

Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
Strule House
16 High Street
Omagh
Co Tyrone
BT78 1BQ

20th December 2018

Dear Sir / Madam

I wish to respond to the Fermanagh & Omagh District Council (FODC) 'Local Development Plan 2030 – Draft Plan Strategy'.

The plan refers at Draft Policy TCR04 – Villages and Small Settlements:

Policy Clarification

4.40. village shops along with other services perform an important role in serving the local day-to-day needs of people living in rural areas as well as providing a sense of community. In small settlements, the presence of a small convenience shop, for example, can be a life line for local people who have limited or no access to transport. Our villages and small settlements act to support and sustain rural communities and indigenous industries, such as the agri-business base. In all cases, the scale, form and design of any proposed retail development shall be appropriate to the character and size of the settlement.

This rightly identifies that villages provide support and sustainability to the local and rural communities. However, in Draft Policy Draft Policy IB01 - Industry and Business Development in Settlements it states:

(b) Villages and Small Settlements:

development proposals for industry and business will be permitted where:

i) the scale, nature and design of the proposal are in-keeping with the character and setting of the settlement; and, ii) the proposal is compatible with adjacent and nearby land uses, including residential uses.

Policy Clarification

4.7. generally, land for industry and business uses will only be zoned for that purpose in our towns and no specific sites will be zoned in our villages and small settlements.

This section rules out any land being zoned for industry and business within villages and small settlements and of course the rural policy rules out any significant such development in the countryside.

I believe this policy is short-sighted and deficient. Many villages throughout the Council area have small-scale enterprise units, Clabby, Derrylin and Ballinamallard being just a few, however other areas do not have such options.

The area between Enniskillen and Lisnaskea does not have any opportunity base for small enterprise as the facilities are not in place, even though the area has easy access to the main arterial route of the A4. Why should an area like this, or indeed other similar areas throughout the District not have reasonable opportunities for business development?

Some significant enterprises and businesses in the Council area are not located within the main town, Severfield, Balcas and Quinn Industrial Holding are just a few that are major employers in the local area but are not located within the main towns. We should not inhibit other businesses from starting a project in a particular location if it is best suited and preferred location for the individual or Company that are going to establish a business or enterprise.

FODC or its predecessor Councils have supported various village plans, which have specified enterprise and economic development in the area. One that I am familiar with is the Maguiresbridge Village Plan which highlights the need to develop social enterprise opportunities in the village, this is again highlighting the importance of enterprise and business options for the village. The current draft plan strategy appears to go against such plans.

I trust my concern will be given appropriate consideration.

Yours sincerely

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