

**PLANNER'S REPORT****Ref: TP 17/37279**Cork City Council  
Development Management  
Strategic Planning and  
Economic Development

<b>Permission type</b>	Permission
<b>Description</b>	permission for development at the former Good Shepherd Convent site, Convent Avenue and Buckston Hill, Sunday's Well Cork (3.16 ha). The proposed development will consist of the partial demolition, redevelopment and extension of the existing former Good Shepherd Convent, Orphanage and Magdalene home buildings, and the demolition of all ancillary sheds and structures to facilitate a residential development of 234no. apartments. The proposed development will consist of works to the former Good Shepherd Convent, Orphanage, and Magdalene Home buildings, and former Gate Lodge protected structures (PS721) as well as works within the curtilage of these protected structures. The proposed development also consists of works to the exterior of structures which are located within the proposed Sunday's Well Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)
<b>Applicant</b>	Moneda Developments Limited
<b>Location</b>	The Former Good Shepherd Convent site Convent Avenue And Buckston Hill Sunday's Well Cork
<b>Recommendation</b>	Request FI

**TP 17/37279****Senior Planners Report**

I note the reports and documents on file (including submissions) and I refer to the SEP's reports for comprehensive overview of issues, and assessment (including assessment of the EIS).

**Key Issues**

- This is a highly significant proposal (234 residential units) located at a key site (c3.2 ha) at the Good Shepherd complex in Sundays Well.
- The site is of significant social, architectural and conservation importance and sensitivity. It includes a former Magdalene Orphanage and graveyard adjacent.
- It is visually prominent (includes Landscape Protection Zone).
- The site has been subject to significant fire damage/dereliction and has been unused for many years.
- The proposal is of significant scale involving

- The partial demolition, reconstruction and extension of the convent, orphanage, and Magdalene House to provide 112 apartments over 4-6 stories.
- Construction of seven buildings ranging in height from 3-6 storeys to include 122 apartments. to facilitate the development
- Proposed 210 car parking spaces (112 undercroft/98 surface) & 234 cycle spaces.
- Provision of crèche in former Gate Lodge and conversion of Bakehouse to facility/exhibition space.
- Of relevance in the planning history is 183 units permitted under PL28.219782 in 2007 by An Bord Pleanála (TP 06/30540). Subsequent refusal under TP 07/32544 (and PL282982) and 09/34000 for developments of increased scale.
- The site is zoned **Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses**.
- Other relevant objectives include Landscape Preservation Zone, RPS Structures on site and location within ACA.
- There are a significant number of third party submissions (see report and file) which include reference to traffic/pedestrian impacts, construction impacts, visual impacts/design, scale density, housing tenure/mix & planning history.
- The site is of social sensitivity/importance given its previous using as a Magdalene Orphanage and the graveyard adjacent the site (submissions on file in this regard).
- The Transport and Mobility Report recommends refusal on the basis the development 'would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard because the road design network is inadequate to cater for the existing traffic movements likely to be generated by the proposed development'.
- The SEP acknowledges the positive impacts of the proposal, refusal recommended relating to traffic impacts, form and design of Blocks B1 and B5 and housing mix.
- The CO considers proposal positive in overall terms but raises concerns regarding height of blocks A1, A2 and A4, access to graveyard and arrangement and mix of development at southern portion of the site.
- Roads, archaeological report also recommend that further information should be sought.
- EIS considered acceptable by reference to Article 4 – however revised details are sought in relation to the EIS. In addition any changes to the proposal required by way of further information request will require updates of the EIS.
- Proposal set in the context of national and local housing crises (Rebuilding Ireland and associated policy documents relevant). The site is one of very few of scale within the city boundary. It is the first new proposal for residential development of scale within the city boundary for a number of years.

## **Assessment.**

The proposal is acceptable in principle and the appropriate redevelopment of the site will bring positive planning benefits in terms of addressing a significant derelict site and providing well located homes within the city. I consider that in overall terms the proposal is well designed. The reports from Transport and Mobility, SEP and CO (and submissions on file) raise, from differing perspectives issues relating to the scale and mix of the proposal.

I note the recommendation for refusal from Transport and Mobility (and SEP) which raises issues regarding the assessment submitted, the constraints affecting the site – including poor road network, limited access, poor pedestrian infrastructure and public transport and the scale and mix of the development. There is no doubt that there are transport issues affecting the site. At the same time there are significant locational benefits to the proposal and I note for example that it is within walking distance of the city centre, Apple (both within 2 kilometres) and UCC (within 1 kilometre) .I note in addition that the development of the site (at smaller scale) has been previously assessed as acceptable (albeit at a different time and scale – 183 units) by the City Council and An Bord Pleanála. Other reports raise concern regarding the scale and mix of the proposal. Taking these points together and having regard to the overall planning benefits of the appropriate development of the site (including addressing the housing crises) I consider that it is appropriate to recommend further information requiring the applicant to address the transport and mobility issues identified (and other issues) in the context of a reduction in scale of the proposal

I recommend that the following further information is sought.

### **1. Transportation and Mobility Issues/Scale of Development**

The planning authority has significant concerns regarding the likely traffic impacts of the proposal by reference to the scale and nature of the development proposed, inadequacies in relation to the surrounding transportation network and the traffic assessment submitted. It is considered that the given the traffic constraints in the area the proposed development cannot support the level of use proposed.

Please submit revised proposals to address these points including:

- the submission of revised details showing reduced densities and a better mix of units such that the resultant development is more attractive to homeowners rather than multi occupancy renters as this could result in a reduction in the level of cars movements associated with the development at peak times.

- The current assessment is based on the development having 210 car parking spaces and Sunday's Well Road/ Lee Road/ Thomas Davis Bridge junction operating as a signalised junction. The scenarios were modelled using LinSig computer modelling software. The remaining 5 junctions were assessed as priority junctions using the PICADY computer programme. It is unclear as to whether the proximity of the junctions to each other has been taken into account in the assessment or whether the assessment assumes that the priority junctions are unrelated with free flow traffic conditions upstream and downstream of the junctions themselves, which is not the case. Please submit a realistic traffic model and all its assumptions which link the priority junctions and show the impact of the junctions on each other at peak times. The submission of sensitivity test results for the traffic modelling work based on an assessment of the 85th percentile for the trip generation should also be included.
- The submission of revised details showing safe walking routes to/from the development from the nearby trip attractors such as Apple , UCC, Sundays Well Boys & Girls Primary School, City Centre, Fitzgerald's Park, etc.
- The submission of the version of TRICS database being used as well as the details of the developments being used to form the trip generation information, i.e., do they have similar public transport, pedestrian and topography issues?

## 2. Road Design

- Submit detailed of the vehicular access, designed in accordance with the principles set out in DMURS. The drawings should show that sight distances of a minimum of 45m in both directions, at a set-back of 2.4m from the road edge, are available and are not obstructed by walls, pillars, poles, vegetation etc. The drawings should also show details of any changes (build-outs) to the public footpath that may be required to achieve the above.
- Clarify that a pedestrian access is proposed onto Buxton Hill and provide detailed drawings of same. It is noted that the Transportation Section has indicated that no pedestrian entrance should be provided at this location.
- Submit revised drawings of the internal road layout showing minimum road widths of 5.5m and minimum footpath widths of 1.8m.
- Confirm that the development will be managed by a management company and that the roads, open spaces and other services will not be taken in charge in the future by Cork City Council.
- Show sizes of parking bays and show that 5% of the parking spaces provided is set aside for disabled parking. Parking bay widths for disabled persons will be a minimum of 3m wide and 4.75m long.
- Show that the parking spaces designated for the crèche can be safely manoeuvred and provide a pedestrian crossing to the crèche.

### 3. Design/Layout

- **Blocks A1, A2 and A4** - The planning authority is concerned regarding the visual impact of Blocks A1, A2 and A4 in the context of ridge heights of the pitched roofs of the retained buildings. Please address this point including the lowering of the height of Blocks A1, A2 and A4 by one floor.
- **Blocks B1 – B5** - It is considered that the proposed apartment blocks in the lower section of the site and located close to the south and east boundaries of the site are problematic in terms of impact on the amenity of neighbouring houses and, by virtue of their size and bulk, in terms of the existing architectural character of the areas immediately adjacent on Buxton Hill and the north side of Sunday's Well Road.

It is considered that given the negative impact on adjacent property and the problematic setting of Blocks B2, 3, 4 and 5, and the transport constraints (identified above) the strategy for this part of the site should be revised, replacing the apartment blocks with own-door houses with gardens, thereby contributing to the integration of the site with the family-type housing of Buxton Hill and Sunday's Well.

The extent of hard-landscaped surface car parking in this area should be reduced.

### 4. Materials

- The applicant is requested to reconsider the self colour render finish to the northern elevations of Blocks A1- A5 and to the elevations of Blocks B1 – B5. The Planning Authority has concerns in relation to the visual impact of this finish on views towards the site and in terms of long term weathering.

### 5. Roof Treatment

- **Blocks B1 – B5** - Being located lower down the site, the flat roofs will be visible from upper levels of the buildings above. It is important therefore that the roof arrangement and finish be designed to be seen from above.

- **Blocks A1 - A5.** - Consideration should be given to the provision of a green sedum roof to Blocks A1, the extended portions of Blocks A2-A4 and Block A5. Please submit revised proposals to address these points.

## 6. Section Details

1. The Sections submitted are incomplete and incorrect in a few instances. The long A1 sections are titled 1:200, where they should actually be 1:500.
2. Adjoining properties on the site boundaries should be detailed in all long sections and dimensions should be indicated, similar to the site plan.

## 7. Updated Visual Assessment

The applicant is requested to submit an updated Visual Impact Assessment. Views should be winter views, with seasonal tree cover omitted. The following additional views should also be submitted.

- View from Buxton Hill looking west to the development site, approx 50 metre back from the proposed emergency / pedestrian entrance
- View from the southern section of Buxton Hill looking north -west to the development site,
- View looking north to the development site, from the viewing area / car-park area to the north of the Aula Maxima in UCC
- View to the development site from the City End of Mardyke Walk
- Local Views looking south from in front of the Convent Building and the Orphanage Building
- Views from at least 2 no. rear gardens in Blarney Street, looking south

## 8. Archaeological Issues

- Research on the records of residents of the Institution, numbers of recorded deaths and recorded burials including an assessment of the likely occurrence of undocumented burials of children in the context of evidence from comparable institutions in Ireland.
- Detailed mitigation measures to identify possible undocumented burial places and graves. A geophysical survey and test trenches of all anomalies identified in the geophysical survey is required. The testing should be conducted by a team with appropriate expertise in the matter of identifying burials. A detailed method statement for this research should be submitted to the Planning Authority and should also accompany a licence application to the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and The National Museum of Ireland.

- The significance of the Magdalene or 'penitents' graveyard, while not within the boundary of the current proposal cannot be discounted. Please submit revised proposals to develop and enhance the Magdalene Burial Ground as part of the overall development of the subject site. This should include a revision to the rear walkway giving access to the western graveyard to include universal access from the vicinity of the Bakehouse. Dedicated visitor car parking should be provided.

## **9. Calculation of Development Contributions**

- The applicant is requested to submit a revised schedule of floor areas which shows gross internal floor area for each floor including basement parking and circulation areas.
- A schedule of areas to be demolished for each building shall be submitted.

**10. EIS** - The EIS should be updated to take account of revisions required by this further information request.



---

Kevin Lynch  
Senior Planner  
**Strategic Planning & Economic  
Development Directorate**

Dated: 10/04/2017

