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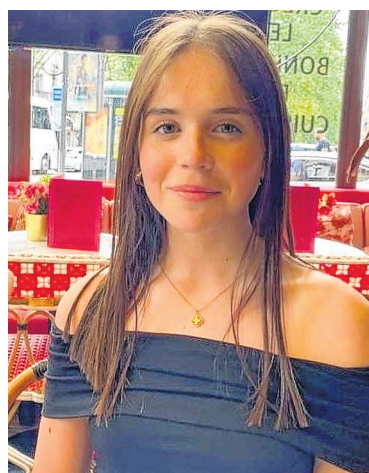
IRISH LANGUAGE SUPPLEMENT

Inside today



“The fact is that even before the Trump smackdown, Seamus Culleton likely would not have obtained his green card, because he had overstayed his 90-day visa

Niall O’Dowd
Opinion & Analysis



HOW TO DO THE LEAVING CERT ADVICE FROM 600-POINTS STUDENTS

Kate Byrne
Education

Councillors tried to zone 288 sites prone to flooding

Planning regulator intervened 93 times to stop zoning over past six years

On 30 occasions, regulator had to ask minister responsible to block zoning

CAROLINE O'DOHERTY
Climate and Science Correspondent

Councillors tried to zone almost 300 flood-prone sites around the country for development over the past six years, new figures from the planning regulator show.

The regulator's office had to intervene on 93 occasions to block their plans, warning homes and properties were under threat of inundation if they proceeded.

In most cases, the intervention of the regulator's office was accepted but on 30 occasions, it had to ask the minister in charge to issue a formal direction that the zoning not proceed.

A further nine cases are currently the subject of requests to the Minister.

The regulator's office said flood risk management was now a “frequent theme” in its recommendations to local authorities when county and local development plans were assessed.

The figures emerged as communities continue to pick up the pieces after weeks of heavy rain and flooding, with forecasts of more prolonged wet spells to come.

Kevin “Boxer” Moran, the Minister of State with responsibility for flood defences, said last week any homes built on flood plains in future would receive no publicly funded flood defences.

“I’m making this clear. I’m appealing to every local authority, particularly when the pressure comes on now, in terms of homes to be built; if a house is built on a floodplain, it will not be defended,” he said.

The figures from planning regulator Niall Cussen show elected members in some local authorities continue to underestimate the risks of zoning for development in flood-prone areas.

Since the office was established in 2019, it has made 93 recommendations relating to the zoning of land in areas at risk of flooding.

Some recommendations related to multiple sites, with a

total of 288 sites identified.

In most cases the recommendations were accepted and the development plans were amended.

In some cases, the local authority introduced safeguards that addressed the concerns raised.

In the case of 30 sites, however, the regulator had to ask the minister responsible for local government and planning to issue a formal legal direction.

These were issued to the county councils in Clare, Galway, Mayo, Donegal, Meath, Monaghan and Wicklow, as well as Galway City Council and Limerick City and County Council.

A further nine sites are currently the subject of direction proceedings to Donegal and Sligo county councils.

A spokesperson for the regulator stressed the importance of observing flood risk planning guidelines as extreme weather increased.

“Development on land at risk of flooding affects people and communities who live there and can increase flood risk in other areas, by reducing the capacity for floodwater storage on floodplains,” the spokesperson said.

“This issue is becoming more urgent due to increased rainfall driven by climate change.

“It is a core part of our work within the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) to ensure flood risk management informs the zoning of land, avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.”

Limerick City and Council Council received the highest number of formal directions, relating to eight sites that councillors zoned for development against the advice of the OPR, the Office of Public Works, the council's chief executive and the council's own flood risk consultants.

One of the rezoned sites was within the former Greenpark Racecourse land, owned by Voyage Property Ltd, which the OPR said lay predominantly within Flood Zone A, the highest risk category.



Rapist Larry Murphy linked to dig for two women

Tip-off related to Murphy prompts new search for Deirdre Jacob and Jo Jo Dullard

CONOR LALLY
and **JACK WHITE**

A search for the remains of Deirdre Jacob and Josephine “Jo Jo” Dullard, who both disappeared without trace in the 1990s, has begun based on information received by the Garda which they believe is linked to rapist Larry Murphy.

The Wicklow man has long been regarded as the chief sus-

pect for the murder of Deirdre Jacob, though not for Jo Jo Dullard, with another man questioned in 2024 about her killing.

While the excavation now taking place in Co Wicklow is effectively a search for the remains of either woman, or other evidence, gardai are not linking their murders.

Instead, information has been received by the Garda al-

leging something was buried on the lands at a disused quarry near the Wicklow-Kildare boundary. The area is about 9km from Murphy's former home and gardai are treating him as the person suspected of carrying out the alleged burial.

However, the information dates back to claimed events at the quarry three decades ago. And while gardai investigating the assumed murders of both women are keen the allegations are thoroughly investigated, the accuracy of the claims remains unknown.

The scene at Castleruddery Upper, Co Wicklow, was sealed off yesterday as a Garda search

team carried out its work. A mechanical excavator was used to shift large mounds of earth.

In the Deirdre Jacob murder investigation, a file was sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions in 2021, with Murphy as chief suspect, but no charges were directed.

In November 2024, lands were searched near Grangecon, Co Wicklow, for Jo Jo Dullard's remains, though nothing was found. A man arrested at the time was released without charge.

In 2018, gardai travelled to the UK to interview Murphy (60), who did not substantively engage with them.

Originally from Baltinglass, he was released from prison in 2010 having served 10 years of a 15-year sentence for the kidnapping, rape and attempted murder of a woman in the Wicklow Mountains in 2001.

Jo Jo Dullard (21) was last seen on November 9th, 1995, while on her way home to Callan, Co Kilkenny, after socialising in Bruxelles bar off Dublin's Grafton Street.

She called a friend from a phone box in Moone, Co Kildare, at 11.37pm, telling her a driver had stopped and she was going to take a lift. She was never seen again.

Deirdre Jacob was aged 18

■ **The search for the remains of Jo Jo Dullard and Deirdre Jacob at a quarry at Castleruddery Upper in Co Wicklow yesterday.**

PHOTOGRAPH: COLIN KEEGAN/COLLINS

when she disappeared shortly after 3pm on July 28th, 1998, near her family home at Roseberry, Newbridge, Co Kildare. She had walked into Newbridge town to organise a rent deposit for her second college year in London, where she was studying to be a teacher.

➔ **‘I hope they do find something’: page 3**

Data privacy watchdog opens inquiry into X ‘nudification’

CIARA O'BRIEN

The State's data privacy watchdog has opened an inquiry into social media company X over potential breaches linked to the “nudification” of images through its AI chatbot Grok.

Elon Musk-owned X, which has its European headquarters in Dublin, came under scrutiny in recent weeks after Grok was used to digitally undress images of people, including women and children, without their consent and share them.

The investigation by the Data Protection Commission (DPC) follows continuing engagement between X Internet Unlimited Company (XIUC) and the DPC on the matter.

The DPC said it had opened an inquiry into X under section 110 of the Data Protection Act 2018. This will focus on whether the company has breached

the European Union's GDPR rules under several articles, including Article 5, which deals with principles of processing; Article 6 (lawfulness of processing); Article 25, which mandates that the privacy of individuals should be built in at the start of every project and product; and Article 35, which requires a data protection impact assessment be carried out.

X has been notified of the inquiry.

Lead supervisory authority

“The DPC has been engaging with XIUC since media reports first emerged a number of weeks ago concerning the alleged ability of X users to prompt the @Grok account on X to generate sexualised images of real people, including children,” deputy commissioner Graham Doyle said.

“As the lead supervisory au-

thority for XIUC across the EU/EEA, the DPC has commenced a large-scale inquiry, which will examine XIUC's compliance with some of their fundamental obligations under the GDPR in relation to the matters at hand.”

The investigation is likely to take several months.

In response to the backlash, X made a number of changes to Grok's image editing features, including limiting it to paid subscribers. However, after the UK's media watchdog Ofcom began an investigation, the platform said it would no longer allow users to edit images of real people in revealing clothing in areas where it is illegal.

X faces hefty fines if the commission finds against it, with possible penalties of up to 4 per cent of total global annual turnover or €20 million, whichever is higher, for severe breaches.

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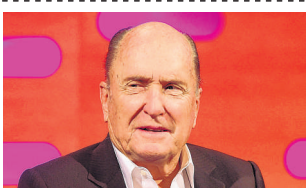
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Travel: The Department of Foreign Affairs has advised Irish citizens to avoid non-essential travel to Cuba. [Page 5](#)

World News



Hollywood: Robert Duvall, who starred in Apocalypse Now and The Godfather, has died ‘peacefully’ at the age of 95 at his home in Virginia. [Page 6](#)

Business + Your Money

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Savings: Tax changes to encourage people to invest more of their savings could be made in the next budget, Simon Harris has said. [Page 15](#)

Sports Tuesday

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GAA: Mathew Costello is an injury concern for Meath in their top-of-the-table Division Two clash against Cork on Sunday. [Page 20](#)