

**MIONTUAIRISCÍ DO CRUINNIÚ SPEISIALTA CHOMHAIRLE CHONTAE
CHILL CHAINNIGH LE REACHTÁIL AR DE LUAN, 26 IÚIL, 2021**



**MINUTES OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON MONDAY, 26TH JULY, 2021 AT 12.15 P.M. VIA MS TEAMS**

Chair: Cllr. Fidelis Doherty

Cllrs: Eamon Aylward, Tomás Breathnach, John Brennan, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Martin Brett, Peter Cleere, John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen, Michael Delaney, Andrew McGuinness, Maria Dollard, Matt Doran, Michael Doyle, Pat Dunphy, David Fitzgerald, Pat Fitzpatrick, Ger Frisby, Denis Hynes, Joe Lyons, Joe Malone, Michael McCarthy, Eugene McGuinness & Patrick O'Neill.

Officials: Tim Butler, Mary Mulholland, Denis Malone, Fiona Deegan, & Catherine Cooney.

Apologies: Cllr. Eamon Aylward.

Cathaoirleach Cllr. Fidelis Doherty opened the meeting and welcomed the Elected Members, Executive and members of the public. She advised that Tim Butler, Director of Services, will make a presentation to the meeting and invited Mr. Butler to do so.

Mr. Tim Butler stated that this meeting is being held to consider the Chief Executive's Report on the Part 8 Loughmacask Link Road Phase 1 (A) and then gave a presentation to Members on:

- Background to the development.
- Details of Part 8 proposal.
- Submissions Received.
- Conclusions and Recommendations.

Mr. Butler as part of his presentation also went through the following main points raised in the 113 submissions received:

- Traffic Impact
- Increased Noise/ Air Pollution
- Increased risk of accidents.
- Difficulties exiting Housing Estates.
- Loss of amenity space and safety.
- Removal of trees.
- Lack of public consultation.
- Environmental concerns.

Mr. Butler also responded to the following queries/questions raised by Elected Members in recent Workshop in relation to:

- Impact of future housing/planning applications on the link road.
- Impact on future road infrastructure on the link road.
- Requirement for water and waste water infrastructure.
- Number of students to be accommodated.
- Cost to Kilkenny County Council.
- Traffic Concerns for Freshford Road.
- Possibility of access from Talbots Court to Dunningstown Road.
- Is there any other viable access?
- HGVs, Buses, etc.
- Due diligence by school – land locked site.
- School planning application – Traffic Impact Assessment done during COVID.
- Existing schools in the area – Active Travel, difficulty walking/cycling to site.

- Progressing Link Roads: Kilmanagh Road to Dean Street, Kilmanagh Road to Freshford Road and Northern Ring Road extension.
- Reference to An Bord Pleanála decision on CAS 2 and CAS 3 in relation to current Part 8.
- Proximity of pedestrian crossing to Talbots Gate.
- Referral to An Bord Pleanála for determination – European Site.

In response to a request from previous meeting for a computer-generated view of what the development might look like when completed, Mr. Butler then presented three computer generated views: View of proposed Roundabout, pedestrian crossing location and proposed revised entrance to Talbot Court and safety measures in place for amenity area.

Following Mr. Butler's presentation, the Cathaoirleach allowed Members to address the Meeting.

Cllr. Matt Doran

- Thanked Mr. Butler for a very comprehensive report and review of the proposed development
- Acknowledged the efforts of so many people over the last number of weeks.
- Thanked the residents and communities for continuing to relay their concerns and the Executive, Party Whips and Colleagues for engaging in the so many meetings, workshops, etc.
- Particularly acknowledged the work of the Kilkenny City Councillors who continually relayed the concerns of residents in the area.

Cllr. Doran stated that the school must go ahead and highlighted that the concerns of residents will be continually monitored as the development progresses.

It was then proposed by Cllr. Doran that:

*"We the Members of Kilkenny County Council approve the proposed Part 8 in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended **Development of Loughmacask Link Road Phase 1(A), as circulated**".*

Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh:

- Thanked Mr. Butler, Executive, fellow Whips and Residents for their participation in the process
- Acknowledged the concerns of residents in the area.

In response to point raised by residents that no consultation took place, Cllr. Cavanagh requested Mr. Butler to outline again the level of consultation that took place.

Cllr. Cavanagh also agreed that the school development must go ahead and therefore seconded the proposal put forward by Cllr. Matt Doran.

Cllr. Eugene McGuinness:

Cllr. McGuinness stated that the Elected Members are in an impossible position in relation to a decision in this case and pointed out the following concerns regarding the proposed development:

- Increased Traffic on the Freshford Road.
- Don't believe that a roundabout will alleviate the traffic.
- Presence of two hospitals in the area to add to traffic issues.

Cllr. McGuinness requested confirmation that the proposed link road will only be used for access to the school and are the housing developments along the route which currently have planning permission due to go ahead.

Cllr. Martin Brett

- Thanked all involved in the process
- Stated that this is vote for education for the future so that children in the City will not need to travel to other parts of the County for education.

Cllr. Maria Dollard

- Thanked Mr. Butler for his presentation
- Acknowledged that the Elected Members are in a difficult position in relation to this decision.
- Requested that the Council would re-examine the design and width of the proposed link road and carry out a Traffic Impact Assessment and Road Safety Audit.

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness

- Thanked residents who have engaged throughout the process and stated that the residents are not against the plans for a new school.
- Requested that the residents be kept informed as the development progresses as they are a central part of the whole process.
- Expressed his thanks to Tim Butler and Denis Malone for facilitating and participating in all meetings and workshops.

Mr. Tim Butler responded to comments and queries raised by Members by outlining:

- The extent of public consultation that took place even though it was difficult during COVID restrictions,
- A Traffic Impact Assessment was for the school planning application.
- Successive Development and Local Area Plans detail objectives for connectivity for Kilkenny City.
- HGV traffic is not encouraged into the City Centre.
- There are housing developments permissioned for this area. However, only one of these developments will impact on this road. This development is phased for development post 2027.
- Road width will be 3.25 metres per carriageway which is in line with the recommended width in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.
- Most urban streets will have a speed limit of 50 km/h with the exception of City Centre and Housing Estates. Specific speed limits can be considered under the Speed Limits Review which is currently in progress.

Denis Malone, Senior Planner, reminded Members that it has been an objective of the Development Plan for this road to serve the Loughmacask area.

Cllr. David Fitzgerald

- Acknowledged the level of engagement from the residents of Talbot Court, Talbots Gate and Dunningstown Road which has shaped the final proposal before the Members today.
- Biggest difficulty is the lack of infrastructure serving St. Canice's Parish and asked that the Council give a commitment to the people of St. Canice's Parish for a Ring Road Bridge.
- More certainty needs to be given on the connection between the Kilmanagh Road and Freshford Road.
- Thanked everyone involved for their work.

Cllr. John Coonan

- Residents have made invaluable contribution and should be kept informed as the development progresses.
- Thanked the Executive, residents and fellow Councillors.

Cllr. Tomás Breathnach

- Thanked everyone.
- Information between school, residents and the Council can be worked on going forward.

Cllr. Fidelis Doherty thanked all the Members for their contributions and confirmed that it has been proposed by Cllr. Matt Doran, seconded by Cllr. Mary Hilda Cavanagh:

*"that we the Members of Kilkenny County Council approve the proposed Part 8 in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended **Development of Loughmacask Link Road Phase 1(A), as circulated**".*

Members were then asked to indicate if any Councillors were dissenting in relation to the resolution.

Cllr. Maria Dollard stated that she does not feel that she has received enough information in order to make a decision and wishes to abstain.

Similarly, Cllr. Eugene McGuinness stated that in the absence of a Traffic Impact Assessment he cannot make a decision and wishes to abstain.

The resolution was passed by majority decision with 2 Elected Members abstaining being Cllr. Eugene McGuinness and Cllr. Maria Dollard.

Cllr. Fidelis Doherty thanked all who contributed to the discussions today and the public for their engagement.

The meeting then concluded.

CATHAOIRLEACH

DATE