



Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2020

Planning Authority: Offaly 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 7th day of August 2020 by Steinfort Investments Fund care of Stephen Ward of Jocelyn House, Jocelyn Street, Dundalk, County Louth.

Proposed Development comprises of the following:

The construction of 358 number dwellings in detached, semi-detached, terraced/townhouse, terraced/duplex and apartment form and in buildings ranging in height from two to five storeys. All buildings proposed have the option for the installation of photovoltaic/solar panels on front/rear roof slopes depending on orientation. The development will also provide for supporting neighbourhood uses in a two storey building including four number ground floor neighbourhood units for uses such as shops, cafes and restaurants and a medical centre at first floor level with an overall floor area of 1,700square metres, and a standalone crèche in a two storey building (1,007 square metres, with potential capacity for 100 number children). The total non-residential floor space proposed amounts to 2,707 square metres. The ground floor of apartment Block A has been designed such that part of the ground floor can be used as a crèche or three apartments. The overall quantum of public open space provided to serve the development extends to circa 15,389 square metres.

Public open space takes the form of both 'green' landscaped and hard surfaced 'civic space' form and is in addition to circa 1,521 square metres of communal space. Car parking is provided by way of 666 number car parking spaces including 386 number in curtilage car parking spaces. 294 number bicycle spaces are proposed across the site at surface level and bicycle storage rooms in apartment buildings D and E. Vehicular access is provided from the Clonminch Road (R443) via a new signal-controlled junction. The development provides for future potential vehicular and pedestrian connections from the proposed development to Clonminch Wood. The development also provides for works to Clonminch Road including the provision of two number new bus stops and cycle lanes over a distance of circa 1,700 metres from circa 100 metres south of the new vehicular junction to the application site northwards to circa 80 metres north of its junction with Bachelors Walk (R420), Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The planning application also includes all associated site development works including a pumping station and associated infrastructure, open space areas, public lighting, Electrical Vehicle charging points and ducting, six number Electricity Supply Board substations, roads, footpaths and cycle paths, landscaping, boundary treatments and service provision, including removal of existing pylons/Electricity Supply Board poles within the site and diverting and undergrounding of existing overhead electrical cables all located at this site Clonminch and Gayfield, Clonminch Road (R443), Tullamore, Co. Offaly extending to circa 14.3 hectares including lands under the control of Offaly County Council along Clonminch Road (R443). The site is bounded by Clonminch Wood, Limefield, Clonminch Road and a number of dwellings fronting onto Clonminch Road to the west and to the south, east and north by open fields.

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. The design of the proposed Link Street, which is identified as an objective of the development plan for these Masterplan lands, linking Clonminch Road/R443 to the west and Chancery Lane to the north, is substandard in terms of its horizontal alignment and fails to have adequate regard to its strategic function and to the provisions of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in March 2019, as amended, in relation to such routes. The proposed development would, therefore, result in an unsatisfactory standard of development and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. The Guidelines for Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, A Best Practice Guide, issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in May 2009, includes key criteria for such development, including context, connections, layout, public realm and distinctiveness. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) provides further guidance on the design and layout of streets in terms of the creation of sense of place.

It is considered that the proposed development is dominated by roads and surface car parking and results in a poor design concept for the site that is substandard in its form and layout, fails to establish a sense of place, and includes a poor quality of urban and architectural design. The development would, therefore, be injurious to the residential amenities of future occupants and would be contrary to the provisions of the Urban Design Manual – a Best Practice Guide, in particular criteria number 2 Connections and number 7 Layout, and provisions 2.2.1 of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Paul Hyde

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

Dated this day of 2020