



Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2018

Planning Authority: Galway City Council

Planning Register Reference Number: 18/224

APPEAL by RGDATA of Mentec House, Pottery Road, Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin against the decision made on the 14th day of November, 2018 by Galway City Council to grant subject to conditions a permission to Lidl Ireland GmbH care of The Planning Partnership of McHale Retail Park, Castlebar, County Mayo.

Proposed Development: Permission for development on a site of 0.617 hectares at the junction of Bóthar Stiofáin and Western Distributor Road, comprising the construction of a single storey (with mezzanine plant deck) licensed discount foodstore supermarket with ancillary off-licence sales measuring 2,185 square metres gross floor space with a net retail sales area of 1,387 square metres; the construction of a single storey coffee shop/café measuring 66.5 square metres gross floor space; and the provision of associated car parking, free standing and building mounted signage, free standing trolley bay and enclosure, refrigeration and air conditioning plant and equipment, public lighting, hard and soft landscaping, cycle parking, boundary treatment, vehicular and pedestrian accesses, drainage infrastructure and connections to services/utilities and all other associated and ancillary development and works above and below ground level, all at Junction of Bóthar Stiofáin and Western Distributor Road, Galway.

Decision

REFUSE permission for the above proposed development in accordance with 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

Having regard to the prominent location of the subject site at a key junction on the Western Distributor Road, at the entry point from this Road into the designated Knocknacarra District Centre, as set out in the Galway City Development Plan 2017–2023, and having regard to the provisions of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2012, and accompanying Retail Design Manual, it is considered that the proposed development, by reason of its horizontal emphasis, its mainly single storied nature and limited height, and by reason of its overall design, with little animation to the adjoining streets, particularly a mainly continuous blank façade along the southern elevation facing the Western Distributor Road, would constitute a monolithic and poor quality of development in terms of visual amenity and streetscape, and would represent a substandard design intervention at this location, which would be contrary to these Ministerial Guidelines and in particular to the guidance set out in Section 6 of the Retail Design Manual. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant permission, and while accepting that the quantum of retail floor space proposed at this location was generally justifiable in the light of the location of the site within the Knocknacarra District Centre, the planned expansion of this suburb, and in the light of the submitted retail impact assessment, the Board considered, for the reasons outlined in its order, that the design of the proposed development would not provide the necessary landmark building for such a prominent site within the District Centre, at a key junction on the Western Distributor road, and did not accept the conclusion of the Inspector that it represented a pleasing design aesthetic nor that it was appropriate to its location. Furthermore, the Board was not convinced that the requirement to provide a large amount of car parking necessitated the form of development envisaged, as suggested by the Inspector, and noted that similarly-sized supermarkets in other locations within the State have provided for, for example, undercroft car-parking below retail floor space, and additional commercial or residential floors above such retail floor space.

Philip Jones

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

Dated this day of 2019.