

Our Ref: 220008/EPP/030304

Your ref:

Administrative Officer,
Review of County Development Plan,
Forward Planning Department,
Longford County Council
Áras An Chontae,
Great Water Street.
Longford,
N39 NH56

08 January 2021

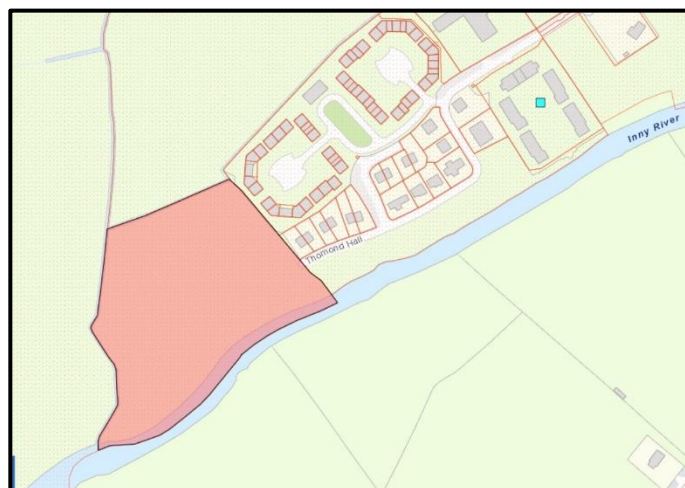
Dear Sirs

Re: Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 – Submission for re-zoning from Recreation/Amenity & Green Spaces on lands at Thomond Hall, Ballymahon on behalf of Sean Kelly

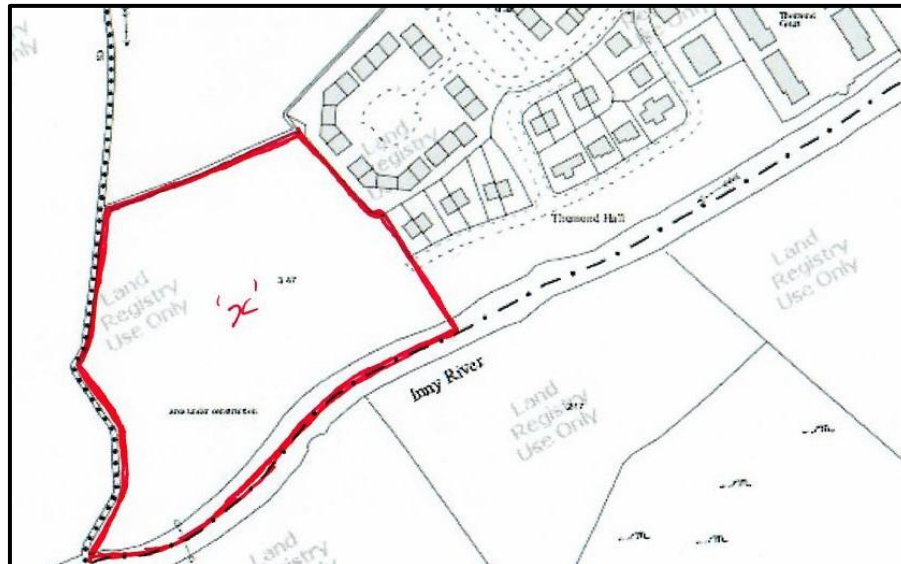
VCL Consultants have been commissioned by Sean Kelly to prepare a submission on the County Development Plan, with specific reference to the Ballymahon settlement statement, for rezoning of lands located west of Thomond Hall. The subject lands are contained in folio LD 11683 F and are outlined in the extract from the PRAI mapping below and the relevant OSI mapping and comprise circ. 2.8 ha. (Marked “X”) of which it is requested that approximately 1.7 ha (Marked “Y”) is re-zoned.

The subject lands, although serviced by a foul pumping station, road access, water and power is currently zoned recreation/amenity & green space.

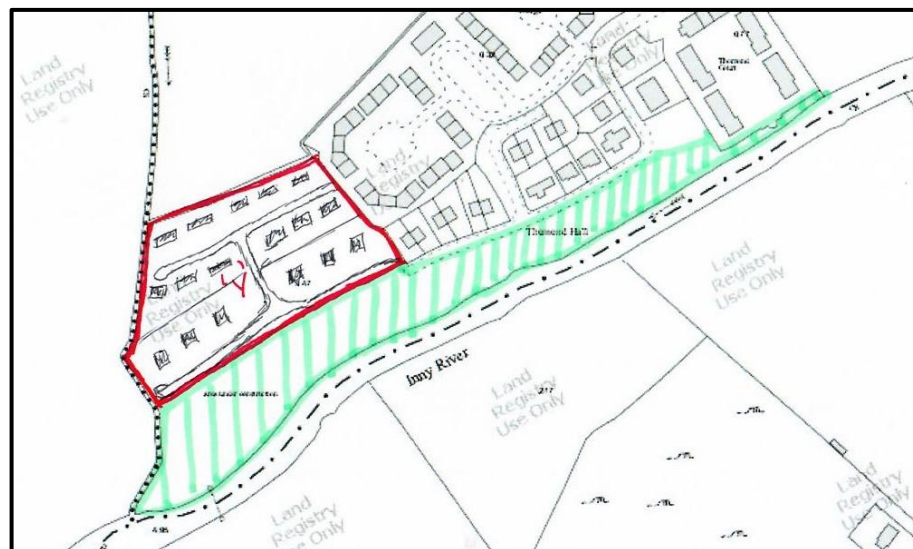
This submission requests consideration for rezoning of part of the subject lands west of the established Thomond Hall development to New Residential as an intricate part of Thomond Hall to provide for high quality residential amenity and increase the access and amenity of the river Inny.



Extract from PRAI mapping showing total lands



Location of Subject site marked "X" on OSI mapping (copied under licence NTS)



Extent of Subject site proposed for re-zoning Marked "Y" on OSI mapping (copied under licence NTS)

Volume 2 Appendix of the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2021 has upgraded Ballymahon as a rural settlement to a “Self-Sustaining Growth Town”. The rationale behind this change would be based on its past performance in the current plan with increased levels of economic activity coupled with its natural heritage assets.

The primary natural asset of Ballymahon is the amenity which is the river Inny. Access to the river was historically poor and limited to agricultural workers and fishermen. The development of river court opened up access for all to the river to the north of the bridge and the re-development of the local authority space and the kayak club premises provided limited access south of the bridge, both of these are on the western bank of the river. The development of Thomond Hall provided further accessible access to the river amenity in the form of a linear park running from the Thomond Court viewing plaza in a southerly direction to current extent of Thomond Hall.

There is currently no formal access to the river on the eastern bank.



The importance of this amenity has been recognised in both the current and the proposed development plans with the designation of recreation/amenity & green spaces on both banks of the river, however designation in itself does not generate or ensure the availability or suitability of access. The areas thus designated have been retained in agricultural use and there is no incentive for them to be opened up to the public. In this the zoning objectives have failed and will continue to fail. Other than the limited local authority space and Kayak Club area, the only sections currently made available to the public as a riverside amenity are those associated with a residential development (River Court and Thomond hall).

The development of a linear park/riverside amenity associated with residential development allows the managed development of the amenity without impact on the local authority resources and more importantly provides for appropriate passive surveillance of the amenity to provide confidence and security to its users. The proposed re-zoning will allow for this amenity upgrade for the town

A further deficit and limitation on the development of Ballymahon as a successful self-sustaining growth town as envisaged by the draft development plan is the lack of provision of an appropriate mix of high quality residential units to serve the requirement of the expanding numbers of executives and skilled workers locating in the town and operating in the various enterprises. The original Thomond Hall development had provided such dwellings but that development is complete and fully occupied.

The re-zoning of part of the subject lands to new residential development will allow for the provision of appropriate a high quality residential development as an extension of Thomond Hall and extending the existing linear park accessible to all as envisaged in both the existing and the proposed county development plan.

There are many advantages to re-zoning the lands including:

- Strategic rezoning of lands and settlement hierarchy due to the site's location as an extension of existing development.
- Provides for increased and appropriate access to the riverside amenity.
- Expansion and growth would be in a managed way due to the location of the site.
- The proposed development is considered sustainable as there is an identified need for high quality residential units in the area to sustain and grow the town.
- The site is serviced by a foul pumping station designed in agreement with the local authority to serve the area and public water supply with sufficient capacity for the proposed development.
- The subject site is appropriately served by road and pedestrian access.
- The subject site is outside of areas identified as constrained use due to flood risk.

I trust the above will be considered in the preparation of the final draft of the Longford County Development Plan.

Yours faithfully

Eddie Phelan
VCL Consultants