



## Board Direction

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**Ref: 20.245569**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup>, February 2016.

The Board decided to refuse permission generally in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation, for the reasons and considerations as set out below.

### REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

1. Notwithstanding the current zoning for the site as a district centre in the Roscommon County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 and the Monksland/Bellanmullia Local Area Plan 2010 – 2016 and having regard to the Retail Strategy for County Roscommon 2014, and the proposed policy of the draft Monksland / Bellanmullia LAP 2016 – 2022 to consolidate retail development in the existing district centre, it is considered that the overall quantum of retail proposed would not be justified at this time considering the vacancy rates that currently exist within the Monksland area. In this regard it is considered that the proposed development would have a negative impact on the vitality and viability of Athlone Town Centre. It is considered that the proposed development would, therefore, be contrary the “Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities” issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in April, 2012 and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. Having regard to the dominance of surface car parking and road layout, and the absence of usable public open space, it is considered that the proposed development would present a poor public realm and would not provide adequate amenity to future residents. The proposed development would, therefore, seriously injure the visual amenities of the area and the residential amenities of future occupants of the development and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 12<sup>th</sup>, February 2016  
Paddy Keogh