

Meath County Council



Planning Report

To: Gerard Kellett, Senior Executive Planner

From: Stephen O' Brien, Executive Planner

File Number: 26/60775

Applicant: Ava Swan

Development Address: Oberstown, Skryne, Tara, Co. Meath

Application Type: Permission

Date of Site Inspection: 3rd July 2026

Date of report: 13th August 2026

Date Decision Due: 16th August 2026

Development Description: The development will consist of PERMISSION for the construction of a two-storey dwelling and detached domestic garage, existing agricultural entrance to be changed to a domestic entrance, driveway, septic tank and percolation area, landscaping and all associated works.

1. Site Location & Description:

1.1 Site Description:

The application site measures 0.28ha and is located in the townland of Obertlstown approximately 1.5km east of the rural node of Oberstown and 1.7km southwest of the rural node of Edoxtown. Vehicular access to the site is formed along the local road L-1002 and is an existing agricultural entrance. This is a designated Strategic Route Corridor between Skryne and Rathfeigh. The subject site is greenfield at present, is used for agricultural purposes and is generally flat. There is a hedge located along the front (south) boundary of the site. The rear (north) and side (west) boundary is unformed while there are also a number of large trees located along the side (east) boundary. *Rathfeigh Pitch and Putt Course* is located immediately to the side (east) of the site. There is a mix of ribbon and linear developments in the general area with a mix of house types and also some agricultural complexes. The nearest dwelling to the side (east) is two storeys, the nearest dwelling on the other side (east) is also single storey while there is a dwelling on the opposite side of the local road that is single storey. The subject site is approximately 1.4km east of Skryne GFC, 3.4km east of the M3 Motorway, 4.5km west of the N2 National Primary Road and 5.5km east of the Hill of Tara.

The area is zoned RA as Rural Area. The site is designated a Rural Area Under Strong Urban Influence, according to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. There are no Protected Structures, National Monuments or Protected Views within the application site. The site is located within a 'Lowland Landscape', namely the 'The Central Lowlands', which has a high landscape character and a moderate landscape character sensitivity.

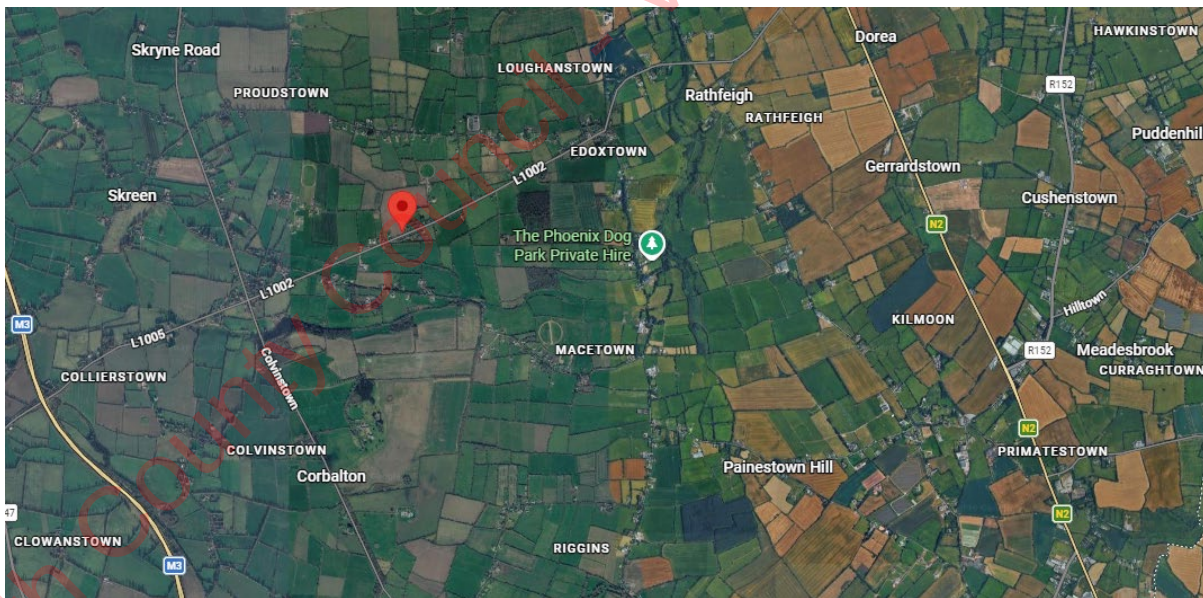


Figure 1: Site Location (Source: Google Maps, August 2026)



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph of Site Location (Source: Google Maps. Date of Capture: August 2026).

Site Photos









2. Proposed Development:

The subject application seeks permission of development for *"the construction of a two-storey dwelling and detached domestic garage, existing agricultural entrance to be changed to a domestic entrance, driveway, septic tank and percolation area, landscaping and all associated works"*. The dwelling proposed has a total floor area of 192sqm while the garage has a total floor area of 52sqm.

3. Planning History:

Pl. Ref. AA202053: Serena Russell **refused** permission for the construction of a storey and a half type dwelling house, detached garage, boundary fence/wall, suitable onsite Sewerage Treatment System with Percolation Area & Ancillary Site Works (2021).

AA202053

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The proposed development would directly access and egress onto a Class 1 Protected Strategic County Road ref: CR401. It is a policy (RD POL 39) of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied), *"To identify and protect those non-national roads of regional or local importance from unnecessary and excessive individual access/egress points, which would prejudice the carrying capacity and, ultimately, the function of the road"* and (RD POL 40), *"To restrict new accesses for one-off dwellings where the 80km per hour speed limit currently applies in order to safeguard the specific functions and to avoid the premature obsolescence of identified regional and important county link roads (see Map No. 10.6) through the creation of excessive levels of individual entrances, and to secure the investment in non-national roads"*.

The Applicant has not demonstrated compliance with the exceptions to the above policies as outlined in section 10.16.3 of the plan. It is also considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard because of interfering with the safety and free flow of traffic on the adjoining public road and would ultimately undermine the function of the road by the precedent it would set. Accordingly, to permit the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, would be contrary to the aforementioned policy provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (varied) and thereby contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The site of the proposed development is within an 'Area under Strong Urban Influence' as identified in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2005) and in a 'Rural Area under Strong Urban Influence', which is demonstrating pressure for individual dwellings, and where housing is restricted in accordance with the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied). It is a policy (RD POL 3) of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied), *"To protect areas falling within the environs of urban centres in this Area Type from urban generated and unsightly ribbon development and to maintain the identity of these urban areas"*.

Having regard to (i) the siting of the proposed dwelling to the east and west of an existing linear pattern of development along local road L-1002-4, and (ii) to the density, pattern and build-up of continuous road frontage development at this rural location, it is considered that to permit the proposed development would by itself and by the 'infill' sites it would create, result in an undesirable extension and coalescence of a disorderly and regimental line of ribbon development, which would be visually prejudicial to the amenities of the area and therefore contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. It is a policy (RD POL 6) of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied), *"To accommodate demand for permanent residential development as it arises subject to good practice in matters such as design, location and the protection of important landscapes and any environmentally sensitive areas"*.

Having regard to the exposed nature of the application site, it is considered that the proposed development would result in an unduly prominent and visually intrusive physical feature and would dominate, rather than integrate with, the local landscape. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed development would fail to integrate successfully into the landscape and would erode the rural character and visual amenities of the area in question.

4. It is a policy (RD POL 9) of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied), *"To require all applications for rural houses to comply with the 'Meath Rural House Design Guide'"*.

The proposed development by reason of its size, scale and massing is considered would be out of keeping and fails to integrate with the character of the surrounding rural area and would form a visually obtrusive feature, which would not respect and integrate with the surrounding landscape. Accordingly, to permit the proposed development would materially contravene the aforementioned policy provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (as varied) and thereby contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

PI. Ref. NA800997: Sinead Phelan **refused** permission for the construction of a storey and a half style dwelling with detached domestic garage, to install a proprietary sewage treatment system and to form new entrance to public road (2008).

NA800997

Reasons for Refusal

1. In order to safeguard, the specific functions and to avoid the premature obsolescence of identified regional and important county link roads through the creation of excessive levels of individual entrances and to secure the investment in non-national roads, it is a policy of the Meath County Development Plan (2007) to restrict new accesses for one-off dwellings where the 80km/h speed limit currently applies. Having regard to the site's location off the heavily trafficked important county link road, the CR 401, where the maximum speed limit applies, it is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, be contrary to the provisions of the County Development Plan and would establish an undesirable future precedent.
2. Having regard to the location of the proposed site in an area identified as a 'Rural Area under Strong Urban Influence' with the proposed dwelling being the seventh house within 250m of the same roadside frontage it is considered that the proposed development would constitute 'Ribbon Development' as defined in the Meath County Development Plan (2007) and by Appendix 4 of the 'Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines' (DoEHLG, 2005) which recommends avoidance from the creation of such development. The proposed development would extend, strengthen and consolidate this haphazard and unsustainable pattern of development. Consequently, the proposed development is contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of this rural area.
3. Taken together with the existing and permitted development in this area and notwithstanding the proposed use of a proprietary wastewater treatment system, it is considered that the proposed development would result in an excessive concentration of private wastewater treatments systems in a limited area which would be prejudicial to public health and the environment. As such, the proposed development, if permitted, would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Pl. Ref. NA70463: Sinead Phelan **refused** permission for the construction of a storey and a half style dwelling with detached domestic garage, to install a proprietary sewage treatment system and to form new entrance to public road (2008).

Na/70463

Reasons for Refusal

- 1 In order to safeguard the specific functions and to avoid the premature obsolescence of identified regional and important county link roads through the creation of excessive levels of individual entrances and to secure the investment in non-national roads, it is a policy of the County Development Plan 2007 to restrict new accesses for one-off dwellings where the 80km per hr speed limit currently applies. Having regard to the site's location off the heavily trafficked important county link road, the CR401, where the maximum speed limit applies, it is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, be contrary to the provisions of the County Development Plan and would establish an undesirable future precedent.
- 2 Having regard to the location of the proposed site in an area defined as being under strong urban influence in the 'Sustainable Rural Housing - Guidelines for Planning Authorities' issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in April 2005, and in an area of Strong Urban Influence in the 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan, it is considered that the proposed development would consolidate a pattern of undesirable ribbon development in a rural area, would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area and militate against the preservation of the rural environment. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 3 Taken together with existing and permitted development in this area and notwithstanding the proposed use of a proprietary wastewater treatment system, it is considered that the proposed development would result in an excessive concentration of septic tanks/treatment systems in a limited area which would be prejudicial to public health. As such, the proposed development if permitted would be contrary, to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7. National and Local Planning Policy:

Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework

Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework (NPF) recognises that there is a continuing need for housing provision for people to live and work in Ireland's countryside. Careful planning is required to manage demand in the most accessible countryside around cities and towns, focusing on the elements required to support the sustainable growth of rural economies and rural communities.

Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2005)

The Guidelines advise that a tailored approach should be taken to rural housing based on the spatial characteristics of the rural area in question.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland (EMRA) for the period 2019-2031 came into force on 28/06/19 and is a strategic plan and investment framework to shape the future development of the Region to 2031 and beyond.

Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

Rural Settlement Strategy

Meath County Council recognises the long tradition of people living in rural areas and promotes sustainable rural settlement as a key component of delivering more balanced regional development.

The application site is situated within an **Area 1 –Rural Area Under Strong Urban Influence**, which has the following relevant policies:

RD POL 1: To ensure that individual house developments in rural areas satisfy the housing requirements of persons who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which they are proposed, subject to compliance with normal planning criteria.

RD POL 2: To facilitate the housing requirements of the rural community as identified while directing urban generated housing to areas zoned for new housing development in towns and villages in the area of the development plan.

RD POL 3: To protect areas falling within the environs of urban centres in this Area Type from urban generated and unsightly ribbon development and to maintain the identity of these urban centres.

Chapter 9 and Chapter 11 shall be consulted throughout the assessment of this application. *All other relevant Section 28 Planning Guidelines have been considered in this assessment of this application.*

5. Submissions:

No submissions were received in relation to this application.

6. Representations:

Representation received from Cllr. Suzanne Jamal on behalf of this application.

7. External Referrals:

The application was not referred to any External Bodies.

8. Internal Referrals:

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

Transportation Department	Report received 31 st July 2026 recommending conditions.
Environment Department	No report received to date.

9. 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. Planning Assessment:

The main planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Ribbon Development
- Layout & Design
- Transportation
- Site Services

10.1 Principle of Development

The site is zoned RA – Rural Area (Strong Urban) with the zoning objective being 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 and under which residential development is permissible subject to compliance with the Rural Settlement Strategy.

Section 11.14.3 of the CDP notes that a “permissible use” is one which is generally acceptable in principle in the relevant zone, but which is subject to normal planning consideration, including other policies and objectives outlined in the CDP. Section 9.2 of the CDP sets out the Rural Settlement Strategy, the policies and objectives relevant to the rural area type in section 9.3 and the general local needs criteria is set out in section 9.4.

The applicant is applying for permission for the construction of a two-storey dwelling and detached domestic garage, existing agricultural entrance to be changed to a domestic entrance, driveway, septic tank and percolation area, landscaping and all associated works.

The site is within the following area;

‘Area 1 - Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence: To facilitate the housing requirements of the rural community while directing urban generated housing development to areas zoned for new housing in towns and villages in the area of the development plan. This area exhibits the characteristics of proximity to the immediate environs or close commuting catchment of Dublin, with a rapidly rising population and evidence of considerable pressure for development of housing due to proximity to such urban areas. This area includes the commuter- belt and peri-urban² areas of the county, and are the areas that are experiencing the most development pressure for one-off rural housing. These areas act as attractive residential locations for the inflow of migrants into the county.

The principle of development is acceptable subject to appropriate local needs documentation and a full assessment of the documentation which form the planning submission.

National Policy Objective (NPO) 19 of the NPF seeks to:

“Ensure, in providing for the development of rural housing, that a distinction is made between areas under urban influence, i.e. within the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment, and elsewhere [...] in rural areas under urban influence, facilitate the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area and siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements” (emphasis added)

Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 4.80 of the RSES states that:

“Local authorities shall manage urban generated growth in Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence (i.e. the commuter catchment of Dublin, large towns and centres of employment) and Stronger Rural Areas by ensuring that in these areas the provision of single houses in the open countryside is based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area, and compliance with statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.” (emphasis added)

In respect of rural generated housing, section 3.2.3 of the Sustainable Rural Housing guidelines sets out the following general criteria for considering whether a person is an intrinsic part of the rural community:

“Such persons will normally have spent substantial periods of their lives, living in rural areas as members of the established rural community. Examples would include farmers, their sons and daughters and or any persons taking over the ownership and running of farms, as well as people who have lived most of their lives in rural areas and are building their first homes. Examples in this regard might include sons and daughters of families living in rural areas who have grown up in rural areas and are perhaps seeking to build their first home near their family place of residence. Returning emigrants who lived for substantial parts of their lives in rural areas, then moved abroad and who now wish to return to reside near other family members, to work locally, to care for elderly family members, or to retire should be also accommodated.” (emphasis added)

Section 9.4 of CDP notes that the Planning Authority recognises the interest of persons local to or linked to a rural area, who are not engaged in significant agricultural or rural resource related occupation, to live in rural areas including:

“Persons who have spent substantial periods of their lives, living in rural areas as members of the established rural community for a period in excess of five years and who do not possess a dwelling or who have not possessed a dwelling in the past in which they have resided or who possess a dwelling in which they do not currently reside.”

The applicant has submitted the following in support of local need:

- Local needs application form stating the applicant has rented locally for 2 years and resided in the family home prior to that.
- The family home is indicated as being within the rural node of Oberstown.
- The applicant has indicated she does not own a property and has never sold a property.

The following documents have been submitted to support his local need:

- Letter from local Credit Union dated 2026 confirming applicant's address locally.
- Letter of support from local parish priest.
- Utility bill for the applicant dated 2023-2026 confirming applicants address locally.
- Insurance letter for the applicant dated 2026 showing address locally.
- Banks statements for the applicant dated 2022-2026 showing address locally.
- Premium for the applicant dated 2026 showing address locally.
- Revolut statement for the applicant dated 2026 showing address locally.
- Letter from the landowner of the site. The applicant is not the landowner of the site.
- Letter of support from Tara Athletic Club.
- Letter of support from applicant's employer locally.
- A letter from the RTB confirming that the applicant has been renting locally since 2024.
- Letter from local national school confirming attendance and address locally.
- Letter of support from Skryne GFC confirming address locally.

With regard to the Local Need Form and supplementary documentation outlining the applicant's intrinsic links to the local rural area, the main basis of the submission relates to a need to live at the proposed site based on residency in the local area for a substantial period of time.

Section 9.4: Persons who are an Intrinsic Part of the Rural Community of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 is relevant to the subject application. The Development Plan indicates that the Planning Authority will support proposals for individual dwellings on suitable sites in rural areas relating to persons who have spent substantial periods of their lives living in rural areas as members of the established rural community.

On the submitted Local Needs Form, the applicant states that they do not own a house or have owned a house within the last five years. It is considered, based on the documentation submitted, that the applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated a local/essential need to live in a rural area.

10.2. Ribbon Development

Ribbon development is considered to be a high density of almost continuous road frontage type development, for example where 5 or more houses exist on any one side of a given 250 metres of road frontage. (Please note that in all instances where ribbon development is referred to in this Development Plan, the example contained in Appendix 4 of the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities as published by the DoEHLG in April 2005 shall apply).

Whether a given proposal will exacerbate such ribbon development or could be considered will depend on:

- The type of rural area and circumstances of the applicant;
- The degree to which the proposal might be considered infill development, and;
- The degree to which existing ribbon development would be extended or whether distinct areas of ribbon development would coalesce as a result of the development.

Meath County Council will endeavour to arrive at a balanced and reasonable view in the interpretation of the above criteria taking account of local circumstances, including the planning history of the area and development pressures.

Assessment of Ribbon Development

The area has experienced a significant level of 'one-off' development, particularly east and west of the subject site where there is a high concentration of dwellings within a 250m length of road frontage.

The site is not family lands and being purchased subject to planning.

It is not considered the applicant's particular circumstances and site-specific needs are sufficient for the planning authority to accept this extension to ribbon development and by the 'infill' sites it would create, resulting in an undesirable extension and coalescence of a disorderly and regimental line of ribbon development.

As such, it is considered that the application be refused.

10.3 Layout & Design

The subject site is greenfield at present, is used for agricultural purposes and is generally flat. There is a hedge located along the front (south) boundary of the site. The rear (north) and side (west) boundary is unformed while there are also a number of large trees located along the side (east) boundary. *Rathfeigh Pitch and Putt Course* is located immediately to the side (east) of the site. There is a mix of ribbon and linear developments in the general area with a mix of house types and also some agricultural complexes. The nearest dwelling to the side (east) is two storeys, the nearest dwelling on the other side (east) is also single storey while there is a dwelling on the opposite side of the local road that is single storey. The subject site is approximately 1.4km east of Skryne GFC, 3.4km east of the M3 Motorway, 4.5km west of the N2 National Primary Road and 5.5km east of the Hill of Tara.

The proposed dwelling is a two-storey dwelling of 192sqm with a ridge height of approximately 8.2m and will be located approximately 27.45m from the local road that is located to the south of the site. The proposed dwelling is a four-bedroom dwelling. The ground floor of the proposed dwelling consists of an entrance hall, an open plan kitchen/dining/living area, utility, sitting room, bathroom and bedroom/study. The first floor will comprise of three bedrooms (one ensuite), a bathroom and a hot press.

It is noted that a different applicant was refused on site before in relation to the design of the proposed development. Previously, there were issues with the size, scale and massing of the proposed dwelling which would appear bulky in terms of the various window sizes, projections, materials and detailing which would be contrary to the Meath Rural Design Guide.

The applicant has addressed the design issue more so under this current application. The front elevation comprises of traditional fenestration and fits in more with the rural character of the area. The front elevation proposed also has a porch that will comprise of a natural stone finish. Generally, the proposed dwelling is to comprise of a napped render finish. Both side elevations are to have a pitched roof element and generally speaking the proposed development is an improvement to what was refused previously on site.

A garage is proposed to the side of the dwelling house that will have a floor area of 52sqm and a ridge height of 5.39m. The front elevation will have two roller shutter door for vehicular entrance while the side elevation facing the dwelling house will have a pedestrian entrance and a window. Both side elevations will have a pitched roof element, and the proposed ridge height will not be higher than that of the original dwelling house on site.

The planning authority is satisfied that the siting and layout as proposed is acceptable as it has adequate separation distances to neighbouring dwellings. The site shall have minimal impact on residential amenity and is unlikely to have any serious impact on visual amenity based on the development style of dwellings in the area.

The design of the proposed dwelling is considered acceptable from the front elevation and does not adversely affect the visual or residential amenities of the existing structures and dwellings in the area within a 'Lowland Landscape', namely the 'The Central Lowlands', which has a high landscape character and a moderate landscape character sensitivity. This is deemed suitable when considering the **Meath Rural Design Guide** and the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

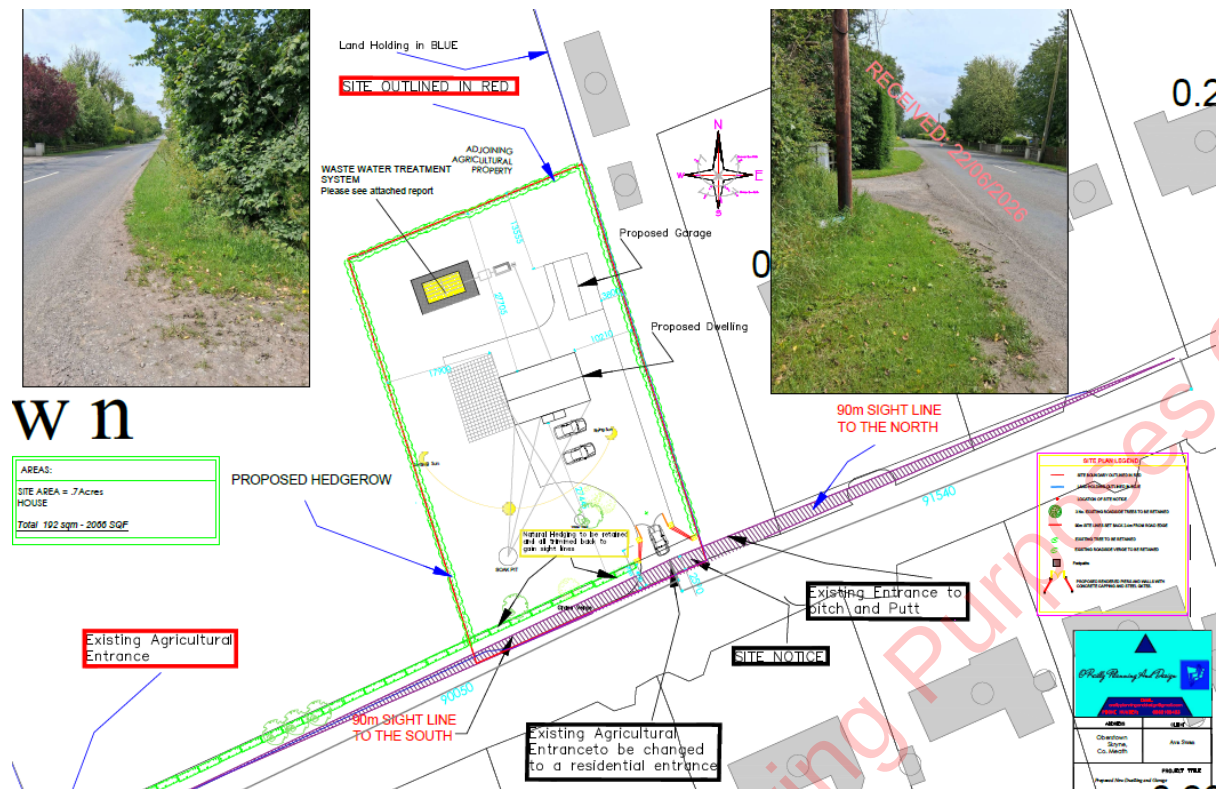


Figure 14: Proposed Site Layout Plan

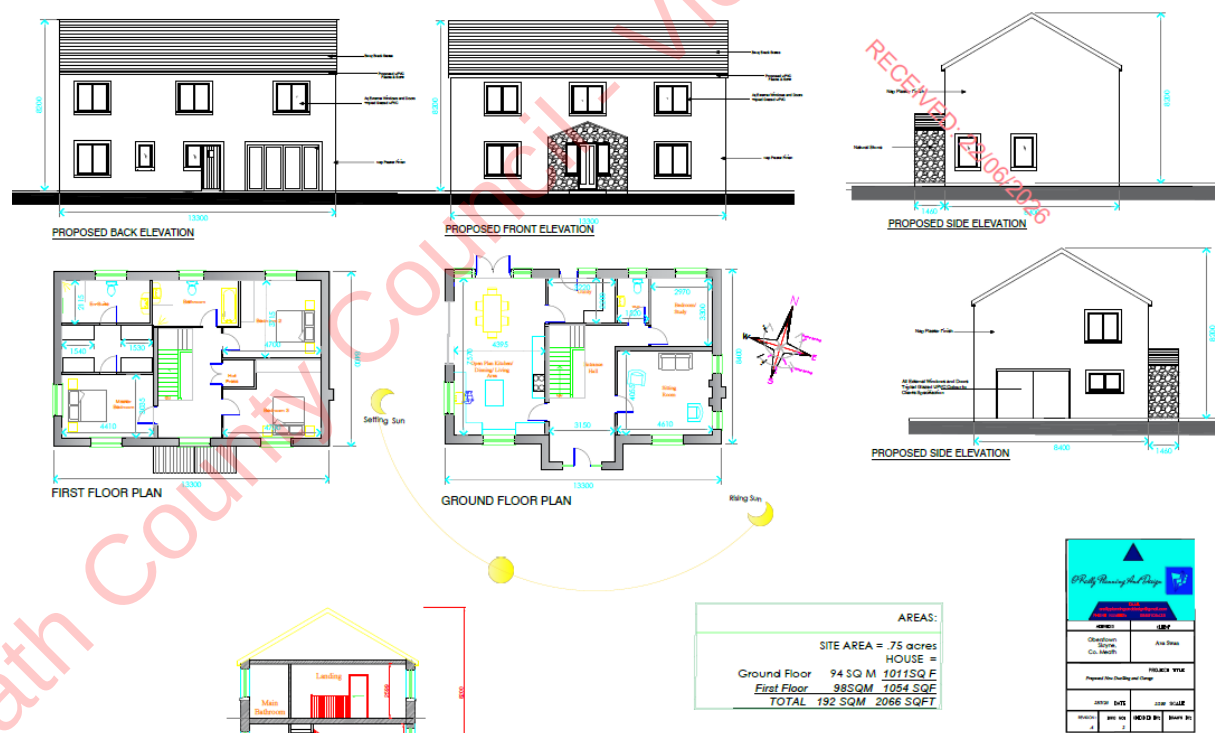


Figure 15: Proposed Plans & Elevations

10.4 Transportation

Vehicular access to the site is formed along the local road L-1002 and is an existing agricultural entrance. This is a designated Strategic Route Corridor between Skryne and Rathfeigh. It is noted that there have been refusals on site previously in relation to roads as the subject site is on a Strategic Corridor. It is noted that roads have recommended conditions under this application, however, the lands are not within family ownership.

A report has been received from the Roads and Transportation Department dated 31st July 2026 stating the following:

'The

The proposed development is located on the L-1002 inside the 60 km/h speed limits. The L-1002 is identified as a Strategic Corridor in the CDP.

The applicant proposes to access the development by upgrading the existing agricultural entrance to form a new domestic entrance. It appears there is another agricultural entrance to the west of the site. The applicant has demonstrated sightlines of 90 metres to the nearside edge of the road in both directions from a setback of 2.59 metres from the new entrance.

Recommendation:

Four number conditions have been attached.

The report is noted however the lands are not family owned and is considered would not comply with the exceptions policies as outlined in section 9.15.3 of the plan. Therefore it is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard because of interfering with the safety and free flow of traffic on the adjoining public road and would ultimately undermine the function of the road by the precedent it would set.

10.5 Site Services

Water Supply:

As outlined in Section 20 of the application form submitted by the applicant the proposed dwelling will be serviced by a new private well. This is indicated to the front of the house on the attached Site Layout Map. It is noted in Section 1 of the Site Suitability Assessment that the applicant states the proposed connection is via the public mains so there is a discrepancy between the SSA, the application form and the Site Layout Plan.

Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater will be serviced by a new secondary treatment system and soil polishing filter with discharge to groundwater and indicate that the site is suitable for the proposed method. Details of this treatment system are outlined in the Site Characterisation Report submitted to the Planning Authority. The report was prepared by Percolaton tests.ie. The applicant is proposing an O' Reilly Oakstown Treatment Plant. The drawing detail is to be compliant with EPA Code of Practice 2021. Any permission should condition the application to be updated to be compliant with EPA Code of Practice 2021.

- Trial hole opened on 02/06/2026

- Subject site is located within a Locally Important Aquifer in an area of Low Vulnerability.
- Groundwater Protection Response is R1.
- Groundwater flow direction is unknown according to the SSA.
- Trial hole dug to 2.1mBGL.
- Test holes examined on 04/06/2026
- The water table and bedrock were not encountered within the trial hole.
- The surface test results are shown at 29.36 (min/25mm)
- The sub-surface test results are shown at 34.25 (min/25mm)

Based on the details attached with the site suitability assessment, longitudinal site section along with the pictures and details of the trial holes, the planning authority are satisfied with the details attached and are satisfied that the proposal is compliant with the EPA Code of Practice 2021.

Surface Water Management

Q.20 of the submitted Application Form indicates that surface water drainage is proposed by discharge via soakpits. These are indicated on the attached Site Layout Map.

11. Flooding:

The County Development Plan states that planning applications will be assessed in accordance with 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities'. It notes that "The Council will ensure that only developments consistent with the overall policy and technical approaches of these Guidelines will be approved and permission may be refused where flood issues have not been, or cannot be, addressed successfully and where the presence of unacceptable residual flood risks to the development, its occupants or users and adjoining property remains."

The policies in respect of flooding include:

INF POL 18: To have regard to the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DoEHLG/OPW, 2009) through the use of the sequential approach and application of the Justification Tests for Development Management and Development Plans, during the period of this Plan.

INF POL 20: To ensure that a flood risk assessment is carried out for any development proposal, where flood risk may be an issue in accordance with the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DoECLG/OPW, 2009). This assessment shall be appropriate to the scale and nature of risk to the potential development.

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 refers to Flood Risk Management as a key area of assessment. A review of the area indicates that the application site is not located in an identified flood risk zone in the OPW PFRA Mapping/Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Meath carried out for the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. The application site is located within Flood Zone C. From a flood risk perspective, there is no objection to the proposed development.

The Applicant has also stated in Section 18 of the application form that the subject site has not flooded in the past.

12. 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 site is not within or directly adjoining any Natura 2000 site. There are a number of Natura 2000 sites situated within a 15-kilometre (approximate) distance of the application site as follows.

- River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (0002299) – c. 8.25km west of site.
- River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (0004232) – c. 8.25km west of site.

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.

13. Environmental Impact Assessment:

Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ('the EIA Directive') is designed to ensure that projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are subject to a comprehensive assessment of their environmental effects prior to development consent being given. The latest amendments to the EIA Directive are provided for under Directive 2014/52/EU and

Circular letter PL 1/2017. The proposed development is not a development type listed under Part 1 or 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations (PDR) 2001 (as amended) nor is it considered a sub-threshold development for the purposes of Schedule 7 PDR. Based on information provided and having considered the nature, size and location of the development, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment and as such as EIS/EIAR is not required.

14. Development Contributions:

The development of a dwelling on the site, is not exempt from being levied under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2023, to provide a development contribution. The development is for a residential dwelling with a floor area of 192m² for the dwelling. The development will be levied in the class between 141-200m² at a charge of **7,500 euro**.

As outlined in Section 5 of the Meath County Development Contribution Scheme 2024-2029, the breakdown and allocation of funds are 5% for 'Surface Water Drainage', 55% for 'Roads' and 40% for 'Social Infrastructure'. Therefore, the allocation of each category will be as follows:

- Surface Water Drainage (5%): **375.00 euro**.
- Roads (55%): **4,125.00 euro**.
- Social Infrastructure (40%): **3,000.00 euro**.
- Total: **7,500 euro**

15. Conclusion

Given the extent of density of development along this roadside it is considered that to permit the proposed development would by itself and by the 'infill' sites it would create, result in an undesirable extension and coalescence of a disorderly and regimental line of ribbon development.

The proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard because of interfering with the safety and free flow of traffic on the adjoining protected public road and would ultimately undermine the function of the road by the precedent it would set.

In light of the foregoing, it is recommended the application be refused.

16. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the application for PERMISSION be REFUSED for the following reason(s)

Reason(s):

1. The site of the proposed development is within an 'Area under Strong Urban Influence' as identified in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for

Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2005) and in a 'Rural Area under Strong Urban Influence', which is demonstrating pressure for individual dwellings, and where housing is restricted in accordance with the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 - 2027. It is a policy (RD POL 3) of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 - 2027, *"To protect areas falling within the environs of urban centres in this Area Type from urban generated and unsightly ribbon development and to maintain the identity of these urban areas"*.

Having regard to (i) the siting of the proposed dwelling to the east and west of an existing linear pattern of development along local road L-1002-4, and (ii) to the density, pattern and build-up of continuous road frontage development at this rural location, it is considered that to permit the proposed development would by itself and by the 'infill' sites it would create, result in an undesirable extension and coalescence of a disorderly and regimental line of ribbon development, which would be visually prejudicial to the amenities of the area and therefore contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The proposed development would directly access and egress onto a Class 1 Protected Strategic County Road ref: CR401. It is a policy (RD POL 39) of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 - 2027, *"To identify and protect those non-national roads of regional or local importance from unnecessary and excessive individual access/egress points, which would prejudice the carrying capacity and, ultimately, the function of the road"* and (RD POL 40), *"To restrict new accesses for one-off dwellings where the 80km per hour speed limit currently applies in order to safeguard the specific functions and to avoid the premature obsolescence of identified regional and important county link roads (see Map No. 9.2) through the creation of excessive levels of individual entrances, and to secure the investment in non-national roads"*.

Notwithstanding the exceptions to the above policies as outlined in section 9.15.3 of the plan, it is considered that the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of a traffic hazard because of interfering with the safety and free flow of traffic on the adjoining public road and would ultimately undermine the function of the road by the precedent it would set. Accordingly, to permit the proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, would be contrary to the aforementioned policy provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 and thereby contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

REFUSAL

Stephen O'Brien

Stephen O' Brien
Executive Planner
Date: 13/08/2026

RECOMMENDATION

ACCEPTED

14 August 2026

SIGNED:

Gerard Kellett

Gerard Kellett
Senior Executive Planner
Date: 14/08/2026