



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-312236-21

Case Reference / Description	167 no. residential units (125 no. houses & 99 no. apartments) Dunlo, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway		
Case Type	Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation Request		
Date:	29 th April 2022	Start Time	10:00am
Location	Remotely via Microsoft teams.	End Time	11:30am
Chairperson	Stephen O'Sullivan	Executive Officer	David Behan

Representing An Bord Pleanála:

Stephen O'Sullivan, Assistant Director of Planning
Fiona Fair, Senior Planning Inspector
David Behan, Executive Officer

Representing Prospective Applicant:

Ronald Greene, R. G. Greene & Associates
William Greene, R. G. Greene & Associates
Denis O Connell, Limehill Esker Limited

Representing Planning Authority

Val Loughane, Senior Executive planner
Christina Ryan, Assistant Scientist - Environment
Martina Connaughton, Senior Executive Engineer - Water
Rachel Lowe, Senior Engineer - Housing
Jack Houlihan, Executive Engineer - Roads

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, 21st January 2022, 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, 16th December 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, as amended, 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. Compliance with the CDP 2015 – 2021 and the Ballinasloe LAP 2012-2022**
- 2. Design and Layout**
- 3. Transportation & Connectivity**
- 4. Open Space and Landscaping**
- 5. Issues raised in CE Report**
- 6. AOB**

1. Compliance with the CDP 2015 – 2021 and the Ballinasloe LAP 2012-2022

ABP Comments:

- Consideration sought on compliance issues in respect of; core strategy, apartments within 'R' zone and road going through the OS zone are addressed in any future application.
- Consideration that all material contravention matters are addressed and advertised accordingly, having regard to the change in the CDP and a new LAP.
- Further justification of the proposal in light of specific objective T1-26 with respect to access, should this objective be pertinent at the time a future application is made.
- Consideration that the County Development Plan and the Ballinasloe LAP 2022 are being amended and new plans eminent. The application will be assessed against the statutory plan in place at the time the Board are making its decision.
- Clarification that all issues raised in the CE report with respect to policy and objectives for the area have been considered and overcome or fully justified.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Ballinasloe LAP determined layout of proposed development.
- Routes and link roads indicated in the LAP determined the fundamental layout of the proposal.
- The access to the east extends from existing development, 78 units under construction. Proposal is to extend the access southwards.
- Road serving the northern portion of the site circles around the commercial zoned lands and the Tesco super store.
- West side road links to Ballinasloe town commercial area
- Reviewing access points on T126
- Clarity sought on changes of zoning in new plan. Have made solid representation against changing the priority of the residential land zoning on the subject lands.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Prospective applicant advised that new LAP is nearing completion and likely to be in place by end of May 2022
- Reduction of some R1 zoned lands to R2 zoned based upon core strategy figures and best use of zoned serviced lands. Cognisant of higher densities required on zoned lands within urban settlements.

2. Design and Layout

ABP Comments:

- Justification needed for development strategy for the site including urban design considerations such as building height and the bulk, scale and mass of blocks; architectural treatment; connection to the surrounding road network, pedestrian connectivity, proximity to boundaries, boundary treatments and interaction with the existing surrounding land-use pattern.
- Further consideration of the proposals contribution to the character and identity of the neighbourhood.
- Further justification of the proposal in terms of visual impact analysis, use of materials and variety in design.

- Further consideration of urban placemaking, urban assimilation and amenity.
- Further consideration of the proposed layout and finishes. Documentation to include specifications of materials to be used in proposed buildings.
- Further elaboration required for the public open space strategy and quantum and quality of communal open space.
- Further consideration in respect of roads layout proposed, at the access / entrance and through the site. There is a need to adhere to the principles of DMURS.
- Further consideration of units (in particular the apartment units) turning corners, where appropriate and providing passive surveillance of open spaces.
- Dual aspect of certain apartments not clear. Details of the number and percentage of dual and single aspect apartments in the context of the minimum standards set out in 'Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2020). It is important that the proposal meets and preferably exceeds the minimum standards in terms of dual aspect (50%) given the sites location. In the interests of clarity clear delineation / colour coding of floor plans indicating which apartments are considered by the applicant as dual / single aspect.
- There is a need for a detailed housing quality assessment.
- There is a requirement to carry out a daylight, sunlight, overshadowing Assessment as part of any future application.
- Clarification that all items raised by the PA in their report submitted to the Board are addressed, further meetings should be sought to resolve outstanding issues.
- All drawings, reports and documentation should relate to one another and be consistent throughout.
- Cognisance of layout and typology given this is a green field site on the edge of the town. Principle of the style of duplexes and density proposed is common. However the detailed design of is important to ensuring that adequate privacy and defensible space is available around the apartments.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- This is a preliminary proposal. More detailed design, landscaping, materiality will form part of a more detailed stage 3 proposal.
- Will provide more detail to show adherence to relevant policies and PA Opinion at application stage.
- There is only 25% of apartments within the scheme.
- Accepts all concerns raised by PA in their Opinion

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Need for higher density
- Typology of the site requires due care to be paid to design and layout
- Increase of units with own door access and own private space
- Issues need to be addressed around future road connections.
- Concern that the proposal is road dominated.
- Concern with respect to formal layout of the units and long terrace behind the Tesco store.

- Ballinasloe and Tuam are key towns within the County. Applicant should look at examples of type of development units and models from Scandinavia and UK, own door, open space located within centre of the form of the building.
- Regard to be had to higher density and form of development proposed. Lots of models to draw experience from.

3. Transportation & Connectivity

ABP Comments:

- Analysis and assessment of the proposed development in terms of a traffic impact assessment.
- Further consideration and justification of the proposal in terms of omission of a childcare facility within any future proposal. Cognisance that each application is dealt with on a case by case basis and therefore it is imperative issues relating to childcare and community audit are fully considered afresh and are fully justified.
- Further consideration and justification of the car parking quantum and layout, further consideration or justification for perpendicular parking flanking internal access roads.
- Further clarity with respect to phasing, connectivity and overall integration with the wider area.
- Further consideration of how it is proposed to deliver pedestrian and cycle connections to the north of the site and pedestrian connections to existing adjoining and permitted future developments to the south and east and future proposed connection to the west.
- Clarification that issues raised by the planning authority's transportation division are further explored and discussed between the parties and resolved or justified.
- Design Specifications DMURS – New National Cycle Manual to be had regard to. Continuous cycle lanes are required with priority over minor roads at junctions.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- There is a Creche in the adjoining permitted development which is currently under construction. It is to be delivered in the first phase of that development and is within 300 metres of the subject site.
- There are a proliferation of creches in the surrounding area.
- The permitted Creche, in the adjoining development, is within the applicants control. It has capacity to cater to the childcare requirement from the subject scheme.
- There are pedestrian and bicycle path to the creche on adjoining lands via existing infrastructure and to the town centre in general.
- Speed ramps for all roads

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Connectivity to the creche appears all road based.
- Pedestrian and bicycle routes must be included
- Issue with connectivity to SW corner to be addressed
- It is important that connectivity and permeability to adjoining lands is delivered.
- Noted that proposed straight roads could lead to motorists speeding
- Needs robust traffic calming measures in place
- Proposed speed ramps are a retrograde solution

- On street parking to be avoided
- Improvement to disabled access required
- Landscaping to screen parking required
- Parking areas should be broken up
- Streets require hard edges, placemaking and reinforcing passive surveillance.
- Prospective applicant advised to consult Local Area Transport Plan in draft LAP, there is a separate transport plan.

4. Open Space and Landscaping

ABP Comments:

- Further consideration and justification of the proposal in terms of location of public open space.
- Further elaboration required for the public open space strategy and quantum and quality of communal open space.
- Further consideration of a legible and connected green (biodiversity) network, ideally providing a continuous biodiversity corridor through the site.
- Requirement for further cross sections given sloping site, mounding and earth works on the site.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Will provide improved public realm and landscape documents at application stage

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Maintains position set out in Opinion
- Communal and public open space require more active surveillance.
- Pedestrian and cycle access to and through open space is important, open space needs to be useable and high quality.
- Public realm needs to be improved

5. In relation to issues raised in the CE Report.

ABP Comments:

- Further consideration that surface water drainage, water supply and wastewater items raised in the Irish Water (IW) report and the PA's report are fully addressed at application stage.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Currently in discussion with Irish Water with respect to incorporating additional lands to the south.
- Surface water discharges into soak pit
- Wastewater, sub catchment close to pumping station
- Pumping station requires upgrade, this will occur on lands within the ownership of the applicant.
- Will make SUDS upgrades and explore nature based solutions.
- Proposed development in flood Zone C
- Archaeology report will be submitted

- Ecologist preparing AA screening report
- Archaeology report will be submitted
- Hydrologist report will be carried out.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- More SUDS elements to deal with surface water required
- Nature based solutions need to be looked at and are preferred, such as rain gardens.
- Further attention to swales and rain gardens.
- Site is located within 600 m from SPA. Query re screening out for NIS. All documentation to be clear, scientific in nature and fully justified.

6. AOB

ABP Comments:

- There is a need for a construction management plan and a quality audit.
- It is important that any future application is supported by AA Screening and EIAR screening reports. Prospective applicant reminded that NIS should be submitted if significant effects on Natura 2000 sites are likely.
- All reports to have regard to one another and be consistent and accurate.
- Consideration that the SHD process does not allow for further information, only in exceptional circumstances, it is imperative that all information is clear and of a high quality and accurate to ensure the Board can make an informed decision.

Prospective Applicant's Comments:

- Further consideration to be given to material contravention issues.
- Concerns raised of timing of an application and dealing with existing and new plans.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Recognised difficulties of prospective applicant caused by falling between two plans
- Prospective applicant reminded that density requirement has risen and not as much lands are zoned.
- Population projection of 2000 people for Ballinasloe.
- The start of a new CDP and LAP period and conscious that any proposal has regard to this.

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.
- A Schedule of Documents and Drawings should be submitted with the Application.
- 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.

Stephen O'Sullivan,
Assistant Director of Planning
May 2022