

An  
Bord  
Pleanála

**Board Direction**  
**BD-011852-23**  
**ABP-312377-22**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 03/03/2023.

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:

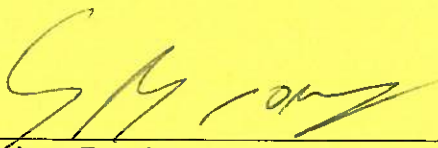
- a) the location of the site within a rural area identified as being under strong urban influence in accordance with the 'Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities' published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in April, 2005;
- b) National Policy 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 demonstratable economic or social need to live in a rural area, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements,
- c) the provisions of the Westmeath County Development Plan, 2021-2027 which provide for consideration to be given to the development of rural housing in areas under strong urban influence for those with a definable social or economic need to live in the open countryside,

the Board is not satisfied, on the basis of the information submitted with the application and the appeal, that the applicant comes within the scope of either

the economic or social housing need criteria. 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, would contribute to the encroachment of random rural development in the area, would militate against the preservation of the rural environment and the efficient provision of public services and infrastructure, and would undermine the settlement strategy set out in the Development Plan. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The board also noted issues raised in the inspector's report in relation to the requirement for a well on the site, and the need to ensure appropriate siting of the well, including adequate separation from septic tank, etc. Ordinarily the board would have required further information regarding this issue prior to making a determination; however with regard to the substantive reasons for refusal it was decided not to pursue this matter at this time.

**Board Member**

  
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Stephen Brophy

**Date:** 06/03/2023