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16th August, 2022

Planning Department,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24
D24YNNS

Reg. Ref: SD22A/0039 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Re: **Conservation Response to Further Information Request on proposed development at Silveracre Bungalow, Whitechurch Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, consisting of:**

(a) The demolition of two existing habitable structures on site including a bungalow (Silveracre), an existing cottage (No. 6 Whitechurch Road) and a row of 5 derelict structures/cottages located along the western boundary of the site (extent of proposed demolition is 433sq.m) (b) the construction of 21 x 4-bed and 1 x 5-bed, 3 storey units ranging in size from 174.5sq.m to 233.5sq.m, all with associated private balcony/terrace areas. Vehicular and pedestrian access is proposed via new entrance on Whitechurch Road. The proposed development shall provide for 44 car parking spaces, a new single storey bicycle storage shed (approx 34sq.m) and provision of bin storage to be provided at the front curtilage of the dwelling for all terraced units, all boundary treatment, all site services and all associated site works.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

We would like to respond to the Conservation items raised in the Additional Information request. These are raised in Item 1 of the decision issued, as follows:

''1. The Planning Authority has concerns in regard to the overall height, form and design of the proposed development and the associated impact on existing residential and visual amenities in the area. In this regard, the applicant is requested to address the following requirements of the Planning Authority;

(a) A reduction in the height of the proposed dwellings to a maximum of 3 storeys;

(b) Reconfiguration of Unit No. 1 and No. 22 to provide a frontage/ entrance onto Whitechurch Road. The proposed boundary treatment along this boundary should be revised to provide

a privacy strip behind a low wall, hedge or railings until where it meets the rear private amenity space behind the dwellings along this boundary.

(c) Reconsideration of the proposed materials and finishes, having regard predominant building palette in the area especially the neighbouring Protected Structure and the adjoining ACA. A greater variance in materials across elevations (particularly the rear elevations) and house types should also be considered.''

In summary the above is addressed under three headings,

A Height of the proposed dwellings

B. Frontage of Unit 1 & 22 to Whitechurch Road

C. Proposed external finishes

(A) Height of the Proposed Dwellings

(A1) Number of stories

It is submitted that the proposed houses are 3 storey houses, utilising their roofs/ attic space in an innovative response to providing qualitive private open space to meet the requirements of the current County Development Plan. In descriptive terms with habitable room use of the attic they would normally be referred to as 3 ½ storey, however in this case the attic is merely for stair access to a terrace, with the front façade balcony and rear elevation reflecting a three storey house.

Fig. 1 - The two storey 1970's flat roofed terrace gable-ending the site on the north side of the green

It is noted the design ensures no overlooking from the roof top balconies occurs, through orientation of the roof balconies over the central public space at the centre of the

development and west to the mature sylvan setting on the west side of Whitechurch Road. This arrangement effects a three storey impact on Tara Hill Crescent, a two storey 1970's flat roofed terrace, gable-ending the site on the north side of the green. The visual impact is therefore limited to bedrooms overlooking rear gardens, as is normally the case in a residential area.

Similarly the impact on two late 20thC two storey houses on the original Mill site to the south also gable-ending the site is of bedrooms overlooking the rear gardens (illustrated further below). This is little different to a neighbouring house view over adjoining gardens. It is further noted that objections raised on heights did not focus to any great extent on overlooking concerns.

(A2) Comparative height

The height of the proposed dwellings has been shown through the contiguous elevations/ sections (section 1-1) to be a marginal increase over that of the Mill House and No.50 St. Patrick's Cottages reflecting the urban scale of this 21stC development. The Mill House however is a large voluminous structure by comparison to the proposed houses and will continue to be a dominant structure on Whitechurch Road even though the principal elevation does not face the road.

Figure 2 – Contiguous section-elevation - Site Section 4-4 which is taken through the rear gardens of units 9 to 16 and through unit 8. facing Tara Crescent & the Green. Note three storey impact with slated roof.

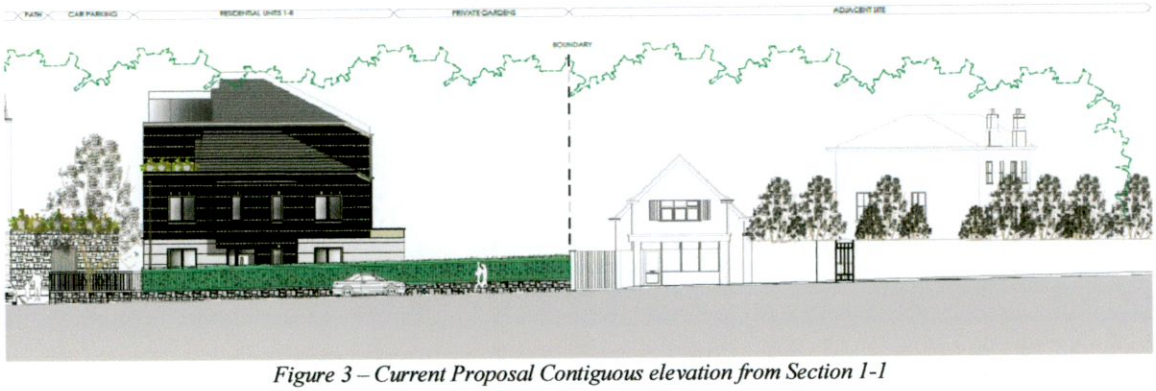


Figure 3 – Current Proposal Contiguous elevation from Section 1-1

Fig.4 – Mill House Protected Structure east (above left) and south (above right) elevation.

The Mill House is a large structure in height and footprint, three stories with a low pitch hipped slate roof arranged with a 'C' roof plan/ north returns to cover the deep plan. Large chimney structures are poorly reflected on the drawn illustration above (refer also to appended photographs).

Note there are three 2 storey houses in very close proximity to the Protected Structure's east gable and north facade, refer to aerial illustration below. An observation was received from one of these dwellings, No.49 St. Patrick's Terrace that raised overlooking in a general sense. However it is noted this dwelling, built circa 1975, is separated from the site by a second dwelling No. 50 also of late 20thC construction and similar in scale to No.49. It is considered therefore the impact is negligible here as there is a constrained view between the two late 20thC houses on the site of the original Mill. Further, the two storey terrace of St. Patricks Cottage's which is accessed immediately off Whitechurch Road, gable ends the northerly location of the site and is separated by the two houses referred to above, No.49 and 50. The impact of the development on this terrace is again considered to be negligible.

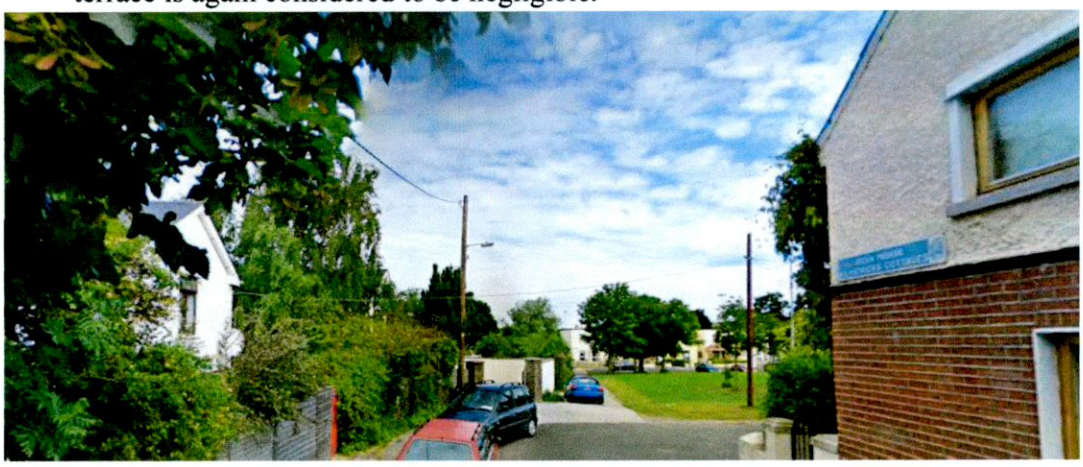


Fig. 6 – View north across west side of ACA green from the ended of the terrace of St. Patrick Cottages, House 48 on right.

Fig. 7 – View southeast over No.50 on the Mill site, now with two 20thC houses, to No.49 St. Patrick's Cottages (red dot).

Fig. 8 – View west on Tara Hill Crescent (Green to left), over the Tara Hill Land strip and trees to the subject site, 1970's flat roof terrace gable ends boundary as illustrated above. House in trees on left No.49 & 50 are on the site of the demolished mill.

In relation to the ACA and St. Patrick's cottages, the primary structures of interest in conservation terms are south-east of the green and are in fact somewhat removed from the site. It is later two-storey-flat roofed two storey terraced houses on the green within the ACA that are closest to the development site. These would appear to have been included in the ACA to encapsulate the open green that was originally divided into allotment type field strips. These flat-roofed houses were developed on the long cottage gardens of the original cottages. In Conservation terms these later flat-roofed houses are considered to be of no architectural or heritage merit and the height of adjacent development is therefore irrelevant in Conservation terms.

It is noted prior to 1900 the area was characterised by large/ prominent buildings in a rural setting, starting with Rathfarnham Castle followed by Loreto Abbey, Loreto House, Rathfarnham Village Church, Church on Grange Road, St. Enda's to the south, also historically a number of local Mills, including one originally adjacent to the Mill House. Single storey cottages also existed where local labour was accommodated to serve estates, Mills etc. The adjacent ACA seeks to protect a semi-rural housing typology with what was originally large linear gardens to provide a high level of self-sufficiency for a working class tenancy.

The rebuilding of the Yellowhouse Public House reflected late 19thC expansion of residential housing in the area, characterised by two storey suburban low density speculative estate type housing, affordable for a growing middle class market. This type of increasingly low density speculative residential development continued throughout the 20thC. However development plans now require higher densities and consequently more urban inspired housing prototypes. Single storey cottages and two storey semi-detached houses are therefore no longer an appropriate or sustainable model for development within a serviced residential zoned area. In terms of Dublin housing typologies Georgian terraced houses ranged from 2-4 stories typically with split level or raised basements and were not as a type confined to the city centre. Twenty first century housing models under development plan constraints are turning to a similar prototype as illustrated below. The first image being similar in material palette to that now proposed, with the same brick proposed – Marzialle (Outhaus – Wienerberger).

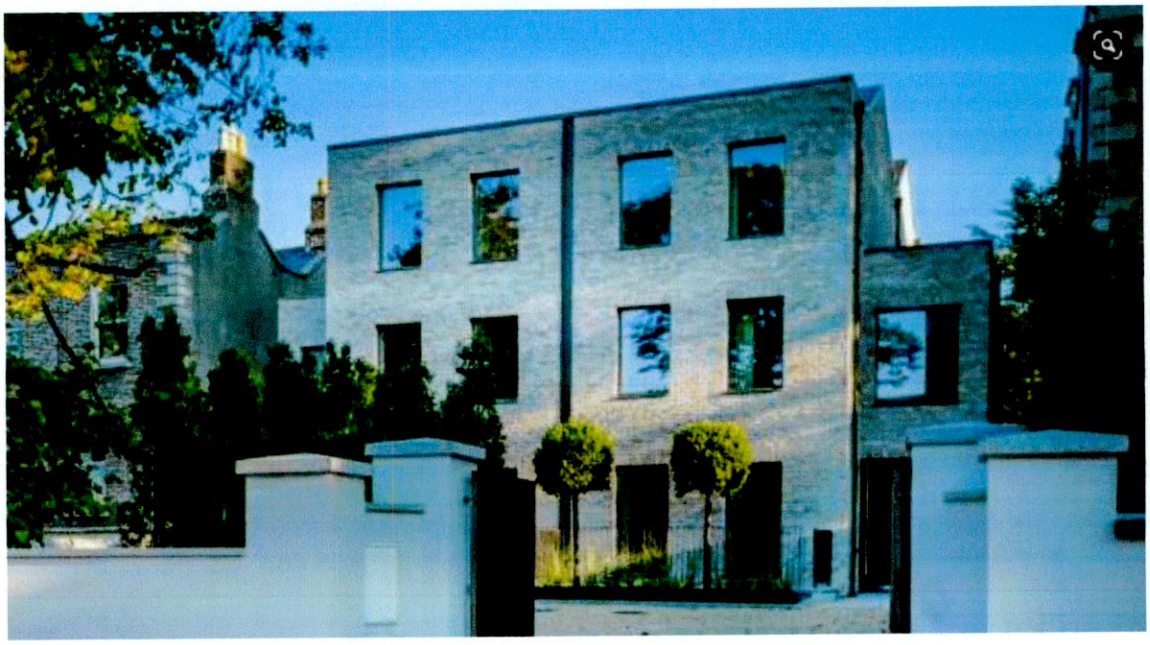


Fig. 9 –Semi-detached Georgian inspired three storey semi-detached houses on Highfield Road, Rathgar.

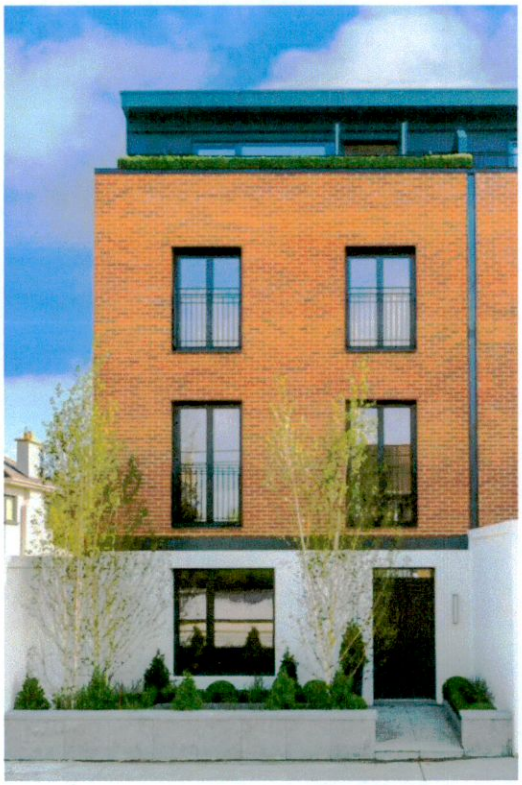


Fig. 10A & 10B – Terrace of Georgian inspired three/ four storey houses at the Torquay/ Westminster Road central Foxrock.

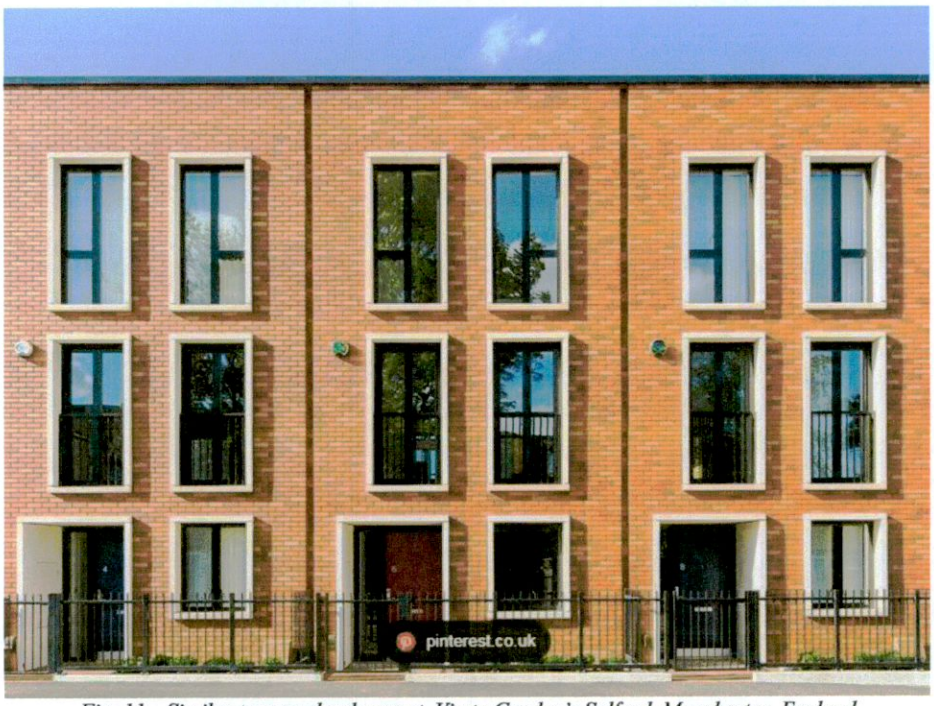


Fig. 11 – Similar terrace development, Vimto Garden's Salford, Manchester, England

(B) Frontage of Unit 1 & 22 to Whitechurch Road

The gable ended approach to treatment of Whitechurch Road in the submission reflected the desire to provide a central green community space as a focal point of the development encountered along Whitechurch Road. The gable elevations have been given careful consideration in design terms.

Fig. 12A –Treatment to Whitechurch Road – As originally proposed

Fig. 12B –Treatment to Whitechurch Road – Gable ends create a focus and anticipation of the central amenity space. Additionally the two units along the road have been reduced in scale by one floor to improve the massing of the ensemble as encountered along the road.

The building line along the Mill House and its own gable ended arrangement to the pavement, supports development close to the roadside boundary. It reflects the nature of this originally rural road, pre 1900 in arrangement with intermittent stone walling, relatively narrow carriageway and sylvan setting. All of these aspects are to be maintained in the edge condition of the proposed development. The houses are not obtrusive in urban terms on the context of Whitechurch Road (as there is no immediate development on the opposite side of the road), but have nonetheless been reduced in massing terms by one floor of the gable ended units to the road. The road frontage is a sylvan setting that is characterised by the west side of the road, with the tree-lined stream concealing late 20thC residential housing further beyond.

(C) Proposed external finishes

'' having regard to the predominant building palette in the area, especially the neighbouring Protected Structure and the adjoining ACA. A greater variance in materials across elevations (particularly the rear elevations)''

(C1) Character of Whitechurch Road:

Refer to Appendix 1 attached that summarises the residential housing material palette from Grange Road to Taylor's Lane progressing down Willbrook Road to Whitechurch Road and continuing south. The route is primarily characterised by low density 20thC suburban semi-detached housing graduating over the 20thC in a southerly direction, with the early 20thC improved material palette typically north of the site. In view of the predominant later 20thC speculative typology south of the site, it is accepted the Protected Structure and similar local buildings are referenced by the Conservation Section in conjunction with the Planning Department for new residential prototypes.

(C2) Density of development

In addressing development of this section of Whitechurch Road it would seem appropriate also to focus on the increasingly urban impact of development carried out under current density standards, their scale/ with higher density contribute a more urban physical built infrastructure. Consequently house types reflect a change from lower density 20thC suburban estate housing, effectively urban sprawl, to an urban emphasis of taller structures, in this case around a central designed urban space. All designed in a contemporary semi-formal interpretation of a Georgian square as per the typologies illustrated above.

(C3) Rear Elevations

These were deliberately kept muted, so as to minimise their impact on surrounding existing residential and other development. It is intended again to adopt traditional finishes to respect the nature of the finishes adopted on the Protected Structure and similar local buildings.

(C4) Façade treatment - Revisions to the elevational design proposed

The material palette has been altered as follows:

Units 1-8 - on southern boundary and Units 17-22 on the northern boundary.

- Ground Floor Façade - Smooth plaster bands (rusticated render) in a buff-portland colour to all elevations.
- First Floor level - precast concrete string course/ cill in a portland colour to all elevations.
- Precast concrete window cills in a buff portland colour to all elevations.
- First/ Second Floor – selected buff brick with flush struck buff pointing with exposed aggregate to all elevations of Units 1-8 on southern boundary and Units 17-22 on the northern boundary.
  Note: it is proposed to use the same brick as that illustrated in Fig. 9 above (houses on Highfield Road, Rathgar).
- Brick soldier courses over window openings in brick facades.
- Precast concrete window reveal slips to window reveals and soffit in a Portland colour finish.
- Pre-painted olive green finish to aluclad framed windows.
- Recessed olive green RWP's in cast aluminium to meet Local Authority drainage requirements.
- First floor French balcony toughened glass handrail screens to full height windows.
- Selected blue black slate.
- Dwarf hedge planting to roof terrace toughened glass safety handrail.

Units 9-16 - to rear of the open space/ east boundary – for visual contrast

- Ground Floor Façade - Smooth plaster bands (rusticated render) in a buff-portland colour to all elevations.
- First Floor level - precast concrete string course/ cill in a portland colour to all elevations.
- First/ Second floor façade – self-coloured textured render based on the Protected Structure/ Mill House finish to all elevations.
- Precast concrete window cills in a buff portland colour to all elevations.
- Tapered flush plastered reveal to all window openings in rendered facades.
- Pre-painted olive green finish to aluclad framed windows.
- Recessed olive green RWP's in cast aluminium to meet Local Authority drainage requirements.
- Pre-painted olive green finish to aluclad framed windows
- First floor French balcony toughened glass handrail screens to full height windows
- Selected blue black slate.
- Dwarf hedge planting to roof with toughened glass safety handrail behind.

Fig. 14A – Extract from Section 1-1

Fig. 14B – The Millhouse South elevation

The dual illustration above (not to exact scale), shows the mirroring of window and proportions adopted in the proposed house type that refer directly to the fenestration of the Mill House, in addition to addressing the finished treatments proposed.

The revisions proposed seek to reinforce the design qualities of this urban inspired proposal by further reference to the colour and texture finishes of the Protected Structure and dwellings of heritage interest within the ACA.

(C5) Revised CGI's

Revised views, illustrated below are presented of the proposed development. These views are submitted in full A3 format separately in the Architects submitted documentation and are reproduced here for reference and comment from a Conservation perspective.

Fig. 15 - Proposed view, Whitechurch Road view east over shared open space

View from Whitechurch Road

The dwellings north and south (left and right) are in a buff brick, ground floor treatment remains consistent across all units. The centre block of 3 storey dwellings is finished in a lime coloured textured render to harmonise in visual terms with the Mill House Protected Structure further down Whitechurch Road. Note: Roof level open space terraces all overlook the public open space and sylvan setting on the opposite side of Whitechurch Road and the window fenestration is similar to the south façade of the Mill House.

Fig. 16 - Proposed view, northwest of Units 17-22

View from within the development

Units 17-22 illustrated above are in a buff brick on all elevations at first and second floor level, ground floor treatment remains consistent across all units in render bands (rusticated render). The roofs to the rear project to a lower eaves than the front facades.

Summary

It is considered that the height, form and design of the development is appropriate to its setting, one that is increasingly urban in nature. The impacts on the existing residential and visual amenities have been shown to be negligible. The proposed houses are three stories with roof level private open space designed in an innovative response to development plan requirements including density of development. Units 1 & 22 have been reconfigured to reduce their impact on the road and massing of the scheme in relation to the road. Providing pedestrian entrances directly off Whitechurch Road to these units would create a more sub-urban response in layout terms, inappropriate in design terms. The material palette has been further developed and carefully considered in relation to the neighbouring Protected Structure and buildings of interest within the adjacent ACA.

I hope you find this response considered and comprehensive in relation to the items raised.
If there is any further information you require do please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Sent by email & duly not signed

James Slattery B.Arch., Dipl. ABRCons M.R.I.A.I.

For

David Slattery – Conservation Architects Ltd.

Appendix 1

Character of Residential Housing on Whitechurch Road

The Yellow House – Marks the Junction of Grange Road and Willbrook Road leading south to Whitechurch Road

At the northern end of Willbrook adjacent to the Church, perpendicular to the road with rear parking **8 houses Early 20thC:** drydash render, painted string course/ lintols/ windows, natural slate.

The next group at the northern end of Willbrook Road – **14 houses Early 20thC -** Similar aesthetic with brick on ground floor, both have bay windows with projecting ground floor roofs

I hope you find this response considered and comprehensive in relation to the items raised. If there is any further information you require do please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Sent by email & duly not signed

James Slattery B.Arch., Dipl. ABRCons M.R.I.A.I.

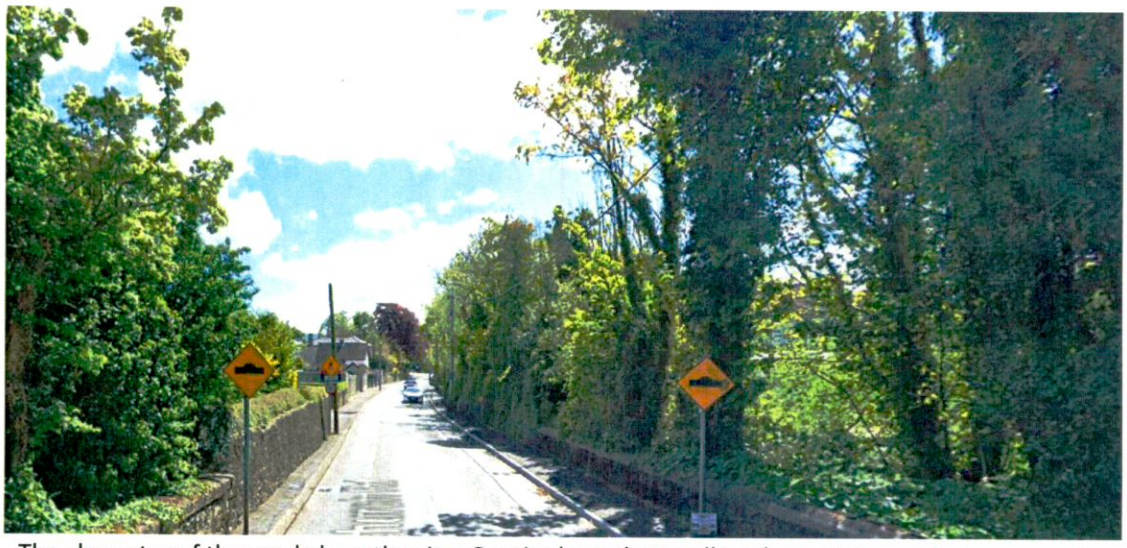
For

David Slattery – Conservation Architects Ltd.

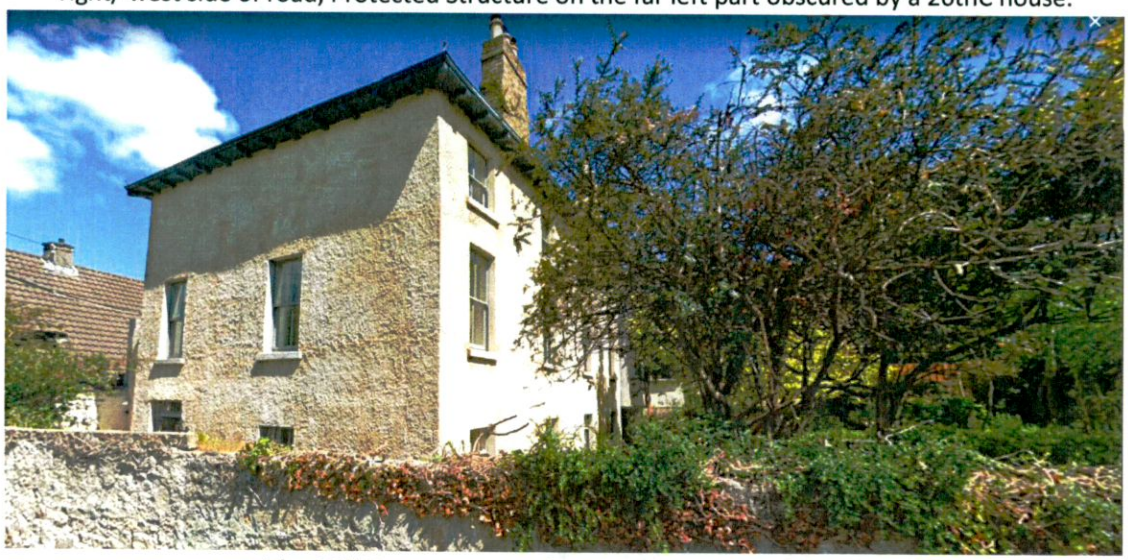
At the northern junction with Willbrook/ Ballyboden |Road – **12 houses Early 20thC** - Similar to previous group with full brick facade, all 3 consistent with 1900 – 1914 pre WW1 aesthetic.

Acrebrook House immediately north of subject site – Appears as a late 19th/ early 20thC replacement of an earlier house of the same name. Rendered façade, quoins, ground floor bay sash windows, natural slate roof, late 19thC aesthetic.

Late 20thC one-off House immediately south of subject site and adjacent to the Protected Structure on the site of the mill. Painted nap render, brick dressings, concrete tiled roof.



The character of the road along the site: Granite boundary walls, sylvan setting with stream on the right/ west side of road, Protected Structure on the far left part obscured by a 20thC house.



The Mill House Protected Structure – above & below

4 bay 3 storey with natural slate roof and tall chimneys with tall pots. Off-white Harling lime render façade finish with granite cillls. Entrance on St. Patrick's Cottages, obscured by wall and planting.

Opposite side of Whitechurch Road - Willbrook Lawn Estate : west of the site on Whitechurch Road 1970's with mature tree sylvan screen

ACA – 1 & 2 storey Cottages/ Terraces & Interspaced 1970's 2 Storey Flat Roofed Terraces

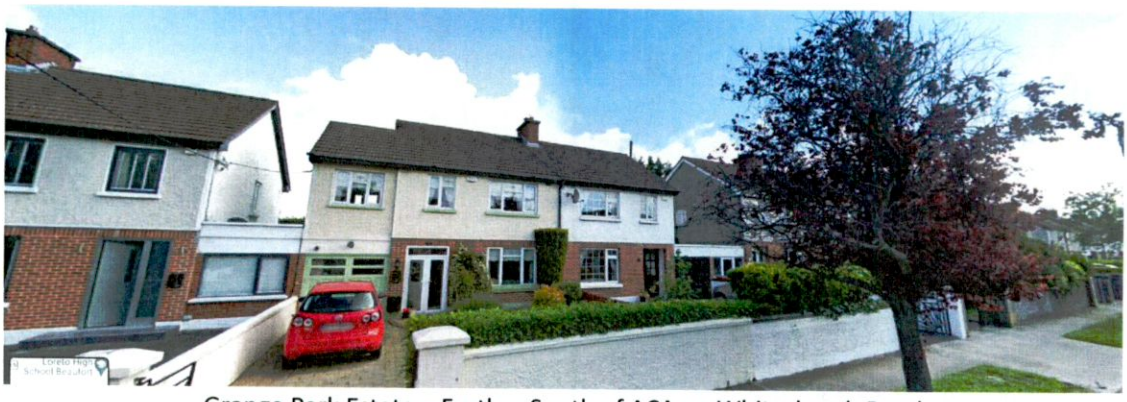
St. Patrick's Cottages behind the Mill House – 2 storey early 20thC
Brick ground floor, render above, natural slate roof, painted window frames.

Tara Hill Grove – entry road in to ACA – 1970's – Large section of the ACA is configured by this type.

Tara Hill Green – Immediately East of the site – Subject site behind trees on left

St. Patrick's cottages, single storey rendered/ painted, brick dressings, natural slate roof
Tara Hill Crescent/ St. Patricks Cottages – Grange Road side of Green – Focus low density type of ACA

Woodview Cottages Rathfarnham – within the village ACA, this is a contemporary development to St. Patrick's Cottages that uses a more considered palette of materials including stone, buff brick and textured render.



Grange Park Estate – Further South of ACA on Whitechurch Road
Later 20thC estate housing, brick and painted nap render with concrete tiled roofs

Grange Park Estate – Whitechurch Piines south of site
Same late 20thC aesthetic

There are a number of early 20thC Bungalows, several screened from the road, most with concrete tiled roofs and rendered facades.

The character of the road along the first bungalows betrays the original rural nature of the road with boundary walls/ no pavement, sylvan setting, hidden stream. This character is variously evident in stretches along the route to Taylors Lane.

St. Enda's Park Estate further south of site

Whitecliff Estate Further again South of site – full brick façade, concrete tiled roofs

END