

Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2022

Planning Authority: Westmeath County Council

Application for permission under section 4 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, as amended, in accordance with plans and particulars, lodged with An Bord Pleanála on the 4th day of July 2022 by DSPL Limited care of Armstrong Fenton Associates, Planning and Development Consultants of 13 The Seapoint Building, 44-45 Clontarf Road, Dublin.

Proposed Development comprises of the following:

212 number dwellings and a creche. The residential dwellings are comprised of 107 number two and three storey houses, 86 number two and three-bedroom duplex units in eight number three storey blocks, 19 number one and two-bedroom apartments accommodated in one number four storey building which also accommodates a crèche at ground floor level (428 square metres), with associated outdoor play area (circa 258 square metres). The proposed houses consist of 31 number two-bedroom, 70 number three-bedroom and six number four-bedroom detached, semi-detached and terraced houses.

The proposed development provides for all associated site development works, relocation of existing underground surface water attenuation tank, surface car parking (Total: 290 number spaces), bicycle parking, bin and bicycle storage, public open space (circa 1.06 hectare) and communal open space, hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments, underground utilities, three number substations and public lighting. Vehicular access to the development will be off the R394, via Rathgowan Park with pedestrian and cyclist access also proposed onto

the R393 Ashe Road to the north. The site is located north and east of existing housing at Ardilaun Heights and Rathgowan Wood and Rathgowan Park, north-west of the R394 Road, which is known as the Mullingar Western Relief Road and south of the R393 Ashe Road, all in the townland of Rathgowan or Farranshock all located at Rathgowan, Mullingar, County Westmeath.

Decision

Grant permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the said plans and particulars based on the reasons and considerations under and subject to the conditions set out below.

Reasons and Considerations

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

- (a) The location of the site in an established urban area, with the site zoned for residential development;
- (b) the policies and objectives as set out in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and of the Mullingar Local Area Plan 2014-2020 (as extended);
- (c) the provisions of Housing for All, A New Housing Plan for Ireland issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage September 2021;
- (d) the provisions of Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework which identifies the importance of compact growth;
- (e) the provisions of 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;
- (f) the provisions of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in December 2022;

- (i) the provisions of the Regulation of Commercial Institutional Investment in Housing – Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in May 2021;
- (j) 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;
- (k) the provisions of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management for Planning Authorities (including the associated Technical Appendices), issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2009;
- (l) the nature, scale and design of the proposed development and the existing availability in the area of a wide range of social, transport and water services infrastructure;
- (m) the pattern of existing and permitted development in the area;
- (n) the submissions and observations received;
- (o) the Chief Executive's Report received from the planning authority; and
- (p) the report and recommendation of the Planning Inspector including the examination, analysis and evaluation undertaken in relation to appropriate assessment and environmental impact assessment.

Appropriate Assessment Screening

The Board completed an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise in relation to the potential effects of the proposed development on European Sites, taking into account the nature and scale of the proposed development on serviced lands, the nature of the receiving environment which comprises a built-up urban area, the distances to the nearest European Sites and the hydrological pathway considerations, submissions on file, the information submitted as part of the applicant's Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and the Inspector's report. In completing the screening exercise, the Board agreed with and adopted the report of the Inspector and that, by itself or in combination with other development, plans and projects in the vicinity, the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on any European Site in view of the conservation objectives of such sites, and that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not, therefore, required.

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

The Board completed an environmental impact assessment screening of the proposed development and considered the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report submitted by the applicant, which contains the information set out Schedule 7A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, identifies and describes adequately the direct, indirect, secondary and cumulative effects of the proposed development on the environment.

Having regard to: -

- (a) the nature and scale of the proposed development, which is below the threshold in respect of Class 10(iv) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended,
- (b) the existing use on the site and pattern of development in the surrounding area,
- (c) the availability of mains water and wastewater services to serve the proposed development,

- (d) the location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in Article 299(C)(1)(v) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended,
- (e) the guidance set out in the “Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development”, issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2003),
- (f) the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and
- (g) the features and measures proposed by the applicant envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise be significant effects on the environment, including measures identified in the Ecological Impact Assessment Report, the Engineering Planning Report, the Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment, the Construction and Environmental Management Plan, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, the Archaeological Assessment and the Traffic and Transport Assessment, the Board did not consider that the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the preparation and submission of an environmental impact assessment report would not, therefore, be required.

Conclusions on Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

The Board considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below that the proposed development would constitute an acceptable quantum and density of development in this urban location, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area, would be acceptable in terms of urban design, height and quantum of development, would be acceptable in terms of pedestrian safety and would provide an acceptable form of residential amenity for future occupants. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars. In default of agreement, such issues may be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. House Type G1, G2 and G3 shall be omitted from the scheme and this area of the site shall be the subject of a separate planning application for a revised house type.

Reason: The design of House Type G1, G2 and G3 are considered to detract from the residential amenity of the houses that back on to these plots due to the form, height and blank rear elevation of the proposed structures.

3. The number of residential units permitted by this grant of permission is 207 number units in the form of 102 number houses and 105 number apartment units.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

4. The period during which the development hereby permitted may be carried out shall be five years from the date of this Order.

Reason: In the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

5. The following revised plans and particulars shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development:
 - (a) The ground floor dwelling units of Duplex Blocks 4, 5, and 6, Unit Type L1 and L2, shall be redesigned so that the private amenity space is accessed from the main living space of the unit not the bedroom.
 - (b) The metal railings to the terrace of the upper floor units of Blocks 4 and 5, Unit Type M1 and M2, shall be replaced with a revised boundary treatment that reduces overlooking of properties to the rear of these blocks.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

6. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the phasing details submitted unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interests of clarity, orderly development and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7. The footpath shown to Rathgowan Wood (Drawing Number 6253-P-003) shall be constructed up to the boundary to provide access to adjoining lands.

Reason: In the interests of permeability and proper planning and sustainable development.

8. The following requirements in terms of traffic, transportation and mobility, and as relates to 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, shall be incorporated, and where required revised plans and particulars showing compliance with these requirements shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development:

- (a) Full design details of the footpath/bicycle path along the R393 Road as referenced in Section 3.2 of the Stage 1 and 2 Safety Audit. No units shall be occupied prior to the completion of these works.
- (b) All roads in the development shall be a minimum of 5.5 metres in width.
- (c) Footpath/cycleways on the distributor road from the R394 shall be a minimum of three metres in width.
- (d) All parallel parking bays shall be six metres by 2.4 metres.
- (e) The bus stop shall be located as per Drawing Number 202215-PUNCH-XX-XX-DR-C-400 REV C03/6253-P-003 as opposed to bus stops shown at two locations on Drawing Number 202215-PUNCH-XX-XX-DR-C-460 Rev C05.
- (f) The toucan crossing on the R394 Road shall be constructed in accordance with details contained within Drawing Number 202215-Punch-XX-XX-DR-C-0401 Rev CO2 and all associated expenses accrued shall be paid by the developer, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.
- (g) The developer shall apply to Westmeath County Council for a road opening licence and comply with conditions imposed relating to any works on the public roads/footpaths.
- (h) All works to roads and footpaths shall be carried out in accordance with the standards set out in 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.
- (i) The developer shall carry out a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit post construction on the completed road layout in accordance with the provisions of Transport Infrastructure Ireland document GE-STY-01024 Road Safety Audit (December 2017 Revision).

- (j) Full annotated design drawings for all footpaths shall be submitted for the written agreement of the planning authority.
- (k) A public lighting design that accords to the provisions of the Midland Counties Public Lighting Specification.
- (l) All traffic signs shall comply with Traffic Signs Manual published by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, August 2019.

In default of agreement, the matter(s) in dispute shall be referred to An Board Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interests of traffic, cyclist and pedestrian safety.

9. The car parking facilities hereby permitted shall be reserved solely to serve the proposed development. The spaces shall not be utilised for any other purpose, including for use in association with any other uses of the development hereby permitted, unless the subject of a separate grant of planning permission. Car parking spaces shall not be sold, rented or otherwise sub-let or leased to other parties. Car parking serving the entire development site shall be managed based on a detailed car parking management plan. Prior to the commencement of development, such a detailed car parking management plan shall be submitted for agreement in writing with the planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking facilities are permanently available to serve the proposed residential units.

10. A minimum of 10% of all car parking spaces shall be provided with functioning electric vehicle charging stations or points, and ducting shall be provided for all remaining car parking spaces facilitating the installation of electric vehicle charging points or stations at a later date. Where proposals relating to the installation of electric vehicle ducting and charging stations or points has not been submitted with the application, in accordance with the above noted requirements, such proposals shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the occupation of the development.

Reason: To provide for and or future proof the development such as would facilitate the use of electric vehicles.

11. Proposals for the development name and dwelling numbering scheme and associated signage shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Thereafter, all signs, and dwelling numbers, shall be provided in accordance with the agreed scheme. The proposed name(s) shall be based on local historical or topographical features, or other alternatives acceptable to the planning authority. No advertisements or marketing signage relating to the name(s) of the development shall be erected until the developer has obtained the planning authority's written agreement to the proposed name(s).

Reason: In the interest of urban legibility and to ensure the use of locally appropriate placenames for new residential areas.

12. Details of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings shall be as submitted with the application unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development. In default of agreement the matter(s) in dispute shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

13. The areas of public open space and communal open spaces, as shown on the lodged plans shall be landscaped in accordance with the landscape scheme submitted to An Bord Pleanála with this application, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority. The landscape scheme shall be implemented fully in the first planting season following completion of the development, and any trees or shrubs which die or are removed within three years of planting shall be replaced in the first planting season thereafter. This work shall be completed before any of the dwellings are made available for occupation.

Reason: In order to ensure the satisfactory development of the public and communal open space areas, and their continued use for this purpose.

14. Full details of all boundary treatments both internally and along the outer perimeter of this site shall be submitted for the written approval of the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of biodiversity, the protection of residential and visual amenity and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

15. The developer shall engage a suitably qualified archaeologist (licensed under the National Monuments Acts) to carry out pre-development archaeological testing in areas of proposed ground disturbance and to submit an archaeological impact assessment report for the written agreement of the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, in advance of any site preparation works or groundworks, including site investigation works/topsoil stripping/site clearance/dredging/underwater works and/or construction works. The report shall include an archaeological impact statement and mitigation strategy. Where archaeological material is shown to be present, avoidance, preservation in-situ, preservation by record and/or monitoring may be required. Any further archaeological mitigation requirements specified by the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, shall be complied with by the developer. No

site preparation and or construction works shall be carried out on site until the archaeologist's report has been submitted to and approval to proceed is agreed in writing with the planning authority. The planning authority and the National Monuments Service shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of any subsequent archaeological investigative works and or monitoring following the completion of all archaeological work on site and the completion of any necessary post-excavation work. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

Reason: In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the site and to secure the preservation and protection of any remains that may exist within the site.

16. Public lighting shall be provided in accordance with a scheme, which shall include lighting along pedestrian routes through open spaces details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. Such lighting shall be provided prior to the making available for occupation of any dwelling.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and public safety.

17. Water supply and the arrangements for the disposal of foul water, shall comply with the requirements of the Uisce Éireann and the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development.

18. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall enter into water and or wastewater connection agreement(s) with Uisce Éireann.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

19. Drainage arrangements including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health and surface water management.

20. A plan containing details for the management of waste (and, in particular, recyclable materials) within the development, including the provision of facilities for the storage, separation and collection of the waste and, in particular, recyclable materials and for the ongoing operation of these facilities for each apartment unit shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority not later than six months from the date of commencement of the development. Thereafter, the waste shall be managed in accordance with the agreed plan.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity, and to ensure the provision of adequate refuse storage.

21. All items and areas for taking in charge shall be undertaken to a taking in charge standard. Prior to development the applicant shall submit construction details of all items to be taken in charge. No development shall take place until these items have been agreed.

Reason: To comply with the planning authority taking in charge standards.

22. The management and maintenance of those areas not taken in charge shall be the responsibility of a legally constituted management company. A management scheme providing adequate measures for the future maintenance of these areas shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to occupation of the development.

Reason: To provide for the satisfactory future maintenance of this development in the interest of residential amenity.

23. All construction traffic shall access and egress the site at a single point from the R393 Ashe Road to the north of the site at the location where the pedestrian and cyclist access is proposed.

Reason: In the interest of traffic safety and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

24. The construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a Final Construction and Environmental Management Plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall provide inter alia: details of proposals as relates to soil importation and exportation to and from the site; details and location of proposed construction compounds, details of intended construction practice for the development, including noise management measures, details of arrangements for routes for construction traffic, parking during the construction phase, and off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste and/or by-products.

Reason: In the interests of public safety and residential amenity.

25. The site development and construction works shall be carried out in such a manner as to ensure that the adjoining roads are kept clear of debris, soil and other material, and cleaning works shall be carried on the adjoining public roads by the developer and at the developer's expense on a daily basis.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

26. Construction and demolition waste shall be managed in accordance with a construction waste and demolition management plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall be prepared in accordance with the "Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects", published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in July 2006.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable waste management.

27. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

28. All service cables associated with the proposed development such as electrical, telecommunications and communal television shall be located underground. Any relocation of utility infrastructure shall be agreed with the relevant utility provider. Ducting shall be provided by the developer to facilitate the provision of broadband infrastructure within the proposed development.

Reason: In the interests of visual and residential amenity.

29. All of the permitted house or duplex units in the development, when completed, shall be first occupied as a place of residence by individual purchasers who are not a corporate entity and or by persons who are eligible for the occupation of social or affordable housing, including cost rental housing. Prior to commencement of development, the applicant or any person with an interest in the land shall enter into a written agreement with the planning authority under section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, to this effect. Such an agreement must specify the number and location of each house or duplex unit.

Reason: To restrict new housing development to use by persons of a particular class or description in order to ensure an adequate choice and supply of housing, including affordable housing, in the common good.

30. Prior to commencement of development, the applicant or other person with an interest in the land to which the application relates shall enter into an agreement in writing with the planning authority in relation to the provision of housing in accordance with the requirements of section 94(4) and section 96(2) and (3) (Part V) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, unless an exemption certificate shall have been applied for and been granted under section 97 of the Act, as amended. Where such an agreement is not reached within eight weeks from the date of this order, the matter in dispute (other than a matter to which section 96(7) applies) may be referred by the planning authority or any other prospective party to the agreement to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and of the housing strategy in the development plan of the area.

31. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or other security to secure the reinstatement of public roads which may be damaged by the transport of materials to the site, to secure the provision and satisfactory completion of roads, footpaths, watermains, drains, open space and other services required in connection with the development, coupled with an agreement empowering the local authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory completion of any part of the development. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory completion of the development.

32. The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution as a special contribution under section 48(2)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in respect of providing
- (a) a footpath/cycleway on the R393 Ashe Road to connect the proposed pedestrian/bicycle access to the existing footpath at the Ballynacarrigy roundabout and
 - (b) a surface water pipe for a distance of 225 metres to connect the surface water system.

The amount of the contribution shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer, or in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be updated at the time of payment in accordance with changes in the Wholesale Price Index – Building and Construction (Capital Goods), published by the Central Statistics Office.

Reason: It is considered reasonable that the developer should contribute towards the specific exceptional costs which are incurred by the planning authority which are not covered in the Development Contribution Scheme, and which will benefit the proposed development.

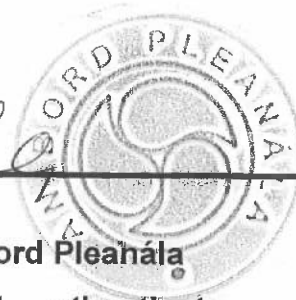
33. The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions for Westmeath County Council of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.

Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.



Mary Henchy

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



Dated this 14th day of September 2023