



ROEBUCK
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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Mr Declan Hayden
Community Liaison Coordinator
Land Development Agency
2nd Floor Ashford House
Tara Street Dublin 2
Dublin
D02 VX67

12th February 2021

Re. Proposed Development at the Central Mental Hospital Site

Dear Mr Hayden,

In our letter to you of 26th Sept 2020, we introduced Roebuck Residents' Association (RA)¹. We represent c380 households across the Larchfield / Farmhill / Mt Carmel / Friarsland area, bordering the entire eastern perimeter and the majority of the southern perimeter of the Central Mental Hospital site (the Site)². We have worked hard in recent years to reinvigorate the close knit sense of community that has existed in the area for over 70 years, through regular communications, community initiatives, looking after and watching out for our fellow residents, and generally attempting to bring people together. We're proud of what we have developed.

At the outset, we should state that we acknowledge that some type of development will take place on the Site (the Development); indeed we understand the wider societal need for housing, the political drive behind it, and appreciate the attractiveness of the Site as a location. **We would like to work collaboratively with the LDA in order to ensure that the proposed Development works for the LDA, but also for our members and our community.** As part of that collaboration, we expect that the LDA, as a responsible developer who is no doubt attuned to the importance of securing local stakeholder acceptance, will **engage meaningfully** with Roebuck RA and **work collaboratively to produce a holistic development proposal that works for all parties**, even if that requires significant amendments to design / development scale / access, or an increase in scope to address existing issues (e.g. rat runs). We must avoid at all costs a fait accompli scenario where the surrounding communities will have to suffer the consequences for many years to come, something that we currently perceive is the likely outcome.

We appreciate that the LDA is on a design and development journey for the Site, and as such may not yet have all the answers to the questions posed by our members or others. However as you can appreciate, given the information currently in the public domain (14 storey buildings, 1300 units, access routes via residential areas, unrealistic parking allocations (c430 spaces)), in the context of the location of the proposed Development with respect to existing well-established

¹ www.roebuckresidents.com

² Appendix - Figure 1:Roebuck Resident's Area Geographical Footprint

suburban communities (with existing traffic rat runs) **and facing four significant developments³ (comprising over 2,400 units) with associated infrastructure demands**, significant concerns are emerging, be they perceived or real. Our members have voiced these concerns with us, and to date we have not been able to provide them with any additional information / clarity which would allay the concerns / perceived concerns. This is not helpful for anyone.

From an early stage, we have taken the view that working collaboratively with the LDA, providing constructive commentary / input / suggestions, and assisting the LDA in understanding our concerns will ultimately yield the best outcome for both our residents and the LDA. In an attempt to do this, we wrote to you on 26th Sept 2020 outlining some observations / concerns / suggestions; we have yet to receive a written response to this letter. In a further attempt to secure clarity so as to inform our residents, we followed up on 26th Jan 2021 with a number of specific queries; we have yet to receive a written response to this email.

The LDA subsequently requested that we attend a Bi-Lateral meeting with the design team, and in advance of this meeting, and so that we could come prepared with further feedback from our community, **we again requested a written response to our correspondence of 26th Sept 2020 and our queries of 26th Jan 2021; none were forthcoming.** Unfortunately we were forced to resort to using the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 to 2018 to secure further information, a situation that we should not have been put in and that we would like to avoid having to do again in the future.

As we prepared for the Bi-Lateral meeting, and conscious of the challenges that developers can face in dealing with voluntary organisations such as ourselves, we worked with our members to distill a Key Message and set of Objectives in an attempt to ensure clarity. These were presented to the LDA at the Bi-Lateral meeting on the evening of 9th February and are included in Appendix 1.

We appreciate the open conversations and exchange of information that took place at the Bi-lateral meeting, and acknowledge that the LDA and their design team provided information relating to some of our queries. We also appreciate that the LDA is on a development journey and at this point do not have all of the answers to the queries that have been raised. However, we currently find ourselves in a situation where we have no comfort in relation to a number of significant concerns raised by our members.

At this point, we are of the view that the Development proposed by the LDA will neither fit within, nor enhance the existing communities into which it is attempting to fit. In fact, **we are very concerned that the proposed Development will be detrimental to our well established close-knit community built over the last 70 years.**

At the Bi-Lateral meeting, it was suggested by the LDA that the Roebuck RA could allay concerns / perceived concerns held by some of our members. We would very much like to, however we are dependent on the LDA as developers of the scheme providing us with the means by which to do so.

³ 1300 unit Central Mental Hospital (<https://lda.ie/projects/central-mental-hospital-dundrum-dublin/>),
239 bedspace shared living housing development at Vector Motors (<https://goatstownroadshd.ie/>),
861 unit student accommodation unit at Our Ladys Grove (<http://www.pleanala.ie/casenum/307440.htm>)
2 schools at the IGB site (<https://planning.agileapplications.ie/dunlaoghaire/application-details/85873#documents>)

Given this, **we are making what we believe are the following entirely reasonable asks of the LDA;**

- A written response to our letter of 26th Sept 2020 and our email of 26th Jan 2021, providing as much details as is available at this time, and providing clear dates for the provision of the outstanding information.
- A written response outlining how the LDA are going to address Roebuck RA's Key Objectives (as outlined in Appendix 1)
- A commitment that the LDA & their design team will meet with Roebuck RA on a monthly basis, to review progress in addressing live concerns / issues / Key Objectives, with the first meeting taking place the first week in March.

Given the length of time that the correspondence has been sitting with you, and your pending self imposed deadline of 28th Feb for receipt of submissions on the Development, we would request the above by close of play Friday 19th Feb.

For our part, we will endeavour to work collaboratively with the LDA in order to ensure that the proposed Development works not only for the LDA, but also for our members, our community and our neighbouring communities.

We look forward to a timely response to our reasonable asks.

Regards,

Roebuck Residents' Association

www.roebuckresidents.com

Appendix 1



Key Message

We acknowledge that development will happen on the Central Mental Hospital site in the coming years, however we expect that this development will fit within, and enhance, our existing communities. The current proposal does neither. We are very concerned that it will be detrimental to our well-established close-knit community build over the last 70 years.

Our **Objectives** for this development are:

- **To protect our families:** We want quieter roads, not an exacerbation of the existing rat-runs.
- **Appropriate development:** 4/6 story blocks mid site, with 2/3 story houses at the edges is appropriate.
- **Diversity in housing:** Our area needs elderly/downsizer housing, family housing, a mix of owner occupiers and social housing.
- **Proper infrastructure:** Given the lack of public investment in past years, Luas, transport, roads, schools, healthcare, childcare and recreational space are all at capacity. There is no room for this development at the scale proposed.

