

# Cultural and Community Infrastructure (Impact) Assessment

**Gowan House, Naas Road, Dublin 12**

August 2023

# Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Local context	3
3.	Policy Context	9
4.	Cultural Need Assessment	17
5.	Typology Assessment	28
6.	Management and Operational Model	33
7.	Artform Assessment	35
8.	Benchmarking against DCC Workspace Design Principles	41
9.	Conclusion and Recommendations	46

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**Client:** Maclose Limited

**Our reference:** THON3002

**August 2023**

# 1. Introduction

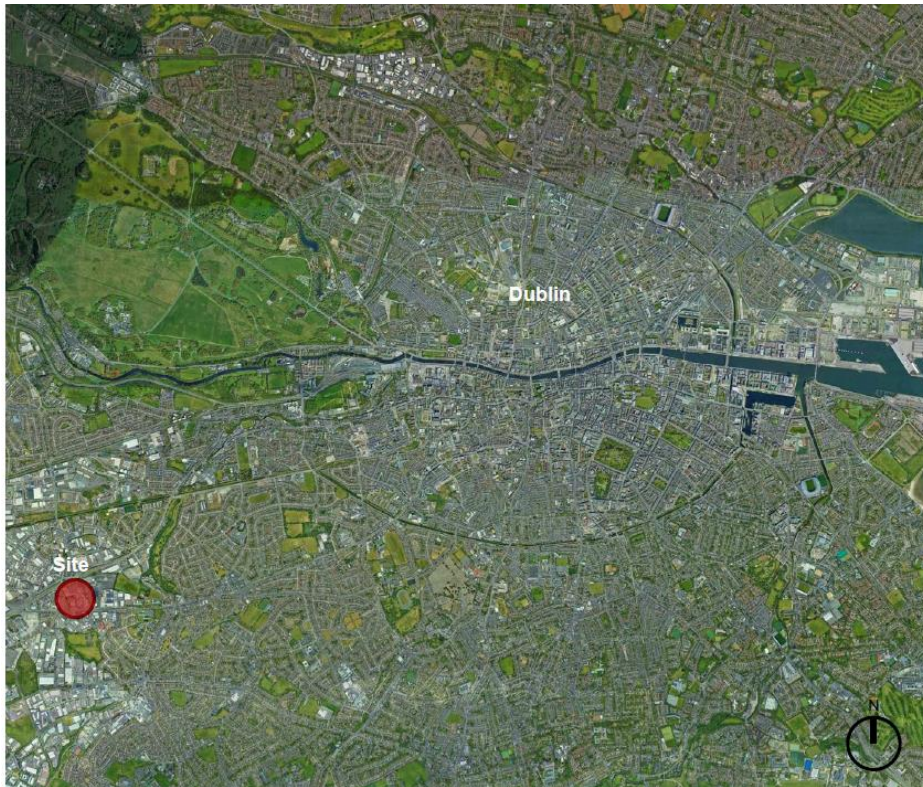
1. Turley has undertaken the following Cultural and Community Infrastructure Assessment on behalf of Malclose Limited for the proposed demolition of existing buildings on land at Gowan House, Carriglea Business Park, Naas Road, Dublin 12, D12 RCC4 and its replacement with purpose-built student accommodation as part of a residential-led mixed-use scheme. The site is in Dublin's Ballyfermot-Drimnagh administrative area.
2. The proposed development will principally consist of: the demolition of the existing two-storey office/warehouse building and outbuilding (5,172 sq m); and the construction of a development in two blocks (Block 1 (eastern block) is part 2 No. storeys to part 15 No. storeys over lower ground floor and basement levels with roof plant over and Block 2 (western block) is part 9 No. storeys to part 11 No. storeys over basement with roof plant over) principally comprising 941 No. Student Accommodation bedspaces (871 No. standards rooms, 47 No. accessible studio rooms and 23 No. studios) with associated facilities, which will be utilised for short-term lets during student holiday periods. The 871No. standard rooms are provided in 123 No. clusters ranging in size from 3 No. bedspaces to 8 No. bedspaces, and all clusters are served by a communal living/kitchen/dining room.
3. The development also provides: ancillary internal and external communal student amenity spaces and support facilities; **cultural and community floor space (1,422 sq m internal and 131 sq m external) principally comprising a digital hub and co-working space with ancillary cafe**; a retail unit (250 sq m); public open space; the daylighting of the culverted River Camac through the site; a pedestrian bridge link at first floor level between Blocks 1 and 2; vehicular access at the south-western corner; the provision of 7 No. car-parking spaces, 2 No. motorcycle parking spaces and 2 No. set down areas; bicycle stores at ground and lower ground floor levels; visitor cycle parking spaces; bin stores; substations; hard and soft landscaping; roof gardens; green and blue roofs; new telecommunications infrastructure at roof level of Block 1 including antennas and microwave link dishes, 18 No. antennas and 6 No. transmission dishes, together with all associated equipment; boundary treatments; plant; lift overruns; and all associated works above and below ground.
4. This report is primarily concerned with:
  - a) Setting out the policy context for Cultural and Community Infrastructure and evaluate the proposals against the policy requirements set out with the Dublin City Development Plan, and the Notice of Opinion provided by Dublin City Council to the applicant.
  - b) Assessing the current provision of cultural / community space, against an audit of the existing cultural and community infrastructure within the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh administrative area and wider area surrounding the site.
  - c) Providing an evaluation of the current demand for cultural (workspace, performance, rehearsal, maker or multi-purpose) space, relative to the community provision.
  - d) Reviewing appropriate typologies, governance and operating models for cultural/community space.
  - e) Evaluating any suitable cultural space proposals against Design Principles developed by Turley, on behalf of Dublin City Council, set out within the Dublin City Council, Cultural Infrastructure Report.

5. Further consideration of the operating model (leasing arrangements and management) and refinement of any cultural space's specific artform uses / or community space use should be explored through dialogue (co-design engagement) with potential users (artists and creative professionals), the community and any proposed operators of the cultural and/or community space, in advance or further to grant of planning permission.

## 2. Local context

### Site background

- 2.1 The subject site is located on Naas Road, Dublin 12 which is situated in the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area and about a 20-minute drive from the city centre or 30 minutes by public transport. The location is served by strategic road routes and also public transport such as the M50 motorway and Luas Red Line with a stop located within 150m of the site, which can sustain future development.
- 2.2 The site is strategically significant in the city context, in that it offers an opportunity for future regeneration and improved integration of the area into the emerging City Edge Framework which sets out parameters for the development of the Naas Road lands. The framework will also form the basis for a statutory City Edge LAP, which is expected to be adopted in 2 years.
- 2.3 This area is identified in the National Planning Framework (NPF) as a part of Dublin that is currently underutilised and has the potential to achieve Government policy in terms of compact growth, at scale.



**Figure 1: Map depicting the site location in the wider Dublin City context**

### Ballyfermot-Drimnagh demographics

- 2.4 To assess the context of the site, the current population demographics of the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area was mapped to gauge if the future population demands from the proposed development can be met by relevant services in the study area.
- 2.5 Dublin City covers an area of c. 115 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 554,554 people (Census 2016). The population of the city is projected to increase to between 613,000 to 625,000 people up to

2026, according to the NPF population projections set out within the Dublin City Development Plan.

2.6 Preliminary results from the 2022 Census state that County Dublin County has grown by 103,342 (7.7%) to 1,450,701 people from 1,347,359 people in 2016. However, more detailed information relating to Dublin City and the LEA is not yet available, so the 2016 Census is the main point of reference for the time being.

2.7 The demographic data for the study area is obtained from the 2016 Census and relate to the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh (LEA 2019). The following areas are discussed:

- Population;
- Age Profile;
- Household Size;
- Social Class and Employment;
- Educational Attainment; and
- Car ownership

### Population

2.8 The LEA has experienced significant population growth above the growth rate in the State and Dublin City itself at 21.03%, owing to the substantial rate of new housing unit completions in the intervening years.

	LEA		Dublin City		State	
Year	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
2011	38,602	-	527,612	-	4,588,252	-
2016	46068	21.03%	554,284	4.6%	4,757,976	3.7%
2022 (preliminary)	Not available		Not available		5,123,536	7.6%

**Table 1: Population Trends in Ballyfermot-Drimnagh LEA, Dublin City and the State, 2011, 2016, 2022.**

2.9 The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 projects population growth of 613,000 (low) to 625,000 (high) by 2026. A population of c. 554,500 was recorded in the 2016 census. This represents a c. 10.5% population increase at the lower end, and a c. 12.7% increase at the higher end over this period.

### Age Profile

2.10 The table below shows the age profile of the LEA in comparison to Dublin City and the State.

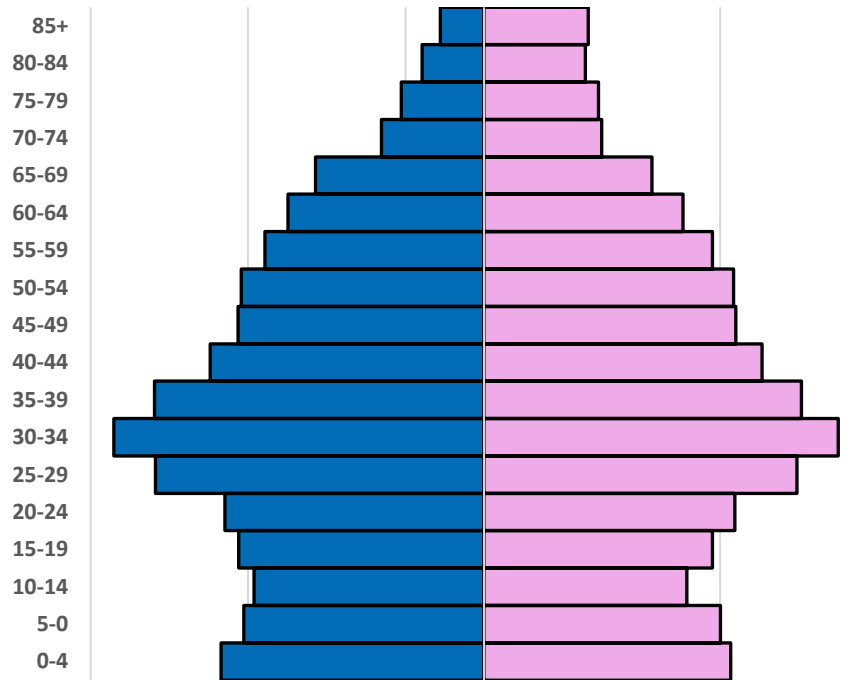
	LEA		Dublin City		State	
Age Group	2016 Pop.	% Of Pop.	2016 Pop.	% Of Pop.	2016 Pop.	% Of Pop.
0-19	11,099	24.1%	111,994	20.2%	1,309,368	27.4%
20-39	14,771	32.1%	213,801	38.6%	1,322,467	27.7%
40-59	11,650	25.3%	132,649	23.9%	1,253,607	26.3%
60-79	6,725	14.6%	75,927	13.7%	727,831	15.2%
80+	1,823	4.0%	20,183	3.6%	148,592	3.1%
Total	46,086	100.0%	554,554	100.0%	4,761,865	100%

**Table 2: Age Profile in LEA, Dublin City and the State, 2016; Source: CSO.**

2.11 The above figures show that Ballymerfot-Drimnagh LEA has a similar proportion of middle-aged residents to Dublin and the State. While the LEA has 1.4% more 40-59 year olds in its age profile

than the city, it has 1% fewer than the state at large. This same trend is shown in the next age group where the LEA has 0.9% more 60-79 year olds than the city, but has 0.6% fewer than the state.

- 2.12 The LEA has a slightly larger proportion of residents aged over 80 years old at 4%, compared to 3.6% and 3.1% for the city and state respectively.
- 2.13 The younger age profile provides a more varied picture relative to the city and state. In the 0-19 age group, the DEA sits at 24%, which is more than the city at 20.2% but less than the state at 27.4%. However, the reverse is true for the 20-39 age group, where the DEA has fewer residents in this age group compared to the city, at 32.1% and 38.6% respectively, but has a greater share than the state at 27.7%.



*Figure x – Population pyramid of Ballyfermot-Drimnagh DEA*

#### Household Size

- 2.14 The table below shows the average household size for the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh LEA.

Area	Households	Persons in private households	Average Household Size
LEA	17,145	44,666	2.6
Dublin City	211,747	525,229	2.5
State	1,697,665	4,666,376	2.8

*Table 3: Comparison of household size between the LEA, the City and the State; Source: CSO*

- 2.15 The above figures show that the average number of persons in a private household in Ballyfermot-Drimnagh is 2.6, which is larger than the average for Dublin. However, it is smaller than more widely seen in the state.



## Social Class and Employment

	LEA		Dublin City		State	
Principal Economic Status	Pop.	%	Pop.	%	Pop.	%
At work	18,814	49.8%	265,670	56.4%	2,006,641	53.4%
Looking for first regular job	411	1.1%	4,686	1.0%	31,434	0.8%
Unemployed having lost or given up previous job	3,896	10.3%	34,514	7.3%	265,962	7.0%
Student	3,412	9%	53,067	11.3%	427,128	11.3%
Looking after home/family	2,908	7.7%	28,734	6.1%	305,556	8.1%
Retired	5,266	13.9%	63,637	13.5%	545,407	14.5%
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	2,545	6.7%	18,665	4.0%	158,348	4.2%
Other	507	1.3%	2,368	0.5%	14,837	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,758</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>471,341</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,755,313</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4: Employment Statistics of LEA, Dublin City and the State, 2016; Source: CSO.**

- 2.16 The above figures show that the LEA area has a smaller proportion of the population at work at 49.8%, compared to Dublin at large with 56.4% or the State average of 53.4%.
- 2.17 This is mostly explained by the higher proportions of Ballyfermot-Drimnagh's population who are unemployed having lost their job at 10.3%, higher than the city and state on 7.3% and 7% respectively) and those unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability at 6.7%, again higher than the city and state on 4% and 4.2% respectively.
- 2.18 The LEA also has a smaller proportion of students within its population at 9%, whereas the city and state have larger proportions, both on 11.3%.
- 2.19 The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a continuous household survey carried out by the CSO and is the official source of employment and unemployment estimates for Ireland. The number of persons aged 15-89 years in employment increased by 83,000 or 3.4% to 2,554,300 persons in the year to Q3 2022.
- 2.20 The employment rate for persons aged 15-64 years was up from 72.2% to 73.2% over the year to Q3 2022.
- 2.21 Unemployment decreased by 19,200 (-24.4%) for males to 59,400 in the year to Q3 2022 – this compares with a fall of 10,800 (-15.3%) to 59,700 for females over the same period. The unemployment rate for males was 4.2% in Q3 2022 down from 5.7% a year earlier while the corresponding rates for females were 4.8% and 5.8% respectively.
- 2.22 The unemployment volume for males of 59,400 is the lowest since Q4 2006, and the male unemployment rate of 4.2% is the lowest since Q4 2005
- 2.23 The number of persons aged 15-74 years who were unemployed in Q3 2022 stood at 119,100, with an associated Unemployment Rate of 4.5%.



- 2.24 After an analysis of the socio-economic groups in Ballydermot-Drimnagh, it is clear that the LEA has a smaller proportion of residents employed in 'white collar' roles than the rest of Dublin and the national average.

	LEA		Dublin City		State	
Social Class	LEA	%	Total	%	Pop.	%
Professional workers	1,867	4.1%	53,492	9.6%	386,648	8.1%
Managerial and technical	8,613	18.7%	147,267	26.6%	1,336,896	28%
Non-manual	7,987	17.3%	89,661	16.2%	837,145	17.5%
Skilled manual	7,529	16.3%	62,892	11.3%	671,890	14.1%
Semi-skilled	5,795	12.6%	50,188	9.1%	501,103	10.5%
Unskilled	2,533	5.5%	20,871	3.8%	170,391	3.5%
All others gainfully occupied and unknown	11,744	25.5%	130,183	23.5%	857,792	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,068</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>554,554</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,761,865</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 5: Socio Economic group of LEA, Dublin City and the State, 2016; Source: CSO*

- 2.25 The figures presented in Table 4 above show that Ballyfermot-Drimnagh has a significantly smaller proportion of residents employed in the professional, managerial and technical skill classes at 22.8% compared to the Dublin City area and the State at 36.2% and 36.1% respectively.
- 2.26 Instead, Ballyfermot-Drimnagh has higher proportions of residents working with the non-manual, skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled employment classes compared to the city and state, with the exception of the state having a higher proportion of residents in non-manual employment at 17.5% against the LEA's 17.3%.
- 2.27 Compared to the city, the LEA has a similar proportion of residents employed gainfully or whose employment is unknown at 25.5% to Dublin's 23.5%. This is a significantly higher proportion than the state average of 18%.

### **Educational Attainment**

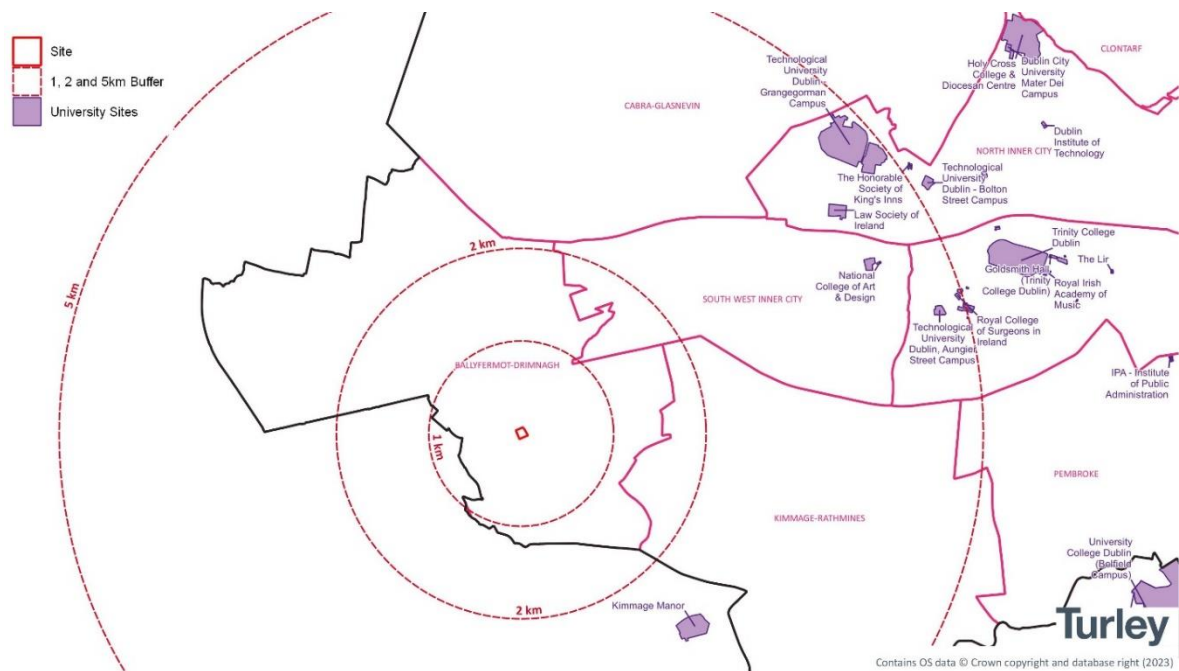
- 2.28 As can be seen from table 6 below, the LEA area has a lower level of third-level educational attainment relative to both the state and the Dublin City Council area. This is true at Ordinary Bachelor/National Degree level (LEA: 4.8%, DCC 7.1%, State 7.6%), at Honours Bachelor/Professional Qualification/Both level (LEA 6.9%; DCC 13.3%; State 10.6%) and at Doctorate/PhD level (LEA 0.5%; DCC 1.5%; State 0.9%).

	LEA		Dublin City		State	
Educational Attainment	Pop	%	Pop	%	Pop.	%
No Formal Education	373	1.2%	5,807	1.5%	52,214	1.6%
Primary Education	6013	19.0%	43,102	11.3%	334,284	10.7%
Lower Secondary	5531	17.4%	44,219	11.6%	449,766	14.5%
Upper Secondary	5136	16.2%	56,059	14.7%	573,643	18.5%
Technical or Vocational qualification	2696	8.5%	25,005	6.6%	271,532	8.7%

<b>Advanced Certificate/Completed Apprenticeship</b>	1422	4.5%	14191	3.7%	182,318	5.8%
<b>Higher Certificate</b>	1115	3.5%	14,340	3.8%	153,351	4.9%
<b>Ordinary Bachelor Degree or National Diploma</b>	1508	4.8%	27,047	7.1%	237,117	7.6%
<b>Honours Bachelor Degree, Professional qualification or both</b>	2200	6.9%	50,756	13.3%	331,293	10.6%
<b>Postgraduate Diploma or Degree</b>	1809	5.7%	53,063	13.9%	284,107	9.1%
<b>Doctorate(Ph.D) or higher</b>	174	0.5%	5897	1.5%	28,759	0.9%
<b>Not stated</b>	3301	10.4%	41,268	10.8%	198,668	6.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,703</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>380,754</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3,097,052</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6: Education Level in LEA, Dublin City and the State, 2016; Source: CSO.**

2.29 The percentage of the population with no formal education in the LEA (1.2%) is lower than both the Dublin (1.5%) and the state average (1.6%). A higher proportion of people within the LEA have lower secondary level academic attainment (17.4%) than the equivalent figures for Dublin City (11.6%) or the state (14.5%). The percentage of LEA residents with upper secondary qualifications (16.2%) is higher than the city's percentage (14.7%) but lower than the state (18.5%)."



**Figure 2: GIS mapping of the site and its relative distance to university campuses (purple).**

### 3. Policy Context

#### Cultural Policy Context

1. At a strategic level “Project Ireland 2040” is the Government’s long term national strategy from which “Culture 2025 (A National Cultural Policy Framework to 2025)”<sup>1</sup> connects an overarching policy framework for the arts, culture and creativity policies which sit within the government strategy and informs policies and objectives of associated government departments and cultural/heritage specific agencies (i.e. The Arts Council, Creative Ireland, Culture Ireland and The Heritage Council).
2. “Culture 2025” also connects initiatives working towards Ireland’s sustainability and growth economically and environmentally, such as Global Ireland 2025 and the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2021 – 2027.
3. In this context, culture and creativity are understood to include the arts as defined by the Arts Act 2003: *‘any creative or interpretative expression (whether traditional or contemporary) in whatever form and including in particular visual arts, theatre, literature, music, dance, opera, film, circus and architecture and including any medium when used for this purposes’*<sup>2</sup> and occupations and industries for which creativity delivers commercial success, export growth and sustainable employment including architecture, crafts, design, fashion, film, TV, radio, photography, graphic design, publishing, textiles, gaming, advertising and marketing.
4. The policy framework is based on three principles:
  - Recognising the value of culture to the individual and society
  - Supporting creative practice and cultural participation, and
  - Cherishing our cultural heritage.
5. The first principle speaks to the importance of culture in place making, especially in grounding a sense of identity and connectedness within existing and newly establishing communities. It also recognises the contribution of arts and culture to the ‘brand Ireland’ in terms of tourism and economic investment as Ireland’s cultural capital is a significant factor in its attractiveness as a place to live and work.
6. Built infrastructure is addressed under the second principle ‘Supporting creative practice and cultural participation’. €100m of the national purse has been invested in cultural infrastructure between 2000 and 2008 resulting in a significant uplift in spaces in which to present and engage with culture but not specifically related to the creation.
7. The framework commits to protecting and enhancing this investment, whilst targeting investment toward projects which align to Project 2040 objectives, the aims of which are actions that delivery on an inclusive, integrated, sustainable and economically robust society. In recognition of the strategic priority to increase opportunities for the making of and participating in culture, under Culture 2025, the government intends to double cultural funding from 2017 levels by 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/62616d-culture-2025/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2003/act/24/enacted/en/print.html>

8. Under the three pillars of Culture, Heritage, Irish Language and the Islands within “Investing in our Culture, Language and Heritage”<sup>3</sup>, Creative Ireland’s Strategy 2018 – 2027 acknowledges gaps in cultural infrastructure, with a government allocation of €40m to be distributed via the local authority network to address such gaps.
9. While the Arts Council do not operate a capital programme, the wide-ranging grant schemes they operate are designed to meet the variety of financial requirements involved in the making and presentation of arts and culture.
10. “Making Great Art Work – Leading the Development of Arts In Ireland”<sup>4</sup> sets out policy and action which intends to make available resources via grant aid which will ensure the delivery of ‘a supportive working environment that addresses key points in the creative cycle by which art is made’.
11. Specifically, the Council’s Visual Artists Workspace Scheme, eligible to any space in which four or more artists are working, offers grants up to €50,000 to provide best possible working environments and subsidised access for tenants. The Arts Council also acts as advocates for arts infrastructure and advise and inform arts infrastructure development under Project Ireland 2040.
12. Furthermore, “Dublin City Development Plan 2022 – 2028”<sup>5</sup> are explicit in policy and objectives that it is a priority for Council to address gaps in cultural infrastructure and specifically support the addition of artists’ studios and live workspaces over the duration of the Plan, whilst supporting developers to design and plan suitable and sustainable workspaces<sup>6</sup>.

### Development Plan & Local Area Plan Policies

- 3.1 The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 came into effect on 14 December 2022, and provides the relevant statutory planning context informing this Cultural Impact Assessment as part of the proposed development on land at Naas Road, Dublin 12.
- 3.2 This application seeks to achieve a minimum of 5% cultural/community space through the provision c. 1,422 sq m of internal and 131 sq m of external cultural / community space on the ground floor of the development, in line with objective CUO25 of the Development Plan. As highlighted:

- **Objective CUO25 – SDRAs and Large-Scale Developments** “All new regeneration areas (SDRAs) and large scale developments above 10,000 sq. m. in total area\* must provide for 5% community, arts and culture and artist workspaces predominantly internal floorspace as part of their development at the design stage. The option of relocating a portion (no more than half of this figure) of this to a site immediately adjacent to the area can be accommodated where it is demonstrated to be the better outcome and that it can be a contribution to an existing project in the immediate vicinity. The balance of space between cultural and community use can be decided at application stage, from an evidence base/audit of the area. Such spaces must be designed to meet the identified need. {**\*Such developments shall incorporate both cultural/arts and community uses**

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en/publication/investing-in-our-culture-language-heritage/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.arts council.ie/arts-council-strategy/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dublincity.ie/residential/planning/strategic-planning/dublin-city-development-plan/development-plan-2022-2028/chapter-12-culture-0>

<sup>6</sup> CUO27: develop a Toolkit Guide to Workspace & Objective and CUO31: to develop and provide artists workspace

*individually or in combination unless there is an evidence to justify the 5% going to one sector.}”*

- 3.3 And whilst a co-design process has not yet been undertaken, and the provision of space is allocated rather than providing detailed design, this report represents an audit of cultural shortcomings in the area.
- **CUO30 Co-Design and Audits:** *Large development applications (over 10,000 sq. m., either in phases or as one application) will, in the absence of a DCC local area culture audit (COU44 refers), be required to undertake a cultural audit for the local area to identify shortcomings within the area; and to work with DCC Arts Office to identify and agree appropriate arts or cultural uses, preferably as part of a co-design process in advance of lodging an application, for inclusion in the development. Such audits shall be informed by the existing cultural mapping resources in the Dublin City Cultural Infrastructure Study and by Culture Near You maps.”*
- 3.4 To inform the cultural need assessment (audit of existing provision) we have provided a summary analysis and re-examination of relevant responses to the Artist Workspaces Study 2020<sup>7</sup> and the Cultural Infrastructure Report 2021, previously undertaken by Turley on behalf of Dublin City Council.<sup>8</sup>
- 3.5 According to the 2016 census, there were in the region 2,500 artists in Dublin (representing just under 10% of all creative workers). The maximum number of individual artist’s studios between 2010-2019, however, was just 392 studios spread across c.89 artist workspace building<sup>9</sup>.
- 3.6 In the same period, the city contained c.137 shared rehearsal spaces and c.36 public venues providing provision for existing artists. The same census data identified just over 25,000 creative workers in Dublin.
- 3.7 Whilst the overall provision of workspace held relatively steady over the same 10-year period, despite high profile closures or permanent and meanwhile workspaces, our workspace study surveyed 538 artists (c.20% of the city’s resident artist population) and found that 41% were actively “seeking workspace” with no alternative provision.
- 3.8 This strongly indicates a significant undersupply of artist workspaces across the city, which could be as high as the need for workspace for 1,125 artists, across multiple art form with differing accommodation requirements.

## Community Policy Context

### Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028

- 3.9 As with the Cultural Policy Contact, The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 has related objectives and policies in support of community provision as follows:

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<sup>7</sup> Turley/Dublin City Council, *Artist Workspace Study 2020*, cited in full, *Artist Workspaces Report – Developing a Liberties Creative Campus*, Dublin, November 2020, as available online at [www.artistworkspace.ie](http://www.artistworkspace.ie)

<sup>8</sup> Turley/Dublin City Council, *Cultural Infrastructure Report 2021*, Dublin, December 2021, as available online at [cultural-infrastructure-study.pdf](http://cultural-infrastructure-study.pdf) ([dublincity.ie](http://dublincity.ie))

<sup>9</sup> According to Jackie Ryan, *Ryan Report 2020*, as cited *Cultural Infrastructure Report 2021*, Ibid

- **Policy QHSN47 – High Quality Neighbourhood and Community Facilities** To encourage and facilitate the timely and planned provision of a range of high-quality neighbourhood and community facilities which are multifunctional in terms of their use, adaptable in terms of their design and located to ensure that they are accessible and inclusive to all.
- **Policy QHSN48 – Community and Social Audit** To ensure that all residential applications comprising of 50 or more units shall include a community and social audit to assess the provision of community facilities and infrastructure within the vicinity of the site and identify whether there is a need to provide additional facilities to cater for the proposed development. Refer to Section 15.8.2 of Chapter 15: Development Standards
- **Objective CUO25 – SDRAs and Large-Scale Developments:** All new regeneration areas (SDRAs) and large-scale developments above 10,000 sq. m. in total area\* must provide for 5% community, arts and culture and artist workspaces predominantly internal floorspace as part of their development at the design stage. The option of relocating a portion (no more than half of this figure) of this to a site immediately adjacent to the area can be accommodated where it is demonstrated to be the better outcome and that it can be a contribution to an existing project in the immediate vicinity. The balance of space between cultural and community use can be decided at application stage, from an evidence base/audit of the area. Such spaces must be designed to meet the identified need.

{\*Such developments shall incorporate both cultural/arts and community uses individually or in combination unless there is an evidence to justify the 5% going to one sector.}

- **CUO30 Co-Design and Audits:** Large development applications (over 10,000 sq. m., either in phases or as one application) will, in the absence of a DCC local area culture audit (COU44 refers), be required to undertake a cultural audit for the local area to identify shortcomings within the area; and to work with DCC Arts Office to identify and agree appropriate arts or cultural uses, preferably as part of a co-design process in advance of lodging an application, for inclusion in the development. Such audits shall be informed by the existing cultural mapping resources in the Dublin City Cultural Infrastructure Study and by Culture Near You maps.
- **Section 15.8.2 “Community and Social Audit”** states: “Community facilities, such as local parks and playgrounds, community centres, local hubs, schools, childcare are an integral component of a successful neighbourhood. Applications for large residential developments or mixed use developments should include provision for community type uses. All residential applications comprising of 50 or more units shall include a community and social audit to assess the provision of community facilities and infrastructure within the vicinity of the site and identify whether there is a need to provide additional facilities to cater for the proposed development.

A community and social audit should address the following:

- Identify the existing community and social provision in the surrounding area covering a 750m radius.
- Assess the overall need in terms of necessity, deficiency, and opportunities to share/enhance existing facilities based on current and proposed population projections.
- Justify the inclusion or exclusion of a community facility as part of the proposed development having regard to the findings of the audit.”

3.10 As demonstrated within this report, the nearby community possesses only a few of these facilities and the proposed development further contributes to the achievement of the above objectives, through the provision of community / cultural space – albeit what facilities this space will accommodate has yet to be defined.



## Planning policy context

3.11 The key provisions of national, regional and local planning policy as it relates to the proposed development and this assessment are set out in the following sections. The key policy and guidance documents of relevance to the proposed development are as follows:

- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework;
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009);
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022);
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities (2001);
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (RSES) 2019;
- Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028.

## National Planning Framework

3.12 The National Planning Framework (hereby abbreviated to NPF) is the high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland until 2040. The NPF sets out that 50% of future population is to be accommodated within the existing footprint of Dublin and the other 4 cities.

3.13 The NPF also includes the following objectives in relation to social infrastructure needs:

- *“NPC 30 - Local planning, housing, transport/ accessibility and leisure policies will be developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population along with the inclusion of specific projections, supported by clear proposals in respect of ageing communities as part of the core strategy of city and county development plans.”*
- *“NPC 31 - Prioritise the alignment of targeted and planned population and employment growth with investment in:*
  - *A childcare/ECCE planning function, for monitoring, analysis and forecasting of investment needs, including identification of regional priorities;*
  - *The provision of childcare facilities and new and refurbished schools on well located sites within or close to existing built-up areas, that meet the diverse needs of local populations;*
  - *The expansion and consolidation of Higher Education facilities, particularly where this will contribute to wider regional development, and*
  - *Programmes for life-long learning, especially in areas of higher education and further education and training where skills gaps are identified.”*

3.14 These objectives highlight the need to safeguard and construct policy for key areas of the population, such as children and ageing communities and therefore to ensure that facilities which cater for all aspects of the population are in place in urban areas and areas of increasing development.



## Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)

- 3.15 These guidelines were published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in order to set out the key principles that should be adopted within developments and used by the Planning Authorities both in writing their Development Plans and in assessing new developments. The sections under this document that are relevant to this social and community infrastructure audit / assessment are outlined below.
- 3.16 The Guidelines state that one of the fundamental questions to be addressed during the planning process is “the relationship and linkages between the area to be (re)developed and established neighbourhoods, including the availability of existing community facilities, and the provision of pedestrian and cycle networks.”
- 3.17 The Guidelines state that Planning Authorities should ensure efficient and integrated provision of schools, childcare, community centres, healthcare facilities and district/neighbourhood centres are made available for the wider community. We note the following requirements set out in the Guidelines that relate to social infrastructure:
- **Schools:** *“No substantial residential development should proceed without an assessment of existing schools’ capacity or the provision of new school facilities in tandem with the development.”* This is further clarified as requiring applications for 200+ units to be accompanied by a report detailing the school capacity of the area and the impact of the development.
  - **Childcare:** In accordance with the Childcare Guidelines 2001, the Guidelines recommend the provision of one childcare facility (equivalent to a minimum of 20 child places) for every 75 dwelling units. However, the Guidelines state *“the threshold for such provision should be established having regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of areas, in consultation with city / county childcare committees. The location of childcare facilities should be easily accessible by parents, and the facility may be combined with other appropriate uses, such as places of employment.”*
  - **Community Centres:** The Guidelines state that provision of community centres is to be assessed by the local authority but should be in a central area and near public transport facilities.
  - **Healthcare facilities:** The Guidelines state that the provision of healthcare facilities should be determined in conjunction with the Health Services Executive and the needs of the elderly and disabled should be taken into consideration in health care facilities, accessibility, caretaking facilities and residential development.
  - **District/Neighbourhood Centres:** The provision of new retail in new district or neighbourhood centres will be influenced by the Development Plan Retail Strategy.

## Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028

- 3.19 The Dublin City Development Plan was adopted by the City Council on 12 November 2022 and came into effect on 14 December 2022. A number of policies and objectives relating to the social and community infrastructure requirements of new developments are predominantly contained within Chapter 5 of the Development Plan, titled ‘Quality Housing and Sustainable Neighbourhoods’, and Chapter 12 / 15, the most relevant of which are included below.

- **15-Minute City (policy QHSN11):** *‘To promote the realisation of the 15-minute city which provides for liveable, sustainable urban neighbourhoods and villages throughout the city that deliver healthy placemaking, high quality housing and well designed, intergenerational and accessible, safe and inclusive public spaces served by local services, amenities, sports facilities and sustainable modes of public and accessible transport where feasible.*
- **Policy QHSN48 – Community and Social Audit** *To ensure that all residential applications comprising of 50 or more units shall include a community and social audit to assess the provision of community facilities and infrastructure within the vicinity of the site and identify whether there is a need to provide additional facilities to cater for the proposed development. Refer to Section 15.8.2 of Chapter 15: Development Standards*
- **Objective CUO25 – SDRAs and Large-Scale Developments:** *All new regeneration areas (SDRAs) and large scale developments above 10,000 sq. m. in total area\* must provide for 5% community, arts and culture and artist workspaces predominantly internal floorspace as part of their development at the design stage. The option of relocating a portion (no more than half of this figure) of this to a site immediately adjacent to the area can be accommodated where it is demonstrated to be the better outcome and that it can be a contribution to an existing project in the immediate vicinity. The balance of space between cultural and community use can be decided at application stage, from an evidence base/audit of the area. Such spaces must be designed to meet the identified need.*

*{\*Such developments shall incorporate both cultural/arts and community uses individually or in combination unless there is an evidence to justify the 5% going to one sector.}*

- **CUO30 Co-Design and Audits:** *Large development applications (over 10,000 sq. m., either in phases or as one application) will, in the absence of a DCC local area culture audit (COU44 refers), be required to undertake a cultural audit for the local area to identify shortcomings within the area; and to work with DCC Arts Office to identify and agree appropriate arts or cultural uses, preferably as part of a co-design process in advance of lodging an application, for inclusion in the development. Such audits shall be informed by the existing cultural mapping resources in the Dublin City Cultural Infrastructure Study and by Culture Near You maps.*
- **Section 15.8.2 “Community and Social Audit” states:** *“Community facilities, such as local parks and playgrounds, community centres, local hubs, schools, childcare are an integral component of a successful neighbourhood. Applications for large residential developments or mixed use developments should include provision for community type uses. All residential applications comprising of 50 or more units shall include a community and social audit to assess the provision of community facilities and infrastructure within the vicinity of the site and identify whether there is a need to provide additional facilities to cater for the proposed development.*

### 3.20 A community and social audit should address the following:

- *Identify the existing community and social provision in the surrounding area covering a 750m radius.*
- *Assess the overall need in terms of necessity, deficiency, and opportunities to share/enhance existing facilities based on current and proposed population projections.*
- *Justify the inclusion or exclusion of a community facility as part of the proposed development having regard to the findings of the audit.”*

- **Section 15.13.1.3 “Communal Facilities” in student accommodation states:** *“Communal facilities and services which serve the needs of students shall be provided both internally and externally within a scheme. Adequate external open space of suitable orientation should be provided within developments for the amenity of students. Generally ground floor courtyards that achieve appropriate daylighting and sun lighting will be required. In certain circumstances, terraces and roof gardens will be considered but only in addition to appropriate ground level amenity provision. The provision of indoor communal space can be broken down to indoor amenity spaces such as cinema rooms, study rooms, games rooms etc. and indoor services such as laundry facilities, caretaker/ security and refuse facilities etc. Where accommodation is provided on-campus, communal facilities will be assessed on a case-by-case basis having regard to the level of and access to on campus amenity. Details are to be provided as part of the application. All proposals must provide appropriate indoor and outdoor communal and recreational facilities for students at a combined level of at least 5-7 sq. m. per bedspace.”*

3.21 The preparation of this report is intended to address the requirements of these objectives in accordance with the above considerations and assess the provision of community facilities and infrastructure within the vicinity of the site.

## 4. Cultural Need Assessment

### Current Workspace Provision in Ballyfermot-Drimnagh and wider area

- 4.1 It is widely recognised that arts and culture are key cornerstones in the sustainable development of new communities, helping to define and preserve identity, promote social activity, and offer valuable educational and economic returns.
- 4.2 Dublin City has a strong network of artists, performers and musicians promoting cultural activities. Due to the lack of capacity in some parts of the sector, many of the organisations are difficult to pinpoint on a map as their locations are temporary, informal and frequently change.
- 4.3 Dublin City Council has invested significantly in a mapping project to provide a spatial understanding of cultural resources and infrastructure across the city which includes: arts and heritage, parks and nature, sport and fitness, food, hobbies, community involvement and education, as well as artists and makers who call Dublin home.
- 4.4 This project also has a public resource, a website called Culture Near You, that makes the city's cultural buildings, organisations and networks easier to find and connect with.
- 4.5 Utilising data from Dublin Culture Company's, Culture Connects - "Culture Near You" project and the Ryan Report 2020 (Artist Studio Infrastructure), the Cultural Infrastructure Study 2021 prepared by Turley provided and updated mapping of all known cultural infrastructure provision across each of the artforms with the Arts Act (2003).
- 4.6 Utilising and re-examining this data we have provided a mapping of the current cultural infrastructure provision within 1km, 2km and 5km of the site on land at Naas Road, Dublin 12.



Figure 3: GIS mapping of existing Cultural Infrastructure in and around the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh administrative area by artform

### Provision within 1km

- 4.7 The figure illustrates a significant lack of appropriate cultural infrastructure near the site, with only 2 facilities within 1 kilometres of the site being used for cultural uses, based on the Culture Near Your data. These are:

1. **Canal Communities Regional Youth Service - Bluebell Youth Project** - The Canal Communities Regional Youth Service is a project based in south side of Dublin city, Ireland that serves the communities of Bluebell, Inchicore and Rialto. Their remit is to develop a network of community-based youth projects, youth clubs and youth groups in the area and to provide support services for those groups. Their aim is to enhance the quality of life and choices for young people, engaging and supporting a diverse range of youth services and activities. The Bluebell site is located c.0.35km from the site.
2. **Walkinstown Social Service Centre** - The Social Day Centre caters for senior citizens from the local area. The service includes Day Care services and a Meals on Wheels Service. Freshly made hot lunches are served as well as offering a transport service and many social events. The site is located c.0.63km from the site.

- 4.8 Whilst inclusion in the Culture Near You data, indicates that both offer some level of cultural provision, it is clear that neither has a specific remit as cultural space, and are more clearly a wider community resource / infrastructure asset (See Chapter 5).

### Provision within 2km

- 4.9 Of the 12 cultural facilities within 1-2 kilometres of the site, the nearest cultural infrastructure facility is:

3. **Ballyfermot Family Resource Centre** - Further out from the site is the Ballyfermot Family Resource Centre, which provides a number of services to the surrounding community located c.1.8 kilometres north-west of the site, and whilst inclusion in the Culture Near You data indicates some cultural use, it does not have a specific cultural remit and more clearly has a wider community resource / infrastructure asset (See Chapter 5).
4. **Niki Collier** - Visual Artist - Niki Collier is a Bulgarian born visual artist and maker with a personal studio in the creative courtyard in Marlay Park. Niki's art is textile and felt based, and she "work at the convergence of science and art informed by balance and empowerment". Her studio is located c.1.1km from the site but she is based citywide.
5. **Michael Moore** - Michael Moore is a maker of ceramic sculptures and a Reader in Fine and Applied Arts, Ceramics. Michael is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics and a Higher Education Authority Fellow. He holds a Master of Arts Degree from The National College of Art and Design, Dublin and is a registered maker with the UK and Irish Craft Councils. Michael also holds a Pg. Cert in Training from the Education Faculty of the National University of Ireland. His studio is based c.1.4km from the site.
6. **Common Ground** - Common Ground is an arts organisation based in the heart of the historic and ever changing south west inner city of Dublin. Since 1999 they've been working in the local community to ensure equal access to the arts. In 2003 they opened studio 468, an artist studio based in St Andrews Community Centre, Rialto. It offers opportunities for artists and local groups to work collaboratively while supporting artists developing their socially engaged

practice. In September 2019 they became the cultural tenants at The Lodge, Inchicore – the old caretakers house at Goldenbridge Cemetery. The Lodge houses our staff and artist(s) in residence and provides a meeting space for the artists and groups with work with. The Lodge at Inchicore is located c.1.42km from the site.

7. **The St John Bosco Youth Centre** - The St John Bosco Youth Centre has been in existence for over 70 years the centre strives to be relevant to the needs of young people in Drimnagh and their families. Although primarily a youth centre, they also provide activities for all age groups. Since being divested from the Catholic Church in 1996, the centre has been managed by a voluntary board of directors and is supported financially by a range of government funding which allows it to employ staff, run activities and maintain the building. The building is open 7 days a week, 51 weeks a year and is located c. 1.42km from the site.
8. **Jill & Gill** - a collaborative illustration and print studio located c.1.5 kilometres north-west of the site. However further investigation of their website suggests the fine art prints and wearable business may have relocated their premises to 28 Stand Street D1, since the data was gathered.
9. **Biblary Polish Community Centre and Library** - Biblary association has been functioning in Dublin for 10 years, and they run the Polish library in Dublin. They organise educational activities, reading sessions and workshops promoting the Polish culture, and have also set up a choir. The centre is located c.1.6km from the site.
10. **CIE Hall - Inchicore Sports and Social Club** - The club is a community facility located in Inchicore, Dublin 8 (in the old Inchicore works area). The centre has a number of rooms including a large hall (with wooden sprung dance floor and stage), a bar/ lounge, a games room, and office space. The club has provided a venue for the ladies club as well as other activities such as yoga classes, children's dance classes and other family events. It has also run a number of fundraising activities for charities which have enhanced the club's reputation in the Dublin 8 area. Regular music nights are currently held twice a month, and a flea/vintage market once per month. The club is located c.1.62km from the site.
11. **Historian-in-Residence for Children:** Dervilia Roche based in Richmond Barracks in Inchicore, holds Dublin's first Historian-In-Residence for Children. From September 2020, historian Dervilia Roche has worked on bringing history to life with children, planting the seeds for a lifelong connection to the history of Dublin. This partnership of Dublin City Libraries and Dublin City Council Culture Company brings together many of their shared values. The residency which aims to experiment, learn and share through history, will create space, opportunity and resources to uncover the stories of our city and its people, bringing the past to life by finding new and creative ways to engage and connect through history. The site is located c.1.72km from the site.

4.10 Additional desk-based research, identified the following arts and cultural organisations and infrastructure within 2km of the site, not included in the Culture Near You data:

12. **HOTT Records Entertainment recording studio** - HOTT Recording Studio is/was an independent studio, run by professional musicians and producers in order to assist artists/bands in their creative processes across genres of music including 'Hip-Hop/Rap, R&B, Afro-beat, Pop, Indie, Jazz, Rock, Alternative, Blues, Inspirational/Gospel, Reggae, Dance, EDM' and much more. Facilities also include 'Kitchen, Toilets, lounge, Smoking area and car parking located at 2 Canal Bank Hume Avenue, Park West, Ballymount Dublin, D12. However, it is not clear whether the studios are still operable, as social media and website channels indicate the premises may no longer be trading (last post 2019).

- 13. Dedsound Rehearsal Studio** - Band Rehearsal rooms located at JFK Trading Centre, with several ample sized acoustically rehearsal rooms, fitted with their own air conditioning. Rental of rehearsal studio includes:
- 1200 / 1600 Watt Powered Mixing Desk
  - 2 Full Range Speakers
  - 3 Shure SM58 Mics per room
  - Tama Superstar Drum kit – Rock or Fusion all kitted with resonant dampers
  - Guitar Amps (min 2 amps per room no extra charge)
  - Bass Amp
  - Hercules Guitar Wall Hangers
  - All valve amps available on request
- 14. Think Punk art studio** – Also based at JFK Trading Centre Think Punk is a multimedia studio for rehearsals, live stream performances, video and photo production, and a professional recording and live-streaming studio events.
- 15. Lookahead Recording Studio** – Project recording studio based in Dublin, providing singer/songwriter to full band recording. Also offers podcast-recording and location-recording services. However it is unclear if the studios are currently trading.
- 16. Baaz Productions Dublin – movie and music production** – Baaz is an Indian entertainment production company based in Dublin. The company describes itself as being ‘Committed to promoting new talents from India and across the World’ The company has an active YouTube channel, on which they released a full-length film called Donki, which has attracted 6.4m views.
- 17. MVP recording studio** – MVP is a recording studio based in the Motokov Complex on the Naas road. The studio has one control room and one vocal booth and offers recording sessions and a ‘DJ school’, at which the MVP team offer classes teaching students about music production and DJ techniques.
- 18. Monica Loughman ballet school** – Monica Loughman Elite Ballet offers training to Irish and International Ballet dancers, helping to train them for a life as professionals. The school offers training to children aged 5 and up, based around group or individual sessions. Monica Loughman is an esteemed Irish Ballerina, who had previously been solo dancer within the Perm State Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Russia.
- 19. Sound factory – musical instrument repair shop** – Sound Factory is a guitar repair specialist and luthier service operating out of a fully-equipped professional workshop in Dublin. The firm specialises in full repair service for guitars, specialising in setup, fret-work, mods, electronic upgrades, luthier services, general repairs, refinishing, custom builds and amp repair.
- 20. Vision Lab media house** – Vision Lab is a multi-media studio based in Ballymount Industrial Estate. It offers three studios – its Jupiter, Mercury and Neptune Suites. The Jupiter and Neptune Suites offer support for audio production and include vocal recording rooms and control rooms. The Neptune Suite offers a place for visual artists to work, including a photography studio and editing station. The venue also runs a series of Open Mic events, aimed at showcasing local talent.
- 21. Helen Farrell – nature inspired artist** – Helen Farrell is a nature-inspired contemporary Irish artist based in Dublin. She studied Fine Art in Dun Laoghaire from 1989-1994 and latterly

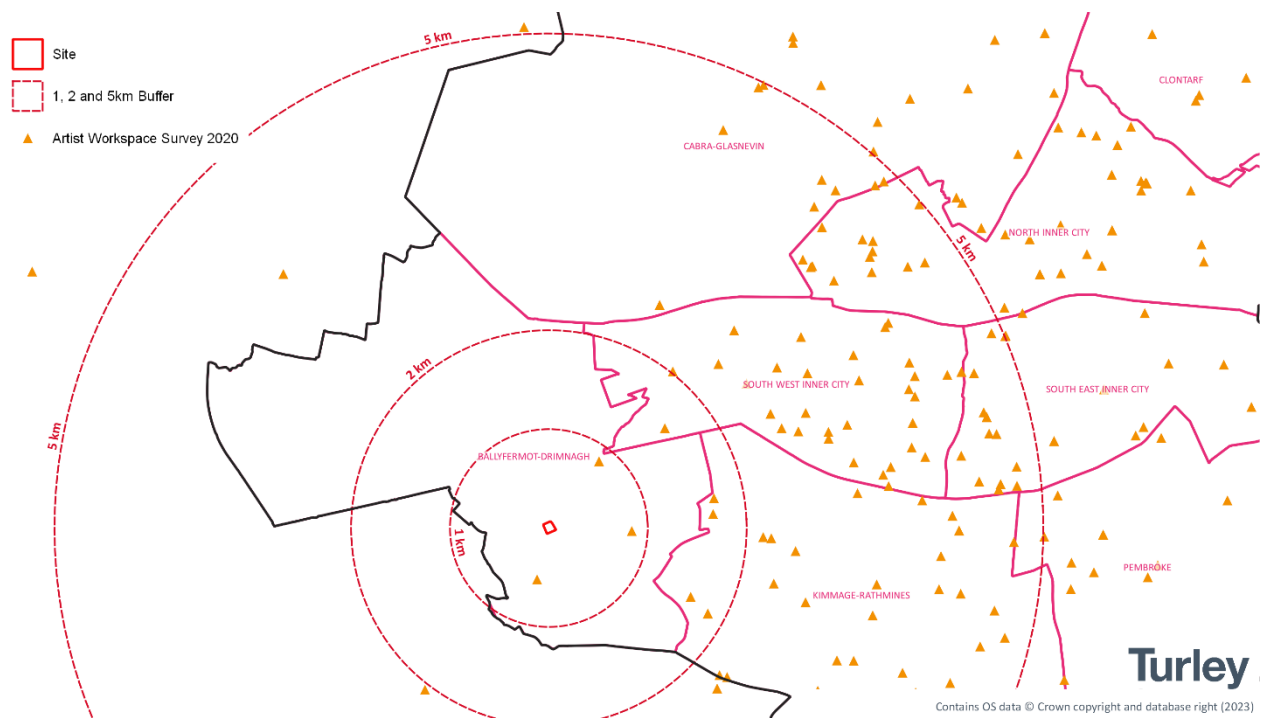


completed Post-Graduate studies in Arts and Healthcare and Community from NUI Maynooth. She works with mixed media in an intuitive and semi-abstract way, responding to elements within the natural world.

**22. Raku – drama theatre** – Raku Theatre is a Dublin theatre company focusing on bringing Japanese drama to the Dublin cultural scene.

#### **Anticipated need for cultural infrastructure in the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh and wider area**

- 4.11 Given the very limited existing provision, there is minimal risk of displacement as a result of introduction additional cultural provision as part of the development site.
- 4.12 Whilst there is some limited provision of other forms of cultural infrastructure within a wider vicinity of the site, the majority of cultural infrastructure is located within other LEA areas, which are all significant distances from the development site.
- 4.13 The Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area serves a population of c. 46,068 resident citizens, with limited current provision of artist workspace and studio.
- 4.14 In 2020, our Workspace Study received 538 respondents (20% of the overall artist population of the city). There were only 3 artist respondents in administrative areas Ballyfermot-Drimnagh, and 9 respondents within 2km of the site suggesting a resident artist population of c.45 within the same distance of the site.
- 4.15 However, given the lack of current artist workspace provision in the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area, this could significantly under-report artists who are resident in the area, but whose workspace was reported closer to the city centre.
- 4.16 A total of 95 artist respondents were within a 5km radius of the site, which could suggest a larger resident artist population of c.475 artists within an area encompassing all of the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh and South West Inner City, in addition to portions of Kimmage-Rathmines, Cabra-Glasnevin, South East inner City and North Inner City.
- 4.17 Again, however, this number is likely to under-report artists currently living in the area but travelling to workspaces closer to the city centre where the current provision is largely located.



*Figure 4: GIS mapping of respondents to the Artist Workspaces study with a connection (live/work/socialise) to the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh administrative area.*

### Other Site Considerations

- 4.18 The subject is located about a 20-minute drive from the city centre or 30 minutes by public transport. The location is served by strategic road routes and also public transport such as the Luas Red Line, with a stop located within 150m of the site, which can sustain future development.
- 4.19 Whilst a majority of artists report currently living/working within an average 3.9 km of the city centre, the Artist Workspace Study indicated that artists prefer their workspaces to be located an average distance of no more than 2.7 km from public transport stops or stations.
- 4.20 More generally, cultural infrastructure/workspaces should be ideally located no more than 5.4km from the City Centre and to the nearest University/College. The site is located within 5km of a number of university sites as depicted below.
- 4.21 The Gowan House site within proximity by public transport, bike or by foot to Ballyfermot College and TUD Tallaght, Inchicore College of Further Education and the National College of Art and Design, all of which offer third level courses in art, design and fashion.
- 4.22 Transport links to the city are excellent, with a regular luas and bus service to the area.
- 4.23 The site is approx. a 10 minute walk from the Grand Canal Way, an amenity of increasing importance as a connector between Dublin city centre and the communities to the west.
- 4.24 The Grand Canal Recreation and Animation Plan proposes a number of links, nodes and zones to enhance access to and use of the blueway and greenway, notably Node 1 Bluebell South and Node 2 Goldenbridge.

- 4.25 Offering the potential for permeability from the Gowan House site via Landsdowne Valley Park (access routes depending) improving permeability to the Grand Canal Blue/Green Way and the Inchicore/Kilmainham area overall.
- 4.26 The South Dublin County Council proposed 'Liffey Blueway' is under consideration as part of a recently commissioned tourism strategy for the County.
- 4.27 Drimnagh Castle and the former CIE Chassis Factory are important heritage sites that contribute to the cultural – heritage vibrancy in the area closely located to the Gowan House site.
- 4.28 There are several other high density residential developments proposed as part of the City Edge Masterplan which will contribute to the distribution and flow of new resident communities in the area
- 4.29 Whilst most artists prefer to live within 5.2km of their workspaces. The site sits outside these parameters, and as such any cultural infrastructure may struggle to serve more than resident artists and community in the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area. However, given the significant under provision across the city this is not considered an immediate impediment.

# Community Need Assessment

- 4.30 In order to understand the appropriateness of future community facilities on the site, an audit of existing facilities serving the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area has been undertaken.
- 4.31 For the purposes of this audit, we are defining “community facilities” as social or community infrastructure which provide for the wealth, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community.
- 4.32 The purpose of this audit is to understand if the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh areas are well served by community related facilities to support the future residents of the proposed development.
- 4.33 In particular, this assessment demonstrates that there is significantly more civic and community amenities and facilities provision within the catchment to cater for the future needs of the population, than current civic or community cultural facilities within the same radius.

## Existing community facilities

- 4.34 As part of this development proposal, we have carried out an assessment of the existing facilities in the area in order to assess the need for social and community infrastructure primarily within 2km of the site.
- 4.35 Civic amenity space and community amenity space have been defined to include the following:
- Community and Social Infrastructure
  - Open Space, Sport and Recreation
  - Education Facilities
  - Religious Facilities
- 4.36 Initially a search was undertaken using the Culture Near You platform. As described in Chapter 3 this includes a number of primarily civic or community amenities, that also provide some level of cultural infrastructure, but as previously detailed are primarily a community resource. They include:
- Canal Communities Regional Youth Service - Bluebell Youth Project
  - Walkinstown Social Service Centre / Community Centre
  - St. John Bosco Community and Youth Centre
  - Biblary Polish Community Centre and Library
  - CIE Hall - Inchicore Sports and Social Club
  - Ballyfermot Community Civic / Family Resource Centre
- 4.37 In addition, the Culture Near You data also identified, a number of parish, church or parochial halls within 2km of the site, including:
- St. Agnes' Parish Hall
  - Aras Mhuire Hall
  - Moeran Hall
  - Our Lady's Hall
- 4.38 It also identified Mother McAuley Centre, a day centre for older people living in the Drimnagh Area that also provides a meals on wheels services to the local community.

- 4.39 Utilising this data and additional desk-based research we have audited below the current civic and community infrastructure provision.

### **Community and Social Infrastructure**

- 4.40 Quality neighbourhoods should be responsive to the needs of local communities, play an important role in quality-of-life factors and foster a wider sense of community and active citizenship.
- 4.41 Community Facilities are considered to include youth services, local authority offices, welfare services, libraries, Garda and fire stations, and community services.
- 4.42 Dublin City has a strong network of community groups and clubs, many of which are voluntary groups. Our survey identified a large range of community facilities within the study area.
- 4.43 Key providers in the area include
- Canal Communities Regional Youth Service - Bluebell Youth Project
  - Ballyfermot Community Civic Centre
  - Belgrove/ Glenaulin Residents Association.
  - Walkinstown Social Services and Community Centre
- 4.44 The Ballyfermot-Drimnagh LEA falls within the South Central Area and receives local community support from Dublin City Council<sup>10</sup>.
- 4.45 Dublin City also has a large-scale library network, the nearest of which is Walkinstown Library (c.2km from the site).
- 4.46 Libraries provide useful facilities to local residents including free broadband and wireless internet service, self-service printing/scanning, photocopying, study space, Book Club(s), Demonstrations, Exhibitions, Lectures and library tours, as well as application forms for motor tax, passport etc. and a community noticeboard / information.
- 4.47 In addition to the formal library service the Biblary Polish Community Centre and Library provides a specific resource to this new community, in their own language.
- 4.48 As set out above, it is considered the existing and proposed uses within a 2km catchment area offer good provision for the community across a range of social amenities, including community centres, and essential public services.

### **Religious Facilities**

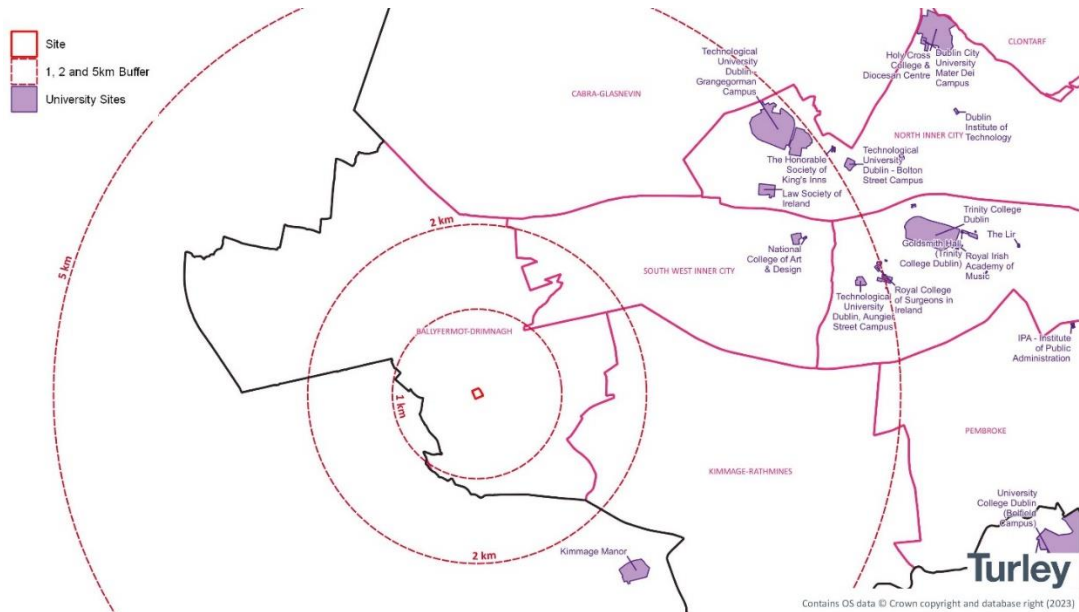
- 4.49 Religious and community facilities are a very important part in the provision of neighbourhood facilities. Due to its primacy and historic nature Dublin City has a range of religious facilities. Within 1km of the site, there is the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption. In many cases, as described previously community facilities (e.g. Halls) are associated with these religious facilities.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/2023-03/Director%20of%20Services%20Report%20March%202023.pdf>

## Education Facilities

- 4.50 Third-level education in Ireland includes all education after second level, encompassing higher education in universities and colleges and further education on Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) and other courses.
- 4.51 The primary development proposals for Purpose Built Student Accommodation reflect the large number of third-level institutions, largely located within 5 km east of the site.



- 4.52 Given the highly accessible nature of the site other large-scale universities such as NCAD, Technological University Dublin's and Trinity College Dublin are conveniently accessible via public transport.
- 4.53 The site is also in proximity is Ballyfermot Further Education College, which is located less than 3km to the North. In addition, at secondary level Assumption Secondary School Walkinstown, Drimnagh Castle Primary, Drimnagh Castle Secondary are all within a 2km area of the site.

## Open Space, Sport and Recreation

- 4.54 Recreation and open space are an important part of every community's life. They require proactive encouragement and enhancement to ensure participation by all within the local community. This section of the audit seeks to identify the type, functions and location of open spaces within the wider area and includes:
- An assessment of the quality and condition of facilities and fitness for purpose;
  - The levels of use, needs and differing aspirations for open space by the community; and
  - An evaluation of the existing provision against the identified needs, such as to identify areas of deficiency or surplus and other issues and opportunities.
- 4.55 The site is located a short distance north of Drimnagh castle which has a vast area of outdoor space as well as Bluebell Park. A short distance further south is a children's playground as part of the Church grounds, and Lansdowne Valley Pitch and Putt a short distance to the east.

- 4.56 Wider social amenity exists close by, including the popular Green Door Market<sup>11</sup> formerly located in New Market Square, is now located ten-minute walk from the Gowan House site just off the Old Nass Road in a much less accessible location than the site, when travelling by foot for residents coming from Inchicore, Kilmainham and Drimnagh.
- 4.57 Rascals Brewing Company<sup>12</sup>, Inchicore, is nearby example of a local food and beverage experience which also operates as a social facility where people collect, as is the Still Garden Distillery<sup>13</sup>.
- 4.58 The canal located to the north of the site, providing opportunities for wider outdoor recreational activity such as walking, running and cycling. To the south west there is Walkinstown Avenue Park, Glenmalure Rovers FC and Blackforge FC, as well as a number of playing pitches such as Bernard Curbs Park. There are also leisure facilities in the area, such as Sheldon Park Leisure Club.
- 4.59 Inchicore Sports and Social Club is located within 2km of the site, providing access to CIE Hall, with indoor recreation facilities including pool, snooker and darts, as well as other community and recreation programming including Choir, Yoga and Zumba.
- 4.60 Despite its predominately developed and urban character, there are a range of open space and recreation areas nearby. For the purposes of this study open space and recreation facilities are considered to include parks, playgrounds, multi-use games areas, leisure facilities and sports pitches used by GAA, soccer and other clubs.
- 4.61 Quality recreation, leisure and amenity facilities have a fundamental impact on quality of life. It can improve social integration and cohesiveness. Sporting, recreation and leisure activities are of primary importance to the quality of life enjoyed by the local community.
- 4.62 The site as it currently stands provides little contribution to the built environment through public realm or retail for public use. However, the proposed development will include public open space, retail and high-quality pedestrian & cycling routes which will benefit the existing and the future residents in the area.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.thegreendoor.ie/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://rascalsbrewing.com/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://stillgardendistillery.com/>



## 5. Typology Assessment

- 5.1 In summary, the proposed cultural/community space at Gowan House could integrate well with existing cultural and community infrastructure in the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area, supporting local artists/groups and making a sizeable contribution to the life of the area.
- 5.2 To inform this, we have outlined below consideration of the differing typologies that could occupy the lower ground (basement) and ground level spaces.
- 5.3 The c.1,422 sq m of indoor cultural / community use space proposed at Gowan House (including a 436 sq m digital hub space accommodated in the basement, alongside wider shared community and cultural facilities, and ground floor community spaces including co-working spaces, café, changing and washrooms etc.), is substantial in comparison to most arts and cultural venues in the city.
- 5.4 Potential uses have therefore be considered in the context of this scale, for example, in 2019, the Arts Council and CCMA commissioned a national study of multi-disciplinary arts centres and venues.
- 5.5 This showed a wide variance in the scale of dedicated performance and gallery space across those venues surveyed. As shown in table 5.2, below, the average capacity of theatres surveyed was 230 seats, with a median (central) value of 200.

**Table 5.1: Scale of Theatre and Gallery Spaces in Arts Venues**

	Theatres		Galleries
	Main	Studio	(floor area)
Average	230 seats	96 seats	117m <sup>2</sup>
Median	200 seats	72 seats	88m <sup>2</sup>

Source: derived from All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO): *Audit of Arts Facilities & Venues*, Arts Council, 2016

- 5.6 Both floors of the proposed cultural space front onto a public plaza that also forms part of the proposed pedestrian route through the site. It therefore offers both excellent visibility and permeability for cultural and community organisations based in the space.
- 5.7 The site will provide 941 no. rooms for student accommodation. There will be an active community onsite, however they may be off site during the day.
- 5.8 The massing suggests that the cultural / community space will largely be in shadow to the 10, 12 and 14 storey apartment blocks which will affect light and most likely render the space unsuitable for visual artist workspaces (i.e. studio space). In so far as natural light is a key requirement of most practitioners this would render the space unsuitable for fine artists studios.
- 5.9 Other visual art forms, such as film, moving image, photography, printing plus digital, animation and tech should not be discounted as they require lighting that can be modified.
- 5.10 Cultural workspace / production / makerspace space is also an option. In addition to arts making, artisan crafts, food and beverage production has been on the increase in Dublin 12, 8 & 6 over a number of years.

5.11 This presents an opportunity for mixed cultural – community use which can allow a flexibility to inform how the space is used for different types of cultural uses which can co-exist on site.

5.12 Dublin City Council adopted the UNESCO definition for culture to guide its most recent Cultural Strategy (2016 – 2021)

*“The set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, values systems, traditions and beliefs.” (UNESCO 2001:3)*

5.13 The Strategy sets out a vision for an inclusive and diverse City, in summary:

- Culture as a central to human development and central to Dublin’s quality of life
- Cultural diversity and equal respect for all cultural expressions confronts division, honours tradition and embraces the future
- Dublin is and will be a city to make, experience and share culture
- Culture builds community, empowers people and enables change through imagination and creativity
- Dublin City Council will create and support opportunities for all citizens to engage in inclusive and diverse cultural experiences.

5.14 With these policies, objectives and vision statements in mind, and taking into account facilities and activities in the surrounding area, a flexible community / cultural space which can support a broad range of social enterprise community / cultural activity seems most suitable.

5.15 This approach to the development of cultural space could positively impact the resident student population while attracting local residents across the age ranges and cultural backgrounds in neighbouring communities of Drimnagh, Inchicore, Bluebell, Walkinstown and Ballyfermot.

5.16 There are an increasing number of examples of student accommodation that integrate cultural and community spaces, particularly in the UK. These offer a wide variety of activities and generally respond to the needs of the area in which the accommodation is located.

#### **COMPARATOR 1: DEAKINS PLACE, NOTTINGHAM STUDENT QUARTER**

5.17 Student accommodation provider Student Roost opened Deakins Place in 2022, with space for almost 1,800 students. The building is being operated by third party management service, Fresh<sup>14</sup>, which runs 70 student halls across the UK.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.thisisfresh.com/corporate/our-services> ; <https://www.fenews.co.uk/education/student-roost-offers-a-preview-of-its-new-nottingham-student-quarter/>



- 5.18 In addition to the usual mix of social, wellbeing and study spaces for students, a hosting kitchen has been included in the development. At other Student Roost locations where hosting kitchens have been provided, they have been used for collaborations with local businesses in running cooking events such as demonstrations and workshops.

#### **COMPARATOR 2: HAYLOFT POINT, LONDON**

- 5.19 Hayloft Point is United Students' flagship property in London. During development, archaeological remains of a 16th century Playhouse were discovered, leading to the inclusion of a community performance and exhibition space<sup>15</sup> as part of the student accommodation building. The space is being leased at a low rent via a public invitation for expressions<sup>16</sup> of interest from local community and/or cultural groups.



<sup>15</sup> <https://manaloandwhite.co.uk/hayloft-point>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.unitegroup.com/articles/unite-students-invites-applications-for-lease-of-new-community-space-in-tower-hamlets-london>

### COMPARATOR 3: THE TERRY FROST BUILDING, LEEDS

- 5.20 Currently being developed by Alumno and named for the artist Sir Terry Frost, this new purpose-built student accommodation includes specially-commissioned artworks for the building and surrounding landscaped public areas<sup>17</sup>.



- 5.21 On the ground floor there is a public art gallery and studio space which will be used by local artists to feature workshops and host exhibitions. The space is being managed by the local award-winning non-profit organisation East St Arts<sup>18</sup>, which has also been involved in a number of placemaking projects elsewhere (e.g. Derby).

<sup>17</sup> <https://howarthlitchfield.com/alumno-celebrates-topping-out-of-leeds-student-residence/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.eaststreetarts.org.uk>

## TYPOLGY PROPOSAL

5.22 Having had consideration of the need assessment and exemplars above the proposed primary function of the cultural space is a digital hub space for *'podcasts, you tube studio space, gallery space, kitchen, photography studios, makerspace and general shared working for creatives'*, alongside community and shared space in the form of co-working areas, ancillary space, shared reception, as well as washrooms and changing facilities.

5.23 These are detailed in the schedule below:

Cultural/ Community NIA					
Floor	Use	Name	Internal Area (sqm)	Total Internal Area (sqm)	External Area (sqm)
Basement	Cultural	Digital Hub	436	729	
		Office	41		
		Store/ BoH	193		
		Staff Changing Rooms and Showers	18		
		WC	16		
Ground Floor	Shared Community / Cultural	Accessible Break-Out	162	221	91
		Shared Reception	59		
	Community	Café	52	472	40
		Co-Working Area	86		
		Main Co-Working Area	277		
		Ancillary	41		
		WC	11		
Total				1422	131
Percentage				92%	8%
Total Combined				1553	

5.24 The applicant has considered similar models, such as the University of the Arts London; Creative Computing Institute<sup>19</sup>, where its Hub at Eagle Wharf<sup>20</sup> it provides students with access to a range of creatives spaces including Gallery Space, Maker Lab, Co-working and Incubator Space alongside meeting, training and lecture room facilities.

5.25 Whilst an operator has not yet been engaged with, there may be opportunities to explore provision of this space for third level institutes such as the nearby Ballyfermot College of Further Education, or an offsite expansion of NCAD facilities. The digital hub and co-working spaces provide more than adequate provision to offer a similar range of uses in a manner similar to the UAL CCI Hub, with a focus on creative and digital courses.

5.26 In a similar manner, Ballyfermont College of Further Education offers a range of courses in Animation & Games, Art & Design, Digital Media, Media, Music, Television, Film & Visual Effects.

5.27 The proposed digital hub facilities, co-working and shared community space could provide an attractive proposition for a partnership with such a third level educational operator, providing facilities for a range of creative courses and artform workspaces, augmenting the commercial facilities and creative community (particularly in the music recording) in the wider vicinity.

<sup>19</sup> [UAL Creative Computing Institute \(arts.ac.uk\)](https://arts.ac.uk/)

<sup>20</sup> See [CCI Wiki \(arts.ac.uk\)](https://arts.ac.uk/) for a list of facilities and floorplan



## 6. Management and Operational Model

- 6.1 As previously outlined, arts and culture play a key role in facilitating sustainable and engaged communities and businesses. Consequently, arts, culture, community and economic development has increasingly been a collaborative process.
- 6.2 Internationally, successful management and delivery models for community and cultural spaces co-located with student accommodation take a partnership approach, with each partner playing to its own strengths.
- 6.3 Partners with experience of managing property and student accommodation lead on those aspects, while entities with experience of managing cultural and community spaces maintain lead or supporting roles in those areas.
- 6.4 Operational models in comparable developments tend to be similar to that of other community and cultural organisations. The practicalities of creative or community work require a high degree of permeability between the management structure of the building and its users, to ensure that the space remains suitable for the artistic vision / community purpose of its users.
- 6.5 In the first instance, expressions of interest will be sought from operators with a track record in managing community and cultural spaces, including creative and community organisations. In addition, given the scale of the proposed cultural allocation at Gowan House, there exists an opportunity to invite expressions of interest from social enterprise operators.
- 6.6 To ensure appropriate long-term management, operation and maintenance, spaces will be managed by an operator under a long-term lease, which allows for it to sublet the spaces to individual community and creative organisations either together or separately. This approach, again, mirrors the approach taken in other, similar cultural/community projects.
- 6.7 The operator will also be responsible for identifying, screening and ongoing management of community and cultural providers that contract the spaces.
- 6.8 Finally, the operator will be tasked with responsibility for seeking providers and organisations that are a good fit with the demographics of the area, ensuring that the experiences and spaces will be used in a way that will enrich the lives of local residents.

### **Operations and Finance**

- 6.9 The operational approach and structure outlined here are considered the most likely model but will be developed as part of the negotiation of the lease.
- 6.10 The role and responsibilities of the Operator are outlined above. The Operator should consider appointment of a number of key roles to manage day-to-day operations on-site. These may include:
  - Cultural Space Manager (full time), who will be responsible for the overall management of the space on a daily basis, including coordinating the efforts of the small operational team and managing relationships with strategic partners to ensure delivery of the long-term Strategy.
  - Engagement Officer (part time), who will be responsible for developing community engagement and education programmes with local schools and will coordinate the roles

of the community/cultural space's users in delivering these. They will be responsible for ensuring maximum use of any exhibition space, including its availability for private hire and community use. They will also be responsible for publicity and PR. This role may be fulfilled by a tenant artist/s with the requisite experience as part of their contract.

- Finance (part time), will be responsible for the financial management and viability of the spaces, including the administration of grants. This will take the form of an external accountant or similar, secured for several days a month.
- Facilities support (full time), who will be responsible for the daily management and maintenance schedule of the cultural spaces. As some of the spaces will be accessible 24 hours a day, there is potential for this role to be a shared resource with residential and other spaces on-site and to be provided partly or wholly by an external provider.

6.11 In addition to the above, community/cultural space users will be expected to work together to support the collective.

- A vision for the space
- A Strategy and Business Plan that ensures the efficient leasing of spaces, management of subcontracts, and provides for the development of relationships with strategic partners (including the Arts Council and Dublin City Council)
- A ten-year operational plan with cash flow projections
- Implementing an agreed maintenance programme for the spaces

6.12 Subcontracted organisations/entities will be responsible for the following:

- Own insurances and financial viability
- Community engagement
- Publicity and PR
- Daily maintenance and upkeep of the spaces

6.13 The community/cultural space will depend for ongoing financial sustainability on the income to the Operator from the subcontracting of the spaces. In turn, the subcontractors have potential to draw on a number of income sources in order to meet their financial obligations to the Operator. These include:

- the leasing of spaces for performances, events, workshops and classes
- grant support

6.14 The Operator should appoint a dedicated contact who will be responsible for the overall management of the space and will be the key liaison for subcontractors, the community and stakeholders. This should be supported by a part time financial resource (external accountant or similar) and a facilities resource that can be shared with the on-site residential space. The subcontracted organisation/s should also have responsibility for community engagement, for its own insurances, financial viability, etc.

6.15 An experienced Operator of the community / cultural space will also have potential to apply for and manage grants from a number of public bodies including the Arts Council and Dublin City Council.

6.16 In the case of a partnership or operator arrangement with a third level institution, such as a university or further education college, governance and operational arrangement may be centrally administrated, but would still require a similar level of own site provision.



## 7. Artform Assessment

- 7.1 Whilst the proposed Digital Hub and associated co-working space and other facilities provide a rational use of the community / cultural space, it could also accommodate a range of community and cultural functions.
- 7.2 To inform further considerations we have considered the current scale and physical characteristics of the proposed space against the needs of various artform as defined within the Arts Act 2003 (Figure 5). This illustrates the mutual and divergent workspace feature preferences between each art-form defined
- 7.3 Our consideration utilises the ‘Art-form DNA’ established by Turley through the Artist Workspaces survey undertaken on behalf of Dublin City Council (which reflects the views of c.500+ artists across all artforms.

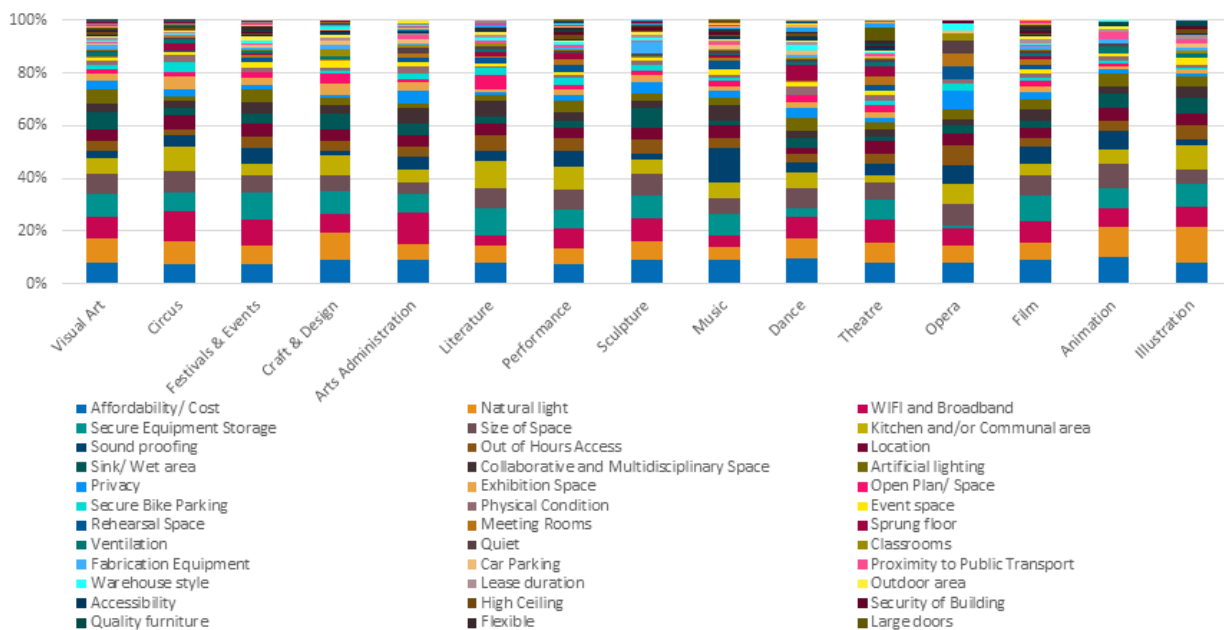


Figure 5 Artform “DNA” Specification Preferences

- 7.4 These respective features have been distilled below, and we have identified further design opportunities and artform specific guidance within the context of pragmatic design considerations and existing constraints at Gowan

Art-form	Features	Workspace Study Summary	Further Suggested Design Considerations
Visual Arts and illustration	Natural / Smart Lighting	<p>Lighting was referred to as one of the most important aspects of a workspace by Visual Artists (28%) in our Artists’ Workspace study.</p> <p>Natural light was considered the most important feature of ideal workspace by 10% of all respondents of the Artist Workspaces study. All art-forms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to the limitations of the cultural / community space and the high premium placed on natural light by visual artists, it is likely that the space will not be suitable for artists working in these artforms.</li> </ul>

		<p>referenced Natural Light in their description of the ideal workspace however 31% of these comments were referenced by Visual Artists.</p> <p>In addition to demand for access to natural light, it is all important to ensure there is access to artificial lighting sources as natural light will not always be the most appropriate lighting for all artistic production.</p>	
Circus	Increased Size	<p>Circus, spectacle and street arts are underrepresented in Dublin as the requisite double height spaces are limited. Should the Chapel's large space be designed with this in mind, it may offer a solution to the scarcity of touring opportunities for Irish based circus and spectacle makers and introduce opportunity for inbound international touring groups which are making work at a smaller scale than the large scale shows which tour to the 3 Arena.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst the floor space area will be spacious enough to allow for movement-led performances ranging from high motion entertainment activities such as hoopers, tightrope walkers and unicyclists, to lower motion acts such as a juggling, magicians, and ventriloquists, there is insufficient ceiling height on either level to accommodate Circus stunt activities such as Acrobatics and Aerial performances.</li> <li>• There is, however, potential to provide rehearsal space when not in use for programming. This may require some form of flexibility / segregation.</li> </ul>
Dance	Changing facilities, sprung floor, climate controls	<p>A permanent home for a Dance company provides a significant boost to its operating model. Whilst requiring investment in maintenance (controlled heating, lighting) they allow practitioners to develop their craft with uninterrupted access to rehearsal and performance facilities. The set-up and features of a dance workspace should be designed with injury prevention in mind and this includes lighting, and heating and ventilation. A sprung floor is an essential feature of workspace for this artform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To function effectively as a Dance Rehearsal space a purpose-built sprung floor is key feature requirement for Dance rehearsal or performance, in addition to the addition of adequate changing facilities, to support both professional and community use. Including storage lockers.</li> <li>• Segregation of the space as Dance studios should also include a mirrored rehearsal space and an adequately heated environment for dancers who require a warm space to allow artists to practice safely and reduce associated injury risks.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similarly, the spaces should have heating controls to allow temperatures to be reduced in the warmer months and provide sufficient ventilation.</li> </ul>
Theatre	Rehearsal Space	<p>Whilst Theatre performance spaces do exist across the city, adequate rehearsal and black box spaces are in undersupply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate changing facilities, to support both professional and community use. Including storage lockers.</li> <li>Medium sized spaces and sprung floors at a minimum 64sqm – ideally 144sqm</li> <li>Good light, comfortable, good heating/ ventilation, access to water, kitchens, changing rooms with showers.</li> <li>Adequate storage (overnight if using space over a period of days/weeks)</li> <li>Wheelchair accessible</li> <li>Small adjoining meeting space</li> </ul>
Music	Performance Space	<p>There is a perception of insufficient workspace provision for Music artists across Dublin and in light of this need offering studios for this art-form should not be easily discarded.</p> <p>However, the specialist design features required by Music artists need to be carefully assessed in the context of the design constraints of the cultural / community space and the surrounding residential amenity.</p> <p>One of the key requirements of Music artists is sound proofing. Sound proofing is considered to be most highly prioritised by Music artists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance space to be set up with access to AV equipment (including mixing desk) and suitable power outlets (placement and voltage).</li> <li>The size and shape and form of the cultural / community space will determine which Music artists can use it due to the impact on acoustics.</li> <li>The space should be designed to accommodate as many genres as possible.</li> </ul>
	Rehearsal Space	<p>There is an under provision of adequate rehearsal space for amplified and non-amplified ensemble and private rehearsal spaces across the city.</p> <p>A primary consideration would be the effective soundproofing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A noise impact assessment may be required to ensure effective management during rehearsals recording or performances, were this potential use to be developed post-planning.</li> <li>The audit suggest the area is well served by a number of</li> </ul>

		of each unit, and any restriction of operating hours for live pre-performance rehearsals as a result of adjacent workspaces or other uses on, or near, the wider site.	existing music rehearsal spaces and private recording studios. However, this may provide an opportunity to cluster these business under a collectively operated space.
	Media lab / Recording Studio	<p>The provision of technical equipment would be important for hosting Music artists in the community/cultural space. Audio Equipment such as AV, recording equipment and microphones should be readily available for communal use in this space.</p> <p>The level of sound proofing required for individual music studios may not be feasible as it would need to be equipped to allow for high levels of noise being produced internally whilst also preventing any external noises being heard from within the unit, this is particularly important for artists using the space for recording / composition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application of sound proofing should be designed to mitigate the noise impact of sound disturbance from the performance space to the surrounding community.</li></ul>
Opera	Sound Proofing	As with other forms of musical performance, adequate sound proofing is considered a key workspace feature for this artform to prevent Opera artists from disturbing neighbours and workspace peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A noise impact assessment may be required to use the cultural / community space for this artform</li></ul>
Arts Administration	Privacy and Quiet	Privacy is extremely important by Arts Administrators, in addition to having a quiet environment to work in. These features are considered important to provide a suitable setting for users to undertake research and composition works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flexible screening options to provide on-demand privacy for users.</li><li>• Internal soundproofing of unit to prevent users being disturbed by exterior noise.</li></ul>
	Secure equipment storage	Arts Administrators consider the provision of secure storage equipment to be an essential component of their ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Suitable storage solutions such as lockable filing cabinets and guarantee of units been secured when vacant. Suitable</li></ul>

		workspace. This would offer storage for research files as well as administrative technology (e.g. computers, hard drives etc.)	<p>surveillance for all units should also be provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internet security will also be a key consideration for any users connecting to a shared site broadband source.</li> </ul>
	Meeting rooms and other flexible workspaces	<p>Meeting rooms will be required by those working in Arts Administration on an ad hoc basis. The spaces should facilitate in-person and virtual collaborations and meetings.</p> <p>Often people need to set up a temporary office which can expand and contract as the numbers employed crescendo closer to production / delivery. This is the case for TV and film production, theatre, dance and performance, visual artists working on large scale projects and festivals / events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Units designed to accommodate larger meetings and equipped with relevant meeting furniture and video conferencing facilities.</li> <li>Meeting rooms which can be made available for seasonal hire (medium term) as well as for meeting for tenants and possible as pop-up work spaces for cultural / community space users who want to work out of their own space once in a while. Flexibility and servicing the widest possible mix of users is key to this section.</li> </ul>
	Literature	Secure equipment storage	<p>Similar to Arts Administrators, those who practise Literature would also need secure storage equipment to be readily available to store soft and hard copies of their works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of an ergonomic office space with secure storage furniture, such as a filing cabinet or similar.</li> </ul>
Festivals and Events	Smart lighting solutions (natural lighting, artificial lighting, blackout curtains)	Festivals and Event background may require suitable stage lighting in their performance spaces. It is expected that a suitable lighting rig and control system (desk) will be required for hosting festivals and events within the cultural / community space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further consultation with this art-form may be required to assess the most suitable types of lighting and staging needed to allow the space to be adequately utilised as a festival performance venue.</li> </ul>
	Administrative	Similar workspace requirements as Arts Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See above</li> </ul>

	Secure equipment storage	Larger equipment storage is required by Festivals and Events. Storage will need to accommodate larger event apparatus such as sound systems, lights, stage covers, trussing, tents and technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated storage for larger equipment pieces.</li> </ul>
	Classrooms / Workshop and Group Space	Access to a classroom / workshop space was cited as a desirable area for Festival and Events artists to facilitate audience participation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a space large enough to accommodate group activities with individual workspaces to facilitate teaching and engagement sessions.</li> </ul>

## 8. Benchmarking against DCC Workspace Design Principles

- 8.1 Through the Cultural Workspace Study, Dublin City Council has developed seven design principles for Artist Workspaces. These are set out below, along with our assessment of whether and in what way the proposals meet each benchmark.

**Table 8.1: Design Benchmarks and Response**

Design Principle		Benchmark	Comments and Recommendations
Value	<b>Value for Money</b> The key consideration for our artists is value for money. Creating affordable workspaces through economical design choices is imperative.	To be determined	There is currently no proposed operator or final operating model of the cultural / community space. As such, it is impossible to gauge the affordability of the space to prospective users.
	<b>Stability</b> introducing extended tenancy agreements and support for artists when they decide to move elsewhere.	To be determined	There is no current operator lease or artist tenancy agreement to assess. However, the proposed operating model outlined above (at Chapter 6) has been designed in part to promote a stable working environment for tenants.
Form	A key consideration for any future design will be to ensure the culture and workspaces are pragmatic in their function and respond to the practical needs of artists.	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is not currently possible to determine whether this consideration has been met.
	<b>Storage</b> Providing ample storage (big and small) that is accessible and secure.	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is impossible to determine whether this consideration has been met.
	<b>Comfort to create</b> Artist spaces must provide controllable lighting, acoustics, adequate sound proofing, ventilation and temperature	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is impossible to determine whether this consideration has been met.
	<b>Limitless access</b> Around the clock access to workspaces.	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is impossible to determine whether this consideration has been met.



<b>Security</b> Building entrances and workspaces must be secure and safe to allow lone working at any time of the day. Secure storage for resident bicycles must also be provided.	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is impossible to determine whether this consideration has been met.
<b>Health and safety</b> Workspaces must uphold the highest levels of health and safety and should be configured to help artists adapt to new health and safety measures – for example socially distanced parameters.	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is impossible to determine whether this consideration has been met.
<b>Facilities</b> Well placed everyday facilities available within the building - such as a kitchens, toilets and showers. As well as in built unit facilities such as desk, chair and individual storage space, paint storage in addition to sinks, wet areas and safe paint cleaning areas.	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is impossible to determine whether this consideration has been met.
<b>Removals and delivery</b> The building's exit and entry points allows for artists to drop off and load equipment / artwork / supplies of significant size and scale. i.e. access to a loading bays and lifts.	To be determined	As final proposals for the form and function of the space are not yet extant, it is impossible to determine whether this consideration has been met.

	<b>Heating and ventilation</b> Good heating and ventilation available all year round	Criteria met	The proposed development will be designed and constructed to meet Approved Document Part L 2022 Conservation of Fuel and Energy – Buildings other than Dwellings.  The Gowan House development has been designed to achieve thermal comfort in accordance with the industry standard CIBSE Technical Memorandum 59 (2017). Compliance has been achieved through; reduced glazing solar transmission to control excessive solar gains, high thermal mass capacity of the structure, openable windows for purge ventilation and mechanical ventilation to provide continuous background ventilation.
Flexibility	Flexibility should be at the core of any design considerations – from flexibility of artist medium to flexibility of space and even flexible tenancy models.	Partially met	The design of the space prioritises flexibility of use, to allow for easy conversion to community or a wide range of artistic/cultural uses.
	<b>Flexible spaces</b> A variety of workspace sizes (in footprint and height) offered to fit the space needs of the artist, allow artists to work in solitude or in larger groups as they please – including rehearsal and performance spaces.	To be determined	As key decisions on the form and function of the community / cultural space are yet to be taken, it is not yet possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.
	<b>Privacy</b> Providing areas within the building to give artists private and quiet working spaces.	To be determined	As key decisions on the form and function of the community / cultural space are yet to be taken, it is not yet possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.
	<b>Display</b> Offering exhibition spaces that showcases to the public the work of its residents (whatever the discipline).	To be determined	As key decisions on the form and function of the community / cultural space are yet to be taken, it is not yet possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.
	<b>Ground Floor Retail</b> Areas within the building for artists to perform or exhibit their work, perhaps in partnership or in place of traditional ground floor retail	To be determined	As key decisions on the form and function of the community / cultural space are yet to be taken, it is not yet possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.

	<b>Meeting rooms, workshops and classrooms</b> Spaces to host classes and separate meeting rooms.	To be determined	As key decisions on the form and function of the community / cultural space are yet to be taken, it is not yet possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.
	<b>Outdoor space</b> Easy access to private or public outdoor space.	Criteria met	The proposed cultural / community space fronts out onto a new public plaza, ensuring easy access to high-quality outdoor space for tenants.
Readiness to change	A new artist workspace should incorporate cutting edge technology to meet the needs of artists now, but also factor in future technologies and opportunities to meet future needs.	To be determined	Until the design and operating model are finalised it is not possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.
	<b>Digital infrastructure</b> Workspaces must offer effective digital connection for communications, administrative technology and adapting to the needs of digital creative industries now and in the future	To be determined	Until the design and operating model are finalised it is not possible to determine whether this baseline has been met. However the proposal for a digital hub should require the operator to provide a detailed specification for digital technology and facilities within the space for a wider variety of creative production (music, animation, video etc.).
Diverse Communities	A broad artist workplace should accept diversity as a key component of creating rich outputs.	To be determined	Until the design and operating model are finalised it is not possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.
	<b>Diversity through design</b> Consider how size, shape, age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, education levels, income, spoken languages, culture & customs can be designed for from the start.	To be determined	As the design for the space is yet to be finalised, it is not yet possible to say whether this baseline will be met.
	<b>Support</b> Creating spaces where artists have access to commercial opportunities and support services such as training or professional development	To be determined	As the final operating model has yet to be determined, it is not yet possible to say whether this baseline will be met.

Inclusive and Welcoming	Artist workspaces can have the reputation for being closed and insular. New workspaces should consider openness and inclusivity as a key priority.	To be determined	The aspiration for the building is for it to be an open and inclusive centre, with good links between the community / cultural space and the building's student population. However, until the design and operating model are finalised it is not possible to determine whether this baseline has been met.
	<b>Gateway</b> Creating a clear public frontage, and identifiable and welcoming entrance to the building.	Criteria met	The proposed entrance onto the public plaza provides a clear, identifiable and welcome gateway to the proposed cultural / community space within the wider PBMSA accommodation.
	<b>Location</b> City centre located sites with access to local services and the public transport network and can be easily accessed via active transport.	Partially met	While not a city-centre location, the proposed cultural / community space at Gowan House benefits from excellent public, private and active travel links.

## 9. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 The Cultural and Community Infrastructure Assessment has led to the following conclusions and recommendations based on in depth audit of cultural and community need in the area, together with an analysis of the opportunities and constraints presented by the site and the applicants' proposed cultural and community floor space (1,422 sq m internal and 131 sq m external).
- 9.2 The audit has revealed a significant lack of appropriate cultural infrastructure near the site, with only 2 facilities within 1 kilometres of the site being used for cultural uses Bluebell Youth Project / Centre and Walkinstown Social Service Centre. Whilst inclusion in the "Culture Near You" data, indicates that both offer some level of cultural provision, it is clear that as community centres neither has a specific remit or form as cultural space. Of the remaining 12 cultural facilities within 1-2 kilometres of the site identified by Culture Near You, only one provides significant provision for workspace for artists The Lodge, Inchicore operated by Common Ground.
- 9.3 Uncharacteristically in contrast to other areas of the city, our further research has identified there is a strong existing or prior provision of private music recording studios and sound insulated rehearsal space within a 2km radius of the site (most outside the Dublin City Council boundaries), with several operators to the south west of the site. Likewise, Opera and Ballet have some rare representation through the privately operated provision of the Monica Loughman Ballet school which provides early tuition in the discipline to children.
- 9.4 In contrast Community and Social infrastructure within a 1km radius of the site serving the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area includes four Community Centres, offering a range of services primarily to older and younger people, several parish halls. Drimnagh Castle and Bluebell Park offer large outside recreational amenity, with children's playgrounds in short distance from the site to the east. Sporting facilities and clubs and Sheldon Park Leisure Club provide significant recreational infrastructure, and Inchicore Sports and Social Club provides access to indoor recreation facilities.
- 9.5 The policy set out in CU025, requires provision at a "minimum for 5% community, arts and culture spaces including exhibition, performance, and artist workspaces predominantly internal floorspace as part of their development at the design stage." And that "such developments shall incorporate both cultural/arts and community uses individually or in combination unless there is an evidence base to justify the 5% going to one sector".
- 9.6 The proposed space is a significant volume across two floors (basement lower ground and ground floor), both sufficient in scale to host multiple cultural (workspace, performance, rehearsal, maker or multi purpose space) and community typologies, as well as accommodate a wide range of artforms and community uses.
- 9.7 The typology proposed by the applicant, a digital hub and co-working space, could provide provision for a range of creative pursuits (such as podcasts and music recording, video production studios space, gallery space, kitchen, photography studios, makerspace and general co-working pace) and offers a genuine creative and educational opportunity, which if coupled with a third level institution could make an enhanced contribution to the wider use of the building as purpose built student accommodation.
- 9.8 It is strongly recommended, and the understood intent of the applicant, to undertake further engagement with Ballyfermot College of Further Education, and whilst no formal discussion have yet been undertaken it is understood that current facilities for a range of its creative courses in

Music, Animation & Games, Art & Design, Digital Media, Television, Film & Visual Effects etc. are heavily utilised and current facilities within the college over-subscribed.

- 9.9 The proposed cultural/community space at Gowan House could integrate well with existing community infrastructure in the Ballyfermot-Drimnagh area, by emphasising as space to be utilised for cultural use. This could support a population of local artists/groups, and whilst limited in its capacity to cater for the largest cohort (by number) of artistic professionals i.e. visual artists, it could make a sizeable contribution to the life of the area as co-working or digital workspaces is for a mix of digital and other creative artforms.
- 9.10 There are an increasing number of examples of student accommodation that integrate cultural and community spaces offering a wide variety of activities (such as a hosting kitchens, community performance or exhibition space) in addition to digital and co-working space for a range of emerging professionals.
- 9.11 Indeed, it may present a unique opportunity to embed digital and creative facilities within a student community, that are also proximity to an existing network of commercial and semi-commercial operators of digital and sound recording studios in the immediate area – offering a natural transition and incubator space for emerging talent.
- 9.12 This approach to the development of cultural community space at Gowan House could positively impact the resident student population while attracting local residents across the age ranges and cultural backgrounds in neighbouring communities of Drimnagh, Inchicore, Bluebell, Walkinstown and Ballyfermot.