

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

kevin callan [ ]

**Sent:** 23 December 2020 10:37

**To:** LouthCDP

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below the submission of the Borough District of Drogheda Elected Members to the Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Regards,

Cllr Kevin Callan  
Mayor of Drogheda.

### **Submission of The Mayor and Elected Members of the Borough District of Drogheda to the Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027.**

The ten elected members of the Borough District of Drogheda make the below collective submission relating specifically to the Borough District of Drogheda in relation to the Draft Development Plan 2021-2027. We use the opportunity to reference key issues for the Borough as identified by the members collectively which will fall within the lifetime of the said Draft Plan. The Drogheda Borough District hereby notes the publication of the Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 and sets out hereunder submissions and observations on behalf of the members. This submission has been reviewed and approved by the Members of the Drogheda Borough District before being submitted on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

#### **INTRODUCTION.**

The functional administrative area covered by Drogheda Borough District includes the town of Drogheda (excluding the part of the town in Meath), Tullyallen, Termonfeckin, Sandpit, Clogherhead and surrounding rural areas.

Drogheda is one of the oldest and most distinguished urban centres in Ireland with a history stretching back to its founding in 1194. As a result of the 2016 census, Drogheda is now the largest town in Ireland. The population projections for the town show significant growth over the coming years with an anticipated population of approximately 50,000 people living in the town by 2031 (RSES).

Drogheda boasts an enviable location along the eastern seaboard of Ireland. As part of the Economic Development Strategy for Drogheda and its Environs carried out by the Indecon consultancy, an examination of the wider catchment of Drogheda was made. This study, carried out by the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) found that within 20km of Drogheda there is a catchment population of some 105,000 people; within a 40km range, 750,000 people are resident whilst, significantly within a 60km range there are some 1.7 million people resident (Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011~2017). Since completion of the above studies the population of the wider catchment area of Drogheda has significantly increased.

Drogheda acts as the de-facto gateway to the internationally acclaimed Boyne Valley which contains the World Heritage Site at Brú na Boinne. This is one of the largest and most important prehistoric megalithic sites in Europe and acts as the centre piece to a cluster of other major visitor attractions in both Counties Louth and Meath including Monasterboice Round Tower and High Crosses, Old Mellifont Abbey, the Hill of Tara, the Battle of the Boyne site, Slane Castle, Kells Round Tower and High Crosses,

Trim Castle and Beaulieu House. Within Drogheda itself lie a number of major historical attractions including St. Laurence's Gate, Millmount Museum and Tower, St Peter's Church and the Town Walls.

Drogheda Urban and Rural areas have a large population catchment, is strategically located close to both Dublin and Belfast and has great potential to be an economic driver along the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor. Despite many positive factors in Drogheda's favour a

significant negative factor is the number of people (6,000) who exit the town on their daily commute to work in surrounding areas. The daily commute has the following negative consequences for both people and the town:

- Significant loss of income
- High stress levels
- Negative environmental impact
- Negative impact on wellbeing for both individuals and families

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Drogheda demonstrates remarkable assets in terms of its favourable location along the Belfast- Dublin Corridor, strong transport infrastructure, its cost competitive location, its proximity to Dublin airport, favourable demographic structure, entrepreneurial spirit, highly skilled and well- educated work force and availability of telecommunications infrastructure.

Policy Objectives:

To promote Drogheda as a location for Foreign Direct Investment.

To develop a Framework Plan for Drogheda on part of the lands titled employment generation. The Framework Plan should aim to develop a specific area into a location of international standing that will attract and encourage inward investment into Drogheda. The above mentioned development of a Framework Plan is to include the 350 hectares of land to the north side of the River Boyne and contained within the Borough District Area.

Implicit in this Framework is the desire to reinforce the role of Drogheda as a key Regional Growth Centre. The plan should include but not be confined to the following:

- Landmark entrance
- Information and signage system
- Development cells
- Private and public artworks
- Biodiversity park
- Transport management system
- Environmental landscaping
- Identify a distinctive proposition

To promote revitalization and redevelopment of the Heritage Quarter through implementation of the West Gate Vision and the Urban Design Framework Plan.

To promote the development of the Docklands area. We reference for the purposes of this submission, the Docklands Area Plan of 2007 which provides the required framework of the redevelopment of the area including the creation of a new urban quarter on both sides of the River Boyne. As port activities have ceased on the South Quay we say that regeneration would stimulate further redevelopment and a compact and vibrant living space in the town centre area.

## **THE PORT ACCESS NORTHERN CROSS ROUTE**

The Elected Members wish to convey the importance of the PANCR in terms of the development of the northern environs area of Drogheda with the potential to permit the development of 5000 residential properties to the northern area of Drogheda, the development of 350 hectares of employment generation lands and the potential for indigenous and foreign direct investment in terms of employment and commercial enterprises as well as sporting development/sports facilities.

The Elected Members state that this project is of paramount importance to the future of Drogheda and is without doubt in the opinion of the Borough District the most strategically significant factor in Drogheda's responsible and feasible expansion affording relief to the congestion levels of traffic within the town centre and existing residential areas.

The Elected Members are of the view and submit that this PANCR must be a key priority of Louth County Council for the lifetime of the Draft Plan. In the event that current applications are not successful, we request that Louth County Council continue to seek every opportunity to apply for any relevant form of funding to see this project succeed to completion.

The Elected Members submit that the PANCR will also alleviate traffic congestion within the town centre area which also is an area of potential regeneration and development as set out above. We wish to state our desire to see the development of our historic town centre areas in terms of economic development, residential accommodation, tourism development and the facilitation of providing property space for new business migration into our town.

The Elected Members are of the view that the future development of Drogheda requires the PANCR to be a priority to allow for development to be conducted in a balanced fashion with the current planning permissions granted on the southern side of Drogheda by Meath County within its administrative area resulting in unbalanced and unsustainable development of the town. Therefore it is the considered opinion of the Members that the development of the Northern Environs shall be prioritised in order to support balanced growth for Drogheda.

## **JOINT URBAN AREA PLAN**

The Elected Members wish to convey the importance of the pursuit of the Joint Urban Area Plan for Drogheda between Louth and Meath County Councils.

The UAP/EAP is an additional element of the development of Drogheda reaching its economic potential when added to the above mentioned employment generation lands to the north side of the River Boyne, being lands within the functional area of Louth County Council.

As Droghedas population was deemed in 2016 to consist of 34,199 or 84% within the administrative area of Louth with southern fringes being located in Meath, we say that every effort must be made to progress cooperation on the UAP/LAP with County Meath.

**For and on behalf of the Borough District of Drogheda Elected Members.**

Cllr Kevin Callan, Mayor of Drogheda

Cllr James Byrne

Cllr Joanna Byrne

Cllr Tom Cunningham

Cllr Michelle Hall

Cllr Fiachra Mac Raghnaill

Cllr Paddy Mc Quillan

Cllr Declan Power

Cllr Pio Smith

Cllr Eileen Tully