



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

**Board Direction**  
**BD-007456-21**  
**ABP-307744-20**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 01/02/2021.

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

### **Reasons and Considerations**

1. Having regard to:

- The nature and scale of the development proposed, including the quantum of convenience and comparison floorspace and car parking,
- The mixed use zoning objective O-LZ3 for the site,
- The location of the development, outside of the town centre and Opportunity Sites identified in the Athlone Joint Retail Strategy 2019-2026,
- The retail hierarchy as set out in the current Development Plan for the area, and
- The Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in April 2012,

It is considered that the development as proposed would be contrary to the retail policies as set out in the development plan and would negatively impact upon the vitality and viability of retail development in the town centre of Athlone and would consequently be contrary to the Retail Planning Guidelines. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. By reason of its generic form, dominant retail use and standardised design and layout, it is considered that the proposed development would be visually unsatisfactory and inappropriate in the context of the prominent location of the site on the edge of Athlone Town Centre. The proposed development would conflict with the provisions of Policy P-RET2 of the current Athlone Town Development Plan and its objectives to require new retail development to contribute positively to public realm and place-making, and to National Planning Framework Objective NPO 6 and NPO 11 in terms of their objectives to regenerate towns as environmental assets and encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing towns, which objectives are considered reasonable. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Board Member**

**Date:** 02/02/2021

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Michelle Fagan