

Proposed Extinguishment of Public Right of Way at Gloster's Lane, Thomondgate

This matter was raised at several meetings of the Monthly Briefing Sessions with the Metropolitan Councillors for the Metro North Area during 2017 where a number of requests were made to close off this lane way to reduce anti-social activity in the area. Following a site inspection last August, it was decided to initiate the formal extinguishment process and site notices were erected and a public notice was placed in the Limerick Leader on the weekend of 16th September 2017, in accordance with Section 73 of The Roads Act, 1993. Objections or representations to the proposal were invited from members of the public to be submitted up to and including 1st November 2017.

On foot of this notification, three submissions were received from Ms. Sarah Gough, No. 3 Thomond Villas (adjacent to the laneway), Mr. Derry Holmes, No. 38 Canon Breen Park (adjacent to the laneway) and Mr. Eoin McMahon via email (eoin@bilsphere.ie). I met both Ms. Gough and Mr. Holmes and discussed the matter on the telephone with Eoin McMahon. The following summarises the position of the three individuals:

Mr. Holmes is fully supportive of the proposal due to ongoing anti-social activity, frequent littering of the area and the throwing of rubbish over his garden wall.

Ms. Gough is also supportive of the proposal but is concerned that access to her property will not be adversely affected and she also is concerned about issues of ownership, maintenance and insurance of the enclosed area.

Mr. McMahon objects to the proposed closure on the grounds of loss of connectivity/permeability in the area and the additional walking it would generate for local elderly residents. He states that closing footways such as this is contrary to current "green" policies of encouraging exercise and is a permanent and irreversible step which may be regretted in the future. He is also concerned about potential damage to the tree in the laneway and he suggests the area could be developed as an amenity area or play area for children.

No objection to the proposal was made from any local residents.

An Garda Síochána were also written to for their views and the Superintendent's Office has responded to say that they support the closure due to anti-social activity for a number of years at this location.

The attached map shows the location of the laneway (red) and adjacent properties.

The laneway connects High Road, Thomondgate with Canon Breen Park. The front half runs between House No 2 and House No. 3 Thomond Villas and measures 17 metres long by six metres wide. The rear half widens out and measures roughly 9 metres long by thirteen metres wide. An alternative paved walking route between the front and rear of the laneway is available via an alternative access to Canon Breen Park located between No's 1 and 4 Inglewood Villas. This route is roughly 100 metres longer than the direct route through the laneway. The average person would walk this distance in about 80 - 90 seconds and a less agile person in about 110 to 120 seconds.

Recommendation:

Having regard to the level of anti-social activity at this location, the absence of any local objection to the proposed extinguishment and the availability of a suitable alternative pedestrian route to the other end of the laneway, I recommend that this right of way be extinguished.



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