

9<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Senior Planner,  
Planning Policy Unit,  
Kerry County Council,  
Rathass,  
Tralee,  
Co. Kerry,  
V92 H7BT.

**Re: Adopted Kerry County Development Plan 2022 - 2028**

A chara,

The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) acknowledges the adoption of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 (the Plan) by the members of Kerry County Council on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

The Office also acknowledges receipt of your notice letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022, further to section 31AM(6) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended (the Act).

The Office has reviewed the adopted Plan, and notes the decision of the planning authority not to comply, in whole or in part, with a number of the recommendations included in its submission on the draft Plan and the majority of the recommendations made in its submission at material alterations stage.

Where the recommendations of the Office were not complied with, the Office gave careful consideration to the reasons of elected members and, with the exception of certain specific matters, accepted that these reasons addressed the matters raised by the Office.

However, in relation to recommendations of the Office concerning:

- Recommendation 7 in relation to renewable energy targets and wind energy;
- MA Recommendation 1 in relation to the amendment of policy / objectives on access / intensification of access to national roads; and
- MA Recommendation 2 in relation to the amendment of wind energy policy.

The Office has made a recommendation to the Minister in respect of a proposed draft direction in accordance with the legislative requirements set out in section 31AM of the Act.

The Office's recommendation to the Minister of a proposed draft direction and notice letter pursuant to section 31AM, has been made available on the [Office's website](#), together with this letter.

As you will be aware, the matter will now be determined by the Minister under section 31 of the Act.

With the exception of the specific matters raised in the 31AM(8) notice, the Office welcomes the making of a Plan, which provides a reasonably well-balanced strategy for future population and economic growth throughout the county.

In particular, the Plan provides a positive framework for the development of the County towns, including Tralee, Killarney and Listowel. This has the potential to create strong local economies and provide a more sustainable pattern of development, which responds to the need to address climate change and to protect the high environmental quality of the county.

The vision the Plan shows for these urban areas will improve the quality of life in these towns and support the growth of employment, enterprise, retail and tourism. In particular, the Plan makes strong policy commitments to the regeneration and renewal of towns and villages in the county over the plan period in a manner that is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

In this regard, the Office commends the planning authority for the work carried out to enable it include concrete regeneration initiatives and site-specific projects which support compact growth, place-making and quality environments. The Office would encourage the planning authority to make the implementation of these initiatives a key focus over the lifetime of the Plan.

The Office fully acknowledges the scale of work carried out by the planning authority in preparing its rural housing policy approach, informed by a rational, evidence-based approach to determining the Rural Area Types consistent with the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines* (2005).

Regarding sustainable transport, the Office welcomes the inclusion of appropriate sustainable transport policies, which promote sustainable modes of transport and the 10-minute town concepts. The effective implementation of such policy approaches will become increasingly important in addressing climate change in the coming years.

In the absence of zoning objectives for Regional Towns and other smaller settlements, the Office would remind the planning authority of the importance of ensuring the zoning of settlements in future Local Area Plans (LAPs) are also consistent with the achievement of National Strategic Objective 1 (NSO 1) Compact Growth and with objectives for sustainable settlement and transport strategies.

With the exception of the specific issues detailed in the section 31AM(8) notice, the Office is generally satisfied with the manner in which its recommendations and observations have been addressed during the Plan preparation process.

In conclusion, the Office generally welcomes the adoption of the Kerry County Development Plan, and looks forward to continued positive engagement with the planning authority into the future.

Is mise le meas,

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**Anne Marie O'Connor**

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations

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