

Monaghan County Council
Planning Department
1 Dublin Street
Co. Monaghan

Sent by email to: devplan@monaghancoco.ie

14th February 2022

Re: Dublin Street North Regeneration and Rosky Lands Master Plans

A Chara,

An Taisce welcomes the opportunity to give constructive feedback to Monaghan Municipal District on the proposed variation to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 in relation to Dublin Street North and Rosky Lands. As the lands bound each other, these comments are applicable to both.

An Taisce's Advocacy Unit is dedicated to addressing the climate and biodiversity crises while promoting human health and wellbeing, the creation of sustainable communities and the protection of our rich built heritage. We wish to see a shift to more sustainable modes of transport, particularly walking and cycling, as is crucial for improving human health and wellbeing and reducing our impact on the environment.

While we support, in principle, much of the project vision, objectives and the regeneration plan strategy, including the 10-minute Monaghan Strategy and the Town Centre First Approach, the adequate inclusion of these into the proposed plans unfortunately fails.

The proposed plans foresee an increase of roads. Many of these roads are two-way and give the provision of car parking in nearly all available public open space. The naming of some of these car parking locations as 'Rosky Square,' 'Farney Place' or 'Temporary Event Space' does not hide the fact that they are predominantly car parking locations rather than civic spaces, which are needed for the creation of sustainable town centre communities.

The layouts appear dominated and perhaps dictated by a road network that brings vehicles to car parking locations throughout the masterplan area. This will subsequently discourage sustainable modes of transport, such as walking and cycling, not only by those living and working in the space but also those from elsewhere in the town. The use of 'shared surface' does not mitigate this because the pedestrian is still at the mercy of the vehicle.

The potential connection of some of the roads into the historic streetscape of Glaslough Street is of real concern to An Taisce. The plans allude to this intention, and I would appear to be a consideration, although one which was removed from the issued plans. This is similar to what was proposed as part of the Dublin Street North Proposals with the proposed demolition of 4 buildings within the Architectural Conservation Area of Dublin Street, including the home of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy. Outside the red line boundary of the Rosky Master Plan, the plans

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draw a road connecting 'Infirmity Hill' to the North Road / R135. The Master Plan sets out opportunities to significantly increase vehicle movement in and around the town centre and this area. This will create an internal ring road into an already vehicle dominated town centre.

The proposed plans will see two new access roads from Old Cross Square, the 'Gateway,' to the town from the south. In addition, the existing road, Rooskey Vale, which enters Old Cross Square, will experience an increase in traffic. This makes it less accessible for those wishing to cycle or walk from the south into the town. Of particular concern is the potential of through traffic. The proposed 'new public space with public realm design' will not mitigate this. The Plan does not consider the Ulster Canal Greenway into the town, adjacent schools, or the impact on this important amenity as a result of the increased vehicle movement along Rooskey Vale.

In summary, if these plans were implemented, there would be no modal shift away from private vehicles, no increase in walking and cycling. The latter are critical if we are to address the climate and biodiversity crises. There is insufficient place making in the plans, which is needed for the creation of sustainable urban communities. The plans as currently presented should be reconsidered and revised before adoption as a variation to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025.

Please acknowledge our submission and advise us of any decision made.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Lumley
Head of Advocacy
An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland