



11<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Forward/Strategic Planning,  
Economic Development Directorate,  
Limerick City and County Council,  
Merchants Quay,  
Limerick,  
V94 EH90.

### **Re: Revocation of Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2021-2027**

A chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in preparing to revoke the Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2021-2027 (the LAP) pursuant to section 20(3) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended, (the Act).

The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) wishes to acknowledge the work your authority has put in to the preparation of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, which incorporates the area within the boundaries of the Southern Environs LAP against the backdrop of an evolving national and regional planning policy and regulatory context, including the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Southern Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and the establishment of the Office.

As your authority will be aware, a key function of the Office is the assessment of statutory plans and strategies to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning. This includes a requirement to make submissions on statutory plans, including any observations or recommendations the Office considers necessary to ensure the effective co-ordination of national, regional and local planning requirements.

Recommendations issued by the Office relate to clear breaches of the relevant legislative provisions, of the national or regional policy framework and/or of the policy of Government, as set out in the Ministerial guidelines under section 28. As such, the planning authority is required to implement or address recommendation(s) made by the Office in order to ensure consistency with the relevant policy and legislative provisions.

Observations take the form of a request for further information, justification on a particular matter, or clarification regarding particular provisions of a plan on issues that are required to ensure alignment with policy and legislative provisions. The planning authority is requested by the Office to action an observation.

The Office has evaluated and assessed the proposed revocation under the provisions of sections 31AO(1) and 31AO(2) of the Act, and concludes that no recommendations or observations are warranted.

## **1. Rationale for revoking the LAP**

The Office notes that the Southern Environs LAP came into effect on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021 following its adoption by the elected members of the Metropolitan District of Limerick on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Subsequently, the planning authority has prepared and adopted the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028<sup>1</sup> which incorporates the area within the boundaries of the Southern Environs LAP.

The Office is currently in the process of conducting an independent review of the adopted development plan, which contains some significant zoning changes for the Southern Environs area and is due to come into effect on the 29<sup>th</sup> July. The Office will correspond with the local authority separately on this matter.

Given the need to ensure that there is a statutory plan in place for the Southern Environs area at all times, the planning authority is advised to co-ordinate the timing of the revocation of the LAP with the coming into effect of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

The Office acknowledges and welcomes the intent of the planning authority to have one statutory plan which contains its vision and planning framework for the entire Limerick City area.

In this regard, the Office does not have any 'in-principle' objection to the proposed revocation of the Southern Environs LAP.

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<sup>1</sup> Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 was adopted on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022

## 2. Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

The Office notes that the planning authority has undertaken screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) and has determined that SEA and AA are not required for the revoking of the Southern Environs LAP.

### Summary

The Office's evaluation and assessment of the proposed revocation of the Southern Environs LAP concludes that no recommendations or observations are warranted.

The Office looks forward to continued positive engagement with your authority regarding the implementation of the Limerick Development Plan and the preparation of new local area plans for the larger settlements in the county.

Please feel free to contact the staff of the Office if you have any questions regarding the comments above. Contact can be initiated through [plans@opr.ie](mailto:plans@opr.ie).

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**Niall Cussen**

Planning Regulator

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