

Input from Corofin Future Planning Association (CFPA) to the Clare County Development Plan



1. Introduction

Corofin Future Planning Association act as a forum for planning, implementing and resourcing community development actions that benefit Corofin and its residents. Its aims are:

- To enhance the social, economic, cultural and environmental development of Corofin, incorporating the Electoral Divisions of Corofin, Kilnaboy and Rath in County Clare.
- To contribute to improved life quality and community experience for all community residents in Corofin.
- To develop Corofin as a sustainable community, capable of: i) sustaining population and local services; ii) maximising the opportunities for tourism; and iii) attracting investment, enterprise and employment while retaining the environmental integrity of the area.

CFPA welcomes the opportunity to offer input to the emerging Clare County Development Plan.

Corofin is a community with a vibrant community spirit, embodied by the number and variety of community-based activities and associations in the area. It is also a community fortunate to have a variety of high-quality community facilities that resource and accommodate that range community-based activity. In this regard, Corofin, Kilnaboy and Rath are well served.

However, a comprehensive consultation with community in 2019 revealed:

- Considerable road safety and road quality concerns, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists in Corofin village
- Disturbing levels of physical decline, dilapidation and dereliction in Corofin
- The need to develop the tourism potential of the area
- Inefficient parking arrangements in the village, impacting on all of the above.

2. Corofin-priorities for Inclusion in the County Development Plan

Against the backdrop of the above, CFPA recommends that the following be integrated into the emerging County Development Plan in respect of Corofin:

- a) Address road safety concerns in Corofin village by:

- installing speed Indicator Lights at the main entrances to Corofin – Ennis, Gort, Kilfenora Roads and Station Roads - with a view to encouraging drivers to observe speed limits in the village
 - facilitating a Road Safety Feasibility Study for Corofin Village
 - removing parking from outside Corofin Medical Centre to contribute to efficient movement of traffic
 - future improvement works to the R476 would include the provision of cycling paths and pedestrian footpaths as a matter of course
- b) Counteract the physical decline of Corofin village through Clare County Council working in partnership with a task group from CFPA to:
- identify the optimal streetscape for Corofin village
 - build an understanding of the current position regarding Ground Rents and their implications for the purchase and development of properties in the village
 - explore the purchase of certain unused buildings in the village for community, business/enterprise or residential use
- c) Develop parking facilities in Corofin village by:
- exploring possibilities in the short term for the creation of additional parking spaces near to Corofin church
 - in the longer term, exploring the potential of developing a full loop from the Church to the Fair Lane Car park, thus further increasing parking potential.
 - zoning coach parking on the widened road space adjacent to Corofin grotto, thereby encouraging coaches to stop in the village
- d) Invest in Corofin’s capacity as a tourist destination, mindful of the community’s location alongside the Burren and its close proximity to the Wild Atlantic Way and sites of cultural and historical importance¹. In particular:
- establish a transport link to and from the Burren National Park, Cliffs of Moher and Corofin with a view to encouraging tourism in the locality and building greater joined-up-thinking between communities in North Clare
 - engage with the bodies responsible for the operation and development of the workhouse, museum and genealogical centre, and assess ways in which the tourism potential of these centres can be advanced
 - support the development of walking routes around Corofin, most notably a marked biodiversity walk linking Ballycullinan Lake to Lake Attedaun and onwards to Lake

¹ Whilst recognising the need to ensure full adherence to guidelines pertaining to the protection of the environment.

Inchiquin , with a subsequent off-road connection to the Burren Way, walking routes utilising the historic lanes that lead to the River Fergus, which runs through the village and other historic off-road routes within the village, including the historic Fair Lane which leads to the underutilised 'Loughan' lake.

3. Conclusion

CFPA recognises that the actions prioritised above require the community of Corofin to work in close partnership with Clare County Council. CFPA wishes to express its commitment to establishing an ongoing positive working relationship with Clare County Council to realise the priorities outlined above.

