



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-501268-GY-26

Development

For the construction of a new garage directly adjacent to an existing dwelling

Location

Tonagarraun, Corrandulla, Co. Galway

Planning Authority

Galway County Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

2660243

Applicant(s)

Aidan Joyce

Type of Application

Permission

Planning Authority Decision

Refuse Permission

Type of Appeal

First Party Normal Planning Appeal

Appellant(s)

Aidan Joyce

Observer(s)

None

Date of Site Inspection

7th June 2026

Inspector

Conor McGrath

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located in the townland of Tonagarraun, c.1km east of the N84 (Galway – Castlebar) at Clonboo, Castlequarter. This rural site is occupied by a modern single-storey detached dwelling. There are existing houses to the southwest, and south on the opposite side of the road to the appeal site. A foundation has been set out in the northeastern corner of the site, behind the building line of the existing dwelling. There is an existing portacabin type structure on site, on the northern side of the house.
- 1.2. To the north east, outside but immediately adjoining the site, an entrance and hardcore area has been set out and appeared to be in use for storage of plant and materials at time of site visit. Topsoil from this site appears to have been stripped and mounded on the northeastern edge of that site. There is an existing access between the subject site and these adjoining lands.
- 1.3. The alignment of the local road (L21269) serving the site is straight at this location. The lands in the area are generally low-lying and approx. 60m northeast of the site the Castlecreevy Stream flows south toward the Cregg River, which flows west to Lough Corrib.

2.0 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the construction of a new detached garage structure in the north-eastern corner of the appeal site, in the area of the existing foundation pad. The structure comprises a net internal area of 130-sq.m, being approx. 14.7m x 9.2m in length. The structure has a proposed ridge height of 5.85m and is constructed in corrugated metal sheeting. A new soakaway is proposed within the rear garden. The site layout plan does not indicate the existing portacabin on the site nor the adjoining plant and material storage area to the northeast.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The planning authority decided to refuse permission for the proposed development for one reason as follows:

Having regard to the excessive scale, height and finishes of the domestic garage on the rural residential site, the planning authority considers the proposal, within the curtilage of a domestic dwelling house, would detract from the visual amenity of the area, would militate against the preservation of the rural environment, would impact negatively on the existing residential amenity of adjoining property, would be contrary to Policy Objective LCM1 and DM Standard 6 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022 -2028 and would set an undesirable precedent for future similar development in the area. Therefore, to permit the proposal would set an undesirable precedent in the area and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The development was screened out for AA and EIA.

The site is not within a flood risk area. The principle would be generally acceptable where the design is in accordance with DM Standard 6.

The proposed domestic garage with a height of 5.8m, floor area of approx. 135sqm and finishes of metal cladding is considered excessive and inappropriate in size, character and scale in this location and is over the generally permitted 60sqm and 5m high threshold for domestic garages, compounded by the absence of any justification for same. Therefore, it is considered that to permit this large domestic garage at the proposed position within the site would be contrary to DM Standard 6 of the 2022-2028 County Development Plan and contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.4. Third Party Observations

None

4.0 Planning History

- PA ref. 03/6460: Permission granted on the subject site to Aidan Joyce for the construction of a dwelling, garage with effluent treatment system. This provided for a single storey garage in the northeastern corner of the site, (approx. 8.54m x 5.185m).
- PA ref. 21/787: Permission refused on the adjacent site to the northeast for construction of a new dwelling house, domestic garage, sewage treatment system, and associated works, on public health grounds.
- PA ref. 22/814: Permission refused on the adjacent site to the northeast to construct a dwelling house, domestic garage/fuel store, septic tank, treatment system and percolation area, on public health grounds.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

Chapter 8.13 Landscape Conservation and Management

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

Chapter 15 - Development Management Standards

DM Standard 6: Domestic Garages (Urban and Rural)

- The design, form and materials should be ancillary to, and consistent with the main dwelling on site;
- Structures may be detached or connected to the dwelling but should be visually subservient in terms of size, scale and bulk;

- 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

Appendix 4 identifies the site as being located within the Central Galway Complex Landscape Type - 6a. Black River Basin - low sensitivity to change.

The site is not affected by any scenic routes or protected views.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

The closest sites of natural heritage interest comprise Lough Corrib SAC and SPA. There is a weak hydrological connection to these sites via the Castlecreevy watercourse and the Cregg River.

6.0 EIA Screening

- 6.1. 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.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. Grounds of Appeal

The first party make the following points in their appeal against the refusal of permission:

- Revised drawings are stated to accompany the appeal, illustrating
 - A reduction in overall height of the garage.
 - Revisions to external finishes to reflect the adjoining house.

- Screen planting to the side and rear of the structure.
- The amendments improve the scale, proportion and visual integration, and address concerns regarding visual amenity, rural character and policy compliance.
- The use function and ancillary nature of the structure remain unchanged.
- The garage is clearly ancillary and reads as a secondary structure, not dominant or visually intrusive.
- Reduced height improves the relationship with the house, reduces visual presence on the site and complies with principles for ancillary domestic development.
- Amended finishes and screen planting, provide for a cohesive relationship with the house, avoid incongruous rural form and enhance streetscape and site cohesion.
- As required under LCM1 and DM standard 6, the structure remains ancillary to the dwelling, is modest in height and scale, provides sympathetic finishes and is located within the curtilage.
- The amended garage does not cause overlooking or loss of privacy, overshadowing or noise and activity beyond normal domestic use.
- This site-specific response does not create a precedent.

[Note: Notwithstanding the commentary in the appeal, no revised drawings have been submitted to the Commission.]

7.2. Planning Authority Response

No response to the first party appeal has been received from the planning authority.

7.3. Observations

None received.

7.4. Prescribed Bodies

While the appeal was circulated to an Taisce, the Heritage Council and the Development Applications Unit, no submissions were received from these bodies.

8.0 Assessment

- 8.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the application and appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues to be considered in this appeal are the landscape and visual impacts of the development on its surroundings and relationship with the existing dwelling on the site.
- 8.2. The Commission should note that the appeal statement refers to proposed revisions to the design of the proposed structure and accompanying drawings in that regard. I have reviewed the drawings submitted with the appeal and confirm that the dimensions, finishes and site layout contained therein reflect those of the original planning application documents. No changes appear to be illustrated therein. I therefore base the assessment on the details provided to Galway County Council as part of the application.
- 8.3. The proposed structure is located within the site of the dwelling permitted under PA ref. 03/3460. A smaller scale domestic garage was permitted originally as part of that development and the principle of same is acceptable on the site, subject to design. The permitted dwelling has a ridge height of 6.16m and an eaves height of 2.54m, set back c. 21m back from the edge of the public road. The site of the proposed garage is currently partly screened by a portacabin type structure on the site, which does not appear to have the benefit of planning permission. The foundation pad for the structure appears to be already In-situ. While the ridge height of the proposed garage would be lower than that of the house, its scale and proximity to the house, and the shallow pitch roof form with a 4.9m eaves height, would have an uncomfortable and inappropriate relationship therewith.
- 8.4. The site is open to views from the adjoining public road and on the approach from the northeast, while views from the southwest are limited. The proposed structure by reason of its height, form and overall scale would not read as ancillary or visually

subservient to the associated dwelling, and would represent a discordant feature at this location. The scale and relationship with the adjoining dwelling is inappropriate and would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area. The scale of the proposed development would be greater than that generally associated with a domestic structure and no rationale or justification in this regard has been provided either at application or appeal stage. While the scale and materials may be reflective of agricultural development in the wider area, the subject location does not present as an agricultural site.

- 8.5. While the planning authority report refers to a general floorarea limit of 60-sq.m. for domestic garages, I cannot identify any standard or objective in the current county development plan in this regard. Nonetheless, such would generally reflect a domestic scale of development associated with, and ancillary to, a rural dwellinghouse.
- 8.6. While the site layout plans do not indicate the location and layout of the wastewater treatment plant and percolation area serving the existing dwelling, the proposed structure does not encroach on the layout permitted under PA ref. 03/3460. The proposed soakaway located within the site would appear to be an appropriate solution to manage run-off, subject to design in accordance with BRE Digest 365.
- 8.7. Having regard to the foregoing, I concur with the planning authority that the proposal would represent an inappropriate form of development and would be contrary to DM Standard 6 of the development plan, and recommend therefore that permission be refused for the reasons set out below.

9.0 AA Screening

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

The proposed development is located within a domestic site in a rural area and comprises the construction of a garage structure (c.135-sq.m.). The closest European Site, part of the Natura 2000 Network, is the Lough Corrib SAC [00297] and Lough Corrib SPA [004042], located c.2.4km southwest of the site as the crow flies.

The Castlecreevy watercourse, flows southwest within c.60m of the site, and joins the Cregg River approx. 1.525km downstream of the site. The Cregg river flows into the SAC c.3.3km further downstream.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The nature and scale of the proposed development.
- The separation from European site and the indirect nature pathways thereto, including the potential dilution effects over distance occurring in the intervening watercourses.

I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

10.0 Water Framework Directive

- 10.1. The Castlecreevy watercourse, flows southwest within c.60m of the site, and joins the Cregg River approx. 1.525km downstream of the site. The Castlecreevy River currently has a Poor quality status, identified as being At Risk. Significant pressures are identified as hydromorphology. The site overlies the Clare-Corrib groundwater body ((IE_WE_G_0020) of Good Status, Not at Risk.
- 10.2. Having considered the nature, scale, and location of the proposed development, it is concluded that the proposal will not result in any risk of deterioration in the status of any water body, including surface waters (rivers and lakes), groundwater, transitional waters, or coastal waters. This applies to both qualitative and quantitative status, and in respect of temporary and permanent effects.
- 10.3. In addition, the proposed development will not adversely affect the achievement of established environmental objectives, including the protection, maintenance, and improvement of water body status, as required under the Directive. Accordingly, the

proposed development is considered to be compliant with the requirements of Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive.

11.0 Recommendation

- 11.1. That permission be refused for the proposed development for the reasons and considerations set out below.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the height, scale and external finishes of the proposed development, and its relationship with the adjoining rural dwelling, the proposed development would represent an inappropriate and discordant feature in the rural landscape, would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area and militate against the preservation of the rural environment contrary to Policy Objective LCM1 and DM Standard 6 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022 -2028, and would set an undesirable precedent for future similar development in the area. The proposed 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.

Conor McGrath ADP

29/06/2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-501268-GY-26
Proposed Development Summary	Development For the construction of a new garage directly adjacent to an existing dwelling
Development Address	Tonagarraun , Corrandulla , Co. Galway
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?	☒ Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q.2.
	☐ No, No further action required.
(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)	
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to	State the Class here

be requested. Discuss with ADP.	
☒ 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 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?	
☒ 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.	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
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	State the Class and state the relevant threshold
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)	State the Class and state the relevant threshold

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)
No ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____Conor McGrath_____ Date: 29/06/2026_____