



Roscommon Town Draft Local Area Plan

Forward Planning Section,

Roscommon County Council,

Aras an Chontae,

Roscommon

F42 VR98

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**Re: Draft Roscommon Town Local Area Plan 2024- 2030**

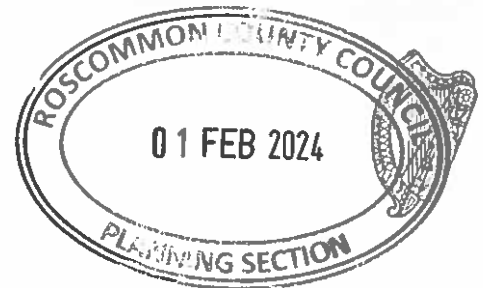
Thank you for your email of 15 December 2023, where you provided notice and shared a Draft Roscommon Town Local Area Plan.

Infrastructure and Transport, and the draft Plan's strategic aim of providing a supportive framework to promote an integrated transport system for Roscommon Town, is covered in Chapter 7 of the draft Plan, with welcome reference made to the aim of achieving a "successful transition from a dependency on private vehicles to more sustainable and environmentally friendly modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport".

As you will be aware, there have been important national policy developments relevant to accessible, integrated and sustainable public transport. The Department of Transport (DoT) considers these should be reflected in the final version of the proposed plan. It is welcome to see sustainable transport referenced within section 7.3 of the draft plan.

Accessibility of public transport for all should also be referenced in the final plan and the below information may be of interest in this regard.

**Accessible public transport for All, and especially for Persons with Disabilities, Reduced mobility and Older People**



- the “whole of Government” **National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022** includes specific actions assigned to local authorities. For example, action 108 relates to the ‘dishing’ of footpaths and action 109 relates to accessible infrastructure, including bus stops. Lack of dishing is often cited as a major concern for wheelchair users. The National Disability Inclusion Strategy came to an end at the end of 2022. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth are working with the Disability Inclusion Strategy Steering Group to commence work on the development of a UNCRPD implementation strategy. The DoT welcomes the text in Sustainable Transport policies (Section RN 28, page 46), ‘recognise the need to ensure all such initiatives incorporate the principles of universal design to ensure inclusion for people with access and mobility requirements’.
- the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** ratified by Ireland in 2018. The UNCRPD puts obligations on State Parties to ensure access for persons with disabilities to, for example, the physical environment and transportation in both urban and rural areas.
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- the **Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response** published in 2020. It includes guidance that designers should ensure that
  - measures align with the principles of universal design,
  - consider Government policy on accessibility for people with disabilities and
  - consult people with disabilities to further appraise measures.
- References in the draft Plan to the 2019 version of DMURS should be replaced with references to the 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response.
- To make public transport fully accessible to people with disabilities requires a **‘whole journey approach’**. This refers to all elements that constitute a journey from the starting point to destination. Local Authorities are a key stakeholder by ensuring a universal design approach to the built environment’. This including footpaths, tactile paving, cycle paths, roads, pedestrian crossing points, town greenways and bus stops/shelters.
- The **Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan (2022-2025)** is a major national public transport initiative with the aim of increasing public transport connectivity, particularly for people living outside the major cities and towns. Over 100 rural villages will benefit from frequent public transport service (at least three return trips daily) for the first time. The



plan will also see a 25% overall increase in rural bus services, and over 60 new connections to regional cities from surrounding areas.

The Department of Transport can assist with appropriate text in the development plan regarding integrated, accessible public transport if desirable.

*Central Policy, Coordination and Reform*

**An Roinn Iompair**

*Department of Transport*

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