

An
Bord
Pleanála

Board Order
ABP-320582-24

Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2022

Planning Authority: Galway City Council

Planning Register Reference Number: 20/218

APPEAL by Helen Duffy Fahy care of BPS Planning and Development Consultants of Ballinatone, Greenan, Wicklow and Nightguard Limited of Briarhill Business Park, Ballybrit, Galway and by Parosi Development Limited care of MKO of Tuam Road, Galway against the decision made on the 24th day of February, 2022 by Galway City Council to grant subject to conditions a permission to the said Parosi Developments Limited.

Proposed Development: Construction of an eight storey over basement, 186 number bedroom hotel with below ground pool plant equipment, tank room, standby generator and pumping station (Gross Floor Area: circa 12,478 square metres). The development includes for hotel uses on the ground floor including a reception area, lounge area, a restaurant, a bar, a lobby, toilet facilities and back of house rooms. The ground floor also includes an LV switch room, an MV switchroom, an ESB substation, a transformer/LV switchroom, a public entrance to the spa and spa facilities including a swimming pool, a whirlpool, a sauna/steam room, male and female changing rooms, and storage rooms. The first floor incorporates spa facilities including a treatment room, a studio, a gym, a lobby area, a storage area, eight number meeting rooms with associated reception area, an office, toilet facilities and a pantry. The upper floors incorporate 186 number hotel bedrooms. The

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development also includes for a green roof, emergency fire escapes, an upgrade to the existing entrance/exit from the Business Park Campus, new guest vehicle entrance from the Business Park Campus to the north of the site, two number new vehicle entrances from the west of the site, 153 number car parking spaces, three number set down spaces at the main entrance, service entrance layby to the west of the site, 28 number cycle spaces, electrical vehicle charging spaces, pumping station kiosk, signage, associated landscaping and boundary treatments, and all other site development works and services ancillary to the proposed development, all on Site 4, Briarhill Business Park, Bothar na dTreabh, the townlands of Ballybrit and Doughisra, Galway. As amended by the further public notices received by the planning authority on the 23rd day of December, 2021.

Decision

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

Reasons and Considerations

The Board considered that the height, scale and mass of the proposed development to be inappropriate for this outer suburban area and would be contrary to Policy 8.7(8) of the City Development Plan which seeks to adhere to the Galway City Urban Density and Building Height Study (2021). The Spatial Strategy for the outer suburbs set out in the Galway City Urban Density and Building Height Study (2021) states that the prevailing two-three storey building height pattern should continue and any opportunities to increase the height of new buildings above the prevailing height in the area should be marginal. The proposal at eight storeys in height is considerably in excess of the prevailing height in this outer suburban area and therefore would be contrary to the Galway City Urban Density and Building Height Study (2021), the Galway City Development Plan 2023 - 2029 and would 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 the proposed development would be contrary to Policy 8.7(8) which requires adherence to Galway City Urban Density and Building Height Study 2021 and did not share the Inspector's view that exceptional design quality had been demonstrated due to the mass, scale and form of the proposed development and its relationship with the surrounding area. It is further noted that Section 3.1 of the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities seeks a presumption in favour of buildings of increased height in our town/city cores and in other urban locations with good public transport accessibility. Having regard to the sites location in an outer suburban area on the periphery of the built-up area, the Board considered that the policies in the National Planning Framework, the National and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy regarding the promotion of compact settlement growth did not justify such a fundamental departure from the prevailing two-three storey character of the surrounding area.

The Board also did not share the Inspector's view that the site was sufficiently well serviced by public transport, in order to reduce any substantial reliance on the private car, particularly in relation to providing access from the site to the and from Galway City Centre. In this regard, it was considered that the applicant had not sufficiently demonstrated or justified the reduction in car parking provision below the standards required in the development plan.

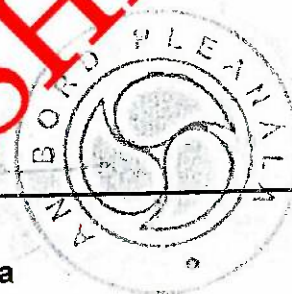
The Board also had regard to the grounds of the first party appeal, and for the arguments set out above, did not consider an eight-storey building to be appropriate on the subject site. The Board also noted the arguments put forward by the appellant regarding the reduction in the quantum of development by one storey would adversely affect the viability of the proposed development, for this reason the Board considered that any further reduction in the height and scale of the proposed development in order to allay its concerns and provide a development of a more suitable scale in the context of the surrounding area, would further reduce the viability of the proposal and would result in a development which is materially different that that originally applied for.



Paul Caprani

Member of An Bord Pleanála

duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Board.



Dated this 12th day of December 2024.

DECISION QUASHED