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**Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended**

**Planning Authority: Mayo County Council**

**Planning Register Reference Number: 2560142**

**APPEAL** by Harold Conway care of The Planning Partnership of Upper Chapel Street, Castlebar, County Mayo against the decision made on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2025 by Mayo County Council refuse permission.

**Proposed Development:** Demolition of the existing public house and residential building and the construction of a proposed new café restaurant, including preparation of hot and cold food, a food and beverage retail outlet with dine-in and takeaway services on the ground floor and a two-bed apartment on the first floor, including new shopfront, proposed new roof lights and clerestory glazing to the rear and all associated lighting, signage, drainage and service connections, all at James Street, Westport, County Mayo.

## **Decision**

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

## Reasons and Considerations

1. The proposed development, which involves the demolition of the entire building on site, would be contrary to Objective BEO1 of the Westport Local Area Plan 2024-2030, which aims to ensure the preservation of the special character of the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in which the site is located. The demolition of the entire structure, which in itself is listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and within the Architectural Conservation Area, would adversely impact on the historic integrity of the streetscape thereby diminishing the historic fabric of the buildings that contribute to the designation of the Architectural Conservation Area. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. The demolition of the existing structure would be contrary to Policy BEP 6 of the Westport Local Area Plan 2024-2030 which seeks to “Encourage the rehabilitation, renovation, climate-proofing and reuse of existing protected structures and vernacular buildings within the plan area where appropriate over the demolition of same and new build on-site”. The demolition of this historic building, which is vernacular in form and listed on the NIAH, would be contrary to the above policy and 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 had regard to the various policies in both the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Westport Local Area Plan which seek to ensure the preservation of the special character of Architectural Conservation Areas. The Commission considered that the removal of historic buildings, particularly the elements fronting onto public streetscapes, erodes

the individual historic elements that collectively contribute to the special character of Architectural Conservation Areas.

The Commission also noted that planning policy as set out in Section 13.5 of the County development plan require Architectural Assessments to be submitted in respect of applications for the demolition of buildings that contribute to the character of ACA's, and these will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The applicant, in this instance, did not submit an Architectural Assessment of the existing building on site but merely submitted a Condition Report which did not in itself assess the architectural importance of the building or provide an inventory /evaluation of the inherent architectural features within the building. The Commission also noted that the Condition Report mainly identified defects associated with the rear return of the building. The Commission was not satisfied, based on the information submitted in the Condition Report, that the front portion of the building, which constitutes that portion of the structure that contributes most to the character of the ACA, cannot be salvaged and incorporated into any future redevelopment of the site.



**Paul Caprani**

**Planning Commissioner of An Coimisiún  
Pleanála duly authorised to authenticate  
the seal of the Commission.**



Dated this 25<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025.