



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## inspector's Report ABP-303068-18

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<b>Development</b>	Construction of a split level house, single storey to front with storey & a half rear element, domestic garage, septic tank, vehicular entrance and all associated site works
<b>Location</b>	Stadalt, Stamullen, Co. Meath
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Meath County Council
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	AA181034
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Linda Reilly
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Refuse
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First Party
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Linda Reilly
<b>Observer(s)</b>	Robert Ian & Elidona Russell
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> of February 2019
<b>Inspector</b>	Angela Brereton

## **1.0 Site Location and Description**

- 1.1. The subject site (0.28ha) is located in the townland of Stadalt on the east side of the local road L-16185-0. The site is c.0.5km from the Stamullen Development Boundary, which includes the nursing home to the north. There are existing bungalow type dwellings to the north and south of the proposed site. The proposed site appears as infill development and the site semi-urban and there are also dwellings on the opposite side of the road and several vehicular accesses to this narrow undulating road.
- 1.2. There is a boundary hedge along the site frontage. The site appears at road level to the front and slopes steeply to the rear. The dwelling to the south is screened by a hedgerow along the site boundary. The Delvin River runs to the rear of the landholding.

## **2.0 Proposed Development**

- 2.1. This proposal is for a split-level dwelling, single storey to the front with single and a half element to the rear, domestic garage, septic tank with percolation area, vehicular entrance and all associated site works.
- 2.2. Drawings including a Site Layout Plan, Floor Plans and Elevations have been submitted. A Design Statement has been submitted.
- 2.3. A letter has been submitted with the application from the landowner giving the applicant consent to apply for permission on this site.
- 2.4. A Site Characterisation Report has been submitted by Robert Meehan-Talamhireland Ltd.
- 2.5. Documentation has been submitted in support of the applicant's local need.

## **3.0 Planning Authority Decision**

### **3.1. Decision**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2018, Meath County Council refused permission for the proposed development for reason in summary - of lack of demonstrated site specific

rural generated housing need, being contrary to policy and guidelines and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### **3.2. Planning Authority Reports**

#### **3.2.1. Planner's Report**

The Planner had regard to the locational context of the site, planning history and policy, to the inter-departmental reports and to the submissions made. Their Report included the following:

- The site is in a rural area under strong urban influence and consequently is under severe development pressure.
- They provide a summary relative to the applicant's local housing need and noted their concerns relative to compliance with planning policy.
- They are concerned about excessive development in the rural area.
- They consider the proposed dwelling design to be acceptable in this location and to comply with the rural house design guide.
- The site is not located within the green belt area and is located outside the development boundary of Stamullen and is assessed in accordance with Rural Housing Policy for Meath County Council.
- They recommend that permission be refused relative to lack of demonstrated local need and in accordance with planning policy and guidelines to restrict housing in the rural area.

### **3.3. Other Technical Reports**

The Planner's Report states that none were received.

### **3.4. Third Party Observations**

A Submission from local residents to the proposed development includes the following concerns:

- This is a green belt area where such proposals should be refused.

- The proposal would harm the character of the green belt area while additionally causing unwanted congestion.
- It will lead to ribbon development.
- This is a narrow fast road, that is used as a shortcut and there are concerns of traffic hazard.
- There will be a negative impact on the natural environment and visual amenity of the area.

## 4.0 Planning History

The Planner's Report has regard to the Planning History and also notes a number of refusals in the area.

### *On the subject site*

- Reg.Ref. SA/900292 – Permission refused to Gerard Cromwell for a dormer style dwelling incorporating a basement garage/storage area, entrance and access road, septic tank and percolation area. This was refused in summary – not rurally generated and lack of demonstrated compliance with local needs policy.
- Reg.Ref. AA/180447 – Permission refused to Linda Reilly for a split level dwelling, single storey to the front with storey & a half rear element, domestic garage, septic tank with percolation area, vehicular entrance and all associated site works. This was refused in summary – not rurally generated and lack of demonstrated compliance with local needs policy.

### *Adjoining the site to the north*

- Reg.Ref. SA/900316 – Permission refused to Deborah & Alan Delahan to construct a two storey dwelling with double domestic garage and wwtp and all associated site works. This was refused in summary – not rurally generated and lack of demonstrated compliance with local needs policy.
- Reg.Ref. SA101420 – Permission granted to Ann Sarsfield for a bungalow dwelling, wwts, rainwater system and all associated site works. This is the dwelling constructed on the landholding to the north of the subject site.

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040

Section 5.3 refers to the growth and development of rural areas and the role of the rural town as a catalyst for this. It is recognised that the Irish countryside is, and will continue to be, a living and lived-in landscape focusing on the requirements of rural economies and rural communities, based on agriculture, forestry, tourism and rural enterprise, while at the same time avoiding ribbon and over-spill development from urban areas and protecting environmental qualities.

Objective 18 refers to the policy to support the proportionate growth of and appropriately designed development in rural towns that will contribute to their regeneration and renewal, including interventions in the public realm, the provision of amenities, the acquisition of sites and the provision of services.

Objective 19 outlines that within areas under urban influence, single housing in the countryside will be facilitated based on the core consideration of a demonstrable economic or social need to live in the rural area. It further states that in rural areas elsewhere, it is an objective to facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.

### 5.2. Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019

Relevant provisions are referenced as follows –

The application site is located on rural lands, outside of any identified settlement in the Co. Dev. Plan 2013;

Sect.10.2-10.3 sets out the relevant ‘policy’ regarding the assessment of housing within in rural areas. Policy RUR DEV SP 1 seeks: *To adopt a tailored approach to rural housing within County Meath as a whole, distinguishing between rural generated housing and urban generated housing in rural areas recognising the characteristics of the individual rural area types.*

Section 10.3 provides for three distinct rural area types within Co. Meath, which reflect the different levels of development pressure across the county. These are Area 1 – Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence,

Area 2 – Strong Rural Area,

Area 3 – Low Development Pressure Areas (see copy of Map10.1 – Rural Area Types Dev. Pressure attached). Applicants are required by the provisions of the Co. Dev. Plan to demonstrate that they are an intrinsic part of the rural community.

Policies RD POL 1-3 seek to cater for rural housing needs and to curtail urban generated housing.

RD POL 2 of the Plan seeks: *To facilitate the housing requirements of the rural community as identified while directing urban generated housing to areas zoned for new housing development in towns and villages in the area of the development plan.*

Sect.10.4 provides the detailed requirements relating to the establishment of 'local housing need'. This sets out a number of categories of person, who will be considered to be 'an intrinsic part of the rural community', (see copy attached).

It is noted that the Planning Authority recognises the interest of persons local to or linked to a rural area, who are not engaged in significant agricultural or rural resource related occupation, to live in rural areas. For the purposes of this policy section, persons local to an area are considered to include:

- *Persons who have spent substantial periods of their lives, living in rural areas as members of the established rural community for a period in excess of five years and who do not possess a dwelling or who have not possessed a dwelling in the past in which they have resided or who possess a dwelling in which they do not currently reside;*
- *Persons who were originally from rural areas and who are in substandard or unacceptable housing scenarios and who have continuing close family ties with rural communities such as being a mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law of a long established member of the rural community resident rurally for at least ten years;*

- *Returning emigrants who have lived for substantial parts of their lives in rural areas, then moved abroad and who now wish to return to reside near other family members, to work locally, to care for older members of their family or to retire, and;*
- *Persons, whose employment is rurally based, such as teachers in rural primary schools or whose work predominantly takes place within the rural area in which they are seeking to build their first home, or are suited to rural locations such as farm hands or trades-people and who have a housing need.*

RD POL 9 seeks: *To require all applications for rural houses to comply with the Meath Rural House Design Guide.*

RD POL 41 seeks: *To avoid the removal of existing roadside boundaries where they are more than 3m from the road edge (edge of carriageway), except to the extent that this is needed for a new entrance, and where required for traffic safety reasons. (Please refer to policies contained in Section 9.7.8 Woodlands, Hedgerows and Trees in this regard).*

NH POL 13 seeks: *To encourage the retention of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatments in rural areas and prevent loss and fragmentation, where possible. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, mitigation by provision of the same type of boundary will be required.*

Section 10.19 provides the Technical Requirements relative to One Off Houses: Sight Distances and Stopping Distances.

Policy RD POL 43 seeks: *To ensure that the required standards for sight distances and stopping sight distances are in compliance with current road geometry standards as outlined in the NRA document Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) specifically Section TD 41-42/09 when assessing individual planning applications for individual houses in the countryside.*

Section 10.19.2 refers to Groundwater Protection and the Planning System and seek to ensure environmental protection. Policies RD POL 44 and RD POL 45 refer.

Policy RD POL 46 seeks: *To ensure that new development is guided towards sites where acceptable wastewater treatment and disposal facilities can be provided, avoiding sites where it is inherently difficult to provide and maintain such facilities.*

*Sites prone to extremely high water tables and flooding or where groundwater is particularly vulnerable to contamination shall be avoided.*

Chapter 11 of the Co. Dev. Plan sets out the 'Development Management Standards & Guidelines'.

Appendix 15 sets out the Co. 'Rural Housing Design Guide'.

### **5.3. The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005**

This seeks to encourage and support appropriate development at the most suitable locations. Section 3.2.3 concerns Rural Generated Housing and gives an example of Persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community and Persons working full-time or part-time in rural areas.

Section 3.3 is concerned that the consideration of individual sites will be subject to normal siting and design considerations. These include the following:

- Any proposed vehicular access would not endanger public safety by giving rise to a traffic hazard.
- That housing in un-serviced areas and any on site wastewater disposal systems are designed, located and maintained in a way, which protects water quality.
- The siting of the new dwelling integrates appropriately into its physical surroundings.
- The proposed site otherwise accords with the objectives of the development plan in general.

Section 4.4 is concerned with Access and restriction of such on National Primary and Secondary Roads. Regard is also had to Roadside Boundaries Section 4.5 is concerned with Protecting Water Quality and Site Suitability issues.



#### **5.4. Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment Disposal Systems serving Single Houses**

This document (2009) by the EPA relevant to single houses (p.e <10) and replaces SR6:1991 and the EPA Manual 2000 for 'Treatment Systems for Single Houses'. The objective is to protect the environment and water quality from pollution and it is concerned with site suitability assessment. It is concerned with making a recommendation for selecting an appropriate on site domestic wastewater treatment and disposal system if the site is deemed appropriate subject to the site assessment and characterisation report. The implementation of the Code is a key element to ensure that the planning system is positioned to address the issue of protecting water quality in assessing development proposals for new housing in rural areas and meeting its obligations under Council Directive (75/442/EEC).

#### **5.5. EU Water Framework Directive**

The purpose of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) 'is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater.

#### **5.6. Natural Heritage Designations**

There are no Natura 2000 sites noted within 10km radius.

#### **5.7. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening**

- 5.7.1. Having regard to the modest nature the proposed development (a single dwelling), the capacity of the soils on site to accommodate wastewater and the distance of the site from nearby sensitive receptors, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The need for environmental impact assessment can, therefore, be excluded at preliminary examination and a screening determination is not required.

## 6.0 The Appeal

### 6.1. Grounds of Appeal

Michael Halligan Planning Consultants have submitted a First Party appeal on behalf of the applicants. This includes the following:

- This site is c.0.5kms from where the applicant currently resides in her parent's home in Stamullen Village. This is shown on the aerial photo submitted.
- There are bungalows on either side so this can be seen as an infill site.
- They have regard to Section 10.4 of the Meath CDP 2013-2019 and consider the applicant satisfies local needs criteria.
- The site is located opposite the original family home at Giblockstown which was the family home for 3 generations. The applicant wishes to return home as the 4<sup>th</sup> generation.
- The site is suitable for a house and the house type has been accepted by the Council as being compliant with the rural housing design guide. It will form part of a rural cluster.
- It is seen as an 'infill' development and fits into a small cluster of development along this part of the local road.
- Documentation relative to the applicant's local need are included with this appeal. Her links to the rural area confirm that she has a genuine local need.
- The applicant currently resides with her children in her parent's house in Stamullen and is in an overcrowded and substandard scenario. Appendix 6 includes a letter about her father's ill health.
- The applicant intends to return to work when her children are older and has been welcomed to rejoin the Nursing Care facility at St. Clare's Stadalt.
- It cannot be held against the applicant that her grandparent's family home opposite the site is no longer in family ownership and thus disqualifying her as not moving back to the area.

- Permission for a house has been granted by the Council further to the north of the site Reg. Ref. AA/180460 refers.
- The structure is connected to mains water and the site tests clearly established that the site is suitable for percolation.
- The required sightlines are available and no traffic hazard will be caused as was also accepted by the PA in AA180460 to the north.
- They note that Government Policy is to take a more flexible approach to rural housing. Notwithstanding that the proposal complies with current criteria they request the Board to additionally take into account movements towards greater flexibility to address the current housing emergency.
- They conclude with a summary of the applicant's local need and consider that on reasonable interpretation of the CDP the applicant qualifies for a house at this location and they request the Board to grant permission.

## 6.2. Planning Authority Response

The Planning Authority has regard to the grounds of appeal. They are satisfied that all matters outlined in the submission were considered in the course of their assessment of the planning application as detailed in the Planning Officer Report dated 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2018. They request the Board to uphold their decision.

## 6.3. Observations

An Observation has been submitted from local residents, Robert Ian and Elidora Russell. They object to the proposed development and their concerns include the following:

- The proposal is in and will harm a green belt area where in accordance with planning guidelines, this type of proposal should be refused.
- The proposal will increase congestion on this narrow busy local road. The road construction is not suitable for more traffic in the area.
- It will cause an invasion of privacy to adjoining houses.

- It is aligned too closely to the adjoining properties and houses and detracts from ribbon effect development.
- There will be a negative impact on views, the environment and upon the visual amenity of the area and its environs.
- Water supply has been extremely low on a day to day basis with poor water pressure.
- They ask the Board to refuse permission.

## 7.0 Assessment

### 7.1. Rural Settlement Strategy – Local Needs

- 7.1.1. The site is located in Rural Area 1 i.e is under Strong Urban Influence as identified in the Meath CDP, Map10.1 relates. It is noted that the site is in an area under pressure for one-off housing and the road frontage appears semi-urban and is close to the southern development boundary of Stamullen. Rural Development Policies RD POL 1 -3 seek to restrict urban generated development in such locations. Section 10.4 has regard to the criteria relative to *Persons who are an Intrinsic Part of the Rural Community* and has been noted in the Policy Section above.
- 7.1.2. Regard is also had to the Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines 2005 where the strategy indicates that there should be a presumption against urban-generated one-off housing in rural areas adjacent to towns. It is put forward that the applicant has a proven local need and there should not be a blanket ban on genuine applicants in the area. Details of the Applicant's local need have been submitted with the planning application.
- 7.1.3. Supporting documentation has been submitted with the application to show the applicant's local connections to the area. This includes an aerial photograph to show the applicant's family home within the urban area of Stamullen, her former place of work within the proximate St. Clare's Nursing Home, and her grandparent's former home further north at Giblockstown on the opposite side of the road relative to the site. The applicant and her partner and children currently reside with her elderly parents in a small council house in Stamullen. It is provided that she is currently in

an unacceptable housing scenario and has strong connections and a local need to reside in the area of the subject site proximate to her grandparent's former family home. It is noted that she plans to return to work in St. Clare's when her children are older. This facility is within land zoned for community use in the Stamullen development boundary and is to further to the north of the subject site.

- 7.1.4. It is noted that the Council provides that the applicant has not satisfied the rural housing policy criteria as set out in section 10.4 of the Meath CDP 2013-2019. They consider that the applicant has not demonstrated that she has spent a substantial period of her life living in the rural area or has intrinsic links to that area and does not comply with rural housing policy.
- 7.1.5. The First Party provides that her local need complies with section 10.4 of the MCDP quoting Council's local needs criteria relative to residing in the rural community for over 20 years and being in a substandard and an unacceptable housing scenario. The applicant with her family is now overcrowding her parent's house and wishes to reverse their move from the countryside to Stamullen. Also, that her local housing need is compounded by it being the only economically viable option to address the issues stated.
- 7.1.6. They ask the Board to consider movements towards greater flexibility to address the current housing emergency and refer to the forthcoming Government statement on rural housing qualification criteria. It is of note that the latter has not yet been published. However, regard is also had to National Policy Objective 19 of Project Ireland 2040. This provides: *In rural areas under urban influence, facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in the rural area and siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.*
- 7.1.7. In this case it appears that the applicant may have a housing need, however she lives and is based in the urban area of Stamullen, while there are links to the rural area it is considered that her need is urban generated and that she does not have a site specific local need. Also, it must be noted that this is an area under strong urban pressure where, as per National Policy Objective 18 the objective is: *To support the proportionate growth of and appropriately designed development in rural towns that*

*will contribute to their regeneration and renewal...* It is considered that this proposal would be contrary to Policy RD POL 2 of the Meath CDP 2013-2019.

## **7.2. Regard to Design and Layout**

- 7.2.1. The Rural Design Guide sets out guidelines on rural housing in County Meath, for example, from orientation and site layout to building design. The Guide recommends positioning a dwelling on a site having regard to existing shelter, topography and vegetation and design which draws from traditional forms of development and good design practice.
- 7.2.2. The Site Layout Plan shows that the proposed house is located c.19.4m back from the road and is on a similar building line as the single storey bungalow to the north. In view of the drop in ground levels it is proposed to provide a split level dwelling. The single storey stone faced element to the front and the more modern two storey element (described storey and a half) to the rear. The single storey element to provide siting and guest rooms and hallway to the split level element at the rear. The floor plans show a kitchen/dining room on the lower level and 3 bedrooms at upper level. The ridge height of the single storey element is shown 4.7m and of the rear element 6.9m. While I would consider the single storey element to the front to be acceptable, I would have some concerns that the design of the split level element at the rear is not visually well integrated and will not add to the character of the overall design in the rural landscape.
- 7.2.3. It is noted that it is proposed to site a single storey garage close to the southern site frontage. This is shown with a floor area of 35sq.m and a ridge height of 4.5m. Provided this is constructed in external finishes to match the existing dwelling and is screened by landscaping and boundary treatment this is considered to be acceptable.

## **7.3. Impact on the Character and Amenities of the Area**

- 7.3.1. The Sustainable Rural Planning Guidelines are concerned with the need to avoid haphazard and Ribbon Development extending out along radial roads from the town. Appendix 4 of these Guidelines defines ribbon development as *a high density of almost continuous road frontage type development for example where 5 or more*

*houses exist on any one side of a given 250m of road frontage.* Taking into account the proposed, permitted and existing dwellings adjacent to the proposed site this would be the 6<sup>th</sup> in a row and while the issue of ribbon development arises it may be considered an infill site. In the current case the site frontage areas are larger and it is seen more as an 'infill development' between two existing houses. Nevertheless, it will add to the numbers of houses with frontages onto this rural road just outside the development boundaries of the urban settlement of Stamullen. While the Observer is concerned that this proposal will impact adversely on the green belt area, the Planner's Report provides there is no such area, rather the site is located in the rural area outside the development boundary of Stamullen.

#### **7.4. Access issues**

- 7.4.1. There is concern that the roadway construction is not suitable for more traffic in this area. The accommodation road is narrow and it is noted that it is used as a short cut by the residents in Stamullen village and is a busy road with poor horizontal and vertical alignment. As noted above there are several vehicular entrances from existing houses in this area onto the local road, and this proposal will add to these.
- 7.4.2. It is noted that the Site Layout Plan shows that the proposed entrance shall be recess 5m from the road edge. The recess space to be formed from wing walls splayed to provide overall width of 8m along the road boundary. They provide that sight lines in excess of 90m taken 2.4m from the road edge are available.
- 7.4.3. Having viewed the site I would consider that sightlines are somewhat restricted due to the bends in the road and that much of the roadside boundary hedge will need to be removed to facilitate sightlines. This would be contrary to RD POL 41 and NH POL13 which (as quoted in the Policy Section above) are relative to the retention of boundary hedgerows in the rural area. Also to RD POL 9 as the Meath Rural House Design Guide seeks to avoid the removal of large sections of hedgerow.

#### **7.5. Drainage**

- 7.5.1. The Site Layout Plan shows the location of the proposed septic tank and percolation area. This is shown on the lower part of the site close to the eastern site boundary.

The location of the septic tanks to the north and south of the site are also shown. This proposal will add to the number of such in the area.

- 7.5.2. Regard is had to the Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (p.e.< 10). Table 6.2 of this EPA Code of Practice provides the minimum depth requirements for on-site systems discharging to ground i.e.1.2m and at the base of polishing filter 0.9m.i.e minimum depth of unsaturated subsoil to bedrock and the water table. Table 6.3 provides an interpretation of percolation test results and “in cases where  $3 < P < 75$  the site may be suitable for a secondary treatment system and polishing filter at ground surface or overground if the soil is classified as Clay...” The ‘T’ and ‘P’ test values given are within this range.
- 7.5.3. A Site Characterisation Assessment has been submitted with the application. It is proposed to connect to public water mains. The Aquifer Category is described as poor and the groundwater protection response is R1. This notes the soil and rock type and that soils in the area are generally well drained with infiltration dominating over runoff. Sands and gravels of high permeability form the subsoil for a considerable portion of this area, with consequent rapid to moderate percolation rates. An Assessment is made of the site and it is provided that given the response and the aquifer type the site is potentially suitable for a conventional septic tank system. Trial holes confirm that there exists at least 1.85m depth of unsaturated soil and subsoil material above the water table under the site. Also, that the site is therefore likely to be suitable for a conventional septic tank which requires 1.2m of unsaturated soil and subsoil between the percolation trenches and above bedrock and the water table. The ‘T’ test results = 5.9 and ‘P’ tests = 17.2 and confirm the classification of the topsoil as sandy loam, underlain by a sandy silt with abundant gravels. The Assessment provides that the site is suitable for the installation of a septic tank and percolation area.
- 7.5.4. They provide that all separation distances are to be achieved and all works to be carried out in accordance with the EPA Guidelines. Therefore, it is considered that based on the documentation submitted and having regard to the Code of Practice that the site is suitable for the disposal of effluent.



## **7.6. Screening for Appropriate Assessment**

- 7.6.1. Taking into consideration the nature and scope of the proposed development, the wastewater treatment system proposed to serve the dwelling, the details provided on the site characterisation form and the existing residential and farm development in the intervening distance, I am of the opinion that no appropriate assessment issues arise and that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, on any Natura 2000 site.

## **8.0 Recommendation**

- 8.1.1. I recommend that permission be refused for the reasons and considerations below.

## **9.0 Reasons and Considerations**

1. The site of the proposed development is located within an 'Area under Strong Urban Influence' as identified in the "Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities" issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2005) and in a 'Rural Area under Strong Urban Influence', which is demonstrating pressure for individual dwellings, and where housing is restricted in accordance with the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2013- 2019, as varied. RD POL 2 of the Plan seeks "to facilitate the housing requirements of the rural community as identified while directing urban generated housing to areas zoned for new housing development in towns and villages in the area of the development plan." This policy is considered reasonable. It is considered that the proposed development would conflict with this policy, and that an additional house in this area would, therefore, contribute to the encroachment of random rural development in the vicinity, would militate against the preservation of the rural environment and the efficient provision of public services and infrastructure, and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. Having regard to the location of the site within an 'Area Under Strong Urban Influence' as identified in the "Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities", and to National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in February, 2018 which, for rural areas under urban influence, seeks 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, it is considered that the applicant does not come within the scope of the housing need criteria as set out in the Guidelines and does not comply with National Policy Objective 19. 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.
3. The proposed development would add to a proliferation of vehicular entrances onto this minor road which is substandard in terms of width and alignment and would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposal will involve the removal of a significant part of a roadside boundary hedgerow to gain access to the site and to achieve the sightlines which would have a detrimental effect on the rural character of the area and would be contrary to Policies RD POL 9 and NH POL 13 of the current Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.

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Angela Brereton  
Planning Inspector

26th of February 2019