

Planning Statement

for

**Residential Development on Lands to
the East of Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole,
County Dublin**

on behalf of

Romeville Developments Limited

August 2022



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Description

- ✓ The proposed development on land to the east of Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole, will consist of the demolition of 1 no. dwelling and 1 no. ancillary outbuilding and the construction of **42 no. 3 bed dwellings**. The proposed development will provide 84 no. in-curtilage surface car parking spaces.
- ✓ A significant portion of public open space, well in excess of Development Plan standards, is proposed as part of the development.

Context

- ✓ **Planning permission was granted under an Strategic Housing Development (SHD) permission for the wider lands, including the now application lands**, for a scheme of 204 no. units and associated infrastructure and services by An Bord Pleanála (ABP) on 12th November 2020 (Ref. ABP-307698-20). The site for the SHD permission included the site now subject to this planning application for 42 no. units.
- ✓ This recent SHD approval **establishes the principle of residential use** on these lands, in line with the South Dublin County Development Plan(s) 'New Residential' zoning objective.
- ✓ The applicant has been unable to implement this SHD approval on the subject lands due to a judicial review of the decision, which is as of yet undetermined and may take a significant period of time to be resolved to a conclusion. Due to the significant uncertainty on the timing of the conclusion of the judicial review proceedings, it is now necessary for an application for planning permission for development on part of the site in order to seek to **deliver residential units to the market within a short to medium timeframe**.
- ✓ The proposed development of 42 no. units comprises the first phase of development on the overall landholding. This first phase **includes key structuring infrastructure** such as the main entrance from Stoney Hill Road that will form the main internal vehicle and pedestrian network for the overall landholding.
- ✓ The layout and site strategy **mirror that as approved in the above referenced SHD** permission, in terms of street hierarchy and layout and in terms of open space. The layout allows for logical extension in to future phases of development on the overall landholding.
- ✓ The planning application for 42 no. units relates to the **sequentially logical first phase of development on this overall landholding**, being located adjacent to Stoney Hill Road to allow access to the lands and also being located on the western part of the site, closest to Rathcoole Village Centre.
- ✓ This first phase planning application also allows for the **front-loading of two significant public open spaces** areas on the RES-N lands (the western and eastern open spaces), in addition to front-loading the linear park to the south. There are therefore significant public gains.

Principle of Residential Development

- ✓ The application site is **specifically zoned for new residential development** under the RES-N zoning of the site under which 'residential' is a use permitted in principle.
- ✓ The **precedent of the granted SHD scheme** (Ref. ABP-307698-20) on the site is significant and included residential development on the portion of lands now subject to this planning application. The form and layout of housing now proposed is almost identical to that previously permitted by An Bord Pleanála under the SHD permission.
- ✓ The subject application site **adjoins the settlement of Rathcoole** and is in a sustainable location that is within walking distance of the village and the Dublin Bus services, etc.

Site Layout Concept and Approach

- ✓ The approach to the site layout and urban design of the proposed development is **highly influenced by the site topography**.
- ✓ The subject development site is sloping and has a level range of between circa 129:00 at its northern end and circa 141:00 at its southern end above mean sea level. **The site incline from north to south dictates an east to west built form layout**. A north-south layout would result in a series of stepped terraces / building lines, which would not be considered appropriate in visual terms.
- ✓ The **location of the vehicular access** to the site is governed largely by the existing levels. The level change and transition in levels from Stoney Hill Road to the development site is at its least aggressive towards the southern end of the site.
- ✓ In addition to topography considerations, there are **existing hedgerows** that run along the eastern and western boundaries of the subject land. There is also a hedgerow that runs through the site in a north to south arrangement. Seeking to **retain as much of these existing hedgerows as possible**, whilst ensuring the delivery of an appropriate and legible residential development that reaches an acceptable density of development and provides typologies which reflect the requirements of the area is a key consideration in the site layout.
- ✓ The proposed development follows the form of development in this part of Rathcoole while at the same time creating its own identity and enhancing Rathcoole's southern urban character. The **proposed site layout is considered to be an entirely appropriate** and acceptable response to the character of the site itself and the surrounding context.

Site Development Standards and Design Criteria

- ✓ The proposed dwellings provide a **high quality modern design** which is consummate with the surrounding quality of the area. The proposed materials on the external façade of the new houses will be primarily a mix of brick and plaster and render on subsidiary elevations. The roof tiles will be slate and will be blue / black in colour. Windows and doors will be UPVC and the exact colour will be determined



at a later stage in the development. The windows will also have concrete cill / banding.

- ✓ The proposed development complies with, and in some cases **significantly exceeds all relevant site development standards**. Exceedance occurs in particular in relation to public open space. Public open space is provided at 23.2% of the total developable area (i.e. measured on the lands zoned RES-N). This 23.2% figure **excludes** the additional 11,797 sq.m linear park on the southern portion of the lands.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Virtus on behalf of the applicant, Romeville Developments Ltd, in support of a planning application for residential development comprising 42 no. 3 bedroom units on lands to the east of Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement has been prepared to assess the planning application proposals against the relevant provisions of the statutory Development Plan, statutory National and Regional Plans and Guidelines and other material planning considerations. This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the additional supporting reports submitted with the planning application.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The proposed development lands ('Subject Site') are located to the south of Rathcoole village, adjacent and to the east of Stoney Hill Road. The subject site measures 2.9 hectares in area and is partly undeveloped, except for one existing residential property and curtilage. The existing property is proposed to be demolished to facilitate the proposed development (see section 3.0 below).
- 2.2 In figure 1 below, the subject site is shown along with the land uses and development in the adjoining lands. The modern housing development to the west and north west is the Peyton Estate that has been developed over the last 10 years and includes a range of house types, such as 2 storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings, 3 storey duplexes, etc. There are one-off dwellings on Stoney Park to the north and other independent dwellings to the south west off Stoney Hill Road. The adjoining land uses to the north east, east and south east are a mix of residential and open countryside and the land uses to the south and south west are also open countryside, agriculture, commercial and one-off residential properties.



Figure 1 – Subject Site – Outlined Approx. in Red
Source: Google Maps

- 2.3 Beyond the Peyton Estate to the north and north west is Rathcoole Village, which is within walking and cycling distance of the subject lands via Stoney Hill Road and footpaths. The subject site's proposed entrance at Stoney Hill Road is some 650 metres from Main Street Rathcoole, which takes 2 minutes by bike and 7 minutes by foot.
- 2.4 Examples of some of the facilities and services in the vicinity of the subject site, that will support the residents living there are:
- A variety of retail premises on and off Main Street, including Rathcoole Shopping centre, that would attract more local trips and activity without the need for travelling to other larger settlements / centres;

- There is a secondary school, national school and Gaelscoil in Rathcoole, there are plans to develop a new secondary school and national school in Rathcoole and a new Gaelscoil in Citywest and there are schools in Citywest / Saggart and plans to build new post primary schools in these adjoining settlements.
- Rathcoole Park which provides a multi-use active open space and recreation area for play, such as sports fields, exercise equipment zones, walking / jogging / cycling trail, etc. and passive open spaces, for example two lakes, landscaped areas with seating, etc. and
- Childcare facilities, community centre, soccer club, hurling and camogie club, etc.

2.5 The subject site is located approximately 650 metres south of the proposed BusConnects network which will operate along the Main Street in Rathcoole. The routes that will be delivered as part of the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Bus Connects initiative, will transform the current bus system by redesigning routes to offer fast, predictable, and reliable journeys.

2.6 The subject site will therefore benefit from enhanced accessibility and mobility levels delivered by the proposed Rathcoole BusConnects scheme for commuters accessing the city centre. Under the BusConnects proposals, the following routes will serve Rathcoole, as well as the subject site:

- Other City Bound Route 58, proposed under BusConnects, will run every 20 minutes on weekdays and weekends from Rathcoole to Dublin Port via Clondalkin, Red Cow, Kylemore, and further along the City Quays. It is proposed to operate through Main St approximately 650m north of the subject site.
- Peak Time Route X58 is exclusively a peak time route that will run from Rathcoole directly into Dublin City Centre and will complete the indirect service provided on the 58 services.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

General Description

- 3.1 The proposed development on land to the east of Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole, will consist of the demolition of 1 no. dwelling and 1 no. ancillary outbuilding and the construction of 42 no. dwellings.
- 3.2 The proposed development will comprise of 21 no. Typology F and 21 no. Typology L dwellings. The proposed 42 no. dwellings will comprise of 3 bed units in a mix of semi-detached and terraced typologies. Typology L are two storey and typology F are two storey, plus second floor loft accommodation with front dormer windows and rear rooflights.
- 3.3 The proposed development will provide 84 no. in-curtilage surface car parking spaces.
- 3.4 In terms of open space, the proposal includes 3,281 sq.m usable public open spaces in an eastern open space and a western open space, in addition to the first phase of a linear park to the south of the site.

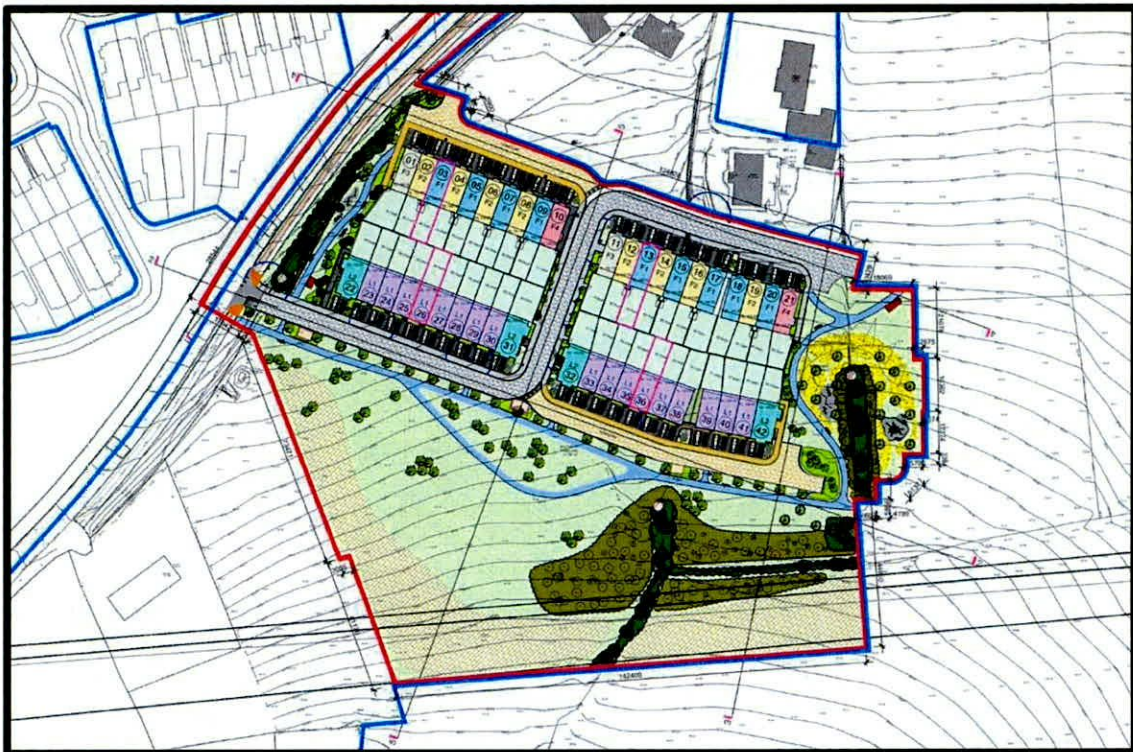


Figure 2: Extract from Site Layout Plan, Drawing No. P006
Source: Adrian Hill Architects

- 3.5 The proposal also includes private domestic gardens, a new vehicular entrance from Stoney Hill Road, an internal road network, including footpaths / cycleways, 3

no. refuse/bin stores, public lighting, boundary treatments, drainage and engineering works and all other associated and ancillary development/works.

- 3.6 The total proposed residential development gross floorspace is circa 5,622 sq.m.
- 3.7 The proposed development is set out in such a manner so as to specifically respond to the site levels and contours. This has dictated an east-west building line and has had an influence, together with other factors, on the key structuring principles such as the road/street alignment and hierarchy, as well as the open space locations. This is addressed further in Section 6 of this planning statement.

Residential Component

- 3.8 There are two types of residential units proposed in the subject development. The proposed house types are 3 bedroom units and are a mix of semi-detached and terraced. All dwellings are two storeys in height.
- 3.9 The main difference between the house typologies proposed is: typology L is two storey with rear roof light tunnels and typology F is two storey with front dormer windows and rear roof slope rooflights.



Figure 3: CGI of Proposed Development
Source: 3D Design Bureau

Open Spaces

- 3.10 The location and form the public open space in the proposed development was influenced by the aim to use and enhance as much of the existing hedgerows on site as possible. The eastern and western open spaces were therefore located to reflect existing hedgerow locations.
- 3.11 Furthermore, the layout of the proposed development ensures all residential dwelling are directly connected to or close to high quality active and passive public open spaces. Passive surveillance of these open spaces was also an important consideration.
- 3.12 Each of the two open spaces on the RES-N zoned lands is described below.

East Park

- 3.12.1 The proposed east park public open space area measures 2,248 sq.m and works out as 15.9% of the developable site area (i.e. the extent of the lands zoned RES-N). The public open space area forms the eastern end of the residential development zone. It retains a substantial hedge that runs through the middle of the open space and is encircled by meandering footpaths and a cycleway. There are trees planted in the defined open space area around the existing hedge which include children and adult play spaces and equipment, for more active recreational activities.
- 3.12.2 There are also pockets of seating surrounding the defined open space and existing hedge and trees for more passive and relaxing recreational activities. The western park public open space area adds a natural link between the subject lands and the rest of the landholding, further east and north east. It is also linked to the southern parkland area and creates a semi circled open space enclosure of the residential development zone on the subject site. The east park open space area is overlooked by the proposed residential properties to the east.

West Park

- 3.12.3 The proposed west park public open space area measures 1,033 sq.m and works out as 7.3% of the developable site area (i.e. the extent of the lands zoned RES-N). The public open space area forms the western boundary of the proposed residential development. There is a significant existing hedgerow that is retained in this public open space area and there is also new planting of trees and other vegetation and seating for passive recreation for residents and visitors to the proposed development.
- 3.12.4 This public open space area is linked to the southern parkland area and creates a semi circled open space enclosure of the residential development zone on the subject site. The west park open space area is overlooked by the proposed residential properties to the west.

- 3.13 The above open spaces significantly exceed the minimum quantitative requirement for open space in the Development Plan.
- 3.14 In addition to the two open spaces referred to above, an opportunity is presented to deliver a substantial public open space on the RU zoned lands to the south. Whilst the proposed development meets and exceeds all quantitative open space requirements on the RES-N lands alone, the opportunity is being taken to deliver an additional open space for public benefit.
- 3.15 This linear open space has the potential to be extended to the east at a later date to link with Rathcoole Park, if desirable. The southern parkland area will provide a unique and exceptional open space both residents and visitors can visit and enjoy. It will also allow biodiverse species and wildlife to retain and create rich habitats for their survival.
- 3.16 This southern parkland takes up a significant portion of the subject site, measuring 11,797 sq.m in area (40.5% of the gross total site area). The southern parkland will include passive areas of open space and will retain and increase trees, hedges and vegetation for the existing and new ecological species and wildlife. The southern end of the parkland area contains 3 existing watermains and a wayleave therefore the growth and vegetation shall be maintained for easy access for service inspections, etc.
- 3.17 The proposed public open spaces referred above, including the southern parkland, provide for 15,078 sq.m of the total gross site area (29,076 sqm). This is 51% of the gross site area and is considered an extremely generous provision of public open space.

Height, Scale and Massing

- 3.18 The proposed houses are uniformly designed as two storey and the typology F units have loft accommodation in the second floor. The typology F units have front dormer windows and rear rooflights to create a loft room living space with high amenity value. Habitable roof spaces provides for a varied family accommodation house type in the proposed development.
- 3.19 The typology L dwellings do not provide loft accommodation but have high quality family accommodation at both ground and first floor level. The omission of second floor loft accommodation and front dormer windows in the typology L units has been designed into the scheme to respect the transition between 'RES-N' built form and the rural zoned 'RU' lands to the south of the proposed development.
- 3.20 The scale and mass of the proposed development's built form is well balanced with the provision of green space and provision of public open spaces on site. The proposed development's gross floor area makes up only 20% of the subject site's gross site area.
- 3.21 The ridge heights (all below 11 metres) and cumulative widths of the proposed terraced houses do not adversely block access to skyline at street level and they blend in with the surrounding landscape.

Design and Materials

- 3.22 The proposed materials on the external façade of the new houses will be primarily a mix of brick and render on subsidiary elevations. The roof tiles will be slate and will be blue / black in colour. Windows and doors will be UPVC. The windows will also have concrete cill / banding. The design intent around the selection of the material palette for the new houses is based on following / matching other existing modern developments in the vicinity of the subject site, such as the Peyton Estate on the opposite side of Stoney Hill Road to the west.
- 3.23 Further details on proposed materials refer to the plans and drawings by Adrian Hill Architects submitted with this planning application.

Car and Bicycle Parking

- 3.24 The quantum of in-curtilage car parking spaces in the proposed development is 84 no. This accords with the County Development requirements for parking provision in residential development in zone 1 in the County. New zone 1 houses with 3+ bedrooms to provide 2 car parking spaces.

Site Services

- 3.29 The proposed development will connect to existing surface and foul water network on Stoney Hill Road, through new connections. Irish Water have provided a confirmation of feasibility and a copy of this is appended to the Infrastructure Report, by Aecom. The existing water mains on Stoney Hill Road will also be connected to the new proposed development. The schemes drainage strategy is outlined and explained in the plans, drawings and infrastructure report, by Aecom, submitted with this planning application.
- 3.30 Permeable paving will be provided in the in-curtilage car parking spaces throughout the proposed development. Any pollutants will be intercepted, and infiltrated through the drainage system, which is connected to an attenuation tank, when required.
- 3.31 The proposed development includes new public lighting and this is outlined and explained in the plans and public lighting report, by Aecom, in the planning application.
- 3.32 Connection by the proposed development to the existing ESB network in the adjoining area. The existing 10KV overhead ESB cables on site will need to be diverted underground to service the proposed development.
- 3.33 There are Eir and Virgin Media existing broadband networks, on Stoney Hill Road, that the proposed development can connect to.
- 3.34 There is an existing gas supply network on Stoney Hill Road, that the proposed development can connect to if there is a requirement to do so.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 The relevant planning history for the subject lands is provided below.

South Dublin County Council (SDCC) Registration (Reg.) Reference (Ref.) SHD 3ABP-307698-20

4.2 On the 12th November 2020, ABP granted planning permission for the above SHD planning application for the following proposed development:

“Demolition of 5 existing residential properties and associated outbuildings and the construction of a residential development of 204 units, comprising 151 Houses (including Duplexes) and 53 Apartments. The basement for the apartment block includes 49 car parking spaces, 87 bicycle parking spaces, circulation, plant areas, refuse storage areas and other associated facilities. There are an additional 12 visitor bicycle parking spaces for the apartment block provided at surface level. Access to the apartment block is directly from Stoney Hill Road via a new access from an existing dropped kerb. The development also includes 306 surface car parking spaces, 169 bicycle parking spaces (comprising of 99 spaces at basement and surface for the apartment block, 60 secure spaces for the apartments in the duplex units and 10 visitor parking spaces at surface level), communal open space for the apartments, public open space including a children’s playground and a linear park to the south of the site. New vehicular entrances from Stoney Hill Road (one to the apartment building to the north of Stoney Hill Road and a second to the remainder of the development further south on Stoney Hill Road). The proposed development also includes a 2 storey creche building plus an outdoor play area located on an existing undeveloped portion of the Peyton site located to the west of Stoney Hill Road.”

4.3 On the 12th January 2021, an application to the High Court for leave to bring judicial review proceedings on the ABP’s decision to grant approval of the SHD scheme was successful. The applicant is therefore unable to implement this planning permission while the Judicial Review is being decided. The timeframe for a decision on the judicial review proceedings is uncertain.

Phase 2 Application SDCC Reg. Ref. SD18A/0413

4.4 An application for a Phase 2 development comprising 93 no. residential units on the subject lands, was lodged with South Dublin County Council on the 16th November 2018 under Reg. Ref: SD18A/0413.

4.5 The description of the Phase 2 development as applied for is as follows:

“The proposed development on lands to the east of Stoney Hill Road will consist of the construction of a residential development comprising of 93 nos. in total. This consists of 36 no. four bed units and 57 no. three bed units, all in a mix of terrace and semi-detached units, and of a height of two storeys (including second floor accommodation in roof space with dormer windows and roof lights). The proposed development includes new priority access from Stoney Hill Road to the

development, a new linear park to the south of the site (as an extension to that proposed in Phase 1) together with other public open spaces, landscaping including boundary treatment, underground services and utilities and road and footpaths on the site. 186 no. car surface car parking spaces will be provided for the development. The total gross floor area of the proposed residential development will be circa 13,418.71 sq.m. The proposed development also includes a 2 no. storey crèche building of 620 sq.m located on an existing undeveloped portion of the Peyton site located to the west of Stoney Hill Road. The crèche includes 10 no. car parking spaces and 20 no. bicycle parking spaces. The proposed development includes all associated and ancillary works”.

- 4.6 The applicant withdrew the planning application on 25th April 2019 and decided to submit an SHD planning application to ABP for the whole site.

Phase 1 Application (SDCC Reg. Ref. SD18A/0364)

- 4.7 An application for a Phase 1 development comprising 99 no. residential units on the subject lands, was lodged with South Dublin County Council on the 8th October 2018 under Reg. Ref: SD18A/0364.

- 4.8 The description of the Phase 2 development as applied for is as follows:

“The proposed development on lands to the east of Stoney Hill Road will consist of the demolition of 3 no. existing dwellings and the construction of a residential development comprising of 99 no. residential units in total. This consists of 60 no. dwellings and 39 no. apartments. The 60 no. dwellings comprise of 38 no. four bed units and 22 no. three bed units, all in a mix of terrace and semi-detached units, and of a height of two storeys (including second floor accommodation in roof space with dormer windows and roof lights). The apartments are located in a single four storey block over part basement level, and including a setback at third floor level, located to the north-west of the site to the east of Stoney Hill Road and with access from Stoney Hill Road. The apartments comprise of 11 no. one bedroom units, 19 no. two bed units, and 9 no. three bed units. The proposed development includes new priority access from Stoney Hill Road to the development, in addition to a separate access to the apartment building from Stoney Hill Road, a new linear park to the south of the site together with other public open spaces, landscaping including boundary treatment, underground services and utilities and road and footpaths on the site. 128 no. car surface car parking spaces will be provided for the development and 41 no. basement car parking spaces and 32 bicycle parking spaces beneath the apartment building. The total gross floor area of the proposed residential development will be circa 12,538 sq.m. The proposed development also includes a 2 no. storey crèche building of 620 sq.m located on an existing undeveloped portion of the Peyton site located to the west of Stoney Hill Road. The crèche includes 10 no. car parking spaces and 20 no. bicycle parking spaces. The proposed development includes all associated and ancillary works”.

- 4.9 The applicant withdrew the planning application on 25th April 2019 and decided to submit an SHD planning application to ABP for the whole site.

SDCC Reg. Ref. SD08A/0858

- 4.10 An application for a development comprising 54 no. residential units on the subject lands, was lodged with South Dublin County Council on the 23rd December 2008 under Reg. Ref: SD08A/0858.
- 4.11 The description of the development as applied for is as follows:
- “Residential development consisting of 9 no. two bedroom two storey houses, 12 no. three bedroom two storey houses, 8 no. three bedroom two storey dormer houses, 25 no. four bedroom two storey dormer houses (total 54 no. units); for 100 car spaces, all estate roads, footpaths and all landscaping and site works on and under land including a children’s playground; with proposed vehicle access from the new Rathcoole distributor road to be constructed to the south with pedestrian access only to Rathcoole Park.”*
- 4.12 In July 2009, ABP upheld a decision of SDCC to refuse planning permission for the proposed development, on the following 2 reasons:
- (1) *“Having regard to the central location of the development within lands zoned A1 - ‘to provide for new Residential Communities in accordance with Approved Area Plans’, it is considered that the proposed development of 54 number dwellings would be premature pending the preparation and approval of an area plan for these zoned lands. The proposed development would, therefore, materially contravene the zoning objective for these lands and be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*
 - (2) *Access arrangements to the site are via a roundabout and spur from the proposed Rathcoole Distributor Road (which works have not been included in the Part VIII process for the road). Furthermore, construction has not commenced on the proposed new distributor road and no start date for this road has been set. It is considered, therefore, that development of the kind proposed would be premature pending the determination by the planning authority of a road layout for the area, including link roads from the approved Distributor Road and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area”.*
- 4.13 The above reasons for refusal would not apply to the subject proposed development. The existing South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 RES-N zoned lands to the east of the subject site and wider landholding, which is also zoned RES-N, is proposed to be moved further east in the emerging Draft South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028. The subject site is therefore detached from the RES-N lands, further east, negating the need for a strategic plan / area plan to develop these lands.
- 4.14 Furthermore, the planning inspector’s report in SHD planning application, for the entire landholding, Ref. ABP-307698-20 assessed the need to provide an area plan in accordance with the RES-N zoning objective. His stated,

"...I note that the wording of the objective does not call for an adopted Action Area Plan, nor does it call for an adopted Local Area Plan and as such the lack of same should not hinder the site coming forward for development, and I do not consider the lack of same a material contravention of the zoning objective for the site. There is no indication in any of the submissions that a statutory Action Area Plan or a statutory Local Area Plan is being prepared for in this area. The PA refer to a draft Masterplan for the adjacent site being prepared, but this does not appear to be a statutory plan such as those referred to above. As such it would be unreasonable, in my view, to sterilise the development of this residential zoned site in the absence of such a statutory Action Area Plan or a statutory Local Area Plan..."

- 4.15 For these reasons, as will be explained further in this report, an approved area plan for the proposed residential development is considered not relevant in order to comply with the zoning objective of the subject site.
- 4.16 The second reason for refusal above is irrelevant in the context of the subject proposal, as the proposed access to the subject site is via Stoney Hill Road. The subject proposed phase 1 development is therefore not reliant or connected to delivery of the Rathcoole Distributor Road.

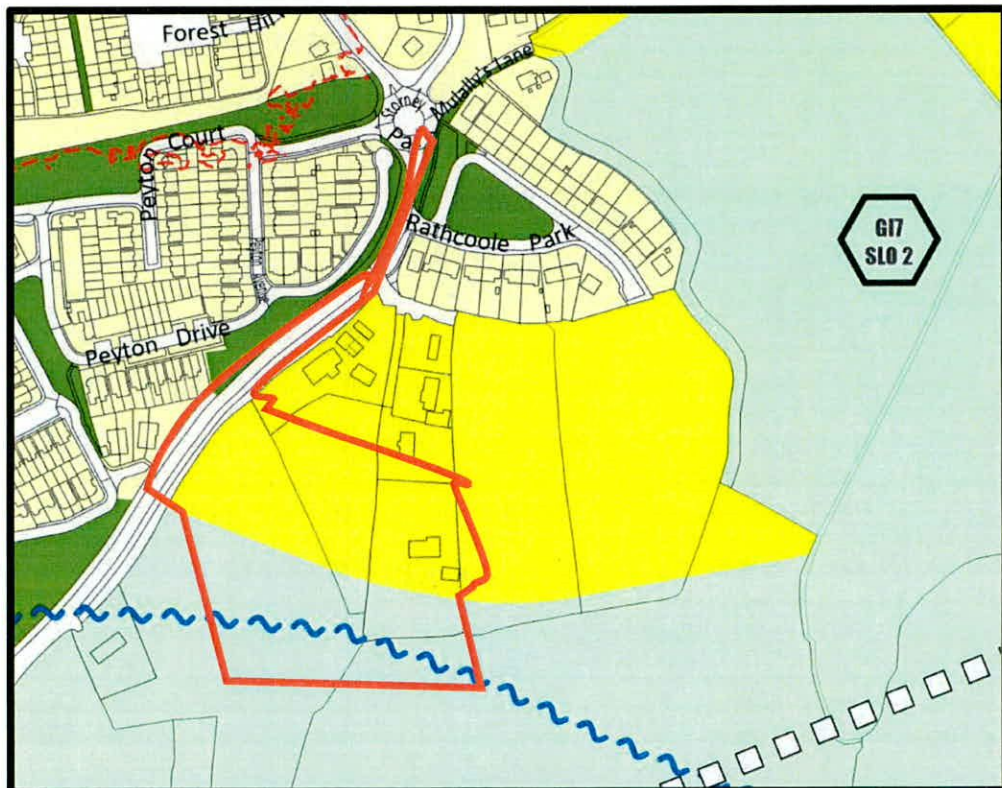


Figure 4: Zoning Map from South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Relevant National and Regional Planning Policy

5.1 The relevant provisions of national (including relevant Section 28 guidelines) and regional planning policy as they relate to the proposed development are set out in the following sections.

5.2 The key policy and guidance documents of relevance to the proposed development are considered to be the following:

- National Planning Framework 2040;
- Housing for All - A new Housing Plan for Ireland (2021);
- Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031;
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), and the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009);
- Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities (2007) and the accompanying Best Practice Guidelines – Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007);
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019);
- Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035, and
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009).

5.3 Other environmental and ecological guidance and legislation of relevance is described in following documents submitted with this planning application:

- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report, by Malone O' Regan Environmental;
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, by Enviroguide, and
- Ecological Impact Assessment Report, by Enviroguide.

5.4 An account of the relevant elements of the above national and regional policy and guidelines documents is provided at Appendix 1 and reference to national and regional policy is made, where relevant, in Sections 5 and 6 of this report.

South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022

5.5 The subject site is located within the administrative boundary of South Dublin County Council. During the preparation of this application, the operative Development Plan was the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022. Regard was had to the emerging 2022 – 2028 Development Plan during preparation of the application. It is noted that as of the 3rd August 2022, the operative Development Plan is the 2022 – 2028 Development Plan.

5.6 A full account of the relevant policies and objectives of the 2022 – 2028 Development Plan is provided below. For reference, the relevant policies and objectives of the previous South Dublin County Development Plan 2016 – 2022 is provided at Appendix 2.

South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028

- 5.7 The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 was made on 22nd June 2022 and came into operation on the 3rd August 2022.

Relevant Policies, Objectives and Standards

Zoning Objective

- 5.8 The application site is subject to two zoning objectives. All proposed built development is located on lands zoned 'New Residential (RES-N)', with an objective *"To provide for new residential communities in accordance with approved area plans"*. 'Residential' use is permitted in principle under this zoning objective.
- 5.9 The southern portion of the site is zoned 'Rural and Agriculture – RU', with an objective *"To protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture"*. 'Open Space' is a use which is permitted in principle under this zoning objective.
- 5.10 Where the red line of the application site extends on to Stoney Hill Road to allow for the connection of services, Stoney Hill Road is, naturally, not zoned for any objective.

Core Strategy

- 5.11 In Table 11 'Core Strategy Table 2022-2028', Rathcoole is titled a Self-Sustaining Growth Town with a projected population growth of 6,409 persons and housing delivery of 2,429 to accommodate this level of population growth. This is calculated to be a +48% increase in population over the baseline line population reported in the 2016 national census.
- 5.12 Rathcoole has been identified as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town in Table 13 'RSES Settlement Hierarchy relating to South Dublin County Council'. Self-sustaining growth towns are defined in table 10 as being 'Self-Sustaining Growth Towns with a moderate level of jobs and services – includes sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining.'
- 5.13 Rathcoole is predicted to have an increase in population of +48% above the 2016 national census recorded population for Rathcoole. The town is therefore catergorised as a medium size town.
- 5.14 Rathcoole needs to be developed at an incremental pace, considering the type of social, physical and transport infrastructure and services available in the town. There are plans to develop social and community infrastructure in Rathcoole and this is outlined in Appendix 4 – Rathcoole SIAR Update 2022.

Natural and Built Heritage

- 5.15 Policy NCBH3: Natura 2000 Sites, is in place to:
- "Conserve and protect Natura 2000 Sites and achieve and maintain favourable conservation status for habitats and species that are considered to be at risk through the protection of the Natura 2000 network from any plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on their coherence or integrity."*
- 5.16 NCBH3 Objective 1 specifies how these sites will be conserved and protected 'on ground' and states:
- "To prevent development and activities that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site located within or adjacent to the County and promote the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species integral to these sites."*
- 5.17 NCBH3 Objective 3 explains the process the Council can use to assess if the proposed development, alone or in combination with other developments, would adversely affect any designated Natura 2000 sites. It states:
- "To ensure that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, will not have a significant adverse effect on a European Site, or where such a development proposal is likely or might have such a significant adverse effect (either alone or in combination), the planning authority will, as required by law, carry out an appropriate assessment as per requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC of the 21 May 1992 on the conservation*

of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as transposed into Irish legislation. Only after having ascertained that the development proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, will the planning authority agree to the development and impose appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions. A development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European site may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation."

- 5.18 The development plan sets out policies for the protection of habitats and species throughout the County, in policy NCBH5 and NCBH5 Objectives 1 and 2. In chronological order, each state:

"Protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas and ensure that species and habitats that are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2018, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992, the Flora (Protection) Order 2015, and wildlife corridors are adequately protected."

"To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on biodiversity, including known rare and threatened species, and that biodiversity enhancement measures are included in all development proposals."

"To ensure that an Ecological Impact Assessment is undertaken for developments proposed in areas that support, or have the potential to support, protected species or features of biodiversity importance, and that appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into all development proposals."

- 5.19 Policy NCBH11: Tree Preservation Orders and Other Tree Protections objectives 3 and 4 that state (in order) below:

"To protect and retain existing trees, hedgerows, and woodlands which are of amenity and/or biodiversity and/or carbon sequestration value and/or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management taking into account Living with Trees: South Dublin County Council's Tree Management Policy (2015-2020) or any superseding document and to ensure that where retention is not possible that a high value biodiversity provision is secured as part of the phasing of any development to protect the amenity of the area."

"To protect the hedgerows of the County, acknowledging their role as wildlife habitats, biodiversity corridors, links within the County's green infrastructure network, their visual amenity and landscape character value and their significance as demarcations of historic field patterns and townland boundaries. (Refer also to Chapter 4, Green Infrastructure)."

- 5.20 Policy NCBH13: Archaeological Heritage and NCB13 Objective 2 state:

"Manage development in a manner that protects and conserves the Archaeological Heritage of the County and avoids adverse impacts on sites, monuments, features or objects of significant historical or archaeological interest." (Policy NCBH13)

“To ensure that development is designed to avoid impacting on archaeological heritage including previously unknown sites, features and objects.” (NCB13 Objective 2)

- 5.21 Policy NCBH14: Landscapes contains a number of objectives that are relevant to proposal. The five relevant Policy NCBH14 Objectives state:

“To protect and enhance the unique landscape character of the County by ensuring that development retains, protects and, where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the landscape, taking full cognisance of the Landscape Character Assessment of South Dublin County (2021).”

“To ensure that development is assessed against Landscape Character, Landscape Values and Landscape Sensitivity as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment for South Dublin County (2021) in accordance with Government guidance on Landscape Character Assessment and the National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025.”

“To ensure that development respects and reinforces the distinctiveness and uniqueness of the Landscape Character Types and retains important characteristics such as habitats, landform, vernacular heritage and settlement patterns.”

“To require a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment to accompany all planning applications for significant proposals, located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes and to provide mitigation measures to address any likely negative impacts.”

“To protect skylines and ridgelines from development.”

- 5.22 Policy NCBH15: Views and Prospects and NCBH15 Objectives 1 and 2 state:

“Preserve Views and Prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest including those located within and outside the County.”

“To protect, preserve and improve Views and Prospects of special amenity, historic or cultural value or interest including rural, river valley, mountain, hill, coastal, upland and urban views and prospects that are visible from prominent public places and to prevent development which would impede or interfere with Views and / or Prospects.”

“To require a Landscape/Visual Assessment to accompany all planning applications for significant proposals that are likely to affect views and prospects.”

Green Infrastructure

- 5.23 Policy GI4: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Objectives states that:

“To limit surface water run-off from new developments through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) using surface water and nature based solutions and ensure that SuDS is integrated into all new development in the

County and designed in accordance with South Dublin County Council's Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Explanatory, Design and Evaluation Guide." (GI4 Objective 1)

"To incorporate a SuDS management train during the design stage whereby surface water is managed locally in small sub-catchments rather than being conveyed to and managed in large systems further down the catchment." (GI4 Objective 2)

"To require multifunctional open space provision within new developments to include provision for ecology and sustainable water management". (GI4 Objective 3)

"To require multifunctional open space provision within new developments to include provision for ecology and sustainable water management." (GI4 Objective 4)

Quality Design and Placemaking

5.24 Policy QDP1: Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods and the subsequent QDP1 Objectives 1, 2 and 6.

- Policy QDP1: Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods states,

"Support the development of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods that are connected to and provide for a range of local services and facilities."
- Policy QDP1: Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods Objective 1 states,

"To ensure that residential development contributes to the creation of sustainable communities in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009) (or any superseding document) including the urban design criteria as illustrated under the companion Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG (2009)."
- Policy QDP1: Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods Objective 2 states,

"To ensure that residential, mixed use and employment development provides an integrated and balanced approach to movement, placemaking and streetscape design in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTAS and DEHLG (2013 as updated)."
- Policy QDP1: Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods Objective 6 states,

"To build residential neighbourhoods in a manner that aims to provide for adequate numbers of affordable homes in line with provisions set out in Goal 11 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy towards the delivery of long term sustainable communities."

5.25 The need to ensure new residential development complies with the 8 relevant principles of 'The Plan Approach' in section 5.2.1 'The Delivery of Sustainable Neighbourhoods 'The Plan Approach'' is contained in Policy QDP2: 'Overarching – Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods'.

- Policy QDP2: Overarching - Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods states,

"Promote the creation of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods through the application of the eight key design principles to ensure the delivery of attractive, connected, and well-functioning places to live, work, visit, socialise and invest in throughout the County."

- Policy QDP2: Overarching - Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods Objective 1 states,

"To ensure that applications for new development are accompanied by a statement from a suitably qualified person detailing how 'The Plan Approach' has been taken into consideration and incorporated into the design of the development including the materials and finishes proposed and demonstrating how the overarching principles for the achievement of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods have been integrated as part of the design proposal."

5.26 The relevant 8 principles are set out in the following policies and relevant objectives:

- Policy QDP3: Neighbourhood Context states,

"Support and facilitate proposals which contribute in a positive manner to the character and setting of an area."

- Policy QDP3: Neighbourhood Context Objective 1 states,

"To ensure new development contributes in a positive manner to the character and setting of the immediate area in which a proposed development is located taking into consideration the provisions set out in Chapters 3 and 4 of this Plan and having regard to the requirements set out in Chapter 13 Implementation and Monitoring in relation to design statements."

- Policy QDP4: Healthy Placemaking states,

"Promote the delivery of neighbourhoods that are attractive, connected, vibrant and well-functioning places to live, work, visit, socialise and invest in."

- Policy QDP4: Healthy Placemaking Objective 1 states,

"To deliver successful and sustainable neighbourhoods that are attractive, connected, vibrant and well-functioning through high quality design and healthy placemaking in a manner which reduces the need to travel, facilitates a mix of uses and the efficient use of land and infrastructure in line with the provisions of NPO 4 and 26 of the NPF and RPO's 6.12, 9.10 and 9.11 of the RSES."

- Policy QDP5: Connected Neighbourhoods states,
“Promote short distance neighbourhoods and strive towards the achievement of 10-minute settlements over the lifetime of the Plan, promoting a more compact development form, sustainable movement, and ease of access to services, community facilities, jobs and amenities.”
- Policy QDP6: Public Realm states,
“Promote a multi-disciplinary and co-ordinated approach to the delivery and management of the public realm within South Dublin County.”
- Policy QDP6: Public Realm Objective 1 states,
“To require that all development proposals, whether in established areas or in new growth nodes, contribute positively to the creation of new, and the enhancement of existing public realm. To demonstrate how the highest quality in public realm design is achieved and how it can be robustly maintained over time (see also Chapter 13 Implementation and Monitoring - Design Statements and Public Realm).”
- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Development General states,
“Promote and facilitate development which incorporates exemplary standards of high-quality, sustainable and inclusive urban design, urban form and architecture.”
- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Street Width and Height Objective 5 states,
“To ensure that development contributes to the creation of sustainable communities in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines on Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, DEHLG (2007), the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009), or any superseding guidelines, including the urban design criteria as illustrated under the companion Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG (2009).”
- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Street Width and Height Objective 6 states,
“To ensure that development provides an integrated and balanced approach to movement, healthy placemaking and streetscape design in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTAS and DEHLG (2013).”
- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Street Width and Height Objective 7 states,
“To ensure that all proposals for development contribute positively to providing a coherent enclosure of streets and public spaces, taking into consideration the proportions and activities of buildings on both sides of a street or surrounding a public space, providing for good standards of daylight and sunlight, and micro climatic conditions and having regard to the guidance and principles set out in

the South Dublin County's Building Height and Density Guide and the Design Manual for Urban Streets and Roads (DMURS) (2019)."

- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Adaptability and Inclusivity objective 8 states,

"To promote and support a Universal Design Approach to residential and non-residential development – having regard in particular to the universal design principles and guidance in relation to Buildings for Everyone, Housing and Shared Space as promoted by the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design at the National Disability Authority – ensuring that all environments are inclusive and can be used to the fullest extent possible by all users regardless of age, ability or disability consistent with RPO 9.12 and 9.13 of the RSES. (See also Chapter 8 Community Infrastructure and Open Space)."

- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Adaptability and Inclusivity objective 9 states,

"To promote and support the provision of quality housing with long-term adaptability in residential and mixed-use developments, having regard to the principles and guidance in relation to adaptability as set out in the South Dublin County's Height and Density Guide (Appendix 10) and the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009) and the guidance on Lifetime Homes as set out in the Quality Housing and Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities (2007)."

- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Adaptability and Inclusivity objective 10 states,

"To promote and support the principles of universal design, ensuring that all environments are inclusive and can be used to the fullest extent possible by users regardless of age, ability or disability consistent with RPO 9.12 and 9.13 of the RSES."

- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Adaptability and Inclusivity objective 11 states,

"To encourage and foster the creation of attractive mixed-use sustainable neighbourhoods which contain a variety of housing types and tenures with supporting community facilities, public realm and residential amenities, and which are socially mixed in order to achieve a socially inclusive county."

- Policy QDP8: High Quality Design – Building Height and Density Guide (BHDG) Objective 1 states,

"To assess development proposals in accordance with the Building Height and Density Guide set out in Appendix 10 of this Development Plan and associated planning guidelines. In this regard, all medium to large scale and complex planning applications (30 + residential units, commercial development over 1,000 sq.m. or as otherwise required by the Planning Authority) shall be accompanied by a 'Design Statement'. The Design Statement shall include, inter

alia, a detailed analysis of the proposal and statement based on the guidance, principles and performance-based design criteria set out in the South Dublin County's Height and Density Guide. Any departures within the proposed development from the guidance set out in the Building Height and Density Guide for South Dublin County (Appendix 10) shall be clearly highlighted in the Design Statement. (See Chapter 13 Implementation and Monitoring)."

- Policy QDP10: Mix of Dwelling Types Objective 1 states,

"To ensure that new residential developments provide for a wide variety of housing types, sizes and tenures in line with the South Dublin County Housing Strategy 2022-2028."
- Policy QDP11: Materials, Colours and Textures states,

"Promote high-quality building finishes that are appropriate to context, durable and adhere to the principles of sustainability and energy efficiency."
- Policy QDP11: Materials, Colours and Textures Objective 1 states,

"To require the use of high quality and durable materials and finishes that make a positive contribution to placemaking."
- Policy QDP11: Materials, Colours and Textures Objective 3 states,

"To promote the reuse and recycling of materials to promote the circular economy and reduce construction and demolition waste."

Housing

5.27 The County Development Plan is a housing led plan, similar to the previous County Development Plan and the housing policies and objectives are centered around the provision of sustainable, affordable, accessible and adaptable high quality housing throughout the County over the life time of the County Development Plan. There are a number of housing policy and objectives that are relevant to the subject proposed development.

- Policy H1: Housing Strategy and Interim Housing Needs Demand Assessment, Objective 2 states,

"To require that 20% of lands zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses for development of 5 or more units or development of units on land greater than 0.1 hectares (or relevant figures as may be revised by legislation) be reserved for social and affordable housing in accordance with the Affordable Housing Act 2021 and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)."
- Policy H1: Housing Strategy and Interim Housing Needs Demand Assessment, Objective 7 states,

“To provide social and affordable housing over the Plan period to meet forecast future housing need as identified in the Housing Strategy and interim HNDA.”

- Policy H1: Housing Strategy and Interim Housing Needs Demand Assessment, Objective 8 states,

“To ensure population growth and increased housing densities take place within and contiguous to Dublin City and Suburbs and the County’s town boundaries suited to their strategic regional role, subject to good design and development management standards being met.”

- Policy H1: Housing Strategy and Interim Housing Needs Demand Assessment, Objective 8 states,

“Proposals for residential development shall provide a minimum of 30% 3-bedroom units unless it can be demonstrated that:

- *there are unique site constraints that would prevent such provision or*
- *that the proposed housing mix meets the specific demand required in an area, having regard to the prevailing housing type within a 10-minute walk of the site and to the socio-economic, population and housing data set out in the Housing Strategy and Interim HNDA.”*

- Policy H2: Supply of Housing Objective 4 states,

“To promote lifetime housing standards in new homes built in the County in accordance with best practice.”

- Policy H7: Residential Design and Layout states,

“Promote high quality design and layout in new residential developments to ensure a high-quality living environment for residents, in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units and the overall layout and appearance of the development.”

- Policy H7: Residential Design and Layout Objective 1 states,

“To promote a high quality of design and layout in new residential development and to ensure a high-quality living environment for residents, in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units and the overall layout and appearance of the development in accordance with the standards set out in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009) and the accompanying Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide and the Design Standards for New Apartments (DHLGH as updated 2020) and Chapter 13 Implementation and Monitoring.”

- Policy H7: Residential Design and Layout Objective 2 states,

“To ensure that new residential developments incorporate energy efficiency measures and promote innovation in renewable energy opportunities.”

- Policy H7: Residential Design and Layout Objective 2 states,

“To ensure that residential development provides an integrated and balanced approach to movement, placemaking and streetscape design in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTAS and DEHLG (2013).”

- Policy H8: Public Open Space states,

“Ensure that all residential development is served by a clear hierarchy and network of high quality public open spaces that provide for active and passive recreation and enhances the visual character, identity and amenity of the area.”

- Policy H10: Internal Residential Accommodation states,

“Ensure that all new housing provides a high standard of accommodation that is flexible and adaptable, to meet the long-term needs of a variety of household types and sizes.”

- Policy H10: Internal Residential Accommodation Objective 2 states,

“To support the design of adaptable residential unit layouts that can accommodate the changing needs of occupants, through extension or remodelling subject to the protection of residential amenity.”

- Policy H10: Internal Residential Accommodation Objective 3 states,

“To consider the need for housing units to provide enough space to allow for individuals to work from home.”

- Policy H11: Privacy and Security states,

“Promote a high standard of privacy and security for existing and proposed dwellings through the design and layout of housing.”

- Policy H11: Privacy and Security states Objective 1 states,

“To ensure there is a clear definition and delineation between private, semiprivate (communal) and the public open spaces that serve residential development.”

- Policy H11: Privacy and Security states Objective 2 states,

“To ensure that all developments are designed to provide street frontage and to maximise surveillance of streets and the public realm”

- Policy H11: Privacy and Security states Objective 3 states,

“To ensure that private open spaces are, where it consists of gardens, enclosed within perimeter blocks behind the building line and that they are subdivided by suitably robust boundary treatments of a sufficient height and composition to provide adequate privacy and security. In limited circumstances,

some discretion may be provided for where the configuration of the space can provide for private and secure space, to a high quality, elsewhere on the site than behind the building line.

- Policy H11: Privacy and Security states Objective 4 states,
“To ensure that opposing balconies and windows at above ground floor level have an adequate separation distance, design or positioning to safeguard privacy without compromising internal residential amenity.”
- Policy H12: Steep or Varying Topography Sites,
“Ensure that development on lands with a steep and/or varying topography is designed and sited to minimise impacts on the natural slope of the site.”
- Policy H12: Steep or Varying Topography Sites Objective 1 states,
“To ensure that all developments including buildings, streets and spaces are designed and arranged to respond to and complement the site’s natural contours and natural drainage features in accordance with the recommendations of the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009).”
- Policy H12: Steep or Varying Topography Sites Objective 2 states,
“To avoid the use of intrusive engineered solutions, such as cut and filled platforms, embankments or retaining walls on sites with steep or varying topography.”

Sustainable Movement

- 5.28 One of the key design criteria for the proposed development was to create an environment where residents and visitors are encouraged to use alternative modes of travel in addition to the private vehicle, including using walking, cycling and public transport for local journeys. This approach is reflective of a number of relevant sustainable movement policies and objectives.
- Policy SM1: Overarching – Transport and Movement Objective 4 states,
“To ensure that future development is planned and designed in a manner that facilitates sustainable travel patterns, with a particular focus on increasing the share of active modes (walking and cycling) and public transport use and creating a safe and attractive street environment for pedestrians and cyclists, in accordance with RPO 5.3 of the RSES/MASP.”
 - Policy SM5: Street and Road Design states:
“Ensure that streets and roads within the County are designed to balance the needs of all road users and promote place making, sustainable movement and road safety providing a street environment that prioritises active travel and public transport.”

- Policy SM5: Street and Road Design Objective 4 states:
“To prioritise safety on rural roads and junctions, while considering the protection of biodiversity, green infrastructure and rural character present in roadside trees, hedgerows and banks, etc.”
- Policy SM6: Traffic and Transport Management states,
“Effectively manage and minimise the impacts of traffic within the County having regard to the need to provide shared road space for different users.”
- Policy SM6 Objective 8 states,
“To require all major traffic generating development to submit a Mobility Management Plan/Workforce Plan and/or Traffic and Transport Assessment.”

Community Infrastructure and Open Space

5.29 The following policies and objectives in Chapter 8, Community Infrastructure and Open Space are noted:

- Policy COS4: Sports Facilities and Centres Objective 5 states,
“To support the provision of formal and informal play areas with appropriate equipment and facilities, incorporating nature-based play opportunities across the County, ensuring that the needs of differing age groups and abilities are accommodated.”
- Policy COS4: Sports Facilities and Centres Objective 6 states,
“To facilitate the provision of appropriately scaled children’s play facilities and teen space facilities at suitable locations across the County within existing and new residential development.”
- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching states,
“Provide a well-connected, inclusive and integrated public open space network through a multi-functional high-quality open space hierarchy that is accessible to all who live, work and visit the County.”
- Section 8.7.3 ‘Quantity of Public Open Space’ specifies public open space standards (minimum) for Lands Zoned RES-N, in table 8.2 ‘Public Open Space Standards’,
“New Residential Development on Lands Zone RES-N – Minimum 15% of site area”.
- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Objective 8 states:
“To ensure the design of parks and public open space areas is of high quality; to provide a pleasant setting, accommodate use by people of all ages and

abilities, to support life-long activity and good health and well-being by the provision of a balanced mix of active and passive recreation and access to, or view of, nature, ensuring that the design considers:

- *provision of an appropriate mix of hard and soft surfaced areas;*
- *enhancement of biodiversity and existing trees and hedgerows;*
- *incorporation of water courses, other natural features and existing built heritage into the design of parks and open spaces as appropriate;*
- *provision of new planting, landscape features and appropriate site furniture including a variety of accessible, well located and designed seating.”*

- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Objective 9 states:

“To ensure that parks and public open space are appropriately located within the County and within development sites, to facilitate and support its multifunctional role.”

- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Objective 13 states:

“To ensure that parks and open spaces provide for a wide range of recreational and amenity activities that are easily accessible to all in the community, irrespective of age or ability.”

- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Objective 15 states:

“To support the development of passive recreation within open spaces, such as walking trails, seating provision and areas which provide for passive amenity/ hobbies, and visual interest.”

- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Objective 15 states:

“To ensure that parks and public open spaces are carefully designed as safe spaces, by implementing the following measures: à Providing active frontages and maximising passive surveillance from adjacent housing and/or public thoroughfares;

- *Eliminating buildings which back-on or gable-front public open spaces;*
- *Designing corner units with active frontage;*
- *Encouraging increased use through improved access and quality of facilities’; and*
- *Careful location, design and choice of surface materials and site furniture.”*

- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Objective 19 states:

“To support the provision within new residential developments and parks and public open spaces, of formal and informal play areas with appropriate equipment and facilities, incorporating nature-based play opportunities where appropriate, ensuring that the needs of differing age groups including young children, older children and teenagers are catered for and that different abilities and needs are accommodated to be able to access and participate in play, and

to ensure playspaces and play facilities comply with universal design principles.”

- Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Objective 20 states:

“To ensure that children’s play areas are provided as an integral part of the design and delivery of new residential and mixed-use developments and addressed as part of a landscape plan in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 13: Implementation and Monitoring.”

Energy

5.30 The following policies and objectives are noted:

- Policy E2: South Dublin Energy Profile Objective 1 states:

“To seek to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels in the County by reducing the energy demand of existing and new development.”

- Policy E3: Energy Performance In Existing and New Buildings Objective 3 states:

“To require all new development to be designed to take account of the impacts of climate change, and that energy efficiency, energy provision and renewable energy measures are incorporated in accordance with national building regulations and relevant policy and guidelines.”

Infrastructure and Environmental Services

5.31 The following relevant policies and objectives are noted:

- Policy IE1: Overarching Policy states,

“Ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital.”

- Policy IE2: Water Supply and Wastewater Objective 7 states,

“To promote water conservation and best practice water conservation in all developments, including rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling and supporting the implementation of BS8515:2009 Rainwater harvesting systems – Code of practice.”

- Policy IE2: Water Supply and Wastewater Objective 9 states,

“To ensure that all new developments in areas served by a public foul sewerage network connect to the public sewerage system.”

- Policy IE2: Water Supply and Wastewater Objective 10 states,

“To require all development proposals to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system – where practicable.”

- Policy IE4: Flood Risk Objective 1 states,

“To require site specific flood risk assessments to be undertaken for all new developments within the County in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and the requirements of DECLG Circular P12/2014 and the EU Floods Directive and Chapter 13 Implementation and Monitoring and the policies and objectives of this chapter.”

- Policy IE4: Flood Risk Objective 1 states,

“To require all developments in the County to be designed and constructed in accordance with the “Precautionary Principle” detailed in the OPW Guidelines.”

- Policy IE7: Environmental Quality Objective 6 states,

“To ensure external lighting schemes minimise light spillage or pollution in the immediate surrounding environment and do not adversely impact on residential or visual amenity and biodiversity in the surrounding areas having regard to the Institute of Lighting Engineers’ Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution (UK) (see section 13.9.3 (iii)).”

- Policy IE8: Casement Aerodrome Objective 4, which states,

“To prohibit and restrict development in the environs of Casement aerodrome, where it may cause a safety hazard. In general, no development shall be permitted in the public safety zone. (See also Policy IE13 Public Safety Zones, Chapter 13 Implementation and Monitoring).”

Development Standards

- 5.32 The relevant standards and criteria the proposed development will abide by are considered and listed below.

- Development proposals on sites with varying or steep topography should be accompanied by a comprehensive site analysis, including a character appraisal, movement analysis, concept proposal and design statement, as outlined in Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG (2009).
- Development proposals that could have an impact on ecologically significant sites, must be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), under European and National Legislation on nature conservation.
- Any development proposals that could impact of a European Designated site (i.e. Natura 2000), for the breeding or resting of birds and other protected species, under the European and National Habitats Directive, requires an appropriate screening assessment / natura impact statement screening assessment.

- Development proposals, where relevant, should include the following when submitted planning applications on sites with existing trees and hedgerows:
 - Tree and hedgerow removal,
 - Tree and hedgerow retention and
 - New tree and hedgerow planting.
- Planning applications for medium scale residential developments (30+ dwellings) should be accompanied by a design statement. The Design Statement should carry out a detailed analysis of the scheme based on the 12 design criteria in the Urban Design Manual (2009) and the South Dublin County Council's Building Height and Design Guide. Other Ministerial Guidelines should also be used to assess the proposed design, such as, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009).
- Proposals for residential development shall provide a minimum of 30% 3-bedroom units.
- Planning applications for housing developments should be accompanied by statement explaining how the proposed developments could be adapted in the future for older people / people with disabilities. New housing development proposals must include units less than 3-bed multigenerational / lifetime homes, subject to urban design considerations.
- Planning applications for housing development should be accompanied by a schedule of accommodation and a housing quality assessment.
- New housing should exceed minimum floor area sizes in table 3.20: Minimum Standards for Housing. Private open space requirements are set in table 3.20 should be exceeded. Private open spaces should be behind the front building line of the house and private. Three bedroom houses, that are subject to the proposed development housing unit mix, are to have a minimum floor area of 92 sq.m and minimum private open space area of 60 sq.m
- Table 13.22 provides the minimum public open space standards for new residential development on RES-N zoned lands. The minimum public open space for new residential development on these lands is 15% of the site area.
- New public open spaces should be designed to incorporate the following components:
 - *Access*
 - Public open spaces should be accessible by all modes of travel and by all residents and visitors in the County.
 - Multitude of public open spaces in new residential developments should be linked.
 - Continuous walls or barriers around public open spaces should be avoided.
 - *Recreation Facilities*

- Public open spaces to be varied, with areas of passive and active open space, and inclusive to all users.
- *Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Sustainable Water Management*
 - Open spaces should retain existing features, such as trees, hedgerows, etc.
 - Planting to be native and pollinator friendly.
- *Accessibility*
 - Public open spaces should be disability friendly and should be useable by all.
- *Safety*
 - Public open spaces should be passively surveilled, i.e. house windows overlooking spaces, walking / cycling paths and / or streets located beside these spaces.
 - Open spaces should be designed to be visible in how they are lit and landscaped and where they are located.
- New public open spaces in residential developments of 30 dwellings + shall provide children's play areas. These areas shall comprise of:
 - Young Children's Area for Play (YCAP), or Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) or natural play area;
 - Play space should be carefully sited so that it can be overlooked and accessed by residential properties, without causing nuisance to these properties;
 - Play spaces should improve the visual appearance of their immediate area, and
 - Play spaces should be accessible to all.
- Table 13.26: Maximum Parking Rates (Residential Development), requires 2 car parking spaces for 3 bedroom, Pls, houses in Zone 1 lands, the category the subject land falls into.
- EV charging shall be provided in all residential developments and shall comprise a minimum of 20 per cent of the total parking spaces provided. All car parking spaces should be capable of containing charging points in the future. New dwellings with in-curtilage parking, should have infrastructure available to allow for installation of charging points in the future.
- Flood risk assessments submitted with residential development should assess the potential impact of pluvial flood risk. Drainage proposals to minimise the risk of pluvial flooding.

- Residential development proposals should include site drainage measure that comply with South Dublin County Council's Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Explanatory, Design and Evaluation Guide.
- Surface water outflow from the development should not exceed the existing water outflow on the subject site. The development should adhere to the precautionary principle regarding climate change. Pollution of ground water during construction or operation of the development cannot occur. All surface water discharge to be intercepted, collected and disposed of or treated using best practice standards.
- All new developments in the County should include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS can include measures such as permeable paving, filter drains, soakaways, etc. The Council will consider other options, such as attenuation tanks, where other measures are not a feasible option for the proposed development / land.
- External lighting schemes should not cause light spillage or glare of light above the horizontal plane. External lighting schemes should not cause nuisance to residents in the area or local road users. Lighting plans should be submitted with proposed developments in sensitive locations.
- Refuse storage for new residential developments should be externally located, concealed and should facilitate the number of bins per household. Bins serving new terraced properties should be located in the front of the house in well-designed enclosures and shall not impact negatively on the residential amenity of the area. Access to storage areas in new residential developments should be confined to residents and bin collectors only.
- New residential developments of 10 plus unit, should have a construction and demolition waste construction and demolition waste management plan submitted with the planning application. The Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan shall explain how construction and demolition waste from the proposed development site will be managed. Waste shall be reused where possible and disposed of to an authorised facility if reuse is impossible. Excavated material from the development site should be reused, where appropriate.
- Planning applications for proposed residential developments of 10 + dwellings, should be supported by an Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation Design Statement. This statement should outline how demolition, construction and long term management of the site will be arranged. The scheme's energy and climate change considerations in how it is designed and planned should also be outlined in the report. This will demonstrate the scheme's compliance with Part L of Building Regulations (2019) Conservation of Fuel and Energy – Dwellings).

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

6.1 The proposed development is assessed under the following sub headings below:

- (i) Zoning Objective and Principle of Development
- (ii) Site Layout Approach
- (iii) Development Density
- (iv) Compliance with Quantitative Development Standards
- (v) High Quality Design
- (vi) Other Issues
 - Infrastructure and Services
 - Flood Risk
 - Environmental Impact Assessment Screening
 - Ecology
 - Archaeology
 - Energy
 - Aviation

(i) Zoning Objectives and Principle of Development

Zoning and Precedent

6.2 There are three key elements which secure the 'in principle' acceptability of the site for residential development. These are:

- (a) The RES-N zoning of the site under which 'residential' is a use permitted in principle.
- (b) The precedent of the granted SHD scheme (Ref. ABP-307698-20) on the site, which included residential development on the portion of lands now subject to this planning application. The form and layout of housing now proposed is almost identical to that previously permitted by An Bord Pleanala under the SHD permission.
- (c) The subject application site adjoins the settlement of Rathcoole and is in a sustainable location that is within walking distance of the village and the Dublin Bus services, etc. The close proximity of employment hubs in the greater Dublin area and city centre makes the subject site suitable for the incremental and sustainable development of much needed housing and population increase in South County Dublin and specifically in Rathcoole where there is strong demand for family housing.

6.3 It is also important to note that the detailed studies which support this application do not identify any other factor, such as ecological or archaeological or aviation, which would suggest that the site is not inherently suitable for residential development.

6.4 It is noted that the An Bord Pleanala Order for the SHD permission states that:

“The Board considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below that the proposed development would constitute an acceptable quantum and density of development in this accessible urban location, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area, would be acceptable in terms of urban design, height and quantum of development and would be acceptable in terms of pedestrian safety. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area”.

- 6.5 Furthermore, the An Bord Pleanála Inspector at Paragraph 12.2.8 of his report stated that:

“In terms of assessing the suitability of the site for residential development, I consider that the site represents a natural expansion of Rathcoole. It is located approximately 500m south of the Main Street, it benefits from existing pedestrian and road links into the town, which provides a range of services, and has cycle infrastructure in the immediate vicinity. It is located sequentially to existing housing, located to the north and west of the site. The development is also designed to support future connectivity to adjacent zoned lands to the east, which are the subject of the draft Masterplan and area plan referred to above”.

- 6.6 Having regard to the above, it is respectfully submitted that the principle of the proposed development is well established.

Phased Approach

- 6.7 It is acknowledged that the development now proposed relates only to a portion of the wider lands owned by the applicant.
- 6.8 The applicant has been unable to implement the SHD approval (Ref. ABP-307698-20) on the subject lands due to a judicial review of the decision, which is as of yet to be determined and may take a significant period of time to be resolved to a conclusion.
- 6.9 Due to the significant uncertainty on the timing of the conclusion of the judicial review proceedings, it is now necessary for an application for planning permission for development on part of the site in order to seek to deliver some residential units to the market within a short to medium timeframe.
- 6.10 The proposed development of 42 no. units comprises the first phase of development on the overall landholding.
- 6.11 There are a number of factors that determined the Phase 1 site, or Phase 1 portion, of the overall ownership. These are:
- This first phase includes key structuring infrastructure such as the main entrance from Stoney Hill Road that will form the main internal vehicle and pedestrian network for the overall landholding. It is therefore essential that Phase 1 is located adjacent to Stoney Hill Road, and more specifically to the lower (southern) portion of Stoney Hill Road.

- Bridging from the access off Stoney Hill Road, the layout and site strategy mirror that as approved in the above referenced SHD permission, in terms of street hierarchy and layout and in terms of open space. The layout allows for logical extension in to future phases of development on the overall landholding.
 - Phase 1 allows for the front-loading of two significant public open spaces areas on the RES-N lands (the western and eastern open spaces), in addition to front-loading the linear park to the south. There are therefore significant public gains.
- 6.12 Therefore, the planning application for 42 no. units relates to the sequentially logical first phase of development on this overall landholding, being located adjacent to Stoney Hill Road to allow access to the lands and also being located on the western part of the site, closest to Rathcoole Village Centre.

Reference to 'Action Area Plan' in the RES-N Zoning Objective

- 6.13 The RES-N zoning objective is to provide new residential communities in accordance with approved area plans. In the first instance, it should be made absolutely clear that this reference to 'area plan' is not a reference to a requirement for a statutory 'Local Area Plan'.
- 6.14 An applicant-led area plan was submitted with the SHD planning application (SDCC Reg. Ref. SHD 3ABP-307698-20) for the subject planning application site, the wider landholding and the Council lands (zoned RES-N) to the east of the wider landholding and abutting the subject site. The purpose of the area plan submitted with the SHD application was to ensure that the strategic delivery of the RES-N zoned lands to the east of Stoney Road, Rathcoole are coordinated and well planned.
- 6.15 However, there have been significant changes in context and policy since the SHD permission was granted.
- Firstly, the An Bord Pleanála Inspector's comments on the SHD permission with regard to the area plan requirement are notable (Paragraph 12.2.6 of the Inspector's Report:

*"I note that the wording of the objective does not call for an adopted Action Area Plan, nor does it call for an adopted Local Area Plan and as such the lack of same should not hinder the site coming forward for development, and I do not consider the lack of same a material contravention of the zoning objective for the site. There is no indication in any of the submissions that a statutory Action Area Plan or a statutory Local Area Plan is being prepared for this area. The PA refer to a draft Masterplan for the adjacent site being prepared, but this does not appear to be a statutory plan such as those referred to above. **As such it would be unreasonable, in my view, to sterilise the development of this residential zoned site in the absence of such a statutory Action Area Plan or a statutory Local Area Plan**".*
(emphasis added)

- Secondly, it is essential to confirm that the subject application site and the wider landholding is owned by one landowner, the applicant, Romeville Developments Limited. There are no adjoining or connected RES-N zoned lands contiguous to the applicant's ownership. This effectively dispenses with the requirement for an action plan to provide an agreed framework between different landowners. All RES-N lands at this location are within the control of the applicant.
- Thirdly and finally, it is noted that nowhere in the Development Plan is there a definition or an explanation of either the intended purpose of such an area plan, or the requirements for such an area plan¹. Absent also is any commentary on who is responsible for the preparation of an area plan, in other words whether it is intended to be planning authority or applicant led. In the absence of any specific requirements for an area plan, it would be unreasonable to hinge any objection to this proposed development on a requirement for an area plan.

6.16 Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that the planning authority has not advanced an area plan for the site, As noted above by the An Bord Pleanala Inspector, it would be unreasonable to sterilise the development of this residential zoned site in the absence of such a plan.

(ii) **Site Layout Approach**

Overall Approach

- 6.17 Particular regard has been had to Development Plan Policies QDP1 through to QDP11, all inclusive, in the development of the site layout. The concepts of placemaking and community have been central to the concept. The strategy whereby family housing is provided in a coherent manner, with lowly trafficked streets within pedestrian priorities and within close walking proximity of generous and quality designed open spaces will provide a high quality neighbourhood.
- 6.18 The enclosed Design Statement by Adrian Hill Architects provides a full and detailed assessment of how the proposed development responds to the criteria set out in the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide 2009. Regard has also been had to the Design Manual for Urban Streets and Roads (DMURS) (2019), as reflected in County Development Plan policies SM1, SM5 and SM6, as referenced in the enclosed Design Statement and also in the enclosed reports by Aecom.
- 6.19 The proposed development in terms of layout, permeability and legibility is considered to fully comply with Policy H7: Residential Design and Layout of the County Development Plan requiring a high quality design and layout to ensure a high quality living environment for residents.
- 6.20 Further information on the influences and guiding principles for the site layout are set out below.

¹ The applicant made detailed submissions on the preparation of the new County Development Plan seeking clarification on the intended use and function of Area Plans, but none has been provided in the now adopted Development Plan.

Influence of Site Topography

- 6.21 The approach to the site layout and urban design of the proposed development is highly influenced by the site topography.
- 6.22 Particular regard has been had to policies of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016 – 2022 relating to site topography, as this Development Plan was in place at the time of preparation of the scheme, and which are also reflected in Policy H12 of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028. In particular, Policy H12 requires that “*development on lands with a steep and/or varying topography is designed and sited to minimise impacts on the natural slope of the site*”. This has been a central focus of the design concept.
- 6.23 The layout of the proposed development has been dictated by the number of key site characteristics:
- The subject development **site is sloping** and has a level range of between circa 129:00 at its northern end and circa 141:00 is at its southern end above mean sea level. The slope is gradual and has a rise of 1:13 as shown in the contours in Drawing No. (P)002 ‘*Existing Site Layout 1:1000*’, by Adrian Hill Architects. **The site incline from north to south dictates an east to west built form layout**. A north-south layout would result in a series of stepped terraces / building lines, which would not be considered appropriate in visual terms.
 - The **location of the vehicular access** to the site is governed largely by the existing levels. The level change and transition in levels from Stoney Hill Road to the development site is at its least aggressive towards the southern end of the site. Provision of an access road any further north would result in a significant amount of cut and soil removal. Moreover, a north to south orientated internal road network would be inconsistent with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street (DMURS) (2019) Section 28 Guidelines, as the road gradients would be too steep. Compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations would also be affected as access to dwellings could not be made by people using wheelchairs, etc. if the houses were orientated off steep gradients.
 - There are **existing hedgerows** that run along the eastern and western boundaries of the subject land. There is also a hedgerow that runs through the site in a north to south arrangement. Seeking to **retain as much of these existing hedgerows as possible**, whilst ensuring the delivery of an appropriate and legible residential development that reaches an acceptable density of development and provides typologies which reflect the requirements of the area is a key consideration in the site layout.
 - The hedgerow along the western boundary is being retained and enhanced as part of the proposed development. The hedgerows along the eastern boundary, and the hedgerow which runs through the centre of the site, have to be partly removed to facilitate a logical and coherent residential layout. Nonetheless, the remaining hedgerows at those locations will be

incorporated as an integral part of the eastern and southern open spaces. There will be significant additional tree planting on the site. The location of the hedgerows was a key factor in positioning the two public open spaces on the RES-N lands, the east park and the west park.

- The other influencing factors in terms of open space location were:
 - (a) to bookend the development to the east and west with open space to ensure all residents have easy access to these spaces;
 - (b) to reflect the general permitted layout under the SHD permission, allowing for future phases of development (subject to separate planning permission(s)) to extend out in a logical and sensible way from the now proposed development, and
 - (c) the eastern park provides a welcome buffer to Stoney Hill Road. It should be acknowledged that careful consideration has been given to the frontage to Stoney Hill Road. In this respect, regard has been had to Policy H11 Objective 2 of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, relating to Privacy and Security, which is *“To ensure that all developments are designed to provide street frontage and to maximise surveillance of streets and the public realm”*. As a north-south orientation with dwellings directly addressing the Stoney Hill Road has not been possible, for reasons stated above, a dual frontage dwelling buffered by the eastern park provides a soft but welcome entrance to the site and relationship to Stoney Hill Road. All proposed new internal roads are directly addressed by houses, including the provision of dual frontage houses where relevant.
- The **opportunity presented to deliver a substantial public open space** on the RU zoned lands to the south. Whilst the proposed development meets and exceeds all quantitative open space requirements on the RES-N lands alone, the opportunity is being taken to deliver an additional open space for public benefit. This linear open space has the potential to be extended to the east at a later date to link with Rathcoole Park, if desirable.

6.24 Other factors that have influenced the site layout principles are the following:

- The subject site is not constrained by adjoining or adjacent existing development. However, providing a site layout which has the potential to logically extend to future phases of development on the RES-N (residential) zoned lands was an important factor. In this respect, the permitted layout of the wider SHD scheme has been a key influencing factor in this proposed development. The proposed development ensures that future phases reflecting the permitted SHD layout can be ‘plugged in’ to this proposed development. Street layouts and open space locations are fully compatible with extending the scheme at a later date, subject to a separate planning application(s) to reflect the permitted SHD layout.

- There is an existing power line (ESB) that runs through the centre of the site (in a north-west to south-east axis) that can be replaced / rerouted to make way for the new proposed residential development.
 - There is an existing wayleave, which protects 3 existing watermains, at the southern end of the subject lands. This infrastructure passes through the 'RU' zoned land (see section 5.0 below) that is proposed to be the southern park open space area.
 - Allowing for a transition in built form from north to south, reflecting to move from the urban area of Rathcoole to the north to a more rural character moving towards the foothills of the Dublin Mountains. This is achieved through a combination of transition in building form (moving from two storey plus dormer typologies to two storey typologies) and then in to the linear open space on the RU zoned lands.
- 6.25 The proposed development follows the form of development in this part of Rathcoole while at the same time creating its own identity and enhancing Rathcoole's southern urban character.
- 6.26 The proposed site layout is considered to be an entirely appropriate and acceptable response to the character of the site itself and the surrounding context.
- 6.27 It is also of particular note that the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Kennett Consulting and submitted with the application concludes that:
- "As a result of this appraisal, it is concluded that the proposed development will have a narrow range of landscape and visual effects, ranging from slightly adverse to slightly positive. The proposed development will have no significant adverse impacts upon the Athgoe and Saggart Hills LCA, and there will be no significant landscape or visual effects upon designated Scenic Routes or Views and Prospects".*
- 6.28 The above report and conclusion ensure that the proposed development complies with Policy NCBH14 of the County Development Plan.

Trees and Hedgerows

- 6.29 It is acknowledged that Policy NCBH11, in particular, of the South Dublin County Development Plan encourages protection and retention of existing trees and hedgerows. As has been described previously, the application site contains a number of trees and hedgerows.
- 6.30 Significant efforts have been made to retain, and more importantly, protect and incorporate existing trees and hedgerows in the proposed development. The site layout and configuration are a direct response to a number of factors, as described above, and none more so than seeking to work a coherent and legible scheme around the retention of a significant portion of existing trees and hedgerows.
- 6.31 In this respect, only one of the five mature trees on the site will be lost. Significant extents of hedgerow will be retained and protected along the western and eastern

boundaries of the site, and in the linear park. Significantly, there will be an extensive scheme of native planting as part of the proposed development.

6.32 As described in the enclosed Arboricultural Impact Assessment:

"1No. of the individually tagged trees included within this assessment area along with c.217m from the c.424m of hedging that falls within this site areas red line boundary along with three small shrub borders are required to be removed to facilitate the proposed development works.

The loss of the above tree and hedge vegetation is to be militated against within the landscaping of this completed development with the use of trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, bulbs and hedging.

The following is a list of some of the main elements of these mitigation measures:

- The planting of native hedgerows linking to outward boundary hedgerows.*
- Infilling and augmenting of existing hedgerows.*
- Developing new compensatory 'native' woodlands where space allows and merging them with the existing hedgerows.*
- Planting of semi-mature trees, with many flowering varieties which are beneficial for pollinators.*
- Planting diverse meadow mixes, including naturalized bulb planting and managing key grass area zones as meadows in particular along the linear park to the south.*
- As part of the hedgerow removal works, topsoil from the hedge banks are to be salvaged and stored separately. This material shall be reused in the forming of berms for the new native hedgerows".*

6.33 Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed development represents an appropriate balance between achieving a welcoming and inviting residential community at appropriate densities and recognizing and enhancing the ecological value of the site through a carefully considered approach to retention and new planting of trees and hedgerows.

(iii) Development Density

6.34 The application site represents an appropriate extension to the built-up area of Rathcoole and is on a site which is capable of setting its own context. Whilst adjoining the built-up area of Rathcoole, the site itself does not relate specifically to existing adjoining development.

6.35 Notwithstanding the above, there are a number of factors which influence the development density on the site, including the following:

- (i) The application site is the first phase of the wider development area (subject to separate planning permission) and which is following the precedent set by the granted SHD permission. The built form on this part (i.e. the part now subject to this planning application) of the SHD site was one of more traditional two storey housing. To maintain the overall approach to the already approved built form through the SHD permission, no material change has been made to the built form in this planning application.

- (ii) The sloping nature of the site and the requirement to integrate development with the topography of the site, having regard to potential negative visual impact;
- (iii) The existence of mature trees and hedgerows and the desire to retain these insofar as is possible and practicable;
- (iv) Restrictions on building height due to the site being within the catchment of Casement Aerodrome; and
- (v) The nature and character of the existing surrounding development which is dominated by traditional two storey housing.

6.36 The net density of development should be calculated in accordance with Appendix A of the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), which provides the following guidance on the calculation of net densities:

“A net site density measure is a more refined estimate than a gross site density measure and includes only those areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses. These will include:

- *access roads within the site;*
- *private garden space;*
- *car parking areas;*
- *incidental open space and landscaping;*
- *children’s play areas where these are to be provided.*

It therefore excludes:

- *major and local distributor roads;*
- *primary schools, churches, local shopping etc.;*
- *open spaces serving a wider area; and*
- *significant landscape buffer strips”.*

6.37 Based on the above, the following is the net site area for the purposes of density calculation:

Gross site area:	29,076 sq.m
Minus RU zoned lands and Stoney Hill Road lands within red line:	- 14,902 sq.m
Minus eastern park:	- 2,248 sq.m
Minus western park:	- 1,033 sq.m
Remaining (net) site area:	10,893 sq.m

6.38 With 42 no. units, this provides a density 39 units per hectare net (based on 10,893 sq.m / 1.08 ha).

6.39 Whilst it is considered both the eastern and western parks qualify as “open spaces serving a wider area” as they are both public open spaces, in the event that they are considered not to qualify as such, the net density achieved is 30 units per hectare net. This density is considered entirely appropriate given the site context. It is noted that a higher development density is achievable on other parts of the wider lands, subject to separate planning permission.

- 6.40 In the context of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), the subject site would be considered an outer suburban / greenfield site. The Guidelines differentiate between 'cities and larger towns' and 'small towns and villages' in density terms.
- 6.41 The Guidelines state that "*smaller towns and villages are defined as those with a population ranging from 400 to 5,000 persons*". The population of Rathcoole in the 2016 Census of Population was 4,351 persons and as such it would qualify as a 'smaller town' for the purposes of the Guidelines. Whilst population statistics for Rathcoole under the 2022 Census have not, at the time of writing, yet been released, it is not impossible that Rathcoole may not exceed the 5,000 population mark, pushing Rathcoole into the territory of a 'larger town' for the purposes of the Guidelines.
- 6.42 The Guidelines state that following in respect of 'outer suburban / greenfield' sites:
- "These may be defined as open lands on the periphery of cities or larger towns whose development will require the provision of new infrastructure, roads, sewers and ancillary social and commercial facilities, schools, shops, employment and community facilities. Studies have indicated that whilst the land take of the ancillary facilities remains relatively constant, the greatest efficiency in land usage on such lands will be achieved by providing net residential densities in the general range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare and such densities (involving a variety of housing types where possible) should be encouraged generally. Development at net densities less than 30 dwellings per hectare should generally be discouraged in the interests of land efficiency, particularly on sites in excess of 0.5 hectares"*.
- 6.43 For edge of centre sites in 'smaller towns', the Guidelines state that:
- "The emphasis will be on achieving successful transition from central areas to areas at the edge of the smaller town or village concerned. Development of such sites tend to be predominantly residential in character and given the transitional nature of such sites, densities to a range of 20-35 dwellings per hectare will be appropriate including a wide variety of housing types from detached dwellings to terraced and apartment style accommodation"*.
- 6.44 In terms of more recent policy guidance, a key objective of the NPF is to achieve greatly increased levels of residential development in appropriate locations. Density of development will be increased in developing the out the whole landholding, where more dense type of development will be proposed, such as apartments.
- 6.45 On balance, considering that (a) Rathcoole in population terms is likely to be straddling a 'smaller town' and 'larger' town, and (b) the site characteristic challenges in terms of topography and vegetation, both of which impact on site layout and therefore development density, the proposed density at 32 units per hectare net is considered to be appropriate.
- 6.46 It is also noted that the proposed development, again as a function of the site layout responding to topography and vegetation, provides public open space on the RES-N zoned lands at circa 23%, greatly in excess of the Development Plan requirement at 15%, also impacts on the net density achievable.

(iv) **High Quality Design**

- 6.47 In terms of house design, the proposed houses are two storey and some (typology F) provide accommodation at second floor / roof level.
- 6.48 Similar housing typology has been successfully employed at Peyton residential estate and the Croftwell residential estate, both in Rathcoole. Refer to example images overleaf.



Photo 1: Example of Housing Typology at the Peyton Estate, Rathcoole



Photo 2: Example of Housing Typology at Croftwell, Rathcoole

- 6.49 The proposed materials on the external façade of the new houses will be primarily a mix of brick and plaster and render on subsidiary elevations. The roof tiles will be slate and will be blue / black in colour. Windows and doors will be UPVC and the exact colour will be determined at a later stage in the development. The windows will also have concrete cill / banding.
- 6.50 The proposed dwellings provide a high quality modern design which is consummate with the surrounding quality of the area.
- 6.51 Further details on proposed materials refer to the plans and drawings by Adrian Hill Architects submitted with this planning application.

(v) Compliance with Quantitative Development Standards

- 6.52 In addition to policies and objectives of the South Development County Development Plan 2022 -2028, there are a number of particularly relevant site development standards which the preparation of the proposed development have been measured against. These are set out and responded to below.
- 6.53 The following summary of requirements (that are outlined in Appendix 2 and 3) from the South Dublin County Development Plans are noted:

Open Space

- Private open space requirements are set in table 3.20 should be exceeded. Private open spaces should be behind the front building line of the house and private. Three bedroom houses, that are subject to the proposed development housing unit mix, are to have a minimum floor area of 92 sq.m and minimum private open space area of 60 sq.m.
 - Response:
This proposed development fully complies with this. All private open spaces are to the rear of the houses and all meet or exceed 60 sq.m.
- The minimum public open space for new residential development on RES-N zoned lands is 15% of the site area.
 - Response:
This proposed development fully complies with this, and in fact, significantly exceeds this at 23.2% of the total developable area (i.e. measured on the lands zoned RES-N). This 23.2% figure **excludes** the additional 11,797 sq.m linear park on the southern portion of the lands.
- The Development Plan includes other specific guidance on the requirements for open space and in this respect it is noted that the open spaces in the proposed development:
 - Are all within easy walking distance of all proposed dwellings.
 - Provide more than one area, in fact three open space are provided, each with different qualities and purposes, providing passive and active use, including a children's play area.

- Are generally open, without walls or barriers, except where a boundary is required for safety reasons or other reasons (i.e. retention of existing hedgerows).
- Retain existing features such as trees and hedgerows.
- Include new native planting.
- Are all highly passively surveilled due to the careful design and orientation of the proposed dwellings.

Dwelling Mix

- Proposals for residential development shall provide a minimum of 30% 3-bedroom units.
 - Response:
The proposed development provides 42 no. 3 bedroom units and as such fully complies with this requirement. The dwelling mix is intended to address a high demand for family housing in Rathcoole.

Housing Design and Standards

- Planning applications for housing developments should be accompanied by statement explaining how the proposed developments could be adapted in the future for older people / people with disabilities. New housing development proposals must include units less than 3-bed multigenerational / lifetime homes, subject to urban design considerations.
 - Response:
The proposed development provides 42 no. 3 bedroom units that can be adapted internally and externally for older people / people with disabilities in the future, if there is a requirement for this type of adaptation to the proposed units in the future. The dwelling mix is intended to address a high demand for family housing in Rathcoole.
- Planning applications for housing development should be accompanied by a schedule of accommodation and a housing quality assessment.
 - Response:
Referred to the enclosed Design Statement by Adrian Hill Architects.

Car Parking

- Table 13.26: Maximum Parking Rates (Residential Development), requires 2 car parking spaces for 3 bedroom, Pls, houses in Zone 1 lands, the category the subject land falls into.
 - Response:
The proposed development provides 2 no. car parking spaces per unit, all in-curtilage, in full compliance with the requirements.
- EV charging shall be provided in all residential developments and shall comprise a minimum of 20 per cent of the total parking spaces provided. All

car parking spaces should be capable of containing charging points in the future. New dwellings with in-curtilage parking, should have infrastructure available to allow for installation of charging points in the future.

- Response:
As all housing units proposed are dwellings with in-curtilage parking, all parking space will have full EV capabilities.
- Refuse storage for new residential developments should be externally located, concealed and should facilitate the number of bins per household. Bins serving new terraced properties should be located in the front of the house in well-designed enclosures and shall not impact negatively on the residential amenity of the area. Access to storage areas in new residential developments should be confined to residents and bin collectors only.
- Response:
3 no. external and enclosed refuse stores are proposed to be provided.

Other

- New residential developments of 10 plus unit, should have a construction and demolition waste construction and demolition waste management plan submitted with the planning application.
- Response:
Refer to the enclosed Construction and Environmental Management Plan by DCON Safety Consultants and the enclosed Construction and Demolition Waste Management Plan by Aecom.
- Planning applications for proposed residential developments of 10 + dwellings, should be supported by an Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation Design Statement.
- Response:
Refer to the enclosed Preliminary Energy Report from Mande Consulting Engineers which demonstrates that the proposed development will be constructed to high building standards and will provide a sustainable, energy efficient development for future occupants.

(vi) Other

Infrastructure and Services

- 6.54 The proposed development includes the linking to the existing public, foul and surface water networks. The proposed development also includes an attenuation tank. Services provision is addressed further in the Infrastructure Report prepared by Aecom.
- 6.55 The applicant is aware of a current capacity issue in respect of Tay Lane pumping station. The pumping station, within the control of Irish Water, requires an upgrade

to facilitate additional residential development. A confirmation after a pre-connection enquiry has been received from Irish Water and is included with the Infrastructure Report, prepared by Aecom.

- 6.56 It is noted that the capacity constraint at Tay Lane has not previously been an issue in the granting of a planning permission for additional residential development in Rathcoole, including on the application site as granted under the SHD permission referred to extensively above. It is also of particular note that the subject lands have retained a residential zoning in the newly adopted South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 with the Tay Lane capacity fully within the knowledge of the planning authority.
- 6.57 In accordance with Policy GI4 of the County Development Plan on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, the proposed development incorporates SUDs measures. The enclosed Infrastructure Report by Aecom provides a full account of the SUDs measures incorporated, including the rationale and requirement for the use of an attenuation tank system due to the filtration characteristics of the site. The County Development Plan clearly states² that *“The Council will consider other options, such as attenuation tanks, where other measures are not a feasible option for the proposed development / land”*.

Flood Risk

- 6.58 With regard to Policy IE4 of the County Development Plan in particular, we refer to the enclosed Strategic Flood Risk Assessment by Aecom which concludes that the site is located within Flood Zone C and therefore is not at risk of flooding.

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

- 6.59 We refer to the enclosed Environmental Impact Assessment Screening prepared by Malone O'Regan, which concludes that:

“Based on the findings of this EIA Screening assessment, the Proposed Development does not require a mandatory EIAR, nor does it meet the threshold where a sub-threshold EIA would be warranted”.

Ecology

- 6.60 We refer to the enclosed Appropriate Assessment Screening Report by Enviroguide which concludes that:

“On the basis of the screening exercise carried out above, it can be concluded, on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available, that the possibility of any significant effects on any European Sites, whether arising from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded. Thus, there is no requirement to proceed to Stage 2 of the Appropriate Assessment process; and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is not required”.

6.61 The above addresses Policy NCBH3 relating to Natura 2000 Sites and also NCBH3 Objective 3 of the County Development Plan.

6.62 We further refer to the enclosed Ecological Impact Assessment by Enviroguide which concludes that:

"It is considered that provided the mitigation measures proposed are carried out in full, there will be no significant negative impact to any valued habitats, designated sites or individual or group of species as a result of the Proposed Development.

Based on the successful implementation of these measures and proposed works, to be carried out in accordance with the landscape plan, there will be no significant negative ecological impacts arising from Construction and Operational Phases of the Proposed Development".

6.63 The above report and conclusion fully address the Development Plan requirements as set out in policies for the protection of habitats and species throughout the County, particularly Policy NCBH5 and NCBH5 Objectives 1 and 2.

Archaeology

6.64 We refer to the enclosed Archaeological Desk Study / Development Impact Statement by Edmond O'Donovan & Associates and note the conclusion that monitoring requirements for archaeology are recommended only.

6.65 The above fully addresses Policy NCBH13: Archaeological Heritage and NCB13 Objective 2 of the Development Plan relating to archaeology.

Energy Performance

6.66 With regard to Policies E2 and E3 of the County Development Plan in particular, we refer to the enclosed Preliminary Energy Report from Mande Consulting Engineers which demonstrates that the proposed development will be constructed to high building standards and will provide a sustainable, energy efficient development for future occupants.

Aviation

6.67 Policy IE8: Casement Aerodrome Objective 4 relates to Casement Aerodrome. We refer to the enclosed Aeronautical Assessment Report by O'Dwyer & Nolan Design Partnership, which concludes that ". . . the proposed housing development complies with the aviation and aeronautical requirements affecting the location".



7.0 PART V (SOCIAL HOUSING) COMPLIANCE

- 7.1 The applicant agrees to accept a condition on a grant of planning permission, if the Council is minded to approve the proposed development, which requires the applicant to enter into a Part V agreement with South Dublin County Council as per their requirements prior to commencement of development.
- 7.2 The applicant's Part V proposals are outlined in separate correspondence enclosed with this submission.
- 7.3 In accordance with the Affordable Housing Act 2021, the provision of 20% social and affordable housing on new development sites of 5 or more houses only applies where:
- The land to be developed for new housing was purchased after 1st August 2021.
 - The new housing land was purchased before the 1st September 2015 and receives planning permission after 2nd September 2015*.
 - Planning permission is granted after the 31st July 2026, regardless of when the land was purchased.
- 7.4 The requirement for social and affordable housing between 2015-2021 was 10%. This still applies to land purchased between 1st September 2015 and 31st July 2021, which has a planning permission granted for new housing between 3rd September 2021 and 31st July 2026.
- 7.5 The applicant purchased the land between 17/8/17 and 19/7/18 and is expecting to receive planning permission for the proposed development between 3rd September 2021 and 31st July 2026. There are therefore 4 affordable units (10% of the proposed 42 units in the subject planning application). The 4 units are highlighted in the plans and drawings by AHA, submitted with this planning application.

APPENDIX 1

Summary of National, Regional Planning Policy and Section 28 Guidelines Relevant to the Proposed Development

The relevant provisions of national (including relevant Section 28 guidelines) and regional planning policy as they relate to the proposed development are set out below.

The key policy and guidance documents of relevance to the proposed development are considered to be the following:

- National Planning Framework 2040;
- Housing for All - A new Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)
- Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031;
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), and the accompanying Urban Design Manual (2009);
- Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities (2007) and the accompanying Best Practice Guidelines – Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007);
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019);
- Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035, and
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009).

It is noted that the height of the proposed development at 2 storeys is modest and is fully compliant with the building height guidance in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028. In this respect, the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018) are not of relevance.

National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040

As a strategic development framework, Ireland 2040 sets the long-term context for our country's physical development and associated progress in economic, social and environmental terms and in an island, European and global context.

The NPF emphasises the importance of development within existing urban areas by making better use of under-utilised land, together with higher housing and job densities, better services by existing facilities and public transport.

It is noted that Objective 3a of the NPF states that it is a national policy objective to:

“deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally within the built-up envelope of existing urban settlements”.

Objective 4 of the NPF is to:

“ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and wellbeing”.

Objective 11 of the NPF states that,

“there will be a presumption in favour of development that encourages more people, jobs and activity within existing urban areas, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth”.

The NPF also states that:

“to avoid urban sprawl and the pressure that it puts on both the environment and infrastructure demands, increased residential densities are required in our urban areas”.

Housing For All: A new Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)

Launched in September 2021, ‘*Housing for All, A new Housing Plan for Ireland*’ is the Government’s new plan (replacing ‘*Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan For Housing and Homelessness*’) to increase the supply of housing up to 2030 in the form of; increasing availability and affordability of housing; and to create a sustainable housing system into the future. The aim of the plan is to ensure that: *“everyone should have access to a home to purchase or rent at an affordable price, built to a high standard and in the right place, offering a high quality of life”.*

The plan contains a range of actions and measures to ensure over 300,000 new social, affordable, cost rental, and private homes are constructed by 2030. The actions outlined in the Plan are backed by over €4 billion in annual guaranteed State investment in housing within each budget over the coming years, including through Exchequer funding, the Land Development Agency, and Housing Finance Agency investment. The plan commits to over €20 billion initially in State investment for housing delivery in the first 5 years of its launch.

The Plan sets out four pathways how it will address the current housing challenges facing the State:

- Pathway to supporting homeownership and increasing affordability;
- Pathway to eradicating homelessness, increasing social housing delivery, and supporting social inclusion;
- Pathway to increasing new housing supply, and
- Pathway to addressing vacancy and efficient use of existing stock.

These pathways are underpinned by long-term actions to address systemic challenges, by creating a housing system that has environmental, social, and economic sustainability at its heart and which meets the needs of all.

Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly; Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019- 2031

The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly was formed on 1st January 2015. The three previous regional authorities in the Eastern and Midland region, for example the Dublin Region, produced Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG’s), such as the RPG for the Greater Dublin Area 2010 – 2022. RPG’s have now been replaced by Regional Assembly’s, i.e. the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly’s Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031. The RSES was made on 28th June 2019 and was issued by Ministerial Direction on 14th January 2020.

The RSES is a strategic plan and investment framework to shape the future development of the eastern region to 2031 and beyond.

The key vision set out in the RSES is to create a sustainable and competitive region that supports the health and wellbeing of our people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel, and employment opportunities for all.

Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)

The role of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas is to ensure the sustainable delivery of new development throughout the country. The Guidelines focus on the provision of sustainable residential development.

The Guidelines encourage layouts, and development on sites, that allow for the following:

- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, and minimise the need to use cars;
- Are easy to access for all users and to find one's way around;
- Promote the efficient use of land and of energy, and minimise greenhouse gas emissions;
- Provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand.

The Guidelines are also accompanied by a Design Manual discussed below which demonstrates how design principles can be applied in the design and layout of new residential developments, at a variety of scales of development and in various settings. The Guidelines recommend that planning authorities should promote high quality design in their policy documents and in their development management process.

The Guidelines emphasise the need to adopt a sequential approach to the development of land and note in Section 2.3 and *"the sequential approach as set out in the Departments Development Plan Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2007) specifies that zoning shall extend outwards from the centre of an urban area, with undeveloped lands closest to the core and public transport routes being given preference, encouraging infill opportunities..."*.

The Guidelines set out locations that are suitable in principle for increased density. Section 5.9 of the Guidelines refers to infill lands in this context, stating that:

In the context of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), the subject site would be considered an outer suburban / greenfield site. The Guidelines differentiate between *'cities and larger towns'* and *'small towns and villages'* in density terms.

The Guidelines state that *"smaller towns and villages are defined as those with a population ranging from 400 to 5,000 persons"*. The population of Rathcoole in the 2016 Census of Population was 4,351 persons and as such it would qualify as a *'smaller town'* for the purposes of the Guidelines. Whilst population statistics for Rathcoole under the 2022 Census have not, at the time of writing, yet been released, it is not impossible that Rathcoole may not exceed the 5,000 population mark, pushing Rathcoole into the territory of a *'larger town'* for the purposes of the Guidelines.

The Guidelines state that following in respect of *'outer suburban / greenfield'* sites:

"These may be defined as open lands on the periphery of cities or larger towns whose development will require the provision of new infrastructure, roads, sewers and ancillary social and commercial facilities, schools, shops, employment and community facilities. Studies have indicated that whilst the land take of the ancillary facilities remains relatively constant, the greatest efficiency in land usage on such lands will be achieved by providing

net residential densities in the general range of 35-50 dwellings per hectare and such densities (involving a variety of housing types where possible) should be encouraged generally. Development at net densities less than 30 dwellings per hectare should generally be discouraged in the interests of land efficiency, particularly on sites in excess of 0.5 hectares”.

For edge of centre sites in ‘smaller towns’, the Guidelines state that:

“The emphasis will be on achieving successful transition from central areas to areas at the edge of the smaller town or village concerned. Development of such sites tend to be predominantly residential in character and given the transitional nature of such sites, densities to a range of 20-35 dwellings per hectare will be appropriate including a wide variety of housing types from detached dwellings to terraced and apartment style accommodation”.

For the purposes of clarity, Appendix A of the Guidelines provides the following guidance on the calculation of net densities:

“A net site density measure is a more refined estimate than a gross site density measure and includes only those areas which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses. These will include:

- *access roads within the site;*
- *private garden space;*
- *car parking areas;*
- *incidental open space and landscaping;*
- *children’s play areas where these are to be provided.*

It therefore excludes:

- *major and local distributor roads;*
- *primary schools, churches, local shopping etc.;*
- *open spaces serving a wider area; and*
- *significant landscape buffer strips”.*

In addition to recommending appropriate densities, the Guidelines also focus on the provision of sustainable residential development, including the promotion of layouts that:

- *prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, and minimise car use;*
- *are easy to access for all users and to find one’s way around;*
- *promote the efficient use of land and of energy, and minimise greenhouse gas emissions;*
- *provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand, and*
- *reduce traffic speeds in housing developments.*

The Guidelines also provide advice on the core principles of urban design when creating places of high quality and distinct identity. The Guidelines are accompanied by a Design Manual which demonstrates how design principles can be applied in the design and layout of new residential developments, at a variety of scales of development and in various settings.

The proposed development has been designed to reflect the relevant aspect of these guidelines.

Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities (2007)

The Department's policy statement Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities, Guidance provides the overarching policy framework for an integrated approach to housing and planning. The statement notes that demographic factors will continue to underpin strong demand for housing, which in turn will present considerable challenges for the physical planning of new housing and the provision of associated services. The quality of the housing environment is stated as being central to creating a sustainable community.

Sustainable neighbourhoods are areas where an efficient use of land, high quality design, and effective integration in the provision of physical and social infrastructure combine to create places people want to live in.

The Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities policy statement is accompanied by Best Practice Guidelines entitled '*Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities*' (2007). The purpose of these Guidelines is to promote high standards in the design and construction of houses and in the provision of residential services in new housing schemes. The guidelines encourage best use of building land and optimal utilisation of services and infrastructure in the provision of new housing; point the way to cost effective options for housing design that go beyond minimum codes and standards; promote higher standards of environmental performance and durability in housing construction; seek to ensure that residents of new housing scheme enjoy the benefits of first-rate living conditions in a healthy, accessible and visually attractive environment, and provide homes and communities that may be easily managed and maintained.

Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022 – 2042

The Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022- 2042 (Transport Strategy) replaces the previous framework from 2016- 2035, as part of its compliance with the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008, where the National Transport Authority (NTA) must review its transport strategy every 6 years. The overall aim of the Transport Strategy is:

"To provide a sustainable, accessible, and effective transport system for the Greater Dublin Area which meets the region's climate change requirements, serves the needs of urban and rural communities, and supports economic growth."

The Strategy sets out measures to achieve the vision and objectives for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), including the better integration of land use planning and transportation, consolidating growth in identified centres, and providing more intensive development in designated town and district centres, and control of parking supply.

Guidelines for Planning Authorities on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009)'

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines require the planning system at all levels to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, particularly floodplains, unless there are proven wider sustainability grounds that justify appropriate development and where the flood risk can be reduced or managed to an acceptable level without increasing flood risk elsewhere; adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management when assessing the location for new development based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of flood risk;



and incorporate flood risk assessment into the process of making decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.

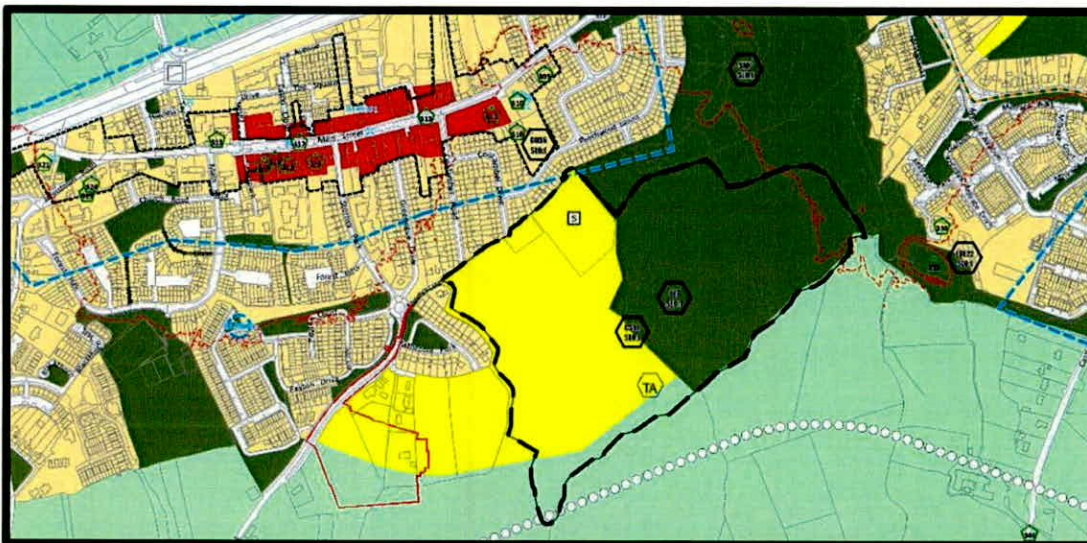


APPENDIX 2

South Dublin County Development Plan 2016 – 2022

Zoning

As shown in the image below, the subject site is zoned 'New Residential' (RES-N) (yellow shading), with an objective to "provide for new residential communities in accordance with approved area plans". Residential use is permissible in principle under this zoning objective. The requirement for an 'approved area plan' is addressed further in section 6 of this Planning Statement.



Source: South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 with red line overlay by Virtus

Relevant Policies, Objectives and Standards

Core Strategy

In section 1.4.4 'Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) Settlement Strategy', Rathcoole is defined as a small town. Small towns are within the hinterland areas and yield a population of between 1,500 and 5,000 persons. The level of growth of small towns should respond to local demand and should be managed in line with the ability of local services to cater for such growth.

In section 1.5.1 'RPG's and CSO Population Targets' table 1.3 sets out population and housing targets for South Dublin. Between 2016-2022, the population South Dublin is predicted to grow by 21,126 persons and housing is predicted to grow by 22,575 units.

To manage this predicted increase in population and housing, a land capacity and population forecast for each settlement was prepared and included in table 1.10 'South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 Total Capacity'. Rathcoole has a total land capacity of 45 hectares, which equates to 1,062 residential units. Furthermore, the population of Rathcoole is predicted to increase by 1,694 persons by 2022.

Core Strategy Policy 4 Small Towns states,

"It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable long term growth of Small Towns based on local demand and the ability of local services to cater for growth".

Core Strategy Policy 4 is underpinned by 2 objectives. Objective 1 relates to development on zoned land and states,

"To support and facilitate development on zoned lands on a phased basis subject to approved Local Area Plans."

The phasing, prioritization and infrastructure delivery of zoned lands in the County is assessed in section 1.8.0. Section 1.8.0, point 6 assessment of Rathcoole and Newcastle states:

"Rathcoole and Newcastle have limited public transport provision and social services, and as such, are not identified as growth nodes. These settlements will develop at an incremental pace, based on the delivery of social, physical and transport infrastructure and services. The capacity of zoned lands is considered to be largely sufficient to meet long term demand."

Housing

Chapter 2 housing contains a number of policies and objectives that are considered relevant to the proposed development and have been carefully considered in the design of the proposed development. The following specific policies and objectives are:

- Housing Policy 1 'Housing Strategy', H1 Objective 2 states,
"To apply a 10% social housing requirement, pursuant to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to all sites that are zoned solely for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses (save where the development qualifies for a modified or amended obligation or is otherwise exempted)"
- Housing Policy 1 'Housing Strategy', H1 Objective 4 states,
"To promote social integration and facilitate a diverse range of dwelling tenures within housing developments, including social housing in a balanced way in all Local Electoral Areas of the County".
- Housing Policy 6 'Sustainable Communities', states,
"It is the policy of the Council to support the development of sustainable communities and to ensure that new housing development is carried out in accordance with Government policy in relation to the development of housing and residential communities."
- Housing Policy 7 'Urban Design in Residential Developments', states,
"It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all new residential development within the County is of high quality design and complies with Government guidance on the design of sustainable residential development and residential streets including that

prepared by the Minister under Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)."

- Housing Policy 8 'Residential Densities', states,

"It is the policy of the Council to promote higher residential densities at appropriate locations and to ensure that the density of new residential development is appropriate to its location and surrounding context."
- Housing Policy 8 'Residential Densities', H8 Objective 1 states,

"To ensure that the density of residential development makes efficient use of zoned lands and maximises the value of existing and planned infrastructure and services, including public transport, physical and social infrastructure, in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009)."
- Housing Policy 8 'Residential Densities', H8 Objective 2 states,

"To consider higher residential densities at appropriate locations that are close to Town, District and Local Centres and high capacity public transport corridors in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009)."
- Housing Policy 8 'Residential Densities', H8 Objective 6 states,

"To apply the provisions contained in the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009) relating to Outer Suburban locations, including a density range of 35-50 units per hectare, to greenfield sites that are zoned residential (RES or RES-N) and are not subject to a SDZ designation, a Local Area Plan and/or an approved plan, excluding lands within the M50 and lands on the edge or within the Small Towns/ Villages in the County."
- Housing Policy 9 'Residential Building Heights' states,

"It is the policy of the Council to support varied building heights across residential and mixed use areas in South Dublin County."
- Housing Policy 9 'Residential Building Heights', H9 Objective 1 states,

"To encourage varied building heights in new residential developments to support compact urban form, sense of place, urban legibility and visual diversity."
- Housing Policy 10 'Mix of Dwelling Types' states,

"It is the policy of the Council to ensure that a wide variety of adaptable housing types, sizes and tenures are provided in the County in accordance with the provisions of the Interim South Dublin County Council Housing Strategy 2016-2022."
- Housing Policy 11 'Residential Design and Layout' states,

"It is the policy of the Council to promote a high quality of design and layout in new residential development and to ensure a high quality living environment for residents, in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units and the overall layout and appearance of the development."

- Housing Policy 11 '*Residential Design and Layout*', H11 Objective 2 states,

"To promote new residential developments taking account of energy efficiency, prioritising passive house construction standards, as well as renewable energy opportunities, including solar energy where appropriate, in accordance with Part L of the Building Regulations."
- Housing Policy 12 '*Public Open Space*', states,

"It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all residential development is served by a clear hierarchy and network of high quality public open spaces that provides for active and passive recreation and enhances the visual character, identity and amenity of the area."
- Housing Policy 12 '*Public Open Space*', H12 Objective 1 states,

"To ensure that public open space in new residential developments complies with the quantitative standards set out in Chapter 11 Implementation and the qualitative standards set out in Chapter 11 and Chapter 4 of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DEHLG (2009), together with the design criteria illustrated under the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, DEHLG (2009)."
- Housing Policy 14 '*Internal Residential Accommodation*' states,

"It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all new housing provides a high standard of accommodation that is flexible and adaptable, to meet the long term needs of a variety of household types and sizes."
- Housing Policy 14 '*Internal Residential Accommodation*', H14 Objective 2 states,

"To support adaptable housing layouts that can accommodate the changing needs of occupants, through extension or remodelling."
- Housing Policy 15 '*Privacy and Security*' states,

"It is the policy of the Council to promote a high standard of privacy and security for existing and proposed dwellings through the design and layout of housing."
- Housing Policy 15 '*Privacy and Security*', H15 Objective 2 states,

"To ensure that all developments are designed to provide street frontage and to maximise surveillance of streets and spaces."
- Housing Policy 16 '*Steep or Varying Topography Sites*' states,

"It is the policy of the Council to ensure that development on lands with a steep and/or varying topography is designed and sited to minimise impacts on the natural slope of the site."

- Housing Policy 16 'Steep or Varying Topography Sites', H16 Objective 1 states,
"To ensure that all developments including buildings, streets and spaces are designed and arranged to respond to and complement the site's natural contours and natural drainage features in accordance with the recommendations of the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009)."
- Housing Policy 16 'Steep or Varying Topography Sites', H16 Objective 2 states,
"To avoid the use of intrusive engineered solutions, such as cut and filled platforms, embankments or retaining walls on sites with steep or varying topography."

Transport and Mobility

The layout and configuration of the internal street network in the proposed development has been designed to comply directly with the policy requirement in Transport and Mobility Policy 3 'Walking and Cycling'. The policy states:

"It is the policy of the Council to re-balance movement priorities towards more sustainable modes of transportation by prioritising the development of walking and cycling facilities within a safe and traffic calmed street environment."

Transport and Mobility Policy 3 'Walking and Cycling' can be delivered through the implementation of Transport and Mobility Objective 2 and 3 by designers and developers of new housing developments in the county. Each state:

"To ensure that connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists is maximised in new communities and improved within existing areas in order to maximise access to local shops, schools, public transport services and other amenities, while seeking to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour and respecting the wishes of local communities."

"To ensure that all streets and street networks are designed to prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists within a safe and comfortable environment for a wide range of ages, abilities and journey types."

New development proposals in the County need to minimise their impact on the County's existing road and street network. This is required in Transport and Mobility Policy 5 'Traffic and Transport Management' and Transport and Mobility Objective 3 which respectively state:

"It is the policy of Council to effectively manage and minimise the impacts of traffic within the County."

"To minimise the impact of new development on the County's road and street network."

There is an action under Transport and Mobility Policy 5 'Traffic and Transport Management' that is worth noting in the context of the proposed development. It states:

“Require all major traffic generating development to submit a Mobility Management Plan/Workforce Plan and/or Traffic and Transport Assessment (see also Section 11.4.5 - Traffic and Transport Assessments and Section 11.4.6 Travel Plans).”

The safety of residential roads and streets are established primarily in how they are designed before becoming active. Transport and Mobility Policy 6 ‘Road and Street Design’ and 3 subsequent objections (Transport and Mobility Policy 6 Objectives 1, 2 and 3) outline this requirement and how it will be achieved. They state:

“It is the policy of Council to ensure that streets and roads within the County are designed to balance the needs of place and movement, to provide a safe traffic-calmed street environment, particularly in sensitive areas and where vulnerable users are present.”

“To appropriately apply speed limits taking into account the characteristics of the surrounding area, the design of the street environment and the presence of vulnerable users.”

“To ensure that all streets and street networks are designed to passively calm traffic through the creation of a self regulating street environment.”

“To advance national and local initiatives in relation to road design and safety.”

There are actions under Transport and Mobility 6 ‘Road and Street Design’ that are worth noting in the context of the proposed development. They state:

“New roads and streets within urban areas shall be designed in accordance with the principles, approaches and standards contained within the DMURS (see Section 6.4.3(l) – Design of Streets and Roads in Urban Areas) and the National Cycle Manual, where appropriate.”

“That the design of street networks in new residential estates shall facilitate the implementation of Special Speed Limits, including the lowest speed limits applicable under current legislation.”

Transport and Mobility Policy 7 ‘Car Parking’ states,

“It is the policy of Council to take a balanced approach to the provision of car parking with the aim of meeting the needs of businesses and communities whilst promoting a transition towards more sustainable forms of transportation.”

There are 4 objectives under Transport and Mobility Policy 7 ‘Car Parking’ that are considered relevant to the proposed development. They state:

“To carefully consider the number of parking spaces provided to service the needs of new development.”

“To effectively design and manage parking to ensure the efficient turnover of spaces.”

“To ensure that car parking does not detract from the comfort and safety of pedestrians and cyclists or the attractiveness of the landscape.”

“To make provisions for the use of electric vehicles through a significant increase in the provision of clearly and exclusively designated electric car charging points on public and private land in partnership with ESB and other relevant stakeholders and land owners.”

There are actions under Transport and Mobility 6 ‘Car Parking’ that are worth noting in the context of the proposed development. They state:

“Implement maximum parking rates for all new development and require further reductions where external factors reduce the need to travel by car (see also Sections 11.4.2 –Car Parking Standards).”

“Support the Electric Transport Programme by facilitating the roll-out of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (see also Section 11.4.3 – Electric Vehicle Parking).”

Infrastructure and Environmental Quality

The Council work closely with Irish Water to ensure the existing water and waste infrastructure is protected and to propose investment in the network where deficiencies are reported. This partnership is confirmed in Infrastructure and Environmental Quality Policy 1 ‘Water and Wastewater’. The policy states:

“It is the policy of the Council to work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water and drainage infrastructure and to promote investment in the water and drainage network to support environmental protection and facilitate the sustainable growth of the County.”

The required close engagement between the Council and Irish Water on the protection and provision of water and waste water infrastructure is further elaborated in Infrastructure and Environmental Quality objectives 1 and 2. They state:

“To work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect, manage and optimise water supply and foul drainage networks in the County.”

“To work in conjunction with Irish Water to facilitate the timely delivery of ongoing upgrades and the expansion of water supply and wastewater services to meet the future needs of the County and the Region.”

There are two actions under Infrastructure and Environmental Quality Policy 1 Water and Wastewater that are relevant to the proposed development. They state:

“South Dublin County Council will liaise with Irish Water to promote the sustainable development of water supply and drainage infrastructure in the County and the Region, in accordance with the objectives and recommendations set out in the Greater Dublin Drainage Study, Water Services Strategic Plan and Water Supply Project.”

“South Dublin County Council will present business cases to Irish Water to secure capital investment for required infrastructural projects in the County based on the growth strategy outlined in the Core Strategy.”

The requirement for flood risk assessment (site specific) in the County Development Plan 2016-2022 are provided for in Infrastructure and Environmental Quality Policy 3 Flood Risk Policy 3 ‘Flood Risk’ and Infrastructure and Environmental Quality 3. Each states:

"It is the policy of the Council to continue to incorporate Flood Risk Management into the spatial planning of the County, to meet the requirements of the EU Floods Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive."

"To manage flood risk in the County in accordance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DECLG and OPW (2009) and Circular PL02/2014 (August 2014), in particular when preparing plans and programmes and assessing development proposals. For lands identified as being at risk of flooding in (but not limited to) the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment to an appropriate level of detail, addressing all potential sources of flood risk, is required, demonstrating compliance with the aforementioned Guidelines or any updated version of these Guidelines, paying particular attention to residual flood risks and any proposed site specific flood management measures."

The potential for light pollution from the proposed development needs to be assessed as it includes public lighting. This requirement is included in Infrastructure and Environmental Quality Policy 7 'Environmental Quality' and Infrastructure and Environmental Quality Objective 5. Both state:

"It is the policy of the Council to have regard to European Union, National and Regional policy relating to air quality, light pollution and noise pollution and to seek to take appropriate steps to reduce the effects of air, noise and light pollution on environmental quality and residential amenity."

"To ensure external lighting schemes minimise light spillage or pollution in the immediate surrounding environment and do not adversely impact on residential or visual amenity and biodiversity in the surrounding areas."

The subject development site is in the vicinity of the casement aerodrome military airbase. Infrastructure and Environmental Quality Policy 8 'Casement Aerodrome' and Infrastructure and Environmental Quality Objective 1 controls the future safety of the casement aerodrome. They state:

"It is the policy of the Council to safeguard the current and future operational, safety and technical requirements of Casement Aerodrome and to facilitate its ongoing development for military and ancillary uses, such as an aviation museum, within a sustainable development framework."

"To ensure the safety of military air traffic, present and future, to and from Casement Aerodrome with full regard for the safety of persons on the ground as well as the necessity for causing the least possible inconvenience to local communities."

Green Infrastructure

There are a number of Green Infrastructure Policies and Objectives that are considered relevant to the determination of the proposed development. Green Infrastructure Policy 2 'Green Infrastructure Network' Objective 5 states:

"To integrate Green Infrastructure as an essential component of all new developments."

Green Infrastructure Policy 2 'Green Infrastructure Network' Objective 9 states:

"To preserve, protect and augment trees, groups of trees, woodlands and hedgerows within the County by increasing tree canopy coverage using locally native species and by incorporating them within design proposals and supporting their integration into the Green Infrastructure network."

Green Infrastructure Policy 5 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' states:

"It is the policy of the Council to promote and support the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in the County and to maximise the amenity and biodiversity value of these systems."

Green Infrastructure Policy 6 'New Development in Urban Areas' states:

"To protect and enhance existing ecological features including tree stands, woodlands, hedgerows and watercourses in all new developments as an essential part of the design process."

Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes

The relevant policies and objectives in Chapter 9 Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes considered relevant to the proposed development are:

Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes Policy 2 'Archaeological Heritage' states:

"It is the policy of the Council to manage development in a manner that protects and conserves the Archaeological Heritage of the County and avoids adverse impacts on sites, monuments, features or objects of significant historical or archaeological interest."

Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes Policy 2 'Archaeological Heritage' Objective 1 states:

"To favour the preservation in-situ of all sites, monuments and features of significant historical or archaeological interest in accordance with the recommendations of the Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, DAHGI (1999), or any superseding national policy document."

Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes Policy 2 'Archaeological Heritage' Objective 2 states:

"To ensure that development is designed to avoid impacting on archaeological heritage that is of significant interest including previously unknown sites, features and objects."

Heritage, Conservation and Landscapes Policy 2 'Archaeological Heritage' Objective 3 states:

"To protect and enhance sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places and ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Area of Archaeological Potential does not detract from the setting of the site, monument, feature or object and is sited and designed appropriately."

Energy

The relevant policies are:

Energy Policy 4 Energy 'Performance in New Buildings' and Energy Policy 4 Energy 'Performance in New Buildings' Objective 1 and 2, state:

"To ensure that medium to large scale residential and commercial developments are designed to take account of the impacts of climate change, including the installation of rainwater harvesting systems, and that energy efficiency and renewable energy measures are incorporated in accordance with national building regulations, policy and guidelines."

"To support the passive house standard or equivalent for all new build in the County."

Implementation

The subject lands are zoned New Residential, abbreviated 'RES-N', that has a zoning objective 'To provide for new residential communities in accordance with approved area plans'. Below is an extract of table 11.3 of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022. Residential and Open Space are permitted in principle in RES-N zoned lands.

The subject planning application site are also zoned Rural and Agriculture, abbreviated 'RU', that has a zoning objective 'To protect and Improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture'. Table 2 below is an extract to table 11.6 of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022. Open space is permitted in principle in RU zoned lands.

Table 11.3: Zoning Objective RES-N: 'To provide for new residential communities in accordance with approved area plans'

Use Classes Related to Zoning Objective	
Permitted in Principle	Childcare Facilities, Community Centre, Cultural Use, Doctor/Dentist, Education, Enterprise Centre, Funeral Home, Garden Centre, Guest House, Health Centre, Housing for Older People, Industry-Light, Nursing Home, Offices less than 100 sq.m, Open Space, Primary Health Care Centre, Public House, Public Services, Recreational Facility, Recycling Facility, Residential Institution, Residential, Restaurant/Café, Retirement Home, Shop-Local, Shop-Neighbourhood, Sports Club/Facility, Stadium, Traveller Accommodation, Veterinary Surgery.
Open for Consideration	Advertisements and Advertising Structures, Agriculture, Allotments, Bed & Breakfast, Betting Office, Camp Site, Car Park, Caravan Park-Residential, Cemetery, Crematorium, Embassy, Fuel Depot, Home Based Economic Activities, Hotel/Hostel, Industry-General, Live-Work Units, Motor Sales, Nightclub, Office-Based Industry, Offices 100 sq.m - 1,000 sq.m, Off-Licence, Petrol Station, Place of Worship, Refuse Transfer Station, Science and Technology Based Enterprise, Social Club, Wholesale Outlet.
Not Permitted	Abattoir, Aerodrome/Airfield, Boarding Kennels, Concrete/Asphalt Plant in or adjacent to a Quarry, Conference Centre, Heavy Vehicle Park, Hospital, Industry-Extractive, Industry-Special, Offices over 1,000 sq.m, Outdoor Entertainment Park, Refuse Landfill/Tip, Retail Warehouse, Rural Industry-Food, Scrap Yard, Service Garage, Shop-Major Sales Outlet, Transport Depot, Warehousing, Wind Farm.

Source: South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022

Table 11.16: Zoning Objective 'RU': 'To protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture'

USE CLASSES RELATED TO ZONING OBJECTIVE	
Permitted in Principle	Aerodrome/Airfield, Agriculture, Allotments, Cemetery, Concrete/Asphalt Plant in or adjacent to a Quarry, Home Based Economic Activities ^a , Industry-Extractive, Open Space, Public Services, Rural Industry-Food.
Open for Consideration	Abattoir, Bed & Breakfast ^a , Boarding Kennels, Camp Site ^b , Car Park ^b , Childcare Facilities ^b , Community Centre, Crematorium, Cultural Use ^a , Doctor/Dentist ^b , Education, Embassy ^a , Enterprise Centre ^b , Fuel Depot ^b , Funeral Home ^b , Garden Centre, Guest House ^a , Health Centre ^b , Heavy Vehicle Park, Hotel/Hostel, Offices less than 100 sq.mb, Petrol Station ^b , Place of Worship ^b , Primary Health Care Centre ^b , Public House ^b , Recreational-Facility, Recycling Facility ^b , Refuse Landfill/Tip, Residential ^c , Restaurant/Café, Service Garage ^b , Shop-Local ^b , Social Club, Sports Club/Facility, Stadium, Traveller Accommodation, Veterinary Surgery.
Not Permitted	Advertisements and Advertising Structures, Betting Office, Caravan Park-Residential, Conference Centre, Hospital, Housing for Older People, Industry-General, Industry-Light, Industry-Special, Live-Work Units, Motor Sales Outlet, Nightclub, Nursing Home, Office-Based Industry, Offices 100sq.m-1,000 sq.m, Offices over 1,000 sq.m, Off-Licence, Outdoor Entertainment Park, Refuse Transfer Station, Residential Institution, Retail Warehouse, Retirement Home, Science and Technology Based Enterprise, Scrap Yard, Shop-Major Sales Outlet, Shop-Neighbourhood, Transport Depot, Warehousing, Wholesale Outlet, Wind Farm.

Source: South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022

Section 11.2.1 'Design Statements' requires medium scale developments proposals / planning application (such as, 10 dwellings and above) to be accompanied by a design statement. The design statement shall consist of:

- A Site Analysis;
- A Concept Plan and/or Masterplan;
- A statement based on the design criteria set out in relevant National Planning Guidance documents, such as,
 - Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, DECLG (2009)
 - Companion Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide, DECLG (2009)
 - The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTS and DECLG (2013)
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019)

Section 11.2.6 '*Residential Communities*' confirms that the Council will assess planning applications for new residential development against the criteria in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the companion Urban Design Manual (The Urban Design Manual focuses on design issues associated with housing schemes of 30-50 units per hectare).

Development Standards

In Section 11.3.0 '*Land Uses*' the relevant residential standards are outlined.

- **Mix of Dwelling Types**
 - Residential scheme dwelling mix should provide a range of dwelling types and sizes.
- **Residential Density**
 - Proposed residential development densities should follow the relevant parameters set in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).
 - In the promotion of sustainable forms of development in the County, higher densities should be provided in walking distance of town centres, with high capacity public transport.
 - Net densities for new residential development should be greater than 35 dwellings per hectare.
- **Public Open Space / Children's Play**
 - Public open space should form an integral part of new residential development.
 - Residential development of 10 units + to have landscape plan prepared on extent of open space and its treatment.
 - Residential development on lands zoned RES-N to have a minimum of 14% public open space.
 - Children play areas should be safe, secure and should be accessible from their homes.
 - Children play area's to have formal play equipment, natural play spaces and features.
- **Dwelling Standards**
 - New dwellings to provide minimum room sizes, dimensions and areas set in the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Guidelines, DEHLG (2007)
 - 3 bedroom units to exceed the following house and open space standards:
 - 3 Bedroom House Area: 92 sq.m
 - 3 Bedroom House Private Open Space: 60 sq.m
 - Private open space to be behind the front building line of the house, in a private area.
- **Privacy**

- New dwellings facing streets to have a privacy strip of 1 metre or a front garden.

In Section 11.4.0 '*Transport and Mobility*' the relevant standards are outlined.

- Car Parking Standards
 - New zone 1 houses with 3+ bedrooms to provide 2 car parking spaces.
- Car Parking for Electric Vehicles
 - 10% of a new residential development car parking spaces should provide electrical vehicle charging points. All other spaces should be capable of containing electrical vehicle charging points in the future.
- Car Parking Design and Layout
 - In-curtilage parking is suitable for new residential development at density of 40 dwellings per hectare or below. This is subject to:
 - Adequate screened (planting) plot widths.
 - Convenient on-street parking for visitors.
- Traffic Impact Assessment
 - This assessment will demonstrate sustainable public transport and road capacities to cater for the trips generated by the development.
 - Up to date traffic surveys (within 6 months of planning application lodgment) and cumulative traffic generation between the subject planning application and other proposed, approved and new developments on the local road network and junctions to be included in the traffic impact assessment.
- Travel Plan / Mobility Management Plan
 - This plan outlines measures to create more sustainable modes of travel in a development, such as,
 - Cycling.
 - Walking.
 - Car pooling.
 - Public transport.

In Section 11.5.0 '*Heritage and Landscape*' the relevant standards are outlined.

- Archaeological Heritage
 - New development in the vicinity of archaeological sites or monuments shall be designed so as to have minimal impacts on these features.
- Ecological Assessments
 - New development proposals adjacent the countryside need to be assessed for potential impacts on EU and Nationally protected species, habitats and / or sites.

- Sites with Steep or Varying Topography
 - Proposals on sites with a varied topography need to be assessed by a site analysis (i.e. character and movement analysis), concept proposal and design statement.
 - Changes in site levels, incorporation of natural slope and drainage features should be shown in site sections.
 - Engineering solutions on sloped sites to be used, such as,
 - Minor split level housing.
 - Sloping gardens with plated boundary treatments.
 - Planted banks (last resort).

In Section 11.6.0 '*Infrastructure and Environmental Quality*' the relevant standards are outlined.

- Flood Risk Assessment
 - Site specific flood risk assessments, where required, should be carried out by an appropriate qualified chartered engineer.
- Surface Water
 - New residential developments should include suitable site drainage schemes in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) and Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works.
 - Surface water outflow from new developments should not exceed the existing situation.
 - Surface water effluent to be intercepted, collected and disposed of / treated through the installation of appropriate systems during construction and for the lifetime of the development.
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)
 - All new development should include SUDS. Examples of SUDS are:
 - Swales
 - Permeable pavements
 - Filter drains
 - Storage ponds
 - Constructed wetlands
 - Soakaways
 - Green roofs
- Groundwater
 - Appropriate site investigations on potential of soil and groundwater contamination to be carried out as part of new development proposals.
- Water Services
 - Applicants to consult with Irish water for advice on way leaves and buffers to be maintained around public water utilities and capacity issues.

- Irish Water need to be consulted on the layout and design of proposed residential development water services as part of planning applications.
- Noise
 - On proposed development sites that adjoin existing residential development, a condition will be added to any planning permission to restrict the operation of machinery or equipment on site before 7.00 hours on weekdays and 9.00 hours on Saturdays, after 19.00 hours on weekdays and 13.00 hours on Saturdays and at any time on Sundays, Bank Holidays or Public Holidays.
- Lighting
 - Details of external light scheme to be provided where proposed in new development proposals.
 - Lighting proposals in new development to avoid light spillage, glare and emission of light above a horizontal plane.
- Refuse Storage and Recycling Facilities in New Developments
 - Refuse storage and recycling facilities in new residential development should be easily accessible to residents and the public and should not detract from the residential amenity of future occupiers.
 - Refuse storage and recycling facilities in new residential development to be externally located, enclosed and large enough to cater for the number of bins per house. Enclosures to be to the front of houses and not to the detriment of visual amenity.
- Construction and Demolition Waste
 - Construction and demolition waste management plans should be submitted for development proposals for new residential development of 10+ dwellings.
 - The construction demolition waste management plan should:
 - Manage all construction and demolition waste from the development site.
 - Re-use / recover materials on site.
 - Dispose of waste through the proper channels.

In Section 11.7.0 'Energy' the relevant standards are outlined.

- Energy Performance in New Buildings
 - Planning applications for development proposals for 10+ dwellings need to be submitted with an Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation Design Statement.
 - The Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation Design Statement should:
 - Detail how demolition, construction and operation of the development will be managed.
 - Show how energy and climate change adaptation considerations have been designed and brought into the scheme.



- The new residential development is to comply with part L of the building regulations and all other relevant guidelines and practice guidance.



APPENDIX 3

Rathcoole Updated Social and Infrastructure Report 2022

Social Infrastructure Audit Report



for

Residential Development at Stoney Hill Road,
Rathcoole, County Dublin

on behalf of Romeville Developments Ltd

July 2022



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Romeville Developments Ltd are applying for planning permission to build 42 residential dwellings on lands zoned for residential development off Stoney Hill Road, and in between Rathcoole Park, Rathcoole, County Dublin. An audit of the social / community infrastructure in and around Rathcoole has been prepared in support of the planning application. The aim of this assessment was to determine whether the proposed development would have access to necessary community facilities and services to support future residents. The key test applied was to analyse the availability and capacity of identified facilities and services and to establish whether there are any examples of under provision in the area and how these deficiencies are overcome. The demand for community facilities and services arising from the existing and projected demographic profile of Rathcoole, between 2016-2024, was also assessed.
- The ability of new residential development to access community facilities and services is paramount in maintaining sustainable communities. This principle is emphasised in national planning guidelines and the South Dublin County Council Development Plans, which includes numerous policies on community facility provision in the County, in support of new development and communities.
- The items of social infrastructure that have been assessed as part of the proposed development in Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole are:
 - Open space and recreation;
 - Education;
 - Childcare Facilities;
 - Health and social services facilities;
 - Libraries;
 - Art and cultural facilities;
 - Religious and community facilities;
 - Retail provision, and
 - Public Transport.
- The proposed development will accommodate 42 residential units of 3 bed two-storey terraced typology.
- In assessing the level, quality and availability of community facilities and services in Rathcoole and surrounding area online research and telephone surveys were conducted to determine the demographic profile of Rathcoole, between 2016 (last census) and 2024 (anticipated completion of development date), the pressure new residents will place on certain facilities, such as schools and childcare facilities and suggestions on how any deficits in provision are being / can be overcome.
- The population in Rathcoole is predicted to increase upwards of 30% by 2024, above 2016 levels, based on housing completions in the area over the last 6 years and the residents who would live in the subject application site. It is therefore critical that community facilities and services are available in Rathcoole and vicinity to cope with this significant rise in population.

- National planning guidelines recommend residential development should be within a 10-minute walk from public open spaces. Other community facilities and services, such as schools, health centres, town halls, local retail centres, etc. should ideally be within a 15-minute walk time. Access to other community facilities and services, such as schools and childcare facilities, may not be accessed by foot or on a bike and require the use of public transport or a single motor vehicle.
- The proposed development will contain suitable active and passive public open space on-site (exceeding the development plan requirements). The proposal also includes parkland along the southern boundary of the site, which is provided in addition to the development plan requirements, and which will provide a significant public amenity. This land has the potential to create a green route beyond to the east and north east, via the adjoining Council and Department of Education and Skills sites, to Rathcoole Park. The subject application site is also in close proximity of the Rathcoole Boys Football Club and the Commercials GAA Hurling and Camogie club and associated facilities.
- The Department of Education and Skills land to the north-east of the subject application site would be a suitable location for the post primary facility that has been identified as a requirement for Rathcoole in the SDCC Development Plan 2022-2028. A survey of the three schools in Rathcoole, including Scoil Chrónáin, Holy Family National School, Holy Family Community School and their capacities was carried out as part of this audit. In addition, three schools considered to be within a reasonable commuting distance of Stoney Hill Road, which include of Citywest Educate Together National School, Citywest & Saggart Community National School and St. Mary's National School Saggart, were also assessed. Of the schools that were contacted, most reported to be at or near full capacity and have waiting lists for enrolment in 2022/2023. This is consistent with national trends. There is no special school in Rathcoole, but the St Raphael's Special School catchment in Celbridge extends to Rathcoole. The primary schools do include supporting services for pupils with special needs. The results of our survey indicate a lack of available school places in Rathcoole.
- The Government in December 2019 announced its plans to build an 8-classroom primary school in Rathcoole, with a due open date of 2020 which has subsequently been delayed due to tendering issues. A Gaelscoil with 8 classrooms is also planned for Citywest / Saggart but with an expected opening date not within the construction period of this proposed development. A post primary school provided in the north east of the application site on zoned lands would further alleviate pressures for these school places in the future.
- Developers and estate agents operating in the area were contacted during the school place audit of Rathcoole and environs. Both confirmed that new residents who moved into the area in recent years have been mainly young couples and young families. Some existing families have relocated to these housing estates, but only a small percentage. This trend would indicate a need for childcare facilities and accessible existing facilities to serve the potential subject site residents at Stoney Hill Road, as opposed to new schools. Moreover, families with children and/or teenagers who may relocate to the subject site could have enrolment in nearby schools within a commuting distance.

- The proposed development will have access to the planned childcare facility to be delivered as part of the wider landholding development, on land adjoining the Peyton Estate, and in existing facilities within a commuting distance between Stoney Hill Road and the Dublin City boundary.
- Rathcoole benefits from containing a host of medical (and veterinary) services, pharmacy, and alternative treatment facilities. Rathcoole is also in close proximity to the Tallaght Regional Hospital which would cater for advanced health issues and emergencies. Other social services such as care home and home help are also accessible from the subject application site and referrals from local health officials in Rathcoole to more specialised treatment can be provided.
- Rathcoole Community Council provide information on Rathcoole heritage in their website. They are also working on a scheme with the Council to restore the old Courthouse into a historic museum. Occasional art and sculpture exhibitions are held in Iniscara Bespoke Framing & Gallery in Main Street, Rathcoole.
- The Council in their Open to You South Dublin Libraries Development Plan 2018-2022, have included an objective to provide a library hub in Rathcoole. This will be required, especially when Rathcoole expands and the existing mobile library, which is open for approx. 1 hour every Monday at Broadfield Meadows, Tootenhill, Rathcoole, will become unfit for purpose.
- The only places of worship in Rathcoole are Church of the Holy Family, Rathcoole (Roman Catholic Church) and the Church of Ireland (Christian, Anglian Communion). Those of other religions / faiths would have to travel to Dublin City to practice publicly. The Rathcoole Community Centre could, subject to terms of agreement, host ceremonies of other faiths subject to need and advice from the representative faith/religious centres in Dublin City.
- The Rathcoole community centre is the main centre serving Rathcoole and provides space for a range of actives and services. It uses the old courthouse for excess space also. It is home to the Rathcoole Community Council and Rathcoole Tidy Towns.
- Retail provision in Rathcoole is predominately located along Main Street. Further retail premises are operating out of the Rathcoole Shopping Centre. The variety of retail premises in Rathcoole attract local trips and activity without the need to go further afield for day-to-day shopping.
- The No. 69 and 69x Dublin Buses are the main public transport links in Rathcoole to Hawkins Street in Dublin City Centre, along with Go-Ahead Ireland providing regular services through Rathcoole from Dublin City Centre, towards Newbridge & Rathangan via the No. 126 buses. The 69 Dublin Bus is a relatively frequent service with buses provided every 30 minutes to an hour from Monday right through to Sunday. The 69X is a less frequent with one service provided to Hawkins Street at 7:30 am Monday – Friday (excluding bank holidays). Route 126 provided by Go-Ahead Ireland operates frequently every 20 minutes during peak times (30 to 60 minutes during non-peak times).

- After completing this social infrastructure audit of Rathcoole, it is apparent there are sufficient facilities and services in the town and surrounding area to cater for the needs of the residents who would live in the subject application site. There are some deficits in facilities, as is to be expected in any urban area, however there is no fundamental deficit in facilities which would make the proposed development unsustainable.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Romeville Development Ltd in relation to the proposed development of 42 residential dwellings comprising 42 no. 3 bed units, in a terraced typology, following demolition of 1 no. residential property and 1 no. ancillary outbuilding, at Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole, County Dublin.

1.1 The purpose of this social infrastructure audit report is to identify the community facilities and services considered to be accessible to the subject proposed development site at Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole. The quality and capacity / availability of these facilities and services will also be assessed against the existing and proposed demographic profile in Rathcoole.

1.2 The primary objective of this study will be to analyse whether there are adequate community facilities and services in the vicinity of the proposed development site to serve the new residents who will be moving to the area. The suitability of these facilities and services will also be assessed. The report will provide an audit of available social infrastructure in the area relating to:

- Open space and recreation;
- Education;
- Childcare Facilities;
- Health and social services facilities;
- Art and cultural facilities;
- Libraries;
- Religious and community facilities;
- Retail provision, and
- Public Transport.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site is circa 2.60 hectares and is predominantly situated to the east of Stoney Road, Rathcoole, County Dublin. The application site will also include part of Stoney Hill Road and the roadway at the eastern side of Rathcoole Park.



Figure 1 – Site(s) Location
Source: Google Maps

3.0 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

1. Department for Environment, Heritage and Local Government: Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns & Villages) May 2009

3.1 Published in 2009 the 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages)' document is a comprehensive and consolidated document on how residential developments in Ireland should be planned and designed in order to achieve sustainable development principals.

3.2 Underpinning the desire to create sustainable development across the country, the guidelines recognise that sustainability should not be confined to the built environment. It is a holistic concept that can be summarised into four main themes when planning for sustainable neighbourhoods at a micro level. The most applicable theme to maintaining adequate social infrastructure is 'Provision of community facilities'. The guidelines highlight the five main community facilities, which need to be integrated, to be;

- (a) Schools;
- (b) Childcare;
- (c) Community centres;
- (d) Healthcare facilities, and
- (e) District / neighbourhood centre uses.

Schools

3.3 In order to cater for the demand new residential development places on local school places and facilities, the guidelines suggest the following requirement,

"...it is recommended that planning applications for 200+ dwelling units should be accompanied by a report identifying the demand for school places likely to be generated by the proposal and the capacity of existing schools in the vicinity to cater for such demand..."

Childcare

3.4 Similar to schools, new residential development puts pressure on local childcare facilities and new facilities are required to be provided at a certain threshold. The guidelines state,

"...When considering planning applications, in the case of larger housing schemes, the guidelines recommend the provision of one childcare facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units. However, the threshold for such provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas, in consultation with city / county childcare committees..."

Community Centres

- 3.5 Major development proposals need to be supported by suitable community centres ideally within walking distance of the development. Planning authorities have a responsibility, following engagement with the communities they represent, to ensure community centres are a policy requirement for certain types of development proposals in their adopted development plans. Development contributions can also be used to fund these facilities.

Healthcare Facilities

- 3.6 When planning for new major development proposals, the Health Service Executive should be engaged in order to determine whether there are suitable health facilities in the area for the new residents. This also spans on to persons with specific needs, such as people with disabilities, and nursing home facilities for when residents become elderly in the future.

District / Neighbourhood Centres

- 3.7 A key consideration when proposing new major development proposals is proximity to district / neighbourhood centres for access to commercial, leisure and community uses, such as convenience shops, sport facilities, community halls, etc. Access to these facilities within walking distance is desired along with well served public transport links.

Public Open Space

- 3.8 The guidelines acknowledge the positive impact public open space can have on the physical and mental well-being of residents in residential developments. Public open space can include both active and passive green spaces such as, sub regional parks, pocket parks, playing pitches, children's play areas/equipment, informal kick about areas, etc. There are qualitative standards provided in the guidelines for how new public open spaces should be delivered.

Design:

Public open spaces, especially in larger parks, should have both active and passive areas. These spaces should be safe, attractive and appropriately lit (subject to adverse light spill). They should also be suitably proportioned (left-over uninviting spaces to be avoided) and should contain durable materials where required.

Accessibility:

Local parks should be within 10-minute walk time of the majority of homes in a residential area. They should also be accessible by pedestrian / cycle paths. Children play areas need to be easily accessible, capable of being naturally surveilled and should not cause adverse impacts to residents regarding noise and disturbance.

Variety and Shared Use:

The availability of passive and active open space facilities serving residential areas need to be balanced and over-provision of one type of public open space above the other is to be avoided. Shared use of facilities, such as all-weather pitches between the community and nearby schools, should be considered.

Biodiversity and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS):

Public open spaces can act as areas of high biodiversity value, with the planting of various species of plants, hedges and trees to enhance flora and fauna in these areas. SUDS can also be provided in public open spaces to hold and filter water which avoids surface water flooding while at the same time preserves the aquatic environment from urban water runoff.

- 3.9 Local authorities calculate public open space provision on a range of 2-2.5 hectares per 1,000 population. The suitability of applying this standard to residential development in suburban areas is not always considered to reflect requirements as occupancy rates of larger houses and apartments do not always follow the indicated take up of bed spaces. In addition, where existing facilities are available in nearby town centres calculating open space requirements on a population basis is not appropriate.
- 3.10 Local authorities generally follow these specific standards when considering open space provision with new residential development proposals;
- In greenfield sites, open space should be delivered at a minimum of 15% of the total site area. These open space areas should be integral within developments or, where relevant, be larger parks serving the wider community.
- 3.11 Local authorities may choose to focus on qualitative standards over quantitative where residential developments would be located close to town centres recreational facilities and / or public parks and natural amenities. Alternatively, local authorities may seek financial contributions towards public open space or recreational facilities in the wider area in place of open space within the proposed development.

4.0 RELEVANT LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

4.1 The South Dublin County Council Development Plan for the period between 2022-2028 aims to implement stated policies which address economic, social, cultural and environmental concerns to help improve the planning, growth and development of the SDCC.

4.2 Community infrastructure in the SDCC Development Plan is made up of the following centres and facilities:

- Community centres;
- Libraries and cultural facilities;
- Religious buildings;
- Sporting facilities;
- Health facilities;
- Childcare and education facilities, and
- Open space and recreational facilities.

4.3 The Council promote and support the provision of community infrastructure which satisfies social and recreational needs of communities. The Council will ensure that provision of these facilities and services are integrated with residential areas. This will allow residents to easily access and use these facilities and services.

4.4 The Council seeks to ensure that an appropriate range of community facilities are provided in all communities. This objective is to be achieved through conformity with the following relevant community facility policies:

➤ **“COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 3–**

Community Centres

Policy COS3: Community Centres

Ensure that communities across the county have access to multifunctional and intergenerational community centres that provide a focal point for community activities.

COS3 Objective 1: To investigate, where new provision is required to meet the needs of the population, the feasibility of extending existing community centres on suitable sites, where siting, layout, design, access and other planning considerations allow.

COS3 Objective 2: To ensure the provision of new community centres in new and existing development areas or where provision is the responsibility of the developer, the Council will ensure the developer provides, in proximity to the population they serve and in accordance with the standard of one centre per 8,000 population with a size of approximately 1,200-1,800 sqm, or dependent on specific local demographic or other needs, smaller centres at a more local level, generally between 350-650sqm in size at the discretion of the Council, or as may be updated by any future community centre strategy carried out by the Council.

COS3 Objective 3: To provide discretion to the Council to require residential or mixed-used developments in new development areas to provide a pro-rata contribution towards the provision of a community centre, in accordance with the standards set out in COS3 Objective 2 and in line with the Development Contribution Scheme.

COS3 Objective 4: To ensure that community buildings are multi-functional and adaptable, can be used by all age cohorts (intergenerational), providing for indoor and supporting outdoor use e.g., café seating areas, and are accessible to as many different users as possible including our teens and young people.

COS3 Objective 5: To support and facilitate the development of a Community Centre Strategy to include the assessment of existing community floorspace/facilities within the County, to identify gaps in provision and to ensure new community centres are provided in existing and new development areas having regard to the Social Infrastructure Audit carried out for the Development Plan.

➤ *“COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 10 – Libraries*

Policy COS10: Libraries

Provide an innovative, community-focused public library service to all who live, work, and study in South Dublin County.

COS10 Objective 1: To support the development of the County’s library services and the implementation of key objectives, as set out in Open to You - South Dublin Library Development Plan (2018-2022) or any superseding document.

COS10 Objective 2: To support the delivery of a new library service in the Rathcoole environs, to meet the needs of the expanding population.

➤ *“COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 11 –*

Arts & Cultural Facilities

Policy COS11: Arts and Cultural Facilities

Facilitate and support the continued development of arts and culture within the County.

COS11 Objective 1: To seek to work with all relevant stakeholders to promote equality of access to and engagement with arts and cultural services and in the promotion of culture and heritage led urban and rural regeneration, consistent with RPO 9.25 of the RSES.

COS11 Objective 2: To support the government ‘Per Cent for Art’ scheme for publicly funded capital, infrastructural, and building developments.

COS11 Objective 3: To require new commercial developments greater than 5,000 sqm in size, in the case of non-residential development, and in excess of 500 units in the case of residential development, to incorporate a physical artistic feature into the scheme to improve the built environment / public realm, which could include high-quality features within the environment/landscaping, in agreement with the Council, and to invite local artists to participate where appropriate by way of open competition

COS11 Objective 4: To facilitate the continued development of arts and cultural facilities throughout the County and to support the objectives and implementation of the South Dublin County Arts Strategy (2016-2020) and the South Dublin County Cultural and Creativity Strategy (2018-2022) and any superseding plans and strategies.

COS11 Objective 5: To ensure that arts and cultural facilities are accessible to all members of the community.

COS11 Objective 7: To support the arts and culture by facilitating community groups to use vacant or unused council premises for exhibitions, performances, and other uses related to community arts, where suitable.

COS11 Objective 8: To prepare a feasibility study for the development of Arts and Culture Infrastructure within the County, taking into account of transport links

➤ *“COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 12 –
Places of Worship*

*Policy COS12: Places Of Worship Support and facilitate the development of places of worship and multi-faith facilities at suitable locations within the County.
COS12 Objective 1: To support and facilitate the development of places of worship and multi-faith facilities at appropriate locations, such as town, village, district and local centres or other suitable locations where they do not adversely impact on existing amenities.*

➤ *“COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 4 –
Sports Facilities & Centres*

Policy COS4: Sports Facilities and Centres Ensure that all communities are supported by a range of sporting facilities that are fit for purpose, accessible and adaptable.

COS4 Objective 1: To promote the provision and management of high-quality, multi-functional, sport and recreational infrastructure across the County to meet existing and future needs, to include sports hubs and multi-sport astro-pitches, in accordance with the South Dublin County Council Sports Pitch Strategy (2020), the National Sports Policy (2018-2027) and the aims of the South Dublin County Sports Partnership, consistent with RPO 9.15 of the RSES.

COS4 Objective 2: To promote public health policies including the Healthy Ireland Framework and National Physical Activity Plan consistent with NPO 26 of the NPF and RPO 9.16 of the RSES.

COS4 Objective 3: To support the preparation of a Sports Plan for the County, where this provides for the sustainable development of sports facilities, in accordance with the National Sports Policy (2018-2027).

COS4 Objective 4: To support and encourage the co-location and sharing of community and sporting facilities within the County where feasible. (See also Policy COS8 Objective 8).

COS4 Objective 5: To support the provision of formal and informal play areas with appropriate equipment and facilities, incorporating nature-based play opportunities across the County, ensuring that the needs of differing age groups and abilities are accommodated.

COS4 Objective 6: To facilitate the provision of appropriately scaled children's play facilities and teen space facilities at suitable locations across the County within existing and new residential development.

COS4 Objective 7: To support and promote communities and clubs in developing minority sports at appropriate locations within the County.

COS4 Objective 8: To support the provision of permanent space for well-established sports and recreational activities at appropriate locations within the County, aspiring to the standards and conditions met for such playing areas by National Governing Bodies, where feasible and in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

COS4 Objective 9: To support and facilitate a framework for the improvement, maintenance, and enhancement of existing community-based sports facilities within the County.

COS4 Objective 10: To support and where possible identify a location for the development of a Motocross track and support any applications for national funding where available.

COS4 Objective 11: To facilitate as far as possible all sports played by the citizens of South Dublin County including rugby, recognizing the growing numbers taking part in the sport and the particular requirements of the game in terms of pitches.

COS4 Objective 16: To support the provision of athletics facilities in the County examining the potential for their location within Regional Parks and other locations in accordance with SDCC's Sports Pitch Strategy 2020 and the development of the County Sports Plan and Parks and Open Space Strategy.

COS4 Objective 17: To ensure that any sports club established for over 5 years in the community be provided with proper facilities (changing rooms/ toilets) to ensure they can continue to operate and grow within our community.

COS4 Objective 18: To make available suitable unused Council-owned brownfield sites and buildings to sport, arts and community groups on a temporary or long-term lease basis, where feasible.

➤ **"COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 7 –
Early Childhood Care and Education Facilities**

Policy COS7: Childcare Facilities

Support and facilitate the provision of good quality and accessible childcare facilities at suitable locations within the County in consultation with the County Childcare Committee.

COS7 Objective 1: To support and facilitate the provision of childcare facilities on well located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, including adjacent to school sites, and within employment areas where the environment is appropriate, making provision to encourage sustainable transport, consistent with NPO 31 of the NPF.

COS7 Objective 2: To require provision of appropriate childcare facilities as an essential part of new residential developments in accordance with the provisions of the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) or any superseding guidelines, or as required by the Planning Authority. The Guidelines recommend one childcare facility with a minimum of 20 places for each 75 units for new residential developments, with any variation to this standard being justified having regard to factors such as type of residential units, emerging demographic profile and availability of existing childcare services in the vicinity.

COS7 Objective 3: To require childcare facilities to be provided in new communities in tandem with the delivery of residential development and, where a Local Area Plan or Planning Scheme applies, in accordance with the phasing requirements of that plan/scheme.

COS7 Objective 4: To support investment in the sustainable development of the County's childcare services as an integral part of social infrastructure provision, including support of the Affordable Childcare Scheme; ensuring quality and supply of sufficient childcare places; and support of initiatives under a cross-Government Early Years Strategy, consistent with RPO 9.20 of the RSES.

COS7 Objective 5: To support the provision of small-scale childcare facilities in residential areas subject to appropriate safeguards to protect the amenities of the area, having regard to noise pollution and traffic and parking management.

COS7 Objective 6: To support the provision of childcare facilities within or co-located with community buildings, such as community centres and schools.

➤ **“COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 6 –
Healthcare Facilities**

Policy COS6: Healthcare Facilities Support the Health Service Executive (HSE) in their aim to provide access to a range of quality health services, in line with Sláintecare and relative to the scale of each settlement and community, and facilitate other statutory and voluntary agencies, and the private sector in the provision of healthcare facilities and services, including the system of hospital care and the provision of community based primary care facilities appropriate to the size and scale of each settlement.

COS6 Objective 1: To facilitate the development of community-based care including primary health care centres, hospitals, clinics, and facilities to cater to the specific needs of an aging population in appropriate urban areas in accordance with the Development Plan core and settlement strategy, consistent with RPO 9.23 of the RSES.

COS6 Objective 2: To promote healthcare facilities of an appropriate scale to be provided in new communities on a phased basis in tandem with the delivery of housing, in accordance with the phasing requirements of Local Area Plans and approved Planning Schemes and in locations that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.

COS6 Objective 3: To support the provision of appropriately scaled healthcare facilities within existing settlements, in locations that are accessible by public transport and safe walking and cycling infrastructure.

COS6 Objective 4: To support the provision of primary care facilities with relevant agencies, in accordance with the standard of one facility per 7,000-10,000 population as identified by the HSE and the Department of Health.

COS6 SLO 1: To engage with stakeholders and to investigate the possibility of providing senior accommodation on the Rathcoole Health Centre site (protected structure RPS 316), ensuring that any future development is appropriate, having full regard to the setting and integrity of the protected structure, the location of the site within the Rathcoole Architectural Conservation Area, and the amenities of adjoining housing and other land-uses.

- 4.5 The SDCC Development Plan highlights the important role educational facilities play in developing sustainable and balanced communities. The Department for Education and Skills is responsible for delivering educational facilities and services in the state. The department has identified a need for additional post primary schools' places in the Newcastle / Rathcoole areas. How primary and post-primary facilities should be delivered and function in SDCC over the development plan period to 2028 is contained in Policy 9:

➤ **“COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 8 –
Primary & Post-primary Facilities**

Policy COS8: Primary and Post Primary Schools Policy

COS8(a): Work in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills to promote and support the provision of primary and post-primary schools in the County to reflect the diverse educational needs of communities.

Policy COS8(b): Engage with the Department of Education and Skills and support the Department's School Building Programme by actively identifying

sites for primary and post primary schools at suitable locations, based on forecast need.

COS8 Objective 1: To reserve and identify early on sites for primary and post-primary provision in developing areas through the Development Plan, Local Area Plans, Planning Schemes and masterplans, in consultation with the Department of Education and Skills and to ensure that designated sites are of sufficient size and are accessible cycle and pedestrian friendly locations, consistent with, consistent with NPO 31 of the NPF and RPO 9.21 of the RSES.

COS8 Objective 2: To facilitate the development of new schools, the re-development of existing schools and extensions planned as part of the Government's School Building Programme.

COS8 Objective 3: To require schools to be provided in new communities on a phased basis in tandem with the delivery of residential development, in accordance with the phasing requirements of Local Area Plans and Planning Schemes or as may be otherwise required.

COS8 Objective 4: To support and facilitate the extension of existing school facilities, based on identified needs, subject to appropriate safeguards in relation to safe travel to school, traffic management and the amenities of the area.

COS8 Objective 5: To promote an urban school model within built-up areas of the County, where access to off-site facilities including for sport, recreation, and amenity space can be clearly demonstrated.

COS8 Objective 6: To ensure new schools are designed and located to promote walking and cycling and access to public transport, by implementing the following measures:

- *Ensuring school sites are in locations that are central and accessible to the communities they serve;*
- *Providing infrastructure including safe cycle ways and footpaths;*
- *Requiring a mobility management plan for all new schools that prioritises active travel modes and public transport;*
- *Incorporating measures to promote walking and cycling at design stage including permeability and connectivity with the surrounding area through provision of adequate access points for pedestrians and cyclists;*
- *Ensuring the provision of adequate secure bicycle storage;*
- *Working with existing and new schools to increase the proportion of students walking and cycling through the promotion of initiatives such as the 'Green Schools' and 'School Streets' projects. (Refer to Chapter 7, Sustainable Movement)*
- *Introduce measures that would support increased bus services to enable more students to travel to school through public transport.*

COS8 Objective 7: To facilitate provision of parking for staff and parents and 'drop-off' areas for new schools, only as part of a mobility management plan, where a need has been demonstrated and where active travel modes (walking and cycling) and public transport have been prioritised having regard to the protection of nearby residential amenity.

COS8 Objective 8: To promote and support schemes that facilitate the shared use of school facilities, particularly at planning stage, such as sports halls, ball courts and all-weather pitches for community use outside of school hours and to support the co-location of pre and after-school childcare facilities on new primary school developments and to promote this using the Council's land management and ownership policy. (See also Policy COS4 Objective 4).

COS8 Objective 9: To support the provision of adequate indoor and outdoor school sports facilities for all new and existing schools in the County, based on identified need and in line with the population of the school.

COS8 SLO 1: To identify a site for the appropriate location of a new post primary school within the Neighbourhood Area of Citywest/Saggart/Rathcoole/Newcastle to provide for the needs identified for the catchment area by the Department of Education and Skills.

- 4.6 Open space and recreational facilities are at the core of delivering sustainable communities. Outdoor sports facilities include playing pitches, children's play facilities, etc. and allow for outdoor activity and recreation. This contributes to the promotion of both physical and mental health. Policy 5 sets out the requirements and objectives for Open Space in the SDCC administrative area.

➤ *"COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (C) Policy 12 –*

Parks and Public Open Space

Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space – Overarching Provide a well-connected, inclusive and integrated public open space network through a multi-functional high-quality open space hierarchy that is accessible to all who live, work and visit the County.

COS5 Objective 1: To support a hierarchy of multi-functional, accessible parks and public open spaces across the County in line with Table 8.1, based on existing populations and planned growth in accordance with the overall standard of 2.4ha per 1,000 population.

COS5 Objective 2: To support the implementation of South Dublin County Parks and Open Space Strategy and to ensure that the provision, upgrade, design, and maintenance of public open space is in accordance with the Strategy.

COS5 Objective 3: To support the implementation and expansion of the Council's TeenSpace Programme (2021) and the implementation of the Sports Pitch Strategy (2020) or (any superseding documents).

COS5 Objective 4: To require the provision of public open space as part of a proposed development site area in accordance with the Public Open Space Standards (minimum) set out in Table 8.2. The Council has the discretion for the remaining open space requirement to achieve the overall standard of 2.4 ha per 1,000 population, to allow for the provision or upgrading of small parks, local parks and neighbourhood parks outside the development site area, subject to the open space or facilities meeting the open space 'accessibility from homes' standards for each public open space type set out in Table 8.1. In exceptional circumstances where the provision or upgrade of small parks, local parks and neighbourhood parks is not achievable, the Council has the discretion for the remaining open space requirement to allow provision or upgrade of Regional Parks, to achieve the overall standard of 2.4 ha per 1,000 population, subject to the Regional Park meeting the open space 'accessibility from homes' standard set out in Table 8.1.

COS5 Objective 5: To require the provision of public open space as part of a proposed development site area in accordance with the Public Open Space Standards (minimum) set out in Table 8.2. The Council has the discretion to accept a financial contribution in lieu of any remaining open space requirement to achieve the overall standard of 2.4 ha per 1,000 population, such contribution being held solely for the purpose of the acquisition or upgrading of small parks, local parks and neighbourhood parks subject to the open space or facilities

meeting the open space 'accessibility from homes' standards for each public open space type specified in Table 8.1. In exceptional circumstances where the provision or upgrade of small parks, local parks and neighbourhood parks is not achievable, the Council has the discretion to accept a financial contribution in lieu of the remaining open space requirement to allow provision or upgrade of Regional Parks, subject to the Regional Park meeting the open space 'accessibility from homes' standard specified in Table 8.1. Where the Council accepts financial contributions in lieu of open space, the total contribution shall be calculated on the basis of the costs set out in the applicable Development Contribution Scheme, in addition to the development costs of the open space.

COS5 Objective 6: To require that public open space calculations be based on an occupancy rate of 3.5 persons in the case of dwellings with three or more bedrooms and 1.5 persons in the case of dwellings with two or fewer bedrooms.

COS5 Objective 7: To require at the sole discretion of the Planning Authority a pro rata contribution in lieu of provision of public open space where, due to the small size, configuration or location of a particular development or on sites with less than three units it is not possible to provide functional public open space on site.

COS5 Objective 8: To ensure the design of parks and public open space areas is of high quality; to provide a pleasant setting, accommodate use by people of all ages and abilities, to support life-long activity and good health and well-being by the provision of a balanced mix of active and passive recreation and access to, or view of, nature, ensuring that the design considers: provision of an appropriate mix of hard and soft surfaced areas; enhancement of biodiversity and existing trees and hedgerows; incorporation of water courses, other natural features and existing built heritage into the design of parks and open spaces as appropriate; provision of new planting, landscape features and appropriate site furniture including a variety of accessible, well located and designed seating.

COS5 Objective 9: To ensure that parks and public open space are appropriately located within the County and within development sites, to facilitate and support its multifunctional role. COS5 Objective 10: To support and facilitate the key role of parks and open spaces in relation to green infrastructure including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), flood management, biodiversity and carbon absorption and to promote connections between public open spaces and the wider GI network.

COS5 Objective 11: To promote the role of parks and open spaces in conserving and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems in accordance with the objectives of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (2017-2021) and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021- 2025, the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2026 or any superseding plans. In the development of individual management plans for parks the requirements of the aforementioned biodiversity and pollinator plans will be taken into consideration and will form a part of the management requirements for the park. The development of individual management plans for parks will include consultation with local stakeholders.

COS5 Objective 12: To ensure that proposed SuDS measures are only accepted as an element of public open space where they are natural in form and integrate well into the open space landscape supporting a wider amenity and biodiversity value.

COS5 Objective 13: To ensure that parks and open spaces provide for a wide range of recreational and amenity activities that are easily accessible to all in the community, irrespective of age or ability.

COS5 Objective 14: To ensure that public open space and associated recreational facilities are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, as appropriate to their position within the open space hierarchy set out in Table 8.1.

COS5 Objective 15: To support the development of passive recreation within open spaces, such as walking trails, seating provision and areas which provide for passive amenity/ hobbies, and visual interest.

COS5 Objective 16: To ensure that parks and public open spaces are carefully designed as safe spaces, by implementing the following measures:

- *Providing active frontages and maximising passive surveillance from adjacent housing and/or public thoroughfares;*
- *Eliminating buildings which back-on or gable-front public open spaces;*
- *Designing corner units with active frontage;*
- *Encouraging increased use through improved access and quality of facilities'; and*
- *Careful location, design, and choice of surface materials and site furniture.*

COS5 Objective 17: To ensure that incidental areas of open space which do not function as useable open space and/or are not clearly visible from the public realm, are designed out of a proposed scheme.

COS5 Objective 18: To ensure that incidental areas of open space and areas immediately underneath high voltage electricity lines are not included in open space calculations.

COS5 Objective 19: To support the provision within new residential developments and parks and public open spaces, of formal and informal play areas with appropriate equipment and facilities, incorporating nature-based play opportunities where appropriate, ensuring that the needs of differing age groups including young children, older children and teenagers are catered for and that different abilities and needs are accommodated to be able to access and participate in play, and to ensure playspaces and play facilities comply with universal design principles.

COS5 Objective 20: To ensure that children's play areas are provided as an integral part of the design and delivery of new residential and mixed-use developments and addressed as part of a landscape plan in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 13: Implementation and Monitoring.

COS5 Objective 21: To review the Council's play policy within the lifetime of the Development Plan.

COS5 Objective 22: To maximise the leisure and amenity resource offered by each of the County's parks through the promotion of management plans that provide for the continued improvement of the park setting, recreational facilities and biodiversity.

COS5 Objective 25: To continue to provide innovative play spaces, including sensory play areas and play trails, in parks and open spaces throughout the County and to identify the quietest and busiest times at SDCC playgrounds and share this information so it may be useful to visitors so they can identify quiet times and quieter playgrounds and plan their visits accordingly.

COS5 Objective 26: To support and facilitate the provision of a memorial park of remembrance for all survivors of the Mother and Baby and County Institutions.

COS5 Objective 28: To deliver better accessibility for wheelchair users in parks, across all features (pathways, furniture, sensory and recreational amenities, etc), including a check of compliance with universal design principles as part of the design process.

- 4.7 SDCC is committed to delivering social and community infrastructure for its residents and the natural environment through a range of mechanisms. Examples of these processes would be; Council budget, development levies and contributions, through other public agencies, such as the HSE or the Department of Education and Skills, via partnerships with other public and private stakeholders, etc. There are a number of community infrastructure schemes to be delivered over the development plan period to 2028 through development contributions collected under the Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme (Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)) for SDCC.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The level and type of social infrastructure expected to support the subject planning application at Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole is clearly laid out and expressed in relevant national guidelines and local planning policy. The availability and quality of local community facilities and services within Rathcoole and catchment area have been reviewed as part of this audit report. The methodology used will assess the quantum of social infrastructure needed to support the potential residents at the subject application site. It will further establish the likely pressure the subject planning application residents will place on certain types of existing social infrastructure in Rathcoole, and its environs, such as local schools, accessible childcare facilities, etc. The assessment therefore includes of two main aspects:

- (1) Considering the demographic profile of Rathcoole by calculating the latest population figures and projected population increase based on latest population figures for Rathcoole (2016 census), new housing estates built in Rathcoole between 2016 and 2022, such as the Croftwell, Green Lane Manor, the Peyton Estate and Rathmill Manor, and the potential new residents generated by the subject planning application at Stoney Hill Road, and
- (2) Assessing community facility capacity in Rathcoole and surrounding area through online research and telephone surveys.

6.0 ASSESSMENT / AUDIT

(1) Consideration of the Demographic Profile of the Area

6.1 According to the latest census that was carried out for Rathcoole in 2016 and is recorded in the Central Statistics (CSO) website (Source: <https://www.cso.ie> - E2016: Population and Actual and Percentage Change 2011 to 2016 by Alphabetical List of Towns, Census Year and Statistic: Rathcoole, South Dublin), the population in Rathcoole was 4,351 persons. The CSO do not have a breakdown of population predictions for towns and cities in Ireland beyond 2016 but have made population projections at region level by certain criteria, such as birth rates. Therefore, in order to predict the likely population that is living in Rathcoole now, focusing on the residents living in the recently built housing estates in Rathcoole (between April 2016 – August 2022) including Croftwell, Green Lane Manor, the Peyton Estate and Rathmill Manor, and who would be living in Rathcoole if the proposed development at Stoney Hill Road is built, expected to be 2024, the following exercise needs to be carried out:

- Set out number of residents living in Croftwell, Green Lane Manor, the Peyton Estate and Rathmill Manor based on an average household occupancy of 2.7 persons per household;
- Set out number of residents who will be living in the Stoney Hill Road development (assuming planning permission for Stoney Hill Road is secured by end of 2022 and the development is constructed 14 months' time from the end of 2022) based on an average household occupancy of 2.7 persons per household, and
- Add this population to the latest census figures for Rathcoole (April 2016) to establish likely population predicted for Rathcoole to 2024.

New Housing Estates	New Housing Estate Dwelling Numbers	New Housing Residents based on 2.7 persons per dwelling	Rathcoole Population at April 2016 (Last Census)	Total Population in Rathcoole by 2024
Croftwell	60	162	4,351	1295 + 4,351 = 5,646
Green Lane Manor	76	205		
The Peyton Estate	202	545		
Rathmill Manor	100	270		
Stoney Hill Road	42	113		
Total	480	1,295		

Table 1 – Population in Rathcoole by 2024

6.2 According to results in table 1 above, the population in Rathcoole is predicted to have an increase of 30% by 2024, above 2016 levels. The key test in this social infrastructure audit therefore is to assess whether the existing community facilities

and services in Rathcoole are sufficiently provided and operated to cater for this local population increase, with particular reference to the subject development.

(2) Social infrastructure in Rathcoole capable of serving the proposed development

6.3 In order to satisfy sustainable development principles, national guidelines recommend new residential developments to be within a 10-minute walk of public open spaces. Other community facilities and services, such as schools, health centres, town halls, local retail centres, etc. should ideally be within a 15-minute walk time from new major residential developments, in close proximity to villages and towns. The maps in Appendix 1 set out radiuses (400 metre, 800 metre and 1.2 kilometres) of 5, 10 and 15 minute walk times and 2.5, 5 and 10 minute cycle times from the subject planning application site to social infrastructure in the Rathcoole district, which caters for the day to day needs of the residents who will live there. Not all facilities and services are within walking distance of Stoney Hill Road, such as schools, childcare facilities, etc. Access to these facilities is provided through school buses and public transport yet some will still require the use of a single motor vehicle. The following social infrastructure in Rathcoole and surrounding area have been assessed as part of this audit study:

- Open space and recreation;
- Education;
- Childcare facilities;
- Health and social services facilities;
- Cultural facilities;
- Religious and community facilities;
- Retail provision, and
- Public transport.

Open Space and Recreation

6.4 The proposed development at Stoney Hill Road will provide 23.15% of public open space, which is over the national guideline of 15% and the local development plan requirement also of 15%. This includes two pockets of active and passive landscaped areas to the west and the east of the proposed dwellings. In addition to this 23.15% public open space provision, a parkland of circa 11,797 sq.m is provided along the southern boundary. The parkland to the south of the site will also provide a connection and the green route east and north east to the wider landholding and the Council site and beyond to Rathcoole Park. This green route will also follow an existing watercourse.

6.5 The subject application site is located on zoned lands on the edge of Rathcoole and has access to a variety of public open spaces. The most notable space is Rathcoole Park. Rathcoole Park is a half a kilometer from Stoney Hill Road or a 14-minute walk / 6-minute cycle. The Council, the Department of Education and Skills and the Gaelic Athletic Association lands to the east of the subject application site, if / when developed, would provide a connection between the Stoney Hill Road site and Rathcoole Park. Rathcoole Park provides a multi-use active open space and recreation area for play, such as sports fields, exercise equipment zones, walking /

jogging / cycling trail, etc. and passive open spaces, for example two lakes, landscaped areas with seating, etc.

- 6.6 Stoney Hill Road is also within walking distance of outdoor and indoor sports and leisure facilities in Rathcoole. The Rathcoole Boys Football Club at Frank Cox Park is a 10-minute walk or 3-minute cycle time away. Although titled 'Boys' the football club fields both boys' and girls' teams at under-age level. The club boasts a high-quality soccer football complex with 3G pitches, grass pitches, changing facilities, club house, coffee shop and a Superfit gym. The Commercials GAA Hurling and Camogie club is just under 1km from Stoney Hill Road, 20-minutes by foot or 7 minutes by bike. The club has three field pitches, a ball wall, a hall, which is available for hire, and a Fitness Company Commercial Gym.
- 6.7 The subject application site contains public open space significantly over the national guideline and local development plan requirements. It is in close proximity to Rathcoole Park with connections likely to be improved if / when the lands to the east are developed. Stoney Hill Road is also between 12-20 minutes' walk or 4-7 minutes' cycle of an underage soccer football club, a hurling and camogie club and two commercial fitness gyms. Therefore, the proposed development has access to suitable open space and recreation, sports and fitness facilities.

Education

- 6.8 The SDCC Development Plan 2022-2028 identifies the need for a post primary school facility to be provided in Rathcoole. The Department of Education and Skills own the land in the north eastern corner of the zoned lands (RES-N) for residential development at Stoney Hill Road and Rathcoole Park. The Concept Plan for these lands includes a reservation for a school in this north eastern site. There are three schools in Rathcoole village, including, Scoil Chrónáin, Holy Family National School and Holy Family Community School. All three schools are between 6-15 minutes' walk or 2-5 minutes' cycle from Stoney Hill Road. As shown in table 2, all three schools are at / near full capacity for this school year 2021/2022 and there is a waiting list for new school places next year 2022/2023. This is consistent with national trends for school place demand.
- 6.9 There are three schools in the adjoining towns of Citywest and Saggart which are within a 20-25 minute public bus journey, including 5/10 minutes walks either side from Stoney Hill Road. These schools are Citywest & Saggart Community National School, Citywest Educate Together National School and St. Mary's National School Saggart. As shown in table 2, all three schools are at full capacity for this school year 2021/2022 and there is a waiting list for new school places next year 2022/2023.
- 6.10 There is no dedicated special school for pupils with intellectual disabilities in Rathcoole, yet the primary schools in Rathcoole and Citywest & Saggart have supporting services for special needs. The closest dedicated special school is the St Raphael's Special School in Celbridge, County Kildare. This school is accessible by private bus or car and would be 20 minutes' drive from Stoney Hill Road.

Area	School	Enrolment 2021/2022	Capacity	Confirmed Waiting Lists
Rathcoole	Scoil Chrónáin	409	Full	✓
	Holy Family National School	710	720	✓
	Holy Family Community School	963	Full	✓
Citywest & Saggart	Citywest Educate Together National School	387	395	✓
	Citywest & Saggart Community National School	448	Full	✓
	St. Mary's National School Saggart	695	706	✓

Table 2 – School Capacities in Rathcoole, Citywest and Saggart

- 6.11 In carrying out the primary and post primary school survey for Rathcoole and surrounding areas, considering capacity of current schools and the growth rate of Rathcoole, there could be a need for new primary and post primary school places / facilities in the area. SDCC have already included the need for a post primary school facility in Rathcoole in their adopted development plan 2022-2028. The Government had announced plans to build a new 8 classroom primary school in the Rathcoole area and a Gaelscoil in Citywest/Saggart (see <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2019-press-releases/PR19-12-20.html> Source: Department of Education and Skills). Since this announcement, no schools have commenced yet as of August 2022, with delays in both the planning and tendering process factors, alongside the Covid-19 Pandemic. The post primary school in the north eastern corner of the Stoney Hill Road and Rathcoole Park zoned lands would satisfy demand for school places from the subject application site.
- 6.12 Considering the above, it is considered that appropriate measures are in place to deliver any additional demand for school places.

- 6.13 The developers and estate agents involved in building and selling new residential developments in Rathcoole were engaged as part of the primary and post primary school survey. When asked about the mix of people now living in these new housing estates, all confirmed that a large percentage of new purchasers of 2, 3 and 4 bed dwelling houses were young couples and young families. Some existing families have relocated to these developments, but this would make up only a small percentage of the new residents living there. This would indicate a need for a new childcare facility serving the subject application site and wider landholding and for provision in existing childcare facilities within commuting distances. The primary and post primary students who may relocate to the subject site could already have enrolment in nearby schools or schools within a commuting distance.

Health

- 6.15 Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole has access to a host of health professionals, centres and services all within a 10-minute walk time or a 4-minute cycle of the subject site. These health facilities include:
- Rathcoole Health Centre;
 - Rathcoole Green Medical Centre;
 - 2 Local General Practitioners;
 - 2 Pharmacy's;
 - 2 Dental Practices
 - The Salt Clinic (Alternative Health Facility), and
 - 1 Veterinary Surgery.
- 6.16 Stoney Hill Road, Rathcoole being on the periphery of Greater Dublin has access to major regional hospitals, the closest being Tallaght University Hospital. This hospital is approx. 20-minute drive from Stoney Hill Road and would be some 10 minutes by an emergency vehicle.
- 6.17 There is also social healthcare provision in the vicinity of the subject site, such as the Lisheen Nursing Home which is 3 minutes' walk from the site off Stoney Lane. Home help services can also be provided in Rathcoole. This is through Home Instead Senior Care, who are based in Greenogue Business Park.
- 6.18 The subject application site is close to a variety of health facilities and social services predominately with the Rathcoole town centre. Referrals to other more specialised services would also be available.

Art and Culture

- 6.19 The Rathcoole Community Council who operate out of the Community Centre (which is a 10-minute walk or a 4-minute cycle from Stoney Hill Road) provide information into the heritage of Rathcoole to residents and members of the public in person and on their website - <http://rathcoole.info/>. The Community Council are also working with the Council to restore the old Rathcoole Courthouse (presently used as a community hall) to a historic museum displaying the old administrative centre for Rathcoole and hinterland. The Iniscara Bespoke Framing & Gallery (10-minute walk

or 4-minute cycle from Stoney Hill, Road) hold art and sculpture exhibitions open to the public at different times of the year. The proposed development, its potential residents and visitors would therefore benefit from these insights into Rathcoole's local art and heritage.

Library

- 6.20 There is no library in Rathcoole. The Council do operate a mobile library which is stationed at Broadfield Meadows, Tootenhill, Rathcoole (20-minute walk and a 5 - minute cycle from Stoney Hill Road) every Monday from 18:00-18:55. The SDCC *Open to you South Dublin Library Development Plan (2018-2022)* sets out an objective to provide a new library / hub in the Rathcoole / Newcastle area. Rathcoole is not sufficiently served by a fixed frequent library service. The mobile library would alleviate this shortfall, however the potential residents of the subject application at Stoney Hill Road need this service for education and development of knowledge from a variety of sources. Whilst the application site, located on the edge of Rathcoole, would not be an appropriate location for a library, development contributions levied as part of the development would contribute to the provisions of such facilities in Rathcoole.

Place of Worship and Community Centre

- 6.21 The Church of the Holy Family, Rathcoole (Roman Catholic Church) and the Church of Ireland, Rathcoole (Christian, Anglian Communion) is a 10-minute walk or a 5-minute cycle from Stoney Hill Road. There do not appear to be any other religion or faith who has a registered centre in Rathcoole. However, there is a diverse presence of different religions and faiths in the Greater Dublin and Central Dublin areas, such as Jewish Representative Council of Ireland, Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland, Dublin Buddhist Centre, Dublin Krishna Temple, etc. These centres are mainly in central Dublin district but would be a good starting point on advising potential residents of different ethnicities where they can practice their faiths in the area or region. There may be an opportunity for other ethnic groups to rent a space in the Rathcoole Community Centre for different days / times of the week, if there is a known demand in the area. This could be confirmed by the religions' / faiths' representative council or centre in Central Dublin. Whilst the application site, located on the edge of Rathcoole, would not be an appropriate location for a place of worship, development contributions levied as part of the development would contribute to the provisions of such facilities in Rathcoole.
- 6.22 The Rathcoole Community Centre is the main community facility in Rathcoole (10 minutes by foot or a 5-minute cycle from Stoney Hill Road). The centre also uses the old Courthouse building nearby as additional community hall space. The community centre provides a number of commercial classes to local residents and visitors, such as zumba, yoga, fitness, etc. There is also a conference hall / dance studio, music studio, commercial gym and sports hall in the building. The community centre is also home to the Rathcoole Community Council, elected by local residents, and Rathcoole Tidy Towns. Both bodies are concerned with ensuring Rathcoole is an enjoyable place to live and interact. The potential residents in the subject application site would therefore also be well represented in the area and region if they are of a different religion or faith.

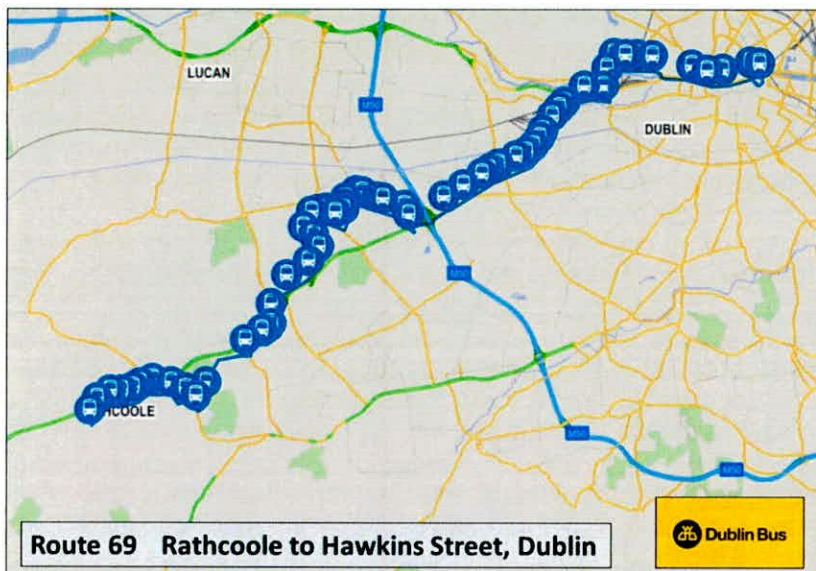
Retail

- 6.23 The Rathcoole retail core area is located on Main Street, which is a 6-minute walk or a 3-minute cycle from the subject application site at Stoney Hill Road. There is a diverse retail offer in Rathcoole considering the size of the town. Major supermarkets franchises have a presence there, such as Tesco, Spar and Centra. There are also a number of convenience shops and stores available in the Rathcoole Shopping Centre. Further down main street there are hair and beauty salons, bookmakers, bars and restaurants, a Bank of Ireland branch and a local Credit Union. The potential residents in the subject application site would therefore be attracted to make more frequent local trips to Rathcoole considering its diverse retail offer and choice relative to its scale and function.

Public Transport

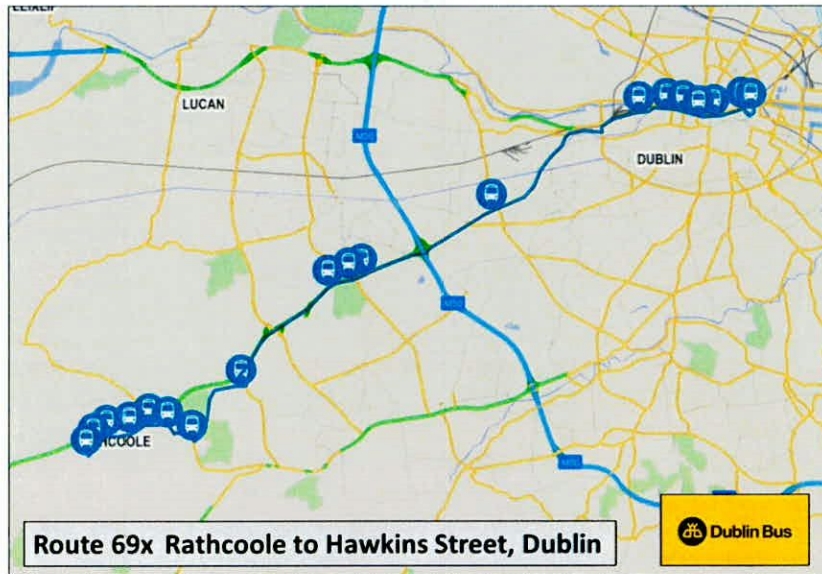
- 6.24 The main public transport link in Rathcoole would be the number 69 and 69x Dublin Bus service from Rathcoole to Hawkins Street in Dublin City Centre, along with Go-Ahead Ireland providing regular services through Rathcoole from Dublin City Centre, towards Newbridge & Rathangan with No. 126 bus. The number 69 bus follows a relatively frequent service of collection and drop-off between 45 minutes to an hour Monday to Saturday (06:00/06:15 – 00:05) and every 45 minutes to an hour on Sundays (11:15 – 00:10). The number 69x is less frequent and only operates one service a day from Rathcoole (07:30 am) Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays). Route 126 provided by Go-Ahead Ireland operates frequently every 20 minutes during peak times (30 to 60 minutes during non-peak times). These services would cater for local residents commuting to schools, visiting specialised healthcare facilities or religious centres, etc.

Figure 2 – Dublin Bus – 69 Bus Route



Source: TFI Journey Planner (<https://journeyplanner.transportforireland.ie/>)

Figure 3 – Dublin Bus – 69x Bus Route



Source: TFI Journey Planner (<https://journeyplanner.transportforireland.ie/>)

Figure 4 – GoAhead Ireland–126 Bus Route



Source: TFI Journey Planner (<https://journeyplanner.transportforireland.ie/>)

7.0 CONCLUSION / REFLECTION ON RESULTS

- 7.1 In carrying out this social infrastructure audit as part of the subject planning application at Stoney Hill Road, it is apparent that there is adequate community facilities and services available in Rathcoole to serve the new potential residents at the subject application site. Unsurprisingly, and as a result of increased demand for community facilities and services from major housing developments built and planned for in Rathcoole and the surrounding area, a few deficits in provision have been discovered.
- 7.2 There are measures being applied and that can be applied to address this shortfall. These include of:
1. Delivering the 8-class primary school in Rathcoole by fastracking the tender and construction stages in the next year (2023) through a central Government initiative.
 2. Delivery of 8-class Gaelscoil in Citywest / Saggart in 2023.
 3. Plans to build a new post primary school in the Rathcoole / Newcastle area, which could be provided in the zoned lands in the north east of Stoney Hill Road and Rathcoole Park, which is under the Department of Educations and Skills ownership.
 4. Plans to build post primary schools in the Citywest / Saggart area.
 5. Facilities for special education and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) accommodation to be provided in the new schools.
 6. The requirement for a new library/hub in the Rathcoole/Newcastle area is identified in the SDCC "Open to You South Dublin Library Development Plan 2018-2022" needs prioritisation.
 7. There may be a need for available community space in the Rathcoole area for other ethnic groups to practice their religion / faith.
- 7.3 It is apparent from the above that there is a range of services and facilities available to cater for existing and future residents in Rathcoole. As with any expanding urban area, there are some identified deficits. The majority of these deficits are being actively addressed, as set out above. In addition, where feasible, the proposed development will make a significant contribution to provision of facilities (public open space and a childcare facility) and in addition development contributions levied as part of the development would contribute to the provisions of such facilities in Rathcoole.

8.0 APPENDICES

- 8.1 *Appendix 1 - 400 metre, 800 metre and 1.2 kilometre radiuses from the Subject Application Site to Social Infrastructure in and around Rathcoole*

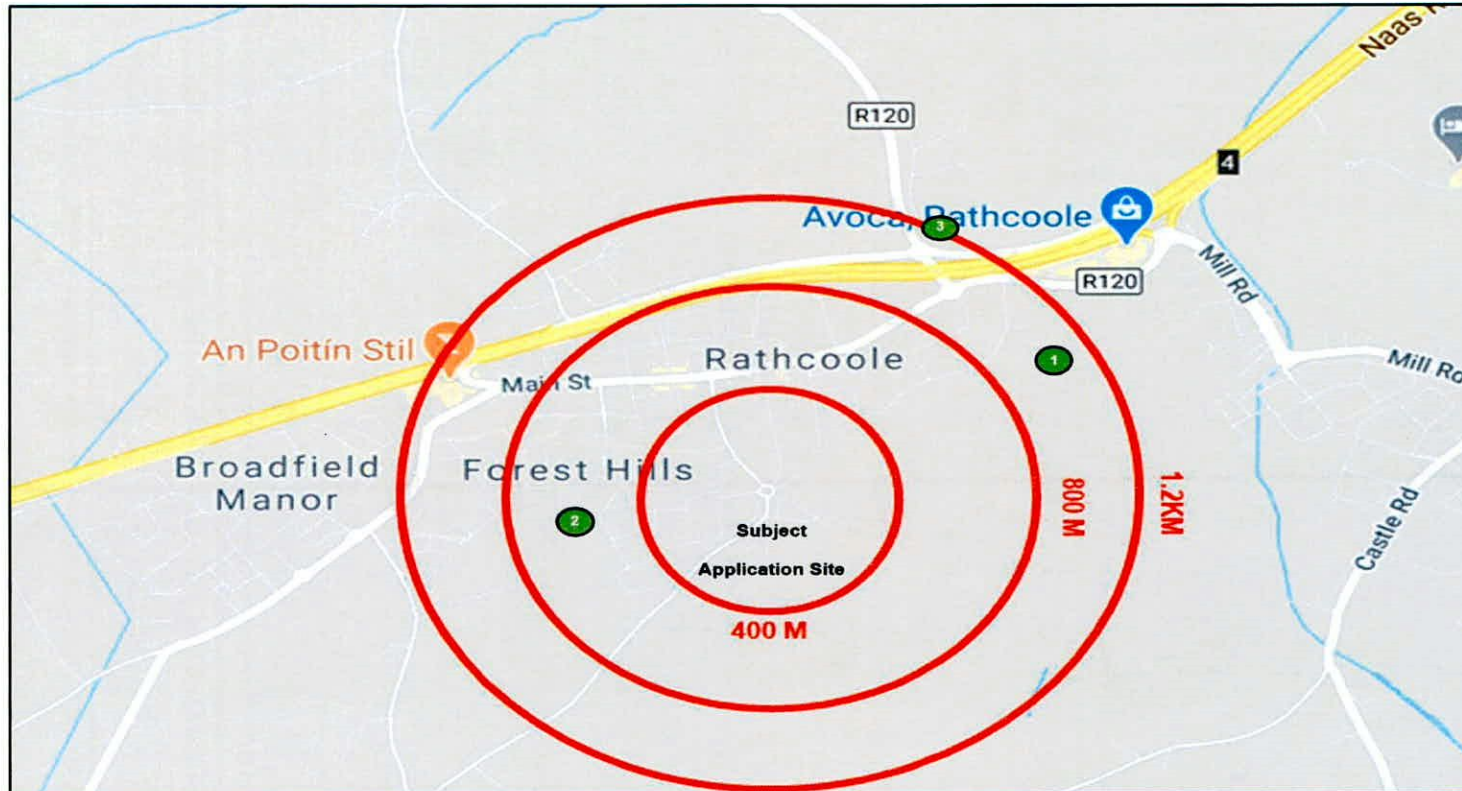


Figure 5 - Open Space and Recreation Facilities in Rathcoole
Source: Google Maps

1. Rathcoole Park
2. The Rathcoole Boys Football Club at Frank Cox Park
3. The Commercials GAA Hurling and Camogie club

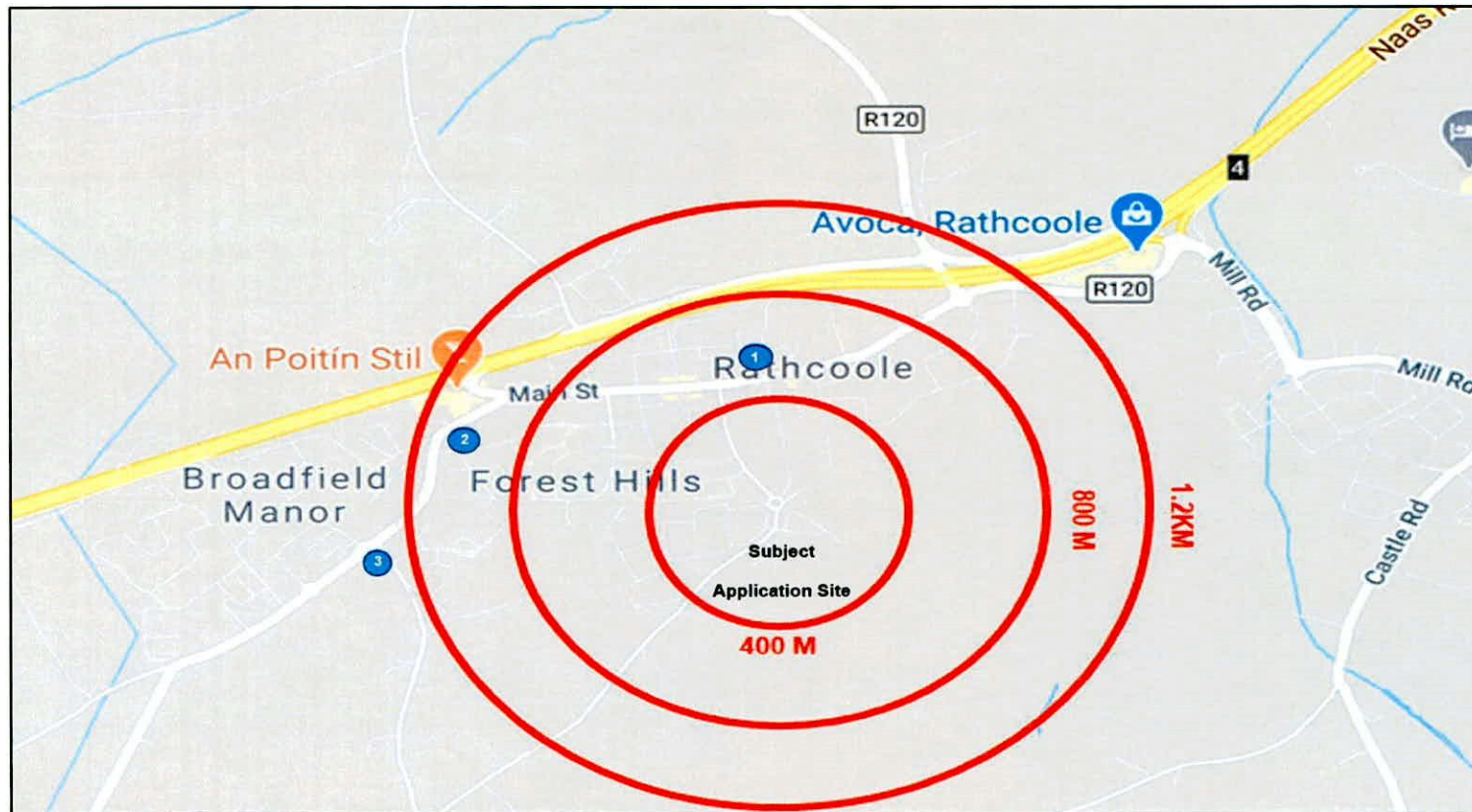


Figure 6 – Education Facilities in Rathcoole
Source: Google Maps

1. Scoil Chrónáin
2. Holy Family National School
3. Holy Family Community School

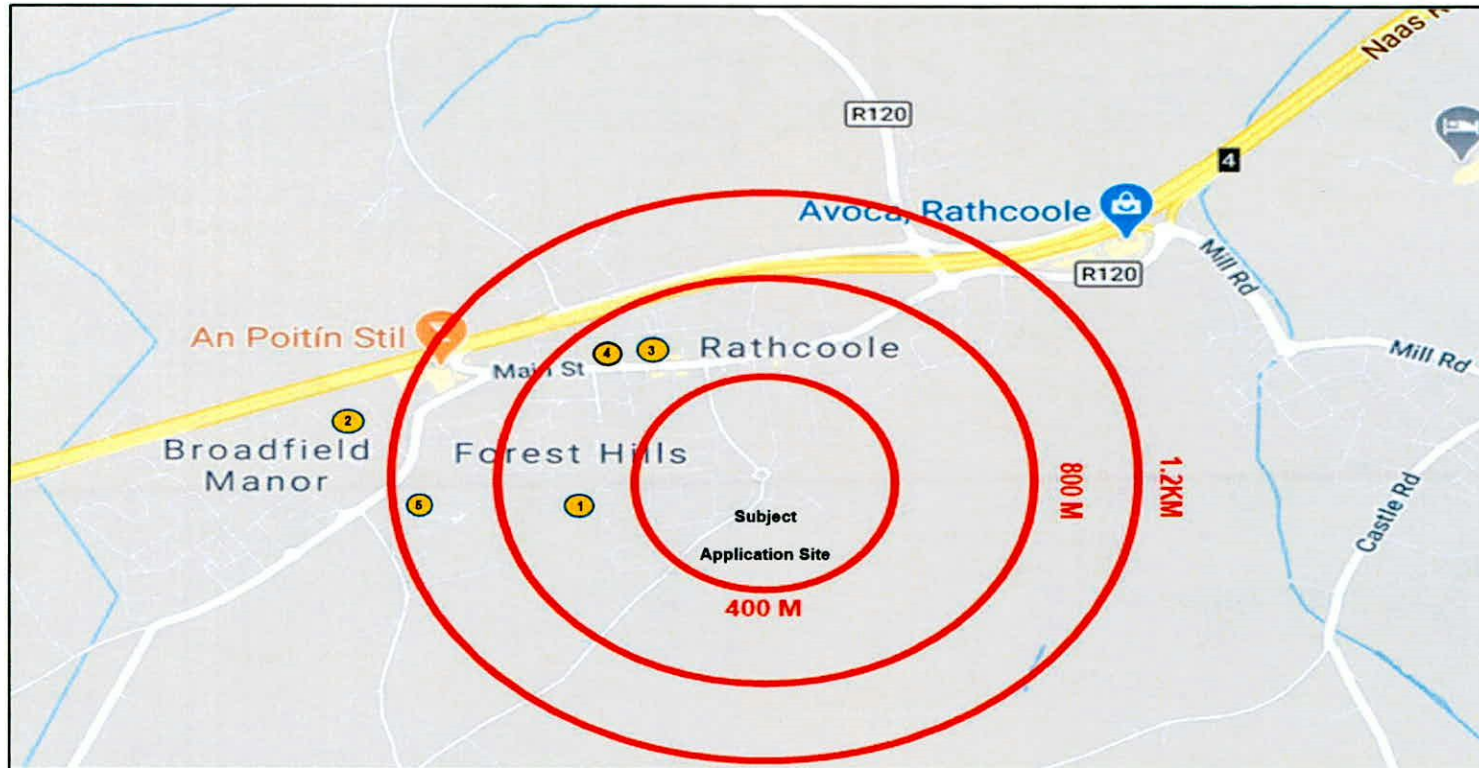


Figure 7 – Childcare Facilities in Rathcoole
Source: Google Maps

1. Happy Feet (Football Club Rathcoole) ELC - Rathcoole Boys Football Club
2. Little Fingers - 23 Broadfield Ct, Broadfield Manor, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin, D24 VF66
3. Little Saints crèche and Montessori - Eaton House, Main Street, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin
4. Teach na Leanai - Rathcoole Community Centre, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin, D24 FX4N
5. Happy Feet ELC (Blackthorn) - Blackthorn Hill, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin

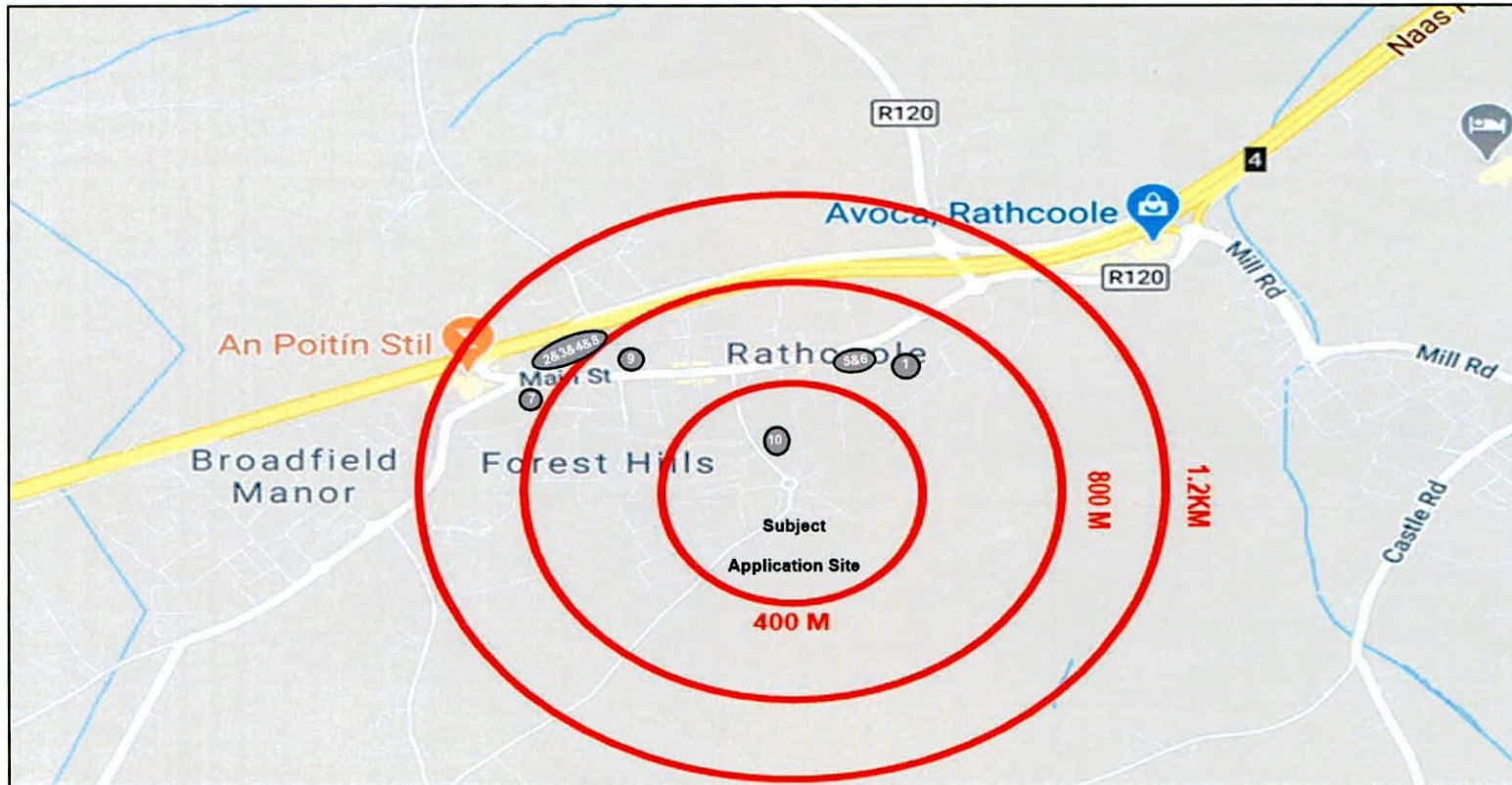


Figure 8 – Health and Social Care Facilities in Rathcoole
Source: Google Maps

1. Rathcoole Health Centre
2. Rathcoole Green Medical Centre
3. Dr James Clarke and Dr Ailsa Catherine McGarry (General practitioners)
4. Reidy's Pharmacy Ltd
5. Smiths Pharmacy Rathcoole
6. Rathcoole Dental
7. Dental Practice
8. The Salt Clinic
9. Vet Care
10. Lisheen Nursing Home

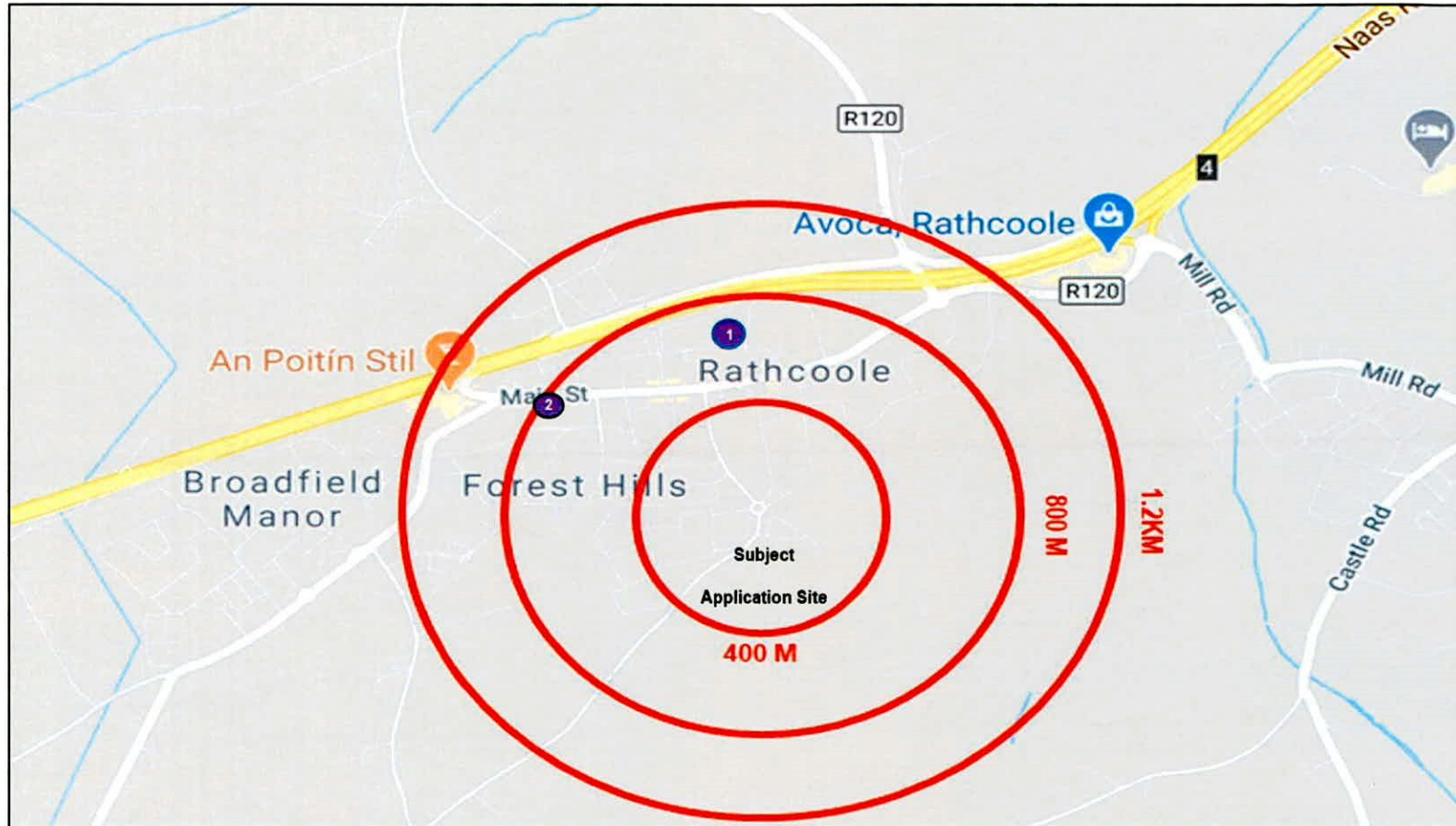


Figure 9 – Art and Culture Facilities in Rathcoole
Source: Google Maps

1. Rathcoole Community Centre
2. Iniscara Bespoke Framing & Gallery

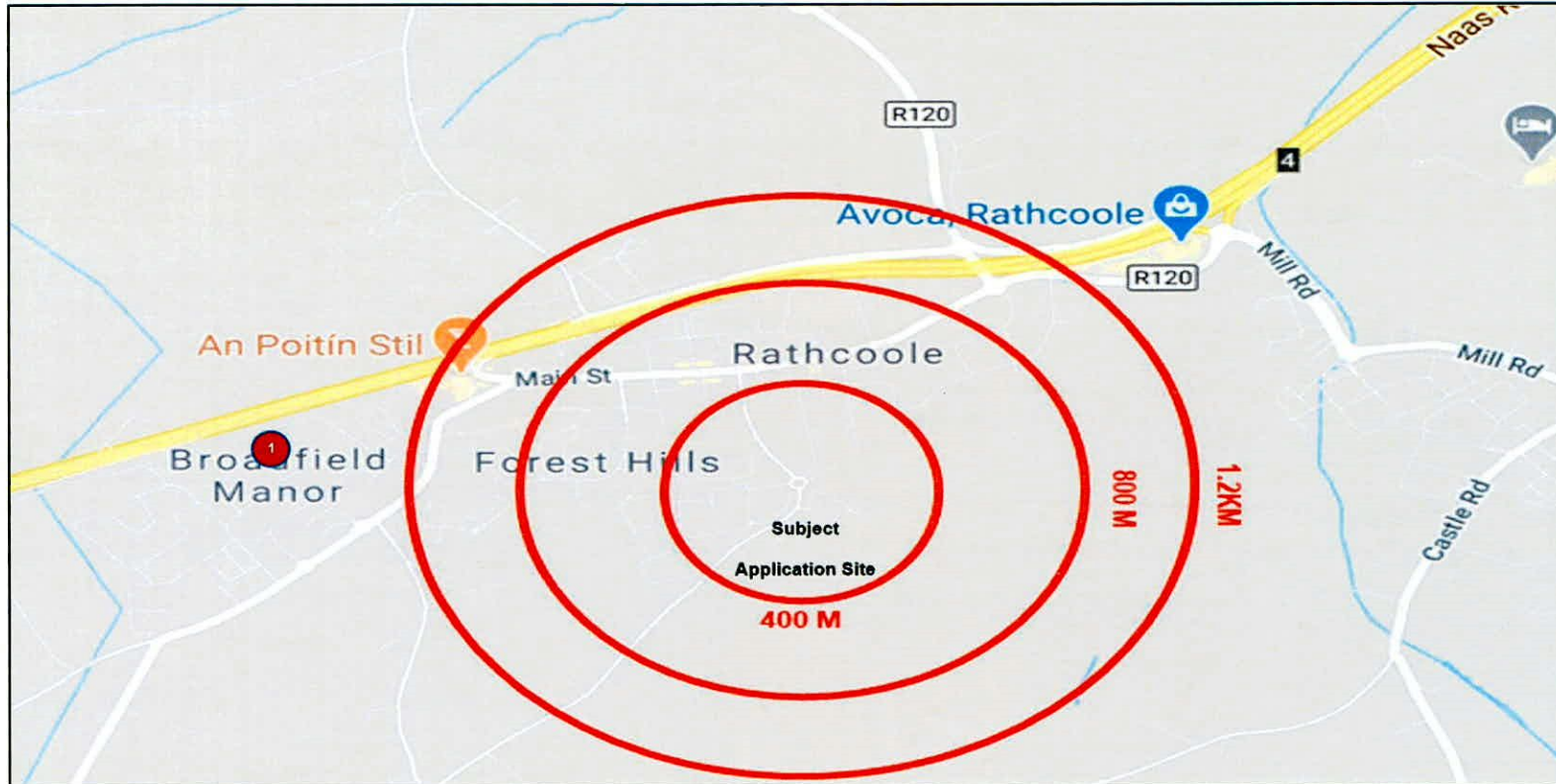


Figure 10 – Rathcoole Mobile Library
Source: Google Maps

1. Rathcoole Mobile Library

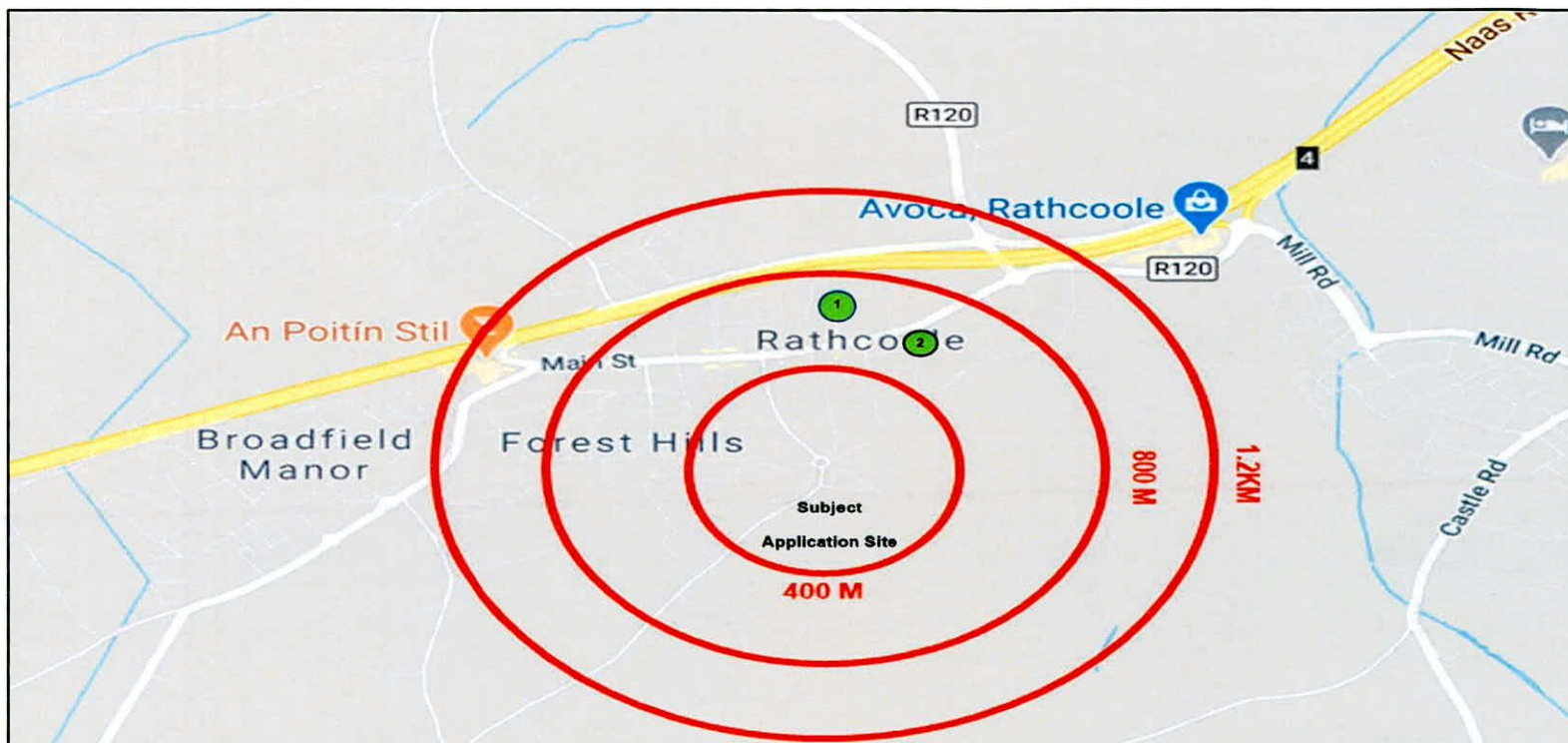


Figure 11 – Places of Worship in Rathcoole
Source: Google Maps

1. The Church of the Holy Family, Rathcoole
2. The Church of Ireland, Rathcoole

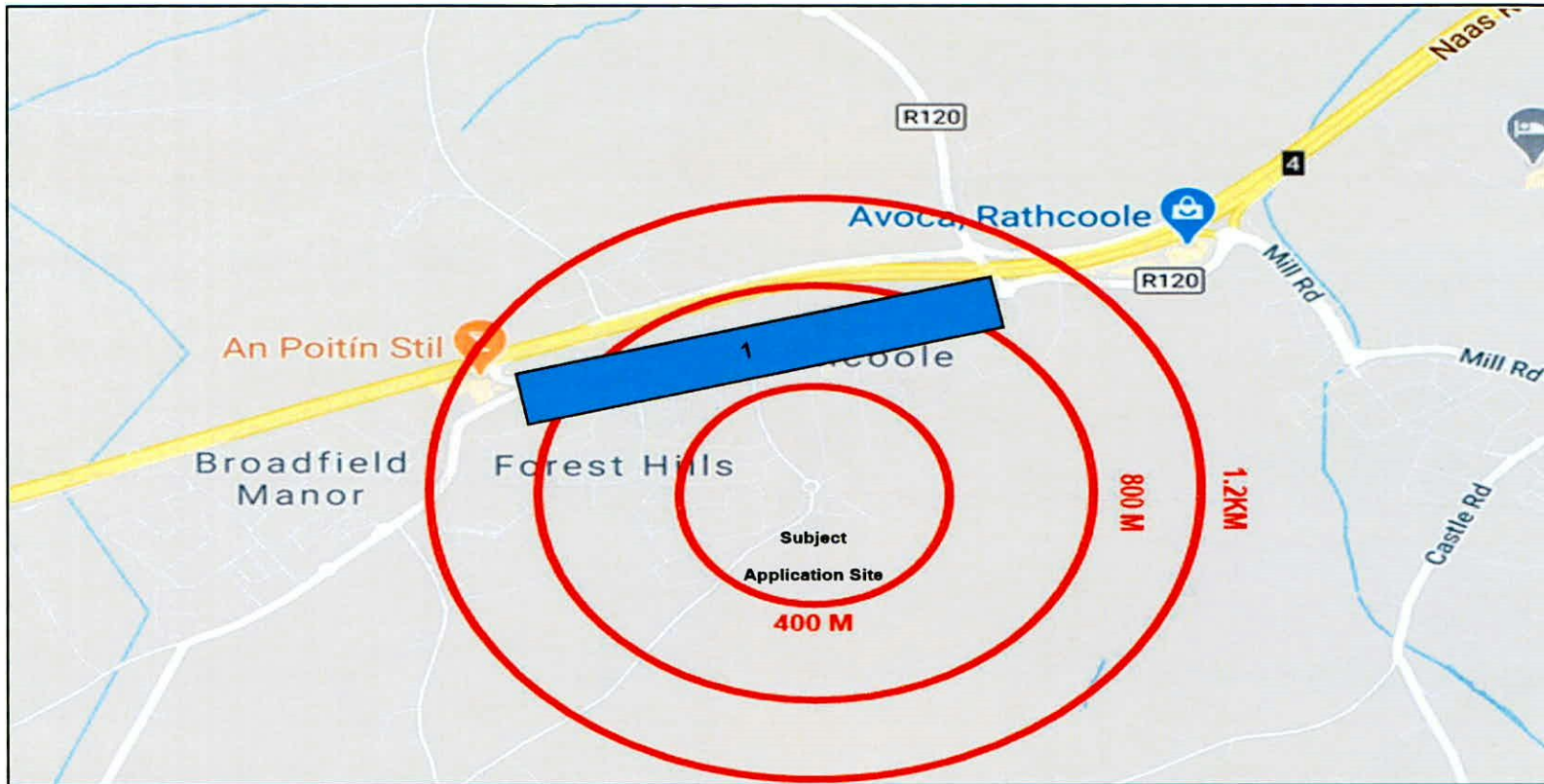


Figure 12 – Retail Provision in Rathcoole
Source: Google Map

1. Main Street, Rathcoole

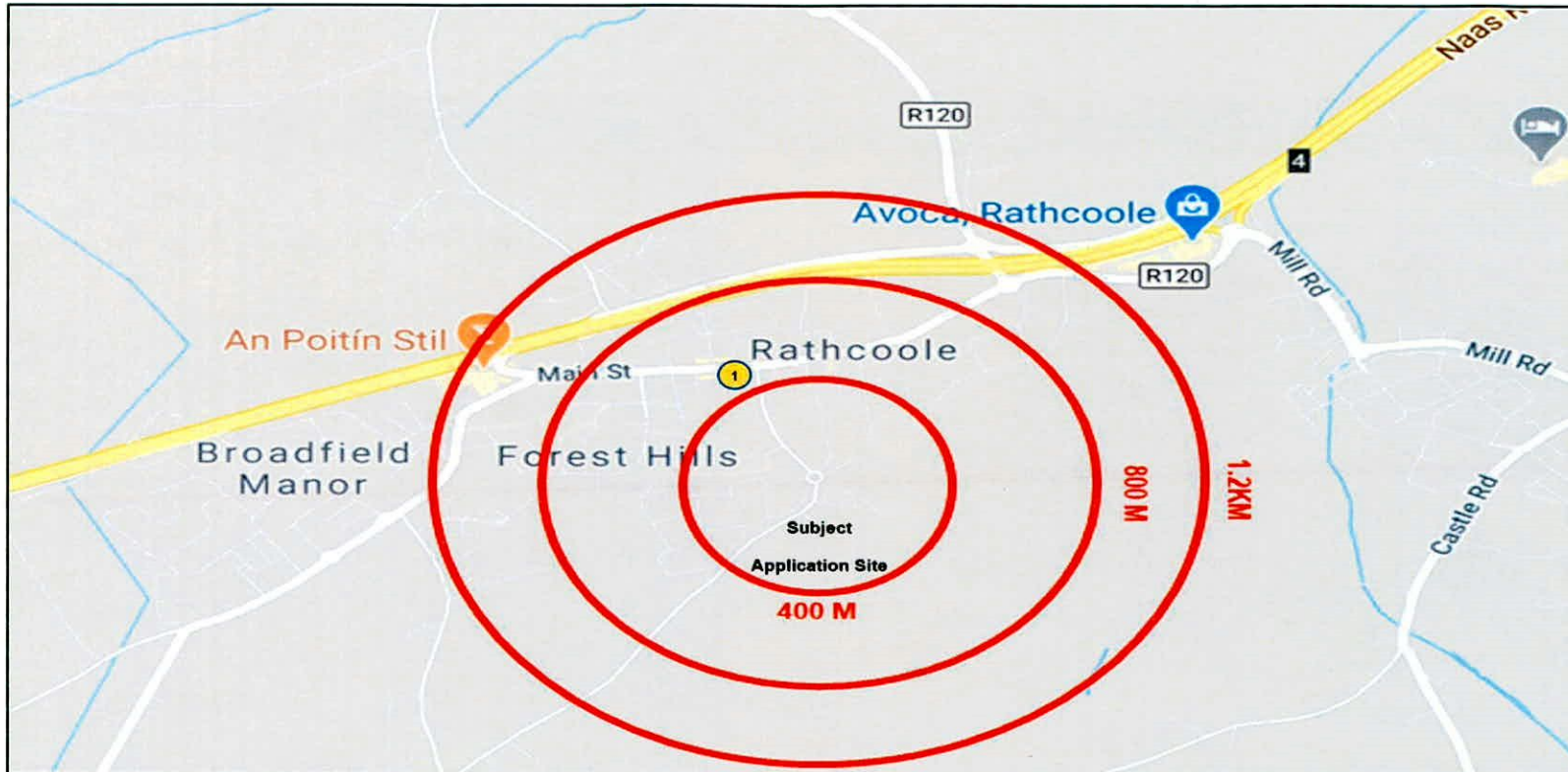


Figure 13 – Nearest Bus Stop
Source: Google Maps

1. Barrack Court, Stop 4557, Main Street, Rathcoole