

# DESIGN RATIONALE – LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Project: **SANTRY AVENUE, SWORDS ROAD, SANTRY**

Project no.: **Dw.02**

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**ISSUED FOR:** INFORMATION/BILLING/**PLANNING**/TENDER/CONSTRUCTION

# Landscape Report

## 1 Introduction

The objective of this report is to describe the proposed landscape and external works as part of the proposed strategic housing development at Santry Avenue (Former Heiton Buckley Site), Swords Road, Santry, Dublin 9. This report should be read in conjunction with documents issued and included in this submission by Dermot Foley Landscape Architects, Davey & Smith Architects, Armstrong Fenton Associates Planning and Development Consultants, DBFL Consulting Engineers and others.

Dermot Foley Landscape Architects visited the site on several occasions in 2021 and in May 2022, to observe conditions on site, such as existing vegetation, conditions under foot, boundaries and other items which would have a bearing on the design process.

The following additional documents have been issued by Dermot Foley Landscape Architects as part of this submission:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Scale</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Title</b>
201	1:250	A1	Landscape Plan
202	1:250	A1	Roof Terrace Plan
203	1:1000/50	A1	Boundary Treatments
240	1:100	A1	Landscape Sections
250	1:20	A1	Typical Landscape Details

## 2 Landscape Appraisal and Design Approach

### 2.1 General

The subject site is approximately 1.5 hectares in size. It is located at the junction of Santry Avenue to the north and Swords Road to the east. To the south it borders the development of Santry Place (granted under Dublin City Council Reg. Ref.: 2713/17 & 2737/19), and to the west by the Santry Avenue Industrial Estate. The lands subject to this planning application, are currently occupied by Chadwick's (former Heiton Buckley) builder's providers.

### 2.2 Existing Boundaries

The site boundaries vary in character. The northern boundary is a high palisade fence on a low brick wall. The eastern boundary with Swords Road currently consists of a palisade fence and hedge planting. A line of lime trees runs in a grass verge along the boundary. The southern boundary is generally open, comprising of a fence to an internal road. A wall runs along the western side of the development with some existing trees and vegetation overhanging the lands from the neighbouring site.



Figure 1: Image looking south from Santry Avenue, towards the northern boundary of the subject site.



*Figure 2: Image looking south-west from the junction of Swords Road and Santry Avenue, towards the north-eastern corner of the site.*



*Figure 3: Image looking north from Swords Road, towards the eastern site boundary of the site.*

### **3 Landscape Strategy**

#### **3.1 General**

The proposals submitted in this planning application show a lively, innovative and durable landscape which will integrate the proposed development within the surrounding context of Santry and generate new landscape setting for the occupants and the wider public. The landscape strategy is integrated with the building design and takes into account its proposed uses, as well as the site's proximity to Santry Park.

The proposed landscape strategy has been formulated in conjunction with the entire design team and client in order to integrate architecture, civil engineering, ecological considerations and improved circulation and accessibility. The landscape design facilitates circulation, seating and bicycle parking and at the same time ensures abundance of vegetation and flexibility of use, providing opportunities for passive and active recreation as well as visual amenity from apartments and privacy to ground floor units. A large area of public open space is located between the central blocks. Communal open space is located at ground level in the courtyards and at roof level. A series of peripheral open spaces and thresholds integrate the proposed development into its surround context and ensure permeability throughout. Tree planting as well as hedge and groundcover planting is proposed as part of the scheme. Selected areas of lawn are also included. Furthermore, the landscape strategy builds on the principles established as part of Santry Place to the south, ensuring a cohesive and coherent overall masterplan.

There are several components making up the overall landscape strategy:

1. A diverse and attractive range of open space, including hard and soft landscape areas with tree planting and ground flora;
2. Provision of a wide variety, high-quality play equipment within public and communal open space;
3. Creation of a safe environment which is available for future residents but is also a positive addition to the public realm of the wider Santry area;
4. Improved permeability throughout the site for pedestrians and cyclists;
5. Integration of functional landscape and external works to ensure accessibility to parking and building cores;

### 3.2 Diverse Range of Open Space

The overall site area and areas of proposed public open space, private open space and communal open space are scheduled in documents included in this submission by Davey & Smith Architects.

The landscape proposals have been designed with the wider context in mind. The site's proximity to Santry Park, coupled with strong geometries and a clear landscape strategy, create a distinct sense of place for the new development. The location of Santry Park to the north of the proposed development is the most significant contribution to the site regarding open space. The large public park provides a wealth of outdoor opportunities and, as result, the landscape strategy for the site is designed to complement this amenity. Public open space is located between the central blocks, while communal open space is located between the blocks to the east and west and on roof terraces at level 01 of the communal building, level 7 of blocks C and F and level 14 of Block A



Figure 4: Diagram of the subject site showing combined landscape plan at ground and roof level.

### 3.3 Public Open Space

Topography and level change have been utilised as the main space-making element across the site, helping to define sub-spaces and creating distinct landscape typologies. Long mounds along the periphery of the open space, accommodate tree planting over podium and create a sense of enclosure. They also act as buffers, sheltering the private terraces of ground floor units from the main open space. To the southern and northern periphery, careful selection of distinct tree species and planting create a well-defined entrance to the public open space while the main circulation routes through unify the space and provide universal access.

The public open space is designed as a sequence of spaces: a large central lawn area accommodates active and passive recreation while smaller sub-spaces enclosed by vegetation and tree planting result in a garden-like environment. A strong sense of enclosure permeates throughout, creating a comfortable, secure setting for residents and visitors. The main circulation meanders through the various landscape typologies creating an attractive car-free alternative to the footpath along Swords Road. A small plaza space with a café and outdoor seating area is located to the north, acting as a fulcrum for intersecting pedestrian circulation coming from Santry Park and the wider area. Pedestrian routes and open spaces have been deliberately divorced from vehicular traffic, in order to maximise human interaction with open space rather than road-scape. Vehicular access is conceived as a pedestrian friendly surface with proposed traffic calming measures and dense vegetation, creating a safe and calm environment for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike.

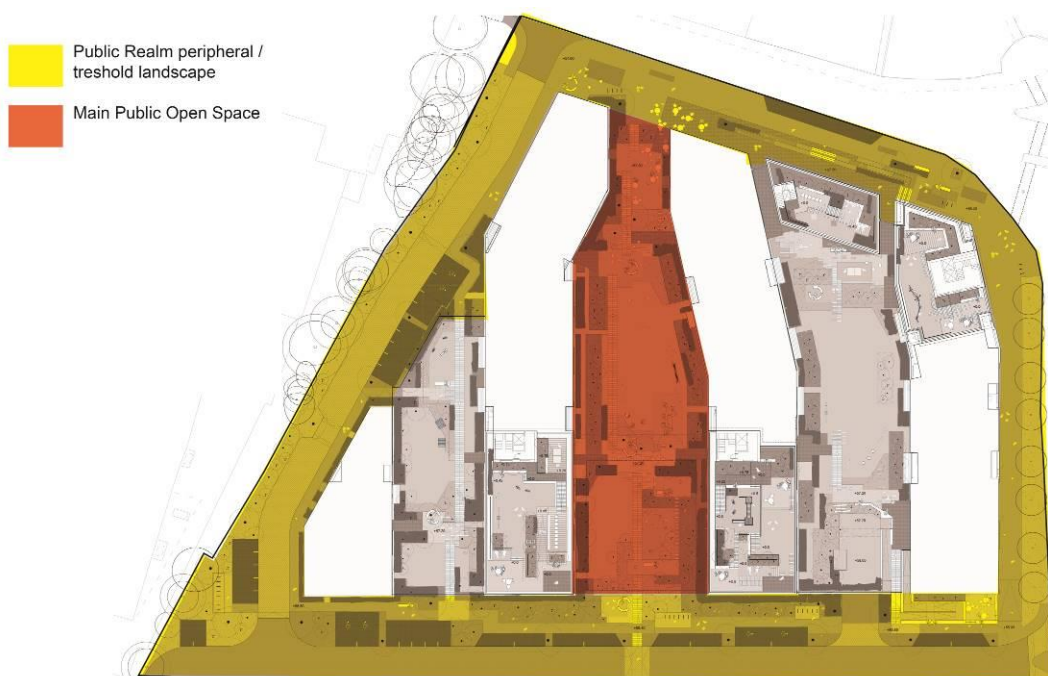


Figure 5: Diagram of the subject site highlighting transitional space in yellow and public open space in orange.

### 3.4 Permeability

A key objective of the landscape strategy is to link the new development to the wider public realm of Santry. The proposed public open space connects to Santry Park to the north and Santry Place to the south, ensuring that the wider network of open space is perceived as one continuous public realm, accommodating complimenting uses and activities and contributing to the wider ecology.

The landscape proposals for the site are in line with the general strategy for Santry Place, collectively resulting in a coherent new neighborhood. The interest and complexity of the wider masterplan strategy comes at the detail level where the spaces break up into series of character areas, comprising dense planting, open lawn areas, play areas and seating nodes.

The play strategy takes a similar approach, formulated with the wider masterplan in mind. Play equipment has been located in such a way as to create series of trails within the wider landscape, providing varying play experiences and challenges which complement each other.

To the east, the full length of the existing boundary along Swords Road is proposed to be removed, with the existing Lime trees retained. The existing pedestrian footpath is proposed to be removed and replaced by soft landscape, creating a buffer between the busy road and the new footpath. Ground floor units along this facade are proposed for commercial use, creating active street frontage along Swords Road.



Figure 6: Aerial photograph showing overall masterplan and Santry Park.





Figure 7: Diagram showing coherent landscape strategy of the granted development at Santry Place and the subject site at Santry Avenue.

### 3.4 Communal Open Space

Communal open space for the proposed apartments is located between the building blocks and on roof terraces. At ground level much of the shared space is situated over basement car park. Similar to the landscape approach of the public open space, the communal areas are designed to provide a sequence of usable open spaces for the residents and cater for circulation, accessibility and recreation. Substantial tree, hedge and groundcover planting is proposed within these spaces, providing for visual amenity from inside the apartments and balconies, as well as an attractive setting for outdoor recreation. An arrangement of clipped hedges is proposed adjacent to ground floor units so that all private space is separated from the communal open space.

The proposed development caters for resident's amenity at roof level, delivering a complementary experience framed by long distance views. Tall hedges, screens and dense tree planting in key areas provide a sense of enclosure and serve as wind breaks without interrupting the spatial flow of the terraces and creating favorable microclimate suitable for long- and short-term recreation. Generally, the terraces adopt a similar configuration: an extensive lawn area is provided with a play area including nature play equipment catering for small children, and selected areas of hard landscape with the provision of seating decks, communal seats and free-standing furniture.

The build-ups of the communal courtyards and roof terraces ensure there is minimum 300mm of topsoil for lawn and 800mm of topsoil for tree planting. All areas have been designed in accordance with the Technical Guidance Document Part M: Access and Use (2010).

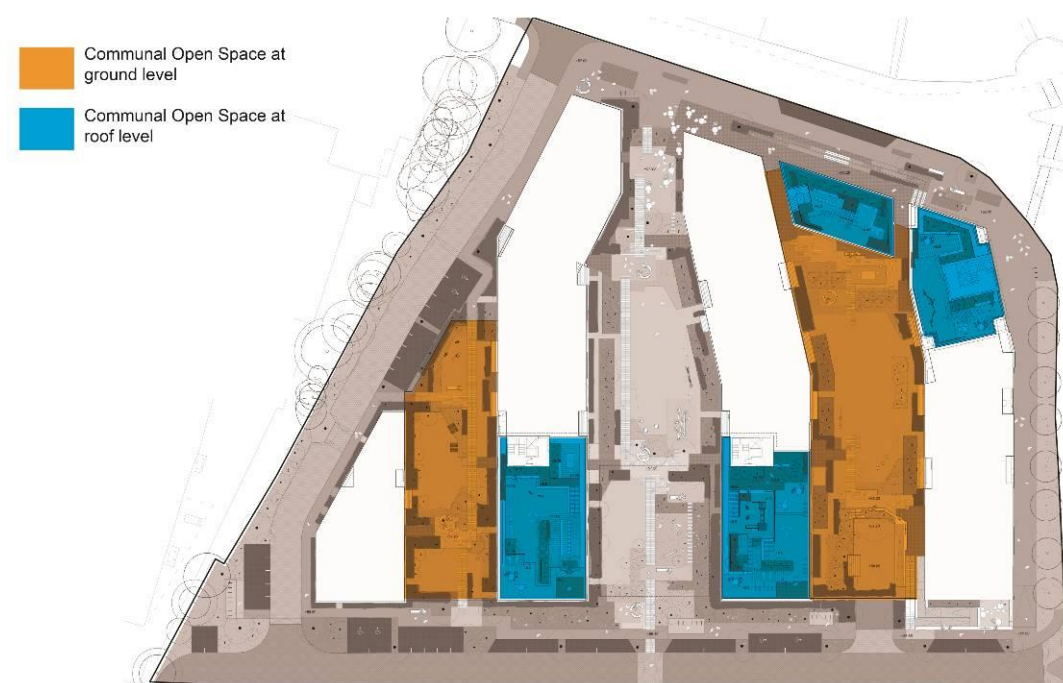


Figure 8: Diagram of the subject site highlighting communal open space at ground (pink) and roof level (blue).

### 3.3 Play

The development site lies within a two-minute walk of Santry Park. It is due to this proximity to a large, diverse open space, that the landscape strategy caters for the play needs of younger children. A variety of nature play equipment is proposed within public and communal open spaces on ground floor and roof terraces, integrated within the wider landscape and ideally located to allow for passive surveillance. Nature play equipment is proposed in the form of a rope course, trails of timber logs, various balancing equipment and a see-saw and play huts in the communal space. All play elements are situated amongst proposed trees and surrounded by planting. This approach adheres to the Dublin City Council Development Plan's (2016-2022), Green Infrastructure Objective 30:

*'To involve children and young people in green initiatives and biodiversity projects, having regard to their need to interact with and be educated by nature' (p.90)*

A schedule of play equipment is outlined as part of *Drawing 201 Landscape Plan*, prepared by Dermot Foley Landscape Architects and included in this planning application.



Figure 9: Diagram of the subject site highlighting play allocation at ground (pink) and roof level (blue).



*Figure 10: Precedent images for the type of incidental nature play proposed within the development site.*

## 4 Proposed Planting and Hard Landscape Materials

*Drawing 201 Landscape Plan and Drawing 202 Roof Terrace Plan*, prepared by Dermot Foley Landscape Architects, include detailed schedules of proposed planting and illustrate the location and extent of mown lawn, managed long grass, bulb, low groundcover, hedge and tree planting.

### 4.1 Tree planting

In addition to the proposed tree planting, it is proposed to retain a number of trees along or adjacent to the boundaries of the site, most notably, the alignment of existing *Tilia cordata* (lime) along Swords Road. All trees within the lands subject to this planning application have been surveyed by The Tree File Arborists in accordance with BS 5837:2012. BS 5837:2012 calls for a realistic assessment of the viability of retaining trees in the context of proposed construction. The British Standard has been used here to rigorously assess the stock of existing trees and to make recommendations which are realistic and represent a fair assessment of the quality and long-term viability of the trees on site. Substantial tree planting is introduced in the landscape proposals to improve the proportion of native species on site and to build on the existing character of Santry Park along the north.

Tree species are selected for longevity, suitability to local soil conditions and microclimate, biodiversity (native species) and suitability for close proximity to residential buildings. Proposed tree sizes range from semi-mature (35-40cm girth) specimen trees to multi-stems. Typical tree species are illustrated on the following pages.

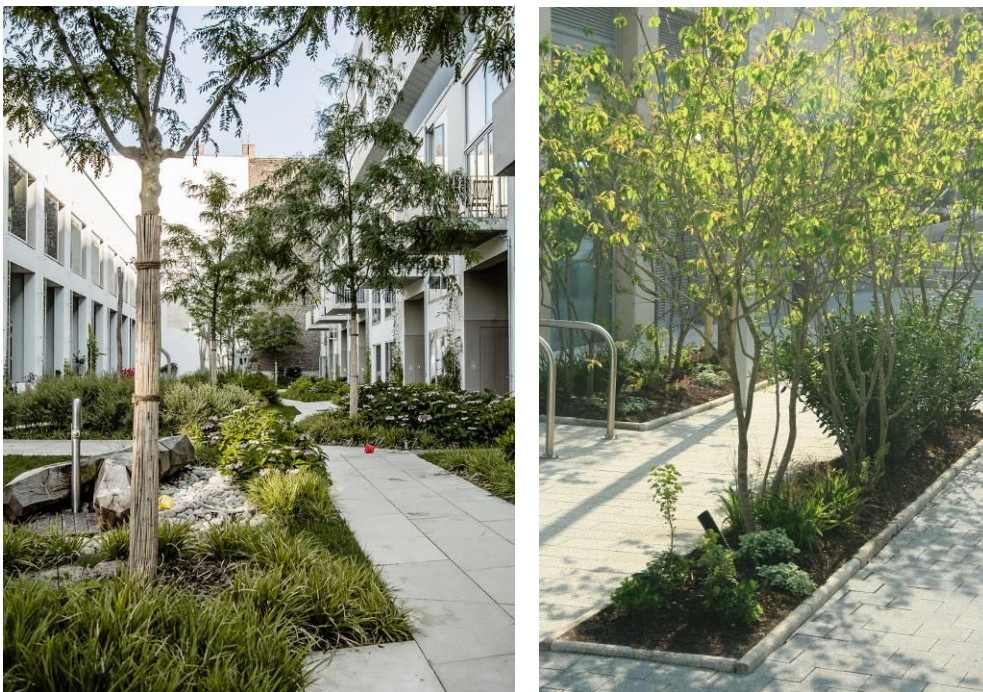


Figure 11: Precedent images showing character of tree planting within the development site.

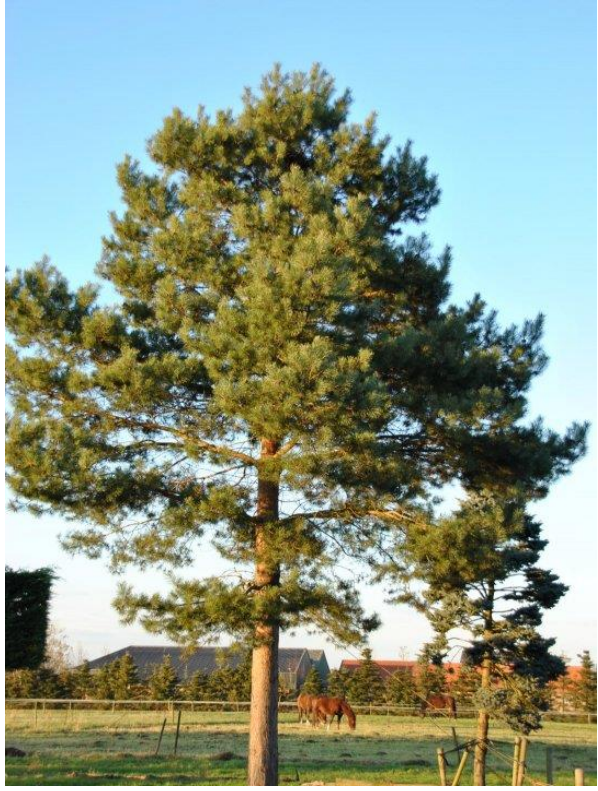


Figure 12: Selection of proposed tree species, clockwise from top left: *Quercus robur*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Betula pubescens* and *Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer'.

#### 4.2 Hedge, Groundcover and Bulb Planting

Low planting is utilized to create and reinforce sub-spaces within the larger landscape; for visual screening, defensible space, visual interest, ecological purposes and to guide or direct pedestrian's movement. The low planting is conceived as subtle layering of greens within the open spaces. The planting is layered as follows; lowest - bulb planting, groundcover planting, highest - clipped hedge planting.



Figure 13: Species for shade groundcover – native & exotic including *Darmera*, *Luzula*, *Dryopteris* and *Asplenium*.



*Helleborus* spp.



*Libertia grandiflora*



*Luzula sylvatica*



*Dianella nigra*



*Dryopteris filix-mas*



*Asplenium scolopendrium*

Figure 14: Typical individual groundcover species.

### 4.3 Hard Landscape Materials and Furniture

The landscape strategy incorporates the full range of functions required by the proposed development. These include circulation, parking, bicycle parking, access for delivery and emergency vehicles and sustainable drainage systems. The surface water drainage strategy has been designed by the engineers to slow down run-off and retain stormwater on site. The choice of landscape materials reflects this strategy with porous / permeable products used where possible.

The selection of hard landscape materials is determined by function but also to provide a cohesive palette of materials across the site. The open spaces are proposed to have a number of different hard landscape finishes to delineate the different spaces and recreational uses. The materials and furniture in these locations are chosen to create a more intimate environment and encourage communal activities. Materials are chosen for permeability, durability, but where practical, are proposed to be constructed in a way which is sensitively integrated with lawn and soft landscape, in order to minimise the impact of hard landscape surfaces.



Figure 15: Self-binding gravel with reconstituted stone paving.

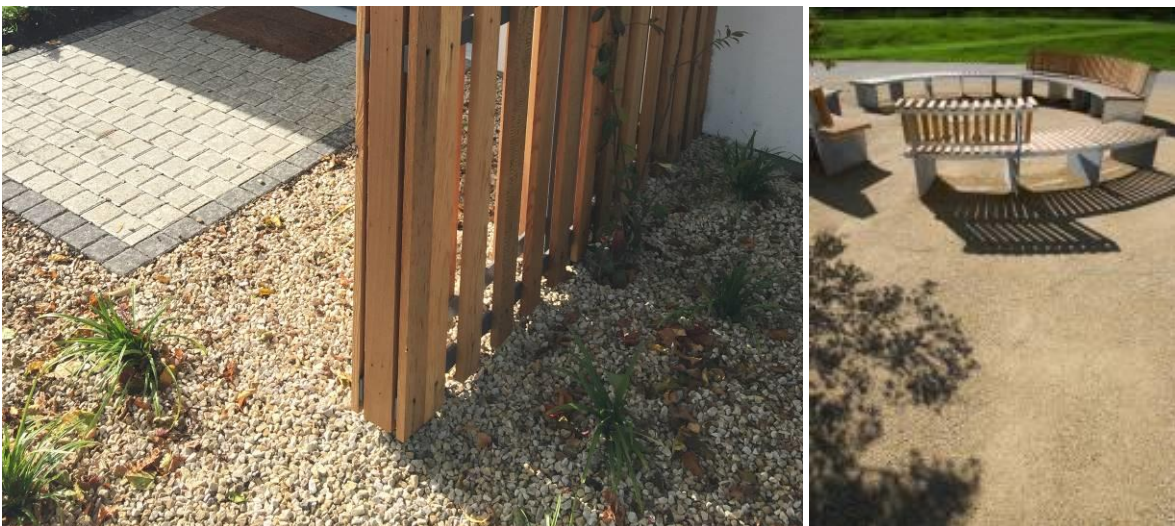


Figure 16: Range of hard landscape finish details (from left to right): permeable gravel detail, self-binding gravel.





*Figure 17: Reconstituted stone paving integrated with lawn.*



*Figure 17: Mix of small and large format natural stone paving integrated with self-binding gravel.*

**END.**