

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Patrick Lalar and I am 66 years old and I am the applicant.

I live with my wife in Ironmills, Co. Lanes and we have four children and four grandchildren. All my children are now adults and living away from home with their own partners and families. I am farming all my life starting at a very young age with my own father and my two uncles. My family have farmed this land for many generations, and it has been passed down to me from my father and uncles. My son John has followed my footsteps and has been dedicated to the farm all his life. We operate the farm in a partnership setting as are most farms when fathers and sons work together. We are hard working people making ~~the~~ an honest living from the land. We comply with the Dept guidelines our Nutrient Management Plan is set out for us yearly by Teagasc and we are members of Bord Bia quality assurance scheme. We work within the rules + regulations and keep our livestock to great standards. This is my life's work.

We have always complied with the rules and regulations of all authorities and this is the first time we made such a mistake and it was purely misinterpreted and misguiding information. We applied for grants for the other buildings on our farm so we knew planning permission was needed for them in order to qualify for the grant + as we were not applying for a grant on this shed in question I didn't realise we needed planning.

Our stock numbers were high in 2016, and we were facing

another winter where the animals had to be wintered outside on a stand-off pad and we were concerned that this was not an ideal situation and they might not have survived if we got another harsh winter. I had heard and I believed that if the new shed was placed 100m distance from a road + 30m distance from a house that Planning wasn't required. I also didn't think there would be any issue considering we were building in an existing farmyard with other farm buildings between it and the neighbouring farm house + the public road.

If I could go back in time I would never have built this shed without the planning permission, but our backs were to the wall at the time and it was rushed. This is so regretted now as our lives have been ruined as a result.

I was due to go into get my hip replaced, I ~~was~~ knew if we had this shed in place, it would reduce the work load on my son John while I was out. At that time it was almost impossible to get farm help. So I felt the shed would have a better set up and keep the animals in better conditions while I was recuperating.

In August 2016 we started working at the building basing the plans on one of our existing approved sheds in the yard in Jannills. We had the tanks in when I received a letter from Lais County Council stating to stop all work on the unauthorised development in September 2016. We stopped all construction work. An Enforcement officer from Lais Co CC came out the following week. She advised we could build the shed and seek retention on it once completed. I believed this was a routine workaround to planning permission where the shed could be built first + then apply later.

we were advised that there shouldn't be a problem getting retention, so that's what we did. When we made the application it was granted permission by LACS CO. CO. in Nov 2017.

This permission was then appealed to An Bord Pleanála due to my neighbour

The application was then over turned by An Bord Pleanála in Aug 2018, and we were told to take down the shed. We were all shocked and devastated and very upset by this, it may be a shed to some people but this building is vital for our two families livelihoods and to repay a massive loan for the purchase of the land. This was the worst financial pressure that I have ever felt and words cannot describe how dark life quickly started to feel. I couldn't come to terms with how this had gone so wrong from the advice we were giving from the local authority at the start before we had spent huge costs building and submitting retention for the shed.

We hoped + prayed that we could overcome all the issues that were noted on the list from An Bord Pleanála, so we got professionals to put them costly reports together as quickly as we could. We re-applied to LACS CO. CO. in April 2019 + we hoped that our shed was not causing harm to anyone as shown on our reports. We couldn't comprehend the issues that were being questioned on the environment as we really felt this shed was more environmentally friendly in comparison to the stand-off-ped. In the new application we also provided a little access lane trying to help with the neighbours concerns.

My neighbours who lodged all the complaints are also dairy farmers. Their sheds + milking parlour are on the same yard as their dairy house over 200 yards from the shed in question. The gate into our yard is on the left so for many years we would have chatted on a daily basis. I would have considered them friends. We shared ownership of Machinery which is still in their use + possession. They need access through our gates in order for any large vehicles to turn to gain access to their yard. When the real lorry comes the driver needs to drive out into our farm lorry to turn in order for him to deliver their food. This was always done + still is to this day despite their numerous submissions against us + we have never locked the gate to stop them doing it. We are farmers, the objections are farmers + we feel life is difficult enough + people should help one another where possible. These neighbours have attended family weddings + events. However since we purchased the adjoining land in 2013 things were never the same. We were in less contact with them as they never seemed to be around the yard when we passed in text. Their whole family were asked + attended my sons + John's wedding in 2014 however they didn't come to any other event after that, or to my daughters wedding the following year.

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our yard has also been subject to repeated criminal damage since the shed. One case being on Christmas day in 2018, when the meal bins were opened + the expensive animal feed destroyed. Also when there were family events wires in fields were opened to let off causing mayhem + damage to livestock. Keys have been stolen from tractors in the yard + benches damaged. The Gardaí were contacted when it got too hot.

Dairy farming days are so long + such hard work. Regardless of the weather, holidays, Christmas, family events or community events the cows still had to be milked, they have to be fed, they have to be cleared out + with loads of other jobs. I have never considered it a job in my life as I loved it but this added pressure has ripped the love out of it + at this time in my life when I should be taking a step back + enjoying family time with my wife + grandkids I am under more pressure physically, mentally, emotionally + financially.

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This may not look like huge money to large businesses. but we are a two man band + I have worked the last 60 years to get to this point + there were huge sacrifices along the way. If the planning isit approves my whole lifes work was wasted in one sweep.

I feel such a personal burden that where we were trying to improve our lives by creating some spare time along with an income to pay back a massive business

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forward with our lives.

Thanks for reading my letter

Yours sincerely

Patrick Lalor