



Inspector's Report

PL-500540-LD-25

Development	Construction of a house, wastewater treatment plant, and all associated site works.
Location	Grillagh, Killashee, Co. Longford
Planning Authority	Longford County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	25/47
Applicants	James & Concepta Whitton
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Permission
Type of Appeal	First Party v Refusal of Permission
Appellants	James & Concepta Whitton
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	26 th March 2026
Inspector	Anthony Kelly

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is located on a local road approximately 1km south west of the rural settlement cluster of Killashee in west Co. Longford.
- 1.2. The subject site, rectangular in shape, comprises part of an agricultural field which has a very slight drop in ground levels from a relative high point in the north west corner. The junction of the local road and the N63 road is approximately 50 metres north of the site boundary. There is a single-storey house to the north east of the site and three agricultural / storage sheds to the north west adjacent to the roads junction. The areas to the east, south, and west are undeveloped. There are a wide verge and a drain between the local road and the site boundary and there are also drains along the northern and southern boundaries of the field of which the site forms part. Overhead lines cross the site. There is a watercourse (Ballynakill) on the opposite side of the local road.
- 1.3. The site has an area of 0.3 hectares.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for a house, wastewater treatment system (WWTS), and all associated works.
- 2.2. The proposed house has a floor area of approximately 123sqm¹ with a height of 5.25 metres.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. On 1st December 2025 Longford County Council (LCC) decided to refuse permission for the following reason:

¹ The application form gives the floor area as 142sqm. However, this includes a covered external space to the south side of the house. The floor area of the house itself is approximately 123sqm.

'It is the policy of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 as set out in **Section 4.8.12, CPO 4.24** which identifies the criteria for applicants seeking permission in Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence' must satisfy. It is considered that the applicants have not demonstrated a rurally generated housing need at this location and where the proposed development has the potential to impact adversely on the area. As such, the proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area' [sic].

3.2. **Planning Authority Reports**

Planning Reports

3.2.1. The Planning Report includes a site location and description, a planning history, a summary of the policy context, and a planning assessment. The planning assessment can be summarised as follows:

- Access – Adequate sightlines are available in both directions.
- Rural housing need – The applicants own their current residence and want to downsize for health reasons. Due to the lack of information submitted they have not demonstrated a site-specific need for an additional rural house.
- Layout/design – The house would benefit from a porch, otherwise it is acceptable.
- Wastewater treatment – The proposed system and percolation area are acceptable.
- Appropriate assessment (AA) – Stage 2 AA is not required.
- Environmental impact assessment (EIA) – An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required.

Other Technical Reports

3.2.2. None.

3.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

3.3.1. None.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

3.4.1. None.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1. There has been no previous planning application on site.
- 4.2. The applicants have previously been refused permission on a site approximately 500 metres south west of the site subject of the current application as follows:

P.A Reg. Ref. 25/18 – In June 2025 permission was refused for a house, WWTS, and all associated site works for two reasons: (i) the location of the entrance is onto a national road where the maximum speed limit applies and would materially contravene Policy CPO 5.15 of the County Development Plan², and (ii) compliance with the rural housing policy has not been demonstrated.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Longford County Development Plan (LCDP) 2021-2027

- 5.1.1. The site is in an area identified as ‘Areas under Urban Influence’ in Figure 4.5 (Rural Typology Map).
- 5.1.2. There are a number of applicable County Policy Objectives (CPOs), including:

CPO 4.24

‘Accommodate demand from individuals for permanent residential development in defined ‘Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence’, subject to good planning practice, environmental carrying capacity and landscape protection considerations.

Applicants seeking permission for the development of single dwelling rural housing in areas defined ‘Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence’ must satisfy the following criteria:

1. The applicant was born within the local rural area or is living or has lived in the local rural area for a minimum of 5 years at any stage prior to making the planning application. It includes returning emigrants seeking a permanent home in their local rural area. The ‘Local Rural Area’ for the purpose of this policy is defined as the

² ‘To protect the capacity, efficiency and safety of the national road network in County Longford by complying with the ‘Spatial Planning and National Roads -Guidelines for planning authorities’ (2012)’.

area generally within an 8km radius of where the applicant was born, living or has lived.

For the purpose of this policy, the rural area is taken to include 'Rural Settlement Clusters' listed in the Settlement Hierarchy, but excludes the Key Town, Self-Sustaining Growth Town, Self-Sustaining Towns, Towns and Villages and Serviced Rural Villages listed in the Settlement Hierarchy.

2. The applicant has a functional economic or social requirement to reside in this particular rural area such as in any of the following 2 situations:

(a) Economic requirements will normally encompass persons referred to in the revision to the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005 and, if applicable, circulars. It includes persons involved in full-time farming, horticulture or forestry as well as similar rural based part-time occupations where it can be demonstrated that it is the predominant occupation.

(b) Social requirements will normally encompass persons referred to in the revision to the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005 and, if applicable, circulars. Pending the making of the revised Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines by the Minister, a Functional Social Requirement in County Longford shall be taken as compliance with point 1 above.

Special consideration shall be given in cases of exceptional health circumstances - supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support, or requires a close family member to live in close proximity to that person.

3. The applicant does not already own or has not owned a house in the open countryside.

4. If the site is located within an Area of Special Control, there is no alternative site outside of Areas of Special Control.

5. High quality siting and design'.

CPO 4.28

'Attach an occupancy condition to planning permissions in respect of rural housing applications in identified 'Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence', pursuant to Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, restricting the use of the dwelling to the applicant, as a place of permanent residence. The period of occupancy will be limited to a period of 7 years from the date of first occupation'.

CPO 4.35

'Have regard to the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2005, and any replacement guidance which require that new houses in rural areas be sited and designed to integrate well with their physical surroundings and be generally compatible with:

- a) The protection of water quality in the arrangements made for onsite wastewater disposal facilities;
- b) The provision of a safe means of access in relation to road and public safety;
- c) The conservation of sensitive areas such as natural habitats, the environs of protected structures and other aspects of heritage.

In regard to septic tanks, the Planning Authority will be positively disposed towards the use of septic tanks and/or with additional package treatment systems, where necessary, with Irish Agrément Board Certification. In order to protect groundwater, all site suitability tests shall be carried out in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's 'Code of Practice- Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (p.e. <10)' (2009), or any subsequent update'.

CPO 4.40

'Require that the design of entrance gateways should be in keeping with the rural setting. All applications for a dwelling in a rural area should include detailed drawings and specifications for entrance treatments. The roadside boundary should ideally consist of a sod/earth mound/fencing planted with a double row of native hedgerow species e.g. Hawthorn, field maple, holly, blackthorn, hazel etc. High block walls and gates and ornamental features will not be permitted'.

CPO 4.44

'Prepare an updated 'Rural Design Guidance for Residential Developments in Rural County Longford' over the lifetime of the Plan. Until such time as this is prepared, all new housing in the rural countryside shall achieve the highest quality of layout and design in accordance with the Development Management Standards set out in Chapter 16 of this plan and the current Rural Design Guidance for Residential Developments in Rural County Longford set out in Annex 7 of this Plan'.

- 5.1.3. Subsection 16.4.5.7 (Rural Housing) of the Plan sets out a number of relevant development management standards (DMS) including: DMS 16.88 (Site Selection and Design), DMS 16.89 (Materials and Detailing), DMS 16.91 (Access and Sightlines), DMS 16.92 (Surface and Wastewater Treatment) and DMS 16.93 (Boundary Treatment).

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.2.1. The nearest area of natural heritage designation is Royal Canal proposed natural heritage area (pNHA) approximately 2.1km to the north east of the site. The closest European site is Mount Jessop Bog special area of conservation (SAC) approximately 5.7km to the east. The closest special protection area (SPA) is Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA approximately 6km to the north. All distances are in a direct line.

6.0 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening

- 6.1. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for EIA (refer to Appendices 1 and 2 of this Inspector's Report (IR)). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for EIA screening and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. Grounds of Appeal

7.1.1. The first party grounds of appeal can be summarised as follows:

- The site is in the townland of Grillagh, not Clonfuigh as referenced in error by LCC³.
- The applicants have lived in the area for 28 years and have a very strong support network with neighbours.
- The applicants need to downsize due to medial reasons and government guidelines.
- The applicants have sold their two-storey house and have funds to build the new house. The applicants cannot afford to buy and renovate an old house. It is stated that the applicants are currently living in a camper van.
- This is the second refusal by LCC on different sites.
- A summary of the applicants' history and links to the area is provided.
- A letter from a doctor in Longford has been provided outlining the applicants' medical situations.

7.2. Planning Authority Response

7.2.1. None.

7.3. Observations

7.3.1. None.

8.0 Planning Assessment

Having examined the application and appeal details and all other documentation on file, and having inspected the site, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal are as follows:

³ The LCC Planning Report and decision cite the relevant townland as Cloonfuigh, as does the Commission's correspondence in relation to this appeal. However, as per the public notices, the subject site is in the townland of Grillagh.

- Compliance with the Rural Housing Policy / Planning Authority Reason for Refusal
- Wastewater Treatment System (WWTS)
- Site Layout and House Type
- Access

8.1. **Compliance with the Rural Housing Policy / Planning Authority Reason for Refusal**

8.1.1. The planning application was refused by LCC for the reason set out in paragraph 3.1.1 of this IR i.e. non-compliance with the rural housing policy. This was the applicants' second refusal of permission for a rural house, the previous being last year under 25/18 on a site approximately 500 metres to the south west of the site subject of the current application. The applicant's address on the grounds of appeal is a 1 ½ storey house in immediate proximity to the site which was previously refused permission. There is conflicting detail on file in relation to this house. The Local Need Form submitted with the application stated that the applicants own the house and have been living there since 1997. A different letter on file stated that it was in the process of being sold, and the grounds of appeal states that the house has been sold and the applicants are living in a camper van. The applicants do not own the site subject of the current application. A letter of consent has been submitted by the relevant landowner consenting to the application being made. There has not been a planning application on the substantial landholding identified within the last twenty years.

8.1.2. The LCDP 2021-2027 identifies the subject site as being in an area under strong urban influence⁴. In these areas, applicants seeking permission must satisfy certain criteria set out under CPO 4.24, as per paragraph 5.1.2 of this IR. These criteria can be considered as follows:

Criterion 1 – I am satisfied that the applicants have lived in the local rural area for a minimum of five years prior to the making of the planning application.

Criterion 2 – Two situations outlining economic and social requirements are set out. Economic requirements do not apply as the applicants are both retired, as per the

⁴ The Rural Typology Map (Figure 4.5) refers to 'Areas Under Urban Influence', however it is elsewhere referred to as 'strong urban influence'.

Local Need Form. The applicants could be considered to demonstrate a social requirement having regard to their links to the area. Criteria 2 gives special consideration in cases of exceptional health circumstances where it is supported by relevant documentation from a registered medical practitioner and a disability organisation proving that a person requires to live in a particular environment or close to family support. In this case certain medical issues have been outlined in the application and in a letter from a doctor. No letter from a disability organisation has been received. The doctor's letter does not state that the applicants require to live in this particular environment. Notwithstanding the wording of the doctor's letter or the absence of any documentation from a disability organisation I do not consider that such exceptional health circumstances arise such that a house in a rural area under strong urban influence is required.

Criterion 3 – It is stated in the application that the applicants have lived in the area since 1997 but have sold their house since this planning application was submitted to LCC. This means that the applicants do not qualify for a house in this rural area under criterion 3.

Criterion 4 – This does not apply to this application.

Criterion 5 – Siting and design are addressed in subsection 8.3 where I consider them to be acceptable.

- 8.1.3. Further to the documentation on file, the applicants have very recently sold their house despite CPO 4.24 stating that applicants seeking permission for the development of single dwelling rural housing in areas defined 'Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence' must not already own or have owned a house in the open countryside. The health circumstances outlined are not, in my opinion, sufficient for the applicants to qualify for a rural house under the health circumstances exception. The applicants also state, in the grounds of appeal, that 'due to government guidelines we need to downsize to a small 2 bedroom bungalow'. I am not aware of what guidelines are being referred to in this instance, but they are not section 28 guidelines.
- 8.1.4. Having regard to the foregoing I consider that the reason for refusal by LCC is warranted and the applicants do not qualify for a house in this rural area under strong urban influence as set out in the LCDP 2021-2027.

8.2. **Wastewater Treatment System (WWTS)**

- 8.2.1. The proposed development includes a WWTS. No Environment Section report was prepared by LCC for the application.
- 8.2.2. A Site Characterisation Form (SCF) dated 2nd October 2025 was submitted with the application. There was no bedrock or water table encountered in the 2.2 metres deep trial hole. There is no reference to mottling in the Form. The topsoil had a crumb structure with a firm density and the subsoil had a blocky structure with a compact density. Subsurface and surface percolation tests were carried out with a 'T' value of 50.97 and a 'P' value of 45.56 respectively. Photographs were included in the application. The trial hole had been filled in at the time of my site inspection. The field was wet at the time of my inspection but there was no waterlogging or areas of water ponding.
- 8.2.3. The slope of the site is identified in subsection 3.1 of the SCF as relatively flat, with a slope of <1:20. Separation distances are set out in Table 6.2 of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Code of Practice for Domestic WWTSs (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) (2021). Subsection 4 of the SCF states that all minimum separation distances are met, and I agree. The minimum depth of unsaturated soil required as per the R2² groundwater protection response is 1.2 metres for infiltration areas following tertiary systems, as is proposed. Given the proposed invert level of the gravel bed (0.3 metres) and the results of the trial hole I am satisfied this would be achieved. An infiltration area of 100sqm is proposed.
- 8.2.4. I am satisfied that the ground conditions are acceptable for a tertiary treatment system and infiltration area. I consider that the proposed WWTS would be acceptable subject to standard conditions.

8.3. **Site Layout and House Type**

- 8.3.1. I note initially that there are inconsistencies between the site location map and the site layout plan. Although the dimensions of the site boundaries are consistent on both, the eastern site boundary on the site location map extends, approximately, to the eastern building line of the existing house to the north east whereas the eastern site boundary on the site layout plan extends well beyond the eastern building line of the existing

house. This implies that the footprint of the existing house on the site layout plan is not accurate

- 8.3.2. Notwithstanding, the site layout is a standard layout for a rectangular shape site with the house footprint 18 metres from the roadside boundary and a substantial rear garden area. Although a soakpit is proposed for on-site surface water disposal, its location is not identified on the site layout plan. The proposed site boundaries are not described by way of either drawings or commentary. Should the Commission decide to grant permission I recommend that these issues are addressed by suitable condition.
- 8.3.3. The proposed house is a single-storey two-bed house with a floor area of approx. 123sqm and a covered external space to the south side. It has a proposed height of 5.25 metres. Its elevations are relatively simple and it is similar in scale to the existing house to the north east.
- 8.3.4. I consider the site layout and proposed house type to be acceptable at this location.

8.4. **Access**

- 8.4.1. I note initially that a new vehicular entrance was not included as part of the development description in the public notices received by LCC.
- 8.4.2. DMS 16.114 of the LCDP 2021-2027 states that 160 metres sightlines on an 80pkm local road are desirable but are subject to road width and alignment, traffic volumes and traffic speeds and where a lesser distance is shown to be adequate in terms of safety. The site layout plan shows sightlines of 77 metres to the north and 90 metres to the south. There are slight bends in the road to both sides of the proposed vehicular entrance but there are no substantial visual interruptions that would negatively affect the achievement or maintenance of sightlines, in my opinion. There is one existing tree in the grass verge which appears to be outside the site boundary to the south, however this tree is a few metres back from the roadside edge. The junction of the local road with the N63 approximately 80 metres to the north would help to reduce vehicular speeds.
- 8.4.3. There is a wide grass verge and an existing drain/ditch along the roadside boundary. The application does not include a roadside elevation drawing or appropriate plan so

it is unclear how this area is to be treated. Should the Commission decide to grant permission I recommend an appropriate condition in this regard is attached.

8.4.4. Having regard to the foregoing I consider that adequate sightlines would be available for the proposed vehicular entrance.

9.0 **Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening**

9.1. AA screening has been carried out in Appendix 3 to this IR.

9.2. In accordance with section 177U of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended), and on the basis of the information considered in the 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 site(s) and is therefore excluded from further consideration. AA is not required.

9.3. This determination is based on:

- The nature, scale, and location of the proposed development.
- The distance of the subject site from the nearest European sites and the lack of direct connectivity.
- The hydrological distance between the subject site and European sites and the assimilative capacity of the River Shannon.
- The extent of the availability of similar land for foraging by ex-situ SPA species.

9.4. 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 provisions of appendix 4 apply to this section.

10.2. The site is an agricultural field located in a rural area. There are ditches around the boundaries of the field of which the site forms part and there is a watercourse on the opposite side of the local road to the west of the site.

- 10.3. No water deterioration concerns were raised during the planning application process.
- 10.4. I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the WFD which seek 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.
- 10.5. The reasons for this conclusion are as follows:
- the relatively limited nature and scale of the proposed works,
 - the standard condition that can be attached to any grant of permission that surface water shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services with details to be submitted for written agreement, including the proposed soakpit and works to pipe the existing drain along the roadside boundary, and,
 - the presence of the public road between the subject site and the watercourse on its opposite side and the absence of any direct hydrological link.
- 10.6. On the basis of objective information, 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 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 planning permission be refused.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the location of the site within a 'Rural Area Under Strong Urban Influence' where housing is restricted to persons demonstrating local need in accordance with County Policy Objective (CPO) 4.24 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, it is considered that the applicants do not come within the scope of the housing need criteria as set out in the Development Plan for a house at this location. The proposed development, in the absence of any identified locally based need for the house, would contribute to the encroachment of random rural development in the area and would militate against the preservation of the rural environment and the efficient provision of public services and infrastructure. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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

Anthony Kelly

Senior Planning Inspector

14th April 2026

Appendix 1: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-500540-LD-25
Proposed Development Summary	Permission for a house, WWTS, and all associated works
Development Address	Grillagh, Killashee, Co. Longford
In all cases check box or leave blank	
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a ‘project’ for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, “project” means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a ‘project’. Proceed to Q.2.
	<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 & Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.	
<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 & 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.	
Schedule 5 Part 2 Class 10 (b) (i) – Construction of more than 500 dwelling units. Schedule 5 Part 2 Class 11 (c) – Waste water treatment plants with a capacity greater than 10,000 population equivalent as defined in Article 2, point (6), of Directive 91/271/EEC not included in Part 1 of this Schedule.	
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
No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	PL-500540-LD-25
Proposed Development Summary	Permission for a house, WWTS, and all associated works
Development Address	Grillagh, Killashee, Co. Longford
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
<p>Characteristics of proposed development</p> <p>(In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).</p>	<p>The proposed development is for a house and WWTS. It is a modest development and would not involve any demolition works. It would not require the use of substantial natural resources and would not pose a risk of major accident and/or disaster.</p> <p>Normal pollution and nuisance can be expected during the construction phase. The site is in a rural area and there is an existing house adjacent to the north east. The proposed development would be similar to existing development in the vicinity. The WWTS has been considered in subsection 8.2 of the IR. It is to accommodate a single house and waste generation would be very limited.</p>
<p>Location of development</p> <p>(The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment)</p>	<p>The development is situated in a rural area on grassland which is relatively abundant in the area, notwithstanding the site being in the 'Peatlands' landscape character area of the county, as per Appendix 9 of the LCDP 2021-2027. The site is removed from sensitive habitats and centres of population. The closest European site is Mount Jessop Bog SAC which is approximately 5.7km to the east. There are no protected structures in the immediate vicinity.</p>

<p>e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).</p>	<p>There is a ringfort (LF 018-016) in the adjacent field to the south east. LCC referred the application to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on this basis but no response was received.</p>
<p>Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).</p>	<p>The proposed house and WWTS would have no significant environmental impact. It would be consistent with the existing pattern of development in the immediate vicinity, it would be located away from any environmentally significant area, and the proposed development is substantially below a threshold that could be considered relevant for EIA.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	
<p>Likelihood of Significant Effects</p>	<p>Conclusion in respect of EIA</p>
<p>There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment</p>	<p>EIA is not required</p>

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 3: Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Determination

<p style="text-align: center;">Screening for Appropriate Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Test for likely significant effects</p>	
<p>Case Reference Number: PL-500540-LD-25</p>	
<p>Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics</p>	
<p>Brief description of project</p>	<p>Permission for a house, WWTS, and all associated works</p>
<p>Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms</p>	<p>The application is for a house and WWTS in the rural area on a greenfield site. There is no demolition proposed. There is a house and three agricultural sheds / outbuildings adjacent to the north. There is a local road along the western boundary and the N63 road is approximately 50 metres to the north.</p> <p>There is a ditch along the western boundary of the site and along the northern and southern boundaries of the field of which the site forms part. There is also a watercourse (Ballynakill) on the opposite side of the local road to the east.</p> <p>It is proposed to discharge surface water to a soakpit and wastewater to a WWTS.</p> <p>The closest European site is Mount Jessop Bog SAC approximately 5.7km to the east. The closest SPA is Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA approximately 6km to the north. All distances are in a direct line.</p>
<p>Screening report</p>	<p>No screening report was submitted with the application.</p> <p>Section 10.5 (Appropriate Assessment) of the LCC Planning Report concluded that the proposed development, by itself or in combination with other plans and developments, would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European site and Stage 2 AA was not required.</p>

Natura Impact Statement (NIS)	No NIS was submitted with the application.
Relevant submissions	None.

Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model

In my opinion, given the nature of the subject site and the proposed development, the ditches/watercourses in the vicinity, and the location and nature of European sites in the area, the proposed development would not result in any likely significant effect on any European site. Notwithstanding, in the interest of completeness I have briefly considered the closest European sites in the following table and those theoretically hydrologically linked.

European site (code)	Qualifying interests (QI) / Special conservation interests (SCI)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections	Consider further in screening Y/N
Mount Jessop Bog SAC (002202)	Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Bog woodland [91D0]	Approx. 5.7km to the east	None	No. There is no source-pathway-receptor link between the site and the SAC.
Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA (004101)	Greenland White-fronted Goose [A395]	Approx. 6km to the north	None	No. Though this species may forage on agricultural grassland there is a significant amount of similar land in the wider vicinity.

<p>Lough Forbes Complex SAC (001818)</p>	<p>Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation [3150]</p> <p>Active raised bogs [7110]</p> <p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> [91E0]</p>	<p>Approx. 6km to the north</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No. There is no source-pathway-receptor link between the site and the SAC.</p>
<p>Lough Ree SAC (000440)</p>	<p>Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation [3150]</p> <p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on</p>	<p>Approx 6.2km to the west</p>	<p>Indirect hydrological</p>	<p>No. There are ditches along the subject field boundary. The watercourse on the opposite side of the local road (Ballynakill), and another watercourse approx. 800 metres to the</p>

	<p>calcareous substrates [6210]</p> <p>Active raised bogs [7110]</p> <p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]</p> <p>Alkaline fens [7230]</p> <p>Limestone pavements [8240]</p> <p>Bog woodland [91D0]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> [91E0]</p> <p>Otter [1355]</p>			<p>east⁵, both flow north. It is possible that the on-site ditches connect into one of these two watercourses, which join together upstream. The watercourse eventually discharges to the River Shannon and then it flows south into Lough Ree. This is a total hydrological distance of approx. 13km. Given the hydrological distance and the assimilation capacity of the River Shannon, in the unlikely event that any notable pollution event occurred on site there would not be any likely significant impact on this SAC.</p>
<p>Lough Ree SPA (004064)</p>	<p>Little grebe [A004]</p> <p>Whooper swan [A038]</p> <p>Teal [A052]</p> <p>Mallard [A053]</p>	<p>Approx. 6.4km to the west</p>	<p>Indirect hydrological</p>	<p>No. As above. In addition, although some of the SCI species may forage on sites such as this, it is</p>

⁵ The watercourse is also cited as the Ballynakill on the EPA's publicly available catchments.ie website.

	<p>Tufted duck [A061]</p> <p>Common scoter [A065]</p> <p>Goldeneye [A067]</p> <p>Coot [A125]</p> <p>Golden plover [A140]</p> <p>Lapwing [A142]</p> <p>Common tern [A193]</p> <p>Wigeon [A855]</p> <p>Shoveler [A857]</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>			<p>a substantial distance from the SPA and there is a significant amount of similar land in the wider vicinity.</p>
--	---	--	--	---

Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites

I have screened out all sites within a theoretical zone of influence. Having regard to the provisions of the foregoing table I do not consider that the proposed development could have any likely significant impact on any European site. As there is no likelihood of significant effects arising to European sites from the proposed development alone, I do not consider the proposed development could act in combination with any other plan or project to result in any significant effect, notwithstanding that there is no such plan or project.

Step 4: Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site

I conclude that the proposed development (alone) would not result in likely significant effects on any European site. The proposed development would have no likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects on any European sites. No further assessment is required for the project. No mitigation measures are required to come to these conclusions.

Screening Determination

Finding of no likely significant effects

In accordance with section 177U of the Planning & 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 site(s) and is therefore excluded from further consideration. AA is not required.

This determination is based on:

- The nature, scale, and location of the proposed development.
- The distance of the subject site from the nearest European sites and the lack of direct connectivity.
- The hydrological distance between the subject site and European sites and the assimilative capacity of the River Shannon.
- The extent of the availability of similar land for foraging by ex-situ SPA species.

No mitigation measures aimed at avoiding or reducing impacts on European sites were required to be considered in reaching this conclusion.

Appendix 4: Water Framework Directive (WFD)

WFD Impact Assessment Stage 1: Screening

Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality

An Coimisiún Pleanála Ref. No.	PL-500540-LD-25	Address	Grillagh, Killashee, Co. Longford
Description of project	Permission for a house, WWTS, and all associated works		
Brief site description relevant to WFD screening	The site comprises part of an agricultural field in a rural area. There is a ditch around the southern, western, and northern boundaries of the field and a watercourse (Ballynakill) on the opposite side of the local road to the west. Poorly draining peat / river alluvium soil is on site.		
Proposed surface water details	The application form states that surface water would be to a soakpit, though the location of this has not been identified on the site layout plan.		
Proposed water supply source and available capacity	The application form states that there would be a new connection to the public mains. Uisce Éireann was notified of the application by LCC on 13 th October 2025 but no observation was provided.		
Proposed wastewater treatment system (WWTS) and available capacity	Proposed WWTS on site (see also subsection 8.2)		
Other issues	No		

Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection

Identified water body	Distance	Water body name (code)	WFD status (2019-2024)	Risk of not achieving WFD status	Identified pressures on that waterbody	Pathway linkage to water feature
River waterbody (Ballynakill)	Approx. 20 metres to the west on the opposite side of the local road and approx. 800 metres to the east	Ballynakill_010 (IE_SH_26B220790)	Moderate	Review	None	Possible indirect hydrological link via on-site ditches
Groundwater waterbody	Underlying site	Funshinagh (IE_SH_G_091)	Good	Not at risk	None	Drainage to groundwater

Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.

Construction phase

No.	Component	Waterbody receptor (EPA code)	Pathway	Potential for impact / what is the possible impact	Screening stage mitigation measure	Residual risk (Y/N)	Determination to proceed to Stage 2

1	River waterbody	Ballynakill_010 (IE_SH_26B220790)	Possible indirect hydrology	Spillages and general construction activity	Limited works involved. No specific mitigation required.	No	Screened out
2	Groundwater waterbody	Funshinagh (IE_SH_G_091)	Dissipation through ground	Spillages and general construction activity	Limited works involved. No bedrock or water table found in trial hole. No specific mitigation required.	No	Screened out
Operational Phase							
1	River waterbody	Ballynakill_010 (IE_SH_26B220790)	Possible indirect hydrology	General activity on site	The site is for standard residential use. No specific or particular issue of concern is identified.	No	Screened out

2	Groundwater waterbody	Funshinagh (IE_SH_G_091)	Discharge to ground	Discharge from WWTS	The proposed WWTS has been assessed in sub-section 8.2 of this IR. The site conditions are considered to be acceptable for a WWTS.	No	Screened out
Decommissioning Phase							
N/A							