

Louth County Council Planning Report

Planning Ref: 2660464

Applicant's Name: David O'Sullivan

Date of site inspection: 14/08/2026

Site Notice: Yes

Type of Application: Permission

Description: Permission for a proposed dwelling house, domestic garage, wastewater treatment system and polishing filter percolation area, new vehicular entrance onto public road and all associated site development works.

Site Location: Parsonstown, Clogherhead, County Louth

File Due Date: 06/09/2026

Part 1 – Overview

1. Introduction

Planning permission is being sought for a new dwelling, garage, septic tank, entrance and associated site works.



Site Location (Google Earth Image)

2. Site location and description

This site is situated on agricultural lands located approximately 2.5 km north-west of Clogherhead and 7.5 km south-east of Dunleer. This site is within a large agricultural field that has mature boundary hedgerow along the northern and eastern (roadside) boundary. The site's western and southern boundaries are undefined and lie open to the remainder of the much larger agricultural field. A bungalow dwelling is located to the immediate north of this site. This area is primarily rural in character, the topography is generally flat, and the site is situated near the coast. The site and surrounding area are located within Rural Policy Zone (RPZ) 1 and is designated as an Area of High Scenic Quality as identified in the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 (as varied).



Above: proposed site looking northwestwards as of 14th August 2026

3. Site history

Development Address	Parsonstown Clogherhead Co Louth PARSONSTOWN CLOGHERHEAD
Applicant Name	David O'Sullivan
Application Status	APPLICATION FINALISED
Decision Date	04/10/2024
Decision	REFUSED
Development Description	Planning Permission for a proposed dwelling house, waste water treatment system and polishing filter percolation area, new vehicular entrance onto public road and all associated site development works
File Reference	2460471

1) The proposed development is located within Rural Policy Zone 1 as designated by the Louth County Development Plan 2021 -2027 (as varied). This location is an area under strong urban influence and of significant landscape value. Policy HOU 41 of the Plan seeks to manage the development of rural housing in the open countryside by requiring applicants to demonstrate compliance with the Qualifying Criteria relative to Rural Policy Zone 1 set out in Table 3.4. Based on the information submitted, the planning authority is not satisfied that the applicant comes under the scope of the qualifying criteria for

residential development in Rural Policy Zone 1 and as such, the proposed development would contravene the rural housing policy of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied) and thus would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2) The proposed development is at a location within an area characterised by a proliferation of one-off rural dwellings. In order to facilitate this dwelling, this proposal would require the extensive removal of established roadside boundary hedgerow to accommodate the development. This site is also located on a level higher than the adjacent public road and has no substantial screening or backdrop on its rear and southern side boundary. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy objective HOU 42 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied) which seeks to manage development of rural housing in the open countryside by requiring any new dwelling to be 'appropriately designed and located so it integrates into the local landscape and does not negatively impact or erode the rural character of the area in which it would be located', Policy Objective HOU 47 which requires applications for one-off rural housing to comply with the standards and criteria set out in Section 13.9 of Chapter 13 'Development Management Guidelines', Policy Objective ENV 39 which seeks to protect and preserve existing hedgerows particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows and Policy Objective NBG 37 which seeks to protect the unspoiled rural landscape of the Areas of High Scenic Quality. Such development would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of this area.

3) The proposed development is located within a holding where a substantial number of dwellings have been constructed. It is Policy Objective HOU 46 Reference 24/60471 Page 19 of 19 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 (as varied) to restrict residential development on a landholding, where there is a history of development through the speculative sale or development of sites, notwithstanding the applicant's compliance with the local need criteria. Considering the substantial number of dwellings that have been developed with these lands, it is considered that the proposed development is contrary to Policy Objective HOU 46 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 (as varied) and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Development Address	Parsonstown Clogherhead Co Louth PARSONSTOWN CLOGHERHEAD
Applicant Name	Alan O'Sullivan
Application Status	APPLICATION FINALISED

Decision Date 14/05/2023
Decision REFUSED
Development Description Permission for a proposed dwelling house, waste water treatment system and polishing filter percolation area, new vehicular entrance onto public road and all associated site development works
File Reference 23130

Development Address Parsonstown Clogherhead Co Louth PARSONSTOWN CLOGHERHEAD
Applicant Name Jason O'Sullivan & Ciara Hall
Application Status APPLICATION FINALISED
Decision Date 20/10/2019
Decision CONDITIONAL
Development Description EXTENSION OF DURATION OF 15/19: Permission for a two storey dwellinghouse, detached domestic garage, on site well, installation of on site waste water treatment system and associated site works.**Significant Further Information was received 26/05/15.*
File Reference 19684

Development Address Parsonstown Clogherhead Co Louth PARSONSTOWN CLOGHERHEAD
Applicant Name Jason O'Sullivan & Ciara Hall
Application Status APPLICATION FINALISED
Decision Date 22/06/2015
Decision CONDITIONAL
Development Description Permission for a two storey dwellinghouse, detached domestic garage, on site well, installation of on site waste water treatment system and associated site works.**Significant Further Information was received 26/05/15.**
File Reference 1519

Development Address Parsonstown Clogherhead Co. Louth PARSONSTOWN CLOGHERHEAD
Applicant Name Shane Mullen
Application Status APPLICATION FINALISED
Decision Date 03/06/2008
Decision CONDITIONAL

Development Description Permission - two storey house, conventional septic tank treatment system with percolation area, domestic garage and the ancillary site development works.

File Reference 08242

Development Address Parsonstown Clogherhead Co Louth PARSONSTOWN CLOGHERHEAD

Applicant Name Noel & Jackie Mullen

Application Status APPLICATION FINALISED

Decision Date 08/08/2007

Decision REFUSED

Development Description (P) a storey and a half type house, conventional septic tank system with percolation area and domestic garage. The development will include a new vehicular access to the public road along with ancillary site development works

File Reference 07751

4. Pre-Planning consultations

No pre planning consultations indicated.

5. Relevant Planning Policies

- Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework (revised April 2025);
- National Development Plan 2021 - 2030
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009);
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, August 2018;
- Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, 1999.
- EPA Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (2021)
- Sustainable Rural Housing Guideline for Planning Authorities (April 2005).

Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied)

The operational Development Plan for this area is the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, as varied (hereinafter referred to as the LCDP).

This site is located in RPZ 1 which is described as an “Area under strong urban influence and of significant landscape value”. It is also located within an Area of High Scenic Quality (AHSQ).

The open countryside in Louth is a valuable resource to the County and wider Region. The scenic landscape and the local amenities are an important source of enjoyment, and the farmland produces high-quality agricultural produce. The Louth County Development 2021-2027 recognises the importance of rural life and the rural economy to the County and will strive to support the continued growth and development of rural areas. It is important that a balance is achieved that will allow the countryside to be preserved for future generations whilst also facilitating the growth of the rural economy and rural communities. The following policy objectives and guidance contained within the LCDP are considered relevant when assessing applications in this area.

Local Planning Policies (LCDP)

Chapter 3 – Housing – local needs

Chapter 7 – Movement - access

Chapter 8 – Appropriate Assessment, Scenic Routes, Area of High Scenic Quality (AHSQ)

Chapter 9 – Archaeology

Chapter 10 – Utilities – Surface Water Management, Flooding, Wastewater Management

Chapter 13 – Development Management Guidelines

6. Overview of proposed development

Planning permission is being sought for a 4 bedroom single storey detached modern style dwelling, septic tank, entrance, garage and associated works. The form of the dwelling is broken into several different aspects, finishing materials include a mixture of plaster, a metal seemed and blue / black slate roof and timber panelling. The garage is a detached single car garage finished similarly to the dwelling. The house type and layout is the same as that proposed under planning application 2460471.

7. Submissions/Observations

No submissions received.

8. Statutory Consultees

No statutory consultations required.

9. Internal Referrals

Environment – by report dated 24th August 2026 - No objection (subject to conditions).

Part 2 Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

10. EIA Screening and determination

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 under Directive 2014/52/EU and Circular letter PL 1/2017. The proposed development is of a class i.e. residential development and given the scale of the development i.e. below 500 units for a mandatory EIA, is considered sub-threshold. From a preliminary examination, 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 the need for an EIAR can be ruled out.

11. Appropriate Assessment

This proposal is located close to the following designated sites:

European Site	Site Code	Distance to site	Qualifying Interests
Stabannon & Braganstown SPA	IE0004091	12.2 km	• Greylag Goose
Dundalk Bay SPA,	IE0004026	6.34 km	• Great Crested Grebe • Greylag Goose • Light-bellied Brent Goose • Shelduck • Teal • Mallard • Pintail • Common Scoter • Red-breasted Merganser • Oystercatcher • Ringed Plover • Golden Plover

			• Grey Plover • Lapwing • Knot • Dunlin • Blacktailed Godwit • Bar-tailed Godwit • Curlew • Redshank • Black-headed Gull • Common Gull • Herring Gull • Wetland and Waterbirds
Dundalk Bay SAC	IE0000455	6.34 km	• Estuaries • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide • Perennial vegetation of stony banks • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand • Atlantic salt meadows, • Mediterranean salt meadows.
Clogherhead SAC	IE0001459	3 km	• Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts • European dry heaths
Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC	IE0001957	8.27 km	• Estuaries • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide • Annual vegetation of drift lines • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand • Atlantic salt meadows • Embryonic shifting dunes • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)

			Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)
Boyne Estuary SPA	IE0004080	10.5 km	- Shelduck - Oystercatcher - Golden Plover - Grey Plover - Lapwing - Knot - Sanderling - Black-tailed Godwit - Redshank - Turnstone - Little Tern - Wetland and Waterbirds
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	IE0002299	11.2 km	- Alkaline fens - Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) - River Lamprey - Salmon - Otter
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	004232	12 km	Kingfisher
North West Irish Sea SPA	CSPA 4236	1.4 km	- Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) - Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) - Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) - Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] - Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>) [A013] - Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) - Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) - Little Gull (<i>Larus minutus</i>)

			• Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) • Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) • Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) • Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) • Great Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus marinus</i>) • Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) • Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) • Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) • Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) • Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) • Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>)
River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA	004158	13.7 km	• Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) • Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) • Wetland and Waterbirds

The applicant has provided a Natura Impact Screening Report prepared by Hydrocare Environmental Ltd dated 4th July 2024 and is the same screening report submitted with planning application 24/60471. The screening report considers a 3km radius instead of a 15km radius as it states that the proposal is relatively small and therefore fails to identify all European Sites as listed above that fall within 15 km of this site as required by Policy Objective NGB 6 of the LCDP.

Considering that this site is not located within or immediately adjacent to a European Site, and having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and the nature of the receiving environment and as adequate

wastewater disposal arrangements have been clearly demonstrated (positive response from the Environment Section), no appropriate assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site (Special Area of Conservation or Special Protected Area) and as such an Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2 AA) is not required.

Part 3 – Planning Assessment

12. Principle of Development

This site is located in Development Zone 1 which is identified as an area under strong urban influence and of significant landscape value where in accordance with HOU 42 there is a need to carefully manage development in these areas whilst recognising the existing communities.

In accordance with HOU 43 of the LCDP the applicant is seeking to demonstrate compliance with Qualifying Criteria Number 3 for Rural Policy Zone 1 as set out in Chapter 3, Table 3.4 which is for:

A person who has an established business which is intrinsically reliant on being located in Rural Policy Zone 1 and consequently requires them to reside in Rural Policy Zone 1 of the rural area. The nature of the operations of the business shall be specific to this rural area being cognisant of the need to protect the high amenity value of the landscape. Any application shall demonstrate the viability of the business and clearly set out the nature of activities associated with the business and why it requires the owner to reside in the vicinity.

Similar to application 2460471, the applicant has provided the following documentation to support his local housing needs:

- A completed 'Qualifying Criteria Form for Housing in Rural Policy Zone 1;
- Revenue details addressed to applicant;
- Copy of driving licence;
- Bank statement addressed to applicant at stated qualifying address as well as another early statement (5 months) referencing a different address;
- Letter from local parish detailing applicants ties to area;
- Letter from local secondary school confirming the applicant's years of attendance (address quoted is Beltichburne, Beaulieu, Drogheda);
- Registration of business name details;
- Accountants letter;
- Birth Certificate copy

- 2 x letters of support from local farmers who use Spider Motor Works Mechanics
- Applicant's letter to confirm his business in the area (Parsonstown) this past 10 years.

The information provided has been considered and contains largely the same documentation submitted for application 2460471 bar the additional letter from the applicant and 2 of the applicant's customers. The planning policy criteria remain the same as it would have been during the assessment of application 2460471 including the local needs qualifying criteria for RPZ 1. Having reviewed the information submitted, like application reference no. 2460471 assessment, it has not been clearly demonstrated through this new application that the applicant meets one of the 6 criteria for Zone 1. Having particular regard to category 3 which the applicant has applied under and provided information for, and having regard to the nature of the business which is a vehicular mechanical business, it is not considered that there is an intrinsic need for a business of this nature to be located in RPZ 1 nor for an owner or employee to reside in close proximity. As stated in the assessment of application 2460471, businesses of this nature are often located within zoned urban lands. It also not been demonstrated that the subject business benefits from planning permission. Therefore, having regard to the documentation submitted, the local needs qualifying criteria and planning history, it is considered that the applicant has not satisfactorily demonstrated a need to reside within the rural area

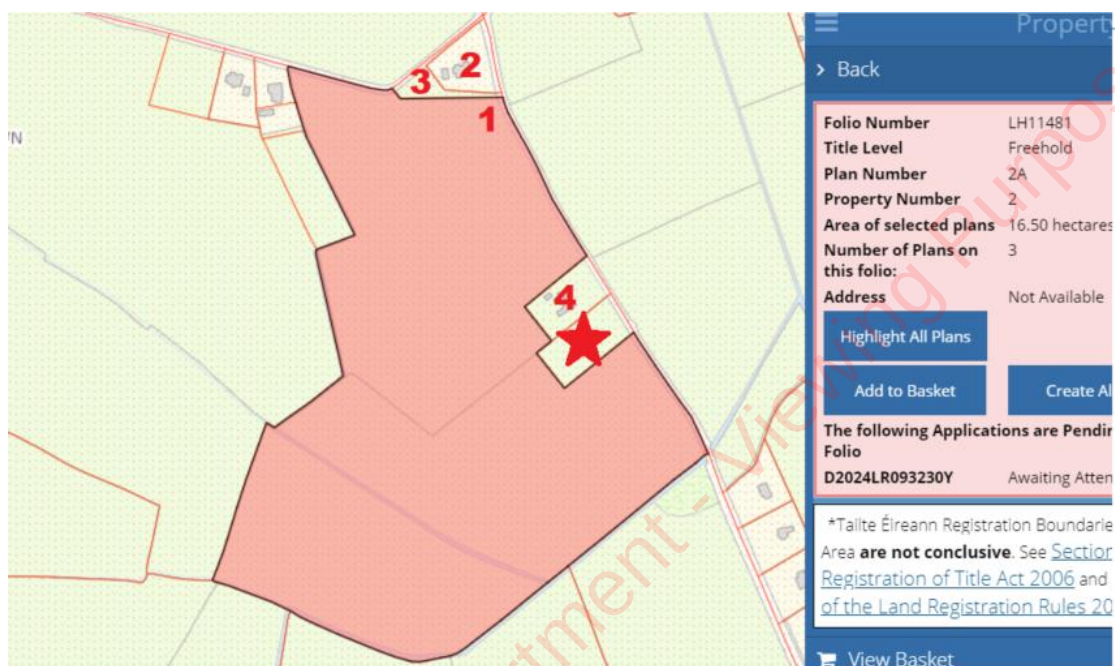
Speculative sale/ development

It is Policy Objective HOU 46 'To restrict residential development on a landholding, where there is a history of development through the speculative sale or development of sites, notwithstanding the applicant's compliance with the local need criteria'.

The applicant for this application is David O'Sullivan, the applicant is not the owner of the land, it is stated in question 10 of the application form that the owner is Jason O'Sullivan who is brother of the applicant.

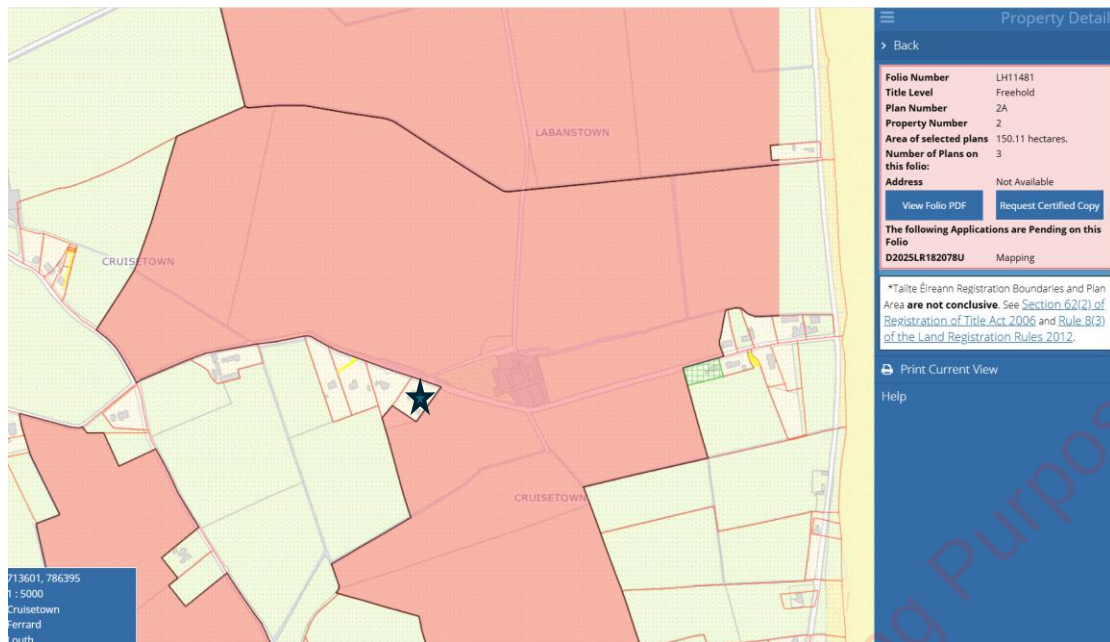
A land registry search has been carried out, and it would appear that this site has been carved out of a larger holding (Folio LH11481) within which there has been several applications - the site locations and planning authority decision is detailed in the map and table below. Having carried out a desktop search and reviewed the folio details and information available at the time of writing, including the application site, 5 sites have been sold off the landholding of some 150 hectares of which all five sites were granted planning permission for a dwelling, 1 permission (the subject application site) having lapsed, and the remaining 4 having been developed within the last 20 years (3 of which were

sold off and constructed within the last 8-9 years and 2 having been constructed within more recent years). Considering the size of this holding and the number of applications, it is considered that this proposal also does not comply with the objective of HOU 48 which seeks to restrict residential development on a landholding where there is a history of development through speculative sale or development of sites, notwithstanding the applicant's compliance with the local need criteria.



Land Holding details, applicant site indicated by red star (landdirect.ie)

Site Number	Planning Reference	Proposal	Applicant	Decision	Decision Date
1	21365	Dwelling	Hazel O'Sullivan	Grant	13/05/2021
2	05994	Dwelling	Joseph & Patricia O'Sullivan	Grant	24/01/2006
3	061785	Dwelling	Noel & Jackie Mullen	Deemed Withdrawn	
4	17492	Dwelling	Jeff & Natasha Brannigan	Grant	20/08/2024



Above: the wider landholding of folio LH11481 also shows another site sold off the landholding (marked with a star) to Sarah O'Sullivan and granted planning permission for a dwelling under 20/297. Dwelling has been constructed.

13. Layout and Design

Site

Policy Objective HOU 44 requires that any new dwelling is appropriately designed and located so it integrates into the local landscape and does not negatively impact or erode the rural character of the area in which it would be located. Section 13.9.4 of the LCDP provides guidance in relation to site selection and HOU 49 requires compliance with same.

The proposal involves the same house design and layout as submitted under 2460471, positioning on the most elevated part of the field and, the removal of a large section of the same mature roadside hedgerow that currently sits tight to the road edge to provide sightline visibility splays for the proposed new vehicular entrance and which would be contrary to Policy Objective ENV 39 which seeks *'To protect and preserve existing hedgerows particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows where their removal is necessary during the course of road works or other works seek their replacement with new hedgerows of native species indigenous to the area'*. It is considered that with the removal of a large stretch of roadside hedging and the location of the dwelling on an elevated part of the site above the road level would result in a prominent structure in this scenic landscape and would further erode the rural character of this area along with the emergence of a suburban style of linear roadside development.

Design

Similar to the previous application, the same house type is proposed and whilst contemporary in appearance it expresses elements of rural form and proposes suitable materials that would be acceptable to this scenic rural setting.

14. Open Space requirements

This site would have a sufficiently sized area for recreational and domestic purposes.

15. Residential Amenity

When considering the proposal's single storey design, the separation distance from the closest neighbouring dwelling, this development should not have an adverse impact upon residential amenity through overlooking, overshadowing or other means.

16. Traffic and Transportation Considerations

MCPID has responded with no objections to the proposed development, and it is therefore considered that adequate visibility can be achieved at the site entrance.

17. Environmental Considerations

Flood Risk

This site is not identified as being vulnerable to flooding on OPW flood mapping.

Water and Waste Water connections

The applicant has proposed a septic tank designed for a maximum number of residents as 6. A trial hole with a depth of 2.1 metres was dug and no bedrock or water table was identified. Environment section has been consulted and has responded with no objections to the proposed wastewater disposal arrangements.

Surface water

The applicant has demonstrated that surface water can be disposed of within the boundaries of the site in a sustainable manner and in compliance with policy IU 19 of the LCDP. The response from MCPID confirms no objection to the proposals subject to conditions.

18. Development Contributions

In an otherwise acceptable scheme, the proposed dwelling would be subject to development contributions as set out in Section 8 of the Louth County Council Development Contribution Scheme 2023. This would equate to €9,427.00 for Class 1 Infrastructure and €2,219.00 for Class 2 Amenity, or €11,646.00 for a dwelling unit.

Part 4 Conclusion and Recommendation

19. Conclusion

Having regard to the planning history of the site and surrounding area, the supporting local needs documents submitted and all the particulars received including details of the proposed house, wastewater treatment, access and surface water, it is considered that the applicant has failed to demonstrate compliance with category 3 of table 3.4 of the LCDP nor any other qualifying criteria for RPZ 1 and the site is located within a holding where there has been a high number of applications for single rural dwellings granted and sites disposed of that would be contrary to the policy objective of HOU 48. Furthermore, having regard to the proposal which would entail the removal of a large stretch of mature roadside hedgerow for access and sightline visibility along with the position of the dwelling on an elevated section of the site above the level of the road and the proposed resulting lack of screening within this AHSQ, that the dwelling and garage will appear visually prominent and would further erode the rural scenic character of this landscape.

20. Recommendation

It is considered that permission is refused for the reasons detailed below:

Refusal Reasons

- 1) The proposed development is located within Rural Policy Zone 1 as designated by the Louth County Development Plan 2021 -2027 (as varied). This location is an area under strong urban influence and of significant landscape value. Policy HOU 43 of the Plan seeks to manage the development of rural housing in the open countryside by requiring applicants to demonstrate compliance with the Qualifying Criteria relative to Rural Policy Zone 1 set out in Table 3.4. Based on the information submitted, the planning authority is not satisfied that the applicant comes under the scope

of the qualifying criteria for residential development in Rural Policy Zone 1 and as such, the proposed development would contravene the rural housing policy of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied) and thus would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- 2) The proposed development is at a location within an area characterised by a proliferation of one-off rural dwellings. In order to facilitate this dwelling, this proposal would require the extensive removal of an established roadside boundary hedgerow to accommodate the development. This site is also located on a level higher than the adjacent public road and has no substantial screening or backdrop on its rear and southern side boundary. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy objective HOU 44 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied) which seeks to manage development of rural housing in the open countryside by requiring any new dwelling to be 'appropriately designed and located so it integrates into the local landscape and does not negatively impact or erode the rural character of the area in which it would be located, Policy Objective HOU 49 which requires applications for one-off rural housing to comply with the standards and criteria set out in Section 13.9 of Chapter 13 'Development Management Guidelines', Policy Objective ENV 39 which seeks to protect and preserve existing hedgerows particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows and Policy Objective NBG 37 which seeks to protect the unspoiled rural landscape of the Areas of High Scenic Quality. Such development would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of this area.
- 3) The proposed development is located within a holding where a substantial number of dwellings have been constructed. It is Policy Objective HOU 48 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 (as varied) to restrict residential development on a landholding, where there is a history of development through the speculative sale or development of sites, notwithstanding the applicant's compliance with the local need criteria. Considering the substantial number of dwellings that have been developed within these lands, it is considered that the proposed development is contrary to Policy Objective HOU 48 of the Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 (as varied) and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Lisa Grant
Assistant Planner
Date: 25/08/2026

David Hall
A/Senior Executive Planner
Date: 25/08/2026

Thomas McEvoy
Director of Services
Date: 28/08/2026