

Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2020

Planning Authority: Donegal County Council

Planning Register Reference Number: 21/50969

APPEAL by Alan McCaffrey of Gortnacorrib, Letterkenny, County Donegal against the decision made on the 8th day of July, 2021 by Donegal County Council to grant subject to conditions a permission to Shane and Katie McMonagle care of Studio G2 Architecture of Glebe, Letterkenny, County Council for the proposed development.

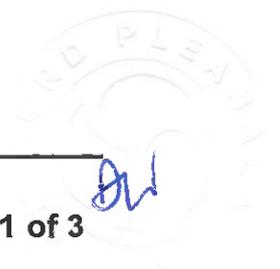
Proposed Development: Construction of a new dwelling house with an on-site sewage treatment system at Gortnacorrib, Letterkenny, County Donegal.

Decision

REFUSE permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the reasons and considerations set out below.

Matters Considered

In making its decision, the Board had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.



Reasons and Considerations

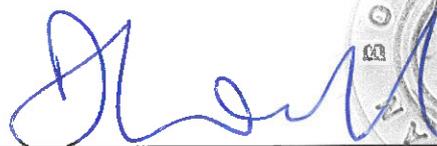
The site of the proposed development is located within a “stronger rural area”, as identified in the Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024, under which designation it is council policy to consider proposals from prospective applicants in need of housing, provided that they can demonstrate compliance with other relevant policies in the County Development Plan. In this regard, Policy RH-P-2 of the Development Plan states that proposals for new rural dwellings should integrate successfully into the landscape and not cause a detrimental change to, or further erode, the rural character of the area. Furthermore, it is national policy, as set out in National Policy Objective 19 of the 2018 National Planning Framework and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in April 2005, 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 viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.

Having regard to the site location proximate to the large town of Letterkenny, to the extent of residential development in the vicinity which could be regarded as ribbon development in a unzoned rural area, and to the documentation submitted with the application and appeal, while the Board acknowledges that the applicants are actively engaged in farming activity, the need to live in this location are not sufficiently justified, having regard to the distance from the site to the farm holding at Glendowan, and the requirement to live in this rural area for the purposes of continuing to work in agriculture. In the absence of an identified locally based, site-specific economic or social need to live in the area, it is considered that the proposed development would contribute to the development of random rural housing in the area, would exacerbate the existing 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, 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 Board considered that, notwithstanding the planning authority's assessment which was accepted by the Board's Inspector that the applicant complied with rural housing policy as set out in the relevant policies and objectives of the Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024, the proposed development at this location was not justified, taking account of the fact that:

- a) the applicants currently live within 1.8 kilometres of the site within the Letterkenny town boundary,
- b) the proposed development is not close to the farm holding and it has not been demonstrated that living in this rural area is essential for the purposes of carrying out their agricultural profession,
- c) additional rural-generated housing in the area would further erode the rural character of the area, and
- d) it has not been demonstrated that an economic or social justification to live at this location has been provided.

In these circumstances, the Board considered that the proposed development would exacerbate urban sprawl in this rural area and would not be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



Dave Walsh

Member of An Bord Pleanála

**duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Board.**

Dated this 19th day of November 2021.