

Full steam ahead for Connacht Rugby's stadium plans

BY DECLAN VARLEY

€10m commitment, as announced by Government Chief Whip Sean Kyne T.D.

In his announcement, Mr Kyne confirmed that the additional investment has been secured due to the economic significance of the Sportsground redevelopment to the wider West of Ireland region. The investment is fully aligned with Project 2040, the National Development Plan and the Government's commitment to balanced

evening with a further



Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017

Notice of Strategic Housing Development Application to An Bord Pleanála

Kegata Limited intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála for permission for a strategic housing development on lands at Ross Hill, Galway in the townlands of Merlin Park, Roseam and Murrrough.

The development will consist of:

- (a) Residential development consisting of 342no. units comprising 185no. houses and 157no. apartments, including a ground-floor community space, office, café, retail unit.
 - (b) A two-storey childcare facility
 - (c) The provision of public realm landscaping including shared public open space and play areas, public art, public lighting, resident and visitor parking including car rental bays, electric vehicle charging points and bike rental spaces
 - (d) Pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular links throughout the development
 - (e) Access road and junction improvements at Ross Hill Road/Old Dublin Road
 - (f) Provision of all associated surface water and foul drainage services and connections including pumping station
 - (g) All associated site works and ancillary services.
- A Natura Impact Statement ('NIS') and Environmental Impact Assessment Report ('EiAR') have been prepared and accompany this application. The application is also accompanied by a Statement of Material Contravention of the Development Plan.

Planning permission is sought for a period of seven years.

The application contains a statement setting out how the proposal will be consistent with objectives of the Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023.

The application contains a statement indicating why permission should be granted for the proposed development, having regard to a consideration specified in section 37(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, notwithstanding that the proposed development materially contravenes a relevant development plan other than in relation to the zoning of the land.

A Natura Impact Statement ('NIS') and Environmental Impact Assessment Report ('EiAR') have been prepared and accompany this application. The application is also accompanied by a Statement of Material Contravention of the Development Plan.

The application together with the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement, may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, during public opening hours at the offices of An Bord Pleanála and Galway City Council. The application may also be inspected online at the following website set up by the applicant: www.RosshillManorSHD.ie

Any person may, within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by An Bord Pleanála of the application and on payment of the prescribed fee of 20 (except for certain prescribed bodies), make a submission or observations in writing to An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, relating to the implications of the proposed development, if carried out, for proper planning and sustainable development in the area or areas concerned, and the likely effects on the environment or the likely effects on a European site, as the case may be, of the proposed development, if carried out. Submissions or observations duly made will be considered by An Bord Pleanála in making a decision on the application. Such submissions or observations must also include the following information:

- (a) the name of the person, authority or body making the submission or observations, the name of the person, if any, acting on behalf of that person, authority or body, and the address to which any correspondence relating to the application should be sent,
- (b) the subject matter of the submission or observations, and
- (c) the reasons, considerations and arguments on which the submission or observations is or are based.

An Bord Pleanála may grant permission for the strategic housing development as proposed, or may grant permission subject to such modifications as it specifies in its decision, or may grant permission in part only, with or without any other modifications it may specify in its decision, or may refuse to grant permission for the proposed development. An Bord Pleanála may attach to a grant of permission such conditions as it considers appropriate. Any enquiries relating to the application process should be directed to the Strategic Housing Development Section of An Bord Pleanála (Tel. 01-85588100).

A person may question the validity of a decision of An Bord Pleanála by way of an application for judicial review, under Order 84 of the Rules of the Superior Courts (S.I. No. 15 of 1986), in accordance with sections 50 and 50A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (No. 30 of 2000), as amended. Practical information on the review mechanism can be found in the Judicial Review Notice on the An Bord Pleanála's website: www.pleanala.ie or on the Citizens Information Service website: www.citizensinformation.ie.

Signed: *Maithón P Crowe* (AGENT: MKO, Tuam Road, Galway)

Date of publication 16 January 2020

regional development".

Commenting on the historic investment, Connacht Rugby CEO Willie Ruane said there is huge excitement in Connacht Rugby and throughout the province, at the announcement that €20m in state funding is being allocated to the redevelopment of the Sportsground.

"I want to fully acknowledge the very significant support we have received from An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar. Mr Varadkar personally visited the Sportsground last year to receive a briefing on our plans and the strategic importance of the project to the wider

immensely proud of

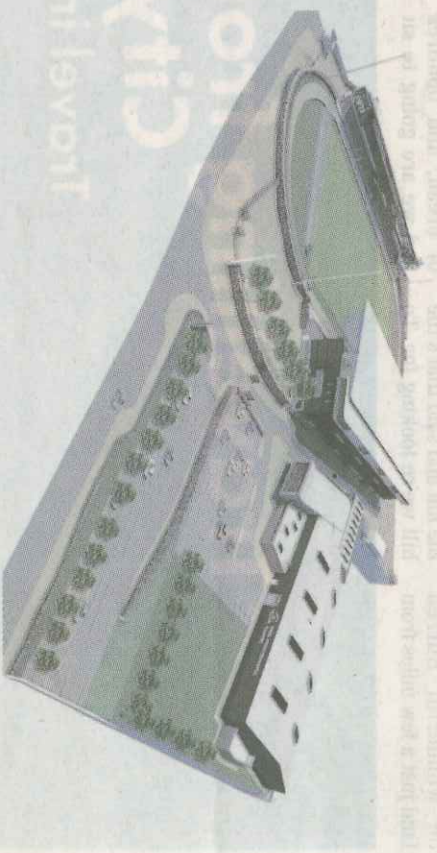
"These facilities will also be available to the Special Olympics and the Community Games members, who gave priority status in support of our application," he concluded.

The allocation of state funding is critical to the Sportsground's redevelopment and today's announcement means that we can now immediately move forward with complete certainty towards delivering this transformational project". The phased project will cost €30m to complete in full and full planning permission was granted for the redevelopment in

the Sportsground.

"I am very grateful that my representations to him, and to my colleague Brendan Griffin, paid off today with the announcement of €10 million; and I am absolutely delighted that another €10 million will now be separately provided following our further discussions.

"It will allow for this ambitious project to be progressed more quickly than anyone imagined, and we are considerably closer to finally having facilities at the Sportsground that are worthy of the team's outstanding performances on the field in recent seasons.



regional economy.

"I would also like to express our sincere gratitude to Government Chief Whip Sean Kyne for the support he has shown throughout the project and in ultimately delivering the additional funding to make this project a reality".

"Connacht Rugby's successful application for funding under the LSSIF received unanimous political support from members of all political parties including Minister Michael Ring, Hildegarde Naughton and Independent TD Noel Greahish," added Mr Ruane.

"We have always said that our vision is to ensure that the province has a fit for purpose stadium and training centre which future generations of sports stars, supporters and all the people of the West of Ireland can be

May 2019.

The major funding boost, was welcomed by Fine Gael TD for Galway West Hildegarde Naughton, will cover two-thirds of the total €30 million cost for the state-of-the-art 12,000-capacity stadium.

She said that Mr Varadkar would be writing to Connacht Rugby to confirm the additional grant funding, which will enable work on the new Sportsground and high-performance training centre to commence sooner.

"I brought Leo to the Sportsground to view plans for the redevelopment last May, and I have met with him several times since then in relation to Connacht Rugby's application for funding under the scheme," explained Deputy Naughton, who is a season-ticket holder at

"It hasn't been a bad day's work," she added.

"The pride and enjoyment that people in the west derive from Connacht Rugby can't be measured, but there is a tangible economic benefit to the city, county and wider geographical region. "Connacht Rugby employs 130 people itself, making it a sizeable employer. But the economic spin-off is huge, and the team's future success on the field will be shared by businesses and individuals throughout the area," explained Deputy Naughton.

"Today's announcement that the redevelopment of the Sportsground can proceed and progress quickly is a key part of that future success, making this an extremely exciting time for us fans and other potential beneficiaries in the region."