

An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

**Memorandum
ABP-322958-25**

To: Stephen Rhys Thomas
From: Colm McLoughlin
Re: Further Information
Date: 5th January 2026

I recommend that further information should be sought from the applicant for this application under section 37(F)(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, requesting the following:

- 1) The application Drainage Report refers to shallow channels as draining the western side of the site and the immediate areas to the north and south. This Drainage Report also states that the application site is on occasion subject to flooding and that despite sizing the proposed surface water drainage infrastructure to accommodate all storm durations and intensities up to a 1:30 year storm (plus a 20% climate change factor), during exceptional events in excess of this water levels may overtop the discharge control (hydrobrake) and result in short-term uncontrolled flows towards the culvert draining west under Southern Station Road, towards an area that is noted to be prone to flooding under the Shannon Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study. The Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027, the operative statutory plan for this area, includes policy objective CPO 10.106 requiring flood risk assessments to be carried out for any development proposals within 200m of a watercourse and at risk of flooding. The applicant is requested to submit a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment following the approach set out in 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2009), including the Technical Appendices.

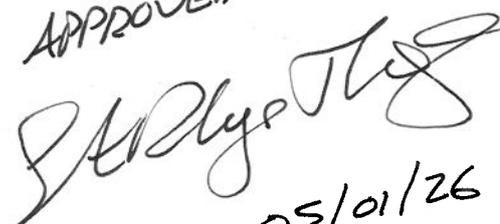
- 2) Policy objective CPO14.12 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 aims to ensure that archaeological excavation is carried out in accordance with best practice as outlined by the National Monuments Service. Notwithstanding the location of the application site outside of the historic town walls to Athlone and outside a 'zone of archaeological potential' indicated in the expired Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020, the National Monuments Service 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' (1999) outline when archaeological assessment should be undertaken, including in the case of developments that are 'extensive in terms of area or length'. The area of works within the site on undeveloped ground amounting to over 1 hectare is extensive in urban development terms. The National Monuments Service 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' (1999) states that if archaeological assessment is appropriate, a report on the assessment, including a report on test excavations if such was undertaken, should accompany an application to undertake a development. The applicant is requested to submit an Archaeological Assessment report for the proposed development following the approach set out in 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' (1999).
- 3) Policy objectives CPO 7.1 and 7.2 of the Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 promote the provision of quality urban design in developments, including creating accessible, functional, attractive and distinctive places. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) outline the need to design new roads in a manner that would encourage pedestrians and cyclists to use active travel routes. The proposed boundary wall with fencing atop separating the proposed link road and the expanded bus depot, would measure a total height of 4.75m onto the link road. This boundary treatment would be out of character with boundary treatments in the immediate area and would be of excessive scale, resulting in overbearing impacts for those using the proposed link road corridor and presenting a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists, thus discouraging use of the respective active travel routes. The applicant is requested to submit revised drawings for this boundary treatment, cognisant of the provisions set out above, including the need for a reduced height to the boundary treatment.

- 4) The applicant is requested to provide cross-section drawings to a stated metric scale, illustrating the context for the proposed link road and housing along The Manse and St. Francis' Terrace.
- 5) The applicant is requested to provide floor plan, elevation and section drawings to a stated metric scale for the tyre store building that is proposed to be relocated within the bus depot.
- 6) The applicant refers to calculations for the foul drainage proposals as being contained in appendix E to their Drainage Report. The applicant is requested to submit this 'appendix E', as it appears to have been omitted from the planning application.

(Allow 12 weeks)



Colm McLoughlin
Senior Planning Inspector

APPROVED

A/ADP 05/01/26

