

OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000, AS AMENDED

REFERENCE: DEC 24/11

NAME OF APPLICANT: Gerard Teehan & Enya Mulcahy
ADDRESS: Military Road, Crinkle, Birr, Co. Offaly.
ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: 16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly. R42 NN76

NATURE OF APPLICATION: Request for Declaration under Section 5 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended as to whether the proposed renovation of an existing house (including internal works comprising of reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and, new insulation in the attic) to bring it to liveable standard is or is not development and is or is not exempted development.

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT: 16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly. R42 NN76

WHEREAS a question has arisen as to whether the proposed renovation of an existing house (including internal works comprising of reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and, new insulation in the attic) to bring it to liveable standard is or is not development and is or is not exempted development at 16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly, R42 NN76.

AS INDICATED on the particulars received by the Planning Authority on the 4th January 2024.

AND WHEREAS Gerard Teehan & Enya Mulcahy requested a declaration on the said question from Offaly County Council;

AND WHEREAS Offaly County Council, in considering this declaration request, had regard particularly to:

(a) Section 2, 3(1) and 4(1)(h) of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended.

AND WHEREAS Offaly County Council has concluded that the proposed works is development and is exempted development.

NOW THEREFORE Offaly County Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 5(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), hereby decides that:

The proposed renovation of an existing house (including internal works comprising of reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and new insulation in the attic) to bring it to liveable standard **is development and is exempted development** at 16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly, R42 NN76

MATTERS CONSIDERED In making its decision, the Planning Authority had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.



Administrative Officer

Date 31/1/2024

Note: Any person issued with a Declaration may on payment to An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street Dublin 2 of such fees as may be described refer a declaration for review by the board within four weeks of the issuing of the Declaration.

Planning Report

Section 5 Declaration

File Reference:	Dec. 24/11
Question:	<i>Whether the proposed renovation of an existing house (including internal works comprising of reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and, new insulation in the attic) to bring it to liveable standard is or is not development and if so, are they exempted development.</i>
Applicant:	<i>Gerard Teehan & Enya Mulcahy</i>
Correspondence Address:	<i>16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly. R42 NN76</i>
Location:	<i>As above</i>

1. Introduction

The question has arisen as whether the proposed refurbishment works to an existing dwelling house is or is not development and if so, are they exempted development.

2. Background

The dwelling is located within an established residential development and is zoned under Existing Residential within the Birr Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029. The Area Planner visited the site in January 2024 and is satisfied with the description of the proposed works.

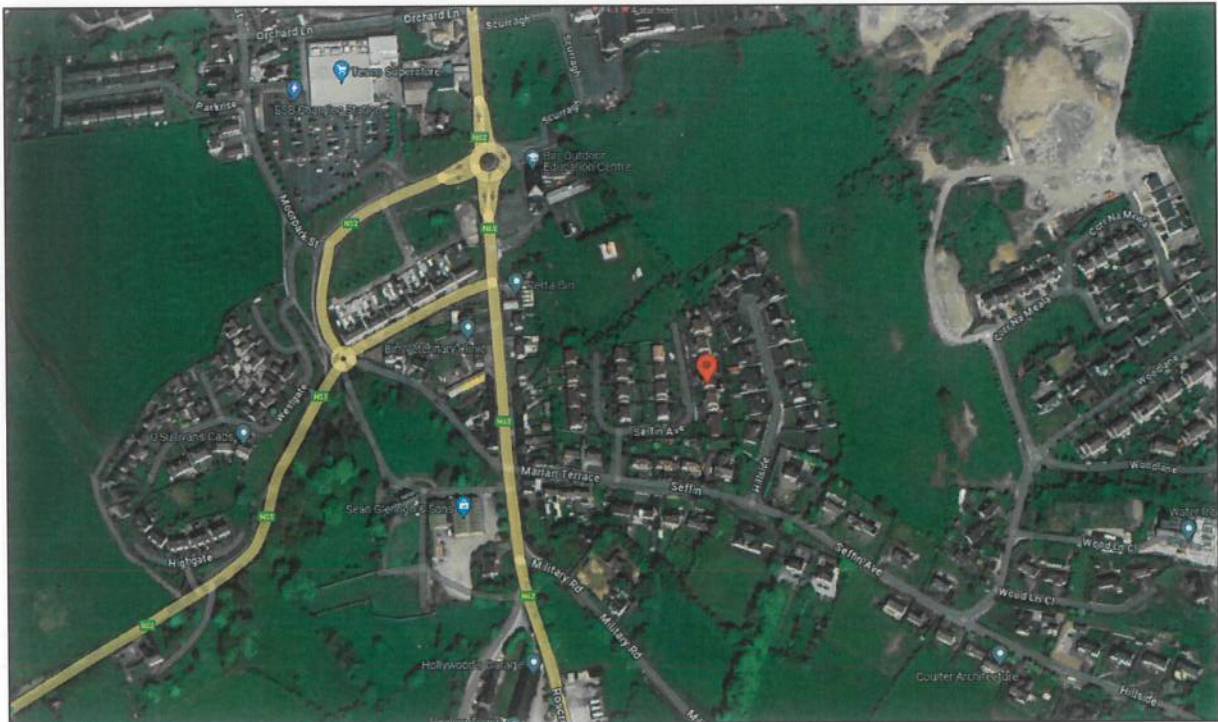


Photo 1 - Subject Site Location (as indicated).

3. Site History

On Site – BR1096: Oranwood Ltd sought permission for the development of 16 no. 4 bedroom two storey detached dwellings, 2 no. 4 bedroom bungalows and site development works – Granted (18/11/1999).

Enforcement – No recent history associated with the subject site.

Adjoining Lands - No recent planning history associated with the adjoining lands.



Photo 2 - Subject Site.

4. Legislative Context

In order to assess whether or not the proposed works constitute exempted development, regard must be had to the following items of legislation:

Statutory Provisions

Section 2 (1) Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, states as follows:

“house” means a building or part of a building which is being or has been occupied as a dwelling or was provided for use as a dwelling but has not been occupied, and where appropriate, includes a building which was designed for use as 2 or more dwellings or a flat, an apartment or other dwelling within such a building;

“works” includes any act or operation of construction, excavation, demolition, extension, alteration, repair or renewal and, in relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, includes any act or operation involving the application or removal of plaster, paint, wallpaper, tiles or other material to or from the surfaces of the interior or exterior of a structure.

Section 3 (1) Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, defines development.

“development” means, except where the context otherwise requires, the carrying out of any works on, in, over or under land or the making of any material change in the use of any structures or other land.

Section 4 - Exempted Development

Section 4 (1) (a) – (l) sets out what is exempted development for the purposes of this Act including:

- (h) *development consisting of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any structure, being works which affect only the interior of the structure and which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or neighbouring structures.*

Section 4 (2) (a) - The Minister may by regulations provide for any class of development to be exempted development for the purposes of this Act where he or she is of the opinion that -

- (i) *by reason of the size, nature or limited effect on its surroundings, of development belonging to that class, the carrying out of such development would not offend against principles of proper planning and sustainable development.*

Regulatory Provisions

Article 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) states, *inter alia*, that:

“Subject to Article 9, development of a class specified in Column 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 2 shall be exempted development for the purposes of the Act, provided that such development complies with the conditions and limitations specified in Column 2 of the said Part 1 opposite the mention of that class in the said Column 1”.

5. Proposal by Applicants

The Applicant has advised that the proposed works will not include any works to the exterior of the dwelling or any interiors structural changes. A quote for works included with the application refers to internal works only which reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and new insulation in the attic.

6. Evaluation

Question: Whether the proposed works (as listed) to the existing dwelling are development and if so, are they exempted development?

In considering the proposed works against the definitions of ‘development’ and ‘works’ as provided in the Act, it is the view of the Planning Authority that the proposed works are deemed as development as it includes refurbishments to the existing dwelling.

Question: Is this proposal considered as Exempted Development?

With regard to the proposed works which are described in the submitted documents, the Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposed works would not result in a material alteration to the appearance of the dwelling and would not be inconsistent with the character of area.

The refurbishments proposed by the applicant are harmonious with Section 4 1 (h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). It is the opinion of the Planning Authority that these works meet the criteria of exempt development under statutory provisions.

An appropriate assessment screening has been carried out see attached.



7. Conclusion

It is recommended that the Applicant be advised that the proposed development is **development** and **is exempted development**.

Declaration on Development and Exempted Development

Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

WHEREAS a question has arisen as to whether the proposed renovation of an existing house (including internal works comprising of reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and, new insulation in the attic) to bring it to liveable standard is or is not development and if so, are they exempted development at 16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly, R42 NN76.

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- (a) Section 2, 3(1) and 4(1)(h) of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended.

AND WHEREAS Offaly County Council has concluded that the proposed works is development and is exempted development.

NOW THEREFORE Offaly County Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 5(2)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), hereby decides that:

- The proposed renovation of an existing house (including internal works comprising of reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and new insulation in the attic) to bring it to liveable standard is **development and is exempted development** at 16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly, R42 NN76.

Please note that any person issued with a declaration under subsection 2(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) may on payment to the Board of the prescribed fee, refer a declaration to An Bord Pleanála within 4 weeks of the issuing of the decision.



Úna McCafferkey

Executive Planner

30th January 2024



Ed Kelly

(A/Senior Executive Planner)

Date 31/1/2024

APPENDIX A

**APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING
REPORT FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS**



Screening is used to determine if an AA is necessary by examining:

- If the plan / project is directly connected with / necessary to the management of the European site.
- If the effects will be significant on a European site in view of its conservation objectives, either alone / in combination with other plans / projects.

Planning Authority: OCC

Planning Application Ref. No: DEC 24/11

(A) DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND LOCAL SITE:			
Proposed development:	Whether the proposed renovation of an existing house (including internal works comprising of reflooring/retiling of bathrooms and bedrooms; upgrade to plumbing; new doors & skirting; new access ladder to attic; and, new insulation in the attic) to bring it to liveable standard is or is not development and if so, are they exempted development.		
Site location:	16 Seefin Avenue, Birr, Co. Offaly. R42 NN76		
Site size:	N/A	Floor Area of Proposed Development:	N/A
Identification of nearby European Site(s):	Dovegrove Callows SPA – 3.23km Lisduff Fen SAC – 3.79km Sharavogue Bog SAC – 4.55km River Little Brosna Callows SPA – 6.19km All Saints Bog SPA – 7.64km Middle Shannon Callows SPA – 11.8km Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA – 11.69km Island Fen SAC – 6.11km Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog SAC – 5.04km All Saints Bog and Esker SAC – 7.69km River Shannon Callows SAC – 11.63km		
Distance to European Site(s):	As above – all as crow flies		
The characteristics of existing, proposed or other approved plans / projects which may cause interactive / cumulative impacts with the project being assessed and which may affect the European site:	None		
Is the application accompanied by an EIAR?	No: X		
(B) IDENTIFICATION OF THE RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITE(S):			
The reasons for the designation of the European site(s):	River Shannon Callows SAC – Features of interest include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] • Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) [6510] • Limestone pavements [8240] • Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] • Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Dovegrove Callows SPA – Features of interest include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenland White-fronted Goose (Anser albifrons flavirostris) [A395] Lisduff Fen SAC– Features of interest include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] • Alkaline fens [7230] • Vertigo geyeri (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] 		

Sharavogue Bog SAC – Features of interest include:

- Active raised bogs [7110]
- Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]
- Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]

River Little Brosna SPA – Features of Interest:

- Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) [A038]
- Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) [A050]
- Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052]
- Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054]
- Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056]
- Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]
- Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [A142]
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156]
- Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]
- Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) [A395]
- Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

Middle Shannon Callows SPA - Features of interest include:

- Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) [A038]
- Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) [A050]
- Corncrake (*Crex crex*) [A122]
- Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]
- Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [A142]
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156]
- Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]
- Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

All Saints Bog SPA - Features of interest include:

- Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) [A395]

Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA- Features of interest include:

- Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) [A082]

Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog SAC - Features of interest include:

- Active raised bogs [7110]
- Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]
- Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]
- Bog woodland [91D0]

The conservation objectives / qualifying interests of the site and the factors that contributes to the conservation value of the site: (which are taken from the European site synopses and, if applicable, a Conservation Management Plan; all available on www.npws.ie) (ATTACH INFO.)

Site Name: Middle Shannon Callows SPA, Site Code: 004096

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004096.pdf>

Site Name: River Shannon Callows SAC, Site Code: 000216

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY000216.pdf>

Site Name: Dovegrove Callows SPA, Site Code: 004137

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004137.pdf>

Site Name: Lisduff Fen SAC, Site Code: 002147

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY002147.pdf>

Site Name: Sharavogue Bog, Site Code: 000585

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY000585.pdf>

Site Name: River Little Brosna SPA, Site Code: 004086

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004086.pdf>

Site Name: All Saints Bog SPA, Site Code: 004103

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004103.pdf>

Site Name: Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA Site Code: 004160

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004160.pdf>


Site Name: Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog SAC, Site Code: 000641

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY000641.pdf>

(C) NPWS ADVICE:

Advice received from NPWS over phone:

None Received

Summary of advice received from NPWS in written form (ATTACH SAME):	None Received
(D) ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS:	
<i>(The purpose of this is to identify if the effect(s) identified could be significant – if uncertain assume the effect(s) are significant).</i>	
If the answer is 'yes' to any of the questions below, then the effect is significant. <i>(Please justify your answer. 'Yes' / 'No' alone is insufficient)</i>	
Would there be...	
... any impact on an Annex 1 habitat? (Annex 1 habitats are listed in Appendix 1 of AA Guidance).	Not likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
... a reduction in habitat area on a European site?	There will be no reduction in the habitat area. The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
... direct / indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality and supply, soil compaction) in the European site?	Not likely due to the location and type of development The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
... serious / ongoing disturbance to species / habitats for which the European site is selected (e.g. because of increased noise, illumination and human activity)?	Not likely due to the location and type of development The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
... direct / indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations on the European site?	None likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
Would the project interfere with mitigation measures put in place for other plans / projects. [Look at <i>in-combination effects</i> with completed, approved but not completed, and proposed plans / projects. Look at projects / plans within and adjacent to European sites and identify them]. Simply stating that there are no cumulative impacts' is insufficient.	No other plans known of in the vicinity of the site. The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
(E) SCREENING CONCLUSION:	
Screening can result in:	
1.	<i>AA is not required</i> because the project is directly connected with / necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.
2.	<i>No potential for significant effects / AA is not required.</i>
3.	<i>Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain.</i> (In this situation seek a Natura Impact Statement from the applicant, or reject the project. Reject if too potentially damaging / inappropriate.
Therefore, does the project fall into category 1, 2 or 3 above?	Category 2
Justify why it falls into relevant category above:	There would be no likely significant impact on the European site from the proposed development due to the scale of the proposed development and the separation distance between the subject site and European Site.
Name:	Úna McCafferkey 
Position:	Executive Planner
Date:	30 th January 2024