

**Minutes of the July Monthly Meeting of Athlone Town Council, which was held in the Civic Centre, Church Street, Athlone at 6.00 p.m. on Monday July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006**

**Attendance:**

Mayor: Cllr. J. Butler

Members: Cllrs. A. Berry, M. Cooney, P. Hogan, R. Lennon, N. McFadden, K. Molloy, E. Moran and K. Moran

Officers: Mr. Danny McLoughlin, County Manager  
Mr. Barry Kehoe, Director of Services  
Mr. John Walsh, Town Clerk  
Mr. Brian McNeela, A/Town Engineer  
Mr. Billy Coughlan, Administrative Officer  
Ms. Anne McNamara, Assistant Staff Officer

**Minutes:**

It was proposed by Cllr. M. Cooney,

Seconded by Cllr. K. Moran and resolved,

“That we hereby adopt the Minutes of the June Monthly Meeting which was held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2006 in the Civic Centre, Athlone”.

**Vote of Congratulations:**

The Members joined with Cllr. K. Moran’s congratulations to Breffni Rowan, a former colleague, on his retirement from his involvement with the Athlone and District Schoolboys League. After years of involvement with sport, he wished him well in his retirement and hoped the Council would recognise his work at a future date.

**Votes of Sympathy:**

All the Members wished to be associated with votes of sympathy to the families of Justin Golden, James Maher and Brendan O’Callaghan.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

**Review of Litter Plan:**

Mr. Billy Coughlan informed Cllr. McFadden that a small number of Members had to be elected to the Committee reviewing the Litter Plan and this could be done at this meeting. Then the Review could proceed.

**Submission for Marine View Remedial Works:**

The Town Clerk informed Cllr. Molly that the Town Engineer is on leave and he is not aware whether or not the submission has been made.

**Open space use at Cartron Drive:**

Cllr. K. Moran requested that the Town Engineer meet with the residents again, especially those on the Retreat side of the development.

**Costing of studs:**

The Director informed Cllr. Hogan that reflective studs on Roundabouts would cost €4,900 for the town. This could be considered in the 2007 Budget.

**Date for Mayor's Reception:**

The Town Clerk informed Cllr. Hogan that the Reception would be held in September and the date would be set in early September.

**Bottlebanks at Bonavalley:**

The Director informed Cllr. Hogan that the Bottlebanks had been removed as it was impossible to keep the area around them clean and they were a drain on the Council's finances. They would be used again he said when a more suitable location can be found for them. Cllr. E. Moran thanked the Council for removing them.

**Correspondence:**

The Town Clerk informed Cllr. Hogan that there had been no responses from the Ministers concerned with regard to Irish Immigrants in Great Britain and defibulators.

**Curragh-Lissywollen North Local Area Plan:**

The Director of Services informed the Members that they had 3 options regarding this Plan. The Manager in his Report had given them his best advice and the Members could now adopt the plan as it is, vary or modify it or reject it entirely. If they chose to vary or modify it, then these changes would have to be advertised again for public consultation and the County Manager would report back to the Members again.

The Report of the Manager was as follows:-

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Appendix B Map outlining locations referred to in submissions for the Manager's Report

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This Draft Local Area Plan was presented to the Town Council on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2006 following public consultation in 2005.

The Plan was placed on public display on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2006 and the closing date for submissions/observations was May 1<sup>st</sup> 2006. The necessary statutory requirements have been conformed with under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2002.

This is a report which summarises the submissions/observations received pursuant to Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 with my opinions and recommendations set out thereon. The Plan includes a part of the functional area of Westmeath County Council and a parallel process is in train by the County Council.

This Plan will be deemed to be made/adopted within 6 weeks from June 28<sup>th</sup> 2006 in accordance with the Managers recommendation unless the Members by resolution vary or modify the proposal otherwise than as recommended or decide not to make the Plan at all.

### **1.2 SUBMISSIONS**

In total there were 16 submissions received concerning issues ranging from zoning of individual parcels of land to access issues to comments on the overall Plan area. This report is confined to submissions lodged within the statutory public consultation period.

The area/location to which submissions refer are identified on the map in appendix B by means of the reference number.

## **2. SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED AND THE OPINIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MANAGER**

There were numerous issues raised in the submissions received covering five principal topics. These are dealt with below.

### **2.1 General Issues**

Only a small number of submissions referred to issues of a general nature, including issues such as National Policy Guidance and Sustainable Development. Each of these aspects is very important and is dealt with below individually.

### **2.1.1 Submission No.1 - OPW**

The Office of Public Works (OPW) stated that they would be supportive of the proposals outlined in the Plan as they affect State lands in the area. The OPW are prepared to co-operate as required with all relevant interested parties to help bring the Plan to fruition. (no Map reference).

#### **Opinion of Manager**

Comment noted and appreciated.

#### **Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

### **2.1.2 Submission No.2 - NRA**

The National Roads Authority (NRA) stated that they will rely on Athlone Town Council to abide by the national policy in relation to frontage development on national roads as outlined in Circular letter 1/95, and 7/2004. (no Map reference).

#### **Opinion of Manager**

It is one of the duties of the Town Council and County Council to uphold the official policy on the control of development with implications for national roads, promoting road safety. This policy and national guidance has been adhered to throughout the Draft Local Area Plan process and will be further implemented during detailed engineering studies.

#### **Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

### **2.1.3 Submission No.3 (part) – Cllr. F. Keena**

Submission 3 states that there needs to be a further emphasis on sustainable development, particularly in an era of rising oil prices, high electrical charges and high emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. It proposes that the following be included in this local area plan: 'That both residential and commercial development will attain high standards of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, including the following:

- Bio-climatic site design,
- Water conservation,
- Energy efficient strategies for housing design,
- Daylight analysis,
- High insulation standards.

(no Map reference).

### **Opinion of Manager**

There is a pending requirement for certification for energy efficiency and conservation in respect of all residential developments and this should, when introduced, satisfy the sustainable development criteria envisaged in this submission.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

## **2.2 Zoning**

Three submissions relating to three separate zoning issues were received.

### **2.2.1 Submission No.4 – Mr. Danny O'Neill**

Requested that the whole of the property at the entrance to the Cloghanboy Estate on the Ballymahon Road including the coal bunker and yard, semi-detached house and yard, three sheds, some open space and a detached residence and yard be zoned for Mixed Area of High Density. The proposal is to include commercial units (containing a medical centre, pharmacy, butchers, mini market, local shop and fuel store) with apartments overhead, apartment blocks, town houses and parking. (see (4) on Submissions Map, Appendix B).

### **Opinion of Manager**

A number of locations for neighbourhood centres have already been identified throughout the Draft Plan area and also at locations in the adjoining lands of Cornamaddy. There are also existing shopping facilities in both Clonbrusk and the Ballymahon Road adjacent to the area of the plan. It is important to ensure that oversupply does not occur thereby negatively impacting on the urban fabric due to a loose planning and development framework.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

No change to the zoning of the site.

### **2.2.2 Submission No.5 (part) – Messrs. Kiaran O’Malley & Company for Fides Properties**

It was requested that a couple of areas within the Draft Plan’s development boundary currently proposed for open space should be re-zoned to accommodate residential development. The areas intended for open space removal are located in the:

- a. Open space zone abutting the existing housing at Mayfield Grove and Cloghanboy estate, and,
- b. 50m wide open space zone alongside the N6.

The submission suggests replacing some of this open space in the area south of Lissywollen House. (see (5) on Submissions Map, Appendix B).

Submission 5 states that tables 16 & 17 should be revised stating that the applicants open space liability is 15% of its gross site area and it also states that the location of the pedestrian bridge over the N6 be positioned further west to link as directly as possible to the Athlone Regional Sports Centre to maximise the prospect of its being uses by the future resident population.

#### **Opinion of Manager**

The open space outlined in the Draft Plan was identified through on-site survey and by applying the best principles of urban design, sustainable development and environmental protection. The open space abutting the existing estates of Mayfield Grove and Cloghanboy allows for a buffer between existing developments, maintaining the existing stream, allowing for stormwater attenuation and protecting significant tree groupings. This area is to be overlooked from the Lissywollen House Residential Area development.

The location identified for the pedestrian bridge is considered appropriate.

As stated in the Athlone Environs Plan, as part of the Westmeath County Council Development Plan 2002 - 2008, ‘a minimum rate of 15% of the total site area will be required...’. Therefore it is not, as claimed above, 15% of the applicant’s site area. While every effort is made to have a selection of open spaces throughout the site, in some areas it is necessary to zone larger areas of open space so that, as stated in the Development Plan, open spaces are ‘in the form of useful open spaces within residential developments’. It is not appropriate for the council to consider individual land ownership boundaries while implementing the holistic approach of the Local Area Plan process.

#### **Manager’s Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

### **2.2.3 Submission No.6 – Mr. Tom Donohoe**

This submission requested that the land identified north of Garrycastle Bridge be zoned commercial / mixed use / retail.

### **Opinion of Manager**

It is proposed to zone these lands for Mixed Use development, which according to the Zoning Matrix allows for a variety of uses including Hotel, Hospital, Light Industry, Offices, Public House, Restaurant/Cafe, Sports and Leisure, Science & Technology, Shops - Local, Tourism - Recreational etc (For a full listing please consult the Zoning Matrix in Appendix B of the Draft Local Area Plan document).

However the inclusion of car sales/repairs and garden centres as normally permitted a development would offer greater flexibility and economic viability.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

Amend the mixed use planning matrix to include car sales/repairs and garden centres as normally permitted development (P).

## **2.3 Access and Movement**

The majority of submissions received were in relation to the topic of Access and Movement within the Draft Plan area. This topic can be further categorised into five separate issues.

### **2.3.1 Submission No.5 (part) – Messrs. Kieran O'Malley & Co. for Fides Properties**

To delete the 'temporary basis' of the Cloghanboy (secondary distributor road) access and instead specify a number of new houses, which would be able to gain permanent access and egress through this route. The submission suggests a figure of about a hundred units permanently accessing and egressing through this access point.

### **Opinion of the Manager**

As stated in the Draft Plan 'a secondary entrance to the Plan area from the N55 is proposed along an east-west route through the existing Cloghanboy housing area via a secondary distributor route. This access shall only be provided on a temporary basis until such time that the other principal access routes, as identified in the Plan, are in place, together with the full road network'.

The proposed temporary access measure was deemed appropriate so that lands to the southwest could be accessed on a phased basis and that the roll out of development could be implemented promptly.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

#### **2.3.2 Submission No.7 – Ms. Ruth Dwyer**

Is concerned about the roundabout proposal on the N55, Ballymahon Road at the entrance to Mayfield Grove and the proposed access route to Cornamaddy.

### **Opinion of Manager**

Maps 5 and 7 indicate Roundabout symbols and it is stated within the text that 'an entrance from the N55, to be located at the proposed roundabout from the Cornamaddy area'. The roundabout indicated on the N55 at the entrance to Mayfield Grove is proposed to facilitate the access and egress not only to the Mayfield Grove but also to accommodate the proposed link route to Cornamaddy (see Cornamaddy Action Area Plan - 2005). Any changes to the N55, including the provision of pedestrian crossings, signalised junctions, roundabouts etc, will require the approval of the National Roads Authority and are conditional on their approval. Therefore the proposed road symbols are indicative only and subject to a detailed engineering study, taking into account all aspects of safety.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

#### **2.3.3 Submission No.8 – Clasby Beale Associates for Mr. Jodie Moran**

Submission 8 refers to the proposed vehicular link from the N55 to lands in the Cornamaddy/Cornamagh area. The vehicular link at present is shown to dissect lands and it is strongly suggested that the proposed link does not dissect the landholding but instead the proposal should be amended to show the link along the western boundary of the site.

### **Opinion of Manager**

This proposed road link is not within the remit of this Local Area Plan as it falls outside the boundaries of the Draft Plan.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

#### **2.3.4 Submission Nos.9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 3 (part) –**

**Messrs. Sean Lucy & Associates for Mayfield Grove Residence Association**

**Mr. Eamonn Braiden**

**Mayfield Residence Association**

**Mr. Norman Dungan**  
**Mr. Patrick A. Deavy**

These submissions relate to the proposed Public Transport Link Route: allowing public transport, emergency vehicles, pedestrian and cycling access to the Plan area from the N55, through the Mayfield Grove housing estate.

In all cases, the submissions were opposed to the proposed access and egress through Mayfield Grove estate to the lands to the rear, some wishing to register the strongest possible opposition and objecting to any breach of the Mayfield Grove estate boundaries. The reasons against allowing Public Transport/Pedestrian access through Mayfield Grove estate are as follows:

- Increased traffic - detracting from the quiet residential setting of the estate.
- Dissection of an established residential estate from the proposed 'boulevard' would divide and segregate a well established residential estate - resulting in loss of social cohesion and community bond. The residents would also lose car-parking facilities to the east, at the location of the proposed collapsible bollards.
- Disruption caused by road works and additional traffic would serve to severely diminish the quality of life of the residents in the area during the construction phase.
- Road widening necessary to establish the 'boulevard' would result in the subsequent loss of trees, which have been funded by Mayfield Grove Residents. Public open space would be lost and the widening would necessitate the felling of a continuous line of Silver Birch trees.
- The loss of the only active, public open space in Mayfield Grove would create safety issues for children at play resulting in a significant loss of amenity and detrimentally impacting on the usability of the public open space.
- Loss of residential amenity and privacy - dramatic increases in vehicular traffic and public pedestrian traffic levels would further result in the loss of value of houses in Mayfield Grove.
- Loss of enclosure / sense of security as the proposed public transport/pedestrian/cycle link would seriously affect the sense of security experienced by the residents.
- The Plan is a manifestation of the undue influence being exerted by property developers in the shaping of Athlone Town.
- Removal of the boundary will destroy the integrity of the estate resulting in its unique identity being lost as it is absorbed into the surrounding developments.
- Reduction of open space within the estate below County Development Guidelines to create access to adjoining lands is unacceptable.
- The cul-de-sac design of the estate will be totally changed.
- The roadway will introduce noise pollution.
- The roadway will introduce increased dangers to residents along the new route entering and exiting their driveways.

- The impact of the roadway through an existing high quality residential estate will directly contravene the Westmeath County Council and Athlone Town Council Housing Strategy 2002, which aims to 'Improve and sustain a high quality environment in all residential areas'.
- Any revised plan should include measures, as deemed necessary, to protect and maintain the existing boundaries of Mayfield Grove and this is to be a stated objective of a revised plan.
- Proposals are contrary to the Traffic Management Guidelines (prepared by the Department of Transport, Department of the Environment and Local Government), which states that 'the design and layout of roads needs to be integrated into the development in a way that is sensitive to the local development rather than to dominate it'.
- The road will become a 'rat-run' for traffic exiting the relief road and going to the Blyry Industrial Estate, Ericsson's etc.

### **Opinion of the Manager**

Having regard to the impact of the public transport corridor on Mayfield Grove I consider that it should be excluded and that an access for pedestrians and cyclists only be provided.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

Exclude the public transport corridor and boulevard through Mayfield Grove as proposed under 3.2.2 Road Hierarchy 5 and Road Access 4 but retain a link for pedestrians and cyclists only.

### **2.3.5 Submission Nos.14, 15, 3 (part) –**

**Stephen Dowds Associates for Cloghanboy Residents Association**

**Mr. Ian Pillion**

**Cllr. F. Keena**

These submissions relate to the proposed Secondary, temporary entrance to the Plan area from the N55 along an east-west route through the existing Cloghanboy housing area via a secondary distributor route. This access is only to be provided on a temporary basis until such a time that the other principal access routes, as identified in the Plan, are in place, together with the full road network. In all cases, the submissions were opposed to the proposed temporary access through Cloghanboy estate to the lands to the rear, some wishing to register the strongest possible opposition. The reasons against allowing temporary access through Cloghanboy estate are as follows:

- The existing road network through the Cloghanboy area is not suitable for a temporary route to serve this Local Area Plan area as the roads are the minimum required width (6m) and would not be able to take construction or future residential traffic.
- This matter has been a source of contention in a previous planning application (03/1194), in which the entire development had relied for

- access on the road through the Cloghanboy estate, this was also the subject of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála (PL34.210068), which was refused on the grounds that the proposed access through Cloghanboy was flawed by infrastructural shortcomings of the proposed development.
- The road is unsuitable as it is long and tortuous, so long that an alternative emergency access had to be proposed.
  - The road is bounded by a major public open space area.
  - There are a number of houses directly opening onto it.
  - The entrance off the Ballymahon Road is difficult being beside several other junctions and having limited sight lines.
  - The existing road already has to cope with; the traffic of a housing estate, nursing home accommodating 76 residents and a creche for up to 100 children.
  - The lands subject to this plan have significant road frontage elsewhere and are not short of locations where good alternative access arrangements can be provided.
  - The proposed access through Cloghanboy during the construction phase would seriously detract from the residential amenity of the area.
  - The proposed access route would be hazardous to the safety and security of the existing residents. The conflict of movements would be prejudicial to public health and safety and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
  - The proposal to widen the road width within Cloghanboy to 16m to facilitate construction traffic is unnecessary and inappropriate.
  - Loss of residential amenity would result having a detrimental effect on the value of property in the area.
  - The length of the construction period has not been delineated by the council.

### **Opinion of the Manager**

This road is required temporarily to facilitate the commencement of development in this area which should be limited to 100 houses. It will be closed when alternative permanent access arrangements are available.

### **Manager's Recommendation**

Retain temporary access road and limit development to 100 houses pending the provision of an alternative permanent access.

## **2.4 Neighbourhood Centres**

Two submissions were received concerning the need for the proposed neighbourhood centre to the east of the Local Area Plan area alongside R916

**2.4.1 Submission Nos.16 & 3 (part) –**  
**Messrs. Joe & Denise Donegan**  
**Cllr. Frankie Keena**

A development of a new neighbourhood centre on the site of the existing Garrycastle Spar shop and adjoining lands is proposed. This site is located just southeast of the Local Area Plan area. The submissions request that this proposed neighbourhood centre be considered suitable to service the needs of Woodville residents, Blyry Business Park employees and residents of the southeast corner of the proposed LAP. It is stated that the pedestrian catchment rule of 500 metres for neighbourhood centres should not apply here, as it is not a high-density urban area.

**Opinion of the Manager**

As is indicated on Map 7 of the Draft Lissywollen - Curragh Local Area Plan the proposed neighbourhood centre identified on lands in the Cornamaddy Action Area Plan - 2005 would service the northeast corner of the proposed Woodville mixed use zone.

The proposed extension to the existing Garrycastle Spar to incorporate neighbourhood centre facilities would service the southeast corner, as requested, of the proposed Woodville mixed use area. However, as indicated on Map 7 the central-east area falls outside acceptable neighbourhood centre catchment areas of 500 metres, as prescribed in the Governments Retail Planning Guidelines, 2004.

A number of additional points also have to be taken into consideration:

- The bridge over the N6 Athlone by-pass creates a psychological barrier in terms of the flow of people from the Woodville mixed use area using the proposed Garrycastle neighbourhood centre.
- The proposed Garrycastle neighbourhood centre will be able to serve the area south of the Athlone by-pass, which could incorporate a significant potential population if and when the lands in the Lissywollen - Kilnafaddoge townland to the west of the Garrycastle neighbourhood centre are developed.

Therefore the removal of the local retail objective from the central-east area of the Woodville mixed use zone is unnecessary and unwarranted.

**Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

**2.5 Building Heights**

A submission was concerned with the recommended maximum building height of the landmark building proposed for the Lissywollen House Medium/Higher density development area.

**2.5.1 Submission No.3 (part) – Cllr. Frankie Keena**

Submission three(e) requests that the recommended landmark building height of 4 stories in the Lissywollen House medium/higher density residential development be reduced.

**Opinion of the Manager**

The buildings within this development area are proposed to be of a two - three storey height with an option for a possible four storey Landmark building. This building height is in no way excessive or overbearing for the proposed area in question. In terms of urban design it is advisable to avoid repetition in the design of a scheme. This landmark building will aid with the legibility of the site, allowing the street or place to be more memorable and distinctive and allowing people to orientate themselves with greater ease. It is an objective of the Plan to ensure the highest standard of architectural design throughout the development.

**Manager's Recommendation**

No change to Draft Plan.

**Overall Recommendation**

I have considered all the submissions made and I have given my opinions and recommendations in this report.

In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of Athlone I recommend that you adopt the Curragh/Lissywollen Local Area Plan as presented to you and as revised by my recommendations herein.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
DANIEL MCLOUGHLIN  
COUNTY MANAGER

Dated: 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2006

**APPENDIX A****SUBMISSIONS**

List of persons and organisations that made submissions or observations in relation to the Curragh/Lissywollen Local Area Plan

No.	Date Rec.	Name	Address	Subject
1	10/04/06	The Office of Public Works (OPW)	Board Support Unit, 51 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2	Supportive of proposals
2	15/04/06	National Roads Authority (NRA)	St. Martin's House, Waterloo Road, Dublin 4	National policy guidance in relation to frontage development
3	01/05/06	Cllr. Frankie Keena	Moydrum, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Building Heights, Access routes, Sustainable development, Neighbourhood centres
4	28/04/06	Danny O'Neil	St. Paul's, Cloghanboy, Ballymahon Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Zoning
5	27/04/06	Kiaran O'Malley & Co Ltd Client: Fides Properties	Saint Heliers, Saint Heliers Copse, Stillorgan Park, Blackrock, Co. Dublin	Open Space Zoning and location of pedestrian bridge, Access through Cloghanboy estate,
6	02/05/06	Tom Donohoe	Barrymore, Athlone, Co. Roscommon	Zoning
7	10/04/06	Ruth Dwyer	4 Mayfield Grove, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Roundabout proposal at the entrance to Mayfield Grove estate

8	25/04/06	Clasby Beale Associates – Mr. Jodie Moran	Millstream House, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	Proposed link to lands in Cornamaddy area
9	21/04/06	Sean Lucy & Associates Client: Mayfield Grove Residents Association	Mount Street Gardens, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath	Proposed Public transport/Pedestrian/Cycle Link through Mayfield Grove
10	26/04/06	Eamonn D. Braiden	56 Mayfield Grove Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Proposed Public transport/Pedestrian/Cycle Link through Mayfield Grove
11*	28/04/06	Mayfield Grove Residents Association	C/o Pat Bennett, Chairman, 1 Mayfield Grove, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Proposed Public transport/Pedestrian/Cycle Link through Mayfield Grove
12	01/05/06	Norman Dungan	37 Mayfield Grove, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Proposed Public transport/Pedestrian/Cycle Link through Mayfield Grove
13	01/05/06	Patrick A. Deavy	34 Mayfield Grove, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Proposed Public transport/Pedestrian/Cycle Link through Mayfield Grove
14	27/04/06	Stephen Dowds Assc Client: Cloughanboy Residents Association	Town Park Centre, Tuam Road, Galway	Proposed temporary access through Cloughanboy estate
15	28/04/06	Ian Pillion	16 Cloughanboy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath	Proposed temporary access through Cloughanboy estate

16	01/05/06	Joe & Denise Donegan	Garrycastle Spar, Garrycastle, Athlone	Neighbourhood Centre
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Note:

\*This submission consists of a list of 56 signatures.

The Members considered and discussed at length the Report of the County Manager and each of the 16no. submission and the Managers response thereto. They were unanimous in believing that links should not be permitted through Mayfield Grove nor should the temporary link into the Cloghanboy Estate be permitted. They also favoured the expansion of the uses proposed for the Mixed Use Zoning Matrix to include car sales/repairs and garden centre as normally permitted development.

The County Manager advised the Members that a pedestrian/cycle link through Mayfield Grove would be beneficial for all and that the temporary access to Cloghanboy would unlock the potential of the area and kick start development by offering immediate access rather than having to wait for the inclusion of the main access roads from the north east.

It was proposed by Cllr. Cooney,

Seconded by Cllr. E. Moran and resolved,

“Having regard to the provisions of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2002 in particular Section 20 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, the 16no. submissions received by the Council and the Report of the County Manager dated June 27<sup>th</sup> 2006 and the Draft Curragh-Lissywollen Local Area Plan we hereby amend the Draft Plan as follows:

(a) Ref. 3.2.2 – Pages 10 and 11

1) Exclude: Roads Hierarchy no.5 which reads as follows:

“5. Public Transport Link Route allowing public transport, emergency vehicles, pedestrian and cycling access to the Plan area from the N.55 through the Mayfield Grove housing estate”.

2) Exclude: Road Access nos. 3 and 4 which reads as follows:

“3. A secondary entrance to the Plan Area from the N.55 is proposed along an east west route through the existing Cloghanboy Housing area via a secondary distributor route. This access shall only be provided on a temporary basis until such time that the other principal access routes as identified in the Plan are in place, together with the full road network”.

“4. An entrance from the N.55 to be located at the proposed roundabout from the Cornamaddy area. Providing public bus emergency access through Mayfield Grove by creating a boulevard effect with central planting. This entrance will also allow access for pedestrian and cycling movement whilst restricting use by through traffic”.

(b) Ref. Appendix B – Mixed use Zoning Matrix – Page 41

Include: car sales/repairs and garden centre as normally permitted development.

As these are material amendments we further approve of them being placed and public display with publication in the local press and the prescribed bodies and those who made submissions shall be notified.

### **Dean Crowe Theatre:**

The Town Clerk had received the resignation of Cllr. Berry as a Director on the Board of the Dean Crowe Theatre and he asked the Members to now elect a replacement.

It was proposed by Cllr. McFadden,

And seconded by Cllr. Lennon,

“That we hereby elect Cllr. Hogan as the Council’s representative on the Board of Directors of the Dean Crowe Theatre”.

Cllr. Hogan thanked his colleagues for his nomination, but felt that his one voice would not be heard, so he withdrew his name.

It was proposed by Cllr. Butler,

Seconded by Cllr. E. Moran and resolved,

“That we hereby elect Cllr. Molloy as the Council’s representative on the Board of Directors of the Dean Crowe Theatre”.

### **Disposal of Land:**

It was proposed by Cllr. E. Moran,

Seconded by Cllr. McFadden and resolved,

“Pursuant to the provision of the Local Government Act 2001, the Housing Act 1966, Section 90 of the Housing Act 1966 and the Landlord and Tenant (Ground Rents) No.2 Act 1978, we hereby approve of the disposal of the fee simple interest in the properties as set out in the schedule hereunder:

#### **Schedule:**

<b><u>Description of Property</u></b>	<b><u>Name of Purchaser</u></b>	<b><u>Purchase Price</u></b>
47 St. Anne’s Terrace	Neil & Clodagh Flannery	€20.00
48 St. Francis Terrace	Sharon Nicholson	€38.30

### **Proposed Army Memorial:**

The Town Clerk informed the Members that the Committee had met and considered the optimum location to be in the recess of the western curtain wall of the Castle. He said the memorial was for the Members of the Defence Forces of the Western Brigade who died on active duty. If this location is approved, he added that the area could be upgraded and redesigned, while respecting what was put there in the past.

Cllr. Berry and other Members welcomed the proposal and the location and it was agreed that no names would appear on the plaque/memorial, thus making it a timeless memorial.

It was proposed by Cllr. Berry,

Seconded by Cllr. McFadden and resolved,

“That the Memorial to the personnel of the western command who died on active duty, be placed in the recess of the western curtain wall of the Castle”.

### **Housing Capital Allocation:**

The Town Clerk informed the Members that €1.5m had been allocated to Athlone for 2006 for the construction and acquisition of housing. He added that it is hoped to commence 63 Social Housing units at Brawney with 37 affordable houses, and 10 houses at St. Mels Terrace as well as the purchase of 12 others. He said that the Council should get 6 social houses and 12 affordable houses this year, under Part 5 legislation.

Cllr. McFadden expressed disappointment with the Part 5 figures, while Cllr. Lennon was disappointed with the provision of housing in general.

The Director said the Council is using its finances in the best possible way to provide housing, while the Town Clerk added that the provision of 190 housing units could only be regarded as success.

All the Members joined with Cllr. Molloy in wishing Mr. Billy Coughlan well in his new job in the Area Office and they thanked him for his work over the years

Cllr. Butler welcomed Ms. Edel Martin to Housing.

### **Proposed Skateboard Park:**

The Members were circulated with the indicative design and layout of the skateboard park, west of the pitch behind the playground and they all welcomed the proposal.

It was proposed by Cllr. K. Moran,

Seconded by Cllr. Lennon and resolved,

“That we hereby approve of the proposed location of the Skateboard Park within the grounds of the Sports Centre and the indicative design and layout presented.”

### **Special Meeting:**

The Members agreed to defer the items concerning the Regeneration of Battery Heights and Loughanaskin areas and the proposed Lissywollen Brawney Housing Scheme, until

July 31<sup>st</sup> when they would hold Special Meetings, one at 12.30p.m. and the other at 2.30p.m.

**Housing Strategy:**

The Town Clerk informed the Members that the Housing Strategy adopted in 2001 is due to expire in 2006, while the Development Plan (of which it forms a part) is not due to expire until 2008.

He recommended that the Town Development Plan be varied by the inclusion of the existing Housing Strategy and thereby extend the life and application of the existing Strategy, until the Review of the Town Development Plan in 2008.

It was proposed by Cllr. Molloy,  
 Seconded by Cllr. E. Moran and resolved,  
 Pursuant to the provisions of the Planning & Development Acts 2000-2002,  
 “We hereby adopt the Westmeath Housing Strategy 2001 in respect of the period ended December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008 and we further approve of the inclusion of the Strategy on the Town Development Plan and the implementation of the necessary process to vary the Plan for this inclusion”.

**Water Services Investment Programme:**

The Members considered the Report on the Water Services Programme for 2007-2014 and they agreed that there were two main issues for Athlone and to make a submission to Westmeath County Council concerning these.

It was agreed to request that they expedite the commencement and completion of the works to upgrade the capacity of the Athlone Water Treatment Plant and give greater priority to the Athlone Waste Water and Drainage Scheme and stage 1 of the South Westmeath Regional Water Supply Scheme. They should insure that their priority placings do not inhibit immediate progress including the approval of the Preliminary Reports by the DOE and the construction of the projects at the earliest possible date.

It was agreed that the provision of the infrastructure in the above projects is vital for the continued growth of Athlone.

**QUESTIONS:**

Question 1. Cllr. K. Molloy:

“What is current position regarding our development at O’Connell Street?”

**Answer:** **An Architect appointed by the Council is currently developing proposals to include car parking, housing and commercial development and this will be presented to the Council at the September Meeting.**

Question 2. Cllr. K. Moran:  
“When will the Loughandonning Area Action Plan be brought back before the Members?”

**Answer:** It is necessary to address the drainage of this area before the Plan can be returned to the Council and in this regard engineering consultants are preparing a report which will be presented to the Members in October.

Question 3. Cllr. P. Hogan:  
“Can this Council inquire from Westmeath County Council if there is a longterm lease contract for the storage of the e-voting machines and what is the annual cost?”

**Answer:** The e-voting machines are a matter for the County Registrar and not Westmeath County Council.

Question 4. Cllr. P. Hogan:  
“When will the footpaths at Cypress Gardens and opposite the Wash House turn be finished?”

**Answer:** Work will be completed by September.

Question 5. Cllr. N. McFadden:  
“Can this Council examine the Clonbrusk area and put in place traffic calming to ensure the safety of the residents?”

**Answer:** This matter will be examined and if necessary, a traffic calming scheme will be prepared and costed for consideration for funding in 2007.

Question 6. Cllr. N. McFadden:  
“Can this Council put in place traffic calming in the areas of Caislean Riada, and Hazel Wood, Coosan, Athlone?”

**Answer:** Caislean Riada has only recently been taken in charge and it is not considered necessary to provide any traffic calming measures at this housing estate. Hazelwood is not as yet taken in charge by the Town Council.

Question 7. Cllr. N. McFadden:

“Can this Council take appropriate action with Iarnrod Eireann, and the owner of the old shop at Sarsfield Square to clean up the entrance to this otherwise tidy estate?”

**Answer:** **The overhanging bushes at this location will be trimmed over the coming weeks.**

Question 8. Cllr. R. Lennon:

“What is the latest development regarding Athlone Town Council taking over the running of Woodville Estate?”

**Answer:** **The developers engineers are currently preparing a submission in respect of compliance with the planning permission for examination by the Town Engineer and at that stage, a programme will be put in place for the execution of outstanding works.**

### **Managers Orders:**

The Members noted the summary of Managers Orders circulated.

### **Note of Thanks:**

The Members noted a letter from the National Learning Network thanking the Council for their financial support for the Athlone People of the Year Awards and the Town Clerk for his assistance and support in bringing this event to the town.

### **Representational Payments for Elected Members:**

It was proposed by Cllr. Cooney,

Seconded by Cllr. K. Moran and resolved,

“Pursuant to the Local Government Act 2001, we hereby approve of the payment of revised annual representational payment to the Members as set out in the Department of the Environment Circular Letter LG /06 with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006”.

### **Conferences:**

The Members noted the forthcoming conference and the cost thereof:-

Cavan      AMAI      14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2006

**New look Athlone.ie:**

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Minister for the Environment, Mr. Dick Roche T.D., would be launching the new look website in the Civic Centre on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2006.

It was agreed that Cllrs. Butler, K. Moran, McFadden and Hogan meet with the Town Clerk to identify issues to be raised at the Members meeting with the Minister.

**Standing Orders:**

It was proposed by Cllr. McFadden,

Seconded by Cllr. Cooney and resolved,

“That we suspend Standing Orders in order to deal with the remainder of items on the Agenda, as the termination time had elapsed”.

**Increase in Outdoor Staff:**

The Town Clerk informed Cllr. Lennon that the numbers of outdoor staff are currently capped by the Minister for the Environment, but the Council has the staff compliment provided for in the 2006 budget.

Cllr. Lennon said that the public are not happy with the cleanliness of the town and that we should look to the Minister for more staff.

Some of the Members agreed that there area a few pockets in town that are bad but that the town is being well maintained in general.

The Members agreed that Cllrs. Butler, Lennon and K. Moran be the representatives on the Litter Plan Review Committee.

**Striking a rate:**

In response to Cllr. Lennon’s motion not to strike a rate in 2007, the Town Clerk said that the Council Members have a legal obligation to adopt a budget and determine a rate poundage annually and this can only be considered at the Statutory Budget Meeting.

**Sewerage works at Ional Grove:**

The Town Clerk confirmed for Cllr. Lennon that the provision of sewerage services at Iona Grove would be referred to Westmeath County Council.

**Athlone Triathlon:**

The Town Clerk reminded the Members that the Triathlon was going to take place on Saturday July 8<sup>th</sup> and to be mindful of the road closures.

He complimented Liam Heavin and the organisers and wished them every success.

**Footpath at Grattan Row:**

The Town Clerk informed Cllr. Molloy that this footpath would be examined and any works of immediate concern will be carried out. He added that the replacement of the footpath if necessary, will be put forward for consideration in the 2007 budget.

**Footpaths at Clonbrusk:**

The Town Clerk stated in response to Cllr. K. Moran's motion that the replacement of this footpath (notably opposite Barry's shop) will be put forward in 2007 for consideration by the Members in the Budget.

Cllr. Moran welcomed this but said that parts of the footpath were dangerous and in urgent need of repair.

**Use of the Plume:**

The Town Clerk suggested in response to Cllr. K. Moran's motion, that a small committee be formed to consider the future location and uses of the plume. The Members agreed that the committee should consist of Cllrs. Butler, Lennon and K. Moran.

**Footpath to Cornamagh Graveyard:**

The Town Clerk informed Cllr. K. Moran that the upgrading of this footpath can be costed and considered for funding in 2007.

**Damaged pumps at A.I.T.:**

The Town Clerk stated in response to Cllr. Hogan's motion that the matter will be pursued with the owners of the old petrol station, under the derelict sites legislation.

**Sarsfield Square – cul-de-sac:**

The Town Clerk in response to motions by Cllrs. Hogan and McFadden, stated that the question of traffic management in Sarsfield Square was considered by the Members in February 2004 and by a majority vote, the Members decided to retain the opening at the bridge to St. Mel's Terrace. He circulated a copy of the Minutes of that Meeting and added that the Town Engineer still advises against a cul-de-sac.

Cllr. Hogan requested that the Town Engineer meet again with the residents of Sarsfield Square. Cllr. McFadden said that people are using the estate as a rat run and this should be stopped.

The Director agreed to ask the Town Engineer to consult again with the Residents and to update the Traffic Management Plan, bearing in mind the proposed regeneration of the Loughanaskin area.

### **C.E.S. for Sarfield Square:**

In response to Cllr. Hogan's motion, the Town Clerk stated that Community Employment Schemes are a matter between communities/organisations and FAS. They do not involve the Council. He added that the Sarsfield Square Residents Association should in the first instance make contact with FAS and if at a later stage, they should require information in regard to suitable works for the scheme, then the Council would be pleased to advise.

### **Play Area for St. Francis Terrace:**

The Town Clerk stated in response to Cllr. McFadden's motion that it is not envisaged that the residual lands from the construction of the Railway Field Link Road will be suitable either in terms of size or by virtue of their proximity to the Road, as a play area for children.

Cllr. McFadden requested that this area of land be treated sensitively to provide some buffer between the terrace and the new road. The Town Clerk confirmed that this would be done.

### **Security at Marine View:**

Cllr. McFadden requested that bollards be provided to close vehicular access to Marine View, from Wansboro Field and also that the remains of an old wall in Wansboro be removed, as it provided an area for anti-social behaviour.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Engineer would examine the area.

### **Traffic calming measures in Millbank:**

In response to Cllr. Lennon's motion, the Town Clerk stated that a speed table was installed here in 2005 and a speed survey determined that 45kph be the speed in both directions. The limit here is 50kph and in view of the status of the road as a district distributor road within the hierarchy set out in the Department of Transport's Traffic Management Guidelines, it is not considered that the current operational speed is excessive. However he said, the Council acknowledges that the public road is not a

suitable place for children to play and a playground is planned for the infilled section of the canal north of Millbank, which will facilitate these children.

Due to the increased numbers of houses built in the area and the bigger busier Shamrock Lodge Hotel, many of the Members felt that extra safety measures should be considered for this area, as soon as possible.

**Development on the west-side:**

Cllr. Lennon requested that a committee be formed to bring forward the Westside Development Plan but the Town Clerk stated that the Council as a whole is totally committed to the development of the west side. The schemes currently being progressed, he pointed out, include the acquisition of a number of derelict sites, the regeneration of the Canal and children's play area, the regeneration of Battery Heights, O'Connell Street car park and the upgrading of the Promenade and Connaught Street Carpark. He added that the Council has already identified future projects but as always, progress is dependent on the availability of finance. He stated that it is not considered necessary to form another committee as the 9no. Members of the Council adequately fill the role of promoting and improving the Westside of town.

Cllr. Lennon felt a committee of business people, developers and Members would be better, but the Members agreed with the Town Clerk and felt that the Plan for the regeneration of the West of the town was being implemented as best it could and all was being done to further development there.

*This concluded the business of the meeting.*

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