



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-312010-21

Development	3 bedroom, single-storey demountable dwelling unit (circa 40sqm) and planning permission for a wastewater tremanet system.
Location	Cushinstown, Rathfeigh, Navan, Co. Meath.
Planning Authority	Meath County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	211715
Applicant(s)	Kathleen McDonagh
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refusal
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	Kathleen McDonagh
Date of Site Inspection	22 nd January 2022
Inspector	Colin McBride

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site, which has a stated area of 0.57 hectares, is located in a rural area at Cushinstown, Rathfeigh, Co. Meath, approx. 9.5km north of Ashbourne on the eastern side of the N2. It is c. 2.2km north of Kilmoon Cross (junction of N2 and Drogheda Road). The immediate area is predominantly characterised by agricultural lands and single rural dwellings of varying scales and styles. The site is flat and is not clearly visible from the N2 due to existing screening. The site is rectangular in shape and has a gated access directly off the N2, there are mature trees and hedgerow bounding the site. The N2 at this location is provided with reduced hard shoulder on each side.

I did not gain access to the site. I noted however a number of structures from the roadside, including the structure which is the subject of this application. A stream flows east along the northern site boundary which joins a watercourse flowing northeast to the rear of the site.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Retention permission is sought for an existing three-bedroom, single-storey demountable dwelling unit (circa 40sqm) and permission for a new wastewater treatment system and associated site works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Permission refused based on the following reasons...

1. The subject structure to be retained, comprising a demountable dwelling unit, is not acceptable to the Planning Authority in terms of design and does not conform to the policies of Meath County Council namely RD POL 9 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied) which requires all applications for rural

houses to comply with 'Meath Rural House Design Guide'. It is considered that the demountable dwelling unit if permitted would create an undesirable precedent for similar development proposals in this rural area. Therefore, the development, as presented is not considered to be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The application site is located in a rural area outside any designated settlement and within a rural area designated as "Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence" where development which is not rurally generated is restricted in accordance with the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied). As per Section 10.3 and Policy RD POL 1, the Meath County Development Plan 2013 (as varied) seeks 'to ensure that house developments in rural areas satisfying the housing requirement of persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which, they are proposed, subject to compliance with normal planning criteria'.

It is the policy of the Planning Authority to direct development into designated settlements to restrict residential development in rural areas outside settlements to those applicants who can demonstrate an intrinsic link to the rural community or who have an occupation predominantly based on rural community such as agriculture or in the equine industry.

The Planning Authority is not satisfied, based on the information submitted in connection with this application, that the applicant has established a site specific rural generated housing need for a residential unit in this location. The subject development would, therefore, materially conflict with rural housing policies of the Meath County Council Plan 2013-2019 (as varied) be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. The development subject to the application is to be accessed via an entrance directly off the N2 (National Primary Road). It is the policy of Meath County Council Development 2013-2019 (as varied) to develop and maximise the opportunities of the county's national primary and secondary roads as key strategic infrastructure vital to the county's continued economic development and to protect this strategically important infrastructure from unplanned ribbon development or random one-off

housing development (RD POL 36) and to ensure that future development affecting national primary or secondary roads, shall be assessed in accordance with the guidance given in the document 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (RD POL 37).

Section 1.5 of the 'Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)' states that the creation of new accesses to and intensification of existing accesses to national roads give rise to the generation of additional turning movements that introduce additional safety risks to road users. Therefore, from a road safety perspective, planning authorities, the NRA, road authorities and the Road Safety Authority must guard against a proliferation of roadside developments accessing national roads to which speed limits greater than 50-60 kmh apply as part of the overall effort to reduce road fatalities and injuries".

The Planning Authority is not satisfied that the subject development would not endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard as the applicant has not demonstrated that unobstructed sightlines can be provided at the subject entrance. It is further considered that increased traffic movement generated at the subject location onto the N2 where the speed limit of 100 km/h applies would also interfere with the safety and traffic movements along this National Primary Route. Therefore, development at this location, as proposed, would materially contravene both local and national policies, would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

Planning report (22/10/21): Issues raised related to non-compliance with the Meath County Design Guide, failure to demonstrate compliance with rural housing policy, failure to comply with policy regarding control of development along national; routes and traffic hazard issues. A refusal was recommended based on the reasons outlined above.

Other reports

Transportation (20/10/21): Refusal recommended due to variance with national policy along National routes and traffic hazard.

Environment Report (21/10/21): Further information required including the need to demonstrate that the sand polishing filter and its distribution would be well outside the extent of the area designated as flood zone A (which covers a significant portion of the site) and the layouts should clearly show locations of all wells in the vicinity.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

TII (22/10/21): Proposal is at variance with national policy regarding control over development on/affecting national routes and would also constitute a traffic hazard.

Irish Water (22/10/21): No objection.

3.4. Third Party Observations

None.

4.0 Planning History

PL17-309896 (2153): Permission refused for Retention for single storey demountable dwelling unit & construction of treatment system with sand polishing filter. Refused based on two reasons...

1. The subject site is located in a rural area which is identified by the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 as being under strong urban influence. In such areas, National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework (2018) outlines that in such areas, single housing proposals shall be facilitated 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, and Policy RD POL 1 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 also requires that individual house developments shall satisfy the housing requirements of persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which they are proposed. The applicant has not demonstrated an economic or social need to live in a rural area and has not

demonstrated that they are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which the development is located. The proposed development, therefore, does not accord with National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework and materially contravenes the rural housing policies of the Meath County Development 2013-2019 and is contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The location of the entrance to the proposed development is directly onto the N2, a national strategic route, at a location where the speed limit of 100 km/h applies. It is the policy of Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) (DOECLG) as reflected in Policy RD POL 36 and 37 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 to prevent the creation of additional individual entrances and intensification of movements at existing entrances which open directly onto national routes at locations outside the 60 km/h zone, to facilitate the efficiency and effectiveness of the national strategic road network. The entrance and the additional turning movements created by the development interfere with the unobstructed, safe and free flow of traffic on the route and therefore materially contravene Policy RD POL 36 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and is contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.

ABP 306580-19 (1911493): Permission refused in May 2020 for retention of a 2 bedroom single storey demountable dwelling unit (c.30sq.m) The reasons for refusal were as follows:

1. It is considered that the proposed development, by itself and by the precedent which it would set for other relevant development, would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard because the site is located alongside the heavily trafficked National Primary Road N2 at a point where a speed limit of 100 km/h applies and the traffic turning movements generated by the development would interfere with the safety and free flow of traffic on the public road. Furthermore, the sightlines at the entrance are deficient. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the provisions of the ‘Spatial Planning and National Roads-Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ and would contravene the objectives of the planning authority to safeguard the capacity and safety of the National road network.

2. Having regard to the location of the site within an Area Under Strong Urban Influence as identified in Development Plan for the area and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in April 2005, and in an area where housing is restricted to persons demonstrating local need in accordance with the current Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019, it is considered that the applicant has not demonstrated compliance with the housing need criteria as set out in the Guidelines or the Development Plan for a dwelling at this location. The proposed development, in the absence of any identified locally based need for the dwelling, 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. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

PA ref. NA/130302: Permission refused in 2013 to Mr. Patrick Gavin to retain a temporary dwelling on the site for a period of 3 years, planning permission to construct a wastewater treatment system and site entrance and outline permission for a permanent dwelling on the site.

The reasons for refusal reflect AA1911493.

PA ref. NA/20366: Permission refused in 2002 for a dwelling on the site. PA ref. 98/1186: Permission refused in 1998 for a dwelling on the site.

Adjoining lands to the North:

PA ref. AA/140838, PA ref. AA140837, PA ref. AA140836: Permission was refused in 2014 for these three separate planning applications each for retention of an existing dwelling unit and wastewater treatment system and a shared entrance from the N2.

PL17.241996 (NA130163): Permission refused in 2013 for retention of shared entrance from the N2, retention of existing 3 no. demountable dwelling units and installation of 3 No. individual wastewater treatment units. Four concurrent applications for four no. demountable dwellings were all refused permission on appeal in 2012 for reasons reflecting the current appeal case.

- PA ref. NA/111093 (ABP ref. PL17.240253)
- PA ref. NA /111094 (ABP ref. PL17.240258)
- PA ref. NA/111095 (ABP ref. PL17.240259)
- PA ref. NA/111096 (ABP ref. PL17.240260)

PA ref. NA/100542: Permission refused in 2010 for 4 no. demountable dwellings and 2 no. wastewater treatment systems.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1 National Policy

National Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework National Policy

Objective 15: Support the sustainable development of rural areas by encouraging growth and arresting decline in areas that have experienced low population growth or decline in recent decades and by managing the growth of areas that are under strong urban influence to avoid over-development, while sustaining vibrant rural communities.

National Policy Objective 19: Ensure, in providing for the development of rural housing, that a distinction is made between areas under urban influence, i.e. within the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment, and elsewhere:

- 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 a 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;

- In rural areas elsewhere, 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.

Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities

Proper planning is central to ensuring road safety. The creation of new accesses, and intensification of existing accesses, to national roads gives rise to the generation of additional turning movements that introduce additional safety risks to road users. Therefore, from a road safety perspective, planning authorities, the NRA, road authorities and the Road Safety Authority must guard against a proliferation of roadside developments accessing national roads to which speed limits greater than 50-60 kmh apply as part of the overall effort to reduce road fatalities and injuries. Section 2.6 identifies exceptional circumstances where a less restrictive approach may be applied.

Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities

The Guidelines distinguish between:

- Housing needed in rural areas within the established rural community by persons working in rural areas or in nearby urban areas (rural generated housing), and
- Housing in rural locations sought by persons living and working in urban areas, including second homes (urban generated housing). With regard to urban generated housing in the open countryside, the NSS identified four broad categories of rural area types with differing development circumstances that required tailored settlement policies in the development plan process.

The appeal site is located within an area identified generally as an Area Under Strong Urban Pressure. In rural areas under strong urban influences, development driven by cities and larger towns should generally take place within their built-up areas or in areas identified for new development through the planning process.

These areas will exhibit characteristics such as proximity to the immediate environs or close commuting catchment of large cities and towns, rapidly rising population, evidence of considerable pressure for development of housing due to proximity to

such urban areas, or to major transport corridors with ready access to the urban area, and pressures on infrastructure such as the local road network.

5.2 Regional

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031. (RSES) Set the strategic plan and investment framework for the region.

5.3 Local

Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019

Strategic Policies

RUR DEV SP 1 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 individual rural area types.

RUR DEV SP 2 To ensure that individual house developments in rural areas satisfy the housing requirements of persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which they are proposed, subject to compliance with normal planning criteria....

The site is located within Area 1 - Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence

RD POL 1 To ensure that individual house developments in rural areas satisfy the housing requirements of persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which they are proposed, subject to compliance with normal planning criteria.

RD POL 2 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.

Sections 10.4 and 10.5 of the Plan outlines the criteria by which applicants can demonstrate a local housing need.

Transport Policies

TRAN POL 28 To safeguard the capacity and safety of the National road network by applying the provisions of the Department of Environment Community and Local

Government's – 'Spatial Planning and National Roads-Guidelines for Planning Authorities

TRAN POL 40 To avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development / intensification of traffic from existing entrances onto national roads outside the 60kph speed limit, except as indicated on Maps No 6.4.1 - 6.4.7 Rural Development Policies

RD POL 36 To develop and maximise the opportunities of the county's national primary and secondary roads as key strategic infrastructure vital to the county's continued economic development and to protect this strategically important infrastructure from unplanned ribbon development or random one-off housing development.

RD POL 37 To ensure that future development affecting national primary or secondary roads, shall be assessed in accordance with the guidance given in the document 'Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities'.

5.6.3 Groups with Specific Design/Planning Needs

There are several groups considered to have specific planning and design needs. These includetravellers and members of ethnic minority groups. It is a policy of the council to recognise the need for people with special needs to enjoy an appropriate living environment and to support the provision of facilities for people with special needs.

HS OBJ 3 To provide appropriate accommodation for Travellers through the implementation of the "Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009 - 2013" and any subsequent Programme adopted during the life of this Development Plan.

Other: Code of Practice - Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (p.e. ≤ 10)" – Environmental Protection Agency, 2009

Sets out guidance on the design, operation and maintenance of on site wastewater treatment systems for single houses..

5.4 Natural Heritage Designations

- The site is not designated for any nature conservation purposes.
- The nearest designated site is the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA 004232 located approx. 10km north and 12km west of the site.
- Drains adjoining the site eventually discharge to the River Nanny, which reaches the sea at Laytown, River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (004158).

5.5. EIA Screening

5.5.1 The proposed development is of a class but substantially under the threshold of 500 units to trigger the requirement for submission of an EIAR and carrying out of EIA. Having regard to the nature of the development, which is a new dwelling and associated site works, the absence of features of ecological importance within the site, I conclude that the necessity for submission of an EIAR and carrying out of EIA can be set aside at a preliminary stage.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

6.1.1 A first party appeal has been lodged by Kathleen McDonagh, Cushinstown, Rathfeigh, Navan, Co. Meath. The grounds of appeal are as follows...

- In response to refusal reason no. 1 the applicant/appellant states that they are a member of the travelling community and the style of dwelling proposed is part of traveller culture. Travellers are recognised as an ethnic minority with the County Development Plan making no allowances for traveller culture/or style of dwelling.
- In response to refusal reason no. 2 the applicant/appellant reiterates their point regarding the status of travellers as an ethnic minority and the failure of the County Development Plan recognise this status and that housing policy in the plan does not recognise such/housing needs.
- In response to refusal reason no. 3 the applicant/appellant refers to that there are a number of entrances currently in place at this location and that there is

no evidence another entrance would cause intensification of traffic. It is stated that the policy cannot be contravened with a precedent set for entrances at this location.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

Response by Meath County Council

The proposed development is not consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7.0 Assessment

- 7.1. Having inspected the site inspected the site and associated documents, the main issues can be assessed under the following heading.

Design

Rural Housing Policy

Traffic impact

Public health

Conclusion

- 7.2. Design:

- 7.2.1 The proposal is for retention of a demountable dwelling with a floor area of circa (40sqm). The first reason for refusal relates to non-compliance with RD POL9 of the current County Development Plan which requires that all applications for rural houses comply with the Meath Rural House Design Guide. The grounds of appeal have referred to the culture and style of Traveller accommodation and that the use of demountable dwelling units is a part of this culture and that the Meath Development Plan does not make allowance for this.

7.2.2 In terms of overall design, scale and siting, the structure for retention is modest in scale and not highly visible in the surrounding area due to such scale, a high gate at the entrance and existing screening along the site boundaries consisting of mature trees and hedgerow. I would note that there has been two previous proposal on this site for retention of a demountable dwelling under ABP-309896-21 and ABP-306580-20. Design and scale were not reasons for refusal. I would be of the view that the overall design of the dwelling does not comply with the County Design Guide, however I would not recommend refusal on this basis with other issues that are fundamentally contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development regardless of the quality of design proposed.

7.3 Rural Housing Policy:

7.3.1 Policy in relation to rural housing need/settlement strategy is clearly set out at both a national and local level with such outlined under the Section titled Planning Policy. Under the Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines, the subject site is located in an area designated as an 'Area Under Strong Urban Influence'. This is an area where urban generated development is to be directed to areas zoned for new housing in towns and villages. National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework refers to the necessity to demonstrate a functional economic or social requirement for housing need in areas under urban influence.

7.3.2 The second reason for refusal relates to a failure to demonstrate a genuine rural housing need in this location. The applicant has been refused twice on such grounds, under ABP-309896 and ABP 306580-20, for the retention of a demountable unit on the site with non-compliance with rural housing policy as reason on both occasions. There is no supporting documentation on file pertaining to the applicant's compliance with the Council's Rural Housing policy as set out in the current Meath County Development Plan. No Local Needs Form has been submitted with the application or the grounds of appeal. The grounds of appeal include what appears to be an extract from a document/article (source is not referenced) which refers to the economic status of Traveller women. An extract from the Census is also included.

7.3.3 The site is located within an area identified as being under strong urban influence.

Development plan policies seek to facilitate the housing requirements of the rural community in such areas and identifies specific criteria by which applicants can demonstrate a local housing need. This is consistent with national policy on rural housing. The applicant in this instance has not demonstrated any local rural housing need or connection to this location. The development of a demountable structure on the site in the absence of such need would be contrary to local and national policy guidance. Traveller ethnicity has been raised in the first party appeal. This matter was previously raised under ABP309896-21 and ABP 306580-20 when it was determined that this alone is not a basis on which to override such local and national rural housing policies. Rural Housing policy is clearly stated in the County Development Plan, the National Planning Framework and the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines. The policies and objectives in relation to rural housing are the determining factor in consideration of rural housing applications and all applicants must demonstrate compliance with such. I would consider, based on the information on file, the applicant has not demonstrated compliance with the requirements set out under policy RD POL1 of the current County Development Plan for a house in the countryside. The applicant, therefore, does not have a defined social or economic need to live in this area of strong urban influence and thus the development would be contrary to Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework, would be contrary to the guidance set out in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and contrary to RD POL1 of the current Meath County Development Plan.

7.4 Traffic Impact:

7.4.1 Issues arise in relation to traffic and include both technical and policy issues relating to the access to the site off the N2. The site is located along the N2, National Primary Route, with an existing vehicular entrance at the southwestern corner of the site. The N2 at this location is provided with a narrow hard shoulder at this and is generally straight and level on the approaches to the site. The 100kph limit applies at this location and traffic does travel at or close to this limit. Sightlines at the entrance are deficient, significantly failing to meet requirements set out in NRA TD 41-42/11 of 215m due to the layout of the existing entrance. No details are provided with the

application as to how these might be achieved on the site and any works in this regard may require encroachment upon adjoining lands.

7.4.2 As noted previously in the other case refused on site, the retention of the entrance is not included in the description of development as set out in the Statutory Notices and therefore does not form part of the assessment before the Board and I do not propose to make a recommendation on the technical elements associated with the 'entrance'. There are policy issues concerning the use of the entrance, in terms of policy to serve a dwelling. Policy RD POL 36 and 37 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 seeks to prevent the creation of additional individual entrances and intensification of movements at existing entrances which open directly onto national routes at locations outside the 60 km/h zone, to facilitate the efficiency and effectiveness of the national strategic road network. In addition The Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities require planning authorities to guard against the proliferation of roadside developments accessing national roads. Section 2.5 outlines that it shall be the policy of planning authorities to 'avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60km/h apply.' Transport Infrastructure Ireland's submission on the application outlined that the development is contrary to the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and would endanger public safety.

7.4.3 The grounds of appeal refer to other existing accesses onto the N2 in the vicinity of the site and argue that there is no evidence that another entrance would cause intensification of traffic. The volume or extent of additional traffic generated by the development is unclear, however; it is clear from the Guidelines that any additional access point or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses onto a national road with a speed limit above 60km/h is unacceptable. The development contravenes these Guidelines and would set an undesirable precedent for developments which interfere with the safety and free flow of traffic on a national road.

7.5 Public Health:

7.5.1 Permission is sought for a proprietary wastewater treatment system and sand polishing filter. This aspect of the proposal was considered satisfactory by Meath County Council and was not an aspect for which permission was refused. Site characterisation was carried out including trial hole and percolation tests. The trial hole test (depth 2.1m) notes that the water table level was encountered at a level of 1.2m. Both T and P tests were carried out on site with percolation values that are within the standards that would be considered acceptable for the operation of a wastewater treatment system set down under the EPA Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses.

7.5.2 The Council's Environment Section recommended further information pertaining to the need to clearly demonstrate that the sand polishing filter and its distribution would be well outside the extent of the area designated as flood zone A (which covers a significant portion of the site) and the provisions of layouts that clearly show locations of all wells in the vicinity. I do not consider that these are matters that could be addressed by condition if the Board considered granting permission.

7.6 Conclusion:

7.6.1 Permission for similar development has been refused twice previous on the appeal site. The same issues arise in this application and the applicant/appellant has failed to address these issues to the degree that it does not merit a change in view regarding the proposal.

8.0 Appropriate Assessment

8.1 The applicant has not submitted an AA Screening report. A screening was carried out under ABP 306580-20. The site is not within or adjacent to any European sites. The River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Protection Area (Site Code 004232) and Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002299) are located c.10.5km to the north. There are no known hydrological links to this designated site and I do not

consider there is any source-pathway-receptor means by which potential pollutants could be transferred from the site to it.

- 8.2 The surface water flow in this location is to the northeast generally, draining to the River Nanny. This discharges to the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (004158) approx. 20km downstream of the appeal site. Having regard to the location, scale and nature of the proposed development and the distance from the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA, it is reasonable to conclude that on the basis of the information on the file, which I consider adequate in order to issue a screening determination, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to have a significant effect on River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (004158), or any other European site, in view of the site's Conservation Objectives, and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (and submission of a NIS) is not therefore required.

9.0 Recommendation

- 9.1. I recommend refusal based on the following reasons.

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. The subject site is located in a rural area which is identified by the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 as being under strong urban influence. In such areas, National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework (2018) outlines that in such areas, single housing proposals shall be facilitated 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, and Policy RD POL 1 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 also requires that individual house developments shall satisfy the housing requirements of persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which they are proposed. The applicant has not demonstrated an economic or social need to live in a rural area and has not demonstrated that they are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which the development is located. The proposed development, therefore, does not accord with National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework and materially

contravenes the rural housing policies of the Meath County Development 2013-2019 and is contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The location of the entrance to the proposed development is directly onto the N2, a national strategic route, at a location where the speed limit of 100 km/h applies. It is the policy of Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) (DOECLG) as reflected in Policy RD POL 36 and 37 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 to prevent the creation of additional individual entrances and intensification of movements at existing entrances which open directly onto national routes at locations outside the 60 km/h zone, to facilitate the efficiency and effectiveness of the national strategic road network. The entrance and the additional turning movements created by the development interfere with the unobstructed, safe and free flow of traffic on the route and therefore materially contravene Policy RD POL 36 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and is contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.

Colin McBride
Senior Planning Inspector

21st January 2022