



COAKLEY O'NEILL
town planning

Statement on Housing Mix

Kinsale Road LRD

Prepared in April 2025 on behalf of
BML Duffy Property Group Limited

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Document Control Sheet

Client	BML Duffy Property Group Limited
Project Title	Kinsale Road LRD
Job No.	CON23173
Document Title	Statement on Housing Mix
Number of Pages	12 (excluding Appendix 1 Advisory Report – attached under separate cover)

Revision	Status	Date of Issue	Authored	Checked	Signed
1	Draft	9 th April 2025	RH	AON	
2	Final	16 th April 2025	RH	AON	

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 BML Duffy Property Group Limited is seeking planning permission for the development of a new residential neighbourhood in the form of a Large-scale Residential Development LRD at the infill, brownfield site of the former Vita Cortex Plant, Kinsale Road/Pearse Road, Cork City.
- 1.2 The proposed development will consist of a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD), comprising 170no. residential units (158no. apartments and 12no. townhouse apartments, to include 51no. 1-bed units, 84no. 2-bed units, 35no. 3-bed units) arranged in 4no. blocks varying in height from four to nine storeys over ground. The proposed development also includes a crèche; café; management office; 4no. retail units; car parking and cycle parking provided on surface and within an undercroft; the provision of private, communal and public open space and all associated site development, landscaping and drainage works on the site of the Former Vita Cortex Facility, Kinsale Road and Pearse Road, Cork.
- 1.3 This report sets out a justification for proposed housing mix in the context of the dwelling mix size set out in Table 11.8 of Chapter 11 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022 (the Plan).
- 1.4 This report is prepared in the context of Item 4 of the LRD Opinion (07-24) which seeks the following:
4. *Further consideration and amendments to the housing mix for the residential element of the proposed development is required, having regard to Objective 11.2 and Table 11.8 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. If the proposed housing mix is not aligned with the housing mix targets in Table 11.2, [sic] the applicant shall provide a separate Housing Mix report setting out a justification on the basis of market evidence that the demand/need for a specific dwelling size is lower than the target. Details of the intended occupation/tenure, if different from the standard private apartment supply should be clearly clarified in the housing mix report, for consideration by the Planning Authority.*
- 1.5 The basis for Item 4 of the LRD Opinion is the proposed housing mix and tenure presented at S32B stage, i.e., 30% 1-bed; 67.1% 2-bed and 2.9% 3-bed dwellings, as set out in Table 1 below. There was a predominance of 2-bed units, and, at the time, a standard apartment scheme was proposed, with an unidentified quantum of Assisted Living Accommodation. The proposed mix presented at the S32B stage did not align with Objective 11.2 and Table 11.8 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (the Plan).

Apartment/Townhouse types	Numbers	%
1-bed	51	30%
2-bed	112	67.1%
3-bed	5	2.9%
TOTAL	170	100%

Table 1: Proposed Dwelling Mix (S32B)

- 1.6 It can now be clarified at LRD application stage that the proposed development constitutes a standard private apartment scheme, including 10% Part V units. Specifically, and as illustrated in Table 2 below, the

proposed development includes the following housing mix in the proposed 158no. apartments and 12no. townhouse apartments:

Apartment/Townhouse types	Numbers	%
1-bed	51	30%
2-bed	84	49.4%
3-bed	35	20.6%
TOTAL	170	100%

Table 2: Proposed Dwelling Mix

- 1.7 It is considered that the proposed mix is now generally in line with Objective 11.2 and Table 11.8 of the Plan., however, for the sake of completion, a justification for the proposed housing mix is presented below.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 The proposed housing mix is presented in the following context:

- The 2018 NPF's population growth target of at least 50-60% for Cork City and its suburbs by 2040.
- National Policy Objective (NPO) 2a which envisages a target of half (50%) of future population (and employment) growth in Cork to be focused on Cork City and its suburbs.
- The NPF's focus on compact growth as the preferred spatial development approach.
- National Policy Objective 3a which seeks to deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements.
- Above all, the Government-approved Revised NPF on 8th April, 2025¹. Predicated on the Census 2022 population increase to 5.7m people, and reinforcing the requirement for compact urban growth, the Revised NPF anticipates a further increase of between 6.1m and 6.3m by 2040, requiring, as set out in National Policy Objective 42, approximately 50,000 new homes per annum for the next 15 years. National Policy Objectives 4 and 8 of the Revised NPF supports ambitious growth targets to enable the four cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford to each grow by at least 50% over 2016 levels to 2040 within their existing built-up footprints to become cities of scale, capitalising on the potential of underutilised sites such as the proposed development site, to support an increase in population and a more compact urban form, facilitated through well-designed higher density development.

- 2.2 Table 11.8 of Chapter 11 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022 (the Plan) identifies the dwelling size mix for the City Suburbs, as set out in Table 2 below:

¹ subject to the approval of both Houses of the Oireachtas

	Min	Max	Target
Studios / PBSA (at LRT Stops / Urban Centre / HEI Campus Only)	0%	15%	10%
1 Bedroom	15%	25%	20%
2 Bedroom	25%	40%	34%
3 Bedroom	18%	38%	28%
4 Bedroom / Larger	5%	15%	8%

Table 2: Table 11.8 of the Plan: City Suburbs Dwelling Size Mix for Housing Developments

2.3 The Dwelling Size Mix set out in Table 11.8 of the Plan is predicated on the following:

- Section 11.76 of the Plan states that all developments will need to comply with dwelling size mix set out in Tables 11.3 -11.9.
- Section 11.77 of the Plan states that the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) has provided the basis for the dwelling size mix across Cork City and the identification of targets for the whole development plan period. Cork City Council has applied the household size distribution from the HNDA population modelling for the City to dwelling sizes to provide guidelines to be applied in the planning system to ensure that the forecast households will be able to find suitable accommodation in Cork City.
- Section 11.78 of the Plan states that the HNDA forecasts a requirement for a mixed dwelling type product to meet the needs of the market, as 73% of new homes will need to be tailored around providing for households of between 1 and 3 people. When combined with location and density targets this will mean that new development will need to combine dwelling types across Cork City and its urban towns and hinterland villages.
- Section 11.80 of the Plan states that evidence to justify provision at a lower rate than the target specified on the basis of demand / need will need to be provided, including market evidence and the housing authority that they (or an approved AHB) have declined the option to acquire the units. Applicants will need to fund an independent peer review of market data to ensure validation of the evidence presented. In the event that the Planning Authority accepts this evidence then development proposals must include an alternative dwelling size mix that assists in achieving a balanced community.

2.4 Objective 11.2 of the Plan sets out the policy with respect to dwelling size mix, as follows:

Dwelling Size Mix

All planning applications for residential developments or mixed-use developments comprising more than 50 dwellings will be required to comply with the target dwelling size mix specified in Tables 11.3-11.9, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Applications for 10-50 dwellings will need to provide a dwelling size mix that benefits from the flexibility provided by the dwelling size target ranges provided for the respective sub-area.

Purpose-Built Student Accommodation schemes will be exempt from dwelling size mix targets. Where there is a target for student accommodation, and it can be demonstrated that this demand has been provided for within the area, then this demand can be reassigned to other dwelling sizes according to the relative target proportions.

Where a clear justification can be provided on the basis of market evidence that demand / need for a specific dwelling size is lower than the target then flexibility will be provided according to the ranges specified.

3.0 ASSESSMENT

Apartment/Townhouse types	Numbers	%	Range (Target)
1-bed	51	30%	15-25% (20%)
2-bed	84	49.4%	25-40% (34%)
3-bed	35	20.6%	18-38% (28%)
TOTAL	170	100%	

Table 3: Proposed Mix and Development Plan range

3.1 Table 3 above illustrates the following:

- The proposed 1-bed units, at 30%, is slightly higher than the range specified in Table 11.8 of the Plan.
- The proposed 2-bed units, at 49.4%, is also slightly higher than the range specified in Table 11.8 of the Plan.
- The proposed 3-bed units, at 20.6%, lies within the range specified in Table 11.8 of the Plan.

3.2 As the proposed quantum of 3-bed units meets the requirements of Table 11.8 and Objective 11.2 of the Plan, no further consideration will be given to the proposed number of 3-bed units.

3.3 As noted in Table 3, the proposed number of 1-bed and 2-bed units, at 30% and 49.4% respectively, are slightly higher than the range set out in Table 11.8 of the Plan.

3.4 In this context, the justification for the proposed mix is set out as follows:

- the uplift in projected population uplift and revised number of new homes per annum in the Revised NPF, this report hereunder sets out the rationale for the proposed housing mix.
- the special status of the site as a designated Neighbourhood Development Site, and one that attracts a Neighbourhood and Local Centre (ZO 8) zoning objective.
- the brownfield nature of the site.
- the provision of a number of townhouse apartments, 12no. in total, to provide own-door access on the ground floor on Pearse Road, respecting the character and typology of existing dwellings along Pearse Road.
- having regard to the fact that no studios or 4-bed units are proposed, the mix of 1 and 2 bed units is to be considered in the context of the overall mix range presented in Table 11.8 of the

Plan. With no studios or 4-bed units proposed, a greater quantum of 1, 2 and 3-bed units would be required to satisfy the overall dwelling mix, to ensure that the forecast households will be able to find suitable accommodation in the area.

- the permitted mix for the immediately adjacent 5-storey Part 8 residential development on the former Top Tile site, permitted in August, 2022, which provides 24no. 1-bed units (61.5%) and 15no. 2-bed units (38.5%).
- having regard to the number of 1 and 2 bed units, the proposed development will provide for 79% of households of between 1 and 3 people, which is generally aligned with section 11.78 of the Plan which notes that 73% of new homes will need to be tailored around providing for households of between 1 and 3 people.

3.5 In this context, the proposed mix of 1-bed and 2-bed units, which, at 30% and 49.4% respectively, is only slightly higher than the range set out in Table 11.8 of the Plan, is generally in compliance with the dwelling size mix of the Plan, is considered to be acceptable. and will ensure the achievement of a balanced community on this brownfield site.

3.6 The overall objective of the housing mix targets identified in the Plan is to ensure that housing developments meet the predicted housing needs based on population projections but also to ensure that communities both existing and planned provide for a mix of unit sizes to accommodate housing needs of all sizes.

3.7 In this regard, when considering the proposed housing mix, consideration should be given to the existing housing mix in the immediate environs. The 2022 Census, identifies the number of bedrooms in existing private households. On review of the immediate the catchment of the proposed development, comprising of 10 Electoral Divisions ², the existing housing mix is as follows:

No. of Bedrooms	Total No.	% Total
1-Bed	253	4.6%
2-Bed	1211	22.3%
3-Bed	2933	53.9%
4-Bed	836	15.4%
5-Bed +	208	3.8%
TOTAL	5441	100.0%

Table 4 Existing Housing Mix in Immediate Catchment of the Proposed Development

3.8 As indicated above in Table 4, the catchment of the proposed development is significantly under served by 1-bed unit types and, when considering the housing mix targets identified in the Plan is under served by 2-bed units.

3.9 The housing mix proposed comprising of 51no. 1-beds; 84no. 2-beds and 35no. 3-bed units will therefore add a significant number of much needed smaller unit types in the Ballyphehane area which will contribute to the creation of a sustainable and inclusive community into the future.

² Ballyphehane A, Ballyphehane B, Glasheen C, Greenmount, Pouladuff A, Pouladuff B, The Lough, Togher A, Togher B and Turner's Cross B.

3.10 In order to justify the proposed mix further, the applicant has also engaged the services of Sherry Fitzgerald to prepare an Advisory Report dated 10th April, 2025, which is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. This advises as follows:

- Cork City accounted for 7,894 new homes built between 2011 and 2024. This growth has been particularly pronounced since 2017. Apartments have steadily increased, reaching 18% in 2024 compared to just 3% in 2017. In comparison, apartment completions accounted for 22% of all newly developed homes in the State since the beginning of 2011.
- In 2024, 30,330 new dwellings were completed, marking a 6.7% decrease compared to the previous year. This figure falls significantly short of the Government's target of 40,000 new homes. Apartment completions experienced the most significant decline, falling 24.1% from 11,542 in 2023 to 8,763 in 2024.
- Assuming that the average household size will fall to the EU average of 2.3 by 2036, Sherry FitzGerald Research estimate an average housing demand in the State of 56,200 units per annum up to 2036, of which at least 50% will need to come from new apartments. This demand is heavily weighted towards the beginning of the projection period, given the current shortages in the market, with approximately 62,000 units per annum required in the short term. Using the same assumptions, demand for the South-West region is estimated at an average of 7,290 units per annum. This is significantly greater than the 3,554 level of completions recorded for the region during 2024, indicating that development activity will have to increase significantly in order to meet demand.
- Demand greatly outstrips supply of new homes in Cork with Sherry FitzGerald New Homes being four times oversubscribed on new developments.
- The low numbers of new homes being constructed close to Cork city centre in the established suburbs highlights the need for new multi storey developments in this location.
- The proposed development would provide 170 quality new homes within the city suburbs. The site is conveniently located within walking distance of the city centre and amenities such as schools, third level institutes, hospitals, shops & parks. The site has convenient access to the South Link Road and the N40 South Ring Road network and is well served by public transport with bus routes 203 & 219.
- The proposed development will be well received by the market due to its high quality of design and based on the severe shortage of residential accommodation available and under construction in Cork.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 In the context of:

- a population uplift and a consequential increase in the requirement for new homes, including apartments,
- the well-documented demand versus supply conundrum,
- the special status of this brownfield site as a Neighbourhood Development Site and neighbourhood and local centre zoning objective.
- the provision of townhouse apartments as part of the housing mix,
- the existing undersupply of 1 and 2 bed units in the immediate area,
- the general alignment with section 11.78 of the Plan, with the proposed development catering for 79% of households of between 1 and 3 people.
- the alignment of the proposed quantum of 3-bed units with Table 11.8 and Objective 11.2 of the Plan,
- the fact that the proposed number of 1-bed and 2-bed units, at 30% and 49.4% respectively, are only slightly higher than the range set out in Table 11.8 of the Plan, and that no studios or 4-bed units are proposed,

It is the conclusion of this report that the housing mix proposed for the Kinsale Road LRD is generally aligned with the requirements of Table 11.8 of the Plan as it applies to Cork City Suburbs and will positively contribute to future communities of the Cork City environs.