

Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

Vin F []

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To: LouthCDP

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To whom it may concern

Upon a review of the draft plan I was dismayed to see that there was no mention for developing and promoting the Irish language within Louth which I believe would be in line with national strategy for promoting the Irish language. Promoting the Irish language in my opinion would be a good fit with the called-for regeneration and conservation of our built heritage as well as promotion of the historic and cultural gems of Louth history for tourism purposes.

Therefore I wish to request that the following be included in the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027.

1. Identified need for the County Development Plan to provide Irish medium education in Louth with planning for Naíonraí, Gaelscoileanna and Gaelcholáistí within the lifetime of this county development plan.

Louth currently has one of the lowest rates of provision of Irish medium education at both primary and secondary level in the country and is the lowest in Leinster, while at the same time having one of the richest and most colourful gaelic language heritages in Ireland.

The Louth Development Plan should prioritise the planning for additional Naíonraí and Gaelscoileanna in areas where population centres are set to increase as a result of new residential development. This need is not only evidenced by the oversubscribed Gaelscoileanna and Naíonraí in Drogheda and Dundalk, but by the number of children currently travelling to Balbriggan from Drogheda and Dundalk to obtain post primary Irish medium education.

In addition to this, planning should be started for the provision of Irish medium education from Naíonraí level in the north of the county to support Louth County Council's aim to promote and protect the language and heritage from the Oriel region.

The Louth Development Plan should prioritise the planning for a Gaelcholáiste in Dundalk, to be included in the Louth County Development Plan, based on the approval in principle by the Department of Education for a satellite of Coláiste Ghlor na Mara in Dundalk, dependent on a suitable premises being identified, which will act as the nucleus for the gaelcholáiste. The gaelcholáiste will serve all of north, mid and south Louth as far south as Termonfeckin / north Drogheda environs, as the Balbriggan gaelcholáiste already serves south Drogheda.

2. Naming of new developments in Louth

All planning applications granted for housing developments and new streets should include a planning condition that proposals for the naming of the development and associated roads and streets are either in the Irish language and/or in bilingual format and reflecting the local heritage of Co. Louth in accordance with the Department Circular 'Naming of Streets and Roads, Numbering of Houses and the Use of Irish'.

3. Equality of language on signage in accordance with the Official Languages Act 2003.

Make equality of language on signage a policy in the Louth County Development Plan, ensuring that the Irish spelling and grammar on signage is checked and correct for all signs produced by Louth Co. Council by the Oifigeach Gaeilge.

4. Encouragement and promotion of business and shop signage in Irish or bilingual format

With funding now being provided for the preservation of Irish language business and shop fronts, the Development Plan should make it a priority to encourage and promote the use of Irish on business and shop fronts in the county.

5. A County Louth Irish Language Plan

Develop an Irish Language County Plan in conjunction with various agencies and organisations across the county, in line with the National 20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030. Begin to plan now for Irish language and cultural quarters in our large towns.

Kind Regards,

Vincent Fagan