



## Revit Architecture revitalises Monkstown townlands

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**Cormac Dooley**, Architect, Dooley Architects

Commencing operations in Dublin as a family venture in 2003, architect Cormac Dooley returned to his native Galway where the business continued to flourish, proving that not everything needs to be Dublin-centric. In a very short period Dooley’s company quickly expanded as the number and complexity of their architectural projects increased. The company undertakes both commercial and residential projects and from those early beginnings, now employs 15 staff, including specialist structural engineers and technicians.

As to Cormac’s CAD software of choice, he explained they originally had been using AutoCAD® LT, then 3D AutoCAD® but found that Revit® Architecture (formerly Autodesk® Revit® Building) provided a more integrated solution with design, project management and collaboration tools as part of a single business solution. “Last year we switched a third of our team to Revit to ensure we wouldn’t inconvenience our clients should we have decided it wasn’t for us, but the sheer range and power of the package meant we were under pressure to provide it to everyone, and we plan to roll it out throughout the organisation.”

“Our main reason for adopting Revit was for its advanced 3D capabilities. We had won a contract to design a Town Centre concept at Monkstown townlands near Athlone and 3D visualisation was a necessary requirement due to the complexity of the project, not only to ensure the massing of structures were acceptable, but that the cityscape was similarly visually pleasing. More importantly, we needed to give accurate information to the planning authorities. Our ability to relocate these structures ‘on-the-fly’ as part of the design process gave us confidence that the building placement was optimum, and using 3D to see how changes might affect another part of the development was a real time-saver.”

“For a project of this size, Revit was ideal for visualising the overall impact of the various buildings and for incorporating design changes easily, when meeting various design constraints; parking provision, open space provision, access routes, boundary considerations not forgetting the all-important distances between buildings, and their relative heights. One particular advantage was that revisions are automatically updated universally, so our drawings remained consistent, with plans, sections, and elevations all corresponding correctly. “

“Revit also has advantages as a presentation tool. Camera views can be taken from any angle, giving realistic images of the proposal. I like the walkthrough facility which is beneficial in discussions with clients as we can show in a non-technical way what the finished project will look like. It can also assist with decision-making during the design process.”

“One important part of our decision to change was whether there was a steep learning curve in adopting the package. Our familiarity with AutoCAD put us on a good footing. To take full advantage of the benefits, you need to take more time in planning your spatial environment, rather than just rushing to create your first model. This means there is less to see in the initial stages, but it pays dividends in the power of what you can do later. Techniques we might have learned in creating patches and blocks as a ‘quick fix’ don’t work with Revit, as these shortcomings will be exposed later during rendering or 3D flythrough. Guidance and support in using the package was also an important consideration. Amicus Technology of Galway introduced us to the product and ongoing technical support was provided by a Dublin company, Acumis Technology.



“You might not believe me if I said we could turn a project round in half the time, but it is quite true. We’ve been able to speed up our drawing process by a factor of 50%. Once you get over the ‘wow factor’ and perhaps do a few modifications just to satisfy yourself that the changes are properly reflected down through all the design elements, you quickly realise that with Revit, you can trust it to do the job you’ve asked. For collaboration with others that don’t use Revit, we can offer the required drawings as \*.dwf files, or in an AutoCAD file format. So far, we have only used Revit as far as the planning stage, but I envisage further advantages as we roll out its usage in subsequent stages.”

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