



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Planners Report

To: Sandra Carrie, Senior Executive Planner

From: Niall Togher, Executive Planner

File Number: 26/60828

Applicant: Cathal and Susan McDonnell

Development Address: Local Road L-5623 (East of R132), Gormanston,, Co. Meath,

Application Type: PERMISSION

Development Description: The development will consist of a two-storey dwelling, including a single-storey to the sides and rear, a proprietary treatment unit with a soil polishing filter, and alterations to the existing vehicular entrance onto the public road, including all ancillary site works. A Natura Impact Statement has been lodged with this application

Date of Site Inspection: 04/08/2026

Date of Report: 26/08/2026

Date Decision Due: 26/08/2026

1.0 Site Location & Description:

The site measures 0.529ha and is located within the townlands of Gormanstown, approximately 6.6km southeast of Julianstown and 3.8km northwest of Balbriggan, Co. Dublin. The site is currently agricultural pasture. The front boundaries of the site consist of a mature hedgerow. The site is located off the local road L-5623-0. The site is immediately surrounded by agricultural lands. The Delvin River is located to the south of the site. There is a railway track located to the east of the site.

The site is zoned RA - Rural Area and is located within an area designated as a 'Rural Area under Strong Urban Influence', according to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. The site is not located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). There are no Protected Structures, National Monuments or Protected Views within the application site. The site is located within the 'Coastal Plains', coastal landscape character area, which has a moderate landscape character value and has a high landscape sensitivity.

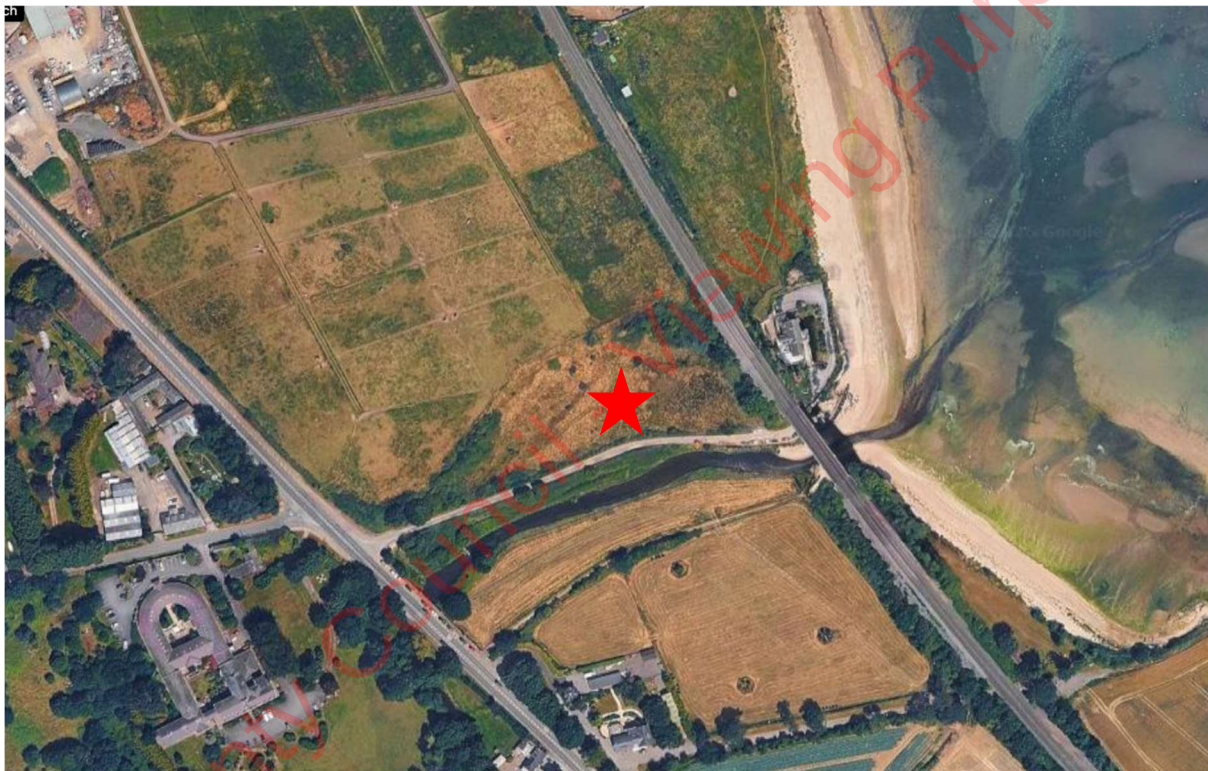


Figure1: Overview of the subject site.





Figure 2: Site inspections photos.

2.0 Proposed Development:

The development will consist of a two-storey dwelling, including a single-storey to the sides and rear, a proprietary treatment unit with a soil polishing filter, and alterations to the existing vehicular entrance onto the public road, including all ancillary site works. A Natura Impact Statement has been lodged with this application

3.0 Planning History:

Record of planning history on site.

2561144

Permission REFUSED for the development will consist of a two storey dwelling including single storey to the sides and rear, proprietary treatment unit with soil polishing filter and alterations to existing vehicular entrance onto public road including all ancillary site works. A Natura Impact Statement has been lodged with this application.

Reasons for refusal (4)

- 1) It is a policy (RD POL 6) of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, *“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 elevated and exposed nature of the application site, its proximity to the Recorded Monuments, 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.

Accordingly, to permit the proposed development would be contrary the aforementioned policy provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 and therefore contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- 2) It is the policy (RD POL 9) of the Meath County Development 2021 – 2027, *“To require all applications for rural houses to comply with the ‘Meath Rural House Design Guide’”*

The proposed development by reason of its siting, 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 be contrary 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.

- 3) With reference to Meath County Council's MapInfo flood mapping and the OPW CFRAM flood mapping for the relevant area, the development site and access road (L-5623-0) is partially situated in Zone A where the probability of flooding is greater than 1% from fluvial flooding; i.e. it is at high risk of flooding and Flood Zone B where the probability of flooding is between 0.1% and 1% from fluvial flooding; i.e. it is at medium risk of flooding. With regards coastal flooding, the site and access road is situated in Flood Zone B where the probability of coastal flooding is 0.5% i.e. it is at moderate risk of coastal flooding. It is the policy of the Meath County Council Development Plan 2021-2027 to require implement the *“Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities”* (DoECLG/OPW, 2009) through the use of the sequential approach and application of Justification Tests for Development Management and Development Plans, during the period of this Plan. (INF POL 18) and to require that a Flood Risk Assessment is carried out for any development proposal, where flood risk may be an issue. This assessment shall be appropriate to the scale and nature of risk to and from the potential development and shall consider the impact of climate change (INF POL 20)

The Applicant has not sufficiently assessed the flood risk on the access road (L-5623-0) to the proposed development to determine whether there is safe access for residents and emergency services to the proposed development during critical flood

events. As such the Applicant has not carried out a sufficiently detailed Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) in accordance with the aforementioned guidelines and the Planning Authority cannot assess whether the proposed development passes the Justification Test and specifically parts 2(ii) and 2(iii) of same. In the absence of such critical information the application is not considered to pass the 'Justification Test' and is therefore not in accordance with the aforementioned guidelines.

The proposed development, if permitted, would be contrary to the aforementioned Ministerial Guidelines and would materially contravene policies INF POL 18 and INF POL 20 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, and would not be in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

- 4) It is a policy (RD POL 48) of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, "To ensure all septic tank/proprietary treatment plants and polishing filter/percolation areas satisfy the criteria set out in the Environmental Protection Agency 'Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10)' (2021) (or any other updated code of practice guidelines) in order to safeguard individual and group water schemes".

On the basis of the failure of the subject application to demonstrate that the development meets the minimum standards as set out in 'Environmental Protection Agency Code of Practice: Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) (2021)' and the failure to submit a fully complete Site Characterisation Report as requested. The Planning Authority is not satisfied that the subject site can cater for the safe and effective treatment and disposal of effluent in accordance with the necessary standards and therefore would be prejudicial to public health.

4.0 Relevant Planning Policy:

4.1 Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework

Project Ireland 2040, The National Planning Framework (NPF) was formally adopted on 29/05/2018 (Circular FPS06/2018). The NPF sets out the national planning policy context.

4.2 Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005)

These Guidelines seek to:

1. Ensure that the needs of rural communities are identified in the development plan process and that policies are put in place to ensure that the type and scale of residential and other development in rural areas, at appropriate locations, necessary to sustain rural communities is accommodated,
2. Manage pressure for overspill development from urban areas in the rural areas closest to the main cities and towns such as the gateways, hubs, and other large towns.

They distinguish between different types of rural area, with differing policy responses identified for each. They also distinguish between rural generated housing and urban generated housing and set out development plan policy guidance for both.

4.3 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

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

It highlights the importance of tailoring planning responses in rural areas to recognise the balance required between managing urban generated demand in the most accessible rural areas, typically in proximity to Dublin and other towns, whilst supporting the sustainable growth of rural communities and economies, including those facing decline.

4.4 Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

Zoning

The site is zoned 'RA' (Rural Area) where the objective is "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."

Residential is a permitted use, subject to compliance with the Rural Settlement Strategy.

Chapter 9 Rural Settlement Strategy

Chapter 9 of the Development Plan sets out the rural development strategy. The strategic aim of the settlement strategy is set out in following objectives:

RUR DEV SP 1 To adopt a tailored approach to rural housing within County Meath as a whole, distinguishing between rural generated housing and urban generated housing in rural areas recognising the characteristics of the individual rural area types.

RUR DEV SP 2 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. An assessment of individual rural development proposals including one-off houses shall have regard to other policies and objectives in this Development Plan, and in particular Chapter 8 Section 8.6.1 UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne

The application site is situated within a 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.

Section 9.4 of the Development Plan outlines the criteria by which applicants can demonstrate a local housing need. Section 9.5 outlines application criteria which are relevant across all rural areas. Section 9.18 outlines the technical requirements for new housing.

Design

The Development Plan places a strong emphasis on design standards for new housing in rural areas. In this regard, the Meath Rural House Design Guide is included as an Appendix to the Development Plan. Policy RD POL 9 requires that all applications comply with the Meath Rural Design Guide.

Infrastructure

INF POL 5 To require that in the case of all developments where public watermain are available or likely to be available and have sufficient capacity, that such development shall connect to them.

INF POL 16 To ensure that all planning applications for new development have regard to the surface water management policies provided for in the GDSDS.

INF OBJ 15 To require the use of SuDS in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works for new developments (including extensions).

INF OBJ 16 To ensure that all new developments comply with Section 3.12 of the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works V6 which sets out the requirements for new developments to allow for Climate Change.

INF OBJ 18 To ensure that new developments provide for the separation of foul and surface water drainage networks within application site boundaries.

INF OBJ 25 To require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of sustainable drainage techniques where appropriate, for new development or for extensions to existing developments, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.

INF OBJ 26 To discourage the use of hard non-porous surfacing and pavements within the boundaries of rural housing sites.

Wastewater

INF OBJ 13 To ensure that septic tanks, proprietary effluent treatment systems and percolation areas are located and constructed in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines of the EPA and the Council in order to minimise the impact on surface water of discharges.

RD POL 46 To ensure that new development is guided towards sites where acceptable wastewater treatment and disposal facilities can be provided, avoiding sites where it is inherently difficult to provide and maintain such facilities. Sites prone to extremely high water tables and flooding or where groundwater is particularly vulnerable to contamination shall be avoided.

RD POL 47 To ensure that the site area is large enough to adequately accommodate an on-site treatment plant and percolation area.

RD POL 48 To ensure all septic tank/proprietary treatment plants and polishing filter/percolation areas satisfy the criteria set out in the Environmental Protection Agency 'Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10)' (2021) (or any other updated code of practice guidelines) in order to safeguard individual and group water schemes.

RD POL 49 To require a site characterisation report to be furnished by a suitably qualified competent person. Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authority may require additional tests to be carried out under its supervision.

RD POL 50 To ensure a maintenance agreement or other satisfactory management arrangements are entered into by the applicant to inspect and service the system as required. A copy of this must be submitted to the Planning Authority.

RD POL 51 To ensure that direct discharge of effluent from on site waste water disposal systems to surface water is not permitted.

RD POL 52 To ensure wastewater treatment plants discharging into the Boyne catchment or to coastal Natura 2000 sites are suitably maintained and upgraded in advance of any additional loadings beyond their capacity in order to protect water quality, as required.

RD POL 53 To promote good practice with regard to the siting and design of septic tanks and the maintenance of existing tanks. A high level of scrutiny will be placed on applications within 2km of watercourses in the Boyne catchment. Proposals in this area shall not have an adverse impact on local water quality that could affect the qualifying interests of the cSAC and SPA.

Transport

RD POL 38 To ensure that all development accessing off the county's road network is at a location and carried out in a manner which would not endanger public safety by way of a traffic hazard.

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.

Boundaries

HER POL 37 To encourage the retention of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatments in rural areas and prevent loss and fragmentation, where practically possible. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, mitigation by provision of the same type of boundary will be required.

HER POL 53 To discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amount of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments.

RD POL 41 To avoid the removal of existing roadside boundaries where they are more than 3 m from the road edge (edge of carriageway), except to the extent that this is needed for a new entrance, and where required for traffic safety reasons. (Please refer to policies contained in Section 8.9.7 Woodlands, Hedgerows and Trees in this regard).

DM OBJ 11: Existing trees and hedgerows of biodiversity and/or amenity value shall be retained, where possible

Flooding

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

INF POL 20 To require 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” (DoEHLG/OPW, 2009). This assessment shall be appropriate to the scale and nature of risk to and from the potential development and shall consider the impact of climate change.

INF OBJ 20 To implement the Planning System and Flood Risk Management-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG/OPW 2009) or any updated guidelines. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment should be submitted where appropriate.

4.5 Section 28 Guidelines

All other relevant Section 28 Planning Guidelines have been considered in this assessment of this application.2561325

5.0 Submissions/Observations:

No submissions/observations have been made in respect of the application within the statutory timeframe.

6.0 Representations

No representations received

7.0 Prescribed Bodies:

There has been no formal consultation undertaken.

The application was referred to the following prescribed bodies:

Uisce Éireann	Report received; Comments noted
	No reports received at the time of the recommendation.

8.0 Internal Referrals:

There has been no formal consultation undertaken.

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

Transportation Section – (General)	Report received, No objection subject to conditions
Environment – (Surface Water Drainage)	Report received, No objection subject to conditions Report received; Further information requested No report received at the time of the recommendation.
Environment – (Flooding)	Report received; Refusal recommended.
Environment – (Waste)	Report received, No objection subject to conditions Report received; Further information requested No report received at the time of the recommendation
Ecologist	Report received; Further information requested

9.0 Pre-Planning Consultation:

There has been no pre-planning consultation in relation to this proposal.

10.0 Planning Considerations:

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

- Principle of Development
- Design, Layout & Impact on Amenities
- Transportation
- Water Services
- Environment
- Flood Risk
- Ecology

Principle of Development/Land Use Zoning/Development Control Zone:

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”

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.”

The application site land zoning is stated as RA – Rural Area, according to the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. This zoning objective is as follows; ‘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’. The proposed application is therefore aligned with this objective.

Section 11.14.3 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 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 Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. Section 9.2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the Rural Settlement Strategy, the policies and objectives relevant to the rural area type are set out in Section 9.3 and the general local needs criteria is set out in Section 9.4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Section 9.3 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 notes that the planning authority distinguishes between three different types of rural areas within the county. The site is located within a Rural Area under Strong Urban Influence as per the Development Plan. The key challenge for this area is, “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”

Section 9.4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 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 a range of documentation to support the establishment of local needs:

- Completed Local Needs Form.
- Letter of consent from landowner (Applicant's brother)
- Bank Statements dated 2021 – 2026.
- Certificate of Insurance
- Motor Insurance details
- Employment indemnity insurance.
- Letter Naomh Pádraig GAA confirming membership.
- Letter from Stamullen FC confirming membership.

- Confirmation of attendance of Whitecross National School, Julianstown.
- Letter from Stamullen / Jullianstown Parish office.
Letter from local creche.

It is considered that the Applicant has substantially proved their intrinsic link to the local area with the documentation supplied to the Planning Authority. The documentation supplied confirms the applicants having resided locally in the area for the last 5 years. However, with regard to local and housing needs requirement, there are some discrepancies that have arisen that have not been adequately addressed by the information provided.

It is noted that there are two dwellings in the ownership of the applicant's parents according to Land Registry, including lands that are subject of a pending transfer with land registry to the applicant Cathal McDonnell, which appear to include the family home. Notwithstanding this pending transfer, it is unclear as to why the applicant is seeking to construct a dwelling on land in his brother's ownership, rather than utilising lands that are in the process of being transferred to the applicant.

Furthermore, from the family landholding maps that has been provided to the Planning Authority, it is considered that there are more suitable sites / locations available within the family landholding, closer to the family home along Station Road that should be further explored for this type of development rather than proposing to develop an isolated and exposed green field site that does not benefit from an existing clustering of dwellings.

As the applicant's local housing need has not been fully established, it is considered that the proposed development would be contrary to rural housing policy as outlined in Section 9.4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and permission should therefore be refused in this regard.

Design Layout & Siting & Impact on Visual Amenity:

The applicant is proposing to construct a two-story detached dwelling. The property consists of a central entrance hallway. There is a sitting room to the left (west) and a study to the right (east). To the rear of the property there is an open plan kitchen dining and living room the full width of the dwelling at 13.9m. To the rear of the kitchen area, there is a utility room, WC and pantry. At first floor level there is a primary suite with walk in wardrobe and ensuite, three additional bedrooms (one being ensuite) and a bathroom. The rear of the proposed dwelling has a single storey flat roof that flanks both the eastern and western ends of dwelling. This design alleviates the bulkiness of the proposed dwelling.

The dwelling takes the form of a traditional rural dwelling with Georgian features. The proposed dwelling has a floor area of 335sqm. The proposed dwelling takes the form of a two-storey rectangular building. The width of the dwelling is 13.9m and the depth of the dwelling is 19.88m. The dwelling has a maximum ridge height of 7.69m, which is below the maximum right height of 8.2m permitted under the Meath Rural Housing Design Guide. The dwelling is proposed with a hipped roof profile and accommodates two chimneys to maintain a symmetrical façade. The external materials proposed are in accordance with the Meath Rural Design Guide, these are a plaster finish in a muted off white render. The roof is to be finished with a blue/ black slate. The proposed dwelling is setback from the from the front entrance

gate by 85m to the west. The dwelling is orientated towards the south and aligns perpendicular to the main roadway to the front of the dwelling.

The applicants propose to introduce additional planting along the site boundaries, particularly to the eastern end of the site. The introduction of additional planting at this location may reduce the impact of the proposed dwelling when viewed from the coastline and the railway line over time. The front boundary is well screened from public view by the existing hedgerow and is located at a lower elevation than the public road.

Notwithstanding this, the overall site is particularly exposed, and the proposed dwelling being two storey in height is to be sited in the middle of an exposed site with few natural boundaries to help assimilate it into the landscape. The proposed planting plan submitted would potentially take a considerable period to establish itself and landscaping alone cannot be relied upon to mitigate against and alleviate the visual impact of the property.

From review of the planning application, it is considered that the proposed dwelling would not satisfactorily integrate into the host environment at this location. It is the opinion of the Planner that even with the revised dwelling design proposed under this application, the proposed dwelling is quite prominent in this sensitive location and the proposed boundary treatments would not be sufficient to integrate the development to the landscape. It is considered therefore that the Applicant has not successfully overcome previous refusal reason no. 1. And that the proposed dwelling would not comply with RD POL 9 of the Meath County Development Plan and would be contrary to the principles of the Meath Rural House Design Guide and should be refused permission in this regard.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

The proposed dwelling is to be located 26.98m from the eastern site boundary and approximately 45m from the dwelling to the east across the railway line. There are a significant number of first floor windows on the flank walls of the dwelling which could potentially overlook to the neighbouring dwellings and towards the coastline. This is mitigated against due to the separation distance, railway tracks and the proposed boundary treatment. There are no dwellings to the west.

Transportation:

The Transportation Section have reviewed and assessed the proposed development and have commented with the following.

"The proposed development is located on the L-5623 inside the 60kph speed limits. The applicant has proposed sightlines of 90 metres to the nearside edge of the road in both directions from a setback of 2.4 metres from the new entrance. Works required to provide unobstructed sightlines have been identified in the site layout and included within the redline boundary.

The applicant proposes to access the development by upgrading the existing agricultural entrance to form a new domestic entrance. Access to the remaining agricultural lands appears available to the north of the landholding. The front entrance piers and gate are too close to the road edge."

The Transportation Section have stated that they have no objection to the proposed development in principle.

The applicant shall address the following points below as part of a request for Further Information to be submitted to the Planning Authority.

- The applicant shall provide and maintain 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.
Reason: In the interest of traffic safety.
- The entrance layout shall comply with the Meath Rural Design Guide - the face of the entrance piers shall be at least 3 metres from the edge of the road and the entrance gate shall be recessed at least 7 metres from the edge of the road.
Reason: In the interest of traffic safety and orderly development.
- Remove the entire roadside boundary hedge and set it back at least 3 metres from the existing road edge. A grass verge, at least 3 metres in width, shall be provided and maintained free of any obstruction, between the edge of the road and the new site boundary.
Reason: In the interest of traffic safety and orderly development.
- The works required to provide unobstructed sightlines shall be completed prior to any other work commencing on site.
Reason: In the interest of traffic safety.
- The entrance driveway should be no more than +/- 2.5% for the first 7 metres.
Reason: In the interest of traffic safety.
- Road drainage shall be provided in compliance with the Department of Transport "Guidelines for Road Drainage - 2nd Edition, 2022". Any drainage pipe installed shall be at least 300mm in diameter and in any case be no less than the nearest downstream pipe diameter.
Reason: In the interest of orderly development.

Owing to the documentation submitted on the application and the report received from transportation it is considered that the applicant has failed to demonstrate adequate sightlines at this location, due to the location of the entrance gate, walls and piers which are inadequately sited. I therefore recommend refusing permission in this regard.

Water Services:

The Environment Section has reviewed the Site characterisation form as submitted by the applicant having regard to the EPA (2021) Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (PE≤10). The applicant has stated in Section 20. of the Planning Application Form (Part 1) that the proposed water supply to be a connection to the public mains as outlined in the Site Characterisation Report (SCR). The applicant has applied to Uisce Eireann (copy of application submitted) for a formal assessment of feasibility which is pending. The proposed waste water system is 6PE BAF and 90m2 polishing filter. The Environment Department have stated no objection to the proposed waste water treatment system.

The applicant has submitted a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) that has been reviewed by Meath County Councils Flooding Department concluding that the proposed dwelling is elevated above Flood Zones A & B, discussed further below.

Referring to MCC utilities mapping there appears to be a services pipe that crosses this site, running East to West towards the R132 roadway. This is deemed un-surveyed and therefore it would be advisable that the exact location of this pipe be verified by the applicant via consultation with all associated 3rd party bodies.

However, the Environment section is seeking Further Information with regard to the location of the aforementioned pipe. This matter shall be addressed prior to the commencement of any works.

Flooding Matters:

The Environment Section of the Planning Authority has reviewed and assessed the proposed development and have commented with the following remarks. With reference to the OPW CFRAM flood mapping and Meath County Councils MapInfo flood mapping for the relevant area, the development site and existing access road is partially situated in Flood Zone A where the probability of flooding is greater than 1% from fluvial flooding i.e. it is at high risk of fluvial flooding and partially situated in Flood Zone B where the probability of flooding is between 0.1% and 1% from fluvial flooding i.e. it is at a moderate risk of fluvial flooding. The subject site and access road is also vulnerable to coastal flooding and with reference to the OPW CFRAM flood mapping is partially situated in Flood Zone A where the probability of flooding is greater than 0.5% from coastal flooding i.e. it is at high risk of coastal flooding and in Flood Zone B where the probability of flooding is between 0.5% and 0.1% i.e it is at moderate risk of coastal flooding. The access road to the proposed development is situated in Flood Zone A .

The applicant has submitted a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) and has, again been reviewed by the Environment Section. The submitted SSFRA references OPW flood mapping which is indicative only and should not be used to support individual planning applications. From the submitted SSFRA and site layout plan, the proposed dwelling is elevated above Flood Zones A & B however the access road will be flooded during any critical flood events. The applicant has also not clearly demonstrated that access/egress for emergency vehicles is possible to the subject site during a flood event as the submitted topographical survey information is not detailed enough and not legible.

The Environment Section is not satisfied that the access to the proposed dwelling can be overcome. It is also considered that the proposed dwelling contradicts the policy INF POL 20 with regard to the scale and nature of risk to and from the potential development and shall consider the impact of climate change. The Environment Section are recommending a refusal on this basis.

Owing to the omission of critical information in the site specific flood risk assessment, and the report received from the environment section, it is considered that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the entrance road would not be flooding during a critical flood event and that

emergency vehicles could adequately access the site. I therefore recommend refusing permission in this regard.

Ecology:

The Ecologist has reviewed and assessed the proposed development and has made the following comments regarding the proposal. With regard to the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) submitted *"No rare, protected or invasive species were identified on site."*

The Ecologist does make a recommendation that *"Mitigation measures outlined in the EclA should be implemented in full to ensure no impacts occur through impacts to water quality or light spill to adjacent habitats."*

The NIS states that foul water will be treated on site in a Domestic WWTS. On reviewing the submitted site suitability report, it is not clear that the slope of the site is < 1:8. In accordance with the EPA Code of Practice 2021, Domestic wastewater treatment systems are not permitted to be constructed on slope angles in excess of 1:81. Until it can be confirmed that the location of the proposed WWTP has a slope of < 1:8, significant potential effects to groundwater or surface water can not be ruled out. Further information is therefore required.

I recommend the following FI;

1. The applicant is requested to provide a topographical survey of the full site and to confirm within the site suitability report that the slope of the site, at the location of the proposed WWTP, does not exceed 1:8.

RD POL 48

To ensure all septic tank/proprietary treatment plants and polishing filter/percolation areas satisfy the criteria set out in the Environmental Protection Agency 'Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤10)' (2021) (or any other updated code of practice guidelines) in order to safeguard individual and group water schemes.

The applicant should note the issues raised by the Ecologist in this regard.

11.0 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 following is located within 1km of the subject site.

- North – West Irish Sea cSPA (site code: 004236)

The applicant has submitted a Nature Impact Statement with recommended mitigation measures for the proposed development and the following comments have been received from Ecologist, Jessica Clarke;

“The applicant is requested to provide a topographical survey of the full site and to confirm within the site suitability report that the slope of the site, at the location of the proposed WWTP, does not exceed 1:8.

RD POL 48

To ensure all septic tank/proprietary treatment plants and polishing filter/percolation areas satisfy the criteria set out in the Environmental Protection Agency ‘Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤10)’ (2021) (or any other updated code of practice guidelines) in order to safeguard individual and group water schemes.”

Notwithstanding the comments raised by the Ecologist, 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 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).

12.0 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.

13.0 Water Framework Directive

The EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) requires all Member States to protect and improve water quality in all waters so that we achieve ‘good chemical and ecological status’ by at the latest, 2027. It was given legal effect in Ireland by the European Communities (Water

Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003). It applies to rivers, lakes, groundwater, and transitional coastal waters. The Directive requires that management plans be prepared on a river basin basis and specifies a structured method for developing these plans.

The proposed development is located in Gormonston, Co. Meath, within the Delvin_40 SC River catchment. The ecological status of the River Delvin at Gormonston has been classified as poor (2019-2024).

The scale and nature of the proposed development should be assessed against potential pathways to the River Delvin and its tributaries (surface runoff, stormwater discharge, etc.). If not carefully managed, there is some risk of contributing to nutrient loading, sediments and altered flow regimes.

The Planning Authority have assessed the Proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, the Planning Authority is satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.

The reason for this conclusion is based on:

- The nature of works e.g. small scale and nature of the development.
- Information provided by the applicant with regard to Surface Water Drainage. (Further Information requested)
- The report received by the Environment Surface water Section of MCC with regard SUD's proposed for the site. (Further Information requested)

The Planning Authority on the basis of objective information submitted , I conclude that the proposed development would not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives.

14.0 Conclusion:

The applicant has failed to demonstrate a genuine rural housing need at this location and has not satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposed site access can be provided with adequate visibility splays or that during a flood event, emergency vehicles could access the site. Furthermore, the proposal fails to comply with the provisions of the Meath Rural Design Guide. It is considered that residential development of this nature would be more appropriately located on the northern section of the landholding adjoining Station Road, where a recognised cluster of dwellings exists, thereby facilitating a more consolidated and sustainable form of rural development.

15.0 Recommendation:

It is recommended that permission be **REFUSED** for the proposed development, for the following reasons:

- 1) The subject site is located on lands zoned 'RA' Rural Area under the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, the objective of which is "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 site is also located within a 'Rural Area Under Strong Urban Influence' as defined in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2005). National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework supports the provision of single houses in such areas only where a demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area has been established.

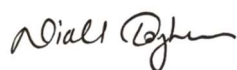
Having regard to the information submitted, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that the applicant has adequately demonstrated a genuine economic or social need to reside at this location. In this regard, it is noted that an application is currently pending with Land Registry in respect of the transfer of the existing family home to the applicant. Furthermore, the applicant's parents retain ownership of two additional residential properties, together with a family flat conversion, all of which are located within the rural area. The applicant has not satisfactorily demonstrated why these existing housing options are unavailable or unsuitable to meet their accommodation needs.

Accordingly, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development comes within the scope of the rural housing need criteria set out in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, the National Planning Framework, and the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. In the absence of a demonstrated rural-generated housing need, the proposed development would represent an inappropriate and unsustainable form of development in the countryside, would undermine the objectives of the Meath Rural Settlement Strategy, and would contribute to an uncoordinated pattern of rural development. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework, the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

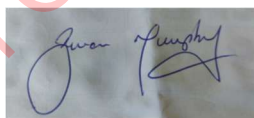
- 2) It is a policy (RD POL 9) of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, "To require all applications for rural houses to comply with the 'Meath Rural House Design Guide'. The proposed development by reason of its size, scale and massing is considered would be out of keeping with the site context and fails to integrate with the character of the immediate 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 2021-2027 and thereby contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 3) The application site is identified as being located, either in whole or in part, within Flood Zones A and B, which are areas at high and moderate risk of fluvial flooding. The applicant has failed to satisfactorily demonstrate, by way of an appropriate Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment and, where required, the application of the Justification Test, that the proposed development would not be at risk of flooding or would not increase flood risk.

elsewhere. Furthermore, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that a safe means of access to the proposed dwelling can be achieved, having regard to the flood risk affecting the site and its access arrangements. The Planning Authority also considers that the proposal is contrary to Policy INF POL 20 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, which seeks to ensure that developments are appropriately assessed having regard to the nature and scale of flood risk and the potential impacts of climate change. In the absence of sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with these requirements, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development constitutes an appropriate form of development at this location. Accordingly, the proposed development would be contrary to the provisions of *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2009), Policy INF POL 20 of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- 4) The Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed site access has been designed to provide adequate sightlines and safe vehicular ingress and egress. Having regard to the layout and positioning of the proposed entrance piers, walls and gates, the applicant has failed to satisfactorily demonstrate that the required visibility splays can be achieved and maintained in the interests of road safety. In the absence of sufficient information demonstrating that the proposed entrance arrangement can provide safe access to and from the public road, the Planning Authority considers that the development would give rise to a traffic hazard and endanger public safety. Accordingly, the proposed development would be contrary to the road safety provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



Niall Togher
Executive Planner
26/08/2026



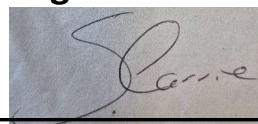
Brian Murphy
Senior Executive Officer,
26/08/2026

RECOMMENDATION

ACCEPTED

26 August 2026

SIGNED: _____



Sandra Carrie
Senior Executive Planner
26/08/2026

REFUSAL