

**An
Bord
Pleanála**

**Board Direction
BD-018610-25
ABP-319360-24**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 08/01/2025.

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

Reasons and Considerations

1. It is the policies of the Galway City Development Plan 2023 – 2029, as outlined in Section 6.5 and Chapter 10 Section 10.23, to encourage higher densities and larger mix of uses in the Westside area, and the Galway City Council – Urban Density and Building Heights Study, Sept 2021. In this case, the scale and single use nature of the proposed development does not result in the maximisation and efficient use of zoned serviced land, which in this case is a limited resource as the site is positioned within a complex built urban environment where opportunities for redevelopment and infill to increase densities do not arise often. While in particular the context/location of this site is such that it is located close to areas of employment, education, retail, services, medical campus and public transport, engendering a requirement that any development within the Westside District Centre area should provide for higher densities and greater mix of uses. Therefore, having regard to the policies of the development plan and the urban density and building height study, this proposal for a single storey commercial building within a designated District Centre, would be contrary to the above development plan policies and would


not meet the requirements for the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods and the efficient use of land.

2. The proposed development is located in the Westside area which is identified in Section 10.23 of the Galway City Development Plan 2023 to 2029 as lacking a strong urban definition and streetscape with poor legibility and sense of place. The area has the objective *“to improve connectivity, to increase attractiveness and encourage more sustainable street level community interaction and activity”*. Having regard to the absence of an appropriate public realm, high quality accessible civic spaces or significant alteration to the existing site layout dominated by surface car parking, the proposed development fails to provide a high quality layout that would be in accordance with Policy 8.7 “Urban Design and Placemaking” and with the urban design criteria as set out in Table 8.1 of the Galway City Development Plan 2023 to 2029. As such the proposed development would be contrary to the Galway City Development Plan 2023 to 2029 and proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Note: The board noted the inspector’s concerns, and recommended reason for refusal, relating to traffic levels generated on site, as a result of the proposed development, and resultant impacts on traffic safety and the capacity of the existing road network. However, given the reasons for refusal as set out above, the board did not consider the raising of this as a potentially new issue to be warranted in this instance.

Please issue copy of this Direction with the final Order.

Board Member


Liam McGree

Date: 14/01/2025