

Comments on COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN Clare County Development Plan
2017 - 2023 (As Varied)

MARTIN KNOX 3/1/2023



Written Statement.

I'd like to make a number of points on the written statement produced by Clare Co Council, as follows:

- Any renewables planned, around 1.167 GW by 2030, is ambitious and may not be achieved without detailed plans for each individual project being developed and costed. No costings were presented in any of the CDP documentation. Any renewables generated in Clare and must not be sold to us as if the resource is for the exclusive use of County Clare with a view to potentially packing the county with hungry data centres.
- It is not shown in the documentation how Clare Co Council's plans tie in with national objectives on renewables and energy demands. Clare does not exist outside the national endeavour. Indeed, Ireland even now relies on the interconnectors to the UK and eventually to France: we're part of Europe and must see ourselves exporting energy eventually.
- Data centres are not the future for employment in Clare but manufacturing of renewable infrastructure/products such as wind turbines, solar panels etc. may be. Data centres are NOT low energy, something that is often stated in planning documentation and elsewhere: data centres are huge consumers of energy most of which is wasted. To claim that data centres are low energy is simply false.

Attracting energy-intensive employment (e.g., Data Centres) to form part of a low-carbon energy network.

- It is a mistake to be pushing data centres as 'necessary' infrastructure to support industry in Ireland. Currently we have an adequate supply of data storage and retrieval facilities here (Currently 75 operating) to serve the national needs: the plan seems to be to supply these services to other countries who in turn will transfer their carbon burdens to Ireland with no benefits. Why should Ireland carry such a load without any benefits to the country, when we don't have the renewables infrastructure to support them.

- Untrue or dubious statements:

Data centres and investment in them are recognised as having significant benefit to Ireland's economy and employment. Ireland has an abundance of renewable energy sources including wind energy, to meet energy demands of data centres which are increasingly looking to renewable energy sources for their operations.

*Martin Knox
3/1/23*

