

planningcpu@donegalcoco.ie

Date: 10th February 2026

Tel: 028 7034 7100

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Public Consultation on Proposed Variation to the County Donegal Development Plan 2024-2030 (Proposed Variation No. 1).

Thank you for your email, dated 15th January 2026, in relation to the above.

I wish to respond on behalf of the Council, as follows:

The Council notes that Proposed Variation No.1 to the County Donegal Development Plan 2024–2030 introduces six new Area Plans; several significant land zoning changes; updated transport plans and updated accompanying assessments.

1. Proposed Variation No.1 Document:

The Council notes that this core document lines all policy changes proposed to the County Development Plan (CDP). It introduces new Area Plans for An Clochán Liath, Ballyshannon, Bridgend, Carndonagh, Donegal Town and Killybegs, and details re-zoning of land in Bunrana, Letterkenny and Ballybofey/Stranorlar. It is noted how these updates align with the NPF Housing Growth Requirement Guidelines and that the amendments are required to support sustainable settlement growth.

2. Updated Land Use Zoning Maps:

The Council notes that the zoning maps visually set out proposed land-use changes within the affected towns including the upgrade of land at Cockhill, Bunrana from New Residential Phase 2 to Phase 1: RZLT-related rezonings in Letterkenny and the Twin Towns, and the replacement of pNHA designations in Letterkenny.

3. Local Transport Plans (LTPs) for Each New Area Plan:

It is noted that each of the six new Area Plans is accompanied by a Local Transport Plan, assessing transport needs and proposing networks to support compact growth, active travel, and accessibility, and that the LTPs will ensure that future development aligns with sustainable mobility, pedestrian safety, and infrastructure capacity. It is noted that they also integrate with existing and planned regional transport routes to ensure the towns can accommodate projected population and housing growth.

4. Environmental Report (Strategic Environmental Assessment – SEA):

It is noted that, having determined the need for SEA of Variation No.1, the accompanying Environmental Report provides a clear understanding of the likely

environmental consequences of decisions regarding the making and implementation of the Proposed Variation.

5. Natura Impact Report (Appropriate Assessment – AA):

The Council also notes that, having concluded that a Stage 2 AA of Variation No.1 is required, this report evaluates whether the proposed variation could significantly affect any Natura 2000 sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). It is noted that the report sets out mitigation measures to avoid adverse impacts on protected habitats and species and ensures full compliance with the Habitats Directive before the variation can be adopted.

6. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Report:

The Council notes that a Stage 2 SFRA assessment was undertaken and that the Proposed Variation No.1 is considered to have been adequately prepared in accordance with the approach set out in the Flood Risk management Guidelines.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Denise Dickson
Head of Planning