



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL-500357-LD-25

Development	Retention of a two storey dwelling, domestic garage and site boundaries.
Location	Keelogenasause Townland , Edgeworthstown , Co. Longford
Planning Authority	Longford County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2560172
Applicant(s)	Susan Behan
Type of Application	Retention
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Retention with Conditions
Type of Appeal	Third Party Normal Planning Appeal
Appellant(s)	Susan Behan
Observer(s)	
Date of Site Inspection	11/02/2026
Inspector	Darragh Ryan

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The proposed development site is located in the townland of Keelogenasause on the local road L1089. The site is located to the north-west of Edgeworthstown and within the defined settlement boundary of the town as detailed in the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027. There is an existing two storey detached dwelling with a detached garage. The subject site is surrounded by a mature hedgerow defined by high conifers that surround the site.
- 1.2. The site is located on an infill site between two residential dwellings. The front of the site is bounded by limestone walls and all boundaries are planted with a mix of native and non native tree species.
- 1.3. The subject site is located within lands zoned Existing Residential in the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027. Existing Residential - To provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Retention development is sought for a two storey dwelling, domestic garage and site boundaries.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

- 3.1. **The planning authority issued a Decision to grant permission subject to 5 conditions. The conditions of note include:**

C3 - The garage shall be used strictly for domestic purposes only, and not for residential occupation, as a commercial store, workshop or for the housing of animals other than domestic pets.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and of the residential amenity of adjoining property owners.

C5 - The Applicant shall pay the sum of €2,820.00 development contributions * to the Planning Authority, in accordance with Longford County Council - Development Contribution Scheme (2023-2027) (Indexation amendment

for 2025), adopted in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the Planning Authority

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. There are two Planning Reports on file the first planning report sought further information for the following:

1. The applicant is requested to submit a revised site layout plan for the development confirming the sightlines from the existing site access to the dwelling in both directions. The submitted plan shall confirm the full detail of the site access including the landscaping to the front of the dwelling. Should any works be required in order to improve the sightlines then this should be clearly defined and detailed on the revised plan and all works to be detailed within the defined red line boundary. If any works are located outside of the red-line boundary these should be identified.

The revised site plan shall confirm the defined floor areas of the side extension on the south-west elevation and the floor area of the converted garage on the north-east elevation.

The applicant to confirm that no water, sewer connections and any other utilities across the site are built over.

2. The applicant is requested to confirm the need and requirement for the large domestic garage located on the site and how this space is used, especially the upper floor level. The applicant is requested to note the standard planning condition for garage structures. The garage shall be used for ancillary domestic purposes only, not as habitable accommodation, not as a commercial store, workshop or for the housing of animals other than domestic pets.
3. The applicant is requested to confirm that the Development Contribution levied on the previous grant of planning permission was paid for the subject site. If the development contribution was not paid then the applicant shall be advised that the Planning Authority if minded to grant Retention Permission

shall levy the current development contribution for a new dwelling -
Development Contribution = €2,820.00.

4. In respect of the three submissions received, the applicant is requested to review the submissions and respond to the matters identified

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- None

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- None

3.4. Third Party Observations

There are three third party submissions on the original planning file. The issues raised are largely raised as part of the appeal. The submissions can be summarised as follows:

- (a) The house and garage do not reflect that of the parent permission PL98/559 – the garage area is 140sqm larger than most houses.
- (b) PL98/559 approved 4 no. houses. What was built is not what was approved. All four houses it is stated are unauthorised. There is no permission for one single house on this site. Therefore, permission should be sought for the retention of the other three houses plus this unauthorised house.
- (c) There is no demonstration of available/achievable vehicular sightlines for this house or the other 3 adjoining houses. The front wall and entrance is completely out of character with the adjoining properties.
- (d) The house do not match the original house planned on this site.
- (e) A hexagonal type sunroom that has been built without planning permission. These shapes of sunrooms have been refused planning permission by the Planning Authority in the past 25 years.
- (f) A recessed vehicle entrance faced with rough stone and pillars that does not match the original planning condition.

(g) A dwelling home that does not resemble the house granted permission for under PL98/559.

4.0 Planning History

- PA reg ref PL98-559: Permission granted for 4 No. Two storey dwelling houses, garages and septic tanks

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Longford County Development Plan 2021 - 2027

- 5.1.1. **Residential** - To provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity.

This zoning is intended primarily for established housing development but may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to improve the residential amenity of residential communities such as schools, crèches, small shops, doctor's surgeries, small scale residential, playing fields, etc.

Potential sites may range from small gap infill, unused or derelict land and backland areas, side gardens of existing houses, up to larger undeveloped sites within an established residential area. A balance must be struck between the reasonable protection of the amenities and privacy of adjoining dwellings, the protection of established character and the need to provide infill development. Proposals for development involving the intensification of residential uses within existing residential areas will need to clearly demonstrate that the proposal respects the existing character of the area and would not harm the amenity value of adjacent properties. Within this zoning category the improved quality of existing residential areas will be the Council's priority.

- 5.1.2. Development Management Chapter 16.88 – 16.91

- DMS 16.88 Site Selection and Design

a) The scale, form, design and siting of the development should be sensitive to its surroundings and visually integrate with the receiving landscape.

- b) Simple design forms and materials reflective of traditional vernacular should be used.
- c) Have regard to the scale of surrounding buildings.
- d) The design, siting and orientation of a new dwelling should be site specific responding to the natural features and topography of the site to best integrate development with the landscape and to optimise solar gain to maximise energy efficiency.
- e) The siting of new development shall visually integrate with the landscape, utilising natural features including existing contours and established field boundaries and shall not visually dominates the landscape. (Cutting and filling of sites is not desirable).
- f) New buildings should respect the landscape context and not impinge scenic views or skylines as seen from vantage points or public roads.
- g) Larger houses (e.g. in excess of 200sqm) should incorporate design solutions to minimise visual mass and scale e.g. sub-divided into smaller elements of traditional form to avoid bulky structures.
- h) Use a simple plan form to give a clean roof shape – a long plan in preference to a deep plan. This will avoid the creation of a bulky shape.
- i) Where existing vernacular structures exist on site, consideration should be given to their re-use, adaptation and extension in preference to new build.
- j) Clustering with existing rural buildings is generally preferable to stand-alone locations.
- k) The applicant should determine if the proposed development is located on any designated natural heritage, archaeological or architectural heritage site. The existence of any of these designated sites within the proposed development site may have implications for the proposed dwelling.
- DMS16.89 – Materials and Detailing
- a) The detail, texture, colour, pattern, and durability of materials of the proposed development should be sustainable and of a high quality, and sensitive to its proposed location.

- b) Local stone (sandstone/limestone - area specific) and render such as stucco, traditional lime render or lime wash, rough cast render or napped render finish and glass is encouraged.
- c) Metal cladding such as copper, timber shingle, self-finished modern renders, and painted timber finish may be acceptable in certain instances or in cases where the design solution calls for an accent material.
- d) Brick, stone cladding which clearly reads as non-structural and non-local stone or dashes and cladding and other metal or timber finishes which give an engineered or artificial appearance will generally not be permitted.
- e) Where contemporary materials are proposed they should complement and harmonise with traditional materials.
- f) Simple design forms and roof designs with narrow spans (gable-widths) and pitches/ profiles are preferable.
- g) Particular attention should be paid to the solid to void ratio of windows and doors. Openings should be proportionate to complement the style of the building.
- h) Decorative fascia and box end soffits should be avoided.
- DMS 16.90 Domestic garage / shed / store
- a) The design, form and materials should be ancillary to, and consistent with the main dwelling on site.
- b) Structures should generally be detached and sited to the rear or side of the dwelling house and be visually subservient in terms of size, scale and bulk.
- c) Storage facilities should be used solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling and not for any commercial, manufacturing, industrial use or habitable space in the absence of prior planning consent for such use.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

- Ardagullion Bog SAC 002341 – 5.4km north east
- Glen Lough SPA 004045 – 6.13km south

5.3. 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.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. This is a third party appeal against the decision of Longford County Council to grant retention permission. The Grounds of Appeal can be summarised as follows:

- Garage structure – there is potential for overlooking from the garage structure to be retained where by it is converted in the future into residential development or short term lets such as for use as Air B&B.
- The garage structure is ripe for conversion into a dwelling. The wording of condition 3 is not acceptable. The wording of the condition facilitates the illegal conversion into a separate dwelling. A rewording of Condition 3 is recommended.

6.2. Applicant Response

A response to the appeal was submitted on the 19th of December 2025

- It is set out the applicants points in relation to the proposed garage are based wholly on speculative and hypothetical future scenarios that are prohibited by condition 3 of the Council Decision to grant permission.
- The site is connected to the public mains sewer and there is no onsite wastewater treatment system associated with the development.
- The domestic garage was constructed to house a selection of vintage vehicles for safe storage and keeping of same. The upper floor of the garage is used for ordinary domestic/ancillary storage purposes.

- The garage shall be used for domestic purposes and not for residential occupation or as a commercial store.

6.3. **Planning Authority Response**

Planning Authority issued a response on the 18th of December 2025

The third party appeal has been examined by the Planning Authority. The Planning Authority is satisfied that all matters outlined in the submission were considered in the course of its assessment of the planning application as detailed in the planning officers reports under PL ref: 25/60172.

6.4. **Observations**

- None

6.5. **Further Responses**

- None

7.0 **Assessment**

7.1. Having examined the planning application details and all other documentation on the appeal file, including the appeal submission, and inspected the site, and having regard to relevant local, regional and national policies and guidance, I consider that the main issues in this licence appeal are those raised in the grounds of appeal. The issues can be addressed under the following headings:

- Principle of Development
- Garage Structure
- Other Matters
- Appropriate Assessment

7.2. Principle of Development

7.2.1. The site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Edgeworthstown, County Longford, on lands zoned for residential use. The applicant seeks retention

permission for an existing dwelling house as constructed, together with a domestic garage and site boundaries. The development is connected to the public mains sewer.

- 7.2.2. The dwelling subject to retention comprises a two-storey structure measuring approximately 291 sq.m, with a ridge height of 8.5m. The associated garage is a two-storey structure of approximately 140 sq.m with a ridge height of 7.5m, located to the north-western corner of the site. Planning permission for the original dwelling formed part of a development of four houses granted under parent permission PL 98/5549. While the permitted dwelling and garage were of a slightly smaller scale, the principle of residential development on the site has been clearly established.
- 7.2.3. The retention relates to the structures as built. No recent extensions or works have taken place, and the application seeks to regularise the existing situation on site. The zoning objective for the lands is to provide for residential development while protecting and improving residential amenity. Chapter 4, Section 4.8.9 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021–2027 identifies Edgeworthstown as a self-sustaining town. The Planning Authority raised no objection in respect of the principle of development. Having regard to the zoning of the site within the town boundary and the established residential character of the area, I consider the principle of the retained development to be acceptable.

7.3. Garage Structure

- 7.3.1. The appellants have raised concerns regarding the size and scale of the garage, suggesting that it may be converted to residential use in the future, potentially resulting in overlooking of neighbouring properties. It is also contended that the dwelling and garage do not reflect the development permitted under PL 98/5549, and that the garage, at approximately 140 sq.m, exceeds the size of many dwelling houses. Concerns have further been expressed that Condition 3, as attached by the Planning Authority, is insufficient to prevent a future change of use, including potential short-term letting such as Airbnb.
- 7.3.2. The Planning Authority considered the garage to be a substantial structure and requested justification from the applicant. In response to further information, the applicant stated that the garage is intended to house vintage cars, with the remaining space to be used for ancillary storage associated with the enjoyment of the primary

dwelling. During the site inspection, the garage was observed to contain household items and was not in residential use.

7.3.3. It is noted that both the dwelling and garage have existed in their current form for a considerable period without additional works or extensions. The retention therefore relates to an as-built scenario that differs from the parent permission but does not introduce new development. The surrounding area is characterised by large detached dwellings on generous sites, often accompanied by substantial garage structures. Development Management Standard 16.90 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021–2027 sets out design standards for garage structures; however, the Plan does not prescribe specific size limits. The garage is located to the rear of a substantial site measuring approximately 2 hectares, and I am satisfied that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate a structure of this scale. The garage remains subservient to the main dwelling and incorporates finishes that are consistent with it.

7.3.4. In relation to the appellants' concerns regarding potential future residential use, I consider that Condition 3, as attached by the Planning Authority, adequately addresses this matter. The condition states:

“The garage shall be used strictly for domestic purposes only, and not for residential occupation, as a commercial store, workshop, or for the housing of animals other than domestic pets.”

I consider this wording to be reasonable and enforceable, and it provides an appropriate safeguard against unauthorised future use. The applicant has also confirmed that it is not their intention to use the structure for residential purposes. Accordingly, the imposition of this condition is an appropriate mechanism to prevent such a potentiality.

7.3.5. With regard to overlooking, the garage contains no windows or rooflights that would facilitate views towards neighbouring properties. In addition, mature hedgerows provide screening between the garage and the nearest dwelling to the north. I therefore do not consider that the retention of the garage would give rise to any significant adverse impact on residential amenity.

7.4. Other Matters

7.4.1. Sightlines and Traffic Safety

Further information was requested in relation to sightlines at the existing site entrance. The submitted drawings indicate that the front boundary wall is set back from the public road and does not interfere with visibility. The site is located along a straight section of road subject to a 50 km/h speed limit.

The sightline drawing demonstrates visibility splays of 90m, measured from a setback distance of 2.4m from the road edge. These measurements comply with Development Management Standard 114 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021–2027. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal does not give rise to traffic safety concerns and that the issue has been adequately addressed.

7.5. **Water Framework Directive**

7.5.1. I have assessed the proposed development for the retention of a residential unit and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to a surface water

- The reason for this conclusion is as follows:
- The best practice standard measures that will be employed to prevent groundwater and surface water pollution from the site.
- Connection to existing public sewer

I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the retention 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

8.0 AA Screening

- 8.1.1. I have considered the proposed development at Keelogenasause Townland , Edgeworthstown , Co. Longford in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. The subject site is located c Ardagullion Bog SAC 002341 – 5.4km to the south west and Glen Lough SPA 004045 – 6.13km to the north
- 8.1.2. There are no drainage ditches or watercourses in the vicinity of the development site that provide direct connectivity to European sites. Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and the Habitats Regulations 2011 place a high degree of importance on such non-Natura 2000 areas as features that connect the Natura 2000 network. Features such as ponds, woodlands and important hedgerows were taken into account in the decision process.
- 8.1.3. The proposed development comprises the retention of a single dwelling house on a on rural lands.
- 8.1.4. 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 European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows;
- The nature and small scale of the development,
 - The location of the development site and distance from nearest European site(s), and the weakness of connectivity between the development site and European sites.
 - Taking account of the screening report/determination by the Planning Authority.
- 8.1.5. I conclude that 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.
- 8.1.6. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000) is not required

9.0 Recommendation

9.1. I recommend that retention permission be granted for the following reasons and considerations:

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the following:

- the nature and scale of the proposed development,
- the consideration of main grounds of appeal and observations in relation to the proposed development set out in Section 6.0 of this report,
- the planning application particulars submitted by the applicant including the response to Further Information and submissions on the appeal,

It is considered that the proposed development for retention does not impact negatively on amenity of neighbouring residential properties owing to nature and scale of development on zoned lands. It is considered that the garage for retention to be used as ancillary storage associated with the enjoyment of the primary dwelling complies with Development Management Standard 16.90 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021–2027.

11.0 Conditions

1. a) The development shall be retained in its entirety in accordance with the plans, particulars and specifications lodged as part of the application and that received by way of Further Information on the 21/10/2025; save as may be required by the other conditions attached hereto.
b) The retention permissions relates solely to those items stated on the planning site notice and development description and no other development shall be permitted on the site.

Reason: To ensure that the development shall be in accordance with the permission and that effective control can be maintained.

2. (a) 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.

(b) The access driveway to the development shall be provided with adequately sized pipes or ducts to ensure that no interference will be caused to existing roadside drainage.

Reason: In the interest of traffic safety and to prevent flooding or pollution.

3. The garage shall be used strictly for domestic purposes only, and not for residential occupation, as a commercial store, workshop or for the housing of animals other than domestic pets.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and of the residential amenity of adjoining property owners.

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

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

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

Darragh Ryan
Planning Inspector

12th February 2026

Appendix 1 - Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

[EIAR not submitted]

An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference	500357-LD-25		
Proposed Development Summary	Retention of a two storey dwelling, domestic garage and site boundaries		
Development Address	Keelogenasause Townland , Edgeworthstown , Co. Longford		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)	Yes		
	No	X	
2. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it equal or exceed any relevant quantity, area or limit where specified for that class?			
Yes			
No	X		Proceed to Q.3
3. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) but does not equal or exceed a relevant quantity, area or other limit specified [sub-threshold development]?			
		Threshold	Comment (if relevant)
			Conclusion
No	X	N/A	
			No EIAR or Preliminary Examination required
Yes			

4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?

No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Examination required
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Screening Determination required

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____