

# Statement of Response to An Bord Pleanála Opinion

In respect of

**DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, CONNECTIVITY & PHASING**

for

**Proposed Strategic Housing Development**

at

**Dunlo & Pollboy, Ballinasloe, Co Galway,**

**ABP – 312236-21**

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|     |        |            |           |             |

## A. INTRODUCTION

The **Pre-Application Consultation Opinion** from An Bord Pleanála (ABP) in relation to the proposed strategic housing development for residential development on lands at Dunlo, Ballinasloe, Co Galway was received on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022- **Case Reference: ABP-3122636-21** (the “Opinion”).

The Opinion states that *‘Furthermore, Pursuant to article 285(5)(b) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017, the prospective applicant is hereby notified that, in addition to the requirements as specified in articles 297 and 298 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017, the following **specific information** should be submitted with any application for permission:*

**3. A detailed statement demonstrating how the proposed development ties in with the wider development strategy for the landholding and the overall Ballinasloe Area, with regard to a phasing strategy and delivery of pedestrian/cycle/vehicular accesses through the site.**

An Bord Pleanála considers that the above matter need to be addressed in the documents submitted that could result in them constituting a reasonable basis for an application for strategic housing development.

This Statement is made pursuant to Article 285(5)(b) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations 2017 and sets out a response in respect of this item of specific information .

**3. A detailed statement demonstrating how the proposed development ties in with the wider development strategy for the landholding and the overall Ballinasloe area, with regard to a phasing strategy and delivery of pedestrian/cycle/vehicular accesses through the site.**

### **Development Strategy**

The lands are zoned R- Residential(Phase 1) and (Phase 2) in the current Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028. A strong evidenced based case has been made for the justification of the provision of a development on these lands, and this is presented in the Planning Report & Statement Of Consistency which has been prepared in support of this application.

The realization of the various transportation policy objectives of successive LAP's, in relation to the reservation of access to the backlands at Dunlo, has been expressed through the granting of various planning permissions over the past 15 year period for the provision of the various roadways which now facilitate access and circulation through the proposed scheme on the subject site.

Some of these roadways were constructed in the 2007-2010 period and some are currently under construction.

Relevant planning context for the development of the site was established during the planning process for a residential project on the applicants lands (Planning Ref No 18/1359-withdrawn) and was reaffirmed over the course of a subsequent application which is now under construction on the applicants lands directly to the north( Planning Ref 19/1978). The Masterplan which was presented in each case, on which the applicants entire landholding is lined in blue, is shown below.

This plan showed a provisional residential layout on the southern area of the applicants lands ( the area of the proposed development on the subject site in this case).

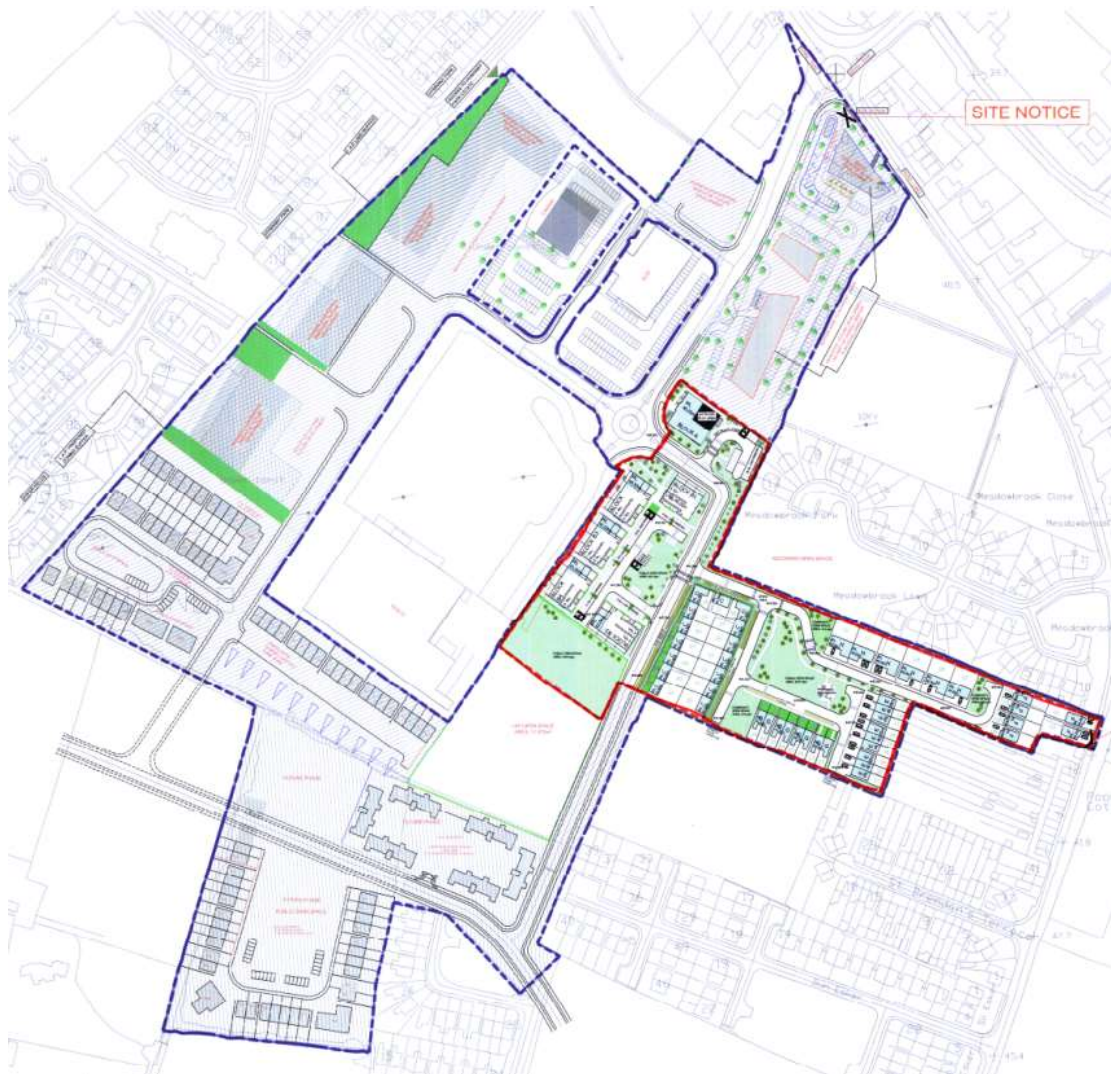
It is important to note that this provisional scheme layout incorporated an access road network which was deemed to be consistent with the transportation objectives of the LAP for the connection of residentially zoned lands in the southern environs of Dunlo/Pollboy with the town centre.

This masterplan is an approved document and planning permission was granted under Planning Ref No 19/1978 for a layout (as outlined in red on the above masterplan) which incorporated the initial phase of the roadway which forms the eastern access to the proposed development in this case .

This section of roadway is presently under construction up to and partly into the lands currently zoned OS-Open Space/Recreation & Amenity in the current Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028.

The masterplan also incorporates the initial phase of the roadway which forms the western access to the proposed development in this case . This roadway was deemed to be consistent with the transportation objectives of the LAP for the connection of residentially

zoned lands in the southern environs of Dunlo/Pollboy with the town centre, as expressed in and approved by Planning Ref Nos 07/9022 & 09/9009, and it was partly constructed in the 2009-2010 period.



Planning permission was obtained in 2020 for Phase of the development on the applicants lands , and this is presently underway and due for completion in 2023.

Accordingly, having regard to the government policy on this provision, as expressed in the National Planning Framework, and in recognition of the objective of Galway County Council to support the provision of housing to satisfy the needs of the Core Strategy, it is now considered an appropriate juncture to consider the provision of a strategic housing development on the remainder of the applicants zoned lands.

Such a proposal is consistent with the Core Strategy for the Town of Ballinasloe, as expressed in the Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028.

The above context sets out the applicants strategy for the development of the remainder of his residentially zoned lands at Dunlo and Pollboy in this case.

The site of the proposed development is essentially an infill between existing well established residential housing to the east and west of the site. This development proposal constitutes a final completion phase of the southern environs of Ballinasloe since it was commenced almost 20 years ago.

It is fitting that such a development would proceed at this stage at this time of great housing need.

### **Phasing Strategy**

A scheme was designed for the provision of a total of 165 dwelling, as explained in detail in the Architectural Design Statement, and consists of the following:

- Block A1 and A2, each consisting of 6 No Two-Bed Ground Floor apartments, 1 No One-Bed ground Floor apartment, 6 No Three-Bed First Floor Duplex Units, and 1 No Three-Bed Second Floor apartment.
- Blocks B1 to B3 and B6 to B13 inclusive, each consisting of 2 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor apartment, and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment,
- Blocks B4 and B5 inclusive, each consisting of 1 No Two-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Unit, 2 No Three-Bed Ground Floor Duplex Units, 1 No Two-Bed Second Floor Apartment and 1 No One-Bed Second Floor apartment.
- House Type C : 32 No Two-Bed units in semi-detached pairs
- House Type E : 27 No Three-Bed units in triplet arrangements
- provision of 281 No. on-site car parking spaces incorporating 163 No. spaces for residents of the apartment/duplexes, and 118 No in-curtilage car parking spaces for the housing units

The shape, access routes and configuration of the site facilitates natural phasing to the western and eastern sector independently.

Existing services and roads infrastructure has been constructed in as far as the subject site on the eastern and western side. In fact, services have been constructed into the site, namely, watermains and surface water drainage along the western access roadway.

Accordingly, it would be most feasible to commence the construction work on the western side of the site which has services already in place.

Therefore, it is submitted that the the construction of the 165 No residential units within the development would be most conveniently commenced on the western side and phased in the following manner:

- **Phase 1-** Completion of construction of western access roadway to the site together with the construction of the Block A1 & A2, and Block B1 to B5 inclusive together with all associated site development services, including roads , pathways, pedestrian links and site boundaries. A total of 58 No. units would be provided under this phase and encompass a broad range of typologies.



- **Phase 2-** Completion of internal roadway together with the construction of the Type C semi-detached dwellings on sites 59 to 80 inclusive together with all associated site development services, pathways, pedestrian links, and site boundaries to include retaining wall along rear boundary with the Tesco property. A total of 22 No. units would be provided under this phase.





- **Phase 3** - Completion of eastern access roadway through the open space and the main internal east-west roadway through the site for interconnection with the previously developed western phases of the scheme. This phase would also include the provision of Block B11- Block 13 inclusive and the construction of the Type C semi-detached dwellings and Type E dwellings on sites 129-165 inclusive together with all associated site development services, pathways, pedestrian links, and site boundaries . A total of 55 No. units would be provided under this phase and encompass a broad range of the typologies within the scheme.
- **Phase 4**- This phase would include the provision of Block B6- Block 10 inclusive and the construction of all associated site development services, pathways, pedestrian links, and site boundaries . The full development of the area of zoned open space , including the provision of all public realm facilities, would be fully developed under this phase and integrated into the existing neighbourhood developments. A total of 30 No. units would be provided under this phase .



An overview of the phasing scheme for the entire development is set out on **Drawing No 2521- 009** which accompanies this application.

### **Pedestrian/Cycle/Vehicular Accesses Through The Site**

The site is located in a key central position in the southern environs of the town of Ballinasloe. It is already surrounded on three sides by existing residential development, and is bounded to the north by an emerging commercial park.





The site is currently being used by the residents of adjoining developments as a pedestrian and cyclist desire route for journeys from their homes to the adjoining retail park and generally towards the town centre.



Note the tracked routes formed by pedestrians who habitually criss-cross the site from either direction towards the retail park and the town centre too the north.

Accordingly, it is submitted the proposed development on the subject site will provide much needed safe and secure connectivity for the entire residential neighbourhood in the southern environs of Ballinasloe

During the design phase of the scheme it was necessary, on the one hand, to maintain and integrate the travel desires lines of the surrounding neighborhoods through the scheme to and from the retail park and the town centre; and, on the other hand, to ensure that future

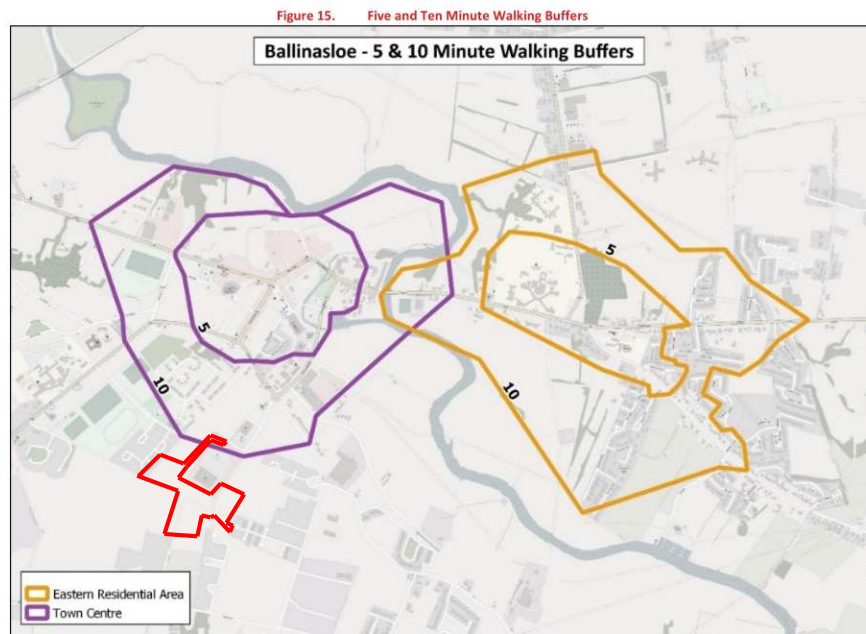
connectivity and permeability was preserved and maintained to adjoining undeveloped lands on all sides.

Accordingly, connectivity and permeability was a primary consideration in the preparation of the design of this scheme from the outset.

The central zone of the scheme incorporates the principle circulation hub for inwards and outwards movement, and through the general layout as shown above.

The open configuration of the layout in each of the character areas ensures that there is maximum permeability across the site itself, and towards both the town centre and the adjoining residential neighborhoods.

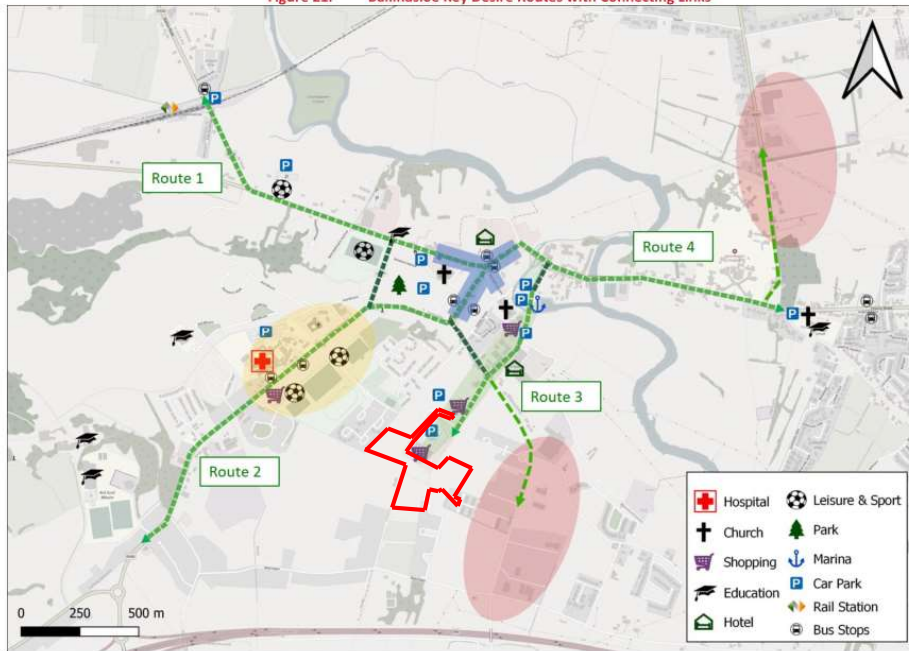
North-south routes through the site have been transportation objectives of the LAP for the past 20 year period as access to the extensive residentially zoned lands in the southern environs of the town. These routes have been realized in part to date by the grant of planning permission and the subsequent construction of these routes towards the site.



The site is adjacent to the 10 minute walking buffer zone from the town Centre, as shown in the extract from Ballinasloe LTP above.

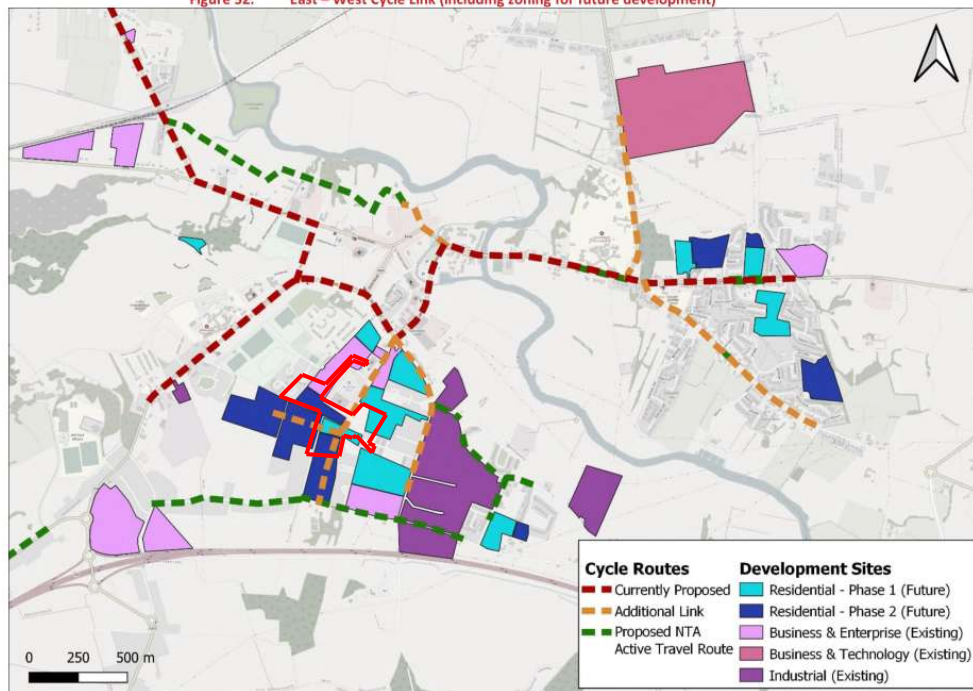


Figure 21. Ballinasloe Key Desire Routes with Connecting Links



The site is located on one the primary desire route from the Town centre as shown in the extract from Ballinasloe LTP above.

Figure S2. East – West Cycle Link (including zoning for future development)



One of the cycle route desire lines, as shown on the LTP, passes north-south, and east-west through the subject.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the provision of a residential scheme on the subject site will be a significant unifying gain for the existing residential neighbourhood, and for the town of Ballinasloe in terms of improving connectivity and permeability for pedestrians , cyclists, and for vehicular traffic generally.

Finally, it is to be noted that provision has been made in the design of the scheme for the preservation of the desire routes as set out in the Local Transport Plan of the Ballinasloe LAP 2022-2028.

The revised design layout of the scheme, following the Stage 1 & 2 process was presented to the roads section of Galway County Council for their consideration with respect to the roads layout as shown throughout the site. It was stated at that time that this layout was improved following the commentary from Galway County Council during the Stage 1 & 2 process.

The Roads Section indicated that the revised layout was a reasonable improvement having regard to connectivity and permeability through the site for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic.