



Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended

Planning Authority: Westmeath County Council

Planning Register Reference Number: 2560044

APPEAL by Water Street Association care of The Planning Partnership of The Bank Building, 52 Oliver Plunkett Street, Mullingar, County Westmeath against the decision made on the 2nd Day of May by Westmeath County Council to grant permission, subject to conditions, to Water Street Association.

Proposed Development: Development and retention of the change of use from a former single dwelling house, domestic garage and garden area to a community facility. Permission is sought to extend the existing pedestrian footpath link to connect the property to the established pedestrian network, provide for six number car parking spaces (of which one number accessible space, one number community car EV charging point) and 10 number covered and secure cycle parking spaces and any other associated boundary, landscaping and associated above and below ground works Water Street, Castlepollard, County Westmeath.

Decision

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

Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the information on file, which lacked sufficient details and clarity on the nature and scale of the proposed development, the Commission considered that the proposal would have real potential to seriously injure the amenities of neighbouring properties, resulting in haphazard development and erosion of the residential character of the area. The proposal would mitigate against the preservation of the established residential environment, when appropriately zoned lands for community/educational/institutional uses are available within Castlepollard, and is contrary to policy objective CPO 15.1 of the Westmeath Development Plan 2021-2027 that seeks support for high quality residential consolidation and sustainable intensification at appropriate locations. The proposed development and development proposed for retention would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development for the area.
2. Having regard to the lack of sufficient detail on the nature and scale of the development, the commission considered that the development would constitute undesirable haphazard development by virtue of nature and uses, the intensification of related traffic movements, inadequate parking and lack of connectivity to the town centre for safe pedestrian movement. The additional traffic movements would interfere with the safety and free flow of traffic on the local secondary public road, endangering public safety by reason of traffic hazard; contrary to policy objective CPO 10.52 of the development plan which seeks to safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of the County's local road network, and policy objective CPO 9.17 which seeks to ensure that the traffic movements generated by the development will not give rise to a traffic hazard.

In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant retention permission subject to the attachment of six conditions, the Commission agreed with the Inspector's approach to a de novo assessment.

Notwithstanding, the Commission concluded that there was insufficient information on the nature and scale of the development, in particular because of insufficient details provided on this matter. This led the Commission to treat the use in its broadest sense and noting the established residential environment and the Established Residential zoning objective which seeks to "support high quality residential consolidation and sustainable intensification at appropriate locations in a manner that does not impact negatively on the amenities or character of an area", the Commission could not be satisfied that the intention of this zoning objective would be achieved or that the development as proposed would align with policy objective CPO 15.1.

Furthermore, the commission considered that the additional traffic movements would interfere with the safety and free flow of traffic on the local secondary public road, endangering public safety by reason of traffic hazard; contrary to policy objective CPO 10.52 of the development plan which seeks to safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of the County's local road network, and policy objective CPO 9.17 which seeks to ensure that the traffic movements generated by the development will not give rise to a traffic hazard.

Patricia Calleary

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Planning Commissioner of An Coimisiún

**Pleanála duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Commission.**

Dated this *24th* day of *September* 2025.

