JFOCarchitects

# Appendix A to Architectural Design Statement – Public Realm

Residential Development at
Main Street, Newcastle, Co. Dublin

Additional Information Submission to South Dublin County Council
February 2023

## Introduction

The Architectural Design statement has been informed by the guidance set out in the South County Dublin Development Plan 2022-2028 and is structured around best practice guidance outlined the 'Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide' (2009) which sets out 12 Principles of Urban Design. These criteria form the basis of the design analysis outlined in this Architectural Design Statement. The 12 criteria are sub-divided into three groups: Neighbourhood/Site/Home, reflecting the sequence of spatial scales and order of priorities that is followed in a good design process.


12 Principles of Urban Design', Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009)

The Urban Design Manual (2009) states that the most successful neighbourhoods contain streets, squares, parks and public gardens that are as good quality – if not better, than the private buildings and spaces within the neighbourhood. A neighbourhood with poor quality public spaces will rarely be improved by even the highest quality architecture – whilst a neighbourhood of ordinary buildings can be transformed through improvements to the public realm.

The public areas are also a key determinant of the image that people form of the quality of a development as a whole. Visitors to a housing development will often spend as much time in the public realm of a development as they do in the private zone– and the quality of such spaces will form the impression of the place that they take away with them.

The provision of a high quality public realm has been a key component of the design proposed as part of this application.

Section 12.5.4 of the South County Dublin Development Plan states that developments that include public realm proposals should provide for the following:

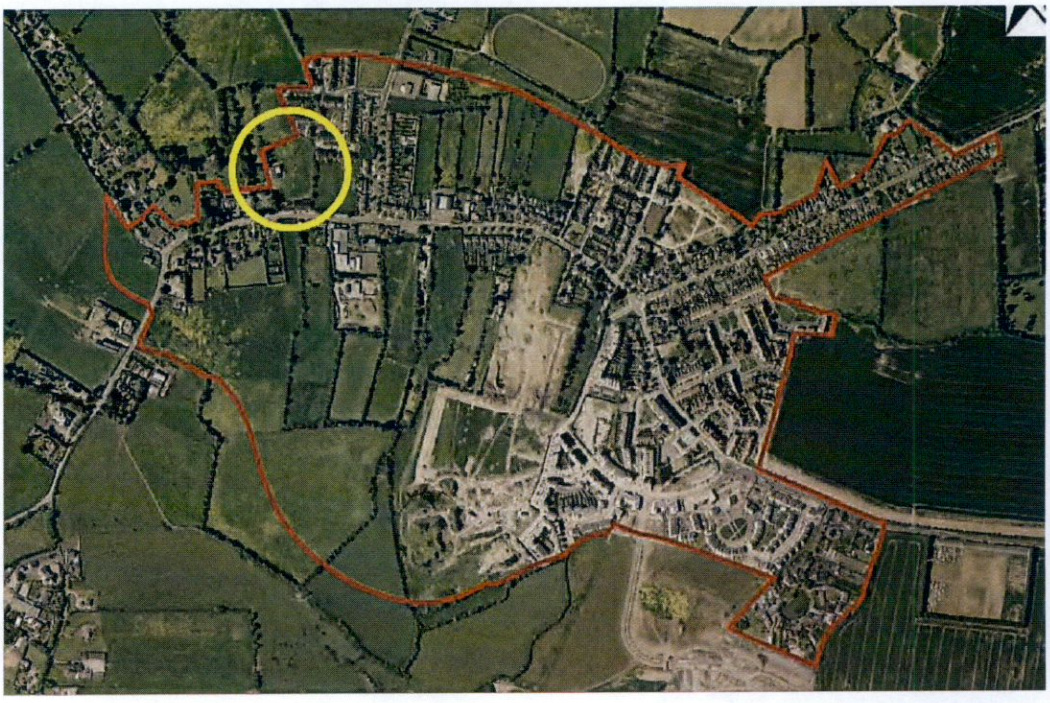
1. Accessible public open space that retains natural or artificial landscape features such as trees, hedges, rivers / streams using minimal visual or physical clutter;
2. A landscape design that creates welcoming open spaces or a parkland setting, or a landscape to enhance an urban setting complementing the character of the area;
3. A layout which allows the use of sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport, with clearly defined footpaths and cycleways linking all buildings and public areas. Parking areas should not be a dominant feature;
4. The location of public space close to public transport connections and interchanges or other major linkages;
5. Promote greater connectivity and permeability throughout the development through the provision of a network of well-connected public spaces and streets, with materials, and signage that is easily interpreted by all;
6. Crossing points and routes should be clearly identifiable, appropriately located with respect to facilities and follow pedestrian desire lines;
7. Quality of materials, especially at significant locations is important to sustainable placemaking.

The layout of this document is structured around these aims under the following corresponding headings:

1. Receiving Environment
2. Landscape Strategy
3. Pedestrian Priority
4. Connectivity
5. Permeability
6. Desire Lines
7. Materiality and Detail Design

## 1.0 Receiving Environment

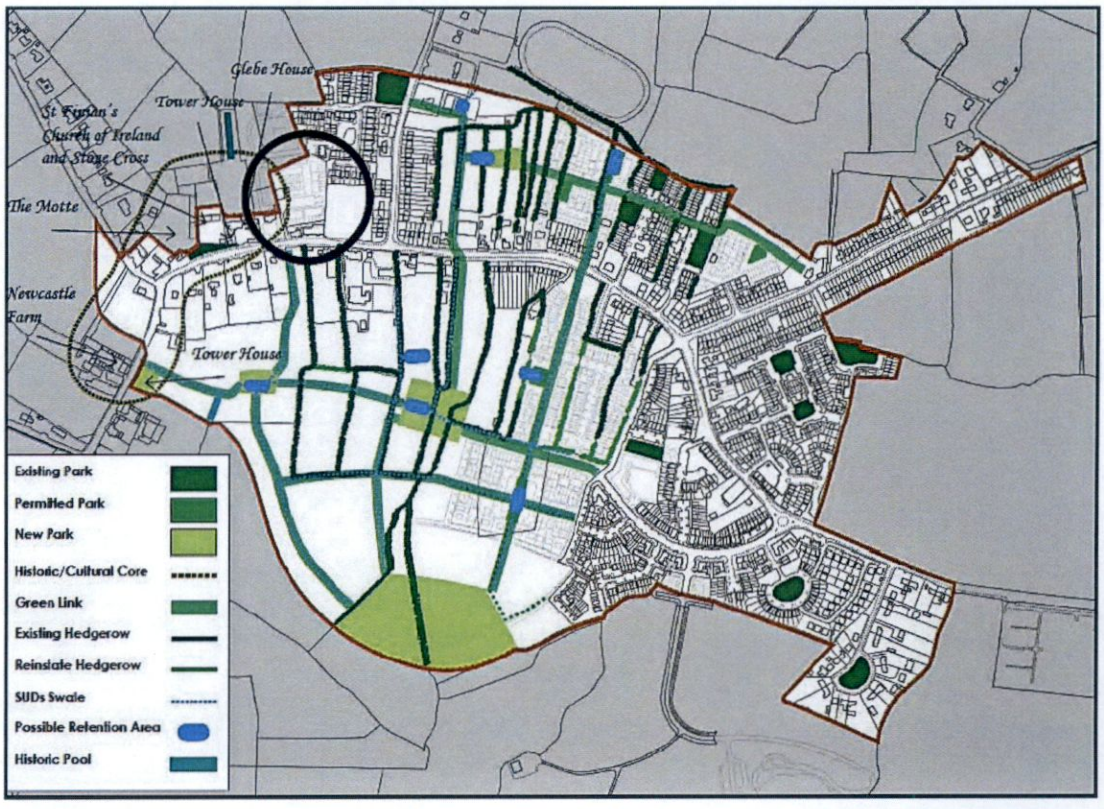
The subject site of this application lies to the west of Newcastle village and is well connected to local community amenities, commercial centres, educational facilities, and transport links. The village of Newcastle is defined by its historic burgage plots and local landmarks. There are numerous residential developments in the vicinity of the Village Core as the village continues to expand relative to the Newcastle Local Area Plan 2012. This application seeks to make a considered and high quality addition to the residential amenity of Newcastle.



Application site shown in relation to the village of Newcastle, and the extent of the Newcastle Local Area Plan 2012 shown in red

The site is bounded to the west by a historic townland boundary that is heavily planted with mature trees. This boundary separates the townlands of the Glebe to the west and Newcastle North to the east. It is proposed to retain these trees and maintain the historic townland boundary on the site, the mature trees adding to the visual amenity within the scheme.

The town centre is 200m or a 3-minute walk from the site entrance. The nearest bus stop is 220m from the site entrance. The site is surrounded by existing two-storey residential developments. The proposed scheme is cognisant of the receiving environment and two storey dwellings are proposed.




Application site shown in relation to local green infrastructure

The village of Newcastle still retains much of the burgage plots that defined the medieval allotments to the north and south of Main Street. The hedgerows that line these plots contribute to the green infrastructure of the village and these plots are defined as areas for village expansion in the Newcastle Local Area plan 2012.

To the west of the subject site of this application the boundary is mature planted trees that define the townland boundary, separating the Glebe to the west and Newcastle North to the east.


Proposed Site Layout

The layout of the proposal features two predominant public open spaces, each with a distinctive character. The section of the public realm in the west of the site is bounded by mature planting which marks the townland boundary. The public open space at the east of the scheme is defined by terraced housing which aligns with the existing urban grain of the site context.

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## 2.0 Landscape Strategy

Please refer to the drawings and documents prepared by RMDA Landscape Architects that have been submitted as part of this Additional Information response for a full and detailed description of the landscape strategy proposed.

## 3.0 Pedestrian Priority

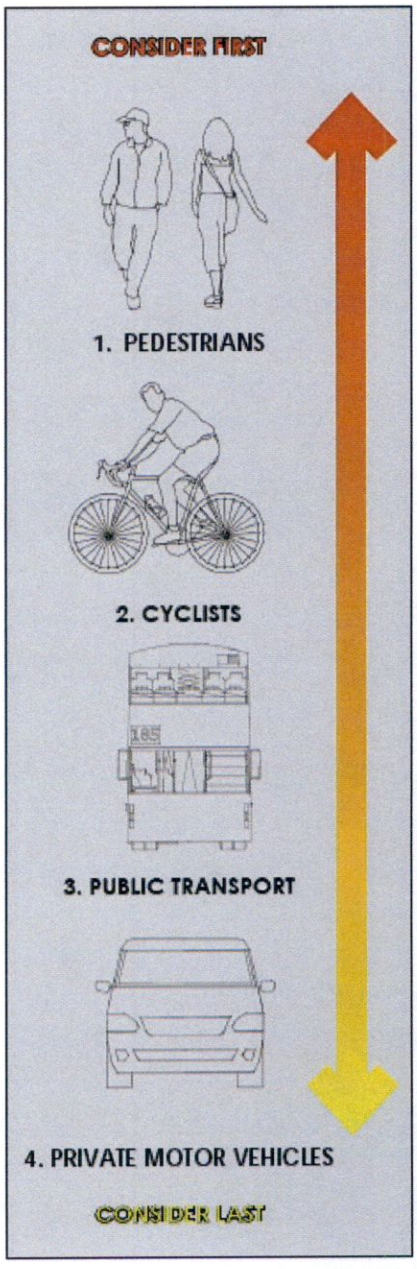
The public realm of the proposed development has been designed with pedestrian priority in mind, and aligns with best practice recommendations from the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)

Advantages of more permeable networks as identified in DMURS that have been applied to this proposed development include:

- Drivers are more likely to maintain lower speeds over shorter distances than over longer ones. As drivers can access individual properties more directly from Access/Link streets (where speeds are more moderate) they are more likely to comply with lower speed limits on Local streets.
- Permeable layouts provide more frequent junctions which have a traffic-calming effect as drivers slow and show greater levels of caution
- The value of place can also be improved as slower moving traffic has less impact on the surrounding environment

DMURS emphasises the priority of the pedestrian in place-based design. The design of this network affords the highest priority to pedestrians and cyclists, as per the DMURS sustainable transport 'user hierarchy' matrix (DMURS Fig. 2.21). Connections to existing public transport links have been maximised as possible. Pedestrian, cycle, and vehicle transport will remain important for this community.

Throughout our proposal, homes front on to the proposed streetscapes. This is a purposeful design consideration to ensure that the streets within the scheme are safe and welcoming. An active street front has many benefits to the presence of the proposed housing and to the use of the homes by the future residents. As well as providing a safe network of public streets that enjoy excellent passive surveillance, the active street fronts help to nurture a sense of community where interacting between residents can happen at the entrances to all homes.




DMURS Figure 2.21 'User hierarchy that promotes and prioritises sustainable forms of transportation'.

Active street edges provide passive surveillance of the street environment and promote pedestrian activity. This should be a principle aim of the design team. Increased pedestrian activity also has a traffic-calming effect as it causes people to drive more cautiously.

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) emphasises that designers should seek to promote active street edges on all streets within cities, towns, and villages. The most effective way to promote pedestrian activity is to place buildings in proximity of the street with a high frequency of entrances and other opening

## 4.0 Connectivity

The public open spaces that are proposed in the development are to connect into the wider context of Newcastle and its existing green infrastructure.

The town centre is 200m or a 3-minute walk from the site entrance. The nearest bus stop is 220m from the site entrance. The site is surrounded by existing two-storey residential developments. The proposed scheme is cognisant of the receiving environment and two storey dwellings are proposed.


Aerial of Site in Context of Newcastle Local Area

The following is an overview of these communities and amenities, existing and proposed, annotated in Figure 14:

The village core is served by two Dublin Bus routes, the 68 and the 68X. The bus stops that are located either side of the main street at the village core are within short walking distance from the subject site of this application

St. Finian's National School is located close to the main street. St. Finian's is a mixed Irish primary school, catering for boys and girls from 4 to 12 years old. In existence since 1825, this school provides a wide range of activities and interests for its 532 plus pupils.

St. Finian's Church (Catholic) was built in 1813 on the site of older churches dating back to early Christian settlement in the area.

Choice Childcare is a local creche and Montessori, first opened in 2006

St. Finian's Community Hall was built in 1949 and is an important amenity for the community.

St. Finian's Church of Ireland was built around 1400 on the site of older churches dating back to early Christian settlement in the area.

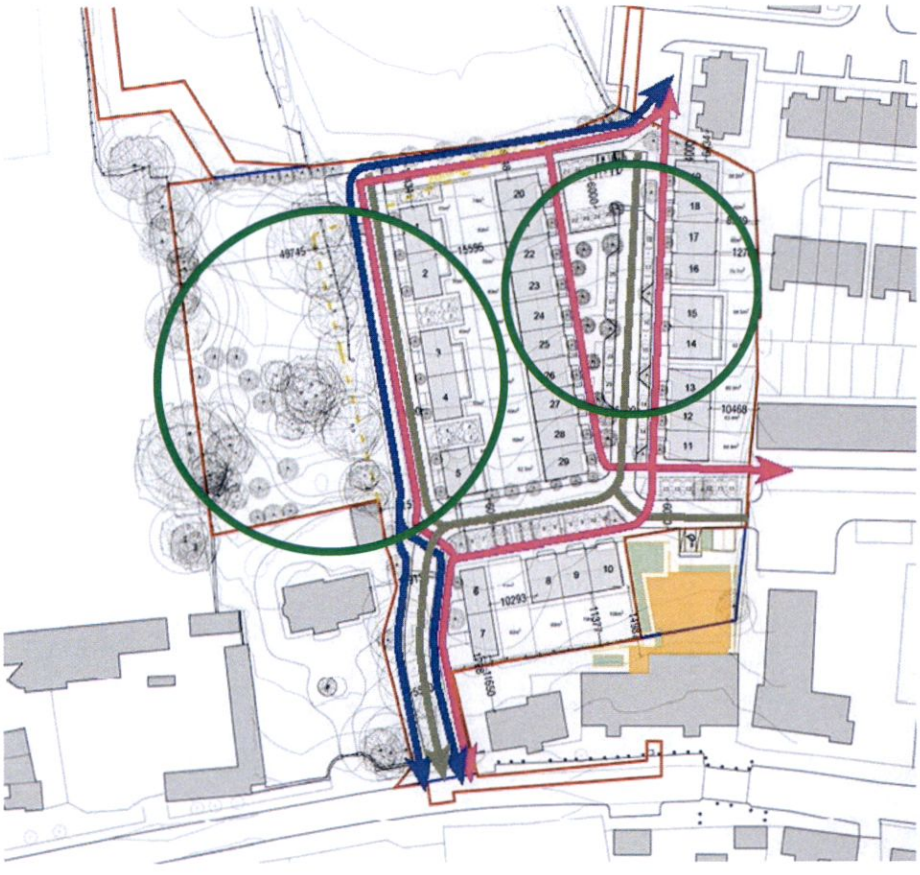
Cocoon Childcare is a creche serving the residential area of Peamount

Rocking Horse Creche and Montessori serves the local residential area of Burgage North

St. Finian's GAA and playing pitches.

Newcastle Service station and Post Office.

## 5.0 Permeability



Pedestrian

Cycle

Vehicular

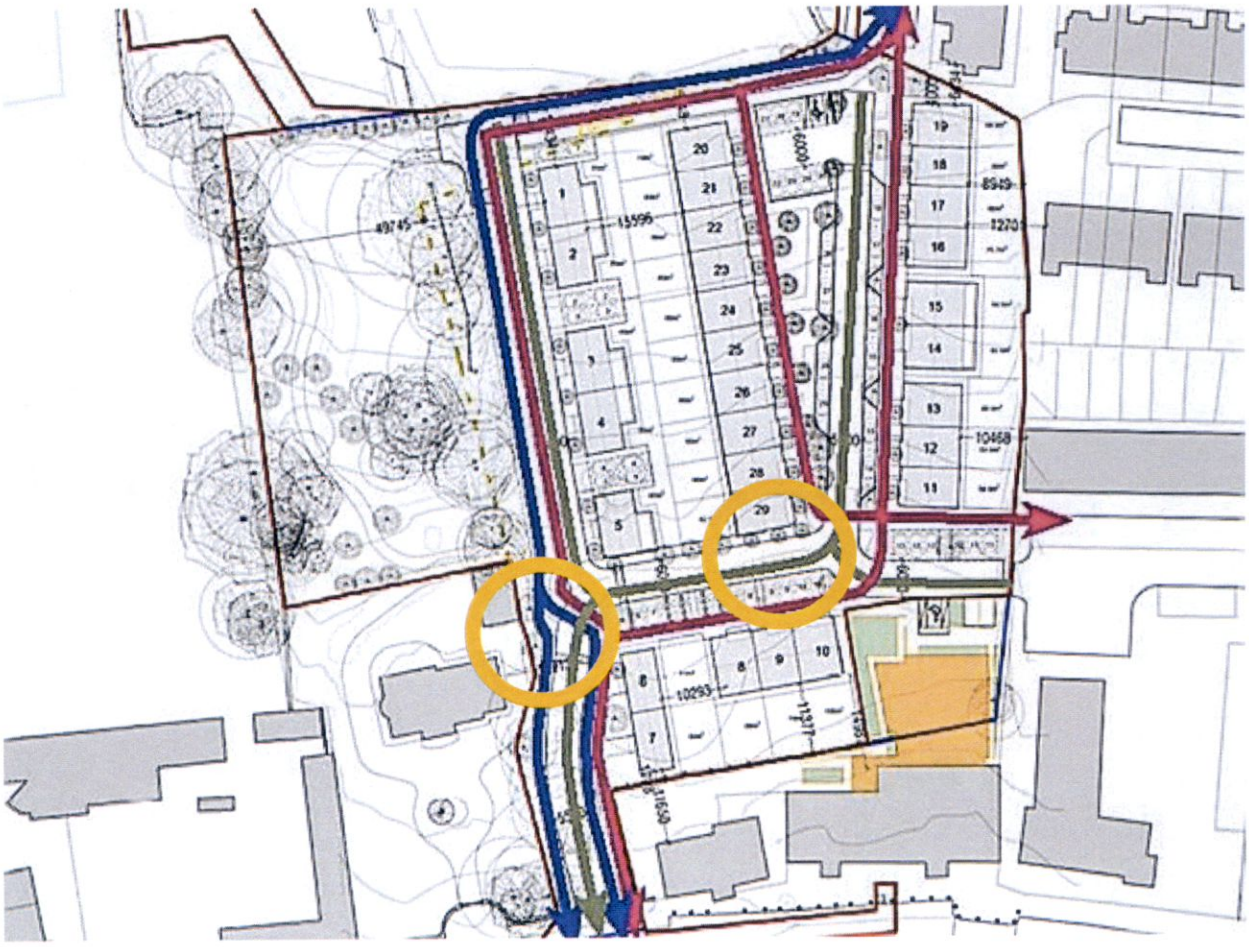
The proposal is design to provide a permeability development that links into its context. The priority being on the pedestrian and cycle connectivity. The plan above highlights the relationship between this connectivity and the public open spaces proposed by this development.

## 6.0 Desire Lines

The Urban Design Manual states that a well laid out development is one where people who live there are encouraged to walk and cycle in preference to using the private car for short journeys. As well as increasing the sustainability of the development, encouraging people to walk will bring significant benefits in terms of on-street activity.

Key to unlocking the pedestrian and cycle connectivity potential of our scheme is responding to the everyday use of the scheme, considering how the residents will want to navigate the site through its green infrastructure. The routes proposed align with the imagined desire lines that exist when we look at how different aspects of the layout will connect and relate to each other.

Throughout the site layout the pedestrian and cycle navigation of the layout has been carefully considered. The location of pedestrian crossing points proposed prioritise the movement of pedestrian and cycle routes. Below map shows the crossing points at desire lines:



## 7.0 Materiality and Detail Design

We refer the Planning Authority to the accompanying architectural plans and site plan that illustrate the general relationship between blocks, accessibility, design quality of street and footpaths, permeability between amenities, passive surveillance of the public realm. This results in a residential scheme that is well connected and integrated with its natural surroundings, and which has been designed to be attractive and safe for its occupiers and members of the community.

SuDS aims to deal in an integrated way with the issues of water quantity, quality, and amenity. It works on the following principles:

- managing surface water run-off on-site as near to source as possible;
- slowing down run-off;
- treating it naturally; and
- releasing good quality surface water to watercourses or groundwater.

SuDS techniques comprise a flexible series of options, which allow the drainage designer to select those systems that best suit the circumstances of the site. In accordance with the SuDS philosophy, a Surface Water Treatment Train approach has been applied to the design of the surface water drainage on this site. The techniques that have been applied here have been selected to suit this site topography, ground conditions and receiving environment. Please refer to PUNCH Consulting Engineers Report for more information.

Where bin stores are required for mid-terrace housing it is proposed to locate them to within close proximity to the front of the dwellings where possible for ease of access.

The proposed development aims to create a sense of place and there is a consistent architectural style throughout the development, and a simple material palette and design language.

The success of the scheme heavily relies on the quality of its delivery. High quality, durable and low maintenance materials have been selected for the proposed development. The investment into the public realm particularly will enhance the local building stock. Buildings are designed to be simple and in keeping to this development, while being respectful to existing buildings and future developments. This is achieved by carefully considering the scale proportion and materials of buildings.

In order to create a distinctive development, all units use a similar pallet of materials, finished with render and brick.

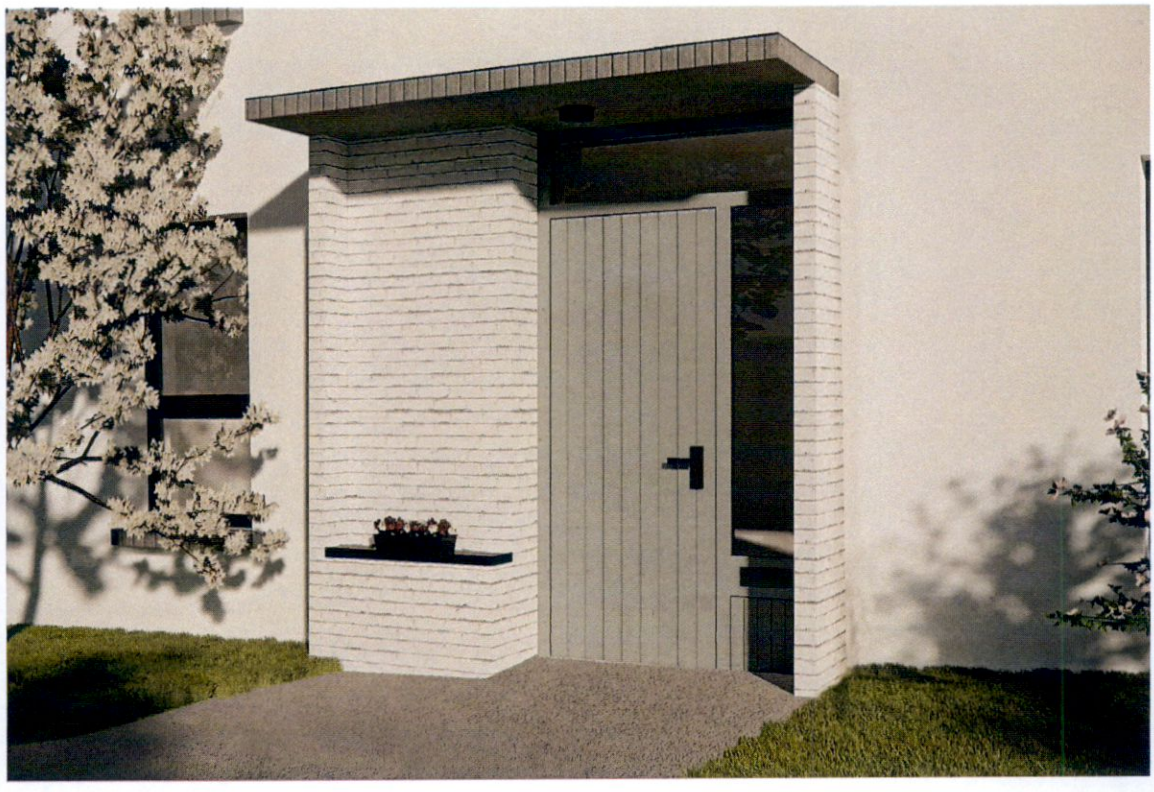
1.



2.

3.

Proposed Material Palette
1. Selected Grey Roof Slates
2. Selected Smooth Render Finish
3. Selected White Brickwork



Detail of Typical Proposed Porch

Walls:
Plain render has been selected for typical elevations with brick porches are proposed to each unit where a more hard-wearing materials are needed as this is a point of frequent contact with the building

Roofs:
Slate pitched roofs to all units.

Windows:
Coloured high performance UPVC/Aluminium window frames with double or triple glazing.

Rainwater Goods:
High quality UPVC coloured gutters and down-pipes.

Fascia and soffits:
Colour coded UPVC facias and soffits.