

**COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE
MINUTES OF ORANMORE AREA COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2008 IN ROOM G01**

LATHAIR

Baill: Cllr. Cuddy , Chairman
Cllr. Carey,
Cllr. Hoade,
Cllr. McDonagh

Oifigigh

Mr P.Ridge, Director of Services
Ms M.McGrath, Senior Staff Officer

To consider the Draft County Development Plan as per Section 11 (5) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended”

Mr Ridge commenced by outlining, that the process of reviewing the County Development plan had commenced and that an integral part of that process was the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment, which was a new requirement, imposed by regulation in 2004. These regulations require that reference is made to the SEA process in the initial notification to the public that the Plan is to be reviewed. He added that reference to the SEA was not included because we viewed this initial public notice as a public notification of the Planning Authority’s intention to review the Development Plan and that SEA notification would be provided at a later stage when we were publishing the Draft Plan. Unfortunately this is incorrect.

Mr Ridge added that he had considered the implications of the omission of this item in the initial notice and concluded, for reasons of future certainty regarding the validity of the plan that it would be preferable to recommence the process. He stated that the relevant advert had now been inserted into the newspapers and effectively the process of reviewing the County Development Plan was recommencing.

He explained that on the face of it the implications of this are that a substantial period of time in the process had been lost, however in reality much of the work that had been carried out in recent months will be reusable and will recover some of the time lost. He added that it will be necessary to look very closely at the 99 weeks scheduled for the preparation of the plan and it was worth noting that 22 weeks of the 99 weeks are periods during which the plan must be on public display. These 22 weeks cannot be shortened in any way. He stated that the officials have 45 weeks within that period to prepare reports and publish the final plan and that it is their intention to substantially reduce this with a view to recovering lost ground and completing the plan within the initial timetable. He added that the elected members have 36 weeks within this period: 10 of these 36 weeks have been used to give directions to the officials on what should be included in the Draft Plan and a further 8 of those are to consider the Draft before it goes on Public Display. He explained that they were currently now operating in that 8 week period. He added that with the cooperation of the Members these periods could be shortened the next time round, thus recovering more lost time. He stated that he took full responsibility for the error.

Cllr Hoade asked if it were necessary for people who made submissions previously to resubmit then again.

Mr Ridge stated that all submission made during the previous display period would be considered and that everyone who made a submission would be notified of this and invited to make a further submission or to reiterate the submission already made.

Mr Ridge referred to the following as major issues in the new County Development Plan: Rural Housing, Rural Development, Ardaun/Garraun, Transport Corridors, and the Settlement Strategy. He added that in 2003 a number of initiatives were put in place that successful addressed the development pressure around the Galway city.

Cllr Hoade and Cllr Cuddy referred to the Ardaun Corridor and expressed concern over the lack of information available to them as elected members in relation to Ardaun.

Mr Ridge stated that a report was due from the consultants shortly which would be presented to the Full Council.

Cllr Hoade stated that the joint working committee between the City Council and the County Council had not met over 2 years. She referred to the lack of facilities in the area and stressed that the Consultant's Report must be examined very carefully by the Full Council and Area Committees. She queried the possibility of the towns and villages loosing out on the resources if Ardaun Project goes ahead. She referred to the Gateway Innovation fund and expressed fears that by having committed to the funding that Ardaun is already decided on.

Mr Ridge explained that there was a time constraint on the application for the Gateway funding. He explained that the Ardaun Project has to be signed off by the Elected Members before it goes ahead, otherwise the Gateway Funding will be proposed for somewhere else.

Cllr Hoade referred to the settlements centres that have been removed form the pre draft development plan, Laraghmore and Derrydonnell Beg and requested to have them reinstated.

Mr Ridge explained that settlement centres where applications for development had not been received were removed from the plan but added that they can be inserted again. He also stated that An Bord Pleanala have overturned planning decisions in Settlement Centres on the basis that the centres were too small for development.

On the proposal of Cllr Hoade and seconded by Cllr McDonagh it was agreed to reinstate the following settlement centres into the County Development Plan, Laraghmore and Derrydonnell Beg.

Cllr Carey referred to the lack of services in Settlement Centres and added that the Ministerial Guidelines should be incorporated into the Plan.

Mr Ridge stated that it is a discussion document, guidelines that we have regard to but that the Directive has to follow as yet.

He added that ideally it would be better to have services in place before development are permitted but then all development would have to stop until this infrastructure was in place. Developments connecting to their own private wastewater treatment plants are being permitted until such time as the proper infrastructure is in place.

Cllr Cuddy stated the septic tanks for the single one off rural houses were not being properly maintained or monitored.

Cllr Hoade referred to the current housing policy and stated that a site on family lands in the family for over two generations should be considered for planning even if the family home is not at this location. Cllr Cuddy agreed with this. Cllr Cuddy also referred to the problem of planning for local people classed as urban generated development outside towns such as Claregalway.

Cllr Hoade stated that a policy should be included in the new plan where grand children and grand nieces and grand nephews would also be catered for on family lands

Cllr Cuddy stated that he had an issue with 'intrinsic links to the area' and added that 'family lands 'should be clearly defined in the new plan.

Mr Ridge stated that 'intrinsic links to an area' came from the Ministerial Guidelines.

It was agreed that the enurement clause would remain at 7 years

Cllr Cuddy also referred to the planning restrictions for development along the R 339 on family farms. He added that the term, 'family farms' should be amended to the 'family holding' in the County Development Plan.

Mr Ridge stated that the problem is that applicants won't share a common entrance onto the restricted road.

He also added that the Roads Section would compile a detailed document in relation to the site distances required onto the various roads which would be incorporated into the Draft Plan.

Mr Ridge also referred to the Housing Strategy which has been prepared by Consultants and would be incorporated into the Draft Plan.

Mr Ridge referred to the development of Tuam as a hub town and the effect this would have on other towns and villages in the vicinity.

Mr Ridge referred to Section 5.1, the County Spatial Strategy which outlines how it is anticipated that the County would develop.

Cllr Cuddy also referred to the Development Contribution Scheme and asked what the situation was with Development Contributions Schemes in other Local Authorities.

Mr Ridge referred to €4,000 contribution on all new planning applications as a means of funding for roads.

Cllr Carey stated that this is additional pressure for young people.

Mr Ridge referred to the Habitats Directive and added that a meeting would be arranged with the National Parks and Wild Life Services in relation to the County Development Plan.

Cllr Cuddy referred to windfarms and stated that the landscape sensitivity assessments restricts where windfarms can be situated.

Mr Ridge stated it was not his intention to review the landscape and landscape character assessment of the County and that it will be necessary to work within the context of what is already there.

Cllr Carey stated that the ACA designation was an issue in Headford along the shopfronts.

Cllr Carey also queried if Galway County Council can make bylaws in relation to controlling jet skis on Lough Corrib

It was agreed to have the next Oranmore Electoral Meeting on Tuesday 11/3/2008 at 3.00