The Rathmines Initiative

Gulistan Site Redevelopment: Meeting with City Council & Clúid Housing

The Rathmines Initiative (RI) attended a meeting hosted by Dublin City Council at City Hall on the 19th of May 2025. RI had lobbied for the meeting, which was arranged by Councillor Dermot Lacey, Chair of the South-East Area committee of the Council. The City Council Housing Dept and the contracted housing body, Clúid, and their architects gave a presentation on the proposed development to representatives of residents from Gulistan and Mt. Pleasant Avenue Upper and Castlewood Avenue, as well as RI.

A spokesperson for the Gulistan residents expressed their strong support for the development in principle, welcoming the intention to provide for much-needed housing, and asked for further engagement on a number of concerns:

- The designers for both the HSE and Clúid should confer and collaborate to ensure coordinated consideration of the site as a whole and the planning applications for both the Primary Care Centre and the Housing Development should be made at the same time so that their impact could be assessed as a whole and at the same time.
- While the aspiration to have the housing development designated as 'car free' is welcomed, the practicalities of car-free status need to be more clearly understood to ensure this is a realistic proposal. There is limited understanding to what extent the Primary Car Centre is intended to be car-free, if any.
- The suitability of the site for a Primary Care Centre was questioned due to the relatively poor access by car or public transport compared to other Primary Care Centre locations and the inevitable increase in traffic involved.
- Concerns were raised in relation to access to the site during construction and once the development is built with the only vehicular access via Mt. Pleasant Ave and Gulistan Terrace being very constricted. The potential for DCC to purchase a property at Parker Hill bordering the site and currently for sale was proposed as this would greatly ease access.
- Limited information was provided to date on the impact of the higher buildings on surrounding houses and the overall streetscape. Clúid undertook to include shadow studies and computer-generated imagery in their Part VIII Planning process.

The view was also expressed that the intention to restore the stone building was welcomed but that it should be used exclusively for community purposes.

All attendees felt that the meeting was constructive and that the officials present were taking account of the concerns expressed.

Councillor Dermot Lacey later commented to RI that this was a hugely important development for Dublin and Rathmines and it was essential that it was done properly. He acknowledged the reservations about both long term and construction traffic, and said it was a key to success that the HSE planning application be made at the same time as the housing one. He believed that Rathmines would benefit greatly from the development and looked forward to all parties working together to that end, and expressed thanks to all participants for their positive engagement.

The Rathmines Initiative will continue to try to influence the key decision makers as this important project proceeds, so as to ensure the best outcome for the whole community in Rathmines.