Proposed Housing – St. Brigid's Terrace (Phase 3), Cavan, Co .Cavan

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craftstudio architecture

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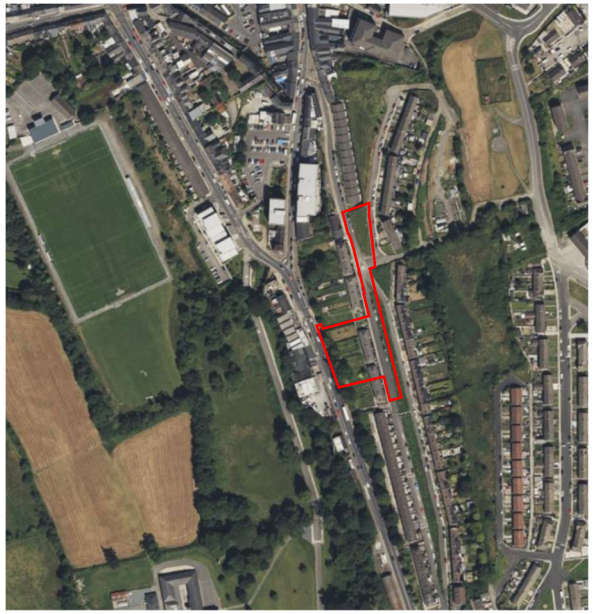


Aerial Photograph of St. Brigid's Terrace with site outlined in red

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

Craftstudio Architecture has been commissioned by the Cavan Council to design a compact own-door housing development at St. Brigid's Terrace, Cavan, Co. Cavan.

The proposed own-door development is known as Phase 3 of an overall masterplan comprised of 4no. phases. The site consists of seven derelict and vacant properties which are to be demolished to make way for twenty energy-efficient and modern homes, bringing new life into the town core. The site is earmarked for *Existing Residential* development within the Cavan Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The proposal responds to the need for residential homes in the area.

The development consists of:

i) Demolition of 7no. vacant properties No.13 to No. 19 St. Brigid's Terrace;

ii) Development of 20no. own-door residential units split over 2no blocks:
   a. Block A is two-storey high and consists of 4no. 2-bed apartments, located at ground floor level and 4no. 1-bed apartments, located at the first-floor level;
   b. Block B is three-storey high and consists of 6no. 2-bed duplex units, located at lower ground and ground floor level and 6no. 1bed apartments, located at the first-floor level;

iii) Car parking and bicycle parking provision;

iv) Pedestrian access steps connecting Dublin Road and the LP 6623 (Road at rear of existing St Brigid's Terrace)

v) Public lighting;

vi) Connection to public sewer, watermain and surface water;

vii) Erection of boundary treatments and retaining structures and all associated site works including provision of pedestrian footpath as indicated.

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 Renaissance Engineering Ltd) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (prepared by Noreen McLoughlin, MSc) Street lighting design/specification (prepared by the lighting consultants Signify), and all other planning documentation (forms and notices).

Pre-planning consultations took place in October 2024 in which the development proposals were agreed in principle.

2.0 Housing Quality Assessment

2.1 Residential Zoning

Extract from Cavan CDP Maps showing land use zoning. (The site is outlined in red)

In line with Cavan's County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, the site is currently zoned as, *Existing Residential*, as shown in pale yellow.

It is an objective of the Existing Residential zone within the plan to '*Protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities'.*

The proposed development aims to regenerate underutilised land in the Town Centre and aims to address the current housing needs in the area. The proposed residential scheme is designed to meet the criteria outlined by Cavan County Council, fully meeting the standards and guidelines in the current County Development Plan (2022-2028) and all relevant guidelines provided by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) for residential development. The building and access are designed and to be constructed in full compliance with current Building Regulations.

Sustainable Community Proofing

The site sits within Cavan Town Centre, a large economically active town with high-quality transport links. It is a vision of the Cavan Development Plan 2022 – 2028 that Cavan Town will grow to 12,674 people over the plan period. This will be achieved, among other objectives by the development in the town core.

The plan outlines the need for smaller units compared with the larger homes in the surroundings.

This location promotes walking and cycling among residents and 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.

2.2 Mix of Dwelling Types

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

Proposed accommodation type	Proposed unit type	No. of units	Total No. of units
Apartment	1 bed	10	20
	2 bed	10	
Total no. of units			**20**

This mix achieves a mix of dwelling types and sizes and takes account of the 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 that are not widely available.

2.3 Residential Density

20no. units are proposed for this site of 0.4327 Hectares equating to **46.2dph**.

Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028 designates Cavan Town as a Key Town.

We consider the proposed density of 46.2dph appropriate for this site, due to the:

- Compliance with Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines 2024 (SRDCS) - As a Key Town and under the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines 2024*

(SRDCS), *Table 3.5 - Centre and Urban Neighbourhood Areas* can be developed to achieve net residential densities of between 40 and 100 dwellings per hectare (dph). *SRDCS Table 3.5* defines urban neighbourhoods as areas that *'consist of the early phases of residential development around the centre that has evolved to include a greater range of land uses;*

- Compliance with Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028 (under 13.4.1 Residential Density reference is to be made to *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)* which has now been superseded by SRDCS 2024;
- Its proximity to the Town Core (indicated in a purple hatch in the zoning map on Page 4);
- The site is zoned as Existing Residential;
- Proximity of community facilities as shown in the table in the following column.

The proposed residential development of 20no. units optimise the use and density of the site whilst providing private amenity space, access, parking spaces, and public space. This constitutes an efficient use of the available land on the site. The proposal will regenerate underutilised land within the Town Centre and address the housing need in the area.

Distance (m)	Walking Distance (mins)	Facility
150m	2mins	Farnham Medical Practice
150m	2mins	Main Street – Retail, Restaurants, Supermarkets, etc.
450m	6mins	Cavan's Bus Station
550m	8mins	St. Felim's National School
600m	8mins	Odeon cinema
600m	9mins	Terry Coyle Park (Cavan Gaels GAA)
1000m	15mins	Aldi Supermarket, Dublin Road
1100m	16 mins	Tullacmongan Resource Centre (Community Centre) including Astro Park
1100m	17mins	Springfield Playground
1500m	21mins	Lakeland Retail Park, Dublin Road
1600m	21mins	Con Smith Park Memorial Playground

2.4 Public Open Space (external of the site)

In addition to the site's proposed amenity spaces, there is a walking trail accessible from the town centre 'Cavan Heritage Town Trail' - A self-guided walking tour of historic Cavan town. This provides good opportunities for walking and cycling for occupants of the proposed development. Con Smith Park Memorial Playground (including children's play park equipment) is less than a 21-minute walk from the proposed site.

Just across the road the new Sport's Campus project has received planning approval. The completion date is yet to be confirmed.

2.5 Separation Distances

The scheme was designed to prevent overlooking of habitable rooms and private amenity spaces.

There is a nine-metre level difference on the existing site.

The proposed Block A is located at the lower level (facing Dublin Road), while the proposed Block B is located at the upper level of the site (facing St. Brigids Terrace Road). The two blocks are parallel and integrated within the existing sloped site. The distance between the two blocks varies from 4.5 metres and 8.3 metres, as Block A staggers towards Block B, with private courtyards acting as amenity spaces for its users but also providing a buffer zone between the two stepped blocks.

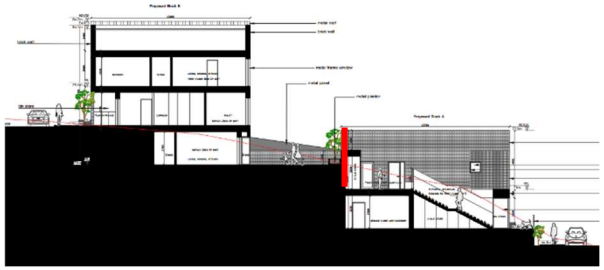
Overlooking prevention between Block A e B:

SPPR 1- Separation Distances from ***Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024***, states *'a separation distance of at least 16 metres between opposing windows serving habitable rooms at the rear or side of houses, duplex units, and apartment units, above ground floor level, shall be maintained'.*

There are no windows on the rear elevation of Block A to avoid any overlooking between Bock A and Block B habitable rooms. This rear elevation is partially buried in the existing slop. Block A windows will be either facing Dublin Road or their own private courtyards.

Proposed site plan

Window-free zone



Proposed site section

Window-free wall

Overlooking prevention between Block A units:

Block A consists of a repetition of 4no. equal-sized sub-blocks, along with their own private courtyards in between, forming a composition of mass and void.

Each sub-block is facing its neighbour sub-block's blank wall, which prevents overlooking between the neighbouring units.

Proposed site plan – Block A First Floor level

Window-free wall

Overlooking prevention between Block A Sub-block private courtyards:

Each Sub-block or module is comprised of 2no units:

- 1no 2-bed apartment on the Ground Floor level, and associated amenity space at the same level;
- 1no 1-bed apartment on the first floor) associated amenity space at the same level;

Dedicated access to each of the units and their private courtyards, provision of visual barriers such as balustrades or landscape elements (green planting, etc), along with the careful positioning of the windows will prevent overlooking between the two properties.

Proposed Block A – Sub Block Ground-Floor (left) and First-Floor (right) plans

Balustrade and landscaped vertical planting (Ivy, etc)

Access to 2-Bed Ground-Floor apartment

Access to 1-Bed First-Floor apartment

Overlooking prevention between Block B Sub-block private courtyards:

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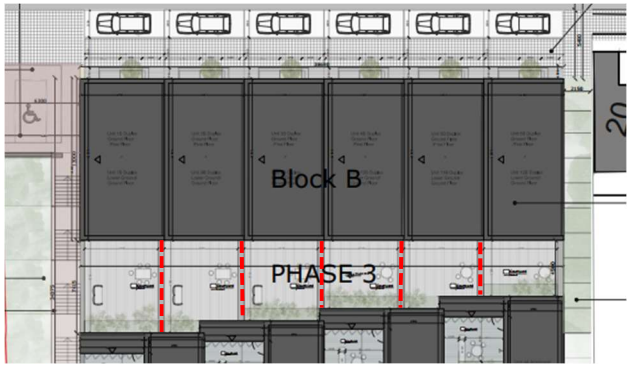
Block B consists of a repetition of 6no. equal-sized sub-blocks. Each Sub-block or module comprises a private courtyard. A brick wall between courtyards aims to provide the necessary privacy between neighbours.



Proposed Block B site plan

Brick Wall

2.6 Site Safety and Security

Windows to habitable rooms allow for passive surveillance of communal external areas within the curtilage of the site including the entrance to the site, and parking areas.

A site lighting design/strategy report prepared by Signify has been included in the planning submission to ensure safety and security at night.

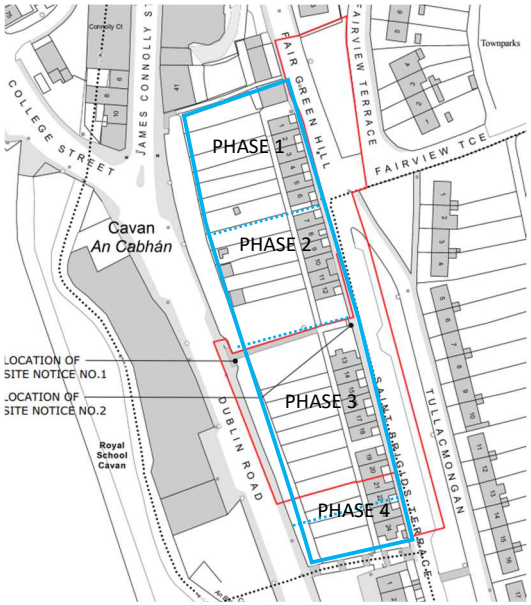
2.7 Accessibility

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 (i.e. the first-floor apartments), the stairs provided are suitable for use by ambulant disabled persons. In addition to Part M the 4no. units have been designed with Universal Design sized sanitary facilities and circulation.

2.8 Communal Amenity Space (on site)

The proposed scheme is known as Phase 3 of a masterplan comprising 4no. phases. Phase 1 is located 30 metres down the road and is comprised by 20no. residential units and associated Public Open Space. Construction of Phase 1 is due to be completed by the end of the current year (2024). Phase 4 is located adjacent to the boundary (south side) of Phase 3, and it is anticipated that Phase 4 will be dedicated to Community Infrastructures and associated Public Open Spaces.

In addition the landscaping pockets on the perimeter of the site boundary, it is envisioned that Phase 3 residents/users will have use of Phase 1 & 4 amenity spaces and infrastructures, as part of the overall masterplan.



Masterplan comprises Phases 1,2,3 & 4

Masterplan boundary
Phases boundary
Phase 3 site boundary

2.9 Bicycle Storage

Bicycle storage encourages a sustainable mode of transport.

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Block A units have their own private bicycle storage, located in a dedicated sheltered area, within their courtyards.

Cycle parking will be provided to the Block B units, in line with *Table 7.4* (of the *Cavan Development Plan*) requiring 1 stand per 10 units (a bicycle stand comprises of a shelter with a minimum of 5 racks per stand).

The bicycle storage for all Block B apartments will be located on St. Brigid's Terrace Road.

Bicycle Storage – Block A:				
Unit type	No. of units	Spaces per bed (CDP rates)	Spaces	
			Required under CDP	**Proposed**
Block A units	8	8	8	8
Visitor parking		No additional requirement	N/a	**N/a**
TOTAL SPACES			**8**	**8**

Bicycle Parking – Block B:				
Unit type	No. of units	Spaces per bed (CDP rates)	Spaces	
			Required under CDP	**Proposed**
Block B units	12	1 stand per 10 units (1 stand has 5no. racks = 10 spaces)	2 stands (2 x stands = 20no. spaces)	2 stands (2 x stands = 20no. spaces)
Visitor parking		No additional requirement	N/a	**N/a**
TOTAL SPACES			**12**	**20**

2.10 Car Parking

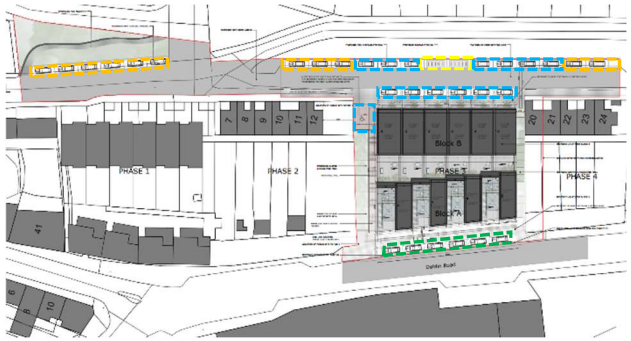
Parallel car parking is located in two areas of the development:

- At St. Brigid's Terrace Road, equating to 14no. parking spaces
- And at Dublin Road, equating to 6no. parking spaces

Combined, they provide 26no. car parking spaces. This satisfies the requisites of *Cavan's County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, Table 7.4, which* requires 1no space per residential unit. Refer to the note below regarding visitor parking.

11no. additional spaces have been allocated to future prove the upcoming Phases 2 & 4.

To note that due to the site location within the Town Core zone, within walking distance of the town's centre, visitor Parking hasn't been provided. This may be acceptable as ***CP 03*** *'allows for the reduction in car parking standards in suitable town centre locations to encourage a modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, cycling and walking'*.



Proposed site plan

St. Brigid's Terrace Road car parking area

Dublin Road car parking area

Car parking allocated to future phases 2 & 4

St. Brigid's Terrace Road cycle parking area

Parked cars are overlooked by both apartment blocks, this maximises passive surveillance for improved security. Materials used for parking areas are of similar quality to the rest of the development. All the proposed car parking spaces are parallel with minimum space dimensions of 2.4 x 6 metres, in line with Cavan's CDP. requirements.

The full on-site parking is summarised in the following table:

Car Parking:				
Unit type	No. of units	Spaces per unit (CDP rates)	Spaces	
			Required under CDP	**Proposed**
1-Bed Apartment	10	1	10	**10**
2-Bed Apartment	10	1	10	**10**
Total car parking			20	**20**
TOTAL SPACES			**20**	**20**

Out of the 20no. car parking spaces provided:

- 1no. space will be designated for disabled in accordance with Part M 2022 of the Building Regulations
- 6no. spaces will have recharging points for Electric Vehicles (EV) (CDP requires 1 point per 5 units). Ducting infrastructure for the remainder of these spaces will allow for the potential upgrade of accommodating future electric vehicle charging points.

2.11 Refuse Storage and Bins

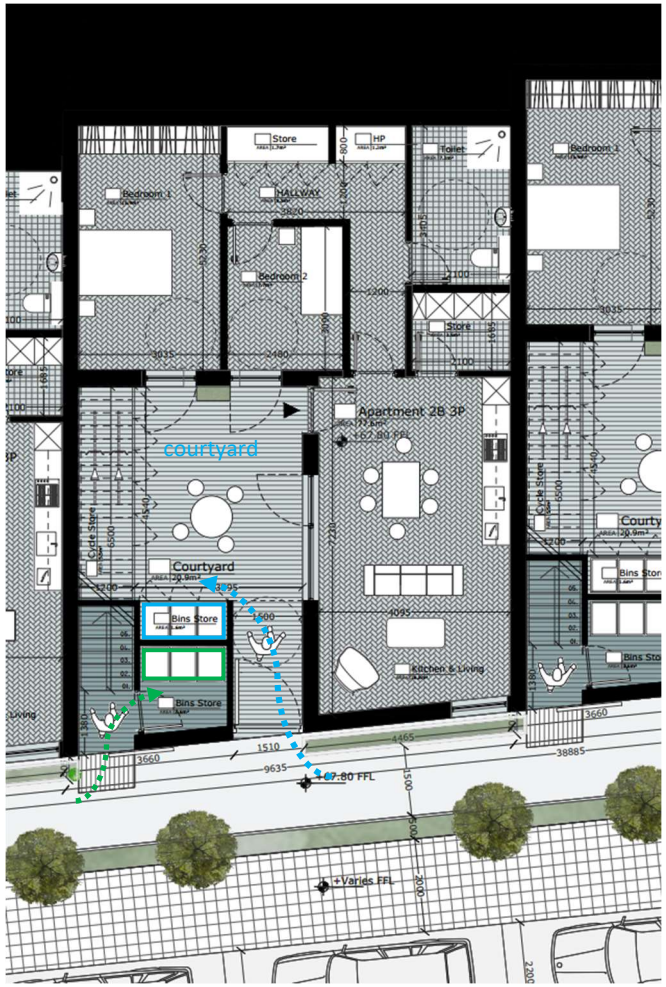
Each of the proposed apartments has adequate provision for recycling and waste facilities, which are broken down below:

- Block A – Ground-floor apartments have dedicated and sheltered bin storage accessed from their own private courtyards. (as demarcated in blue on the following diagram).
- Block A - First-floor apartments have private and sheltered bin storage located at the ground floor entrance level of each property (as demarcated in green on the following diagram).
- Block B – Lower Ground/Ground floor Duplexes units and First-floor apartments both have private and sheltered bin storage located at the ground floor entrance level of each property. (refer to the diagram overleaf).

This allows for 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.

Both bin storage types can store a minimum of 3no. bins (i.e. black, brown & green bins) per apartment.

This will encourage residents to sort and store recycling correctly before collection and in turn, maximise recycling.



Block A Ground floor plan - Sub-Block - Bin Stores

2-Bed Ground Floor apartment bin store

1-Bed First Floor apartment bin store

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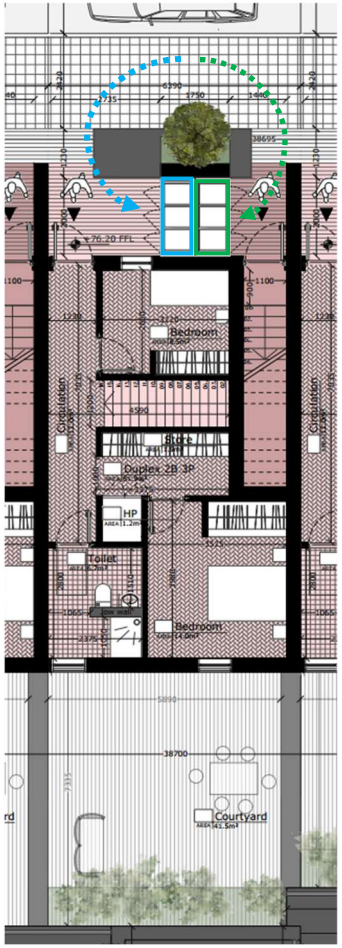


Block B Ground floor plan - Sub-Block - Bin Stores

2-Bed Ground Floor apartment bin store

1-Bed First Floor apartment bin store

2.12 Gross Floor Area of Dwellings

All of the proposed units achieve and exceed the minimum floor area standard as defined in:

- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2022;
- Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022);
- Best Practice Guidelines: Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities.

Refer to point 3.0 Schedule of Accommodation on pages 13 & 14, of this document for more detailed information.

2.13 Space Standards

The proposed units have been planned to ensure compliance with space standards and guidelines in *Cavan County Development Plan 2022 – 2028; Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments 2022; Design Manual for Quality Housing* (2022); *Best Practice Guidelines - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities and in respect of the following:*

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

Refer to point 3.0 Schedule of Accommodation on page 12, of this document 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 dimensions.

2.15 Aspect of dwellings

All the proposed units in the scheme are dual-aspect as a minimum. Block B gable apartments and duplex units are triple-aspect.

2.16 Ceiling Height

A ceiling height of 2.7m is provided throughout all Block A apartments and all the Block B duplex units (to both floors) A ceiling height of 2.4m is provided for the Block B First Floor apartments.

This is in line with *Design Standards for New Apartments; Design Manual for Quality Housing* (2022); *Best Practice Guidelines - Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities; Sustainable Urban Housing* and *Part F* of the *Building regulations.*

2.17 Kitchens

Kitchens are located adjacent to the dining and living areas of all the properties. Sizes and layouts of the kitchen have been designed to provide:

- Adequate high and low-level storage;
- Adequate worktop surface and space for appliances
- Optimum work sequence.
- Separate utilities are provided in the apartment, accessible directly from the kitchen.
- Stores are also provided close to kitchens in all units which residents can use to store dry recyclables before moving them out to their bin stores.

2.18 Internal Storage

The Schedule of Accommodation, on pages 13 & 14, demonstrates that each unit meets the minimum internal storage requirement. In addition to the internal storage, a designated location for the internal elements and water storage associated with the heat pumps is also indicated. This is as recommended in the 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 the 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.

Block A units are provided with private courtyards - this type of amenity space allows for a greater feeling of protection and privacy for its users, responding to the proximity of Dublin Road. Generous buffer planted zones between Dublin Road and the proposed Block A also contribute to the same purpose.

Block B duplex units are provided with a generous private garden area, as their amenity space, while Block B apartment located on the first floor, benefits from southwest-facing balconies, with open views toward the green hills. The balconies are inset without the building envelope for extra privacy and additional shelter.

To St. Brigids Terrace Rd. side, Block B units benefit from a covered and planted area of private space adjacent to the unit's main entrance door. This acts as a semi-private buffer zone to the public pavement.

All unit amenity space areas exceed the minimum space requirements – refer to 3.0 Schedule of Accommodation.

2.20 Daylight, Sunlight

All the proposed units in the scheme are dual-aspect as a minimum. Block B gable apartments and duplex units are triple-aspect. Associated with the east/west orientation of the proposed development maximises the 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. Windows

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

2.22 Energy Performance

Detailed design of the apartments 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

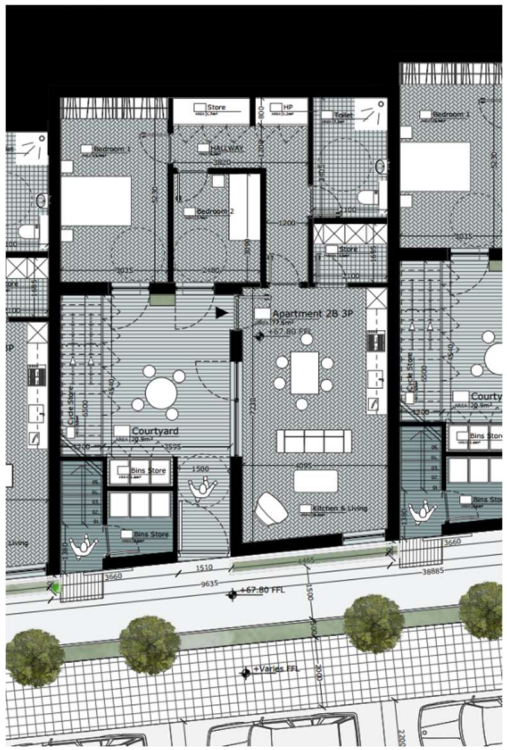
The following documents have been consulted in the pre-planning design stage:

- Cavan County Development Plan 2022 – 2028
- Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines 2024
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments; Guidelines for Planning Authorities; (DHPLG 2022)
- Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities; (DEHLG, 2007)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas; Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG 2009) (now superseded by SRDCS 2024)
- Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas; (DOELG 1998).
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2013)

3.0 Schedule of Accommodation

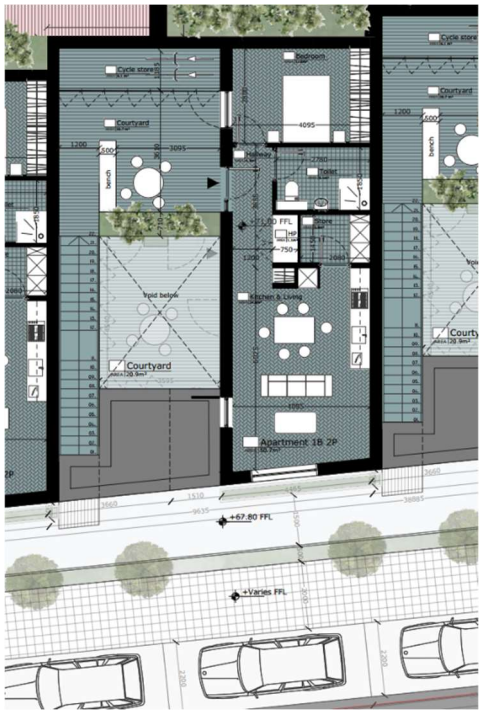
Proposed accommodation / Block type	Proposed unit type	No. of units	Total No. of units
Block A	1 bed	4	8
	2 bed	4	
Block B	1 bed	6	12
	2 bed	6	
Total no. of units			**20**

BLOCK A - Type A – 2bed 3person GROUND FLOOR APARTMENT (4no. units)			
	Proposed Area m²	**Target Area m² (minimum)**	**Percentage variation**
Aggregate Living Area	28.8	28	
Aggregate Bedroom area	23.6	20.1	
Storage (plus heat pump area)	5.2 (+1.2) ***	5	
Private amenity space	20.9	6	
Gross Floor Area	77.6 **	63	*18.8%



Block A - Ground floor plan - Unit Type A highlighted in light blue. Unit Type B is highlighted in dark blue.

BLOCK A - Type B – 1bed 2person FIRST FLOOR APARTMENT (4no. units)			
	Proposed Area m²	**Target Area m² (minimum)**	**Percentage variation**
Aggregate Living Area	24	23	
Aggregate Bedroom area	11.5	11.4	
Storage (plus heat pump area)	3 (+1.1) ***	3	
Private amenity space	20.7	5	
Gross Floor Area	50.7	45*	*11.2%

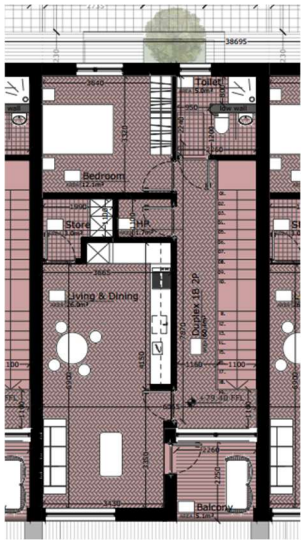


Block A – First floor plan - Unit Type B highlighted in dark blue.

BLOCK B - Type C – 2bed 3person LOWER/GROUND FLOOR DUPLEX (6no. units)			
	Proposed Area m²	**Target Area m² (minimum)**	**Percentage variation**
Aggregate Living Area	28	28	
Aggregate Bedroom area	22.5	20.1	
Storage (plus heat pump area)	5.5(+1.2)***	5	
Private amenity space	31.0 (as a minimum - varies)	6	
Gross Floor Area	81.9	70	*14.5%

BLOCK B - Type D – 1bed 2person FIRST FLOOR APARTMENT (6no. units)			
	Proposed Area m²	**Target Area m² (minimum)**	**Percentage variation**
Aggregate Living Area	26	23	
Aggregate Bedroom area	12.1	11.4	
Storage (plus heat pump area)	3 (+1.7) ***	3	
Private amenity space	5.1	5	
Gross Floor Area	60.4****	45	*25.5%

Block B - Lower Ground Floor (Ieft) & Ground Floor (right) plans - Unit Type C highlighted in light pink. Unit Type D is highlighted in dark pink.



Block B - First Floor plan - Unit Type D highlighted in dark pink.

Notes:

*Apartment floor areas as per the **Design Manual for Quality Homes 2022** and also in line with the **Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments 2022,** where under point number 3.8 - it is a requirement that the majority of all apartments in any proposed scheme of 10 or more apartments exceed the minimum floor area standard, by a minimum of 10%.

The bathrooms and circulation zones, located within Block A (units Type A), have been sized in line with **Universal Design Guidance. The enhanced size provided, aims to creating an environment that can be used by all people, regardless of their age, size, disability or ability.

***Apartment areas as per **Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (QHfSC) 2007** – as noted in **Design Manual for Quality Homes 2022** under 5.3.4.5 – the floor areas required to accommodate the heat pump plant internally were not envisaged in the QHfSC target floor areas and consequently the provision of heat pumps has contributed to the overall floor areas being exceeded. An area has been allocated within each of our proposed units specifically for the heat pump internal plant.

****For buildability and efficiency, the first-floor footprint follows the footprint of the floor below (ground-floor).