



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

An Bord Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

22nd September 2023

RE: Application for Approval made under Section 177(AE) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) to (1) carry out Improvement works to St Brigid's Section E and (2) extend the existing Burial Ground at Drumcliff, Ennis. Co. Clare.

A Chara,

Clare County Council wish to apply for approval under Section 177(AE) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), to (1) carry out Improvement works to St Brigid's Section E and (2) extend the existing Burial Ground at Drumcliff, Ennis. Co. Clare.

The proposed development will include the following:-

- An addition of 350 double plots including provision for ash plots.
- Access road improvements including lay-bys, turning circle and traffic calming measures.
- Parking, Drainage & Footpaths
- Planting and landscaping including Columbarium and Reflectance Garden
- Associated Site Works

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report was prepared. As a result, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared as part of the application for the approval in respect of the proposed development.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in support of the application. It concluded that EIA is not required.

Enclosed herewith is the following documentation in accordance with Article 249 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) in support of the application.

- a) 2 no. hard copies of the newspaper notice published in the "Clare Champion" on the 22nd September 2023 in accordance with section 177AE(4)(a)
- b) 2 no. hard copies of the Site Notice – erected 22nd September 2023 (pictures attached).
- c) 2no. hard copies of the Plans & Particulars of the proposed development.
- d) 2 no. hard copies of the Landscape Proposals
- e) 2no. hard copies of the Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS)
- f) 2no hard copies of the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)

Roinn Tuaithe agus Pobail
Stiúthóireacht Forbairt Pobail

Áras Contae an Chláir, Bóthar Nua, Inis, Co. an Chláir, V95 DXP2

Rural and Community Department
Rural Development Directorate

Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, V95 DXP2



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- g) 2no. hard copies of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report.
- h) 2no. hard copies of the Hydrological & Hydrogeological Assessment Report
- i) 2no. hard copies of an Archaeological Appraisal Report
- j) 2 no. hard copies of the Preliminary Construction & Environmental Management Plan
- k) 1 soft copy of the full Planning Application Pack for the proposed development

The following Prescribed Bodies have been notified with respect to the application for the proposed development in terms of Section 177AE(4)(b) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended):

1. Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage
2. Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
3. National Parks & Wildlife Service
4. An Taisce
5. Uisce Eireann
6. Heritage Council
7. Inland Fisheries
8. Arts Council
9. Fáilte Ireland
10. Clare County Council

Statement of Design intent

Drumcliff Burial Ground is located north of Ennis town close to Drumcliffe Church and Round Tower. Drumcliffe Water Treatment Plant is to the south of the Burial Ground. Ballyallia Lake (an SAC & SPA) is located to the north and the River Fergus (SAC) to the east. This planning application seeks to improve the existing operational section of the burial ground and extend the existing burial ground to ensure sufficient capacity for the next decade.

Drumcliff Burial Ground is divided into Sections – Section E (St. Brigid's) is the section currently in operation i.e. burial plots are available for purchase. Access to Section E is via an existing road through the main burial ground. This road serves all other sections in the burial ground. Ground conditions in some areas of Section E are not suitable for burials and this has meant a reduction in the number of future plots. It is estimated that Section E will approach capacity in less than 2 years.

The proposed development seeks to extend the burial ground beyond Section E to create additional capacity for burials. In addition, the design proposal aims to make improvements to section E having regard to ground conditions and drainage, whilst creating a sense of tranquillity and reflection through considered landscaping and pause spaces throughout the proposal. In particular, a new Reflectance Garden and future Columbarium Wall will be located in Section E. A central landscaped spine will link the new Reflectance Garden and future columbarium location to the burial ground extension to the south. In terms of servicing, provision is made for carparking, water supply and bin storage. A future compound area is also identified and will come into operation when the new extension is operational.

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Section E is currently served by an Operations Area that is used by gravediggers for disposal of spoil from grave-digging. This area is accessed through the main entrance of the Burial Ground. A minor extension of this area is proposed within the current site boundary and access will remain as currently is. Once Section E is no longer available for burials, Operation area E will no longer be available and Operation area G will become operational. This area is further south and is within council owned lands.

The proposed development will not give rise to any increased level of water run-off. Currently all surface water falling on the site is either absorbed directly into the existing sub-soil or flows over land (during heavy rainfalls) downhill towards the existing graveyard areas. Due to the provision of gullies, soak pits and underground perforated land drainage pipes, the surface water which is not absorbed directly by green areas within the proposed development, will be captured and directed toward underground infiltration areas and infiltration swales. Therefore, any water run-off which may previously flowed over the land downhill uninterrupted, will now be captured and fed to suitably designed infiltration areas (soak pits/swales/perforated pipes). Several infiltration tests to BRE365 were carried out across the site to identify appropriate infiltration rates to be used to design these infiltration areas.

There is one existing soak pit identified on the Proposed Site Services Layout (drawing 21384-3030-PL4), which currently services the existing access road to Section E. The drainage of a localised area of footpath along the eastern boundary of Section E has been identified as deficient and it is proposed to drain this area via an acco drain/pipework to the existing soak pit shown. As noted previously, ponding/waterlogging occurring at localised locations due to overground flow of surface water will be minimised by the proposed development. Any deficient existing drainage identified will be corrected.

The proposed development is likely to increase the water quality as overland flow will be minimised and infiltrated to the existing subsoil, which would act as a polishing filter so that surface water eventually reaching any underground water table would be cleansed of debris/organics.

An early season survey for long eared owls at the site did not record any definitive evidence of the species utilising the site. However suitable habitat for the species was present and a few locations within the site were noted where existing nests could potentially be used by the species for breeding. No trees within the site are proposed for removal as part of the proposed development, and there is no potential for loss of nesting habitat. In addition, no lighting is being provided. Therefore, the proposed development is likely to continue to provide suitable habitat for the species.

Current Capacity of Burial Ground

As previously advised, Section E of the existing Burial Ground is nearing full capacity, so it is important that this development is progressed as soon as possible. We would therefore appreciate if An Bord Pleanála can consider this application as soon as possible.

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We trust that you will find this application in order and look forward to receipt of an acknowledgement at your earliest convenience.

If you have any queries in relation to the above, please contact:

Ms Bernadette Haugh,
Senior Executive Officer,
Clare County Council,
Tel: 065-6846226 Email: bhaugh@clarecoco.ie

Yours Faithfully,

Jason Murphy,
A/Director of Services

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