

**Minutes of May Meeting of Cashel Town Council held in the Council Chamber,
Civic Offices, Friar Street, Cashel on Monday 11th May 2009 at 7.30pm.**

Mayor: Councillor Martin Browne

Members Present: Councillor Eddie Bennett
Councillor Michael Browne
Councillor Dan Dillon
Councillor Patrick Downey
Councillor Sean McCarthy
Councillor Joe Moloney
Councillor Maureen O'Donoghue
Councillor Tom Wood

Officials Present: Mr. Sean Keating, Town Manager
Ms. Marie McGivern, Town Clerk
Mr. Willie Corby, Town Engineer
Ms. Mairead Ryan, Staff Officer
Ms Labhaoise McKenna, Heritage Officer
Ms. Sonja Reidy, Senior Executive Planner
Ms. Clare Lee, Executive Planner

1. MINUTES OF APRIL MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 6th April 2009 were adopted on the proposition of Councillor Joe Moloney seconded by Councillor Eddie Bennett.

2. CONSIDER MANAGERS REPORT ON MATERIAL AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT CASHEL TOWN AND ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The making of the Development Plan was proposed by Councillor Sean McCarthy and seconded by Councillor Michael Brown. Councillor Wood said that he felt that this is an important document for the development of the Town over the next 6 years but he would be opposing the adoption of the Development Plan on the grounds of heritage. He thanked the Manager and staff for the work that went into the preparation of the Plan and complimented the public on their input. The plan was also opposed by Councillor Bennett, solely on the issue of land zoning at Windmill.

It was proposed by Councillor Sean McCarthy, seconded by Councillor Michael Browne

“That in accordance with Section 12 (10) (a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended that the Draft Cashel Town and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 and the Draft Environmental Report as amended by the proposed Material Amendments as further modified by the recommendations of the Section 12 (8) Managers Report and further modified by the Members Directions of May 2009 Town **CASHEL Town AND ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2009-2015** and the associated **ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT be and hereby adopted.**”

The following vote was taken:

Councillor Bennett		Against
Councillor Martin Browne	For	
Councillor Michael Browne	For	
Councillor Dillon		Against
Councillor Downey	For	
Councillor McCarthy	For	
Councillor Moloney	For	
Councillor O'Donoghue	For	
Councillor Wood		Against

The vote was carried by 6 votes to 3 votes

3. WORLD HERITAGE SITE - DRAFT TENTATIVE LIST

The meeting was joined by Messrs. Brian Duffy, Chief Archaeologist, Brian Lucas, Principal Officer, both of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Dermot Burke, Director, Heritage Services, Office of Public Works to update the members on the current status of this proposal.

Mr Brian Lucas outlined some background, stating that there are over 850 world heritage sites on the World Heritage List. Of these; there are 2 sites in Ireland, Skellig Michael and Bru na Boinne at Newgrange. In order to be included on the World Heritage List, a site must be of Outstanding Universal Value. This means that it must have a cultural and /or natural significance, which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. A country can only nominate a site for inscription on the World Heritage List from its Tentative List. A Tentative List is an inventory of those properties, which a county intends to consider for nomination to the World Heritage List in the next five to ten years. In October 2008, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government established an expert group to carry out a review and update the current Tentative List with a view to the submission of a revised Tentative

List to UNESCO. The Group has been examining the sites on the current Tentative List and other potential sites for inclusion on the revised list. The objective is to forward a revised Tentative List to UNESCO in July 2009. It is proposed to include the Rock of Cashel as part of the Royal Sites Serial nomination along with Dun Ailinne, Hill of Uisneach, Rathcroghan and Tara. Brian Duffy, Senior Archaeologist said that the serial site is favoured at this time and makes a stronger case for inclusion on the list.

Councillor Sean McCarthy thanked the group for their presentation and welcomed the interest in promoting Cashel. He asked if the other Royal sites are suitable to be included and if the recent Sunday Tribune article giving a false impression that the area around the Rock of Cashel would be developed is damaging. Brian Lucas indicated that if the Department felt there was a problem, they would have commented on it. The Mayor asked if the Rock of Cashel could be considered as a stand-alone project. Brian Duffy indicated that there would be a stronger case to be made if it is included as part of a theme site.

Councillor Wood welcomed the opportunity to have this discussion with the Officials from the Office of Public Works and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. He said that he felt that the Ecclesiastical grounds are stronger than the Royal theme as a basis for inclusion on the list. He expressed concerns that the Rock of Cashel has been on the tentative list for 17 years and has not been progressed. The Mayor agreed that the Rock is a stand-alone site and should be treated that way. He encouraged attendance at the public meeting to be held on 12th May 2009.

4. RENT COLLECTION

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the rent arrears to the end of April were €11,636.

5. MANAGERS ORDERS

The Managers Orders were read.

6. CASHEL TOWN COUNCIL FIVE-YEAR REPORT 2004-2009

The Five Year Report was circulated to the members at the meeting.

7. NOTICES OF MOTION

Councillor Tom Wood

“That following lengthy discussions and meeting re St. Cormac’s Cemetery, the Manager advise the Council as to what works etc. will be implemented.”

A written response was issued as follows:

Following discussions with the Town Councillors in 2008 regarding the future layout of Cormac's Cemetery, Cashel Town Council arranged to plant a Copper Beech hedgerow between the new and old sections. This work has been carried out.

In addition, the Town Council have made arrangements to place kerbing on the outside circle of the turning area in the cemetery, to prevent motor vehicles mounting the grassed areas. These works will be carried out in the coming months.

Councillor Wood accepted this response but asked that the work on the kerbing be completed as a priority.

Councillor Tom Wood

“Due to the expense involved in trying to re-instate a number of Local Authority houses to habitable standards (especially the former O'Brien house on the Green) the Manager and Council would consider the sale of same to suitable applicants.”

A written response was issued as follows:

Having examined this house at the Green, it is felt that it is a valuable part of the Town Councils Housing Stock and would be a very suitable for an elderly/single person due to its size and town centre location.

The Council is currently undertaking a cost analysis of the works required to render the property suitable for re-letting. It is the Council's intention to retain this property within the Council's Housing Stock.

Councillor Wood appreciated the response to this motion but hoped the Manager would consider the sale of this property. This was supported by Councillor Dillon. Councillor O'Donoghue felt that this property would be very suitable for an elderly person and was against the sale of the property. Councillor Downey agreed with Councillor O'Donoghue.

Councillor Tom Wood

“That the Manager update the members on the implementation of weight restriction programme for heavy vehicles through the Town.”

A written response was issued as follows:

On the completion of the Cashel By-pass, the Town Council considered the implementation of a weight restriction for vehicles on the Main Street. The Town Council were advised that the Gardaí would be required to enforce weight restrictions. This became feasible with the introduction of a weighbridge at the recycling centre on the Clonmel Road. To ensure that the restrictions could be enforced, the Town Council would have to erect adequate signage warning motorists of the restrictions in place and highlighting alternative routes. A schedule of signage indicating preferred routes for HGVs around the town was prepared. Estimates of the cost of implementing the system were in the region of €50,000. The Town Council were concerned regarding the amount

of additional signage that would require to be erected around Cashel, and it was decided to review the situation after the Clonmel Road interchange was completed. The Clonmel Road interchange is now under construction and it is anticipated that it will further improve the flow of all traffic through Cashel town centre. In addition to this, the completion of the M8 North and South of the town has had the effect of reducing the number of HGVs using the town. Once the works on the Clonmel Road are complete, the matter will be reviewed by the Town Council and if necessary, an amended plan may be prepared taking account of any new traffic flow patterns.

Councillor Wood accepted this response.

Councillor Sean McCarthy

“That this Council including the Executives and Forward Planners should clarify the position of the New Town Development Plan and how any changes, if any, would impact on the Rock of Cashel and also the false impression and representations implied in a recent Sunday Newspaper article (Sunday Tribune) should be fully and completely refuted as the content of that article have caused considerable malcontent and disquiet amongst many decent people in the Town.”

A written response was issued as follows:

The Cashel Town and Environs Draft Development Plan 2009-2015 and the proposed material amendments to same are to be considered by the members of Cashel Town Council and South Tipperary County Council on Monday 11th May 2009. The preparation of the Cashel Town and Environs Draft Development Plan has been ongoing since September 2007 and has included an in depth review of the existing Development Plan 2003. Three separate public consultation phases have taken place, each of which has included public meetings and meetings with other agencies and statutory consultees as well as the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

As part of the preparation of the Plan, full consideration has been given to the bid for World Heritage Status for the Rock of Cashel. In this regard, Cashel Town Council and South Tipperary County Council have worked very closely with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government with a view to ensuring the inclusion of the Rock on the Revised Irish Tentative List for nomination to UNESCO for World Heritage Status. This process is ongoing.

The recent article in the Sunday Tribune (19/04/09) misrepresents the policies and objectives of the Draft Plan. It should be noted that the article relies primarily on quotes attributed to Mr Ian Lumley of An Taisce and Dr Niall Gregory of Cashel Chamber of Commerce and the author does not appear to have independently investigated the points raised by either. A senior planning official was interviewed by telephone for the article, based on questions provided in advance. The detailed information offered to the journalist was not utilised but was instead presented as a weak defence to the charges made.

Management of the Town Council discussed the Sunday Tribune article in detail with the Elected Members of Cashel Town and Area members at a recent workshop on the Draft Development Plan. The Mayor has delivered a statement to local media, refuting the allegations made and stressing the damage done by the article to Cashel's international reputation and its bid for World Heritage Status.

It is regrettable that this exercise is necessary in order to refute groundless allegations raised in sensationalist style in the national media without regard to either the factual situation nor to the potential for damage that such coverage can cause.

*The attached **Annex** refers to specific allegations raised in the newspaper article and provides full information on the factual situation in order to set the record straight.*

Annex

*The article **incorrectly** refers to quantities of lands that have been newly zoned in the Draft Plan, mentioning "over 100 acres of newly zoned industrial land and more than 140 acres of newly zoned residential land".—The **factual** situation is that the Draft Plan proposes to provide 64.43 acres for new residential development (approximately 27 acres of which is currently zoned for same) and identifies 105.84 acres for industrial use (approximately 50 acres of which is currently zoned for same).*

*The article refers to the lands to the north of the Rock being rezoned which will result in a "substantial uplift" in value. The implication is that said lands are proposed to be zoned for either residential or commercial purposes. In fact the Draft Plan proposes to zone these lands for Special Amenity or Agricultural use only. This is a change from the current plan in that lands north of the Rock are zoned for Special Landscape in the current Plan but does not provide for a zoning class that facilitates general speculative development and as such will **not** result in any increase in value.*

*The article refers to suburban sprawl around the eastern side of the Rock being extended. It should be noted that to the east of the Rock, lands are currently zoned for Special Opportunity that allows for residential development and the proposed draft plan has zoned a slightly reduced area for new residential use subject to very specific criteria and limited densities and as such suburban sprawl will **not** be facilitated and this is considered an improved situation on the current plan in terms of potential design and visual impact.*

*The article refers to the removal of protection status from a number of buildings and states that this is a cause of concern. In fact, the Draft Plan does **not** propose the removal of any existing Protected Structures, although a proposal to add a number of sites to the Record of Protected Structures in the initial draft will not now proceed as a result of the first public consultation period.*

The article refers to concerns over the erosion of the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) close to the Rock. While the boundaries of the ACA are proposed to be reduced in areas in order to be more effective, the area proposed to be omitted near the Rock contains no upstanding structures and as such an ACA designation has no protective value.

*The article includes two images which infer that two- to four-storey developments will be permitted on lands immediately south of the Rock of Cashel though no reference to the images is provided in the text of the article. Lands south of the Rock are proposed to be incorporated in the St Patrick's Master Plan which provides for lands zoned for Amenity (immediately south of the Rock) and Town Centre on lands to the rear of Cashel Palace. The image portrayed in the Sunday Tribune **would not and could not** occur under the provisions of the Draft Cashel Town and Environs Development Plan.*

Councillor McCarthy expressed his concern about this misleading, dishonest and frightening article that gave the impression that development could take place in the vicinity of the Rock of Cashel. He was pleased to hear from the Department that it would not have an adverse effect on the World Heritage Site Proposal for the Rock of Cashel.

Councillor Sean McCarthy

“That ramps should be installed forthwith on the road leading to and from the National School as parents, teachers and many others are concerned about the safety of the children and I feel that ramps would ensure the safety of the children into the future.”

A written response was issued as follows:

Cashel Town Council have installed a number of vertical deflection traffic calming devices around the town. To date, these measures have proved to be successful in reducing traffic speeds in the town centre. The devices used are “speed cushions”, which have several advantages over conventional “ramps” i.e. such as they do not cause discomfort to cyclists. “Speed cushions” offer advantages to bus operators, where the wheel base of the vehicle is generally wider than the cushion. Similarly, many emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire brigades (outside of Ireland and the UK) have a wheel base wide enough to completely avoid the cushion. Considering these facts, “speed cushions” offer both advantages and disadvantages over “speed ramps”. The effectiveness of the cushions depends on the spacing between them. Where devices are spaced 60 metres apart, reductions in speed of up to one third can be expected, whereby at 160 metres, reductions of approximately one sixth can be achieved.

As regards the Old Road, a series of cushions would need to be installed in order to achieve effective speed reduction. As an initial step a series of four locations (80 metres apart) will be examined where the cushions may be installed 3 units wide. This would cover a length of roadway 240 of metres (approximately 120 metres each side of the school). Suitable locations may be selected where lighting is appropriate and the devices would not have adverse effects on entrances to property. The estimated cost of this work is €15,000, and would be, subject to availability of funding from the Roads Grant allocation 2009.

Councillor McCarthy feels that ramps are working well in the locations where they have been installed and hopes that there is money available to complete these works. This motion was supported by the Mayor and Councillor O'Donoghue.

8. CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS:

The list of Conferences and Seminars were noted.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence circulated was read.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Dillon expressed his thanks to Liam White, Executive Technician for his efforts on the repair of the public lights. Councillor Moloney asked if the light at Main Street adjacent to Abrakebebra could be replaced as it has been missing for sometime.

The Mayor paid tribute to Councillors Tom Wood and Maureen O'Donoghue would not be seeking re-election to the Council in June 2009. He wished them well for their futures and said that they would be missed from the Council.

Councillor O'Donoghue said that she was first elected in 1985 and was proud to serve the people of Cashel and hoped that she had done so with pride and dignity. She thanked all the staff of the Town Council for their support over the years

Councillor Wood wished Councillor O'Donoghue well and said that he hoped to continue on the County Council. He wished all the members success in the forthcoming elections in June. He said that he was delighted to serve the people of Cashel for almost 30 years and was very proud of his times as Chairman and Mayor of the Council.

The other members echoed the good wishes to Councillors O'Donoghue and Wood together with the Town Manager and Town Clerk.

There was a discussion regarding the forthcoming Mayors Meeting of the European Charter of Rural Communities scheduled to take place in Starý Poddvorov, in June. Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor indicated that they would be unable to attend due to the forthcoming local election.

11. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS/SYMPATHY:

Votes of sympathy were extended to the following: -

The Moloney Family on the death of their sister Eileen and nephew Paul
The Donovan Family, Boherclough Street on the death of Mrs. Donovan

The Meeting then concluded.

Signed _____
Mayor

Dated: _____ 2009

Signed _____
Town Clerk

Dated: _____ 2009