

An
Bord
Pleanála

Board Direction
BD-018601-25
ABP-319267-24

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a Board meeting held on 08/01/2025.

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 proposed development entails the use of a temporary wastewater treatment system to pre-treat effluent from the proposed development to secondary level, prior to discharging to the existing Mountbellew Wastewater Treatment Plant, managed by Uisce Éireann, which is currently operating at/above capacity. Construction of a new plant in Mountbellew is not expected until Q4 2027. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the existing Wastewater Treatment Plant at Mountbellew would be capable of operating without an unacceptable deterioration in the water quality of the Castlegar River into which it flows.

In the absence of adequate sufficient capacity in Mountbellew Waste Water Treatment Plant, the proposed development would be contrary to Objective SS7 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, and to Objective WW4 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 in respect of waste water capacity.

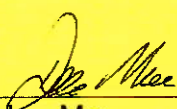
2. The NIS submitted with the planning application does not examine the potential impact of the proposed development on the River Suck Callows SPA at operational phase, specifically the proposal to discharge pre-treated effluent to Mountbellew Waste Water Treatment Plant, which is operating at/above capacity, and the potential for impacts as a consequence of subsequent discharge from this waste water treatment plan to the Castlegar River, which connects to the River Suck Callows SPA.

The NIS does not address the potential for cumulative impact on the River Suck Callows SPA arising from the development permitted under PA. Ref. 23/60139, the pre-treated effluent from which similarly discharges to Mountbellew Waste Water Treatment Plant. These omissions represent a significant lacuna in the NIS, and on the basis of the information submitted with the planning application/appeal documentation and the Natura Impact Statement, the Board cannot be satisfied that the proposed development individually, or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to have a significant effect on the River Suck Callows SPA (Site Code: 004097), in view of the site's conservation objectives. In such circumstances, the Board is precluded from granting permission

Note

The Board also has a concern in relation to the maintenance and management of the proposed temporary waste water treatment system given that it is to be vested in a management company, contrary to Circular Letter PD 1/08 'Taking in Charge of Residential Developments/Management Arrangements' (DoEHLG), which recommends that wastewater treatment plants are taken in charge.

Board Member


Declan Moore

Date: 17/01/2025