



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Addendum Report ABP-306560-20

To: Drafting/ The Board

From: Paul O'Brien, Inspectorate

Re: The construction of a single-storey supermarket including off-licence area, coffee-shop, plaza, enhanced public realm area and landscaping. New vehicular entrance to/ from the Royal Oak Road, electricity sub-station, bin storage area, signage car and bicycle parking and all associated site works.

Location: Royal Oak Road, Moneybeg, Bagnelstown, Co. Carlow.

Date: 1st May 2020

6.6 Further Comment by the Planning Authority:

I note the contents of the memo received on the 1st of May 2020 with regards to the received response of Carlow County Council, which is signed and dated 24th of March 2020.

The grounds of appeal are noted by the Planning Authority and the following are the issues raised in response:

- The site is suitably zoned for the development of 'appropriately scaled neighbouring convenience development'.
- There is capacity for additional convenience retail provision and the Retail Strategy seeks to develop the identified opportunity sites for retail use.
- The site was deemed suitable for development in terms of the sequential test for site selection and the site is adjacent to the town centre with easy access to and from the site/ town centre.
- The design of the development was revised, and it is now considered to be acceptable as well as appropriate in this location in Muine Bheag. Consideration was made having regard to applications on adjacent sites.
- No issues of concern were raised by the Carlow County Council Transportation Department regarding the proposed road/ junction layout following the receipt of further information. A priority junction is appropriate in this location and traffic flows do not warrant the provision of a central reservation here for right turning traffic.

6.7 Further Comment by the Applicant

I note the contents of the memo received on the 1st of May 2020 with regards to the received response of TBP on behalf of the applicant, in response to the comments made by Mr Connolly in his appeal. The letter from TBP is signed and dated 25th of March 2020.

TBP have made the following additional comments in response to the appeal, on behalf of the applicant:

- The proposed retail unit is no larger than that previously proposed for this site and which were not refused on retail grounds.
- The zoning and principle of development has been established in the past. Refusals referred to design issues not retail.
- The catchment is the same as previously and whilst the town population has decreased, that of the catchment has increased.
- The designation as a discount store no longer applies due to changes in the Retail Planning Guidelines.
- The issue of neighbour uses has been covered already in the Planning and Retail Statement (page 19). The zoning allows for the development of a number of retail units however following consultation with the Planning Authority it is was considered appropriate to apply for a supermarket and coffee shop only.
- Traffic concerns have been addressed and further details are provided in the report prepared by DBFL.
- Existing vacancy rates are likely to be 12 – 14% and not 34% as stated in the Retail Strategy 2015. Convenience retail is been lost from the town and the development will capture some of this outward leakage.
- There is no evidence that the development will negatively impact on the smaller retail units in the town or result in job losses. The subject site is closer to the town centre than the existing Aldi store.
- The design is suitable for this location.
- There is no basis for the comments regarding noise or general disturbance. Such shops are often in residential areas.
- A permission refused in 2006 was partially due to the fact that the site was zoned for residential uses.

In conclusion the applicant requests that permission be granted as the development is appropriate in this location on suitably zoned lands and is adjacent to the core town centre. The design and finishes are of a suitable quality.

Conclusion:

The comments of the Planning Authority are noted and are similar to the comments previously made. The comments made by TBP in response to the appeal are also noted. TBP prepared a comprehensive report with the application and in response to the other appeal by Mr Dillon. Other than elaborating on the considered vacancy rates in Muine Bheag, all other issues have been covered already.

I have noted the submitted comments and no new matters have been raised that would require a revision to my report/ recommendation. I therefore have no further comment or wish to make any revision to my report at this time.

Paul O'Brien
Planning Inspector

1st May 2020