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03/08/22

RE: Planning Report for the Sleaveen Road, Macroom Part 8 Scheme. (16no. Residential units).

To whom it concerns,

The proposed development consists of the demolition of a derelict dwelling and sheds over two sites totalling 0.19ha and construction of 16no. residential units at Sleaveen Road, Macroom, Co. Cork. The 16no. units comprises: 4 x 2-bed, 2-storey Townhouses, (terrace); 5 x 1-bed units, 1 x 2-bed unit at ground level; 5 x 1-bed units, 1 x 2-bed unit at first floor level Apartments, (terrace), communal amenity space and off street car parking .

Core Strategy

Macroom is a 'Ring Town' with a population of 3,765 (2016 Census) with a 2028 target of 4,809 or requirement to deliver 399 residential units to accommodate same. With 45ha of zoned land, 'brownfield' infill sites such as this will need to deliver higher densities, particularly, targeted socio-economic/ demographic or age friendly units to meet these targets, and counter unsustainable growth in surrounding rural areas.

The **core strategy objective CS 2-4 (b)** is to establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of future population growth, in with this core strategy so that Macroom can accelerate its rate of growth and achieve a critical mass of population to enable them to maximise their potential to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport.

Zoning

The subject site traverses two distinct land use zonings as per the County Development Plan 2022, the majority of the site is zoned Town Centre, (lands to east of Sleaveen Road), whereas lands to west of road is zoned Existing Residential/ Mixed Residential and other uses. The most northerly plot of TC zoned lands is within a designated Regeneration Area.

The 'development site' including the residential component is zoned town centre.

The subordinate plot with car parking is zoned **ZU 18-9 "Existing Residential / Mixed Residential and Other Uses"** with the objective that "the scale of new residential and mixed residential ... should normally respect the pattern and grain of existing urban development in the surrounding area. Overall increased densities area encouraged..."

ZU 18-17 “Town Centre / Neighbourhood Centres” with the objective to “promote the development of town centres... as the primary location for retail and other uses. Residential development will also be encouraged...”

MM-T-01 Town Centre Core Area Objective lands- “Promote the town centre as the primary area for retail and mixed-use development, encourage sensitive refurbishment/ redevelopment of existing sites while respecting the heritage character of the built fabric of the town and wherever possible to promote public realm improvements.

Any new proposals will need to create a positive edge on the street with active frontages and provide a mix of uses compatible with its town centre location. Proposals for new development within this overall core area will also need to make provision for linkages particularly pedestrian and cycleways within the core area.”

The site forms part of and adjoins a regeneration site south of Market Square

MM REGEN 05 South of Market Square

“This is a significant opportunity site for development identified south of the Market Square located behind the Main Street.

The site to the south of Market Square includes some vacant properties and sizeable garden to the rear and side of houses which combine to create potential for a significant infill site that harnesses its prime location in the town centre.

It is the intention of the Council that each of these sites is developed as a cohesive unit integrated with the Market Square. In this regard, they will be supported in the assembly of land. They also have constraints with regards to accessibility from the Main Street, which will be needed to be addressed. Both MM REGEN 04 and 05 should play a key role in the relocation of on-street parking from the Market Square.”

Fig. 1 Site to left. Town Centre lands. Proposed residential units



Fig. 2 Site to right. (Shed) Existing Residential/ Mixed Residential and other uses. Proposed parking



Density and Mix

The proposed scheme of 16 units on 0.19ha equates to 80units per ha. Macroom is one of 6 Ring towns and is prioritised as a centre for growth and plays a pivotal role in linking south west Cork and north west Cork. There is a need to slow down the rapid expansion of rural population in the Ring while strengthening the urban areas. There is no upper limit on density for larger towns on residential zoned lands. (note that parking element of site is zoned Residential (Mixed). Given the infrastructural investment such as the N22, higher density within the town centre is appropriate.

The 16-unit scheme comprises of two terraces: 4 x 2-bed, 2-storey Townhouses, (terrace); 5 x 1-bed units, 1 x 2-bed unit at ground level; 5 x 1-bed units, 1 x 2-bed unit at first floor level Apartments, (terrace). All units are dual aspect. Houses and Grd floor apartments are served by private amenity spaces. The variety of units is appropriate.

Quality Assessment

The floor area of the apartments exceed the minimum standards as per '**Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities,**' (45sq.m. for 1-bed , 63sq.m. for 2-bed unit). First floor apartments have a 5sq.m. balcony. The balcony to Apartment 14 is considered to be marginally deficient and should be increased if possible to 6sq.m. private amenity spaces to grd floor apartments range between 30sq.m. and 48sq.m. This is very positive.

The townhouses (2-bed, 4 person) exceed the '**Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities**' standards with an overall floor area of 85sq.m., exceeding the 80sq.m. requirement. The private amenity spaces range between 20 and 36sq.m. which is less than ideal in comparison to the Grd Floor Apartments, but can be accepted given that the Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines supports reduced provision on infill site of less than 0.25ha subject to overall design quality.

Townscape

The site is a narrow linear site, on a steep slope falling south to north. The site also falls by 3metres East to West. The area is characterized by 2-storey terraces 19th and 20th C building stock and some recent infill schemes. It is typical of a market town. The scale and massing respects the established character. The Flat roof form is a divergence from the A-frame roofs pre dominating, but is a welcome variation in this instance and will minimize over shadowing.

The proposed redevelopment accords with the regeneration objective and the town centre core area objective. The proposal is considered to be sensitive to the existing sites / residences and respects the scale, form and massing of the built fabric of the town. It will result in localised public realm improvements



Fig. 3 Proposed layout

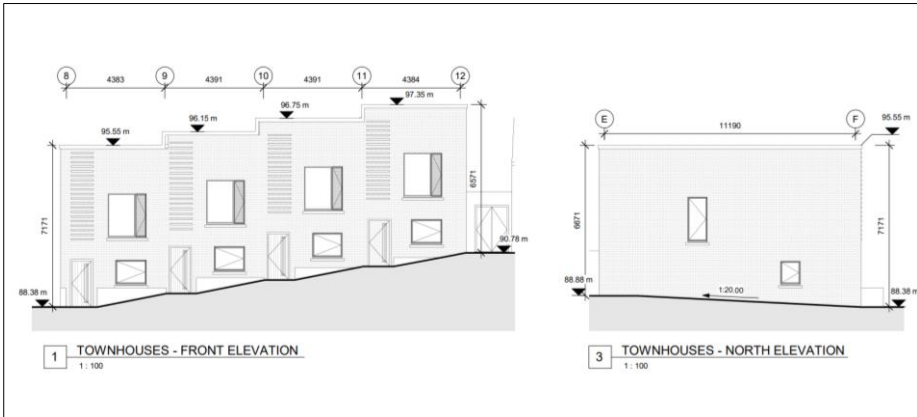


Fig. 4 Townhouse Elevations

The proposal creates a positive edge to the street with active frontages. The low level of car parking is considered appropriate given sites proximity to town centre and local services and will reinforce prioritisation of active modes along this constrained route. Compact urban development, place-making and townscape enhancement is considered to be a priority for a small infill site such as this. The scheme is considered to be a progressive evolution of the ‘precedent’ Council development on the adjoining site to the north.

The 2-storey scale of development respects the massing of the existing streetscape and would not seriously injure residential amenities in the vicinity. High levels of residential amenity are achieved within the scheme by way of internal floor areas and provision of private amenity spaces and a communal area.

Amenity

Private amenity space may not strictly accord with design minimum of 48sq.m. but given that many future residents will be senior citizens, this is considered acceptable.

Public amenity space exceeds the required 12-18% and is considered preferable to car parking, protecting residential amenities. The site is proximate to significant green infrastructure such as the Castle Demesne

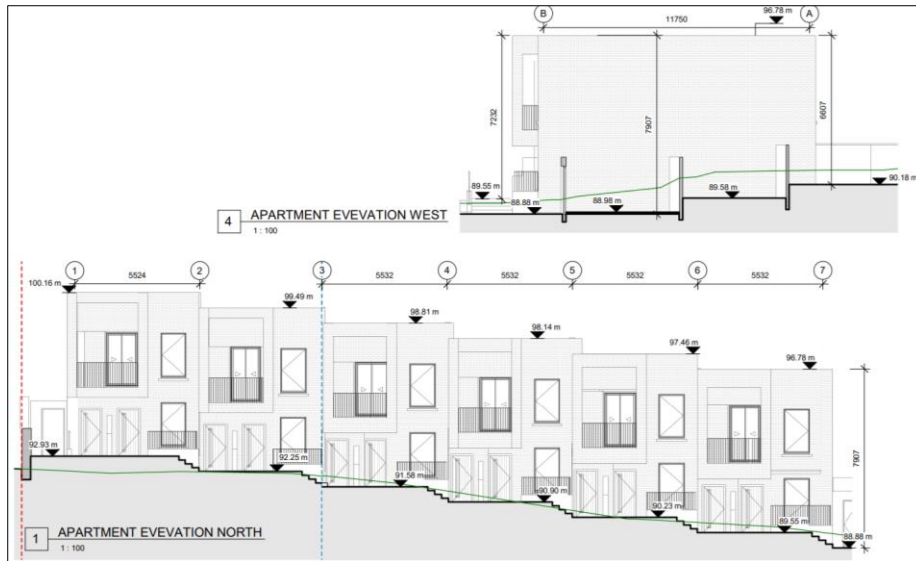


Fig. 5 Apartment Elevations

Parking

Parking standards are maximum standards and reduced provision is encouraged to support active and smarter travel initiatives and support modal shift from private car use.

The current commuting mode share to work is 76% in Macroom; the 2028 target is 60%. This requires habitual changes and designing out car parking is a required in certain circumstances. The context of this scheme and its location within walking distance of the town centre lends itself to significantly reduced parking from the maximum prescription of 2 spaces per house, 1.25spaces per apartment and as such is considered to be in accordance with Objective TM 12-9 (Parking) “to restrict parking provision to achieve greater modal shift.”

The proposal to insert 3no. set down spaces is considered acceptable in principle on the basis that adequate communal or public spaces are provided in the remainder of the Regeneration sites (4 & 5) as part of a wider comprehensive parking plan including relocation of on-street spaces from Market Square. However, the sub site is very small in dimension and there is a potential vehicular/pedestrian conflicts. This area should be revisited including detailed design clarifying the availability of adequate pedestrian circulation space between the parking spaces and the road carriageway. On delivery of regeneration of sites 4 & 5 (referred to above), the proposed parking could be reconfigured or decommissioned for pedestrian purposes.

Conclusion

The proposed redevelopment of this ‘brownfield’ site is considered to be in accordance with the core strategy and objectives of the County Development Plan 2022 having regard to its town centre core area zoning, mixed residential zoning and regeneration objective and national design guidance standards and as such represents proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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