



## Doolin to get ATM

Owen Ryan

CASH, for those who have it in their bank accounts at least, is going to become a bit more easily available in North Clare.

Euronet 360 Finance Ltd Irish Branch has been given planning permission for the installation of an ATM at the shopfront of O'Connor's Pub in Doolin.

Outlining where the ATM will go, the Clare County Council planning report says, "The site is located at O'Connor's bar and restaurant on the northern side of Fisher Street, within the settlement of Doolin. O'Brien's craft shop is located to the west of the site, with the Doolin Chocolate Shop located to the east. Views of the site are available from the road network to the south-west. There is a footpath across the front of the site."

The Appropriate Assessment section of the report said, "The site is 1km from the Black Head to Poolsallagh Complex SAC and pNHA. It is also 1.4km from the Cliffs of Moher SAC. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the fact that there will be no increase in the onsite loadings and the absence of proximity or connectivity to a European site, no appropriate assessment issues arise. I do not consider that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects, on a European site. An appropriate assessment screening report and determination is attached to this report."

Under a section entitled 'economic considerations', it said, "Such a facility would be an addition to the services provided in Doolin and would be in accordance with the land use zoning."

# Ireland taken to EU Court of Justice after Derrybrien failure

Derrybrien Development Society welcomes the news that Ireland is facing legal action over the absence of an Environmental Impact Assessment since the 'environmentally-devastating' landslide in 2003

Owen Ryan

IRELAND is being taken to the Court of Justice of the EU, having failed to comply with a 2008 judgement that it carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Derrybrien wind farm.

Tens of thousands of fish were killed, as a result of a landslide at Derrybrien in 2003, while 450,000 cubic metres of peat was dislodged.

The fact that Ireland is now facing legal action over the absence of an Environmental Impact Assessment in the years since the landslide has been welcomed by the Derrybrien Development Society.

In a statement last week, the European Commission said, "Although the Derrybrien wind farm was constructed already more than 13 years ago, no sufficient impact assessment has been carried out. Such impact assessment of certain public and private projects on the environment is required under the EU rules, before construction is allowed to commence."

"The scale of the development and its sensitive moorland hilltop location means that its operation continues to have an impact locally. The site could still benefit from mitigation and remediation measures, but these can only be identified after an Environ-



Martin Collins of Derrybrien Development Society, at the site of the mudslide 10 years ago.

Photograph by John Kelly.

tal Impact Assessment has been done. Ireland must, therefore, ensure that this happens."

The statement added, "The Court of Justice of the EU ruled on July 3, 2008, amongst others,

that Ireland had failed to carry out an environmental impact assessment for the 70-turbine wind farm – the largest in Ireland and, at the time of judgement, one of the largest in the EU.

"Its construction required the removal of large areas of forest and extraction of peat up to 5.5 metres deep on the top of the Cashlaundrumlahan Mountain, causing a 2km environmentally-

devastating landslide in October 2003.

"The Commission is requesting the Court of Justice of the EU to impose a minimum lump sum payment of €1,685,000

(€1,343.20 per day). The commission is also proposing a daily penalty payment of €12,264, if full compliance is not achieved by the date when the court issues its ruling. The final decision on the penalties rests with the Court of Justice of the EU."

Martin Collins of Derrybrien Development Society said he is pleased that the commission is bringing the issue back to court. "It's something that doesn't happen too often anyway. It exposes the difficulties and problems that are there from an environmental and planning point of view."

He said due care was not taken before construction began on the wind farm, nor after the landslide. "I suppose, from an environmental point of view, it was never properly assessed. There was never a proper Environmental Impact Assessment done before the development started at all and there was nothing proper done since either."

He holds the view that it is better late than never that an assessment take place. "It's very late in the day to be doing such a thing now. But it wasn't done when it shouldn't have been done, so what do you do? Do you just ignore everything and say, look it, it's alright and we'll move on? I don't know can you do that either."

"You have to take some kind of stand. The community took a case, with regard to deforesta-

tion, and that went against us at the High Court and the Supreme Court. Now we have a situation, where the EU Commission is saying that an Environmental Impact Assessment has to be carried out. You just ask yourself what has gone on in the courts."

He said he had expected that the appropriate assessment would have been carried out after the landslide. "I understood that there would be an impact assessment carried out. Now we're 10 years on from 2008 and nothing has been done. Somebody has dragged their heels along the way and hoped it would all just go away."

There is plenty to be looked at and Mr Collins questions the wisdom of building on bogland in the first instance. "I suppose, if one was to ask what the assessment would look at, one big issue is the whole thing of flooding in the Gort area. I think it would have a knock-on effect on that. At the time that the landslide occurred, and afterwards, one of the recommendations was this robust drainage plan."

"All of that does have knock-on consequences and effects. The whole thing of building on bog at all, from what I can see, they have gone away from that. Some of that bog was five metres deep," he concluded.

## Izak9 makes maths child's play at St Enda's school

A NEW teaching and learning resource is transforming the way children learn maths at St Enda's National School in Lisdoonvarna.

Pupils at the school are using an innovative interactive tool called Izak9, which is designed to engage all children by making maths more enjoyable through practical learning.

Izak9 adds fun by taking away the pencil and copybook and St Enda's principal, MJ Malone, says his pupils are reaping the rewards.

The result is an increase in pupils' enjoyment, which is proving to boost not only numeracy but literacy and confidence also.

Mr Malone explained that the colourful cubes, which are used in tandem with online problem-solving, are particularly beneficial to children who struggle with the subject when more traditional teaching methods are employed. "When it comes to working in a group and problem-solving, it can be those kids who really excel. Izak9 definitely lends itself to group work and active learning. The kids are thoroughly engaged. The teacher is almost like a facilitator in the classroom, who goes around from group to group," Mr Malone said.

Izak9 consists of 27 cubes with different combinations of colour, number and shape. Joint research by Trinity College, Dublin and Queen's University, Belfast, which was recently published in *The International Journal of Education Research*, found that students' enjoyment of mathematics was significantly increased by using the resource.



Izak 9 Superuser, MJ Malone, principal of St Enda's National School, Lisdoonvarna, with pupils, enjoying maths using the innovative learning resource.

Izak9 is making a big impact on teaching and learning in the Lisdoonvarna National School. "It has transformed the way I teach maths," explained Mr Malone. "When using Izak9, the classroom is set up in groups to facilitate communication among the pupils and among groups. You are covering the same content you would normally teach in a traditional way but, with Izak9 cubes, it's on a very innovative, child-friendly and discover-learning basis."

"We find it great. When covering the skills of the curriculum, at times it can be very difficult to find a resource that covers the reasoning, integrating, connecting and, in particular, communi-

catating and expressing elements. "Izak9 provides a problem-solving approach to the teaching and learning of maths. We are covering all the areas of the curriculum with one very simple resource. The strongest aspect of Izak9 is that it covers skills-based learning."

"While covering skills, it also covers a wide variety of the content, such as fractions, decimals, percentages, number theory, shape and space," he said.

Izak9 is proving successful in boosting confidence and social skills by the promotion of language. Mr Malone explained, "Izak9 is cross-curricular, as it integrates so well with oral language. Kids are having to ra-

tionally express their ideas and back up how they have come to a solution. The beauty of Izak9 is that it facilitates children communicating among themselves in oral language and mathematical language."

Izak9 was created by Derry secondary school teacher Franz Schindwein out of a determination to stimulate mathematical thinking and interaction among all pupils. The colourful cubes are used by primary and secondary-level children, with task-setting and assistance from teachers and the help of animated on-screen characters named Helix and Abacus.

For further information, log on to [www.izak9.com](http://www.izak9.com).

## Woodville gardens

THE snowdrops are appearing at Woodville walled garden in Kilchreest.

The walled garden will reopen on February 1, from 11am to 4.30pm daily, for its display of snowdrops and other winter flowering plants, such as acornites, cyclamen, iris, miniature daffodils and snowflakes, as well as winter flowering shrubs.

Guided tours are held each Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with head gardener Marie. Tours can be arranged outside of these hours by appointment.

Woodville's seventh annual snowdrop event will take place on Saturday, February 10, with special guest speaker Paul Smyth at 2pm. The title of his talk will be *Snowdrops and Spring Bulbs - The Good, The Bad And The Indifferent*.

## St Patrick's Day Parade theme recalls legend of 'The Flight of the Dishes'

IN recognition of Galway being awarded its status as European Region of Gastronomy in 2018, the Gort St Patrick's Day parade committee has chosen the local legend of 'The Flight of the Dishes' as the theme for this year's event.

The legend tells the tale of King Guaire, who, each night before dinner, would say a prayer that "if anyone needs this food more than I, then let it be".

One night, in the packed banquet hall of Dun Guaire Castle, Kinvara, the fully-laden platters of meat, fish and fowl took flight. They flew out the window of the castle and across the landscape of the Burren.

The king gathered his war-

riors from around the Burren lowlands to give chase.

They followed the dishes as they flew and found themselves at Eagles Rock, where the hooves of the horses stuck fast in the rock.

To this day, the hoofprints remain in the rock of the Burren.

Finally, the dishes landed at St Colman's Cave by the Holy Well, which is situated roughly between Gort and Carron.

The poor, hungry monk had been praying and, to his amazement, a feast was laid before him.

When the king heard this, he met with St Colman and gave him the funds to build Kilmacduagh Monastery, where Ireland's

tallest tower still stands.

This theme of food in all its aspects, "from the farm to the fork", will give participants plenty of scope to take part in the parade.

The parade committee is currently looking for more people to become involved in planning the event.

Anyone interested in helping out or participating in any way is invited to attend an open meeting.

This meeting will be held at the ICA Hall, Boland's Lane, Gort, on Monday, February 5 at 8pm.

The committee has already received the active support of Burren Lowlands and Burren Biz Network.

## AILG MEETING



(From left) Councillor John Crowe, Councillor Damien Geoghegan (president, AILG) and Councillor Padraig Conneely, Galway, at the AILG plenary meeting at the Radisson Blu Hotel.

Photograph by Arthur Ellis

## Aughinish Island causeway needs protection works – Councillor Hayes

Dan Danaher

A CASE for long-term works to protect the causeway leading to Aughinish Island, New Quay, has been presented by a local councillor.

Councillor Pat Hayes has urged Clare County Council to put remedial works in place to strengthen the causeway and, in particular, the section on the island side.

Speaking at a recent Killaloe Municipal District meeting, Councillor Hayes told council

officials that recent storms have caused more damage to this area, which now requires long-term works.

"There is a need for emergency minor capital works to be carried out in this area. I think short-term work needs to be completed as well. It was a learning experience for councillors when the Killaloe Municipal District was expanded, as we now see the difficulties for people living on the shoreline and coastline."

"When you are living in a community with only one exit and entry point, you are very much

dependent on keeping this safe.

"While I welcome the request to fund a long-term solution, I have been talking to different people concerning the need for short-term works. Hopefully, no further damage will take place during the spring period. It is a major challenge to ensure the entry road is kept safe. Rising tides and weather conditions are causing major problems in some places," he said.

Senior executive engineer, Hugh McGrath said the council carried out emergency repairs to a breach in the embankment in

this area last year.

Following the most recent storms, some damage occurred to the Galway section of the causeway and this has also been repaired.

"The Aughinish Island side of the causeway experienced some further damage. Significant capital funding will be required to upgrade the current sea defences in this locality."

"I am advised that an application for such funding is to be made to the Office of Public Works in the coming year," Mr McGrath concluded.



Students from Gort Community School had the honour of meeting the Minister for Education, Richard Bruton, at the PDST ePortfolio Day in Croke Park last week.

The Gort group presented the eportfolios they are working on as part of the GAA Future Leaders TY Programme. Pictured, from left, are Eoghan Hanley, national coordinator of the GAA Future Leaders TY Programme; Tadgh Dean, Laura Cafferky, Caoimhe Cahill, Minister Richard Bruton and Jason O'Donoghue.