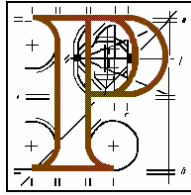


An Bord Pleanála



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 TO 2011

Cork County

An Bord Pleanála Reference Number: PL 04G.ZD.2008

WHEREAS Cork County Council made a draft planning scheme on the 8th day of October, 2013 under section 166 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 pursuant to a resolution entitled “Monard Strategic Development Zone, Draft Planning Scheme”:

AND WHEREAS Finbar and Rosarie O’Sullivan and Michael and Margaret Cronin care of “Teach Teile”, Monard, Rathpeason, County Cork and the Monard Community Association care of Coakley O’Neill of Building 1000, City Gate, Mahon, Cork appealed the decision of the planning authority in relation to the draft planning scheme:

DECISION

An Bord Pleanála decided under the provisions of section 169 (7) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to REFUSE TO APPROVE the making of the planning scheme based on the reasons and considerations set out below.

MATTERS CONSIDERED

In making its decision, the Board had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.

REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

In coming to its decision, the Board had regard to:

- (a) the provisions of Part IX of the Planning and Development Act, 2000,
- (b) Statutory Instrument No. 540 of 2010 - Planning and Development Act, 2000 (Designation of Strategic Development Zone: Monard, Cork County) Order, 2010,
- (c) national and strategic policy as set out in the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Transport 21 and Smarter Travel 2009-2020, the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West Area 2010-2022 and the Cork Area Strategic Plan jointly adopted by Cork City Council and Cork County Council,
- (d) the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan, 2009,
- (e) the provisions of the Blarney Electoral Area Local Area Plan 2011,
- (f) the contents of the Environmental Report and Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and other accompanying documentation,
- (g) the Report of the County Manager and the changes made to the scheme by the Members of Cork County Council,
- (h) the existing pattern of development in the area,
- (i) the objections made to the proposed planning scheme,
- (j) the documents and submissions on file generally and
- (k) the report of the Inspector, who conducted an oral hearing.

1. Notwithstanding the long-term commitment of Cork County Council to the development of land at Monard as a new town, having regard to the lack of certainty in relation to essential elements underpinning the proposed planning scheme which are not within the control of the applicant, in particular the delivery of future national road infrastructure and operational railway links, it is considered that in the absence of these critical transportation elements, the development of the strategic development zone would be reliant on limited improvement of the local road network only, which would give rise to serious traffic congestion in the surrounding area, would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard and obstruction of road users. The proposed planning scheme would, therefore, be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.
2. The purposes of the Monard Strategic Development Zone, as designated under statutory instrument, is to establish a zone for residential development, schools, commercial development, rail infrastructure and community facilities. These developments are to be provided for by the efficient use of public investment in infrastructural facilities, including public transport, water, waste water and roads. The planning scheme as proposed, adopts a low density approach to urban development on a site that requires significant public capital investment. It is considered that the planning scheme as proposed, would not achieve the efficient use of land given the scale of public investment required. The planning scheme as proposed, would therefore fail to achieve the outcome intended by the designation of this Strategic Development Zone. The planning scheme as proposed would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development for the area.
3. The topography of Monard represents a considerable challenge to development in terms of physical constraints, gradient, urban design, and long term management of physical infrastructure, including the control of surface water run-off. Furthermore, the pattern of landownership in the Monard Strategic Development Zone is fragmented. Having regard to the difficulties of the terrain and the multiplicity of land owners involved, the Board is not satisfied that the implementation mechanisms as set out in the planning scheme are sufficient to ensure the timely and efficient delivery of land and infrastructure for the purposes of the Strategic Development Zone. It is considered that the planning scheme, as proposed, would not provide a satisfactory framework within which to realise this outcome.

4. In terms of urban design, the planning scheme's approach to residential development fails to have sufficient regard to the topography of the Monard Strategic Development Zone and to the provisions of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (Cities, Towns and Villages), published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in May 2009. The approach lacks coherence, definition and detail and would give rise to serious difficulties in relation to universal access. Furthermore, the siting of offices accessed via a residential estate would seriously injure the residential amenity of future occupants. The planning scheme as proposed would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development for the area.

In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to seek further information regarding a more complete transportation assessment, the Board noted that the Inspector was considering limiting development in the planning scheme to 3,800 residential units, in the absence of the provision of the Northern Ring Road. The Board considers that one of the purposes of the designation of a Strategic Development Zone is to give certainty that infrastructure will be provided, to enable the rational development of land. It would appear to the Board that the delivery of the Northern Ring Road is crucial to ensure that 5,000 residential units can be provided at Monard, to give effect to the policies in the South West Regional Planning Guidelines for the Southwest Area 2010-2022, the Cork Area Strategic Plan and the Cork County Development Plan, 2009. In the absence of certainty regarding future access to the Northern Ring Road if delivered, the Board did not consider that additional information on transportation patterns would be necessary for decision making purposes. Furthermore, given the scale of public investment required to implement the Strategic Development Zone, the Board did not consider it appropriate to limit development to 3,800 residential units.

**Member of An Bord Pleanála
duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Board.**

Dated this day of 2013.