



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-310391-21.

Development	Amendments and 2 storey extension to an existing house.
Location	Foramoyle East, Barna, Co. Galway.
Planning Authority	Galway County Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	21/369.
Applicant(s)	Kieran & Catherine Ryan
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse.
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Kieran & Catherine Ryan
Observer(s)	Martin & Alma Brennan.
Date of Site Inspection	15/07/2021.
Inspector	A. Considine.

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site is located immediately to the west of a newly developed residential estate to the north-western area of Barna in Co. Galway. Access to the estate is via the L5387-15 local road which runs in a north westerly direction from the crossroads in Barna, approximately 650m from the village. The site comprises a narrow entrance of 4.4m in width with a driveway of this width extending in a south easterly direction for a distance of approximately 90m, before the site widens to a maximum width of approximately 21.5m. The existing site levels drop towards the rear of the site (south).
- 1.2. The site has a stated area of 0.253 ha and is occupied by an existing single storey, traditional detached house which occupies almost the full width of the site, with a side access of 1.4m to the west and 0.742m to the east of the site boundaries. The existing house has a stated floor area of 159.5m² and comprises two bedrooms, one ensuite, large sitting/dining room and kitchen with a lounge area. There is also an existing garage serving the house. The building rises to a maximum height of 5.512m. The existing house is connected to a private WWTP.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought, as per the public notices for permission for the demolition of: the existing front porch, eastern side projection, and 1 chimney stack; the construction of: a first floor pitched roof extension to the western elevation, a 2 storey rear extension and boundary wall along the eastern boundary of the site, a rear single storey outbuilding; the provision of 2 roof lights to the front slope of the existing main roof and a dormer extension to the rear, new raised soil polishing filter and all associated site works. Gross floor space of proposed works: 199 sqm. Gross floor space of work to be retained: 139.9 sqm. Gross floor space of demolition works: 16.7 sqm, all at Forramoyle East, Barna, Co. Galway.
- 2.2. The proposed development will result in the creation of additional residential accommodation over a number of levels. The existing house will be altered such that a number of small projections, including the porch and ensuite/store area associated with bedroom 1, will be demolished. In addition, existing bedroom no. 2 will be altered to provide an access to the new south-eastern extension and stairs to the

proposed upper floor. This upper floor – within the existing roof space – will comprise a master suite.

- 2.3. The existing kitchen/dining area will be altered to provide an office space and stairs to a proposed ensuite double bedroom. To the south-east of the existing building, the development will include a two-storey extension which will run within 200mm of the eastern boundary and will include a lower ground floor comprising two double bedrooms, a bathroom and living room. This level will also provide access to the proposed sauna and garden area. The ground floor level will comprise a large open plan kitchen/dining area and living room.
- 2.4. The proposed extensions to the existing house will amount to a floor area of 199m² and will include the installation of dormer windows in the southern plane of the existing roof to serve the proposed master suite.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The Planning Authority decided to refuse planning permission for the proposed development for the following stated reason:

Having regard to the following:

- the excessive scale and massing of the proposed extension relative to that of the existing structure;
- the lack of appropriate circulation provision with respect to the footprint of the proposed development relative to the site confines as delineated;
- the inability of the site to satisfactorily assimilate the proposed development owing to its overall scale and massing in conjunction with the disparity in level between the subject site and adjoining terrain to the east;

It is considered that the proposed development, if permitted would be out of character with the existing forms and pattern of urban development on site and in the vicinity, would seriously injure and detract from the visual and general amenities of the area, would contravene DM Standard 1 of the current

County Development Plan and would, accordingly be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. **Planning Authority Reports**

3.2.1. **Planning Reports**

The Planning report considered the proposed development in the context of the details submitted with the application, planning history, internal technical reports, third party submissions and the County Development Plan policies and objectives. The report also includes a section Appropriate Assessment.

The planning report concludes that proposed development is unacceptable, noting that the proposed design is considered to have serious potential to detract from the amenity associated with the general area owing to the footprint of the proposal encroaching onto the side boundary on the eastern perspective and the scale of the extension in terms of the disparity in site levels. The western first floor pitched roof is not considered to be subordinate to the host structure and the proposed 199m² extension to a house 139m² is considered to have potential to constitute an overdevelopment of the restricted site. The Planning Officer recommends that permission be refused for the proposed development.

This Planning Report formed the basis of the Planning Authority's decision to refuse planning permission.

3.2.2. **Other Technical Reports**

None.

3.2.3. **Third Party Submissions**

None.

4.0 **Planning History**

The following is the relevant planning history pertaining to the subject site:

PA ref 95/141: Permission granted to Mr. & Mrs. Pat Reddan to renovate and build a kitchen and bathroom extension to dwelling.

Adjacent Site: An Maolan to east:

PA ref 16/1767: Permission refused by the PA for the construction of 46 houses due to inadequate design and layout.

PA ref 17/1314: Permission granted by the PA for a total of 48 houses – parent permission for the An Maolan residential development.

ABP ref: ABP-309631-21 (PA ref: 20/2003): Permission granted for addition of a third floor to No. 23 An Maolan along with associated roof lights.

Adjacent Site to east:

PA ref: 20/2066: Permission granted for alterations and extensions to existing bungalow comprising attic floor development and the raising of the ridge height.

5.0 Policy and Context

5.1. Development Plans

- 5.1.1. The Galway Development Plan 2015 – 2021, is the relevant policy document relating to the subject site. Section 3 of the Plan deals with Rural and Urban Housing and Section 3.5.3 relates to an extension to a dwelling house, stating as follows:

The construction of extensions to existing houses will be encouraged generally as it usually provides a less resource intensive method of expanding living space than building a new structure. Primarily the design and layout of extensions should have regard to the amenities of adjoining properties, particularly as regards sunlight, daylight, overshadowing and privacy.

- 5.1.2. Section 13 of the plan deals with Development Guidelines, and the following DM Standards are considered relevant:

- DM Standard 1: Qualitative Assessment – Design Quality, Guidelines and Statements (Urban and Rural Areas).
- DM Standard 6: Assimilation of development into Landscape

- 5.1.3. The site is located within the settlement boundary area of Barna under the Barna Local Area Plan 2015-2021, in the Outer Village and the existing land use is identified as detached residential.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

The site is not located within any designated site. The closest Natura 2000 site is the Galway Bay Complex SAC (& pNHA)(Site Code: 000268) and the Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site Code: 004031) which are located approximately 2km to the east of the site.

5.3. EIA Screening

- 5.3.1. The Board will note that there is an existing house on the site and the proposed development seeks to extend same, on a site covering 0.253ha.
- 5.3.1. Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) sets out the class of developments which provide that mandatory EIA is required. The proposed development is not of a scale or nature which would trigger the need for a statutory EIAR. It is therefore considered that the development does not fall within any cited class of development in the P&D Regulations and does not require mandatory EIA.
- 5.3.2. In accordance with section 172(1)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), EIA is required for applications for developments that are of a class specified in Part 1 or 2 of Schedule 5 of the 2001 Regulations but are sub-threshold where the Board determines that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. For all sub-threshold developments listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, where no EIAR is submitted or EIA determination requested, a screening determination is required to be undertaken by the competent authority unless, on preliminary examination it can be concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.
- 5.3.3. Having regard to:
- (a) the nature and scale of the development,
 - (b) the suburban nature and the existing residential nature of the site,
 - (c) the zoning afforded to the site and

- (d) the location of the development outside of any sensitive location specified in article 109(3) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended),

It is concluded that 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

6.1.1. This is a first-party appeal against the decision of the Planning Authority to refuse planning permission for the proposed development. The grounds of appeal are summarised as follows:

- The property has been in the ownership of the applicants family for over 30 years, and it is the intention of the applicants, having worked abroad for a number of years, to return to live in Barna.
- The property needs to be extended to accommodate their family needs and previous extensions to the original cottage are suffering from elements of disrepair, including dampness ingress.
- The proposed extension does not result in an excessive plot ratio and is comparable to the permitted development to the house to the north/west of the subject site.
- With regard to the issue raised in the reason for refusal relating to lack of appropriate circulation provision, it is submitted that the existing property has a circulation path to the western perimeter of the house/garage which will not be altered. To the east, there is a narrow passage that has a sharp fall and low fence adjacent. It is proposed to infill this area with the new extension but the entrance hall with directly opposing front and back doors will allow an easy route to the rear.

- An existing right of way exists to the eastern boundary providing access to the rear of the site from the front which will remain in place.
- With regard to the inability of the site to satisfactorily assimilate the proposed development it is submitted that a great deal of design consideration and review has been put into the proposal, including physical and CGI 3D modelling exercises in order to ensure a sensitive approach to siting and context is achieved.
- The proposals were issued to a number of neighbours without objection and a pre-planning meeting was held with Galway County Council.
- The proposal was careful to ensure the existing cottages ridge height is maintained which allows the extensions to blend seamlessly with the appearance of a single storey addition when viewed from the north/east.
- The existing topography of the site allows the lower level to address the garden / courtyard.
- The use of materials is intentional.
- The cross sections show that the ridge height and eaves are as close as possible to those of the adjacent housing scheme.
- The orientation of the scheme allows for privacy to be restored to the dwelling house following the development of the housing scheme to the east. The housing development has had a significantly impacted upon the existing amenity, privacy and aspect of the existing house.

The appeal includes a number of enclosures.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

None.

6.3. Observations

There is one observation noted in relation to the subject appeal from Martin & Alma Brennan, 41 An Maolan, Foramoyle East, Barna, Co. Galway. This property is currently under construction. The observation is summarised as follows:

- The rationale for the refusal is very applicable to the observer as their home is directly along the boundary line of this planned development.
- There was no consultation.
- The observers home will be directly overlooked by the proposed extension.
- Issues raised with the location of the original site notice which is considered obscure. An objection would have been lodged during the planning period had the notice been seen.
- Due to the disparity in site levels, the proposed extension will overlook the garden and adversely block views and access to light.
- Issues raised in relation to the proximity of the extension to the eastern boundary.
- The development is vastly out of scale with adjoining houses and would amount to a 112.5% increase in size of the existing house on the site. development would be out of character with the existing forms and pattern of urban development on site and in the vicinity, would seriously injure and detract from the visual and general amenities of the area and would contravene DM Standard 1 of the CDP. The applicant does not address this issue in the appeal.
- Figure 5 of the 3D model supplied by the applicant supports the enormous scale of the extensions.
- The applicants do not live in the existing structure.

There are enclosures with the observation, and it is requested that the PAs decision to refuse be upheld.

7.0 Assessment

Having undertaken a site visit and having regard to the relevant policies pertaining to the subject site, the planning history, the nature of existing uses on and in the vicinity of the site, the nature and scale of the proposed development and the nature of existing and permitted development in the immediate vicinity of the site, I consider that the main issues pertaining to the proposed development can be assessed under the following headings:

1. Principle of the development
2. Design & Residential Amenity
3. Other Issues
4. Appropriate Assessment

7.1. Principle of the development

- 7.1.1. The proposed development seeks to extend an existing house through an attic conversion and two storey extensions to accommodate additional residential accommodation within the private house. The site is located on a site with an area of 0.253ha and is currently serviced by public water and a private WWTP. The site is located within the boundary of the village of Barna and is zoned for residential purposes. I have no objection to the proposed development in principle.

7.2. Design & Residential Amenity

- 7.2.1. The Board will note that the Planning Authority has raised concerns in terms of the proposed development, due to the scale and massing of the proposed extension, relative to the existing structure and the impact of the development on the visual and general amenities of the area. The existing house on the site has a stated floor area of 159.5m² and occupies a single floor. The proposed development will see the retention of 139.9m². The extension, which includes an extension into the attic space, as well as a first-floor extension over the existing single storey kitchen / lounge on the western area of the site, and a new two storey extension, with a lower ground floor and ground floor level, to the south-eastern side of the existing house, has a stated floor area of 199m².

7.2.2. In terms of the design and scale of the proposed extensions, I would agree with the Planning Authority that the new elements could not be considered as being subordinate to the original main structure. The appellant makes the case that the proposed development is located on a site which has adequate area such that the proposed floor area of the overall development, with extensions in place, would not result in an excessive plot ratio. This argument is made with regard to the concerns regarding the excessive scale and massing of the proposed extension relative to the existing house. I also note the appellants commentary in terms of the potential impact of the development on the visual and general amenities of the area.

7.2.3. While I have no objection in principle to the proposed extending of the existing house, I consider that the variations in roof styles, as well as the overall height of the extensions and proposed dormer windows, are inappropriate to this transitional area of Barna. The scale of the building proposed, together with the bulk of the proposed southern and eastern elevations in particular, and the existing site levels in the context of adjacent sites, is inappropriate to this narrow and elevated site and if permitted, the development will be out of character with the existing forms and pattern of development in the vicinity and would seriously injure the visual, residential and general amenities of the wider area.

7.3. **Other Issues**

7.3.1. **Water Services**

Having regard to the nature of the proposed development, I am generally satisfied that there are no issues relating to the provision of water services arising. The Board will note that the applicant intends on installing a new WWTP to serve the existing house and extension. I note that there are a number of errors in the Site Characterisation Report, in terms of the size of the development – eg.

- No of bedrooms is indicated as 2 x double and 2 x single.
- The PE capacity of the treatment plant is indicated at 5.00

The drawings indicate that if permitted, the development will result in a 5 double bedroomed house.

The site assessment notes the shallow soils on the site which is within an area which includes a regionally important aquifer with extreme vulnerability. The Groundwater Protection Scheme for the area indicates an R2² response, with surface water noted as the main target risk. The trial hole was dug to a depth of 1.1m where the granite and other Igneous Intrusive bedrock was encountered. Peat with clay sand, silt pebbles and cobbles were noted in the upper 0.3m of the site. The result of the *P test is noted at 19.28min/25mm. The proposed development will see the installation of a polishing filter with an area of 54m².

I am satisfied that the applicant has submitted a robust and complete site suitability assessment regarding the suitability of the proposed site in terms of the treatment and disposal of wastewater generated on the site. I am further satisfied that the site appears capable of accommodating the development in the context of wastewater treatment and disposal.

I have considered all of the information presented on the file and I am generally satisfied that the subject site has been adequately assessed to show that it is capable of accommodating the proposed development in terms of the treatment and disposal of wastewater arising from the development. I am therefore satisfied that the development, if permitted, is unlikely to result in a public health hazard or impact on the quality of ground or surface waters in the area.

7.3.2. Roads and Traffic

There are no issues arising in terms of roads and traffic.

7.3.3. Development Contribution

Having regard to the Galway Council Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme, Part 4 of the Scheme, revised August 1st 2019 deals with exemptions for the payment of development contributions including:

House extensions and domestic garages/sheds shall be exempt from Development Contributions.

There is no development contribution payable in this instance.

7.4. **Appropriate Assessment**

7.5. **Introduction**

- 7.5.1. The EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance through the establishment of a network of designated conservation areas collectively referred to as Natura 2000 (or 'European') sites.
- 7.5.2. Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken for any plan or programme not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but likely to have a significant effect on the site in view of its conservation objectives. The proposed development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site. The applicant did not submit a Natura Impact Statement.
- 7.5.3. In accordance with these requirements the Board, as the competent authority, prior to granting a consent must be satisfied that the proposal individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is either not likely to have a significant effect on any European Site or adversely affect the integrity of such a site, in view of the site(s) conservation objectives.
- 7.5.4. Guidance on Appropriate Assessment is provided by the EU and the NPWS in the following documents:
- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001).
 - Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG), 2009.

Both documents provide guidance on Screening for Appropriate Assessment and the process of Appropriate Assessment itself.

Consultations

- 7.5.5. With regard to consultations, the Board will note that no concerns were raised with regard to AA.

7.6. Screening for Appropriate Assessment

7.6.1. The applicant did not prepare an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report as part of the subject application. The site is not located within any designated site. The closest Natura 2000 site is the Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site Code: 000268) and the Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site Code 004031) which are located approximately 2km to the east of the site.

7.6.2. In terms of AA, the Board will note that the development is not directly connected or necessary to the management of a European Site. There are 9 Natura 2000 Sites occurring within a 15km radius of the site. I am satisfied that following sites can be screened out in the first instance, as they are located outside the zone of significant impact influence because the ecology of the species and / or the habitat in question is neither structurally nor functionally linked to the proposal site. There is no potential impact pathway connecting the designated sites to the development site and therefore, I conclude that no significant impacts on the following sites is reasonably foreseeable. I am satisfied that the potential for impacts on the following 7 Natura 2000 sites can be excluded at the preliminary stage:

Site Name	Site Code	Assessment
Connemara Bog Complex SAC	002034	Site is located entirely outside the EU site and therefore there is no potential for direct effects.
Connemara Bog Complex SPA	004181	
Lough Corrib SAC	000297	No habitat loss arising from the proposed development.
Lough Corrib SPA	004042	
Ross Lake and Woods SAC	001312	No disturbance to species.
Black Head-Poulsallagh Complex SAC	000020	No pathways for direct or indirect effects.
Moneen Mountain SAC	000054	Screened Out

7.6.3. I consider that the following Natura 2000 sites, located within 15km of the subject site, can be identified as being within the zone of influence of the project, for the purposes of AA Screening, as follows:

- Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site Code: 000268)

- Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site Code 004031)

7.7. Qualifying Interests for Natura 2000 Sites within Zone of Influence

- 7.7.1. The subject development site is to the north of the urban area of Barna with a mix of residential development including low and medium density housing. The site is not located within any designated site. The site does not appear to contain any of the habitats or species associated with any Natura 2000 site. The existing site is composed an existing house which is to be extended, and the Board will note that the lands to the east and south are currently being developed as a residential estate.
- 7.7.2. The following table sets out the qualifying interests for each of the identified Natura sites:

European Site	Qualifying Interests
<p>Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site Code: 000268) Located approx. 2km to the east of the site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Coastal lagoons [1150] • Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] • Reefs [1170] • Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] • Turloughs [3180] • <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] • Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] • Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] • Alkaline fens [7230] • Limestone pavements [8240] • <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365]
<p>Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site Code 004031)</p> <p>Located approx. 2km to the east of the site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black-throated Diver (<i>Gavia arctica</i>) [A002] • Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) [A003] • Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] • Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) [A028] • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] • Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] • Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] • Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

7.8. Conservation Objectives:

7.8.1. The Conservation Objectives for the relevant designated sites are as follows:

European Site	Conservation Objectives
<p>Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site Code: 000268)</p> <p>Located approx. 2km to the east of the site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NPWS has identified a site-specific conservation objective to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the following Annex I habitat listed as a Qualifying Interest, as defined by a list of attributes and targets:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] ○ Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] ○ Reefs [1170] ○ Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] ○ Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] ○ Turloughs [3180] ○ Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] ○ Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] ○ Alkaline fens [7230] ○ Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365] ● The NPWS has identified a site-specific conservation objective to restore the favourable conservation condition of the following Annex I habitat listed as a Qualifying Interest, as defined by a list of attributes and targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coastal lagoons [1150] ○ Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] ○ Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] ○ Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] ○ Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]
<p>Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site Code 004031) Located approx. 2km to the east of the site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The NPWS has identified site-specific conservation objectives to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Qualifying Interests, as defined by a list of attributes and targets.

7.9. Potential Significant Effects

7.9.1. In terms of an assessment of Significance of Effects of the proposed development on qualifying features of Natura 2000 sites, having regard to the relevant conservation objectives, I would note that in order for an effect to occur, there must be a pathway between the source (the development site) and the receptor (designated sites). As the proposed development site lies outside the boundaries of the European Sites, no direct effects are anticipated. With regard to the consideration of a number of key indications to assess potential effects, the following is relevant:

- **Habitat loss / alteration / fragmentation:** The subject site lies at a remove of some 2km from the boundary of any designated site. As such, there shall be no direct loss / alteration or fragmentation of protected habitats within any Natura 2000 site.
- **Disturbance and / or displacement of species:** The site lies within a developed environment. No qualifying species or habitats of interest, for which the designated sites are so designated, occur at the site. As the subject site is not located within or immediately adjacent to any Natura 2000 site and having regard to the nature of the construction works proposed, there is little or no potential for disturbance or displacement impacts to species or habitats for which the identified Natura 2000 sites have been designated.
- **Water Quality:** The proposed development relates to an extension to an existing house. The applicant proposes to upgrade the existing WWTP system on the site and I note that there is an existing connection to the water supply in the area. There is no indication that the upgraded system will result in any significant effects arising.

7.10. In Combination / Cumulative Effects

7.10.1. Given the nature of the proposed development, being a residential extension, I consider that any potential for in-combination effects on water quality in Galway Bay can be excluded. In addition, I would note that all other projects within the wider area which may influence conditions in Galway Bay via rivers and other surface water features are also subject to AA.

7.11. Conclusion on Stage 1 Screening:

7.11.1. I have considered the NPWS website, aerial and satellite imagery, the scale of the proposed works, the nature of the Conservation Objectives, Qualifying and Special Qualifying Interests, the separation distances and I have had regard to the source-pathway-receptor model between the proposed works and the European Sites. It is reasonable to conclude that on the basis of the information available, that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the European Sites identified within the zone of influence of the subject site. As such, and in view of these sites' Conservation Objectives a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required for these sites.

8.0 Recommendation

I recommend that planning permission be refused for the proposed development for the following stated reason.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the pattern of development in the area and the design and scale of development proposed, it is considered that the proposed extension, by reason of its scale, massing, variation in roof styles and proximity to site boundaries, together with the varying site levels with adjacent properties, would fail to adequately assimilate into the landscape, would seriously injure the residential amenities and depreciate the value of adjoining properties by reason of visual obtrusion and overshadowing. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

A. Considine
Planning Inspector
31st August 2021