



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Direction
CD-020743-25
ABP-320867-24

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 22/09/2025.

The Commission decided to refuse permission for the following reasons and considerations.

Planning

Commissioner:

Eamonn James Kelly

Date: 22/09/2025

Eamonn James Kelly

DRAFT WORDING FOR ORDER

Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the Donegal County Development Plan 2024-2030, to the proposed development site in a rural area, and to Policy RH-P-9 (Location, Siting and Design and Other Detailed Planning Considerations), it is considered that the proposed development would contribute to an excessive density of suburban type development in a rural landscape classified as being an area of 'High Scenic Amenity' and an 'Area Under Strong Holiday Home Influence'. The proposed development, if permitted, would expand and consolidate a suburban pattern of development in the rural area, would further erode the rural character of the area,

would be detrimental to the amenities of the area and, accordingly, would be contrary to the provisions of Policy RH-P-9 of the Donegal County Development Plan 2024-2030. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant permission, the Commission noted the submission of the Appellant concerning its previous refusal to grant permission in respect of a proposed dwelling west of the site for suburbanisation of this rural landscape (ABP-318381-23) and that the planning authority also previously refused to grant permission in respect of a proposed dwelling east of the site because inter alia it would "set un undesirable precedent for similar developments beyond the existing cluster of development, which if permitted would exacerbate and further expand this existing cluster in an unsustainable northern direction causing further erosion of this highly visible and elevated coastal site" (P.A. Reg. Ref. 2251775). While the Inspector's consideration that all appeal cases should be assessed and determined on their own merits was noted, the Commission considered in this case that previous decision-making in this location reflects concerns regarding suburbanisation of a sensitive rural landscape in an unsustainable manner and concluded that the proposed development is therefore contrary to development plan policy RH-P-9(i) and (iii).

Note

The Commission further considered that the information submitted by the Applicant's was not satisfactory to demonstrate compliance with Policy RH-P-2 on the basis that no information or evidence substantiates either an 'Economic' or 'Social' need to live in this rural area. The Commission was not satisfied that a Letter of Support from an Elected Member or a stated family connection to the area (without any supporting material) is an adequate basis to assess the proposed development against relevant development plan policies. While such a letter may be deemed acceptable to the planning authority, this correspondence constitutes an internal procedure/practice of the planning authority rather than an adopted policy context which is enshrined in the development plan. The Commission acknowledges that the area was zoned as a

Structurally Weak Area under the previous development plan under which the Applicant's originally made their application, and while the Commission would ordinarily seek further information from the Applicant's in such circumstances noting the principle of natural justice, the Commission decided not to pursue this matter further at this time in light of the substantive reasons for refusal set out above.