

4th April 2022

Senior Planner,
Planning Department,
Roscommon County Council,
Aras an Chontae,
Roscommon.

Re: Adopted Roscommon County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

A chara,

The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) acknowledges the adoption of the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 (the Plan) by the members of Roscommon County Council on the 8th March 2022.

The Office also acknowledges receipt of your letter of 15th March 2022, further to section 31(AM)(6) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended (the Act). The Office has reviewed the adopted Plan in accordance with the legislative requirements set out in section 31(AM) of the Act.

The Office wishes to congratulate the planning authority on the delivery of a well-presented County Development Plan, which provides a clear and concise strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Roscommon over the plan period.

The Office commends the planning authority and the elected members for the adoption of the Plan without the amendments proposed under MA50, MA51, MA172 and MA173. This demonstrates the planning authority's clear commitment to supporting national renewable energy targets under the *Climate Action Plan 2021* and National Policy Objective (NPO) 55 of the *National Planning Framework*.

The Office similarly welcomes the inclusion of figures for renewable energy potential for County Roscommon within the Plan and advises the planning authority to consider a variation of the Plan to update the targets upon completion of the process to identify potential renewable energy sites of scale in collaboration with the Northern and Western

Regional Assembly as per Regional Policy Objective 4.16 of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

Regarding the decision of the members not to comply with MA Recommendation 3 concerning zoning amendment MA117 in Castlerea, the Office accepts the rationale provided by the members for MA117 on the basis of the overall requirement for housing land in the settlement and the removal of the residential zoning from the land the subject of MA103 to ensure consistency with the core strategy of the Plan.

Notwithstanding, the Office remains concerned about the potential adverse impact of adopting the Plan with zoning amendments MA117 and MA120 which may impact on the ability of Castlerea to achieve compact growth and sequential development. In this regard, the Office advises the planning authority to closely monitor development activity in the town over the plan period consistent with policy objectives CS 2.7 and CS 2.19 of the adopted Plan.

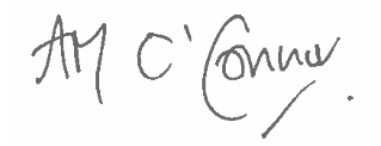
Regarding the decision of the members not to comply fully with MA Recommendation 4 concerning zoning amendments MA160 in Athleague and MA167 in Hodson Bay/Barrymore, the Office accepts the rationale provided by the members for retaining these zoning changes in the adopted Plan.

However, it will be for the planning authority to determine any future planning applications for these settlements in accordance with NPO 3c and NPO 18a, as well as the policies and objectives of the adopted Plan such as CS 2.5 and TV 4.18 which strongly advocate for compact growth and for the regeneration and renewal of towns and villages throughout the County.

Notwithstanding the above, the Office is satisfied with the overall outcome of the adopted Plan and the manner in which the vast majority of its recommendations and observations have been addressed at draft Plan and Material Alterations stages.

In conclusion, the Office welcomes the adoption of the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022 - 2028, and looks forward to continued positive engagement with the planning authority on the preparation of the forthcoming local area plans for the Regional Growth Centre of Athlone and the Key Town of Roscommon.

Is mise le meas,

Handwritten signature of Anne Marie O'Connor in black ink on a light gray background.

Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations
