N22 Farranfore to Killarney Project

Public Consultation

Submission to Kerry National Road Design Office

Prepared by

Farranfore Development Association

20th June 2021

This submission has been prepared by the Farranfore Development Association, which is a constituted voluntary organisation established in November 2011.

The overall aims of the Farranfore Development Association are the promotion of community, social, recreational and business development in the Farranfore area resulting in the improvement and enhancement of Farranfore, so to ensure its continued and future sustainability.

Farranfore is located in the heart of County Kerry strategically positioned 17km south of Tralee, 15km north of Killarney and 9.5km west of Castleisland.

Farranfore originally developed as a transport hub and has continued to fulfil this role. Kerry International Airport is located just over 1km east of the village core and Farranfore Railway Station is located close to the northern entrance to the village.

To support our submission please find attached a copy of the 2018 review of our community development plan, which was commissioned in 2012 and completed in 2013.

In 2013, the original N22 road re-alignment route had just been shelved and the 2018 review was undertaken before this current project was launched. It is clear that the N22 project is a key factor in the strategic infrastructure, amenity and enterprise aims of Farranfore.

The proposed re-alignment of the current N22 road has long been on the agenda. The delays over the last twenty years and more in the project planning and advancement have been major factors in the lack of necessary and expected residential, commercial and infrastructural development within Farranfore.

The project, when completed, will result in a seismic change in Farranfore’s positioning and role. It is important that the current range of services, amenities, infrastructure, community and commercial activities are maintained when the project is complete.

Indeed the desire of the local and national policy makers must be that this project will act as a catalyst to work with the local community to secure the investment in Farranfore to support its growth and expansion, so as to ensure Farranfore’s potential is maximised for the benefit of the local community and county as a whole.

Economy;

Encourage further enterprise growth and development within the village, the local business park and Kerry International Airport.

Given the services available in Farranfore, the excellent infrastructure and proximity to the major population centres of Kerry, it is ideal location within the county for business/enterprise development and also residential development.

As a transport hub with air and rail linkages, strategically located at the junction of the N22 and N23 in close proximity to the large settlements of Killarney and Tralee, Farranfore has huge potential to continue to develop as a business centre in the County.

This project should account for and encourage Farranfore’s position as a transport hub by facilitating the development of transport related facilities within the town and safeguarding Kerry Airports operation and expansion.

• Safety;

Signage on the new route to highlight Farranfore, its services, amenities and points of interest. ‘Welcome to Farranfore’ signage and landscaping should be put in place at new village access intersections on the new N22, to soften the entrance to the village and encourage passive traffic calming through creating awareness of the village setting.

Traffic Calming:

* 60km zone commencing 1km beyond current 50km zones on the Tralee, Castleisland and Killarney approaches to Farranfore, similar to 60km zone on approach to Tralee.
* Appropriate use of digital warning signs.
* The intersection of the N22 and the R561 is recognised as a point of particular concern.
* Removal of remaining lay byes, which were installed in late 1990’s, which are used as ad hoc long term public parking, by those seeking to avoid charges at the railway station and airport. This obstructs the view of traffic trying to access the current N22, from the local school, Park View estate and Firies GAA grounds.

Some of these lay byes were paved and incorporated into the existing footpaths a few years ago, similar work on the remaining lay byes would have the twin benefit of removing obstruction and improve the pedestrian permeability within the village core, which is currently hampered and discontinuous, there is a need to bring footpaths from the village core along the R561 as far as Farranfore Medical Centre.

• Environment;

Ensure that the current water courses in the area, namely the Féith Fionn are protected and allow for the potential development as a public amenity and positive visual focal point in Farranfore, through appropiate clearing and landscaping.
Identify and appropriately treat and remove any Japanese Knotweed to ensure that project work carried out in no way results in the further spread of this invasive species in the area.

* Highlight and promote the significance of Farranfore’s Transport History and its importance in terms of travel and logistics within the County.

The project must protect and conserve any remaining structures and features associated with Farranfore to Valentia branch railway line, as well as facilitate and account for any potential future development of the line as a public amenity such as a walking/cycling route along the old branch line, which would benefit the local community and offer tourism opportunities to attract visitors to the area. This would help develop Farranfore as a visitor destination with a focus on its unique transport history.

The bridges on the Tralee, Castleisland and Currow approaches form part of the vernacular architecture and should be conserved. Lighting them would provide a nice entrance framework to the village.

• Accessibility & Social Inclusion;

Enable long overdue residential development in Farranfore and promote best practice in encouraging development within easy access of the current services of the village.

As Farranfore was not overly developed with housing in the past decade the village has retained is integrity and character. This project should give certainty to allow residential development, which does not exclude access to those without regular motorised transport and should promote socially inclusive and age friendly accessibility in the village.
The project should protect current accessibility to Farranfore, from the surrounding hinterland. Farranfore’s current connectivity with Tralee, Killarney and Killarney must also be protected

• Integration;

Encourage and facilitate improved linkages between various modes of transport including connection between arrival/departure points and joined up scheduling information.

Farranfore was originally developed as a transport hub and has continued to fulfill this role. The village provides national and regional air, rail and road transport. Visitors arriving in Farranfore by bus, rail or air need to be better catered if Farranfore is to continue to grow based on its status as a transport hub,.

Kerry Airport is located over 1km east of the town core and there is a need to ensure individuals and groups arriving in the airport can avail of services in the village core and link up with bus and rail services.

There is currently no dedicated bus set down/layby on the Killarney – Tralee route through the village and buses are forced to stop on the current N22 carriageway, causing traffic obstructions. Changes to the existing bus stop locations should be facilitated by the project.

The potential for development of an integrated public transport terminal, which would see the bus stops moved from the N22 to the area within the Train Station, should be explored and include mitigation measures to allow for safe access/exit for buses to/from the train station. This allow for covered bus shelters and real time passenger information for transport users and visitors arriving by Train, Bus and Air.

• Physical Activity.

The project must not negatively impact on access to the current ‘Sli na Slainte’ routes adjacent to the current N23 and along the L-11047-0 and the Farranfore Railway Park, which are important amenities.
There is potential to extend these walks and link them via the Railway Park onto the old Farranfore to Valentia branch line.

The project should facilitate and encourage the further development and extension of dedicated walk and cycle ways within Farranfore, with the local hinterland and neighbouring villages such as Firies, Currow and Currans, as well as major population centres of Tralee, Killarney, Castleisland and Killorglin.