



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

16no. residential units at:

**Former Central Garage site,
Parnell Rd., Bray, Co. Wicklow**

Site Appraisal Report



16no Units at form Central Garage Site, Parnell Road, Bray

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REPORT PREPARED BY:
STEPHEN EARLS, MRAI, EXECUTIVE ARCHITECT, WCC



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1.0 SITE CAPACITY

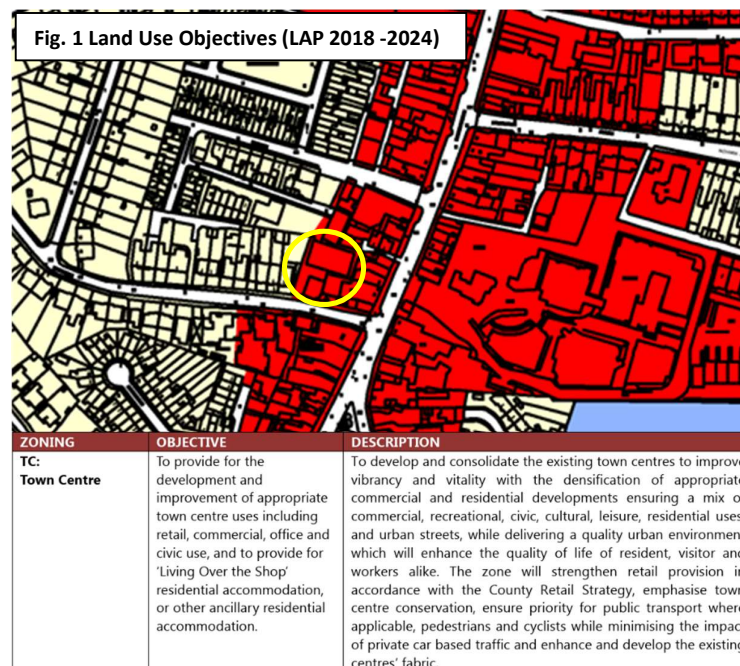
The subject site extends to approximately 0.09 hectares and is located at the former Central Garage, Parnell Road, Bray, within the existing built-up area of Bray Town Centre. The proposed development provides for 16 residential dwellings, together with associated communal open space, cycle parking, ancillary site works and all associated infrastructure.

The site is located within the settlement boundary of Bray, which is identified as a Key Town in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region and the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028. Under the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018–2024 (as extended), the lands are zoned TC – Town Centre, the objective of which is to provide for the protection, regeneration and consolidation of the town centre, including the provision of residential development as part of a sustainable mix of uses.

The National Planning Framework (Project Ireland 2040) identifies Compact Growth as a National Strategic Outcome and promotes the regeneration and reuse of underutilised and brownfield lands within existing urban areas. These objectives are reinforced by the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), which seeks to consolidate the growth of Key Towns through compact development and the efficient use of existing infrastructure.

The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028, through its Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy, promotes compact growth by encouraging the redevelopment of infill and brownfield sites within existing settlement boundaries. Chapter 5 – Town & Village Centres: Placemaking and Regeneration, and in particular Core Policy Objective CPO 5.6, supports the regeneration of Bray Town Centre through the redevelopment of underutilised sites, strengthening the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and making efficient use of serviced lands.

The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) recognise town centre and highly accessible urban locations as appropriate for increased residential densities where supported by good design, accessibility and existing services. The proposed development comprises 16 dwellings on a site area of approximately 0.09 hectares, equating to a residential density of approximately 178 dwellings per hectare. Having regard to the site's town centre location, brownfield nature and accessibility to public transport, employment, retail and community facilities, the proposed density represents an efficient and sustainable use of serviced urban land and is consistent with the objectives of the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028 and the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan.



1.1 ACCOMODATION BRIEF

The proposed development comprises 16 residential units, including 12 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom dwellings. This unit mix reflects a targeted response to current housing demand, aligning with the most sought-after dwelling types on the local housing waiting list.

The town centre location is ideally suited to this typology, offering immediate access to public transport, services, and amenities. This urban context supports a reduced reliance on private vehicles, consistent with national policy objectives.

In particular, the 2024 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines, issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, advocate for compact growth and sustainable mobility. Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 3 reinforces this approach, stating:

“In areas of high accessibility, car-parking provision should be minimised, substantially reduced or wholly eliminated.”

The proposed scheme is therefore well-aligned with contemporary planning policy, promoting compact, accessible, and demand-responsive residential development.

The table below outlines the unit type, count and mix:

UNIT TYPE	BLOCK 1	% Mix
TYPE A - 1B/2P (46.5 M2)	12	75%
TYPE B - 2B/3P (66 M2)	4	25%
Total	16	100%

Table 2: Proposed unit mix

The floor areas and layouts consistent with the target areas of the key guidance documents listed below:

- *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities*
- *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments*
- *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements*
- *Design Manual for Quality Housing*

The layouts for the proposed development, directly reference the *Design Manual for Quality Housing*, namely:

- A22 Apartment 1B-2P-1S
- A5 Apartment 2B-3P-1S

Design Strategy

The proposed development is conceived as part of a fragmented massing approach, where the overall building volume is broken down into smaller, articulated components. This strategy reduces the perceived scale of the development and aligns with the finer grain of surrounding residential structures typical of back land development.

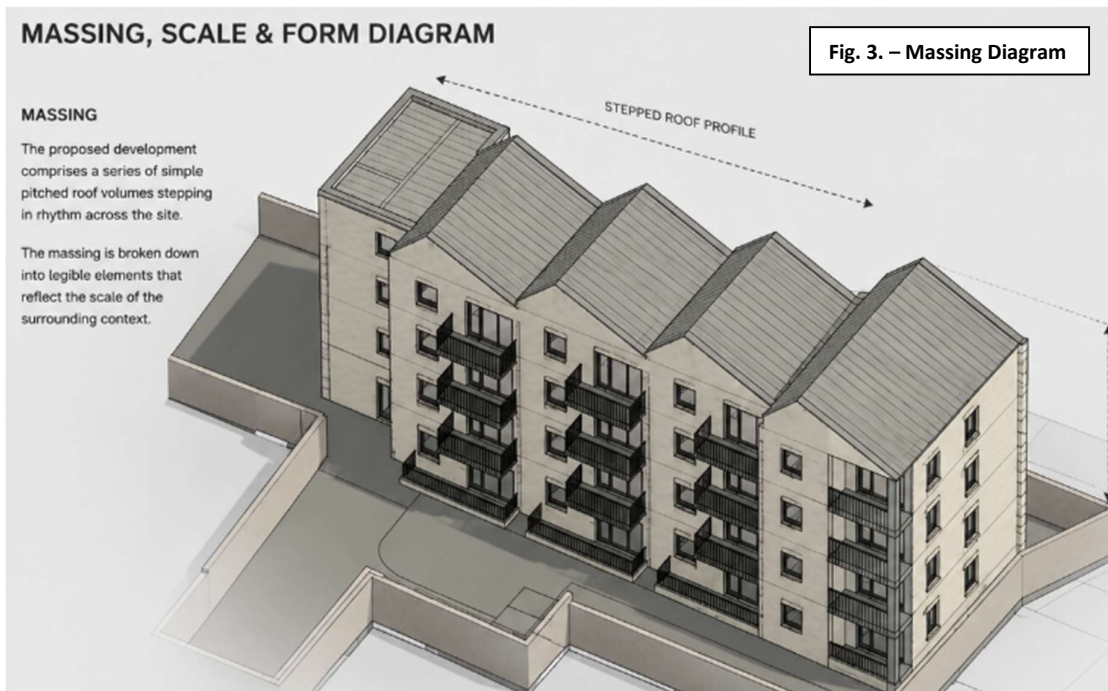
- **Vertical Articulation:** The building is divided into distinct vertical bays, each expressed through façade modulation, helping to visually segment the massing of the development.
- **Setbacks and horizontal breaks** respect neighbouring properties and emphasize distinct residential blocks."Own-Door Units: Ground-floor apartments feature independent entrances, reinforcing the domestic scale and contributing to a more active edge condition.
- **Roof Variation:** The saw-tooth roof profile introduces rhythm and breaks the roofline, referencing industrial typologies while softening the overall silhouette.
- **Balcony Integration:** Projecting and recessed balconies further articulate the façade, contributing to the perception of layered, smaller-scale volumes.



Fig. 2: Proposed Development – South Elevation

This massing strategy supports the integration of the development into its constrained back land setting, maintaining visual continuity with surrounding residential forms while delivering higher density in a context-sensitive manner.

The proposed development comprises a four-storey apartment block containing 16 residential units. The design responds to the site's immediate context, which includes historic residential terraces to the west and north, and more recent infill development along Parnell Road to the south. The site is currently occupied by a disused mid-20th century industrial structure, which is to be removed to facilitate redevelopment.



The building adopts a brick-faced façade, informed by the established presence of brick within Bray's broader built environment. While not directly referencing adjacent structures, brick has historically featured across a range of building types in the town—including residential terraces, institutional buildings, and industrial facilities—contributing to a coherent urban character. Its selection reflects a durable and contextually appropriate material tradition, supporting a consistent architectural expression within a contemporary design framework.

2.0 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PROOFING

The proposed development site at the former Central Garage, Parnell Road, Bray is located within an established town centre environment comprising a mix of residential, commercial and community uses. The redevelopment of this underutilised brownfield site for the provision of 16 new residential units represents an opportunity to deliver high-quality residential accommodation within walking distance of a wide range of community services, facilities and public transport, supporting the principles of sustainable compact growth.

It is generally accepted that a distance of 500m (approximately a 5-minute walk) to 1,000m (approximately a 10-minute walk) represents an appropriate catchment within which residents should be able to access local services and day-to-day amenities.

Within approximately 500m (5 minutes' walk):

- Town Centre Retail (Main Street & Castle Street)
- Convenience Retail (SuperValu)
- Community Facilities (Bray Library)
- Civic Facilities (Bray Civic Offices / Town Hall)
- Arts & Cultural Facilities (Mermaid County Wicklow Arts Centre)
- Postal Services (Bray Post Office)
- Public Transport (Dublin Bus Services)
- Food & Beverage Services (Main Street cafés and restaurants)

Within approximately 1,000m (10–15 minutes' walk):

- Heavy Rail Services (Bray DART Station)
- Coastal Amenity (Bray Promenade)
- Harbour & Marina (Bray Harbour)
- Public Open Space (People's Park)
- Primary Education (St. Peter's National School)
- Secondary Education (Loreto Secondary School)
- Leisure & Recreation (Shoreline Leisure Centre)



In terms of public transport, the site benefits from excellent accessibility. Dublin Bus services are available within a short walking distance of the site, providing regular services to Bray Town Centre, Dublin City Centre and surrounding areas. Bray DART Station, located approximately a 10-minute walk from the site, provides regular commuter and intercity rail services along the Dublin–Rosslare line. The site also benefits from convenient access to the N11/M11 national road network.

The redevelopment of this previously developed brownfield site represents an efficient use of serviced land within the built-up area of Bray Town Centre, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and compact growth. The proposed development will deliver 16 high-quality homes, make effective use of existing infrastructure and services, and contribute positively to the continued regeneration and vitality of Bray Town Centre.

The site is currently vacant and underutilised, detracting from the visual amenity of the surrounding area. Its redevelopment will improve the streetscape, increase passive surveillance, remove an underutilised town centre site from vacancy, and provide a safe, attractive and sustainable residential environment for future occupants.



Fig. 5 – Landscape Plan

3.0 SITE CONSTRAINTS AND OPTIMISATION

3.1 PLANNING HISTORY

The subject site has a history of planning activity associated with its redevelopment from a former commercial use to residential development.

Planning permission (Ref. 03/630134) was previously granted for the demolition of the former Central Garage buildings and the construction of a three-storey apartment development with ground floor car parking. While this established the principle of residential redevelopment on the site, the development was not implemented and the permission subsequently lapsed.

In 2019, Wicklow County Council, in partnership with Tuath Housing, commenced a Part 8 planning process (Ref. 19/902) for the redevelopment of the site. The proposal comprised the demolition of the remaining structures and the construction of a five-storey apartment building containing 17 residential units, comprising 13 no. one-bedroom apartments and 4 no. two-bedroom apartments, together with associated site development works. The proposal was subsequently approved by the elected members in December 2019.

The current proposal continues the established principle of residential redevelopment at this centrally located brownfield site and builds upon the previous planning history of the site.



3.2 FLOOD RISK

The subject site has been assessed with regard to flood risk. The Office of Public Works (OPW) Flood Maps and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment accompanying the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018–2024 have been examined.

The available mapping confirms that the subject site is located within Flood Zone C and is not located within Flood Zone A or Flood Zone B. The site is not identified as being at risk from fluvial or coastal flooding. Accordingly, there is no evidence to indicate that the proposed development would be subject to flood risk.

The proposed development is therefore considered appropriate at this location and is consistent with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG/OPW, 2009, as amended) and the flood risk policies and objectives of the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan 2018–2024 and the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028.



3.3 AA SCREENING AND EIA SCREENING

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report have been prepared in support of the proposed development and accompany this application.

The AA Screening Report assesses the potential for the proposed development to have likely significant effects on any European Site (Natura 2000 site), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The assessment concludes that, having regard to the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, it can be concluded that the proposed development will not have a likely significant effect on any European Site. Accordingly, the report concludes that Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

The EIA Screening Report assesses the proposed development in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and the criteria set out in Annex III of the EIA Directive. Having regard to the characteristics, location and potential impacts of the proposed development, the report concludes that the proposal is not likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment and that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required.

The findings of both screening reports demonstrate that the proposed development is not likely to result in significant ecological or environmental effects and support the proposed residential development at this location.

3.4 SERVICES & SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE (SuDS)

The subject site is well served by existing public infrastructure and utilities. Existing mains services, including water supply, foul drainage, electricity and telecommunications, are available within the surrounding public road network and adjacent developments.

The proposed development will connect to the existing public water supply and foul sewer network, subject to the agreement of Uisce Éireann. A Pre-Connection Enquiry has been submitted to Uisce Éireann and confirmation has been received that both water and wastewater connections are feasible without the need for infrastructure upgrades by Uisce Éireann.

Electricity and telecommunications infrastructure are available in the vicinity of the site and will be extended to serve the proposed development as required. Surface water drainage will be managed through a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) in accordance with the proposed engineering design.

The availability of existing services and infrastructure confirms that the site is suitably serviced for the proposed residential development and supports the efficient redevelopment of this brownfield site within the existing urban area.

The proposed development incorporates a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) comprising separate foul and surface water drainage networks. The surface water drainage strategy includes a rainwater garden, surface water gullies, an underground attenuation tank providing approximately 15.2m³ of storage and a vortex flow control device restricting discharge to approximately 6 litres per second. The separate foul and surface water drainage networks combine within the site before discharging to the existing combined public sewer on Parnell Road.

The proposed SuDS strategy will ensure that surface water runoff from the development is appropriately managed and attenuated prior to discharge, thereby reducing peak runoff rates to the receiving combined sewer and providing a sustainable surface water management solution for the proposed development.



3.5 TRAFFIC AND PARKING

The proposed development is located within the established urban area of Bray and is well served by existing public transport and pedestrian infrastructure. The site is within walking distance of Bray Town Centre and Bray DART Station, with a range of bus services also available in the surrounding area, providing connections to Dublin and other destinations within Bray and the wider region.

No car parking spaces are proposed as part of the development, having regard to the site's central urban location, proximity to public transport and the availability of a wide range of services and amenities within walking distance. This approach is consistent with the sustainable transportation objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028, which seek to reduce dependence on private car travel and promote increased use of walking, cycling and public transport.

To support sustainable travel, the proposed development will provide a minimum of 23 bicycle storage spaces for residents. The provision of dedicated bicycle storage, together with the site's proximity to public transport and local services and amenities, supports the proposed car-free approach.

The proposed development falls below the advisory thresholds for the preparation of a Traffic and Transport Assessment as set out in the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (2014). The Guidelines identify a threshold of 100 dwellings for housing developments within urban areas with a population equal to or greater than 30,000. Accordingly, a Traffic and Transport Assessment is not considered necessary for the proposed development.

The proposed traffic and parking arrangements are therefore considered appropriate having regard to the accessible urban location of the site and the sustainable transport objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028.



Fig. 9 & 10 – Parnell Road

3.6 TOPOGRAPHY & GROUND CONDITIONS

The subject site is relatively level, with existing ground levels ranging from approximately 25.23mOD to 27.37mOD. The proposed development has been designed having regard to the existing site levels, thereby minimising the extent of earthworks required while facilitating appropriate finished floor levels and surface water management.

A programme of site investigation works was undertaken in March 2026, comprising four cable percussive boreholes (including two re-drills), two trial pits incorporating plate load testing, ten foundation pits, one soakaway test and associated geotechnical and environmental laboratory testing.

The investigation identified made ground extending to depths of approximately 0.40m to 0.80m below ground level, overlying competent natural slightly sandy, slightly gravelly silty clay soils. No groundwater was encountered during the investigation. The report concludes that shallow foundations may be adopted, subject to the removal of made ground where encountered beneath foundation level and inspection of the founding strata by a suitably qualified engineer during construction. The findings of the site investigation indicate that, subject to the recommendations outlined in the report, the site is suitable for the proposed residential development and no abnormal ground conditions were identified that would preclude its redevelopment.

3.7 EXISTING BUILDING

The former Central Garage building is a utilitarian industrial structure typical of its era. Constructed primarily for functional use, the building exhibits a straightforward rectilinear form with minimal articulation or decorative detailing. Its envelope is composed of concrete blockwork and corrugated roof cladding, with large vehicular openings and limited fenestration, reflecting its original purpose as a service and storage facility.

The structure contributes little to the surrounding townscape in terms of scale, character, or visual interest. Its deteriorated condition and obsolete typology further diminish its architectural significance, rendering it unsuitable for adaptive reuse without substantial intervention.



Fig. 11 – Existing Building

The proposed demolition is justified on the basis of the building's limited architectural merit, obsolete typology, and poor physical condition. Its utilitarian form and degraded state render it unsuitable for adaptive reuse without extensive intervention. Removal of the structure will facilitate the regeneration of a strategically located urban site, enabling a contextually responsive development that better integrates with the surrounding historic and contemporary built environment, enhances permeability, and contributes positively to the evolving character of Bray town centre.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This Site Appraisal Report has examined the suitability of the subject site at Central Garage, Parnell Road, Bray for the proposed residential development, having regard to its location, physical characteristics, planning context and the availability of supporting infrastructure.

The assessment confirms that the site is located within the existing built-up area of Bray, in close proximity to the town centre and a wide range of local services, community facilities and public transport. The proposed development makes efficient use of a previously developed and underutilised brownfield site and supports the principles of compact urban growth.

The site can be appropriately serviced, with provisions incorporated for water supply, foul and surface water drainage and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The site's central and highly accessible location, together with the provision of bicycle storage and proximity to bus and rail services, supports the proposed car-free approach to the development.

The technical information reviewed as part of the appraisal, including flood risk, environmental screening, drainage and site investigation information, demonstrates that the principal environmental and engineering considerations associated with the site have been assessed.

Overall, the appraisal identifies the Central Garage site as being suitable for the proposed residential development, having regard to its town centre location, established surrounding development, accessibility to services and public transport, and the relevant objectives of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028 and the Bray Municipal District Local Area Plan.