Axo Architects, Ellison Street, Castlebar

GLEN ABBEY NATIONAL AMBULANCE FACILITY

BELGARD ROAD, TALLAGH, DUBLIN 24

LANDSCAPE REPORT

April 2023

West Boundary

Currently there is a single storey industrial unit to the west of the site. This is due to be demolished as per approved development under SHD ABP Ref. 309916-21. A green corridor is proposed as part of such development between the new adjacent residential buildings and this site. A disused tarmac access and parking and concrete kerb are existing.

South Boundary

The south boundary is mainly formed by a mix of fairfaced concrete block walls of various heights to the industrial/retail units to the south. The corner of the site to Colbert's Fort has recently been subject of agreement for remedial works to make good of a block wall that was deemed unsafe. There is the occasional tree, often to close to boundary walls with a clear "fight" between roots and wall foundations.

East Boundary

Facing Belgard road we can see an existing low fairfaced block wall with a steel metal fence of poor design. No pedestrian or vehicular access exists within the sire boundary. No new ones will be proposed.

Within Site description

As stated, there are to main blocks of tarmac within the site. One to the west (not used) and one with access from the north to existing car park (to be replaced). The remaining of the site is soft landscape, mainly grass. A group of mature leylandii nearly splits the site East/ West. There are a few mature trees close to the road front. Where possible, the design intends to keep the trees.

Design Development Rationale

The intent is to maximize soft or permeable landscape as much as possible, albeit the purpose of the development is to park and deploy ambulances for the National Ambulance Services. The same way that the architecture brief was to achieve carbon neutrality, every effort was made in the landscape to contribute to the local biodiversity and incorporate as much sustainable elements as possible within such a limited area. We deliberately placed as many green elements to the road front as the design would allow.

Due to the nature of the proposed development, it was essential to secure the site.

Boundary Treatment

A newly designed fence is proposed to the east, south (facing Colbert's Fort) and west, facing the green strip of the new adjacent approved development.

To the north, new paving, general and accessible pedestrian access and accessible parking are rationalised and open to the main access within the estate. Still on the north boundary and linking the building to the Belgard road new fence, it is proposed to add an automated pedestrian and vehicular access. The later as a sliding gate.

Sustainability

The development proposal follows the recently published guidelines issued by SDCC. 'Sustainable Drainage Explanatory Design and Evaluation Guide, 2022'.

Sustainability aspects of the proposed development are:

• The planting of trees and shrubs to mitigate the loss of existing site vegetation and which will be suitable for the long-term site objectives such as definition of space, screening, seasonality etc.

• Careful consideration of maintenance and management requirements through design development

• Access for All - the delivery of optimal access and circulation routes, including public and secure bicycle parking.

• SuDS strategy for dealing with surface water run-off and measures for avoiding contamination of water

• Promotion of biodiversity

• The provision of an essential service within the community.

The principles of sustainability can be extended into the detailed design of the site with the specification of environmentally friendly materials and products with a low carbon footprint. Embodied carbon was considered both in architecture and landscape.

Landscape Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) mimic natural drainage processes to reduce the quantity of runoff from developments and provide amenity and biodiversity benefits.

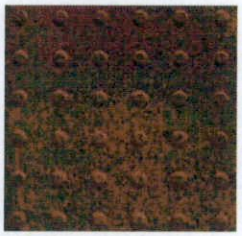
The proposed development will focus on the provision of varied planting zones and bioretention garden as an integral part of the overall engineering SuDS strategy for the site, shown on Landscape drawing no. L(80)06 and civil engineer's drawings.

SuDS measures contribute to developments and urban spaces by making them more vibrant, visually attractive, sustainable and more resilient to change, by improving urban air quality, helping to regulate temperatures and reducing noise.

Examples of SuDS included are:

• Bioretention systems, including rain gardens, collect runoff, allowing it to pond temporarily on the surface before filtering through vegetation and underlying soils.

• Permeable pavements, selected in a choice of colours and textures in-keeping with the proposed architecture finishes and to highlight to all pedestrian vs vehicular access.



TOBERMORE RED BLISTER FLAG
400 X 400 X 50 MM

TOBERMORE BRAEMAR ARRAN STONE
200 X 100 X 80 MM

TOBERMORE NATURAL TEXTURED KERB
125 X 255 X 195 MM

TOBERMORE CITY PAVE VS5
HEAVY DUTY & TRAFFIC SUITABLE
300 X 150 X 100 MM

• Trees capture rainwater and provide evapotranspiration, biodiversity and shade

• Rainwater harvesting systems, with a combined system harvesting from the building and the site itself.

• Ambulance washing wastewater recycling

There was no opportunity for a green roof in this development as the area is utilised to harvest sun light as part of the carbon neutrality strategy.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity refers to the variety of all life, habitats, plants and animals, where they live and the diversity of ecosystems. In any given place, the response of living organisms to the environs (geology, soils, climate and other conditions) creates an ecosystem which not only provides habitat for wildlife but contributes to our quality of life and sense of place. Our landscapes and the biodiversity within must be protected and enhanced through sensitive and sustainable management now and in the future in the interest of preserving habitats and adapting to climate change scenarios.

Aware of how restricted the proposed area is, we have tried to incorporate a diverse range of elements (refer to L(80)06 for location):

Zone1 – At the site entrance a single tree on a soft bed of grass with native bulbs and perennials.

Zone 2 – Bioretention garden. The planting proposed is biodiverse in nature and will comply with the guidance of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, with successional flowering plants for all seasons. Planting will include a strong proportion of native plants at all levels (ground flora, shrub and tree). Soils and test results shall be reviewed by a landscape consultant to ensure that they can support a healthy vegetation community.

Zone 3 – An opportunity to insert ornamental trees and shrubs. The emphasis is on the use of native species while ensuring that the selected are suitable for this location in respect of ultimate size and crown spread. It will complement the green strip on the approved adjacent development, buffering remaining industrial/ retail units.

The remembrance garden – Within the building design, a symbolic note was given to remember the ones that the service could not save. I single native tree in a small courtyard will be selected to change with the seasons and remind all of the path of life.

Standards and specifications

- All relevant standards referred to in the landscape specifications shall be Irish Standards/ British or European Standards.
- Principles of Universal Accessibility shall apply to all design. Building regulations Part M shall be apply to design on approaches to buildings.
- Tactile and blister paving shall be laid in compliance with the prevailing norms and standards.
- All materials required for paving shall be from a source approved by the Landscape Architect.
- Full specifications for workmanship and quality shall accompany the tender documentation.
- All landscape works shall be fully quantified.
- Topsoil shall conform to B.S. 3882 2007
- All plant material shall comply with the requirements of B.S. 3936: Parts 1-11 Specification for Nursery Stock. Advanced nursery trees shall comply with B.S. 5236: 1992
- A design risk assessment shall be prepared for all landscape works.
- Grass seed shall include a nurse species, such as dwarf rye grass and shall include a range of fescue and bent grasses to create a diverse sward. The grass shall obtained from recognised suppliers who will supply a list of the species, their percentage composition within the mix and the seeds sources.

Closing statement

The Landscape design has been considered in collaboration with the design team members and with reference to best practice guidelines. This has led to a well thought out layout and arrangement of spaces that provides amenity to the service, remembrance and retains a breeding space in the Belgard Road. The landscaping scheme also has an ecological approach, providing habitat, contributing to bio-diversity, green infra-structure and assisting pollinators.
It is expected that this site and landscape will add to the character of the area in the long term and assist in placemaking and identity for the locality.