An Coimisiún Pleanála

Direction
ACP-324174-26

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 10/11/2026.

The Commission decided, as set out in the following Order, that

WHEREAS a question has arisen as to whether (1) the expansion and operation of the Strandhill Wastewater Treatment Plant beyond its permitted footprint; and (2) the intensification of use of the Killaspugbrone Looped Trail in the townlands of Killaspugbrone, Larass and Carrowbunnaun inStrandhill, County Sligo, is or is not development and is or is not exempted development:

AND WHEREAS Áine Nic Amhlaidh requested a declaration on this question from Sligo County Council and the Council issued a declaration on the 11th day of March, 2026 stating that (1) the expansion and operation of the Wastewater Treatment Plant 'is compliant with the works previously considered under Part 8, and (2) the "intensification of use of the Killaspugbrone Looped Trail, currently exceeding 500,000 annual visitors" does not constitute development:

AND WHEREAS Áine Nic Amhlaidh referred this declaration for review to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 27th day of March 2026:

AND WHEREAS An Coimisiún Pleanála, in considering this referral, had regard particularly to –

(a) the nature, scale, extent and scope of the use,

(b) the existing and past site context,

(c) Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 177U and 179 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended,

(d) Articles 6, 9 and 80 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended,

(e) Class 33 (c) of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended,

(f) the planning history of the referral site, and specifically the Strandhill Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement Works Part 8,

(g) relevant precedent referrals and judgements,

(h) the pattern of development in the area, and

(i) the provisions of the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030, as varied, as they apply to the referral site:

AND WHEREAS An Coimisiún Pleanála has concluded that:

(a) there is no evidence presented in the referral documentation that the Strandhill Wastewater Treatment Plant has extended beyond its (2007) authorised footprint,

(b) there is therefore no valid referral question to answer with respect to the Wastewater Treatment Plant,

(c) there is no evidence presented in the referral documentation of a change of use of Killaspugbrone Looped Trail, by reason of intensification of use,

(d) in the absence of a change of use, there is no "material change in the use" that would constitute "development" under Section 3(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, and

(c) in the absence of "development" there is no requirement for a contemporary Appropriate Assessment (AA) or screening for AA:

NOW THEREFORE An Coimisiún Pleanála, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 5 (3) (a) of the 2000 Act, as amended, hereby decides that there is no question to answer with respect to the Wastewater Treatment Plant and that the increased usage of Killaspugbrone Looped Trail in the townlands of Killaspugbrone, Larass and Carrowbunnaun in Strandhill, County Sligo is not development.

Planning Commissioner: _____ **Date:** 10/11/2026

Declan Moore