

# DERRY CITY AND STRABANE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2030



### EVIDENCE BASE EVB 1

#### LDP VISION, OBJECTIVES & GROWTH

This Document is one in a series, which builds up to form the 'evidence base' that informs the preparation of the Local Development Plan (LDP).

A series of initial Workshop Paper(s) on the range of key Planning topics were presented to Council Members during 2016 / 2017, which have been subject to Member discussion and input, before further discussion at a number of Planning Committee (LDP) meetings and in turn feeding into the LDP Preferred Options Paper (POP) and then the Plan Strategy (PS) and eventually the Local Policies Plan (LPP) which will together form the LDP.

Therefore, the afore-mentioned evidence base will be continually updated, to additionally include the latest information, input from public engagement, statutory consultees, stakeholder groups, Sustainability Appraisal and from other Departments within the Council, including Community Planning.

The Evidence Base is published as a 'supporting document' in accordance with Article 10(a) and 15(a) of the Planning (LDP) Regulations (NI) 2015



## LDP Vision and Objectives

1.0 The Council's Vision for the District is set out in our recent Community Plan – the Strategic Inclusive Growth Plan for Derry City and Strabane District (SIGP). The LDP shares this Vision for the District, namely to be a:

***thriving, prosperous and sustainable City and District with equality of opportunity for all.***

1.2 The LDP is required to 'take account of' the Community Plan; the two documents are closely aligned, having been prepared at the same time, with the same vision and priorities for the District to 2032, structured across the themes of Economy, Environment & Regeneration and Health & Community. The LDP is the spatial articulation of the SIGP / Community Plan, in that the LDP deals with the land use and place-making aspects of the various actions and priorities in the SIGP; therefore, the LDP will be an important vehicle for the implementation of the SIGP's vision for the District.

1.3 The preparation of the Council's SGP / Community Plan has involved a co-design process and an extensive community and stakeholder consultation and input during 2015 to 2017, especially involving many meetings of Thematic Sup-Groups, public meetings, stakeholder engagement events and also commissioned research. The LDP has in turn utilised the findings and opinions of this SGP process, in order to assist in their alignment and direction towards addressing the identified needs and objectives for this District. The Ulster University Economic Policy Centre has undertaken research on behalf of the Council, to underpin the proposed strategic priorities and target growth levels. Therefore, the following Council / Region / SGP (Community Plan) / LDP documents may be referenced as part of the Evidence Base for the LDP POP:

<http://www.derrystrabane.com/getmedia/5c932053-752b-4b54-9912-98a6c9dc06f0/Baseline.pdf>

<http://www.derrystrabane.com/Subsites/Community-Planning/Developing-our-Plan>

<http://www.derrystrabane.com/Council/News/Conference-presents-major-boost-to-North-West-Regi>

<http://www.derrystrabane.com/Subsites/LDP/LDP-Events/LDP-Pre-POP-Stakeholder-Event>

<http://www.derrystrabane.com/getmedia/5875f3e5-c3aa-4a7d-8f23-8265d76488f2/Strategic-Growth-Conference-Presentation-06-Dec-2016.pdf>

<http://www.derrystrabane.com/Council/News/Councils-publish-joint-report-exploring-challenges>

(A further update report from Ulster University is currently at Draft form and will be added, when finalised shortly.)

## **LDP & SGP Growth Strategy for the Derry City and Strabane District**

1.4 In line with the above-mentioned research and stakeholder input, the following summarises the current POP basis for the ambitious but ‘planned growth’ of the District over the next 15 years.

1.5 The RDS 2035 and the emerging National Planning Framework (ROI) both identify Derry-Letterkenny as the regional growth centre(s) for the North West, being a metropolitan city region of up to 350,000 population. Derry City itself is identified as a linked gateway for Northern Ireland and is expected to grow in population and jobs as an economic driver for the North West region. Recent studies by both Donegal County Council and DCSDC have identified the realistic yet ambitious pathway to growth of the region over the next 15 years, particularly with:

- extensive investment in infrastructure including the A5 and A6 dual carriageways, plus Buncrana Road;
- the upgraded rail network and transportation hub;
- expansion of Altnagelvin Hospital;
- continued development of the City of Derry Airport and Foyle Port at Lisahally, with their related business locations;
- the significant student-expansion of Ulster University Magee, and North West Regional College, as part of a ‘Knowledge Zone’ (with new campus buildings, student accommodation, student servicing, city vibrancy and cosmopolitanism, as well as research/medical/hi-tech sector spin-off businesses);
- significant growth in technology industries especially at key regeneration sites at Ebrington and Fort George;
- plans to significantly expand the resident populations of Derry, Letterkenny, Strabane and wider North West cross-border growth Region;
- significant modern retail investment in the city centre;
- urban regeneration and significant place-making / remodelling of city centre and the riverside;
- a continued expansion of city-based, heritage tourism, festivals and events.

1.6 The Council is also progressing a very significant multi-million pound capital investment programme for its key regeneration sites in Derry and Strabane (Derry-Strabane Investment Proposition) to pump prime finance from central government and the private sector. Also, there will be significant opportunities presented by ‘Brexit’ including related favourable tax rates, property prices and health, for businesses, employment, and population

growth / relocation to within this District. Therefore, this LDP will play an important role in helping to deliver the ambition of the Strategic Inclusive Growth Plan for Derry City and Strabane District (SIGP), as well as the other strategies to grow this 'city region'.

1.7 The DCSD currently has a population of approximately 149,500, with growth having been modest in recent years and projected to continue modestly over the coming period. There are currently approximately 53,600 employee jobs in the District, with an improving trend over the past five years. There are around 55,600 dwellings in the District, with building levels having been very low over the past decade due to the serious economic downturn. The LDP Growth Strategy will seek to develop the District sustainably from these baseline levels over the next 15 years.

### **Proposed LDP Objectives – POP Stage**

1.8 Evidence Base Paper EVB3 addresses the broad strategic objectives discussed with Councillors at their Workshops, as well as summarising the Growth Strategy Options in the POP. Arising from the above, Stakeholder / Consultee feedback and the various Councillor Workshop discussions, the POP states that the LDP will aim to deliver the shared vision through the following strategic economic, social and environmental objectives:

#### **Economic**

##### **(a) Creating Jobs and Promoting Prosperity**

- (i) To facilitate the creation of approximately 15,000 new jobs, based upon projected population increase, reduced unemployment rates and investment-driven growth, at all skill levels by 2032, at a variety of locations where they are accessible to all members of the community, including those without a private car.
- (ii) To accommodate particularly those sectors identified by the Council as targets for step-change growth, as well as those existing sectors identified for incremental growth and significant further job creation.
- (iii) To recognise and accommodate entrepreneurship and innovation for large, medium and small firms by attracting new firms, facilitating new business start-ups and accommodating expanding businesses, in urban areas and also in rural areas where appropriate location, type and scale.
- (iv) The need to recognise the importance of self-employment and home working, particularly in rural locations.
- (v) To recognise the North West's significant renewable energy resource and encourage the use of sustainable energy both as a means of generating money for the local

economy, attracting investment in enterprise and providing sustainable and affordable lighting and heating for the population.

- (vi) To facilitate the City to capitalise on its role as a key cross border and international gateway providing access by road, rail, and sea, while similarly maximising the economic corridor potential for Strabane and the rest of the District of the cross border and A5 and A6 improvement schemes to the North West.
- (vii) Continue the high levels of co-operation between Letterkenny, Derry and Strabane as pursued by the Northwest Regional Development Group, to unlock the potential of the North West and consider opportunities to improve transport / accessibility and public services in sectors such as health and education.
- (viii) Continue the regeneration of the City and its promotion as a major tourist destination while respecting its heritage assets, exceptional landscape setting and unique walled core through sensitive development.

## **Social Development**

### **(b) Accommodating People and Facilitating Communities**

- (i) To further develop Derry as the core settlement and regional gateway city for the North West and Strabane as the main hub. A regenerated city should be the focus for administration, shopping, health, education, commerce, specialised services, cultural amenities and tourism within the North West. Strabane has the potential to benefit from its close proximity to Lifford, an administrative centre for Donegal County Council; strengthen its service provision to local communities and expand its tourism offer by working with our cross border neighbours.
- (ii) To protect and consolidate the role of local towns and villages so that they act as local centres for shops and community services meeting the daily needs of their rural hinterlands.
- (iii) To provide for vital and vibrant rural communities elsewhere, including in our small settlements, whilst protecting the countryside in which they live by accommodating sustainable growth within the countryside which reflects the extent of existing rural communities.
- (iv) To provide for approximately 12,000 new homes by 2032 in a variety of formats designed to meet the needs of families, including single parent families, small households, the elderly and disabled and single people, at sustainable locations accessible to community services, leisure and recreational facilities, for those people with and without a car. Housing schemes in Derry city and Strabane particularly will require imaginative and innovative design, including mixed use schemes, and possibly mixed tenure, to ensure that they link into the existing urban fabric.
- (v) To recognise the needs of both growing families and carers of the elderly and disabled by accommodating development which allows people to remain within their own communities while not adversely impacting on neighbours or the environment.

- (vi) To facilitate the development of new community facilities at locations accessible to the communities they serve, through a variety of modes of efficient public transportation in accordance with the community plan.
- (vii) To accommodate cultural differences between communities of all religious backgrounds, whilst promoting “shared spaces” to bring people together with equality of opportunity.
- (viii) To close the gap in quality of life for those living in deprived areas.

## **Environment**

### **(c) Enhancing the Environment, Creating Places and Improving Infrastructure**

- (i) To protect and enhance the natural and built environment to achieve biodiversity, quality design, enhanced leisure and economic opportunity and promote health and well-being.
- (ii) To build upon the existing urban assets / built heritage value, but also improving connectivity to existing and new urban soft and hard spaces, so as to achieve enhanced place-making.
- (iii) To accommodate investment in power, water and sewerage infrastructure, and waste management, particularly in the interests of public health.
- (iv) To improve connectivity between and within settlements and their rural hinterland through accommodating investment in transportation to improve travel times, alleviate congestion and improve safety for both commercial and private vehicles as well as more sustainable modes of transport including buses, walking and cycling.
- (v) To improve connectivity through telecommunication which both meets the needs of business and private households whilst reducing the need to travel.
- (vi) To enhance transport linkages across the North West particularly between Londonderry, Strabane and Donegal, to and from the air and sea ports and the distribution of traffic from and between transport corridors.
- (vii) To improve the public transport service and consider the more efficient integration of land use and transportation. The siting of new developments in locations well served by public transport will provide a sustainable choice of transport.
- (viii) Protect areas of high scenic value, undeveloped coastline and wetlands from inappropriate development. The attractive natural and historic setting of the City reinforces its uniqueness and brings benefits to the economy and society.
- (ix) Protect and enhance the network of open spaces in the North West. Opportunities should be taken for connections to an enhanced network of pedestrian paths, cycleways and ecological corridors