

9<sup>th</sup> September 2025

The Forward Planning Unit,  
Planning Department,  
1 Dublin Street,  
Monaghan Town,  
H18 X982.

**Re: Proposed Variation No. 1 to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031**

A chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in preparing the Proposed Variation No. 1 (proposed Variation) to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 (County Development Plan).

As Monaghan County Council (Planning Authority) is aware, a key function of the Office of the Planning Regulator (Office) is the assessment of statutory plans to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning. The Office has evaluated and assessed the proposed Variation under the provisions of sections 31AM(1) and 31AM(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (Act) and this submission has been prepared accordingly.

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, planning authorities are requested 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. Planning authorities are advised by the Office to action an observation.

A submission also can include advice on matters that the Office considers would contribute positively to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Planning authorities are requested by the Office to give full consideration to the advice contained in a submission.

On adoption of the proposed Variation, the Office will consider whether the plan has been made in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the Office and whether the plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and development of the area concerned.

## Overview

The Office notes that the proposed Variation to the County Development Plan relates to the rezoning of c. 2.515ha from Strategic Residential Reserve to Industry, Enterprise and Employment at Annahagh, Monaghan Town. The proposed Variation lands are located in close proximity to existing Industry, Enterprise and Employment zoned lands.

Given Monaghan's Key Town status within the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, the Office is satisfied that the proposed Variation will contribute to economic and employment growth in the town, consistent with Strategic Objective MTSO 2 of the County Development Plan for 'the development of the Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands at Annahagh and Tullyherim'.

The Office is also satisfied that the proposed Variation aligns with the core strategy of the County Development Plan.

While the Office welcomes the inclusion of an Explanatory Brief as part of the proposed Variation, it does not set out access arrangements for the proposed Variation lands in the short term nor does it refer to the preparation of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Monaghan Town or any sustainable transport measures relating to the subject lands. This is the basis for the recommendation set out below.

The submission below has been prepared to provide a strategic level input to your authority in finalising the proposed Variation. It is within the above context that the submission sets out one (1) recommendation under the following key theme:

Key theme	Recommendation	Observation
<a href="#">Co-ordination of land use and infrastructure</a>	<a href="#">Recommendation 1</a>	-

## Co-ordination of land use and infrastructure

While the Office welcomes the inclusion of an Explanatory Brief as part of the proposed Variation, it does not set out access arrangements for the proposed Variation lands in the short term nor does it refer to the preparation of the LTP for Monaghan Town or any sustainable transport measures relating to the subject lands.

The Office understands that a LTP is being prepared for Monaghan Town, which should be reflected in the strategic approach to the development of the subject lands, together with the wider land bank. This will maximise the opportunities for the integration of land use and transport planning as set out in the RSES.

In particular, this should ensure that interim and longer-term access arrangements are identified together with any other transport measures required to facilitate sustainable transport measures in the short, medium and long term as the wider land bank is developed.

### Recommendation 1 - To facilitate the integration of infrastructure and land use

Having regard to the need for the co-ordination of land use, and the required infrastructure to service the lands and in particular to:

- NPO 19 of the NPF which requires local authorities to identify locations for strategic employment development in urban areas;
- RPO 6.27 of the RSES which supports the collaborative preparation of a Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Monaghan town, the RPO sets out that the LTP will inform development plans;
- RPO 6.28 of the RSES which sets out that policies, objectives and measures which emerge from the LTP shall be incorporated into development plans;
- Strategic Objective MTSO 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 (County Development Plan) which includes a provision to prioritise the development of the Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands at Annahagh and Tullyherim within the lifetime of the County Development Plan and a provision for the preparation and implementation of a LTP for Monaghan town;

- Transport Policy TP 2 of the County Development Plan relating to the preparation of a LTP for Monaghan Town during the first 3 years of the County Development Plan; and
- Objective MTO 9 of the County Development Plan relating to the preparation of a LTP for Monaghan Town by 2025 and Objective MTO 10 to vary the County Development Plan to incorporate the objectives and measures of the LTP when finalised,

the Office recommends that the Planning Authority:

- (i) identifies access proposals to the subject lands in the short term; and
- (ii) includes an objective to require that the transport measures identified in the LTP (once finalised), and specifically the sustainable transport measures, are applied to the future development of the proposed Variation lands.

## Summary


The Office requests that your authority addresses the recommendation outlined above. As you are aware, the report of the Chief Executive of your authority prepared for the elected members under section 13 of the Act must summarise this recommendation and the manner in which it will be addressed.

Please note that at the end of the process, your authority is required to notify this Office within **five working days** of the decision of the Planning Authority in relation to the proposed Variation. Where your authority decides not to comply with the recommendation of the Office or otherwise makes the plan in such a manner as to be inconsistent with the recommendation made by this Office, then the Chief Executive shall inform the Office and give reasons for this decision.

Please feel free to contact the staff of the Office in the context of your authority's responses to the above, which we would be happy to facilitate. Contact can be initiated through [plans@opr.ie](mailto:plans@opr.ie).

Is mise le meas,

---

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'AM O'Connor'.

**Anne Marie O'Connor**

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluation

Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015

---