



**ARMSTRONG  
FENTON**  
ASSOCIATES

**PROJECT:** Strategic Housing Development  
for proposed residential development at  
Rathgowan, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

**REPORT:** UNIVERSAL DESIGN STATEMENT

**CLIENT:** DSPL Ltd.

**DATE:** June 2022

**Planning &  
Development  
Consultants**



## 1.0 Scope of Report

This Report is submitted in support of a planning application for a proposed strategic housing development on lands at Rathgowan, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

The Access & Use Strategy is being submitted with the Planning Application to demonstrate that the proposed design is in substantial compliance with Part M (Access & Use) of the Building Regulations and that it will be possible in due course to obtain Disability Access Certificates, as necessary, for the development without giving rise to changes that would require planning permission. The design has sought to comply with the principles of Universal Design to ensure access and use of the development and its facilities for everyone.

## 2.0 Development Description

DSPL Limited intends to apply to An Bord Pleanála for permission for a strategic housing development, on a site area of 6.37Ha located at Rathgowan, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. The site is located north and east of existing housing at Ardilaun Heights and Rathgowan Wood/Rathgowan Park, north-west of the R394, which is known as the Mullingar Western Relief Road and south of the R393 Ashe Road, all in the townland of Rathgowan or Farranshock.

The proposed development will consist of 212 no. dwellings and a creche. The residential dwellings are comprised of 107 no. 2 & 3 storey houses, 86 no. 2 & 3 bed duplex units in 8 no. 3 storey blocks and 19 no. 1 & 2 bed apartments accommodated 1 no. 4 storey building, which also accommodates a crèche at ground floor level (428sq.m), with associated outdoor play area (c.258sq.m). The proposed houses consist of 31 no. 2 bed, 70 no. 3 bed and 6 no. 4 bed detached, semi-detached and terraced houses.

The proposed development provides for all associated site development works, relocation of existing underground surface water attenuation tank, surface car parking (Total: 290 no. spaces), bicycle parking, bin & bicycle storage, public open space (c. 1.06Ha) & communal open space, hard & soft landscaping and boundary treatments, underground utilities, 3 no. substations and public lighting. Vehicular access to the development will be off the R394, via Rathgowan Park with pedestrian & cyclist access also proposed onto the R393 Ashe Road to the north.



### 3.0 Universal Design Statement

Based upon the drawings submitted as part of this application for permission, we confirm that all of the proposed dwellings / buildings have been designed to be compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations with regard to accessibility.

#### Basis of Compliance

Purpose Group	Design Guidance (Fire Safety / Access & Use)
PG 1 (c) Residential	TGD-M 2010, BS 8300:2018 & UK ADM
PG 7(b) Car Park	Centre for Excellence in Universal Design / NDA publication "Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland" NDA "Building for Everyone"

The aforementioned guidance proffers prescriptive design solutions which are considered prima facie compliance with Parts M of the Building Regulations.

The design seeks to go beyond minimum mandatory compliance and accordingly where practicable best practice and the principles of Universal design form the basis of the design approach herein.

### 4.0 Access & Use Strategy

#### 4.1 External Access Routes

The external site landscape will be designed to achieve best practice in accordance with BS 8300 2018 Part 1, including accessible access routes to serve each of the residential units and cores. In order to ensure universal access will be provided for all; access routes will include level approach and gently sloped approach routes. Gently sloped approach routes shall achieve a gradient of between 1:50 to 1:20 as per TGD M 2010. Each of the residential units / cores will be provided with an accessible entrance to facilitate wheelchair/disabled access.

Car parking will be provided with a minimum of 5% designated accessible car parking spaces as per TGD-M 2010. The internal height of the circulation in the car parks ensures adequate circulation for all persons as per TGD-M. This will ensure level access routes are provided from the designated parking spaces to each building.

#### 4.2 Creche Facility

The proposed creche has been designed to achieve universal access for patrons and staff.



### 4.3 Sanitary Facilities

All residential units will be provided with visitable wc's in line with TGD M 2010.

The residential and commercial amenities / facilities shall be provided with an appropriate accessible WC in accordance with Diagram 15(a) of TGD M 2010.

### 4.4 Residential Units

The internal layout of the residential units will be designed in accordance with TGD-M 2010 such to include accessible entrance doors, accessible WCs and habitable rooms.

### 5.0 Summary

Cognizance has also been paid to the guidance set out in the 2013 Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland. The site layout plan and landscaping proposals have also taken into consideration the need for ease of movement through the development. The main features of the proposed development are therefore as follows:

- All buildings houses have level access delivering ease of access for all. The public realm is designed to ensure accessibility on equal terms for people of a range of ages and physical mobility.
- There are 19 no. 1 & 2 bedroom apartments proposed in a 4 storey building, which range in size from 53.4 – 85.9sq.m and are in excess of the minimum standard. There are 86 no. 2 and 3 bed duplex units/ apartments which are all own door units with no common lobby areas. The smallest 2 bed unit is 79.2sq.m while the smallest 3 bed unit is 105.6sq.m, therefore exceeding the minimum floor area requirements of 73sq.m and 90sq.m respectively. A range of dwelling types have been proposed in terms of both size and design meeting the aspirations of a range of people and households. These range in gross floor area from 53.4m<sup>2</sup> (1 bedroom apartment) to 140.9m<sup>2</sup> (4 bedroom house) with a variety of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings types proposed in a mix of apartment, duplex and house typologies.
- The proposed development presents a welcoming and positive aspect to passers-by, creating a new accessible urban, public realm and allowing for direct connectivity to open spaces and adjoining lands, thus avoiding unnecessary physical and visual barriers.
- Connectivity to adjoining lands has been incorporated into the design of the layout. The network of paths and cycle routes ensure full permeability throughout the scheme and ensures connectivity from the subject site to the surrounding area and local facilities beyond.
- Falls and gradients have been minimized wherever possible on site and level access will be provided at all parking locations. All units within the development will meet the requirements of Part M of the Technical Guidance Documents where accessibility is concerned.
- Public spaces, streets and parks, are all designed so that every member of society can use them. Dwellings address these spaces so that they are passively supervised, creating safe spaces for everyone to use. The activity generated here enhances the open space realm.

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