

Sentencing adjourned for pilot found guilty of flying cocaine into airfield

A man who was recently found guilty of flying €8.4m worth of cocaine into Abbeyshrule Aerodrome in August 2022 has had his sentence hearing adjourned to January.

Michal Luczak (44), formerly of Primrose Avenue, Jigginstown, Naas, Co Kildare, now with an address at The Davitt, Dublin 12, appeared before Judge Roderrick Maguire and a jury of 12 at Mullingar Circuit Court (pictured) in October, for a trial which lasted three weeks and resulted in a guilty verdict.

He was facing four charges, including the possession of cocaine, possession of cocaine for the purpose of sale or supply, possession of cocaine valued at €13,000 or more for the

purpose of sale or supply, and the importation from another country of drugs to the value of €13,000 or more.

Those charges relate to the transportation of 120kg of cocaine, valued at €8.4m from northern France into Abbeyshrule Aerodrome, Co Longford, on August 4, 2022.

Appearing via video link before Judge Kenneth Connolly, Mr Luczak agreed to have his sentence hearing adjourned to January.

"I'm still waiting for my criminal record from Poland, which I hope will help the defence, but by all means I would be very okay with that," he told the judge, before asking if it would be possible for further adjournments if necessary.



Judge Connolly told him he was welcome to have his legal team bring an application for an adjournment before him during the current sittings of Mullingar Circuit Court if necessary, and remanded him in custody to January 12, when Judge Maguire will sit.

In October, the jury heard how Mr Luczak departed from

Abbeyshrule Aerodrome in a Cessna 182-S aircraft that was part-owned by eight equal shareholders, including the accused.

With him was his friend Timothy Gilchrist (57), who told the jury last week that he is serving a 12-year prison sentence, with six months suspended, for his involvement in the importation of the drugs.

The two men flew to Le Touquet airport in northern France, and stayed overnight in a hotel before flying to Dieppe, where five large sports bags and one large suitcase were loaded onto the plane before the two men returned directly to Abbeyshrule, landing in the early evening of August 4.

Garda surveillance was

put in place, with the Garda National Drugs & Organised Crime Bureau (GNDOCB), supported by other units, monitoring the aircraft.

When the two men landed, the six bags were loaded into an Alpha Romeo owned by Mr Gilchrist, who was later intercepted and arrested by Gardaí at Lough Owel.

The car was searched and the six bags were each found to contain 20 blocks, each wrapped in plastic with green tape and a picture of a sea-horse on them. Each of the 120 blocks was found to contain approximately one kilogram of cocaine, totalling 120kg, with a market value of €8.4m.

Mr Luczak had left the aerodrome in a black Mercedes, and was stopped at Collins-

town, Co Westmeath, before being brought to Ashbourne Garda Station for interview.

John Shortt SC, for the defence, told the jury that his client maintained he was not aware the bags contained such quantities of cocaine and that he had been told they held books and papers and accounts.

However, Cathal Ó'Braonáin BL, for the state, argued there were too many risks to the criminal organisation involved in the drugs operation for them to "take a chance" on Mr Luczak not knowing exactly what he would be carrying.

The jury returned unanimous guilty verdicts on all four charges after three hours and 16 minutes of deliberations.



FORBAIRT BHEARTAITHE UIMH. 94 AONAD CHÓNAITHE AG TAILTE 150M Ó THUAIDH DEN N55, LIOS UÍ MHULLÁIN BF., BAILE ÁTHA LUAIN, CO. NA HIARMHÍ.

De bhun cheanglais Alt 1 77AE (4) (a) den Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt 2000 (arna leasú), tugtar fógra leis seo go mbeartaíonn Comhairle Chontae na hIarmhí ceadú a larg ón gCoimisiún Pleanála chun an fhorbairt seo a leanas a dhéanamh ag TAILTE 150m LASTUAIDH den N55, i mbaile fearainn BAILE UÍ MHULLÁIN BF.

Cineál Forbartha: Títhe agus árasáin nua a thógáil. Beidh 94 aonad cónaithe san iomlán san fhorbairt bheartaithe, comhdhéanta de 86 teach agus 8 n-árasán. Cuimseoidh na hoibreacha beartaithe freisin páirceáil charranna, crua-thírdhreachú agus bog-thírdhreachú, oibreacha glanta láithreáin, bóithre rochtana, cosáin, soilsiú poiblí, naisc, draenáil, príomhlíne uisce agus cumhacht leictreach nasctha leis na seirbhísí reatha, agus na hoibreacha forbartha láithreáin coimhdeacha go léir.

Tá Ráiteas Tionchair Natura (NIS) ullmhaithe maidir leis an bhforbairt bheartaithe. Féadfaidh An Coimisiún Pleanála cead a thabhairt don fhorbairt le coinníollacha nó gan choinníollacha nó féadfaidh sé díoltú don iarratas ar fhorbairt.

Beidh cóip de na pleananna agus de na sonraí lena n-áirítear an Ráiteas Tionchair Natura ar fáil lena n-íniúchadh nó le ceannach ar tháille nach mó ná costas réasúnta cóip a dhéanamh, le linn gnáthuaireanta oifige (Luan go hAoine. 9.30 r.n. - 4.00 i.n., ach amháin Laethanta Saoire Boinc agus Laethanta Saoire Poiblí) ar feadh iostreimhse 6 seachtaine ón **Satharn 13 Nollaig 2025 go dtí an Aoine 6 Feabhra 2026**, ag na láithreacha seo a leanas:

- Ag oifigí Chomhairle Chontae na hIarmhí, Áras An Chontae, Sráid an Mhóta An Muileann gCearr
- agus in Ionad Cathartha Bhaile Átha Luain, Sráid na hEaglaise, Baile Átha Luain, Co. Na hIarmhí
- Suíomh gréasáin comhairliúcháin Chomhairle Chontae na hIarmhí ag <https://consult.westmeathcoco.ie/en>

Féadfar aighneachtaí nó tuairimí a dhéanamh chuig an gCoimisiún Pleanála maidir leis an bhforbairt bheartaithe i ndáil leis na nithe seo a leanas:

- Impleachtaí na forbartha beartaithe do phleanáil chúil agus forbairt inchothaithe sa limistéar lena mbaineann;
- na héifeachtaí is dóighe a bheidh ag an bhforbairt bheartaithe ar an gcomhshaol; agus
- éifeachtaí suntasacha dóchúlacha na forbartha beartaithe ar an Láithreán Eorpach má dhéantar iad.

Féadfar aon aighneachtaí nó tuairimí a dhéanamh i scríbhinn chuig an gCoimisiún Pleanála, 64 Sráid Marlborough, Baile Átha Cliath 1. Cliath DOI V902 **tráth nach déanaí ná 4.00pm Dé hAoine 6 Feabhra 2026**.

Tá na forálacha d'alt 251 den Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt 2000 a bhaineann leis an tréimhse saoire idir an 24 Nollaig agus an 1 Eanáir, an dá lá san áireamh, curtha san áireamh agus an dáta freagartha á ríomh.

Féadfaidh duine bailloch chinneadh de chuid an Choimisiúin Pleanála a cheistiú trí iarratas ar athbhreithniú breithiúnach, faoi Ordú 84 de rialacha na Uaschúirteanna (I.R. Uimh. 15 de 1986) de réir alt 50 den Acht um Pleanáil agus Forbairt 2000 (arna leasú). Is féidir teacht ar eolas maidir leis an bpróiseas athbhreithnithe breithiúnaigh ar shuíomh gréasáin An Choimisiúin Pleanála <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/home> nó ar shuíomh gréasáin Sheirbhís um Fhaisnéis do Shaoránaigh www.citizensinformation.ie.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 94 NO. DWELLING UNITS AT LANDS 150M NORTH OF THE N55, LISSYWOLLEN TD., ATHLONE, CO. WESTMEATH.

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 1 77AE(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) notice is hereby given that Westmeath County Council proposes to seek approval from An Coimisiún Pleanála to carry out the following development at LANDS 150m NORTH OF THE N55, in the townland of LISSYWOLLEN TD.

Nature of Development: To construct new houses and apartments. The proposed development will comprise of 94 no Dwelling Units, consisting of 86 houses and 8 apartments. The proposed works also include for car parking, hard and soft landscaping, site clearance works, access roads, footways, public lighting, connections, drainage, mains water and electrical power connected to existing services and all ancillary site development works.

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of the proposed development. An Coimisiún Pleanála 'may give approval for the development with or without conditions or may refuse the application for development.

A copy of the plans and particulars including the Natura Impact Statement will be available for inspection or for purchase for a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, during normal office hours (Monday to Friday. 9.30am - 4.00pm, excluding Bank Holidays and Public Holidays) for a minimum period of 6 weeks from **Saturday 13th December 2025 to Friday 6th February 2026**, at the following location:

- At the offices of the Westmeath County Council, Áras An Chontae, Mount Street Mullingar
- and at Athlone Civic Centre, Church Street, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
- The consultation website of Westmeath County Council at <https://consult.westmeathcoco.ie/en>

Submissions or observations may be made to An Coimisiún Pleanála on the proposed development in relation to:

- The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the area concerned;
- the likely effects on the Environment of the proposed development; and
- the likely significant effects of the proposed development on European Site if carried out.

Any submissions or observations may be made in writing to An Coimisiún Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1. DOI V902 **not later than 4.00pm on Friday 6th February 2026**.

The provisions of section 251 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 relating to the holiday period between the 24th December and 1st January, both days inclusive, have been taken into account in the calculation of the response date.

A person may question the validity of a decision of An Coimisiún Pleanála by way of an application for judicial review, under Order 84 of the rules of the Superior Courts (S.I No 15 of 1986) in accordance with section 50 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Information in respect of the judicial review process and be accessed on the An Coimisiún Pleanála's website <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/home> or on the Citizens Information Service website www.citizensinformation.ie.