

The view of the community representative

Councillor John Sheahan,
Limerick County Council

A stylized silhouette of a mountain range in a darker shade of teal, located at the bottom right of the slide.


Who am I?

- ◆ Elected 2004
- ◆ Married to Mary with 2 girls
- ◆ Farming background
- ◆ Living in the countryside
- ◆ Representing the Rathkeale Area,
north-west Limerick


Community Representative and Local Authority Management

- ◆ Elected member
- ◆ Involvement in Planning process, questions as to what constitutes appropriate and reasonable intervention.
- ◆ Working together constructively is important. Need to avoid an 'us' and 'them' approach


Rural Areas: Definition and needs

- ◆ What is rural? Differences in perspectives.
 - ◆ The importance of strengthening towns and villages.
 - ◆ The lack of water and wastewater services is a serious obstacle.
 - ◆ Need to move away from requirement to demonstrate housing need. This can be done by providing adequate alternatives to one off housing in rural localities.
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Current alternatives to one off rural housing

- ◆ Serviced sites
 - ◆ Renovation of vacant properties and lifting of restrictions to encourage this
 - ◆ Housing people according to life-stage and need: providing alternatives to growing isolation in rural areas.
 - ◆ Revitalising mixed use in town centres and villages: upper floors of traditional shops.
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Design

- ◆ Need to distinguish between registered architects and all 'other' who draw plans.
 - ◆ Need to encourage a change of mindset as to the value of good design.
 - ◆ Questions the need for blanket restrictions to protect scenic views when they can be protected with good design
 - ◆ The perils of design guidance v the importance of good design principles.
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The future for rural areas

- ◆ Serious decline in agriculture
 - ◆ Rural population decline
 - ◆ What industries are appropriate in rural areas to address this
 - ◆ Rural diversification, eg tourism, niche activities.
 - ◆ Relationship between large urban areas and their rural region.
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