Section 7: Architectural Heritage

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the EIS was prepared by Dublin City Council's conservation department in order to identify likely significant impacts of the proposed residential development on the architectural heritage of its immediate environs.

The site of the proposed development does not contain any protected structures but its boundaries adjoin interesting nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings including dwellings on North Circular Road, St Bricin's Military Hospital and a significant complex of Dublin artisans' dwellings.

Nearby, the former Isolation Hospital, Married Quarters building and the enclosing stone wall to Infirmary Road are designated protected structures.

The site is also a short distance from Phoenix Park, Collins Barracks and Mc Kee Barracks which are all designated non statutory conservation areas in the Dublin City Development Plan 2005 – 2011.

The Wellington monument and clock tower of the Royal Military Infirmary are important city landmarks, visible from the site, providing visual orientation.

The site is in an elevated position in the urban landscape and the likely impact of the proposed development on architectural heritage includes impacts on:

- The character of the adjoining Dublin Artisans Dwelling Company dwellings.
- The adjacent buildings of the North Circular Road.
- Protected structures, heritage buildings and conservation areas in the vicinity of the site.
- Views and vistas in this area.

7.2 STUDY METHODOLOGY

7.2.1 DESKTOP SURVEY

A desktop survey, using documentary and cartographic references to identify architectural heritage on or adjacent to the site of the proposed development site was carried out.

Information relating to the proposed development has been provided by City Architects.

7.2.2 MAP SOURCES

The following maps were consulted:

 John Rocque's detailed map of 1756. This map pre-dates the building of the North Circular Road and the lands to the east of the Deerpark wall are shown as undeveloped fields.

- Dublin 1846-47 shows how little development has occurred in the north western section of the city apart from the military institutions. This end of the North Circular Road is not yet developed and the large fields still linger in a not dissimilar pattern to that shown on the Roque's Map.
- Ordnance Survey, 1887 indicates where development has taken place on the North Circular Road the gap between the first houses on the right hand side and Carlisle Terrace corresponds to where the entrance to O' Devaney Gardens will occur between houses not yet built. There is little development along Infirmary Road apart from the Married Quarters building. The Military Hospital (St Bricin's) is shown with extensive wooded grounds to its rear.
- Ordnance Survey Map 1943 illustrates the context of the site before the construction of O'Devaney Gardens. The area is densely developed with artisans dwellings. Development along the North Circular Road is completed and the Military institutions encircle the site.
- Ordnance Map 1966 showing the Dublin Corporation housing developments at O'Devaney Gardens.

7.2.3 SITE INSPECTIONS

Site inspections were carried out on 4th and 12th October 2010. Photographs were taken of the site including the approach from North Circular Road, the adjacent Dublin Artisans Dwellings and St Bricken's military hospital. The proximity of the Phoenix Park and the Royal Military Infirmary were noted. Relevant photographs are included in this report.



Photo 7.1: O Devaney Gardens Existing Flat Blocks

7.3 THE BASELINE ENVIRONMENT

7.3.1 CONTEXT (CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE)

The O'Devaney Gardens estate is located at the centre of a great concentration of military institutions dating back to the early eighteenth century origins of the city. It is named after Bishop Cornelius O'Devaney who was hanged, drawn and quartered at the Gibbet in 1612 along with a young priest. The two men were arrested for saying mass and giving communion, a treasonous offense. On the day of the execution they were paraded through the streets on their way to the Gibbet in Arbour Hill.

The site occupies lands that were once part of an extensive strip of territory north of Arbour Hill. In mediaeval times this was partially owned by Christ Church Cathedral and used for the storage of corn, hence Arbour Hill's name, derived from Cnoc an Arbhair (corn hill). The Prior and Community made it their Home Farm, and erected fine barns, described in old documents as:

"the Barnes of the Holy Trinity,' and more generally as Gormo's Grange or Grangegorman. The area had a small village that consisted almost entirely of servants who lived in cottages around the farm. 'With the exception of this village, and the adjacent village of Glasmenogue (Broadstone), this whole territory of Grangegorman was laid out in pastures and fields, and as with Oxmantown Green, and Ellen Hoare's meadow was practically uninhabited, until after the restoration of Charles the second in 1660. Parochially it formed part of the Parish of St. Michan, the only - Catholic or Protestant - Parish on the north side of the river.'

Late seventeenth century saw little development in the area beyond the appearance of the Deer Park wall, the houses along Arbour Hill and the laying

out of Smithfield with its adjoining streets. Generous gardens stretched behind many houses, otherwise the area was countrified with large fields, like those noted by a French tourist Jonvin de Rochfort as *'great meadows'*. An English bookseller, John Dunton who came to promote his wares in 1698, was staying in lodgings at Arbour Hill and described his elderly hosts as living *'like Adam and Eve in paradise'*.

The first real expansion of the city dates from the Restoration, a period of relative calm, when the city's defensive mediaeval walls began to disappear, the quays were built along the river, brick and stone buildings replaced timber construction, Phoenix Park was enclosed, St Stephens Green was laid out and the Royal Hospital was built.

In the seventeenth century it appeared as if the growth pattern of the city would favour the west side. The Hospital and Free School of King Charles the Second (the Blue-Coat school) opened in 1675, and was endowed with the ground-rents of Oxmantown and St Stephens Green and the future of the former was considered the more promising. This was a mistaken belief and with the benefit of hindsight we know that the fashionable city expanded east due to the ambitions of the Gardiner estate on the north side of the river and the south side, the Fitzwilliam estate, helped in no small measure by the building of a bridge east of Essex Bridge in the 1690s.

Figure 7.1: Royal Infirmary Phoenix Park.



In the first half of the eighteenth century the army accounted for the largest part of public expenditure on buildings and purpose built barracks relieving the townspeople of the burden of quartering the troops. The grandest of all the barracks, The Royal Barracks, was built on land near The Bowling Green and was under construction by Burgh in 1706, 'in very great forwardness'. This first free-standing barracks in Britain or Ireland was located on the westerly outskirts. It's design was influenced by a wedge shaped site. An illustration from Charles Brooking's 1708 map shows, in the background, the gable ended houses that were already built along Arbour Hill. The other significant development in the area was uncoordinated development along Mountpelier Hill where houses had long back gardens stretching into the country side.

By 1756 a series of hospitals, schools, prisons and lunatic asylums had been built in the western outskirts. A large military presence in the city necessitated the construction of two military hospitals, Arbour Hill Military Hospital and the Royal Military Infirmary, (completed 1788) a handsome Portland stone building within the Phoenix Park, its 170 feet long façade overlooking the People's Flower Garden. It was designed by Gandon (apart from the cupola) and executed by William Gibson. From here, in 1916, Padraig Pearse dictated his order of surrender.

Arbour Hill gave its name to the smallest of the Victorian era prisons which was designed by Jacob Owen in 1835 and rebuilt ten years later to designs by the drawing office of the Royal Engineers. Its tripartite façade links the Garrison Chapel and Governor's House at either end. Harry Clarke windows illuminate the altar of the church. From Arbour Hill, Cavalry Row leads the short distance to the St Bricin's Military Hospital which overlooks the site at O'Devaney Gardens.

St Bricin's Military Hospital was first occupied in 1913 when the Royal military Hospital had become unsuitable for its original purpose. It was built on the site of the old structure of the Provosts, as a large U shaped building with three storey ward ranges flanking a forecourt and a central Italianate style entrance block. The wards were heated with central stoves connecting by under floor ducts to the chimney stacks on the outer walls.

The building is set in generous landscaped grounds where, in 1930, a cruciform church was built in a loosely Vosey idiom. Its low walls support a steeply pitched roof with a band of glazing on the eastern façade.

In 1944 a tuberculosis wing was built in plain red brick. To the north of the chapel a two storied Nurses' Home was built c.1950 embellished with decorative brick aprons and surrounds.



Photo 7.2: Wellington monument closing the vista of north circular road

North Circular Road

In the early eighteenth century open fields stretched from Arbour Hill's military complexes to Phibsborough, interrupted only by the buildings at Grangegorman that included the North Dublin Union Workhouse, three hospitals, two lunatic asylums and a prison. This pattern began to change with the opening in 1768 of the North Circular Road, one of the boundary roads of the city. Wide and straight roads served a military objective of moving troops efficiently across the city fast, in order to quell any disturbances amongst the population. Three miles long and tree lined, it immediately became a fashionable promenade leading to one of the Phoenix Park gates and terminating with a view of the Wellington Monument.

It enclosed the developing urban quarter around Smithfield and gave new names - Aughrim Street and Prussia Street – to the initial stretch of Blackhorse and Cabra Lanes as they left Stoney Batter, one of the oldest streets in Europe. Gradually Oxmantown developed from an "unserviceable waste" into a densely populated and fashionable residential quarter. Infirmary Road was built in 1787 along the boundary wall of the Phoenix Park and named by the Dublin Artisans Dwelling Company in 1886.

Development occurred sporadically along the North Circular Road as the century drew to a close, with substantial red bricked houses built in terraces and serviced with mews lanes to the rear. They were attractive to the

emerging middle class who were an essential ingredient of the city's ever expanding bureaucracy.

Photo 7.3: Mews building and lane behind late nineteenth century housing of North Circular Road



Dublin Artisan Dwelling Company

1876 the Dublin Artisan Dwellings Company was established by a group of investors who wanted to build good quality housing at reasonable rents. By 1913 they had provided about 3,300 working class dwellings, twice that of Dublin Corporation during the same period. It was not a charity but a sound business company that expected to gain good dividends on its investment. The prospective tenants tended to be skilled workers. Smithfied had become dominated by the distilling industry and empty fields, close to the city and its industrial jobs, was an ideal opportunity to provide better quality housing. Houses were constructed around Aberdeen Street in 1886 and Aughrim Street houses completed in 1897.

"The DADC then bought twenty eight acres of mostly orchards from the Mount Temple family. 'Between the Royal Barracks and the, North Circular Road was an open space known to very few, for it was built all round, yet, four years ago, it contained more than 20 acres, which in the spring were rosy and radiant with apple blossoms, a Paradise in this obscure corner of the City. It had belonged to the Palmerston Temples, and has now been sold to the Artisans' Dwelling Co., and already the golden groves have been sawn down to the earth level, but the circles of dark wood wreathed with shoots of apple leaves could still be measured, and many were two feet in diameter, denoting, for fruit trees, a growth of many centuries. The folklore of the neighbourhood holds them to have been planted by the Danes. The workmen's homes will prove a blessing, but it is a pity the red brick or grey monotony should not be relieved by a few of these old Ostmen, who renewed their youth each recurrent spring, and kept venerable memories green.'

(History of Ireland, by Wright from internet site)

Photo 7.4: Example of the artisan dwelling terraces adjoining O Devaney Gardens.



Building work started in 1900 and within eight years over one thousand houses and cottages were completed. The houses including those in in Mount Temple Estate, Arbour Hill, Sitric and Viking Roads, Manor Place, Harold Road, Murtagh and Oxmantown Road, became known as the Buildings.

To get a vacant house in the Buildings it was necessary to have two references and a member of your family already living there. The Dublin Artisan Dwelling Company designed the small houses and cottages closely together with front doors leading straight onto the street and small back yards. The houses in the area incorporate a foot scraper, useful when Market days were held in nearby Smithfield.

The Dublin Artisans Dwelling Company sold the houses to Folio Homes in the 1980s who provided tenants with upgrading, internal bathrooms and the opportunity to buy their own homes.

Photo 7.5: Residential character of Findlater Street to the west of the site.



Photo 7.6: Streetscapes of special character (Findlater Street)





Photo 7.7 Residential character of Sullivan Street to the west of the site

O'Devaney Gardens was built in 1954. Its character is derived from the fashionable architectural and social planning policies of the 1950's, a very progressive period in the state's short history. Thirteen four storey blocks of flats released the surrounding ground for landscaped recreational areas.



Photo 7.8: Existing shop on site at O' Devaney Gardens

Photo 7.9: Property on the North Circular Road at the entrance to the estate



7.3.2 CHARACTER (RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT)

The surrounding context is predominately residential in character. On the site's north-western boundary the houses of the North Circular Road are terraced and generally brick built, three storey, exhibiting an eclectic range of Victorian and Edwardian characteristics. They have generous south facing gardens. A narrow mews lane separates the houses from the local authority housing. The houses immediately backing onto the local authority site are not protected structures.

On the north-easterly, westerly and southerly boundaries of the site the predominant building was provided by the Dublin Artisans Dwelling Company using their conventional modest idiom of single storey cottages and two storey houses. Many of the buildings exhibit attractive original windows, are well maintained and a number of the residents have claimed ownership of the public realm with exuberant displays of flowers. The terraces tend not to engage with the O'Devaney Gardens estate and the adjoining streets are separated from the estate by railings.

Directly adjoining the site to the south east is the hospital of St Bricin's. It is separated from O'Devaney Gardens by its landscaped gardens. An access road leads from the Royal Military Infirmary and Phoenix Park into the estate.

The site due to its considerable size, forms a significant element within the fine grained context of the surrounding artisans dwellings. It frames the view from St Bricin's towards the Royal Infirmary and Phoenix Park.

The elevated site has exceptional views south across the city to the Dublin mountains and westwards to the Park.

The demolition process of the existing sub standard flat blocks is being carried out on a phased basis by Part 8 process to advance regeneration proposals on site.



Photo 7.10: Existing arrangement of apartment blocks on site

Protected structures

The site does not contain any protected structures.

Adjacent buildings

A small portion of the site's north western boundary backs onto a terrace of twelve late nineteenth century buildings on the North Circular Road, these buildings are not protected. The terraces of the Dublin artisan's estate that immediately adjoin the site are generally single storey cottages.

The military hospital complex of St Bricin's which is not protected directly adjoins the site.



Photo 7.11: St Bricin's Military Hospital

The site is close to the Phoenix Park, the largest enclosed park in Europe, with its numerous Protected Structures, including the Royal Military Infirmary and Wellington Monument, both significant landmarks, tying together natural, urban and cultural features into one comprehensive view.

Photo 7.12 Royal Military Infirmary in the background as viewed across the site of O Devaney Gardens at present



Photo 7.13: Wellington Monument as viewed across O Devaney Gardens at present



Landmarks

The following local landmarks add to the distinctive character of the area:

- Wellington Monument;
- Phoenix Park (signified by trees);
- Clock tower of the Royal Military Infirmary.

The existing views of the Wellington Monument and the clock tower of the Royal Military Hospital will not be affected by Phase 1A of the proposed development. They will be obstructed by the four storey buildings intended to line the 'Boulevard' that is proposed for Phase 2.

7.3.3 SIGNIFICANCE

The subject site has no statutory heritage designation however it is located in proximity to significant heritage buildings: the Royal Military Infirmary and Phoenix Park, St Bricin's Military Hospital and the Isolation Hospital complex. The buildings of the North Circular Road are a significant element of the nineteenth century building stock north of the river and share a residential conservation zoning (Z2) with the adjacent artisans dwellings. This imposes constraints on the development in terms of its architectural treatment, height, materials and urban grain.

7.3.4 SENSITIVITY

The proposed development will have a significant visual impact on the setting and views to the rear of the 19th and early 20th century buildings on North Circular Road.

This must be considered in the context of the existing views and former character of the site prior to demolition of flat blocks which were close to this boundary. The redevelopment of the site proposes higher quality replacement buildings of lower height scale and landscaping which will have beneficial impacts on visual outlook from these properties.

The proposed development will have a significant visual impact on the setting of and views to and from the heritage buildings of the St Bricin's Hospital complex, in particular of the buildings located in its western sector. Phase 2 is proposed on part of the former St Bricin's site on lands ceded to Dublin City Council for the construction of affordable homes. This land is now separated from the main complex of St Bricin's by a boundary wall and is overgrown. Existing trees will have to be removed as part of Phase 2 which will create a more open view into the site of O Devaney. The layout of Phase 2, in combination with a height strategy of 2-4 storeys and landscaping proposals will reduce the extent of a negative impact. The opening of views to the red bricked complex of buildings on the site of St Bricin's may create new landmarks and reference points for place making within the site.

Refer to Chapter 9 'Landscape and Visual Assessment'.

7.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Full details of the description of the proposed development of the site are contained within Section 2 of the EIS.

Plans have been provided by City Architects indicating the proposed development. The distribution of heights has been considered with regard to impact on the adjoining buildings on the North Circular Road, the artisans' dwellings, the scale of the mews lanes and the views from adjacent protected structures. A wide *voir clair* has been provided on the eastern edge of the development, framing the chapel of St Bricin's.

The architectural design is informal and engages with the framework of irregular site boundaries. A built frontage along the lane behind the houses on North Circular Road will effectively provide a more secure environment with passive surveillance from the rear windows. Space has been left to allow future development of mews buildings on the lane.

The design of the buildings, reflecting modest heights and traditional materials, relate to the design idiom of the adjacent Dublin Artisan Dwelling Company houses. Phase 1B includes buildings attached to Ross Street and Ashford Terrace that will provide physical connections into the site.

7.4.1 KEY ELEMENTS

<u>Design</u>

The proposed development consists of small scale urban interventions clustered towards the edges of the site and higher buildings enclosing a significant landscaped area to the centre.

The arrangement of the building terraces follows the irregular site boundaries. The dense grain of the surrounding area is reflected in the planning of the new residential units. Small private gardens are intended to soften the urban edges.

Four storey buildings line the 'Boulevard' which bisects the site. A restrained palette of traditional building materials chosen to complement traditional building idioms.

<u>Masterplan</u>

The initial Phase 1A part of the scheme is submitted in the context of an overall Masterplan for the entire site that has been widely discussed with the residents. It proposes the removal of existing blocks of flats to provide a housing scheme with supermarket, 'boulevard' and central green space.

7.5 PREDICTED IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

7.5.1 DO NOTHING IMPACT'

At present the residential units on site are partly occupied, partly boarded up. The open space is uninviting. In a 'do-nothing' scenario the empty site and

run down blocks continue to deteriorate and to have a significant negative impact on the environs of the site and its cultural heritage.

The present boundaries and circulation pattern remains unaltered and no impact occurs to view or vistas, vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

7.5.2 PREDICTED IMPACT

Construction phase

It is predicted that there will be a moderate, temporary adverse impact on the residential and working population of the area whose workplaces or homes are directly over-looking the subject site. The adverse impact will be general disturbance and inconvenience during construction works. The phased nature of the works will lessen the impact but prolong it.

Dust, noise (within statutory limits) and vibration will occur. Refer to Chapter 11 'Air Quality and Climate' and Chapter 12 'Noise and Vibration'.

Operational phase

The proposed development has the potential to halt the relentless decline of an inner city council development and provide for the overall renewal and rejuvenation of this site. It has been designed in close consultation with the community, and it is predicted that the impact of the scheme will be positive due to the quality of its public realm improvements, the high standard of its new accommodation and the high levels of private spaces.

Changes to existing topography by the construction of new buildings will remove the 'sense of place' that is particular to that location. The alteration of boundaries and new routes impact on historical activity.

The proposed regeneration of this site will bring life, civic awareness and a new pattern of usage into a context of an appropriate urban scale and quality.

7.6 PREDICTED IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON VIEW AND VISTAS

The introduction of the residential units and associated buildings into the existing environment has potential to impact on the views of a number of heritage buildings, due to their visibility from a number of locations within the site. The development will have an impact on the setting of St Bricin's Hospital and a group of houses on the North Circular Road. The development will have a significant impact on its predominant context of the small scale buildings of the surrounding Dublin Artisan's Dwellings.

Points of reference will be lost when the significant landmarks of the Wellington Monument and clock tower of the Royal Military Infirmary are obscured by development on the site of Phase 2 in particular.

The views are not protected but contribute positively to local character and place making.

The height strategy proposed is otherwise respectful to the context.

Views into the site from the streets with artisan dwellings will display higher quality terraced housing, landscaped streets and an urban park. Such a view is more positive than the existing views into the site from the surrounding artisan dwelling streets. The park and views into it have the potential to create new local landmarks.

Given the relatively modest height of the buildings between two and four storeys high storeys, they will not be visible from many areas of the city outside the environs of the site. Note Section 9.0 Landscape and Visual Assessment in particular. It will not intrude on views and vistas from Phoenix Park although the four storey elements of the development may be visible from upper storeys of the Royal Military Infirmary.

From the above analysis it is evident that the proposed development has not noticeably increased the adverse impact on views and vistas on or from the adjoining protected structures from the present situation.

7.7 MITIGATION MEASURES

7.7.1 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Appropriate measure will be undertaken by the contractor to reduce the impact of noise, dust and vibration associated with construction works and traffic.

Prior to demolition, in the interests of historical record, a drawn survey of the 1960s buildings and a photographic study of the entire site will be deposited in the Irish Architectural Archives.

7.7.2 OPERATIONAL PHASE

The new residential units, expressed in a contemporary architectural idiom, will be a considerable improvement of the present empty spaces associated with the blocks, in a densely grained part of the city.

The importance of context has been addressed in the size, scale, and massing of the proposed development with an evident importance placed on scale. The proposed layout has responded to the architectural context of traditional tight urban grain that exists between Aughrim Street and the Phoenix Park. The Dublin Artisans Dwellings generally turn their back on the site and it is proposed to integrate three streets into the scheme by attaching terraced houses to existing buildings.

The heights of the new buildings are low, four storey buildings is generally limited to the centre of the site. The distribution of heights has been carefully considered with regard to their impact on adjacent dwelling houses.

There will be extensive planting in the newly formed 'Boulevard' and in the public park.

The design objective of the residential accommodation reflects the commitment, standards and ethos of DCC to provide innovative housing units

to the highest spatial standards, contextual consciousness, energy efficiency and overall sustainability.

The design of the neighbourhood park shall incorporate a view to the south west towards the Wellington Monument for place making and identity within the site.

As the masterplan principles for future Phase 2 is an indicative proposal for guidance, it should be a requirement that the urban design details for future buildings should address ways to maintain a view towards the Wellington Monument for good place making and identity on site.

The layout of future Phase 2 can also encourage visual connection east towards the heritage buildings on the site of St Bricin's to form a backdrop.

7.8 MONITORING

Monitoring during the construction phase is necessary to ensure that all demolitions and removals on site are undertaken with care to ensure that no damage results to adjacent building stock.

The monitoring will also ensure the salvage for re-use of suitable elements of building materials from the demolition of the flat blocks for use elsewhere.

7.9 REFERENCES AND SOURCES

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Figure 7.2: John Roque's Map 1756 (Irish Historic Town Atlas, courtesy Royal Irish Academy)

This map pre-dates the building of the North Circular Road and the lands to the east of the Deerpark wall are shown as undeveloped fields.



Figure 7.3: DUBLIN 1846 – 1847

(Irish Historic Town Atlas, courtesy Royal Irish Academy)

Dublin 1846-47 shows how little development has occurred in the north western section of the city apart from the military institutions. This end of the North Circular Road is not yet developed and the large fields still linger in a not dissimilar pattern to that shown on the Roque's Map.

The Military Hospital (St Bricin's) is shown with extensive wooded grounds to its rear.



Figure 7.4: 1887 OS Map

Ordnance Survey, 1876 indicates where development has taken place on the North Circular Road the gap between the first houses on the right hand side and Carlisle Terrace corresponds to where the entrance to

O' Devaney Gardens will occur between houses not yet built. There is little development along Infirmary Road apart from the Married Quarters building.

Section 7/Page 23



Figure 7.5: 1943 OS Map This map illustrates the context of the site just before the construction of O'Devaney Gardens. The area is densely developed with artisans dwellings. Development along the North Circular Road is completed and the Military institutions encircle the site.

Section 7/Page 24



Figure 7.6: OS Map 1966 This map shows the Dublin Corporation flat development of the O'Devaney Gardens site.

Section 7/Page 25