

Meath County Council

Planning Report

To:	Wendy Bagnall, Senior Executive Planner
From:	Nathan Cooney, Executive Planner
File Number:	25/60894
Applicant:	TC Structures Ltd
Development Address:	Baytown Lodge Baytown, The Ward Co. Meath D11 E300
Application Type:	Retention & Permission
Date of Site Inspection:	24/09/2025
Date of Report:	09/10/2025
Date Decision Due:	17/10/2025
Development Description:	1) Retention Permission of change of use of existing industrial unit to vehicular repair garage, retention of storage containers, hard standing area's. 2) Planning Permission sought for office/storage space to existing building with associated site works

1.0 Site Location & Description

The subject site is located at Baytown Lodge Baytown, The Ward Co. Meath, and comprises an existing vehicular repair garage use on site with ancillary storage containers on site and yard. The site also comprises an existing dwelling. The dwelling and the subject site are both accessed by separate entrances on the local road. The existing vehicular repair garage and associated structures are the subject of retention permission. The stated site area is 1.30 ha.

At the time of site inspection, it was clear that the subject site was in use as vehicular repair garage.

The lands are zoned 'RA' – Rural Area in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. The subject site is located within Dublin Airport Aircraft Noise Zone C. There are no protected structures or recorded sites on or adjacent to the site. The site is not located within a Flood Zone. The site is located in the Lowland landscape character area; the character area is noted as low value and highly sensitivity to development changes.



Figure 1.0: Aerial image showing the location of the application site.



Figure 2.0: Images of the subject site to which the application relates.

2.0 Proposed Development

The proposed development, as stated and as indicated on plans submitted would comprise:

- Retention Permission of change of use of existing industrial unit to vehicular repair garage, retention of storage containers, hard standing areas.
- Planning Permission sought for office/storage space to existing building with associated site works.

3.0 Planning History

- 001092 Permission REFUSED for to erect dormer bungalow with bio cycle waste water treatment system, also entrance.
- 9386 Permission REFUSED for a dwelling.
- 891237 Permission REFUSED for construction of bungalow and septic tank.

4.0 Policy Context

4.1 Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework

Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework (NPF) is a 20-year strategy setting out the growth strategy for the country up to 2040.

The NPF states that agriculture has traditionally been the most important contributor to rural economies and it remains important as a significant source of income and both direct and indirect employment. However, it must adapt to the challenges posed by modernisation, restructuring, market development and the increasing importance of environmental issues related to climate change impacts and biodiversity loss.

4.2 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)

The Guidelines are aimed at ensuring a consistent, rigorous and systematic approach to fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system. They require the incorporation of flood risk management in the plan-making and development management processes.

The key elements of these Guidelines include the following:

- A sequential approach to flood risk management, based on avoidance, reduction and then mitigation of flood risk
- A determination of appropriate development based on flood probability and vulnerability of development type.
- A stringent set of criteria against which to test development in floodplains for justification on the basis of wider sustainability grounds and acceptable management of flood risk.

- The requirement for a flood risk assessment in relation to spatial planning and planning applications.

4.3 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly for the period 2019-2031 is a strategic plan and investment framework to shape the future development of the Eastern and Midland Region to 2031 and beyond.

4.4 Other Strategies, Guidelines, etc.

All other relevant Section 28 Planning Guidelines and National Policy have been considered in this assessment of this application.

4.5 Meath County Development Plan (MCDP) 2021-2027

Zoning

The application site is subject to the RA – Rural Area zoning which has the objective “*To protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture, forestry and sustainable rural-related enterprise, community facilities, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage.*”

The uses permitted in the RA zoning include;

Permitted Uses

Agriculture, Agricultural Buildings, Agri-Tourism, Boarding Kennels (Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence), Burial Grounds, Extractive Industry/Quarrying, Equestrian, Farm Shop (Only where the bulk of the produce is produced on the farm), Forestry related activities, Horticulture, Caravan and Camping Park (No static mobile homes or permanent structure unless ancillary to the operation of the campsite shall be permitted), Golf Course, Open Space, Research and Development (Rural related research and development only), Residential (Subject to compliance with the Rural Settlement Strategy), Restaurant/Café (Only where ancillary to tourism uses or conversion of protected or vernacular structures), Sustainable Energy Installations, Utility Structures.

Open for Consideration Uses

Community Facility, Cultural Facility, Education, Garden Centre, Micro Businesses (Refer to the Economic Chapter), Playing Fields, Recreational Facility, Sports Club, Telecommunication Structures, Workshop (only where ancillary to an existing dwelling where it is demonstrated that the proposed activity is carried out by a resident of the dwelling, with no visiting members of the public), Veterinary Clinic.

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 is the statutory development plan for the area. The Development Plan sets the local planning policy context including provisions for urban and rural development etc.

Chapter 4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the Economy and Employment Strategy.

Section 4.11.1 refers specifically to the Rural Enterprise.

It is the policy of the NPF 'to enhance the competitiveness of rural areas by supporting innovation in rural economic development and enterprise through the sustainable diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and in particular those with a low or zero carbon output'. This Plan accepts that there is a need to develop a rural economy that offers viable and sustainable employment for existing communities. There is also a need to strengthen the provision / retention of services, regenerate rural communities and promote the economic development of rural areas. This manifests itself in the need to both acknowledge the need for, and promote the development of, small scale enterprises in rural areas. Given the County's strategic location within the GDA its excellent transport links, proximity to a multiplicity of third level institutions providing a steady stream of skilled workers and its access to urban centres served by high speed communications infrastructure the County is ideally located to attract and grow new and innovative employment sectors into its rural areas. The Council provides a comprehensive, multidisciplinary support system to businesses who seek to locate in the County.

It is the policy of the Council to support the location of once off medium to large-scale rural enterprise if it is demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the council, that the enterprise can be more readily accommodated in a rural setting than provided in a designated settlement centre and subject to standard development management considerations being applied. It is equally accepted that there are certain types of rural enterprises, especially those that involve processing of natural resources, which serve rural communities which have a critical role to play in sustainable rural development. There are already a number of successful enterprises of this nature existing in the County in the food processing and development areas, as well as the extractive industry.

The promotion and facilitation of micro enterprises (up to a maximum of 10 employees) is a key area for the generation of sustainable employment opportunities in rural areas. The Council will seek to facilitate the development of this sector by ensuring that incubator units for micro enterprises are provided in lower tier centres (Small Towns and Villages) as well as considering their individual appropriateness in rural nodes and possibly, the open countryside. In particular, the reuse of redundant agricultural buildings and the development of new buildings to accommodate such diversification / enterprise, within an overall farmyard complex, will be considered on their individual merits.

ED POL 16: To support the location of a once off medium to large-scale rural enterprise only in instances where it is demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Council, that the enterprise can be more readily accommodated in a rural setting than in a designated settlement centre and subject to standard development management considerations being applied.

ED POL 17: To support in conjunction with Meath LEO and other agencies the development of indigenous industry and business start-ups in rural employment centres (villages and settlements) in the County, subject to compliance with siting, design and environmental considerations.

ED POL 18: To support rural entrepreneurship and the development of micro businesses (generally less than 10 no. employees) in rural areas where environmental and landscape impact is minimal and such developments do not generate significant or undue traffic. This policy shall not apply to sites accessed from the National Road Network.

Chapter 11 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the Development Management Standards and Land Use Zoning Objectives.

5.0 Submissions

5 no. objections/submissions were received within the 5 weeks statutory period in respect of the planning application. This was received by;

1. Denis and Imelda O'Leary
2. Ed Dormer
3. Joyce Dormer
4. Paul O'Connell
5. Nora Tuite

Issues raised and considered includes the following:

- Planning status.
- Impacts on public health.
- Not acceptable within a rural area.
- Should be on zoned lands.
- Impacts on residential amenity.
- Traffic impacts.
- Surface water.
- Validation issues.
- Noise pollution.
- Intensity of the use – number of employees etc.

All issues raised in the submission has been taken into full consideration the assessment of this proposal.

6.0 Representations

None.

7.0 Prescribed Bodies

The application was referred to the following External Sections/Departments:

Dublin Airport Authority	No response at the time of writing.
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8.0 Internal Referrals

The application was referred to the following Internal Sections/Departments:

Transportation Department	Report Received; Further Information Required.
Environment Section (Surface Water)	Report Received; Further Information Required.
Environment Section (Flooding)	Report Received; No objection.
Environment Section (Wastewater)	Report Received; Further Information Requested.
Public Lighting	Report Received; Further Information Requested.

9.0 Pre-Planning Consultation

Section 19 of the planning application form confirms that a pre-planning consultation was not undertaken in relation to the proposed development.

10.0 Planning Assessment

It is considered that the key planning considerations in the assessment of this application are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Design, layout & Impact on amenities
- Transportation
- Water services
- Flood risk
- Public Lighting

10.1 Principle of the Development

The subject development is located on lands zoned “RA” – ‘Rural Area’ in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. The zoning objective for “RA” lands is *‘To protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture, forestry and rural-related enterprise, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage’*.

Guidance

The primary objective is to protect and promote the value and future sustainability of rural areas. Agriculture, forestry, tourism and rural related resource enterprises will be employed for the benefit of the local and wider population. A balanced approach involving the protection and promotion of rural biodiversity, promotion of the integrity of the landscape, and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage will be adopted.

Permitted Uses

Agriculture, Agricultural Buildings, Agri-Tourism, Boarding Kennels (Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence), Burial Grounds, Extractive Industry/Quarrying, Equestrian, Farm Shop (Only where the bulk of the produce is produced on the farm), Forestry

related activities, Horticulture, Caravan and Camping Park (No static mobile homes or permanent structure unless ancillary to the operation of the campsite shall be permitted), Golf Course, Open Space, Research and Development (Rural related research and development only), Residential (Subject to compliance with the Rural Settlement Strategy), Restaurant/Café (Only where ancillary to tourism uses or conversion of protected or vernacular structures), Sustainable Energy Installations, Utility Structures.

Open for Consideration Uses

Community Facility, Cultural Facility, Education, Garden Centre, Micro Businesses (Refer to the Economic Chapter), Playing Fields, Recreational Facility, Sports Club, Telecommunication Structures, Workshop (only where ancillary to an existing dwelling where it is demonstrated that the proposed activity is carried out by a resident of the dwelling, with no visiting members of the public), Veterinary Clinic.

Assessment

The applicant has not submitted a cover letter outlining how the proposed development complies with the RA – Rural Area zoning objective. The applicant has described in the development description that the development is retention for a change of use from an existing industrial unit to vehicular repair garage. However, the submitted application form outlines that the previous use was an agricultural unit. In order for the planning officer to make a full and complete assessment as to whether the subject application complies with a rural business / micro business as per ED POL 18 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 additional information is required.

The applicant is therefore requested to submit a cover letter and business plan demonstrating that the proposed development complies with the RA – Rural Area zoning objective, and Section 4.11.1 of Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, by way of further information. Furthermore, the applicant is requested to clearly set out the planning history of the site, and to illustrate that the site has been granted permission for industrial unit / use on site.

11.2 Design, Layout & Impacts on Amenity

The proposed development consists of retention for the change of use from an industrial unit to a vehicular repair garage. Retention of storage containers and hard standing areas. Planning Permission sought for office/storage space to existing building with associated site works.

From a review of the submitted site layout, the site consists of;

B-01 Industrial Shed -	Area: 210m2
B-02 Container -	Area: 36m2
B-03 Container	Area:12m2
B-04,05,07 & 09 x4 Containers	Area: 108m2
B-06 Existing Building -	Area: 186m2
B-08 Container	Area: 22m2
B- 10, 11 Container x2	Area: 26m2
Total -	600m2

Existing Dwelling	Area: 185m2
Existing Garage	Area: 25m2

From a review of the submitted site layout, it would appear there is sufficient separation distance between the existing structures on the site and any third party dwellings and the public road. However, concerns have been raised by Third Parties in relation to impacts on the public health, residential amenity, the planning status of the site and traffic concerns. The Planning Officer considers that further information is required in relation to the planning history and compliance with the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 to understand the significance of any impacts on amenity.

11.3 Transportation

The Transportation Department have reviewed the subject application and have stated;

“Comments: The proposed development is located on the L-5024 inside the 60kph speed limits. The applicant has not demonstrated unobstructed sightlines of 90 metres to the nearside edge of the road, in accordance with TII document DN-GEO-03060, from the entrance. The sightline in the north western direction appears to be entirely obstructed by the existing hedgerow and fence.

Sightlines and the existing topographical details including the road edges, walls and the front and back face of the boundary hedges should be shown accurately in a revised site layout plan.

It is not clear what traffic that will be generated by the proposed development.

Recommendation:

The applicant should be requested to submit the following further information:

- *The applicant shall demonstrate unobstructed sightlines of 90 metres to the nearside edge of the road from a setback of 2.4 metres, in accordance with TII document DN-GEO-03060, from the entrance. The nearside road edge shall be visible over the entire sight distance. Where works are required to provide unobstructed sightlines, they shall be identified in a revised site layout and included within the redline boundary. Where works are required in third party lands, written consent from the land owner shall be submitted.*
- *The applicant should submit details of the traffic that will be generated by the proposed development.*
- *The existing topographical details including the public road edges, walls and the front and back face of the boundary hedges should be shown accurately when demonstrating sightlines.”*

The Planning Officer notes the above, and shall requested further information.

11.4 Water Services

Surface Water Drainage

Section 20 of the Application Form indicates the surface water disposal is via watercourse.

The Environment Section (Surface Water) have reviewed the submitted application and has requested further information be submitted.

Water Supply

The applicant has indicated in section 20 of the Application Form that water supply is existing from public mains.

Wastewater Treatment

The applicant has indicated in section 20 of the Application Form that wastewater treatment is existing from an on-site treatment system. The Environment Section (Wastewater) have reviewed the submitted application and has stated;

"I have reviewed the information provided by the applicant for this development. Planning Application Form (Part 1) states there is an existing waste water treatment system on site. However, the applicant has not provided any information on this system in the proposed planning application. No house plans have been submitted to indicate how many bedrooms are part of the houses structure. There is no reference to existing staff numbers nor reference to any increase in staff as a result of the proposed office space. The site layout map indicates a sauna and hot tub situated to the rear of the existing garage. No information has been provided on the drainage of wastewater associated with either structure."

The Environment Section (Wastewater) have requested further information.

11.5 Flooding

The Environment Section (Flooding) has reviewed the submitted application and has provided the following comments;

"Re above application and from a Flood Risk Management perspective and with reference to the DOEHLG / OPW publication 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities:

The applicant is requesting retention permission which includes for the change of use if existing industrial unit, storage containers, hard standing area and permission for office/storage space to existing building which is classified as a 'less vulnerable development'.

With reference to Meath County Council's MapInfo flood mapping and the OPW CFRAMS and NIFM flood mapping for the relevant area, the development site is situated in Flood Zone C for fluvial flooding i.e. the probability of flooding is less than 0.1% and therefore at low risk of flooding.

From a flood risk perspective, I have no objections to the proposed development."

11.6 Public Lighting

The Meath County Council Public Lighting Officer has reviewed the submitted application and has made the following comments;

“No external lighting shown in development (Yard/car park).- Confirmation of same requested or an external lighting design -designed and installed as per “Meath County Councils; Public Lighting Technical Specification & Requirements” document”.

The Planning Officer notes the above and shall seek clarification.

12.0 Environmental Impact Assessment

The Planning Authority is required to determine if the proposed development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This determination is based on the requirements set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001-2025, that does not exceed the stated threshold (as per Article 92). In this regard, the commercial/manufacturing structures are not listed in Schedule 5 therefore, EIA is not required.

The Planning Authority must also determine if a sub-threshold EIAR is required. The proposed development is significantly below the relevant threshold for commercial/manufacturing development and, will not by itself, or in combination with other developments, exceed the said threshold. Therefore, the Planning Authority is satisfied that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required.

13.0 Appropriate Assessment

Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) compels competent authorities to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

‘Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects, Guidance for Planning Authorities’ (2009) provide advice to planning authorities on their obligations under the Habitats Directive. The document, “Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities”, states that where, from the nature, size and location of the development, it is unclear if the proposal will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site(s), a Natura Impact Statement will be required. The application site is not within or directly adjoining any designated Natura 2000 site. The following Natura 2000 sites are also located within 15km of the application site:

- Malahide Estuary SPA (Site Code 004025)
- Malahide Estuary SAC (Site Code 000205)
- Rogerstown Estuary SPA (Site Code 004015)
- Rogerstown Estuary SAC (Site Code 000208)
- Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (Site Code 001398)

The Planning Authority considered the nature, scale and location of the proposed development and other plans and projects (where there could be potential for cumulative or in-combination

effects), the conservation objectives/ qualifying interests of European Sites within the vicinity of the site and the distance to European Sites, any protected habitats or species, the WFD catchment location, the underlying aquifer type and vulnerability and the excavation works, emissions, transportation requirements and duration of construction and operation and cumulative impacts associated with the proposal.

The Planning Authority's Screening for Appropriate Assessment has considered the potential effects including direct, indirect and in-combination effects of the proposed development, individually or in combination with the permitted developments and cumulatively with other plans or projects on European Sites. The Planning Authority concludes that the proposed development (entire project), by itself or in combination with other plans and developments in the vicinity, would not be likely to have a significant effect on European Site(s). In light of this, it is considered that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) is not required in this instance.

14.0 Conclusion

From a review of the submitted application, it is considered that further information is required in order for the Planning Officer to make a full and complete assessment.

15.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that **FURTHER INFORMATION** be sought;

1. The applicant is requested to clearly document the planning history of the site, and to demonstrate that the site has been granted permission for industrial unit / use on site.
2. The applicant is requested to submit a cover letter and business plan demonstrating that the proposed development complies with the RA – Rural Area zoning objective, and Section 4.11.1 of Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.
3. The applicant shall submit the following in relation to surface water;
 - a) The applicant has not submitted a surface water design for the proposed development. The applicant shall submit a detailed surface water design that is SuDs compliant, that is in accordance with the below mentioned guidelines and that is designed by a suitably qualified and competent consultant.
 - b) The applicant shall submit a clear and legible plan of the existing and proposed surface water drainage system on the subject site, showing locations of any soakaways, interceptors, manhole cover levels and invert levels, pipe sizes and gradients and details of any outfalls on the subject site.
 - c) The applicant shall submit a detailed topographical survey highlighting any existing open drain/ditch/watercourse in the vicinity of the subject development, which shall include invert levels, top of bank levels, and existing outfall details. The survey shall also include all details of any drainage systems on the existing site, including invert levels, cover levels, pipe sizes, pipe gradients, and existing outfall details.

- d) The applicant shall provide confirmation how contaminated run-off is managed on site and shall submit a suitably designed drainage system to manage contaminated run-off from the subject site. The applicant shall submit a detail plan showing all proposed finished ground levels and gradients.
- e) All surface water (roofwater) from the proposed development shall discharge to a suitably sized soakaway this shall be in accordance with the requirements of BRE365. No surface water shall be discharged directly to an existing drainage ditch/watercourse.
- f) Any soiled or contaminated run-off from the proposed yard shall be directed to an suitably sized storage facility and managed appropriately.
- g) As per the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study, Volume 3 Environmental Management, soakaways shall not be constructed within 5 metres of the foundations of the buildings or under a road and adequately sized to cater for the site.
- h) All surface water design/work shall comply fully with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) Regional Drainage Policies Volume 2, for New Developments.
- i) All surface water design/work shall comply fully with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Volume 6.

Please contact dobrien@meathcoco.ie to discuss the further information response for surface water prior to responding to this further information request

4. The applicant shall submit the following in relation to wastewater;

- a) The applicant will be required to submit a report clearly demonstrating that the existing wastewater treatment system is adequately sized to accommodate any effluent generated and also that it is functioning correctly to ensure its suitability to cater for any potential increased loading which is placed on it as a result of the operation of the facility.

In the event that the existing wastewater treatment system does not comply with the EPA 2021 Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (PE≤10) and the EPA Waste Water Treatment Manual for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels the applicant will submit a proposal for the replacement of same. This shall take the form of the site characterisation report completed by a fully qualified site assessor.

- b) The applicant will be required to confirm the existing staffing numbers for this site and to confirm if the proposed development will result in any increase in staff numbers.
- c) The applicant will be required to provide clear details of the drainage system(s) for the onsite sauna and hot tub.

Please contact Siobhan Johnston, Assistant Scientist, Environment Section, Meath County Council for queries in relation to this request.

5. No external lighting shown in development (Yard/car park). The applicant shall confirm if this is the case or shall submit an external lighting design -designed and installed as per "Meath County Councils; Public Lighting Technical Specification & Requirements" document".
6. The applicant shall submit the following in the relation to transport;
 - a) The applicant shall demonstrate unobstructed sightlines of 90 metres to the nearside edge of the road from a setback of 2.4 metres, in accordance with TII document DN-GEO-03060, from the entrance. The nearside road edge shall be visible over the entire sight distance. Where works are required to provide unobstructed sightlines, they shall be identified in a revised site layout and included within the redline boundary. Where works are required in third party lands, written consent from the land owner shall be submitted.
 - b) The applicant should submit details of the traffic that will be generated by the proposed development.
 - c) The existing topographical details including the public road edges, walls and the front and back face of the boundary hedges should be shown accurately when demonstrating sightlines.
7. A landscaping scheme for the entire site should be prepared by a competent landscape professional specifying species to be used and a time scale for planting in order to assimilate the development into the surrounding area.
8. The applicant is invited to respond to any third party submissions received.
9. If any submission resulting from the above requires the submission of additional data which alters your original proposal and the Planning Authority on receipt of the submission consider it to be significant, you may be required to publish a notice in an approved newspaper in accordance with S.34(8) of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2023. You should not publish any notices unless and until such time as the Planning Authority issues you with a notification to do so.

Any response to a Further Information Request for an Online application should ONLY be made Online via the ePlanning Portal.



Nathan Cooney
Executive Planner
Date: 09/10/2025

**FURTHER
INFORMATION**

RECOMMENDATION

ACCEPTED

13 October 2025



SIGNED: _____

Wendy Bagnall
Senior Executive Planner
Date: