



12th May 2022

The Draft Kildare County Development Plan,
C/O The Administrative Officer,
Forward Planning,
Kildare County Council,
Devoy Park,
Naas,
Co Kildare,



Dear Sir or Madam,

RE: Submission to the draft Kildare County Development Plan

I live in the above house. My house is on the Register of Protected Structures (Ref: B14-37). I would like to make a submission to the draft Kildare County Development Plan to have my house removed from the register.

My house is made up of 2 parts. The main part (75%) is a modern construction new build (with a normal tiled roof). The remaining 25% is a renovated old cottage with a thatched roof. The 2 parts of the house are interconnected.

Twenty years ago the cottage was a derelict wreck. It was renovated in the late noughties and the new modern extension was added.

When the cottage was renovated I understand that the only parts of the old structure which could be retained were the walls. All other parts (including the windows, doors and roof) were additions or constructed as new. Even parts of the stone walls had to be reconstructed.

Living in an old property has its drawbacks. It is more expensive to heat (because there is no insulation in the walls or ceiling) and because of the small cottage windows it is quite dark in the cottage and so it requires more electrical lighting usage. The thatch requires annual care and maintenance by a qualified thatcher. Thatchers are in short supply and difficult to source. However, the biggest difficulty of all is house insurance.

To insure the property requires the entire house to be treated for insurance purposes as "non-standard construction". This is because of the part thatched roof. Obtaining insurance in Ireland for thatch properties is a huge battle. The availability is one issue and the affordability is another. Whilst I currently have insurance cover my premium

is over 4 times what that the insurance premium would be if the thatch roof was not in place. My premium has doubled in the last 8 years. This is simply not sustainable. I have to be able to live in my house. My house is not a museum. It needs to be functional and have operating costs which are within reasonable norms. I cannot afford this insurance and I simply cannot afford not to have insurance cover as I could lose my entire house.

Despite extensive searching for alternative insurance quotes there are currently no active insurance underwriters in the Irish market offering this type of cover as new business. I have lobbied both the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Trade, Enterprise and Employment for assistance on the matter. Both have essentially replied that they are aware of the problem, but their hands are tied and that there are no measures that they can take to resolve it.

So as a last resort, I would request that my property be delisted from the register in order that I can remove the thatch roof and install a normal tiled roof. I do not propose changing any other aspect of the cottage other than the roof material. I make this request reluctantly. But unfortunately there are no other realistic options available.

I am not aware of any reason why my property is on the Register other than that it is partly thatched.

Yours sincerely,


Ciarán McDonnell