

**COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL**

**FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

**FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029**

**TUESDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER 2022**

**Sheet 3 Fingal Central**

Motion from Councillor Brian Dennehy : 82430

Rezone RU to RC

"That Fingal County Council rezone the area outlined from RU to RC."

**REPORT:**

The content of this motion which seeks the rezoning of RU lands measuring 1.6 ha (c.3.9 acres) to RC at Roscall to the east of Ballyboughal, is noted.

This proposal if accepted would involve the creation of a new Rural Cluster.

There are currently thirty-seven Rural Clusters within the Draft Plan to cater for rural generated housing need. The Rural Cluster zoning has a total area of 175 hectares (432 acres). 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 a 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.

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 and vision and supportive policy and objectives set out in Chapter 7 of the Draft Plan relating to the rural economy.

The rezoning of these lands cannot be justified on the matters outlined above 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 RU lands of which it is Council policy to protect. Having regard to the foregoing, the rezoning of RU lands to RC would not be appropriate and is contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

No change to the Draft Plan.