



# Proposed Housing Development, Durrow, Co. Laois

## Architectural Design Statement





## **CONTENTS**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **2.0 Site Context.**

2.1 Planning Context.

2.2 Architectural Context

### **3.0 Site Development Strategy**

### **4.0 Development Standards**

4.1 Proposed Development

4.2 National Standards

4.3 County Development Plan

### **5.0 Architectural Design**

### **6.0 Conclusion**



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Architectural Design Statement has been prepared by the Housing Agency on behalf of Laois County Council (LCC) for a proposal to provide new social housing and services sites in Durrow, Co. Laois. This report outlines the site context, development strategy and regulatory compliance of the proposed development.

The proposal is to demolish a vacant 1-2 storey house at the junction of Derry Road and the N77, to redesign this road junction to improve road safety, and to provide 24 no. social housing units and 4 no. services sites on the site. The demolition works will take place as an enabling works package to immediately address the poor visibility issues at the N77/Derry Road junction.

The site is comprised of a site owned by the Housing Agency and a site recently purchased by LCC- total site area 1.2HA. The site bounds the N77 and Derry Road. There are neighbouring residential developments to two sides, and a Protected structure (currently a Scout's Hall) sits next to the site on the N77.

Stage 1 approval has been received by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH). This approval was prior to the purchase of the second site by LCC. The additional site provides an increase of units and the opportunity to redesign the unsafe Derry Road/N77 junction.

This report should be read together with the design team drawings and reports that fully describe the proposal.

## 2.0 CONTEXT

### 2.1 Planning Context

Durrow is a small town in County Laois, with a population of <1000. The site is located on the south-eastern edge of Durrow town (fig.1). It sits within the settlement boundary in an area zoned Residential 2. This site is ideal for the development of new housing, being within the town boundary and close to all local amenities. A small portion of the site lies within the Durrow Architectural Conservation Area (fig.2), and there are protected structures next to the site. The Site is not located in a flood risk area.

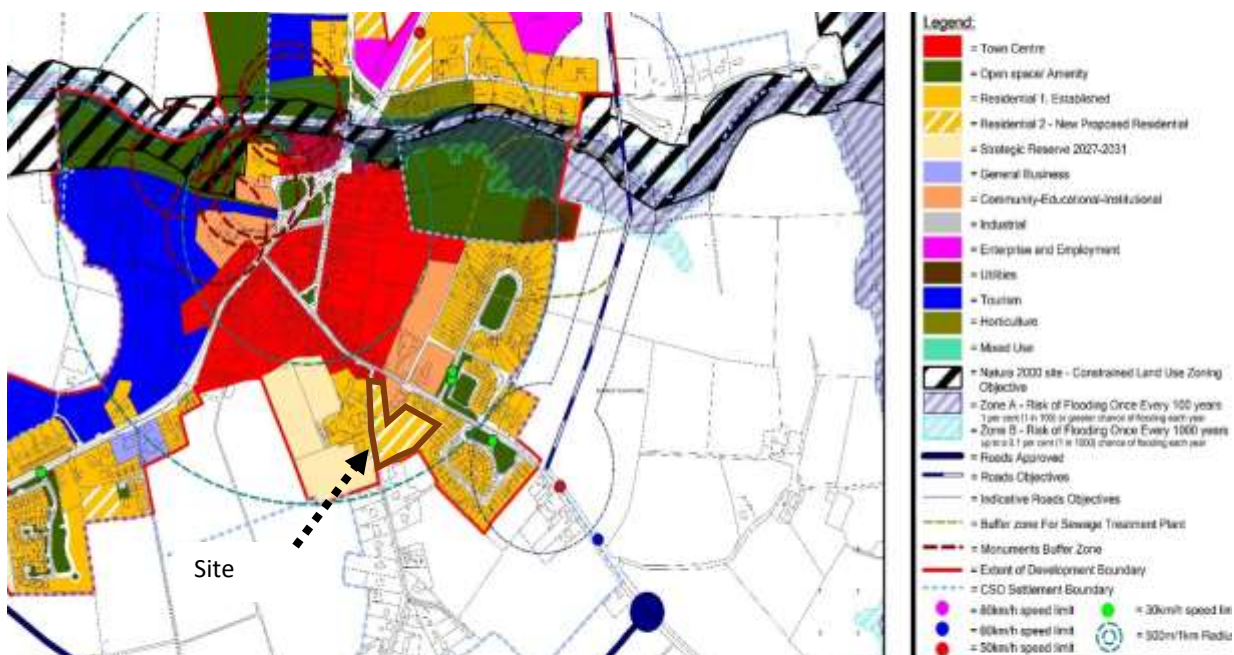


Fig.1 Durrow Zoning Map -Laois Development Plan 2021-2027



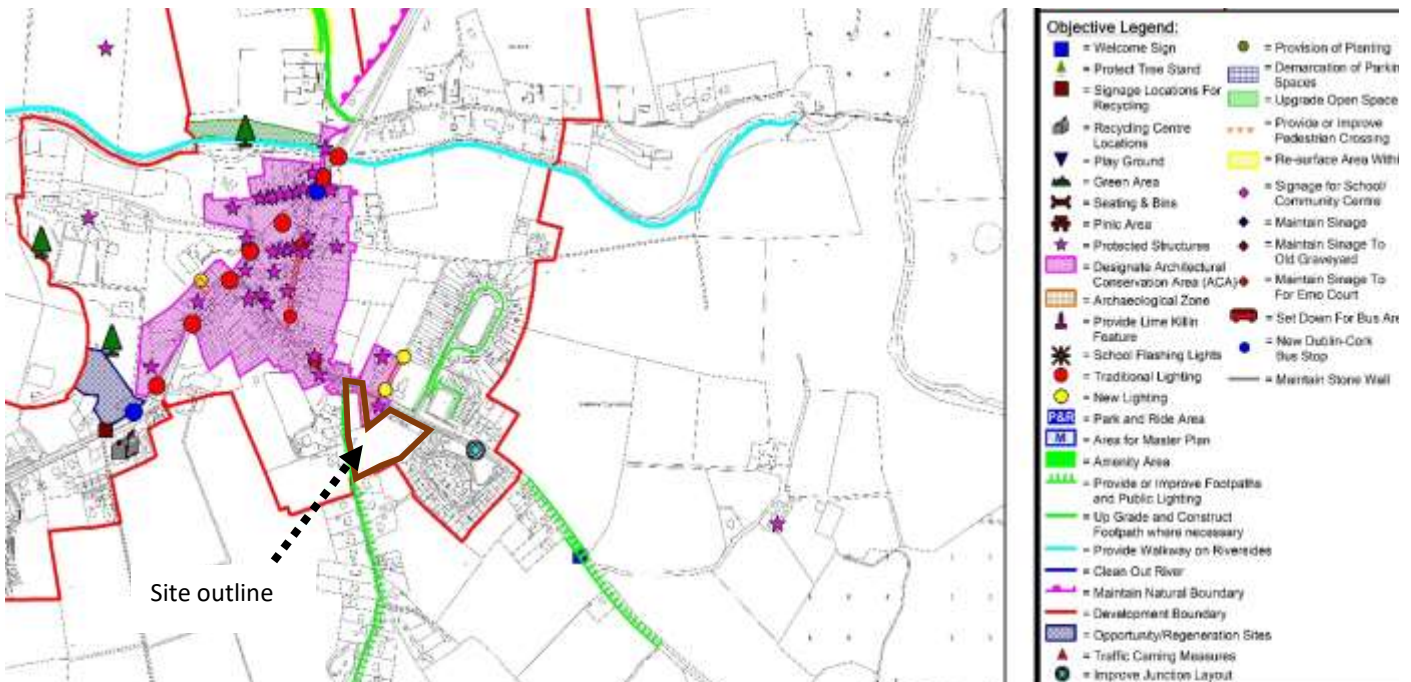


Fig.2 Durrow ACA Map -Laois Development Plan 2021-2027

## 2.2 Architectural Context.

The architectural style of the streetscape proximate to the site is two storey vernacular. The houses are simply designed with a mix of exposed stone and render facades. The roofs are pitched and slated and step up the hill (fig.3). The houses front directly onto the street. Buildings are frequently grouped in small terraces with intermittent laneways and integral carriage arches providing access to long narrow rear back plots. The

simple terraced enclosure of the Main Street breaks up as the street meets the site. There is a detached 1-2 storey house located at the edge of the site (fig.4). The location of this building tight against the road leaves little room for a footpath on one side and there is no footpath on the other side. The building location obscures the vision lines for pedestrians and vehicles approaching the village from Derry Road. See Roadplan technical report for a full review of the existing road layout and recommendations.



Fig.3 Main Street on approach to junction with Derry Road



*Fig.4 House located at junction of site with N77.*



*Fig.5 Scout's Hall and large surface area car park.*



*Fig.6 Church set back from Road.*





**Fig.7 National School set back from Road.**

Beside the site is a protected structure with a large surface area carpark. The original structure was a national school and is currently being used as a Scout Hall (fig. 5). Opposite the site, is a large Church and the newer national school, both set back from the road (figs. 4+5).

The main area of the site is located behind the Main Street along Derry Road. Derry Road rises from the junction with the N77. The context here is more rural with a mix of agricultural fields and newer detached houses set back from the road (fig. 6).



**Fig.9 Derry Road**

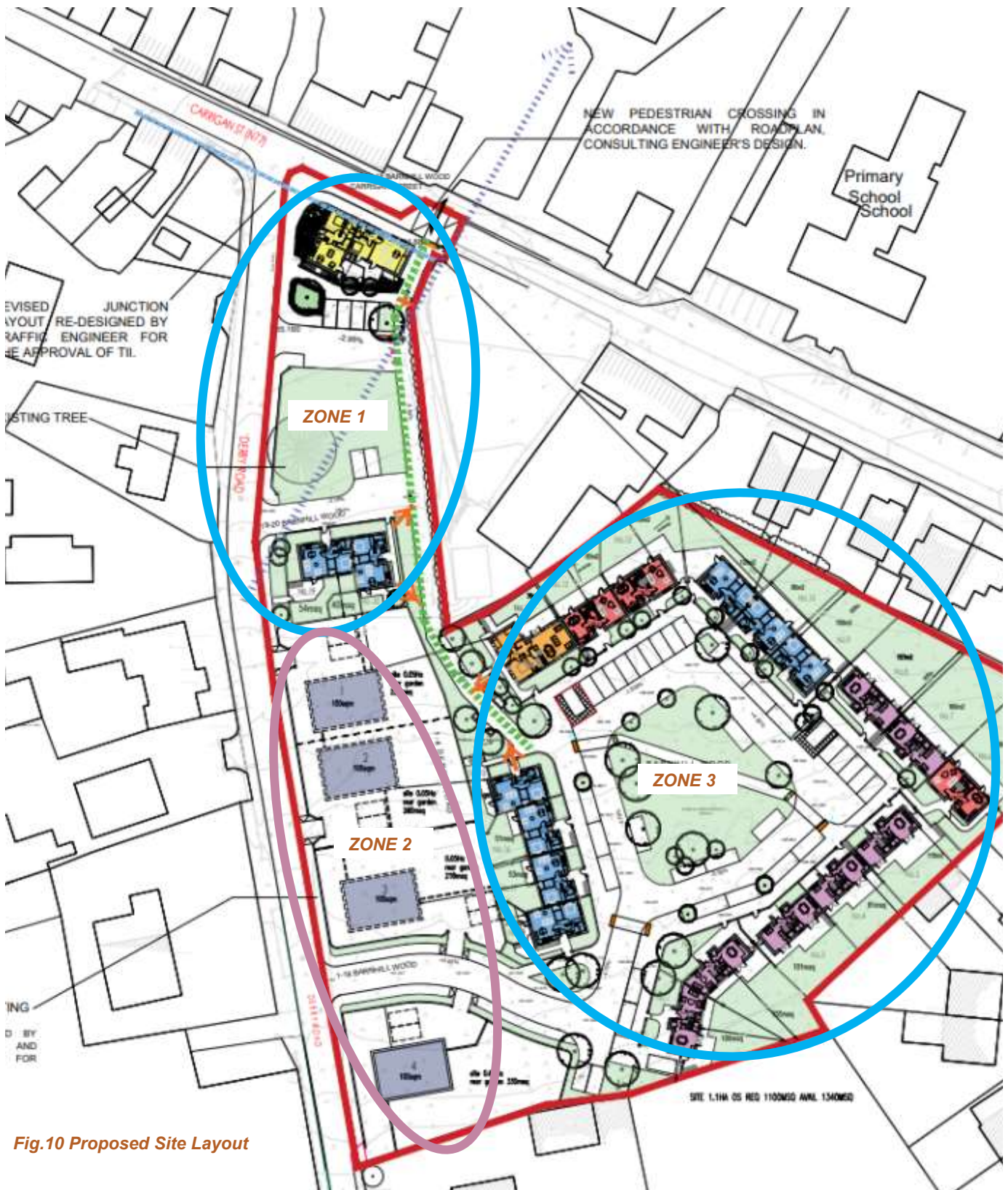


Fig.10 Proposed Site Layout

### 3.0 Site Development Strategy

The site is divided into 3 distinct areas ;

**Zone 1** - The northern part of the site addresses the N77 (Carrigan Street) and Derry Road. The existing building is to be demolished to allow this junction to be

redesigned to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety. This demolition will take place as an enabling works package to prioritise addressing the poor visibility and unsafe pedestrian provision in this location.

The demolished building will be replaced with a new structure similar in design, scale and layout to the





existing. The site to the rear of the existing house is a generous green space with a mature tree. It is proposed to largely retain this area to provide a new public open space. This open space will be overlooked by the new dwellings to the north and south of the space. There will be 6 no. 1 bed units provided in this zone. A new pedestrian route will run through the east of this open space connecting the main housing development and national school with a safe off road route. A new pedestrian crossing point will connect this new route with the school across the busy N77.

**Zone 2** - This zone is located along Derry Road. The proposal will deliver 4 no. services site in this area, accessed individually from Derry road. The sites are approximately 0.5Ha in size, facilitating the development of 4 no. medium detached houses in this location.

**Zone 3** - This development consists of 1 and 2 storey dwellings arranged around a central open space. A mix of unit types are proposed to provide a total of 18 homes in this development. Single storey units are located where the proposed development is closest to neighbouring dwellings, thereby reducing the impact. The first floor bedrooms of all 2-storey units have windows to the front only, with no bedroom overlooking existing rear gardens.

Derry Road improvements - In addition to the redesign of the junction of Derry Road with the N77, the proposed works include the provision of a footpath and public lighting along the stretch of Derry Road that bounds the site.

#### 4.0 Development Standards

##### 4.1 Proposed Accommodation

The proposal will deliver a total of 24 no. social houses and 4 no. serviced sites, improve the visibility at the junction of Derry Road and the N77 and provide new footpaths and public lighting.

The proposed social housing units align with the existing housing needs as illustrated in Table 1.

Unit Types	Required	%	Proposed	%
1 bed	51	66	13	46
2 bed	13	17	8	29
3 bed	9	12	3	11
4 bed	4	5	4 (private, ) via services sites	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>		<b>28 (24 social + 4 via services sites</b>	

Table 1 - Proposed mix of units

#### 4.2 National Standards

##### Density.

The Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (DHLGH), recommend a density of between 20-35dph for edge of centre sites for development within small towns and villages. The proposed density sits within this range at 23 DPH.

The site is zoned residential 2 under the provisions of the Laois County Development Plan, 2017-2023. The stated objective for this zoning is to provide for new residential development, residential services, and community facilities with a housing density of c.12-25 units per ha. The front part of the site facing the N77 is zoned town centre. Residential use is identified as a use that is open for consideration on lands that are zoned Town Centre and permitted on lands that are zoned Residential 2. The principle of the form and density (23DPH) of development proposed is therefore considered to be consistent with the land use zoning objective and acceptable in this location.

##### Unit areas and internal layouts.

The proposal is designed in accordance with the development standards outlined in the 'Design Manual





Item	Dev Plan	Proposed
<b>Public Open Space</b>	10%	10%
<b>Garden area 1+2 bed</b>	Min 60msq	All units with the exception of Units 15-20 exceed these standards. Units 15-20 are all 1 bed units, and have rear gardens ranging in size from 30 - 54msq. These are under the 60msq areas, however, these units all face directly onto generous open spaces and benefit from this amenity being on the doorstep.
<b>Garden area 3/4 bed</b>	Min 75msq	
<b>Apartment Private Open Space</b>	5msq	Min. 5msq
<b>Boundary walls</b>	Rear 1.8-2m conc. block / conc. post and panel	As per requirements
<b>Refuse/Recycling</b>	Provision for 3 bins per unit	As per requirements
<b>Parking</b>	2 per unit	50 spaces for 28 units. This is just under under 2 spaces per unit and includes designated accessible parking spaces. This is deemed acceptable due to teh predominance of 1 bed units in the scheme and teh proximity of the development to the town centre.

**Table 2 - Development Standards**

for Quality Housing' published by the Department of Housing and Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH). The compliance of proposed areas and room layouts is indicated in the architectural drawings of the proposed units.

### 4.3 County Development Plan Standards

The proposal generally complies with the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027. The slightly lower provision of car parking spaces is offset against the consideration that the site is within the village and proximate to all amenities, therefore promoting sustainable transport. There are two generous green space proposed within the development overlooked by the dwellings, this is offset against a small percentage of the 1-bed dwellings having rear gardens below the areas specified in the development plan. Table 2 compares the proposed development standards with the development plan standards. Where the proposal

deviates, this table includes the case for this.

### 5.0 Architectural Design

Durrow has a coherent vernacular architectural style with simple stone or rendered elevations and pitched slate roofs that step up the sloped streets. The proposed development is inspired by this simple architectural language and is detailed in a similar style.

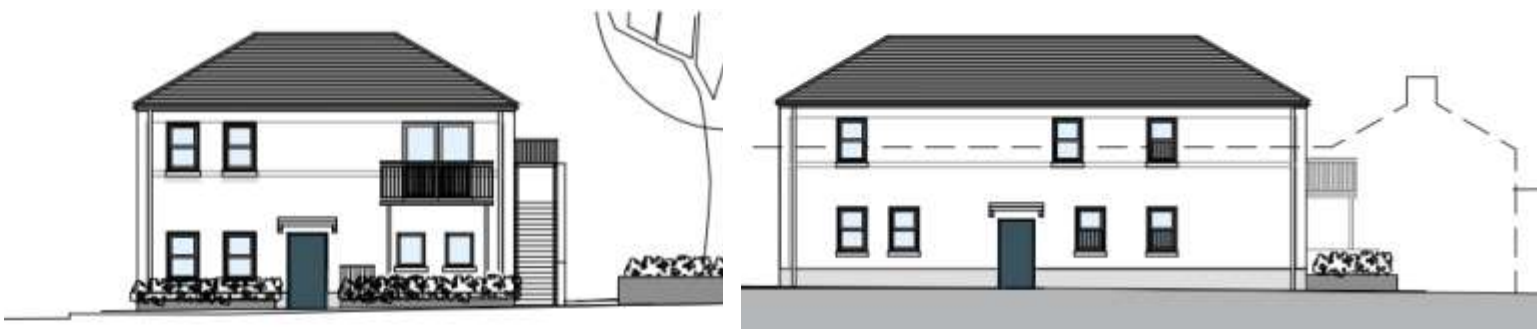
#### Main development

The proposed units have plain white rendered elevations with pitched slate roof that step up slopes (figs 11+12). Simple porches provide shelter for residents and modulate terraced elevations.

Units give active edges and surveillance to all open spaces. All units are minimum dual aspect, with corner units being triple aspect.



**Fig.11 Elevations of proposed 1, 2+3 Bed Houses**



**Fig.12 Duplex Unit Elevation to Derry Road**

**Duplex Unit Elevation to N77**





## **N77, Derry Road Junction**

The existing house at the corner of the N77 and Derry Road is to be demolished and replaced with a 2-storey Duplex unit. Refer to separate Architect/planning Report on the proposed demolition for further analysis of the existing structure.

The siting of the new 2 storey apartment development at this corner aligns with the dominant existing building line along the N77 (fig.12). This new location for a corner building on this site will allow for a wider footpath along the N77 and the provision of a new footpath on Derry Road. The position of the apartment unit will allow for sufficient visibility for pedestrians and vehicles at this junction. This will greatly improve the safety for all road users.

The proposed apartment unit is L-shaped, as per the existing building. The elevation turns the corner, providing active frontage to both the N77 and the Derry Road (Fig. 12). The siting, massing and design of this proposed structure is sympathetic with the existing village aesthetic while providing a strong visual element at this junction.

The living spaces are located to the rear, giving them protection from the busy N77. Landscaping protects the ground floor open space areas. The units will provide surveillance over the new public open space.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

The proposed development will provide 28 new homes in a mix of social housing and privately developed serviced sites. There is an urgent need for this accommodation, and the variety of unit types proposed address the existing houses need in the area in accordance with required densities.

The location of the site within the town settlement boundary aligns with the Compact Growth objective of

the National Planning Framework. This central location provides housing within an existing community, proximate to all the village amenities. This will contribute to the strengthening of a sustainable community in the village. This central location, and the provision of an off road pedestrian and cycle route will support sustainable travel.

The demolition of the existing structure on the site will address the existing road safety concerns at the Derry Road / N77 junction.

The design of the proposed housing development is in keeping with the existing village aesthetic. The proposed units are one and two storey dwellings, with simple rendered elevations arranged around two generous open spaces. This development will also provide a new footpath and public lighting along its boundary with Derry Road.

The proposal will benefit the existing community, providing much needed accommodation in this village. The two new public green spaces, new pedestrian route, footpath and lighting along Derry Road, and improved safety at the Derry Road/N77 junction will be a positive contribution for the village.