

Submission to the Cork County Development Plan Review From Transition Town Kinsale (TTK) (Bandon-Kinsale Municipal District)

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Outline of Submission

Part I

1. Integration of Climate Action Plan (2019) and Programme for Government (2020)

- Climate action commitments in our County Development Plan (CDP) – from aspiration to action
- Community energy generation
- Climate resilient infrastructure
- Responsible and sustainable development
- Appointment of person responsible for the implementation of the climate action commitments for Cork County

2. Valuing and protecting Biodiversity

- Appointment of advocate for the findings of both the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA)
- Active promotion and protection of biodiversity in the county

Part II

Comments under specific headings in the County Development Plan Public Consultation Document

National and Regional Context

The National Planning Framework sets out ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) or priorities to guide future development. The last three are listed as: *Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society; Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources; Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services*. One could argue that these priorities should be first given the statement below.

With Irish per capita Green House Gas (GHG) emissions among the highest in Europe and the wider global climate challenge, Government has identified 'Climate change as the most important long-term challenge facing Ireland' and is committed to 'the transformation required to achieve a low carbon resilient future'.
Southern Regional Assembly Issues Paper RSES, 2018

TTK outlined in our submission to the Issues Paper for the Southern Region's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy*Because of this we suggest that it is imperative that in this regional strategic document and in the National Planning Framework document the issue of greenhouse gas emission reduction should be prioritised in the opening statements. All future strategy in every sector should be framed in the context of greenhouse gas reduction. If our future is not planned under this framework Ireland will continue to fail to achieve its international commitments in this regard. Despite the statement (above) in the Issues Paper this essential context is not raised until page 21.*

The Climate and Biodiversity Emergency, which have been acknowledged in our Dáil¹, should underpin all strategy. If, as global citizens, we do not take on these challenges with the urgency they require the realisation of the vision outlined in this Development Plan, a society with wellbeing of all at its core, and a sustainable economy, becomes unachievable. Greenhouse gas emission reduction plans should be highlighted and outlined in the plan in the same way detailed projections are made about housing and water services.

¹ <https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/ireland-declares-a-climate-emergency/>

Kinsale Area

In the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (Southern Region) Kinsale is part of the Cork Ring Network. It also comes under the CEDRA1 report on Energising Irelands Rural Economy (2014) definition of rural Ireland as “all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities”.

This definition is carried forward to the Governments Action Plan for Rural Development (Realising our Rural Potential) published in 2017 which identifies five key pillars to support rural development, with associated objectives as outlined below, many of which are particularly relevant to the settlements and placemaking issues discussed in this paper:

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Transition Town Kinsale would emphasis these objectives for Kinsale as follows:

1. Supporting Sustainable Communities - *consider how more effective public participation could be realised and moving beyond the reliance of voluntarism to enable this participation.*
2. Supporting Enterprise and Employment – *support the development of an innovation hub for social enterprise and ‘work from home’ venue – support innovation and diversification in the agriculture sector – harness the benefits of renewable energy as a means of regional regeneration – support life learning and opportunities for upskilling for all.*
3. Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential - *development of blueway-greenway to create corridors of connection in our communities while protecting our natural and built heritage. As we develop and promote Activity Tourism etc. ask where tourists will be coming from into the future.*
4. Fostering Culture and Creativity in rural communities - *Increase access to the arts and enhance cultural facilities in rural communities – support the development of the Municipal Hall in Kinsale as a theatre space.*
5. Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity - *Improve public transport connectivity to both Cork City and to the surrounding areas - assess flood relief measures and how they can be improved for example, the use of a barrier with locking facilities on the seaward side of the harbour, below the Boatyard to cater for an expected three to a six-metre rise in the tide levels by the year 2050 – consider future planning decisions in context of increased vehicular traffic on Kinsale streetscape and flood plains - improve broadband connectivity in local ‘blackspots’.*

These points are considered in more detail in Part II. Some further overall comments on the CDP include:

- Migration – this 21st Century issue is not considered i.e. providing homes for those who will migrate here when they are forced to leave their own homes.
- Could the plan be written in context of the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) as per the Regional Strategic Spatial and Economic Plan for the Southern region.
- Due attention to air quality and related health issues and how this will be managed into the future.
- Work with the farming community and other landowners to create a land use management strategy in context of climate change adaptation and mitigation, agricultural use, renewable energy infrastructure and biodiversity protection.
- Creating a skills gap for the county for our low carbon transition and outlining support for upskilling initiatives.
- Adapting a ‘towards Zero Waste’ waste management strategy within the county and leading my example as to how this could be achieved. Supporting enterprises that are working to create a circular economy.

Part I

Integration of The Climate Action Plan (2019) and Programme for Government (2020)

A vibrant and resilient economy is based on societal well-being; and can only exist in a healthy environment.²

The County Development Plan should ensure it integrates the Climate Action Plan as outlined in the 'Report of the Joint Committee on Climate Action – Climate Change: a cross-party consensus for action (2019)'. This joint committee was set up to develop this Action Plan based on the Citizen Assembly Submission 2018.

2.2.30 The Climate Action Plan is committed to achieving a net zero carbon energy systems objective for Irish society and in the process, create a resilient, vibrant and sustainable country.

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Ireland is one of only two countries in the EU which will overshoot its 2020 targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions. TTK would argue that this is not acceptable for moral reasons and because of our international commitments. It is more imperative than ever that we stand up to our commitments; as one of the rich countries in the world we contribute to around 86% of carbon emissions (even though we represent approximately 50% of the world's population).³

Investment and funding over the lifecycle of this development plan needs to be prioritised in context of Ireland's Mitigation and Adaptation Plans, which will outline how Ireland will achieve targets for 2050. Climate change is inevitable due to emissions already released into the atmosphere, so Ireland need to adapt to reduce exposure to climate risks and reduce emissions at the same time. We need to acknowledge the evidence-based scenarios of the cost of no action.

The EPA and the Climate Advisory Council describe what is required as "a major societal and economic transformation". The Advisory Council has advised that we should outline the roadmap to achieve the 2050 national objective. That objective, set out in the National Policy Position on Climate Action, is an 80% aggregate emissions reduction between the buildings, energy, and transport sectors, and carbon neutrality in agriculture. To be consistent with the national 2050 objective of an 80% cut in net emissions, this will require year-on-year cuts of 7.6% per annum starting in 2020.⁴ Ireland is already heading towards paying non-compliance costs. This money would be better spent on investing in the future economy of this local area, county and country.

The County Development Plan should be planning for a transition to a low carbon climate resilient future from now – in line with our commitments to the Paris Agreement, the EU New Green Deal and the potential yearly 7% reduction in our GHG emissions as per the Programme for Government June 2020. It should outline how the Climate Action Plan and other directives will be devolved locally. Energy generation; land use planning; transport; housing; waste management; economic development and agricultural practices, all need to be considered in this context. Integrated planning and collaborative work will be required to achieve this between many stakeholders and TTK hopes that processes will be put in place to facilitate this. The aspirations in our National Policy Documents and in County Development Plans need to be resourced actions in our Local Area Plans. We also need to create a culture where biodiversity, and its protection, is at the forefront of decision making in our county instead of an add-on.

² <https://www.epa.ie/irelandsenvironment/environmentandwellbeing/>

³ <https://ourworldindata.org/co2-by-income-region>

⁴ <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/cut-global-emissions-76-percent-every-year-next-decade-meet-15degc>

We would propose that in the same way our own wellbeing is served by our Primary Care Centres a network of Climate Action Centres (Sustainability Hubs/ Earth Centres) are created in the county to facilitate not just information dissemination but effective participation of us all in this '*Just transition*'. The CARO offices and the Public Participation Network already in place may be the structures to explore the possibilities of effective collaboration between community led initiatives, the local authority and private enterprise. TTK would also propose that:

- only responsible and sustainable investment (i.e. climate proofed and low carbon) should be endorsed by the County Council;
- a person should be appointed who is responsible for the implementation of our climate action commitments in our Local Area. Acting as 'Future Proofing Auditors' they should be sitting at the decision-making tables across all sectors.

Waste Management is a key element of our transition. A county wide strategy towards Zero Waste and the support of enterprises which incorporates a circular economy could be included in the plan. At a local level there is a limited recycling facility in Kinsale which could be improved. TTK would prioritise the development of a local green waste site. The by product (compost) could be used locally to nurture the green space in the town.

The Local Authority has a key role to play in climate change mitigation as it has in adaptation as outlined below.

2.2.18 Local authorities will play a key role in helping the country to adjust to the effects of climate change. The local government sector plans a pivotal role in planning for, and responding to, emergency situations.

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The transition to a low carbon society will be neither community led, or top down enforced it will happen when we all engage together in making it happen. It needs to be about transparent representation and shared responsibility. Our Local Authority will play a key role and this role needs to be mapped out in this CDP.

Valuing and Promoting Biodiversity

To ensure the biodiversity of our area is protected and enhanced over the timeframe of this plan Transition Town Kinsale propose the following:

- That a person is nominated and resourced to be the advocate for the findings of both the SEA and the HDA throughout the planning process. This is suggested in context of Ireland’s most recent report to the Convention on Biodiversity where only 8% of habitats are described as in ‘favourable condition’. We need to ask why we have this poor record and actively work to change it.
- It is essential that the findings from the Habitat Directives Assessment are promoted locally so that this element of Kinsale’s heritage can be appreciated. Habitat inventory needs to be included in our Local Area Plan and made available locally.
- Transition Town Kinsale supports the creation of nature-corridors in the area especially in areas where we are trying to protect species.
- Transition Town Kinsale supports connecting the greens spaces within the town area and those in the Hinterland with walking and cycling routes.
- Current zoning needs to be reevaluated in context of the HDA and climate projections e.g. site at Commoge Marsh zoned Enterprise.
- Inclusion of The Prince’s Bed (Wedge Tomb) at Ballymacus as a Heritage site.
- Consideration of further Natura 2000 sites in the area based on the HDA.
- Consideration of the introduction of the red squirrel to woodland in the Kinsale area.
- Council to adopt policy of ‘no weed killer’ as a measure to promote biodiversity; implementing a ‘trim only’ policy where required.

Notes

1. Sites of invasive Japanese Knotweed which have been observed by TTK’s Edible Landscaping Group:
 - Extensive growth opposite SuperValu on New Road
 - Opposite Kinsale Hostel driving towards Lidl
 - Corner at crossroads beyond fire station on R605 towards Barrack Street (on RHS opposite green area)
 - End of Long Quay – area in front of access to woodland
 - Towards R607 opposite county council offices
2. TTK, through funding from The Community Foundation is developing a local Community Biodiversity Action Plan for the area.

Part II

People and Places - Housing

With regard to housing Transition Town Kinsale would ask that the following are considered in developing this Development Plan:

- Why is there a housing issue - is profit the priority rather than the provision of a basic need; do we need to create innovative partnerships to develop cost effective housing;
- Policies whereby housing stock cannot be left empty (after a given time period) where there is a housing need;
- Policies to encourage vacant business properties in towns to be utilised (reduced rates for reduced rents);
- Planning policies which create more attractive high-density development in our urban areas;
- Provision of sheltered housing in housing developments or near town centres so that living in the community is a viable option to living in a Care Home with increased care needs – with zoning assigned for such development.
- Allocation of Housing for those who have come to live here through refugee or asylum status so that the Direct Provision system can be abolished or used only for a short interim period (maximum 3 months?);
- Cost, sustainability and availability of public transport and service provision for one off housing in future planning applications.
- Feasibility of district heating in estate housing developments.

TTK would advocate for:

- An effective community programme to facilitate the energy efficiency upgrading of our housing stock. This could be led by the Council who have programmes in place to do this with Local Authority Housing. Taking the learning from this process to effect the same in private estates across the county.
- Effective participatory decision making regarding the design and upgrade of urban infrastructure – town squares, new urban space.
- Reimagining our town centres as space for people (not cars!).

Kinsale

Evaluate potential use of vacant property in Kinsale with consideration been given to:

- housing for older people in proximity to the town centre.
- housing for those who may come to Kinsale as part of Ireland's resettlement Process.
- those who have been priced out of the rental market.
- the many students who come and live in Kinsale while studying at Kinsale College.

Transition Town Kinsale would raise the question who should profit from land rezoning especially relevant in Kinsale where property prices are premium.

Settlements and Place making – Kinsale Town and hinterland

Transition Town Kinsale commend the aspiration outlined in Table 3.3.1.



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Following involvement with the SECAD My Town, My Plan Programme Transition Town Kinsale would propose the following for Kinsale and hinterland.⁵

- Formation of Kinsale & Hinterland Community Council
- Creating an enviro-socio-economic plan for the area so community can see possibilities for developments – an asset-based approach where under-utilised resources and possibilities for area enhancement can be realised and highlighted
- Establishment of a social enterprise hub and a ‘local hub’ for home working
- Development of Blueway - Greenway network to connect the area

Cork County Council needs to protect all established right of ways with regard to connectivity of town and heritage access and consider them in both zoning and planning applications e.g. connectivity with Saile (including Kinsale’s Community Orchard) to Cappagh and directly to Commoge Marsh (along Bee Bole Wall); green road connecting Compass Hill and Commoge Marsh; Ballymacus Lane to Ballymacus Strand; lane to Ferrypoint.

Kinsale

- Revaluation of zoning and development in proximity to Commoge Marsh especially given potential exposure to flooding risk due to climate change induced sea level rise and impacts on a wetland habitat, and other areas highlighted in HDA’s.
- Zoning for allotments within walking distance of residential areas.
- Formal location for river and harbour access for non-commercial and non-marina users should be established. Though locations are known locally, visitors to the area may not be aware of the most appropriate place to gain access to the river or harbour with small boats and kayaks.
- Development of the Scilly Dam area for Water based Tourism

⁵ https://hincks.cit.ie/my-town_my-plan-community-tra

The Town Centre

Transition Town Kinsale commend the alternative design for residential development outlined below.

4.5.6 Activity levels in urban areas are directly linked to their density of development and the design of the urban structure. Pedestrian activity or street life increases in urban areas that can be defined as “walkable”. Within the past half century, more recent residential layouts in our towns and villages have been designed in cul-de-sac layouts which promoted car use. The Plan advocates that new residential development should generally follow the traditional perimeter block layout which is the traditional form of layout in most of our towns and villages. This contributes to increased pedestrian permeability.

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Transition Town Kinsale would advocate innovative thinking around the use of the car in Kinsale Town Centre which has a unique architectural heritage and streetscape (which should be protected and enhanced). A letter to our Local Councillors is included in the Appendices where we advocated exploring the concept of ‘completely car free’ at the weekends in the Summer.

Potential for a one-way system and options to increase pedestrian zones should be explored and implemented. Reduced town centre car parking (relocated to ‘satellite car parks’) to improve and expand pedestrianised spaces should be considered with limited town centre parking reserved for those with mobility issues.

Transition Town Kinsale propose the development of a Looped Walk of the town (or a series of walks) which would integrate its heritage network, biodiverse zones and edible food and birds ‘n bees planting. TTK has carried out this planting throughout Kinsale to promote awareness of both food security and the importance of biodiversity. Future Kinsale is promoting this walk on their Kinsale App. Historical heritage Walks have been highlighted in John Thuiller’s book Walkers’ Pocket Guide to Kinsale and District’. Routes in the town are also available on ‘The Kinsale Maps’. Another potential trail could be from the McCarthy Brothers Memorial on Pier Road to the location of their home at Lower Cove

Economy and Employment

Create work – hubs for SMEs, social enterprises and those who would like to work from ‘home’ but don’t have the home space as outlined in 4.7.4. Could there be potential space in the County Council Offices? Kinsale is part of the commuting belt to Cork City and reducing the commuting traffic, especially in single use car, is essential in planning for our low carbon future.

4.7.4 There are currently 10 E centres throughout Cork County. One such example is the Ludgate Hub in Skibbereen which aims to facilitate the creation of 500 jobs and 1000 indirect jobs by 2020.

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Work with the farming community to create agricultural practices in line with water management, flooding prevention and biodiversity protection. Although Cork is renowned for its high-quality agriculture and food production there are huge improvements that can be made to improve sustainability in this sector. The use of regenerative agriculture practices would improve livelihoods of farmers by diversifying their income and help mitigate climate change and improve biodiversity. Specifically, this means transitioning to agroforestry and holistic managed rotational ‘mob’ grazing patterns where soil carbon can be increased every year and habitats for biodiversity are also increased. Space and funding should also be given to re-create wetlands on farms and create a river border along waterways where trees and natives are planted. This would

reduce pollution and flooding in Cork County and save money on expensive flood protection measures in local towns. Stopping any further clearing of land for more grazing needs to be implemented to coincide with this and hedgerows should be allowed to reach maturity and encouraged to grow larger with no punishment of farm grants through the area aid payments. Sustainable Organic Horticulture enterprise should be assisted so we can reduce the huge importation of fruit and vegetables into Ireland every year

Tourism is part of the local economy but how will it develop into the future - consider what tourism could look like in 2050. Who will be travelling here given that we still have no potential low carbon solution for aviation fuel? Harness the potential of Cork's Coast as a destination – and tying this into the county's rich heritage and food culture.

Explore and support the possibilities of renewable energy as a means of regenerating of our rural economies

Water Services

Transition Town Kinsale suggest the following:

- Ensure adequate water services are in place as further development takes place in Kinsale collaborating with Irish Water.
- Ensure private wastewater treatment systems are being maintained
- Engagement with communities to protect our waterways

People in our community living in areas which are considered to be at risk of increased flooding are already experiencing the economic consequences, through the non-availability of house-insurance etc. TTK would support, as a long-term strategy for flood prevention, green engineering and 'soft strategies' such as forestation in the river catchment area; wetland management, consideration of alternative agricultural techniques and protection of green spaces as per the Flood Directive. These green engineering or soft-strategies reduce the need to build flood protection and will maximise the natural capacity to 'soak up' or attenuate water in order to protect critical infrastructure from flooding. This is critical given future climate change scenarios which predict increases in precipitation and rising seas levels [Ref. Ireland's Sixth National Communication to the UNFCCC (2014)]. Our County Development Plan needs to address this issue, with resourced actions that will be taken over the timeframe of the plan.

In 2014, The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government issued the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2014, placing new obligations on local authorities to co-ordinate the catchment management and public participation elements of the Water Framework Directive. The Plan should highlight how the Bandon Catchment is being protected and the area enhanced as per this Directive and the National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021.

Transport and Mobility

Transition Town Kinsale are delighted to see the strong emphasis outlined in item 2.12.2

The Climate Action Plan points to key policy areas to make growth less transport intensive which include: • The successful execution of the National Planning Framework which is designed to promote compact, connected and sustainable living; • Expansion of walking, cycling and public transport to promote modal shift;

Draft Cork County Development Plan, 2020

Promotion of walking to school and work will be fostered with an improved footpath network in our towns and villages. This should be a priority in our CDP. The huge increase of people (young & old) cycling was evident during the COVID-19 lockdown – this was possibly because people felt safer on our roads.

In addition to creating specific greenways, a positive walking experience can be created by a better network of pathways within all towns and villages and cycling could be encouraged as a mode of transport between villages with specific cycle routes with signage and decreased speed limits. There is great potential to do this throughout the county because of the large minor road network in Ireland.

Experiment with innovative transport ideas⁶:

- ‘Cheek-to-cheek’ buses and trains – we have this now in Kent Station and Kinsale bus but this is not reliable!
- Public transport has to be made attractive ... we know that increasing fuel costs do not reduce our use of the car. Would Free public transport increase our use of same? Public transport is usually slower and more inconvenient (unless you are on a route with bus lanes in peak traffic) so it has to be cheaper! The Kinsale-Cork Bus route is almost the same price as the Dublin-Belfast bus service!!
- Fixed-route taxi-buses – local link, build on this, advertise better
- ‘Anytime, anywhere’ demand-responsive transport – explore how this could work ...could local link be used like this?
- Lift share...seems to work only when imperative is there
- Traffic calming - design in sympathy with the urban landscape...making it more attractive...pedestrian priority slows vehicles down!
- Safe walking and cycling routes between nearby towns/ villages – map routes
- Community traffic-reduction projects
- Car-free tourism packages – collection point from Ferry etc. – mapped routes to download
- Regional co-ordination

Kinsale

As highlighted above Transition Town Kinsale would advocate that Kinsale is an ideal town to explore the concept of a car free centre and propose that management of mobility within the town centre be reconsidered with pedestrians been given priority. Transition Town Kinsale acknowledges ongoing improvements to the town’s green infrastructure and pavements e.g. the new amenity area at Duggan Bridge and the addition of lighting and upgrading of pavements to this area from town and on to Commoge Marsh (though a pedestrian crossing is needed in this area) as well as the upgrading of the bus stop in Kinsale town centre.

As we have advocated in the past at least implement the ‘cheap and easy’ aspects of the 2009 Transportation Study but after reassessment of traffic flow in the town given the expansion of the town to the New Road area. The intersection at The White House Hotel has ‘major log-jam’ potential (minor ones

⁶ The Rural Transport Futures project examined leading examples of good rural transport in three areas of Europe: Friesland, in the north of the Netherlands; Nordrhein-Westfalen, in Germany; The rural area around Copenhagen, in Denmark. The project also gathered individual examples of good practice from Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands.
<http://www.china-up.com:8080/international/case/case/592.pdf>

have happened!) and new residential development. Low-cost proposals made in this study include: Waterfront link Road; New Town Centre One-way system; Pedestrian improvements; Town Centre calming; Improved Delivery management. The development of the Kinsale Northern Relief Road and Western Relief Road are listed as 'medium to long term' in the previous County Development Plan. TTK would advocate that for the protection and enhancement of this heritage town, and given the road safety benefits of a roundabout at Pewter's Cross, priority for the development of the Northern Relief Road needs to be changed to short term. The need for the Western Relief Road should be reassessed based on impact of Waterfront link road etc..

Alongside the promotion of a 'part-time' car free centre Kinsale could lead the way for other towns in Ireland with policies to actively discourage driving in the town centre unless necessary e.g. 30Km speed limit in town centre and 50km zone 'stretched out'. For example, across Duggan Bridge and to Gully Bridge/Tisaxon. Not only will the town become a pleasanter place to walk around (leading to increased footfall!) air quality will improve leading to the follow-on health benefits for all. Improved walking networks and slowing of traffic in the area of the town will also bring the add-on benefit of a more active community; many people do not walk or cycle on roads within and adjacent to the town as they are considered 'too dangerous'. This would be 'low cost' to implement and would be a key step in developing the improved urban landscape the county plan aspires to. An immediate impact from such policies could be that more children walk to school. This would reduce congestion, improve mental and physical well-being and reduce air pollution in the local area as well as reducing GHG emissions. As outlined in the CDP an improved pathways network will increase the connectivity in the town; creating linkages between housing estates, schools and amenities. TTK would encourage the prioritisation of same.

Community

Transition Town Kinsale suggest the following:

- Formation of a community council for Kinsale and Hinterland as a means of increased involvement of all in the decision making around our communities' development.
- Promote innovative community care – through the provision of sheltered housing in housing developments.
- Alongside our Primary Care Centres create Climate Action Centres (Sustainability Hubs/ Earth Centres)
- Drive the change so that all our community buildings are carbon neutral.
- Facilitate the development of the following community initiatives:
 - Library at the Mill Building
 - The Municipal Hall as a Theatre Space and for community use
 - Completion of Saile Community Centre – (see also looped walk to Commoge Marsh - green lane at boundary edge and alongside Bee Boule Wall.
 - Rezone commercial zoned site adjacent to Commoge Marsh – create a biodiversity zone with hide for birdwatching.
 - Kinsale Museum
 - Reestablishment of Artwork by Eilís O'Connell 'The Great Wall of Kinsale' to its original state.
 - Support the development of an artist space

Energy

As Cork County is the largest producer of energy in Ireland it could also be the leader in the conversion to a sustainable energy supply and a reduction in GHG emissions. Transition Town Kinsale look forward to seeing how this is mapped out in the CDP. In context of our Energy Transition TTK notes the following:

- No further investment or planning permission should be given for fossil fuel infrastructure. There is adequate fossil fuel available in the global market for our transition to renewable energy. Investment should be in our renewable energy systems, and how to ensure back up generation and grid stability in these systems, alongside adaption and efficiency in our energy consumption patterns.⁷
- In rural Ireland Renewable Energy infrastructure will possibly be closer to our homes, so a more effective participatory process needs to be adapted so that we as citizens become involved in the process and are beneficiaries in the regional regeneration that these energy systems will bring.
- Creating a community ownership model for our new energy system which ties into regional regeneration will make this journey easier. Germany and Denmark are the only two European countries that have reduced their greenhouse gas emissions. Is it a coincidence that these two countries are leaders in the Community Ownership Model?
- The land use planning strategy regarding zoning needs to be considered in context of community energy generation. At the launch of the Energy White paper (2015) the Minister for Energy, Alex White, stated *"The State will provide the supports to enable energy consumers to become active energy citizens. Our energy system is going to change from one that is almost exclusively led by Government and utilities, to one where individuals and communities will increasingly be participants in energy efficiency and renewable energy generation and distribution. It's a story that will impact on all our people."*
- Transition Town Kinsale would advocate that data centre development in the county should only be developed with access to locally generated 'green' electricity.

4.8.3 The Government Statement on the Role of Data Centres in Ireland's Enterprise Strategy 2018 also outlines how the development of data centres contributes to enterprise and regional policy objectives and is a strategically important element of Ireland's future economic prospects. 4.8.4 A planning policy framework document on data centres has been included in Appendix D of this document and proposes that the next County Development Plan should include policy guidance for Data Centres, including site selection criteria

Draft Community Development Plan 2020

Kinsale

TTK propose that Kinsale, as the birthplace of the global Transition Movement, is well placed to be a pilot town for the development of community energy generation.

Options in the Kinsale area that could be considered include:

1. Anaerobic Digestion: District heating for a new development or the production of biofuel. [Ref: Transition Town Kinsale: Feasibility Study Kinsale Community Digester Project (2011) RX3 Funded.]

7

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_communications_climate_action_and_environment/submissions/2018/2018-07-10_opening-statement-greg-muttitt-oil-change-international_en.pdf

2. Solar Panel scheme adjacent to Water Treatment Plant. Electricity produced could be used locally both in the community centre at Sáile or in the proposed housing to be developed above this area.
3. Feasibility studies for wind and hydro electricity generation.

Maritime Cork and Green Infrastructure

Kinsale Harbour – Bandon River: Greenway Blueway development

TTK is delighted to see the progress that is being made in the development of Greenways etc. and hopes that the development of the Cork-Kinsale route is reconsidered. TTK has previously highlighted cycle routes in the Kinsale area which could be simply highlighted with signage to promote cycling in the area (as outlined above). These are included in Appendix 2. The Military Trail which has been proposed for Cork County could include a cycle trail of the Kinsale Battlefield and this has been advocated for in previous plans.

With the development of routes near Carrigaline it would be great to see a link in some way to Kinsale and on to Clonakilty. This would open up the possibility of connecting to the Wild Atlantic Way directly from the Ferry at Ringaskiddy by bicycle.

We have advocated above for a Feasibility Study for a Blueway – Greenway for Kinsale and hinterland and the development of amenity sites at Commoge Marsh and Scilly Dam.

Coastal Walkway

TTK propose that Cork be the first county to open a complete coastal trail along its 1100km of coastline. Coastal Walkways in Kinsale area could include:

- Development of a Coastal Walk Route from Jamesfort/Dock to Sandycove and on to Garretstown/Old Head in cooperation with landowners as was used for the Seven Heads and Sheeps Head Ways. This would join up with Garrylucas to Garretstown Walk already in place.
- Charles Fort to James Fort is currently a well walked route.
- Charles Fort to Preghane Point, Hangmans Point and onto Ballymacus Strand and Ferry Point at Rathmore with land owners co-operation. There is a heritage site (Wedge Tomb) at Ballymacus, known as The Prince's Bed.
- Extend Charlesfort/Preghane eastward toward Oysterhaven, Novohal Cove and Robert's Cove via an extension of the Belgooly estuary walkway to the town of Kinsale. Originally funded by West Cork Leader and the local community-the extension would enhance the 1.836km corridor on the R600, which is home to a diverse ecological system and natural bird reserve.

Other possibilities for trails could include walks adjacent to Bandon river e.g. at Shipool Castle & Shipool Wood and Dunderrow Forest. There is also the potential of a looped walk south of Dunderrow in Ballywilliam area if it could be linked upstream at the Old Bridge subject to co-operation of land-owners. These would complement the walkways which have already been earmarked along former railway lines in the area. There are many other possibilities.

Possible Connection points at: Tracton Community & Arts Centre; Belgooly Parish Hall; Lusitania Tower and Kinsale (Charles Fort / KAFC - town centre - possibilities at Commoge Marsh).

Heritage

Kinsale Heritage Town

Kinsale is valued as a priority heritage town both by those who live there and those that visit. Emphasis is put on the value of this throughout the plan and on protecting its unique characteristic. Integration of different aspects of the plan is required to do this. We would highlight:

- The creation of a car free town centre would promote the built heritage of the town.
- The development of the blueway – green way would help create connection with the heritage of the area and its stories and its biodiversity.
- Development of the Kinsale Museum as a repository of local stories.

To Conclude

Now is the time to act together to bring about the transition required for the future being demanded by young people calling for climate action and intergenerational justice. The CDP needs to be thinking beyond the 2028 'timeframe' and acknowledge and reference the cost of inaction.

Transition Town Kinsale

Transition Town Kinsale is a voluntary community organisation which was set up in 2005 to look at how the area of Kinsale could adapt to the global challenges of climate change and peak oil. It was the birthplace of the global transition movement (over 1000 towns/ cities/ districts in 43 countries). Its vision is a sustainable and resilient town. Along with many other communities across the island of Ireland it has run events and initiatives to promote green awareness and sustainable development and has endeavoured to be a catalyst for climate change mitigation and adaptation over the past 15 years. It is a member of Transition Ireland and Northern Ireland (TINI). Transition Town Kinsale would like to acknowledge the financial support it has received since 2005 both from Kinsale Town Council and Cork County Council.

TTK recognises that integrated planning and collaborative work between many stakeholders will be required to co-create solutions for the complex issues outlined in the Public Consultation Document for the CDP. TTK hopes that processes will be put in place to facilitate this. To achieve our climate action commitments all citizens, need to be involved in the 'transition' to a low carbon economy. We support the emphasis on protecting biodiversity which is outlined in the plan and look forward to seeing this ambition realised.

Submitted on behalf of Transition Town Kinsale by Elizabeth Creed

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Letter to Councillors Bandon and Kinsale Municipal District – May 2020



Mobility in Kinsale town and surrounding areas A submission to our Councillors prior to meeting Thursday 28th May 2020 From Transition Town Kinsale

Summer 2020 - an opportunity

Transition Town Kinsale are delighted to see the Chamber of Tourism and Business working with the Council to prepare the town for summer 2020 by looking at pedestrianisation possibilities and innovative solutions to the issue to social distancing as highlighted recently in the Irish Examiner (May 21st 2020).

Transition Town Kinsale would advocate that the reduced traffic in the town, due to the ongoing pandemic, offers a further opportunity to 'test' aspects of mobility and transport in the Kinsale area and this could play a part in the consultative process for same. Our suggestions are outlined below.

Explore the possibilities of a 'car-free' Kinsale on Saturdays and Sundays over the Summer months.

By removing the car from the centre of Kinsale a streetscape will be created where the businesses can use the space to their advantage in this time of social distancing. Kinsale has had one-off occasions like this before. Of course, the weather will play a big part here. However, in the summer ahead, bar the dreadful days, one could anticipate we will all be happy to eat our lunch, drink a coffee, peruse a 'stall' from a local shop with our hats & coats on if necessary!

Media coverage comes with a good story – and innovation to regenerate our towns as we come out of this lockdown will be one of those, as illustrated by the interest in steps being taken already. Kinsale could be a

model for the 'car-free' town centre in Ireland. And what a place to do it - with its rich architectural heritage and narrow streets!

And there are other benefits: research has shown consistently that pedestrianisation improves footfall – footfall equals business, unless you're a drive through one and reduced vehicular traffic will improve air quality in town.

The Practicalities:

Notice would be given to the council from business outlining how streetscape will be used. This will be necessary to ensure access for emergency vehicles.

Visitors from the West could be directed to the carpark at Kinsale College. Visitors from the east could be directed to the fire-station car park.

In the same way the Age Friendly car park space was introduced it could be requested that, at the weekend, the car parks in the centre of town be left for the residents and those with reduced mobility.

Negative pedestrian experience extends perceived walk from a parking spot ... we can fix one of these by making the walk from the car pleasant! (could highlight at parking spot – 2 minutes to..., 5 minutes to ... (potential advertising???). A one-way system and pedestrianisation will do this; as will improved pathways or pedestrian priority.

At the same time create a temporary bypass for Kinsale (Saturdays and Sundays) right at Pewter's Cross to join the Bandon Road just above the turn to Ballinacurra; following the wide link road to cross the Duggan Bridge.

Create a more pedestrian – cyclist friendly area around the town

The young cyclist and families walking have become very visible on the roads in and around the town. To encourage this:

- Move 80km sign to beyond the turn off to the Dock (it is now midway across the bridge)
- Move 80km sign at Commoge Marsh to beyond the causeway at Tisaxon-Beg
- Create a mini-green way for the summer months
For a few hours on Sunday (and if successful Saturday) shut off the traffic from the bridge into the town centre – creating a family cycle route giving access to the town to the young cyclist from the built-up area from Compass Quay to Abbey View. And for those living in town to the Dock Beach. There is a strong possibility this will bring visitors to Kinsale – an hour's activity followed by lunch/ ice-cream/ shopping! Look how busy the Carriagaline – Crosshaven route is!
Diversion to the bypass will be necessary for this.

Promote the walks proximate to Kinsale:

(possibly using the Future Kinsale App which is uploading the edible walkway developed by Transition Town Kinsale and Tidy Towns)

- To Charles Fort and beyond

- To The Dock and Sandycove
- Compass Quay
- Commoge Marsh (birdwatching) to Tisaxon-Beg (otters & seals) taking in Carrigeen lane (bats)

One of the ideas being discussed as part of the SECAD My Town, My Plan process was the development of a blueway/ greenway as a means of connecting the town with the hinterland. Highlight these areas also as a means of exploring possibilities for such an initiative. Some example:

- Garretstown to Garrylucas
- Loop at Lusitania Museum and Old Head of Kinsale
- Ballinspittle Woods
- Belgooly Walkway
- Roberts Cove to Rocky Bay to Nohoval Cove
- Ballinclashet to Oysterhaven

The Practicalities:

Reduce speed limit on roads where walkways are mapped out (as done from Ballinaclashett Crossroads to Oysterhaven)

Wider interest in these suggestions:

Key findings from Kinsale Residents survey - carried out by Future Kinsale 2018/ 2019⁸

Mobility was one of the top things to work on – the pedestrian experience, traffic flow, public transport

Resident priorities:

1. Better waste/recycling
2. Development of walking and cycling trails
3. Edge of town coach park with shuttle service to the town centre.
4. Pedestrianization of parts of the town centre

Low priorities for residents:

1. Iconic recognition of Kinsale as start/end of WAW
2. Indoor visitor centre

Tourist priorities:

1. Iconic recognition of Kinsale as start/end of WAW
2. Indoor visitor centre – heritage and environmental care/sustainable future themes plus arts
3. More walking/cycling trails

⁸ <https://futurekinsale.home.blog/2018/12/22/kinsale-residents-survey-results/>

An envisaging event was carried out as part of the SECAD My Town, My Plan initiative⁹; priorities from this process are listed below.

(SECAD – My Town, My Plan (September 2019 – June 2020) – Document pending)

Envisaging our Future Workshop	
<u>Council & local Governance</u>	<u>Nature, culture & heritage</u>
Community Council Facilitated public/plans decision making	No cars in centre of town
	<u>Citizen safety & wellbeing</u>
<u>Land use and development</u>	Carbon neutral
Pedestriansation of Kinsale town centre	
Community energy project	<u>Infrastructure & buildings</u>
Bicycle trails & walking trails	Municipal hall as community enterprise centre – food oriented
Social housing mixed with all housing	Local authority housing

⁹ https://hincks.cit.ie/my-town_-my-plan-community-tra

Appendix 2

Walkways

Currently walked routes marked in Pink – right of way is not implied



Potential Cycle Routes

Routes are marked in red with alternate options marked in yellow. There is also the potential of a Cycle route around the Battle of Kinsale sites



