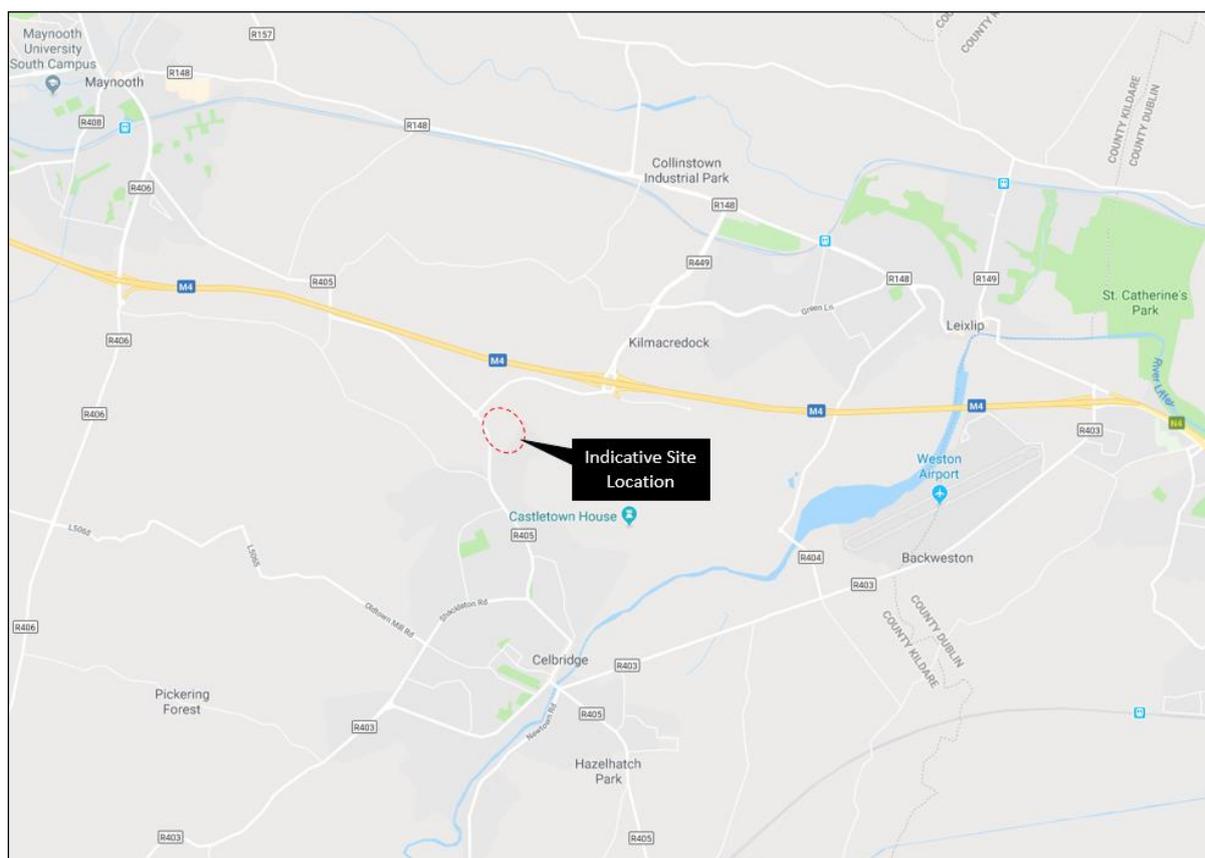


2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Location and Context

The subject site is located on the northern side of the built-up area of Celbridge in County Kildare. The site is bounded to the west by the Maynooth Road (R405) and to the north-west by the Leixlip Road (R449) that also connects to the M4 Motorway at Junction 6, a short distance to the north-east of the subject lands. The lands are bounded by open agricultural to the north-east and by the rear gardens of houses within the established residential development of Crodaun Forest Park to the south-east and south.

Figure 2.1 Site Location



Castletown House, an 18th century Palladian style house and its associated demesne, is located to the south east of the proposed site, beyond the Crodaun Forest Park residential estate. An avenue through the wooded area to the north west of the House marks the line of a north west axis and vista from the House toward the folly at Carton House Demesne. That vista continues parallel to and beyond the north eastern boundary of the site (Figure 2.2).

The townland boundary with Castletown forms most of the eastern and southern boundary of the site and comprises a largely well preserved roughly cut stone wall with notable modern changes to the south of the site where concrete blocks and capping have been inserted. The wall is 1.8 - 2.2 m high and is constructed of roughly cut limestone blocks and mortar while an original gateway provides access to and from the demesne lands.

2.2 Site Description

The site is irregular in shape and extends to approximately 9.55ha in area, which include an area of zoned Objective F (Open Space) lands that is required for ground levelling works to deliver the northern most and internal access road. This strip of land extends to approximately 0.136ha. It also includes areas owned by Kildare County Council (totaling 0.232ha) for which consent has been given for its inclusion in the application.

The subject site is composed of three large fields currently in use as grazing land, and a small triangular field adjoining the Maynooth Road. The field boundaries comprise mature hedgerows with a laneway off an existing vehicular access on the Maynooth Road on the south-western part of the site.

Figure 2.2 Aerial View of Site



The site has a gentle topography varying from approximately 69m in the north-western corner falling by approximately 3m in a southerly direction to approximately 66m at the south-eastern boundary of the site. Along the north-western boundary of the site is a man-made embankment, approximately 6m high, that screens the site from views from the R449.

2.3 Relevant Planning History pertaining to the Subject Lands

Provided below is an overview of the relevant planning history relating to the subject lands.

2.3.1 KCC Ref. 052819

On the 22nd February 2006 KCC Refused planning permission for a mixed-use development (total gross floor area of 39,099 sq.m) on a 13.45 ha site.

The proposed development comprises: the demolition of a single storey house, garage, stables and barn and removal of the existing earth berms along the R449. The proposed development included as follows:

- 45 no. houses and 76 no. apartments.
- Leisure centre, including: creche; medical centre; community and community centre.
- One retail unit and 11 no. Office units plus Restaurant.
- 56 bed Nursing Home and 28 No. low-dependency nursing home units.

Planning permission was refused for 5 reasons, which included in broad terms as follows:

- Material contravention of zoning / development objective;
- Part of site fell outside the development boundary of Celbridge – i.e. on agricultural lands;
- Inappropriate scale, height, layout and deficient public open space provision.
- Proposed 4-storey blocks would interfere and detract with a protected vista from / between Castletown House and Connolly's Folly.
- Unsustainable form of development by reason of the large number of housing in a peripheral location poorly served by public transport provision.

2.3.2 KCC Ref. 0872

In March 2009 KCC granted planning permission for the demolition of existing single storey house, garage, stables and barn and the construction of 5no. two storey blocks containing 22 no. industrial/commercial units plus new vehicular entrance and access road, associated carparking and service areas etc.

2.3.3 KCC Ref. 082040

In June 2009, KCC granted planning permission for the construction of a two-storey over basement Fitness Centre, comprising swimming pool, treatment / consultants' rooms, gymnasium, changing, shower / toilet facilities, plant room, car parking and access roads, etc.

2.3.4 KCC Ref. 09572 (PL 09.235757)

In May 2010, ABP refused planning permission for a new petrol station and associated new vehicular access / egress off the R449 to the north of the site. Permission was refused for the following reasons:

The location proximate to the roundabout on the R449, on the opposite side of the road to an existing petrol station served by two access roads, and with access and egress arrangements from the R449 designed to operate on a left in and a left out basis only would create a complex environment for road users which would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard.

The access to the proposed petrol filling station would form an integral part of the access to the remainder of the area that is zoned retail/commercial in the Celbridge Local Area Plan, 2010. To permit

the proposed access in the absence of a comprehensive assessment of the overall development proposals for the area would prejudice the potential access arrangements to the lands and be contrary to the Local Area Plan's objectives for this area.

The application site lies within an area zoned retail/commercial in the Celbridge Local Area Plan, 2010. Within this zone, petrol stations are not permitted and so to grant permission for the proposed petrol station on this site would materially contravene the development plan.

2.3.5 KCC Ref. 091273 (PL 09.237463)

In February 2011, ABP refused planning permission for revisions to consist of the omission of warehousing blocks A, B, C and D (total floor area of 7,259.0 square metres and replacement with the construction of a 4,308 square metres single-storey cinema complex with projection area mezzanine level, together with revised associated car parking, vehicular access roads, drainage, landscaping and site works.

Permission was refused for 3 reasons, including in broad terms, as follows:

- The peripheral location beyond (more than two kilometres from the centre of the town), the proposed development would cater predominantly to a car-borne patronage that would detract from the vibrancy of the town centre.
- Cinema use is open for consideration under the zoning Objective H. However, the proposed development would take up the greater part of the lands zoned Objective H at this location to the south-east of the R449 regional road and would not be in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The proposed development would, therefore, materially contravene a zoning objective, as set out in the Local Area Plan.
- Due to the accessibility of the site to the M4 motorway, the proposed development would be likely to attract car-borne patronage, not alone from Celbridge, but from the other major population centres of North Kildare and West Dublin. The proposed development would, therefore, be likely to give rise to on-street parking on the adjacent major traffic arteries, namely, the R449 and R405. The proposed development would, therefore, endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard and the obstruction of road users.

2.3.6 KCC Ref. 10307

In January 2011, KCC granted planning permission for an industrial warehousing building comprising of 9 individual units and associated car parking, site works, drainage and services, new vehicular access road R449, alteration to previously granted road layout – planning register reference: 08/72.

2.3.7 KCC Ref. 101234

In November 2011, KCC refused planning permission for a development consisting of a single storey block comprising of one large retail unit and a two-storey block comprising of 2 retail units at ground level and medical consulting rooms at first floor level, and associated car parking, site works, drainage and services.

The reasons for refusal stated the peripheral location of the site and its impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and the potential to give rise to car-borne trips in this out of centre / edge location.

2.3.8 KCC Ref. 11141

In January 2012, KCC granted planning permission for a development consisting of a single storey Montessori school including 8 No. classrooms, general purpose room and ancillary support accommodation; temporary entrance on the R405 (Maynooth Road) pending development of roads on adjacent site; final entrance to be formed on completion of adjacent site roads; associated boundary fencing, car parking, site works, drainage and services.

The above permission was subsequently amended by KCC Planning Ref. 12174, as granted in June 2012.

2.3.9 KCC Ref. 12433

In July 2012, KCC refused planning permission for an all-weather playing pitch with perimeter boundary fencing and floodlighting. Reasons for refusal include potential impacts on nearby residential amenities; haphazard /piecemeal development in the absence of a framework plan for the area and potential traffic hazard due to the lack of ancillary / associated car parking.

2.4 Relevant Planning History - Adjoining Lands

The most significant and relevant pipeline development is a Draft Strategic Housing Development Proposal for a scheme consisting of 495 no. dwellings (228 no. houses, 42 no. duplexes, 225 no. apartments) with a childcare facility and associated site works that is currently being promoted by Crodaun Development Company on the western side of the R405 (directly opposite the subject site). This proposal is pursued under ABP Ref. PL09.304246 as a Strategic Housing Development.

It is noted that ABP issued an Opinion on the 17th June 2019, stating that the proposed scheme represents a reasonable basis for an application. On this basis it is considered safe to assume that at some point in the nearby future an application for a comparable quantum of new housing will be submitted for the formal consideration of ABP as a Strategic Housing Development application.