

7.14 Commercial Design Strategy

The key points which have shaped the commercial design strategy are described below. Careful consideration has been given to balance the commercial aspirations with the requirement for the local community needs.

Public plaza :

the cafe, bar and smaller artisan shops are all concentrated around the central public plaza space which benefits from the southerly aspect and is also open along its east-west axis. This provides a sheltered and sunny location which is ideal for outdoor seating, almost akin to a mini piazza, which can be used throughout the day and early evening.

Corner units :

The generously proportioned corner units (including the bar and pharmacy units) are located at either end of the pedestrian concourse and are designed and sized to appeal to premium and well established operators.

Medical Centre :

The largest unit measures c. 210sq.m (2,260 sq. ft.) and is designed to accommodate a medical centre. It is conveniently located on the north elevation where it is less than 400m. from Tallaght Luas stop. A dental practice is proposed adjacent to the centre to complement its health use.

Creche :

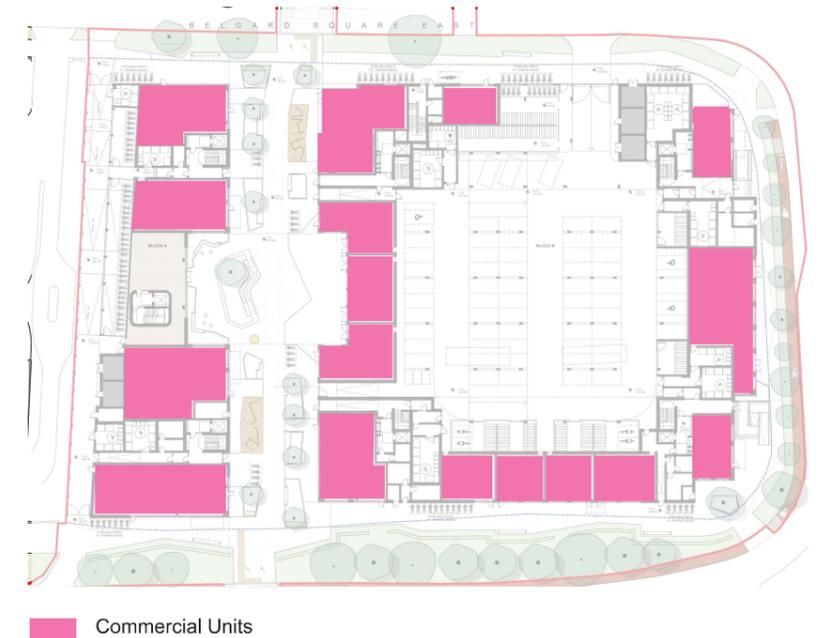
The proposed crèche measures c. 350 sq.m. (3,765 sq.ft.) and is arranged over 3 levels to maximise plan efficiency. A covered play area is designed to be concealed from the view of the adjoining apartments to remove any overlooking. A dedicated drop off point with space for up to 3 cars is provided in the car park

East Elevation to Belgard Road :

The larger commercial/community/retail units are located facing Belgard Road. This provides the optimum commercial arrangement and encourages footfall opposite Abberley Square on the other side of Belgard Road. The flexibility of the layout allows these units to be readily sub-divided in the future if required to suit demand.

Pedestrian / cycle crossings :

The proposed addition of the crossings to Belgard Road and Belgard Square East. These will encourage additional pedestrian footfall across the east-west axis of the site by providing safe access to The Square on the west side of the site and the commercial units in and around Abberley Square on the east side.



Commercial Units

7.15 Servicing

A clear, legible and straightforward servicing arrangement has been incorporated into the proposed design layout for each of the two main Blocks A and B. This strategy has been informed by the feedback received from SDCC at LRD Opinion Stage. It has also been developed in consultation with NRB Consulting Engineers, experts in Traffic/Transportation and Road, who advised on how best to safely manage traffic along the service lane.

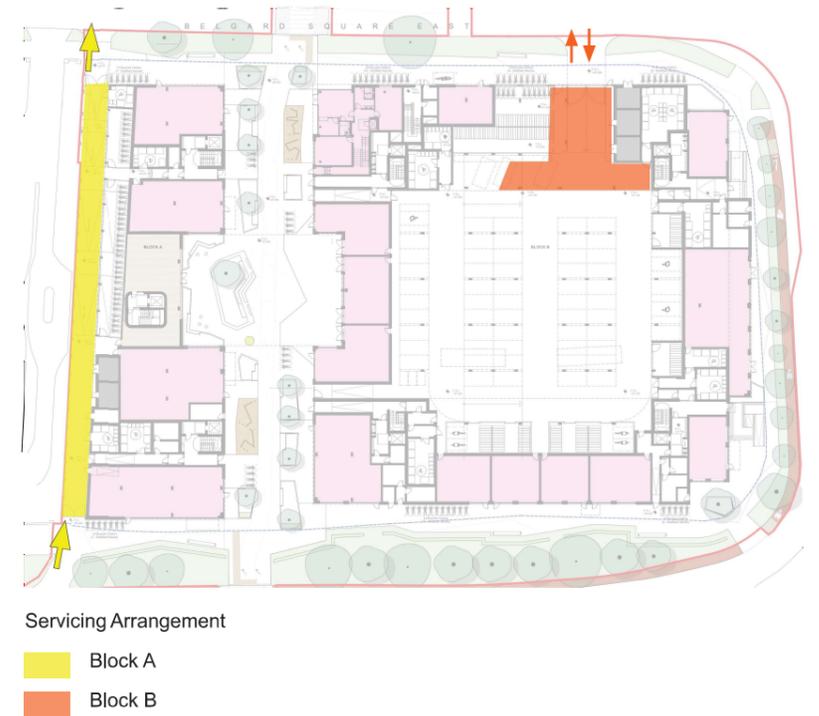
(i) Block A: Linear 'Senior Living' Block

Separate service access for the 'Senior Living' block on the southern end of the site is provided along a service laneway which is gated at either end. This laneway provides for the bin lorry and delivery vehicles to enter from the Belgard Road side and exit along Belgard Square East.

(ii) Block B: U-Shaped Residential Block

The service access for the larger U-shaped block is incorporated as part of the main vehicular entrance to the car park from Belgard Square East. The podium of the building has been raised to facilitate a bin lorry truck to enter and turn within the car park. A designated bin collection point has been allocated close towards the entrance and this will be used for the residential and commercial refuse collection on separate days (refer to the operational waste management plan which has been submitted with this Planning Application).

The layout of the car park has also been designed to accommodate a large van delivery vehicles (for example a high Transit van type with fixed axle) to serve the commercial units that are located around the perimeter of the block. All units are provided with rear access for service deliveries and to allow to the commercial bin stores that are located on the perimeter of the car park.



7.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STRATEGY

7.16 Residential Accommodation Design Principles

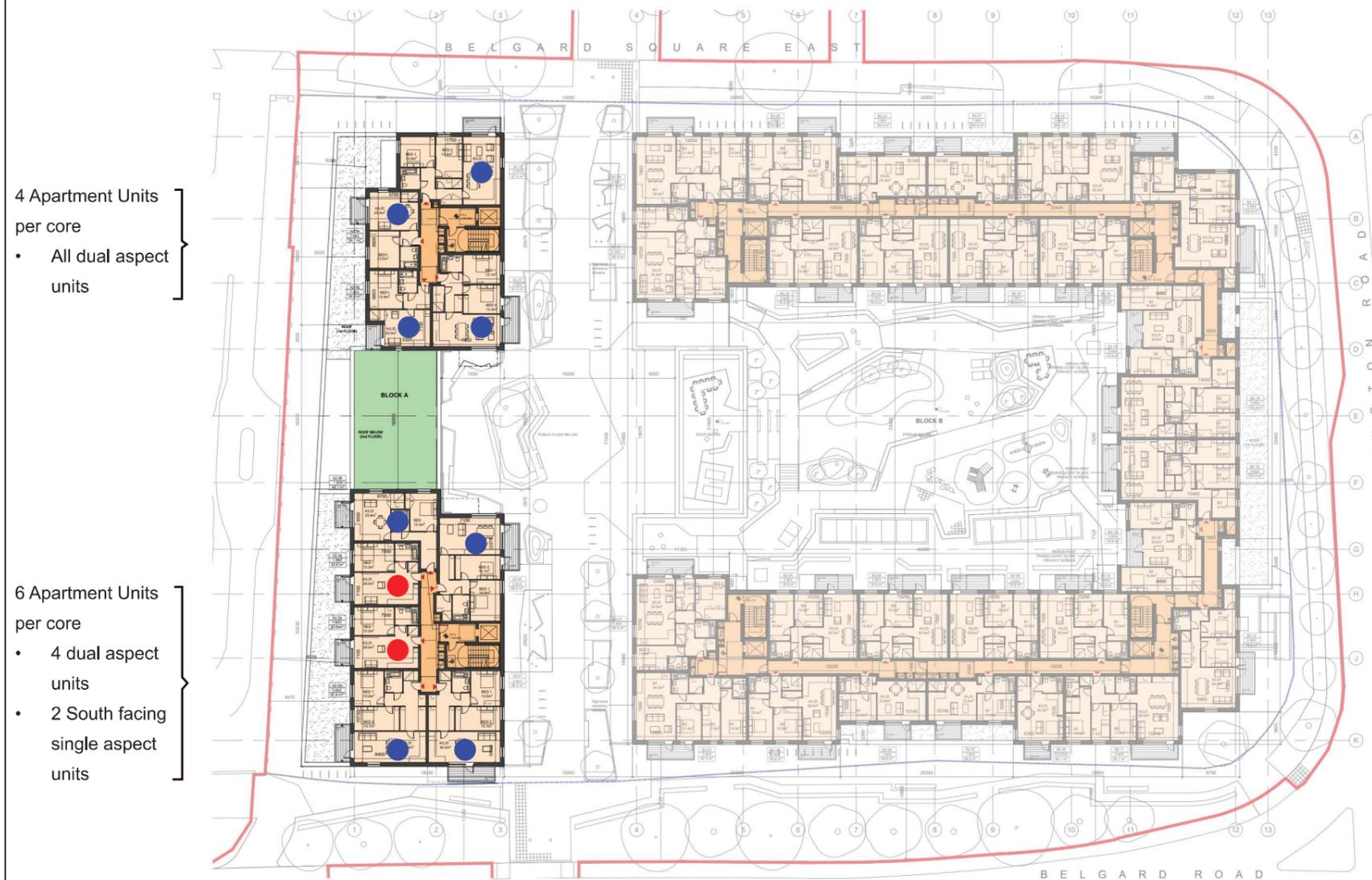
(i) Block A: Linear 'Senior Living' Block

A total of 49 apartment units are proposed over 5 levels. Designed for 'Senior Living' residents, the units provide a diverse social mix of residential apartment units and comprise one and two bed units only (as three bed units are considered family units). The units are generally larger in size compared to standard apartments, having been designed to meet the current Universal Design Guidelines. However, they are not a form of assisted living, rather they are larger apartments designed specifically to cater for the needs of older people who live independently.

The design is laid out in two blocks, a larger block which has six apartments across a typical floor with a single stair/lift and a smaller block which has four apartments on a typical floor. The blocks are connected at first floor level by a large internal communal amenity area. Below this amenity space is a large external communal amenity space which is accessed directly from the central public plaza area at ground floor level.

The design and layout of the senior living apartments are arranged to incorporate the following key design principles:

- over 56% of the apartments are designed as dual aspect units
- where the units are not dual aspect (12 out of the 49), these are all designed to face south
- the mix of units is marginally weighted in favour of 2-bed units (53%) with the remaining 47% 1-bed units (no 3-bed units are provided)
- balconies are generally oversized to provide suitable private open space for elderly persons
- the stair/lift cores which serve each block are located on the north side of the blocks in order to maximise the arrangement of the apartment units along the southern elevation and avail of the sunny orientation
- access to the stair/lift cores is directly via the public plaza or from the central communal amenity space at ground floor level
- safe and secure access from the rear is accommodated for older persons who wish to cycle



Typical Floor Plan: Senior Living Accommodation

- Dual Aspect Unit
- Single Aspect Unit Facing South

4 Apartment Units
per core
• All dual aspect
units

6 Apartment Units
per core
• 4 dual aspect
units
• 2 South facing
single aspect
units

7.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STRATEGY

(ii) Block B: U-Shaped Residential Block

A total of 150 apartment units are proposed in 5-6 levels over ground floor. The opposing wings of the block are located 35.4m. apart to prevent overlooking and to provide a bright, airy and generous communal garden area at podium level which enjoys a southerly aspect.

Unlike the previous SHD scheme, the design does not rely on the roof to provide sufficient Communal amenity space to comply with the Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities in July 2025, published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The residential units are laid out either side of a central corridor with four stair/lift cores located in the corners to provide a simple and efficient layout. The circulation corridor wraps around the three sides of the block to facilitate access to each apartment from two of the stair/lift cores which provide direct access from the car park level.

The residential units are arranged to incorporate the following key design considerations:

- the mix of units is heavily weighted in favour of 2-bed units (48% of units in Block B).
- all 3-bed units are dual aspect and are orientated either south or west to one side
- the 3-bed units are typically located towards the ends of the block in the premier locations where they can also provide animation to the gable facades
- no single aspect north facing apartments are proposed (unlike the previous SHD Application).
- no deck access units are proposed to eliminate the risk of anti-social behaviour which might otherwise occur where there is no passive surveillance of the external common areas
- all apartments are designed with a floor to floor dimension of 3.325m to provide 2.7m from floor to ceiling.



Typical Floor Plan of U-Shaped Apartment Block

- Studio Unit
- 1 Bed Unit
- 2 Bed Unit
- 3 Bed Unit

7.17 Residential Communal Open Space

Residential Communal Open Space

The proposed design seeks to incorporate the communal open space for the residents as an integral part of the design without relying upon the roofscape to deliver this. In contrast to this, the communal open space in the previous SHD Planning Application was mostly confined to the roof – a full nine floors above street level.

(i) Block A: Linear ‘Senior Living’ Block

Internal Communal Open Space

Internal as well as external open communal amenity space, is designed to provide a suitable alternative area for older residents during the winter months and the days of persistent inclement weather. The internal space (c.114 sq.m,) is located centrally at first floor level between the two 6-storey blocks on either side. This provides direct and easy connection to each of the lift/stair cores that serve each apartment block. This internal amenity space overlooks the central plaza space, with its piazza, on the north side and has a long generous terrace, facing south on the opposite side.

External Communal Open Space

External communal open space is provided in two locations:

- Ground floor level

A large communal space (measuring c.139 sq.m,) is located directly off the main public plaza. The communal space is enclosed within the building envelope, however it is designed as an external space or winter garden, providing a semi-private and secure external area that is sheltered and where residents and visitors to meet and gather. The space also provides a separate entrance for both residents and visitors directly off the new plaza.

- First Floor Level

A terrace, facing south and measuring c.50sq.m., is located at first floor level. The terrace is accessed directly from the internal communal amenity space where it can take advantage of its sunny orientation.

Locating the amenity spaces for older persons adjacent to and overlooking the public plaza places older people at the heart of the community. It also provides passive surveillance of the central public space during the day and at night time.

(ii) Block B: U-Shaped Residential Block

External Communal Open Space

The communal open space is accommodated at podium level, directly above the car park and easily accessible from the four stair/lift cores that serve all of the apartments. This communal space is defined by the U-shaped apartment block and is orientated due south, measuring 1398 sq.m. This area provides c. 30% above the minimum requirements for external communal amenity space as set out in the new Planning Design Standards for Apartments (July 2025).

The primary external space measures approx. 43m long by 34m. wide and incorporates a carefully landscaped garden and play areas which are described in detail in the Landscape Design Report that accompanies this Planning Application. A smaller raised area is located towards the southern end, overlooking the plaza and providing views east and west along the new pedestrian concourse below. This space, with its sunny orientation, offers an opportunity for rooftop allotments and a place for residents to gather, socialise and to watch the activity in the central plaza space below.

7.18 Access and Inclusivity

The proposed design seeks to provide a high quality, adaptable and inclusive development. Careful consideration has been given to catering for the needs of all users. Particular cognizance has been taken of the changing levels across the site from north to south where there is a fall across the Belgard Road of c.1.2m. and a fall of c.1.8m along the length of Belgard Square East. The proposed design, site layout and levels have been developed to make access through and within the new development clearly legible and easily accessible for pedestrians, regardless of age, gender, disability, race or sensory and mobility abilities and for cyclists.

Some of the key considerations around the inclusivity elements that have been incorporated as part of the design include:

- provision of minimal gradient ramps and the elimination of steps across the public spaces generally
- clear, legible and direct pedestrian access for residents from the street
- generous lift and TGD Part M compliant stair access from the car park to all apartments
- main entrance to the 'Senior Living' residents located directly off the central public plaza to provide a clear and safe entrance for older residents and visitors
- direct link for cyclists from the cycle lane along Belgard Road to the shared surface on the pedestrian concourse
- separate cyclist entrance/exits to the secure bicycle parking areas located in the car park
- even distribution of secure bicycle parking areas across the development
- provision of covered and secured Sheffield stands for the 'Senior Living' bicycle storage

- provision of Sheffield stands alongside double stacked bicycle racks to assist children and persons with disabilities using the bicycle storage in the main residential block (Block B).
- simple and legible car park layout with the provision for three disabled car park spaces located close to residential stair/lift cores
- 3no. drop off points for the crèche which are provided to the western side of the car park, close to the car park entrance. A dedicated pedestrian route is conveniently located directly adjacent to the drop off area to safely transfer children from the car park to the proposed crèche.



Residential Bicycle Parking - Long Time Secured

Block A



CGI Showing Inclusivity and Accessibility through the plaza

7.19 Vehicular and Bicycle Parking

Car parking

A total of 58 car parking spaces are included as part of the proposed development, including three disabled car park spaces, as well as three spaces for motorbikes and provision for EV charging units. Electronically controlled access gates provide secure and monitored access from Belgard Square East and separate pedestrian gates (which also cater for cyclists) are located adjacent to this.

Bicycle parking

A generous provision of bicycle storage is provided across the site.

(i) Residents to Block A: 'Senior Living'

76no. covered and secure bicycle spaces are provided for the residents. Since not all older persons will use bicycles, this well in excess of the bicycle parking that will be required in practice, however the provision has been made on the basis that it can accommodate future change/demand.

The bicycle parking is located to the southern side of the 'Senior Living' block where it is accessed along the service laneway which is secured by electronically controlled gates at either end. The bicycle parking spaces are secured in their own enclosure which is located under the overhang of the first floor above. Direct access is provided from the bicycle storage area directly into the stair/lift cores. All bicycle stands are 'Sheffield type', suitable for older persons to safely and easily lock their bicycles.

(ii) Residents to Block B

336 bicycle spaces (including provision for 4 cargo bicycles) for the residents are distributed in separate secure enclosures around the perimeter of the car park. The car park at level 0 is access controlled and there are two main access points for cyclists: (i) via the vehicular main entrance gates and (ii) a dedicated cycle route from the new public concourse which connects to the existing cycle lane along Belgard Road.

(iii) Visitor Bicycle Parking

A total of 145 bicycle parking spaces using 'Sheffield Stands' are evenly distributed around the perimeter of the site and within the pedestrian concourse area which connects Belgard Square East and Belgard Road. The Sheffield stands have been carefully placed close to the six residential stair/lift cores to facilitate easy access for visitors to the residential apartment units as well as for visitors to the commercial units.



Residential Bicycle Parking - Long Time Secured

Block B

8.1 Building Heights and Massing

The height of the proposed buildings adhere to the framework as set down in Section 2.6.2 of The Tallaght Town Centre LAP, 2020 (ref. fig. 2.8 – Height Strategy). This provides appropriately scaled and robust buildings located along the perimeter of the development site to consolidate the urban grain.

However, it is noted that the prescriptive nature and height limits set down in the LAP do present design challenges, particularly where it is not possible to add height in order to articulate the roof profile or vary skyline to create visual interest.

The larger U-shaped residential block B is almost exactly square in plan shape, measuring c.71m. in length. Without the Planning mechanism to increase the height, for example at the corners, the challenge is how to create visual interest and modelling to the facade. In addition, the generally repetitive floor plans that are demanded for this scale of residential structures generally does limit the scope of variation that can be introduced in terms of openings and balconies etc.

To address these challenges, the design emphasis has concentrated on developing the following elements:

- Corner massing

To articulate the prominent north-west and north-east corners (without the benefit of increasing the height) the brick massing steps inward in plan at the corner to express a stronger verticality at these highly visible node points. At the lower level, the shopfronts are arranged to allow the corner solid massing of the apartment above to be transferred into large brick piers to further accentuate the verticality on these corners.

- Window openings to the gable ends and corners

The dual aspect gable units provide an opportunity for the window openings and balconies at the gable ends and the external corners to break free from the repetitive rhythm of the longer elevations. The location and size of the window openings, the balconies and their balustrade detailing, all alternate between the floor levels to create visual interest to all of the gable ends and corners.

- Massing and modelling

To emphasise the solidity of the large masonry block, the plan of the U-shaped block is designed to step inwards at different locations to express a stronger massing and modelling when viewed obliquely along the surrounding streets. By creating deeper reveals and shadow, this helps to break up the general massing of the longer elevations to the street.

- Avoiding the clichés

The proposed building is designed as a solid and robust urban block. Therefore, the design has steadfastly sought to avoid repeating the clichés of poor and unimaginative architectural apartment design, most notably: set back penthouse floors in a different material finishes/colour; unoriginal alternating of cost effective wirecut bricks to generate interest or the poor choice of materials intended to break up the massing, particularly cementitious renders.



View from Belgard Square East looking East



View from Belgard Square East looking West

8.2 Elevation Strategy

Street elevations and the courtyard elevations

A key component of the elevational strategy is the modelling of the solid facades and how the openings (windows) and projections (balconies) are arranged within them.

The plan layout, with the apartments arranged either side of a central corridor, results in the living spaces and balconies being located on both the street and the inward looking courtyard elevations. Responding to these very different settings, the balconies to the street elevations are typically ordered or grouped, except to the gables, whereas in contrast, the balconies to the courtyard elevations are staggered to improve the sunlight / daylight to the living spaces.

Articulation of the gable ends and corners

This is a key element of the overall design and the elevational strategy. The gables, in particular, are very prominent in the views along the streetscape. They are also important since they frame the views of the public plaza. Therefore, the articulation of the gables, including their massing, the window locations, size and depth of the reveal and the design and material finish to the balconies, all offer opportunities to enrich and articulate the design of the gables and the external corners. Each gable and external corner has been expressed differently and has been designed to respond to their position in the streetscape, the proximity of the building opposite or how the building turns the corner.

Balconies designs and locations

For the majority of the balconies, a simple slatted painted metal balustrade is proposed throughout. Careful consideration is given to avoid vertical repetition, especially along the longer elevations. Therefore, the design of the balconies varies subtly at the corners and gables to add variety and visual interest at the most prominent locations. Where this occurs the balcony types are selected to suit the daylight requirement (ie it may

be dependent upon the orientation or the floor level where it is located) or where safeguarding privacy is required for a particular location. On the gables where the dual aspect apartments occur, the balconies to alternate between facades. For example balconies may be grouped on one elevation at the lower level and then relocated around to the alternate façade at the upper levels to provide interest and movement on key views.

Window openings

With the repetition of so many window openings, careful consideration has been given to how the window openings are arranged in these solid facades. This includes varying where the openings are clustered, where they are ordered or aligned or where the opening break the repetition. Variation is also created with the window sizes and the depth of recess which is dependent on the window location or the view that the window frames from inside the apartment.



Gable end to west end to public plaza facing Belgard Square East



Gable end to west end of public plaza

8.3 Commercial and Community Design: Street Frontage and Shopfronts

The rationale for the commercial design strategy and mix is set out in Section 7.13. Active street frontages for the commercial/retail/community units are carefully integrated around the full perimeter of the new urban block and along the pedestrian concourse and public plaza area. Commercial units are placed at all of the prominent external corners of the site, including at either end of the new pedestrian concourse which connects Belgard Road and Belgard Square East.

The design of the public realm and landscaping also seeks to increase the visibility and vibrancy of the streetscape where it interfaces with the commercial/retail units.

Along the retail edge, facing Belgard Road, the shopfront design is ordered to provide uniformity in terms of the shopfront and the signage above. Equally as important, this provides a future degree of control for prospective tenants to operate within.

Along the proposed new pedestrian concourse and public plaza area, the shopfronts are designed with smaller artisan shops in mind. Therefore, extensive and repetitive single glazed shopfronts are avoided in favour of separate shopfronts set within brick, stone or metal piers. Quality and attractive street frontage is an important part of our urban and neighbourhood environments. They help to add vibrancy and vitality and therefore careful consideration has been to the design of the key areas such as the entrance corners to the pedestrian concourse and around the public plaza.

The proposed street front has been designed to meet the objectives set out in Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Street Frontage, as contained

8.4 Universal Design Strategy

The proposed design follows the guiding principle that if an environment is accessible, usable, convenient as well as a pleasure to use, this benefits everyone. Therefore, the proposed design and layout have been carefully considered in line with the seven Principles of Universal Design:

- Equitable Use
- Flexibility in Use
- Simple and Intuitive Use
- Perceptible Information
- Tolerance for Error
- Low Physical Effort
- Size and Space for Approach and Use

The key considerations which follow these principles and have been incorporated into the proposed design and are set out in Section 7.17 (Access and Inclusivity) of this report.

The items set out in Section 7.17 have been incorporated, taking into account due consideration of the following relevant guidance and statutory documents, including:

- National Disability Authority's (NDA): 'Buildings for everyone: A Universal Design Approach.
- Customer Communications Toolkit for Services to the Public – A Universal Design Approach, published by the NDA, March 2023.
- TGD Part 'M': Access and Use of the Building Regulations (Amended), 2022.
- Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland, published by the NDA, March 2023.



Proposed new pedestrian concourse