

Development Planning Review,  
Planning Dept.,  
Clare County Council,  
New Road,  
Ennis ,  
Co Clare.  
V95DXP2  
16/11/2020



#### Issues Paper Clare County Council Draft Development Plan 2022-2028

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you in relation to two priorities which both the Elected Members and eminent Administrators of our town of Ennis aspire to deliver in order to meet the demands of our community, namely- zoned land development and delivering the Green agenda.

Specifically, I wish to submit in advance of the drafting of the next County Development Plan, that lands at St Flannan's College should be developed to meet the needs of the Community, whilst preserving recreational facilities, nature and delivering on the objectives around the Green Agenda.

The lands adjoining the school were, in the past, designated as 'Open Space' with an exceptional number of casual runners and walkers, athletic and GAA clubs and youths availing of the facilities. This demand and use remain to this day. Indeed, one could argue that there is even a greater demand for recreational facilities in these challenging times.

At some point, some lands were rezoned as 'community'. The lands were, despite the objection of the then Acting Chief Executive,<sup>1</sup> eventually rezoned for low density housing (LDH), by way of a Members Resolution<sup>2</sup>. A further attempt to convert from LDH to residential was not approved.<sup>3</sup>

In July 2019, it was announced that a 5.09 acre site was secured for the relocation of St Joseph's Hospital, upon which a 100 bed community nursing facility will be built. This will obviously be subject in time to a design which aligns it with a mature residential neighbourhood on two sides and deals with limited access, followed by an appropriate planning application.

What is of concern is that this site contains a tree line of old and mature trees which, in my opinion, should be preserved as they are the epitome of the history, character and tradition of the school. Furthermore, they would add to the surroundings of the new facilities, inline with those trees currently on the site of the existing hospital.

In addition, the site comprises both community and LDH lands. The Community lands encroach towards those which are designated as 'Open Space and it is my fear that there will be a further erosion of the 'Community' and 'Open Space' designation, over time at this site, for non-recreational

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1

<sup>2</sup> Appendix 2

<sup>3</sup> Appendix 3

**purposes. Further potential evidence of this is that access** serving the site will be through Gallows Hill and that the new entrance will access both the c. 5.09 acres as well as the balance of the lands remaining within the College.

Finally, the development of these lands decommissions more playing facilities for pupils and public alike and this was the basis, on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016, for the Chief executive to explain his decline decision as the following-

“..this is the only area of Community zoning in the Southern half of the Ennis Settlement. I am also mindful of the growing requirement for school places.....”

When we look at some of the questions in the Strategic Issues Paper (as below), we can achieve the delivery of the new healthcare facility whilst preserving our green areas. I laud the efforts of all involved in upgrading the St Joseph’s facility and welcome its future delivery. Our Community needs and deserves it. I would also have to acknowledge and thank the Diocesan/College Trustees for making the lands accessible to all, down through the years.

“How can we support the provision and maintenance of attractive Community Spaces to serve town and village communities?”

“Are there any pieces of Green Infrastructure that you are aware of in the County that could be developed further to benefit the community?”

“Community facilities include the provision of libraries, schools, childcare facilities, open space, playgrounds, leisure facilities and health centres”

“Green Infrastructure is now an integral element in planning and features throughout all planning themes of the Clare County Development Plan. The Plan must seek to support Green Infrastructure in recognition of its value for recreation amenity and the proven health and well-being benefits it provides.”

“How could the County Development Plan promote and encourage the inclusion of Green Infrastructure into new developments?”

That is why I am asking that all decision makers enshrine all further lands at St Flannans College, which is a small portion of Community zoned and larger area of Open Space, in the next plan for use as recreational only, with a long term commitment to continuing in that vain.

Yours Sincerely,

Patrick Walzer

# Chief Executive's Report (to the Elected Members on submissions received on the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023) 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016

## Appendix 1

### Ref. 389 P. Coleman and Associates on behalf of Killaloe Diocesan Trust

*Key words: Ennis*

#### Summary of the Issues Raised in the Submission

This submission refers to lands owned by the Killaloe Diocesan Trust within St. Finnan's College complex, Ennis, which is identified as Plot A on an accompanying map and encompasses a total approximate area of 1.5 ha. The landholding is inside the Ennis Settlement Boundary and is currently zoned "Community" and it is not proposed to change this zoning in the draft Plan.

The submission requests the planning authority to zone Plot A as "Residential"

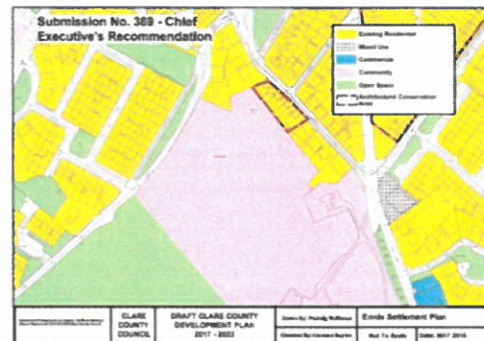
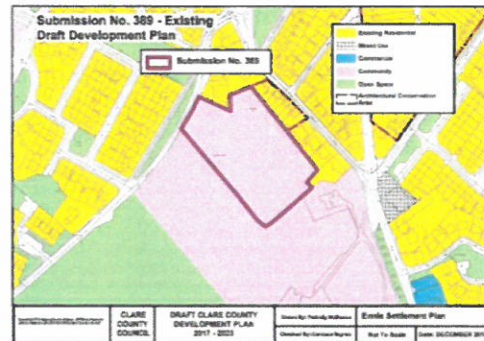
The submission notes the proximity of Plot A to the town centre makes the land ideally suited for residential development. It is their opinion that reclassification to "Residential" zoning would be compatible with the adjoining residential land uses and the pattern of development in the area and would not therefore seriously injure the amenities of the area or of the properties.

#### Chief Executive's Response

I wish to thank Killaloe Diocesan Trust for their submission. I agree that from a sequential point of view that the land as referred to in the submission is well positioned to accommodate residential zoning, as it is within walking distance of the town centre. However the requirement to meet the need for housing on Plot A as requested by this submission must be balanced against the requirement to ensure there is sufficient community zoned lands to serve the neighbourhood in which it is located. With the exception of a parcel community zoning in Clarecastle, this is the only area of proposed community zoning in the southern half of the Ennis Settlement. I also mindful of the growing requirement for school places which is a trend that I consider will continue for some years to come. I therefore consider that land as referred to in submission number 389 should be zoned community.

#### Chief Executive's Recommendation

I recommend that no amendments are made to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 on the basis of this submission.



# Booklet 4

## Members Resolution to Amend the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 in accordance with Section 12(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

### Ennis Municipal District Written Statement and Maps

Resolution Ref.	Submission Ref:	Settlement	Members' Resolution	Members' Reasons and Considerations
			Residential to Recreation as per attached map.	
E.44	389	Ennis	Change zoning from Community to Low Density Residential as per attached map.	Proximity to the town, easy access to schools, close to services.

## Appendix 3

### Chief Executive's Report (To the Elected Members on submissions received on proposed amendments to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 – 08<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Chief Executive's Report on Submissions on Proposed Amendments to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023

#### Ref. 041 Killaloe Diocesan Trust c/o P. Coleman & Associates

##### Submission Summary

The proposed amendments to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 are noted and the zoning objective for part of their land-holding at St. Flannian's College has been re-categorised from Community to Low Density Residential (LDR). It is requested that the proposed Low Density Residential (LDR) zoning objective be re-categorised to Residential (R) as it is considered better suited to the site and can be deemed to be minor variation in terms of Section 12(10)(c)(i) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, given that the principal of the zoning objective is the same and the proposed change is simply an intensification of the same use.

There are a number of reasons given to support the request for a change in zoning from Low Density Residential (LDR) to Residential, some of which include that the site is strategically located within the town and is a much sought after location; the site would become the largest residentially zoned parcel of land closest to the town centre; the re-classification as Residential would be in compliance with national policy and the sequential approach to development within the town; intensification of residential uses within existing residential areas should be encouraged so as to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The landowner is interested in providing community housing on some of their landholdings.

If the request in this submission is not to be adopted then it is requested that the proposed zoning of Low Density Residential as outlined in the proposed amendments to the Draft Plan be adopted.

##### Chief Executive's Response

I thank the Killaloe Diocesan Trust for their submission. The site in question is the subject of a proposed amendment. However, proposed amendments may either be adopted or the zoning may revert to that which appeared in the Draft Development Plan. The Planning and Development Act 2000 states that a further modification to an alteration shall not be made where it relates to an increase in the area of land zoned for any purpose. Given that the requested change requests an increase in the area of land zoned for Residential purposes, it cannot be accommodated at this time.

##### Chief Executive's Recommendation

I recommend that the proposed amendment to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023, which relates to a change in zoning from Community to Low Density Residential, be adopted without the further proposed modification requested in this submission.

Chief Executive's Report on Submissions on Proposed Amendments to the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023

