



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-322402-25

Development	Shed to be used for the storage and drying of onions, a concrete apron, use of existing entrance, and all associated site works
Location	Richardstown, Dunleer, Co. Louth
Planning Authority	Louth County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2460821
Applicant	Tony McGuinness
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission
Type of Appeal	Third Party v Grant of Permission
Appellants	Gerard & Geraldine Kelledy
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	2 nd July 2025
Inspector	Anthony Kelly

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is located in a rural area of Co. Louth, approximately 3km north west of Dunleer and approximately 700 metres north of the rural node of Dromin.
- 1.2. The site contains an existing farmyard. There is a local road along the eastern boundary, a wheat field is adjacent to the north and west, and there is further agricultural land to the south. There are a number of trees and a watercourse along the southern boundary. There are two substantial agricultural sheds on site with associated vehicular circulation and hardstanding areas.
- 1.3. The site has an area of 1.237 hectares.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for a shed to be used for the storage and drying of onions, a concrete apron, use of existing entrance, and all associated site works.
- 2.2. The proposed shed has a floor area of 640sqm and a height of 10.96 metres. The external finish is to be dark green metal cladding. Its footprint will encroach into the existing wheat field. The floor area of the existing agricultural buildings is 4,076sqm.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. On 4th April 2025 Louth County Council (LCC) granted permission subject to thirteen conditions. Inter alia, conditions 2 and 3 restrict the use of the proposed building, condition 4 restricts hours of operation, and condition 10 requires submission of a construction and demolition waste management plan. I assess the planning conditions in sub-section 7.4.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

- 3.2.1. Two Planning Reports were prepared by LCC, the first on foot of the original planning application and the second subsequent to the applicant's response to a further information request.
- 3.2.2. The first report, dated 18th February 2025, contained, among other issues, a site location and description, a planning history, a policy context, a summary of two submissions received and a summary of internal reports received. It was not considered that an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR) was required, however further information was considered to be required in terms of appropriate assessment (AA). In the 'Planning Assessment' section of the report it was considered that the principle of development was compliant with the Louth County Development Plan (LCDP) 2021-2027 (as varied) though additional information was required to justify the need for the development and to allow LCC to assess impacts. It was considered the proposed structure could satisfactorily integrate given the existing structures on site.
- 3.2.3. Further information was sought on 18th February 2025 in relation to the landholding, use of the shed and associated processes, effluent production, vehicular movements, hours of operation, and noise generation. A response to same was received on 12th March 2025.
- 3.2.4. The second report, dated 4th April 2025, contained a summary of the applicant's response. The planning authority considered that all issues in the further information request were addressed and that no AA issues arose.

3.2.5. Other Technical Reports

Physical Development Section – No objection subject to conditions.

Waste and Environment Section – No objection subject to conditions.

Environmental Compliance Section – No comment.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- 3.3.1. The application was not referred to any prescribed bodies.

3.4. Third Party Observations

- 3.4.1. Two submissions from local residents, including the appellants, were received by LCC on foot of the initial planning application. The main issues raised are largely covered by the grounds of appeal as summarised in sub-section 6.1.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1.1. The relevant planning history of the subject site is:

P.A. Ref. 11/213 – In 2011 permission was granted for an agricultural shed for dry storage, a concrete apron, and new entrance onto the public road. This is the shed adjacent to the proposed shed (Shed A).

P.A. Ref. 17/435 – In 2018 permission was granted for a shed to be used for storage of grain, concrete apron, and use of existing entrance. This is the shed closer to the road (Shed B).

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Louth County Development Plan (LCDP) 2021-2027 (as varied)

- 5.1.1. Relevant policy objectives of the Plan include:

EE 55 - To support rural entrepreneurship and rural enterprise development of an appropriate scale at suitable locations in the County.

EE 60 - To continue to support the agricultural sector and to facilitate the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural activities.

- 5.1.2. The provisions of sub-section 13.13.11.7 (Agricultural Enterprises and Buildings) are also relevant.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.2.1. The nearest designated area of natural heritage is Stabannan-Braganstown Special Protection Area (SPA) approx. 2.7km to the north. The SPA boundary is within the larger Stabannon-Braganstown proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA), though they are the same distance from the subject site at the nearest point. The nearest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is Dundalk Bay SAC approx. 6.8km to the north east.

5.3. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

- 5.3.1. The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Appendix 1.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

- 6.1.1. The grounds of appeal are submitted by Gerard and Geraldine Kelledy who are local residents. The main issues raised can be summarised as follows:
- Two short videos submitted with the grounds of appeal outline road safety concerns. One shows a lorry parked on the road in a dangerous position and the second shows the manoeuvring required when one lorry is trying to exit the site while another one is entering. There is a primary school further down the road.
 - Photographs provided show road damage from the number of HGVs using the local road, the uneven entrance to the site, a bad bend in proximity to the site, and flooding on the road.
 - The proposed shed does not take into consideration local community issues or road safety.
 - A hedge has been planted and a bank built-up only since the application was submitted and objections went in, in order to reduce night-time noise levels.

- The permission states hours of deliveries are to be 0800-1800 Monday to Saturday. The video footage shows a lorry waiting to access the site at 0730.
- Noise is generated from the site, especially in summer. The appellants do not believe that work will stop after 6pm as per the permission condition.
- It is requested that an engineer inspect the site to address road safety and the entrance as the appellants are not sure this was carried out by LCC.

6.2. **Applicant's Response**

6.2.1. None received.

6.3. **Planning Authority Response**

6.3.1. No additional substantive issues have been raised in the grounds of appeal from those raised in the submission made at application stage. The key planning issues are set out in the two planning reports and it is not proposed to reassess the concerns raised. The Board is requested to uphold the planning authority decision.

6.4. **Observations**

6.4.1. None received.

7.0 **Assessment**

Having examined the application and appeal details and all other documentation on file, and having inspected the site, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal are as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Traffic and Transportation
- Noise
- Planning Authority Conditions

7.1. Principle of Development

- 7.1.1. The site is located in a rural area with some residential development in the wider vicinity. The closest house to the site boundary is approx. 140 metres to the south/south east and other houses are more than 200 metres away.
- 7.1.2. The site comprises an existing, permitted farmyard. It contains two structures, similar to but larger than that subject of the application. They were permitted for use as dry storage. The proposed structure comprises a shed for the storage and drying of onions. The applicant produced 650 tonnes of onions on 12 hectares in 2024 and is now contracted to produce 1,000 tonnes on 20 hectares on an annual basis. The proposed store has a capacity of 1,000 tonnes. The agricultural consultant's letter submitted with the further information response states that 'The store as designed, with a centre split for extra ventilation and wooden floor with ducting installed underneath, cannot be used for anything else other than the drying and storage of bulk onions'. The proposed development, in my opinion, is consistent with the existing use of the site.
- 7.1.3. The LCDP 2021-2027, in its chapter on economy and employment, contains policy objectives in relation to the rural economy which are supportive of development of the type proposed. For example, as set out in paragraph 5.1.1, EE 55 supports rural enterprise development of an appropriate scale at suitable locations and EE 60 states it is a policy objective to support the agricultural sector and to facilitate the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural activities.
- 7.1.4. Ultimately, this planning application facilitates agricultural activity in a rural area at an existing, permitted farmyard. The proposed shed is to the rear of the site, away from the road, and would largely be hidden by an existing shed. The structure would not be visually obtrusive or incongruous. I consider the proposed development to be acceptable in principle and supported by the provisions of the LCDP 2021-2027.

7.2. Traffic and Transportation

- 7.2.1. Concerns about traffic and transportation related issues form a significant part of the grounds of appeal.

- 7.2.2. The videos and photographs submitted with the grounds of appeal are noted. In relation to the photographs, there is no location map or layout plan indicating the positions that these were taken, apart from those showing the subject site. Notwithstanding, and having visited the site, I do not consider that the condition of the local road network is notably different from that existing throughout the country in terms of road width, alignment, and condition. It cannot be concluded that damage to the road is solely a result of HGV traffic associated with the existing farmyard. Given the rural location, it is likely that the local road network is frequently used by HGVs and agricultural vehicles associated with other farmyards or commercial premises and these would contribute to the road condition.
- 7.2.3. This planning application relates solely to the proposed onion storage shed. Other issues set out in the grounds of appeal, such as a lorry waiting to enter the site at 0730, are not directly relevant to this particular application. I note that an entrance to the site was permitted under 11/213. The application under 17/435 sought, inter alia, permission for use of the entrance. The site layout plan showed this as being in the same position as the vehicular entrance shown on the current application. Therefore, notwithstanding the issues referenced such as the location of the entrance between a road bend and the brow of a hill, or when two lorries are accessing/egressing the site, this vehicular entrance is a permitted and established entrance.
- 7.2.4. The grounds of appeal state that the planning permission states that hours of deliveries are Monday to Saturday from 0800-1800 (condition 4), but that there was a lorry waiting to get in at 0730. The conditioned hours of delivery/operation referred to relate specifically to the proposed development which is subject of the appeal and therefore do not yet apply. There are no hours specified in either of the two previous permissions on site and therefore no specific issue arises with a lorry waiting to access the site at 0730. I address the issue of the conditioned hours of operation in paragraph 7.4.3 and recommend that they be excluded from any grant of permission that may issue on the ground that they are unnecessarily restrictive.
- 7.2.5. Having regard to the foregoing, I consider that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of traffic and transportation. This is a rural area with agricultural and HGV traffic which affects the condition of the local road network, though it is not in a particularly poor condition. The proposed development proposes to continue the

use of an existing and permitted vehicular entrance and I consider this to be acceptable.

7.3. Noise

- 7.3.1. The grounds of appeal refer to noise issues from the farmyard including the sound of dryers, buckets hitting the ground, and reversing beepers which can go on late into the night. I note that these relate to current operations in the farmyard. This planning application relates solely to the proposed onion storage shed development.
- 7.3.2. The response to the further information request includes a letter from an agricultural consultant. The letter contains information in relation to the noise that could be generated. It is stated that the store would be filled once in September and emptied over a small number of weeks between November and February. Anticipated vehicular movements are cited as 52 during filling with 38 during emptying/transport to a packing/grading facility, with other movements of loaders loading and unloading. Fans used in the facility are 'extremely efficient and quiet in operation'. They will only be operating periodically and it is stated they will be located at the back of the facility. Air entering the store will be heated by propane burners which are also 'extremely efficient and quiet in operation'. It is stated that generators are currently being used on-site but mains electricity 'is in the process of being brought to the site'.
- 7.3.3. I do not consider that the noise generated from the proposed development would be excessive. The associated vehicular movements are relatively limited and would be restricted to specific times of the year. The shed is located at the rear of the site and would be approx. 230 metres from the nearest house with the existing farmyard buildings and a number of trees between them. Any noise that would be generated by the proposed development would facilitate the operation of the onion storage shed and I consider that it would be acceptable.

7.4. Planning Authority Conditions

- 7.4.1. The planning authority attached thirteen conditions to the grant of permission. I consider that a number of these are not necessary given the specific development subject of the application. The conditions are assessed in this sub-section. Condition 1 is the standard 'as per plans and particulars' condition and is appropriate.

- 7.4.2. Condition 2 states that the building shall not be used for the housing of animals and condition 3 states that it shall be used solely for agricultural uses ancillary to the farm holding. I consider these to be adequately addressed by the standard condition 1 i.e. development in accordance with the submitted plans and particulars.
- 7.4.3. Hours of operation and deliveries are restricted in condition 4 to between 0800-1800 Monday to Friday. I note that these are the hours outlined in the response from the agricultural consultant ('Harvesting ... will be normally restricted to the hours of 8am to 6pm due to availability of light, health and safety requirements, working time directive of staff, dew on crops etc ... Emptying of the store will operate ... during normal working hours on normal work days'). Notwithstanding, I consider specifying hours to be unduly restrictive given the agricultural nature of the proposed development, and given that activity in the shed would only take place at particular times of the year, I consider it should be omitted from any grant of permission.
- 7.4.4. Condition 5 relates to surface water discharge. I consider the standard Commission condition in this regard is adequate.
- 7.4.5. Condition 6 relates to emissions of deleterious matters such as would give rise to annoyance to residents in the vicinity. There is no suggestion in the application that this would be an issue and it has not been raised by third parties. Given the nature of the application and the separation distances to existing residences I do not consider this condition to be warranted.
- 7.4.6. Development contributions are the subject of condition 7 and I consider the standard development contribution condition is applicable.
- 7.4.7. Condition 8 relates to the maintenance of sightlines. The entrance was permitted under previous applications and conditions relating to the maintenance of sightlines were attached to them. Those conditions remain in effect and this application proposes no alteration to the vehicular entrance and does not remove the requirement for those conditions to be applied. I consider this condition is not necessary.
- 7.4.8. Condition 9 relates to landscaping. The site layout plan outlines, inter alia, a boundary to be heavily planted on a proposed mound and additional planting to form screening. Given the location of the subject shed to the rear of the site/existing buildings I consider the proposed landscaping would be adequately addressed through condition 1 and does not warrant a stand-alone condition.

- 7.4.9. Condition 10 requires submission of a formal construction and demolition waste management plan. Given that the 'Best Practice Guidelines for the preparation of resource & waste management plans for construction & demolition projects' published by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2021 recommends 'that planning authorities stipulate that an RWMP¹ shall be submitted for all construction and demolition projects as best practice to inform the planning consent process. It is recommended that all planning permissions granted include compliance with the RWMP as a standard condition of planning', (page 9), I consider it reasonable that a condition is included requiring submission of a RWMP for agreement with LCC.
- 7.4.10. The proposed development is in a rural area with limited residential development in the wider vicinity. I do not consider that construction hours are necessary as set out in condition 11.
- 7.4.11. Condition 12 states that the developer shall be responsible for the full cost of repair of damage caused to adjacent public roads arising from the construction work. Given the relatively limited scale of the construction work required and the obvious difficulty in ascertaining the degree to which the specific construction work contributed to damage, if any, I do not consider this condition to be justified.
- 7.4.12. I consider that the planning authority's condition 13, relating to keeping the public road free of debris during the construction phase, is reasonable.
- 7.4.13. Having regard to the foregoing, I consider that eight of the planning authority conditions are not warranted.

8.0 Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

- 8.1. AA screening was carried out in Appendix 2 to this report.
- 8.2. In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended), and on the basis of the information considered in the AA screening, I conclude that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on Stabannon-Braganstown SPA, Dundalk Bay SPA or Dundalk Bay SAC, or any other European

¹ Resource Waste Management Plan

site, in view of the sites conservation objectives, and AA (and submission of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS)) is not therefore required.

8.3. This determination is based on:

- The relatively minor nature and scale of the proposed development and lack of impact mechanisms that could significantly affect a European site,
- The absence of any effluent being generated on the subject site, the hydrological distance to Dundalk Bay, and the dilution capacity of the River Dee,
- The absence of any reference to water quality in the attributes, measures, and targets of the SAC QIs and,
- No significant ex-situ impacts on wintering birds.

9.0 **Water Framework Directive (WFD)**

9.1. The provisions of appendix 3 apply to this section.

9.2. The site is located in a rural area with a watercourse along its southern boundary running in an easterly direction. This watercourse is a tributary of the River Dee which outfalls to Dundalk Bay approx. 11.2km north east of the site, hydrologically. The proposed storage shed footprint is approx. 60 metres from the watercourse.

9.3. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

9.4. I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the WFD which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface and ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. 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 surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.

9.5. The reasons for this conclusion are as follows:

- the nature of works i.e. the relatively small scale and nature of the proposed development,

- the location of the construction works away from the surface watercourse, and,
- the absence of any effluent generation on-site.

9.6. On the basis of objective information, the proposed development would not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives, and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

10.0 Recommendation

10.1. I recommend that planning permission should be granted, subject to conditions, for the reasons and considerations as set out below.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and the provisions of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied), it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would be in accordance with policy objectives of the Development Plan in so far as it relates to agricultural development in a rural area, and would not result in a traffic hazard or undue adverse impact on the amenities of property in the vicinity. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

12.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as amended by the further plans and particulars received by the planning authority on the 12th day of March 2025, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following

conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. Prior to commencement of development, a Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) as set out in the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021) shall be prepared and submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will be measured and monitored for effectiveness. All records (including for waste and all resources) pursuant to the agreed RWMP shall be made available for inspection at the site office at all times.

Reason: In the interest of reducing waste and encouraging recycling.

3. The disposal of surface water shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit details for the disposal of surface water from the site for the written agreement of the planning authority.

Reason: To prevent flooding and in the interests of sustainable drainage.

4. All necessary measures, as may be determined by the planning authority, shall be taken by the developer to prevent spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on adjoining public roads during the development works. The developer shall ensure that all vehicles leaving the development are free from any material that would be likely to deposit on the road and in the event of any such deposition immediate steps shall be taken to remove the material from the road surface. The developer shall be responsible for the full cost of carrying out road cleaning work.

Reason: In the interests of orderly development and traffic safety.

5. The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.

Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.

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.

Anthony Kelly

Senior Planning Inspector

28th July 2025

Appendix 1 – Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ABP-322402-25
Proposed Development Summary	Permission for a shed to be used for the storage and drying of onions, a concrete apron, use of existing entrance, and all associated site works
Development Address	Richardstown, Dunleer, Co. Louth
	In all cases check box or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, 'Project' means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2. <input type="checkbox"/> No. No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994. No Screening required.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.	

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.	
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4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2 – Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA)				
Test for Likely Significant Effects				
Step 1 – Description of the Project and Local Site Characteristics				
Brief description of project	Shed to be used for the storage and drying of onions, a concrete apron, use of existing entrance, and all associated site works			
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	The site is in a rural area. The proposed structure will present as an extension to an existing agricultural structure within an established farmyard complex. No animals are kept at the farmyard. No effluent would be generated as a result of or from the proposed development. It is proposed to discharge surface water to a watercourse along the southern site boundary via an attenuation tank with a flow control device. The watercourse is a tributary of the River Dee which discharges to Dundalk Bay approx. 11.2km to the north east. Dundalk Bay is an SAC and SPA at the outfall location. The attenuation tank can also be used for filling the spraying tank or washing the sheds down, according to the application form.			
Screening Report	No			
Natura Impact Statement (NIS)	No			
Relevant submissions	None			
Step 2 – Identification of Relevant European Sites using the Source-Pathway-Receptor (SPR) Model				
European Site (code)	Qualifying Interests (QIs) / Special Conservation Interests (SCIs)	Distance from Proposed Development	Ecological Connections	Consider Further in Screening? Y/N
Stabannon-Braganstown SPA 004091)	Greylag goose [A043]	Approx 2.7km to the north	Proximity	No
Dundalk Bay SPA (004026)	23 bird species plus wetland and waterbirds [A999]	Approx. 6.8km to the north east in a direct	Hydrology	No

		line and approx. 11.2km hydrologically		
Dundalk Bay SAC (000455)	Six habitats [1130, 1140, 1220, 1310, 1330, and 1410]	Approx. 6.8km to the north east in a direct line and approx. 11.2km hydrologically.	Hydrology	No

Step 3 – Describe the Likely Effects of the Project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites

The closest European site is Stabannon-Braganstown SPA approx. 2.7km to the north. Its sole SCI is greylag goose. Given the distance between the subject site and the SPA, the presence of the existing farmyard complex on site, and the limited area of same being extended into the adjacent wheat field, in my opinion the proposed development could not be considered to affect the SPAs SCI.

In terms of Dundalk Bay SPA and SAC, I consider that the proposed development would not have any potential direct or indirect impact on either of these European sites. The watercourse that it is proposed to discharge surface water to, via an attenuation tank with a flow control device, is a tributary of the River Dee which discharges to the Irish Sea at Annagassan, approx. 11.2km to the north east of the site hydrologically. The farmyard activity on site does not involve animals or effluent. The existing and proposed structures are/are to be used for dry storage.

The subject site is not generally suitable for the SCI species of the SPA. Given the distances between the subject site and the European site, the nature of the subject site, and the land uses in immediate proximity, it could not be considered as an ex-situ site of any importance for the SCI species.

In relation to Dundalk Bay SAC, the distances involved and the capacity of the River Dee would ensure that in the unlikely event of any contaminated surface water entering from the subject site it would be diluted by the time it reached the outfall point to Dundalk Bay. Notwithstanding, the six QIs are all habitats and none of their attributes, measures, and targets refer to water quality.

Having regard to the foregoing I do not consider the proposed development would have any likely significant effect on these, or any other, any European sites.

Step 4 – Conclude if the Proposed Development Could Result in Likely Significant Effects on a European Site

I conclude that the proposed development, alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, would not result in likely significant effects on a European site. No further assessment is required for the project. No mitigation measures are required to come to this conclusion.

Screening Determination

Finding of no Likely Significant Effects

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended), and on the basis of the information considered in this AA screening, I conclude that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on Stabannon-Braganstown SPA, Dundalk Bay SPA or Dundalk Bay SAC, or any other European site, in view of the sites conservation objectives, and AA (and submission of a NIS) is not therefore required.

This determination is based on:

- The relatively minor nature and scale of the proposed development and lack of impact mechanisms that could significantly affect a European site,
- The absence of any effluent being generated on the subject site, the hydrological distance to Dundalk Bay, and the dilution capacity of the River Dee,
- The absence of any reference to water quality in the attributes, measures, and targets of the SAC QIs and,
- No significant ex-situ impacts on wintering birds.

Appendix 3 – Water Framework Directive (WFD)

WFD Impact Assessment Stage 1 – Screening			
Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
An Coimisiún Pleanála Ref. No.	ABP-322402-25	Address	Richardstown, Dunleer, Co. Louth
Description of project		Shed to be used for the storage and drying of onions, a concrete apron, use of existing entrance, and all associated site works	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD screening		The site is in a rural area and there is an existing farmyard complex on site. There is a public road to the east with agricultural land to the north, west, and south. No effluent is to be generated by the proposed development. It is proposed to discharge surface water to a watercourse along the southern site boundary via an attenuation tank with a flow control device. The watercourse is a tributary of the River Dee which discharges to Dundalk Bay approx. 11.2km to the north east. The attenuation tank can also be used for filling the spraying tank or washing the sheds down, according to the application form.	
Proposed surface water details		Discharge to watercourse via an attenuation tank	
Proposed water supply source and available capacity		Well	
Proposed wastewater treatment system (WWTS) and available capacity and any other issues		N/A	
Others?		N/A	
Step 2: Identification of Relevant Water Bodies and Step 3: Source-Pathway-Receptor (S-P-R) Connection			

Identified water body		Distance (metres)	Water body names (codes)	WFD status	Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g.at risk, review, not at risk	Identified pressures on that water body	Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)
Groundwater waterbody		Underlying site	Louth (IEGBNI_NB_G_019)	Good	Not at risk	No pressures	Discharge to groundwater
River waterbody		Along southern boundary	Dee_080 (IE_NB_06D011000)	Moderate	At risk	Hydromorphology, agriculture	Surface water discharge
Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage							
No.	Component	Waterbody receptor (EPA code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact / what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2).
Construction Phase							

1	Groundwater	Louth (IEGBNI_NB_G_019)	Dissipation through ground	Spillages and general construction activity	No bedrock or water table found in trial hole. No specific mitigation required.	No	Screened out
2	River waterbody	Dee_080 (IE_NB_06D011000)	Surface water run-off	Deterioration of surface water quality from pollution of surface water run-off during site preparation and construction.	No particular mitigation is required. The development area is approx. 60 metres from the boundary watercourse.	No. I do not consider that the proposed development would be such that it would materially affect the risk of not achieving the WFD objective.	Screened out
Operational Phase							
2	River waterbody	Dee_080 (IE_NB_06D011000)	Surface water run-off	Deterioration of surface water quality	It is proposed to discharge surface water to the watercourse via an attenuation tank with a flow control device. The attenuation tank can also	No	Screened out

					be used for filling the spraying tank or washing the sheds down. Surface water run-off would be uncontaminated given the absence of any effluent generation on-site.		
Decommissioning Phase							
N/A							