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Liffey Valley, Site D, Hotel Proposal.

Proposed Development;

Construction of a 7 storey hotel building over 2 basement levels comprising of 254 bedrooms and 8 penthouse suites, reception, exercise room, bar and restaurant, staff facilities, outdoor plaza area, business / conference rooms, 148 car parking spaces and 36 bicycle parking spaces; Works to existing vehicular access at the north of the site and all associated site enabling and excavation works, ESB substation, plant, storage, hard and soft landscaping, green roofs and signage.



Design Statement

17th April 2023

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Section A; Contextual design;

I. The Site Context;

The proposed development envisages the construction of a seven storey hotel in previously undeveloped site in Liffey Valley, located north-west of the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre and is known as Site D.

The contextual area is Liffey Valley, an mixed use area of retail, commercial and residential in an urban environment, south of the N4 and the valley to the river Liffey and west of the M50.

The physical infrastructure of the local area is fully complete, and provides excellent connections to the city and surrounding area including the existing road network which provides for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. There is a newly completed Bus Connects station to the south, located in the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre.

The Liffey Valley Shopping Centre, directly to the south is the focal point of the area, which has been greatly augmented by further development since it first opened in 1998. The Fonthill road is the main east-west throughfare, the road has mixed use developments (hotel, motor showrooms, drive-thru' restaurants and offices) to the north side and predominantly open space to the south side.

The natural heritage feature of the area is the valley of the river Liffey, extending into the city to the east and the suburbs to the west. The proposed development site is 0.56 hectares, currently in a non-developed state, with amenity grade grass.

There are no features of architectural, built or archaeological heritage on the site.

The site is zoned; 'MRC' - To protect, improve and provide for the future development of a Major Retail Centre.

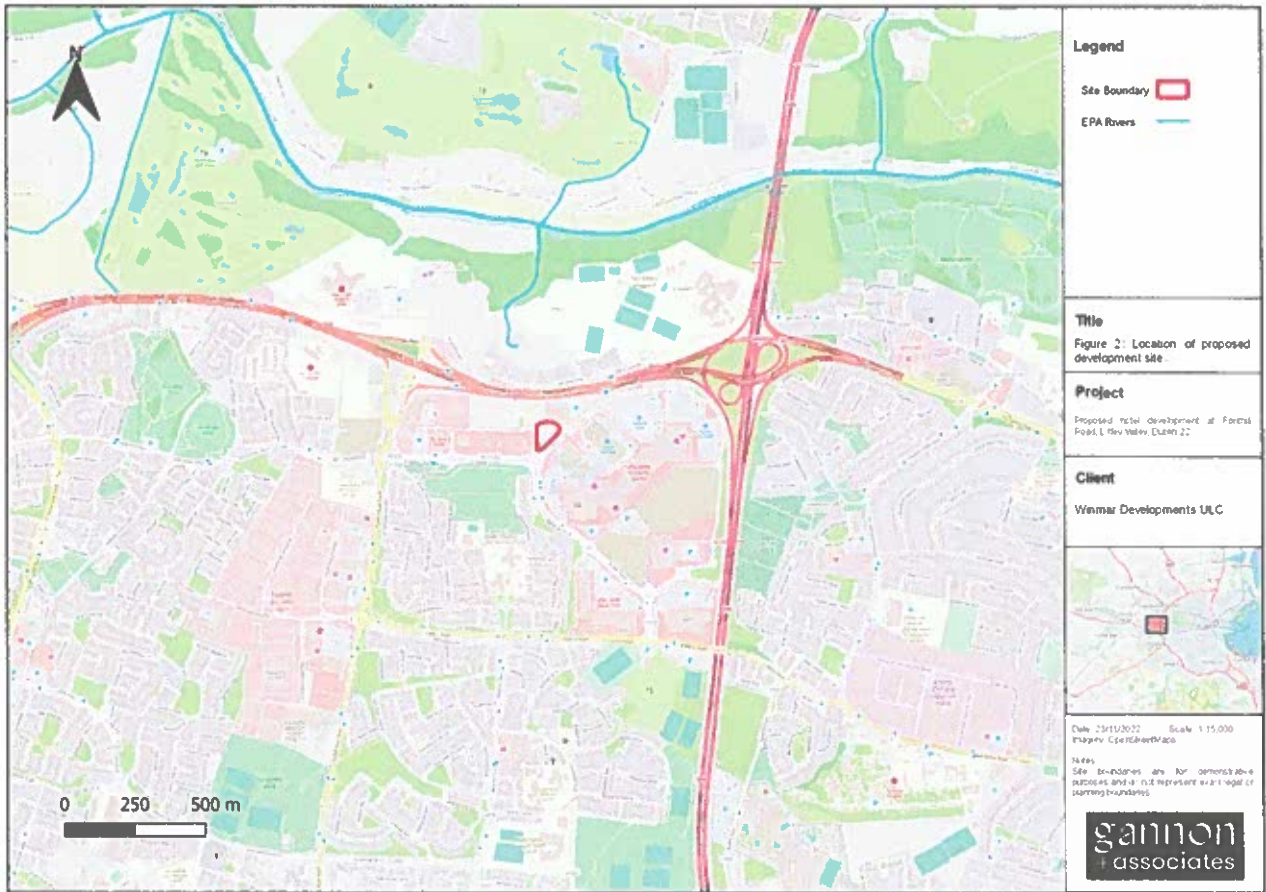


Fig. 1; Location of proposed development in its wider context, extracted from Gannon + Associates Appropriate Assessment Report for this project.

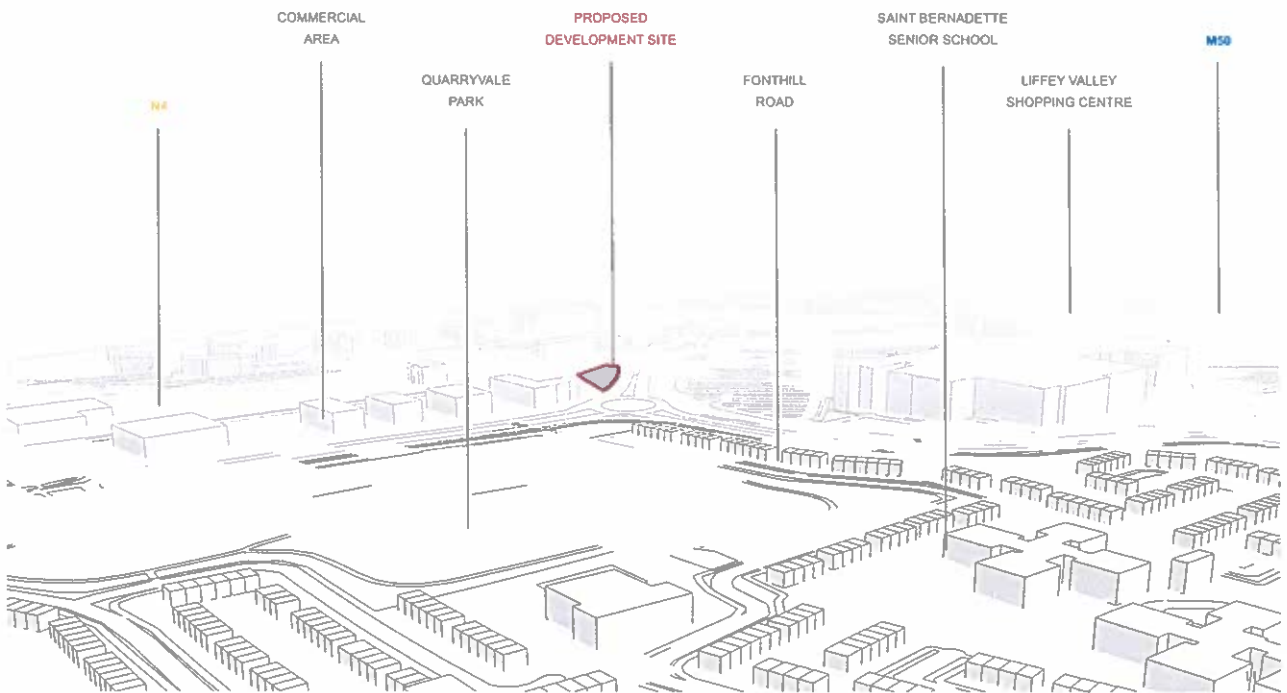


Fig. 2; Site analysis view, extracted from Gannon + Associates Landscape Report for this project.



Fig. 3; Aerial view of the development site, extracted from Gannon + Associates Appropriate Assessment Report for this project.



Fig. 4; Aerial view of site of proposed hotel development, with adjoining office buildings on either side.

USES



Fig. 5; Site context, existing adjoining uses, extracted from Gannon + Associates Landscape Report for this project.

CIRCULATION



— Site Boundary

— Main Road

— N4

— Cycle Lanes

— M50

Fig. 6; Site context, existing circulation, extracted from Gannon + Associates Landscape Report for this project.



Fig. 7; Photograph looking north toward the development site from the recently completed Bus Connects terminal in Liffey Valley Shopping Centre.



Fig. 8; Photograph looking west toward the development site indicating the recently completed pedestrian / cycleways / landscaping improvement works.

2. The Building Design;

The design brief was to design a four-star hotel development, with a minimum of 250 bedrooms, with bedroom sizes in excess of the minimum requirement for 'four-star' classification, supported by a restaurant, bar and a business centre.

The design response seeks to create a high-quality contemporary designed building, the concept being to have two bedroom wings, each one addressing the public road, with one wing at 45 degrees to the other, this geometry reflecting the existing site context. The bedroom wings are articulated at their junction in the central block, addressing the roundabout. The proposed building has been designed, orientated and configured to compliment the existing adjoining commercial blocks, and seeks to define and create an urban form addressing the existing road network and the wider context.

The design stage of the building included reviewing other potential configurations. One option was to increase the height of the building at the junction of the bedroom wings, however following 3D analysis of the massing of the building, it was concluded that the configuration as a predominantly six storey building with a partial penthouse level was the most appropriate to the existing site context. This was confirmed by building height analysis using 3D modelling and contextual elevations. The culmination of the design process has resulted in the adopted design.

In assessing the design criteria set-out in the 'Urban Design Manual' (2009), we consider that the adopted design achieves;

a. *Context;*

The plan form reflects the geometry and orientation of the site, and best utilises the site area to create a building which will positively contribute to the character and identity of Liffey Valley. The form, architecture and landscaping proposals are contemporary in design.

b. *Connections;*

The limited size of the site, and its location bounded by two main roads ensures that it is well served by the existing circulation routes. The use of open boundaries will enhance visible permeability through the site, while pedestrian permeability will be improved by forming new pedestrian connections to the existing footpaths which surround the site.

c. *Inclusivity;*

The development will foster inclusivity through detail design to ensure ease of access for all, the site boundaries will be open presenting a positive aspect and will avoid physical or visual barriers. The 'public' and 'social' element of the hotel complex (restaurant, bar and business centre) will create a physical and visual interaction between the building and its surroundings.

d. *Variety;*

The proposed use as a hotel will create a good mix of activities in the area, which currently has a retail, commercial and residential focus. The inclusion of the restaurant, bar and business centre will enliven the uses within the building and the wider context.

e. *Efficiency;*

The proposal sees the use of a previously undeveloped, yet serviced, site. The development is not higher densities than those permitted, but seeks to utilise building height to make more space available for landscaping and external use purposes. The building and its attendant open space maximises the site orientation, while the landscaping will enhance bio-diversity and include sustainable drainage systems.

f. *Distinctiveness;*

The building will utilise high-quality design and materials, and is a unique response to its site, orientation and context. The building will seek to create a focal point at the eastern end of

Fonthill Road.

g. *Layout;*

The building design places 'public' functions at ground level, opening out onto the landscaped areas, creating active functions at street level.

h. *Public Realm;*

The entrance plaza is located at the junction of the bedroom blocks, and is intended as a public space, not just as an access point to the hotel. The design envisages car parking at basement level, allowing the plaza area to function as a pedestrian-friendly area.

i. *Adaptability;*

The building has been designed with a floorplate depth of 15 metres and a floor to floor height of 3.6 metres. This geometry would facilitate the possible future redevelopment of the building for a number of uses, including residential, office or mixed-use.

j. *Privacy and amenity;*

The requirement for privacy is not really applicable to hotel use, however this has been considered in the design of the penthouse level suites, each having a private balcony area. Externally, spaces to be used by the building occupants have been designed to create private and more public areas.

k. *Parking;*

Sufficient car and cycle parking has been provided, with all car parking (except some accessible spaces) located at basement level, so as to maximise open space for landscaping and amenity use.

l. *Detail design;*

The detailed design of the proposed hotel will ensure that high-quality design and materials will provide a positive contribution to the locality, maximising external spaces for the use of the building users.

3. Building Height and Density;

The maximum height of the proposed building is 28 metres, the typical height of the south-eastern wing onto Fonthill road is 27.26 metres and the typical height of the north-eastern wing onto the access road is 24 metres.

In respect of the Urban Development and Building Heights, Guidelines for planning Authorities (Consultation Draft document, 2018), we would note;

- The proposal is located within an existing / proposed Major Retail Centre, which is well served by public transport connections.
- The proposed building will enhance the mixed use within this Retail Centre
- The proposed building will make a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood and streetscape of the area.
- The form, massing and height of the proposed building have been modulated in the design of the building.

In respect of the Building Height and Density Guide for South Dublin County 2022 (Appendix 10), we would note;

- Increased building heights are considered acceptable in lands zoned MRC, which includes the subject site.

- The existing 'prevailing height' is five storeys, based on the adjoining commercial premises. The proposed development is predominantly six storey. The upper (penthouse) level is set back from the building edge and utilises different materials to accentuate this. The junction of the two bedroom wings is articulated by a seven storey block. We do not consider this to be a significantly scaled increase in building heights, based on our analysis of the existing context.
- The proposed development density has a plot ratio of 1:3.03 and a site coverage of 33%.
- We consider that this building height and density are contextually appropriate.

BUILDING HEIGHT ANALYSIS & VISUAL IMPACT:

We have reviewed the surround building context in terms of existing and proposed building heights, see fig. 9 below.



Fig. 9; Existing and proposed building heights and approx. parapet levels relative to Ordnance Datum.

The visual impact of the proposed building has been assessed by Digital Dimensions, using verified photomontages computer generated images from four locations within the vicinity of the development. Extracts of these images are provided below. The re



Fig. 10; Extract of CGI image, with view from Fonthill Road roundabout looking east, prepared by Digital Dimensions.



Fig. 11; Extract of CGI image, with view from N4 looking east, prepared by Digital Dimensions.



Fig. 12; Extract of CGI image, with view from pedestrian access ramp to N4 looking west, prepared by Digital Dimensions.



Fig. 13; Extract of CGI image, with view from overbridge on N4 looking west, prepared by Digital Dimensions.

Digital Dimensions have undertaken a shadow study analysis of the impact of the proposed building on the adjoining office building to the west. The executive summary of this study confirms that *'there will be negligible reduction to the available sunlight levels to the neighbouring properties'* and in respect of the communal amenity space it is *'well designed for sunlight with 90.8% of the area receiving more than 2 hours of available sunlight on the 21st March, which well exceeds the recommendations of the BRE Guidelines 2002'*. Therefore, we would contend that this is an acceptable level of impact on light in terms of commercial buildings located in an urban context while the proposed open spaces receive sufficient sunshine hours.

We would conclude that the proposed building form, massing and height is appropriate to the context of the building in the Liffey Valley area.

4. Street Design;

The proposed development does not create any new streets, it is located at the junction of Fonthill Road and the access road to the north of it. We consider that the proposed development will contribute to defining this existing road infrastructure, while the proposed use as a hotel with restaurant, bar and business centre located at ground floor level, will enliven the existing streets.

6. Quality Design and Healthy Placemaking;

The proposal intends to create a building of high-quality design and materials. In terms of building use, the hotel will attract visitors to the area, while the ancillary uses (restaurant, bar and business centre) will augment placemaking.

The proposal is located within walking distance of public transport, and the recently completed Bus Connects terminal at Liffey Valley Shopping Centre. The recently completed infrastructural upgrade also enhances cycling and walking options.

The design proposal will contribute to an integrated and balanced approach to movement, placemaking and streetscape, while providing a range of services and facilities.

In terms of sustainable neighbourhoods, we would contend that;

Context – The proposal considers heritage and green infrastructure elements, while providing for social and economic development, contributing to sustainable development.

Placemaking – The proposal will contribute to urban design, and through its use, to social interaction.

Connected neighbourhoods – The proposed location is well served by existing public transport and will enhance internal movements within the neighbourhood.

Thriving economy – The proposal will contribute to employment within the community

Inclusive and accessible – The building and its site will be accessible to all

Public realm – The proposal will contribute to the sense of place, providing a distinctive building and landscaped surroundings.

Built form and mix – The proposal will provide an appropriate built form to its context and utilizes the existing transport networks and infrastructure.

Design & Materials – The following section provides details of the proposed finishes.

Section B; Material design.

Materials, Colours and Textures:

The proposed building will be predominantly a brick finished building, it is anticipated that a beige / red colour will be used. The junction of the two bedroom wings is intended to be expressed in a beige Jura limestone / tiled finish, so as accentuate this element. All glazed elements will be aluminium / alu-clad framing, with a light grey / silver grey colour.

The existing adjoining commercial buildings are finished in red brick, with the glazed elements in aluminium framed glazing system.

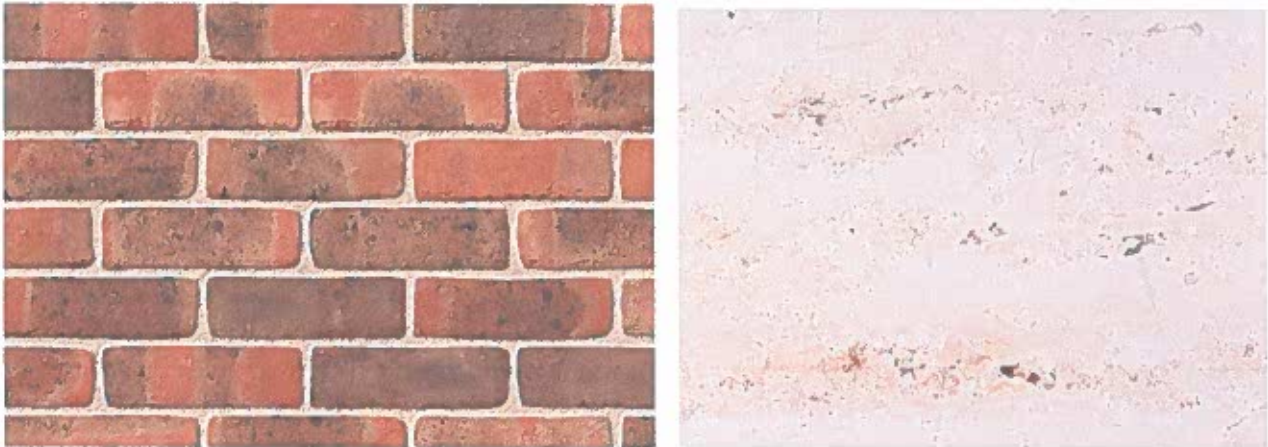


Fig. 9; Left; Intended brick finish. Right; Intended stone finish.

Signage:

The proposed building end-user has not yet been determined, and therefore the details of the proposed signage will require further review. The intention is that all signage will be formed in metal, as individual letters or a logo symbol, and each letter / element will be individually mounted. Lighting will be limited to back-lit 'halo' lighting, each letter / element being lit individually. There is signage intended at the entrance, which will consist of low level signage to match the building signage.

Boundary Treatments:

The boundary treatments are intended as open boundaries, to maximise visual and physical links between the building users and the building context. The building design envisages the ground floor being predominantly used for 'public' uses; restaurant, bar and business centre, to encourage this interaction. The existing western boundary treatment of a semi-transparent security fence to the adjoining office building will be retained, all other boundaries are intended to be open, with landscaping extending to the public footpath. No boundary gates or walls are envisaged, the use of vehicular access control by way of automated barrier may be a requirement of a future end-user.

Section C; Compliance with relevant sections of the Development plan;

1. EDEI Objective 6 (of SDCC Development Plan);

The development will contribute to the economic and sustainable development of the area, and in response to EDEI Objective 6 we would note;

- The development of a 254 bedroom hotel with restaurant, bar and business centre will increase employment opportunities and densities within walking distance of the proposed hotel, and on the public transport route which serve Liffey Valley and the adjoining local areas.
- The proposed development will increase permeability within the area, and adequate car parking and cycle parking will be provided. The end-user of the proposed hotel has not yet been determined, however the promotion of walking, cycling and use of public transport by both staff and guests will be prioritised.
- The use of any future district heating, and the use of renewable energy as a source of power will be reviewed, and incorporated into the detailed design of the building, where practicable.
- The proposed landscaping scheme will increase the potential for carbon sequestering, in comparison to the existing site conditions. This is addressed in the Green Infrastructure Statement prepared by Gannon + Associates, Landscape.

2. Universal Design (Item 12.5.1 of SDCC Development Plan);

The proposed development, should planning permission be granted, shall comply with Part M of the Building Regulations, while the external environment in the wider context and approach to the building will refer to the 'Building for Everyone' guidelines.

As part of the pre-planning stage design of the building, an outline assessment of accessibility was undertaken by Maurice Johnson & Partners, Fire Safety Engineering and Access Consultants, and the recommendations of this assessment were integrated into the building design.

The detailed design stage of the proposed development will include;

- Provision of designated accessible parking and set down points for people with disabilities and parents with children. The current design indicates accessible parking and set down being provided at entrance plaza level, and at both basement levels.
- Provision of level pedestrian routes, together with ramped and stepped access routes as determined by the existing topography, of sufficient widths to accommodate all building users.
- Provision of external hard landscaping surfaces suitable for wheelchairs and buggies
- Provision of tactile and blister paving, as required to highlight routes and changes in level.
- Provision of colour contrast in materials and features, particularly in the public realm.
- Provision of wayfinding and signage at appropriate levels, particularly in the public realm.
- Provision of level access to buildings from the street that is suitable for wheelchairs and buggies
- All entrance doors will be designed as accessible entrances.

3. Public Art (Item 12.8.6 of SDCC Development Plan);

Gannon + Associates, Landscape Architects have prepared a report defining a possible response the provision of public art within the scheme, this report forms part of the Additional Information submission.

4. Energy Performance in New Buildings (Item 12.10.1 of SDCC Development Plan);

The proposed development, should planning permission be granted, shall comply with Part M of the Building Regulations. The detailed design of the building will ensure that material specification and construction detailing provide an energy-efficient building fabric and external envelope.

As part of the pre-planning stage design of the building, an assessment of the proposed building services design was undertaken by MMA Consulting Engineers, and the building has been designed to accommodate the space requirements and routes for vertical and horizontal distribution of building services.

The detailed design stage of the proposed development shall provide an Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation Design Statement. The statement will detail:

- Method statement for energy use in material selection at construction stage and energy-use for long-term management of the development.
- How energy and climate change adaptation considerations have been inherently addressed in the design and planning of the scheme.

5. Solar Photovoltaic (Item 12.10.54 of SDCC Development Plan);

The scheme indicates an area of the roof where south-facing solar photovoltaic panels could be mounted, while there is sufficient plant room space in the basement for battery storage. The requirement for renewable energy will be addressed at detail design stage. The location for photovoltaic panels was selected with reference to;

- Building orientation and possible over-shadowing
- Ease of access and sufficient space for installation and maintenance
- No impact on the visual amenities of the surrounding area
- No impact on Habitats Directive and glint and glare to adjacent airports.

6. Aviation, Airports and Aerodromes (Item 12.11.5 of SDCC Development Plan), **Restricted and Prohibited Development** (Item 12.11.6 of SDCC Development Plan) **and Shielding / Safeguarding** (Item 12.11.7 of SDCC Development Plan);



Fig. 10; Extract from South Dublin County Council 2022-2028, arcgis map indicating flight paths and aerodromes. The subject site is outside of zone of Casement aerodrome.

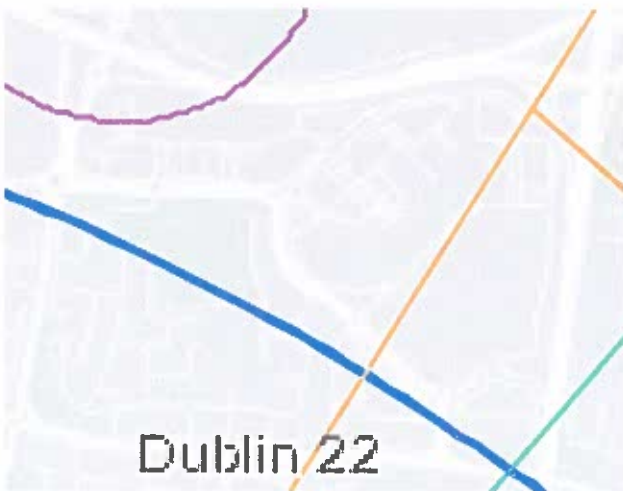


Fig. 11; Extract from South Dublin County Council 2022-2028, arcgis map indicating flight paths and aerodromes. The subject site is in the centre of the map, outside of zone of Casement aerodrome (blue line) and the north-east flight path (orange line).

Aviation, Airports and Aerodromes:

The proposed development will not adversely affect, or be an obstacle to, aviation. The proposed development is within the 'yellow zone' as indicated in fig. 12.1 of the Development Plan, however the building height is less than 30 metres (the maximum proposed building height is 28 metres).

Restricted and prohibited Development:

The proposal will not contribute to bird-strike hazard.
 There are no smoke, duct, steam or fume-generating activities.
 The proposed building is not within runway thresholds, flight paths or control tower.

Shielding / Safeguarding:

The proposed building height will not require 'shielding'.

