



## **Architects Report**

for

**Proposed development of 10 dwellings including 1 live-in artist's studio with gallery  
& associated site works**

at

**Junction of Barrack Lane & Dublin Road, Lusk, Co. Dublin**

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## **1. Description of Proposed Development:**

This report should be read in conjunction with all other documentation included with the Part XI Planning Application.

### **Site:**

The site for the proposed development is located in the town of Lusk, Co Dublin. It has an area of approx. 2526 Sqm / 0.25 ha. It is bounded to the north and east by residential properties, to the south by the Dublin Road and to the west by Barrack Lane.

### **Zoning:**

In the Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) the site is zoned TC, Town and District Centre – *‘Protect and enhance the special physical and social character of town and district centres and provide and/or improve urban facilities.’* The site is also indicated as being in an Architectural Conservation Area and a Zone of Archaeological Notification.

### **Proposal:**

The proposal, which accords with the Development Plan policies and objectives, includes; The construction of a 2 ½ storey, stone/render/zinc clad building with pitched and flat roofs including solar panels and roof lights with; 10 number units in total to include; 4 number 2 bedroom single storey dwellings and 1 number single storey live-in artists studio with part double height gallery space at ground floor level and; 5 number 2 bedroom duplex dwellings at first floor level with stairs/lift/external walkway access and; 11 number car parking spaces including 2 number visitor spaces and bin/bike/meter stores to the north of the site and; Public and private landscaped areas with trees/hedges/paving/seating onto Barrack Lane and to the centre of the development and; Boundary walls, SUDs drainage, and all associated works.

### **Space Standards:**

Space standards within dwellings and provision of private and shared open space meet the requirements of the Fingal Development Plan (2017-2023) and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG, 2018).

### **Site Services:**

The site will be serviced by ESB, EIR, GNI utilities which are available on public roads adjacent to the site. Public lighting within the site will be designed and installed to the standards of the Public Lighting Section in Fingal County Council Operations Department.

Refer to the drawings, calculations and report prepared by Lohan & Donnelly Consulting Engineers included with the Part XI Planning Information for details on the proposed drainage & civil works.

### **Archaeology:**

The **Development Plan / Lusk Objective 1** outlines the following requirement:

*‘Protect and conserve the special character of the historic core of Lusk including the area of archaeological notification in the centre of the Town...’*

As the proposal site is in the Zone of Archaeological Notification initial archaeological investigations and reporting have been carried out by Rubicon Heritage (Refer accompanying Part XI Planning Information). A number of trenches throughout the site uncovered archaeological findings and Fingal County Council intend to proceed with the recommendations of the report as follows:

- 1. The proposed development site should be fully archaeologically excavated under licence from the National Monuments Service in advance of any construction works.*
- 2. Any essential enabling works or demolition works in advance of construction should be subject to a programme of archaeological monitoring, under licence, by a suitably qualified archaeologist. Note where possible enabling or other groundworks works should be deferred until after the full archaeological excavation has been completed.*
- 3. All archaeological material encountered during such monitoring works will be investigated and fully recorded. However, if significant archaeological material is encountered then Fingal County Council will be notified. Resolution of any such significant material will be determined by the Fingal County Council in consultation with the National Monuments Service (DoCHG).*
- 4. A written report should be prepared detailing the results of all archaeological work undertaken.*

## **2. Architectural Design Statement:**

### **Introduction:**

The 'Key Garage Site', as referred to in Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) is in a prominent location at the edge of the Outer Historic Core as one approaches Lusk Town Centre from the south.

It is within an area of significant heritage value (Architectural Conservation Area and Zone of Archaeological Notification) and within close proximity of the ecclesiastical centre/round tower/medieval church and tower.

The **Development Plan / Lusk Objective 3** notes:

*“The development of the key garage site shall not, unless special justification is made, exceed three storeys in height. In any event developments shall be designed in such a manner so as not to compromise the important views of the former St. MacCullin's Church when approaching from the south.”*

Taking the above into account, we believe that the design response needs to balance two primary criteria:

1. Due to the prominence of the site at the edge of the Outer Historic Core, the building should act as a signpost that one is approaching the Town Centre and Historic Core of Lusk.

The importance of the site is recognised by the Development Plan height limit of three storeys (And possibly more with special justification) which is unusual for the Architectural Conservation Area.

2. The building should be respectful of its context and not detract from the existing character of the Architectural Conservation Area while maintaining the important view to the historic church towers.

### **Proposal – Planning Objectives:**

The proposal, which supports the provision of necessary housing, aims to balance the above criteria through appropriately considered scale, form and use coupled with high-quality materials and public landscaping while opening up a view to the church towers. The design process has been directly guided by the relevant Planning Objectives as set out in the Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) as follows:

- (A) The building has been positioned in such a way that a view is maintained to the historic church towers as one approaches the Town Centre along the Dublin Road in accordance with the **Development Plan / Lusk Objective 2.**

*‘Maintain the valued distinctive views of the monastic site from all approach roads in to the town...’*

Refer also to **Visual Impact Assessment** accompanying the application which describes in detail how the building has been designed in order to protect and enhance the view and setting of the ecclesiastical site as approaching from the south.

- (B) The overall building form has been broken into a series of smaller elements with steeply pitched gable roofs, in order to respect the historic character of the area in accordance with the **Development Plan / Lusk Objective 3.**

*“Ensure that all new developments respect the historic character of the Inner and Outer Core Areas of Lusk.”*

The proposed building is not a ‘monolithic’ apartment block but instead has been designed to reflect local building forms with steep gable roofs as found within Lusk village. It also incorporates a mixture of single storey / two storey / two and half storey (Dormer accommodation) elements to avoid any over-bearing or over-shadowing effects on adjacent properties.

- (C) The building has been designed to have a strong visual presence with high quality materials including natural stone, zinc and render in accordance with the **Development Plan / Lusk Objective 3.**

*“The external walls and roofs shall be faced with high quality materials and finishes within the Inner and Outer Core Areas.”*

The stonework to the two and a half storey blocks will be chosen to compliment / harmonise with typical rural buildings in the locality whereas the overall colour scheme is restrained and mainly consists of white and varying tones of grey so that the building does not visually detract from the historic church towers in the background.

(D) The proposal includes for a good-sized public open space along Barrack Lane with native trees, hedgerows, paving and seating which will contribute to the openness and historic character of the area in accordance with the **Development Plan / Lusk Objectives 3 & 4**.

The **Development Plan / Lusk Objectives 3** encourages:

*“...open space proposals which would significantly contribute to the openness and historic character of the Inner and Outer Core Areas of Lusk.”*

The **Development Plan / Lusk Objectives 4** encourages:

*“... the planting of hedgerows and trees using native species within new developments.”*

**Proposal – General Considerations:**

In addition to being guided by the relevant Planning Objectives the following has been considered:

- The building incorporates an artist’s studio with a gallery space in order to further contribute to the amenity value of Lusk.

A key aspect of the proposal is to positively contribute to the town of Lusk, not only through the use of high-quality design, materials and landscaping, but also by the provision of services which have community value and support the arts.

- The building has been designed so that ground floor units address both the public street and rear gardens whereas first floor units only address the public street from habitable spaces (Internal and external) in order to avoid overlooking of rear gardens / private amenity spaces of adjacent properties.

Both rear elevations of the proposed building are also sufficiently far away from opposing boundaries so as to avoid any sense of being overlooked.

- Privacy and overlooking has also been carefully considered within the development as follows:

Strong lateral separation has been provided between all patios throughout the scheme and the main external patios to the ground floor units are not overlooked by habitable spaces from above (Internal or external).

The external circulation route at first floor level has also been designed to mitigate against direct sight lines into the patios below while at the same time allowing passive overlooking of the shared open space to the centre of the development.

The sense of privacy/personal space is however balanced with an openness and connection to the landscaped area to the centre of the development at ground floor level.

- All permanent dwellings throughout the development are dual aspect for light and ventilation purposes while ground floor dwellings have been designed with 3m floor to ceiling heights in order to maximise natural daylight penetration into the spaces.
- The proposal has been designed to be climate-friendly with high levels of insulation, high performance windows and doors, solar panels and SUDs drainage throughout.

A Flood Risk Assessment has also been carried out by Lohan & Donnelly Consulting Engineers – Refer to engineer’s documentation included with Part XI Planning Information.

- The proposal has been fully screened for Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment (Refer reports included with Part XI Planning Information) - Both reports conclude that no additional measures are required.
- The proposal has been audited by a Fire and Access Consultant (AFEC Engineering) in order to ensure compliance with Parts B (Fire) & M (Access and Use) of the building regulations. A lift has also been provided so that all dwellings are wheelchair accessible and Age Friendly.



### **3. Housing Quality Assessment:**

#### **a. Residential Zoning:**

In the Fingal Development Plan (2017-23), the site has Zoning Objective: TC, Town and District Centre – *‘Protect and enhance the special physical and social character of town and district centres and provide and/or improve urban facilities.’* - The proposal accords with the Use Classes for the Development Plan Zoning which allows for Residential and Community / Cultural Facilities.

#### **Sustainable Community Proofing**

The site lies 250m from Main Street & Station Road, Lusk with shops, pharmacies and bank facilities. It is generally accepted that 400m (5-minute walk) to 800m (10-minute walk) represents the 'ped shed' - a suitable distance from which residents should be able to access local services and convenience shopping. (Ref QHfSC pages 7, 31).

#### **400 to 800m (10 minutes' walk)**

The nearest convenience stores and bus routes 33, 33-N, 33a, 33x, 733, 833 are located within this zone providing good services and public transport connectivity.

#### **800 to 1200m (20 minutes' walk)**

The nearest schools Lusk Community College and Rush & Lusk Educate together are located within this zone.

Given its proximity to the numerous retail, educational, recreational and healthcare facilities located close-by and its location close to public transport, the development of the site for social housing would contribute to the creation of sustainable mixed communities in accordance with national and local statutory planning policy, and raises no concerns as to sustainable community proofing.

#### **b. Dwelling Types:**

All permanent residences are 2 bedroom (4 person occupancy) which has been confirmed by Fingal Housing Department as being in line with the housing need for the area. The live-in artist's studio, which is intended for intermittent/temporary use, includes 1 bed space.

**c. Residential Density:**

The area of the site is 2526 Sqm / 0.25 Ha, which equates to a density of 40 units per hectare. This density is deemed appropriate in this case, for the following reasons:

- The site is proximate to the centre of a large town (250m to Lusk Main Street / Station Rd)
- The site is on the Dublin Road, which is served by Dublin Bus routes 33, 33N, 33A, 33X, 733 & 833 providing good public transport connectivity.

**d. Public Open Space:**

As per Objective DMS59 of Fingal Development Plan (2017-23), the entrance to the proposed development is within 400m walking distance of the Class 2 Public Open Space which adjoins Chapel Farm Park.

**e. Separation Distances:**

There are no first-floor rear windows from habitable spaces in the development.

**f. Site Safety and Security:**

Passive surveillance is achieved to all communal external areas within the curtilage of the site including the parking area and bin and bicycle storage via windows and external circulation routes. A site lighting scheme will be included in the detailed design to ensure safety and security at night.

**g. Accessibility:**

As noted in Section 2 above the proposal and been audited for compliance with Part M (Access and Use) and Part B (Fire) of the building regulations. All access routes to dwellings and spaces within dwellings are designed to be accessible/visit-able along with providing safe escape routes in case of fire as required by Building Regulations. A lift has also been provided to make all units accessible by wheelchair / Age-Friendly.

**h. Communal Amenity Space:**

The shared communal amenity space within the development is in excess of 500 Sqm which surpasses the requirements of the Fingal Development Plan (Min 10% of site area – I.e. 253 Sqm) and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (Min 7 Sqm per 2 bed unit / 5 Sqm per 1 bed unit – I.e. 68 Sqm).

**i. Bicycle Storage:**

12 number bicycle parking spaces have been provided within a dedicated structure to the north of the site in line with the requirements of the Fingal Development Plan (1 space per unit and 1 visitor space per 5 units). The number of bicycle parking spaces can be doubled by the introduction of a stacking system.

**j. Car Parking:**

11 car parking spaces have been provided which includes 1 space for each of the 9 permanent residences and 2 visitor spaces. 1 space per unit is considered appropriate as the site is in close proximity to Lusk Town Centre with numerous Retail / Educational / Recreational / Healthcare Facilities and Public Transport Bus Routes 33, 33-N, 33a, 33x, 733, 833.

Access routes from parking spaces to the building entrances comply with Part M (Access and Use) of the Building Regulations and provision by way of ducting will be made for electric charging points at each parking space.

**k. Refuse Storage and Bins:**

A communal bin storage area, which is easily accessible by both bin lorries and residents, is located within a dedicated structure to the north of the site. It has been sized to allow operation of a three-bin system of segregation with capacity to serve all units.

**l. Management Company:**

A management company will be engaged to maintain all communal spaces within the development.

**m. Gross Floor Areas of Dwellings:**

All units exceed the minimum Gross Floor Areas of 73 Sqm for two-bedroom (4 person) apartments as set out in the Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG 2018).

As the scheme contains 10 units (Including the live-in artist's studio) an additional 10% floor space has been calculated for the majority of the units (6 number) and distributed evenly across all units. This gives a minimum additional floor space of 4.4 Sqm per unit (10% of 73 x 6 ÷ 10) which is provided in all cases. The area of the stairs in the Duplex apartments has not been included in the area calculations.

*Refer to Appendix A: Schedule of Areas / Widths to Dwellings*

**n. Space Standards:**

The apartments have been planned to ensure compliance with space standards in the Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG 2018).

- Gross floor areas
- Individual room sizes
- Aggregate room areas
- Principal room dimensions
- Storage areas

*Refer to Appendix A: Schedule of Areas / Widths to Dwellings*

**o. Layouts of Dwellings:**

The dwelling layouts have been designed to demonstrate:

- Principal room widths
- Typical arrangement of furniture
- Appropriate living / kitchen / dining space
- Adequate space within bathrooms
- Adequate storage facilities

**p. Aspect of Dwellings:**

All units are dual aspect for light and ventilation purposes.

**q. Ceiling Height:**

Ground floor units have ceiling heights of 3m / First floor units have ceiling heights of 2.55m / Second floor rooms are designed as dormer accommodation in line with Diagram 3 of Part F (Ventilation) of the Technical Guidance Documents for habitable space.

**r. Kitchens:**

The layouts provide for open plan kitchen/living/dining arrangement. The kitchens sizes and layouts have been designed in compliance with the Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG 2018) and include for:

- Adequate high level and low level storage
- Adequate worktop surface
- Adequate space for appliances

**s. Internal Storage:**

Each dwelling meets the internal storage requirements of Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG 2018).

*Refer to Appendix A: Schedule of Areas / Widths to Dwellings*

**t. Private Amenity Space:**

Each dwelling is provided with Private Amenity Space in the form of private patios / decks. Areas of Private Amenity Space for each unit exceed the minimum requirement of 7 Sqm as noted in Fingal Development Plan (2017-23) and Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG 2018).

*Refer to Appendix A: Schedule of Areas / Widths to Dwellings*

**u. Daylight, Sunlight:**

All units are dual aspect and have generous ceiling heights and high-performance openable windows and patio doors. The following guidance and standards have been considered in the design of the proposed development:

- Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (B.R.209, 2011);
- B.S. 8206 Lighting for Buildings, Part 2 2008: Code of Practice for Daylighting.

**v. Acoustic Privacy:**

To ensure compliance with Part E (Sound) of the Building Regulations, the form of construction will be in accordance with guidance, and testing of the completed building will be carried out to demonstrate this compliance.

**w. Energy Performance:**

All dwellings will achieve high levels of occupant comfort, and compliance with the relevant parts of the building regulations as follows:

- Part F: Ventilation
- Part J: Heat Producing Appliances
- Part L: Conservation of Fuel and Energy

**x. Design Standards:**

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

- Fingal Development Plan (2017-23)
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG 2018)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas; Planning Authority Guidelines (DEHLG 2009)
- Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas (DOELG 1998)
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2013)

## Appendix A:

Schedule of Areas/Widths to Dwellings				
	Room	Required	Proposed	% Exceeded
<b>GF Unit - 2 Bed Apartment (4 number)</b>	Gross Floor Area (sqm)	77.4*	78.0	0.7
	Agg. Living/Dining/Kit Area (sqm)	30.0	31.0	
	Agg. Bedroom Area (sqm)	24.4	24.4	
	Agg. Storage Area (sqm)	6.0	6.3	
	Bedroom 1 / Double (sqm)	11.4	11.4	
	Bedroom 2 / Twin (sqm)	13.0	13.0	
	Min. Living Width (m)	3.6	3.8	
	Min. Bedroom Width (m)	2.8	2.8 / 2.95	
	Room	Required	Proposed	% Exceeded
<b>FF Unit - 2 Bed Duplex (4 number)</b>	Gross Floor Area (sqm)	77.4*	79.0	2.0
	Agg. Living/Dining/Kit Area (sqm)	30.0	29.0**	
	Agg. Bedroom Area (sqm)	24.4	25.2	
	Agg. Storage Area (sqm)	6.0	6.25	
	Bedroom 1 / Double (sqm)	11.4	11.4	
	Bedroom 2 / Twin (sqm)	13.0	13.8	
	Min. Living Width (m)	3.6	4.4	
	Min. Bedroom Width (m)	2.8	3.0	
	Room	Required	Proposed	% Exceeded
<b>FF Unit - 2 Bed Duplex (1 number)</b>	Gross Floor Area (sqm)	77.4*	88.6	14.0
	Agg. Living/Dining/Kit Area (sqm)	30.0	29.0**	
	Agg. Bedroom Area (sqm)	24.4	25.2	
	Agg. Storage Area (sqm)	6.0	7.95	
	Bedroom 1 / Double (sqm)	11.4	11.4	
	Bedroom 2 / Twin (sqm)	13.0	13.8	
	Min. Living Width (m)	3.6	4.4	
	Min. Bedroom Width (m)	2.8	3.0	

\*  $73 + 4.4 \text{ Sqm}$  (10% of  $73 \times 6 \div 10$ ) = 77.4 Sqm per unit – Refer Section 3(m) above

\*\* Note - 5% differentiation allowed as long as overall areas are achieved