LANDSCAPE and VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Proposed Development of 22 Houses, 115 Apartments and a Creche at Simmonstown Lane/ Hazelhatch Road, Celbridge, Co. Dublin.

For:

Garyaron Homes Ltd.

RMDA
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS + CONSULTANTS

1.0 Landscape and Visual Impacts

1.1 Introduction

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (hereafter LVIA), prepared by Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates Ltd (hereafter RMDA), and was informed by a desktop study, and a survey of the site and receiving environment in February 2021 & June 2022. The assessment is in accordance with the methodology prescribed in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013 (GLVIA) published by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment.

This report identifies and discusses the landscape and visual constraints effects in relation to the proposed development at Hazelhatch Road, R405, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. RMDA has been commissioned by the applicants, Garyaron Homes Ltd. to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to accompany a Large - scale Residential Development (LRD) planning application on a site measuring circa 2.1 hectares, on lands that are located within the metropolitan area of the Kildare County as defined by the development plan 2017 – 2023.

This assessment should be read in conjunction with the Photomontages have been prepared for the scheme which are included in the separate A3 document "LVIA Viewpoints" prepared by 3d Design Bureau, which should also be read in conjunction with this chapter. In addition, please also refer to section 14.9 and Figs 14.29 and 14.30 of this chapter for an assessment of the viewpoints.

The development shall consist of 137 no. residential units(115 Apartments & 22 Houses) and a creche, on a site located west of the Hazelhatch Road, R405, Road, south of the housing development Hazelhatch Park housing estate, and south west of the Primrose Gate housing development. The site is located 2.5 km from the centre of Celbridge, once a small village on the outskirts of Kildare city but now an expanding satellite town and is 23 km to O'Connell Street, the centre of Dublin city by road. The proposed residential development at Hazelhatch Road, R405 shall form an important and expanding development in this area and shall be consistent with emerging housing patterns in the area.

The proposed residential units shall be characterised by houses, including semi-detached and terraced houses, as well as apartments with open spaces, greenways, the retention of existing trees and hedgerows, associated tree planting, roads, driveways, and new boundary treatments. The proposal also includes drainage and SUDS proposals, electricity substations and all associated site development works facilitating the proposed development.

1.1.1 Statement of Authority

RMDA provides specialist landscape and visual services for projects from inception, through site/route selection, environmental impact assessment (EIA) and the planning process, to detailed design and construction. The company specialises in landscape character assessment (LCA) and landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) – for a wide variety of projects.

Fig. 1.0 - Landscape Masterplan

Ronan MacDiarmada is the chapter's main author, and Peter Lynch provided oversight and review. Ronan MacDiarmada, B.Agr. Sc. (Land. Hort.) is the director of Ronan MacDiarmada & Associates Ltd, and is graduate of University College Dublin. He is a qualified Landscape Architect and a Corporate Member of the Irish Landscape Institute. He has specialised in Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) and has over twenty years' experience in a range of projects, from large scale strategic design, master planning and detailed design to LVIA and landscape planning, including Large - scale Residential Developments throughout Ireland.

1.2 Methodology Used

Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology: This assessment is based on the following guidelines:

- "Advice Notes on Current Practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements", Environmental Protection Agency (2015)
- "Guidelines on the Information to the Contained in Environmental Impact Statements", Environmental Protection Agency (2002).
- "*Draft 2017 EPA Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment",* Environmental Protection Agency.
- "Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements" Draft (September 2015)
- *"Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment"*, 3rd Ed., Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013.
- "*Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on the preparation of the EIAR*" European Commission, 2011.

The following Methodology was used in this assessment:

- A desk top study of the proposed site and its environs, including reviewing aerial photography and ordinance survey documents.
- A site survey was undertaken to determine the character of the landscape and the surrounding area, including site visits during the month of June 2022.
- An assessment of the proposed development was carried out by examining the layout plans, elevations, and sections to determine the impacts of the development.
- An evaluation of these impacts was carried out in accordance with the criteria set out in the EPA guidelines.
- A review of statutory planning and other documentation in order to ascertain the local and wider significance; and visiting the site and surrounding area during February and June 2022 and preparing a photographic record of views and landscape features.
- RMDA were involved in the landscape design of the proposed development and liaised directly with the arborist, ecologist and the design team for the project. The design was heavily influenced by the retention of existing trees and the planting of native hedges, trees and pollinator planting.
- Photomontages and CGI were prepared by 3d Design Bureau, the review and assessment to determine the visual impact and effect on the Landscape was carried out by RMDA.

1.2.1 Definition of Landscape

Ireland is a signatory to the European Landscape Convention (ELC). The ELC defines landscape as *'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'*. This definition is important, as it defines that the landscape is not only a physical and visual amenity but provides for a range of functions. As a cultural resource, the interaction of man and landscape has formed the basis of much of our cultural heritage and values. The rhythms of the land as it was settled has informed what Hazelhatch Road, R405, is today. The landscape provides opportunities for passive and active recreation. It contributes to the sense of place, as over time and place various histories and interactions have formed a sense of place for the local populations. The landscape provides a historic record, it is a resource for food production, a source of energy in the cycle of nature's various processes. In particular, the landscape has the ability to renew itself.

Hazelhatch Road, R405, and its environs is that of a semi - rural setting and this is defined in "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment 2013 (GL VIA-2013)" in the following manner (Section 2.2):

"Landscape is about the relationship between people and place. It provides the setting for our day to day lives. The term does not mean just special or designated landscapes and it does not only apply to the countryside."

1.2.2 Forces for Landscape Change

The landscape in Celbridge Hazelhatch Road, R405, is not unchanging. It has changed with the settlement pattern over the last several hundred years. It has progressed from wilderness to agriculture and settlement. The patterns of settlement have been driven primarily by economic need and the requirement to provide shelter and a food resource. In this frame, it has to be accepted that changes shall occur, and it requires finding an appropriate balance between economic, social and environmental forces and values. In this, the landscape proposed in the development have focused on the existing hedgerows and the retention and augmentation of same. This is done to minimise visual impact, create and retain existing habitats. It is anticipated to retain the sense of value and place in the location in which residents work and reside. This shall encourage the growth of community in Celbridge,

The landscape proposals have focused on bringing nature into the urban realm so that the residents may have a sense of value and place in the location in which they reside. This shall encourage the growth of community in Celbridge,, through natural interventions, retention of hedgerows and trees, woodland planting, wildflower meadows, pollinator planting and extensive tree planting.

Fig 14.4 – Planting Moodboard

Climate change was also one of the factors that informed this proposed design consideration, i.e. the need to mitigate and offset issues associated with urban development. In this, the approach to surface water run-off is integrated with landscape solutions in the SUDS requirements. It was considered very important to be able to manage the water and more extreme weather and rainfall patterns. The use of natural falls, existing ditches, woodland planting and extensive tree planting, have been adopted as part of this new landscape and is considered to a positive visual impact upon the landscape and the environment.

1.2.3 Nature of Impacts

Impact on landscape arising from development has two distinct but closely related aspects. The first is impact in the form of change to character of the landscape that arises from the excavation of the existing landform and 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:

- Direct impacts upon specific landscape elements and buildings within and adjacent to the site;
- Effects on the overall pattern of the landscape elements that give rise to the character of the site and its surroundings;
- Impacts upon any special features or interests in or around the site;
- Direct impacts of the scheme upon views in the landscape;
- Overall impact on landscape character and visual amenity.

In determining the Visual Impacts, the following definitions were used to assess the significance of the impacts:

1.2.4 Impact Significance Criteria – Table 1

No Impact:	There are no changes to views in the visual landscape.
Imperceptible Impact:	An impact capable of measurement but without noticeable consequences.
Slight Impact:	An impact which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate Impact:	An impact that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging trends.
Significant Impact:	An impact which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Profound Impact:	An impact which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

Terms used to describe quality of visual impact:

- **Neutral Impact**: A change which does not affect the quality of the landscape.
- **Positive Impact**: A change which improves the quality of the environment or landscape.
- **Negative Impact**: A change which reduces the quality of the environment or landscape.

1.2.5 Terms used to describe the Duration of Visual impact

Momentary Effects	Seconds to Minutes
Brief Effects	Less than a day
Temporary Effects	Less than a year
Short-term Effects	Lasting 1 to 7 years
Medium-term Effects	Lasting 7 to 15 years
Long-term Effects	Lasting 15 to 60 years
Permanent Effects	Lasting over 60 years
Reversible Effects	Effects that can be undone
Frequency of Effects	Describe how often the effect will occur

Landscape effect vs. landscape impact: the terms 'effect' and 'impact' should be clearly defined and used consistently in environmental assessments. 'Impact' is defined as the action been taken, whilst

‘effect’ is defined as result (change or changes) of that action, e.g. the ‘impact’ of the project on the woodland has a significant ‘effect’ on the character of the landscape (LI/IEMA, 2013).

1.3.0 Receiving Environment

1.3.1 Description of the Receiving Environment

The area of the red line of application equates to 2.1 Ha which includes the proposed connections to adjoining lands to the south west as well as proposed upgrades to the Sommerton Lane,
The area of the subject site was previously a single house set among a garden which is now owned by the Client Garyaron Homes. This site shall accommodate the proposed housing, creche, associated open spaces and site development works etc., which are located south and southwest of two large housing developments, Hazelhatch park and Primrose Gate respectively.

The proposed site lies south of the main town of Celbridge and directly off the Hazelhatch Road, R405, which connects to a lane connected to Simmonstown manor, a laneway which is currently being used as a walking route by local people and is proposed to be upgrade. To the west of the development site, lies existing field patterns that remain agricultural in appearance, as well as individual houses. Celbridge GAA .Club has its grounds and pitches to the East of the site, while the Celbridge & District Tennis Club is located south east of the proposed site along the Hazelhatch road.

Currently there is a main house that was a detached dwelling located in a large garden with many mature trees. There are several old farm outbuildings which have been abandoned for some time on the subject site, these are proposed to be demolished. There are a lot of mature trees, notably a fine walnut tree specimen, with notable pine trees, beech and over mature chestnut tree.

This is an area characterised by the expanding village of Celbridge to the North, consisting primarily of suburban housing, a number of shops, supermarkets, public houses, church There are a number of amenities in the area, Celbridge GAA club and . The County town of Celbridge is expanding from the North along the R405 Hazelhatch Road.

The subject site is situated on a relatively level ground with no undulations or hills.

1.3.2 Landscape Type - Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The proposed scheme involves the development of a wide variety of dwelling types for the expanding town of Celbridge, the increasing population of Kildare City and its immediate environs.

The access to the site shall be directly from the Hazelhatch Road, R405, and an upgraded Simmonstown Manor Lane. Pedestrian and cyclist connections are also proposed through the subject site along an existing tree belt.

Paths, seating and sensory planting, in the form of wildflower meadow mixes have been proposed to provide amenity in the open spaces, with a belt of existing trees being retained to the Eastern boundary and a number of trees and hedge to the south

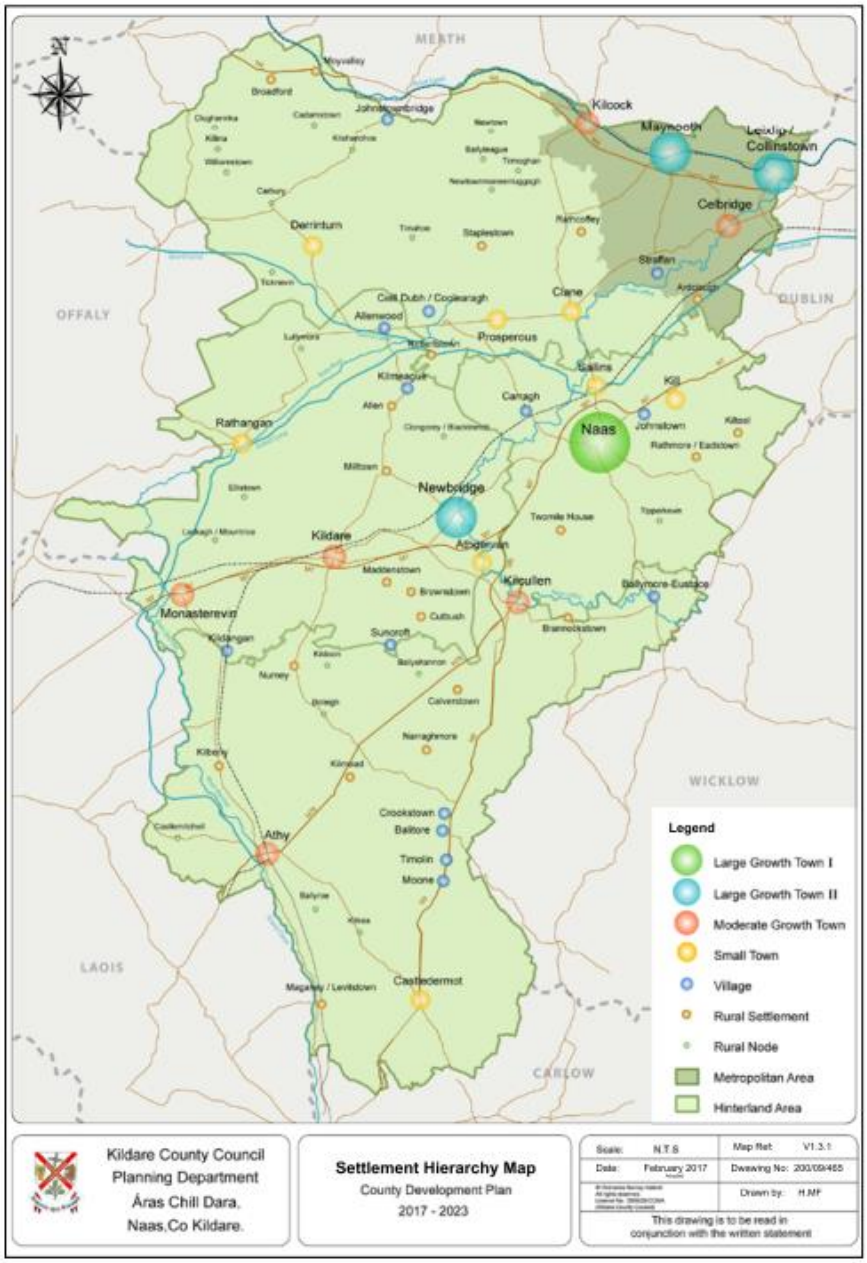


Fig 1.3 Settlement Hierarchy Map – (Source: KCC Development Plan 2017 – 2023 – Map 3.1)

It is intended that the site shall retain some of the existing trees. However as the site was once a garden with extensive tree planting, many of these shall be removed. On completion of the residential development, it shall be landscaped to a very high standard, with tree planting, pollinator shrubs, paths, play spaces, wild flower meadows, bulb planting and paving in the external open spaces.

Although works shall occur in the construction of the dwellings, the character of the site at present shall change the garden to housing, the landscape albeit with the removal of a large amount of the existing trees, shall be in a manner that is consistent with emerging and existing trends and therefore a moderate impact. The development to the North and west with its existing built form, the retention of the eastern and southern vegetated boundaries shall ameliorate the impact and effect from the surrounding areas. There shall be a programme of tree planting throughout the site, along the new streets and the open spaces within the development.

This shall help define the character of the proposal and a public path shall be made available to the public, through the existing woodland area on the Eastern boundary from the Hazelhatch Road, R405, Road, to the lands to the south west.

The soft landscape proposals shall compliment the development aesthetically and functionally and shall tie in with the existing and surrounding landscape. The proposed and existing trees, hedges and shrubs shall position the development into the landscape and provide a large element of screening. It is intended to tie in with and blend the development into the local landscape befitting of its semi-rural context merging into an established urban background.
'In landscape terms', the proposed development has been developed to achieve the following objectives:

- To renew and augment existing vegetation with planting suitable to the local and new proposed environment;
- To create new landscape features that will complement and enhance the landscape;
- To provide a new landscape feature in the form of a housing development that will significantly enhance and retain the character of the area.

1.3.3 Policy Context of Receiving Environment

The following section includes policies and objectives from the 2017-2023 Kildare County Development Plan (hereafter referred as the Plan) and the Celbridge Local Area Plan (hereafter referred as the LAP) which relate to the site, including policies relating to the core strategy, landscape, views and prospects, and green infrastructure. The Plan includes policies relating to landscape character, protected views and general landscape policies, whereas the LAP includes more specific policies for the vicinity of the proposed development site.

1.3.4 Celbridge Local Area Plan (LAP) 2017-2023

1.3.4.1 Zoning

The site is zoned Existing Residential Infill

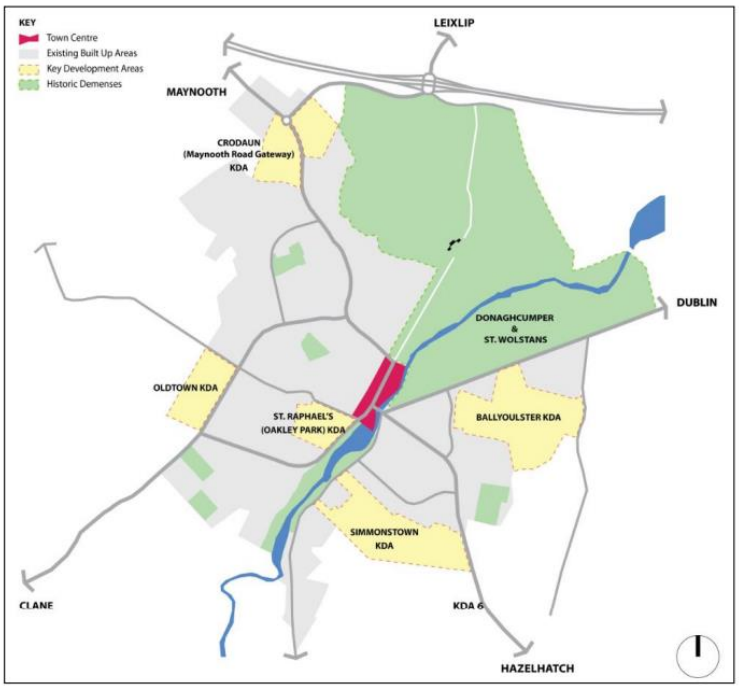


Fig 1.4 Core Strategy Map Celbridge LAP Figure 4.1

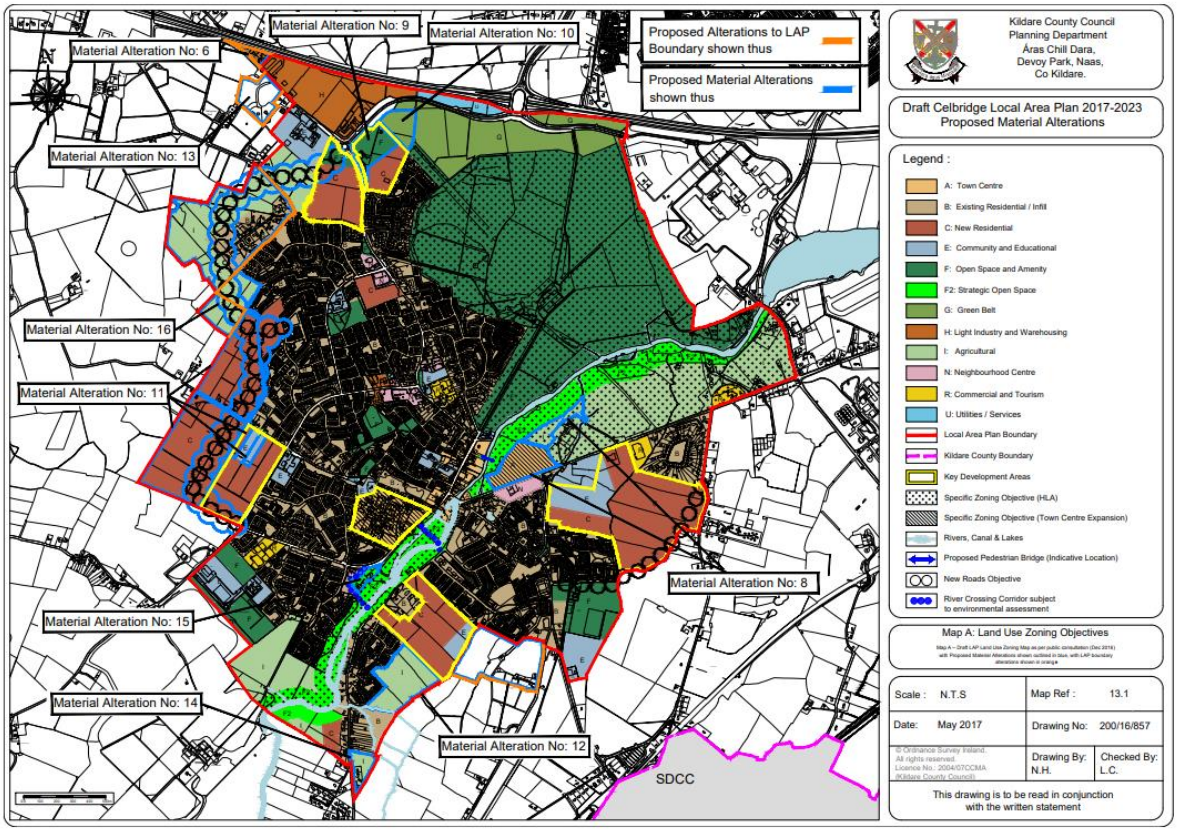


Fig. 1.5 – Zoning Map (Source Celbridge LAP 2017 – 2023 – Map Ref 13.1)

1.3.5 Landscape Character

The Character Area of Celbridge is Northern Lowlands and is located in a Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns In the Metropolitan Area, as per the LAP . In a strong edge of Metropolitan area district service centres with HQ linkages and increased densities at nodes on public transport corridors. It is located in a Hinterland Area, circa 10km from large growth town on public transport corridor, and serves rural hinterland as a market town.

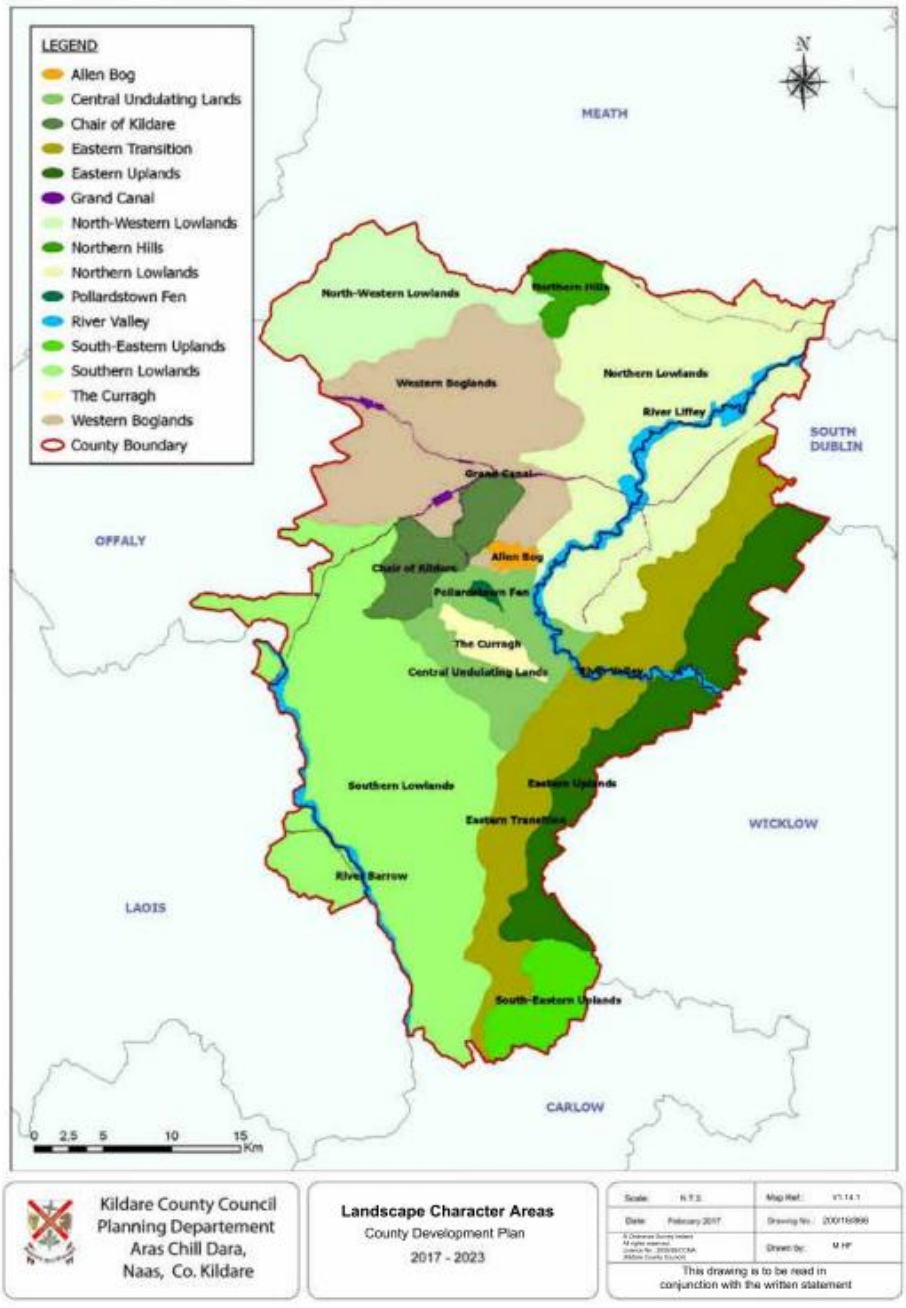


Fig. 1.6 –Landscape Character Areas (Source KCC Development Plan 2017 – 2023 – Map Ref 14.1)

The site at Hazel hatch is not located within a Natural Heritage Area, nor is it within a Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area.

Celbridge is located within a preferred development Area:

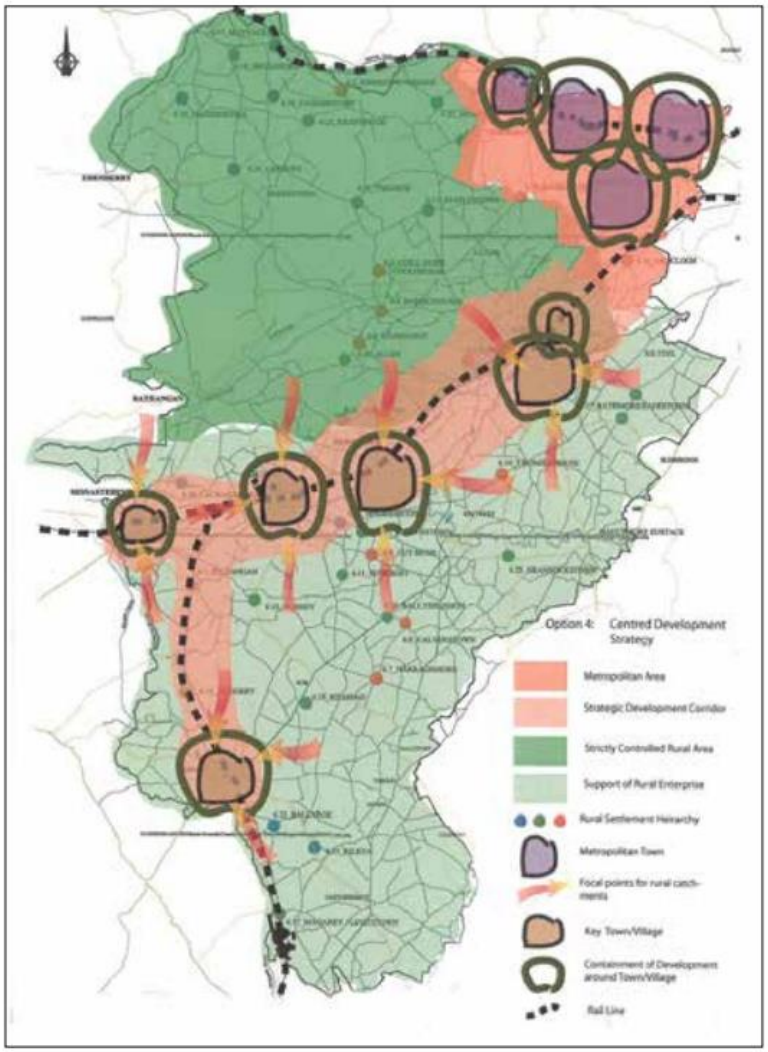


Fig. 1.7 –Preferred Development Strategy (Source KCC Development Plan 2017 – 2023 – Map Ref 2.5)

1.3.6 Protected Views

- There are no protected views within the development or adjacent to it.

1.3.7 Built Heritage - Record of Protected Structures

There are several protected structures in the locality but there are no protected structures, monuments or sites recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) within the subject site.

Earthwork possible Site - Simmonstown – OS Sheet No. 11 - KD011-030
Castle Site - Simmonstown OS Sheet No. 11 - KD011-016

1.4.0 Summary of Landscape Characteristics and Values

1.4.1 Landscape Values

The GLVIA Guidelines sets out the methodology for assigning landscape sensitivity. This is based on combining judgements on landscape value and landscape susceptibility.

Landscape values are derived from both indications of value as seen in national and local policy, as well as other indications that a landscape or landscape element, is valued. The CDP and LAP have both designated the site for residential development along with open spaces. The site is not covered by any landscape designations.

In addition to formal designations at international, national and local level, the GLVIA refers to criteria which can help to describe landscape values in landscapes that are not covered by designations. These include the following:

1.4.2 Landscape Quality/Condition

The quality of the landscape and the condition of individual elements is considered to be good. The tree survey indicates the majority of the trees on site are of moderate quality. The river Liffey is located north of the site and flows through the town of Celbridge. The site is a private dwelling with a large garden and disused outbuildings.

1.4.3 Aesthetic/Scenic Quality

The site has mature trees and lawns which give a pleasant open visual quality to the site. The existing stream, with tree cover is very pleasant and remains open. The woodland – tree cover on the eastern boundary is an important aspect of the site and various receptor views were taken in these locations to show that they reduce the visual impact of the proposed development. .

1.4.4 Perceptual aspects

A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, such as wildness or tranquillity. The site is an area of a garden, adjacent to a built-up area. It has maintained the mature trees. The location at the periphery of Celbridge town provides an open ambience on the southern and western portion of the land

1.4.5 Public Accessibility and Recreation Value

The site is in private ownership and not publicly accessible. These values can further be categorised in two ways – values which should be conserved, and those that provide opportunity for enhancement. It is proposed to reinforce and manage the existing inventory of natural habitats, i.e. trees and understorey planting.

1.4.6 Conservation Values

The conservation values indicate those aspects of the receiving environment which are sensitive and could be negatively impacted on by the proposed development. These values form the potential landscape and visual constraints to the proposed development. These include:

- Mature Garden setting
- Trees contribute greatly to the character of the site and shall be retained along the eastern boundary as an existing screen and buffer.

There shall be a pedestrian/Cycle way through the linear/woodland buffer that shall form a Greenway route.

1.4.7 Enhancement Values

The enhancement values reflect change that is occurring in the landscape and its inherent robustness. These values would include existing trees and woodland. The enhancement would take account of these landscape features and utilise them, wherever possible in the proposed landscape design. The enhancement would take the form of providing active and passive recreational amenity for the future residents. These features would be further expanded upon by the use of additional tree and hedge planting to augment or add to the existing hedgerows. Paths, seating, play areas and wildflower/meadow mix shall be added to enhance the amenity and landscape of the proposed development.

These include:

- The green routes, along the existing woodland shall be utilised as connection routes to internal and external open spaces;
- The street hierarchy shall be of a high quality leading to greater sense of place and to a greater sense of well-being. The new planting shall preserve the old and provide a new urban landscape that shall be ordered and provide a sense of place;
- Opportunity to increase permeability with adjacent built-up areas. The proposed circulation has been devised to provide access throughout the development and into adjoining access points, greenways and public paths and roads, if required. The paths are located within open space areas leading to greater recreational use and permeability;
- Opportunity to provide ecological enhancement. This shall include the planting of a large number of trees, far in excess of the existing number on site. The replanting of native hedgerows, and the hedgerows shall be managed to ensure that they shall survive into the future;
- The open spaces shall be developed with habitat renewal to the fore, it is proposed to be augmented by wild meadow grasses and wildflower mixes. Bulb planting to aid pollination is also proposed.
- The existing trees along the Eastern boundary shall be retained in a linear park that shall have a path and cycle way to provide a connection from Hazelhatch Road, R405, road to the south connecting to an development area to the south – South west. The linear park shall provide amenity for residents in the form of walking and biodiversity.
- The linear park shall have wildflower mixes and additional tree planting.
- To further enhance the linear park, a play space and seating shall be placed along the route.
- Several pocket parks and open spaces are proposed and shall retain an open ambience. They shall be planted with pollinator trees and wildflower and bulb mixes.

1.4.8 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The development proposal consists of the construction of a residential development of 137 no. dwellings and a creche, as well as open spaces, and all associated site development works. Access to the subject site will be from the Hazelhatch Road, R405, Road, with pedestrian and cyclist connections directly into the adjoining Simmonstown Lane/Hazelhatch Road.

It is intended that the site shall retain many of the existing trees along the eastern boundary and hedgerow and trees to the southern boundary. Upon completion of the development, there shall be a very high standard of landscaping to the public and private realm, with tree planting, shrub planting and paving that shall characterise the external open spaces. The open spaces shall contain, green areas, paths, public seating, and extensive tree, shrub, wildflower and bulb planting.

Many of the proposed species will be pollinator friendly in order to create biodiversity within the scheme. The range of plants have been taken from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020 & 2021 - 2025 The provision of shrub planting includes Bergenia cordifolia, Hypericum hidcote, Lavandula angustifolia, Libertia grandifloria, Persicaria affine, Rosemarinus 'Prostratus',

Although the existing garden and s internal vegetation shall be removed in the construction of the development, the character of the site at present shall be retained looking toward the site, with the retention of the key element – the eastern woodland tree belt and southern hedge. These shall be protected and kept in order to add to the appearance and screening of the development.

The soft landscape proposals shall compliment the development aesthetically and functionally and shall tie in with the existing and surrounding landscape. The proposed and existing trees, hedges and shrubs shall sit the development into the landscape and provide a large element of screening. It is intended to tie in with and assimilate the development into the local landscape befitting of its suburban background, as follows:

- To retain existing vegetation, hedgerows and Trees, and to augment with native planting where appropriate.
- To create new landscape features that are biodiversity friendly that will complement and enhance the Landscape;
- To provide a new landscape feature in the form of a development that will significantly enhance and retain the character of the area.

Fig 1.8 - CGI – Proposed central open space with natural play ground and kickabout area

1.5 Analysis : Assessment of Potential Impacts of the Proposed Development

This section of the report describes the potential effects of the proposed development, on the visual and landscape qualities of the subject site and wider context; at construction and operational stages. Effects may vary between positive or negative, short or long term; temporary or permanent.

1.5.1 Construction Phase

Potential visual 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/hoarding, gates, plant and machinery etc., will be required and put in place. All construction impacts will be temporary, and may include the following:

- Site preparation works and operations;
- Site excavations and earthworks;
- Site infrastructure and vehicular access;
- Construction traffic, dust and other emissions;
- Temporary fencing/hoardings;
- Temporary site lighting;
- Temporary site buildings (including office accommodation);
- Cranes, crash deck and scaffolding;
- Piling rigs.

1.5.2 Operational Phase

The importance of design quality in the process of urban renewal and inserting new buildings into the town fabric should not be underestimated. Good design in such circumstances is a rigorous process involving: a deep understanding of the site, its context and existing sensitivities; testing of the range of appropriate design options; a broad knowledge of suitable design approaches and; the ability to convert these through careful detailing, materials selection and effective control throughout the construction process. These aspects of design are central to successful and appropriate integration of new development within its context. Any development has the potential to impact negatively if poorly designed. Conversely it has the potential to impact positively, indeed to inspire, if well designed.

Many aspects of the proposed scheme design at this preliminary stage are included specifically to respond to such issues and any associated concerns. The design approach and specific mitigation measures employed to address the sensitive contextual issues and to respect and enhance the local environs are outlined in the following sections.

1.5.3 Potential Visual Impact of the Proposed Development

The visual impacts of the proposed development on the landscape are considered in the context of the construction and operational stages. Generally, the development shall reduce the amount of green space, replacing it with the proposed units, and associated walls, roads and driveways. The space that is being removed was a garden with a number of mature trees and lawn area. .

The main visual changes shall be the height and the extent of the proposed residential development and associated building works to the landscape. The development shall be located on relatively flat ground which shall reduce its visual impact, notably from all the visual receptors directly north, west east and south of the site.

Fig 1.9 - CGI – visual impact of buildings minimised by level change and existing trees along the Eastern Boundary

The design and organisation of the open space shall ameliorate the impact of this development and of the decrease in spatial area. This shall be aided through provision of extensive semi - mature tree planting, native hedge planting.. The hedge and tree planting shall position the housing into the landscape as per the proposed landscape design.

The lines and the height of the buildings shall be visually reduced through the retention of existing trees notably along the eastern side and hedgerow to the south, the proposed use of more soft landscape materials shall further reduce the impact of the development. Semi - mature trees and shrub planting shall give an immediate effect tying in with the surrounding landscape. The visual impact of the landscape intervention on the existing development shall be moderate with a neutral to positive landscape effect in the long term, as it ties with proposed and existing developments. The impact on the agricultural nature of the surrounding landscape shall be slight - moderate and as development continues around the proposed site.

1.5.4 Assessment of Construction Impacts

During the construction of the development, the area shall be changed from a dwelling house and mature gardens to a residential development. The introduction of the built structures, driveways boundaries and landscape will be developed.

Tree protection shall be provided to retain the character of the existing trees.

The development shall be carried out in an organised basis, thus reducing the visual impact upon the environment: however, the landscape impact on the initial area of construction shall be moderate, while visually negative due to the loss of the tree cover for a temporary to short term and neutral to positive to the long term as it shall form part of an overall development area planned by Kildare County Council.

The retention of the trees, along the eastern boundary, hedge to the southern boundary and the existing built form to the North and west, shall reduce the visual impact of the proposal during construction..

As the development increases and phasing continues, the improvement, growth and maturity, in terms of the landscape elements, trees, hedges and shrubs, shall reduce the visual impact. In the long term, it will neutral to positive, as other existing housing developments and the proposed Simmonstown development area to the south are developed
The greatest impact shall be the views through the site as they will become determined by the proposed units, walls, and landscape elements of trees and hedges. The landscape impact shall be moderate.

1.5.5 Due to the removal of the site vegetation

During the construction stages traffic movement, excavation operations and construction works shall have a moderate impact on the site, with some temporary negative visual impacts.

Grass in the form of a lawn forms the groundcover over a portion of the site with existing s providing screening and boundary treatment.

The removal of the grass will be necessary for the development to commence.

The existing tree line to the Hazelhatch Road, R405, Road shall be retained despite the requirement from Kildare County Council to upgrade this road through the provision of a path along the road. The visual impact upon the area shall be ameliorated due to the retention of the trees – therefore it shall be a slight to moderate impact with a neutral visal to the short term.

The majority of the trees shall be removed throughout the site – a moderate impact with a neutral - negative visual impact in the short term.

Although the portion of 'Green' land will be reduced, no loss of botanical significance shall be incurred, Existing trees that are being retained, shall be augmented by the introduction of new trees and planting, the predicted impact during construction shall be moderate and neutral to negative in the short-term depending on the length of time on site.

1.5.6 Assessment of Operational Impacts

Initially, on completion of the development, the introduced shrubs will be at early stages of establishment and the trees shall be semi-mature at planting. As time progresses, the plants and trees will grow and stabilise in their new environment creating better defined avenues and spaces.

The number and quality of landscape elements shall be an addition to the built environment of Hazelhatch Road, R405, providing quality amenity for the residents. The extensive development of the external spaces shall provide an improvement on the existing landscape. The ordered design shall be visually positive and long term. The landscape impact on the surrounding landscape shall be slight to moderate in the short term and with maturity of the trees, hedges and plants it shall be neutral to positive in the long term.

Fig. 2.0 – Woodland Zone – Existing Trees and shared greenway set along the existing trees on the Eastern Boundary

There shall be new homes with a landscape scheme, both hard and soft, accompanying them to provide a highly developed and coherent design. The proposed house, driveway, parking and planting shall be clearly identified and developed in an organised manner.

Fig. 2.1 – Proposed 'Local' Streetscape

1.5.7 Impact due to introduction of new structures & buildings

The introduction of the proposed buildings shall form the vertical elements of the proposal. However, existing trees shall help reduce the visual impact as it has established vertical elements, i.e. trees. The main visual impact shall be the mass of the proposed structures, notably the apartment buildings.

The new structures and associated works will reduce the amount of current open space and remove many of the existing trees internally.

The potential visual impact shall be ameliorated due to the screening of the Eastern boundary woodland, southern hedge and built form to the north and west, although moderate during construction stage, it shall change to neutral /positive development in the long term, as new housing is developed. The southern receptor view locations show that the retention of this tree lined / woodland boundary screens the development from the hazel hatch road. . The road is to be widened along the Simmonstown Lane, with footpath and boundary proposed. The visual impact shall change over time as the new native hedge and trees shall grow and mature, reconnecting with existing hedgerows along the boundaries.

The development shall therefore be a maturing site, becoming increasingly knitted to the fabric of the landscape in this area, which in isolation has a suburban and isolated rural feel but increasingly urban to the north, east and further west.

The roads have been developed into a hierarchy of street types, meaning shorter lengths, different surface materials contributing to the reduction of long visual lines. The roads shall be heavily planted with semi mature trees and hedges, reducing the impact of the road on the environment.

1.5.8 Impact due to Landscape Proposals

The landscape proposals shall consist of retention of existing trees along the eastern boundary and a group to the northern boundary. As a garden the trees were planted throughout and surrounding the existing house. The removal shall be ameliorated by the new planting of a variety of tree species, including native trees, being introduced along with shrubs in specified areas. These proposals shall enhance the landscape character of the development. The site will change from garden use to a completed residential development with an associated landscape scheme.

The landscape scheme shall impact on the development in a positive way, working with the landscape through the use of and retention of trees and hedging to create an environment maintaining desirable aspects of the existing landscape and accentuating them through the introduction of new elements.

The current street frontage of the existing trees shall be retained and augmented by a native hedge and stone piers & railing. The development of a new native hedgerow set back from the road as per direction from Kildare County Council shall provide an ordered and a boundary that is in keeping with the surrounding field boundary landscape.

There shall be an increase in the species and varieties of plants, wildflower grass meadows, bulbs and notably trees on the existing landscape which was primarily a monoculture of grass(lawn) and garden trees.

The landscape proposals shall include for a range of pollinator plants, trees, hedges, flowering bulbs and wildflowers and shrub planting. The flowering of these plants shall enable bees to flourish but also increase the texture and colour in the landscape. This shall be a positive and long-term visual impact.

1.5.9 Parking

The entrance roadway has been designed not to have a visual link from the road to the proposed houses, in part due to the flat topography. The parking areas shall be screened by new hedges and existing trees. The visual effect shall be moderate to significant in the short to medium term. As the planting matures, the organised layout with the associated tree planting will create their own character, creating an organised new landscape. Visually, the proposal shall become a new urban landscape, part of the current and emerging trend in the locality. This is important as the Simmonstown Area to the south of the site is identified as a development area.
In the short term the impact shall be slight to moderate, however as the area is developed with the retention of the key tree/woodland and hedge boundary and the organised urban landscape with associated trees it shall be a neutral impact over the medium and positive to long term.

1.6 Waste handling areas

The bin storage of an individual house shall be to the rear as this shall be typical of a housing development. The apartments shall have their waste handled by a management company and shall be centralised in designed bin stores and shall screened from view.

1.6.1 Impact due to Telecommunications/Power Lines

On this site, the development shall be served from existing services, telecommunications, and power lines. The proposed services, telecommunications and power lines on site shall be all underground. The opportunity to organise and reduce the telecommunication and services to current standards shall be utilised to reduce the visual impact on the development. Therefore the only items that may be seen shall be lamp standards, ESB mini box, and substation. The lamp standards shall be designed to fit into the streetscape in an organised manner, (as per below). The telecommunications shall be all underground and shall serve the houses individually and shall not impact visually upon the new landscape.

1.6.2 Due to Lighting

The lighting of the new development shall be limited and shall be typical of a similar scheme with roads, footpaths, carparking and the main open spaces lit up by the overspill of street lighting.

Internally the roads and streets shall be lit by individual columns, which shall visually change the character of the landscape. Therefore the impact of lighting on the existing landscape shall be moderate in the medium term, negative for the short term and shall become neutral in the medium term to long term.
The lighting of the new houses shall be limited and shall be typical of a housing development. The proposed lighting shall form an extension of the existing roads and developments which are established. In the short term it will be a slight to moderate impact, however as the development establishes, it shall form part of the extended housing neighbourhood in the area and shall be neutral in the long term.

1.6.3 Do Nothing Impact

Should the development not proceed it is likely that the site would return to a private house and garden that shall be surrounded by development. The lands to the south and west are categorised for future development.

It is already identified as an infill site and as such presents opportunities for pedestrian and cyclist routes, which shall be lost if the development does not proceed.

1.7 Mitigation Measures

1.7.1 Monitoring

A Landscape Architect shall be appointed to oversee and monitor the project at construction and operational stage. They shall liaise with other project members in relation to any existing and proposed trees.

The landscape architect shall overview all hard and soft landscape works and liaise with resident engineer, project team and contractor. The landscape architect shall also inspect the trees; however, most of the monitoring works shall be during and post-civil construction stage. The landscape architect shall review and instruct on details of soft planting, trees, shrubs and of paving materials, walls and railings.

During the operational stage, the Landscape Architect and Arborist shall review the state of all planting and trees. The landscape architect shall review for period of 18 months, from practical completion of each stage the standard and quality of the materials and workmanship. A final certificate of completion shall be issued by the landscape architect in respect of this.

1.7.2 Mitigation Measures - Construction Phase

During the construction of the development, the area shall be changed from a single dwelling with gardens to a residential development with a crèche. The introduction of the built structures, roads, carparking and landscaped open spaces will be carried out. During construction, there will be a change to the landscape and there will be negative visual impacts for residents and visitors to the areas adjacent to the site associated with construction activity.

Tree protection shall be provided to retain the character of the existing trees on the eastern boundary.

The development shall be carried out in an organised basis, thus reducing the visual impact upon the environment; however, the impact on the initial area of construction shall be in line with emerging trends and therefore be a slight to moderate impact.. The remedial measures proposed include the implementation of appropriate site management procedures – such as the control of site lighting, storage of materials, placement of compounds, delivery of materials, car parking, etc. Visual impact during the construction phase will be mitigated somewhat through appropriate site management measures and work practices to ensure the site is kept tidy, dust is kept to a minimum, and that public areas are kept free from building material and site rubbish.

Site hoarding will be appropriately scaled, finished and maintained for the period of construction of each section of the works as appropriate. To reduce the potential negative impacts during the construction phase, good site management and housekeeping practices will be adhered to. The visual impact of the site compound and scaffolding visible during the construction phase are of a temporary to short term nature only and therefore it is expected that this will require no remedial action other than as already stated.

The retention of the hedgerow on the eastern boundary and the existing walls to the north between Hazel hatch park housing estate shall reduce the visual impact of the proposal during construction. This shall include the use of Tree protection fences to BS standard BS5837.

All building material shall be stored within the site compound, the compound shall be enclosed by a stout fence, and shall be accessed only by a gate manned by a security guard.

The stripped soil shall be stored in berms, until required for use in gardens and open spaces. The balance of the material, that is not required, sod shall be removed to an approved tipping waste management facility.

As the development increases and phasing continues, the improvement in terms of landscape elements, trees etc., growth of the new vegetation and management of the existing hedgerows shall reduce the visual impact and in the long term be positive.

The greatest impact shall be the views through the site as they will become determined by the new buildings, walls and boundaries, landscape elements of trees and hedges shall also affect these views. However the views are currently screened by existing trees, these are being augmented by the introduction of new trees and planting, the predicted impact during construction could be negative in the temporary to short-term depending on the length of time on site, however as the views are restricted by the existing vegetated boundaries and existing built form the visual impact shall be neutral in the short term.

1.7.3 Mitigation Measures – Operational Phase

In landscape terms the design proposal seeks to complement the existing landscape, implementing new landscape features that integrate with and enhance the character of the area and wider environment. The design rationale seeks to mitigate negative effects on the visual amenity and landscape of the area with the following objectives:

- The retention of the existing woodland to the eastern boundary, as well as the trees to the north-west corner.
- Once the development has been lived in for a significant period, the upgrade and improvement of the external spaces shall have a positive impact on the landscape and reduce the visual impact upon nature of the location;
- Follow a multidisciplinary approach to align landscape planting with service elements, maximising the opportunity for public realm trees and buffer planting;
- Use of appropriate materials and boundary treatments to provide high quality public facing finishes that are harmonious with the buildings' facades and provide a legible, safe, and comfortable physical environment;
- The extensive planting of additional trees and shrubs throughout the site and on the site boundaries in keeping with the wider landscape character, will over time, provide visual relief, add to the amenity of the current landscape, reduce the visual mass of the buildings, soften the development over time from various viewpoints and assist in integrating the development into the landscape.
- Native and pollinator species (as per The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020, 2021 - 2025) planting for biodiversity has been incorporated into the scheme and this includes a native tree belt / woodland area, wildflower meadows and semi natural grassland.
- Several connected public open spaces have been designed as part of an overall design strategy that focuses on creating a distinctive 'sense of place' and individual character for the development area. The design of public open space that forms part of a network of spaces that includes areas for passive and active recreation, social / community interaction and play facilities catering for all ages.
- A number of pocket parks shall be developed throughout the development to add to the amenity for the residents and provide additional opportunities for biodiversity. The pocket parks shall be natural and organic in form, using plants from the All-Ireland Pollinator plan for the new and emerging communities. The provision of significant parkland areas/open spaces will facilitate permeability and access to nature.
- The proposed Planting Plan shall use trees and wildflower meadow mixes, taken from the All-Ireland pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020, 2021 – 2025 & the RHS Plants for pollinators. Therefore there shall be an increase in the range and area of pollinator planting.

- Shrubs and hedges to be used in the private spaces shall be taken from the All-Ireland pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020, 2021 – 2025 & the RHS Plants for pollinators. This shall help encourage insects and bees and provide interconnected routes for birds and biodiversity.
- Augmentation of the trees and planting of new native hedges to provide continuous sustainable biodiversity green links for flora and fauna.
- Application of best practice horticultural methods to ensure that mitigation measures establish and grow appropriately.

Landscape works are proposed to reduce and offset any adverse impacts generated due to the proposed development, where possible. The planting of substantial numbers of new trees and other planting in the open spaces, at the site boundaries and internal roads, both native and ornamental varieties. This will enhance the overall appearance of the new development and compensate for any removal of hedgerows and trees, where needed, for the construction works, and increase the overall landscape capacity of the site to accommodate development. Thus offsetting the effect upon the landscape in visual and physical terms, to short to medium term.

1.7.4 Residual Impacts

Initially, on completion of the development, the introduced shrubs will be at early stages of establishment, the trees shall be semi mature at planting. As time progresses, the plants and trees will grow and stabilise in their new environment creating better defined avenues and spaces.

The number and quality of landscape elements shall be an addition to the built environment of Hazelhatch Road, R405, providing quality amenity for the residents.

The extensive development of the external spaces shall provide an improvement on the existing landscape. The ordered design shall be visually positive and long term. The impact on the surrounding landscape shall be slight and moderate in the short term and with maturity of the trees, hedges and plants it shall be neutral to positive in the long term.

1.8.0 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative Impacts are impacts that result from incremental changes caused by
other past, present or reasonably foreseeable developments together with the proposed development
(a) Likely;
(b) Significant; and
(c) Relating to an event which has either occurred or is reasonably foreseeable
together with the impacts from this development.

In assessing Cumulative Impacts the following the principal sources consulted:
Kildare County Council Development Plan
Kildare County Council Planning Files
An Bord Pleanala Planning Files.
Celbridge Local Area Plan

In accordance with Schedule 6, Part 2(c) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, this Section has considered the cumulative impact of the proposed development. This relates to the cumulative impact on the subject site itself and on surrounding sites. The European Commission's report of May 1999 'Guidelines for the Assessment of Indirect and Cumulative Impacts as well as Impact Interactions' defines cumulative impact as follows:

"Impacts that result from incremental changes caused by other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions together with the project".

Regarding the cumulative impact of proposed development on landscape and visual amenity, the future development will take place in a large garden and will form part of the comprehensive redevelopment and rejuvenation of the Simmonstown Manor area, in line with the current Celbridge LAP.

In this regard, the cumulative impact of the overall development is expected to be slight to moderate in the short term and shall be a positive visual impact over the medium to long term. It is considered that there will be short term negative landscape impacts associated with the construction phase of the project over all phases of development. Subsequent construction phases are likely to occur sequentially after the completion of the first Phase.

It is considered that there will be a long term positive visual impact as a result of the proposed development, due to the modern residential facilities being provided, the improved visual amenity and outlook from the surrounding area, creation of an integrated streetscape and attractive, useable public realm, and the provision of organised pocket parks, playgrounds and seating to serve the needs of the local community.

As the Simmonstown Lane - Hazelhatch Road, R405, is developed, to the North and East, West, the visual impact will be limited due to existing developments. The proposed development shall visually assimilate into the new urban – suburban landscape.

The proposed housing development shall provide a visual interaction with existing residential developments of Hazel hatch park and Primrose Gate. The proposed new development at Hazelhatch Road, R405, shall tie in with these existing developments and shall provide a positive impact to the development in the immediate area.

The landscape is changing from semi - rural, suburban to a built urban environment.

Hazelhatch Park and Primrose Hill have been established and this shall have positive interactions and impacts upon Hazelhatch Road, R405, and provide a valuable visual and recreational amenity for the area. The proposed interaction between the proposals in the form of paths and connections is a slight landscape impact that shall be positive and shall provide a resource for the expanding population of Celbridge.

1.8.1 Cumulative Impacts – Construction Visual Impact

During the construction stages, traffic movement, excavation operations and construction works will have a moderate – significant visual impacts on the site, under the following heading(s).

1.8.2 Material Assets & Land – Property

Landscape and visual effects may impact on residential properties located near the proposed development. Likely landscape and visual effects will be most pronounced during the construction and initial operation stages, causing initial visual impacts, after which landscape mitigation measures will be increasingly effective in integrating the proposed development within the landscape and in reducing landscape and visual impacts on properties.

1.8.3 Cumulative Impacts – Construction Landscape Impact

Existing lawn forms the groundcover over the site with trees providing screening and boundary treatment. These lands at present have a limited function, providing a garden for the existing house. Therefore limited as a garden, the future development of the site for residential land use will have a slight to moderate impact.

Although the portion of 'Green' land will be reduced, no loss of botanical significance shall be incurred, however, some mature trees shall be removed as per the arborist and ecological reports. The landscape impact upon the area shall be slight to moderate and shall be neutral to positive to medium to long term as the proposed landscape is developed.

1.8.4 Soils & Geology

The construction of the proposed development will involve excavation of existing soils, primarily soft in nature, with spoil material being placed in material deposition areas within the land take. The development of the proposal, both horizontal and vertical, takes account of landscape and visual impacts on residential properties. The stripping of the soil shall be a slight to moderate impact with removal of the sod cover. The topsoil to be retained on site shall be stored on site in berms that shall be used at a later date for gardens and open space.

1.8.5 Hydrogeology

As a result of the redistribution of traffic, there is a risk to water quality through pollution and spillage accident risk. The construction phase of the project has the potential to impact on groundwater and habitats. Mitigation measures have been put in place to avoid and/or minimise these effects. During the operational stage, sealed drainage systems will be used, and stormwater drainage will be suitably treated prior to discharge.
The SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System) proposed will be a significant improvement over the traditional drainage regimes and with the distribution of the traffic onto the new roads is likely to result in an improvement during the operation stage for hydrogeology. The SUDS proposed aim to utilise a two-step intervention of surface water, cleaning and temporary storage, prior to release to the system. This shall not be visible except for the interventions above ground.

1.8.6 Cumulative Impacts – Operational Visual Impact

Based on the Viewpoints 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 (described in section 14.9), it is not likely that any development would be visible in the aforementioned viewpoints.

A number of developments are already in existence, notably to the North East and to the North. The cumulative visual effects are therefore not likely in the immediate vicinity of the site, therefore, cumulative visual effects arising from the proposed development are considered to be slight to moderate, over the medium to long term.

The lands to the west are currently open fields, identified as a development area, the town of Celbridge is expanding and it would be reasonable to expect development along Hazelhatch Road, R405, road.

The extensive planting, retention of trees, to the east and south, the built form particularly at the north, of the development shall reduce the visual impact of the proposal, the operational visual effect shall be neutral to positive in the long term due to the proposed new developments planned by Kildare County Council in the Development area to the west: therefore the proposed built form shall be slight impact.

1.8.7 Traffic

Traffic in the proposed development will have landscape and visual effects on properties in proximity to the proposed development.
These effects were considered during the design process of the proposed development. Mitigation measures have been proposed, in the form of landscape planting, street trees, width of new streets and roads. The organised planting of street trees along roads and parking spaces, all provide a new environment and sense of place. The new traffic from the existing Hazelhatch Road, R405, to the Simmonstown Lane connecting to the development site, provides the opportunity to propose an organised and varied design that shall provide a positive landscape and visual impact along the proposed roads and streets.
The retention of existing trees/woodland and hedgerows and the provision of a number of open spaces, ranging in size from pocket parks, communal spaces to central park, shall reduce the impact of the built environment and shall help reduce the visual impact of Traffic.

1.8.8 Cumulative Impacts – Operational Landscape Impact

The cumulative landscape effects of the development may result in Moderate, adverse effects on the wider landscape at Hazelhatch Road, R405,, in the short term, as the land will change from a garden to built-up areas, with potential loss of landscape elements such as vegetation and trees which define the garden.

The subject lands have been zoned for infill development in the 2017 - 2023 County Development Plan with the Celbridge LAP. This identified the neighbouring site as being developed for housing as part of the Simmonstown development Area. Therefore, both the CDP and LAP clearly envisage residential development of considerable size on the subject and adjoining lands. The development of the site is consistent with both the CDP and LAP zoning.

The retention of the woodland and hedgerow shall be significant in the operational impact, by providing screening and backdrop to the proposed development. The new native hedgerows shall aid in tying the development into the wider landscape and reduce the operational landscape impact.

The cumulative effects of the development of the lands depended on the nature, scale and design of those developments to the north and north-east. These lands have been well developed, with associated roads, paths, buildings and open spaces. The potential cumulative landscape effects of the proposed development, in conjunction with the development of lands within the area, shall have a positive effect on the landscape in the environs of the site, as it forms part of the existing development.

1.8.9 Biodiversity

The scheme has been developed to retain trees on the Hazelhatch Road, R405, and Simmonstown lane. . However, trees and garden plants will be removed in the construction – generally for access roads. The main impact shall be the removal of existing cover of grass. This may have a negative effect on landscape amenity in the short term, however the monoculture of grass/lawn shall be replaced by pollinator rich wild flower and bulbs, aiding the biodiversity in the long term.
In conjunction to this, there shall be trees planted 120 no. and 65 retained, enhancing the range and number of tree species in the locality.
Landscape mitigation proposals have been developed to be complementary with the ecological requirements. These include planting of native, naturalised and indigenous species to augment existing hedgerows. The hierarchy of street tree planting shall help in reconnecting ecological networks resulting in a positive effect on biodiversity and a positive long-term impact for the subject site at Hazelhatch Road, R405,.

Further enhancements in the form of wildflower meadow, bulbs, native hedgerow and trees shall aid the reduction in landscape impacts and shall be a positive effect shall be long term.

1.9.0 Population & Human Health

During the construction period, there could be negative temporary visual impacts that may will arise for residents located close to or adjoining the construction boundary. A Construction Management Plan (CMP) shall be drawn prior to construction and implemented. Specific mitigation measures include the provision of hoarding around construction compounds during the construction phase for properties particularly impacted by the works.

During the operational phase, landscape and visual impacts will arise from the built physical presence of the roads and streets. Mitigation measures will include general measures such as retention of existing hedgerows and trees, the augmentation of existing hedgerows established throughout the development, and the planting of a range of trees and species. Landscape and visual mitigation measures have been utilised in the design of the proposed development to reduce impacts on property.

The impacts of the new development shall be offset by the further potential to enhance sustainable green links through the site and to surrounding employment and housing areas. The engagement with the natural landscape environment and renewed habitat areas are beneficial to the health and wellbeing of the local population. The facilitating of sustainable alternative transportation is positive for human health and aids in the forming of a sense of place at Hazelhatch Road, R405,. The negative impacts shall be temporary to short term, while the organised and enhanced landscape shall provide an interesting and varied living spaces which add to the quality of life for residents and users. The permeable nature of the site, with extensive paths linking to the Development Site shall be a positive long term effect.

2.0 Landscape Impact Assessment Criteria

The following criteria are considered, when assessing the potential impacts on the landscape resulting from a proposed development:

- Landscape/Landscape character, value and sensitivity;
- Magnitude of likely impacts;
- Significance of landscape effects.

The sensitivity of the landscape to change is the degree to which a particular setting can accommodate changes or new elements without unacceptable detrimental effects to its essential characteristics. Landscape/Landscape Value and Sensitivity is classified using the following criteria set out in Table 14.1

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the Landscape character exhibits a very low capacity for change in the form of development. Examples of which are high value townscapes, protected at an international or national level (e.g. World Heritage Site), where the principal management objectives are likely to be protection of the existing character.
High	Areas where the Landscape character exhibits a low capacity for change in the form of development. Examples of which are high value townscapes, protected at a national or regional level, where the principal management objectives are likely to be considered conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the Landscape character exhibits some capacity and scope for development. Examples of which are townscapes, which have a designation of protection at a county level or at non-designated local level where there is evidence of local value and use.
Low	Areas where the Landscape character exhibits a higher capacity for change from development. Typically, this would include lower value, non-designated townscapes that may also have some elements or features of recognisable quality, where management objectives include, enhancement, repair and restoration.
Negligible	Areas of Landscape character that include derelict sites and degradation where there would be a reasonable capacity to embrace change or the capacity to include the development proposals. Management objectives in such areas could be focused on change, creation of Landscape improvements and/or restoration.

Table 3 - Landscape/Landscape Value and Sensitivity – Magnitude of Change

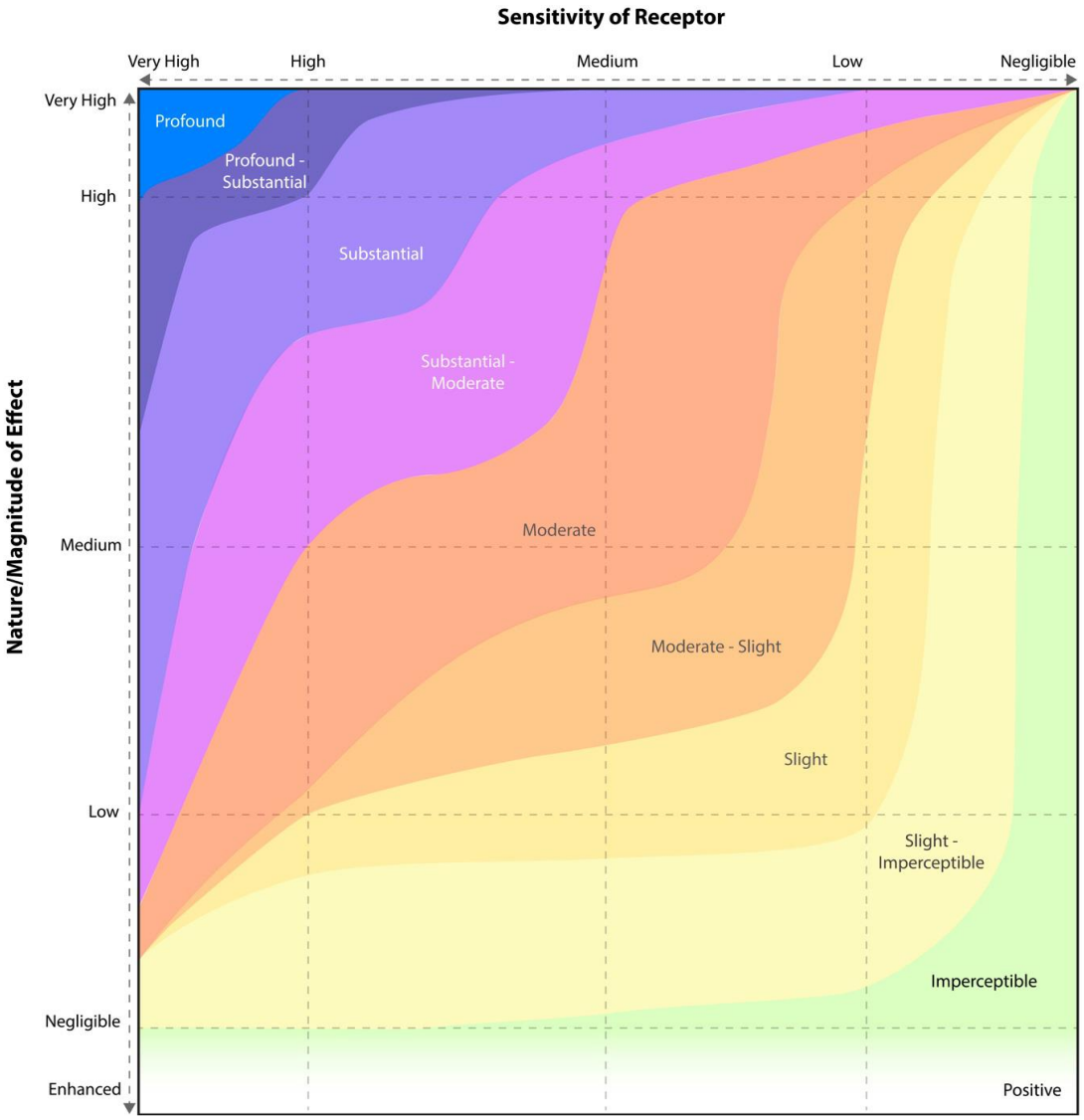


Table 4 - Impact Significance Matrix

Magnitude	Typical Criteria for Landscape Receptors
High	Major removal or addition of landscape features or removal of localised but unusual or distinctive landscape features and/or addition of new conspicuous features and elements which may alter the character of the landscape (with uncharacteristic features being negative and characteristic features being positive). Physical loss of landscape features that are not replaceable or are replaceable only in the long term.
Medium	Moderate removal or addition of landscape features and/or addition of new noticeable features and elements which would be clearly visible but would not alter the overall character of the landscape (with uncharacteristic features being negative and characteristic features being positive). Physical loss of landscape features that are replaceable in the medium term.
Low	Minor removal or addition of landscape features and/or addition of new discrete features and elements which would be perceptible within but would not alter the overall character of the landscape (with uncharacteristic features being negative and characteristic features being positive). Physical loss of landscape features that are readily replaceable in the short term.
Negligible	Barely perceptible removal or addition of landscape features would occur, and the development would be barely perceptible in visual/ character terms.

Table 5 - Assessment of Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors

Fig 14.29 - Visual Receptors – Locations 1 – 10

2.1 Visual Selector Interaction

The 10 no. visual receptors have been assessed and presented to the design team. Through a process of dialogue in conjunction with the project architects, planners and 3d Design Bureau, they represent the most significant and sensitive location points, and were based upon the sensitivity of the locations and typical criteria is listed on Table 1, below.

2.1.1 Sensitivity – susceptibility of receptors.

A visual receptor is a human user of the landscape. The practice has adopted the principle that the sensitivity for each type of visual receptor is inherent to the nature of the activity they are undertaking rather than the view itself.

In accordance with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ("IEMA") Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (3rd edition 2013) visual receptors most susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity are:

- *"Residents at home;*
- *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and on particular views;*
- *Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
- *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;*
- *Travellers on road rail or other transport routes where such travel involves recognised scenic routes and awareness of views is likely to be heightened".*

Visual receptors that are less susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity include:

- "*People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;*
- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focussed on their work or activity, not their surroundings and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life".*

2.2.0 Images & Photomontages

A collection of 10 no. photomontages have been prepared surrounding the site to fully illustrate the physical and visual nature of the proposed development. Please note the proposed photomontage photo location points were prepared by 3d Design Bureau from publicly accessible viewpoints around the location of the subject lands.

Sensitivity	Typical Criteria for Visual Receptors
High	Users of residential properties, public rights of way, named viewpoints and scenic roads or railways. Users of cultural heritage features including World Heritage Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas where they are known to be tourist destinations or places used by local communities.
Medium	Users of public rights of way (urban or industrial areas) play areas, sporting and outdoor active recreational facilities and rural roads.
Low	Users of office and employment areas, industrial areas and the main road and rail network.

Table 6 - Visual Receptor Sensitivity

2.2.1 Visual Impact Assessment Viewpoints

2.2.2 Visual Impacts: Images

We have noted images from various receptor points as per the aerial plan (Fig 2.2), enclosed in the accompanying landscape receptor views. They have been prepared to illustrate the impacts, if any, with respect to the proposed development along associated access roads, the Hazelhatch Road, R405, Road and the adjoining Hazelhatch Park.

View	Description
1	Looking due West on the Hazelhatch Road, R405, directly adjoining the development area
2	Looking North west, on the Hazelhatch Road, R405, at gate of the Celbridge & District Tennis Club
3	Looking North, on the Simmonstown Lane at existing entrance to the house.
4	Looking North from Simmonstown lane
5	Looking East, from a road in Hazelhatch Park, across an open space.
6	Looking East, from a road in Hazelhatch Park.
7	Looking South-east, Hazelhatch Park
8	Looking South – from a road in Hazelhatch Park
9	Looking South from Entrance to Primrose gate housing estate.
10	Looking South West, on Hazel Hatch Road to the corner of the proposed development site.

The 10 no. visual receptors that are presented, are the closest to the proposed development site and have been selected to best represent the most significant and sensitive location points.

View 1	
Existing View	Looking due West on the Hazelhatch Road, R405, directly adjoining the development area
Proposed View	The proposed development site is shown in CGI and is screened from the road due to the existing mature trees 
Impact – Construction Stage	Slight in the short term. – screened by existing trees – hoarding.
Impact – Operational Stage	Slight in the short term. Positive to medium – long term. Impact reduced due to trees along the road
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Medium
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Medium - High
Quality of Change	Neutral - Positive in the long term. Impact reduced by retention of existing trees. Further reduced over time by maturing plant material – trees, hedges and shrubs.

View 2	
Existing View	Looking North west, on the Hazelhatch Road, R405, at gate of the Celbridge & District Tennis Club
Proposed View	The proposed development shall be screened from the road due to existing trees and vegetation 
Impact – Construction Stage	Neutral Impact
Impact – Operational Stage	Neutral in the long term
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	High

Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Medium
Quality of Change	Neutral in the long term

View 3	
Existing View	Looking North, on the Simmonstown Lane at existing entrance to the house.
Proposed View	The proposed development site is shown in CGI and is screened from the road due to the existing mature trees 
Impact – Construction Stage	Moderate Impact – removal of trees internally. However woodland being retained.
Impact – Operational Stage	Moderate in the short term. Positive– long term. Impact reduced due to trees along the road
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Medium
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Medium - High
Quality of Change	In the short term, the impact shall be slight to moderate, however due to emerging trends, i.e. more housing shall render the visual impact Neutral – Positive in the long term

View 4	
Existing View	Looking North from Simmonstown lane
Proposed View	The proposed development, in part can be seen from the Road. The existing mature planting frames the development; therefore a portion of the development may be seen. 
Impact – Construction Stage	Slight - Moderate Impact.
Impact – Operational Stage	Moderate Impact – Neutral - consistent with emerging trends.
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Medium - High
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Medium
Quality of Change	Moderate in the short term, Neutral - Positive in the long term due to the proposed development in this area, The proposed development shall form part of the Simmonstown development Area as outlined in the Celbridge LAP

View 5	
Existing View	Looking East, from a road in Hazelhatch Park, across an open space.
Proposed View	The proposed development cannot be seen from the road due to the existing buildings and the existing trees 
Impact – Construction Stage	Neutral
Impact – Operational Stage	Neutral
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Medium
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Low

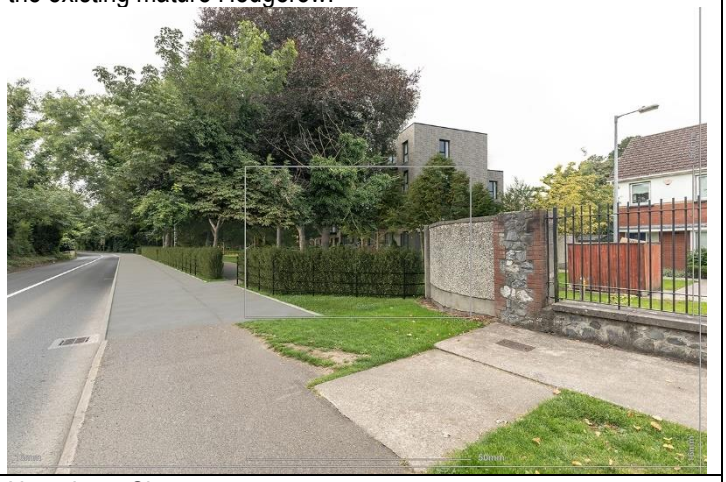
Quality of Change	Neutral in the long term

View 6	
Existing View	Looking East, from a road in Hazelhatch Park Housing Development
Proposed View	The proposed development cannot be seen from the road; it shall be screened by the existing housing. 
Impact – Construction Stage	Neutral Impact
Impact – Operational Stage	Neutral Impact
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Low
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Low
Quality of Change	Neutral in the long term

View 7	
Existing View	Looking South-east, from a road in Hazelhatch Park
Proposed View	The proposed development cannot be seen from the Road due to the existing housing 
Impact – Construction Stage	Negative in temporary term due to internal trees being removed.
Impact – Operational Stage	No Impact – Neutral – Positive to long term due to retained trees and future planting. In keeping with emerging trends.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Low - Medium
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Low - Medium
Quality of Change	Moderate in short term – Neutral – Positive in the long term
View 8	
Existing View	Looking South – from a road in Hazelhatch Park
Proposed View	The proposed development can be seen from the road however is screened from existing trees 
Impact – Construction Stage	Negative to Neutral – temporary
Impact – Operational Stage	Neutral to positive medium – long term
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Medium
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Medium
Quality of Change	Neutral in the long term

View 9	
Existing View	Looking South from Entrance to Primrose gate housing estate.
Proposed View	The proposed development cannot be seen from the road due to the existing mature Trees 
Impact – Construction Stage	No Impact - Neutral
Impact – Operational Stage	No Impact - Neutral
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Medium
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Low
Quality of Change	Neutral in the long term

View 10	
Existing View	Looking South West, on Hazel Hatch Road to the corner of the proposed development site.
Proposed View	The proposed development cannot be seen from the road due to the existing mature Hedgerow. 
Impact – Construction Stage	Negative – Short term
Impact – Operational Stage	Slight - Moderate impact. in the Short to medium term – Neutral to positive in long term due to emerging trends. Positive impact as existing trees are retained and augmented.
Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Medium
Magnitude of Change for Landscape Receptors	Medium
Quality of Change	Neutral – positive in the long term

2.2.3 Difficulties Encountered in Compiling

Hazelhatch Road, R405, is a private garden and not an open site. Access has to be agreed with the owner of the property. There were no difficulties encountered on visiting the surrounding area.

3.0 Conclusion

The proposed development site is located within the Northern Lowlands LCA , the proposed development is identified as being compatible with the LCA, therefore the during the operational phase, the proposed development is unlikely to adversely alter the landscape character of this area as there are existing developments directly adjacent(to the north) of the proposed site. However, as the subject site provides more accommodation for future residents, the well-designed layout that retains and is sympathetic to the characteristics of the surrounding landscape, it shall have a moderate visual impact in the short term that is consistent with emerging trends of the Kildare Development Area to the south and existing developments to the North and North East.

The increase and coherent design of external spaces shall replace the open space of the house and garden. A direct connection to the open space to the south west , from the Hazelhatch Road, R405, Road, utilising the existing woodland, shall provide a positive visual amenity.

The retention of the existing trees/woodland along the east, along with the proposed planting shall tie the proposed dwellings with the natural landscape.

Although the character of the environment shall change, the reduction in open space and the removal of the existing trees shall have a temporary to short term negative landscape effect. It is in line with emerging patterns of development in the locality, notably Celbridge and the future Simmonstown development area. The proposal is, however, sympathetic to the surrounding landscape and shall present a positive landscape impact in the long term. Visually screened from all sides the development shall tie in with the expanding town of Celbridge and shall present a positive visual long term impact.

The increased tree cover shall also enhance and increase the biodiversity of the existing landscape and tie it in with the existing hedgerows and trees.

It may be viewed, that as this new development retains elements of the existing garden character, it enshrines the retention of the eastern boundary, provides valuable amenity space and creates an important pedestrian/cycle link to the amenity, to the future development area to the south and west.

The proposed development shall influence the surrounding land use, in particular the field to the west. This development shall be an addition to the existing urban fabric of the Simmonstown area, and in the short to medium term, it shall have a moderate impact upon the landscape and its usage. Therefore due to its strong greenway connections and organisation of open spaces and reorganisation of the new landscape in line with emerging trends it shall be positive impact to the long term.

The landscape impact shall be moderate in the short term due to the removal of the mature trees in the garden. However the retention of the existing boundary on the Hazelhatch Road, R405 and southern hedge and the existing development to the north and west shall reduce the visual impact and shall be a neutral to positive effect in the long term.

The proposed development shall provide a coherent ordering of buildings and external spaces and present a positive visual impact upon the existing development and shall not detract from the local landscape. Therefore, the impact upon the nature of the landscape shall be slight and visually neutral in

the medium term and a positive visual and landscape impact in the long term. This shall be due to the emerging patterns of development – maturing landscape and the retention of existing habitat and trees.

2.4 References:

- British Standard BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction. Recommendations.
- Advice Notes on Current Practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (1995)
- Guidelines on the Information to the Contained in Environmental Impact Statements (2002).
- Revised Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements Draft (September 2015)
- Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements Draft (September 2015)
- Guidelines On the Information to Be Contained In Environmental Impact Assessment Reports Draft (August 2017)
- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- Planning and Development, Act 2000, as amended.
- Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017 - 2023
- Kildare County Council Development Plan 2017– 2023
- TII : Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of Proposed National Roads - Standard PE-ENV-01102 December 2020