

**Proposed Variation No. 4 (St. John's Well)  
to the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021**

**11<sup>th</sup> October 2017**



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council

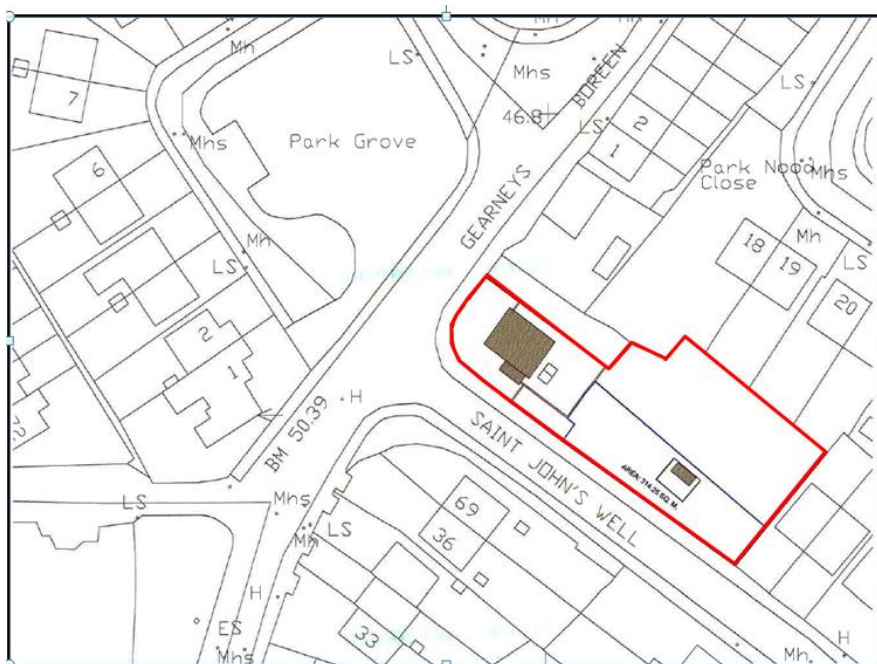


## Proposed Variation No. 4 (St. John's Well) to the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021

### The requirement for the Variation

The Housing & Community Directorate of Cork City Council proposes to develop a residential scheme for 6 no. social housing units (including 5no. new units) at the junction of St John's Well and Gearney's Boreen, Upper Fairhill, under a Part 8 application process.

The site is located on land zoned "Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses" in the Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021 with the objective "to protect and provide for residential uses, local services, institutional uses, and civic uses, having regard to employment policies outlined in Chapter 3."



**Figure 1 Site Location Map**

Part of the site which fronts onto St. John's Well is publicly accessible from the footpath and is a community maintained green space with a Marian shrine or grotto.

Objective 11.7 (b) relating to planning policy on Public Open Space states the following:

*"There will be presumption against development on all open space in residential estates in the city, including any green area/public amenity area that formed part of an executed planning permission for development and was identified for the purposes of recreation/ amenity open space, and also*

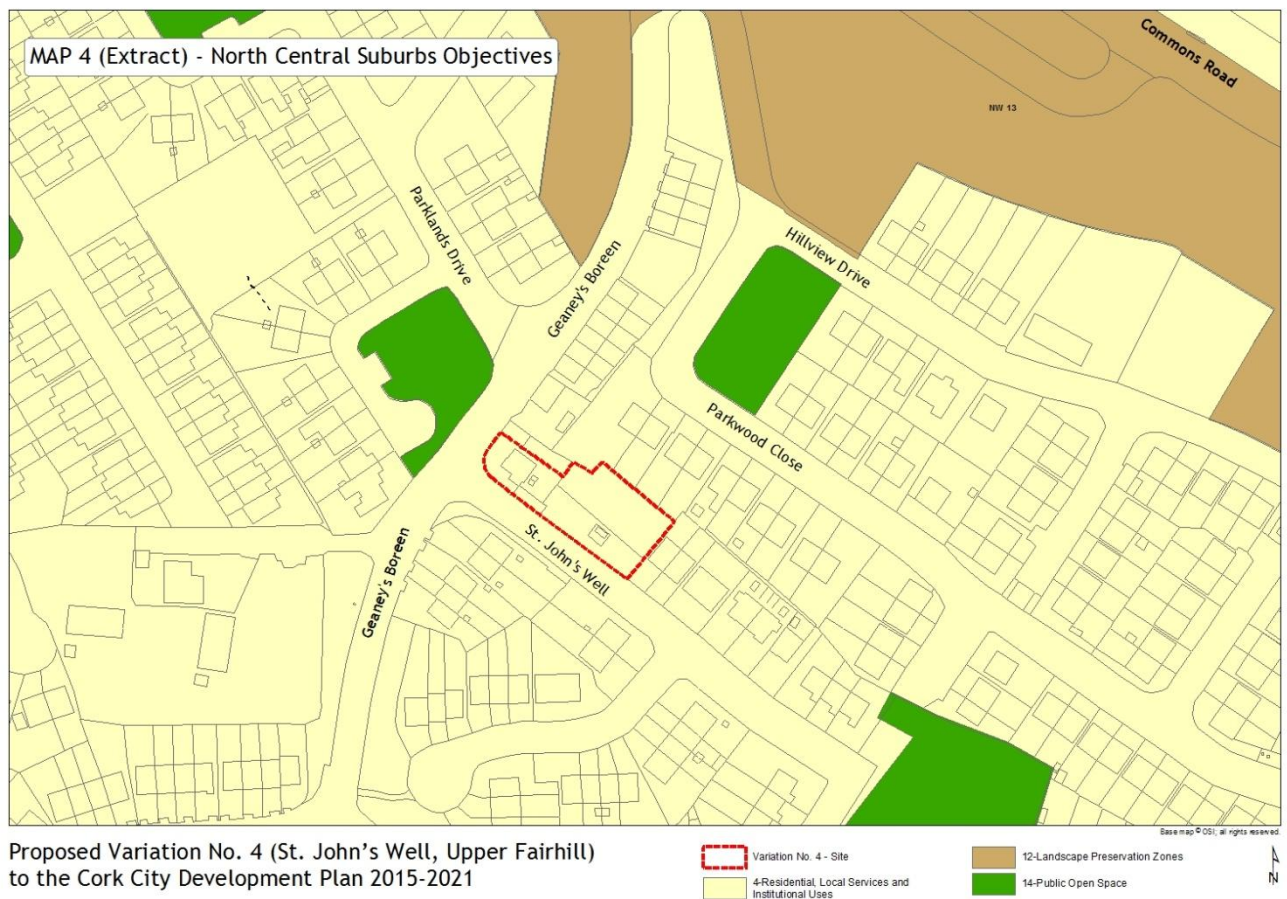
including land which has been habitually used as public open space. Such lands shall be protected for recreation, open space and amenity purposes;”

Having regard to the habitual use of this green area as public open space, it is considered that the proposed development would materially contravene Objective 11.7(b) set out above.

As the City Council is precluded from contravening its City Development Plan, it is proposed to make a variation to the development Plan by way of inclusion of a site-specific objective to Chapter 6 Residential Strategy, namely,

**“To provide social housing on the City Council owned site at the junction of St. John’s Well / Gearney’s Boreen.”**

in order to override the presumption against development of this piece of land, as stipulated by Objective 11.7 (b).



**Figure 2 Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2015 Map 4 North Central Suburbs Objectives**

## Site Description and Use

The piece of land subject to the proposed variation is located at the junction of St. John's Well and Gearney's Boreen in the north central sector of the city suburbs. The site is 0.11 ha in area, is owned by the City Council and is intended to provide 6 no. social housing units. The site is located on a corner plot in an established residential area, with housing adjacent to the site.

There are three components to this site. At present, there is a detached two storey derelict dwelling on the western portion on the site. This dwelling is currently boarded up and has an unsightly appearance. The remainder of the site is made up with a flat piece of land. Half on this land is cordoned off with wire fencing and is overgrown. The remaining portion is publicly accessible and contains a line of mature trees running parallel to the adjacent footpath with a grotto facing towards the footpath.



**Photo 1.** Existing derelict house



**Photo 2.** Green area and Grotto

### **Context for the proposed Variation**

The following factors support the proposed variation.

- Having regard to the housing shortage and inadequate supply of new housing in the city, this site presents an opportunity to provide 6 no. social houses;
- It allows for the re-use of a vacant property and under-utilised lands to the rear for housing purposes in accordance with the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan. It is not possible to redevelop the disused lands without incorporating the small area of amenity space along the street front.
- It will result in revitalisation and make environmental improvements to a prominent corner site, which has been subject to vandalism and dumping.
- A new nearby residential development of 14 no. houses with public open space will compensate to some extent the loss of amenity space resulting from redevelopment.
- The existing grotto will be re-incorporated into the new housing scheme and will be accessible from the public footpath.

## **The Proposed Amendment**

The proposed variation consists of a single amendment to page 72 of Chapter 6 Residential Strategy of Volume 1 Written Statement of the City Development Plan, namely, the insertion of a new objective.

**“Objective 6.3a Social Housing at junction of St. John’s Well and Gearney’s Boreen.”**

**“To provide social housing on the City Council owned site at the junction of St. John’s Well/ Gearney’s Boreen.”**

## **Conclusion**

The proposed site specific objective for 0.11 hectares of “Residential, Local Services & Institutional Uses” zoned land to “provide social housing” would facilitate the redevelopment of a disused, vacant dwelling and adjoining disused lands and would provide 6 new social housing units. If adopted, the housing development would regenerate this prominent corner site and would result in environmental improvements to the residential area.

Given the housing shortage at local and national level, the proposed variation is considered to be in accordance with the objectives of the **Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness**, namely, to accelerate the provision and delivery of social housing and to utilise vacant homes and sites and as such accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



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