

A road to ruin in Ballybeg

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THERE have been calls for repairs to be carried out along a stretch of road in Ballybeg that has fallen into an "appalling" condition.

At yesterday's meeting of the Ennis Municipal District Committee (MDC) Cllr Mary Howard (FG) called on the committee to outline a programme of works for Clon Road Beg, from Clareabbey, Kildysart Road to the Water Tower and Ballybeg.

In her motion, Cllr Howard states, "This road is unsafe and dangerous on many levels. The road surface is in an appalling state, its footpaths are non-existent as well as the road having badly overgrown hedges."

She said that stretch of road should be brought up to the same standard as the section from the Kilrush Road to the Water Tower.

"It's like night and day, the two sides of the road... People living there can't go for a walk safely," she added.

Cllr Paul Murphy (FG) told the meeting he had been raising issues with the Ballybeg Road for the past seven years.

He said the road has deteriorated into very bad condition and water also ponds in an area near the Water Tower.

Cllr Ann Norton (Ind) said you would "literally be rocking" in the car along the section between the Kildysart Road and Ballybeg.

She said it is important the road is improved, describing its condition as, "appalling".

Cllr Pat Daly told the meeting the stretch between the Water Tower and the Kildysart Road is a "third world road".

Cllr James Breen (Ind) requested the committee seek legal advice to find out who is responsible for the placement of ESB poles in what he said were unsafe areas of the road.

"It's lucky no one has had a serious accident", he added.

In his reply, Mr O'Dea said the Council carried out the works from the N68 to the Water Tower by means of a specific improvement scheme, which funding is not available from the Department of Transport at present.

"The council has €30,000 in the Roadworks Programme Restoration Improvement Grant and it is intended to structurally improve and seal the road from the Water Tower towards the quarry this year. Funds from the discretionary maintenance funds will be used to improve drainage at Ballybeg Lane junction," he added.

Mr O'Dea stated the road will be included in the 2015 Road Works programme. He said that previous proposals for an SLI scheme from the Kildysart Road towards the Water Tower had delayed planned works on the Ballybeg Road.

€1.75m market plan takes first step

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CLARE County Council has applied for approval from the Department of Environment to raise loans of €1.75 million to fund an ambitious re-development of part of the Ennis Market.

Members of the former Ennis Town Council previously approved the raising of the loan to develop a covered market and other infrastructural works at Garraunakilla.

In a report to Ennis councillors, Ennis Municipal District Coordinator, Ger Dollard states, "At this point in time, formal approval has not to date been received but the Council is continuing to engage with the Department in relation to the matter. It is unlikely that any significant financial requirement will arise in the

current year and it is the Council's intention to progress the project to a shovel ready stage. At that point, it would be essential that formal funding decisions are made in relation to then project".

"The project offers a very significant basis for rejuvenation of the area and the intention would be to follow on, subject to funding, with further phases of the Market redevelopment project."

The proposal to re-develop Garraunakilla includes the building of a structure that according to the Council will have "multifunctional uses". The proposed structure would consist of two adjacent pavilions with a plexi-glass roof covering the central corridor.

Mr Dollard told the meeting the construction of a covered market formed phase one of an overall re-

development of parts of the town centre.

The plan also envisions developments at Barrack Street, Lysaght's Lane and Moran's Car Park.

He was speaking in response to a motion tabled by Mayor of Ennis, Cllr Johnny Flynn (FG) at yesterday's meeting of the Ennis Municipal District Committee.

Cllr Mary Howard (FG) told the meeting the proposal represents a "very exciting project" for Ennis. She said covered market has the potential in time to become one of the town's "iconic" buildings.

She said it would be beneficial if the new councillors received a full briefing the project.

Cllr Ann Norton (Ind) agreed that it would be useful if all councillors were brought up to speed.

Cllr Clare Collieran Molloy (FF)

said she had concerns as how the Council could afford to take on such a costly project at a time when it is struggling to provide resources for "basic public services".

Cllr James Breen (Ind) said he had been approached by some people in the Market area who claimed the planning notice for the development was not displayed properly in the market.

Mr Dollard said this was not correct. He said the former Ennis Town Council received a high volume of submissions in relation to the project. He said there was a high degree of knowledge among the public about the project.

In his report, Mr Dollard that initial archaeological investigations had been completed and a detailed design is being prepared so the project can be brought to tender.



Amy Neville (Kilkishen) with dog Charlie at the launch of the South East Clare Show in Bridgetown.

Natasha Barton

Council to 'go all out' on new car park

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CLARE County Council has been urged to "go all out" and purchase a site in the Buttermarket, Ennis for the development of a new car park in the town.

That's according to former Mayor of Clare, Cllr Pat Daly (FF), who raised the issue at yesterday's meeting of the Ennis Municipal District Committee.

In a motion, Cllr Daly called on

the Municipal District "to seek funding for the purchase of the site at Buttermarket, Ennis with a view to constructing either a ground floor car-park or a multi-story car park, particularly as parking in the town is at a premium presently".

Cllr Daly told the meeting there are very few sites in Ennis that would be suitable for car-park development.

He said parking is a major issue, particularly for businesses in the town.

He said the Council should "go all

out" to purchase the site, even if that meant lobbying the Department of Environment.

In his reply, Senior Executive Engineer, Eamon O'Dea said Ennis Town Council had previously "pursued acquisition of this site for the purposes of car-parking and had agreed a purchase price and paid a deposit".

He continued, "Following examination of title and other matters, the Council on advice of the Town Solicitor and in the absence of issues being clarified by the liquidator, the

sale did not proceed. The property was recently offered again for sale and the Council has again submitted a bid for the property".

Director of Service and Ennis MDC Coordinator, Ger Dollard, said he was aware the site had recently been sold at auction and the issues around title had been resolved.

Cllr James Breen (Ind) told the meeting it is "very necessary" new parking facilities are developed in the town. Cllr Mary Howard (FG) said she fully supported the proposal.