



Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2022

Planning Authority: Galway City Council

Planning Register Reference Number: 24/60001

APPEAL by Sodalitas Property Limited care of urbanARQ Limited of Pavilion House, 31/32 Fitzwilliam Square South, Dublin against the decision made on the 23rd day of February, 2024 by Galway City Council to refuse permission for the proposed development.

Proposed Development: (1) The construction of an additional single storey retail wing, to the west of an existing two storey retail and commercial block. The proposed new retail wing will comprise of 1,852 square metres of gross internal floor area with the existing and proposed blocks being inter-connected by an atrium lobby measuring 230 square metres, (2) modifications to the existing surface car park area, including the ramp access to the existing basement car parking. Modifications to the existing hard and soft landscaping and the provision of additional hard and soft landscaping to the site, (3) modifications and connection to all other associated site services and (4) all ancillary site works to facilitate the development at West City Centre Office and Retail Park, Seamus Quirke Road, Galway.

Decision

REFUSE permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the reasons and considerations set out below.

Reasons and Considerations

1. It is the policies of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029, as outlined in Section 6.5 and Chapter 10 Section 10.23, to encourage higher densities and larger mix of uses in the Westside area, and the Galway City Council - Urban Density and Building Heights Study, Sept 2021. In this case, the scale and single use nature of the proposed development does not result in the maximisation and efficient use of zoned serviced land, which in this case is a limited resource as the site is positioned within a complex built urban environment where opportunities for redevelopment and infill to increase densities do not arise often. While in particular the context/location of this site is such that it is located close to areas of employment, education, retail, services, medical campus and public transport, engendering a requirement that any development within the Westside District Centre area should provide for higher densities and greater mix of uses. Therefore, having regard to the policies of the development plan and the urban density and building height study, this proposal for a single storey commercial building within a designated District Centre, would be contrary to the above development plan policies and would not meet the requirements for the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods and the efficient use of land.



2. The proposed development is located in the Westside area which is identified in Section 10.23 of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 as lacking a strong urban definition and streetscape with poor legibility and sense of place. The area has the objective "to improve connectivity, to increase attractiveness and encourage more sustainable street level community interaction and activity". Having regard to the absence of an appropriate public realm, high quality accessible civic spaces or significant alteration to the existing site layout dominated by surface car parking, the proposed development fails to provide a high quality layout that would be in accordance with Policy 8.7 "Urban Design and Placemaking" and with the urban design criteria as set out in Table 8.1 of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029. The proposed development would be contrary to the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



Liam McGree

Member of An Bord Pleanála

duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Board.

Dated this 21 day of January 2025.