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**Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2019**

**Planning Authority: Westmeath County Council**

**Planning Register Reference Number: 19/7163**

**APPEAL** by Patrick J. Henry care of Liam Madden of Convent Road, Longford against the decision made on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2019 by Westmeath County Council to grant subject to conditions a permission to Monsignor McCarthy Family Resource Centre Limited care of Eric Nugent and Associates of 20 Saint Francis Terrace, Athlone, County Westmeath.

**Proposed Development:** A change of use from residential dwellinghouse to Athlone family resource centre with signage, elevational changes, access ramp and security fence, car parking and to sub divide the premises into two units and all associated site works at Woodlands, Battery Road, Athlone, County Westmeath.

**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**

1. The subject site is zoned 'residential' in the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020. It is an objective of this zoning 'to provide for residential development, associated services and to protect and improve residential amenity'. The proposed change of use would result in a loss of residential accommodation within a mature residential area within a town centre setting and would undermine the residential character of the established residential area, would set an undesirable precedent and be contrary to section 5.9.1 and Policy P-DU6 of the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020, which seeks to maintain a strong residential base in the town area. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. Having regard to the nature of the proposed change of use and to the intensity of the uses proposed, it is considered that the proposed development would seriously injure the residential amenities of the area and, particularly, those of the occupants of the adjacent dwelling. 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, the Board considered that the proposed change of use would result in a loss of residential accommodation within a mature residential area within a town centre setting and would undermine the residential character of the established residential area, would set an undesirable precedent and be contrary to section 5.9.1 and Policy P-DU6 of the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020, which seeks to maintain a strong residential base in the town area. Furthermore, the Board considered that the proposed development would seriously injure the residential amenities of the area and, particularly, those of the occupants of the adjacent dwelling.

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

**Dated this            day of            2020**