

An Bord Pleanála



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 TO 2016

Roscommon County

Planning Register Reference Number: 16/266

An Bord Pleanála Reference Number: PL 20.247243

APPEAL by Donal Kenny of Carrick O Brien Road, Golden Island, Athlone, County Westmeath against the decision made on the 16th day of August, 2016 by Roscommon County Council to refuse permission.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Development comprising the construction of a district centre containing a discount food store of circa 1,518 square metres gross floor area including off-licence use, a two-storey mixed use building of circa 1,533 square metres containing five number shops (combined floor area circa 450 square metres), consulting rooms, therapy unit, services rooms, at ground floor, with six number apartments and two number office suites at first floor. The proposed development also includes construction of proposed link road from the existing public road to the proposed site entrance, all site works, adjustment of ground levels, car parking, paving, landscaping and public amenity area, a feature tower structure and boundary treatments together with all underground services, connections to public mains, surface water attenuation and outfall to existing drain, plus service yard, delivery areas and electrical/plant rooms, all at Monksland, Athlone, County Roscommon.

DECISION

REFUSE permission for the above proposed development based on the reasons and considerations set out below.

MATTERS CONSIDERED

In making its decision, the Board had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.

REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

1. It is a strategic aim of the Monksland/Bellanamullia (Athlone West) Local Area Plan 2016-2022 to support the consolidation of commercial activity within the Local Area Plan area around a District Centre, which is located to the south-east of, and not contiguous with, the application site. In addition, the land use zoning objective for the application site is 'New Residential' as indicated on Map 13 of the Local Area Plan. Both the strategic aim and the land use zoning objective are considered reasonable. Having regard to the quantum of retail and commercial uses proposed (including a discount food store/supermarket of stated area of circa 1,518 square metres, which is not normally permitted on lands zoned 'New Residential') and also having regard to the limited number of residential units being proposed, six number apartments, it is considered that the proposed development would conflict with the above mentioned strategic aim of the Local Area Plan and would materially contravene the land use zoning objective for the site. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. Having regard to the Retail Strategy for County Roscommon 2014, and to the land use zoning objective for the site, as indicated in the Monksland/Bellanamullia (Athlone West) Local Area Plan 2016-2022, it is considered that the overall quantum of retail proposed would not be justified at this time, or at this location, considering the vacancy rates that currently exist within the Monksland area. In addition, having regard to the level of permitted retail floor space in this area that is not currently operational, as set out in the retail strategy, it is considered that the quantum of retail use proposed would have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of Athlone Town Centre. It is considered that the proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the "Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities" issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in April, 2012 and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. Having regard to the dominance of surface car parking and road layout, and to the absence of usable public open space, it is considered that the proposed development would present a poor public realm and would not provide adequate amenity to future residents. The proposed development would, therefore, seriously injure the visual amenities of the area and the residential amenities of future occupants of the development and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Member of An Bord Pleanála
duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Board.**

Dated this day of 2017.