

Re: Submission to Stage 1 – Pre-Draft Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028

From: Ennis Chamber of Commerce, 54 O'Connell Street, Ennis, Co. Clare

Date: November 16, 2020



Ennis Chamber of Commerce thanks Clare County Council for the opportunity to contribute this submission on behalf of our membership. We hope the points listed below will be taken into consideration as part of the Pre-Draft Clare County Development Plan 2022-2028 process.

Attracting industry & Services:

- According to recent CSO stats, Ennis is showing a population decline. Without new industry, the population of Ennis will continue to decline. Therefore, the attraction of new industry is the key priority.
- To create a co-working/hot desking space in the town centre. Currently Ennis is the only town of scale within the county, without a County Council backed co-working hub/facility.

Land:

- Review and address the failure to promote or use land held by Shannon Group at Clare Technology Park.
- Review Opportunity Sites, and to assess the ability of those sites to be developed immediately as opposed to long-term. Some identified opportunity sites are difficult to develop due to multiple ownership issues and the Council need to look into these issues before designating sites for development.

Housing:

- A stock of quality housing is required if Ennis is to successfully attract industry/ jobs.
- Plan for re-population of Ennis town centre, to ensure a sustainable future for Ennis, one that acknowledges projected increases in vacant commercial property numbers, as towns (worldwide) undergo a fundamental shift in identity and purpose.
- Clare County Council currently buying property from private developers to satisfy social housing needs – figures need to be re-balanced to reflect this.

Support Infrastructure:

- To support the construction of new quality homes, capacity at waste treatment plants located at Clare Abbey and Clonroad need to be increased.
- Re-locate barrage at Clare Castle further downstream on Shannon Estuary to mitigate against projected rise in sea levels

- Screen unsightly waste treatment plant at Clare Abbey / adjacent to motorway/main entry access to Ennis / North and West Clare

Transport:

- To deliver on commitment for a Town Bus service.
- To continue investment in cycling lanes/ active transport supports.
- Parking: to create multi-storey or similar parking facility targeted towards business owners/ staff use.

Public realm:

- We welcome recent public realm capital investment commitments to carry out refurbishments and up-grades to the town centre, and request that investment is sought for further/continued upgrades to reflect changing use of town centres.

Tourism:

- Support the Cultural and Creative Sustainability of Ennis as outlined in Ennis Niche Destination Plan (copy attached).
- Adopt culture and creativity as key tenets across future economic planning.
- Scope the development of distinctive quarters across the town to highlight the cultural story of Ennis.