



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

## **Assistant Planner**

# **Information for Candidates**

**November, 2024**

## **1. The Position**

The Council is seeking applications from suitably qualified candidates with relevant experience for the position of Assistant Planner.

It is proposed to form a panel of qualified candidates from which vacancies both permanent and temporary will be filled during the lifetime of the panel.

## **2. Role, Duties & Responsibilities**

The Assistant Planner will be responsible for implementing programmes of work in the Planning Department and for providing multiplicity of planning and related services.

The duties to be assigned may include the following, although this list is not exhaustive and may be reviewed from time to time as organisational needs require:

- Conducting site visits & preparing recommendations on assigned planning applications including applications made directly to An Bord Pleanála where a local authority report is requested.
- Preparing responses to pre-planning requests & holding pre planning meetings.
- Preparing responses to planning appeals, attendance and input at oral hearings as necessary.
- Carrying out site visits and preparing recommendations in relation to planning enforcement and derelict sites, including attendance at court cases and the giving of evidence.
- Preparation of reports on the taking in charge of residential developments.
- Preparing responses for submissions on compliance with planning conditions.
- Advising on and preparation of recommendations on 'Section 5' exempted development declaration applications and other declarations as directed.
- Giving planning advice on the preparation and processing of "Part 8" Local Authority development applications.
- Responding to planning queries, completions of returns etc. from other Council departments and national and regional Government / statutory agencies, external bodies as directed.
- Carrying out survey work, research, analysis, drafting policies and proposals, preparing written statements and maps and other work as required on the agreed Forward Planning work programme, including but not limited to,

plans, other planning strategies and studies, urban and rural renewal strategies / plans, urban design / public realm strategies.

- Input into the preparation of, management and administration of environmental assessments of planning applications and plans / programmes as required.
- Assistance in organising and facilitating public consultation and participation including attendance at meetings and other public forums, making presentations and recording and responding to queries.
- Dealing professionally and courteously with queries from members of the public and their agents.
- Providing a high level of service to public representatives, including attendance at and presentations to the relevant Strategic Policy Committee and at meetings of the Council, including at Municipal District level.
- Maintaining and proactively developing a culture of Health and Safety in the workplace
- Engaging in Continuing Professional Development/Training.
- Incorporating the use of IT and efficiencies into work practices.
- Preparation for and attendance at Council and staff meetings.
- Acting or deputising for senior personnel in their absence when required
- Undertaking any other duties of a similar level and responsibility, as may be required, or assigned, from time to time.

### **3. Qualifications**

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has declared that the qualifications for the position of an Assistant Planner shall be as set out below:

#### **(a) Character**

Candidates shall be of good character.

#### **(b) Health**

Candidates shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

Successful candidates will be required to undergo a medical examination carried out by the Council's Occupational Health Doctor prior to appointment.

**(c) Education, Experience etc.**

- (i) Candidates shall hold a qualification in Planning (at least Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications);
- (ii) have at least two years' satisfactory relevant experience of planning work;
- (iii) possess a high standard of technical training and expertise;

**(d) Desirable Skills and Experience**

The ideal candidate will be a highly motivated person, with a strong sense of commitment to delivering quality public services and shall demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of:

- Local authority services, its key stakeholders and relationships
- Local government structures and its democratic role and mandate
- Current local government issues, future trends and strategic direction of the sector, particularly in relation to planning policy and practice
- Key policies guiding the local government sector
- National, Regional and Local planning issues
- Fostering and maintaining wide ranging productive working relationship both internally and externally to the organisation
- Implementing change
- Public service values

The ideal candidate should also have a good technical knowledge base and experience of planning policy and practices to include the following:

- Planning legislation & procedures across the areas of forward planning, development management and enforcement in particular
- Current and future planning issues facing Co. Donegal and its wider region
- Administration, report writing and putting across a well researched and reasoned recommendation
- Awareness of and Management of Health, Safety and Welfare in the workplace

- Operating ICT systems, in particular word processing, presentation and GIS systems
- Prioritising of work effectively
- Acting on own initiative
- Dealing effectively with conflicting demands
- Working under pressure to tight deadlines

#### **4. Particulars of the Post**

##### **(a) General**

Donegal County Council proposes to create a panel of qualified candidates for the position of *Assistant Planner* from which it will fill any permanent or temporary vacancy that may arise.

##### **(b) Probation**

Successful candidates shall be required to be on probation for an initial period, as determined by the Council.

##### **(c) Remuneration**

The current annual salary-scale is €45,802 minimum to max LSI2 €71,185 (as per Circular EL 03/2024).

Holders of the post will be paid at the appropriate point on the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Department Circular.

New entrants will commence on the minimum point of the scale.

##### **(d) Base**

The base for the post of Assistant Planner shall be determined by the Council and will depend on the particular area and service to which the post holder is assigned.

The role of the Assistant Planner will involve some travel, with some involving overnight stays and associated costs covered by the appropriate allowances.

##### **(e) Residence**

Holders of the post shall reside in the district in which their duties are to be performed or within a reasonable distance thereof.

##### **(f) Working Hours / Annual Leave**

The normal hours of work will be 37 hours per week. The Council reserves the right to alter the hours of work from time to time. Due to the nature of the work,

attendance will be required outside of normal working hours, including evenings and at weekends.

Annual leave allowance will be in accordance with Circular LG(P) 07/2011.

### **(g) Requirement to Drive**

Candidates shall be required:

- a. to possess a full current category B Driving Licence.
- b. to have their own vehicle available for use while performing their duties and the associated costs will be covered by the appropriate allowances.

### **(h) Conflicts of Interest**

The post holder shall not engage in any gainful occupation, other than as an employee of a local authority, to such an extent as to impair the performance of his or her duties as an employee of a local authority or in any occupation which might conflict with the interests of the local authority or which might be inconsistent with the discharge of his duties as a local authority employee.

## **5. Recruitment Process**

### **A. Application Form**

- Applications must be made on the official application form and all sections of the form must be fully completed.
- **Please do not submit a CV with your application.** Only information contained in the application form will be considered when assessing a candidate's suitability for the post.
- Applications must be submitted as an e mail attachment in either Word or PDF format only **by email only** to [vacancies@donegalcoco.ie](mailto:vacancies@donegalcoco.ie)
- Applications must be received by the deadline specified on the form.
- Applications that are late, lost or delayed will not be considered unless official evidence showing that the application was sent within the timeframe can be produced.

### **B. Short Listing**

Candidates may be short-listed for interview on the basis of information supplied. In the event of a short-listing exercise being required, an Expert Panel will convene to examine and assess the application forms against a set of pre-determined

criteria, based on the requirements of the job. It is therefore in your own interest to provide a detailed and accurate account of your qualifications and experience on the application form.

Where it is considered, by reason of the number and standard of applications received, that it would be reasonable not to admit all candidates to the interview, only persons likely to attain at the interview a standard sufficient for selection and recommendation for appointment shall be called for interview.

### **C. Right to Information and Review - #AP 001**

The Council is committed to offering feedback and information to candidates. Any candidate who wishes to do so may request to have a decision or the process reviewed. Any such request must be submitted in writing, stating the grounds of the request and this must be submitted to the Human Resources Department, Three Rivers Centre, Lifford, Co. Donegal within five working days of the date of notification of a relevant decision quoting the above reference number.

### **D. Confidentiality**

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence.

### **E. Other**

Appointments to the Council are subject to satisfactory checks with regard to references, qualifications, medical examinations, and Garda Vetting, as applicable.

### **F. Canvassing Will Disqualify**

Any attempt by a candidate (or by any persons acting on their behalf) to canvass or otherwise influence any officer of the Council (or persons nominated by it to interview or examine applicants) in the candidate's favour, either directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise, will automatically disqualify the applicant for consideration for the position.

### **G. General Data Protection Regulation**

Donegal County Council is committed to protecting your personal data and we comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Acts, 1988 – 2018, and the General Data Protection Regulation.

- Basis for Processing your Personal Information

The basis for processing your personal data is to process your application for the position you have applied for with Donegal County Council under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources Department policies and procedures.

When your application form is received, we create a computer record in your name, which contains much of the personal information you have supplied on your application form. This personal record is used solely in processing your candidature. You are entitled to obtain at any time, a copy of information about you, which is kept on record.

- **Sharing of Information**

Outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied for, with a designated shortlisting and/or interview board.

If, following the competition, you are deemed a qualified candidate and offered a position; the information provided in your application form will form part of your Personnel File.

Furthermore, should you be offered a position and subsequently confirm your interest in the position, the information provided on your application form will be used to request service records and employment references.

- **Storage period**

Your application will be retained for two years from the date a panel for this position is formed. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition.

Donegal County Council's Privacy Statement can be assessed at:  
[www.donegalcoco.ie](http://www.donegalcoco.ie).