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**Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2019**

**Planning Authority: Galway County Council**

**Planning Register Reference Number: 19/1553**

**APPEAL** by Cignal Infrastructure Limited care of 4Site, 4Site House, Raheen Business Park, Limerick against the decision made on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2019 by Galway County Council to refuse permission for the proposed development.

**Proposed Development:** Permission to install six number antenna and two number transmission dishes on supporting poles together with associated equipment cabinets, cabling and associated site works at Christ Church, Church Hill, Clifden, County Galway, a protected structure under RPS Number 585 in the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021. The installation will form part of Eir Mobile telecommunications network and a future broadband operator.

**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**

The proposed development would be located on a protected structure, Christ Church (RPS number 585). Having regard to the contemporary and industrial nature of the proposed development, and to the protected and historical status of the building on site, and its elevated and exposed setting in the wider settlement of Clifden, it is considered that the proposed development (notwithstanding the proposed mitigation measures) would seriously detract from the visual setting and integrity of the protected structure, and would adversely affect the character of the protected structure. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development would materially contravene Objectives HC 2 and HC 4 of the Clifden Local Area Plan 2018-2024, would militate against the preservation of the setting of the protected structure and would set an undesirable precedent for future similar development affecting protected structures. 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 concurred with the view of the planning authority regarding the unacceptability of the proposed development on the character of the protected structure, particularly having regard to the location of the telecommunications antennae on the exterior of the spire of the Church, and considered that the applicant had not made a convincing case for the location of this telecommunications infrastructure on the protected structure. The Board was also satisfied that the proposed development would represent an unacceptable precedent for the fixing of such infrastructure on the exterior of church towers/spires that are protected structures, noting that An Bord Pleanála had previously refused planning permission for similar proposals in other locations on similar grounds (while permitting internal provision in some cases where there would be no external impact). Furthermore, the Board was satisfied that the development in question would, as noted by the planning authority, materially contravene objectives of the Clifden Local Area Plan.

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

**Dated this            day of            2020.**