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PMCA architects

PLANNING DESIGN REPORT
PROPOSED APARTMENT DEVELOPMENT
AT
HILL HOUSE
LUCAN ROAD
LUCAN,
CO. DUBLIN
for
FRANCES DOWLING



PMCA architects

PLANNING DESIGN REPORT

Residential Development at Hill House, Lucan, Co. Dublin

1. Introduction

The current design proposal is an amendment to the previous decision to grant planning application SD20A/0142 which was then refused by An Bord Pleanála PL06S.309483 on the basis of an inappropriate entrance/exit to the site. The current proposal aims to correct the proposed entrance way as described by An Bord Pleanála while maintaining all other facets to the proposal that were deemed appropriate and successful by both South Dublin County Council and An Bord Pleanála previously.

A design proposal has been prepared to develop the site at Hill House, Lucan Road, Lucan, Co. Dublin on behalf of Frances Dowling, in line with the SDCC Development Plan 2016-2022 and all relevant DoHPLG Guidelines and other applicable National and Regional Planning Policy Strategies.

The proposal now being submitted represents a positive development for the general area and will support the principles of more sustainable development in the serviced built-up areas of the city. This proposal seeks to address issues raised by the planning authority when determining an application for a similar proposal on this site. The site is of significant scale and size and is therefore suitable for more intense development. The site currently accommodates one single storey dwelling with some large out-buildings, all of which are now end-of-life brownfield buildings.

The existing lands are under-utilised, and the existing buildings are now unsustainable in the long term as habitable accommodation. The demolition of the existing structures will allow for the appropriate development of the lands providing much needed residential accommodation. Access to the proposed development will be through Lucan Road at the front of the site. Access for Fire Tender vehicles, bin lorries and emergency vehicles will be provided from Lucan Road. A secondary access is proposed off Lucan Heights to the south.

The proposed development comprises the construction of 20 no. apartments consisting of:

- Demolition of 1 no. dwelling.
- 6 no. 1-bed apartments.
- 13 no. 2-bed apartments.
- Car park (11 spaces).
- Bin and Bicycle storage area accommodating 20 bicycles.
- Associated ancillary services landscaping works.

The applicant is seeking to realise a residential development of high quality with a range of unit types which will contribute positively to the sustainable development of these 'residential' zoned lands in the increasingly important satellite towns of the capital city.

2. Site Location and Description

The site is located to the south of Lucan Road, just east of the centre of Lucan. The site has an area of 0.19 Ha. and is a level, regular square, open site, which currently accommodates a large, but non-descript dwelling and a large out building. The site is a mixture of tarmac surfaces and a grass lawn to the north east while all the boundaries are well planted with trees and hedging, particularly along the west, south and east boundaries.

The site has a long frontage onto the main public road at Lucan Road, from which it access via the north eastern corner of the site. A public pedestrian route runs along the eastern boundary connecting to the residential estate at Lucan Heights to the south. The southern boundary itself bounds onto a residential estate known as Lucan Heights. The area surrounding the site is predominantly given over to residential development and is surrounded in the main by two storey detached and semi-detached residential developments, with the exception of the western boundary which bounds directly onto Presentation Mission House along its western boundary. The area immediately adjacent to the development site along its western boundary is an open grassed space incidental to the buildings. The nearest building on the adjoining property to the west is approximately 35 meters distance from the boundary of the development site. The building to the east of the site and the public pedestrian route that forms the eastern boundary of the site is an office building occupied by Pieta House, a registered charity, in use as offices and consultation rooms.

The southern boundary of the site adjoins a two storey semidetached house no. 4 The Cloisters, Lucan Heights.

The site presently accommodates a single storey dwelling house which is situated in the north western corner of the site, forming part of the boundary walls onto the footpath. The existing dwelling house is not a protected structure. The dwelling is generally in fair condition but given its age, size and incoherent rambling form, it has now reached the end of its practical life. The dwelling is made up of a series of additions and extensions onto an original dwelling which is more than 80 years old. The property is not of significant architectural and/or historical value and it is therefore considered appropriate to remove the existing structure in order to facilitate development of the site in a more sustainable and practical manner in the context of the current planning and development environment.



AERIAL VIEW OF SITE CONTEXT AND SURROUNDINGS

The development proposal includes for the retention of the trees and hedges along the south and western boundaries and the introduction of a new boundary wall with railings and planting along the eastern boundary with the pedestrian foot path to encourage passive surveillance of the pedestrian route. All boundaries will be supplemented with additional strategic tree planting.

3. Planning and Development Context

The site at Hill House, Lucan Road is located in an area zoned for residential development which is 'Zone RES – "to protect and/or improve residential amenities"'.

The site is situated in a well-developed and mature residential area of Lucan Town and is fully served by a range of social/community services and commercial/retail facilities which make the site wholly suitable for more intense residential development. There is an extensive range of facilities in the immediate area such as schools, shopping, leisure, sports, community, entertainment and business uses. All of these are within close proximity to the site and the development of this site as proposed will support and help sustain the community living in the area.

An extract from Map 1 of the South County Dublin Development Plan 2016 -2022 is indicated below. This illustrates the residential zoning status, and the predominantly residential zoning of the surrounding area. The proposal to develop the site as a residential development with a compatible mix of residential unit types conforms fully to the zoning and the development plan objectives and will represent a more sustainable and efficient use of the zoned and serviced lands in this expanding satellite town.

Lucan is one of three towns in the South Dublin County area which is designated as a '**Metropolitan Consolidation Town**'. The development plan records in relation to Lucan in **Table 1.1: South Dublin Settlement Hierarchy under the Regional Planning Guidelines** that:

'Strong active urban places within the Metropolitan Area with strong transport links. These towns should be developed at a relatively large scale as part of the consolidation of the Metropolitan Area and to ensure that they support key public transport corridors connecting them to the City, to each other and to Large Growth Towns in the Hinterland. Long term growth could see them expanding to a population of up to 100,000 people in a planned and phased manner'.

This is further expanded in Section 1.7.2 which states that

'Metropolitan Consolidation Towns are located close to Dublin City and function as part of the Dublin Gateway. These towns will continue to support key public transport corridors and be important locations for services, retail and economic activity'

Lucan and the other Consolidation towns have been identified as the areas for the provision of significant housing development in the County's area and this is set out in the Table 1.1: South Dublin Settlement Hierarchy under the Regional Planning Guidelines:

- **Core Strategy CS2 Objective 5** – 'to promote and support high quality infill development in existing built-up areas' and
- **Core Strategy CS2 Objective 6** - 'to promote higher residential densities at appropriate locations, adjacent to town centres and high capacity public transport nodes.



SOUTH COUNTY DUBLIN DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016-2022

MAP 1

In preparing this design proposal the key policy documents which were taken into account were as follows:

- *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2008) and Urban Design Manual*
- *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DoECLG Dec 2015)*
- *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DoHPLG 2017 & 2018)*
- *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DoHPLG 2020)*
- *Delivering Homes, Sustainable Communities (DoEHLG 2007) and Best Practice Guidelines – Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities*
- *Regional Planning Guidelines for Greater Dublin Area (2010-2022)*
- *Smarter Travel – A New Transport policy for Ireland (2009-2020)*
- *Urban Development and Building Heights- Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2018 and*
- *South County Dublin Development Plan 2016-2022*

The current National Planning Framework (NPF) identifies as a core objective the consolidation of development in urban areas in a manner which protects local character and amenity. Urban consolidation is considered a key requirement to ensure future sustainable development, economic competitiveness and the efficient utilisation of increased investment in transport infrastructure. All of the above have been taken into consideration in the process of preparing this design proposal and underpin the nature and intention of this proposal.

As already stated, the site is clearly well served by public transport, there being a bus route directly along the Lucan Road, which also provides a dedicated cycle route connecting Lucan to the city centre. In addition, the site is immediately adjacent to the N4 motorway which provides access to M50 and the West.

A planning application for a similar type development was lodged with SDCC on the 24th of June 2019, SDCC Register Reference No. SD19A/0198. This application was refused planning permission for 4 reasons:

- Reason 1. *The proposed intensification of traffic at the access to the site in close proximity to a controlled junction and onto a heavily trafficked regional road would result in increased traffic hazard. It is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard or obstruction of road users or otherwise.*
- Reason 2. *Having regard to the overall bulk, scale and massing of the building, the proposed development would be visually obtrusive and would adversely impact on the visual and residential amenity of adjacent residential properties and the wider area, and would set an undesirable precedent for similar type development in the area and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*
- Reason 3. *The proposed development would have a significant overbearing impact on the dwelling to the south and would therefore not be in accordance with the zoning objective of the site 'to protect and/or improve Residential Amenity'. The proposed development would, therefore, seriously injure the residential amenities of the area, would conflict with the objectives of the County Development Plan and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*
- Reason 4. *Having regard to the provision of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (December 2018), the Planning Authority is not satisfied on the basis of the information submitted that the proposed development complies with the criteria set out in Section 3.0 of said guidelines. The proposed development therefore would be contrary to SPPR 3 of the Ministerial Guidelines and contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

In preparing a subsequent application a Pre-Planning consultation took place with SDCC on behalf of the client by Laurence Pierce and Michael McCabe of PMCA Architects on the 6th of February 2020 at the offices of South Dublin County Council, Pre-Planning Register Reference No. PP165/19. A second proposal was developed further and amended based on these discussions. The amendments to the previous design submitted involved changes to the design and site layout with the intention of successfully resolving all the points raised and identified by the planners and road engineer present at the meeting and address the 4 reasons for the previous refusal of planning permission.

In particular the design and layout of this proposal addresses Reason 1 of the previous refusal of planning permission and follows discussion and correspondence with the Roads and Traffic Department of SDCC and the project consulting Engineers, GK Consulting Engineers Ltd as detailed in the Engineering Services & Drainage Design Report that forms part of this application.

In preparing the design of this proposal Reasons 2 & 3 of the previous refusal of planning permission have been addressed by reducing the overall bulk, scale, and massing of the building. The height of the building is reduced from 3 to 2 storeys at the southern end of the site to eliminate the risk of impacting the residential amenity the dwellings to the south.

To address Reason 4 of the previous refusal of planning permission full cognizance is taken of the criteria set out in Section 3 of the Urban Development and Building Guidelines for Planning Authorities (December 2018) and as further detailed on page 6 of this architectural design report.

These amendments address the main planning concerns that arose during the assessment of the previous planning application and address the items discussed at the Pre-Planning consultation. This second design proposal was then submitted under application SD20A/0142 which with the submission of additional information was given a decision to grant permission on 28/01/2021. This decision was then appealed by Bernard J. and Vivienne Coyne care of Hughes Planning and Development Consultants and by Lucan Heights Residents care of O'Neill Town Planning of Oakdene to An Bord Pleanála under reg reg ABP-309525-21 where it was refused despite the ABP inspectors' suggestion to grant permission. The above-mentioned application was refused on the basis that:

"Having regard to the proximity of the primary site access to the controlled junction on the R835 regional road, to the proposed limited access by means of a "left in, left out" arrangement only, and to the proposed use of the secondary access point onto Lucan Heights across the existing pedestrian walkway which is considered inappropriate, it is considered that the proposed intensification of traffic accessing and egressing the site would result in increased traffic hazard on a busy road and would result in unsafe traffic movements into and out of the site. It is considered that the proposed development would endanger pedestrian safety by reason of creating a traffic hare and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant permission, the Board considered that the proposed secondary access over the pedestrian laneway to the east of the site and through the cul-de-sac of Lucan Heights would present an unacceptable risk to pedestrians using this access point to the established estate and would introduce an unacceptable level of additional traffic onto this narrow roadway. Accordingly, in the context of not accepting the viability of the secondary access point to the site, and taking account of the constrained nature of the primary access point onto the R835, where right-turning vehicles into and out of the site would cause a significant traffic risk under the current road arrangements, the Board considered that the increased traffic accessing the site cannot be accommodated in the absence of the provision of safer and more sustainable road design solutions such as box junctions, traffic lights and/or pedestrian crossing to facilitate the development."

It is under this pretense that we hereby submit the amended planning application with the recommended road design solutions of a box junction and a pedestrian crossing to facilitate the development.

4. Development Management Implementation

Development in areas with residential zoning is subject to compliance with the Planning and Development Policy for such areas as set out in the **Chapter 11.3.0 'Land Uses'** of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022. There are several specific requirements in this section of the Development plan which are relevant in this case which have been identified and addressed below:

11.3.1 Residential

i. Mix of Dwelling Types

On smaller infill sites such as the current proposal, it is stated that a mix of dwellings should contribute to the overall dwelling mix in the locality. The surrounding residential area is predominantly made up of three- and four-bedroom dwellings with very little variety in residential typology. This proposal is for 1- and 2-bedroom apartments which will provide suitable accommodation for a range of occupancies not adequately served for in the area. Single persons, first time buyers and retired couples are among the type of occupants which would be best served by this development.

The following is a breakdown of the apartment units proposed:

- 6 x 1-bedroom apartments, represents 32%
- 13 x 2-bedroom apartments, represents 68%

Specific Planning Policy Requirement 1 of the DoHPLG 'Sustainable Urban Housing Guidelines 2020' states that '*Housing developments may include up to 50% one-bedroom or studio type units ... and there shall be no minimum requirement for apartments with three or more bedrooms.*'

The proposed development consists of an apartment mix which complies fully with the relevant criteria set out in the Apartment Guidelines 2020.

i. Residential Density

The apartment development now being proposed represents a sustainable and appropriate density of development given the size and scale of the site, its location close to the centre of Lucan and its transport link to Dublin city centre by QBC. Lucan has been identified as one of the Metropolitan Consolidation Towns in the Regional Planning Guidelines Settlement Hierarchy and this is confirmed, as referred to earlier in section 1.7.2 of the SDCDP 2016-2022. In particular '**Core Strategy CS 5 and CS 6**' are specifically relevant to this proposal.

The development site is within short walking distance of the centre of Lucan. A wide range of retail, community and social services are all located close to the site. A QBC Route (no. 25) is located directly along the Lucan Road immediately adjacent to the site. This provides a regular and reliable connection to the city centre while all other local services are close by using bicycle or walking. There is mainline/DART rail service located at Adamstown which are readily accessible by bicycle. This provides a rapid public transport connection to Dublin city centre and the West.

National guidance as set out in 'Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas' DoECLG 2009 does not prescribe the setting of density in development but places emphasis on the role of good design. The document asserts that land is a scarce resource and should be used as efficiently as possible. This approach is underpinned by the national and regional planning guidelines and the South Dublin Development Plan where the development of infill serviced brownfield sites is promoted in order to increase residential development in Consolidation Towns and manage the use of land more efficiently.

On this basis this site is perfectly suitable for a more intense form of residential development providing a different residential mix than currently exist in the area while ensuring that the existing surrounding amenities are properly protected.

The proposal is for the construction of an apartment block which will provide 19 apartments in a four storey building. The site area is 0.19 hectares. The proposed development would result in a density of 105 units per hectare.

It was noted in the Inspectors Report for the application ABP-309525-21 that: "The site is located within a mature residential area supported by a network of community and social facilities positioned within walking

distance of the site and public transport. Residential use is permitted in principle and is compatible with adjoining land uses."

ii. Building Height 11.2.7

The proposed building height of this development was arrived at having carried out an analysis of its location, context and relationship to the surrounding built form. Reference to both South County Dublin Development Plan 2016-2022 and the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines published by DoHPLG December 2018 has been undertaken.

The following site characteristics were identified which determined the appropriate height for a development on this site:

- The site is located in a 'Metropolitan Consolidation Town' in the SDC Development Plan which seeks 'to promote higher residential densities at appropriate locations, adjacent to town centres and high-capacity public transport nodes'
- The site is a distinct and stand-alone separate site with a long frontage onto Lucan Road, which is the main thoroughfare leading into the centre of Lucan
- The site is separated from adjoining commercial properties to the east by a wide public pedestrian laneway and to the west by the large open space of the adjoining convent
- The properties to the south are two storeys and should be reflected in the heights along the southern boundary.

Reference to Building Heights in Table 11.17 Masterplan Considerations SDCDP 2016-2022 states that one of the Key Outcomes should be the '*Distribution of heights to reinforce the urban structure with taller buildings located along key movement corridors and within centres and nodes*'

With the exception of the southern area of the site which adjoins two storey houses, the site analysis and assessment would support the provision of increased height on this site given its main frontage onto a main road, its separate and distinct site delineation and its remoteness from any adjoining residential properties to the east, north and west. The current proposal incorporates a reduction in the overall number of apartments compared to the previous application and the reduction in the height of the southernmost element of the proposed apartment block to two storeys which matches the height of the adjoining houses in Lucan Heights.

The Department of Housing Planning and Local Government issued Guidelines for Planning Authorities – Urban Development and Building Heights in December 2018. In line with the National Planning Framework which seeks to achieve compact urban growth as one of its strategic outcomes, the above Height Guidelines were issued to identify the rationale for consolidation and densification of development in order to meet the accommodation needs into the future.

Under Section 3.2 Development Management Criteria, of the above referenced Guidelines criteria for the assessment of the appropriate heights for particular developments are set out. The proposed development has been assessed in relation to all the specific criteria as follows:

'At the scale of the relevant city/town'

- The site is well served by public transport and has good links to other modes of public transport
- The site is not located in a highly sensitive area. As stated above the site fronts directly along its northern boundary onto a main distributor road leading into Lucan centre.

'At the scale of district/neighbourhood/street'

- The site is a stand-alone site with substantial separation distances from adjoining non-residential properties to the east and west. The proposed design responds positively to its street location and makes a clear and legible architectural statement consolidating the urban grain.
- The building has been designed to avoid large areas of uninterrupted walls with a range of materials and finishes which create a suitable scale of building
- The open frontage of the site to the north and its distinct position support the proposal to place a building with increased height along the northern area of the site

- The proposal will make a positive contribution to the area by providing an attractive building form at the approach into Lucan centre.
- The proposed development represents a mix of unit typologies which is currently limited in supply in the area which is predominantly 3- & 4-bedroom dwellings. The accommodation in the proposed development provides residential typologies suitable for single persons, couples, and retired persons.

'At the scale of the site/building'

- The building has been carefully designed to assimilate into the site in a sympathetic manner. The upper floor is set back, and the external facades are designed to avoid large building elements.
- The form of the building planned around a south facing communal courtyard maximises the access of all of the units to sunlight and daylight.
- The development reduces in height along its southern boundary matching the two-storey height of existing houses.

iii. Public Open Space

Public open space is provided as a communal landscaped area to the rear of the apartment block. The communal area is overlooked by each of the apartments and provides a calm and attractive amenity area for the development and creates an open area where it adjoins the neighbouring properties.



The open space provided has an area of 540 m² which is well in excess of the required open space provision of 10% as set out in the Development Plan. In fact, the area of open space represents 28% of the total site area. Appendix 1 of the Sustainable Urban Housing/New apartment guidelines requires a minimum quantum of communal open space to be provided at the rate of 5m²/one bedroom and 7m²/two bedroom which would equate to 135m². Again, this open space requirement is exceeded - by a factor of 4. The communal open space is situated so as to obtain the maximum exposure to daylight and sunlight for the apartments while ensuring that there is no adverse impact on any of the nearby properties.

The below comments were made in the Inspectors Report for application ABP-309525-21: "The third parties consider the overall height to be excessive, and it will create overbearing impact and is contrary to Policy H9 Objective 3 of the development plan because it is too close to No. 4 Lucan Cloisters, where there will be a dramatic increase in height. In response to this issue the site is not located in a highly sensitive architectural streetscape. The predominant height is two storey dwellings with a church further west along the streetscape. The development reduces in height along the southern boundary matching the two-storey height of existing houses (Lucan Cloisters), and then graduates to three and four storey.. In architectural terms there is a graduation in height, with building lines matching the front building line of the dwellings in the Lucan Cloisters cul de sac. There is no drastic increase in height between the existing and proposed residential properties."

&

"I would not consider the proposal to be overbearing as described by the appellants."

&

"I have examined the appeal drawing with the fourth floor removed, and although this is a subjective issue, I consider the suggestion creates an inferior and unnecessary adjustment to the overall design."

SITE LAYOUT SHOWING OPEN SPACE

All the apartments have been provided with private balconies/terraces and each of these are in excess of the minimum standard prescribed in the Development Plan and the Planning Guidelines.

iv. Dwelling Standards

The layouts of all the apartments have been designed to exceed the space standards set out in Table 11.21 of the Development Plan. A full and detailed Schedule of Accommodation has been prepared and is indicated on the application drawings. These schedules indicate all the relevant space and size data and confirm that each apartment meets the appropriate standard in terms of total floor area; room areas and sizes, storage provision as well as opens space standards. The rooms are dimensioned, and room areas are indicated on the plans.

v. Privacy

The development site is so configured that it does not result in any opposing facades at any point in the site. The apartment block has been designed and positioned on the site so as to avoid any overlooking of adjoining residential amenity. The building is concentrated towards the northern boundary along the public roadway.

Moreover, the site is well screened along all its other boundaries. Given its substantial distance from all nearby buildings, its plan form which avoids any direct overlooking and the boundary screening, the proposal will not impact on the existing privacy of adjoining properties.

It was noted by the Inspectors Report for application ABP-309525-21 that the Bord agrees with the above configuration: "Having regard to the configuration of adjoining residential curtilages and the proposed separation distances from the same residences, there will be minimal impact in terms of overlooking or loss of privacy of adjoining properties."

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"Given the orientation, the configuration of adjoining curtilages and setbacks from adjoining properties, the level of overshadowing resulting from the proposed development will be negligible as discussed below."

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"Having regard to the configuration of adjoining residential curtilages and the proposed separation distances from the same residences, there will be minimal impact in terms of overlooking or loss of privacy of adjoining properties. This is an urban/ suburban location, and a certain level of oblique overlooking of private rear gardens is to be anticipated within residential areas."

vi. Dual Aspect

Section 3.11 of the guidelines requires that the minimum number of dual aspect apartments that may be provided in any single development shall be 50%. In this proposal over 70% of the units are dual aspect while the remainder are south and west facing single aspect apartments. These relate directly to the central landscape court and will benefit from excellent orientation in terms of daylight and sunlight. Only the one-bedroom apartments are single aspect.

11.4.0 Transport and Mobility

11.4.1 Bicycle Parking Standards

Table 11.22 of the Development Plan sets out the minimum bicycle parking rates for all development. Residential apartment developments are required to provide a minimum of 1 space per 5 units. And 1 visitor space per 10 units. This would equate to 4 spaces + 2 visitor spaces; however the proposal has provided for a total number of 12 spaces for the occupants and 4 visitor spaces. This is considered to be more than adequate given the increase in bicycle use in the recent years.

11.4.2 Car Parking Standards

Table 11.24 of the Development Plan sets out the maximum car parking rates for all development.

The proposed development provides for surface car parking which is located along the eastern area of the site to the front of the apartment block. The total number of car spaces provided is 13 parking spaces. In terms of the site location adjacent to the centre of Lucan and its proximity to the QBC bus service along Lucan Road this provision of car spaces is considered appropriate and will meet the needs of the occupants of the development.

The proposed provision of car spaces conforms to the standard set out in **Section 4.19** of the DoHPLG Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines, December 2020, particularly as the site is close to public transport services and is close to the town centre and areas of employment.

5. Design Strategy

The block layout and site organization evolved from an analysis of the site characteristics. And its relationship to the adjoining properties. The site is regularly shaped and provides a sufficient and generous area to facilitate the placement of a block along the north and east boundaries without impacting on the existing surrounding amenities. This led to the conclusion that an L-shaped building would provide a practical and appropriate building form which defined the open area along the west and south boundaries. The apartment block was set back from the eastern boundary so as to provide an area for car parking, cycle and bin stores.

From this basic footprint the internal layouts were developed and a mix of one- and two-bedroom apartments located around two separate stair/lift access cores proved to be the most effective internal arrangement. All the units were designed to conform to the required space standards and design criteria set out in the Guidelines and Development Plan.

The building design for the apartment block is contemporary in its character but by the use of brick and coloured render as well as the overall scale of the buildings, the visual appearance of the buildings reflects the suburban character of the area.

The site organization described above allows for the realization of an efficient yet sympathetic residential development in this established residential district.

6. Urban Design

The Urban Design Manual sets out the design aspirations under specific criteria for new residential developments. The aim is to produce high quality places and living environments which are sustainable and adhere to good planning and design standards. The proposed residential design solution for this site reflects and responds to the relevant criteria as follows:

• Context

The design process involved the recognition the site-specific characteristics and the relationship of the site onto the Lucan Road interface and the adjoining private properties to the east, west and south. The site is fully self-contained, and it is clearly defined along all its boundaries by dense planting and solid walled boundaries. The site is essentially distinct and separated from its adjoining neighbors and allows for a stand-alone design approach for the development of the site.

Vehicle access to the site will be provided from Lucan Road and Lucan Heights. This provides for suitable access for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians alike. Emergency/Fire tenders and bin lorries.

The broader context places the site in a large suburb of zoned and settled residential lands which were generally constructed in excess of twenty years ago. Access to public transport is available to the occupants in the form of bus service immediately along the Lucan Road frontage and the mainline rail service nearby at Adamstown (A mere 15 minute cycle away).

The site therefore offers the opportunity of providing a residential development of appropriate density in an entirely suitable and sustainable context, which will contribute positively to the sustainable development of the local area, and the city in general.

- **Connections**

The site is located in an area which has been built up over a number of decades around the historical town of Lucan. The site interfaces with the public roadway and footpath immediately to the north of the site. A bicycle lane is located immediately outside the site and connects with the expanding bicycle lane network.

As indicated above the site is immediately adjacent to a bus service along Lucan Road. Mainline rail service to city centre is located at Adamstown, which is readily accessible by cyclists. The site is immediately adjacent to the M50 motorway which links to all regions and districts. Such good access to public transport and private road network supports the principle of higher densities in order to achieve sustainable development

Within the site the pedestrian and vehicle movements are clearly articulated resulting in a safe and pedestrian friendly environment for both occupants and visitors alike. The site is therefore well connected in terms of mobility and accessibility.

- **Inclusivity**

The proposed development has been designed to provide a suitable range of residential unit types which will supplement the predominant 3/4-bedroom house typology in the area. The proposal includes for the provision of 1- and 2-bedroom apartments increasing the range of options which will suit a variety of people of different ages, backgrounds and lifestyles.

The building design is clear and legible with definitive public and private realms giving the development a strong sense of place. The area to the front will provide a public/private space with car parking and quality landscape treatment which will increase the sense of belonging and inclusion for all the occupants. Its overall design will ensure that it forms an intrinsic part of Lucan town and will be well integrated into its receiving environment.

- **Variety**

This is a relatively small residential development primarily used by the occupants; the variety in this case is provided for in its difference from other surrounding developments. The building form and character provide a richer and more vibrant presentation resulting in greater variety of building form and appearance.

- **Efficiency**

The site currently contains one detached house as illustrated in the attached drawings The site is eminently suitable for increased density due to its zoning objective. The National Strategy Plan and Development Plan policies promote the more efficient use of serviced land. Lucan is a Metropolitan Consolidation Town and is identified for more intense and efficient development. All public utility services are available and based on the principles of proper sustainable development the current proposal represents an appropriate and efficient use of zoned lands and existing and future services.

- **Distinctiveness**

The preservation of identified existing trees, proposed tree planting, the attractive landscape treatment and the clearly articulated architecture will contribute to a site-specific development proposal which will create a unique development with a strong yet pleasant identity. The proposal is a site-specific design response which is distinct in its character and presents an articulate and legible urban building along the busy public road. The building presents a more urban building form which reflects the current need to build more efficiently in built-up areas. The building design and quality of open space all combine to make the residential environment one of high quality and distinct personality. On that basis the development will have a strong and attractive identity.

- **Layout**

The final layout has evolved over a period of time involving exploration of a variety of building forms and organization. The proposed site layout presents a simple but very strong and attractive pattern of development which incorporates all the main design objectives. The site layout is practical, logical and is clearly articulated providing a high-quality architectural composition with excellent open spaces and clearly defined public/private realms.

- **Building Height**

In accordance with Government Policy as set out in the Urban Development & Building Heights-Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2018 Section 3 building heights should be generally increased in appropriate urban locations. The location of the site just east of the centre of Lucan, is a key urban location. Lucan has been identified as one of the Metropolitan Consolidation Towns in the Regional Planning Guidelines Settlement Hierarchy. The site is well serviced with public transport, a QBC Route (no. 25) is located direct along the Lucan Road immediately adjacent to the site. There is mainline/DART rail service located at Adamstown which are readily accessible by bicycle. This provides a rapid public transport connection to Dublin city centre and the West.

The proposal for a two to four storey building makes a positive contribution to the urban streetscape and neighbourhood. The proposed building is two storey in height adjoining the southern boundary and in keeping with the two storey height of the adjoining houses. The design of the building allows a gradual increase from the two storey southern element up to three then four storey as it addresses the busy Lucan Road. The choice of materials and the form of the building ensures the building is not monolithic with the materials well considered. The height of the building is carefully modulated to maximise access to natural light and views and minimizes overshadowing or impact on adjoining residential amenities. The highest element of the building is located fronting onto the busy Lucan Road which successfully integrates into the public realm as depicted below.



VIEW OF APARTMENT BUILDING FRONTING LUCAN ROAD

- **Public Realm**

The development has been designed to present a clear and defined public and private realm within the scheme. As stated above the communal open space has been located on the site for the maximum benefit of the occupants. The northern and eastern areas of the site have been organized in a structured manner with a clear pattern of vehicle and pedestrian movement. Pedestrian movement through the site is well defined and will be accentuated with a variety of paving surface finishes.

The building form and façade addresses the frontage onto Lucan road in a strong and uncluttered fashion which will improve the interface with the streetscape improving the public realm along this busy road.

Accordingly, the development provides a strong and clearly identifiable public realm which will add positively to the built environment along Lucan Road.

- **Adaptability**

The range of unit types provides for a potential mix of different occupancy types. The 1 and 2 bed apartments all offer a different residential typology currently provided for in the surrounding area, which allows the units to be suitable for occupation by single persons, couples, first time buyers and retired persons. The unit types will increase the overall residential adaptability in the general area of Lucan.

- **Privacy and Amenity**

All duplex and apartments are provided with private terraces or balconies in accordance with the guideline recommendations. Open space is provided which is accessible to all occupants and provides a high quality of residential environment for all the residential units. The various areas of open space and landscape treatment throughout the site ensures that all units have unobstructed outlook to the landscaped open spaces. It was recognised by the Inspectors Report for application ABP-309525-21 that it is the Bord opinion that: "The proposed bin store and bike store are positioned in the south-western corner of the site where there will be passive surveillance from the apartment block towards the storage area and adjoining public open space area. There will be pathways provided around the perimeter of the building, providing a safe, functional and comfortable living environment. The efficient management and maintenance of the development is an important consideration, and I consider the storage location on site in the south-western extremity to be appropriate. The public open space area is also appropriately located where optimum passive surveillance can occur from the apartments, in addition to it creates a buffer area between existing and proposed residential properties."

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"The appellants state the proposal will overlook, and overbear adjoining residential properties, and yet they provide no technical evidence to support their claims, whereas the planning application documentation clearly demonstrates the proposal will not result in undue loss of privacy or overshadowing. These factors were salient in the planning authority's assessment and granting planning permission for the development."

- **Parking**

Parking for all the units is provided for in the front area along the eastern boundary. Grassed and planted areas have been designed around the building to the north and east in order to soften the visual appearance. The location of the site close to the town centre would support a reduction of the maximum car parking provision for this site. In the current environment, the provision of 13 car spaces is considered more than adequate given its proximity to the town centre. It was also the Inspectors opinion in the case ABP-309525-21 that: "Turning movements into and out of the site at Lucan Heights will be slow due to the narrow nature and configuration of the road, in addition to the relationship to the pedestrian link onto Lucan Road. The contextual elevations reveal the visibility into and out of the site from the adjoining road and pedestrian network will be clear."

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"As regards the informal arrangement to provide access from Lucan Heights into the site, the Lucan Cloisters cul de sac ends at the pedestrian lane and entrance to the subject site. The road configuration is narrow at this point, however the access to the subject site is only a secondary/ subsidiary access to the main access off Lucan Road. The planning authority has agreed in principle to the technical issues and it is satisfied with

the access arrangements."

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"There will be clear view of all traffic movements into and out of the secondary access, I do anticipate a hazard to pedestrians. In my opinion, The opening up of the site along the eastern boundary will provide passive surveillance of the path and create a safer link for pedestrians."

- **Detailed Design**

The design of the development evolved over a period, involving the assessment of the adjoining sites and buildings and the overall site context. The design objective for the site required that, given a denser form of development, a building form which respected the existing residential amenity would be of primary concern. The size and scale of the site and its separateness from adjoining buildings generated an L-shaped building plan which avoided overlooking and any visual impact on the receiving environment.

Having identified an appropriate site organization strategy, the detail design of the building elements required to be dealt with. The overall design intent was to design a well-articulated, sensitive yet contemporary residential building. The styling and fenestration of the proposed building is of a more contemporary type which gives a fresh and modern feel to the development.

The internal layout of units is based on all the recommendations and guideline documents in terms of floor areas, room sizes, storage provision and private open spaces. The internal layouts are practical and provide well-proportioned and planned rooms and spaces.

The design solution for this proposal has evolved over a period involving pre-planning consultations, previous applications SD20A/0142 and ABP-309525-21 to ensure the most appropriate and acceptable proposal is presented to the council including all the relevant development policies and design criteria set out in the South County Dublin Development Plan 2016-2022, and the Design Guidelines issued by the DoPHLG 2020.

An assessment of the proposed design solution in terms of the relevant criteria of the Best Practice Guide-Urban Design Guide 2009 would confirm that this proposal represents a high quality sustainable residential development for this site and would be an appropriate residential development.

7. Summary

This development site is located in a built-up area immediately beside the centre of Lucan town centre, is zoned 'RES - *To protect and/or improve residential amenity*' development in the **South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022**. The design proposal represents a form of residential development which conforms to both the relevant National and Local Planning policies insofar as the proposal will help consolidate the best use of serviced areas of the city and promote more sustainable development in the context of the environmental and building efficiency demands confronting society today.

The amended design of this proposal and the provision of an appropriate mix of units will realise a sustainable and appropriate consolidation of the residential serviced lands in the County and underpin the longer-term future of Lucan, a **'Metropolitan Consolidation Town'**, for the foreseeable future. The proposal has been designed to achieve the appropriate density and quality in terms of current planning policy while minimizing its impact on the existing residential environment to the south of the site. Based on the above this amended proposal for this site would conform with the proper planning and development of the area. It was the Inspectors final opinion on the case ABP-309525-21 that: "The Board should uphold the planning authority's decision to grant planning permission for the proposed development."

May 2022.

PMCA architects



IMAGES OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT