

Backland Development

The development of back land Sites can contribute to enhancing the vibrancy and character of an existing community while also contributing to the efficient use of serviced lands. There is a need for the inclusion of planning applications to be considered in back-lands that would allow Elderly people size down and allow young people build there first home possible at the rear of their parents' house.

Where there are several Children in a Family and they require housing in the area that they have grown up in then consideration needs to be given to allow for backland development.

The development of backland sites on an individual basis (i.e. rear garden areas/ individual backlands with no frontage) can contribute to combatting rural Isolation.

These developments would allow for professionals who have moved into the area i.e. Teachers, Guards, Doctors, Nurses an opportunity to own their home in the area that they are working in.

Backland developments would tie into an already established Infrastructure i.e. Water, Electricity, Broadband etc.

Submitted by Cllr David Collins

Retirement Villages

Ireland's over 65 population increases by 20,000 every year.

There are currently 638,000 people over the age of 65 in Ireland and by 2040 we will have 1.3 million people in this age bracket. { CSO 2016} This is a 100% increase in this period.

These numbers equate to 23% of the population. There are currently 26,000 people over the age of 65 in County Galway. If Galway is to mirror the National projection trends there will be 52,000 people over the age of 65 in County Galway by 2040.

Elderly people are now living longer and more healthy and independent lives. There needs to be a creation of a plan on how we will cater for this age group into the future and housing and planning will have a big impact on their everyday lives.

Allowing for people to downsize and make properties available for younger people makes sound economic and social sense.

Due to the changing nature of the age profile of the County it requires greater consideration of the housing needs of older persons.

Needs of the elderly must be considered relating to access, public transport, and provision of local services, medical care, security and personal safety among other issues. The idea of rural isolation must be taken into account. Independent living facilities catering specifically for older people should generally be located in close proximity to Church, Shops, community facilities.

It is important for those who wish to remain in their community and live independently that there is an opportunity to downsize in the area in which they live. This can be a smaller dwelling on their own private land or for rent or purchase within their own community.

Submitted by Cllr David Collins

Waste- Water Infrastructure

One of the objectives in the upcoming county Development Plan will be Rural and Urban Regeneration

There are Many Villages and Towns in County Galway that have Populations of over 500 People and will be considered for Local Plans if there is Waste Water Infrastructure in Place.

At the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Meeting we discussed the Issue of Urban and Rural Regeneration and the Importance of it within the Region.

The Assembly have agreed through our representation to bring Irish water Representatives to the next meeting in September to discuss our concerns and hopefully have some vision and Plan for the next 5 years for the region.

There are EU funds available for Smarter and Greener practices within our Villages and Towns.

The crux to allowing for the development of these practices is being able to develop our towns and villages from a planning point of view.

Right Now we cannot do this due to the lack of waste water Infrastructure.

Within our Villages we have so many resources and services – We have Electricity, Broadband, Water, Schools, Churches, Community Centres, Shops and Businesses and Just recently we have a plan for the roll out of LED lighting systems for the County.

What we do not have is Waste Water Infrastructure Plan or a vision to roll it out.

Whether its Planning, Biodiversity, Smart Development, Community Development, Business Development, Housing, which are all an Integral Part of the recently Published RSES Plan for the region and which are also the areas for planning within our county Development Plan It is vitally Important that we have a plan for the Roll out of Waste Water Infrastructure within our County.

As members of the Northern and Western Assembly I along with My colleagues will insure that this is kept on the agenda from a regional Point of view but I am asking this be included by Galway County Council to insure that we have a Waste Water Infrastructure Plan that will Insure that we can deliver all the upcoming actions within our County Development Plan.

It is vital that we have this Certainty for the People and Communities that we represent within County Galway.

Submitted by Cllr David Collins