



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ACP-322997-25

Development	Change of use of existing commercial unit into funeral parlour, minor changes to the front entrance together with all associated site works.
Location	Main Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Planning Authority	Offaly County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2560047
Applicant(s)	1. PJ Lambe 2. David Lambe 3. Edel Kenny
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant permission
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	David Gibb
Observer(s)	None of file
Date of Site Inspection	10/10/25

Inspector

Ronan Murphy

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located on the southern side of Main Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly and comprises of an existing retail unit with a stated area of c. 0.010ha.
- 1.2. The appeal site is located to the south-west of the town centre of Tullamore. Main Street is a relatively narrow two-way throughfare with public, metered parking on both sides of the road.
- 1.3. The existing retail unit opens directly onto a narrow public footpath along Main Street and is bound by a separate retail unit to the west, a small public square to the east, a public walkway, and the Tullamore River to the south and Main Street to the north.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development comprises of the change of use of an existing vacant commercial unit to a funeral parlour. Permission is also sought for minor alterations to the front entrance of the existing building.
- 2.2. The proposed change of use would include the following floor areas:
 - Funeral parlour of 62.75m²
 - Family bereavement room of 13.8m²
 - Kitchenette of 5.0m²
 - Staff W.C. 2.5m²
- 2.3. In addition to this, the proposal includes alterations to the front of the building to include the replacement of the eastern and western window panels with doors and updated signage.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

By order dated 26th June 2025 the planning authority decided to grant planning permission for the proposed change of use and minor changes to the front entrance of the existing commercial building subject to 8 conditions. The conditions are generally standard for this type of development.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

Planning Reports

- 3.2.1 There are two planning reports on file. The first planning report is dated 17 April 2025 notes that the use of the land within the Town Centre / Mixed Use as per the *Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027* is open for consideration. The proposed use, based on an area of 88m² would require 4 car parking spaces. It was noted that the area engineer requested Further Information with respect to compliance with car parking standards. In addition to this, the area planner requested further information with respect to the proposed shopfront design.

Other Technical Reports- Pre Further Information

- **Area Engineer:** Report dated 25/3/25 requesting Further Information relating to the need for a Traffic and Pedestrian Plan and clarification of the operational plan for the running of the proposed development. Information also requested with respect to how the applicant would meet car parking requirements in accordance with DMS 102.
- **Environment and Water Services:** Report dated 8/4/25 outlining no objection, subject to conditions.

Post FI Planning Report

- 3.2.2 A second area planners report on file is dated 23/6/25. The area planner states that they are satisfied with the applicant's response to all items of the further information. As a result, planning permission was granted, subject to 8 conditions.

Other Technical Reports- Post Further Information

- **Area Engineer:** Report dated 17/6/25 stating that the further information response has been inspected and there are no objections to the proposed development, subject to conditions.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

No responses on file.

4.0 Planning History

4.1 There is no recent planning history related to the appeal site.

Adjacent sites

Reg. Ref. 2460442: Application for modifications to the existing Unit A, Block 03 at Main Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, to include the change of use of the existing ground floor retail space to a day activity centre (87m²), with a refurbished shopfront facing onto Main Street. Permission granted, subject to conditions.

Reg. Ref. 21336: Application for the change of use of an existing commercial unit from retail use to café / restaurant. Permission granted, subject to conditions.

Reg. Ref. 21376: Application for the restoration and development of the former grain mill distillery building into a mixed-use building containing 4 retail units and 18 apartments at first to third levels. Permission granted, subject to conditions.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1 The *Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027* is the operative plan for the area. The appeal site is within the Town or Village Centre /Mixed Use zone. Relevant policies and objectives include:

LUZO-02: which seeks to provide for, protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town/village centres, through consolidating development, encouraging a mix of uses and maximising the use of land, to ensure the efficient use of infrastructure and services.

DMS-69: Which seeks to ensure that shopfront design is in accordance with the Offaly County Council leaflet 'Guide to Shopfronts and Signs' and set out a number of criteria which are required to be considered.

DMS-102: which outlines a car parking requirements at a maximum of 1 space per 20m² gross floor area for funeral home.

DMS-103: which outlines that the council will consider car-free developments on suitable small-scale sites within or adjacent to town centres which have high levels of public transport accessibility.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.2.1 The subject site is not located within or adjacent to a European Site. The nearest designated site is the Charleville Wood SAC (Site code: 000571) which is 1.1km to the south-west of the site. In addition to this, the Clara Bog SAC (Site code: 000572) is located c. 8km to the north-west of the site and the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code: 002162) is located c. 10.7km to the south of the site, the Raheenmore Bog SAC (Site code: 000582) is located c. 11.5km to the north-east of the site, and the Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC (Site code: 000859) is located 13.5km to the south-west of the site. The Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA and the Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA are located c. 15.4km to the south of the site.
- 5.2.2 In addition to this, the appeal site is located c. 322m to the south of the Grand Canal pNHA (Site code: 002104), c.1.5km to the north-east of Charleville Wood pNHA (Site code: 000571) c. 4.1km to the south-east of the Ballyduff Esker pNHA (Site code: 000885), c.5.3km to the north of Hawkswood Bog NHA (Site code: 002355), c. 5.7km to the north-east of the Screggan Bog NHA (Site code: 000921) and 6.2km to the south-west of the Daingean Bog NHA (Site code: 002033).
- 5.2.3 A screening exercise for Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken in Section 8 below.

5.3. 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 and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (or Part V of the 1994 Roads Regulations). No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of report.

5.4 Water Framework Directive

- 5.4.1 The purpose of the EU Water Framework Directive is an initiative aimed at improving water quality throughout the European Union. The Directive was adopted in 2000 and requires governments to take a new approach to managing all their waters; rivers,

canals, lakes, reservoirs, groundwater, protected areas (including wetlands and other water dependent ecosystems), estuaries (transitional) and coastal waters.

5.4.2 An Coimisiún Pleanála and other statutory authorities cannot grant development consent where a proposed development would give rise to a deterioration in water quality.

5.4.3 The appeal site is located c. 8m from the TULLAMORE_030 River Waterbody IE_SH_25T030300. This waterbody is classified as poor ecological status. In addition to this the appeal site is located c. 330m to the south of the Grand Canal Main Line (Lower Shannon) River Waterbody IE_25A_AWB_GCMLW. This waterbody is classified as good ecological status. This is illustrated on the EPA mapping (<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/agriculture>).

5.4.4 I have assessed the application for the change of use from vacant commercial unit to funeral parlour for which permission is sought and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & 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.

5.4.5 The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The small scale and nature of the development; and
- The site is connected to public water and wastewater facilities.

5.5 Grounds of Appeal

5.5.1 A third-party appeal has been received from BPS Planning and Development Consultants on behalf of David Gibb. The appeal can be categorised and summarised as set out below:

The proposal should provide parking as per DMS-102

- The development plan stipulates minimum parking provision for different land uses.

- The hearse will need to park in the nearest available space and use a trolley.
- Very busy street 2 spaces may not be available in a line at the same time or could be 100m away on the opposite side of the street.
- Vehicle would park illegally as close as possible to the funeral parlour and then load / unload creating strain on an already busy street.
- No in-curtilage parking, set down areas and can't control who parks in the public spaces.
- Informal measures will be applied to ensure they can use the parking spaces (such as traffic cones, roping off spaces or staff preventing cars from parking).
- Policy DMS-103 is aimed at new developments, including works, the proposed funeral parlour should not be considered in the same manner as a shop or professional service. A funeral parlour needs associated parking (family mourning vehicle etc.)
- The applicant acknowledges that at least one car parking space is required by the funeral parlour. This location should have been screened out by the applicant when considering possible locations.
- There is no way for the applicant to guarantee that any car parking spaces would be available at a given time / day to suit their business, and they cannot take measures to prevent others from parking in these public spaces.
- The applicant requires a business loading bay; there is no loading bay in the immediate vicinity.
- Coffin will be mounted on a trolley and will be walked from the funeral parlour to the hearse no matter how far away. This is not appropriate, the footpaths are narrow and would be unseemly.
- The funeral parlour would operate within the busiest hours for public parking in the town.
- No parking demand survey was submitted, unclear on what basis Offaly County Council granted planning permission. No letter of consent was submitted for the use of a single space for this business only.

- How will the business operate in reality if there are no car parking spaces to the front of the building. It will lead to double parking and traffic build up.
- The applicants Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan has not been prepared by a road engineer but by a planning consultant. Concerns relating to the validity of the time frame of when the public use spaces in the town centre. No details relating to where staff will park, where a hearse will park, will the premises be closed outside of the times there are funerals.
- Concerns that the overnight parking is free for residents and that all parking spaces would be full between 4pm until 7am the next morning.

The traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan lacks credibility

- The proposal is poorly considered as regards its likely impact on the pedestrian environment on the footpath and in the areas outside the proposed funeral parlour.
- Both doors into and out of the proposed funeral parlour for mourners are off a thin footpath where the queue would cause constant pedestrian congestion 3 days a week and as such would be a hazard for existing users of the footpath in front of the premises. Is it acceptable to rope off public areas to serve a private business. Is it realistic that mourner's queue as suggested in the application, it would lead to permanent queueing on multiple days in a week in public areas.
- The Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan is confusing as regards its traffic impact claims. No Traffic Impact Assessment has been submitted.
- The funeral parlour would have the same hours as any business and will generate traffic at peak afternoon times causing congestion.
- In the town centre many uses are open from 9am into the evening, the funeral parlour is not a late evening use. The hours of operation are not sufficiently different to those already on Main Street. The use should be located where the stopping of hearses and the congestion caused by mourners would not shut down a town's Main Street

- All of the people attending funerals would do so by car (including from out of town) it is not credible that mourners would travel by public transport. How will car parking demands be managed. Mourners will try and park as close as possible to the funeral parlour causing congestion.
- The applicant has not proven that there are sufficient available parking spaces to serve the funeral parlour and has not proven that these are sufficiently close to avoid traffic congestion by way of fly parking.
- No drop off area to facilitate older people or those with accessibility needs. As there are no organised drop off points, this will lead to congestion.
- The Traffic Management Plan is not enforceable. The plan is not written by an expert and is light on detail. A document is required which would indemnify a decision on a project which may have traffic and pedestrian hazards.

Applicant response to Mr. Gibbs concerns

- The applicant's response to concerns is not acceptable. The applicant has not credibly explained how they propose to get unobstructed access to the unit and cannot guarantee parking spaces. What happens if the closest parking space is 40m away.
- No credible proposals from a suitably qualified road engineer which would confirm a parking strategy.
- No set down area for mourners and no loading bay for hearse to load and unload coffins. The applicant needs unobstructed means of access from a loading area to the premises.
- The use of the thin public footpath to transport coffins by trolley is not safe for pedestrians or suitable. It would not be convenient to load coffins immediately outside the premises.
- The proposed queueing area raises a number of concerns.
- The applicants' statements are all prevarication. Cars will converge on the premises and cause traffic impacts.

- No traffic engineering expert report and no basis for statements with respect to parking in the town centre. No responsibility for trip generating use on Main Street.
- No legal right / consent / permission or license for the roping off of public areas and there is no pedestrian safety assessment relating to likely impacts on users of the footpath to the front of the premises or residents needing to access their buildings.
- The applicant's business is open in the morning and closes at 8pm, the town trades from 9am to 5.30pm. The proposal will complete for footpath space, load space and parking spaces with existing users.
- The applicant has failed to address these concerns.

Negative precedent

- The proposal would set a negative precedent for similar developments to proceed in this manner. A number of similar schemes which rely on public parking spaces, public footpaths, areas of public domain to spill over could not be accommodated.
- The proposal could not be treated as a one-off development. It must be assessed on the basis that it may encourage others to make similar proposals.
- Funeral parlours should provide parking, safe pedestrian access, queueing for mourners with the curtilage of the business.

5.6 Applicant Response

5.6.1 A first party response has been received from ABBD Civil and Building Contractors on behalf of PJ Lambe, David Lambe and Edel Kenny. The first party response includes Appendix A (Letter offering the use of Central Hotel Car Park) The response can be summarised as set out below:

- The appeal rests heavily on the fact that the traffic and pedestrian plan for the proposed development was prepared by a Planning Consultant and not a Roads Engineer. The appellant calls for a more technical assessment. This level of assessment was not requested by the planning authority.

- The information provided submitted in the Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan is both credible and feasible and adequate for a planning authority to make an assessment.

The development does not provide car parking in accordance with Standard DMS-102

- One car parking space is only required for delivery and extraction of the deceased.
- A hearse would not be parked at this location on a permanent basis.
- It is possible to use other proximate car parking spaces for the same purpose.
- Car parking will not be required for staff in front of the premises.
- Car parking will not be required for the mourning family in front of the premises.
- The proposal does not require a permanent / full-time car parking space as suggested by the appellant.
- Co-operation between commercial traders in town centre areas is not considered or given credence by the appellant.
- A local car park owner has made their car park available to the operators of the funeral parlour and any mourning traffic associated with the use. This car park is located approximately 60m southwest of the subject site. This is another car parking option to mourners in proximity to the proposed development.
- It is therefore submitted that the loading requirements of the proposed use can be catered for using existing on-street facilities. Parking for mourners can be facilitated at the Central Hotel Car Park on Main Street.
- This, infrastructure is sufficient to allow the proposed development to be deemed to comply with parking policy in the Tullamore Development Plan.

Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan

- The report sets out analysis in relation to on-street car parking in the vicinity of the proposed development as set out in the development plan. The validity or credibility if the submitted report is demonstrated by the fact that Offaly County Council Planning Department accepted the report.

- The report concludes that there is sufficient available on-street car parking in the vicinity of the proposed development, within a reasonable waking distance to provide car parking for mourners.
- As a consequence of this available infrastructure the development would not have a negative impact on traffic congestion in the town centre.

Response to appellants concerns

- The applicant does not require unobstructed access to the unit. The applicant proposes to load and unload the coffins using the parking area to the front.
- A set down area for mourners is not required, there are sufficient car parks in the vicinity to facilitate safe set down areas for mourners.
- The queueing process for mourners has been designed to prevent obstruction of the footpath in front of the premises. The applicant does not seek to privatise any areas of the public domain / The proposed queueing system is designed to prevent congestion of mourners on the footpath and staff would be conscious of this issue and would seek to usher the mourners to make sure the footpath is not obstructed.
- All proposals made by the applicant are with the intent to facilitate the operation of the proposed funeral parlour without having a negative impact on surrounding businesses and uses.

5.7 Planning Authority Response

5.7.1 Letter dated 7/8/25 requesting that An Coimisiún Pleanála uphold the decision to grant planning permission.

5.8 Observations

5.8.1 There are no observations on file.

5.9 Further Responses

5.9.1 There are no further responses on file.

6 Assessment

6.1 Having examined the appeal details and all other documentation on file, including submissions / observations, the reports of the local authority and inspected the site, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Design
- Car parking
- Flooding
- Appropriate Assessment

6.2 Principle of development

6.2.1 The appeal site is within the Town or Village Centre /Mixed Use zone. Objective LIZO-02 states that it is an objective of the Council to *provide for, protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town/village centres, through consolidating development, encouraging a mix of uses and maximising the use of land, to ensure the efficient use of infrastructure and services*

6.2.2 Funeral parlours are an open for consideration use in the Town or Village Centre /Mixed Use zone. In broad terms I would not be opposed to a Funeral Parlour within Tullamore Town Centre. Funeral Parlours are a vital community service, and I consider the principle of the development to be acceptable subject to a full assessment of the proposed development.

6.3 Design

6.3.1 The proposed development includes works to the shopfront comprising of the replacement of the eastern and western window panels with doors and an updated signage.

6.3.2 I refer the Coimisiún to Drawing No. EK-24-005 'Proposed Shopfront Elevation submitted as part of the applicants Further Information response which shows the proposed elevation and shopfront signage. I am satisfied that the proposed elevational treatment and signage are acceptable. In coming to this conclusion I have considered the Offaly County Council Shopfront Leaflet, '*Guide to Shopfronts and Signs*' and

6.4 Car Parking

- 6.4.1 The third-party appeal outlines concerns that the proposed development, which does not provide any car parking would not comply with Objective DMS-102 of the *Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027*. The appellant has concerns that the Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan submitted by the applicant at further information stage lacks credibility. Concerns are also raised that as the applicant has no control over the use of the car parking spaces to the front of the proposed funeral parlour that vehicles would park illegally as close as possible to the funeral parlour and then load / unload creating strain on an already busy street or that informal measures will be applied to ensure they can use the parking spaces (such as traffic cones, roping off spaces or staff preventing cars from parking). In addition to this, the third-party notes that the applicant requires a business loading bay to facilitate loading and unloading of coffins. there is no loading bay in the immediate vicinity. The outcome of this would be that the proposed development would lead to traffic congestion within Tullamore.
- 6.4.2 In response the first party states that the application material states that the proposed development would cater for 2-3 funerals per week and that it is intended to have the deceased in repose and open to the public between the hours of 4pm to 8 pm and that only one car parking space is required for delivery and extraction of the deceased. The first party also state that a hearse would not be parked at this location on a permanent basis and that staff parking and mourning is not required to the front of the premises as a local car park owner has made their car park available to the operators of the funeral parlour. This car park is located approximately 60m southwest of the subject site and is another car parking option to mourners in proximity to the proposed development.
- 6.4.3 I note the contents of the third-party appeal with respect to the credibility of the Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan, while I acknowledge that that the author is not a traffic engineer, I am satisfied that the information provided within this report is acceptable. I note that both the area planner and the area engineer were satisfied with the information provided.

- 6.4.4 Having regard to DMS-102 of the *Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027* the proposed change of use would attract the need to provide a maximum of 4 no. car parking spaces. There are car parking spaces to the front of the building, however, these are pay and display public parking.
- 6.4.5 The appeal site is located within the town centre of Tullamore and while I note that a funeral parlour has different characteristics to a standard commercial premises, in broad terms I would not be opposed to the reduction in car parking to zero *per se* at this central location. In this regard, having been on site, I note that there are a number of alternative on-street parking options available and the site is accessible on foot. In addition to this, there a number of off-street parking options available within reasonable proximity to the appeal site such as the Bridge Street Shopping Centre.
- 6.4.6 I note that Appendix 1 of the first party appeal response provides a letter from the Central Hotel which states that car parking will be made available for the proposed funeral home. While I make the Coimisiún aware that this is not legal contract between the parties, it does give an indication that car parking is available in the area for mourners using the funeral home.
- 6.4.7 In overall terms, I am satisfied that there is sufficient parking available within the town centre of Tullamore and that the proposed change of use would not lead to unsustainable traffic congestion in the area.

Hearse

- 6.4.8 Notwithstanding the above, I do have concerns with respect to the lack of a dedicated set down area for the hearse to load and unload. The first party appeal response states that the loading and unloading of the coffin would be undertaken the parking area to the front of the building. While I noted on the day of my site visit, that car parking spaces to the front of the property were available and that there were a number of on street car parking spaces available in proximity to the appeal site, the car parking spaces to the front of the building are public and the applicant has no control over when or for what duration these parking spaces can be used.
- 6.4.9 In addition to this, I note the Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan submitted by way of Further Information states that if the car parking space to the front of the building is occupied then it is intended to use the nearest car parking space to the premises and the coffin can be transported on the pavement a short distance by trolley.

Again, the applicant does not have any discretion as to where these spaces may be any car parking space could be on the opposite side of the road.

6.4.10 In my opinion, the lack of dedicated parking for the hearse is a serious constraint associated with the appeal site. Firstly, I would have concerns with respect to the dignity of the deceased as there is no guarantee that a parking space would be available in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. Secondly, loading or unloading the coffin on the road has the potential to cause traffic congestion on a busy street within the town centre. Finally, the footpaths around the appeal site are narrow and I have concerns that the use of the footpath for moving the coffin would mean that pedestrians may have to step onto the road to allow the coffin to pass. This has the potential to be a hazard for pedestrians.

6.4.11 The Coimisiún may be of the opinion that this matter could be dealt with by way of the Council designating a car parking space as hearse parking to the front of the premises, however, in my opinion this is a matter for the local authority and can not be dealt with by way of planning condition and therefore refusal is recommended.

Pedestrians

6.4.12 Concerns are also raised with respect to the impact the mourners queuing to enter the building would cause constant pedestrian congestion, 3 days a week and would be hazard for existing users of the footpath.

6.4.13 On my site visited I noted that the footpath to the front of the appeal site is narrow and would not be suitable for the purposes of queueing to enter the funeral parlour. Notwithstanding this, I refer the Coimisiún to Figure 4.1 of the Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan submitted by way of Further Information which shows a queueing procedure for mourners. This shows that mourners would form a queue along the east gable elevation of the building within a small public square. To facilitate this a stanchion system using ropes would discreetly define the queueing area is proposed to be used. The third-party appeal questions if it would be acceptable to rope off public areas to serve a private business. In my opinion, there is little difference between the queueing system proposed and similar queueing arrangements for businesses in town centres such as nightclubs. In addition to this, Drawing No. EKPL-25-004 '*Proposed floor plans, elevations and sections*' indicates that the eastern door would be used to allow mourners into the building, and the western door would be used to allow

mourners exist the building. I am satisfied that that the proposed queueing procedure in combination with entry / exist system would ensure that the proposed development would not impact on pedestrian safety in the area.

6.5 Flooding

6.5.1 have consulted the flood mapping system (www.floodinfo.ie) and I note that the pertinent maps are currently under review. However, it would appear that the appeal site was previously within Flood Zone 'C.'

6.5.2 Having considered all the foregoing; I consider the proposed change of use would not increase the risk of flood either within the site itself or the surrounding area. The proposal is acceptable from a flood risk perspective.

7 AA Screening

7.1 I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The application is for the change of use of existing commercial unit into funeral parlour, minor changes to the front entrance together with all associated site works in Tullamore town centre, Co. Offaly.

7.2 The subject site is not located within or adjacent to a European Site. The nearest designated site is the Charleville Wood SAC (Site code: 000571) which is 1.1km to the south-west of the site. In addition to this, the Clara Bog SAC (Site code: 000572) is located c. 8km to the north-west of the site and the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code: 002162) is located c. 10.7km to the south of the site, the Raheenmore Bog SAC (Site code: 000582) is located c. 11.5km to the north-east of the site, and the Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog SAC (Site code: 000859) is located 13.5km to the south-west of the site. The Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA and the Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA are located c. 15.4km to the south of the site.

7.3 In addition to this, the appeal site is located c. 322m to the south of the Grand Canal pNHA (Site code: 002104), c.1.5km to the north-east of Charleville Wood pNHA (Site code: 000571) c. 4.1km to the south-east of the Ballyduff Esker pNHA (Site code: 000885), c.5.3km to the north of Hawkswood Bog NHA (Site code: 002355), c. 5.7km to the north-east of the Screggan Bog NHA (Site code: 000921) and 6.2km to the south-west of the Daingean Bog NHA (Site code: 002033).

- 7.4 There is no hydrological link between the subject site and the European sites.
- 7.5 Having considered the nature, scale, and location of the proposed development, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site.
- 7.6 This determination is based on:
- Small scale of the development.
 - The appeal site is connected to public water and wastewater infrastructure.
 - Distance from European sites.
 - No hydrological connections to the European sites.
- 7.7 I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 7.8 Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 I recommend that the permission be refused.

9 Reasons and Considerations

- 9.1 Having regard to the absence of a designated parking/ set down area associated with the hearse at the subject site and the location of the site in Tullamore Town Centre, it is considered the proposed change of use to a funeral parlour would result in an inappropriate use given the absence of parking / set down area associated with the hearse and would result in undue congestion due, would result in serious pedestrian and traffic hazard, and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought

to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Ronan Murphy
Planning Inspector

13 October 2025

Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ACP-322997-25
Proposed Development Summary	Change of use of existing commercial unit into funeral parlour, minor changes to the front entrance together with all associated site works
Development Address	Main street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
	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)	☐ Yes, it is a 'Project.' Proceed to Q2. ☒ No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	
☒ 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 and 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?	
☒ 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.	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)	

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 ☐	
No ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____ Date: _____