



An
Bord
Pleanála

**S. 6(7) of Planning and
Development (Housing)
and Residential Tenancies
Act 2016**

**Inspector's Report on
Recommended Opinion
ABP-305869-19**

Strategic Housing Development

201 no. residential units in 5 no. apartment buildings and associated works.

Location

Site to the northwest of the Dublin Road, north of the Southgate Centre and south west of Grange Rath. Drogheda. Co. Meath.

Planning Authority

Meath County Council

Prospective Applicant

Rockmill Ltd.

Date of Consultation Meeting

18th December 2019

Date of Site Inspection

5th December 2019

Inspector

Sarah Moran

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Having regard to the consultation that has taken place in relation to the proposed development and also having regard to the submissions from the planning authority, the purpose of this report is to form a recommended opinion as to whether the documentation submitted with the consultation request under section 5(5) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 - (i) constitutes a reasonable basis for an application under section 4, or (ii) requires further consideration and amendment in order to constitute a reasonable basis for an application under section 4.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1. The site is located at the southern periphery of Drogheda, c. 2 km from McBride Railway Station. It is immediately adjacent to the Southgate Shopping Centre at the junction of the R132 Dublin Road and Colpe Road. The site has a stated area of c. 1.67 ha and is cleared, undeveloped lands at present with some mature trees at the Dublin Road frontage. The Southgate Centre is occupied by a mix of retail, employment and community uses, also apartments at the eastern side of the centre. The remainder of the surrounding area is predominantly suburban residential development. The site is bound as follows:

- Two storey housing in Park Crescent to the north, within the larger Grange Rath development.
- The Southgate Centre to the east. There is an existing access road serving the Southgate Centre along the eastern site boundary, which connects to the Dublin Road at a signalised junction.
- Frontage to the R132 Dublin Road to the south. There is a bus stop adjacent to the site and cycle tracks in both directions along this stretch of the R132.
- Housing within Park Heights and on the Dublin Road to the west. A two storey childcare facility also adjoins the western site boundary.

3.0 Proposed Strategic Housing Development

3.1. The proposed development involves 201 no. apartments as follows:

UNIT TYPE	NO. OF UNITS	%
1 bed	53	26%
2 bed	132	66%
3 bed	16	8%
TOTAL	201	

The development has a stated net residential density of c. 121 units/ha based on a development area of c. 1.67 ha. It is laid out as 5 no. 5 storey apartment blocks around a central open space. The scheme also includes:

- Total public open space provision of 0.28 ha, 17% of the total site area. Includes a play area.
- 201 no. basement car parking spaces and 196 no. cycle parking spaces at surface level.
- New east / west pedestrian and cycle linkage across the site between the Dublin Road and the Grange Rath development, at the site boundary shared with the Southgate Centre.
- Vehicular access from an existing roundabout at Park Crescent to the north of the site. Additional emergency access from the access road to the Southgate Centre at the eastern site boundary.
- Part V proposals comprising transfer of 21 no. apartments, all in Block 5 (5 no. 1 bed, 13 no. 2 bed and 3 no. 3 bed).
- New connection to the public water supply and sewer.
- The applicant has submitted an EIA screening report and an AA screening report.

3.2. The site is located on lands zoned C1 'To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses', where there is a requirement for at least 30% of a given site area to be for commercial (non-retail) development. The applicant has submitted a

masterplan for the development site to address this zoning objective. The following points of same are noted:

- The masterplan relates to the totality of the C1 zoned lands at this location including the Southgate Centre and the existing childcare facility to the north of the development site.
- The masterplan analyses the land uses at the overall C1 zoned lands at present, including a detailed breakdown of floorspace at the Southgate Centre. It states that all parts of the masterplan area are under the control of the applicant.
- At present c. 47% of the Southgate Centre floorspace is in non-retail commercial use, which equates to c. 28% of the overall C1 masterplan lands.
- Taking into account the current provision of commercial, non-retail uses including the childcare facility and the commercial, non-retail space within the Southgate Centre, c. 35% of the overall masterplan site is already in commercial, non-retail use.
- There is a proposed future expansion of the Southgate Centre which includes an anchor store retail extension (c. 1,672 sq.m.), additional office space (c. 1,500 sq.m.) and an aparthotel (c. 45 units). This will further tilt the balance on the Southgate Centre towards non-retail commercial uses.
- It is submitted that the objective of achieving an appropriate mix of residential and commercial uses within the C1 zoned lands will be achieved with the proposed SHD.
- The applicant submits a Technical Note on car parking, which demonstrates that adequate car parking for the future extension of the Southgate Centre can be provided within the existing curtilage of the centre.

4.0 **Planning History**

4.1. **LB171243**

- 4.1.1. Permission granted on part of the development site for an 80 space surface car park to serve the Southgate Shopping Centre, accessed via a roundabout in the existing access road off the R132 (Dublin Road), also associated site development works

including surface water drainage, street lighting, boundary fencing, road signage and markings, footpaths and landscaping.

4.2. **SA/100928 PL 17.238119**

- 4.2.1. Permission granted by the Board for an 80 space surface car park and associated site development works including surface water drainage, street lighting, boundary fencing, road signage and markings, footpaths and landscaping, including retention of planning permission for alterations to the internal access arrangements to the surface/undercroft car park off the R132 including the provision of a roundabout and or alterations to the layout and configuration of the car park from that originally permitted under the SA/40196 PL 17.212344 (the original permission for the Southgate Shopping Centre) and subsequently amended by SA/60665, to provide for a total of 649 no. spaces.

5.0 **National and Local Planning Policy**

5.1. **Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines**

- 5.1.1. Having considered the nature of the proposal, the receiving environment and the documentation on file, including the submissions from the planning authority, I am of the opinion that the directly relevant section 28 Ministerial Guidelines are:

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (including the associated Urban Design Manual)
- Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (including the associated Technical Appendices)
- Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities

5.2. **National Planning Framework**

- 5.3. The NPF seeks to achieve compact urban growth by targeting a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing 'footprint' of built-up areas and plans for growth of 490,000 to 500,000 people in the Eastern

and Midlands Region. Section 3.2 of the Framework notes that the key driver for the Louth / North East area is the Dublin-Belfast cross-border network, focused on Drogheda, Dundalk and Newry and states that it will be necessary to prepare co-ordinated strategies for Dundalk and Drogheda at both regional and town level to ensure that they have the capacity to grow sustainably and secure investment as key centres on the cross-border network. A focused approach to compact, sequential and sustainable development of the larger urban areas along the Dublin – Belfast economic and transport corridor is identified as a key policy priority for the Eastern and Midland Region. National Policy Objective (NPO) 2b:

The regional roles of Athlone in the Midlands, Sligo and Letterkenny in the North-West and the Letterkenny-Derry and Drogheda-Dundalk-Newry cross-border networks will be identified and supported in the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

NPO 7 relating to a tailored approach to urban development includes cross-border networks focused on Drogheda-Dundalk-Newry on the Dublin-Belfast corridor. NPO 44 states:

In co-operation with relevant Departments in Northern Ireland, to further support and develop the economic potential of the Dublin-Belfast Corridor and in particular the core Drogheda-Dundalk-Newry network and to promote and enhance its international visibility.

There is a related objective:

Effectively planning and developing large centres of population and employment along the main economic corridor, including in particular Drogheda and Dundalk;

5.4. National Development Plan

- 5.4.1. The National Development Plan provides for investment to support the ambition for development of the border region, including an examination of opportunities for improvements in journey times and investment in high-speed rail links between Belfast, Dublin and Cork. The delivery of priority elements of the DART Expansion Programme including high frequency services to Drogheda is identified as an investment action with the DART extension to Drogheda indicated in Figure 5.3 Greater Dublin Area Public Transport Network 2027.

5.5. **Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly 2019-2031**

- 5.5.1. Drogheda is identified as a Regional Growth Centre in the RSES, which identifies the continued sustainable and compact growth of the town as a key priority with a target population of 50,000 by 2031. The objective is to provide for the regeneration of the town centre and the compact planned and co-ordinated growth of the town's hinterland along with enhancing Drogheda's role as a self-sustaining strategic employment centre on the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor. The adoption of a statutory Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP), to be jointly prepared by Louth County Council and Meath County Council will be a priority. The joint UAP is to provide for a co-ordinated planning framework to identify and deliver strategic sites and regeneration areas so that a minimum of 30% compact growth can be achieved. It will identify a functional urban area and plan boundary for the plan area and strategic housing and employment development areas and infrastructure investment requirements to promote greater co-ordination and sequential delivery of serviced lands for development.

5.6. **Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019**

- 5.6.1. The Development Plan core strategy identifies Drogheda Environs as a Large Growth Town I at the top of the settlement hierarchy, along with Navan. Objective SS OBJ 8 applies:

To develop Navan and the Drogheda Environs as the primary development centres in Meath and to ensure that the settlements grow in a manner that is balanced, self-sufficient and supports a compact urban form and the integration of land use and transport.

Table 2.4 of the core strategy indicates a target of 857 no. residential units for Drogheda environs for the plan period, with an average net density of 43 units / ha.

- 5.6.2. Development plan Variation no. 2, adopted on 19th May 2014 includes policies for Drogheda Southern Environs as an update to the LAP for the Southern Environs of Drogheda. It introduces land use zoning objectives and an order of priority for the release of zoned lands across the county. Strategic Policy SP1 for Drogheda Environs, as set out in Variation No. 2 states:

To operate an Order of Priority for the release of residential lands in compliance with the requirements of CS OBJ 6 of the County Development Plan as follows:

- (i) The lands identified with an A2 'New Residential' land use zoning objective correspond with the requirements of Table 2.4 Housing Allocation & Zoned Land Requirements in Volume I of this County Development Plan and are available for residential development within the life of this Development Plan.*
- (ii) The lands identified with an A2 'New Residential' land use zoning objective but qualified as 'Residential Phase II (Post 2019)' are not available for residential development within the life of this Development Plan.*

Section 3.3 of Variation no. 2 states:

It should be noted that the inclusion of lands in Phase II which is indicated as being required beyond the life of the present County Development Plan i.e. post 2019, does not infer a prior commitment on the part of Meath County Council regarding their future zoning for residential or employment purposes during the review of the present plan and preparation of a new County Development Plan expected to occur during the 2017 – 2019 period.

Variation no. 2 also states in relation to the Phase II lands:

The timeline for the release, if appropriate, of these lands will be considered post 2019 in accordance with the relevant Meath County Development Plan in place at that time.

- 5.6.3. The site is zoned C1 Mixed Use with the objective 'To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses'. The following guidance is provided:

C1 land use zoning objectives are only considered appropriate in the higher tier settlement centres (Moderate Sustainable Growth Town and upwards as identified in the Core Strategy).

The preparation of statutory land use plans for Navan, Drogheda and Dunboyne shall facilitate opportunities for high density mixed use employment generating activities whilst supporting appropriate levels of residential development. These areas shall be located in proximity to high frequency public transport corridors.

C1 zones have been identified to encourage mixed use development and for this reason it will be a requirement to include at least 30% of a given site area for commercial (non retail) development.

There shall be no restriction to the definition of office in C1 land use zones. Office shall include Class 2 and Class 3 as referred to in Part 4 Exempted Development – Classes of Uses contained in the Second Schedule of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

5.7. Draft Meath County Development Plan 2020-2027

- 5.7.1. The draft Meath County Development Plan 2020-2027 went on public display on 18th December. The core strategy states the following in relation to Drogheda:

While there have been a number of meetings between Senior Officials from Meath and Louth County Councils, at the time of writing the timeframe for the preparation of a Joint Urban Area Plan had not been agreed. It is acknowledged that any amendments of the land use zoning strategy for the Southern Environs of Drogheda would be premature pending the preparation of this Joint Plan. However, the Council also recognises that Drogheda is one of the principal areas for population and economic growth in the Eastern and Midland Region outside Dublin.

Taking this into account it is important that land use availability is reflective of its position in the settlement hierarchy and its anticipated role in the future growth and development of the Region, which is to act as a regional driver of economic growth. The ‘Residential Phase II’ designation on the A2 ‘New Residential’ lands in the Southern Environs of Drogheda has therefore been removed with these A2 ‘New Residential’ lands retained and being made available for development.

This ‘transitional arrangement’ will ensure there is sufficient land available to facilitate population growth and economic development based on its designation as a Regional Growth Centre. As part of the Joint Urban Area process a more detailed examination of the quantum of residential and employment zoned lands, in addition to open space and community infrastructure, will be carried out. Pending the completion of this process the Council will closely monitor development activity in the area.

- 5.7.2. The settlement strategy states in relation to Drogheda:

The Southern Environs of Drogheda is located in Meath. In 2016 this area had a population of 6,527, which was 16% of the total population (40,956).

In recognition of the importance of preparing a coherent and co-ordinated strategy that will ensure the town can develop to its maximum potential, the RSES requires the preparation of a Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP) for Drogheda by Meath and Louth County Council.

The RSES recognises the contribution that the Southern Environs of Drogheda can make to the economic development and the creation of a sustainable community due to the availability of enterprise and employment lands in strategic locations close to residential areas.

6.0 Forming of the Opinion

6.1. Pursuant to section 6(7) of the Act of 2016, regard is had in the forming of the opinion to the documentation submitted by the prospective applicant; the planning authority submissions and the discussions which took place during the tripartite consultation meeting. I shall provide a brief detail on each of these elements hereunder.

6.2. Documentation Submitted

6.2.1. The prospective applicant has submitted information pursuant to section 5(5)(a) of the Planning & Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 and Article 285 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017. This information included, inter alia, the following:

Completed Application Form; Planning Report/ Statement of Consistency with Planning Policy; EIA Screening Report/ Environmental Report; Masterplan for C1 zoned lands at Southgate; Architectural Drawings including Site Location Map, Site Layout Plan and Schedule of Accommodation; Architectural Design Statement; Part V proposals including an Estimate of Costs; Landscape Drawings including Landscape Masterplan, Boundary Treatment Plan and Landscape Report; Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Survey and Arboricultural Method Statement; Infrastructure Design Report; Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment; Engineering drawings; Traffic and Transport Assessment; DMURS Consistency

Statement; Archaeological Assessment Report; Appropriate Assessment Screening Report; Energy Statement and Utility Services Review; Site Lighting Layout and Utilities layout; Sunlight and Daylight assessment report.

6.2.2. Section 5(5)(b) of the Act of 2016 requires the submission of a statement that, in the prospective applicant's opinion, the proposal is consistent with both the relevant objectives of the development plan or local area plan concerned, and the relevant guidelines issued by the Minister under section 28 of the Act of 2000. These statements have been submitted, as required.

6.2.3. I have reviewed and considered all of the above-mentioned documents and drawings.

6.3. Planning Authority Submission

6.3.1. In compliance with section 6(4)(b) of the 2016 Act the planning authority for the area in which the proposed development is located, Meath County Council, submitted a copy of their section 247 consultations with the prospective applicant and also their opinion in relation to the proposal. These were received by An Bord Pleanála on the 5th December 2019. The planning authority's 'opinion' included the following matters:

- The proposed development complies with the requirements of the C1 zoning objective. The submitted masterplan is noted in this regard.
- The PA submits an overview of residential zoned lands in the Drogheda Environs which details extant permissions, units completed / under construction and outlines the balance of the core strategy housing allocation remaining. The remaining Phase I zoned lands could potentially yield 1,914 residential units if developed at a density of 43 units/ha. Under this scenario, there would be a balance of 186 units on Phase I zoned lands when the extant units are taken into account.
- The draft County Development Plan 2020 goes on public display on 18th December 2019. The submission includes statements from the core strategy, as quoted above, which indicate that the joint UAP for Drogheda is pending and that, in the interim, lands currently zoned Phase II are to be made available for development as a transitional arrangement.

- The proposed density is high at 121 units/ ha but is considered appropriate for the subject site due to its location along a public transport corridor adjoining a bus stop and adjacent to neighbourhood facilities at Southgate. The planning authority notes that ABP recently granted permission for an SHD on C1 zoned lands in Navan under ABP-304840-19 where the density was 105 units /ha.
- The public open space provision of 17% of the site area exceeds the standard of 15% development plan standard. Detailed layout required to show clear distinction between public and private open spaces. Full details of boundaries are also required.
- Meath County Council Transportation Dept comment appears to refer to the development permitted under LB171243, i.e. an 80 space car park.
- Meath County Council Public Lighting Section. Proposed public lighting design is not to the required standard and must be compatible with the landscaping design.
- The development broadly meets the requirements of the Meath County Council Water Services Section. Some specific details are required.
- Meath County Council Environment Section. Requires further details of waste management including construction waste. Recommends conditions. No objections in relation to fluvial flood risk with regard to the submitted SSFRA.
- Meath County Council Housing Section notes that all Part V units are located in Block 5 as proposed by the Housing Section during S247 consultation.
- ABP requested to refer the SHD to Meath County Childcare Committee.
- Meath County Council Conservation Officer states no objections subject to archaeological test trenching being carried out. No objection in relation to architectural heritage.
- The planning authority notes that no Ecological Impact Assessment is submitted.

6.4. Louth County Council Submission

- 6.4.1. The development site is adjacent to the Co. Meath / Co. Louth border. Accordingly, Louth County Council were invited to make observations on the proposed development under section 6(10) of the Act. A submission was received on 16th December 2019. The following points of same are noted.

- It is noted that under the current Meath County Development Plan the development site is not subject to any site specific objective or phasing objective that restricts the delivery of residential development on the lands or seeks to phase the delivery of same.
- The NPF emphasises the need to prepare co-ordinated strategies for Dundalk and Drogheda at both regional and town level. Under the NPF, the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017 will be replaced by the strategic Drogheda Urban Plan with Meath County Council.
- The development site is considered appropriate for new residential development given its proximity to existing employment and retail development, social and community infrastructure, public transport including Drogheda train station and bus services on the Dublin Road and the site's location within the existing built up area of Drogheda. Notwithstanding the above, the lands are considered to be premature pending the preparation of the joint Urban Area Plan for Drogheda and the Meath County Council area south of Drogheda.
- The submission refers to the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area 2007, which was jointly prepared by Louth County Council and Meath County Council. The development site was not specifically identified for development under the strategy.
- It is noted that an urban design framework plan was prepared in line with policy objective BA 1. However, this has no statutory basis as an urban design framework plan and was not adopted as a variation to the Meath County Development Plan and therefore does not meet with the objective of the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area 2007 or the statutory Meath County Development Plan.
- Louth County Council Environment Section. Applicant must demonstrate how the development will comply with Louth County Council waste management policy. The application should demonstrate how the development will incorporate the contents of the national policy 'Climate Action Plan 2019'.
- The development will result in increased traffic along the R132 and along the Marsh Road to the Bull Ring junctions resulting in significant demands on the

capacity of these junctions. The minimum requirement to grant of planning permission from the Louth County Council infrastructure point of view is:

“The applicant shall contribute towards the implementation of an ‘adaptive’ traffic light system to optimise the junction capacity along the R132 (including the Bull Ring) in Drogheda. The applicant shall provide prior to commencement a contribution of €125,000 towards this purpose.”

6.5. Irish Water

6.5.1. The submission of Irish Water states that it has issued a Confirmation of Feasibility 210 no. residential units at this site subject to the following:

- In order to accommodate the proposed connection, upgrade works are required to increase the capacity of the Irish Water network. Approximately 350m of existing 150mm watermain is required to be upgraded to 200ID. A cross connection is also required between the existing 150mm and 400mm watermains on R132. Irish Water does not currently have plans to carry out the works required to provide the necessary upgrade and capacity, therefore, all costs of any upgrade will be borne by the developer.
- Based on the details provided by the applicant there is sufficient capacity to discharge to the 900mm Foul network, to the north of the site and the railway line, however, the applicant will be required to provide the following at connection application stage:
 - As-built drawings for the adjacent estate confirming discharge to the 900mm Foul sewer north of the railway line.
 - Capacity/ condition report for the 3rd party infrastructure in the estate between the premise and the 900mm IW Foul Sewer
 - Permission from the 3rd party to connect to this infrastructure and vesting of the Arterial Route to Irish Water.

6.6. Consultation Meeting

6.6.1. A section 5 Consultation meeting took place at the offices of An Bord Pleanála on the 18th December 2019. Representatives of the prospective applicant, the planning authority and An Bord Pleanála were in attendance. An agenda was issued by An Bord Pleanála prior to the meeting.

6.6.2. The main topics raised for discussion at the tripartite meeting were based on the Agenda that issued in advance and contained the following issues:

1. Meath County Development Plan zoning objective and core strategy.
2. Relevant policies and objectives under the current development plan and draft plan
3. Residential design and layout
4. Roads and traffic impacts
5. Site Services and Flood Risk
6. Any other matters

6.6.3. In relation to the Meath County Development Plan zoning objectives, ABP representatives sought further elaboration / discussion on:

- Strategic development plan objectives relating to the development site including Phase II lands and the C1 zoning objective.
- Status of the current County Development Plan and the timeline for the new development plan
- Issue of prematurity with regard to the submission of Louth County Council and the preparation of the joint UAP

6.6.4. In relation to residential design and layout, ABP representatives sought further elaboration / discussion on:

- Design and layout including the provision of public open space between the apartment blocks
- Variation of levels between the site and surrounding areas.
- Permeability, particularly pedestrian connectivity with the Southgate shopping centre
- Quantum of dual aspect units in accordance with the Apartment Guidelines.

6.6.5. In relation to roads and traffic impacts, ABP representatives sought further elaboration / discussion on:

- Scope of TTIA, to include potential impacts on road junctions in Co. Louth.

- Pedestrian and cycle connections between the development and the Southgate Centre
- Applicant to provide clarity as to who is to carry out required road works and to include in red line site boundary if possible.
- Consultation with Louth County Council regarding necessary road works in Co. Louth and related development contributions.
- Applicant to justify proposed quantum of car parking provision in the context of parking available at the Southgate Centre, also provide details of parking management.

6.6.6. In relation to site services and flood risk, ABP representatives sought further elaboration / discussion on:

- Proposed surface water management measures and flood risk.

6.6.7. In relation to any other matters, ABP representatives sought further elaboration / discussion on:

- Childcare provision with regard to relevant national policy in the Childcare Guidelines and the Apartment Guidelines.

6.6.8. Both the prospective applicant and the planning authority were given an opportunity to comment and respond to the issues raised by the representatives of ABP. Those comments and responses are recorded in the 'Record of Meeting ABP-305869-19' which is on file. I have fully considered the responses and comments of the prospective applicant and planning authority in preparing the Recommended Opinion hereunder.

7.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

7.1. Based on the entirety of the information before me, it would appear that the proposed development falls within the definition of Strategic Housing Development, as set out in section 3 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.

- 7.2. I have examined all of the information and submissions before me including the documentation submitted by the prospective applicant, the submissions of the planning authority and the discussions which took place at the tripartite meeting. I have had regard to both national policy, via the section 28 Ministerial Guidelines, and local policy, via the statutory development plan for the area.
- 7.3. Having regard to all of the above, I recommend that the Board serve a notice on the prospective applicant, pursuant to Section 6(7)(b) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, stating that it is of the opinion that the documentation submitted with the consultation request under section 5(5) of the Act constitutes a reasonable basis for an application under section 4 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.
- 7.4. I would also recommend that the prospective applicant be notified, pursuant to article 285(5)(b) of the 2017 Regulations, that specified information (as outlined hereunder) be submitted with any application for permission that may follow. I believe the specified information will assist the Board at application stage in its decision making process. I am also recommending that a number of prescribed bodies (as listed hereunder) be notified by the prospective applicant of the making of the application.

8.0 Recommended Opinion

- 8.1. An Bord Pleanála refers to your request pursuant to section 5 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016. Section 6(7)(a) of the Act provides that the Board shall form an opinion as to whether the documents submitted with the consultation request (i) constitute a reasonable basis for an application under section 4 of the Act, or (ii) require further consideration and amendment in order to constitute a reasonable basis for an application under section 4.
- 8.2. Following consideration of the issues raised during the consultation process and having regard to the opinion of the planning authority, and submissions received from statutory consultees referred to under Section 6(10) of the Act, An Bord Pleanála is of the opinion that the documentation submitted **would constitute a reasonable basis for an application** for strategic housing development to An Bord Pleanála.

8.3. Pursuant to article 285(5)(b) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017, the prospective applicant is hereby notified that, in addition to the requirements as specified in articles 297 and 298 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017, the following specific information should be submitted with any application for permission:

1. Rationale for the proposed entirely residential development on C1 zoned lands to address the housing need in the area, residential density, housing mix and adjacent land uses in the context of local and national policy objectives for the development of Drogheda and the overall development of the C1 zoned lands at this location.
2. A report that specifically addresses the proposed materials and finishes to the scheme including specific detailing of finishes, the treatment of balconies in the apartment buildings, landscaped areas, pathways, entrances and boundary treatment/s. Particular regard should be had to the requirement to provide high quality and sustainable finishes and details which seek to create a distinctive character for the development. The report should also demonstrate that the development provides the optimal architectural solution and sustainable development of the site and in this regard, the proposed development shall be accompanied by an architectural report and accompanying drawings which outlines the design rationale for the proposed height and design strategy having regard to inter alia, national and local planning policy, the site's context and locational attributes.
3. A site layout plan that clearly indicates pedestrian connectivity from the subject site to and through the site to the Southgate Shopping Centre, indicating pedestrian routes including through the adjacent lands outside the development site boundary.
4. Housing Quality Assessment with regard to relevant national and local planning policy on residential development.
5. A life cycle report shall be submitted in accordance with section 6.3 of the Sustainable Urban housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2018). The

report should have regard to the long term management and maintenance of the proposed development.

6. Rationale for proposed public open space provision with regard to national and local planning policy on residential development.
7. Comprehensive landscaping proposals to include details of hard and soft landscaping, play equipment (if provided), boundary treatments, delineation of public and communal open space provision, pedestrian and cycle facilities, public lighting, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, tree protection measures, car and cycle parking areas and refuse storage areas.
8. Topographical survey of the site and detailed cross sections to indicate existing and proposed ground levels across the site, proposed FFL's, road levels, open space levels, drainage infrastructure, landscaping, etc. relative to each other and relative to adjacent lands and structures including public roads.
9. Daylight/Sunlight analysis, showing an acceptable level of residential amenity for future occupiers of the proposed development, which includes details on the standards achieved within the proposed residential units, in private and shared open space, and in public areas within the development. The analysis should also consider potential overshadowing impacts on adjoining residential areas.
10. Rationale for proposed parking provision with regard to development plan parking standards and to the 'Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2018), to consider the existing and proposed car parking provision in the context of the available car parking at the Southgate Centre and the existing and projected demand for same with regard to current and proposed land uses at the Centre, also details of car parking management.
11. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment with photomontages, to include, *inter alia*, consideration of visual impacts on the Dublin Road, the Colpe Road and surrounding residential areas.
12. Traffic and Transport Impact Analysis, to be prepared in consultation with Louth County Council.

13. Road Safety Audit and Quality Audit
14. Archaeological Impact Assessment to be prepared in consultation with the National Monuments Service.
15. Rationale for proposed childcare provision (or omission of same) with regard to, inter alia, the 'Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities', circular letter PL 3/2016, and the 'Sustainable Urban Housing Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2018), to provide details of existing childcare facilities in the area and demand for childcare provision within the proposed scheme. The applicant is advised to consult with the relevant Childcare Committee in relation to this matter prior to the submission of any application.
16. AA Screening Report
17. Water infrastructure proposals to meet the requirements outlined in the submission on file of Irish Water dated 12th December 2019.

8.4. Pursuant to article 285(5)(a) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017, the prospective applicant is informed that the following authorities should be notified in the event of the making of an application arising from this notification in accordance with section 8(1)(b) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016:

1. Irish Water
2. Transport Infrastructure Ireland
3. National Transport Authority
4. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
5. An Taisce-the National Trust for Ireland
6. The Heritage Council
7. Failte Ireland
8. An Comhairle Ealaíonn
9. Meath and Louth County Childcare Committees

10. Louth County Council

PLEASE NOTE:

Under section 6(9) of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016, neither the holding of a consultation under section 6, nor the forming of an opinion under that section, shall prejudice the performance by the Board, or the planning authority or authorities in whose area the proposed strategic housing development would be situated, of any other of their respective functions under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2016 or any other enactment and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in legal proceedings.

Sarah Moran

Senior Planning Inspector

16th January 2020