

From: Planning Office
Sent: Thursday 24 February 2022 12:52
To: forwardplan
Subject: FW: Submission from Fergus Currach Club in relation to County Development Plan

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From: Patrick Brennan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday 24 February 2022 12:43
To: Planning Office <planoff@clarecoco.ie>
Subject: Submission from Fergus Currach Club in relation to County Development Plan

Dear Sir/ Madame,

I write to you on behalf of the Fergus Currach Club in particular as the review of the County Development Plan is underway. Local business and land owners have been supportive of us since the foundation of the Currach Club and have kindly offered us space near the quay to store boats such as in Whelans yard or more recently the vacant space at the back of Sli an Fergus. However, we have just been advised that this property is now sold to a new Property Developer which leaves the whole club existence in peril. We have three weeks to relocate which has placed us under immense pressure to locate a short term option as well as seek a longer term location.

As a local community sporting group we provide a chance for locals, visitors, men, women and children over 12 to engage in currach rowing on the River Fergus and in other locations around Clare and Ireland. Our main base is currently the River Fergus accessed from Clarecastle Quay. The club has been involved with providing sport and recreation opportunities in particular and is featured in the Healthy Clare strategy. Aside from the added amenity and recreation, the boats themselves are important heritage assets. The members also learn to build and maintain boats under various grant schemes that we engage with to support and keep the tradition alive in Clare. We used to travel with the boats to Ballyalla before a local business started using the lake for kayaking. We respect that those ventures are making a commercial living and therefore have significantly reduced our use of the lake in recent years.

Fergus Currach Club would like to request that Clare County Council consider the potential to supply a site for the Fergus Currach Club as part of any development plan for Clarecastle or indeed the Ennis and Environs area. We are the only rowing facility in the Ennis/ Clarecastle area. We have sister clubs in Kildysart, Doonbeg, Kilkee & Kilrush all of whom have been afforded more permanent spaces and we all come under the umbrella of our parent club West Clare Currach Club.

Aside from our urgent immediate short term requirement, we see that there are potential opportunities to consider the club requirements in different areas of the Municipal District:

1. Any suitable location as deemed by Clare County Council in the review of the County Development Plan in particular near accessible lakes and water courses surrounding the Ennis Municipal District that may be suitable or less tide dependent. We note with interest that the site at Ballaghafadda in the ownership of Clare County Council is under review and we have completed a survey in relation to that site. Currach rowing which is accessible to all ages and ability, is a thing of beauty and heritage and would in our view be a complementary amenity to any recreational development on this site.
2. We note the Roche site being decommissioned near the Quay. Any area in this location would permit us to have a permanent base for our boats near the river. Boats can be rolled by trolley up to the slip. This still leaves tidal challenges but we would be grateful for a safe storage and club base. We would seek to fund raise to contribute as required.

Min Requirements for consideration:

The club would require a small outdoor or covered space to store the timber and canvas constructed boats on racks (these can be doubled to minimise space). These racks are constructed by our volunteers and are not permanent. A longer term plan would be to have a boat maintenance and training shed but a small container would keep life jackets and other rowing safety devices safe from the elements and allow drying out.

Depending on location we would only require a couple of parking spaces. Many members cycle or live locally. The site would need to be secure from vandalism and fenced off. A min area of 125sqm would provide enough space to store 8 boats, 2 trailers and a small storage container.

We see public benefit in what our club provides through:

Access to water based recreation for all ages.

Heritage value and beauty

Environmental sustainability – no engines/ oil or noise The club Naomhog Corcaigh work with Cork County Council to have an open row every Saturday morning as part of tourism in Cork city. The club would be open to having discussions regarding a similar arrangement as part of a land lease or partnership arrangement subject to resources, the approval of our insurers and parent club West Clare Currach Club.

We would be very grateful if Clare County Council consider the potential to supply a site for the Fergus Currach Club as part of any development plan consideration for Clarecastle or the Ennis and Environs area.

Kind regards

Pat Brennan

Secretary Fergus Currach Club



Cc Pearse Hannon, Chairperson Fergus Currach Club, Eoin Honan, Chairperson West Clare Currach Club Reply - Reply to All - Forward - More Actions