



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-310013-21

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| Case Reference / Description | Demolition of existing garage and southern boundary wall, construction of 143 no. residential units (105 no. houses, 38 no. apartments) creche and associated site works. Monacnapa, Blarney, Co. Cork. | | |
| Case Type | Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation Request | | |
| Date: | 18 th June 2021 | Start Time | 10:00 a.m. |
| Location | Via MS Teams | End Time | 10:50 a.m. |
| Chairperson | Tom Rabbette | Executive Officer | Hannah Cullen |

Representing An Bord Pleanála:

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| Tom Rabbette, Assistant Director of Planning |
| Elaine Power, Planning Inspector |
| Hannah Cullen, Executive Officer |

Representing Prospective Applicant:

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| Eoin Sheehan, Applicant |
| Niall Sheehan, Applicant's advisor |
| Martin Byrne, BRH Design Partners |
| Fachna Sheehy, OLS Consulting Engineers |
| Jim Kelly, Cunnane Stratton Reynolds |
| Eoin Reynolds, NRB Consulting Engineers |
| Aiden O'Neill, Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd |

Representing Planning Authority

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| Michelle Delaney, A/ Senior Executive Planner |
| Simon Lyons, Senior Executive Engineer |
| Cathy Beecher, Senior Executive Engineer |
| Denis O'Regan, Executive Engineer |

Introduction

The representatives of An Bord Pleanála (ABP) welcomed the prospective applicant, Planning Authority (PA) 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 once the Opinion has issued,
- ABP received a submission from the PA on 19th May, 2021 providing the records of consultations held pursuant to section 247 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended 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 PA 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 22nd April, 2021 formally requesting pre-application consultations with ABP. The prospective applicant advised of the need to comply with the definition of SHD as set out in the (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act of 2016, in relation to thresholds of development. The representatives of ABP advised that the Inspector dealing with the pre-application consultation request would be different to the Inspector who would deal with the application when it was submitted. Recording of the meeting is prohibited.

Agenda

- 1. Design Strategy – (Density, Design and Layout, Topography, Residential Amenity, Housing Mix, Materiality, Phasing)**
- 2. Open Space**
- 3. Visual Impact - Blarney Castle**
- 4. Transportation and Accessibility**
- 5. Water Services - Drainage**
- 6. Any Other Matters**

1. Design Strategy – (Density, Design and Layout, Topography, Residential Amenity, Housing Mix, Materiality, Phasing)

ABP Comments:

- Permission was previously refused on this site (ABP 308156-20) . The reason for refusal considered that the proposed density was a material contravention of the development plan and the applicant had not submitted a material contravention statement. A clear rational and justification for the proposed density is required having regard to the sites Objective BL-R-03, the previous refusal on the site (ABP-308156) and national guidance.
- Rational for the proposed apartment design and layout, in particular the northern aspect of the living spaces and southern aspect of the bedrooms in some units.
- Query the stated quantity of dual aspect units within the scheme. True dual aspect units significantly add to the light entering the unit and assist with ventilation.
- Justification for the housing mix.
- Consideration of the materials and finishes having regard to the elevated nature and highly visible location of the site.
- Rational of how the public open spaces relate to the proposed phasing.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- A material contravention has been submitted with the documentation to satisfy the Board in addressing the previous refusal item. The proposed density is considered appropriate at this location and having regard to national guidance.
- The design and layout of the apartment blocks has addressed concerns raised in the previous application.
- The design and layout of the dwellings have addressed concerns raised in the previous application and a number of units have been omitted to allow for a revised layout, in particular along the site's eastern boundary.
- A report addressing the demand for housing within the area has been provided. There is currently a requirement for additional housing.
- The proposed materials and finishes are of a high standard and would provide a distinctive character for the site.
- The phasing of the open space provision will be reconsidered.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- The proposed scheme materially contravenes the zoning objective of the lands, further matters on this item have been addressed in the PA report submitted to the Board.

2. Open Space

ABP Comments:

- The concerns raised by the PA regarding the staggered nature of the rear private open space of the dwellings should be considered.
- Clarity is required regarding the use and maintenance of the public open space located on the northern elevated part of the site area
- Consideration of the potential impact on hedgerows and trees provided within private rear gardens. The potential loss of hedgerows and trees should be fully addressed.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- The northern area of the site is not currently public open space. It is not proposed to include it as public space. The layout includes an access to this portion of the site for maintenance / grass cutting. This area would be further planted as part of the development of the site and would be maintained by a management company.
- The impact on hedgerows and / or trees within the private rear gardens of dwelling will be addressed in the application.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- The parks department have recommended planting groups of mature tree's further details can be found within the PA report submitted to the Board.

3. Visual Impact - Blarney Castle**ABP Comments:**

- The applicant should address/respond to the PA's concerns highlighted in their report in relation to views from Blarney Castle and provide requested cross sections. The importance of Blarney Castle and its setting is acknowledged, and it is noted that this issue was addressed in detail in the previous application.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- The scheme has been designed to ensure it does not have any adverse impacts on the setting of Blarney Castle.
- Cross sections are included in the landscaping drawings. There is no objection to including this detail in the architectural drawings.
- All trees to be retained on site would be protected during the construction phase. Details have been included with the submission.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- The parks departments report on the previous application (ABP 308156-20) is noted and should be taken into consideration as it still stands.
- Objective GO-06 of the Local Area Plan relates to visual impacts of developments in close proximity to Blarney Castel to ensure they do not compromise the landscape heritage character of the area. This objective should be addressed in the application.
- A concern was raised by the conservation officer in relation to the treatment of the western boundary of the site and the length of the gardens at this area. This concern should be addressed by the applicant.
- There is a historic treeline at the southern boundary and it is essential that it be protected during construction works and ensure that the development would not negatively impact on the health of the trees.

4. Transportation and Accessibility**ABP Comments:**

- Information included within the traffic assessment will need to be evidence based and robust.

- Clarify if there is potential to widen Sunberry Drive road/footpath.
- Concerns regarding potential for queuing on Sunberry Drive due to traffic movements on the R617.
- The pedestrian links and permeability should be clearly indicated on drawings submitted and should satisfy the concerns raised by the PA regarding poor connectivity from the site to Blarney town centre.
- Consideration of any upgrades that may be required on the surrounding road network to facilitate the development.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- TRICS was used to ascertain the potential impact on the road network. TRICS is a well-established and accepted database that is an evidence based and robust.
- No objection to carrying out a sensitivity test for the potential impact of the development based on similar developments in the area.
- There is no ability to widen the footpath/road at Sunberry Drive.
- It is highly unlikely that a development of this nature and scale would result in queuing on the local road network.
- Upgrade works were recently carried out on the R617 which included the road being levelled out and new signage provided.
- Unclear to the concern with issue raised in the PA report in relation to pedestrian crossing and connectivity.

Planning Authority's Comments

- Scope to prepare a sensitivity test against similar development in the area.
- Possible safety implications of car queuing up Sunberry Drive.
- Pedestrian improvements may be required in the town centre to accommodate additional pedestrian movements generated by the development.

5. Water Services – Drainage

ABP Comments:

- Consideration of the proposed drainage network within and adjacent to the site, having regard to the location of the apartments in relation to wayleaves / retaining walls, stormwater and SUDS.
- Clarification of any third party consents that may be required to facilitate the drainage works should be included in any application.
- Concerns of the PA's Drainage Department should be fully addressed. Further engagement between the applicant and the PA is recommended to discuss technical details.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- A site investigation has been initiated, awaiting analysis as the report was delayed due to COVID, the results will inform the underlying layout of ground seepage and ground water levels.
- A site-specific technical report can be prepared in relation to the wall mentioned by the PA.

- Further engagement will be sought with the PA to discuss calculations and other technical details.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Further information is required in relation to SUD's strategy, seepage, runoff, cut and fill.
- Potential of slippage at the proposed retaining wall at the sites southern boundary should be addressed.
- Query if there is sufficient space between the western site boundary and the apartment blocks to allow for the required infrastructure.
- Further details required in relation to the attenuation calculations / surface water runoff.
- Fully address any potential for flood risk.
- It is best practice to engage with possible 3rd party landowners due to the amount of drain locations.

6. Any Other Matters

ABP Comments:

- A full day/sunlight assessment should be submitted at application stage that has regard to BRE/BS guidelines. If there are areas not in compliance fully demonstrate any shortcomings along with any rationale/justification and compensatory measures proposed if any.
- Identify all material contraventions of statutory plans.
- Ensure that all documentation is consistent.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- All required documentation will be submitted at application stage.
- There is a demand for housing in Blarney and the applicant is prepared to proceed with developing this site.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Nothing further to add.

Conclusion

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. Note recent changes to public notice requirements.
- 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
July, 2021