

**Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council
Planning Report**



**Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended
Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended**

Planning Ref: P. 25/ 60354

Due Date: 13th August 2025

Applicant: Mike Nolan

Subject: Retention permission to retain indefinitely: (a) a change of use of agricultural buildings to commercial short-term holiday lets comprising of 8 no. self-contained units, a toilet block and an activity centre which includes an outdoor play area, outdoor sitting areas, picnic benches, a kitchen/cooking area, a pool room, a lounge area and a jacuzzi/steam room intrinsic to the operation of the commercial business and (b) a change of use of a domestic residential dwelling, namely “The Bungalow Cottage” to commercial short-term holiday let and (c) all associated site works at Knockreagh House Knockreagh, Callan, Co. Kilkenny R95 PC79 & R95 AX50.

Referrals

Roads – recommends refusal due to variance with national policy; further information may be sought for an alternative access to the site, as per report dated July 2025.

Environment – further information required as per report dated August 2025.

Fire Services – development will require the benefit of a Regularisation Fire Safety Certificate before works commence on site, as per report dated July 2025.

Conservation – response not received at the time of writing this report.

TII – development is at variance with national policy as per report dated July 2025.

HSE – further information required as per report dated July 2025.

Gas Networks Ireland – response states that GNI “have neither comment nor objection”, but request conditions requiring the applicant to contact GNI in advance of any siteworks and to complete all such works in the vicinity of the Gas Transmission Pipeline in compliance with the Code of Practice.

Failte Ireland – response not received at the time of writing this report.

DHLGH - response not received at the time of writing this report.

Third Party Submissions

No third party submissions on file.

Site History

25/ 60139 – current application awaiting further information response for Mike and Emmet Nolan for permission for the following: a) Construction of a milking parlour, dairy and ancillary rooms, drafting and handling facilities, waiting yard, calf rearing pens, meal bin, water storage tank and underground slatted parlour washings storage tank b) Construction of an agricultural shed consisting of cubicles, feeding area and underground slurry storage tanks c) Installation of PV Panels on the roof of existing shed and all associated site works.

07/648 – Permission granted to Margaret Ryan to erect a suckler cow shed with underground slurry storage and straw lying area plus associated concrete works.

00/1890 – Permission granted to Margaret Ryan to build a dwelling house with septic tank.

Application to the north of the site, within the landholding outlined in blue, with access onto the regional road R691:

07/1510 – Permission refused to Margaret and Michael Nolan to construct a Garden/Horticultural Centre and Farmer's Market on a 17.5 acre agricultural site located off the Kilkenny to Cashel Road in the townland of Riesk, Callan, Co. Kilkenny. The development will consist of a Garden/Horticultural Centre building of 59.2m x 60.8m with an internal mezzanine to give a total area of 4110m². At it's highest point the structure will be 10.4m high. The development will have a walled courtyard with a Farmers Markdet and horticultural displays of 2226m², a new entrance and access road off the R691 (Kilkenny to Cashel Road) with associated car parking spaces, for 138 spaces, an artifical lake, underground services, signage, and landscaping. The existing road frontage to the site will be realigned to form the new entrance.

Permission refused due to (i) unsuitability of the location in the rural area, (ii) the scale and nature of the development, (iii) public health, and (iv) sufficiency of interest.

Enf 24/129 – an email has been received from the Enforcement section in relation to the subject site on 25th March 2025, which states as follows:

Alleged unauthorised operation of a commercial short-term self-catering holiday let, comprising of 9 no. self- contained units, which includes an outdoor play area, outdoor siting areas, picnic benches, a kitchen/cooking area, a pool room, a bar area and a jacuzzi/steam room intrinsic to the operations of the commercial business.

Alleged unauthorised change of use of agricultural buildings to commercial short-term holiday lets.

Alleged unauthorised change of use of a domestic residential dwelling, namely “The Bungalow Cottage” to commercial short-term holiday let.

Pre-planning

No pre-planning meeting noted on the application form.

Development Plan Policy

The site is located in an Area Under Urban Influence as per the Council's Rural Housing policy.

Section 12.11.3 of the development plan sets out the Council's policy in relation to access to national roads states as follows:

National policy in relation to access to national roads is set out in the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines (2012) and followed here. The Guidelines state that "The policy of the Planning Authority will be to avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60kmh apply. This provision applies to all categories of development, including individual houses in rural areas, regardless of the housing circumstances of the applicant".

Section 7.7 of the plan relates to tourism uses and states:

It is Council policy to:

- support the provision and improvement of visitor facilities, infrastructure and accommodation (including self-catering, hotels, hostels, guesthouses, B&Bs, caravanning, camping, motorhome service areas and glamping) at appropriate locations, preferably clustered within existing settlements, in order to provide a range of accommodation type to suit all visitors.*

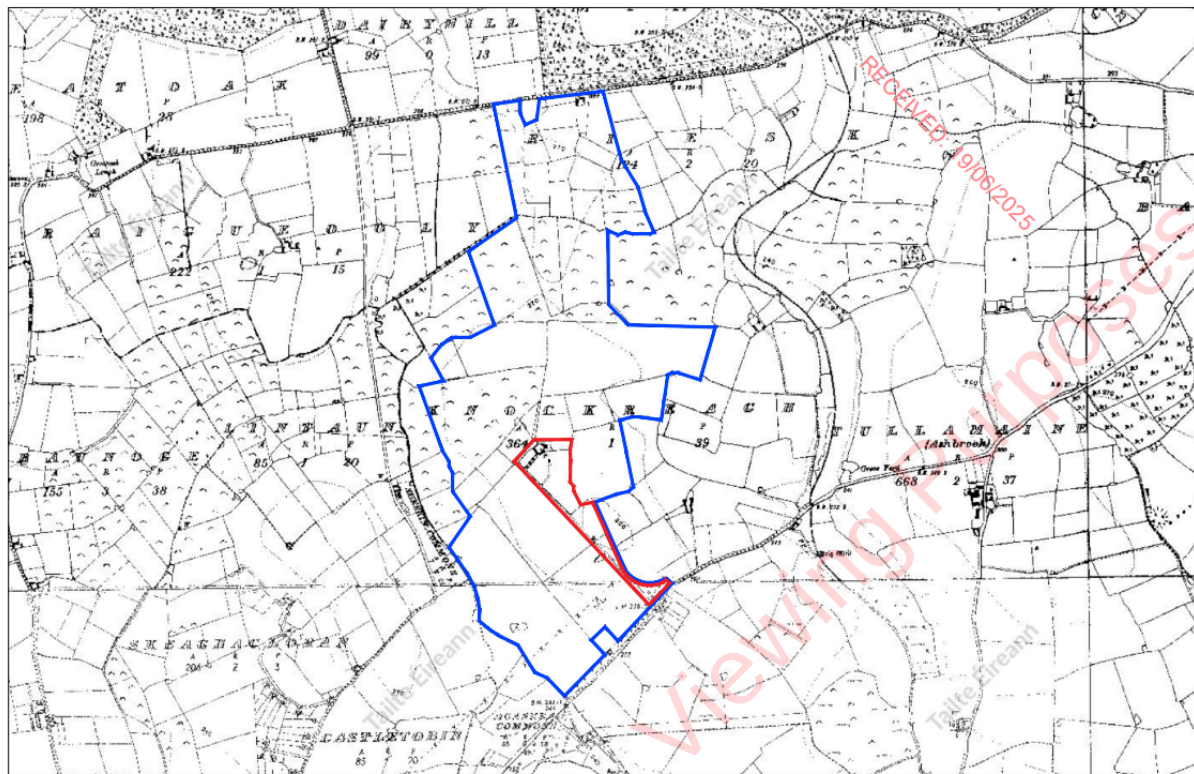
Section 5.3.4 of the plan relates to camping/ glamping sites and states:

The Council recognises that the provision of camping sites is an important element in the range of tourist accommodation offers. While the Council considers that camping sites should be located on appropriately zoned land within or adjacent to existing settlements, small scale camping sites and/or forest based tourism accommodation, may be appropriate in a rural location removed from any settlement where they support rural tourism initiatives developed upon rural enterprise, natural heritage assets and outdoor recreational activities. In general, camping sites should be located at appropriate locations within or adjacent to existing settlements where such proposals demonstrate the provision of safe pedestrian links to the settlement. Proposals for camping sites to complement a high potential tourism asset such as the Greenway, or other walking trails etc, should be located in existing settlements or at established centres which provide existing services to tourists, subject to the capacity of the site and the location to facilitate the proposal. The planning authority may facilitate proposals for camping sites which support rural tourism initiatives and which are located at a rural location removed from any settlement or high potential tourism asset, subject to the capacity of the site and the location to facilitate the proposal. The scale of any tourism accommodation will be determined by the nature and scale of the existing tourist attractions and/or the extent of existing underutilised agricultural/commercial/ancillary building stock available for reuse for the purposes of tourist accommodation and ancillary services.

Site location and description

The site is located in the rural area of Knockreagh, approx. 1.5km to the north of Callan. The site is reached via a long driveway with access directly onto the N76 national road. There is an existing two-storey dwelling on site, adjacent to the existing farmyard, and holiday units with ancillary structures. There is also a single storey dwelling located to the east of the access drive, closer to the public road. The site is surrounded by farmlands, with mature trees located on site. The Bord Gais pipeline crosses under the access driveway as per the planning GIS register. It was not possible to gain access to the site at the time of site inspection, however,

access was possible during inspection for previous application ref. 25/60139. There appear to be some building present on the 6 inch historic maps for this site, however, there does not appear to be any listing for heritage buildings on the NIAH or Record of Protected Structures.



IT NOTE: NOTES:
 Applicant Site Boundaries Outlined in Red
 Area of Land Owned By Applicant Outlined in Blue

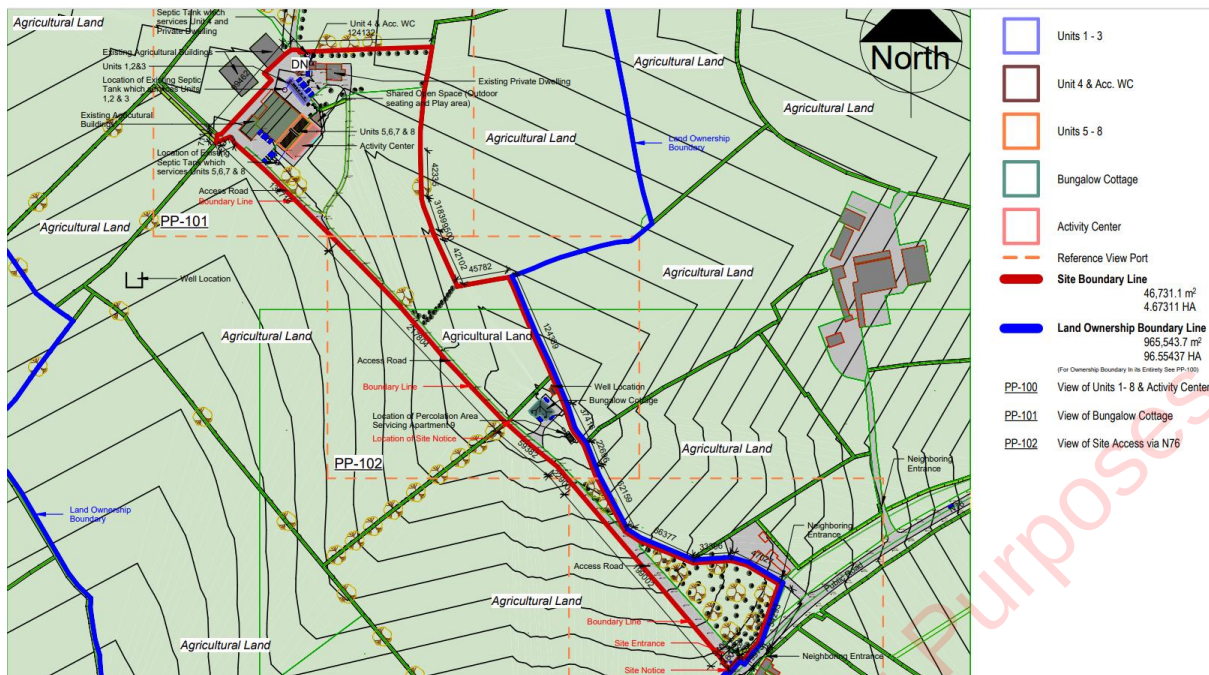
Site location and landholding map

Proposed development

Retention permission sought for:

- (a) a change of use of agricultural buildings to commercial short-term holiday lets comprising of 8 no. self-contained units, a toilet block and an activity centre which includes an outdoor play area, outdoor sitting areas, picnic benches, a kitchen/cooking area, a pool room, a lounge area and a jacuzzi/steam room intrinsic to the operation of the commercial business, and
- (b) a change of use of a domestic residential dwelling, namely “The Bungalow Cottage” to commercial short-term holiday let, and
- (c) all associated site works

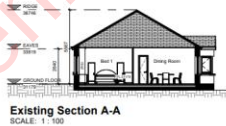
The site has a stated area of 4.673ha. The combined floor area for retention is stated as 1,013sq.m. It appears that units 1-4 may have involved the refurbishment of existing farm buildings, and that units 5-8 are new purpose build units, along with the ancillary leisure building. The cottage is a change of use of a permitted permanent residence.



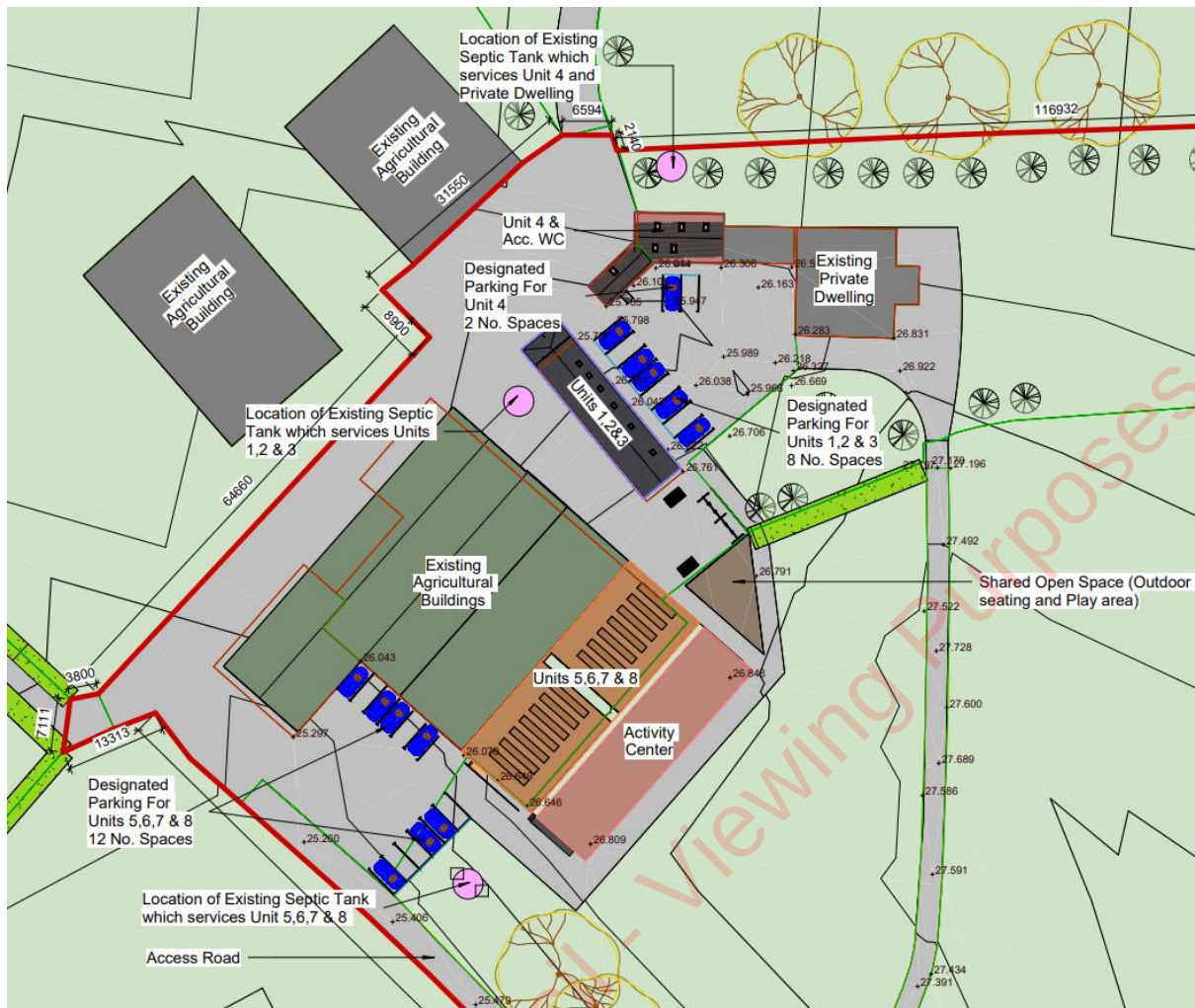
Site layout plan



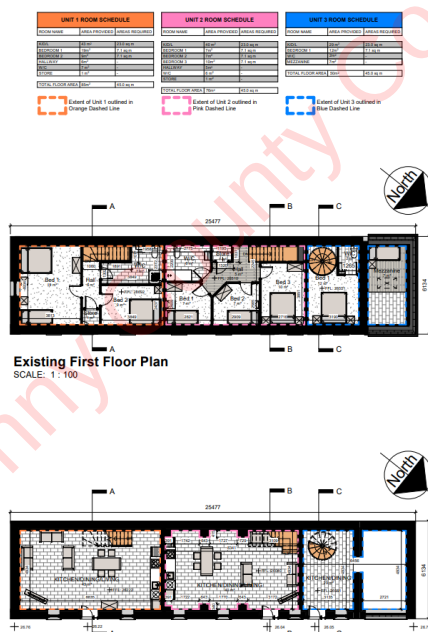
Site layout plan relating to the bungalow



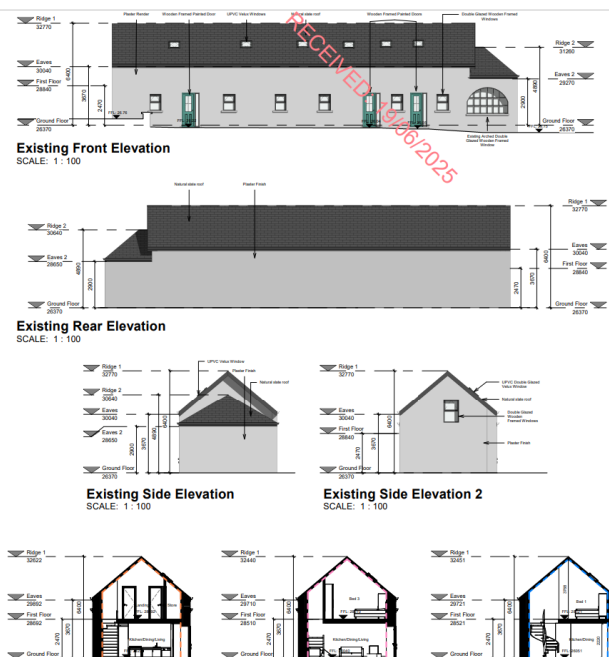
Existing bungalow for change of use

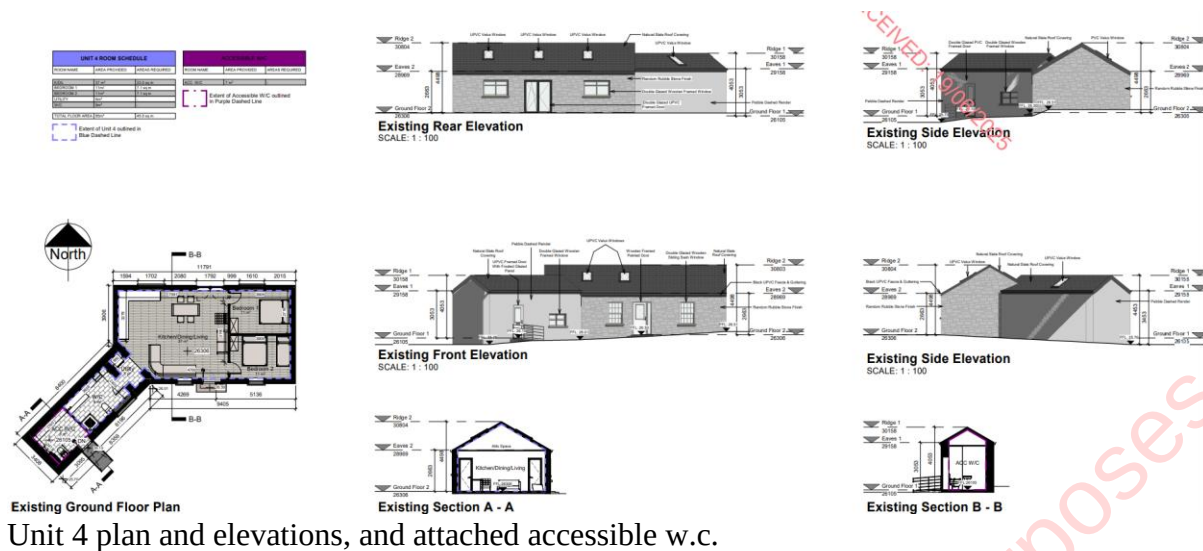


Site layout plan relating to units 1-8



Floor plans and elevations for units 1, 2 and 3





Access

The entrance to the site proposes access from the existing access onto the national road. Sightlines of 120m have been proposed in both directions. The report received from TII states that the development is contrary to policy relating to access onto national roads. The report received from the Roads section also notes that the development is at variance with national policy, and requires further information.

The report from TII dated July 2025 states:

The Authority has examined the above application and considers that it is at variance with official policy in relation to control of development on/affecting national roads, as outlined in the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), as the proposed development by itself, or by the precedent which a grant of permission for it would set, would adversely affect the operation and safety of the national road network for the following reason(s):

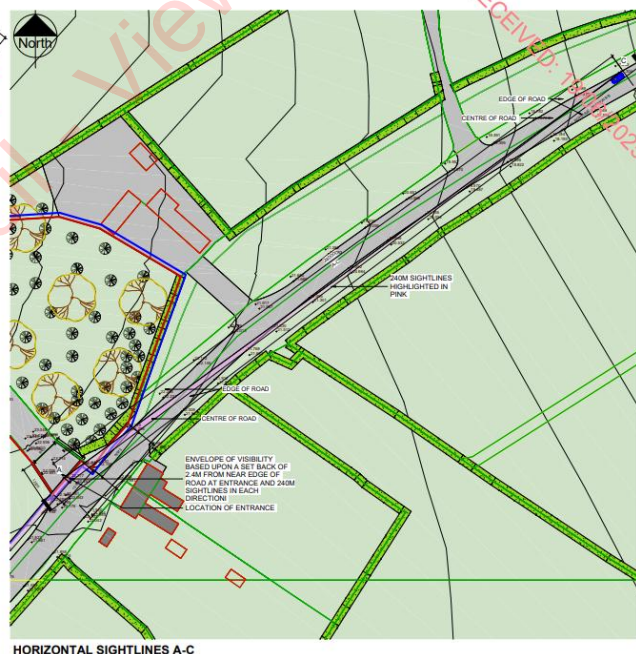
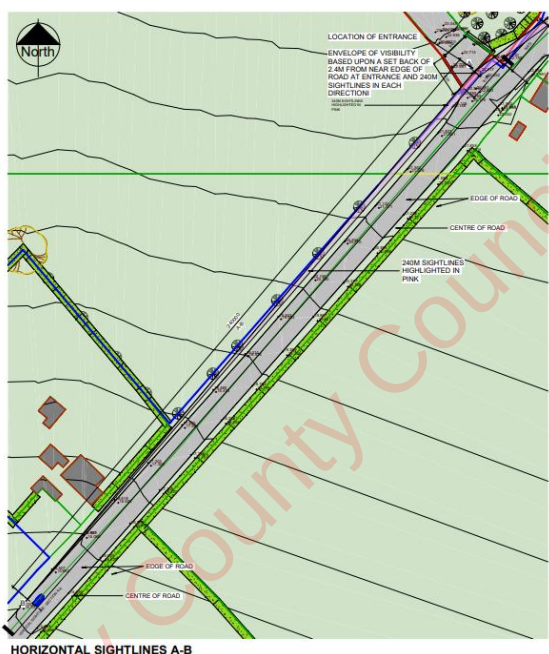
Official policy in relation to development involving access to national roads and development along such roads is set out in the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (January, 2012). Section 2.5 of the Guidelines

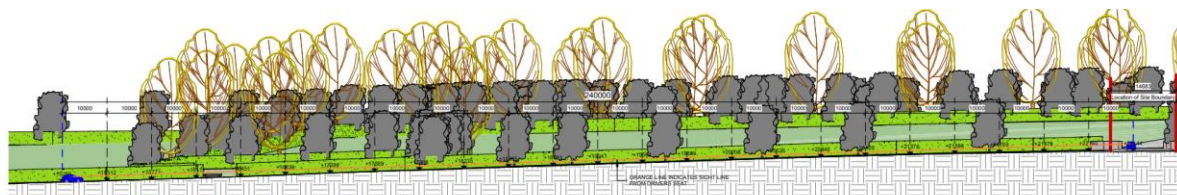
states that the policy of the planning authority will be to avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60kph apply. The proposal, if approved, would result in the intensification of an existing direct access to a national road contrary to official policy in relation to control of frontage development on national roads.

The report received from the Roads section dated July 2025 states as follows:

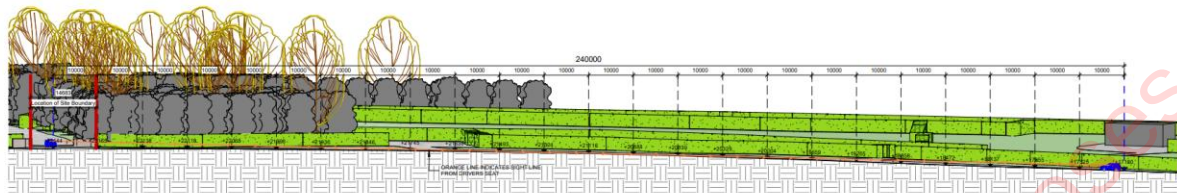
The proposed commercial development takes access off the N76 National Secondary. As outlined in TII submission dated the 2nd July 2025 the development for retention is at variance with official policy in relation to control of development on/affecting national roads, as outlined in the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), as the proposed development by itself, or by the precedent which a grant of permission for it would set, would adversely affect the operation and safety of the national road network and as such should be refused in line with this policy.

It is noted the applicant landholding extends onto the R691 Regional Road from which an access to this development could be considered. Should the applicant wish this application to be considered further, proposals to provide an alternate access from the R691 to serve the development should be submitted.





VERTICAL SIGHTLINES - SECTION A-A
SCALE: 1 : 500



VERTICAL SIGHTLINES - SECTION B-B

Services

Water – private well.

Surface water – disposal to on-site soakpit.

Waste water – the site layout plan shows four on-site wastewater treatment systems; testing details or specifications for the wastewater treatment units has not been submitted.

The report received from the Environment Section dated August 2024 requires further information.

The report received from the HSE dated July 2025 requires further information and states:

The proposed water supply is listed as an existing private well. Further information is required by this office regarding the provision of a potable water supply which complies with the Drinking Water Regulation 2023. Details should be provided regarding the source of potable water for the proposed development and any additional treatment. The location/details of the private well should be provided and whether the well is for the sole use of the holiday lettings.

The proposed waste water treatment system is listed as a conventional septic tank. Further information is required by this office regarding the provision of a wastewater treatment system for the above proposed development. Details should to be provided regarding the treatment of wastewater from the holiday lettings and whether the system has suitable capacity.

Further information is required regarding the storage and treatment of refuse from the proposed development. An adequately sized and enclosed external refuse storage area should be provided as part of the proposed development. A paved, screened and properly drained would suffice. Facilities for the segregation and recycling of waste should be provided.

The proposed treatment of surface water is listed as a soakpit. Further information is required regarding the treatment of surface water from the proposed development. Details should to be provided regarding the treatment of surface water from the holiday lettings and associated facilities and whether the system has suitable capacity.

It is recommended that the applicant contacts the Environmental Health Service, St. Canice's Hospital, Carlow Road, Kilkenny, to discuss the food hygiene requirements regarding the proposed development, if it involves the production of food for sale or supply.

Landowner

The applicant is the stated landowner.

Development Contribution

Development Contributions, class 4 – to be determined on receipt of further information.

EIA Conclusion

A preliminary examination of the nature, size and location of the proposed development has been carried out which determines that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. It is therefore concluded that an EIAR is not required.

Impact on Natura 2000 site

A Screening exercise is pending receipt of further information to determine if any significant environmental impact is likely on any Natura 2000 site.

Documentation submitted

As part of this application, the applicant has submitted a “Business Case Plan for Retention Planning Permission Knockreagh Farm Cottages”; excerpts from the plan state:

Opened: 1st July 2021

Knockreagh Farm Cottages is a successful, family-owned agri-tourism business located on a 200-acre working farm outside Callan, County Kilkenny. Since opening in July 2021, the enterprise has consistently provided high-quality, five-star self-catering accommodation by repurposing traditional farm buildings. The business was created to support farm income through sustainable, off-farm diversification in line with Teagasc policy, and to contribute meaningfully to the local tourism and rural economy.

Knockreagh Farm has been in the Nolan family since 1950 and is a key rural holding in the area. The current generation of the family has submitted a planning application for a new 160-cow dairy enterprise, reinforcing long-term commitment to agriculture. Old outbuildings were sympathetically restored and converted to self-catering cottages to diversify income and preserve heritage buildings.

Unique Selling Points (USPs)

- *Only offering of its kind in Callan – providing group-friendly, high-quality self-catering accommodation.*
- *Ideal for larger groups: birthdays, weddings, sports teams (GAA, soccer, camogie, athletics), family gatherings.*
- *First-class rural accommodation near Kilkenny City, one of Ireland's cultural capitals.*
- *On-site experience of a working Irish farm with real agricultural heritage and hands-on education potential.*

Photos taken 8th May 2025 (during site inspection for application 25/60139)



Photo of activity centre, units 5 and 6, and farm buildings from the driveway



Photo of units 5 and 6 set between farm building and activity centre

Website

The following images were sourced from the website, which appears to relate to the subject site, "<https://www.knockreaghfarmcottages.ie/>" as at 11th August 2025.



Units 1-4



Bungalow



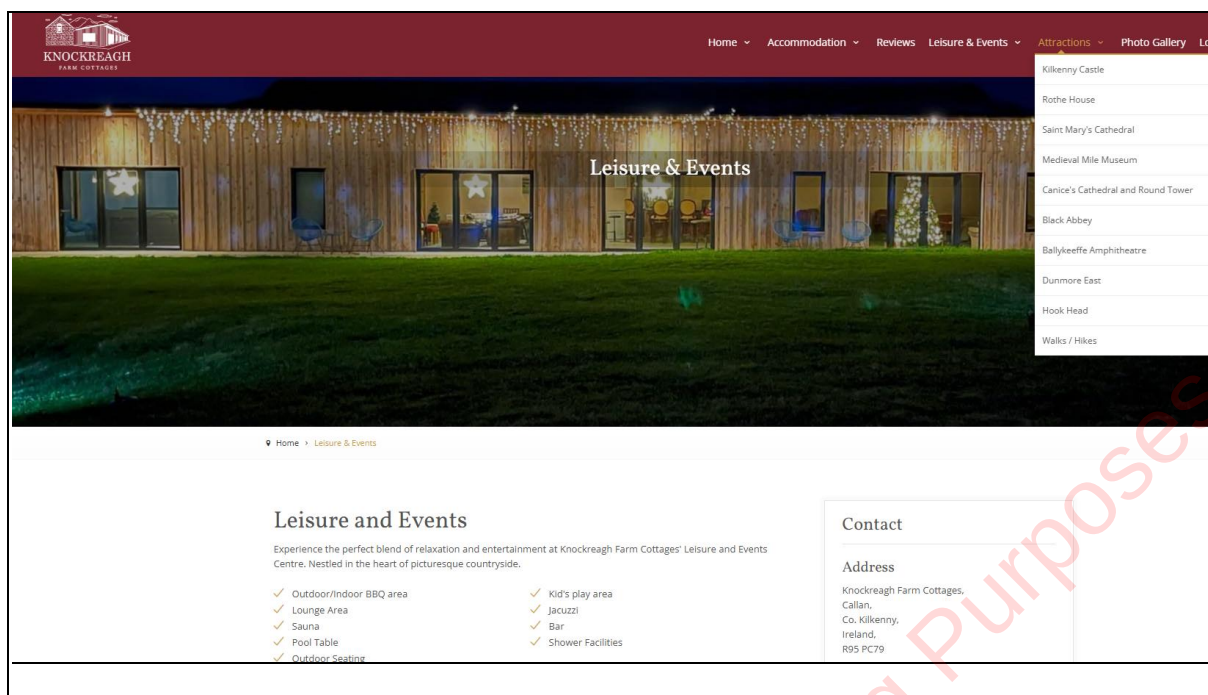
Activity centre



Activity centre



Activity centre



Page from website listing leisure and events, and attractions

P.25/ 60354 Recommendation

Further information is required as follows:

1. The proposed commercial development takes access off the N76 National Secondary, and is at variance with official policy in relation to control of development on/affecting national roads, as outlined in the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), as the proposed development by itself, or by the precedent which a grant of permission for it would set, would adversely affect the operation and safety of the national road network.

The applicant's landholding extends onto the R691 regional road from which an access to this development may be considered. Should the applicant wish this application to be considered further, proposals to provide an alternate access from the R691 to serve the development should be submitted.

Note: Such proposals would be deemed significant further information, requiring revised plans, demonstrating adequate sightlines for a proposed entrance and public notices. Revised plan should detail the sight visibility splays at the proposed entrance measured in both the horizontal and vertical planes using a detailed survey of the public road, verges, and road side boundaries and features. The drawings shall include the forward visibility to a vehicle turning both right and left into the development access. Details of the construction make-up of the access road and surfacing of same should also be provided. Details of timelines for operation of the access from the regional road should be included.

Should an alternative access be proposed onto the regional road, details are required of surface water drains or watercourses on site or within 100m of the access showing the direction of water flows within the drains or watercourses, with proposals, cross-sections and construction methodology for crossing same.

2. It is unclear from the drawings submitted, which elements of the development involved new-building works to facilitate the development for retention. Please submit revised drawings to clarify any new building works for units 1-8 and ancillary buildings which were constructed/ extended to accommodate the development. A revised site layout plan is required in addition to plans and elevations of the buildings, showing their uses, prior to any works to facilitate the development for retention.
3. The planning authority has concerns regarding the compatibility of the development for retention with regard to the location, nature and extent of the development, having regard to the policies as set out in the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027, with particular regard to the location of the development in an un-serviced rural area.

The “Business Case Plan for Retention Planning Permission Knockreagh Farm Cottages”, states that the development is “located on a 200-acre working farm”, with “repurposing traditional farm buildings”, and provides “on-site experience of a working Irish farm with real agricultural heritage and hands-on education potential”.

The website “<https://www.knockreaghfarmcottages.ie/>” (which appears to relate to the subject site), lists “Summer BBQs Break, Family Gathering Breaks, Big Birthday Breaks, Wedding & Special Occasions, Team Building Getaway, Corporate Events, Hens & Stags, Girly Getaways”. However, leisure activities, events and “Attractions” listed, including ‘walks/ hikes’, all relate to off-site activities, and did not appear to include any activities relating to farm uses.

The applicant is requested to demonstrate how the site-specific rationale for the retention of the development and how these would comply with the policies set out in the *Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027*.

In relation to the change of use of the “bungalow cottage”, (a) you are advised that the dwelling is located in a rent pressure zone and within an Area Under Urban Influence as per the Council’s rural housing policy; the proposal would not appear to comply with this policy. Please provide a detailed rationale for the proposed change of use; and (b) it appears from the drawings submitted that the dwelling and site layout of the “bungalow” does not comply with the grant of permission ref. 00/1890. Please address. Note: Retention of changes may be deemed significant further information.

4. Please submit a revised site layout plan which details the exact uses for each of the existing agricultural buildings.
5. (a) Having regard to the existing wastewater treatment systems, the applicant is requested to submit a detailed assessment of the 4 existing wastewater treatment systems including percolation areas to determine whether they are adequate to cater for the development. In particular the applicant shall submit the following details:
 - Type of tank (precast concrete / plastered block/other)
 - Working volume of tank
 - Number of chambers
 - Full extent of percolation area shall be shown on a revised site layout plan; the root spread of the existing tree shall be overlain on the site layout plan percolation area

- Design population equivalent capacity of existing system
- Design population equivalent being discharged to the existing system
- Design standards under which the existing system was designed and built
- The working condition of the system

It will also be necessary to conduct a site suitability assessment in accordance with the EPA's 2021 code of practice, Domestic Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent < 10) and to design a suitable unit based on site specific conditions. This will be required for each domestic waste water treatment system on site.

(b) The applicant is requested to submit the hydraulic design calculations used to determine the PE generated on site and subsequently how each domestic waste water treatment system was sized.

It is noted from the website "<https://www.knockreaghfarmcottages.ie/>" that the development accommodates events, details of the maximum numbers to be catered for at such events, and PE should also be addressed, as part of your response.

6. (a) The applicant is requested to engage the services of a suitably qualified individual to conduct an Infiltration-Test in accordance with BRE-365. The test shall be carried out at a level appropriate to the installation of the proposed SuDS systems. The findings of these tests shall include the infiltration rate and the depth to the water table.

(b) The applicant is requested to submit a revised site layout drawing to include for the following:

- All Soakaways on site
- Percolation/ infiltration areas for all four domestic waste water treatment systems
- Trial hole and percolation test hole locations for each location
- All wells within 250m
- The location of the external refuse storage area

7. (a) The applicant is requested to submit a resource and waste management plan for the operational phase of the project.

(b) Details are required regarding the storage and treatment of refuse from the development. An adequately sized and enclosed external refuse storage area should be provided as part of the proposed development, paved, screened and properly drained. Facilities for the segregation and recycling of waste should be provided.

(b) The applicant is requested to submit past invoices from their authorised waste collector for each year since commencing the business.

8. The applicant is requested to provide details on if the use of grease traps has been implemented for the kitchen areas. If this has not been included the applicant is requested to submit proposals for the installation of grease traps for the kitchen areas.
9. Details are required regarding the provision of a potable water supply which complies with the Drinking Water Regulation 2023, including the source of potable water for the development and any additional treatment. The applicant is requested to mark the location of the well supplying units 1-8 and highlight if this well is used for any other purposes or

for the sole use of the holiday lettings. The required water demand and achievable capacity of the well shall also be referenced.

10. Please demonstrate the provisions for the safety of visitors, during operational farming activities, with particular regard to segregation of pedestrians, machinery and animals.
11. Submit details of all external lighting proposals. Please note that these should be limited to essential lighting only in order to limit the impact on protected species such as Bats in this rural area. , and submit an assessment from a qualified ecologist with regard to impacts of the entire development, including external lighting on bats, which are a protected species.
12. Submit a revised site layout plan showing the root and crown spread of trees, their species, conditions and heights, and proposals to ensure that any proposed development will not negatively impact on same.
13. Please submit an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified conservation professional, with regard to impacts of the development for retention, with particular regard to the setting of the main/ private dwelling on site, and impacts on conversion of units 1-4.

Notes:

Please note an Appropriate Assessment screening by the planning authority is pending receipt of further information to determine if any significant environmental impact is likely on any Natura 2000 site. An Appropriate Assessment Screening, may be requested following receipt of further information.

Having regard to the scale of the development, and any revised proposals, the planning authority may deem an archaeological impact assessment to be necessary, in consultation with the National Monuments Service.

The applicant should factor such reports into the timeline for the response to this request for further information.

The applicant is advised to contact Gas Networks Ireland in advance of any works or testing on site with regard to the location of the Gas Networks Ireland pipeline on site.

The applicant is advised to contact the Environmental Health Service, St. Canice's Hospital, Carlow Road, Kilkenny, to discuss the food hygiene requirements regarding the proposed development, if it involves the production of food for sale or supply.

Your application will be held in abeyance pending receipt of the above information, for a period not exceeding six months.

This information is required by the Planning Authority to make a full assessment of the application and should not be taken as an indication that the proposed development is acceptable to the Planning Authority.

P.25/60354 Further Information



11th August 2025

C. Kelly, Executive Planner



12/08/'25

N. Louw, Senior Executive Planner

Kilkenny County Council - Viewing Purposes Only!