



Comhairle Contae Lú  
Louth County Council

**Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended  
Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended**

**Notice of Intention to Undertake Development by Louth County Council Under Section 179A of The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)**

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The development will also include the construction of a new entrance onto the R171; provision of new cycleway, footpath, and public lighting along the boundary with the R171; new estate roads and homezones within the site; 109no. car parking spaces including both on-street and in-curtilage parking; cycle parking; hard and soft landscaping including public open spaces, playground, and private gardens; boundary treatments; ESB substation; lighting; laying of underground sewers, mains and pipes; underground attenuation tank; and all associated works.

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**Mid Louth Civic Services Centre, Fair Green, Ardee, Co. Louth, A92 RYT2.**

(Inspection and purchase - during public opening hours between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday)

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In accordance with the provisions of Article 81A(6) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, Louth County Council has carried out a screening of the proposed development to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site. Accordingly, Louth County Council has determined that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

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**Declan Grimes, Senior Engineer, Louth County Council.**  
16.04.2024

### Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme 2024

Louth County Council invites applications for grant assistance under its **Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme 2024**.

The Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme is available to local retailers and business owners within County Louth. Shopfronts are one of the most important elements in determining the character, quality and perception of retail streets and it is hoped to promote good quality shopfronts through this initiative. To help businesses achieve this, Louth County Council has also published a **Shopfront Design Guidelines booklet**.

Details of the scheme are available on [www.louthcoco.ie](http://www.louthcoco.ie) or you can request the design guidelines, application form or make enquiries by emailing: [shopfrontgrant@louthcoco.ie](mailto:shopfrontgrant@louthcoco.ie).

The 2024 Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme will open to applications on **Monday 15th April, 2024** and the closing date for receipt of applications is **5.00pm on Friday 27th September, 2024**.

**Colette Moss, Senior Executive Officer,**  
Economic Development,  
Louth County Council

County Hall, Millennium Centre, Dundalk, County Louth A91 KFW6  
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# Soc Dem candidate slams broadband issues in Ardee

**Donard McCabe**

[donard.mccabe@dundalkdemocrat.ie](mailto:donard.mccabe@dundalkdemocrat.ie)

Niall McCreanor, a Social Democrats candidate for the upcoming local elections in the Ardee Local Electoral Area (LEA), has formally raised pressing concerns regarding broadband accessibility, through party spokesperson Jennifer Whitmore, to Minister Eamon Ryan, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications.

In a detailed question submitted to the Minister, Mr McCreanor has called for immediate measures to ensure that residents of Ardee, particularly those in Cherrybrook Estate, are not left behind in Ireland's drive toward digital inclusivity.

This query highlights what he says are the ongoing struggles faced by many residents awaiting fibre broadband installation and seeks accountability from those responsible for delivering these essential services.

"The lack of sufficient broadband access is not just



**Social Democrats candidate Niall McCreanor**

an inconvenience; it's a barrier to education, business, and connectivity," stated McCreanor.

"In our national effort to ensure digital inclusivity, it is crucial that no community, especially those already digitally disadvantaged, is left behind."

In response, Minister Ryan referred to the government's ambitious targets set under Ireland's Digital Connectivity Strategy.

He stated, "By the end of 2026, all premises in the intervention areas, including

many in Ardee, will have access to high-speed broadband. Meanwhile, commercial operators like Open Eir are working to deliver services in areas already covered commercially."

Furthermore, Minister Ryan detailed the existing infrastructure developments, including the completion of 955 Strategic Connection Points across the country, improving broadband speeds significantly at public and educational facilities.

Despite these

reassurances, Mr McCreanor emphasised the need for ongoing vigilance and active management to ensure that the promises made are promises kept.

"While plans are well-articulated, residents need more than just promises. They need tangible progress and a clear timeline of when these improvements will materialise in their daily lives," he added.

For residents within the zoned BLUE area of Ardee who find their broadband speeds lacking, Mr McCreanor advises contacting their service providers or using the DECC webform to escalate the issue.

This approach, he adds, ensures that community members are directly involved in advocating for better service.

Niall McCreanor says he remains committed to addressing the needs of Ardee residents and will continue to advocate for enhanced digital infrastructure that supports local growth and connectivity.

# DkIT students take part in EU computing project

A group of ten Computing students from Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) recently took part in an EU funded project, called Start-IT in Belgium.

The DkIT students joined a total of 50 students from all over Europe which included participants from Ireland, Finland, Germany, Poland and Portugal in this recent project.

The aim of the Start-IT Antwerp project was to teach students soft skills and future skills in a multidisciplinary setting.

The non-DkIT students were mainly from Computer Science and Business Studies undergraduate degree courses, however, some students from other disciplines also participated in the project.

The DkIT students were from the BSc (Honours) in Computing in Software Development and the BSc (Honours) in Mathematics and Data Science.

The students from the various undergraduate degree courses and colleges



**DkIT students who took part in the project**

were formed into inter-college, diverse, international and multidisciplinary teams.

The student teams were tasked with producing a mobile app prototype along with a suitable business and marketing plan.

The teams got to choose the focus of their mobile app.

However, all mobile

apps had to relate to sustainability within an eco-friendly city. The teams were also required to give three presentations during the project's ten days.

The DkIT students really enjoyed both the experience and learnings of participating in an international project of this type, feedback from the students included, "I loved working in a multicultural

real-world environment. It opened my imagination to the opportunities I might have as a software developer in the future."

This Start IT Antwerp project is the last of a set of three projects that received funding from the European Union. The other two projects took place in Berlin (2023) and Porto (2022). A total of 30 DkIT students benefited from participating in these three projects.



# WOMAN DIAGNOSED WITH HEART FAILURE AFTER BIRTH OF FIRST CHILD BACKING APPEAL

By MARGARET RODDY

A young Co Louth mother who was diagnosed with heart failure shortly after the birth of her first child has given her backing to a new drive to bolster State funding for services provided by the Irish Heart Foundation to heart and stroke patients in Co Louth.

Primary school teacher Carmel Finnegan says that the support she receives from the Irish Heart Foundation give a reassurance that she can't find elsewhere.

It was back in 2017 that the then 33-year-old was first diagnosed with heart failure. She had returned home from Dubai with her husband Mark to give birth to their first child. After little Senan's arrival, Carmel was home for just three days when she began to feel unwell, suffering from fatigue.

She was struggling to breathe and her cough was worsening, and her blood pressure was "through the roof".

She went to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda, where her lungs were checked. She was given oxygen and later had blood transfusions.

After further assessments, she was diagnosed with heart failure and spent the first few weeks of Senan's life in hospital recovering.

Following the birth of her second child, Carmel began using the Irish Heart Foundation's Nurse Support Line, the counselling service, the Facebook Group 'Heart Support Network', and she also joined the Patient Champions Programme.

"I had no expectations of the services, but I felt it was better to hear from those with real-life experience who had been through something similar," she said.

"The services and groups I am involved in are so positive and no one is ever negative, despite their diagnosis. I would absolutely recommend these services to anyone going through similar to what I did.

"The services give me a support no one else can give me and give me a reassurance no one else can."

Carmel is now backing a nationwide campaign which is asking people to lobby their TDs and Senators to sign a pledge to support Irish Heart Foundation patient support services - with funding vital to their continued operation.

It is estimated that 16,000 people in Louth are living with cardiovascular disease.

For many, supports provided by the charity are the only help they receive after a life-changing heart event, heart failure, stroke or other cardiac conditions.

The practical, social and



**Carmel Finnegan from Dundalk says Irish Heart Foundation patient support services played a key role in her recovery.**

emotional support services begin when patients leave hospital and continue for as long as they are needed.

Now local people are being encouraged to ask their local representatives to sign an online pledge on [irishheart.ie/advocacy](http://irishheart.ie/advocacy) to ensure €1.2million in crucial annual funding is made available.

The Irish Heart Foundation currently receives just 8.6% of this to fund patient support services nationwide, which it says is inadequate to help the current volume of patients.

The services reduce costs for the State every year by supporting patients to continue living in their homes rather than requiring nursing home care or being readmitted to hospital - but only a fraction of this work is State-funded, says the charity's Director of Advocacy and Patient Support, Chris Macey.

"Nationally, 80,000 heart and stroke patients are discharged from hospital every year, or one every seven minutes, in many cases to a bleak and uncertain future," he said.

"One in three of all stroke patients returning home are being referred in to our services, whilst we are also supporting thousands of heart patients.

"These people cannot simply return to the lives they led before and desperately need the unique pathway of support services that the Irish Heart

Foundation provides.

"We are doing our utmost with our resources to ensure that people can make the most of life after a stroke or heart diagnosis, but we cannot guarantee continued delivery of these services."

Mr Macey says stroke patients leaving hospital often feel abandoned - and many heart failure patients end up in a revolving-door system where they need to be re-admitted.

"Our range of services, described by patients as a lifeline, reduce the need for admission to hospitals and nursing homes. A heart disease diagnosis or stroke often leads to post-traumatic stress disorder.

"But the counselling we provide is the only psychological support available to many patients.

"People are denied basic services and it is appalling."

In addition to counselling, the Irish Heart Foundation provides nurse-led needs assessments, weekly support calls, back-to-work programmes, fatigue management, peer-to-peer support services, social interaction and online exercise groups. Patients also have access to a Nurse Support Line to provide medical advice.

Once they sign the pledge, elected representatives' names will appear on [irishheart.ie/advocacy/](http://irishheart.ie/advocacy/) and they are also asked to share the pledge on their websites and social media.



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**The development will also include the construction of a new entrance onto the Ballymakenny Road; provision of new cycleway, footpath, and public lighting along the Ballymakenny Road; new estate roads and homezones within the site; 120no. car parking spaces including both on-street and in-curtilage parking; cycle parking; hard and soft landscaping including public open spaces, playground, and private gardens; boundary treatments; ESB substation; lighting; laying of underground sewers, mains and pipes; underground pump station and attenuation tanks; and all associated works.**

Plans and particulars of the housing development are available for inspection or purchase, at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the Louth County Council as set out below and are available for inspection on the website of Louth County Council at <https://consult.louthcoco.ie/> hereafter.

**Drogheda Civic Offices, Fair St, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92 P440.**

(Inspection and purchase - during public opening hours between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday)

In accordance with Article 81A(5) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, Louth County Council has concluded from a preliminary examination pursuant to the provisions of article 120(1)(b)(i) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

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**Cllr. Bernie Conlon with her parents Peter and Connie McArdle at the launch of her election campaign in Dunleer.** Photo: Colin Bell Photography

# Bernie Conlon hoping to build upon late husband Hugh's legacy in Dunleer

By JOHN MULLIGAN

CO-OPTED on to Louth County Council after the untimely passing of her husband Independent Councillor Hugh D Conlon in September 2021, Bernie Conlon launched her campaign to be re-elected in the upcoming local elections.

"Hugh worked tirelessly for the people of Louth for over three decades", says a proud Bernie Conlon.

"I have been living in Dunleer since I was born, where I run a small business. I have been community focussed all my life and an active member of Tidy Tows, the Dunleer Market House and the Darkness in to Light committee".

Speaking of some of her hard work since becoming a member of Louth County Council, she pointed to getting Louth County Council to repaint the Dunleer Library and the work she has put into getting a new premises on the Main Street for the new Library.

"I am the Mid Louth representative on the

Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor Forum and I am on the Joint Policing Committee, and on the Strategic Policy Committee for infrastructure and Planning in the Council".

"Although only a relatively new Councillor I feel I am well aware of the structures, procedures and protocols of the Council and how it works and the issues that the public have".

"I have campaigned and canvassed for decades with my late husband Hugh on many issues like the importance and relevance of the necessity for the re-opening of the Dunleer Train Station".

Other issues that she focuses on are social and affordable housing adding "I want to try and ensure our senior citizens feel protected valued and safe in our County".

"I'm a proud Independent Councillor for Mid and County Louth and I am determined to try my best and hopefully that I will be elected and get the opportunity to continue serving the people of Louth over the next five years".

# LEO mission to cut energy bills

"Sold and outdated equipment ramping up your energy bills? Could modern lighting, energy controls, fridges, ovens or manufacturing equipment bring down your energy consumption and costs? Maybe our Energy Efficiency Grant can help your business" explains Pamela Kerr (pictured) of Louth's Local Enterprise Office.

The Energy Efficiency Grant is designed to support local companies who are seeking to reduce energy consumption and lower their carbon footprint.

"The scheme allows business owners to access up to €5,000 of matched funding towards the cost of new equipment. Manufacturing companies have used it to invest in new production equipment. Cafes have used it for new ovens, dishwashers or fridges. Shopkeepers have used the grant to fund new lighting to reduce their energy usage, while other business owners have used it to replace outdated heating and cooling systems and install controls for greater efficiency" Pamela continues.

"The Energy Efficiency Grant is open to

businesses who have had an SEAI Energy Audit or companies that have taken part in the LEO Green for Micro or Green Start programmes. There are terms and conditions, but nothing too complex, and our team is here to help you with your application. Call us today on 042 933 5457 and let us guide you through the next steps."

She adds that if you have taken part in Green for Micro in the last three years or have completed an SEAI Energy Audit, you may be eligible for an Energy Efficiency Grant, which could help you to invest in new equipment or systems to drive sustainability and reduce energy consumption in your business.

"These are just some of the supports available to business owners across Louth

from the Local Enterprise Office, part of Louth County Council," Pamela concludes. "To discover more, visit [www.localenterprise.ie/louth](http://www.localenterprise.ie/louth) or book a free online appointment in the Business Advice Clinic to talk to one of our expert advisors about the supports available to you."

