

To the Lord Mayor and  
Members of Dublin City Council

Report No. 70/2020  
Report of Assistant Chief Executive



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## **Housing Strategic Policy Committee Report on the Development of Lands at Oscar Traynor Road**

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At the February meeting of the Housing SPC members discussed a report that was compiled by a Working Group of Councillors that was established following the rejection of a Section 183 Disposal proposal on the same land by Councillors at the November 2020 meeting of the City Council.

The report was agreed at the Housing SPC meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February. It was also agreed that this report would be submitted to this meeting of the City Council for debate and consideration by the full Council.

In particular the Housing SPC agreed a tenure mix of 40% Social, 40% Cost Rental and 20% Affordable purchase housing and recommended that agreement be sought from Councillors on this proposed tenure mix in any alternative plan for a residential development on this land.

**Brendan Kenny**  
**Assistant Chief Executive**  
**1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

**OSCAR TRAYNOR LANDS**  
**ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

**January 2021**

This report has been prepared in response to following motion passed at the Dublin City Council meeting on Monday 16th November 2020 with a view to drafting a proposal for a new plan for developing the Oscar Traynor Road site.

*In the event of the rejection of Report 310/2020 Dublin City Council requires the drafting of a new plan that would see Dublin City Council lead the design and oversee the development of public housing on the site. That this new plan would draw on our learnings from the development of St. Michael's Estate and our engagement with the EIB for funding and would seek full support from the Department of Housing. That this new plan would be drafted in collaboration with the Public Housing Working Group of the Housing SPC and would appropriately engage with the Oscar Traynor Lands Consultative Forum. To this end, we call on An tArd Mheara to seek an urgent meeting with the Minister for Housing, the CEO, Housing Manager, the Chairperson of the Housing SPC and Group Leaders to discuss putting this approach in place for the Oscar Traynor land.*

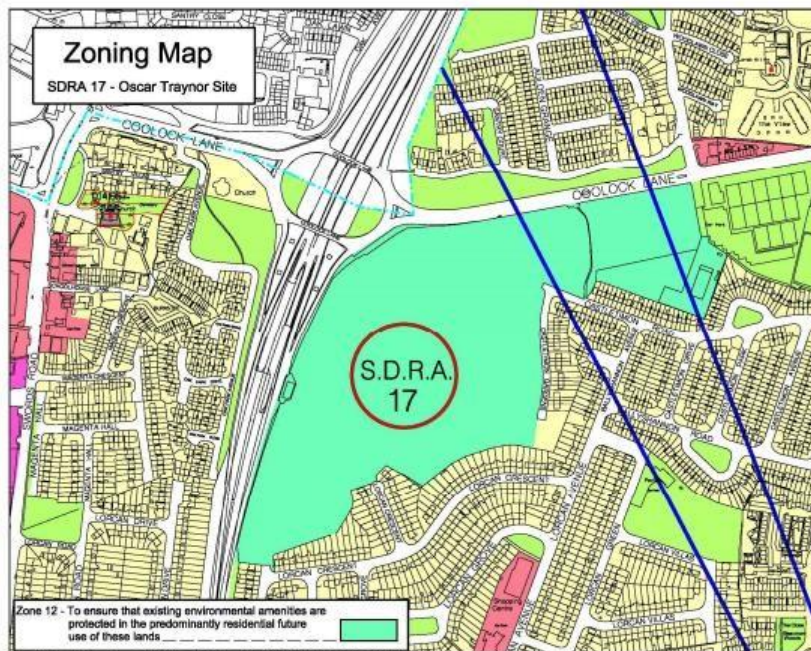
All Parties/Groups were represented as follows in the drafting of this report: Cllr. Deirdre Heney (FF), Cllr. Donna Cooney (GP), Cllr. Declan Flanagan, (FG), Cllr. Dermot Lacey (Lab), Cllr. Cieran Perry (Ind Group), Cllr. Michael MacDonncha (SF), Cllr. Patricia Roe (SD) and Cllr. Tina MacVeigh (PBP). Discussions were convened by the Lord Mayor, Cllr Hazel Chu and chaired by Cllr Alison Gilliland, Chairperson of the Housing SPC.

**SITE HISTORY**

The site at Oscar Traynor Road (total area 17.2 ha) is a designated Strategic Development and Regeneration Area. It is 'located to the south-east of the junction of Oscar Traynor Road and the M1 interchange. It is relatively flat and currently undeveloped. The overall vision for this site is the creation of a new residential quarter supported by neighbourhood facilities and parks, creating an attractive tree lined setting, and which integrates and complements the surrounding residential area.

The overall objectives for this site are as follows:

- The creation of a primarily residential quarter with a mixture of unit types and tenures to provide for much needed housing in the city in accordance with the core strategy and complemented with retail units serving a local need.
- The provision of retirement housing is particularly sought adjoining new local services.
- To support the increased provision of senior citizens homes on the Oscar Traynor site.
- Higher densities will be sought to the northern and western edges of the site with heights of 4 to 6 storeys being generally appropriate, scaling down to the east and south where the site adjoins existing 2-storey residential housing.
- Heights of up to 6 storeys will be considered in the north-west corner of the site as slender landmark features.
- The provision of a high quality distinctive park(s) set within amongst tree-lined avenues and streets is required.
- High levels of permeability throughout the site integrating with existing residential streets to the east and south where feasible.
- The creation of a neighbourhood centre to Oscar Traynor Road with local retail provision and a possible hotel use, forming a distinctive place-making element and the main entrance to the overall site.' (Dublin City Development Plan 2016 – 2021)



Dublin City Development Plan 2016 – 2022 extract from Zoning Map, Zone 12

The site has been in the long-term ownership of the Council. It was previously held as religious institutional lands until the 1970's. The site was intended to be used for road widening and providing a site compound for the Dublin Port Tunnel construction project. Following the completion of the tunnel project in January 2007 the Council brought forward development proposals, following a competitive process, the site was to have been developed under a public-private partnership. However, that proposal was abandoned in 2008 following the economic downturn.

It is a vacant green field site covered in scrub vegetation bounding: the M1 motorway / Port Tunnel entrance to the west, R104 Coolock Lane (Oscar Traynor Road) to the north, astro park football pitches and Gaelscoil Cholmcille to the north-east, the front of two storey houses along Castletimon Gardens to the east, and the rear of two storey houses which front onto Lorcan Crescent to the south. In 2015, it was considered that the building sector had recovered sufficiently for developers to have the capacity to develop out this site to the Council's requirements. The unencumbered land is valued under the Vacant Sites Register at around €44 million.

A report was presented to, and approved by both the Housing and Planning Strategic Policy Committees and subsequently by the full City Council in January 2017 as follows:

- The lands would be offered to the market with an indicative site layout
- Use private finance to eliminate / mitigate the planning and financial risk to the Council.
- Promote mixed tenure and income mix to ensure long-term sustainability.

All this became known as the City Council's Housing Land Initiative and included two other sites at O Devaney Gardens and St Michael's Estate\*.

At that time, the main principles of the Housing Land Initiative were:

- A tenure mix of 30% social, 50% private, and 20% affordable purchase housing.
- Social and Affordable units are to be sourced at construction cost.
- Procurement through Competitive Dialogue, which places tight control over the developments, via contractual Development Agreement.
- Reduction of exposure of DCC to the inherent Planning Risk (and costs) involved in developing the site.
- Site development costs and associated infrastructure to be borne mainly by the preferred bidder.
- No Local Authority borrowing to develop site resulting in adherence to EU spending rules.
- Land Ownership remains under DCC control until each phase is complete.

\*subsequently, a revised plan for St Michael's Estate was adopted that allowed for 30% social housing and 70% cost rental units with the entire project being led by DCC. This project will be a useful reference for the development of the Oscar Traynor Lands.

In this report ([https://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-10/Oscar Traynor Road Site SPC - New.pdf](https://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-10/Oscar%20Traynor%20Road%20Site%20SPC%20-%20New.pdf)) an indicative plan and site layout was proposed with low to medium density in the southern part of the site adjacent to the existing two storey housing and commercial development with medium to higher density residential development on the northern and western boundaries of the site as illustrated in the figure below

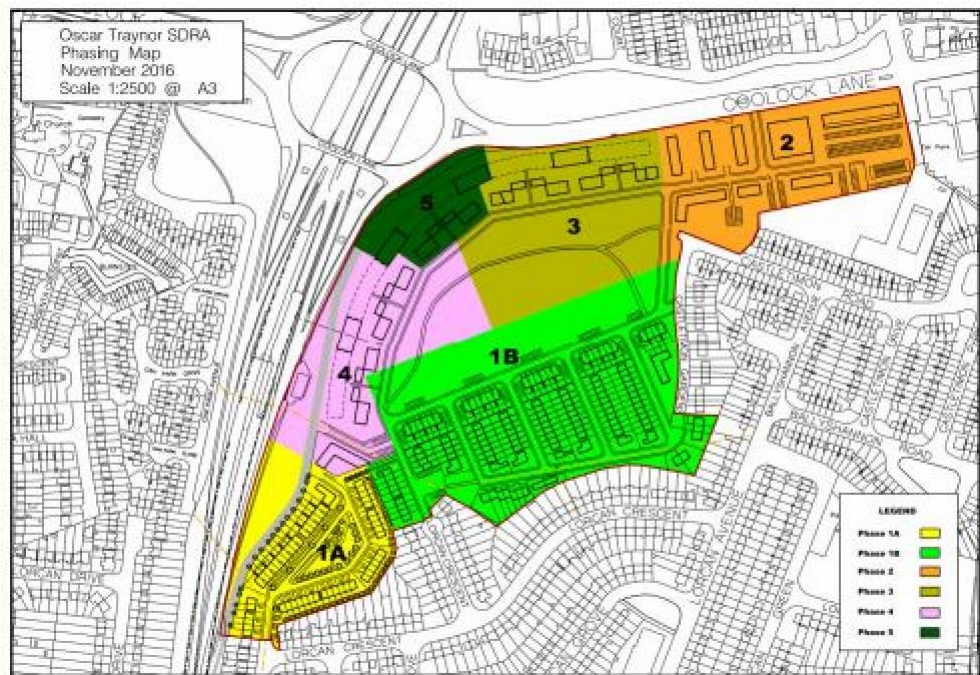


Figure 4: Phasing Map from Housing Land Initiative Report





Figure 6: Layout and Site Constraints Map from Housing Land Initiative Report

## THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

After an intensive analysis a decision was made that the Competitive Dialogue Procurement process was the most appropriate for this and the O'Devaney Gardens project. The Competitive Dialogue process involved the following key principles:

- Invitation, through a Pre-Qualifying Questionnaire (PQQ), for interested parties (developers etc.) to demonstrate that they are capable of delivering the project. These parties are assessed and shortlisted based on the (mostly technical) information they submit.
- The shortlisted parties are then invited to submit their plan for the site (the Outline Submission) based on the Invitation to Participate in Dialogue (ITPD), which is essentially Dublin City Council's brief for the project - describing the project, the planning history, the site constraints, the financial requirements, City Council requirements etc.).
- The Shortlisted Parties then submit their development plans for the site (layout, heights, densities, materials, infrastructure etc.), a series of dialogue sessions between Dublin City Council's Project team and each of the developers' technical team ensues, at which the technical options are assessed and honed, after which a clearer understanding of the brief and solutions are arrived at.
- A final brief is drawn up (the Invitation to Submit Final Tender (ISFT)). The shortlisted parties submit their final tenders, the tenders are assessed and a preferred bidder is identified, a Development Agreement is drawn up and signed by both parties, thus ending the procurement process and allowing the project to progress to the next stage.

## LOCAL CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A Community Forum was established to support local consultation and community engagement with regard to the development of the site. The members of the Community Forum comprised 2 representatives each from Lorcan Estate, Castletimon, Woodlawn/Aulden Grange and Santry Court Estates and Gaelscoil Cholmchille along with 4 local Councillors that reduced to 3 local Councillors post the 2019 local election when all surrounding estates joined to form part of the same local election ward.

A whole community consultation workshop took place in June 2019. This workshop was facilitated by Connect the Dots and discussed and recorded a wide variety of planning and development issues and concerns as follows:

- The Vision/Future Identity of the Site
- Accessibility, Permeability and Traffic
- Community Gain
- The Buildings – Look and Feel
- The Outdoors – Look and Feel
- Hopes and Concerns
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A report on the workshop was published in July 2019 and the Community Forum remains an active part of the development process.

## THE PREFERRED BIDDER

The preferred bidder chosen after the competitive dialogue tendering process was Glenveagh Living Limited and Glenveagh Homes Limited (jointly) (“Glenveagh”) and their scheme comprises approximately 853 units subject to planning, together with all associated infrastructure works, commercial units and parks.

The breakdown of residential units proposed was as follows:

UNIT TYPE	SOCIAL 30%	AFFORDABLE 20%	Private	Total
Studio	25	0	12	37
1 Bed	52	51	63	166
2 Bed	101	87	164	352
3 Bed	75	34	170	279
4 Bed	0	0	19	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>853</b>
<b>Total %</b>	<b>255.9</b>	<b>170.6</b>	<b>426.5</b>	<b>853</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>29.66</b>	<b>20.16</b>	<b>50.18</b>	<b>100</b>

The social housing units would be allocated to those on the DCC social housing waiting list. The cost of the affordable units to purchasers would be subsidised by the Serviced Site Fund of €50,000 per unit as well as the forgoing of development levies. These units would be offered for sale under the anticipated Affordable Purchase Scheme. Those purchasing these units would qualify for a grant under the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan Scheme. The anticipated price range of the affordable purchase units is as follows:

OSCAR TRAYNOR ROAD AFFORDABLE PURCHASE PRICE RANGE PER UNIT		
SIZE	PRICE RANGE *	NO. OF HOMES
1 BED	€230,000 – €260,000	51
2 BED	€250,000 - €300,000	87
3 BED	€270,000 – €320,000	34
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>172</b>

\*The figures in the above table include the Site Services Subsidy and the Grant under the Help to Buy Scheme.

The remaining 50% of units would be offered to private purchasers by Glenveagh. Under the proposed agreement with the developer, prices will be set at 1st Jan 2019 prices and fixed until the end of 2024.

Glenveagh would be paid for the social and the affordable units, this payment would be at the construction cost detailed in the tender rather than open market value. The developer would also be responsible for the infrastructure on site, the development of the park, the play areas, community facilities, landscaping, design, planning, financing, and carrying any inflation risk on the 1 Jan 2019 fixed price, along with passing over a cash payment of €14 million to DCC.

Summary of the development:

- a) 253 social housing units
- b) 172 affordable purchase homes
- c) 428 developer units for private market sale
- d) 690sq.m. Childcare building including children's secure play and education areas.
- e) Landmark Neighbourhood building providing
  - I. Local Retail 145sq.m.
  - II. Café/Restaurant 270sq.m.
  - III. Multi-Use/Dance Studio 360sq.m.
- f) Auditorium of 165sq.m.
- g) 833 car-parking spaces (760 residential spaces plus 73 public/visitor/retail spaces) in a mix of locations.
- h) A Central Park with a re-opened Naniken river at its heart connecting through the development providing a variety of green spaces for a range of different users such as the main park, pocket parks, private courtyards, nature trails along the perimeters and a community urban park.
- i) New cycleways along the Main Boulevard and through a "Green Cycle-Way" North to South connecting with adjoining Castletimon and Lorcan Estates

The proposed site master plan was as follows:



### **REJECTION OF THE FINAL PROPOSAL (REPORT 310/2020 and 311/2020)**

The preferred bidder, Glenveagh, presented their proposal along with their schematic architectural design to the North Central Area Committee at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and to the Community Forum on 28<sup>th</sup> September. A series of questions were submitted for clarification and responses circulated to North Central Area Councillors and Community Forum members.

A final report, 311/2020 on the proposal was presented to the November DCC monthly meeting, as was a proposal to dispose of the site to facilitate its development under the proposal, Report 310/2020.

The majority of the Councillors rejected both reports and the following motion was adopted by the majority of Councillors:

*In the event of the rejection of Report 310/2020 Dublin City Council requires the drafting of a new plan that would see Dublin City Council lead the design and oversee the development of public housing on the site.*

*That this new plan would draw on our learnings from the development of St. Michael's Estate and our engagement with the EIB for funding and would also seek full support from the Department of Housing. That this new plan would be drafted in collaboration with the Public Housing Working Group of the Housing SPC and would appropriately engage with the Oscar Traynor Lands Consultative Forum. To this end, we call on An tArd Mheara to seek an urgent meeting with the Minister for Housing, the CEO, Housing Manager, the Chairperson of the Housing SPC and Group Leaders to discuss putting this approach in place for the Oscar Traynor land.*



## **ALTERNATIVE PLAN FOR THE OSCAR TRAYNOR RD SITE**

The Lord Mayor wrote to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, TD on 17th November 2020 seeking a meeting to discuss an alternative plan for the development of the site.

Two meetings were held with Group Leaders/their respective nominees to discuss and come to a consensus on the underpinning principles for developing the land and the tenure/income mix that should be developed.

### **Underpinning principles**

As per the motion agreed by the majority of Councillors at the November 2020, meeting it is agreed that Dublin City Council takes the lead in all aspects of the development, particularly the design and planning application processes. This does not preclude co-operation and collaboration with external private professionals, including the tendering of specific aspects of the development process. Nor does it preclude Dublin City Council from engaging private contractors to carry out some of the work required to realise this development. For example, it is recognised that Dublin City Council does not have the capacity to build out the development and therefore it will tender for the construction of development. Dublin City Council is also open to partnering with like-minded not-for profit organisations to develop the lands.

It is envisaged that the development will be designed in line with the vision, policy and objectives of the Dublin City Development Plan to create a sustainable, 'integrated and family friendly' development that is 'attractive', 'well-landscaped, properly managed, pedestrian friendly and served by good public transport', that 'improves the quality and accessibility of existing community facilities', inclusive of those with disabilities and those in their senior years, and that 'sets a new standard in housing development' as envisaged by the local community during DCC consultation (Report July 2019). It should also meet the highest of environmental standards and afford the nurturing of onsite biodiversity.

### **Tenure/income mix**

The site comprises of 100% public land and as such should provide maximum public housing benefit\*.

Each Party/Group had differing views on the tenure/income mix – social housing, affordable/cost rental, private affordable purchase and private market value sale. However, most Parties/Groups agreed to make concessions and a majority consensus was arrived at as follows:

- Social housing: 40%
- Cost/Affordable rental: 40%
- Affordable Purchase: 20%

### **Social housing considerations**

Area B has one of the longest waiting lists for social housing across Dublin City Council. The October 2020 statistics show 4,452 persons are on the housing waiting list for Area B and a further 3,868 on the transfer list. These figures include those waiting on older person's accommodation. To support a fair and proportionate approach to allocations across the development, the unit size mix should reflect this waiting list.

## Area B Waiting List (October 2020)

October 2020 HOUSING Waiting List figures by Bedsize Req	
Bedsize Required	Area B
1 Bed	2631
2 Bed	1334
3 Bed	450
4 Bed	33
5 Bed	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4452</b>

October 2020 TRANSFER Waiting List figures by Bedsize Req	
Bedsize Required	Area B
1 Bed	1060
2 Bed	1877
3 Bed	850
4 Bed	75
5 Bed	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3868</b>

October 2020 COMBINED Waiting List figures by Bedsize Req	
Bedsize Required	Area B
1 Bed	3691
2 Bed	3211
3 Bed	1300
4 Bed	108
5 Bed	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8320</b>

With an ageing population, significant consideration should be paid to providing for more senior citizens in an inclusive rather than a segregated way. Such seniors should include those who wish to right-size, both those who are current social housing tenants and those who own their own home and wish to avail of the financial contribution scheme. At present there are 301 persons waiting for Older Persons' accommodation in Area B. These figures in include 37 applications under the Financial Contribution scheme. On the transfer list there are 212 persons seeking Older Persons' accommodation

Signification consideration should also be given to providing for specific residential needs such as a refuge for those leaving domestic violence and those who need wrap around medical, health or supported residential care/accommodation. For example, collaboration with the following should be explored:

- The HSE runs 3 residential units for mental health in Area B (Daneswood, Maryfield and the The Grange). These generally look to Dublin City Council to provide units for transition into more independent living. The Housing Association for Integrated Living (HAIL) provides sheltered housing for those requiring ongoing mental health supports. At present there are 8 individuals currently identified on the Dublin City Council waiting list for such housing and associated support.
- Aoibhneas provides local refuge accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. At present, they can only accommodate 10 families in their current facility and regularly have to turn away families in need. Covid19 has exposed and exacerbated the level of domestic violence and the need for a more proactive response to supports, particularly safe emergency accommodation that provides appropriate supports and services to allow families rebuild their lives.

The following conditions pertaining to the above income/tenure mix were agreed:

- All affordable purchase units are to be offered back to Dublin City Council if owners were to sell them.
- To increase affordability of cost/affordable rental and affordable purchase units:
  - funding for all community infrastructure and amenities to be provided by central government/Dept Housing
  - the service site fund must be increased from current national level of €50,000 to a Dublin specific SSF rate of €100,000

The development should be tenure blind and designed in such a way that differing tenures are pepper-potted though out the various units. It is also agreed that consideration should be given to appropriate phasing of the construction process on the site.

\* Given the lack of a definition of public housing, the Public Housing Working Group had agreed the following definition as part of its work:

*'high quality sustainable housing for all citizens regardless of income that is rented from one's local authority or its nominees (for example AHBs) so as to affordably and securely provide for one's particular housing needs'*

### **Commercial and retail**

In addition to the general commercial and retail needs identified in the Housing Land Initiative, consideration should be given to including a work hub to support those who are either self-employed or those who are required to work from home and need office type support.

### **Accommodating Gaelscoil Cholmcille**

Gaelscoil Cholmcille is currently a single stream primary gaelscoil situated adjacent to the Oscar Traynor Rd. site. It currently cannot meet the demand for school spaces and has expressed the intention to expand to at least a 2-stream school ie 2 class groupings of each class level.

The land upon which it is situated belongs to the Department of Education. The building it currently occupies is a temporary one. Part of the school land is unused to allow for potential expansion. It is agreed that the development of this site should include the accommodation of a permanent building for and expansion of Gaelscoil Cholmcille to allow for the most appropriate location of the school.

### **Community Gain**

To support the inclusion of the local community in the opportunities the development of the lands provides it is agreed that:

- a social clause be included in all construction and associated contracts to allow for the active consideration of employment and apprenticeship opportunities for those living in the local community
- amenities and facilities required to support a sustainable community and the integration of established and with the new community should be provided

## **FUNDING OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

It is envisaged that the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage fund the social housing and affordable housing components on the site while Dublin City Council seek a loan to fund the cost/affordable rental component. It is also envisaged that the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage would increase the Serviced Site Fund from €50,000 per unit to €100,000 to allow for greater affordability of both rent and purchase costs as well as providing funding for all community infrastructure and amenities.

However, it is essential that all funding sources should be fully explored particularly low interest, 30 – 40 year term loans that would reduce annual repayment costs, particularly relevant for reducing rent levels in the affordable/cost rental units. Funding sources, including collaborations and partnerships, that should be explored include:

- Housing Finance Agency
- European Investment Bank loan opportunities
- Ireland Strategic Investment Fund
- Credit Unions launch-new-housing-fund-backed-by-irish-creditunions/Pension Funds ([www.cuda.ie](http://www.cuda.ie))
- The Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) Institutional investors seeking sustainable and socially responsible investments
- Learning can be drawn from housing financing examples such as The German real-estate company Vonovia (NESC, *Housing Policy: Actions to Deliver Change*, 2020) The Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (Hearne, R., *Housing Shock*, 2020)