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The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2017.

The Board decided to refuse permission, generally in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation, for the following reasons and considerations.

### **Reasons and Considerations**

1. The subject site is located in the open countryside, in an area which would correspond to the rural area type "Area under Strong Urban Influence", as set out in the "Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities" issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in April 2005, wherein it is indicated that it is policy to distinguish between rural-generated housing need and urban-generated housing need. On the basis of the documentation submitted in support of the application and the appeal, it is considered that the proposed development would represent urban-generated rural housing, and that the applicant, therefore, would not come within the scope of the housing need criteria for a house in this rural location. Accordingly, the proposed development would be contrary to these Ministerial Guidelines and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. The site is located in an area which is designated in the current Wicklow County Development Plan 2016 – 2022 as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and an 'Open Countryside' area of special control in relation to which it is

policy of the planning authority to control development in order to maintain the scenic values and existing character of the area and only when it is for those with a definable social or economic need to live in the open countryside. The designation and policy are considered reasonable. The proposed development would detract to an undue degree from the rural character and scenic amenities of the area. It is also considered the applicant does not come within the scope of the housing need criteria set out in Objective HD23 of the Wicklow County Development Plan. It is considered, therefore, that the proposed development would contravene stated policy and objectives and be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. The site is located on a private laneway which is seriously substandard in terms of surface, width and alignment, and where adequate sightlines cannot be achieved without the removal of the existing front boundary embankment and hedgerows of the site and the setback of the field boundary to the west. Furthermore, the proposed development would generate additional traffic movement on a narrow local public road (L5008) which is substandard in width and alignment and is served by a substandard junction with the private laneway and with the R117 road. It is, therefore, considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of serious traffic hazard and obstruction of road users. If sightlines were to be improved at these substandard junctions, it would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Board Member**

**Date:**

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Eugene Nixon