



Cathal O'Meara Landscape Architects
2Mc Sweeney St, Fermoy, Cork.

Preliminary Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Residential Development at Redforge Road, Blackpool, Cork.

Client: Bellmount Developments

Project: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for proposed residential development

Date: August 2021

Landscape Architects: Cathal O'Meara Landscape Architects,
2 Mc Sweeney St,
Fermoy,
Co. Cork.

Issue: Final

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Methodology
- 3.0 Description of the Receiving Environment
- 4.0 Description of the Proposed Development
- 5.0 Potential Landscape Effects
- 6.0 Potential Visual Effects
- 7.0 Summary of landscape and visual impacts
- 8.0 Conclusion

- Appendix 1 Landscape drawings
 - Propose Landscape Plans Ground Level
 - Proposed Landscape Plans Roof garden

- Appendix 2 Photomontage views prepared by Pedersen Focus Ltd

1.0 Introduction

Catha O'Meara Landscape Architects have been commissioned to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed development, which seeks to construct a mixed height residential accommodation complex ranging from four to nine storeys.

The site is located on the site of Millfield Service Station, Redforge Road, Cork. As such this assessment looks at the planning context for the site as well as the landscape context of the wider area.

This report has been prepared in tandem with a series of Landscape drawings of the proposed development and is included as Appendix 1 to this report (in A3 format). A series of Photomontages of the proposed development prepared by Pedersen Focus Ltd is included as Appendix 2 (also included in A3 format). These photomontage locations are the subject of the assessment in Section 6 of this report.

Further supporting documentation is included with this planning application and includes

- Planning and Design Statement prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning, and Butler Cammoranesi Architects
- Application form prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning;
- Summary report of Engineering issues- Water; Flood Risk; EirGrid; Broadband –
- Photomontage Report – Pedersen Focus Ltd
- Building Lifecycle Report – Butler Cammoranesi
- Sunlight / Daylight Analysis - Engineering Consultants
- Report on Possible Environmental Impacts - McCutcheon Halley Planning
- Statement of Consistency – Planning Guidelines including DMURS - McCutcheon Halley Planning
- Site Location Maps prepared by Butler Cammoranesi;
- Site layout plans, floor plans and sectional and elevational drawings prepared by Butler Cammoranesi Architects;
- Wind Microclimate Study

2.0 Methodology

This assessment methodology follows best practice advisory guidelines set out in the following guidance documents

- Guidelines for landscape & Visual Impact Assessment” 3rd Edition, published by the Landscape Institute (UK), - (2013).
- Draft Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA 2017) and the Draft Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements (EPA, 2015)
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (August 2018)

This assessment has regard to related documents, specifically

- Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021
- Cork County Draft Landscape Strategy (2007)
- Draft North Blackpool LAP (2011)

This methodology includes a desktop analysis of the existing landscape area, including specific designations and land use patterns. Two site visits were undertaken to assess the likely visibility and consequent visual impact of the proposed development. Cathal O’Meara Landscape Architects undertook these visits of the site and from the roads in the vicinity during June/July 2020. The conditions were overcast but with good visibility.

The following maps were included as part of the desktop review and were also used as field references.

- 1:50,000 OSI Discovery Series (Map 80)

A digital OSI Map was also used, in compiling this report.

In order to classify the significance of effects/impacts of the proposed development the “Draft Guidelines on information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2017)” was used, specifically Table 7.1 as indicated below.

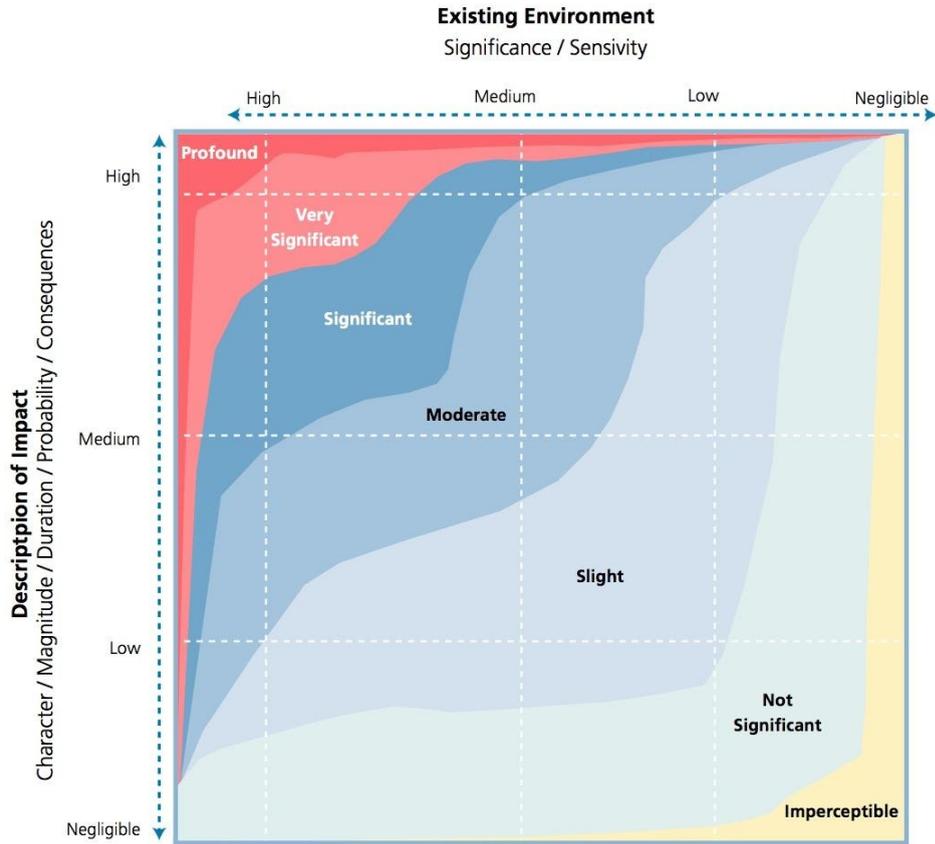


Figure 1. Classification of Significance of effects (impacts), EPA, 2017



Figure 2. Location of Photomontages/principal (distant) receptors selected



Figure 3. Location of Photomontages/principal (distant) receptors selected

3.0 General Description of the Receiving Environment

A detailed description of the landscape and surrounding context to the proposed development is included below. This description is sub-divided under separate headings to allow a structured overview of the existing landscape context as it relates to the sensitivity of the site and the proposed development.

3.1 Existing Context

The site is located to the north of Cork City Centre identified as the North Central Suburbs in the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021. The site is located on the Redforge Road and is currently functioning as a petrol station and associated shop. The National Road the N20 is 150 meters to the west, with the Cork-Mallow Rail corridor approximately 60 meters to the northeast. This elevated railway line is cut into the steep embankment above Blackpool. This embankment rises from the relatively flat valley floor.

Recent developments to the south of the site underscore a process that is defining the wider North Blackpool area. This process, already well underway, has seen the decline of older manufacturing industries and the growth in commercial and retail development. This pattern of development is evident in adjacent lands to the south of the site where a series of retail and residential buildings have developed in recent decades rising to 9 stories.

The lands to the north are currently in a derelict state having previously been granted permission for the construction of 18Nr terraced houses on the site of

Millfield Cottages. Similar permission for residential use has also been granted for the site of the former Sunbeam factory.

The site for the proposed development extends to 0.73Ha and is bounded to the east by the Redforge Road and to the south by the access lane to the Blackpool Retail Park. The site contains very limited existing vegetation as the forecourt is mostly composed of macadam and block paving. However present onsite are 4Nr semi-mature Quercus (Oak) sp, a semi mature Prunus (Cherry) sp, a semi mature Betula (Birch) sp and a semi mature Fagus (beech) Sp . Some ornamental planting exists in a linear bed parallel to the Redforge Road. An overgrown Grisellinia hedge also exists on the northern site boundary.

3.2 Site significance

The site is situated in the Blackpool ‘District Centre’ to the north of the City Centre. The site is contained to the east by the Redforge Road and the adjacent steeply sloping embankment. To the south and west the site is contained by the blank facades of adjoining Retail Park developments/multi-storey car park.

3.3 Outline Planning Policy

In the Cork City Development Plan the site is located in the north of the City in the North Central Suburbs and is zoned as Objective 8, “District Centres”. It should be noted that “In addition to retail uses, District Centres will also provide a focus for other uses, including: retail warehousing, retail office, commercial leisure, services, (e.g. libraries, hotels, personal and medical services) and residential uses”.

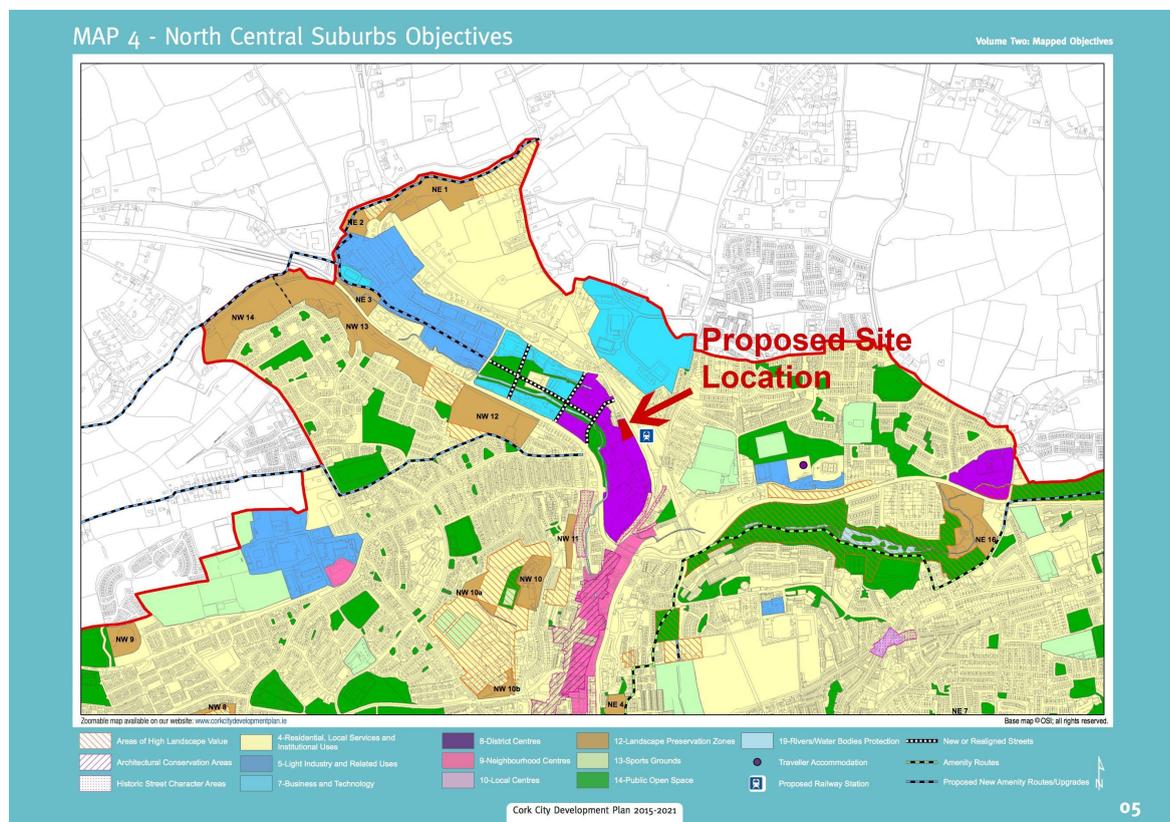


Figure 3. Extract from Cork City Development Plan showing North Central suburbs development objectives

Goal 5 of the Core Strategy (Chapter 2, P.15) of the Cork City Development Plan, states that “There are ... opportunities for creation of new character areas in locations such as Docklands, Mahon and Blackpool and at the arrival points or gateways into the city”. The concept of Gateways and District Centres are further expanded on within this report.

3.4 Zone of Visual Influence and Potential Visual Receptors

The zone of visual influence is the extent of potential visibility of the site from the landscape and is contained by topography and built structures. With respect to the subject site this visual envelope is defined principally by the geography of the area. This contains a valley floor with a steeply sloping hillside to its east, and occasional ridgelines. Views towards these ridgelines are protected in the Cork City Development Plan. Due to this topography as well as the presence of the existing Blackpool retail center the number and spread of potential visual receptors is generally limited to views of the single dominant element, the 19 storey residential block. This slender vertical profile constitutes a focal point in the landscape anchoring long distance views and giving vertical expression to this developing area. Owing to its height, this principal element will be visible throughout much of the north of Cork City.

Objective 10.6 of the current Cork City Development Plan states that “There will be a presumption against development that would harm, obstruct or compromise the quality or setting of linear views of landmark buildings, panoramic views, rivers prospects, townscape and landscape views and approach road views”.

Within the surrounding area of North Central Suburbs there are a number of protected views. Protected views with the potential to be impacted are listed in the attached map extract from the current development plan and include:

View point	Receptor ID	Location	View to	Direction of Proposed site
LT 21	9	Glenthorne – Dublin Hill	Southwest - St Finbarr’s/ Farranferris	West
LT 21A	7	North Ring Road	West - St Finbarr’s/ Farranferris	Northwest
LT 24A	17	N20/Mallow Rd	Landscape/ Townscape View	Southeast

			approaching City	
Panoramic assessment Point	9	Hawthorn Mews, off Dublin Hill Middle	Panoramic assessment Point	All
Panoramic assessment Point	18	St Anne's Church, Shandon	Panoramic assessment Point	North

Further protected views exist and are detailed on Map 14 - Views and Prospects: North-East and Map 15 - Views and Prospects: North-West, however these will not be affected by the proposed development.

Twelve additional views from the wider landscape have also been considered to represent a complete picture of the potential impact of the proposed building on the receiving environment. These are described further in Chapter 6 and are located in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

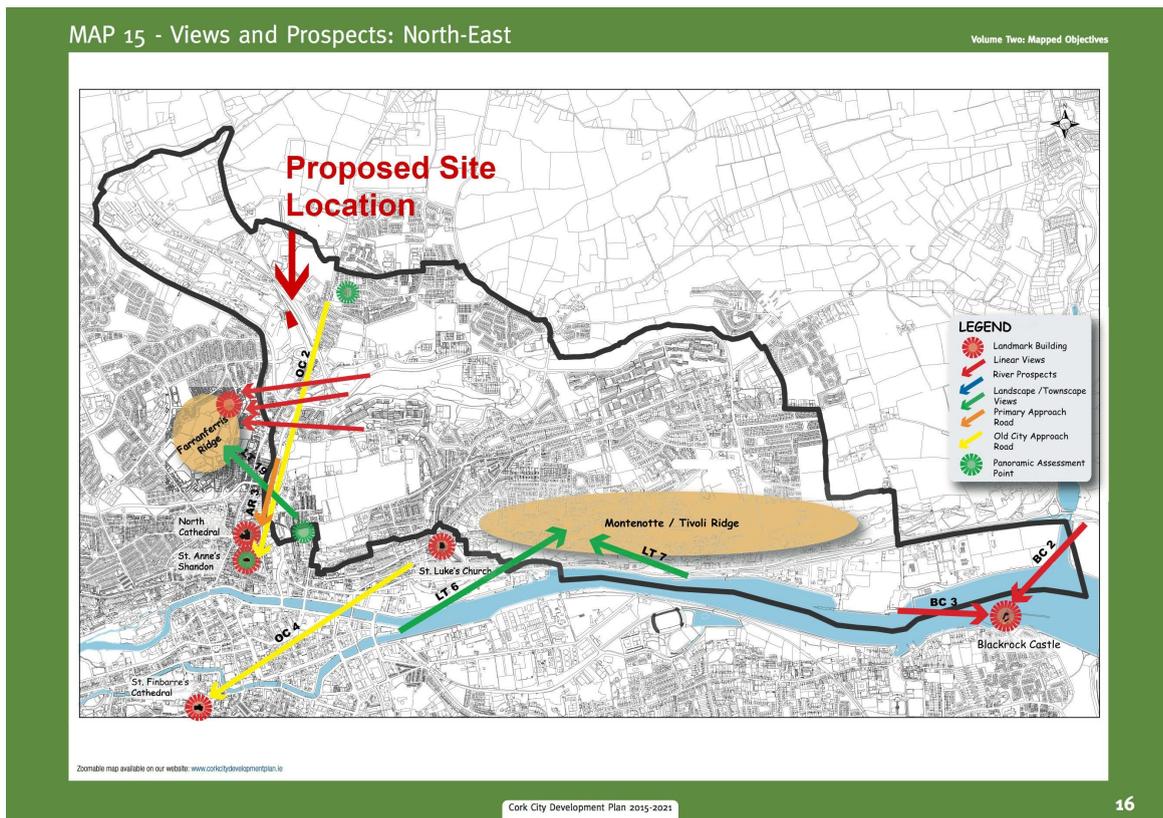


Figure 4. Extract from Cork City Development Plan showing views and prospects in the North-east of Cork City

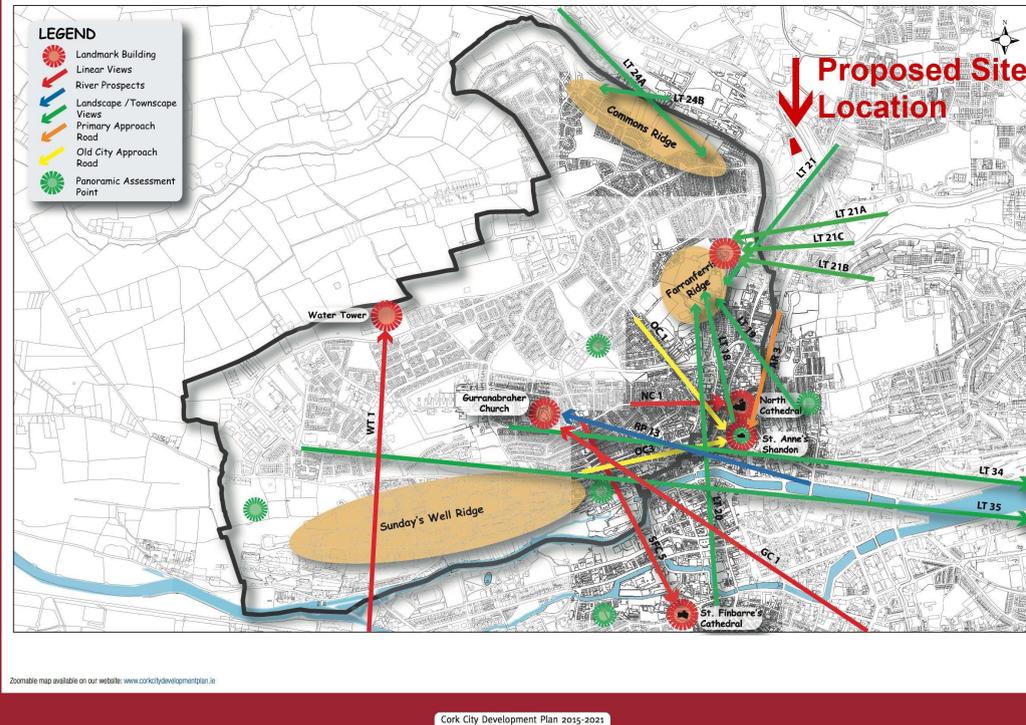


Figure 5. Extract from Cork City Development Plan showing views and prospects in the North-west of Cork City

4.0 Description of the Proposed Development

Bellmount Developments Limited intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála for a 5-year planning permission for a strategic housing development at Millfield Service Station, Redforge Road, Blackpool, Cork.

The development will consist of:

- The demolition of existing structures on site including a single storey building, pump island canopy, 4 no. fuel pumps and the decommissioning/removal of 4 no. underground fuel tanks; and
- The construction of 114 no. Build to Rent apartments (comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments) in 2 no. blocks, ranging in height from 4 to 9 storeys;
- 1 no. 313 sqm retail unit;
- Residential amenity facilities including a reception, residents gym, lounge area and shared workspace;
- The provision of landscaping and amenity areas including an enclosed courtyard and 1 no. rooftop garden;
- The provision of public realm improvements on Redforge Road including widened footpaths and pavement improvements, pedestrian crossing, tree planting, raised tables/*planters and seating areas; and*
- All associated ancillary development including pedestrian/cyclist facilities, lighting, drainage, boundary treatments, bin and bicycle storage, ESB Sub-station and plant at ground floor level.

5.0 Potential Landscape Effects

5.1 Landscape Sensitivity

The assessment of potential landscape effects considers the sensitivity of the landscape resource and the magnitude of landscape change, which would result from the development. By employing these criteria, the potential significant impacts (prior to mitigation measures) are considered to occur where highly sensitive landscape and visual receptors occur with high order landscape and visual effects.

The site contains an existing petrol station (Millfield) including a covered forecourt and Gala shop with associated container stores and extensive surface car parking. Limited existing landscape features exist onsite. Visually the site presents a largely level surface with some shrub/ornamental planting adjacent to the roadside. The site is overlooked on its west and south by the adjoining blank facades of the Blackpool shopping centre and multi-storey car park.

Redforge Road and the wider Blackpool area is currently an area undergoing significant change. The North Blackpool Local Area Plan in its vision for the area cites the intention ‘to develop its role as the economic and social heart of the northside of the city and gateway to the city’. Given this developing context, it is appropriate to characterise the site as having a Medium level of Landscape Sensitivity.

5.2 Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of landscape change is a crucial measurement to assess the degree to which change is perceived. The same element can impact visual receptors to different degrees depending on proximity, orientation and landscape context. The proposed development will represent a Low degree of change to the existing landscape and visual character of the wider lands surrounding the site. The proposed development is comprised of a stepped building height, which has differing potential to cause landscape change.

In summary, the proposed works would accumulatively result in a Medium magnitude of change during the construction period due to the presence of cranes on the skyline. After construction the development would result in a Low change in the landscape. It is further however noted that the anticipated landscape change is consistent with the site and its evolving context as the northern City Gateway, a process already well underway.

5.3 Significance of Potential Landscape Effects

Considering the urban context of the landscape and the magnitude of change proposed, the significance of the potential landscape effects could be classified as Slight. The changes would take place in an urban landscape that is noted as being a “City Gateway” and a “District Centre” where the proposed development and its vertical expression would result in a continuation of the anthropomorphic progression of the wider site, consistent with the characteristics of this developing area.

6.0 Potential Visual Effects

In order to determine the potential visual effects on views and visual amenity a number of viewpoints were determined to represent key visual receptors in the receiving environment. These are based on the analysis of the receiving environment (Chapter 3).

Eighteen viewpoints were selected for detailed visual impact assessment informed by photomontages of the proposed development. These images are presented as a before and after analysis.

In the case of each of the views proposed a description is provided identifying the following:

- Key elements and characteristics of the existing view;
- Sensitivity of the view;
- Proposed change to the view;
- Conclusion of the significance of the potential visual effects.

6.1 Viewpoints (Please refer to appendix 2 for Photomontages, prepared by Pedersen Focus Ltd)

Viewpoint 1:

Junction of Knockpogue Av and Popham's Road 909 meters from the site.

Existing View:

This viewpoint represents the elevated site of the Church of the Resurrection, Farranree. The viewpoint is defined by the linear expression of Popham's Road. This expression serves to establish a distant focal point on Dublin Hill. The existing context of Dublin Hill contains extensive housing developments in its lower reaches with the upper fields retaining agricultural function and demarking the City/Country threshold.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this view represents an elevated panorama and the site of a place of Worship Viewpoint Sensitivity is High.

Proposed Change:

The receptor location was chosen to represent a worst-case scenario concerning the impact on the proposed development on the adjacent Church of the Resurrection and the residential amenity of the wider area . The proposed development would be visible largely as a single built expression, with the lower massing's screened by the existing built environs. The maximum height of the development while not insignificant, will not project above the existing built horizon and will appear consistent with neighbouring buildings. Magnitude of proposed change will be Low.

Conclusion/Summary:

The proposed development represents a Low level of change in the view and is consistent with the evolving character of this area. Positive visual attributes are evident with the proposed scheme. The introduction of City District Centre elements will solidify the suburban nature of views towards Dublin Hill, and reinforce a sense of built hierarchy. The significance of the visual effects at this location would be Slight and on balance Positive.

Viewpoint 2, 3:

These views have been considered together given the similarity of viewpoint and impact.

View 2: Junction of Knockpogue Av and Popham's Road 639 meters from the site.

View 3: Fairfield Avenue at Kilnap Green approximately 642 meters from the site.

Existing Views:

These elevated panoramic views represent a largely residential area. Extensive views of the northeast of Cork City are visible and contain a blend of agricultural fields, wooded parcels and terraced residential estates, culminating in the distant wooded Montenotte/Tivoli Ridge.

Viewpoint Sensitivities:

As these views represent elevated panoramas and adjacent residential amenity, Viewpoint Sensitivity is High.

Proposed Change:

Changes to these viewpoints are considered within the context of a multi-layered urban cityscape. The distant views of the Montenotte/Tivoli Ridge will remain, as will views of Dublin Hill. The proposed building will not break the skyline of Dublin Hill from this viewpoint. Magnitude of proposed change will be Low.

Conclusion/Summary:

The proposed development represents a Low level of change in the views, consistent with the evolving character of this area. Positive and negative attributes are evident with the proposed scheme. The introduction of City District Centre elements (positive) are balanced against the loss of some views towards the wooded valley floor (negative). The significance of the visual effects at this location would be Slight-Moderate, and on balance Neutral.

Viewpoint 4:

Beechwood Grove 772 meters from the site.

Existing View:

This view looks east across the northern city landscape terminating in long distance views of the southern city ridge. Medium distance views are informed by the derelict former Sunbeam factory site, adjacent industrial occupancy and the linear interruptions of electricity and telecom wires.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this view represents an elevated panorama and adjacent recreational amenity, Viewpoint Sensitivity is Medium-High.

Proposed Change:

The proposed Magnitude of Change will be Medium, given the location of the proposal. Long distant views of the southern city ridgeline will remain unaffected. It is likely, depending on the exact height of the receptor that some loss of views of the wooded valley of Blackpool will occur.

It is noted in the Draft Blackpool LAP that the southern portion of the Commons Ridge is zoned as “Residential, Local Services, Institutional and Civic uses”. Some change in long distance views is possible absent the current development.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects therefore at this location would be Moderate-Slight, and on balance Neutral.

Viewpoint 5:

Fairfield Avenue adjacent to Mulberry Park, approximately 412 meters from the site.

Existing View:

This location represents both a transitory view as one descends Fairfield Avenue and also the residential amenity of proximate housing. Views are similar to receptors two and three, although owing to the loss of elevation significantly less expansive. Long distance views terminate in the terraced residential developments of Dublin Hill.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

Given the adjacent residential amenity Viewpoint Sensitivity is classified as Medium.

Proposed Change:

The existing 9 storey development at Heron Gate currently breaks the skyline from this receptor. This singular element acts as a focus for short distance views. The proposed development although rising to 9 stories will appear slightly lower in height owing to its distant location. The addition of this built element within the composition will balance the vertical tension from this frame of view. Magnitude of proposed change will be Medium.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects at this location would be Moderate, and on balance Neutral.

Viewpoint 6:

Pedestrian access to Blackpool Shopping Centre from N20, 610 meters from the site.

Existing View:

This viewpoint represents a slightly elevated receptor commonly viewed both in transit from the N20, or as a pedestrian accessing the shopping centre car park. The foreground is dominated by the tarmacked expanse of the car park and contains limited planting. The largely blank façade to Dunnes Stores restricts views to the east. A small portion of the residential developments of Dublin Hill are visible between the buildings of the shopping centre/retail park .

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

Owing to the expansive nature of the foreground car park the Viewpoint Sensitivity is classified as low

Proposed Change:

No Change will be evident from this receptor.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects at this location would be Imperceptible.

Viewpoint 7:

Mount Farran Road, off the Glen Avenue approximately 606 meters from the site.

Existing View:

Views at this location are principally dominated by the expansive nature of the North Ring Road. However elevated houses also exist adjacent to this receptor. The foreground of this viewpoint is characterised by the North Ring Road and adjacent walls and fences. The middle ground context is informed by views of Blackpool Shopping Centre and Retail Park. The background contains wooded views of the Blackpool River Valley and terminates in elevated agricultural fields.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this viewpoint represents different receptors (residences or vehicles in transit) the sensitivity may be deemed Medium-Low.

Proposed Change:

The proposed development will not alter protected views. Some very minor loss of the wooded views will be incurred; however, the proposed building will not break the skyline from this perspective. Given the larger adjacent buildings which occupy the centre of the frame, the proposed scheme will appear consistent with its surroundings. Scale/magnitude of change is classified as Low.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Slight and Neutral.

Viewpoint 8:

Kilbarry View/The Glen Avenue, approximately 847 meters to the site

Existing View:

This receptor represents an elevated, largely residential area southeast of the proposed site. St Brendan's Catholic Church and St Brendan's Primary School are also close to this receptor. Middle ground views of the Blackpool District Centre are visible above the roofs of the adjacent housing. The view looks northwest along the axis of the Redforge Road/Old Whitechurch Road. Extensive copses of woodland and agricultural fields delineate the city limits.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

Viewpoint Sensitivity is high.

Proposed Change:

A low degree of the proposed development will be visible from this location. The vertical expression of the 9-storey element in particular will represent a change in the view from the existing receptor. This built element as a place making component and will strengthen the evolving gateway to the city at this threshold. At slight positive gain will be realised with the introduction of built plot edges which will delineate this site and help define the linear nature of the Redforge Road as it extends northwards. Scale/magnitude of change is classified as Low. This is not a significant deviation from the evolving character of this City Gateway.

Conclusion/Summary:

The proposed development represents a slight change in the view. The singular visible element and the design of the fenestration in particular will provide a high-quality architectural addition to this City panorama. The significance of the visual effects at this location would be Moderate-Slight, and on balance Positive.

Viewpoint 9:

Hawthorn Mews, off Dublin Hill Middle, approximately 331 meters from the site. This viewpoint is a designated "Panoramic Assessment Point" in the current City Development Plan.

Existing View:

This viewpoint represents a residential street with an east/west aspect. This linear definition has the effect of creating a focal point at the end of the road revealing the terraced hill of Gurrabraher, which contains an extensive built footprint and buildings that break the ridgeline of the hill.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

Viewpoint Sensitivity is High.

Proposed Change:

As the proposed development does not break the skyline nor rise above the adjacent housing the Magnitude of change is therefore classified as Low-Negligible.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects at this location would be Not Significant-Imperceptible and Neutral.

Viewpoint 10:

Delaney Park, 261 meters from the site

Existing View:

This receptor represents a residential street. While the dwellings tend to have a south-westerly aspect with views orientated towards the City, Delaney Park Road has an east west orientation. This aspect focuses views on the north-western periphery of Blackpool and its agricultural hinterland.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this viewpoint represents a road with adjacent residential occupancy sensitivity is inferred as Medium

Proposed Change:

The extent of the view that would be occupied by the proposed development is partial and oblique to the axis of view. Given the modest scale of the proposed development and the angle of view the proposed development would therefore result in a Low magnitude of change.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects at this location would be Slight-Not Significant and on balance Neutral.

Viewpoint 11:

Redforge Road, Close to its junction with Dublin Hill Lower, approximately 264 Meters from the site

Existing View:

This view represents a commercial part of this street with a mix of development heights from single storey to four storey developments. Extensive surface car parking adjoins this street and contributes to a loss of definition weakening its "District Centre" context.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this viewpoint represents a commercial street Viewpoint Sensitivity is Medium-High.

Proposed Change:

The proposed development represents a Negligible magnitude of change

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Imperceptible –and on balance Neutral.

Viewpoint 12:

Redforge road at the entrance to the Sunbeam Business Park, approximately 82 meters from the subject site.

Existing View:

This viewpoint represents a city road with some minor quantum of residential occupancy. The extensive derelict Sunbeam manufacturing complex as well as the adjacent partially derelict Millfield Cottages lend a neglected character to this street. The setback of the Millfield Service Station continues this fragmented character.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this viewpoint represents a street with a degree of adjacent residences, Viewpoint Sensitivity is Medium.

Proposed Change:

The proposed apartments would be substantially visible from this viewpoint rising to meet adjacent building heights. However, this increase in height is not automatically a negative attribute. The architectural detailing of the fenestration, high quality brick façade and stepped height are all positive characteristics which embrace the existing street as part of a functioning streetscape. The impact of the proposed development represents a Medium level of Change.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Moderate and Positive.

Viewpoint 13:

Father Rogers Park, off the Old Whitechurch Road, 214 meters from the subject site.

Existing View:

This viewpoint represents a small road that accesses approximately 18 residential dwellings. Although located on an elevated site, views from this road are principally restricted to the foreground and the sky with the intervening vegetation partially screening mid ground/city views. Foreground views contain the tarmac road, steel fencing, overhead cables and screening vegetation along the railway.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this viewpoint represents a road with adjacent residential occupancy sensitivity is classed as Medium.

Proposed Change:

The impact of the proposed development represents a Negligible level of Change.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Not Significant and Neutral.

Viewpoint 14:

The Grove, off Dublin Hill Middle, approximately 120 meters from the subject site.

Existing View:

This viewpoint represents an inner-city residential neighbourhood of principally 2 storey dwellings with some light industrial activity. Extensive views of Gurrabraher Hill, the Spire of St Anne's Church Shandon and the distant Cityscape lend a panoramic aspect to this elevated receptor.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this viewpoint represents a street with a degree of adjacent residences, Viewpoint Sensitivity is High.

Proposed Change:

The proposed change although evident, will not deviate from the process of change already taking place in the Blackpool District Centre. The proposed height is consistent with the adjacent developments and will represent a Medium level of Change.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Moderate and Neutral.

Viewpoint 15:

Blackpool Retail Park (car park) 105 meters from the subject site.

Existing View:

The foreground is dominated by the tarmacked expanse of the car park which contains limited planting. The largely blank façades of Aldi, the multi-storey car park and the Reel Cinema restrict wider landscape views. A small glimpse of the elevated railway embankment is visible between the blank facades. The access street that links to the Redforge Road lends a neglected aspect to the north east of this car parking square.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

Owing to the expansive nature of the foreground car park and the adjacent blank facades, Viewpoint Sensitivity would be classified as Low, however the adjacent residential dwellings change increase the sensitivity classification to Medium.

Proposed Change:

The impact of the proposed development represents a Low level of Change.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Low and owing to the loss of view of the fields is deemed on balance Negative.

Viewpoint 16:

Adjacent to Teamwork, Campus 1, Blackpool Retail Park, 151 meters from the site

Existing View:

This receptor is adjacent to the River Bride and its associated Park. A finger of vegetation extends to the east restricting further views in this direction. The large Campus 1 building of Teamwork presents a partial barrier to further views north. To the north glimpses of the elevated fields off Dublin Hill are partially visible.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

The character of the north Blackpool area is informed by its wooded valley context on approach to the city. Positive individual elements are however somewhat compromised by the intersection of industrial and warehouse type facilities. It is within this context that the viewpoint sensitivity is classified as medium.

Proposed Change:

The impact of the proposed development represents a Slight level of Change. The partial loss of a view (negative) is replaced with elements of a layered or stacked cityscape (positive).

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Slight and on balance Neutral.

Viewpoint 17:

N20/Mallow Road on approach to the City, 1632 meters from the subject site.

Existing View:

As the valley floor continues to descend on approach to the city, elements of increasing urbanity come into view. These elements are framed to the west by the agricultural fringe and the Commons Ridge and to the east by the wooded and increasingly industrial context of the business and industrial units of Northpoint Business Park. The background is contained by long distance views of the southern city ridge with the midground cityscape nestled in-between.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

As this receptor represents a "first glimpse" of the city Viewpoint Sensitivity is High.

Proposed Change:

The impact of the proposed development represents a Negligible level of Change. The proposed development, will not break the skyline or impact long distance views to the southern city ridge.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Not Significant-Imperceptible.

Viewpoint 18:

View from the top of St Anne's Church (Shandon Bells) 1582 meters from the subject site. This viewpoint is a designated "Panoramic Assessment Point" in addition to a "Landmark Building" in the current City Development Plan.

Existing View:

This view reveals an expansive view of the northern city suburbs. The N20 Road corridor and the lower slopes of Dublin Hill define the east of this viewshed with the elevated wooded Farranferris Ridge defining the west. In between the landscape stretches to the north and the wooded/agricultural fringe. The middle ground is punctuated by the increased elevation of Blackpool shopping centre. This increase in density informs the viewer of the "District Centre" at Blackpool north.

Viewpoint Sensitivity:

Given the specific designation as a "Panoramic Assessment Point" as well as the elevated perspective the Viewpoint Sensitivity is High.

Proposed Change:

When viewed from this perspective the proposed development represents a Negligible level of Change.

Conclusion/Summary:

The significance of the visual effects will be Imperceptible and Neutral.

6.2 Additional views from private dwellings, streets and areas of the city

These are a number of private dwellings, public streets and workplaces in the vicinity of the site and it is likely that some of these are afforded partial views into the site, particularly from the upper floor windows of dwellings and businesses. As many of these locations are private dwellings further investigation was not feasible. The height of the proposed residential buildings combined with the quantum of elevated viewpoints will likely increase the visibility from these locations.

Based on the assessment criteria employed herein, potential significant impacts (i.e., those impacts of significance which may arise prior to consideration of mitigation measures and which, therefore, can be distinguished from residual impacts) are considered most likely to occur in instances where highly sensitive landscape and visual receptors coincide with high order landscape and visual effects.

6.3 Summary of Landscape and visual impacts:

The proposed development will give rise to landscape and visual impacts especially during construction. Close up views will be impacted, however most of these are transient in nature and are less critical in terms of impact.

The proposed development will provide a high-quality scheme for this area with contemporary materials contributing positively to this gateway setting. The addition of new landscape treatments to the streetscape will add coherence to this location allowing it become enveloped into its urban context. This proposal combined with the increased footfall associated with the development will turn a neglected backroad into a vibrant streetscape.

The overall assessment of landscape and visual impact is considered to have a generally positive impact on the urban environment that will contribute to the promotion of the “District Centre” nature of Blackpool.

7.0 Summary of Landscape and Visual Impacts

Chapter six details that of the eighteen selected viewpoints the significance of the predicted visual impact on eight will be in the range of Moderate to Slight. The Impact on the remaining ten viewpoints will be Slight to Imperceptible. The densification of the Core of this area will improve the appearance of this District Centre by improving the visual clarity when viewed from a distance. This proposal will help define the area, add coherence to the “District Centre” objective in the City Development Plan/North Blackpool Local area Plan.

The quality of effects on the selected receptors will be Neutral for fourteen of the receptors and Positive in the case of three of the receptors, where streetscape benefits and axial definition are realised. One of these receptors is deemed to be impacted negatively.

The proposed development will give rise to landscape and visual impacts. The nature of these impacts will diminish as the short term construction work finishes and the development becomes established within the context of the mixed use nature of this locality where commercial, institutional and residential buildings

Given the merits of the proposed development, including high quality architectural finishes to the buildings, the reorientation of a back land site into a vibrant streetscape and the provision of tree planting and open space will substantially outweigh the limited negative aspects of the proposal.

8.0 Conclusion

The conclusion of this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed development is that this application will not result in a significant change to the process of evolution already well underway at this District Centre/City Gateway.

In summary the broader landscape character area and visual context around Blackpool, has the capacity to absorb the proposed alterations of this scale in landscape and visual terms.

Appendix 1 Landscape drawings
Propose Landscape Plans Ground Level
Proposed Landscape Plans Roof garden

Appendix 2; Photomontages taken by Pedersen Focus Ltd