



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP315612-23

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| Development | Retention for the existing use as dry goods storage and distribution for goods not associated with the adjoining Largo Foods Facility and all site development works associated with the proposed development. |
| Location | Kilbrew, Ashbourne, Co. Meath |
| Planning Authority | Meath County Council |
| Planning Authority Reg. Ref. | 22/1395 |
| Applicants | Vertice Transport Services Limited |
| Type of Application | Retention permission and permission |
| Planning Authority Decision | Refuse. |
| Type of Appeal | First Party |
| Appellants | Vertice Transport Services Ltd. |
| Observer | Colin Crothers, Lima, Kilbrew, Ashbourne, Co. Meath. |
| Date of Site Inspection | 11 th July 2023 |
| Inspector | Trevor Rue |

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1.0 Location and Description

- 1.1. The application site is in a rural location about 5 kilometres to the north west of Ashbourne and about 4 kilometres to the north of Ratoath.
- 1.2. The site has a stated area of 0.974 hectares. It includes an existing dark green steel-clad shed, which is 61.6 metres long by 37.2 metres wide and has a shallow pitched roof with a ridge height of 9.3 metres. The gross floor area of the shed is stated as 2240 square metres. Submitted plans show the ground floor subdivided into four units, each accessed by a full-height roller door on the southern elevation, and three units in a mezzanine floor. The site also includes circulation and parking spaces to the north and south of the shed and an access road immediately to its east, which adjoins local road L50161 to the north at an oblique angle. There is a sliding gate at the access.
- 1.3. The immediate surroundings of the site on its eastern, northern and southern sides are commercial in character. Lorry trailers are stationed on hard surfaced ground to the south. The western boundary of the site, between the application building and the trailer park, is marked by mature and fledgling trees.
- 1.4. Tayto Snacks, formerly known as Largo Foods, operates from sheds located to the west of the application site. Its buildings are used for potato storage, warehousing, offices and the manufacture of potato crisps. A new shed is under construction adjacent to the boundary with the application site. Lorries belonging to unrelated transport companies are parked within the Tayto site, which has two well-proportioned accesses on to the L50161. Emerald Amusement Park, themed on the Tayto brand, occupies an extensive area on the northern side of the road.
- 1.5. There are several individual dwellings to the east of the amusement park and opposite the access road which forms part of the site. There is also a dwelling immediately to the west of the access road, whose curtilage is bounded by commercial developments to the south and west. The wider setting of the application site, beyond the commercial developments, consists of generally open countryside. The access road continues southwards beyond the application site into agricultural fields.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. **Retention permission** is sought for the existing use as dry goods storage and distribution for goods not associated with the adjoining Largo Foods facility.

- 2.2. **Permission** is also sought for proposed upgrades to the established vehicular access. The proposed development includes all ancillary drainage, services, landscaping, public lighting, road signage and all associated site development works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Meath County Council **refused** permission on 15th December 2022 for the following reasons:-

1. The Planning Authority considers that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard having regard to the increased traffic movements into and out of the site that would be generated by the proposals, whose sightlines are restricted. Therefore the proposed development would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. It is the policy of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 to 2027 (ED POL 26) *“to positively consider and assess development proposals for the expansion of existing authorised industrial or business enterprises in the countryside where the resultant development does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area.”* It is further stated that *“in all instances, it should be demonstrated that the proposal would not generate traffic of a type and amount inappropriate for the standard of the access roads. This policy shall not apply to the National Road Network.”* The proposed development, as presented, is considered to materially contravene said policy. It is therefore considered that the proposed development, if permitted, would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. The proposed development, if permitted, would materially contravene Condition no. 6 of planning reg. ref. no. DA121067 which states *“the proposed warehouse structure shall be used only for the storage of non-perishable products associated with the operation of the food production business on the adjacent Largo foods facility and shall not be operated as a separate entity from the overall Largo factory production and warehouse areas”* and Condition no. 13 which states *“the sliding access gate shall not be used for access the proposed warehouse. The gate shall be used for agricultural purposes only”*. The proposed development would

therefore be considered to be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

- 3.2.1. The **planning officer's report** of 14th December 2022 provided the reasoning for the authority's decision. He described the site, set out the planning history and relevant provisions of the development plan, and summarised the responses of Irish Water and three internal departments. Among the key planning considerations he identified were planning policy; design, layout and siting; Condition 6 of DA121067; access/traffic; and water services.
- 3.2.2. The planning officer reached the following conclusions relevant to these matters:-
- Permissible uses and those open for consideration in this area do not include warehousing/distribution.
 - The existing substandard means of site access is considered to represent a traffic hazard.
 - The nature of the use of the premises deviates from the permitted use and is a stand-alone business.
 - The submitted drawings and supporting traffic note do not demonstrate the necessary sightlines.
 - According to the submitted floor plans, there are four toilets in the building. An existing septic tank is shown in the north-eastern corner of the site with a percolation area located outside and to the east of the site boundary. No details of the existing conventional septic tank are provided and it is unclear whether the percolation area is operating to an acceptable modern standard.
- 3.2.3. The prescribed body **Irish Water** recommended that the applicants be asked to submit for approval a proposal indicating individual water connections and to install a separate non-domestic meter to serve the development.
- 3.2.4. The Council's **Water Services** Section stated that the development as proposed did not meet its requirements with respect to the orderly collection, treatment and disposal of surface water. It recommended that the applicants be asked to submit a water disposal design compliant with sustainable urban drainage.

3.2.5. The Council's **Transportation Planning Section** noted that the "established entrance" is not a permitted access point for the development. The applicants have not demonstrated any sightlines from the entrance. The entrance gate is too close to the edge of the road to permit a heavy goods vehicle (HGV) to pull in off the road. This could lead to vehicles having to wait on the public road for the gate to open, thereby creating a traffic hazard. The access road is not wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic, which could lead to vehicles waiting on the public road for others to exit.

3.2.6. The Transportation Planning Section went on to say that if the application was being considered, the following further information would be required:-

- A revised site layout plan clearly showing the provision of unobstructed sightlines of 90 metres to the nearest roadside edge from a setback of 3.0 metres in compliance with Transport Infrastructure Ireland standard DN-GEO-03060. Where works are required on lands outside the ownership of the developer, then written consent of the landowner should be submitted and the application boundary should be revised.
- The existing entrance redesigned and upgraded so that the face of the entrance piers are at least 3 metres from the edge of the road, the entrance gate is recessed at least 17 metres from the edge of the road, and the access road is widened to facilitate two-way traffic.

3.2.7. The Council's **Fire Service Department** stated that a regularisation certificate was required as well as fire brigade vehicle access in accordance with published guidance.

4.0 Planning History

4.1. **91/943:** On 27^h March 1992, Meath County Council granted permission to Mr John Coyle for two agricultural sheds, one of which was to be located in the approximate position of the building to which the current appeal relates. The floor space was stated to be 2171 square metres.

4.2. **DA12/1067:** On 19th September 2013, the planning authority granted permission to Mr Coyle for change of use of existing single storey building from agricultural use to warehousing use for storage of dry goods and associated car and truck parking. The ground floor plan area was stated to be 2240 square metres. The approved site layout plan showed an earth berm on the eastern boundary of the site and to the south of the

building. These works would have obstructed vehicular access via the existing access road to the east and north.

Among the conditions attached to the permission were the following:-

6. *The proposed warehouse structure shall be used only for the storage of non-perishable products associated with the operation of the food production business on the adjacent largo foods facility and shall not be operated as a separate entity from the overall Largo factory production and warehouse areas.*

Reason: In the interest of clarity and protection of residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

13. *The sliding access gate shall not be used for access [to] the proposed warehouse.*

Reason: In the interest of traffic safety.

- 4.3. This decision was appealed to An Bord Pleanála (**PL 17.242581**), which resulted in requirements for financial contributions being removed, but Conditions 6 and 13 remained in force.
- 4.4. **22/409:** On 24th May 2022, the planning authority refused permission to the present appellants for retention of the existing use as dry goods and distribution of goods not associated with the adjoining Largo Goods Facility, together with established vehicular access and all associated site development works. The reasons given were identical to those stated in respect of the application currently under appeal.
- 4.5. The planning officer also drew attention to an application by Largo Foods Exports Limited in respect of an adjacent site to the south (**DA901038**). This sought permission for the erection of a 1003 square metre extension to an existing dry store and for the erection of four single storey warehouse units in a single building with a total ground floor area of 8052 square metres, together with concrete yards, 91 car parking and 10 truck parking spaces. A notification of decision to grant permission was issued by the Council on 14th January 2010.
- 4.6. The Council's decision was appealed to An Bord Pleanála which refused permission (**PL 17.236024**). The Board was not satisfied that the applicants had adequately demonstrated that the development would serve the needs of the local community or that it had a locational requirement necessitating a rural context. It considered that

the development would constitute an inappropriate extension not provided for in policy and would result in an increase in conflicting traffic movements in and near the site.

5.0 Policy and Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1. Chapter 4.0 of the **Meath County Development Plan 2021 to 2027** is titled Economy and Employment Strategy. **ED POL 26** states that the Council shall positively consider and assess development proposals for the expansion of existing authorised industrial or business enterprises in the countryside where the resultant development does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area. In all instances, it should be demonstrated that the proposal would not generate traffic of a type and amount inappropriate for the standard of the access roads.

5.1.2. Within Section 11.6.7 Industrial, Office, Warehousing and Business Park Development, **DM OBJ 61** requires any planning application for industrial, office, warehousing and business park development to address 19 development assessment criteria. One of these criteria is that details of suitable access arrangements, internal roads layout including details of footpaths, turning areas, loading bays be provided.

5.1.3. Section 11.14.6 states that in rural areas the objective is to protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture, forestry and sustainable rural-related enterprise, community facilities, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage. It provides the following lists of uses that will be permitted and uses that are open for consideration:-

Permitted Uses

Agriculture, Agricultural Buildings, Agri-Tourism, Boarding Kennels (Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence), Burial Grounds, Extractive Industry/Quarrying, Equestrian, Farm Shop (Only where the bulk of the produce is produced on the farm), Forestry related activities, Horticulture, Caravan and Camping Park (No static mobile homes or permanent structure unless ancillary to the operation of the campsite shall be permitted), Golf Course, Open Space, Research and Development (Rural related research and development only), Residential (Subject to compliance with the Rural Settlement Strategy), Restaurant/Café (Only where

ancillary to tourism uses or conversion of protected or vernacular structures), Sustainable Energy Installations, Utility Structures.

Open for Consideration Uses

Community Facility, Cultural Facility, Education, Garden Centre, Micro Businesses (Refer to the Economic Chapter), Playing Fields, Recreational Facility, Sports Club, Telecommunication Structures, Workshop (only where ancillary to an existing dwelling where it is demonstrated that the proposed activity is carried out by a resident of the dwelling, with no visiting members of the public), Veterinary Clinic.

5.2. **Natural Heritage Designations**

Map 8.3 of the Meath County Development Plan indicates that no part of the application site or its surroundings is covered by a natural heritage designation.

5.3. **EIA Screening**

The proposed development is not one to which Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, applies and therefore, the requirement for submission of an environmental impact assessment report and carrying out of an environmental impact assessment may be set aside at a preliminary stage.

6.0 **The Appeal**

6.1. **Grounds of Appeal**

6.1.1 Reference was made to the National Planning Framework and it was submitted that the existing use as an industrial store/warehouse would make a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of Kilbrew. The building has been in use for a number of years and the proposal is to continue a similar use under separate ownership. It assimilates successfully into its immediate context without negative impact on surrounding properties. No changes are anticipated to traffic generation. Improvements are proposed to provide a benefit to users of the L50161 and to take on board recommendations made by the Council's transport team.

6.1.2. It was submitted that **Reason for Refusal 1** lacks credibility. The applicants had commissioned the engineering consultants Meinhardt to prepare a transport note on traffic movements into and out of the site. The operational context is as follows:-

- Opening times are Monday to Friday 0700 to 1730 hours;

- Ten staff are employed with a maximum of six working at any time;
- There are 55 daily two-way traffic movements associated with the site, of which 22 are by HGVs; and
- All staff drive to work.

6.1.3. There are 18 car parking spaces and four truck spaces at the site, all accessed from the L50161 via the established access road and an internal road which is about 70 metres in length and 4.5 metres in width at its narrowest point. The access gate adjacent to the L50161 is open continuously during normal working hours and can be opened on demand outwith these hours. The applicants have not recorded any traffic accidents or incidents at the site.

6.1.4. The L50161 in proximity to the site is a single carriageway about 6.2 metres in width and subject to a 50 kilometres per hour (kmph) speed limit. It provides direct accesses to farms, single dwellings, industrial sites and Tayto Park. There are no footways or street lighting but to the west of the site there is a signalised pedestrian crossing connecting Tayto facilities. No accident statistics are publicly available. The L50161 links with the national road network, principally the R155 and the N2.

6.1.5. It was submitted that **Reason 2** had been readily addressed in Meinhardt's traffic note. According to automatic traffic count data collected over a week in June 2022, the average daily two-way traffic flow was 2,130 vehicles, of which 138 were HGVs. The average daily mean speed was 47.3 kmph and the 85th percentile speed was 60.1kmph. Some 40% of all vehicles were travelling faster than the speed limit

6.1.6. A survey carried out on Thursday, 16th June 2022 recorded 55 traffic movements at the current site entrance – 27 inbound and 28 outbound. All but six movements were to or from the east where the R155 and the N2 are located. Some 22 of the traffic movements (40%) involved HGVs and all but two of these movements were to or from the east. Meinhardt conducted view footage of the traffic movements and there were no occurrences of two vehicles passing each other (in opposite directions) along the access road from the established access to the site's parking spaces.

6.1.7. The proposed upgrades to the established vehicular access from the L50161 include:-

- Pulling back the entrance gate by 17 metres;
- Introduction of a STOP line adjacent to the edge of the public road; and:

- Prohibiting left out turns by HGVs.

Meinhardt prepared a traffic note for the appeal, to which was appended a drawing showing proposed safety enhancements. These included a 2.0 by 50 metre visibility splay to the left of the access on to the L50161 and 2.0 by 70 metres to the right. The access road is shown widened on its western side to provide a 13 metre radius with 1:10 taper for 25 metres back from the public road. A swept path analysis drawing was also produced showing an articulated vehicle 16.48 metres long and 2.55 metres wide entering and leaving the access road.

6.1.8. According to the applicants' planning consultants, there is an agreement in place with the owner of the land to the west of the established access for these improvements. Appropriate visibility splays would be provided in accordance with the characteristics of the road and the outcomes of the traffic surveys. Enhanced visibility to the west would be a betterment. It was considered inappropriate to widen the access road as a two-way road would not be commensurate with its operation.

6.1.9. In regard to **Reason 3**, it was submitted that the site was in a state of disrepair prior to occupation by the applicants, with uses that were not complementary to the residential amenity of neighbours. Previous uses included manufacturing, builders, light industry not associated with Largo Foods (cleaning products and merchandising equipment) and the sale of cars and vans. The applicants have invested significantly in the site and removed scrap metal and rubbish, cleared ditches and channels in adjoining fields, and hired road sweepers to clean site and boundaries. They are replanting trees and flower beds and have purchased nine triple-stack bee hives and 30 bird boxes which are in the warehouse and due to be placed on site.

6.1.10. It was argued that the application site is appropriate for use by Vertice Transport Services due to its convenient location for staff and access to the transport network. The applicants' business specialises in handling out of Gauge units and has completed for sites for Fluence Ireland / Siemens for the Electricity Supply Board on solar and battery array. It also handles deliveries to data sites in Wicklow, Wexford and Gormanstown. The company continues to provide local employment within an existing light industrial node and supports sustainable patterns of commuting, whereby Meath residents have the opportunity to work in the county.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

The planning authority was satisfied that all relevant matters outlined in the applicants' appeal submission were considered in the course of its assessment of the planning application as detailed in the planning officer's report.

6.3. Observations

- 6.3.1. The third party stated that his main observations were in his submission at application stage. In that submission he identified himself as the owner occupier of the house and land in front of the application site. He said that Vertice Transport Services were not the registered owners of the site in the land ownership records. It was John Coyle who was listed. He went on to say that the entrance to the site posed a danger to his family, their neighbours and other road users.
- 6.3.2. The third party said he bought his home from John Coyle in 2005 as a quiet rural farm house in which to raise a family. They are now surrounded by an industrial estate. They are constantly exposed to the noise and sight of trucks up and down the side of their house operating covertly through the gate. There are tailbacks on the road of trucks lining up into the gateway. The ground shakes as the trucks enter and leave. Dust, air pollution, rubbish and debris land in their property. There have been a number of accidents directly outside their home involving large freight vehicles. The granting of permission would have a severe impact on the valuation of their home, their quality of life, and their wellbeing and stress levels.
- 6.3.3. According to the third party, trucks can still be entering the yard up to 9pm, although on a few occasions they have entered and left as late as 1.20am. On 13th June 2022, he recorded 22 traffic movements by HGVs, the first at 8.16am and the last at 9.26pm. On the following day there were 19 such movements, from 6.36am until 7.31pm.
- 6.3.4. The third party pointed out that Vertice Transport Services is a freight company which stores and transports goods for many companies and it would be reasonable to assume they intend to grow and develop. There has been massive levelling of ground within its site which appears to be designed to facilitate a large number of vehicles. The site would comfortably accommodate 80 truck parking spaces. The link access between the Vertice building and Largo which was supposed to be used has been fenced off by Tayto Snacks. The access road was never built to facilitate the number of heavy freight vehicles now using it. The gates were not engineered to facilitate this

use and there is not a clear line of sight on to the public road for trucks of this size. Dash cam footage was provided to showing, among other things, a truck stopped on the wrong side of the road on a bend waiting to enter the access road.

6.3.5. According to the third party, trucks currently turn left from the access road on to the L50161 and it would be impossible to enforce a prohibition of this practice. The third party owns the land to the west and has not agreed to facilitate any improvements to the access. The figure showing the entranceway extended to the east involves land which has been owned by Ashbourne Visitor Centre since January 2022. That landowner had written to the Council pointing out that a letter of consent for the inclusion of these lands had not been submitted with the application.

Having regard to the fuel capacity of an HGV, the third party expressed concern about fire risk to his home and potential impact on soil and wildlife.

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Issues

7.1.1 Having inspected the site and considered in detail the documentation on file for this First Party appeal, it seems to me that the main planning issues are:-

- whether the use proposed is acceptable in principle at this location;
- whether the vehicular access to the public road currently in use is safe, or capable of being made safe;
- the effect of the development as proposed on residential amenity; and
- the benefits offered by the development.

7.1.2. I must also consider whether an appropriate assessment (AA) is required pursuant to the European Union Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

7.2. Acceptability in Principle

7.2.1. Kilbrew is a rural area outside any settlement identified in Map 3.1 of the Meath County Development Plan. The immediate environs of the application site represent something of an anomaly in the countryside in so far as they have been developed for various industrial and business purposes. The development plan, ED POL 26, allows for the expansion of existing authorised enterprises in the countryside provided there are no unacceptable impacts on local character, amenity and traffic. The 2013

permission for the storage of non-perishable products associated with the operation of the food production business on the adjacent Largo site was consistent with that policy but the proposed development does not comply with it.

7.2.2. The development plan does not envisage unrestricted development of employment uses in the rural area. Instead it sets out lists of “permitted uses” which are generally acceptable in principle and “open for consideration uses” which may be permitted where the Council is satisfied that the proposed development would be compatible with the overall policies and objectives for the rural area. The use of the appeal building for storage and distribution of dry foods not associated with the adjoining food production facility is a different use to that which was permitted in 2013 and does not fall into either category. The plan makes provision for such uses elsewhere in the county. It must be concluded that the use proposed materially contravenes the development plan and is not acceptable in principle at this location.

7.3. Road Safety

7.3.1. While it is useful to have information on the recent usage of the unauthorised access road connecting the appeal building with the L50161, it would be unwise to assume that the number of vehicles would remain static following any grant of planning permission. The site is relatively close to the national road network, there is ample space for additional parking of HGVs on the site and it is reasonable to expect that the appellants would want to grow their business.

7.3.2. My inspection confirmed that the unauthorised access road is unsafe in several respects. Visibility at the junction with the L50161 is very poor in both directions, especially to the left hand side emerging. A vehicle turning left on to the local road must manoeuvre round an acute angle. As can be readily inferred from the appellants’ swept path drawing, an HGV turning left would be obliged to cross to the wrong side of the public road. Visibility to the right emerging is curtailed by the sliding gate and the radius of the junction is inadequate. Closure of the gate in its current position is likely to obstruct the free flow of traffic on the public road. It is inevitable that sooner or later an HGV attempting to enter the access road will meet an HGV already on the access road, causing at best a hold up and at worst an accident on the public road.

7.3.3. Although the consultants Meinhardt showed potential enhancements to the entrance on a drawing attached to their report, that drawing is not part of the planning application

and it is far from clear that the appellants have control over all the necessary land. While the setting back of the gate and the painting of a stop sign would be beneficial, provision of adequate sight splays and junction radii are not part of the proposal. It is unclear how the appellants propose to enforce a ban on left turns to the public road. The width of the access road is insufficient to accommodate two-way traffic but the appellants do not intend to widen it. It must be concluded that the access road, as proposed, would continue to constitute a serious traffic hazard.

7.4. Residential Amenity

7.4.1. I consider that the third party objector's concerns about fire risk could be eased substantially provided the appellants comply with the requirements of the Council's Fire Department. I also consider that an hours-of-operation condition, if adhered to, would overcome his concerns about late working. However, given the proximity of the access road to his dwelling, its use by HGVs every weekday can only have an unduly detrimental effect on the living conditions of the occupants.

7.5. Benefits offered by the Proposal

7.5.1. Approval of this application would help sustain existing jobs and potentially create additional employment in Meath. However, the appellants have not demonstrated that there are no other sites in the county from which they could run their storage and distribution business. It seems to me that granting permission for this development would create an unacceptably widespread precedent for setting aside land-use provisions of the development plan, ignoring traffic hazards and sanctioning harm to residential amenity. I conclude that the employment benefits offered by the proposal do not outweigh its detrimental effects.

7.6. Appropriate Assessment Screening

7.6.1. A statement for AA screening was submitted with the application. Although there are no European nature conservation sites within 15 kilometres of the application site, consideration was given to the following designated sites on the basis of theoretical hydrological linkages:-

- River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
- River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Protection Area (SPA); and
- River Nanny and Shore SPA.

- 7.6.2. The screening statement noted that the application site drains to the Hurley River, a tributary of the River Nanny. There is no hydrological pathway to the River Boyne. It was therefore concluded with full scientific certainty that the development at Kilbrew could not have impacts, direct or indirect, on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC or those of the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA.
- 7.6.3. The screening statement noted that the estuarine section of the River Nanny at Laytown is designated as a SPA for various wetland bird species. There are no direct open drainage channels between the application site and the Hurley River. Surface water drainage at the site is by percolation through hardcore or runoff to the adjoining field. The development does not involve production of aqueous wastes or refuelling of vehicles. There is an estimated 22 kilometres of river channel between the relevant section of the Hurley River and the SPA at Laytown. It could therefore be concluded with scientific certainty that the development could not realistically have impacts, direct or indirect, on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the River Nanny and Shore SPA.
- 7.6.4. The screening statement noted that there are existing commercial premises to the west of the application site and an amusement park to the north. These development are more than 15 kilometres from any European site. It could be demonstrated objectively that these other projects, in combination with the appeal development, would not have any effect on the European sites.
- 7.6.5. Despite his concerns about the effectiveness of the sewage disposal arrangements, the planning officer also reached the conclusion that an AA is not required.

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the nature and scale of the foreseeable discharges therefrom, the absence of a pathway between the application site and the River Boyne, and the distance from the site to the SPA at Laytown, I too am satisfied that it is possible to screen out the requirement for an AA at an initial stage.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1. I recommend that permission be refused.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. The Meath County Development Plan sets out lists of “permitted uses” and “open for consideration uses” which may be acceptable in the rural area. The proposed use falls within neither category and it has not been demonstrated that the business has specific requirements that necessitate a location in this area. The proposal

materially contravenes the Development Plan and is contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. Continued use of the access road by vehicles associated with this storage and distribution use would endanger public safety by reason of inadequate visibility at its junction with the public road and obstruction of traffic on the public road.
3. Continued use of the access road by vehicles associated with this storage and distribution use would be unduly detrimental to the residential amenity of the dwelling located immediately to the west of its junction with the public road.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.



TREVOR A RUE

Planning Inspector

13th July 2023