

1st May 2024

To: The Mayor and Each member of Galway City Council

Re: Leasing of Land at Ballyloughane, Renmore, Galway to Renmore Parish Development Association

To develop an Organic Garden for the use of the Renmore Community Employment Scheme and for the benefit of the local community through the provision of local produce and environmental education.

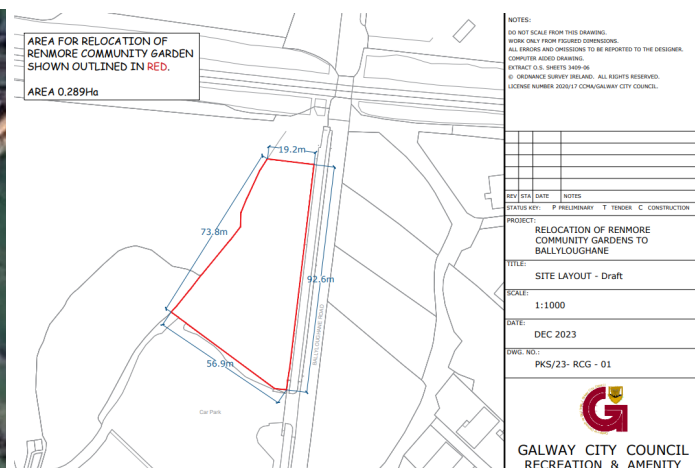
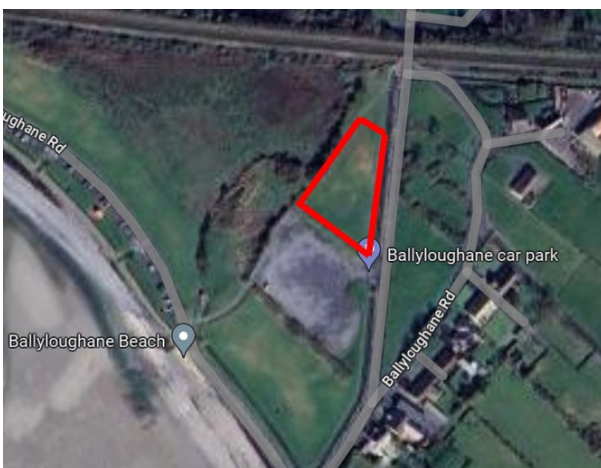
A Chara,

I enclose herewith statutory notice dated 1st May 2024 pursuant to Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000, for consideration at the May Ordinary Meeting of Galway City Council.

Background

Renmore Parish Development Association first started their Community Employment (CE) Scheme organic garden in Ballyloughane in 1993, over 30 years ago, in Holy Trinity Convent. When the Sisters of Mercy required the land back to build a nursing home the garden relocated to the Brothers of Charity site on the Old Dublin Road. The Brothers of Charity now require their lands back to build a school and the Renmore CE Scheme approached Galway City Council enquiring about available lands to rehome the organic garden.

Having considered several possible locations in the Ballyloughane area, the proposed location was identified as being the most suitable. The site is south of the railway bridge on the right hand side of the road adjacent to the gravel carpark, see image below. The total site area is 0.289 hectares.



Proposal

The proposed organic garden will grow organic vegetables, herbs, fruit and flowers, use a collecting rainwater system and possibly solar power. The proposal includes 2 Polytunnels, 1 Tool shed, 1 Canteen shed for staff space and composting area. The intention is to be fully self-sufficient. In addition to providing horticulture training to long term unemployed people, the garden will continue to be a centre of education for local schools and community groups. The organic produce from the garden will continue to be available for sale to the local community, and the profit from the sale of produce will continue to go to the local hospice. The CE Scheme organic garden is a not-for-profit social enterprise.

The lands will require fencing, but the garden will remain open to visitors during operational hours.

It is proposed the mechanism for the lease of GCC lands to the Renmore Parish Development Association will be a 5 year lease agreement subject to conditions and payment of rent. The 5 year lease agreement is required to enable the CE Scheme to apply to the Department for funding under the Community Climate Action Fund to procure the polytunnels and solar power etc.

Galway City Council Plans

The organic garden proposal aligns with a number of GCC Plans, such as:

GCC Climate Action Plan

GCC Biodiversity Action Plan

GCC Green Spaces Strategy (forthcoming)

Climate Action Plan, Action #40

- Promote local and lower carbon footprint food production, including:
 - - Promote and increase local growing and food sharing through community gardens/hubs and allotments throughout Galway City.
 - - Identify new areas for community gardens.

Please find attached map with the area in question outlined in red. I am recommending to Members that Section 183 of the Local Government Act, 2001, and Section 211 of the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 2000 be agreed. This item will be placed on the Agenda for the next Meeting of Galway City Council on the 13th May 2024.

Signed:



Patrick Greene

Director of Services

**Roads & Transport (Operations), Water Services,
Recreation & Amenity, Sports Capital, Environment**