

Residential Development at Edmondstown Mill

Architectural Heritage Assessment



Proposal

Following on from the original parent permission SD17A/0407 the proposed works consist of an alteration of the the part ground floor, part basement from parking area to apartments, two additional levels of apartments and associated works and site works including additional parking to site curtilage.

Previous Architectural Heritage Assessment

An Extensive Architectural Heritage Assessment was carried out by Molloy associates as part of the original planning application, planning reg ref. SD17A/0407. OC Architects contributed to this assessment throughout and hold an integral understanding of the overall scheme. We do not intend to alter or redefine the approach or works contained within that document, save as where is required by the proposed Works. This document deals with the proposed works that form part of this application.

Heritage Significance

Edmondstown mill comprises five different buildings dating from 19th and 20th century. It is listed on the South Dublin County Council Record of Protected Structures reference no. 351. The property is also included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage reference 11221005.

As with the previous application the proposed works seek to defer to to the architectural heritage characteristics of the site.

Previous Application

The parent permission to this application was described as follows:

“A material change of use from industrial to residential and the proposed development of the Edmondstown Mill(Protected Structure) site, Edmondstown Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16, currently occupied by Chemserve Ltd, and located adjacent to Edmondstown Golf Course and bounded to the west by the Owendoher river.

The development will consist of the conservation, extension and modification of the existing structures and protected structures for conversion into a residential development comprising of 4 No. Buildings (A to D respectively) consisting 25 No. residential units total. The development will also include the demolition of storage sheds and other minor structures and walls and the proposed relocation of the existing vehicular entrance from the Edmondstown Road.

Works to Building A will consist of the conversion, conservation and modification of an existing 3 storey original building ancillary to the Mill to provide 3 No. residential units comprising of: 2 no. 2 beds apartments, and 1 No. 1 bed apartment. There are some alterations proposed to the eastern elevation and it is proposed to demolish adjoining 20th century single storey plant room and provide 2 storey extension on footprint of demolished structure.

Works to Building B will consist of the conversion, conservation and modification of an existing 2 storey industrial/office building to provide 2 No. 1 Bed apartments.

Works to Building C will consist of the partial demolition of an existing 2 storey 20th Century storage building to include the retention of the existing primary concrete structure with extensive elevational changes and the proposed construction of an additional storey, all consisting of entrance/circulation lobby, 10No. private garages, Bicycle Parking, Plant Storage and Bin Storage at ground floor level, 3No. 2 bed apartments & 1No. 1 Bed apartments and landscaped courtyard(roadside) with pedestrian access to Edmondstown Road at first floor level and 3No. 2 bed apartments & 1No. 1 Bed apartments and second floor level. All 8 apartments feature balconies and it is proposed to facilitate PV panels on the pitched section of the proposed roof.

Works to Building D will consist of the conversion, conservation and modification of an existing 3 storey over basement mill to provide 12No. 2 Bed apartments. There are 4No. Balconies proposed.

The proposed development is site extensive and will include all associated engineering and landscaping works, requisite car parking spaces, cycle parking, new boundary treatments, relocation of the vehicular entrance, a new pedestrian entrance, footpaths, associated infrastructural site works and a pedestrian pathway along the Owendoher River.

The application relates to protected structures and their curtilage.”

This application received a final grant of planning permission on the 06th July 2018 with 32 Conditions attached.

Site Overview

There are a number of buildings on the site, including five principal structures which are referred to as buildings A, B, C, D & D1, labelled from north to south on the previous planning application. Buildings A, B and C are located with an elevation towards Edmondstown Road, though they are primarily orientated into the courtyard in the centre of the site. The courtyard is at a lower level than the public road and thus buildings are taller within the site than they appear from Edmondstown Road.

Buildings A and D are the most significant older buildings, dating from the mid-nineteenth century. The granite stone walls are rendered in a harling render, with brick lined opes. They have been modified internally and externally down through the years at various stages. There are no additional works proposed to buildings A and D as part of this application. Buildings B and C are twentieth-century structures built of reinforced concrete. There are no additional works proposed to building B as part of this application.

Building C is a long building, stretching for some 55 metres along the road frontage, where it presents a concrete wall, interrupted by piers, between which there were windows, now all blocked up except one. Building C is also deeper than the other buildings on the site.

The water tower which acts as a landmark to the area is located on the roof of building C. I note the condition of this tower is unable to be determined at this stage as access to this area is not possible due to safety concerns.

The proposed works apply to building C only, whilst also incorporating site alterations to account for the additional parking requirement created by the additional accommodation and change of use of the ground floor/basement area of building C from parking to accommodation.

Proposed Works

The applicant wishes to apply for an alteration to the previous application. The basement level is proposed to be changed from a parking area to two no. 1 bed apartments and one no. 2 bed apartment. An additional level, reflecting the ground floor and first floor plans, is proposed to be added at second floor level. This level will accommodate three no. 2 bed apartments and one no. 1 bed apartment.

The proposed penthouse level which is set back from all elevations will contain 3 no. 1 bed apartments and one no. 2 bed apartments.

The proposal will incorporate some minor site adjustments to address an increased parking requirement and the existing water tower relocation as well as proposed signage to the main entrance.

Pre Planning

A pre planning consultation was held between the client and the local authority where it was proposed to demolish building C and construct a new 5 storey new construction in its place containing 22 no units in total. OC Architects were not involved in this pre planning discussion.

We understand that the planning authority felt this was an overdevelopment of the site



Image of preliminary model presented for pre planning purposes



Image of typical floor plan presented at pre planning

Design

OC Architects designed the original scheme for the project and we were commissioned to address how best to increase the density of residential units to the site while being sensitive to the protected status of the site and its location.

Due to the significance of buildings A and D particularly we felt that there was no opportunity to increase the density of these buildings without harming them. Building B, although built later, has a particular scale and position that did not lend itself to this. An additional new building within the site was also explored. However, this would have had significant impact along the riverfront that we felt would be detrimental to the overall development

Building C was arrived at as the optimum location and opportunity to add additional units without having a detrimental impact on the surrounding buildings and overall site and its unique and sensitive location. Building C dates from the early 20th century and was built as a warehouse with a primary mass concrete grid structure. Although this building is not of particular architectural or historic significance, rather it is within the curtilage of buildings A and D, it is recognised that it represents an example of 20th century industrial functional architecture with its concrete structure being of more significance and interest than the infill panels. It forms a bridging piece physically and chronologically between industrial buildings of different eras and contributes to the story of the evolution of the site. In line with the original application, it is intended to preserve and incorporate as much as possible of the existing structure into the proposed design.



3D of view of revised proposal as viewed from the main entrance

The first additional level is stepped and adjusted at either end to relate to the scale of the buildings either side. The design generally ties in with the elevations below. The second penthouse level steps back significantly from all elevations so that its visual impact from the ground is minimised. It is designed to read as a lightweight element and to reflect its surroundings so it dissolves into the background



3D view of revised proposal side elevation of Building C

Assessment of Building C (as existing)

Excerpt taken from Molloy Associates Original Architectural Heritage Assessment

General

Building C dates from the early 20th century and was built as a warehouse with a mass concrete grid structure. The building represents an example of early 20th century architecture and there is merit in preserving it given its particular context adjacent to other industrial buildings from different eras.

Exterior

The West elevation, which faces the courtyard, consists of 14 framed two storey bays, with half the bay to the northern and cranked to align with Building B. Each bay is framed by the concrete column and beam configuration that constitutes the primary structure. The ground and first floor openings of most bays would originally have housed large steel window panels designed to maximise daylight. Most of these openings have now had the original steel windows replaced or alternatively the windows were removed altogether, and the openings subsequently infilled with 215 solid blockwork. The building originally had five cast iron down pipes spaces along the elevation, one had been removed completely and the hopper to another is missing.

A metal water tower is suspended above the roof of Building C, surmounted on a framed structure. This water tower contributes to the character of the site and acts as a local landmark. The tower is accessed by ladders to the North-West and South-East corners, however, closer inspection of the tower was not possible for reasons of health and safety.

Interior

Internally, the concrete structures and concrete floors are exposed throughout Building C, with the exception of two easternmost bays at the first floor level, where it was configured for office use. The early 20th century offices, complete with panelled walls. Fitted furniture and chimneypieces and are of a high quality given their modest function and are preserved remarkably intact. Building C is connected with Building B via a small stair on level 1.



Fig. Building C

Proposal

Proposed Works as part of the original proposal (*Excerpt taken from Molloy Associates Original Architectural Heritage Assessment*)

Building C

- *The internal configuration of Building C will be altered to create eight apartments in total; with car parking located in the existing ground floor, four apartments in the existing first floor level with four apartments on a proposed second floor extension.*
- *The extant concrete and beam structure to be retained.*
- *The west elevation, which faces the courtyard, is to be demolished. The proposed new façade has been remodeled to provide balconies, energy efficient windows, high thermal performance cladding and to accommodate photovoltaic panels on the inclined roofs. The design of the modified façade takes cognizance of the industrial setting incorporating a saw-tooth roof profile and retaining the water tank as a feature overhead.*
- *Construction of extension comprising of one additional floor story. It is proposed to provide an additional story which will in turn result in a two-storey elevation on the Edmondstown roadside and a three storey on the river. To minimize the impact of the extra storey on the Edmondstown road elevation the building is set back from the retained boundary wall by 3.6 meters creating a landscaped courtyard separating the proposed building from the road. The existing Edmondstown boundary wall will be preserved, albeit in an altered form whereby original openings which are now blocked up, but which previously housed fenestration, are reinstated to enclose an open terrace with inset louvers to provide screening and an acoustic barrier between the proposed courtyard behind.*
- *The selected palette of materials, zinc and brick are reflective of the materials extant on site. It is proposed that the materials be detailed in a contemporary manner to differentiate them from the early 20th century structures thus providing the legibility on site.*
- *Restoration of the elevated water tank. As a tribute to the site's industrial heritage it is proposed to retain the water tank elevated above Building C as a distinctive site feature. Subject to more detailed investigation works, it is hoped that the tank could be repurposed for water harvesting.*
- *Removal of existing building services and installation of new mechanical and electrical services to serve the apartments.*



Additional Works that form part of this application

The works detailed above will be enacted save for where they need to be modified to allow for the following:

- Relocation and restoration of the elevated water tank. As a tribute to the site's industrial heritage it is proposed to retain the water tank as a distinctive landmark. It is proposed to relocate it from the roof of building C to the main entrance adjacent Building A. Subject to more detailed investigation works, it is hoped that the tank could be repurposed for water harvesting.
- The parking area shown at basement level on the parent application is proposed to be converted to two no. 1 bed apartments and one no. 2 bed apartment, incorporating necessary elevational changes.
- An additional full level of accommodation will be added at second floor level that will reflect the layout of the lower levels. This will contain three no. 2 bed apartments and one no. 1 bed apartment. The materials used will continue in line with elevation of the lower floors.
- An additional penthouse level of accommodation that will be set back from all elevations will be added at third floor level, comprising of three no. 1 bed apartments one no. 2 bed apartment. This level is designed as a penthouse set back and using light materials incorporating as much transparency and reflectivity as possible.
- As before, to minimize the impact of the extra storeys on the Edmondstown road elevation the building is set back from the retained boundary wall by 3.6 meters creating a landscaped courtyard separating the proposed building from the road. The existing Edmondstown boundary wall will be preserved and altered as per the previous application acting as a screen an acoustic dampener for the courtyard space behind.



Fig. Building C East Elevation facing onto Edmondstown Road.

REAR

Conclusion:

Building C is an early 20th century mass concrete building with cast in-situ concrete grid structure. Though an important part of the story of the evolution of the site, other than the concrete structure, it retains little else of its original features and generally later interventions are of little architectural or historic merit. Of the five primary structures on site it is the least significant architecturally and historically and thus it was viewed as the most viable opportunity to add accommodation.

The works have been designed and considered to have very little further impact on the structure and particularly on any of the adjacent buildings. The elevations, scale and massing have been considered so that the building relates sensitively to the building either side.

Generally very little additional building has been added, a conscious decision given the protected status and sensitive location of the site. An existing footprint has been used so that the evolution of the site remains clear and the dialogues between the buildings maintained.

We feel this is a well considered and appropriate extension given the overall context and approach to the scheme. The integrity of the original scheme has been maintained.



Alan O'Connell B.Arch MRIAI

Architect Accredited in Conservation Grade III

Photographic Survey of Building C

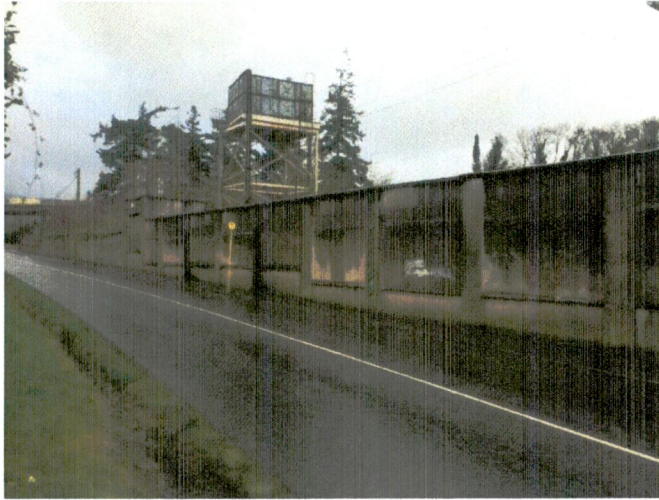


Fig.1 Building C as viewed from Edmondstown Road



Fig.2 Building C as viewed from Edmondstown Road



Fig. 3 Building C as viewed from the internal courtyard

*Fig. 4 Building C as viewed from the internal courtyard.
The block infill panels likely replaced previous crittal style window infills*



Fig 5 Overall view of Building C from the internal courtyard, viewed in context, with Buildings A and B visible



Fig 6 The water tower as viewed from the internal courtyard. It is proposed to relocate this to the main entrance



Fig 7 View of the interior of building C showing the existing concrete structure

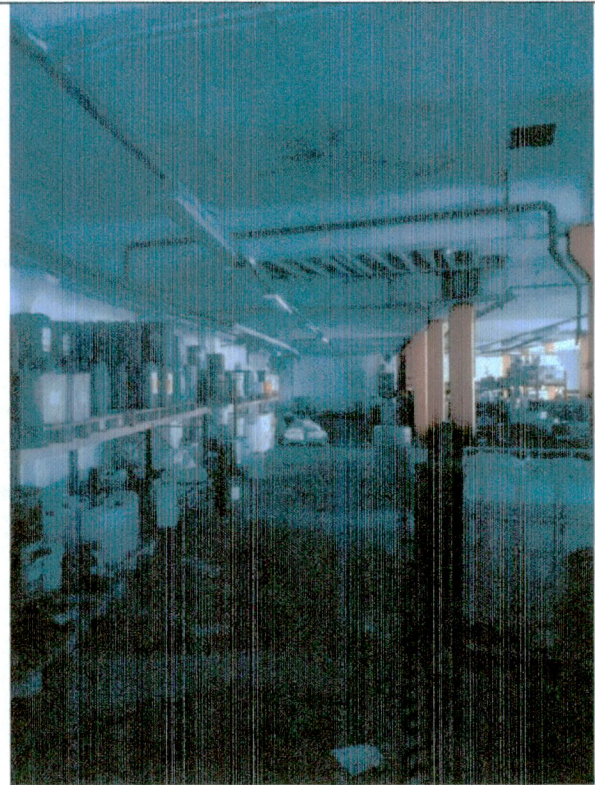


Fig 7 View of the interior of building C showing the existing concrete structure



Fig 8 View of the interior of building C



Fig 9 View of the interior of building C showing the existing concrete structure

Fig 10 View of the interior of building C



Fig.11 Example of boardmarked concrete externally

Fig. 12 Some surviving metal windows at ground floor are thought to be original to the building