



An
Bord
Pleanála

Board Direction
BD-001306-18
ABP-301961-18

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on October 9th 2018.

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

Reasons and Considerations

1. The subject site is located within the Ballynoe Urban Expansion Area as designated in the Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017. Notwithstanding the zoning of the site for residential development within this Plan or the proposed delivery of road widening along the site boundary and the provision of a section of a proposed new roadway within the subject site, the development on these lands is dependent on the provision of specific strategic infrastructure and services as outlined in Table 3.2.3 of the Local Area Plan. The strategic infrastructure required is not proposed within this application nor are there any definitive advanced designs, approvals or timelines, or an Implementation Plan in existence, for the delivery of the transport infrastructure, connectivity and other facilities and services. Therefore, having regard to the uncertainty regarding the timing of such an Implementation Plan and any statutory approvals that may be required to implement the improvement works outlined in Table 3.2.3 of the Local Area Plan, it is considered that the development of the subject lands would be premature pending the provision of these necessary improvement works. Furthermore, it is considered that, if developed prior

to the carrying out and completion of these improvement works, the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, including hazard to pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. In addition to the requirement for improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity outlined in the Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017, Section 4.10 of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), together with Criteria No. 2 (Connections) in the accompanying Urban Design Manual, seeks to minimise the need for car journeys and encourage walking and cycling in the creation of well-connected communities. Having regard to the uncertainty regarding the delivery of, and approvals which may be necessary to facilitate, the road improvements and upgrades required to deliver the pedestrian/cycle infrastructure, it is considered that the development of the subject lands would be premature pending the provision of these improvement works. Furthermore, it is considered that, if developed prior to the carrying out and completion of these improvement works, the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard particularly to vulnerable road users given the absence of footpaths in the wider vicinity of the site that would connect the site to the town of Cobh, to public transport and to community facilities. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. Cobh is designated as a Metropolitan town in the County Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area. Furthermore, the Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 includes a specific objective for the development of a new rail station at Ballynoe to include park and ride facilities (Objective CH-C-01). The site of the proposed development is on serviceable lands, within the development boundary of Cobh, in an area earmarked for residential development, and which, subject to infrastructural improvements, would give access to existing and planned public transport. It is considered that the proposed development would not be developed at a sufficiently high density to provide for an acceptable efficiency in serviceable land usage in the light of these factors, and therefore that the density proposed would be contrary to the provisions of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, as they relate to Cities and Towns and in particular to sites serviced by existing and planned public transport. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to these Ministerial Guidelines and contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

4. The “Urban Design Manual – a Best Practice Guide” issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009), to accompany the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas includes key criteria such as context, connections, inclusivity, variety and distinctiveness. It is considered that the proposed development results in a poor design concept that is substandard in its form, scale and layout, fails to provide high quality usable open spaces and fails to facilitate adequate and appropriate natural surveillance of green spaces. In addition, the proposal fails to establish a sense of place and includes a poor quality of architectural design to the proposed units and blocks which would result in a substandard form of development lacking in variety and distinctiveness, and leading to conditions injurious to the residential amenities of future occupants. Furthermore, the proposed layout and widths of roads and paths, and the poor internal and external connectivity, would not give priority to the needs of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users over that of vehicular traffic, with the scheme being dominated by roads, contrary to the provisions of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in 2013. The proposed development would, therefore, seriously injure the residential amenities of future occupants, would be contrary to these Ministerial Guidelines and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Board Member

Date: 9th October 2018

Philip Jones