



Proposed Redevelopment of Lands at Emmet Road Inchicore – Inchicore

In 2006 the then Government gave Dublin City Council approval for the demolition of St Michael's Estate and the redevelopment of the site which contained approximately 12 acres of land. Plans then progressed by way of a Public/Private Partnership which unfortunately became a victim of the economic crash. However progress on the re-housing of tenants continued to the stage where it was possible to gradually demolish the whole estate of apartment blocks leaving a clear development site in a key part of the city. During the recession years it was not possible to progress the redevelopment of the site.

In 2015 St Michaels Estate was one of three sites which made up the Housing Land Initiative (HLI) pursued by Dublin City Council. The other two sites were O' Devaney Gardens and Oscar Traynor Road which have now progressed to a crucial stage. Feasibility Studies for each of the three sites were undertaken by the Council in December 2015. The 2015 studies were subsequently reviewed and further reports completed in 2016. The feasibility studies for each of the three sites were presented to the City Council at a joint DCC Housing and Planning Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in December 2016 and adopted by the elected members at a City Council meeting on 9th January 2017.

The feasibility study for St Michaels Estate was based on the policy and objectives of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, which includes specific detailed guidance for St. Michaels Estate as a designated Strategic Development and Regeneration Area (SDRA 9). The tenure mix agreed for all three HLI sites comprised 30% social housing; 20% affordable housing and 50% private housing. St Michaels Estate had an estimated delivery of 415 dwellings with the addition of commercial/civic buildings fronting Emmet Road.

The progress of the St Michael's Scheme was delayed because time was needed to finally resolve ownership and title issues on the front (Emmet Road) part of the site. During this period the Housing Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) discussed the possibility of a different development model and there were also discussions with the Department of Housing and Planning about the possibility of a revised Housing Mix to include a Cost Rental model of Housing which is a common concept in other European Countries and Cities.

In June 2018 the Feasibility Study was further considered to re-examine the residential component of the St Michaels scheme having regard to the newly published Guidelines for Planning Authorities on apartment standards. Dublin City Council, in consultation with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, has identified the land at Inchicore as an option for a cost-rental project.

The development is now being considered for a revised tenure mix of 30% Social Housing and 70% Cost Rental with a possible 10% of this 70% being reserved for Affordable Purchase. The key objective of Cost Rental is to provide affordable accommodation for moderate income households in urban areas of high demand for residential accommodation. The rents paid will be linked to the cost of construction, be significantly below local market rents, have security of tenure and with clarity on rent levels over a long period. Given its well connected convenient city location, we consider that this land is ideally suitable for a cost rental housing development.

Site Description and location:

The land at Inchicore located c.4km west of the city centre in Inchicore. The property which extends to c.4.9 hectares is bounded to the north by Emmet Road, to the south by the Grand Canal and Goldenbridge Cemetery, to the east by the rear of residential dwellings on Connolly Avenue and Bulfin Court and to the west by St. Vincent's Street West. There is an internal road which runs in a north south direction and links the newly developed social housing at Thornton Heights to Bulfin Road. The site is on the location of the former St. Michael's Estate.

Planning Policy Context:

The site at is zoned 'Z14' – a Strategic Development and Regeneration Area – in the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, with a stated objective *“To seek the social, economic and physical development and/or rejuvenation of an area with mixed use of which residential and Z6 (employment) would be predominant uses”*.

The City Development Plan 2016-2022 contains a number of key guiding principles for this site under the heading SDRA 9, notably:

1. The development of a high-quality, vibrant, mixed-use urban quarter will be promoted; new facilities will be located in accessible locations and will maximise the opportunities to connect with the wider neighborhood.
2. The development will support and compliment the regeneration of Inchicore by encouraging a natural extension of the village centre eastwards along Emmet Road; the development will provide strong connections between the site and the functions of the village centre, for which a Local Environmental Improvements Plan is proposed.
3. The development of high-quality streetscape onto Emmet Road with accessible civic spaces, active frontages and an appropriate transition in scale, height and character between the village centre and the site will be promoted.
4. Strong permeability will be sought through the site, including pedestrian and cyclist connections, to achieve strong north-to-south connections between Emmet Road and the LUAS/Grand Canal corridor and east-to-west connections between St Vincent Street West and Bulfin Road; active streetscapes along these routes will be promoted.
5. Variety in housing tenures and unit types will be sought in order to achieve a balanced and sustainable community.
6. The important heritage features on, and adjoining the site, shall be respected and highlighted by urban design with particular regard to the tourism, heritage, community and amenity value of assets such as St. Michael's Church, Richmond Barracks, Goldenbridge Cemetery and the Grand Canal.
7. Innovative proposals that create a landmark destination within the city for combined facilities of a community, recreational, leisure and sports nature will be promoted; such facilities shall integrate positively with the existing sports facilities on site.
8. The development of high-quality housing for Older Persons. This will be located on the site between Thornton Heights and Richmond Barracks.

The Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 also contains an indicative land-use map for the future build-out of this proposed development.

Proposed Tenure Mix:

The residential development proposed for the main c.4.9 hectares' site comprises of an appropriate mix of cost rental and social housing units along with commercial units, community facilities and amenity open space, with the overall objective of delivering a sustainable mixed tenure mixed use development.

The 2017 feasibility study was revised to re-examine the residential component of the scheme having regard to the newly published Guidelines for Planning Authorities on apartment standards and also taking into account a revised tenure mix of 30% Social and 70% Cost-Rental accommodation. The revised feasibility study for the site indicates that the site has potential for the development of 472 residential units. The proposed tenure of these units is broken down in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Potential residential development – Land at Emmet Road, Inchicore, Dublin 8

Tenure of unit	Number of units
Cost Rental units	330
Social units (inclusive of 52 assisted living units at Thornton)	142
Total	472

Retail/ Community Facilities:

Separate to the residential development, this location has a demand for commercial and community facilities. In order to integrate with the wider community, the site has potential to develop a high quality streetscape onto Emmet Road. This will include a new Civic Urban Space linking to St. Michaels Church and connecting Emmet Road with Inchicore Community Sports Centre, while also accommodating the existing community facilities and the provision of a new Public Library. The proposed new retail/community facilities will include the following:

- A new public library
- Supermarket and retail units
- High quality civic building
- A local neighbourhood park with play facilities
- A public plaza
- Replacement of the current Parish Centre in a new building.

In addition to these facilities, the proposed development will improve pedestrian links to and from the Luas, as well as improving permeability within the wider Inchicore area.

Delivery Strategy:

This project will be delivered by Dublin City Council. We have already appointed a small Project Team to drive this very important development for the whole Inchicore /Kilmainham area and this team will be enhanced as necessary as planning for the development progresses. Ms Sandra McAleer Senior Engineer is the Project Manager who will be working full time on this specific development. Sandra has significant experience already on housing and Regeneration projects in the city and in more recent times has been intimately involved on the Housing Land Initiative. In the immediate term she will be assisted by Brian Gallwey, Staff officer who is a Planner by trade. Both will report into Tony Flynn Executive Manager, Housing Department, and Brendan Kenny Deputy Chief Executive. There will of course be a close involvement by the South Central area Office in all aspects of the project in particular on the consultation arrangements.

Funding:

Funding will be provided by Department of Housing Planning and Local Government for the 30% social housing and by the European Investment Bank for the cost rental housing. Funding for the cost rental element of the project will be sourced by Dublin City Council at a low rate of interest directly from the European Investment Bank (EIB). The EIB has extensive experience supporting cost rental housing developments across Europe. The cost of developing the project, including the cost of servicing the debt, will be directly linked to the rent paid by tenants. Dublin City Council is providing the site/land to facilitate the full development.

Estate Management

The future management of this overall development will in our view require a radically different form of management and ideally the provision of a professional estate management entity. Such new models of management are essential and hence there will be specific emphasis on this in the criteria involved in the selection of a suitable Developer. We will consider separating the role of developer and the management of the whole estate by a separate tender process.

We are very conscious of deficiencies in Estate Management in this area during the existence of the St Michaels Estate and indeed following its demolition. Therefore this issue will get the utmost attention from Dublin City Council before, during, and after construction of this residential, community and retail development.

We are very aware of Social problems in this area eg Criminality, Anti Social Behaviour, Educational deficits, unemployment and the lack of opportunities for young people. We will work very closely with all the relevant Statutory Agencies on the development of plans to overcome where possible these difficult Social Issues.

We are also very aware of problems in the business sector in Inchicore Village with a very significant number of vacant or under utilized premises dotted throughout. We will work with the business sector in the area in trying to resolve these issues.

We believe the proposed re-development of the former St Michael's Estate land will be a major catalyst for much needed renewal of the Village, we must ensure that it does.

Consultation:

Dublin City Council will ensure that there will be a full, comprehensive, and broad based consultation process that will include all the various stakeholders in the Inchicore/Kilmainham area eg residents, community groups, voluntary bodies sporting organisations, business and heritage/historical bodies. This will be facilitated by:

- The DCC Local Area Team.
- The Kilmainham/Inchicore network.
- Public submissions etc.
- South Central Area Committee.

In addition Dublin City Council has asked the Kilmainham/Inchicore Network (KIN) to establish a special Inchicore Regeneration Consultative Forum to focus directly on the development of this site and to ensure that there is constant and ongoing consultation before, during and after construction.

This Forum will be established in the coming weeks and will be chaired by Eamon Devoy (Retired Senior Trade Union Official) who is currently Chair of the above Network and it will be administered by Aoife Hannon who will act as the Director of the Forum. Aoife currently is the Manager of the Network (Not a DCC official).

This Forum will be supported by Dublin City Council and it is hoped to acquire an office premises in Inchicore to facilitate its operation and to cater for local residents with enquiries on the project.

The Network (KIN) will shortly invite expressions of interest from all relevant parties in Inchicore/Kilmainham. Leaflets with this invitation will be posted (Or dropped in) to all homes and premises in the area with a view to forming a broad based Consultative Forum with up to 20 members. We have no intention of '*hand picking*' these members.

It is hoped that the first meeting of this Forum can be held shortly if not already done.

The first task of the Forum in association with Dublin City Council will be to formulate an initial public consultation process with all stakeholders in the area (Inchicore/Kilmainham) during the month of October. While the Consultative Forum, which will include local City Councillors, will oversee ongoing participation of all stakeholders, there will be specific consultation campaigns at the different project milestones such as Draft Masterplan, Planning Application, Announcement of National Cost Rental Scheme and selection of developer etc.

In line with the guiding principles for this site under the heading SDRA 9, City Development Plan, Dublin City Council will undertake a community audit to consider educational, economic/retail, community, cultural, recreational and sports/leisure facilities in the surrounding area. This will inform the new draft masterplan for the area.

Next Steps

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government is currently in the process of finalising the detail of a National Cost Rental Scheme. We hope this scheme will be announced before the end of the year, until then we are not in a position to answer all the detailed questions currently being asked on this very welcome new model of Housing. In the meantime we intend to advance the project as quickly as possible because a project of this size and complexity takes time to progress with a lot of work needed on the following;

- Procure Planning Consultant
- Procure Multidisciplinary Design Team
- Develop Masterplan
- Submit funding applications
- Complete Detailed Design
- Submit planning application to An Bord Pleanála
- Procure Building Contractor
- Commence on site

This can also be done in parallel with the consultation process. We are not in a position at this early to give definite timescales on the delivery of this project but we will do so as soon as possible.

The redevelopment of this site in Inchicore has been a long journey with some false starts and lots of different views all of which we have listened to and will continue to do so. We finally now have a definite road map for development and certainty over funding and we must now move forward as quickly as possible with planning, design and ultimate construction.

This is not just another Housing Estate it is a project that can also bring significant economic and social renewal to the whole Historical area of Inchicore and Kilmainham including opportunities for the business sector in the Village.

This report is an important update on the redevelopment of these lands and it outlines the following:

- A revised Housing mix including a new concept of Cost Rental Housing.
- Direct development of the overall site by DCC.
- Initiation of a comprehensive consultation process
- The provision of significant Community, Civic, and Commercial facilities.

This Report was agreed by the Members of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee at its meeting held on 6th September 2018.

We hope that the Elected Members of the City Council will now give strong support to the urgent progress of this very important project and we will report back on a regular basis.

Resolution:

“That Dublin City Council notes the contents of Report No 245/2018 and hereby approves the contents therein”.

Brendan Kenny

Assistant Chief Executive

14th September 2018