

**From:** Felim Gurn [felimgurn@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** 11 August 2020 20:12  
**To:** cdp  
**Subject:** County Development Plan Submission

I applaud the vision set out which states "Our vision is to build an economically strong, creative and inclusive county making Leitrim the best place to live, to work, to invest and to visit.

It is important that every aspect the plan to achieve this vision is fact checked to ensure coherence with this worthy vision.

Despite the economic and social havoc of Covid right now we need to explore how its implications for home working and the attractiveness of rural life will make Leitrim a more attractive place to live, work and invest.

3.1 points out that Ireland's population is projected to grow by a further 1 million over the 20 year period 2040 with a approximately 550,000 new houses required and a further 660,000 jobs created to sustain this population growth.

At 3.2 The Regional Spatial and economic strategy for the Northern and Western Strategy sets out Carrick on Shannon as the only key town in Leitrim with the implication this is this town main focus for jobs and more importantly housing. Surely the implications of Covid as mentioned above raises questions about this strategy.

I again applaud the leadership of the Leitrim Co Council executive in securing significant funding through funding programmes which include Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds. The potential of these funds and follow on approvals and investment to encourage more investment in jobs and housing needs to be actively encouraged.

4.1 Settlement is vital. A vibrant county needs a growing population particularly of young families.

The population of the county was only 32,044 in 2016. This is a significant improvement from what was the situation 20 years ago when terminal decline was the expected wisdom. However the population projection in the plan is very modest in the order of 2000.

More worrying is the statement "At least 30 per cent of this population growth MUST be delivered in Carrick on Shannon which is a key support town in the region. Unfortunately the link with Carrick on Shannon for most of North Leitrim is weak due to geography and a poor road structure. Carrick on Shannon needs to be developed but I believe that with more ambition and building on the investments in the pipeline and hopefully the SLNCR Greenways Manorhamilton and the surrounding villages can transform itself and capitalise on Leitrim becoming the Killarney of the West. Manorhamilton's location in the centre of North Leitrim and with a strong industrial and services sector base has the potential to

support Sligo Town in making North Leitrim in particular a great place to live and raise a family. Currently there is very little housing in Manorhamilton particularly to rent. In fact this is the situation right though out North Leitrim. This is a very serious situation.

The plan says that the retention of rural communities will be a priority of the plan. I welcome this but how can this be actualized unless the issue of rural housing is addressed.

I believe all the towns and villages which experienced population growth in the county can be promoted for further growth. If this doesn't happen how can the vision outlined at the beginning of the document be realised. The roll out of broadband supports this objective.

5.1 Economic strategy. The 461 fall in persons employed in the county in the period 2011 to 2016 is very disappointing. However it is good that there was an increase of 437 in people living in the county and working elsewhere. This indicates people want to live in the county which is a priority and will help the development of the service sector.

Many things are possible to create more jobs in the [County.In](#) North Leitrim Manorhamton with its catchment of all North Leitrim and serving West Cavan North Sligo and South Donegal has the potential to become an employment hub for the region. The recent success of the application for £3m funding by Manorhamilton Innovation and Development Company for an Innovation and R&D Centre for the Construction and Quarry industries gives hope that community and enterprise drive is healthy in the town and can be built on. What is needed?

support for the development of the enterprise hubs.

More industrial /Office space

1The bringing to fruition of the SLNCR

The development of the truly magnificent natural amenities of Glenfarne Forest Fowleys Falls O Donnell's Rock walkway Eagle Rock Manorhamilton Castle and O'Rourke's Section 4.4 says there has been no commencement notice for more than 10 houses in the county in over 15 years. There is no effective multiple house construction in the county. This is serious and has worrying implications going forward.

Then in section 4.5 Compact Growth it states "This requires delivering a greater proportion of residential development and other development within existing built up area of towns and villages moving away from greenfield development to meet our future development needs. It goes further to say that 30% of all new homes will be delivered within the existing built up footprint.

What does this mean in real terms for housing development in Leitrim when no multiple housing is taking place within the county with the existing rules.

Regards Felim