

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Development Plan](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Submission to Variation No.1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029
Date: Thursday 2 April 2026 16:40:55
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Dear Forward Planning Section,
Please find attached the OPW letter of observation on the proposed variation no. 1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029.

I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this email.

Kind regards

Róisín

Roisin Walsh
State/Principal Architect's Office

Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works

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Roisin Walsh
Clerical Officer - State/Principal Architect's Office

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Variation No.1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029,
Planning Department,
Clare County Council,
New Road,
Ennis,
Co Clare,
V95 DXP2.

01/04/2026

RE: Submission to Variation No.1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029

Dear Sir/Madam,

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Office of Public Works (OPW) is a central Government Office operating under the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform with particular responsibility for Flood Risk and Estate Management, including Heritage.

The OPW has responsibility for the care, operation and maintenance of all National Monuments in State care. In undertaking this duty, the principal objective is to protect, conserve, maintain and present these sites and to facilitate appropriate public access where possible. In this regard, OPW works in partnership with the National Monuments Service at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH).

This submission is made specifically with regard to the Heritage Services portfolio. Further submissions on the project may be made by the OPW with regards to other areas of responsibility.

2.0 OBSERVATION

The Proposed NPF Variation No. 1 to the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 includes the following:

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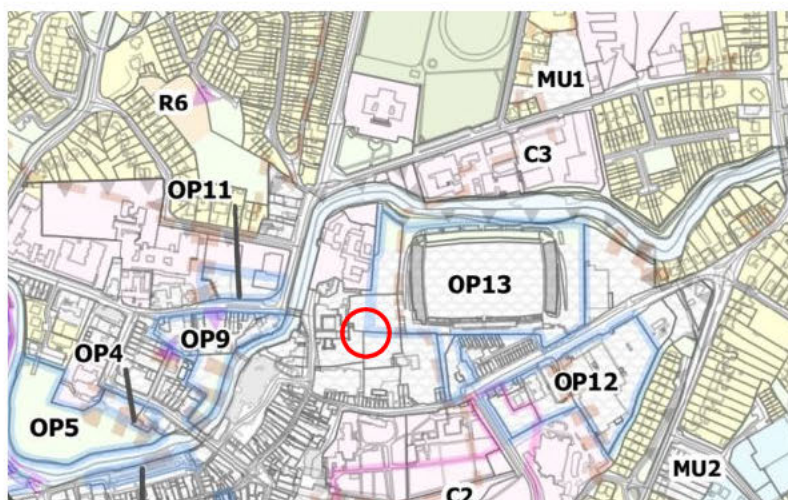
1. To align the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 with the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirement' Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (2025).
2. To implement the decision to propose a variation to the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 to change the zoning of lands in accordance with the Finance Act 2021, as amended by the Finance Act 2024, and the policy and guidance in the Residential Zoned Land Tax - Change in zoning of land subject to existing economic activity Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).
3. To incorporate 'Ennis 2040 Economic and Spatial Strategy' into the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 to inform future patterns of land-use zoning in Ennis and support the effective implementation of the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirement' Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025).
4. To incorporate 'Ennis Local Transport Plan' into the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 to inform the future comprehensive pattern of land-use zoning of Ennis and support the effective implementation of the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirement' Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025).
5. To align the Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (2024).

OPW Heritage Services requests the following observations be considered with reference to the proposed changes to the County Development plan and its alignment with National Policy:

Ennis Friary, Ennis

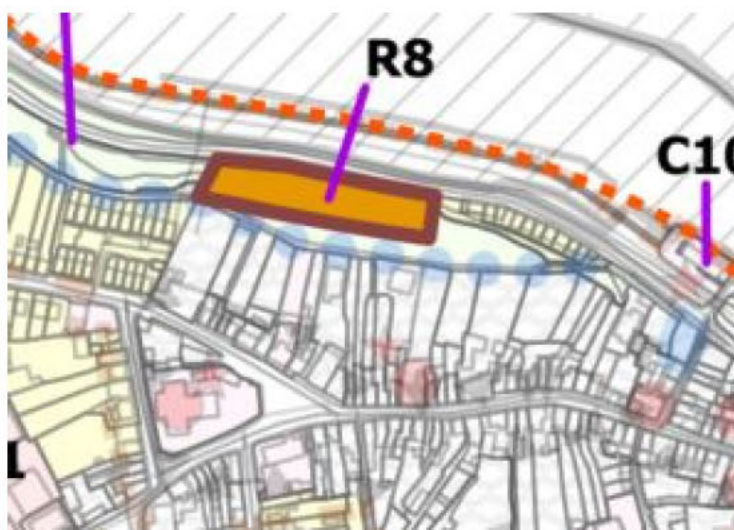
The OPW notes the presence of Opportunity Sites OP9, 11, 12, 13 in the vicinity of Ennis Friary (National Monument, CL033-082001-170) and of transformational site C2.

The OPW requests that the setting of Ennis Friary is respected and taken into account in any plans for these areas. The OPW wishes to be consulted on proposed changes. Any changes to the context should result in a high quality physical environment.



Ennis, with Ennis Friary NM 170 marked in red

St Molua's (CL045-033015-279), Killaloe



The OPW requests that Clare County Council ensure that any housing in zone R8 should not have a negative impact on views from St Molua's, nor should the housing have a negative impact on views of St Molua from the bridge, from the opposite bank of the River Shannon. Careful, sensitive design will be necessary in this sensitive location.

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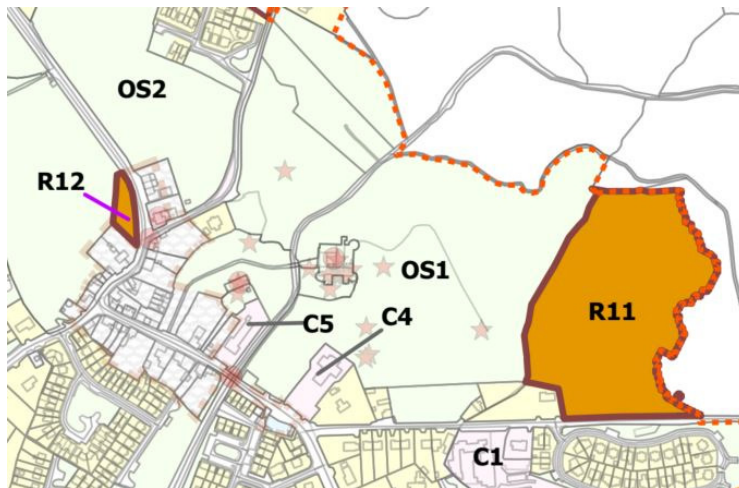
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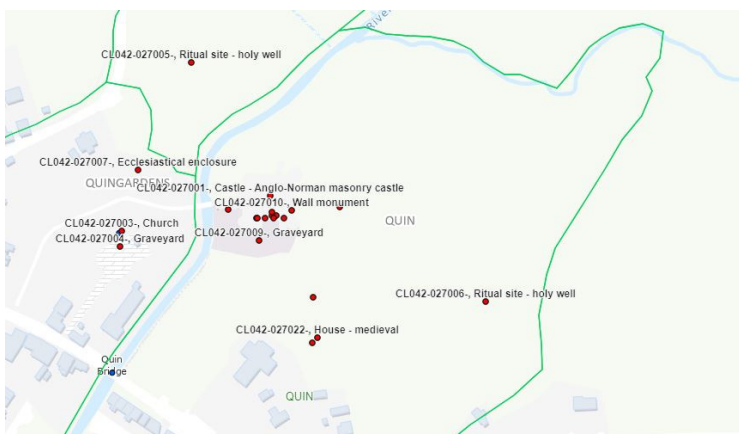
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Quin Abbey (CL042-027002-15), Quin



Quin Abbey, with associated Recorded Monuments to the west and east of the site



Extract from Archaeology.ie (dated 31st March 2026)

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Google maps aerial view showing above and extensive below ground archaeology

The OPW notes the proliferation of Recorded Monuments to the west, and most particularly to the east of the upstanding ruins of Quin Abbey and Quin Castle. The eastern extent of the upstanding historic structure is metres away from the land zoned for housing. The OPW refers Clare County Council to an archaeological report by TVAS Ireland Ltd (2017), which includes aerial views and LIDAR imagery, https://www.tvasireland.ie/Reports/Quin_report_2016.pdf. Quin Abbey has enjoyed renown amongst antiquarians and visitors for centuries by, ref: the article/blog 'One of the Finest and Most Entire Monasteries', by theirishaesthete (July 31 2017), link: <https://theirishaesthete.com/2017/07/31/one-of-the-finest-and-most-entire-monasteries/>

The preservation to date of the setting of Quin Abbey is notable and remarkable. The Abbey can be appreciated much as it has been by centuries of local people and visitors. Its setting by the river with views of farmland to the east is an integral part of the sense of place of the multi-layered heritage site and of the whole town of Quin.

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3.0 CONCLUSION

The OPW requests that Clare County Council take into consideration the observations raised in this letter with regard to the Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Clare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029.

ARead

Anthony Read
Principal Officer
Heritage Services

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