



THORNTON O'CONNOR
TOWN PLANNING

Justification Report

Planning Application

In respect of a Shared Living Residential Development at

Brady's Public House
Old Navan Road
Dublin 15
D15 W3FW

Submitted on Behalf of
Bartra Property (Castleknock) Limited

September 2019



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Purpose of this Report – Responding to Policy Set out in the *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (March 2018) and the *Fingal County Development Plan 2017 - 2023*
 - 1.2.1 *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (March 2018)
 - 1.2.2 *Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023*
- 1.3 Background to Shared Living as a Housing Typology to be Encouraged in Ireland

2.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUIREMENT FOR SHARED LIVING USE AT SUBJECT SITE

- 2.1 Demand for Accommodation Generated by Employees of Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown
- 2.2 Demand for Accommodation Generated by Families of Medium/Long Term Patients of Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown
- 2.3 Demand for Accommodation Generated by the Employees of the Dublin Enterprise Zone
- 2.4 Demand for Accommodation Generated by the Employees of Blanchardstown Town Centre
- 2.5 Accommodation Demands Generated by the National Aquatic Centre and National Sports Campus
- 2.6 Demographical Analysis – Demonstrates Younger Age Profile in Local Area
- 2.7 Summary – Significant Generators of Accommodation Demand Exist in Close Proximity to Subject Site

3.0 'DO NOTHING SCENARIO' – AN ANALYSIS OF THE ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO LOCAL WORKERS

- 3.1 Well Publicised Scarcity of Rental Housing Options
- 3.2 Rental Options in the Locality are Not Affordable to Many Workers
- 3.3 Assessing the Affordability and Provision of Current Rental Accommodation Options for Single People

4.0 CONCLUSION

1.0 RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Introduction

The subject site has been purchased by the Applicant with the intention of developing and operating a Shared Living scheme which will provide short-medium term accommodation for those living and/or working in the surrounding area and in Dublin City Centre. The subject site is located on the Old Navan Road close to the junction of Old Navan Road with Navan Road (N3) and is also in close proximity to the M50 motorway. The lands have the benefit of an extant permission for 36 No. apartments (FCC Reg. Ref. FW16A/0079, ABP Ref. PL06F.248037).

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate to An Bord Pleanála and Fingal County Council that there is a cogent town planning rationale for the proposed Shared Living development at this location.

The *Apartment Guidelines 2018* sets out that

'a new format of residential accommodation described as 'Shared Accommodation has the potential to emerge as a distinct segment within the overall urban accommodation sector'.

The basis underpinning the Shared Living concept is that the facility will be professionally managed, residents will pay a monthly fee and that there will be access to communal amenities and facilities. We refer to the Shared Living Report prepared by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning detailing the functionality of the development and compliance with the Guidelines.

Since the consultation with An Bord Pleanála and Fingal County Council, the design team have taken into consideration the Opinion of the Board and undertaken various amendments to the scheme as detailed within the accompanying Statement of Response and Planning Report prepared by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning. Item No. 1 of the Board's Opinion relates to the principle of shared accommodation provision at the subject location. Item No. 1 (iii) specifically sets out that the following is required:

'Further consideration of the documents as they relate to the principle of Shared Accommodation at this location. This consideration and justification should have regard to, inter alia...the suitability of this location for Shared Accommodation with regard to accessibility and connections to employment centres and community facilities.'

In response to the Opinion of the Board the Design Team have compiled a comprehensive justification for the proposed Shared Living development at this strategically located site as detailed throughout this document. We further note that a recent decision by An Bord Pleanála to grant permission for a Shared Living Scheme at the Old School House, Eblana Avenue, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin [ABP Ref. ABP-304249-19] has informed the layout of the proposed Shared Living scheme at the subject site.

1.2 Purpose of this Report – Responding to Policy Set out in the *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (March 2018) and the *Fingal County Development Plan 2017 - 2023*

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate to An Bord Pleanála and Fingal County Council that there is a cogent town planning rationale to allow the use of the subject lands as a Shared Living residential development having regard to the locational characteristics of the site, including its position in the core urban area of Blanchardstown – a Metropolitan Consolidated Town relative to major employment centres in the surrounding area including Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown, the Dublin Enterprise Zone and Blanchardstown Town Centre.

1.2.1 *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments* (March 2018)

The *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments*, (March 2018) includes guidelines for new formats of residential accommodation, including formats described as ‘Shared Accommodation Developments’. It states that ‘*a new format of residential accommodation described as Shared Accommodation has the potential to emerge as a distinct segment within the overall urban accommodation sector*’.

It is widely reported that there is an acute housing shortage prevailing with a significant demand existing in the Blanchardstown area. The Applicant has identified the subject lands as an appropriate location for ‘Shared Accommodation’ which can provide purpose-built accommodation to meet the housing needs of a greater number of persons. We note that this Report supersedes the detailed Justification Report which was submitted at pre-application consultation stage having regard to Item No. 1 of An Bord Pleanála’s Opinion which requires ‘*further consideration of the documents as they relate to the principle of Shared Accommodation at this location*’.

Key Point: Section 5.18 of the *Apartment Guidelines 2018* states that ‘*the obligation will be on the proposer of a shared accommodation scheme to demonstrate to the planning authority that their proposal is based on accommodation need and to provide a satisfactory evidential base accordingly*’. Therefore, the purpose of this Report is to provide a detailed justification and rationale for providing a shared accommodation scheme at the subject site at Brady’s Public House, Old Navan Road, Dublin 15.

1.2.2 *Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023*

The Development Plan set outs the vision for the development of Blanchardstown as follows:

‘Consolidate the growth of the major centres of Blanchardstown by encouraging infill development and intensification of development within appropriate locations.’
[Our Emphasis]

The Development Plan further notes the following objectives:

Objective PM44 aims ‘***to encourage and promote the development of underutilised infill, corner and backland sites in existing residential areas subject to the character of the area and environment being protected.***’ [Our Emphasis]

- **Objective SSo8** aims to **identify opportunities for infill development** which will in turn reduce the need to zone additional greenbelt lands; [Our Emphasis] and
- **Objective SS15** highlights the need to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services by **consolidating existing urban areas through infill and appropriate brownfield redevelopment**. [Our Emphasis]

Key Point: The proposed scheme which involves the redevelopment of an existing underutilised, brownfield, infill site in an existing residential area is therefore in accordance with the objectives of the Development Plan. The subject site is ideally located to provide the proposed Shared Living development having regard to the site’s location in close proximity to Castleknock Train Station which is c. 550 metres walking distance [7 No. minutes] to the south – west of the site, in addition to external factors including the lack of available accommodation options for the very substantial permanent local workforce (Connolly Hospital, Dublin Enterprise Zone and Blanchardstown Town Centre), the more affordable housing solution that a ‘Shared Living’ facility presents relative to standard residential development and the role that the subject scheme could play in relieving pressure on the private rented sector in the local area.

1.3 Background to Shared Living as a Housing Typology to be Encouraged in Ireland

In a speech to the Irish Planning Institute (November 2017) the Housing Minister, Eoghan Murphy addressed the paucity of rental properties available in Dublin and set out the Government’s strategy to expand this sector as follows:

*‘The Government’s Strategy for the Rental Sector calls for **a major expansion of a properly funded and professionally managed rental accommodation sector**. We need a mature build to rent market in our cities but we don’t have any guidelines for the sector.*

*So new statutory guidelines for planning authorities will be put in place for the build-to-rent sector, by December, and in the context of completion of the NPF, which will allow for a new type of apartment development, including the shared accommodation models that we see in other cities. **If you go to cities in the UK like Manchester or London, and further afield, you will find new models of brilliantly designed, superbly executed, centrally located and affordable managed rental accommodation. Like the Collective www.thecollective.co.uk providing thousands of badly needed and innovative accommodation solutions for the needs of a modern city and modern communities.***

***We have to free ourselves from the mind-set that everyone should live in a 3 bedroomed house at every stage of their lives.** We know other models work, but we don’t have them here. So, our job as policy makers and planners is to see how this can be done and to then make it happen.*

We’re not so different from our European and Anglo-American cousins. We can design the provision of the wider range of accommodation our society needs, working back from what it can afford, and not the other way around. Those previous failed planning policies

helped in some way to drive us to unsustainable debt, unsustainable development, and ultimately collapse – not just of the sector, but of the whole economy.

*From some initial work done in my Department, it would not be unreasonable to assume that in Dublin alone, at least 5,000 new homes could and should be unlocked over the next couple of years under new build-to-rent models. **This new model will not be for everyone or everywhere but that's ok. We have to move away from the one size fits all approach.**' [Our Emphasis]*

Therefore, the provision of 210 No. Shared Living bedspaces at the subject location will play a significant role in addressing the current housing shortage by providing an alternative affordable living accommodation for employees in Dublin.

2.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUIREMENT FOR SHARED LIVING USE AT SUBJECT SITE

2.1 Demand for Accommodation Generated by Employees of Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown

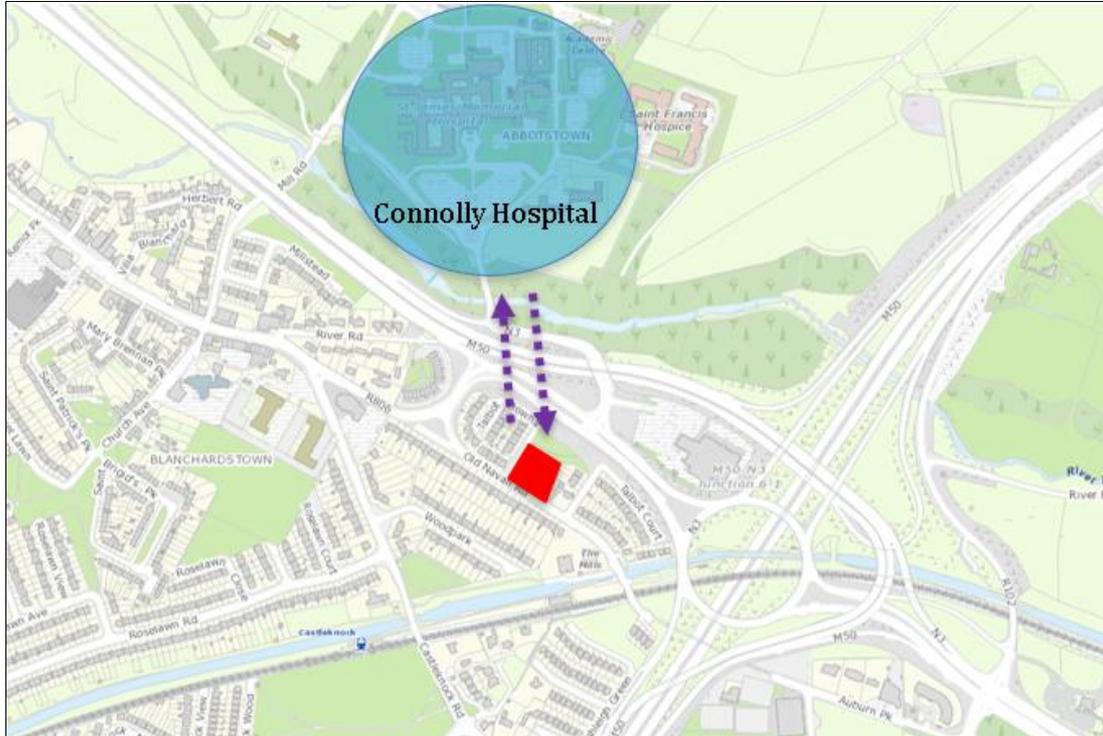


Figure 2.1: Map Identifying the Subject Site Outlined in Red (Indicative Only) with Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown Directly to the north

Source: Myplan.ie, Annotated by Thornton O’Connor Town Planning, 2019

The subject lands are located approximately 300 metres (as the crow flies) to the South of Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown, which is a significant employer in Blanchardstown currently employing in excess of 1,100 No. staff. In this regard, the *Apartment Guidelines 2018* expressly refer to sites close to Hospitals and public transport as central and accessible urban locations and thus suitable for high density residential developments.

Connolly Hospital is a major teaching and health promoting hospital providing a range of services to a diverse population covering the communities of West Dublin, North Kildare and South County Meath. These services include a 24 hour Emergency Department, acute medical and surgical services, acute psychiatric services, long-stay residential care, day care, out-patient care plus diagnostic and therapeutic and support services. A number of major developments have been completed at the hospital in recent years, including the opening of the Endoscopy Unit in 2011 and the refurbishment of the Acute Medical Assessment Unit (AMAU) and opening of the new MRI facility in 2014.

Connolly Hospital has undergone a significant expansion to provide a new National Children’s Hospital Satellite Centre which opened in July 2019. This Paediatric Outpatients and Urgent Care Centre means it will no longer be necessary for children to travel to Crumlin or Temple Street, unless they need to see a specialist. The planning application documentation submitted confirms that 90 No. staff are estimated to be employed at the

Satellite Centre with an estimated 15,000 No. outpatient appointments and 25,000 No. urgent care visits to be catered for annually (as detailed in the Inspector’s Report, ABP Ref. PL29S.PA0043).

Key Point: Connolly Hospital, a major employer of healthcare workers and support staff is located approximately 300 metres (as the crow flies) to the north of the subject lands, an approximate 11 No. minute walk (c. 800 m walking distance). The hospital has been expanding incrementally in recent years and a major development to provide a Satellite Centre to the National Children’s Hospital opened its doors in July 2019. The subject lands are ideally positioned to cater for accommodation demands associated with the employees of the adjacent major healthcare facility. Many of the employees of the hospital are shift workers and therefore will be commuting to and from work at irregular times when public transport is often unavailable or subject to limited services. Use of a private car, where available, is ruled out by parking restrictions at the hospital.

We note that CS Consulting’s Response to Item No. 6 of An Bord Pleanála’s Opinion enclosed with this Application sets out the following in relation to pedestrian facilities in the area:

‘Existing pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the development site are of good quality. Raised footpaths and public lighting are in place along the Old Navan Road and surrounding streets. Signalised pedestrian crossings are provided at the nearby Navan Road, providing a safe pedestrian route north from the development site across the N3 towards Connolly Hospital in approximately 11 minutes.’

Therefore, the positioning of an accommodation option just an 11 No. minute walk from the employment node presents a practical and sustainable accommodation option to address an identified urban housing need.

Letter of Support: Please see enclosed as Appendix A, a letter from the General Manager of Connolly Hospital expressly supporting the proposed Shared Living development. The letter advises that accommodation availability and cost continue to be a significant issue for the health care workers and staff working in Connolly Hospital. The General Manager confirms that it is extremely difficult to find affordable accommodation to rent within reasonable distance of workplace facilities and states that this is particularly problematic for health care workers, given the shift roster nature of their working week. The letter concludes that the provision of such accommodation at the earliest opportunity would be welcomed by health care facilities trying to recruit staff in the first instance, and also to retain them in the hospital.

We enclose a Letter of Support as Appendix B from Empath (Healthcare Recruiter) who similarly note that accommodation availability and cost continue to be a major issue for the entire range of health care workers particularly in Dublin. They share the concerns of Connolly Hospital relating to the difficulties of finding affordable accommodation to rent within a reasonable distance of workplace facilities reiterating that this is especially problematic given the shift roster nature of most workers. Therefore, Empath also welcome Shared Living Developments especially in close proximity to hospital locations as the proximity of accommodation to the workplace will also give employees the flexibility if emergency shifts need to be filled.

Vista Career Solutions (a specialist healthcare recruitment company) reiterate the concerns of Connolly Hospital and Empath and correspondingly welcome the provision of Shared Living accommodation which would assist health care operators and recruiters in finding accommodation for staff and reducing staff turnover generally. (Letter of Support attached as Appendix C).

2.2 Demand for Accommodation Generated by Families of Medium/Long Term Patients of Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown

Connolly Hospital is a major healthcare facility, which has been expanded to accommodate a Children’s Hospital Satellite Centre as previously discussed. Notwithstanding the above, Connolly Hospital generates a considerable requirement for accommodation from families of patients that require medium or long term care. We note that the Children’s Satellite Centre will close at 10 pm, however accommodation may be required by families of persons over 16 No. years who have been admitted to the hospital and who have travelled long distances and need to return on multiple days.

Key Point: The existing children’s hospital at Crumlin has a Parent/Guardian Only Accommodation Unit which provides 54 No. rooms for parents. Family accommodation is also provided at Ronald McDonald Houses (located on the hospital campus) and Late Late Show House and Cuain Aoibhin House which are located proximate to the hospital. There are no comparable facilities for family members being provided at the Satellite Centre at Connolly Hospital. Therefore, it is anticipated that the subject Shared Living Development could play a role in addressing the need for family/relative accommodation associated with medium/long term in-patients that are subject to medium/long term stays in the hospital.

2.3 Demand for Accommodation Generated by the Employees of the Dublin Enterprise Zone

The Dublin Enterprise Zone is located in Blanchardstown and has grown rapidly in recent years to become ‘a significant national economic asset’¹. According to Fingal County Council, Dublin Enterprise Zone’s success to date is due to the significant investment which has taken place in hard and soft infrastructure by Fingal County Council, IDA Ireland and the private sector over the last 20 years. The zone is described by Fingal County Council as:

‘...a pro-business environment that has attracted investments by some of the world’s biggest companies over the past decade.’²

The Dublin Enterprise Zone consists of 1,571 No. hectares of land primarily zoned for Office, Research and Development, High Technology Manufacturing, Industrial, General Enterprise and Employment and is currently the location of many multinational IT firms including IBM, PayPal, eBay and Symantec in addition to clusters of pharmaceutical companies includes world leaders like Helsinn-Birex, Mallinckrodt, Bristol-Myers Squibb, The Tech Group and Alexion Pharma. The Dublin Enterprise Zone is located within close proximity of the subject site – for example eBay is located a 21 No. minute walk and 6 No. minute cycle from the subject lands.

¹ Source: <http://www.fingal.ie/business-and-economy/dublinenterprisezone/>.

² IBID

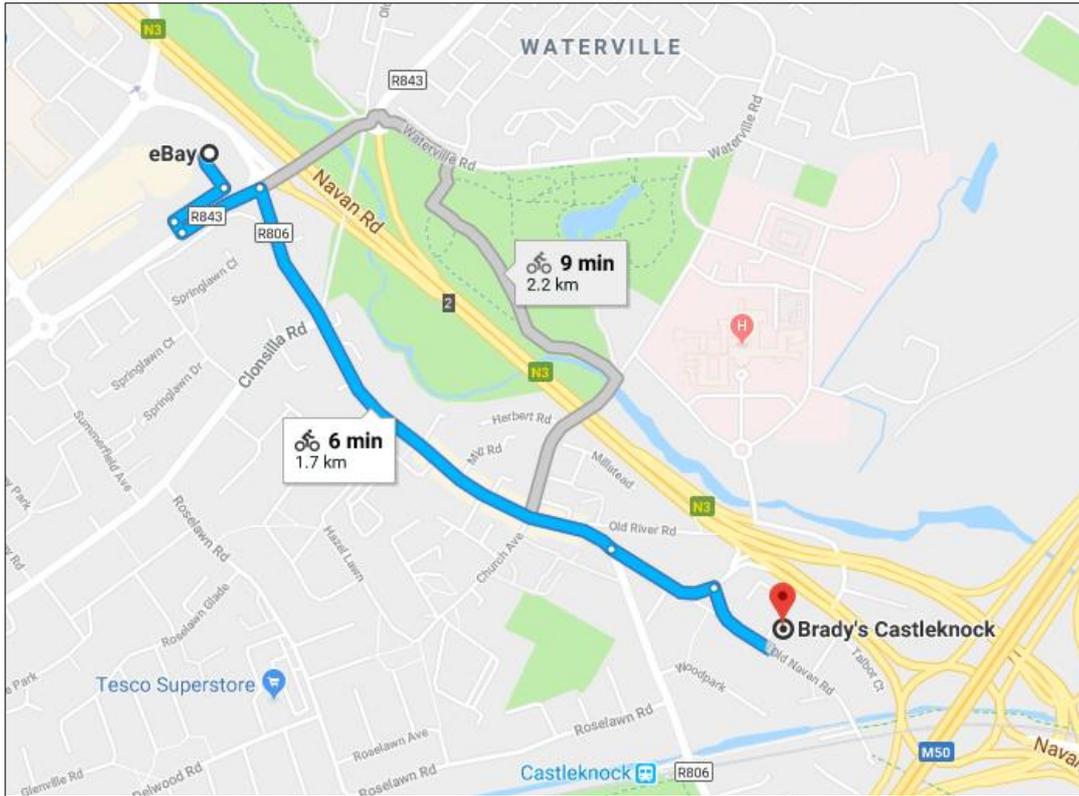


Figure 2.2: Map Identifying the Cycle Distance from the Subject Site to eBay which is located within the Dublin Enterprise Zone.

Source: Google Maps, 2019

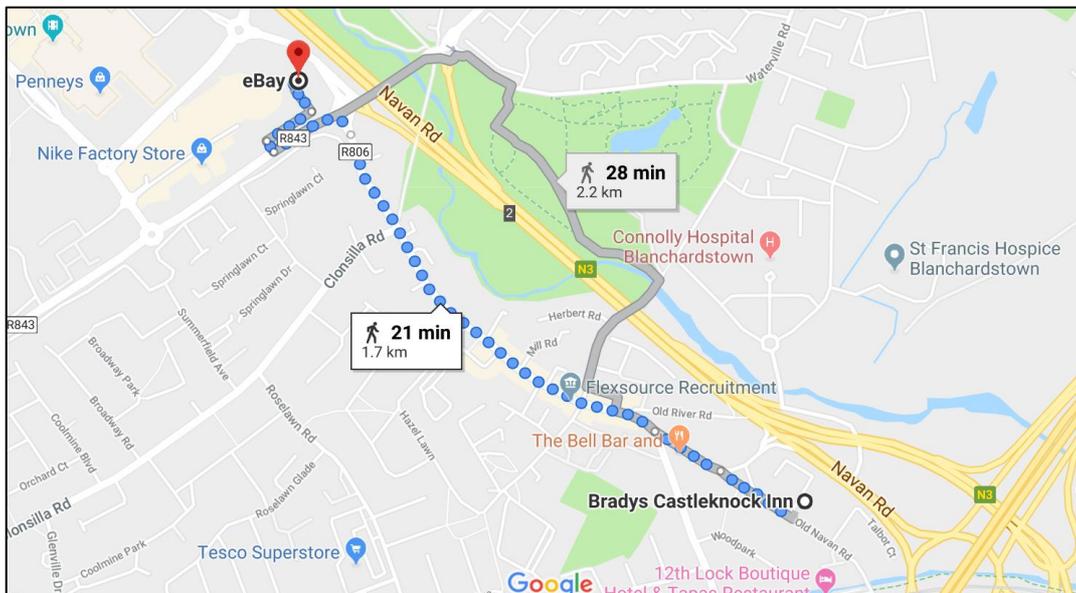


Figure 2.3: Map Identifying the Walking Distance from the Subject Site to eBay which is located within the Dublin Enterprise Zone.

Source: Google Maps, 2019

Key Point: The zone consists of 779 No. businesses, 16,920 No. employees and 1.18 million sq m of building floor area. Only half of the Dublin Enterprise Zone has been developed thus far. Therefore, there is the potential to create an additional 20,000 No. jobs on the 716 No. hectares of undeveloped, zoned and serviced land available in the Zone³.

Due to the non-availability of a sufficient quantum of local accommodation for workers, many employees are now required to travel substantial distances to work which is a less sustainable solution than the provision of local accommodation. With the current housing crisis and pent up demand that exists, it is clear that accommodation for future workers will be a key challenge to the completion and success of the development of the Dublin Enterprise Zone. The subject development can assist in addressing the demand in a sustainable way.

The subject development is also likely to be an attractive housing option for young professionals due to the social community environment that is a central tenet of the purpose built development.

2.4 Demand for Accommodation Generated by the Employees of Blanchardstown Town Centre

Blanchardstown Town Centre currently contains in excess of 10,000 sq m of retail and office space and a further 19,000 sq m of leisure uses including cinemas, a theatre and arts centre and Ireland’s largest public library. It currently employs in the order of 5,500 No. people, many of whom would be paid the minimum wage and would not be able to afford conventional housing in the area.

Key Point: Blanchardstown Town centre is located c. 1.5 – 1.7 kilometres from the subject site, a c. 8 No. minute cycle or a c. 21 No. minute walk. The proposed Shared Living accommodation would be ideally suited to many of its employees, particularly in the earliest stages of their careers.

2.5 Accommodation Demands Generated by the National Aquatic Centre and National Sports Campus

The National Aquatic Centre and National Sports Campus, which are located a cycle distance of c. 8 minutes from the subject site, provide state-of-the-art sports facilities to elite athletes in Ireland. The Centre and Campus regularly host elite training camps for athletes from all over the world. For example, in 2012 it hosted pre-Olympic training camps for teams from 16 No. different countries and 190 No. athletes, including the eventual Water Polo Champions, Croatia, and the Synchronised Swimming Team from the USA. We refer to Fingal County Council’s written opinion which references *‘long term proposals for this campus is to have accommodation on it to cater for visiting teams etc.’*, however it is our opinion that speculative proposals cannot be relied upon. We note that the proposed Shared Living development will provide for a choice in tenure for users of the National Aquatic Centre.

Furthermore, the Fingal County Council written opinion advised that *‘the new ‘Busconnects’ network proposed for Dublin will greatly enhance the public transport network and will allow*

³ <http://www.dez.ie>

ease of access from various parts of the city to the Blanchardstown Centre, the Dublin Enterprise Zone, and National Aquatic Centre thus allowing workers to avail of suitable accommodation removed from the immediate area'. We acknowledge that the Busconnects network will be an excellent asset to the Blanchardstown area, however, we are advised that the majority of such training camps commence very early in the morning when public transport options would be scarce. Additionally, the provision of accommodation in closer proximity is even more sustainable.

Key Point: The subject Shared Living Accommodation can provide for the accommodation requirements of teams that will be training in Blanchardstown for stays of medium-term duration.

We note that the Planning Authority's Opinion identifies that alternative residential developments will be provided at the *'former Phoenix Park Racecourse, Hansfield Strategic Development Zone and in the longer term Barnhill which is located at a public transport node...this will alleviate accommodation concerns in the Greater Blanchardstown Area'*. It is our professional planning opinion that in this instance, the aforementioned proposed future developments are welcomed however the logical sequential approach to new developments would always favour most proximate development. Therefore, it is clear that the provision of accommodation in closer proximity to employment locations is even more sustainable. In any event all development options are needed.

2.6 Demographical Analysis – Demonstrates Younger Age Profile in Local Area

The Metropolitan Consolidation Town of Blanchardstown generally has a younger age profile than the national average with 38% of the population under the age of 24 in comparison to the national average of 35%.

Key Point: The provision of Shared Living Accommodation in the Blanchardstown area will provide an affordable accommodation option for the younger accommodation profile in the local area, many of whom do not require a typical family home in a house or apartment and would be more satisfied with high quality, purpose built accommodation that is more affordable and presents more opportunities for social interaction with other persons from the same age cohort. We re-iterate that that the provision of accommodation where it is required represents proper planning and sustainable development.

2.7 Summary – Significant Generators of Accommodation Demand Exist in Close Proximity to Subject Site

As demonstrated in this Section of the Report, it is clear that the subject site is located at a nodal point of key generators for accommodation, particularly accommodation that can present an alternative to the dominant typology of family accommodation that prevails in the local area and is unaffordable to many workers (discussed in detail below in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this report). It is envisaged that a significant proportion of the Shared Living rooms proposed will be occupied by the healthcare workers of the expanding Connolly Hospital. However, additional demand will also be generated by other employees in the local area including the Dublin Enterprise Zone (which is continuing to expand) and the Blanchardstown Town Centre. The proposed development will also provide an accommodation option to new employees of the Satellite Centre for the National Children's

Hospital at Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown. Accommodation may also be required by family members of persons over 16 No. years who have been admitted to the hospital and who have travelled long distances and need to return on multiple days. We note that elite training teams using the proximate facilities at the National Aquatic Centre and the National Sports Campus may also utilise the Shared Living scheme. As previously stated Fingal County Council's Opinion states that:

'new accommodation being provided at for example the Former Phoenix Park Racecourse, Hansfield Strategic Development Zone and in the longer term Barnhill which is located at a public transport node...this will alleviate accommodation concerns in the Greater Blanchardstown Area.'

It is our opinion that this comment does not promote sustainable development as the Planning Authority appear to encourage employees travelling greater distances by public transport to their place of work rather than walking/cycling. In our opinion, the current and foreseeable accommodation deficit requires multiple responses. The subject scheme is located within walking and cycling distance to a wide range of employment locations as set out above and therefore represents proper planning and sustainable development.

3.0 'DO NOTHING SCENARIO' – AN ANALYSIS OF THE ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO LOCAL WORKERS

3.1 Well Publicised Scarcity of Rental Housing Options

In a speech to the Irish Planning Institute (November 2017) the Housing Minister, Eoghan Murphy stated:

'With fewer than 1,000 properties available for rent in Dublin and similar low levels in all our other cities, there is not just an under-supply but a gaping hole in the supply of affordable accommodation (and rental accommodation in particular) in the heart of our cities'.

Key Point: The statement above is directly relevant to Blanchardstown where there is an acute shortage of rental properties. In the course of preparing this planning application, a search of properties available to rent in the Blanchardstown area was carried out at different stages over 12 No. months using Daft.ie.

The first search was undertaken on 17th August 2018 and there were just 7 No. rental properties available in Blanchardstown (5 No. two bed units and 2 No. three bed units). It is important for the An Bord Pleanála to note that there were no one bed properties available to rent at this time.

Thornton O'Connor Town Planning repeated this exercise on the 10th May 2019 and just 1 No. one bed unit, 7 No. two bed units and 2 No. three bed units were available, again providing little choice in tenure. On closer inspection of the 1 No. one bed property to rent for €1,400 per month, we note that the unit is located in a garage situated in the rear garden of a semi-detached dwelling house which is entirely inappropriate.

On 28th August 2019 this exercise was undertaken for a third time and again just 1 No. one bed unit was available in addition to 6 No. two bed units and 1 No. three bed units. The 1 No. available one bed unit is a studio located in the rear garden of a dwelling similar to the property advertised on 10th May 2019 mentioned above.

Therefore, there is a clear paucity of rental options available in the local area, particularly accommodation for single persons and young couples. Furthermore, it is noted that all of the rental accommodation options available are subject to minimum one year leases which would likely be unsuitable for contract workers that the proposed development will cater for. The proposed Shared Living scheme will provide shorter term flexible contracts and one bed suites that are in significant demand in the Blanchardstown area.

3.2 Rental Options in the Locality are Not Affordable to Many Workers

The huge demand for rental accommodation and associated lack of supply has had a significant impact on rental costs which are continuing to soar. The cost of rental accommodation in the general vicinity of the site is not financially sustainable for many hospital and Town Centre employees.

As documented in an article in The Irish Times entitled 'Average rents reach all-time high of €1,304 per month', as published on 17th August 2018, rental prices across the State are now 26% higher than Celtic Tiger peak. The article states that in Dublin, rents are now 34 per cent,

or almost €500 a month, higher than the previous high point a decade ago. The capital also has the highest average rents in the country of €1,936 with rental growth running at 13.4 per cent in the year to June.

At a more micro level analysis the subject lands are located in Dublin 15. The Daft.ie Rental Price Report entitled 'An analysis of recent trends in the Irish rental market 2019 Q2' documents the very significant increase in rents for housing options over the past 12 months. As documented in Table 3.1 below, the average monthly rental cost a one bed apartment in Dublin 15 is €1,298, which represents an increase of 6.9% in the past year. However as documented in Section 3.1 above, there were no one bed apartments available to rent in Blanchardstown on 17th August 2018, 1 No. poor quality property available (located in the rear garden of a semi-detached dwelling) on 10th May 2019 and again on 28th August 2019 there was just 1 No. one bed unit (studio) located in the rear garden of a dwelling which demonstrates the dearth of appropriate accommodation provision in the area.

As shown in Table 3.1 below, to rent an average house in Dublin 15 ranges from €1,358 to €2,105 per month (dependent on number of bedrooms). This price excludes utility bills including heating, light etc. which would add significantly to monthly financial accommodation commitments (all of which are included in the rental of a Shared Living suite).

	1 Bed Apartment	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	4 Bed House	5 Bed House
Dublin 15	€1,358	€1,563	€1,810	€1,994	€2,105
Percentage increase from Q2 2018	6.2	6.0	4.9	4.9%	1.0%

Table 3.1: Average Rental Prices in Dublin 15

Source: Abstracted from <https://www.daft.ie/report/2019-Q2-rentalprice-daftreport.pdf>

3.3 Assessing the Affordability and Provision of Current Rental Accommodation Options for Single People and Couples

Key Point: A person is defined as having an affordability crisis if they are required to spend more than 30% of their salary on rent. As there are scarce one bedroom apartments available to rent in Blanchardstown the most affordable option is a two bedroom apartment, with an average rent of €1,563 per month. Therefore, to be able to affordably rent such a unit would require a net monthly salary of €5,210 which is the equivalent of a gross annual salary of approximately €102,000. In the event that 2 No. persons house were to house share, they would require a salary of c. €51,000 which would still be beyond the reach of a lot of hospital workers.

Many healthcare workers in the Connolly Hospital and Blanchardstown Town Centre would not be in a financial position to meet the economic commitment of a one year lease on a two bed unit in the local area. Even if a one bed unit became available at an average rent of €1,358, a net monthly salary of €4,527 would be required to avoid a defined affordability

crisis. Such a high salary (equivalent to a gross salary of approximately €84,500) is unachievable for many local workers.

There are therefore very few rental accommodation options for workers that are not on very high incomes. In our opinion, the 'Do Nothing' scenario requires such workers to avail of accommodation at further distances from the area on the commuter belt – clearly a less sustainable housing solution that adds to traffic volumes and congestion with associated impacts on quality of life.

The Shared Living scheme proposed will provide a much more affordable rental option for employees looking to rent accommodation close to their places of employment at Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown Town Centre and the Dublin Enterprise Zone and will provide easy access to a range of amenities and facilities in the area surrounding the site. In addition, the provision of communal facilities and amenities within the Shared Living Scheme will ensure a high-quality standard of living for the residents.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The site subject of the proposed development is a strategically located tract of land within the core urban area of a Metropolitan Consolidated Town that is located within 7 No. minutes walking distance of Castleknock Train Station and located in the heart of a substantial employment area that includes Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown, the Dublin Enterprise Zone and Blanchardstown Town Centre.

The site has the potential to provide an accommodation typology that is lacking in the local area, a typology that is specifically targeted towards typically younger workers that may be unable to afford the sparse rental options available in the local area and that may prefer to live in a designed environment that provides social interaction spaces. We submit that there is a cogent rationale for the provision of Shared Living use at the subject site and that the development will provide diversity in accommodation options in the area.

APPENDIX A: LETTER OF SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM CONNOLLY HOSPITAL,
BLANCHARDSTOWN, DUBLIN 15

Connolly Hospital
Blanchardstown
Dublin 15
D15 X40D
Tel: (01) 6465000

Ms Hazel Jones,
Strategic Planning Director,
Bartra Capital Property Group,
3rd Floor, Longphort House,
Earlsfort Centre,
Dublin 2
D02 WK40

27th August 2018

Dear Hazel

Thank you for your introduction to the Shared/Communal Living concept.

Accommodation availability and cost continues to be a significant issue for the entire range of health care workers, and staff working in Connolly Hospital. This situation is similar for all other hospital locations. It is extremely difficult to find affordable accommodation to rent within reasonable distance of workplace facilities. This is particularly problematic for health care workers, given the shift roster nature of their working week.

For agency staff, their accommodation needs would generally be short to medium term. Additionally, NCHD's on rotations, require short term accommodation. Currently accommodation, if available, is restricted to house, or apartment, sharing, usually with strangers.

Many of our staff are key workers who come to Ireland on short to medium term contracts and their accommodation needs are focussed on affordability and proximity to the workplace. This allows them to save, and maximise the amount of income they send to families back in their home countries. There is a severe scarcity of such accommodation currently.

We would welcome the Shared/Communal Living concept as an addition to the accommodation options available for these key workers, especially where it is located in close proximity to hospital locations. The provision of such accommodation at the earliest opportunity would be welcomed by health care facilities trying to recruit staff in the first instance, and also to retain them in the hospital.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Boland
General Manager
Connolly Hospital

**APPENDIX B: LETTER OF SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM EMPATH (HEALTHCARE RECRUITER),
BLANCHARDSTOWN, DUBLIN 15**



Rockford House,
Deansgrange Road,
Blackrock, Co Dublin,
Ireland, A94 TK54

EMPATH.ie
T: +353 1 675 4369
E: info@empath.ie

**Ms Hazel Jones,
Strategic Planning Director,
Bartra Capital Property Group,
3rd Floor,
Longhort House,
Earlsfort Centre,
Dublin 2**

31st August 2018

Dear Hazel,

Thank you for your introduction to the Shared/Communal Living concept.

Accommodation availability and cost continues to be a significant issue for the entire range of health care workers, and staff Empath recruit for nursing homes and hospitals throughout Ireland, particularly in Dublin.

This situation is similar for all our clients. It is extremely difficult to find affordable accommodation to rent within reasonable distance of workplace facilities. This is particularly problematic for health care workers, given the shift roster nature of their working week. We currently rely on our staff to assist us in sourcing accommodation.

Many of our staff are key workers who come to Ireland on short to medium term contracts and their accommodation needs are focussed on affordability and proximity to the workplace. This allows them to save, and maximise, the amount of income they send to families back in their home countries. In addition, it gives them the flexibility if emergency shifts need to be filled. There is a severe scarcity of such accommodation currently.

We would welcome the Shared/Communal Living concept as an addition to the accommodation options available for these key workers, especially where it is located in proximity to nursing homes and hospital locations. The provision of such accommodation at the earliest opportunity would be welcomed by Empath as a recruiter of Healthcare staff in the Irish Nursing home and Hospital sector.

Yours Sincerely,



Conor Keating
Managing Director

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM VISTA CAREER SOLUTIONS, BLANCHARDSTOWN, DUBLIN 15

VISTA CAREER SOLUTIONS

48, Brandon Square, Waterville, Blanchardstown, Dublin-15, Ireland
 Ph: 0894691241; 015157626; 0894288675;
 Email: director@vcsnursing.com; website: www.vcsnursing.com

02/10/2018

Dear Mrs Tania Sepleman,

Further to our recent conversation regarding the accommodation challenges for the entire range of healthcare workers, I can confirm that availability and cost continues to be a significant issue in most hospital and nursing home locations, particularly in the Greater Dublin area. It's quite difficult finding affordable accommodation for rent within reasonable distance of workplace facilities. This is particularly problematic for health care workers, given the shift roster nature of their work. Currently their accommodation options, if at all available, are restricted to houses or apartment sharing, usually with strangers. Because of the scarcity of all types of accommodation, the cost is also prohibitively high for most staff grades – forcing them to live at locations which require significant daily commutes with attendant costs.

Many of our nursing applicants are key workers who come to Ireland on long term contracts and their accommodation needs are focussed on affordability and proximity to the workplace. This allows them to save and maximise the amount of money they send to families back in their home countries. There is a severe scarcity of such accommodation facilities currently.

Having looked at the concept of Shared Living, which we understand is being promoted by the Dept of the Environment, Housing and Local Government, we would welcome it as an addition to the accommodation options available for key workers, especially where it is located in close proximity to hospital/nursing home locations. We believe the provision of such accommodation would assist health care operators and recruiters in trying to attract staff in the first place and reducing staff turnover generally.

Thanking You
 Kind Regards



Lalupaul Vareethpaul

Vista Career Solutions

VISTA CAREER SOLUTIONS
 48, Brandon Square, Waterville, Blanchardstown, Dublin-15, Ireland
 Ph: 0894691241; 015157626; 0894288675;
 Email: director@vcsnursing.com; website: www.vcsnursing.com

