

Provision of information to members of the Oireachtas by An Bord Pleanála
Quarter 1 2024: 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024

Query Number: OIR24/001

Date Received: 31st of January 2024

Query Subject: Planning

Deputy/Senator: Mairead Farrell TD

Acknowledged: 1st of February 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 2nd of February 2024

Language: English

Query:

Could you provide me with the following information:

In relation to strategic housing developments that relate to purpose built student accommodation that have yet to be determined by An Bord Pleanála

- The number of applications
- The names of applicants
- The address of the site along with the Eircode
- Number of proposed beds to be delivered as part of the development

If this information could be provided in Excel format I would be greatly obliged.

Substantive Reply:

Please find an Excel Document attached above with the requested data in relation to proposed strategic housing development applications that are yet to be determined by An Bord Pleanála and which relate to purpose-built student accommodation.

[OIR_24_001-Mairead-Farrell-SHD-Students.pdf \(pleanala.ie\)](#)

Query Number: OIR/24/002

Date Received: 1st of February 2024

Query Subject: Planning

Deputy/Senator: Carol Nolan TD

Acknowledged: 2nd of February 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 2nd of February 2024

Language: English

Query:

I refer to the following: <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/313412>

As I understand it notice this application for “Leave to Apply Substitute Consent S177 “ Lemanaghan Bog was withdrawn on 15/01/2024.

What are the implication of this for the local community?

It is my understanding that when BnM applied for this substitute consent they needed to 'regularise' planning status on peatlands, i.e, they needed retrospective planning permission for historic peat extraction.

Nevertheless, I understand that until BnM get this retrospective planning sorted - they cannot develop on it, legally - as the site currently is an illegal development.

May I please ask you to confirm if this is the case and to provide an update with respect to the leave to apply for substitute consent.

Substantive Reply:

In response to your query please be advised that new legislation, being subsection (11) of section 41 of the Planning and Development, Maritime and Valuation

(Amendment) Act 2022, was commenced on the 16th of December 2023 by Ministerial Order S.I. 645 dated the 15th of December 2023. The Commencement Order brings into operation sections 10 to 21, sections 23 to 40 and subsections (8) to (12) of section 41, of the Planning and Development, Maritime and Valuation (Amendment) Act 2022. Section 41(11) is of particular relevance, as it now provides as follows: (11) Where a person applied for leave to apply for substitute consent under section 177C of the Principal Act before the date of the coming into operation of section 40(b), but a decision on the application for leave was not made under section 177D before that date, the applicant shall be deemed to have withdrawn his or her application for leave to apply for substitute consent under section 177C and the Board shall return to the applicant any fee received from the applicant in respect of the application. As a result, this application for leave to apply for substitute consent was deemed withdrawn as a matter of law. In addition, the provisions of the 2022 Act, now commenced, provide for a single-stage application process whereby "leave to apply" for substitute consent is no longer required in order to make an application for substitute consent. Accordingly, it is open to persons who had made applications for leave to apply for substitute consent, which had not been determined and have now been deemed withdrawn, to make applications for substitute consent.

2 Due to the nature and scope of its functions, An Bord Pleanála is not in a position to comment on other matters or questions raised in your correspondence .

Query Number: OIR/24/003

Date Received: 7th of February 2024

Query Subject: Planning

Deputy/Senator: Mairead Farrell TD

Acknowledged: 7th of February 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 13th of February 2024

Language: English

Query:

I was hoping you could provide me with (in excel format) the full list of all approved SHDs for purpose built student accommodation.

Substantive Reply:

Please find an Excel Document attached above with the requested data in relation to the approved Strategic Housing Developments for purpose build student accommodation.

[OIR_24_003-Mairead-Farrell-SHD-Applications-approved-for-student-accommodation.pdf](#)

Query Number: OIR/23/004

Date Received: 9th of February 2024

Query Subject: HR

Deputy/Senator: Minister Darragh O'Brien

Acknowledged: 9th of February 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 23rd of February 2024

Language: English

Query:

Can we please get:

- breakdown in tabular form of the number of staff, and their grade, currently employed within An Bord Pleanála, highlighting if they are employed on a part-time or full-time basis
- breakdown in tabular form of the number of vacant staffing positions and their grade within An Bord Pleanála

Substantive Reply:

Please find below the breakdown in tabular form of the number of staff, their grade, employment status and vacant staffing positions by grade within An Bord Pleanála.

Staffing Figures 31st January 2024			
Grade	Full time	Atypical*	Total
Board Member	15		15
Chief Officer	1		1
Directors	4		4
Assistant Director of Planning	4		4
Senior Administrative Officer	11	2	13
Senior Planning Inspector	44	3	47
Planning Inspector	37	2	39
Senior Executive Officer	18	1	19
Administrative Assistant	42	4	46
Executive Officer	61	8	69
Grand Total	237	20	257

* Atypical denotes employees on a less than full time arrangement

Please also note the context to these figures by reference to workforce planning in An Bord Pleanála and consequent sanctions for new additional posts in the organisation as given by the Department of Housing, Local Government and

Heritage. The following table relates to the number of such new posts approved and then filled in the period 2021 to 2023/2024. This shows that, of the **117** new posts approved in this period, **101** of those are now filled. It is anticipated that the remainder of these new posts (**16**) will be filled by the middle of 2024.

Workforce Plan	Number of Posts Sanctioned	Number of These Posts Filled
2021	24	24
2022/2023 Phase I	34	29
2022/2023 Phase II	28	21
2023 Additional Posts	31	27
Total	117	101
Outstanding posts (16)		

The total approved posts figure is now **313** and the total posts now filled is **257** which leaves another **40** posts unfilled at this point in time. However, this reflects prevailing staff turnover patterns within the overall complement of staff. There is a continuous process ongoing to seek to replenish such vacancies and this will continue in 2024.

Query Number: OIR/23/005

Date Received: 20th of February 2024

Query Subject: Planning

Deputy/Senator: Carol Nolan TD

Acknowledged: 20th of February 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 28th of February 2024

Language: English

Query:

I am seeking assistance in ascertaining if a bog at Garrymore Upper, Garyhinch, Co.Laois-An Bord Pleanala Ref No: 315157 has a CPO order relating to it from Bord na Mona.

Substantive Reply:

The only current case before An Bord Pleanála in relation to this matter is a pre-application consultation request case numbered ABP-315157-22 in respect of a proposed windfarm at Garrymore Upper, Garyhinch, Co.Laois. That pre-application consultation process has not concluded. There is no application currently before An Bord Pleanála for confirmation of a compulsory purchase order in respect of any lands at this location.

I hope this is of assistance in relation to your query.

Query Number: OIR/23/006

Date Received: 27th of February 2024

Query Subject: HR

Deputy/Senator: Cian O'Callaghan TD

Acknowledged: 28th of February 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 6th of March 2024

Language: English

Query:

Would you be able to provide me with the number of staff hired by An Bord Pleanála since February of 2023 and the number of vacancies currently waiting to be filled?

It would be helpful if this was broken down into the specific roles.

Substantive Reply:

Please find below the breakdown in tabular form of the number of staff, their grade, employment status and vacant staffing positions by grade within An Bord Pleanála.

Staffing Figures			
29th February 2024			
Grade	Full time	Atypical	Total
Board Member	15	0	15
Chief Officer	1	0	1
Directors	5	0	5
Assistant Director of Planning	4	0	4
Senior Administrative Officer	12	1	13
Senior Planning Inspector	45	2	47
Planning Inspector	38	1	39
Senior Executive Officer	18	1	19
Executive Officer	61	9	70

Administrative Assistant	45	3	48
Total	244	17	261

* Atypical denotes employees on a less than full time arrangement

Please also note the context to these figures by reference to workforce planning in An Bord Pleanála and consequent sanctions for new additional posts in the organisation as given by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The following table relates to the number of such new posts approved and then filled in the period 2021 to 2023/2024. This shows that, of the **117** new posts approved in this period, **101** of those are now filled. It is anticipated that the remainder of these new posts (**16**) will be filled by the middle of 2024.

Workforce Plan	Number of Posts Sanctioned	Number of These Posts Filled
2021	24	24
2022/2023 Phase I	34	29
2022/2023 Phase II	28	21
2023 Additional Posts	31	27
Total	117	101
Outstanding posts (16)		

The total approved posts figure is now **313** and the total posts now filled is **261** which leaves another **52** posts unfilled at this point in time. However, this reflects prevailing staff turnover patterns within the overall complement of staff. There is a continuous process ongoing to seek to replenish such vacancies and this will continue in 2024.

Query Number: OIR/23/007

Date Received: 7th of March 2024

Query Subject: Planning

Deputy/Senator: Minister Josepha Madigan

Acknowledged: 8th of March 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 15th of March 2024

Language: English

Query:

Our office has been contacted by residents in Belmont estate in Stepside who are seeking the latest update on the following housing application:

<https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/309828>. Some residents have stated that the application is under judicial review. We would be grateful if ABP could provide the latest update on this application and clarify whether it is under judicial review.

Substantive Reply:

In response to your query please be advised that An Bord Pleanála's decision in relation to case number 309828 was the subject of judicial review and that a High Court judgement was delivered on the 27th September, 2023 which quashed that decision. Final High Court orders reflecting that judgement and dealing with any associated matters have yet to be made by the High Court so that is the current status of these legal proceedings. I hope this is of assistance.

Query Number: OIR/23/008

Date Received: 11th of March 2024

Query Subject: Planning

Deputy/Senator: Minister Josepha Madigan

Acknowledged: 12th of March 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: 19th of March 2024

Language: English

Query:

ABP-308151-20 Our office has been contacted by residents in Belmont estate in Stepside regarding the above planning application and appeal to ABP. We can see from the planning files online that the Bord granted permission to the development in 2021. However, no construction appears to have yet taken place on the site. We would be grateful, therefore, if you could provide a full update on this planning application and clarify whether this development is due for construction.

Substantive Reply:

As An Bord Pleanála has made its decision in this case its jurisdiction in the matter is spent. The Board has therefore no further role in respect of this proposed development and your query on this should be directed to the prospective developer and/or the local planning authority - the latter must be given formal prior notice of commencement of the construction of the proposed development the subject of the permission.

Query Number: OIR/23/009

Date Received: 28th of March 2024

Query Subject: Finance

Deputy/Senator: Matt Carthy TD

Acknowledged: 2nd of April 2024

Substantive Reply Issued: PENDING

Language: English

Query:

To ask the Minister for Housing; Local Government and Heritage the ground rents payable by his Department or agencies under its remit, by named property, by name of landlord and by amount payable, in the years 2016 to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Substantive Reply:

PENDING