

Dublin City Council Adaptive Reuse Unit

The Adaptive Reuse Unit in Dublin City Council was established in 2022 within the Housing Department. As an innovation unit it was tasked with establishing a new housing delivery mechanism that would create social housing by acquiring and converting vacant commercial property to homes. The unit established a programme of projects that will deliver across several corporate and national strategies and regulatory objectives including climate action, compact growth, city rejuvenation, housing delivery and addressing vacancy.

An Exemplar Adaptive Reuse Project: Creating Social Homes from Vacant Office Buildings

14-15 Fitzwilliam Quay, Ringsend, Dublin 4

The office buildings in Ringsend, Dublin 4 became available on the market in 2023. The Adaptive Reuse Unit in Dublin City Council carried out a feasibility study and developed a proposal for the conversion of the buildings to apartments for use as social housing. Funding was secured through the DHLGH Social Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) to acquire the buildings and convert them to 15 apartments at an estimated cost of circa €420,000 per apartment. This represents excellent value for money for social housing delivery in a high-value property location.


- The vacant office building was acquired by Dublin City Council in March 2024. An adaptive reuse design team framework was established in 2025, from which a design team was appointed to the project
- A Part 8 planning application was lodged in March 2026
- It is expected that Part 8 permission will be granted at the July 2026 meeting of Dublin City Council
- A competition to appoint a contractor to the project will be initiated in July 2026 with the intention of appointing a contractor in October 2026
- 15 new social housing apartments are planned for completion and occupation in early 2028

The reuse of existing buildings to create new homes will be a key means of achieving carbon reduction targets in the coming years and is consistent with the approach set out in the [Irish Green Building Council's Roadmap to 2030](#). The building is in a designated decarbonisation zone in Dublin City Council and the project is being delivered as an exemplar climate action housing project.

The project exemplifies good practice for the following reasons:

- The project is an example of a best practice approach to new housing development at **reduced cost** when compared with new build development
- The project is an example of a best practice approach to **low-carbon housing development** with an estimated reduction of 55-70% in embodied carbon compared to new build housing.
- A **circular economy project involving reuse of the fittings and fixtures** will be undertaken in advance of the main redevelopment work. The project follows best practice in relation to the circular economy.
- **Meanwhile use of the building** by Dublin City Council's Climate Action Office as a community hub for climate action promotion and support has been in place since the building was acquired by DCC. This has ensured that the maximum potential of the building has been harnessed.
- It is proposed to replace the car park in the existing building **with planting, high quality bike storage, and green space** for the shared use of residents. The bike store and bin area are proposed to be constructed from the reused car park paving stones.
- The building is in an area with **excellent public transport links** and is situated along the route of the Dodder Greenway.

The delivery of adaptive reuse projects to create new homes demonstrates a commitment by Dublin City Council to proactively engage in implementing the policies of the City Development Plan 2022-2028 relating to the refurbishment of the built environment, driving reductions in vacancy and underuse of buildings, and promoting reuse over demolition of buildings where possible. The Adaptive Reuse Unit was selected by the National Oversight and Audit Commission as an example of Good Practice in Local Government in 2024.




Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

14-15 Fitzwilliam Quay


Adaptive Reuse of Vacant Offices into 15 Universal Design Apartments

A retrofit-first housing project led by Dublin City Council to transform a vacant office building in Ringsend into 15 high-quality social homes. The proposal prioritises Universal Design, Circular Economy principles, and delivers significant embodied carbon savings through the retention and reuse of the existing structure






The site benefits from immediate access to a range of high-frequency public transport services and lies within a comfortable 15-minute walk of both rail and Luas connections. Located directly opposite the Dodder Greenway, the development also supports active travel and sustainable movement throughout the city.






The existing office floorplate has been carefully reconfigured to deliver 15 accessible homes with minimal intervention to the existing building fabric, supporting a low-carbon and resource-efficient retrofit approach.

A detailed building inventory was undertaken to identify materials and building elements suitable for reuse or recycling, supporting the project's circular economy objectives and minimising construction waste.



Fitzwilliam Quay



Legend

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings
- Proposed Landscaping
- Proposed Parking
- Proposed Cycle Paths
- Proposed Refuse Storage
- Proposed Planting
- Proposed Water Features
- Proposed Fencing
- Proposed Lighting
- Proposed Street Furniture
- Proposed Public Art
- Proposed Street Naming
- Proposed Street Lighting
- Proposed Street Furniture
- Proposed Public Art
- Proposed Street Naming

Material Palette

g+a

Landscaping

14/15 Fitzwilliam Quay, Dublin 4

Project No. 2023-001

Scale: 1:500

Date: 15/05/2023

Author: [Name]

Check: [Name]

Approved: [Name]

The existing hard-paved parking area to the front of the site is replaced with a landscaped forecourt incorporating bicycle and refuse storage. The proposal introduces new planting and creates a small urban habitat that supports local biodiversity and urban wildlife.

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ARCHITECTS


CORA
Consulting Engineers
(Civil + Structural)

OCSC
Consulting Engineers
(M + E)

BOLGER
Quantity Surveyors

Acoustic Consultants

g+a
Landscape Architects



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