



Leitrim County Council Planning Report

Planning Reference No:	26-60130
Applicant:	Damien and Natasha Comiskey
Location:	Cornalaghta, Leckaun, Co. Leitrim.
Application Type:	Permission
Proposed Development	The development will consist of the following: (1) construct a two storey type domestic dwelling, (2) construct a domestic dwelling, (3) a new site entrance, (4) wastewater treatment system to current EPA code of practice and all ancillary works.
Date of Site Inspection:	11/06/2026
Site Notice:	Site notice visible and legible in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, when inspected.
Due Date:	14/07/2026

Description of Proposed Development

Permission is sought to construct:

1. a two-storey type domestic dwelling,
2. a domestic dwelling,
3. a new site entrance, and
4. waste water treatment system to current EPA code of practice and all ancillary works;

all on a site at Cornalaghta, Leckaun, Co. Leitrim.

Site Location and Context

The subject site is located in the townland of Cornalaghta, approximately 5.5km north-east of Dromahair and 3km east of Lough Gill, on a moderate sloped site and which lies on the north side of the R278 Regional Road which serves this area. The surrounding lands are farmland of mixed quality with a number of existing rural dwellings in the area. The subject site has a stated area of 0.97 Ha and is roughly triangular in shape. The current boundary of the site is sheep proof fencing along the length of the R278.



Fig. 1 – Subject site location



Fig. 2 Subject site

Planning History

The following planning history pertains to the site:

- P.6366** Permission was sought for a bungalow on the eastern edge of subject site. Further information was sought but not replied.
- P.6817** Permission was granted for a bungalow and septic tanks on the western edge of subject site; however, it was not taken up.
- P22/20** Permission was sought by the current applicants to: (a) construct a two-storey type domestic dwelling, (b) construct a domestic garage, (c) construct a new site entrance, and (d) construct a Wastewater Treatment System to current EPA Code of Practice and all ancillary works.
Application withdrawn.

Permission was sought by the current applicants to (a) construct a two storey type domestic dwelling, (b) construct a domestic garage (c) construct a new site entrance, (d) construct a Wastewater Treatment System to current EPA Code of Practice and all ancillary works.

Refused for 2 reasons as follows:

- 1. The proposed access is located off the R278 Regional Road at a point where there is a continuous white centre line and where traffic operational speeds and volumes are high. The proposed access is located at a point onto the Regional Road where the horizontal and vertical alignment of the road are poor. The existing roadside boundary treatment consists of a traditional stone wall with post and wire fence inside and intermittent hedgerow with lands higher inside the field than the public road. The achievement of the required 160 metres of sight distance in both directions has not been provided in the submitted Site Layout Plan and cannot be achieved without significant excavation into the site and beyond on lands outside of the application site and of applicant's ownership and for which no letter of consent has been provided. On the basis of the foregoing, the proposed access to the development is considered to constitute a serious and unacceptable traffic hazard onto a Regional Road which would result in traffic movements endangering the safety of other road users. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*
- 2. The subject site is situated in a Low Capacity Area where policy RUR SET POL 3 of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 applies. This policy seeks to facilitate individual housing developments for applicants from the local rural community who have a demonstrable economic or social requirement to live in this local rural area in adherence to national and regional policy considerations. The Planning Authority is aware, based on Land Registry information, that the applicant's housing need within this Low Capacity Area has already been satisfied. This information has not been provided in the submitted documentation with the planning application. Having regard to the foregoing, the Planning Authority are not satisfied that a housing need which complies with the requirements of RUR SET POL 3 has been established and that the proposed development would therefore contravene said policy. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

E/25/2 Enforcement file pertaining to the site.

Nature of the unauthorised development:

The unauthorised development comprises of the removal of an extensive length of roadside boundary stonewall at Cornalaghta, Dromahair, Co Leitrim.

Services/Infrastructure

Wastewater

The application documentation has indicated that it is proposed to provide a tertiary system with an infiltration/treatment area.

Water Supply

The application documentation has indicated that the proposed development will be serviced a new connection to an existing public main.

Storm Water Disposal

The application documentation has indicated that surface water from the proposed development will be disposed of via a soakpit.

Natural, Archaeological and Architectural Heritage

Natural Heritage

The nearest Natura 2000 site is Lough Gill SAC (Site Code: 001976) located approximately 1.2km to the southwest of site.

The nearest nationally designated site is also Lough Gill pNHA (Site Code: 001976) and 3.5km to the northwest of Crockauns/Keelogy Bogs NHA (Site Code: 002435)

The surrounding lands fall within the open countryside but not within any designated visually sensitive areas as designated in the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029.

Archaeological and Architectural Heritage

There are no protected structures or structures listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) located within the application site. There are no protected national monuments affected by the proposed development.

Internal and Prescribed Bodies Referrals

The application was referred to the following, with responses indicated below:

Consultant's Name	Status	Response
North Leitrim District Engineer	Internal	Report received on 10/07/2026
Environment	Internal	No response to date.
Uisce Éireann	External	Response received 04/06/2026

North Leitrim District Engineer (Report received 10/07/2026):

The report from the North Leitrim District Engineer notes that the subject site is on a section of the R278 where the road geometry necessitates the installation of a continuous centreline road marking as a road safety measure and where there is also a road junction with the L4153 to the south of the site.

The report notes that the submitted site layout is ambiguous and seems to suggest the sightline to the east of the site is measured to the opposite side of the road rather than the nearside, as required. The report further notes that the full sightline to the west is not included in the submitted site layout. The report states that following a site visit, the District Engineer is of the opinion that to achieve the required 160m sightlines at the nearside, the applicants will have to encroach onto third party lands outside the extents of the marked area the letter of consent refers to. The report concludes with the recommendation that the proposed development be refused.

Uisce Éireann (Submission received 04/06/2026):

Uisce Éireann set out the following and recommended a number of conditions to attach should a grant issue. The applicants shall enter into a Connection Agreement(s) with Uisce Éireann to provide for a service connection(s) to the public water supply and/or wastewater collection network and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in that agreement. All development shall be carried out in compliance with Uisce Éireann's Standard Details and Codes of Practice. Uisce Éireann does not permit Build Over of its assets. Where the applicant proposes to build over or divert existing water or wastewater services the applicant shall have received written confirmation of Feasibility (COF) of Diversion(s) from Uisce Éireann prior to any works commencing.

Submissions/Observations

One third-party submission was received on 19/06/2026. I have read the submission and have considered the points raised in my assessment of the application. The main planning concerns raised are summarised as follows:

Concerns regarding road safety, the protection of traditional roadside features and the natural character of this rural scenic area. Prior to Planning Application No: 2660130 approximately 160m of traditional dry stone wall and mature intermittent roadside hedgerow were removed, which were long established features and character of this rural area with more dry stone wall removal proposed with this application. The new proposed access is located off the R278 at a point where there is a continuous white centre line and traffic speed and volumes remain high and the 160m of sight distance in both directions are not achievable.

The proposed hedgerow is not in character as dry stone walls are a heritage feature in the area. This section of the road participated in The Golden Mile / Slí an Dulra in conjunction with Leitrim County Council, Crann and support by the Heritage Council. The judges highly commended the excellent dry stone walls. Dry stone walling is recognised as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

Representations

No representations have been made on this application.

Part V

Part V provision is not applicable to the subject application.

Pre-Planning Consultations

No pre-planning referenced in submitted application.

Policy Context

The following extracts of Volume I – Written Statement of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 are relevant in the assessment of this application:

The surrounding lands fall within the open countryside but not within any designated visually sensitive areas as designated in the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029. The subject lands are located within a rural area identified as an area with '**Low Capacity**' – these are areas under strong pressure from commuting to Sligo in this case.

The Policy in the Low-Capacity Areas is to facilitate housing development for applicants from the local rural community who have a demonstrable economic or social requirement¹ to live in the local rural area in adherence to national and regional policy considerations.

Where 'Local Area' is defined as within approximately a radius of 4km from the site, excluding defined urban areas (which have development envelopes containing land use zoning objectives). Where the site is of greater distance, but the applicant can demonstrate significant ties with the area for example immediate family or well-established landownership (at least 10 years), then these applications will be considered on their merits.

The relevant policies are set out below:

¹ Housing needed in rural areas within the established rural community by persons from the community or whose occupation is intrinsically linked to/with that particular rural area.

RUR SET POL 3 To accommodate demand from existing members of the rural community for permanent residential development in Low Capacity Areas who have strong economic and social needs to the area and who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which planning permission is being sought, subject to normal planning considerations and who satisfy the following criteria:

1. Persons with a demonstrable social need to live in a particular local rural area – Persons who have lived a substantial period of their lives in the local rural area (minimum 18 months) in which the house is proposed.
2. Persons with a demonstrable economic need to live in the particular local rural area – Persons employed full-time in rural-based activity such as farming, horticulture, forestry, bloodstock or other rural-based activity in the area in which they wish to build or whose employment is intrinsically linked to the rural area in which they wish to build, such as teachers in rural schools or other persons who by the nature of their work have a functional need to reside permanently in the rural area close to their place of work, provided that they have never owned a house in a rural area.

All applicants for one-off rural housing will need to demonstrate compliance with the qualifying criteria of one of the above two categories unless otherwise specified as being located within an area where this Rural Housing Policy does not apply.

Applicants relying on the economic need criteria involving part-time occupations in farming or natural resources-related activities, will be required to submit sufficient evidence to demonstrate same, for example (but not limited to) a herd number or hours of activity as a farmer. It should be noted that in such instances, any part-time occupation in farming or natural resources-related activities shall be the predominant occupation to any non-farming or non-natural resources-related incomes.

RUR SET POL 4 To attach an occupancy condition to planning permissions in respect of individual rural housing in Low-Capacity Areas pursuant to Section 47 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, restricting the use of the dwelling to the applicant or members of their immediate family, as a place of permanent residence. The period of occupancy will be limited to a period of 7 years from the date of first occupation.

RUR SET POL 6 To ensure that residential development in rural areas conforms to the principles detailed in the *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside* published by Leitrim County Council and any replacement Design Guide produced during the life of this Development Plan.

RUR SET POL 7 To have regard to the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2005, and any replacement guidance which require that new houses in rural areas be sited and designed to integrate with their physical surroundings and be generally compatible with:

- a) The protection of water quality in the arrangements made for onsite wastewater disposal facilities.
- b) The provision of a safe means of access in relation to road and public safety, and
- c) The conservation of sensitive areas such as natural habitats, protected landscapes, the environs of protected structures and other aspects of our heritage.

RUR SET POL 8 To encourage all individual rural house developments to incorporate climate change measures and be constructed to high energy efficiency standards that fully avail of renewable technologies, maximise solar gain, and utilise modern materials and design practices

Section 13.11 Residential Development in Rural Areas:

Notwithstanding an applicant's demonstration of compliance with the rural housing criteria as set out in Chapter 3, it is important to note that applicants are also required to meet overriding sustainable planning practices in terms of visual impact, design standards, environmental and traffic safety issues.

- Site selection and Design,
- Materials and Detailing,
- Water and Wastewater Services and Surface Water Disposal,
- Boundary Treatments

Wastewater Treatment and Disposal:

WWT POL 1 To ensure that private wastewater treatment plants, where permitted, are operated in compliance with the EPA Code of Practice for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) (March 2021), as may be amended.

A detailed site investigation report, to include percolation and water table tests certified by a qualified person, should be provided with the planning application.

13.16.4 Entrances and Sightlines:

Generally, it is the policy of the Council to discourage the proliferation of access points onto public roads, particularly in areas where the maximum speed limit applies or where road safety is a concern. Where the removal of hedgerow is required in order to achieve sightlines, the minimum amount of hedgerow shall be removed.

All new entrances and junctions will require clear and unobstructed sight lines to be provided in accordance with the minimum sightline requirement set out in Table 13.5.

Road Status	100 km per hour	80 km per hour	60 km per hour (or less)
National Primary Roads & R280	Plot Ratio Standards	215 m	80 m
Regionally & Locally Important Roads	215 m	160 m	80 m
Other Regional Roads	N/A	160 m	80 m
County Roads	N/A	120 m*	70 m

Note: *Except where operational speed is 60kph or less, 90m may be considered satisfactory. These sight distances are measured at a height of 1.05 m above ground level from a point 3.0 m back from the edge of the carriageway to a point on the road 260 mm over the surface level of the road.

Section 8.11.4 Regional Roads:

The consideration of new individual housing proposals affecting all Regional Roads, shall have regard to the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005)* as follows:

- In site selection, avoid the creation of unnecessary new accesses, where access can be provided off a nearby local road serving the same landholding.
- Ensure that necessary new entrances provide effective visibility for both users of the entrance and users of the public roads so that opportunities for conflicting movements are avoided, taking account of all relevant considerations such as traffic levels, typical vehicle speeds, plans for realignment, etc.
- Avoid the premature obsolescence of regional roads through creating excessive levels of individual entrances.

Section 11.3 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

Section 11.3 of the Plan sets out the following policies and objectives for the protection of the environment:

NH POL 1 To protect and conserve Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

NH POL 3 To protect designated Natural Heritage Area (NHA) sites, including proposed Natural Heritage Area sites (pNHA) and seek to develop linkages between designated sites and other non-designated sites of ecological importance, where feasible and as resources permit.

NH POL 5 To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on plant, animal or bird species or habitats protected by law, subject to satisfactory mitigation measures.

Section 11.10 Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows

Section 11.10 of the Plan sets out the following policy for the protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows for landscape and biodiversity value:

TWH POL 4 *To protect and preserve existing hedgerows and minimise their removal. Where their removal is necessary, to seek their replacement with new hedgerow material native to the area.*

TWH POL 5 *To retain distinctive boundary treatment such as stone walls, when undertaking, authorising or approving development. Where the loss of the existing boundary is unavoidable as part of development, to ensure that the wall is re - built using local stone and local vernacular design.*

Section 11.14 Landscape Character Assessment

Section 11.14 provides an overview of the landscape classifications within the county and the policy provisions pertaining to the conservation and protection of landscape features. A relevant policy in this regard is as follows:

LCA POL 4 *To seek to ensure that local landscape features, including historic features and buildings, hedgerows, shelter belts and stone walls, are retained, protected and enhanced where appropriate, so as to preserve the local landscape and character of an area, whilst providing for future development.*

These policies are in turn supported by the following objectives:

LD OBJ 1 *To protect the quality, character and distinctiveness of the landscapes of the county in accordance with national policy and guidelines and the recommendations of the Leitrim Landscape Character Assessment (2020) which forms Appendix VII of this Plan.*

LD OBJ 4 *To protect Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of High Visual Amenity from inappropriate forms of development. These areas are identified in Table 11.6 and Table 11.7 of this Plan and shown graphically on Map No. 11 'Landscape Designations' in Volume III (Book of Maps).*

Section 13.11 Residential Development in Rural Areas:

Section 13.11 of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 refers to Materials and Detailing and states as follows:

- *The detail, texture, colour, pattern, and durability of materials of the proposed development should be sustainable and of a high quality, and sensitive to its proposed location*
- *Local stone (sandstone/limestone-area specific) and render such as stucco, traditional lime render or lime wash, rough cast render or napped render finish and glass is encouraged. Metal cladding such as copper, timber shingle, self-finished modern renders, and painted timber finish may be acceptable in certain instances or in cases where the design solution calls for an accent material. Brick and stone cladding which clearly reads as non-structural and non-Local Stone or dashes and cladding and other metal or timber finishes which give an engineered or artificial appearance will generally not be permitted*

- *Where contemporary materials are proposed they should complement and harmonise with traditional materials*
- *Simple design forms and roof designs with narrow spans (gable-widths) and pitches/profiles are preferable*
- *Particular attention should be paid to the solid to void ratio of windows and doors. Openings should be proportionate to complement the style of the building, and*
- *Decorative fascia and box end soffits should be avoided.*

13.11.1 Domestic Garage/Shed/ Store Development.

The guidance prescribed below for this class of development is applicable in both urban and rural settings:

- The design, form and materials should be ancillary to, and consistent with the main dwelling on site.
- Structures should generally be detached and sited to the side or rear of the dwelling house and be visually subservient in terms of size, scale, and bulk, and
- Storage facilities should be used solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling and not for any commercial, manufacturing, industrial use, or habitable space in the absence of prior planning consent for such use.

Summary of Key Planning Issues and Assessment

The subject site falls within an area of open countryside but not within any designated visually sensitive areas and is located within a Low-Capacity area for rural housing as defined in the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029.

Housing Need:

The policy in designated Low-Capacity Areas is to facilitate housing development for applicants from the local rural community who have a demonstratable economic or social requirement to live in the local rural area in adherence to national and regional policy considerations. Where 'Local Area' is defined as within approximately a radius of 4km from the site, excluding defined urban areas (which have development envelopes containing land use zoning objectives).

A cover letter provided with this application sets out to demonstrate the applicants' compliance with the criteria for building a dwelling in an area of Low capacity. At present, the applicants live in a dwelling 600 metres from the proposed site.

The applicants also indicate that they own a dwelling almost directly across the road from their current residence. They indicate that this dwelling would be too small to accommodate their family and would require extension and updating of the wastewater treatment system. However, I note the permission under P.04/855 where an application was granted for an upgraded WWTS and percolation area, the site was indicated to have a site area of 0.44Ha which would provide adequate area to facilitate a substantial extension to accommodate the family.

I also note under application P.23-37 that it was ascertained that one of the applicants also owns another dwelling some 1.3km (again with a large site area of 1.76ha, where an extension could be facilitated) from the subject site. From an examination of Land Direct, the co-applicant is still the registered owner of this dwelling.

Notwithstanding the extent of property registered to the applicants, either individually or collectively, it is clear that they can demonstrate longstanding ties to this 'Local Area' as defined under the Rural Settlement Strategy contained within Section 3.17 of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029. Given the location of the subject site within a designated Low-Capacity Area, the provisions of Policy RUR SET POL 3 apply whereby applicants are required to demonstrate compliance with one of the two following applicant categories:

1. *Persons with a demonstrable social need to live in a particular local rural area - Persons who have lived a substantial period of their lives in the local rural area² (minimum 18 months) in which the house is proposed.*
2. *Persons with a demonstrable economic need to live in the particular local rural area – Persons employed full-time in rural-based activity such as farming, horticulture, forestry, bloodstock or other rural-based activity in the area in which they wish to build or whose employment is intrinsically linked to the rural area in which they wish to build, such as teachers in rural schools or other persons who by the nature of their work have a functional need to reside permanently in the rural area close to their place of work, provided that they have never owned a house in a rural area.*

It is noted that Policy RUR SET POL 3 is somewhat silent with regard to the current situation whereby persons with a demonstrable social need to live in a local area are seeking to construct a new dwelling on the basis that their existing dwelling does not meet their needs. Strict interpretation of RUR SET POL 3 follows that once an applicant can demonstrate either a social or an economic need to live in a particular local area, they can be considered for rural housing in a Low Capacity Area, subject to other planning considerations.

Set within this context, and having regard to the extent of time which the applicants have lived in the area, it is considered that the applicants are members of this rural community and have a demonstrable social need to live in this local area.

Design and Siting

As set out in the *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside*, houses should:

- not be the prominent feature in the landscape,
- single storey designs in visually prominent areas,
- large plan areas are best divided into units,
- forms should respect the site contours,
- bulky forms should be avoided,
- forms that are alien to our architectural heritage should be avoided.

The subject site slopes gently upwards from the roadside boundary, with no landmarks or substantial hedgerows to shield it. Any dwelling proposed here would be very prominent on the landscape. While the subject site is not located within an area designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) it is located between two areas; AONB- A5-Benbo to the east and AONB A4- Lough Gill, Leean Mountain and Environs to the west and would still be very scenic and visually sensitive. Any proposal on a site in this area would need to take full cognisance of the recommendations set out in the *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside*.

The proposed dwelling has a stated floor area of 335.6 m², with the main section of the dwelling having a ridge height of 9.035 metres and the single storey portion with a ridge height of 6 metres and the front elevation having a combined length of 25 metres from end to end. To the rear, there is a proposed flat roofed rear return with two large skylights within the roof, the area will house a dining/living area and will enjoy views of the mountains and hills to the rear. In addition, there is a single storey element located at the eastern end of the dwelling. This element has a proposed ridge height of 6 metres and has a north-south orientation and is proposed to be clad in natural stone. A large roof light is also indicated on the eastern roof. It is noted from the

² *Local area is defined as within approximately a radius of 4km from the site, excluding defined urban areas (which relate only to the Carrick-on-Shannon development envelope containing land use zoning objectives). Where the site is of a greater distance, but the applicant can demonstrate significant ties with the area for example immediate family or well-established landownership, then these applications will be considered on their merits. This recognises applicants who are either a son or daughter of a landowner in which the house is proposed in which the landholding (as opposed to a site) is owned (or in the family name) for at least 10 years.*

first-floor plans for this single storey element that a substantial floor area is shown but no room layout or annotation have been provided on what the intended use for this space is. It would appear from the drawings that the roof light provides light to this area only, so one can conclude that it is intended to use this as habitable space. This substantial dwelling will provide for 5 bedrooms, a living room, utility, bathroom and open plan kitchen/dining /living area.

The proposed development maintains the existing building line with the adjoining dwellings, however the sheer size and scale of the proposed dwelling is at odds with the typical dwelling in this scenic area, where the building type is predominately single storey or dormer in line with the *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside*.



Fig. 3 Proposed front (south) elevation.

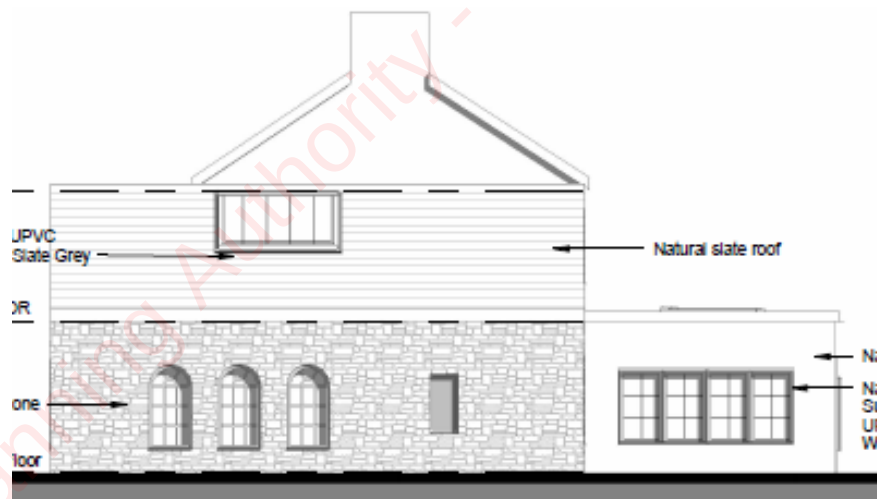


Fig. 4 Side elevation (east) of proposed dwelling.

The proposed dwelling will be visually dominant from all approaches. No landscaping plan has been submitted with this application, however given the positioning of the proposed dwelling on site and its mass, it would be difficult to achieve adequate screening through landscaping. In addition, it is also proposed to provide a substantial garage to the east of the subject dwelling close to the single storey element of the dwelling.

The proposed garage has a stated floor area of 98.2 m² and a ridge height of 6.35 metres, not dissimilar in size to a single storey dwelling. The floor plans submitted indicate that the area will be split into two distinct areas, one will house a two-car garage with two individual door and to the front of the garage is a separate space, with an area of 29.31 m². This area to the front of the garage will also have two large windows matching those of the proposed dwelling and a separate door to access this area. It is also noted from the substantial ridge height that

the resulting attic space will have a ceiling height in excess of 2.4 metres, which could possibly accommodate additional rooms. The need for a garage of this size has not been set out within the application. It should be noted that storage facilities should be used solely for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling and not for any commercial, manufacturing, industrial use, or habitable space. It is also proposed to clad this garage in stone in line with the adjoining single storey element of the dwelling. The addition of this garage will further increase the overall mass of the proposed development on site.



Fig. 5 Proposal viewed from the northwest.



Fig. 6 Exposed nature of the site viewed from the L4253 (Google Streetview)

Given the scale, mass and design of the proposed dwelling, it will be very visually dominant in the area and it is therefore at odds with the guidance set out in the *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside* and is therefore contrary to RUR SET POL 6 of the County Leitrim Development Plan 2023-2029. A total redesign taking cognisance of these guidelines will be required should all other aspects such as public health and traffic safety be acceptable.

Public Health:

The wastewater treatment system (WWTS) and percolation area are to be located as per the 2023 application (P.23/37) and the accompanying Site Characterisation Report prepared for this earlier application has been resubmitted. Given that the WWTS is to be located in the same area and the proposed dwelling and number of occupants remains the same, this is acceptable. A Site Characterisation Report (SCR) was submitted with this application and referred to the Environment Department for comment. No report has been received from the Environment Department to date. The Site Characterisation Report does state a trial hole depth of 1.6m subsoil depth and records a 'T' value of 40 and 'P' value of 59. Having regard to the submitted Site Characterisation Report and my visual site inspection, I am satisfied that the subject site can accommodate a wastewater

treatment system and is therefore acceptable. The Planning Authority is satisfied that no specific public health concern exists with this proposal.

Traffic Safety

Generally, it is the policy of the Council to discourage the proliferation of access points onto public roads, particularly in areas where the maximum speed limit applies or where road safety is a concern. This is to ensure that necessary new entrances provide effective visibility for both users of the entrance and users of the public roads so that opportunities for conflicting movements are avoided, taking account of all relevant considerations such as traffic levels, typical vehicle speeds, plans for realignment, etc. and to avoid the premature obsolescence of regional roads through creating excessive levels of individual entrances. The proposed access is to open onto the R278 Regional Road, which has a requirement for 160m sightlines in both directions.

The horizontal and vertical alignment of the regional road at this location is very poor and is characterised by a continuous white line all along this site boundary.

It is clear from the history on site (including enforcement file) and utilising Google Streetview historical imagery, that the site boundary, until recently, consisted of a low dry-stone wall and fencing which is typical in the area. A third-party submission also mentions this fact. Currently, the subject site boundary consists of sheep proof fencing, and the remains of the wall can be observed flattened into the verge of the R278.

The removal of this extent of boundary is considered contrary to policies TWH POL 5 and LCA POL 4 of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029, as dry-stone walls are a key feature in the landscape in this area. In addition, from the site layout it would appear that significant further works are necessary on site to try to achieve minimum sightlines, including further removal of wall and hedgerow from an adjoining landholder (letter of consent provided) and significant grading works for the complete length of the roadside boundary significantly changing the topography of the site, which will further alter the landscape of the area. Moreover, it is noted that under P.23/37, one of the reasons for refusal of this application related to traffic safety grounds.

The site has been enlarged under the current application, however the fact still remains that the proposed development will result in a new access point onto a Regional Road, where speeds are on the higher side and where there is a continuous white line along the length of the site. In addition, both traffic speeds and volumes experienced on the day the site inspection was carried out were very high.



Fig. 7 Roadside boundary that was removed.



Fig. 8 Portion of hedgerow and wall required to be removed under this application



Fig. 9 Large amount of ground works proposed under this application, coloured in yellow.

It was deemed under enforcement case E25-2 that the removal of the boundary wall did not fall within the parameters of exempted development. To rectify this, it would be required to look for permission to retain these works and proposals to reinstate a similar boundary would be required under this application. Neither of these steps were taken within this application which would lead one to question if these works were carried out to facilitate sightlines for this proposed development, as this was cited as one of the refusal reasons on a previous application. If this is the case, it is important to set out that site development works to facilitate a development cannot commence prior to permission being granted. This is not an acceptable practice and contemplating a grant would set an undesirable precedence for this practice and, as such, is not in line with policies and objectives of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2026 or any national planning guidance.

Notwithstanding this, the proposal still requires further removal of hedgerow and stone wall as well as significant grading works. Such an excessive extent of boundary removal and alteration is considered contrary to policies TWH POL 5 and LCA POL 4 which seek to retain boundary treatment such as stone walls which characterise the boundary at this location.

Moreover, regard is had to the report of the North Leitrim District Engineer on the subject application which notes that the subject site is on a section of the R278 where the road geometry necessitates the installation of a continuous centreline road marking as a road safety measure and where there is also a road junction with the L4153 to the south of the site. The report further states that the submitted site layout is ambiguous and seems to suggest the sightline to the east of the site is measured to the opposite (far side) side of the road rather than the nearside, as required. The report further notes that the full sightline to the west is not included in the submitted site layout. The report states that following a site visit, the District Engineer is of the opinion that to achieve the required 160m sightlines at the nearside, the applicants will have to encroach onto third party lands outside the extents of the marked area the letter of consent refers to. The report concludes with the recommendation that the proposed development be refused.

Having regard to the significant traffic volumes and speeds along this section of Regional Road, to the deficiencies in the sightlines detailed in the submitted site layout which appear to be measured to the opposite (far side) side of the road rather than the nearside, as required, in the case of the sightline to the east, and the non-inclusion of the full sightline to the west, and to the report received from the District Engineer above, the Planning Authority considers that the proposed new entrance would constitute an unacceptable traffic hazard to the users of this road and the Planning Authority recommends refusal in this instance.

Conclusion

While concerns regarding design, scale and massing of the proposed development could potentially be addressed by way of further information, it is not considered that the applicants can overcome the shortcomings of the subject site in relation to traffic safety concerns as set out below.

While the current boundary on site has been amended to stockproof fencing since the previous application (under P.23/37 which was refused), the proposed development will still require significant works, some on lands outside ownership of the applicants in order to potentially achieve requisite sightlines. Significant works are required along the full length of the site boundary, which will alter the topography of the site and will be visually intrusive in this scenic area. Indeed, upon examination of the requisite sightlines to the nearside of the proposed entrance, as required, instead of the far side as depicted in the submitted site layout, the applicants will likely have to encroach onto third party lands outside the extents of the marked area the letter of consent refers to. Moreover, the proposed boundary works to achieve the requisite sightlines will require an excessive extent of boundary removal and alteration which is considered contrary to policies TWH POL 5 and LCA POL 4 which seek to retain boundary treatments which form local character features such as the stone walls which define the boundary at this location.

The proposed works are to facilitate a new access onto a Regional Road in an area that has poor alignment, high speeds and a continuous white line. In addition, the stretch of road preceding this site already has a proliferation of existing accesses onto it. Granting an additional access where there is some doubt in the ability to achieve adequate sightlines will create a significant traffic hazard and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Having regard to the above, it is recommended that permission be refused.

Appropriate Assessment

The proposal has been assessed having regard to the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive. The development has been screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA), and it has been determined that an AA is not required. See Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening report attached.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and the absence of any connectivity to any sensitive location and the likely emissions therefrom, and the fact that the development proposed is not of a development type or class set out in Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations

2001, as amended, it is concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. It is therefore concluded that EIA is not required.

Recommendation

Having regard to the submitted documentation, the contents of a third-party submission, the planning history on site and site inspection, a number of deficiencies have been identified with the proposal as submitted, which cannot be overcome by way of further information. The development, as proposed, would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

It is recommended that permission be refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed access is located off the R278 Regional Road at a point where there is a continuous white centre line and where traffic operational speeds and volumes are high. The proposed access is located at a point onto the Regional Road where the horizontal and vertical alignment of the road are poor. The achievement of the required 160m sight distances in both directions from the proposed entrance have not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority on the basis of the submitted application documentation. The achievement of the required 160 metres of sight distance in both directions will require the removal of additional stonewall and hedgerow outside the applicants' land ownership in addition to works that will significantly alter the appearance of landscape and topography along the full length of the boundary. On the basis of the foregoing, the proposed access to the development is considered to constitute a serious and unacceptable traffic hazard onto a Regional Road which would result in traffic movements endangering the safety of other road users. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. The proposed works to facilitate the access for the proposal will require an excessive extent of boundary removal and alteration which is considered contrary to policies TWH POL 5 and LCA POL 4 which seek to retain boundary treatments which form local character features such as the dry stone walls which define the boundary at this location. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
3. The scale and mass of the dwelling and garage proposed on site as submitted are not in accordance with the guidelines set out in the *Design Guide for the Siting and Design of Single Houses within the Leitrim Countryside* and are therefore contrary to the RUR SET POL 6 and RUR SET POL 7 as set out in the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029.



Aileen Farrell
Assistant Planner
Date: 10/07/2026



Liam Flynn
Senior Executive Planner
Date: 13/07/2026



Appropriate Assessment Screening and Determination

STEP 1. Description of the project/proposal and local site characteristics:

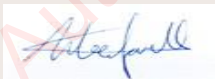
(a) File Reference No:	26-60130
(b) Brief description of the project or plan:	As per planning report
(c) Brief description of site characteristics:	As per planning report
(d) Relevant prescribed bodies consulted: e.g. DHLGH (NPWS), EPA, OPW	No
(e) Response to consultation:	N/A

STEP 2. Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information on Qualifying Interests and conservation objectives.

European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest	Distance from proposed development (km)	Connections (Source- Pathway- Receptor)	Considered further in screening Y/N
Lough Gill SAC (001976)	https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/001976	1.2 km	No	No

STEP 3. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

(a) Identify all potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project under the following headings:	
Impacts:	Possible Significance of Impacts: (duration/magnitude etc.)
Construction phase e.g. - Vegetation clearance - Demolition - Surface water runoff from soil excavation/infill/landscaping (including borrow pits) - Dust, noise, vibration - Lighting disturbance - Impact on groundwater/dewatering - Storage of excavated/construction materials - Access to site - Pests	
Operational phase e.g. - Direct emission to air and water - Surface water runoff containing contaminant or sediment - Lighting disturbance - Noise/vibration - Changes to water/groundwater due to drainage or abstraction - Presence of people, vehicles and activities - Physical presence of structures (e.g. collision risks)	

• Potential for accidents or incidents		
In-combination/Other		
(c) Are 'mitigation' measures necessary to reach a conclusion that likely significant effects can be ruled out at screening? ☐ Yes ☒ No		
Step 4. Screening Determination Statement		
The assessment of significance of effects: Describe how the proposed development (alone or in-combination) is/is not likely to have significant effects on European site(s) in view of its conservation objectives.		
Having regard to the information on file, the nature and scale of the proposed development, its distance from European sites, the lack of direct connections with regard to the Source-Pathway-Receptor model, it is concluded that the proposed development, either alone or in-combination with other developments, is not likely to have any significant effects on any European site in view of its conservation objectives.		
Conclusion:		
	Tick as Appropriate:	Recommendation:
(i) It is clear that there is no likelihood of significant effects on a European site.	☐	The proposal can be screened out: Appropriate assessment not required.
(ii) It is uncertain whether the proposal will have a significant effect on a European site.	☐	☐ Request further information to complete screening ☐ Request NIS ☐ Refuse planning permission
(iii) Significant effects are likely.	☐	☐ Request NIS ☐ Refuse planning permission
Signature of Recommending Planner:		Date: 10/07/2026



Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Pre-Screening

Establishing if the proposal is a 'sub-threshold development'

File Reference No:	26-60130
Development Summary:	As per Planning Report
Was a Screening Determination carried out under Section 176A-C?:	☐ Yes – No further action required ☒ No – Proceed to Part A

Part A - Schedule 5 Part 1 - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 1, of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)? (Tick as appropriate)

☐ Yes – specify class:	EIA is mandatory No screening required
☒ No	Proceed to Part B

Part B - Schedule 5 Part 2 - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 2, of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it meet/exceed the thresholds? (Tick as appropriate)

☒ No, the development is not a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 2	No screening required
☐ Yes, the project is listed in Schedule 5, Part 2 and meets/exceeds the threshold, specify class (including threshold):	EIA is mandatory No screening required
☐ Yes, the project is of a type listed but is <i>sub-threshold</i> :	Proceed to Part C

Part C – If yes, has Schedule 7A information/screening report been submitted?

☐ Yes, Schedule 7A information/screening report has been submitted by the applicant	Screening Determination required
☐ No, Schedule 7A information/screening report has not been submitted by the applicant	Preliminary Examination required

EIA Preliminary Examination:

The Planning Authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

	Comment:	Yes/No/Uncertain:
Nature of the development: <i>Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?</i> <i>Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or</i>		

result in significant emissions or pollutants?		
Size of the development: Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment? Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?		
Location: Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location? Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?		
Preliminary Examination Conclusion:		
Based on a preliminary examination of the nature, size or location of the development. (Tick as appropriate)		
☐ There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. EIA is not required.	☐ There is real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. An EIAR is required.	☐ There is significant and realistic doubt regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment. Request the applicant to submit the Information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination. Proceed to Screening Determination.
Signature of Recommending Planner:		
	Date:	10/07/2026