

LDA launches public consultation on plan to deliver up to 600 homes in Limerick at St Joseph's Hospital site

- Project will unlock the potential of State-owned land for affordable housing on key Colbert Quarter site
- Draft masterplan published with public consultation to run until December 15th

The Land Development Agency (LDA) has today launched a public consultation process on plans for up to 600 homes at the St Joseph's Hospital site beside Colbert Station in Limerick.

The HSE-owned site, identified for transfer to the LDA under Housing for All, is one of the key development sites of the Colbert Quarter area in Limerick.

A new draft masterplan for the 6.4-hectare site identifies the potential for the phased delivery of between 500 and 600 new affordable and social homes, 1000 sq metres of community space and a significant amount of open green space, with the latter accounting for 35% of the entire site area.

It is proposed that approximately 70% of the homes are to be made available as cost rental, with up to 20% for purchase and 10% social housing. The masterplan also includes proposals for an urban greenway, new community facilities and amenities, local shops, a farm café, workspaces, playstreets, gardens and a creche.

The LDA published [The Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework](#) in December 2022 following an extensive period of engagement with stakeholders, including the HSE, Limerick City and County Council, and the wider community. The framework outlined how areas could be developed with the potential to deliver up to 2,800 new homes together with new community facilities, parks, open space and commercial properties.

After extensive stakeholder engagement, the LDA has now released a draft masterplan for the St Joseph's Hospital site with further proposals expected for other parts of the Colbert Quarter at a later stage.

The draft masterplan presents an opportunity for members of the public and other interested bodies and stakeholders to examine the proposals for the St Joseph's Hospital site and to make any observations to the LDA by **5pm on December 15th**

It also outlines how the proposed project has involved extensive engagement with the HSE, Limerick City and County Council (LCCC), and Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ). Particular attention was paid to how the site could be developed for housing while still allowing the HSE to operate and further develop its existing healthcare campus. It is expected that planning permission will be sought for phase 1 in early 2025.

St. Joseph's Hospital is an important site within the Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework and is located to the east of the Colbert Quarter area. The site currently contains a number of buildings, including protected structures, which host a variety of HSE and Tusla uses.

The draft masterplan identifies areas of public land within the site, which are to be redeveloped for affordable housing to create a compact and vibrant urban community in the heart of Limerick City. In addition, the HSE as part of their planning propose to retain a secure healthcare campus including a new access road off Ballysimon Road.

It explains how the HSE is making land available while ensuring parts of the site remain a secure healthcare campus. A new access road for the healthcare campus is planned, along with additional healthcare facilities and controlled emergency access points.

The proposed housing development will be well-connected to the wider Colbert Quarter and within a short walk or cycle from Limerick City Centre. The proposals include high quality streets, public squares and gardens in addition to the retention of the area's mature trees.

The St Joseph's Hospital building itself is not included in the proposals, but there are plans to convert some of the other protected buildings on the site- Elmhurst House and the Chapel – into new community spaces. Meanwhile the new housing developments are due to be located at a suitable distance from the existing buildings.

The planned homes involve a mix of apartments and houses with different heights and typologies. All ground floors units are proposed to have their own front doors. Houses will have their own front and back gardens and apartments will benefit from private balconies and shared communal open space.

The draft masterplan proposes access to the site via loop roads from Mulgrave Street and from Roxboro Road, preventing through access for vehicles. This is proposed to create a public realm at the centre of the site for active communal usage. A new urban greenway for pedestrians and cyclists is proposed to run from the Roxboro Road through the site to Mulgrave Street.

The design of the proposed development focuses on creating safe, walkable streets, and the promotion of active travel. The 'car as guest' principle allows for sufficient access, drop-off, and parking, for vehicles while ensuring the provision of shared surfaces where pedestrians will have priority, and playstreets which will allow access for emergencies only.

The draft masterplan and an executive summary, both of which can be viewed on www.colbertquarter.ie. The Agency is looking forward to receiving comments and feedback on the proposals. The LDA will also be holding meetings on the plans in Limerick for all stakeholders and interested parties to attend.

In addition to working on the Colbert Quarter, the LDA recently completed the purchase of 81 apartments at The Mills in Castletroy as part of its Project Tosaigh initiative and these apartments are due to be rented to eligible candidates at cost rental rates in 2024. The LDA

is also working with Limerick City and County Council to deliver 186 social and affordable homes in Mungret.

John Coleman, chief executive of the LDA said: *Colbert Quarter represents a fantastic opportunity to regenerate a large part of Limerick City and to deliver a high number of affordable and social homes. We are delighted to be progressing this strategic project and to have published our first masterplan proposals for one of Quarter's key site. One of main roles of the LDA is to deliver new homes on state-owned land, but this process must also involve creating new, well-served, well-connected, vibrant and sustainable communities. The new draft masterplan for St Joseph's Hospital contains ambitious proposals that will ultimately create new homes and a new community in what will be a great place to live, work and visit.*

The LDA is focused on maximising the potential of state-owned land for affordable and social housing, and engagement with our partners and stakeholders is key to unlocking the potential of key state lands such as this. I would like to thank the HSE, Limerick City and County Council, CIE and other stakeholders who have worked with the LDA on this masterplan. The HSE is making this land available and by doing so the agency is playing an important part in helping to meet the country's housing need."

Joe Hoare, Assistant National Director Capital & Estates of the HSE said: *"The HSE welcomes this development and is proud to have worked with the LDA to make the St Joseph's Hospital site available for affordable and social housing. We have worked collaboratively and positively to support the draft masterplan development and believe that it provides the basis for the delivery of new homes together with a modern healthcare campus on this exceptionally located site in Limerick City Centre.*

"There has been considerable engagement between the HSE and the LDA and we are confident that the masterplan for the site offers the best solution for both the HSE's future plans and the country's housing need. A key focus for the HSE has been to ensure that the lands it retains are not compromised and maintain appropriate levels of privacy and security given the sensitive healthcare services provided there, now and in the future. Appropriate and clear separation of different circulation patterns is considered critical given the sensitive health and social care services on the St Joseph's campus. The new LDA led developments will enhance the area and will complement the use of the remainder of the site as a healthcare campus."

Issued on behalf of the LDA by Murray

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About the LDA

The LDA is the State's affordable housing delivery body. It is in the process of delivering more than 8,000 homes on State-owned land and over 5,000 through the Government's Project Tosaigh initiative. The agency has existing planning permission for over 3,600

affordable homes on State-owned lands with many projects already under construction and others at the advanced planning stage.

In addition to the direct delivery of homes on state-owned or private land, the LDA is overseeing Project Tosaigh, an initiative whereby the agency steps in to purchase stalled or unviable housing projects and then makes the homes available to renters or to buyers at costs significantly below market rents or full market purchase prices. Under this scheme, the LDA has an initial delivery schedule of 2,500 homes and is on course to deliver 5,000 by 2026.

The LDA recently produced the Report on Relevant Public Land, which advised the government of the potential to deliver 67,000 homes on 83 underutilised State-owned sites. It also announced plans to purchase private sites with planning permission in the country's five major cities.

Direct delivery

The LDA's direct delivery projects include the construction of 265 homes at St Kevin's Hospital in Cork, a former HSE site, and the development of 597 homes in Shanganagh in Dublin in partnership with Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. It also includes 817 homes at a site at Castlelands in Balbriggan in Dublin, 345 in Hacketstown in Skerries in Dublin, 219 at Devoy Barracks in Naas, Co. Kildare, 852 on the former Central Mental Hospital site in Dundrum, Dublin 14 and 543 at St Teresa's Gardens in Dublin's south inner city in partnership with Dublin City Council. A further 3,700 homes are currently in the design and development phase.

Project Tosaigh

Project Tosaigh is an LDA initiative, whereby the agency steps in to kick-start stalled or unviable housing projects and then makes the new homes available to renters on a cost rental basis or to purchasers at an affordable cost.

The LDA has already launched a number of Project Tosaigh schemes. They include the release of 142 cost rental homes in Archers Wood in Delgany in Wicklow and 95 in Parklands on Fortunestown Lane in Citywest in Dublin. The homes in Delgany were delivered in association with Cairn Homes while the homes in Citywest were delivered in association with Harcourt Developments.

A further 247 cost rental homes are under construction in Hansfield in Dublin 15 in association with the McGarrell Reilly Group. Other Project Tosaigh developments include the delivery of 81 homes at The Mills in Castletroy in Limerick in partnership with Cairn Homes, 69 in Hollystown in Dublin in partnership with Glenveagh, and 204 in Cookstown in Tallaght in partnership with Willow Street Capital.

The LDA has also launched a number of affordable purchase Project Tosaigh developments. This includes the phased launch of 92 homes in Clonmore in Mallow in Cork, 95 in Summerfields in Kilbarry in Waterford and 50 in Baker Hall in Navan. The homes in Clonmore were delivered in association with the O'Flynn Group. The homes in Kilbarry were delivered in partnership with the Whitebox Group and the Baker Hall homes were built by Glenveagh. These homes can be purchased by eligible candidates under local authority shared equity schemes. Further Project Tosaigh developments are due to be announced soon.