Dear Sirs,

Please find below my submission in regards to the  Leitrim County Development Plan 2022 2028.

1. Do not demolish the three properties on Main Street, known as Geraghtys, Canon’s House and The Magnet, or as you refer to them in your Call 2 for URDF proposal, Buildings A, B and C.
2. As priority, our original structures and walls should be retained as they are, and a plaque placed on them, that reveals the history that is associated with them. The same should be done for our shops and old houses. Align with An Taisce, Geneology Ireland etc to build stories and walking tours around our old buildings.
3. If as you say bricks and mortar businesses struggle because of online competition, then help them. Demolishing their businesses and homes is definitely not going to help them in any way! A suggestion instead, would be to actually meet with them in their shops, show them nicely what help you can offer by the way of assistance, training, grants etc. Reassure them that they will not be held to ransom if they take up any offers that you provide to them.
4. For existing vacant premises, don’t do anything crazy like force them to put in for costly change of use / delist or sell their property. This will only be viewed as punishment, and would frighten the small business owners of the town, and drive them further away from LCC. The knock on effect being that larger outside investors will not be attracted to the town. Instead, look to meet with them (nicely). Show them what you can do for them. Partner them up with the Startup businesses that approach you for grants and support. Consider pop up shops, grants, training and mastermind groups.
5. Use vacant shops in the town centre for more pop up events, such as Carlow’s Art Festival, Kilkenny’s Cats Laugh etc. Partner shops up with online businesses, so that they can get an opportunity to show their wares in a bricks and mortar business, and get a feel for how well they would do if they set up a physical shop.
6. Do not build any more big empty warehouse type glasshouses. We have enough of them. Repurpose these, particularly the ones you already own by way of NAMA. Ask the wider community what they would like to see them used for. I mean community, not just the small influential “sway”. Get all the ideas, then put them out to a vote for all the community.
7. If private developers build apartments and shops, don’t take on the responsibility of taking irresponsible actions in an effort to get them a better return on investment.
8. Rather than LCC taking ownership of more spaces and creating more work for themselves through the maintenance of that property, leave them with the private owners to maintain.
9. Stop relocating businesses from our main streets, into other streets.
10. Change planning permission policies to encourage people to live over the shops.
11. Be transparent in how you award contracts so that people regain faith in you. Hire local architects and contractors.

Regards,