

CHAMPION MOTORING

Nissan Qashqai in a class of its own

by Seán Creedon

IN a review of the Nissan Qashqai a few years ago I said that former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher did us all a favour when her Government sold Britain as a 'gateway to Europe.'

Maggie backed her friend Norman Tebbit in a dispute with Chancellor Nigel Lawson over tax breaks for inward investment to the UK. Mrs T kept the promise she had made to Nissan and sold the Japanese company an 80-acre Usworth airfield site near Sunderland at agricultural prices.

The Sunderland plant has been a major success story. I was lucky enough to visit the massive Nissan plant a few years back and it was fascinating to see a combination of robots and humans produce a new car every 60 seconds.

There were worries about the impact of Brexit, but now every car company seems to be worried about a worldwide shortage of semiconductors.

I read some time back that 85% of the five million parts Nissan use in the north of England every day, have to be imported from mainland Europe, but I suppose that's the way business is right now.

Last week I got to test



drive the third generation of the Qashqai and straight away I thought the car was larger and chunkier than what the previous versions felt like. It's true, even if the increased measurements are in millimetres.

The third generation of the car is 35mm longer, 32mm wider and 25mm taller, while its wheelbase is 20mm longer. Not huge figures, but I suppose they all add up.

The first thing I noticed was the heads up display, which is already used by the likes of Mazda and Mit-

subishi. It's a brilliant service, but it's only available in the top of the range automatic version that I drove.

This version of the Qashqai is a Mild-Hybrid so you should get better fuel economy and I did find the engine was very frugal, even in urban driving. The car certainly has a bold stance to it and you get LED lights and 20-inch alloys.

My test car came in amber with a black roof, which looked really cool and two roof-rails added to the SUV look.

Normally when I show a



press car to friends they may say "Oh I love the smell of a new car." Well this time those people were definitely not spoofing as Nissan have been using Odour Evaluation Lead Engineer Peter Karl Eastland to achieve that coveted new car smell.

Peter has been blessed with acute sense of smell, a gift he realised he had from an early age. Then he got a Master's degree in Chemistry with Forensic Science from Leicester University.

Prices start at €30,500 for the 1.3-litre XE version, while the CVT automatic version I drove will cost you €44,600. Road tax is €270. You also get a good old-fashioned spare wheel.

I have always liked the Qashqai and this automatic version was really class. The starting price is good value, but over 44k for the automatic version is a bit steep.

The boot is huge and the good news is that you get a proper spare wheel, instead of the dreaded repair kit. And the 360-degree reversing camera is brilliant.

Like most Irish people I wasn't a huge fan of Mrs Thatcher, but she certainly did us all a favour by introducing Nissan and their brilliant Qashqai to these islands.

CHAMPION PROPERTY

Backlog of grants for older people and disability scheme

by Melissa Corrie

THE backlog to deliver funds under Housing Adaptation Grants and Disabled Persons Grants schemes were discussed at this month's meeting of Clane-Maynooth MD on Friday, 1st October.

"That the council consider outsourcing housing grant inspections under the Housing Adaptation Grants for older People and People with a Disability Scheme in this municipal district to clear the backlog," read a motion brought forward by Cllr Tim Durkan (FG).

"There are cases with the grant application and they're waiting quite some time," commented Cllr Durkan.

"I'd like to suggest we offer up €204,000 LPT money, and this would be a motive to the councillors from other MDs to do the same and the council gives the €100,000 extra."

"This is addressing severe problem," commented Cllr Naolise Ó Cearúil (FF).

Cllr Paul Ward (FF) suggested that a timeline be given as to how long it would take.

The council report issued by Mr B O'Gorman, Administrative Officer, Housing Department stated that the council administers two

schemes to facilitate housing adaptations for older people and people with a disability, and both schemes are funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLLGH) and the council.

In 2021, the grants available include Housing Adaptation Grants for privately owned homes up to €3,162, 288 and Disabled Persons Grants (DPG) for council owned homes up to €17,504.

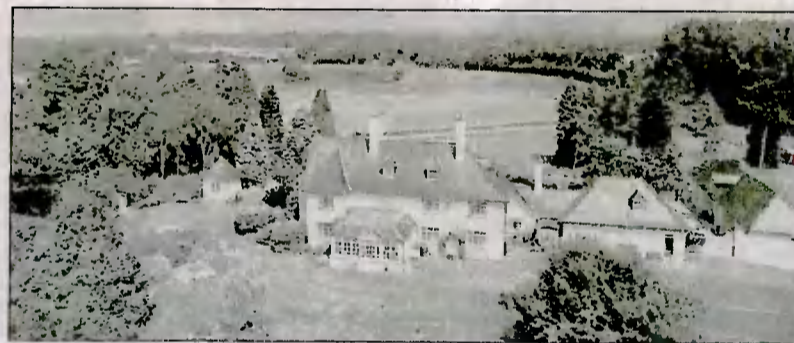
Applications for each grant type are assessed by the Housing Department and housing inspections of approved works on private homes are carried by an engineer or architect engaged by the home owner directly.

Specific information on requirements is provided to applicants at approval stage.

For council properties, works are project managed by the Architects Section and all inspections are carried out by the council.

Works on properties were curtailed due to COVID-19, however, these are now being progressed for all approved tenants.

The council does not consider it necessary to make any change to the current arrangements at this time.



Donadea property featured on 'Most Exclusive Homes' last week

by Andrew Smullen

DYANN House in Mountarmstrong, Donadea was featured in the final part of RTE's three-part series 'Selling Ireland's Most Exclusive Homes' last week.

The six-bedroom house, located on c.85 acres, is expected to fetch €3.25 million or more.

It is described as being a unique pink-painted country residence, measuring 484 sq metres with an eclectic interior and fabulous equestrian facilities.

It was built in 1981 and has stylistic touches of a French Chateau, sur-

rounded by two stable yards, gardens, paddocks, ornamental lake and ponds, tennis court and specimen trees.

Retired horse trainer and interior designer Dianne Coleman has put the property on the market with the sale being handled by joint agents Sherry FitzGerald Country Homes and Sherry FitzGerald Reilly.

Dianne's late husband John bought the property when he was over for the races. He wanted to name the property 'Dianne' but they settled Dyann.

The property was shown on RTE 2 on 20th September and RTE1 on 22nd September and a clip is available to see on the Lifey Champion Facebook page.

PLANNING

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL: We, Liam and Lorraine O'Brien, intend to apply for planning permission for development at this site, 47 Earlsfort Road, Lucan County Dublin K78 XE67. The development will consist of: A single storey front, side and rear extension, comprising of a den, utility room and a living area, an additional single storey rear extension as part of kitchen, new roof windows to side and rear of new roofs, and all associated site works. This application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of South Dublin County Council during its public opening hours of 9am - 4pm, Mon-Fri, and a submission or observation may be made to South Dublin County Council in writing and on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of weeks weeks beginning on the date of receipt by South Dublin County Council of the application.

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL: Robert Barnes intends to apply for planning permission for a development at this site: 74 Glendale, Leixlip, County Kildare, W23W7P6. The development will consist of: A) conversion of existing garage into habitable rooms, B) a single storey extension to the rear, C) internal alterations to ground a first floor, D) and all associated site works. The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of the Planning Authority during its public opening hours and a submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the authority in writing on payment of the prescribed fee within the period of five weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the authority of the application. Des Maguire Architects MR/IAI, 7 The Mall, Main Street Leixlip, County Kildare, Phone 086-805 8582.