

Senior Executive Officer
Planning Department
Meath County Council
Buvinda House
Dublin Road
Navan
Co. Meath
C15 Y291

Friday, 25th June 2021

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: SUBMISSION IN RESPECT OF THE MATERIAL AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT MEATH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027 IN RESPECT OF LANDS FRONTING NEW ROAD, SUMMERHILL, COUNTY MEATH.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Thornton O'Connor Town Planning¹ have been retained by AJW Developments Limited² to prepare this Submission to Meath County Council in relation to lands fronting New Road, Summerhill, County Meath (shown in Figure 1.1 below). The Submission relates to the publication of the *Material Amendments to Draft Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027*. Specifically, the Submission relates to Proposed Summerhill Amendment No.2.

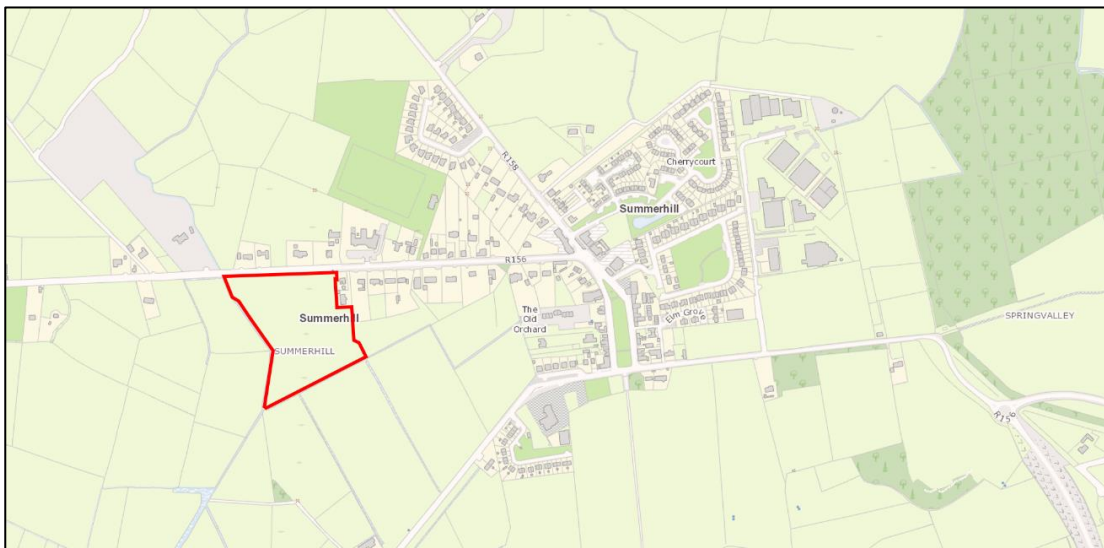


Figure 1.1: Map of the Subject Site

(Source: Myplan.ie, annotated by Thornton O'Connor Town Planning, 2021)

¹ No. 1 Kilmacud Road Upper, Dundrum, Dublin 14 D14 EA89

² Kilbrook Mews, Enfield, Co. Meath



A Submission was previously made in respect of the lands following the publication of the Draft Plan. In summary, that Submission set out a cogent case seeking the rezoning of the lands, from unzoned lands to '*G1 Community Infrastructure*' to allow our client to develop a proposal for a retirement village on part of the subject site, which would present a complementary and much needed facility for elderly persons adjacent to the Summerhill Primary Care Centre and within walking distance of a range of shops and services.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THIS LETTER – SUPPORT THE PROPOSED REZONING OF THE LANDS

The purpose of this Letter is **to support** the material amendments proposed in respect of the subject lands which rezones the lands to G1 'Community Infrastructure'. Proposed Summerhill Amendment No.2 has been included below for reference:

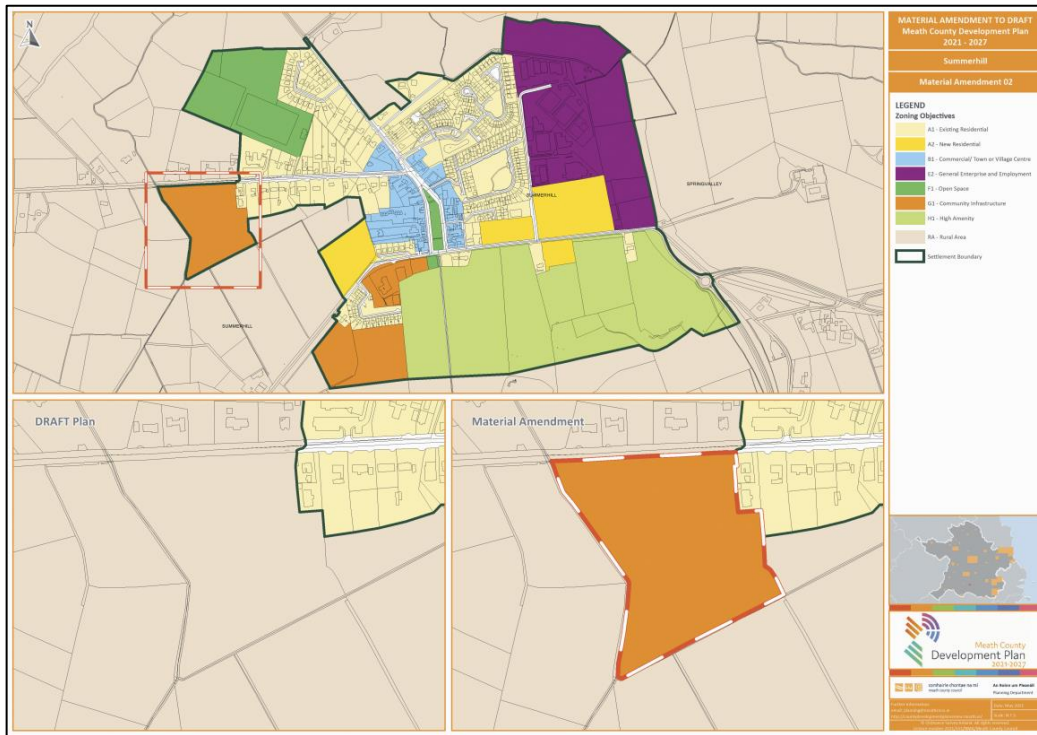


Figure 1.1: Proposed Summerhill Amendment No. 2

(Source: Draft Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027)

The following key points were made in the previous Draft Plan stage submission which sought the rezoning of these lands:

1. There has been a clear lack of investment in housing in Summerhill in recent years which has resulted in the inability of older people to secure step-down housing in the vicinity of their support networks.
2. An ageing population is emerging in the national population which will create a range of policy and planning challenges for the future of housing and care of the older person.
3. Summerhill is a suitable location for individual housing with an element of care in addition to a nursing home given its large rural hinterland.
4. A slower than expected return of housing construction in Summerhill has taken place since the years of heightened construction activity between 2001-2010. This has led to few available houses on the market within comfortable walking distance of the village services.

5. There is a clear need for new housing developments to be designed in accordance with the 'aging in place' principle in order to support this growing population of older persons.

We concur with the opinion of the Chief Executive in their report dated August 2020 that the subject lands are ideally located to provide for elderly or care accommodation. The Chief Executive, in responding to the Draft Plan Submission made in respect of the subject lands, stated:

'The subject lands are located within walking distance of the village and immediately adjacent to a primary care centre and the recreational facility provided by the GAA. It is considered that the future development of an elderly accommodation retirement village with sheltered accommodation would provide a centrally located facility that can serve the needs of the increasing elderly cohort of persons resident in the substantial hinterland of Summerhill to live in a modern, central and socially inclusive community.'

The Chief Executive further recognised that:

'The site also benefits from services including electricity, mains water and foul water.'

Thus, we fully support the proposed rezoning of the subject lands to G1 'Community Infrastructure'. Our client looks forward to submitting an application in the short term for a development that will provide for an envisioned elderly accommodation development at the lands encompassing various stages of care allowing elderly persons to live within their communities with dignity and receive the appropriate level of care for their circumstances. The forthcoming application will include a full suite of technical assessments to support the development including a site-specific flood risk assessment.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this submission is to express support for the Proposed Summerhill Amendment No.2 proposed as part of the *Material Amendments to Draft Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027*. As part of these amendments, the subject lands are proposed to be rezoned from their current unzoned status to G1 'Community Infrastructure' to allow for the delivery of an envisioned elderly accommodation retirement village with sheltered accommodation.

The subject site is ideally located within walking distance of the village core and immediately adjacent to a Primary Care Centre and the recreational facility provided by the GAA. Thus, the rezoning of this infill site fully accords with the principle of proper planning and sustainable development.

The envisioned future development of an elderly accommodation retirement village with sheltered accommodation would provide a centrally located facility that can serve needs of the increasing elderly cohort of persons resident in the substantial hinterland of Summerhill to live in a modern, central, sustainable, and socially inclusive community.

Thank you for continuing to support this proposal.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sadhbh O'Connor'.

Sadhbh O'Connor
Director
Thornton O'Connor Town Planning