



An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

**Pre-Application Consultation pursuant  
to Section 37L of the Planning and  
Development Acts, 2000-2021, as  
amended**

**Inspector's Report on  
ACP-322856-25**

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|                                     |                                                         |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Development</b>                  | Proposed works to former dwelling to make it habitable. |
| <b>Location</b>                     | Emlaghmore, Ballyconneely, Co. Galway.                  |
| <b>Planning Authority</b>           | Galway County Council                                   |
| <b>Prospective Applicants</b>       | Patrick Ridge                                           |
| <b>Date of Consultation Meeting</b> | 04 <sup>th</sup> September 2025                         |
| <b>Date of Site Inspection</b>      | N/A                                                     |
| <b>Inspector</b>                    | Sarah O'Mahony                                          |

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1. An Coimisiún Pleanála received a request on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 from Hanley Taite Design Partnership on behalf of Patrick Ridge, to enter into a pre-application consultation under section 37L of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

- 1.2. An Coimisiún Pleanála agreed to the request to enter into consultations on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025. A pre-application consultation meeting was held on 04<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
- 1.3. The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the nature of the pre-application consultations undertaken, pursuant to Section 37L of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

## **2.0 Site Location**

- 2.1. The 0.72ha site is situated in west Connemara, approximately halfway between Roundstone and Ballyconneely in the townland of Emlaghmore. Emlaghkeeragh Lough is situated 90m northeast of the site while a stream/river coming out of the lake and flowing southwest into Maumeen Lough is situated adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. This stream/river forms part of the Connemara Bog Complex SAC, SPA and pNHA. There is a separation distance of 4m between the site and the boundary of the European Sites.
- 2.2. There is a single storey, stone, pitched roof structure on the site comprising 67.3m<sup>2</sup>. It has the appearance of a vernacular cottage with windows and a chimney. The application documents state that it is inhabitable in its current state as it has no heating, insulation water supply or sanitary facilities. It is estimated to date from c.1900. There is a separate, 36.7m<sup>2</sup>, unroofed outhouse also present on the site to the northeast of the cottage.

## **3.0 Description of Proposal**

- 3.1. Planning permission is sought for the following:
  - Restoration of existing 67.3m<sup>2</sup> unoccupied farm cottage.
  - Raising of the wall plate level by 1m of the existing farm cottage to allow for habitable loft space to comply with current building regulation standards.
  - Restoration and of 36.7m<sup>2</sup> outhouse.
  - 41.5m<sup>2</sup> extension between the cottage and outbuilding to form one single dwelling on the site.

- Decommissioning and desludging of existing wastewater system to comply with current EPA standards as well as all associated site works including rainwater harvesting for the provision of potable water to the site.

3.2. The following documentation was included with the pre-application consultation request:

- Remedial Natura Impact Statement
- Planning History Outline
- Archaeological and Historical Background Report
- Structural Report and Construction/Augmentation Management Plan
- Signed affidavits from third parties setting out the works and high level methodology undertaken to date.
- Design Statement with photomontages
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Site Characterisation Form
- Rainwater Harvesting System Specification
- Drawings

3.3. Separately, the applicant has indicated that it is intended to submit an application for permission for Substitute Consent for 'retained development' under Section 177E (1A) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended for:

- Replacement of a collapsed metal clad roof with a roof formed on a like for like basis excepting that a modern profiled metal cladding was used. This was carried out in the 1990s while the remaining three elements below were undertaken in 2020.
- Reopening of 3 no. opes on the front elevation of the cottage which had been blocked with dry stonework, to allow natural light into the building.
- Repair an existing chimney breast which was unstable and in dangerous condition.
- Placement of some CCTV cameras and antennae on the façade of the cottage following criminal damage.

## 4.0 Planning History

- 70254: Reference made in the application documents to a 1994 application to reconstruct and extend the existing derelict dwelling. The application documents state permission was refused.
- 201112: Planning permission sought to (1) Restore existing unoccupied farm cottage (2) Raise wall plate level of existing cottage to allow for habitable loft space to comply with current building regulation standards (3) Form single storey extension to cottage and adjoining outhouse (4) Convert, extend and restore existing outhouse to form part of overall single dwelling (5) Install new proprietary sewage treatment system with filter area as well as all associated site works. This planning application is accompanied by a NIS, as required by Article 239 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Gross floor space of proposed works: 25.00 sqm. Gross floor space of work to be retained: 97.00 sqm. Permission was **refused** for 4no. reasons relating to lack of clarity regarding the planning status of existing development, appropriate assessment, flood risk and suitability of a potable water supply.
- 2189: Planning permission sought to (1) Remove existing roof structure added to semi-ruinous cottage in circa 1990's (2) Retain works associated with alterations to existing window opes (3) Retain and complete works to reinstate and make good existing stone chimney (4) Retain security cameras fixed to existing building façade for a temporary period until the cottage is developed and prior to its occupation or a period of 2 years if undeveloped (5) Restore existing semi-ruinous farm cottage to make habitable; including formation of new roof with roof covering material more appropriate to the character of the building; alteration of openings and fitting of new timber framed windows; alterations to the internal plan layout; application of insulation to walls, roof and floor internally, damp proofing; installation of services and all ancillary works (6) Restore existing ruinous outhouse to make same usable as an outhouse using appropriate materials (7) Install new proprietary sewage treatment system with filter area as well as all associated site works. This planning application is accompanied by a NIS, as required by Article 239 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). Gross floor space of retained

works: 71.40msq. This application was deemed **invalid** as retention permission was sought for works which required an NIS.

- 212405 (ABP ref. PL07.313445): Retention permission sought for A) The reinstatement of a collapsed roof and making good of an existing chimney, B) The unblocking of windows and replacement of timber framed windows on the front elevation, C) Recently erected CCTV cameras on the building to be in place for a temporary period. Gross floor space of work to be retained: 46.52 sqm. A notification to grant permission was appealed by a third party and An Bord Pleanála decided to **refuse** permission for the following reason:

*The Board had regard to the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, policy objective RH 7 regarding proposals to renovate, restore or modify existing derelict or semi-derelict dwellings being generally dealt with on their merits on a case by case basis having regard to the relevant policy objectives of the development plan, the specific location, the condition of the structure and the scale of any works required to upgrade the structure to modern standards, policy objective LCM 3 where landscape sensitivity ratings shall be an important factor in determining development uses and in areas of high landscape sensitivity, the design and the choice of location of proposed development in the landscape will also be critical considerations, and policy objective NHB 2 to implement Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and to ensure that Appropriate Assessment is carried out in relation to works, plans and projects likely to impact on European Sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas), whether directly or indirectly or in combination with any other plan(s) or project(s) and that all assessments must be in compliance with the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulation 2011.*

*The Board considered –*

1. *The development proposed for retention for the purposes of a “temporary shelter/respice” does not in itself constitute a class of planning development,*
2. *The totality of the file including the design of the structure, the proposed use of the structure and the history of the structure submitted by the applicant,*
3. *That the “temporary shelter/respice” was akin to a dwelling and should be assessed accordingly,*

4. *That no detailed justification was provided for the development use proposed to be retained at this location,*
5. *The scale of any works required to upgrade the structure to modern standards remains unclear and*
6. *The scope and detail of the Appropriate Assessment screening must encompass sufficient details and rationale, including in relation to enabling works, site access and construction methodologies, in order to reasonably conclude the development proposed for retention did not give rise to significant effects on a European Site.*

*Having regard to the use of the site, the sensitivity of the landscape, the pattern of development in the area, and the need to implement Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, the Board considered that the development proposed for retention would therefore contravene the Galway County Development Plan, and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

*In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant permission, the Board considered the Appropriate Assessment screening to be insufficient in terms of scope and detail and that development proposed for retention at this location would injure the amenities of the area and would not accord with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

- 2460859: Retention permission sought for A) The reinstatement of a collapsed roof and making good of an existing chimney and, (B) The unblocking of window openings and replacement of timber framed windows on the front elevation. Planning Permission for: (A) Restore existing unoccupied farm cottage, (B) Raise wall plate level of existing farm cottage to allow for habitable loft space to comply with current building regulation standards, (C) Form single storey extension linking existing cottage and adjoining outhouse, (D) Restore, convert and extend an existing outhouse to form part of overall single dwelling, (E) Decommission and desludging of existing wastewater system to install a new proprietary sewage treatment system with filter area to comply with current EPA standards, as well as associated site works. This planning application is accompanied by a NIS, as required by Article 239 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (As Amended). Gross Floor space of existing

buildings to be restored: 104 sq m, plus extension of 41.5 sq m, providing a total floor area of approx. 145.5 sq m. This application was deemed **invalid** as retention permission was sought for works which required an NIS.

## **5.0 Legislation**

- 5.1. Any subsequent application will be lodged under the provisions of Section 37L of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, and Part 22 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

## **6.0 Prospective Applicant's Case**

- 6.1. The prospective applicant noted the planning history and context and requested the pre-application consultation in order to determine the process of how to lodge any application for substitute consent and future works and what that application should contain.

## **7.0 Pre-Application Consultation Meeting**

- 7.1. A Pre-Application Consultation meeting took place via Microsoft Teams on 04<sup>th</sup> September 2025. Representatives of the prospective-applicant and An Bord Pleanála were in attendance. An Agenda was issued by An Bord Pleanála prior to the meeting. The prospective applicant was advised in advance of the meeting that the consultation would relate solely to the administrative procedures around the lodgement of an application, and any associated requirements.
- 7.2. This report should be read in conjunction with the copy of the presentation made to the meeting, the written record of the pre-application consultation meeting held with the prospective applicant on file. It is not proposed to repeat the contents of those records in detail here. The main topics raised for discussion at the meeting were as follows:
- Introductions
  - Description of development and relevant background – clarity regarding scope of application.

- Procedural Advice with regard to any subsequent application for Substitute Consent.

7.3. Following the meeting, a record of the meeting minutes was circulated to the applicant for comment however no comments were received.

## 8.0 Conclusion

8.1. The meeting concluded with An Bord Pleanála representatives stating that they did not foresee the need for a further meeting but if requested by the prospective applicant, the request would be examined. I therefore recommend that the pre-application consultation process should be closed.

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Sarah O'Mahony  
Planning Inspector

08<sup>th</sup> October 2025