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Grangegorman development stalls over petrol station

Plans for the main entrance to DIT to be redrawn around garage

Olivia Kelly

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One of the first major developments of the €200 million Grangegorman campus for Dublin Institute of Technology has gone back to the drawing board following the refusal of a petrol station owner to move off site.

The proposed €5 million Broadstone Gate development would provide the main vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist access entrance for the college campus as well as a stop for the new Luas Cross City line.

The plan involved the demolition of a small number of buildings, including the Maxol garage on Constitution Hill. However, Maxol has withdrawn its consent for the demolition.

Dublin City Council said it would have to redraw the plans, working the new entrance plaza around the garage.

Luas stop location

The garage site had been earmarked as the location of the Luas stop, with a landscaped plaza above it. The Railway Procurement Agency (RPA), which is building the Luas line, approached Maxol in 2009 and agreement was reached that the company would relocate to a new site to be provided by the council.

A site was identified on Oscar Traynor Road in Dublin 17. However, Dublin city councillors last June voted by a narrow margin to reject the proposal following pressure from parents at a nearby primary school.

Maxol chief executive Tom Noonan said the company had been willing to move and had suggested alternative sites.

“Right up to last week we were saying we were willing to consider any other site in the greater Dublin area. There are numerous empty sites that have been filling stations in the past and are now in the control of Nama. If suddenly something was freed up by Nama we would be happy to give our full co-operation.”

However, Mr Noonan said the company was informed that no site had been found but that the Broadstone development had to proceed. On that basis it withdrew its letter of consent from the council. “We feel we have been very helpful since 2009 but the RPA and council have not been able to deliver.”

Executive manager with the council Jim Keogan said it had to press ahead with the planning process for the Broadstone Gate development, known as a Part 8 procedure, despite Maxol’s decision to stay put.

“In approving the planning scheme for Grangegorman, An Bord Pleanála imposed a condition that the Broadstone entrance must be in place before the new campus is occupied by students in 2017. If it is to be completed by that time, we can’t delay.”

‘Not ideal’

The proposed solution is to redraw the plans excluding the garage and restart the planning procedure. The solution is “not ideal, in that it compromises the amenity value and functionality of the lower plaza

area and the Luas stop”, Mr Keogan said.

But he said it would still allow for a pedestrian access way to Grangegorman and a bus overpass.

The RPA said it would “continue to engage with the stakeholder to see if an agreement can be reached in relation to the property”. It added that it had powers to compulsorily acquire the property “and will use these powers , if necessary”.

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