

## *Comhairle Chontae na Mí*

*Halla an Chontae, An Uaimh, Contae na Mí*

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## *Meath County Council*

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Bypass Slane Campaign  
Slane  
**County Meath**

County Manager's Office

10<sup>th</sup> May, 2012.

Dear

### **Re: N2 Slane Bypass – Post Decision**

Thank you for meeting with me on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012. I undertook to write to you to set out what actions the Council is proposing following An Bord Pleanála's decision to refuse permission for the bypass in March 2012. As you know, the Board made it clear in their decision that, because of the landscape setting of Brú na Bóinne, a bypass would only be acceptable where it had been demonstrated that no appropriate alternative is available. It was in this context that their two 'Reasons and Considerations' for refusal were framed.

Since An Bord Pleanála's decision was announced, the Council has met with the NRA twice to discuss its implications and what further studies should be carried out to address the Board's views on alternatives to a bypass. As a result, we now propose to embark upon a three stage process as follows:

- Stage 1 - Review existing information, gather supplementary information and model possible alternatives to the bypass;
- Stage 2 - Consider the legal and practical implications of any traffic management alternatives identified in stage 1, and;
- Stage 3 - Decide what is the best option to address the traffic situation on the N2 through Slane.

Stage 1 has already been advanced. The NRA have a pre-existing arrangement with a specialist consultant who advise them on traffic related issues. They have designed another survey cordon, and identified 22 locations on the road network where further information and traffic counts will be gathered. Meath County Council have sought prices for this work and are finalising the appointment of the lowest tenderer. The surveys will be carried out later this month.

When the information from the new data collection exercise is available, it will be used to develop a transport model. This will give us an even more comprehensive view on transport activity through the Slane area. It will then fall to the consultants to produce a robust analysis of traffic management measures using the model to determine if any have the potential to be a possible alternative to the bypass in traffic terms.

If the above work concludes that a traffic management alternative would obviate the need for the bypass in traffic terms, then there are some other considerations that the Council and the NRA will be faced with.

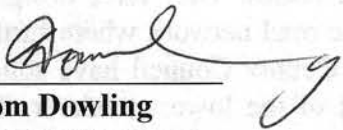
These would cover issues like the legal considerations in terms of the Council's responsibilities as the Road Authority; operational considerations of how the system could be implemented and how it would work on a day to day basis, and; consultation with the Garda Commissioner, the NRA, other local authorities and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

It is difficult to be definitive on the timeframe for a decision on the way forward as it is dependant on the outcome of the traffic studies, and possibly, consultation and legal advice. Having said that, we are conscious of the urgency of the situation, and we anticipate that we will have an indication of the results of the stage 1 work in June 2012. This should provide clarity on whether any traffic management options are worth pursuing further and if we need to move to stage 2 in the process.

A new draft County Development Plan (CDP) is currently being finalised and will be on public display before the outcome of the above work is known. The Council's updated policies and objectives relating to Slane will reflect the fact that the potential safety risks in Slane are still very real, and will re-state the Council's commitment to finding a solution to protect road users and local residents. The draft CDP will leave open the possibility of a bypass, and protect the corridor of the route that was presented to An Bord Pleanála in December 2009 pending the outcome of the investigations outlined above.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the participation of the residents of Slane in the statutory process for the bypass, and particularly the efforts made by the Bypass Slane Campaign and the Slane Bridge Action Group. I know that the issue of traffic safety on the N2 through Slane places an onerous obligation on us, and that you will hold us to account on the delivery of a solution. I suggest that you contact Nicholas Whyatt for an update on progress of the above work in the middle of June 2012. He can be contacted on 046 90977500.

Yours sincerely



**Tom Dowling**  
**County Manager**