

Landscape Design Rationale

for

Eblana Avenue

at

Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

April 2019

1.0 Introduction

We have been retained by the applicant to submit a landscape design rationale and comprehensive detailed landscape proposals for Eblana Avenue, which is located in the heart of Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

The proposed development site is defined by Eblana Avenue and Sussex Street along its south to south-western boundary, marine road terraced houses to the east and Crofton road along its north to north-western boundary.

Stephen Diamond Associates is a progressive design orientated landscape architecture consultancy based in Dublin. The practice has full Membership of the Landscape Institute (CMLI), the professional organisation for chartered landscape architects in the UK and is a Registered Member of the Irish Landscape Institute (ILI), the professional organisation representing landscape architects in Ireland.

The drawings associated with this report which describe and illustrate the landscape architecture proposals are as follows:

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|----------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| • 18-497-PD-01 | Landscape Plan | Scale: 1:100 at A1 |
| • 18-497-PD-02 | Sections Details | Scale: 1:100 at A1 |
| • 18-497-PD-03 | Roof Terrace - 3rd/4th/5th Floor | Scale: 1:100 at A1 |
| • 18-497-PD-04 | Planting Details & Schedule | Scale: nts at A3 |

The hard and soft landscape works shall be completed as part of the general construction works, with all trees and shrub planting completed within the first suitable planting season after completion of the general construction works. The tender information for the works shall include for a minimum 12-month maintenance period and defects liability period.

1.1 Description of Development

Bartra Property (Eblana) Limited, intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála for permission for a strategic housing development at this site at the Old School House, Eblana Avenue, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

The development will consist of the demolition all existing buildings on site (2,629 sq m) including a section of the northern boundary wall located to the western side of the site and the construction of a part four to part six storey over part basement/ part lower ground floor Shared Living Residential Development comprising 208 No. single occupancy bedspaces (including 4 No. accessible rooms) with circulation core and photovoltaic panels at roof level (6,501 sq m); and a kiosk fronting Eblana Avenue for the sale of food and beverages to the public (16.7 sq m) with associated external seating area.

The development also consists of the provision of communal kitchen/dining/living and library spaces at each floor level to serve the residents of each floor; communal resident amenity space for all residents at lower ground and ground floor levels including the provision of a lounge/games room, multi-purpose/dining space, gymnasium/fitness space and TV/cinema room; a roof garden at fifth floor level (348.8 sq m) facing north, east and west; landscaped amenity areas at lower ground/ ground floor level (206.7 sq m); resident facilities including launderette, linen room and concierge/administration management suite; bicycle parking; car parking incorporating 4 No. visitor car parking spaces, 1 No. disabled car parking space, 1 No. car share parking space and a short-term set down area; bin storage; boundary treatments; green roofs; hard and soft landscaping; provision of a pedestrian link between

Eblana Avenue and Croften Square; storage areas; plant; switch room; substation; lighting; and all other associated site works above and below ground.

2.0 Landscape Architecture Proposals:

Landscape proposals for the site are intended to contribute towards:

- A unique sense of place;
- A site-specific design proposal generated from existing landscape elements and context;
- A high-quality environment;
- A permeable layout that assists ease of movement for pedestrians and vehicular traffic;
- A development that acknowledges the local landscape character and integrates well into the receiving environment.
- A development that promotes beneficial effects on biodiversity by providing new habitat.

Issues that have been considered throughout the landscape design are:

- Connection to the existing landscape, adjacent land use, proposed buildings, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, shared space;
- The appropriate selection of hard and soft landscape materials;
- Boundary treatments that are in keeping with the surrounding landscape;
- Mitigation of the proposed development, its buildings, access roads and associated services structures.
- Specification of native tree species and plants to enhance biodiversity and visual amenity.

Landscape design proposals have been developed on a number of levels to address the integration of existing buildings, proposed architecture, access, infrastructure and context.

The spatial arrangement of the landscape plan relates directly to and is informed by the architectural proposals to create a unified whole and settle the proposed development into the site context. Movement patterns, orientation, context, prospect and microclimate have been considered in the design and detail of the scheme.

The landscape design is intended to create and heighten qualities and characteristics in the open spaces enjoyed in nature such as change, surprise, awareness of transition and movement; weather, seasonal change, use and maturing. Pockets of nature are created within the hard-landscaped open spaces of the development, which are surfaced in durable attractive and hard-wearing materials to give the external spaces textural character.

Spatial design proposals are developed to encourage social interaction, engagement with the external environment and the full utilisation of external spaces. Such proposals involve the integration of seating/meeting areas, external reading areas and paving layouts to define a hierarchy of open spaces suitable to a variety of use requirements. These spaces will play a pivotal role in the delivery of a successful development.

A landscape of layers has been developed from the geometries of the existing buildings, proposed architecture and site context to mark a legible transition of architectural language to urban landscape.

Soft landscape proposals will incorporate a diverse planting scheme of native and naturalised trees, shrubs and flowering perennials selected to enhance the development site's biodiversity value and visual amenity.

The site is situated between the main street of Dun Laoghaire and Crofton road where the DART station is situated. The site has a potential to create a strong link and connection between Dun Laoghaire Main Street (Georges street) and Crofton road leading to the DART station in the form of a green walkway.

Eblana Avenue's southwestern boundary is a quiet cul de sac with little footfall coming from Georges street and Sussex street which intersects at the Eblana Avenue site.

We propose providing a public access from Eblana Avenue that will run northeast through the site and provide a connection to the seafront and dart station. This access and more direct route from the seafront and dart station to Georges street will activate the space providing more footfall throughout the day.

This connection will consist of a green walkway of high quality natural stone paving, bespoke hardwood seating, set against a green backdrop of lush vegetation with breakout spaces along the main walkway. Seating will be situated along the north-western boundary.

There are a total of 208 secured cycle spaces plus 24 visitor cycle spaces, giving a total of 232 bicycle parking spaces.

A 1:20.5 gently sloped access + stepped access provide access from the higher southwestern point of the site to the lower north-eastern point. An alternative platform lift (conform to BS 6440:1999) is also provided at northern entrance to the site. Retaining walls will be required for the gently sloped access and stepped access.

Fall protection in the form of 1.1m railing will provide safety along the gently sloped access and stepped access.

The lighting provided will include 4m height light pillars to match the existing fittings along The Harbour Square Walkway & Public realm. In ground recessed LED uplighters will also be used to highlight the *Betula pubescens* and *Amelanchier larmackii* and to illuminate the undercroft when entering from Eblana Avenue.

The vehicular entrance from Eblana Avenue will be planted with 7 no. 18-20cmg semi mature *Betula pubescens* planted to soften the car park and turning area. The trees along the boundary wall will be finished with a hard compacting gravel for a clean finish.

Roof terraces are situated on the 3rd, 4th & 5th floor. The 5th floor will be accessible with an activity zone, seating from solid oak benches and informal boulders. A potential pergola structure might accommodate additional solar panels.

Multi stemmed *Amelanchier larmackii* and *Betula pubescens* provide a sense of enclosure within the 5th floor terrace.

The 3rd and 4th floor sedum roof will not be accessible.

Planting concepts relate to biodiversity, circulation, SUDS, landscape character, architectural language and microclimate.

The use of native and strategically located non-native plants will provide optimum biodiversity and aesthetic values. This varied profile is designed to provide a diversity of landscape and habitats throughout the site.

Hard and soft landscape and streetscape elements will be fully detailed and completed to the required level to meet current building regulations and best practice provided by the relevant guidance documentation e.g. Technical Guidance Document Part M – Access and Use Building Regulations (2010) and 'Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach' by the National Disability Authority.

We take universal design/access or design-for-all as a point of departure for the design of all external space.

Our aim is to design a landscape where build development, nature and amenity facilities co-exist.

3.0 Paving:

Paving materials within the development have been specified with the intent of providing high-quality surface materials which will survive well over the long-term and require little maintenance.

All paving materials have been specified as level, with no changes in level across paving which might cause a slip, trip or fall, and are suitable for access by all abilities.

Natural stone paving is specified to help define the access routes and seating areas and signal a stop off point to sit, relax and enjoy the landscape open spaces. These include the pedestrian and vehicular entrances off Eblana Avenue. Stone paving has been specified to provide a natural and durable, hard-wearing, high-quality surface to these areas. A Flame-textured finish has been specified to reduce the risk of slipping on the surface of the stone. It has a slightly translucent mottled blue/grey colour with slightly paler areas. The surface has a smooth, slightly dusty appearance with an irregular overlay of minor pits, peaks and flakes.

The stone paving is specified at 95mm width in random lengths of 200mm, 400mm and 600mm lengths. These paving bands structure and run across the site following the alignment of the architectural treatment to stitch the new development into the landscape context. Organised along these strips are ornamental shrub planting and seating to enliven the open spaces. The granite paving was chosen to follow the existing granite paving at The Harbour Square walkway and public realm.

The pavement adjacent to the entrance on Eblana Avenue will be paved in an exposed aggregate concrete to tie in with the existing concrete paving.

The paving is to be laid with cross-falls on a sub-base to engineer's details.

High-quality hard-wearing paving material such as these will require low levels of maintenance and will retain their slip resistance qualities as they age.

4.0 Planting:

The detailed specification of planting – trees, ornamental grasses, flowering perennials - attempts to recreate the sensory experience of lush Irish nature. Trees and shrubs will be used to provide a counterpoint to the hard landscape and built elements so as to provide dynamic and sensual external spaces.

Ornamental perennial, shrub and tree planting has been concentrated along the site perimeter, terraces and courtyard spaces, to improve the visual amenity of the development. The specification of planting material will act to improve the micro-climate of the open spaces, providing shade, year-round visual interest, and improving the biodiversity of the site by attracting wildlife.

All planting will be to a maximum level of 1m height to create the most open and inviting space possible. It will also allow clear visibility throughout the site.

Inspired by the diversity of Irish nature, different types of biotopes have been established such as native birch and flowering snowberry – spaces that visually merge into each other and invite further exploration, strolling and contemplation.

The visual impact of the development is softened by the specification of flowering perennials, ornamental grasses and leafy groves of decorative trees. Throughout the seasons the colours and textures in the planting change to constantly provide new sensory experiences for the residents.

4.1 Tree planting:

It is the intention to provide a feeling of maturity and permanence as soon as possible by planting semi-mature trees of varying height and form to include 18-20cmg 2m height clear stemmed of Amalanchier lamarkii and Betula pubescens specimens.

A mix of native and non-native deciduous trees has been specified to provide year-round visual interest, habitat and screening. The detailed specification of trees is inspired by the species of tree currently found on the site, and suitability of the tree to the location.

Where non-native species have been specified it is for their decorative features, fruit and suitability to the context. The cultivars specified are all similar in form, habit and potential to support wildlife to native Irish trees. Clear-stemmed trees are specified to create a sense of security, clarity and free movement beneath the leaf canopies.

All semi-mature trees will be staked and planted as per details. 75mm depth bark mulch and 600-1000mm depth topsoil will be provided to all semi-mature tree planting.

4.2 Ornamental shrub planting:

The design and specification of the ornamental shrub planting is intended to add interest and variety as well as assist in defining spatial qualities across the site. Species have been selected that will successfully establish and grow in the local conditions as well as being sufficiently robust to survive in the public realm with limited maintenance.

Ornamental shrub planting is contained within a series of defined planter beds. 300mm depth topsoil to BS3882 is provided to shrub planting, topped with a landscape fabric and 75mm depth medium-grade bark mulch.

The planting consists of a range of flowering evergreen and deciduous perennials, selected for their suitability to the site conditions, inter-planted with ornamental grasses to provide year-round visual interest. These perennials will also attract honeybees, butterflies and birds to the development, increasing the biodiversity potential of the gardens.

An ornamental grass, *Calamagrostis x acutiflora*, has been specified to provide fast developing vegetative screens to the seating elements and to create a distinctive vertical accent in the open spaces.

The perennials will provide seasonal visual interest, as the interplay of colour and billowing form will stand out as a constantly changing pattern. The slightest breeze sets these grasses and perennials in motion, highlighting the landscape finish, especially when planted as a mass border. This treatment of mixed ornamental grasses and flowering perennials requires little maintenance and attracts wildlife.

5.0 Anticipated Programme of Works:

- (i) The planting programme shall generally be carried out during the following periods;
- All root-balled trees 7 November – 31 March
 - Bare Root Shrubs, Whips etc, 7 November – 7 March
 - Container Grown shrubs perennials at any time

Planting outside of the above periods must be agreed with the Landscape Architect, with appropriate container grown stock used and an additional watering programme enforced.

6.0 Establishment Maintenance:**Generally:**

- (i) Establishment maintenance will form part of the landscape contractors works. The period of establishment maintenance will be 12 months after the completion of the planting and grassing works prior to handover.
- (ii) Prior to handing over all plant deaths shall be replaced, and all defects made good to the satisfaction of the landscape architect and / or the management company.
- (iii) The landscape architect will be retained by the developer to inspect all planting works until handover to the management company.

7.0 Landscape Maintenance:**7.1 Planting Preparation Specification and Management Notes For Soft Landscaped Areas - General Information**

Area: Soft landscape areas to include the following elements:

- Grassed Areas;
- Perennial shrub planting;
- Tree Planting.

7.2 Management Responsibility:

Following the completion of the one year's defects liability period for the main landscape contract, responsibility for the day to day maintenance of all areas in the site curtilage will be passed to a landscape management company.

The management company will engage a landscape sub-contractor. It will be the management company's responsibility to monitor and review the works of the sub-contractor to ensure the management objectives as outlined below are attained.

7.3 Management Objectives:

The objectives of the management company will be as follows;

- To maintain all areas in a neat, tidy and substantially weed free condition,
- To ensure that all seeded areas are maintained in a condition that contributes to the visual amenity of the development,
- To establish and maintain tree and shrub planting to provide an overall landscape framework for the development.

8.4 Performance Criteria:

Performance criteria are indicators for assessing the quality and success of the particular plant mixtures used for a purpose i.e. structure/ screen planting, specimen planting, tree planting etc. Such indicators will be based upon aspects such as;

- Health and condition of planting
- Plant growth
- Achievement of desired effect

The achievement of the performance criteria and the monitoring of the landscape contract will be under the direction and supervision of the developer's landscape architect. As previously stated the management company will monitor longer-term performance criteria.