

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029

TUESDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Sheet 5 Skerries

Motion from Councillor Tom O'Leary : 81913

Zone RA to Deliver Improved Access (Active Travel+Road)

"This Council resolves that the lands, outlined on the map attached, be zoned from GB-to RA-Residential Area.

REPORT:

The content of this motion is noted. The subject lands adjoin the Downside residential area in Skerries to the south and are located to the east of Golf Links Road. The subject lands which measure 2.2 ha (5.4 acres) are zoned GB-Greenbelt.

In terms of the request to rezone the subject site RA (Residential Area), the quantum and location of zoned land within Fingal is directly influenced by the Development Plan's Settlement and Core Strategy. The role of the Core Strategy is to ensure that there is sufficient zoned and serviced land to cater for future housing demand over the plan period. The Core Strategy sets out a spatial settlement strategy for the County which is consistent with national and regional policy and Specific Planning Policy Requirements (SPPRs) required under Section 28 Guidelines.

In terms of the request to rezone the subject site RA (Residential Area), the subject site measures 2.2 ha total and could accommodate between 77 and 110 residential units at densities of between 35 and 50 units per hectare. This is in excess of what it proposed in the Core Strategy and would present a significant loss of greenbelt lands in Skerries.

There is evidently sufficient zoned land to meet the needs of the population and housing targets set by the Ministerial Guidelines and the NPF for the Development Plan period. In addition to this, there are also significant long-term Strategic

Reserve lands, zoned for housing/mixed use that have potential to deliver additional housing beyond the 6 year life of this Plan. Based on the evidence-based approach adopted in the Core Strategy for the County, it is clear, that Fingal has a significant and sufficient quantum of zoned land to meet our requirements for the Development Plan period.

Based on the above, 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 and as such, would be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

The 'GB' zoning objective seeks to, *'Protect and provide for a Greenbelt.'* The associated zoning vision for these lands seeks the relative control on development within Greenbelt lands which is necessary to protect and maintain the rural and undeveloped nature of the Greenbelt in order to clearly demarcate the edge of established settlements, prevent coalesce and merging of settlements, provide for the continued viability of agricultural and rural uses and provide for amenity uses.

Section 3.5.15.12 relating to Fingal's Greenbelt lands as set out in the Draft Plan is explicit in the protection of Greenbelt lands through supportive policies and objectives including Policy SPQHP57 and objective SPQHO97, and SPQHO98. The subject lands form part of the strategic greenbelt around Skerries safeguarding the innate rural value of the Fingal countryside from unsustainable settlement patterns.

Any encroachment into this strategic Greenbelt area would result in coalescence and the loss of definition between urban and rural areas, resulting in a significant loss of strategic Greenbelt lands and to the detriment of the rural character of the area.

In terms of what this motion seeks to achieve in terms of delivering improved access, it is unclear to where this relates. The subject lands are not located adjoining any roads and given their location centrally between other lands and their GB zoning, access is not required to serve the subject lands.

Furthermore, the role of the Greenbelt as referred to in the Vision for the GB zoning objective is to prevent countryside encroachment and as such it is considered that provision of road infrastructure on these GB lands would not be appropriate.

The zoning of these lands to RA cannot be justified having regard to the matters outlined above and would be contrary to government guidance at national level.

Such a development pattern would result in the loss of strategic greenbelt lands, of which it is Council policy to protect and would be contrary to the Core Strategy of the Draft plan. As such the proposal is not considered appropriate and is contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION:

No change to the Draft Plan.