

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022

## **Review of Draft Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028**

A Chara

I welcome the opportunity to again make submissions on the Draft Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028. I acknowledge that some of my observations have been addressed. I strongly feel that following points need to be further highlighted. I request that these specific issues be addressed in our County Development Plan –

### **Linguistic need must be prioritised in our Gaeltacht Areas**

In Chapter 5 Rural Housing, Section 5.5 Rural Housing, page 74 the following is amended

- a. Establishing that there is a genuine economic or social need for permanent occupation.

To

- a. Establishing that there is a genuine economic, social and linguistic need for permanent occupation.

### **Completion of the N86 Tralee to Dingle/An Daingean**

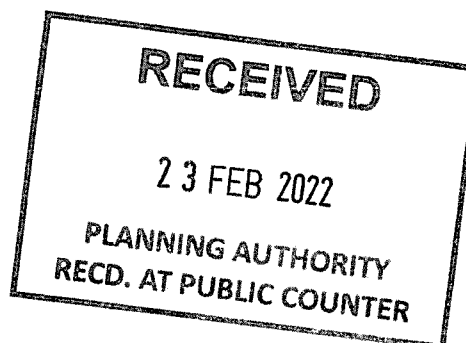
In Chapter 14 Connectivity, Section 14.4 Road Network the following is included

**The completion of the N86 Tralee to Dingle/An Daingean Scheme.**

Thank you for this opportunity to express my observations in relation to our Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028

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Breandán Fitzgerald



29<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## Review of Draft Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028

A Chara

As a first time County Councillor I welcome this opportunity to make a submission on our Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028. In my observations that I submitted in August 2020 I made reference to several areas that I feel needed to be addressed in our County Development Plan 2022-2028. I want to take this opportunity to thank the planning office for taking my observations into account in the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028.

I welcome the opportunity again to make submissions on various aspects of the Plan and I will endeavour to be concise and to the point in my observations. While I acknowledge that several of my observations have been addressed already, I still feel that they need to be highlighted again. I request that these specific issues be addressed in our County Development Plan –

- Lack of investment and or clarity of plans by Irish Water in our water and/or wastewater infrastructure makes development of our towns and villages impossible.
- As a Local Authority if we cannot guarantee adequate services in our towns and villages then we must encourage and enable individuals to develop sustainable and environmental friendly homes in rural areas.
- The Irish Language is an integral part of us and the survival, growth and promotion of our Gaeltacht's in the Dingle and Iveragh Peninsulas depends on the survival, growth and promotion of our people living in our Gaeltacht communities. Without the people we will not have the language and as a Local Authority this must be taken into account in planning applications and developments.
  - Linguistic need should be considered a priority. For Irish Speakers we need to ask how we can give planning as opposed to how we can stop them in all Rural Area Types.
- The switch from Long Term Letting to Short Term Letting is creating a critical shortage of long term accommodation in our towns and villages. This is changing traditional residential areas to commercial and making it more lucrative for new developments in our more popular towns and villages to stop catering for long term accommodation.
- With 17% of our population in Kerry aged over 65 the need to provide more sheltered independent living housing in order to enable people to live independently while being part of a sheltered community in our towns and villages.
- With the largest number of people on our Housing List being Single Individuals (Approximately nearly 50% in my own MD), a comprehensive plan must be developed to address this immediately. This issue is made all the more alarmingly when the length of time that these individuals are on the Housing List is taken into account.
- Social & Affordable Homes need to be provided in all our towns and villages to cater for people from those areas and who want to live in those areas, if not the option of the Single Rural Dwelling must be provided to them.
  - Provide serviced sites near our towns and villages for people.
  - That it be a priority to bring back into use disused, vacant and derelict properties or sites in our towns, villages and countryside even when it is a change of use to those properties or sites.

- Covid-19 has brought many issues to the forefront of our daily discussions and we must plan for these events in future -
  - Our over reliance on the Tourism Industry within the county must be examined and further inward investment in alternative jobs and industries must be developed.
  - The ability to work from home has never been more important, every effort should be made to promote and encourage this within Kerry and investment in infrastructure such as broadband must continue to be a priority.
  - The continued promotion and encouragement of urban living over rural living must be questioned in a world where Covid-19 or another such Pandemic dictates our lives. Sustainable and environmentally friendly rural living must be promoted and encouraged.
- Our investment in infrastructure in our beaches, historical sites and scenic amenities must be continued and further developed for locals and visitors alike.
  - This needs to be done in conjunction with local groups and organisations and should abide by the Barcelona Declaration of "Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit".
  - During the key summer months Kerry County Council must explore the possibility of employing Guides to assist in the proper management of our beaches, historical sites and scenic amenities.
  - Electric car fast charging points be installed in all our public car parks and amenities.
- That along with the development of Greenways within the County that we actively look at the development and maintenance of our coastal walks and the provision of Blueways around our coastline. These coastal walks are under severe pressure from coastal erosion and they need to be protected and safeguarded for future generations.
- Fishing and marine activities plays an integral part in the life of our County. Our harbours, piers and slips under the control of Kerry County Council, are working harbours, piers and slips and need to be developed for Fishermen and Leisure Boat users.
  - Access must be provided on them and to them in case of emergencies and for loading and offloading boats.
  - Signage and lines should clearly show visitors where not to park in order to allow access for Emergency Services and Fisherman and that the upmost care be taken on them.
  - Facilities for our Fishermen in these areas need to be improved and further investment is needed.
  - With Brexit the need for direct access to Mainland Europe has never been as important, the possibilities of direct access through a ferry from Kerry needs to be examined and explored.
- Continued investment in the infrastructure and the streetscapes of our towns and villages must be maintained and increased. Making our towns and villages better places to live for local people will ensure that they are better places to visit for tourists.
  - Our towns and villages must be made fully accessible for people with disabilities.
  - Bus shelters need to be provided throughout the County in all our towns and villages. Having locals and tourists standing in the rain waiting for a bus is not acceptable.
  - Footpaths, walkways and cycle paths on the outskirts of our towns and villages need to be developed, with the growth of these towns and villages more and more people live on the outskirts and it is important that they have a safe walk or cycle into our towns and villages.
- Allow with my Fianna Fáil Council Colleagues I want to make these points in relation to planning.
  - In relation to rural planning that there should be no effort made now or in the future to place a limit/threshold of acreage to determine what categorises a farm as being of a size large enough to allow for the named farmer to apply for planning on that farm.
  - We submit that there be no effort made to increase the areas classified as Rural Areas Under Significant Urban Influence.

- We submit that all persons who demonstrate that they have lived in the locality for a period of 7 years are deemed eligible to apply for planning in the areas classified as Rural Areas Under Urban Influence.
- We believe that people who are from these areas and may have had to move away for education and employment be afforded the opportunity to make a home in their own locality. The working from home or near home practice affords us the opportunity to entice those with higher end employment and the equivalent incomes back to live in and invest in our county.
- We believe that in line with our obligations for the conservation and development of the Irish language that people who speak Irish and wish to live in and use the language in the Gaeltacht areas be allowed to seek planning in those areas. We have sought out people to come and live in rural Gaeltacht areas and many have responded to those calls who do not have intrinsic ties to the areas already. These people should not be discriminated against on that basis. Without people who speak and or are willing to speak the language we cannot live up to our statutory or moral obligations to promote the language.
- That in all future residential developments of substantial size that are more than 1 Km from the urban centre, the developer must provide for the recreational needs of the residents with the provision of amenity areas and play spaces, specifically a playground and recreational park for the older residents. Footpaths and cycle lanes to promote and facilitate active travel are also to be built into the approval of such developments.
- That in all future Housing developments that 15% of those homes are single story and designed to facilitate ground floor living for people with a disability and mobility issues associated with aging/infirmary to provide for a cohort of older people for example and those dealing with disabilities who need to move closer to essential services but may have been living and working in rural areas. This would allow for previous accommodation to be available for family use.
- In relation to areas categorised as Visually Sensitive Areas & Views and Prospects we submit that each individual MD must be afforded the opportunity to go back and look more carefully at where these are marked and the implications for sustainable development as a result.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my observations in relation to our Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028

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