



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-317847-23

Development	Demolition of sheds, boundary walls, disused septic tank, flat roof entrance to dwelling and construction of 2 dwelling units and associated site works.
Location	Glasson, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
Planning Authority	Westmeath County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	22532
Applicant(s)	P.J. Coghill
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant with Conditions
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	1. Eugene Flynn and Dawn Sullivan 2. Mary O'Connell
Observer(s)	Jill & Peter Wolfe
Date of Site Inspection	12 th of September 2024
Inspector	Caryn Coogan

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site (0.0902ha) is located in Glasson village, which is to 8km northeast of Athlone town and east of Lough Ree. The village in the last census had a population of 207 persons. It includes a number of social and community facilities serving the wider hinterland.
- 1.2. The village has a linear formation, built along the Main Street, which is also the N55. There are old stone walls and some fine stone buildings creating an attractive streetscape character.
- 1.3. The subject site is located at the southern end of the village off a local primary road L-1459. It is just beyond the junction with the N55 with the local primary road which leads to Lough Ree. On the streetscape is a terrace of two storey dwellings, and on the opposite side of the road, is the old stone school house.
- 1.4. There is a detached bungalow immediately west of the site.
- 1.5. The site is a brownfield site, containing old sheds, outhouses, walls, backing onto a carpark area that is accessed directly from Main Street. There is an additional egress onto the local road at the western extremity of the site.
- 1.6. Presently there are cars parking to the front of the site along the local road.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The demolition of existing sheds on the subject site, boundary walls and unused septic tank, and the flat roofed entrance to No. 5 Main Street.
 - Construction of 2No. two storey dwellings with associated gardens, garden sheds and parking.
 - Dwelling No. 1 is 128sq.m. with a private amenity space of 59sq.m.
 - Property No. 2 is 131sq.m. with a private amenity space of 52sq.m.
 - There is also a new extension proposed to the existing property that is addressing the local road.
 - Each dwelling has a single carparking space.

2.2 Further information was requested on 23rd of December 2022, regarding site boundaries, access to adjoining dwelling, overshadowing, roads infrastructure. Lighting, water supply, refuse, timber sheds and shop signage. A response was received on **28th of March 2023**. A request for Further Clarification issued from the planning authority (not dated). A response was received on **20th of June 2023**.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

By Manger's Order on the 27th of July 2023 Westmeath Co. Co. granted planning permission for the proposed development subject to 11No. conditions.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. *Planning Reports*

- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – infill should be based on the need to protect existing amenities
- The site is zoned Mixed Use in the development plan. Proposal is acceptable in principle.
- The proposal will result in an improved village streetscape with a sensitive design approach.
- Further information regarding access to at the rear
- Lighting scheme details required.
- A sunlight/ daylight assessment is required
- No overlooking concerns

Following a request for further information and submission of same, a recommendation to grant planning permission was forwarded.

3.2.2. *Other Technical Reports*

- Area Engineer requested additional information.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.4. Third Party Observations

There were two objections to the proposed development citing the following concerns:

- Dispute over ownership of subject land;
- Impacts on residential amenity in terms of loss of privacy
- Location of pedestrian footpath
- Loss of parking
- Access to existing dwelling owned by the applicant.

4.0 Planning History

4.1 *Planning Ref: 167086*

PJ O Coghill was granted planning permission for the demolition of the structures on the subject site, and to construct 2No. two storey dwellings. The permission expired and the extension of duration was refused under reference **21/603**.

4.2 Enforcement History: **200068**: Unauthorised use of outbuilding as workshop.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1 *Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027*

5.1.2 The site is zoned **Mixed Use** – *CPO15.6 applies : provide for, protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town centres, through consolidating development encouraging a mix of uses and maximising the use of land.*

5.1.3 **8.6.6. Glasson Village**

Glasson village developed as an estate village in the 1760s at the edge of the Waterstown House and Demesne. The existing village structure is linear in form with a built edge along Main Street and old stone walls on the opposite side of the street, creating an attractive streetscape. The terrace of buildings along the southern stretch of Main Street is noted as being of particular architectural merit given its contribution to the streetscape value of the north-south axis. Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- Facilitate improved local service provision.
- The provision of housing and commercial development within the village core.
- Expand on the village's tourist appeal given the village's proximity to Lough Ree.
- Undertake a programme of Environmental and Public Realm enhancement, promote a pedestrian bias in the settlement and visually enhance the approach roads into the settlement, to be enabled by a future N55 by-pass.

Policy Objectives:

To support the provision of housing commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

NHA Site Code 00440 Lough Ree

Lough Ree SAC Site Code 00440

Lough Ree SPA site Code 004064

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

There are two third party appeals. I will summarise each and try to avoid undue repetition.

6.1.1 *Mary O'Connell, Cloughan, Mullingar*

- The appellant owns and operates a pharmacy north of the development site and owns the carpark to the south of her premises. She is concerned the future residents will use her carpark resulting in a loss of customer spaces.
- She is also concerned about the vehicular access close to a priority junction with the N55 will result in a serious traffic hazard.
- The site boundary and floorplans were radically altered as a result of the further information response.
- Here were no onerous conditions attached to the decision to grant permission by the planning authority.

6.1.2 Traffic Safety and Carparking:

- There is an existing house on the site east of the proposed development site which comprises of 3No. flats and two houses which the applicant rents. The planning status of the units is unclear. The occupants park their cars on the subject site where the new dwellings area proposed. If the permission is granted there will be no parking for the existing residents. The planning status of the rented properties should have been checked by the planning authority.
- The existing occupants will park in the appellant's carpark when there are no alternative spaces available to them.
- The carpark owned by the appellant will be references as the Pharmacy carpark.
- The original drawings indicated access to the site via the Pharmacy carpark. The applicant has no Right-of Way through the pharmacy carpark. The applicant conceded this issue and access is to be from the local road L1459.
- Any crossing onto the Pharmacy carpark would be trespassing.
- It is unknown why a car has been highlighted blue in the drawings submitted with the further information. The car highlighted blue on the drawings is located within the development boundary. The only way for the car to exit the site is via the Pharmacy carpark.

- The applicant should have been requested to show parking requirements for his existing buildings. The current proposal requires 5No. parking spaces.
- Glasson village is 8km from Athlone where the nearest services are available. Any occupant of the dwellings will require a car. Carparking is necessary as the residents cannot rely on public transport from Glasson. The lack of parking will result in haphazard on-street parking or parking in the pharmacy carpark.
- The width of the access along the L1459 will be reduced to 2.5metres creating a traffic hazard. This is inappropriate so close to the dangerous junction onto the N55 where numerous accidents have occurred. The distance from the junction is within 20metres, and it is not compliant with TII guidance. With respect to direct access onto minor roads in close proximity to a National Road. The proposal contravenes DN-GEO-03060 of Geometric Design of Junctions.

6.1.3 Overdevelopment

- The proposed density represents 11units/ ha which is above the norm having regard to the low density village context. The proposed private open space for each unit is below what is required for Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027.
- CPO 16.20 states that 1-2bedroom units should have 48sq.m. for one of the houses . the proposed development comprises of 42sq.m for one and 40sq.m. for the other. There is no space for the existing units on the site. There is no public open space proposed.
- The applicant has failed to provide sufficient carparking and sufficient open space. This represents overdevelopment of the site.

6.1.4 Legal Title

- There are concerns regarding the area marked X on the site layout plan submitted by way of further information on 20th of June 2023. The area marked X is part of her carpark.

6.1.5 Eugene Flynn/ Dawn Sullivan, No. 3 Glasson Village, Athlone.

6.1.6 They are tenants of No. 3 Glasson village for 10 years and are currently awaiting a new longterm tenancy agreement. They are concerned about the following:

- They will be overlooked from the rear of the proposed development and the natural light entering the property will be greatly reduced. There was a daylight/ Shadowing projection submitted but its not true representation of the light entering the property.
- There will be loss of views from the main living/ dining room.
- The revised plans show the main exit/ entry that has not been used for ten years. They park their cars outside their back door. The new exit/ entry will see people going in and out of the property pass right past the windows of their living room and kitchen which will be a total invasion of their privacy.
- There is only provision for 2No. parking spaces for the dwellings. Where will the tenants from the other properties currently using the site park their cars? In the past there has been up to 4No. cars parked on the site by the tenants.
- The old hairdressers carpark is used by parents every Wednesday and Friday dropping children off to Speech and Drama in the Heritage Centre. They also use the Pharmacy carpark. These carparks are used for the Bridge Club in the Heritage Centre.
- The proposed entry/ exit for cars on the proposed plans is totally absurd. It will see cars going in and out of the property onto a very busy road beside a dangerous junction onto a Main Road.
- The existing properties owned by the applicant are an eyesore and kept in bad repair. Where are all the properties to store their bins?
- There is a telegraph pole on the site. Where are the cables to go?

6.2. Applicant Response

6.2.1 The applicant welcomes and accepts the decision to grant planning permission for the development. Having reviewed the content of the third-party appeals, there are no grounds that would require the Board to reach a different decision to the planning authority.

- The changes made to the scheme during the application process in relation to the issues raised by the third parties in terms of traffic safety, overdevelopment and legal title. We request the Board dismiss the appeal.
- The Planning Report assessment represents a full understanding of the relevant issues. The provisions of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 were taken into consideration.
- **Description of the subject site and vicinity.**

The appeal site is located to the rear of three properties (No.3 and 5 Main Street, as well as a housing unit to the rear of No. 5). This forms the southern end of a terrace of three buildings that are located facing onto Main Street, Glasson, and one that faces onto the road. The site is currently occupied by a single storey outbuilding and an informal car parking space area to the rear of No. 5 that are parked directly off the road. The site is just to the west of the junction between the N55 which it fronts onto.

The appeal site bounds the local road to Portaneena for 29m to its south and is located opposite Glasson Heritage Centre on the opposite side of the local road that once formed the old school house and forms a Protected Structure that is a single storey building, with two lower bays on either side. It is angled to face the junction. This access connects to the N55 and provides access to parking associated with the pharmacy.

- The site is zoned as mixed-use under the development plan and is located in the village's consolidated envelope.
- **Planning History**

Planning Ref: 16/7068

The application on the site was to 2No. two storey dwellings. Permission was granted, with access to the development from the north and carparking was owned by one of the appellants currently appealing the decision.

Planning Reference 21/603

An application to extend the permission granted under Ref: 16/7068 was refused relating to the provisions of section 42 of the Planning and

Development Act 2000. The Council were of the opinion the development had not commenced. This does not set a precedent for a negative consideration of the current proposal.

6.2.2 *Response to Mary O'Connell's appeal*

(i) The appellant owns the pharmacy and carpark and raises a number of concerns regarding carparking as well as a number of other issues

(ii) Table 16.2 does require one space per dwelling, but a maximum of one space per dwelling. It is unclear the planning status of the pharmacy carpark. One of the outside of the application site already has access through the pharmacy carpark to a parking space for one car to the rear of No. 5. It is not relevant to the current case under consideration by the Board. The proposed removal of unauthorised parking along the local road must be considered in that light, and will improve traffic safety.

(iii) It is unclear the planning status of the pharmacy carpark. The revised scheme submitted under the Clarification of Further Information removed the proposed access to the two dwellings from the proposal. This is not an indication the applicant has given up his right of way over the pharmacy carpark, and this is a matter for the courts.

(ii) On street parking can be controlled by the Council and the Garda.

(iii) It is acknowledged that the archway is only 2.5metres in width but it is relatively short in length, but cars can still manoeuvre safely, its only serving two dwellings. The L1479 is a wide road with low levels of traffic, there is no potential for a traffic hazard.

(v) The issue of the junction with the N55 is a lack of visibility. The current situation on the subject site is more dangerous with cars reversing onto the road. The proposed development will improve pedestrian footpath width, narrowing the road and reducing traffic speeds.

(vi) The quoted section 5.2.2 of the Transport Infrastructure Ireland's publication in relation to Junction Design has been misapplied, as this is the reorganisation of an existing access onto a local road. The removal of the unauthorised parking will ensure the proposal is fully compliant with the cited Guidelines.

(vii) The issue of over density has been presented incorrectly. The proposed density is 30units/ hectare. The proposal is in keeping with the established pattern of development. This part of Glasson has a tight urban fabric.

(vii) The appellant fails to accept Objective CPO 16.20 also allows for a reduction in the size of private open space areas in certain circumstances. In this instance there is a need to protect the established pattern of development and management car safety and parking. In terms of the existing units on site there is no change proposed to their gardens, therefore it is not a relevant consideration.

(viii) The area marked X on the drawings was under the applicant's control in the 2016 planning application, now the pharmacy are laying claim to it. There are no legal documents to back up their claims. The wording 'my client is of the opinion' has no legal standing. This aspect of the appeal should be dismissed.

6.2.3 *Response to Eugene Flynn and Dawn Sullivan*

(i) It is clear the proposed development will have no material impact on No. 3 Glasson in terms of overlooking. The first floor northern (rear) windows will be fitted with opaque frosted glass or a landing area window.

(ii) There was a full analysis of the overshadowing potential which indicates a minimal increase to the appellants home.

(iii) loss of views is not a relevant planning issue.

(iv) The appellants carparking arrangement will be unaffected by the proposed development. The pharmacy carpark is used as a public carpark and not just exclusively for the staff and patrons of the pharmacy.

(v) There is no basis for the Board to conclude the proposed development is a traffic hazard.

(vi) Underground services will be rerouted in accordance with the requirements of the relevant statutory bodies. The refuse is stored and collected in accordance with the requirements of the operator.

6.3. Planning Authority Response

There was no further comment from the planning authority.

6.4. Observations

6.4.1 Jill & Peter Wolfe, Low Road, Glasson, Co. Westmeath

- The Ordnance Survey Maps for the property are incorrect as they show the building and the boundary does not exist. During the digitisation process the PRA – Property Registration Authority -On the maps submitted the boundaries are non-conclusive i.e. not guaranteed and the registry identifies properties and not boundaries. The engineers should survey the boundaries and not rely on the maps.
- The area designated for cycle racks lies outside the applicant's boundary wall and has been used as a carpark for many years. This clearly indicates that it does not form part of his property and is the result of a mapping error. Photographs included show no building jutting into the pharmacy carpark beyond a longstanding block boundary wall. Many maps and aerial photographs are included. In addition, the applicant has not had the use of or access to this area which lies outside of his boundary wall and is part of the pharmacy carpark.
- **Development:** The existing building which is divided into flats which are rented will have no parking spaces and insufficient amenity areas. The required minimum amenity space of 48sq.m. has not been provided – only 42sq.m for one dwelling and 40sq.m. for the other dwelling.

Glasson is a beautiful old country village with appropriately large gardens for amenity space. The subject site can only accommodate one dwelling because there is only sufficient amenity space for one dwelling. There would also be sufficient space for one parking space within the site. The roadway for one dwelling would be located where it would not cause a traffic hazard or a danger to the intersection onto the N55 where there was a serious accident recently. One dwelling would clean up the property.
- **No Parking:** There is no parking provided for the residents. The carparking space coloured blue is a misrepresentation, as this space does not exist. There are only 2No. spaces provided for the dwellings and there is very little parking space available for the users of the School House over the road which

is used as a community centre and from time to time a polling station. The present narrow footpath is used for parking and sometimes cars are parked within inches of the intersection onto the N55.

It is probable that the grey striped area will be similarly used for parking which would be extremely dangerous. There is a parking strip to allow cars to pull in but not to stop and park their cars. However, due to the lack of parking provided this strip will be used for parking and destroy the owner's enjoyment of their amenity space which is mostly in their front garden.

- **Dangerous Vehicular Exit:** The proposed vehicular exist from the proposed development is only 20metres from the intersection onto the N55. This is a very dangerous intersection and will cause a traffic hazard particularly in view of the current haphazard parking of vehicles in this area. The proposed vehicular arched access measures 2.5meres in width which is exceedingly narrow and will be a challenge for many drivers. The average width of a car is 5.8feet -1.8metres which leaves 70cms = 35cm on either side of the vehicle. A Ford Transit is 2metres which leaves 50cm= 25cm on either side.

The submission is accompanied by a comprehensive set of photographs, maps and aerial photographs.

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Having inspected the subject site and it's context in Glasson village, and considered the appeal file, I will assess the proposed development under the following headings:

- Planning Policy
- Design
- Neighbourhood Character
- Building Envelop
- Visual Privacy
- Carparking and Vehicle access
- Private open space/ Site facilities

7.2 Planning Policy

- 7.2.1 Glasson is recognised in the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 as a village settlement. National and local planning policy aims to encourage new residential development to be located in existing towns and villages throughout the county. The site is zoned for 'Mixed Use'. It is a brownfield site in close proximity to the Main Street of the village and within a built up footprint of the village. The site includes a shed and a number of outbuildings and includes a number of carparking spaces that are accessed from the local road (L1459), which forms the southern boundary of the site. The site is located just west of the junction of the L1459 with the N55, the main route to Athlone town .
- 7.2.2 The proposed development is for 2No. two storey dwellings with associated gardens, parking as well as an extension and new front entrance to No. 5 Main Street (also owned by the applicant).
- 7.2.3 There was planning permission granted for two dwellings on the subject site under reference number 16/7068. This permission was not constructed and the applicant applied for an extension of the permission, which was refused in 2021, because no substantial works had taken place on site at the time. In my opinion, the planning history is relevant to the current proposal.
- 7.2.4 The proposal complies with the 'Mixed Use' zoning in the current development plan. The proposal represents an increase in housing within the village boundary. It provides for an extension of the streetscape in proportion to the existing built environment. I consider, in terms of planning policy, the proposed development to be acceptable, and complies with national and local planning policy to provide much needed housing in existing settlements in a compact form.

7.3 Design

- 7.3.1 There are two dwellings proposed on a site area of 0.0902ha. Both dwellings extend the existing terrace on the corner of Main Street, Glasson along the local road entering the village from the west. The street frontage is continued along L1459, and the development offers a more attractive streetscape than the current view which consists of on street parking and outhouses, creating an unappealing streetscape.

7.3.2 The proposed design supports urban consolidation making use of available infrastructure. The proposed density, reflects the density on the neighbouring site. I would not agree with the third party stating the proposal represents overdevelopment of the site. In my opinion, the basic design represents an orderly form of development that mirrors the existing built form and layout of the village.

7.4 Neighbourhood Character

7.4.1 The neighbouring buildings include a detached bungalow to the west of the site, which is positioned in close proximity to the public roadway. To the rear there is a surface carpark, which one third party appellant claims to own. The carpark is accessed off the Main Street (N55) alongside her pharmacy outlet, and can be exited onto the L1459 to the west, between the subject site and the bungalow. At the present time the rear of properties No. 3 and No. 5 Glasson are exposed when viewed from the L1459 or the approach to the village from the west.. No. 5 Glasson has a large building envelop, and according to the appeal file, it is owned by the applicant and rented out as, allegedly 5No dwelling units. The planning status for same is undefined , and this could be relevant because one of the units is been extended under this current proposal, in addition, the subject site been utilised as the surface carpark for the 5No. existing units.

7.4.2 The proposed development is consistent with the mass and proportions associated with the exiting two storey building to the east of the subject site. The proposed dwellings visually address the street and create a complete building form. The proposed roof form, pitch, façade articulation, window/ door proportions respect the character of the neighbourhood.

7.4.3 The carparking, garden areas, bin storage are located to the rear of the proposed dwellings. This is similar to the existing building curtilages within the vicinity of the subject site. I am satisfied the proposal will enhance the neighbour character of the village.

7.5 Building Envelop

7.5.1 The proposed dwellings do not directly address other residential properties. The proposed dwellings front a street and back onto a carparking area. The proposed dwellings are dual aspect, with the facades facing south, and the rear facing north. One of the third parties was concerned about loss of privacy and overshadowing

from the proposed development. They reside at No. 3 Glasston, east of the subject site, addressing the Main Street and positioned alongside the access to the pharmacy.

7.5.2 The proposed building footprint is along the southern boundary of the site. The building footprint will not impact on No. 3 Glasston, please see (Plate 9 of site visit photographs). No. 3 backs onto the carparking area and it includes an onsite parking space, but no garden area. It has a yard area. The proposed building height, orientation, setback will not result in significant or serious a loss of daylight to the third-party appellants property. A shadow analysis were submitted by way of Further Information on the 28th of March 2023, which clearly demonstrates there will be no undue loss of light associated with the adjoining properties as a result of the proposed development.

7.5.3 The proposal will integrate into the existing built environment of Glasston, enhance the existing street, maintain the amenity of the adjacent residents, and provide a sense of security.

7.6 Visual Privacy

7.6.1 The rear of the dwellings will be provided with new 2m capped walls and piers. This will ensure privacy for the future residents of the proposed dwellings. A new timber fence is proposed along the eastern site boundary. This common boundary is shared with No. 5 Glasston which includes dwellings and apartments according to the appeal file. The storage/ yard/ green area associated with No. 5 Glasston is extremely restricted. I could find no relevant planning histories associated with the property. The proposed development includes an extension and new front entrance to one of the properties over the proposed archway from the L-1479. The proposed development will not result in undue loss of privacy associated with No. 5 Glasston, because the proposed dwellings are perpendicular to No. 5 and there is satisfactory boundary treatment proposed. The visual privacy into No. 3 Glasston will remain the same as present.

7.7 Carparking and Vehicle Access

7.7.1 I refer to the Engineering Report on the planning file dated 28th of April 2023. The applicant was requested to submit evidence of a legal right of way to the carpark at the rear of the site, parking proposals inline with Section 16.4.1 of the development

plan and a footpath fronting the site in line with the DMURS standards. In the further information received on the 20th of June 2023, the 2No. parking spaces originally proposed to the rear of the dwellings to be accessed via the existing carpark will now be accessed from the front of the buildings off the L1479 via the 2.5m archway. The applicant conceded he has no right of way over the carpark to the rear which according to the appeal submissions is owned by the pharmacy owner to the north of the site. The applicant is still adamant he does have a right of way to an element of the carpark to the rear, that he had access to his property from the north. Neither party has provided definitive evidence regarding the Right of Way. In the event of a favourable decision, recommend the Board impose the following footnote:

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Section 34 (13) A person shall not be entitled solely by reason of a permission under this section to carry out any development.

7.7.2 The provision of one parking space per dwelling is in line with the development plan policy.

7.7.3 There is currently haphazard parking occurring on the subject site. The proposed development will eliminate the reversing movements and illegal parking associated with the subject site along the L1479. The appeals express concern over where the parking associated with the existing 5No. residential units, and questions where will the parking associated with the existing units in the ownership of the applicant relocate to following completion of the development. I consider this issue to be a valid point given the adjoining property is under the same ownership. This issue was not raised by the planning authority during the assessment of the application. The applicant has indicated on appeal, on-street parking is a matter for the Council and the Garda. Given that the carpark to rear of the site is in private ownership, there is an issue with the loss of carparking spaces associated with the existing development at No. 5 Glasson. I note, the Main Street of Glasson includes a multiplicity of businesses and residential properties with no parking. It would appear from my observations, the community utilise the pharmacy carpark for a range of activities in the village and not just the pharmacy. The control of this issue is beyond the application.

7.7.4 My concern is the proposed access to the rear of the dwellings and parking area. Originally the 2.5m arched access off the L1479 was proposed as a pedestrian access to the rear of the site, with access to the two parking spaces from the pharmacy carpark. This would have been a safer access arrangement. The revised proposal by way of the clarification of further information requires the cars to enter parking spaces to the rear of the site via the 2.5m archway which is only the width of a parking space. I note on the revised site layout plan traffic turning illustrations from the access are only those exiting the site. The turning movements into the site have not been analysed. Certainly, traffic coming from the west along the L-1479 will not be able to enter the archway without crossing over into the righthand lane, at a point extremely close to the L1479 junction with the N55. In my opinion, this access is too narrow to be a vehicular entrance to cater for two cars, and traffic turning movements into it from the east and west will create a serious traffic hazard. The proposal should be refused on this basis.

7.7.5 The proposed 2.5m access is only 20metres from the junction of the L1479 with the N55. The main junction has poor sightlines due to the curvature of the road and the projection of the existing building line along Main Street. Traffic turning off the junction from the N55 on to the L1479 would have very limit stoppage time in the event a car is trying to enter the site off the L1479. Due to the narrow width of the entrance, extreme caution is required to turn a car correctly in the narrow width of 2.5m. In my opinion, this will create dangerous manoeuvres causing a traffic hazard.

7.7.6 I note a single storey stone building on the opposite side of the L1479 to the subject site. The building was a former school and is now used for community activities. The entrance to the property is opposite the proposed entrance, and the width of the existing entrance is circa 4metres. The existing entrance is not splayed, and requires careful manoeuvring into the site when approaching from the east off the N55 junction. This puts into context, the severity of proposing a 2.5metre vehicular access on the opposite side of the road.

7.8 Private Open Space/ Site Facilities

7.8.1 Dwelling No. 1 has a private rear garden of 42sq.m. and Dwelling No. 2 has a rear garden area of 40sq.m. Each dwelling has bin storage, bicycle storage and garden space. Objective CPO 16.20 of the Westmeath County Development Plan requires

48sq.m. for a two bedroom dwelling. No. 1 dwelling has a small courtyard space to the side which is 10sq.m. The development plan states a reduction in the prescribed areas will be considered in certain circumstances. Given the existing pattern of development in the immediate vicinity, I consider the proposed open space provision and site facilities to be acceptable.

8.0 AA Screening

8.1. I have considered the project: Demolition of existing shed, outbuildings and walls; construction of 2 no. dwellings, and extension to dwelling and all associated services connections and site works, in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The subject site is located within the built-up area of Glasson village. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works: small scale and nature of the development
- • The serviced nature of the brownfield site.
- • Taking into account screening report and determination by PA.

I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required

9.0 Recommendation

I recommend the decision to grant planning permission for the development be **REFUSED** for the following reason.

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the narrow width of the proposed vehicular access, 2.5metres, to provide access to the carparking spaces to the rear of the proposed dwellings, it is considered the proposed development will result in dangerous traffic turning movements into the site off the public road in close proximity to a busy junction with the N55 where limited sightlines are available, and there would be very limited stoppage time available due to the proximity of the proposed access to the junction. The proposed development is therefore considered to be a traffic hazard, and contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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.

Caryn Coogan

Planning Inspector

20th September 2024

Appendix 1 - Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

[EIAR not submitted]

An Bord Pleanála Case Reference	317847-23		
Proposed Development Summary	Demolition of sheds, boundary walls, disused septic tank, flat roofed entrance to dwelling, and the construction of 2No. dwelling units with associated gardens, sheds, parking, entrance, extension to existing dwelling		
Development Address	Glasson, Co. Westmeath		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)		Yes	
		No X	No further action required
2. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it equal or exceed any relevant quantity, area or limit where specified for that class?			
Yes		Class.....	EIA Mandatory EIAR required
No			Proceed to Q.3
3. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) but does not equal or exceed a relevant quantity, area or other limit specified [sub-threshold development]?			
		Threshold	Comment (if relevant)
No		N/A	No EIAR or Preliminary Examination required
Yes		Class/Threshold.....	Proceed to Q.4

4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?

No		Preliminary Examination required
Yes		Screening Determination required

Inspector: _____

Caryn Coogan

Date: _____

20/09/2024