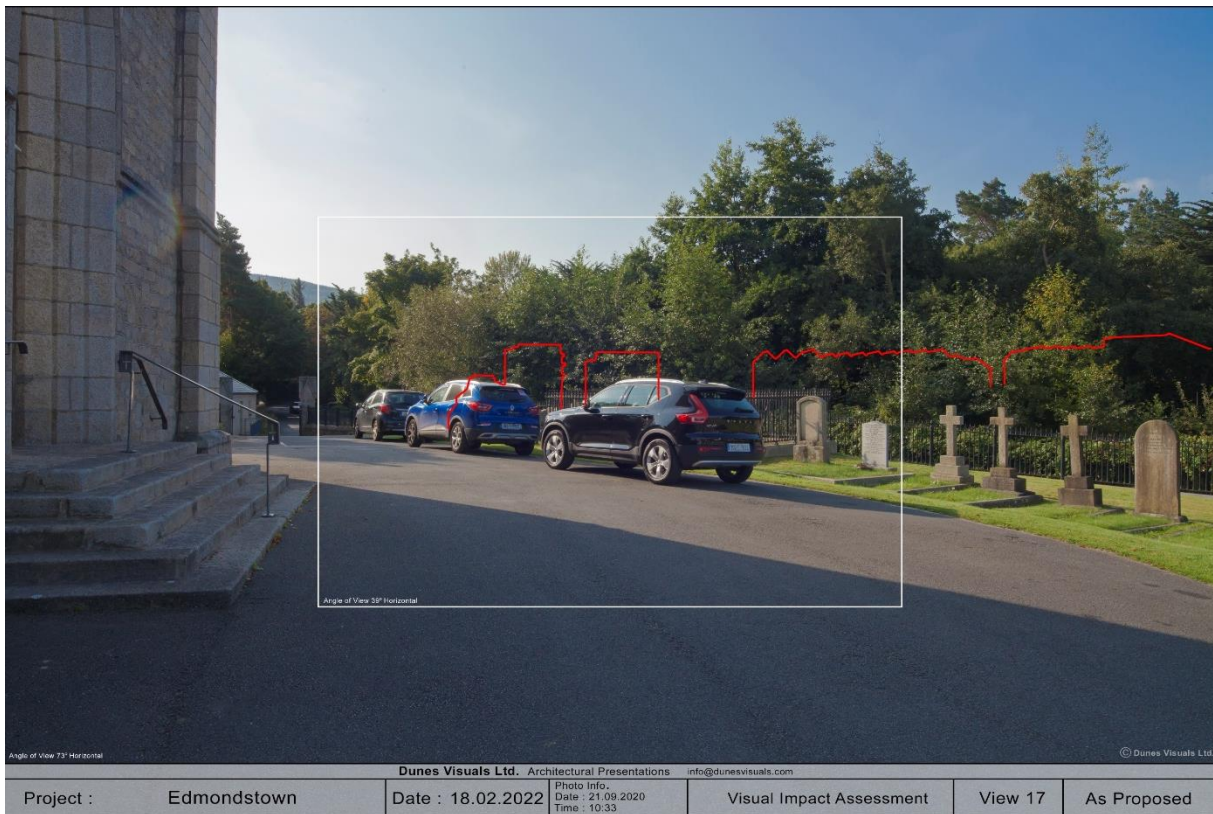
Distance from the site: 85m (approx.)

Existing View



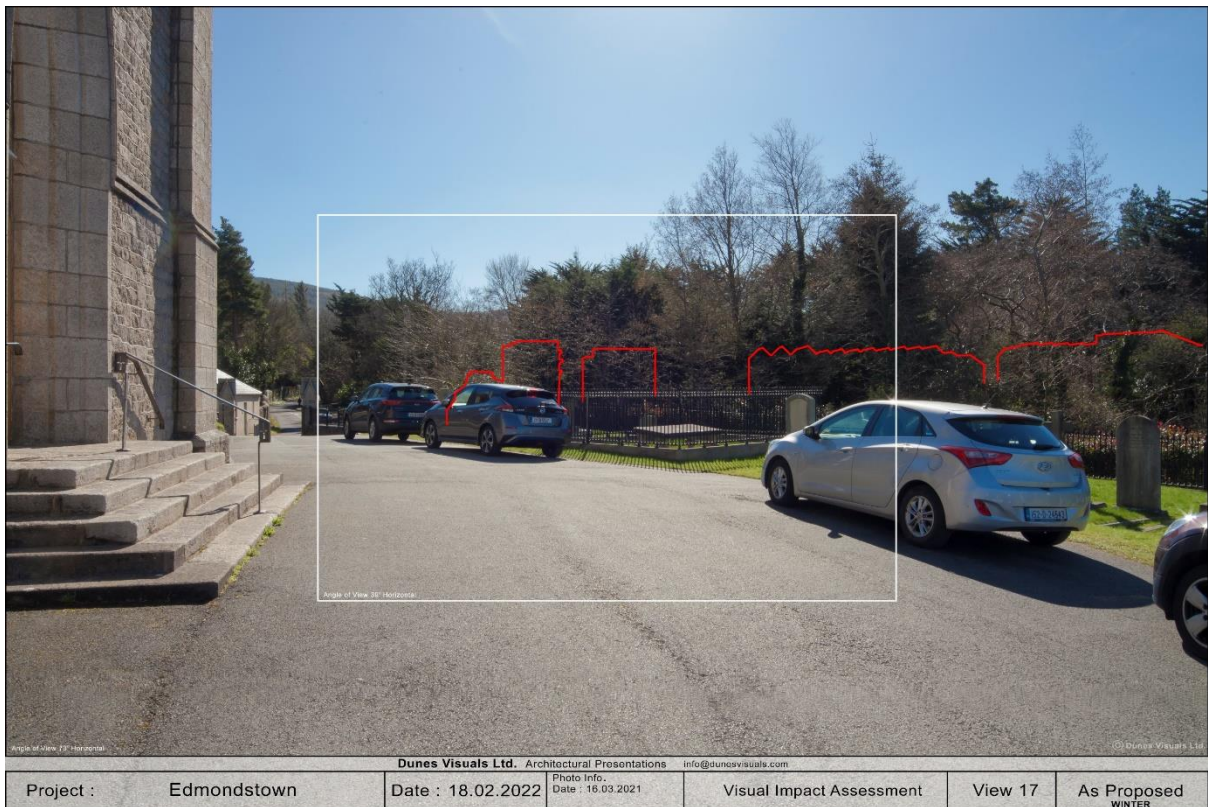
This viewpoint is located at the front of Whitechurch Parish, situated on the eastern side of Whitechurch Road. The view faces south-west towards the site. The built fabric of the western elevation and steps leading to the front entrance door to the church are visible in the left of the view. Several grave headstones and informal parking are visible in the middle distance. A metal railing is visible at the interface of the church grounds and Whitechurch Road. A dense, mature tree canopy and hedging are visible lining the western side of the Whitechurch Road, screening views into the site. A glimpse view of the Dublin Mountains is visible in the left background of the view above the existing intervening tree canopy.

Proposed View (Summer View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The extent of the proposed development is shown by a red line representing its location in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation, topography and distance from the site. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View (Winter View)



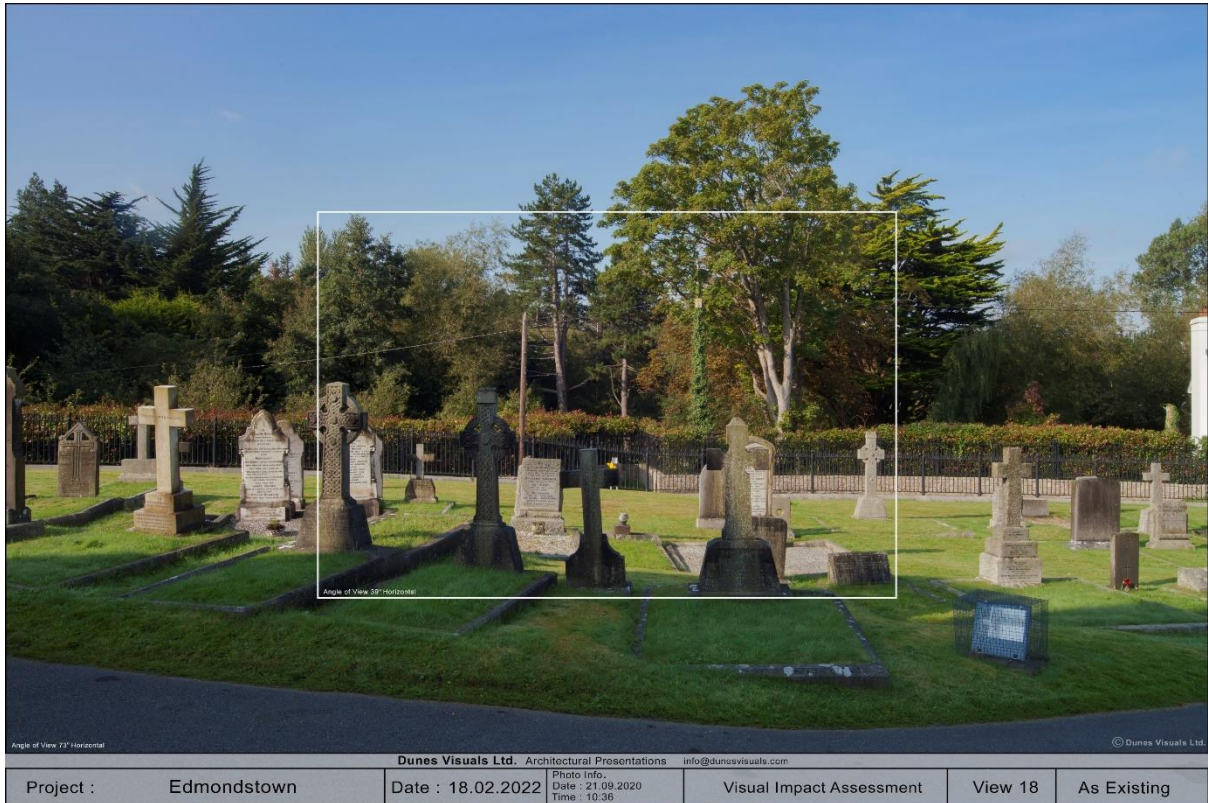
The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. The extent of the proposed development is shown by a red line representing its location in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation, topography and distance from the site. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Viewpoint 18

Location: The front of Whitechurch Parish, Whitechurch Road

Distance from the site: 85m (approx.)

Existing View



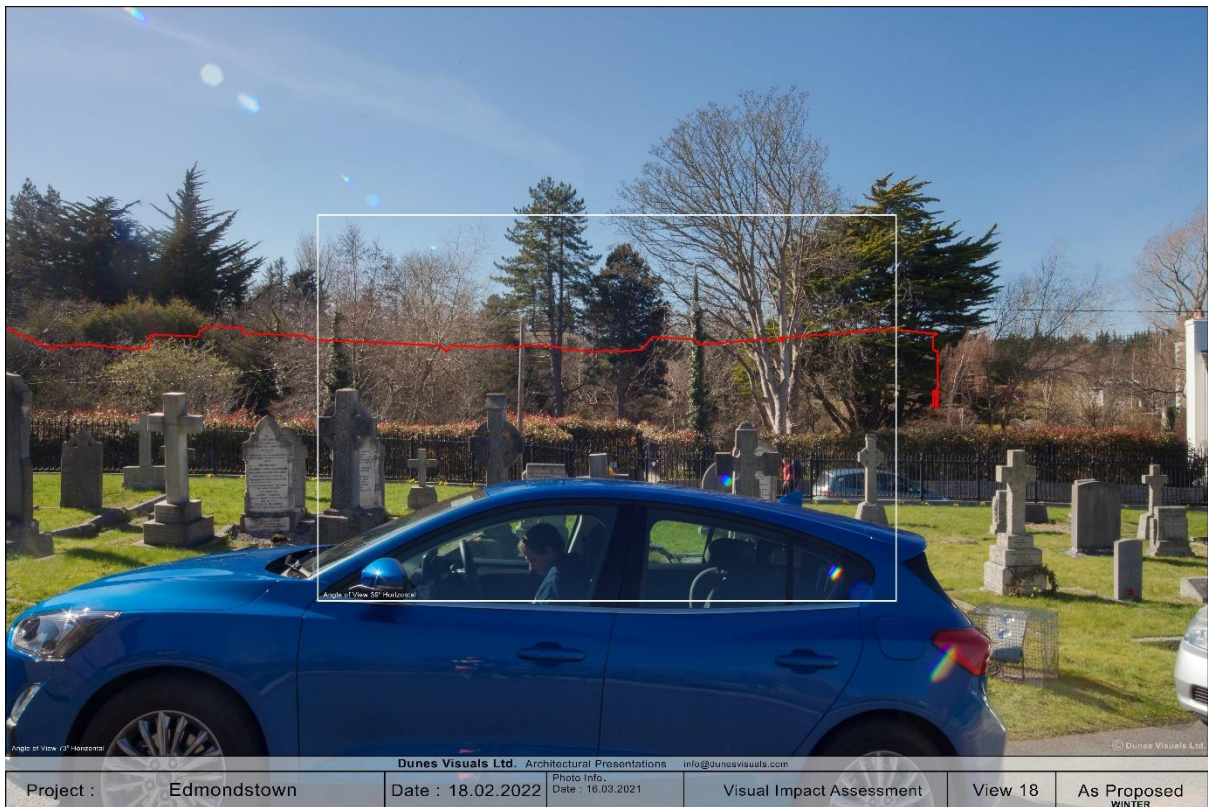
This viewpoint is located within the grounds of Whitechurch Parish Church, Whitechurch Road and looks west towards the site. In the foreground of the view several grave headstones are visible on a mown grass lawn. A plinth wall and metal railing boundary forms the interface on both sides of the Whitechurch Road. Beyond this in the background of the view, a neat hedgerow and tall mature tree planting line the western side of Whitechurch Road. The mature tree canopy screens views into the site.

Proposed View (Summer View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Proposed View (Winter View)



The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint location during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. The red line presented on the image indicates the extent of the proposed development in the background of the view. All elements of the proposed development will be screened from view by intervening vegetation. Therefore, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development at this viewpoint location.

Conclusion

The existing development site consists of two character areas located immediately to the west of Whitechurch Road and north of the M50 in Edmondstown, South County Dublin. The site consists predominantly of agricultural grassland used for pastoral grazing, with a number of vacant and derelict dwellings and out-buildings dispersed throughout. The site is rich in vegetation cover and features mature hedgerow and shelterbelt planting surrounding field perimeters and a number of groups of mature trees. Whitechurch Stream, a tributary of the River Dodder traverses the site on a north to south axis along the eastern perimeter and is surrounded by dense riparian edge planting. The stream is rich in plant biodiversity and wildlife and serves as an important aquatic corridor.

From within the site, the most expansive views can be seen looking west across adjacent agricultural grassland and south towards the Dublin Mountains. Mature tree planting and tall hedgerows act to restrict views in various locations. The boundary between the southern perimeter of the site and the M50 motorway is formed by a concrete wall of approximate height 2.4m. The eastern site boundary forms an interface with Whitechurch Road and is formed by low natural stone walls characteristic of the area. Elsewhere mature hedgerow planting delineates site perimeters.

The proposed residential development consists of the construction of a 178no. dwellings and a neighbourhood centre consisting of a creche, shops and café. The development comprises a range of housing units including apartments, duplex units and houses, spread across the Edmondstown South and Edmondstown North character areas. Each character area will be accessed from a vehicular access road off the western side of Whitechurch Road. A high-quality landscape setting will be achieved through a range of hard and soft landscaping interventions. The proposed development will feature a series of open spaces including public parks with kickabout lawn and seating areas, communal amenity space associated with apartment blocks, a duplex shared garden, public plaza, active open space, formal public playground and informal nature play areas and a river walk with streamside seating. A shared surface homezone treatment is proposed throughout the development to create an equal priority environment for vehicles and pedestrians. The design proposals recognise the ecological importance of both character areas and therefore a strategy for retaining existing hedgerows and trees and the protection and enhancement of the riparian edge will be implemented.

In order to evaluate the overall landscape and visual impact of the proposed strategic housing development, eighteen verified views were assessed within the local domain, from locations where there is a potential for impact upon key local sensitive receptors. At the request of the local

authorities, additional winter views were also undertaken to assess the potential visual impact of the proposed development from key locations during winter months when trees are not in leaf. There are eleven winter view scenarios for the following views; V2, V3, V4, V5, V6, V7, V8, V12, V13, V17, V18. It should also be noted that the local authorities requested additional views from the N11/M11. This request was reviewed but was not deemed feasible due to health and safety concerns by the photomontage consultants, i.e., there were no safe or suitable locations to undertake photography on this busy arterial route.

Of the eighteen viewpoint locations, there are two locations where there will be views of the proposed development. In sixteen locations, there will be no visual impact from the proposed development due to intervening vegetation, distance from the site, intervening topography and built infrastructure which obscure the proposed development from view.

There will be potential visual impacts from Viewpoints 2 and Viewpoints 3. Viewpoint number 2 represents a view where it is considered that there will be a negative and moderate visual impact in the short term during the construction stage of the project. This will reduce to a neutral and slight visual impact during the operational phase. The proposed built fabric of the proposed development will not be visible from this location however elements of the proposed landscaping and new link road and cycle path infrastructure will be partially visible.

At Viewpoint 3, there visual impact is considered to be significant and negative in the short term during the construction stage of the project, reducing to moderate and negative in the medium term. This may reduce further to a moderate and neutral impact in the long term if the ground floor units and external public realm/outdoor spaces are activated with users of the retail/non retail units and neighbourhood centre. The retention of existing tree planting and addition of new tree planting along the Whitechurch Road boundary assists in screening much of the façade of Block B from view during summer months. When trees are not in leaf, there will be more clear views of the façade of Block B from this viewpoint location.

Generally, the extent of the existing tree and hedgerow planting to the perimeter of the site will screen the majority of the proposed development from view from the public domain. It should be noted that much of this planting is coniferous and quite densely planted which will be beneficial in visually containing views into the proposed development, as well as maintaining the sylvan and rural character of the general area.