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Fingal County
Council



Phase One Report

Provision of Accommodation for Older People in Fingal -

Engaging with the Private Sector

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1. Provision of accommodation for older people in Fingal

1.1 Introduction

Most housing in Ireland is provided by the private sector. Interest and awareness among developers in the opportunities offered in provision of housing to older people has, however, been very limited. Nonetheless, there is some evidence from before the recent recession that suggests that the private sector was beginning to develop projects focussed on the provision of housing for older people. This interest ranged from the inclusion of a life cycle approach to the delivery of individual homes to campus type developments which were specifically targeted at an older client group. Innovative designs had begun to emerge across the country but in general, these were at an early stage of development as the initial impact of the recession in 2008/09 began to radically alter the capacity to invest in housing generally.

Given the return to what might be considered more "normal" conditions, alongside a now clear understanding that Ireland's population is ageing rapidly, the challenge of addressing the delivery of age appropriate housing is now returning as a central challenge for housing policy makers at both national and local level. This is fully acknowledged in the policy context of both levels of government. This is less the case regarding the development sector which remains severely challenged in the general delivery of housing under current financial constraints. Access to capital to commence the planning and development of projects, not to mention the actual delivery of housing units is limited. This includes areas of high demand such as Fingal and the Greater Dublin area generally.

It is therefore possible that, without intervention on the part of the public authorities, private investment interest will likely continue to be restrained over the coming decade. Opportunities will therefore be lost as the population continues to age and legacy challenges will become an increasing feature of that ageing, especially for those responsible for the long-term planning of our communities.

This short research report is being prepared for Fingal County Council. It has the objective of preparing a "roadmap" for the Council's Housing Directorate which will provide some additional direction for Council housing policy. It also seeks to enhance an understanding among developers operating in the Fingal area of the need to embed consideration of the housing needs of an older population into their planning. The preparation of this report follows completion of detailed work in this area by the Council as a central theme of the Fingal Age Friendly Strategy. This Strategy has a clear ambition to place the ageing population of Fingal at the heart of the long-term development of the County and, as a result, the Council

has already completed an analysis of the locations of older people, facilities, land (private and public ownership), etc.

Notwithstanding these efforts, in particular the embedding of the Age Friendly Strategy into the local planning and development context, there is limited evidence of older persons accommodation being provided in the County. There is also limited evidence that existing housing provision could be described as meeting life cycle needs. This is resulting generally in private householders having to retro fit housing as the need arises to meet their own needs as they become older. From experience across the country it also hastens the decision to avail of nursing home care that is both expensive and not the expressed preference of 88% of older people in Fingal.

Given prevailing conditions there remains a necessary focus on development of housing units for the expanding population of the County, generally. This is in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework. In overall terms, however, the central fact is that the County's population is ageing and the proportion of older persons in the County is going to increase significantly in the coming decades. The Council, therefore, is rightly concerned with ensuring that the transition to an older population is facilitated through having a diverse housing environment which reflects the general life cycle of the population. This concern is now fully reflected in Council policy, most notably the County Development Plan.

Evidence already indicates there are many “empty nesters” in the County with little incentive to move onto appropriate alternative accommodation inclusive of appropriate care. There is therefore an immediate need to advance provision of age appropriate accommodation as well as plan for the longer-term distribution of age appropriate housing across the County.

The Council in advancing this strategy wishes to carry out a series of actions that will support and sustain the housing needs of an ageing population in the county.

As a result, this research has been commissioned to:

- Undertake a re-examination of investigative work already carried out and its enhancement as required
- Carry out a desk top study on other models of good practice that may have application in Fingal
- Deliver preliminary engagement with the private sector housing developers in Fingal, including the Construction Industry Federation, to ascertain current thinking and likelihood of future investment choices
- Engage with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Age Friendly Ireland, Approved Housing Bodies, Educational Bodies and the Housing Agency

- Complete a preliminary examination of partnership possibilities between the Council and the private sector (PART V, leaseback, etc.)
- Produce a guidance document that could be provided to developers and other interests.

The following report addresses the above requirements and recommends a possible "roadmap" towards meeting a longer term need to advance private sector-based investment in housing for older people.

1.2 Methodology

Following an inception meeting with Fingal County Council a desk top review of available web sites and reports on the provision of housing for older people was completed. This review focused on international practice and associated best practice. Face to face meetings with senior staff within the Council including Housing, Planning, Corporate Services and Architects, were undertaken as well as external face to face/teleconference meetings with the Construction Industry Federation (CIF), developers, the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland (RIAI), the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, the Housing Agency, a representative Approved Housing Body, the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) and the Age Friendly Ireland (AFI) team based at the shared service platform within Meath County Council. The existing policy position of Fingal County Council was reviewed. This included the County Development Plan, the current and past Age Friendly Strategy and various related policies of the Council.

2. Current arrangements in Fingal

2.1 Existing planning and housing policy provision.

Existing regional planning guidelines have targeted a share for Fingal of 19.8% of Dublin housing for the years 2016 to 2022 respectively. This means that in the order of 3,577 housing units per year are expected to be developed in Fingal to 2023. As a result, the County Development Plan sets a strategic vision which includes:

"Ensure consistency with the Council's Core, Settlement and Housing Strategies to provide high quality housing of a sufficient scale and mix, located in optimum locations and aligned with adequate infrastructure, services and amenities."

Among its main aims is:

"Ensure an adequate supply of zoned lands to meet forecasted and anticipated economic and social needs, while avoiding an oversupply which would lead to fragmented development, dissipated infrastructural provision and urban sprawl."

This aim is underpinned by the objective of contributing *"to the creation of a more socially inclusive, equal and culturally diverse society by providing for appropriate community infrastructure, quality public realm and improving access to information and resources"...through... "adding quality to the places where Fingal's communities live, work and recreate by integrating high quality design into every aspect of the Plan promoting adaptable residential buildings and ensuring developments contribute to a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness of an area."*

The policy acknowledges both the Aalborg Charter and the Dublin Declaration and specifically recognises the Fingal Age Friendly Strategy 2018-2023. Fingal's Development Plan Objective PM04 declares that the Council will work with landowners and development interests to pursue the potential of suitable, available and viable land and buildings for appropriate development.

Specifically, regarding addressing the housing needs of older persons the Council's policy is to:

"... to address the housing needs of older people within their communities, with the aim of providing a range of accommodation choices for people wishing to downsize and in turn to address the underutilisation of larger houses, particularly within more established areas. It is also Council policy to support the concept of independent and/or assisted living for older people. In this regard, the provision of purpose-built accommodation or adaption of existing properties is supported. Furthermore, the Council operates three separate grant schemes for qualifying home owners. In order to provide suitable housing for older people, the Council will work with other housing bodies and agencies associated with this type of housing."

2.2 Age Friendly policy in Fingal.

A new Age Friendly Strategy has been drafted and published (Fingal Age Friendly Strategy 2018-2023). The content of the document in relation to housing contains principles similar to previous policy documents and considers the new Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI) data for the County. In essence, the new Policy acknowledges that older people in Fingal want to remain in their own homes and communities. In the event, however, that the home is no longer fit for purpose and the provision of care and physical alterations cannot render it so alternatives, preferably in the same area or community, need to be provided. There is recognition that there is a significant under-provision of such suitable accommodation for people at this stage of their life-cycle.

2.3 Overview of the development environment in Fingal, key housing developers and providers

There has been an upturn in housing construction in Fingal in the past 2 years. There are currently 79 private development sites under construction. Fingal County Council currently has 25 social housing build programmes on stream at various stages of planning and delivery. A large majority of these builds will be delivered by the Council, while some will be turnkey properties in conjunction with the Approved Housing Bodies and more will be provided under the Part V process.

Direct social housing provision by Fingal County Council and Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) has commenced/is about to recommence/is being planned also in local authority ownership. The Council is currently planning for the innovative and sustainable development of its 2 large land banks in Ballymastone, Donabate and Church Fields, Dublin 15. In the medium term therefore, the Council needs to access additional development lands, both for private housing as well as public/social housing.

Given current demographic and economic conditions, it is highly likely that construction activity in the County will expand over the next few years. There is, however, limited evidence, outside of current statutory obligations under Part M, of private led housing development applying an age friendly approach to existing development proposals. In addition, the research undertaken for this project found little or no concrete evidence of any specific provision for older people in current or planned development.

2.4 Consultation undertaken

The consultants engaged in a wide range of interviews with diverse stakeholders. This includes key developers inside and outside the County and with the Construction Industry Federation (CIF). Although the main thrust of the questioning related to private sector involvement it also covered general provision. The following were also consulted mainly using face to face meetings:

- Senior staff from Fingal County Council including representatives from Community, Housing, Communications Office and Planning
- Housing Agency personnel with age friendly accommodation as part of their brief (2 meetings), Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) and the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH)

- Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland (RIAI)
- Age Friendly Ireland (AFI)
- Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD)
- Construction Industry Federation (CIF)
- Developers
- Department of Housing Officials
- The Land Development Agency (LDA)

Telephone consultation with the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland (RIAI) was also undertaken. Further consultation, subject to confirmation with the Council, will be undertaken with Age Friendly Alliance and the Fingal Senior Citizens Forum members in the County including the Chairs.

2.5 Issues arising from a Private Sector Perspective

In meeting both the Construction Industry Federation and a limited number of Fingal based private developers several key issues came to light which will have to be fully considered if the Council is to advance relations with the private development sector with a view to enhancing life cycle adaptable housing throughout the County. Without doubt the most critical point to understand, albeit that a response is largely outside the control of the Council, is that Developers indicate that they are unable to make the business case for their investors and loan providers to agree to taking specific actions regarding the provision of age friendly housing. This particularly applies in regard to development outside of the areas of high demand but even in areas of likely high demand for such provision it remains the case that due to an even greater need for general housing provision with a commensurately higher unit price and thus return on investment, provision of bespoke housing for older people is unable to compete for the limited investment resources that are available to the private developer.

Furthermore:

- Developers largely have no “war chests” built up and consequently they need to minimise risk around cash flow and have little interest in marketing older persons housing at this point in the investment environment given the large demand in Fingal for standard 3 and 4-bedroom houses
- The cost of capital is often between 8% and 15% and developers want to have a speedy return to help their cash flow. This is not often, in their perception, immediately the case regarding older persons housing.
- In Tullamore and similar towns on the edge of the Dublin commuter belt prices would need to reach approximately 240,000 euro for a 3-bed house to enable commencement of development.
- Previous experience is that the consumer is loathe to pay extra for anything above the normal standard (for example one developer suggested that even in the case of energy efficient homes with a clear short pay-back period being made available, the market was resistant and so therefore would be much more resistant to development proposing a full life cycle model).
- Older persons housing is far from developers and public consciousness despite the existence of an affluent older cohort in society.

- There is now a trend to reduce the footprint of 3 bed (and 4 bed) houses with a bedroom provided in the attic space leaving only 2 rooms plus bathroom downstairs (the small room is sometimes gone) and less room for adaptation for a shower and downstairs bedroom with wheelchair turning circles etc.
- There might be an opportunity to progress older persons housing on state lands using a licence agreement. In such situations the Local Authority could specify what they want (e.g. developer design and build). Consideration could be given to providing payment by developers to the Local Authority as monies come in from sales. Other models are currently being considered in Fingal County Council. This could accommodate a mix of social, affordable (using the new scheme) and private housing. However, the net effect is that the risk (or part of risk) of providing such housing could in effect transfer from the private developer to the local authority.
- Nonetheless, there appears to be an understanding that the key is the production of houses that are life time adaptable rather than including all the features at construction stage as every older person will differ in his/her needs and national guidelines on same would be a useful start in advancing private developer understanding.
- Reference was made to new models in Goatstown and Rathgar. These models create a high specification Apartment complex with large multi-storey houses taken over from older people. This is a different model to the above.

2.6 Other Perspectives

- The Department for Housing, Planning and Local Government has not imposed a % number of houses to be built as Universal Design (UD) or lifetime housing but this may change
The increase in cost for UD accommodation was estimated by CLUID, the Approved Housing Body, at less than 2% for apartments. It is slightly higher for housing at circa 4% - 8%. The Housing Agency informally estimates the increase for a house may be “in excess of 4%” not allowing for the new standards introduced in the past few months. Detailed research carried out on one scheme being designed in Fingal indicated increased costs of approximately €12,712 excluding VAT per 3 bedroom house.
- The idea of an age-related Q mark or a lifetime-housing standard for adaptable houses was suggested as a marketing tool.
- Public awareness needs to be developed in order to create a market demand for life cycle/Universal Design (UD) housing units. The more national exposure there is to raise people's awareness of good practice and the need to plan, the greater the likelihood is that home purchasers when considering their purchase options will think ahead and thereby increase demand for such housing types.
- The idea of having proactive development sections which would identify and pre-assess possible locations in towns for older persons housing was also highlighted given the level of pre-planning engagement between the local planning authority and the private development sector.

- There may be a need however, in addition to using market forces and public awareness to drive provision in the direction of Universal Design (UD)/life cycle housing to embed Design for all Principles in all development organisations, public and private.
- Some housing associations already design to age friendly principles and the Housing Agency has done excellent work on design. It has compiled a compendium of sites around Ireland which exhibit good practice which Fingal can now call upon once it is aligned to the policy platforms of the Council.
- Those interviewed indicated that the Council has made considerable progress in its policy frameworks with note taken of progress made in the 2017-2023 Development Plan.

3. International Comparison

3.1 Overview of provision in EU, US and Australasia

As populations generally across the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) age it is the case that most advanced economies are challenged to meet the accommodation needs of their ageing populations. However, given the different cultural perspectives and market models which apply across the OECD the nature of the response to encouraging private sector investment in older persons housing provision is going to be different. Rental provision of homes in most mainland European countries is very different from the approach to provision in Ireland. Most relevant comparisons relate to housing provision in the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and New Zealand where private levels of ownership tend to be closer to that pertaining in Ireland.

Nonetheless, there is merit in examining provision in the European members of the OECD given that current trends in provision in Ireland indicate a move towards a more even provision between rental properties with those privately owned in the State over the coming decade.

In that context the research examined a sample of policy initiatives in the UK, Australia, Germany, France and the United States. These are outlined below in broad terms. The overriding view however is that all the countries examined are struggling with the issue given that their ageing context is much more advanced than is the case in Ireland. They therefore are having to deal with the legacy of not having had the opportunity to embed ageing into their policy context. Given that to some extent Ireland still remains a relatively young population there is greater scope for policy makers in Ireland to factor into local and national policy. The need for greater consideration of ageing is therefore more important in the Irish case given the experiences in other member states of the OECD.

United Kingdom

The government of the UK is, as in Ireland, confronting, housing challenges in homelessness, lack of capacity to deliver housing units, a severely constrained (perhaps even more so than in Ireland) capacity to resource housing provision. Therefore, policy regarding addressing the needs of the UKs ageing population is relatively under developed with a primary focus on provision of guidance to local government and housing associations regarding social provision for older persons. There seems to be limited provision regarding delivery of private housing for older persons with this mainly addressed through existing building regulations, broadly similar to that currently applying in Ireland.

Several local authorities have nonetheless prepared specific guidance for the provision of private sector housing for older people. This tends to be set within the context of the national housing strategy in England, for example. In the case of Kensington and Chelsea their guidance provides details on the building design and service provision for two main types of housing for older people, those in need of

extra care housing and those needing more general retirement housing. Their guide, as is the case with other examples examined in other local authorities in the UK, outlines design standards and considerations required to support the needs and aspirations of older people. The guide has been developed for architects, developers and housing providers delivering homes across housing tenures including homes for private sale and a range of affordable housing tenures. Such an approach is something worth considering in the case of Fingal and indeed other Irish Local Authorities.

Policy in the UK tends to follow the broad policy parameters set by the Government and professional bodies such as those representing architects. The focus is on supporting independent living, creation of sustainable communities, providing the capacity for inter-generational engagement, creation of internal enabling spaces within housing developments and individual units. Councils may also require, as a part of planning consent, an operation framework for older persons housing addressing day to day management etc.

The effect is that those private developers seeking to build housing targeted at older persons are clearly working to a set of specific guidelines. What is less clear however is the extent to which such guidelines are applied to general provision of housing for the private tenant/owner occupier. There seems therefore to be a gap between the policy intent of bespoke housing provision for older persons as a distinct housing sector with the general need to provide housing that respects the full life cycle of a person.

United States

As in the United Kingdom the focus, in so far as one applies given the market led conditions of the US generally, seems to be on the market supplying bespoke needs of older persons as distinct from incorporation of such needs into the general development of housing. Nonetheless there are examples worth examination including New York which promotes an 'age-in-everything' approach across all aspects of city life. Led by the Mayor of New York, the age friendly initiative "*asks the city's public agencies, businesses, cultural, educational and religious institutions, community groups, and individuals to consider how changes to policy and practice can create a city more inclusive of older adults and more sensitive to their needs*" (UK Urban Ageing Consortium).

The City of New York does provide a similar range of supports to meet specific housing needs for older persons to those provided in Fingal, and does so within the framework, unusually, of a federal policy, reflecting perhaps the political strength of the older age community in the United States. However, there is limited evidence of the city authorities directly engaging with the development community to ensure a life cycle approach to the provision of housing by the private development sector.

Mainland Europe

As is the case in Ireland most mainland countries are operating within a European policy context where ageing is increasingly recognised as being at the heart of local and national policy development. However, it is reasonable to acknowledge that the nature and context of the housing model applying across the European mainland is radically different to that applying in Ireland. Notwithstanding the differences, there is a common feature from examination of various "best case models" which is that these seem to be the result of an individual's (generally an architect) own initiative rather than a local authority or state authority taking a system wide initiative to engage with the development sector to ensure that housing provision reflects the life cycle. Therefore, much housing requires considerable retro fitting to meet the needs of older persons.

Australia/New Zealand

Again, as is the case in the UK/US efforts to embed life cycle thinking and age appropriateness of housing into the private provision of housing rests largely within the planning consent framework. Work by bodies such as Liveable Housing Australia has ensured that there are very useable guidelines for local authorities, private developers etc. but these are very much dependent on individual developers or local policy makers taking it upon themselves to apply what is very good guidance.

Liveable Housing Australia defines a liveable home as one designed to:

- be easy to enter
- be easy to navigate in and around
- be capable of easy and cost-effective adaptation, and
- be responsive to the changing needs of home occupants.

Their guidance has identified 16 liveable design criteria which are simple to follow, but, as in Ireland and elsewhere, there is a dependency on the individual home developer and more importantly the housing development sector to in effect take on board their very good recommendations.

3.2 Lessons, if any, applicable to Fingal

It is evident from what is a very broad sweep over the countries above that similar challenges confront the Local Authorities, planners and housing development bodies/promoters to those confronting local government and housing developers in Ireland in regard to advancing an understanding that housing when designed should include universal design criteria alongside a capacity to provide for the life cycle of the human being. Nonetheless there are examples of practical design guidelines across several of the sample states examined above, most notably those pertaining to the work of Liveable Australia.

It is also evident that if Fingal County Council was to develop a working model that allows developers engage in best practice in the provision of housing that is both bespoke to older persons but also more critically perhaps the embedding of universal design into the planning consent processes of the Council alongside an education process with the professional bodies guiding the development sector that this could be a model relevant to not only their counterparts in Ireland but indeed across those states examined above.

4. Roadmap to deliver an informed development community/sector

4.1 The gaps in advancing housing for older people

It is evident that several critical gaps exist regarding the delivery of housing for older people. These can be distributed across two main features. In the first instance there remains a gap in translating the broad objectives of the existing County Development Plan into specifically focused policy implementation/delivery of older persons housing. The need to continue to embed such broad objectives into development control practices and procedures therefore remains essential to allow Council staff to continue to deliver policy effectively. This in turn enhances the potential impact of the new Fingal Age Friendly Strategy and is likely to realise the potential for positive practical implementation of its high-level goal “To work collaboratively to promote the needs of older people in relation to Age Friendly Housing”.

In addition pending the development of national guidelines the capacity of the Council's staff to place development control conditions on housing/master planning initiatives throughout the county lessens the scope to embed life cycle/Universal Design into the design of estates and individual housing developments.

If this continues to be the case the opportunity to forward plan for ageing will be reduced and private owners and social/private rental housing managers will, on an on-going basis, be forced to deal with the ever-increasing demands arising from an ageing population in a manner which may be ad hoc and not optimally coordinated. As a result, legacy costs to transition housing provision over time will be an enduring challenge for both the individual home owner, social and private housing tenant as well as those renters that will be confronted with housing an ageing population.

Regarding the actual provision of housing it is clearly evident that while existing developers may be alert to the ageing characteristics of the population in the County, they remain, by reason of risk aversion and limited access to capital, welded to the practice of delivering housing units for a traditional housing demand. There is limited scope to be innovative or to think in terms of long-term development issues arising from an ageing population.

These are the most serious gaps identified from the research associated with the preparation of this report.

4.2 Short, medium and long-term actions for Fingal to deliver

It is important that the research underpinning and the high-level goals contained in the new Age Friendly Strategy will result in a more overt embedding of an age friendly perspective within the County Development Plan and other policy documents. In implementing the strategy in the medium-term actions may be agreed to include development of detailed guidance for all Council staff regarding their mandates and the application of an age friendly perspective.

Specifically, regarding planning and housing policy, this means that staff be further equipped with the capacity and capability to deliver on age friendly policies. This would mean that when it comes to the design of social housing or the retro fitting of existing housing stock that staff concerned would have additional wherewithal to ensure that such efforts are underpinned by a clear recognition of the need to have such tasks delivered with an acknowledgement of Universal Design/life cycle approach. In addition, regarding staff engagement with external consultants working on Council/Approved Housing Body led projects, that such consultants fully understand Council policy regarding age friendly project delivery. Similarly, future contracts for housing delivery may embed an age friendly approach. Procurement documentation could be used to advance these ambitions.

Finally, regarding the provision of private housing, Council planners can continue from initial engagement through to project conclusion to promote an age friendly development control approach. Further consideration of the issues raised in the report may be considered in the future when drafting new County Development Plans.

4.3 Building partnership with the development and community sectors to deliver housing

General awareness raising will have to be at the heart of any initiative the Council and other local authorities undertake to advance an age friendly dimension to private housing provision. Using existing Council policy structures such as the Public Participation Network, the Fingal Senior Citizens Forum/Older Peoples Council and related Strategic Policy Committees the Council does have the opportunity to continuously impress upon the wider public that planning, individually and collectively for an older population is an essential aspect in the Council's overriding role as the principal public authority in the County. The public policy platform provided through these existing fora is well developed in the County and does provide a solid platform on which to adjust the public aspect of planning for older people, most notably regarding social housing.

Regarding private housing the Council, as is recommended above, could develop additional dialogue with the private sector, most notably the private housing developers, their advisors and agents. It is worth considering establishing an aligned forum of such voices such that private perspectives could inform and be informed alongside that which potentially could take place within the aforementioned consultative fora.

The broad objective would be to create the conditions and consultative platforms through which awareness training, policy debate and Council guidance would be developed and passed into the critical stakeholders acknowledged within this research report.

5. Recommendations to Fingal County Council

Considering the research completed for this project the following recommendations are put forward for consideration by the Council and these should be read along with the next steps in section 6:

(i) The guidance document for developers and their agents which has been drafted by the consultants in parallel with this report should be published and used as a communication tool. It will contain a small number of basic inexpensive steps to make future homes more suitable for older people as well as references to more comprehensive design documentation.

(ii) Follow-up seminars/workshops may be organised in the near future to include private sector/developer interests, Fingal County Council staff, key Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government personnel, private sector interests, designers and other stakeholders to discuss the findings and point to a way forward. The recommendations arising from the two Seminars supported by Age Friendly Ireland/Housing Agency/CEUD in November/December 2018 could be considered as providing part of a future road-map for actions in Fingal.

(iii) All pre-planning meetings held with developers and their agents prior to applications being received for planning permission may continue to be used to clearly outline Council policy and expectations regarding the provision of Universal Design/Life cycle housing. A check-list of possible public realm design features to enhance quality of life outside the house boundary could be made available to developers.

(iv) In addition, there may be further cross-sectional assessment of sites that are suitable for older persons developments by the private sector and a degree of planning assessment carried out in advance by the Council to encourage use of brownfield and other sites.

(v) Consideration could be given by Fingal County Council to the immediate implementation of mandatory % provision of adaptable housing as part of all future private sector accommodation developments in the county thus making it a leader nationally. It may ensure that the same criteria apply to Social and Approved Housing Bodies providing housing which facilitates the provision of a step-down model. This could be incorporated in all relevant Council strategies and the County Development Plan/Local Area Plans.

(vi) The possibility of incentivising developers in this regard and the advance purchase of suitable brownfield sites should be considered at both Council level and with the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

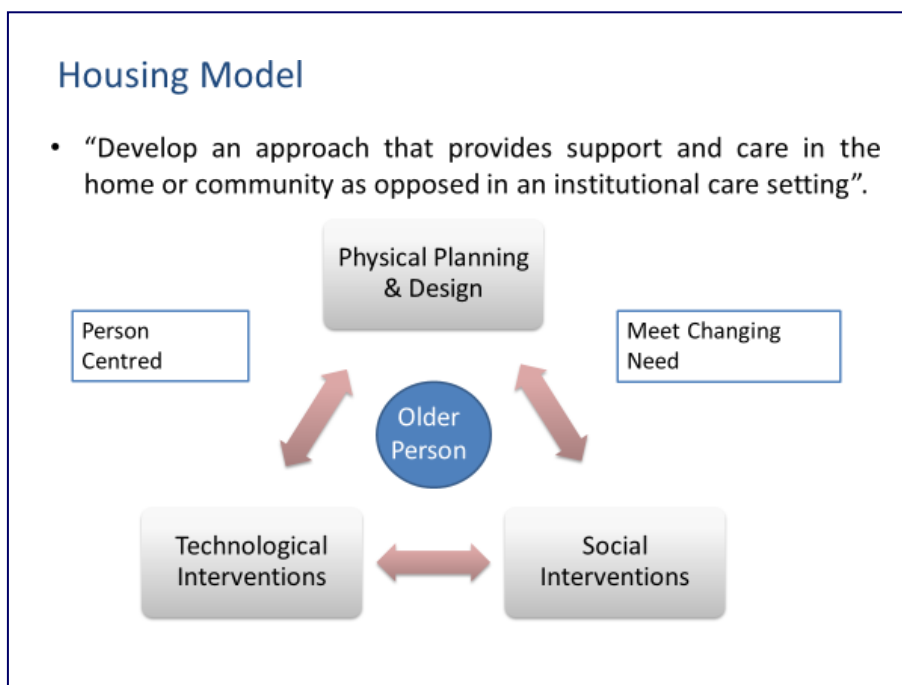
(vii) The acquisition of suitable lands from the Health Service Executive and other state bodies should be fully explored with the objective of ensuring such lands become a part of an overall development package in which housing units are developed within a Universal Design context.

(viii) At least one of the land banks being developed following production of a master plan should contain significant numbers of adaptable housing in addition to an appropriate amount of older persons housing. A lease-back model or equivalent as suggested above could be developed to ensure private sector involvement is maximised. The feasibility of smaller sites for older persons developments may be explored.

(ix) The Housing sub-committee of the Fingal Age Friendly Alliance could be reinvigorated and given tight terms of reference. The development of a model of accommodation with an agreed care package and including technology and social supports (like Great Northern Haven in Dundalk) could be advanced in Fingal with private sector input. A scheme of accelerated provision on unused green areas could be advanced. A comprehensive public awareness campaign may be initiated using Fingal County Councils communications capability.

(x) Partnership actions with other stakeholders including the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) and the Housing Agency should be advanced, the focus of which should include increasing private sector involvement in solutions. The potential of the Land Development Agency could be utilised regarding older persons accommodation.

(xi) The recommendations of the Sliotar report (April 2016) should be considered when planning or assessing any further accommodation for older people in Fingal. The diagram below captures the features to be considered in addition to cost:



(xii) The relevant sections in the national policy document, Housing for Older People - choosing the right home for me (dated 28 June 2018) and proposed new policy guidance (planned release in Spring 2019 by Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and Department of Health) should be considered in relation to future actions in Fingal.

6. Next Steps for Fingal County Council – Phase II

The above recommendations and roadmap should be fully considered by the Council and an implementation plan agreed. They should be considered in conjunction with the recommendations in Section 5. The consultants are happy to assist in this process in any way deemed useful.

A second phase of this investigative work would also include some or all the following:

- Liaison with Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government officials and Age Friendly Ireland following the publication of “10 ways to Construct a more Lifetime Adaptable and Age-friendly Home” in March 2019
- Following up with all relevant funding organisations around possible future financing and hosting of mini-seminars for architects, planners and other designers active in the Fingal area and including internal staff in same
- Developing the concept of pilot accommodation for older people whose own homes are no longer suitable for their needs but who are not requiring nursing home care
- Creating further greater coherence around the issue of additional costs associated with Universal Design provision and carry out an economic analysis on aspects of housing in Fingal
- Expanding interaction with Approved Housing Bodies
- Reinvigorating partnership approaches between FCC and crucial stakeholders
- Considering further the development of a recognition scheme for housing with a reasonable level of age friendly/adaptable features.
- Following up with Land Development Agency around future possibilities
- Expanding the contact with developers who are or may be active in Fingal in association with relevant Fingal County Council staff and host a seminar/workshop targeting private sector interests
- Interaction with all relevant Fingal County Council staff, the Fingal Age Friendly Alliance and Senior Citizens Forum (Older People’s Council) including the Alliance Chair, Mr Jim Glennon
- Linking further with City and County Management Association (CCMA) and Age Friendly Ireland and sharing the learning from this study and the “ 10 ways to Construct a more Lifetime Adaptable and Age Friendly Home” publication

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