



An Bord Pleanála Opinion Response Report (Architectural Items)

SHIPSEYBARRY

THE MEADOWS

BESSBOROUGH
BLACKROCK
CORK

MARCH 2022

commissioned by Estuary View Enterprises 2020 Ltd.

foreword

This document addresses the principle ABP (An Bord Pleanála) opinion items as set out in the Boards opinion issued in December 2021 that concern Architectural specific responses. Note other response items are addressed across other design team disciplines reports.

Specific to the opinion items addressed in this report are:

Item 1.

Masterplan and items thereof.

Item 2 . Heights and massing in relation to the historic Bessborough House and historic demesne landscape.

Item 4.

Relationship to historic farmyard to West.

Item 6.

Bridge design and interaction with the greenway and wayfinding.

Item 7.

Impact and lands to North.

Item 8 .

Details of areas to be taken in charge.

ITEM 1.

MASTERPLAN

'The application should be accompanied by an appropriately detailed Masterplan / Design Statement which should set out a coherent strategy for the overall development of lands within the prospective applicant's ownership at Bessborough. The Masterplan should describe the overall response to the historic context and landscape setting of the lands, and the relationship between developments within different character areas in terms of their design and layout and the influences thereon.'

We confirm a full masterplan is presented in the design statement documentation in which historic context and landscape setting of the lands, and the relationship between developments within different character areas in terms of their design and layout and the influences are expanded on .



ITEM 2.

HEIGHTS

'The application should be accompanied by a detailed rationale / justification for the range of building heights and the massing of development proposed, having regard to potential impacts on the character and setting of Bessborough House, a protected structure, and its role and position within the historic demesne landscape.

Regard should be had, inter alia, to the provisions of Chapter 16 of the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 relating to Building Height and Objective 10.4 with regard to Areas of High Landscape Value, and to the criteria set out in Section 3.2 of the Urban Development and Building Height, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2018).'

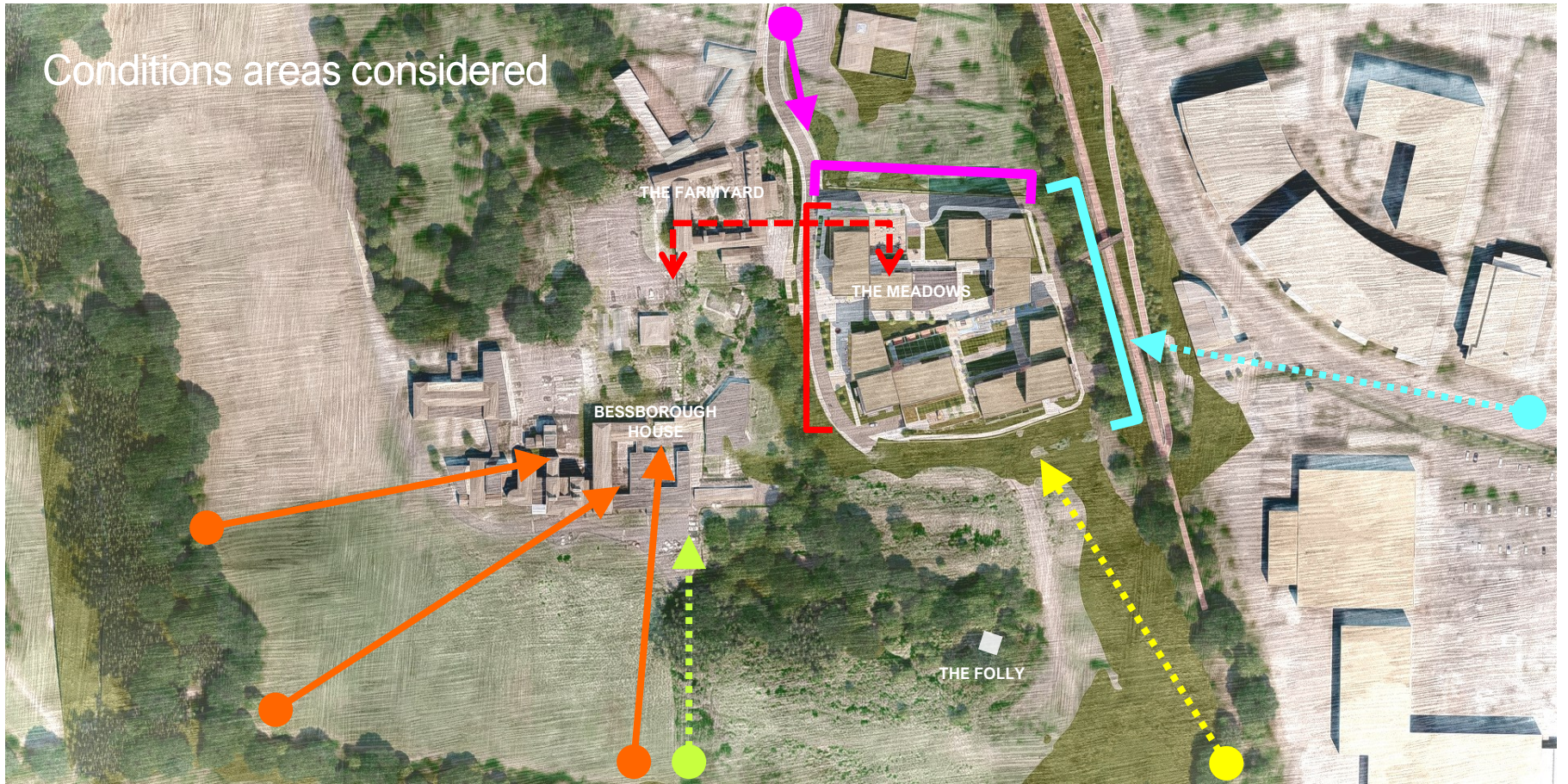








Please refer to relevant policy items Chapter 16 of the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 relating to Building Height and Objective 10.4 with regard to Areas of High Landscape Value, and to the criteria set out in Section 3.2 of the Urban Development and Building Height, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2018) in Appendix items i, ii & iii appended to document .

The following sets out the considerations, rationale and justification behind the selection of heights and massing at this location. Of note is the highly sustainable location suitable for new communities on residentially zoned land with the added sensitivity of being designated High Landscape Value and having a unique heritage setting. This section will analyse the approach to the design given these parameters. This section is set out to look at specific conditions that the design considers in height and mass terms from different locations around the site and from more distant views. These are in no particular order or hierarchy and are considered in their entirety and holistically to arrive at the proposals height strategy .

Please note FOREST BIRD – Historic Landscape Assessment Reports is also reference in this document as it informed many decisions around designing in the particular setting from an early design stage (August 2020) and is also included as Appendix item IV .

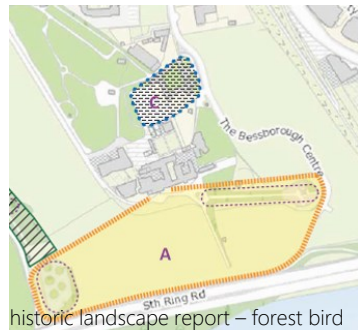
Conditions areas considered



-  Condition Area A - Building height receiving capacity – Relationship to protected structure – Bessborough House (PS 490).
-  Condition Area B - Building height receiving capacity - Distant cross valley and protected views from south.
-  Condition Area C - Building height receiving capacity – Southern intermediate distant views.
-  Condition Area D - Building height receiving capacity – Northern approach and northern lands relationship.
-  Condition Area E - Building height receiving capacity – Eastern approaches and greenway.
-  Condition Area E - Building height receiving capacity - Relationship Farmyard complex (N.I.A.H. -20872006)



From early consideration of 'Condition Area A', site specific conditions are relevant to the height receiving environment for the buildings located to East of Bessborough House. Of note is the topography which is 10 meters lower to the lower far south west corner of the site. This elevates with the prominence of the 3 storey protected structure to a commanding presence over the historic demesne landscape to the foreground. This open landscape is highlighted as highly sensitive (A below) in Forest Birds historic landscape report (Appendix iii).



An other high consideration is the presence of mature tree stands to the East which book-end a portion of the open landscape area and provide a buffer to the development to the east. Significant analysis was undertaken in modelling alternatives to this view and assessing height impacts to arrive at the proposed heights to the West of the proposal.



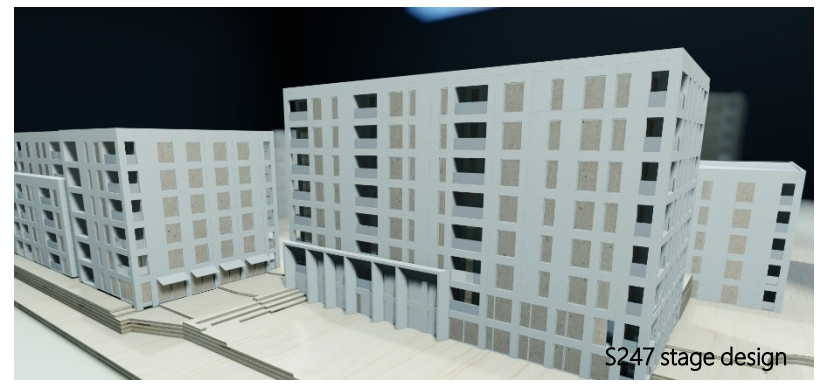
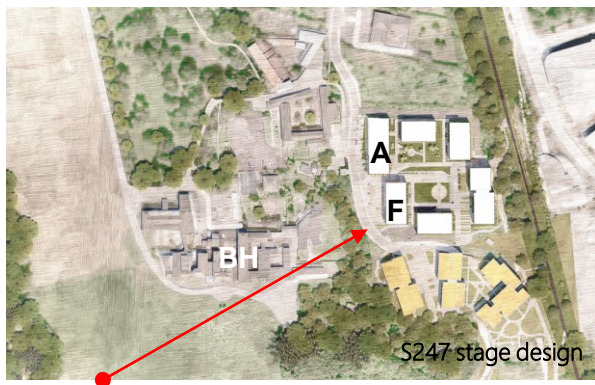


Bessborough House (BH) Building A Building F



Building A Building F

Early analysis prior to first S247 meeting explored this height relationship in then buildings A & F to the West of the proposal. With datum level accurate modelling, this distant view was carefully considered. At this stage of the design process Buildings A & F were proposed at 6 – 8 storeys. The application proposal has revised the Western built forms to 5, 6 & 7 storeys at this location, with a rear building (B) presenting in the far distance at 10 storeys. Also, considerable adjustment was made throughout the design phase to move away from the more mono-block approach to introduce more de-massing mechanisms of steeped forms, façade expressions, material breakups and setbacks.



View from south-west corner with Bessborough House to the right of the image showing the development proposal in the background (red) with the extension in the foreground in this winter view. Please refer to LVIA and photomontage set accompanying documentation for fuller assessment.



application

View from south-west corner with Bessborough House to the centre of the image showing the development proposal in the background with the built form presenting we propose in distant and tertiary manor to the primary commanding presence of Bessborough House and the secondary vegetation boundary to the right of the image.



application

View from south-west corner with Bessborough House to the centre of the image showing the development proposal in the background with the built form presenting we propose in distant and tertiary manor to the primary commanding presence of Bessborough House and the secondary vegetation boundary to the right of the image.



Application –winter

Condition Area B

DISTANT VIEWS FROM SOUTH



Above view of initial S247 view shows the 9 storey block to the right and 8 story block to left and in foreground to south of proposal. The buildings are of mono material make up with no set backs and with less variation in height breakup.

Through design development, the proposal (below view) has evolved to allow for reduction in heights to the south, more stepping of parapet levels, set backs, fenestration breakup and material breakup with more muted darker materials located at higher level. The 10 storey distant element to the rear of the scheme is given a dark brick/material palette to assist most notably in this particular view.



Condition Area C

SOUTHERN INTERMEDIATE DISTANT VIEWS



In assessing intermediate distant views from the south, a critical component in measuring this impact is the recognition of the potential for future dense development to the southeast boundaries residential zoned lands outside the applicants ownership (A). This land holding has been subject to 2 recent applications for MBW TWO Ltd .

The first of which in location A ; In its ruling on MWB’s proposal, the board said it would be “premature” to grant permission before establishing that the site “was not previously used as, and does not contain a children’s burial ground”. Subsequently the second smaller application (Z) was deemed piecemeal without the other application in place .



This said, land in area A will retains residential zoning with the potential for future development at this location. This prospect presents the current application site with the prospect of development to its south in the future.

Prior to these refusals on this southern site the design team modelled the southern proposals to assess the buffer impact for development of the eastern boundary to the greenway holistically. The application proposal is designed to accept southern development in location A which will eclipse and diminish impacts intermediate distant views from the south

It must be noted the reasons for refusal on both MWB TWO Ltd applications was not for height issues per say, with the inspector noting in (site Z) ABP 309560-21

8.3.4. On the basis of the above I consider that the density both of the development subject of this appeal to be acceptable.

And further on ,

8.3.7. Block D subject of this appeal at 8 storeys high will have an overall height of 26.8 metres and represents a deviation from the 23 metre limit as set in the development plan. Certainly, in the context of the overall development as originally proposed a case could be made for the height allowing for a graduated step up from west to east providing for a focal and terminating point at the southernmost point at its interface to the South Link Road. With regard had to the Building Heights Guidelines (SPPR1 and SPPR3) and National Planning Framework (Objective 35) the proposal is considered acceptable.

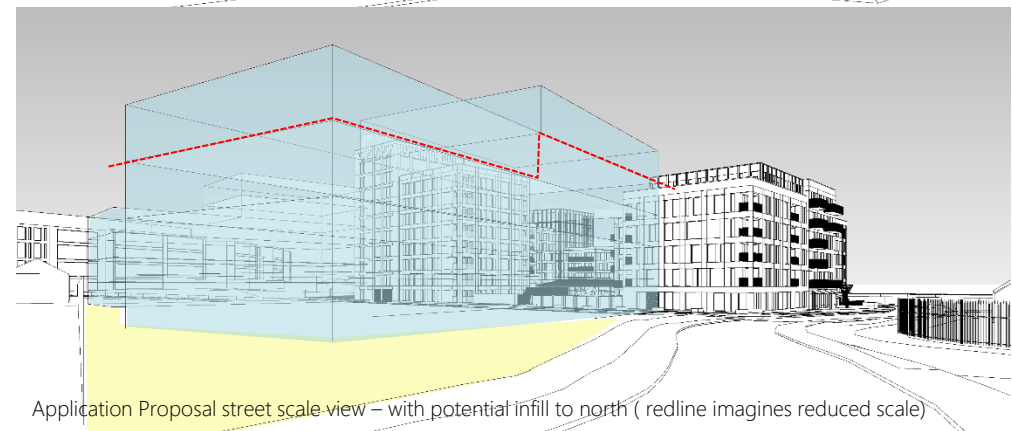
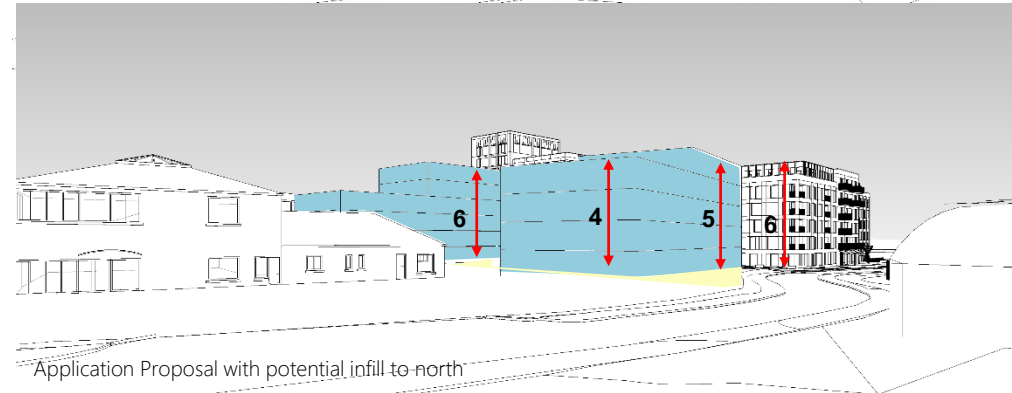
The zoning in the operative CDP supports the principle of development on the ABP-308790-20 lands. It is included here for analysis on that basis

Condition Area D

VIEWS FOR NORTH AND APPROACH FROM NORTH

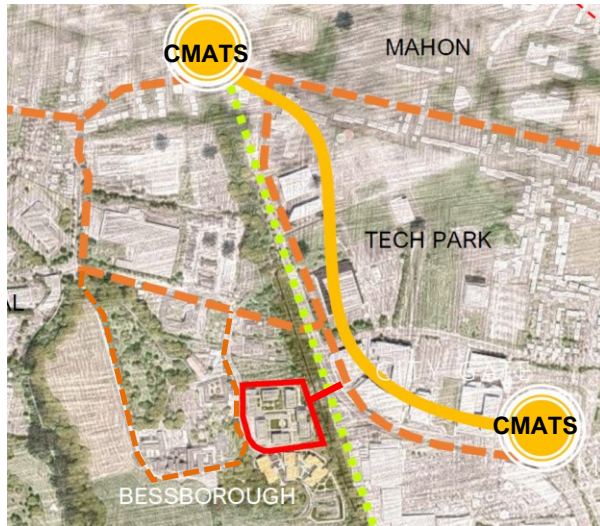


in assessing the approach views and proposed height from the north , the design team considered the lands to the North which is also zoned for future residential development , this bank of land potentially deals with a transition in scale as of it close proximity to a low scale existing neighbour to its north (The Alzheimer’s Society Bessboro Day Care Centre) of 1 and 2 storey in height . On analysis the scale of any new development here it is envisioned to be in the order of 4 – 6 storeys (North to South) with indicative block format shown above in blue . The diagrams to the right indicates the longer term height impact of the proposal with a 4 – 6 storey infill development to the north. Of note is the street scale view with also offers insight into the buffer impact to this infill at a storey lower (3-4) at street frontage . The proposals scale further down the street highlights the gateway nature to the scheme with its central large public realm piece ,main route and bridge to connect Bessborough to the greenway to the East .



Condition Area E

VIEWS FROM EASTERN APPROACH AND GREENWAY



When assessing height strategy from the Easter approach, it was considered the location of this area of the proposal site had a number of factors which allowed for height and density.

- Being furthest from heritage items to the West of the site.
- Proximity to new built form and scale of Mahon to East.
- Proximity to future CMATS network.
- Proximity and access to city Greenway system.
- ABPs assessment of recent applications to South of the site.
- Potential future densities in this area beyond the current development plan.

At early stage of design MWB Two Ltd. applications had progressed through pre planning consultation phases with proposals of principally 8 to 5 storeys in close proximity to a heritage item ' the folly ' (NIAH 20872007).



Ultimately refused for separate reasons to height, the ABP inspectors report noted in ABP 309560-21 section 8.3.4. ' On the basis of the above I consider that the density both of the development subject of this appeal to be acceptable.' And further on ,section 8.3.7. Block D subject of this appeal at 8 storeys highthe proposal is considered acceptable.'

While this commentary is noted the proposal site is received from the eastern approach as being closer and more engaged to the scale of more recent built forms of office blocks to the South (right of image). The above shows the application proposal and differing form at the S247 design, the design development placed 8 storeys to the South with the 10 storey element to the North of the site (right of image) with more varied massing and material breakup. As the proposal potential

marks the principle access point to the wider Bessborough masterplan and neighbourhood park via the new bridge location to the East, the design team felt a degree of prominence was merited at this location .

Also of note but may be premature to consider given the draft development plan 2022-2028 does not consider this aspect, but from a future urban regeneration perspective, with the delivery of the CMATS system in the future, we see it as likely the B&Q carpark may be considered for scale development (indicative in redline to the left of the image) . We accept this may be into future development plans but wish to acknowledge the potential scenario in a longer term urbanism context.



The Greenway due to the topography in this location and the parameters of the former rail line design is located within a deep raven type landscape with heavy mature tree stands to the East and West. With this local condition scale and height development becomes less impactful with the green buffer and level relationship to the application site.

To the left is a excerpt for the photomontage study which shows the depth of the green way and vegetation condition



An indicative illustration of the level difference from the green way with the heavy tree stand at the upper crest level of the embankment. Our analysis suggests scaled development behind this tree buffer will not impinge on the character and quality of this amenity

the Meadows



Potential Development to North of the Meadows



the Meadows

Potential Development to North of the Meadows



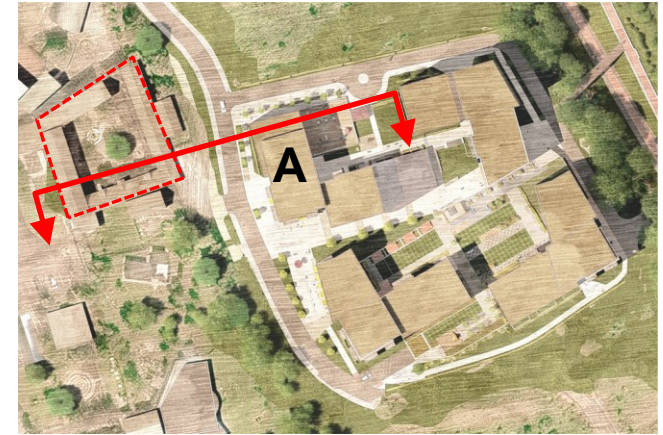
the Meadows

Potential Development to South of the Meadows

Condition Area E

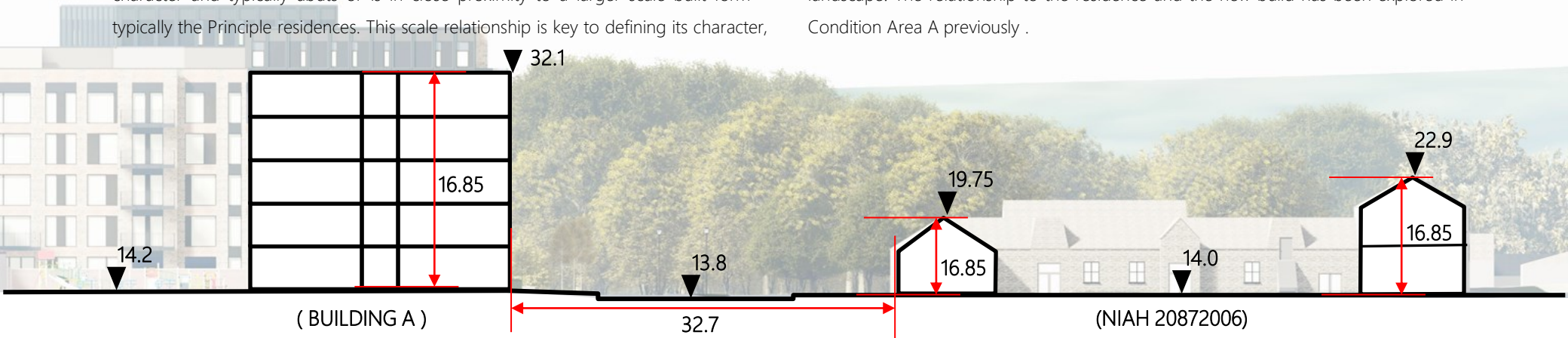
HERITAGE RELATIONSHIP TO WEST

'The application should clearly illustrate and assess the relationship between the proposed development and the adjoining farmyard complex and walled garden to the west, identified in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (reg. no. 20872006), having regard to the height and scale of development proposed. Detailed section and contextual drawings and other imagery should be submitted in this regard.'



The relationship of building A of the proposed development and the Farmyard complex to the East is explored in below context sectional drawing, A further more detailed section is provided in the drawing submission pack. In assessing the height potential of application in this proximity appropriate to this heritage item, it is considered the low scale of this assembly of buildings is part of its own inherent character and typically abuts or is in close proximity to a larger scale built form – typically the Principle residences. This scale relationship is key to defining its character,

and the farmyard complex should not have new development matching its scale as this would detract from its unique characteristic. An adjoining scale that highlights this unique scale characteristic we feel is appropriate in this context. Critically the scale relationship of any new Build to the former residence is the more sensitive relationship as this is intended to present as a large scale dominant presence in the historic landscape. The relationship to the residence and the new build has been explored in Condition Area A previously .



Contextual section drawing .



building A proposal

farmyard complex (NIAH 20872006)



Ref :Rockfield House , Kells — intact hierarchy

Given the sequence of extensions to the main residence and additions of, bedroom blocks, resource centre & creche over time the original scale relationship at Bessborough house has been slightly dissolved. Again the key consideration in assessing the appropriate scale for development adjacent to the farmyard/stables complex is more how this new scale sits with the principle residence which is more threatened by the proximity of a new scaled item and less about the juxtaposition

of proximity to lower scale outbuildings as their scale was always to be viewed as secondary hierarchy to the main residence . le; a lower scale addition in proximity to outbuildings can confuse this hierarchy. Under 'Condition Area A' assessment we feel this item has been addressed .

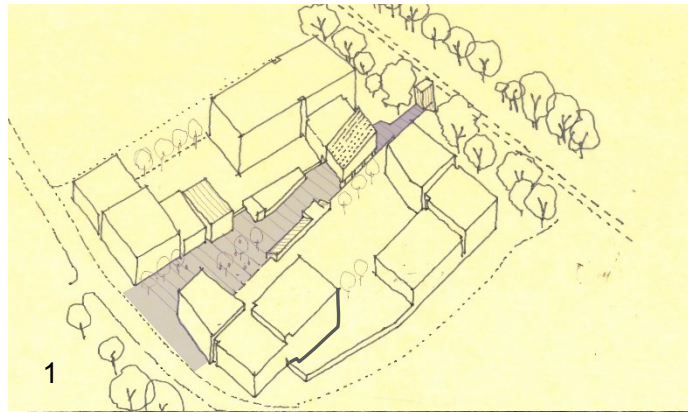
On analysis of the above view and its relationship to the farmyard complex. Consideration should be given for the potential of further residential development to the foreground (North) as analysed in Condition Area D.

ITEM 6.

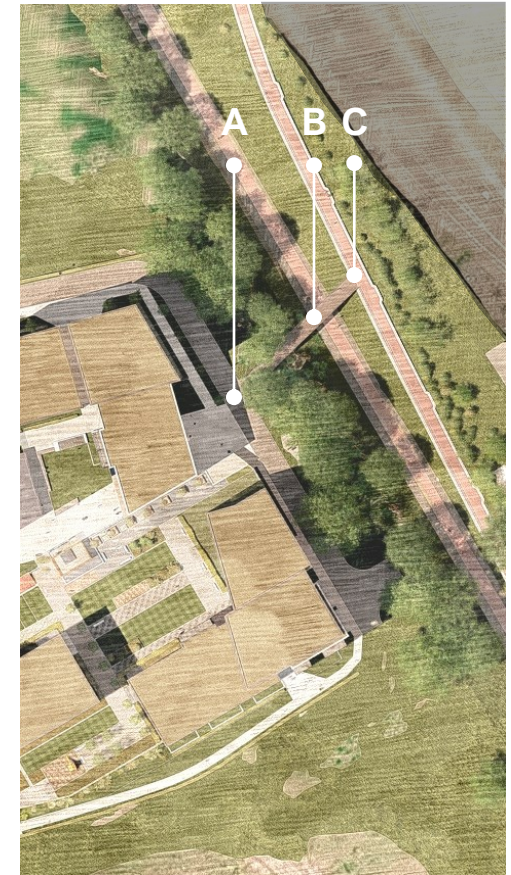
BRIDGE DESIGN & WAYFINDING

Detailed design proposals for the proposed Greenway access bridge should be provided, which should address the matters raised in the submission of the Planning Authority to An Bord Pleanála dated 15/10/2021, including a rationale for the siting and design of the structure, a requirement for an increase in the width of the bridge, interaction with the existing Greenway and issues of wayfinding.

This aspect of the development should be assessed as part of the Quality Audit to be undertaken in respect of the proposed development.



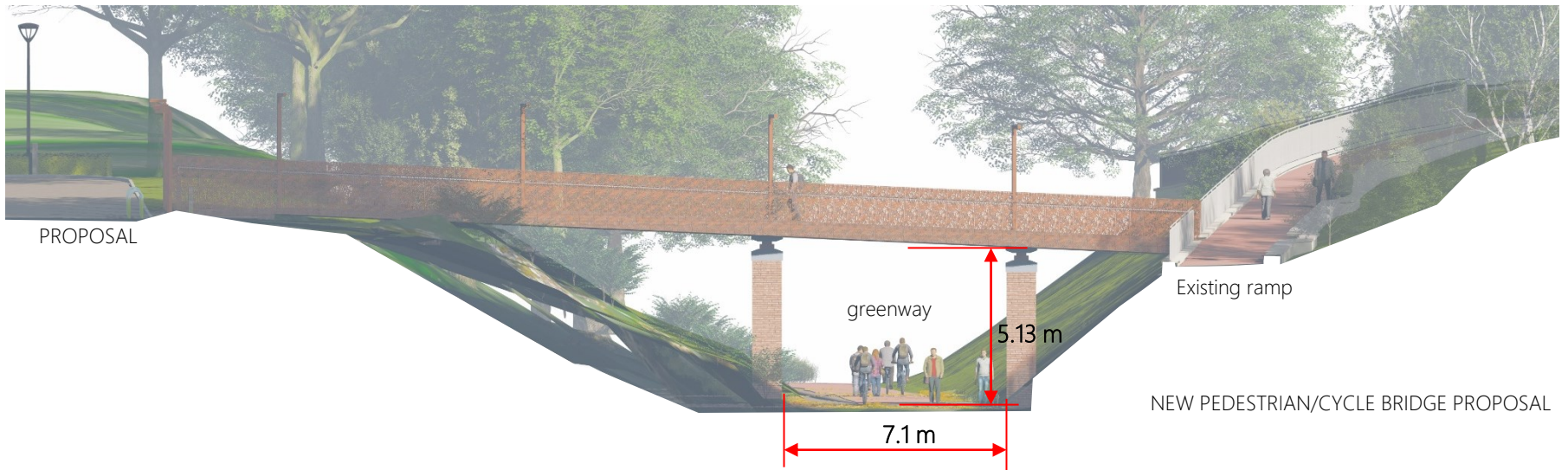
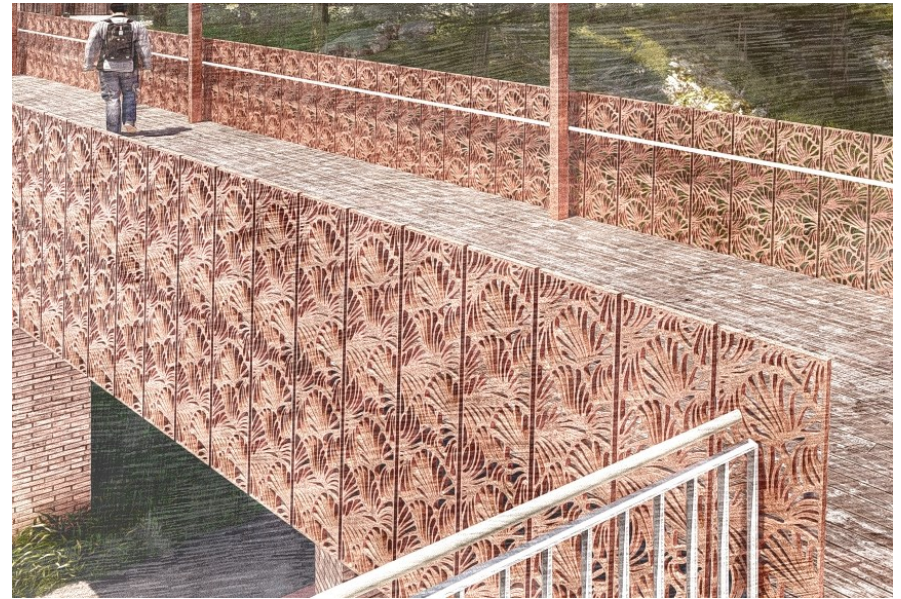
From early design stage and engagement with CCC a major public realm piece was proposed and supported transiting the site East-West to provide the meadows development the potential of forming a gateway to the wider Bessborough site (1) . Design development explored a stepped access with lift core (2) but for maintenance and security reasons the concept of bridge access to the existing down ramp to the Greenway (C) was explored for ease of access for all . The bridge also provides for a more convenient access to lands to the East and Mahon. The specific geometry around the central location is organised to provide appropriate clearance levels to the green way (B) while also providing a part M compliant slope between existing entry levels to achieve access for all . This geometry contributes to the place making as it is slightly off axis adding interest and placemaking characteristics to the desire line through the scheme .



The Bridge design has been modified through engagement with Cork City Council (CCC) post Tri-Party engagement phase. The Bridge now has a clear width of 3.15 meters, width clearance of 7.1 meters and height clearance of 5.13 meters per CCC request. Also of note is the design incorporates 2 supporting piers compared with 1 previously, as concern was expressed as to the bearing capacity next to the existing ramp. The geometry of the bridge was also minorly adjusted slightly in plan to meet the existing ramp at a more northerly and higher point and facilitate the clearance required by CCC.

The expression of structure is traditional in perception while composed with contemporary building fabric materials. A decorative panelised system in Corten steel is used as the main design feature on the main bridge transept guardrail standing on 2 simple formed brick piers.

A Full detailed design drawing is included as part of the submission pack.





'.....The proposed bridge now makes adequate provision for the possible future provision of light rail and so is acceptable to the Infrastructure Development Directorate in regard to planned future infrastructure. I note the clear width of the bridge has been revised to 3m clear width. This is acceptable to the Infrastructure Development Directorate noting the width of the existing ramp.'

Adrian Quinn – *by email 17.02.2022*

Senior Executive Engineer Cork City Council

WAYFINDING

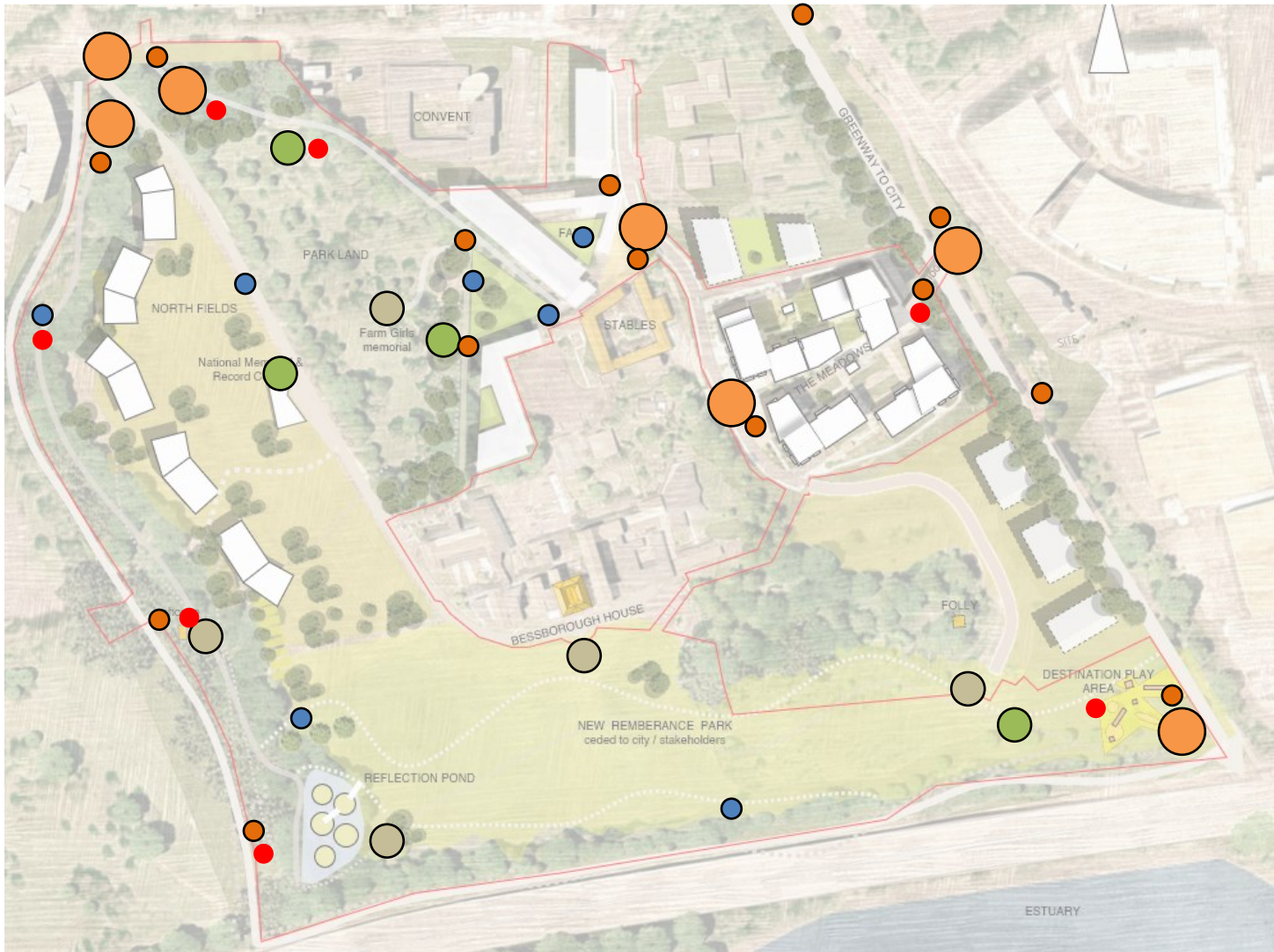
Given the scale of the overall masterplan a clear way find approach will require implementing . The general approach is indicatively presented here but a detailed signage proposal at each phase will need to be approved with all stakeholders prior to implementation and updates as each phase and suite of features is delivered



At implementation stage a detailed design proposal will be submitted with the following three goals in mind:

- Development of sign standards for the lands managed by the City's Parks program;
- Creation of a comprehensive signage system that enhances the user experience and supports management of the resources by the Bessborough Estate Parks stake holders and Public Lands ; and
- Establishment of a recognizable identify, brand and graphic aesthetic for the lands managed by the City's Parks Division in taken in charge areas and the promoter on publicly accessible private lands that provide unity and clarity across the masterplan area .

Compliance with the guidelines will ensure that signage is coordinated and consistent throughout the Bessborough Estate system of parks, open spaces and trails offering a coherent navigation and rule based guidance for public and residents to enjoy the full potential of the parks system and site permeability .



- Primary title / place sign
- Directional / Navigation sign
- Area interest placard
- Monument / place sign
- Rule/prohibition markers
- Feature areas

Bessborough Estate

Park Opening Hours: 10:00 am - 11:00 pm

They Love Access! Great paths, beautiful views, and friendly staff.

Not allowed in 200m zones around buildings, swimming areas, playgrounds, tennis, or other sports areas.

Please leash your pet at all times.

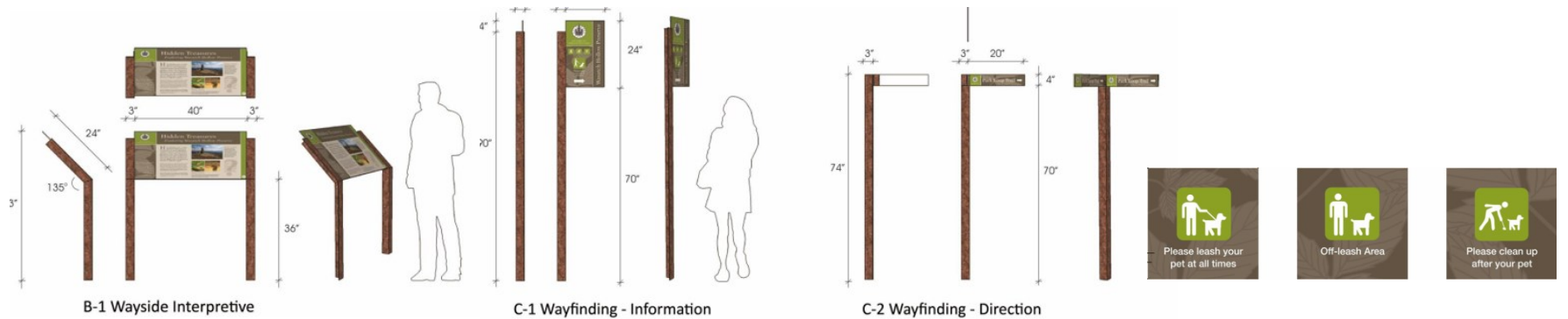
Please make sure your dog is on a lead at all times.

Please do not feed any animals, and do not give them any food.

INDICATIVE WAYFIND ACROSS THE MASTERPLAN AREA PROPOSAL



A coordinated approach to the signage design across the masterplan facilitates each stakeholder's requirements. From the public's navigation, cultural experience to amenity guidance and behaviour rules to more practical rules around private and public areas, access & servicing.



ITEM 7.

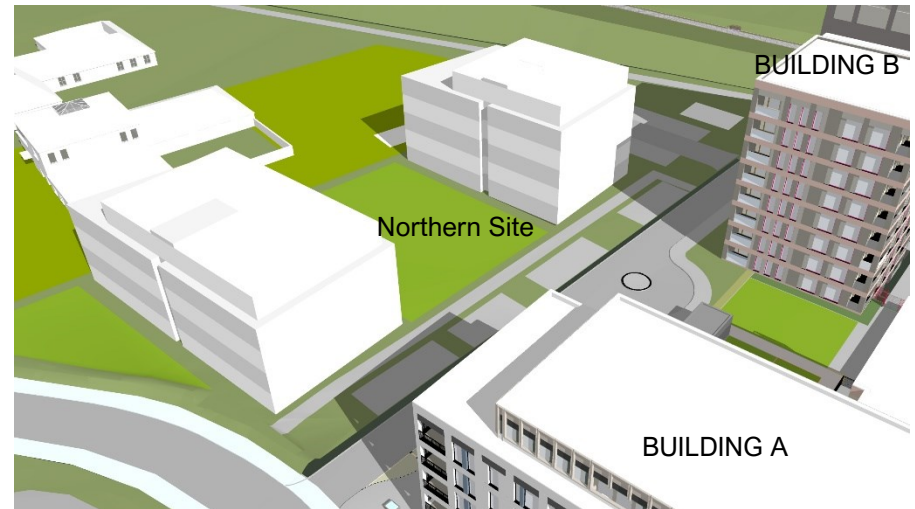
LANDS TO NORTH

'Further consideration of, and possible amendment to the documents and/or design proposals submitted, having regard to the relationship of the proposed development with the adjacent lands to the north. It should be demonstrated that the proposed development would not prejudice any future development of those lands, having particular regard to issues including overlooking, daylight, sunlight and overshadowing.

The design team has considered development to the North by analysis of the relationship to a newly built residential scheme post operational phase. Certain assumptions are made in this exercise :

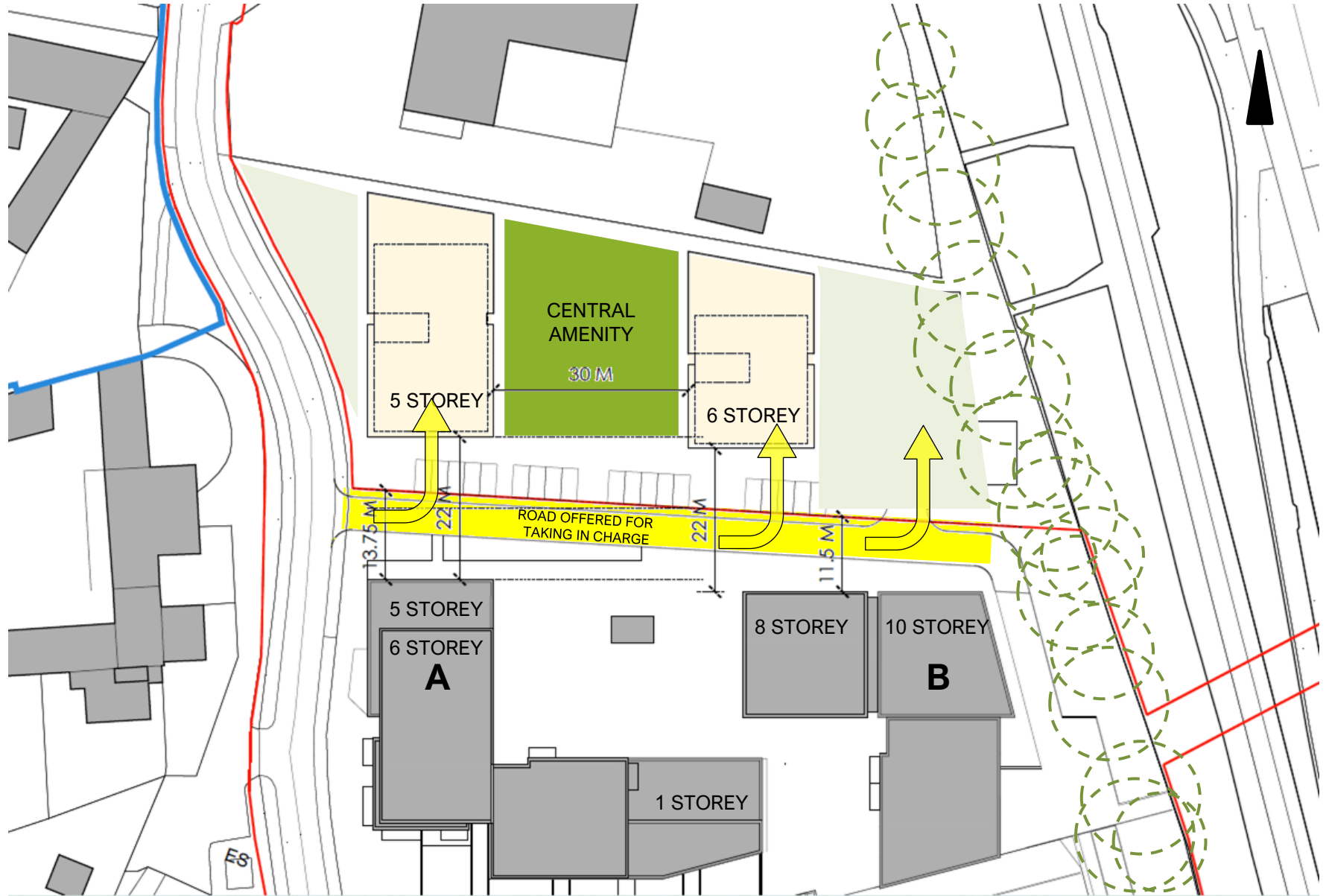
- Given the sustainable location an apartment scheme is considered a likely typology.
- The linear length on the site, and the neighbour further to the North implies North -South running blocks of development.
- The dimensional length constraints of the site imply 2 blocks not 3 would be constructed, to allow for adequate proximity to facing units.
- A central amenity space between blocks.
- The Northern road taken in charge offered by the applicant to the applicants site will be used for accessing the northern lands.
- An assumed scale of 4 – 6 storeys over the site.

The application site has strategically set its building line to a minimum of 11 meters for the Northern boundary, this with an 11m set back on the Northern site will allow for orderly development with a 22m separation between facing Apartments. By location of the applicants higher built form to the rear (North East) corner of the site, a potential amenity space to the Northern site is aligned with a break in the applications building A & B allow for quality of southern light to penetrate the site.



Overleaf demonstrates the dimensional set up of critical set out distances. A further shadow study is included based on the indicative scheme which demonstrates the quality of light achieved in the central amenity space on March 21st assessment date.

On analysis we conclude that the proposal does not adversely impact on the development potential of the lands to the North , distances being within guidelines for acceptable proximities and shadow cast be within BRE acceptable limits .



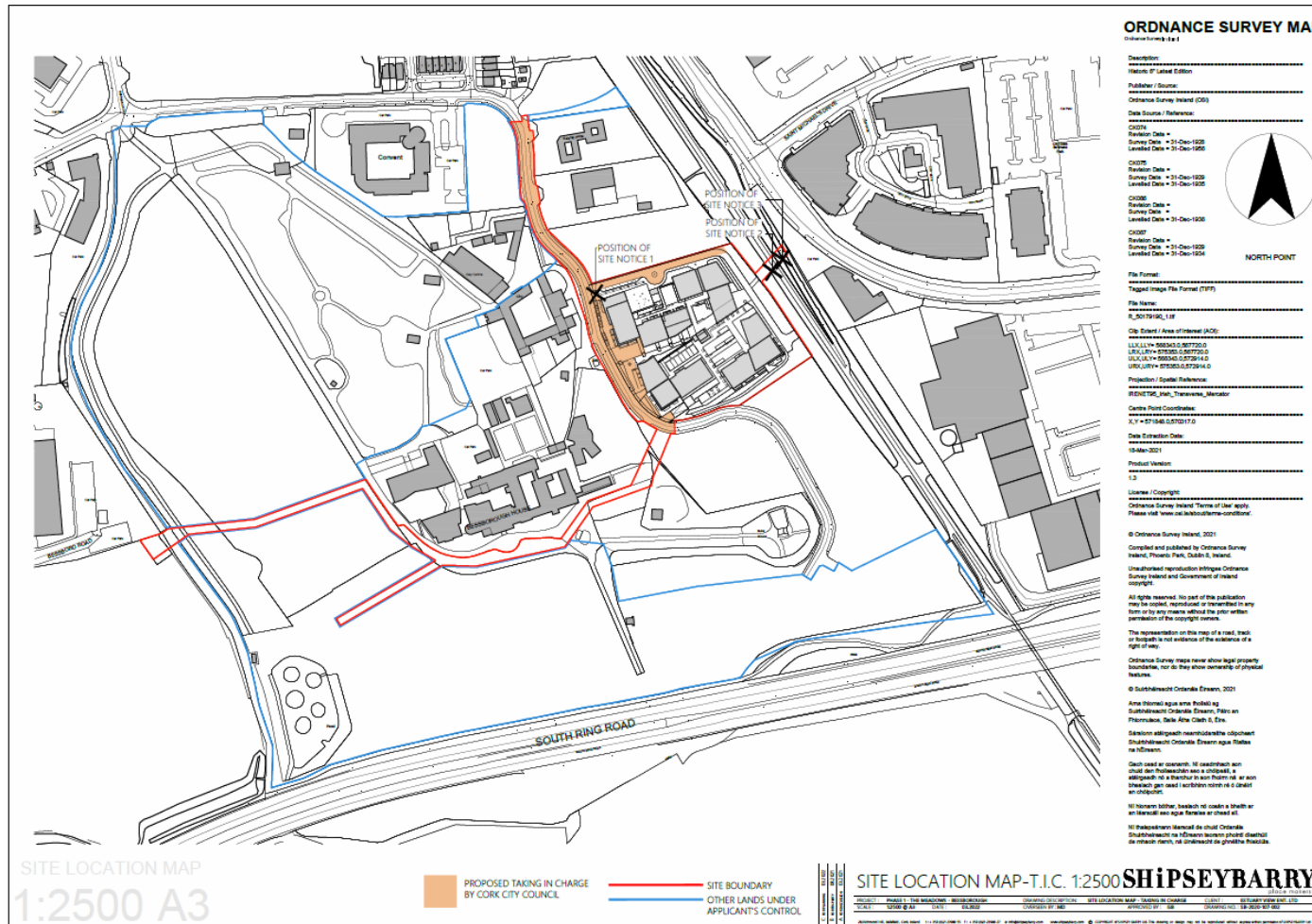




ITEM 8.

TAKING IN CHARGE

'Details of the areas intended to be taken in charge by the Local Authority should be clearly set out.'



A 'taking in charge drawing has been included in the drawing documentation set as requested

APPENDIX i

Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 relating to Objective 10.4 with regard to Areas of High Landscape Value

Objective 10.4 Areas of High Landscape Value

To conserve and enhance the character and visual amenity of Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV) through the appropriate management of development, in order to retain the existing characteristics of the landscape, and its primary landscape assets. Development will be considered only where it safeguards to the value and sensitivity of the particular landscape. There will be a presumption against development where it causes significant harm or injury to the intrinsic character of the Area of High Landscape Value and its primary landscape assets, the visual amenity of the landscape; protected views; breaks the existing ridge silhouette; the character and setting of buildings, structures and landmarks; and the ecological and habitat value of the landscape.

APPENDIX ii

Chapter 16 Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 relating to Building Height

Building Height

16.25 Within the context of Cork City the following building height categories can be identified:

- Low-rise buildings (1-3 storeys in height);
- Medium-rise buildings (less than 32metres in height, 4-9 stories approximately). Buildings which are taller than the general building height in any area will be considered “taller” even where they are less than 10 storeys;
- Tall buildings (32metres or higher, the approximate equivalent of a 10 storey building with a commercial ground floor and residential in the remaining floors).

16.26 Building height should be in proportion to the space between buildings and, where appropriate, be set back from the road edge or the existing building line to allow wider footpaths and space for

landscaping, to reduce overlooking or overshadowing of adjoining buildings and to avoid creating a canyon effect between buildings.

Building Height in Suburban Areas

16.27 Within the suburban areas of the city (developed after 1920) low rise buildings will be considered appropriate (including cases where demolition and replacement of existing buildings occurs) except in the following areas:

- Major development areas identified in this development plan for which a local area plan or Development Brief will be prepared;
- Larger development sites – sites of greater than 0.5 hectares (or one residential block) which are capable of accommodating their own intrinsic character without having an adverse impact on their neighbours.

16.28 Buildings of between 3-5 storeys will be considered appropriate in principle in major development areas and larger development sites, subject to normal planning considerations. In exceptional circumstances local landmark buildings may be considered with a height of up to 20-23 metres (approximately 6-7 storey equivalent). Building heights greater than this will only be considered where specifically identified in a local area plan.

Building Height in the City Centre and Inner Urban Areas

16.29 Within the City Centre and Inner Urban Areas (developed until 1920) the general building heights are varied due to their naturally evolving character and varied building types and styles. The City Centre typically has a general building height of 3- 5 storeys. Due to the importance of the City Centre as an area of historic and architectural character, the building height of any new development within the City Centre should generally respect the area's existing character and

context and should be in accordance with the prevailing hierarchy / character of buildings, save in exceptional circumstances where an increase in building height can be justified on sound urban design or architectural grounds.

16.30 In appropriate circumstances, new corner (local landmark) buildings may reflect their location by means of additional building height of 1-2 storeys, subject to other planning considerations. The building design and treatment of a building (including built form/ height) should reflect new civic and public benefit uses.

APPENDIX iii

Section 3.2 of the Urban Development and Building Height, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2018)



Urban Development and Building Heights

Guidelines for Planning Authorities

December 2018



Development Management Criteria

3.2 In the event of making a planning application, the applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority/ An Bord Pleanála, that the proposed development satisfies the following criteria:

At the scale of the relevant city/town

-

The site is well served by public transport with high capacity, frequent service and good links to other modes of public transport.

- Development proposals incorporating increased building height, including proposals within architecturally sensitive areas, should successfully integrate into/enhance the character and public realm of the area, having regard to topography, its cultural context, setting of key landmarks, protection of key views.³ Such development proposals shall undertake a landscape and visual assessment, by a suitably qualified practitioner such as a chartered landscape architect.

- On larger urban redevelopment sites, proposed developments should make a positive contribution to place-making, incorporating new streets and public spaces, using massing and height to achieve the required densities but with sufficient variety in scale and form to respond to the scale of adjoining developments and create visual interest in the streetscape.

³ City centre development in several UK and EU cities have successfully managed to both consolidate development through increased building heights, working sensitively and imaginatively with existing sensitive architectural building contexts – e.g. central London through the London Plan.

At the scale of district/ neighbourhood/ street

- The proposal responds to its overall natural and built environment and makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood and streetscape

- The proposal is not monolithic and avoids long, uninterrupted walls of building in the form of slab blocks with materials / building fabric well considered.

- The proposal enhances the urban design context for public spaces and key thoroughfares and inland waterway/ marine frontage, thereby enabling additional height in development form to be favourably considered in terms of enhancing a sense of scale and enclosure while being in line with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (2009).

- The proposal makes a positive contribution to the improvement of legibility through the site or wider urban area within which the development is situated and integrates in a cohesive manner.

- The proposal positively contributes to the mix of uses and/ or building/ dwelling typologies available in the neighbourhood.

At the scale of the site/building

- The form, massing and height of proposed developments should be carefully modulated so as to maximise access to natural daylight, ventilation and views and minimise overshadowing and loss of light.

- Appropriate and reasonable regard should be taken of quantitative performance approaches to daylight provision outlined in guides like the Building Research Establishment's 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight' (2nd edition) or BS 8206-2: 2008 – 'Lighting for Buildings – Part 2: Code of Practice for Daylighting'.

- Where a proposal may not be able to fully meet all the requirements of the daylight provisions above, this must be clearly identified and a rationale for any alternative, compensatory design solutions must be set out, in respect of which the planning authority or An Bord Pleanála should apply their discretion, having regard to local factors including specific site constraints and the balancing of that assessment against the desirability of achieving wider planning objectives. Such objectives might include securing comprehensive urban regeneration and or an effective urban design and streetscape solution.

Specific Assessments

To support proposals at some or all of these scales, specific assessments may be required and these may include

:

- Specific impact assessment of the micro-climatic effects such as down-draft. Such assessments shall include measures to avoid/ mitigate such micro-climatic effects and, where appropriate, shall include an assessment of the cumulative micro-climatic effects where taller buildings are clustered.

- In development locations in proximity to sensitive bird and / or bat areas, proposed developments need to consider the potential interaction of the building location, building materials and artificial lighting to impact flight lines and / or collision.

- An assessment that the proposal allows for the retention of important telecommunication channels, such as microwave links.

- An assessment that the proposal maintains safe air navigation.

- An urban design statement including, as appropriate, impact on the historic built environment.

- Relevant environmental assessment requirements, including SEA, EIA, AA and Ecological Impact Assessment, as appropriate.

Where the relevant planning authority or An Bord Pleanála considers that such criteria are appropriately incorporated into development proposals, the relevant authority shall apply the following Strategic Planning Policy Requirement under Section 28 (1C) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

SPPR 3

It is a specific planning policy requirement that where;

- (A) 1. an applicant for planning permission sets out how a development proposal complies with the criteria above; and
2. the assessment of the planning authority concurs, taking account of the wider strategic and national policy parameters set out in the National Planning Framework and these guidelines;

then the planning authority may approve such development, even where specific objectives of the relevant development plan or local area plan may indicate otherwise.

- (B) In the case of an adopted planning scheme the Development Agency in conjunction with the relevant planning authority (where different) shall, upon the coming into force of these guidelines, undertake a review of the planning scheme, utilising the relevant mechanisms as set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to ensure that the criteria above are fully reflected in the planning scheme. In particular the Government policy that building heights be generally increased in appropriate urban locations shall be articulated in any amendment(s) to the planning scheme.

- (C) In respect of planning schemes approved after the coming into force of these guidelines these are not required to be reviewed.

APPENDIX iv


FOREST BIRD – HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESMENT

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

August 2020

Besborough House Demesne
Ballinure, Mahon, Cork



Document Title: Historic Landscape Assessment Report
 Issue Date: 18th August 2020
 Site Location: Besborough Demesne, Mahon, Cork
 Townland: Ballinure
 Irish National Grid Reference: (E,N) 571800, 570250
 Client: Estuary View Enterprises 2020 Limited
 Report Author: Mike Waldvogel, MILI 

1 - INTRODUCTION

Forestbird Design has been commissioned by Estuary View Enterprises to prepare a Historic Landscape Assessment for the lands at the Besborough Demesne in Ballinure, Mahon, Cork. The author of this report, Mike Waldvogel, has more than 20-years experience as a Landscape Architect and is a specialist in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Within this heading falls the expertise in assessing cultural and historic landscapes. Mike is a corporate member of the Irish Landscape Institute. Having assessed dozens of potential development lands within the city boundary and involved with projects as nearby as Skehard Road, Mahon, Blackrock and Rochestown, he is familiar with the local history, landform and landscape characteristics of the area. Varying documents also refer to the house as 'Bessborough', 'Bessboro' and 'Bisboro' with the spelling 'Besborough' selected for this report due to its consistent use in Ordnance Survey maps.

2 - METHODOLOGY

This report was developed through a combination of on-site investigations and desktop research. The research involved analysing cartographic information, historical reference texts and publications on the application of Historic Landscape Assessments. It is intended that this document be read in conjunction with the *Cultural Heritage Assessment* produced by John Cronin and Associates, as their work provides historical details not duplicated here. The other primary resources referenced include the following:

- Ordnance Survey historical mapping (6-inch, 25-inch, Cassini)
- National Monuments Service Archaeological Survey of Ireland
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage database
- National Museum of Ireland online database
- Aerial photography from Google and Bing Maps
- Cork City Development Plan 2015-21 (objectives, designated sites and landscape policy)
- National Biodiversity Data Centre national vegetation database and heritage trees
- Landscape Institute (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd edition
- The Heritage Council (2013) *Historic Landscape Characterisation in Ireland: Best Practice Guidance*
- Howley, James (2004) *The Follies and Garden Buildings of Ireland*
- Buxbaum, Tim (2002) *Icehouses*
- Robinson, William (1870-1895, rev.2010) *The Wild Garden*, 5th edition
- Ballitore Quaker Library and Museum (Quaker Garden Research)
- Powers, Jane (2015) *The Irish Garden*

3 - SITE BACKGROUND

Besborough House is a Georgian country house dating back to 1760, passing through a series of Quaker gentry and eventually purchased by the Sacred Heart Order in 1922, who are still on site today. Although the grounds sit within close proximity to urban life, the site has a discreet entrance and a sense of separation from surrounding activity. Besborough House is a *Protected Structure* (PS490), a *National Monument* (NM ref. no. CO074-077) and listed on the *National Inventory of Architectural Heritage* (NIAH ref. no. 20872005). Within the demesne are an Icehouse (NM CO074-051) to the west, a Farm Complex and Walled Garden (NIAH 20872006) to the north and a Tower Folly (NIAH 20872007) to the east.

The site is accessed at a single point through a historic stone and wrought iron gateway. Stone boundary walls are largely intact. The internal landscape generally consists of a defined entry drive, large pastures and mature parkland trees at the periphery. The land undulates, but with a natural fall towards the estuary to the south. The historic site was permanently altered with the construction of the South Ring Road (N40).



Aerial reference image of site and environs (courtesy of Bing Maps and Microsoft ©2020).

4 - WHAT IS A HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT?

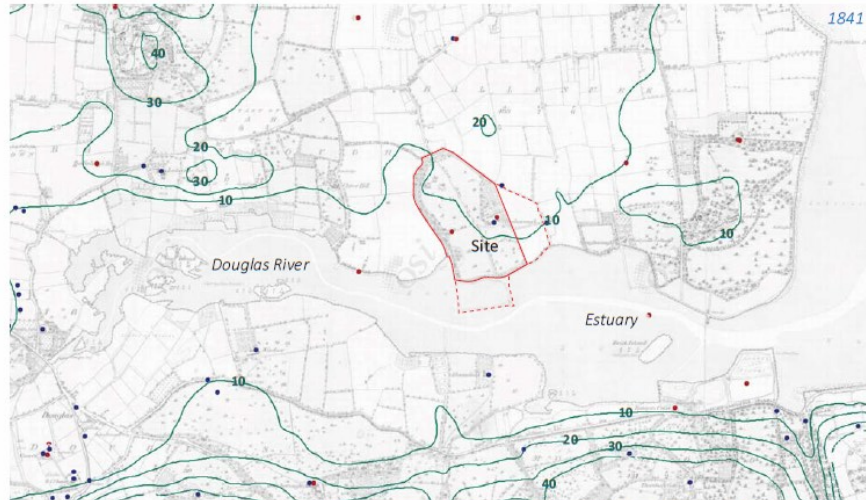
A *Historic Landscape Assessment* (HLA) is a report that documents past landscape use, the evolution of the landscape over time and identifies the key components linked to such historical use. In order to draw conclusions on individual components, they need to be brought into relationship of the greater landscape. In this instance, the HLA would cover the greater demesne lands, beyond the central building cluster. The individual elements are intrinsically linked and assessed regardless of current ownership.

There are no statutory guidelines on HLA. But there is a quality framework laid out by the Heritage Council, National Monuments Service, the Landscape Institutes and published notes from An Taisce. The combination of these provides clarity in HLA approach. At this site, the HLA would include the following investigations:

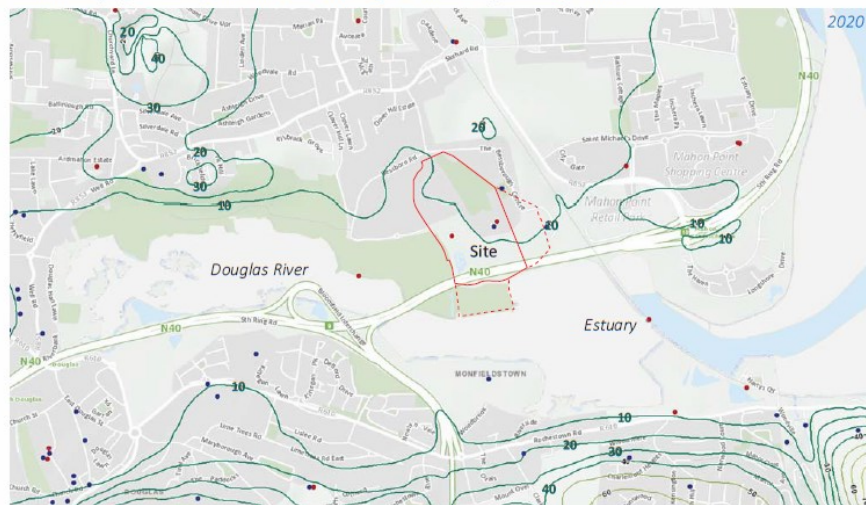
- Historical written and map references pertinent to the site and environs
- Original landscape extent of the demesne and land use pertinence
- Identifying a period of landscape significance and landscape trends during this time
- Overview of the types, ages and arrangement of the trees on site
- Evolution of the landscape with evolution of the site use and external influences
- Assessment of historic and cultural benefit of current landscape, including degree of importance
- Conclusion to assess potential impact of proposals

5 - LANDSCAPE SETTING

Naturally, the lands are located on a gently sloping hillside that falls towards the Douglas River and Cork Harbour estuary. The map below illustrates the historical site in terms of landform. The house sits on a highpoint within the site, but in the larger context the site itself is not one of prominence. Knolls to the east at Lakeland (modern Mahon Interchange), to the west at Ballinlough and the steep hillsides of Rochestown across the estuary would have been more visible. It benefits from a sheltered position and access to the water. Site archaeology is recent and a direct result of the demesne.



(Above) Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (1841) overlaid with contour data and archaeology (red dots = NM, blue dots = NIAH). The original demesne is outlined in red, with dashed red lines indicating natural extensions of the demesne lands. The parcel size and proximity to the water indicate a privileged setting, but the landform suggests an estate with a localised degree of visibility. (Below) The original demesne outline overlaid onto a modern map of the area, with the N40 severing the southern portion of lands.



6 - HISTORICAL REFERENCE MAPS

The maps prior to the 1841 6-inch Map identify Besborough as a house of status, but give little information on the landscape or contents therein. The 1841 map provides the first detailed graphic account of the site. However, at this stage the demesne would have been in place for more than 80 years. In interpreting landscape use prior to 1841, we can make inferences based on how the buildings evolved, the landscape trends of the time and the business and religion of the landowners.

By 1760, there was a trend for 'designed landscapes' and there were numerous publications to which the landed gentry could refer. Preferences could lean towards the more ornamental French style or the planned natural English style. Neither appears to have been wholeheartedly embraced, which could be influenced by the fact that for the first 150 years, the landowners were Quakers. As pertains landscape history, Quakerism has a close link to the natural world. Their landscapes often had animals, individual tree planting and typically shunned high degrees of ornament or amenity. From these roots, we can comment on the detail of the 1841 6-inch map.



6-inch Ordnance Survey map 1st Edition (1841). The shaded area indicates the demesne lands. The two parcels to the east may have been used by Besborough, but they do not form part of the original demesne designation.

- A** - The structured parterre garden is offset from the main house, indicating that it was likely a functional garden and not for ornament. It also contains grow houses close to the house, whereby aesthetic design would have placed them at the rear periphery of the garden.
- B** - North of the house is a small area that likely housed pens for small livestock (chickens, pigs). Beyond this is an area of dense vegetation, potentially fruit. It also includes the largest trees on site, indicating that these may have been native trees or planted as part of an avenue when the house was first constructed.
- C** - The central access drive only has clusters of tree planting (moderate age) and is not planted as a contiguous avenue (as it is today). It also does not stand out in the hierarchy of paths. It is reasonable to assume that the original access drive followed the northeast boundary, where a larger track with more mature trees is represented. The central drive probably arose due to increased horse and cart traffic as roads improved in the late 1700- early 1800's and the benefit of water access declined.

6 - HISTORICAL REFERENCE MAPS

D - The paths are all fairly wide, indicating their main purpose was for a cart and not pedestrian promenades.

E - The demesne is divided up into four field parcels, each with parkland-type tree planting or roughly the same age (moderate). This indicates the fields were intentionally planted and used as animal pastures, not grains or crops.

F - Boundary planting to all sides is notably thick and of mixed species (primarily deciduous). There are also boundary walls within the tree planting; all indicating a desire for a degree of privacy.

G - The two field parcels east of the house are not indicated as part of the demesne. But, the lack of boundary between them and the presence of a shared track hints that they may have been used by the demesne (crops/grain) or had a close relationship with the landowner.

H - There is a direct track west of the house leading approximately to where the Ice House is today. The Ice House is not clear on the map (in vegetation), but the late 1700's would have been a likely installation period, particularly this close to boat access and for a business that would need to store goods.

I - The pond with 5 islands is a distinct feature and illustrates vegetation on the islands. At this time there is no vegetation to the edge of the pond (as today), so there is an unimpeded visual link to the house. The use of 5 islands in a pond this size is very unusual and its meaning is also unclear. As the islands appear equal in size, it could allude to a familial connection to the number 5, a means of separating certain types of animals or a religious anecdote to the *Testimonies* of Quakerism at the time. Written description reveals that the pond was later used as an amenity (late 1800's), but amenity may not have been its original intent.

J - Within the walls but along the site periphery, a sizable track is indicated; providing a looped circuit back to the parterre garden area. Adjacent to the pond, the track runs along the west.

K - Beyond the boundary walls, but likely an important part of the functioning of the demesne is a boat house and access routes. The access would likely have been made of built-up shingle, protecting the route from regular tides (but not spring tides). It accesses both the demesne and the track to the west. The fact that it makes a square (rather than merging into a single route) means that the internal square may have been protected for a coastal agricultural use.

L - The two agricultural parcels east of the house are separated by a hedgerow. This would not form part of the Folly avenue we see today. Where the hedgerow meets the track, some have argued that this square is the Folly. It is an odd juxtaposition and would be highlighted grey if it were the Folly. A wave of follies (particularly castle follies) arose across Ireland during the famine years of the late 1840's.

From the 1841 6-inch map to the 1899 25-inch map, the house was occupied by one family. This period also saw a number of changes to the demesne, achieving the size we are more familiar with today. The advent of the railway line creates an abrupt boundary to the east, allowing the two field parcels east of the house to be amalgamated within the domain of the house. North of the house, the farm has expanded considerably, with structures attaining a larger footprint than the house itself. The introduction of the Folly expands the landscape equally from west to east, centred on the house.



Photo of the house from the 1880's, with a manicured lawn and planted urns; yet still functional land as wire fencing separates the pasture.

The late 1800's saw a change in Irish lifestyle, with recovery from the famine and the advent of parkland as amenity (whether it be private or public). These changes also occurred within Besborough. The Folly expanded the landscape, as a romantic and amenity focal point. A 'Summer House' was introduced along the shoreline, a frivolous feature where one could take tea or use for play. A slip was enhanced at the Boat House, likely for pleasure access rather than business. And written text alludes to the Pike family using the pond for paddling boats.

6 - HISTORICAL REFERENCE MAPS



25-inch Ordnance Survey map (1899). These maps typically show less landscape ornament, but provide more clarity for boundaries, access routes and tree types.

A - The railway line from Cork City to the Passage West docks is introduced, severing the site from lands to the east. Buffer planting has been installed adjacent to the track (not always the case at this time).

B - The farm complex substantially increases, minimising the importance of the former parterre garden.

C - Amalgamation of adjacent lands and construction of the Folly (a partial castle keep) create a new focal point and visual feature for passersby on the train. New types of parkland trees form an avenue, including a Monkey Puzzle, Scots Pine and a Copper Beech (in addition to traditional Beech, Oak, Yew and Ash).

D - A Summer House with views over the estuary expands the landscape amenity.

E - The Townland boundary has changed, incorporating the coastal reconfiguration.

F - The Boat House remains and is enhanced with an expanded slip (likely amenity).

G - A windmill is introduced at the edge of the coastal reconfiguration. No longer extant, it could have served an amenity purpose (focal point from house) and a functional purpose (coastal agricultural square or water circulation within the pond).

H - A circular band of trees appears, but none remain today. Aligned with the track, they would have been an ornamental feature, possibly new tree species at the period or short-lived ornamental trees (like Cherry).

I - The pond is cleanly presented, illustrating coniferous trees on the islands (as is today) and a footbridge to the northeast island. A vegetative buffer has been introduced to the edge of the pond, likely obscuring visibility from the house.

J - The track crossing the field west of the house appears to access the pond and not a direct link to the Ice House. The Ice House is indiscernible on this map, which may indicate its' disuse or coverage by vegetation.

K - Tree clusters still exist within the field parcels, indicating they are still used as pastures (not crops).

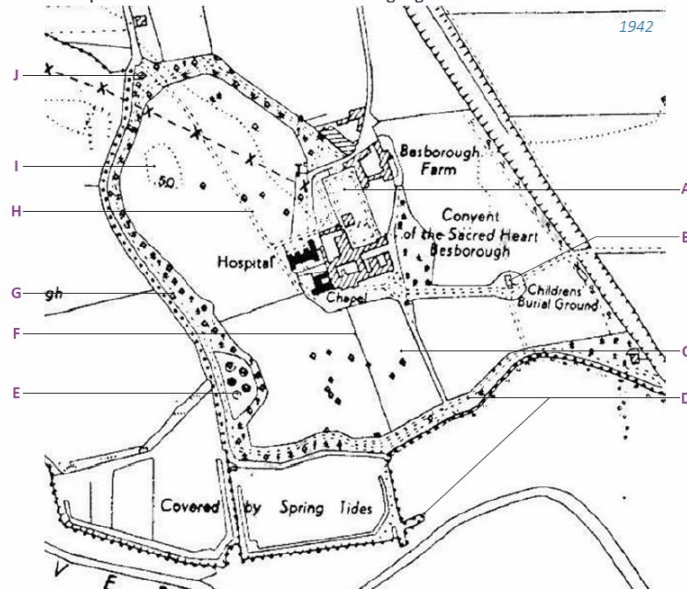
L - The central avenue is now the prominent track, but avenue planting has not yet commenced.

M - The Gate Lodge is as per the 1841 map and the entrance has the current concave boundary.

6 - HISTORICAL REFERENCE MAPS

Between the 1899 25-inch map to the 1942 6-inch Last Edition map, the house underwent a change of occupancy, which also resulted in a change of landscape uses. The map below illustrates the evolution of the site 20 years after being acquired by the Sacred Heart Order. Substantial additions and subtractions were made to the buildings. While many of the amenities from the second half of the 1800's are present, they appear less prominent. It should be noted that the Last Edition maps typically contain less landscape detail than earlier versions, so maps cannot be compared like-for-like.

Suburban growth from Cork began to make its way to the gates of Besborough. With a significant increase in occupant numbers on site, the use of the grounds for casual amenity is also anticipated to have increased. However, amenity may have been limited to walks/promenades. The loop path along the boundary wall is a significant landscape feature and the convent uses are highlighted.



6-inch Ordnance Survey map Last Edition (1942). The convent buildings west and east of the House result in significant changes to its landscape setting.

- A - The walled garden appears intact and de-cluttered, perhaps for resident use.
- B - Association with the Folly has been altered by attaching an area of solemn commemoration to it. It is of interest that trees are not shown along the avenue, despite significant specimens having been present.
- C - Trees are still shown within the southern pasture.
- D - The Summer House, Boat House and slipway are unmarked, but appear intact.
- E - The pond is still clearly identified with 5 islands and a buffer of planting to all sides.
- F - Former tracks to the Ice House and estuary appear to have been downgraded to fencelines.
- G - The Ice House is visible on the map, adjacent to a clearly defined perimeter path.
- H - Despite the advent of the motor car, the entrance avenue does not illustrate upgrading from a track. Avenue tree planting is still not indicated.
- I - 50' contours appear on the map, identifying the site high point. Former tree planting has been removed.
- J - The Gate Lodge, mature tree planting and concave entrance are extant.

7 - CURRENT LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

Some elements of the existing landscape have been well maintained, while others have been neglected. In developing a landscape inventory, we look at both hardscape and vegetation. Pertinent existing components are described below and assessed on a scale of 1-5 based on the relevance of the element to the historic landscape and the condition it is in.

Category 1 = Low Importance; no landscape heritage link or is a modern artefact in place of a historic one, loss would have no detrimental impact on the historic landscape.

Category 2 = Minor Importance; a feature that exists from a historic era, but has little impact on the landscape character or landscape intent, loss is acceptable with compensation.

Category 3 = Moderate Importance; a feature that adds to the historic landscape character and should be retained, loss at this level is not detrimental individually, but cumulative loss must be assessed. This category could include important elements that are in poor condition.

Category 4 = High Importance; a prominent feature that should be retained, loss at this level would have significant impact, but not an impediment to comprehending the historic landscape.

Category 5 = Extremely Important; a key feature requiring retention and protection, loss at this level would be detrimental to proper interpretation of the historic landscape.



Item: Entrance Piers
Comments: Scale and offset to each other
Category: 4

Item: Entrance Wrought Iron Fence
Comments: Curved form and finial design
Category: 4

Item: Cobble Paving
Comments: Natural stone, modern addition
Category: 2



Item: Tarmac Entry Avenue
Comments: Alignment and scale
Category: 3

Item: Concrete Post and Wire Fence
Comments: Later generation fence
Category: 1

Item: Avenue Hedge
Comments: Biodiversity, but impedes visibility
Category: 1



Item: Northeast Parkland Conifers
Comments: Ornamental conifers from 1950-70
Category: 1

Item: Northeast Parkland Broadleaves
Comments: Hybrid and smaller stature ornamental species from 1950-70; select retention
Category: 2



Item: Entry Avenue Tall Lime Tree
Comments: Remnant from 1760-1820 parkland
Category: 5

Item: Entry Avenue Short Lime Trees
Comments: Monoculture from mid 1900's
Category: 2

7 - CURRENT LANDSCAPE INVENTORY



Item: Arrival Layout
Comments: Curvature and scale
Category: 4

Item: Concrete Kerbs and Tarmac
Comments: Mid-1900's, replaced gravel
Category: 1

Item: Cabbage Palms
Comments: Frame to front door, period specific
Category: 2



Item: Grotto
Comments: 1920-30; appropriate, but poor location
Category: 3

Item: Mature Ash and Sycamore Trees
Comments: Spatial definition, diversity
Category: 4

Item: Mature Scots Pine Tree
Comments: Focal point, form and longevity
Category: 5



Item: Ornamental Garden at Modern Shed
Comments: Unique plants; outside of Folly avenue
Category: 1



Item: Avenue Monkey Puzzle and Copper Beech
Comments: Mid-1800's, alignment
Category: 5



Item: Stone Folly (Castle Keep)
Comments: Mid-1800's, quality, romanticism
Category: 5

Item: Graveyard
Comments: 1920's; cultural
Category: 5

Item: Yew Tree
Comments: Mid-1800's, obscures view but culturally appropriate, moderate health
Category: 4



Item: Pond with 5 Islands
Comments: Original, cultural interest, biodiversity
Category: 5

Item: Island Scots Pine Trees
Comments: Original planting, identity, bird perch
Category: 5

Item: Island Shrubs
Comments: Overgrown with Laurel, revamp req.
Category: 1

7 - CURRENT LANDSCAPE INVENTORY



Item: Ice House
Comments: Style and setting, intact but used as a rubbish dump and graffitied
Category: 5

Item: Surrounding Woodland
Comments: Original, shelter and character
Category: 5



Item: Woodland Path at West Boundary
Comments: Original, would benefit from widening, but do not pave (potential tree root damage)
Category: 4



Item: Stone Boundary Wall
Comments: Stone and plaster to 2.5m ht.; compromised at several locations
Category: 5

Item: Woodland Understorey
Comments: Clean, but only modest diversity
Category: 3



Item: Undulating Landform
Comments: Site character, allows devel. variety
Category: 4

Item: Open Pastures
Comments: Modern evolution from parkland trees
Category: 1



Item: Visual Link to Amenity Path Bridge
Comments: Railway line route over N40; Folly and House filtered visibility
Category: 3



Item: Visual Link to Southern Hillside
Comments: Distant views (2km) of House from Rochestown and Mount Oval
Category: 3

8 - IDENTIFYING LANDSCAPE IMPORTANCE

The historic landscape isn't just a snapshot at a particular point in time. It is the culmination of contributions by various landowners, cultures and time periods that improve the setting and experience of the landscape. The previous pages investigated the evolution of the landscape and the components that are consistent through the generations. With this information, we can identify a framework that best exemplifies and enhances the setting of the house. At Besborough, the key landscape components are contained within 3 zones, identified in the diagram below.



Diagram of landscape zones that should be protected and enhanced to enable retention of historic landscape character. Areas not highlighted have a degree of flexibility to receive landscape change or built development.

ZONE A - The historic house has undergone an enormous amount of change to the rear and sides, but the one constant is the open landscape to the front (south) of the house. These contextual relationships can be extended into the landscape. The lands to the south are vital to keep open, while the lands to the east, west and north can tolerate development without diluting the historic landscape strengths. The zone includes the full extent of the pond to the west and the Folly to the east. It is this zone that should be classified as the "Landscape Preservation Zone".

ZONE B - The band of woodland along the western and northern boundaries relates back to the original demesne planting. The number of stately trees this close to the city centre is a rare find, creating a unique atmosphere and sense of time. The zone includes the Ice House, the entrance gates, the boundary wall and a footpath link. Defined by the extent of trees, any development outside of this needs to be cognisant of root protection zones. In terms of status, this is secondary to Zone A, but it would be equal in terms of protection.

ZONE C - The walled garden and historic farm buildings would be considered part of the built fabric of the demesne, but it is here where the landscape composition would have impacted the daily lives of many residents through time. The walled garden and associated stone buildings should be viewed as a landscape amenity within the interconnected fabric of structures.

OTHER AREAS - The lack of zone identification does not give the right for unencumbered development. Works in these areas are to be cognisant of the individual inventory and to create new uses embedded within a parkland setting.

9 - IDENTIFYING THE LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION ZONE

In identifying the historic landscape zones for protection and enhancement, the query arises *What parameters have we used to define the Landscape Preservation Zone?* There are 4 key criteria described below. The diagram graphically presents an accurate depiction of the extent to be included in the Landscape Preservation Zone (LPZ).



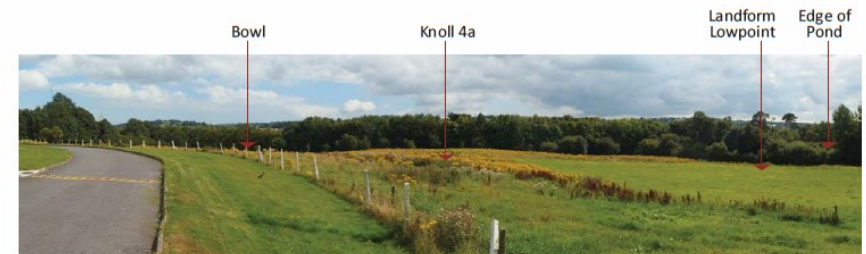
Diagram depicting an accurate extent of the proposed Landscape Preservation Zone. The base image includes structures, landscape features, 1m contour lines and aerial extent of tree canopies.

Criteria 1 - The Pond - The entirety of the pond needs to be included with future visual link to the house (after mitigation).

Criteria 2 - The Folly - The ring around this element defined by edging and paths is to be included.

Criteria 3 - Folly Avenue - Includes 20m north of the path for suitable tree protection.

Criteria 4 - Landform - More important than a line on a plan, the lay of the land defines the southern open space with a distinct 'bowl' feature. The knolls to either side (4a and 4b) must be included to enhance the effect. The northwest extent of the LPZ reflects a lowpoint of the receding knoll in the undulating landscape.



View south, approaching the house and the boundary of the LPZ.

10 - LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION ZONE MITIGATION MEASURES

In reinvigorating the historic landscape and evolving it into a public amenity, there are a number of mitigation measures to be incorporated so that it reads as a designed demesne parkland. The historic setting had a relationship with the estuary and distant hills. As that has been altered and urban development encroached on all sides, the aim is to create informal amenity where users can escape the urban surrounds and experience different natural and historic environments



Diagram illustrating mitigation measures to improve amenity and interpretation.

Mitigation 1 - Ice House - Full cleaning and resculping of base per Archaeologist guidance. Provide interpretation. Provide a visual gap to new development for secondary supervision.

Mitigation 2 - Perimeter Path - Contiguous link from Entrance gates to Folly. Upgrade path and make it inviting. Enhance for biodiversity.

Mitigation 3 - The Pond - Remove Cherry Laurel from islands. Create pedestrian bridge across 2 islands (retain existing stone bridge, but do not use). Remove vegetation at northeast corner of pond for visual link back to house and parkland.

Mitigation 4 - Pond System - In accordance with SuDS, incorporate all surfacewater into a natural swale filtration system to regularly replenish and cleanse the pond.

Mitigation 5 - Link Path - Re-establish a western link path.

Mitigation 6 - Ornamental Trees - Incorporate a couple of clusters of showy parkland tree planting, resonant of historic planting regimes, but small in stature to ensure continued long range views.

Mitigation 7 - Open Up Parkland - Improve the historic north-south path. Remove 90% of tree belt to amalgamate parkland and increase visibility.

Mitigation 8 - Remove car parking from within the LPZ and relocate to the north. Create an amenity square at the Grotto to link with the Folly avenue, as a public gathering and interpretation point.

Mitigation 9 - Outside the LPZ, provide an amenity landscape incorporating a commemorative space, community garden focal point or modern landscape amenity. Consider reducing the derelict road.

Mitigation 10 - Provide a pedestrian link over the railway amenity path, for ease of access to Mahon office and retail area.

11 - REFERENCE IMAGES



The aim is to restore the pond with a character pertinent to the time period where it received greatest amenity interaction. Reinvigoration of the pond water should be coupled with Laurel removal on the islands and new footbridges to enhance the amenity. This image illustrates an ambience that we want visitors to experience.



Pond restoration is intended to work in tandem with site stormwater solutions. Creating a sustainable drainage system that can remove surfacewater naturally and feed the pond with regular, fresh water is the desired design technique. This image illustrates an undulating parkland collecting and mitigating stormwater.



Within the southern open space, tree planting should be minimal in order to retain long range views. This minimal quantity should be presented as clusters of small canopy ornamental trees with spring flowers and autumn leaf colour to demarcate the seasons. Crabapple (left) or Cherry would be suitable species and relevant to the historic setting as classic ornamental trees.



Within the north and northwest parklands, tree planting should consist of large canopy traditional native and acclimatised trees. Mature canopies should be able to exceed 20m in height or width. These could be Oak (left), Ash, Lime (right), Beech, Plane or Chestnut; being cognisant of horticultural threats at the time of selection and installation.

12 - CONCLUSION

The landscape at Besborough has been evolving in a managed way for 260 years. Over this period, landowners with different approaches to the landscape have left their mark on the demesne. The current Development Plan has classified the bulk of the site as being within the *Landscape Preservation Zone* (LPZ). The research in this report comes to the conclusion that not all of this site should be classified as LPZ. Many parts, particularly north-northwest of the house, are not fundamental in contributing to a historic setting or defining the demesne landscape character.

The diagram in Part 8 identifies the key elements that give the house its' landscape character. The diagrams in Parts 9 and 10 illustrate how the LPZ should be defined and the key measures that need to be carried out to ensure the proper historic fabric is retained and suitably enhanced.

There is no single period of landscape significance at this demesne. The period of the late 1700-early 1800s provided a layout, tree planting and landform that have carried through to today. The period of the mid-late 1800's could be considered the apex in terms of landscape amenity, as society and lifestyle experienced notable changes and the landowners appeared to have taken on a number of landscape leisure features. Equally impactful is the change in landscape use that occurred in 1922 and carried through most of the 20th century. It could be said that this period had the greatest cultural and societal impact on the site.

To this day, the site is evolving in terms of community services, but devolving in terms of landscape (N40 construction, dereliction of large areas). Our current culture, lifestyle and societal relationship to the landscape seem to mirror this speed of change. If the site were to be managed as-is in perpetuity, we would certainly see the loss of irreplaceable historic landscape. Part of the benefit in developing the less-historically pertinent areas is creating a community to oversee the site and take a degree of personal stewardship in it. The potential for the public to receive these lands as fully accessible parkland is a rare opportunity. At the same time, site use must evolve in order for the public-landscape relationship to be successful.

If zoned and developed as per the guidelines in this report, I believe the landscape character can be not just retained, but brought back to life for the benefit of the general public. In doing so, the historic framework and qualities will be clearly understood for generations to come.



End of Report



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