



Architectural Design Statement

Student Accommodation, 21-23 Blackpitts, Dublin 8, Ireland

Stage: LRD Stage 3 Submission

Date: July 2025 | Rev *

Horan Rainsford Architects

Horan Rainsford Architects believe that buildings should respond to clients' needs and respect their local environment, with each design response being an individual realisation. Buildings should also be timeless, of the highest quality materials, and impart minimal impact on the environment.

A building is a legacy for our clients, for its' occupants and for the locality. Understanding our clients' aspirations and specific requirements is the vital first step to creating a successful building: we enjoy working with our clients, and collaborating with design teams, to develop solutions that exceed expectations. Throughout the design and construction process, the building is tested by way of drawings, 3D modelling and discussion. This enables a clear understanding of the proposals at each stage, and ensures that appropriate quality runs through all phases of design development and implementation.

Horan Rainsford Architects have been responsible for the design and delivery of numerous significant developments in the primarily hotel, residential and office sectors.



290 unit residential development, Dalguise Monkstown



Blackrock Business Park



Offices at Sir John Rogerson



Hotel | 21 Ship Street



The Grafton

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Aerial View of Subject Site (highlighted in red). Not to scale.

Subject Site



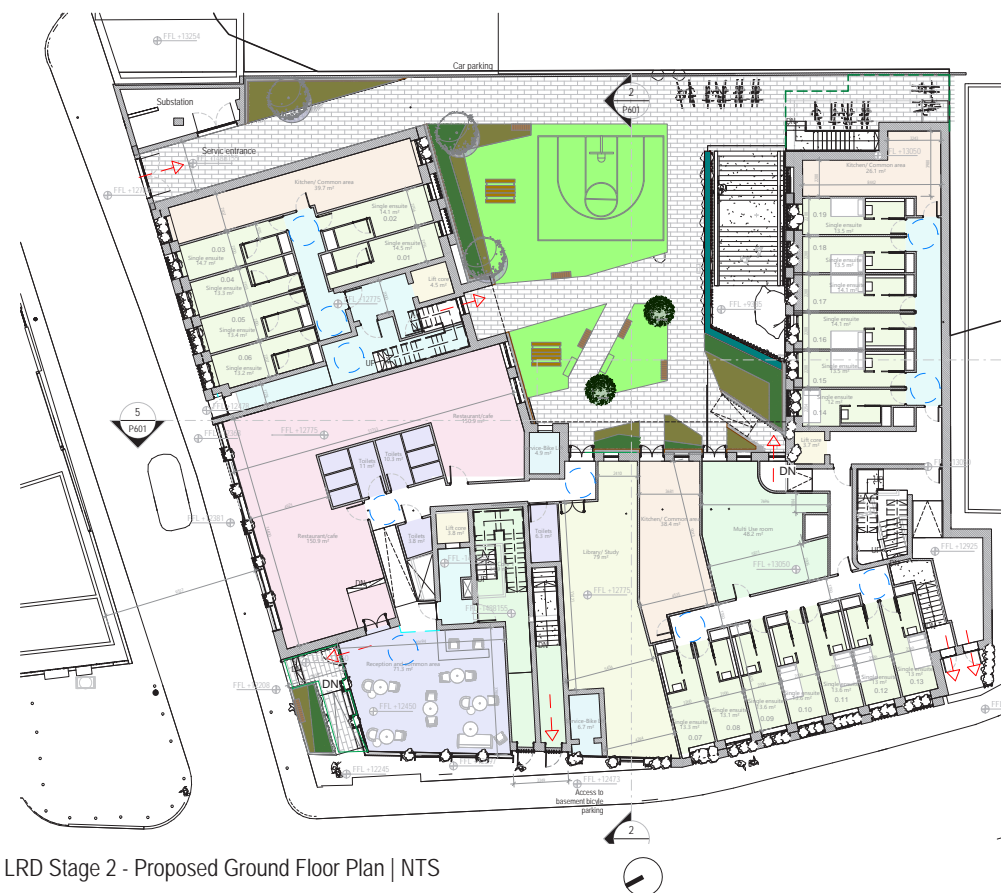
1.0 Response to LRD Stage 2 Opinion

Following the LRD stage 2 meeting and the opinion that followed, we have removed the 6th floor in its entirety in order to address the comments regarding scale, mass and bulk. In tandem with this we have adjusted the massing facing onto Blackpitts in order to improve the relationship with the neighbouring houses.

At ground floor level, the street presence has been improved by creating an additional entrance to the Cafe/Restaurant from O'Donovan Lane while relocating the communal space of the ground floor cluster of rooms along Blackpitts to the street front.

A new loading bay, DAC parking space and paid parking spaces are proposed along O'Donovan Lane while eliminating the unauthorised parking along Blackpitts and ensuring a 2m wide footpath around the development. The ground floor levels of the scheme have also been looked at in order to improve it's flood resilience while being cognisant of universal access. The external courtyard has also been reconfigured, its levels adjusted and the daylight results have significantly improved with 53% of the area receiving a minimum of 2 hours of daylight in March.

We feel these changes have addressed the local authority's comments arising from the LRD stage 2 opinion and that the resulting scale, mass and design is appropriate for the area. Please see across comparison plans, elevations and VIA images.



LRD Stage 2 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan | NTS



LRD Stage 2 - Proposed Blackpitts Elevation | NTS

Parking Relocated
Loading bay, DAC parking space and 4no. paid parking spaces introduced along O'Donovan Lane

Improved Daylight to External Courtyard
Courtyard reconfigured, levels adjusted and daylight results have significantly improved as a result.

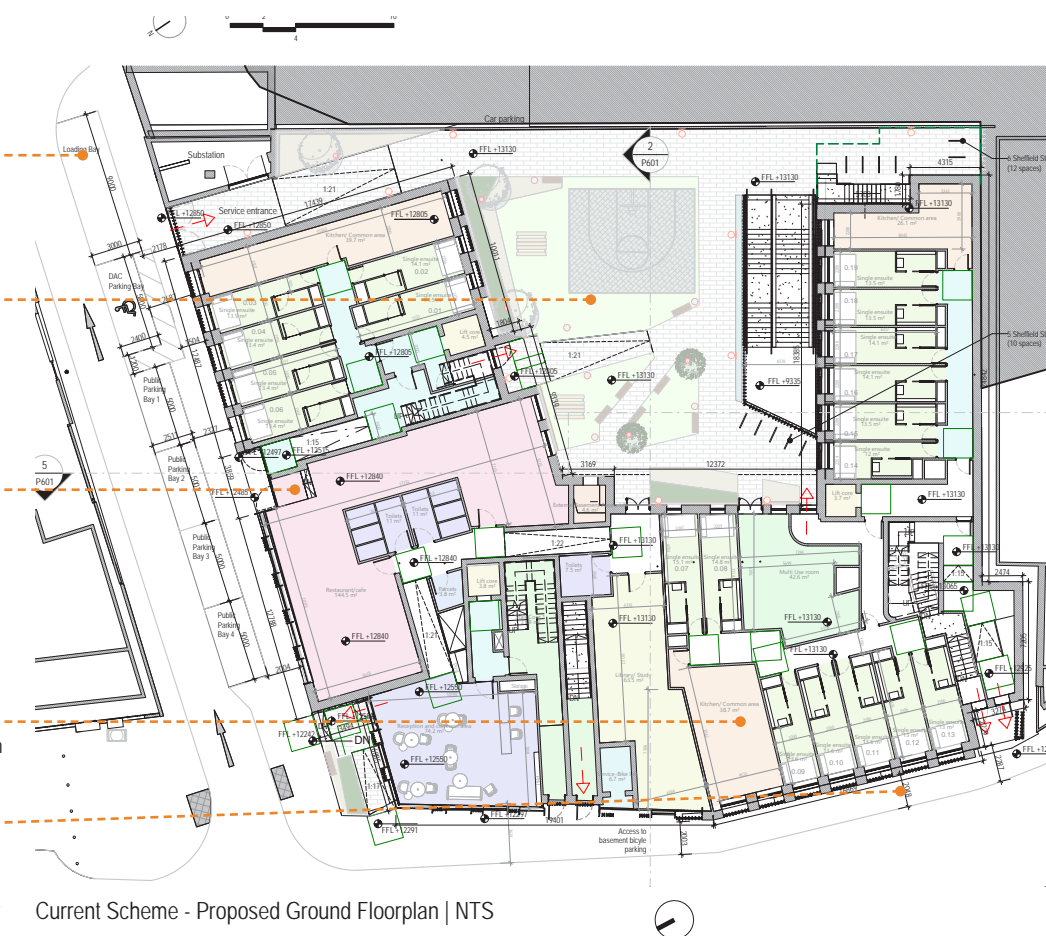
Improved Street Presence
Additional entrance to Cafe/Restaurant provided along O'Donovan Lane.

Improved Street Presence
Communal facilities relocated from courtyard to Blackpitts.

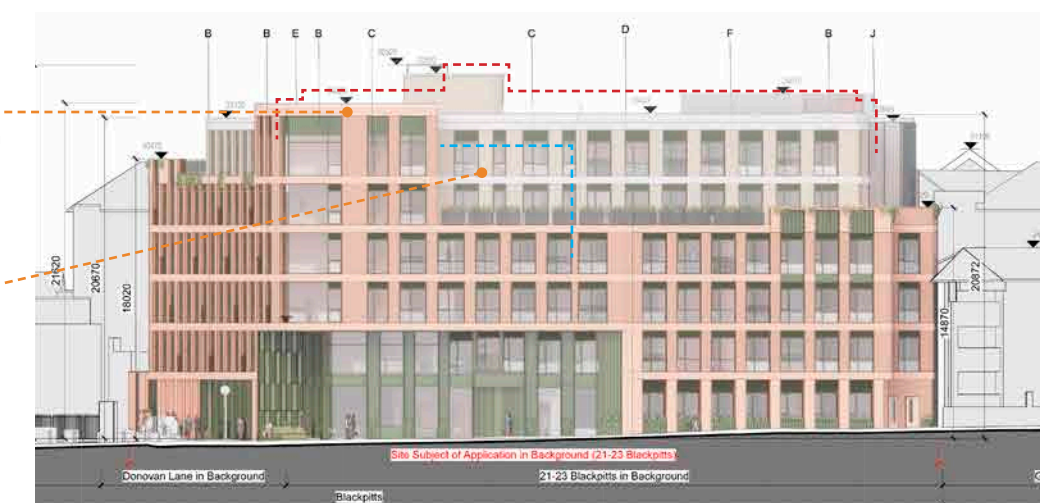
Increased footpath width to 2m
Footpaths increased to 2m width along O'Donovan Lane and Blackpitts. 1no. pinch point at parking of 1.85m

Removal of 6th Floor
The 6th floor has been removed in its entirety in line with comments received in the opinion.

Reconfiguration of mass onto Blackpitts
The mass has also been reconfigured and the length of setback increased along Blackpitts to reduce the scale and bulk of the proposal in line with comments received.



Current Scheme - Proposed Ground Floorplan | NTS



Current Scheme - Proposed Blackpitts Elevation | NTS

LRD Stage 2



View 5 Removal of 6th floor has now led to only a small portion of the building being visible from Lombard Street West.

Current Proposal



LRD Stage 2



View 13 Removal of 6th floor and reconfiguration of mass greatly reduces scale and mass as seen from St. John's Street while providing a more elegant bookend for the corner of the scheme.

Current Proposal



View 8 Removal of 6th floor has led to a greater proportion of sky visible in the view and the building now fitting into the image.



View 15 Removal of 6th floor and reconfiguration of mass greatly reduces scale and mass as seen from Hammond Street with a greater proportion of sky now seen in the image.



View 12 Removal of 6th floor and reconfiguration of mass has led to a greater proportion of sky and a more elegant bookend for the corner of the scheme.



View 16 Removal of 6th floor and reconfiguration of mass greatly reduces scale and mass as seen from Hammond Street with a greater proportion of sky now seen in the image.



2.0 Introduction

The following Architectural Design Statement has been prepared by Horan Rainsford Architects Ltd. on behalf of Blackpitts Residence ULC. The report forms part of a pre-planning submission to Dublin City Council. This document should be read in conjunction with drawings and reports from other disciplines submitted with the application.

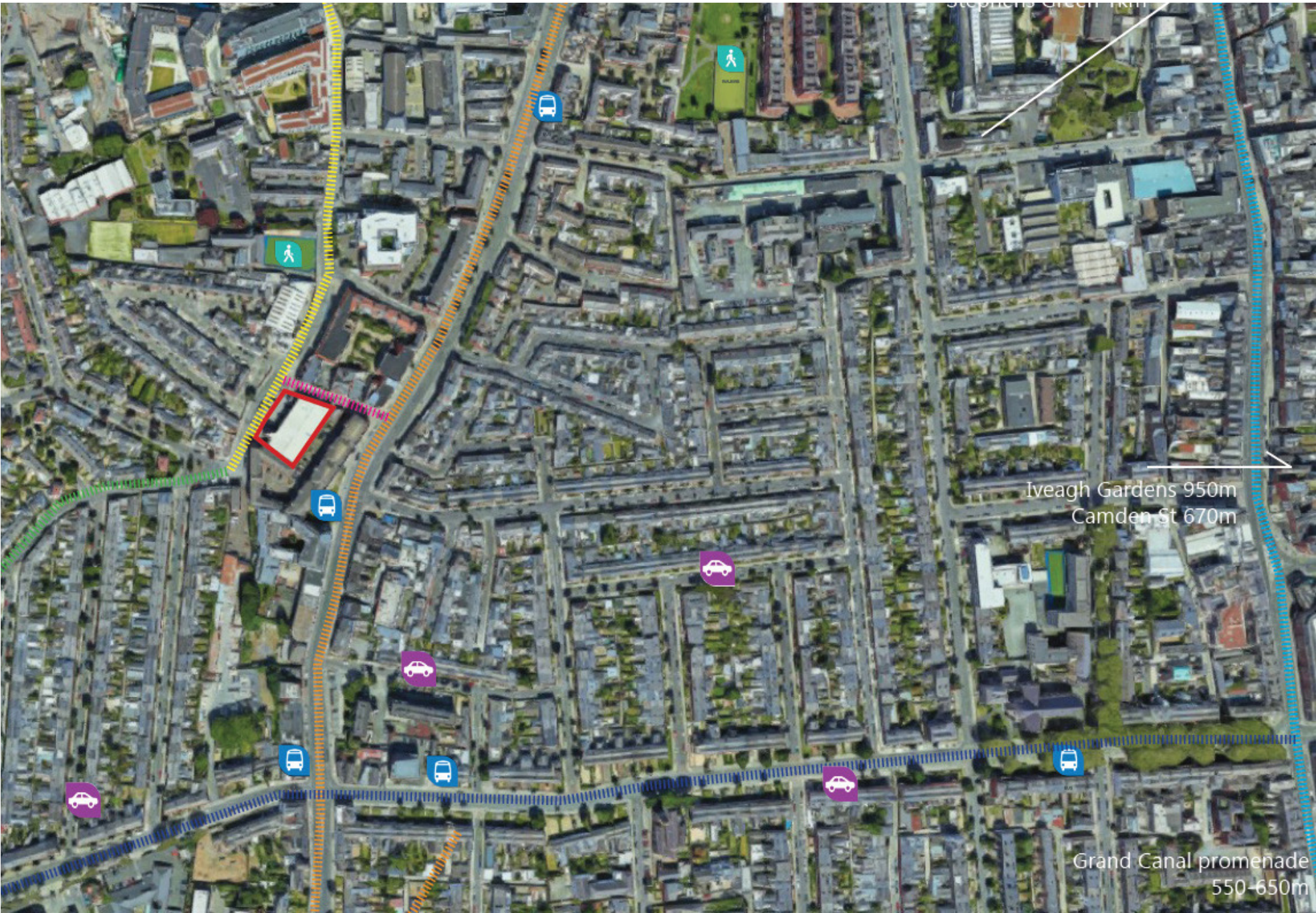
3.0 Design Team

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Applicant: | Blackpitts Residence ULC |
| Architect: | Horan Rainsford Architects Ltd. |
| Planning Consultant: | McGills Planning |
| Landscape Architect: | JBA |
| Civil/ Structural Engineering: | JJC Consulting Engineers |
| Sustainability Consultant: | Passive Dynamics |
| Archaeologist: | ABH |
| Sunlight/Daylight: | Modelworks |
| TVIA: | Modelworks |
| CMP: | JJC Consulting Engineers |
| FRA: | JBA |
| BIA: | Ayesa |
| AA Screening: | Altamar |

4.0 The Site

The site is strategically located off Clanbrassil Street Lower in Blackpitts, a historic district known for its artisan and craft heritage. This central location offers an urban residential environment to the northwest and easy access to the city’s commercial center, just a 10-minute walk to the east. Clanbrassil Street nearby provides numerous local amenities including cafes, restaurants, and nightlife options. Blackpitts features narrow streets with red brick terraces, artisan cottages, and 1930s Dublin Corporation housing. Once an industrial area for leather work and clothing factories, it is now a culturally vibrant community with a variety of shops and restaurants.

The area is well-connected by public transport and pedestrian routes. Clanbrassil Street is a main artery into the city center with several bus routes. St Stephen’s Green and the Red Line Luas are under 1 km away, and the Green Line Luas at Fatima is 1.2 km away. Shared bike and car services are also readily available.



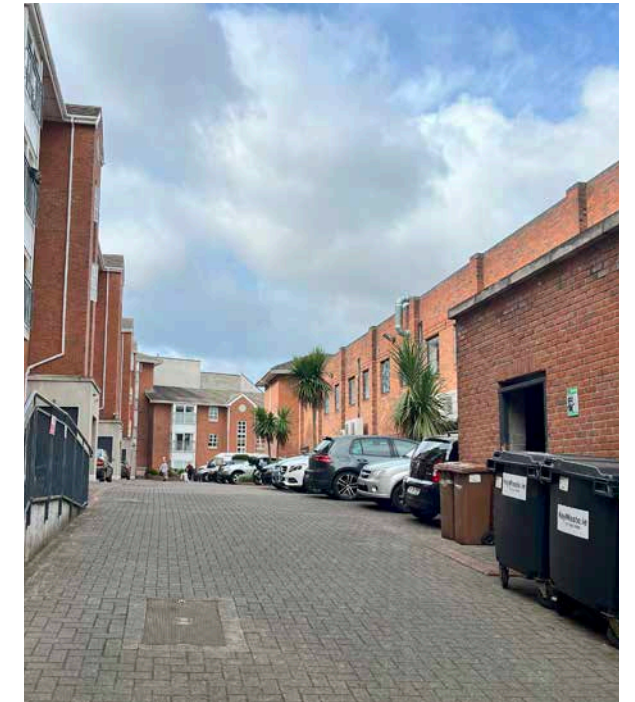
Aerial view showing application site outlined in red | NTS

5.0 Development Description

Planning permission is sought for a Large-Scale Residential Development delivering 217 student bed spaces (209no. single rooms and 4no. twin rooms, 213no. rooms in total), within one block. The block ranges in height up to 6 storeys with a basement below. All associated internal and external amenity space, including the provision of restaurant/café, on street carparking, cycle parking, landscaping, bin stores, service provision and all other associated site development works.



View of existing building from Donovan Lane



View of rear elevation facing onto neighbouring residential building



View of the building looking North along Clanbrassil Street Lower | NTS



View to existing building from corner of Donovan Lane and Blackpitts

6.0 Land Use Zoning:

The site falls within Zone Z1, which is designated to “protect, provide, and enhance residential amenities.” It is bordered by Zone Z2 to the west, aimed at improving amenities in residential conservation areas, and by Zone Z4 to the east, intended for the provision and enhancement of mixed services facilities.

Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods – Zone Z1

The city’s vision for residential development promotes a diverse range of high-quality housing within sustainable communities. This vision ensures that residents have easy access to open spaces, amenities like shops, educational institutions, leisure activities, and community services. The goal is to integrate effective public transport, pedestrian, and cycling infrastructure, fostering residential areas with good connectivity to employment hubs, the city center, and key urban villages, supporting the principles of a “15-minute city.”

Permissible Uses: Assisted living/retirement homes, buildings for the health and safety of the public, childcare and community facilities, cultural and recreational buildings, delicatessens, education facilities, embassy offices, enterprise centers, halting sites, home-based economic activities, medical and related consultants, open spaces, places of public worship, public service installations, residential shops (local), sports facilities, training centers.

Open for Consideration: Allotments, beauty/grooming services, bed and breakfast establishments, betting offices, Build-to-Rent residential, cafés/tearooms, car parks, civic and recycling centers, community facilities, craft centers, creative and artistic enterprises, cultural and recreational buildings, delicatessens, education facilities, embassy offices, enterprise centers, funeral homes, light industry, laundromats, live/work units, media-associated uses, mobility hubs, off-licenses, offices, park-and-ride facilities, petrol stations, pigeon lofts, postal hotels/motels, primary healthcare centers, public houses, residential institutions, restaurants, student accommodation, veterinary surgeries.

Residential Neighbourhoods (Conservation Areas) – Zone Z2

Zone Z2 includes residential conservation areas characterized by significant groupings of buildings and open spaces with notable architectural design and scale. These areas may also feature open spaces within or adjacent to an Architectural Conservation Area or protected



Extract from Zoning Map | Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028

PRIMARY LAND USE ZONING CATEGORIES

| | | |
|---------|---|--------------|
| Zone Z1 | Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods | Yellow |
| Zone Z2 | Residential Neighbourhoods (Conservation Areas) | Light Yellow |
| Zone Z4 | Key Urban Villages / Urban Villages | Pink |

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

| | |
|---|-----|
| Protected Structures, [RPS takes precedence] | *** |
| Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) as Established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 | --- |

structures. Special care is needed when handling development proposals affecting these areas to prevent unsuitable new developments or works that might compromise the amenity or architectural integrity of the area.

Permissible Uses: Bed and breakfast establishments, buildings for the health and safety of the public, childcare facilities, embassy residences, guesthouses, home-based economic activities, medical and related consultants, open spaces, public service installations, residential buildings.

Open for Consideration: Allotments, assisted living/retirement homes, beauty/ grooming services, Build-to-Rent residential, cafés/tearooms, civic centers, community facilities, craft centers, creative and artistic enterprises, cultural and recreational buildings, delicatessens, embassy offices, enterprise centers, funeral homes, light industry, laundromats, live/work units, offices, places of public worship, primary healthcare centers, residential institutions, restaurants, shops (local), sports facilities, student accommodation, veterinary surgeries.

7.0 Planning History of Subject Site & Adjoining Building

7.1 Planning History of 21-23 Blackpitts, Dublin 8

2179/99 GRANT OUTLINE PERMISSION
To erect a mansard type roof to existing building to form offices in new roof space.

2904/05 GRANTED
Planning Permission for the change of use of retail warehouse to office use including alterations to existing ground floor external facade and internal remodelling at Unit 3, Enterprise House, Blackpitts, Dublin 8.

3682/15 GRANTED
Planning permission is sought for upgrading and improvement works at existing enterprise centre (approved under Reg Ref. 1359/91) consisting of reinstatement of 4 no. original windows to rear 1st floor elevation, internal alteration and overall refurbishment of existing enterprise centre.



View to existing building from Donovan Lane & Clanbrassil Street Lower | NTS



View to existing building from Hammond Street | NTS



View to existing building from Blackpitts (North End) | NTS

8.0 Existing Building & Uses

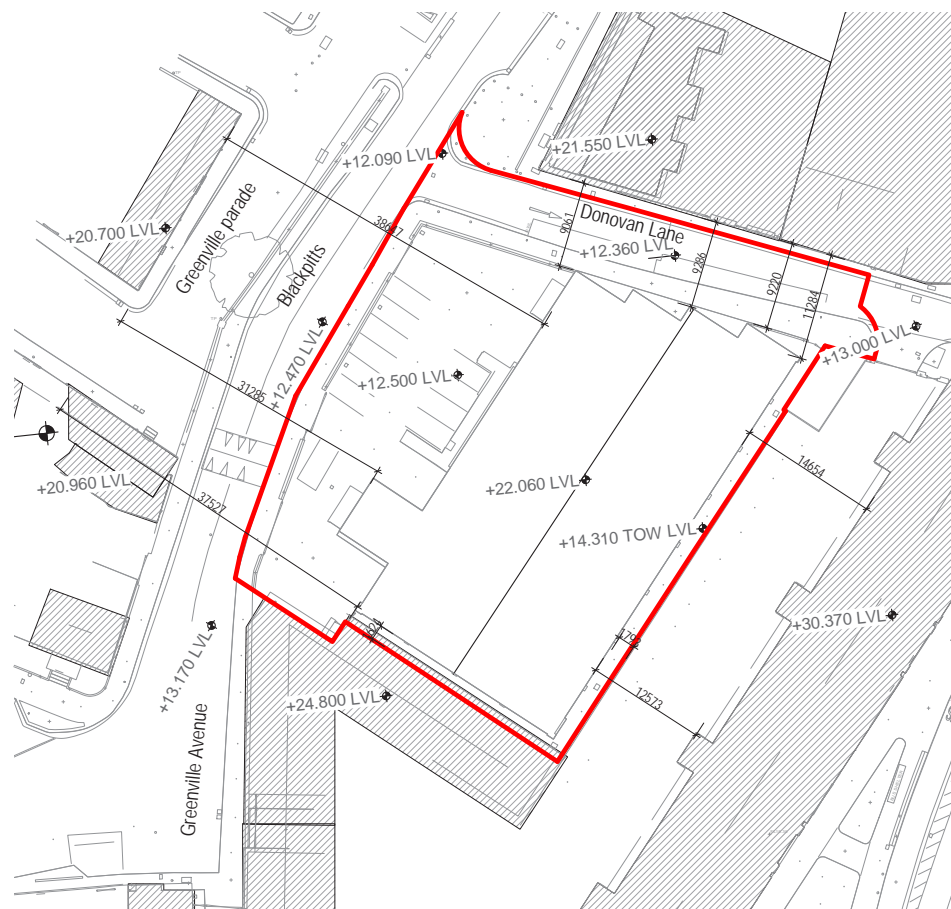
The site spans 0.47 acres and is currently occupied by a two-story office/warehouse structure with occupant parking, fronting onto the Blackpitts. The building stands 9.4 meters tall and covers a ground floor area of approximately 1066 square meters. Constructed with a block core and portal frame structure, the facade is finished with brick and painted plaster. The warehouse forms a hard boundary against neighboring structures to the southeast and southwest. It is separated from the southeast boundary by a narrow maintenance path and concrete wall, while the neighboring apartment building forms the boundary to the southwest.

The current commercial and industrial use of the site contrasts with the Predominantly residential character of the surrounding area. Along this section of Blackpitts, the street features a variety of residential buildings, including original Victorian terraces, 1930s Corporation Dwellings, a converted industrial warehouse, and apartment developments from the late 1990s.

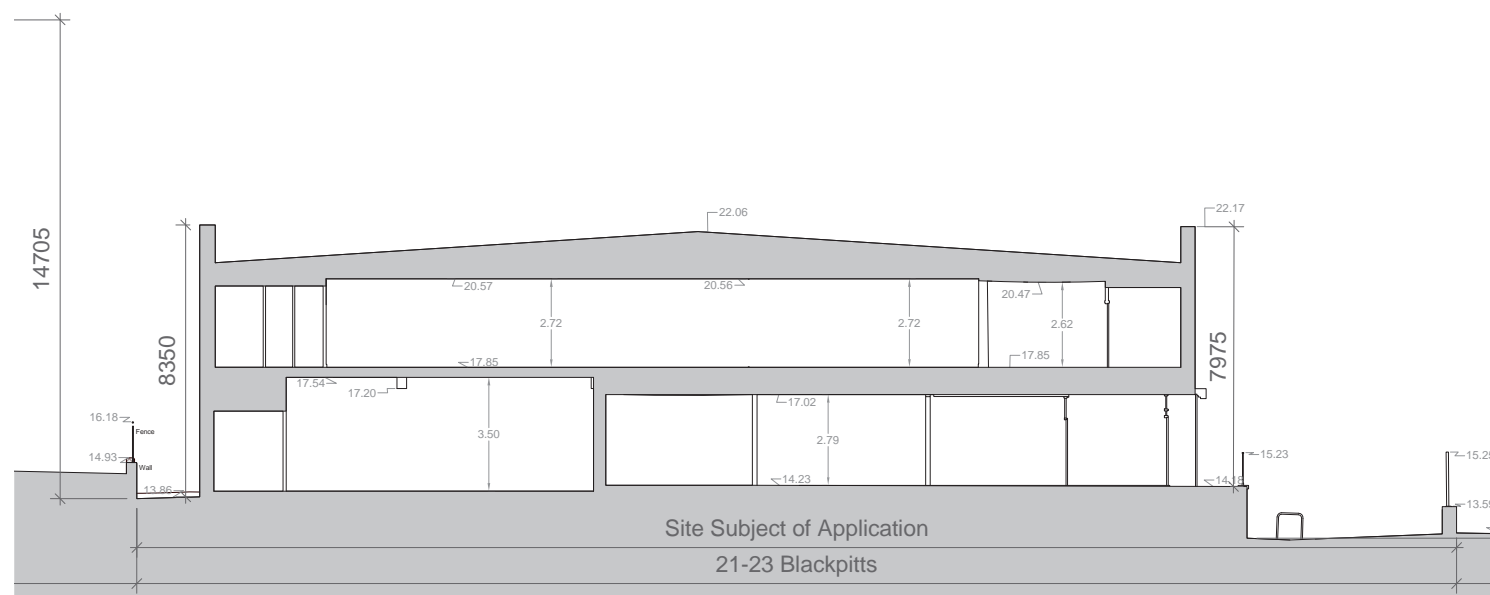
9.0 Demolition of Existing Building

The client and the design team are aware that in terms of embodied carbon, the most sustainable option is generally to reuse and re purpose existing buildings however this is not possible in this instance for the following reasons;

- The structure is a portal frame and it will not have the capacity to extend upwards. A whole new structure will be required to extend the footprint vertically.
- The depth of the plan means that the student accommodation rooms become long and narrow. They will likely have poor lighting and are an inefficient use of space in terms of the plan's density. This could be altered, but it would require extensive work to the structure and building overall.
- Current window arrangement will not work to create functional or viable student accommodation. Heavy alteration of facade required to create new opes as outlined on plans and sections.
- The quantum of student bedrooms the existing structure can house is not viable.
- The existing building is a warehouse, and the levels have been designed to cater to loading and unloading trucks and lorries. These levels make accessibility extremely challenging.
- Stairs are currently not Part M compliant.
- Additional lifts and stairs required to cater to the new use.



Existing Ground Floorplan | Not to Scale



Existing Section | Not to Scale



Existing Logistics & Office Building on Site



Ramp access to logistics building



View to existing building from St. John's Street



View to existing building from Blackpitts



View to existing building from Greenville Ave

10.0 Proposed Development

The client set out their brief to create a high-quality development that would provide much needed student housing for the Dublin area. The development houses 213no. Student bedrooms across 6 floors, each have a generous en-suite, ample storage/desk space and in general, exceed the minimum standards set out in the Dublin City Council Development Plan 2022-2028. Large windows are provided to these rooms which address either the adjoining streets or the internal courtyard while also gathering as much natural light as possible. The bedrooms are grouped together in blocks of no more than 8, with each block sharing an appropriately sized kitchen-common area. The levels above ground floor house the majority of the student rooms.

The building's main entrance is located on the corner of Blackpitts and Donovan Lane and is defined by a change in material and a two storey setback in the elevation. This entrance leads to a reception and the central core of the building as well as the adjoining cafe-restaurant and library spaces with an exit out onto the central courtyard. The courtyard at the center of the scheme not only provides an invaluable amenity space for the students and a much improved visual outlook for the neighbouring apartments but also acts as means of circulating between the various cores, linking and tying the whole development together.

Further communal amenity facilities are provided at the basement which will be accessed via an external stairs or by each internal core. These include a gym with changing facilities, a multi-functional space and cinema in addition to the library, cafe-restaurant and multi-use space at ground floor level. External amenity spaces are providing at ground floor within the courtyard and at roof level in a communal terrace. These total 1185m², again exceeding the minimum standard set out in the Dublin City Development plan for a scheme of this size. The basement level while providing high-quality communal facilities will also house the plant space required for the development, a kitchen for the cafe-restaurant, a laundry, a bin store and bike storage for 272no. bikes. 2no. service lifts and a dutch style bike ramp along the edge of the external stairs will facilitate access for bicycle users.

The overall scale of the proposed development is considered appropriate for the site. However, thoughtful design adjustments have been made to step down the building height along its edges, ensuring the structure harmonizes with its surroundings. Setbacks in the building's form are



Proposed Ground Floor Plan | Not to Scale



View of Courtyard taken from LRD Stage 2 presentation video



Views of entranceway from Donovan Lane taken from LRD Stage 2 presentation video



View of Courtyard taken from LRD Stage 2 presentation video