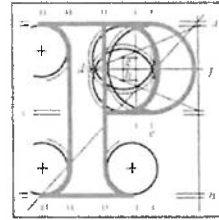


Our Case Number: ACP-323606-25

Your Reference: Christopher Fingleton & Mary Tyrrell



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Bluett & O'Donoghue Architects
1 Chancery Street
Dublin 7

Date: 12 June 2026

Re: Proposed construction of 67 no. housing units
on a site at Tyrells Land, situated along Stradbally Road, Portlaoise, Co Laois

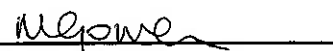
Dear Sir / Madam,

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received your letter dated 12th June 2026 in relation to the above-mentioned case. The contents of your letter have been noted.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter, please contact the undersigned officer of the Commission at laps@pleanala.ie.

Please quote the above-mentioned An Coimisiún Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Commission.

Yours faithfully,


Muirín Gowen
Executive Officer
Direct Line:

CH08

Teil
Glao Áitiúil
Láithreán Gréasáin
Ríomhphost

Tel
LoCall
Website
Email

(01) 858 8100
1800 275 175
www.pleanala.ie
communications@pleanala.ie

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
Baile Átha Cliath 1
D01 V902

64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Muirin Gowen

From: Emma Curran <emma.curran@boda.ie>
Sent: Friday 12 June 2026 13:06
To: LAPS
Cc: Mary Fingleton; Chris Fingleton
Subject: ACP-323606-25 Tyrrell's Land, Stradbally Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois Section 177AE
Attachments: L4- An Coimisiún Pleanála.pdf

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

To whom this may concern,

Please find attached submission in relation to the above development:

- L4 - An Coimisiún Pleanála

Please acknowledge receipt of this email and attachments once received.

Kind regards,
Emma



Emma Curran *Architectural Graduate / Planner*
BArch MPlan

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IRELAND

BLUETT & O'DONOGHUE
www.boda.ie

Chat with me on Microsoft Teams

Data Retention & Protection Policy

BLUETT & O'DONOGHUE

PROJECT MANAGEMENT ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING BUILT HERITAGE PLANNING FORENSICS

Our Ref: C25-026 L4 - An Coimisiún Pleanála
Reply to: 2 John St., Kilkenny, mail@boda.ie
Date: 12th June 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála/The Commission,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1

By email to An Coimisiún Pleanála/The Commission laps@pleanala.ie

Attention: Muirín Gowen, Executive Officer

Re: Tyrrell's Land, Stradbally Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois Section 177AE
Re: Case reference: ACP-323606-25
Client: Christopher Fingleton and Mary Tyrrell, Portrane House, Portlaoise.

A Chara,

We, *BLUETT & O'DONOGHUE* thank you on behalf of Christopher Fingleton and Mary Tyrrell of Portrane House, Portlaoise, Co. Laois for your letter dated 19th of May 2026 informing us that the Commission has received further information from Laois County Council in relation to this case.

Laois County Council do not appear to have made any material changes to the design and have not responded adequately to the request for further information.

We would refer The Commission to our previous submissions as listed below:

- L1- An Coimisiún Pleanála (20th October 2025)
- L2- An Coimisiún Pleanála (6th February 2026)
- L3- An Coimisiún Pleanála (19th March 2026)

These submissions contained concerns and offered potential solutions.

We summarise our previous submissions, their key concerns and how they have not been addressed by Laois County Council below:

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+353(0)1 8656265
mail@boda.ie

Two John Street, Kilkenny, R
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mail@boda.ie

Peter Bluett

Cormac O'Sullivan

James O'Donoghue

Danyal Ibrahim

L1- An Coimisiún Pleanála (20th October 2025)
Key Concerns
• Development is not sensitively sited in the curtilage of the Protected Structure • Boundary Treatment needs careful consideration • Negative Impact on proposed Natural Heritage Area • Negative impact on surrounding trees and root protection area
L2- An Coimisiún Pleanála (6th February 2026)
Key Concerns
• The development does not respect the curtilage as defined in the Judith Hill baseline heritage report • The proposed units adjacent to Portrane House materially impact the setting of the principal elevations • Policy PS3 of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 requires that any development, modification, alteration, or extension affecting a Protected Structure must be prepared by suitably qualified persons and accompanied by appropriate documentation as outlined in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities [DAHG, 2011] • Laois County Council's response does not take into consideration the recommendations of the Dr Judith Hill Report and its requirement for an awareness of the heritage significance of the development site.
L3- An Coimisiún Pleanála (19th March 2026)
Key Concerns
• Portrane House is a private residential dwelling occupied by Christopher Fingleton and his wife Mary Tyrrell. The veterinary clinic operates from outbuildings in the yard. Laois County Council continuously incorrectly refer to Portrane House as being a Veterinary Clinic. It is important that the assessment considers the actual use of the building as a dwelling.

We have reviewed the Further Information submitted by Laois County Council and Van Dijk Architects (*hereafter referred to as The Applicant*) on May 5th 2026. In response to this, we note the following:

1. Scheme Design

The Applicant states in section 4(a)(ii) of their response that:

"The proposed scheme improves the buffer and separation relative to earlier layouts,"

We are surprised by this statement as there has been no improvement to the buffer or separation as there has been no changes to the scheme in this regard.

Please see attached comparison in Appendix A which indicates no material change between the current scheme and the original scheme from what we can see.

2. Significant Views

We would also highlight that the photos submitted by the Applicant in Appendix 1 of the response and comparisons on page 25 of their report do not accurately show the direct relationship and are deceptive. In section 4(a)(iv) the Applicant states that: *“the perceived visual relationship between the site and Portrane House is notably less pronounced in reality.”* The photos taken are from further away from Portrane House and are of poor quality. Please see below photos of elevations.

2  View towards Portrane House	5 
Figure 1: Photo of front of Portrane House from Development site (Source: Response to RFI May 2026 van Dijk Architects) This view is further away from Portrane House	Figure 2: Photo of front of Portrane House from Development site (Source: Design Statement van Dijk Architects January 2026) This view could be retained with a modest adjustment of the development layout.

3. Significant Views and Residential Amenity

The photomontage provided (extract under) confirms to us that there has not been any further consideration given in relation to the setting of Portrane House. The scheme continues to show the rear elevations of residential units as set out.

Portrane House is a private residential dwelling occupied by Christopher Fingleton and his wife Mary Tyrrell. The proposed view from their dwelling as demonstrated in the indicative photomontage showing the rear elevations of the new houses facing the front entrance and façade of Portrane House is not acceptable.



Indicative photomontage of proposed development from the front garden of Portrane House (based on Dr. Judith Hill Fig. 30), illustrating the set-back, screened and recessive nature of the development within the existing landscape context.

Figure 3: Photomontage submitted as part of RFI response May 2026 (Source: Response to RFI May 2026 van Dijk Architects pg.26)

The example of *The Downs* housing estate given as an exemplar for development on pg27 of The Applicant's response would not be appropriate in this case as Portrane House is screened by a substantial range of outhouses on its west side and the ridge/esker which is higher than the roofs of the two storied houses in the Downs estate.

4. Built Heritage and Layout

The Applicant's response to Item 4 of An Coimisiún Pleanála's Request for Further Information has not included a new Architectural Heritage Impact Report as requested.

The Applicant's response Item 1, paragraph 1, on page 4 notes that reliance on the Judith Hill Report is limited and that there is now a reliance on a discussion with Caroline Whatley as set out. It is advised that this form of response "*satisfies the intent of an AHIR*" (we presume AHIA) by "*building upon the Judith Hill Report*".

The Applicant's review of elements of the Judith Hill Report and associated summary of discussions with Caroline Whatley is a confusing and incoherent assessment.

Judith Hill's recommendations on pg. 11 of The Judith Hill Heritage Assessment Report 2021 still stands as being an objective site review.

- A generous buffer zone between the boundary of Portran House and the proposed housing. This zone should include a strip of land adjacent to Stradbally Road where the beech trees grow and it should flow into the area zoned open space at the foot of the esker. (figs 25, 28) (map 14) There is an opportunity to treat this buffer as parkland, and to incorporate a path to link Stradbally Road and the housing development to the rest of the site. (see below) As map 2 shows historically there was a network of paths linking the north end of the demesne where the beech trees are located with the southern part of the demesne. The buffer zone would be reinforced if the housing development was designed in such a way that there was a concentration of gardens or public open space adjacent to the buffer. The single evergreen tree may fall into the buffer zone or be incorporated into landscaping in the housing scheme. This would help to preserve the setting of Portrane House and allow a view of the beech trees from the house and garden.
- One or more open areas/sight lines through the housing development which would enable views of Portrane House in a setting that includes the ridge. This could be associated with a new path system, giving access to the open space amenity and linking with a path in the buffer zone. Important views include figs 21, 22, 11. (map 14)
- A low rise housing scheme that would retain the view of the trees lining the River Derry from Portrane House. (fig 23)
- Retention of existing features of the Esker Ridge including the viewing point and the trees. (figs 2, 5, 9, 10, 19, 21)

Judith Hill states on page 4, paragraph 1.1 that:

1.1. Aim and scope of the report

Portrane House, a protected structure, is situated at the north-west corner of a development site, the lands of which were once part of the Portrane estate. Future changes and development on these lands will have a potential impact of the house and its immediate setting. The objective of this report is to define the significance of Portrane House, and to outline the sensitivities of the site with regard to heritage issues for the masterplan that is to be developed for the development site on Stradbally Road.

It is advised that Caroline Whatley expresses concern and gives recommendations under point 4 (a)(ii) on page 19 of their response:

Caroline Whatley supports the identification of these sensitivities; however, in review/discussion she notes that:

- The relationship between the front elevation of Portrane House and the proposed development could be further refined,
- The current layout introduces rear elevations facing toward the protected structure, which may affect the perceived approach,
- Improvements such as a stronger boundary treatment (e.g. stone wall) would enhance the interface between old and new

Conclusion:

We would respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála carefully consider our previous submissions and make an order with appropriate conditions to take into account the setting of Portrane house. This can be achieved by a modest adjustment to the scheme layout to remove rear elevations facing towards the protected structure without a material reduction in estate density.

Alternatively, refuse the application as it is currently configured so that Laois County Council can prepare an appropriate updated submission.

Yours sincerely,



EMMA CURRAN

B.Arch., MPLAN (Planning and Sustainable Development), MRIAI
BLUETT & O'DONOGHUE



PETER BLUETT

B.Arch., Sc., Dip. Arch., M.Sc., (Fire Eng'), CEng. MI(Fire)E. FRIAI, RIAI Grade 2 Conservation Architect. MIEI
BLUETT & O'DONOGHUE

Cc: Client

APPENDIX A – SCHEME EVOLUTION

	
Part 8 Scheme (2023)	Current Proposed Scheme (May 2026)

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