



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
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Cork County Council
Architects | Housing Directorate

Planning Statement

for

1-8 Rae na Ceithre Mhíle Housing Development

at

Church Road, Durrus, Co.Cork



**Rialtas
na hÉireann**
Government
of Ireland

**Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040**

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0.0 Introduction

Cork County Council seeks to create sustainable communities and acknowledges that this requires the delivery of quality housing in well managed estates and clusters. This report relates to a Cork County Council intention to construct 8no. social housing units, 1-8 Rae na Ceithre Mhíle, Church Road, Durrus, Co.Cork.

This report has been compiled by Cork County Council's Housing Directorate.

1.0 Design Brief

1.1 Site Description

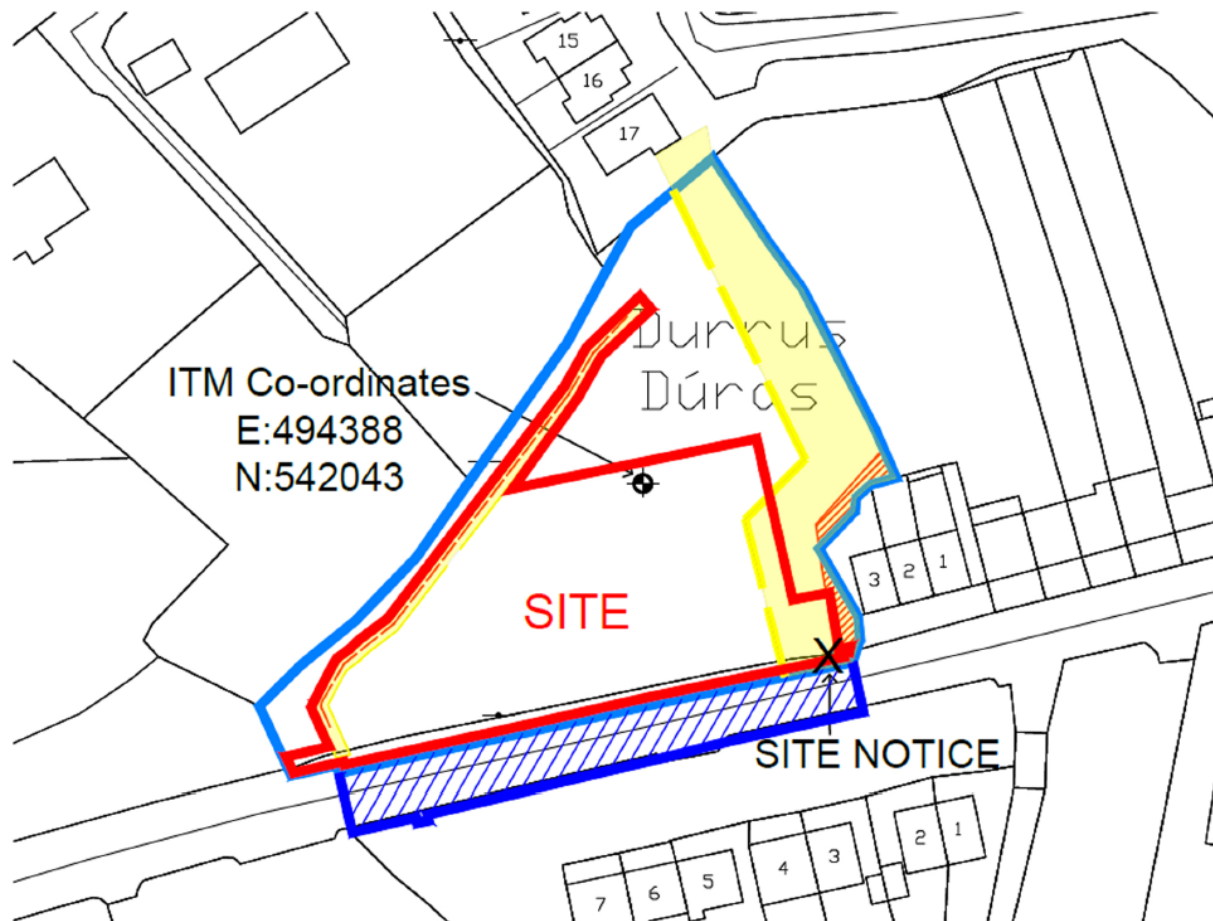


Figure 1. Site Location Map (site outlined in red, lands in CCC ownership outlined in blue, hatched red area in the process of being transferred to neighbouring property. Yellow areas denote wayleaves.)

The subject site is part of a larger roughly triangular-shaped site, the front portion of which only will be developed as part of this proposal. The rear space is not proposed to be developed as part of this scheme.

The site is located between the village centre and the church. It is overgrown with vegetation and it undulates due to soil being dumped on the site previously. There is however a level section of ground in the middle of the site which had been previously used as an access track for the construction of the estate to the north. The plot slopes upwards to the north.



Figure 2. Aerial picture showing access track previously used during development of the housing to the north.

South- The site is bound by the L47040 public road to the south. Currently there is a ditch forming the boundary to the roadside, outside this is a footpath providing access from the village down to the Church.



Figure 3. View from L47040 looking at the southern boundary of the subject site.

East- To the east there is a row of terraced houses fronting onto the road.



Figure 4. View from L47040 looking at the existing housing to the east of the site.

North - To the north, beyond the part of the site that is not to be developed, there is a recently developed private housing estate. There is a large concrete retaining wall along the boundary constructed as part of the estate.



Figure 5. View from the development to the north overlooking the retaining wall down over the site.

West -To the north west there is some vacant agricultural land. A dyke runs along part of the western boundary towards the road and ultimately enters a drainage pipe.



Figure 6. Drainage dyke hitting front boundary of site and running into underground drainage pipe.

1.2 Accommodation Brief

The proposed development of 8no. units is composed of the following mix:

- 7no. 2 bed, 4 person houses
- 1no. 1 bed, 2 person house

The housing allocation section have indicated that due to the rural nature of the village, accommodation provided should be housing and not apartments as previous experience shows that apartments can be very difficult to fill.

The majority of the need is for one and two bed units and this is reflected in the unit types proposed.

The proposed houses will be generally in line with the minimum floor areas as outlined in the *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* guidance document.

1.3 Material Palette and Architectural Language

The architectural language of the proposed structures is simple in form. The material palette is intended to be robust, understated, subtle and in keeping with the general character of the area. The existing buildings in the area feature predominantly rendered facades with both smooth and wet dash finishes. Some brick is evident on the houses directly south the of the site. Facing stone is generally not used in the facades of residential dwellings but is regularly used in boundary walls. Colours used in the local area are varied with a few brighter coloured buildings. It is intended to add colour to the unit facades in keeping with the other houses in the area and as per the elevations below. Local roofs are generally finished in blue/black slate or tile. The retaining walls that front the scheme on the roadside are to be of local stone.



Figure 7. Proposed Scheme Elevations.

The building scale in the area is generally of standard residential scale either single-storey or two storey. The residential buildings in the area generally have a horizontal form and adhere to a traditional typology with gable ended pitch roofs, small windows, chimney stacks and simple flat facades. Some have front door canopies. The new estate to the north is comprised of dormer style dwellings with timber cladding on the facades.



Figure 8. Examples of structures in the vicinity of the site, typical of the general architectural language of Durrus Village.

2.0 Sustainable Community Proofing

2.1 Strategic Site Location

The subject site is located on the northern periphery of Durrus village, 93km west of Cork City centre and 10 km southwest of Bantry.

Durrus is a small-scale village (<1,500 residents) which is a gateway and service centre to the scenic Sheep's Head Peninsula and Mizen Head Peninsula along the R591 route. The village of Durrus contains primary schools as well as a Catholic Church, a variety of shops, pubs, a health centre, a nursery and some industry.

The site is within good walking distance of the village centre (3 min walk). Based on guidance outlined in *'Shaping Neighbourhoods'* by Barton, Grant, and Guise (2003), it is generally accepted that 500m represents a suitable catchment area from which residents can access local services and convenience shopping. This site is located close to the local shop (<300m /3 min walk) and the local

national school (<500m / 6 min walk). The settlement has limited public transport services but is served by some rural transport links to Bantry town.



Figure 9. Subject Site shown by the red pin.

3.0 Site Constraints and Optimisation

3.1 Site Ownership

The site is in the ownership of Cork County Council. There is a prior agreement for a small land transfer to house no.3 Mill House along their boundary of the site.

A registered wayleave is in place along the eastern boundary for storm and foul service lines servicing the estate to the north and resulting in a 6m. wayleave either side for maintenance and access.

There are two overhead ESB lines crossing the site one to the east and the second through the middle of the site. An informal agreement with ESB has been reached to underground all lines along the western boundary. This will require a 2m. wayleave.



Figure 10. Large CCC owned site shown in red. Existing drainage wayleave show in yellow running along the eastern boundary. Note only the front part of the site will be developed. See figure 1 for extent of site to be developed.

3.2 Existing Hedgerows and Trees

There are a number of trees on the site and overgrown areas where clearance will be required. Where possible existing hedgerows and vegetation will be maintained. Where clearance will happen, this will be outside of bird nesting season.

3.3 Existing Electricity Cables Onsite

The subject site currently has an electricity pole at the eastern corner and one along the southern boundary both carrying overhead lines. The blue line to the east of the site is a 400V/230V overhead lines which will remain untouched. The green overhead line is a 10KV/20KV triple line which runs underground toward the north servicing the estate. The overhead green line is to be undergrounded along the west boundary of the site.

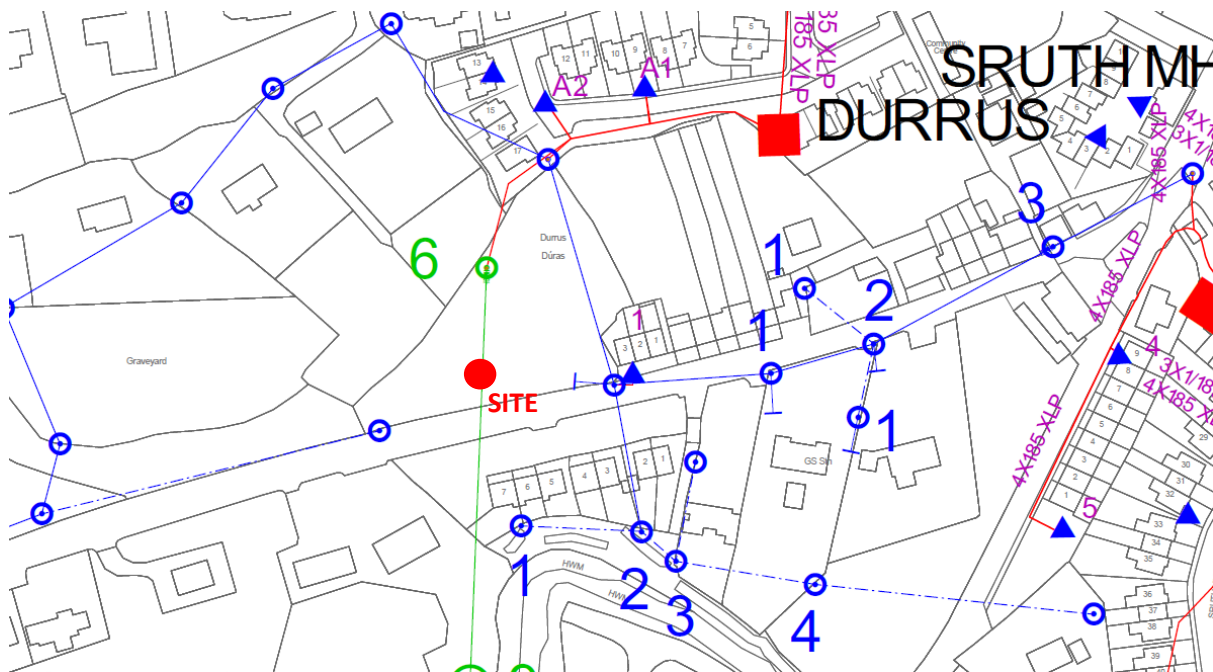


Figure 11. Subject Site – Redline indicates underground route. Green overhead lines present on the subject site will be undergrounded along the western boundary.

3.4 Appropriate Site Density

Under the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* village such as Durrus with <1,500 population should not fall below 25dph and there is no maximum limit listed.

The subject site areas are as follows:

- Site boundary (Developable) - 0.144 Hectares (0.356Acres)
- Site boundary (Overall) - 0.358 Hectares (0.886Acres)
- Public Amenity/ Open Area - 0.018 Hectares (0.049Acres) - 12.5% of developable area

The proposal of 8no. houses over 0.144Ha achieves a density of 55.6 units/ha when looking at developed part of the site within the red site boundary.

This scheme is in line with the guidelines.

3.5 Statutory Land Use Zoning

The subject site is not given a particular zoning in the Cork County Council Development Plan 2022 but is within the development boundary of Durrus. The CDP Development Boundary Objectives allow for up to 20no. additional units within the development boundary.

Development Boundary Objectives for Durrus	
Objective No.	
DB-01	Within the development boundary encourage the development of up to 20 additional dwelling units during the plan period.
DB-02	The development of lands closest to the village centre is proposed in the first instance, and the development of good pedestrian/cycle and amenity links with the main street are considered to be an important part of any proposed scheme.

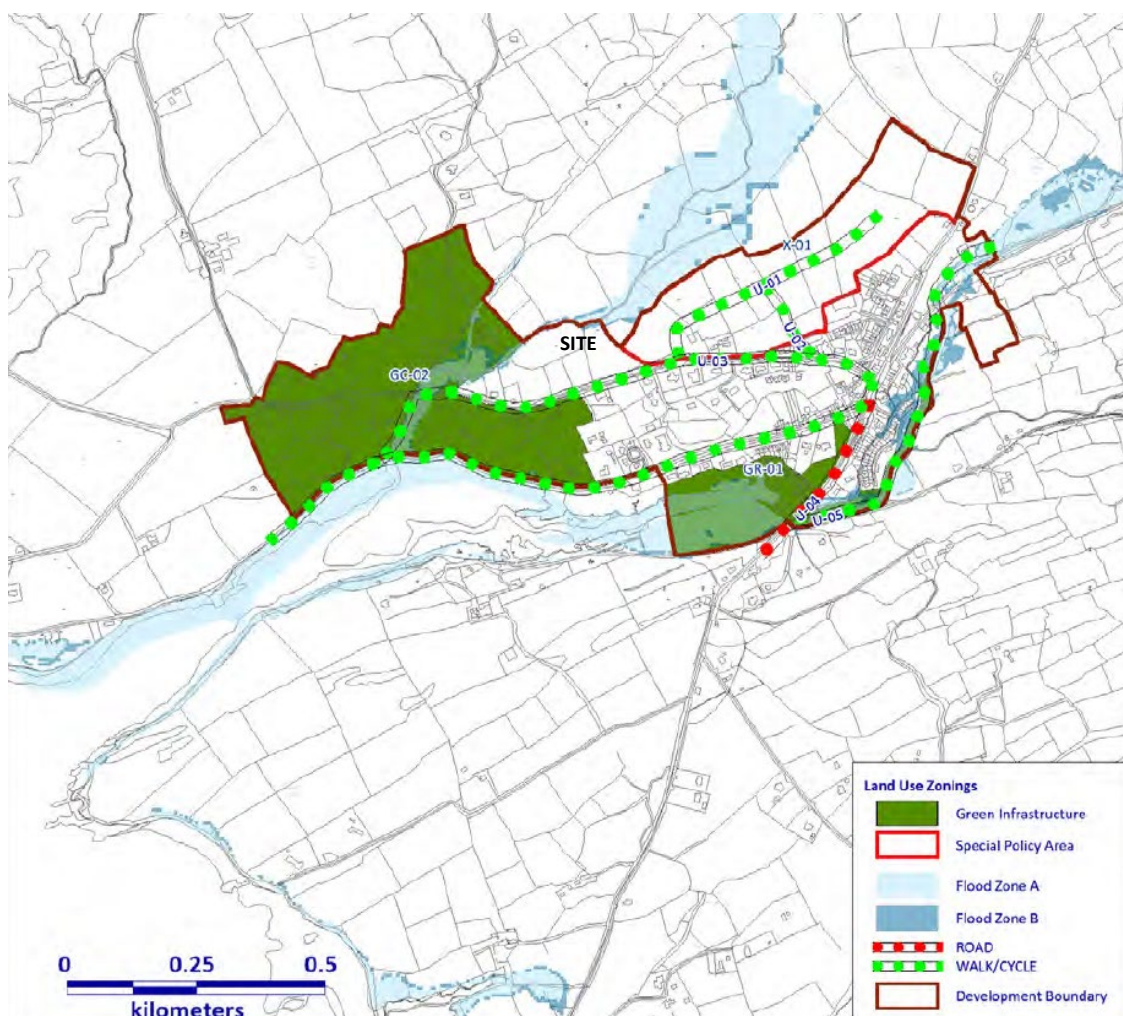


Figure 12. Durrus Land Use Zonings Map from Cork County Development Plan Volume 5 West Cork

3.6 Infrastructural Constraints

Durrus does not currently have a separate storm and foul system. There is however a separate foul and storm line running along the east and southern boundary that services the development to the

north. It is proposed to connect a new storm sewer to the existing separate line on the main road. This is yet to be taken in change but it is believed that it will be in the first half of this year. This is currently being pursued.

3.7 Topography

A detailed topographical survey has been completed. The site slopes upwards to the north with an incline of 7.5m across the entire site over approx. 68.5m. This gives a gradient of 1:9.

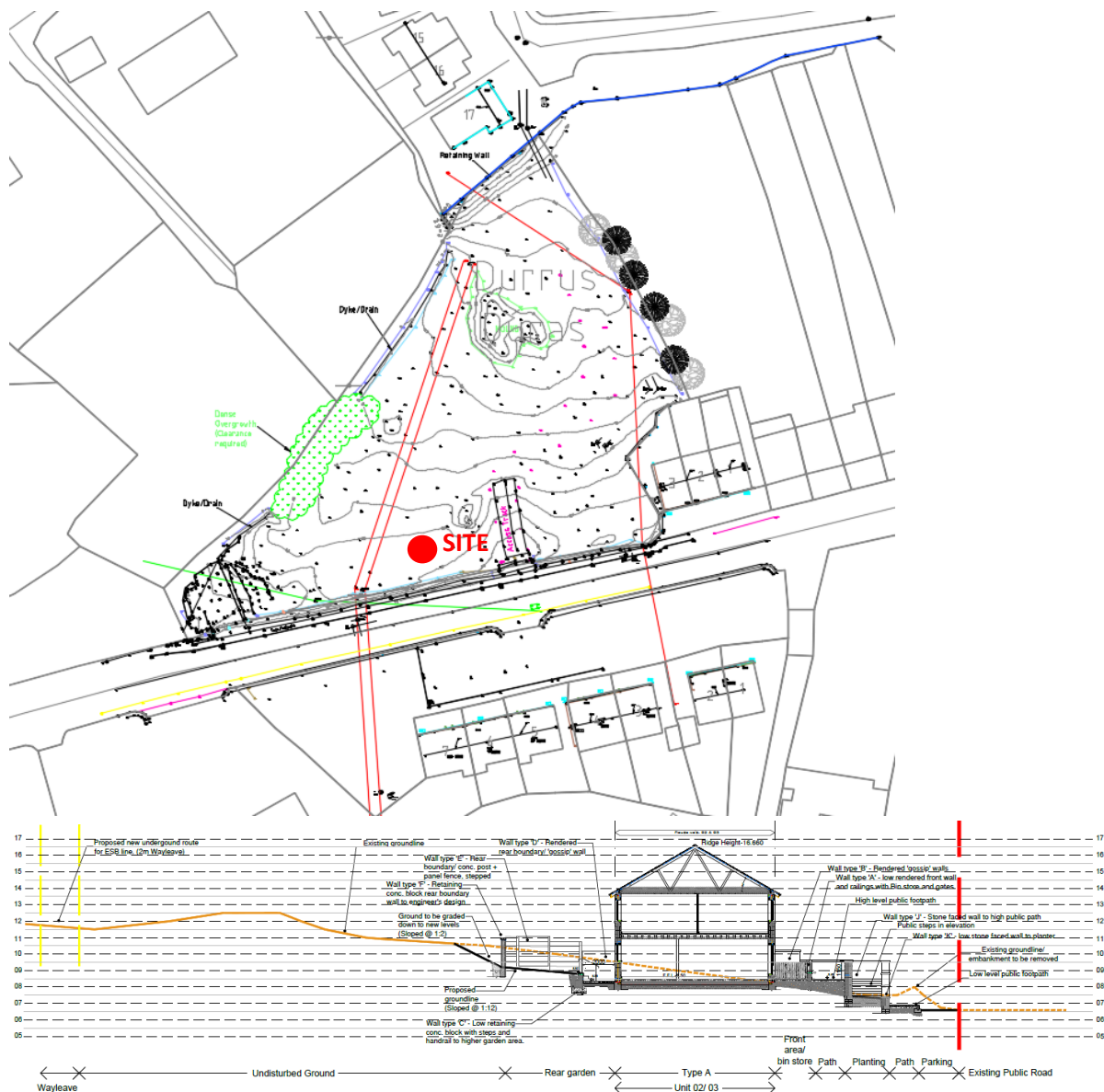


Figure 13. Above- Topographical Drawing with Contours in grey. Below-Site Section with existing levels in orange.

The layout of the proposed scheme has been designed to work with the contours as much as possible to minimise cut and fill and ensure Part M compliance is achievable. The steep incline

means the back of the site is inaccessible within the required accessibility standards for pedestrians or vehicles and as such the site could only be developed if large portions of the hill were cut out. This would result in substantial retaining and level changes to the north. It is considered developing a terrace in the front portion of the site is the most viable option for development.

3.8 Bearing Capacity

Site investigations have been completed. They note that a large portion of the site contains rock, however it is still suitable for traditional strip foundations. The units are located above the road level to reduce the amount of rock breaking on the site.

3.9 Flood Risk

The development site does not fall within Flood Zone A or B. See engineering report for flood risk assessment.

3.10 Environmental Parameters

The development site does not sit within a Special Area of Conservation or a Special Protected Area.

3.11 Archaeological and Architectural Heritage

The subject site does not fall within an Architectural Conservation Area. A Water pump to the East of the site at Wiseman's green is on the Record of Protected Structures RPS ID 2984. Sacred Heart RC Church to the West of the site is on the NIAH Reg. no 20913009. The development will not affect these structures.

As the site is below 0.5Ha, no Archaeological Assessment is required. There are no designated archaeological monuments on or close to the site and nothing of note on the historic maps.

The site does sit on a dedicated Scenic Route S108 - Road from Bantry via Durrus and Ahakista to Kilcrohane. The new development should not impact this route in a negative way as it is continuing the existing street elevation and will blend in with the architectural character of the village.

3.12 Planning / Site Optimisation

Durrus is classified as a key village under the Cork County Council Development Plan 2022 in the West Cork Municipal District. It is in line with the following Development Plan requirement: *“New developments should be well integrated with the existing village and allow for easy and safe access to the centre and main facilities by foot and bicycle”*

Given the site constraints of topography and overhead / underground services it has been decided to develop along the southern boundary to continue the existing street elevation. Working with the existing levels required that this terrace be raised and accessed by a public ramp and set of steps but this has been designed to be stone fronted and integrated with landscaping to lessen the effect of the retaining walls and help blend them into the site.

3.13 Car and Bike Parking

The Cork County Development Plan 2022 indicates that a maximum of 2no. car parking spaces are required per unit. The proposed allows for 1no. car parking space per unit, which gives a total of 8no. It is considered that this number is acceptable for the following reasons:

- Units are small (one and two bed houses) so have a higher likelihood of accommodating single people or single adult families.
- The location is village centre, so potential lower car dependence and many amenities are within walking distance.
- There already appears to be an over provision of parking in the housing cluster directly across the road so extra overflow can potentially be accommodated here if necessary.
- Experience on other social housing projects shows that social housing estates tend to have lower car ownership and in many completed estate there is evidence of excess parking that is often left vacant.
- Bike parking provisions is incorporated into the scheme.

The spaces will allow for provision for future car charging points.

The bike parking requirements have been accommodated by the inclusion of bike stands off the public footpath.

3.14 Public Open Space

A small public amenity area has been allowed for to the west. This will be landscaped and enhanced with benches. The area of the public amenity space to the west is 180 sq. m. (0.018Ha). This accounts for 12.5% of the site. The *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements guidelines for Planning Authorities* requires that public open space be 10-15 % of the site area. The proposal is in line with this.

3.15 Private Open Space

Private gardens are provided to the rear of all units with each one being a minimum of 20m. sq. in line with *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements guidelines for Planning Authorities*.

3.16 Planning History

There are no historic planning applications for the site.

3.17 Services

All existing main services such as water, foul, Eir and electricity will be utilised. Uisce Eireann have confirmed via a pre-connection enquiry that both water and wastewater connections are feasible without infrastructure upgrade.

Water: There is an existing water main running along the southern boundary of the site along the road L47040. The intention is to make a connection here. A pre connection enquiry was previously made and Uisce Eireann confirmed that water connections are feasible without infrastructure upgrade.

Foul: There is an existing foul service along the main roadway. The proposal is to make a connection here. A pre connection enquiry was previously made and Uisce Eireann confirmed that wastewater connections are feasible without infrastructure upgrade.

Storm: A stormwater drain runs through the site along the eastern boundary from the estate to the north. A short run of new drainage line along the main road to connect into the existing drainage may be required. The existing drain is yet to be taken in charge, but indications are that it will be in the coming weeks.

Eir: There is an existing Eir / Telecoms chamber on the main road. The intention is to make a connection here.

Electricity: Electricity is available in the immediate area. A public lighting feed is already in place along the main roadway and a design for extra lights has been agreed.

Gas: There is no mains gas line in Durrus Village.

4.0 Conclusion

The proposed development is consistent with the policies and objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 and other relevant statutory documents. Due to the subject site's proximity to Durrus Village, it is considered an appropriate location for a new social housing scheme. The proposed development seeks to address and meet some of the need for housing in the County Cork area, providing much needed accommodation for those on the housing waiting list.

The proposed development of the site, accommodating 8no. units, is recommended in order to meet the need for housing accommodation in the village centre and to facilitate a broader objective of enhancing place making on a vacant site.