



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting TC0004

Case Reference / Description	Construction of 113 no. new dwelling houses. Truskey East, Bearna, Galway.		
Case Type	Section 5 Pre-Application Consultation Request		
Meeting	1 st Meeting		
Date:	4 th September, 2017	Start Time	14:30
Location	Galway County Council	End Time	16:40
Chairperson	Tom Rabbette	Executive Officer	Lianna Slowey

Representing An Bord Pleanála:

Tom Rabbette, Assistant Director of Planning
Una Crosse, Senior Planning Inspector
Lianna Slowey, Executive Officer

Representing Prospective Applicant:

Michael Burke, Burkeway Homes
Fred Fullard, Burkeway Homes
Therese Pender, Architect
David O'Connell, Architect
Brian Whyte, Landscape Architect
Andrew McDermott, Traffic
Gus McCarthy, Planning
Colm Harte, Planning

Representing Planning Authority

Valerie Loughnane, Senior Planner
John Costello, Executive Engineer, Roads and Transportation

Martina Connaughton, Senior Executive Engineer, Water
John Kearns, Executive Engineer, Housing
Maria Flaherty, Housing
Eileen Keaveney, Administrative Officer, Planning

Introduction

The representatives of An Bord Pleanála (ABP) welcomed the prospective applicant and planning authority (PA) representatives, introductions were made. The procedural matters relating to this 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 PA on 22nd August, 2017 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 they may 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 meeting nor 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 27th July, 2017 formally requesting pre-application consultations with ABP and acknowledged the level of detail submitted. It was also noted that the Inspector dealing with the Pre-Application Consultation Request would be different to that who would deal with the application when it is submitted.

Agenda

1. Principle of Proposal, Zoning Provisions and Planning History
2. Design, Density, Layout and Open Space
3. Pedestrian Connectivity to Bearna Village Centre and Transportation, Access and Traffic
4. Community Gain
5. Drainage and Flooding
6. Childcare Assessment
7. Any other matters

1. Principle of Proposal, Zoning Provisions and Planning History

ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:

- Environmental Management Zone (EMZ) within the site.
- PA's opinion in relation to the above matter and development within the EMZ.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- The site is designated as Phase 1 Residential and EMZ, which is subject to flood risk assessment.
- 7 no. houses are situated within the EMZ.
- Area of the EMZ is wider than the flood plain or flood risk area.
- The stream on site is for the most part located within a gorge.
- Linear park is proposed within the EMZ area.

Planning Authority's comments:

- A new Bearna Local Area Plan (LAP) is being prepared as a variation to the current Galway County Development Plan.
- Any proposal for development within EMZ will be subject to a flood risk assessment.
- Core strategy of the plan is to provide housing for up to 420 people or 161 units. Approx. 15 units have been granted planning permission to date since the adoption of the core strategy.

2. Design, Density, Layout and Open Space

ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:

- Rationale for the density proposed in the context of national guidance and minimum densities given therein.
- Design of open space.
- PA's opinion in relation to the matter.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Density figure is in line with existing neighbouring residential developments.
- Open space proposed is 25% of overall site area, if the area under the EMZ is omitted this figure is reduced to 15%.
- Plot ratio is in line with the LAP's zoning objective.
- Design includes a variation of 20 house types within the proposed development.
- Design had regard to multiple aspects, appropriately turns corners, generally avoids north facing gardens.
- Held public consultation with adjacent housing estate and responded to concerns re. set back distances.
- Intend to make a feature of the stream along the central corridor, cul de sac arrangement proposed off this corridor.
- Landscaping proposed – native species and what is naturally on site, especially along the stream, moving towards more manicured landscaping at active spaces such as lawns and play areas.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- No issue with the density proposed - existing housing estate adjoining the proposed development site, existing density/pattern of development in the area.
- Core strategy within LAP to deliver residential units for a population of up to 420 people by the year 2021.
- Pockets of units within the design do not benefit from overlooking open space.
- Need to address turning corners.
- Potential difficulties with taking in charge of play areas, requirement for a management company.
- Open space proposed complies with objectives of LAP.

3. Pedestrian Connectivity to Bearna Village Centre and Transportation, Access and Traffic**ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Compliance with DMURS re. pedestrian connectivity to village centre.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- No space to provide a footpath along the public road from the site to Bearna village. Lands within verge are in private ownership.
- A sewer connection is to be provided from the site to the centre of the village, the prospective applicant is willing to provide a footpath as part of these works.
- Continuation of linear park constrained by lands in private ownership.

Planning Authority's comments:

- PA is not in a position to CPO lands for pedestrian connection.
- Road not wide enough to provide a footpath and a carriageway.
- Footpath would be less than 1m in width, not advisable.
- Road alignment is good, speed is low – shared space pedestrian use preferable to a substandard footpath.
- Continuation of public lighting along road into Bearna village would provide better pedestrian connection.
- Reinforce signage highlighting speed limit / “warning pedestrian” signs to drivers.
- Entrances to existing houses along the public road are set back but verges are on private lands.
- No current plan or funding to continue pathway along the river.
- Junction at public road considered adequate.
- No issue with internal road layout per say, some concern re. position of ramps and the inclusion of gravel driveways.
- Suggest autotrack analysis be carried out and a road safety audit prepared re. internal roads for future, i.e. if PA are taking in charge.

4. Community Gain**ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- PA's provision for Community Gain in LAP.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Bearna LAP amended in 2012 re. requirement for community gain with provision for financial contribution in lieu.
- Linear park is envisioned to become part of wider public open space area.
- Precedence for PA to take in charge roads but not parks or playgrounds.

Planning Authority's comments:

- Suggest enhanced public space, objective provides for pedestrian and cyclist routes.
- Previous application on site was to deliver a school site.
- Difficulties likely with taking in charge proposed astro pitch, putting green, playground with structures or frames – insurance.

5. Drainage and Flooding**ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Sewage/decommissioning of existing services on site.
- Flooding potential on portions of the site.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- Sewage – Irish Water have confirmed capacity.
- Connection to public sewer and surface water drainage stops short of the site.
- Prospective applicant's proposals in line with PA's recommendations.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Irish Water Statement of Feasibility included with request for Pre-Application Consultations.
- Foul water – proposed to join existing connection along local road.
- Surface water – 4 separate attenuation tanks at accepted surface water run-off rates with petrol interceptors/gravity feed.
- Current proposal is to connect to stream at standard greenfield site run-off rate.
- Flooding – stream on site along slope, 7m in difference from north to south, complicated earthworks, aiming to keep site as close to existing conditions.
- Flood modelling and assessments carried out for identified areas, i.e. around proposed putting green, in terms of 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood event.

6. Childcare Assessment**ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- No provision for childcare facility within proposed development.
- PA's opinion in relation to the above matter.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- 3 purpose built childcare facilities in Bearna village have spare capacity at present.

Planning Authority's Comments:

- No particular issue in this instance

7. Any other matters**ABP sought further elaboration/discussion on:**

- Linguistic Assessment
- Part V provision

Planning Authority's comments:

- Linguistic Assessment required as part of application within the Gaeltacht.
- Prospective applicant's report as provided is acceptable.
- Requirement for 20% of residential units to be reserved for Irish speakers. Potential buyers must complete Irish language test in order to be deemed eligible by PA.
- Part V – agreement in principle reached in July 2017.
- Part V costings to be fully agreed before application can be submitted.

Prospective Applicant's response:

- Expressed concern re. uncertainty with new Irish language requirements and mortgage lenders.
- Part V – expressed concern re. publication of commercially sensitive details.

ABP Comments with regard to application:

- Development within the EMZ requires further justification.
- Proposed density requires further justification.
- Details of adjoining permissions granted for residential developments to be provided.
- Greater degree of clarity re. treatment of pocket parks required.
- Pedestrian connection to Bearna village and compliance with DMURS to be addressed.
- Transport infrastructure – outline clearly who will deliver/when it will be delivered.
- Outline rationale of community gain element.
- Taking in charge drawing to be provided.
- Potential impact of flooding to be addressed.

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.
- Prescribed Bodies to be notified in advance of lodging the application.

- Sample notices, application form and procedures will be made available on ABP's website (sample copy of newspaper and site notice to be emailed following the meeting).
- 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
September, 2017