

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023

Tuesday, 27 September 2016

Motion from Councillor Adrian Henchy: Chapter 5 Rural Fingal. AI029105

CVQ 3329

That the Chief Executive resolves that the land outlined in red on the attached map for identification purposes, be rezoned to Zoning Objective GE to facilitate General Employment, in the interest of sustainable development of the area.

REPORT:

This motion seeks to rezone an area of high amenity lands south of Donabate Village, from Objective 'HA' (High Amenity) to Objective 'GE' (General Employment).

This motion proposes the rezoning of HA zoned land on the approach to Donabate from Hearse Road and to rezone the lands for general employment use (Objective 'GE').

In this regard it should be noted that 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. 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 2007 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 land removed from the centre of Donabate and are currently zoned high amenity, the vision for which is to: *'Protect these highly sensitive and scenic locations from inappropriate development and reinforce their character, distinctiveness and sense of place. In recognition of the amenity potential of these areas opportunities to increase public access will be explored.'*

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 'HA' 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, there is an existing long-standing business operating on this site. It is considered that any future expansion to this established business would be most appropriately dealt with through Objective Z05 of the Draft Plan, which

seeks to: *'Generally, permit reasonable intensification of, extensions to and improvement of premises accommodating nonconforming uses, subject to normal planning criteria.'*

The Draft Plan notes that throughout the County there are uses which do not conform to the zoning objective of the area. These are uses which were in existence on 1st October 1964, or which have valid planning permissions, or which are unauthorized but have exceeded the time limit for enforcement proceedings. Reasonable intensification of extensions to and improvement of premises accommodating these uses will generally be permitted within the existing curtilage of the development and subject to normal planning criteria.

In addition, 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. No competing centres are proposed at Corballis or Ballymastone. 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'*.

The *Draft Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023* also includes the following objective, which supports the consolidation of Donabate Village:

Objective DONABATE 2:

"Channel and concentrate the development of additional commercial, social, community and civic facilities within the town centre and promote high quality urban design in such development."

Overall, there is significant potential for an increase in floorspace and the growth of the village area through site assembly and development of derelict/underutilised sites in the future. 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 for new employment and business opportunities.

In addition, the lands to the west 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 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.'

The proposed 'GE' zoning would therefore be contrary to the objectives of the Draft Plan, the Donabate LAP 2016 and NTA policy to channel employment growth into the large urban centres of the County, aligned with existing and planned infrastructure.

The lands are in close proximity to lands required for the approved Donabate Relief Road and may, if zoned, compromise the delivery of this critical piece of road infrastructure. The road network in the area comprises sub-standard rural roads and the new Donabate Relief Road is required to open up residentially zoned lands at Corballis East, Corballis West, Spires East and Ballymastone and the delivery of approx. 3,000 residential units and related services.

In conclusion, there is therefore no justifiable need to rezone any additional high amenity lands to provide for general employment lands in this area. Such a change in designation would result in the erosion of the rural character of these sensitive high amenity lands and would contravene Development Plan policy. Any future expansion to the established business operations at this location can be appropriately dealt with through Objective Z05 (as noted above) and there is, therefore, no requirement to rezone these High Amenity lands for GE purposes.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that no change is made.