

Proposed Housing, Swan Lane (Eircode C15 RD82),
Balreask Old, Navan, Co. Meath

Housing Quality Assessment & Schedule of Accommodation

August 2022



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

Craftstudio Architecture have been commissioned by Meath County Council to design 6no. housing units at Swan Lane, Balreask, Navan. The site consists of a derelict detached two-storey dwelling with private open space, which has been subject to vandalism, and is to be demolished as part of the development works. The proposal will regenerate a derelict site in the town centre and address the current housing need in the area.

The proposed development consists of the following:

- Demolition of existing fire-damaged two storey property;
- Construction of a two-storey development comprising 2no. 2-bed residential units and 4no. 1-bed residential units;
- Connection to public sewers and mains water supply;
- Erection of bin stores and bicycle store;
- All ancillary site works necessary to facilitate the development inclusive of road/footpath revisions, boundary treatments, vehicular

parking arrangements, SuDS drainage and landscaping.

This report should be read in conjunction with the architectural drawings (prepared by Craftstudio Architecture), *Planning and Architectural Design Statement* (prepared by Craftstudio Architecture), engineering particulars (prepared by Alan Traynor Consulting Engineers) and all other planning documentation (forms, notices etc.).

Pre-planning consultations took place in February, July and August 2022 in which the development proposals have been agreed in principle.



Aerial Photograph of Swan Lane with site outlined in red

2.0 Housing Quality Assessment

2.1 Residential Zoning

The site is currently zoned as A1 (existing residential) within the current Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 and is situated within the Navan Settlement Boundary. It is an objective of this zone within the plan *‘to protect and enhance the amenity and character of existing residential communities.’*

The proposed planning application represents the replacement of a derelict dwelling on a large urban site thus regenerating a derelict site, bringing the land back into use, to address the current housing need in the area. The Proposed residential scheme is designed to meet the criteria outlined by Meath County Council fully meeting the standards and guidelines in the current County Development Plan and all relevant guidelines provided by the DHPLG for residential development. The building and access is to be design and constructed fully in compliance with current Building Regulations in particular Part M, access and use and Part B, fire.

Sustainable Community Proofing

The site lies 3km from the M3 motorway (connecting Dublin and Cavan and the border with Co. Fermanagh) and is approximately 2.5km from Navan Shopping Centre and Navan town centre with its wide range of shops, services and facilities.

The proposed site is within a 30minute walking distance of Navan’s town centre. There are pedestrian footpaths which connect to the town centre opposite the site on the junction of Balreask Old and Swan Lane. To allow for the potential future installment of a pedestrian footpath to the front of the site (to the east side of Swan Lane) the boundary walls to the south-west of the site have been set back from the road to allow for this potential connection.

The inclusion of cycle storage on the proposed site encourages residents to cycle and thus reduce the impact of vehicular traffic on local roads in the area.

Access to the town’s existing bus service can be gained to the south of the site at Kilcarn Bridge – which provides access to bus route N1 (Navan–Town Service) with connections within the town then also to N2 (Navan- Town Service).

2.2 Mix of Dwelling Types

The following mix of unit types is included in the proposed development:

Proposed unit type	No. of units
1 bed unit	4
2 bed unit	2
Total no. of units	6

This mix has been agreed with Meath County Council Housing Department, based upon their assessment of housing need, the objective to achieve a balanced mix of dwelling types and size, and taking account of location and nature of the proposed development. It is considered that the proposal will make a positive contribution to the existing dwelling mix in the locality by providing dwelling types which are not widely available.

2.3 Residential Density

The land of the proposed site (comprising 0.1227 ha) is brownfield in nature and zoned for existing residential use. The existing derelict two-storey

dwelling which has been subject to vandalism including fire damage. Access to the interior is not possible owing to the risk of collapse of elements of the structure. The remainder of the site is private open space which has been left unkept for some time. Due to the dangerous condition of the existing dwelling it is proposed to demolish it and to construct 6no. housing units (2no. 2 bed residential units and 4no. 1 bed residential units). This adds density to the site and optimises the use thereof whilst still providing ample private amenity space, access, parking spaces and a public open space provision. This constitutes an efficient use of the available land on the site. The proposal will regenerate a derelict site in the town centre (the scheme will bring the land back into use) and address the current housing need in the area.



Proposed housing development

2.4 Public Open Space

Within Navan there are several public parks and walks that are accessible to the proposed residents including Athlumey Riverside Walk, Blackwater Park, Johnstown People's Park and Boyne Rampart Heritage Walk. These are all within 2.5km of the site. The River Boyne (that runs parallel to Swan Lane to the east of the site) offers many scenic walks and viewing points.

2.5 Separation Distances

Separating distance from the existing dwelling to the north-east of the site is approximately 39m and to the existing dwelling to the south-west (across Swan Lane) is approximately 52m. Therefore separation distances in excess of 22m between opposing first floor windows as per *DM OBJ 19* is achieved.

2.6 Site Safety and Security

Windows to habitable rooms provide passive surveillance of communal external areas within the curtilage of the site including the entrance to the site, parking areas, bin and bicycle storage.

A site lighting scheme has been included within the planning submission to ensure safety and security at night.

2.7 Accessibility

As required by Part M, Access and Use, of the Building Regulations, the buildings are designed to ensure that people can safely and conveniently approach and gain access to all the units. Where the habitable rooms are not located at ground level (aka the first floor apartments), the stairs provided are suitable for use by ambulant disabled persons.

2.8 Communal Amenity Space

The public/ communal open space to the front of the site, although technically not required under *DM OBJ 27* of the Meath CDP 2021-2027 (see extract below), is provided at almost 6% of the overall site area to provide additional accessible communal space to the front of the site which is accessible and open to all of the tenants and will help to promote social interaction. Outdoor lighting will ensure safety.

DM OBJ 27 of the Meath CDP 2021-2027:

‘Stand alone residential developemtns comprising of 9 residential units or less shall be exempt from the requirement to provide 15% open space. In such cases the private amenity space serving each dwelling shall exceed the minimum requirements’

2.9 Bicycle Storage

For bicycle storage all ground floor tenants have private gardens for safe private storage of these. For the first floor apartments (who have balconies not ground floor gardens) there is a secure sheltered bicycle store proposed to the south of the site with bicycle spaces as follows:

Bicycle Parking:				
Unit type	No. of units	Spaces per bed (CDP rates)	Spaces	
			Required under CDP	Proposed
First floor apartment (1B 2P)	2	1	2	2
Visitor parking		1 (per 2no. apartments)	1	4
TOTAL SPACES			3	6

This overprovision of bicycle parking within the bicycle store could potentially be utilised by any of the residents.

The bicycle storage encourages a sustainable mode of transport.



Perspective View of proposed Swan Lane with car parking to the front and bins stores

2.10 Car Parking

Car parking is proposed to be within easy reach of the home’s front door. Parked cars are overlooked by each of the housing units which all have a view towards the public areas of the site to the front. Materials used for parking areas are of similar quality to the rest of the development – cellular grassed paving is proposed to soften the visual impact of the hard surfaces. The cellular/permeable paving assists with surface water drainage.

In total there are 9 dedicated car parking spaces (including 1no. disabled). This is in line with the *Meath CDP 2021-2027* and *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* and is broken down as follows:

Car Parking:				
Unit type	No. of units	Spaces per unit (CDP rates)	Spaces	
			Required under CDP	Proposed
House (2B 4P)	2	2	4	4
Apartment (1B 2P)	4	1	4	4
Visitor parking		1 (per 4no. apartments)	1	1
TOTAL SPACES			9	9

Of the 9no. spaces proposed note also:

- 1no. space will be accessible in accordance with Part M
- 2no. spaces will have the necessary wiring and ducting to be capable of accommodating future electric vehicle charging points (at a rate of 20% of the total spaces provided as per the CDP)

Parked cars are overlooked by the housing to maximise natural surveillance for improved security.

2.11 Refuse Storage and Bins

Each of the proposed dwellings have adequate provision for recycling and waste facilities in the form of external bin stores. Each unit has the capacity to store a minimum of 3no. bins (i.e. black, brown & green bins) within their bin store. This will encourage residents to sort and store recycling correctly prior to collection and in turn maximise recycling. The stores are located in to either side of the front elevation, next to the parking, so passive surveillance (from the dwellings and whilst residents go to and from their properties) will be utilised to ensure the stores are kept in good order.

2.12 Gross Floor Area of Dwellings

All of the proposed units (houses and apartments) achieve and exceed the minimum floor area standard as defined in *Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022), Best Practice Guidelines - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments*. Please refer to the *Schedule of Accommodation* below for more detailed information.

2.13 Space Standards

The proposed units have been planned to ensure compliance with space standards and guidelines in *Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022), Best Practice Guidelines - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments in respect of the following:*

- Gross floor area
- Individual room sizes
- Aggregate floor areas
- Principal room dimensions
- Private amenity space

Please refer to the *Schedule of Accommodation* below for more detailed information.

2.14 Layouts of individual units

Floor plans included within the planning application drawings (prepared by Craftstudio Architecture), demonstrate:

- Typical arrangement of furniture for each room
- Freedom of circulation, appropriate to activities
- Potential for movement of larger items of furniture into and between rooms
- Living space appropriate for small family gatherings, including occasional visitors
- Working area and storage facilities appropriate to likely activities (e.g. the kitchen)
- Door swings do not interfere with other doors, furniture or circulation routes
- Principal room dimension.

2.15 Aspect of dwellings

All residential units are dual or triple aspect. The 2bed houses are both dual aspect and the 1 bed apartments (as they bookend the scheme) are all triple aspect (although it should be noted the Level 01 apartment gable windows are opaque to avoid potential overlooking to neighbouring properties whilst still utilising daylight within these rooms and reducing energy usage).

2.16 Ceiling Height

All residential units have a floor to ceiling height of 2.5m to both the ground floor and first floor accommodation. This is in line with *Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022), Best Practice Guidelines - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* and *Part F* of the *Building regulations*.

2.17 Kitchens

Kitchens are located adjacent to dining and living areas. Sizes and layouts have been designed to provide:

- Adequate high and low level storage;
- Adequate worktop surface and space for appliances
- Optimum work sequence.
- Efficient ducting for services.
- Stores are also provided accessible adjacent to kitchens which residents can use to store dry recyclables before moving them out to their external bin stores.

2.18 Internal Storage

The *Schedule of Accommodation* below demonstrates that each unit meets the minimum internal storage requirement. In addition to the internal storage we have also indicated a designated location for the internal elements and water storage associated with the heat pumps. This is as recommended in *Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022)* as the target floor areas in *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* did not accommodate heat pumps. This ensures the residents still have the required amount of internal storage but also ensures use of heat pumps as they have been designed and included at this stage.

2.19 Private Amenity Space

Every home within the scheme has access to an area of useable, private amenity space to the rear and parking to the front. Rear gardens are enclosed by 1.8m high concrete walls for additional privacy, each garden provides in excess of 55 m² of private open space for the houses (56.6m² and 56.8m² proposed) and in excess of 5m² for the apartments (6.7m², 6.7m², 31m² and 59m² proposed). The first floor apartments have balconies which are enclosed to

the north and south by the full height walls to provide privacy and are covered by the building's roof to add further privacy. The balcony balustrades will be constructed from vertical metal slates which provide privacy to the occupants behind when viewed from askance. Balcony balustrades to be in accordance with *Part K of Building Regulations*.

The useable private outdoor space is directly accessible via each resident's kitchen, living and dining space (this also meant their private space is in direct view of their main living space). The ground floor apartments have gated access via the gable elevation to their gardens in addition to this.



Proposed rear gardens and balconies



Proposed rear gardens and balconies

2.20 Daylight, Sunlight

All residential units are dual or triple aspect to maximise use of daylight and sunlight on site.

2.21 Acoustic Privacy

To ensure compliance with Part E, Sound, of the Building Regulations, the form of construction will be in accordance with guidance in TGD Part E, 2014. In general the layout of units ensures that bedrooms are separated from stair lobbies by the entrance hall within each unit. In so far as possible highly serviced areas such as kitchens and bathrooms are located with vertical alignment to facilitate efficient distribution of service pipes and ducts. Windows and

patio doors will be specified to provide high acoustic and thermal performance.

2.22 Energy Performance

Detailed design of individual dwellings and the building as a whole, will ensure high levels of occupant comfort, and compliance with requirements expressed in current, relevant parts of the Building Regulations:

- Part F: Ventilation;
- Part J: Heat Producing Appliances;
- Part L: Conservation of Fuel and Energy. In particular the requirement for nearly zero energy buildings and renewable sources of energy will be addressed in the detailed design and construction stages.

2.23 Design Standards

The following documents have been consulted in the pre-planning design stage:

- Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027
- Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities; (DEHLG, 2007)

- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments; Guidelines for Planning Authorities; (DHPLG 2018)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas; Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG 2009)
- Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas; (DOELG 1998).
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2013)

3.0 Schedule of Accommodation

Proposed unit type	No. of units
1 bed unit	4
2 bed unit	2
Total no. of units	6

Type A – 1bed 2 person LEVEL 00 APARTMENT (2no. units)			
	Proposed Area m ²	Target Area m ² (minimum)	Percentage variation
Aggregate Living Area	23.1	23	
Aggregate Bedroom area	11.4	11.4	
Storage (plus heat pump area)	3 (+1.2)	3	
Private amenity space	6.7	5	
Gross Floor Area	48.9	45	8.6%

Type A – 1bed 2 person LEVEL 01 APARTMENT (2no. units)			
	Proposed Area m ²	Target Area m ² (minimum)	Percentage variation
Aggregate Living Area	23.1	23	
Aggregate Bedroom area	11.4	11.4	
Storage (plus heat pump area)	3 (+1.2)	3	
Private amenity space	6.7	5	
Gross Floor Area	48.3 *	45	7.3%

Note = * L.01 apartment area excludes the area of the access stair – refer to the hatched areas within the planning drawings

Type B – 2bed 4 person HOUSE (2no. units)			
	Proposed Area m ²	Target Area m ² (minimum)	Percentage variation
Aggregate Living Area	32	30	
Aggregate Bedroom area	25.1	25	
Storage (plus heat pump area)	4.1 (+1.3)	4	
Private amenity space	56.6 and 56.8	55	
Gross Floor Area	81.5	80	1.9%