

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023

Tuesday, 27 September 2016

Motion from Councillor Anne Devitt: . AI028842

“This Council resolves that the lands outlined in red on the attached map be rezoned from ‘RU’ (Rural) to ‘GE’ (General Employment).”

Motion 1 is seeking to rezone the lands from GE to RU as these lands form part of the flood plain and as such cannot be developed. They are more suitable for rural/open space lands.

Motion 2 is seeking to rezone the land from RU to GE to essentially replace the lands to be rezoned back to RU. There is no increase in GE lands but rather represents a swap of zoning designations as the lands that are currently zoned for general employment uses cannot be developed for such uses given the location of these lands on a flood plain.

REPORT:

This motion seeks to rezone 2 parcels of land at Turvey. It should be noted however that only one area was shown on the motion documentation submitted. This motion is therefore addressing the request to rezone lands from ‘RU’ to ‘GE’ to the north of the existing ‘GE’ zoned lands at Turvey (which would appear to reference ‘Motion 2’ in the above motion request). The area of land is approximately 7.3ha.

Significant land has been provided for in the Draft Plan for industrial, rural business and commercial land uses and there is no identified need to provide additional ‘GE’ zoned lands at this location. There is currently an area of approximately 17.8ha of undeveloped ‘GE’ zoned lands at Turvey (in the ‘RB’ zoned lands located between the M1 and the R135).

Fingal’s Economic Strategy set out in the Draft Plan seeks to attract a range of employment types, across business and industry sectors at the most appropriate and accessible locations within the County, minimising the requirement for undue commuting and improving the quality of life for Fingal’s

residents. Strategic Policy 10 and Objectives ED02 and ED03 of the Draft Plan seek to promote enterprise and employment throughout the County, particularly in the growth Centres of Swords, Blanchardstown and Balbriggan.

In order to maximise the utility of existing and future infrastructure provision and promote the achievement of sustainability, a logical sequential approach as advocated in the DoECLG Development Plan Guidelines must be applied to the zoning of land for development. In this regard, areas to be zoned should be contiguous to existing zoned development lands, a strong emphasis should be placed on encouraging infill opportunities and better use of under-utilised lands and zoning should extend outwards from the centre of an urban area, with undeveloped lands closest to the core and public transport routes being given preference (i.e. 'leapfrogging' to more remote areas should be avoided). Any future zonings shall have regard to this sequential approach.

There is a more than adequate quantum of employment zoned lands within the County to accommodate any future employment growth in readily accessible locations within the County where necessary infrastructure is at an optimum. The quantum of existing GE zoned lands currently available for development is c.1218 hectares (3009 acres). These lands are located at highly accessible locations close to the motorway and national road network off the M50 and M1 corridors and at Damastown. The M50 corridor alone has an available and accessible landbank of c.399 ha's. [985 acres] of undeveloped GE zoned lands. The undeveloped landbank of GE and HT zoned lands at Courtlough equates to c. 57.6 ha's [142 acres]. These figures represent a substantial provision of GE zoned lands readily available for development.

The National Transport Authority, in their pre-draft submission, also state that the strategic transport function of the M1 should be maintained by limiting the extent of development which would give rise to the generation of local car-based traffic on the national road network. The M1 (&M50) are vital economic corridors for Dublin, and the east coast in general, and should not be used to facilitate development of employment which would be more appropriately developed in areas well served by existing or committed high quality public transport and/or within the key settlements of Swords, Blanchardstown or Balbriggan.

In the absence of the sequential approach, any coherent evidence based need or planning rationale for the proposed change in zoning from 'RU' to 'GE' in this location, would result in an un-coordinated, ad-hoc provision of unsustainable employment lands of which there is no evidence based need.

Furthermore, the new Donabate LAP development areas offer a good opportunity to develop new businesses and employment in the area. However, it is the strategy of the LAP to support the consolidation of the existing village in Donabate as the focus for retail, commercial and services development. The new development areas are all less than 1km from the village core and their population will be integrated into the established functioning of the village for shopping and services activity. The development of the LAP lands and the resultant increase in population will encourage and support the re-development of infill and vacant / undeveloped sites in the Village Centre and the LAP will encourage new retail and economic opportunities to locate in Donabate urban centre. It is a strategic aim of the Donabate LAP to *'support Donabate Village as the primary location for commercial, retail, community and cultural development serving the Town and Peninsula generally'*.

In addition, there is adequate 'GE' zoned lands to the south of the subject site at Turvey which also offer potential business development and employment opportunities for the existing and future population of Donabate. The Draft Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 includes the following objective:

'Objective DONABATE 11

Prepare and implement a Masterplan for lands at Turvey (see Map Sheet 7, MP 7.A). A detailed flood risk assessment will be carried out for these lands to address potential flood risk and propose mitigation measures.'

This Masterplan will give consideration to the need for any additional GE zoned lands at this location and the flood risk measures required for any existing 'GE' zoned lands at this location.

The proposed 'GE' zoning would therefore be in breach of key objectives of the Draft Plan, Donabate LAP 2016 and NTA policy to channel employment growth into the large urban centres of the County, aligned with existing and planned infrastructure and as such is contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

It is also considered, having regard to the existing water pressure constraints in Donabate, current constraints in the foul drainage system, absence of any surface water capacity assessment and having regard to known flood risk in the area, that any proposal to rezone additional lands at Turvey at this time would be premature pending the preparation of the above Masterplan for these lands.

There is therefore no justifiable need to rezone any additional land to provide for general employment lands in this area, at this time. Such a change in

designation would result in the erosion of the rural character of these sensitive lands, would contravene Development Plan policy and would be premature pending the preparation of the Turvey Masterplan.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that no change is necessary in this instance.