



Forward Planning,
Economic Development and Enterprise Directorate,
Limerick City and County Council,
Merchants Quay, Limerick
28th November 2022

Re: Draft Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023-2029

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of notification of the above draft LAP. The Department of Education has examined the contents therein and would like to make the following submission.

In the context of future population trends, the Department notes that this draft LAP refers to the population growth identified for Caherconlish in the recent draft CDP 2022-2028. In the context of the Core Strategy of the CDP, Caherconlish is a Level 3 town in the settlement hierarchy. In accordance with National Policy Objective 3c, a growth target of 23% has been incorporated into the Core Strategy. It is also noted that the 2031 NPF/RSES target for County Limerick is 246,000. This would see a further increase in population by cc 17,000 between 2027 and 2031. It is reasonable to assume that a proportion of the potential increase to 2031 will be applied to Caherconlish. In 3.2.2 Population Projections, Capacity and Residential Land Availability for Caherconlish of the Draft LAP the assumed population growth allocation for Caherconlish is an additional 339 persons to 2028 above the 2016 Census population of 1,476. The Department considered this data and made its submission to the draft CDP 2022-2028 regarding Caherconlish on the basis of potential population growth within the town and its environs between 2021 and 2031. In that submission, the Department stated the following:

The town is served by one mainstream primary school. At post-primary level, the needs of the town are served by the school in Doon.

At primary level, the Department anticipates that the existing school will be able to meet requirements. At post-primary level also, it is anticipated that the post-primary school in Doon will continue to be able to meet requirements arising from Caherconlish.

The Department also notes from Table 3.1 Core Strategy Units Allocated on page 18 of the draft LAP that 125 housings units are allocated for the lifetime of the plan to give rise to the projected growth of 339 persons, which equates to 2.71 person average per household. The table also specifies 146 units for a 7 year period up to 2029. This would equate to a growth of 395 persons in Caherconlish for that 7 year period. The Department has also considered this data and still forms the same conclusion as per its submission to the CDP as quoted above.



There is one primary school located in Caherconlish village. The Department's preference would be to expand these existing facilities (if possible) should there be a requirement for additional school places as a result of the planned population increases. At post-primary level, the Department anticipates that a relatively modest potential increase in school place requirements would be capable of being met at the existing school facility (or expansion thereof). The Department requests the Planning Authority to examine the potential of protecting a land buffer around the primary school to enable it to expand further if required to meet the future population growth in Caherconlish village.

The Department notes and supports 5.2.1 Education and Childcare to facilitate the provision of any future expansion, lands opposite the existing school have been zoned for community and education use.

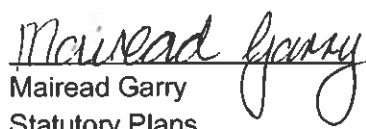
The Department notes and supports Objective C O2: Childcare and Educational Facilities to ensure that the existing school site is protected for educational use and that lands opposite to the school is protected for education and community uses.

The Department notes and supports Objective C O2: Childcare and Educational Facilities to support and facilitate improvements to existing educational and childcare and facilities within Caherconlish.

In terms of assessing current and future capacity, the Department of Education has to be mindful of potential unforeseen circumstances such as the Ukrainian crisis, which have the ability to put undue pressure on school place provision and could necessitate reassessments of school place provision from time to time. The Department will engage with the Council where the findings of an assessment require a review of existing or future school site provision within a specific location. The Department also anticipates that additional Special Education Needs provision at both Primary and Post Primary level will be required in the future throughout the country and this may result in schools requiring additional accommodation to meet this growing need. The Department will consult with the Council if and when additional SEN accommodation is required within specific locations.

Finally, the Department welcomes the continued engagement with the Council regarding the development of both new and existing schools, as appropriate, and emphasizes the critical importance of the ongoing work of the Council in ensuring sufficient land is zoned for this purpose.

Yours sincerely,


Mairead Garry
Statutory Plans
Forward Planning Section