



Comhairle Chontae Liatroma Leitrim County Council

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Cora Droma Rúisc
Contae Liatroma

Áras an Chontae
Carrick on Shannon
Co. Leitrim

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This matter is being dealt with by **Bernard Greene**

(071) 9650455 Direct Line

31 July 2020

Mr. Martin Lydon,
Director of Housing, Digital Transformation, Planning,
Head of Finance and Roscommon Municipal District Area Manager,
Roscommon County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Roscommon,
F42 VR98

RE: Pre draft Submission to Roscommon County Development Plan 2021-2027

Dear Martin,

Leitrim County Council welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the pre-draft consultation phase of the preparation of the Roscommon County Development Plan to cover the period 2021-2028. Leitrim County Council are also at the same stage in the review of our existing County Development Plan 2015-2021 and preparation of our new County Development Plan to cover the period 2022-2028. Leitrim County Council is keen to ensure that a holistic plan led approach is taken to the development of the combined urban centre of Carrick on Shannon / Cortober but also that of Roosky which straddles both of our administrative areas. There are also other areas of mutual concern where a consistent approach by both of our Planning Authorities will provide assurances to both our citizens and Elected Members alike.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly identifies a clear role for Carrick on Shannon, our county town, as a Key Town in the region. The RSES identifies Carrick on Shannon as one of twelve urban places of regional scale for accelerated population growth of at least 30%. This would see the population of Carrick on Shannon grow from 4,066 population to at least 5,300 people by 2040 if this targeted population growth is realized. Cortober is presently identified as a Tier 3 urban centre in the Roscommon Urban Hierarchy with the qualification that the centre will develop in the context of the larger settlement of Carrick-on-Shannon. Tier 3 centres are indicated as having a population more than 500 population with the 2016 Census of Population having recorded a population of 640 people in Cortober.¹

¹ The CSO provided the following dissemination of the 2016 recorded population of Carrick on Shannon to our Planning Authority:

Population of Carrick-on-Shannon Settlement by County		
	Carrick-on-Shannon	% Population
State	4,062	100
Leitrim	3,422	84.24
Roscommon	640	15.76

The Core Strategy and Housing Strategy contained in the Roscommon County Development Plan 2021-2027 should clearly demonstrate the quantum of additional housing units / extent of residentially zoned lands proposed to be provided in Cortober which forms part of the overall urban centre of Carrick on Shannon / Cortober. The extent of additional housing units provided for Cortober should be commensurate with the supporting role of Cortober to Carrick on Shannon noting that only 15.76% of the population of the combined settlement is located within the administrative area of Roscommon County Council. A similar restraint was clearly shown in your existing County Development Plan. It should also be clearly stated that the quantum of housing units / population identified for Cortober is taken from the County Roscommon regional population allocation rather than from Leitrim County Council's modest allocation.

Leitrim County Council would also consider that there is no effective justification for any additional retail development to be delivered in Cortober over the life of the next Development Plan having regard to the existing over supply of such uses / number of vacant units. It is considered that the existing level of provision is disproportionate to the support role of Cortober and mitigates against the orderly development of our County town. Leitrim County Council will seek to ensure that the primacy of the town centre of our county town is protected. Leitrim County Council acknowledges the inclusion of the Special Policy on Retail/Storage/light Industrial Warehousing contained in your existing County Development Plan which includes Cortober. Leitrim County Council would support the retention of an objective seeking to develop and commit to a strategy for alternative uses for vacant retail/distribution warehouse units in Cortober. The current first impression presented by vacant retail units and the Mulvey centre on the Sligo approach to our combined urban centre is less than desirable.

The RSES requires the preparation of a joint Local Area Plan between our respective Local Authorities for Carrick on Shannon / Cortober in order to deliver an integrated framework for the future development of the combined urban area within 3 years of the adoption of the strategy. In line with informal discussions, it would be desirable if both Planning Authorities stated that work would commence on this joint Local Area Plans when our respective County Development Plans are at an advanced stage of completion or within one year of the County Development Plans both taking effect.

Leitrim County Council is committed to the identification of a sustainable transportation solution to the existing congestion experienced in Carrick on Shannon / Cortober in conjunction with Roscommon County Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland. A solution is needed to address transportation issues which include congestion on the main routes approaching and, in the town, including the N4 National Primary Road, unreliable journey times owing to delays and conflict between through and local traffic. In turn these are having an impact on the wider economic and social life of the town, county, and region. It is also considered that there are opportunities to improve public transportation options and enhanced facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. The quality of life for those living and working in Carrick on Shannon / Cortober is negatively impacted upon and accessibility to our Key Town is compromised. The identification of a sustainable transportation solution is a Corporate priority for Leitrim County Council, and we would request that a similar weighting be included in the Roscommon County Development Plan 2021-2027 in this regard. Leitrim County Council would also suggest the inclusion of an objective in the Roscommon County Development Plan seeking to extend the existing level of car parking provision serving the existing Carrick on Shannon train station which is in Cortober.

Roosky is identified in the existing Leitrim County Development Plan settlement hierarchy as a Tier 4 Village, one level below than of the adjoining settlement of Dromod which is identified as a Tier 3 Village. The distinction between a Level 3 and Level 4 village is based on having a population above or below 225 population and is accepted as being arbitrary in nature. It is noted that Roosky is identified in the Roscommon County Development Plan as a Tier 4 large village. Leitrim County Council would support the enhancement of pedestrian and cyclist facilities across Roosky bridge noting the desire of the Elected Members of both Authorities previously in this regard. Leitrim County Council would also support the identification of the former meat factory site within Roosky as a site in need of regeneration / redevelopment and for possible inclusion within your Vacant Site Register if not already included. Roosky, located on the Shannon waterway and Blueway, is strategically located to capitalise on

water-based tourism and transport and Leitrim County Council would support policies and objectives to further develop these roles.

Leitrim County Council have identified the area along the existing N4 corridor from Roosky to Carrick on Shannon as an area of low capacity to accommodate individual one-off housing in our existing County Development Plan. This was reflective of historic pressure along this transportation corridor but also one with considerable scenic value along the Shannon waterway. The National Planning Framework (NPF) distinguishes between pressures for urban generated rural housing in the immediate areas which surround cities and large towns from all other areas. The NPF indicates that it will continue to be necessary to demonstrate a functional economic or social requirement for housing need in areas under urban influence, i.e. the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment. However, the NPF provides for a more flexible approach, primarily based on siting and design, will be applied to rural housing in areas that are not subject to urban development pressure. This will assist in sustaining more fragile rural communities and in overall terms, will need to be related to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements. Arising from this strategic policy direction, Leitrim County Council is likely to give consideration to revise and reduce the extent of the existing area identified as having low capacity for individual houses along the N4 corridor to that within the sphere of influence of Carrick on Shannon and Sligo only along with areas of environmental or scenic sensitivity. It would be beneficial if a similar approach were adopted by Roscommon County Council along our common boundary to include the area close to Roosky, Drumsna and Jamestown in Co. Roscommon.

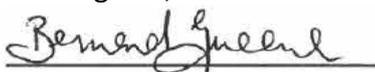
Satisfying the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice for individual wastewater treatment systems continues to present difficulties in most parts of Co. Leitrim owing primarily to the nature / characteristics of the sub soil layers in terms of poor permeability which also extend into parts of north Roscommon and other contiguous counties. Leitrim County Council have and will continue to be proactive at examining innovative solutions to deal with the treatment and disposal of wastewater in an environmentally responsible manner. It would be useful if an acknowledgment to the issues of satisfying the EPA Code of Practice in north Roscommon was contained in your new County Development Plan. Leitrim County Council would support the retention of the statement in Section 4.3.1 'Rural Wastewater Disposal' that Roscommon County Council will undertake further investigation with the EPA in relation to the issue of rural wastewater disposal sites.

Leitrim County Council have reviewed our existing 2002 Landscape Character Assessment, and this will be published as part of our draft County Development Plan in due course. This has revised somewhat the extent and naming of the existing Landscape Character Areas. Leitrim County Council would be happy to make this document available to Roscommon County Council if required as part of your preparation of your County Development Plan.

Finally, it would be considered beneficial to both Planning Authorities if a meeting were held to discuss areas of common interest in advance of a draft County Development Plan being prepared by either Planning Authority.

I wish you every success in the preparation of your new County Development Plan.

Kind regards,



Bernard Greene,
Senior Planner,
Planning Department.