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Murphy attempts to halt Omagh retrial

The only man jailed in connection with the Omagh bomb will today attempt to stop his retrial.

Builder and publican Colm Murphy (53), is trying to thwart attempts to bring him before the courts again on conspiracy charges linked to the 1998 blast in Northern Ireland which killed 29 people, including a mother pregnant with twins.

Mr Murphy, of Jordan's Corner, Ravensdale, Co Louth, was freed on bail in 2005 after the Court of Criminal Appeal quashed his conviction and 14-year sentence.

A retrial was ordered after it was found the original trial court failed to give proper regard to altered interview notes by investigating gardai.

The High Court is hearing a judicial review challenge to the retrial which was supposed to open in the non-jury Special Criminal Court last January.

Mr Murphy has claimed that short-term memory loss as a result of a car accident before he was arrested would interfere with his right to a fair hearing.

It is alleged the accused lent a mobile phone for use in the Real IRA bombing, the single worst atrocity of the Troubles.

Michael O'Higgins SC, for Mr Murphy, said the charges were based solely on a hotly-contested alleged admission by the accused during an interview with investigating gardai.

The barrister said there was no video footage of the interviews and interrogation notes varied greatly with some confined to key words or phrases.

Mr O'Higgins said his client's memory difficulties made it difficult for him to meaningfully and accurately challenge what was said in the interviews as set out by the detectives' notes.

He referred to medical tests on the accused which concluded he had suffered brain damage in a car accident in 1988 leaving his short-term memory impaired.

Mr O'Higgins also argued that there have been substantial delays - of a prosecutorial and systemic nature - in bringing the case, which amount to an interference of Murphy's right to a fair trial.

Shane Murphy SC, for the Director of Public Prosecutions, will outline the State's opposition to the application to stop the retrial.

Two detectives accused of forging interview notes and committing perjury during Murphy's trial were last year acquitted of the charges.

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TODAY



11-19 °C

TOMORROW



4-15 °C

SATURDAY



7-13 °C

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