

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029

TUESDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Sheet 2 Fingal North

Motion from Councillor Tony Murphy : 81814

Courtlough

Motion that the lands outlined in red (CE OPR SH2.1), continuous with the GE zoned land at the eastern part of the M1 Business Park, Balbriggan retain the GE designation assigned to the Fingal Draft Plan 2023- 2029 (compliant with NPF4.4) being a location for extension of existing enterprises. The subject site is an extension to and contiguous with the M1 Business Park, progressively developed over the last 20 years. The established employment area, accommodating light industrial enterprises, logistics and warehousing, food ripening Fyffes, is compliant with NPF 4.4.

It is a lower density employment, high density space typology with excellent major road access and good utility infrastructure.

The location is away from high intensity employment office developments and does not attract HGVs into busy compact settlements.

Planning permission F22a/0225 for improved waste water pump station to service existing and future GE development of M1BP was granted 13th July 2022. The M1BP East is well serviced by frequent National, local and private bus services.

This is a sequential GE development on the remaining Eastern M1BP lands it is compliant with the GE vision and National Planning Guidelines and RSES and Variation 2 to the current FDP 2017-2023

The "Vision" for GE lands is to "Facilitate opportunities for compatible industry and general employment uses, logistics and warehousing activity in a good quality physical environment. General Employment areas should be highly accessible, well designed, permeable and legible".(DFDP)

"Low intensity employment uses such as distribution, warehouse, storage and logistics facilities will require good access to the major road network;" (NPG)

"The opening of Business Parks and industrial complexes near Junction 5 (Balbriggan South) and 6 (Balbriggan) together with the benefits accruing from the M1 motorway, will increase the attractiveness of Balbriggan to businesses that require easy access to Dublin Airport and the IFSC in Dublin City. The readily available workforce, together with the power, natural gas, and fibre-optic resources can be used to attract large-scale employers to the area." (FDP 2017 - 2023 variation 2).

Contrary to the CE response to the OPR recommendation 11(V) this GE site is compliant with the key objectives of both the current FDP and the emerging DFDP.2

Logistics, warehousing and light industry are permissible within the Matrix. The Typology proposed use for this site is the same as those already operating at this location and referred to in the NPG section 6.2.5

"Differing typologies of commercial /industrial land-uses will generate different employment characteristics (e.g. high-intensity commercial office use in comparison to lower Intensity warehousing/logistics) and these should be considered in overall strategic assessment."

The existing uses at M1BP and the planned use at this site are in an appropriate location for warehousing and logistic and light industry. channelling such uses into Strategic Employment Area identified by uses by RSES (page 19 KMPG report) is contrary to guiding principles as this is a space intensive enterprise.

The employment growth anticipated at M1BP, being a lower density employment growth cannot be channeled into the Strategic Employment areas listed on page 19 of the KPMG report as they aren't compatible with the emerging cluster developing at M1BP.

The NTA has not raised any concerns in respect of the zoning of lands at M1BP.

This GE zoned site is adjacent to M1 and the National road network and has excellent interchange capacity (Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines 2.7) compliant with NTA policy.

The rationale for CE amendment CE OPR SH 2.1 as stated on page 54 of the CE report is without foundation and justification and therefore should be rejected.

REPORT:

The content of the motion and supporting rationale is noted.

In the interests of clarity, CE OPR SH 2.1 of the CE Report states as follows:

CE OPR SH 2.1

Amend Sheet 2 to so that the additional GE land which forms the south-eastern portion of the overall GE zoned lands at Courtlough revert to the RU zoning as per the current Development Plan.

The subject lands equate to c. 7.1 hectares (17.5 acres) and are located to the east of the M1 and parallel to the R132 and adjoins employment zoned lands to the north at Courtlough. The subject lands are undeveloped and are in agricultural use. No recent relevant planning history pertains to the subject lands.

The subject lands are zoned RU – Rural in the current FDP 2017-2023. The Elected Members resolved to change the zoning of these lands from RU- Rural to GE- General Employment as shown in the Draft Plan.

The NTA, TII and OPR in its submission to the Draft stage of the Development Plan process, highlight the need for the continued protection of the strategic transport function of the national road network which includes the M1.

Critically, the OPR in its submission to the Draft Plan stage, emphasises the need to ensure that the location of land zoned for employment use is consistent with the national and regional policy framework including the NPF, RSES, Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities and that land is not zoned in locations where it would be in conflict with the principle of compact growth, the sequential growth approach and the implementation of sustainable transportation objectives.

Specifically in this context, OPR Recommendation 11 to the Draft Plan contends that the Planning Authority is required to provide robust justification for the extent and location of employment zoned land and to demonstrate that the criteria of the aforementioned national and regional policy have been satisfied, in respect of the lands zoned as General Employment (circa 73ha) south of

Balbriggan as set out in the Draft Plan which extends across both sides of the M1 and includes the lands subject to this motion.

In view of this recommendation, an analysis of these lands shows that a significant portion of these lands remain un-developed, and no recent relevant planning history pertains to the wider zoned landbank. Therefore, there is no rationale for zoning further lands at this location.

Furthermore, the Council is fully committed to the continued protection of the agricultural sector and the preservation of agricultural land within the County in accordance with the RU zoning objective, vision and supporting policy and objectives in the Draft Plan. Specifically, Chapter 7 Employment and Economy, Section 7.5.3 and Policy EEP23 of the Draft Plan, is explicit in the protection and promotion of agricultural lands within the County, a valuable resource that cannot be inconsequentially exhausted.

In addition, the key strategic employment aims and objectives of the Draft Plan seek to facilitate and channel employment growth within key strategic and accessible employment areas of the County, whilst having regard to the sequential approach as advocated at national level. This approach is supported by the evidence based underlining the Draft Plan, which shows there is an undeveloped landbank of GE lands within the north County area including Courtlough and Balbriggan, equating to c. 130 ha. These figures represent a substantial provision of GE zoned lands readily available for development.

The proposed change in zoning from RU to GE would be contrary to the policy and objectives relating to the protection of valued agricultural lands in the Draft Plan and in the absence of the sequential approach and any coherent evidence-based need or robust planning rationale for this change in zoning as well as the remaining quantum of un-developed zoned employment lands in the area.

The proposal would result in an un-coordinated, ad-hoc provision of unsustainable employment lands, contrary to the key employment aims and objectives of the Draft FDP 2023-2029 and NTA, TII, OPR policy, which seeks to protect strategic transport corridors and channel employment growth within key strategic employment areas of the County, aligned with existing and planned infrastructure.

As such, the proposed motion is contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION:

No change to the Chief Executive's Recommendation.

