



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-317202-23

Development	Construction of 9 dwellings with all associated site works.
Location	46-54 incl. Cedar Road, Archerstown Wood, Milltown, Ashbourne, Co. Meath.
Planning Authority	Meath County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	22860
Applicant(s)	Edward Paul Grimes.
Type of Application	Planning Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission.
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	The Archerstown Wood Residents Association
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	3 rd February 2024
Inspector	Ronan O'Connor

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1.1. The site is located within the settlement boundary of Ashbourne. The site is an existing parcel of land to the west of an existing housing estate, Archerstown Wood. The western boundary is defined by mature trees and hedging. The surrounding area is urban in character with existing housing in proximity.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1.1. This application seeks planning permission for
- i. The construction of 9 no 9 (Total) 2 storey, 3-bedroom dwellings consisting of:
 - a) 1 no. 2 storey, 3 bedrooms semi-detached (Type A) on site 54 and
 - b) 8 no. storey, 3 bedrooms terraced and semi-detached dwellings (Type B) on sites 46-53 incl.
 - c) All associated site development works on serviced site with vehicular and pedestrian access from existing estate road (Cedar Road).
 - d) All on subject site circa. 0.23 Ha.
- 2.1.2. I note the development description was amended at Further Information Stage to include the parent permission reference and reference to the permission sought for the exclusion of the original permitted creche facility on the subject lands.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. Planning permission was granted on the 28th April 2023 for the proposed development subject to 24 planning conditions which were mainly standard in nature.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

Planning Reports

3.2.1. The first report dated the 18th August 2022 recommended that further information, (FI), be requested on five points. The second report dated the 27th April 2023 assessed the response to FI and recommended that permission be granted.

The first report of the PO is summarised below:

- Notes that the residential is permissible on A1 zoned lands.
- Applicant has not provided any justification for the omission of the creche approved under the Parent Permission/Social Infrastructure Assessment Required
- No harm to the visual amenity of the area
- Design generally in keeping with the neighbouring permitted units to the west of the site
- Design, layout and appearance is generally in keeping with the Urban Design Manual (2009)
- Unit No. 41 and 54 should be revised to incorporate dual frontage
- Density acceptable/In line with DM OBJ 14
- Unit mix/Floor Areas/Storage Space/Internal layout/private amenity space/separation distances acceptable
- Not considered the proposed development would cause any significant harmful impact to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing, loss of outlook, loss of natural light or loss of privacy
- Proposal is exempt from public open space requirements
- Notes contents of Internal Reports (summarised below)
- Stage 2 AA not required.
- Need for an EIA was excluded.

3.2.2. Further Information was sought in relation to the following issues.

1. Social Infrastructure Audit/Amend development description/clarify if development is sited on 'open space' of the original permitted layout.

2. Redesign Units 46 and 54 to be dual frontage/Revised boundary treatment of same units/Bin storage provided for Unit 51
3. Quality assessment of hedgerow/clarification of proposals for same
4. Comment on contents of Third Party Submissions
5. Consultation Requirements if applicable

3.2.3. Significant Further Information was received by the Planning Authority on 16th March 2023. The second Planner's report [dated 27th April 2023] is summarised below.

Item 1

- On balance the information submitted is considered acceptable/there is an acceptable number of childcare facilities located in the area/Replacement of the childcare facility considered acceptable
- Applicant has clarified that no part of the development would be sited on 'open space'/updated taking in charge map has been provided/notes that the lands are appropriately zoned residential as per the current zoning of the Meath County Development Plan.

Item 2

- Revised floor and elevations plans have been submitted as requested.

Item 3

- Detailed Hedgerow Study provided/existing hedgerow along the western boundary to be retained

Item 4

- Applicant has commented on the contents of third-party submissions/considered to have been addressed

3.2.4. Recommendation was to Grant Permission subject to conditions.

Other Technical Reports

Broadband Officer – The report dated 20th July 2022 notes that suppliers should be consulted, ducting installed, telecommunications services installed concurrently with other services, plans showing delivery of external infrastructure to be provided.

Water Services – The report of 20th July 2022 states that development broadly meets the requirements of the Water Services Section. States that all work should comply with the GDSDS.

Public Lighting – The report of 21st July 2022 states that the applicant shall provide public lighting to the front of site.

Transportation Department – The report dated the 15th August requests a Redesign of Units 46 and 54 to be dual frontage/Revised boundary treatment of same units/Bin storage provided for Unit 51. The second report dated the 26th April 2023 had no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions.

Housing – Refer to attached letter confirming agreement in principle to Part V proposals (dated 15/07/2022).

Environment – The report dated 22nd August 2022 recommends that Further Information is sought/Justification Test required/SSFRA showing the most up to date flood mapping for the area

3.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

3.3.1. **Uisce Éireann** – The report dated the 30th of June 2021 suggests standard conditions.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

3.4.1. The PA received 11 no. valid 3rd Party submissions during the initial public consultation period. The Planner's report summarises same and this summary is reproduced below:

- Block sunlight
- Reduce green/open space provision for the existing housing estate
- Finishes
- Flooding
- Increase in traffic
- Site was allocated as a creche

- No public infrastructure
- Parking to be removed
- Material contravention of current zoning
- Overdevelopment of site
- No.46 and 47 located in area taking in charge by MCC Substandard units
- Visitor parking

Also noted is a representation from Cllr Alan Tobin

3.4.2. 1 no further submission was received from Archerstown Wood Resident's Association following the submission of Significant Further Information. The second Planner's report summarises the issues raised and this is reproduced below:

- Applicants response does not address further information points
- Building on open space

Also noted is a representation from Cllr Alan Tobin

4.0 Planning History

DA/130494 – Grant [decision date 26/08/2013] Extension of duration of permission Planning Permission Ref DA/800715

DA/800715 – Grant permission [decision date 10/09/2008] for childcare facility

DA/40414 - Grant permission [21/12/2004] for a residential development comprising 45 no. two bed houses, 86 no. three bed houses, 25 no. four bed houses and 10 no. five bed houses, with all associated roads, cycle-ways, footpaths and services, a new site access through a proposed residential development on adjoining lands and a fifty space childcare facility to operate between the hours of 8am to 6pm, Mondays to Friday. Significant further information/revised plans submitted re planning application DA/40414 for a development which will consist of a residential development comprising 37 no two bed houses,82 no three bed houses,25 no four bed houses and 10 no five bed houses, with all associated roads, cycleways, footpaths and services, a new site access through a proposed residential

development on adjoining lands and a fifty space childcare facility to operate between the hours of 8.00am to 6pm, Monday to Friday

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

- 5.1.1. The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 is the current Development Plan. Under this Plan, the site is zoned A1 'Existing Residential' with the zoning objective 'To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities'. Residential is a permissible use under this zoning objective.
- 5.1.2. The following section of the Development Plan are of relevance to the development proposal and the grounds of appeal:

Volume 1

Section 3.4.2 - Settlement Strategy - Ashbourne is designated as a 'Self-Sustaining Growth Town' in the Settlement Strategy for Meath. The Strategy recognises Ashbourne as a rapidly growing settlement and states that, 'there will be a greater emphasis on achieving a greater balance between employment and population growth in these settlements'.

SOC POL 5 To require, as part of all new large residential and commercial developments, and in existing developments, where appropriate, that provision is made for facilities including local/neighbourhood shops, childcare facilities, schools and recreational facilities, and to seek their provision concurrent with development.

SOC OBJ 13 - In respect of residential development, in all cases the development site area cannot include lands zoned FI Open Space, G1 Community Infrastructure and H1 High Amenity. (i.e. the open space requirements shall be provided for within the development site area.)

SOC POL 20 To encourage, promote and facilitate the provision of quality affordable childcare facilities in accordance with national policy and relevant guidelines and in consultation with Meath County Childcare Committee

SOC POL 21 To support the provision of childcare facilities of an appropriate type and scale at the following locations:

- Areas of concentrated employment and business parks; Neighbourhood centres; Large retail developments; Schools or major educational facilities; Adjacent to public transport nodes; Villages and Rural Nodes and within new and existing residential development

Chapter 11 – Development Management Standards

DM OBJ 14 – encourages densities in excess of 35 uph for Ashbourne

Volume 2 - Ashbourne Written Statement

ASH POL 1 - To support the consolidation of development of Ashbourne which facilitates the provision of residential development and employment, retail, community, and recreational facilities in order to create a more compact and self-sufficient settlement

5.2. National Policy

National Planning Framework

The NPF 2040 was adopted on the 29th of May 2018 with the overarching policy objective to renew and develop existing settlements rather than the continual sprawl of cities and towns out into the countryside. The NPF sets a target of at least 40% of all new housing to be delivered within the existing built-up areas of cities, towns and villages on infill and/or brownfield sites. It also seeks to tailor the scale and nature of future housing provision to the size and type of settlement.

The NPF has a number of policy objectives that articulate delivering on a compact urban growth programme. These include:

- NPO 2(a) relating to growth in our cities;
- NPO 3(a)/(b)/(c) relating to brownfield redevelopment targets;
- NPO 5 relating to sufficient scale and quality of urban development; and
- NPO 6 relating to increased residential population and employment in urban areas;
- NPO13 relating to a move away from blanket standards for building height and car parking etc. and instead basing it on performance criteria.

5.2.1. **Section 28 Guidelines –**

- Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Jan 2024).
- Childcare Facilities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007)

5.3. **Natural Heritage Designations**

5.3.1. No designations apply.

5.4. **EIA Screening**

5.4.1. See completed Form 2 on file. Having regard to the nature, size and location of the proposed development, and to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations, I have concluded at preliminary examination that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. EIA, therefore, is not required.

5.5. **Appropriate Assessment**

5.5.1. Having regard to the minor nature and scale of the proposed development, the site location outside of any protected site, the nature of the receiving environment and the proximity of the lands in question to the nearest European Sites (Malahide Estuary SAC [Site Code 000205] and Malahide Estuary SPA [004025], which are both approximately 13km to the south-east), it is my opinion that no Appropriate Assessment issues arise and that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, on any Natura 2000 site.

6.0 **The Appeal**

6.1. **Grounds of Appeal**

6.1.1. 1 no. Third Party Appeal was submitted on behalf of Archerstown Wood Residents Association. The main grounds of appeal are summarised below:

- The proposed development is on lands previously designated for community use/open space in the parent permission for Archerstown Wood Residential Estate
- Was never intended for housing
- Material contravention of the A1 zoning objective for these lands
- Should be refused permission for this reason
- Overdevelopment
- Barely meets internal space standards
- In conflict with the dominant low density housing environment in Archerstown

Creche

- SOP POL 6 does not apply to this proposal
- Parent application correctly determined that the creche was essential social infrastructure
- No creche facilities provided in recent adjacent residential permissions
- Lack of capacity information in the assessment of the FI submission
- Material contravention of the CDP and of the relevant condition in permission DA40414
- Planner incorrectly refers to SOC POL 21/within new and existing residential developments are also considered appropriate locations a creche
- Assessment is fatally flawed/focuses only on the town centre
- Demand for creche has increased over time/no local facilities in many of the existing, permitted and planned estates
- Provision of a childcare facility will help reduce car ownership

Zoning

- A1 zoning is merely permissive of residential development whereas the A2 zoning is persuasive of residential development

- Proposed development would clearly be in material contravention of this zoning objective
- Applicant's responses (to open space issue) was not correct/residential site is larger than the designated/permitted creche site which extended to the turning circle shown on the plan/the proposed northernmost 2 dwellings are to the north of the turning circle and in the approved open space for the estate
- There are no now formally zoned open space areas in the existing residential estates
- The FI open space zoning is now reserved for substantial parkland areas to the south and east
- A1 zoning does not attribute a presumption in favour of residential development on all A1 lands which include all the designated and permitted open space areas within existing permitted residential estates
- Objective is to 'protect and enhance the amenity and character of existing residential communities'
- The Taking in Charge map is not relevant to the planning issues arising in this appeal/should not have been conflated with the zoning/creche issues by the PA
- It is clear from the maps and plans below that the proposed two northern houses are located on lands designated as open space and included within the open space area of 4445 sq. m. in the original permission for the Archerstown Wood Development.
- The area north of the proposed creach turning circle is part of the Archerstown Wood public open space (4,445 sq. m)
- Residential development on this area would be a material contravention of the permission for the development of Archerstown Wood
- Construction of a childcare facility was an integral and stated component of that permission/hence a material consideration in granting permission for that development

Open Space

- Site has been maintained as part of the larger open space (4,445 sq. m) since the estate was developed
- FI Open Space zoning in the Ashbourne Local Area Plan 2009-2015 and in the CDP 2013-2019 reflected this
- Proposal is an attempt to chip away incrementally at the approved Archerstown Wood Open Space
- Proposed development is taking away from the open space that was approved in the parent permission

Precedence

- Would raise an undesirable precedent for other such proposals on other open space areas

Parking

- Proposed development includes the removal of 4 longstanding existing visitor parking spaces/removal would result in additional kerbside and on footpath parking/will cause a traffic hazard

Visual

- Will be visually discordant and look out of place/will disrupt the existing streetscape
- A community use such as a creche could sit comfortably with a public space use

6.2. Applicant Response

- 6.2.1. A response to the third party appeal was submitted on behalf of the applicant on the 21st June 2023 and is summarised below:

Validity

- Appeal should be declared invalid as it was submitted outside the statutory period of a valid appeal.
- Notification of Decision to grant permission is dated 24th April 2023. The appeal was lodged with the Board on 25th May 2023 which is outside the statutory period.

Zoning

- Residential use is a permitted use under the zoning matrix of the Development Plan.
- Proposed development cannot be in material contravention of the zoning objective
- Policy objective of the Development Plan to support infill development
- Development is on a site that is the same as the site for which planning permission was granted in 2008 for a childcare facility
- No evidence is provided to suggest that the application site was designated in the past for community use or open space
- Previous permission superseded any use that was designated in the parent permission

Overdevelopment

- Houses comfortably exceeds the minimum standards for total gross floor area, living area and bedroom area/private open space is also in excess of Development Plan standards
- Density is in line with Development Plan policy
- Entirely appropriate to revisit the requirement for a facility and to require a fresh SIA to be carried out.
- Clear there is no need or demand for a childcare facility
- The site of the subject application is the same as the site of the permitted childcare facility/the site area of the previous childcare application was increased in response to an FI request from the Local Authority to accommodate additional car parking spaces.
- There is no reason why a fresh planning application cannot be granted where it contravenes a previous planning condition that was attached to a previous permission/each application is considered on its merits/PA was clearly satisfied that the condition was no longer relevant as adequate facilities are provided.
- Planning Officer has correctly quoted SOC POL 21

- Does not remove open space/childcare permission superseded the parent planning permission for this part of the overall site
- In relation to setting a precedent, each application is considered on its merits
- In relation to the removal of the 4 no. car parking spaces, no provision was made for these car parking spaces in the permission that was granted in 2008
- Car parking standards have been met
- Not accepted that the development would be visually discordant

6.3. Planning Authority Response

A response was received from the Planning Authority (PA) on the 15th June 2023 and includes the following:

- All matters raised in the appeal have been addressed in the Executive Planner's report dated 27th April 2023
- PA requests that ABP uphold the decision of the Planning Authority to grant permission.

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the main issues in this appeal can be addressed under the following headings:

- Principle of Development
- Loss of Open Space
- Childcare Demand
- Design (Including Density and Visual Impact)
- Internal Space Standards
- Other Issues

7.2. Principle of Development

- 7.2.1. Under the Meath County Plan 2021-2027, the site is zoned A1 'Existing Residential' with the zoning objective 'To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities'. Permitted uses include residential. Furthermore, within the Development Plan it is stated that *'lands identified as 'Existing Residential' are established residential areas. Development proposals on these lands primarily consist of infill developments and the extension and refurbishment of existing properties. The principle of such proposals is normally acceptable subject to the amenities of surrounding properties being protected and the use, scale, character and design of any development respecting the character of the area'*.
- 7.2.2. As such, the principle of a residential development such as that proposed here is acceptable in principle on A1 zoned lands, subject to other relevant considerations as set out above (amenities of surrounding properties and scale, character and design).

7.3. Loss of Existing Open Space

- 7.3.1. From an examination of the Planning History on file, and the associated Planner's Reports, it would appear that this site was proposed for a creche under the parent permission, and again the same site was proposed for a larger creche under a subsequent permission DA/800715. As such, notwithstanding that the area has not been developed, it would appear that the site in question was not part of the overall quantum of open space associated with the existing residential development. The Planning Authority have not stated that this area has previously formed part of the open space provision associated with the existing estate, and have not raised an 'in-principle' objection to a development on same. I would note also that there remains a substantial area of open space remaining, included a large area zoned F1 'Open Space' to the south of this application site. As such, I am satisfied that a development on the site would not result in a loss of previously designated open space, notwithstanding the submissions of third parties in relation to same.

7.4. Childcare Demand

- 7.4.1. The Third Party appeal submission states that the parent application correctly determined that the creche was essential social infrastructure. It is further stated the

no creche facilities have been provided in recent adjacent residential permission, and that there is a lack of capacity information in the application documentation.

- 7.4.2. The applicant has responded by stated that it is entirely appropriate to revisit the requirement for a childcare facility and it has been determined that there is no demand for same, noting that the Planning Authority were satisfied that this is the case.
- 7.4.3. Section 7.7.3.3 'Childcare Facilities' of the Development Plan notes that the provision of childcare facilities is a key piece of social infrastructure and that there continues to be a growth in demand for such services. Policy SOC POL 5 requires provision of social infrastructure, including childcare facilities, in all new large residential and commercial developments, and in existing developments, where appropriate. Policy SOC POL 20 encourages provision of same, with Policy SOC POL 21 referring to appropriate locations for same, which include *inter alia* within new and existing residential developments.
- 7.4.4. Section 3.3.1 of the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) note that 'in relation to new housing areas, a standard of one childcare facility providing for a minimum 20 childcare places per approximately 75 dwellings may be appropriate. This is a guideline standard and will depend on the particular circumstances of each individual site'. Appendix 2 of the Guidelines outlines how an alternative threshold for provision may be calculated, noting that the threshold for provision should be established having had regard to the existing geographical distribution of childcare facilities and the emerging demographic profile of the area.
- 7.4.5. The revised development description (as submitted at Further Information Stage and subsequently advertised by way of a revised site notice and newspaper notice) refers to the exclusion of the original permitted creche facility on the subject lands. I note that a 50 no. space childcare facility was granted under the parent permission DA/40414. A subsequent application for an 80 no. space childcare facility was granted under DA/800715, on this site, but this was not implemented. As such, the existing demand for childcare is a material planning consideration in this instance, in my view, given the development is proposing to omit the originally permitted creche, and is also increasing the overall number of units on the wider site by 9 no. units.

- 7.4.6. In response to the Further Information request by the Planning Authority, the applicants have submitted a Social and Community Infrastructure Audit. This considers *inter alia* the existing provision and demand for Childcare Facilities. Of note within the report is that the creche going age of the Ashbourne Area was 1,014 No. persons, or 9.5% of the total population of the area, with reference to the 2016 census. The report considers the creche and school demand generated by the proposed development (9 units) and it is concluded that the proposed development would, in theory, accommodate 13 no. children. It is not stated what proportion of these 13 no. children would be of creche age, rather it is repeated that 9.5% of the total population of the area is of creche going age. The theoretical or actual demand for childcare within the existing estate, or surrounding estates, is not considered. Section 6.2 considers Childcare Facilities in the area, and it is noted that there are currently 16 no. childcare facilities in the wider Ashbourne Area, within 5km of the subject site.
- 7.4.7. In relation to the information submitted at application stage (including that submitted at Further Information stage), I am of the view that there is insufficient information provided to demonstrate that there is sufficient childcare capacity in the area and, therefore, there is insufficient justification for the omission of the permitted 50 space childcare facility. While the Social and Community Infrastructure Audit includes a high level analysis of potential number of creche going children in the wider Ashbourne Area, there is insufficient analysis of existing childcare demand within the wider estate (as permitted by the parent permission) or the wider area. Furthermore, there is no examination of the existing capacity of the childcare facilities referred to above. A 'capacity' figure is quoted in the report for each of the facilities mentioned in the Audit. This would appear to refer to the overall capacity of the facility rather than existing capacity (no details of a capacity survey are provided in any case). It is stated that the existing facilities in Ashbourne provide in excess of 890 childcare spaces but the residual capacity of these facilities is not provided. I am of the view that a comprehensive Childcare Demand Needs Assessment is required if the applicant seeks to justify the exclusion of the permitted creche in this instance.
- 7.4.8. In conclusion, therefore, and having regard to the considerations above, I am of the view that the applicant has not justified the omission of the permitted creche facility, and the application should be refused on this basis.

7.5. Internal Space Standards

- 7.5.1. The Third Party Appeal submission states that the proposed units barely meet internal space standards. The First Party response states that the houses comfortably exceeds the minimum standards for total gross floor area, living area and bedroom area and that the private open space is also in excess of Development Plan standards.
- 7.5.2. In relation to same, I note that the Planning Authority assessed the development having regard to the standards as set out in Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007) and note that all of the 9 no. units comply with the internal space standards for 3 bed units (83 sq. m), as set out in Table 5.1 of same. I note that 8 no. units are exactly 83 sq. m. and 1 no. unit being 92 sq. m. While the minimum standards have generally been provided in relation to floor area, the units are in compliance with same, with larger than minimum garden sizes being provided (which range from 74 sq. m. to 94 sq. m). I would note also that the proposed houses meet the minimum private open space standard of 40 sq. m. for a 3 bed house, as set out in SPPR 2 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Jan 2024), noting the publication date of these guidelines was after the submission of this appeal.

7.6. Design (including Density and Visual Impact)

- 7.6.1. In relation to the overall density of the proposed development has an overall density of 39 uph. This is in line with Development Plan Policy DM OBJ 14 which state that densities greater than 35 uph should be encouraged in Self-Sustaining Growth Towns such as Ashbourne. I would also note that it is within the range as set out in Table 3.3 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Jan 2024), which states that for a suburban area of a Metropolitan Town (such as Ashbourne), densities ranges of 35 to 50 uph shall generally be applied. As such, I am satisfied that the proposed density is appropriate and is in line with relevant policy on same.
- 7.6.2. In relation to the visual impact of the proposed development, I note that the proposal involves 9 no. two storey housing units, within an existing estate of similar scale and typologies. I am not of the view that a development of this type would appear visually discordant, as contended by the Third Party Appellant, but rather would be in

keeping with the overall scale and appearance of the wider estate, notwithstanding it would appear as a later addition to same.

7.7. Other Issues

- 7.7.1. Validity of Appeal – The First Party Appellant has stated that the appeal should be declared invalid as it was not lodged within the statutory timeframe, noting that the Notification of Decision to Grant Permission states that the order is dated 24th April 2024, and the appeal was lodged with APB on the 25th May 2024, outside the 28 day timeframe. In relation to same, I note that the Notification of Decision to Grant Permission does state that the order is dated 24th April 2023, although the Chief Executive Order is dated 28th April 2023, with the appeal lodged within 28 days of the date of same. It is a matter for the Board to consider the validity or otherwise of the appeal.
- 7.7.2. Loss of Visitor Parking Spaces – The First Party Appellant has stated that the proposed development would result in the loss of 4 no. on street visitor parking bays. The applicant has responded by stating that no provision was made for these car parking spaces in the permission that was granted in 2008. In relation to same, I note that no objection was raised from the Planning Authority’s Transportation Department in relation to the loss of these spaces. I accept that the loss of these spaces was accepted in principle under the 2008 permission for the creche. I also note that 2 no. spaces are proposed for each proposed dwelling unit, in line with Development Plan Standards as set out in Table 11.2 of same, meaning it is unlikely that the units in question would generate overspill parking onto the surrounding estate roads. Having regard to these considerations I am satisfied that the loss of the 4 no. visitor spaces is not likely to result in a material impact on the surrounding road network.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1. I recommend that planning permission be refused for following reasons and considerations.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the provisions of the Meath Development Plan 2021-2027, and having regard to the provisions of Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001), insufficient evidence has been put forward to support the omission of the originally permitted creche facility (permitted under Planning Authority Reg. Ref DA/40414). The Board is of the view that the documentation submitted with the application which does not include a sufficient analysis of the demand for childcare within the existing estate, or the wider area, and does not include a sufficient analysis of the capacity of existing childcare facilities within the wider Ashbourne Area. As such, the proposal is contrary to said Guidelines and is contrary to Policy SOC POL 5 and Policy SOC POL 20 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Rónan O'Connor
Senior Planning Inspector

7th February 2024

Appendix 1 - Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

[EIAR not submitted]

An Bord Pleanála Case Reference	317202-23		
Proposed Development Summary	Construction of 9 dwellings with all associated site works.		
Development Address	46-54 incl. Cedar Road, Archerstown Wood, Milltown, Ashbourne, Co. Meath		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? <small>(that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)</small>	Yes	Y	
	No		
2. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it equal or exceed any relevant quantity, area or limit where specified for that class?			
Yes			
No		No	Proceed to Q.3
3. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) but does not equal or exceed a relevant quantity, area or other limit specified [sub-threshold development]?			
		Threshold	Comment (if relevant)
			Conclusion
No		N/A	
Yes	Yes	Class (10)(b) of Schedule 5 Part 2 Construction of more than 500 dwelling units;	9 dwelling houses on a site of 0.23Ha . The applicable site
			Proceed to Q.4

		Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 ha in the case of a business district, 10 ha in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 ha elsewhere.	area threshold is 2 ha.	
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4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?		
No	No	Preliminary Examination required
Yes		Screening Determination required

Inspector: _____

Date: _____