

Bedford,Katie

From: Aoife Keogh [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday 26 May 2023 08:29
To: Forward Planning
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan for 2023-2029

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Dear Sir or Madam,

We are writing to put forward a submission to the LAP for Abbeyfeale Town. My name is Aoife Keogh and together with my husband Eamonn we own Spin Doctor Cycles in the town and Locomotion Bike Rental on the Limerick Greenway. We are very much involved in the town. Eamonn is a coach and committee member of the rugby club, I am secretary of the ACC, I am on the board of WLR and am also a member of the Town Center First group. Along with my colleague Noreen Cotter we are in the process of setting up CARA, a creative arts project in Abbeyfeale. I am also secretary of the newly formed Abbeyfeale Oral History Association. My background is in Disability Services. Eamonn is originally from Abbeyfeale and we have been living here since 2000. We have 3 children. We are both passionate about improving the town and restoring its vibrancy. We see lots of potential for the town and have the following suggestions and observations.

There is no Family Resource Center in Abbeyfeale. In fact there are only 4 FRC's in Limerick county in comparison to 12 in Kerry. Abbeyfeale is the second largest town in the county and has significant social needs. There is an absence of supports services for the community and surrounding hinterland. Having worked in Disability Services for over 25 years I am acutely aware of the positive effect such services can have in providing targeted services and creating opportunities to meet the needs of families who need support. There is a concerning gap in services in Abbeyfeale, such as the lack of childcare facilities which a family Resource Center would address. We would like to see the inclusion of a FRS in the plan.

There is no safe access from the newly developed Limerick Greenway to the town. As we are in the trade, we can see the opportunities for the town that the Greenway brings. We are concerned that the lack of a link to the town will encourage visitors to pass Abbeyfeale in favor of other towns along the Greenway where access is better. The development of a link between the town and the Greenway is a matter of urgency.

The Bank of Ireland Building was identified by the people of the town as a potential site for a museum or heritage center. This has now been temporarily repurposed. It is imperative that that building is returned to the town for use as a place to protect our history and heritage and should be acknowledged in the town plan.

The town has a beautiful town park. It would be a fantastic addition to the town if the Park could be connected to the Greenway. The draft plan should support the opportunity to link the Park to the Greenway.

Thank you
Aoife Keogh and Eamonn Foley.