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MANOR AVENUE - ARCHITECT'S DESIGN STATEMENT

OVERVIEW

The Design Statement has been prepared by Sam Le Bas Architects on behalf of Patricia Carmody in regard to the proposed development at Manor Avenue, Terenure, Dublin 6W, D6W DE70. The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed description of the proposal and highlight the determining factors which lead to the proposed design. The report will highlight the complexity of working on the site and consequentially the very site specific design which was developed in reaction to such conditions.

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CONTENTS

SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

The site subject to this application is located off Manor Avenue, a lane way which serves five no. dwellings located to the rear of Wainsfort Park and College Drive, a well-established residential area of Terenure. Manor avenue splits into 2 separate lane ways providing private access to the subject site and a neighbouring property, 1A Manor Avenue.

The site has an existing 465sqm two storey workshop located in the south west corner. The existing structure formerly operated as a steel works and worker's yard. The core of the building is constructed of masonry walls. A variety of light weight steel frame additions have been constructed around the perimeter of the building. The site area is approximately 1,330sqm. The site is circa 16.5 meters in Width (at its maximum to the West) and circa 55 meters in length. The site is enclosed by a well-defined boundary on all sides. A 4.6 meter high rubble stone wall to the south and a 1.7 meter masonry wall to the north. Refer to Fig. 01 & 02.

Site Area: 0.133 Ha. approx.
Gross floor area of existing structure: 465sqm
Gross floor area for demolition: 465sqm

Total gross floor area of proposed development: 480sqm

Ground Floor Level: 73sqm per unit (219smq total)
First Floor Level: 61sqm per unit (183smq total)
Second Floor Level: 26sqm per unit (78smq total)
Total Per Dwelling: 160sqm (480sqm total)

N

Indicates Site Boundary

Fig. 01

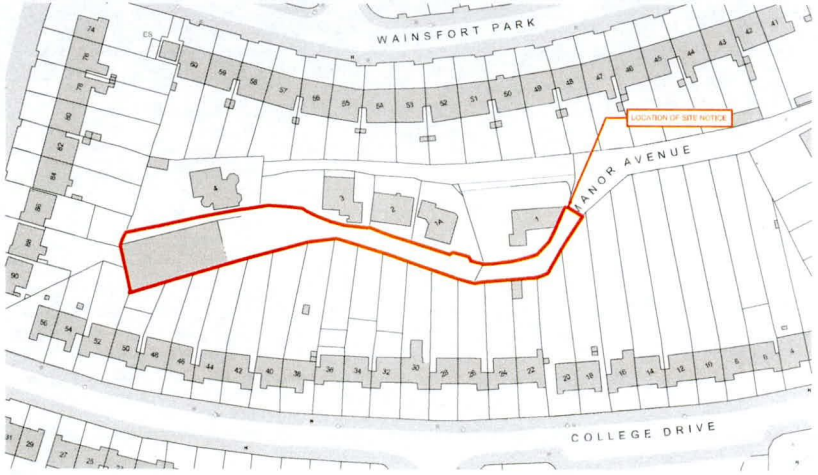


Fig. 02

SITE CONTEXT

To the south, the site is abutted by the rear gardens of semi-detached houses located on College Drive. Similarly, to the west, the site is abutted by the rear gardens of semi-detached houses located on Wainsfort Road. As previously mentioned, to the north the house is abutted by properties located on Manor Avenue.

The aerial images, commissioned for this report are intended to provide a contextual view of the site. Refer to Fig.03-06. It is worth noting that the existing steelwork factory and adjoining workers yard is the only non-residential property found in within the immediate context.

Fig. 03

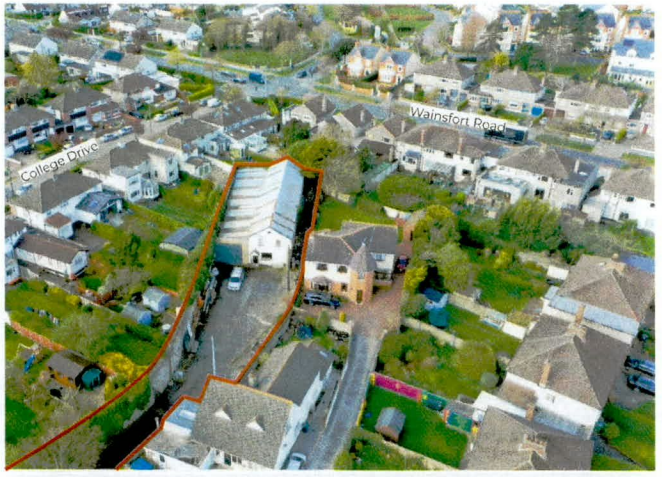


Fig. 05

Fig. 04

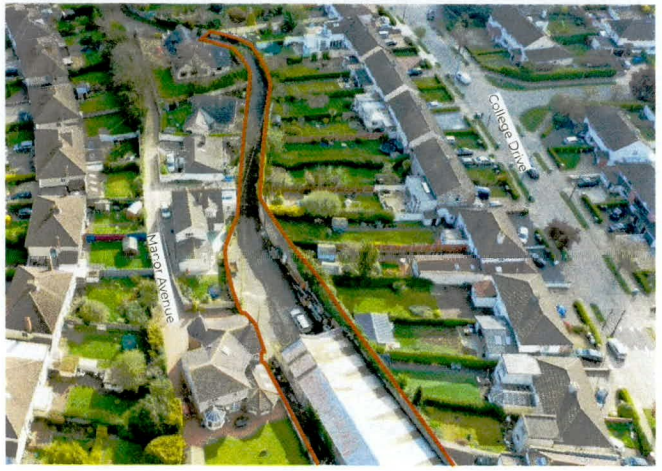


Fig. 06

Indicates Site Boundary

ADJACENT PROPERTIES

The nearest adjacent dwelling is No.04 Manor Avenue to the north of the subject site. The detached two storey pitched roof structure is the largest of the 5no. houses accessed via Manor Avenue. It is observed to be approx 3meters to the existing workshop at its nearest point. The two structures are separated by a tapering passageway and 1.7 meter high boundary wall. Refer to Fig.08-10.

To the south, the rear gardens of No.40 to No.50 College Drive adjoin the 4.6 meter stone boundary wall of the subject site. Distance to the site boundary vary from 10meters (No.50) to 30 meters (no.40). The boundary wall is heavily planted to the south and in large sections the growth can be seen to continue on top of the wall increasing its precieved height in appearance. Refer to Fig. 08.

The rear gardens of no.52 College Drive & No.88 / No.86 Wainsfort Road adjoin the site to the West. The houses are circa 18 and 20 meters from the stone gable wall of the workshop which form the boundary of the site. This boundary varies from 6.3 meters to 4 meters in height.

To the east of the site is No.03 Manor Avenue a large 2 storey house constructed circa 1 meter from the site boundary. The dwelling is circa 27 meters from the existing workshop at its nearest point and is separated by 1.7 meter high masonry boundary wall. Refer to Fig. 09.

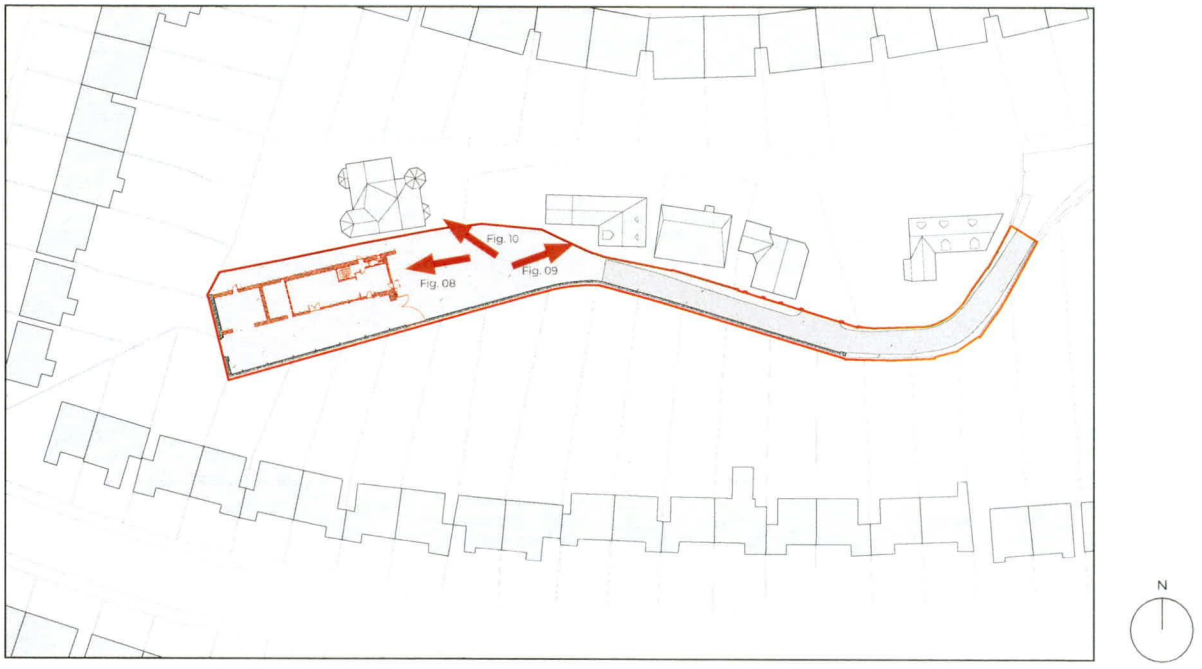


Fig. 07

Fig. 08

Fig. 09

Fig. 10

EXISTING SITE CONDITION

The existing structure occupying the site is dilapidated and has been vacant for a number of years. This has accelerated the deterioration of the structure overall.

Externally the office space is finished with a painted concrete render. The windows and doors of the workshop are PVC. The entrance to the adjoining workshop is clad with timber and is entered through a large corrugated metal door. Refer to Fig. 13. Internally the office space is uninhabitable and suffers from areas of damp throughout.

The workshop is formed by a 'lean to' steel structure which supports a damaged corrugated metal roof. The ground of the existing workshop and adjoining yard is cast from non-permeable concrete slabs. Refer to Fig. 12-14.

As previously mentioned, the stone boundary wall on the south boundary of the site is overgrown with hedges from the neighbouring gardens. Refer to Fig.11 & 13.

Fig. 11

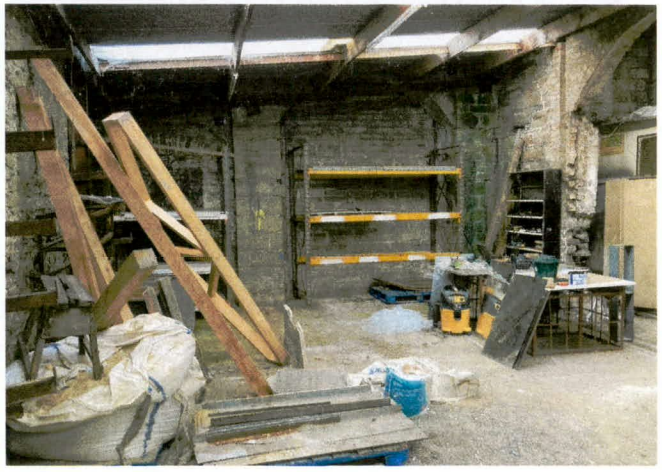


Fig. 12

Fig. 13

Fig. 14

PLANNING HISTORY

SD18A/0356 - REFUSE PERMISSION

The site was subject to a previous application for permission, SDCC planning reference, SD18A/0356. The application for permission was registered on the 22nd March 2019 and was refused by SDCC on the 17th April 2019. Fig. 15 shows the previously proposed plans. The scheme proposed 4.no terraced dwellings with pitched roofs.

Reasons for refusal:

1. The Planning Authority has significant concerns in respect of the turning movements illustrated for a rigid bed refuse or fire tender vehicle. The proposed multi-movements required to turn such a vehicle is considered hazardous and totally dependent on a clear path being available in perpetuity, as stated by the Roads Department. The applicant has therefore not demonstrated the ability of service vehicles to adequately turn on-site uninhibited.

2. There is an under provision of car parking at the site, based on the car parking requirements specified in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022, its is considered that there is a potential for parking of vehicles in undesignated parking areas on-site. This may lead to difficulties in service vehicles turning on-site. In the event of an emergency at any or all of the residential units at this site, this could potentially result in difficulties in emergency service vehicles accessing the site and turning on-site.

Fig. 15

PLANNING HISTORY

ABP -304447-19 - GRANTED PERMISSION

The refusal was appealed and eventually granted permission with An Bord Pleanala, on the 7th of October, 2019.

Reasons stated:

Having regard to the residential zoning objective of the site, the nature, scale and design of the proposed development, the existing pattern of development in the area, it is considered that, subject to the conditions set out below, the proposed development would be acceptable in terms of design, height and scale of development, would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity, would be acceptable in terms of pedestrian and traffic safety, and would comply with the provisions of the South County Dublin Development Plan 2016-2022.

Relative conditions applied:

1. The proposed development shall be amended as follows:
(a) Unit number 02 shall be omitted, and Unit number 01 shall be relocated westwards to form a terrace of three units.
(b) Four number parking spaces only shall be provided, and a clear width of a minimum of three metres shall be demarcated and kept free of obstacles to allow for pedestrian access to the residential units.
(c) The north facing window of first floor bedroom of Unit number 03 in the west end of terrace unit shall be omitted.
(d) All first floor windows to the north elevation shall be finished in obscured glazing.

Fig. 16

PROPOSED DESIGN OVERVIEW

Overview

The proposed development will consist of the demolition of the existing two storey workshop and the construction of 3no. Three-bedroom terraced dwellings with rooftop terraces. In the main, the proposed design utilizes the footprint of the previous grant of permission by An Board Pleanala, ABP Ref 304447-19.

The intention was to create a design which responded to the client's brief, and which responded to the very specific spatial challenges the site presented. The proposed design aims to provide high quality living spaces in a challenging site and produce a development of architectural merit.

Our architectural response takes into account the clients brief and the architectural considerations which we believe were imperative to make a site-specific design of high quality. The clients brief and the architectural considerations are briefly listed below and are expanded on in the following pages.

Client Brief

(i) Open Plan Living - A desire for larger open plan living spaces which offers freedom to families to adapt the layout to their needs.

(ii) Bright Living Spaces - There was a concern that the 4.6 meter tall stone boundary wall would compromise the extent of sunlight that would enter the existing living spaces at ground floor as proposed in the previous application.

(iii) High Quality private Outdoor Spaces - Similarly the clients were concerned that the 4.6m high stone boundary wall on the south boundary of the site would result in a poor outdoor space on ground floor level as proposed in the previous application.

(iv) Flexibility - A requirement for an additional room that could operate as a family snug or work from home office.

(v) Equality - The previous proposal doesn't provide for 3no. equal residential units, as the middle unit is modified to accommodate the rear returns of adjoining properties. The clients were keen to ensure that the proposed new dwellings would be identical.

Architectural Considerations

(i) ABP Conditions – The proposed scheme incorporates the conditions attached to the previous grant of permission by An Board Pleanala.

(ii) Utilizing the Existing Footprint – The proposed design is situated on the footprint of the existing warehouse structure, which is also the footprint of the previously granted scheme. This is most clear on the architect's floor plan drawings, drawing number 2204-PL-101.

(iii) Scale Form & Overlooking – Given the strict parameters of the site and the neighbouring properties, it was vital to produce a design that provided privacy for the clients and the adjoining neighbouring properties. Similarly, it was important to ensure the scale and form of the proposed design was appropriate for the site.

(iv) High Quality Spaces - A primary area of focus was to provide living spaces that could be lit and ventilated naturally, and to provide high quality, usable private outdoor spaces, that could be enjoyed by the clients.

SPATIAL LAYOUT

After examining the site conditions and client's brief, our design proposes an inverted spatial composition that would flip the conventional layout of a typical dwelling. The ground floor and rear garden receive the least natural light out of all floor levels due to the 4.6m tall stone boundary wall to the south. For this reason, the bedrooms spaces are located on ground floor level.

This allowed us to move the kitchen, dining and living spaces to the upper floors, allowing these spaces to benefit from greater natural light. Similarly, we chose to disperse the private open space requirement across all levels, ground, first and second floor level. The outdoor spaces at first and second floor level integrate with the living spaces and extend the floor area of these rooms further, providing the clients with, high quality, useable outdoor spaces.

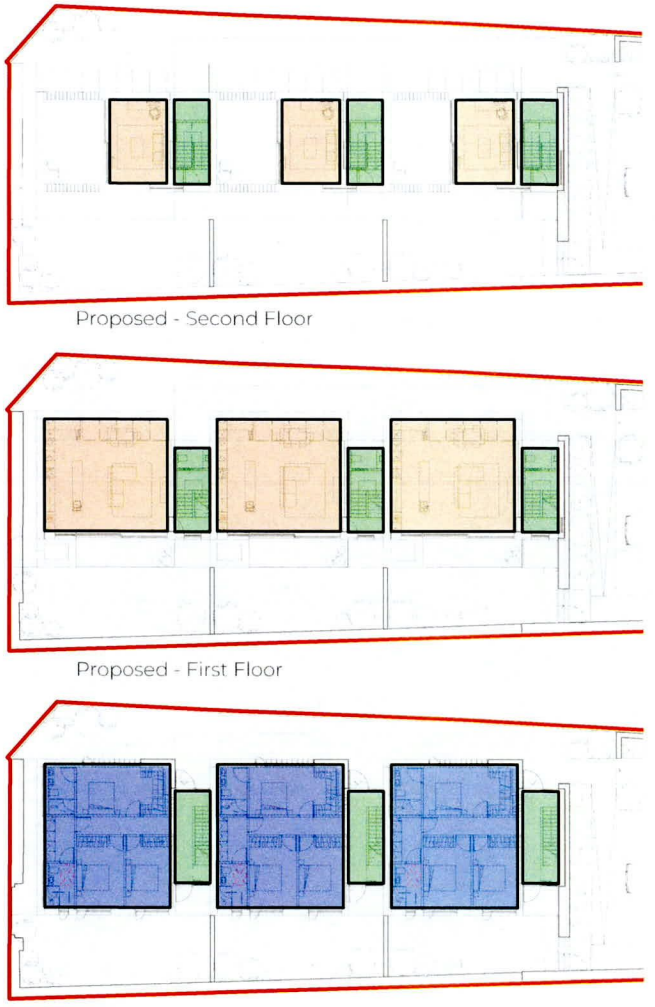
The design employs the use of a vertical circulation core to bookend the plan of each unit. This vertical core acts as a physical buffer between each house and efficiently consolidates the vertical circulation in plan, allowing for larger open plan living spaces free of corridors. The core is set back from the outer perimeter of the floor plan which helps to form an entrance to each house and create a physical demarcation between each dwelling.

The design introduces a second-floor living area / office space. The adjoiing terrace is provided with 1.8meter tall timber screen to North & South elevations. to maintain privacy for the clients and prevent overlooking of the neighbouring properties. The terraces divide the overall volume in to three parts strengthening the individual expression and breakdown the perceived size of the volume. Refer to Fig.17 for a diagrammatic overview of the proposed spatial composition.

Indicates Bedroom Area

Indicates Living Area

Indicates Circulation Core



Proposed - Second Floor

Proposed - First Floor

Proposed - Ground Floor

Fig. 17

SCALE FORM & MASSING

The challenge from the beginning was to ensure the scale and massing of the proposed scheme sat comfortably in the site. Our intention was to move away from the monoblock form associated with conventional terrace housing. Our response was to subdivide the form into a hierarchy of volumes, each volume expressed with a different scale and material finish. Fig.18 & 19 show initial concept sketches which illustrates the massing and composition of the volumes.

The largest volume contains the vertical circulation core and is justified to the east in plan. The remaining space on second floor level is utilized as a terrace space. The roof terrace allows for a visual separation between the vertical cores of each dwelling. There are two smaller volumes which play supporting roles in the building's expression. These volumes are positioned on the north and south facade. The addition of these secondary volumes further emphasises the separation of the dwellings, reducing the building down into smaller more palatable forms. Each form possesses its own material expression which helps to breakdown the perceived scale of the overall structure.

Throughout the design process we were acutely aware of the proposed designs relationship with the scale and volume of the existing warehouse structure, and the structure which had previously been granted permission. We aimed to minimize the overall height of the proposed structure. This was achieved by sinking the proposed structure 400mm below the existing ground level of the site and by reducing the ceiling heights throughout to 2.4m. Subsequently, the proposed structure is only 1.485m taller than the previously granted scheme, and 1.38m taller than the existing warehouse structure on site. Refer to Fig. 20.

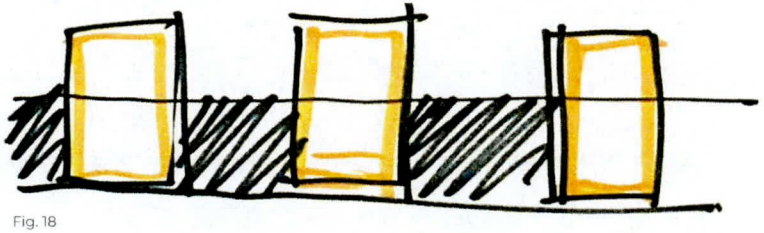


Fig. 18

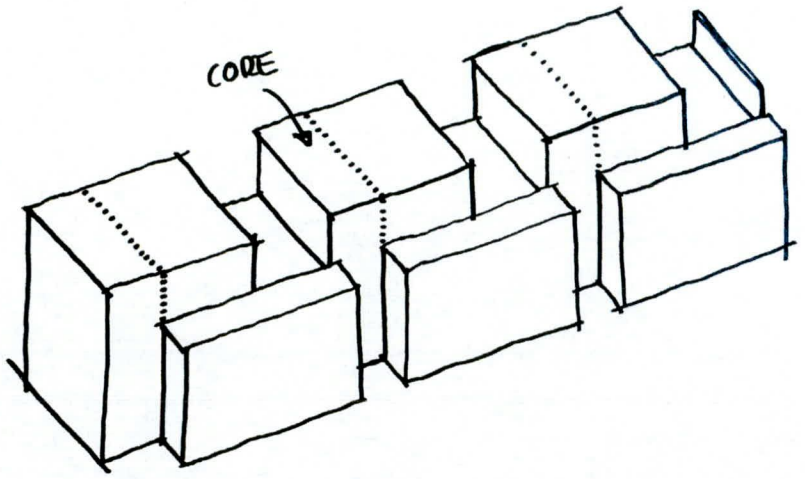


Fig. 19

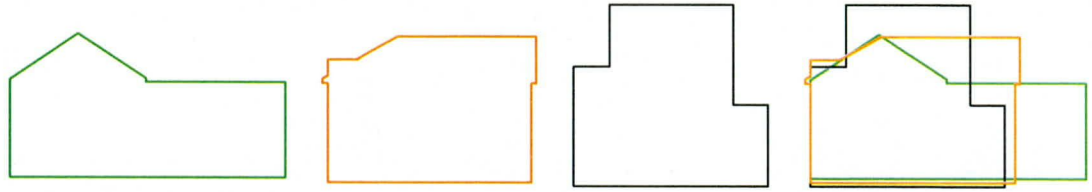


Fig. 20

Indicates Proposed Design

Indicates Previous ABP Grant of Permission

Indicates Existing Warehouse Structure

MATERIALITY

The proposal makes use of a number of different of external finishes. Each material is purposefully used to emphasise the formalistic composition of the design and create a distinction between volumes. The materials are strategically placed to give the structure a sense of character and a feeling of weight, they play a vital role in defining forms and providing an aesthetic balance to the overall composition.

The base of the building uses a combination of both random rubble stone and sand & cement render finish. Refer to Fig.22 & Fig.23. We made a decision to integrate the existing stone from the warehouse structure to create a connection with the site and the existing historic boundary walls. The integration of the existing stone rubble wall was also a condition attached to the previous grant of permission by An Bord Pleanala, ABP Ref 304447-19.

In areas where it was not feasible to use stone we continued with the use of a rendered finish, another robust material that will continue to provide a sense of weight and solidity to the rising walls. Refer to Fig.23.

The first and second floor is mainly composed of vertical timber cladding. Refer to Fig.24. This material is used to define the core of the building as a separate volume and provide a sense of lightweight construction that is served and supported by the smaller forms found on the north and south elevations. Visually, the juxtaposition of the heavy stone and render finish against the timber cladding help differentiate the proposed design into distinguishable volumes which help to reduce the overall sense of scale of the proposed structure.

Fig. 21

Fig. 22

Fig. 23

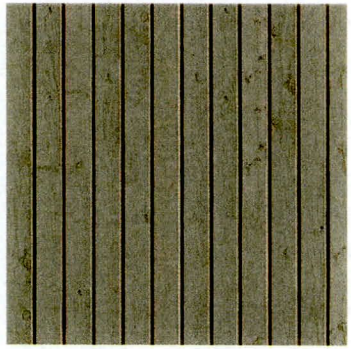


Fig. 24

OVERLOOKING & PRIVACY

A primary consideration throughout the development of the design was the need to ensure privacy for the clients, and also for the adjoining properties. A condition attached to the previous grant of permission by An Bord Pleanala stipulated that north facing windows in the previously submitted scheme must be made opaque. Conscious of this, we organised the spatial layout to ensure we did not require windows on the north elevation at first and second floor level, while still providing living spaces of a high quality that would benefit from a high level of natural lighting.

On first floor level, the primary living space receives an abundance of natural light from its southern aspect. The existing stone boundary wall prevents overlooking of the neighbouring rear gardens along College Drive. On the second floor, the living space is rotated to prevent overlooking, the adjoining terrace is screened with timber fins to further prevent overlooking and increase privacy to the north and south. To note, the large window on rear facade at second floor level is opaque and is intended to provide the space with additional daylight.

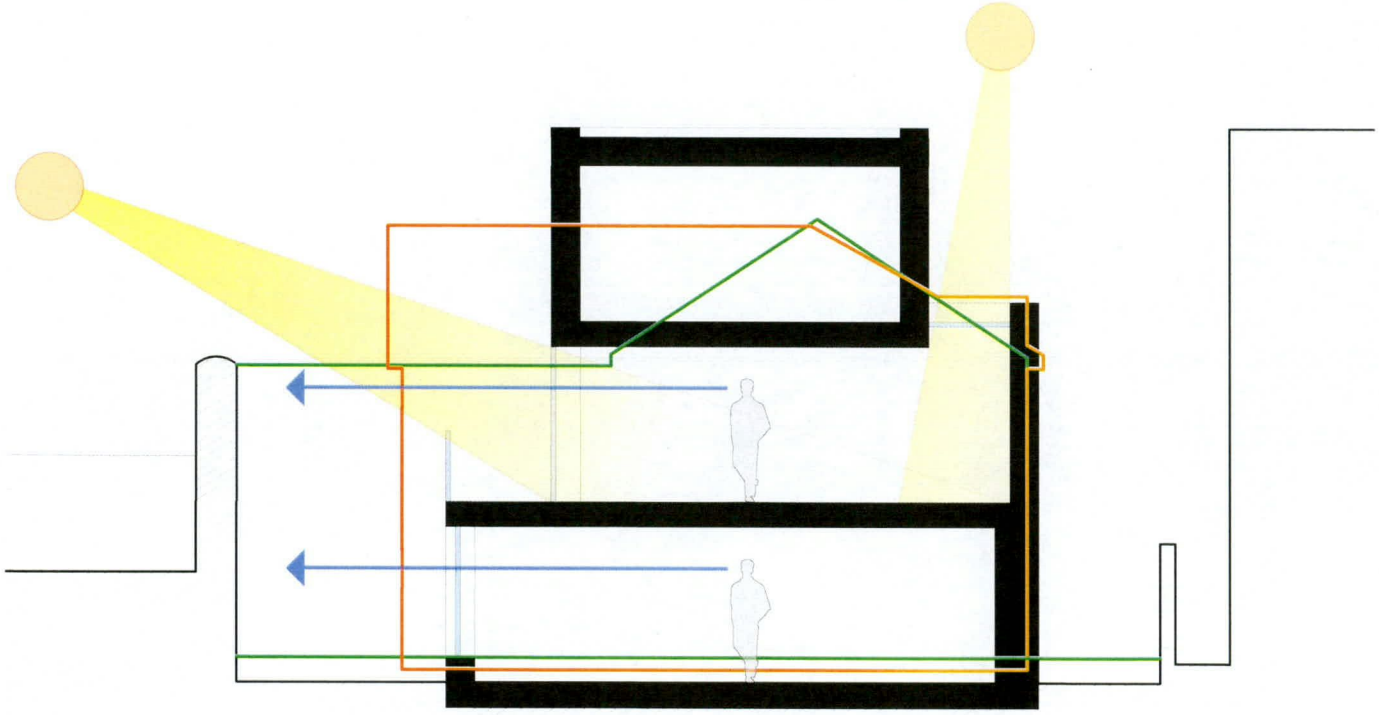


Fig. 25

Indicates Previous ABP Grant of Permission

Indicates Existing Warehouse Structure

PRIVATE OUTDOOR SPACE & LANDSCAPING

One of the client's main concerns was to ensure that each dwelling would provide high quality private outdoor spaces. The previously granted scheme, ABP Ref 304447-19, provided a conventional rear garden on ground floor level. Due to the 4.6m existing stone boundary wall the garden would receive little direct sunlight throughout the year. To circumvent this problem we decided to disperse the private outdoor space across the three floor levels. Fig.26 shows an initial concept sketch that expressed the design intention.

Each outdoor space has its own spatial conditions and function. At ground level a standard rear garden is provided. At first floor level a 1.7m deep terrace is provided which directly adjoins the main living area. The terrace is south facing benefiting from sunlight throughout the year. It allows the living area to extend outdoors and also ensure the living area benefits form an abundance of natural light year-round.

At second floor level, the terrace adjoins the secondary living space and is screened on both the north and south by timber fins to prevent overlooking. The terrace is approximately 5m x 3.4m and allows for a wide range of functions. The accumulative private outdoor space for each dwelling is in excess of the minimum allowable private outdoor space as stated in the design 'Design Manual for Quality Housing'. Refer to Fig.26-27.

Significant consideration was given to the landscaping of the site. For further information in regard to landscaping please refer to Architect's drawing 2204-PL-104, and to the Arborists report which accompanies this application.

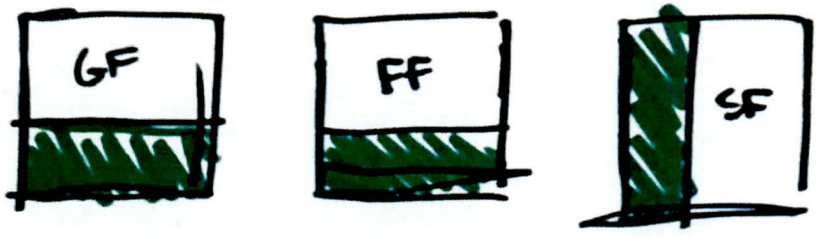


Fig. 26

Fig. 27

VISUAL IMPACT

Fig. 28

Fig. 29

Aerial view showing a comparison between the existing warehouse structure, Fig.28, and the proposed design, Fig.29.

VISUAL IMPACT

Fig. 30

Fig. 31

A view of the east elevation showing a comparison between the existing warehouse structure, Fig.30, and the proposed design Fig.31.