



## Draft Blessington Local Area Plan Submission - Report

Who are you:	Agent
Name:	PD Lane Associates
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### File

Blessington LAP 2025.pdf, 0.81MB

## BLESSINGTON LAP

**SUBMISSION FOR LANDS AT:**  
BLESSINGTON DEMENSE, BLESSINGTON, CO. WICKLOW

**LANDS IN THE OWNERSHIP OF:**  
CLONMEL ENTERPRISES LTD.

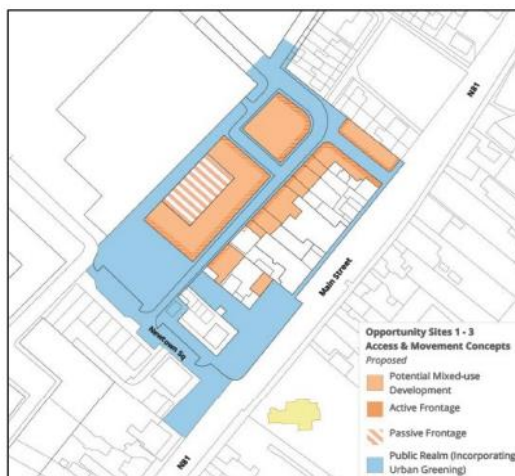
### INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Having reviewed the draft Blessington Local Area Plan 2025 ('draft LAP'), we wish to make the following submission on behalf of Clonmel Enterprises Ltd. regarding the 'Subject Lands' (see overleaf outlined in red).

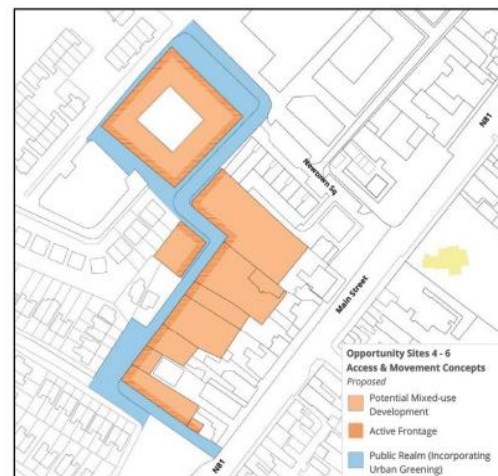
We welcome the continuation of the current land use zoning objective of Town Centre ('TC') for the Subject Lands under the proposed draft LAP, and a planning application is being prepared for 71 No. residential units and a retail/commercial ground floor space on this basis.

The Subject Lands come under Opportunity Sites 4-6 within the draft LAP – specifically '*Downshire Park*' ('OP6') and also relates to Opportunity Sites 1-3 ('OP1-3') and Opportunity Sites 4&5 ('OP4&5') - '*Blessington Town First Town Centre Plan*' (see below extracts from the draft LAP).

**OP1-3**



**OP4-6**



## GROUNDS OF SUBMISSION

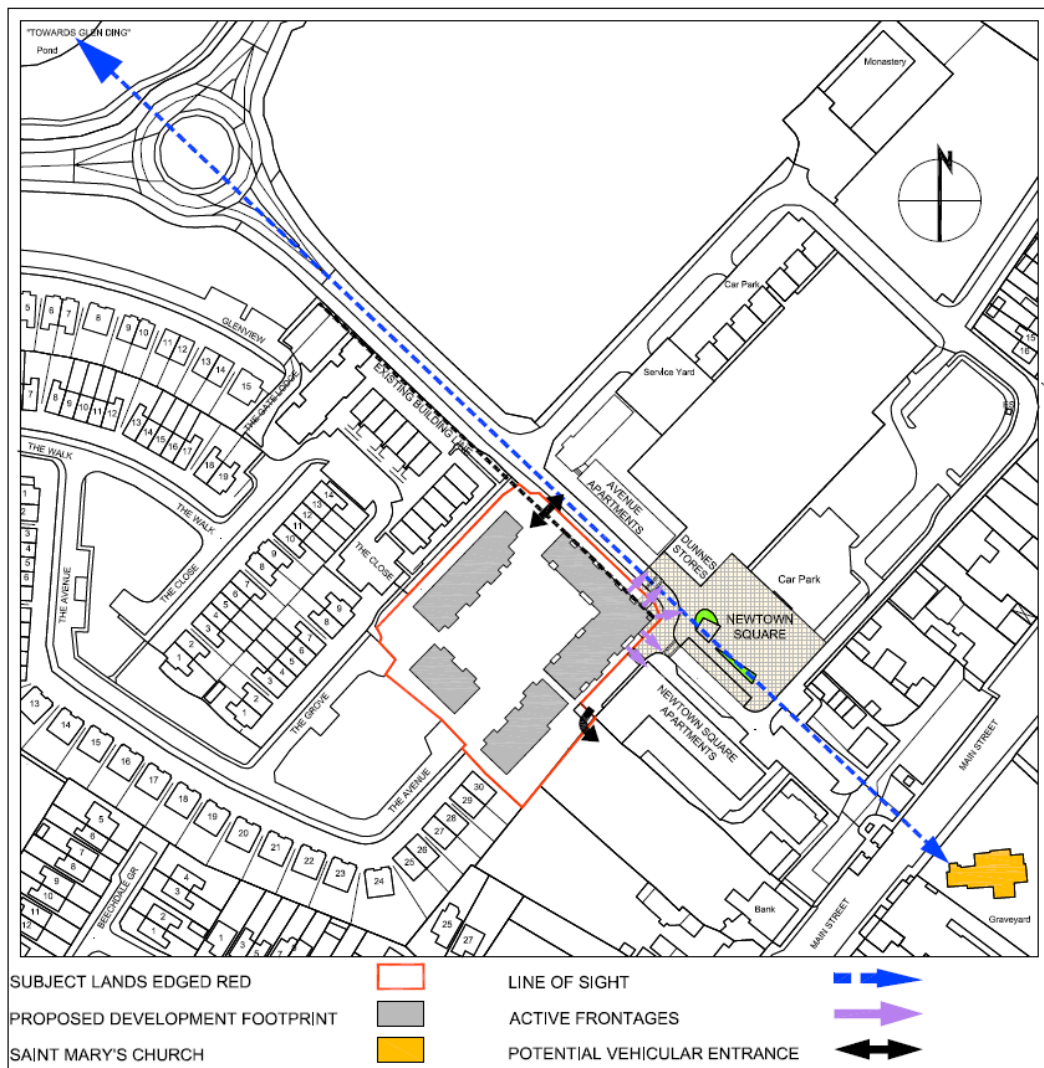
OP6 'Downshire Park' provides for a number of objectives under BLESS OP4-6, as follows:

- *This site has the potential to significantly enhance the town centre character of Newtown Square and mark a clear transition between the town centre and residential areas to the west and south.*
- *The development of OP6 should have regard to sightlines between Blessington Town Centre (both in a general sense and with specific reference to St. Mary's Church of Ireland) and both Glen Ding and landscape elements of the former Blessington Demesne to the west. The building line of OP6 facing the Newtown Centre should be informed by the Newtown Square apartments to the immediate east.*
- *To provide for mixed use town centre infill development (which shall include residential use, particularly on upper floors). Indicative block formats, plot lines, and active frontages are provided in the below concept parameters and access plans. Development should provide an appropriate architectural response to the Blessington Architectural Conservation Area.*
- *To provide for a new vehicular access point along the eastern boundary of OP6 to service OP4 and OP5 from Newtown Square, alongside other vehicular access points as indicated in the below access plan. The development of any individual opportunity site, or plot therein, should not 'land lock' or prejudice the development of adjacent/intervening plots. Permission will not be considered on OP6 unless the above vehicular access point/road servicing OP4/OP5 is included in the proposed development.*
- *To provide for new urban 'shared space' streets and pedestrian and cycle routes within OP4, OP5 and OP6 as indicated in the below access plans. Vehicular access to/from Dempsey's Lane into the opportunity sites will be discouraged.*
- *The development of back lands within OP4 and OP5 should provide strong urban and active frontages onto existing or proposed streets. Architectural variation between these intervening plots will be encouraged, while plot amalgamation will be discouraged.*
- *The development of OP6 should provide for active ground floor uses, having regard to its location outside of the Blessington Core Retail Area.*
- *Development within OP4 and OP5 should seek to preserve sightlines between Blessington Main Street and Glen Ding to the west, especially with regard to views through the gaps between existing buildings that are indicated below as pedestrian and cycle routes.*
- *The development of OP6 should have regard to sightlines between Blessington Town Centre (both in a general sense and with specific reference to St. Mary's Church of Ireland) and both Glen Ding and landscape elements of the former Blessington Demesne to the west. The building line of OP6 facing the Newtown Centre should be informed by the Newtown Square apartments to the immediate east.*
- *The development of OP6 should seek to preserve the residential amenities of adjacent existing residences.*

The proposed development being prepared for the Subject Lands adheres to the majority of the objectives under BLESS OP4-6, as follows:

- Provides for a compact, in-fill predominantly residential development containing 71 units at a density of 95dph
- Sympathetic to the scale of adjacent built form and local topography by providing three and four storey perimeter blocks with internal courtyard

- Respects views out to the local landscape by maintaining the line of sight between Glen Ding and St. Mary's Church
- Maximises 'active frontages' at ground floor level with proposed retail/commercial space on ground floor corner with Newtown Square
- Improves the public realm in favour of pedestrian and cyclist priority around the site by providing an extension of the cycle path across the front of the site from Downshire Park to Newtown Square and providing footpaths that link in with existing footpaths in the area
- Creates shared spaces, where vehicles make use of spaces designed for pedestrians and cyclists by connecting into Newtown Square with traffic calming and shared surfaces
- Provides for a vehicular route through to Opportunity Sites 4 and 5 by providing ample space through the existing access point to the southeast into part of the Subject Lands and then into the Ulster Bank site



However, the proposed development of the Subject Lands does not adhere to 'The building line being informed by the Newtown Square apartments to the immediate east' (as shown previously on OP4-6 graphic).

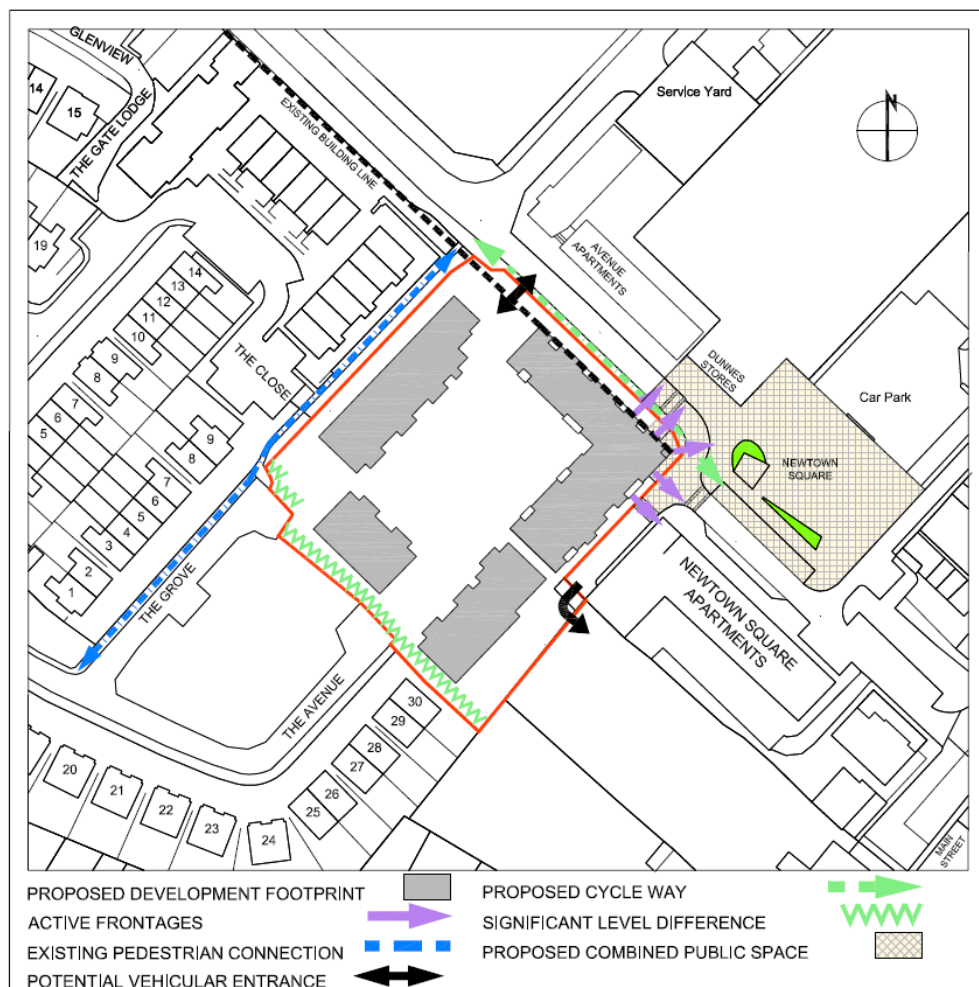
The perimeter block configuration of the proposed development is appropriate for this site for the following important and quantifiable urban design & town planning reasons:

- The proposed building line onto Newtown Centre is essential to creating a street and providing further enclosure for Newtown Square public space at this town centre location
- The proposed building line onto Newtown Centre maximises meaningful 'active frontages' directly onto street and Newtown Square public space
- The proposed building line onto Newtown Centre provides 'passive surveillance' of public realm, in particular in this case - Newtown Square
- The proposed building line onto Newtown Centre is taken from the established building to the west, that maintains the line of sight from Glen Ding to St. Mary's Church

By setting back the building line onto Newtown Centre (as proposed under OP4-6) away from the existing movement network (street) and the public space (Newtown Square) the following will occur:

- The sense of enclosure and active relationship with the public realm will be downgraded and become poor
- The setback will create a gap in the built form and create more of a road than a street along the north of the site
- The passive surveillance opportunity will become effectively irrelevant for Newtown Square, as there will be no direct overlooking of the public space

See below Movement & Linkages graphic illustrating a compact, predominantly residential perimeter block development maximising frontages at ground floor level together with improvements to the public realm and providing potential vehicular access to 'backlands' opportunity sites OP4&5.

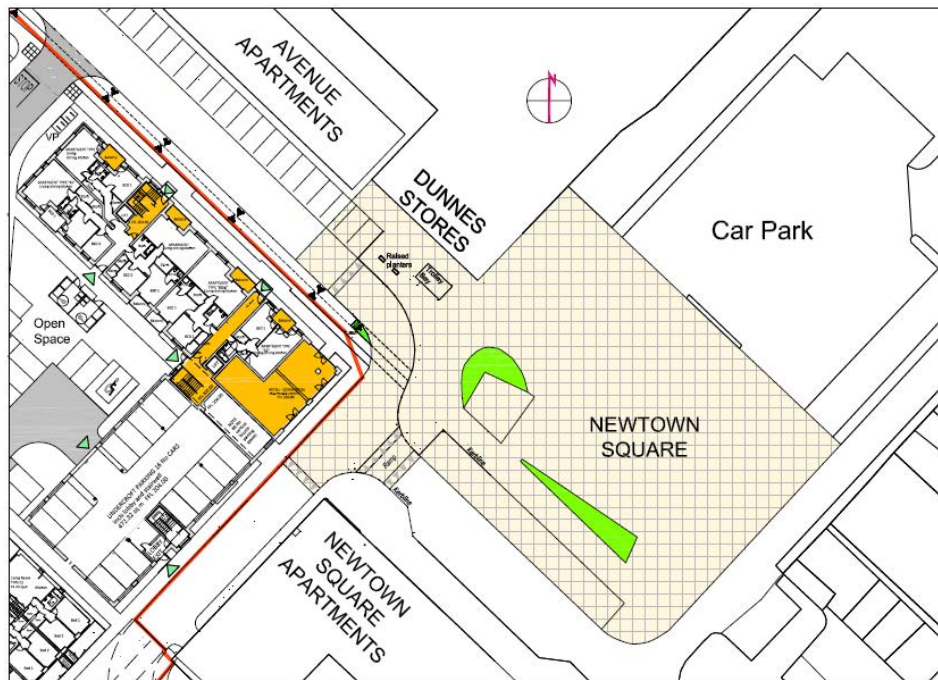




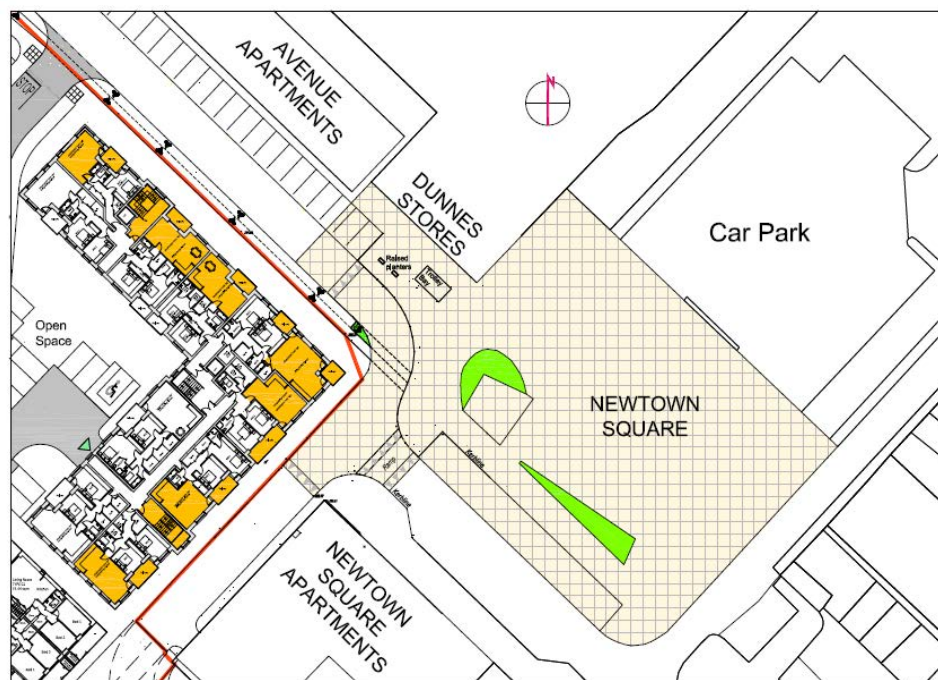
See below 'Daytime' and 'Nighttime' diagrams illustrating the impact of the proposed development on the public realm, in particular on Newtown Square.

'Active frontages' from the retail/commercial space, doorways & balconies used predominantly during the daytime and 'Passive Surveillance' from living rooms, stairwells & balconies used during the daytime and nighttime.

These active ground floors and overlooking from upper floors of buildings are essential to good placemaking that provide a sense of enclosure to Newtown Square at this town centre location.



DAYTIME "ACTIVE FRONTAGES" GROUND FLOOR



NIGHTTIME "PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE" 1st+2nd+3rd FLOORS



## CONCLUSION

We respectfully request that the front building line onto Newtown Centre proposed under OP4-6 in the final adopted Blessington LAP be brought forward to align with the proposed established building line described in this submission.

The proposed established building line maintains the line of sight from Glen Ding / Downshire Public Park towards St. Mary's Church on Main Street and provides the opportunity for meaningful 'active frontages' and 'passive surveillance' over Newtown Square and surrounding streets.

The proposed development prepared for the Subject Lands is sympathetic to the scale of adjacent built form and local topography, respects views out to the local landscape, improves the public realm and creates shared spaces whilst providing for a potential vehicular route through to Opportunity Sites 4 and 5.

Taking all these design opportunities and constraints into account, together with the considerable level difference to the rear of the site - the proposed development in its current form provides for both an appropriate urban design and town planning solution and a financially viable scheme for the Subject Lands.

Therefore, it is imperative that the front building line onto Newtown Centre under OP4-6 graphic in the final adopted Blessington LAP be along the established building line and the associated paragraph be changed to: '*The building line of OP6 facing the Newtown Centre should be informed by the established building line to the west.*'

*Malcolm Lane*

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Date: December 2024

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