

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029

TUESDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Sheet 2 Fingal North

Motion from Councillor Grainne Maguire: 82005

Map Sheet 2 Fingal North

This Council resolves that the land outlined in the map as supplied contained in Development Plan Sheet 2, be zoned from HA to RC to afford rural dwellers the opportunity to establish their homes within a rural cluster, eliminating the need for housing in the open countryside, in the interest of sustainable development for Rural Fingal.

REPORT:

The content of this motion to facilitate local housing need is noted. The subject lands equate to 0.7 hectares and are located on elevated lands opposite the existing Man O War Public House and Restaurant, further to the south of Balrothery and where the existing road network is limited in width and alignment.

The subject lands are currently zoned HA-High Amenity, within highly sensitive landscape and with preserved views along the adjoining county road as designated in the current FDP 2017-2023. The zoning objective and landscape designations are carried through to the Draft Plan.

There are currently thirty-seven 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 change in zoning of lands to designated new Rural Cluster would represent a piecemeal uncoordinated rezoning of lands for which there is no evidence-based need. Decisions to zone land must be clearly justified on the basis of established need and must support the aims and strategy of the Draft Plan and consider issues such as need, policy context, capacity of water, drainage and roads infrastructure, supporting infrastructure and facilities, physical suitability, sequential approach and environmental and heritage designations.

The recently published Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities June 2022 relating to zoning for residential development acknowledges the spatial pattern of the growth of settlements, often along radial access routes, characterised by ribbon and low-density development, has served to 'lock-in' extremely high levels of car dependence and render settlements too spread out and incoherent to pursue active travel and has resulted in the decline of town and village centres.

In undertaking the zoning function for new residential development at individual settlement scale, Planning Authorities are required to adopt a sequential approach whereby the most spatially centrally located development sites in settlements are prioritised for new development first, with more spatially peripherally located development sites being zoned subsequently which reflects the compact growth, utilisation of existing infrastructure and regeneration based on national and regional policy guidance of the NPF and RSES.

In developing land-use zoning and policies for rural areas, these guidelines also note the importance of considering the mandatory Development Plan objective in respect of climate change action under S.10(2) (n) of the Planning and Development Act, which relates to the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas to reduce energy demand.

With regard to the requested change from HA to RC, notably, the areas of greatest development pressure within the County coincides closely with these areas of high amenity value. The Draft Plan affords a high level of landscape value and protection to these high amenity areas. The primary objective of the Council over successive Development Plans has been to limit housing development in particular, within areas of high amenity in order to promote more sustainable settlement and protect the most sensitive parts of the County in accordance with the zoning objective and vision for these lands. The Council will continue to concentrate efforts to protect high amenity areas and supportive policies and objectives within Chapter 9 Green Infrastructure and Natural Heritage of the Draft

Plan includes policy GINHP28 and objective GINH063 in this regard. The Council is therefore fully committed to the continued protection of these high amenity lands in accordance with the zoning objective and vision as set out in the current FDP 2017-2023 and Draft Plan.

Based on the above, the zoning of these lands cannot be justified on the matters outlined and would be contrary to government guidance at national level. 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 HA zoned lands of which it is Council policy to protect.

RECOMMENDATION:

No change to the Draft Plan.