



Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023–2029

Volume 3d West Clare Municipal District Settlement Plans

10th December 2021



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



CLARE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029

VOLUME 3(d) West Clare Municipal District Area Settlements

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Kilfenora

Location and Context

Kilfenora is located midway between Ennistymon and Lisdoonvarna at the junction between the R481 and the R476. It is identified as a Large Village in the Settlement Hierarchy of this plan. The village is centred on Kilfenora Cathedral (RPS 124) which is dedicated to Saint Fachtna who founded the monastery here during the 6th century.

Kilfenora has a school, church, a number of pubs, shops and a tearoom. Lying on the southern edge of the Burren, it is very much seen as the gateway to the Burren area and is home to The Burren Centre. The village is also renowned for its traditional music and is home to the world famous Kilfenora Céilí Band. Both these assets contribute to an important local tourism economy.

In line with the provisions of the Settlement Strategy contained in Volume 1 of this Plan, the strategy for Kilfenora is to provide for small scale, well designed residential, commercial and community developments which have regard to the character of Kilfenora itself.

Kilfenora is connected to the Ennistymon Regional Water Supply. There is an existing wastewater treatment plant serving the village which has sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the target population over the plan period. An upgrade of the existing wastewater treatment infrastructure to increase capacity is expected to be completed in 2022.

Any alterations to existing development or any new development, including residential, commercial or employment generating development, on identified lands will be strictly contingent on the provision of appropriate wastewater treatment facilities that can fully demonstrate no adverse effects on the receiving environment, water courses or adjacent ecological designations. Developments must comply with relevant EPA standards and requirements to ensure that all future development is sustainable in the long term. The Natura Impact Report accompanying this plan (Volume 10a) provides relevant mitigation measures and recommendations at site and project level.

General Objectives

- To consolidate the existing village form, support the tourism industry in the area and encourage the development of a range of amenities and services for both permanent residents and visitors to the area, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.
- To ensure that future growth is balanced and sustainable and is relative and appropriate to the scale, size and character of the existing village.
- To provide for the growth of tourism-based development to contribute to an increase in local economic activity in the village.

- To support the provision of infrastructure to allow for future growth.

Employment and Enterprise

Kilfenora is a convenient base for the many fishing opportunities the area offers. There are numerous lakes such as Likeen Lake and Lough Lake, which have stocks of rainbow and brown trout. Kilfenora is seen as the gateway to the famous Burren region and the village is steeped in history and culture. While tourism plays a key role in the economy of Kilfenora, sustainable agriculture in the surrounding Burren remains an important part of the local economy. In order to support economic development in the area, the Council will facilitate home-based economic activity and encourage farm enterprise and agri-tourism in Kilfenora including artisan food production and local crafts.

A key priority will be to retain community and social facilities in the village and to encourage indigenous enterprises and service provision. There are opportunities to develop the tourism and leisure potential of the area, particularly given Kilfenora's location as a gateway to the Burren.

The cultural and economic benefits of a rich traditional music heritage should be further explored by the hosting of festivals, events, and tuition so that Kilfenora becomes a centre of excellence for traditional music artists.

In order to support economic development, the village centre is zoned for mixed use, commercial and tourism purposes.

Housing and Sustainable Communities

Kilfenora offers a high-quality rural environment in the heart of the Burren in which to live. It is important to ensure that growth is balanced and contributes to a thriving village community that can support a range of services. In this regard, lands have been zoned in the village to promote compact growth and support the village centre. Development proposals must ensure safe pedestrian and cycle connectivity to local services and the village centre.

It is an objective:

- To support the development of facilities, amenities and services in the village that will cater for the needs of a range of users including current and future residents and will contribute to the sustainable development of the village into the future.
- Future developments on Residential Zoned lands shall provide for an appropriate housing mix and shall have regard to the density, character, and form of existing residential development in Kilfenora.

Strategic Residential Reserve (SRR)

Acknowledging that not all lands within the settlement boundary of Kilfenora will be required for development to 2029, lands which comprise infill or contiguous sites or have a planning history for residential use and can form part of the long-term sequential expansion of the settlement are zoned SRR. Consideration may be given to the development of some SRR lands before the end of the plan period, in line with provisions set out for *Strategic Residential Reserve in Section 19.4 of Volume 1*.

All development proposals on zoned lands shall take cognisance of the associated Landscape Character Areas (LCA) (Kilfenora Farmland and the Low Burren LCA) and must be planned and developed in a manner sympathetic with the surrounding prospects and views.

Transport, Active Travel and Connectivity

In terms of public transport, Bus Eireann provides a regular bus service to and from Ennis and Kilrush and Clare Local Link also provides a daily service to Ennis and Lisdoonvarna. These existing services have the potential to provide an alternative to the private car for residents and visitors and encourage a modal shift to a more sustainable transport option.

In addition, the enhancement of and provision for green infrastructure such as walking and cycling routes would promote active recreation and sustainable travel in the village and its environs. Improved pedestrian connectivity such as footpath linkages between key elements of the village encourage pedestrian movement and improve amenities in the area.

Place Making and Regeneration

This is a village where the core area is substantial and the approaches to the village retain their original rural character with informal continuous stone walls and grass verges. Ideally new housing should also share this informal quality and any wide areas of on-street parking shall be broken up by the provision of landscaping in the form of planting and trees.

There are a number of vacant and derelict buildings in the village. The plan supports the redevelopment or alternative use of such buildings in order to bring them back into active use.

The main square is a large open space which would benefit from a simple landscaping scheme, including some trees, to better define the area by providing a civic space which is more pedestrian friendly.

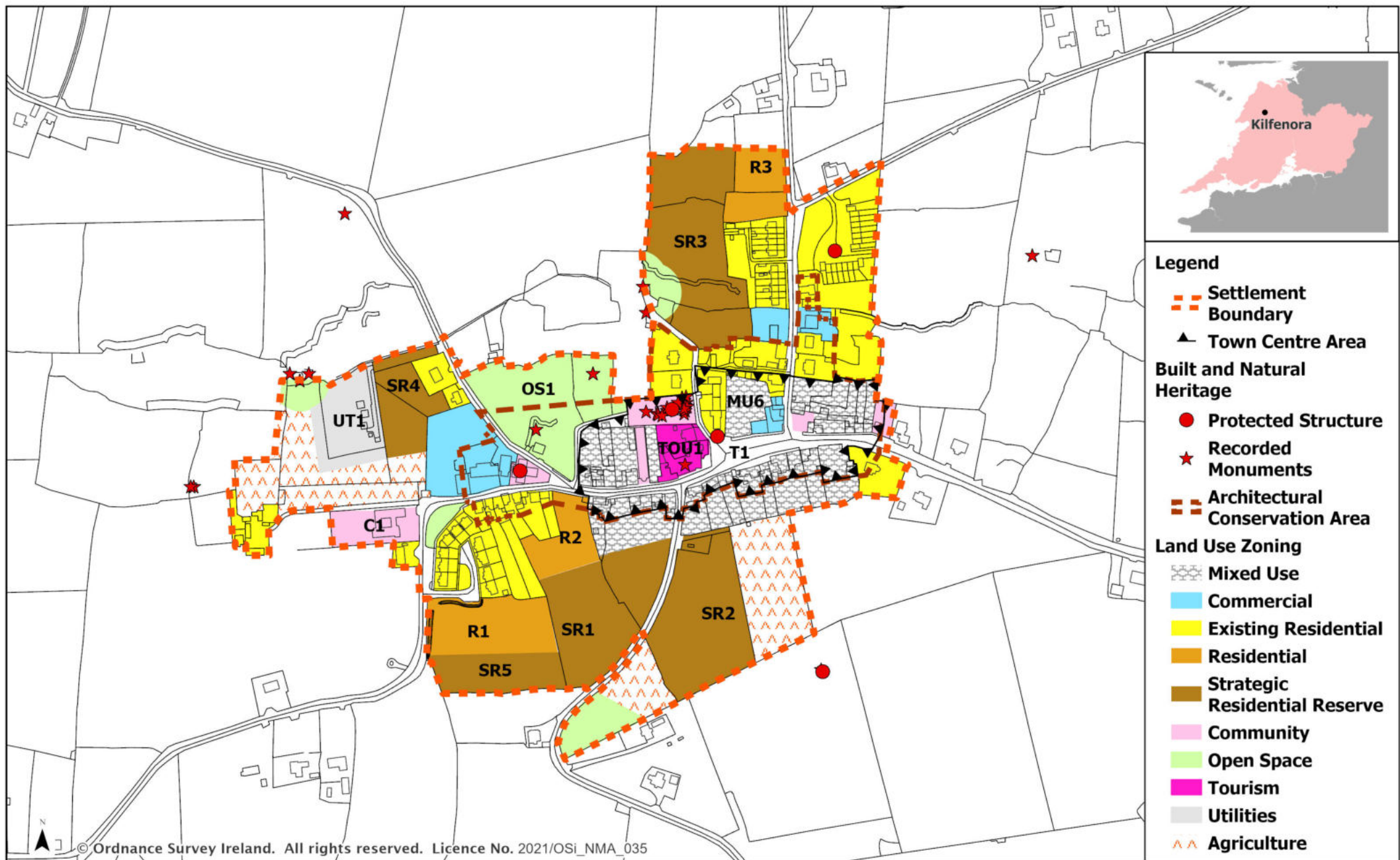
T1 Central Square Area

This is the site of the old market square and now acts primarily as a parking area for local and visitor traffic. However, the area has potential to be developed into a space that continues to serve as a parking area, but that is enhanced to provide an attractive focal point to the village.

It is envisaged that an environmental improvement project will be prepared for the square area during the lifetime of the Plan which will incorporate the design of an appropriate parking and landscaping arrangement as part of the overall scheme.

It is an objective of the Council:

- To promote sustainable and compact growth to address issues of vacancy including the reuse or redevelopment of vacant, underutilised sites and buildings for alternative uses.
- To prepare a scheme for the enhancement of the square to provide an attractive focal point in the village.



- Legend**
- Settlement Boundary
 - ▲ Town Centre Area
 - Built and Natural Heritage**
 - Protected Structure
 - ★ Recorded Monuments
 - Architectural Conservation Area
 - Land Use Zoning**
 - Mixed Use
 - Commercial
 - Existing Residential
 - Residential
 - Strategic Residential Reserve
 - Community
 - Open Space
 - Tourism
 - Utilities
 - ^^ Agriculture

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Kilfenora

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Scale: 1:5000