



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Commission Direction
CD-000802
PL-500878-WH-26

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 25th June 2026.

The Commission decided to refuse permission generally in accordance with the following reasons and considerations.

Planning Commissioner:

Emer Maughan

Date:

29th day of June 2026

DRAFT WORDING FOR ORDER

Reasons and Considerations

The site of the proposed development is located within an 'Area Under Strong Urban Influence' as set out in the 'Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities' issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in April, 2005 and in an area where housing is restricted to

persons demonstrating local need in accordance with the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Furthermore, the subject site is located in a rural area that is under urban influence, where it is national policy, as set out in National Policy Objective 28 of the National Planning Framework (First Revision, April 2025) to facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area.

Having regard to the documentation submitted with the application and appeal, the Commission is not satisfied that the applicant has a demonstrable economic or social need to live in this rural area in accordance with CPO 9.1 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027. It is considered, therefore, that the applicant does not come within the scope of the housing need criteria as set out in the Guidelines and in national policy for a house at this location. 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 and would militate against the preservation of the rural environment and the efficient provision of public services and infrastructure. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The Commission agreed with the Inspector's assessment in terms of the design and siting of the proposed dwelling which they considered was acceptable in terms of visual impact, that the proposed access would be acceptable in terms of road safety and was also satisfied that the proposed development is located within Flood Zone C with a low probability of fluvial flooding as defined in the Flood Risk Guidelines. In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant permission, the Commission considered the totality of information submitted

with the application and appeal, along with the specific wording of the relevant rural housing policy CPO 9.1. In this regard while the Commission agreed with the Inspector that the second named applicant has not demonstrated adequate ties to the rural area, it did not share the view that the first named applicant has demonstrated personal, family or economic connections to the rural hinterland of Rattin, Co Westmeath, as from the presented detail the social links (family home, school attendance, GAA, community and parish involvement) are primarily derived from within a different rural catchment in County Meath. Furthermore, the Commission considered the economic dimension (part time farm work) to be insufficient to justify a genuine economic need for a dwelling in an area under strong urban influence. It was determined therefore that a refusal of permission was warranted as set out in the reason stated.

