

Agenda Item 15

MEETING OF DÚN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL

8th June, 2015

Report submitted in accordance with Part 8, Article 81 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, (as amended) the Planning and Development Acts 2000, (as amended), and Section 138 of the Local Government Act, 2001, (as amended)

Proposed Housing Development (Phase 3) at Rochestown House, Sallynoggin, Co Dublin

1. PC/H/02/15

In accordance with Part 8, Article 81 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, (as amended), the Council gave notice of the proposed development in the Irish Independent on 3rd March, 2015. Plans and particulars of the proposed development were available for inspection from 3rd March, 2015 and up to and including 14th April, 2015 at the Housing & Community Department and Planning & Enterprise Department, County Hall, Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire between the hours of 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and at the Council offices, Dundrum Office Park, Dundrum between the hours 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays and under dlr consultations on the Council's website homepage www.dlrcoco.ie.

Submissions and observations with regard to the proposed development could be made up to and including 28th April, 2015.

<https://dlrcoco.citizenspace.com/housing/proposed-housing-development-at-rochestown-house-s>

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION:

The site of the proposed development is located off Sallynoggin Road to the north-east of its junction with Rochestown Avenue. There is a housing development known as Somerton, immediately to the west of the site. Abutting the site to the south and east are St. Joseph's Public Park and sports grounds. Sallynoggin Road is to the north. The overall subject site area is 0.9052 hectares (ha) in extent.

The site, which is known as "Rochestown House" is set in what was formerly the walled gardens of Somerton, a dwelling listed as a Protected Structure and located to the west of the site. The garden walls and some boundary trees remain. The site is largely screened from Sallynoggin Road.

The site originally accommodated three low-rise, low density residential blocks providing accommodation primarily for the elderly. In June 2012 a Part 8 Development Scheme (PC/01/12) was adopted by the County Council for a housing re-development at the site. The main objective of this development was to refurbish and reorganise two 1970s apartment blocks on the site (Blocks 1 and 2) to provide an improved standard of accommodation for residents. Refurbishment/extension works are currently underway on Block 1 (Rochestown House) to provide a total of 34 one bedroom units, while the existing Block 2 was redeveloped and re-opened in 2013 providing 12 one bedroom

units. There is also a terrace of 6 no. one storey bungalows located to the south west of the site. The total number of existing units is 52.

The current proposal is to provide an additional 14 units in the central area of the site. This would bring the total number of units on the site to 66.

3. ZONING AND OTHER OBJECTIVES:

The subject site is located on lands zoned Objective 'A', 'To protect and/or improve residential amenity'. There is also an objective for a County Council Housing Programme Site at this location. In addition, there is an objective to protect and preserve trees and woodlands adjacent to the site's northern boundary. Lands to the south, east and north of the site are zoned Objective 'F', 'To preserve and provide for open space with ancillary active recreational amenities'.

4. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORKS:

The main aim of the proposed current scheme is to provide additional units for the elderly and/or disabled tenants on the site.

There are a total of 323 applicants on the Senior Citizen's list. 244 of those applicants have a preference in the Dún Laoghaire/Dalkey areas which is the area where Rochestown House is situated. As the proposed units, together with Blocks 1 and 2 are situated within a community setting, it is proposed that the whole area should be for elderly/disabled.

It is proposed to provide an additional fourteen (14) units on the overall site comprising 12 one-bed units (each 58sqm. in area) and two 2-bed units (each 75 m sq. in area). Eight of the units are to be fully wheelchair accessible and six first floor units are to be fully ambulant accessible. The accommodation is to be provided in eight separate blocks – six blocks are two storeys in height and comprise 12 No. 1-bed two person units, while the remaining two blocks are single storey in height and comprise 2 No. 2-bed 3 person units. This provides a total of 30 bed spaces. The stated proposed density on the overall site (including upgraded Blocks 1 and 2, and 3) is 73 dwelling units/hectare.

The proposed ground floor units will be provided with a stated 10 sq m. of private open space while the first floor units will have large corner windows and window seats with full length opening doors. The additional units are to be located in the communal open space area on the site. A number of trees will be removed to facilitate the Scheme, however, a landscaping proposal is intended to be designed to enhance the existing area which is currently overgrown and inaccessible ensuring a better enjoyment of the open space by the residents.

Proposed materials for the blocks comprise a mixture of brick, with grass roof, and timber cladding with zinc roof.

As part of the proposed development, the existing ramp to Block 2 will be reconfigured as an ambulant disabled staircase. The pedestrian and vehicular circulation within the site will remain largely unchanged with some minor re-alignments of existing roads to facilitate the provision of 19 additional car parking spaces within the overall site. Additional pedestrian routes will be established within the open central area. A new

entrance arrangement at the main access gate is proposed to improve pedestrian access to the site.

5. APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The proposed development is subject to the Guidance for Planning Authorities on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, November 2009), and the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations, 2011. These require that screening is carried out for all projects to examine if any impacts are likely on Natura 2000 sites, that is, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Scott Cawley Limited has reviewed the proposed development with respect to the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment, and submitted their report. (report attached)

The report concluded that "there will be no likelihood of significant effects on any European sites and no impacts to European site integrity, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Therefore it is our view that an Appropriate Assessment is not required."

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PROPER PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA:

Under the Objective "A" zoning in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, 2010-2016, residential use is "Permitted in Principle". The proposed development, which will provide additional units for the elderly (and/or disabled tenants), accords with both the zoning and housing objectives pertaining to the site by improving residential amenities for residents and improving the standard of social housing available on site.

The proposed development comprises eight separate buildings (providing 14 units) – one and two-storey in height – which are positioned around the perimeter of the green area with spaces between each block and allowing for views between the built form into the green space. Since the proposed development is to be located within the current central open space area it is imperative that firstly the buildings are designed to "nestle" into this space, whilst also retaining amenity space for the enjoyment of the future residents. The proposed form, height and placement of the buildings will reduce their impact on the overall site and on the open space area.

While the development will require the removal of a number of existing trees it is intended to replace this woodland environment through the planting of large/medium sized trees and natural landscaping. The use of brick and timber cladding for the respective buildings also takes cognisance of the setting through the use of natural materials and the proposed two storey units facing existing Block 2 will be provided with green roofs. This will further ameliorate their impact and will also provide a pleasant visual aspect for current residents in Block 2. The elevations of the four blocks facing existing Block 2 are arranged in such a way that only the hall and bathrooms face the existing residential block with all bedroom and living spaces facing the open space. This avoids any overlooking issues in either direction.

In terms of impact on the amenities of existing residential units located on site specifically within Blocks 1 and 2, it is considered that the proposal would not have any significant adverse impact on the visual or residential amenities of these dwellings. Having regard to the above assessment it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable.

The stated proposed density is 73 dwellings units per hectare. In general the number of dwellings to be provided on a site should be determined by reference to the Government guidelines document "Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DoEHLG, 2009).

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Planning/FileDownload,19164,en.pdf>

As a general principle, and on the grounds of sustainability, the objective should be to optimise the density of development in response to type of site, location and accessibility to public transport. However, the overriding concern should be the quality of the proposed residential environment to be created and higher densities should also be acceptable if all of the criteria which contribute to this environment are satisfied. In Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, minimum residential densities should be 35 dwellings per hectare. In existing built-up areas of the County readily accessible to public transport corridors, Government guidance is to provide densities at higher than 50 dwellings per hectare. In this regard, the proposed density is considered to be acceptable.

Having regard to the current use of the overall site, the policies of the 2010-2016 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, the proposed development design and layout which is considered an enhancement of the existing arrangement with consequent improvements in residential amenities for residents, it is considered that this Part 8 Scheme proposal is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of this area.

7. INTERNAL REPORTS RECEIVED

Transportation Planning and Drainage Services Department:

In report dated 16.4.15 Transportation Planning raised no objection. The detail of indicated enhanced pedestrian access to site can be agreed at detailed design stage.

In report dated 18.12.14 the Drainage Services Section advised that "normal separation of foul and surface water drainage will apply. SuDS proposals that would apply to any sites of these scales will also be required."

In a report dated 16.1.15 the Waste Management Section raised no objection.

Corporate Services and Human Resources Department – Property Management Section: In correspondence dated 20.1.15 the Property Management Section raised no ownership issues.

Environment Department: In report dated 24.4.15 Parks and Landscape Services Section advised that due consideration will be given at detailed landscape design stage to the type of planting and tree species proposed which shall be appropriate to the new development. Accordingly, Parks and Landscape Services have no objection.

County Librarian: In correspondence dated 21.1.15, the County Librarian raised no objections.

Planning and Enterprise Department: In a report dated 30 January 2015, the Planning Department raised no objection to the proposal.

8. STATUTORY BODIES/ORGANISATIONS:

It is noted that Irish Water had no objection in relation to the proposed development.

The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, recommended that Archaeological Monitoring be carried out at this site by a suitably qualified archaeologist and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to be furnished with a report describing the results of the monitoring.

Response:

The Council will engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor all topsoil stripping associated with the development and should archaeological material be found during the course of monitoring, an archaeologist may have work on the site stopped pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The Council will, if necessary, advise the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with regard to any necessary mitigating action (e.g. preservation *in situ*, and/or excavation) and facilitate the archaeologist in recording any material found. Where necessary the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht shall be furnished with a report describing the results of the monitoring.

9. SUBMISSIONS/OBSERVATIONS

9.1. Submissions

In accordance with Part 8, Article 81 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, the Council gave notice of the proposed development in the Irish Independent on Tuesday 3rd March, 2015 indicating that submissions would be accepted up to and including Tuesday, 28th April, 2015. A site notice (in the prescribed format) was also erected on the site and maintained in place for the prescribed period. No submissions were received.

10. CONCLUSION:

The proposed development is in accordance with the zoning objective of the area as set out in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, 2010-2016. The proposed development, which will provide additional residential accommodation for elderly and/or disabled tenants accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

11 RECOMMENDATION:

Having regard to the current use of the overall site, the policies of the 2010-2016 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan, the proposed development design and layout which is considered an enhancement of the existing arrangement with consequent improvements in residential amenities for residents. In accordance with the legislation, the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's Report, unless the Council, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development otherwise than as recommended, or decides not to proceed with the development.

It is recommended that a decision be made by the Elected Members of the Council to **proceed** with the proposed development in accordance with the drawings, which were on display and to any such minor or immaterial alterations to the plans and particulars of the development subject to the following condition:

1. The Council will engage the services of a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor all topsoil stripping associated with the development and should archaeological material be found during the course of monitoring, an archaeologist may have work on the site stopped pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The Council will, if necessary, advise the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht with regard to any necessary mitigating action (e.g. preservation *in situ*, and/or excavation) and facilitate the archaeologist in recording any material found. Where necessary the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht shall be furnished with a report describing the results of the monitoring.

Subject to the above approval, Members are hereby notified in accordance with Section 138 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, of the intention to proceed with the proposed development.

Tom McHugh, Director of Housing and Community