

## Treanor, Bronagh

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**From:** Marie Moriarty [mmoriarty@nwra.ie]  
**Sent:** 21 May 2018 17:42  
**To:** ldevplan  
**Subject:** NWRA Submission - Draft County Monaghan Dev Plan 2019-2025  
**Attachments:** NWRA Submission Draft County Monaghan Dev Plan 2019-2025.pdf; May 2018 Report on Draft Monaghan CDP.pdf

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

A Chara,

I refer to your letter of 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 in connection with the above, and attach copy of submission/report from the Northern and Western Regional Assembly.

Please acknowledge receipt of same.

Best Regards,

Marie

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# Northern & Western Regional Assembly

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Mr Adrian Hughes  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Environment Section  
Monaghan County Council  
Council Offices  
The Glen  
Monaghan

21<sup>st</sup> May, 2018

RE: Draft County Monaghan Development Plan 2019-2025

A Chara,

I refer to your correspondence dated 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 in respect of the Draft County Monaghan Development Plan 2019-2025. The Northern and Western Regional Assembly would like to thank you for the notification in respect of the Draft Plan and for the opportunity to make comment on it.

I am pleased to confirm that the NWRA, at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2018, considered the Draft County Monaghan Development Plan 2019-2025 and I attach a copy of the report and recommendations for your consideration, which was adopted by the Assembly at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> inst. as its submission to the Draft Plan, in compliance with Sec. 27 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000, as amended.

Finally, the abovementioned submission is made in a spirit of collaboration and the Assembly looks forward to ongoing engagement with Monaghan County Council. Should any query arise in respect of this submission then do not hesitate to revert.

Mise le Meas,

Denis Kelly  
Assistant Director & Senior Planner

Northern & Western Regional Assembly  
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# Northern & Western Regional Assembly

## Report on the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 – 2025.

### Process

The Assembly were informed on 14/03/2018 of the Draft County Monaghan Development Plan 2019-2025. The closing date for receipt of submissions is the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. The Assembly has an obligation under S27c to make a submission on the Proposed Plan.

### Comment on Draft Plan

The aim of the Plan is to set out a medium to long term strategic framework for the development and growth of the County, and the Plan is bound by the requirements of Sec. 10 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000, as amended, to ensure Local Authorities formulate policy which is consistent, insofar as is practicable, with National & Regional Policy, and that this be outlined in the Core Strategy of the Plan.

Whilst a new National Planning Framework – Ireland 2040 was issued in February, 2019, the Draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) is in the process of being prepared and, when the RSES is finalised, it will set out the implementation and amplification of the National Planning Framework from 2019 – 2031. You will be aware the NWRA has completed the Pre Draft Consultation for the RSES (Issues Papers) and a Directors Report in this regard was presented to the Assembly members in early April, summarising the contents of the 125 submissions received.

#### 1. National & Regional Policy Context:

The National Planning Framework has included in Sec. 2.4 an envisaged population growth for each Assembly Region from now until 2040, and this is earmarked at 180,000 for the Northern and Western Region. The ratio of additional people to jobs is forecast at a ratio of 1:0.66. In relation to population, the figure will have to be apportioned across the Region, and 9 Local Authorities therein, and includes a provision for circa. 40,000 additional people for Galway City & its environs.

The RSES is likely to pursue a policy of accelerated growth in the identified Regional Centre's of Sligo & Letterkenny, (Athlone lying partly within our Region) and beyond this, it is likely a number of regionally important towns will be identified as suitable for targeted growth. It is reasonable to assume that Monaghan Town will potentially be such a centre, alongside Cavan Town (i.e. County leads). The Assembly will in the weeks to come be liaising directly with Monaghan County Council in relation to same. Upon the making of the RSES, it shall be necessary for Monaghan County Council to review the Monaghan County Development Plan, and consider whether any variation of policy is necessary in order

to achieve / implement the objectives of the RSES, as provided for in the Planning & Development Act, 2000 as amended.

The 2010 Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the Border Region projected a County population of just under 60,000 for County Monaghan in 2016, and 61,700 by 2022. The Assembly note the 2016 census population result is very close to the projected 2022 figure.

The projected growth to 2025 to 67,252 is considered to be reasoned within the context of the Regional Planning Guidelines but as referenced above, it will be necessary upon adoption of the RSES to review same.

## **2. Core Strategy & Housing:**

The overall proportion of County Monaghan's population residing in the urban settlements currently represents a comparatively low percentage relative to other Counties, and whilst Sec. 2.1 of the Core Strategy aims to increase the overall share, perhaps a longer-term monitoring and increase of this ratio for the County would be advisable. This objective should ultimately aim to grow a number of key urban centres and ultimately, further increases ratio of people resident in towns and identified villages.

The National Planning Framework (National Policy Objective 37) outlines a HNDA (Housing Needs Demand Assessment) is to be undertaken for each local authority area. The purpose of the HNDA is to inform Housing Demand, and decisions around Housing Strategies and Zonings. The Assembly await further guidance and clarification on the detail of the HNDA model, however it is likely that the introduction of the HNDA will require a review of all County Plan's, and Core Strategies.

The Assembly agrees with the settlement hierarchy set out in the Core Strategy, with Monaghan Town as the Tier 1 Settlement & the towns of Carrickmacross & Castleblaney as Tier 2 Settlements. The very low output of housing built in County Monaghan's towns / villages since 2013 (as outlined in Sec.2.4.2) is noted. Furthermore, the National Planning Framework is focused on 'Compact Growth' (Listed as No.1 of the 10 National Strategic Outcomes), and the target set out in relation to same are to deliver 30% of all new homes Nationally within the built-up footprint of existing settlements (National Policy Objective 3c), the Monaghan County Plan should reflect same. This may require a revision in the quantum of residential land zoned.

The Regional Assembly notes the contents of 2.4.2 (HLR) to provide housing within Urban Area's at a Lower density than has been the norm heretofore, and this is set out in National Policy Objective 18b, which refers to the provision of serviced sites, to allow people to build houses in small towns and villages. The Regional Assembly would view this lower density provision as being appropriate in all towns and villages below Tier 2 in the settlement hierarchy, as set out in the Core Strategy, but should not apply this blanket approach to Monaghan Town, Castleblaney or Carrickmacross.

The Regional Assembly considers the identification of Rural Area's under Strong Urban Influence (Sec. 2.8.1) as justified, and appropriate to the 4 towns as set out.

## **3. Infrastructure**

With regard to key infrastructure the National Development Plan has identified all of the projects which the NWRA identified as critical enablers for Monaghan, the Central Border Region, and the North West, including North Donegal & Derry , foremost amongst these is the N-2 Ardee to the Border route upgrade and linkage with the A-5, and it is likely that the delivery of this project may be 2028 – 2029 (RF. National development Plan). National Policy Objective 2c, reflects the importance of improving Regional Accessibility to the N&W of Ireland.

The East West Link (Dundalk / Cavan / Sligo) is identified in the 2010 Regional Planning Guidelines (5.2.2.2) as a Strategic Link, and the R178, R179 & R181 (via Carrickmacross) forms part of this route in South County Monaghan. In the medium term the upgrade & improvement of this route is something which the Regional Assembly supports and is recognised as an infrastructure priority for the Central Border Region. It is considered that the overall strategic value of this route, and linkages thereon should be reflected and highlighted in the County Plan.

Brexit: It may be worth considering the inclusion of a specific Objective that facilitates any necessary infrastructure to manage the outcome of Brexit.

Ulster Canal: The NWRA had identified the future restoration of the Ulster Canal in it's submission to the Draft National Planning Framework. The National Development Plan has included the Restoration of the Ulster Canal within the Capital Programme, and the Ulster Canal Greenway brings a Regional significance to the advancement of this project, and will add to the overall amenity offer in the Mid Border Region.

Greenways: The Dept. of Transport, Tourism & Sport are expected to publish the National Greenway Strategy in the coming months, and there may arising from same, be additional opportunity for Monaghan & Cavan County Council's to examine a number of potential route linkages, as part of an overall Regional Network, as demonstrated on the attached Fig.1, this is an approach advocated by the Regional Assembly, and one which is likely to be reflected in the forthcoming RSES.

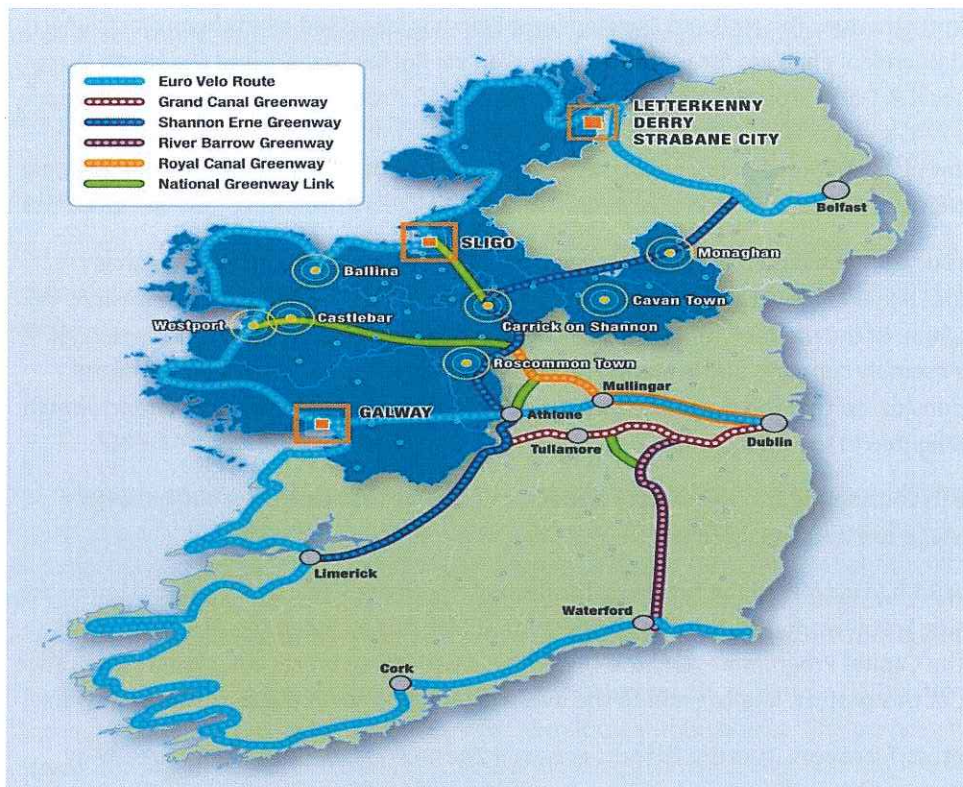


Fig 1: Regional thinking on Greenways & Potential Linkages

#### 4. Economic Development

Employment growth in County Monaghan continues to experience expansion. The 4 main centre's of employment in the County have been profiled in the National Planning Framework (Appendix 2), with Monaghan Town faring best in terms of Ratio of employment to Resident workers, and Clones faring worst.

Monaghan Town: Total Jobs 3,715. Ratio jobs to Resident Workers – 1.158.

Carrickmacross Total Jobs 1,962. Ratio jobs to Resident Workers – 0.945.

Castleblaney: Total Jobs 1,502. Ratio jobs to Resident Workers - 1.111.

Clones: Total Jobs 415. Ratio jobs to Resident Workers - 0.744.

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Theoretically, where a settlement demonstrates a ratio of jobs to resident workers which sits above 1.0, there may be a greater potential to grow these settlements beyond those below such a rate, with a high number of people who are working in these settlements during the day, but not residing there beyond that. Again, as stated at 1, above, the RSES is likely to identify Monaghan Town as a centre for accelerated growth, and this will expedite population & employment growth initially between now and 2026.

Given the key emphasis placed on the vitality of health of Towns & Villages in the National Planning Framework (Compact Growth - National Strategic Outcome No.1) the Draft CDP could provide greater clarity in respect of Sec.4, Policy INDP1, which proposes that whilst there will be a preference for locating large scale industry within Monaghan's major town's there will be exceptional circumstances where prospective development will be accommodated. The INDP1 policy may benefit in a further elaboration on precisely the range of exceptional circumstances, and this would serve to bring certainty to this limiting provision, wherein the circumstances would be defined in advance of any application.

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#### **5. Environment, Renewable Energy & Climate Change:**

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The County Development Plan is a critical part of translating overall national policy on energy, renewable energy (including solar) and wind energy in a manner that supports the achievement of Ireland's international obligations relating to climate change and renewable energy, and taking account of local circumstances. It must address renewable energy related policies or objectives when considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The Plan does not adequately detail policies and objectives as required in Chapter 3 of the Wind Energy Development guidelines, 2006 and taking account of the Guidelines issued by the Minister on 3rd August 2017 (i.e. Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change and Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006 – Update on Review and also Circular Letter PL 5/2017). Furthermore, the Plan may benefit from further elaboration in relation to Monaghan County Council's policy on Solar Energy, and prospective medium to large scale projects in this sector.

In conclusion, the Regional Assembly has to determine whether the Draft Plan is consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines currently in force and in this regard it is considered to be generally consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Area 2010-2022.