



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report

**ABP-321971-25**

<b>Development</b>	Construction of a two-storey dwelling house, garage and all associated site works.
<b>Location</b>	Lisroyne, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Roscommon County Council
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	2460223
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Michael Fallon & Sorchu Bruen
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Refusal
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First party
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Michael Fallon & Sorchu Bruen
<b>Observer(s)</b>	4
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2025

**Inspector**

**Paul Christy**

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**Appendix 1 – Form 1: Pre-screening**

**Appendix 2 – Form 2: Preliminary Examination**

## **1.0 Site Location and Description**

- 1.1. The subject site as defined by the submitted red line site boundary is in the rural area but also immediately adjacent to the 'Plan Boundary' for Strokestown as contained in the Roscommon County Development Plan, 2022-2028 (Map ST1: 'Strokestown Land Use Zoning Map', Volume 2: 'Plans' refers). Lands to the north and west of the site are within the Plan boundary. The adjacent lands immediately to the north are zoned for 'New Residential' use and lands to the west on the opposite side are zoned as 'Outer Core'. In the Landscape Character Assessment that accompanies the Development plan, the site lies within the lowest of four landscape designations ie. 'moderate value'.
- 1.2. The site as defined by the red line is extremely generous for a one-off dwelling, being 3.13 hectares or thereby. However, the proposed plot curtilage is a much smaller portion of the overall site, measuring 0.28 hectares. There is a distance of 30m between the nearest boundary of the proposed curtilage and the 'Plan Boundary' and 'New Residential' zoning to the north.
- 1.3. The site is adjacent to and on the eastern side of a minor road, the L6053, which road provides access to/egress from the western/south-western side of Strokestown. An 80kph speed zone is in place at the site. There is no footpath on either side of the road between the site and the village centre.
- 1.4. The eastern side of the road between the site and the centre, comprising the 'New Residential' zoned lands as referred to above, is undeveloped. Generally, there is a gentle fall in levels from the village centre down towards the subject site, and the lands present as green fields. The interface of the road and adjacent fields is defined by typical roadside grass verge and hedgerows. Within the lands on the western side of the public road zoned as 'Outer Core', there are two detached dwellings opposite the subject site set in large curtilages. One is a single-storey, hipped roof bungalow, while the other is two-storey with a stone detailing to the front. Between these two dwellings and the centre there is an undeveloped area approximately 70m in length, and then two detached dwellings and a pair of semi-detached dwellings along the remainder of the road before it joins the village centre.

- 1.5. The subject lands are generally flat and at the same level as the lands opposite on which the two existing dwellings are located.

## **2.0 Proposed Development**

- 2.1. The development proposed is the construction of a new dwellinghouse and garage, plus ancillary site works. The proposed design is an L-shaped dwelling, part two-storey and part single-storey. The main module facing, and parallel with, the public road is two-storey with a ridge height of 7m and proposed 'smooth or nap plaster painted finish'. The module extending from, and at right angles to, the rear of the main module is single-storey with a ridge height of 4.32m and proposed 'natural local stone' finish. A set-back of 19m from the road edge is proposed.
- 2.2. In terms of services, it is proposed to connect to existing water and foul sewers in the public road. Vision lines of 75m to the north and 90m to the south are proposed from a point 2.4m back from the road edge at the proposed access. The submitted plans also specify that existing hedgerows are to be '*reduced and maintained*' on both sides of the access, save for a length of 12m or thereby of hedgerow to facilitate the proposed access.

## **3.0 Planning Authority Decision**

### **3.1. Overview**

- 3.1.1. The initial plans submitted to the Local Authority proposed a two-storey house with 9.5m ridge height located on the eastern side of the overall planning application site (ie. 125m or thereby back from the roadside boundary). Subsequently, in response to a Further Information request, the applicants submitted materially revised details for both the siting (19m from the road edge) and design (7m ridge height) of the dwelling. It is not entirely clear if the Local Authority refusal reason as summarised in para. 3.2.1 was in respect of the revised siting and revised design, or revised design only. However, it may be of some assistance to note that in the Planner's report dated 12 December 2024, in the section headed: 'Assessment of Further Information

Received', the Planner advised that: *'The proposed dwellinghouse has been re-positioned and the applicants' revised proposal in this regard is considered acceptable'*.

### 3.2. Decision:

- 3.2.1. **Refuse for one reason.** The reason focussed on design, and the design being *'incapable'* of integrating into the rural setting and injurious to the visual amenities of the area. It was concluded that the development would be contrary to Section 12.7 (Rural House Design considerations) of the Roscommon County Development Plan and failed to adequately reflect the siting and design principles set out in the 'County Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines'.

### 3.3. Planning Authority Reports

- 3.3.1. Planning Reports: There are three reports on file. The table below summarises the different design proposals submitted during the processing of the Local Authority application, together with key details contained in the relevant Planner's report for each of these stages.

Application Stage/Applicants' Proposal	Date of Planner's Report; and Key Considerations/Conclusions of Report
<u>Initial Submission</u> L-shaped dwelling, part two-storey and part single-storey. The main module facing the public road was two-storey with a ridge height of 9.5m, whilst the module extending from the rear of the main module was single-storey with ridge height of 4.32m Proposed location was 125m or thereby to east of roadside boundary.	<u>11 July 2024</u> ~ Notes that the site is located in an <i>'other rural area'</i> outside of the identified pressure areas under strong urban influence, and that <i>'the status of the applicants is therefore not a material consideration'</i> . ~ Refers to Section 12.7 (Rural House Design considerations) of the Roscommon County Development Plan and the 'County Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines' and, in this context, notes concerns re the site's ability to accommodate a two-storey dwellinghouse, given <i>'its open and exposed</i>

	<p><i>location</i>'.</p> <p>~ Recommends a Further Information request for, inter alia, a revised design (single-storey) and layout (dwelling to be re-positioned significantly closer to the western [roadside] boundary), together with landscaping details.</p>
<p><u>Further Information Response</u></p> <p>Similar L-shaped design, part two-storey and part single-storey but with a reduced ridge height for the main module facing the public road (7m), and the module extending from the rear of the main module unchanged.</p> <p>Proposed location was much closer to roadside boundary (19m).</p>	<p><u>12 December 2024</u></p> <p>~ Notes compliance with most of the items on the Further Information request, including revised position of dwelling, but again concludes that a single-storey design is still required.</p> <p>~ Recommends a request for clarification of the Further Information request for a single-storey dwelling.</p>
<p><u>Further Information Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Response simply requested that the Local Authority makes a decision on the revised plans submitted in response to the initial Further Information request.</p>	<p><u>28 January 2025</u></p> <p>Concluded that the revised design '<i>does not satisfactorily address</i>' the requested single-storey design. Acknowledged that there are a number of existing two-storey dwellings in the area (but that) the concerns raised are site specific and pertain to the site's ability to accommodate a two-storey dwellinghouse, given its open and exposed nature.</p>

3.3.4. Roads Section: No objections, subject to standard conditions re: surface water run-off; reinstatement of any damage to the public road; set back of any existing public services behind the new boundary wall; and sightlines to comply with County Development Plan standards.



### 3.4. Prescribed Bodies

- 3.4.1. None. However, I would advise that an Uisce Éireann 'Confirmation of Feasibility' letter was included with the Agent's reply to the Local Authority Further Information request. The said letter advised that water and sewer connections were available.

### 3.5. Third Party Observations

- 3.5.1. None.

## 4.0 Planning History

- 4.1. No history for the subject site other than the present case. However, I note that there is currently a live application (L.A. Ref. 25/60099) with the Local Authority for a multiple residential development of 44 units on the lands immediately to the north of the subject site zoned as 'New Residential'. At the time of drafting this Inspector's Report, no decision had been made by the Local Authority.

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. Overview

- 5.1.1. As the the subject site is located both in the rural area and immediately adjacent to the Strokestown settlement boundary, the policy context set out below addresses policies relevant to both.

### 5.2. National Policy

- 5.2.1. 'National Planning Framework, 2018 ('the NPF)'<sup>1</sup>: National Policy Objective 19 contains the keynote national policy on the principle of one-off rural dwellings. The policy identifies two distinct rural sub-areas: 'areas under urban influence'; and 'rural areas elsewhere'. The subject site is in the latter category. For these areas, the policy is to facilitate their provision *'based on siting and design criteria in statutory*

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Ireland, 2018

*guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements’.*

5.2.2. Section 6.6: ‘Housing’ states in the narrative that: *‘Development sprawl at every settlement level in Ireland has manifested as scattered development, ‘leapfrogging’, continuous suburbs and linear patterns of strip or ribbon development. This type of development has made it costly and often unfeasible for the state to align and invest in infrastructure delivery where it cannot be justified. It has also hampered effective responses to climate change...’* In response to these identified concerns, National Policy Objective 33 prioritises *‘the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location.’*

5.2.3. ‘Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2005’: A central focus is the need for planning authorities to identify and differentiate between urban and rural generated housing, and the associated need for tailored policies. Section 3.3 of the Guidelines also addresses more practical considerations including: the pattern of landscape features (land-cover, habitats, trees); historic and archaeological areas and features; water bodies (including rivers), and ridges, skylines, topographical features, geological features, and important views and prospects.

### **5.3. Development Plan: County Roscommon Development Plan, 2022-2028**

#### **5.3.1. Principle of Development**

- Policy Objective CS 2.2 (Chapter 2, ‘Core Strategy’) refers to accelerating a transition to a greener, low carbon and climate resilient county, with a focus on reduced travel demand through the promotion of sustainable development patterns.
- Policy Objective CS 2.3 (Chapter 2, ‘Core Strategy’) directs growth towards designated settlements.

- Policy CS 2.18 (Chapter 2, 'Core Strategy') seeks to ensure role of countryside as a place to live, work and visit, having regard to carrying capacity and environmental sensitivity.
- Policy PPH 3.13 (Chapter 3, 'People, Places and Housing') addresses single houses both in 'areas under strong urban influence' and 'rural areas outside of areas under strong urban influence'. For the latter, the policy is to: *'facilitate single houses ... subject to appropriate design criteria, including demonstration of adherence to the principles set out in the County Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines'*.
- Policy ST 10, Strokestown Settlement Plan, Vol. II, County Development Plan: Notes support for small-scale residential development on lands zoned as 'Outer Core'.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5.3.2. Visual Impact

- Policy NH 10.25 (Chapter 10, 'Natural Heritage') seeks to: *'Minimise visual impacts on areas categorised within the LCA including 'moderate value'; 'high value'; very high value'; and with special emphasis on areas classified as 'exceptional value' ...'*
- Section 12.7 'Rural House Design Considerations' (Chapter 12, 'Development Management Standards') is essentially a cross-reference to the 'County Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines' as referred to in Policy PPH 3.13.

#### 5.3.3. Biodiversity Impacts

- Policies CAEE 8.23 (Chapter 8, 'Climate Action' etc.) and NH 10.1 (Chapter 10. 'Natural Heritage') are general policies around the protection and enhancement of the County's biodiversity.
- Policy NH 10.1 (Chapter 10. 'Natural Heritage') seeks to protect sites of geological importance.

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<sup>3</sup> Considered relevant as one such zoned area is immediately opposite the subject site.

- Policies NH 10.13; NH 10.14; & NH 10.15 (Chapter 10. 'Natural Heritage') focus on the retention and planting of hedgerows, and the replacement of hedgerows *'that are required to be removed in the interests of traffic safety'*.

#### **5.4. Natural Heritage Designations**

- 5.4.1. The site is located 2.13km from Annaghmore Lough (Roscommon) Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 001626) and Proposed Natural Heritage Area.

#### **5.5. EIA Screening**

- 5.5.1. In a Pre-screening Report prepared as part of this Inspector's Report (refer Appendix 1), it is concluded that the proposed development falls within Class 10(b), Part 2 (dwelling units), and Class 1(a), Part 2 (rural restructuring/hedgerow) of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (As Amended). The Report concludes, therefore, that it is necessary for the Board to undertake a preliminary examination of at least the nature, size and location of the development in accordance with Article 109(2)(a) of the Regulations. This examination is contained in Appendix 2, wherein it is concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development.

### **6.0 The Appeal**

#### **6.1. Grounds of Appeal**

- 6.1.1. One no. first party appeal was received from agents on behalf of the first party. Most of the appeal submission is devoted to providing a detailed account of the application's progress through the Planning Authority process. Section 5 of the submission is headed 'Appellants' reasons for appealing'. The grounds of appeal as contained therein can be summarised as follows:

- Refers to their review of the ‘Roscommon County Development Plan 2021/2027 V1’<sup>4</sup> and Sections 4 (‘Siting and Design’) and 6 (‘New Build’) of the ‘County Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines’ and that it was ‘*assumed (an) application for a L-Plan two-storey dwelling would be deemed appropriate considering the number of two storey existing neighbouring dwellings on the applicants site road*’. Contends that the aforementioned Sections 4 and 6 of the Design Guidelines do not ‘appear to reference a requirement or adherence for a **single storey dwelling**’<sup>5</sup>.
- Also notes Section 12.7 of the CDP and Section 6.9 of the Design Guidelines ‘*referencing a two-storey L-plan layout*’.

6.1.2. Section 1 of the appeal also contains relevant comments regarding the social circumstances of the applicants. Thus it is advised that both applicants are ‘local Roscommon natives’ and further commentary is provided regarding the proximity of the applicants’, and family’s, home to the subject site.

## 6.2. Planning Authority Response

6.2.1. None received.

## 6.3. Observations

6.3.1. Four observations were received from the following: Gerry Kelly; Mary Brennan; Peter Kelly; and Cathal Cregg. All four submissions express strong support for the proposed development for the following reasons:

- The applicants’ strong family ties to the area and commitment to its future. Three of the four observers advise of living in the locality. One of the submissions places a particular emphasis on Michael’s active role in the local GAA club.
- The thoughtful design of the proposed dwelling in terms of scale, siting, design and environmental principles.

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<sup>4</sup> It is assumed that this is a reference to the Draft County Roscommon Development Plan 2021-2027.

<sup>5</sup> Their emphasis.

- In a time of a housing crisis, the need for new homes in Strokestown for local community members/young people.
- Support for local businesses and services.

## **7.0 Assessment**

### **7.1. Overview**

7.1.1. Having examined the application details, and all other documentation on file including the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be assessed are as follows:

- The principle of development;
- Siting and design issues; and
- Technical issues.

### **7.2. The Principle of Development**

7.2.1. As alluded to in Section 5.0, consideration of the principle of development in the circumstances of this particular case should, in my opinion, not only have regard to the national and local policies differentiating between 'areas under urban influence'; and 'rural areas elsewhere', but should also have regard to the proximity of the site to the built up area of Strokestown.

7.2.2. Considering firstly the national and local rural housing policies, the site is within an area designated as 'rural areas outside of areas under strong urban influence'. For such areas, national policy as contained in National Policy Objective 19 of the 'National Planning Framework' is to facilitate their provision *'based on siting and design criteria in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements'*. Local policy as contained in the CDP is strongly aligned with national policy. Thus Policy Objective PPH 3.13 (Chapter 3, 'People,

Places and Housing') also seeks to: '*facilitate single houses ... subject to appropriate design criteria, including demonstration of adherence to the principles set out in the County Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines*'. From this perspective, the principle of development is consistent with the aforementioned national and local policies.

However, and as flagged above, any assessment of this proposal should, in my opinion, have regard to the proximity of the site to Strokestown. This is addressed in the paragraphs that follow.

7.2.3. Policy Objectives CS 2.2 and CS 2.3 in the Development Plan Core Strategy are clearly aimed at consolidating designated settlements, including Strokestown. The lands on the opposite side of the road are zoned as 'Outer Core' in the Settlement Plan and I also note the generally positive policy objectives for residential development contained in the Plan for these areas. Thus Policy Objective ST 8 seeks to '*Facilitate a range of community, residential and commercial facilities within an attractive accessible residential environment...*'; and Policy Objective ST 10 also includes, inter alia, the following: '*Facilitate small scale additional residential development primarily on infill sites and in keeping with the existing residential character of the area...*' From an analysis of these policies, it would appear that the Local Authority has earmarked the 'Outer Core' areas for development of the nature proposed in the subject application. The corollary of this is that it has chosen not to earmark lands on the opposite side of the public road outside of the Plan boundary and containing the subject site for small-scale housing.

7.2.4. I would also refer to Policy CS 2.18 (Chapter 2, 'Core Strategy'). This policy seeks to ensure the role of the countryside as a place to live, work and visit, and that '*appropriate development is facilitated having regard to the carrying capacity and environmental sensitivity of the rural area*'. Whilst the terms 'carrying capacity' and 'environmental sensitivity' are not defined, it is reasonable to assume that road and pedestrian safety must be a consideration when having regard to them. I have already noted that the site access would be on to a local road where the speed limit is 80kph and that there is no footpath on either side of the road until the village centre. This speed limit is in place for a distance of 210m from the subject site at which point a 50kph restriction is introduced. I would further advise that there is a

distance of 170m or thereby between the proposed site access and the nearest roadside public lighting and that there is a significant bend in the road approximately 70m to the north of the site on the 'village side'. Having regard to the aforementioned, and notwithstanding the positive report of the Local Authority's Roads Office, I would be concerned that the proposed development could give rise to a traffic and pedestrian safety hazard by virtue of the relative proximity of the site to the village centre and the potential for pedestrian trips arising along an unserviced and unlit public road where a speed limit of 80kph, and subsequently 50kph, applies.

### **7.3. Siting and Design Issues**

- 7.3.1. National and local policy support for the principle of such a development is conditional on the development satisfying siting and design criteria. Policy Objective PPH 3.13 (Chapter 3, 'People, Places and Housing') of the CDP specifically references (the need for) demonstration of adherence to the principles set out in the 'County Roscommon Rural Design Guidelines' (hereinafter referred to as the CRRDG's).
- 7.3.2. Having reviewed the CRRDG's, I would advise that they are clearly targeted at sites in the (open) countryside<sup>7</sup>. This is perfectly understandable. However, although located outside of the Strokestown Plan boundary, the context of the subject site could be considered to be more predominantly built-up, as opposed to countryside. I make this observation having regard to: the (intermittent) built-up character of the area on the opposite side of the public road from a point some 275m to the south of the subject site, which entire area is within the Strokestown Plan boundary, inclusive of the two dwellings located immediately opposite the subject site; and the site's proximity to the lands to the north zoned as 'New Residential'<sup>8</sup> and lands to west zoned as 'Outer Core'. For these reasons, the weight to be given to the CRRDG's is diluted, in my opinion.

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<sup>7</sup> To verify this contention, the first sentence of the document reads as follows: '*The rural design guide has been prepared to assist people in making a planning application for the refurbishment of an existing dwelling, replacement of a dwelling as well as the construction of a new dwelling in the countryside.*' (refer Section 1.1)

<sup>8</sup> As noted earlier, a planning application for multiple residential development on this site was submitted to the Local Authority on 11 March 2025.



- 7.3.3. In this context, whilst I do note the relatively open and exposed nature of the site, I would agree with the Local Authority's conclusions that the site can absorb a dwelling in terms of visual impact, subject to the provision of a robust screen planting scheme similar to that suggested in Section 4.4: 'Dealing with contours' in the CRRDG's.
- 7.3.4. In terms of the proposed design, I would again refer to the 'transitional' location of the site between the built-up area and the countryside. I also note the two-storey dwelling on the opposite side of the road, albeit that that dwelling 'benefits' from substantial screen planting. In this context, in my opinion, the proposed L-shaped dwelling with a ridge height of 7m for the main module, and 4.3m for the secondary module, can be accommodated at this site in terms of visual impact, if supported by screen planting as referred to in the preceding paragraph. This position is strengthened by the incorporation of various traditional design features espoused in the CRRDG's including the roof/elevation proportions; proposed traditional roof materials; symmetrical windows; and traditional chimney stacks.

#### 7.4. Technical Issues

- 7.4.1. Vision Lines: Section 12.24 of the CDP deals with 'Accessibility and Sight Lines'. Fig. 12.24: 'Sight Distance Requirements' identifies a requirement of 2.4m x 90m for Local Roads but the subsequent narrative then states that: '*Visibility splays for Local Roads will be determined on a site-specific basis subject to traffic safety.*' In the submitted plans, vision lines of 75m to the north and 90m to the south are proposed. The report of the Local Authority Roads Office advises of having '*no objection to the application subject to recommendations attached below.*' The subsequent recommendations include the following comment: '*Sightlines to comply with CDP.*' Although the vision line to the north fails to meet the 2.4m x 90m standards specified in the CDP, these vision lines could be achieved by relocating the entrance slightly to the south within the site boundary. On this basis, I am satisfied that the development could comply with the vision line requirements of the CDP.
- 7.4.2. Public Health and Water Supply: As noted above, an Uisce Éireann 'Confirmation of

Feasibility' letter was included with the Agent's reply to the Local Authority Further Information request. The said letter advised that water and sewer connections were available.

## **7.5. Other Matters**

- 7.5.1. Geological Heritage: The site, and indeed the entire village of Strokestown, lies within the 'Mid Roscommon Ribbed Moraines' County Geological Site identified in Table 10.1 of the CDP. CDP Policy Objective NH 10.1 refers and seeks to: '*Preserve and protect (such) sites from inappropriate development where they comprise designated sites or national heritage areas.*'
- 7.5.2. The Site Report for this designation as contained in the 'Audit of County Geological Sites in Co Roscommon, 2012'<sup>9</sup> notes that: '*This field of ribbed moraine forms part of a small, discrete field of these features, west and northwest of Slieve Bawn. It covers an area of 10 by 20 kilometres, and includes approx. 100 ribbed moraine features.*' The features are generally 6km-8km long and 1km or so wide, with individual superimposed drumlins being c. 1km long and 400m-500m wide. The Report also notes that: '*This is one of the finest fields of discrete ribbed moraines in the country.*', but also that: 'The features are too large to undertake any conservation efforts on their part, but the landscape itself is noteworthy and should be promoted as unique amongst landscape elements within the Roscommon County Development Plan and in Landscape Characterisation.
- 7.5.3. Having regard to extent of the designated area, to the proximity of the site to the build up area of Strokestown, and to the generally flat topography of the site and its immediate vicinity, I am satisfied that the proposed development would not compromise the designated area.
- 7.5.4. Hedgerows: With reference to the value placed on hedgerows in CDP Policy Objectives NH 10.13; NH 10.14; & NH 10.15, I note that the submitted plans propose the retention of existing hedgerows outside of the site in the ownership of the

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<sup>9</sup> The Geological Heritage of Roscommon: An audit of County Geological Sites in Roscommon By Matthew Parkes, Robert Meehan and Sophie Préteseille October 2012.

applicants, and the removal of existing hedgerow and its replacement with a new 'green beech hedge' along the proposed roadside site boundary. I would advise that were permission to be forthcoming, the proposed removal of existing hedgerow along the front boundary could be revisited with a view to removing only that part of the hedgerow necessary to achieve the site access.

## **8.0 AA Screening**

**8.1** I have considered the proposed construction of a new dwellinghouse and garage, plus ancillary site works at Lisroyne, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon in light of the requirements of S.177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The subject site is located 2.13km from Annaghmore Lough (Roscommon) Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 001626). The proposed development comprises construction of a new dwellinghouse and garage, plus ancillary site works and connection to Uisce Éireann water and sewer mains networks. 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 reasons for this conclusion are as follows:

- the nature of the works and the distance of the site from the nearest European site and the absence of any connections between the two.

I conclude that on the basis of objective information, 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**

**9.1.** I recommend that permission for the development be refused for the reasons and considerations as set out below.

## **10.0 Reasons and Considerations**

- 10.1. **(1.)** The subject site is located in the rural area immediately outside of the development

boundary for Strokestown as contained in the 'Strokestown Land Use Zoning Map' (Map ST1: Volume 2: 'Plans', Roscommon County Development Plan, 2022-2028). Policy Objective CS 2.2 of the said Plan seeks to accelerate a transition to a greener, low carbon and climate resilient county, with a focus on reduced travel demand through the promotion of sustainable settlements patterns, whilst Policy Objective CS 2.3 aims to direct growth towards designated settlements. Having regard to the location of the site in close proximity to the development boundary, it is considered that the proposed development would contribute to the extension of urban development and sprawl outside of Strokestown, and would thereby undermine the aforementioned policies aimed at consolidation of the settlement. In this context, and in the absence of footpaths and street lighting along the local road serving the site, part of which has an 80kph speed zone, it is considered that to permit the proposed development would be contrary to Policy Objectives CS 2.2 and 2.3 of the Development Plan and would thereby be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- 10.2. **(2.)** Having regard to the proximity of the site to Strokestown village centre, to the likelihood of pedestrian trips that would be generated by the proposed development, to the 80kph speed zone in place for a distance of 210m along the public road from the site towards the village centre, to the absence of street lighting for a distance of 170m along the public road from the site towards the village centre, and to the absence of any public footpath between the site and the village centre, it is considered that the proposed development could give rise to a traffic and pedestrian safety hazard. To permit the proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policy Objective CS 2.18 of the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028 as the area does not have the carrying capacity to support the proposed development. The development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.3. The issues raised in the above-noted recommendation are new issues not raised by the Local Authority in its decision, and the Board may wish to offer the appellants the opportunity to make submissions on this matter.

10.4. 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.

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Paul Christy  
Planning Inspector

1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

## Appendix 1 - Form 1

### EIA Pre-Screening

[EIAR not submitted]

<b>An Bord Pleanála Case Reference</b>	<b>ABP-321971-25</b>		
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Construction of a two-storey house, garage and all associated site works.		
<b>Development Address</b>	Lisroyne, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon		
<b>1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?</b> (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)		<b>Yes</b>	✓
		<b>No</b>	
<b>2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>	✓	<u><b>Class 10(b), Part 2:</b></u> Construction of dwelling units. Threshold = more than 500 dwelling units.  <u><b>Class 1(a), Part 2:</b></u> Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider proposed development, and not as an agricultural activity that must comply with the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011. Threshold = where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50 hectares.	
<b>No</b>			
<b>3. Does the proposed development equal or exceed any relevant THRESHOLD set out in the relevant Class?</b>			

Yes			
No	✓		
<b>4. Is the proposed development below the relevant threshold for the Class of development [sub-threshold development]?</b>			
Yes	✓	<p><b><u>Class 10(b), Part 2:</u></b> Construction of dwelling units. Threshold = more than 500 dwelling units. [Proposed development is for, inter alia, 1 dwelling unit.]</p> <p><b><u>Class 1(a), Part 2:</u></b> Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider proposed development etc. Threshold = where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50 hectares. [Proposed development incorporates, inter alia: ~ field boundary removal of 11m; ~ area of land to be restructured by the removal of field boundaries = 0.265 hectares.]</p> <p>Recontouring is not proposed.</p>	Preliminary examination required.
<b>5. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?</b>			
No	✓	<b>Conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q4)</b>	
Yes		<b>Screening Determination required.</b>	

Inspector: Paul Christy      Date: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025

## Appendix 2 - Form 2

### EIA Preliminary Examination

<b>An Bord Pleanála Case Reference Number</b>	<b>ABP-321971-25</b>
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Construction of a two-storey dwelling house, garage and all associated site works.
<b>Development Address</b>	Lisroyne, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon
<p><b>The Board carried out a preliminary examination [ref. Art. 109(2)(a), Planning and Development regulations 2001, as amended] of at least the nature, size or location of the proposed development, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations.</b></p> <p><b>This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.</b></p>	
<p><b>Characteristics of proposed development</b></p> <p>The development has a modest footprint, comes forward as a standalone project, does not require demolition works, does not require the use of substantial natural resources, or give rise to significant risk of pollution or nuisance. The development, by virtue of its type, does not pose a risk of major accident and/or disaster, or is vulnerable to climate change. It presents no risks to human health.</p>	
<p><b>Location of development</b></p> <p>The development is situated in a 'transitional' area between the village of Strokestown and the open countryside. The site may be characterised as improved agricultural land, which is abundant in the area. The development is removed from sensitive natural habitats or any site designated for nature conservation purposes. It lies within the lowest of four landscape designations, ie. 'moderate value', in the County Development Plan.</p> <p>The site lies within the 'Mid Roscommon Ribbed Moraines' County Geological Site also identified in the Development Plan. This designation covers an area of 10 by 20 kilometres, including the entire village of Strokestown, and includes approx. 100 ribbed moraine features.' The features are generally 6km-8km long and 1km or so wide, with individual superimposed drumlins being c. 1km long and 400m-500m wide.</p>	



**Types and characteristics of potential impacts**

Having regard to the modest nature of the proposed development, its location removed from sensitive habitats/features, likely limited magnitude and spatial extent of effects, and absence of in combination effects, there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.

With regards to the 'Mid Roscommon Ribbed Moraines' County Geological Site, the extent of the designated area, the proximity of the site to the built up area of Strokestown, and to the generally flat topography of the site and its immediate vicinity are such that the proposed development would not compromise the designated area.

**Conclusion**

<b>Likelihood of Significant Effects</b>	<b>Conclusion in respect of EIA</b>	<b>Yes or No</b>
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.	Yes
There is significant and realistic doubt regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	Schedule 7A Information required to enable a Screening Determination to be carried out.	No
There is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIAR required.	No