COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023

Tuesday, 27 September 2016

Motion from Councillor Anne Devitt: cvq4568. AI028817

This Council resolves that the lands at Blake's Cross, as outlined in red on the attached map, be rezoned from "RU – Rural" to "RB – Rural Business" as an extension to the existing business at this location.

REPORT:
Motion No. **AI028827** (Councillor Devitt) also relates to the rezoning of land from 'RU' to 'RB' at Blake's Cross.

This motion seeks to rezone an area of 'RU' (Rural) zoned lands (approx. 0.44ha) to Objective 'RB' (Rural Business). These lands are located to the south of the existing Blake's Cross 'RB' zoned area. Objective 'RB' seeks to '*Provide for and facilitate rural-related business which has a demonstrated need for a rural location.*'

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 lands at this location. There is currently an area of approximately 5.5ha of undeveloped 'RB' zoned lands at Blake's Cross (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.

The subject lands consist of an area of rural land located adjacent to an existing area of Rural Business. There is no identified need for additional RB zoned land at this location.

The purpose of the 'Rural Business' zoning is to facilitate enterprise opportunities associated with rural-related businesses requiring a rural location. Within the Draft Development Plan, there are over 92 ha of lands zoned for RB purposes located in locations such as Lusk, Rush, Ward Lower and Blake's Cross. The Draft Plan acknowledges that the development of rural enterprise and employment opportunities will be vital to sustaining the rural economy. In accordance with the Economic Strategy for the overall County, appropriate scaled enterprises will be directed to small towns, villages and rural business zones. In accordance with the economic strategy for the overall county, employment servicing the rural areas, should, in general, be directed to the local employment centres of small towns and villages (See Rural Village Local Area Plans) and rural business zones, catering for local investment and small scale industry. Within the rural countryside, horticulture, agriculture, equine, recreational, tourism, energy production and rural resources based enterprise is promoted.

There is also 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 'RB' at this location, would result in an un-coordinated, ad-hoc provision of unsustainable employment lands of which there is no evidence based need.

In addition, the lands to the south of the subject site at Turvey are currently zoned Objective 'GE' (General Employment) and also offer potential business development and employment opportunities for the existing and future populations of the area.

The proposed 'RB' zoning would therefore be in breach of key objectives of the Draft Plan 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. In this regard there is no foul network in the area. All development would have to be serviced via an On Site Wastewater Treatment System, which is considered inappropriate at this location and local water infrastructure upgrades would be required to facilitate the development of these lands. A full Sustainable Drainage Systems treatment would be necessary.

There is therefore no justifiable need to rezone any additional rural business lands in this area. Such a change in designation would result in the erosion of the rural character of these lands in an area with infrastructural deficits contrary to Development Plan policy.

RECOMMENDATION:
It is recommended that no change is made.