

# Submission to the Draft Stage of the Fingal County Development Plan 2017- 2023

Submission on behalf of:

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By:

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To:

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## 1.0 Introduction

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This submission is made by O'Connor Whelan on behalf of Justin Ward T/A Justin Flowers, Moymel, Main Street, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, and relates to the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023. It is submitted in response to an invitation by Fingal County Council to make submissions during the public consultation period of the Draft Development Plan.

The purpose of this submission is to seek the rezoning of 0.44 hectares of land located to the rear of Justin's Flowers on Main Street, Blanchardstown from its current High Amenity zoning to a Town Centre zoning in order to facilitate the development of a car park. Figure 1 below outlines the location of these lands.



**Figure 1: Site Location**

We believe that there is sound planning logic to support this zoning, namely:

1. The car park will be a public facility available to all, which is a planning gain, as the immediate area has little on-street and off-street car parking.
2. It will facilitate the redevelopment of the entire Justin's Flowers site, enabling the development of contemporary building which would present a more attractive streetscape than currently exists on the site.

3. It will ensure the sustainability of an indigenous business which has operated from this site for almost 50 years.
4. It will contribute to the revitalization of Blanchardstown village.
5. The site is incorrectly zoned as High Amenity, as it has no amenity value.
6. Fingal County Council has no plans to develop the site as amenity / recreational lands in the future.

## 2.0 Context

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Justin's Flowers has operated from this site for almost 50 years. The total landholding is 0.85 hectares, with approximately half zoned "Town Centre" and half zoned "High Amenity" in the Draft Development Plan.

The site consists of a two storey former dwelling, with a single storey extension to the front. There is a surface car park on facing the main street with parking for approximately 12 cars. There are a number of 'outbuildings' on the site including a number of shipping containers.



**Figure 2: View from the Main Street**

The "High Amenity" lands are located to the rear, and are used for storage of products sold in the shop. Mostly it is overgrown grass land with large areas of briars. It has no amenity or recreational value. There is a substantial change in level from the area adjoining the Main Street to the back of the site, as shown in Figure 6 below.



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

## 3.0 Rationale for Rezoning

### Planning Gain: Car Parking

Between Ramor Park and Clonsilla Road there are eight commercial premises, including an auctioneers, medical practice and a solicitor's office. Most of the business have no or limited off-street car parking, and yet there are only seven on-street car parking spaces on this stretch of the main street. As a result, cars are permanently parked on the footpaths, as shown in figures 7 and 8 below.



Figure 7



Figure 8

If these lands are rezoned as Town Centre, it is intended to develop a public car which will be available to all members of the public, thus freeing the footpaths from parked cars.

### Redevelopment of the Site

Justin's Flowers has been located on this site for almost 50 years. It is a business that has grown generically over that period. It is not a particularly pleasant looking set up however. The front extension to the former dwelling, the surface car park and shipping containers do not create an attractive streetscape to the Main Street.

The rezoning of the area to the rear will facilitate the redevelopment of the entire site. It is intended that an international retailer will redevelop the site as a supermarket including the construction of a new premises for Justin's Flowers. The new development will address the Main Street in an appropriate manner and provide a contemporary, attractive streetscape in this part of the village.

Attached a drawing from Carew Kelly Architects which shows how the lands could be comprehensively redeveloped, whilst creating an attractive street frontage onto the Main Street.

### Indigenous Business

The rezoning of the lands to the rear and redevelopment of the site will ensure the long term operation of Justin's Flowers, which has operated from this site for almost 50 years. Justin's Flowers is an indigenous business which has provided a service to the community for a considerable period. The premises, however, require modernisation, which will be best done as part of the redevelopment of the entire site.

### Revitalisation of Blanchardstown Village

The redevelopment of the site, and the provision of a supermarket will increase footfall in the area and will ultimately contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of Blanchardstown village. It will complement the development strategy for the village as outlined in the Draft Development Plan

*"Promote the planned and sustainable development of Blanchardstown, positioning it as an important residential, service, employment, retail, and leisure centre, specifically by:*

- *The provision of civic, cultural, retail, commercial, residential and employment activity within Blanchardstown at a level appropriate for a Metropolitan Consolidation Town...."*

### **Incorrect Zoning**

As described above, and shown in the various figures, the site is used for storage and is overgrown in parts. It is privately owned and there is no public access to it. It has no amenity or recreational value and should not be zoned as High Amenity.

In addition, the Development Plan has a symbol on the lands which appears to indicate that they are liable to flooding. The lands used to be liable to flooding, however, due to works carried out on the River Tolka in Clonee in the early to mid-2000s flooding no longer occurs, despite the frequent flood events that have plagued the certain parts of the country in recent years.

### **Future Plans**

We understand from discussions with the Parks Department that Fingal County Council has no plans to develop the site and surrounding land as amenity or recreational lands in the future. Efforts will instead focus on developing and maintaining the park lands on the northern side of the N3 / Navan Road. In this regard, therefore, there is no reason to maintain the High Amenity zoning objective.

## 4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

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The purpose of this submission is to seek the rezoning of 0.44 hectares of land located to the rear of Justin's Flowers on Main Street, Blanchardstown from its current High Amenity zoning to a Town Centre zoning in order to facilitate the development of a car park. Figure 1 below outlines the location of these lands.

We believe that there is sound planning logic to support this zoning, which will lead to the comprehensive redevelopment of the site, thereby contributing to the vitality and vibrancy of the Village. It will also create public off-street car parking in a part of the Village where a lack of car parking has resulting in cars being parked on footpaths.

In any event, the High Amenity zoning is incorrect as the lands are in private ownership, with no public access and have no amenity or recreational value.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned should you wish to discuss any aspect of this submission.

Yours faithfully



**Alan Whelan**  
**Director**  
**O'Connor Whelan**