

1st September 2026

Forward Planning,
Planning Department,
Leitrim County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Carrick-on-Shannon,
Co. Leitrim.

**Re: Proposed Material Alterations to the Proposed Variation No. 1 of the
Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029**

A chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in preparing the Material Alterations (material alterations) to the proposed Variation No. 1 (proposed Variation) to the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 (Development Plan).

As Leitrim County Council (Planning Authority) is aware, a key function of the Office of the Planning Regulator (Office) is to evaluate and assess statutory plans to ensure consistency with legislative requirements and national and regional planning policy. The Office has evaluation and assessment pursuant to Part 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (Act) and its functions under section 546, and this submission sets out the outcome.

In this context, submissions may include recommendations and observations. Recommendations arise where the Office identifies clear inconsistencies with legislative provisions or policy frameworks and are intended to be addressed to ensure compliance. Observations highlight areas where further clarification, justification, or refinement would strengthen the plan. The submission may also include advice to support the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Following adoption of the Variation, the Office will carry out a further assessment under section 63 of the Act.

1. Response to the Office's submission on the proposed Variation

The Office welcomes the significant work undertaken by the Planning Authority in addressing the recommendations and observation of the Office in its submission at draft stage.

In response to Recommendation 1, the Office welcomes the incorporation of the Carrick-on-Shannon Local Transport Plan into the Development Plan as this reflects the need for the integration of land use and sustainable transportation as set out in the National Planning Framework First Revision (2025) (NPF) and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region.

In relation to flood risk management, Recommendation 2, the Office notes the additional information contained within the Chief Executive's Report (CE's Report) in relation to Proposed Amendment No. 29 and welcomes the Planning Authority's commitment to implement best practice as advocated by The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) (Flood Guidelines).

In response to Recommendation 3, the Office acknowledges the reasons within the CE's Report as to why the proposed Enterprise and Employment land use zoning in Manorbhamilton (Proposed Amendment No.38) would not undermine the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre.

2. Overview of submission on proposed material alterations

As set out above, the Office welcomes the proposed material alterations which positively respond to the recommendations made in its submission at draft stage and considers that the proposed Variation will improve the integration of land use and transport planning as well as implement best practice promoted in the Flood Guidelines.

Notwithstanding the above, the Office has significant concerns regarding the proposed additional residential zoning objectives in Carrigallen and Ballinamore. As sufficient zoned land is already included in the proposed Variation to accommodate

the projected housing growth requirements of these settlements, and in light of the significant deficiencies in site servicing and supporting infrastructure, including inadequate access arrangements and wastewater infrastructure constraints, the Office considers that there is no justification for further residential zoning and recommends that MA 7, MA 8, MA 9 and MA 10 should not be zoned for residential purposes.

The recommendation set out below is intended to support the Planning Authority in finalising the proposed Variation and ensuring its effective implementation:

Subject	Recommendation	Observation
Residential zonings	MA Recommendation 1	-

3. Residential zonings

The sustainable growth and development of County Leitrim's towns, villages and graigs is a key objective of both the NPF and the RSES.

Within the key village of Carrigallen, MA 7 and MA 8 seek to zone additional lands for residential purposes. MA 9 also proposes to rezone Open Space for residential use within the settlement.

As acknowledged within table 2.5 of the proposed Variation, which indicates the potential housing yield from lands identified with a Residential or Mixed-Use land use zoning objective in the Development Plan, the Capacity Register published by Uisce Éireann (August 2025) states that Carrigallen has no capacity available (red status) in terms of wastewater treatment. As a result, it states that it is unlikely that its household allocation will come forward for development within the remaining period of the Development Plan.

It is apparent from the CE's Report that this is still the current position as the project to upgrade the Carrigallen Wastewater Treatment Plant is currently at Stage 2 under the Uisce Éireann Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme, and is unlikely to be completed during the lifetime of the Development Plan. It is also noted that MA 14 seeks to amend the Settlement Capacity Report for Carrigallen in order to reflect this position detailing that the capacity register shows the current project completion year

as Post Revenue Control 4; Revenue Control Period 4 runs from 2025-2029. MA 14 states that the 10-year Water Supply Capacity Register published by Uisce Éireann in April 2026 shows that there is potential capacity available but that there is a Level of Service improvement required. Section 10.5 of MA 14 also adds that MA 8 has no road access or public lighting and that both MA 8 and 9 have no footpath connection to Main Street.

The CE's Report highlights that, following an evaluation of Carrigallen, the most appropriate lands for residential development, in terms of infrastructure provision and land use evaluation, have already been included as part of the proposed Variation. With a potential yield of 61 units, there is already sufficient land within the proposed settlement envelope to accommodate the village's housing growth requirement (2023-2029) for 36 units and support long-term compact growth.

Notwithstanding that, table 2.5 within the proposed Variation has yet to be updated to reflect the yield of the proposed material alterations, it is apparent from the CE's Report that the quantum of residential land proposed by MA 7, MA 8 and MA 9 (c. 9.8 ha) would be nearly four times the amount indicated in the proposed Variation for Carrigallen. Based on the densities indicated within table 2.5 of the proposed Variation, this could result in Carrigallen having a total potential household yield of 208-257 units. Even when the Wastewater Treatment Plant is upgraded it would not have the capacity to cater for this level of growth, even without taking account of potential future non-residential demand for infrastructure capacity.

The CE's Report further notes that retaining MA 9 as Open Space would provide an opportunity to develop a walkway connecting to adjacent amenity lands, enhancing accessibility to recreational facilities and supporting the delivery of a more attractive, liveable and high-quality village environment for residents.

In relation to MA 10, which proposes to zone additional lands as New Residential in Ballinamore, the CE's Report notes that there is limited headroom in the settlement's Wastewater Treatment Plant and that it would not be appropriate to exacerbate this situation with further zonings during the lifetime of the Development Plan. When reviewing the previous Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2023 it is stated that Tully Lane, from which MA 10 would be accessed, was deemed to have an inappropriate gradient and width to service additional residential zoned lands. MA 12,

which seeks to revise the Settlement Capacity Report for Ballinamore contained in the proposed Variation, also confirms that MA 10 does not have road access, a footpath or public lighting. Table 2.5 within the proposed Variation indicates that Ballinamore has a housing growth requirement of 97 units (2023-2029). The proposed lands already contained within the proposed Variation have an estimated yield of 166 units, and while table 2.5 has not been revised to include the projected yield from MA 10, it is apparent that there is already adequate Residential land identified within the proposed Variation to meet the housing needs of Ballinamore.

As sufficient zoned land is already available to facilitate the projected housing growth requirements of Carrigallen and Ballinamore, and given the significant infrastructure constraints that currently restrict the capacity of these settlements to support further residential development, the Office therefore recommends that MA 7, MA 8, MA 9 and MA 10 should not be zoned for residential purposes.

MA Recommendation 1 - Residential zonings

Having regard to the delivery of housing and having particularly considered:

- NPO 42 of the NPF to target the delivery of housing to accommodate approximately 50,000 additional homes per annum to 2040;
- NPO 43 of the NPF to prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development;
- NPO 103 of the NPF to not zone land for development purposes that cannot be serviced within the life of the plan; and
- the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements (2025),

it is recommended that the Planning Authority makes the Variation without the following:

- (i) MA 7 Carrigallen;
- (ii) MA 8 Carrigallen;
- (iii) MA 9 Carrigallen; and
- (iv) MA 10 Ballinamore.

4. Summary

The Office requests that the Planning Authority addresses the recommendation set out above.

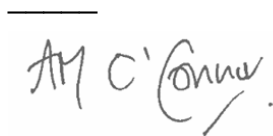
As part of this process, the Chief Executive's report to the elected members, prepared under section 58(15) of the Act should summarise the Office's recommendations and outline how it is proposed to address them.

Following adoption of the Variation, the Planning Authority is required to:

- provide the Office with a copy of the adopted Variation, together with any submissions received from the Minister, regional assemblies, and the National Transport Authority during the plan preparation process within **one week** of adoption;
- inform the Office, **as soon as practicable**, where the elected members decide not to comply with a recommendation, including the reasons of the elected members for this decision; and
- publish notice of the Variation within **one week** of adoption, confirming that the Development Plan as varied will be available for inspection (online and at a specified location) no later than **five weeks** after adoption.

The Office looks forward to continued constructive engagement with the Planning Authority. If further clarification or discussion would be helpful, the Office would be pleased to assist and can be contacted at plans@opr.ie.

Is mise le meas,



Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Planning Policy Implementation
Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015