

**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATEMENT**  
**FOR**  
**A STRATEGIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**  
**AT**  
**DUNLO & POLLBOY, BALLINASLOE, CO GALWAY**

Client: LIMEHILL ESKER LTD  
Our Ref: 2521/WMG/RG



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## 1. INTRODUCTION TO ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATEMENT

This architectural design statement has been prepared in support of a Strategic Housing Development Application which shall be submitted by Limehill Esker Ltd for a development consisting of 165 residential units and associated services on their lands at Dunlo & Pollboy, Ballinasloe, Co Galway.



The total area of the site is 6.6702 hectares, and this comprises 5.2331 hectares of residentially zoned land and it incorporates 1.3481 hectares of land which is zoned open space.

The general description of the proposed development is as follows:

- Block A1 and A2, each consisting of 6 No Two-Bed Ground Floor apartments, 1 No One-Bed ground Floor apartment, 6 No Three-Bed First Floor Duplex Units, and 1 No Three-Bed Second Floor apartment.
- Blocks B1 to B3 and B6 to B13 inclusive, each consisting of 2 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor apartment, and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment,
- Blocks B4 and B5 inclusive, each consisting of 1 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Unit, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor Apartment and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment.
- House Type C : 32 No Two-Bed units in semi-detached pairs
- House Type E : 27 No Three-Bed units in triplet arrangements
- provision of 281 No. on-site car parking spaces incorporating 163 No. spaces for residents of the apartment/duplexes, and 118 No in-curtilage car parking spaces for the housing units

- Provision of all water, surface water, foul drainage, utility ducting and public lighting and all associated siteworks and ancillary services.
- All ancillary site development works including access roadways, footpaths, cycle ways, pedestrian links, Bicycle Sheds, waste storage areas, communal and open space, site landscaping, and boundary treatments.

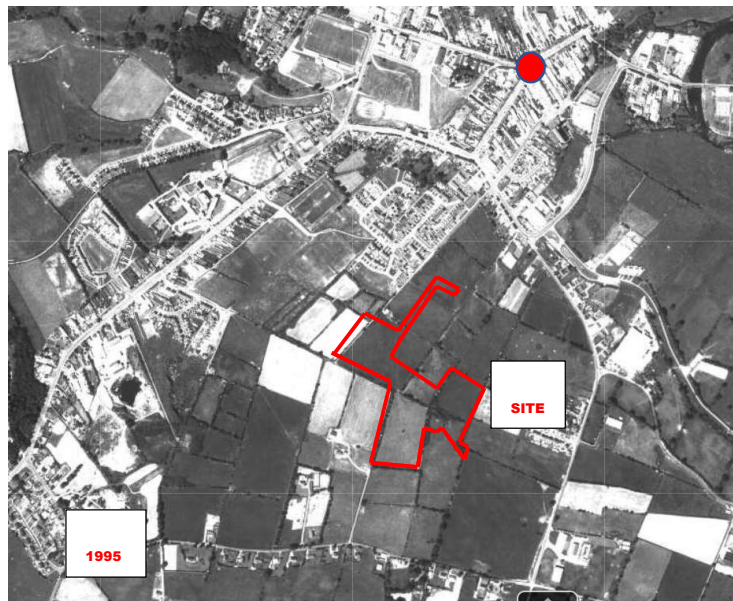
The entire area of the development site is located within the boundary of the Ballinasloe LAP in the townlands of Dunlo and Pollboy.

## 2. SITE CONTEXT & ANALYSIS

The lands in the southern environs of the town of Ballinasloe became developed, primarily for residential development, during the past 30 year period.

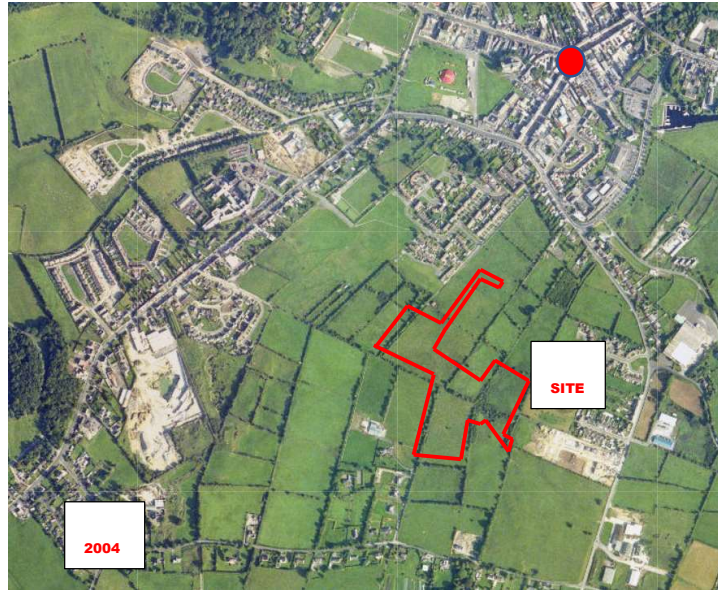
### 2.1 DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

In 1995 all of the lands in the southern environs of the town were set out in a typical rural field pattern and were in agricultural use. The aerial view, taken in 1995, shows the context of the site in relation to the Town Centre.

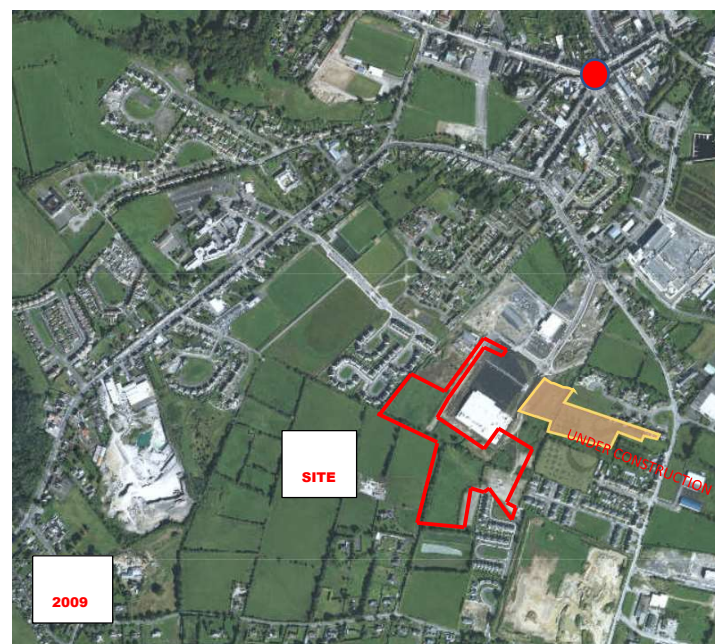


The infill of residential development in the southern environs of the town generally commenced in or about 2004. Residential developments were completed in a sequential pattern in a southerly direction along the Harbour/Pollboy Road, as shown in the contemporary aerial view below.





Significant infill residential development was completed in the intervening period up to 2007-2009 as shown in the aerial view below.



The site now became enclosed within existing residential development to the east and west and partly to the south. Significant development works were also carried out to the north of the site, consisting of the construction of a roundabout at the entrance to the lands and internal roadways leading to the commercial park as it now exists, and occupied by a Tesco and Aldi supermarket and other associated facilities.

The lands in the southern environs of the town remained in this state of development right up to 2022 when a further development commenced on the applicant lands for the provision of 78 residential units. This development is under construction and is due to be completed in mid 2023.



The above aerial view shows the development under construction ,and the new development site in this case, in the context of the existing development as described above.

It is apparent, from the foregoing, that the proposal for the provision of a residential development on the site is a natural extension and infill of the development which has been underway in the southern environs of the town for the past 30 year period.

## 2.2 RELEVANT PLANNING CONTEXT

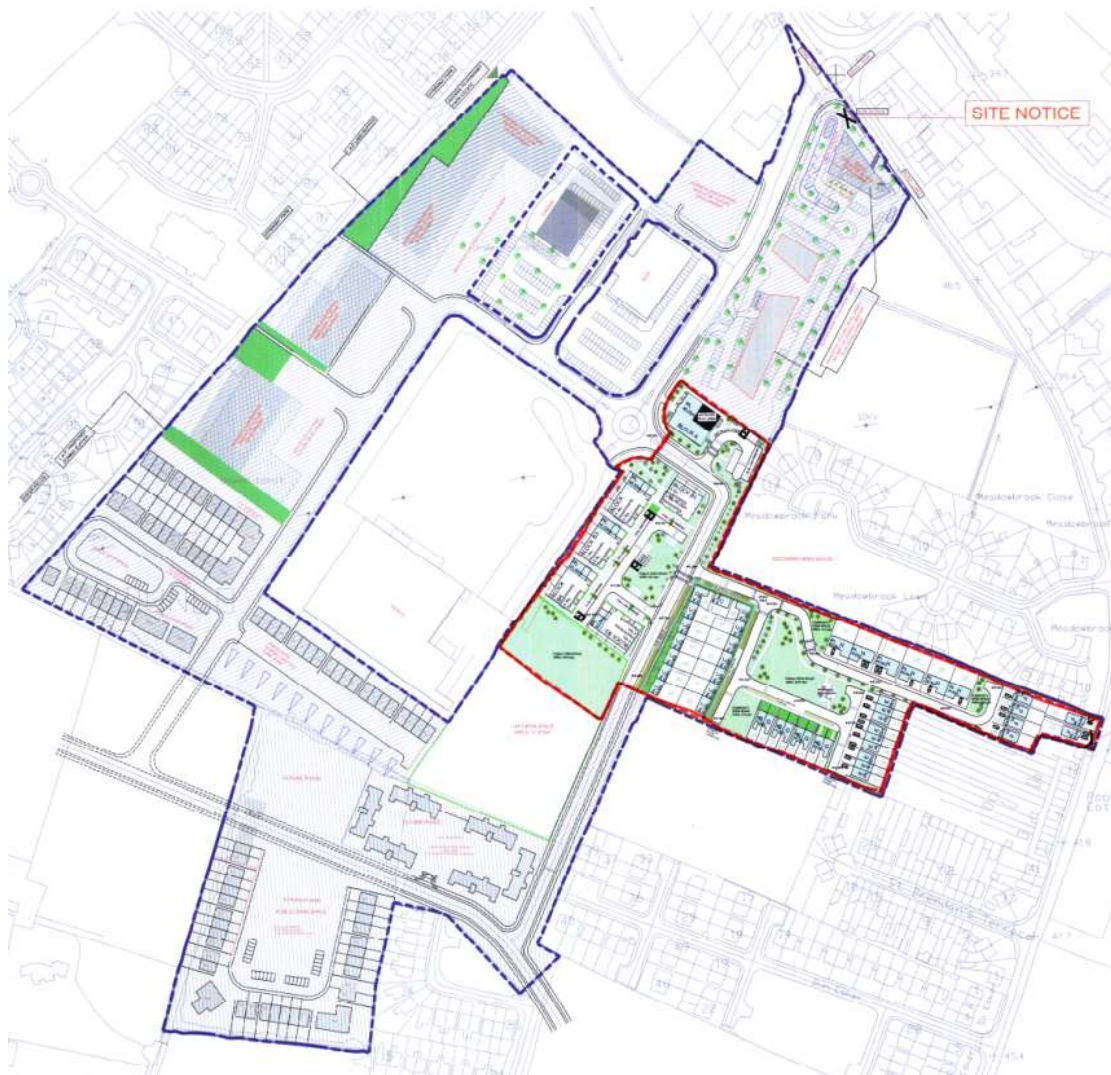
The lands are zoned R- Residential(Phase 1) and (Phase 2) in the current Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028. A strong evidenced based case has been made for the justification of the provision of a development on these lands, and this is presented in the Planning Report & Statement Of Consistency which has been prepared in support of this application.

The realization of the various transportation policy objectives of successive LAP's, in relation to the reservation of access to the backlands at Dunlo, has been expressed through the granting of various planning permissions over the past 15 year period for the provision of the various roadways which now facilitate access and circulation through the proposed scheme on the subject site.

Some of these roadways were constructed in the 2007-2010 period and some are currently under construction.

Relevant planning context for the development of the site was established during the planning process for a residential project on the applicants lands (Planning Ref No 18/1359- withdrawn) and was reaffirmed over the course of a subsequent application which is now under construction on the applicants lands directly to the north( Planning Ref 19/1978). The Masterplan which was presented in each case, on which the applicants entire landholding is lined in blue, is shown below:





The above plan shows a provisional residential layout on the southern area of the applicants lands ( the area of the proposed development on the subject site in this case).

It is important to note that this provisional scheme layout incorporated an access road network which was deemed to be consistent with the transportation objectives of the LAP for the connection of residentially zoned lands in the southern environs of Dunlo/Pollboy with the town centre.

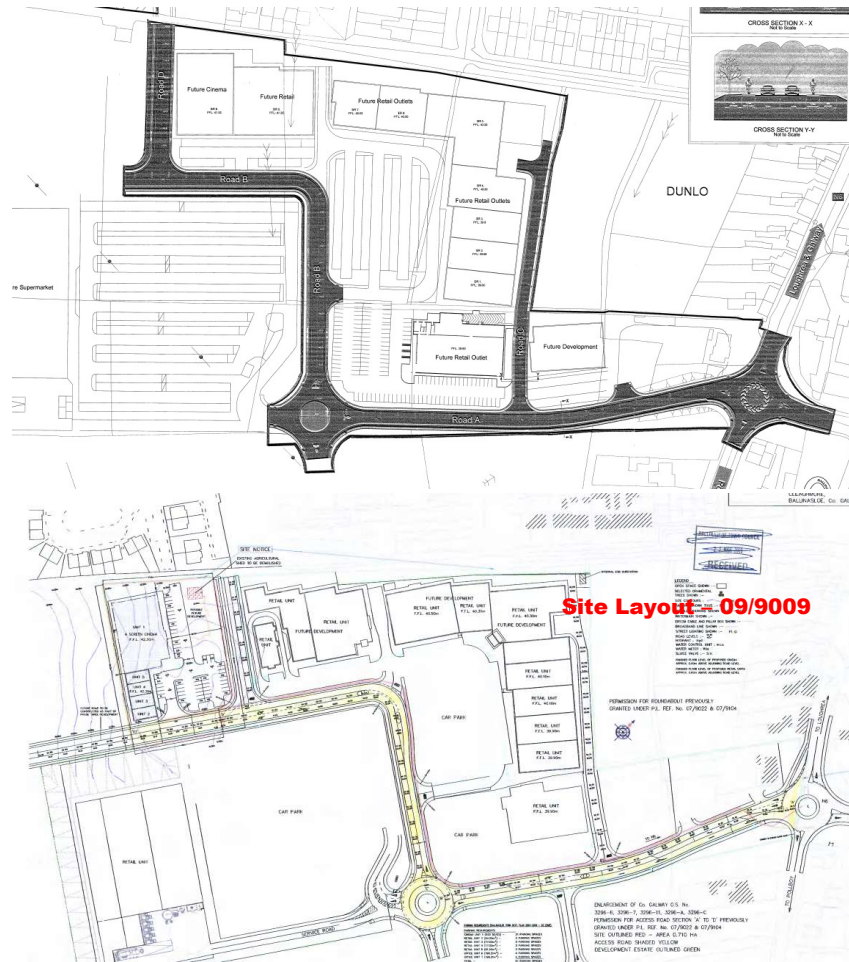
This masterplan is an approved document and planning permission was granted under Planning Ref No 19/1978 for a layout (as outlined in red on the above masterplan) which incorporated the initial phase of the roadway which forms the eastern access to the proposed development in this case .

This section of roadway is presently under construction up to and partly into the lands currently zoned OS-Open Space/Recreation & Amenity in the current Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028.

The masterplan also incorporates the initial phase of the roadway which forms the western access to the proposed development in this case . This roadway was deemed to be



consistent with the transportation objectives of the LAP for the connection of residentially zoned lands in the southern environs of Dunlo/Pollboy with the town centre, as expressed in and approved by Planning Ref Nos 07/9022 & 09/9009, and it was partly constructed in the 2009-2010 period.

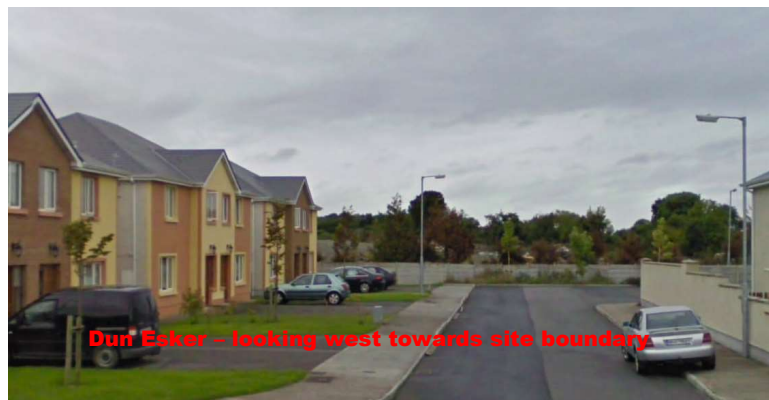


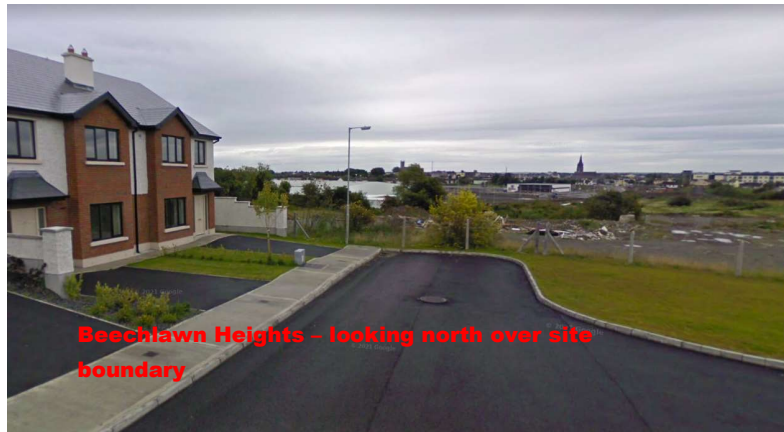
## 2.3 EXISTING ADJACENT USES

The site is surrounded on three sides by dendritic residential development.



All of this development consists of conventional residential estates.





The northern boundary of the site is dominated by the central location of the Tesco supermarket. The applicant land on either side consists of disturbed ground which was excavated during the initial phases of a commercial project in 2009.

Adjoining lands to the South of the site are in agricultural use.

## 2.4 TECHNICAL CONTEXT- RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

The architectural design of the scheme was informed by the following documentation:

- 'Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities'
- 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas'
- 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities' 2007 Design Standards for New Apartments- Guidelines for Planning Authorities' 2018
- 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets'
- 'Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide May 2009'
- 'Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028'
- 'Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028'



### 3. SITE CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES INFORMING DESIGN

The natural topography of the site was modified to some extent over the course of the construction of the Tesco supermarket and the initial site works associated with a commercial project which was contemplated in 2009.



The main body of the site adopts an approximate East-West orientation. The entire surface area of the site has been disturbed following excavation works in 2009. All internal natural features have been removed other than one original **field boundary** in a central location.

A study of the existing site topography suggests that a residential scheme could be designed around four interrelated character areas without the need to undertake any significant modification to existing site levels.

**Character Area 1** is located at the northwestern corner of the site and the natural ground levels range from 46-45 m OD down to about 44m OD in an easterly direction.



This area is bounded and enclosed to the south and the west by an **old mature & overgrown track/boreen** which is outside the curtilage of the site. This boundary would form a suitable developed and mature edge to protect the amenity of the adjoining dwellings in Esker Fields.

The northern boundary of this area is undefined and adjoins other land of the applicant which are zoned BE-Business & Enterprise.

The eastern boundary of this area would address the proposed location of the western access roadway.

The topography and position of Character Area 1 on the site would facilitate the design of this element of the scheme as being set back against the enclosing boundaries and arranged around a central open space.

**Character Area 2** is a long narrow strip located in a low central location within the site directly abutting the rear boundary of the Tesco Supermarket. Natural ground levels were significantly lowered along this area at the time of construction to about 43m OD. This area generally addresses and is enclosed by the **retained existing field boundary** which is at higher level to the South.



A linear scheme element could be ideally provided in this area and set back against and protect the rear Tesco boundary. Site levels within this area would have to be restored to about 43.5 m OD to improve the amenity and use of the open space adjacent to the retained existing field boundary which is at higher level.

**Character Area 3** is a wide elevated area located in a central location within the site. This area is generally flat across the width of the site where the natural levels are about 48 m OD. The area is generally bounded by the **retained existing field boundary** to the north and by undefined internal boundaries within the applicants lands elsewhere.

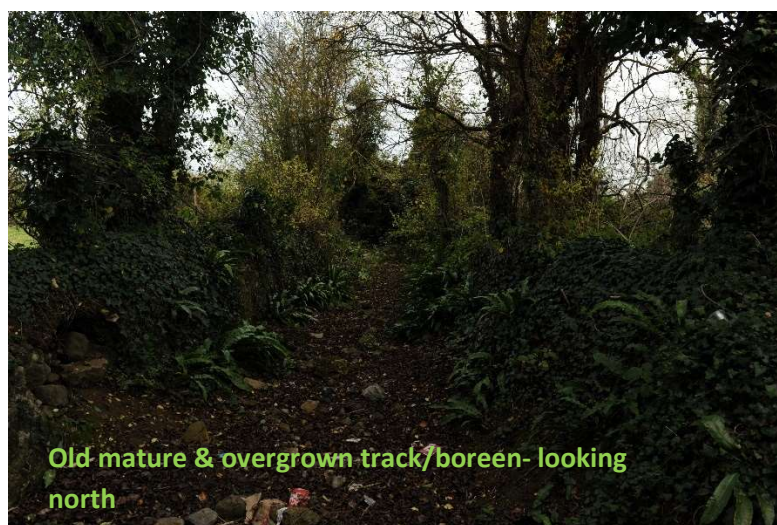
This area offers an opportunity to accommodate a central distribution roadway through the site which would interconnect all elements of the scheme on the overall site. The structure of this layout would also afford opportunities for connectivity and permeability with Beechlawn Heights and Dun Esker estates.

This area also fronts onto the southern edge of the large tract of land zoned OS- Open Space/Recreation & Amenity which is enclosed within the site.

The central location and positioning of this area suggests that it would be most amenable to an open and permeable developed form which would contribute to a high quality of public realm within the overall scheme.

**Character Area 4** is located at the southern sector of the site and the natural ground levels range from 52 m OD down to about 49m OD in an northerly direction.

This area is bounded and enclosed to the south by an **existing mature hedgerow**, and to the west by an **old mature & overgrown track/boreen** which is within the curtilage of the site. These boundaries would form a suitable developed and mature edge to the development.



This area is enclosed to the east by the **rear boundary wall** of the existing Beechlawn Heights residential development.

The topography and position of Character Area 4 on the site informs the design by suggesting that this element of the scheme would be most conveniently set back against the enclosing boundaries and arranged around a central open space.

#### 4. SCHEME DESIGN

A scheme design was prepared, having regard to the opportunities afforded by the site analysis as stated above, and having regard to the residential design and policy standards outlined in Chapter 2.3 herein and expressed as follows:

- Average residential density within the site should be of the order of 35 dwellings/ hectare, subject to the exigencies and constraints of the site.
- Encourage increased height adjoining public open spaces to provide for passive surveillance and enclosure.

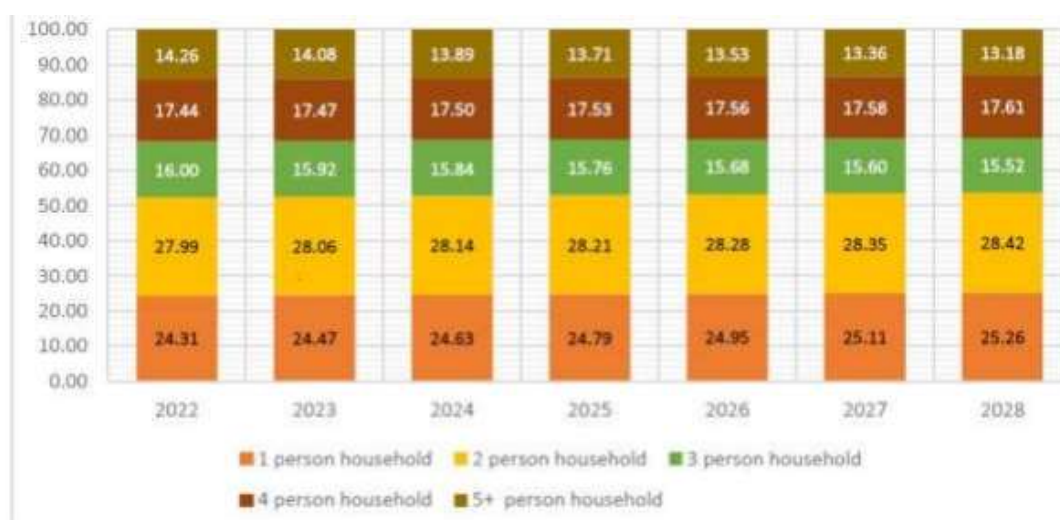
- Layouts should encourage natural surveillance of the public realm by providing street activity with unit typologies that turn corners and no blank facades to the public realm.
- Provide for a variety of housing types suitable for people at a range of life stages.
- Avoid mono-type building typologies (e.g. two storey or own-door houses only).
- Provide for adaptability and flexibility In design of new dwellings.
- Building finishes should be varied, high quality and durable.

#### 4.1 CHOICE OF UNIT TYPOLOGY

Traditional forms of residential development in Ballinasloe to date, in common with most provincial towns, are based on the mono typology of the housing estate.

However, having regard to the current government policy on the provision of housing, and publication of the guidelines on the sustainable use of serviced land resources, alternative more traditionally ‘urban forms’ of residential development must now be considered.

Guidance in this regard is forthcoming from the Housing Need and Demand Assessment as incorporated into the Core Strategy of the GCDP 2022-2028 which sets out the predicted household size cohort over the term of the Plan, as extracted below:



**Table 2.10: Household Size Cohort**

It is clear from the above that the provision of over 50% of 1 & 2 person households in any scheme, and at a density on zoned and serviced land which is consistent with government policy, cannot be provided in the form of the conventional typologies.

However, it is also necessary to have regard for the provincial town location of the site, and to balance the provision of 'urban forms' with more 'traditional forms' within the scheme.

A form of duplex unit is proposed as the fundamental unit type throughout the scheme. Such units can accommodate a variety of 1 Bed ,2 Bed, and 3 Bed dwellings in a variety of formats and layouts.

A traditional Block A duplex arrangement is proposed as one solution consisting of an apartment entered at ground floor level, and a 2-storey maisonette overhead.

A more urban Block B duplex arrangement is more generally proposed consisting of 2 Bed and 3 Bed maisonettes entered at street level, and 1Bed and 2 Bed apartments entered overhead.

Such units address **Policy SPPR 4** of Urban Development and Building Heights, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018) with regard to a mix of building heights and housing typologies. Such units, from the resident's point of view, offer own-door living in a 1, 2 or 3 bedroomed format, thus ensuring active street frontages.

The remainder of the scheme is mono-typology semi-detached and semi-terraced traditional 2 Bed and 3 Bed dwellings.

The overall housing mix throughout the Scheme is summarized as follows:

<b>HOUSING MIX:</b>			
Apartment	1 Bed / 2P	15	8.98%
	2 Bed / 4P	25	14.97%
	3 Bed / 5P	2	1.20%
Duplex	2 Bed / 4P	26	15.57%
	3 Bed / 5P	40	23.95%
House	2 Bed / 4P	32	19.16%
	3 Bed / 5P	27	16.17%
<b>Total</b>		<b>167</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

It is to be noted that, having regard to the consideration of apartments in the LAP as being 'open for consideration' on residentially zoned lands, a total of only 16.77% of the units as scheduled above are apartments in the 'conventional sense' where they are accessed by means of common areas.

A detailed analysis of each of the unit types proposed in the scheme is set out on the **Schedule of Accommodation & Site Analytics** which accompanies this application.

It is to be noted that the overall of breakdown of units within the scheme, in terms of cohort size, aligns favorably with the findings as expressed in Table 2.10 of the Core Strategy as shown above, with the exception that 4 and 5 Bed dwellings are not being provided within the scheme. It is also to be noted that the breakdown of units chosen by Galway County



Council under the Part V requirement (as expressed in the Letter of Understanding dated 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022- The current Demand) is in excess of the Core Strategy prediction on cohort size demand for 2022.

UNIT TYPE	CORE %	% in Scheme	Part V Choice %
1-BED	24.31	9	50 (8 No)
2-BED	27.99	50	38 (6 No)
3-BED	16.00	41	12 (2 No)

## 4.2 UNIT DESCRIPTIONS & QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The type of units to be provided within the development can be broadly described as follows:

- Block A1 and A2, each consisting of 6 No Two-Bed Ground Floor apartments, 1 No One-Bed ground Floor apartment, 6 No Three-Bed First Floor Duplex Units, and 1 No Three-Bed Second Floor apartment.
- Blocks B1 to B3 and B6 to B13 inclusive, each consisting of 2 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor apartment, and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment.
- Blocks B4 and B5 inclusive, each consisting of 1 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor apartment, and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment.
- House Type C : 32 No Two-Bed units in semi-detached pairs
- House Type E : 27 No Three-Bed units in triplet arrangements

### 4.2.1 BLOCK A1 & A2

These are two conventional type duplex blocks which are set out in a handed arrangement, with the variation that a 3-Bed apartment is provided at 2nd floor level. Each block has an easterly aspect to the front.

The ground floor 2 Bed/4P apartments, are generously sized and exceed the minimum floor areas (Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments. Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020 (73m<sup>2</sup>)) by an average of 24%.

## Appendix 1

### Required Minimum Floor Areas and Standards

#### Minimum overall apartment floor areas

Studio	37 sq m (n/a)*
One bedroom	45 sq m (38 sq m)*
Two bedrooms (3 person)**	63 sq m (n/a)*
Two bedrooms (4 person)	73 sq m (55 sq m)*
Three bedrooms	90 sq m (70 sq m)*

\* Figures in brackets refer to 1995 guidelines

\*\*Permissible in limited circumstances

The 3Bed/5P duplex units are also generously sized and exceed the minimum floor areas(90m<sup>2</sup>), as above, by 40 %.

The second floor entry 3 Bed/5P apartment is generously sized and exceeds the minimum floor areas (Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments. Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020 (73m<sup>2</sup>)) by 31%.

Demonstration of compliance with the other minimum parameters, such as Aggregate living/dining/kitchen rooms and minimum bedroom areas/widths is set out in the Accommodation Schedule below.

#### 4.2.2 BLOCK B1-B3 & B6-B13

These individual 3 Storey Block units each consisting of 2 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor apartment, and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment.

The ground floor own door entry 2 Bed/4P duplex units are generously sized and exceed the minimum floor areas (Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments. Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020 (73m<sup>2</sup>)) by an average of 18%.

The ground floor own door entry 3 Bed/5P duplex units are also generously sized and exceed the minimum floor areas (Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments. Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020 (90m<sup>2</sup>)) by an average of 29%.

The second floor entry 2 Bed/4P apartment is generously sized and exceeds the minimum floor areas (Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments. Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020 (73m<sup>2</sup>)) by 29%.

The second floor entry 1 Bed/2P apartment is generously sized and exceeds the minimum floor areas (Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments. Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020 (45m<sup>2</sup>)) by 11%.

Demonstration of compliance with the other minimum parameters, such as Aggregate living/dining/kitchen rooms and minimum bedroom areas/widths is set out in the Accommodation Schedule below.

#### 4.2.3 BLOCK B4 & B5

These units are similar in style but are one unit less than the above and each consist of 1 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Unit, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor apartment, and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment.

The size and extent of each of the units within the block is identical to the corresponding units in BLOCK B1-B3 & B6-B13.

Demonstration of compliance with the other minimum parameters, such as Aggregate living/dining/kitchen rooms and minimum bedroom areas/widths is set out in the Accommodation Schedule below.

Types	Description	Agg. Living Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Bedroom 1		Bedroom 2		Bedroom 3		Agg. Bedroom Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Private Amenity Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Storage Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Unit Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
			Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Width (m)	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Width (m)	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Width (m)				
<b>Block A1 &amp; A2 (2 No. Blocks)</b>												
Apartment 01	2 Bed / 4P	31.3	13.0	2.82	11.6	3.38			24.6	20.0	7.2	79.9
Apartment 02	2 Bed / 4P	32.6	13.5	3.24	13.6	3.23			27.1	42.0	7.3	90.9
Apartment 03	2 Bed / 4P	36.4	15.5	3.47	12.2	3.23			27.7	19.0	7.2	92.1
Apartment 04	2 Bed / 4P	36.4	15.5	3.47	12.2	3.23			27.7	19.0	7.2	92.1
Apartment 05	2 Bed / 4P	32.6	15.5	3.22	12.2	3.24			27.7	42.0	6.9	90.9
Apartment 06	1 Bed / 2P	26.8	12.1	3.26					12.1	26.5	3.0	56.1
Apartment 07	2 Bed / 4P	33.1	13.2	2.82	11.7	3.18			24.9	10.0	8.0	96.7
Duplex 01	3 Bed / 5P	40.1	14.9	3.80	13.5	2.87	10.2	2.87	38.6	10.2	9.3	126.6
Duplex 02	3 Bed / 5P	40.1	14.9	3.80	13.5	2.87	10.2	2.87	38.6	10.3	9.3	126.6
Duplex 03	3 Bed / 5P	40.1	14.9	3.80	13.5	2.87	10.2	2.87	38.6	10.3	9.3	126.6
Duplex 04	3 Bed / 5P	40.1	14.9	3.80	13.5	2.87	10.2	2.87	38.6	10.3	9.3	126.6
Duplex 05	3 Bed / 5P	40.1	14.9	3.80	13.5	2.87	10.2	2.87	38.6	10.4	9.3	126.6
Duplex 06	3 Bed / 5P	40.1	14.9	3.80	13.5	2.87	10.2	2.87	38.6	10.3	9.3	126.6
Duplex 07	3 Bed / 5P	40.1	14.9	3.80	13.5	2.87	10.2	2.87	38.6	10.4	9.3	126.6
Apartment 08	3 Bed / 5P	36.7	13.0	2.80	11.4	3.20	7.1	2.38	31.5	10.2	8.1	118.2
<b>Total per block:</b>												<b>1603.1</b>
<b>Block B1-B3 &amp; B6-B13 (11 No. Blocks)</b>												
Duplex 01	2 Bed / 4P	31.7	14.3	2.90	11.4	3.15			25.7	13.6	5.2	86.0
Duplex 02	2 Bed / 4P	30.0	14.3	2.80	11.4	3.15			25.7	14.0	5.0	86.0
Duplex 03	3 Bed / 5P	36.8	14.6	3.83	13.1	2.80	7.3	2.10	35.0	13.8	8.8	116.0
Duplex 04	3 Bed / 5P	39.6	13.0	3.66	11.5	2.94	7.2	2.10	31.7	12.4	10.5	116.0
Apartment 01	2 Bed / 4P	39.0	14.2	3.40	11.4	3.00			25.6	7.0	6.1	94.0
Apartment 02	1 Bed / 2P	23.0	12.0	3.33					12.0	5.0	3.0	49.9
<b>Total per block:</b>												<b>547.9</b>
<b>Block B4 &amp; B5 (2 No. Blocks)</b>												
Duplex 02	2 Bed / 4P	30.0	14.3	2.80	11.4	3.15			25.7	14.0	5.0	86.0
Duplex 03	3 Bed / 5P	36.8	14.6	3.83	13.1	2.80	7.3		35.0	13.8	8.8	116.0
Duplex 04	3 Bed / 5P	39.6	13.0	3.66	11.5	2.94	7.2		31.7	12.4	10.5	116.0
Apartment 01	2 Bed / 4P	39.0	14.2	3.40	11.4	3.00			25.6	7.0	6.1	94.0
Apartment 02	1 Bed / 2P	23.0	12.0	3.33					12.0	5.0	3.0	49.9
<b>Total per block:</b>												<b>461.9</b>
<b>House Types</b>												
House Type C	2 Bed / 4P	32.6	14.0		12.0				25.9	70.2 (min.)	0.9	83.9
House Type E	3 Bed / 5P	31.4	19.3		10.5		8.4		38.2	57.9 (min.)	0.0	104.5

Minimum aggregate floor areas for living/dining/kitchen rooms, and minimum widths for the main living/dining rooms

Apartment type ***	Width of living/dining room	Aggregate floor area of living / dining / kitchen area *
Studio	4m**	30 sq m**
One bedroom	3.3 m	23 sq m
Two bedrooms (3 person)	3.6m	28 sq m
Two bedrooms (4 person)	3.6 m	30 sq m
Three bedrooms	3.8 m	34 sq m

\* Note: An enclosed (separate) kitchen should have a minimum floor area of 6.5 sq. metres

\*\*Note: Combined living/dining/bedspace, also includes circulation

\*\*\* Note: Variation of up to 5% can be applied to room areas and widths subject to overall compliance with required minimum overall apartment floor areas.



#### **4.2.4 TYPE C HOUSE**

This is a 2 B/4P house which is arranged in a semi detached format set back against the edges of the site at various locations. The area of this type is 5% in excess of the minimum standard set out in Best Practice Guidelines for Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities.

Demonstration of compliance with the other minimum parameters, such as Aggregate living/dining/kitchen rooms and minimum bedroom areas/widths is set out in the Accommodation Schedule above.

#### **4.2.4 - TYPE E HOUSE**

This is a 3 B/5P house which is arranged in a triplet format set back against the edges of the site at various locations. The area of this type is 13% in excess of the minimum standard set out in Best Practice Guidelines for Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities.

Demonstration of compliance with the other minimum parameters, such as Aggregate living/dining/kitchen rooms and minimum bedroom areas/widths is set out in the Accommodation Schedule above.

### **4.3 SCHEME LAYOUT**

An element of the scheme layout is prepared for each of the four character areas identified above, based on the opportunities and constraints offered in each case.

It is to be noted that the layout, as presented to ABP at Stage 1 of the SHD process, has been refined slightly following a consideration of the commentary presented by ABP and the PA over and as a result of the Stage 2 process. More detailed explanation of the differences is set out in the Statement of Response to the Written ABP Opinion and the Statement of Response to the PA Opinion.

The layout of the proposed scheme in its Stage 3 format is presented below:



**Character Area 1** is formed by the arrangement of 3-story blocks containing an integrated range 1-Bed to 3- Bed units around central open space which will have a general southern aspect and is located to ensure good surveillance.

This layout affords good interconnectivity with the main access roadway and across the site to the public park to the east. The road layout also makes provision for future connectivity to residentially zoned lands to the south.







The placement of the 3-story blocks along the western access road frontage invokes a strong sense of active streetscape on this primary route to development to the south in the future

**Character Area 2** is ideal for the provision of a simple linear arrangement of semi detached dwellings which will enclose and secure the long straight boundary with the adjoining commercial development.



This cul-de-sac arrangement of dwellings would enjoy a southerly aspect to the front and the amenity of this area is enhanced for the landscaping treatment of the rising ground towards the existing internal hedgerow boundary which is to be retained.





A network of footpaths facilitate pedestrian movement through this space, linking with the surrounding elements of the scheme with public open spaces via pedestrian and cycle routes.

**Character Area 3** lends itself to an open and permeable format which will facilitate the conflicting constraints of east-west circulation and the need for north-south permeability through the scheme towards the large public park to the north and towards the commercial park and town centre.



This element of the scheme, given the function of the east-west road to unify the overall scheme in the short term and to provide connectivity to adjoining residential lands in the future, must be imbued with an element of streetscape.



The 3-storey blocks are arranged to convey a sense of corner definition . The use of these duplex units is of great benefit to the streetscape. They provide a fine-grained street enclosure with much elevational variety, as evident from the above CGI at the corner looking west. Their own door nature means active frontages because of entrances off streets. Variations include gable entry buildings which allows overlooking to the sides of these buildings, pedestrian routes into inner parking areas.



Their three storey height provides good spatial enclosure to the public realm.

Access to the various units is either from the front street or via the communal garden from internal parking court. Parking provision consists of a combination of street parking and three parking courts.

Communal open space is provided directly adjacent to each block. The communal gardens merge into the large public park to the north.



Private space for the dwellings is either in the form of generous patio space for the ground floor duplex units, or a terrace for the upper units.

All private terraces have good sunny aspects, mainly to the south, and these spaces will provide good animation and active surveillance for the communal garden areas and open space generally.

The road layout is configured for future connection to adjacent residentially zoned lands , and it will merge with the existing open space and access from Beechlawn Heights to join this development into the connectivity and permeability of the overall area, as will be provided by this scheme.

Similar connectivity will be available from the access road to the north to Dun Esker and to adjoining residentially zoned lands which would otherwise be landlocked .

**Character Area 4** is formed mainly from rows of 2-Bed and 3-Bed semi-detached and triplet dwelling set back against the mature site boundaries. This arrangement is protective of the amenity of the rear of the existing residential development in Beechlawn Heights, and it offers protection to the mature edges which are designated biodiversity corridors in the ecological assessment of the site.



This area has the highest elevation on the site , so the provision of 2-storey elements is in sympathy with the similar form of adjacent development which has higher finished floor levels generally.



Levels drop to about 48m OD to the north adjacent to the central street where 3- storey blocks are positioned to complete the central streetscape .

A large central open space is provided and it incorporates a community garden/playspace which is secure and is has good surveillance.

The roads layout within this area has been configured for future connectivity to adjoining residentially zoned lands.

#### 4.4 MATERIALS AND FINISHES

A consistent, contemporary architectural expression is carried throughout the scheme to bring a uniformity and identity while maintaining a simplicity to the elevations.

Selected coloured render finishes shall be provided to all external surfaces of the units throughout the scheme. The aim is to provide a robust and low maintenance surface finish. The subtle variation in tone imparted by the juxtaposition of facets



finished in different shades will generate a contemporary high quality suburban development which will convey a sense of place and will age well.



Fenestration shall consist of PVC double glazed windows with clean line contemporary finish.

Roofs shall be traditional A shape and provided with a slate/tile finish. Rainwater goods shall be half round black pvc throughout.

The material finishes in the public realm are set out in detail in the Landscape Planning & Design Report.

## 5. DESIGN STATEMENT METHODOLOGY

The design rationale outlined below outlines the key criteria considered in the design process for the proposed residential scheme on the site under the 12 criteria set out in the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide 2009.

5.1 Context	-How does the development respond to its surroundings?
5.2 Connections	- How well connected is the new neighbourhood?
5.3 Inclusivity	- How easily can people use and access the development?
5.4 Variety	- How does the development promote a good mix of activities?
5.5 Efficiency	- How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
5.6 Distinctiveness	- How do the proposals create a sense of place?
5.7 Layout	- How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?
5.8 Public Realm	- How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
5.9 Adaptability	- How will the buildings cope with change?
5.10 Privacy and Amenity	-How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?
5.11 Parking	- How will the parking be secure and attractive?
5.12 Detailed Design	- How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

### 5.1 CONTEXT

-How does the development respond to its surroundings?

The main body of the site is internal within the applicant's landholding and is protected to the south and west by a mature overgrown track/boreen which is being retained in the scheme as a biodiversity corridor. The layout of the scheme is configured to provide continuing protection to these boundaries.

The proposal for this site seeks to integrate a compact and sustainable urban design pattern with the retention of these existing site features.

Three story typologies have been located internally within the site layout, and two-story typologies have been located generally on the perimeter in support of the amenity of adjoining residential development which backs onto the site boundaries.

The units within the scheme are provided with pitched roof styles which are in keeping with the adjoining residential vernacular.



The layout is informed by existing topography, ensuring that natural land form within and across the site is preserved.

The placement of all public open spaces at central locations of the development is proposed to achieve a balanced high quality solution. These public open spaces are interlinked within the development with the large public park and are designed to be accessible for all residents and the wider community.

## 5.2 CONNECTIONS

- How well connected is the new neighbourhood?

The site is located in a key central position in the southern environs of the town of Ballinasloe. It is already surrounded on three sides by existing residential development, and is bounded to the north by an emerging commercial park.

The site is currently being used by the residents of adjoining developments as a pedestrian and cyclist desire route for journeys from their homes to the adjoining commercial park and generally towards the town centre.

North-south routes through the site have been transportation objectives of the LAP for the past 20 year period as access to the extensive residentially zoned lands in the southern environs of the town. These routes have been realized in part to date by the grant of planning permission and the subsequent construction of these routes towards the site.





Western access was constructed in 2007-2009, and eastern access is presently under construction.

The internal road and public realm network has been designed to provide internal connectivity within the scheme.



This network also facilitates connection to existing residential development.



It was necessary, on the one hand, to maintain and integrate the travel desires lines of the surrounding neighborhoods through the scheme to and from the commercial park and the town centre; and, on the other hand, to ensure that future connectivity and permeability was preserved and maintained to adjoining undeveloped lands on all sides.

Accordingly, connectivity and permeability was a primary consideration in the preparation of the design of this scheme from the outset.

The central zone of the scheme incorporates the principle circulation hub for **inwards** and **outwards** movement, and through the general layout as shown above.

The open configuration of the layout in each of the character areas ensures that there is maximum permeability across the site itself, and towards both the town centre and the adjoining residential neighborhoods.

### 5.3 INCLUSIVITY

- How easily can people use and access the development?

The proposed development includes a wide mix of unit types including 1,2, and 3- Bed Houses, Duplexes and apartments, which will cater for a variety of household formations, living arrangements and cohort sizes as identified in the Core Strategy of the GCDP. The layout shall consist of 9 No variations on the 1-Bed-2P, 2-Bed-4P, and 3-Bed-5P theme across the range of houses, duplexes and apartments .

All units within the development will meet the requirements of Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents where accessibility is concerned. A total of 76% of the units are own door access at ground floor level.



The public realm is designed to ensure accessibility on equal terms for people of a range of ages and physical mobility, with the site being moderately sloped and new areas of public space being fully accessible.



Play equipment and street furniture will be provided to cater for residents of various ages.

## 5.4 VARIETY

- How does the development promote a good mix of activities?

The design seeks to create 4 unique and different character areas which each have their own identity and offer a diverse arrangement of housing typologies .

The open space and community gardens have been individually designed to relate to adjoining units in each area.

The landscape of the scheme has been designed to integrate a range of activities suitable for all, consisting of play areas for children, and community gardens suitable for family use.

A network of footpaths facilitate pedestrian movements throughout the scheme and provide a link to public open spaces both for residents and for adjoining neighborhoods.

## 5.5 EFFICIENCY

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

The need to integrate future connection to the lands in the southern environs of the town, due to the central location of the site, has imposed a certain constraint on the site in relation to efficiency. Efficiency has also been impacted by the proximity of the central portion of the site to zoned open space lands.

However, efficiency in relation to land resources has been achieved by the provision of design of a unit typology which is both consistent with the policy for higher densities on service land, and which accords with the need to provide unit sizes and configurations which are consistent with the requirements as identified in the Housing Demand & Needs Assessment in the Core Strategy of the GCDP.

The development provides a density of c. 32 units/ha across the site which is considered appropriate, having regard to the constraints as outlined above, for this location.

The design of the building fabric of the individual units will ensure that they are energy efficient and sustainable throughout their service life. The provisional BER rating for all of the units has been estimated as being A2, as outlined in the Energy & Building Life Cycle Report.

## 5.6 DISTINCTIVENESS

- How do the proposals create a sense of place?

A sense of place is generated within the layout by the creation of four separate and unique character areas which are each treated individually within the landscape scheme.

Such a site-specific housing solution for this development will create an identifiable and unique streetscape, which will instill a strong sense of place. Own door access is available to 76% of the units, thus providing occupants with a sense of belonging to place.

Homes are designed with direct linkages to open spaces and community gardens, allowing occupants to retain a sense of civic pride and belonging to their neighbourhood.

## 5.7 LAYOUT

- How does the proposal create people friendly streets and spaces?

The layout of the scheme was informed by the topography of the land and the configuration of the site.

Although the primary road network was imposed as a constraint on the site, due to its key location in the southern environs of the town, the design has succeeded in creating a series of interesting character areas across the overall layout .

The layout has also been successful in integrating the large public park area, which is central to the entire residential neighborhood, into the scheme for the use and enjoyment of all.



People friendly spaces are created by a strong landscape scheme and this is achieved in the design. All units are located close to adjacent community gardens. All open spaces are centrally located within easy walking distance of all units where they can be actively overlooked by living areas closeby.



## 5.8 PUBLIC REALM

- How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?

All public areas throughout the scheme are overlooked from all sides.



All public realm areas are landscaped to a high standard in a combined hard/soft landscaped plan for the use and enjoyment of all residents. These spaces are centrally located and are not subject to overshadowing.

## 5.9 ADAPTABILITY

- How will the buildings cope with change?

The buildings are to be finished in high quality render, roof tile and glazing, giving a character of strength and robustness befitting the context and vernacular in the provincial location of Ballinasloe. The choice of materials imparts strong durability with minimal maintenance and upkeep requirements. The units are designed to be compliant with Building Regulations and will incorporate sustainable heating and energy efficiency

requirements. The dwellings have been designed to a provisional BER A2 rating, as outlined in the Energy Statement & Building Lifecycle Report.

Internal walls are lightweight metal stud partition that can easily facilitate internal alterations, without structural implications, in the future and will allow for adaption and subdivision. All units can thus be reconfigured with additional accessibility measures to cater for elder residents or occupants with disabilities

The houses will be constructed with prefabricated trusses which shall be amenable to future attic conversions to cater for growing families. There is also potential for future expansion into the rear gardens of some of the semi-detached dwellings.

#### **5.10 PRIVACY AND AMENITY**

-How does the scheme provide a decent standard of amenity?

All of the houses are provided with private back garden areas that meet and generally exceed the minimum standards of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028.

Houses are provided with at least 11 metres rear gardens and extend and separation distances between opposing first-floor windows, especially with adjoining existing development, in all cases meet the 22 metres minimum.

Private Balconies and patios are provided to all apartments in accordance with Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2020. Compliance details are set out in Chapter 4.2 of this document.

The apartment/duplex private amenity areas are accessed from the main living space in all cases. Generous amenity space is provided in all cases in excess of the minimum requirement.

Formal planting and in-curtilage parking areas are provided to the front of the proposed housing creating defensible space between the public road and the built edge. Similar defensive space is provided along apartment/duplex frontages to the various blocks to roads at front and public/community spaces at the rear.

The scheme design proposes that all semi-detached houses would have their own refuse bins stored to the rear. A purpose-built discreet storage area is provided for waste bins in front of each mid- terrace Type E house.

Separate bin store facilities are provided for all upper floor units throughout the scheme

## 5.11 PARKING

- How will the parking be secure and attractive?

All 59 dwellings units are provided with a private driveway in curtilage with parking space for two cars. Each such dwelling with in-curtilage parking areas can be provided with EV charging points directly on site.

Car spaces for the apartment/duplex units are distributed throughout the scheme in a manner of which will minimize visual impact. Grouped parking areas are provided at three locations and are overlooked. Car parking has been arranged throughout the scheme to ensure reasonable access to adjacent residential units.

Safe storage facilities are provided for bicycles to serve the apartment/duplex element of the scheme.

## 5.12 DETAILED DESIGN

- How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

The materials and external design make a positive contribution to the locality. Refer to the architectural drawings and specifications for proposed materials, selected to contribute to the quality of the public realm.

Proposed building finishes have been selected with long term durability in mind. Selected colour render finish, in subtle varying shades for contrast of adjoining facet surfaces, are the predominant finishes being proposed. Please refer to the Chapter 4 of this Design Statement for detail of the proposed building finishes and their maintenance.

The landscaping design for the proposed development creates a series of high-quality functional communal open spaces throughout the development, native hedgerows are protected and enhanced with additional native tree planting, and biodiversity corridors maintained and developed.

The landscape design is influenced by the strong geometric form of the proposed architecture, with the use of linear and geometric layouts in communal garden areas, and in contrast to the softer natural plant forms and organic large open spaces in the proposed development.



## 6. STATEMENT ON UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The statement below outlines how the proposed Strategic Housing Development has sought to comply with the principles of Universal Design (to encourage access and use of the development regardless of age, size, ability or disability). The following documents have been referred to for guidance: National Disability Authority's "Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach" and "Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland" at [www.universaldesign.ie](http://www.universaldesign.ie).

### Principles of Universal Design

The principles of universal design underpin the design approach, such that the scheme "may be accessed, understood and used to the greatest practicable extent, in the most independent and natural manner possible, in the widest possible range of situations and without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solutions, by persons of any age or size or having any particular physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability or disability" Disability Act 2005.

### Residential Unit Design

All the proposed dwellings, apartments and duplex units within the development have been designed to be compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations with regard to accessibility.

The guidance set out in the 2013 Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland has also been considered in the design. The site layout plan and landscaping proposals have also taken into consideration the need for ease of movement through the development. The main features of the proposed development are as follows:

- All houses have level access delivering ease of access for all.
- Duplex Apartments have been designed with ambulant disabled access stairs to upper level units.
- The public realm is designed to ensure accessibility on equal terms for people of a range of ages and physical mobility.
- Changes in level throughout the public realm have been considered to ensure access for all. The use of steps in public realm areas has been avoided by the provision of gently graded surfaces.



- Level access at crossing points throughout the scheme have been designed to ensure access and connectivity for all is facilitated.
- The range of dwelling types and sizes proposed will provide for accessible independent and semi-independent living for people of all ages, with own door entry at street level and landscaped community gardens nearby for secure relaxation
- Residential units throughout the scheme have been designed such that there are options available for conversion or extension if required.
- The proposed built form presents a welcoming and positive aspect to passers-by, avoiding unnecessary physical and visual barriers. Please refer to the accompanying drawings, CGI views and design statement above.
- The network of roads, paths and cycle routes ensure full permeability throughout the scheme and facilitates connectivity to the surrounding neighbourhood and the closeby town centre. Future potential connections have also been facilitated at boundaries where appropriate to allow for the sustainable development of adjoining lands.

### **Public Spaces and Shared Spaces**

Public spaces, streets, and community gardens are all designed so that they can be used by all age groups. Buildings front these spaces so that they are passively supervised, creating safe spaces for general recreational use. Level grade crossings, aligned with the height of footpaths, have been provided across junctions for pedestrians between the links within the scheme to promote the accessibility and permeability of the proposed development for all users. In addition, the provision of grass, tree and parking verges between the carriageway and footpaths on local streets ensures continuity of footpaths for pedestrians as the dropped kerbs for access to parking have been absorbed in the verges. Further details on the design proposals are included in the Landscape Design Report that accompanies this planning application.

The requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations were considered from the earliest design stage of the scheme for both the individual residential unit layout and the form and shape of the public realm space as set out in the considerations outlined below:

- Adequate access routes are provided through and around the development from the development centre. Each of the routes provided through and around the building are designed to meet the guidance in Section 1.1 of TGD M 2010;
- Accessible car parking spaces are provided through out the development designed to meet the guidance in section 1.1 TGD M 2010;
- Various accessible landscaped areas are provided throughout the site and are designed to meet the guidance in section 1.1 TGD M 2010;
- Adequate access routes are provided from all associated car parking facilities to the main entrances of each duplex block
- Stepped access routes, suitable for ambulant disable people, will be provided to upper floor duplex entrance in accordance with the guidance in section 1.1.3.5 of TGD M 2010.
- Internal corridors, floor finishes and doors within communal areas will satisfy the relevant guide lines as set out in Section 1.3 of TGD M 2010;
- All communal facilities within or surrounding the various blocks are designed to be accessible to meet the needs of all users in accordance with guidance in TGD Part M 2010;
- Apartments and Duplexes are designed to meet the guidance in section 3 of TGD Part M 2010 (e.g. 1200mm by 1200mm level landing at apartment entrances and 800mm wide doors at entrances to the apartments);
- An accessible WC, suitable for visitors, is provided at entry level within each apartment, house and duplex unit.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the proposed development has been designed so that it can be accessed, understood and used by the widest possible extent of people, regardless of their age, size, and disability. This includes buildings, houses, apartments/duplexes, streets, footpaths, pedestrian and cycle routes and open/community spaces.

## 7. PHASING

Existing services and roads infrastructure has been constructed in as far as the subject site on the eastern and western side. In fact, services have been constructed into the site, namely, watermains and surface water drainage along the western access roadway. Accordingly, it would be most feasible to commence the construction work on the western side of the site. Therefore the construction of the 165 No residential units within the development would be most conveniently commenced on the western side and phased in the following manner:

- **Phase 1-** Completion of construction of western access roadway to the site together with the construction of the Block A1 & A2, and Block B1 to B5 inclusive together with all associated site development services, including roads , pathways, pedestrian links and site boundaries. A total of 58 No. units would be provided under this phase and encompass a broad range of typologies.



- **Phase 2-** Completion of internal roadway together with the construction of the Type C semi-detached dwellings on sites 59 to 80 inclusive together with all associated site development services, pathways, pedestrian links, and site boundaries to include retaining wall along rear boundary with the Tesco property. A total of 22 No. units would be provided under this phase.





- **Phase 3** - Completion of eastern access roadway through the open space and the main internal east-west roadway through the site for interconnection with the previously developed western phases of the scheme. This phase would also include the provision of Block B11- Block 13 inclusive and the construction of the Type C semi-detached dwellings and Type E dwellings on sites 129-165 inclusive together with all associated site development services, pathways, pedestrian links, and site boundaries . A total of 55 No. units would be provided under this phase and encompass a broad range of the typologies within the scheme.
- **Phase 4**- This phase would include the provision of Block B6- Block 10 inclusive and the construction of all associated site development services, pathways, pedestrian links, and site boundaries . The full development of the area of zoned open space , including the provision of all public realm facilities, would be fully developed under this phase and integrated into the existing neighbourhood developments. A total of 30 No. units would be provided under this phase .



An overview of the phasing scheme for the entire development is set out on **Drawing No 2521- 009** which accompanies this application.