

Online submission regarding planning application FW15A/0174 by Castlethorn Construction

A chara,

On behalf of Riverwood Residents Association I wish to make the following observations about planning application FW15A/0174 for the development of 76 residential dwellings by Castlethorn Construction.

We welcome the proposal to develop the untidy infill site between Woodbrook apartments and Riverwood Dene. The layout of the application is a welcome change from the application that included an 8 storey building (F04/0723). The gradual rise from 2 storey buildings on the eastern side (matching the existing houses at Riverwood Dene) to the 5 storeys at the western edge is a natural incline to match the height of the bridge there.

While, on the whole, the development is carefully considered, we have a few concerns about some aspects of the development.

Public Open Space Provision On-Site

It is disappointing that the Planning Authority has repeatedly allowed the applicant avoid providing the appropriate open space areas within its developments in the Porterstown/Diswellstown area. For the health and wellbeing of residents, especially children, in the new development this practice needs to stop. Insufficient on-site open space areas leads to children playing in unsuitable locations (e.g. on roadways) or not at all (e.g. sedentary activities indoors). We respectfully ask that the entire 0.5ha of public open space be provided on-site.

We suggest that a gated children play area and basketball/tennis area and large green space for ball play be provided.

The Diswellstown Area Action Plan is mentioned as reason for being able to provide Class 1 open space outside the plan area but then says that the AAP is no longer an objective in the Fingal County Development Plan 2011-2017. Therefore previous provision of Class 1 open space outside the area and pre-planning consultation discussions should not be taken as a limiting precedent. Three nearby developments (Woodbrook, Annfield and Fernleigh) have significant amounts of their required Class 1 open space area provided off-site. Fingal County Council should stop the continued deficit of local Class 1 open space areas.

The 1.2ha of Class 1 open space at Riverwood Chase/Copse should not be considered for day-to-day use by residents. Using this space requires parents to be present to supervise their children as younger children will not likely be permitted to cross the busy Riverwood Road without parental supervision. Time constraints will limit the opportunity to use this open space. Therefore it is significantly better to provide open space area within the development. The off-site open space area at Beechpark is even less useful as it requires driving to it. An on-site open space area is needed to help children get the recommended levels of daily physical activity.

The 1.2ha of Class 1 open space at Riverwood Chase/Copse attracts users from throughout the Diswellstown and Carpenterstown area. Vehicular traffic is noticeably higher as a result. Due to poor drainage, numerous portions of the grass areas are unusable during periods of high rainfall. For

these reasons we would like to see Class 1 open space within the development.

The open space area at Riverwood Court is less than ideal because of the small but significant incline between the road and the train line. This should not be repeated at this new development - it should be flat, with adequate drainage to allow year round use.

It is a concern that a portion of the proposed Class 2 open space would be sacrificed for parking if the Metro West project were to proceed, even if it is temporary.

Parking

The planning application states that the overall car parking ratio of 1.5 spaces per unit is achieved across the proposed scheme. We feel that the space allocation for the 36 apartments and duplexes will be insufficient - 1 per unit, 7 shared and 3 visitor. This ratio is less than 1.2 spaces per unit. This will lead to conflicts between residents, and visitors using spaces allocated to residents.

We also feel that the 1.5 cars per unit number is outdated. We see numerous houses here in Riverwood estate with 3 or even more cars.

Foul Water Drainage

The foul water drainage for this site is proposed to use the existing Porterstown Waste Water Pumping station at the western edge of Riverwood estate. There have been numerous problems with this pump house in the last few years, with Fingal County Council Water Services visiting the site frequently. We would query whether this will cope with the additional volumes from the proposed scheme.

Traffic Volumes

Currently at peak time traffic is queued from the traffic lights at Scoil Choilm along the Diswellstown Road past Riverwood Heath and also up past the Woodbrook estate to the roundabout at Riverwood Dene. With this development, and the developments at St Patrick's NS in Diswellstown, traffic will increase and soon residents will be unable to exit from the estates at Riverwood Heath and Riverwood Dene. A comprehensive traffic analysis plan for traffic to/from Carpenterstown is required from Fingal before any further developments should be permitted.

Childcare

The planning application states that there is 8 childcare facilities within 1.5km of the site. While there is likely more than that, many of them are at capacity. There is always need for additional childcare facilities.

We feel that the suggestion that less than 75 of the dwellings will require childcare facilities is inaccurate. With the high cost of housing, the occupancy rates for dwellings is often higher than the designed capacity. This results in a higher than expected number of children in an area, with an increased demand for childcare facilities.

Conclusion

While we welcome the mostly carefully considered design, we have the following suggestions:

- **Open Space:** Provide the full required amount on site. Consider providing a soft play area, tennis and/or basketball area and a large green space.
- **Parking:** The spaces allocated to the apartments and duplexes is insufficient (1.2 spaces per unit).

- **Foul Water Draining:** Please confirm whether the problematic pumping station will handle the inputs from the proposed scheme.
- **Traffic Volumes:** A comprehensive analysis must be completed of the already congested traffic in the area to determine whether it can cope with the additional traffic from this scheme.
- **Childcare:** Local facilities are near or at capacity. A facility should be provided with this scheme.

Yours sincerely,

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