

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023

Tuesday, 27 September 2016

Motion from Councillor Darragh Butler: Burrow, Portrane. AI029129

Councillor Adrian Henchy and Councillor Darragh Butler –

That the lands indicated on the attached map at the Burrow be zoned RS to allow for the development of twelve (12) one-acre sites for single storey/dormer housing, on already fully serviced land, in line with and maintaining the rural character of the area, conditioned on sufficient land being made available to allow a coastal walkway route through the Burrow, on the western side of the Burrow Road.

REPORT:

Motion Numbers. **AI029112**, **AI028398**, **AI028878**, **AI028880** and **AI028881** also relate to the rezoning of lands at The Burrow, Portrane.

This motion seeks to rezone an area of land at The Burrow, Portrane from Objective 'HA' (High Amenity) to Objective 'RS' (Residential), to allow for the development of twelve (12) one-acre sites for single storey / dormer housing.

In this regard it should be noted that the Ministerial Planning Guidelines on Development Plans, issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), state that *'zoning that is not responsive to or justifiable by reference to reasonable needs, or that substantially exceeds such needs, is not consistent with proper planning and sustainable development.'* The Guidelines also make clear that in order to support public confidence in the planning system and the Development Plan process, decisions to zone land must be clearly justified on the basis of established need and must support the aims and strategy of the plan taking the following specific matters into account:

- Need
- Policy Context
- Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure
- Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities

- Physical Suitability
- Sequential Approach
- Environmental and Heritage policy, including conservation of habitats and other sensitive areas.

This motion is seeking to rezone lands to allow residential development on lands located within sensitive High Amenity lands which cannot be justified based on the specific issues outlined above, whilst significant residential zoned lands (Objective 'RA', 'RS' and 'RC') remain undeveloped in the vicinity of the subject lands.

Such a development pattern would result in deficiencies in terms of the provision of basic infrastructure and public services, in addition to unsustainable travel patterns and a poor quality, fragmented rural environment and the erosion of Greenbelt and High Amenity areas. The Rural Settlement Strategy as set out in the Draft Plan reflects the existing policy in the current Draft Plan 2011-2017. The policy recognises the need to provide for housing for the rural community but limits the amount of housing in the countryside and provides for alternative options within the rural area either in the villages or rural clusters as a more sustainable and suitable location for rural generated housing. The quantum and location of zoned land in the County is directly influenced by the Development Plan's Settlement and Core Strategy. The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced the requirement for an evidence based 'Core Strategy' to be provided in Development Plans. The Core Strategy identifies the quantum and location of development for the plan period that is consistent with the regionally defined population targets and settlement hierarchy, and, which reflects the availability of existing services, planned investment, sequential development and environmental requirements. The Core Strategy sets out the specific population targets and housing requirements across the County and the elements of the settlement hierarchy thereby act as a clear framework for amendments to existing zonings. The Core Strategy must demonstrate that the development objectives in the Development Plan are consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. Based on the evidence-based approach adopted in the Core Strategy for the County, it is clear that Fingal has a significant and sufficient quantum of zoned land to meet the RPG targets for the Development Plan period.

Allowing certain individuals to be excluded from this policy would contradict this overall approach and be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Furthermore, there is a significant area of 'RA' zoned lands (approximately 138 hectares) included within Donabate LAP (March 2016), which has the potential to provide an additional 4,000 housing units on the

Peninsula. There is therefore no justifiable need to rezone any additional high amenity lands to provide for additional housing in this area. Such a change in designation would result in the erosion of the high amenity value of these lands. These lands adjoin the estuary and coast and the loss of same would contribute to a significant diminution of the area's landscape value.

The unique character of the Burrow lands at Portrane is recognised within the Draft Plan. Accordingly, any development in this area must be sensitively designed and must respect the unique character, landscape and visual amenities of the area, having regard to the local issues of coastal erosion and the significant landscape and biodiversity sensitivities in the area including a Flora Protection Order, Special Protection Area (SPA), Natural Heritage Area (NHA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and designated Ecological Buffer Zone.

Recommendation CE CH4.12 of the CE Report recommended that a Study be carried out to decide on the optimal future development of lands in the Burrow area of Portrane. Recommendation CE CH 4.12 states:

'Objective Portrane xx

Prepare a study to decide on the optimal future development of lands in the Burrow area, having regard to the local issues of coastal erosion, flooding, drainage and the significant landscape and biodiversity sensitivities in the area including a Flora Protection Order, Special Protection Area (SPA), Natural Heritage Area (NHA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and designated Ecological BufferZone.'

In conclusion, the rezoning of these lands would be premature until such time as a study has been prepared for the Burrow lands to decide on the optimal future development of lands at this location. To rezone these lands from Objective 'HA' to Objective 'RS' at this time would facilitate the un-coordinated, ad hoc provision of unsustainable urban generated housing detached from existing designated settlements for which there is no evidence-based need or planning rationale and is, therefore, contrary to proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that no change is necessary in this instance and that CE CH 4.12 be upheld.