To:    Cathaoirleach and each Member of Manorhamilton Municipal District

Date:  15th September, 2015

Re:    Consideration of Leitrim Local Economic & Community Plan 2015 – 2021

In regard to the above please find attached assessment prepared of the LECP in relation to its consistency with the core strategy of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 -2021.

I wish to confirm that the draft plan is being amended to take account of the two items that the report draws attention to in regard to:-

1.  The target of seeking particular status for Carrick on Shannon within the National Spatial Strategy (or similar) and
2.  References to the Draft County Development Plan

I therefore recommend that in order for the Municipal District to adopt the following statement in respect of the Draft Leitrim Local Economic & Community Plan 2015 – 2021 as amended above.

- Manorhamilton Municipal District having reviewed the Local Economic & Community Plan 2015 – 2021 as drafted, is satisfied that the plan is consistent with the core strategy and objectives of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 and therefore recommend its adoption to Leitrim County Council.

Signed

Joseph Gilhooley
Joseph Gilhooley
Director of Services


**Agenda Item**
To consider the Leitrim Local Economic & Community Plan 2015-2021 in relation to consistency with the Core Strategy and objectives of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021. Following said consideration, to adopt a statement in that regard to be submitted to Leitrim County Council in accordance with the requirements of Section 66C (2)(b) and 66C (3)(b) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

**Assessment**
The Draft Local Economic and Community Plan (draft LECP) was jointly prepared by Leitrim County Council and Leitrim Local Community & Development Committee (LCDC). The draft LECP was placed on public display from June 30th 2015 until 17th August 2015.

The purpose of the Core Strategy of a County Development Plan is to

"Articulate a medium to long term quantitatively based strategy for the spatial development of the area of the planning authority, and in so doing, to demonstrate that the development plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional policy objectives as set out in the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines" (p. 2, DoECLG Guidance Note on Core Strategies [November 2010]).

This medium-term to long-term strategy for the spatial development of County Leitrim sets out, amongst other things, the amount of land proposed to be zoned for residential and mixed-use purposes in the County Development Plan. It provides a high-level summary description of the key statistics and priorities underpinning this Development Plan. The Core Strategy section of the Plan provides the transparent evidence-based rationale, which is the basis for the Development Plan.

The function of the Core Strategy is to:

i. identify the amount, location and phasing of development for the plan period;
ii. demonstrate how future development supports public transport/existing services;
iii. ensure that needs and priorities of existing zoned/serviced land and new zonings for the area are assessed on a plan-led basis; and
iv. Provide the framework for deciding on the scale, phasing and location of new development, having regard to existing services and planned investment over the coming years.

It includes information on:

i. population targets / objectives;
ii. quantification of requirements for zoning of lands for residential and/or a mix of residential and other uses; and
iii. The existing and proposed, future distribution of population within the County plan area, within a defined settlement hierarchy.

It is considered that the Economic Goals and Community Goals are consistent with the Core Strategy and Development Objectives of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021. Similarly, it is considered that the Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) and Sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs) are consistent with the Core Strategy and objectives of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021.
The projected population of the county by 2021 is 35,277 persons. This population target is reflected in Target T4 of the LECP whereby a population target of 32,500+ is sought by 2022. The LECP is more specific in relation to identifying targets for employment creation whereas the County Development Plan seeks to ensure that there are sufficient lands identified in appropriate locations to facilitate the enterprise and employment needs of the County. It is considered that both strategies are mutually supportive in this regard. The targets and specific actions included for each SEDO and SCO are considered to be more detailed and specific than the majority of the development objectives contained in the County Development Plan.

Carrick on Shannon is identified in the Core Strategy as a Tier 1 town. The Regional Planning Guidelines identified Carrick on Shannon as a regionally important town. The LECP seeks to secure a regional status for the County Town with Target T3 seeking that Carrick on Shannon be designated as a ‘Hub’ (or similar) within the National Spatial Strategy (or similar). The achievement of Target T3 goes significantly further than the aspirations of the Core Strategy and the Strategic Goals of the County Development Plan such as would render it inconsistent with the Core Strategy and Objectives of the County Development Plan. It is considered that target T3 be amended to read “Carrick-on-Shannon be recognised as a strategic driver of growth in the region within the National Planning Framework (replacement National Spatial Strategy) when prepared”.

The adopted LECP shall reflect that the County Development Plan 2015-2021 was adopted 12th January 2015 and all references to the Draft Development Plan shall be corrected throughout the document.

Conclusion
Subject to Target T3 being amended to read “Carrick-on-Shannon be recognised as a strategic driver of growth in the region within the National Planning Framework (replacement National Spatial Strategy) when prepared”, I am satisfied that the draft Leitrim Local Economic & Community Plan 2015-2021 is consistent with the Core Strategy and objectives of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021.

Bernard Greene
Senior Planner,
Leitrim County Council.