



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

**Board Direction**  
**BD-006833-20**  
**ABP-307750-20**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 02/11/2020.

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 proposed development by reason of its design and siting would constitute an inappropriate design response to the existing context of the site, would result in discordant development which would be unduly obtrusive and would seriously injure established residential and other amenities of properties in the vicinity. In this regard the proposed development would contravene the relevant provisions of the Galway County Development 2015-2021, including Objectives RHO9, LCM 1 and LCM 2 and DM Standard 6. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. The Board considered that the site of the proposed development is located within an "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 policy to distinguish between urban-generated and rural-generated housing need. Furthermore, the subject site is located in an area that is designated

under urban influence, where it is national policy, as set out in National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework, to facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside, based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.

Having regard to the location of the site outside the settlement boundary for the village of Bearna, within an unserviced area, it is considered that the proposed development would result in and exacerbate a pattern of haphazard development at this location outside of the urban area, and would by itself and by the precedent it would set for similar such development, militate against the consolidation of the adjoining settlement including the more efficient use of services and infrastructure within this settlement and would contribute to the encroachment of random development, resulting in urban sprawl into the countryside at this location, contrary to the requirements of Variation No 2(a) of the Galway County development Plan 2015-2021. Furthermore, the Board is not satisfied that the applicant's housing needs could not be satisfactorily met in an established town or settlement centre.

The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the Ministerial Guidelines, to the over-arching national policy and having regard to the relevant provisions of the Galway County Development Plan 2015-2021 would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Note 1:** The Board had concerns regarding the proliferation of individual wastewater treatment systems in the area on lands which are characterised by shallow soils over aquifers of extreme vulnerability. However, the Board considered that this was a new issue and in the context of the substantive reasons for refusal set out above, decided also not to pursue this issue.

Copy of Board Direction to issue with the Board Order.

**Board Member**

**Date:** 02/11/2020

---

Maria FitzGerald