

Forward Planning Team
Planning Section
Monaghan County Council
County Offices
Glen Road
Monaghan

Dáta | Date
23 January, 2019

Ár dTag | Our Ref.
TII18-104271

Re. Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan, 2019 – 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) welcomes consultation on the proposed material alterations to the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan, 2019 – 2025. TII welcomes proposed material alterations arising from consideration of the Authority's initial submission on the Draft Plan. In particular, TII acknowledges the proposed introduction of new Strategic Objective no. 8 proposed in material alteration Chapter 1, No. 1, i.e. 'to maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads network and to safeguard the investment in national roads'.

In relation to other proposed material alterations, the Authority outlines the following observations for the Councils consideration;

Material Alterations: Chapter 7, No. 2

TII notes proposed material alterations to Table 7.2 of the Draft Plan which outlines 'strategic national road proposals for County Monaghan'. The National Development Plan, 2018 – 2027, includes two schemes in Monaghan to be taken through pre-appraisal and early planning, namely;

- N2 Clontibret to Border, and
- N2 Ardee to South of Castleblayney.

As previously advised, TII welcomes the inclusion of the above schemes in the Draft Development Plan. In relation to other schemes included in Table 7.2 which are in addition to those identified above, TII advises that while such additional improvements relating to national roads identified at a local level should be done so in consultation with and subject to the agreement of TII, the Council will be aware that TII may not be responsible for the funding of any such schemes or improvements, for example, the Monaghan Town Northern Link Road.

Material Alterations: Chapter 10 - 14 Settlement Plans

The Council will be aware that TII made a number of observations in the Authority's initial Draft Plan submission relating to the requirement for compliance with the provisions of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines relating to specific zoning and development objectives included in individual Settlement Plans. In particular;

- a) Monaghan Town Settlement Plan
 - The development of an industrial link road from N12 Armagh Road to N2 at Dublin Road at Annagh Roundabout and the significant extent of zoned development lands at this location,
 - Lands zoned Industry/Enterprise/Employment on the N54 at Tullygrimes.

- b) Carrickmacross Settlement Plan
 - Proposed zoned Industry/Enterprise/Employment lands to the east of the N2, north of the town and adjoining the northern N2 junction. Policy CMO5 to promote the lands for strategic industrial development also refers.

- c) Castleblayney Settlement Plan
 - Zoning proposals that may extend outside the 50-60kph speed limit location along the N53, national road, and the recommendation that access to the lands identified would be accommodated within the reduced urban speed limit area to ensure compliance with the provisions of official policy.

- d) Tier 4 and Tier 5 Settlements
 - The proposed development limit identified for Smithborough extending to the east of the village alongside the N54 at a location where a 100kph speed limit applies. The Authority requested that the Council review the proposed development limit or consider access requirements having regard to the provisions of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines.
 - Also to consider the implications for other Dispersed Rural Settlements, such as Tyholland on the N12, national primary road, that are situated on the national road network at locations where a 100kph speed limit applies.

It is noted that no alterations appear to be included in the Proposed Material Alterations on display relating to any of the zoning and development objectives outlined above. However, it is acknowledged that the Chief Executive's Opinion included in the 'Chief Executive's Report on Submissions and Observations' on the Draft Plan confirms that;

'The additional lands zoned for industry/employment uses within the settlement plans are indicative of the priority the local authority is placing on stimulating economic activity and the creation of sustainable jobs within the County. It is also acknowledged that direct access onto the national route would only be considered whereby any such proposal would adhere to the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines, and where possible access to these lands should be accommodated within the reduced urban speed limit area'.

In that regard, TII welcomes the clarification provided in the 'Chief Executive's Report on Submissions and Observations' clarifying adherence to the provisions of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines, 2012.

However, with specific reference to lands within the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan, the Council previously advised of progress in relation to the preparation of a LUTS and while TII acknowledges progress in that regard, it remains the opinion of TII that the preparation of a LUTS is an essential requirement in the development of an access strategy for the lands concerned at Knockaconny, Tullyhirm and Annahagh.

TII would welcome an update on developments in this regard. The zoning objectives at this location include proposed development lands along the N12, national primary road, at a location where a 100kph speed limit applies, and accessing via the Annagh Roundabout on the N2, also at a location where a 100kph speed limit applies, contrary to the provisions of official policy. TII remains of the opinion that access proposals for the subject lands should be reviewed and clarified prior to the adoption of the Development Plan to ensure consistency with the provisions of official policy.

Similar to above, access to lands zoned for Industry/Enterprise/Employment on the N54, national secondary road, at Tullygrimes, Monaghan, extending into a location where a 100kph speed limit applies still remains to be clarified to demonstrate adherence to the provisions of official policy.

In relation to lands previously identified at Carrickmacross and subject to Policy CMO5, to the east side of the N2, national road, TII previously outlined that the proposed zoning objective had the potential to directly impact the operation of the strategic national road network in the area. Therefore, it remains a concern to the Authority that, it appears, no evidence base has been undertaken to demonstrate that accessibility, access proposals and additional traffic loading generated by such a zoning objective can be satisfactorily accommodated at this location on the N2 national road junction while safeguarding the strategic function of the network. TII is not aware of any further analysis undertaken by the Council in support of the subject zoning proposal.

It remains the opinion of TII that a review of the subject Industry/Enterprise/Employment zoning proposal to the north of the town, east of the N2, national primary road, should be undertaken to demonstrate compliance with the provisions of Section 2.7 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines. There appears more favourable lands available to assist in consolidating the zoning envelop in Carrickmacross.

Conclusion

As previously advised, TII acknowledges the significant undertaking for the Council in drafting a Development Plan and the requirement to consider and address a multiplicity of factors in developing a sustainable spatial planning framework not just issues relating to national roads.

The Authority acknowledges and welcomes the generally positive alignment in the Draft Plan and subsequent proposed material alterations with official policy concerning development planning and development management and national roads.

Notwithstanding this, as outlined previously and in the above comments, there are a number of specific interactions between land use policy and development objectives included in the Draft Plan and proposed amendments and the strategic national road network in Monaghan that the Authority considers require review prior to the adoption of the Development Plan to ensure consistency with official policy and in order to safeguard the strategic function of the national road network in the area.

While TII remains available to assist the Executive of the Council to address issues identified in the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the above observations are taken into consideration prior to the adoption of the Monaghan County Development Plan, 2019 – 2025.

Yours sincerely,



Michael McCormack
Senior Land Use Planner