

Issues arising from Site Visit on October 23rd, 2014

General

All submissions are to be sent to: **Clare Arts Office, County Library, Mill Road, Ennis, Co.Clare**

Cuan an Chláir means Clare Haven (a safe place)

History of the Site

The site that Cuan an Chláir was originally a farm yard with farm buildings and houses adjacent to it. There was a four acre garden which provided fruit and vegetables to the local colleges and convents.

There is a fairy fort behind the site and there are a large number of bats in the area. Cuan an Chláir are adhering to conservation requirements for the bats with the placement of bat boxes and low level night time lighting at the site.

The Diocese of Killaloe originally purchased the land with the intention of building a retirement home for priests. However, retired priests chose to live in their own communities. The 'Diocese' then gifted the land to Cuan an Chláir who are leasing it from them.

The original plan was to build 24 houses but access to sewage / water provision was an issue so planning permission was only obtained for 12 houses. All houses have solar panels and are built to the highest environmental standards.

Profile of Cuan an Chláir residents / users

Talks are underway with the Lions Club about the potential provision of a bus to bring people to Cuan an Chláir.

The housing and day care users will be in the main in the over 60's bracket but there will be some early retirees aged from 55 years also. Each house has two bedrooms and will have single or double occupancy. 75% of the clients will come from the County Council housing list and 25% from Cuan an Chláir's own list of people interested in living there. A small number may come from the Safe Home Programme (a programme to bring elderly Irish immigrants home from the UK)

Clare Care will operate the catering side of the Day Care Centre and will transfer their current clients from the community centre in Chapel Lane to the Day Care Centre once it is open. It is hoped to avail of a care-taker etc. through a FAS scheme , of some such, via Clare Care also and that this person would look after maintaining the artwork if required.

The Artwork

A permanent external artwork is sought.

There is scope for developing an artwork in conjunction with the day care centre users and / or other members of the community. However, Cuan an Chláir cannot guarantee when the residents and or day care centres will begin to use the facilities, so this needs to be taken into consideration. There are hopes to engage with all sectors of the community if funding is received that will allow the centre to begin operations.

There is flexibility in terms of the outcome of the artwork but the successful proposal must reflect Cuan an Chláir's desire that it would represent 'peace and tranquility for the users in the autumn of their lives'.

Renovations are underway to an old farmhouse at the back of the Day Care Centre which they hope may be used as an artist's studio in the distant future, funding dependent.

Site for the Artwork

Builders plan on being off site by end of December 2014 with residents moving into the houses in January 2015. It is hoped (funding dependent) that the Day Care Centre, which will cater for 50 - 60 people daily, will be open from January 2015 also. Cuan an Chláir have borrowed €300,000 to complete the scheme.

Power and water are available at the site.

The main entrance to the day care centre is on a height and looks out over a car park and green area. Trees will be planted by the houses and in the green area.



The site for the artwork is to the side of the Day Care Centre. It can be viewed from the sunroom / conservatory which leads onto a patio and it is envisaged that this will be the most used room in the centre. It is south facing.

The top of the site is adjacent to the service area of the Day Care Centre (kitchens etc.)

It is a greenfield site, there is no paving there or planned for. If artists require same it would need to come from the commission budget. The surface is mainly clay on rock varying from 300mm to 1.5m below the clay surface.

There is a non functioning buried concrete tank, filled with rocks, on the site but it is not envisaged that this will cause any difficulty. The location of same will be discussed with the successful artist.

There is a graded area on the patio that allows wheelchair access onto the site. There is not scope for a path / steps to be provided up to the site of the artwork as the gradient is too steep.

The stone wall at the site will be tidied up and made safe and there are plans to plant trees (not ash trees but trees native to Ireland) and hawthorn hedging along the wall. There is scope for the successful artist to work with the landscape gardener to incorporate these trees into the artist's plans.

There is access from the laneway beside the stone wall for the installation of the artwork if required, but permission will be required from the Diocese to cross through their lands. It is not envisaged that this would be a problem.

