

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029

TUESDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Sheet 4 Balbriggan

Motion from Councillor Tony Murphy: 81735

Lower Fancourt

Fingal County Council resolves that the lands North of Bower Road, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin as outlined in red on the attached map for identification purposes be zoned Objective 'RS' – Residential: Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 to facilitate a high-quality residential development on the lands.

REPORT:

The content of the motion is noted.

The subject lands are located on the northern (seaward side) of Fancourt Road and the Bower Balbriggan within a sensitive and scenic coastal setting. The lands, affording panoramic views of the sea and coastal landscape are zoned HA-High Amenity and are within the Coastal Landscape Character area, as per the current Development Plan 2017-2023. The High Amenity land use zoning and Coastal Landscape designation are carried through to the Draft Plan.

The Core Strategy has identified that there is a sufficient quantum of zoned lands within the county to meet demand over the Development Plan period. The zoning of additional lands at this location is not required on the basis of need and would be contrary to the Core Strategy and national and regional planning policy as set out in the NPF and RSES. The proposed rezoning would also be contrary to the core principles of the NPF and RSES in relation to compact, consolidated growth.

The proposed zoning would also result in the loss of High Amenity zoned lands where residential development is not permitted other than in limited circumstances as set out in the Rural Housing Strategy.

Areas of greatest development pressure within the county coincide closely with locations which are of significant amenity value, and the Draft Plan affords a high level of protection to these sensitive and scenic areas. A primary objective of the Council over successive Development Plans has been to limit development, particularly housing development, within areas of high amenity in order to promote more sustainable settlement patterns and to protect these important highly scenic areas.

Critically, the lands are also identified as being within 100m of coastline vulnerable to coastal erosion. This is indicated on the Green Infrastructure Map Sheet 15-Green Infrastructure 2, forming part of the Draft Plan together with other coastal areas in Fingal at risk from coastal erosion. In such areas there will be a presumption against new development unless it can be demonstrated, based on best available scientific information, that the likelihood of coastal erosion over the lifetime of the development is minimal. Objectives GINHO70, GINHO71 and GINHO72 should be noted in this regard:

Objective GINHO72 –Development and Risk of Coastal Erosion

‘Prohibit new development outside urban areas within the areas indicated on Green Infrastructure maps, which are within 100m of coastline at risk from coastal erosion, unless it can be objectively established based on the best scientific information available at the time of the application, that the likelihood of erosion at a specific location is minimal taking into account, inter alia, any impacts of the proposed development on erosion, or deposition’.

Objective GINHO70 -Pattern of Coastal Development

‘Strictly control the nature and pattern of development within coastal areas and ensure that it is designed and landscaped to the highest standards and sited appropriately so as not to detract from the visual amenity of the area. Development shall be prohibited where the development poses a significant or potential threat to coastal habitats or features, and/or where the development is likely to result in altered patterns of erosion or deposition elsewhere along the coast’.

Objective GINHO71 -Prohibition of Coastal Development

‘Prohibit development along the coast outside existing urban areas where such development could not be adequately safeguarded over the lifetime of the development without the need to construct additional coastal defences’.

As a general principle, the Draft Plan requires that development in coastal areas should be accommodated wherever possible in previously developed areas before consideration is given to development in greenfield sites. In all cases proposals for coastal development must consider the need for coastal defence.

In conclusion, there is no evidence-based need or planning rationale for the proposed zoning which would be in breach of the Core Strategy of the Draft Plan 2023-2029, the NPF and the RSES. The inclusion in the Draft Plan of zoning objectives facilitating the provision of additional housing without due regard to the Core Strategy and its approach is contrary to national and regional direction would be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

Furthermore, having regard to the important landscape setting, the environmental sensitivity of the lands and vulnerability to coastal erosion, the proposal to rezone from HA to RS would result in a significant loss of amenity to this important coastal landscape, would fail to secure the environmental protection of the area into the future and would be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION:

No change to Draft Plan.