An Coimisiún Pleanála

Direction
CD-022584-26
ABP-320859-24

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 22/10/2026.

The Commission concurred with the Inspector that an Oral Hearing is not warranted, as there is adequate detail on the file.

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

The Commission concurred with the Inspector that permission should be refused. Regarding density, the Commission agreed with the Inspector that the density significantly exceeded the range set out in the guidelines for a 'Metropolitan Town'. The Commission concurred with the Inspector that the height of the building is problematic, as is the relationship of the ground floor with High Street but did not consider the impact on the character of the ACA be so profound as to discredit all elements of the design proposed.

Planning Commissioner: Mary Henchy **Date:** 27/10/2026

DRAFT WORDING FOR ORDER

Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the provisions of the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029, the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018), and the Urban Design Manual (2009), it is considered that the proposed development constitutes an overdevelopment of dwellings on the site. The proposed net density of 240 dph significantly exceeds the baseline range of 50–150 dph prescribed in Table 3.3 of the 2024 Guidelines for a 'Metropolitan Town' location; notwithstanding the site's proximity to high-frequency public transport, this density lies substantially outside the limits open for consideration. The development therefore does not accord with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The Commission had regard to Appendix 5 of the Fingal County Development Plan 2022-2029, which provides a description of Balbriggan Historic Town Core ACA. The description refers to High Street as largely residential with good examples of artisan cottages, and Quay Street as having a series of traditional terrace housing that connects the town's main street to the 18th century historic harbour and beach. The Commission acknowledge that the uses proposed on to both Quay Street and High Street are appropriate, that the juxtaposition of the buildings within this fragmented town block has been well considered, with limited impacts on the amenity of adjoining structures and their occupants by way of overshadowing or overlooking. Furthermore, the block layout addresses the challenging level differences within the site creating an attractive communal space. The railway viaduct's setting is not impinged by the proposed design. Nothwithstanding the above the Commission considered, having regard to the position of the building on both High Street and Quay Street, the building height does not assimilate into the street scape resulting in excessive street enclosure and a poorly articulated transition to the existing dwellings. In addition, the relationship of the ground floor units onto high street due to the internal layout detract from the privacy and residential amenity of future residents and, the limited points of access to the dwellings from high street does little to animate this street. The development would, therefore, injure the visual amenities of the area, not contribute to animating High Street and be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.