

Large-Scale Residential Development Appeal Correspondence Form

Case No: ABP 319 343-24

Please treat correspondence received on 30/03/2024 as follows:

1. Update Plean-IT with new agent of Applicant/Appellant	
2. Acknowledge with LRD <u>40</u>	1. Return to sender with LRD _____
3. Keep copy of Board Letter <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Keep Envelope <input type="checkbox"/>
	3. Keep Copy of Board Letter <input type="checkbox"/>

Amendments/Comments: _____
20/03/24: 16/04/24 ✓

4. Attach to File	
(a) LRD Unit <input type="checkbox"/>	(b) Inspector <input type="checkbox"/>
	Return to EO <input type="checkbox"/>

	Plans Date Stamped <input type="checkbox"/>
	Date Stamp Filled in <input type="checkbox"/>

EO: <u>Ronan Mearney</u>	AA: <u>Dillon Colcoran</u>
Date: <u>05/04/2024</u>	Date: <u>08/04/2024</u>

last day - 16th April Anthony.

Task - 379063-24



An Bord Pleanála

Large-scale Residential Development Appeal Observation

Online Reference
LRD-OBS-006215

Online Observation Details

Contact Name Alice Davis	Lodgement Date 30/03/2024 10:36:37	Case Number / Description 319343
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Payment Details

Payment Method Online Payment	Cardholder Name Alice Davis	Payment Amount €50.00
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Fee Refund Requisition

Please Arrange a Refund of Fee of

€

Lodgement No

LDG— 071122-24

Reason for Refund

Documents Returned to Observer

Yes No

Request Emailed to Senior Executive Officer for Approval

Yes No

Signed

EO

Date

Finance Section

Payment Reference

ch_3OzzH6B1CW0EN5FC1OTWvONj

Checked Against Fee Income Online

EO/AA (Accounts Section)

Amount

€

Refund Date

Authorised By (1)

SEO (Finance)

Authorised By (2)

Chief Officer/Director of Corporate Affairs/SAO/Board Member

Date

Date



Alice Davis,
Chairperson,
Balbriggan Community Council,
C/o 14 Hampton Street,
Balbriggan,
Co. Dublin

Observation on LRD0006/S3

Balbriggan Community Council wishes to make the following observations to the Dean Swift Property Holdings Unlimited Company, on Lands located off Flemington Lane, Balbriggan who intend to apply for a ten-year planning permission for a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD). Balbriggan Community Council wishes to promote a community which includes services and facilities that support all people living and working in this town. The proposed Development should be about linking in with the town and - importantly - linking in with Fingal County Council's Rejuvenation Plan for Balbriggan.

Balbriggan is a beautiful seaside town, situated on the northernmost edge of Co. Dublin and Fingal. Balbriggan is one of the youngest and fastest growing town in Ireland, attributed to its easy access to the motorway, bus and rail links, its beautiful natural amenities, and industry links. With the *Our Balbriggan 2019-2025 Rejuvenation Plan*, the *Dart Plus*, *The Lark Concert Hall* and *Stephenstown Industrial Estate* this also makes it extremely attractive to property developers and investors, both domestic and international.

Balbriggan Community Council welcomes the building of more homes for our community, especially as we are during a housing crisis but feel a measured, needs based approach is required for Balbriggan. We have an acute shortage of large three plus bedroom family homes and smaller homes suitable for single people, couples without children or older couples who wish to downsize. Developments build with a needs-based approach will naturally refresh the housing market.

Balbriggan Community Council understands the need for housing that meets the needs of the residents of Balbriggan, provides quality housing, is built to the highest standards and planning models, is sympathetic to the surrounding areas, provides short-, medium- and long-term housing needs with the relevant infrastructure in place or built alongside this and all future developments.

Balbriggan Community Council believes that the following should be considered:

LAND

We feel the proposed height is too high for the following reasons:

- We feel the lands and boundaries do not yet have the infrastructure in place for the number of Units being proposed (in phase 1)
- We have serious fire safety concerns. Does the fire brigade have the necessary equipment and experience to tackle a fire at the proposed heights? We question if the fire brigade has the capacity for 564 more units.
- We don't feel that the supply of 1-2 bed apartments is what is needed in Balbriggan. Whilst it may be appealing to bring in that many units in the current housing crisis, it will not serve the current, medium, or long-term housing needs of Balbriggan. We are in an extreme short supply of larger 3+ bed family homes.
- We feel that this type of building is not suitable for families, the elderly and those with mobility difficulties. In Balbriggan we already have apartment complexes where the lifts either break down regularly or are no longer in operation. This means that parents are having to pull prams and buggies up and down stairs, the elderly and those with mobility difficulties either have difficulties getting out of their homes or end up housebound, which is not conducive to good living standards, accessibility, and creates isolation. We feel that 1-2 bed bungalows are more suitable for the elderly or those with mobility problems and standard houses are more suitable for families. Mixed style housing gives greater housing options and is one of the principles of *Smart Growth* which is an internationally recognised model to combat urban sprawl. Providing a mix of 1-4 bed bungalows, 1-4 bed houses and small, low storey apartment complexes provides housing options for the *entire* population of Balbriggan.
- As a requirement under law, management companies need to be hired or established to manage apartment complexes. Management company fees are very expensive, and this is an added expense to residents. Having a small amount of apartments would reduce the cost of management fees for most residents.

DENSITY

The proposed density planned is adequate for a large urban area or city but not a town.

- The proposed layout needs changing to facilitate safe play areas.
- There is a need for garden, car parking and bin storage for each unit.
- There is a move to electric cars to be more environmentally friendly: they need access to charging ports that residents need to put in their property, therefore parking in front or to the side of each unit is essential. ²

TRAFFIC/TRANSPORT

Already large sections of Balbriggan are not serviced by the current B1 town service run by Bus Éireann. The service is limited as is. It only operates from 6:40 AM to 7:15 PM Monday to Saturday. There is no service outside those hours, no service on a Sunday or public holidays.

The closest bus stop to the proposed Flemington Lane LRD would be on Hamlet Lane. Under the current planning guidelines, we're trying to move away from the over-reliance on car ownership and car transport. Therefore, the town bus service would need to be extended to cover those areas not already serviced and the service hours would need to be extended beyond the current time tabled hours. Front loading services were done very successfully in the Adamstown development in Dublin, where agreement was reached with Iarnróid Éireann to build a train station to service the estate. This station was built prior to any residential building. Balbriggan Community Council would welcome this approach with all developments in Balbriggan.

Public transport, into main centres such as Dublin, Drogheda and Dundalk is already oversubscribed at peak times. The public transport system is not suitable for the population of Balbriggan at present. Bringing in 564 units will add extreme pressure to an already overstretched service.

FACILITIES/SERVICES

We feel there is a need for facilities and services to be in place to meet the present demand of the present population.

Medical:

Balbriggan Community Council is also concerned about the effects of an increase in population which would affect our medical services. Currently there are a total of 17 General Practitioners that work within Balbriggan. The ratio of GP to the population is very high. There is one GP for every 1,430.7 people (1:1430.7).

The Primary Care Centre has not received the promised services, there are staffing shortages and lengthy waiting lists.

Presently the following problems exist:

- The GP service is oversubscribed. Current wait time for an appointment is 2-3 weeks.
- We are aware that a new family in the town with a new baby were not accepted in any practice due to lack of capacity.

- There is no out-of-hours doctor service for the town.
- The primary care centre is being under-utilised and a minor injury service would be welcome rather than having to travel to Beaumont Hospital. This in turn would reduce the pressure on A&E departments.

Education:

Have extra school places been put in place to cope with the increased population from both the Castlelands SHD and Flemington Lane LRD?

Services for young people:

There is also a lack of services and facilities for young people – Balbriggan being the youngest town in Ireland. We are concerned regarding the number of commercial units included. In Balbriggan many of these units vacant already. Could some of these units be given over to communal residential use, such as youth cafes games rooms, sports facilities, (gym etc). We need somewhere for young people to congregate in a safe place, so they are not seen as loitering.

Employment:

The current demographic of Balbriggan is made up of many people living here and working in Dublin. This means that a significant proportion of the population is absent from the town and must spend significant times commuting. The idea of “*build it and they will come*” is not going to provide concrete employment opportunities. Bodies such as the IDA need to be enlisted to *actively* seek companies to come to Balbriggan. Incentives to site their offices and headquarters here in Balbriggan could be explored. Ideally and for a good quality of living, jobs should be within a 30-minute drive or commute.

Leisure and Recreation:

There is a lack of recreational activities for the residents of Balbriggan. Primarily all the recreational pursuits in the town are sports activities. Currently we have very few restaurants in the town, so people are travelling to Skerries and further afield to eat out. This is taking money out of the town and eroding the town and will continue to cement Balbriggan as a dormer/commuter town only.

Shopping:

With the plans for an additional 564 + units, with also additional 1000 units in Castlelands and proposed 1000 units in Taylor’s Hill, population growth and projections could reach over 40,000, which is like Swords. Swords has a very large and successful shopping centre. The Pavilions has many well-known high street stores. In Balbriggan non-food shopping choices are extremely limited. We need to travel to Dublin, Drogheda, and Swords. Again, this is taking money out of the town and eroding the town.

CONCLUSION

Overall, we feel that the Flemington LRD plan does not meet the needs of the residents of Balbriggan. We feel that should the plan continue in its current iteration, it will be damaging the town, the sense of community and will just perpetuate the problems that are already present in the town. Currently Balbriggan is very disjointed with no clear centre, vacant shops in the main street and a large proportion of the population are working, shopping, and spending their leisure time outside of the town.