



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-306599-20

Case Reference / Description	144 no. residential units (88 no. houses, 56 no. apartments), crèche and associated site works. South of the Letteragh Road (L1323), in the townlands of Ragoon and Letteragh, Co. Galway.		
Case Type	Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation Request		
Date:	5 th May 2020	Start Time	14:30 p.m.
Location	Via Microsoft Teams	End Time	16:15 p.m.
Chairperson	Tom Rabbette	Executive Officer	Ciaran Hand

Representing An Bord Pleanála:

Tom Rabbette, Assistant Director of Planning
Stephen Rhys Thomas, Senior Planning Inspector
Ciaran Hand, Executive Officer

Representing Prospective Applicant:

Pamela Harty, MKO
Aidan McLernon, Cairn Homes
Derbhile McDonagh, O'Mahony Pike Architects
Brendan Heaney, Tobins
Keith Mitchell, CSR

Representing Planning Authority

Caroline Phelan, Senior Planner
Liam Blake, Senior Executive Planner
John Doody, Executive Planner
Stephen Walsh, Senior Executive Parks Superintendent
Frank Clancy, Senior Executive Engineer Water Services
Susan Loughnane, Senior Transport Project Manager – Roads

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 P.A on 6th March 2020 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 10th February 2020 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

- 1. Residential Density**
- 2. Road and footpath improvements – implications of the Galway By-pass Road Project**
- 3. Site interface and relationship – existing property and Letteragh Road**
- 4. Connectivity - Pedestrian and Vehicular**
- 5. Layout and Design**
- 6. Drainage - Surface Water Management – Flood Risk Assessment**
- 7. Any other matters**

1. Residential Density

ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:

- Rationale for the proposed residential density given a recently granted and currently under construction SHD (with a density of 40 units per hectare) in the area and previously permitted development for the site.

Planning Authority's comments:

- Conscious that the site has constraints but there should be a higher density on this site and more of a unit mix could change the density figure.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- The area of the site is 3.8 hectares and the net density is 38 units per hectare, plot ratio is 0.431 to 1.
- This is a complex site with many constraints including the N59 link road on the western boundary and a large wayleave requirement.
- The density could be up to 40 units per hectare (an extra 6 units will be required)
- Density balance is already achieved with apartments and duplexes
- The orange boundary line indicated on maps is the development boundary and there is also a CPO boundary associated with this
- A parallel road to the N59 link road is not being created, a central space is being created and green links are being retained. Key sections will show the fall and level differences across the site.

Further ABP comments:

- The site does have notable constraints, but documentation should justify the proposed density. An examination of the unit mix may increase densities.

2. Road and footpath improvements – implications of the Galway By-pass Road Project

ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:

- The proposed Galway bypass infrastructure (link road) to the north west of the site and an explanation of the relationship and interactions with the proposed development
- Factors such as the new public realm that will result and an explanation of the level differences between the site and link road should be explored.

Planning Authority's response:

- Before and after sections are important and the applicant should examine the proposed development in a scenario as if there was no Galway By-pass Road Project application
- The large area of linear planting area needs to be examined as the proposed heavy planting is outside the control of this council and possibly the applicant.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Entry to the site is from the Letteragh Road, when the Galway By-pass Road Project is constructed a revised grade will tie in with it. There will be a 700mm lift at this location.
- The existing entrance that will tie in with the new road will be within 15 meters of the junction.
- The linear park is the linear boundary and the embankment of the proposed road is a parkway. Before and after sections will show this proposal and detail that there will be a high tree line outside the area of the site. The planting is a backdrop to open space with a stone cut boundary and tree planting behind it
- The site can stand alone and also tie in with the Galway By-pass Road Project application.

Further ABP comments:

- There should be before and after sections showing the linear park proposal
- Outline the timeline of the Galway By-pass Road Project application
- Address how the proposed development can stand alone and also tie in with the new road application (if granted/executed).
- Detail any public realm proposals.

3. Site interface and relationship – existing property and Letteragh Road**ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- How the development will link in with and take account of existing houses to the east of the site.

Planning Authority's response:

- The potential rat run through the site as a result of the Galway By-pass Road Project has been addressed in the documentation.
- There is a current planning permission for an apartment building on land to the south east of the proposed development that is live until 2022, this should be shown on drawings.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Future connections have been allowed for the site to the north west
- There is provision for future pedestrian linkages throughout the site
- The height of the Letteragh Road has not changed with the Galway By-pass Road Project and a stone wall boundary is aligned along this margin
- There will be more examination of linkages to the Burkeway site to the north west
- A linear walkway has been widened to create more public realm along the southern boundary, this small boreen is not owned by the applicant however an open space is being proposed at this location.

Further ABP comments:

- Documentation should have regard to the future urbanisation of this area, it will be important to show level changes between the site and neighbouring development.
- The provision of linkages to and from the site will be important and shouldn't limit future opportunities for connections, even though they may not be achieved now.

4. Connectivity - Pedestrian and Vehicular

ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:

- The potential for a through connection from the Letteragh Road southwards, in the absence of the Galway By-pass Road Project.
- The provision of pedestrian connections on and off the site.

Planning Authority's response:

- A cyclist and vehicle shared road is a concern, an alternative may be a cycle path along the green link park
- Clarify the cycle parking location and specify the cycle parking within the apartments

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Pedestrian and cycle lanes are wider than required and a green link can be delivered in its entirety
- Cycle path along the green link park can be examined
- Cycle parking will be highlighted

Further ABP comments:

- Outline the pedestrian and vehicular connections and detail the cycle parking

5. Layout and Design

ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:

- Apartment amenities, in terms of the apartment block location, outlook and availability of accessible and usable amenities.
- Duplexes located to the south west are surrounded by roads and the workability of dual frontage was queried.

Planning Authority's response:

- A number of criticisms of the apartment block were levelled, including; sunlight/daylight maximisation, not meeting some apartment standards and outlook from apartments is poor.
- This location of the apartments on the Letteragh Road is not seen as an arrival point to the city and so the location of the apartment is not appropriate
- Concerning the issues with the small boreen along the southern boundary; the registration of titles could be transferred to the P.A and the southern right of way could be a public right of way

Prospective Applicant's response:

- A strong road frontage is being created at the corner, the apartment block will be a strong building at the end of the linear park. Building edges will overlook the linear park
- The apartment buildings create a sense of arrival and dominance
- Crèche building sits in the linear park. There is also a capacity for the crèche to be a community hub
- Galway stone and render finish is proposed
- Duplexes overlook the road and have a single entrance point

- In terms of standards, 53% of apartments are dual aspect

Further ABP comments:

- Detail the proposed building materials and finishes
- A building lifecycle report should be submitted as required under the apartment guidelines

6. Drainage - Surface Water Management – Flood Risk Assessment

ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:

- Surface water management details and how the landscape and drainage drawings accord with each other was queried.

Planning Authority's response:

- An attempt is made to tie the attenuation tank into the landscape masterplan
- Watermains on Letteragh Road will have to be relayed as part of works planned.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- In relation to flood risk – the underlying granite rock acts to hold water
- The design balance of cut and fill will eliminate hollows and depressions
- Stormwater will be conveyed to the main drainage system
- A culvert to the north east of the site will be examined in terms of flood risk assessment

Further ABP comments:

- The surface water management and flood risk assessment of the site should take account of any on-site features such as streams and watercourses (if present) and address the issues associated with ponding.
- There is no further information sought at application stage

7. Any other matters

Planning Authority's comments:

- Hard landscaping at driveways and parking should be examined and a greater degree of planting is encouraged to soften predominance of hard surfaces.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- The proposed materials for driveways and parking can be examined.

Further ABP comments:

- No further comment

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 [cgsdesignqa@water.ie](mailto: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
May, 2020