



## SPRING LANE AND ELLIS YARD TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

Architectural Design statement  
for  
Part 8 submission

February 2024  
by Cork City Architect's Department



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This report has been prepared by Cork City Architects Department on behalf of the applicant Cork City Council. This design statement report is prepared with architectural drawings in support of a Part 8 application.

## 1. BACKGROUND

Cork City Council is undertaking the redevelopment of Spring Lane Halting Site at Ballyvolane, Cork City, along with the construction of a new purpose-built group housing scheme on the land adjacent to Spring Lane, known as Ellis Yard.

Spring Lane Halting Site is currently a live site. It is severely overcrowded. It was originally designed as a ten-bay site which now currently holds over 50 families. It is proposed to accommodate a 12-unit Traveller accommodation scheme in Spring Lane and a 15-unit group housing scheme in Ellis Yard. The remaining families are to be housed in existing social housing stock and an off-site separate group housing scheme.

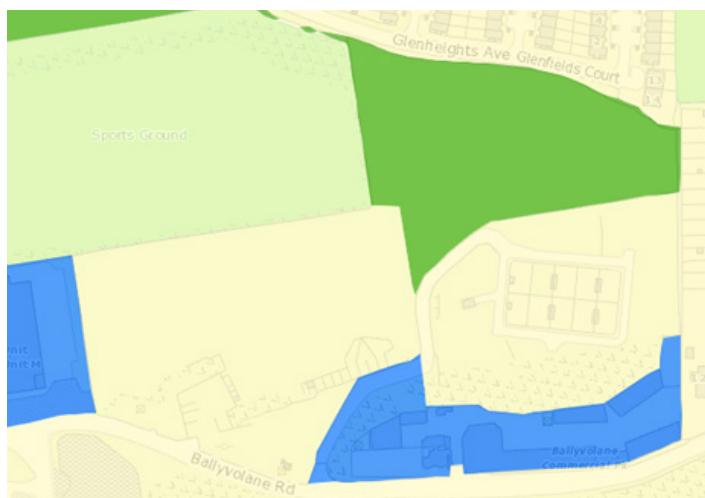
## 2. BRIEF

The current proposed Traveller appropriate accommodation is the result of a lengthy design process informed by reference to local area objectives, local and national planning policy, and extensive consultation between Cork City Council representatives and Traveller representatives. The Housing Operations Directorate and mediators have played a continually active role in commenting and providing valuable feedback to Cork City Architects, providing a 'Traveller voice' throughout the design development process to date.

The proposed development is for the construction of 27no. residential units comprised of 15no. Traveller Appropriate Houses in Ellis Yard and 12no. Traveller Appropriate Units in Spring Lane, public and communal open space, upgrades to existing infrastructure and all associated site works.



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## 3. SITE

### Location:

The proposed site is located in the Ballyvolane area of the North-Central Suburbs of Cork City – refer to Figure 06 ‘Site Location Map’. It is located North of the North Ring Road, in between Glenheights Avenue and Ballyvolane Road.

### Development Plan Zoning:

The majority of the site is zoned as ‘ZO 01 Sustainable Residential’ in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, with the landscaped area to the North of the Spring Lane site zoned as ‘ZO 15 Public Open Space’. The existing entrance to the site is partly zoned as ‘ZO 09 Light Industry and Related Uses’. Refer to Figure 07.

### Site Area:

The combined area of the sites are as follows:

- Spring Lane: 15,215sqm
- Spring Lane – Useable Space: 07,145sqm
- Ellis Yard (East and West): 20,470sqm
- Ellis Yard – Useable Space: 12,440sqm
- Total: 35,685sqm / 3.57 hectares
- Total – Useable Space: 19,585sqm / 1.96 hectares
- Public open space: 13,475sqm / 1.35 hectares
- Overall combined area of sites and public space: approx 4.9 ha

### Site Ownership:

The entire site is in the possession of Cork City Council.



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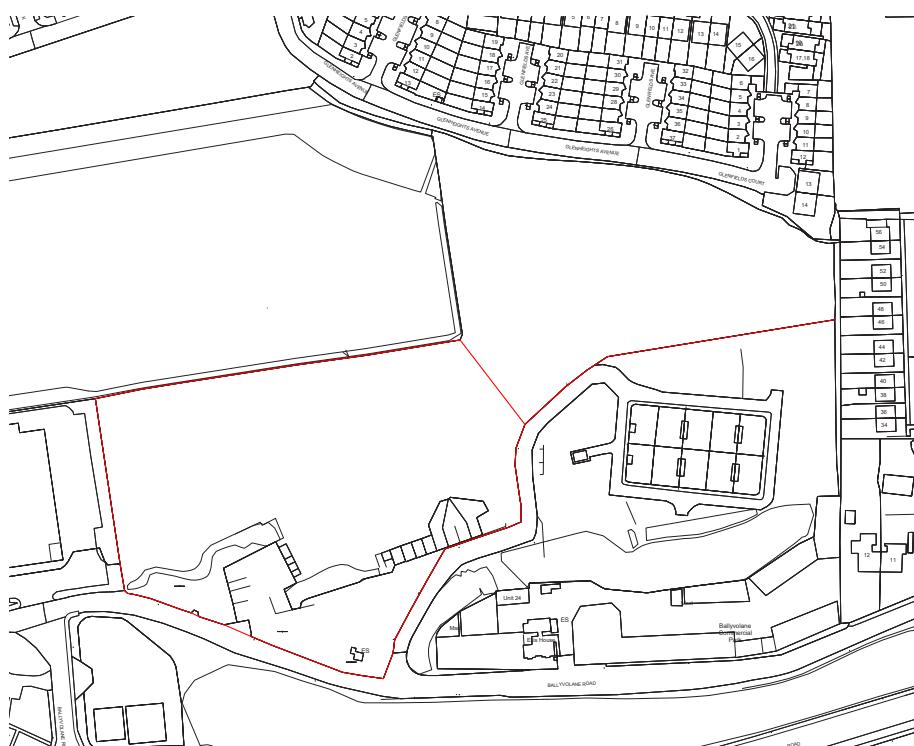


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### 3. SITE

#### Site Description:

The overall site (see figure 08) is comprised of two 'brown field' sites with public open space, approximately 4.9 ha in overall area.

#### Site 1 – Spring Lane

Spring Lane, approximately 1.5 ha is bounded by Park Court housing estate to the East, an empty concrete yard (Ellis Yard) and Glen Rovers GAA pitch to the West, Ballyvolane industrial estate to the South and the public open space with Glenfields Avenue Road and housing estate to the North.

Historic mapping indicates the site was formerly a gravel quarry/pit and this accounts for level differences across this site, the south and east sides are bounded by steep sloping embankments. The central area is considered flat. North of the site is the public open space which starts to rise to the North by approximately 8-10m, it measures approximately 1.35 ha. The public open space will be upgraded as parts of the works. There is only one existing vehicular access into the site from the southwest. It is a steep inclined access road off the Ballyvolane road.

The site is currently occupied by approximately 50no. Traveller families, consisting of typical Traveller type units/bays along with welfare units and sheds. Ten welfare units with caravans were built in the 1980's, this has extended greatly in the last 40 years leading to anti-social behaviour and poor living conditions. The original welfare units are single detached 'dwellings' located quite central in site (see figure 09).

#### Site 2 – Ellis Yard

Ellis Yard, approximately 2.0 ha is bounded by Spring Lane halting site to the East, an industrial unit to the West, Glen Rovers GAA pitch to the North and Ballyvolane Road to the South. It is currently an unused relatively flat area of hard standing bounded by a steep slope/cliff face to the south running up to the Ballyvolane Road. The site can be accessed from the southwest via an unused existing gated entrance.

## 4. SITE STRATEGY - PROPOSAL

### Site Strategy:

It is proposed to remove all existing Traveller units and bays which currently occupy the site.

The specific cultural requirements of the proposed occupants have been balanced with best practice urban planning approaches to arrive at a culturally appropriate residential development that sits within its sub-urban setting. The new scheme proposes to create privacy for various Traveller families along with a more open and inclusive approach to its surroundings, the layout has been modified to meet difficult existing conditions and existing social problems.

The completed project aims to deliver high-quality residential accommodation with positive engagement with the existing sub-urban context, in a highly sustainable, efficient and cost-effective design with low maintenance requirements and public amenity space.

Through the consultation process and interrogation of precedent Traveller accommodation developments, a series of fundamental design parameters emerged. These informed the locations, layouts and design of the Traveller houses resulting in an overall development comprised of 3 estates. Ellis Yard West, Ellis Yard East, and Spring Lane. The development aims to improve and promote existing connectivity links to the site. Ellis Yard West will be accessed from an existing upgraded entrance located off the Ballyvolane Road. Ellis Yard East and Spring Lane will be accessed from the existing upgraded Spring Lane road, each having their own subsidiary roads and entrance. Upgrades to the existing Ballyvolane road along with a new pavement are proposed to improve safe pedestrian connection to the site. The existing pedestrian connection is to be relocated, it is proposed through the North of the site to Glenheights avenue to allow safe pedestrian access to local schools.

Simple cul-de-sac arrangements have been developed with houses grouped around public green area/vehicular circulation areas. These design interventions provide passive surveillance along with providing privacy for the Traveller residents. 2no. large, designated parking areas have been provided for in each plot with access to the rear to accommodate a touring caravan in accordance with the specific client brief. Therefore, no on street parking has been provided. Turning bays have been included for emergency vehicles, bin trucks etc in the proposed new road design.

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fig: 13

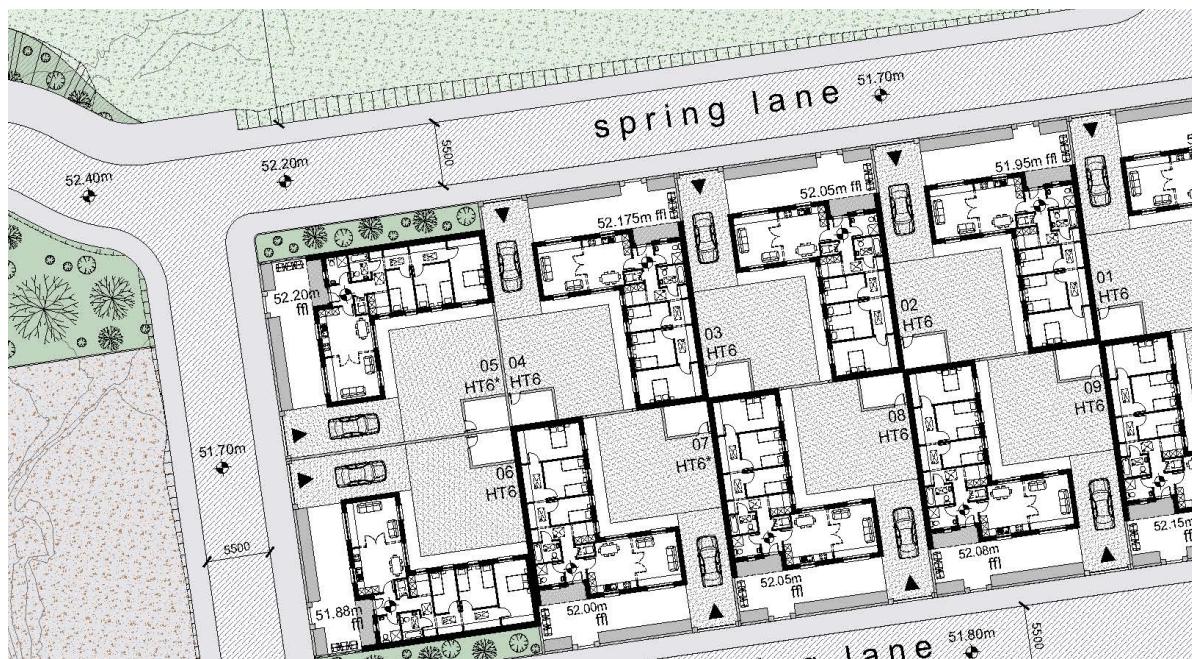


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## 4. SITE STRATEGY - DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

### Ellis Yard East and Ellis Yard West

The houses in Ellis Yard East and West have been orientated to bound the GAA pitch with few windows providing privacy to the Traveller residents along with the GAA community. Each dwelling entrance faces south minimising overlooking between each unit whilst maximising south facing windows.

All dwellings are designed to be comfortable and adaptable to changing needs. The layouts facilitate future adaptability, and are accessible for older people, the very young and people with disabilities.

The house designs, ranging from three-bedroom to five-bedroom, have been designed from a specific brief developed through consultation with the intended user groups via mediators. The external spaces off the ground floor are as important as the internal spaces. A strong visual and physical connection has been included from the main kitchen/ living spaces to the rear yard. Large living spaces are provided to accommodate potentially large family units and facilitate large family gatherings. Most of the living spaces open out onto the yard to create a feeling of permeability and connection with the outdoor environment. A ground floor bedroom with adjacent shower room is provided both for adaptability and to cater for elderly relatives that are commonly cared for by younger generations. The space to the front of the house is minimised, with adequate parking for a car and tourer.

### Spring Lane

As mentioned above the external spaces are as important as the internal spaces, creating visual and physical connections between inside and out. The L-shaped courtyard units have been designed to create internal spaces around the external social environment. Living and sleeping quarters are kept separate with sizes and proportions similar to the Traveller lifestyle. Again, the space to the front of the house is minimised, with adequate parking for a car and tourer.

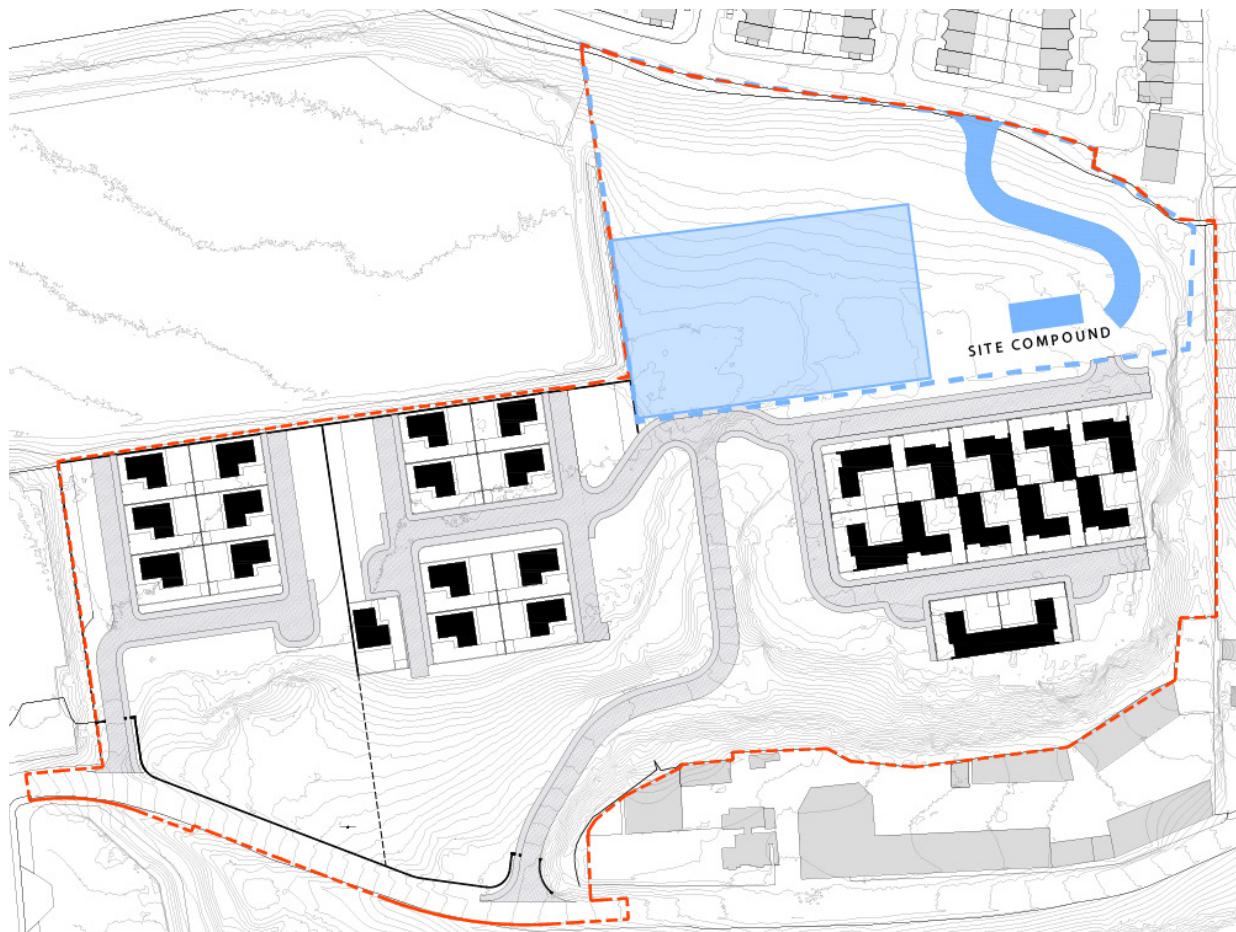


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## 4. SITE STRATEGY - DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

### Temporary Works – Accommodation and Road:

Spring Lane will remain a live site while construction works are on-going and as a result temporary accommodation for the Spring Lane residents will be built to house the residents while the Spring Lane halting site is being developed.

The temporary accommodation will be located in the Public Open Space, see figure 15. A temporary access road for the Spring Lane construction works will be required. The temporary access road will be accessed from the North via Glenfields Avenue, see figure 15. This road will only be used by construction personnel.

The temporary accommodation and temporary road will only be in use during the development of the Spring Lane halting site and not the development of the Ellis Yard site. The temporary accommodation and temporary road will be removed and the Public Open Space reinstated once the Spring Lane site is complete.

## 5. SITE BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

There are differing boundary proposals to the site which respond to adjacent site conditions:

- Western Boundary to Ellis Yard - the existing palisade fencing will be retained along with the existing extensive tree and hedgerow planting already acting as a boundary and a buffer space between the new development and the existing industrial unit.
- Northern Boundary to Ellis Yard - A new 2.4m high wall will be constructed along the Northern Boundary providing privacy to both the new development and the Glen Rovers GAA.
- Eastern Boundary to Ellis Yard/Western Boundary to Spring Lane – The entrance road will act as a boundary between Spring Lane and Ellis Yard along with new sloping ground and fencing.
- Northern Boundary to Spring Lane – This is the public open space. The boundary between Spring Lane and the public open space will remain permeable.
- Northern Boundary to Public Open Space - A new 1.8m high palisade/security fence with tree and hedgerow planting will be provided on the North boundary of the Public Open Space, acting as a buffer space between the new development and the existing residential developments. The pedestrian access route is to be relocated as indicated on the Part VIII drawings.
- Western boundary to Public Open Space - A new 2.4m high wall will be constructed along the Western Boundary providing privacy to both the new development and the GAA.
- Eastern boundary to Public Open Space - The existing steep sloping cliff, existing trees and hedgerow and existing retaining wall will continue to act as a boundary and buffer between the new development and the existing residential developments.
- Eastern boundary to Spring Lane - The existing steep sloping cliff, existing trees and hedgerow and existing retaining wall will continue to act as a boundary and buffer between the new development and the existing residential developments.
- Southern boundary to Spring Lane - The existing steep sloping cliff and existing boundary wall will continue to act as a boundary and buffer between the new development and the existing industrial units.
- Southern boundary to Ellis Yard - The existing palisade fencing will be removed and a new 1.8m high wall will be constructed along the main Ballyvolane access road, upgrading existing site entrances.
- A new 2.4m high wall between Ellis East and Ellis Yard West will be constructed with trees and shrubs.



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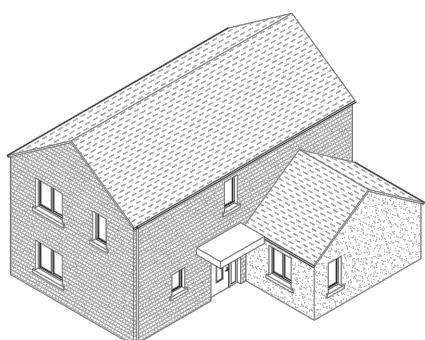


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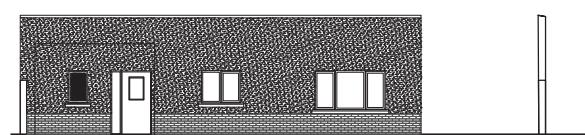


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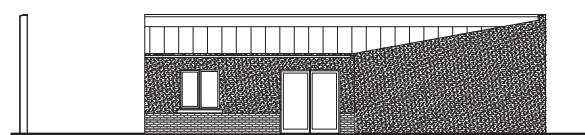


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## 6. UNIT MIX + TYPE

The proposed unit mix is:

### Ellis Yard West:

- 1no. 5bed 11person 2storey detached house - TYPE 1
- 3no. 3bed 06person 2storey detached house - TYPE 3
- 1no. 3bed 06person 2storey detached house - TYPE 4
- 1no. 3bed 06person 2storey detached house - TYPE 5

### Ellis Yard East:

- 2no. 4bed 08person 2storey detached house - TYPE 2
- 1no. 3bed 06person 2storey detached house - TYPE 4
- 6no. 3bed 06person 2storey detached house - TYPE 3

### Spring Lane:

- 12no. 3bed 05person 1storey unit - TYPE 6 + 6\*(internal living space layout differs)

Providing a total of 159 bedspaces in 27 units.

The minimum 10% provision of public open space for residential developments as per the Cork City development plan is provided for in the overall proposal.

## 7. DENSITY

The sites are approximately 3.6 ha where approximately 2.0 ha of this considered to be useable space for development, due to the steep embankments.

### Ellis Yard East and West:

Site area approximately 20,470m<sup>2</sup>/2.05Ha – 15 units

### Spring Lane:

Site area approximately 15,215m<sup>2</sup>/1.52Ha – 12 units

The proposal of 27 units achieves a density of approximately 13 residential units per hectare.



fig: 24



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## 8. DETAIL DESIGN

Use of natural daylight and sunlight has been optimised, windows sized to allow good daylight penetration. Practical aspects of access and use have been considered in detail, with particular reference to Part M of the Building Regulations. Storage spaces are distributed throughout the circulation areas, living spaces and bedrooms, with kitchen cupboard spaces and worktops being provided.

A consistent, contemporary architectural expression is carried throughout the scheme to bring a uniformity and identity while maintaining a simplicity to the elevations. Materials such as brick, render, concrete/slate tiles etc. reflect tried and tested traditional building methods used elsewhere in the surrounding area, and are considered an appropriate aesthetic for the scheme.