



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland
Housing for All

Galway County Council - Housing Unit

DESIGN STATEMENT

**Proposed 88-unit + Crèche Social and Affordable Housing Development
at**

Baile Chláir, Co. na Gaillimhe

**Planning & Development Regulations, 2001
Part 10 Planning Application Process**

Table of Contents

1. CONTEXT.....	3
2. CONNECTIONS	
How well connected is the new neighbourhood?	20
3. INCLUSIVITY	
How easily can people use and access the development?	24
4. VARIETY	
How does the development promote a good mix of activities?.....	27
5. EFFICIENCY	
How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?.....	33
6. DISTINCTIVENESS	
How does the proposal create a sense of place?.....	37
7. LAYOUT	
How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?.....	41
8. PUBLIC REALM	
How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?	44
9. ADAPTABILITY	
How will the buildings cope with change?	45
10. PRIVACY & AMENITY	
How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?	46
11. PARKING	
How will the parking be secure and attractive?	
12. DETAILED DESIGN	
How well thought through is the building and landscape design?	50
13. CONCLUSION.....	55

INTRODUCTION



This Report has been prepared to describe the design rationale behind the proposal for a 88 Social and Affordable units and a Crèche Housing Scheme at *Droim na Gaoithe Baile Chláir*, Co. Galway, which is to be submitted to *An Bord Pleanála*.

The Report follows the 12-points assessment set out on the Urban Design Manual from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, in order to demonstrate compliance with such, as well as with the now current Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, which has been recently adopted.

This scheme is located at the southern exit of *Baile Chláir* (or Claregalway) on the road to Oranmore, in the Barony of Dunkellin, Parish of *Baile Chláir*, in the townland of *Droim na Gaoithe* at the southern end of a number of rather recent residential estates and which at present is to be object of more housing development.

This proposal is brought forward by the Galway County Council in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, under the 'Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness' program, to provide much needed residential accommodation to alleviate the housing pressure Claregalway and its environs are under for the short and medium term.

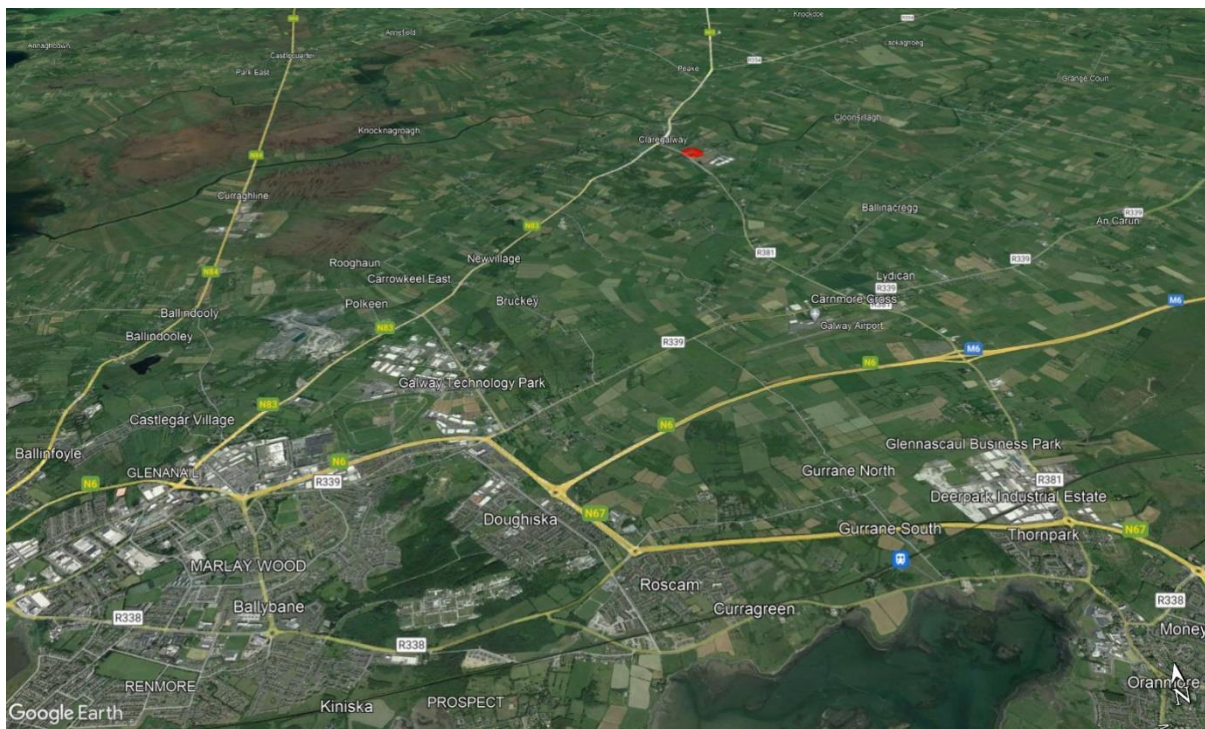
The ample variety of unit types for the proposed 88 dwellings, include 2-storey terraced, semi-detached and detached houses, 2½ and 3 storey apartments buildings and 3-storey duplex-apartments buildings, as well as a Crèche for a small number of little children (as it will be described further on) with a landscaping proposal which utilises its pre-existing conditions as a distinctive feature which create a sense of place, and car and bicycle parking provisions as required and boundary treatment proposal.

The Design Team for this proposal is led by Vincent Hannon Architects, supported by Tobin Consulting Engineers, Coffey Consulting Engineers and Tom McNamara & Partners Quantity Surveyors.

The attached Planning Application demonstrates that the Proposal addresses the requirements from the Department on housing design, is consistent with the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Guidelines and also with the Galway County Development Plan.

1. CONTEXT

How does the development respond to its surroundings?



Location of Site in relation to Galway city and environs

Regional and Local Context

Baile Chláir, on the banks of the river Clare is located around 10 kms North from Galway City. Its Franciscan Friary built c. 1250 mark its beginnings as a medieval settlement in the area where people had been living for hundreds of years previously. Of these, the existing Tower (called Claregalway

Castle, reg. N°110) and the Stone Arched Bridge (N°107) are Protected Structures, although, surprisingly, the Friary (one of the first built in Connaught), which commanded the consolidation of the town itself from medieval times, has no formal legal protection.

Today, having become part of the Galway City commuter towns (or "Galway Metropolitan Area" as designated by the new Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028), Baile Chláir has seen a number of housing, commercial, leisure and educational developments in the last decade, and is experiencing at present a palpable housing pressure and is envisaged that it would have an important population demand and growth in the next years due to its proximity to Galway City and its economic ties with it, its location on the N83, its easy connection to the M6 and through that, to the M7.



Location of Site in relation to Baile Chláir, from the South



View of Baile Chláir, from the North East

Additionally, Baile Chláir belongs to District F “*Imeall na Cathrach*” *Gaeltacht* area, as established on the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 recently adopted. As indicated on the said Plan, “this is District is the most significant area that is under the greatest pressure from the growth of the city and must cope not only with the changes to its language and culture but with the constant demand for infrastructure and services”. As such and as required by Policy Objective GA4 of the said Development Plan, a minimum of 20% of the proposed dwellings ought to be allocated to *Gaeilgoir*.



View of Baile Chláir, from the North East, with subject Site indicated in red

The subject site is almost a corner site, except for the corner itself which belongs to a different ownership, being located relatively close to the town centre (within a radius of approximately c. 500m, i.e. walking distance) and its newly constructed commercial facilities (shops, petrol stations, hotel, cafés, supermarket).

To the West, it has frontage to the R381, which is the main road connecting Baile Chláir to Oranmore and, through it, to the M6 to Dublin (trip of 2.5 hours approximately). To the South-East, it has also frontage to the local L7110 road, called “*Lakeview*”, just across a recently built and functioning educational facilities (primary and secondary schools).



R381 road to Oranmore, with entrances to existing housing estates

To the East it has the GAA grounds, which have an existing pedestrian connection (at its most North-western corner) from the neighbouring Estate to the North, to which the subject scheme proposes a possible future connection to be connected through its main public open space, so as to incorporate it as part of its pedestrian connectivity.



Existing connection between Cúirt na hAbhainn estate and GAA grounds at the corner of the site

To the North, it has the existing *Cúirt na hAbhainn* Housing Estate, which was built on 2007 and recently extended on 2018, providing c. of 100 dwellings.

Relevant to the context of the present application is the recent approval of 114 residential units and a Crèche development proposal by An Bord Pleanála (Case Reference N° TC07.310796) on 07.10.2021 at Lakeview, Baile Chláir, which will be effectively at the opposite side of the above mentioned GAA grounds.



Layout of 114no. unit SHD scheme permitted by An Bord Pleanála (ABP TC07.310796) on a site further to the east at Lakeview. (O'Neill O'Malley Architects).

The subject site has a total of approximately 2.7 hectares, all of which are part of the proposal. In its present state, it does not have any construction and has existing trees and shrubs (of varied type and quality) lining its East, North and partially South boundaries, with also a centre hedge line traversing across the site North to South, as it will be detailed further on.

At the moment of issuing this present Report, there are no local bus route serving the site or its close environs.

Natural Context

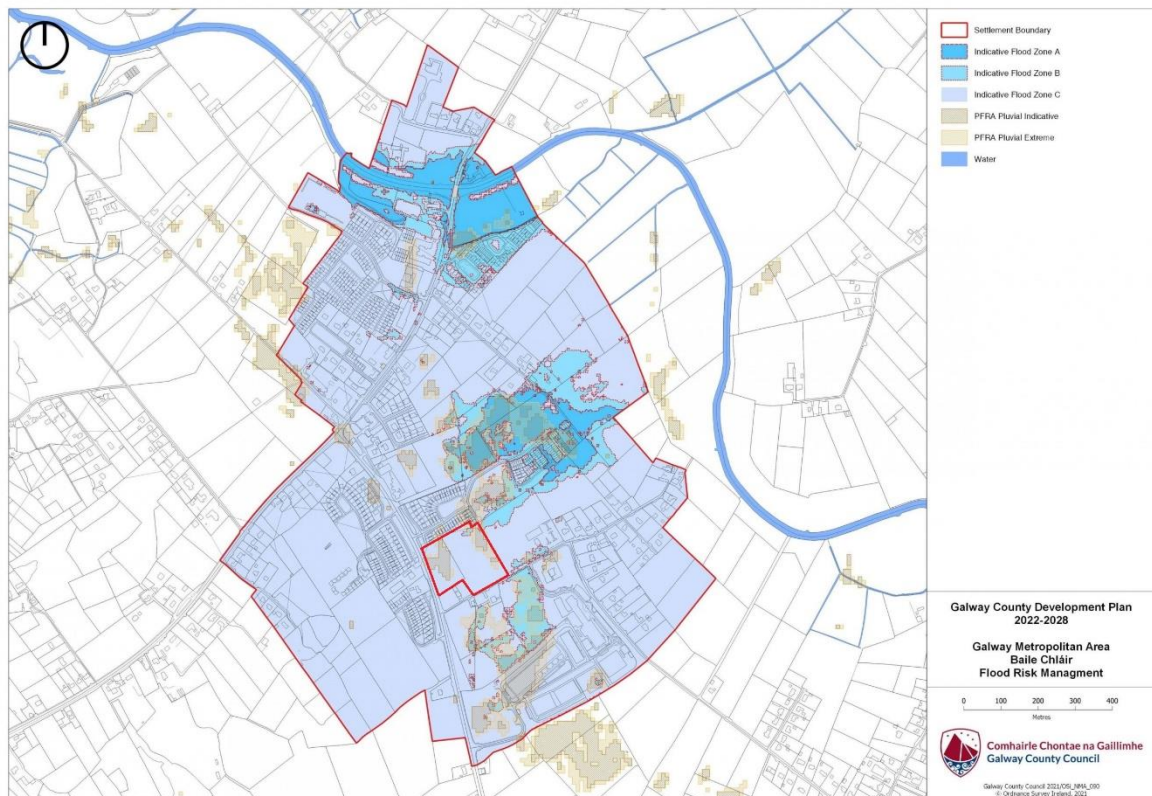
As it is particular to Baile Chláir make up and although sitting on a relatively recent, low density, low building height, suburban context, due to its corner location with recent roads and ancillary features and recently built schools, the site has an urban feeling and setting and has no sizeable natural surroundings to be considered, except for the proximity of the Clare River, some 700m away to the East, which has, however, no direct visual influence on the site itself.



View of existing trees/hedges, looking from North-West to South-East

Flood Risk

As previously indicated, the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 restricted the most North-Eastern corner of the Site (approximately 0.197 hectares) due to flooding.



New Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, Flood Risk Management Plan Baile Chláir, indicating subject site in red

Due to the above and as required by same Development Plan, a Flood Risk Assessment Report was commissioned by Galway County Council and carried out on March 2020 by JBA Consulting Engineers and Scientists Limited.

This Report shows that, although there has been recurring floods in the area due to the proximity of the river Clare, some 700m to the East, and to turloughs, the site itself has not been greatly affected, except for a reduced part at the area already restricted by the Development Plan, as previously mentioned.

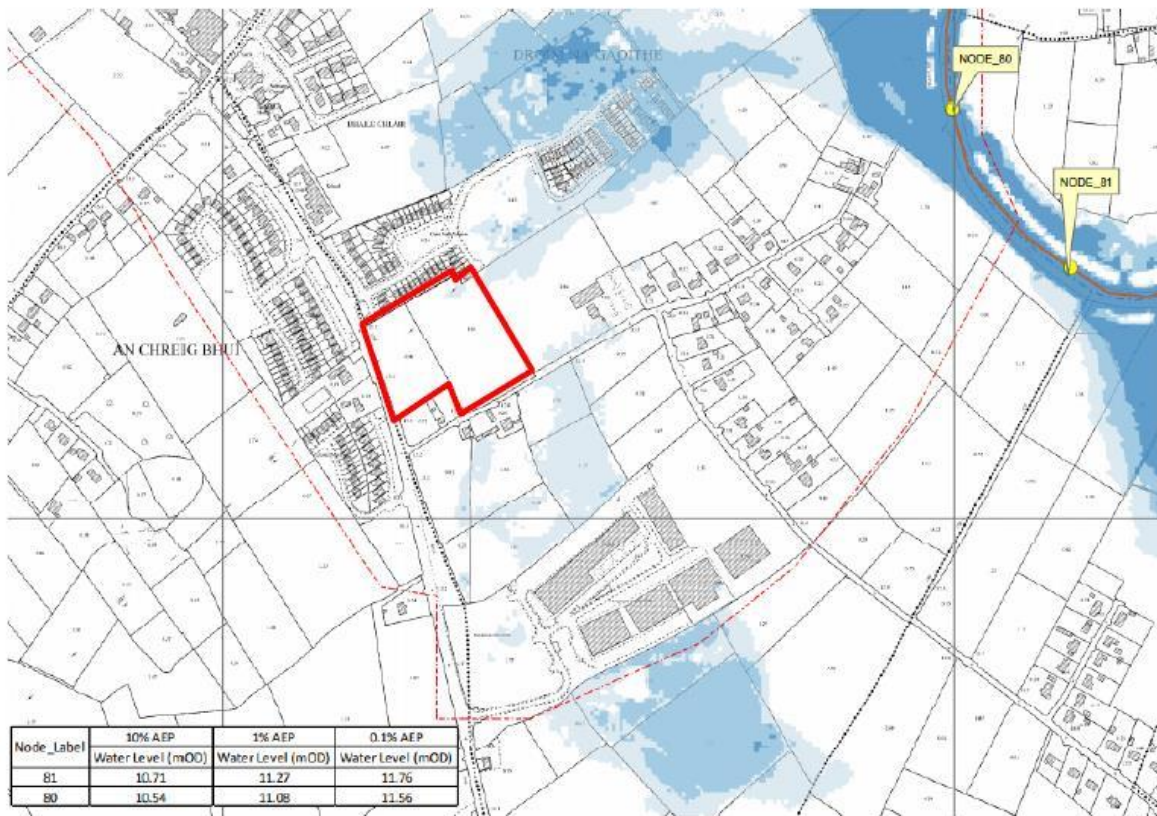


Figure 3-4 Extract from Western CFRAM mapping

As a conclusion, the Flood Report indicates that, as the Clare River Flood Relief Scheme is in place and provided that the site includes surface water drainage that replicates greenfield conditions, that all other mitigation measures are included and that all finished floor levels of any proposed construction are at least above +11.38m, the proposed scheme will not significantly increase risk to the surrounding area or to itself.

Due to the way in which the scheme's general layout was designed, with lowest levels confronting the restriction area above what it is required, it is stated that all required recommendations by the Flood Risk Assessment have been taken into consideration on this proposal to reasonable prevent flood damage.

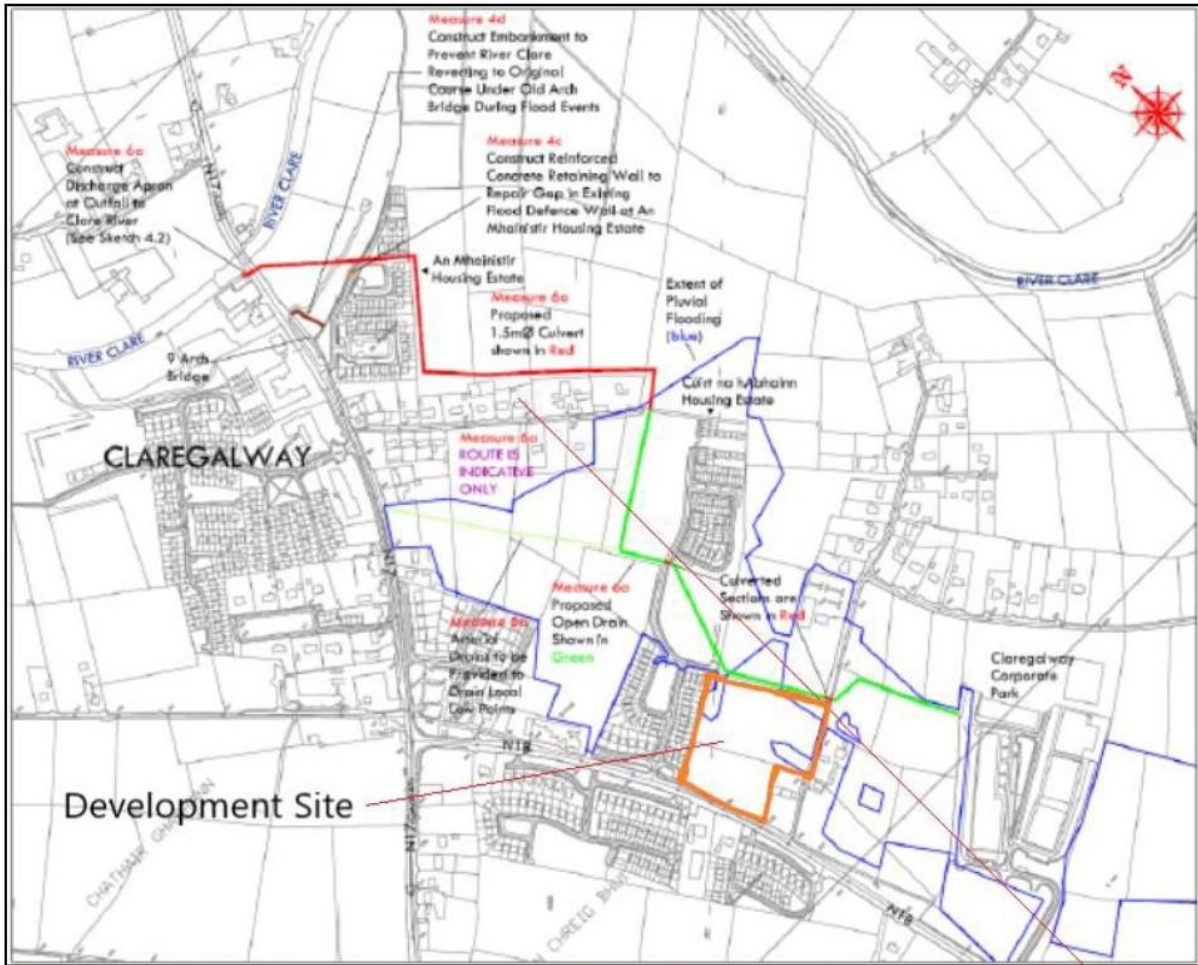


Plate 3-1 Clare Flood Relief Scheme Pipeline (In green) located adjacent to Development Site (In orange) (Image source JBA Consulting).

Ecology

In order to minimise the Proposal’s environmental impact on its surroundings, a number of studies and reports have been commissioned.

The proximity to Lough Corrib’s Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area of Conservation (SPA) and pNHA (ranging from 630m to 9km) requires Ecological studies and Assessments to be completed so to be included on the Planning Application for this scheme.

The commissioned studies and assessments are as follows:

1. Ecological Impact Assessment Report.
2. Appropriate Assessment Screening Report.
3. Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

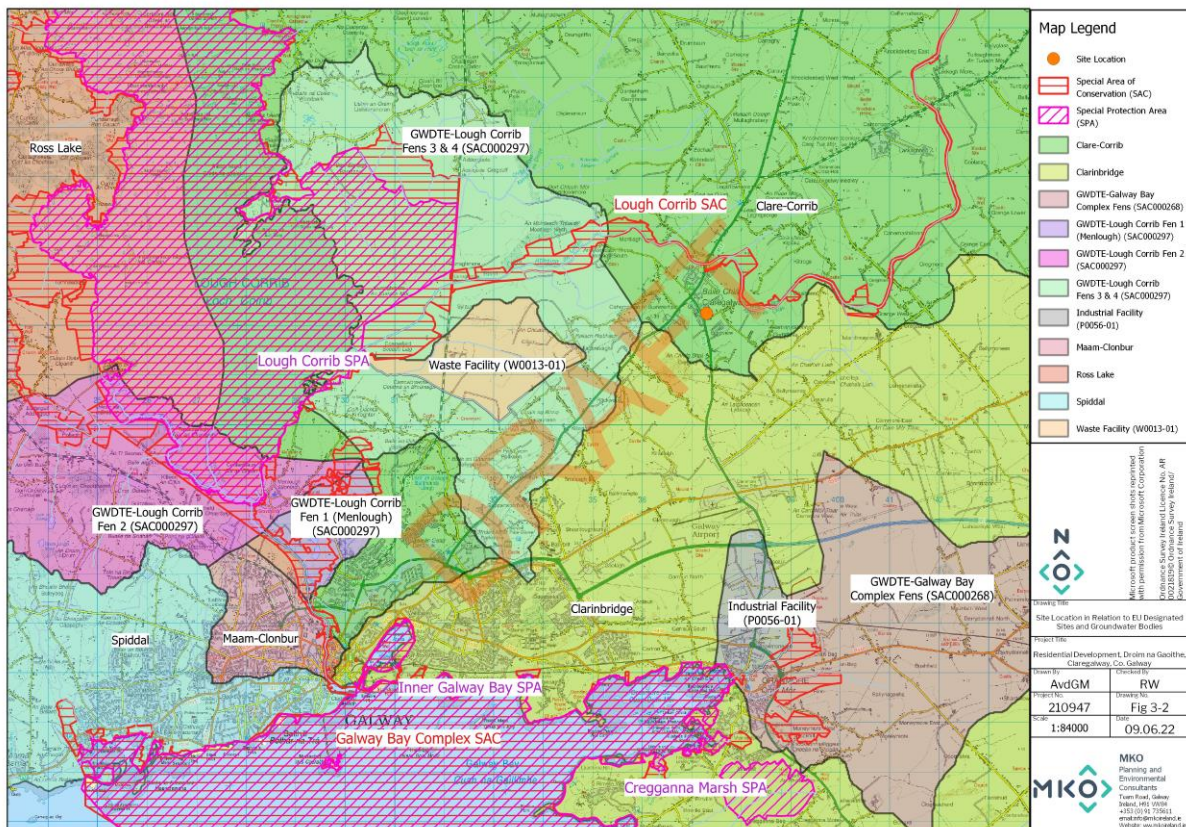
The above reports arrived to the following conclusions:

- 1) **Ecology Report** concluded that, following consideration of the residual effects (post incorporation of best practice measures), there will be no significant impacts on biodiversity given the nature, scale and design of the proposal.

The potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the proposed development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in combination with other plans and projects was identified.

Provided that the proposed development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design described within this application, significant effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographic scale.

- 2) The **AA Screening Report** concluded that it cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on the Lough Corrib SAC and SPA. As a result, an Appropriate Assessment is required, and a Natura Impact Statement shall be prepared in respect of the proposed development.



Site Location in relation to EU designated Site and Groundwater bodies

- 3) This **Natura Impact Statement**, has provided an assessment of all potential direct or indirect adverse effects on European Sites.

Where the potential for any adverse effect on any European Site has been identified, the pathway by which any such effect may occur has been robustly blocked through the use of avoidance, appropriate design and mitigation measures as set out within this report and its appendices. The measures ensure the proposed works do not adversely affect the integrity of European sites.

Therefore, it can be objectively concluded that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site.

Existing Trees

There are existing line of trees and hedgerows dividing properties between the subject Site and the GAA field to the North East. There are also existing hedgerows at the centre of the site and to the North and South-West (towards the corner property) boundaries.

The Proposal requires for most of the existing hedgerows to be removed and the existing trees to the GAA site (towards Lakeview Road) would have to be assessed if they could be saved.

Therefore, compensatory measures are included in the proposal for new native trees and hedgerows to be planted along the back of the sites, as shown on the attached drawings.

Supplementary and sizeable landscaping & select planting of green areas are part of this proposed development along with adoption of key objectives of the new 'All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025.'

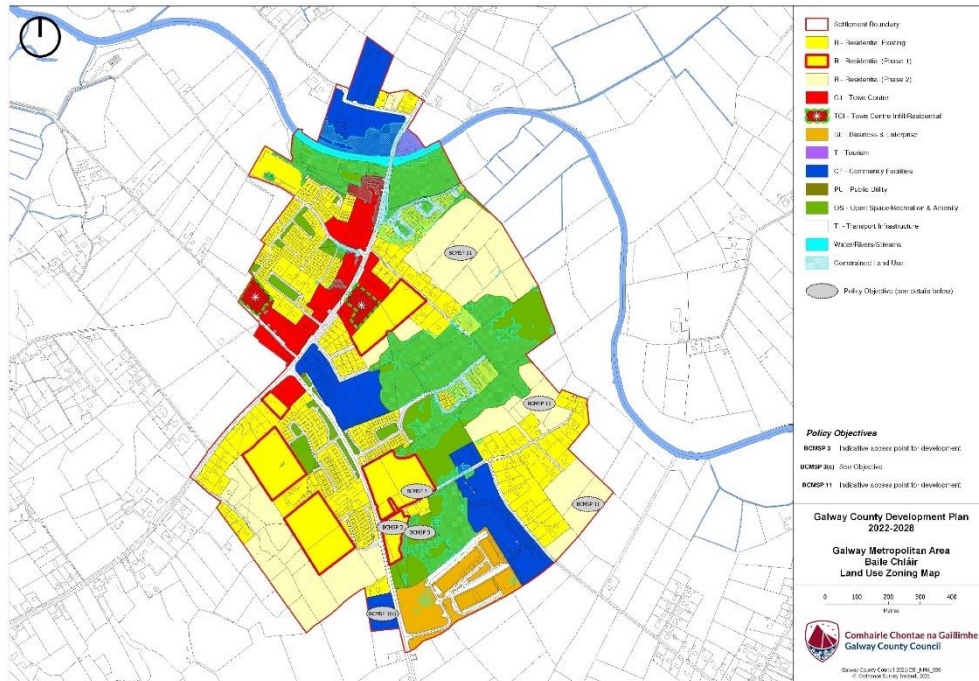


View of existing trees at boundary with GAA at Lakeview Road

Local Planning Context

The subject site where the proposed residential units are to be located are zoned "R-Residential (Phase 1)" under the provisions of the current Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (Volume 2: Galway Metropolitan Area, Baile Chláir). The north-eastern corner of the site is zoned "OS-Open Space Recreation & Amenity" and is dedicated as a public open space amenity area as part of the scheme. The Proposed development is compliant with the Land Use Zoning Objectives of the area.

Also, policy BCMSP 3 of the proposed 2022-2028 Development Plan is indicated for the site, assigning it the provision of community facilities for the purpose of playground, which is included in the Proposal, in the shape of the Playground proposed facing Lakeview Road, to the South.



Local Urban Zoning of new Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

Built Context

As mentioned previously, given the particular context produced by the way Baile Chláir has evolved and grown, despite being a green vacant site, beside a sports ground to the East and a crossroads to the Southwest, due to its proximity to a number of recently built residential estates and schools (both Primary and Secondary), the area does have an urban setting, with consolidated roads, good signage and a surrounding mix of old houses and new residential schemes.

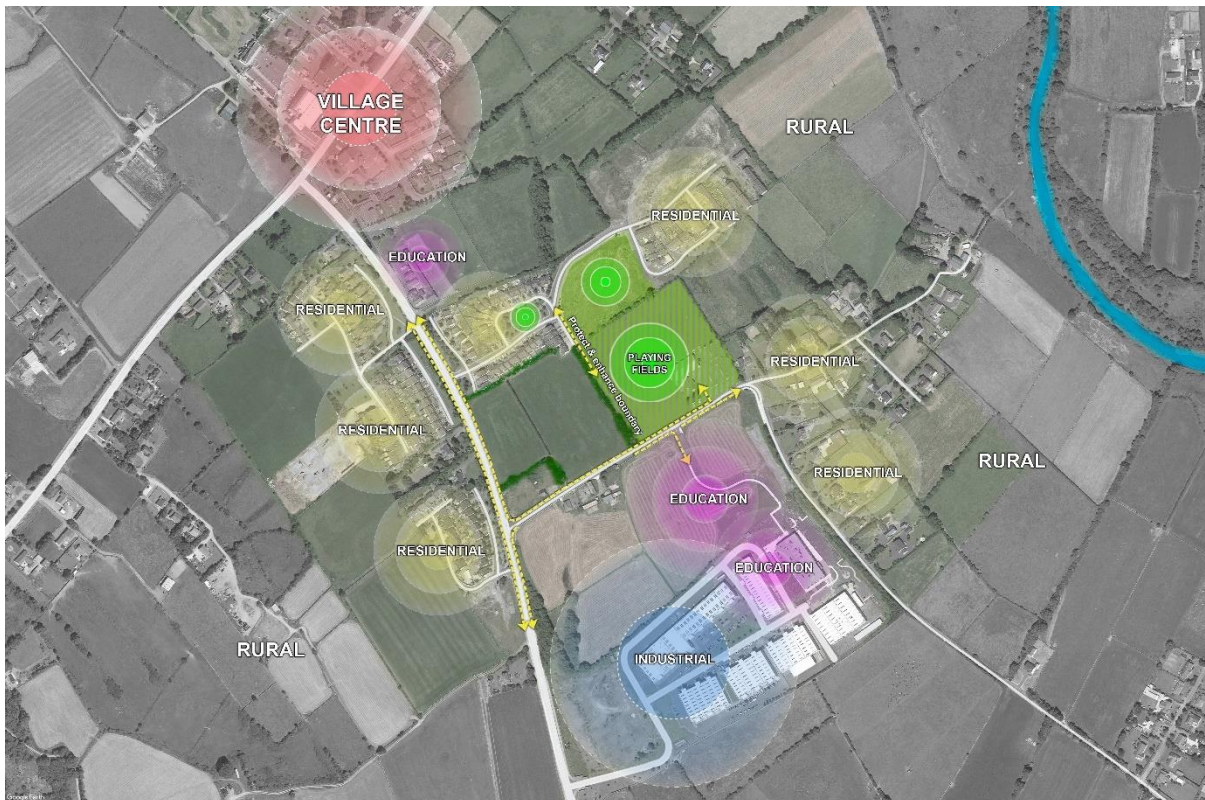


View of existing neighbouring estate looking North, from Claregalway-Oranmore Road



View of recently built Primary School, looking East from Lakeview Road)

The recent surrounding indicated above, which is low to medium density housing estates were constructed within the past 10 to 15 years, to both sides of the R381, most of two storeys high, similar in design, with the usual brick and render finishes and PVC windows, provides a sense of residential approach to Baile Chláir.



Site context within Baile Chláir town present development



View of existing Housing Estate to north from Claregalway-Oranmore Rd.)

There are some existing rendered and stone houses and outbuildings on the corner site (not part of the applicant's ownership) and across Lakeview Road, and residential buildings predating the newer estates, but there are no structures of architectural or historical merit (either old or new) and no recorded protected structures nor monuments among them or on the surroundings and the site (as stated on the attached Archaeology Report).

As indicated previously, the site could be considered a corner site, except for the very corner itself, which belongs to a different ownership, however maintaining the frontage to 2 roads.

Archaeology

A Report carried out by Archer Heritage during 2021, which is part of the planning submission, indicates that there is moderate to high potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains at this site.

In relation to the above, the Report recommends that a geophysical survey should be carried out, followed by test trenching of same, to ascertain the possible extent of such, if it would exist.

Proposal

This Social and Affordable Proposal consists of a total of 88 units, divided into 39 houses and 14 apartment buildings. A 21 child Crèche for a reduced number of children from 0 to 6 years old also forms part of the development proposal and is incorporated into one of the corner apartment buildings.



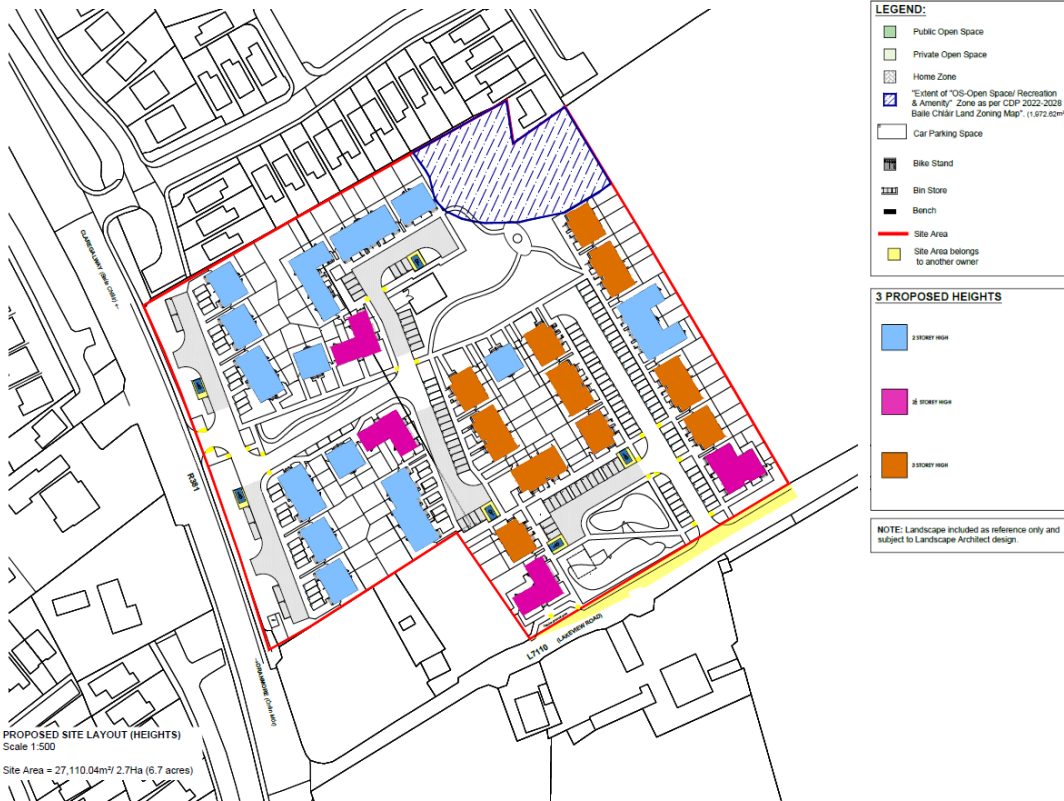
Birdseye view of proposed Scheme from Claregalway-Oranmore Road., looking East



Birdseye view of proposed Scheme from Lakeview Rd., looking North

All proposed houses are to be 2 storeys high, while the apartment buildings will range from 2½ to 3 storeys high, as shown of the accompanying Heights Plan.

In terms of houses to be provided, there will be 2 four-bedrooms, 19 three-bedroom and 18 two-bedrooms. As for the apartments, there will be 15 three-bedrooms, 21 two-bedrooms and 13 one-bedroom, distributed among the 14 apartment buildings, completing the 88 units + Crèche.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-004, Heights Plan.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-001, Site Layout Plan.

Responding to the nature of the site and its conditions, the proposal organises itself around a main green core located to the North-East corner at the restriction area, with a central group of buildings, a line of houses (terraced and semi-detached) facing the R381 (Claregalway to Oranmore Road) and an open area made up by a good size playground facing the L7110 (Lakeview Road), which is flanked by corner apartment buildings at its three sides. Upon this last access, a line of buildings and houses leads onto the main green core to the East boundary, adjacent to the GAA field.

From each of these 2 roads faced, an access is provided leading to an internal road, each of which is designed to have no vehicular connection (avoiding rat-racing), however fully permeable for pedestrians.

All the above illustrates a scheme based on 2 general principles:

- A. *Meaning and focal point to be provided by the landscape.*
- B. *Structure of the overall layout to be brought up by the pedestrian permeability.*

In turn, the above translates into 4 elements being proposed, as follows:

- *Houses facing R381.*
- *Playground onto L7110.*
- *Central Green Core.*
- *Central group of buildings.*

Fulfilling the principles enunciated above and as an ordering Architectural element, from the line of houses facing the Claregalway-Oranmore Road, there is a main landscaped pedestrian access path, which signals the central axis that leads into the main green core, traversing the entire scheme and organising the pedestrian connectivity inside it.

Following pre-planning discussions, the proposed density is in line with what is sought by the new County Development Plan 2022-2028, as indicated by the Planners, with a interesting and varied mix of units on offer, so as to create an attractive and lively community.

The images below and the following points on this Statement show how the above mentioned Proposal's 4 elements could be read:

- *Houses facing R381:*



View of proposed Scheme from Claregalway-Oranmore Road, looking East

In keeping with the context in which they will be placed, i.e. amidst the existing residential estates along that road, these houses are consistently 2 storeys high, mainly three-bedroomed, with the two-bedroomed houses as mid-terrace units at the 2 gateway terraces, both of which include gable entrances.

- *Playground onto L7110:*

Responding to the requirement of providing a community playground, this side of the Proposals offers an ample playground as the centre of the façade the scheme offers to Lakeview Road, playground which is in turn flanked by 3 and 2½ high corner apartment buildings and 2 three-storey apartment and duplex buildings across the internal street, providing full passive supervision to the children’s area, while presenting an engaging and urban front to the Lakeview Road and to the school across it.



View of proposed Scheme from Lakeview Road, looking North

- *Central Green Core:*

This central Public Open Space area has 2 main objectives: absorb and bring urban meaning to a planning restriction due to flooding, whereby the area would be free of buildings (avoiding putting residents at risk) and providing relevant native landscaped, enjoyment and playing areas.



View of proposed Scheme’s Central Green Core from North-East corner.

- **Central Group of Buildings:**

This group of 6 three-storey apartment buildings, which even includes a 2 two-bedrooms 2 storey houses facing the Central Green Core, to add variety to that frontage, provides a circular passive supervision to the centre of the scheme, as it addresses every side with active façades, thus, with plenty of activity. It has the full variety of apartment sizes and configurations offered by the scheme, which aim to cater for a wide array of living and family set ups.



View of proposed Central Group of Buildings, looking South towards Lakeview Road

Each of the above residential unit types indicated above will be described further on at “Detailed Design”.

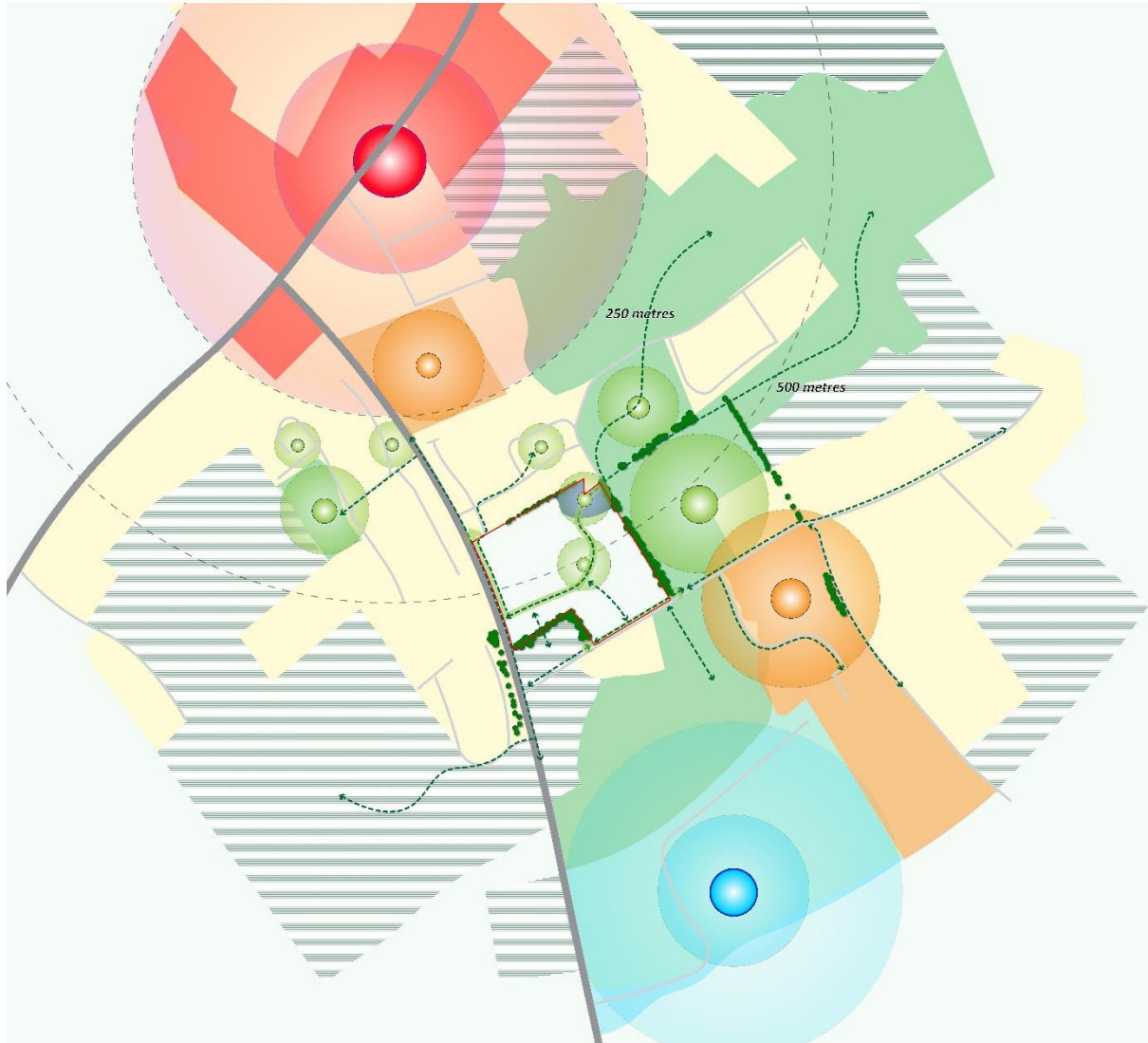
2. CONNECTIONS

How well connected is the new neighbourhood?



Site location in context, looking from South.

The Development is, as previously explained, within walking distance of the city centre, yet in the Southern outskirts of Baile Chláir, on the main road that connects it with Oranmore, the M6 and Galway City, with a distance to the latter that justify considering Baile Chláir as part of Galway City commuter towns, besides being intrinsically connected to it economically and socially. The site, then, has excellent and easily accessible vehicular connections with its own area, the city itself, Galway city, the rest of the county, most of Connaught and also to Dublin and the East.

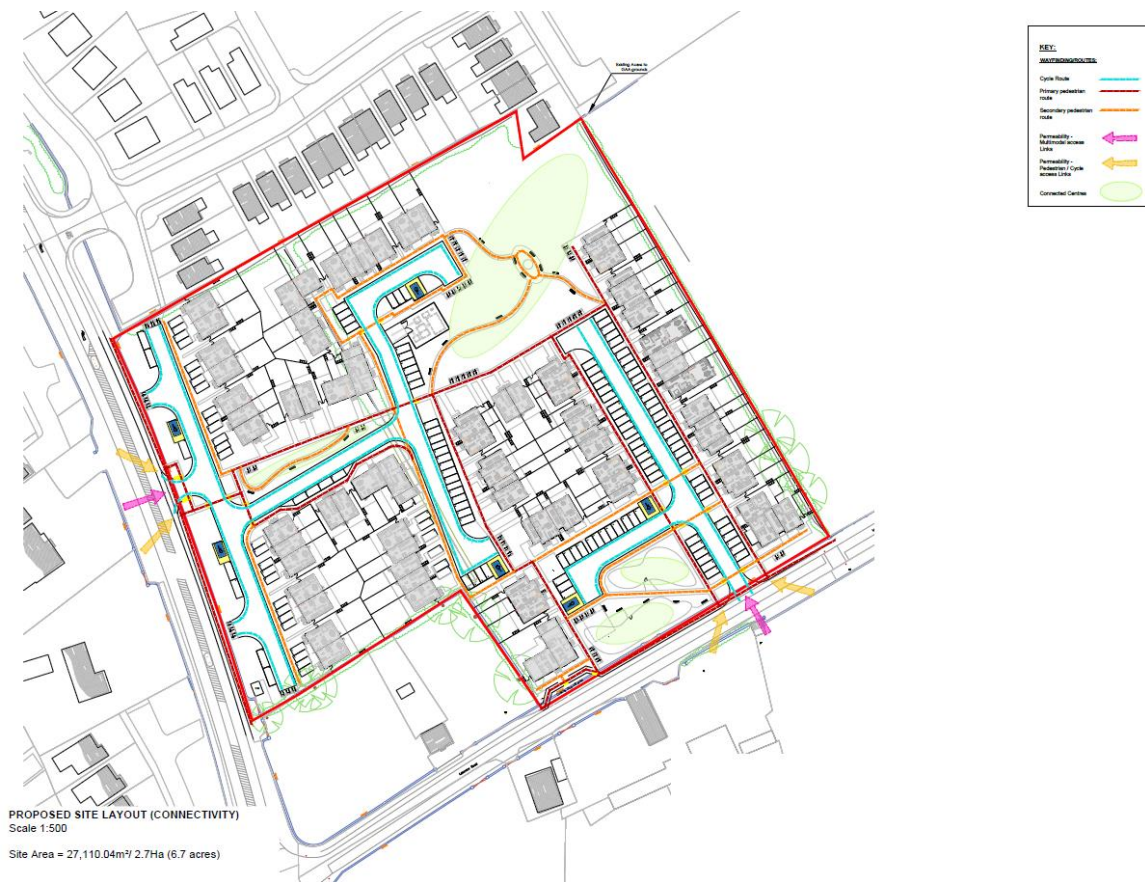


Distances from Baile Chláir town centre to the Site

Although the vehicular connectivity is deliberately curtailed to avoid providing an internal road that would allow passing from R381 to the L7110 (or vice versa), the scheme is fully permeable for pedestrians, with footpaths that connect every part of it and a meaningful West-East axis creating order and accessibility. That axis is in turn connected to an existing and active internal pedestrian connection from the neighbouring Estate at Cúirt na hAbhainn (to the North) to the GAA grounds which, if followed, can lead even to the city centre. Thus, the Proposal takes this existing pedestrian connection and makes it part of its main feature.

In terms of vehicular use, however, besides the vehicular disconnection from R381 to L7110 that was explained on the above paragraph, both vehicular accesses are greatly rationalised in order to avoid

creating over-congestion for the roads and for the existing connections to it that already exist (whether for single properties or for estates), as much as possible.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-014, Connectivity

The Proposal intends to make full use of the landscape to accentuate its connectivity offer and also use the normative design requirements to ensure that this connectivity is available for everyone who uses it, being its main objectives as follows:

- Create a new neighbourhood that integrates seamlessly with the existing settlement around Radharc na Locha townland and take full advantage of its already excellent linkages to the surrounding areas.
- Provide much needed new homes in a robust and meaningful landscape, amenities and public realm proposal that would be easily assimilated and become relevant to the existing settlement in Radharc na Locha and Baile Chláir.
- Provide a mix of new homes of varying types to cater for multi-generational and multi-requirement needs.

Connectivity with the landscape

Baile Chláir sits on flatlands along the Clare River, hence its name, so it has had a close relationship with the river since inception.



View of existing connection from neighbouring residential estates to the North and the GAA grounds

The area around the subject site can be characterised by semi-natural, with formal and informal landscape settings and no important natural features or destinations in the townland or the vicinity, except for the river Clare (*Abhainn an Chláir*). Notwithstanding that, the northern edge of the town has a number of Protected Structures of Regional value, as indicated in the Galway County Council Record of Protected Structures and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, together with the remains of the old Franciscan Friary.



The Landscape Proposal follows the Architectural intention indicated in previous points

Although relatively close to a bend of the Clare, the site itself, due to its specific location, has no view to the river, but its presence is nonetheless felt, as the restriction given by the Development Plan proves it.



View of proposed Scheme's Central Green Core, looking South, from the existing access to GAA grounds.

That restriction, although now overcome by engineering works as previously mentioned, is taken as the basis for the main public open space of the development, thus transforming a natural issue/hazard in the landscaped central feature of the scheme.

3. INCLUSIVITY

How easily can people use and access the development?

The scheme was designed with 2 parts, each responding to the different nature and requirements of those two accesses. From there, the development leads the user to easily understand its vehicular and its pedestrian possibilities, affording a full access to traverse the scheme to the latter and a more restricted, although efficient and effective, access to vehicles.

All proposed footpaths have been designed to be fully accessible to all, residents and visitors, in compliance with current Building Regulations, including internal layouts that allow universal use, as well as with public amenity areas with a city-wide reach, such as the playground, designed and located at the Lakeview entrance of the development, thought to be available for the entire town and provide a focus for amenities in the area.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-006, Playground Areas

Streets, footpaths and landscaped areas are aimed to provide freedom of movement and access to all areas (especially to pedestrians) and to all users, whether impaired and not impaired, visitors and residents, so as to allow inclusion and connectivity. Such aim materialises in the wide use of lower kerbs and level crossings at all streets, footpaths and corners, among other features.



Birdseye view of internal Shared Surface Area and the Playground.

In line with the above, there are 5 Shared Surface Areas (akin to Home-Zones), to create more distinctive areas, where while being part of the same internal street, the avoidance of hard kerbs and blurring of separation between uses, would help to create a sense of neighbourhood and facilitate mobility and inclusiveness.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-011, Public Realm

Designed with Universal Design in mind and with the aim to cater for people with a number of abilities and stages in life, houses and apartment accommodate a wide range of configurations, as explained below.

The concept of Inclusivity takes shape on the varied range of unit types included on the scheme, from 1-bedroom apartments up to 4-bedroom houses and single storey and duplex apartments, to include alternatives for different types of households, occupiers, ages and stages, considering single persons and families.

The proposed housing mix is as follows:

Houses		Apartments	
1 Bed	0	1 Bed - Single Storey	13
2 Beds	18	2 Beds - Single Storey	08
3 Beds	19	2 Beds - Duplex	13
4 Beds	02	3 Beds - Duplex	15
Total	39	Total	49

The internal design of the units complies with the Galway County Development Plan as well as with current DoHLGH housing guidelines, with the 2 four-bedrooms houses (Type A) with bathrooms sized for Universal Design compliance, wheelchair access at Ground Floor level, in line with Part M TGD.

The public lighting layout is designed to avoid dark corners or areas, to provide security and surveillance to the future resident and visitors, while highlighting the main design principles of the proposal.



Drawing N°5236-BLD-100 Proposed Public Lighting Layout

4. VARIETY

How does the development promote a good mix of activities?

One of the main features of this proposal is the considerable number of different unit types and buildings being offered, which despite its fragmentation and multiplicity of sizes, it remains united and consistent through a common Architectural language. That is proposed in response to the envisaged variety of end-users of the dwellings, as families and living arrangements have been suffering considerable changes in the last decades.



View of the Central Green Core, showing the variety of units, under a common Architectural language

In order to help the proposal to insert itself in the area and be respectful of its context, the line of houses facing the R381 road takes a similar, although improved, design configuration in keeping with the surrounding and confronting residential estates, considering 2 storeys only, brick and render finish and separation between units of similar nature as them. However, as getting into the scheme, variations in size and unit types, height and density start to vary, until arriving to the access to L7110, where layout, heights and even uses create a distinguishable “other frontage”.

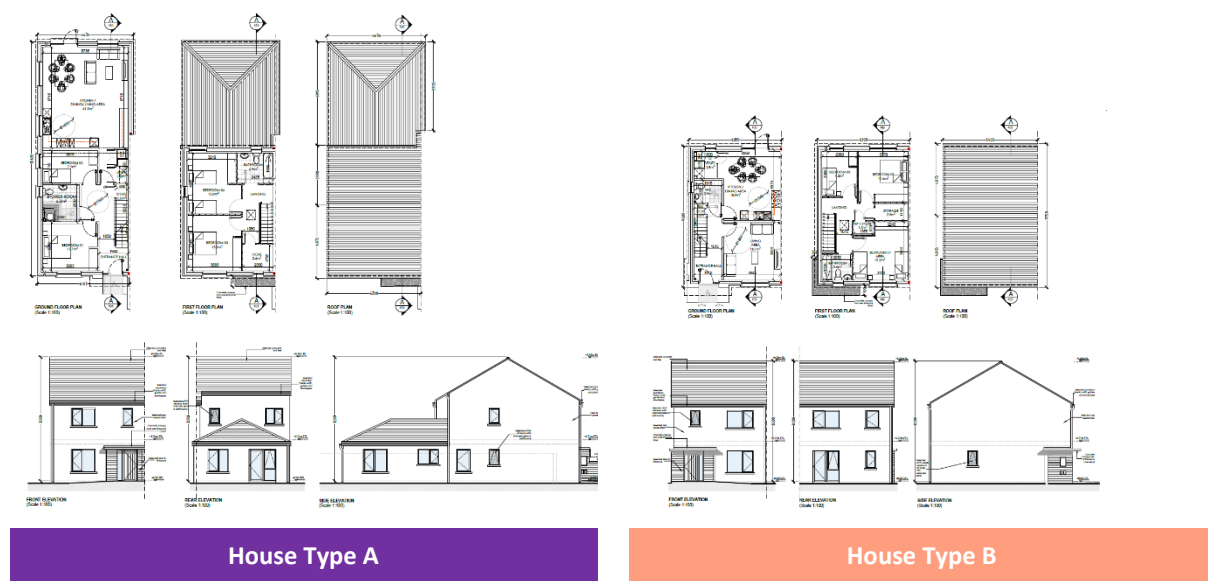


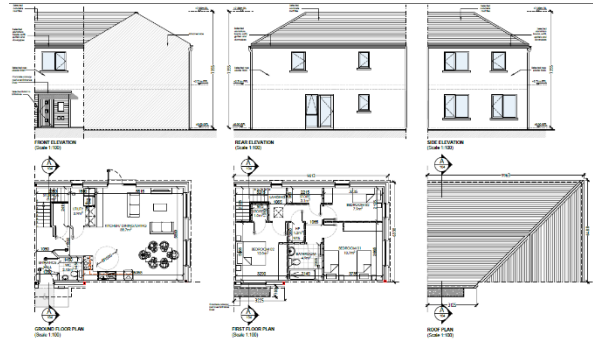
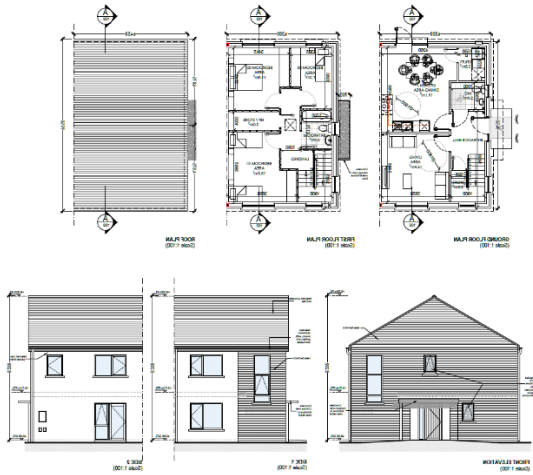
Proposed main entrance and 2 storey houses facing the Claregalway-Oranmore Road, respectful in height and materiality of existing neighbouring residential estates

With this variety, not only it is proposed to comply with the Brief and the planning and regulative requirements to which the Proposal is subject, but also create a distinctive and vibrant sense of place for each side of the scheme, which although united by Architectural language, landscaping, materiality and colours, each would have its own character.

Housing Units

House types are essentially of 3 types: 4-bedrooms (House Type A), 3-Bedrooms (all houses type B) and 2-Bedrooms (all houses type C), which are as shown on the following diagrams (not to scale):





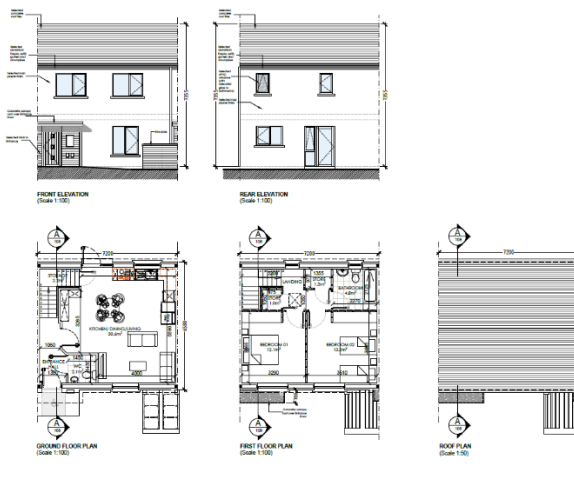
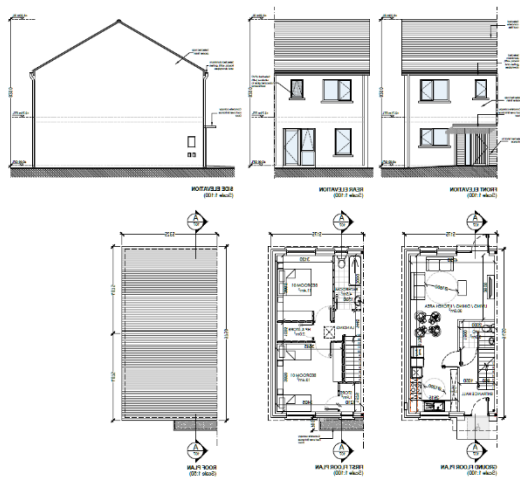
House Type B1

House Type B2



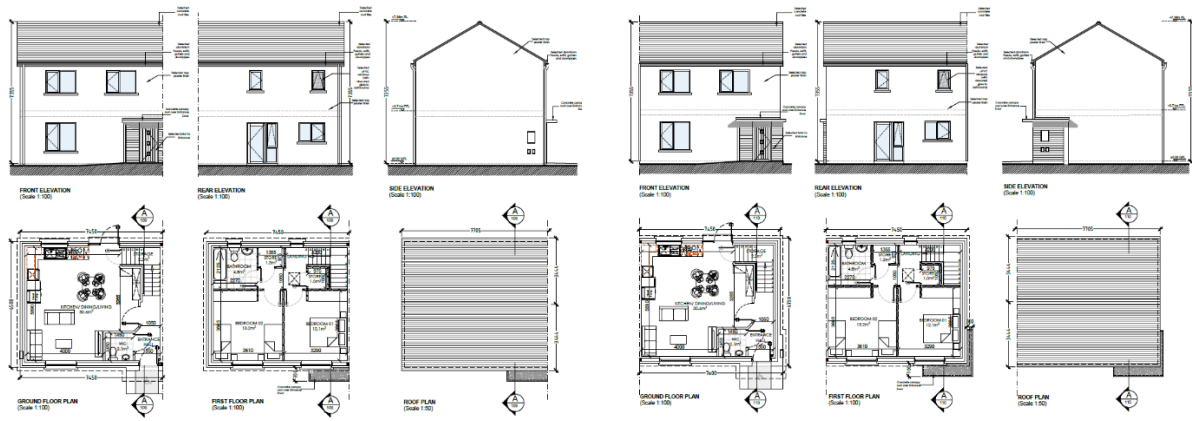
House Type C

House Type C1



House Type C2

House Type C3

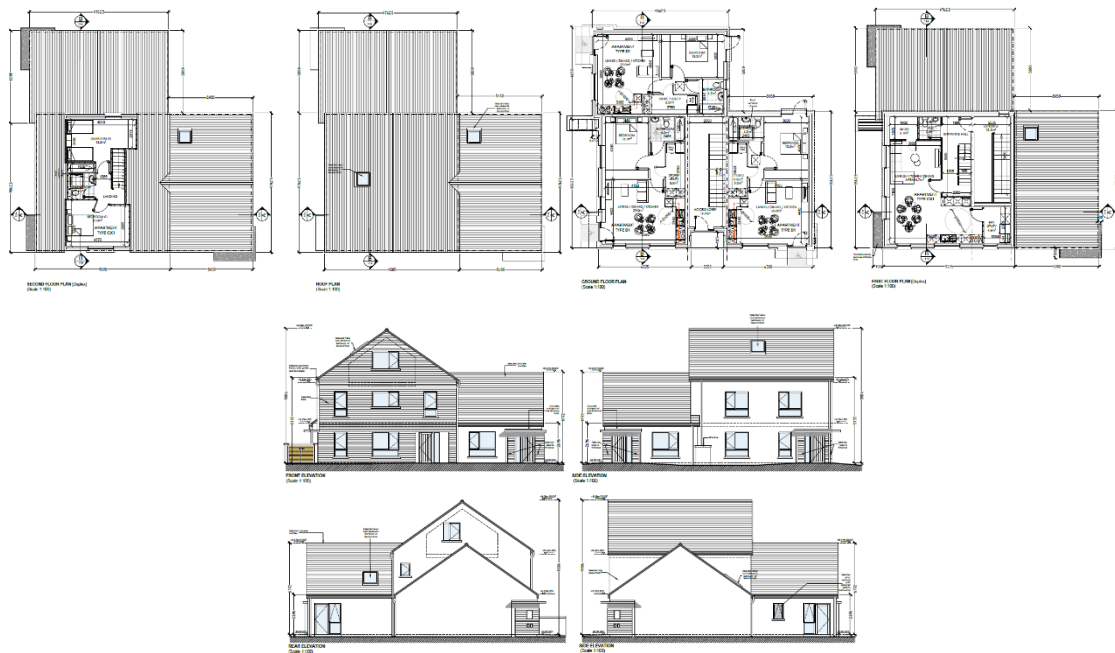


House Type C4

House Type C5

Apartment types

The Apartments are organised under the same structure as the houses, with “B” for 3-Bedrooms, “C” for 2-Bedrooms and “D” for 1-Bedroom, with all duplexes indicated with an extra “X”, such as BX1, BX2, etc. They are divided in Blocks from I to VII



Apartment Block I



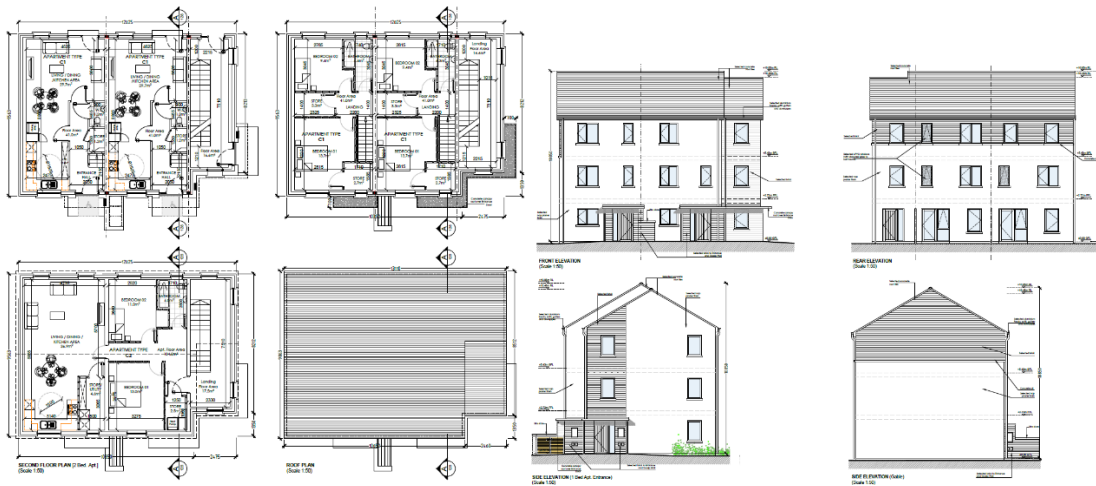
Apartment Block II



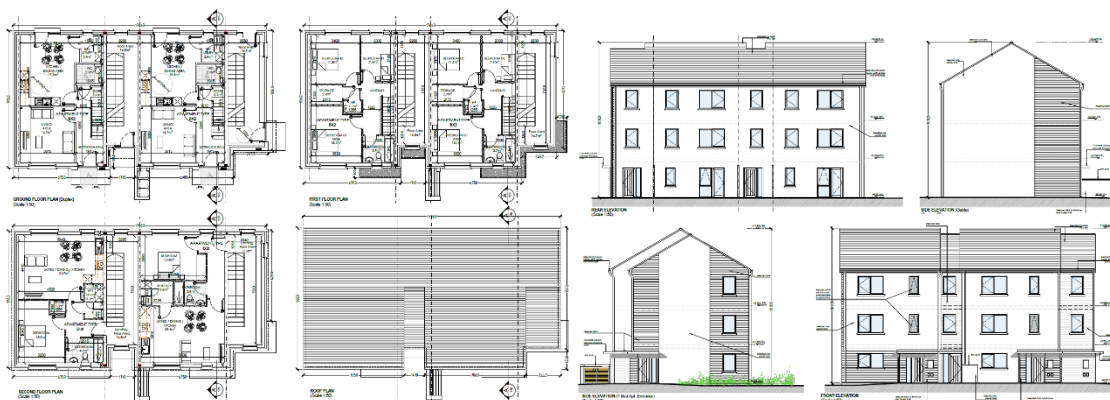
Apartment Block II A



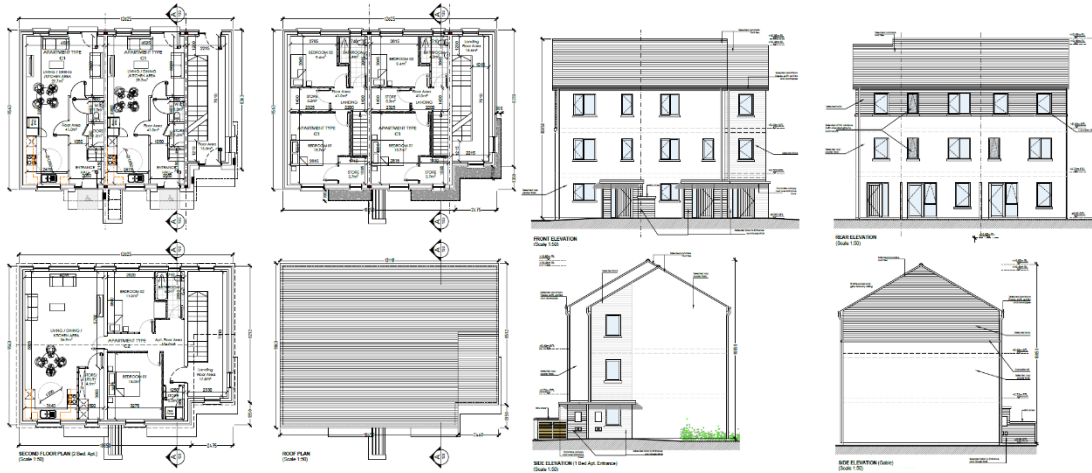
Apartment Block III



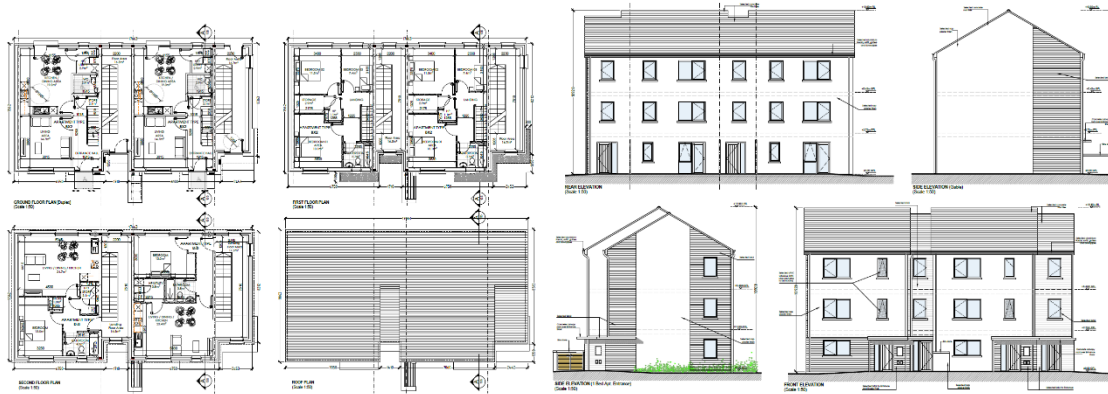
Apartment Block IV



Apartment Block V



Apartment Block VI



Apartment Block VII

5. EFFICIENCY

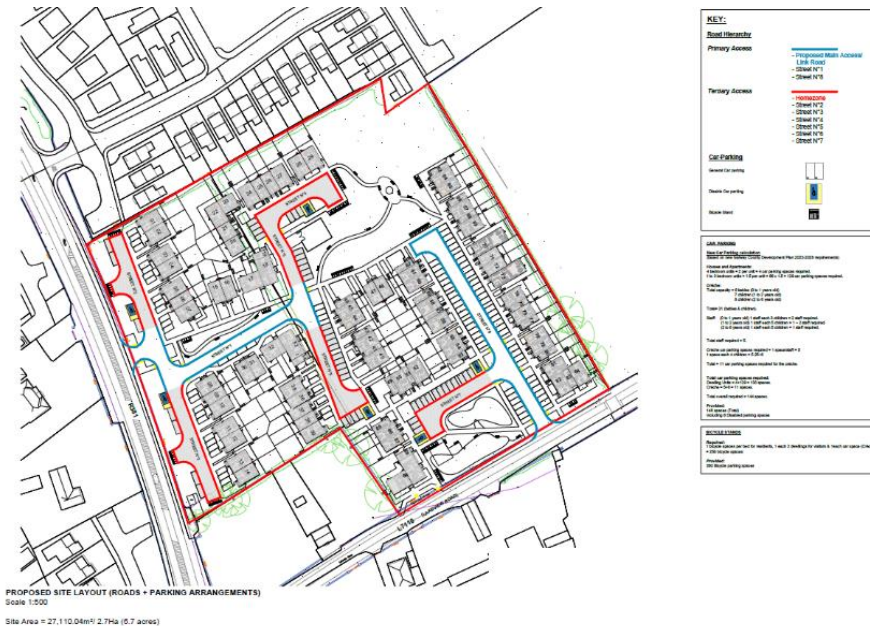
How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?

Given the Brief, the units are organised with a layout that promotes variety and tries to avoid unnecessary repetition and blind or unsupervised spots, placing the units in a way that there would be constant passive supervision onto streets, public open spaces and parking areas, so as to make its daily living practical and safe.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-011, Public Realm, showing efficient positioning of units to provide permanent passive supervision

The proposed density, meaning the number of units per hectare, is within what the new Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 is envisaging, thus making efficient use of the available land and, that way, avoid collaborating with the sprawling ever outwards of urban centres.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-012, Roads & Parking. Showing Layout of allocation of parking spaces for cars and bicycles, including roads hierarchy

Following the above, parking (car and bicycle) distribution is organised following efficient distribution of spaces and, especially, in compliance with the Architectural aim of the proposal. Roads as well are designed to function efficiently, affording clarity and creating a sense of neighbourhood.

In terms of energy efficiency, the units are designed to meet the new (and revised) current legislation standards. Concurrently as well, the layout and organisation of the Proposal on site aims to provide the best possible sunlight for the dwellings, so as to increase their energy efficiency.

In providing an efficient unit of habitation, the proposal includes for a very good array of different type and sizes of units (as shown on the previous point), which can accommodate different stages in the life for its occupiers and bringing choice when trading up or down in required dwelling types.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-005, Site Layout showing public open space areas.

Refuse and recycling facilities are provided within the Galway County Development Plan requirements, allowing each unit to deal with its own refuse bins, avoiding communal stores (thus avoiding maintenance for the Council).

The bins are located out of sight, but within easy reach. However, wherever the location of the 3-bins stores becomes unavoidable in the mid-terrace units, they are located as to avoid disturbance to the general façade and to neighbouring properties as much as possible, and in line with the Architectural proposal.



View of the houses facing the Claregalway-Oranmore Road, showing that the bins are exposed at the façade only when unavoidable.

There is, also, a distinctive aspect in which the proposed scheme is particularly efficient: access to educational facilities. Due to its location, the site is close to a recently built Primary School and just a short walk to a Secondary School, which added to the inclusion of a Crèche at unit 89, although to a limited number of children, it affords to families with children the comfortable possibility to have them very close to home, reducing the commuting-to-school time, thus reducing pollution and congestion, and the stress of too being far from them (if something happens), which together with the scheme's provision of a sizeable community playground, makes the development efficiently suitable for school-going-children families.



View of proposed Crèche at unit 89, with drop-off area

6. DISTINCTIVENESS

How does the proposal create a sense of place?

As mentioned at Point 1 above, the Architectural proposal is based on 4 elements:

- *Provide a frontage to the R381 (Claregalway to Oranmore Road) related to the existing surrounding housing estates, with similar heights.*
- *Provide a Playground that could be accessible to the entire community, not only the to the scheme (facing the L7110 Road).*



View of front Plaza facing Lakeview Road, where the playground is to be located.

- *Use the existing restriction as a Central Green Core for the scheme, a main public open space from which the proposed development can draw its rationale, around which it can gather and proposed a focus for its residents.*
- *A Central group of buildings, which can provide, because they would be taller, supervision to the whole centre of the scheme and frame to its central green core.*

Those 4 elements, due to the nature and location of the development, are designed to provide distinctiveness and character, while create a strong sense of place, not only for the scheme as a whole, but also within it. From the above, the proposed corner buildings are located to be landmarks highlighting the 2 main areas of the development.

Typology:

Houses:

Semidetached and terraced houses (to Home-zones 1 and 2):

All houses are 2 storey high, pitched roofs, walls mostly rendered, with entrances and corner locations highlighted in selected brick, with 2 gable entrance 3-bedrooms houses at the main access from the R381 (Lakeview) Road.



View of 2 storey houses facing Claregalway-Oranmore Road, including one of the houses fronting the main footpath

Terraced houses (to Home-zone 3 and 4):

The corner terrace of units 20 to 23, the terrace from unit 24 to 29 and the terrace from units 35 to 39 are also 2 storey high with pitched roof, with no gable entrances.

The façade treatment is mainly render, with brick finish at entrances. This is varied at units 25 and 26 which have a brick centre, to bring movement.



View of the internal terrace of units 20 to 29

Terraced houses at internal street (accessed via L7110):

This terrace of 4 (units 70 to 73) contains the only 2 four-bedrooms Universal Design units of the development and, although similar in materials and finishes to the rest and having the centre units with a brick façade (units 71 and 72), it has longer units at ground floor level at each end, which forces wider back gardens.



View of the internal terrace of units 70 & 73

Buildings:

There are 2 buildings typologies, the corner buildings and the stand-alone buildings, which share a similar finishes and features language as the houses.

Themselves can each be divided in 2 types, as follows:

Corner Buildings:

- 2½ storey high (3 entrances): Block I
- Full 3 storey high (3 entrances): Blocks II, IIA & III



View of Block I, corner unit of 2½ storey high, facing Lakeview Road



View of Block II & III, corner units of 3storey high, facing Public Open Space.

Stand-Alone Buildings (all full 3-storey high):

- 3 entrances building: Blocks IV & VI
- 4 entrances building. Blocks V & VII



View of Blocks IV and V, facing the Playground Area

7. LAYOUT

How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?



Drawing N°210503-03-003, Site Layout Plan

As it has been stated on the points above, the proposal is based 2 principles, which are: Meaning and focal point being provided by the landscape and Structure by the pedestrian permeability.

The materialisation of those principles through the general layout aims create a friendly environment for residents and visitors and spaces that are useful, meaningful and easy to read.

Architecturally, the scheme offers 2 main entrances, each to the main road the site faces and from there it proposes 2 main axes to reach the main large public open space at the back of it, as a green community heart, which coincides with the restricted area established on the current Development Plan, which in turn offers a pedestrian connection through it, to existing connections to the surrounding estates.

Each section of the scheme is accessed by an ample green area, whether in parallel to the road it accesses from, as in the case of the frontage to the R381 Road, or through a sizeable usable space, in the case of the frontage to L7110 Lakeview Road.

The focal point of the main entrance through the Claregalway-Oranmore is the central footpath traversing the entire scheme West to East, from which the whole proposal derives its layout structure.



View of Central tree-lined footpath at main Entrance from the Claregalway-Oranmore Road

This landscaped footpath, tree-lined as indicated on the Landscape proposal, is the element that the gable-entrance houses (units 07 and 08), 2 bedroom units 15, 16, 30 and 31 face, while the 2 corner buildings, Blocks II & III, look onto this same landscaped footpath as well as onto the main central green area at the same time.



View of Block II (to the right-hand side), facing the Main Green Core, looking North to South

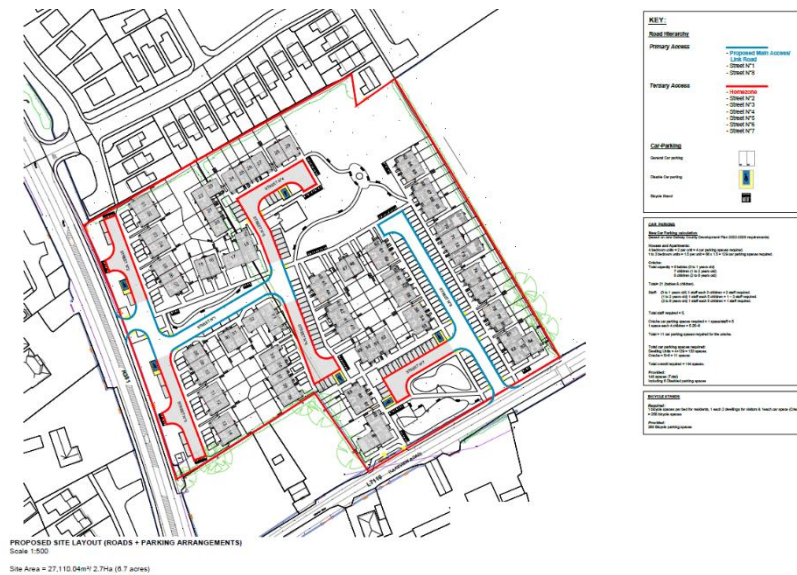


View of Block III (to the left-hand side), facing the Main Green Core, looking West to East.

The layout for internal roads follows 3 principles:

- Practicality.
- Hierarchy from landscape and pedestrian connectivity.
- Provide context for a distinctive sense of place.
- An access from each front to each road the site faces.

The above subject to the basic requirement of curtailing the communication between the 2 main roads.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-012, Roads & Parking. Showing overall Road's structure

Same criteria is applied to turning-heads and cul-de-sacs, which have been optimised to facilitate the required usage and, at the same time, use them to create a neighbourhood sense, provide a frame for the proposed pedestrian, landscape and visual continuity and permeability envisaged Architecturally.



Extract of drawing N°210503-03-014, Connectivity. It shows road's layout and connectivity alternatives.

As a general consideration for the entire proposal, each unit is provided with its own entrance and its own ground floor level private amenity space (although it varies in size).



View of Block I, facing the Lakeview Road and the Playground.

Complementary to the above idea, similar concept is carried through to the apartment buildings, where they are distributed in a way that the largest units have the largest ground level back gardens. Parkingwise, units to the Claregalway-Oranmore road have their own en-curtilage parking, in keeping with its surroundings. In terms of Refuse Bins, they are resolved within each unit, whether internal or externally, avoiding common and difficult-to-manage communal options. Anyway, all those elements keep a strict correlation with their main residential units in materiality and design, as can be seen on the images.

8. PUBLIC REALM

How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?

The Public Realm on this Proposal consists of the Public Open Spaces, Roads, Shared Surfaces Areas, Parking Areas and Footpaths and it has been its relevance that has led the layout design that is now put forward.

Thus, the residential units, beside complying with its housing role and legal requirements, have been located so as to provide the best possible passive supervision and framing to the public realm, in order to make it safe for everyone and noticeable to all.

The public lighting also has been designed following the Public Realm, enhancing passive supervision, while helping to provide a more active supervision and highlighting the main features of the proposal.



View of Block III and units 20 to 29 facing the Main Green Core

Although each unit has been provided with a distinguishable and more private landscaping, it is intentionally not fully separated from the public landscaping, so as to create a green continuum that would afford meaning, depth and highlight connectivity within the scheme.



View of Blocks IV and units 47 & 48, facing the Main Green Core of the development

The roads design has been approached following the landscape design, in a way to make it practical, minimal, efficient and meaningful, with all footpaths to be well passively supervised and well illuminated.

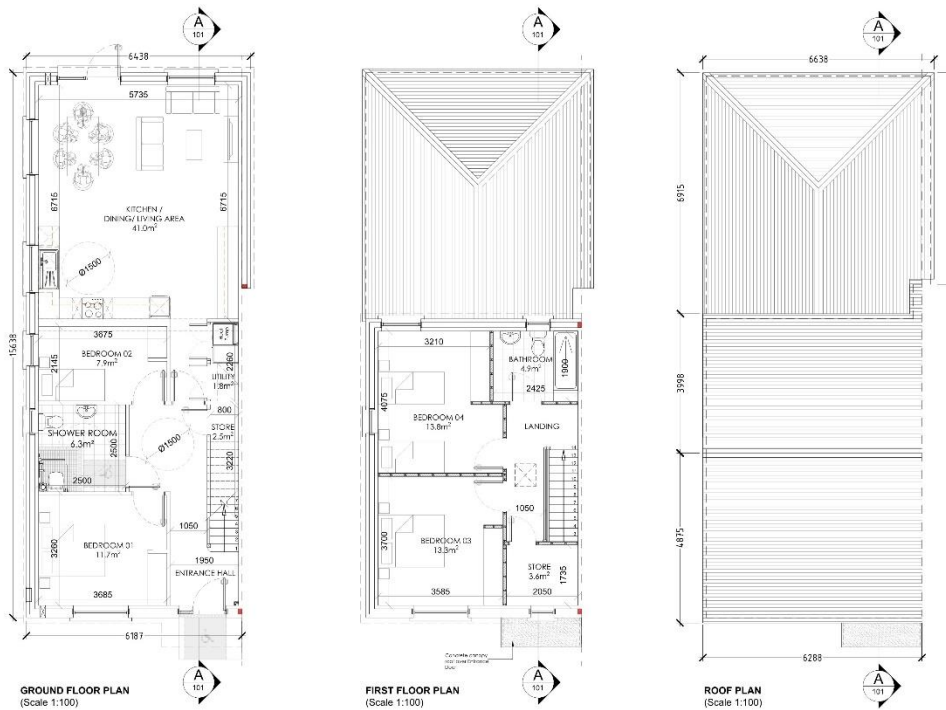
9. ADAPTABILITY

How will the buildings cope with change?

Behind the decision to provide such a variety of unit types, sizes and heights, there is an aim of building suitable dwellings that can adapt themselves to different stages in life and to an array of requirements of contemporary ways of living, needs and situations. That aim includes not only the larger units, but also 1-bedroom apartments, most of which could even be adapted to have space for a care-giver, if the need arises and including special need users. There are two 4-bedroom units (N°70 and N°73) designed to meet universal design standards (see point 3 above).



View of Universal Design units 70 to 73 (Houses Type A), at each end of the shown terrace.



House Type A Plans

Energy efficiency would be built-in on all units, in compliance with current legislation, and they would also be climate-change equipped as far as possible.

Although not included and not part of this application, most houses could allow the possibility to have future rear extensions, subject to the required Planning Permission, in line with the character of the proposed development, so as to cater for household enlargement, mobility issues or special care needs.

Evidently, Extensions are not considered on the apartments, however. In any case, they have been designed to meet the Department’s guidelines and so, adaptable to a number of occupiers with different needs or requirements.

10. PRIVACY & AMENITY

How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?

Although the layout design is landscape and public scape led, the Proposal provides an increased sense of privacy and amenity for each residential unit.

The provision of a usable and meaningful private open space has been approached with equality, so as to provide each house and apartment with their own entrance and their own ground floor level private amenity space, which has been achieved in all units, except for only one.

Each house has its backyard and apartments design have had the view of allocating amenity spaces according to the size of the unit (and thus the number of future users), therefore apartments were designed for larger units having access to good size ground floor level private amenity area directly,

while the smaller upper units have also access to ground floor level private amenity areas, but proportional to their size and occupancy.



View of the Central Group of Buildings, showing that larger units have access to larger own ground level private back gardens

All houses are provided with good size back gardens, and when that has not been entirely possible, quality compensation has been provided in the form of location, access or width.

In compliance with Development Plan requirements, there are at least 22m between confronting windows at First Floor level of each unit, with permanent consideration that location and distribution of the units should construct privacy by design, even when the above figure could not be achieved.

End-of-terrace and semidetached units have side access to their back gardens and so, have individual Refuse Bins Stores allocated to them. Lockable gates will be provided for security and to prevent casual access to these areas. In the case of mid-terrace, Refuse Bins Stores have been especially designed for practicality and to blend with the overall appearance of the scheme, in terms of shape and materials.



View of semi-detached units 01 to 04, with side access for back garden and refuse bins.

In terms of Boundary Treatment for privacy, all boundary walls between units are in blockwork and 2m high, to reasonably prevent overlooking. Regarding the boundary wall to the East (to the GAA site), it will be 2m pre-cast block and plank fencing.

Most of the existing natural stone boundary walls facing the main roads are to be retained (as indicated on the relevant 210503-03-010 Boundary Treatment Plan) and the new external walls to be constructed are also to match the existing or to follow its idea.

As part of the amenities considered on the development, a Crèche for children from 0 to 6 years old has been included, which will form part of Block IIA. It is estimated that it will cater for a maximum of 21 children. The provision of this childcare facility, together with the Crèche that is to be provided as part of the Lakeview SHD (ABP Case Reference TC07.310796) will cover with some ease the childcare needs of this area of Baile Chláir.

Additionally, the subject Proposal includes, as required by the new County Development Plan, a Playground to be used as an amenity not only for the development itself, but for the entire Baile Chláir community.



Birdseye view of frontage to Lakeview Road, showing location of the proposed Playground in relation to the proposed Crèche (part of this development) and the existing Primary School across the road

Given the proximity of schools, this Playground has been designed facing Lakeview Road, away from the main Oranmore Road and easily available to the younger sections of the community (both of the development and of the town).

11. PARKING

How will the parking be secure and attractive?

There are 148 parking spaces provided on the Scheme, which complies with the requirements from the new Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, with 2 spaces per 4-bedroom units and 1.5

spaces per 1 to 3-bedroom units have been provided. Also, the requirements for the Crèche are also met, considering a required provision of 11 car parking spaces.

The total car parking provision requirement stands then at 144 spaces, but we'll provide 148 spaces, including 6 accessible parking spaces, all in compliance with the new Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028. The accessible parking is distributed to cater as fairly as possible for every main area of the development.

Most of the parking facing Claregalway-Oranmore Road was designed to be en-curtilage, together with terraced houses at N°35 to N°39, with communal parking arrangements elsewhere.



Proposed en-curtilage parking at houses facing R381 road

The overall design of the development was done to leave no part of the parking areas without passive supervision from the dwelling units, with the any linear communal parking broken up by landscaping in order to soften it and prevent an overwhelming presence.

Kerbs are reduced at shared surface areas, to create a neighbourhood appeal and an enhanced sense of place.

Bicycle parking is distributed along the development to offer an easy access to users. Numbers are compliant with the requirements of the new Galway County Development Plan, with a provision of 260 bicycle parking spaces.



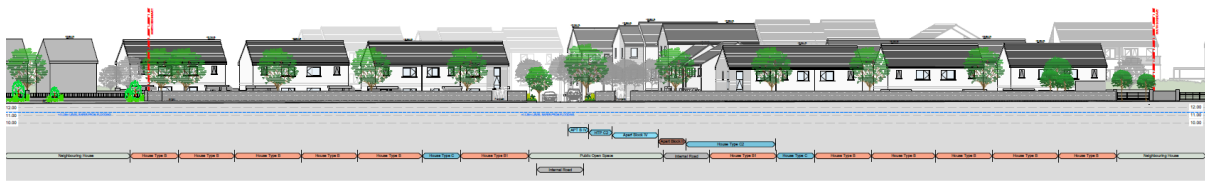
Bicycle parking has been distributed along the development in places where they can be easily used and supervised.

12. DETAILED DESIGN

How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

The detailed design of the elements, selection of materials and methods of the Proposal follow the principles set out above and those of practicality and economy, all of which with the idea of affording identity, durability and permanency which, in turn, can provide the inhabitants a distinctive sense of place while allowing economy of living and reduced impact on the environment.

The internal layout of the units closely relates internally to the Design Manual for Quality Housing (2022), with houses and apartments internal layout in full compliance with the required Guidelines, as it is demonstrated on the attached Residential Areas Quality Audit Schedule.



CONTEXT ELEVATION 1-1 (R381 Entrance)
(Scale 1:200)



CONTEXT ELEVATION 2-2 (Lakeview Entrance)
(Scale 1:200)

Proposal's Context Elevations

General Information

Overall Site Area: 27,110.04m² (2.7Ha or 6.7 acres, approximately).

88 Social & Affordable housing units and 1 Crèche, with a Density of 35.6 units per hectare, in line with what is allowed by the recently approved Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Total units can be divided as follows:

- | | | |
|--|-----------|----|
| • Type A – 4 beds house. | | 2 |
| • Type B – 3 beds (houses and duplex apartments) | 19 + 15 = | 34 |
| • Type C – 2 beds (apartments and 2 beds duplexes) | 18 + 21 = | 38 |
| • Type D – 1 bed (houses and apartments) | | 13 |

Unit 89 will act as a Crèche for infants under 6 years old, with a capacity to cater for up to 21 children.

Total provision of Public Open Space stands at 7,267.45m² equivalent to 26.8% of the total Site area.

Detailed Design

The typology and materials' palette stems from the principles of economy, durability and availability, with their organisation informed by the fundamentals stated previously and to create a distinctive place to live and understand.



View of terrace of houses 08 (corner house, with gable entrance in selected brick) to 14, looking from North to South.

Units are organised as indicated in previous points, following their location and the significance and meaning intended for the area. All units have their own ground floor level private open space to the rear and a small front garden to accommodate bin stores (in the case of mid-terrace units).

As stated, this Proposal is Landscape led, so the palette of materials was chosen to be consistent with the general design intentions, the intended meaning will take shape at every stage of the development, accentuating the sense of place and the making of a new neighbourhood.

The quality of the created spaces is paramount for the design intentions being proposed, which aim to provide an enjoyable, durable and appealing environment for residents, visitors and neighbours.

Materials were selected for being sustainable, stable and low maintenance. Concrete laid with ample positive drainage (dished channel & gully) will be used for footpaths. Closed-texture bituminous materials (asphalt, wearing course macadam / thermoplastic coatings) are to be used at parking areas having regard to longevity, maintenance needs and degree of susceptibility to ice formation as a primary consideration.

Entrances of all units are marked / highlighted / announced by incorporating selected brick around (including entire entrance areas sometimes, depending on the case) so as to make to access to each unit distinctive and a focal point. This will help to afford distinctiveness, while avoiding tedious repetition, and at the same time provide corner buildings or units with fitting prominence, as shown on the images below.

Housing Units



Corner houses at main Entrance from Claregalway-Oranmore Road.

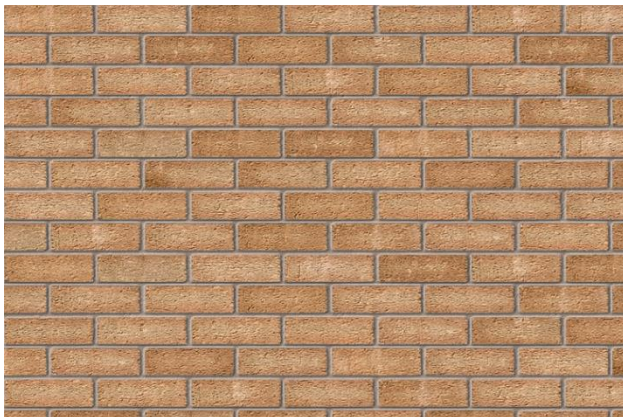
Apartment Units



Corner apartment buildings and Playground facing Lakeview Road.

Materials

- *External Walls*
Selected brickwork to main part of façades, highlighting Entrances, used to provide distinctiveness and a focal point to the unit. Selected render elsewhere, to provide a highlighting contrast.
- *Roofs*
Selected concrete roof tiles.
- *Windows*
Double glazed, uPVC framed.
- *Rainwater goods*
Selected aluminium.
- *Fascia & Soffits*
Selected aluminium.



Sample of selected brick



Sample of selected concrete tile

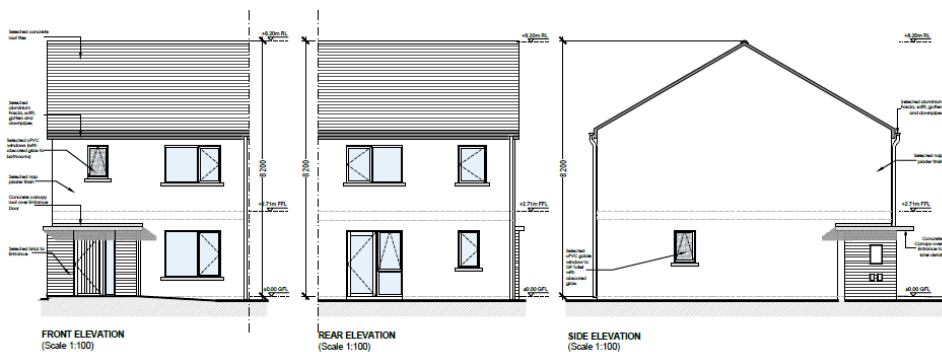
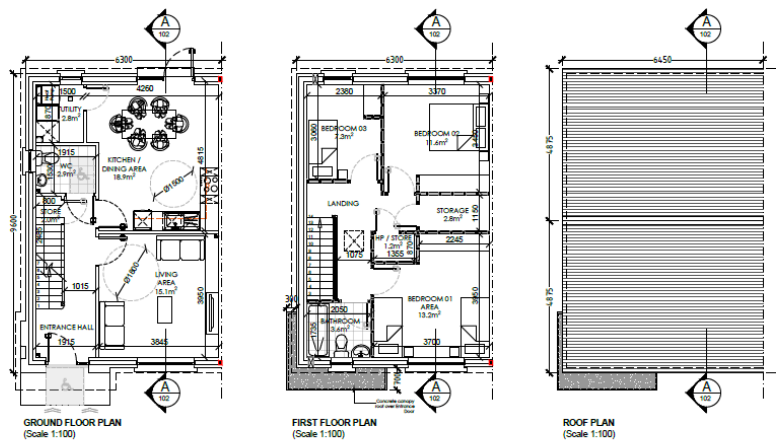


Indicative/reference individual Bin Stores at front of mid-terrace units

Party walls are to be constructed meeting the requirements of TGD Part E and minimize the transmission of sound from unit to unit, as well as in compliance with the new Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Most units, whether houses or apartment building units, would have a significant southerly facing orientation (either S, SE or SW), availing to optimum sunlight.

In terms of internal design, the units are fully compliant with the Department's Guidelines. At Ground Floor level, 3-bedroom houses have separate Living and Dining rooms, while 2-bedroom, 4-bedroom houses and all the apartments have a combined room for Living, Dining and Kitchen, allowing flexibility and facilitating good sunlight at various times of the day.



House Type B, with 3 bedrooms and 2 storey, used as end-of-terrace

Proposed units are designed to be BER A2 energy performance rated, which is to be achieved by the use of Air-to-Water heat pumps for space heating & hot water needs, with Demand-control ventilation providing only the required amount of ventilation.

Having more than half the energy consumption worldwide being attributable to that used in buildings, the resulting CO₂ release add significantly to the climate change phenomenon. The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive aims to address this issue requiring that post-2020, all buildings should be near zero energy buildings (nZEB).

The 88 units + Crèche proposed in this scheme will be A2 energy rated and nZEB compliant. Further climate friendly features to be considered will include:

- Orientation and aspect of each unit optimised to maximise solar gain.
- Reduced heat loss through openings with efficient window specification.
- Air-tight construction, reduced thermal-bridging, high levels of insulation.
- Ventilation requirements met via “demand control ventilation”.
- Absence of fossil-fuel dependent heating system.
- Specification of a high efficiency air source heat pump providing space heating and hot water needs.
- Measures for reduction in water consumption, e.g. low-flow cisterns.
- Significantly reduced operating costs of the dwellings.
- Substantial materials and energy savings from not having to construct chimneys.
- Construction phase will require a ‘Construction & Demolition Waste Management Plan’, stipulating maximum reduction, reuse and recycling of all materials.
- The site location will facilitate more sustainable modes of transport.
- Landscaped to promote biodiversity and native species.
- Street lighting will be energy efficient LED lighting.
- Galway County Council habitually utilise an energy supplier that is committed to the development of renewable and sustainable energy sources

With the above, it is envisaged that a reduction in energy consumption can be achieved, with subsequent carbon footprint reduction and a corresponding reduction in climate change contributing factors.

13. CONCLUSION

As everywhere in Ireland at present, it is public knowledge that housing has reached a crisis status, as demand outpaces supply many times over.

The proposed scheme comes within the response envisaged by the “Rebuilding Ireland” program, in this case, to the particular social and affordable housing demand in Baile Chláir.

As demonstrated on previous pages, the development here proposed complies with proper and sustainable development for this area and is in accordance with local, regional and national planning policies and objectives.

The scheme will provide its residents not only with the much required housing, but also with a frame of landscaping, connectivity, amenities and an organising hierarchy that would enhance the experience of its residents and create a endearing and enduring place to live, full of identity and sense of place.

If successful, the development will allow Galway County Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, to provide this 88 dwellings + Crèche to who needed them the most.