

REPORT: Ironborn SHD, Sector 3, Aiken's Village, Stepside

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

for

Ironborn Real Estate Ltd.

DATE: August 2022.

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LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this assessment was to review the existing landscape setting of the site, to assess the likely potential visual impacts arising from the proposed development on the existing landscape and describe proposed mitigation measures to reduce any likely adverse potential visual impacts on the receiving environment.

The Visual impact assessment has been prepared by, Landscape Architect Daithi O'Troithigh (MSc Urban Design, Pg. Dip LA, BA Larch, Dip Arch Tech and MILI) of doyle + o'troithigh landscape architecture Ltd. Daithi has prepared Landscape & Visual Impact reports for a variety of projects including commercial, recreational, residential and tourism.

The Council of Europe defines 'Landscape as an area, as perceived by people, whose character is a result of action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. The definition broadens the concept of landscape further than solely framed in terms of aesthetics and visual amenity. This definition of landscape is what will be used in this report.

This assessment should be read in conjunction with the Photomontages prepared for the scheme by Gnet3D and included in Application.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Assessment Methodology

This assessment has been based on the following guidelines:

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Advice Notes on Current Practice and the Preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (EPA 2003). Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Reports (2022)

'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment', 3rd Ed., The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013.

Urban Development & Building Heights, Dept. of Housing Planning & Local Government 2018

This assessment has involved:

- Undertaking a desk-top study of the site; including reviewing ordnance survey mapping and aerial photography.
- Reviewing the plans, sections, and elevations of the proposed scheme.
- A review of statutory planning and other documentation to ascertain the local and wider; significance; and
- Visiting the site and surrounding area in July and August 2022.

2.2 Nature of Impacts

Impact on landscape arising from development has two distinct but closely related aspects as outlined in Chapter 2 of the 3rd edition of the Landscape Institute's Guidelines for LVIA and in the Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Reports (2022). The first is impact in the form of change to character of the landscape that arises from the insertion of the proposed development into the existing context. The second aspect is the visual impact, which depends on the degree and nature of change in the visual environment.

It is recognised that the combined impact on character and views will draw responses, the significance of which will be partly informed by an individual's subjective perception of how much the changes matter.

The assessment of landscape and visual impacts include:

Off Site: -

- Designated tourism Routes – roads, paths, trails, and associated view points;
- Public Roads, paths, and access areas;
- Residences, hotels, and amenities;
- Sites and monuments of archaeological, architectural, or historical interest.

Site and environs: -

- Topography and drainage;

- Enclosures;
- Settlement patterns and land-uses;
- Natural features;
- Archaeological, architectural, historical, or cultural features;
- Visual foci – external and internal;
- Vegetation;
- Circulation routes

2.3 Significance Criteria

Whenever appropriate the following terms are used to describe the degree, quality, and duration of an impact: (Note this is based on the EPA Advice Notes and Guidelines 2022) and provided in table 1,2 and 3 below.

Table 1. Terms used to describe the quality of effects.

	Terms used to describe the quality of effects
Positive effect	A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity, or improving the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).
Neutral effect	No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error
Negative / adverse effect	A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).

Table 2. Describing the significance of effects.

	Describing the significance of effects
Profound Effects	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.
Very Significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity, significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.

	Describing the significance of effects
Significant Effects	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity, alters a sensitive aspect of the environment
Moderate Effects	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
Slight Effects	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Not Significant	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.

Table 3. Terms describing the duration and frequency of effects.

	Terms describing the duration and frequency of effects
Temporary effect	Lasting less than a year
Short-term effect	Effect lasting one to seven years
Medium-term effect	Lasting seven to fifteen years
Long-term effects	Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years
Permanent effect	Lasting over sixty years.

This assessment has been based on the following guidelines:

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Advice Notes on Current Practice and the Preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (EPA 2003). Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Reports (2022)

'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment', 3rd Ed., The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013.

Urban Development & Building Heights, Dept. of Housing Planning & Local Government 2018

This assessment has involved:

- Undertaking a desk-top study of the site; including reviewing ordnance survey mapping and aerial photography.
- Reviewing the plans, sections, and elevations of the proposed scheme.
- A review of statutory planning and other documentation to ascertain the local and wider; significance; and
- Visiting the site and surrounding area in May and June 2022.



Fig A: Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village: Site Location and Context (Bing Maps)

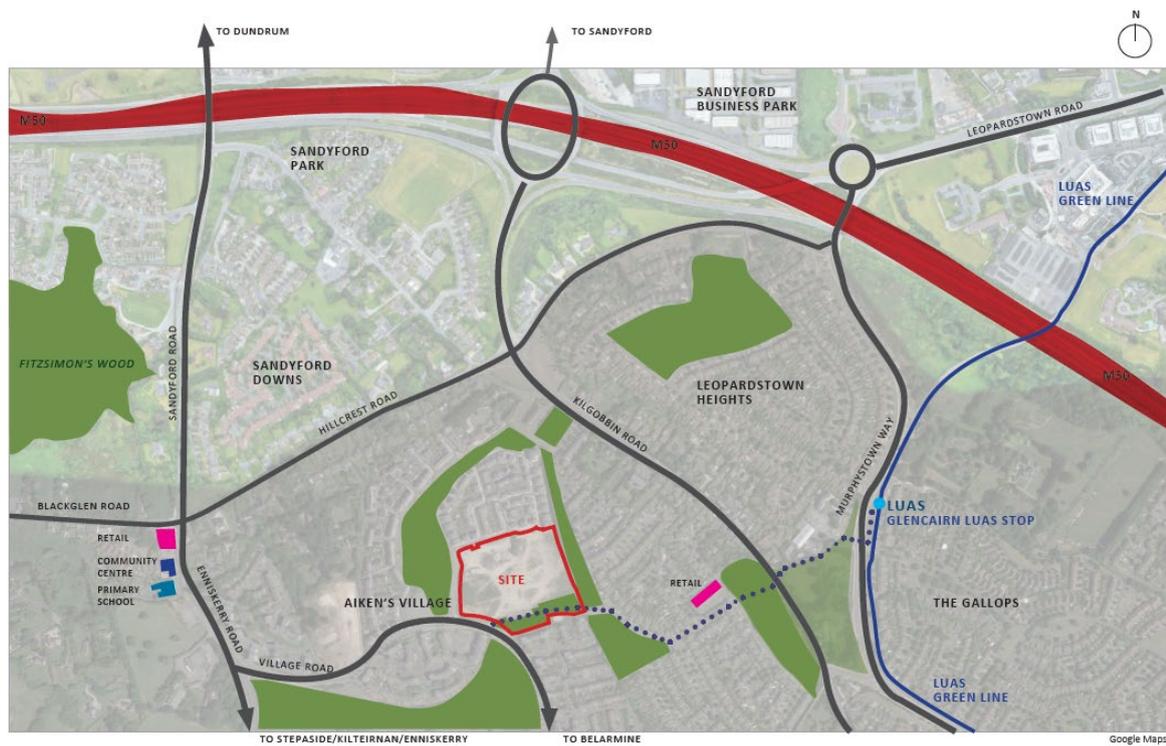


Fig B. Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village Site Location Urban Context.

3. RECEIVING LANDSCAPE ENVIRONMENT

The relevant designated sites including, archaeological features and protected sites in addition to local authority designations were assessed from a landscape and visual impact basis with respect to the development proposals as contained in this submission.

3.1 Designated Sites

3.1.1 National Heritage Sites – National Monuments

Tree Ring (Ref. DU022-069) – This feature lies approx. 100M to the south of the site on ground sloping away from the site. The landscape around this feature has changed significantly over the past 20 years with the development of Aikens Village and Belarmine and the proposed development would not visually impact on this feature as a result.

Burnt Mound (Ref. DU026-161) – This feature lies approx. 350M south east of the site close to the Kilgobbin Stream. This feature is screened by existing vegetation and buildings and would therefore not be impacted by the development.

3.1.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)

There are no NIAH listed properties close to the site that may be visually impacted by the proposals.



Fig C: Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village: National Monuments Sites (Archeology.ie)

3.1.3 Designated Natura 2000 Sites

Fitzsimon's Wood, which is a proposed natural Heritage Area lies approx. 650 Metres to the north west of the site. Intervening buildings and vegetation screen views of this feature from the site.

Dingle Glen proposed Natural Heritage Area lies approx. 3.5Kms to the south east of the site but the development site would not be visible from the designated area.

Wicklow Mountains SAC (Site Code 002122) approx. 5kms at its nearest point to the south west of the development lands is screened from the site by intervening landform and there would be no negative visual impact on this SAC from the proposals.

3.2 Dunlaoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022 -2028 (CDP)

3.2.1 Landscape Character Assessment

The CDP states its commitment to conserving, maintaining, and enhancing the landscape character of the county. Stepside is not within any of the 14 Landscape Character Areas as set out in the County Development Plan but adjoins the Landscape Character Area No. 9 Barnacullia which contains elevated slopes rising up towards the Three Rock Mountain and the relatively undeveloped mixture of mountain and forest is visible from a wide area of south Dublin.

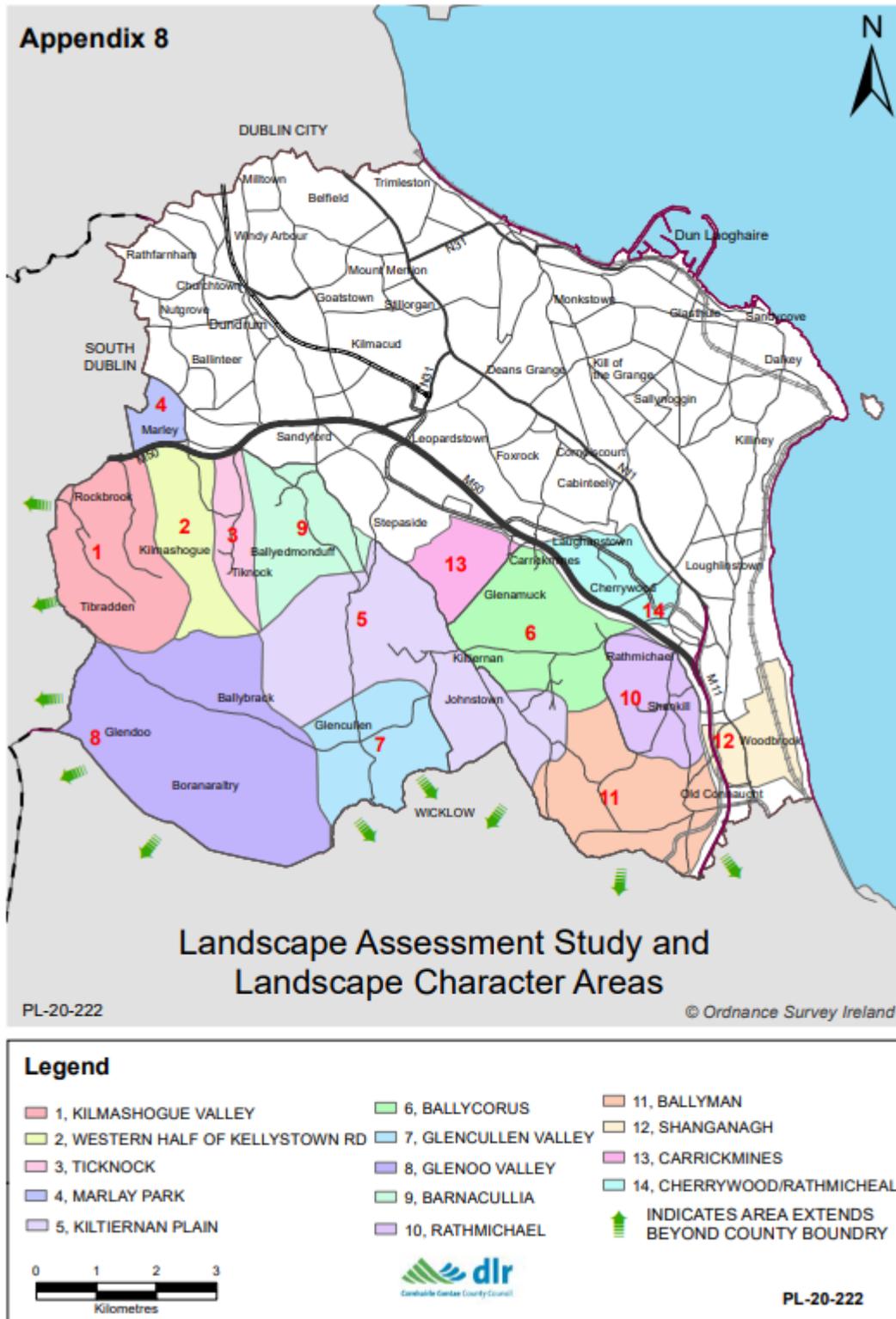


Fig D: Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 Landscape Assessment study and Landscape Character areas.

3.2.2 Land use Zoning

The CDP 2022-2028 Map 6 illustrates the site lands zoned “to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting existing amenities.”

The original Stepside Action Area Plan as published in 2000 has been superseded by later Development

Plans but the uncompleted development areas have been incorporated into the Ballyogan & Environs Local Area Plan 2019 – 2025, the subject site does not form part of this LAP. The lands are zoned Objective A – ‘To provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities’. There are areas Zoned Objective F adjoining the site – ‘To preserve and provide for open space with ancillary active recreational amenities’. The site was originally granted planning in 2016 (Reg. Ref. D16A/0511) with blocks between 3 and 6 storeys containing 243 No. apartments. A Strategic Housing Application (Reg. Ref. ABP-306471- 20) was refused under the headings of Wastewater Infrastructure, Connections and Inclusivity and Separation Distances and Sunlight Access.



Fig E: Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village: Site Zoning (Dunlaoghaire Rathdown Development Plan - extract Map 6)

A subsequent Strategic Housing Development Application (Reg. Ref. ABP-309828-21) addressed these issues and was granted planning permission in July 2021. This permission is now subject to Judicial Review and the current Strategic Housing Development Application is being submitted. With respect to Buildings Heights, the County Development Plan does not specify a building height cap for development in this area and does reference higher storeys being permitted in Stepside among other areas listed. The higher elements of this development are located at the lowest natural site elevations to minimise the visual impacts on the adjoining area.

3.2.3 Urban Development and Building Heights

In the Guidelines for Planning Authorities, The Dept. of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2018 refers to the National Planning Framework and policy objectives to provide more compact forms of urban development. It quotes National Planning Objective 13 *'In urban areas, planning, and related standards, including in particular building height and car parking will be based on performance criteria that seek to achieve well-designed high-quality outcomes in order to achieve targeted growth. These standards will be subject to a range of tolerance that enables alternative solutions to be proposed to achieve stated outcomes, provided public safety is not compromised and the environment is suitably protected.'* It is proposed that this development adheres to these guidelines while respecting the environment and the case of this report the Landscape & Visual Impacts of the development.

3.2.4 Protected Views and Prospects

There are no specific objectives in the County Development Plan relating to Protected Views near the site.

3.2.5 Green County Strategy

The CDP Strategic Vision in relation to Landscape, Heritage and Biodiversity refer to the main headings, i.e.: -

- Balancing the needs of the County's heritage with the need to develop the county in a positive and sustainable manner.
- Increase awareness of the County's Landscape, Heritage and Biodiversity.
- The formulation of policies for the protection, enhancement, and management of the County's heritage.
- Recognition of the importance of landscape in all areas of heritage.

3.3 Site Description

The site (Approx. 3.39 Ha.) is greenfield land which has been cleared for development with soil stockpile mounds the only features remaining on the site area. The site is surrounded by a timber hoarding.

A selection of 6 No. views (See Fig. D below for locations) has been prepared to show the character of the existing site and its relationship with the existing adjoining environment. The images were taken in February 2021 and the images show the site with the surrounding blue hoarding.



Fig F: Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village: Locations of Site Image Views (Bing Maps)

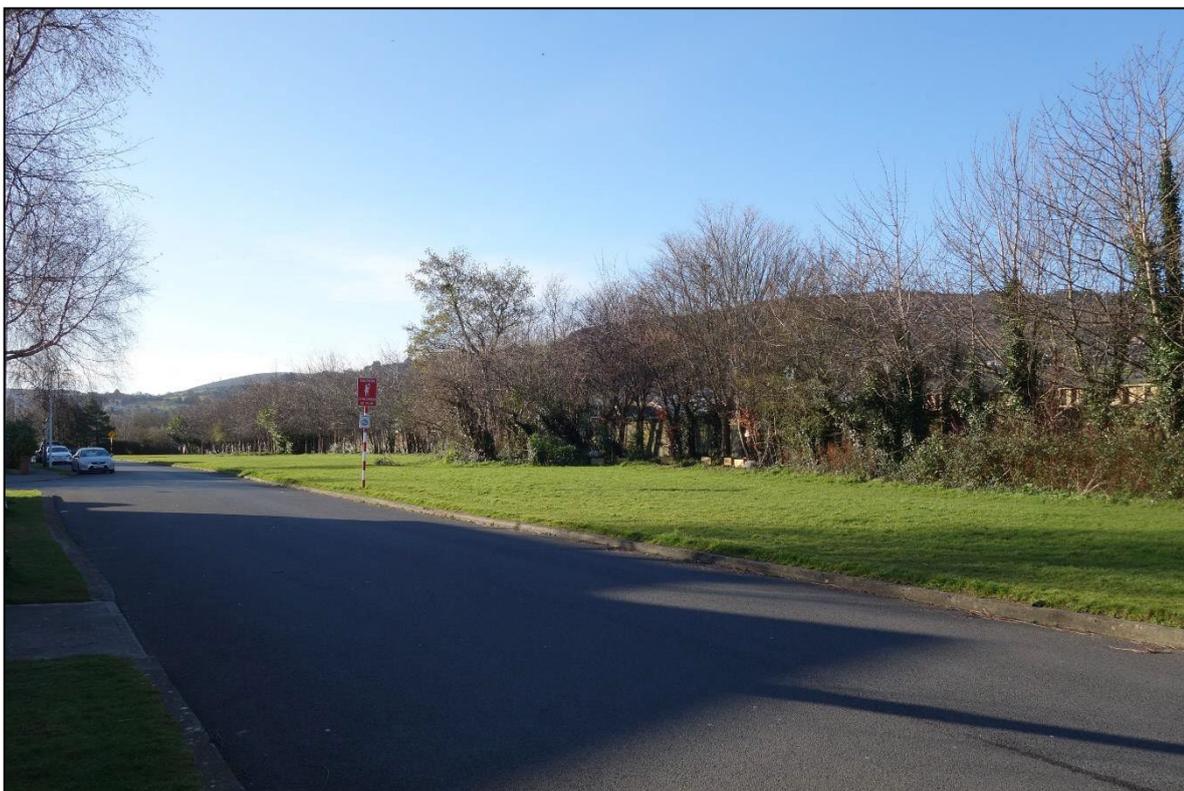


Image 01 – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village – View south from Ferncarrig with site to rear of hedgerow on right.



Image 02 – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village - View north west from Sandyford Hall and pedestrian access



Image 03 – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village -View north east from open space at Cluain Shee



Image 04- Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village -View east from Cluain Shee with Belmont Estate to the rear



Image 05- Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village -View south east from Belmont Estate



Image 06 – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village -View south from Belmont Estate

3.4 Surrounding Environment

The site is bounded to the east by the Ferncarrig, and Sandyford Hall established 2 storey housing estates. The Aikens Village and Cluain Shee estates lies to the south with a mixture of housing, duplex and apartment buildings. A section of open space with grass mounding and a playground lies between the site and Belmont estate that are located to the west and north of the site.

The topography of the area is sloping to the south and east with the land rising steeply to the west at Barnacullia and Three Rock Mountain which visually dominates the area.

3.5 Key Receptors

NORTHERN RECEPTORS – This section of Belmont Estate adjoining the site's northern edge is a mixture of 2 and 3 storey houses with some of the houses facing onto the site and these south facing houses will be the most visually impacted. The design of the proposed blocks on the northern side of the development will be a mixture of two and three storey with four storeys at the corners and with the taller blocks on the southern side of the development which will minimise the negative visual impact on the existing housing.

EASTERN RECEPTORS – The established Ferncarrig and Sandyford Hall Estates to the east of the development are both gable facing and front facing towards the development. There is an existing screening hedgerow at the edge of the development site and a green area which separates the development from the existing housing. The houses facing the development will be the most impacted particularly at the construction stage and the taller building elements at the southern end of the development will be visible above the hedge line.

SOUTHERN RECEPTORS – The Grianan Fidh and Cluain Shee sections of Aiken's Village to the south of the site are a mixture of 3 and 4 storey houses and apartments and are at a slightly lower elevation than the development site. Those units facing the site will be the most visually impacted by the proposals, but the

intervening roadway and open space provide a level of separation between the existing units and the proposed development.

WESTERN RECEPTORS – The western section of the Belmont estate is separated from the site by open space and the grass mounding over the Sandyford High Level Water Reservoir which screens views towards the site for most of the houses. The taller elements of the proposed development will be visible in the distance but would create only a minor negative visual impact from this area.



Fig. G – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village: Landscape Receptors adjoining Site (Bing Maps)

ROADS – The R117 Enniskerry Road passes approx. 400M to the west of the site and is generally screened from the site by topography and buildings and would therefore by little visual impact from the proposals on this roadway. Ferncarrig Avenue is a cul-de-sac which runs to the east of the site and will have views of the taller elements of the development. Similarly, Sandyford Hall Rise terminates close to the south eastern end of the development and will have views of the taller elements of the scheme. Village Road runs along the south western edge of the development and there will be clear views of the taller 7 to 8 storey elements which will face onto Village Road. Residential development has been a common feature of the area around the site and this development, while taller and with more concentrated residential development, is only one of the many similar apartment developments in the Stepside area.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The site for the proposed residential development is generally bounded by Thornberry Road to the north, by Atkinson Drive and the adjoining open space lands to the west, Sandyford Hall residential development adjacent Ferncarraig Avenue to the east and by Village Road and Cluain Shee and Griannan Fidh residential developments to the south. The site for proposed below ground attenuation services is on open space lands generally bounded Griannan Fidh residential development to the south, Sandyford Hall residential development to the east open space lands (including detention basin) to the south and west.

The development proposed consists of: -

A site of approximately 3.39 Ha consists of 438no. residential units including 154no. 1 bed, 284 No. 2 bed. Arranged in 9no. blocks ranging in height from 2 – 8 storeys over 2no. independent single level basements. The development also includes; public open space (c. 4,869 sq. m); 1no. childcare facility (c. 514.9 sq. m); tenant amenity space/ communal areas (c. 4,579 sq. m); new vehicular access to Basement 1 from Atkinson Drive and new vehicular access to Basement 2 from Thornberry Road; 350no. car parking spaces; 669no. cycle parking spaces and 14no. motorcycle spaces; provision of below ground wastewater storage tank and associated connection to the wastewater networks including ancillary above ground kiosks and appropriate landscaping and all associated and ancillary site development and infrastructural works, hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment works.

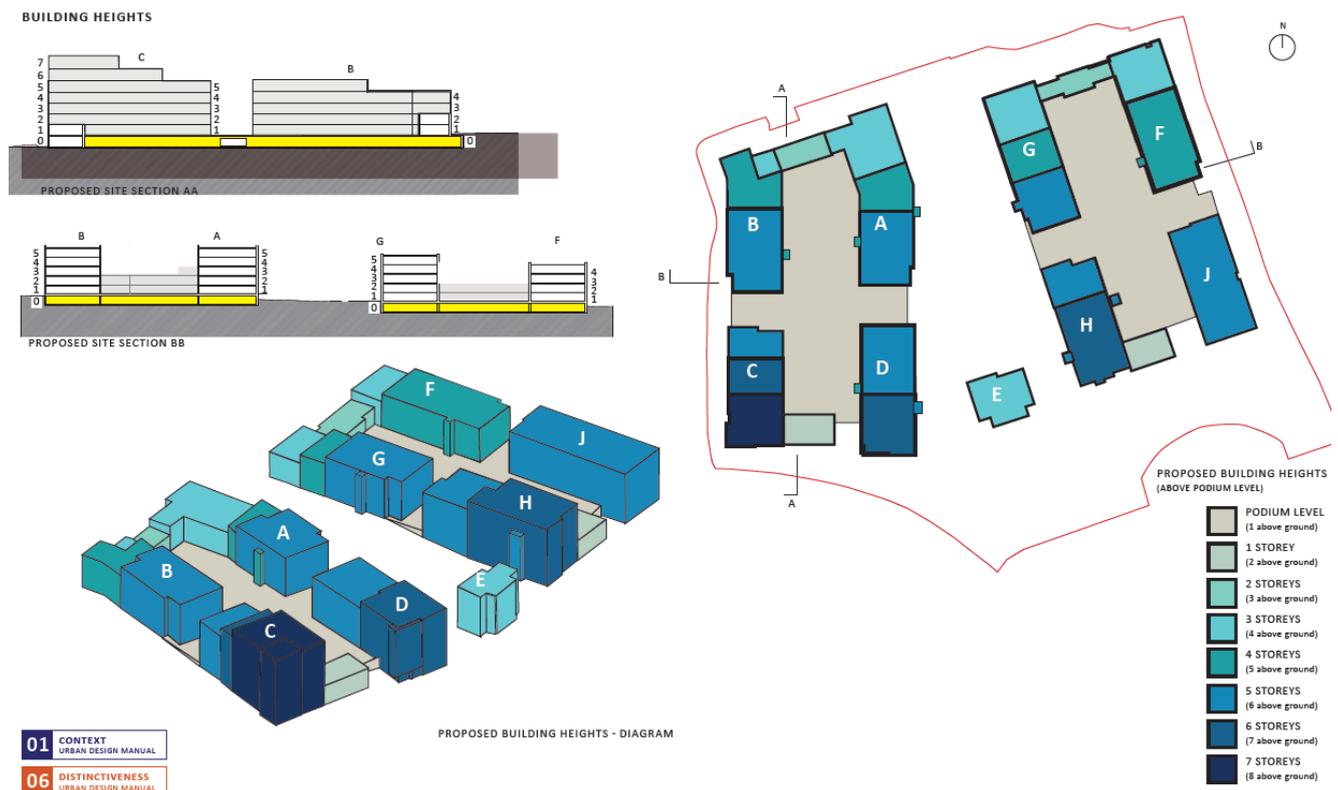


Fig. H – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village: building height.

5. POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The site is in a relatively open landscape with some natural hedgerow screening along the eastern boundary and the water reservoir mounding screening views from the west. The design proposals of 2 and 3 storey with 4 storey corner units will match the existing 2 and 3 storey housing of the Thornberry development on the northern edge of the site, minimising the negative visual impact of the development proposals. The 7 to 8-storey elements on the southern edge will have the most visual impact on the north facing units of Grianan Fidh and Cluain Shee areas of Aikin's Village. The design proposals include a landscaped open space separation and a graduation of heights of the blocks along the southern edge of the development to reduce the negative visual impact of massing on the Grianan Fidh residences to the south. The land drops away to the south and the height of the buildings will be accentuated by the level change with views from the valley to the south.

6. MITIGATION MEASURES

The mitigation proposals commenced at the design stage under the following headings: -

6.1 Design Stage

There are a number of measures that can and have been taken to ensure that the impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding area are minimised during construction and subsequent commission.

- Retention of existing trees and additional boundary screening on the eastern edge of the site to anchor proposed development into the existing landscape and to screen the new buildings from external views.
- Use of existing contours to place buildings and maximise setting of development with 2 to 3 storeys at the northern end and the taller elements at the southern end of the site.
- Exterior lighting design that creates a safe and secure environment on site but respects neighbouring houses, wildlife and the nature of the surrounding landscape.
- A mixture of semi-mature native species deciduous and coniferous trees within and along the boundary of the development.



Fig. I. – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village - Landscape Masterplan (Mitchel & Assoc. Landscape Architects)

6.2 Construction Stage

This mitigation process was developed to address any residual adverse effects of the development.

- The protection of existing retained trees and screening vegetation on the eastern boundary to

BS 5837:2012 standards with the Root Protection Area (RPA) protected by secure fencing for the duration of the development.

- Soil stripping and correct stockpiling method will ensure that where existing topsoil is to be reused it is stripped and stored in dry conditions and placed in a suitable area of the site where it is not trafficked or contaminated with building spoil.
- Site works are carried out in consideration of neighbouring houses and roadways are and site warning signage are properly maintained.
- Planting operations are carried out to the best horticultural practices and an irrigation and weed control maintenance operations are put in place during the defect's liability period.

6.3 Operational Stage

Grass cutting, tree, shrub and hedge maintenance and leaf and litter clearing are the main operations carried out in such a development. Periodic tree surveys are also important where there are existing mature trees retained on site to ensure the safety of residents and public where trees adjoining housing and roadways.

7. PREDICTED IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The visual impacts of the proposed development can be divided into short term construction impacts and operational impacts. The site is open on three sides with some retained screening to the east along by the Ferncarrig Estate which will have Block J at 6 storeys at the south east corner transition down to 3 storeys of Block F at the north east corner. The Blocks D & H will be 6 storeys and 7 storeys and will have a moderately negative visual impact on the northern blocks of Grianan Fidh while the lower Block E will match the existing buildings to the south reducing the visual impact. Block C at the south west corner, with 7 and 8 storeys, is designed as a feature building marking the corner of the site and will be closest to the Village Road. It will create a potential negative visual impact particularly at construction stage where it will be visible from the wider Aiken's Village and Belarmine. However, a considerable amount of tree planting is proposed for the southern edge of the development which will provide screening and visually link into the wider landscape as the planting matures.

7.1 Construction Phase Impacts

Consideration shall be made to mitigate any potentially adverse construction related impacts on the surrounding lands. The normal operations at construction phase would include the erection of visually sensitive site hoarding, site excavation followed by a period of construction activity.

The operation of a well-managed organised and planned construction site following a specific Construction Management Plan, with adequate control of construction traffic and working activity, will be key to avoiding and or minimising impact. Other control measures will include:

- Adequate measures to protect the existing vegetation and retained features on site and on neighbouring lands.
- Warning signage as per the Traffic Management Plan.
- Use of hoarding for screening works as appropriate.
- Ensure all construction operations are carried out during daylight hours but where site lighting is required it will be directed away from adjoining roadways and dwellings.

7.2 Operational Stage Impacts

Once completed the development should integrate visually with the existing landscape and the newly planted trees and shrubs should develop and anchor the development in its surrounds. The provision of linkages between the development and existing adjoining residential developments will facilitate access to the proposed open space areas for residents of the area. The change in appearance from a hoarded off site to one that is intensively landscaped and maintained would be of benefit to the adjoining residential development and contribute to strengthening of Aiken's Village as a community. Once established the proposed planting should provide additional screening of the new development. The existing trees and retained vegetation on site would be maintained subject to the relevant Wildlife Acts and subject to BS 5387: 2012 Standards.

7.3 Photomontage Analysis

A set of 18 no. photomontages have been prepared surrounding the site to fully illustrate the visual nature of the proposed development. These have been prepared from publicly accessible locations that are representative of views of the site from the surrounding areas. These Photomontages together with a site location map are presented in Appendix 1 (See the GNet 3D submission with this application for full sized photomontage images). For each of the views taken a Photomontage has been prepared illustrating the development within the defined view. These are described in Table 7.1 below. Since the

development will not be visible from some of the viewpoints red lines are used to indicate the relative positions of the site buildings.

Table 7.1: Photoview Locations, Aikens Village SHD (See Fig. J. for location references)

View	Description	Location
1	View north east from Village Road	South West
2	View north from Village Road	South
3	View north east from Cluain Shee	South west
4	View north west from pedestrian path	South east
5	View south east from Atkinson Drive	North west
6	View south from Hyde Road, Belmont	North
7	View south from Thornberry Close	North
8	View south east from Thornberry Close	North west
9	View north from Village Road	South
10a	View north east from R117 Enniskerry Road	South west
10b	View east from R117 Enniskerry Road	South west
11	View north west from Ferncarrig Avenue	South east
12	View south from Old Kilgobbin Road	North
13	View north from Village Road	South
14	CGI	
15	CGI	
16	View north west from open space opposite Ferncarrig Avenue	South east
17	View west from Ferncarrig Rise	South East
18	View south west from Ferncarrig Court	East
19	View south from Ferncarrig Avenue	North east



Fig. J – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village – 18 Photomontage locations (Bing Maps) – See also GNet 3D Submission. Please note views 14 and 15 are CGI and not photomontages and do not form part of the Landscape and visual impact assessment.

Photomontage View 1: View north east from Village Road	
Existing View The view approx. 100M from the site shows the site surrounded by hoarding with soil stockpiles visible and with the boundary walls of Cluain Shee on the right and Belmont on the left. The 2 & 3 storey houses of Thornberry on visible on the extreme left.	
Proposed View The proposed view shows the landmark 8 storey Block C at the corner of Atkinson Drive with the blocks stepping down to the lower blocks at Thornberry to the north. Proposed tree planting on the edge of the site links with the existing street trees along Village Road.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short term visual impact.
Impact (Operation Stage)	Slight neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 2: View north from Village Road	
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Existing View This view approx. 100M to the south of the site shows the granite plinth wall and railing of Grianan Fidh on the right and the apartments and boundary granite rubble wall of Cluain Shee on the left with the street trees framing the view northwards.	
Proposed View The view shows the proposed 8 storey Block C on the left and the 7 storey Block D in the centre of the image. The street trees will partially screen the blocks and the proposed tree planting will consolidate the screening as they develop over time.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short term visual impact.
Impact (Operation Stage)	Slight neutral to positive long term visual impact

Photomontage View 3: View north east from Cluain Shee	
Existing View The road junction into Cluain Shee is approx. 25 M from the corner of the site and Atkinson Drive leads up towards Thornberry Estate which is visible on the left.	
Proposed View The landmark corner Block C with its deep balconies and white render stands out at the corner of the site with the lower blocks stepping down to the north. Proposed street tree planting along Atkinson Drive visually links with the existing street tree planting on the Village Road. A building separation and a variety of cladding finishes on the different blocks help reduce the potential appearance of massing.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short term visual impact.
Impact (Operation Stage)	Slight positive long term visual impact

Photomontage View 4: View north west from pedestrian path	
Existing View The pedestrian path links the Belarmine / Aiken's Village development with Sandyford Hall Estate and access to retail and the Luas on Murphystown Road. The pumping station associated with the Sandyford High Level Water Scheme is on the left and the existing hedgerow and wall between the Ferncarrig Estate and Aiken's Village is on the right. The Thornberry housing is just visible above the hoarding.	
Proposed View The proposed view shows the seven storey Block J on the right with landscaped open space surrounding the blocks. The existing hedgerow and wall are on the right.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Slight neutral long-term visual impact
Photomontage View 5: View south east from Atkinson Drive	

Existing View The view shows the 3 storey blocks of the Thornberry Estate on the left with the site hoarding and soil stockpiles in the centre of the view. The upper sections of the Cluain Shee apartment blocks are visible in the distance.	
Proposed View The 4 storey Block B with red brick finish and recessed balconies is set at a half storey lower in the sloping ground. The blocks step up in height as the ground slopes away. Street tree planting soften the edge of the development along Atkinson Drive.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate neutral long-term visual impact

Photomontage View 6: View south from Hyde Road, Belmont	
Existing View The 3 storey houses on Hyde Road frame views towards the site hoarding with the rising land at Barnacullia in the background.	
Proposed View The light brick finish of the 2 / 3 storey Blocks F and G close the view southwards. Open green space with tree planting creates a separation from the existing and proposed development. The proposed building heights are the same as what was granted permission in 2016, Reg. Ref. D16A/0511	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Slight negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate neutral long-term visual impact

Photomontage View 7: View south from Thornberry Close	
Existing View The view is of 2 and 3 storey housing with the hoarding at the edge of the site. The rising land at Barnacullia is in the background.	
Proposed View The proposed 3 storey Block G adjoins an open landscaped area with a section of the 4 storey Block A visible on the right-hand side.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Slight negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate positive long-term visual impact

Photomontage View 8: View south east from Thornberry Close	
Existing View In this view the site hoarding obscures views southwards with only the tops of the tree line bordering Ferncarrig visible in the distance.	
Proposed View The three-storey redbrick clad Block A is separated from the Thornberry houses by a landscape strip with street trees and there is a paved and landscaped plaza between Blocks A & G	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Slightly negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Imperceptible neutral long-term visual impact

Photomontage View 9: View north from Village Road	
Existing View This view northwards from the bridge over Ballyogan Stream is approx. 240M from the site. The Grianan Fidh section of Aiken's Village is on the right and the Thornberry Estate is visible in the distance behind the site hoarding.	
Proposed View The site is at a higher level than the viewpoint and therefore the blocks appear visually dominant in this view. The render finish to the blocks and the varying projections of balconies and varying elevations reduce the impact of massing.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short term visual impact.
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 10a: View north east from R117 Enniskerry Road	
Existing View In this view the existing Woodside development ranging in height from 4 to 5 storeys obscures views of the site. The existing development dominates the view and obscures views of the site and the surrounding environment	
Proposed View The proposed view shows the outline of the development screened from view by the existing development.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Imperceptible neutral long term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Imperceptible neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 10b: View east from R117 Enniskerry Road	
Existing View The site is over 400M to the north east of this viewpoint and looks across lower-level ground where a residential development is under construction. The 3 storey houses at Belmont Estate and the Cluain Shee apartments are visible in the distance through the roadside boundary railing.	
Proposed View The 8 storey Block C and 7 Storey Block D are visible above the existing residential developments the blocks stepping down to the north. Distance from the site and intervening buildings reduce the potential visual impact of the development.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Slight negative short term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Imperceptible neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 11: View north west from Ferncarrig Avenue	
Existing View Ferncarrig Avenue runs parallel with the site's eastern boundary and terminates in a turning circle. A wall and line of trees form the boundary between this area and the site. Part of the Grianan Fidh developments is visible through the trees on the left with some glimpse views of the Belmont Estate and Thornberry Estate through the trees.	
Proposed View The proposed view shows the closest 6 storey Block J adjoining the existing boundary tree line with Blocks H and D also partially visible through the trees.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short term visual impact.
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 12: View south from Old Kilgobbin Road	
Existing View This viewpoint is approximately 140M north of the site and the lands fall away towards the south. The boundary tree line of the site adjoins an open green area beside Ferncarrig Road. There are distant views of the hilly landscape to the south.	
Proposed View The proposed development is screened by existing vegetation and therefore there would be no visual impact from the proposals on this viewpoint.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Imperceptible neutral short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Imperceptible neutral long-term visual impact

Photomontage View 13: View north from Village Road	
Existing View The pedestrian pathway in this view connects the Belarmine and Aiken's Village developments with Sandyford Hall and areas to the south including the Luas line at Murphystown Road. It is a heavily used pathway serving the many pedestrian and cyclists of the area.	
Proposed View The proposed view shows Blocks D, E and H with the wide landscaped pedestrian area between the blocks with tree and shrub planting.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate positive long term visual impact

Photomontage View 16: View north west from open space opposite Ferncarrig Avenue	
Existing View The existing view from the open space west of Ferncarrig Avenue looks north west over the open space with the existing Ferncarrig development on the right-hand side and the existing hedge and tree line on the left. The view is dominated by the hedgerow and trees line which runs along the western boundary of the open space.	
Proposed View The proposed development is screened by existing vegetation and therefore there would be no visual impact from the proposals on this viewpoint.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Imperceptible neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 17: View west from Ferncarrig Rise	
Existing View The existing view from Ferncarrig Rise is west toward the existing open space and its western boundary of a hedge and tree line. To the left and right of view are the existing two storey dwellings of Ferncarrig Rise.	
Proposed View The lower floors of the proposed development are screening by the western boundary hedge and tree line of the existing open space. The upper 3 storeys of block J are visible above the vegetation with the south eastern corner of the upper floor of the reduced block F visible.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 18: View south west from Ferncarrig Court	
Existing View The existing view from Ferncarrig Court is south west toward the existing open space and its western boundary of a hedge and tree line. To the left and right of view are the front gardens of the existing two storey dwellings of Ferncarrig Rise.	
Proposed View The lower floors of the proposed development are screening by the western boundary hedge and tree line of the existing open space. The upper 4 th storey and segments of the 3 rd storey of the reduced block F are visible above the vegetation with the north eastern corner of the upper floor of block J visible.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate neutral long term visual impact

Photomontage View 19: View south from Ferncarrig Avenue	
Existing View The view from Ferncarrig Avenue is south toward the existing open space and its western boundary of a hedge and tree line. To the left of the view are the boundary walls and building facades of the existing Ferncarrig development the left of the view is dominated by the hedge and tree line which forms the western boundary of the open space.	
Proposed View The lower floors of the proposed development are screening by the western boundary hedge and tree line of the existing open space. The upper 2 storeys of block J are visible above the vegetation with partial sections of the upper floor of the reduced block F visible above the vegetation.	
Impact (Construction Stage)	Moderate negative short-term visual impact
Impact (Operation Stage)	Moderate neutral long term visual impact

8. RESIDUAL IMPACTS

The residual impacts will be minimal on the existing local landscape as the site has already been cleared and only contains soil stockpiles of the earlier enabling works. The wider landscape around the site is one that is only at the early stages of development with the relatively recently completed sections of the Belmont Estate and the more mature Cluain Shee and Grianan Fídh which have been completed for some time. The tight spacing of the Thornberry housing means a lack of street trees to soften the built form throughout this section of development but the wider inter block spaces of the proposed development will allow for far greater amounts of native species tree planting, albeit the height and concentration of the proposed built form, which will be a positive benefit for the area over time.

The proposed development complies with the Green County Strategy as referenced in Section 3 above respecting the cultural and heritage objectives as set out in the County Development plan. The project will also comply with the SUDS requirements by the use of green roofs and attenuation proposals. Native species and pollinator friendly species planting proposals along with a pollinator friendly grass mowing regime as set out in the Landscape Masterplan will encourage biodiversity in an existing soil stripped site. The site is one of the last areas for development in the general Belarmine / Aikens Village area that commenced in the early 2000s. The general landscape character of the area is one that is undergoing significant residential development and the landscape character of the area will suffer some level of negative visual intrusion during the construction stage but as the landscape matures around the site the negative visual impacts will tend towards imperceptible. Given the fact that the site has been zoned for development for some time there would be an expectation of construction taking place on the site. Given the recent publication of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Urban Development and Building Heights there would be an expectation that the site would be developed in a sustainable manner with the level of the existing local infrastructure of public transport, roads, educational facilities and retail. The requirement to reduce the heights of the blocks at the northern end to match the Thornberry development heights results in the increased heights at the Village Road end of the development where the site contours benefit increased building heights.

The residual visual impacts of the development will impact mainly on the existing development of Cluain Shee, Grianan Fídh and Ferncarrig Avenue that face onto the site given the height difference of the proposed and the existing 2 to 4 storeys heights but the proposed blocks have been set away from the existing housing to reduce the visual impacts and a landscaped open space provides separation between proposed and existing. The ABP Inspectors Report (Reg. Ref. ABP-309828-21) for the previous application refers to the density of the proposed development and building heights of up to 8-storeys as not being an issue for refusal given that the receiving environment had evolved significantly in recent years to a suburb of increasing density with high quality public transport and emerging neighbourhood centres.

9. REFERENCES

Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Reports (2022).

- 'Advice Notes on Current Practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements', Environmental Protection Agency, 2015.
- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment', 3rd Ed., The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013.
- Urban Development & Building Heights, Dept. of Housing Planning & Local Government 2018

10. Appendix 1

Proposed Views -See GNet 3D submission for final Photomontage locations and existing and proposed views. (Note As the proposed development will not be visible in some of the views red lines on photomontage views indicates position of the development)



Fig. G – Ironborn SHD, Aikens Village – 13 No. Photomontage Locations (Bing Maps) – See also GNet 3D submission.

Table 1.1: Photo view Locations, Aikens Village SHD

View	Description	Location
1	View north east from Village Road	South West
2	View north from Village Road	South
3	View north east from Cluain Shee	South west
4	View north west from pedestrian path	South east
5	View south east from Atkinson Drive	North west
6	View south from Hyde Road, Belmont	North
7	View south from Thornberry Close	North
8	View south east from Thornberry Close	North west
9	View north from Village Road	South

10a	View north east from R117 Enniskerry Road	South west
10b	View east from R117 Enniskerry Road	South west
11	View north west from Ferncarrig Avenue	South east
12	View south from Old Kilgobbin Road	North
13	View north from Village Road	South
14	CGI	
15	CGI	
16	View north west from open space opposite Ferncarrig Avenue	South east
17	View west from Ferncarrig Rise	South East
18	View south west from Ferncarrig Court	East
19	View south from Ferncarrig Avenue	North east



View 01 – Existing - View north east from Village Road



View 01 – Proposed - View north east from Village Road



View 2 – Existing - View north from Village Road



View 2 – Proposed - View north from Village Road



View 3 – Existing - View north east from Cluain Shee



View 3 – Proposed - View north east from Cluain Shee



View 4 – Existing – View north west from pedestrian path



View 4 – Proposed – View north west from pedestrian path



View 5 – Existing – View south east from Atkinson Drive



View 5 – Proposed – View south east from Atkinson Drive



View 6 – Existing - View south from Hyde Road, Belmont



View 6 – Proposed - View south from Hyde Road, Belmont



View 7 – Existing - View south from Thornberry Close



View 7 –Proposed - View south from Thornberry Close



View 8 – Existing - View south east from Thornberry Close



View 8 – Proposed - View south east from Thornberry Close



View 9 – Existing - View north from Village Road



View 9 – Proposed - View north from Village Road



View 10a – Existing - View east from R117 Enniskerry Road



View 10a – Proposed - View east from R117 Enniskerry Road



View 10b – Existing - View north east from R117 Enniskerry Road



View 10b – Proposed - View north east from R117 Enniskerry Road



View 11 – Existing - View north west from Ferncarrig Avenue



View 11 – Proposed - View north west from Ferncarrig Avenue



View 12 – Existing - View south from Old Kilgobbin Road



View 12 – Proposed - View south from Old Kilgobbin Road



View 13 – Existing - View north from Village Road



View 13 – Proposed - View north from Village Road



View 16 -Existing - View north west from open space opposite Ferncarrig Avenue



View 16 -Proposed - View north west from open space opposite Ferncarrig Avenue



View 17 – Existing - View west from Ferncarrig Rise



View 17 – Proposed - View west from Ferncarrig Rise



View 18 – Existing - View south west from Ferncarrig Court



View 18 – Proposed View south west from Ferncarrig Court



View 19 – Existing View south from Ferncarrig Avenue



View 19 – Proposed View south from Ferncarrig Avenue.

