

John Alex Kane entering Longford courthouse ahead of his sentencing hearing

Midlands car dealer is jailed for handling stolen vehicles

Salesman had pleaded guilty

LIAM COSGROVE

A midlands-based car dealer who settled a multi-million-euro tax bill with Revenue has been sentenced to 19 months in prison for handling stolen property.

John Alex Kane (50), of Cartron, Granard, Co Longford, was handed down the sentence by Judge Kenneth Connolly at a sitting of Longford Circuit Criminal Court yesterday.

The car dealer pleaded guilty in January last year on the basis of "recklessness" arising from a lengthy garda investigation into the theft of a number of stolen tractors and 4x4s in the latter part of 2017 and into early 2018.

Kane, who has 22 previous convictions, has previously been jailed for breaches of court orders in relation to a receiver's attempts to satisfy a €4.9m judgment that Revenue secured in 2009 over the non-payment of tax on car sales.

Shane Geraghty BL, counsel for the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), outlined how "certain items of interest" were discovered by gardaí and members from the Stolen Motor Vehicles Investigation Unit following two separate searches of Rathcronin Motors in Granard in February and March 2018.

Among them were a blue Toyota Hilux and a New Holland TM155 tractor, which had been stolen from a farm in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford, and a farm in Cambridgeshire in England, respectively.

Gardaí also came across an NCT declaration form and a sales invoice from Malpas Tractors in England, with investigations establishing that that tractor was never sold by

Malpas Tractors. Enquiries later found the note belonged to a John Deere 6320 tractor whose registered owner was a resident in Wales.

It was discovered the vehicle had been sold on numerous occasions before being purchased by a Spanish buyer in July 2017. Det Gda O'Sullivan found the tractor had been re-registered in Ireland.

In January 2018, the court was told, Kane sold the tractor to a local taxi driver in Granard for €25,000.

It was established the tractor had been stolen from a donkey sanctuary in Devon, England, in November 2017.

Kane also pleaded guilty to three counts of forgery that were "taken into consideration" by the court.

This concerned three vehicles that had been registered in a Portuguese national's name.

In mitigation, Michael O'Higgins SC said his client was a man who had effectively worked in the motor trade all his adult life.

He said the €25,000 he had received from the local taxi driver had been repaid in full.

Judge Kenneth Connolly sentenced Kane to two years and four months in prison for the possession of the stolen New Holland tractor charge, suspending the last nine months for a period of two years.

A two-and-a-half-year sentence was issued for the deception charge, with the entirety of its duration suspended for four years.

Kane, who had come to court with €15,000, was directed to hand over €5,000 of that sum to the UK donkey sanctuary.

The remaining €10,000 was used to fix Kane's bail as Judge Connolly put a stay on an outstanding committal warrant until next Tuesday to allow Kane "get his affairs in order".

Sharks found in waters off Brazil test positive for cocaine

LYDIA CHANTLER-HICKS

Sharks found in waters off Brazil have tested positive for cocaine, prompting fears the drug could potentially be affecting their behaviour.

The illicit drug has widely been detected in aquatic ecosystems, but its presence in free-ranging sharks is not thought to have previously been tested.

A new study examined 13 Brazilian sharpnose sharks, taken aboard by small fishing boats, and found every one of them tested positive for cocaine.

The drug was found in the sharks' muscle and livers, while

92pc also tested positive for cocaine's main metabolite, benzoylecgonine.

Sara Novais, a marine ecotoxicologist at the Marine and Environmental Sciences Centre of the Polytechnic University of Leiria, told *Science* the findings are "very important and potentially worrying".

Dr Enrico Mendes Saggiaro, also an ecotoxicologist at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, told *The Telegraph* the cocaine could be affecting sharks' behaviour.

"Cocaine targets the brain, and hyperactive and erratic behaviour has been noted in other animals," he said. "It's a possibility and

further studies are required."

There are also fears cocaine could reduce the life expectancy of sharks.

How the animals came to ingest the cocaine is not known, but it is thought the drug has been leaked into Brazil's water system through human waste, and through drains from illegal laboratories.

Cocaine has been found in seas and water systems around the world, including in the waters off England's south coast, and in London's sewage system.

Dr Rachel Ann Hauser-Davis, a British scientist and member of the research team from the

Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in Rio de Janeiro, told *The Telegraph* the study showed "chronic exposure due to human use of cocaine in Rio de Janeiro and the discharge of human urine and faeces by sewage outfalls, as well as from illegal labs".

Dr Hauser-Davis dismissed another theory, that the apex predators could have been feeding on bricks of cocaine dumped at sea by drug smugglers.

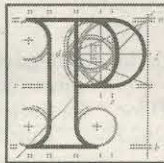
Last year, Discovery Channel documentary *Cocaine Sharks* explored rumours that sharks were feeding on bales of cocaine jettisoned in the waters off Florida. (© Evening Standard)

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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An Bord Pleanála

Roads Acts 1993 to 2015

Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2022

ABP-313892-22

Notice of a decision by An Bord Pleanála in relation to the proposed Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme, all in the County of Dublin.

An Bord Pleanála has, on the 21st June 2024, in exercise of the powers vested in it by section 51 of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended, made an order to approve subject to conditions the proposed road as submitted by the National Transport Authority (NTA).

The conditions of the Board's decision are summarised as follows:

1. The proposed road development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.
2. (a) All mitigation, environmental commitments and monitoring measures identified in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) shall be implemented in full as part of the proposed development.
(b) All mitigation and environmental commitments identified in the Natura Impact Statement shall be implemented in full as part of the proposed development.
3. An ecologist will be appointed by the contractor. Where appropriate, monitoring shall be undertaken by specialists. Monitoring schedules shall be included in Site Specific Habitats Protection and Re-instatement Method Statements.
4. The developer shall submit a Construction Traffic Management Plan and a Construction Stage Mobility Management Plan for the construction phase of the development for the written agreement of the planning authority.
5. All works to protected structures, and structures of cultural heritage interest shall be monitored and by an Architectural Conservation Specialist, Re-instatement Method Statements shall be submitted to the planning authority to be held on file.
6. Noise monitoring shall be carried out during the construction phase of the proposed road development by the developer.
7. Drainage arrangements shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works in respect of both the construction and operation phases of the proposed development.
8. The developer shall prepare, in consultation with the relevant statutory agencies, an updated Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
9. The developer shall monitor queuing time/delays at each works location and record traffic flows on the local road network.
10. Prior to the replacement of trees, hedging and planting which is to be removed the NTA shall liaise with the relevant landowner. The NTA shall employ an arboriculturist and Landscape Architect for the duration of the proposed works.
11. Tree protection measures shall be put in place prior to the commencement of development.
12. All soft landscaping details shall be submitted to the planning authority prior to implementation.
13. Details of the proposed public lighting system shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority.
14. The developer shall facilitate the preservation, recording and protection of archaeological materials or features that may exist within the site. The developer shall –
(a) employ an archaeologist who shall monitor all site investigations and excavation works, and
(b) provide arrangements for the recording and for the removal of any archaeological material which the authority considers appropriate to remove.
15. The developer shall submit an Invasive Species Management Plan to the planning authority.
16. (a) Trees to be felled shall be examined prior to felling and demolition to determine the presence of bat roosts.
(b) No ground clearance shall be undertaken, and no vegetation shall be cleared from the 1st day of March to the 31st day of August, unless otherwise agreed with the planning authority.

The full text of the Board's decision, including conditions, can be viewed on the Board's website at <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/313892>. A copy of the Board's decision and the EIAR is available for inspection at the offices of the National Transport Authority during office hours on working days for a period of 8 weeks beginning on the date of publication of this notice.

A person may question the validity of a decision by the Board 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.

Practical information on the review mechanism can be accessed under the heading Legal Notices – Judicial Review Notice on the Board's website www.pleanala.ie or on the Citizens Information Service website www.citizensinformation.ie

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