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Planning Department
Cork City Council
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01 October 2021

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**Re: Submission to Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022 - 2028
Proposed Realignment of the R579 to facilitate the continued sustainable growth of
Cloghroe National School, Coolflugh, Cloghroe, Cork.**

Dear Sir/ Madam

We act on behalf of the Board of Management of Cloghroe National School who wish to make a submission in response to Cork City Councils invitation for submissions to the Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022 (Draft CDP). This submission is in response to the Councils draft policies and objectives for the settlement of Tower in which Cloghroe National School is located. Specifically, this submission relates to the necessary realignment of the R597 regional road to accommodate adequate bus parking, set down and staff parking areas which will facilitate the sustainable future growth of the school.

01 SUBMISSION CONTEXT

The settlement of Tower consists of two traditionally separate villages, Tower and Cloghroe, which have coalesced in recent decades to form a single administrative settlement. The development context in Tower has evolved considerably in the past 30 years. The population of Tower grew to 3,032 people by 2002, having increased by 116.3% since 1991. The 2011 census calculated that in 2011, 3,306 people lived in Tower which was an increase of 6.6% from 2006. The most recent 2016 census recorded a population of 3,421, a further increase of over 3%. The Draft CDP identifies significant further population in Tower during the lifetime of the CDP with the settlement recognised as an 'Urban Town' in the settlement hierarchy of the plan. This is reflected in table 2.2 of the Draft CDP Core Strategy earmarks a population increase of 36% (1,163 no. people) in the settlement by 2028.

Cloghroe National School serves as the only primary school in the settlement in addition to serving a large rural catchment in surrounding areas such as Inniscarra, Kerry Road and Leemount. The school presently caters for 507 no. pupils which equates to 319 no. families. Currently there are 31 no. teachers employed at the school with a further 12 no. special needs assistants, 1 no. secretary, 1 no. caretaker and 3 no. members of staff in the after-school club.

The Board of Management have long recognised that permanent traffic management solutions are required to accommodate school set-down/drop off, staff car parking and bus parking. The existing parking and traffic management procedures were developed when the school had a significantly

lower number of students than it currently has. As the school has grown the provision of safe drop-offs and parking for students, staff and parents has proved more challenging. The schools location, facing directly onto the R579 poses significant constraints in terms of safely accommodating the traffic generated from the school with regular instances of congestion and queuing on the R579 occurring, particularly at drop-off and collection times.

The Board of Management note the projected population increases for Tower identified in the Draft CDP and the strong recent performance of Tower in recent years in the delivery of new housing. Since the adoption of the current Local Area Plan in 2017, 223 no. dwellings have been permitted in Tower spread across several residential sites. Of these permitted units 202 no. dwellings are either completed or under currently under construction. The Board of Management also note that plans for a Strategic Housing Development of circa 200 no. units at the lands to the north of the Senandale estate, a short distance west of the school. Based on population projections and planned developments in the settlement the Board of Management predict that the school will cater for approximately 750 no. students in the next 10 years.

The Board of Management have sought to address traffic management and parking issues at the school and received permission for the construction of a new school car park with 67 no. general parking spaces, 53 no. staff parking spaces, new entrance, signalised pedestrian crossing on the R579 at the site to south of the R579 opposite the school. Cork County Council planning reference 18/6802 refers.

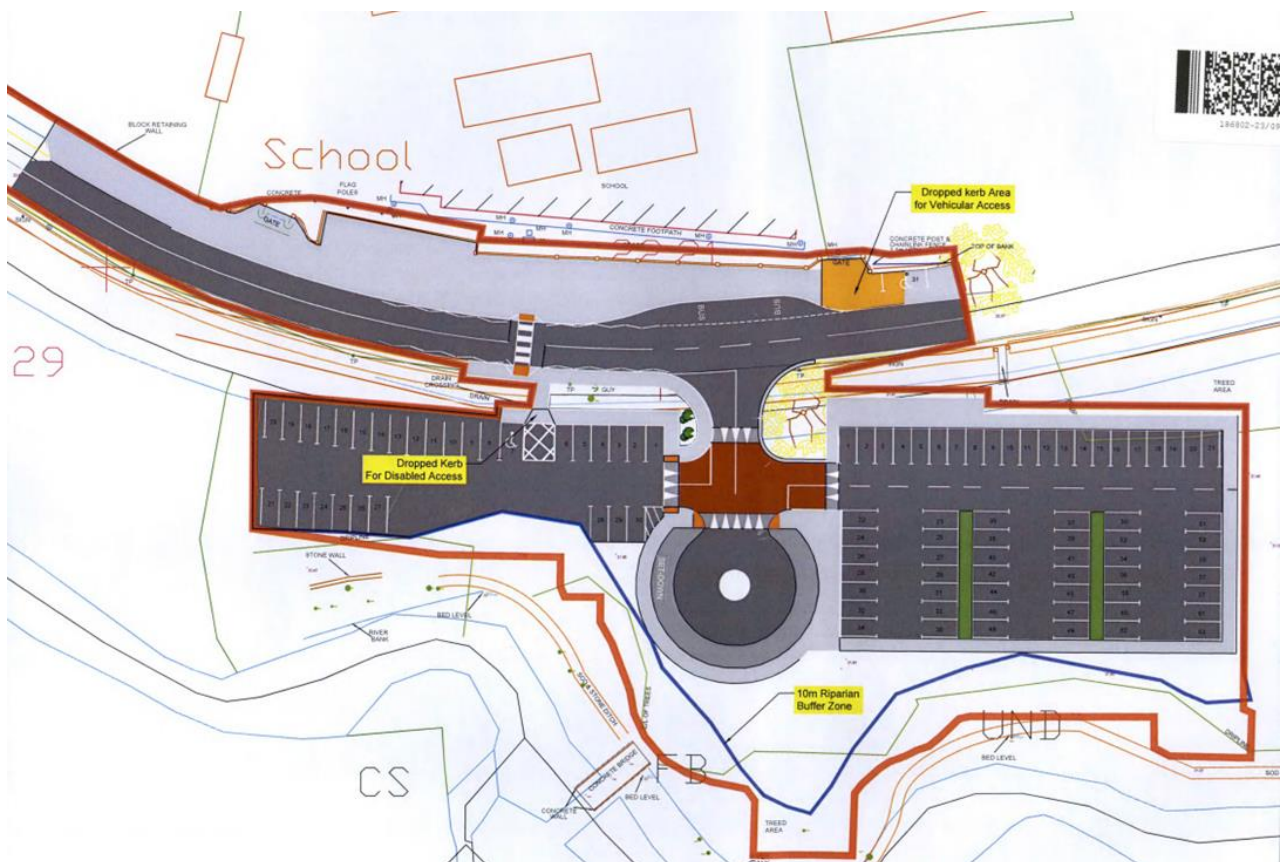


Figure 1.1 Car Park to South of R579 permitted by 18/6802 – MHL & Associates

However, a condition of 18/6802 is that in the event of a yellow weather warning for heavy rain the permitted car park would have to close and would not be accessible for staff to utilise. The Board of Management at the time struggled to convince parents of students that the proposal permitted by 18/6802 was worth pursuing due to the restrictions imposed on the use of the car park and that users of the car park would need to cross the R579, which is one of main regional routes to the west of Cork city.

A newly appointed school Board of Management has investigated alternative proposals for the satisfactory management of parking and traffic circulation at the school. The accompanying plans prepared by MHL & Associates detail the proposed solution which would involve the realignment of the R579 to accommodate the construction of a new bus parking bays, set-down areas, and dedicated staff and parent car parking to the north of the R579. This would effectively result that the schools future traffic management procedures could be accommodated internally in the school campus and would negate the requirement for pedestrians to cross the R579. The school is in ownership of the majority of the lands required to undertake the works.

The attached proposal prepared by MHL & Associates addresses the schools long-term parking and traffic management requirements. Based on the previously referenced envisaged growth of the school future staffing numbers would equate to approximately 67 no. people. The proposed parking layout provides for 64 no. car parking spaces to the east of the school with the remaining 19 no. spaces set aside for visitors, drop-off and collection. A number of bays for bus parking is also provided. The Board of Management envisage that the proposed parking arrangements will be sufficient to cater for the long-term requirements of the school. They note the multiple new residential developments being delivered in the settlement in close proximity to the school which will result in an increased number of students walking to and from school compared with current levels, reflecting a reduction in demand for drop-off/set down spaces.

02 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Paragraph 10.294 of the Draft CDP acknowledges the presence of Cloghroe National School and the requirement for the school to cater for future population growth.

“There is one primary school, located in Cloghroe that serves Tower. The nearest secondary schools are in Blarney and Ballincollig. Cloghroe National School has a current enrolment of 530 pupils with 45 teaching and ancillary staff. The current and future capacity of this school will be a determining factor in the number and phasing of all future housing developments.”

This is reflected in Objective 10.70 of the Draft CDP, ‘Tower Education’ which confirms

“All future planning applications for multiple housing units in Tower including the phasing and numbers permitted will be examined in the context of the current and future capacity of Cloghroe National School”.

Objective 10.69 of the Draft CDP states regarding the ‘Tower Public Realm Strategy’.

“Prepare a Public Realm Strategy for Tower to address issues such as pedestrian and cycle permeability, signage, car parking, traffic management and enhancements to the town core including the area around Tower Shopping Centre and Cloghroe Neighbourhood Centre. In

addition, the potential for connections to Ballincollig and Kerry Pike will also be examined during the lifetime of this Plan.'

03 REQUEST

Based on the reasons outlined in this submission, we request that the wording of Objective 10.70, 'Tower Education' be amended in advance of the publication of the adopted 2022-2028 Cork City Development Plan to read as follows:

Objective 10.70 - 'Tower Education'

"All future planning applications for multiple housing units in Tower including the phasing and numbers permitted will be examined in the context of the current and future capacity of Cloghroe National School. The Planning Authority will in principle, facilitate the realignment of the R579 to accommodate a new staff car park, set down and drop off areas at Cloghroe National School. Any future works relating to the potential future realignment of the R579 will need to be to the full satisfaction of the Planning Authority's Traffic and Transportation Department'.

The Board of Management of Cloghroe National School are committed to working positively with Cork City Council regarding the future delivery of the proposed works and are happy to discuss further if required.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



Harry Walsh
HW Planning

Enclosures: Drawings demonstrating proposed realignment of R579 prepared by MHL & Associates Consulting Engineers.

Supportive letters from Cloghroe NS Board of Management and An Garda Siochana



NOTES:
 All dimensions in metres.
 Do not scale from drawing.
 For any discrepancies found please consult with design office.
 This drawing should be read in conjunction with all contract drawings, documents and specifications.

Rev By	Date	Description

Drawing Status: Preliminary Design

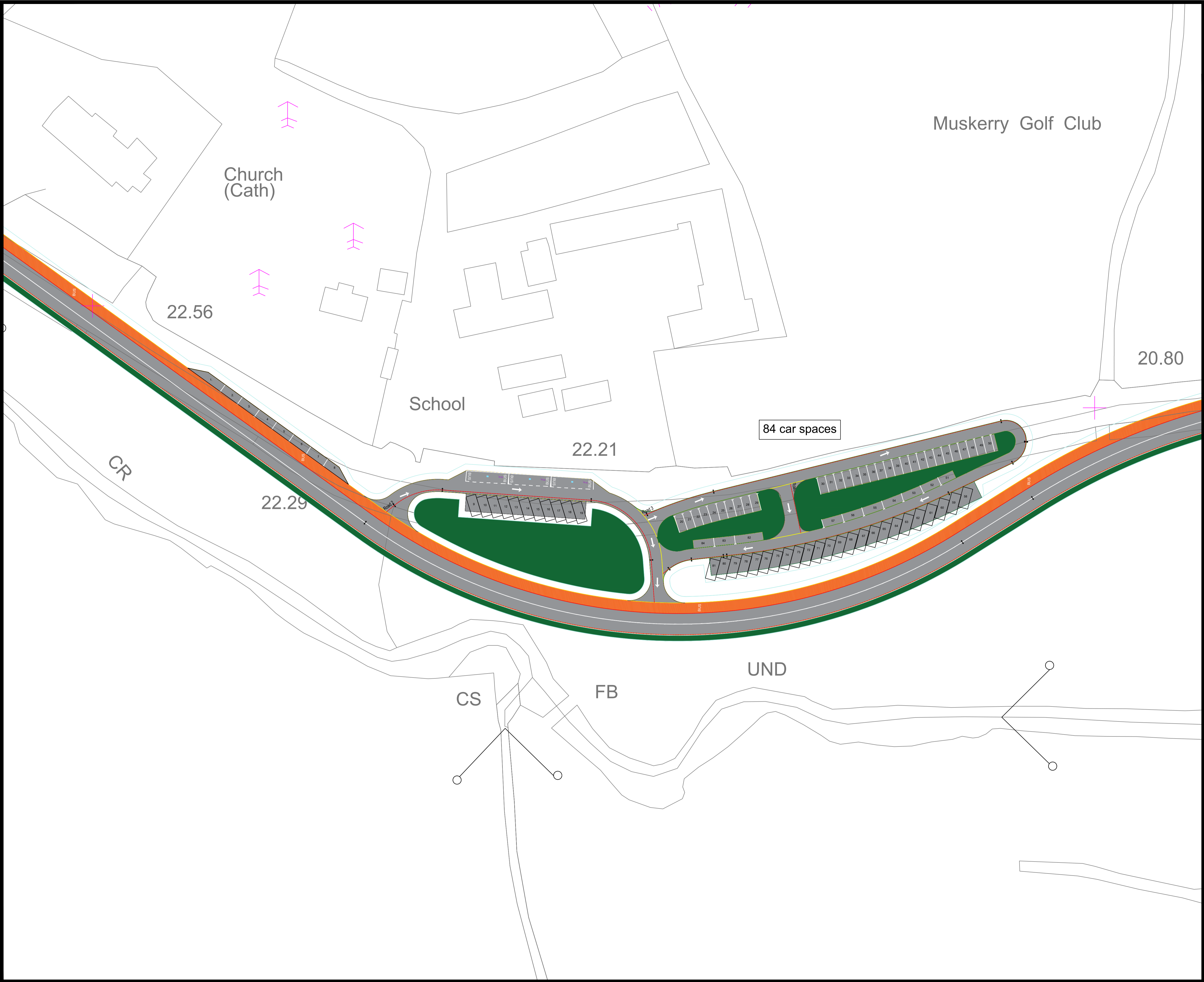
Project Title:
 Car Parking Facilities for Cloghroe N.S.

Drawing Title:
 Realignment of R579

Client:
 Cloghroe National School

M.H.L. & Associates Ltd.
Consulting Engineers
 Carrig Mór House,
 10 High Street,
 Douglas Road,
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Designed: KM	Drawn: KM	Checked: KM
Scale: As shown @ A1	Date: Sept 2021	
Job No: 17075SC	Drawing No: CNS_TS_P01	Revision:



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Scale: As shown @ A1	Date: Sept 2021	
Job No: 17075SC	Drawing No: CNS_TS_P02	Revision:

Cloghroe National School

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30/09/2021

To Whom it May Concern,

The Board of Management of the above-named school is making this submission on behalf of the pupils, parents and staff of Cloghroe NS as we feel the road and traffic situation outside the school is unacceptable as it currently stands.

This has been an ongoing grave concern for over 20 years and has been highlighted to TDs and councillors alike by Boards of Management, concerned parents and principals. The County Development Plan offers an opportunity to finally bring a resolution to the dangerous road situation that exists outside our school. The school currently has a pupil population of 530 children and 48 staff. This is a developing area, with housing development planning granted for over 650 houses in our immediate catchment area. This would mean a projected pupil population of over 750 in the next ten years, a further increase in the number of cars dropping and collecting their children to and from school and in the volume of traffic using the road outside the school.

There is no parking for parents and no drop off and go zone. At dismissal times we have 143 infants at 1.30pm and 364 pupils at 2.30pm exiting the school onto the side of a busy road. The parents are using the church car next to the school for collecting and drop points, this is a casual, local arrangement that could be withdrawn at any time! Issues arise, when there are funerals and weddings. We have a special class in our school and children with additional needs who need to be brought into school.

Traffic on the R579 actually comes to standstill for long periods of time, as parents have nowhere to park, causing u-turns and major holdup of traffic flow.

We are very aware that the R579 is a major commuter route to Kanturk, and North Cork in general, a tourist route to and from Blarney, which attracts the growing numbers of tourist visitors throughout each year, traffic volumes have seriously increased in the past decade here, due to increased population growth.

As highlighted above on "Health and Safety", grounds, this situation needs urgently to be resolved. This proposal would solve the current situation avoid future issues with increased

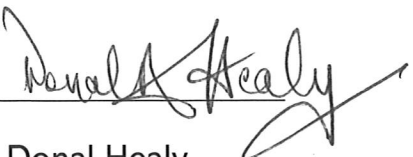
school capacity. We wish to avoid a serious or fatal accident before it happens, the prioritisation is the safety of human life now and always. The Board feels very strongly that urgent action is required.

A parcel of land across the road from the school was purchased by the Board of Management some years ago in anticipation of the necessary development of the school, however in the years since purchasing the land the pace of development locally increased dramatically and the sheer volume of traffic on the road has now become a critical issue. The location is a satellite area for Ballincollig and for the Apple campus in Hollyhill as well as the endless construction transport to and from housing development sites in Blarney, Tower and KerryPike. Planning has been sought (and granted) for a car park on the land as the school drop off and collection had become so dangerous. We now face a situation of several new housing developments due to begin construction adjacent to the school. The situation now demands an even bigger response than our proposed carpark, which would have to close in status yellow weather due to flooding concerns and would also lead to the children having to cross a busy road. The Board is increasingly worried that a fatal accident is inevitable. We urgently require Cork Corporation to include the proposed road alignment in the development plan.

Is Sinne le Meas,

Board of Management

Cloghroe NS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donal Healy", written over a horizontal line.

Mr. Donal Healy

Chairperson, Board of Management

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shane Fennessy", written over a horizontal line.

Mr. Shane Fennessy

Secretary, Board of Management

Principal, Cloghroe NS

AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

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30 September 2021

Bí linn/Join us  

Please quote the following reference no. :

Mr. Shane Fennessy
Principal
St. Senan's National School
Cloghroe

RE/ Issues Surrounding Road Safety at School Drop/Collection Time Cloghroe National School

Dear Mr. Fennessy,

I am writing to you regarding the issue of road safety around Cloghroe National School and in particular how the location of the school is impacting traffic flow but most importantly the safety of pupils.

Cloghroe NS is located adjacent to the busy R579 junction with R617. When the school was established the volume of traffic would not have been of significant concern relative to its location. However, this route now carries a high volume of local traffic but also traffic transiting from the Mallow Road/N20 to the South Ring Road N40 [West Cork/Kerry routes]. Accordingly, numerous heavy goods vehicles, trucks and buses travel this road on an hourly basis.

What is of concern from a policing viewpoint is the manner in which parents/guardians drive/park during the increasingly busy school drop off and collection times. The following are just some of the offences which drivers contravene on a daily basis and are the subject of numerous complaints into this station:-

- Illegal U-Turn [Crossing a continuous white line]
- Parking Adjacent to a Continuous White Line
- Parking at a Junction/Pedestrian Crossing
- Parking on Footpaths/Double Yellow Lines
- Abandoning a Vehicle in a Dangerous Location
- Speeding to and from Cloghroe

When challenged, most drivers are oblivious to the dangers which some of these manoeuvres can lead to.

The obvious lack of parking in/around the school exacerbates driver behavior. Indeed there seems to be an almost cavalier attitude amongst some parents/guardians that they can park

where they wish in order to get their own child safely to school. The onus is on each parent/guardian to ensure that, not only their child, but every other child gets to school safely.

This issue is not exclusive to Cloghroe, other schools in the locality encounter similar situations. However, the location of Cloghroe NS and the current road layout is not conducive to safely moving 500+ pupils during the drop off/collection time periods.

As with other school locations Gardai in Blarney take a proactive and holistic approach when dealing with drivers around school times. Engagement and advice in most instances will have the desired effect. However, increasingly Garda members are left with no option but to enforce road traffic legislation and initiate prosecutions.

I know as principal, in conjunction with the school's board of management, pupil safety is of paramount importance. I wish to echo that sentiment. An Garda Siochana takes road safety seriously and to that end you have my support locally regarding any initiative which can improve the safe transit of pupils around the school's location.

Yours sincerely,

SGT
(MARK DEMPSEY)26059B