

Housing. One of the key objectives in this plan is to realise the opportunities that “the development of the Wild Atlantic Way has brought ... to the areas from a tourism-development and employment-creation perspective. These opportunities can only be realised if there are people living in the area, particularly young people, to take up these opportunities. These people cannot exist in this area without adequate affordable housing. This housing can only be provided if there is adequate infrastructure, in particular water and waste water facilities available in the area. The council should encourage the government to borrow the required finance, which is still available at still relatively low interest rates, to provide this vital infrastructure where needed.

The plan, while recognising the attractiveness of the area for further residential development, lacks active policies to attract people to come to live here from outside the area.

The strategy for the smaller villages “to ensure that they maintain and increase their existing permanent population levels” is welcome. However, it must not be implemented in a manner that deprives the wider rural areas of likewise maintaining and developing a permanent local population consistent with ensuring vibrant rural communities outside these towns and villages. This should include a clear objective that the council will facilitate local people who wish to live in their local area to do so. The council should include a clear objective that it will use its’ best endeavours to ensure that any impediments to this objective are resolved.

Many of the local villages would provide an opportunity to provide for cheaper housing than the large towns outside the area and indeed the county. This is not being fully addressed.

The provision of small-scale cluster housing in the local villages should be actively pursued by the council.

Vacant and derelict buildings. There needs to be much stronger and more tangible objectives for the development of vacant and derelict buildings throughout the area in particular in the towns and villages. The objective to “encourage “such development is weak. Stronger objectives need to be included here e.g.to seek changes to the planning law and to simplify the building regulations to facilitate their redevelopment especially for housing and small scale home-based enterprises.

Objectives to carry out studies to establish the reasons for these buildings becoming vacant and or derelict as a means to help their redevelopment and prevent other buildings from becoming vacant should be included in this draft.

The need for the development of local vacant and or derelict sites should not, in itself, be used as a reason for refusing planning permission for any new development.

A specific unit should be set up in the county council for the specific purpose of redeveloping vacant and derelict sites through the county.

SACs, NHAs and SPAs. These are very important designations which make a substantial contribution to the overall social, economic and environmental development of the area. However, these areas need to be re-examined to ensure that only areas worthy of designation are included. Including areas as some sort of buffer zone between the area worthy of designation and adjoining areas clearly not of the required environmental value renders the whole designation process itself questionable and weakens the necessary local support for the protection of these areas.

Shannon Estuary. The objective “to support the development of a settlement network along the Shannon Estuary including Killimer along with Ballynacally, Killadysert, Knock and Labasheeda, to assist collaborative projects and the sharing of assets and strengths including developing its



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economic and tourism potential as a stopping point on the Shannon Estuary Way” is welcome. But it needs to be fleshed out and a commitment to prepare an action plan, in full consultation with the local communities, to realise this objective should be included.

Green Infrastructure. The objectives to promote green infrastructure such as walking and cycling routes and active recreation and sustainable travel is to be welcomed. But this objective regarding sustainable travel must be implemented in a manner which does not hinder the carrying out of improvements to facilitate existing modes of travel, e, g, road improvement works, particularly taking account of the fact that public transport in this area is extremely limited. New and innovative community travel developments should be supported possibly as social enterprises.

The objective to support the development of the West Clare Railway Greenway is to be welcomed. This infrastructure, when developed, has the potential to substantially add to the attractiveness of West Clare as a tourism destination as well as providing a wonderful amenity for the local population. The development of the Moyasta, Kilrush and Kilkee links, in particular, should be expedited as the existing and future development of the Moyasta train station and the West Clare Railway very much complements their development and potential use and enjoyment.

Home based economic activities. An objective should be included to support home based economic activity with a commitment to work with local small business owners to help ensure that these activities are carried out in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. Such developments would reduce commuter travel and provide a better work/life balance and support vibrant rural populations.

Kiladysert: The upgrade to the Kiladysert wastewater treatment plant is urgently required as indeed is the upgrade to a number of waste water treatment plants in the area. The council need to pursue these upgrades with Irish Water urgently.

The plan recognising a number of significant unique development opportunities for Kiladysert, local tourism including cruise ship opportunities, development of the quay, a base for marine related industry due to its closeness to Cahircon pier and its associated area of deep water and access to the local islands. A commitment to prepare an action plan involving multiple relevant state agencies, private business and community interests needs to be included in the plan if this unique opportunity is to be realised. The combination of such rich opportunities in one small village is indeed unique and their exploitation has the potential to benefit the whole county, the estuary itself and indeed the wider region.

The objective to support the development of the harbour area is to be welcomed. But again, a commitment should be included here for the council to develop an action plan for this area.

Ballynacally. The objective to preserve the unique character of this village while supporting future developments is welcome;

It is not clear from the objectives in the draft plan, if the objectives for this village are to support its population growth or maintain it. Clearly the future growth of the village needs to be supported. I assume that this is what the council intent. If this is so, then, for the purposes of avoiding confusion, the sentence “To ensure that existing population levels and services are maintained” should be amended to read “to support the maintenance and sustainable growth of the existing population and services.”

Consolidation of the existing built form is a proper planning objective. However, this objective should not be used to militate against the granting of planning permissions for small scale

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developments, such as micro businesses or owner occupied housing, by members of the local community.

The identifying of village growth areas for various developments here is welcome and should help potential developers to carry out developments while maintaining the unique character of this village. However, again, there is no public wastewater treatment system in the village. An objective to urgently provide such a system needs to be included here. Such infrastructure is necessary for the sustainable development of this village.

Labasheeda. The overall strategy “to provide for small-scale, well-designed residential, commercial and community developments which have regard to the character of the village itself” is to be supported. This is a lovely village and the preservation of its unique character should be ensured both for the benefit of the village itself and the overall benefit of the local area.

The identification of the potential for much greater tourism development here is welcome. The reasons for the slow growth of tourism activity, in this village, to date, need to be identified with a view to developing further proposals to encourage such development.

The identification of various village growth areas here is very helpful for potential developers.

The draft plan while recognising that there is no public wastewater treatment system in the village does not include any objective to provide one. An objective to urgently provide such a system needs to be included here. This infrastructure would also greatly enhance the possibilities of renewing existing vacant and derelict buildings as well as facilitating the provision of new dwellings which would in turn greatly enhance the attractiveness of the village as a place to live and work in.



Oliver Garry,

Kildysart Village Renewal.

