

Screening Report of Proposed Draft Letterkenny Plan & Local Transport Plan, 2022-2028 to determine if a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is Required

In accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (As Amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (As Amended)



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

**Community Development & Planning Services
29th June, 2022**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This document comprises the Screening of the Draft Letterkenny Plan and Local Transport Plan, 2022-2028 to determine if a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required in accordance with the requirements of Article 14B of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (As Amended) [‘the Regulations’].

1.2 The Draft Letterkenny Plan & Local Transport Plan 2022-2028.

The Draft Letterkenny Plan and Local Transport Plan 2022 – 2028 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Sections 18-20 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (‘the Act’). The Plan is comprised of two sections. Section A contains the plans and policies of a land use plan, whilst a Local Transport Plan is contained in Section B. Together, these two sections constitute the Written Statement of the Plan. The Plan also contains a Zoning Map and other maps. The Draft Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Letterkenny in the context of the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area (the RSES) and the Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024 (As Varied) (the CDP). The Plan has been drafted having regard to Ministerial Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Act, and having regard to the potential need for regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) in accordance with EU requirements.

The Draft Plan will replace Chapter 12, Part C of the CDP, which currently contains the detailed planning policy framework for the town of Letterkenny. It is intended that the said section of the CDP will be deleted by way of a Variation to the CDP, which Variation, it is anticipated, shall be made by Donegal County Council at the same time as the adoption of the new Letterkenny Plan.

2 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

2.1 Screening Assessment

The existing population of the Letterkenny Plan is significantly in excess of 5,000 persons. Article 14B(a) of the Regulations clearly provides that in such circumstances the preparation of an environmental report is mandatory:

'Where –

- (a) the population or the target population of the area of a local area plan is 5,000 persons or more, or*
- (b) the area covered by the local area plan is greater than 50 square kilometres, or*
- (c) the local area plan is being prepared for a town and its environ area, or*
- (d) where the planning authority determines under article 14A(3) or (5) that the implementation of a local area plan, an amended plan or an amendment to a local area plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment,*

the planning authority shall prior to giving notice under section 20(3) of the Act, prepare an environmental report of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the local area plan and the provisions of articles 14C to 14J shall apply.'

This obligation on the Authority to prepare an environmental report as it proceeds with the Letterkenny Plan and Local Transport Plan is reflected in the recommendation in Section 3 below.

3 Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the assessment set out in Section 2 above, and the identification therein that the preparation of an environmental report for the Proposed Draft Local Area Plan and Local Transport Plan for Letterkenny is mandatory on the basis that the population of the town is 5,000 persons or more, it is recommended that such an environmental report is prepared, and that a 'Determination' setting out the mandatory requirement to prepare an environmental report is prepared.

Next Steps

As soon as practicable make a copy of the 'Determination' and associated documents available for public inspection at the offices of the Donegal County Council during office hours and on the website of Donegal County Council.

Undertake a scoping exercise pursuant to 14C of the Regulations.

Signed:



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29th June 2022

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29th June 2022