



Frank Pentony
Director of Services
Development Plan Review
Forward Planning Unit
Louth County Council
Town Hall, Crowe Street,
Dundalk, Co Louth.
A91 W20C

18th December 2020

**RE: Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021 – 2027
Submission on behalf of Margaret Reilly in relation to lands at
Termonfeckin Rd, Co. Louth**

Dear Mr Pentony,

With reference to the above, and further to your invitation to the public to make submissions in respect of the Draft County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 for County Louth, please note that we have been appointed by Margaret Reilly to make this submission on her behalf.

Please find attached contact details for our client separately as directed.

Background:

Our client, Margaret Reilly, is the owner of Grand Designs, a kitchen and built-in furniture manufacturer based at Newtown on the Termonfeckin Road Drogheda.

Grand Designs was first established in 2009 and has since grown from strength to strength earning a reputation for quality, reliability and after sale care.

In 2016 Ms Reilly cooperated with the adjoining landowner to facilitate the provision of a new vehicular access across lands partly owned by her. Planning Ref 16/458 relates. This has resulted in the construction of several phases of the Beulieu Village residential scheme by that developer.

At that time Ms Reilly made developer of the housing scheme aware that she had plans to extend her premises and this was discussed with him before he lodged his application for a new entrance under 16/458. Ms Reilly has since then made 2 planning applications which were refused because the Planning Authority took the view that they were contrary to the residential zoning objective and that the extension of her long-established business had potential to have a negative impact on the houses that could not have been built without her cooperation. It should be noted that none of the new residents who moved into the houses adjoining her premises objected to the development which had the full support of the developer building adjacent to her. The only objection to the modest expansion was from the planning department on technical grounds relating to the zoning objective applied in the 2004 LAP for North Drogheda

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Draft County Plan

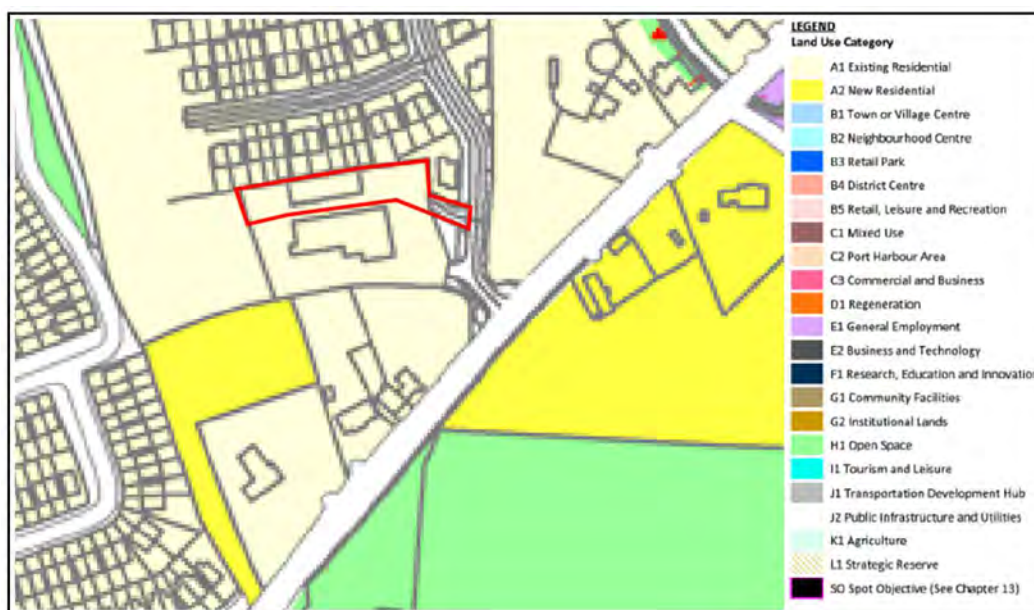


Figure 1: Draft Louth County Development Plan Land Using Zoning Map for Drogheda with Margaret Reilly's business premises highlighted

The Draft CDP seeks to impose the same zoning objective on Margaret's business which provides significant local employment and supports the training of apprentices, that has prevented her modest extension.

The site is identified on in Figure 1 above, on an excerpt from the Draft CDP land use zoning map for drogheda. It is Zoned A1 – Existing Residential.

The relevant policies regarding this zoning objective in the Draft CDP are as follows:

13.19.5 Existing Residential (A1)

Objective

To protect and enhance the amenity and character of existing residential communities.

Guidance

The objective for this zoning is to conserve and enhance the quality and character of established residential communities and protect their amenities. Infill developments, extensions, and the refurbishment of existing dwellings will be considered where they are appropriate to the character and pattern of development in the area and do not significantly affect the amenities of surrounding properties. The strengthening of community facilities and local services will be facilitated subject to the design, scale, and use of the building or development being appropriate for its location.

Generally Permitted Use

Allotments, B&B/ Guest House, Community Facility, E- Charging Facility, Home Based Economic Activities, Nursing Home, Park/Playgrounds, Place of Worship, Recreational /Amenity Open Space, Recreational /Sports Facility, Residential, Residential Institution, Retirement Village, Sheltered Accommodation, Traveller Accommodation, Utilities.

Open for Consideration

Coffee Shop/Tea Room, Childcare Facility, Healthcare Practitioner, Restaurant, Shop ≤200m², Telecommunications Structures, Veterinary Surgery.

The Draft County Plan helpfully includes a statement that established non-conforming uses including reasonable intensification will be considered. I refer to section 13.12.2.4 reproduced below.

13.19.2.4 Non-conforming Uses

'Non-conforming uses' are established uses that do not conform to the zoning objectives of the Plan. Generally, the Planning Authority will consider reasonable intensification of extensions to and improvement of premises that accommodate non-conforming uses, provided that it would not be injurious to the amenities of the area and does not prejudice the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Similar policies were included in the past with respect to Drogheda Borough Development Plans and the LAP for Dundalk regarding non-permissible uses that were already established. No such protection was provided in the 2004 LAP for North Drogheda or in the County Plan currently being reviewed. In any event, the existence of this statement in related county policy documents did not protect Margaret or her business and permission for what we consider to be a very reasonable extension for the improvement of her premises was refused twice.

Requested Change:

We would respectfully ask that the land use zoning map for Drogheda be altered so that our client's established manufacturing operation is provided with the appropriate zoning objective i.e. E1 – General Employment as per Figure 2 below:

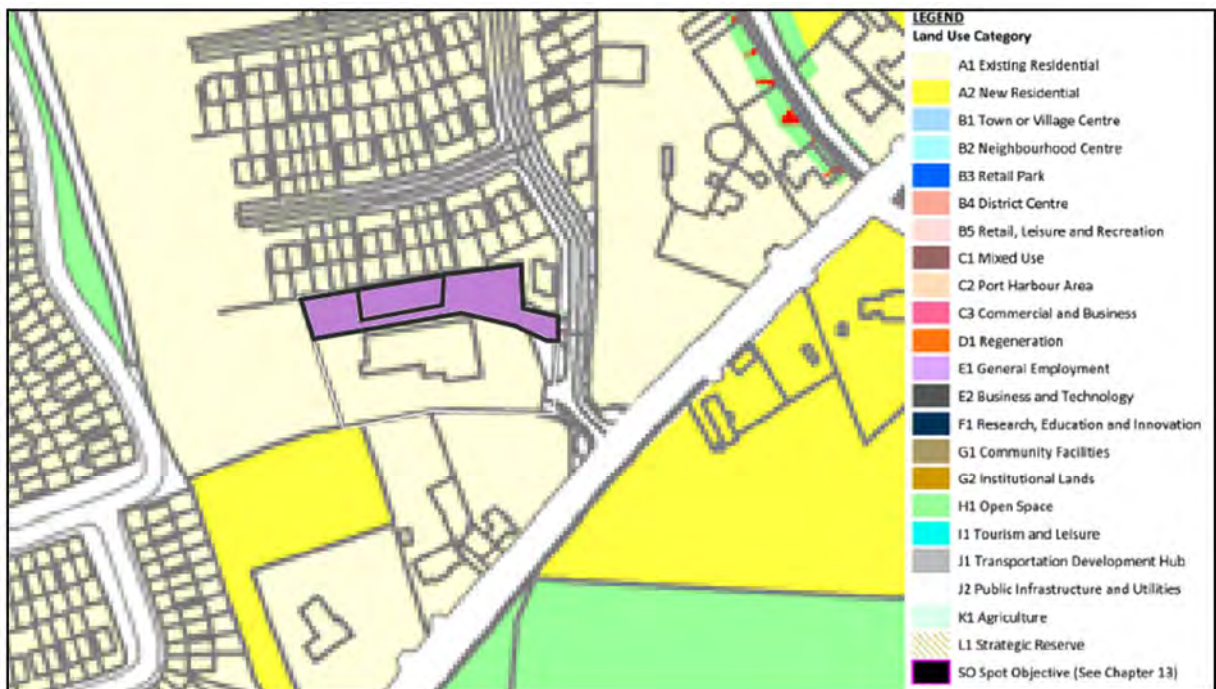


Figure 2: Proposed Amended Draft Louth County Development Plan Land Using Zoning Map for Drogheda

Justification:

There are lots of examples in the Draft Plan for Drogheda where established employment uses were surrounded by subsequent housing developments. Many of these were outside the town when first established and then the town expanded to surround them, just like in Margaret's case.

Some examples of this are provided below, and you will note that all of the example premises are protected by Employment Use zoning.



Figure 3: E1 Zoned Lands - Mell, Drogheda



Figure 4: E1 Zoned Lands - Old Slane Rd, Drogheda



Figure 5: E1 Zoned Lands - Dublin Rd, Drogheda



Figure 6: E1 Zoned Lands – Scarlet St, Drogheda

Summary and Conclusion

There is scope for small businesses to co-exist happily within residential areas as per the examples above, and Margaret and her business is on good terms with all of her neighbours too. The proposed extension to Margaret's premises is an opportunity for engagement with the planning authority and concerned neighbours through the public participation process.

The Draft Plan notes that Drogheda's Job: Worker ration is poor, with Drogheda's economy reliant on commuting workers. The County Plan, as it applies to Drogheda in particular, should be prioritising the protection and creation of employment opportunities side by side with balanced population growth. Existing jobs should not be sacrificed to facilitate residential growth.

We respectfully request that the changes sought be made before the adoption of the new county plan to allow Margaret to improve her business, plan and grow for the future and the secure the much needed jobs she supports locally.

Yours Faithfully

Brian Hughes
BA BAI CEng MIEI,
Chartered Engineer