



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-501201-LK-26

Development	The reconfiguration of vehicular entrance to provide a centrally aligned access and associated site works.
Location	Apollo, 48 Revington Park North Circular Road, Limerick.
Planning Authority	Limerick City and County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2660088
Applicant	David O'Brien
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Refusal of permission.
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant	David O'Brien
Observers	None

Date of Site Inspection

16th June 2026.

Inspector

Derek Daly

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is located on the southern side of Revington Park / North Circular Road in the northern inner suburbs of Limerick City in an established residential area. The area comprises mainly two storied detached properties though immediately to the east of the site is a pair of semi-detached dwellings.
- 1.2. All of the dwellings have individual access onto the public road which serves as a local distributor road and there is a public footpath between the front / road boundaries and the public road. There is no uniformity in the roadside boundaries with a mix of finishes comprising both cut stone and plaster and varying heights. The individual accesses are also not uniform with some having access gates flush with the front boundaries while other accesses incorporate splayed accesses of varying depth.
- 1.3. On the application site is a two-storey detached dwelling accessed from Revington Park. The site has an existing vehicular entrance with an approximate width of 3.8 metres and the entrance is located in close proximity to the site's western boundary.
- 1.4. The remainder of the front boundary is comprised of a wall approximately 1400mm in height with mature planting inside of the wall. There is a public footpath between the front boundary of the site and the public road.
- 1.5. The site has a stated area of 0.057 hectares.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development as received by the planning authority on the 30th January 2026 was for the reconfiguration of vehicular entrance to provide a centrally aligned access and associated site works.
- 2.2. The applicant proposes to increase the width of the vehicular entrance to 7.8 metres equating to the entire site frontage and proposes a splayed entrance with proposed gate set back 4 metres from the roadside edge. The width of the new entrance gate is 4 metres. Four piers 1500mm in height are proposed two at the outer edge of the splay adjoining the public footpath and two at the gate. A wall 1200mm in height is proposed in the splayed area between the piers.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. The decision of the Planning Authority was to refuse planning permission. One reason was stated indicating;
- 3.1.2. The proposal, by virtue of the removal of the front boundary, is considered contrary to Section 11.8.5 Parking in Front Gardens of the Limerick Development Plan (2022-2028) and would result in a detrimental impact on the character of the area and be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The planning report dated the 24th March 2026 refers to the planning history, development plan provisions and an assessment of the development. The assessment focused on the development plan provisions and considered that the proposal as presented did not comply with Section 11.8.5 Parking in Front Gardens where it states that vehicular entrance shall not be wider than 3m.

3.2.2. Refusal was recommended.

3.3. Other submissions

- 3.4. Road's report dated the 23rd March 2026 indicated no objection to the proposal with conditions recommended.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1.1. P.A. Ref 15222. Permission granted for the construction of a two storey extension of approximately 104m² to the rear of existing dwelling.
- 4.1.2. P.A. Ref. No. 22/592. Permission granted for the demolition of an existing house and the construction of a new replacement two storey detached house, detached garden room, widening of existing entrance and all ancillary site works at 46 Revington Park. Condition no 7 provided for the entrance to be recessed with wing walls splayed at 45 degrees.

5.0 Policy and Context

5.1. Development Plan

- 5.1.1. The statutory development plan is the Limerick Development Plan (2022-2028)
- 5.1.2. The site is zoned Existing Residential with the objective: to provide for residential development, protect and improve existing residential amenity on Map 3 of Volume 2a of the plan.
- 5.1.3. The site is not within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) which are outlined in Volume 3 – Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas which includes the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas in Limerick.
- 5.1.4. Volume 1 chapter 11 refers to Development Management and section 11.8.5 refers to Parking in Front Gardens.
- 5.1.5. It refers to the cumulative effect of removal of front garden walls and railings damages the character and appearance of suburban streets and roads. Consequently, proposals for off street parking need to be balanced against loss of amenity. The removal of front garden walls and railings will not generally be permitted where they have a negative impact on the character of streetscapes (e.g. in Architectural Conservation Areas, Street Improvement Areas and other areas of architectural and historic character).

Where the re-development of a drive-way is permitted the following shall apply:

- Not have outward opening gates;
- Have a vehicular entrance not wider than 3m;
- Have a vehicle entrance not wider than 50% of the width of the front boundary;
- Have an area of hardstanding (parking space of 2.5m x 5m). Suitably landscape the balance of the space taking into account the existing context;
- Dish and strengthen the footpath and relocate any services at the applicant's expense;

- The hardstand/paving areas shall comprise a permeable (or porous) surface which allows water to drain through, such as gravel, permeable concrete block paving or porous asphalt, unless the rainwater is directed to a lawn or border to drain naturally.

5.2. National Guidance

- 5.2.1. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Geometric Design of Junctions (priority junctions, direct accesses, roundabouts, grade separated and compact grade separated junctions) DN-GEO-03060 May 2023 outlines standards and advice for the geometric design of junctions, including active travel crossings on national roads. The design principles and geometric parameters which shall be considered by Designers when developing safe and efficient junction layouts and vehicular accesses. Although focusing on main roads and junctions it does provide guidance in section 5.5 in relation to direct accesses including access to dwellings.

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.3.1. The subject site is not located within a site designated as a Natura 2000 site or NHA/pNHA.

6.0 EIA Screening

- 6.1. The proposed development is not a Class to which Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended, applies and therefore, the requirement for submission of an EIAR and carrying out of an EIA may be set aside.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. Grounds of Appeal

The appellant grounds of appeal in summary refers to;

- The principle of the development is not in dispute; the site is zoned residential and benefits from an existing entrance.

- No increase in traffic is proposed and the proposal is whether it is appropriate to retain an existing entrance which is substandard in terms of safety.
- Existing entrance does not provide for satisfactory visibility and vehicles have to advance onto the carriageway before adequate visibility is obtained.
- The proposal is to address current deficiencies and will enable vehicles to remain within the site boundary and achieve sightline visibility prior to entering the carriageway.
- The existing entrance width is 3.8 metres and is deficient and compliance with the Development plan guideline of 3.0 metres is insufficient for the location and a required width of 4.0 metres is required from an engineering basis to provide for safety in turning radius and avoiding encroachment onto the carriageway and a lesser width would inhibit this.
- The roads section of the Limerick City and County Council raised no objections.
- Section 11.8.5 of the development plan is acknowledged and is related to issues and residential amenities and control of parking in front gardens and the 3 metres guidance is a general provision and not an engineering standard and cannot be applied where it would result in an unsafe and substandard access.
- The proposal results in a splayed entrance but remains a single entrance and does not introduce additional parking, alter the use of the site, result in extensive hardstanding or a car dominated frontage and the intervention is confined to a single property and is read in the context of an existing entrance rather than a new break in the streetscape and is not a disproportionate intervention.
- Supplementary planting will be provided to soften the appearance of the entrance.
- Reference is made to 46 Revington Park P.A. Ref. No. 22/592 where the PA required a recessed entrance and splayed boundary treatment in the interests of traffic and pedestrian safety. Details of this decision are included in the grounds of appeal.

- The Planning Authority decision is on visual grounds and has not disputed the safety improvement of the proposal.
- Photographs are included with the grounds of appeal.

7.2. Planning Authority Response

7.2.1. The planning authority has made no response in relation to the grounds of appeal.

7.3. Other responses

7.3.1. No other responses were received in relation the appeal.

8.0 Assessment

8.1. The main issues in this appeal relate to the issues as stated in the grounds of appeal. Appropriate Assessment also requires to be considered. I am satisfied that no other substantive issues arise.

8.1.1. The grounds of appeal largely refer to the stated reason for refusal that the proposal, by virtue of the removal of the front boundary, is considered contrary to Section 11.8.5 Parking in Front Gardens of the Limerick Development Plan (2022-2028).

8.1.2. The grounds focus on section 11.8.5 and that the current entrance which is 3.8 metres in width which it is contended that it is substandard in terms of safety and the proposal under appeal and the design as submitted is an engineering response to address the deficiency and notes that the roads section of the Limerick City and County Council raised no objections. It is contended that the Planning Authority decision is on visual grounds and has not disputed the safety improvement of the proposal.

8.1.3. There is also reference to 46 Revington Park P.A. Ref. No. 22/592 where the PA required a recessed entrance and splayed boundary treatment in the interests of traffic and pedestrian safety. Details of this decision are included in the grounds of appeal.

8.2. Specifically in relation to 46 Revington Park P.A. Ref. No. 22/592 as referred to in the grounds of appeal it is noted that this development was granted and determined

prior to the adoption of the current development plan and an assessment of the current appeal would be in the context of the current operative development plan.

- 8.3. In relation to the current proposal the principle of recasting a new access arrangement on the site is acceptable in principle.
- 8.4. The primary consideration in relation to the current appeal relates to the provisions as set out in the current development plan and issues relating to traffic safety to address what is contended is a deficient access.
 - 8.4.1. The provisions as stated in section 11.8.5 of the development plan primarily focus on the cumulative effect of removal of front garden walls and railings which it is considered damages the character and appearance of suburban streets and roads and that removal of front garden walls and railings will not generally be permitted where they have a negative impact on the character of streetscapes. The provision is I consider reasonable. Section 11.8.5 does provide for new and amended assess points and sets out requirements which include having a vehicular entrance not wider than 3 metres and a vehicle entrance not wider than 50% of the width of the front boundary to removal of entire roadside boundaries.
- 8.5. The appellant's contention is that adherence to the requirements as stated in section 11.8.5 do not allow for the provision of a safe entrance and an entrance width of 4 metres is required greater than the current width of 3.6 metres and a splayed area is also required which in effect removes the entire existing roadside boundary. The basis of the increased width and increased setback it is contended is based on an engineering appraisal to address deficiencies in relation to the current entrance. The grounds do not make any specific reference to a standard but the effect of the design with an increased entrance width and associated splayed area is the removal of the entire roadside boundary.
- 8.6. There is to my understanding no definitive guidance in relation to the minimum width of an entrance and statutory development plans proscribe different maximum widths and in the case of the planning authority to which the appeal relates a maximum of 3 metres is stated. The TII Publication Geometric Design of Junctions (priority junctions, direct accesses, roundabouts, grade separated and compact grade separated junctions) DN-GEO-03060 it is noted provides some guidance in relation to single accesses from dwellings onto public roads in figure 5.9 direct access layout

2 – access from dwellings and outlines a minimum width of 2.5 metres. A width of 3 metres would be acceptable in the context of DN-GEO-03060 given the nature of the public road serving the site.

- 8.7. The primary concern in relation to providing a vehicular entrance is not the width other than it is wide enough to allow a vehicle to pass through it but whether the entrance is designed to provide for safe passage of vehicles on to and out of the site in a manner which does not compromise the safety of all road users including pedestrians and cyclists and that sightline visibility is provided for this in both directions.
- 8.8. DN-GEO-03060 does provide guidance in relation to safety considerations and in particular sightline visibility and the set back of entrance from the road carriageway. The distance back for direct access from a road in which the full visibility is measured is the 'x' distance outlined in table 5.4 of DN-GEO-03060 and on all roads a distance of 3.0 metres is outlined but for local roads accesses, lightly trafficked a relaxation to 2.0 metres is permitted which is measured from the inner edge of the road carriageway and not the site boundary. A requirement of the location of the actual entrance from the edge of the road can therefore be 2 or 3 metres and a setback of in excess of 4 metres as proposed from the front boundary is not necessarily required.
- 8.9. Sightline visibility is determined from the 'x' distance point and from the point "x" metres back from the road a driver approaching the road should be able to see clearly points and distance to the left and right on the nearer edge of the road carriageway referred to the 'y' distance and clear unimpaired visibility should if possible be attained outside of the 'y' distance.

The narrow nature of the site frontage does present issues in relation to achieving a sightline relative to the design speed of the road but an increased setback of the entrance point does not address this or provide increased visibility. It is equally noted the height of the splayed walls at a height of 1200mm and the inclusion of piers 1500mm in height at the outer and inner sections of the splayed walls would exceed the desired height of 1050mm for a driver of a vehicle to view unimpeded in both directions.

- 8.10. I do not therefore consider that the proposal as submitted having considered the grounds of appeal addresses the issue of traffic safety in the manner outlined, provide for unimpaired sightline visibility and the removal of the entire roadside is therefore excessive in the context of the standards outlined in DN-GEO-03060.
- 8.11. Specific to the assessment of and conclusion in the reason for refusal on the streetscape impacts of the proposed development which involves the complete removal of the front boundary resulting in a detrimental impact on the character of the area, although as noted there is a multiplicity of entrances designs in the vicinity of the appeal site there is I consider a strong sense of a roadside boundary which contributes to the character of the streetscape and area. The complete removal of the roadside boundary I consider is not warranted or desirable or warrants setting aside the standards outlined in section 11.8.5 of the development plan and the reason for refusal as stated is reasonable.

9.0 AA Screening

- 9.1. I have considered the proposal for the reconfiguration of vehicular entrance to provide a centrally aligned access and associated site works.
- 9.2. The development comprises in effect a relatively minor development as outlined in section 2 in the Inspectors report. Having regard to the location, nature and scale of the proposed development confined within an established residential property, and the absence of connectivity to European sites it is concluded that no Appropriate Assessment issues arise as the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on these European sites.

10.0 Water Framework

- 10.1. The subject site is not located immediate to a waterbody The development comprises no additional construction works as referred to in section 2 of this report. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.
- 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 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. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works regarding the nature and scale of the development.
- The context of the surrounding area.
- Location and distance from nearest Water bodies and lack of hydrological connections.

Conclusion

I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1. I recommend that permission be refused.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

12.1. Having regard to the nature of the development, the design, nature and scale of the proposed development and to the provisions of the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028 and in particular to section 11.8.5 it is considered that the proposal, by virtue of the removal of the entire front boundary, constitute and excessive intervention in the streetscape which would result in a detrimental impact on the character of the area and would therefore be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

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

Derek Daly
Planning Inspector

7th July 2026

Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL 5001201-LK-26
Proposed Development Summary	The reconfiguration of vehicular entrance to provide a centrally aligned access and associated site works.
Development Address	Apollo, 48 Revington Park North Circular Road, Limerick.
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?	☐ X YES , it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
☐ , it is a Class specified in Part 1.	No
☐ X No ,	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
x 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.	
No , the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.	
No , the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) Yes	

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 ☐	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
Yes ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: Derek Daly Date: 7th July 2026