

Your Ref:

Our Ref: Regeneration and Planning Directorate

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Chief Executive

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Correspondence by email only

Dear Mr Greene,

RE: Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 and the commencement of public consultation.

Thank you for the above consultation received on the 11 February 2022, and the opportunity for Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (FODC) to comment on the proposed Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029. This was tabled for discussion at the Council's Regeneration and Community Committee meeting on the 08 March 2022, and FODC have the following comments to make.

Members made a specific request that the historical importance of Kiltyclogher and particularly Seán MacDiarmada's homestead be referenced in the County Development Plan 2023-2029.

Leitrim County Council (LCC) has been consulted on the FODC Local Development Plan 2030 - draft Plan Strategy. FODC feel that it is important to request that LCC has regard to the objectives and policies within our draft Plan Strategy as part of their consideration of responses and before the making of the Leitrim County Development Plan.

It is recognised that many of the challenges for LCC are similar to those identified in our district. The planning policies put forward in the DLCDP are considered to be an appropriate response to these challenges.

Within the DLCDP it is acknowledged that there are opportunities for co-operation and collaboration in the cross-border area in relation to a number of key areas such as protection of environmental assets, tourism and recreation, economic development, climate change and sustainable transport.

FODC welcome this approach given the close proximity of the Tier 2A town Manorhamilton and Tier 2B town Kinlough to the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council boundary. FODC would also encourage collaboration on a number of shared tourism assets, such as the Shannon Erne waterway, Cuilcagh Mountain, Lough Melvin and Lough MacNea.

FODC would draw attention to the FODC Local Development Plan 2030 – Draft Plan Strategy contains Draft Policy TOU01 - Protection of Tourism Assets and Tourism Development. This policy states that “The Council will not permit any form of development that would, in itself or in combination with existing or approved development, have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character or quality of a tourism asset or any part thereof, or diminish its tourism value, or part thereof”.

The draft Plan promotes natural heritage and biodiversity and advises that these areas shall be protected from inappropriate development through the Development Management process.

FODC welcome this approach and the protection of natural heritage features along our mutual boundaries, and this offers the potential for further collaboration on these specific issues. FODC welcome the promotion of greenways within the draft Plan and the proposals to develop the former Sligo Leitrim Northern Counties Railway (SLNCR) between Collooney and Enniskillen as greenways, which requires collaboration between four different Local Authorities (Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and FODC).

In relation to LCC’s wind energy development, FODC welcome the fact that Leitrim has developed a strategic approach to wind energy similar to that of FODC. LCC has developed a draft Leitrim County Renewable Energy Strategy (prepared by RPS Group) with the overall aim of the strategy to provide a plan-led approach to renewable energy development.

A Landscape and Visual Capacity Study was also undertaken to specifically evaluate the respective capacities of various landscapes in the county to potentially accommodate larger scale wind energy development proposals.

This approach is welcomed as it aligns with the approach of FODC and there is no conflict in relation to wind energy capacity along the common boundary. FODC would promote consistency of landscape designations and capacity across neighbouring Council areas. FODC would wish to see consideration given to sensitivities of landscapes, visual impact, environmental impact and impact on public health and amenity within the FODC area.

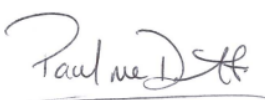
There are a number of policies relating to Extractive Industries and FODC welcome the policies and objectives for the protection of specific landscape character of the area, protection of human health, adjoining land uses and the amenity value of neighbouring lands and of adjoining residential development. In addition officers welcome plans for the restoration/rehabilitation of existing quarries.

FODC would request that LCC consult DAERA in its role as statutory nature conservation body as it has overall responsibility for designation, management and monitoring of European sites, if it has not done so already.

FODC also welcome consultation on any significant planning applications or other planning matters of mutual interest which may be proposed adjacent to Fermanagh and Omagh’s Council boundary.

Of particular note, the Leitrim draft Plan promotes the development of co-working spaces/hubs, digital hubs/eHubs and eWorking centres throughout the County that function as outreach hubs for out of County employers and that promote flexible working arrangements and strengthen the AEC hub network. As FODC move into the LPP stage of the LDP, co working spaces could be facilitated through site specific zonings or key site requirements.

Yours sincerely



Paul Mc Dermott MRTPI
Lead Principal Planning Officer (Interim)