

COUNTY ARCHITECTS REPORT

Proposed Development consisting of:

The refurbishment and change of use of the former stable buildings and former council depot yards, to provide mixed-use cultural/arts/cafe/ restaurant uses together with retail use, WC's, storage areas and a switch room. South Dublin County Council intends to carry out development at the former South Dublin County Council Depot, at the Stables and Courtyards of Rathfarnham Castle and the adjoining Sean Keating Garden, Grange Road/Rathfarnham Road, Dublin14 (D14 FC62 & D14 XT02), Rathfarnham Castle (Protected Structure RPS. 221) Grange Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, on a development site of 1.1725 hectares.

Process under PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED) PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCEDURE UNDER PART 8 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED).



COUNTY ARCHITECTS REPORT – Part 8 – Post Display / Consultation	
Project Title:	<p>Castle Stables and Courtyards at Rathfarnham</p> <p>Proposed development consisting of the refurbishment and change of use of the former stable buildings and former council depot yards, to provide mixed-use cultural/arts/cafe/ restaurant uses together with retail use, WC's, storage areas and a switch room. South Dublin County Council intends to carry out development at the former South Dublin County Council Depot, at the Stables and Courtyards of Rathfarnham Castle and the adjoining Sean Keating Garden, Grange Road/Rathfarnham Road, Dublin14 (D14 FC62 & D14 XT02), Rathfarnham Castle (Protected Structure RPS. 221) Grange Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, on a development site of 1.1725 hectares.</p>
County Architect: Senior Architect:	<p>Cian Harte MRIAI Therese Pender MRIAI Architectural Services Department, South Dublin County Council</p>
Brief explanation of Part 8 Process carried out under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)	<p><i>Part 8 (Public Consultation Schemes)</i></p> <p><i>Developments by a local authority are subject to a public consultation process as set out in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). This procedure requires that notice of the proposed development be given in the public press and that a site notice be erected. If any submissions or observations are received, a report is presented to the members of the Council. This report contains a list of the observer's names along with a summary of the points made by them and the Local Authority's response.</i></p> <p><i>Arising from consideration of the representations, the report sets out whether or not it is proposed to proceed as originally planned or to proceed with a modified proposal.</i></p> <p><u>Development by a Local Authority: 'Part 8'</u></p> <p><i>From time to time the Local Authority may carry out development within its administrative area, such as the construction of houses, roads, swimming pools, public toilets etc.</i></p> <p><i>Development carried out by a Local Authority is often referred to as a 'Part 8': - this is reference to Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) which sets out the procedure for carrying out such developments.</i></p> <p><i>Public consultation is an intrinsic part of the 'Part 8' process. This is achieved by public notices, public display of the proposal, observations by members of the public, reportage on observations received and a recommendation that considers all internal and public observations. The consultation may extend to advisory consultation meetings with local community and interest groups dependent on the particular circumstances and impact of the proposal, though such meetings are not prescribed under the legislation. The primary purpose of the process is to notify the public of the proposal and incorporate any observations validly submitted into a report to inform the Council on its decision to recommend the proposal.</i></p>

Comments and observations on Proposed Developments by a Local Authority can only be received in writing between certain dates. The public notices should be referred to in this regard to ascertain the final date of receipt for observations.

Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) refers to requirements in respect of specified development by, on behalf of, or in partnership with Local Authorities. Part 8 applications are generally lodged by the proposing department within the Council. Article 80 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) sets out a list of the types of development prescribed for the purposes of the act.

The process is as follows:

Public Notices of the proposed development must be placed in an approved newspaper. A site notice (or notices) must be erected on the land on which the proposed development is situated – Article 81(1)(a)(b) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) provides guidance on the requirements.

The application, which must be submitted on the same date as the newspaper notice, must include a copy of the newspaper notice and site notice and drawings for public display of the proposal accessible to the public during normal office hours – via the Planning Portal. Drawings can be made available to the public on request.

There is no fee payable on a Part 8 application.

The application is referred to internal works Departments in the Council – (Roads, Water, and Drainage).

In the case of Protected Structures the application is referred to the Architectural Conservation Officer, and to the “Prescribed Bodies” under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001: Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Heritage Council, the Arts Council, Fáilte Ireland and An Taisce.

The timeframe for third party Observations/Submissions on the Part 8 application is six weeks from the date of lodgement. This date is specified in the public notices. (There are 5 weeks allowed for a normal planning application.) There is no fee for observations/submissions on a Part 8.

At the end of the period for observations/submissions, the proposing Department completes a report on the public display for the attention of the Executive Manager of the Planning Department. The Executive Manager will make a recommendation to the proposing department on foot of this report.

A report will then be compiled for a meeting of the Council. Following consideration of this report by the Council, the proposed development may be recommended, unless the local authority, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development, otherwise than as recommended in the report, or decides not to proceed with the development’ – as per Section 179(4)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

	<p><i>The making of a decision on a Part 8 application is a reserved function of the Council, while for a normal planning application this is an executive function.</i></p> <p><i>The above is a summary of the Part 8 requirement for consultation. It is intended for guidance only. The Planning Acts set out the requirements in full.</i></p>
<p>Public Notice:</p>	<p>South Dublin County Council</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PART 8 PUBLIC NOTICE</p> <p>Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) Notice of Proposed Development By A Local Authority</p> <p>Location: South Dublin County Council intends to carry out development at the former South Dublin County Council Depot, at the Stables and Courtyards of Rathfarnham Castle and the adjoining Sean Keating Garden, Grange Road/Rathfarnham Road, Dublin14 (D14 FC62 & D14 XT02), Rathfarnham Castle (Protected Structure RPS. 221) Grange Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, on a development site of 1.1725 hectares. The site is bounded by Castleside Drive to the north, Rathfarnham Road to the west and Rathfarnham Castle and its grounds to the south and east.</p> <p>Nature & Extent of the Proposed Development: Pursuant to the requirements of the above, notice is hereby given of the proposal to construct the following scheme by South Dublin County Council:</p> <p>The development will consist of the refurbishment and change of use of the former stable buildings and former council depot yards, to provide mixed-use cultural/arts/cafe/ restaurant uses together with retail use, WC's, storage areas and a switch room.</p> <p>Detailed Description of the works:</p> <p>1. Works to the building to the north of the castle known as Cromwell's Fort (GFA 269m²), and its change of use to two multi-purpose event spaces and associated lobby areas.</p> <p>The proposed works to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the removal of a modern flat roof covering and the replacement with a pitched roof with zinc finish and rendered masonry gable-ends; ii. the removal of the existing solid floor to the southern internal room and replacement with a new insulated floor slab and the insertion of a new raised floor to the northern room; iii. the removal of infill blockwork from existing openings and the provision of new windows and doors to existing openings; iv. Installation of new services, partitions and repair and repointing works as required, including application of lime render finish.

2. Works to the existing single storey former stable buildings (GFA 591m²) within the existing courtyards to the north of the Castle and change of use to cultural/arts spaces, retail, café/restaurant, public toilets and ancillary lobby, storage and services spaces. The proposed works to include:

- i. the removal of temporary roof coverings and the replacement with slate roof coverings;
- ii. the minor modification of roof profiles above 2no. entrance doorways to provide sufficient head height at entrances;
- iii. the removal of temporary bracing to windows and doors and replacement with new windows and doors to existing openings;
- iv. the insertion of a new opening to the western perimeter wall to provide a new public entrance to the courtyard immediately to the north of the castle, and the closing up of an adjacent existing doorway opening;
- v. The creation of new openings within dividing walls of the existing stable buildings to provide improved connection between the buildings;
- vi. The construction of a new single-storey mono-pitch extension (GFA 83m²) to the northern elevation of a former stable building;
- vii. New insulated floor slabs, installation of new services and repair, repointing and lime render works as required.

3. The provision of a new single storey café and restaurant and ancillary support space (area GFA 528m²) within the former council depot yards comprising:

- i) The demolition of a section of wall to the north-west to provide access between the proposed restaurant dining area and back of house areas;
- ii) The construction of a single storey mono-pitch structure in the north-west corner including clerestory windows facing north and west along the existing perimeter walls of the site to provide a café/restaurant dining area, and an associated single storey flat-roof structure to the north to provide ancillary support to the café/restaurant, including kitchens, staff and visitor WCs;
- iii) The provision of an internal plant room to the rear;
- iv) The provision of external ancillary support areas including a screened bin store, screened plant enclosure at ground level and screened rooftop plant enclosure;
- v) The provision of two new openings within the existing western perimeter wall to facilitate the insertion of secure entrance gates, to provide staff, deliveries and bin store access to the rear of the ancillary space and bin storage areas;
- vi) The provision of four new openings within the existing western perimeter wall to facilitate the insertion of new glazed window openings to the café/restaurant;
- vii) Repairs and repointing to the existing walls as required.

4. The provision of new, single storey, slated roof structures to the existing structures (GFA 33m²) to the north of the building known as the Seismograph Building consisting of:

- i) A secure bike store area and provision of 10no. long term bicycle storage spaces including 1no. enlarged bicycle space for a cargo bike;
- ii) A secure bin storage area for the retail spaces;

5.The demolition and reconstruction of the walls to the north and west of the northernmost former depot yard;

6.The provision of a new car park on part of the Sean Keating garden adjacent to the boundary with Castleside Drive, with entry from the existing Rathfarnham Road car park, including:

- i) the demolition of 2no. existing gate posts and part of the adjacent existing garden wall and railings, and the removal of 14no. existing trees to facilitate the construction of a new pedestrian and vehicular entrance, pedestrian footpath and delivery drop-off area;
- ii) the regrading and relevelling of the existing sunken pond and garden area to provide 54 no. car parking spaces (including 4no. accessible parking spaces and 10 no. EV parking spaces) and 42 no. short-term bicycle parking spaces to the north of the site and associated landscaping;
- i) The reconfiguration of the existing pedestrian entrance gate and new hard and soft landscaping to the north-west corner of the site to facilitate improved pedestrian access;

7.All associated site services, site development works and landscaping comprising:

- i) Removal of temporary cabin structures from the existing former council depot yards and associated site clearances;
- ii) The construction of new gated entrance and railings between Rathfarnham Castle forecourt and the proposed site;
- iii) The removal of 4no. car spaces from the existing Rathfarnham Road car park to provide a new enlarged pavement area adjacent to the entrance to the Café/Restaurant;
- iv) The reallocation of the existing bus set down area to accommodate a universally accessible set down area;
- v) The local regrading of the footpath within the Rathfarnham Road car park along the perimeter wall to the west of the courtyards to provide accessible entrance points to the courtyards;
- vi) The removal of part of southern end of the existing low level boundary wall between the existing car park and Rathfarnham Road to facilitate a new raised table and improved pedestrian crossing point; installation of a new access control gate to the carpark entrance from Rathfarnham Road;
- vii) The regrading and relevelling of the existing surfaces to facilitate universal access throughout the site
- viii) The provision of new hard and soft landscaping to the existing courtyards;
- ix) The provision of new secure entrance gates to the existing openings between the park and courtyards;
- x) The infilling with masonry construction of an existing unused entrance between the northern courtyard and the park to facilitate the regrading of the courtyard.
- xi) Installation of new drainage, attenuation and site services and associated trenching and reinstatement works.
- xii) Installation of new external site lighting to the car parking areas and courtyard spaces;
- xiii) Repairs and repointing of existing structures throughout, as required.

The former council depot yards and former stable buildings fall within the zone of notification for Rathfarnham Castle, a National Monument (RMP DU022-014, Nat.Mon. 628) and a Protected Structure (RPS. 221)

The proposed Part 8 development has undergone Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening under Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). No likely significant effects were identified during the AA and EIA Screening processes, or during an Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) prepared for the proposed development. Therefore, there is no requirement to proceed to the next stage of AA or for a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to be produced. In addition, the proposed development is not a type of development that triggers the requirement for an EIA and subsequent preparation of an EIA Report as per the prescribed classes of development and thresholds set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Any person may, within 4 weeks from the date of this notice, apply to An Bord Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Persons wishing to inspect drawings and particulars of the proposed development in person can do so as follows:

Plans and particulars of the proposed scheme will be available for inspection or purchase at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy for a period of four weeks from **Thursday 8th May 2025 to Friday 6th June 2025** only; at the Planning Department counter in the offices of South Dublin County Council, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24 between the hours 10.00am – 12.00 noon & 2.00pm to 4.00pm Monday to Friday, and at Ballyroan Library, Orchardstown Avenue, Dublin 14, D14 Vy33 between the hours 9.45am – 8pm Monday to Thursday and 9.45am to 4.30pm Friday to Saturday. Hours may differ at public and bank holidays.

The plans and particulars of the proposed development are also available for inspection online on the Councils Public Consultation Portal website (<http://consult.sdublincoco.ie>) during the period: **8th of May 2025 to 20th of June 2025**

Submissions:

Submissions or observations in relation to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated, may be made as follows:

Online at <https://consult.sdublincoco.ie> up to **11.59pm on Friday 20th of June 2025**

Or

Written submissions not later than **5.00pm, on Friday 20th of June 2025** to: Administrative Officer, County Promotion Unit, Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Development, South Dublin County Council, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Submissions should be labelled "**Castle Stables and Courtyard at Rathfarnham**".

NOTE: Please make your submission by one medium **only**. Only submissions received by **Friday 20th of June 2025** and addressed as set out above, will be considered. Submissions cannot be accepted in any other format or to any other postal address. Submissions and observations should state the name, address, and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc. which you represent.

Signed: Director of Economic,
Enterprise and Tourism Development
South Dublin County Council
Website: www.sdcc.ie

General	This Report contains a summary of relevant aspects of the proposed development. This report is to be read in conjunction with all other Part 8 drawings and reports which contain more detailed information and background to the proposed development
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Figure 1 - Aerial image of site from West

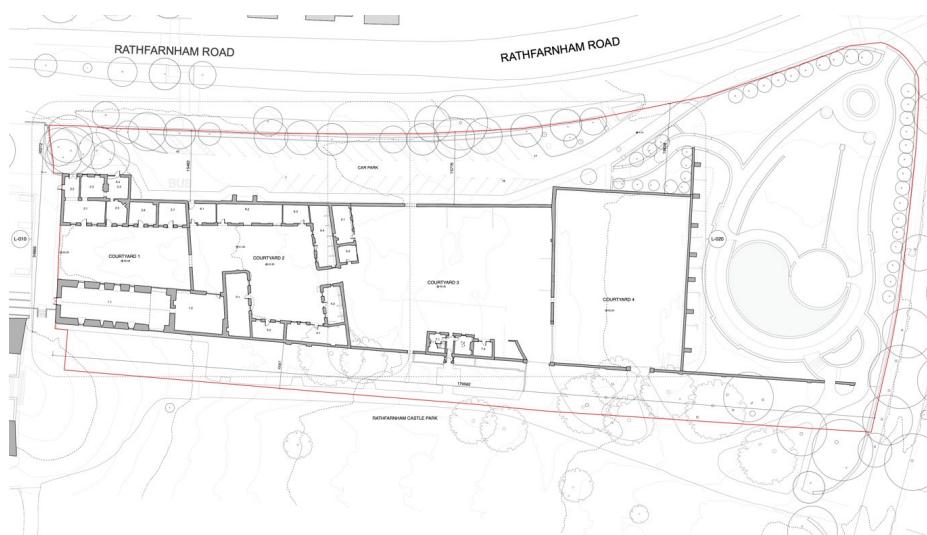


Figure 2 - Site Layout Plan with existing condition - Not to scale

<p>Context:</p>	<p>The subject site is located at the former South Dublin County Council Depot, at the Stables and Courtyards of Rathfarnham Castle and the adjoining Sean Keating Garden, Grange Road/Rathfarnham Road, Dublin14 (D14 FC62 & D14 XT02), Rathfarnham Castle (Protected Structure RPS. 221) Grange Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, on a development site of 1.1725 hectares. The site is bounded by Castleside Drive to the north, Rathfarnham Road to the west and Rathfarnham Castle and its grounds to the south and east.</p> <p>The development will consist of the refurbishment and change of use of the former stable buildings and former council depot yards, to provide mixed-use cultural/arts/cafe/ restaurant uses together with retail use, WC's, storage areas and a switch room. The provision of a new single storey café and restaurant and ancillary support space (area GFA 528m2) within the former council depot yards is proposed.</p> <p>The proposal allows for the provision of a new car park on part of the Sean Keating garden adjacent to the boundary with Castleside Drive, with entry from the existing Rathfarnham Road car park.</p> <p>The history of the Castle and demesne is set out in detail in the Design Statement by Howley Hayes Cooney Architects.</p> <p>The Castle was purchased by the Office of Public Works in 1987, including lands (c.1.24ha) immediately adjoining the building. The remaining lands (c.5.49ha) were brought under the control of Dublin Corporation. The extensions to the Castle, erected by the Jesuits, were removed and restoration works were put in train to restore the building.</p> <p>Over time, a full complex of farm buildings, stables and yards had been developed in close proximity to the Castle. Although many of the original gardens and associated structures no longer exist, there remain a number of structures and enclosed yards located to the north of the Castle. This complex contains four walled courtyards, stretching northwards from the rear of the Castle and with a combined area of 4,586m2.</p> <p>Conservation works to the Castle by the OPW facilitated the opening of the building to the public several years, also including a small café. A public car park was developed to the west, between the bypass road and the farmyard complex. However, the farmyards and farm buildings currently remain closed to the public and had been used in part as a depot by South Dublin County Council.</p> <p>By 2018, the farm buildings had fallen into considerable disrepair. South Dublin County Council undertook a programme of repair and renewal, including replacement of roofs.</p>
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Site Constraints

All required services are available on the subject site, and the proposed development has been considered as part of the overall planning/zoning for the area. The overall site rises gradually from Sean Keating Garden towards the Castle however no significant slope or other topographic constraint was identified. Existing topographic and utilities surveys have been carried out on the site.

A Tree Survey was carried out in January 2025. There are no trees or vegetation within the four courtyards. A bat survey was undertaken in February 2025, with no bat roosts identified in any of the existing buildings and onsite trees or tree lines. NRB Consulting Engineers have carried out an analysis of the local road network, aided by survey work, to establish the capacity and safety of this in relation to the proposed development. This is shown to be satisfactory as described in the Traffic & Transport Assessment Report.

As set out in the report by IAC Archaeology, nothing of archaeological significance was identified during the investigations. IAC further state that it is clear from the results and from analysis of the historic mapping, that the farmyard complex has been subject to ongoing development throughout its lifetime. Further archaeological monitoring will be required as the project develops through the construction stages.

Further site investigations will be carried out post-planning stage to ensure all constraints have been identified and that any impacts on the design of the proposed development can be considered and taken into account prior to construction.

Planning Context

Planning / Zoning for the site



Extract from South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028

Policy Context

The site falls within the zone of notification for Rathfarnham Castle which is a National Monument (Nat. Mon. 628) and is listed on the Record of Monuments and Places (DU022-014). It is also subject to a preservation order (PO no. 2/1986). It is afforded a degree of protection under the National Monuments Act (2004), as amended. The Castle is in State ownership while the stables and yards are in the ownership of South Dublin County Council. The Castle is also included on the Council Record of Protected Structures with reference number 221, and as the stable yard sits within its curtilage it is afforded protection under the Planning and Development Act (2000), as amended. It is also mentioned in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) description of Rathfarnham Castle (11216007).

Local Plans and Policy

South Dublin County Council is the planning control authority for Rathfarnham Castle Park, including the stables and yards site. Rathfarnham Castle Park is zoned 'Open Space' within the South Dublin County Council Development Plan (2022-2028) which states that the objective of the Open Space zoning is 'to preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities.'

Land uses that are listed as 'permitted in principle' are as follows: Allotments, Community Centre, Cultural Use, Open Space, Recreational Facility, Sports Club / Facility.

Land uses that are listed as 'open for consideration' are as follows: Agriculture, Bed & Breakfast, Camp Site, Car Park, Cemetery, Childcare Facilities, Crematorium, Education, Garden Centre, Guest House, Home Based Economic Activities, Hotel / Hostel, Housing for Older People, Outdoor Entertainment Park, Place of Worship, Public Services, Recycling Facility, Residential, Restaurant / Café, Shop-Local, Stadium, Traveller Accommodation.

Built Heritage Policies within the Development Plan include:

Policy NCBH19: Protected Structures

Conserve and protect buildings, structures and sites contained in the Record of Protected Structures and carefully consider any proposals for development that would affect the setting, special character or appearance of a Protected Structure including its historic curtilage, both directly and indirectly.

NCBH19 Objective 1:

To ensure the protection of all structures (or parts of structures) and their immediate surroundings including the curtilage and attendant grounds of structures identified in the Record of Protected Structures

NCBH19 Objective 2:

To ensure that all development proposals that affect a Protected Structure and its setting including proposals to extend, alter or refurbish any Protected Structure are sympathetic to its special character and integrity and are appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale and form. All such proposals shall be consistent with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DAHG (2011 or any superseding documents) including the principles of conservation.

	<p>NCBH19 Objective 3: To address dereliction and to welcome, encourage and support the rehabilitation, renovation, appropriate use and sensitive re-use of Protected Structures consistent with RPO 9.30 of the RSES.</p> <p>NCBH19 Objective 4: To support alternative uses for Protected Structures including former institutional sites in order to provide continued security of the heritage value of these buildings, attendant grounds and associated landscape features.</p> <p>Rathfarnham Village ACA Rathfarnham village is identified as an Architectural Conservation Area. The development of the village being closely linked with that of Rathfarnham Castle is noted in the development plan.</p> <p>See Doyle Kent & Altemars planning, screening and ecology reports for further information.</p>
<p>Project Description and Design</p>	<p>The development will consist of the refurbishment and change of use of the former stable buildings and former council depot yards, to provide mixed-use cultural/arts/cafe/ restaurant uses together with retail use, WC's, storage areas and a switch room. The provision of a new single storey café and restaurant and ancillary support space (area GFA 528m2) within the former council depot yards is proposed.</p> <p>The proposal allows for the provision of a new car park on part of the Sean Keating garden adjacent to the boundary with Castleside Drive, with entry from the existing Rathfarnham Road car park.</p> <p>Site area The overall site area is 1.1725 ha. The courtyard complex contains four walled courtyards, stretching northwards from the rear of the Castle, with a combined area of 4,586 m2.</p> <p>Proposed Development Area The proposed development at the Stables and Courtyards of Rathfarnham Castle and the adjoining Sean Keating Garden, is of modest scale. It will have a floor area of 1,520 m2 (both existing and proposed) compared to the existing 873 m2.</p> <p>The proposed development entails reinstatement of the existing buildings, with new uses, and some new structures, which are designed to harmonise with the existing pattern of development in scale and layout, located within the existing boundary walls of the courtyard environment. A highly conservative approach has been taken to demolition which is kept to the minimum.</p> <p>The Architectural Design Statement prepared by Howley Hayes Cooney Architects and the EIA Screening Report prepared by Doyle Kent Planning Partnership Ltd contain a comprehensive description of the proposed development, its design intent and influences and a description of how the proposed development has been considered to site within its context. SDCC intends to make Castle Courtyards and Stables at Rathfarnham more attractive and accessible as a visitor destination, to increase the economic benefit to Rathfarnham village, to</p>

improve the public park, and improve the connection between the park, Castle and the village. As part of these objectives, the council wishes to adapt the redundant former yards and outbuildings of Rathfarnham Castle into an economically viable mixture of appropriate public and visitor uses.

The Design Statement outlines an overall strategy for the re-use of the farmyard courtyards and buildings. It states that the courtyards should be preserved and brought back into use for community benefit, providing spaces to gather, socialise and interact with others. Historic boundary walls should be kept relatively intact, to ensure the quality and character of these enclosed spaces is maintained, though new openings could be considered, to improve connectivity with the park and village.



Figure 3 – Proposed Site Layout Plan - Not to scale



Figure 4 – Courtyard 1 looking north



Figure 5 – Courtyard 3 looking north



Figure 6 – Proposed Aerial View of site

Screening for Appropriate Assessment	<p>The Screening for Appropriate Assessment report has been prepared by Altemar Ltd on behalf of South Dublin County Council (the applicant), as part of the Part 8 application.</p> <p>In accordance with their obligations under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477/2011), South Dublin County Council must assess whether the proposed development could have 'likely significant effects' on any Natura sites. This document provides supporting information to assist the local authority with an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise, including: a description of the proposed development, details of its environmental setting, a map and list of Natura 2000 sites within the potential zone of impact, and an assessment of potential impacts.</p> <p>Conclusion of AA Screening Report: Concluding Statement</p> <p>The AA Screening report for Appropriate Assessment is based on the best available scientific information, applies the precautionary principle and shows that the proposed development poses no risk of likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.</p> <p>In reaching this conclusion, the nature of the project and its potential relationship with all European sites within the zone of influence have been fully considered. Therefore, it is considered that the application for consent for the proposed development does not require an Appropriate Assessment or the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).</p> <p>This conclusion was reached without considering or taking into account mitigation measures or measures intended to avoid or reduce any impact on European sites. Based on this conclusion it is submitted that the Competent Authority can determine, based on objective scientific information, that an Appropriate Assessment is not required.</p>
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Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment	<p>The Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment report has been prepared by Doyle Kent Planning Partnership Ltd on behalf of South Dublin County Council (the applicant), as part of the Part 8 application.</p> <p>Conclusion of EIA Screening Report: Concluding Statement</p> <p>The proposed development is sub-threshold in relation to the criteria and thresholds set out in Schedule 5, Part 2, of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended. It is concluded having regard to the nature, scale and location of the subject site, that the proposed development, by itself or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the environment (direct, indirect or cumulatively with other development). Accordingly, it is considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.</p>
Access and Traffic Management	<p>The site is accessible by car from its immediate suburban hinterland, Dublin City Centre (8km), and the M50 Motorway (4 km). There are a number of bus routes passing on Rathfarnham Road to/from City Centre, Blackrock/Rialto and Dun Laoghaire/Tallaght. The Luas stops at Windy Arbour and Dundrum site are a 40 mins walk away.</p> <p>In time the site will also be accessible to cyclists and walkers from the Dodder Greenway which is currently being developed and is part of SDCC core active travel network. When complete it will be approximately 17km in length linking the city centre along the Dodder Valley through the local suburbs of Terenure, Rathfarnham, Templeogue and Tallaght to rural and upland Dublin. The proposed Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre Bus Corridor Scheme will further support active travel bus, walking and cycling.</p> <p>A vehicular and pedestrian entrance is located off Castleside Drive which is the earliest known entrance to the castle. The existing car park for Rathfarnham Castle and the park is located off Rathfarnham Road with a pedestrian access point to the park at either end. It is laid out on a narrow linear plot between the bypass road and the line of the wall of the stables and yards. The car park is one way, entered and exited off the outgoing traffic lane only which can create issues if the carpark is full as drivers have to loop back out through Rathfarnham Road and the village. It is proposed to upgrade the existing carpark to create generous pedestrian circulation and entrance areas to the redeveloped complex. Areas are to be retained for bus parking, bin/service/deliveries and fire truck access.</p> <p>NRB Consulting Engineers have carried out an analysis of the local road network, aided by survey work, to establish the capacity and safety of this in relation to the proposed development. This is shown to be satisfactory as described in the <i>Traffic & Transport Assessment Report</i>. The assessment notes that the proposal is a relatively small development in traffic generation terms. It is concluded that there are no adverse or significant traffic/transportation capacity or operational issues associated with the proposed development. A Planning Stage <i>Mobility Management Plan</i> is included with the said report. This sets out the parameters for a more detailed plan to be undertaken when the project has been advanced. It focuses on provision of alternative modes of travel, including walking, cycling and public transport.</p>

Car Parking and Provision of Cycle Parking

The Sean Keating garden will be regraded and relevelled, including infilling of the existing sunken pond. The area will be laid out to provide 54 no. car parking spaces (including 4no. accessible parking spaces and 10 no. EV parking spaces).

As part of the design process, SDCC carefully assessed multiple options for parking, including the feasibility of integrating it within the main site. However, concerns were raised that locating the parking within the existing historical walls would compromise the integrity and fabric of the national monument, posing an unacceptable risk to its heritage value. SDCC investigated an option to locate the car park extension in Courtyard 4 but found this was inefficient and would require considerable change within the yard for car access. This was ultimately deemed an inappropriate use for an important historic setting.

The Conservation Management Plan noted that car parking should be considered as part of any future development to support the site's long-term viability. It identified limited opportunities for parking within the current site layout but suggested that Sean Keating Garden—a space north of the stables complex and outside the garden wall with no discernible heritage value—could be a viable location.

The Part 8 proposal sets the carpark extension within a new garden setting that takes its cue from the orthogonal path layout of the nineteenth century ordnance survey maps, in particular the second edition 25" map of circa 1865. Reinstatement of the historic paths will also generate improved connections with the site boundaries and walls, improving links with the wider area. The carpark is designed to 'bed in' using grasscrete parking bays, planting and permeable surfaces to minimise visual impact to the park and surrounding streets. A heavily landscaped 'belt' around the edge of the site will further integrate the new carpark within its suburban park setting. The loss of any usable public space in the existing garden is more than counter balanced by the quantity and quality of new public space created by the reactivation of the courtyard spaces, and improved access and links to the castle, park and village.

Public short term bicycle parking for 42 spaces is integrated within the new carpark and landscape areas for those arriving to Rathfarnham via bicycle. The spaces are located in accessible areas with good passive surveillance and pedestrian flow. Staff long-term bicycle parking for 10 bikes and 1 cargo bike is provided in covered and secured parking in the existing shed adjacent to the Seismograph house.

Landscape and Public Realm	<p>The Design Rationale – Landscape Architecture, by DFLA, sets out a strategy for the landscaping of the site, including responding to the potential range of functions in each of the courtyard spaces.</p> <p>The landscape proposals aim to integrate the existing site context, architecture, improved circulation and accessibility, traffic, civil engineering, lighting, archaeological and ecological considerations with the public realm design. Minimum works are proposed along the avenue to the Castle, with a new path leading from a reopened garden gate as a secondary entrance into Courtyard 3. The overall design intent within the courtyards is to allow for flexible uses and events while providing ample spaces for seating and gathering.</p> <p>The proposals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal access as an underlying principle throughout all the proposed spaces. • Opportunities for seating through the proposed public realm. • Appropriate areas associated with intended building uses. • Refining and clarifying pedestrian access from surrounding area. • Providing a biodiverse environment where possible, with trees and planting where appropriate. • The restrained use of high quality and appropriate materials throughout. • The re-use of the existing cobbles within the courtyards within the public realm <p>A Tree Survey was carried out in January 2025. There are no trees or vegetation within the four courtyards. The open space to the north contains some pleached limes and box hedging to be largely retained as part of the proposal. Some existing trees are proposed to be removed to create an improved pedestrian access at the most southern entrance to the existing carpark along Rathfarnham Road and to create an improved carpark entrance into the new extended carpark area. The loss of these trees will be more than counterbalanced by the quantity of proposed new tree planting throughout the site area and will be a fundamental element in terms of establishing the character of the public spaces.</p>
Fire	<p>The complex is predominately single storey and relatively straightforward in terms of a fire safety approach. All public spaces will have escape in two directions directly to open air. Fire compartmentation is proposed around the kitchen and plant areas of the café/restaurant. Non-combustible materials and linings are proposed within all internal spaces and will be designed to be appropriate for the more important rooms such as Cromwell's Fort. Fire fighting vehicles will have access to nearly all areas of the courtyards and all building facades and roofs.</p>

Refuse Storage	Each element of the complex will require designated refuse storage, and a dedicated bins store is proposed in the existing shed adjacent to the Seismograph house for most of the development. The café/restaurant kitchen is provided with its own dedicated bin storage next to the kitchen and back of house areas where refuse can be segregated, sorted and stored until collection. All bins will be collected in the existing carpark out of hours and on a managed basis.
Flood Risk	CORA have examined the potential for flooding, including consideration of the flood zones identified in the County Development Plan. There is no record of flooding on the site, and it is not located in a flood zone. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no flood risk on the site. Please see <i>Water Supply and Wastewater Management Plan & Flood Risk Assessment</i> , by CORA Consulting Engineers for further detail.
Ancillary Works to Project:	See Drainage & Foul Drawings by CORA Consulting Engineers
Project Partners	Economic, Enterprise and Tourism Directorate South Dublin County Council
Internal Comments	Will be reported at final stage of Part 8.
Surface Water and SUDS strategy.	As set out in the <i>Stormwater Management Plan</i> , by CORA, surface water is to be treated using nature-based solutions as far as possible. The new building in Courtyard 4 will have a green roof. It is proposed to employ attenuation tanks to serve the courtyards and the new parking area. The subsequent discharge is to be connected to the existing surface water network. Measures to deal with surface water runoff during construction are outlined in the <i>Preliminary Construction and Environmental Management Plan</i> . The design of the sustainable urban drainage will be progressed at detail design in collaboration with SDCC parks, roads and urban drainage teams to optimise all green infrastructure and deliver an integrated system that ensures compliance with the principles set out SDCC Suds guidance. Solar panels will be incorporated on the roof of the proposed new building for ancillary services to the restaurant in North Courtyard.
Irish Water, Water Supply and Foul Drainage	The engineering drawings and the report titled <i>Water Supply and Wastewater Management Plan & Flood Risk Assessment</i> , by CORA Consulting Engineers, sets out proposals for drainage and water supply. There is an existing foul sewer located in courtyard 04 which connects to an Irish Water sewer on Castleside Drive. CORA Drawing no. C0003 shows the proposed foul drainage which is to connect to this sewer. The water supply will be taken from the Uisce Éireann existing watermain located to the east of the site. In order to comply with current Building Regulations a new fire hydrant is required. The water supply layout is shown on CORA drawing C0004.

Invasive Non- native Species (INNS)	<i>Altemar Marine and Environmental Consultants</i> have compiled an <i>Ecological Impact Assessment</i> report in respect of the proposed development at Rathfarnham Castle. No rare or plant species of conservation value were noted during the field assessment. No invasive species listed in Articles 49 & 50 of the Habitats Directive (2011) were noted on site. No signs of terrestrial mammals of conservation importance were noted on site.
County Heritage Officer	The EIA screening indicates no evidence of the breeding places of species protected under the Wildlife Act.
Contract:	The project will be carried out under The Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF) Public Works Contract. Performance Bond will be retained to appropriate level as required under the contract.
April 2025	Cian Harte County Architect