

## SDCC Open Space and Landscaping Pre Planning Guidance

In meeting the needs of development, the Council seeks to ensure the appropriate protection and enhancement of its **existing open spaces and green infrastructure** and the appropriate provision of **new open spaces and green infrastructure**, protecting the character and amenities of the County. The following principles apply:

- Developers shall consult the Planning Department and specifically with the **Public Realm Section** on landscape proposals at an early stage, preferably during the Pre-Planning process.
- **Tree and Hedgerow Survey:** where trees and hedges are present on site a Survey should be carried out at the very outset of site investigation by a qualified Arborist (ideally a member of the Arboriculture Association, Irish Chapter). This should inform and influence the site layout and ensure retention of existing good trees and hedgerows. It shall be lodged in conjunction with an Ecology report, be carried out in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 and shall comprise three colour drawings to 1:500 scale with a written report, as follows:
  1. A Tree Survey drawing showing all existing trees/hedges on site, showing all trees on site in their true and current condition, regardless of the proposed development (impartial assessment of trees on site).
  2. An Arboricultural Implications Assessment drawing (AIA) with Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) (indicates the effects of proposed development on existing trees).
  3. A Tree Protection Plan showing the line of protective fencing for all trees and hedges to be retained.
- High quality landscape design is required for new developments, to ensure/include/address the following:
  - ◆ The broader **Green Infrastructure** context of the surrounding area of the site should inform the site layout and the provision of open space. Connections to or from the proposed open spaces to existing/other open spaces, provision of amenity for future residents, climate change adaptation, retention of existing mature trees and hedgerows and the potential for permeability through walk/cycle routes are all elements to be strongly considered prior to proposing the site layout.
  - ◆ A **Site Survey drawing** is to be submitted showing existing site features such as specimen trees, mature trees, hedgerows, rocky outcrops, important views and existing water features/streams. Significant natural features should be retained and inform the proposed site layout.
  - ◆ Water attenuation by means of **SuDS** is desirable and contributes to **Blue-Green Infrastructure**; however, B-G Infrastructure should not be used at the expense of usable public open/green space.
  - ◆ Open space shall cater to **both active and passive recreation**; therefore fewer larger open spaces are desirable than a greater number of smaller open spaces which are usually 'incidental'.
  - ◆ Proposed **housing shall front on to open spaces, not back on or side on** in order for proper overlooking and supervision of the open spaces to prevent anti-social activity.
  - ◆ Proposed **street trees must not conflict with proposed lighting standards** and the finalised locations of both must be shown on the landscape plan. Street trees will be narrow-crowned species. Tree trunks should be located 5 metres away from proposed street lights in accordance with SDCC Tree Policy.
- Developers are urged, not obliged, to use **Chartered Landscape Architect** services for larger schemes and preferably a member of the Irish Landscape Institute (I.L.I.) to ensure high professional standards, but must at least use qualified and experienced Landscape Consultants for smaller schemes.

A **Landscape Scheme** for a site refers to providing the following:

- A **Site Survey** drawing showing location of existing landscape features (streams, views, trees, hedges etc.) and the proposed retention or loss of any of these in the proposals, including tree protective fencing lines.
- A **Landscape Masterplan** and other relevant drawings all at appropriate scales and in colour, to include both **plans and cross-sections** through several areas and boundaries of the site. Planting Plan and written specification are required with an emphasis mainly on native planting.
- Detail design drawings and written specifications for **hard landscape features and play spaces** using the principles of **Natural Play**.
- Details associated with temporary roads, showing **location of site compounds**, construction storage areas, to ensure no conflict with existing features being protected and retained.
- Developers are responsible for the **implementation** of the agreed landscape plans within the agreed timeframe; prior to occupation of the buildings or dwellings and immediately post completion of the main construction works. The Landscape Architect is to be retained during site works and shall provide a **Certificate of Practical Completion**. The built landscape is to be maintained by the developer for a minimum period of 18 months (**defects liability period**) post completion.
- A drawing indicating the open spaces to be taken in charge by SDCC versus those to be privately maintained.