



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ACP-323231-25

Development	Retention of partially constructed staff accommodation building to be used in connection with applicant's construction business and all associated site works.
Location	Cooltrimegish, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan.
Planning Authority	Monaghan County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2460244
Applicant(s)	Lough Egish Cross Ltd
Type of Application	Retention Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse permission
Type of Appeal	First Party v Decision
Appellant(s)	Lough Egish Cross Ltd
Observer(s)	None.
Date of Site Inspection	6 th February 2026
Inspector	Dan Aspell

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1.1. The site location is Cooltrimegish, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan. The application red line area includes a carpark and an existing staff accommodation building which are the subject of the retention application. The stated site area is 0.134ha.
- 1.1.2. The carpark and accommodation building form part of a larger commercial & office premises extending to the east, and an area of open land extending to the west. The site is accessed from the R180 road which adjoins the site to the south. Adjoining the site to the north is an area comprising water, marshland and trees near Lough Egish. There are a number of large commercial premises in the surrounding area.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1.1. The proposed development generally comprises the retention of a staff accommodation building to be used in connection with applicant's construction business. The building is 2-storey and has a stated area of 305sqm.
- 2.1.2. The applicant submitted architectural, landscape and engineering drawings; a Traffic report and engineering further information response letter; bird survey (referred to as a heritage report); and a report from the applicant's planning consultant.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. Monaghan County Council issued a notification to refuse retention permission for 3 no. reasons, summarised as follows:
 - Reason 1: Refusal reason refers to Development Plan Policy WSP1 and Section 15.10.8. Application site is not suitable for the type of accommodation due in large part to the lack of local services and facilities. Proposal is contrary to Policy WSP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031;
 - Reason 2: Refusal reason refers to Development Plan Policy CP1 and Sections 15.23-15.23.8. Applicant has not satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the regional road in terms

of road safety, forward and rear visibility at the entrance, and entrance visibility splays. Proposal is deemed unacceptable as it would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard and would be contrary to the Development Plan;

- Reason 3: Applicant has not demonstrated that the proposed development will not adversely impact the conservation of Lough Egish pNHA. Proposal is deemed contrary to Policies HCLP6 and HCLP7 of the Development Plan.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning report: The report in response to further information assessed the proposed development against the Monaghan County Development Plan 2031-2025. It recommended refusal for 3 no. reasons, generally as per the decision to refuse. I note the following points:

- Principle of development: Report states there is no provision in Development Plan for 'staff accommodation' as applied for. Applicant further information response sets out need for staff accommodation;
- Site: Site is at/near Lough Egish, west of buildings associated with Lough Egish Creamery. Site has recently been infilled with stone. Roadside boundary is undefined. Adjacent building signage reads "Private Hostel Accommodation";
- Planning history: Report refers to open enforcement file (Ref. E45 2024) relating to unauthorised development at the site. Report refers to historical application (Ref. 06/1304) relating to filling-in/hardcore surfacing at the site refused due to impacts on Lough Egish proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA);
- Location: The initial Planner Report stated Lough Egish is considered a Tier 6 settlement (Dispersed Rural Community) which comprises a cluster of industrial & residential development. Report stated fundamental concerns with the unsustainable nature of the development at this location. Applicant should demonstrate the proposal comprises a sustainable form of housing and that there is adequate infrastructure. In response to further information the Planner Report stated concerns the site is not suitable for this type of accommodation due to the lack of local services & facilities. Accommodation of this nature would

be appropriate in a much more urban setting such as a large village or town.
Proposal is contrary to Policy WSP1 of Development Plan 2025-2031;

- Accommodation development: Report stated Development Plan Section 15.8 states multi-unit residential developments will not be permitted outside designated settlements. Report stated the Authority had fundamental concerns with the proposal and that the applicant does not comment regarding how proposal would comply with Development Plan Section 15.7.1 (residential development). When considered as a Multi-Unit Development the proposal fails to comply with relevant standards. Planner report noted the applicant view that the proposal is not residential development, multi-unit residential development, or a hostel, and that normal residential development standards do not apply as it is a temporary 5-day staff accommodation facility for construction staff who work locally in the applicant's construction company. Report noted the applicant's reference to cases decided by the Board regarding similar staff accommodation with no private or public open space but some recreational / communal open space. Report noted information submitted by applicant relating to facilities in the area and relationship of the accommodation to the business;
- Recreational facilities / Open space: Proposal does not include any public or private open space;
- Access: The Municipal District report stated applicant did not demonstrate forward & rear visibility or visibility splays at the entrance; applicant failed to provide a Road Safety Audit in accordance with Development Plan. Applicant has not demonstrated how proposal will connect to public footpath;
- Surface water: Response to further information provides information on surface water services, interceptors, drainage systems, pipelines, foul water drainage, and water protection plan checklist;
- Landscaping: There is a significant change in levels on site. Further information response includes landscape proposals, sections, details of infill material, and fill material to be retained/assessed. Further information response;
- Lough Egish proposed Natural Heritage Area: Report stated the application site is fully within Lough Egish pNHA which is an important area of ornithological scientific interest. Report referred to fundamental concerns in terms of unknown

impacts on biodiversity. Further information response included an ornithological survey. Report noted the survey stated the size of the area is very small and would not have a significant impact on local bird populations. Report considered the submitted information is lacking as it deals with ornithological matters only and no information on other ecological matters relating to the pNHA;

- Scenic routes / views: Due to the location between existing buildings and a band of mature vegetation on the lake edge it will not adversely affect views of the lake from the road;
- Flood risk: No issue arising;
- Internal reports: Report refers to a report from the Water Services section which stated no objection subject to conditions, however no report is on the case file;
- Appropriate Assessment: Report stated site is removed from any Natura 2000 site. No significant pathway connectors in the vicinity. AA not necessary;
- EIA: Proposal can be excluded;
- Conclusion: Planner Report concluded the proposal is unacceptable at this location due to lack of local services and facilities. Report referred to road safety and environment/ecological impact concerns. Refusal is recommended.

Other Technical Reports

- 3.2.2. Municipal Engineer: Report on the application requested, amongst other things, drawings showing road sections; visibility splays; forward and rear visibility; obstructions; entrance & exit arrangements; signage and road markings; and a Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit.
- 3.2.3. Report in response to further information recommended refusal for 3 no. reasons. Report stated applicant did not demonstrate that forward and rear visibility at the entrance can be received; that applicant did not demonstrate that the visibility splays at the entrance can be achieved; and that the applicant failed to provide a Road Safety Audit for the entrance and internal layout.
- 3.2.4. Roads Section: Report on the application requested submission of a Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit. A report from the Roads Section in response to further information is not on the Commission case file. I note that none is referred to in the Planning

Authority Planner Report. A Roads Section report in response to further information was submitted with the appeal and is available on the Planning Authority public file.

3.2.5. Environmental: Reports stated no objection subject to drainage, waste and construction management conditions.

3.2.6. Environmental Health Officer: No objection.

3.2.7. Water Services: None.

3.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

3.3.1. An Taisce: None.

3.3.2. Inland Fisheries Ireland: None.

3.3.3. Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage: None.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

3.4.1. None.

4.0 **Planning History**

4.1.1. No recent records.

5.0 **Policy Context**

5.1. **National guidelines and strategies**

Planning Design Standards for Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2025;
Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030, noting in particular Objectives 1 to 5;

Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS) 2019;

TII publications DN-GEO-03060 'Geometric Design of Junctions' (2017); DN-GEO-043031 'Rural Road Link Design' (2017); and 'Road Safety Audit GE-STY-01024 December 2017';

Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters, Inland Fisheries Ireland, 2016;

TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2014;

Planning System & Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009;

Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities 2007.

5.2. Development Plan

- 5.2.1. I have reviewed the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 as the relevant development plan. The site is not zoned. In particular I note the following policies, provisions and objectives of the Development Plan:

Core Strategy Strategic Objective CSSO1: To ensure that new development within the County will provide for sustainable and balanced development that enables economic growth, delivery of accessible and high- quality infrastructure and services, and guides population growth in accordance with the settlement strategy.

Dispersed Rural Communities Objective SHO7: To support the viability of dispersed rural communities as locations for sustainable housing and to seek to encourage the growth of Tier 6 settlements generally in the form of single dwellings.

Section 2.6.6 Tier 6 – Dispersed Rural Communities.

Core Strategy Policy CSP1 To preserve the character of Tier 5 and Tier 6 rural settlements by restricting the scale of development permitted within them, having regard to infrastructure availability and capacity, and to ensure integration with the rural character of the area and the satisfactory provision of infrastructure services.

Rural Settlement Policies Policy RDP1 To permit small scale residential development reflective of the character of the existing settlement in accordance with the relevant criteria set out Section 2.11 in Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Section 4.7 Economic Development.

EDO4: “To enhance the competitiveness of rural areas by supporting innovation in rural economic development and enterprise, through the diversification of the rural

economy into new sectors and services, including ICT-based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability”.

EDO6: “To assist in the establishment or expansion of industrial, commercial or other such endeavours that will provide increased employment opportunities in the County, subject to normal development management, environmental and technical requirements”.

EDO7: “To promote the use of appropriate lands at Lough Egish for the development of employment generating, industrial and other such uses, including self-build units and the provision of serviced sites, to enhance and contribute to its growth as a centre for industrial development”.

Section 6.2 ‘Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network’.

Section 6.6.2 ‘National Designated Sites’ and Table 6.3 ‘National Designated Sites – Proposed National Heritage Areas (pNHAs).

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Policy HCLP6: Protect, conserve and enhance natural heritage, insofar as practicable having regard to the remit of the Council; including Natura 2000 sites (SPAs and SACs), proposed Natura Heritage Areas (pNHAs), other designated sites, and non-designated areas of high nature conservation value known as locally important areas which also serve as ‘Stepping Stones’ for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, improving the ecological coherence of Natura 2000 sites.

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Policy HCLP7: Prevent the carrying out of development that would destroy or significantly alter, damage or interfere with the integrity of a pNHA/NHA, or any of its species, communities, habitats; landforms or geological or geomorphological features; or on its diversity of natural attributes.

Scenic Routes Policy SRP2 “To protect the scenic quality of lakes by prohibiting development located between a public road and a lake where the development would interrupt a view of the lake or adversely affect its setting or its wildlife habitat. Development may be permitted between a public road and the lakeshore where the development is screened from the lake by existing topography or vegetation. An exception to this policy may be made for short term let tourist accommodation or recreational development where a specific need has been identified. Any such

proposal should be sensitively sited and designed. Development on high exposed sites overlooking lakes or waterways shall be resisted”.

Regional Road Policy RRP5 Access and road design details on Regional Roads shall comply with TII Rural Road Link Design DN-GEO-03031. Any development with the potential to impact on the carrying capacity and/or safety of the Regional Road shall include proposals to avoid, remedy or mitigate the impact. Such proposals may include the payment of a contribution toward the cost of any required mitigation works.

Natural and Built Heritage Objective NBHO5 To have regard to nature conservation issues when considering proposals for development which may detrimentally impact on habitats, species, or features worthy of protection.

Section 14.6 Industry, Enterprise and Employment.

Section 15.8 Multi-Unit Residential Developments.

Section 15.10.8 Integrated Living Centres/Accommodation Centres.

Integrated Living Centres/Accommodation Centres Policy WSP1: Proposals for serviced and sustainable neighbourhood developments/ integrated living centres/accommodation centres shall comply with Section 15.10.8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Section 15.12 Industrial and Commercial Developments.

Section 15.24 Car Parking Standards.

Car Parking Standards Policy CP1: Proposals for car parking shall comply with Section 15.24 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Section 15.23 Road Access Standards, incl. 15.23.1 Visibility Splays Agreement, 15.23.2 Minimum Visibility Standards for Non-Urban Roads, 15.23.3 Minimum Required Sight Distances for Urban Roads, 15.23.4 Visibility Arrangements at the Access, 15.23.5 Forward and Rear Visibility on the Priority Road, 15.23.6 Other Visibility Requirements, 15.23.7 Location of Accesses and 15.23.8 Access Details.

Appendix 9 Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA)

Appendix 10 Road Safety Audit

Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan 2020-2025

County Monaghan Heritage Plan 2012-2017

Lough Egish Community Plan 2020-2025: A document entitled 'Lough Egish Community Plan 2020-2025' is publicly available on the Monaghan County Council website. I have reviewed this document.

5.3. **Natural Heritage Designations**

- 5.3.1. The site is within Lough Egish Proposed Natural Heritage Area. Dundalk Bay SAC and Dundalk Bay SPA are the closest European Sites at 28.2km to the east.

6.0 **Environmental Impact Assessment screening**

- 6.1.1. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environment impact assessment (See Form 1 & 2 Appendix 1 of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, I consider that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The development, therefore, does not trigger requirement for EIA screening and an EIAR is not required.

7.0 **The Appeal**

7.1. **Grounds of First-Party Appeal**

- 7.1.1. A first-party appeal was received, prepared by the applicant's planning consultant, the main points of which I summarise as follows:

- Site: Site is brownfield and adjacent the 'Tusker' head office. Site is located in Lough Egish which is a commercial hub with a mix of community and local facilities. Lough Egish is one of the most commercialised settlements in Monaghan. Appeal sets out details of companies in the area;
- Need for development: Appeal sets out details of the applicant's business, and their need for the staff accommodation. Appeal states that staff working away from home are required to be accommodated as part of their employment. Due to shortage of accommodation applicant had nowhere to house their construction staff. Due to critical shortage of labour and shortage of

accommodation applicant erected the development to ensure continuity of service. Rooms rented locally are no longer available and are now available for local people (appeal refers to letters from local auctioneers confirming same, however none are included with the appeal). The accommodation is critical for the continued operation and growth of the Tusker business;

- Staff accommodation: Appeal sets out details of the history of employers providing staff accommodation, and details of shortages of construction workers and accommodation, and impacts on tourism accommodation. Appeal refers to decisions from the Board supporting comparable developments;
- Nature of development: Appeal states accommodation is well constructed and designed for staff needs (each bedroom is ensuite; shared kitchen & communal area). A maintenance company cleans the premises and provides food & laundry services. There is a locational need for the premises on the site. Premises serves 9-10 men. Staff are transported by Tusker fleet vehicles;
- Nature of applicant's operation: Appeal states the applicant is an indigenous business and major local employer. Construction staff operate at sites locally, nationally and in the UK. Staff stay for 3/4/5 days before heading to another site or home. Staff often undertake training and avail of social and administrative support in the adjacent Tusker headquarters. Staff stay on a temporary/short-term basis. The rooms are largely vacant at weekends;
- Policy: Development Plan supports local businesses and employment. Appeal states the proposal aligns with Development Plan 2025-2031 Section 4.7, Policies EDO4, EDO6 & EDO7, and Section 14.6;
- Bird surveys: Two bird surveys were carried out. The ornithologist confirmed no birds were identified on the site. Having regard to the brownfield nature of the site no loss of habitat or breeding ground has arisen;
- Access: Proposal is on a regional road within the 60kmh zone where traffic calming is in place. The traffic report confirms the appropriate entrance sightlines are provided. The drawings show the required 65m sightlines are achievable in line with DMURS. 13 no. parking spaces are provided, however all staff are moved to and from the site in the applicant's fleet vehicles. Appeal states the Roads Section had no objection. Appeal states a fleet of vans and

crew cabs already travel to and from the site; the access is existing and there will be no significant intensification. Appeal refers to Development Plan Sections 15.23.1, 15.23.2, 15.23.3, 15.23.4, 15.23.4, 15.23.6, & 15.23.7 and states Sections 15.3 and 15.23.7 are not relevant. Appeal states forward & rear visibility accords with DMURS and is confirmed in the submitted traffic report;

- Grounds of appeal:
- Reason 1: Reason 1 is not relevant as the development is not an integrated living centre or accommodation centre, which are not related to staff accommodation. Those forms of accommodate are support services. Applicant has no objection to a condition to restrict use of the accommodation to prevent any form of long-term living. Notwithstanding that Section 15.10.8 does not apply, there are adequate community facilities in walking distance which provide sufficient social activities for staff. Appeal refers to a community development company, GAA grounds; community centre; primary school; churches; sports hall, gym; meeting rooms; bar/lounge and bus services;
- Reason 2: Reason 2 is unreasonable, unsubstantiated and not sustainable as the site access is within the speed limit and appropriate sightlines have been provided to comply fully with DMURS. The Roads Section report clearly states no objection. Many of the quoted Development Plan sections are only relevant to sites outside the speed limit. A supplementary traffic report which confirms the development would not have an adverse impact on the regional road in terms of safety, forward & rear visibility at the entrance; and entrance visibility splays. Recent additional safety measures were completed on the road including a ramp at the site entrance. The development can be adequately served by existing access and would not give rise to any traffic safety concerns;
- Reason 3: Reason 3 is unreasonable as no loss of habitat has occurred, the development has not impacted protected species, and there has been no significant infilling of the pNHA. Appeal questions the merit of a commercial site dating back decades being in the pNHA, and states inclusion of the site may have been a mapping error/inadvertent as site contains no habitat for protected species. Appeal acknowledges a limited amount of infilling took place on the site and was on an existing hardcore area and a small amount of grassland.

There were no trees in the area. The ornithologist confirmed the grassland area was too short to provide a breeding habitat. Appeal includes historical aerial photographs and states the development took place largely on an area to the rear of existing buildings which was brownfield and *appeared* to contain hardcore and 'a portal frame of sorts'. Appeal states infilling was minor and there was no loss of habitat. Appeal states the site does not and did not include 'wet and dry grassland, hedge and scrub, swamp, freshwater marsh, lake islands, heath and raised bog' and should not form part of the pNHA. Appeal is satisfied the works did not damage the pNHA and did not result in loss of habitat or breeding birds;

- Ornithological survey: Appeal sets out points from the submitted ornithological survey, stating there was minimal usage of the area by birds; the infilling was insignificant in relation to numbers of bird species observed during the surveys and thus would not have any impact on breeding or wintering birds. The lakeshore vegetation adjacent the development extends considerably before any open water. Bird species assemblage along this part of the lake is low in summer and winter;
- Planning assessment: The quality of accommodation is high and conforms with all Building Regulations. Rooms are attractive, well laid out, and comfortable. The communal kitchen/dining area is spacious and sufficient for staff needs. The siting to the rear of existing buildings and the height is appropriate and integrates well into the area.

7.1.2. The appeal includes a supplementary traffic report prepared by the applicant's traffic & transportation planning consultants, which I summarise as follows:

- The report comprises a technical review of the decision. It states that the author understands that the development generates 1 to 2 bus type vehicles each day;
- Report sets out details of Part VIII works undertaken by the Council (Ref. 22/8004) which it states involved works to the junctions along the R180 and R181 roads including new footpaths, redefined carriageway, traffic calming and pedestrian crossing measures outside the site. Report states that having implemented those works the Council have approved the design of those works including the current vehicular and pedestrian access to the application site.

Report states the Council are now applying the policy objectives set out in Development Plan Sections 15.23 and 15.23.8 to those works. Report states the author is not aware of any technical deficiency in the new road layout;

- Report states that Refusal reason 2 was not generated by the Council Roads Section, who raised no objection in their report. The refusal should not have contained reference to road policies which apply to non-urban roads, save for Policy 15.23.3. None of the other policies set out within the refusal from Sections 15.23 to 15.23.8 of the current Development Plan are applicable;
- Existing road constraints restrict overtaking and determine the extent and location of visibility sightlines. This is particularly relevant within the existing site access where the dedicated zebra crossing incorporates a raised table. Solid centre line road marking and cross hatching chevrons are also provided upstream & downstream of the crossing. The new road markings, raised speed table, & zebra crossings means the dynamic speed in the area is expected to be lower and vehicle overtaking constrained. The R180 contains a bus route. As per DMURS Table 4.2 visibility sightlines of 65m are shown in both directions;
- Additional traffic measures within the site access could be introduced in the form of a stop sign and stop road markings (images provided).

7.1.3. The Traffic Report includes a copy of the Local Authority Roads Section report in response to further information. Whilst the appeal refers to a letter from local auctioneers, none are included in the appeal on file.

7.2. **Planning Authority Response**

7.2.1. None.

7.3. **Observations**

7.3.1. None.

8.0 **Assessment**

8.1.1. Having regard to the foregoing; having examined the application, appeal, Planning Authority reports, and all other documentation on file including all of the submissions

received in relation to the appeal; and having inspected the area within and around the site; and having regard to relevant local, regional and national policies, objectives and guidance, I consider the main issues in this appeal are as follows:

- Refusal reason 1;
- Refusal reason 2;
- Refusal reason 3;
- Related matters raised in the course of the appeal, including quality of development / development standards.

8.2. Refusal reason 1

8.2.1. Refusal reason 1 referred to Development Plan Policy WSP1 'Integrated Living Centres/Accommodation Centres Policy' and Section 15.10.8 ('Integrated Living Centres/Accommodation Centres'). It stated generally that the site is not suitable for the type of accommodation due in large part to the lack of local services and facilities, and that the proposal is contrary to Policy WSP1 of the Development Plan. The appellant states Policy WSP1 and Section 15.10.8 are not relevant to this case.

8.2.2. Policy WSP1 refers to 'Integrated Living Centres/Accommodation Centres' and 'serviced and sustainable neighbourhood developments/ integrated living centres/ accommodation centres'. Whilst not clearly defined in the Development Plan, I am not satisfied Policy WSP1 and Section 15.10.8 apply to the subject case, and instead apply primarily to accommodation providing supports including for international protection applicants. I acknowledge similarities in these forms of development including in terms of accommodation with supports, and the appellant's reference to the provision of food, cleaning and laundry services, however I do not consider these Development Plan provisions are directly applicable in this case.

Principle of development

8.2.3. The application is for retention and completion of a staff accommodation building to be used in connection with applicant's adjacent construction business. I am satisfied the Development Plan does not specifically address development of this type.

8.2.4. The appellant sets out details of their need for the development to provide accommodation for staff working away from home, and the critical nature of the

development for the continued operation of their construction business. The appeal sets out details of the lack of short-term accommodation in the area for their staff, and the benefits of the development in freeing up accommodation for other users.

8.2.5. I note existing signage adjacent the application site on the western elevation of the applicant's commercial and office premises which reads "Lough Egish Private Accommodation". If this signage relates to the subject development, it is unclear why staff accommodation would be advertised publicly. I also note the letter from local auctioneers referenced by the appellant as being submitted and which they state illustrates a lack of accommodation in the area for the staff is not on the case file.

8.2.6. The site is located in Lough Egish. Lands in the area are not zoned in the County Development Plan. Lough Egish is considered to be 'Tier 6 – Dispersed Rural Communities' in the Development Plan Settlement Hierarchy. Tier 6 settlements are not identified as towns or villages in the Core Strategy (Map 2.1).

8.2.7. Regarding the Development Plan, I note the following in particular:

- Objectives CSSO1 and SHO7, Section 2.6.6, and Policies CSP1: I am not satisfied the appellant has demonstrated the development accords with the Settlement Strategy or would provide for sustainable housing. In this regard I note in particular the Development Plan emphasis on the provision of single dwellings in Tier 6 areas;
- Objectives EDO4, EDO6 and EDO7 as referenced by the appellant: These Objectives seek generally to support diversification of the rural economy; the expansion of industrial, commercial and other such endeavours; and employment generating, industrial, and other such uses. Whilst I acknowledge the appellant's points as to the role of the development within their construction business, I do not consider the appellant has clearly demonstrated how the existing staff accommodation aligns with these Objectives.

8.2.8. Whilst I acknowledge the appellant's points regarding their need for the development and its role in their wider operation, I do not consider the appellant has satisfactorily demonstrated whether there is sufficient policy basis for the development in the County Development Plan 2025-2031, or whether this form and scale of accommodation in this location aligns with the Development Plan, in particular Objectives CSSO1 & SHO7 and Policy CSP1.

8.3. Refusal reason 2

- 8.3.1. Regarding access arrangements, the existing car park and vehicular circulation in the site (approx. 725sqm) mainly comprises compacted stone fill. Where the vehicular access joins the public footpath is an area of tarmac. During my site visit vehicles were parked in the car park, however no parking layout or markings were in place, and minimal boundary markings or barriers were around the car park.
- 8.3.2. The application includes for retention of the use of the existing entrance onto the public road; permission to complete same; and all associated site works. The layout submitted with the application showed 13 no. car parking spaces to be marked out on the gravel drive. The response to further information included a 'landscape' layout which indicated the parking and access area to be finished in concrete, again with 13 no. car parking spaces, including 1 no. electric vehicle space.
- 8.3.3. Refusal reason 2 stated generally that the applicant had not satisfactorily demonstrated that the development would not have an adverse impact on the regional road in terms of road safety, forward & rear visibility at the entrance, and entrance visibility splays. It stated the proposal was deemed unacceptable as it would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard and would be contrary to the Development Plan.
- 8.3.4. I have reviewed the information submitted by the applicant to the Planning Authority, including the traffic report, and the supplementary traffic report submitted to the Commission. I have reviewed the Planning Authority internal reports on the case file.
- 8.3.5. The Municipal Engineer report on file in response to further information recommended refusal for 3 no. reasons. The report stated the applicant had not demonstrated that forward and rear visibility at the entrance can be received; had not demonstrated that the visibility splays at the entrance can be achieved; and that the applicant failed to provide a Road Safety Audit for the entrance and internal layout. Refusal reason 2 appears to have been based on this recommendation.
- 8.3.6. The appeal states the Planning Authority Roads Section had no objection. The appeal includes a copy of the Roads Section report in response to further information. Whilst a copy of that report is on the Planning Authority online public record, a copy is not included on the Commission case file. The Commission may seek to request a copy of same for the case file. The available copies of that report

indicate the Roads Section reviewed the further information submitted in respect of Appendix 10 ('Road Safety Audit') and 11 ('Access Details') of the Development Plan and had no objection. The appeal makes limited reference to the Municipal District Engineer report and related recommendation for refusal. I note the Roads Section report at application stage requested submission of a Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit.

Assessment

Visibility splays

- 8.3.7. Regarding visibility from the site access, the appeal indicates visibility splays from the access of 65m in both directions. The site appears to be in the 60kmh zone. The appellant states that bus services serve the area. There is a bus stop across the road on the R180, although the bus route is unclear. DMURS (Section 4.4.4) indicates that visibility splays of 59m in a 60kmh zone where buses do not operate, and splays of 65m in a 60kmh zone where buses operate, are required. No vehicular access layout is currently laid out on the site or in the submitted drawings.
- 8.3.8. Having reviewed the submitted drawings, and having visited the site, I am generally satisfied sufficient visibility can be achieved from the site access. I have had regard to the fact that the site is on the outside of a bend along the R180; to the existing slope within the site; the existing nature and layout of the public road, and adjacent boundaries and structures. I am satisfied outstanding details in this specific regard can be resolved by conditions requiring agreement of an appropriate access layout.

Forward and rear visibility

- 8.3.9. Regarding forward and rear visibility as referenced in the refusal reason, the applicant does not specifically address whether vehicles approaching the site would have sufficient visibility of vehicles turning into/out of the site.
- 8.3.10. I note the existing road layout outside the site including solid white lines bounding a hatched median, and the horizontal alignment of the road and adjacent planting which limit visibility for traffic coming from the east. The Planning Authority internal reports did not raise specific issue in this regard, including the principle of vehicles crossing the median to turn right into and out of the site.
- 8.3.11. Development Plan Section 15.23.5 refers to 'Forward and Rear Visibility on the Priority Road' and states that "*forward visibility depends on the same factors as Y*

distances and are calculated as per TII requirements for accesses onto non-urban roads (Table 15.4) or as per DMURS for accesses onto urban roads". Development Plan Section 15.23.2 defines urban roads as a road which is in a built-up area with a speed limit of 60kph or less. I am satisfied the subject site is located on an urban road. As set out above I consider that DMURS requires unobstructed visibility of 65m in this case. I note the appellant appears to accept this section of the Development Plan is relevant to the subject case.

- 8.3.12. I am satisfied that approximately 70m largely unobstructed visibility of vehicles turning right into or out of the site can be achieved for vehicles approaching from the east along the R180. Having regard to the requirements of Section 15.23, I am satisfied reasonable forward and rear visibility can be achieved for the development, subject to the agreement by condition of a final access layout within the site.

Road Safety Audit (RSA)

- 8.3.13. The Planning Authority Roads Section report on the application recommended that an RSA be submitted. The applicant further information response argued that an RSA was not required. The Roads Section report in response to further information, which the appellant submits as part of the appeal, states no objection specifically in relation to Development Plan Appendix 10 ('Road Safety Audit'). In contrast, the Municipal Area Engineer report in response to further information recommended refusal on grounds of the applicant's failure to provide an RSA for the entrance and internal layout.
- 8.3.14. In their response to further information and within the submitted appeal the appellant sets out why they consider a Road Safety Audit of the development is not required. In broad terms the appellant makes the point that Part VIII works to the public road outside the site were subject to a Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit. They state the site vehicular access is well established and has recently been upgraded as part of the Part VIII works, and there is no proposal to alter the existing access. It indicates the access was designed under the umbrella of the Part VIII RSA and as such an additional RSA is not required. The appellant refers to the TII publication 'Road Safety Audit GE-STY-01024 December 2017' which they states indicates that an RSA is not required in this case. I note the further information response stated the appellant's retained road safety auditors advised that as there are no changes

proposed to the existing access or the adjacent road there is nothing for an independent road safety expert to audit.

- 8.3.15. Whilst I note the appellant's points, no information from the referenced road safety auditor is submitted on the case file. In addition, whilst I note the dropped kerb along the public footpath outside the site, no evidence is provided that the works on the subject site were constructed prior to the upgrading of the public road. Furthermore, no extracts from the referenced Part VIII RSA as it relates to the site are provided.
- 8.3.16. I also note the appellant's points regarding the lack of objection stated in the Roads Section report submitted with the appeal. I further note that the Planner Report on file made no reference to a report from the Roads Section. I consider that there is a lack of clarity between the Planning Authority reports in this regard and the case file is incomplete. The Commission may be inclined to seek further submissions from the Planning Authority in this regard, including for any outstanding internal reports on the application, including any Roads Section report in response to further information.
- 8.3.17. The appellant also states the TII publication 'Road Safety Audit GE-STY-01024 December 2017' indicates that an RSA is not required in this case. That guidance refers to national roads whereas the subject road is a regional road. Development Plan Appendix 10 states that RSAs must apply to all Development Schemes which result in a change to the road or roadside layout that is initiated and/or executed for commercial or private development on the National Road Network. Again the site is not on the national road network. However, Development Plan Section 15.1.3 'Assessments Required' states that for certain developments, additional assessments may be required as part of the planning proposal, which may include, Road Safety Audit. Whilst the appellant states that an RSA is not required as there are no changes to the layout, the application is for retention and completion and road markings and surfacing remain outstanding.
- 8.3.18. Given these points, and having regard to the position and layout of the existing access works, and the proposed completed layout, I consider that an RSA is warranted and should be undertaken prior to the commencement of development.

Parking provision

- 8.3.19. Regarding parking, the applicant proposes 13 no. car parking spaces. Development Plan Table 15.5 'Car Parking Standards' does not set out parking standards for staff

accommodation. The development is indicated as comprising 13 no. bedrooms which could accommodate 14 no. persons (12 no. single bed and 1 no. double bed). The applicant states that staff are generally brought to and from the site by the applicant's fleet vehicles and stay for 3-5 days. I note this arrangement does not clearly preclude staff initially commuting to the site with their own private vehicles. No issues in this regard were raised in the Planning Authority internal reports. Given the absence of specific standards; and the number and nature of rooms indicated; I am generally satisfied with the parking provision indicated, subject to a condition for the agreement of a parking layout. Related in this regard, the applicant states that details of the access layout and related markings and signage could be conditioned for the agreement of the Planning Authority. I consider this is warranted.

- 8.3.20. Regarding landscaping, the carpark boundary at the time of my site visit comprised a gravel berm around the perimeter. Minimal details of site boundaries are indicated on the submitted plans. I estimate the carpark surface level is 4-5m at maximum above the adjacent ground levels, with the northern carpark edge forming a steep incline to the adjacent ground. I consider that robust site boundaries are required in this regard, and that corresponding details should be agreed by condition.

8.4. Refusal reason 3

- 8.4.1. Regarding natural heritage and biodiversity, refusal reason 3 stated generally that the applicant had not demonstrated the proposed development will not adversely impact the conservation of Lough Egish pNHA, and that the proposal is contrary to Development Plan Policies HCLP6 and HCLP7.

Lough Egish pNHA

- 8.4.2. The County Development Plan (Table 6.3 'National Designated Sites – Proposed National Heritage Areas (pNHAs)) identifies Lough Egish (Ref. 001605) as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). The Development Plan pNHA description states: "*The lake is primarily an area of ornithological scientific interest, and it is a good over-wintering site for Whooper and Bewick's Swans and Goldeneye. Breeding birds recorded here include Black-headed Gull, Common Sandpiper, Lapwing, Coot, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Tufted Duck and Pochard*".

8.4.3. The National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) provides a publicly available record of the extent of the pNHA (Ref. 001605) and a Site Synopsis. The Planner Report and appeal include a map showing the location of the site relative to the pNHA. The appeal includes a copy of the site synopsis. I note the following from the Synopsis:

- *The lake is located in an area of high commercial and industrial activity and Lakeland Creamery (previously Lough Egish Creamery) owns land on the south-west portion of the lake. The lake is typically bleak and open, abutting onto rough and improved grassland for the majority of the lake's circumference;*
- *The lake is primarily an area of ornithological scientific interest*
- *Botanically the lake is of marginal interest but there are some good examples of wet grassland/semi-terrestrial vegetation fringing the lake margin*
- *The waters of the lake do not appear to be polluted but any discharge into the lake should be carefully monitored as this may have an adverse effect on the wildfowl and bird populations encountered here.*
- *The lake has definite potential in terms of educational value, especially with regard to bird watching. The lake is easily accessible and there are no physical impediments to walking around the periphery of the lake.*

8.4.4. I have reviewed the ornithologist report submitted by the appellant in this regard, and related comments made in the application and appeal documents.

Development Plan

8.4.5. I note the following provisions of the Development Plan:

- Section 6.2 'Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network' which states that this Development Plan sets out to contribute towards the protection of designated ecological sites including proposed Natural Heritage Areas;
- Section 6.6.2 'National Designated Sites' which states that the National Parks and Wildlife Service has proposed 38 additional pNHAs in County Monaghan. The process of designation of NHAs is ongoing, with new sites being added or existing sites being upgraded as more information becomes available... These sites are protected under the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

- Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Policy HCLP6 which seeks to “*Protect, conserve and enhance natural heritage, insofar as practicable having regard to the remit of the Council; including Natura 2000 sites (SPAs and SACs), proposed Natura Heritage Areas (pNHAs), other designated sites, and non-designated areas of high nature conservation value known as locally important areas which also serve as ‘Stepping Stones’ for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, improving the ecological coherence of Natura 2000 sites*”.
- Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Policy HCLP7 which seeks to ‘Prevent the carrying out of development that would destroy or significantly alter, damage or interfere with the integrity of a pNHA/NHA, or any of its species, communities, habitats; landforms or geological or geomorphological features; or on its diversity of natural attributes.
- Natural and Built Heritage Objective NBHO5 which seeks ‘*To have regard to nature conservation issues when considering proposals for development which may detrimentally impact on habitats, species, or features worthy of protection.*’

Assessment

Existing site

- 8.4.6. The works comprise, in the main, an area of stone infill / raised ground levels, and the construction of a 2-storey building on it.
- 8.4.7. I acknowledge, as the appellant states, that whilst the site is within the pNHA, it is at the southern edge along the R180, and that the site was partly brownfield and adjacent commercial premises which are also within the pNHA. I have reviewed historical site photographs provided by the appellant in this regard. Based on these I estimate that approximately half the site area was previously brownfield prior to the construction of the subject development, with that the remainder, generally the western portion of the site now occupied by the carpark, was greenfield.
- 8.4.8. I note too from my site visit that whilst the open waters of the lake are typically some distance to the north (approximately 185m based on publicly available aerial mapping), on the day of my site visit waters linked to the open areas of the lake were immediately adjoining the stone infill bank of the subject development.

- 8.4.9. For completeness I also note that during my site visit the lands adjacent to the west of the application site, outside the red line area but within the blue line area of lands controlled by the applicant, and which are also within the pNHA, appeared to have been recently cleared of surface vegetation, with the exception of trees, some of which were recently cut back.
- 8.4.10. In the interests of completeness I note the Planning Authority Planner Report referred to a historical application for the laying of hardcore on the site which was refused in 2006 on grounds of the site being located within the pNHA.

Impact on pNHA

- 8.4.11. The primary issue in this regard is the impact of the development on the pNHA, and whether they comply with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan.
- 8.4.12. Policy HCLP7 seeks to prevent the carrying out of development that would destroy or significantly alter, damage or interfere with the integrity of a pNHA, or any of its species, communities, habitats; landforms or geological or geomorphological features; or on its diversity of natural attributes.
- 8.4.13. I note the findings of the content of the ornithological survey. No other technical reports addressing impacts on the pNHA are submitted. The report focuses on birds and bird habitats. I note the following points from the report:
- *During construction of the buildings, a small portion of the land had recently been filled in.*
 - *The applicant was not aware that part of the fill encroached on the Lough Egish proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).*
 - *All of the birds observed during the site visits would have been present prior to the construction of the development. The size of the area that was impacted is deemed to be very small and would not have had a significant impact on the local bird populations.*
- 8.4.14. The submitted survey does not address the provisions of the Development Plan 2025-2031 including Policy HCLP7 and whether the carrying out of the development would destroy or significantly alter, damage or interfere with the integrity of a pNHA, or any of its species, communities, habitats; landforms or geological or geomorphological features; or on its diversity of natural attributes.

- 8.4.15. I note the report considers the development in the context of the 2019-2025 County Development Plan including Section 6.2 and Policy HLP14. I have had regard to the wording of Policy HLP14 from the previous Plan. It sought to: *“To resist development in or adjacent to an NHA or pNHA (listed in Table 6.4) where it would result in the deterioration of that habitat or detrimentally impact on any species reliant on it. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate that any such development will not adversely impact on the conservation of such areas.”* The report states that to address Monaghan County Council’s concerns a bird survey was conducted.
- 8.4.16. In broad terms I am not satisfied the applicant has addressed the provisions of the County Development Plan 2025-2031 or substantive matters raised in it. The Commission may be inclined to seek further submissions in this regard, however I am satisfied this is not warranted to proceed to a decision in this case.
- 8.4.17. I note the applicant’s response to further information (Planning Consultant report) stated that the survey report concludes that the proposed development does not have any adverse impact on the NHA and has not had any impact on birds in this area. I do not observe that conclusion in the report. The appeal document (Planning Consultant report) states that having regard to the brownfield nature of the site no loss of habitat or breeding ground has arisen.
- 8.4.18. More broadly in relation to Policy HCLP7, Lough Egish pNHA has a stated area of approximately 139.186ha, and in the main comprises the open water areas of Lough Egish. The application area is 0.134ha. As such the site comprises 0.1% of the pNHA area. It is also located at the southern edge of the pNHA adjacent the public road and adjacent an existing building which has also historically located within the pNHA. I note too that approximately half the site was originally brownfield. I note the NPWS Site Synopsis states the pNHA abuts onto rough and improved grassland for the majority of the lake's circumference; that botanically the lake is of marginal interest but there are some good examples of wet grassland/semi-terrestrial vegetation fringing the lake margin; and also that the lake is primarily an area of ornithological scientific interest.
- 8.4.19. I note the Site Synopsis states that the majority of the lake’s circumference is rough and improved grassland and that botanically the lake is of marginal interest, but

there are some good examples of wet grassland/semi-terrestrial vegetation fringing the lake margin.

8.4.20. Having regard to the foregoing, I am not satisfied that the subject development warrants refusal on grounds of Policy HCLP 7, as I do not consider it could be said that the development destroyed or significantly altered, damaged or interfered with the integrity of the pNHA, or any of its species, communities, habitats; landforms or geological or geomorphological features; or on its diversity of natural attributes.

8.4.21. However, Development Plan Sections 6.2, 6.2.2. and Policy HCLP6 seek variously to protect, conserve and enhance pNHAs. Given the foregoing I am satisfied that the applicant has not clearly demonstrated that the development to date and proposed protected, conserved and enhanced the pNHA, including potential impacts on grassland and vegetation fringing the lake margin and the accessibility of the lake periphery.

8.5. Related matters raised in the course of the appeal

Quality of development / development standards

8.5.1. I note the points made by the appellant and in the Planner Report on the file regarding the standard of development. Having reviewed the Development Plan and national guidance I am satisfied there are no specific standards for this type of accommodation.

8.5.2. Internal access to the building was not available during my site visit. Photographs indicating the internal environment as constructed are provided. I could characterise the spaces shown in these images as being of a reasonable quality.

8.5.3. Regarding bedrooms, the accommodation comprises 12 no single rooms and 1 no. double room. Each room is shown as being en-suite, with storage provided in each room. Whilst the submitted reports state the premises serves men, both male and female shared w.c.'s are shown. The single bedrooms range in size from 10.2sqm to 11.3sqm and the double bedroom is indicated as measuring in the region of 15.5sqm, however all of these areas include en-suites.

- 8.5.4. Regarding communal areas, a kitchen-living room measuring approx. 75.6sqm is shown. I note the applicant states that cleaning, laundry and food services are provided on-site.
- 8.5.5. Regarding outdoor amenity areas, the submitted plans indicate an outdoor amenity space of 180sqm. The submitted layout appears to indicate this area is immediately south of the subject building, between it and the neighbouring building to the south. From my site visit this space is essentially outdoor circulation space between the two buildings, largely comprising concrete. I fail to see where the stated 180sqm is to be provided. The submitted 'Proposed Landscape Plan' submitted indicates a landscaped area which I estimate measures 17-18sqm within this space.
- 8.5.6. Car parking, cycle parking, and bin storage are proposed.
- 8.5.7. Whilst no standards for such accommodation are available, as a comparison I note that the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities and Apartment Guidelines indicate minimum areas of 7.1sqm for single bedrooms and 11.4sqm for double bedroom which the proposal generally exceeds. The Apartment Guidelines provide a minimum area of 11.5sqm for a single study bedroom with en-suite. The Apartment Guidelines indicate the minimum space requirements for kitchen/dining/living areas serving 10 and 12 persons are 3.6 sq.m and 3.3 sq.m per person respectively. Applying those requirements to the subject development would give a required provision of 46.2 - 50.4sqm which the proposal exceeds.
- 8.5.8. Regarding amenity space, the Apartment Guidelines recommend communal amenity space of 5sqm for one bedrooms. This would equate to 65sqm if applied to the subject case. The proposal appears to indicate 18sqm which would be well below this requirement if it were applied in this case,
- 8.5.9. Based on the available information, and noting again the lack of guidelines or requirements specific to this type of accommodation, in broad terms I am satisfied that the internal accommodation is of a reasonable quality.

Water services – *New issue*

- 8.5.10. Regarding foul water, the accommodation is indicated as connecting to the existing sewage system with the Tusker premises. Details of water supply are not clearly indicated. No information from Irish Water is submitted, and no information regarding capacity in terms of foul or potable water has been provided.

- 8.5.11. Regarding surface water, two different surface water layouts for the as-constructed development were submitted to the Planning Authority. Information submitted in response to further information indicated that an attenuation tank has been constructed within the carpark. The submitted drawings indicate that a filter drain, petrol interceptor and outfall to 'watercourse' are proposed. No details as to the works involved in retrospectively providing these features are provided.
- 8.5.12. The application indicates that that an attenuation tank has been constructed on the site. Whilst surface water proposals including sustainable urban drainage systems are indicated, no details as to the works involved in retrospectively providing these features are provided.
- 8.5.13. The Planner Report refers to a report from the Water Services section, however none is on the case file. The Planner Report states the Water Services section report stated no objection subject to conditions. The Commission may be inclined to seek submissions from the Planning Authority in this regard. The Environmental section report stated no objection subject to drainage, waste and construction management conditions.
- 8.5.14. Noting the information provided within the application, I consider that further details are warranted as set out above. However given the available information contained within the Planner and Environmental section reports on file, I am satisfied that refusal in this regard is not warranted.

9.0 Appropriate Assessment screening

- 9.1.1. In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and 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 any European Sites in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and is therefore excluded from further consideration. Appropriate Assessment is not required. This determination is based on the nature of the proposed works and the location and distance from nearest European site and lack of connections.

10.0 Water Framework Directive

10.1.1. The subject site is located approx. 185m from Egish Lough. The proposed development comprises retention of a partially constructed staff accommodation building to be used in connection with a construction business. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal. I have assessed the project 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 prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied 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, or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives. The reason for this conclusion is as follows: the nature of works e.g. small scale and nature of the development, and the location-distance from the nearest Water bodies. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, the proposed development will 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.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1.1. I recommend permission be **Refused**, for the reasons and consideration below.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the provisions of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, in particular to the provisions of Core Strategy Objective CSSO1, as well as Objective SHO7 and Policy CSP1, it is consider that the appellant has not satisfactorily demonstrated that there is sufficient policy basis for the subject development in the County Development Plan 2025-2031, or whether this form and scale of accommodation in this location aligns with these provisions of the Development Plan. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development is

contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and should be refused.

2. Having regard to the provisions of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, in particular Sections 6.2 and 6.2.2. and Policy HCLP6 which seek to protect, conserve and enhance proposed Natural Heritage Areas, it is considered that the appellant has not clearly demonstrated that the development and proposed development would protect, conserve and enhance Lough Egish proposed Natural Heritage Area. Accordingly it is considered that the proposed development should be refused permission in this regard.

-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.-

Dan Aspell
Inspector
31st March 2025

APPENDIX 1

Form 1: EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ACP-323231-25
Proposed Development Summary	Retention of partially constructed staff accommodation building to be used in connection with applicant's construction business and all associated site works.
Development Address	Cooltrimegish, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan.
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?	
	<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 and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	
<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 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?	
<input 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. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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)	Class 10(b)(iv) Urban development.
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"/>	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____ Date: __ 25th February 2026__

Form 2: EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	ACP-323231-25
Proposed Development Summary	Retention of partially constructed staff accommodation building to be used in connection with applicant's construction business and all associated site works.
Development Address	Cooltrimegish, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan.
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development	Proposed development comprises retention of a staff accommodation building and related works in a rural settlement. The proposed development has a modest footprint, comes forward as a standalone project, requires minimal demolition works, does not require the use of substantial natural resources, or give rise to production of significant waste, significant risk of pollution or nuisance. The development, by virtue of its type, does not pose a risk of major accident and/or disaster, human health or is vulnerable to climate change.
Location of development	The development is located in a rural settlement on greenfield and brownfield land. Whilst the site is on the edge of a pNHA and near Lough Egish the receiving location is not environmentally sensitive in terms of EIA. The site is not of historic or cultural significance. Given the scale and nature of development and mitigation proposed there will be no significant environmental effects arising.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts	Having regard to the characteristics and modest nature of the proposed development, the sensitivity of its location, 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.
Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.

Inspector: _____ Date: 25th February 2026
 DP/ADP: _____ Date: _____