

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATEMENT

For

STONEY HILL ROAD, RATHCOOLE, CO. DUBLIN

On behalf of

Romeville Developments Ltd.

July 2022



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1.0: INTRODUCTION

This design statement has been prepared on behalf of Romeville Developments Ltd. for a planning application for development on lands measuring approximately 2.91 hectares at Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole, County Dublin.

The application is for a development comprising of 42 dwelling units, consisting of:

Unit Type	Units Proposed	Gross Floor Space (m ²)
One-bed	0	0
Two-bed	0	0
Three-bed	42	5622
Four-bed	0	0

Table 1.1.1: Proposed dwelling units area schedule.

Total number of residential units in proposed development	42
Cumulative gross floor space of residential accommodation in m ²	5622

Table 1.1.2: Totals.

Over the following chapters we will examine in detail the proposed development with regard to its location and context, development strategy and design methodology to give a thorough understanding of the process involved in developing this proposal.

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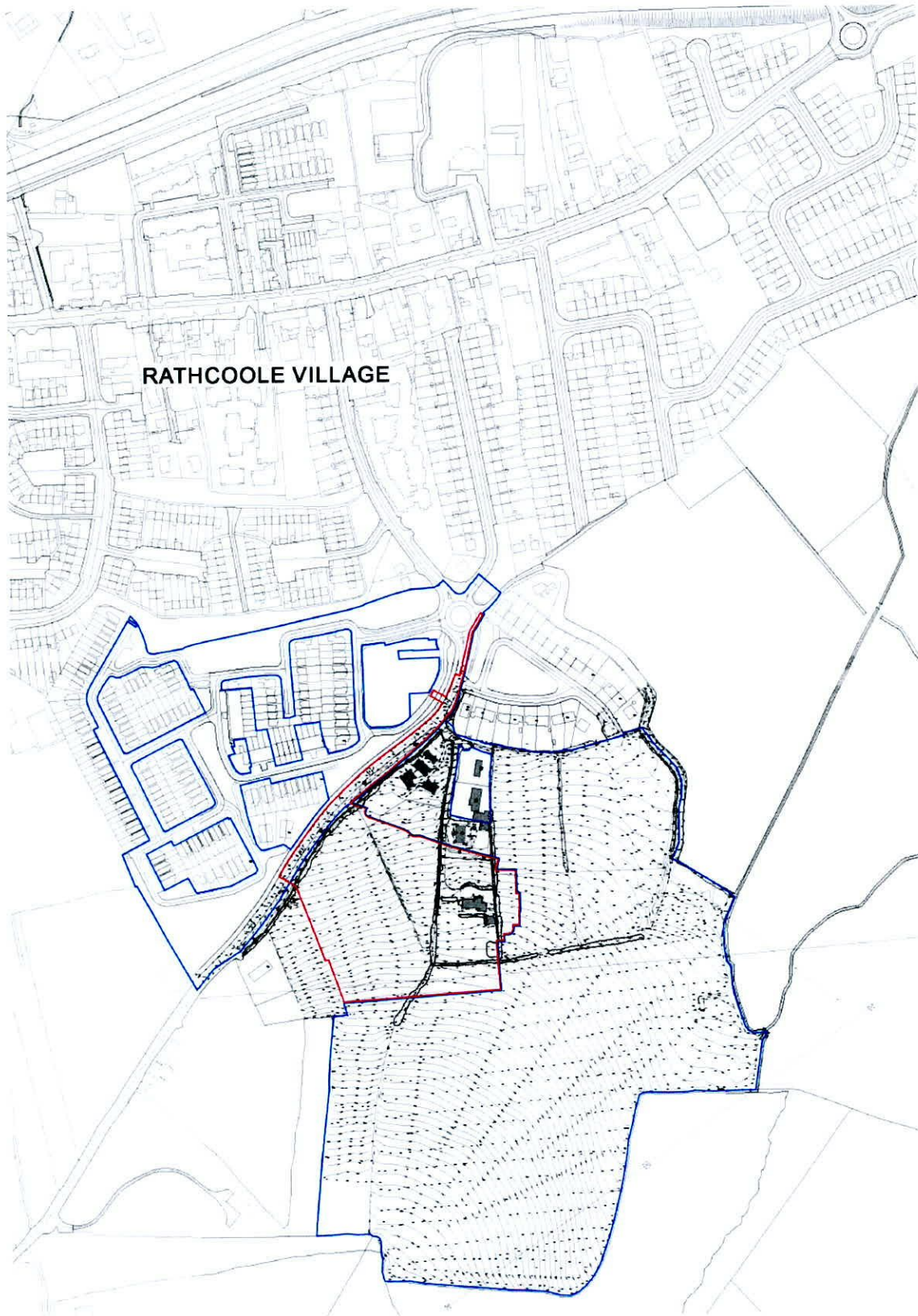


Fig 1.1.1 – OSI Map of Rathcoole and Proposed Site (Redline) and overall landholdings (Blueline).

2.0: SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The proposed site is located on Stoney Hill Road in Rathcoole, County Dublin.

Rathcoole is located approximately 16 kilometres south west of North Dublin City Centre. Casement Aerodrome is located approximately 2.5 kilometres to the north. The village of Rathcoole is situated to the south of the N7 off junction 4. There are a variety of different land use zones in the vicinity of Rathcoole. To the north and northeast lie the business parks of Greenogue and Citywest with an airfield located between. The village of Saggart neighbours Rathcoole approximately one kilometre to the east. To the South the land is predominantly of a rural nature with frequent and sporadic development. Similarly, to the west runs the N7 with a mixture of development among predominantly rural land.

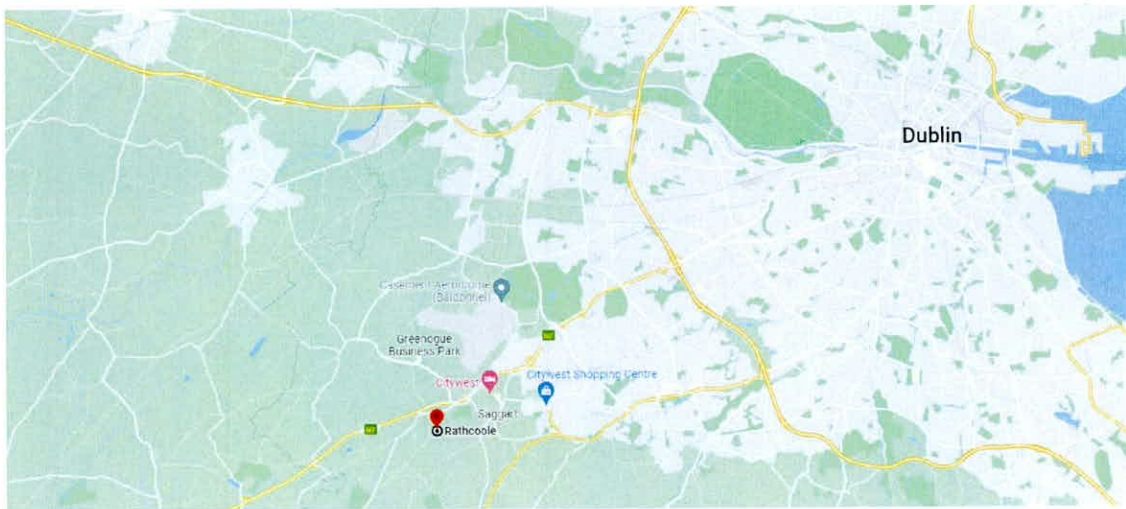


Fig 2.1.1 – Google maps image showing site in wider Dublin context.

The lands are located to the South of an existing estate, Rathcoole Park, and to the East of a more recently developed estate, Peyton Place.

The Western boundary is bordered by Stoney Hill road which runs South-West to North-West. The boundary to the East adjoins additional RES-N lands, beyond the lands in the ownership of South Dublin county Council. To the south is agricultural land.

There is one house and detached garage that currently sits within the site of the proposed development.

The site has some interesting characteristics that are important to take into consideration. Firstly, the existing topography and levels of the site were defined as the dominant feature which would need to be taken into account for any proposed design. These levels played a key role in locating the site entrance. There is a substantial level change of over 3m at the north east of the proposed site where

the site meets Stoney Hill Road. This would result in a winding road in order to reach into the site and in turn render a large portion of the site unusable for both public amenity and accommodation. The level change at the proposed entrance is much more gentle, approx. a 1m change which allows the access to take advantage of the natural gradient of the site and in turn will minimise the amount of cut and fill required.

Secondly, the mature hedge along the boundary is an important element to retain for biodiversity and to act as layer of privacy for residents. The proposed access is designed to minimise the amount of this hedgerow to be removed whilst adhering to design standards for safe access and also to utilise the hedgerow as a feature of the site which encourages the natural flora and fauna of the locality and provides a natural interface with Stoney Hill Road.

The overall area of the site measure approximately 2.91 hectares. There are some existing hedgerows and trees within the site, primarily along the Western and Eastern boundaries.

The lands subject to the proposed development set out in this document are a combination of "Objective RES-N" for the northern half of the site and "Objective RU" lands for the southern half as defined by the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028. They designated as land to provide for new residential communities in accordance with approved area plans and lands to protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture. (see Fig 2.1.1)



Fig 2.1.1 – Ariel photo (Google Maps) showing extent of site within the redline.

3.0: DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This proposal is for an integrated enhancement of Rathcoole and its community through the provision of new dwelling houses considering various aspects of the "Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide" and its influence on the proposed development.

It is the proposal's aim to provide houses to meet the need for housing and adhering to a sense of design continuity while enhancing and relating to the local context.

The proposed scheme subject to this proposal comprises of 42 no. dwellings and as illustrated previously, is part of a wider landholding owned by the applicant. A previous application encompassing the overall landholding was made and approved by An Bord Pleanála in a SHD application (Ref. ABP-307698-20). It is currently proposed to deliver development for the overall site through a series of smaller planning applications with the current proposal being the first or Phase 1. This allows development of the site to be release incrementally onto the market to meet the local demand.



Fig 3.1.1 – Previous SHD scheme (Ref. ABP-307698-20).

This current proposed phase of development is the first on the overall landholding. As such, this proposed phase includes a number of key infrastructural elements to allow the potential future phase

to follow. These include factors such as the main site entrance at Stoney Hill Road which will form the primary internal vehicular and pedestrian network for the overall landholdings. The proposed layout and site strategy employed mirror that as in the previously approved SHD permission with regards to the street hierarchy and open spaces. As will be examined in a latter chapter, the proposed layout has allowed for a seamless extension into potential future phases on the overall landholding. Future vehicular and pedestrian connections to the north and east are provided for and similarly, expansion and connection of the phase 1 open spaces to future phases has been considered and planned for.

This first phase of the overall landholding which is located along the boundary the interfaces with Stoney Hill Road and forms the most logical initial development of the overall site. As previously discussed, this boundary can accommodate the only viable access to the overall site due to the desire to retain as much of the existing native roadside hedgerows as feasible and also in relation to the sites existing topography. Once complete this phase will offer the residents direct access onto the Stoney Hill Road and the village of Rathcoole, whilst simultaneously opening up potential future phase to the north and east within the overall landholding.

In terms of materiality the dwellings consist predominantly of brick, a material that has been commonly used throughout the town of Rathcoole as well as in recent developments along Stoney Hill Road. Several dwellings will have light external render which will create a strong contrast with the brick and will successfully give a variation to the elevation.



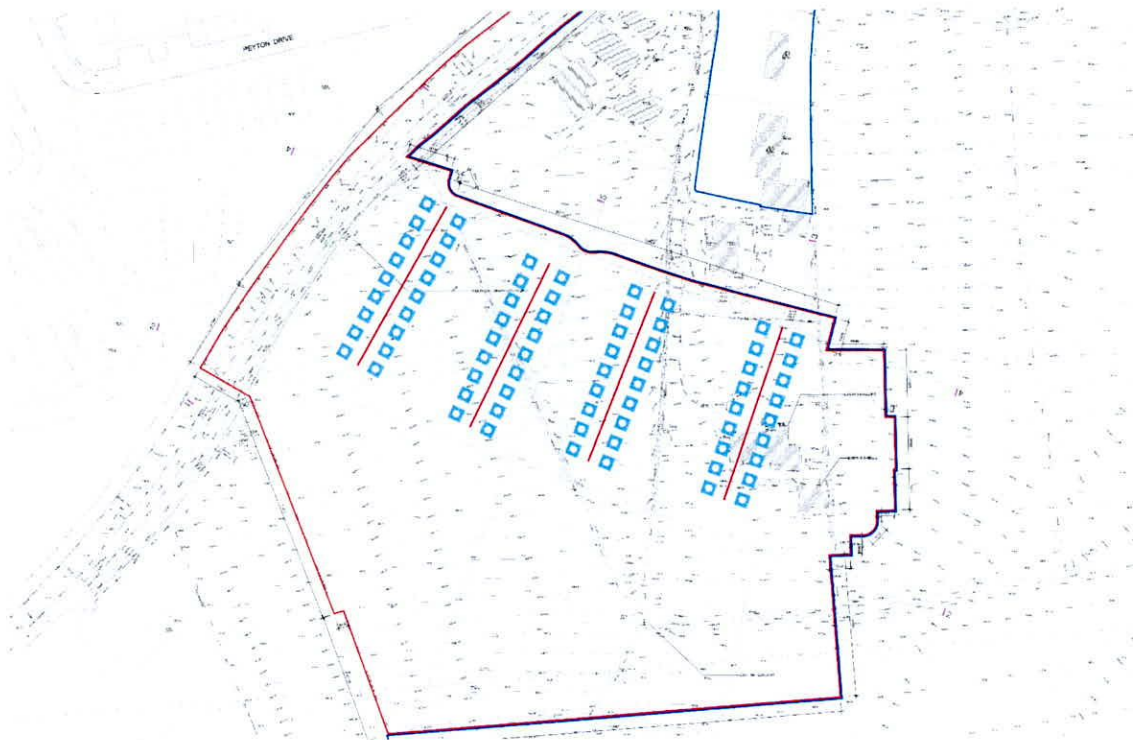
Fig 3.1.2 – Proposed scheme (phase 1).

4.0: SITE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The overall site development strategy followed a number of basic principles such as site access, layout orientation, natural features and site levels to name a few.

In developing the site, as previously mentioned, the location of the proposed access was a key factor which was determined primarily by the site levels and existing hedgerow.

Following the locating of the site entrance, the layout principle for the site was considered. Orientating the proposed dwellings in an east west layout was deemed the best arrangement. This meant the opportunity for the dwellings to respond to the sites existing contours and step up and down where required by the existing topography, minimising the amount of cut and fill required and working with the site gradient. In opposition to this, a north south orientation would provide many obstacles which were determined to be working against the existing sites natural feature. The road gradients required would be challenging without excessive site works and Part M compliance would be difficult to achieve for access to the dwellings.



North - South Housing working against Contours

Fig 4.1.1 – Image showing north south layout



East - West Housing working with Contours

Fig 4.1.2 – Image showing east west layout

This layout arrangement allowed the large southern parklands to be overlooked at all times by the houses and provides a primary relationship between the houses and parkland more in keeping with the sites setting rather than the dwellings primarily relating directly to roads and streets within the site. It is an orientation which utilises the existing hedgerow as features which define areas of the site and allows for them to be wherever possible and being incorporated into the overall landscaping scheme.

This east to west orientation leaves the gable of the dwellings adjacent to Stoney Hill Road, whilst this is not ideal, it is balanced against retaining as much of the pre-existing hedgerow as possible and also was the correct approach to addressing the nature of the levels on the site. This offered the opportunity to create a positive relationship between the houses whose gables interface with Stoney Hill Road. These were designed as dual aspect units with entrances off the west park along Stoney Hill road which turn the corners at the end of the rows of houses and interface directly with Stoney Hill Road (see Fig 5.2.1 for an example of this).

This site layout for the dwellings also works best with the proposed the site entrance. As mentioned previously, this location for the site allows for the gentlest gradient achievable within the site, working with the site levels and minimising the amount of hedgerow required to be removed.



Fig 4.1.2 – Image showing contours and access levels

Key structuring principles were considered through the design phase of this proposed development. As previously discussed with the site entrance, it was located and designed around the existing site levels to provide a safe and natural access which minimises site interference with the natural features. This will form the site entrance for the overall scheme once delivered, linking to potential future phases to the north and east and also providing a link from the site to the village of Rathcoole. The road layout of the proposed site was also structured to allow for further connections to the north and east to any future phases.

This first phase of development also allows the opportunity for the delivery of the first phase of a large linear park (referred to as southern parklands in this phase) on the “RU” zoned lands in conjunction with the proposed residential development.

The proposed building heights which follow the contour lines of the site have been designed to provide a transition from the RES-N zoning to the RU zoning. The dwelling units located towards the north being three storey and the southern dwellings stepping down to 2 storey to reflect the stepping down from residential lands towards the rural lands to the south.

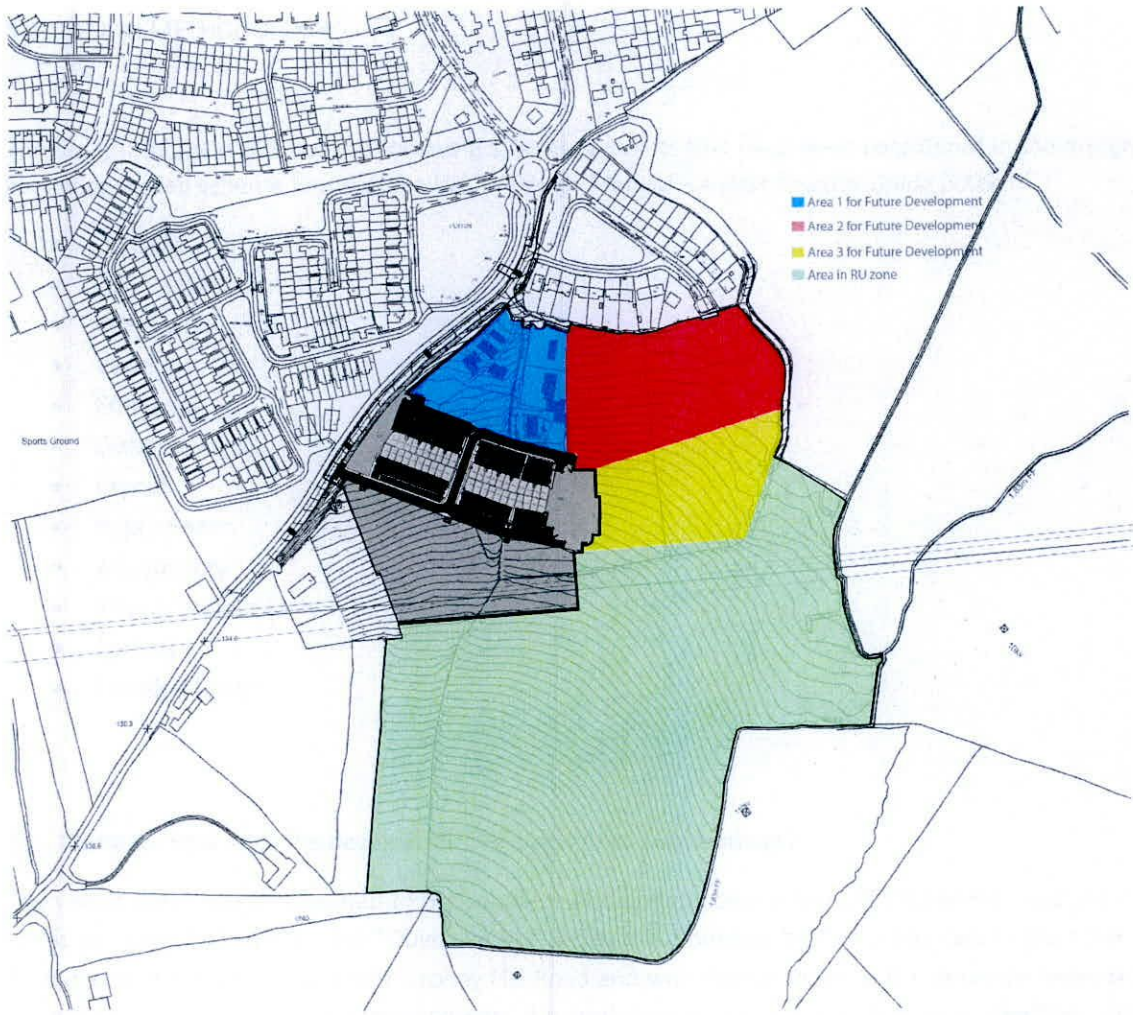


Fig 4.1.3 – Image showing potential future phases

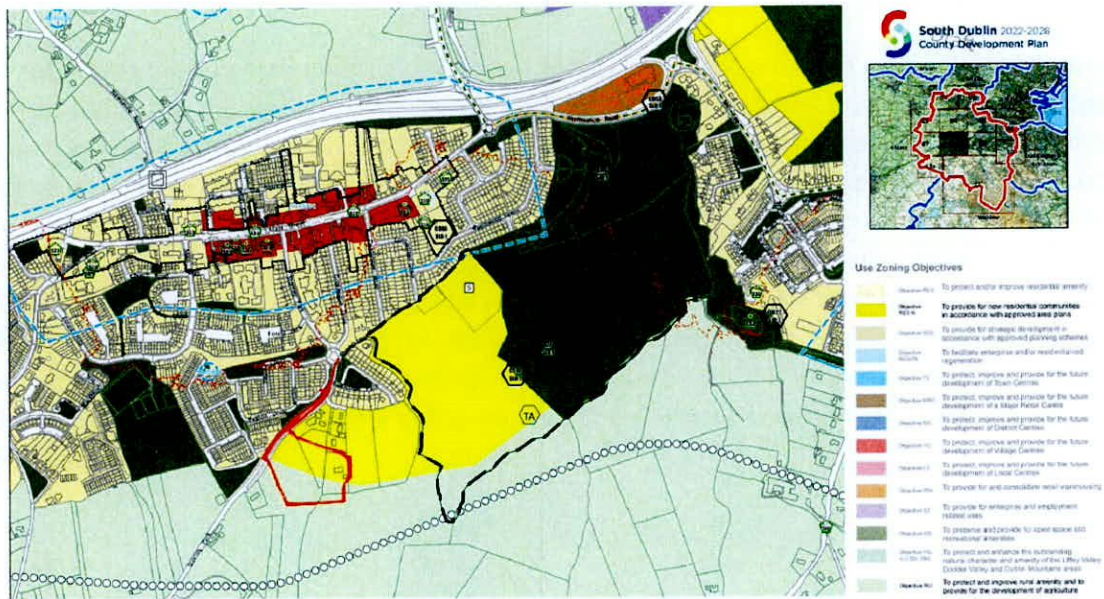


Fig 5.1.1 – Land use Zoning Map (red line indicates the site boundary)

The lands currently are largely open greenfield. The Stoney Hill Road boundary consists of a mixture of hedgerow, earthen embankment and trees. To the north, the boundary crosses 2 properties, one field and an existing domestic dwelling which is proposed to be demolished as part of the proposed works. There is no notable existing natural vegetation running along this boundary. To the eastern boundary there exists a treeline which comprises a mixture of vegetation which runs north to south. Along the southern boundary of the site, water mains traverse the site east to west. There is also a continuation of the treeline along the east boundary that branches to the south west and east. The gradient of the site slopes upwards from north to south with the average slope being gentle. (fig 5.1.2).

The application site does not have many mature trees located centrally within. There is a hedgerow, mentioned previously, running north to south (see Fig 5.1.2 below). Our design proposal aims to allow for these trees and hedgerows to be retained where feasibly possible and be integrated into the design. The new entrance and boundary will be landscaped, additional trees and hedging will be provided to help the development blend in with its setting.

The massing of the proposed dwellings form a direct response to the existing neighbouring developments and land uses. To the south of the site, the proposed dwellings are pitched roof two storey dwellings. To the northern side of the site where the site slopes downwards and towards Rathcoole, the dwellings are three storey pitched dwellings with roof heights lower than the southern dwelling line. These dwelling heights change as you transition from the "RU" zoned lands to the south towards the more built up "RES-N" lands to the north towards the built up area of Rathcoole. The proposed dwelling form and scale have been designed taking both the local building fabric and site

The site access point for the proposed design is located approximately midway along the western boundary at the southernmost point where the redline meets Stoney Hill Road. The primary driver behind this decision was to be able to provide site access at a point which the access could work best with the existing site levels, providing an access point with a gentle gradient while minimising interference to the existing natural roadside boundary. The proposed route being able to follow the existing contour levels of the site also played a **key** role in the siting of the access point. This point provides a more manageable change in levels for the access roads as opposed to further north where the change in levels become more challenging to provide a safe and accessible access route for all users.



Fig 5.2.1 – 3D Image of proposed site access

It is proposed to incorporate a pedestrian pathway through the site to the path along Stoney Hill Road. Locating the access at this point, with a building line running along one side and the expansive southern parkland will create a sense of openness, a sense that the dwellings do not dominate the scheme but instead play a subservient role to the natural landscape of the southern parkland area.

The site comprises of one primary road which runs through the scheme to the northeast where it terminates and the northern end of the west park allowing the park to form the focal point of this route. Additionally, within the site off this main route, there are a two additional homezones, both of which echo the main route by terminating at public open spaces. A strong emphasis has been placed on the proposed routes which predominantly provide dwellings to one side only with open space

across from them throughout the scheme in order to create a greater sense of place where the natural landscape and parks is given equal or greater presence.

The proposed site layout was also designed in a manner that also allows for future expansion and connections of the proposed and potential future public open spaces to the east and north.

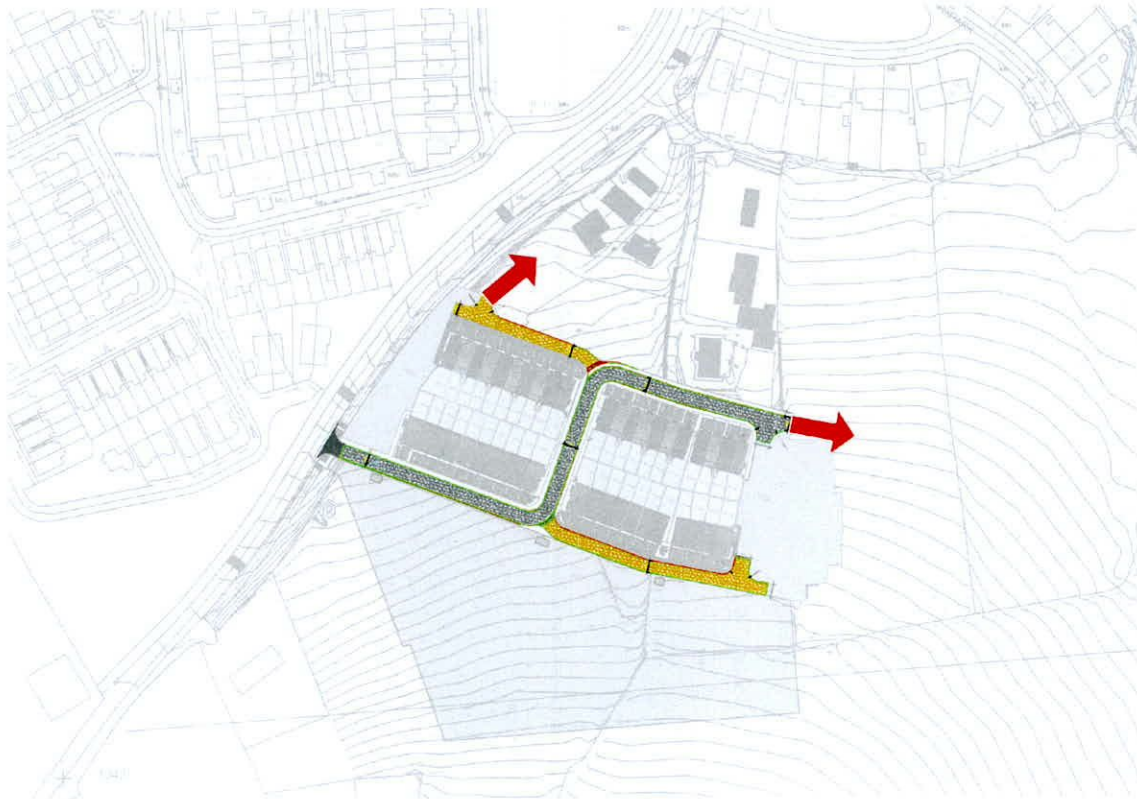


Fig 5.2.2 – Diagram illustrating future connections

The design proposes both a pedestrian and vehicular connectivity to Rathcoole village via the main site access on Stoney Hill Road. However, all the roads and paths have been designed to be connected to any potential future developments to the wider “Objective RES-N” lands to the north and east of the proposed site, which in turn can potentially incorporate residential links across any future developments towards Saggart village creating a direct link between the two villages.

Rathcoole is well served by bus in the peak periods, with services operated by Dublin Bus from Rathcoole village (approximately 550m from the proposed site) and a number of routes along the N7 providing regular frequency.

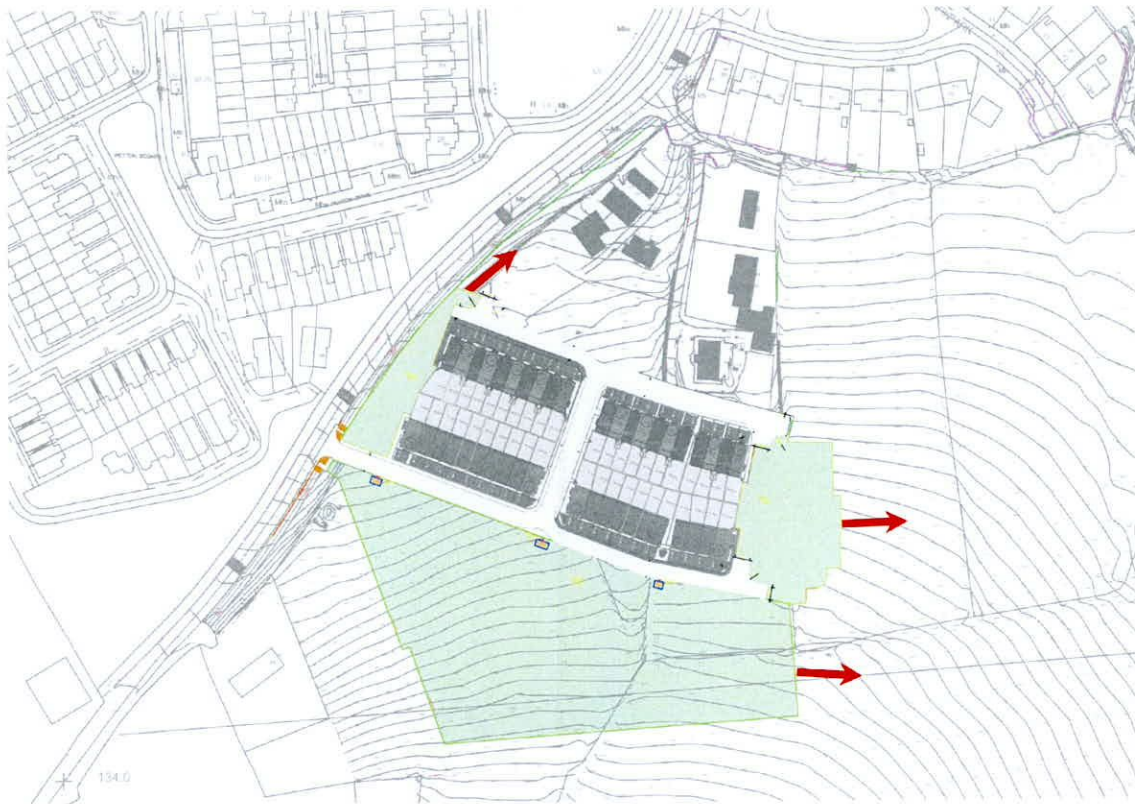


Fig 5.2.3 – Diagram illustrating future public open space connections

5.3: Inclusivity - How easily can people use and access the development?

The proposed development has been designed with due regard to the principles of universal design, including the 'Building for Everyone' publication. The houses are all three bed units.

- All homes have level access and inaccessible areas have been eliminated as far as feasibly possible. The public realm is designed to ensure accessibility on equal terms for people of a range of ages and physical mobility notwithstanding the sloping nature of the site.
- The proposed housing presents a positive aspect to passers-by, avoiding unnecessary physical and visual barriers. New footpaths through the scheme and with potential to connect to any future developments and will provide safe pedestrian routes to the village by connecting to existing footpaths and bike lanes along Stoney Hill Road.

5.4: Variety - How does the development promote a good mix of activities?

The East Park, West Park and the Southern Parklands all provide substantial open and safe space for children to play. These parks are all connected to each other with various walking routes.

Each open space will exhibit its own distinctive characteristics which will in turn provide a variety of amenity for each, whether its landscaped play spaces, natural open spaces that promote and encourage local biodiversity or walking routes that connect through the site and to open spaces in future phases.

Across the scheme there are 42 no. dwelling of 2 principal house types. These vary in form and are a combination of terraced and semi detached dwellings. The Table below indicates the varied housing mix.

Unit Type	Form	No. of beds	Size Per Unit (m ²)	Total no. of units proposed	Sub Total Unit Areas (m ²)
F1	Terraced/End of terrace	3	151	9	1359
F2	Terraced	3	151	8	1208
F3 (corner)	Semi-Detached	3	151	2	302
F4 (corner)	Semi-Detached	3	151	2	302
L1	Terraced	3	111	17	1887
L2 (corner)	Semi-Detached	3	141	4	564
Total				42	5622

Fig 2.4.1 – Dwelling mix table.

5.5: Efficiency - How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?

The proposed scheme provides a total of 42 much needed dwelling units in this location. Through our site analysis, the site was determined as a transitional zone between suburban and rural. Taking this into account along with the existing landscape and its features, it was decided to create two primary zones either side of the site access. The southern parkland to the south of this route and the residential zone to the north. This allows us to create a residential zone of an appropriate density in the area of the site that's closest to the village of Rathcoole and utilise the southern side of the site for open space, which in turn promotes biodiversity within the site and protects the existing biodiversity of the rural zoned lands to the south.

The houses are designed with a mix of terraced and semi detached units which allow for an efficient and sustainable use of land. All the houses will be constructed to current building regulation standards delivering a minimum A3 energy rating. The design of the lands creates three differing public open spaces and generous pedestrian recreational spaces for the development and the wider community as a whole.

Site Coverage = Ground Floor Area / Gross Site Area	
Ground Floor Area	Gross Site Area
2440	29076
Site Coverage %	8.391800798

Plot Ratio = Gross Floor Area / Gross Site Area	
Gross Floor Area	Gross Site Area
5622	29076
Plot Ratio %	19.33553446

Gross Site Density = Units / Gross Site Area	
Gross Site Area	Units
2.9076	42
Density per hectare	14.44490301

Site Coverage = Ground Floor Area / Remaining Nett Site Area	
Ground Floor Area	Remaining Nett Site Area (Hc)
2440	10893
Site Coverage %	22.39970623

Plot Ratio = Gross Floor Area / Remaining Nett Site Area	
Gross Floor Area	Remaining Nett Site Area (Hc)
5622	10893
Plot Ratio %	51.61112641

Nett Site Density = Units / Remaining Nett Site Area	
Remaining Nett Site Area (Hc)	Units
1.0893	42
Density per hectare	38.55687139

Fig 5.5.1 – Site density tables.

5.6: Distinctiveness - How do the proposals create a sense of place?

The primary distinctive feature of the proposed scheme is the relationship between open space, dwellings and the individual and a sense to create a place where the individual can relate and interact with both the natural and built environment in equal measures. This feature is immediately evident as one enters the proposed scheme and continues throughout. It ensures that space, nature and openness integrate the entirety of the site.

The proposal aims to break down the scale of the site down by providing multiple green spaces to provide a greater sense of place. This helps create differing zones within the full scheme which exist individually whilst also forming part of the wider scheme and in turn responding to the sense that the site is a zone of transition between urban and rural landscapes. These different areas, whilst subdividing the site, help enhance the character of the area by creating unique characteristics and avoiding a sense of monotony associated with large urban developments. The western side of the site that fronts Stoney Hill Road has only 2 new dwellings fronting onto it as way of helping to make the development appear more discreet and to respect and embrace the local context rather than dominate it. This unassuming public front along with the expansive southern parkland open space to the south of the main site access also helps the site embrace the rural surroundings creating a sense of distinctiveness for the proposed scheme, inviting the wider community into the development to interact with, use and enjoy the public space.

5.7: Layout - How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?

The layout is primarily informed by parameters set out by the sites context, the Urban Design Manual and by the requirements of the South Dublin Development Plan (2016-2022).

The layout forms a distinctive sense of place through use of the following devices;

- The creation of distinctive character areas to create a sense of place and orientation.
- The streets were designed as places rather than routes with dwellings to one side only fronting onto public open spaces to ensure a hierarchy is created when roads are subservient to the landscape and dwellings.
- The configuration of the road network is designed to encourage lower traffic speeds and be pedestrian friendly.
- Utilising the existing trees, planting, and hedgerows where possible to retain to enhance the proposed development. Providing for additional high quality public open space and active recreational facilities.
- Corner sites have been specifically designed house types that provide an active frontage and passive supervision on two outward looking facades.
- Secondary streets feed from the main road serving the homezones with shared surfaces to further create a sense of integration with the public open spaces.
- Housing zones are carefully considered and respond to their context. The house facades overlook, supervise, and define the edges of streets and public landscaped areas.
- Quality public open space in the form of linear (east park), pocket (west park) and large open park (southern woodland) are distributed throughout the scheme, all overlooked by housing.
- Large open space and green belts remain to contain the development and enhance an open rural feel to the scheme.
- The dwelling units from north to south of the site are designed to achieve the "stepping" of development from village into agricultural hinterland following the sites natural contours and gradient.

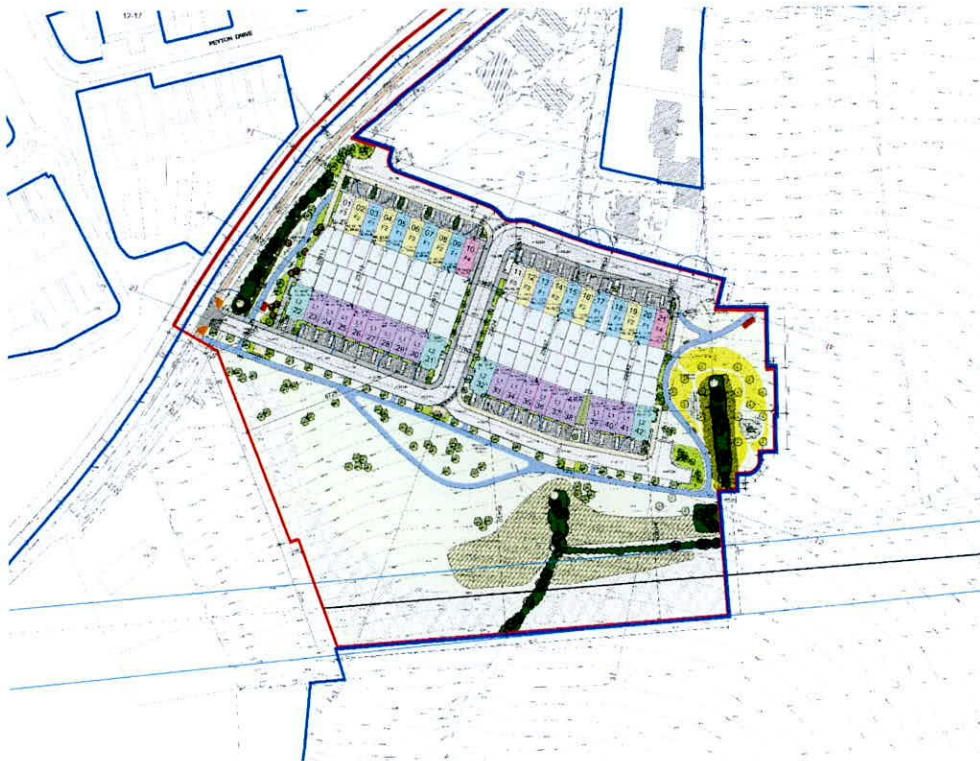


Fig 5.7.1 – Extract of Landscape plan

5.8 Public Realm - How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?

The development has created a selection of distinctive public areas formed by the incorporation of differing landscaping, house types and unit orientation. All public realm areas will be landscaped to a high standard in a combined hard/soft landscaped plan.

Car parking has been provided within the landscaped curtilage of the houses in a configuration to avoid a car-dominated streetscape.

The massing and siting of the dwellings fronting out onto open spaces creates a sense of integration between the open spaces and dwellings which aims to maximise their interaction and use of the open spaces and thus create vibrant parks and greens that will give the scheme its overall identity.

These green spaces allowed for the subdivision of the site and formation of home zones which culminate with public open spaces and help give the overall site a more distinctive character. The houses units were designed and orientated around the green spaces to give them a direct relationship to shared public green spaces and in addition, increasing the opportunity for passive surveillance of these communal spaces (fig2.8.1).



Fig 5.8.1 – Diagram of passive surveillance

Each of the three public open spaces have been designed to give each its own distinctive characteristics which responds to the site context and therefore to integrate into the schemes surroundings.

The west park is linear in nature and is designed to act as an interface with Stoney Hill Road, providing a natural and inviting progression from the public road into the proposed scheme.

The east park is larger in scale and has different characteristics to the west park. This space will provide a more landscaped feel which will also include play facilities for children. Its location to the east of the site away from the site entrance helps it to nestle within the site forming a safe and inviting space for the community.

The expansive southern parklands open space is designed to retain and promote a more natural landscape. The park will retain and enhance much of the existing natural features. It will be a space created to encourage and promote biodiversity of the local flora and fauna.

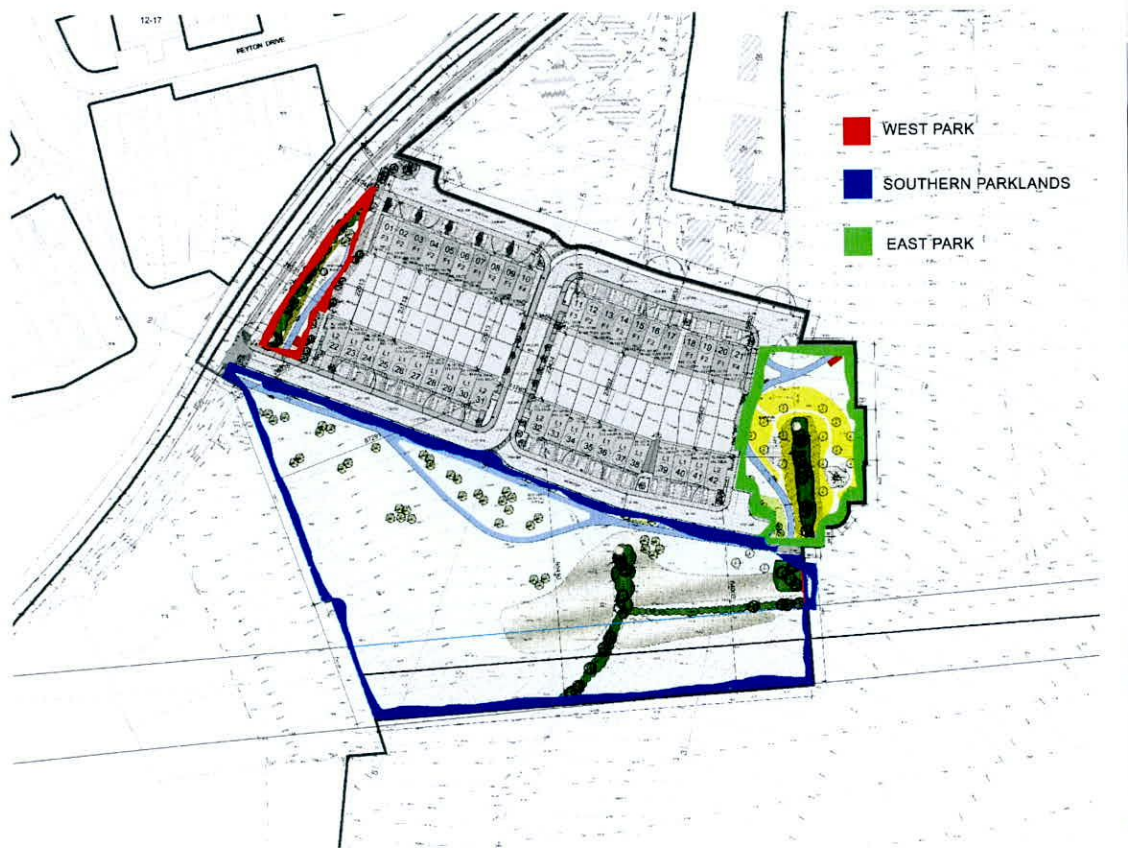


Fig 5.8.2. – Public Open Space diagram

5.9 Adaptability - How will the buildings cope with change?

All house types are designed to meet the requirements 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities' (2020) and in instances more generous internal spaces are proposed to increase the quality of the unit types.

The buildings will be heavily insulated with internal layouts that can be easily adapted in the future. There is also potential for future expansion into the roof spaces of certain dwellings types and also into the rear gardens which have been generously sized in some cases.

The houses will be constructed to current building regulation standards delivering a minimum A3 energy rating.

5.10: Privacy & Amenity - How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?

Each residential unit proposed in this scheme is served by an exclusive area of private open space in excess of the accordance with Table 11.20 'Minimum Space Standards for Houses' of the County Development Plan;

Type of Unit	House Size	Private Open Space
One bedroom	50 sq m	48 sq m
Two bedrooms	80 sq m	55 sq m
Three bedrooms	92 sq m	60 sq m
Four bedroom or more	110 sq m	70 sq m

Due consideration has been taken through the design process to ensure each dwelling achieves a high level of amenity and that there is no overlooking between houses and private open spaces have a high level of privacy.

All homes throughout the scheme will be constructed to high standards that are designed to prevent sound transmission through the use of appropriate acoustic insulation.

It will be necessary to provide enhanced acoustic glazing and vents to ensure that when windows are closed that the internal noise environment is suitable.

Formal planting and on-curtilage parking areas are provided to the front of the dwellings proposed creating a defensible space between the public road and the built edge.

5.11: Parking

All the houses are provided with 2 no. car parking spaces. The design is to ensure the site is not car dominated and the roads and homezones will allow for on street visitor parking.

Bicycle parking is provided for residents and visitors in both the east and west parks along the routes through the site as shown on the landscape plans accompanying this application.

5.12: Detailed Design - How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

- The design intent is to maximise the accommodation of the dwelling units while also providing high-quality design. The site layout is designed in such a way as to ensure that the scheme looks outwards and to maximise the sense of openness throughout the site.
- The proposed dwellings are a combination of two and three storeys in height. There is a mix of elevation treatments that communicate visually with the neighbouring structures, thereby corresponding with the context of the site.
- As with the public open spaces, the proposed dwellings will be finished to a high standard in materials suitable for the context and location of the scheme.
- The colour palette chosen will be sympathetic to the existing residential properties adjacent to the proposed development.
- The dwellings will be designed to cater for the modern way of living. Large windows will allow generous amounts of daylight and internal penetration of direct sunlight.
- The landscape design aims to create a natural and safe environment. The landscape treatments aim to provide an attractive setting while considering long term maintenance of green spaces.

6.0: CONCLUSION

The design proposal has considered the appropriate elements that relate from the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022, Urban Design Manual and Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities. The design has accommodated the brief set out in the Development Plan and the individual and unique design of the proposed scheme creates a very distinctive development.

The proposed dwellings will provide the area with well thought out and designed dwellings to meet the demands of differing households, whilst contributing to the much-needed supply in the area. The private amenity spaces will provide residents with space to relax and socialise together, creating a sense of community within the development.

The development also offers a generous number of bike parking spaces which will contribute to the local and national environmental targets by cutting down on car emissions.

The design and materials chosen are reflective of the existing buildings located within the vicinity of the proposed development. This will create a sense of visual continuity and appreciation of the local area. The design of the apartments and the materials chosen are of good quality and have been specified in order to create a scheme of value to Rathcoole.

We believe that this scheme has carefully considered all the relevant criteria and in turn adds to and enhances the existing neighbourhood, respects the site and its context and will deliver homes of a high quality that will benefit Rathcoole Village and the wider community.

