



Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2018

Planning Authority: Cork County Council

Application for permission under section 4 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, in accordance with plans and particulars, lodged with An Bord Pleanála on the 27th day of June 2018 by Seamus Geaney care of Edge Architecture, Clarke Street, Clonakilty, County Cork.

Proposed Development:

A ten-year permission, for a strategic housing development on 13.6-hectare site at Ballyleary, Great Island, Cobh, County Cork.

The development will consist of:

- a) The construction of 311 number residential units, to include 146 number dwelling houses (comprising a mix of three and four-bed detached, semi-detached and terraced units); and 165 number duplex and apartments (comprising of one, two and three-bed duplex / apartments in 27 number separate blocks to a height of three storeys);
- b) A crèche facility with two number first floor, one-bed apartments.
- c) All associated ancillary development works including drainage, four number vehicular site entrances, pedestrian access points, footpaths and cycle lane, landscaping and amenity areas (including five number local play areas and two number multi-use games areas), site boundary treatments, (including

widening of Ballyleary Road within applicants site curtilage), bicycle parking areas, car parking, bin stores, Electricity Supply Board substation, public lighting and all other associated ancillary development.

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

In coming to its decision, the Board had regard to the following:

1. The subject site is located within the Ballynoe Urban Expansion Area as designated in the Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017. Notwithstanding the zoning of the site for residential development within this Plan or the proposed delivery of road widening along the site boundary and the provision of a section of a proposed new roadway within the subject site, the development on these lands is dependent on the provision of specific strategic infrastructure and services as outlined in Table 3.2.3 of the Local Area Plan. The strategic infrastructure required is not proposed within this application nor are there any definitive advanced designs, approvals or timelines, or an Implementation Plan in existence, for the delivery of the transport infrastructure, connectivity and other facilities and services.

Therefore, having regard to the uncertainty regarding the timing of such an Implementation Plan and any statutory approvals that may be required to implement the improvement works outlined in Table 3.2.3 of the Local Area Plan, it is considered that the development of the subject lands would be premature pending the provision of these necessary improvement works. Furthermore, it is considered that, if developed prior to the carrying out and completion of these improvement works, the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, including hazard to pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. In addition to the requirement for improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity outlined in the Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017, Section 4.10 of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), together with criterion number 2 (Connections) in the accompanying Urban Design Manual, seeks to minimise the need for car journeys and encourage walking and cycling in the creation of well-connected communities. Having regard to the uncertainty regarding the delivery of, and approvals which may be necessary to facilitate, the road improvements and upgrades required to deliver the pedestrian/cycle infrastructure, it is considered that the development of the subject lands would be premature pending the provision of these improvement works. Furthermore, it is considered that, if developed prior to the carrying out and completion of these improvement works, the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard particularly to vulnerable road users given the absence of footpaths in the wider vicinity of the site that would connect the site to the town of Cobh, to public transport and to community facilities. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. Cobh is designated as a metropolitan town in the County Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area. Furthermore, the Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017 includes a specific objective for the development of a new rail station at Ballynoe to include park and ride facilities (Objective CH-C-01). The site of the proposed development is on serviceable lands, within the development boundary of Cobh, in an area earmarked for residential development, and which, subject to infrastructural improvements, would give access to existing and planned public transport. It is considered that the proposed development would not be developed at a sufficiently high density to provide for an acceptable efficiency in serviceable land usage in the light of these factors, and, therefore, that the density proposed would be contrary to the provisions of the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, as they relate to cities and towns and in particular to sites serviced by existing and planned public transport. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to these Ministerial Guidelines and contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

4. The “Urban Design Manual – a Best Practice Guide” issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2009, to accompany the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas includes key criteria such as context, connections, inclusivity, variety and distinctiveness. It is considered that the proposed development results in a poor design concept that is substandard in its form, scale and layout, fails to provide high quality usable open spaces and fails to facilitate adequate and appropriate natural surveillance of green spaces. In addition, the proposal fails to establish a sense of place and includes a poor quality of architectural design to the proposed units and blocks which would result in a substandard form of development lacking in variety and distinctiveness, and leading to conditions injurious to the residential amenities of future occupants. Furthermore, the proposed layout and widths of roads and paths, and the poor internal and external connectivity,

