

An  
Bord  
Pleanála

**Board Direction**  
**BD-016781-24**  
**ABP-318153-23**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 20/06/2024.

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 location of the site within a Strong Rural Area Under Significant Urban Influence as designated in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and to the policy provisions set out in same in respect of rural housing development, to the expanse of one-off housing and the prevailing pattern of ribbon development in the general area, and to the provisions of the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the National Policy Objectives of the National Planning Framework, which seek to manage the growth of areas that are under strong urban influence to avoid over-development and to ensure that the provision of single housing in rural areas under urban influence are provided based upon demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area, it is considered that the applicant does not come within the scope of the housing need criteria as set out in the Westmeath County Development Plan and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for a house at this rural location and do not comply with National Policy Objectives. The proposed development, in the absence of any identified locally based need for the house, would contribute to the encroachment of random rural development in the area, would exacerbate the pattern of ribbon development, and would militate against the preservation of the rural environment and the efficient provision of public services and infrastructure.

The proposed development would, thus, be contrary to the provisions of the Westmeath County Development Plan as they relate to rural housing need and ribbon development, the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities and rural policy provisions of the National Planning Framework, and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. On the basis of the documentation submitted with the application and appeal, the board is not satisfied that effluent from the development as proposed can be satisfactorily treated and disposed of on site. Furthermore, it is considered that, when taken in conjunction with existing development in the vicinity, the proposed development would result in an excessive density of development served by private effluent treatment systems in the area and the proposed development would, therefore, be prejudicial to public health and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. It is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard because of the additional traffic turning movements the development would generate on a local road at a point where sightlines are restricted and in the absence of detailed drawings and specifications regarding access arrangements including how access would be provided across lands not appearing to within the control of the applicant or for which consent has been provided, the proposed development would be contrary to Objective CPO 16.33 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 and therefore, would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Board Member**

  
Una Crosse

**Date:** 21/06/2024