

I'm asking that you refuse this Fantstown order for the proposed closure of the gates and ask Irish Rail to revisit this proposed closure and work with the local community to provide a viable solution that suits all.

The second motion proposed at our special MD meeting that day was in relation to Thomastown (XC201), and was as a result of a community meeting, which I attended in 2020, in Effin Community Hall. One of the main concerns highlighted on the night was to ensure that the proposed new bridge would include a wider section at the top to accommodate agricultural machinery movement, also to include a pedestrian footpath and for future forward planning to afford LCCC an opportunity in the future, to redevelop the existing road towards the village.

The railway line divides the parish and this new access can be a vital cog in linking the community for social events, school runs, access to the community hall and GAA field,,, the local,, and other social events.

The bridge has to be a two-way carriage road with a pedestrian footpath. As an elected representative, I consistently look for safe walking routes in rural areas (as we don't have the luxury of footpaths or cycle lanes). As we all know it is extremely dangerous to walk on the roads across rural Ireland.

While we were successful (getting 2 lanes) on the bridge, but a number of safety issues still remain, in relation to traffic movements at the proposed new junction onto the R515 Charleville/Kilmallock road. I would ask that this junction be reviewed again with LCCC road engineers.

Also, If Irish Rail would carry out necessary works to ensure that the remaining 2 cul de sacs that will be created when the existing crossing is closed to that it does not encourage illegal camping or dumping.

There is an onus on us as elected members, including Irish Rail and Limerick CCC, to ensure that this new bridge construction has to be a cog in a bigger wheel and to ensure that the new road and bridge has to become a main artery within the parish. Thank you for giving me the speaking time this afternoon to highlight our concerns as elected member of C/K MD on behalf of our constituents.

Cllr. Mike Donegan 27/9/22 NCW Oral Hearing

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
16-26	(16)
27 SEP 2022	
LTR DATED	FROM
LDG-	MIKE DONEGAN
ABP-	

Thank you for giving me the speaking time this afternoon to highlight my concerns and those of the elected members of the C/K MD. Welcome Ger Mitchell.

Firstly, The decision by Irish Rail to apply directly to An Bord Pleanála is a direct attempt to deny Limerick City & County Council the process of considering the extinguishment of a right of way closure of a road, which is a reserved function of Councillors. It also denies us the right to represent the local community. The elected members made their views known back in 2009 and now Irish Rail has decided to ignore us and bypass local democracy.

However, As Cathoirleach of the MD in 2019, I called a special meeting of the Cappamore/Kilmallock Municipal District, the agenda was to highlight the concerns of both Fantstown and Thomastown communities with regards to Irish Rail's Railway Order submitted to An Bord Pleanála.

We invited representatives from Irish Rail and Jacobs to attend our MD meeting and I proposed two motions on the day, which were unanimously supported by the other 6 elected members.

The first one, in relation to Fantstown, (XC187) calling on Irish Rail to reconsider its decision to close the Fantstown level crossing permanently and replace the crossing with a bridge, to link the community.

A number of issues were highlighted at that meeting, the same issues, might I add, that we highlighted at the oral hearing back in 2009, which I attended as an elected representative, with concerned residents.

The issues being .. 1. Dividing the community, 2. creating 2 cul de sacs, if the gates are closed permanently. 3. Concerns raised regarding access for emergency services, 4. Further intensification of the already dangerous, Ballinscaula bridge. As this is an agricultural area, large machinery movements over the bridge and onto that regional road.

In my opinion and it is my experience from using this crossing occasionally, that Irish Rail deliberately apply delaying tactics of up to 20 minutes, to send motorists to the Ballinscaula bridge junction for future crossings.... Incidentally, there is currently no pedestrian access through the gates as it is permanently locked for the last 3 years, so no pedestrian access when it's not attended.