



Draft Blessington LAP Amendment Stage Submission - Report

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DUNMOY

PROPERTIES LIMITED

Response to Proposed Material Amendments to the
Draft Blessington Local Area Plan - Submission 23 April 2025

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Objection to Proposed RN1 Zoning at Milltown Gate Lands – Amendment 24

We wish to formally raise an objection to the proposed rezoning of the Milltown Gate Lands—1.3 hectares currently designated for Employment use—to RN1 New Residential Priority 1. While housing delivery is a crucial priority for Blessington, the proposed location is fundamentally unsuitable for residential use, both in planning terms and in terms of the lived experience it would offer future residents.

Policy Context

- Ireland's National Planning Framework (NPF), including the revised Government Approved NPF published in April 2025, emphasizes compact growth through well-serviced infill sites and the careful integration of new housing with surrounding uses and infrastructure. Similarly, the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022–2028 sets out specific criteria for zoning decisions, prioritizing sustainable locations that support community integration and ensure the long-term wellbeing of residents.
- The Draft Blessington Local Area Plan 2024 identifies Blessington as a Moderate Growth Town with a projected population of 6,313 by 2031 and sets a housing delivery target of 519 new units to meet that growth. While this target requires proactive land use planning, it also demands that development occurs in locations that align with national and local policies for safety, environmental quality, and sustainable design.

REVISED NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK - NATIONAL CORE PRINCIPLES:

Prioritise the location of new housing provision in existing settlements as a means to maximising a better quality of life for people through accessing services, ensuring a more efficient use of land and allowing for greater integration with existing infrastructure.

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Proximity to Petrol Station – A Significant Residential Risk

- One of the most pressing concerns with the Milltown Gate site is its direct proximity to existing employment uses, including a petrol station. Petrol stations, by their nature, present environmental, safety, and amenity challenges that are fundamentally at odds with the creation of a healthy residential environment.
- There are multiple well-documented risks associated with locating homes in close proximity to petrol stations. These include persistent noise from 24-hour operations, heavy vehicle movements, and fuel deliveries; harmful emissions and vapour from fuel handling; security concerns stemming from high footfall and anti-social behaviour, especially at night; and light pollution from constant commercial lighting. International best practice guidelines recommend a minimum buffer distance—typically 50 to 100 metres—between petrol stations and residential properties. Given the compact scale of the Milltown Gate site, achieving these setbacks while still delivering a meaningful number of homes would be nearly impossible.

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Traffic and Infrastructure Constraints

- The Milltown Gate lands are accessed via the L8370 road, which already experiences pressure due to its connection with the N81. Adding an additional residential scheme on this road would significantly increase vehicular movements and compound the burden on an already constrained and potentially unsafe junction.
- In contrast, our adjacent lands — currently designated for employment and utility uses — offer an opportunity for residential development that includes a comprehensive and safer road upgrade. Our plan features a redesigned junction with the N81 and a nearby roundabout that would naturally calm traffic, reduce speeds, and improve safety for all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.



Dunmoy Burgage Lands Proposal⁵

A More Appropriate Alternative

- ✓ We propose that our nearby lands — comprising 4.36 hectares of potential residential zoning — be considered a more appropriate site for residential development. Surrounded on three sides by existing housing (as opposed to Milltown Gate which is adjacent on two sides with Employment) our site aligns much more closely with the definition of “infill development” outlined in both the NPF and the County Development Plan.
- ✓ Our proposal also includes Employment Zoning — at an increased scale across 4.03 hectares — rather than the current proposed Employment zoning of 2.48 hectares.
- ✓ Dunmoy’s proposal could offer up to 150 new homes, c.30 light industrial units for employment, Multiple Enterprise Office Buildings; Creche; Café & 361 car parking spaces.
- ✓ Not only is this site better integrated within the urban fabric of Blessington, but it also represents a more strategic southern gateway to the town. It offers the possibility of a balanced mix of well-designed sustainable and affordable housing and employment opportunities, creating a sustainable and functional community hub rather than isolated housing beside incompatible land uses.

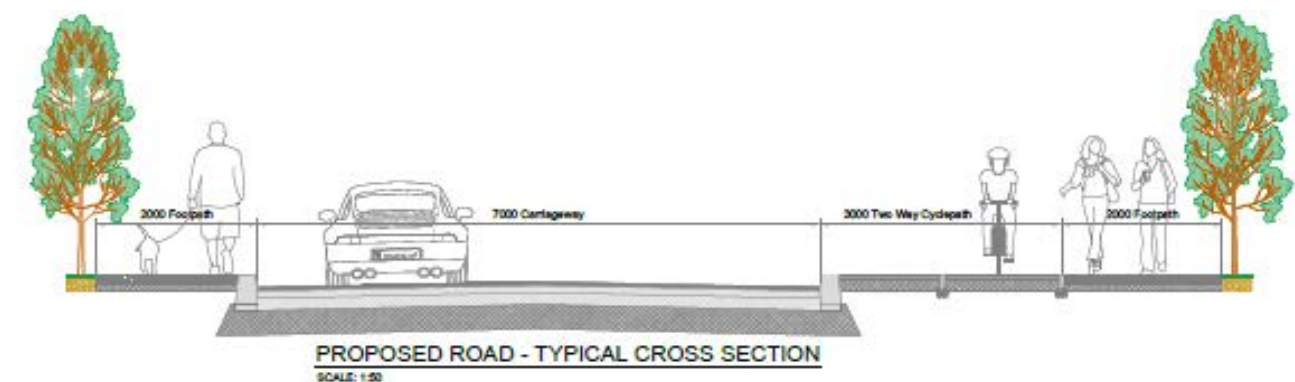
Dunmoy Burgage Lands Proposal

Supporting Active Travel and Greenway Connectivity

- ✓ Our proposal also includes upgrades to the N81, at Dunmoy's expense, that would directly tie into the future Blessington Greenway. This integration would provide a continuous and safe active travel corridor for pedestrians and cyclists — supporting the county's climate and health objectives and ensuring that new development fosters not only housing, but a healthier and more connected way of life.

Immediate Delivery and Local Benefit

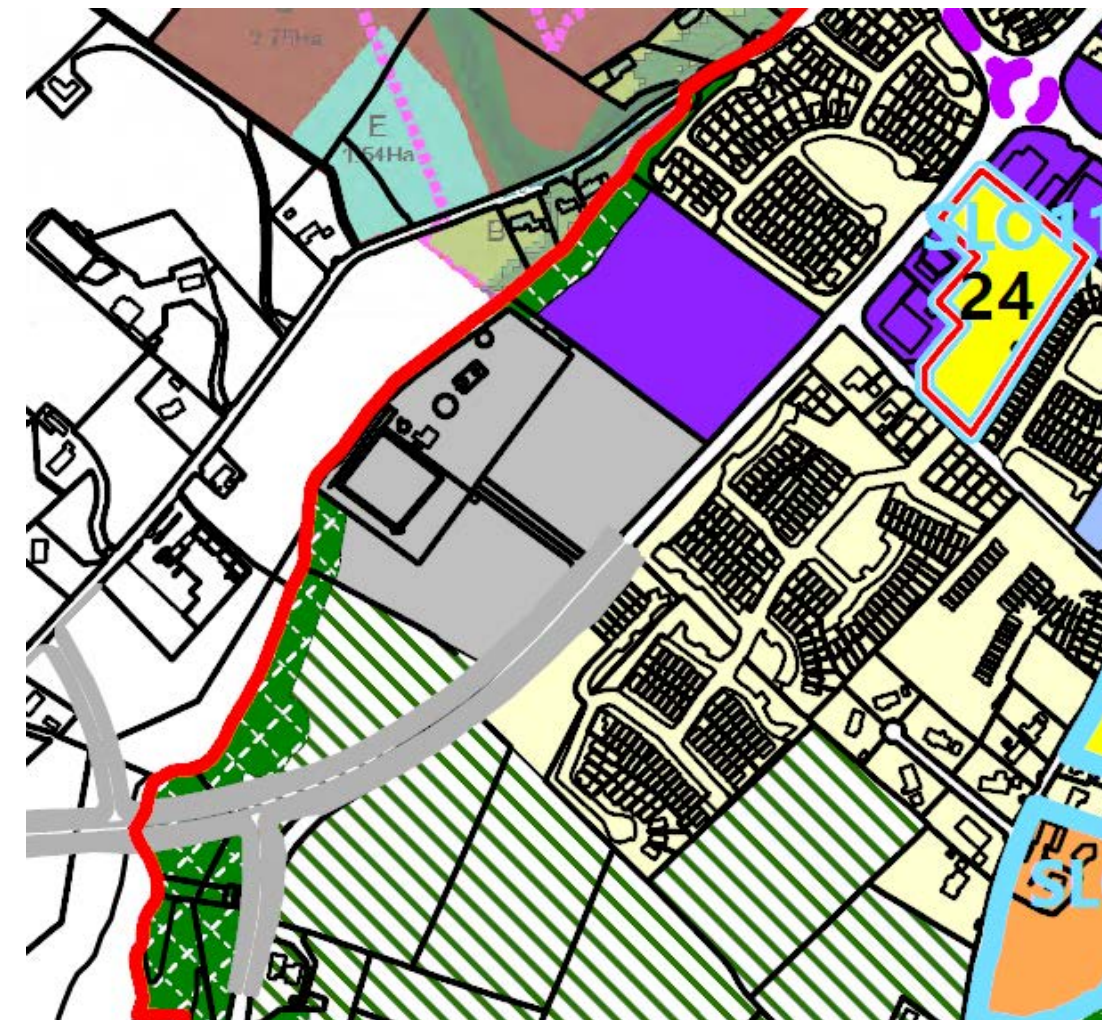
- ✓ We are in a position to submit a planning application within six months for approximately 150+ new homes — nearly 30% of the 2031 target for Blessington. Unlike other developers, we are prepared to offer price reductions for local buyers from the Blessington area. This is a tailored, community-first initiative that directly addresses affordability for families already rooted in the town.



Objection to Proposed RN1 Zoning at Milltown Gate Lands – Amendment 24

The Milltown Gate site is fundamentally unsuitable for residential development due to its adjacency to a petrol station, inadequate separation distances, environmental and amenity concerns, and its limited capacity to support the kind of community-focused, sustainable housing envisaged by national and local policy. In contrast, our lands are infrastructure-ready, policy-compliant, and capable of delivering more homes, faster, in a safer and more appropriate setting.

We respectfully request that the proposed rezoning of the Milltown Gate Lands to RN1 be withdrawn in favour of a better-zoned, more community-aligned alternative.



DUNMOY PROPOSAL



Residential Zoning Proposal



This map shows the location of the subject lands within the settlement boundary of Blessington. It also shows that the development of our northern parcel of lands would constitute infill development.

The lands are located between Burgage Manor, to the east, and lands undergoing development to the west, on the Kilmalum Road. These lands are in the administrative area of Kildare County Council. They are zoned for residential purposes and a primary school, in the Development Plan 2023-29, Blessington Environs.

The subject lands we propose for New Residential are fully serviced and are a prime candidate for residential development to the south of Blessington town.

Our proposed road realignment will allow safe access to these lands from a roundabout on the N81, in addition to improving the N81 for all road users.

Employment Zoning Proposal



Our lands currently have zoning for c.2.7 Hectares of Employment and Park & Ride use. We are proposing to move the Employment zoned lands to the south and increase the area zoned employment to c.4.03 hectares. Our proposed road realignment will further allow safe access to these lands from a southern “Welcome to Blessington” roundabout on the N81.

Open Space Zoning Proposal



We propose these remaining lands, currently zoned agricultural, to be re-zoned to Active Open Space. We propose the eastern section, given the gradient, house 1 standard pitch and the western section 2x5/7 a-side size pitches (football/rugby) with Club house and parking access provided, as permitted within the Open Space uses. Access to these lands will be from the proposed new roundabout at this location.

We have engaged with the representative of a joint sporting clubs submission relating to this Local Area Plan. They were supportive of our proposal, and the location of the proposed pitches. We will be happy to continue discussions with these two clubs subject to the outcome of this LAP review.

Burgage Lands Masterplan

- ✓ **Proposed Residential Lands 4.36Ha:** 153 homes ranging in types from 2-bed apartments to 4-bed detached houses, with associated communal and private spaces, car parking provision and bin and bike storages.
- ✓ **Proposed Employment Lands 4.03Ha:** 30 Light Industrial units; Multiple Enterprise Office Buildings; Creche; Café & 361 car parking spaces.
- ✓ **Proposed Active Open Space 3.78Ha:** 1 full size football / Rugby pitch; 2x 5/7 aside football pitches; Clubhouse and 114 car parking spaces.



Infrastructure - Roads Proposal

- This proposed scheme has been drafted by POGA, our Consultant Engineers, and introduces two roundabouts and additional street infrastructure, footpaths and a dedicated cycle path (supporting the **Active Travel Strategy Map 6**). This allied with low-level lighting and a proposed lower speed limit, will deliver lower traffic speeds as vehicles enter Blessington from the South along the N81. Our proposed route for the N81 mirrors the path of the existing N81 and provides a future access road to connect in with any future outer relief road/Blessington Bypass.
- The roundabouts will act as safe access points for our lands to the East and west of the N81, and are strategically placed for safe access and travel on lead up to and from Nolan's Bend (**Section 2.4.2 of Draft Blessington Local Area Plan: Local Transport Assessment**).
- The proposed roundabout to the south will act as a new “Welcome to Blessington” roundabout and mark the southern entrance to the town. This roundabout will also give access to proposed parking for the Open Space outlined in our proposal. And access to any future Bypass and our Enterprise Zoned Land as per this proposal.
- The access road off the roundabout to the northern end is located to align with Irish Water Infrastructure and will give safe access to the residential zoned lands we propose in this proposal.
- In Red on the plan opposite is the extended cycle path we propose will run all the way to the Blessington Lake Greenway (meeting **BLESS20** objective).



Solutions Our Proposal Enables

Dunmoy's Big Picture Strategy aims to create a vibrant, healthy community by delivering new homes, improving Blessington's entrance, providing new sporting infrastructure, and creating employment opportunities.

Key benefits of the proposal include:

- ✓ **New Residential Development:** A fully serviced site surrounded on three sides by lands zoned Existing Residential, making it an ideal location for new homes.
- ✓ **Employment Expansion:** Increases land zoned for Employment, enhancing the viability of employment-related activities.
- ✓ **Sports Infrastructure:** New sports fields, parking, and clubhouse facilities on a prime site overlooking the lake, benefiting the community.
- ✓ **Commuter Parking:** New commuter parking to the south of Blessington.
- ✓ **Improved Access:** Safe access to new homes, employment areas, recreation facilities, and the Blessington Lakes Greenway. N81 Upgrades: Addressing dangerous bends, reducing speeds, and enhancing safety for all road users.
- ✓ **Future-Proof Infrastructure:** New road infrastructure to facilitate a future outer ring road or bypass.

This integrated proposal offers substantial benefits for the southern part of the town. The rezoning will promote residential development, correct the current misuse of serviced lands in the Draft LAP, and provide employment, recreational, and sporting facilities, all while upgrading the N81 for improved access and safety.

We strongly recommend these proposals be included in the revised Local Area Plan. We are happy to engage in further discussions and can be contacted via the details on the following page.



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PROPERTIES LIMITED

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