

An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Direction
CD-021845-26
ABP-320056-24

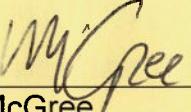
The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 29/01/2026.

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

Planning

Commissioner:

Date: 29/01/2026


Liam McGree

DRAFT WORDING FOR ORDER

Reasons and Considerations

1. The proposed provision of retail at this location would be contrary to the provisions of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) which require that the provision of retail floorspace be 'Plan-Led'. It is considered that the proposed development of a retail food store with a net sales area of 1,315sqm, which includes the sale of alcohol for consumption off premises, totem sign and ancillary building signage, servicing areas, surface car park and associated site infrastructure at this location would not comply with the plan led approach as set out in the Guidelines, nor would it comply with the sequential approach which are required by the Guidelines to justify medium to large scale retail development in out-of-centre locations. The Commission is of the view, therefore, that the proposed development would contravene the

Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), which are guidelines under section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. Objective 7.27 'Strategic Retail Objectives' of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 seek to support and implement the Retail Hierarchy in defining the role of retail centres. Section 10.293 of the Development Plan sets out that Tower does not require additional retail floorspace during the Plan period. The Commission notes that the settlement of Tower is not listed within the Retail Hierarchy, as set out in Section 7.86 of the Plan, and neither is the site identified as a 'Neighbourhood/Local Centre or Village Centre'. As such, the nature and scale of element of the proposed development would serve to undermine the Retail Strategy as set out in the Plan, and would likely have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability on the nearby settlements of Blarney and Ballincollig (identified as a Level 3 – Small Urban Town Centre and a Level 2 – Larger Urban Town Centre within the Retail Hierarchy, respectively). The Commission is of the view, therefore, that the proposed development would represent a material contravention of Objective 7.27 (Strategic Retail Objectives) of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 and would, therefore, be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. Objective 11.2 Dwelling Size Mix and Table 11.9 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 set out clear unit mix requirements to be adhered to except in exceptional circumstances where justification is provided. The Commission is not satisfied that the proposed development meets the housing mix requirements as set out in the Development Plan and notes that insufficient justification for the proposed mix has been submitted with the application. Furthermore, the application is not supported by a 'Statement of Housing Mix', as required by Objective P01 of the Cork City and County Joint Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment (HDNA) 2022-20228, of the Supporting Studies accompanying the adopted Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, noting that Objective 3.6 'Housing Mix' of the Development Plan

seeks to implement the provisions of the Joint Housing Strategy and HNDA as far as they relate to Cork City. The proposed development would, therefore, materially contravene the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 in relation to the provision of unit mix requirements, and would, therefore, be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

4. The proposed density of 35 dwellings per hectare (dph) is below the minimum density of 40 dph for an Outer Suburb such as Tower, as set out in Table 11.2 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. The proposed density is also below the minimum density in the density range of 50 dph to 150 dph for a 'Metropolitan Town (>1,500 population) – Centre and Urban Neighbourhood', as defined in table 3.3 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines (2024). The proposed therefore is considered to materially contravene the policy of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, as relates to residential density, and is contrary to guidance as relates to compact development as set out in the Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines (2024) and would, therefore, be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
5. Objective 10.73 (Tower Education) of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 states that that all future planning applications for multiple housing units in Tower will be examined in the context of the current and future capacity of Cloghroe National School. In addition, Section 10.294 of the Development Plan states that the current and future capacity of this school will be a determining factor in the number and phasing of all future housing developments. The Commission notes that no information in relation to the future demand on, or the existing capacity of, Cloghroe National School has been submitted with the application, and the requirements of the Development Plan are such that such information is required in order to determine planning applications for multiple housing units such as the one proposed here. As such, the Commission is of the view that the proposal would materially contravene Objective 10.73 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 and would, therefore, be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.