

**PLANNING  
&  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTORATE**

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## PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES SEIRBHÍDÍ PLEANÁLA AGUS FORBHARTHA EACNAMAÍOCHTA

### INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Planning & Economic Development Services is to ensure that development is planned in accordance with the principles of sustainability, provides for economic and social progress, promotes the efficient use of resources and protects the environment. The service also aims to achieve a balance between the need to encourage sustainable development whilst at the same time preserving and enhancing the quality of our countryside, towns and villages, historic buildings and wildlife areas.

The Planning & Economic Development Service has developed a more strategic focus in the context of the adoption of the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines.

Members agreed in the 2007 Budget to increase resources and this has enabled the Planning Service to:-

- Increase the level of service provided which will be improved further in 2008 as the remaining vacant planning post(s) are filled.
- Provide additional dedicated resources to each electoral area during the year to deal with planning enforcement. The backlog of cases is being dealt with and staff are working their way systematically through these and also dealing with new cases.
- Work up, through the Planning & Economic Development Strategic Policy Committee, a new approach to preparation of Electoral Area/Local Area Plans to overcome the difficulty of preparing detailed individual local area plans which must be reviewed every four years. This approach will enable the Council to fast track forward planning in the urban generated areas specified in the County Development Plan.

The focus in 2008 and beyond under Urban and Village Regeneration will be a greater emphasis on renewal of obsolete areas, opening up of backlands, removal of dereliction, development of sport & recreation and community facilities. This will require a refocusing of investment in targeted areas. A report will be brought to Members early in 2008 for approval.

**PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**  
**SEIRBHÍSÍ PLEANÁLA AGUS FORBHARTHA EACNAMAÍOCHTA**

**Draft Budgeted Expenditure: €6,238,800**

**Draft Budgeted Income: €2,937,000**

The following pages set out the above for all the relevant Programme Groups.

**Draft Budgeted Expenditure: €5,679,300**

**Draft Budgeted Income: €2,638,000**

**(Pages 11 - 13 of Blue Pages)**

### **THE CENTRAL PLANNING UNIT**

During 2007 the Central Planning Unit have been engaged in an ambitious programme of planning policy development. At particular stages of each Plan there is a period of public consultation. During 2007 the public have responded in a very positive way to the consultation events and the increase in submissions received has been reflected in the workload and the length and content of the Manager's Reports.

#### **1. THE COUNTY DONEGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN - REVIEW**

The County Donegal Development Plan 2006 - 2012 was adopted by the County Council in July 2006 with a commitment to Review a number of policies within 1 year. This process was initiated in early 2007 and the outcome following this intensive Review process is that the basis of a potential Variation of the County Development Plan has been prepared and will be progressed through its various statutory stages into 2008. This process will involve a full public consultation package and subsequent Managers report to Members.

#### **2. BUNCRANA & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

In April 2006 the Review process of the Bunrana Development Plan 2002 commenced. Members of the Bunrana Town Council and the County Council agreed to prepare on a joint basis the Bunrana & Environs Development Plan. Work progressed on the Plan with the publication of Draft Plan in the Spring of 2007. A Managers Report consequent upon the submissions/representations received was approved by the Town & County Councils and the Material Alterations were put on public display at the end of the year. The final Development Plan for Bunrana & Environs will be adopted by the respective Councils prior to the 2 years statutory deadline in the Spring of 2008. For the first time a Development Plan has been subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process introduced by the Directive 2001/42EC and subsequent Regulations SI 1435/6. The SEA process is integrated and runs parallel to the production of the Plan and an Environmental Report introduced at Draft Plan stage has introduced innovative biodiversity policies for the first time in the County.

### **3. THE LETTERKENNY & ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Letterkenny & Environs Development Plan 2003 - 2009 was originally adopted in September 2003 and under the Planning & Development Act 2000 - 2006, the statutory review process was initiated on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2007. So far there has been a series of public events including meetings with prescribed bodies, a 'business breakfast' for the commercial community and a public drop in event for the general public. An issues report was also published and in response to the observations/representations received a Managers Report will be presented to both the Town Council and the County Councils. Also during the year Variations of the 2003 Development Plan were prepared at Ballyraine and Scribbly/Leck. Work will progress on this very important project throughout 2008 with the Publication of a Draft Plan in the early Summer and a Managers Report on the submissions received later in 2008. A mandatory Strategic Environmental Assessment is being carried out as part of the Development Plan process and detail Flooding and Transportation Studies will inform the policies emerging in the Development Plan.

### **4. NEWTOWNCUNNINGHAM, LIFFORD AND PETTIGO LOCAL AREA PLANS**

These 3 Local Area Plans prepared under the Border Village Local Area Programme and funded by the Peace 2 process have progressed through their various stages to adoption in the latter stages of 2007 and bring to an end a very successful programme of plan making which has contributed in a very significant way to Cross Border peace and reconciliation.

### **5. KILLYBEGS LOCAL AREA PLAN**

This important Local Area Plan in the South of the County has progressed rapidly throughout 2007, with the publication of the Draft Plan by the Council in the Summer. The subsequent Managers Report was recently considered by the Council and Material Alterations will be published prior to the end of the year. The Local Area Plan should move to full adoption on the Spring of 2008.

### **6. BALLYSHANNON & ENVIRONS LOCAL AREA PLAN**

With the engagement of Planning Consultants, the National Building Agency in the Summer, work has commenced on this significant Local Area Plan in a town in need of rejuvenation and regeneration. A series of public events were held in the summer and a Draft Plan is currently in the course of preparation and will be published in the Spring 2008.

## **7. BALLYBOFEY/STRANORLAR LOCAL AREA PLAN**

The Ballybofey/Stranorlar Local Area Plan adopted originally by the County Council in 2005 proved to be in need of Review during 2007 due to the progression of the bypass, changes to Habitat Designations, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in the Finn Valley and the need for more flexible policies to address a number of development problems. The amendment also included updates to the Masterplan for Drumboe and the Town Centre. As a result a comprehensive Amendment to the Local Area Plan has been prepared by the County Council and will progress through its various statutory stages to be adopted in the early Summer of 2008.

## **8. PREPARATION OF LOCAL AREA PLANS FOR THE PARISHES OF GLENCOLMCILLE AND KILCAR**

Work will commence in 2008 on the preparation of this Local Area Plan in the New Year in conjunction with the local communities and working in partnership with An Roinn Gnothai, Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta and Údarás Na Gaeltachta. The Local Area Plan will be taken through its various statutory stages by the Local Area Planning Team, during 2008 with the anticipated adoption of the Plan in the following year.

## **9. PREPARATION OF LOCAL AREA PLAN FOR DUNGLOE**

The Review of the Dungloe Town Plan by the Local Area Planning Team will progress through its various statutory stages towards a Working Draft stage to be considered by Elected Members in early 2008.

## **10. BUNDORAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Bundoran Development Plan was adopted by the Bundoran Town Council in 2004 and is due for Review before the end of May 2008. This time however the Review progress is likely to take in a more extensive area and the project will become the Bundoran & Environs Development Plan, prepared jointly by the Town and County Councils.

## **11. ELECTORAL AREA APPROACH TO LOCAL AREA PLANNING**

Donegal has 97 settlements with control points and in theory a local area plan could be prepared for each one. A local area plan approach for each settlement is not however sustainable especially when the statutory timeframe for the County Development Plan and Town Plans and staff resources are considered. A review of our approach has been undertaken and consideration is being given to preparing Electoral Area Plans/ Local area Plans for a number of areas in the County commencing in 2008.

Firm proposals will be brought forward early in 2008, to deal with the priority centres which require attention, having regard to the policies set out in the County Development Plan, the National Spatial Strategy, the Regional Planning Guidelines and local circumstances. Discussions are also continuing with Údarás na Gaeltachta and An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta regarding the preparation of Local Area Plan(s) for the Gaeltacht areas.

## **12. CONSERVATION GRANT AID 2008**

We have continued our programme of raising awareness in the importance of our built heritage through a number of initiatives, as outlined below:

### **TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS ON THE ISLANDS IN COUNTY DONEGAL**

The Council intends to pursue a work program concentrating on the built fabric of the islands with Údarás Na Gaeltachta. This work will involve working closely with local communities and producing a full dimensional photographic survey of the built heritage on the Islands.

### **CONSERVATION GRANT AID 2007**

In 2007 the Council administered €137,000 of monies allocated through the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government to sixteen restoration projects throughout the County.

### **ADDITIONS TO THE RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES**

The Record of Protected Structures is constantly under Review whereby buildings worthy of retention are added to the record on an ongoing basis. There has been a constant demand from the general public throughout the County over the last 3 years, requesting that particular properties be added to the Record of Protected Structures. A program to address a number of additions has been developed and this has resulted in 30 draft additions to the Record of Protected Structures. **The Council will continue the addition of further Structures onto the Record of Protected Structures as a priority in 2008.**

## **CONSERVATION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The Conservation Officer will continue to provide specialist service in providing information on the conservation of historic built fabric in the County. In particular providing advice to:

- Owner/occupiers of properties on the Record of Protected Structures and the issuing of statutory Declarations if required.
- Owner/occupiers of historic properties.
- Planners and engineers on the conservation aspects of planning applications.

This service attempts not only to raise awareness of the value of our historic built fabric but also alleviate fears, which many individuals may have with regards to the legislation and the impact this same legislation may have on future development. The premise of the Council is to encourage the sustainable development of historic buildings, allowing these same building to work for their owners/occupiers while still respecting the quality of materials and craft employed in previous generations.

## **ARDNAGAPPERY LOCAL AREA PLAN**

It is proposed to advance the work in this case by employing an Architect to assist planning staff in the preparation of the Plan. The area involved is sensitive and contains a number of environmental designation which must be fully considered. There is however considerable potential to develop the area, create jobs and enhance the amenity value of the landscape. The first stage, which will get underway early in the New Year is local consultation which will be facilitated by the employment of the Architect. The Council is working closely with Udaras na Gaeltachta in this case.

## **TOWN RENEWAL TAX INCENTIVE SCHEME**

The Draft Budget provision for 2008 is €10,000. The Town Renewal Scheme, which was introduced in 2000, designated 210 sites within 5 towns for tax relief incentives if same were developed in accordance with the site-specific criteria for each site. Incentives were offered on sites either to be refurbished or new built for commercial or residential development, or a combination of both.

The five towns which were designated for tax relief were Ardara, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Ballyshannon, Moville and Ramelton. The Council's role in the Tax Incentive Scheme is to issue preliminary certification in respect of developments which would comply with the site-specific criteria, prior to commencement of the development. Once development has been completed, it is the role of the Council to furnish a letter of Final Certification, if the development has complied with the site-specific criteria.

The following table illustrates an update of the Scheme as at the time of writing:

Town	No. of Final Certificates Issued
Ardara	4
Ballybofey/Stranorlar	6
Ballyshannon	5
Moville	6
Ramelton	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>

The closing date to avail of the Scheme was the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004, in that applicants must have had a planning application lodged prior to this date or in the case of exempted development, 15% of the costs of the project incurred before the closing date.

For applicants who have complied with the above criteria, the deadline date for the completion of this scheme of 31st July 2006 was subsequently extended as follows:

- Full relief will be available for qualifying expenditure up to end-December 2006;
- 75% of the normal relief will apply for qualifying expenditure in the period January 2007 to end-December 2007 (subject to meeting all other conditions inc. 15% of qualifying costs by end-December 2006);
- 50% of the normal relief will apply for qualifying expenditure in the period January to end-July 2008 (subject to meeting all other conditions inc. 15% of qualifying costs by end-December 2006).
- No relief under the schemes will apply for expenditure after end July 2008.

To avail of the extension, additional conditions of the Scheme had been introduced as follows:

### **Residential Developments**

Applicants of Residential Developments were required to provide certified (by a Quantity Surveyor, Architect, etc) proof of 15% pre-December 2006 expenditure to the Revenue Commissioners. This expenditure does not need to be certified by the local authority.

### **Commercial / Industrial Developments**

- Applicants of Commercial / Industrial Developments are required to provide certified (by a Quantity Surveyor, Architect, etc) proof of 15% pre-December 2006 expenditure to the Revenue Commissioners. This expenditure also needs to be certified by the local authority. Applicants were, therefore, required to submit a completed application form requesting certification of the occurrence of 15% Value of Works to Donegal County Council on or before 31 January 2007.

Local authorities were also required to certify, where appropriate, all applications relating to commercial / industrial developments no later than 30 March 2007 for all the following Schemes:

- Registered Holiday Cottages
- Holiday Camps
- Hotels
- Rural Renewal
- Town Renewal
- Urban Renewal

The normal procedures apply to the issuing of Preliminary and Final Certificates of Consistency of Works from the Local Authority Planners.

### **IRISH CENTRAL BORDER AREA NETWORK (ICBAN)**

The Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) was formed in 1995 and consists of the 10 member authorities of Armagh, Cavan, Cookstown, Donegal, Dungannon, Fermanagh, Leitrim, Monaghan, Omagh and Sligo.

ICBAN was established to provide a collective body which would seek to improve the economic and social development of the region through a cohesive and co-ordinated approach in the provision of infrastructure, transportation, environment, civic and community services.

In 2004, an application for funding under Interreg IIIA, Seaside Towns, Improving the Image of Traditional Resorts was approved by ICBAN. Funding of €240,000 was granted for the following works:

<b>Town</b>	<b>Nature of Works</b>	<b>Funding Allocated</b>
<b>Donegal Town</b>	Environmental Improvement works on the quay area.	€82,500.00
<b>Bundoran</b>	Further phase of Promenade.	€82,500.00
<b>Buncrana</b>	Development of a number of walkways from Swan Park to Stragill.	€75,000.00
<b>Total</b>		€240,000.00

This funding was granted on the condition that the Council would provide 25% match funding, bringing the total investment in the above projects to €320,000. The works on the Promenade in Bundoran and the development of the walkways from Swan Park to Stragill have now been completed. Works have commenced to re-develop The Quay, Donegal Town and will continue in 2008.

A marketing committee has been established, consisting of officials from the member authorities which have benefited from this funding, to develop a strategy to market these locations, through online advertising and the development of a website [www.discoverseasidetowns.ie](http://www.discoverseasidetowns.ie). A provision of €30,000 has been included in the Draft Budget to co-fund the secretariat and other interregional activities including NASC.

## **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

The principal tasks of the Development Management Section relate to the determination of planning applications, the enforcement of planning control and the delivery of planning advice including through formal pre-planning meetings.

While some electoral areas (e.g. Milford) showed a drop in applications over 2006, other areas (such as Glenties) remain broadly in line with the levels seen in recent years. Most areas are exhibiting a downturn since the summer months which may reflect the national picture of slower development activity. However, by the end of October there were 6361 applications submitted which suggests a projected total of 7633 for the year. This is less than our busiest year to date (2006) but still higher than 2005. Between the applications and other activities referred to above, there remains considerable pressure on planning staff, particularly in the light of the more stringent reporting and analysis recording which good practice entails.

## **LEGISLATION AND VALIDATION**

During 2007 two major changes in the planning legislation were brought into effect. The first relates to the 2006 Planning & Development Regulations which were proposed to commence on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007 and introduced significant amendments to the process of making a planning application. New planning application forms were introduced and amendments were thus required to all the advisory documentation including notes to applicants on completing the forms. Planning officials also prepared detailed guidance on the major changes (such as the obligation to provide a site suitability assessment for proposed developments which do not connect to a public sewer) and made this guidance available through the Council web-site. Workshops were organised to help inform planning agents of the changes and these were attended with over 160 individuals participating at two centrally located venues.

In late March it was announced that while the new regulations would indeed be introduced on 31<sup>st</sup> March, applications valid under the old system would continue to be accepted until 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007. This effectively resulted in a dual system operating for some months and increased the workloads for staff who had to validate files against two different sets of rules and provide double the paperwork to advise agents/applicants why an application did or did not meet one or other (or both) set(s) of regulations.

Despite the extensive efforts of planning staff to engage with and communicate to agents on the new regulations, levels of invalids in some areas remain unacceptably high. Given the prescriptive nature of the legislation and the extensive guidance available, it is disappointing that more significant improvements have not been achieved. Dealing with invalid files results in significant levels of unnecessary work for technical and administrative staff and diverts resources from provision of a quality planning service to deal with properly made development proposals within the system. Since it also means delays for the applicant/developer, it would appear to be in everyone's interest to reduce the level of invalid applications being submitted. By the end of October 2007 the average levels of invalid applications was 18% but this masks consistently higher level in some areas (34% on average in Letterkenny, 27% in Glenties and 28% in Inishowen).

As part of our engagement with agents, planning has also written to the 75% of agents who have had the most activity in terms of planning applications, advising them of their performance on both invalids and further information requests to facilitate their own review of the firm's performance. Through a parallel process of agents reviewing their work and planning staff engaging in training to improve consistency and quality in the internal processing, we are continuing to seek a more streamlined process with less errors and ideally less invalids. **If improvements are not forthcoming in the first quarter of 2008 more radical intervention may be required.**

The second major piece of legislation relates to the Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006 which became effective on various dates in 2007. This provides for the determination of applications by An Bord Pleanala rather than the Local Authority where the development is to provide specified infrastructure and it is strategic in nature. The legislation also allows for pre-planning discussions with the Board and requires, in certain circumstances pre-consultation on aspects such as content of any Environmental Impact Statement. A scale of fees for application has been set and from 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007 the fee for a Local Authority development approval and Compulsory Purchase Order applications to An Bord Pleanala will be set at €100,000 and observer fees on strategic infrastructure development applications, appeals and referrals at €50.00. Anyone with a legal interest in the land objecting to a Compulsory Purchase Order on that land does not have to pay a fee.

## UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT

The personnel that deal with the assessment of planning proposals also undertake the control of unauthorised development at Electoral Area level. Resources were made available in the 2007 Budget for additional personnel to reduce pressure on staff and to provide a more effective and speedy pursuit of breaches of planning regulations. The consequential assignment of an Assistant Staff Officer and Executive Planner to support each electoral area was finalised in late spring this year, which has assisted in the redistribution of work and increased activity regarding the enforcement of planning law.

There are almost 900 alleged unauthorised development cases unresolved dating from 2000 to 2006 (both years inclusive) and a further 570 alleged cases received by 30<sup>th</sup> October this year. This is a significant increase in complaints that have to be rigorously investigated in order to provide sufficient evidence to support a decision to take enforcement action or otherwise. The figures set out in the following table provides evidence that activity has increased in respect to complaints received this year and in addition to this, 39 historical cases (pre 2006) have been resolved/closed whilst in the case of a further 150 of the historical cases activity has been ongoing. It is important to underscore that these statistics do not demonstrate the effort and time inputted in order to resolve individual cases through negotiation or court action.

TABLE 1 - ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY - 2007 (31/10/2007)

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007 (31/10/07)</b>
Cases	407	570
Warning Letters Issued	205	252
Submission Rec'd (following issue of W.L.)	152	171
Regularised retention permission granted	10	15
Enforcement Notices issued	21	17
Injunction Threatened	-	3
Injunction Sought	10	7
Injunction obtained	-	3
Cases Closed	19	90

It is recognised that it is inequitable to allow individuals to carry out developments without permission and it undermines the planning process if the conditions of permission are not complied with. However, it is necessary to ensure that the Council's response to alleged unauthorised development is measured, appropriate and reflects the significance of the breach in the planning law. The planning authority shall prioritise its resources and use Section 160 injunctions and emergency enforcement notices in appropriate cases that are considered to be serious breaches (e.g. Significant adverse impact on the environment or built heritage). In cases where the impact is less significant and where permission may be considered it is proposed to initially attempt to resolve or halt unauthorised development activity by agreement. However, if the breach is not resolved or halted by agreement enforcement notices or injunctions may be deemed necessary. It shall be necessary to continuously assess and review the effectiveness and efficiency of seeking resolution initially through negotiation rather than the courts and members shall be updated regularly of progress.

I wish to send out a clear message that unauthorised development is unacceptable and will be rigorously pursued in 2008. I will be reviewing all cases with the Council's legal advisor in the first quarter of 2008 with a view to ensuring that relevant cases are dealt with as speedily as possible through the courts and that council's costs and expenses are recovered in full.

## **BREAKDOWN OF DECISIONS**

The table below shows the breakdown of decisions on planning applications between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 & 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

Category	Number of applications determined	Applications determined Within 8 weeks (Further Info not requested)	Ext of time agreed	Applications where F.I. was requested	Applications Granted	Applications Refused	Applications appealed	Appeal Decision Upheld	Appeal Over turned
<b>Housing Development</b>	339	144 (80%)	35 (20%)	161 (47%)	253 (75%)	86 (25%)	29 (8.5%)	15 (52%)	14 (48%)
<b>Individual Houses</b>	2843	1400 (92%)	126 (8%)	1319 (46%)	2120 (75%)	723 (25%)	66 (2%)	43 (65%)	23 (35%)
<b>Other - Not requiring EIA</b>	2084	1647 (98%)	38 (2%)	403 (19%)	1912 (92%)	172 (8%)	26 (1%)	17 (65%)	9 (35%)
<b>Other - requiring EIA</b>	44	28 (93%)	2 (7%)	14 (32%)	37 (84%)	7 (16%)	7 (16%)	2 (29%)	5 (71%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5310</b>	<b>3219 (94%)</b>	<b>201 (6%)</b>	<b>1897 (36%)</b>	<b>4322 (81%)</b>	<b>988 (26%)</b>	<b>128 (2%)</b>	<b>77 (60%)</b>	<b>51 (40%)</b>

There is a significant reduction in both the number of housing developments approved and the number of individuals houses, over the previous year. Two main factors impact on the drop in total number of "housing developments". Firstly, the change in planning policy under the County Development Plan 2006 - 2012 means that - "rural service centres" no longer feature as a policy basis for multiple housing (up to 5) in rural areas. The elimination of this category will have resulted in a drop in the number of housing development schemes. Secondly, the process of establishing the infrastructural requirements and identification of timeframes and means of overcoming deficiencies has impacted on the number of decisions which could practicably be made under Policy UB1 within the county generally and particularly within the urban generated areas. A meeting will be arranged before the end of January between relevant staff in Planning & WEE Services and the members of the Letterkenny & Inishowen Electoral areas to discuss and agree the way forward in these areas.

It is envisaged that the numbers of decided housing schemes will ultimately increase as workable solutions to infrastructural deficiencies are identified in individual settlements.

The number of single house decisions shows a decrease on 2006 and may be related to the significant upsurge of applications experienced in 2006 prior to the adoption of the new plan.

While the numbers of house(ing) decisions is down the total decisions in other categories remains similar to or higher than last year. The "other" category includes commercial, retail, extensions and agricultural decisions and is higher than 2006. 98% of such decisions were arrived at within 8 weeks. Of the 2084 decisions in this category only 26 were appealed and in only 9 cases was the decision overturned. (35% of appeals and only 0.4% of decisions).

Appeals on the single house category show a similar rate of success (35% of appeals 0.8% of decisions) while in the case of housing developments 48% of those cases appealed were overturned (a total of 14 cases). The Planning Section has commenced an analysis of the decisions by An Bord Pleanala with a view to addressing emerging issues. Already it is evident that there is concern at Board level about potential pollution of water, prematurity of development in advance of infrastructure provision and some disparity between the Board's definition of the rural area and those contained in the County Development Plan objectives. The ongoing work on the Development Plan review and associated variation text should address this.

## **IMPROVEMENTS**

The Planning Office has recently issued a survey to agents and architects operating in Co. Donegal to seek views on the Design Guidance which forms part of the County Development Plan. It is proposed to research the views in the profession and follow up the analysis with a workshop to discuss any potential improvements which can be agreed. Any changes will be effected through due process of variation which will allow for the widest possible consultation and informed decision on changes by the elected members.

During 2007 all Planning Offices made available a second phone access slot each week specifically to accommodate agents. The uptake of this availability has been limited and efforts will be redoubled to publicise this facility to agents to allow them better to progress their clients' applications and discuss solutions to any emerging problems.

This accommodation for agents is over and above the weekly phone slot for members of the public and is a commitment by the Planning Service of Donegal County Council to meet the needs of those engaging with us.

It is important that Members are afforded the opportunity to engage with planning staff in a structured and timely manner to enable them to fulfil their representational functions. Subject to maintaining present staffing levels I envisage that the service will improve further to Members and the public. With regard to site meetings, they can be useful in resolving some cases however they are, by their very nature, very time consuming. I will be happy to explore with Members and Staff an agreed approach in 2008.

### **Section 140 Motions under the Local Government Act 2001**

Under S.140 of the Local Government Act 2001 the elected members of a local authority may, by resolution, direct that any particular Act, matter or thing be done or effected. I set out overleaf details of the S.140 planning motions considered by the Council in 2007.

### **Summary**

The Draft Budget for 2008 makes provision of €5,677,800 for the Planning Service as outlined in detail in previous pages and in Programme Group 4 which is an increase of €526,200 over 2007.

**SECTION 140 PLANNING MOTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL IN 2007**

<b>E.A</b>	<b>Ref No</b>	<b>Dev Description</b>	<b>Refusal Reasons</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Glenties	06/31637	Erection of dwelling & Septic tank	Development visually intrusive and not reflective of established pattern of development and is therefore not compliant with Policy RH2	Motion withdrawn	Application withdrawn
Letterkenny	06/40987	Erection of dwelling house with sewerage treatment system and detached garage	Urban Generated Rural Housing, Contravenes standards for location, siting & Design. Absence of Vision Lines/ public water supply	Motion withdrawn	Permission refused
Donegal	07/20150	Erection of dwelling & Septic tank	Development accessing onto NPR	Motion withdrawn	See below
Letterkenny	07/40146	Single storey building consisting of 2 warehouses, septic tank & associated site works	Invalid Motion	N/A	N/a
Milford	07/50316	Erection of dwelling & Septic tank	Development situated on lands between roads and sea and would interfere with preservation of Views and Prospects of special amenity – Policy BHN 5 Landscape conservation. Also Policy RH” which requires applicant to comply with best practice in relation to siting location and design,	Motion withdrawn	Application withdrawn
Letterkenny	07/40146	Single storey building consisting of 2 warehouses, septic tank & associated site works	Development site is within visual zone of Conwall Ecclesiastical site and Archaeological complex and a number of recorded monuments	Motion Defeated	Application withdrawn
Donegal	07/20834	Erection of dwelling, garage & Septic tank	Development is suburban in nature & contravenes Policy RH2 which requires compliance with best practice in relation to Location, siting & Design,	Motion withdrawn	Permission Granted
Donegal	07/20150	Erection of dwelling & Septic tank	Development accessing onto NPR	Motion passed	Permission Granted
Donegal	07/20850	Erection of storey and a half dwelling, garage, sewerage treatment plant and polishing filter	Development visually obtrusive and contrary to Policy RH2 and Appendix E - Location, siting and design guide. Public Health	Motion Passed	Permission Granted

### Programme Group 5

## ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COSAINN NA TIMPEALLACHTA

Draft Budgeted Expenditure: €10,000

Draft Budgeted Income: € Nil

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### Tree Planting

The Draft Budget for 2008 includes a provision of €10,000 expenditure for Tree Planting.

### Programme Group 6

## RECREATION & AMENITY CAITHEAMH AIMSIRE AGUS TAITNEAMHACHT

Draft Budgeted Expenditure: €549,500

Draft Budgeted Income: €299,000

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### Casual Trading

The Draft Budget for 2008 includes a provision of €39,500 expenditure under this heading.

**MISCELLANEOUS  
ÉAGSÚIL**

Expenditure of €696,300 on Loan Charges for the Provision of an Economic Development Fund is included in the Finance Directorate.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND**

The Donegal Employment Initiative Task Force was established on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 1998 by Ms. Mary Harney, T.D., then Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment in response to significant job losses in Donegal.

Among the wide variety of activities undertaken to help the Development Agencies in selling Donegal locations to prospective inward investors was the creation by way of a loan of a IR £5 million (€6,348,690.00) Economic Development Fund by the Elected Members of Donegal County Council.

The type of Projects supported by the Fund to date includes:

- Provision of Premises and Land for the relocation and expansion of businesses which in turn has resulted in a significant increase in employment levels in the County.
- Purchase of land banks in strategic locations within the County to attract inward investment.
- Investment in lands for community, sporting and recreational facilities.
- Investment in the installation of fibre optic networks which will be used as a tool to attract further internationally traded services to the County.

Examples of projects supported by the Economic Development Fund (EDF) to date are set out in the table on the next Page:

Land / Premises / Other	Details
Donegal Town	The Donegal Town PSC and Fire Station have been built on this land. In addition DCC has disposed of 8.74 acres. Monies received used to replenish the EDF.
Lifford Common	Local Area Plan for Lifford had been published in 2007 and included a Masterplan for the Lifford Common lands. The Council is currently disposing of a portion of lands at Lifford Common.
Letterkenny - McGovern / McDonnell	Lands purchased for the development of community, sporting and recreational facilities which will underpin the development of Letterkenny as a Gateway. Expenditure to be recouped from disposal of assets.
Stranorlar - Brogan's land	Lands purchased to be developed for community, sporting and recreational purposes. Fund partially replenished by disposal of land in town.
Premises at Bree, Malin	DCC purchased a factory at Bree, Malin from Fruit of the Loom for in 1999. A call centre business was established there by Forward Emphasis in 2000. In Nov 04' the Members of DCC agreed to dispose of the premises to FE. Sale completed and Fund replenished in 2007.
Unit 6 Lisfannon, Bunrana	Premises purchased by DCC in Bunrana then leased to Seatem (Donegal) Ltd who established a call centre. DCC also agreed to the provision of a refurbishment grant. In Nov 04 the Members of DCC agreed to dispose of the premises to Seatem. Sale completed and Fund replenished in 2007.
Broadband Technology	<p>The EDF provided funding of €440,000.00 towards the development of the Letterkenny Fibre Optic Network. It will also be used to fund the Council's contribution towards the Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) Programme (Phase 2) which will be circa €1.3m. Phase 2 involves the construction of 6 Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN's) in the following towns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bundoran</li> <li>• Ballyshannon</li> <li>• Donegal Town</li> <li>• Ballybofey / Stranorlar</li> <li>• Bunrana</li> <li>• Carndonagh</li> </ul> <p>The EDF is also supporting the Community Network Services Project, which is managed by ERNACT to provide a high-speed County-wide accessible wireless broadband service, particularly targeting the rural areas of the Irish Northwest cross-border area in order to support the future economic and social development of the respective communities.</p>
North West Air Access Consortium	On the 10 <sup>th</sup> April 2006, Members agreed to provide a contribution to the City of Derry Airport/North West Air Access Consortium in respect of the marketing activities to be undertaken to promote access to the North West.

The Members of Donegal County Council have clearly demonstrated their commitment to finding ways to respond to significant job losses in Donegal by first of all establishing the Fund and then supporting it each year by the provision of Loan Charges of €696,300 as part of the Council's Annual Budget. The impact of the Fund is evident and it is envisaged that the Fund will continue to play a role in attracting and supporting long-term investments in the County.

### **Economic Development/Flagship Projects**

In addition to various Environmental Improvement Schemes, the Economic Development Section is currently progressing a number of Economic Development Flagship Projects:

#### **1. Barrack Hill, Carndonagh.**

- Donegal County Council owns circa 28 acres of land at Barrack Hill, Carndonagh. This land is to be developed for a variety of purposes including: enterprise, community, educational, housing and amenity (playground and town park).
- Part VIII for Phase I of the Barrack Hill development was adopted by the Council at the end of March 2007. The Part VIII provided for the upgrade of the junction at Ballyloskey Road and access to the Barrack Hill Lands. Construction is due to commence in 2008.
- Part VIII to develop an access road and roundabout to the Barrack Hill lands from the Carrowreagh Road was adopted at the September 2007 Council meeting.
- Part VIII for the Town Park i.e. widening and improvement works to the existing Barrack Hill Lane / Sacred Heart Church access road and provision of a small public car park with attached children's playground was approved subject to modifications at the adjourned Council meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007. C & E Directorate are managing the development of this Phase.
- At present the three Groups being considered for site disposal by way of lease as part of the first Phase of development are:
  1. Inishowen Parents & Friends of the Mentally Handicapped.
  2. Naiscoil Dhomhnach Og.
  3. Carndonagh Community & Rural Development Co. Ltd.
- Section 183 Notices regarding the disposal of these sites by way of leases (40 year) will be prepared for consideration by the Members at the Council Meeting upon finalisation of project proposals.

- Funding sources identified for the Project to date are as follows:

(i)	DCS 2006:	€350,000
(ii)	DCS 2007:	€350,000
(iii)	Peace II:	<u>€ 66,500</u>
		€766,500

## 2. Stranorlar Masterplan

- The exchange of land with the Mart has been finalised.
- Design of the link road through the site is currently being finalised.
- Negotiations are concluding with regard to land required for the Finn Harps Stadium.
- The council has approved the development of an all weather pitch in this area.
- Design of a Plaza area to include the location of an Enterprise Centre/ Community space is currently being drafted.
- Funding sources identified for the Project to date are as follows:
 

(i)	DCS 2006:	€100,000
(ii)	DCS 2007:	<u>€350,000</u>
		€450,000

## 3. Lifford Common

- Local Area Plan for Lifford was published in 2007 and includes a Masterplan for the Lifford Common Lands.
- Council is currently proceeding to dispose of a portion of lands at Lifford Common.
- Funding sources identified for the Project to date are as follows:
 

(i)	DCS 2006:	€100,000
(ii)	DCS 2007:	<u>€200,000</u>
		€300,000

#### 4. **Dungloe Foreshore**

- Part VIII approval was given at the May 2007 Council Meeting for Phase I of the Regeneration Project and provides for the development of a car park, widening of access to the car park, installation of footpaths, a casual trading area and new access road connecting Car park through Co-Op property to Quay Road which will form a new streetscape. Project now moving to preparation of Construction Tender Documentation.
- Part VIII application is being developed to provide for additional car parking, the continuation of the car park access road to the Maghery Road, the provision of a promenade/river walkway, a pedestrian footbridge attached to the existing bridge on Main Street over the Dungloe River, landscaping & street furniture and an improved footbridge accessing the new playground.
- Funding sources identified for the Project to date are as follows:

(i) DCS 2006:	€100,000
(ii) DCS 2007:	€350,000
(iii) Site Disposal:	<u>€200,000</u>
	€650,000

#### 5. **Glencrow, Merville**

- Council owned lands of circa 5.7 acres is currently (part thereof) being sold to an existing local business for expansion of manufacturing facility and remaining land bank will continue to be sold to businesses wanting to locate in Merville.

## **CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

### **Development Charges/Development Contribution Scheme**

#### **Introduction**

Under the Planning Acts, the Council can impose conditions on planning permissions granted to contribute to the cost of infrastructure, which has benefited or will benefit the development. The monies collected from the development charges levied are re-invested in the services for which the charge was imposed.

At present, the Council is effectively operating with three development charges/contribution schemes as follows:

1. Pre 8th March 2004 - charges levied under the Local Government (Planning & Development) Act 1963 - Schedule of Charges included in the County Development Plan 2000.
2. Development Contribution Scheme (08/03/04 - 28/02/06) - charges levied under Section 48 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 - scheme setting out levels of contributions effective from 08/03/04 - 28/02/06.
3. Development Contribution Scheme (01/03/06 - to date) - charges levied under Section 48 of the Planning & Development Act 2000.

The current position with regard to development charges/ development contributions is examined in the sections set out below as follows:

1. Pre 8<sup>th</sup> March 2004 Development Charges.
2. Development Contribution Schemes (08/03/04 - to date).
3. Development Contributions transferred to services.
4. Collection of Development Contributions - (08/03/04 - to date).
5. Reporting requirements as per Circular letter Finance 20/2005.
6. Summary Conclusions

#### **1. Pre 8<sup>th</sup> March 2004 Development Charges**

In 2007 to date (at 21/11/2007) €1.5 m Pre 8<sup>th</sup> March 2004 development charges have been collected. This includes amount of €627,051.55 which is tied up in payment agreements and all outstanding charges are being actively followed up.

The majority of development levies being collected at present and in the future have been imposed under the new development contribution schemes, (commenced March 2004).

## 2. Development Contribution Scheme (08/03/04 - 21/11/07)

Table 1 - DCS General Levies Raised

<b>Actual General Charges Raised</b>	<b>€19,731,961.48</b>
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Table 2 - DCS General Levies Raised by Electoral Area

<b>ELECTORAL AREA</b>	<b>GENERAL CHARGES</b>
Inishowen	€4,858,494.79
Donegal	€3,255,045.01
Glenties	€3,659,514.71
Letterkenny	€2,723,862.15
Milford	€3,546,783.37
Stranorlar	€1,688,261.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>€19,731,961.48</b>

Table 3 - DCS General Levies Raised by Type

<b>LEVY TYPE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
DCS - Water	€6,769,423.29
DCS - Sewer	€2,383,729.85
DCS - Roads	€3,737,680.86
DCS - Village/Urban Renewal	€2,917,991.36
DCS - Economic, Community & Culture	€1,306,535.00
DCS - Roads & Marine	€2,616,601.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>€19,731,961.48</b>

Table 4 - DCS Specific Levies Raised

<b>Actual Specific Charges Raised</b>	<b>€5,813,924.15</b>
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**Table 5 - DCS Specific Levies Raised by Electoral Area**

<b>ELECTORAL AREA</b>	<b>SPECIFIC CHARGES</b>
Inishowen	€1,875,069.13
Donegal	€966,488.75
Glenties	€561,921.78
Letterkenny	€947,376.61
Milford	€433,996.40
Stranorlar	€1,029,071.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>€5,813,924.15</b>

**Table 6 - DCS Specific Levies Raised by Type**

<b>LEVY TYPE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
DCS - SLI	€708,454.86
DCS - Car Parking	€391,127.31
DCS - Footpath/Lighting	€449,145.44
DCS - Road Drainage	€35,250.00
DCS - GWSS	€144,119.31
DCS - Long Leads	€25,134.00
DCS - Roads Specific	€1,115,801.34
DCS - Water Specific	€2,944,891.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>€5,813,924.15</b>

**Table 7 - DCS General and Specific Charges (Summary)**

<b>ELECTORAL AREA</b>	<b>GENERAL CHARGES</b>	<b>SPECIFIC CHARGES</b>	<b>TOTAL CHARGES</b>
Inishowen	€4,858,494.79	€1,875,069.13	€6,733,563.92
Donegal	€3,255,045.01	€966,488.75	€4,221,533.76
Glenties	€3,659,514.71	€561,921.78	€4,221,436.49
Letterkenny	€2,723,862.15	€947,376.61	€3,671,238.76
Milford	€3,546,783.37	€433,996.40	€3,980,779.77
Stranorlar	€1,688,261.45	€1,029,071.48	€2,717,332.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>€19,731,961.48</b>	<b>€5,813,924.15</b>	<b>€25,545,885.63</b>

### 3. Development Contributions Transferred to Services

Directorate	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Roads	-	€435,809.92	€1,041,933.32	€2,150,000.00	€3,627,743.24
WEE	-	€4,832,633.78	€3,236,985.08	€2,280,593.63	€10,350,212.49
C&E	-	-	€28,349.32	€62,384.22	€90,733.54
P&ED	-	-		€2,552,107.50	€2,552,107.50
Totals	-	€5,268,443.70	€4,307,267.72	€7,045,085.35	€16,620,796.77

### 4. Collection of Development Contributions

Actual General Charges Raised	€19,731,961.48
Actual Specific Charges Raised	€5,813,924.15
Total Actual Charges Raised	€25,545,885.63
Less Payments Received	€15,114,488.77
Charges Outstanding	€10,431,396.86 *

**Table 8 - Charges Outstanding by Electoral Area**

ELECTORAL AREA	AMOUNT
Inishowen	€2720,563.55
Donegal	€1,885,459.80
Glenties	€1,775,036.55
Letterkenny	€961,446.84
Milford	€1,707,585.60
Stranorlar	€1,381,304.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>€10,431,396.86</b>

1. \* For charges outstanding - **€6,100,101.28** is covered by **226 current payment plans**. See overleaf for breakdown by Electoral Area.
2. An estimated figure of 20% (**€2,086,279.37**) for write-offs (**works in lieu**) will reduce the amount, which the Council can actually collect.
3. An estimated figure of at least 5% (**€521,569.84**) for bad debts should be factored in which will further reduce the amount, which the Council can actually collect.

As a result of 1-3 above it can be stated that effectively **€1,723,446.37** is actively being followed up for collection by staff in the Development Contributions collection section.

**Table 9 - DCS Payment Plan by Electoral Area**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>LEVIED</b>	<b>PAID</b>	<b>TOTAL O/S</b>	<b>NO.</b>
Milford	€1,340,970.58	€497,205.05	€843,765.53	47
Glenties	€1,569,687.24	€325,285.52	€1,244,401.72	43
Letterkenny	€1,332,540.93	€553,124.92	€779,416.01	25
Inishowen	€2,535,009.56	€1,063,215.48	€1,471,794.08	55
Donegal	€1,543,799.50	€371,366.51	€1,172,432.99	35
Stranorlar	€961,749.04	€373,458.09	€588,290.95	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€9,283,756.85</b>	<b>€3,183,655.57</b>	<b>€6,100,101.28</b>	<b>226</b>

**5. Reporting Requirement as per the Circular Letter Finance 20/2005**

In accordance with Circular letter Fin 20/2007 dated 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007 I set out the following information:

1. Estimate of development contributions to be collected in 2008 is **€14,453,200**
2. The total balance of development contribution income on hand have been transferred to the Services.
3. An indicative figure for current commitments is approximately €32m.

**6. Summary Conclusion**

The receipts from Development Contributions greatly enhance the Council's ability to advance and fund capital projects, such as the water and sewerage schemes in the County. Also in 2008 footpaths, transportation infrastructure and low cost safety measures will be carried out in the Roads and Transportation Directorate from contributions collected. The Development Contribution Scheme will also provide funding for a number of playgrounds around the county and will also help fund village and urban enhancement and regeneration projects.

There are four full-time staff members in the Development Charges unit dedicated to the collection of development contributions and all the related activities this entails. The collection of levies is constantly kept under review and every effort is made to collect all charges outstanding.

### **Urban & Village Renewal Programme 2000-2006**

The Planning & Economic Development Service continue to progress the Urban & Village Renewal Programme 2000-2006 as approved by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Due to the long lead in time for these projects, taking into consideration the public consultation process, approval of the Council Members and tendering process, the scheme extended to 2007.

The aim of the scheme was to carry out environmental improvement schemes and enhancement works in the many towns and villages throughout the county, through the provision of the following works:

- Undergrounding of overhead cables,
- Provision of street furniture and decorative lighting,
- Provision of new footpaths incorporating drop kerbs,
- Landscaping works.

A major source of funding for the works carried out in the Urban Centres has been derived from an annual allocation received under the Urban and Village Renewal Measure of the Regional Operational Programme, 2000-2006. The allocation from this Programme in 2007 is circa €398,029. In addition to this allocation, the Council will also invest its own resources and approach other funding bodies such as An Roinn Gnothai Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta, Udaras na Gaeltachta, the Peace II Programme, IFI and the Donegal Strabane HEART Initiative, etc for support also.

The following table gives details of the projects currently being progressed under the scheme:

Urban Centre	Progress on scheme (November 2007)
<b>Moville Phase II</b> (Main Street)	<p><b>Scheme:</b> This second phase of Environmental Improvement Works at Moville provides for the continuation of Phase I works including the undergrounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, re-surfacing of carriageway, and general improvements to parking areas.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Works commenced in September 2005 and were completed in August 2006.</p>
<b>Burtonport</b> (Main Street)	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Upgrading works includes the provision of footpaths, retaining wall, gates, etc.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Works commenced in September 2005 and were completed in August 2006.</p>
<b>Ballybofey/</b> <b>Stranorlar</b> <b>Phase III</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Phase III works provided for the continuation of two previous phases of works in Ballybofey and provided for the undergrounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, stone walling, erection of decorative railing, re-surfacing of carriageway, provision of designated parking areas &amp; landscaping.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Works commenced in October 2004 and were completed in June 2006.</p>
<b>Rathmullan</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works providing for the upgrading of the Shorefront at Rathmullan including demolition of the Potato Store, under grounding of services, provision of new water main and storm drainage, new kerbs, stone walls and paved footpaths, car park promenade and seating area, re-surfacing and re-alignment of roadway leading to the Shore Front, decorative street lights, street furniture, provision of picnic area and area for public playground and landscaping works.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Works commenced in November 2005 and were completed in June 2007.</p>

Urban Centre	Progress on scheme (November 2007)
Ballyshannon (Fairgreen)	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works providing for the upgrade of the Fairgreen inc. the under grounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, stone walling, erection of decorative railing, provision of paving, provision of designated parking areas &amp; landscaping.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Works commenced in August 2006 and were completed in May 2007.</p>
Ballyshannon (Mall Park)	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement works provided for the upgrade of Mall Park including the undergrounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, provision of paving, provision of designated parking areas, playground &amp; landscaping.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Works commenced in April 2007 and were completed in November 2007.</p>
Ardara Phase I & II	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Phase I works provided for site development works including laying of fill material, provision of access road and construction of retaining walls. Phase II provided for off-street car parking, footpaths, a childcare building, picnic area, landscaping, provision of decorative lighting and construction of riverside walkway.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Works commenced in October 2005 and were completed in October 2007.</p>
Kilcar Phase I & II	<p><b>Scheme:</b> This initial phase of works along the Main Street provided for the undergrounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, re-surfacing of carriageway, and provision of designated parking areas and was completed in June 2006. Phase II works will involve the continuation of Phase I works and may include the upgrade of footpaths, undergrounding of cables and erection of decorative lighting.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Design Stage</p>
Killybegs (Street Improvements)	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works to inc. the under grounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, provision of paving, provision of designated parking areas &amp; landscaping.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Project to be retendered and works to commence in 2008.</p>

Urban Centre	Progress on scheme (November 2007)
<b>Magheraroarty</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works at The Pier area including new kerbing and footpaths, upgrading of existing access roads and parking facilities including traffic management, provision of new street lighting and decorative street furniture.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Design Stage - Funding being sought from Gaeltacht Strategic Road Allocation.</p>
<b>Bunbeg/Derrybeg</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works on the area between the two villages will be carried out on a phased basis and will provide for the provision of storm drainage, footpaths, removal of ramps, provision of proper traffic calming measures, fencing with foundations laid for stone walls, modification or repair of stone walls, fencing, railings, stone pillars, etc.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Phase I Works completed in May 2007.</p>
<b>Milford EIS</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works including the under grounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, provision of paving, provision of designated parking areas &amp; landscaping.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Public Consultation Meetings and Part VIII completed. Car parking facilities required to accommodate EIS works. Land purchase negotiations currently being finalized. Commencement of project in 2008.</p>
<b>Castlefin</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works may include the under grounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, provision of paved footpaths, etc.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Design Stage - Funding to be secured before advancement.</p>
<b>Raphoe</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works may include the under grounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, provision of paved footpaths, etc.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Design Stage - Funding to be secured before advancement.</p>
<b>Convoy</b>	<p><b>Scheme:</b> Environmental Improvement Works may include the under grounding of services, provision of decorative street lighting, street furniture, provision of paved footpaths, etc.</p> <p><b>Project Status:</b> Design Stage - Funding to be secured before advancement.</p>

### **Village Renewal Works**

During 2006, the Council made an application to Peace II for funding to carry out smaller scale village enhancement works and were successfully awarded €228,000 for the following towns:

<b>Electoral Area</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Funding allocated</b>
Inishowen	Clonmany	€38,000
Donegal	Killybegs	€38,000
Milford	Rathmullan	€38,000
Glenties	Creeslough	€38,000
Letterkenny	Lifford	€38,000
Stranorlar	Convoy / Castlefinn	€19,000/€19,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>€228,000.00</b>

These works are being completed during 2007 and 2008.

### **An Roinn Gnothai Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta**

Each year the County Council and An Roinn Gnothai Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta agree a programme of works to carry out village enhancement works in the Gaeltachta. In 2006, a funding programme was submitted to An Roinn Gnothai Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta, and subsequently resubmitted in 2007, for an amount of €457,100 (to be co-funded by the Council). The programme was approved in May 2007 for the period 2006-2008.

### **Conclusion**

I wish to acknowledge the co-operation and support of the elected members and I look forward to working with you in 2008.

F Coyle  
Director of Services  
Planning & Economic Development