

DESIGN STATEMENT

Fingal County Council
Public Consultation

Date 03rd March 2021
Project Garristown
Revisions 03 – Public Consultation
02 – Internal Consultation 27/11/20
01 – Pre-Planning Review 27/05/20
Ref 20004

Design Team

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North & East Housing Association	Client

Introduction

This report has been prepared on behalf of North & East Housing Association for the proposed development located at a vacant site off the R130 on its approach to Garristown village. The project consists of six dwellings, three 2-bed homes and three 1-bed homes and associated landscaping and site works.

The site is zoned as an 'Existing Development Area of the Village' in the Garristown LAP.

The scheme has been designed in accordance with the 'Garristown Local Area Plan 2010', and the 'Garristown Village Design Framework Plan 2010'. The project attempts to achieve the aims set out in these documents by providing a sustainable, community centred design appropriate to its village setting.

This design statement follows the submission made for a pre-planning review on 27/05/20.

Context

Garristown is an established village of distinctive heritage, rural character and ambience, positioned on an elevated setting in the North Fingal Uplands. The picturesque rolling topography forms a gentle landscape sloping from the west to the east across the village which overlooks an attractive hinterland of arable and pastoral farms. The built fabric of the village core has been designated an Architectural Conservation Area due to its high-quality vernacular architectural character dating mainly from the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries.

Located on an approach road to the east, just outside the centre of the village centre, the project will be experienced as part of the transition into the village and therefore seeks to make a positive visual impact that relates to the distinctive character of its setting and provides an appropriate gateway, in opposition to the examples of ribbon development apparent to the south and east of the village.



In terms of sustainable growth highlighted as a necessity for the future economic and social life of the village, the proposal is of an appropriate high density for a single storey development while retaining a human scale to the whole that is proportionate to the character of the village. Similar to the multi-housing development off Chapel Lane, this is befitting its location close to the centre of the village.

Design Rationale

The site layout has been developed to create a 'village courtyard' composed of single storey homes; three houses are clustered around two forecourts set back off a communal green. There is no legible building line established by the adjacent detached properties. The site entrance and shared open space is therefore framed by two gables that face onto the road and bookend the development. A new stone wall, proposed in the traditional construction method, will align with the neighbour's boundary wall and a grass verge will be extended in front of the proposal.

The proposed external finishes are limited to a palette of high quality, durable materials; render, brick, and slate effect roof tiles to compliment the traditional dwellings of Fingal. The approach to detailing, texture, colour and pattern will be restrained in ornamentation and embellishment to tie in with the simple, robust design forms of narrow spanned volumes with pitched roof profiles found across Fingal. Materials are used judiciously to enhance the sense of identity and place and create intimate social spaces within the design.

The design aims to make a place in keeping with the character of the village, comparable to the successful housing projects described in the Village Design Framework Plan as 'of contemporary design, bright, friendly and set around a green [that] follows the rules of sensitive village design and presents quality houses of lovely spare detailing'.

Garristown Village Design Guidelines

The proposal shares the following key attributes with the objectives of the Garristown Village Residential Design Recommendations:

- Site sensitive, contemporary, sustainable design

The proposal is in keeping with the character of the place and makes the best use of the land through appropriate density for village consolidation, with a site sensitive layout of human scaled clusters that avoid the typical patterns and pitfalls of estate housing

- Optimise views to green/open space

Passive surveillance and ease of access to the shared green has been optimised in the layout. While attractive, intimate forecourts of a semi-private nature encourage ownership of the development

- Reduction in 'front of house' parking in favour of shared and supervised parking

Shared parking spaces have been provided, overlooked by the houses while being partially screened by planting

- Design for adaptability & flexibility

All of the homes will meet Lifetime Homes guidance to ensure long term future-proofing

- Energy Conservation & Sustainable Design Objectives

All homes will aim to achieve a BER rating of A2. Site orientation for passive solar gain and the avoidance of over-shadowing to private garden spaces has been considered

- Form & Materials

Simple, legible forms of high-quality detailing and workmanship will be developed to create a contemporary, sustainable design composed of high quality, natural materials; stone, brick and render. The buildings respect the character of the local vernacular architecture of informal, contextual groupings of rendered rubble stone walls and slate-effect roofs. The scale and massing has been developed from single storey gabled pitched building types built off plans of moderate building depth using indigenous materials

- Landscaping

Planting will be used to embed the scheme in its setting, enhance privacy and create an attractive place and identity for the development. Soft landscaping and permeable paving are also utilised as opportunities for rainwater attenuation to slow down water run-off into local streams and the River Delvin. Landscaping will be characterised by a high standard of quality finishes and treatments

In following the above guidelines, the project endeavours to ensure that the new development is physically, visually, and functionally integrated with and compliments the existing village.

Site Access & Parking Provision

Shared vehicular access to the site is positioned in the approximate location of the existing entrance gate. Vegetation will be removed to create a verge for adequate site lines, please refer to the site plan which show a new strip of lawn to the roadside. New hedgerow consisting of species native to the area will be reinstated inside the line of visibility.

The car parking provision for sheltered housing at a ratio of 1:0.5 plus visitor parking at 5:1 requires a total of 4 parking spaces. These have been provided with an additional space, for use as a temporary set-down area for deliveries.

Landscaping

Housing areas on the edge of the village are publicly accessible and their green spaces and pedestrian routes enhance the historic public realm of the main street, the mall and the triangular green in the village. These spaces are described in the framework plan as having a semi-private, enclave character in which passive supervision ensures non-inhabitants are noticed. The proposed communal green positioned to the front of the site aims to add to this public realm while presenting a welcoming character and reducing the massing visible from the roadside when entering the rural settlement.

Both the public open space, exceeding 10%, and all rear garden spaces, exceeding 60sqm, are above the minimum space requirements. New hedging to the roadside will be beech or hornbeam; the planting strategy envisages a mix of indigenous species acceptable to the council. Benches will be provided to the communal green to encourage use. Each home has a side gate access, and gardens are screened from the public open space by timber fencing.

Raised planters have been included as they are more accessible for the elderly and can also be used for rainwater attenuation. They are positioned to demarcate semi-private threshold spaces, define the forecourts, deal with level changes, and screen the parking.

Hard landscaping will consist of a shared surface for parking and pedestrians with subtle demarcations for parking spaces and circulation zones. Finishes will be of high-quality stone and concrete paving to avoid unsightly expanses of tarmac.

Recessed entrances to each home provide shelter in inclement weather and include seating to encourage social use. These integral benches and raised planters also form purposeful defensible space that act as a buffer between the public footpaths and the private dwellings.

Please find an Appropriate Assessment Screening and an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening attached.

Drainage

A study of the required soakaway dimensions for a sustainable drainage system has been undertaken based on soil investigation calculations. Please refer to the attached drainage report and proposed drainage strategy drawing.

A flood risk assessment determined a risk rating of 1, or 'very low risk'. Please refer to the enclosed report.

Pre-Planning Review

Following the submission to Fingal County Council for a Pre-Planning review, comments on the proposal were received on 19th and 26th of June, and the 16th of September. The design team have addressed the following items.

- An Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Constraints Plan, Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement in accordance with BS 5837: 2012, has been prepared by a suitably qualified arborist. Details on replacement planting of native species are indicated on the landscape plan which also shows the areas of hard and soft landscape details
- Sustainable Drainage Strategy – An AquaCell system has been replaced with a stone soakaway as requested
- Please refer to dr.2100 for sightline diagram. This indicates 70m sightlines as required for a 50kph zone, from a 2.4m setback. A 2m setback is also shown to allow for the future provision of a footpath, as the public road at this location is outlined as an indicative Pedestrian/Cycling Route on the Garristown LAP
- Parking is provided in accordance with the standards for sheltered housing. A carriageway width of 6.0m is provided to allow reverse manoeuvres from parking spaces, see dr.2005
- A communal refuse store is indicated on the proposed site plan as requested
- All rear garden spaces exceed 60sqm, the minimum space requirements. Narrow strips of land in between homes have not been included in the open space calculations

Overview

The proposed development has been designed as a high-quality, contemporary addition to Garristown village, respecting the scale, massing, and material context of Fingal. Each house

has been designed to the relevant standards described in 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities 2007' and the 'Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023'.

We believe that this scheme is a positive addition for the community, and we hope that Fingal County Council can look favourably on our preliminary submission.