

An
Bord
Pleanála

Board Direction
BD-018640-25
ABP-317154-23

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 14/01/2025.

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

Reasons and Considerations

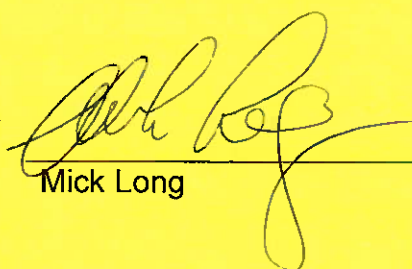
1. The Board noted Section 6.9 (Wastewater) of the Meath County Development Plan, 2021-2027, outlining that for larger developments, the requirements for wastewater treatment plants are set out by the EPA Wastewater Treatment Manuals – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels (1999) and EPA Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater (EPA 2011). It is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan, 2021-2027 (INF OBJ 13) 'To ensure that septic tanks, proprietary effluent treatment systems and percolation areas are located and constructed in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines of the EPA and the Council in order to minimise the impact on surface water of discharges'. Having regard to the totality of the documentation on file, including the Site Characterisation Form, it has not been adequately demonstrated that the site and wastewater treatment system can effectively treat and dispose of foul water. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would be prejudicial to public health by way of groundwater contamination and contrary to Objective INF OBJ 13 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2021-2027, would be prejudicial to public health and would therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. In light of the requirements of Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, an appropriate assessment of the proposed development has been carried out by the Board considering the Inspector's assessments in the original and addendum reports. Having regard to the totality of the documentation on file the Board is not satisfied it has not been adequately demonstrated that the site and wastewater treatment system can effectively treat and dispose of foul water given the location of the wastewater treatment system relative to the existing drainage ditch to the north-west, where a hydrological connection exists to the River Blackwater. The Board therefore cannot be certain that significant effects to the hydrologically connected River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002299) and the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site Code: 004232) can be ruled out. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Objective HER OBJ 33 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2021-2027, the Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines '*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009*' and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Note:

Given the substantive nature of the reasons for refusal the Board did not further examine an additional issue raised by the Inspector but shared the concerns raised. The potential inadequacy of the wastewater treatment system, the poor drainage characteristics of the soil and the potential inability to effectively treat and dispose of foul water, the proposed development may impact on the existing water quality of the River Blackwater (BLACKWATER (KELLS)_120)) and could prevent the future attainment of a 'Good' status under the Water Framework Directive.

Board Member


Mick Long

Date: 14/01/2025