

The Southern Star

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Call for taking-in-charge of Crossbarry waste water plants

The wastewater plant at the southern end of Crossbarry has been malfunctioning for many years causing blockages, flooding, foul smells and a serious nuisance for locals, Fianna Fáil Deputy Aindrias Moynihan told the Dáil. Cork County Council, Irish Water and the Department have all agreed that it needs to be upgraded.

“As it was privately developed, the only option to solve the issues is to have it taken in charge,” he said. “The Minister must release the new taking-in-charge scheme and give Crossbarry the chance to carry out the much-needed repair work and clean up the mess at the plant.”

In addition to the large plant at the lower end of the village, there are a number of smaller temporary plants, he said. “Individuals in the village want to build houses and others who want to upgrade their businesses. They are all stuck because of the inadequate sewerage connection. When Cluain na Croise was built in 2004 the plant at the end of the estate offered the best option for connecting the rest of Crossbarry village. Pipes were laid around other parts of the village and temporary plants were installed, pending the connection of these developments. The estate was not taken in charge and the developer collapsed when the building boom crashed.”

In response, Minister of State John Paul Phelan said the taking-in-charge of housing developments is a matter for the relevant local authority under section 180 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

“The Department launched the national taking-in-charge initiative in April 2016 to trial new approaches and working methods in supporting and accelerating national and local action on the process for the taking in charge of housing estates, including estates with developer provided water services infrastructure,” he said. “Cork County Council was allocated funding under the initiative for several proposed schemes to resolve developer provided water services infrastructure issues. I am told that €90,000 was allocated to estates in Crossbarry in County Cork. I understand the funding was used by the council to investigate the optimum sustainable solution for resolving these three developments, while also taking account of the wastewater needs of the entire village.”

Call to develop Desmond Castle as an interpretative centre

Details of plans to plans to develop Desmond Castle in Kinsale as an interpretative centre, given the national and international significance of the Battle of Kinsale in 1601, were sought in the Upper House by Fine Gael Senator Tim Lombard.

He said the town had an international element because not only did Irish forces fight the Crown forces, over 1,000 Spanish soldiers were involved in the siege and battle. “The Spanish Government is very much aware of the battle and has been proactive about it,” he said. “We need to step into the space and have an interpretive centre in Kinsale in order that we can promote the battle site. The centre could become a focal point not alone for Irish and other European visitors but also international visitors from the entire world to learn what happened during the battle and siege.”

Desmond Castle, he said, is a unique structure located in the centre of Kinsale. “It has been closed since September 2017. It housed a wine museum which is now closed. The castle could be considered by the OPW for use as an interpretive centre, thus allowing us to embrace everything Kinsale has to offer. In many ways, it has been blessed by the hand of history and geography. We have an historical building that could be used as a very important interpretive centre which would benefit Kinsale and the entire western seaboard.”

In reply, Minister of State Kevin Boxer Moran said Desmond Castle is closed for urgent conservation works and visitors have been unable to visit since it was shut at the end of last year. “Desmond Castle which was declared a national monument in 1938 has had a varied history,” he said. “This has led to a lack of clarity about the site at times, which really does not help in trying to market it to visitors. While it is closed, the OPW is taking the opportunity to look again at the site and the approach to it in order that we might possibly reposition it as a visitor attraction and in future marketing. I can tell the Senator that the theme of the 1601 rebellion has been suggested.”

Clearly, he said it will be a strong contender in the future presentation of the site. “My officials shortly hope to present the future interpretation and presentation of Desmond Castle site as an application to Fáilte Ireland for funding under its capital investment programme. I know that the OPW has high hopes this approach will bear fruit.”