

CHRISTMAS MAGAZINE



PRIZE JUMBO & CROSAIRE CROSSWORDS

+ THREE-DAY TELEVISION GUIDE
+ THE BIG IRISH TIMES QUIZ OF THE YEAR



THE IRISH TIMES

CHRISTMAS EDITION

€2.70 (£2.00 Northern Ireland)

irishtimes.com

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Mórshiúl Lucht 'Nativitas'

vue des Éperonniers

Feicim fós féin na coinnle is a loinnir; feicim fós féin an choiscéim thomhaiste; cloisim Laidin liotúirgeach na n-íomann is buillí á mbualadh ar dhruma.

Seo chugam gan choinne an slua dlúth, le gliondar glórtha, le glioscarnach súl, anuas arís an tsráidín chúng-mionlach dílis creidmheach a' ceiliúr, mar ba dhual, breith an dóchais nua.

— PÓL BREATHNACH

Mórshiúl Lucht 'Nativitas' is from Pól Breathnach's collection An Cosán Ceilte, due for publication by Leabhar Breac in 2026.

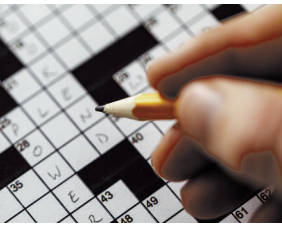


■ Angela Dominguez and Mikey (3) enjoying the Christmas lights on Mary Street in Dublin. PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN BETSON



Nine Irish walks packed with history

MAGAZINE



Chequered Flag sports crossword With top prizes

SPORT



Róisín Ingle Take time to cherish precious things

LIFE

Dartmouth Sq objectors set to sell homes

Agreement with residents set to facilitate early development of MetroLink project

Houses on square are protected structures and one sold for €2.7m last month

OLIVIA KELLY
Dublin Editor

Ranelagh residents who took a legal challenge to the multibillion MetroLink rail project are set to accept an offer from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to buy their homes on Dartmouth Square.

The surprise move, which will end judicial review proceedings, is expected to facilitate the early development of the rail line.

The project, set to be the largest infrastructure project in the State, was facing years of delay

if the court action went ahead.

Minister for Transport Darragh O'Brien said he was "delighted to hear the news that the judicial review has been withdrawn" and he wanted to "thank all of those who were involved in the mediation process for reaching this agreement".

In a social media post, he said it was "full steam ahead now to be able to go to tender and to procure this project, which is a project that we will deliver as a Government that's going to be transformative for the north Dublin area and indeed the Dublin area and the region".

The residents of 12 houses in Dartmouth Square West in Dublin 6 last month initiated judicial review proceedings against An Coimisiún Pleanála's decision to grant permission for the 18.8km, mostly underground, line.

The commission had in September approved TII's application to build the line from Swords in north Dublin to Charlemont, close to Ranelagh in south Dublin.

The route would have 16 stops serving areas including Dublin Airport, Ballymun, Glasnevin, Phibsborough and the city centre.

The houses at Dartmouth Square West back on to the Charlemont terminus of the line. The 19 residents living in the houses, and one company owned by a resident, sought an order quashing the grant of planning permission for the MetroLink. TII was a proposed notice party to the action.

Earlier this month, the company Kalamunda Co Unlimited, owned by Sharon McCabe, of Dartmouth Square West, withdrew from the proceedings. Kalamunda is the holding company that owns the McCabes Pharmacy group, which was bought two years ago by PHX Ireland, the owner of the Lloyds Pharmacy chain.

Victorian homes

At the same court hearing, residents were given a provisional date for the hearing of the judicial review next March. However, lawyers for the residents told the court they were willing to enter mediation, after TII proposed pre-Christmas talks in an effort to resolve the dispute.

Mediation discussions were held this week and it is understood residents are willing to accept offers from TII to buy their Victorian homes and will end their legal challenge to the

MetroLink project.

The houses on Dartmouth Square are substantial protected structures and, while they do not often come to the market, one sold for €2.7 million last month.

It is not known how much TII has offered for the houses, and whether their offer includes a small number of homes on Dartmouth Square West not occupied by those who took the legal case.

TII said it could not comment on commercial agreements.

However, its chief executive Lorcan O'Connor said he had personally met the residents in recent days.

"I greatly appreciate their constructive approach, which has led to agreements that work for all sides. This is another significant step forward for Ireland's largest infrastructure project."

MetroLink programme di-

rector Seán Sweeney said the withdrawal of the judicial review provides critical clarity for the market.

"Our focus now is on progressing enabling works and advancing procurement, with contract notices for the main civil works packages to be issued in Q1 2026."

TII is already in talks with a number of international consortiums who have indicated an interest in building the mega project.

DAA suspends Jacobs pending new investigation

ARTHUR BEESLEY
and MARTIN WALL

DAA chief executive Kenny Jacobs has been suspended on full pay, setting in motion a new investigation into his conduct after months of turmoil in the State airports group.

The move raises the possibility of Mr Jacobs taking an action in the High Court in a bid to block his suspension from the operator of Dublin and Cork airports. However, his intentions

were not immediately clear. Mr Jacobs did not take questions when reached by phone, saying: "I can't talk, sorry."

The development follows prolonged disruption after new issues emerged when a barrister, Mark Connaughton SC, was investigating two formal complaints against Mr Jacobs in the spring and summer.

Although Mr Connaughton did not uphold the original complaints, the new issues prompted board anxiety about Mr

Jacobs's role as chief executive and ultimately led directors to conclude he was unsuitable for the role.

"The board has asked me to share with you today that our CEO will take some time out of the business," said a note emailed by DAA chief people officer Siobhán Griffin to more than 4,000 staff at about 9pm last night.

"In combination with the DAA executive, the recent appointment of Nick Cole as deputy

CEO ensures there will be continuity of leadership throughout this period."

Although the note did not elaborate on the circumstances, two people briefed on the situation said Mr Jacobs had been suspended pending an investigation. The terms of reference remain unclear.

The suspension followed a DAA board meeting on Monday, at which Mr Jacobs made a submission challenging the board.

The board did not previously investigate the new issues because it opted instead to enter mediation with Mr Jacobs.

Those talks led to a draft exit deal in September under which Mr Jacobs was supposed to leave DAA in January. He was to receive €960,000 in exit pay and a separate sum for legal fees built up during and after the Connaughton investigation. Minister for Transport Darragh O'Brien in November refused to approve the deal.

Weather

Dry day with spells of sunshine. Highs of 5-8 degrees in light to moderate breezes.

THE IRISH TIMES
24-28 Tara Street, Dublin 2.
D02 CX89
Telephone: (01) 9203900
Online: irishtimes.com
The recommended retail price of THE IRISH TIMES in the Republic of Ireland is €2.70
Subscriptions: Tel: (01) 9203901
Email: subscribe@irishtimes.com



Home News

Dunsink: Development of thousands of homes at a former landfill site in north Dublin is to be accelerated in an attempt to address the housing crisis. Page 2

Will: A widow had the necessary capacity when she left her home to one of her nieces, a judge ruled. Page 5

World News



Ukraine: Millions of people were without power after another deadly wave of Russian missile and drone strikes. Page 6

Business Today

Legal affairs: Eversheds Sutherland (International) has signed up to lease a building in Dublin 2 as it continues to add staff. Page 12

Iseq: Dublin index is on track to end 2025 with its biggest annual surge since the State exited the bailout. Page 13

Sports Wednesday

Racing: A crammed Christmas schedule starts on St Stephen's Day with Willie Mullins in the unusual position of hoping for a festive form boost. Page 15

Rugby: Leinster hooker Rónan Kelleher is set on revenge against Munster at Thomond Park on Saturday. Page 14

Safe Deposit Box Rental

(01) 254 7900 MerrionVaults.ie

SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFO

From €5 per week

Invest in Gold & Silver Bullion

(01) 254 7901 MerrionGold.ie

SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFO

Trusted by our clients – Excellent rating on Trustpilot

