

Whistleblower wins action

● WRC rules that IPAS worker's protected disclosures caused his dismissal

A Galway security company has been ordered to pay €14,700 in compensation to an employee who was sacked after making a number of protected disclosures about safety concerns at an IPAS centre.

You're Secure Solutions Limited, which is based in Parkmore, was found to have unfairly dismissed and penalised security guard Christopher McDonagh in a decision issued by the Work-

place Relations Commission (WRC).

He had started work with the firm in June 2023 and had been deployed at locations including the Quayside Shopping Centre and the Ballisodare IPAS Centre in Sligo during his employment, which was terminated in April 2025.

An adjudication hearing of the WRC was told that Mr McDonagh was notified of his dis-

missal in a letter that cited a number of concerns, including a serious allegation that he had entered a female IPAS resident's apartment unaccompanied without a body camera.

Managing Director of You're Secure Solutions Ltd, James Barrett, gave evidence that the security guard had failed to engage with management, restricted his availability, failed to complete paperwork, and breached procedure by entering a resident's apartment without authorisation.

Mr McDonagh claimed that his dismissal had been directly linked to numerous complaints and protected disclosures that he had made between September 2024 and March 2025 concerning inadequate security cover, fire-safety obligations, and vetting procedures.

In his decision, WRC adjudication officer Breffni O'Neill found that the dismissal had been procedurally flawed, noting that the employer conducted no investigation prior to the termination, and held no disciplinary hearing.



Judgement...the Workplace Relations Commission.

It had also failed to present any contemporaneous evidence, CCTV records, or witness statements to substantiate the allegation that Mr McDonagh had entered an IPAS resident's apartment.

Mr O'Neill found that the protected disclosures had been the principal reason for Mr McDonagh's dismissal, constituting penalisation under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Unfair Dismissals

Acts, and the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.

The adjudication officer awarded €13,300 to Mr McDonagh for actual financial loss, reduced by 50% due to the worker's limited mitigation efforts and the employer's unreasonable conduct. He also awarded €700 for prospective loss and €700 for a breach regarding written terms of employment. An additional €500 was awarded for failure to compensate Sunday working.

Tuam excavation enters new phase

THE state body charged with excavating the site of the former Mother and Baby Home in Tuam is set to spend nearly €1.4 million hiring specialist forensic personnel as it enters a new phase of the project.

The Office of the Director of Authorised Intervention, Tuam (ODAIT) is seeking tenders from suitably qualified experts as it continues to unearth and analyse infant remains at the site.

It is planning to hire up to ten geomatics assistants to capture geospatial data and build 3D digital models of recovered human remains, as well as up to 20 osteologically trained forensic lab technicians to clean, scan and sort commingled skeletal remains.

Tender documents refer to this as "phase three" of the complex forensic project, which had officially recovered the remains of 99 children at the site by the end of July. It is believed that up to 796 infants could be buried at the location.

The tender states that the recovery operation is "large in scale and complexity", and will centre on the retrieval of commingled remains of infants and young children who died at the institution between 1925 and 1961.

The primary objective of the intervention is to afford dignity to the children who were "manifestly inappropriately interred" by recovering their remains, establishing their causes of death where possible, and either returning them to family members or arranging a respectful reinterment.

Prospective service providers have until October 16 to submit tenders, with contracts scheduled to run until at least June 30, 2027, subject to further ministerial extensions. The estimated value of the contract is €1.365 million.

ODAIT was formally established in 2023 under the Institutional Burials Act 2022 following public outrage over the burial of hundreds of babies on the grounds of the former institution run by the Bon Secours order.



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED) PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED)

NOTICE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Location: Cosmona, Loughrea, Co. Galway.

Nature & Extent of the Proposed Development

In accordance with Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and in accordance with the requirements of Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), notice is hereby given that Galway County Council proposes to carry out the following development.

The construction of a new residential development consisting of:

- The construction of 18 no. 3 bedroom housing units;
- Varied boundary treatments and landscaping works;
- All ancillary site development works and site services necessary to facilitate the proposed development, the site is adjacent to a Burial Ground which is a national monument NIAH GA105-066

The proposal has undergone a preliminary examination under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, (and the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended) and the Planning Authority has concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

The proposed development has undergone Appropriate Assessment Screening under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EC) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and the Planning Authority has determined that a Natura Impact Statement is not required in this instance.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development 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, 9.00am – 4.00pm, excluding Bank Holidays and Public Holidays) from Friday 25th September 2026 until Friday 23rd October 2026, at the following location:

- Galway County Council, Planning Department (Public Counter), Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway, H91 H6KX
- Galway County Council, Loughrea Area Office, Civic Offices, Loughrea, Co. Galway, H62 K065
- Galway County Council's Consultation Portal at <https://consult.galway.ie/>

Submissions and observations in relation to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development will be situated, may be made in writing to: The Planning Department, Galway County Council, P.O. Box No. 27, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway, H91 H6KX, or in electronic format via the special website at <https://planning.localgov.ie/en/search/application>. The closing date for submissions and observations is Monday 9th of November 2026 at 4pm.

Signed:

Damien Mitchell Director of Services

GALWAY ROAD SHOW

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