



An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report

**ACP-323370-25**

<b>Development</b>	Construction of a single storey extension, relocation of shed and all associated works.
<b>Location</b>	Pollaphuca, Brownsgrrove, Galway.
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Galway County Council.
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	2560662.
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Susan Ansbro.
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission.
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Grant Permission.
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	Third Party
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Kevin and Sarah Ansbro.
<b>Observer(s)</b>	None.
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2025.
<b>Inspector</b>	Kathy Tuck

## **1.0 Site Location and Description**

- 1.1. The appeal site has a stated area of c.0.175 ha and is located to west of the local secondary road L-6494 in a rural area with predominantly agricultural use, in the townland of Pollaphuca, Co. Galway. Pollaphuca is situated c. 50km to the northeast of Galway City Centre and c.6km to the south of the border with County Roscommon.
- 1.2. The surrounding rural context is of grass fields and one-off detached houses, of various styles, scattered along the public roads. The subject site accommodates a single storey dwelling with a relatively small front garden, a larger rear garden, a small domestic shed and associated services. It is adjoined to north by a residential unit, which is a considerable larger size, on an elevated site.

## **2.0 Proposed Development**

- 2.1. The proposed development includes the construction of a single storey extension to the rear of the existing dwelling, which has stated area of c.112.5sqm. The proposed extension projects c.15.6m from the rear elevation, has a width of c.9.03m and is finished with a pitched roof profile with a ridge level of c.4.9m.
- 2.2. Permission is also sought for the relocation of the domestic shed on site and the removal of the existing wastewater treatment system and its replacement with a new system.

## **3.0 Planning Authority Decision**

### **3.1. Decision**

The Planning Authority granted planning permission for the proposed development on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025 subject to 13 no. conditions. All conditions included are considered to be standards for a residential extension.

### **3.2. Planning Authority Reports**

#### **3.2.1. Planning Reports**

The report of the Planning Office provides details of the site location and the development proposed, notes the planning history of the site, provided details of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party submission received, notes the relevant development plan policy and provides for an EIA and AA Screening determination.

The assessment considers that works proposed are acceptable in terms of the relevant development plan policy and that the proposed development is not visually intrusive and can be easily assimilated in the existing natural surrounds.

#### 3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- None receive.

#### 3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None required.

#### 3.4. Third Party Observations

The Planning Authority received 1 no. submission the grounds of which can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns in relation to the size and scale of the works proposed and feel that it will be a visually dominant and overbearing structure when viewed from neighbouring house.
- extension as proposed will dwarf the existing modest bungalow on the site as layout of the proposed extension extends some 15.282m beyond the rear building line.
- new proposed rear building line is some 3 to 4 meters behind that of adjoining house.
- southern end of neighbouring house contains living areas to make best use of the southerly aspect and the views out to the rolling countryside beyond. Due to the layout of the proposed extension these amenities will be severely impacted and will have a dominant visual impact on our house.

- Nature of the proposed extension dwarfs the existing house in terms of scale and massing and will lead to a haphazard form of development in this rural location.
- Appears to be two separate kitchen / dining rooms shown on the proposed plan and that the internal layout will form an ununified layout withing the overall house.

## 4.0 Planning History

No planning history pertaining to the subject site.

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

The subject site is situated outside of the settlement boundary or urban fringe classification within a structurally weak area with a low landscape sensitivity (Class 1), unlikely to be adversely affected by change.

Relevant section of the County Plan are considered as follows:

#### Chapter 4: Rural Living and Development

- Policy Objective RH 3 - Rural Housing Zone 3 (Structurally Weak Areas)

It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to facilitate the development of individual houses in the open countryside in "Structurally Weak Areas" subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the *Development Management Standards* outlined in Chapter 15 and other applicable standards with the exception of those lands contained in Landscape Classifications 2,3 and 4 where policy objective RH4 applies.

- Policy Objective RH 9 – Design Guidelines

It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to have regard to Galway County Council's Design Guidelines for the Single Rural House with specific reference to the following:

- a) It is the policy objective to encourage new dwelling house design that respects the character, pattern and tradition of existing places, materials and built forms and that fit appropriately into the landscape;
  - b) It is the policy objective to promote sustainable approaches to dwelling house design and encouraging proposals to be energy efficient in their design and layout;
  - c) It is the policy objective to require the appropriate landscaping and screen planting of proposed developments by using predominately indigenous/local species and groupings.
- Policy Objective RH 12 – Adaptation of Existing Housing Stock, Housing or Existing Buildings within the curtilage of the site.

Facilitate the provision of accommodation for older family members, direct family members in housing need or family members living with disability in need of independent housing, in the existing family setting, subject to compliance with the following criteria:

- Be attached to the existing dwelling or be near to the family home within the curtilage of the site;
- In cases where the new structure is to be attached to the existing dwelling separate access is not to be provided to the front elevation of the existing dwelling;
- Be of appropriate size and length;
- Be capable of being served by adequate foul drainage facilities.

#### Chapter 8: Tourism and Landscape

- Policy Objective LCM 1: Preservation of Landscape Character  
Preserve and enhance the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation and enhancement, where possible of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.
- Policy Objective LCM 3: Landscape Sensitivity Range.

Consideration of landscape sensitivity ratings shall be an important factor in determining development uses in areas of the County. In areas of high landscape sensitivity, the design and the choice of location of proposed development in the landscape will also be critical considerations.

**Development Management Standards:**

DM Standard 11 – Landscaping

DM Standard 28 - Sight Distances Required for Access onto National, Regional, Local and Private Roads

DM Standard 37 – Group Water Schemes and Private Wells

DM Standard 38 - Effluent Treatment Plants

DM Standard 47 - Field Patterns, Stone Walls, Trees and Hedgerows

DM Standard 63 – Sustainable Design and Climate Action

**5.2. Natural Heritage Designations**

The site is not located within or adjacent to any designated sites. The appeal site is situated approximately c.2.65km to the north-west of the Levally Lough SAC (site code 000295) and c.8km to the west of the Lough Corrib SAC (site code 000297).

**6.0 EIA Screening**

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.

## **7.0 The Appeal**

### **7.1. Grounds of Appeal**

This is a third-party appeal from Kevin and Sarsh Ansbro of Pollaphuca, Brownsgrrove, Co. Galway, the immediate neighbour situated to the north of the subject site. The grounds of appeal, as they relate to planning matters, are summarised as follows;

- Concern over the scale of the proposed works which it is considered will be visually dominant and overbearing.
- Extension as proposed will dwarf the existing modest bungalow on the site as layout of the proposed extension extends some 15.282m beyond the rear building line of the existing house and is offset some 3 meters from the existing gable end towards our house.
- new proposed rear building line is some 3 to 4 meters behind that of adjoining house
  - The southern end of adjoining house contains living areas to make best use of the southerly aspect and the views out to the rolling countryside beyond. Due to the layout of the proposed extension these amenities will be severely impacted and will have a dominant visual impact on our house.
- nature of the proposed extension dwarfs the existing house in terms of scale and massing and will lead to a haphazard form of development in this rural location.
- Appears to be two separate kitchen / dining rooms shown on the proposed plan and that the internal layout will form an ununified layout withing the overall house.
- no objection in principle to the adjoining house being extended to form a larger single house, we feel strongly that the extension as proposed is not a suitable form of development at this location and that a more considered approach is required in this instance.

### **7.2. Applicant Response**

A response from the applicant was received on the 10th September 2025 and can be summarised as follows:

- Proposed extension is 17.3m from the neighbouring gable wall; boundary fence is 3.5m high; apex of extension is 21.8m from gable of neighbour and sits 500mm below the ridge level of the main dwelling.
- Existing hedge will not be removed.
- Subject site is relatively narrow, and this was the deciding factor in the design – assimilated that the proposed works into the existing whereby it is almost not visible from the road. This was concluded by Galway County Council.
- Site is situated in a Class 1 landscape – area is unlikely to be affected by change.
- Proposed works will not give rise to overshadowing or block sunlight.
- A flat roof was not considered as it would not compliment the existing dwelling.

The response has been accompanied by a number of images indicating the difference in levels between the two dwellings and the mature boundary.

### **7.3. Planning Authority Response**

None received.

### **7.4. Observations**

None received.

## **8.0 Assessment**

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

- Land-use and nature of the proposed development.
- Impact on the visual and residential amenities of the area



## **8.2. Land-use and nature of the proposed development**

- 8.2.1. The subject site is situated within the townland of Pollaphuca, Co. Galway outside of any settlement boundary or urban fringe classification, within a structurally weak area with a low landscape sensitivity Class 1 which according to section 8.13.2 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 is unlikely to be adversely affected by change.
- 8.2.2. There is an existing habitable bungalow dwelling located on the appeal site which is served by an on-site wastewater treatment plant which has a stated area of c.60sq.m. The applicant is seeking permission for a single storey extension to the rear of the existing dwelling which has a stated area of c.112.5sq.m and a replace wastewater treatment plant. The applicant has stated within documentation submitted as part of the application that the extension is proposed to accommodate the growing family and the applicant's mother and that the two sections of the building, are physically connected and benefits from one single main entrance to the front of the dwelling.
- 8.2.3. I consider that the applicant has established that there is a bona-fide need for the proposed works which will serve members of the same family. The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

## **8.3. Impact on the visual and residential amenities of the area**

- 8.3.1. The appellant has raised concern over the proposed extension in terms of the massing relative to the main dwelling and the impact it would have upon their amenities by virtue of the visual impact and overbearance. It is contended that the proposal will dwarf the main dwelling and will impact the living areas of the adjoining dwelling where it benefits from view of the rolling hills of the open countryside.
- 8.3.2. The applicant in response to the appellant notes that the proposed extension is situated c.17.3m from the gable wall of the appellants dwelling. It is further stated that the boundary fence is 3.5m high and will be retained.
- 8.3.3. Development Management Standard 4 of the Galway Development Plan, 2022-2028, relates to house extensions both in urban and rural areas. It is stated that in general extensions should be subordinate to the existing dwelling in its size, unless in exceptional cases, a larger extension compliments the existing dwelling in its design

and massing. In this instance I note that the existing dwelling has a stated floor area of c.60sq.m which is considered to be relatively small for a family home. I note that the dwelling located to the north is significantly larger with an area of c.187sq.m.

- 8.3.4. The proposed extension projects from the rear elevation of the existing dwelling and reflects the existing dwelling on site being finished with a pitched roof profile. The proposed extension sits c.500mm below the ridge level of the main dwelling and is set c.4.6m at the closest point to the northern boundary of the site which is shared with the appellant dwelling. I further note that the side elevation of the appellants dwelling is set c.12m from the shared boundary. Therefore the proposed extension is provided with a separation distance in excess of c.16m from the southern boundary of the appellants dwelling.
- 8.3.5. Therefore, in my view the design of the proposed single storey extension and garage are appropriate to the rural context and would not in themselves be visually obtrusive or seriously detract from the visual amenities of the adjoining dwelling. The proposed single storey extension allows for the amended dwelling to comprise of two main volumes which are of a traditional form, akin to traditional rural outbuildings, minimising visual mass and scale. The proposed dwelling accords with Policy Objective DM Standard 4 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 in this respect.
- 8.3.6. Furthermore, having regard to the separation distances being provided I do not anticipate that the proposed development would give rise to any undue level of overlooking or overshadowing of the property located to the north.

#### **8.4. Other issues**

##### **8.4.1. Internal Layout**

The appellant considers that the internal layout, which provides for 2 no. kitchen and 2 no. dining rooms, is ununified. I note that the applicant within documents submitted to the Planning Authority stated that it is their intention to have an elderly family member (i.e. the applicant's mother) move into the home and hence the need for the proposed extension.

This would therefore explain the need for 2 no. kitchen and dining areas. The amended floor plans indicate that part of the existing dwelling will provide for a family flat which

would allow for the applicant's mother to retain their independence. I therefore consider the internal layout to be acceptable.

## **9.0 AA Screening**

9.1. 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 the Levally Lough SAC (site code 000295) or the Lough Corrib SAC (site code 000297). or any other European site, in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and is therefore excluded from further consideration. Appropriate Assessment is not required.

9.1. This determination is based on:

- The relatively minor scale of the development and lack of impact mechanisms that could significantly affect a European Site.
- Distance from and weak indirect connections to the European sites.
- Taking into account screening determination by LPA

9.2. See Appendix 2 of this report for Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination. No mitigation measures aimed at avoiding or reducing impacts on European sites were required to be considered in reaching this conclusion.

## **10.0 Water Framework Directive**

10.1. The subject site is located at Pollaphuca, Brownsgrrove, Galway. The proposed development consists of the construction of a single storey extension to an existing dwelling, relocation of existing garden shed and a new septic tank and percolation area, and all associated site works. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

10.2. The Nanny River flows approximate c.414m to the east of the subject site. The status of the Nanny River is moderate. The site is also situated within the Corrib groundwater catchment.

10.3. I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seeks to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water bodies 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.

10.4. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works regard the scale;
- Location-distance from nearest Water bodies and/or lack of hydrological connections.

10.5. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that 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. I recommend that the decision of the Planning Authority be upheld and permission be granted for the proposed development subject to the conditions set out below.

## **12.0 Reasons and Considerations**

The development which is seeking permission for the construction of a single storey extension to the rear of the existing dwelling, a new waste water treatment plan and relocation of the garden shed, complies with the provisions of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028. It is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not be out of character with the surrounding area, would not be visually detrimental to the area would not impact negatively upon the current levels of residential amenity enjoyed at this location and is in keeping with the proper and sustainable development of the area.

## 13.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the attached conditions. Where such conditions require points of detail to be agreed with the Planning Authority, these matters shall be the subject of written agreement prior to the works commencement and shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed particulars.

**Reason:** In the interest of clarity.

2. The dwelling and extension combined shall be fully integrated and used as a single dwelling unit. The development shall not be subdivided, let or sold separately.

**Reason:** In the interest of proper planning and sustainable development.

3. (i) The external wall finishes of the proposed extension shall be on smooth nap plaster, as indicated in the received elevations drawings and as requested hereby.

(ii) The proposed windows shall be of powder coated aluminum and/or timber framed and/or selected/extruded non-white uPVC.

(iii) The roof finish shall be of slates/tiles on dark colour that will match the finish of the existing dwelling house with regard to texture and colour.

(iv) The colour of the soffit/fascia and any rainwater goods shall match the colour of the adjoining walls.

**Reason:** In the interest of visual and residential amenity and good design principles.

4. (i) The sight distance triangle shall be maintained and kept free from vegetation or other obstructions that would reduce the minimum visibility required and all roadside improvements for sight lines shall be carried out, completed, and maintained in accordance with the drawings and particulars submitted to the Planning Authority.

(ii) The public road shall be maintained free from dirt and debris during the construction stage of the proposed development; all necessary measures shall

be undertaken by the Applicant to prevent spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on adjoining lands during the course of the works.

**Reason:** In the interests of public and road safety and proper planning and development.

5. The domestic shed shall not be used for habitable or commercial purposes or any other purpose other than that incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house.

**Reason:** In the interest of orderly development

6. Any in-situ hedgerow and/or trees bounding the site, shall be retained, except for the provision of the required development works.

**Reason:** In the interest of protecting the biodiversity and the visual amenity of the area.

7. The development shall be served by water supplied by Gallagher Group Water Scheme.

**Reason:** In the interest of protecting public health.

8. All surface water generated within the site boundaries shall be collected and disposed of within the curtilage of the site. No surface water from roofs, paved areas or otherwise shall discharge onto the public road or adjoining properties.

**Reason:** In the interest of public health

9. (i) The development shall be served by the proposed wastewater treatment system which shall be located, constructed and maintained in accordance with the plans/particulars received by the Planning Authority on the 27th of May 2025 and shall be in accordance with the requirements of the document "Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent  $\leq$  10) EPA 2021. Any change to an equivalent and equal system shall be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority prior to works being started and the system being installed and shall be in accordance with the "Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent  $\leq$  10) EPA 2021.

(ii) The existing septic tank and percolation area on site shall be decommissioned, removed and appropriately disposed of no later than one

month of the completion of the new proposed wastewater treatment system as per point (i) above and no other system shall be installed unless agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

(iii) The proposed polishing filter/ treatment area shall maintain a minimum separation distance of 10 meters from any dwelling, existing or proposed land drain, third party effluent treatment system or watercourse.

(iv) Immediately following installation of the treatment system, including the polishing filter/ treatment area, the Applicant shall submit to the Planning Authority a report from a suitably qualified person, with professional indemnity insurance, certifying that the effluent treatment system has been installed and commissioned in accordance with the approved details and is working in a satisfactory manner and that the infiltration / treatment area is constructed in accordance with the standards set out in the EPA's Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent  $\leq 10$ ) EPA 2021 and associated groundwater protection response.

(v) A maintenance contract for the treatment system shall be entered into and paid in advance for a minimum period of 3-years from the first occupancy of the house and shall be kept in place at all times. Signed and dated copies of the contract shall be made available to the Planning Authority on request.

(vi) Any soil / fill material being imported on site must be free of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, Ragwort, Gunnera and Rhododendron.

**Reason:** In the interest of public health.

10. Electricity, Telecom, Cable T.V. and other services shall be laid underground, where possible.

**Reason:** In the interest of visual amenity and proper planning and development.

11. Construction on site shall be limited to between 08:00 hours and 18:00 hours, Monday to Friday and between 09:00 hours and 17:00 hours on Saturday, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. No work shall take place on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.

**Reason:** In the interest of residential amenity and orderly development.

12. All spoil (e.g. inert soil etc.) arising on the site shall be re-used / recycled (where feasible) and/or appropriately disposed of at a suitably licensed waste disposal facility. In any case, no such wastes shall be stored on the site following the completion of construction.

**Reason:** To minimise the visual impact of the development and to prevent dumping in unauthorised locations.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

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Kathy Tuck

Planning Inspector

9<sup>th</sup> October 2025



## Appendix 1

### EIA Screening

<b>Case Reference</b>	ACP-323370-25
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Construction of a single storey extension, relocation of shed and all associated works.
<b>Development Address</b>	Pollaphuca, Brownsgrrove, Galway
	<b>In all cases check box /or leave blank</b>
<b>1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?</b>  (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes,  - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
<b>2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.  <b>EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
<b>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?</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road	

<p>development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.</p> <p><b>No Screening required.</b></p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.</p> <p><b>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</b></p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.</p> <p><b>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)</b></p>	

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: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Screening the need for Appropriate Assessment: Screening Determination (Stage 1, Article 6(3) of Habitats Directive)

I have considered the project in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The subject site is located at Pollaphuca, Brownsgrrove, Galway and situated c.2.65km to the north-west of the Levally Lough SAC (site code 000295) and c.8km to the west of the Lough Corrib SAC (site code 000297). The proposed development consists of the construction of a single storey extension to an existing dwelling, relocation of existing garden shed and a new septic tank and percolation area, and all associated site works.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site.

The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works and the limited scale of what is being proposed.
- The location of the site from nearest European site and lack of connections

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.

Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.