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VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

concerning

18 UNIT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

on lands at

FORMER MCEVOYS PUB, NEWCASTLE, CO. DUBLIN

Applicant: Rathgearan Ltd

25th July 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

David Mulcahy Planning Consultants Ltd have been retained by **Rathgearan Ltd** to prepare a Visual Impact Assessment in relation to a proposed residential development at former McEvoy's Pub, Newcastle, Co. Dublin.

The purpose of this assessment is to assess the visual impact of the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the CGI images prepared by Demense Architects.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location

The site is located at the junction of Hazelhatch Road, Athgoe Road and Main Street, Newcastle, Co. Dublin approximately 400m from the town centre - see fig no.1 below.



Fig No.1 Site Location Map (source: Myplan.ie - OSI Licence No.EN 0080915).

2.2 Description

The subject site (**0.95 hectares**) contains two elements: (i) a field to the rear of the site and (ii) the derelict remains of buildings after fire damage near the front of the site. The derelict structures are the remains of 'McEvoy's', a former thatched pub that was badly damaged by fire in 2004 as well as a derelict cottage. These buildings seriously detract from the visual amenity of the area at this high profile location entering the town. There is a vehicular entrance close to the T-junction.



Fig No.2 Map of the site (source: Myplan.ie - OSI Licence No.EN 0080915).



Fig No.3 Satellite image of subject site (source: Google Earth Pro April 2021)



Fig No.4 Photograph of the subject site from Athgoe Road.



Fig No. 5 Photographs of the site taken from Hazelhatch Road.



Fig No. 6 Photograph of eastern portion of the site taken from Main Street.

Please also refer to photographs of the rear of the site prepared by Demesne Architects.

2.3 Adjoining Land Uses

North

There is a detached dwelling to the north¹.

¹ MOATE LODGE, NEWCASTLE SOUTH, NEWCASTLE, CO. DUBLIN, D22 PX71

There is a **Recorded Monument** on the adjoining lands to the north. It is described as a Motte, is protected as an Area of Archaeological Potential and is included in the development plan Record of Monuments and Places.

South

The R405 (Main St) runs along the southern boundary of the site. There is a public footpath, with public lighting, connecting the site to the town centre. The site is located within the 50 km/h speed limit zone.

East

A church (St. Finian's Church of Ireland) and related buildings are located on the adjoining land to the east. These structures are **Protected Structures**

West

Hazelhatch Road runs along the western side of the site. There is a public footpath along the boundary of the site.

3.0 SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ('CDP') 2022 – 2028

3.1 Introduction

The South Dublin CDP 2022-28 zoning map contains a map-based objective to **Protect and Preserve Significant Views** along the Newcastle Road opposite a small part of the site. Critically the arrows face **away** from the site.

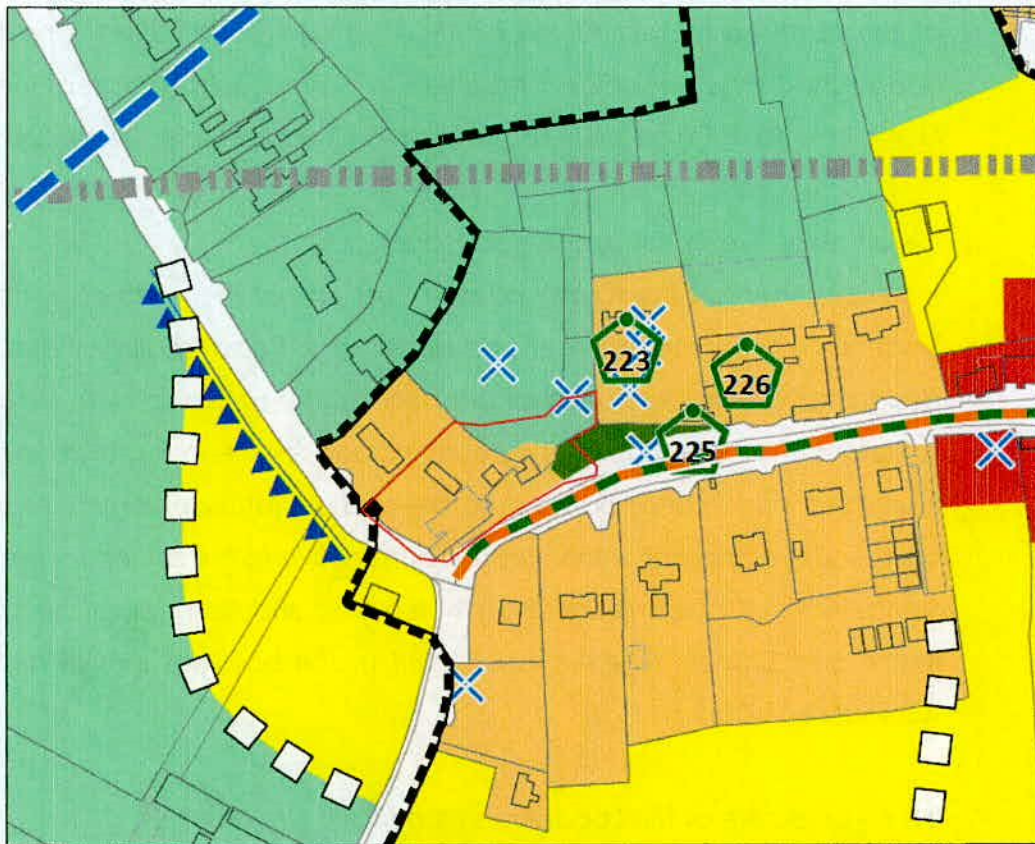


Fig No.10 Extract from zoning map SDCCDP 2016-22 (Map No.7) showing significant views opposite part of the site on west side (blue arrows).

4.0 NEWCASTLE LOCAL AREA PLAN 2012-22 ('NLAP').

Development within the vicinity of an upstanding monument(s) shall enhance the setting of the feature(s) and shall be sited and designed appropriately. Views of the Motte and Saint Finian's Church of Ireland Church from Main Street and Hazelhatch Road shall be protected by sensitive surrounding development. Development of the derelict public house site (previously known as McEvoy's) at the north-east corner of the junction between Main Street and Hazelhatch Road should be especially designed to enhance and protect views of the Motte and Saint Finian's Church of Ireland Church. (Objective GI24)

It is an objective of this Local Area Plan:

- *Development of the former public house site at the north-east corner of the junction between Main Street and Hazelhatch Road shall include a sensitively designed gateway feature that announces the approach into Newcastle and its Historic/Cultural quarter. This could include for the incorporation of elements from the former public house structure and any archaeological material found on site. Development of this site shall be sensitive to the setting to the Motte and Saint Finian's Church of Ireland Church and should incorporate views of the Motte and Church, where possible, within the buildings overall design setting. (Objective LUD5)*

It is an objective of this Local Area Plan that:

- *Gateway and landmark features/structures shall only be developed at the identified locations and shall be appropriate to the scale and character of surrounding development. (Objective BF10)*
- *Gateway and landmark features/structures shall incorporate elements, finishes and materials that reflect the development's time and place. The use of trees and planting as gateway features are encouraged especially at the western gateways of the village. (Objective BF11)*

5.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Description

The proposed development involves 18 residential units provided in 2 separate blocks. Block 1 is 3 storeys high and will contain 12 units. Block 2 is 2 storeys high and will contain 6 units.

The proposed development provides an attractive frontage onto both public roads adjoining the site, ensuring a strong built edge along both roads.

The two blocks are setback as far as possible from the recorded monument adjoining the site (further than the previous scheme which was refused).

The scheme will use the existing vehicular access/egress off Hazelhatch Road and provide a new egress (only) off Main Street. Car parking is provided to the east side of the site.

6.0 VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this study the criteria as set out in the current EPA Guidelines on Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022) are used in the assessment of the likely impacts. The criteria for rating the significance of impacts are outlined below:

Criteria for significance of effects under EPA Guidelines

EPA Rating	
<i>Imperceptible</i>	<i>An impact capable of measurement but without significant consequences</i>
<i>Not Significant</i>	<i>An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without significant consequences</i>
<i>Slight</i>	<i>An impact which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities</i>
<i>Moderate</i>	<i>An impact that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with the existing and emerging baseline trends</i>
<i>Significant</i>	<i>An impact which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment</i>
<i>Very Significant</i>	<i>An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment</i>
<i>Profound</i>	<i>An impact which obliterates sensitive characteristics</i>

The ratings may have negative, neutral or positive application where:

- Positive impact - a change which improves the quality of the environment.
- Neutral impact – No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
- Negative impact - a change which reduces the quality of the environment.

Terms relating to the duration of impacts are as described in the EPA Guidelines as:

- Momentary Effects - lasting from seconds to minutes
- Brief Effects - lasting less than a day
- Temporary Effects - lasting less than a year
- Short-term Effects - lasting one to seven years
- Medium-term Effects - lasting seven to fifteen years
- Long-term Effects - lasting fifteen to sixty years
- Permanent Effects - lasting over sixty years

A total of 3 viewpoints have been chosen. These are local views as there no views of the site from further afield due to the presence of existing buildings in the vicinity.

Please refer to the **CGIs** prepared by Infinite 3D which shows the location where each of the 3 no. views were taken along with existing views of the subject site from each viewpoint. Refer to larger prints of the CGIs which accompany the application.

View No.1

This view is taken from the junction of Main Street and Hazelhatch Road. The proposed new development will be visually prominent at this location. This is considered to be appropriate given the objective for a gateway building at this location. The aesthetic of the development is considered to be very high and it will make a very positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area. It will represent a significant improvement on the status quo.

Visual impact: significant but positive.



View No.2

This view is taken from Hazelhatch Road.

The proposed development is visually prominent but again this is to be expected given it is a gateway building into the village. The aesthetic of the development is considered to be very high and it will make a very positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area. It will represent a significant improvement on the status quo.

Visual impact: significant but positive.



View No.3

This view is taken from Main Street, at a point closer to the village. The proposed development is visible although it is partially obscured by existing mature trees. The scale of the proposed development appears comfortable in its surroundings and context.

Visual impact: significant but positive.



7.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed development involves the provision of 18 no. residential units in two blocks which face onto the Hazelhatch Road and Main Street in Newcastle, Co. Dublin forming a new gateway building into the village.

The site currently contains derelict structures which notably detract from the visual amenity of this area and have done so for a considerable period.

The South Dublin CDP and Newcastle LAP seeks to provide a gateway building at this location. As such the proposed development must be of a high architectural quality and make a positive contribution to the streetscape.

The South Dublin CDP does include a significant view near the site but the view faces away rather than toward the site and therefore is not considered relevant.

A total of 3 no. views have been included in this assessment, one from the junction of Hazelhatch Road and Main Street, one from Hazelhatch Road and one from Main Street. It is considered that these are the most relevant viewpoints.

The views show that the proposed development will be visually prominent at all 3 locations but particularly at the junction of Hazelhatch Road and Main Street and that from Hazelhatch Road. This however is considered to be appropriate given the objective to provide a gateway building at this location into the village. The aesthetic of the development is considered to be very high and it will make a very positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area. The bulk, mass and scale are considered to be appropriate to the area and not overly dominant or domineering.

The proposed development will have a significant visual impact on the area but it will represent a significant improvement on the status quo from a visual perspective and make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Mulcahy', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

David Mulcahy

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