

In order to fulfil our aims as listed in the appendix below, Comharchumann Shailearna Teo., wish to refer this submission to Galway County Council as they prepare for the New County Plan 2022 – 2028.

Summary of The Submission

In the interests of its Cooperative area Comharchumann Shailearna Teo., welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to Galway County Council to present the following as you undertake the preparation of the new County plan.

Here are the main points of our submission:

1. Planning permission should be made readily available for the people/ families of the Gaeltacht and for employees in the area
2. The New County Plan should have options to overcome the challenges of building houses in the Connemara area
3. Land zoning to be used for affordable housing in An Spidéal and other locations in the Comharchumann's functional area.
4. The development of sewerage systems from west of An Spidéal to meet the housing and development needs of Comharchumann Shailearna's operative area.

The Comharchumann calls for the support of elected councillors, executives and the Department of the Environment to ensure the County Council bring about what we have requested in this submission within the New County Plan 2022 – 2028

Submission 1

The basis of this submission is as follows:

1. Planning permission made available to the young people/families of the Gaeltacht and to people employed full-time in the area:

Shareholders of the Comharchumann in the area from an Spidéal to Casla seek as a matter of necessity that planning permission's be available to people living in the area or to people who are employed full-time there. This permission may be available to them on the land holding of their family or on land which they purchase in the area if their family holdings does not have a holding with a suitable site.

We seek this in order to allow our community to live in the same area as their families have lived all their lives or where they were born and brought up. This is crucial for the survival of the Irish language in the Gaeltacht and to ensure that it will be passed from generation to generation.

The Irish language, culture and literature are an integral part of Ireland's heritage. The Irish language has a unique place in the constitution of the country and there have been various governments since the foundation of the state which have prioritized the preservation and expansion of the Gaeltacht. Therefore, it is essential that any plan published by Galway County Council ensure that the Gaeltacht community can use the Irish language (without any constraints) as a community spoken language and also pass it from one generation to the next. Our application as a Co-operative is absolutely central to achieving this objective.

Difficulties and obstacles of building houses in the Connemara area

- Difficulties in finding suitable sites.
- Much of Connemara is designated as a conservation area which has a huge impact on planning. Percolation may be problematic as regards sewerage systems.
- Various reports are required such as hydrological assessments and NIS statements, for example which are costly for young people and even after all these spending's, sometimes they are not successful in obtaining planning permission. The percentage of unsuccessful applications in Connemara is much higher than in the rest of the county.

(2) Land Banks owned by local authorities (Galway County Council) and Údarás na Gaeltachta that are suitable for housing for the development of Affordable Housing Schemes for young people / families of An Ghaeltacht and for people employed full-time in the area.

Comharchumann Shailearna Teo., intends to carry out work in the community that will help the viability of the community and overcome the challenges of those with housing needs in the area. This includes affordable housing, houses which can be purchased at a reasonable price by the young people of the community. Comharchumann Shailearna propose that it would be the objective of the County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 for a community organisation such as the Comharchumann to receive The County Council's support for the development of housing which meets the housing needs of its community.

An ambitious and innovative new approach is needed to encourage and support our community to be able to preserve, expand and pass on the valuable heritage of our country from one generation to the next. Údarás na Gaeltachta has recognised the need for housing in the Cois Fharraige area and we as a community co-operative part funded by Údarás na Gaeltachta are willing to address these challenges in conjunction with the authorities in the area. Housing is currently a national priority for the government.

As a community Co-operative we are aware that there is excellent collaboration between us, the councillors, and the executives in Galway County Council as well as the executives and Board of Údarás na Gaeltachta on this matter. We seek only to strengthen the developing practices that have been created between us through The Galway County Council Plan 2022-2028 which is currently being prepared.

Comharchumann Shailearna has decided to acquire as much land as possible in its functional area and in the surrounding areas within South Connemara suitable for this undertaking, in cooperation with the various local communities and authorities. The aim of the Comharchumann is to work in conjunction with Galway County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta to achieve this important development over the next few years,

As a first phase of affordable housing development, we request that Galway County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta would provide the Comharchumann with a list of any properties in their possession suitable for affordable housing projects for this purpose. We also appreciate that the Galway County Council would undertake the construction of social housing for people in the area.

(3) Land Zoning in the Spiddal area to be used for the Affordable Housing Scheme. This would be a step towards resolving the housing crisis in the South Connemara region. Údarás na Gaeltachta has agreed to sell seven acres of land to Comharchumann Shailearna in the Spiddal area to allow for the building of houses for young people at a reasonable price.

Comharchumann Shailearna Teo., therefore request:

(a) A change in the boundary of the draft development plan for Spiddal to have this land included within the plan. The land in question was within the boundary of Spiddal's development plan several years ago.

(b) That this land would be zoned as phase one residential development land. The use of this land would be for affordable housing and the Comharchumann would be supportive of this condition being added to the zoning of this.

(c) A language condition would apply to the Comharchumann's proposed housing development as in the rest of Spiddal's development plan.

It would be intended to provide water and sewerage necessary for this type of development on that land by allowing for connection to the new system approved for An Spidéal.

* Appendix 2A&2B-Proposed addition to residential (Phase 1) A Diagram of the plot of land is attached for clarification

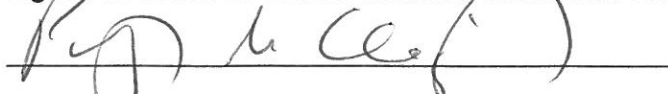
* Appendix C-Existing zoning for site.

(4) A sewerage system for the area that can meet the needs of the community; The absence of a wastewater treatment system in Cois Fharraige significantly affects housing construction, community facilities and business developments. The Comharchumann calls for the objective of the 2022-2028 County Development Plan to provide local sewerage systems to meet the needs of the local community, for example, the provision of constructed wetlands for housing cluster in various rural areas.

Another way to resolve the area's wastewater and sewerage problems is to initiate dialogue between the County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta and discover what Údarás na Gaeltachta would need in order for the wastewater systems on some of its industrial estates to be used for local sewerage schemes.

The sewerage system approved for the Spiddal area needs to cover the development of affordable houses planned by Comharchumann Shailearna. It would be helpful if this system be extended to accommodate our proposed affordable housing scheme. If this is not possible, it's important that our proposed affordable housing scheme be allowed to connect to the new sewerage system.

Signed on behalf of Comharchumann Shailearna Teo



Peigí Uí Ghéidigh – Manager

Date: 22-07-2021