**From:** Gerry McCrann []

**Sent:** 12 August 2020 01:08

**To:** cdp

**Subject:** County Leitrim development plan

Dear Sir/Madam,

My comments are as follows.

1. In order to encourage more people to live in their local villages and towns, I believe certain incentives are required in order to make this option feasible. The main one being the price of sites which could be made cheaper by a monetary contribution from the council or central funds. In addition the VAT element of materials could be reduced for such buildings and possibly an exemption from stamp duty. By encouraging more houses in villages, more life is brought back possibly leading to more jobs and a better environment e.g waste disposal etc.
2. The majority of job announcements over the past few years are for jobs in the eastern/southern half of the country. As far as I can see very few well paid jobs have been announced in Leitrim. While I accept that large multinationals  such as Facebook are unlikely to locate a thousand jobs in Leitrim, there needs to be a government drive to ensure more medium and smaller enterprises locate here.Unless there is buy in from the government, then nothing will happen and we will continue to hear the platitudes from Ministers etc. Due to Covid, many people in services are working from home and this is to be encouraged. Leitrim is ideally placed to be presented as a good and peaceful location to work in. This of course means that both telephone and broadband needs to be improved rapidly.
3. Tourism is one area where I see good potential for Leitrim. The number of greenways, cycling routes need to be increased as well as more development on the waterways. There was some recent speculation about making parts of North Leitrim into a national park which subject to certain conditions makes a lot of sense and should be seriously looked at .At a local level in Mohill, I think reopening the old railway line between Dromod and Mohill would be a very attractive tourist attraction during the summer months. Also in Mohill, the old hospital building could be converted into a local history museum something along the lines of the museum in Turlough, Co Mayo. Everything should be done to preserve the buildings in our towns and villages as they are part of the heritage and should not be demolished to make way for glasshouses.We do not want our towns and in particular Carrick to be 'modernised' and become a bland  version of so many others.
4. For as long as I can remember there has been talk about a bypass for Carrick. The volume of traffic backed up on the August weekend was incredible. A bypass has some many advantages for the town ranging from the environmental aspect to making the town more pedestrian friendly. It would appear that any work that was done on this  ten years  ago is now obsolete and its back to the drawing board again. With the state of government finances not in great shape I hope this does not mean this project will be put on the long finger again.
5. Finally, there needs to be a serious look at the growth of forestry in Leitrim. I accept that it gives employment but the practice of planting mainly one type of tree is leading to disaster. The forests that are planted are very dark and a blot on the landscape and also when they have been cut down, the ground looks like a battlefield. There needs to be incentives to plant more native trees which are far better for the environment