



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-304703-19

Case Reference / Description	120 no. houses, creche and associated site works. Mitchel Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.		
Case Type	Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation Request		
Date:	25 th July, 2019	Start Time	11.38 am
Location	Offices of Tipperary County Council	End Time	14:01
Chairperson	Tom Rabbette	Executive Officer	Maeve Williams

Representing An Bord Pleanála:

Tom Rabbette, Assistant Director of Planning
Sarah Moran, Senior Planning Inspector
Maeve Williams, Executive Officer

Representing Prospective Applicant:

Ronan Barrett, Liberty Square
Mark Bannon, PBA Architects
Andrew McDermott, OCSC
Mark Killian, OCSC
Anthony Johns, Anthony Johns Landscape Design Ltd
Meabhann Crowe, MKO

Representing Planning Authority

Sonja Reidy, Senior Executive Planner
Anne Marie Devaney, Executive Planner (Thurles Area)
John Jones, Acting Senior Executive Engineer (Thurles Area)
Shane Boland, Executive Engineer, Water Services
John Fitzgerald, Acting Senior Staff Officer, Housing Section

Introduction

The representatives of An Bord Pleanála (ABP) welcomed the prospective applicant, the Local Authority (LA) and introductions were made. The procedural matters relating to the meeting were as follows:

- The written record will be placed on the pre-application consultation file and will be made public, along with that file, should an application arise following the conclusion of this consultation process,
- ABP received a submission from the LA on 12th July, 2019 providing the records of consultations held pursuant to section 247 and its written opinion of considerations related to proper planning and sustainable development that may have a bearing on ABP's decision,
- The consultation meeting will not involve a merits-based assessment of the proposed development,
- The meeting will focus on key site-specific issues at strategic overview level, and whether the documents submitted require further consideration and/or amendment in order to constitute a reasonable basis for an application.
- Key considerations will be examined in the context of the statutory development plan for the area and section 28 Ministerial Guidelines where relevant,
- A reminder that neither the holding of a consultation or the forming of an opinion shall prejudice ABP or the LA concerned in relation to any other of their respective functions under the Planning Acts or any other enactments and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in legal proceedings.

The ABP representatives acknowledged the letter dated 17th June, 2019 formally requesting pre-application consultations with ABP. Prospective applicant advised of the need to comply with definition of SHD as set out in the Act of 2016, in relation to thresholds of development. It was also noted that the Inspector dealing with the pre-application consultation request would be different to who would deal with the application when it was submitted. Recording of the meeting is prohibited.

Agenda

- Part V
- Thurles Town and Environs Plan 2009-2015; phasing of development; residential density and housing mix.
- Design of residential accommodation. Residential layout including open space provision, public realm, relationship with adjoining lands.
- Roads layout, DMURS, traffic impacts.
- Wastewater treatment, surface water drainage and flood risk assessment.
- Any other matters.

1. Part V

Part V was discussed at the beginning of the meeting to facilitate PA staff.

ABP comments:

- Clarity was sought from the prospective applicant regarding Part V with reference to the layout and design of the proposed development and the PA requirements for the proposed units.

Planning Authority's comments:

- Discussions are ongoing regarding maintenance of the development and the layout of the units such as duplex accommodation, but are confident that an agreement will be finalised.
- There is a demand for two and three-bedroom accommodation in the area in comparison to four-bedroom units. It is anticipated that one-bedroom apartments would not be sought after in the property market.
- The development should be flexible that it would allow for people to extend their property via building an extension should it be required in the future.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Acknowledge that there are ongoing discussions with the PA regarding maintenance but are confident that an agreement will be finalised.
- 120 units are being proposed for this development with 10% of them given to the PA.
- The development will be built in three phases and four properties will be given to the PA i.e. phase one will have four unit's x type C, phase two will have four unit's x type C and phase three will have four unit's x type D (duplex).

Further ABP comments:

- Issues surrounding Part 5 will need to be addressed at application stage.

2. Thurles Town and Environs Plan 2009 – 2015; phasing of development; residential density and housing mix.

ABP comments:

- Clarity was sought regarding the Thurles Town and Environs Plan 2009 – 2015; phasing of development; residential density and housing mix for this development with regards to local, regional and national planning policy.

Planning Authority's response:

- Still working from the 2009 – 2015 County Development Plan, which has been extended. The landscape of the PA has changed due to amalgamation/merger of nine planning authorities into one.
- The new development plan will be made when the RSES has come into effect.
- Phasing of the development is in three stages. Each phase to be delivered as a stand-alone development. The bonds for each stage will be released upon completion and if necessary bond for stage one can be used for stage three.
- The PA is in a position to take charge of the open space. The development should include heavy planting, general recreational areas with no opportunity for anti-social behaviour.

- The pumping station outlined in drawing 107, will not be under the PA remit it will come under the remit of Irish Water (IW). However, the PA will need confirmation of this.
- The site layout should allow for future connections to adjoining sites.
- Thurles is the third largest town in Co. Tipperary but the National policy on apartment development may not be in the best interest for this rural town. There is a possibility that two-bedroom apartments would glut the market and there may not be demand for a four-bedroom house.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- There is a practicality for building the development on a phased basis with regard to the provision of foul water infrastructure. The pumping station would be built in phase one of the development. Phase two and three will include open spaces.
- The agricultural land in close proximity to the site could become part of a larger scheme in the future subject to being zoned in a future development plan.
- The site is well located and accessible to the town centre.
- Applicant wishes to ensure that there is balance of units to meet the requirements of the local inhabitants and the PA while promoting compact development.
- The development can be broken down as: 20% four-bedroom units, 20% two-bedroom units and 60% three-bedroom units.
- The duplex units will have own door entrances to ensure accessibility.
- The topics outlined by the LA will be addressed at application stage and will be taken into account.

Further ABP comments:

- Ensure all points raised are addressed at application stage notwithstanding, legal issues, demographics, the demands of the area and any issues outlined by the PA.
- The density of development is approximately 34.4 units per ha, which excludes open spaces on amenity zoned lands. It is important to note that the Board have refused other projects due to low density and design/residential mix issues.
- Density and mix needs to be justified at application stage having regard to both local statutory plan and national policy

3. Design of residential accommodation. Residential layout including open space provision, public realm, relationship with adjoining lands.

ABP comments:

- Clarity was sought from the prospective applicant regarding the design of residential accommodation and residential layout including open space provision, public realm, relationship with adjoining lands.

Planning Authority's response:

- The frontage of Bohernamona Road is single storey buildings and cottages, which developed organically.
- The development should improve the visual amenity of the area and be aesthetically pleasing.

- There would be concern if the development was brought closer to the Bohernamona Road as the amenity value of open spaces at the road frontage would be reduced.
- The layout should be designed to avoid use as a rat run, reduce vehicular speeds and to avoid any opportunity for anti-social behaviour.
- The central open space is surrounded by roads, it would be preferable to have it pedestrianised.
- The PA has concerns about maintenance of home zones. Brick should not be used as the PA does not have the resources to maintain this type of material.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- The scheme has been amended following dialogue with the PA.
- A balance must be found to allow for children's safety and not to have a rat run in the development.
- To date no tree survey undertaken.

Further ABP comments:

- The interface with Mitchel Street should be in keeping with the character of the town. More information regarding this should be included at the application stage.
- Ensure that there is interaction between both The Bohernamona Road side of the development may justify a more urban rather than suburban response to this potential urban street/road frontage.
- Mitchel Street and Bohernamona Road.
- In line with DMURS specifications, priority should be given to pedestrian/ cyclist routes.
- All issues raised should be justified and rationalised at application stage for example; landscaping, ecological, try to enhance a village green feel to the development.

4. Roads layout, DMURS, traffic impacts.

ABP comments:

- Clarity was sought from the prospective applicant regarding roads layout, DMURS, traffic impacts.

Planning Authority's response:

- Many of the main issues concerning these topics were discussed earlier in the meeting.
- Impacts on traffic flow at the N75 and two junctions are their most concern.
- There is no landscaping section or grass cutting section in the PA so the residents will have to fund the maintenance.
- The roads layout should be designed to reduce vehicular speed rather than use ramps as they can slow down emergency services and the maintenance would be required.
- The roads hierarchy should be based on the spine road from Bohernamona Road.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- SUDS solutions will be used for this development.
- Road narrowing will be used as a traffic calming measure but ramps will be used where road narrowing is not possible.
- The houses/driveways will be in private use and will not be under the remit of the PA.

- An acoustic fence will be erected adjacent the existing industrial use on neighbouring lands to avoid noise pollution for the residents living at that part of the proposed development.
- The widths of the roads are as follows: Mitchel St will be six meters in width, link to Bohernamona Road will be 5.5 meters in width, Bohernamona road will increase to six meters in width.
- The comments outlined on page five of the PA comments have been taken on board.

Further ABP comments:

- The access to Mitchel Street should be designed in accordance with DMURS and have adequate sight distances.

5. Wastewater treatment, surface water drainage and flood risk assessment:

ABP comments:

- Clarity was sought from the prospective applicant regarding wastewater treatment, surface water drainage and flood risk assessment.
- Requested details of the permitted and proposed pumping station in the context of local development and zoned lands.

Planning Authority's comments:

- The proposed development is planned to connect to the public sewerage system which is outside the flood risk zone.
- Permission was previously granted for a pumping station at this site, to serve the site and adjacent zoned lands
- There was a Service Level Agreement regarding the provision of foul water infrastructure for this area, however that is now obsolete.
- The proposed pumping station can serve other developments on adjacent zoned lands.
- The PA cannot claim contributions for wastewater infrastructure, as it does not come under its remit.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- They are happy to design the pumping station such that it can easily be upgraded to serve additional residential developments. They are working towards a tripartite solution with the PA and IW.
- Aside from the pumping station, the proposed foul sewerage infrastructure will be larger than necessary for this proposed development to facilitate a future upgraded pumping station.
- IW are not in a position to consider the local context and can only focus on current proposed developments.
- Applicant to carry out Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment/NIS, also to consider flood zones, impacts on water quality and climate change.
- Test failed regarding soak pits. This has been taken into consideration in designing the proposed SUDS measures.

6. Any other matters

Planning Authority's comments:

- Rehousing of runoff water – grey water. It is not a demand only a suggestion.

- Requesting that no crèches be included in this development as there is a trend for buildings in other developments not being used and it avoids empty buildings and future change of use applications. It has been requested for practical purposes.
- Propose that an option for child minding facility which could be used as a home if the need for a creche was not necessary. It could be deemed a home based economic business as it would be seen as a dual-purpose building.
- The guidelines for the number of car parking spaces for developments in the county development plan are at the low end of the scale for car parking spaces requirements and they would ask for a higher number to be included at the application stage. The proposed development site is not served by any public transport.
- Off street car parking is outside the remit of the LA.
- Traffic calming measures – creating curvatures to avoid ramps.
- Bond for phase one can be used for phase three, upon phase one's completion.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Recycling of wastewater would include grey water.
- Creche facility unit will not be included at application stage, due to concerns outlined by LA.
- Bonds will be put in place to ensure satisfactory completion of the development
- Traffic calming measures have been implemented to exclude ramps where possible.
- Car parking spaces have been divided so that units with 2 – 3 bedrooms will have one car parking space and four-bedroom units will have two car parking spaces.

Further ABP comments:

- Justify your reasoning for not including a childcare provision at application stage.

Conclusions

The representatives of ABP emphasised the following:

- There should be no delay in making the planning application once the public notice has been published
- Sample notices, application form and procedures are available on the ABP website
- Irish Water would like prospective applicants to contact Irish Water at cdsdesignqa@water.ie **between the Pre-Application Consultation and Application stages**, to confirm details of their proposed development and their proposed design.
- The email address to which applicants should send their **applications** to Irish Water as a prescribed body is spatialplanning@water.ie

Tom Rabbette
Assistant Director of Planning
August, 2019