



21st October 2025

For the Attention of: Mr Robert Burns, Chief Executive

Monaghan County Council
The Glen
Monaghan
County Monaghan
H18 YT50

**Section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 –
Decision to Issue a Direction to Monaghan County Council regarding the
Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031**

Dear Robert,

I am writing to inform you of the following in relation to the section 31 draft Direction that issued to Monaghan County Council on 4th July 2025, and the subsequent consideration by the Office of the Planning Regulator ('the Office') of your report in connection with the *Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031*, as adopted by the elected members of Monaghan County Council on 26th May 2025.

The draft Direction, as issued in July, can be summarised as follows:

- Part 2(a) – Delete two identified material alterations from the adopted Development Plan, such that the plan is amended in the manner described in each instance.

The Office notified the Minister pursuant to section 31AN(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 ('the Act') on 10th September 2025 and recommended that I, as Minister, issue the Direction.

A copy of the notice letter and proposed final Direction was submitted to me, as Minister, by the Office along with a copy of your Chief Executive's Report on the draft Direction, prepared under section 31(8) of the Act.



Accordingly, having reviewed and considered the Office of the Planning Regulator's notice letter and your August 2025 report on the draft Direction and submissions received, I am of the opinion that the Direction should be issued in line with the recommendations of the Office and your report. In the above regard, I refer you to the Statement of Reasons set out in the enclosed Direction.

In making my decision, with regard to material alteration **MA: Chapter 9, No.2**, I am cognisant from examining the development plan's Land Use Zoning Matrix that the 'Existing Commercial' ('EC') land use zoning objective pertaining to the land in question provides for an extensive range of development types that are either 'Acceptable in Principle' or are 'Open for Consideration'. As such, it is clear that the 'EC' zoning objective makes provision for a range of uses.

More generally and without prejudice to my stated reasons, it is clear that Monaghan County Council has adopted a strategic and evidence-based approach to retail provision in Monaghan Town over recent years and this is evident in the successful manner in which the town centre continues to attract and retain a broad retail offering. I am also aware of the Council's ambitious plans to further enhance the town centre through the utilisation of significant funding provided by my Department through the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, in furtherance of national policy objectives of the National Planning Framework.

In relation to MA: MTDP1 No.15, I recognise the elected members' objective to support the development of enterprise and employment within the town, however it is important that this takes place in a manner that recognises the significant social and economic impacts of flooding on communities, businesses and the environment. In this regard, in making my decision to address the zoning of land that is at known risk of flooding (i.e. within Flood Zone A), I have taken into account the fact that the land in question has not passed the Justification Test specified in The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009), as recognised in NPO 78 of the National Planning Framework and RPO 3.10 of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region. The Direction does not however relate to adjoining lands located outside of the identified flood zone.

In reaching my decision to issue the Direction, I have noted your recommendations as Chief Executive under section 31(9) of the Act. I further note the Office's consideration of, and response to, those matters in its subsequent recommendation to me, as Minister, under section 31AN(4) of the Act.



Accordingly, Monaghan County Council should **TAKE NOTICE** that on 21st October 2025 I have issued a Direction pursuant to section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Pursuant to section 31(17) of the Act this Direction is deemed to have immediate effect and its terms are considered to be incorporated into the plan. A copy of this Direction is enclosed.

In light of the foregoing, Monaghan County Council is required, pursuant to section 31(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to comply with this Direction so as to rectify the matter in a manner that, in my opinion, will ensure that the *Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031* sets out an overall strategy for proper planning and sustainable development and meets the requirements of the Act.

The Council should ensure that the Direction is available for inspection at its offices and on its website. My officials remain available to assist you, as necessary, in complying with the foregoing process.

Yours sincerely,

John Cummins TD
Minister of State for Local Government and Planning

Copied to:

- Cathaoirleach, Monaghan County Council, The Glen, Monaghan, County Monaghan, H18 YT50.
- Director, Northern and Western Regional Assembly, Dillon House, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon, F45 WY26.
- Office of the Planning Regulator, Park House, Grangegorman, 191-193A North Circular Road, Dublin 7, D07 EWW4.