

# BUSINESS CASE

## Pilot study



### Housing with Supports, St. Michael's Estate, Inchicore, Dublin 8

Date: 14 December 2020



Photo credits: OBFA Architects

## Pilot identification

Organisations: **OBFA Architects, Circle Voluntary Housing Association, ALONE**  
City: **Dublin**

Country: **Ireland**  
Current phase: **Not in use yet**  
Surface: **4 655 sqm**

## Pilot overview

### General presentation

Design for Elderly scheme of 52 residential units and supporting services and supports. The Scheme is designed around open courtyards to encourage well-being and community interaction. The site location is a brownfield area in a semi-urban context to the west of Dublin City Centre in an area called Inchicore. The site lies adjacent to a newly restored former British Army Barracks, Richmond Barracks. This context is part of the design of the scheme, incorporating concepts of the adjacent historic railway and canal infrastructure. OBFA have designed the buildings to remind residents of the historic structures of the village, which is just outside the gates of the Estate. The scheme is for older residents who are clients of Circle Voluntary Housing Association. Residents may move to this scheme from the immediate locality to retain social and historic relationships. Extensive community workshops were hosted in the early design phase, to get an idea of the profile of the residents who might live here. Many have lived in the area all of their lives, and welcome the Open Design concept to be a part of the planning for the scheme.

## Project team

In association with Dublin City Council, The Health Service Executive (HSE), Alone, Dublin Age Friendly City, Rebuilding Ireland, and the Government Departments of Health and Housing, Planning and Local Government.

**Homes4Life**

EUROPEAN CERTIFICATION FOR AGEING IN PLACE



Homes4Life is a project which received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N° 826295.



## Key highlights

### Age-friendliness approach

This project has expanded OBFA's experience in design and research of housing generally and specialist older people's supports in particular. The scheme avails of best practice in unit design both externally and internally with specific considerations to residents who wish to retain a sense of home, but to be able to have that home adapt to their needs as they age in place. This overall approach is acting as a demonstrator project to establish a form and organisation that may be used again nationally in urban and rural contexts. Examination of existing approaches internationally and their relationship with state supports and services led to citizen designed workshops to profile the potential users of the Dublin scheme. The profiles were used in workshops to plan what design features might be required, and desired by the clients and end users, to assist Dublin to become an age friendly city.



#### PHYSICAL

The dwellings are designed to be equipped with spaces and fit-out specific to older age living, and can accommodate flexible adaptation should the users' requirements change once housed. Smart technology will be user friendly and readily upgraded and maintained.



#### ECONOMIC

The development aligns with the general move towards the delivery of an Affordable Housing model in Ireland. The units will be allocated against the Dublin City Housing List and are delivered under CAS (Capital Assistance and Subsidy).



#### PERSONAL

Inchicore is an old part of the city with historic railway infrastructure. Residents have connectivity to the village, and to transport links for ease of family visits. The scheme is designed to take advantage of its open site location, to ensure nature is close, in window boxes, shared garden walks, and on balcony areas. The design takes account of people's need for connectedness yet privacy, open spaces and private homes.



#### SOCIAL

The St. Michael's Estate has been re-developed as part of a URDF project as part of a long-term public initiative to devise mixed use homes and civic spaces for the long-term benefit of its residents, its users and the wider local community. This scheme will provide local employment through its construction, and through its ongoing engagement with the community with regard to care of its gardens, the homes and the care of residents within, as part of Circle Voluntary Housing Association's long-term supports for residents.



#### OUTDOOR ACCESS

Outdoor space was designed as a core part of the scheme, both to encourage well being or residents, but to also maximise the potential of this large open site.



**Making homes that understand how people live now and want to live into their later years can be a standard, not an aspiration. It simply requires attention to the hidden things that become important as we grow older.” | John Hannigan, CEO CIRCLE VHA**