

Planning Department
Clare County Council
New Road
Ennis
Co. Clare
V95 DXP2

28th March 2022

RE: Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

1.0 Introduction

Dear Sir/Madam,

In accordance with Sections 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), Downey Planning, 29 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, wish to make this submission to Clare County Council regarding the Draft Clare County Development Plan's Public Consultation Stage. The submission is being made on behalf of our client, *Bluemont*, [REDACTED]

This written submission is made in response to an invitation for comments from interested parties by Clare County Council. This submission is being made within the specified timeframe for submissions i.e. 28th March 2022.

The intended purpose of this submission is to outline to the Planning Authority, the opportunity provided by the review of the Development Plan to further assess the future release of lands zoned as Strategic Residential Reserve (SRR) under the forthcoming Development Plan.

2.0 Planning Legislation

Section 9 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) provides that, subject to the requirements set out in Section 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Act, that a planning authority must adopt a new Development Plan every six years. The contents of the Development Plan are set out within Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and must include a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the Development Plan and shall consist of a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the development objectives for the area in question. The process for the preparation of the Draft Development Plan is contained within Section 11 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the consultation process of the Draft

Development Plan is contained within section 12 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), which states:

“12 - (1) Where the Draft Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with section 11, the planning authority shall within 2 weeks of the period referred to in section 11(5)(c)—

(a) send notice and a copy of the Draft Development Plan to the Minister, the Board, the relevant regional authority, the prescribed authorities, any town commissioners in the area and any city or county development boards in the area, and

(b) publish notice of the preparation of the draft in one or more newspapers circulating in its area.

(2) A notice under subsection (1) shall state that—

(a) a copy of the draft may be inspected at a stated place or places and at stated times during a stated period of not less than 10 weeks (and the copy shall be kept available for inspection accordingly), and

(b) written submissions or observations with respect to the draft made to the planning authority within the stated period will be taken into consideration before the making of the plan”.

This submission to the pre-draft of the Development Plan is being made in accordance with Section 11 (2)(b) and 3(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and is being submitted within the specified timeframe (28th March 2022).

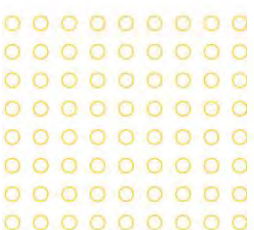
3.0 Grounds of Submission

The Draft Development Plan has zoned certain lands in the County as Strategic Residential Reserve. These land are generally at the edge of existing settlements and have not been brought forward for residential development to date.

With regard to Strategic Residential Reserves, the Draft Plan states at page 430 of the Written Statement:

“Strategic Residential Reserve

It is acknowledged that not all lands within the settlement boundaries of the serviced settlements will be required to 2029. In these cases, some lands have been included as a strategic residential reserve, where they comprise infill or contiguous sites or have a planning history of residential use and can form part of the long-term sequential



expansion of the settlement where considered appropriate. In addition to protecting these lands for the long term expansion of these settlements, consideration may be given to the development of some of the strategic residential reserve before the end of the current plan period where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the development of zoned land is progressing faster than expected and a shortage of available lands may arise or residential zoned land may not be delivered as expected and a shortage may arise during the plan period. The development of such lands will only be considered from the beginning of year four of the Plan (April 2027) in order to give an opportunity for zoned land to be brought forward for development, and where it can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the planning authority that a zoned parcel of land will not be brought forward for development due to infrastructural or other demonstrable constraints during the remaining period of the Plan. It will also be a requirement that the proposed strategic residential reserve lands can be serviced and offer a reasonable substitute in terms of being delivered within the lifetime of the plan and are sequential development with good connectivity and access to services and amenity”.

We understand the rationale and need to manage the release the residential land in a planning and coordinated manner that ensures that the County can achieve its growth and population targets in accordance with the Core Strategy and National and Regional Planning Guidelines.

However, it is important to note that such lands could also accommodate other uses, which are listed as either permitted in principle or ‘open for consideration’ under the Draft Plan and as such it is critical that the Draft Plan does not, unintentionally, prevent other uses, that would ordinarily be acceptable, from being permitted and allowed to be brought forward. Such uses could include Primary Care Centres or similar facilities that provide health, well-being and social services to the community. These are vitally important services to the communities and therefore the forthcoming Development Plan needs to allow a reasonable level of flexibility in the release of zoned land at appropriate locations for such developments.

It is respectfully submitted that allow flexibility in the SRR zoning to facilitate development of primary care centres or other similar uses prior to 2027 is in accordance with Objective CDP10.20 of the Draft Development Plan, which states that:

“It is an objective of Clare County Council:

a) To improve access to quality healthcare services through facilitating initiatives and projects under the National Development Plan 2018-2027 as well as facilitating public, private and community-based agencies to provide appropriate healthcare facilities including for mental health, hospital care and community-based primary care throughout the County;

b) To encourage the integration of appropriate healthcare facilities within new and existing communities;

c) To facilitate and encourage the accommodation of emergency services including fire services, rescue services, heli-pads and acute care, in locations that facilitate ease of access, effectiveness and safety; and

d) To support and facilitate the implementation of Sláintecare and to support the development of outreach and community services for an expanding and ageing population across the County.”

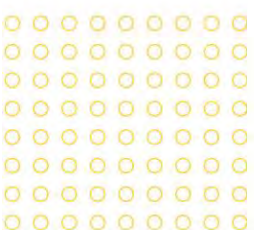
We note that granting permission for a primary care centre (or similar use) on a Strategic Residential Reserve prior to 2027, would not take away from the deliverability of residential development on other zoned lands and therefore would ensure that the phasing of residential development would continue in accordance with the Core Strategy.

It is noted that the development of primary care centres and other similar uses often require larger sites and can be in a campus style setting. As a result, it is reasonable to anticipate that many zoned sites within the centre of urban areas, may not be suitable for such uses and that providers may require that they are developed on alternative sites. Therefore, the Plan needs to ensure that it is flexible enough to facilitate these critical providers.

Considering this, we would respectfully request that the description of Strategic Residential Reserve (p. 430 of the Written Statement) be re-worded as follows (proposed change in red text).

“Strategic Residential Reserve

It is acknowledged that not all lands within the settlement boundaries of the serviced settlements will be required to 2029. In these cases, some lands have been included as a strategic residential reserve, where they comprise infill or contiguous sites or have a planning history of residential use and can form part of the long-term sequential expansion of the settlement where considered appropriate. In addition to protecting these lands for the long term expansion of these settlements, consideration may be given to the development of some of the strategic residential reserve before the end of the current plan period where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the development of zoned land is progressing faster than expected and a shortage of available lands may arise or residential zoned land may not be delivered as expected and a shortage may arise during the plan period. The development of such lands will only be considered from the beginning of year four of the Plan (April 2027) in order to give an opportunity for zoned land to be brought forward for development, and where it can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the planning authority that a zoned parcel of land will not be brought forward for development due to infrastructural or other demonstrable constraints during the



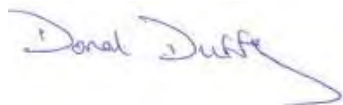
*remaining period of the Plan. It will also be a requirement that the proposed strategic residential reserve lands can be serviced and offer a reasonable substitute in terms of being delivered within the lifetime of the plan and are sequential development with good connectivity and access to services and amenity. **The Planning Authority will also consider granting planning permission for primary care centres and other similar health and social service developments on Strategic Residential Reserve lands during the entirety of the lifetime of this Plan, where it can be demonstrated that they are suitably serviced and there is a requirement for such facilities in the area**".*

4.0 Conclusion

Downey Planning have prepared this submission, on behalf of our client Bluemont Development Ltd., to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 as it relates to Strategic Residential Reserve zoned lands within the County.

The intended purpose of this submission is to outline to the Planning Authority, the opportunity provided by the review of the Development Plan to further assess the future release of lands zoned as Strategic Residential Reserve (SRR) under the forthcoming Development Plan to facilitate the provision of much needed primary care centres and other similar and related health and social service facilities.

Your sincerely,



Donal Duffy MIPI
Director
For and on behalf of Downey Planning