

OPR Ref: DP-011-23

16th March 2023

Development Planning Unit, Sligo County Council, Quay Street, Sligo, F91 PP44.

Re: Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023, as varied.

A chara,

The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) is writing in response to a notice issued by Sligo County Council pursuant to Section 11D (subsection (3)(a)) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended (the Act).

The notice above informed the Office of your authority's proposal to extend the duration of the existing Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 to enable additional time for the preparation of the next county development plan.

In the interests of clarity, the Office notes your confirmation by email that the proposal to extend is not a variation of the Development Plan under section 13 of the Act.

The Office has evaluated and assessed the proposed extension under the provisions of sections 31AM of the Act and this submission has been prepared accordingly.

In particular, section 31AM(1)(aa) of the Act has been updated to include the following;

a notice given under section 11(D)(3) by a planning authority to the Office for the purposes of that section of the intention of the planning authority to extend the duration of its existing development plan.

Section 11D of the Act provides extra time for planning authorities to conduct reviews of their development plans taking account of disruptions experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic and, accordingly, an extension may be required to the period of an existing

development plan to ensure that it continues to have effect until the new development plan takes effect.

Our consideration of your authority's request has focused on the information you have provided under section 11D and the requirement that the Office evaluates and assesses plans under sections 31AM(1) and 31AO(1) of the Act, at least at a strategic level.

The Office notes that the Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023 was adopted by the elected members of Sligo County Council on 31st July 2017 and is effective from 28th August 2017.

It is now proposed to extend the period of the existing plan to July 2024 in order to make additional time available to review the existing plan and to ensure it remains in effect until such time as the new Sligo County Development Plan is effective.

Sligo County Council commenced the review of the existing development plan on 30th July 2021, with the intention to prepare a new Sligo County Development Plan for the period 2023-2029. A public consultation on the Issues Paper took place up to 24th September 2021. The chief executive's report on the pre-draft consultation was submitted to elected members on 22nd December 2021.

The following documents have been provided by Sligo County Council for assessment and evaluation by the Office:

- 1. Notice of intention;
- 2. Copy of notice published in newspaper circulating in the area;
- 3. Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report;
- 4. Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination;
- 5. Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report;
- 6. Strategic Environmental Assessment Determination; and
- 7. Indicative timeframe for the preparation of the new County Development Plan.

Arising from the foregoing, the Office notes that Sligo County Council agreed to initiate the process to extend the period for review of its development plan having regard to operational disruption created by the pandemic. In accordance with section 9A(5) of the Act, your

authority has notified the Office of its decision and provided a revised indicative programme for the making of the new development plan.

While it is a matter for your authority to ensure compliance with the procedural requirements in extending the duration of a development plan provided under section 11D of the Act, the Office notes the information provided for this stage of public consultation and supports the proposal to extend the duration of the Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023, as varied.

Is mise le meas,

Anne Marie O'Connor

AM C'Conna.

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations