



Development	Subdivision of house nos. 1 & 7 into 2 no. 2 bedroom townhouses and all associated site works.
Location	Slievemore View, Church Road, Belmullet, Co. Mayo.
Planning Authority	Mayo County Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	25407.
Applicant(s)	Eamon Padden.
Type of Application	Retention.
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Retention.
Type of Appeal	First Party Normal Planning Appeal.
Appellant(s)	Eamon Padden.
Observer(s)	None.
Date of Site Inspection	5 th February 2026
Inspector	C. Daly.

1.0 **Site Location and Description**

- 1.1. The subject two sites, total area 0.101ha. (site 1 is 0.051ha and site 2 is 0.05ha), consists of two residential sites at no.s 1 and 7 Slievemore View, a cul de sac of 7 no. pitched roof detached dormer houses. Both houses have a driveway and rear garden and there is a flat roofed container in the rear garden of no. 7.
- 1.2. The estate is on a hill that slopes down from the estate entrance towards the end of the cul de sac. It is c.430m south of the village centre and is at the edge of the built up area of Belmullet.

2.0 **Proposed Development**

- 2.1. The proposed development, in summary, consists of the following:
 - Retention for the sub-division of house no.s 1 and 7 into two no. two bedroom townhouses.

3.0 **Planning Authority Decision**

3.1. **Decision**

Mayo County Council decided to refuse permission for one reason which related to it constituting undesirable, haphazard development out of character with the existing low density residential pattern of development in the area, precedent it would set and that it would seriously injure the residential amenities and depreciate the value of property in the vicinity.

3.2. **Planning Authority Reports**

- 3.2.1. The Planner's Report assessment noted that per SPPR 3 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines that two car parking spaces are required per unit or 8 total spaces and it noted that this cannot be provided on the site. It noted this would be on the road and would interfere with the safety and free flowing nature of traffic on the road.
- 3.2.2. It considered this to be overdevelopment in an established residential area where low density prevails. It recommended permission be refused for the reason outlined in section 3.1 above.

3.2.3. Other Technical Reports

None.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None.

3.4. Third Party Observations

None.

4.0 Planning History

012432: Permission granted at Slievemore View by the P.A. for new access road, 7 no. dormer bungalows and connections to existing services.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (the CDP)

Chapter 2 – Core and Settlement Strategy

Section 2.8.1 Settlement Hierarchy

Belmullet is designated as a Tier 2 self-sustaining growth town.

Chapter 3 – Housing

Section 3.4.12 Layout and Design

Objective TVHO 9 *To guide multiple residential development in a sequential manner outward from the core area of settlements, to maximise the utility of existing and future infrastructure provision, to promote sustainability, to make more efficient use of underutilised lands, and to avoid the extension of services and utilities to more remote areas.*

Chapter 12

Table 12.2 sets out the land use zoning objectives for settlement plans. The 'Existing Residential' zoning objective states "*To protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas*".

Policy GSP 1 *To support and promote commensurate population, service and employment growth, to enable the Tiers II and III settlements to fulfil their role as self-sustaining growth towns and self-sustaining towns, respectively.*

Volume 2

Section 4.4 Table 2 (Residential Density) provides for “low to medium” density at a minimum density of 20uph for inner urban suburbs.

Section 4.8 Private Open Space

Dwelling houses should have an appropriate useable area of private open space to the rear of the front building line. The minimum open space provision shall be one/two bedroom houses 55sqm.

Section 7.12 Parking Standards and Dimensions

Table 7 Car Parking Standards includes:

1 space per two bed house plus 1 visitor space per residential unit.

Section 12.6 Béal an Mhuirthead (Tier II)

Policy BTO 5 *To encourage development in the town of Béal an Mhuirthead in accordance with the Land Use Zoning Map.*

Volume 3

The site is zoned “Existing Residential” per Map BT1 Belmullet Land Use Zoning Map.

5.2. **Relevant National or Regional Policy / Ministerial Guidelines**

- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Design Guidelines (2007).
- Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (2024) (The Compact Settlement Guidelines)

5.3. **Natural Heritage Designations**

In relation to designated sites, the subject site is located:

- c.130m east of Mullet / Blacksod Bay Complex SAC and PNHA (site code 000470).

- c.130m east of Blacksod Bay / Broad Haven SPA (site code 004037).
- c.1.7km south-east of Mullet Peninsula SPA (site code 004227).
- c.1.7km south-west of Broadhaven Bay SAC (site code 000472).
- c.4.3km east of West Connacht Coast SAC (site code 002998).
- c.6.1km south-west of Erris Head SAC and PNHA (site code 001501).
- c.8.1km east of Inishglora and Inishkeeragh SPA (site code 004084).
- c.8.1km east of Inishglora and Inishkeeragh PNHA (site code 000506).
- c.9.95km north-west of Ederglen Bog NHA (site code 002446).
- c.10.3km north-west of Tristia Bog NHA (site code 001566).
- c.10.8km west of Carrowmore Lake Complex SAC and PNHA (site code 000476).
- c.10.8km west of Carrowmore Lake SPA (004052).
- c.12.7km south-west of Glenamoy Bog Complex SAC and PNHA (site code 000500).
- c.12.9km west of Pollatomish Bog NHA (site code 001548).

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The grounds of the first party appeal on behalf of Eamon Padden can be summarised as follows:

- The density of the development will rise from 7.4uph to 9.5uph.
- The development is in keeping with the predominant linear layout of residential developments in the area.
- The increase in density is marginal and is not out of character with the existing density.
- The density remains low and in keeping with the surrounding pattern of development.
- Under reg. ref. 23/322 permission was granted further out of town for 8 houses at a density of 20uph and under reg. ref. 23/524 permission was granted for 4 no. apartments at a density of 174uph.

- External alterations include the addition of a hall window to the first floor side elevation and the replacement of a rear window with a door.
- The resulting four dwellings all have generous floor areas for two-bed houses.
- Distances to boundaries have not changed such that there is no impact on adjoining properties.
- No adverse impacts arise from the internal changes.
- Each dwelling currently has space at the side for two linear aligned cars to park which is in keeping with the existing estate.
- As part of the appeal, an amended layout is provided which allows for more space to be dedicated to car parking which would result in two spaces per dwelling in accordance with SPPR 3 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines and the applicant is happy for a condition to be applied requiring this be implemented within 6 months of a grant of permission.
- The proposed development complies with national, regional and local planning policy and the refusal of permission is not justified.

7.0 **Assessment**

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

- Principle of Development.
- Density.
- Residential Amenity.
- Car Parking.
- Other Matters.

7.2. Principle of Development

7.2.1. I note that under the CDP, the site is zoned for existing residential development which it is stated is *“To protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas”*. As the proposal is to sub-divide two existing four bedroom dormer dwellings into two no. two bedroom residential units, I consider that the proposed residential land use intensification accords with the zoning objective for the site and this is acceptable in principle. This is subject to the below assessment in relation to impacts on amenity and character.

7.3. Density

7.3.1. I note the permission for the estate of 7 no. dwellings granted was on a site area of 0.62ha at a density of c.11.3uph and if permitted the proposed development would result in a density of c.14.5uph. I agree with the appellant that this would be a marginal or negligible increase in density. However, the precedent that would be set would potentially allow for the sub-division of each dwelling in the estate which could result in 14 dwellings at a density of 22.5uph.

7.3.2. Section 4.4 Table 2 (Residential Density) provides for “low to medium” density at a minimum density of 20uph for inner urban suburbs. Noting the zoning map where lands are zoned for an additional distance of c.500m to the south of the estate and its location c.425m from the town centre, I consider this applicable and the proposed density would, in my view, be consistent with this section of the CDP.

7.4. Residential Amenity

7.4.1. In relation to the residential amenity of the future occupants, I note that the floor areas would in each sub-divided unit be 68sqm and 91sqm. This would result, in effect, in two semi-detached units in each building. Noting Table 5.1 of the 2007 Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities Guidelines wherein the target floor areas for a two bed two storey (three person) house is 70sqm, I consider that the proposed floor areas would provide a reasonable standard of residential amenity for the future occupants. I note this balancing the general CDP policies which encourage compact development and greater densities in urban areas than those found in the existing estate. Overall, in sustainability terms, I consider this to be acceptable.

- 7.4.2. In relation to private open space, I note each new unit has an area of such space to the rear. At no. 1 the area would be c.90sqm, 1A would have c.105sqm, unit 7 would have c.70sqm and unit 7A would have c.115sqm of such private open space. I note this would exceed the CDP requirement of 55sqm for a two bedroom house. Should permission be granted, I recommend a condition to require a high standard of plastered finish to the walls of the rear gardens to a height of 1.8m to ensure appropriate privacy, attractiveness and useability.
- 7.4.3. In relation to external impacts on residential amenities in the vicinity, I note that there would be no significant external changes to the external appearance of the dwellings with one additional first floor level side facing window and the addition of a rear ground level patio door in place of a window. I consider that the addition of the side first floor window for the stairs would not significantly increase overlooking where two first floor side facing windows already exist.
- 7.4.4. Given the absence of significant external changes, I do not agree with the P.A. that a haphazard development out of character with the existing low density pattern of development would result. I consider that the development would integrate the sites and surroundings and would be in keeping with the pattern of development in the estate.
- 7.4.5. I note no undue overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing impacts. I also do not consider that the increase in density results in significant external impacts, for example in relation to noise and trips to and from the site. Accordingly, I note no undue impacts on residential amenity or devaluation of property impacts. To ensure this, should permission be granted, I recommend a condition that no rooms in the houses shall be used for the purpose of providing overnight paying guest accommodation without a prior grant of planning permission.

7.5. **Car Parking**

- 7.5.1. I note that the CDP standard for car parking for two bedroom units is one car parking space per two bed house plus one visitor parking space per unit. I note that currently each house/building has two car parking spaces to the front side of each building. Noting the Table 7 (Volume 2) standard, two spaces for each unit are required or four spaces per building. Therefore I consider the proposal for retention to not be in accordance with the CDP standard in this case.

- 7.5.2. I note that the applicant has included with the appeal an alternative site layout plan whereby a second driveway would be provided to the front/side of each building which would allow two car parking spaces per dwelling. I note that the P.A. referred to SPPR 3 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines in its assessment and stated that based on this, two spaces are required per dwelling.
- 7.5.3. I note that SPPR 3(iii) refers to a maximum provision of two spaces per dwelling in this regard in intermediate and peripheral locations. As I note that there are no frequent urban bus services or quality public transport in the area, I consider the maximum rate of car parking to be justified in this case. I consider that this would accord with the CDP standard and would not result in an excessive loss of green space to the front of each building. It would also not result in any traffic hazards as it would not result in haphazard street parking in the estate. Should permission be granted, I recommend that the alternative site layout be required to be implemented within 6 months of the date of permission and that two car parking spaces per dwelling be required by condition.

7.6. **Other Matters**

- 7.6.1. I note no extensions are proposed and that the development connects to the existing public water and wastewater network. I recommend a standard condition in relation to the additional connections required. I note ample space to the side and rear of the dwellings for waste bin storage as well as bicycle storage.
- 7.6.2. I note no extensions are proposed, however as new driveways are proposed I recommend a standard drainage condition to ensure all surface water drainage is catered for on the site. I note that the wording of the public notices is such that a grant of permission would not provide permission, whether required or not, for the storage container to the rear of No. 7.
- 7.6.3. As there is no additional floor area proposed, I do not consider that Section 48 development contributions are due while noting the application is for retention.

8.0 **EIA Screening**

- 8.1. The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations

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

9.0 **AA Screening**

9.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The subject site is located c.130m east of Mullet / Blacksod Bay Complex SAC, the nearest European site.

9.2. The proposed development comprises retention for the sub-division of house no.s 1 and 7 into two no. two bedroom townhouses. 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.

9.3. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The relatively small-scale nature of the development.
- The distance from the nearest European site and lack of ecological connections thereto.
- Taking into account the screening determination by the P.A..

9.4. 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.

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

10.0 **Water Framework Directive**

10.1. The subject site is above the Belmullet (IE_WE_G_0057) ground waterbody (status “good”) and is c.130m from the Blacksod Bay coastal waterbody (IE_WE_360_0000) (status “high”). The proposed development comprises retention for the sub-division of house no.s 1 and 7 into two no. two bedroom townhouses..

10.2. 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 and ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.

10.3. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The relatively small-scale nature of the development and the connection to the public wastewater treatment system.
- The distance from the nearest surface water bodies.

10.4. I conclude on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would 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 jeopardize any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

11.0 **Recommendation**

11.1. I recommend that permission be granted subject to conditions.

12.0 **Reasons and Considerations**

Having regard to the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028, to the design of the sub-division of the dwellings and to the car parking areas with no extensions proposed, the development for retention does not give rise to haphazard development and is not out of character with the receiving environment, the density is appropriate and, with no significant traffic safety issues or environmental impacts noted, it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the development would be acceptable. The development would therefore not unduly negatively impact on the residential or visual amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity and is acceptable in terms of car parking provision and convenience. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

13.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be retained and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as amended by the further plans and particulars received by An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 15th day of December 2025, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. The proposed development shall be amended as follows:

Within six months of the date of this permission there shall be two car parking spaces for each dwelling unit and the site layouts shall be as shown on drawing no. 31/25 (Site Layout) submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the 15th day of December 2025.

Reason: In the interests of compliance with Development Plan standards and parking control.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 10(4) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, or any statutory provision modifying or replacing them, no room in the proposed house(s) shall be used for the purpose of providing overnight paying guest accommodation without a prior grant of planning permission.

Reason: In order to prevent overdevelopment of the site in the interest of residential amenity and traffic safety and convenience.

4. Within six months of the date of this permission all rear gardens shall be bounded by block walls, 1.8 metres in height, capped and rendered, on both sides, to the written satisfaction of the planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of residential and visual amenity.

5. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Friday inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on

Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

6. Drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health and surface water management.

7. Prior to the commencement of development the developer shall enter into a Connection Agreement(s) with Uisce Éireann to provide for a service connection(s) to the public water supply and/or wastewater collection network.

Reason: In the interest of public health and to ensure adequate water/wastewater facilities.

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 me, directly or indirectly, following my professional assessment and recommendation set out in my report in an improper or inappropriate way.

Ciarán Daly

Planning Inspector

11th March 2026

Appendix 1 - Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference	PL-500454-MO-25		
Proposed Development Summary	Retention for the sub-division of house no.s 1 and 7 into two no. two bedroom townhouses.		
Development Address	Slievemore View, Church Road, Belmullet, Co. Mayo.		
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	X
		No	
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			EIA Mandatory EIAR required
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		No EIAR or Preliminary Examination required
Yes			Proceed to Q.4

4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?		
No	X	Preliminary Examination required
Yes		Screening Determination required

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____