PLANNING STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY

PERTAINING TO PROPOSED LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (LRD) ON LANDS AT

BALLYNAMONA [Townland], FERMOY, CO.CORK



AUGUST 2025

BON
TOTAL PLANNING SOLUTIONS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Legislative Context 1

1.3 Outline of This Report 2

1.4 Policy Documents Considered 3

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL 5

2.1 Site Location 5

2.2 Proposed Development Description 5

3.0 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY COMPLIANCE 6

3.1 *National Development Plan (Ireland 2040 – Our Plan)* 6

3.2 *National Planning Framework (Ireland 2040 – Our Plan)* 6

3.3 *Southern Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031* 13

3.4 *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning (2009)* 15

3.5 *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (2024)* 17

3.6 *Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009)* 23

3.7 *Design Standards for Apartments Guidelines for* Planning Authorities (2025) 28

3.8 Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007) 34

3.9 Childcare Facilities Guidelines (2001) 35

3.10 Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000: Guidelines (2017) 36

3.11 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019) 37

3.12 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009) 40

3.13 Urban Development and Building Heights: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) 41

3.14 Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning 41

3.15 Climate Action Plan (2021) 43

4.0 LOCAL POLICY COMPLIANCE 43

4.1 Core Strategy 44

4.2 Land Use Zoning Designation and Mapped Objectives 48

4.3 Community Facilities 50

4.4 Childcare Facilities 51

4.5 Climate Policies 51

4.6 Neighbourhood and Placemaking 52

4.7 Transport and Mobility 53

4.8 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity 56

4.9 Open Space, Parks and Recreation 58

4.10 Housing Policy 59

4.10.1 Residential Density 59

4.10.2 Overall Housing Mix 59

4.10.3 Phasing Schedule 62

4.10.4 Site Coverage 62

4.10.5 LVIA 63

5 Other Elements of Consistency 64

6 Conclusion 66

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Outline

This *Statement of Consistency* demonstrates that the proposed residential and ancillary development at lands identified as Ballynamona [Townland], Dublin Road, Fermoy, Co.Cork, is consistent with the relevant policies pertaining to the site at national, regional, and local levels.

The proposed large-scale residential development (LRD) has been developed by VB Developments Limited and is situated on a c.7.85 ha site located at Ballynamona [Townland], Dublin Road, Fermoy, Co.Cork.

1.2 Legislative Context

This Report will demonstrate that the proposed development is consistent with national, regional and local planning policy. The proposed development is classified as a Large Scale Residential Development as defined under the Planning and Development (Amendment) (Large-scale Residential Development) Act 2021:

> "a) The development of 100 or more houses on land zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses;
>
> *b)* The development of student accommodation units which, when combined, contain 200 or more bedspaces, on land the zoning of which facilitates the provision of student accommodation or a mixture of student accommodation and other uses thereon;
>
> *c)* Development that includes development of the type referred to in paragraph a) and of the type referred to in paragraph b), or
>
> *d)* The alteration of an existing planning permission granted under Section 34 (other than under subsection 3(a) where the proposed alteration relates to development specified in paragraph a), b), or c).
>
> where the LRD floor space of—
>
> (i) in the case of paragraph (a), the buildings comprising the houses,
>
> (ii) in the case of paragraph (b), the student accommodation,
>
> (iii) in the case of paragraphs (c) and (d), the buildings comprising the houses and the student accommodation, is not less than 70 per cent, or such other percentage as may be prescribed, of the LRD floor space of the buildings comprising the development."

As the proposed development includes 302 no. residential units, the development is therefore considered a Large-scale Residential Development ("LRD").

1.3 Outline of This Report

This *Statement of Consistency* provides a description of the proposed development followed by a list of the various statutory and strategic policy documents considered. The Statement demonstrates full consistency with the *Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028* as well as the relevant Section 28 National Guidelines.

Development Team

COMPANY NAME	DOCUMENTS PREPARED
BON Total Planning Solutions **Old Thompsons Bakery, Thompson House, MacCurtain Street, Cork City**	• Planning Report • Statement of Consistency • School Needs Assessment • Childcare Assessment Report • Application Form • Site Notice • Planning Application form 19 • Press Notice
BRH Design Partners Architects **Phoenix House, Monahan Road, Cork City**	• Architectural Drawing Pack • Schedule of Accommodation • Housing Quality Assessment • Architectural & Urban Design Statement • Building Lifecycle Report
BRH Design Partners Engineers **Phoenix House, Monahan Road, Cork City**	• Infrastructure Design Report • Engineering Drawings • Flood Risk Assessment • DMURS Design Statement • Preliminary Construction & Environmental Management Plan • Mobility Management Plan
MHL Transport Engineers **Blackpool Retail Park Blackpool Cork City**	• Traffic and Transport Assessment Report • Stage ½ Road Safety Audit
Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Landscape Architects **Copley House Copley Street Cork City**	• Landscape Drawings • Landscape Design Rationale Report • Landscape Visual Impact Assessment [Qualitative] • Outline Landscape Specification
Dixon Brosnan Ecology/Environmental Consultants	• Appropriate Assessment Screening Report • Natura Impact Statement • Ecological Impact Assessment Report (including Bat Assessment) • Statement in Accordance with Article 103(1A)a of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001

	• Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report
DKP **GNET3D** **NSC Campus** **Loughmahon Link Road** **Mahon** **Cork City**	• Daylight and Sunlight Analysis • Verified Photomontages and Computer- Generated Images [CGIs]
Maurice Hurley Consulting **Archarologist** **Saint Lukes Cork City**	• Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment
	• Universal Access Statement
Quantity Surveyor	• Part V Costings
VB Developments	• Property Management Strategy Report • Building Lifecycle Report
DKP Consulting Limited **Clonshaugh Business and Technology Park** **Dublin 17**	• Daylight Sunlight Assessment
Kellihers Lighting Limited **Cork City**	• Part L Planning Compliance for the Mechanical and Electrical Services Installations • Site Lighting Layout • CV Ducting Layout
County Care Tree Services	• Tree Survey • Arboricultural Report?

1.4 Policy Documents Considered

The following policy documents have informed this *Statement of Consistency*:

1. *Project Ireland 2040 – National Development Plan 2021-2030*
2. *Project Ireland 2040 – The National Planning Framework*
3. *Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, Rebuilding Ireland;*
4. *Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland, September 2021;*
5. Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (December 2018);
6. *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025);*
7. Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustainable Communities (2007)
8. *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)*
9. *Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009)*
10. *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019)*
11. *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009);*
12. *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001) and the Child Care Act 1991*

(Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

13. *Sustainable and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024*
14. *Climate Action Plan (2021),*

REGIONAL

15. *Southern Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020*

LOCAL

16. *Cork County Development Plan, 2022-2028.*

OTHER

17. *Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001);*
18. *Part* V of the Planning and Development Act 2000: Guidelines (2017);
19. *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009);*

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

2.1 Site Location

The site is located within the Fermoy Development Boundary and forms part of the Cork County Council functional area. The subject site is situated 1.7 kilometres to the north of the main street and approximately 35 km from Cork City Centre. Fermoy is a thriving market town settlement in its own right with well established employment, recreation, tourism, retail and residential uses in the area. It is strategically located where the main roads from Dublin to Cork and Dungarvan to Killarney intersect. With a population of 6,720 the population has remained relatively static since 2016 when the population was 6,489 persons. This can directly be linked to the lack of available housing in the settlement as demand has been unprecedented during this timeframe. The town has excellent access to the national road network, particularly through its proximity to the M8, which coupled with a good range of schools, community facilities and amenities makes it both a convenient and attractive employment and residential location. The subject site itself is connected to Cork City via the M8 – Cork Dublin Motorway which is situated to the east of the site. In recent years there has been much additional investment in upgrading the water services infrastructure and pedestrian and cycle facilities in the town to achieve good connectivity with the rest of the town and existing social and community services. Additional housing development must be delivered to harness and support this investment.

The subject site is located to the north of Fermoy Town Centre in the townland of Ballynamona, it is situated directly to the north of the Crann Ard Residential Development and to the north of the Inver service station. To the west the site is bounded by the old main Cork to Dublin Road the R639. To the north and east the site is bounded by greenfield agricultural lands.

The site spans a total area of 7.85 hectares [19.39 acres] and is relatively flat. The developable area of the site is a slightly smaller 7.00 hectares [17.29 acres]. This is detailed in the design statement which accompanies this planning statement prepared by BRH design partners. The contextual considerations in the immediate environs of the site were taken into account when devising a scheme for the subject site [see Figure 04 and 05 for reference]. The residential character and amenity has been protected and a proposed residential scheme is deemed most appropriate to tie into the existing land use acting as a continuation of the semi completed scheme to the south.

2.2 Proposed Development Description

The proposed development consists of the following:

VB Developments Limited., intend to apply for permission for the following Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) comprising of the construction of 302 no. residential units, 1 no. creche, 2 no. ESB substations and all associated development works including footpath/cycle path extensions and road improvement works along the R639, permission is also sought for internal connections, crossings, footpaths and cycle paths, car and bicycle parking, drainage, fencing and boundary treatments, bicycle and bin stores, lighting and landscaping/amenity areas at Ballynamona [Townland] , Dublin Road, Fermoy, Co. Cork. Permission is also sought for the demolition of a wall currently traversing the site as well as a redundant bund, vegetation and scrub. Access to the proposed development is provided to the west of the site [constituting a relocation of the existing access to the site], on to the Dublin Road (R639). The application is available to view on the LRD website www.ballynamonalrd.ie

3.0 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY COMPLIANCE

3.1 *Project Ireland 2040 – National Development Plan 2021-2030*

The National Development Plan 2021 – 2030 [NDP] was published in 2021 as an updated version of the previous National Development Plan 2018 – 2027.

As part of Project Ireland 2040, the NDP sets out the Government's investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030. It is an ambitious plan that balances the significant demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland with a major focus on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects to ensure speed of delivery and value for money. The NDP sets out funding to underpin key Government priorities. Specifically, allocations will support the realisation of critical goals laid out in Housing for All– a New Housing Plan for Ireland, September 2021 [Housing for All] and enable a more aligned investment strategy to ameliorate the effects of climate change. The NDP underpins the overarching message of the National Planning Framework [NPF] and essentially provides the national exchequer funding framework for which to realise the key aims of the NPF. The NPF has 10 No. National Strategic Outcomes, which are referenced in the NDP consistency with these is demonstrated in the next section.

3.2 *Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (Our Plan)*

The National Planning Framework (NPF) was launched in 2018 and is the Government's strategic plan for "*shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040".* The National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF) established strong growth targets for Ireland and sets a new policy framework to deliver compact urban development, with at least 50% of all future population and employment growth to be focused on the existing five cities and their suburbs.

The *National Planning Framework* forecasts that an extra one million people living in Ireland by 2040, this is in addition to the two thirds of a million people working in Ireland and the half a million extra homes needed in Ireland by 2040.
The Framework focuses on:

- Growing regions, their cities, towns and villages and rural fabric.
- Building more accessible urban centres of scale.
- Better outcomes for communities and the environment, through more effective and coordinated planning, investment, and delivery.

As a strategic development framework, the Plan sets the long-term context for Ireland's physical development and associated progress in economic, social, and environmental terms and in an island, European and global context. Ireland 2040 will be followed and underpinned by supporting policies and actions at sectoral, regional, and local levels.

Under the heading of 'Compact Growth', the NPF is:
"Targeting a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to happen within and close to existing built-up areas. Making better use of under-utilised land, including 'infill' and 'brownfield' and publicly owned sites together with higher housing and jobs densities, better serviced by existing facilities and public transport."

National Policy Objective 74 states that proposals should '*secure the alignment of the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan through delivery of the National Strategic Outcomes*.'
Table 01 sets out how the proposed development will contribute towards achieving the 10 No. National Strategic Outcomes identified in the *NPF.*

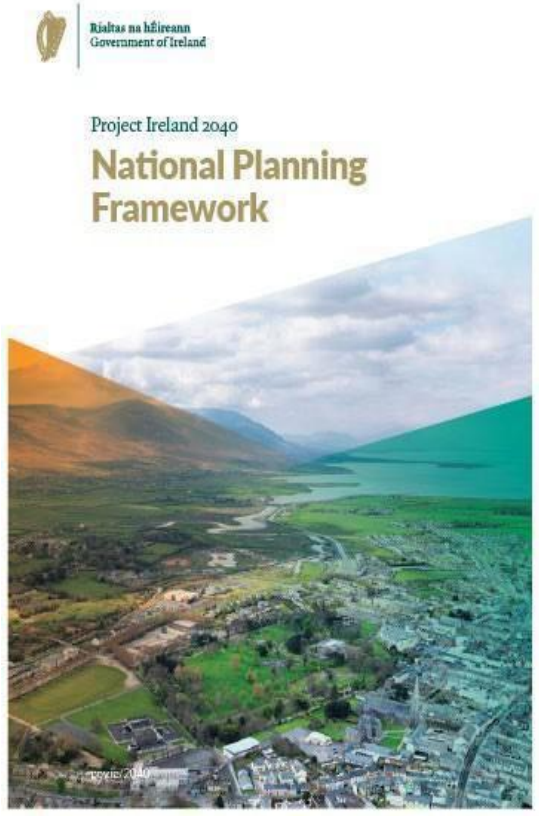


Figure 01 ***National Planning Framework*** **[Ireland 2040]**

Section 10.3 of the *NPF* identifies a list of 10 No. National Strategic Outcomes which sets out the vision of the *NPF* (to create a shared set of goals for every community across the country) as follows:

1. **Compact Growth;**
2. **Enhanced Regional Accessibility;**
3. **Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities;**
4. **Sustainable Mobility;**
5. **A strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills;**
6. **High Quality International Connectivity;**
7. **Enhanced Amenity and Heritage;**
8. **Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society;**
9. **Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources; and**
10. **Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services.**

A number of key National Policy Objectives ("*NPOs*") have been identified throughout the *NPF* in order to successfully deliver the 10 No. Strategic Outcomes.

The table below sets out how the proposed development will contribute towards achieving the 10 No. National Strategic Outcomes identified in the *NPF* as follows:

Consistency with National Strategic Outcomes

No.	Objective	How it is Addressed by this development?	Meet criteria?
1:	Compact Growth;	Sustainable and efficient redevelopment of a key underutilised, brownfield site within the development boundary of an existing urban area.	Yes
2:	Enhanced Regional Accessibility;	Proximity to Fermoy town centre and major transport routes (e.g., N72 road). Public transport links (local bus services) are within walking distance.	Yes
3:	Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities;	Whilst the proposed development is within an Urban Area it will promote increased service delivery to those living in the rural area to the north of Fermoy.	Yes
4:	Sustainable Mobility;	Promoting active and sustainable transport due to proximity of high-quality public transport, provision of bicycle parking spaces as well as electric vehicle parking spaces	Yes
5:	A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation,and Skills	Cork City Centre is accessible from the subject site and therefore the proposed development is in close proximity to significant Employers/Higher Education Institutions such as University College Cork and Munster Technological University. Fermoy's economic hub is accessible, with potential employment/education links (e.g., local industries,). Teagasc Innovation and Research Centre and Advisory Office at Moorepark is less than 2km from the proposed scheme.	Yes
6:	High Quality International Connectivity;	N/A –Relates to Ports and Airports	N/A
7:	Enhanced Amenity and Heritage;	The scheme provides a high level of amenity space for future residents with the provision of 8 generous areas of public open spaces which are strategically dispersed around the site in order to create a permeable and good quality network of public open spaces to enhance the pedestrian experience of moving through the scheme. These open public spaces also help to create 'home zone' areas of character and distinctiveness within each of the 4 designed main neighbourhood spaces. These home zones are diversified by distinct surface materials and provide traffic calming measures to encourage the connection around the site. They additionally provide appealing visual buffer zones between the character areas. The design of the spaces ensures the pedestrian is the highest on the hierarchy of users of the scheme. The green zones incorporated	Yes

		around the scheme are both formal and informal in layout and design allowing not only for transition, but play and	
		rest areas. In terms of quantum, there is 0.82 hectares of usable Public Open Space [POS] provided which equates to 2,476 m2 of POS or 12% of the entire site [exclusive of unusable areas].	
8:	Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society;	The proposed development, by virtue of the strong public transport links and short bicycle journey time to Fermoy town, will encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport. The provision of bicycle parking spaces, and electric vehicle parking spaces will also promote sustainable modes of transport. SUDS infrastructure have been included within the design of the subject scheme to achieve a high energy rating and compliance with building standards.	Yes
9:	Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources; and	Sustainable modes of transport encouraged, and sustainable management of water use and waste output, as detailed in accompanying reports.	Yes
10.	Access to Quality Childcare and Health Services;	The subject site is located a short distance from, Fermoy Town Centre and within easy reach of Education, Cork City Centre via public transport, walking or cycling. There are therefore a wide range of Childcare in the area, this is listed in the accompanying Childcare Assessment Report. A 73 place Childcare Facility also accommpanies this submission. In terms of Education there are plenty of , there are Hospitals and Healthcare facilities within a short distance from the subject site. Among the facilities are as follows:	Yes
Rugby Club Pitch and Putt Club Lidl Tesco Bishop Murphy Memorial School Íde, McCurtain St Loreto Catholic Secondary School Coláiste an Chraoibhín, Duntaheen Rd Fermoy Adair National School St.Joseph'sN.S Barrack Hill Fermoy St Colman's College Fermoy Educate Together National School Fermoy Montessori School Fermoy Academy of Music & Arts Blackwater Driving		GAA Club Soccer Club Supervalu Aldi Gaelscoil De H-	

Table 01 Consistency with National Strategic Outcomes

A number of key national policy objectives are outlined in the *NPF* in order to successfully achieve compliance with the the 10 No. Strategic Outcomes outlined above. An assessment of the NPOs identified in the *NPF has been carried out and the following* relevant objectives are applicable to the proposed development. The relevant NPOs that are applicable to the proposed development are discussed as follows:

NPO 3a: The project **is consistent with the national objective to deliver at least 40% of new homes within existing urban settlements, as it is located on a greenfield site within the defined settlement of Fermoy.**

NPO 4: The development will create an attractive, liveable, and high-quality residential environment that integrates with established communities. It includes a hierarchy of open and landscaped spaces, the **scheme is consistent as it has been designed to ensure the creation of attractive liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being [refer to design statement and Character Areas].**

NPO 5: By contributing to the densification of Fermoy and maximizing public transport use, the **development is consistent as it supports the growth of the town as a competitive and prosperous regional driver, transforming underutilized land into a vibrant new residential neighborhood.**

NPO 6: The project will **regenerate an underused agricultural greenfield site**, introducing medium density residential development to rejuvenate the area with increased activity, population, and enhanced design quality, sustainably benefiting the surrounding region.

NPO 7 The proposed Development is consistent as it applies a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund…Strengthening Ireland's overall urban structure, … Encouraging population growth in strong employment and service centres of all sizes, supported by employment growth; Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by **identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities… In more self-contained settlements of all sizes, supporting a continuation of balanced population and employment growth.**

NPO 8 – Aims to ensure the targeted pattern of population growth of Ireland's cities and towns to 2040 is in accordance with the targets. The targeted additional 380,000 people anticipated in the overall Southern region by 2040, taking its population to almost 2 million people. **The proposed scheme is consistent with this objective applying an average household size of 2.7 persons the town of Fermoy will increase by 827 persons. This equates to 44.74% of the targeted population for Fermoy. This is consistent with the targets set out in Table 4.1 of the NPF.**

NPO 11 – In meeting urban development requirements, there will be a presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth. **The proposed development is consistent it will bring 302 households to Fermoy encouraging more people and generating job growth and activity.**

NPO 26 – Outlines the objectives of integrating Public Health Policy such as Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan with Planning Policy. **The proposed scheme is consistent as the site is located within the Fermoy development boundary in close proximity to the local services. The proposed development includes flexible open spaces with natural play areas and a number of informal grassed areas to encourage future occupants to live active lifestyles.**

NPO 27 Aims to ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and

proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages. **The proposed development is consistent as it is on a greenfield site to the north of Fermoy in cycling distance and will generate increased pedestrian and cycling activity. The result will be safer streets and open areas with increased passive surveillance providing a deterrent to anti-social behaviour. It is proposed to create new pedestrian and cycle links throughout the site which will connect to the existing pedestrian paths beyond the site. Cycle parking spaces are proposed throughout the site for future occupants and visitors.**

NPO 28 Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services**. The proposed scheme is consistent as improved connectivity and universal design and part M compliance will ensure a socially inclusive and integrative scheme. The proposed development provides for a varied housing mix that will cater for a range of household sizes. The Applicant will comply with their Part V obligations and deliver social and affordable housing units. The scheme incorporates a childcare facility to cater for the development. The proposed development is Part M compliant and thus includes access for people with disabilities.**

NPO 31 Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in The provision of early childhood care and education (ECCE) facilities and new and refurbished schools on well-located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations. **The proposed development is consistent with this policy objective as it proposes 1 no. 73 space childcare facility on site.**

NPO 33 Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location. **The proposed development is consistent as it provides 302 no. units on a greenfield site within close proximity to Fermoy town Centre. The scale of the development is supported by public transport infrastructure.**

NPO 34 Support the provision of lifetime adaptable homes that can accommodate the changing needs of a household over time. **The proposed scheme is compliant and it proposes a mix of unit types and to accommodate changes to household size. The proposed development is designed with a Universal Design Approach i.e., so that they can be readily accessed and used by everyone, regardless of age, size ability or disability. The proposed development is Part M compliant and there is 14 no. older persons 'later in life' units proposed to the entrance to the scheme.**

NPO 35 Increase residential density in settlements, through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights**. The proposed development is consistent as it is proposed on a vacant site and designed to maximise density and height, make the most efficient use of the land, public transport investment and utilisation, and increasing the proportion of people living in the area. An effective way to increase residential density in settlements is through medium and high density infill development schemes, the proposed development can be defined as such.**

NPO 52 The planning system will be responsive to our national environmental challenges and ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital. **The proposed development is consistent with NPO 52 and is designed to the nearly zero energy building (NZEB) standard at a high level of energy efficiency minimising the use of natural resources (energy and water). NZEB compliant buildings generally achieve a BER of A1 or A2. The application is accompanied by an Natural Impact Statement and Irish Water has confirmed the feasibility of the scheme in terms of potable water supply and foul water discharge – please refer to Civil Engineering Report by BRH Design Group.**

NPO 54 Reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and adaptation objectives, as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions. **The proposed development is consistent as it is in close proximity to public transport, promotes a modal shift from private car to cycling and as been designed to the nearly zero energy building (NZEB) requirements meaning that the buildings have a very high energy performance.**

NPO 56 Sustainably manage waste generation, invest in different types of waste treatment and support circular economy principles, prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, to support a healthy environment, economy and society. **The proposed development is consistent as it incorporates adequately sized waste management facilities that will promote source segregation of waste streams i.e. organics, recyclable and residual waste.**

NPO 60 Conserve and enhance the rich qualities of natural and cultural heritage of Ireland in a manner appropriate to their significance. **The development is consistent as the towns past is recognised in the proposed development and reference to the vernacular architectural features present in the town has informed the proposed design. The proposed development has integrated existing natural features, such as existing hedgerows, into the proposed design and the overall design approach has been informed by the input of a consulting archaeologist Maurice Hurley.**

NPO 63 Ensure the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure in order to manage and conserve water resources in a manner that supports a healthy society, economic development requirements and a cleaner environment**. The proposed development is consistent and it proposes sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) measures to be incorporated into the proposed design.**

NPO 64 Improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling as more favourable modes of transport **The proposed development is consistent as it will support sustainable modes of transport, by encouraging the movement of pedestrians and cyclists in and enhancing connections to the town centre. This will serve to promote a modal shift in transport and a reduction in emissions. Cycle parking spaces are provided within the scheme also over and above the quantum required.**

NPO 75 Ensure that all plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from the National Planning Framework are subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA and AA as appropriate. **The proposed development is consistent an EIAR Screening and a Natura Impact Assessment will be submitted with the final planning application.**

OVERALL COMMENT ON COMPLIANCE WITH NPF

A core principle of the NPF set out in Section 6.6 states that proposals should: '**Prioritise the location of new housing provision in existing settlements** as a means to maximizing a better quality of life for people through accessing services; ensuring a more efficient use of land and allowing for greater integration of existing infrastructure.' **Section 2.5 of the NPF outlines that compact development is the preferred approach which would focus on:**

'Reusing previously developed, 'brownfield' land, building up infill sites, which may not have been built on before and either reusing or redeveloping existing sites and buildings.' The proposed development is located on infill land in a core urban location that is built-up, well served by public transport and is within easy cycling distance of the city centre. As such the proposed development is consistent with NPOs 2a, 3a and 3b which aim to provide 40% of new homes within the existing built up area of existing settlements and 50% of all new homes within the existing built-up footprints. The NPF recognises that to achieve the targets set out in NPOs 3a and 3b of the framework which relate to the delivery of new homes, housing outputs will undoubtably necessitate a significant increase of apartment type developments.

NPO 8 requires targeted population growth for Dublin city and suburbs and the proposed development will contribute towards increasing the population of this area of Dublin. Furthermore, it is noted in Section 6.6 that 'achieving this level of supply will require increased housing output into the 2020's to deal with a deficit that has built up since 2010.'

It is considered that the proposal will contribute to creating well designed and high-quality urban place as set out in NPO 4 and will ensure the site is sustainably developed contributing towards achieving NPO 5 which aims to develop cities and towns of sufficient scale and quality to compete internationally and to be drivers of national and regional growth, investment and prosperity.

The proposed scheme involves the redevelopment of an underutilised, infill site in an existing built-up area and therefore is fully in accordance with the preferred approach of the NPF. The proposed development provides 302 No. residential units which will positively contribute towards addressing the deficit in housing supply within the Cork Region. The development offers high quality accommodation at a time when the NPF acknowledges the constrained urban housing market.

The scheme represents sustainable development as the site is situated in an existing residential and mixed-use area and the future residents of the scheme will benefit from the site's close proximity to public transport, employment, services and facilities. The provision of a creche will also benefit the residents and the surrounding area.

The proposed development inherently complies with the overarching themes of the NPF by proposing a compact well-designed sustainable form of residential development on an underutilised infill site located in close proximity to a range of social and commercial facilities and high quality public transport services. The development accords with the *NPF*'s aims to consolidate growth in towns through the development of underutilised infill sites. The scale and locational characteristics of the subject site therefore provides an opportunity for a sustainable, higher residential development and the delivery of a significant contribution to meeting housing need.

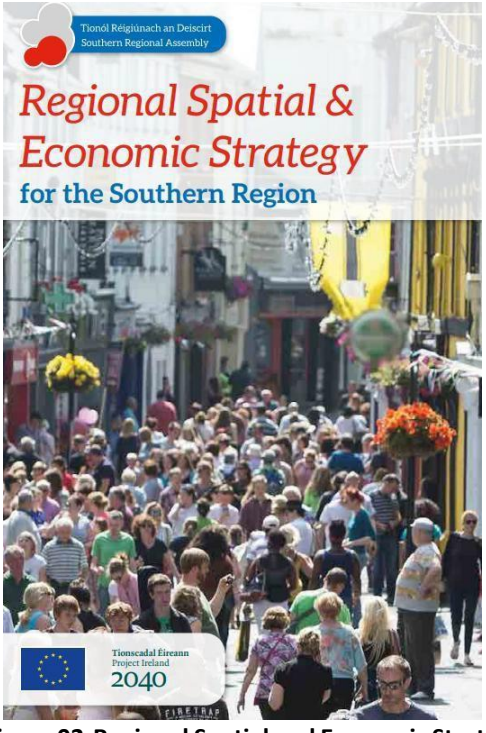


Figure 02 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

3.3 *Southern Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020*

The Regional planning context is provided by way of the Southern Regional Spatial Economic Strategy. The RSES sets out that by 2040 the population of the southern region will most likely grow by 380,000 to almost two million people rendering the need for a considerable amount of new jobs as well as new homes.

The RSES states that the region is well placed to capitalise on a changed approach. The RSES Vision is to:

- Nurture all our places to realise their full potential;
- Protect, and enhance our environment;
- Work to achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all our citizens;
- Accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations; and
- Promote the region's international reputation as one of Europe's most creative, innovative, greenest and liveable regions. [2019:23].

According to the RSES Metropolitan Cork has existing critical mass and is an emerging international centre of scale driven by the State's second city of Cork at the core supported by a network of metropolitan towns and strategic employment locations. It states that sustainable higher densities must be delivered, especially at public transport nodal points. National growth targets will see an additional 75,000 to 2031 (c. 283,700 population by 2031) in the City and Suburbs. The Rest of Metropolitan Area will see an additional 29, 657 people by 2031 (c. 125,000 population by 2031).

In relation to housing and regeneration the RSES state that: "The sustainable growth of Metropolitan Cork requires investment into each of the following locations: (i) City Centre Consolidation and Regeneration (City Centre revitalisation, Cork North and South Docklands and Tivoli); (ii): Potential Light Rail Transit Corridor City Suburban Area (in addition to city centre area, nodal points and corridors on a potential Light Rail Transit Corridor from Ballincollig to Mahon via the City Centre, North and South Environs, District Centres, Glanmire and further regeneration and consolidation initiatives), (iii):City and Suburban Area Expansion (active land management will be required to identify further development opportunities to facilitate sustainable, infrastructure led growth); (iv): Metropolitan Towns on Rail Corridor such as Mallow: (Monard SDZ as a new metropolitan town requiring rail access and road access to the national road network, regeneration, compact growth and infrastructure led urban expansion areas in Midleton, Cobh, Carrigtwohill and Blarney); (v): Other Metropolitan Towns and Villages such as Fermoy. As such realising development on this site is in line with the key aspirations of the RSES particularly with regard to aspirations to consolidate rather than sprawl.

The central element of the strategy is on strengthening the Cork Metropolitan area and the Cork MASP element of the RSES it states that "Cork is emerging as an international centre of scale and is well placed to complement Dublin, but requires significantly accelerated and urban focused growth to more fully achieve this role". When it comes to the subject of major towns the RSES highlights that they are set to see significant population growth in the coming years (p.46) also notes that a key aim for planning authorities must be "To plan increasing population growth in all Key Towns on a phased basis in collaboration with Irish Water, the local authority and other stakeholders to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the receiving environment is not exceeded and that increased wastewater discharges from population growth does not contribute to degradation of water quality and avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network;" In S.3.6 (Towns and Villages) it is stated that it should be ensured " that development plans tailor the appropriate planning response by reference to the scale, nature and location of the settlement. Local authorities will identify settlements which can play an enhanced role at sub-regional level to drive the development of their area;" (**R.P.O 26**). Given the capacity that exists in the Waste water infrastructure system and the fact that the scheme is infill and there is capacity in the local school, there is huge regional and national policy justification for schemes such as the one proposed.

The RSES provides "a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework, in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework, for the future physical, economic and social developments for the Southern Region". The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region 2020 (RSES) translates the NPF objectives to the regional level.

Regional Policy Objective **RPO 10** sets out that the RSES seeks to achieve compact growth by prioritising housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing urban footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling. Section 3.4 of the RSES states that sustainable regeneration and growth (particularly compact growth) will be achieved through effective sustainable transport and spatial land use planning.

RPO 4 *Increased population growth should be planned having regard to environmental criteria including: ● The assimilative capacity of the receiving environment. ● The proximity of European Sites and the potential for impact on the conservation objectives and qualifying interests. Areas that have potential to flood.* ***The proposed development is consistent with this, it is situated within close proximity to the existing population centre of Cork City and the proposed increase in population are in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Framework as reflected in the RSES. An EIAR Screening and Natura Impact Statement is underway by Dixon Brosnan Consulting Ecologists and will be submitted with the application. The site does not form part of a flood plain as will be demonstrated in the engineering report prepared by BRH Design Partners.***

RPO 7 Holistic approach to delivering infrastructure. Ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritises the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility in accordance with NPF objectives to include the following: Water services, digital, green infrastructure, transport and sustainable travel, community and social renewable energy, recreation, open space amenity, climate change, adaptation and future proofing infrastructure including Flood Risk management measures, environmental improvement, arts, culture and public realm. **The proposed development is consistent as it provides for increased population growth in an area within a defined settlement adjacent to an area that will benefit from improvements to public transport hubs and linkages and will promote non-car based modes of transport.**

RPO 8 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas. **The proposed development is consistent with same and the subject site is ideally placed for a higher density development as it is located in Fermoy, in close proximity to Cork City and will benefit directly from existing infrastructure in the area.**

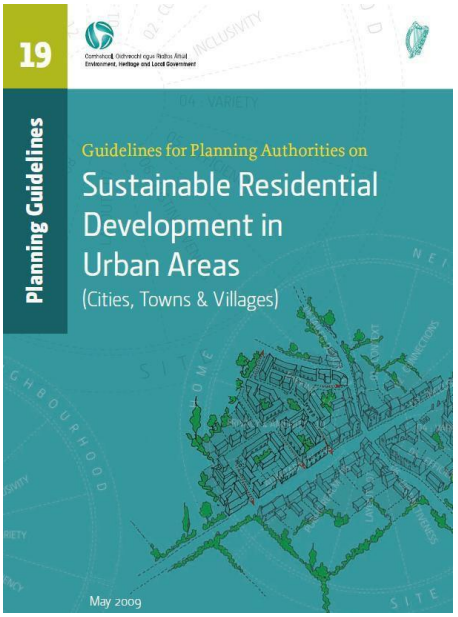


Figure 03 Sustainable Residential Development - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009).

3.4 *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)*

The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (2009) and its associated document Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009) illustrate essential criteria for sustainable urban residential development and describes how a scheme can integrate seamlessly into a site, taking consideration of its surroundings and thus presenting the best possible residential design scheme in built-up areas.

The Guidelines provide national guidance in relation to the appropriate locations for the siting of higher density residential development, having regard to the locational characteristics of the lands in question. Section 5.4 onwards has regard to 'Appropriate locations for increased densities' and states that in general, increased densities should be encouraged on residentially zoned lands and particularly in greenfield locations within the established boundaries of the five cities and towns.

The guidelines set out key planning principles for the local planning policy framework and for the assessment of residential development. The guidelines provide best practice criteria related to a number of criteria including layout, distinctiveness, public realm, connections and detailed design. These criteria are also considered under Section 3.6 Urban Design Manual.

The guidelines set out principles to ensure that developments are sustainable in terms of their density; capacity of available services; proximity to a range of community; support facilities and public transport; accessibility; use of energy and that they provide a safe and attractive environment. In terms of individual housing units, the guidelines provide principles to ensure a quality living environment, including consideration of levels of daylight and sunlight, privacy, and storage space. These qualitative aspects are discussed in full in this report where consistency with the Urban Design Manual is demonstrated.

In this regard, we confirm that the subject site is located within walking distance (less than 500m) from a key public transport bus route which is easily accessed from site via high quality walking and cycle infrastructure.

The *Transport and Traffic Assessment* (TTA) prepared by MHL Consulting Engineers has regard to the capacity of the relevant public transport. On this basis, having regard to the above criterion, we contend that the subject site is an appropriate location for increased residential density (greater than 30 uph between 30-50 uph), as such, the proposed density of 43.14 uph is consistent with the guidelines.

The subject lands have been zoned to provide for residential use and can be considered an infill residential development.

As highlighted in further detail throughout this Statement, the proposed development achieves a gross density of 43.14 units per hectare, thus making a significant contribution to national objectives surrounding compact growth, whilst retaining the character of the lands and providing a significant quantum of public open space.

We therefore conclude that the proposed development accords with this national guidance and provides a sustainable urban residential development which optimises the delivery of housing on a well-located underutilised infill site located in close proximity to public transport services.

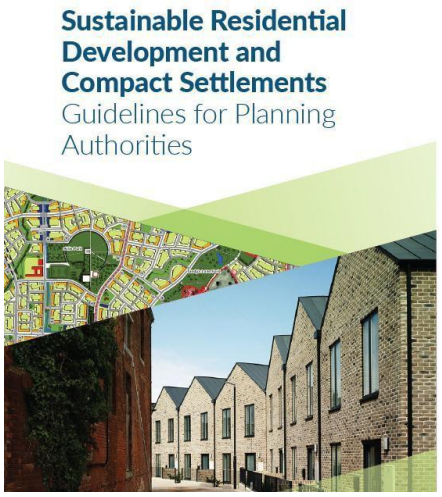


Figure 04 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (2024)

3.5 *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (2024)*

The Guidelines update and replace the 2009 Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas policies, providing a renewed framework for planning urban and rural settlements with an emphasis on sustainable, compact residential development. They build upon the National Planning Framework (NPF) by offering more detailed strategies to create well-designed, liveable, and attractive communities. A key focus is on revitalizing existing settlements through balanced approaches to density, housing standards, and placemaking, ensuring growth is both sustainable and integrated.

In the context of Fermoy, County Cork, this means prioritizing infill development, brownfield regeneration, and higher-density housing within the town's established areas—particularly near services and transport links—while maintaining local character. The Guidelines encourage mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods that reduce car dependency, aligning with national climate action and sustainable mobility goals. By applying these principles, Fermoy can achieve growth that is efficient, environmentally responsible, and socially inclusive.

In the context of a large residential development such as the one proposed in Fermoy, County Cork, the principles outlined in the Compact Settlement Guidelines encourage higher-density housing within the town boundary, particularly near transport links and services, while protecting local character and biodiversity. The guidelines support efficient land use, and mixed-use neighborhoods to reduce car dependency and enhance quality of life. The proposed scheme is consistent with these principles and will go some way towards ensuring Fermoy's growth aligns with sustainable mobility, climate action, and housing affordability objectives. The guidelines also highlight the need for adaptable housing standards, mid-rise developments in accessible locations, and active land management to meet housing demand while fostering compact, vibrant communities. By adhering to these policies the proposed scheme can help Fermoy to achieve sustainable growth that balances economic, social, and environmental priorities.

Section 3.3.3 outlines key policies for Key Towns and Large Towns (5,000+ Population) in general the guidelines state that the strategic approach for these settlements focuses on promoting consolidation within or adjacent to their existing built-up areas.

The primary priorities for the development of Key Towns and Large Towns, are as follows:

(a) Integrated and Connected Planning – Ensure cohesive settlement growth, preventing the displacement of economically driven development from Key Towns or Large Towns to smaller towns, villages, or rural hinterlands. **The proposed scheme is consistent with cohesive settlement**

growth and is a residentially zoned site and follows the contiguous built up area

(b) Town Centre Reinforcement – Strengthen the vitality and function of town centres. **The proposed scheme will help to strengthen the vitality and function of Fermoy town centre by creating a potential additional population of 815 persons which will support local businesses and the local hospitality industry.**

(c) Heritage and Environmental Protection – Safeguard, revitalize, and enhance historic structures, local character, amenities, natural heritage, biodiversity, and environmental quality. **The proposed scheme has followed the principles of respecting the local area as demonstrated in the architectural design statemen, a net biodiversity gain has been demonstrated in the accompanying documentation which will result in an enhanced environment as a result of the realisation of the proposed scheme.**

3.5.1 DENSITY

Section 3.3.3 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines also pertains to density. Specifically Table 3.5 outlines the Areas and Density Ranges for Key Towns and Large Towns (5,000+ Population).

The proposed scheme fits into the "Key Town / Large Town – Suburban/Urban Extension" category as urban extensions pertain to undeveloped greenfield sites adjacent to the existing urban contiguous built up area which may include residential components. These guidelines establish a policy objective that residential densities within suburban and urban extension areas of Key Towns and Large Towns should generally fall within the range of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare (dph) on a net basis. However, in cases where suburban or urban extension locations are deemed "accessible", higher densities of up to 80 dph (net) may be considered. This approach seeks to balance the need for sustainable urban expansion with the promotion of efficient land use, ensuring that development aligns with broader planning objectives. The distinction between suburban and urban extension areas lies in their existing characteristics and intended function within the urban framework. Suburban zones typically reflect established patterns of lower-density housing, whereas urban extensions represent planned expansions that may incorporate a mix of residential and complementary land uses. By prescribing density thresholds, these guidelines aim to facilitate structured growth while accommodating variations based on accessibility and infrastructure capacity.

Key Town / Large Town - Suburban/Urban Extension

Suburban areas are the low density car-orientated residential areas constructed at the edge of the town, while urban extension refers to greenfield lands at the edge of the existing built-up footprint area that are zoned for residential or mixed-use (including residential) development. It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 30 dph to 50 dph (net) shall generally be applied at suburban and urban extension locations of Key Towns and Large Towns, and that densities of up to 80 dph (net) shall be open for consideration at 'accessible' suburban / urban extension locations (as defined in Table 3.8).

Figure 05 Table 3.5 [extract] Areas + Density Ranges Key + Large Towns (5,000+ population)

While densities within the ranges set out in the guidelines will be acceptable, they state that planning authorities should encourage densities at or above the mid-density range at the most central and accessible locations. The density proposed is 43.14 which is consistent with the Compact Settlement Guidelines as well as the objectives contained in Table 3.1: Settlement Density Guide from the Cork County Development Plan 2022 according with the Medium A density.

3.5.1 SEPARATION DISTANCES - SPPR1

The requirement for a minimum separation distance of 22 metres between opposing upper-floor rear windows has been a longstanding principle in housing design but this standard fails to account for contemporary advancements in architectural design, construction techniques, and the sophisticated capabilities of computer-based modelling tools. Modern design software allows for precise simulations of sunlight penetration, daylight distribution, and privacy impacts, enabling more flexible and efficient

spatial planning. Through thoughtful massing, strategic window placement, and the incorporation of multi-level open spaces, it is possible to achieve high residential amenity standards and effective placemaking even with separation distances below the traditional 22-metre benchmark. In line with these principles, the Compact Settlement Guidelines introduce a specific planning policy stipulation that statutory development plans must not impose minimum separation distances exceeding 16 metres between opposing windows serving habitable rooms at the rear or side of houses, duplexes, or apartment units above ground floor level. When assessing planning applications for residential developments, a baseline separation distance of at least 16 metres should generally be maintained for such windows. However, deviations below this threshold may be deemed acceptable under certain conditions. These include instances where no opposing habitable room windows are present or where the design incorporates effective privacy measures to mitigate overlooking of private living spaces and outdoor amenity areas.

The proposed separation distances in all cases exceeds 16 metres between opposing windows serving habitable rooms at the rear or side of houses this is shown in the proposed site layout thus demonstrating that the scheme will not adversely affect the living conditions of occupants in neighbouring properties. This has been achieved by prioritising contextual design over prescriptive standards, this policy shift encourages more adaptable and responsive urban development, better suited to the complexities of modern housing needs.

3.5.2 PRIVATE OPEN SPACE FOR HOUSES - SPPR 2

The compact settlement guidelines establish specific requirements regarding the provision of private open space for new residential developments. These standards mandate minimum area thresholds based on the size of the dwelling, ensuring that each unit is allocated sufficient outdoor space to enhance residential amenity. For one-bedroom houses, a minimum of twenty square metres must be provided, while two-bedroom houses require thirty square metres. Three-bedroom houses are subject to a forty-square-metre requirement, and dwellings with four or more bedrooms must allocate at least fifty square metres of private open space.

SPPR 2 - Minimum Private Open Space Standards for Houses

It is a specific planning policy requirement of these Guidelines that proposals for new houses meet the following minimum private open space standards:

1 bed house	20 sq.m
2 bed house	30 sq.m
3 bed house	40 sq.m
4 bed + house	50 sq.m

Figure 06 Extract from Chapter 5 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024

In certain circumstances, a reduction below these prescribed minimums may be deemed acceptable, provided that compensatory high-quality semi-private open space is made available in lieu of the private area. However, at least half of the total required space must still be provided as private open space, with the remaining portion substituted by well-designed semi-private alternatives. The planning authority must be satisfied that such compensatory space offers a high standard of amenity for residents, ensuring it is both accessible and well-integrated within the development.

For apartment and duplex developments, compliance with the private and semi-private open space standards outlined in the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2023—or any subsequent revisions (2025)—is mandatory. These standards are tailored to higher-density housing typologies, reflecting the distinct spatial and design considerations associated with multi-unit developments.

In all instances, the HQA submitted, prepared by BRH Design Partners, demonstrates compliance, specifically, that in all cases the minimum private amenity space standard is either met or exceeded. The private open amenity space strategy is also complemented by the strong emphasis on public open space provision and a strong local network of public open space.

3.5.3 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Policy and Objective 5.1 relates to the Provision of Public Open Space in Residential Developments. The guidelines establish a clear policy and objective mandating that statutory development plans incorporate specific provisions regarding the allocation of public open space in new residential developments, as well as in mixed-use developments that include a residential component. The overarching aim is to ensure that urban and suburban environments integrate adequate green spaces to enhance community well-being, ecological sustainability, and recreational opportunities.

Development plans must stipulate that public open space constitutes no less than 10% and no more than 15% of the net site area, except under exceptional circumstances. This range ensures a balanced approach, preventing both under-provision and excessive allocation that could impede feasible development. Local planning authorities retain the discretion to adjust minimum thresholds within this spectrum based on area-specific considerations, such as existing public open space availability, nature conservation priorities, and broader environmental objectives.

For strategic and sustainable development sites, the determination of public open space requirements should adhere to a plan-led approach, aligning with the broader strategy for park provision within the region. This ensures that open space allocation is integrated into long-term urban planning rather than being determined on an ad-hoc basis.

The proposal allocates 15% of the developable area to usable open space and is generally compliant – this was discussed with and agreed with the planning authority during pre planning. The layout fosters uplifting and secure residential neighbourhoods, characterised by strong connectivity and accessibility, while emphasising high-quality green infrastructure and a balanced mix of hard and soft landscaping. A green framework is integrated across the site, ensuring the proposed development harmonises with its surroundings. Pedestrian and cyclist movement is prioritised in accordance with DMURS principles, supported by a network of well-planned pathways designed to encourage walking, jogging, and scenic views of the surrounding landscape. The scheme also incorporates safe, well-overlooked open spaces, routes, and facilities, accessible to all and designed to complement the site's topographical and landscape features. Provision has been made for multi-functional active and passive open spaces that are inclusive, accessible, and well- connected to broader green infrastructure. The design adopts a child-centred approach, guided by 'home-zone' principles to ensure children of all ages can navigate their neighbourhood freely and safely.

3.5.4 CAR PARKING – QUANTUM, FORM AND LOCATION - SPPR 3

The provision of car parking spaces plays a pivotal role in shaping transportation decisions for all types of journeys, including short-distance local trips. As urban areas, particularly cities and larger towns, continue to receive sustained investment in active travel infrastructure and public transport networks, an increasing number of destinations, such as employment hubs and essential services, are becoming accessible within a convenient walking or cycling distance or via efficient public transport links. Empirical research indicates that in regions where car parking availability is restricted, individuals demonstrate a greater propensity to adopt sustainable modes of transport, such as walking, cycling, or utilising public transit for their daily commutes.

The guidelines state that this strategy should be informed by the proximity of developments to urban

centres and the availability of sustainable transport alternatives, thereby encouraging more environmentally conscious travel behaviours. Parking allocation standards should be systematically lowered across all urban settings, with a particular emphasis on minimising, significantly reducing, or entirely eliminating parking spaces in areas that benefit from excellent access to urban amenities and public transport networks. A mobility management plan is submitted with the planning application which assesses the varying modes available.

(iii) In intermediate and peripheral locations, defined in Chapter 3 (Table 3.8) the maximum rate of car parking provision for residential development, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority, shall be 2 no. spaces per dwelling

Applicants should be required to provide a rationale and justification for the number of car parking spaces proposed and to satisfy the planning authority that the parking levels are necessary and appropriate, particularly when they are close to the maximum provision. The maximum car parking standards do not include bays assigned for use by a car club, designated short stay on-street Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations or accessible parking spaces. The maximum car parking standards do include provision for visitor parking.

Figure 07 Extract from Chapter 5 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines (2024:57)

In terms of rationale and justification the guidelines state that Chapter 3 Table 3.8 indicates that the maximum rate of car parking provision for residential development, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority should be 2 no. spaces per dwelling. This has been discussed with and agreed with the planning authority there is 2 no. car parking spaces per house and 1.25 spaces per apartment thus demonstrating consistency. The full car parking strategy and rationale is contained in Section 12 of the Architects Design Statement.

Total No. of Spaces	of which EV Spaces	of which Disabled spaces	No. of visitor spaces	No. of motorbike spaces
429	18	15	8	6

Figure 08 Parking Provision

3.5.5 BICYCLE PARKING AND STORAGE SPPR - 4

The Guidelines establish a specific planning policy requirement mandating the integration of safe and secure cycle storage facilities in all new housing schemes, including mixed-use developments that incorporate residential units. The provision of such facilities must adequately cater to the needs of both residents and visitors, ensuring convenience, accessibility, and security. Regarding the quantity of cycle parking spaces, residential developments lacking ground-level open space or featuring smaller terraces should adhere to a general minimum standard of one cycle storage space per bedroom. Additionally, designated visitor cycle parking must be incorporated. Any deviation from these standards requires justification by the planning authority, taking into consideration factors such as the development's location and context, the quality of proposed facilities, and flexibility for future expansion or enhancement.

In terms of design and accessibility, cycle storage facilities must be constructed as permanent structures, either within the building footprint or, where internal provision is unfeasible, in an adjacent or adjoining purpose-built facility.

Bicycle storage spaces are provided as showed in the schedule contained in the Architects Design Statement and are also compliant with 'Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028'. **All houses and ground floor apartments that have direct access to rear gardens and private amenity spaces can utilise these areas for bicycle storage. Each mid-terrace house will have an in-curtilage bike store to**

the front of the unit, with apartments / duplexes at FF levels beings allocated spaces in nearby secure communal bike stores. This is compliant and shows that by embedding these requirements into the planning process, local authorities can foster cycling as a viable and attractive mode of transport, promoting sustainability, health, and reduced vehicular dependency. In essence it is clear that cycle storage is not merely an afterthought but an integral, well-considered element of the residential design.

3.5.6 OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

In residential developments comprising multi-unit and compact housing blocks, the inclusion of communal facilities, such as refuse storage areas, is essential. The guidelines state that these facilities should be situated in open spaces that will not be subject to formal taking-in-charge procedures. To ensure the long-term functionality and upkeep of such developments, planning applications must incorporate a comprehensive operational management plan. This plan should delineate strategies for the sustained maintenance and administration of the scheme, with particular emphasis on waste management in contexts where private outdoor spaces are limited. BRH Design Partners have prepared an OMP and it accompanies this application. **Consistent with the guidelines, refuse facilities are conveniently accessible to all housing units and their design accounts for anticipated waste production volumes, as well as the specific types and quantities of waste receptacles needed. By addressing these factors, the developments promotes efficient waste management practices while maintaining the aesthetic and functional integrity of the shared environment**.

3.5.7 DAYLIGHT

Ensuring adequate daylight in new residential developments is a critical aspect of urban planning, as it contributes significantly to the quality of living environments for future occupants. Equally important is the need to mitigate any adverse effects on the amenity of neighbouring properties, particularly those occupied by sensitive users. The risk of insufficient daylight within a proposed development, or its negative impact on adjacent properties, typically arises in scenarios involving high-density construction, taller buildings, or other obstructions that limit natural light penetration so this is not a major consideration with respect to the proposed development which does not exceed three storeys in height [and particularly as demonstrated in a previous section] that minimum distances have been achieved. The guidelines state that in instances involving low-rise housing with sufficient spacing between existing and proposed structures [as demonstrated], a review of architectural drawings and cross-sections may suffice to determine that no significant detrimental effects will occur. All of these have been provided to demonstrate consistency and satisfy the planning authority that daylight provision was a fundamental consideration in the design development of the scheme ensuring both occupant well-being and the preservation of neighbouring amenities. **All apartments within the Character Areas 2 and 4 of the scheme are either Dual Aspect or triple aspect. As part of the design, DKP Environmental carried out a specialist evaluation of the sunlight and daylight performance of buildings and examined the impact on daylight and sunlight for neighboring dwellings and gardens, as well as the internal daylight and sunlight performance of the proposed apartments and amenity spaces. The specialist assessment follows the recommendations in BRE's "Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice" (BRE Building Technology Group, 2022) and BS EN 17037. The results of the report demonstrate that the development will have not have a negative effect on the daylight received by surrounding buildings to the immediate south of the site, which should maintain similar levels of daylight after construction. Overall, the development has been designed with careful consideration of sunlight and daylight, achieving an exemplary level for its scale and meeting the guidelines set out in the BRE Guide BR 209.**

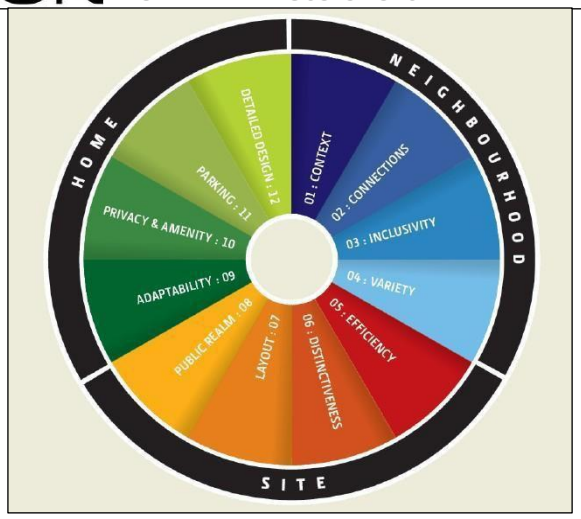


Figure 09 The 12 no. Urban Design criteria

3.6 *Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009)*

The *Urban Design Manual* presents 12 no. criteria that should be used to facilitate assessment of planning applications and should therefore be used as a guide to steer best design practice for residential proposals. The figure below illustrates how the 12 No. criteria have been sequenced in a logical order and the order of the criteria reflects the prioritisation and processes that should be adopted: i.e. not moving onto matters of detail until the important structural decisions have been taken. The 12 No. criteria are subdivided into three groups: Neighbourhood; Site; and Home, respectively, reflecting the sequence of spatial scales and order of priorities that is followed in a good design process. The proposal's response to the various criteria set out by the Guidelines is summarised in this section. Please also refer to the accompanying *Design Statement* prepared by BRH Design Partners for further details.

1 Context

The development is located near Ballynamona in close proximity to Fermoy town. The site is located within the Fermoy Development Boundary and forms part of the Cork County Council functional area. The subject site is situated 1.7 kilometres to the north of the main street and approximately 35 km from Cork City Centre. Fermoy is a thriving market town settlement in its own right with well established employment, recreation, tourism, retail and residential uses in the area. It is strategically located where the main roads from Dublin to Cork and Dungarvan to Killarney intersect. With a population of 6,720 the population has remained relatively static since 2016 when the population was 6,489 persons. This can directly be linked to the lack of available housing in the settlement as demand has been unprecedented during this timeframe. The town has excellent access to the national road network, particularly through its proximity to the M8, which coupled with a good range of schools, community facilities and amenities makes it both a convenient and attractive employment and residential location. The subject site itself is connected to Cork City via the M8 – Cork Dublin Motorway which is situated to the east of the site. In recent years there has been much additional investment in upgrading the water services infrastructure and pedestrian and cycle facilities in the town to achieve good connectivity with the rest of the town and existing social and community services. The surrounding context is a mixture of suburban development and commercial development. The architecture responds to the context by creating a sequence of character areas that respond to the conditions on site. Our design approach is inspired by the "genius loci", which defines the distinctive character of the landscape and the existing features of the respective site and its vicinity. The proposed scheme looks to respect the built environment in it's immediate context and as such is consistent with the principles in the Design Manual. There is a 60m radius temporary stormwater bund on the site is a completely redundant feature. It was installed in 2005 for stormwater outfall for the first phase of the nearby Crann Ard development while waiting for a new proposed council storm line to be installed. This storm line did not go ahead and a stormtec infiltration soakaway was built in 2006 for the next phase of Crann Ard to take all Crann Ard stormwater

to ground and the Bund became redundant. As part of the Cork County Council Development Plan it was proposed that this area be utilised as a SUDS feature. The redundant bund will be removed and it is proposed to use a detention basin in this location of the site to provide for 1:100 year flooding and assist in achieving a new biodiversity gain for the proposed development. **Context has been a key consideration.**

2 Connections

The design supports placemaking by facilitating the creation of a walkable neighbourhood, with new links to the Elm Grove and Crann Ard Estates to the immediate South with links onwards towards Fermoy Town Centre and Local amenities and services including sports clubs and commercial shops. Permeability and Connectivity were key design principles. The provision of new walkways/cycleways through the scheme will provide connectivity between the new residential units, existing and proposed residential schemes to the south as well as the new public open spaces on site. A variety of new, generous open spaces are carefully selected throughout the scheme and facilitate pedestrian/cycle access east/west as well as North/South across the subject site. The main pedestrian and cycle connectivity is along the Dublin Road to the West of the site where it is proposed to connect into the existing network of footpaths and cycle lanes which create links to local amenities in Fermoy. This will encourage future residents to use sustainable modes of transport as an alternative to car use. A new pedestrian crossing at the junction of the Pike Road and Dublin Road, north of the Inver Store has been permitted under a recent Part 8 Application on Elm Grove. This will provide safe pedestrian connectivity from the Subject site onwards to Fermoy Town Centre.

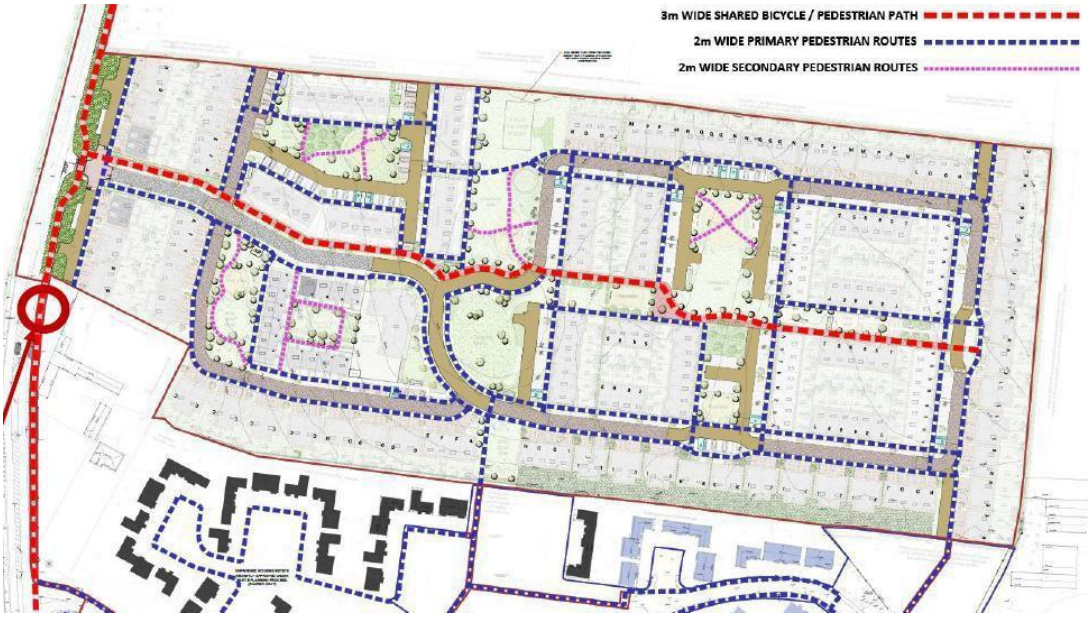


Figure 10 Key pedestrian and cycle connectivity routes

3 Inclusivity

The proposed homes meet the needs and aspirations of a range of people and households including Active Living at the beginning of the scheme 14 no. (units suitable for and aimed at accommodating older residents are proposed. The Design and layout of the site encourages linkages and permeability within the scheme and facilitates potential future links to the adjoining neighbourhoods [refer to figure 10]. Full accessible pedestrian routes will be incorporated all over the scheme. Areas defined as public open space will be accessible to all and maintained by the developer. The design and layout of the proposed development meets the requirements of all relevant documents, in particular Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents which deal with accessibility and inclusivity design. The proposed scheme has been designed so that it can be accessed and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size or ability. The open space areas will be accessible to all, and paths will be hard surfaced with attractive signage where relevant. With regard to the amenity spaces, all have

been developed to suit children of varying ages, teenagers, adults and seniors, where relevant. All areas, whether public, private or communal, are well defined and accessible to all, encouraging the use of the public realm by all users.

Consideration has been given to the accessibility for all building users. Moving through and around the site, meets the requirements of Technical Guidance Document M of the Building Regulations and where possible exceeds them in pursuit of best practice. Level access will be provided and all units throughout the scheme will be complaint with Part M access requirements. The main circulation cores are provided with lifts and Part M compliant stair ways. **As demonstrated, connections have been a key consideration.**

4 Variety

The proposed development provides for a variety of house types and tenure that adds to the choice available in the area. There are 32 house types proposed. The proposed housing mix includes 1, 2, 3, and 4-bed houses (bungalows, townhouses, semidetached), along with 1 and 2-bed own door style apartments and duplexes. This variety aims to create a sustainable residential development that offers more housing choices and meets the needs of single people, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. Additionally, 14 later living bungalows are proposed within Character Area 1 and ground-floor own door apartments with Character Areas 2 and 4 where are designed according to Universal Design principles. **There is a variety of 4 no. distinct character areas and a variety of 10 no. landscaped open green spaces which demonstrate consistency with this principle therefore variety has been achieved.**

5 Efficiency

The development provides an appropriate approach to residential density considering its location and this is perhaps the most efficient aspect of the proposed development. With consideration to the gross site area, the actual developable area of the site, the zoning requirements and general design requirements, the design seeks to strike an appropriate balance between achieving the required densities alongside open space requirements to ensure that the zoned land is used efficiently, whilst quality of environment and place is retained. Higher densities have been achieved in the form of duplex's and townhouses which are appropriately sited. The scheme will be sustainable through the use of low energy materials, energy efficient systems and by using the highest quality materials to provide a sustainable development.

The manual states that landscaped areas should be designed to provide amenity and biodiversity, protect buildings and spaces from the elements and incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems. The proposed development is consistent with same. It also states that buildings, gardens and public spaces should be laid out to exploit the best solar orientation. The proposed development is consistent with same. Landscaped areas consist of flexible open space areas with natural play areas, an amenity walkway and a number of informal grassed areas. **These will provide both passive and active amenity opportunities for the residents of the proposed development while also enhancing the biodiversity of the site. SuDs principles will also be incorporated wherever possible therefore efficiency has clearly been a key principle underpinning the design.**

6 Distinctiveness

According to the plan creating a sense of place is at the heart of a sustainable development. The character areas formed across the site create a sense of human scale and create places that respond to the distinct character of the site. The settlement of Fermoy was formed through incremental expansion. The settlement was subject to significant residential growth in the later twentieth century. The most recent expansion occurred in the 21st century and largely consisted of medium density housing estates.

These contain a mix of mainly semi-detached and detached houses, with some terraced units. The design approach directly relates to defining the existing natural features that exist on the subject site and incorporating them into the scheme where possible to give the development a very distinctive quality that is unique to its location. **The proposed site layout focuses on the creation of distinctive neighbourhoods through careful consideration of open spaces, streetscapes with varying widths and characteristics with parking formations which help generate a highly efficient scheme and assists in our vision of placemaking**. The overall masterplan strategy is to deliver a high quality residential scheme, laid out in 4 distinctive character areas with each enjoying high quality Landscaped areas of public open space with strategic planting and a generous mix of housing and apartment types. The 4 no. distinct character area are each defined by associated amenity spaces, with unit typology, height, elevational treatment and materials unique to each area. The units interaction with open spaces and varying parking arrangements throughout also contribute to distinct character area. A legible and robust network of streets, pedestrian and bicycle pathways and spaces has been designed throughout the scheme. The layout provides active frontages and passive overlooking throughout the site. Where a gable of a house is exposed, a variation of the particular house type is used ensuring overlooking at these locations. Houses are arranged around a network and hierarchy of open spaces for passive overlooking to ensure activity and safety for the users.

7 Layout

The principal question posed by the Design manual is how does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces? The aims outlined in the Design Manual seeks to ensure the Layout aligns routes with desire lines to create a permeable interconnected series of routes that are easy and logical to navigate around. The design approach is consistent with the manual which ensures the streets are designed as places instead of roads for cars, and the pedestrian is at the top of the hierarchy of users followed by cyclists and then drivers. Consistent with the manual, traffic speeds are controlled by design and layout rather than by speed bumps. The proposed layout provides for and ensures connectivity. A connection is also facilitated to the existing public footpath network. **All routes are scaled appropriately to enhance legibility. In general speed will be controlled on the vehicular routes through passive measures including landscaping, pedestrian priority zones and raised tables demonstrating that layout has been a key principle underpinning the design.**

8 Public Realm

As is consistent with the Design Manual design principles: All public open spaces are overlooked by surrounding homes in order to enhance the safety of these spaces. The public realm is considered as a usable integrated element in the design of the development; The scheme includes extensive landscaping proposal which responds to the different character areas across the site; Children's play areas are sited where they will be overlooked, safe and contribute to the amenities of the neighbourhood; There is a clear definition between private and public/communal open space; Some of the roads within the scheme are shared spaces and are designed to form an integral part of the public realm. **The open spaces will enjoy a high level of natural passive surveillance from the units above so that users of the open space will feel comfortable and safe. This strong sense of ownership will reinforce the safety and security of the public realm by minimising the potential for anti- social behaviour.**

9 Adaptability

The manual highlights how inevitably, over time demographic changes can occur, and so the design, through the use of modern construction and building techniques can facilitate changes in use and layout over time. This is particularly important when changes in residential uses occur, as such buildings can be reconfigured to allow in change in mix and typology. With this in mind the proposed development is consistent as the 3 storey buildings in character area 3 allow for flexibility - a 2 storey 4 bed house type

has been designed without the requirement for an additional attic bedroom. This design change will allow future flexibility for the end users of these house types to extend a 5th bedroom or additional space into the attic to future proof the design. Large areas of private open space in excess of the minimum areas required also allow for adaptability in the future whereby residents can extend their ground floor in the future or install a garden room/work from home space ensuring that the house and curtilage can adapt to the varying needs of end-users.

The varying house types will be designed to be adaptable should the future occupants of the dwellings require additional habitable space in the future. Homes on larger plots will also be designed to facilitate extension if required as the provision of surplus rear garden space would also allow for same should the owner require this in the future.

10 Privacy and Amenity

The principles outlined in the Manual is that each home should have access to an area of useable private outdoor space and that the design maximises the number of homes enjoying dual aspect. In addition other principles pertaining to privacy and amenity are that windows are sited to avoid views into the home from other houses or the street and adequate privacy is affordable to ground floor units.

The proposed development is consistent with the Design Manual and has been designed to ensure that each residential unit within the development will have a high standard of residential amenity and privacy. This has been achieved by carefully locating, orientating and positioning each dwelling and also by providing generous separation distances between residential units. Windows are sited to prevent overlooking into adjacent private gardens.
Generous rear gardens are also proposed to be provided throughout the development, which meet the guidelines set out for minimum rear garden sizes and will be oriented to maximise solar exposure. Duplex units will benefit from access to their own balcony. All homes will have adequate storage areas [for more information on this please refer to the accompanying HQA which has been prepared by BRH Design Partners, areas for sorting of recyclables have also been considered. Landscaping will also prevent direct views into the units from internal streets and public areas.

11 Parking

The Design Manual seeks to ensure:

- appropriate car parking is on-street or within easy reach of the home's front door
- parked cars are overlooked by houses, pedestrians and traffic, or stored securely, with a choice of parking appropriate to the situation. **The proposed scheme is consistent with the Design Manual and it is proposed to provide a total of 429 no. parking spaces:** Parking is provided both within the curtilage of units as well as communcal shared parking spaces, Visitor spaces, EV parking spaces and Motorbike parking spaces. All in-curtilage spaces will be equipped with necessary infrastructure and ducting for charging points for EV vehicles. Most Apartments and houses have access to front, rear gardens and private amenity spaces which can be utilised to store bicycles. All apartments with no direct access to private amenity area will be serviced by secure bike stores allocated around the subject site.

12 Detailed Design

The proposed development is consistent with the Manual as:

- The materials and external design make a positive contribution to the locality;
- The landscape design includes generous public spaces;
- Design of the buildings and public spaces will facilitate easy and regular maintenance;
- Surface level car parking areas have been designed as integral elements within the public realm design;

- Care has been taken over the siting of flues, vents and bin stores.

The architecture and landscape design of the scheme will work together to make a high- quality coherent development. Particular attention has been paid to the materials and facade design used in the public realm. The landscape and building design have been considered symbiotically to ensure adequate SUDS is provided, open green space for visual amenity, and careful landscaping and building design. **The development aims to enhance the public realm, create a sense of place using existing landscape features, and support green infrastructure. It uses high-quality materials and landscaping, ensures open spaces are well-oriented and accessible, and integrates public, private, and communal areas with existing ones. Accessibility and traffic calming measures comply with DMURS, promoting walking, cycling, and other activities. Active frontages and passive surveillance are encouraged for a better inter-relationship between buildings, roads, pedestrian paths, and local facilities.**

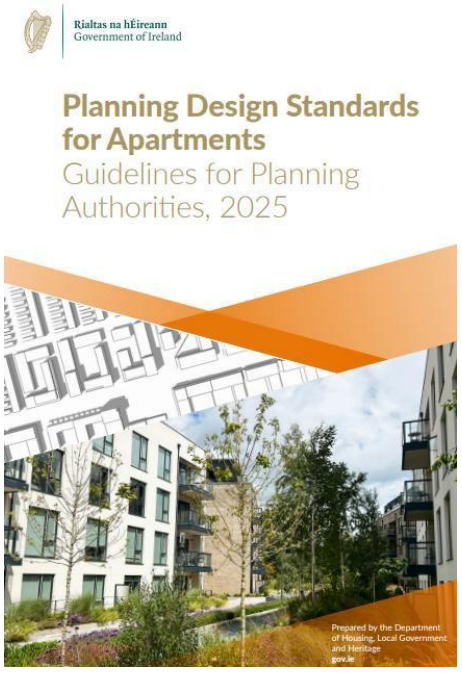


Figure 11 ***Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines (2025)***

3.7 *Planning Design Standards for Apartments: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)*

The 2025 Apartment Design Guidelines introduce a series of Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs) that supersede previous iterations, offering a revised framework for apartment developments in the country. These guidelines address critical aspects of design, including apartment mix, internal space standards, dual-aspect ratios, floor-to-ceiling heights, storage, and amenity spaces, while allowing flexibility to adapt to market demands and site-specific conditions. The proposed 302-unit development in Ballynamona, Fermoy, County Cork, demonstrates compliance with these SPPRs, ensuring high-quality residential standards while responding to local housing needs as follows

1. Apartment Mix (SPPR1)
   Under SPPR1, statutory plans cannot impose restrictions on the mix of unit sizes or types, except in cases involving social housing, Part V developments, or housing for older persons (where a Housing Need and Demand Assessment may apply). This policy ensures that developers have the flexibility to design schemes that align with market demand rather than rigid regulatory constraints. For the Fermoy development, there are 80 no. apartments proposed, whilst there is no mandatory unit mix imposed, the proposal includes a balanced distribution of one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments [40 of each], catering to both individuals/couples and small families. This approach aligns with broader planning objectives of fostering sustainable communities by avoiding an over-concentration of small units that may not suit long-term family living.

2. Minimum Floor Area (SPPR2)

The minimum floor area requirements under SPPR2 have been revised to improve viability while maintaining liveability. The Fermoy scheme is consistent with the following minimum size standards:
Studio apartments: Minimum 32 sq.m
One-bedroom units: Minimum 45 sq.m [minimum size 1 bed proposed 52.16m2]
Two-bedroom apartments (3-person ocupancy): Minimum 63 sq.m [minimum size 2 bed proposed 96.14m2]
Three-bedroom units (4-person occupancy): Minimum 76 sq.m

Additionally, 25% of units (approximately 20 apartments) exceed these minimums by 10%, ensuring a variety of unit sizes that enhance residential choice. This requirement does not apply to small-scale developments (<10 units), refurbishments, or urban infill sites (<0.25ha), but the Fermoy proposal far exceeds these benchmarks, demonstrating a commitment to high-quality living spaces.

3. Dual-Aspect Ratios (SPPR3)

According to the Guidelines, Natural light and ventilation are critical to residential amenity. SPPR3 mandates that at least 25% of units (20 apartments in this case) must be dual-aspect, meaning they have windows on two sides to facilitate cross-ventilation and sunlight penetration. For single-aspect units, priority is given to south, east, or west-facing orientations, with north-facing units only permitted if they overlook significant amenities (e.g., public parks). The Fermoy development is consistent with and exceeds this requirement by ensuring all units are dual aspect, significantly enhancing daylight access and ventilation—a key advantage over many urban apartment schemes where single-aspect units are common. This is highlighted in the HQA by BRH Design Partners.

4 Floor-to-Ceiling Heights (SPPR4)

Adequate ceiling heights improve light penetration, ventilation, and spatial quality. Under SPPR4:
Standard floor-to-ceiling height: Minimum 2.4m
Ground-floor apartments: Minimum 2.7m (to mitigate overshadowing and allow future adaptability)
The Fermoy scheme is consistent with these standards, ensuring that ground-floor units benefit from increased vertical space, which is particularly important for ground-level living conditions.

5. Apartments per Core (SPPR5)

SPPR5 removes previous restrictions on the number of units per floor per stair/lift core, allowing greater design flexibility. This change supports efficient space planning in medium- to high-density developments like the Fermoy project, where a five-block apartment layout comprising of duplex apartments optimizes circulation and accessibility without rigid core-based constraints.

6. Storage and Amenity Spaces

While not explicitly mandated in SPPRs, the guidelines emphasize adequate storage (3-6.7 sq.m per unit) and private outdoor spaces (balconies/patios). The Fermoy scheme is consistent with this as it incorporates:
Internal storage solutions (meeting minimum expectations)
Bicycle storage where there is no rear access to private gardens (supporting sustainable transport in a town-centre location)
Private outdoor spaces for all units.

7. Sustainability and Design Quality

Although not directly covered by SPPRs, the guidelines encourage energy-efficient design, renewable energy integration, and climate resilience. The Fermoy development is consistent with these principles through:
Optimized building orientation (maximizing daylight- refer to page 58 of the Design Statement)
High-performance insulation and ventilation
Potential for renewable energy systems

The 302-unit Fermoy development demonstrates full compliance with the 2025 SPPRs, exceeding minimum requirements in several areas.

Apartment Composition		No. of units	Proportion of total no. of apts
2 Bedroom Apts		40	50%
1 Bedroom Apts		40	50%
Total		**80**	**100%**

Figure 12 Apartment Mix Table [by composition]

Unit Type		No. of units	Proportion of total no. of apts
Apartment		80	26.5%
House		122	73.5%
Total		**302**	**100%**

Figure 13 Housing Mix Table [by unit type]

As can be seen from Figure 12 there is 20% 4 bed units, 36% 3 bed units, 26% 2 bed units and 18% 1 bed units. When Figure 13 is examined and the fact that there are various unit types proposed in the scheme, namely, both houses and apartments. In addition to there being two apartment compositions there are two general house compositions and a number of varying types within same. When the entire scheme is examined in a broad holistic manner and the house types are looked at there is a much larger housing mix proposed than what may be understood from only looking at the consistency with the department guidelines. There are 32 house types proposed. In terms of the dominant typologies: House Type S (3-bed Mid Terrace): 32 units (10.6% of total) is the most prevalent house type and this is not surprising considering that three bed mid terraced units reflect the average household size of 2.74 persons [Census 2022], they also offer a more affordable housing option. House Type J (4-bed Semi-detached): 22 units (7.28%) is the second most prevalent house type and allows for more choice and a larger household size, followed by House Type K (3-bed Semi-detached): 20 units (6.62%). There is of course a strong emphasis on the provision of Family type units but more Compact Units are also a strong element of provision.

- Smaller units (1-2 beds): 132 units (43.7%)
- Family units (3-4 beds): 170 units (56.29%)

Notwithstanding this the majority of the units are houses rather than apartments. To ensure a good housing mix for persons with mixed abilities the principles of Equitable Use have been employed, the design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities. A consistent means of access is provided to all dwellings and each are designed to provide part M compliant level access entrances via the front door for visitors. For the most part car parking is by way of on street design. External amenity spaces are designed in accordance with Technical Guidance Document Part M 2010. The Creche is located in a readily accessible area of the site. Outdoor amenity space is provided for the Creche facility and with Part M compliant level access. The reception area for the Creche facility is located at ground floor level, situated in close proximity to the front door and provided with communication aids. In addition the principles of Low Physical Effort have been incorporated into the design. The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue. The design allows proposed users to maintain a neutral body position, minimise repetitive actions and minimise sustained physical effort. Pedestrian and bicycle pathways have been designed to minimise gradient and mitigate the requirement for extensive change of levels. The majority of pedestrian and bicycle priority routes are provided with a gradient of less than 1:20. The majority of dwelling houses are provided with on street car parking which is located close to the front door. All entrance doors (dwelling houses and childcare facility entrances) are provided with an external level landing in accordance with Technical Guidance Document Part M. 14 no. 1 Bedroom Bungalows for Later living/universal design have been proposed within Character Area 1 [which is the closest Character area to the entrance to the proposed scheme] within a communal

courtyard arrangement which creates a sense of enclosure and security for its end users [may be most suited to older persons]. This design also provides defensive space from nearby streets, ensuring user safety. Each unit includes a small patio/garden for bike storage, and the communal courtyard promotes social interaction among residents. The private patio and communal courtyard together provide sufficient amenity space for each unit. The proximity to the public park offers easy access and integration within the community.

The proposed housing mix has been carefully structured to support balanced population growth in Fermoy, catering to diverse demographic needs. This distribution reflects contemporary household formation trends while preventing over-saturation of any single unit type. The significant proportion of 2 and 3 bedroom units directly responds to Fermoy's identified need for family accommodation, while the 1 and 4 bedroom provision ensures appropriate options for smaller and larger households without dominating the development's character. There is no requirement under the 2025 guidelines to demonstrate a wide range of unit types, whilst the guidelines only relate to apartments the 50/50 mix of 1 and 2 bed apartment units in this regard is considered to be consistent.

Floor-to-Ceiling Height

Section 3.5 stipulates a minimum ceiling height of 2.4m for upper floors in line with Building Regulations and recommends increasing this to 2.7m, particularly for ground-floor units. SPPR 5 further requires ground-floor apartments to have a minimum 2.7m ceiling height to allow potential future conversion to commercial use. The relevant parts of the proposed scheme are compliant with same.

Childcare Provision

In accordance with SPPR6, the development includes an on-site childcare facility to serve the needs of future residents. Since the one-bedroom units are excluded from childcare calculations, the proposed 73 space crèche has been designed to fully accommodate the expected demand from the development's family-sized units. A dedicated childcare facility is incorporated into the scheme, ensuring convenient access for residents. The provision of 73 childcare spaces meets and exceeds projected requirements, supporting the needs of young families within the development. A childcare needs assessment accompanies this application

Bicycle Parking

The scheme fully integrates cycling infrastructure in compliance with Section 4.5 and Section 4.17, which mandate: Location: Bicycle parking is conveniently positioned near residential access points and connected to external cycling routes. The Fermoy development demonstrates full compliance with childcare and cycling infrastructure standards, including: A well-sized, on-site childcare facility that meets community needs. Comprehensive, well-located bicycle parking that promotes sustainable transport. Designed by BRH Design Partners, the scheme ensures family-friendly amenities and cycling accessibility, contributing to a sustainable, high-quality living environment.

.

Dual Aspect Ratio

Under Section 3.4, a minimum of 50% dual aspect apartments is required on greenfield sites, while 33% applies to central and accessible locations. Additionally, **SPPR 4** mandates at least 50% dual aspect units in suburban or intermediate locations. The proposed development exceeds these requirements, with 100% of all apartments/duplex units are designed as dual aspect, ensuring optimal natural light and ventilation and compliance with same.

Internal Storage

Section 3.7 emphasizes the need for dedicated internal storage beyond standard kitchen and bedroom space. The proposed units exceed minimum storage provisions, with additional space facilitated by the generous floor-to-ceiling heights. This ensures practical living conditions for residents while meeting sustainability and functionality benchmarks. The Housing Quality Assessment [HQA] provided with the planning application contains the quantitative information demonstrating complicane with the following

minimum standards
for storage space.

- 1 bed: 3 sqm
- 2 bed (3 person): 5 sqm
- 2 bed (4 person): 6 sqm
- 3 bed: 9 sqm

Consistency is achieved in relation to same as confirmed in the Housing Quality Assessment (HQA) prepared by BRH Design Partners which accompanies this submission.

Car Parking

Section 4.6 notes that the quantum of car parking will vary having regard to the types of locations. It also notes that for apartments in less accessible urban location one car parking space per unit and one visitor space for every 3-4 apartments should be required. The parking provision on site is in accordance with the parking requirements outlined in the CDP. The proposed car parking provision for the development has been informed by standard requirements set out in the 2022-2028 Cork County Development Plan (CDP) and 2022 Apartment Guidelines, which strongly encourage reduced car parking provision. **429 no. Parking spaces are proposed. 1.25 car parking spaces is proposed per apartment. 244 no. cycle spaces are proposed [over and above the fact that most units have access to their own bike parking facilities]. In terms of the 429 no. car parking spaces proposed there are 417 spaces proposed for the residential element and 12 for the childcare facility.**

Private Amenity Space

The development adheres to Section 3.8 which requires all apartments to include private outdoor space in the form of balconies, terraces or patios. SPPR 7 specifies minimum sizes for these private amenity areas based on unit type:

- 1-bedroom units: 5 sqm minimum
- 2-bedroom units: 7 sqm minimum
- 3-bedroom units: 9 sqm minimum

– **All apartment units within the Fermoy development meet or exceed these minimum requirements for private outdoor space. The design by BRH Design Partners ensures these spaces are functional, accessible and integrated with the overall apartment layout.**
– Ground floor units feature private patios, while upper floor apartments include balconies of generous proportions that provide usable outdoor living areas.

The guidelines require that private amenity space shall be provided in the form of gardens or patios/terraces for ground floor apartments. Appendix 1 provides the above minimum standards for private amenity space. **The private amenity space of the proposed apartments and duplexes have been provided in line with these standards and consistency is thereby achieved.**

Communal Amenity Facilities

In accordance with Section 4.3, the development incorporates well-designed communal amenity spaces to enhance residents' quality of life. This section ensures these spaces receive adequate sunlight year-round through careful building orientation and height considerations.
The scheme meets and exceeds the minimum communal amenity space requirements (Appendix 1):

- 1-bed: 5 sqm
- 2-bed (3-person): 6 sqm
- 2-bed (4-person): 7 sqm
- 3-bed: 9 sqm

The proposed development provides generous, well-located open spaces and amenities, designed to maximize sunlight exposure. As confirmed in the HQA by BRH Design Partners, these spaces surpass minimum standards, ensuring a high-quality living environment.

Children's Play Areas

Section 4.4 mandates the inclusion of child-friendly recreational spaces within apartment schemes. The Fermoy development integrates dedicated play areas throughout the site, strategically positioned near residential units to encourage use and enable natural surveillance from surrounding homes.

These play spaces are thoughtfully incorporated into the larger open space network, promoting active and safe outdoor play while complementing the overall amenity provision. The play area strategy is discussed further in the accompanying design rationale document prepared by CSR Landscape Architects.

Accordingly, ***where SPPRs are stated in this document, they take precedence over any conflicting, policies and objectives of development plans, local area plans and strategic development zone planning schemes.*** *Where such conflicts arise, such plans should be amended by the relevant planning authority to reflect the content of these guidelines and properly inform the public of the relevant SPPR requirements."*

There are 302 no. new build units of which there are 80 no. apartment/duplex units in the subject scheme. Compliance with the above noted design provisions has been achieved in this development, full details in this regard are provided in the enclosed *Housing Quality Assessment* and prepared by BRH Design Partners. This is summarised in the table below:

Table: Compliance of the proposed scheme with the relevant SPPRs

Apartment Guidelines Standard	Summary of scheme compliance
SPPR 1	Separation Distances outlined in SPPR 1 have been achieved as well as housing mix and density standards.
SPPR 2	Minimum private open space standards as set out in SPPR 2 have been achieved
SPPR 3	The proposed apartments adhere to the minimum apartment floor areas provided in SPPR 3.
SPPR 4	The scheme exceeds the requirements of SPPR 4 and all units benefit from dual aspect and adequate floor to ceiling heights.
SPPR 5	The new Apartment Blocks comply with SPPR 5 as the Ground Level units have a floor to ceiling height of at least 2.7m.
SPPR 6	The provision of new Communal, Community and Cultural facilities within apartment schemes shall only be required in specific locations - Community Facilities are provided in the scheme by way of a childcare facility

Compliance with relevant Specific Planning Policy Requirements [SPPRs]

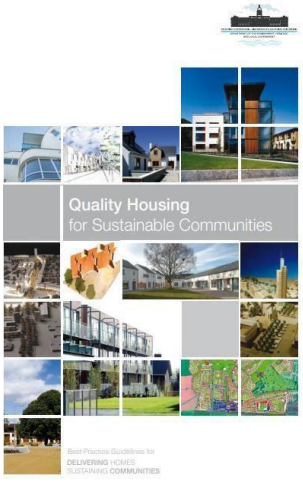


Figure 14 Cover of Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007)

3.8 Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007)

The stated aim of the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities (2007) is to: "identify principles and criteria that are important in the design of housing and to highlight specific design features, requirements and standards that have been found, from experience, to be particularly relevant." These Guidelines along with the Development Plan standards for housing have informed the design of the proposed houses within the proposed development. BRH Design Partners have provided a Housing Quality Assessment for the proposed residential units.

The development of 302 houses in Fermoy can be assessed for consistency with the 2007 Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities document by evaluating how it balances the key principles outlined in the statement. Below is an analysis of how the Fermoy housing project aligns with these criteria:

1. Balance of Key Design Factors

The document emphasizes striking a balance between accessibility, security, safety, privacy, community interaction, services, and space provision.

- **Accessibility: The Fermoy development incorporates universal design principles, ensuring accessibility for all age groups and mobility needs (e.g., step-free access, adaptable units).**
- **Security & Safety: Proper street lighting, defensible space design, and secure pedestrian pathways provision aligns with best practices.**
- **Privacy & Community Interaction: A mix of private gardens, semi-public green spaces, and communal areas fosters both privacy and social cohesion.**
- **Services: Proximity to schools, healthcare, public transport, and retail in Fermoy ensures residents have access to essential amenities.**
- **Adequate Space: Compliance with minimum space standards (per Irish building regulations) ensures functional living areas for families.**

2. Meeting Residents' Needs Across Life Stages

The document highlights the need for housing to accommodate infants, children, adults, and older people over the building's lifecycle. The Fermoy development includes:

- **Diverse unit types (1-bed to 4-bed homes) for different household sizes.**
- **Adaptable housing (e.g., ground-floor units suitable for elderly residents, potential for extensions).**
- **Child-friendly design (safe play areas, proximity to schools).**
- **The 14 later in life units contribute to the variety of units proposed.**

3. Flexibility & Adaptability

- **Lifetime Homes Principles: the design allows for future modifications (e.g., widened doorways for wheelchair access), it ensures long-term usability.**
- **Mixed Tenure & Phasing: If the project includes social, affordable, and private housing, it supports diverse community needs.**
- **Compliance with Part L (Energy Efficiency) of Irish building regulations ensures long-term sustainability.**

The proposed development in Fermoy is consistent with the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities principles by:

- **Balancing social, environmental, and economic sustainability.**
- **Providing flexible, inclusive, and adaptable housing.**
- **Ensuring efficient delivery within time and cost constraints.**
- **Prioritizing resident needs through thoughtful design.**

3.9 Childcare Facilities Guidelines (2001)

The *Childcare Facilities Guidelines (2001)*, generally recommend the provision of childcare facilities for residential development with 75 No. units or more, having regard to the existing geographical distribution of such facilities in the area and the emerging demographic profile of the area.

The *Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)* note that 1-bed or studio type units should not generally be considered to contribute to a requirement for childcare provision, and subject to location this may also apply in part or whole, to units with two or more bedrooms.

Appendix 2 of the 'Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities' establishes a baseline standard for the provision of childcare facilities in new housing developments. The standard is as follows:

- Ratio of Facilities to Dwellings: One childcare facility should be provided for every 75 dwellings.
- Minimum Capacity: Each childcare facility should offer a minimum of 20 childcare places.

This standard is not absolute and may be adjusted based on specific circumstances or additional considerations.

Flexibility in Application
The Guidance recognises that the indicative standard may not be universally applicable and allows for deviations based on case-specific factors. These factors may include, but are not limited to:

- Local Demand: Variations in the demand for childcare services due to demographic or socio-economic factors.
- Site-Specific Constraints: Physical or logistical constraints of the development area.
- Policy Objectives: Alignment with broader local or national childcare or planning policies.

As such, the requirement for childcare facilities may be increased or decreased depending on the unique characteristics of the development area.

Integration with County Childcare Strategies
The Guidance emphasises the importance of aligning local planning decisions with broader strategic frameworks. Specifically:

- Childcare Needs Analysis: The results of any childcare needs analysis conducted as part of a county-level childcare strategy should be taken into account when determining the provision of childcare facilities in new housing areas.
- Evidence-Based Decision-Making: This ensures that planning decisions are informed by robust data and reflect the actual needs of the community.

Summary of Key Principles

1. Baseline Standard: 1 childcare facility per 75 dwellings, with a minimum of 20 places per facility.
2. Flexibility: Adjustments to the standard may be made based on local circumstances.
3. Strategic Alignment: Integration with county-level childcare strategies and needs analyses is essential.
4. Context-Sensitive Thresholds: Provision thresholds should account for existing facilities and demographic trends.

This formalisation provides a structured framework for implementing the Guidance while allowing

for necessary adaptations to meet local needs.

The results of any childcare needs analysis carried out as part of a county childcare strategy should also be considered. Appendix 2 also states that the threshold for provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas.

The proposed scheme consists of 302 no. dwelling units. The 2018 Apartment Guidelines indicate that studio and 1 bedroom units need not be considered in determining the appropriate level of childcare required. Based on this guidance, 54 no. 1 bed units have been omitted from the accompanying assessment. The 248 no. 2-bed plus units (mix of houses and duplex units) will be considered to determine the future childcare requirements for the proposed development. Based on the State average household size of 2.74, the 248 no. units which require childcare provision are likely to generate a population of 680 persons. Based on the assumption that 6.5% of the population of Fermoy are of pre- school age of 0-4 years. The total Population of Ireland in 2022 was 5.1 million people, the population aged 0-4 Years was 330,000 children. The proportion of Population Aged 0-4 age group represents 6.5% of the total population, the number of pre- school children likely to be generated as a result of the completed development is 45.

It is not likely that all 45 children will require childcare so the figure of 45 children is an unlikely maximum scenario in relation to the demand for childcare spaces generated from the proposed development. In formation from the Central Statistics Office revealed that nationally, almost 150,000 children of pre-school age were in childcare. Among this age group, just under a third (44,260) were in childcare for 11 to 20 hours per week. 62% of these were in a crèche or similar facility and 15% were minded by an unpaid relative or family member. As such, **applying a proportion of 62% the total number of children who will be in need of childcare as a result of the proposed development is 28. The proposed residential development includes a 73 no. place childcare facility. The size of the proposed creche [342.17m2] has had regard to the availability of capacity in the existing local facilities as well as the relative lack of childcare facilities to the north of the town of Fermoy. In addition, consideration has been given to providing a creche which will provide childcare places for babies, toddlers and pre-school age children at a size which will attract a local operator [discussions have already taken place with an interested potential operator].**

3.10 Part V of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*

The proposed development in Fermoy demonstrates compliance with Part V, Section 96 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) through its commitment to allocating 20% of the total units (60 no.) for social and affordable housing, in line with legislative requirements. At the pre-planning application stage, the applicant has tentatively proposed transferring these units to the local authority, ensuring adherence to statutory obligations. The breakdown of the Part V units includes 22 one-bedroom, 34 two-bedroom, and 4 three-bedroom dwellings, strategically dispersed across the site to promote inclusive and integrated community development. This distribution avoids clustering and ensures that social and affordable housing is seamlessly incorporated into the broader scheme, aligning with the intent of Part V to prevent segregation and foster mixed-income communities.

- **Part V allocated Units**
- **20% Social and affordable**
- 30 no. Social and 30 no. affordable units.

- House Type E - 3 Bed House - 96.02 sq.m. x 3 No.
- House Type F - 2 Bed House - 89.66 sq.m. x 4 No.
- House Type R - 2 Bed House - 83.03 sq.m. x 8 No.
- House Type S - 3 Bed House - 95.99 sq.m. x 1 No.
- Block A - 1 Bed own door Apartment - 52.16 sq.m. x 8 No.
- Block A - 2 Bed own door Apartment - 96.14 sq.m. x 8 No.
- Block B - 1 Bed own door Apartment - 52.16 sq.m. x 6 No.
- Block B - 2 Bed own door Apartment - 96.14 sq.m. x 6 No.
- Type W - 1 Bed own door Apartment - 57.85 sq.m. x 8 No.
- Type X - 2 Bed own door Apartment - 118.96 sq.m. x 8 No.

Figure 15 Breakdown of Part V Proposal

Furthermore, the applicant has committed to submitting a 'Part V Costs Methodology' as part of the application, which will outline the financial and valuation framework for the transfer of these units. This step ensures transparency and compliance with the statutory process, confirming that the proposed units meet both quantitative and qualitative standards. The inclusion of varied unit sizes (1-bed to 3-bed) addresses diverse household needs, supporting families, individuals, and smaller households, thereby fulfilling the Act's objective of delivering sustainable, mixed-tenure housing.

The proposal reflects a clear understanding of the legislative intent behind Part V, which seeks to balance private development with public housing needs. By allocating 10% social and 10% affordable housing (totaling 20%), the development not only meets the minimum legal requirement but also contributes to Fermoy's long-term housing strategy. The dispersal of these units throughout the site, as indicated on the submitted layout, further underscores compliance with best practices in spatial planning, ensuring that social and affordable housing is physically and socially integrated rather than isolated. This approach aligns with the broader goals of the Planning and Development Act to create cohesive, sustainable communities while addressing housing inequality.

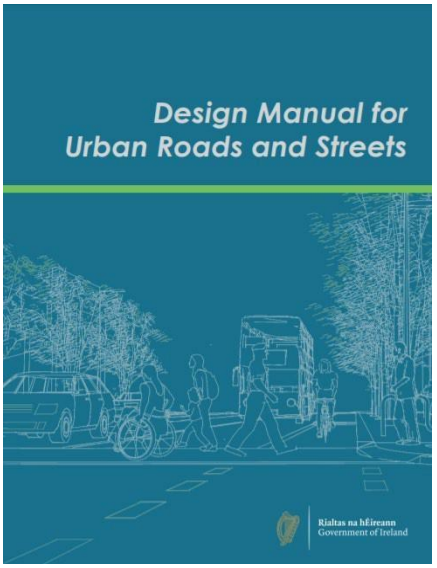


Figure 16 Cover Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019)

3.11 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019)

Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2013, and updated in 2019. DMURS seeks to put well-designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities and supports

boarder government policies on the environment, planning and transportation. DMURS provides the practical measures to achieve:

1. Highly connected street which allow people to walk and cycle to key destinations in a direct and easy-to find manner.
2. A safe and comfortable street environment for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages.
3. Streets that contribute to the creation of attractive and lively communities.
4. Streets that calm traffic via a range of design measures that make drivers more aware of their environment.

DMURS replaced previous national design standards for urban roads and streets, and the use of DMURS is mandatory for all road authorities. A key objective of DMURS is to achieve safe, attractive and vibrant streets by balancing the needs of all users, and prioritising alternatives to car journeys. The Manual advocates a design-led approach, which takes account of both the physical and social dimensions of place and movement. The subject proposal is fully consistent with this recommended approach, and achieves a sense of place and residential amenity whilst also facilitating efficient and secure internal movement. MHL Consulting Engineers have prepared the a *DMURS Compliance Statement and Quality Audit* which describes this development as being compliant with DMURS and its vision for attractive, liveable places. The Statement is accompanied by a suite of independent audit of pedestrian and cycle facilities undertaken by an independent auditor and together this comprises the Quality Audit required by DMURS. The Key Principles underpinning DMURS and how the proposed scheme is consistent with same is outlined herein:

Integrated Street Networks

The proposed development establishes well-connected activity hubs designed to prioritize pedestrian access and public transport connectivity. Key focal points—including the childcare facility, interpretive centre, café, play areas, sports amenities, walking trails, community allotments, and nature park—are strategically positioned to ensure optimal accessibility for both residents and the wider community. These facilities are seamlessly integrated into a cohesive network of footpaths and cycling routes, promoting walkability while maintaining necessary vehicular access. By centralizing these amenities and linking them to an extensive pedestrian pathway system, the development fosters a pedestrian-first environment that aligns with sustainable urban design principles.

Permeability and Legibility

The proposed residential development in Fermoy demonstrates a well-considered street layout designed to maximize permeability for pedestrians and cyclists, ensuring ease of movement throughout the site. Independent pathways have been strategically positioned away from vehicular routes, following natural desire lines between key destinations such as play areas and open spaces. This approach enhances circulation and connectivity, allowing residents to move freely and efficiently. Communal and neighborhood spaces have been carefully sized to promote permeability, ensuring comfortable walking and cycling distances between amenities. The design prioritizes unobstructed movement, avoiding unnecessary barriers or delays, and contributes to a legible and intuitive street network that integrates seamlessly with the surrounding urban fabric. The layout fosters uplifting and secure residential neighbourhoods, characterised by strong connectivity and accessibility, while emphasising high-quality green infrastructure and a balanced mix of hard and soft landscaping. A green framework is integrated across the site, ensuring the proposed development harmonises with its surroundings. Pedestrian and cyclist movement is prioritised in accordance with DMURS principles, supported by a network of well-planned pathways designed to encourage walking, jogging, and scenic views of the surrounding landscape. The scheme also incorporates safe, well-overlooked open spaces, routes, and facilities, accessible to all and designed to complement the site's topographical and landscape features. Provision has been made for multi-functional active and passive open spaces that are inclusive, accessible, and well-connected to broader green infrastructure. The design adopts a child-centred approach, guided by 'home-zone' principles to ensure children of all ages can navigate their neighbourhood freely and safely. The pedestrian is the user at the top of the hierarchy of users.

Movement, Place, and Speed

The proposed development carefully balances speed management with placemaking principles to create a safe and livable residential environment. Recognizing the primarily residential character of the scheme, passive measures such as landscaped features and shared surfaces have been incorporated to naturally regulate vehicular speeds while prioritizing pedestrian movement. These design interventions create a psychological and physical balance, ensuring that roadways accommodate both efficient traffic flow and the community's need for safety. The integration of shared surfaces in key areas further reinforces pedestrian priority, contributing to a streetscape where speed is intuitively moderated without relying solely on restrictive measures.

Streetscape and Urban Structure

The development establishes a strong sense of enclosure and legibility through carefully proportioned street widths, strategic planting, and high-quality design details. A dedicated Landscape Masterplan, prepared by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Landscape Architects, ensures a cohesive green infrastructure that enhances the suburban character while providing shade, biodiversity, and visual appeal. Active street edges and a thoughtfully curated palette of durable, low-maintenance materials contribute to an attractive and functional public realm. These elements work together to create a well-defined urban structure that fosters a sense of place and belonging. The scheme proposes 4 no. distinct character areas, each defined by associated amenity spaces, with unit typology, height, elevational treatment and materials unique to each area. The units interaction with open spaces and varying parking arrangements throughout also contribute to distinct character area. A legible and robust network of streets, pedestrian and bicycle pathways and spaces has been designed throughout the scheme. The layout provides active frontages and passive overlooking throughout the site. Where a gable of a house is exposed, a variation of the particular house type is used ensuring overlooking at these locations. Houses are arranged around the open spaces for passive overlooking to ensure activity and safety for the users.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Environment

Pedestrian safety and comfort are central to the design, with generously proportioned footways and buffer verges along larger roadways to separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic. Uncontrolled crossings, strategically located near open spaces and key destinations, enhance connectivity while promoting natural surveillance. Cyclist needs are also addressed through dedicated facilities, including secure bicycle parking, reinforcing the development's commitment to sustainable and active travel. Collectively, these measures demonstrate the proposal's alignment with Fermoy's residential planning goals, delivering a safe, accessible, and high-quality environment for future residents. The integration of movement, placemaking, and streetscape design reflects a holistic approach to sustainable urban development.

Traffic Management and Environmental Considerations

The layout has been thoughtfully designed to self-regulate vehicle speeds and mitigate traffic congestion, incorporating passive measures that align with the site's topography. Techniques such as landscaped features, pedestrian priority zones, and shorter street lengths encourage slower driving speeds, while gentle curvatures in the roadway design further discourage excessive speed. These elements collectively enhance safety and livability for residents. Additionally, the development addresses environmental concerns by integrating design details and landscaping aimed at reducing noise and air pollution within residential zones. By prioritizing green infrastructure and strategic placement of built elements, the proposal ensures a healthier living environment. This approach reflects a commitment to sustainable urban design, aligning with best practices for residential development in Fermoy while fostering a safe, accessible, and environmentally conscious community.

The consistency of this proposal with Fermoy's residential growth aspirations and the sites residential planning objectives is evident in its balanced approach to connectivity, safety, and environmental sustainability, ensuring a high-quality living environment for future residents.

Movement and Place

The layout employs a clear and context-sensitive street hierarchy, enhancing navigability for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. Major destinations are situated near the primary entrance, reinforcing intuitive wayfinding. The design emphasizes connectivity, with a focus on maximizing direct, walkable, and cyclable routes between streets and key destinations. Variations in road scale and design delineate the hierarchy, ensuring efficient traffic flow while maintaining a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. This approach not only supports multimodal transportation but also integrates the development into the broader urban fabric, creating a cohesive and accessible community.

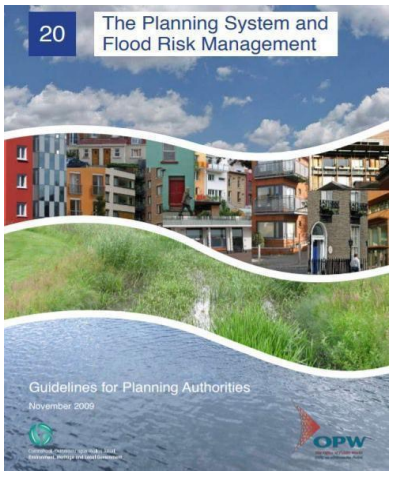


Figure 17 Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)

3.12 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009)

The Office of Public Works (OPW) and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) published The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009). These Guidelines introduce the principle of a risk-based sequential approach to managing flood risk.

The flood risk assessment has been carried out in accordance with the OPW Publication "The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities" and concludes the following:

The site-specific flood risk assessment for the construction of the development was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities", and other relevant documents and publications.

The proposed type of development for this site is to be primarily residential use, which is categorized by the guidelines as highly vulnerable development. As the proposed development is in Flood Zone C, the development is deemed as 'appropriate', and a justification test is not required.

The development's drainage design includes for a 20% climate change allowance. There is no risk of flooding affecting the site area from tidal or fluvial sources. The proposed development will not increase the stormwater runoff rate as all storm water is dealt with on site. Water quality is improved by the use of petrol interceptors, silt traps and isolator rows. The development satisfies the requirement of the SFRA (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment) to reduce flooding and improve water quality. Any known flood events have not caused flooding of the proposed site, and the proposed development does not increase flood risk elsewhere. Thus, the residual risks of flooding can be managed by incorporation of good building practice in design and construction of ground floor level and associated drainage systems, and by maintenance and management of the property. As outlined in the Flood risk assessment which accompanies the planning application, the proposed development has been demonstrated to be in compliance with the core objectives of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines.

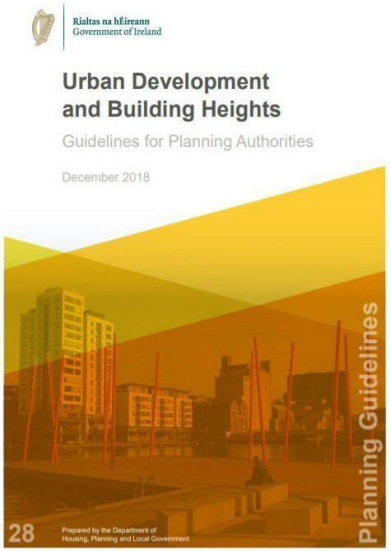


Figure 18 Cover of *Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018).*

3.13 *Urban Development and Building Heights: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018)*

The *Urban Development and Building Heights: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* were published on foot of the *National Planning Framework*. The aim of the *Guidelines* is to ensure that height policies do not undermine national policy objectives to provide more compact forms of development and the consolidation and strengthening of existing built-up areas. Section 3.0 of the Height Guidelines contains **Policy SPPR 3** which states:

"It is a specific planning policy requirement that where;

(A) 1. An applicant for planning permission sets out how a development proposal complies with the criteria above; and

2. the assessment of the planning authority concurs, taking account of the wider strategic and national policy parameters set out in the National Planning Framework and these guidelines."

The proposed development of 302 dwellings in Fermoy demonstrates consistency with the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines 2018, particularly in adhering to Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs). In line with SPPR 1, which encourages increased building height and density in well-connected locations, the scheme features a mix of 2-3 storey buildings, including a large number of duplex-apartment units predominantly in three-storey structures. This approach aligns with national policy by optimizing density without imposing arbitrary height restrictions, while the site's strong connectivity—proximity to public transport and key amenities—justifies its scale. Supporting documentation, including transport assessments, reinforces the suitability of the development's height and density for its context.

The scheme also responds to SPPR 2, which promotes mixed-use development to meet economic and social needs. While primarily residential, the proposal incorporates a childcare facility.

At the town scale, the development aligns with the Guidelines' emphasis on public transport accessibility and context-sensitive design. The site's location within walking distance of Fermoy's bus routes supports the rationale for moderate density. **Collectively, the proposal reflects the Guidelines' core principles: density in accessible locations, contextual sensitivity, and functional diversity, ensuring compliance with national and regional spatial policy and the urban development building height guidelines.**

3.14 Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)

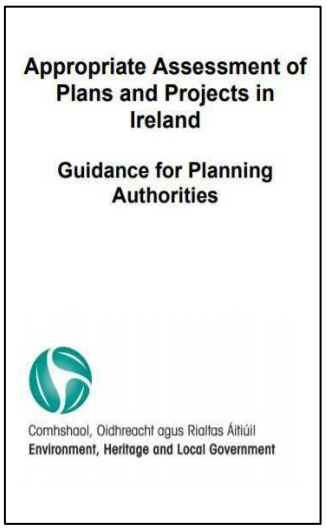


Figure 18 ***Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects: Guidance for Planning Authorities [2009]***

The Appropriate Assessment Guidance was published to guide compliance with the Birds Directive, 1979 and the Habitats Directive, 1992. Dixon Brosnan Consulting Ecologists have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement for the proposed development. It outlines the information required for the competent authority to screen for appropriate assessment and to determine whether or not the proposed development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the sites' conservation objectives, will adversely affect the integrity of the European site.

On the basis of the content of the enclosed report, the competent authority is enabled to conduct an Appropriate Assessment and consider whether, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the sites' conservation objectives, will adversely affect the integrity of the European site.

Following screening, it is concluded that that significant impacts to Natura 2000 sites cannot be excluded, Appropriate Assessment and the preparation of the Natura Impact Statement was therefore required. In this regard, a Natura Impact Statement has also been undertaken and is enclosed. The assessment finds that with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures specifically regarding surface water, significant effects on the integrity of the River Blackwater arising from the proposed development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, can be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt.

Drawing upon the conclusions of the NIS, it is highlighted that following the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined, the construction and presence of this development will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site. No significant impacts are likely on Natura 2000 sites, alone in combination with other plans and projects based on the implementation of mitigation measures.

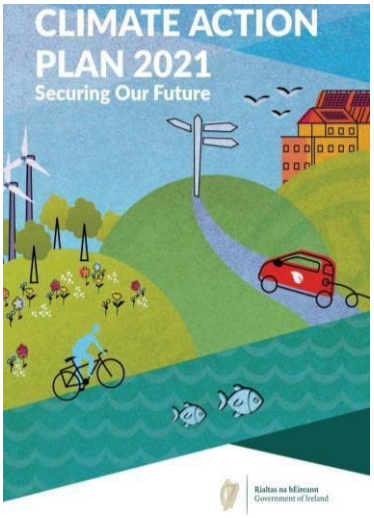


Figure 19 Climate Action Plan 2021

3.15 Climate Action Plan (2021)

Climate Action Plan 2021 was published in 2021. The Plan sets a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. The Climate Action Plan 2021 examines sectors such as Buildings, Transport, Land Use, Circular Economy and Adaptation. The Plan focusses on climate mitigation, and climate adaptation.

The proposed development of 302 dwellings in Fermoy, County Cork, has been carefully designed to align with the principles of the Climate Action Plan 2021, demonstrating a commitment to sustainable urban growth and low-carbon living. As an infill development, the scheme exemplifies compact urban form, efficiently utilizing existing land within the town while minimizing urban sprawl. Its location in close proximity to established services, amenities, and high-quality public transport networks reduces reliance on private vehicles, supporting the Plan's objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through smarter land-use planning. The design has been further informed by a Natura Impact Assessment, ensuring that ecological considerations are integrated into the development's layout and that appropriate mitigation measures are in place to protect local biodiversity.

A key focus of the proposal is the promotion of active travel and public transportation, in line with national climate targets. By consciously limiting private car parking allocations—as justified in the accompanying Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) prepared by MHL Consulting Engineers—the scheme discourages excessive car dependency and encourages walking, cycling, and the use of buses and rail services. This approach not only reduces carbon emissions but also fosters healthier, more connected communities.

Sustainability is embedded in the design of the new buildings, with measures to meet rigorous energy efficiency and environmental performance targets, as outlined in the Life Cycle Report and Sustainability Report by BRH Consulting Engineers. These documents detail strategies such as high-performance insulation, renewable energy integration, and sustainable material selection to minimize the development's carbon footprint over its lifespan. Collectively, these measures ensure that the Fermoy scheme serves as a model for climate-responsive development, aligning with national policies while delivering a resilient, low-carbon neighbourhood for future residents.

4.0 LOCAL POLICY COMPLIANCE

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, is the statutory plan for the area and will guide all future development relating to the subject lands.

4.1 Core Strategy

Chapter 2: Core Strategy
CS 2-3: County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area

The Core Strategy recognises the importance of Fermoy as a 'Key' town in implementing the National Planning Framework and the RSES for the Southern Region, ensuring focused growth in North Cork. Fermoy's development as a major centre for employment and population will be supported by high-quality access to educational and cultural facilities. Essential infrastructure will be prioritised to facilitate Fermoy's expansion while mitigating adverse environmental impacts.

The proposed 302-unit housing scheme in Fermoy will contribute to population and employment growth in Cork, reinforcing Fermoy's role as a thriving centre with excellent accessibility. This development aligns with planned population growth, delivering much-needed housing in the short to medium term.

CS 2-7: Cork County
The strategy aims to sustainably strengthen employment-led growth and town centre-led regeneration in Fermoy, positioning it as a regional economic driver. By leveraging Fermoy's strategic location, the proposed 302-unit development supports this objective, fostering economic activity and enhancing the town's role in the broader region.

Metropolitan Towns

Fermoy's strategic importance is reinforced by its inter-regional road and rail connectivity, which supports its inherent strengths in food production and tourism, while preserving and enhancing the natural environment of the Blackwater Valley. To sustain this growth, targeted investment is needed in infrastructure, including improved inter-regional transport and digital connectivity along the N20/M20 corridor, linking Fermoy to the Cork and Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Areas and the Atlantic Economic Corridor, subject to planning and environmental assessments.
Additionally, maintaining and upgrading existing rail infrastructure is crucial to ensure high standards of safety, service, accessibility, and connectivity. Future development in Fermoy must be phased and coordinated with the Local Authority and Irish Water to guarantee sufficient wastewater capacity and prevent adverse impacts on the nutrient-sensitive River Blackwater.

The proposed 302-unit housing scheme in Fermoy will provide residential accommodation for those working in urban employment sectors, supporting the town's sustainable growth as a key regional hub.

Chapter 3: Settlements and Placemaking
PL 3-1: Building Design, Movement, and Quality of the Public Realm
The proposed 302-unit development in Fermoy seeks to reinforce a strong sense of place and local distinctiveness, enhancing the town's unique character. The design of the residential and non-residential buildings draws on a modern interpretation of traditional forms and materials, blending contemporary elements with Fermoy's existing built environment in a complementary manner. The scheme prioritizes sensitivity to Fermoy's historical and heritage context, ensuring the protection of important non-structural heritage features—such as historic stone boundaries, gate pillars, street furnishings, paving, and mature trees or hedgerows—that contribute to the town's identity. High-quality, locally sourced materials will be used, with architectural designs inspired by Fermoy's vernacular style,

reimagined in a fresh, modern way. Additionally, the development promotes pedestrian-friendly shared spaces, featuring an interconnected network of footpaths and communal areas that improve walkability and connectivity. These pathways are designed to be overlooked by homes, enhancing natural surveillance and fostering a greater sense of safety.

The proposed 302-unit residential development in Fermoy has been carefully designed to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community that respects the town's unique character while meeting contemporary needs. The scheme incorporates thoughtfully designed multi-functional public spaces that will serve all age groups - from children's play areas to quiet seating zones for older residents and flexible spaces capable of hosting cultural events. These amenities are strategically distributed throughout the development to ensure easy access for both new residents and existing neighboring communities. A key focus of the design is the enhancement of green and blue infrastructure, with careful retention and protection of existing mature hedgerows and trees along site boundaries. The development will implement Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) including permeable paving and natural water management features, creating climate-resilient spaces that blend with Fermoy's natural landscape. These measures will protect and enhance the local environment while managing stormwater effectively.

The development prioritizes excellent connectivity, with a network of pedestrian-friendly routes linking seamlessly to Fermoy town center - supporting the 10-Minute Town Concept by ensuring all daily needs are within easy walking distance. Existing access routes and laneways will be preserved and enhanced, maintaining important historical connections while improving accessibility to key amenities including bus routes and the train station. This approach to permeability ensures the new neighborhood will be fully integrated into Fermoy's existing urban fabric, promoting sustainable transport options and reducing car dependency for residents. By combining these elements - quality public spaces, environmental sensitivity, and strong connectivity - the 302-unit development represents a holistic approach to growth that will strengthen Fermoy's community while respecting its unique identity and supporting sustainable living for future residents.

The proposed 302-unit development in Fermoy has been carefully designed to align with the principles of Chapter 3: Settlements and Placemaking (PL 33: Delivering Quality and Inclusive Places), ensuring a harmonious blend of modern living and respect for local character.

Universal Accessibility & Inclusivity

The development incorporates universal design principles, as outlined in the accompanying Universal Design Statement by Deady Gahan Architects, guaranteeing accessibility for all residents, including those with mobility challenges. Thoughtful planning ensures that the needs of all age groups are accommodated—from children’s play areas to quiet, accessible green spaces suitable for older residents. A carefully considered public lighting strategy enhances safety while contributing to the legibility and distinctive atmosphere of the neighborhood, ensuring well-lit pathways and communal areas.

Strengthening Local Character & Placemaking

The architectural approach reflects a contemporary reinterpretation of Fermoy’s traditional building forms and materials, ensuring the new dwellings and non-residential structures complement the existing built environment. This design philosophy reinforces Fermoy’s unique identity while delivering modern, high-quality living spaces.

Sustainable Mobility & Connectivity

Prioritizing walking, cycling, and public transport, the development features an interconnected network of footpaths that enhance permeability and encourage active travel. These pathways are strategically positioned to be naturally overlooked by homes, fostering a sense of safety and community. Additionally, the proposal strengthens Fermoy’s existing pedestrian infrastructure by integrating with

local walking routes, reducing car dependency and promoting sustainable transport alternatives.
By adhering to these principles, the 302-unit development not only meets housing demand but also enriches Fermoy's social fabric, enhances its built heritage, and supports a healthier, more connected community.

The Cork County Development Plan 2022 Core Strategy outlines that the population target for Fermoy during the Plan period is 8,351 persons and that equates to a delivery of 675 units for the plan period. The target was decided on the basis of the following considerations.

1. A detailed analysis of the carrying capacity of zoned lands, including wastewater and water supply infrastructure, public transport accessibility and environmental/flooding and biodiversity sensitivity.
2. Its existing scale of population and social/community infrastructure, including schools and recreational facilities.
3. The relatively recent school developed in Dun Eala in 2017 and the provision for another primary school in R-01.
4. Fermoy functions as an important local service centre for its inhabitants and the wider Municipal District.
5. Proximity to the M8 motorway providing excellent connectivity to other Cork City to the south and Cahir and Dublin to the north.
6. According to the last census (2016) the total number of jobs in the settlement was 2,168 with 2,617 Resident Workers giving a jobs to Resident Workers ratio of 0.828 for the town.

Table 2.9 Cork

Settlement Type / Name		Population and Housing Targets				
Settlement Type	Settlement Name	Census 2016 Population	Population Target 2028	Census 2016 (%)	Housing Target 2022-2028 (units)	Housing Target %
Self-Sustaining Growth: Medium Towns [>5,000]	Youghal	7,963	8,902	2%	359	2%
	Bandon	6,957	8,773	2%	694	3%
	Fermoy	6,585	8,351	2%	675	3%

Figure 20 Cork County Core Strategy Table for Fermoy [extracted from CCDP 2022-2028]

County Development Plan Objective CS 2-4: Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area is relevant to the proposed development and the following selected objectives are highlighted with reference to the proposed development.
(b) Establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of future population growth, in line with this Core Strategy, so that Bandon, Fermoy, Kinsale, Macroom and Youghal can accelerate their rate of growth and achieve a critical mass of population to enable them to maximise their potential to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport
(h) Protect and enhance the natural heritage of the Blackwater Catchment; and prioritise the adequate provision of water services and transport infrastructure to meet current needs and future population targets while protecting the areas environment. **Growing the settlement of Fermoy is therefore consistent with the Objective CS 2-4.**

County Development Plan Objective HOU 4-3 is relevant to the proposed development.

County Development Plan Objective HOU 4-3: Housing for Older People	
a)	Encourage the provision of housing suitable for older people in all residential schemes of 10 units or more.
b)	Support the delivery of housing suitable for older people on infill, opportunity and regeneration-sites within town and village centres. See also Chapter 6 Social and Community- Section 6.6 Planning for Ageing

Figure 21 Objective 4-3 from Volume 1 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022

In terms of the 'Approach to Residential Densities in County Cork' page 96 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 states: "The Plan will support increased densities in appropriate locations as identified by the Guidelines to facilitate the Council's commitment to integrated land-use planning and the greater efficiency of land use" this gives the distinct impression that development on zoned and serviced land in these areas will be supported in principle [subject, of course, to the development management standards articulated in the plan].

Generally the Cork County Development Plan 2022 aims to promote the delivery of housing schemes which:

- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, and minimise the need to use cars;
- Deliver quality of life which residents and visitors are entitled to expect, in terms of amenity, safety and convenience;
- Provide a good range of community and support facilities, where and when they are needed;
- Present an attractive, well-maintained appearance, with a distinct sense of place and a quality public realm;
- Are easy to access and to find one's way around;
- Promote the efficient use of land and energy and minimise greenhouse gas emissions;
- Provide a mix of land uses to minimise transport demand;
- Promote social integration and provide accommodation for a diverse range of household types and age groups, and
- Enhance and protect the built and natural heritage.

The proposed development adheres to the above criteria and the development of 302 residential units in Fermoy, is fully consistent with the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, particularly its policies on residential density, sustainable development, and efficient land use. The Development Plan explicitly supports increased densities in appropriate locations, particularly on zoned and serviced land, to promote integrated land-use planning and optimise infrastructure. Fermoy, as a key urban centre, is an ideal location for such a development, given its existing services, transport links, and role in accommodating growth in County Cork.

County Development Plan Objective HOU 4-7: Housing Density on Residentially Zoned Land			
	Min Net Density	Max Net Density	Comment
Medium A	30	50	• Applicable to suburban/greenfield lands of the larger settlements with a population > 5,000 and those planned to grow >5,000 population; • In towns with an existing/ planned high quality public transport service a minimum density of 35 units/ ha is recommended. • On former Institutional lands which may require concentration of development in certain areas. A minimum of 20% public open space is required at these locations. • This category would be the highest density category applicable to the smaller settlements (< 5,000 in population), and would generally apply to central sites within the core of such settlements, unless otherwise stated or where a higher density approach accords with the existing pattern of development; • Must include a broad range of unit typologies and normally involves a combination of unit formats including a higher proportion of terraced units and/or apartment type units.

Figure 22 Objective 4-7 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022

The proposed density of 43.14 units per hectare aligns with the Medium A allocation and conforms with the Plan's emphasis on compact, sustainable urban development, reducing sprawl and

maximising the use of serviced land. This approach supports the Council's broader objectives of reducing car dependency by ensuring residents have access to walking, cycling, and public transport infrastructure, which Fermoy is well-positioned to provide. The development's scale and design should prioritise connectivity to the town centre, local amenities, and public transport nodes, fostering a walkable and liveable environment.

Furthermore, the proposal supports the Plan's commitment to delivering high-quality residential environments that enhance quality of life. This includes ensuring a mix of housing types to cater to diverse demographics, incorporating green spaces and community facilities, and maintaining a high standard of urban design that reflects Fermoy's character. The development should also adhere to sustainable building practices, reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Plan's environmental goals.

By promoting efficient land use, supporting sustainable transport, and contributing to housing diversity, the 302-unit development at 43.14 units per hectare is a well-justified and policy-compliant proposal that aligns with the strategic vision of the Cork County Development Plan.

The overarching vision for Fermoy is to achieve sustainable population growth in alignment with the targets set out in the Core Strategy. The Development Plan highlights that Fermoy has experienced steady growth in recent years, supported by new residential developments, as indicated by Central Statistics Office (CSO) data. However, this assertion is subject to debate, given that the town's population increased by a mere 0.34% between the 2016 and 2022 Census periods, rising from 6,585 to 6,720 residents over six years. It is important to note that the 2022 Census results were not available at the time the Development Plan was published. This modest population growth underscores the pressing need for additional residential development within Fermoy's development boundary. Had the 2022 Census data been available during the plan's formulation, it is probable that the zoning policy would have incorporated more ambitious population targets and allocated additional land for development.

The Development Plan anticipates Fermoy's population growing to 8,351 by 2028, representing an increase of 1,631 people from the 2022 Census figures. To accommodate this projected growth, a targeted 675 new housing units are required. This highlights the importance of strategic planning and consistent delivery in order to meet the town's future housing and infrastructure needs.

Table 3.1.3 Fermoy Population and Housing Supply

	Population and Housing Requirement			Housing Supply Units	
	Population Census 2016	Population Target (to 2028)	New Units Required (to 2028)	Housing Supply from Residential and Mixed-Use Zoning including Compact Growth Sites	Housing Supply from Residential Additional Provision Sites
Fermoy	6,585	8,351	675	675	140

Figure 23 Population and Housing Targets [extracted from the Development Plan 2022]

Table 3.1.2. Fermoy Municipal District Proposed Scale of Development

Settlement Name	Scale of development 2022	Drinking Water Status – February 2021 Assessment	Wastewater Status – February 2021 Assessment
Main Towns (2)			
Fermoy	675		

Figure 24 Shows adequate Drinking and Waste water capacity [Volume 3, CCDP 2022:13]

4.2 Land Use Zoning Designation and Mapped Objectives

According to Volume 3 of the Development Plan North Cork, the site is zoned for Medium A density residential development. In terms of the site specific zoning objective the plan states that the "Development of this site is contingent on the provision in particular of an acceptable means of surface water discharge. Proposals for development should consider incorporating the existing pond on site as part of the SUDs solution for the site" This has been a key consideration in conceiving of development proposals for the site.

FY-R-05	Medium A density residential development. Development of this site is contingent on the provision in particular of an acceptable means of surface water discharge. Proposals for development should consider incorporating the existing pond on site as part of the SUDs solution for the site	7.4

Figure 25 Zoning Objective [text] for the site [extracted from the Development Plan 2022]

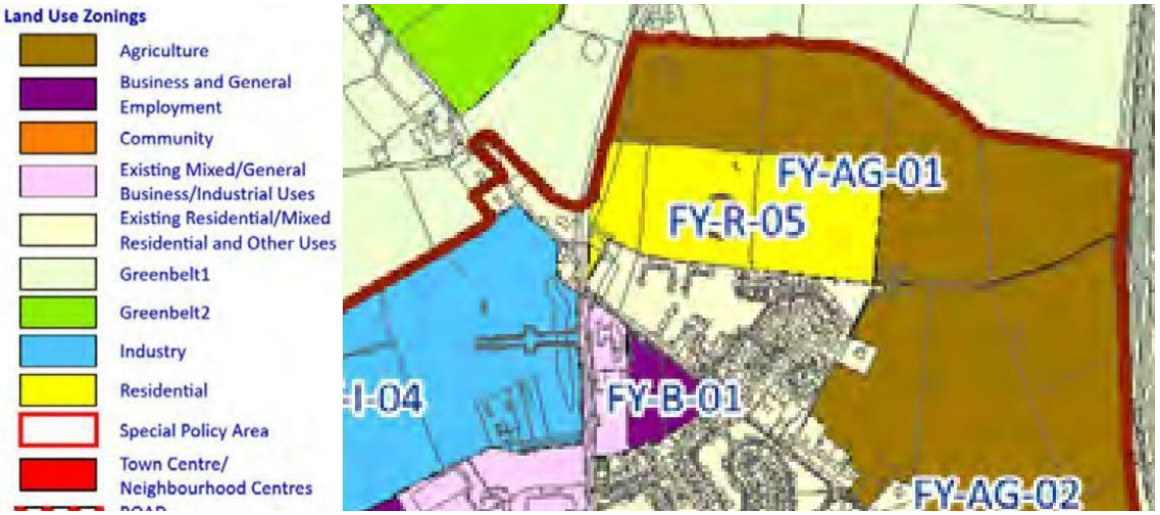


Figure 26 Zoning Objective Map for the site [site in yellow] [extracted from Development Plan 2022]

According to the Development Plan the principal development objective for the subject site is Medium Density Residential Development and the proposed development is fully consistent with all aspects of the zoning policy.

Location and Zoning

The site is strategically located within Fermoy's development boundary, 1.7 km north of the town centre and 35 km from Cork City. It is zoned FY.R-05 under the Cork County Development Plan 2022, designated for medium-density residential development (35–50 units/ha). Key considerations include: Surface water management: Integration of a detention basin to replace the redundant stormwater berm.

Connectivity: Proximity to the M8 motorway, bus routes (245, 220), and pedestrian/cycle links to Fermoy town centre.

Historical and Environmental Features

The site, historically agricultural, retains hedgerows and ditches along its boundaries. These features will be preserved and enhanced to support biodiversity, in line with Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards.

Design Evolution

The proposal evolved through iterative engagement with Cork County Council: Initial Pre-Planning (PPN 23/694): A 3-stage application was revised to a single Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) submission under Section 247. Post-Section 247 Updates: Feedback on density and character areas led to a refined scheme with 302 units (43.14 units/ha), compliant with Compact Settlement Guidelines

(2024). Green Infrastructure 15% usable open space, SuDS-integrated detention basin, and retained hedgerows. Following extensive engagement with the Local Authority a revised scheme design was presented to the Local Authority under a Large Scale Residential Development 32(B) pre-planning submission and subsequently following the receipt of the Section 32(B) Opinion, extensive design responses were made and these are detailed in pages 24-33 of the architects design statement prepared by BRH Design Partners. The revised scheme was designed to provide high quality residential development containing units that contribute positively to Greater Fermoy Area and deliver much needed housing the North Cork Area. The proposed site layout focused on the creation of distinctive neighbourhoods through careful consideration of open spaces, streetscapes with varying widths and characteristics with parking formations which help generate a highly efficient scheme and assists in our vision of placemaking.

Active Travel: Pedestrian/cycle routes (3m shared paths) linking to Fermoy's existing network.

Density and Mix:
Housing Mix: 20% 4-bed, 36% 3-bed, 26% 2-bed, 18% 1-bed (including 14 universal-design bungalows).
Part V Compliance: 60 units (20%) allocated for social/affordable housing. The density proposed is 43.14 which is consistent with the Compact Settlement Guidelines as well as the objectives contained in Table 3.1: Settlement Density Guide from the Cork County Development Plan 2022 according with the Medium A density.

4.3 Community Facilities

The proposed development of 302 residential units in Fermoy, with a density of 43.14 units per hectare, aligns closely with Chapter 6: Social and Community of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028. The project incorporates key social and community infrastructure that meets current and future population needs while supporting the Liveable Town Concept through integrated facilities and accessible public spaces.

1. Provision of Social & Community Infrastructure **(Objective SC 6-1)**
The development includes significant public open space,

These facilities will serve both existing and future residents, ensuring accessibility for all age groups and fostering social cohesion. Additionally, the inclusion of a 73-child creche complies with the Childcare Facilities Guidelines and Pre-School Services Regulations 2006, addressing early-years education needs within the community. The provision of a 73 space creche will serve the proposed development and the wider community.

2. Multi-Use Community Facilities **(Objective SC 6-3)**
The proposed public open spaces and creche are designed to function as multi-use community assets, encouraging shared use among residents and local groups. The sports area, playground, and pocket parks can accommodate intergenerational activities, supporting the Council's objective of facility-sharing to maximise community benefit.

3. Childcare Facilities **(Objective SC 6-4 & SC 6-5)**
The development proactively provides a high-capacity creche (73 children), meeting demand generated by the new housing while adhering to the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Local Authorities (2001). And the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Centres (2019).

This ensures sustainable, inclusive, and accessible childcare provision, aligning with the Plan's emphasis on concurrent delivery of social infrastructure with residential development.

4. Educational Facilities **(Objective SC 6-6)**
While the development itself includes a creche, the proximity to Fermoy town centre ensures access to

existing primary and secondary schools, reducing the need for additional on-site educational facilities at this scale. The Council's policy recognises that larger residential schemes may necessitate expanded school capacity, but in this case, the existing schools in Fermoy can accommodate the projected demand.

A Policy-Compliant, Community-Focused Development

The 302-unit proposal fully complies with the social and community objectives of the Cork County Development Plan by: Delivering essential public open spaces (parks, sports areas, playgrounds); Providing a high-standard creche in line with statutory guidelines; Enhancing multi-use community facilities that promote social interaction and; Ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all age groups. By integrating these elements, the development supports the Liveable Town Concept, fostering a sustainable, well-serviced community that aligns with the Council's strategic vision for Fermoy.

4.4 Childcare Facilities

The proposed Childcare Facility is appropriately located close to the entrance of the site making it accessible to the general public arriving by foot or public transport, as well as residents of the scheme. The proposed Childcare Facility (342.17 sq m) is large enough to cater for the existing and future population of the wider area as well as residents of the scheme.

4.5 Climate Policies

Consistency with Climate Action Objectives CA 17-1 (Policy Compliance)
The development is consistent with national and local climate strategies, including:

- The National Planning Framework and Southern Region Spatial and Economic Strategy through its infill location
- The Climate Action Plan 2021 via compact urban form principles
- The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework through climate-resilient design

CA 17-2 (Low-Carbon Transition)
The project is consistent with emissions reduction goals by:
○ Delivering compact growth within existing settlement boundaries
○ Supporting integrated transport through walkable access to Fermoy's services
○ Incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for flood resilience
○ Allowing for renewable energy integration in building design

CA 17-3 (Behavioural Change)
The development is consistent with promoting sustainable lifestyles by:
○ Creating a 10-minute neighbourhood to enable walking/cycling for daily needs
○ Reducing car dependency through strategic location near existing amenities

CA 17-4 (Monitoring & Policy Development)
The scheme remains consistent with climate monitoring frameworks through:
○ Potential collaboration with the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO)
○ Providing measurable outcomes for the Council's climate tracking

CA 17-5 (Decarbonising Zones)
The infill location is consistent with:
○ Emerging low-carbon zone strategies for Fermoy
○ National Climate Action Plan targets for sustainable urban growth

CA 17-6 (Council's Climate Action Plan)
The development is consistent with forthcoming climate planning by:
○ Aligning with Cork County's obligations under the Climate Action Act 2021

- Providing a model for sustainable residential infill development

Key Climate-Consistent Outcomes

The project delivers multiple climate-consistent benefits:

- Reduced emissions through compact, transit-oriented design
- Enhanced resilience via sustainable drainage and green infrastructure
- Policy alignment with all tiers of climate action frameworks

By locating these homes within Fermoy's existing urban fabric, the scheme demonstrates full consistency with Cork County's climate objectives - avoiding sprawl, cutting transport emissions, and supporting the transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future. The development serves as a practical example of how infill projects can align with and advance both local and national climate action goals.

4.6 Neighbourhood and Placemaking

The proposed development of 302 houses in Fermoy demonstrates strong consistency with the placemaking principles outlined in Chapter 3 of the County Development Plan. At its core, placemaking focuses on thoughtful layout, design, and management of the built environment, ensuring that spaces are attractive, safe, and inviting while fostering a sense of community ownership and activity. This development aligns with these principles by integrating high-quality design that prioritises the human experience, reinforcing Fermoy's unique urban character while supporting sustainable, compact growth.

The scheme is consistent with national and regional planning objectives by delivering a well-connected, permeable neighbourhood that responds to Fermoy's existing urban structure.

The proposal applies people-centred design, ensuring that future residents benefit from accessible amenities, active travel options, and a strong connection to the natural environment. This approach is consistent with the four key components of successful placemaking:

1. Harnessing Fermoy's unique characteristics – The development respects the town's existing layout while enhancing its functionality and aesthetic appeal.
2. Improving quality of life – By promoting walkability, safety, and community interaction, the scheme fosters a liveable, vibrant neighbourhood.
3. Delivering sustainable, well-designed homes – The project integrates energy-efficient housing, green infrastructure, and access to walking/cycling routes, reducing environmental impact.
4. Protecting the environment – Through sustainable drainage, biodiversity enhancements, and climate-resilient design, the development safeguards Fermoy's natural surroundings.

The consistency between this development and the placemaking goals outlined in the Cork County Development Plan ensures that it will not only meet housing needs but also strengthen the town's identity, sustainability, and long-term vitality. By embedding these principles, the project exemplifies how compact, well-planned growth can create thriving, people-focused communities in line with Cork County Council's vision.

The proposed development of 302 houses in Fermoy demonstrates strong consistency with the placemaking principles outlined in Chapter 3 of the County Development Plan, particularly as articulated in Table 3.1: Principles of Placemaking. The development's design approach shows clear consistency with the theme of Character and Identity by responding to Fermoy's distinctive local patterns through appropriate building forms, materials, and architectural details that reinforce the town's unique identity, much like the cited examples of Kinsale's wall-hung slates or Mallow's bay windows.

The proposal maintains consistency with the Continuity and Enclosure principle through its careful attention to street frontages and spatial definition. The development will create coherent building lines that establish strong street edges while ensuring active frontages with frequent doors and windows, thereby promoting street vitality and a clear distinction between public and private realms. The

boundary treatments will similarly reflect local context in their design, whether through traditional materials or contemporary interpretations.

Regarding Quality of the Public Realm, the scheme demonstrates consistency by creating attractive, safe, and accessible open spaces that are sensitively integrated with the natural environment. The public realm design will incorporate quality materials and careful attention to street furniture and lighting, creating welcoming spaces that cater to all users, including older residents and people with disabilities, while maintaining visual connections to Fermoy's surrounding landscape.

The development shows particular consistency with the Ease of Movement principle through its emphasis on permeability and sustainable access. The layout prioritizes pedestrian and cyclist movement with direct, overlooked routes that connect seamlessly to Fermoy's existing network, applying DMURS principles to ensure people-friendly streetscapes that balance all modes of transport.

In terms of Legibility, the proposal is consistent with creating recognizable routes and landmarks through careful massing and spatial organization. The development will reinforce Fermoy's existing urban hierarchy while creating new focal points that enhance wayfinding and spatial understanding.

The scheme demonstrates consistency with the Adaptability principle through flexible building designs that allow for future changes in use or occupancy. This forward-thinking approach ensures the development can evolve with changing social and economic needs over time.

Finally, the proposal shows consistency with Diversity and Vibrancy through its mix of housing typologies, sizes and tenures that respond to Fermoy's varied demographic needs. While primarily residential, the development's design facilitates potential future mixed uses that could contribute to around-the-clock activity in this area of the town.

By carefully addressing each of these placemaking principles, the 302-home development will create a cohesive, high-quality addition to Fermoy that strengthens the town's urban structure while delivering an attractive, sustainable, and people-centered neighborhood consistent with the County Development Plan's vision for successful placemaking.

4.7 Transport and Mobility

According to the Cork County Development Plan the overarching vision is to create "an efficient transport system supporting connectivity and competitiveness", while making "sustainable travel modes an attractive and convenient choice" to deliver economic, social, health, environmental, and climate action benefits (12.2.1).

Key Policy Objectives relate to

Compact Growth & Low-Carbon Transition, the plan supports "the transformational change required to implement the National Planning Framework", particularly in achieving "compact growth and the transition to a low carbon society" (12.2.2).

Transport-Oriented Development Aims to "influence transport demand and reduce the need to travel" by promoting "land use patterns that support sustainable transport investment" (12.2.2).

Sustainable Travel Choices Prioritises "sustainable modes of transport" to minimise environmental impacts while acknowledging "the wider benefits to society" (12.2.2).

Enhanced Connectivity & Permeability Encourages "walking/cycling between homes and areas of employment, schools, public transport, retail and other services" (12.2.2).

Integrated Land Use & Transport Planning based on "sustainable settlement patterns" and maximising "sustainable transport opportunities" (12.2.3).

The plan promotes the "10-minute town/neighbourhood" concept to reduce car dependency (12.2.3).

The plan emphasises compact, low-carbon development, prioritises walking, cycling, and public transport, and integrates transport planning with land use to create sustainable, well-connected communities. The Avoid-Shift-Improve strategy and 10-minute neighbourhood concept are central to reducing reliance on private vehicles.

County Development Plan Objective TM 12-1: pertains to the integration of Land Use and Transport, maintaining the original meaning and including direct quotes where appropriate:

The objective "supports and facilitates the integration of land use with transportation infrastructure" by promoting "diverse, sustainable, compact settlements" to achieve sustainable transport outcomes. New developments in the county must align with "existing and planned well-functioning, integrated public transport, walking, and cycling transport modes."

a) The Council commits to implementing transport programmes and policies outlined in Project 2040 and the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan as they apply to County Cork.

b) Residential development should follow a sequential approach, prioritising lands within or adjacent to existing urban areas that are—or will be—highly accessible by "walking, cycling, or public transport," including infill and brownfield sites.

c) Future developments must be designed to "maximise accessibility by public transport, walking, and cycling." Larger, high-trip-generating developments, such as offices and retail, should be concentrated in central locations with strong "sustainable transport mode" connections.

d) New employment and residential developments should be consolidated and intensified in ways that ensure they are "serviceable by public transport" and highly accessible by "walking, cycling, and public transport." Within Metropolitan Cork, major developments should be located in areas well-served by existing or planned "high-capacity public transport."

e) In smaller rural towns, development should "optimise public transport and sustainable travel integration." Public transport interchanges will be supported to encourage a "modal shift to public transport and sustainable travel" between and approaching settlements.

f) Higher residential densities will be encouraged in "settlement centres benefiting from high-quality public transport services."

This objective ensures that land use and transport planning work together to create "compact, sustainable settlements" that reduce car dependency and enhance accessibility through "walking, cycling, and public transport."



Figure 27 Demonstrates how proposed development fits into the 10-minute town concept

The proposed 302-home development near Fermoy aligns perfectly with this strategy. Located just 1.4km north of Fermoy town, the site is well-positioned to integrate with existing walking and cycling routes, public transport links, and local amenities, ensuring residents can access daily needs within a 10-minute active travel radius. The development's design, prioritising pedestrian permeability, cycling infrastructure, and proximity to services—, upports compact growth while reducing reliance on private cars. By adhering to these principles, the scheme contributes to Fermoy's long-term sustainability, health outcomes, and climate resilience, in full compliance with Cork County's development objectives.

The 10-minute town concept, which promotes sustainable living by ensuring essential services are within a short walk or cycle, aligns strongly with the proposed development of 302 houses north of Fermoy town. This approach delivers significant economic, health, climate, and social benefits, including reduced transport costs, shorter travel times, improved public health, increased retail vibrancy, enhanced social interaction, better air quality, and progress toward climate action goals. By reducing travel distances, the concept encourages active travel modes such as walking and cycling, fostering thriving local economies while minimising car dependency.

The health benefits of this model are substantial. Fewer cars mean cleaner air, quieter streets, and safer environments, while increased walking and cycling contribute to lower obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and even Alzheimer's risk. These principles are reinforced by Ireland's National Physical Activity Plan, which highlights active travel as a key factor in improving public health and wellbeing.

The 10-minute town concept also supports UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and Goal 13 (Climate Action). Ireland's commitment to these goals ensures that urban planning prioritises compact, walkable, and sustainable communities. Achieving this vision requires integrated land use and transport planning, along with proactive infrastructure investment to make active travel attractive. The Town Centre First policy, part of Ireland's Programme for Government, further supports this by encouraging residential growth in town centres to enhance vibrancy and reduce sprawl.

The Traffic and Transportation Assessment (TTA) prepared by MHL Consulting Engineers for the proposed residential development of 302 units in Fermoy, Co. Cork, concludes that the development will have an acceptable impact on the local road network. The assessment, conducted by MHL & Associates Ltd., evaluates key junctions under various scenarios, including the Opening Year (2027), Opening Year
+5 (2032), and Opening Year +15 (2042). The analysis uses traffic modelling software (PICADY, ARCADY, and LINSIG) and incorporates traffic count data from September 2023, adjusted for future growth using TII expansion factors. The proposed development's traffic generation was estimated using the TRICS database, with peak hour trips calculated conservatively.

The assessment focused on five key junctions, all of which were found to operate within capacity under all scenarios. For example, Junction 1 (M8 Junction 14) shows a maximum RFC of 64% in the 2042 AM peak, with a 10-second delay, well below the 85% threshold. Junction 2 (N72/M8 Roundabout) reaches an RFC of 84% in the 2042 PM peak but remains within acceptable limits, with delays of approximately 21 seconds. Junction 3 (Dublin Rd and Pike Rd T-Junction) operates at 52% RFC in the 2042 PM peak, with minimal delays. Junction 4 (Signalised 4-Arm Junction) shows increasing congestion but remains functional, peaking at 69.7% DOS in 2042. Junction 5 (Development Entrance) operates efficiently with an RFC of 41% in the 2042 AM peak.

The cumulative impact of the development on the road network is minimal, with no significant delays or congestion predicted. All junctions will continue to function within capacity, and no mitigation measures are required. The development also includes provisions for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport, aligning with sustainable travel policies.

In summary, the TTA demonstrates that the proposed 302-unit residential development will not adversely affect the local road network, ensuring smooth traffic flow and compliance with operational standards for all assessed junctions. The findings support the acceptability of the development from a traffic and transportation perspective.

4.8 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

The proposed 302-unit development north of Fermoy demonstrates strong consistency with Cork County Development Plan 2022's green infrastructure objectives (GI 14-2) through eight integrated elements, supported by strategic pedestrian connectivity to the wider town network:

1. Comprehensive Green Network

The development delivers consistent provision of quality green spaces, allocating 10 distinct areas of green infrastructure including larger central parks and smaller pocket parks. This responds directly to Objective GI 14-2(a) by addressing Fermoy's recreational needs for its growing population while providing multifunctional ecosystem services such as flood attenuation and urban cooling.

2. Ecological Connectivity

The design implements Objective GI 14-2(c) through continuous green links between the development's parks, adjacent farmland, and Fermoy's town centre. Footpaths extending to the R639 public road feature consistent 3m-wide planted verges with native species, forming both recreational routes and pollinator corridors.

3. Nature-Based Solutions

Demonstrating consistency with Objective GI 14-2(d), the masterplan integrates SUDS basins disguised as wetland gardens and swales that manage runoff while boosting biodiversity. These align with the Plan's emphasis on climate-adaptive design. The redundant bund has also been incorporated the SUDS strategy.

4. Active Recreation

The central green includes a consistent multi-use games area and trim trail, fulfilling GI 14-2(a)'s requirement for both active and passive recreation. Footpaths connect these to Fermoy's existing sports facilities via the public road network.

5. Urban Greening

Street trees and rain gardens along all internal roads provide consistent canopy cover, meeting the Plan's urban cooling objectives while enhancing walkability.

6. Ecological Enhancement

The scheme retains and augments existing hedgerows as wildlife corridors, consistently applying GI 14-2(b)'s corridor concept. New orchard planting reinforces local agricultural character. The hedgerows that exist on site, mainly located along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site as well as the central planted stone ditch which splits the overall site in 2 are to be retained where possible and supplemented with additional protective measures and planting. It is proposed to incorporate these existing natural features into the site layout.

7. Accessible Design

All green spaces and footpaths adhere to universal access standards, with consistent tactile paving where paths meet public roads, fulfilling the Plan's inclusivity aims.

The development's footpath extensions onto the R639 physically and visually integrate the scheme with Fermoy's green infrastructure network, creating consistent pedestrian/cycle access to the town centre, schools, and the Blackwater Greenway - a direct response to GI 14-2(c)'s connectivity objectives.

By delivering these eight interlinked green infrastructure elements, the proposal demonstrates comprehensive consistency with the County Development Plan's environmental objectives, creating a model for sustainable settlement expansion that balances growth with ecological enhancement.

In terms of Biodiversity The proposed development demonstrates strong consistency with Cork County Development Plan Objective BE 15-2 (Protect sites, habitats and species) through its comprehensive approach to preserving and enhancing the site's ecological features while implementing robust water management systems:

1. Hedgerow and Habitat Protection (BE 15-2 a,c,e)

The retention of existing hedgerows along northern/eastern boundaries and the central stone ditch shows direct consistency with BE 15-2(c)'s requirement to protect "hedgerows, tree lines" as ecological corridors. The arborist report ensures compliance with BE 15-2(b) regarding protected species, while supplementary planting enhances these features as wildlife habitats per BE 15-2(e)'s landscape protection requirements. These measures maintain connectivity with the wider ecological network, including the nearby Blackwater River SAC/SPA.

2. Sustainable Drainage Integration (BE 15-2 a,c)

The SuDS strategy aligns with BE 15-2(a)'s protection mandate through:

- Permeable surfaces and infiltration areas that mimic natural hydrology
- Hydrocarbon interceptors safeguarding the Blackwater River SAC/SPA
- Pre- and post-construction water monitoring ensuring no ecological degradation

This demonstrates consistency with BE 15-2(c)'s enhancement objectives by creating new wetland habitats within SuDS features while protecting existing watercourses.

3. Construction Phase Protections (BE 15-2 b,d)

The operational measures show consistency with species protection requirements (BE 15-2b) through:

- Silt traps preventing sediment pollution of aquatic habitats
- Bunded oil tanks avoiding contamination of ground/surface waters
- Strict drainage commissioning protocols preventing cross-contamination

4. Long-term Ecological Management (BE 15-2 c,e)

The maintenance regime ensures ongoing consistency with habitat protection by:

- Regular drainage system cleaning preserving water quality
- Continuous monitoring verifying protection of receiving waters
- Sustainable landscape management of retained/enhanced habitats

The development's water management approach specifically addresses BE 15-2(a)'s SAC/SPA protection requirements through engineered and natural safeguards that prevent any adverse impact on the Blackwater's designated habitats, while creating new ecological value through enhanced hedgerows and SuDS features. This dual approach of preservation and enhancement demonstrates comprehensive compliance with the Plan's biodiversity objectives.

4.9 Open Space, Parks and Recreation

The proposed development demonstrates a strong alignment with Cork County Council's Recreation and Amenity Policy, as well as the specific objectives outlined in the County Development Plan, particularly GI 14-6: Public/Private Open Space Provision. The scheme has been thoughtfully designed to integrate high-quality, accessible, and well-proportioned public open spaces that not only meet but exceed the qualitative and quantitative standards set out in the interim policy and associated guidelines.

The provision of 1.04 hectares of open space, representing 15% of the site, complies with the general requirement of 12% to 18% of the development area being allocated for public open space, as stipulated in the Council's Interim Recreation and Amenity Policy (2019). The design rationale justifies this allocation by ensuring that the open spaces are not merely functional but contribute significantly to the aesthetic and social quality of the development. The eight strategically dispersed public open spaces create a cohesive pedestrian network, enhancing connectivity and fostering a sense of community within the four distinct neighbourhoods. This approach aligns with GI 14-6(b), which promotes the linking of new open spaces to form a green infrastructure network, while also adhering to the qualitative emphasis on design, accessibility, and biodiversity highlighted in the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development.

Furthermore, the mix of formal plaza-style areas and informal green spaces, connected by pathways and enriched with native planting, reflects the Council's objective of achieving high qualitative standards in public open space provision. The inclusion of play and rest areas, as well as traffic-calming home zones, supports the policy commitment to serving the recreational needs of residents, as outlined in the original 2006 policy. The positioning of the creche adjacent to the largest public open space further underscores the scheme's compliance with the Council's objective of promoting social inclusion and community interaction through well-integrated amenities.

The development also addresses the potential for flexibility in open space provision where proximity to existing amenities or high-quality design may justify variations in standards. While the scheme does not rely on off-site provision, the exceptional design quality of the public open spaces—emphasising visual appeal, functionality, and connectivity—could reasonably support the application of a reduced minimum standard if required. However, given that the 15% allocation already meets the baseline requirement, the proposal demonstrates full compliance without necessitating such a relaxation.

In summary, the proposed development is consistent with Cork County Council's Recreation and Amenity Policy and Development Plan objectives by providing a well-designed, accessible, and multifunctional open space network that enhances residential quality, supports community engagement, and integrates seamlessly with the broader green infrastructure strategy, whilst the

quantums are superceded by the 2025 guidelines the general principles . The Landscape Design Rationale by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds further substantiates this compliance, ensuring that the scheme not only meets policy standards but also delivers a high-quality living environment for future residents.

4.10 Housing Policy

4.10.1 Residential Density

While densities within the ranges set out in the guidelines will be acceptable, they state that planning authorities should encourage densities at or above the mid-density range at the most central and accessible locations. The density proposed is 43.14 which is consistent with the Compact Settlement Guidelines as well as the objectives contained in Table 3.1: Settlement Density Guide from the Cork County Development Plan 2022 according with the Medium A density.

4.10.2 Overall Housing Mix

The Cork County Development Plan states that the impact of population growth, social changes including more people living alone or in smaller households and an ageing population with specific housing needs means that the mix of house types and sizes required needs to become more diverse and that it has never been more important to improve the range of choice available throughout the County as a whole. The plan states that the a Statement of Housing Mix should detail the proposed housing mix including specific provision for special needs groups such as older people or disabled and why it is considered appropriate. This section of the planning statement should be considered as the statement of Housing Mix.

County Development Plan Objective HOU 4-6 pertains to Housing Mix and aims to:

a) Secure the development of a mix of house types and sizes throughout the County as a whole to meet the needs of the likely future population across all age groups in accordance with the guidance set out in the Joint Housing Strategy and the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas.

b) Require the submission of a Statement of Housing Mix with all applications for multi-unit residential development in order to facilitate the proper evaluation of the proposal relative to this objective. The Statement of Housing Mix should include proposals for the provision of suitable housing for older people and the disabled in the area.

SCHEDULE OF UNIT TYPES			
Unit Composition		**Number of Units**	**Proportion**
4 Bedroom Units		61	20%
3 Bedroom Units		109	36%
2 Bedroom Units		78	26%
1 Bedroom Units		54	18%
Total		**302**	**100%**

Figure 28 Housing Mix Table [by composition]

As can be seen from Figure 28 there is 20% 4 bed units, 36% 3 bed units, 26% 2 bed units and 18% 1 bed units.

UNIT TYPE	DESCRIPTION	NO. OF BEDS	UNIT SIZE	NO. OF UNITS	% of SCHEME
CA1 - House Type D	Semi-detached	3	109.58	10	3.31%
CA1 - House Type B	Semi-detached	4	158.52	14	4.64%
CA1 - House Type B1	Semi-detached	4	159.79	2	0.66%
CA1 - House Type E	End of Terrace	3	96.02	3	0.99%
CA1 - House Type F	Mid Terrace	2	89.66	4	1.32%
CA1 - House Type A	Semi-detached	4	142.18	3	0.99%
CA1 - House Type C	Semi-detached	4	133.84	8	2.65%
CA1 - House Type G	Mid Terrace	1	47.28	14	4.64%
CA2 - Block C- Ground Floor	Ground Floor own door apartment	1	52.16	12	3.97%
CA2 - Block C- Duplex	1st floor and 2nd floor own door duplex apartment	2	96.14	12	3.97%
CA2 - Block C(m)- Ground Floor	Ground Floor own door apartment	1	52.16	6	1.99%
CA2 - Block C(m)- Duplex	1st floor and 2nd floor own door duplex apartment	2	96.14	6	1.99%
CA2 - Block B- Ground Floor	Ground Floor own door apartment	1	52.16	6	1.99%
CA2 - Block B- Duplex	1st floor and 2nd floor own door duplex apartment	2	96.14	6	1.99%
CA2 - Block A- Ground Floor	Ground Floor own door apartment	1	52.16	8	2.65%
CA2 - Block A- Duplex	1st floor and 2nd floor own door duplex apartment	2	96.14	8	2.65%
CA3 - House Type H	End of Terrace	4	149.61	4	1.32%
CA3 - House Type O	Mid Terrace	2	89.66	8	2.65%
CA3 - House Type L	End of Terrace	3	96.02	4	1.32%
CA3 - House Type J	Semi-detached	4	133.83	22	7.28%
CA3 - House Type K	Semi-detached	3	109.58	20	6.62%
CA3 - House Type M	End of Terrace	3	107.38	6	1.99%
CA3 - House Type P	End of Terrace	3	96.02	6	1.99%
CA3 - House Type N	End of Terrace	3	92.27	4	1.32%
CA3 - House Type Q	Mid Terrace	2	77.69	6	1.99%
CA4 - House Type W	Ground Floor own door apartment	1	57.85	8	2.65%
CA4 - House Type X	1st floor and 2nd floor own door duplex apartment	2	118.98	8	2.65%
CA4 - House Type U	Mid Terrace	3	119.38	16	5.30%
CA4 - House Type S	Mid Terrace	3	95.99	32	10.60%
CA4 - House Type R	Mid Terrace	2	83.03	20	6.62%
CA4 - House Type V	Mid Terrace	4	143.98	8	2.65%
CA4 - House Type T	End of Terrace	3	107.38	8	2.65%
				302	100

Figure 29 Detailed breakdown of Housing Types and Composition

When Figure 29 is examined and the nuances of the various house compositions are examined and the house types are looked at there is a much larger housing mix proposed than what may be understood from only looking at the development description. There are 26 house types proposed. In terms of the dominant typologies: House Type S (3-bed Mid Terrace): 32 units (10.6% of total) is the most prevalent house type and this is not surprising considering that three bed mid terraced units reflect the average household size of 2.74 persons [Census 2022], they also offer a more affordable housing

option. House Type J (4-bed Semi-detached): 22 units (7.28%) is the second most prevalent house type and allows for more choice and a larger household size, followed by House Type K (3-bed Semi-detached): 20 units (6.62%). There is of course a strong emphasis on the provision of Family type units but more Compact Units are also a strong element of provision.

- Smaller units (1-2 beds): 132 units (43.7%)
- Family units (3-4 beds): 170 units (56.3%)

To ensure a good housing mix for persons with mixed abilities the principles of Equitable Use have been employed, the design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities. A consistent means of access is provided to all dwellings and each are designed to provide part M compliant level access entrances via the front door for visitors. For the most part car parking is by way of on street design. External amenity spaces are designed in accordance with Technical Guidance Document Part M 2010. The Creche is located in a readily accessible area of the site. Outdoor amenity space is provided for the Creche facility and with Part M compliant level access. The reception area for the Creche facility is located at ground floor level, situated in close proximity to the front door and provided with communication aids. In addition the principles of Low Physical Effort have been incorporated into the design. The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue. The design allows proposed users to maintain a neutral body position, minimise repetitive actions and minimise sustained physical effort. Pedestrian and bicycle pathways have been designed to minimise gradient and mitigate the requirement for extensive change of levels. The majority of pedestrian and bicycle priority routes are provided with a gradient of less than 1:20. The majority of dwelling houses are provided with on street car parking which is located close to the front door. All entrance doors (dwelling houses and childcare facility entrances) are provided with an external level landing in accordance with Technical Guidance Document Part M.

14 No. 1 Bedroom Bungalows for Later living/universal design have been proposed within Character Area 1 [which is the closest Character area to the entrance to the proposed scheme] within a communal courtyard arrangement which creates a sense of enclosure and security for its end users [may be most suited to older persons]. This design also provides defensive space from nearby streets, ensuring user safety. Each unit includes a small patio/garden for bike storage, and the communal courtyard promotes social interaction among residents. The private patio and communal courtyard together provide sufficient amenity space for each unit. The proximity to the public park offers easy access and integration within the community. The proposed housing mix has been carefully structured to support balanced population growth in Fermoy, catering to diverse demographic needs. This distribution reflects contemporary household formation trends while preventing over-saturation of any single unit type. The significant proportion of 2 and 3 bedroom units directly responds to Fermoy's identified need for family accommodation, while the 1 and 4 bedroom provision ensures appropriate options for smaller and larger households without dominating the development's character.

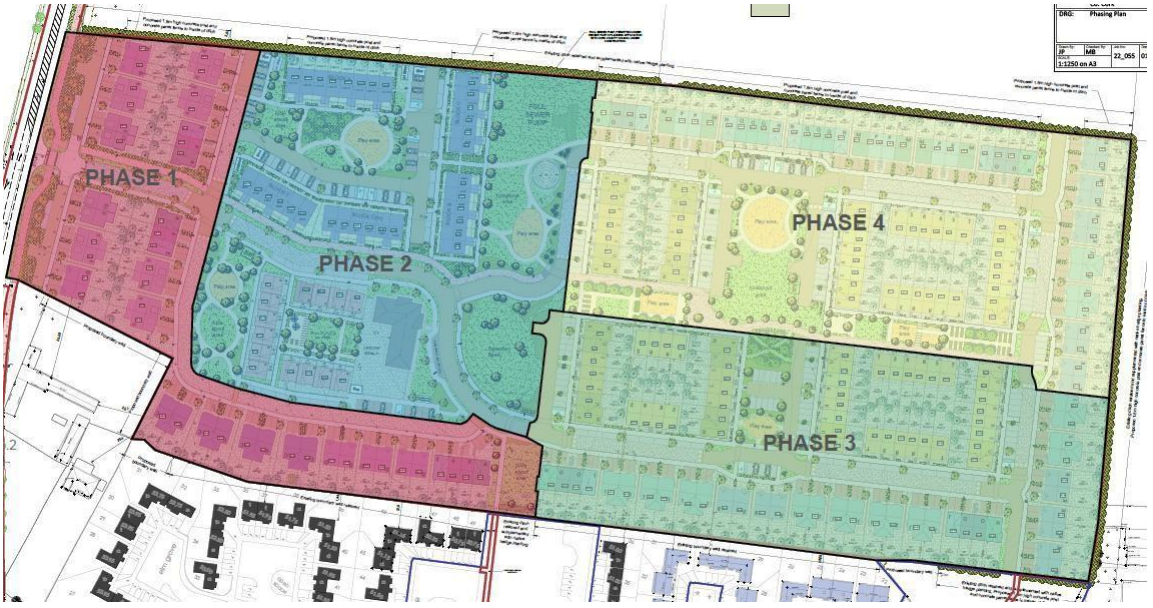
The 302-unit scheme represents an optimal balance between:

- Meeting urgent housing needs
- Respecting Fermoy's settlement character
- Delivering critical mass for sustainable communities
- Future-proofing for population growth.

The proposal transforms an underutilized site into a sustainable residential community that will serve Fermoy's needs for decades to come, while setting a benchmark for quality compact development in regional growth centres. As such the proposed development proposes to secure the development of a mix of house types to meet the needs of the likely future population across all age groups in accordance with the guidance set out in the Joint Housing Strategy and the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas the smaller own door units would lend themselves to the provision of housing for older people or be designed to cater for the disabled in the area.

4.10.3 Phasing Schedule

Paragraph 4.10.4 of the Cork County Development Plan states that Mechanisms such as phasing will be considered to manage the redevelopment of a large site blocks where it is necessary to activate supporting services (such as shops/ community facilities, education facilities etc.) in a timely manner.



4.10.4 Site Coverage

The stipulated plot ratio or site coverage percentage of 43.54%, applied specifically to the net developable area, is a defining parameter for the proposed residential scheme of 302 units in Fermoy, County Cork. This figure, which precisely governs the relationship between built form and open space, reveals a development strategy that consciously prioritises environmental integration, residential amenity, and sustainable design above overdeveloping the site. For a project of this scale, comprising 222 houses and 80 duplex apartments, this moderate ratio indicates a medium-density character, more akin to a large urban extension or a new neighbourhood designed with a clear emphasis on quality of life rather than a high-intensity urban infill project

The application of this ratio to the net developable area is a critical nuance, reflecting a sophisticated and responsible approach to site planning. It signifies that the calculation has been made after the careful subtraction of all unbuildable portions of the site. In the context of Fermoy, this would logically include dedications for new public infrastructure, such as road improvements and footpath networks, as well as the preservation of sensitive environmental features. Given the town's relationship with the River Blackwater, substantial areas will have been allocated for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), such as swales and attenuation basins, to mitigate flood risk. Furthermore, ecologically valuable hedgerows, existing mature trees, and potentially areas of archaeological interest will have been removed from the developable land parcel before this density calculation was even begun. This ensures the final ratio is a true reflection of the intensity of development on the land that can actually be built upon.

Consequently, a ratio of 43.54% facilitates a specific type of living environment. With well over half the net site area reserved for non-built uses, the scheme can generously provide for a hierarchy of private and public spaces. The 222 houses will benefit from private rear gardens of a functional size, and the duplex apartments have associated private ground-floor spaces. The significant remainder of the land will be dedicated to creating a connected network of public open spaces, including landscaped parklets, children's play areas, and green corridors that promote biodiversity and pedestrian connectivity. This ample breathing room between buildings ensures adequate daylight penetration and privacy between

units, preventing the sense of overcrowding that can plague larger developments. The massing and scale of the buildings, from the two-storey houses to the five or six-storey apartment blocks, are therefore carefully controlled to ensure they sit comfortably within the Fermoy landscape, respecting the town's existing character and scale.

Ultimately, this precise figure is not arbitrary but is a direct instrument of planning policy from the Cork County Development Plan and the Fermoy Local Area Plan and best practice placemaking principles. It serves as a crucial control mechanism to ensure that the new community of 302 households is sustainable. It prevents an undue strain on local infrastructure like schools and medical services by managing population density, and it mandates the creation of a high-quality public realm that promotes the health and well-being of its residents. The 43.54% ratio is the mathematical expression of a planning vision for Fermoy—one that seeks growth, but growth that is managed, environmentally conscious, and dedicated to fostering a genuine sense of place and community for its future inhabitants.

4.10.5 Landscape Visual Impact

The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) conducted by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Landscape Architects for the proposed development concluded that its overall integration into the surrounding environment would result in a moderate to neutral landscape effect. This central finding is predicated on a professional evaluation which determined that the landscape in question possesses a Medium degree of sensitivity to change. When this sensitivity is combined with the calculated Medium magnitude of change introduced by the development, the resultant landscape effect is logically categorised as Moderate. The assessment acknowledges that the development will be partially visible from certain vantage points within the immediate locality. However, from the more prominent northern viewpoints, specific design choices and planned mitigation measures are identified as key to managing this visual presence. The specification of dark roofing materials, for instance, is noted for its inherent mitigating effect by reducing visual contrast against the landscape.

Furthermore, the long-term visual effects are forecast to vary across the ten assessed viewpoints. The analysis indicates that for one view the long-term effect will be Moderate, while for eight views it is predicted to be High. For the remaining viewpoint, no change is anticipated. In the short term, the importance of these visual effects is judged to be Neutral for four views, Slight Adverse for another four, and Beneficial for one, with, again, one view expected to experience No Change. Crucially, the long-term prognosis for the importance of these visual effects is decidedly positive, being Neutral for eight views, Beneficial for one, and No Change for the final view. This leads to the significant conclusion that the development is not expected to generate any long-term adverse visual impacts.

This optimistic forecast is directly attributed to the effectiveness of the proposed remedial mitigation measures. A central component of this strategy is the implementation of new tree and hedgerow planting along the northern site boundary. This vegetation is specifically designed to screen the exposed elevations of the houses that are visible from the north. The assessment emphasises that the efficacy of this screen planting will be substantially enhanced over the medium to long term as the vegetation establishes itself and matures, progressively softening the built form and enabling a more seamless assimilation into the landscape character. From viewpoints situated to the south, the development is already partially obscured by existing adjacent housing, and in one specific instance (View 1), it is entirely screened from sight.

A particular positive outcome is noted in relation to View 10, which encompasses the proposed site entrance. At this high-profile location, the combined effect of the architectural treatment of the house elevations and the considered landscape design is assessed to yield an overall beneficial visual effect. In summation, the LVIA demonstrates that the subject site possesses a sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development at its edge-of-town location. This capacity, however, is contingent upon the successful incorporation of the described remedial mitigation measures, which are integral to ensuring the project’s neutral to moderate visual and landscape impact.

5.0 OTHER ELEMENTS OF CONSISTENCY

5.1 Chapter 3: Settlements and Placemaking

The proposed 302-unit residential development at Ballynamona, Fermoy, has been carefully designed to align with the Cork County Development Plan 2022 (CCDP 2022), ensuring consistency with its strategic objectives, zoning policies, and sustainability principles. Below is a detailed breakdown of the relevant chapters and policies that the development adheres to:

The development aligns with Policy PL 3-1 (Building Design, Movement, and Quality of the Public Realm) by reinforcing Fermoy's distinct character through a contemporary yet contextually sensitive architectural approach. The design incorporates traditional building forms reinterpreted in a modern manner, ensuring compatibility with the existing built environment. The scheme promotes pedestrian and cyclist priority (Policy PL 3-1(f)) through an interconnected network of footpaths and shared spaces, enhancing permeability and safety. These routes are strategically positioned to encourage walking and cycling, supporting the 10-Minute Town Concept (Policy PL 3-1(j)), which prioritises accessibility to local services. Additionally, the development provides multi-functional public spaces (Policy PL 3-1(g)) that cater to all age groups, including landscaped amenity areas, playgrounds, and greenways. The retention of existing hedgerows and the integration of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) (Policy PL 3-1(h)) ensure climate-resilient design while enhancing biodiversity.

Policy Compliance/Consistency
Settlement Tier: Fermoy is identified as a "Key Town" in the settlement hierarchy, requiring sustainable growth while maintaining its role as a regional employment and services hub.
Population Targets: The CCDP 2022 allocates a population increase for Fermoy, and this development supports that growth by providing much-needed housing (302 units).
Compact Growth: The medium-density (43.14 units/ha) layout complies with the "Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (2024)", avoiding urban sprawl.

5.2 **Chapter 4: Housing**

The proposal complies with HOU 4-2 (Reserved Land for Social and Affordable Housing) by allocating 20% of units (60 dwellings) for Part V social and affordable housing, distributed evenly across the development. Under HOU 4-3 (Housing for Older People), the mix of unit types (including ground-floor apartments and adaptable dwellings) ensures suitability for ageing populations. The development also adheres to HOU 4-6 (Housing Mix), providing a balanced range of 1-bed to 4-bed units to meet diverse household needs, as confirmed by a Housing Quality Assessment. The density of 43.14 units per hectare (HOU 4-7) aligns with Medium A Residential Zoning, appropriate for Fermoy's growth strategy. The layout avoids overdevelopment by incorporating 12% open space (exceeding the 10% minimum requirement) and maintaining a 40% site coverage, ensuring a high-quality living environment. The development provides a balanced mix of unit sizes (1–4 beds), catering to different demographics (families, older residents, singles). Part V Requirements: The proposal includes 60 units (20%) for social and affordable housing, meeting statutory obligations under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Lifetime Homes: The 14 later-living bungalows and universal design apartments align with policies promoting age-friendly housing.

5.3 **Appropriate Assessment**

Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC requires that an Appropriate Assessment (AA) should be carried out where plans or projects may have a significant effect on the conservation objectives that would ultimately affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. A Stage One AA Screening Report and Natura Impact Assessment for the proposed development has been prepared for the subject development by Dixon Brosnan Consulting Ecologists and is submitted in support of this application to Cork County Council. The report concludes that no significant effects arising from the development works are likely

to occur in relation to the Natura 2000 sites; Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC.

5.4 **Environmental Assessment**

In accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and current government and EU guidance, the Planning Authority must screen the proposed development for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and decide whether the planning application for the proposed development does or does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). Having regard to the nature, extent, and the characteristics of the likely impacts we consider that when screened in accordance with EU Screening Guidelines that the proposed development is not a project defined by Part 1 and Part 2 Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as requiring an EIAR and would not warrant a sub threshold EIAR in accordance with Article 10 of the Regulations. With regard to EIA requirements, the proposal is well below the mandatory EIAR threshold for residential developments of 500 no. units (which is the statutory test in this regard) and is also below the 10 hectare EIAR threshold for development within a built-up area. Any potential impact on the environment is likely to be confined to the immediate site area, is likely to be limited in magnitude and the site is not one of special environmental sensitivity.

5.5 **Other Chapters proposed development is consistent with**

Chapter 11: Water Services, Surface Water, and Waste

The proposal complies with WS 11-9 (Wastewater Disposal) by connecting to the existing public wastewater network, with Irish Water confirming sufficient capacity.

Surface water management adheres to WS 11-16 (SuDS) through attenuation basins, permeable paving, and nature-based drainage solutions, minimising flood risk while enhancing water quality. The Flood Risk Assessment (WS 6-2) confirms that the site is outside flood-prone zones, ensuring resilience against climate-related risks.

Chapter 12: Transport and Mobility

The development prioritises active travel (TM 12-2) by providing DMURS-compliant footpaths and cycle lanes, improving connectivity to Fermoy town centre. A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) confirms that vehicular access from the R639 is safe, with adequate visibility splays.

Parking provisions (TM 12-9) exceed standards, with 589 car spaces (2 per dwelling) and 498 bicycle spaces (1 per unit plus additional for the creche). Electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure is integrated in line with TM 12-11, supporting low-carbon mobility.

A Mobility Management Plan encourages sustainable transport modes, reducing car dependency and aligning with TM 12-5 (Bus Transport) by facilitating future public transport linkages.

Chapter 14: Green Infrastructure and Environment

The development complies with GI 14-3 (Green Infrastructure and Development) by retaining existing hedgerows and mature trees, supplemented with native planting to enhance biodiversity.

Public and private open spaces (GI 14-6) exceed statutory requirements, providing 12% landscaped areas that include an urban park, playground, and sports facilities, fostering community well-being.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) confirms that the scheme preserves Fermoy's scenic character (GI 14-12), with boundary treatments respecting the rural-urban transition.

Chapter 15: Biodiversity

The Ecological Impact Assessment (BE 15-6) ensures no net biodiversity loss, with mitigation measures protecting habitats and incorporating pollinator-friendly planting. Existing trees are retained under BE 15-8, with new woodland planting enhancing ecological connectivity.

Chapter 16: Built Heritage

An Archaeological Assessment safeguards recorded monuments, complying with HE 16-2 (Protection of Archaeological Sites). The architectural design respects Fermoy's heritage, using vernacular-inspired materials (HE 16-18), while a landscape masterplan ensures sensitive integration with the town's historic setting.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed residential development of 302 houses in Fermoy represents a well-considered, policy-compliant, and sustainable expansion of the town, fully aligned with national and local planning objectives. Through careful adherence to the 2024 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (CSG) and the Sustainable Planning Principles and Requirements (SPPRs), the scheme ensures a balanced approach to density, housing diversity, connectivity, and environmental sustainability.

The development's density of 43.14 units per hectare falls within the recommended range of 35–50 uph for Tier 3 settlements like Fermoy, as outlined in the CSG. This density supports compact urban growth, preventing inefficient land use and suburban sprawl while ensuring that Fermoy can accommodate future population needs sustainably. By concentrating development within an accessible and well-serviced area, the proposal aligns with national objectives to prioritise infill and brownfield development where feasible, reducing pressure on rural hinterlands.

A critical factor in assessing the suitability of this development is its location within Fermoy's existing urban framework. The site's proximity to key services, such as schools, healthcare facilities, retail centres, and public transport links, ensures that residents can access daily necessities without excessive reliance on private vehicles. The CSG emphasises the importance of "10-minute neighbourhoods," where essential amenities are within walking or cycling distance, and this scheme supports that vision.

Furthermore, the proposal demonstrates a commitment to infrastructure coordination, ensuring that

water, wastewater, and energy networks are either already sufficient or will be upgraded in tandem with the development. The inclusion of pedestrian and cycling routes, along with potential public transport linkages, reinforces the scheme's alignment with SPPR 3: Infrastructure Coordination.

The housing mix comprising a combination of 1, 2, 3, and 4-bedroom houses, as well as apartments and duplexes responds effectively to Fermoy's demographic trends, including shrinking household sizes and demand for both starter homes and downsizing options. This variety ensures affordability and accessibility for different age groups and income levels, in line with SPPR 4: Diverse Housing.

Additionally, the inclusion of a creche facility supports young families, further enhancing the development's social sustainability. By catering to a broad spectrum of residents—from first-time buyers to older adults seeking manageable homes—the scheme fosters an inclusive, intergenerational community.

The proposal incorporates key environmental sustainability measures, including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), native planting, and green corridors, which align with SPPR 5: Environmental Sustainability. These features mitigate flood risk, enhance biodiversity, and contribute to climate adaptation. The provision of public open space (meeting or exceeding the recommended 10–15% of the site area) ensures that residents have access to recreational areas, promoting health and well-being.

The development's architectural and landscape design respects Fermoy's existing character while introducing contemporary elements that enhance its distinctiveness. By employing a mix of traditional materials (such as brick and slate) with modern detailing, the scheme ensures visual cohesion with the town's built heritage. The layout prioritises walkability, active street frontages, and passive surveillance, creating a safe and engaging public realm—key principles under SPPR 6: High-Quality Design.

The clustering of homes into distinct neighbourhoods with unique identities fosters a strong sense of place, ensuring that the development does not feel monolithic but rather an organic extension of Fermoy.

In summary, this residential development is a well-justified, policy-compliant, and forward-thinking proposal that will contribute positively to Fermoy's growth. It successfully balances density with liveability, integrates essential infrastructure, provides a diverse housing mix, and embeds sustainability at every level. By adhering to the latest planning guidelines and demonstrating responsiveness to both market and community needs, the scheme ensures long-term viability and resilience.

Approval of this development would not only meet immediate housing demand but also set a benchmark for future sustainable growth in Fermoy, reinforcing the town's role as a vibrant and well-connected settlement in County Cork. It is a clear example of how thoughtful planning and design can create thriving, inclusive, and environmentally responsible communities.

We contend that the proposed development is generally in accordance with the following national and local policy documents:

1. *National Planning Framework (Ireland 2040 – Our Plan);*
2. *Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022;*
3. *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009);*
4. *Urban Design Manual: A Best Practice Guide (2009);*
5. *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities (December 2020);*
6. *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007);*
7. *Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001);*
8. *Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000: Guidelines (2017);*
9. *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019);*
10. *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009);*
11. *Urban Development and Building Heights, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018)*
12. *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009),*
13. *Climate Action Plan, 2021; and*
14. *Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028.*

In conclusion, we contend that the development of the subject site, as per the enclosed plans and particulars, is fully consistent with the relevant plans in the hierarchical planning system and is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development.