



Oifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála
Office of the
Planning Regulator

3rd February 2020

Forward/Strategic Planning
Limerick City and County Council
Merchants Quay,
Limerick,
V94 EH90

Re: Proposed Material Amendments to the Draft Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026

A Chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in progressing the Local Area Plan for Croom. The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) has evaluated and assessed the proposed material amendments to the draft Local Area Plan (LAP), above, under the provisions of Section 31AO(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the Act) and within the context of the OPR's recommendations to the draft LAP in September 2019.

As your authority will be aware, one of the key functions of the OPR includes assessment of statutory plans and strategies to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning.

The Office is currently developing an overall assessment methodology for statutory plans. The submission below has been prepared to provide a high-level input to your authority in finalising the LAP.

The Office has undertaken an evaluation and assessment of the proposed material amendments, and has been determined that no specific recommendations are necessary in this instance.

The Office is satisfied with the planning authority's responses to recommendations 2 and 3 contained in its letter of 30th September 2019.

The Office provides the following observations and advice regarding its recommendation to include a phasing schedule for residentially zoned lands and the changes proposed to the boundary of the LAP.

The Office notes that the material amendments reduce the amount of land zoned for residential use by 0.82 hectares from 14.27 hectares to 13.45 hectares largely in response to a condition

attached to a grant of planning permission from An Bord Pleanála for a housing development in the south of the LAP. No phasing schedule is proposed.

While the reduction in the amount of residential land is considered appropriate in this instance, the extant planning permissions and zoned residential land have the potential to deliver approximately 270 additional housing units and accommodate a population increase of in the region of 670 persons.

As outlined in the Office's submission to the draft LAP, the anticipated housing requirement is for 220 housing units (allowing for a 25% headroom) over the plan period to 2026.

The submission from Irish Water to the draft LAP states that the waste water treatment plant has available capacity of 341 population equivalent (pe) out of a total of 2,000pe and proposed upgrade works would increase the capacity of the plant to 2,200pe.

The Office advises your authority that the Croom LAP should be reviewed within 6 months of the adoption of the next County Development Plan to address any inconsistencies with respect to the quantum of land zoned for residential development in Croom and any infrastructural constraints by way of a further variation to the LAP if necessary.

This is to ensure that the allocation of population growth to Croom is appropriate in respect of its position in the settlement hierarchy, the availability of infrastructure and national and regional policies affecting the city and county.

The Office advises that there may be a mapping error in respect of the land zoned Open Space & Recreation in the southwest corner of the LAP. It appears that some existing houses have been zoned Open Space & Recreation. Further, it is noted the Chief Executive's report on the material amendments states that the land is proposed to be zoned Agriculture rather than Open Space & Recreation.

The Office notes that the LAP boundary is extended to the east to form the eastern boundary of the relocated Enterprise & Employment zoning and additional land zoned Agriculture. The Office advises your authority to consider revising the LAP boundary to exclude the land zoned for Agriculture in any subsequent review or variation of the LAP.

Your authority is required to notify this Office within 5 working days of the making of the local area plan and send a copy of the written statement and maps as made.

Please feel free to contact the staff of the OPR in the context of your authority's responses to the above, which we would be happy to facilitate. Contact can be initiated through the undersigned or at plans@opr.ie.

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