



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

**Board Direction**  
**BD-010600-22**  
**ABP-311015-21**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 28/04/2022.

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

#### **Reasons and Considerations**

1. Having regard to the site location in an area at risk of flooding, the evidence of poor drainage characteristics in the wider area, and the underlying soil conditions and high water table, the Board is not satisfied, on the basis of the submissions made in connection with the planning application and the appeal, that effluent from the development can be satisfactorily treated and disposed of on site, notwithstanding the proposed use of a proprietary wastewater treatment system. The proposed development would, therefore, be prejudicial to public health.
2. Having regard to the site location in an area identified by the OPW as being at risk of fluvial flooding, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment appended to the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021–2027, and the provisions of the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in November 2009, the Board is not satisfied on the basis of submissions made in connection with the planning application and appeal, that the subject site is an appropriate site for the type of development proposed; and that the proposed development would cause or exacerbate

flooding on adjoining lands contrary to national flood guidelines. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Board Member**

  
Michelle Fagan

**Date:** 28/04/2022

**Note:** Having regard to National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework (February 2018) which, for rural areas under urban influence, seeks 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 or smaller towns and rural settlements, the proximity of the site to Athlone town, and notwithstanding the submissions on the file indicating familial links to the area, it is considered that the applicant does not come within the scope of either the economic or social housing need criteria set out in the overarching National Guidelines. The proposed development, in the absence of any identified locally based need for the house at this location, would result in a haphazard and unsustainable form of development in an unserved area, would contribute to the encroachment of random rural development in the area and would mitigate against the preservation of the rural environment and the efficient provision of public services and infrastructure and undermine the settlement strategy set out in the development plan. However, it was considered unnecessary to include this reason given the substantive nature of the reasons set out above.