

## **Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027**

Smyth, Kevin [ ]

Sent: 22 December 2020 14:58

To: LouthCDP

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To whom it may concern,

Regarding the Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027, I wish to express my concerns that the proposals in this plan could have very negative consequences for the Cooley Peninsula and the North Louth area in general. The impact of the planning proposals in Zone 2, but particularly Zone 1, would be far reaching and I believe will ultimately lead to a reduction in population in the area. A population reduction would have a huge affect on the local schools (both primary and post-primary) and sports clubs (GAA – Cooley Kickhams GFC, St Patricks GFC, Cuchulainn Gaels GFC, Roche Emmets GFC; Soccer – Bellurgan Utd; Rugby – Carlingford Knights; Athletics – Glenmore AC). A reduction in numbers would lead to a reduction in funding and revenue, and ultimately some of them may not be able to survive in the long term.

The very first qualifying criteria for both Zones refer to “Persons engaged in full time agriculture”. Has anyone actually taken the time to do a survey of how many people in the area are working full time in agriculture? I believe that you would find that the number is very low. The second qualifier for Zone 1 relates to persons who own “at least 3 hectares, for a minimum of 10 years”. This is an extremely unfair qualifying criteria as the majority of families simply would not own that amount of land. I was expecting to find proposals to add development land in Carlingford or other built up areas in the region which would be used to increase the supply of housing, however there does not appear to be any such proposal. So where exactly are the future generations supposed to live in the area? This does not make sense.

Something I would like to see in this development plan would be a plan for housing for the elderly, possibly something similar to Rath Abbey in Grange, Co Louth. In future years many couples may be keen to downsize as they get older (house too big, too expensive to heat & maintain etc), but there are not that many suitable options currently available locally for smaller housing. If such developments were included in the plan, this might be one way to free up larger family homes whilst providing the elderly with smaller, affordable housing in a suitable environment.

2020 has been an unprecedented year with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and unfortunately the timing of the Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 could not have been worse. The plan contains proposals for major changes which will have serious repercussions for this area, and proper public consultation has not been possible due to Covid-19 restrictions. Given the circumstances, I believe Louth County Council should postpone this plan for up to a year when hopefully life has returned to some form of normality and proper public meetings and consultations can be held to consider and discuss the plan.

Yours Sincerely,  
Kevin Smyth.

