

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023

Tuesday, 27 September 2016

**Motion from Councillor Brian Dennehy: Sustainable Rural Development
Lusk. AI029083**

This council resolves that the site outlined in red on the accompanying map be zoned to zoning objective RC to support the sustainable rural development of Lusk.

REPORT:

There are currently thirty four existing Rural Clusters within the Draft Plan to cater for rural generated housing need. These Rural Clusters have a strong residential focus and are based on a small number of individual houses and typically take the form of between 5 and 15 dwellings. They provide an alternative to one-off housing in the countryside through the consolidation of rural residential development within existing small clusters. For the most part, they will provide an opportunity for family members of existing households within the cluster to build a new home, or reuse and adapt an existing structure, in proximity to their family home, by subdividing large sites.

The lands at Greatcommons-Lusk are located to the south of the existing Greatcommons RC. The lands are currently zoned RU. The existing RC at Greatcommon equates to c.12.1 ha's. [29.89 acres] and is one of the larger rural clusters in the County. The area is served by public mains drainage and a very limited county road network. The proposed extension to this existing RC equates to 2.3 hectares resulting in a potential yield of c.18 additional dwelling units. Given the extent of the existing RC and the considerable development potential for c. 44 no. dwelling units that still currently exists within the existing Greatcommons RC, it is considered there is no merit in extending this existing cluster.

The change in zoning of these lands at Greatcommons-Lusk to RC-Rural Cluster would represent a piecemeal uncoordinated rezoning of lands for which there is

no evidence based need. The Ministerial Planning Guidelines on Development Plans, issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, state “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, 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.

The zoning of these lands cannot be justified on the matters outlined above. The Motion proposes residential development beyond existing RC zoning, while RC zoned lands remain undeveloped and are sufficient in area to accommodate local rural based housing need across the County. The existing Greatcommons RC's have significant outstanding provision of 45 no. housing units to facilitate rural generated housing need. There is significant provision also available within the adjoining settlement of Lusk. 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 the loss of agricultural and green belt lands.

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.

Government policy as articulated by the National Spatial Strategy and the Sustainable Rural Housing: Guidelines for Planning Authorities of April 2005, classifies the rural area of Fingal as “an area under strong urban influence” where the housing requirements of the rural community should be facilitated but urban generated housing should be directed to areas zoned for residential development in cities, towns and villages. The approach is reflected in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area. The inclusion in the Draft Plan of zoning objectives facilitating the provision of additional housing without due regard to the Core Strategy and its approach is contrary to the national and regional direction. 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.

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. In conclusion, there is no evidence based need or planning rationale for the proposed zoning of new rural clusters which would be in breach of the Core Strategy of both the FDP 2011-2017, the Draft Plan 2017-2023 and the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 and as such would be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that no change is made.