

Submission no: 066

From: Cathal Crowe [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday 15 November 2020 22:37
To: forwardplan; Helen Quinn
Subject: Development Plan Review



To whom it may concern,

I wish to make a formal submission concerning the new Clare County Development Plan.

I understand that further stages of public consultation are to follow at which the minutiae of the new plan - relating to local community level projects, zoning and policy areas will be determined. For now, I will confine my thought to high level / macro concepts.

1) Rural v Urban Clare

A middle column of the county, from Ennis in a southerly direction as far as the Limerick boundary is, in economic development terms, developing better than the more rural parts of the county - most especially west and north Clare. The new Clare County Development Plan should seek to provide enabling supports for out county's communities that are in a state of rural decline:

- broadband provision
- adequate zoning for village expansion
- facilitation of planning for one-off houses in the countryside
- delivery of water and sewage schemes
- support for rural tourism and new business ventures of all forms

2) Shannon Airport

The new County Development Plan should recognise Shannon Airport and its adjacent industrial zone as the KEY driver of the county's economy and as the major employment centre in Clare. Shannon Airport must be fully protected and supported in all Council policies.

3) Bus and Rail

- The new County Development Plan should prioritise the provision of a new bus service in Ennis and enhanced Local Link services between the county's smaller towns and villages. The Limerick City urban bus service should be further expanded to better cater for the communities of South-East Clare.
- Further rail stops should be developed in the county. In particular, I would like to see the Limerick-Ennis-Galway service stop at Cratloe and Crusheen.

4) Park and ride / Park and rail

The provision of park & ride or park & rail infrastructure near the Limerick City boundary in South-East Clare and also in proximity of Ennis Town.

5) Wind farms & future of Moneypoint Power Station

Whilst wind farms provide the national grid with renewable energy, the new County Development Plan's Wind Energy Strategy should undergo rigorous scientific scrutiny to determine if wind farms are achieving maximum output at their inland locations. I would rather see wind farms located offshore where they are less visually obtrusive and constantly interfacing with high sea winds. I believe that Clare County Council should push for Moneypoint Power Station to be a processing station for off shore wind generated electricity.

6) Other renewable energies

- A scoping exercise should be undertaken to determine if the Shannon Estuary could provide the national grid with electricity generated vis-a-vis tidal energy.
- The possibility of developing a new pumped hydroelectric power station at one of the higher points in our county.

7) Roads

- I support the overall concept of a Limerick Northern Distributor Road but whilst I see many positive to the pricey, I remain hugely concerned that the route-line for phase 2 will involve (i) the effective splitting of Parteen and (ii) traversing a major floodplain in Clonlara. Clare County Council need to proactively look at alternatives to routing the LNDR through these locations. Mitigating measures including mobility plans and masterplans for directly impacted communities must also be advanced.
- Clare County Council should continue to provide community level road maintenance supports vis-a-vis the Local Improvement and Community Involvement schemes.

8) Cycleways and accessibility

The new Clare County Development Plan should seek to provide further cycleways and designated greenways in the county. A cycle and pedestrian plan should also be considered in each Municipal District with particular emphasis on the needs of local schools.

9) Recreational amenities

Clare County Council should seek to provide additional playgrounds and also recreational infrastructure for teenagers and older people - skate parks, outdoor exercise equipment, trails etc.

10) Education

- Villages and towns should grow and expand concurrent with schools. We should no longer see scores of houses built on the edge or a village with a school not having capacity to cater for the new population influx - we do not want to see a return to prefabricated classrooms.
- Clare County Council should adopt policies in the new County Development Plan to support the growth of both the University of Limerick and LIT.

11) Tourism

- Tourism projects in all parts of the county should be looked favourably upon in the planning process. Perhaps an adjustment to the planning matrix operational in Clare is required to ensure easier passage of applications.

12) Industry

- Clare County Council should zone appropriate quantities of land to provide for new industry and expansion of existing industry.

13) Forestry

Clare County Council should support the campaign to have Coillte restore some of Cratloe's world-famous ancient oak woods.

14) New town in South East Clare

The population cluster around Westbury (approx 6,000 people) and a defined centre, should be granted new town status.

15) Retail

Clare County Council should promote new retail outlets and also look at the possibility of developing a niche outlet centre in the county, possibly akin to Kildare Village.

16) Proposals for new protected structures:

- WW2 / Emergency machine gun 'pillbox' at roadside between Clancy's Shop, Parteen and Ardnacrusha Bridge.
- War of Independence memorial at Brennan's Cross, Meelick
- Robert Byrnes, War of Independence memorial at Knockalisheen, Meelick
- Patrick White, War of Independence memorial at White's Cross, Meelick
- Cratloe Ambush, War of Independence memorial at Cratkoekeel, Cratloe
- Punch's Quarry, War of Independence memorial at side of N18 dual-carriageway Cratloe
- Old post box in Parteen Village - across from Browne's Pub
- Old post box in Meelick - at Brennan's Cross

Yours sincerely,

Cathal Crowe TD

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