LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

of a proposed development of Student Accommodation
at 139-149 King Street North, Dublin 7

for Ringline Investments Ltd.
April 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) report assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on the receiving environment in respect of the landscape and key views/visual amenity.

Mitchell + Associates was engaged by MOLA Architecture, on behalf of Ringline Investments Ltd in January 2025, to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for a proposed development of student accommodation at King Street North, Dublin.

The development site is located along the southern edge of King Street North and is bounded by Bow Street to the east and Brown Street North to the west and south.

Figure 1: Site location – the red line indicates the approx. site ownership (source: Bing maps with overlay annotation by Mitchell + Associates)

This LVIA has been prepared with reference primarily to the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', prepared by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013 (GLVIA) and with reference to the 'Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), May 2022.

The LVIA has been prepared by Dave Kirkwood BSc Hons, CMLI, MILI, Dip. Environmental Management. Dave is Managing Director of Mitchell + Associates, Landscape Architects and Urban Designers. He qualified as a Chartered Landscape Architect in 1983 (Landscape Institute, UK) and has been a member of the Irish Landscape Institute since 1995. He served on the Council of the Irish Landscape Institute for

5 years and is a Past President of the Institute. He has over 40 years' experience in landscape architectural practice, specialising in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) since 2005.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 LVIA methodology

This LVIA describes the impact of the proposed development on the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and on the contiguous landscape and its environs. It describes the landscape character of the subject site and its urban landscape context, together with the visibility of the site from key viewpoints in the locality. It includes descriptions of the receiving environment (baseline), an outline of the methodology utilised to assess the effects, descriptions of the potential impacts of the development and of the resultant potential effects. Mitigation measures introduced to ameliorate or offset impacts are outlined and the resultant predicted (residual) effects are assessed.

'Landscape' can be described broadly as the human, social and cultural experience of one's surroundings. It is derived from the interplay between the physical, natural and cultural components of our surroundings, as experienced by people. The combination of these components elicits responses whose significance will be partially dependent on how people perceive a particular landscape and how much changes will matter in relation to other senses, as experienced and valued by those concerned. This assessment seeks to understand the potential effects of a development on the landscape as a 'resource', but also considers the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of landscape that make a place distinctive. Despite the extremely large part played by our visual experience in forming our views on landscape, one's perception and indeed memory also play an important part, if the changes brought about in landscape character are to be fully understood. It is clear therefore that different people doing different things will experience the surrounding landscape in different ways. Such sensitivities and variations in response, including where and when they are likely to occur, are broadly taken into consideration in the assessment.

Visual amenity as expressed through views, refers to the interrelationship between people and the landscape. In accordance with the guidelines, the effects on views and visual amenity are assessed separately from the effects on landscape, though the two are inherently linked. Visual assessment is concerned with the changes that arise in the composition of available views, the response of people to these changes and the overall effects on the area's visual amenity. Generally, these are evidenced by the comparison of baseline (existing) images and photomontages illustrating the proposed development in context.

2.2 Methodology for Assessment of **Landscape** Effects

The assessment of potential landscape effects involves (a) classifying the sensitivity of the receiving environment (i.e., the nature of receptors), and (b) identifying and classifying the magnitude of landscape change (i.e., the nature of the effect), which would result from the proposed development. These factors are combined to arrive at a classification of significance of the landscape effects.

2.2.1 Landscape Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the landscape is a function of its land use, patterns and scale, visual enclosure, the distribution of visual receptors, and the value placed on the landscape. The nature and scale of the development in question is also taken into account, as are any trends of change, and relevant policy. Five categories are used to classify sensitivity (refer to Table 1, below).

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the landscape exhibits very strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. The landscape character is such that its capacity to accommodate change is very low. These attributes are recognised in policy or designations as being of national or international value and the principal management objective for the area is protection of the existing character from change.
High	Areas where the landscape exhibits strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics. The landscape character is such that it has limited/low capacity to accommodate change. These attributes are recognised in policy or designations as being of national, regional or county value and the principal management objective for the area is the conservation of existing character.
Medium	Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong, or has evidence of alteration, degradation or erosion of elements and characteristics. The landscape character is such that there is some capacity for change. These areas may be recognised in policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.
Low	Areas where the landscape has few valued elements, features or characteristics and the character is weak. The character is such that it has capacity for change; where development would make no notable change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes are generally unrecognised in policy and the principal management objective may be to facilitate change through development, repair, restoration or enhancement.
Negligible	Areas where the landscape exhibits negative character, with no valued elements, features or characteristics. The character is such that its capacity to accommodate change is high; where development would make no discernible change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes include derelict industrial lands, as well as sites or areas that are designated for a particular type of development. The principal management objective for the area is to facilitate change in the landscape through development, repair or restoration.

Table 1: Categories of Landscape Sensitivity

2.2.2 Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of change is a factor of the scale, extent and degree of change imposed on the landscape by the proposed development, with reference to its key elements, features and characteristics (also known as 'landscape receptors'). Landscape receptors include individual aspects of the landscape, e.g., landform/topography, vegetation, and the density, mix, pattern and scale of building typologies, which may be directly changed by the development. The surrounding landscape character areas are also receptors whose character may be altered by these changes. Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change (refer to Table 2, below).

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Change that is large in extent, resulting in the loss of or major alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of large elements considered totally uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in fundamental change in the character of the landscape.
High	Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.
Medium	Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.
Low	Change that is moderate or limited in scale, resulting in minor alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in minor change to the character of the landscape.
Negligible	Change that is limited in scale, resulting in no alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are characteristic of the context. Such development results in no change to the landscape character.

Table 2: Categories of Magnitude of Landscape Change

2.2.3 Landscape Effects

As this is a standalone Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, i.e., not part of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), this report does not include a statement of the significance of effects. However, a conclusion on the relative importance of landscape effects (whether on the physical landscape elements or on the landscape character), can be arrived at by combining the landscape sensitivity and the magnitude of landscape change - this is indicated in Table 3 below.

		Sensitivity of the Landscape				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change to the Landscape	Very High	Profound	Profound	High	High-Moderate	Moderate-Slight
	High	Profound	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Slight

	Medium	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Slight	Slight
	Low	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Slight	Slight	Imperceptible
	Negligible	Moderate-Slight	Moderate-Slight	Slight	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

Table 3: Classification of the relative importance of Landscape Effects

The classifications of the relative importance of landscape effects as set out in Table 3 above and as used throughout this LVIA, may be defined as follows in Table 4:

Importance	**Description**
Imperceptible	An effect which may be capable of measurement but is without important consequences.
Slight	An effect which causes few noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without important consequences.
Moderate-Slight	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with the landscape context and with existing and emerging baseline trends.
High-Moderate	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity, alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
High	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity, alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Profound	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

Table 4: Description of the classifications of Landscape Effects

2.3 Methodology for Assessment of **Visual** Effects

Assessment of visual effects involves identifying a number of key viewpoints in the site's receiving environment which overall, are representative of the existing visual environment, and for each viewpoint: (a) classifying the visual sensitivity of the viewpoint/visual receptor (i.e., the nature of the receptor), and (b) classifying the magnitude of change imposed on the view by the proposed development (i.e., the nature of the effect). These factors are combined to arrive at a classification of relative importance of the effects on the visual amenity/views.

2.3.1 Visual Sensitivity

Viewpoint/visual receptor sensitivity is a function of two main considerations:

Susceptibility of the visual receptor to change; this depends on the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention is focussed on the views or visual amenity they experience at that location. Visual receptors most susceptible to change include for example, residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation focused on the landscape (e.g., trail users), and visitors to heritage or other attractions and places of community congregation where the setting contributes to the experience. Visual receptors less sensitive to change include for example, travellers on road, rail, and other transport routes (unless on recognised scenic routes), people engaged in outdoor recreation or sports where the surrounding landscape does not influence the experience, and people in their place of work or shopping where the setting does not influence their experience.

Value attached to the view; this depends to a large extent on the subjective opinion of the visual receptor but also on factors such as policy and designations (e.g., scenic routes, protected views), or the view or setting being associated with a heritage asset, visitor attraction or having some other cultural status.

Five categories are used to classify a viewpoint/visual receptor's sensitivity (refer to Table 5, below):

Sensitivity	**Description**
Very High	Iconic viewpoints (views towards or from a landscape feature or area) that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of national or international value. The composition, character and quality of the view are such that its capacity for change is very low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change.
High	Viewpoints that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (such as views from houses or outdoor recreation features focused on the landscape). The composition, character and quality of the view may be such that its capacity for accommodating change may or may not be low. The principal management objective for the view is its protection from change that reduces visual amenity.
Medium	Views that may not have features or characteristics that are of particular value, but have no major detracting elements, and which thus provide some visual amenity. These views may have capacity for appropriate change and the principal management objective is to facilitate change to the composition that does not detract from visual amenity, or which enhances it.
Low	Views that have no valued feature or characteristic, and where the composition and character are such that there is capacity for change. This category also includes views experienced by people involved in activities with no particular focus on the landscape. For such views, an important management objective is to facilitate change that does not detract from visual amenity or enhances it.
Negligible	Views that have no valued feature or characteristic, or in which the composition may be unsightly (e.g., in derelict landscapes). For such views, the principal management objective is to facilitate change that repair, restores, or enhances visual amenity.

Table 5: Categories of Viewpoint Sensitivity

2.3.2 Magnitude of Change to the Visual Amenity/Views

Classification of the magnitude of change takes into account the size or scale of the intrusion of development into the view (relative to the other elements and features in the composition, i.e., its relative visual dominance), the degree to which it contrasts or integrates with the other elements and the general character of the view, and the way in which the change will be experienced (e.g., in full view, partial or peripheral view, or in glimpses). It also takes into account the geographical extent of the change, as well as the duration and reversibility of the visual effects.

Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change to visual amenity/views (refer to Table 6, below):

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features or characteristics, or introduction of elements that are completely out of character in the context, to the extent that the development becomes dominant in the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity.
High	Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.
Medium	Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.
Low	Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.
Negligible	Barely discernible intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context, resulting in slight change to the composition of the view and no change in visual amenity.

Table 6: Categories of Magnitude of Visual Change

2.3.3 Visual Effects

As for landscape effects, to classify the relative importance of visual effects, the magnitude of change to visual amenity/views is measured against the sensitivity of the viewpoint and a conclusion on the relative importance of visual effects (whether on visual amenity or on the views), can be arrived at by combining the visual sensitivity and the magnitude of visual change - this is indicated in Table 7 below.

		Sensitivity of the Visual Amenity/View				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change to the Visual Amenity/View	Very High	Profound	Profound	High	High-Moderate	Moderate-Slight
	High	Profound	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Slight
	Medium	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Slight	Slight
	Low	High-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Slight	Slight	Imperceptible
	Negligible	Moderate-Slight	Moderate-Slight	Slight	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

Table 7: Classification of the relative importance of Visual Effects

The classifications of the relative importance of visual effects as set out in Table 7 above and as used throughout this LVIA, may be defined as follows in Table 8:

Importance	Description
Imperceptible	An effect which may be capable of measurement but is without important consequences.
Slight	An effect which causes few noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without important consequences.
Moderate-Slight	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with the visual context and with existing and emerging baseline trends.
High-Moderate	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity, alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
High	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity, alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Profound	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

Table 8: Description of the classifications of Visual Effects

2.4 Quality of Effects (Landscape and Visual)

The quality of effects can be assessed as 'positive' or 'negative' depending on whether the change is considered to improve or reduce the quality of the landscape character or visual environment. The quality of impact/effect may also be assessed as 'neutral' if the quality of the environment is unaffected. The assessment of quality needs to consider and weigh-up a range of issues and potentially conflicting standpoints. The nature of the proposed change, its context, appropriateness, quality of design and the sensitivities of the viewers may all be important considerations for this aspect of assessment.

2.5 Duration of Effects (Landscape and Visual)

The duration of effects is another aspect of assessment needing consideration. Effects may range from temporary to permanent. The temporary/short term effects during the construction of the proposed development are also considered in this assessment. The categorisation of effect duration outlined in the EPA 'Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' 2022, (Section 3.7 Assessment of Effects), is used for this assessment, whereby effects arising from the proposed development may be considered in terms of duration as follows:

- Temporary: Effects lasting less than one year
- Short-term: Effects lasting one to seven years
- Medium-term: Effects lasting seven to fifteen years
- Long-term: Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years
- Permanent: Effects lasting over sixty years

2.6 The Use of Photomontages and the Selection of Viewpoints

The primary method adopted for the assessment of visual effects relies largely on a comparative visual technique, whereby accurate verified views (photomontages), incorporating the proposed development are compared to the existing corresponding baseline photograph so that an assessment of effects can be made. These 'before' and 'after' images are prepared for each of the selected viewpoints.

The selection of viewpoints has been carried out in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', prepared by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, published by Routledge, 3rd Edition 2013. The guidance on viewpoint selection and baseline photography requires that the proposed development is considered in context and that photomontages used to illustrate the proposed development include sufficient landscape context for proper assessment. Whilst the potential for views was considered up to a radius of approx. 1 km from the proposed development site, practical choices have to be made regarding the viewpoints which are most likely to illustrate the greatest maximum impact. This resulted in the selection of the 14 views submitted, which range from approx. 50m to 450m distant from the site. The photomontages are prepared by experienced specialists, to a specific detailed methodology to ensure accuracy. The adopted methodology for the preparation of photomontages is described by the photomontage specialist in the A3 document of verified views (photomontages) submitted with the planning application.

In recognition of the potential sensitivities of this location and to enable a full and detailed assessment of the development proposal, a total of 14 views was selected for photomontage preparation. Figure 2 below illustrates the location of viewpoints selected for assessment and for which photomontages are included in the separate A3 document prepared by Digital Dimensions, submitted with the planning application.

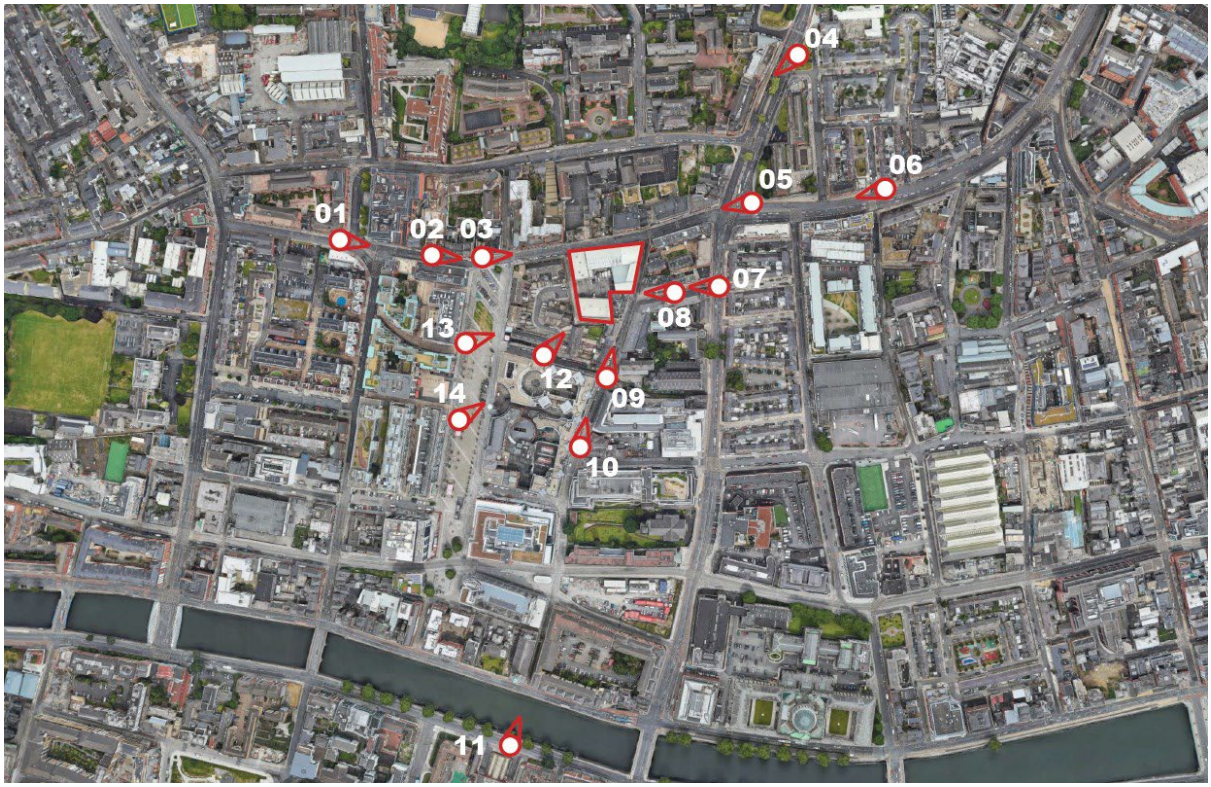

Figure 2: Selected view locations (Source: Digital Dimensions.)

3 RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Introduction

The proposed development site is situated within the north inner city of Dublin, just east of the north end of Smithfield. The site's immediate neighbours include; the Friary Grove housing estate (2-3 storey) just across Brown Street North to the west; a mix of offices, commercial and residential premises (2-6 storeys) across Bow Street to the east and; residential development (2 storey, with 7 storey beyond), across Brown Street to the south. Across King Street North, to the north of the site, the north side of the street is lined by 4-6 storey residential development with commercial premises at ground level, however directly across the street, a gap site (6-7 individual plots) has lain derelict for many years and presents a discordant mix of graffiti covered hoardings and scrub/weed growth, with exposed blank gables at each end, which await and assume future infill development.

3.2 Physical context – land use, topography and vegetation

The broader landscape setting for this development is characterised largely by existing urban development. The site itself is currently occupied by commercial premises primarily, including Little Italy

food importers (accessed from Bow Street, King Street North and Brown Street North) and Kish Fish and H&H brewers and bottlers (accessed from Bow Street) who are situated to the south-east, just outside the site. The underlying topography is relatively flat with a gentle fall towards the River Liffey to the south of the site. The most significant green spaces of any note close to the site include King's Inns (400m distant to the north-east), TUD Grangegorman (500m to the north-west) and the Croppies Acre (700m to the south-west). These areas also offer the most notable tree planting in the broader context, however the local area around the site is relatively 'hard' with little in the way of planting, in either public or private spaces. The area is characterised and somewhat defined by the monumentally scaled public open space of Smithfield Square, to the west of the site.

Figure 3: Smithfield Square looking north.

By contrast, the urban fabric in and around the site is very much more intimately scaled with narrow streets and a mix of older small-scale residential and more recent but much more substantial residential and institutional developments. Figures 4-10 below illustrate the mixed nature of the prevailing buildings and spaces which are richly varied in terms of function, age, scale, form, tone and colouring. This is not unusual for inner city Dublin and follows the general current trend towards agglomeration of older, smaller and often derelict properties in order to provide ever larger and generally taller developments, with residential forming a major part in the drive to keep people living in the heart of the city.

Figure 4: View from the northern end of Smithfield Square, looking north-eastwards. The site lies behind the 2 & 3 storey houses in the centre of view.

Figure 5: View looking north-east from Friary Avenue – buildings on the site are visible in the gap between the housing blocks.

Figure 6: View looking northwards along Bow Street towards the site, with substantial residential, commercial and institutional developments to both sides.

Figure 7: The south-east corner of the site (occupied by commercial premises), pictured from Bow Street - the H&H and Kish Fish premises lie outside the subject site and will remain in place.

Figure 8: View looking west along King Street North towards the protected two storey red brick façade beyond the more recent 5-6 storey commercial development in the left foreground.

Figure 9: View looking east along King Street North with the protected structure in the right foreground and derelict gap site(s) on the left.

Figure 10: View looking eastwards down King Street North - existing buildings on the site are visible just left of centre.

3.3 Planning context

The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out policies and objectives for the city. These include landscape-related policies and objectives. Current land use zoning is set out and illustrated in the Zoning Maps in Volume 3 of the Development Plan.

3.3.1 Zoning

The proposed development is located within the lands covered by the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 and within which the Primary Land Use Zoning Categories and Specific Objectives are outlined on Map E, an extract of which is reproduced below (Figure 11).

The proposed development site is zoned as 'Z5 City Centre' (blue shading). The majority of the adjacent lands are zoned similarly, with the exception of the housing estate to the south-west of the site which is zoned 'Z1 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods' (pale yellow shading).

3.3.2 Protected Spaces, Views and Structures

The designated Conservation area (red hatching) outlined in Figure 11 which is centred around Smithfield and Bow Street, extends along King Street North and the site's northern boundary to encapsulate a number of protected structures at the northern end of the Smithfield Square and the protected red brick façade along the King Street North boundary of the subject site. There are a number of other protected structures in the vicinity of the site, including one just across King Street North at the north-east corner of the site. The nearer Protected Structures will not be physically impacted by the proposed development but may be visually impacted by varying degrees. Whilst there are no specific

protected views or prospects listed for this area, views from within the Conservation Area may be impacted to an extent and a number of the verified views (photomontages) have been selected to assist in assessing the visual impact of the proposed development from the designated area.

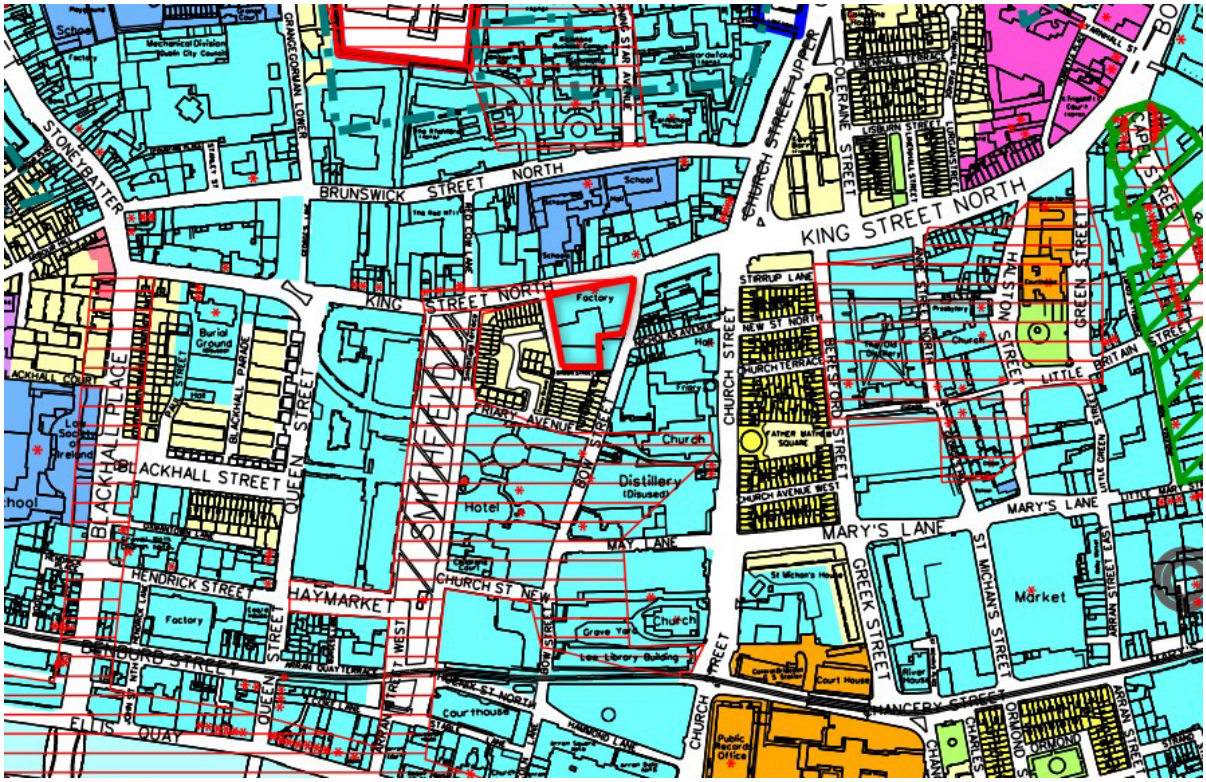

Figure 11: Extract from Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 - Land Use Zoning and Specific Objective Map E with additional annotated overlay by Mitchell + Associates (red line in centre indicates the approx. site ownership boundary)

4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

The development proposed is for student residential accommodation at King Street North, Bow Street and Brown Street North in the heart of Dublin's north inner city. The design for the proposed development is outlined in the drawings which are included within the submitted documents. The Architectural Design Statement, prepared by MOLA Architecture, contains a full description of the development, including the design rationale, materials proposed etc. The Landscape Design Report prepared by BSLA outlines the proposed design for the external areas within the site and provides the rationale for access, circulation etc., to and around the buildings.

4.2 Project Description

Ringline Investments Limited intend to apply for permission for development at 139-149 North King Street, Dublin 7. The development will consist of the demolition of existing structures on site, with the exception of the façade on North King Street (N) and Bow Street (E), which is a protected structure (RPS Ref. No. 8790 – north and east elevation only), which will be retained, improved and restored as part of the proposed development.

The proposal will provide a purpose-built student accommodation development in a 7-storey building over a partial existing basement with a setback at 5th floor and a further significant setback at the 6th floor level.

The proposal includes 361 no. student bedspaces, a ground level retail unit with frontage to both North King Street and Bow Street, communal facilities including a courtyard, external terrace at roof level at 5th and 6th floor and internal amenity spaces. The proposal also includes public realm improvements works along Brown Street North.

4.3 Proposed Scheme Design

The Architectural Design Statement sets out an analysis of the site within its urban context (existing and emerging), and outlines the design approach for the development which includes: broader masterplan considerations; the principles adopted in the development of the scheme layout; the provision of public and communal space; connectivity with adjacent uses/lands; massing and height of the development in context; and the development of the architectural treatments employed, including proposed façade treatments and materials.

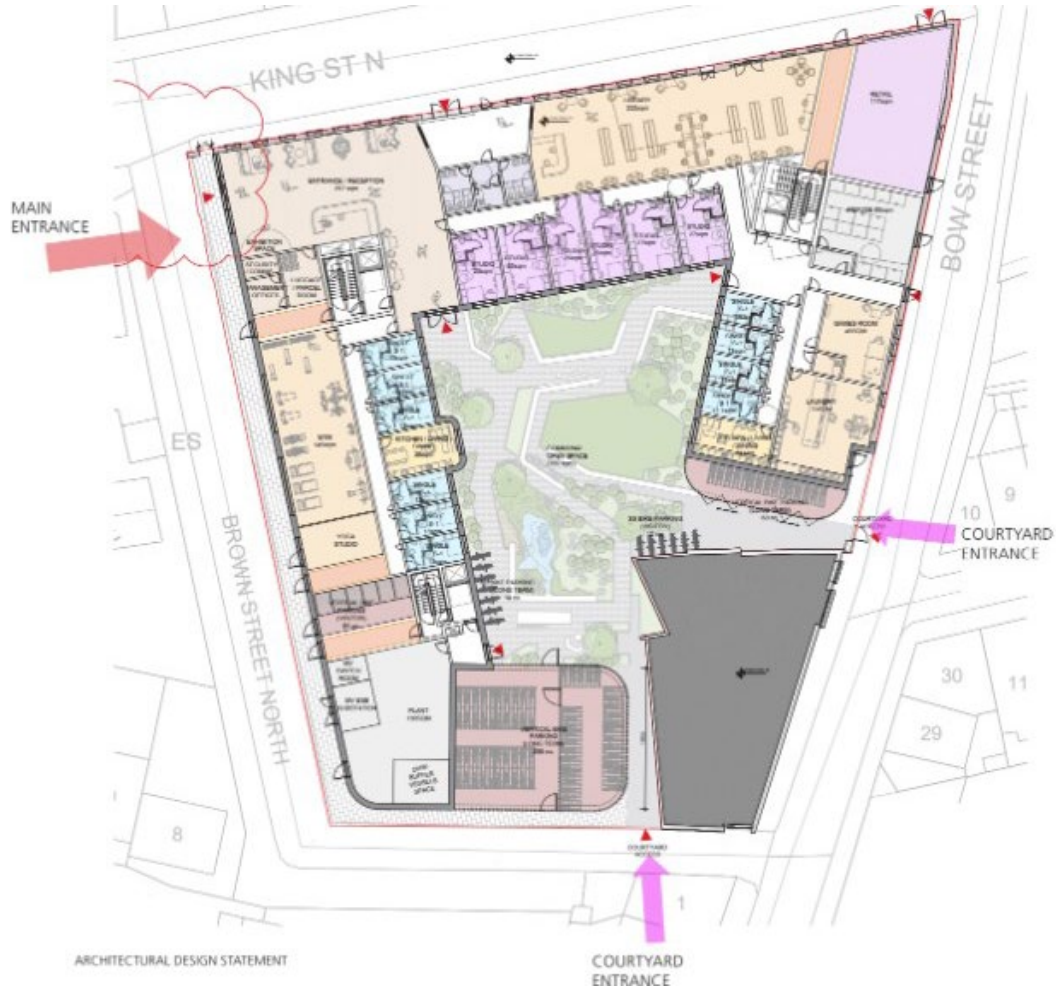

Figure 12: Proposed scheme design – scheme layout (Source: Architectural Design Statement, MOLA Architecture)

The design vision seeks to consolidate the fragmented edges of the site with a new residentially focussed development. This scheme creates a new streetscape to parts of the surrounding streets,

offering associated and locally enhanced public realm which is rather more pedestrian-oriented than the current condition.

The design specifically proposes an improved public realm along Brown Street North through the introduction of a one-way system, additional footpath, set down area, raised pedestrian traffic crossing (at junction with King Street North), planting and enhanced streetscape. Key points of the design include: replacement of the ageing fabric of this site with a new residential community; improved definition of the street edge along King Street North; activating the scheme frontages as far as is practicable in this context and the creation of appropriate and respectful scale relationships between the proposed scheme and its neighbouring buildings. An important feature of the design is the creation of a central open space within the enclosing accommodation blocks, which serves as an identifying focal communal space for the proposed new student community.

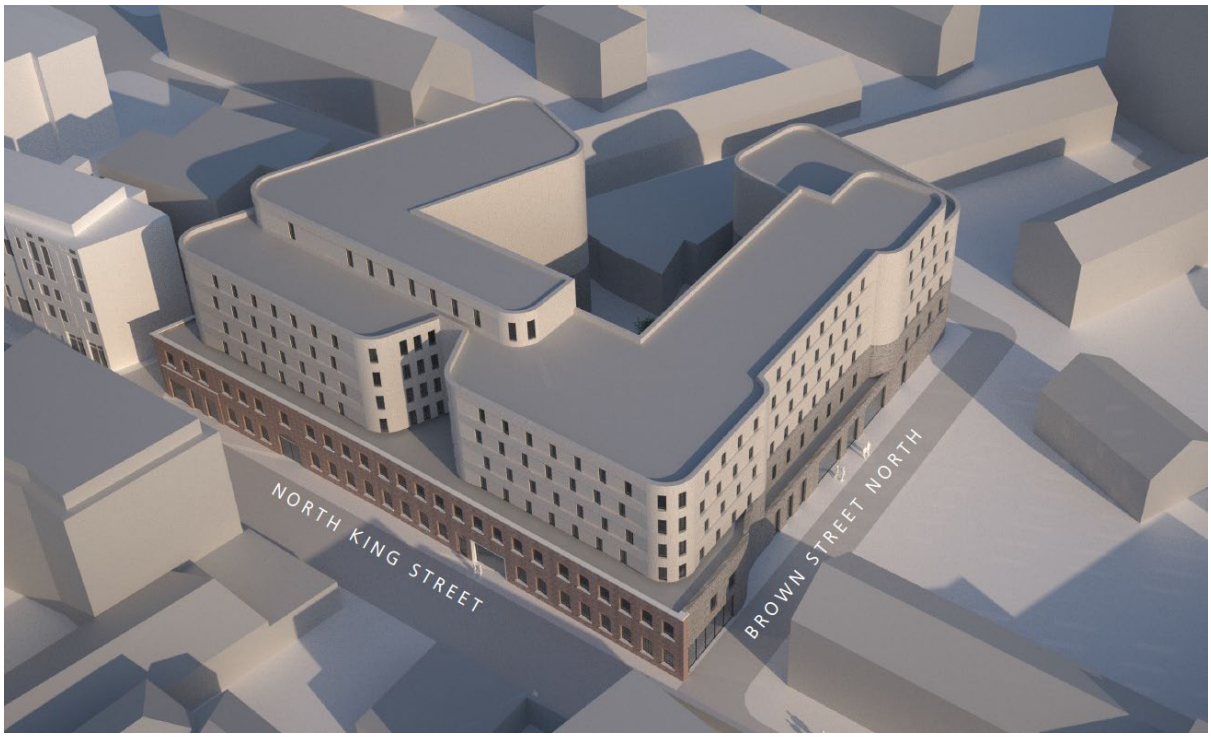

Figure 13: Aerial view of the proposed scheme (basic massing model), looking south-eastwards (Source: MOLA Architecture)

The main building volumes are arranged with the additional intention of promoting discreet connectivity and permeability between the site and the surrounding streets. Open spaces for communal use are also provided which relate to individual blocks at the upper levels, providing a greater degree of privacy to the residents. The design provides appropriate treatments at ground level with privacy screening where required. The associated landscape design within and around these spaces reflects the intended nature of their use. As well as the central ground floor courtyard it is proposed to have 2No. roof terraces, 1No. south facing terrace on level 5 and a smaller west facing terrace on the northern block on level 6. The terraces have been designed to have planting and landscape features around their perimeter to minimise student interface with the edge of the terraces, thus minimising any potential over-looking or noise issues. The terraces have been located to minimise impact on the 2 storey residences to the west of the site.

The relationship between the proposed new building and the protected red brick façade along North King Street (which must be retained) is perhaps the most sensitive aspect of the external architectural design. As such, it has required careful consideration by the Architect. The proposed design solution seeks to present the Protected Structure as a separate and somewhat prominent façade with the proposed new accommodation blocks discretely set behind it. Whilst the proposed new building stands 4 storeys taller than the existing 2-storey Protected Structure, it is also set back from it in order to provide clear differentiation. This is further accentuated by the contrasting lighter toned finishes which are however, of harmonious colouring. The main block is also split along this north facing façade which further accentuates separation from the Protected Structure which of course runs uninterrupted along this part of the street. This subtle contrast in treatment further assists in reducing the apparent building mass above. An additional single story on top of the main block is set further back again from North King Street and wraps around the main block into Bow Street.

CONTIGUOUS ELEVATION A: EXISTING

CONTIGUOUS ELEVATION A: PROPOSED

Figure 14: Contiguous north elevations (existing and proposed) along North King Street (Source: MOLA Architecture)

The proposed treatment of the Bow Street façade takes a similar approach to that proposed for the North King Street façade by retaining the protected section and setting the proposed block behind it. This 7-storey façade is however presented as a vertical face along this part of Bow Street, across from the 5 to 6-storey offices opposite. The proposed west facing façade offers a level of visual continuity of the north elevation as it wraps around into Brown Street North with the lower levels of the building again differentiated from the upper levels by a contrast in tone. This façade includes some further proposed modulation featuring a curved step-back within the lighter toned higher levels. The proposed southern block element is set one storey lower in order to relate more appropriately to the lower scaled buildings immediately adjacent to it and to facilitate greater light and sun penetration into the central courtyard and adjacent residential units.

The proposed building design employs a limited palette of materials externally to give the ensemble of building blocks a calm and rational identity. The predominant material is a pale-toned brick for the upper levels with limited metal cladding panels forming a key part of the fenestration design for these residential blocks.

5 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

5.1 Introduction

A proposed development such as this has the potential to impact upon the landscape and visual aspects of the existing urban environment in a number of ways, at both construction and operational stages. Effects can be short or long term; temporary or permanent. The purpose of this section of the report is to outline and describe the potential effects of such proposed development, upon the visual and landscape aspects of the immediate area, and further afield, where relevant.

5.2 Construction Phase

Potential impacts during the construction phase are related to temporary works, site activity, and vehicular movement within and around the subject site. Vehicular movement may increase in the immediate area, and temporary vertical elements such as cranes, scaffolding, site fencing, gates, plant and machinery etc., will be required and put in place. Most of the construction impacts will be temporary, and may include the following:

- Site preparation and demolition works and operations;
- Site excavations and earthworks;
- Site infrastructure and vehicular access;
- Materials storage, spoil heaps etc;
- Construction traffic, dust and other emissions;
- Temporary fencing/hoardings, site lighting and site buildings (including office accommodation);
- Cranes and scaffolding;

5.3 Operational Phase

The proposed development would consist of the insertion of a substantial new residential development, its associated accesses, public realm, including adjacent footpaths and a new proposed landscape infrastructure and its ancillary elements, onto the subject site. This would replace the existing aging and rather utilitarian commercial factory and warehouse buildings currently occupying the site. The proposed building is more substantial and considerably taller than the existing buildings on the site. It would therefore be expected to be more visibly prominent within the immediate area and may be a more dominating presence within the existing streetscape. It may also be more visible from further afield.

Whilst this in itself, represents a substantial change to the existing site, the landscape generally varying scales, though the trend with proposed new developments is for a concomitant increase in scale and height. The proposed scheme would be expected to create landscape impacts relating to a change in the nature and type of facilities currently on the site, but which would be entirely in keeping with those prevalent in the local area. This should readily facilitate the assimilation of the proposed scheme into the broader community and the realisation of the potential for increased positive social contact and diversity it can bring to the existing local community.

The increased building height proposed in the new development represents a divergence from the existing buildings on the site, but again, not from the prevailing norm - as such it could potentially create visual impacts on views from existing residential areas around the site. Views from Smithfield Square and along King Street North in the vicinity of the site also have the potential to be impacted.

In terms of potential visual impacts, whilst the proposed building type is not uncharacteristic within the broader context, there is a clear change of building scale between what is currently there and what is proposed. Given the relatively flat topography in and around the site, the taller scale of the proposed buildings does make it potentially more visible from greater distance. Whilst the sensitivities of those living around the site may be raised by the insertion of taller buildings on the subject site, the level of potential impact can be mitigated somewhat by well-considered design. The potential for a measure of visual impact, experienced by people visiting, living in, or using these areas for social and/or recreational purposes, could be considered to be generally moderate or in some localised areas, reasonably high. The selected viewpoints for the preparation of photomontages takes this into account by taking views from corresponding locations.

The design rationale adopted and the architectural and landscape architectural approach to the design of the proposed scheme and the details employed, seek to respond to such issues and to mitigate negative effects on both the broader landscape character and the visual amenity of the area – these are outlined further in Section 7, Mitigation Measures, below.

6 POTENTIAL CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Current guidelines suggest that a determination should be made as to whether cumulative effects are likely to occur – these are outlined in the current GLVIA guidelines (3rd edition) as "additional effects caused by the proposed development when considered in conjunction with other proposed developments of the same or different types". Such determination needs to be made in respect of any planned/permitted development of a similar nature which will have a bearing on the assessment of the proposed development - this is subject to the assessor's judgement in the matter. The predicted cumulative effects currently related to the proposed development are outlined in Section 8.6 below.

7 MITIGATION MEASURES

7.1 Construction Phase

The building site including a site compound with site offices, site security fencing, scaffolding and temporary works will be visible during the construction phase, from a range of viewpoints around the site. Such elements are generally viewed as temporary and unavoidable features of construction in any setting. The perimeter site hoarding will screen from view much of the construction activity and materials at ground level. Other mitigation measures proposed during this delivery stage of the development, revolve primarily around the implementation of appropriate site management procedures during the construction works – such as the control of lighting, storage of materials, placement of site offices and compounds, control of vehicular access, and effective dust and dirt control measures, etc.

Such mitigation is set out in the Preliminary Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prepared by CORA Consulting Engineers as part of the documentation submitted for planning for the scheme. This outlines a range of construction phase mitigation measures, many of which are relevant to the reduction of the temporary impacts on the landscape and visual environment during the construction phase. It forms the basis for the required measures to be included in the appointed contractor's Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP will be prepared by the appointed contractor and subsequently submitted to and agreed with the Local Authority prior to the commencement of any construction works. This is a working document which will be continually reviewed and amended through the construction phase to ensure effective mitigation throughout. It will deal with all issues related to the construction, delivery and management of the scheme during the construction stage and will ultimately include details on the following:

- Daily and weekly working hours;
- Agreed haul routes for incoming materials;
- Use of licensed hauliers;
- Disposal sites;
- Travel arrangements for construction personnel;
- Appropriate on-site parking arrangements for construction personnel to prevent overspill parking on the local road network;
- Temporary construction entrances to be provided;
- Wheel wash facilities if/as required;
- Dust suppression;
- Road cleaning and sweeping measures to be put in place if required;
- Temporary construction signage to be put in place and maintained;
- Liaison arrangements with the local community.

7.2 Operational Phase

The design rationale and details employed seek to mitigate negative effects on the landscape character and upon visual amenity of the area by:

- Employing a subtle variation of tone, colour, texture and reflectiveness across the facades, particularly those where the buildings can be seen from a greater distance and the use of appropriate and harmonising colour, tones and materials to integrate with other buildings/structures nearby and within the existing scheme and in order to reduce the apparent massing of the buildings;
- The setting back and stepping back of the taller proposed built elements towards the centre of the site to assist in reducing the apparent massing adjacent to the surrounding smaller scale residential buildings;
- Rationalisation of all services elements and any other potential visual clutter, its incorporation internally within building envelopes (as far as practically possible) and the inclusion of integrated screening at roof level to conceal plant etc, where this is not possible;
- Including communal open space within the design which links with and relates appropriately to existing adjacent/neighbouring public realm and open spaces;

- The provision, maintenance and management of an associated and sensitively considered soft landscape design for the development, which assists in the integration of the buildings within the existing urban landscape;

In addition, it would be further effective in quickly establishing the proposed soft landscape to ensure the appropriate establishment maintenance of planting through the agreement and monitoring of planting growth parameters/targets and by the engagement of appropriate professional advisors throughout the construction period and beyond, as appropriate.

8 RESIDUAL EFFECTS

8.1 Introduction

There are two main inter-related aspects to be addressed in considering the impact and residual effects of the development proposals:

- The landscape as a resource and the associated landscape character – these relate primarily to the landscape's physical components, which may include: topography; vegetation; built elements etc, and how they translate into the perceived character of the existing landscape of the site in its context. How is this physical landscape impacted by the proposal and how do people perceive the change? This will include assessment of the effects of the proposed development on the social and cultural amenity aspects of landscape. The residual landscape effects are outlined in Section 8.4, below;
- The visual amenity and the proposed views of the development, relative to the existing site and the associated effects on the visual environment and on visual amenity. These are outlined in Section 8.5, below.

The effects of each are assessed for the Operational Phase of the proposed development, in accordance with the methodology for each, as set out in Sections 2.2 and 2.3 respectively and a qualitative value is included. The duration of effects is assessed in Section 8.2, below, and the Construction Phase effects are considered and assessed in Section 8.3, below. The cumulative effects caused by the proposed development when considered in conjunction with other proposed developments of the same or different types, are assessed in Section 8.6, below.

8.2 Duration of effects

The duration of effects is determined by the life of the proposed development, as tempered by any mitigating effect of the maturing designed landscape which is proposed as an integral part of the development. In this case the development may have an expected/design life of up to 60 years or possibly beyond. Effects on both landscape character and visual amenity during the Operational Phase of the proposed development are therefore deemed to be of **long-term or permanent** duration in this instance. Construction Phase effects are generally of much shorter duration and are considered in Section 8.3 below.

8.3 Construction Phase Effects

Initially the erection of site hoarding and demolition works will be carried out, site access points will be established, and site accommodation units placed. Early in the construction period, the required excavations for the construction of building foundations will commence. The erection of cranes and/or scaffolding as appropriate will take place and temporary site lighting will be established. Removal and/or storage of excavated materials from site and the delivery of construction materials will generate increased traffic within, to and from the site. As construction progresses over the construction period, impacts will vary with the on-going business of construction, delivery and storage of materials, the erection of the buildings, etc. Mitigation measures have been proposed as per Section 7.1, to minimise the impact of the construction works on the site environs. Generally, where these are carried out, they are effective in limiting adverse construction phase effects.

The landscape and visual effects of these changes are most likely to be experienced as adverse effects by people living in the existing nearby residential properties and to a lesser (and diminishing) extent by residents as one moves further from the site. The experience of people using Smithfield Square to the south-west for say, recreational purposes is unlikely to be significantly impacted by the construction of the proposed new development.

Generally, following the inclusion and completion of the mitigation measures outlined in Section 7.1, the landscape and visual effects during the Construction Phase are likely to vary from **moderate** and **negative** to **slight** and **neutral**, depending on the stage of construction, the intensity of site activity and the relative proximity of receptors to the construction works. The construction impacts will be of **short-term** duration (refer to the categorisation of effect duration in Section 2.5).

8.4 Operational Phase - Landscape Effects

8.4.1 Landscape Sensitivity

Save for the presence of the Protected Structure (and its encapsulation within the Conservation Area), the site has no specific landscape designations or policies which protect its status. Whilst the Protected Structure and its location within the Conservation Area impose obligations on (primarily) the Architect when considering the design of the proposed development, the site generally has rather limited value as a landscape resource. The existing site and the buildings on it are not held in high regard for their landscape qualities, either locally or further afield. The site is therefore not generally considered to be a landscape which is sensitive to change. Overall, the sensitivity of the landscape which is subject to change, is assessed to be **low**.

8.4.2 Magnitude of change

Whilst the change proposed may be considered substantial in terms of the site itself, the nature of the proposed development is considered appropriate in this urban context. The scale, height, and massing of the proposed building(s) is generally greater than the existing buildings on site and to a degree, greater than that prevailing within the surrounding urban landscape, which currently comprises offices, commercial and residential development of varying scales. The proposed development is however, proposed in a manner that avoids inappropriate contrasts with the existing neighbouring buildings. It

also provides an appropriate level of residential density by concentrating the higher elements (up to 7 storeys) and placing them along the northern end of Bow Street, across from existing 5 and 6-storey office buildings. The proposed development represents a fully considered scheme which provides an ensemble of buildings with an associated and 'purposed' set of external spaces which are well-integrated within their broader proposed landscape context. The proposed new development and its associated landscape provide an appropriate contemporary and designed solution which is not uncharacteristic in many ways within its context and offers a potential range of benefits for the new and the existing residential communities. The proposed scheme also fits with the longer-term planning aspirations as expressed in the current Dublin City Development Plan.

The design for the proposed development is a well-considered, high-quality scheme which is appropriate to the area and includes both design and specific mitigation measures that successfully address localised potential adverse landscape impacts. As such it offers positive qualities within the surrounding residential community. Whilst it may create some initially negative localised effects, it also creates a number of landscape improvements with positive attributes and which, with the appropriate future maintenance and management will further improve as the scheme matures over time.

The magnitude of change is assessed as **medium - high**.

8.4.3 Landscape effects

Following the inclusion and completion of the mitigation measures proposed in Section 7.2 the residual landscape effects resulting from a low landscape sensitivity, and a medium-high magnitude of change, is **moderate**. Qualitatively the landscape effect is **neutral**. These terms are defined as, effects that alter the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with the landscape context and with existing and emerging baseline trends and the quality of the landscape is unaffected.

8.5 Operational Phase - Visual Effects

The visual effects of the proposed development will primarily impact residents living in the houses and apartments closest to the site, and particularly those with views directly towards or into the site. In these cases, the effects of the development are experienced by people in and near to the site, where the effect is potentially greater and is frequently recurring. The prospect of a changed relationship between proposed development on the site and the existing residential community of Friary Grove to the west and south-west of the site, creates some increased sensitivity, largely because the scale of the existing buildings on the site is relatively low when compared to the generally larger scale of buildings in the vicinity and the current trends in this area towards greater height.

Views from a distance tend to occupy smaller portions of the field of view and there are many more competing elements within the view – this creates a diluting effect. It should also be remembered that the visual qualities of a place contribute significantly to its character, and these create a large proportion of one's memory of a place – this is particularly so for say, visitors whose experience is often fleeting.

The assessment of visual effects, using comparative 'before' and 'after' photomontages assists in identifying the nature and magnitude of the proposed change on the visual environment. The value placed on these is inevitably influenced by the perceptions of the receptor and what they are engaged

in at the time. In general, the changes to the visual environment created by this proposed development will produce noticeable visual effects upon a range of receptors. However, the actual visual penetration into the site from adjacent residential areas and from areas readily accessible to the public, is somewhat limited, due largely to the presence of intervening buildings. The illustrated views are therefore a representative selection of views from around the proposed development site, which are considered potentially the most sensitive. In accordance with the guidelines, they are also selected in order to provide sufficient landscape context to be able to properly assess the nature and scale of the effect.

The photomontages are important in illustrating the effects of the proposed scheme from the potentially sensitive viewpoints. In this instance, they also serve to support and illustrate an aspect of the assessment of effects on landscape character. It is important to remember that whilst photomontages are a useful tool in illustrating comparative visual impact, they are recognised as having their limitations and potential dangers. The guidelines for their use in assessment clearly advocate their use in the context of a site visit to the viewpoint locations and point out that photomontages alone should not be expected to capture or reflect the complexity underlying the full visual experience (refer to the GLVIA, 3rd Edition).

Because the expected life of the proposed development is up to 60 years or possibly beyond, the duration of predicted visual effects for all views is assessed as **long term or permanent** - as is the case for predicted landscape effects (as outlined in Section 8.4, above).

8.5.1 Assessment of views

A total of 14 viewpoints has been selected for which photomontages (verified views) have been prepared - these are included in the submission documents, within a separate A3 report prepared by Digital Dimensions. They illustrate the visual effect of the proposed development on the selected views taken from the surrounding landscape. The assessment of the visual effects of the proposed development from these viewpoints is provided as follows:

View 1;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking east down King Street North (centre of view) from the junction of King Street North and George's Lane. Queen Street is to the right. The subject site is some 200m distant, down King Street North in the centre of view. The view is dominated by the road surface, markings and pedestrian crossing in the foreground and by the 6-7 storey apartment/office blocks beyond.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates a part of the proposed new development which is a rather minor partial intrusion into the view, which is not uncharacteristic in the context. There is no change to the visual amenity from this viewpoint.

Magnitude of change is considered **low-negligible**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **slight** to **imperceptible**, and **neutral**.

View 2;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is also a view looking east down King Street North but from a location closer to the subject site. The view is characterised by a mix of older buildings and gap sites to the left and the much more recent developments to the right. The site lies beyond the 3-4 storey dark red-brown brick residential development in the centre of view.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates the partial intrusion of the proposed development into the view, above and beyond the dark red-brown brick residential development. The proposed development being light toned, contrasts with the existing residential development but visually recedes against the sky light. Its mass is not readily perceived in this context.

Magnitude of change is considered **low**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **slight**, and **neutral**.

View 3;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

As for Views 1 and 2, this is a further view looking east down King Street North but from a location adjacent to the Cobblestone bar, at the northern end of Smithfield Square and closer to the subject site. The pale tones of Little Italy can be picked up in the centre of view and stand out in contrast to the darker red brick tones along the south side of the street. It should be noted that at this distance (approx. 70m) the Protected Structure is not readily distinguishable against the red brick office building beyond. In addition, the taller office buildings behind the Protected Structure and Little Italy, protrude above them in rather ragged fashion, breaking the skyline.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**-**medium**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates a part of the proposed development set back from the alignment of the Protected Structure which is also now accentuated due to the paler tones of the proposed building. Despite its six storeys, the proposed building's height and massing do not read as such – this is largely

due to the light tones of the building's facades receding visually against the sky light and the now very clearly defined top line of the Protected Structure. The differentiated façade treatment above the main entrance of the proposed building is effective in retaining the sense of the new building being set behind a lower 2-storey structure, which is both allied to the Protected Structure yet differentiated enough to allow the Protected Structure to 'stand clear' of it. The curved stepping in of the northern façade of the building also very subtly suggests two building elements from this angle and this assists further in reducing the apparent mass of the building in this view. The clean lines of the proposed building together with its warm white tones now simplify the previously ragged skyline. In addition, the proposed building does not overtly dominate in the view or impose itself over the adjacent residential buildings in the foreground. Whilst the composition in the view has changed, the new building does not significantly alter the character of the view, however the visual amenity, if anything, is now somewhat enhanced.

Magnitude of change is considered **medium**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **moderate**, and **positive**.

View 4;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking south-west from Church Street Upper at a location just above Linenhall Terrace. The main road in the foreground, together with its markings visually dominates in the view.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates a red profile line denoting the outline of the proposed building and indicating it will not be visible in this view.

Magnitude of change is considered **negligible**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **imperceptible**.

View 5;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking westwards along King Street North from the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Church Street Upper and King Street North. The major road junction and its road markings in the foreground, together with the 6-storey red brick building behind, visually dominate in the view. Further down King Street North, in the background, the red brick Protected Structure forming the northern

edge of the subject site can be clearly discerned.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates, as for View 3, the accentuation of the retained Protected Structure through the subtle insertion of the proposed building, which is set back from the street alignment and is finished in pale tones which also significantly reduces its apparent height and mass. In this view the effect of visually splitting the new building via the curved stepping in of the northern façade and creating an impression of twin buildings, is more enhanced than in View 3. This effectively reduces any tendency for the mass of the main building above to dominate and further enhances the intended sense of separation from the Protected Structure.

Magnitude of change is considered **low**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **slight**, and **positive**.

View 6;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking westwards from the junction of King Street North and Linenhall Street. This view is from a location approx. 130m further back than View 5 and is from a similar angle. The visual context for the proposed development in this view is one of a hard urban environment comprising fairly dense residential apartment complexes facing directly onto the busy street below.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates a red profile line denoting the outline of the proposed building and indicating it will not be visible in this view.

Magnitude of change is considered **negligible**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **imperceptible**.

View 7;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking west down Nicholas Avenue from the corner of Church Street and New Street North. This focussed view is only likely to be experienced by a small proportion of people on Church

Street as it will only be glimpsed by most pedestrians and vehicle drivers. Even drivers on Nicholas Avenue will be facing away from the development as it is a one-way street. The site lies beyond the pale yellow building at the end of the street (Kish Fish) and beyond it, the gas lanterns in Smithfield Square and the upper levels of the Smithfield apartments can be seen.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates how the upper levels of the south and west blocks of the proposed building can be seen beyond Kish Fish, together with a very small sliver of the 7-storey east block to the right of centre. The proposed building now masks the view through to the Smithfield Square lanterns and buildings. In terms of scale or massing, the proposed building doesn't appear to be out of character in this view and whilst its pale tone contrasts somewhat with the prevalent red brick in this view, they do tend to render the building visually recessive against sky light

Magnitude of change is considered **low**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **slight**, and **neutral**.

View 8;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking westwards down Nicholas Avenue from a similar angle to View 7, though its location is much closer to the subject site. This potentially opens up a broader clear view of the proposed building and its proximity to the 2-storey residences on the right of view, despite their orientation away from it, may nevertheless lead to a slightly greater sensitivity amongst those residents. Whilst the orientation of the view tends to focus on the Kish Fish building at the end of the street, the ornate brick detailing of the former church building on the left also has a tendency to lead the eye. Again, however this view is generally only available to pedestrians walking westwards on the street.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low-medium**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates a substantial portion of the proposed building, including a part of the 7-storey element in Bow Street (on the right of view), some 45m from the viewpoint. The articulation of the main blocks of the building around a central courtyard provide variation of apparent scale and depth to the proposed development from this viewpoint with the south and west blocks of the building appearing relatively small scale when compared to the taller eastern block. However, even this taller element does not appear overtly dominating in the view - this is due in part to the lighter toned finishes of the proposed building but it is also due to the strident red brick colouring of the foreground houses and the fact they are set in front of the proposed larger building.

Magnitude of change is considered **medium**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **moderate**, and **neutral**.

View 9;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking north along Bow Street from a location near the junction with Friary Avenue. This part of Bow Street is characterised by the row of 2-storey red brick houses (St. Francis Terrace), and the stone-faced Capuchin Friary and Day Centre across the street. The far end of the street features a mixed bag of later developments of varying scales and finishes. A part of the subject site can be identified by the pale grey profiled metal-clad building to the right of centre, beyond the black brewery building.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low-medium**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates the proposed development rising up at the far end of the street beyond the black brewery building. From this angle the 5-storey south block (left of centre) appears as tall as the 7-storey east block – this is due to the closer proximity of the south block. Whilst the proposed development is prominent in the view, its height and massing is not overtly dominant and the retained presence of the brewery building and Kish Fish offers an intervening break between the new development and the terrace of houses along the street.

Magnitude of change is considered **medium-high**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **moderate** and **neutral**.

View 10;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking north along Bow Street from a location approx. 70m south of the viewpoint for View 9. The street is lined with recently re-purposed distillery-related buildings (apartments, offices and commercial outlets) of a much larger scale (up to 7 storeys) than the 2-storey houses of St. Francis Terrace or the Capuchin Day centre which are just visible further up on either side of the street.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **medium**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view indicates how the 7-storey east block of the proposed development can be seen at the far end of the street. Its verticality and light-toned finishes echo the recent contemporary additions

to the former distillery buildings on the left of view. The harmonising tones and colouring employed create a sense of rhythm along the full length of the street with the proposed building at its terminus. The visual amenity of the existing view is, if anything, marginally enhanced by the proposed new insertion in this view.

Magnitude of change is considered **low-medium**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **moderate-slight**, and **positive**.

View 11;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking north across the Liffey from Usher's Quay. Prominent in the mix of buildings along the north side of the river is St. Paul's Church with its classical portico, clock tower and cupola.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **high**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates a red profile line denoting the outline of the proposed building and indicating it will not be visible in this view.

Magnitude of change is considered **negligible**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **imperceptible**.

View 12;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking north-east from the junction of Friary Avenue and Friary Grove. The proposed development site can just be identified by the grey building wall between the 2 and 3-storey red brick residential buildings in the foreground. These houses are part of a small residential enclave at the northern end of Smithfield Square which backs onto the 2-storey red brick terrace at the north end of Bow Street. As for view 8, the fairly close proximity of the proposed development to these 2-and 3-storey residences, despite their orientation away from it, may nevertheless lead to a slightly greater sensitivity amongst the existing residents and they, together with visitors, experience this view on entering the estate. Having said that, residents and visitors alike are in no doubt as to the broader existing context of larger scale buildings in this part of the north inner city.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low-medium**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view shows part of the upper levels of the proposed development located across Brown Street North, beyond the existing 2 and 3-storey houses of Friary Grove. Whilst the nature and scale of the proposed building is in contrast with the individualised nature of the existing housing, it does not appear overtly dominating – again this is partly due to the pale-toned finishes employed but also to its location to the north-east of the existing properties and to their rear. The viewpoint is relatively close to the proposed development and provides limited context for it in the view. Consequently, whilst the proposed development is not uncharacteristic of other more recent developments in the vicinity, this is not apparent in this view and therefore only residents and visitors entering the estate are likely to experience the view as a disimprovement.

Magnitude of change is considered **low-medium**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **moderate-slight**, and **negative**.

View 13;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view from the northern end of Smithfield Square looking north-eastwards towards the 2 and 3-storey Friary Grove Estate. As for View 12, whilst the view conveys a context of almost exclusively low level residential housing, the viewer is aware of a broader inner-city context of generally higher rise buildings all around this housing estate. In some respects, the general public frequenting Smithfield Square will experience the scale and nature of the Friary Grove housing estate as atypical and possibly somewhat anomalous for this developing part of the city.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **low**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view shows a small part of the proposed development peeking above the 2-storey houses in Friary Avenue with the larger part screened by the 3-storey houses. The proposed building creates a very small visual impact on this view, however the proposed detailing and finishes further render this impact as almost indiscernible in the overall context.

Magnitude of change is considered **low**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **slight**, and **neutral**.

View 14;

Existing View and Visual Receptor Sensitivity;

This is a view looking north-east from a location mid-way up Smithfield Square. The expanse and the broader context of this much-frequented public space, enclosed by larger scaled buildings to either side, begins to emerge in this view.

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered **medium**.

Proposed view and Magnitude of Change;

The proposed view illustrates by way of the red line, the profile of the proposed development which will not be visible in this view.

Magnitude of change is considered **negligible**.

Visual Effect;

The visual effect of the proposed development in this view is assessed as **imperceptible**.

In summary, the representative photomontages illustrating the visual effects of the proposed development on the local urban context clearly indicate that where the proposed building will be seen in the view, it will generally have only slight to moderate effects and that these will be mostly neutral though in a number of instances, they are positive in terms of how they affect the quality of the visual environment and the visual amenity of the area. Despite the proposed development's proximity to the neighbouring 2 and 3-storey residential properties to the west and south, the disposition and scaling of the various parts of the building are effective in mitigating the adverse effects of such contrasts. In one instance only, at the entrance to the Friary Grove estate, the proposed building will create a small but fleeting adverse effect on residents' experience as they enter the estate.

8.6 Cumulative Effects related to the proposed development

There is currently only one development within the vicinity of the subject site, which could potentially be relevant to the assessment of the proposed development in terms of potential cumulative effects. However, it is not considered likely to have any real bearing on the cumulative landscape and visual impact and the views assessed within this report.

Planning Ref: WEB2502/24
Location: Corner of Brunswick Street North and Church Street Upper, Dublin 7
Applicant: Durkan Residential Ltd.

Brief description: Demolition of existing buildings, construction of a housing development scheme divided into 2 no. apartment blocks ranging between 3 - 6 no. storeys in height. The new development comprises 34 no. residential units (each with private balconies/winter gardens/rear gardens) etc.

This development was recently granted planning permission.

As regards the potential cumulative effect on the selected views and visual amenity of this area, the permitted development if/when built, will have no material effect on selected views of the proposed development.

9 'DO NOTHING' SCENARIO

If the proposed development were not to proceed, the site would presumably, remain in its present form for a period. In such circumstances the current land uses and the maintenance and management of them would also presumably continue as at present. The existing nature of the site and its associated visual amenity would remain as is.

10 WORST CASE SCENARIO

As for most development construction schemes, the worst-case scenario in terms of landscape and visual impact is where demolition works, vegetation removal and excavation works commence and are substantially completed, but subsequently the scheme is halted before full completion of the buildings, associated infrastructure and new landscape works. In such cases there is substantial adverse impact without the potential benefits promised by the full realisation of the project.

11 MONITORING & REINSTATEMENT

The maintenance and management of the completed residential facility will be carried out by approved contracted specialists in buildings and facilities management. The maintenance of the associated soft landscape works would normally form part of that specialist's agreement, however an approved system of monitoring the health and vigour of the proposed new planting would be an essential aspect of this work. The timely planting and the maintenance and management required to successfully establish new planting with the projected rates of growth and general performance required, needs an appropriate effective input from professionals with the necessary expertise to ensure it is effectively delivered. The monitoring of the planting performance and suitably appropriate responses to ensure same will be essential to the all-round success of the development as proposed.

12 DIFFICULTIES IN COMPILING INFORMATION

No difficulties were encountered in the preparation of this report.

13 REFERENCES

1. Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment, published by Routledge , 3rd Edition 2013.
2. 'Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), May 2022.
3. Visual Representation of Development Proposals: Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Landscape Institute UK (LI) September 2019.
4. The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028.