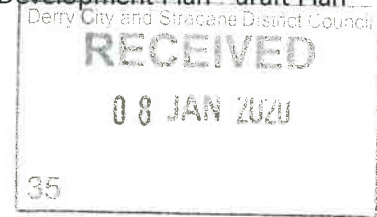


Sarah-jayne Boyle

From: Martin Graham <M.Graham@tourismni.com>
Sent: 07 January 2020 15:57
To: Planning
Cc: 'clumailbox@economy-ni.gov.uk'; DfETourismLiaison; [REDACTED]
Subject: Derry City and Strabane District Council Local Development Plan - draft Plan Strategy



Dear Sir / Madam

Further to the invitation issued to Tourism NI in Dec. 2019 to comment on the Publication of Derry City & Strabane District Council's Local Development Plan 2032 - draft Plan Strategy, I can provide the below comments on behalf of Tourism NI as a statutory consultee : -

TOURISM NI COMMENTS:

- Tourism NI (TNI) welcomes the Publication of Derry City & Strabane District Council's (DCSDC) Local Development Plan 2032 - draft Plan Strategy and the opportunity to comment.
- Tourism NI is also represented on the DCSDC Community Planning Partnership as a statutory partner and works very closely with the Council's Tourism Dept on a number of projects and initiatives
- Tourism NI appointed a dedicated Regional Manager for the DCSDC area in 2016 and has since supported and part funded a Tourism Strategy 2018 - 25 for the DCSDC area and which is currently being implemented
- The Local Development Plan 2032 – Draft Plan Strategy establishes:
 - A clear aspiration to grow the visitor economy through a sustainable approach that will balance the needs of the visitor and tourism industry, with careful protection of the built and natural environment.
 - That the Historic Environment is being recognised and valued since, for example, the Derry Walls, Ebrington and various heritage properties in the city and region play a major role in attracting visitors to the DCSDC area, especially from out of state markets
- Tourism NI is represented on the Derry Walls Management Group which is chaired and facilitated by Historic Environment Division (DfC) and which is responsible for the delivery of the Walls Management and Conservations Plans
- Tourism NI is content that the approach outlined seeks to achieve sustainable tourism growth coupled with the preservation of our built and natural assets. The approach is sensitive to the preservation of the natural environment while seeking to enable communities to prosper sustainably.
- Tourism NI encourages polices and initiatives that encourage balanced and sustainable growth of tourism facilities, services and tourism accommodation portfolios within the district councils existing city, towns and settlements.
- In November 2019, Tourism NI launched its new Experience Band, 'Northern Ireland - Embrace a Giant Spirit' and which features visitor experiences in the DCSDC area and Tourism NI will continue to work

in partnership with DCSDC to develop further visitor experiences in the DCSDC area in the months and years ahead.

- TNI has recently provided approx. £0.5m of funding, in partnership with DCSDC, towards the relocation of the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) from Foyle St to Waterloo Place, which is much more convenient to the city's historic walls and other key attractions within and near to the Walled City. A construction team has been appointed and work is due to complete in May 2020 delivering a new dynamic and interactive VIC for the visitors of the city and region.
- Tourism NI is working closely with DCSDC on the tourism projects included in the City Deal to ensure that investment in tourism is aligned to key objectives in the draft NI Tourism Strategy – Tourism 2030, including the doubling of visitor spend to £2b by 2030. Key tourism projects include 'Secrets of the Historic Walled City', DNA – Derry Maritime Museum and a 'Beyond Walls' signature visitor experience.
- NISRA research figures indicate that there has been a steady growth in tourism spend in the DCSDC area of 20% since 2013, UK City of Culture year. In 2018, the DCSDC area represented 6% of all tourism spend in N. Ireland therefore this represents an opportunity for growth.
- In 2018, the DCSDC area had a hotel room occupancy of 68%, the 3rd highest of all council areas of NI and three new hotels have been developed in the area since 2016 – Bishop's Gate Hotel, Shipquay Hotel and Holiday Inn Express. In addition, it is encouraging to hear that there is a further number of planned hotel developments in the pipeline.
- In relation to comments of a more technical nature, could I suggest that the following wording is used when listing type of tourist accommodation on PP.190-192 and wherever they appear elsewhere in the draft Plan Strategy, to replace with : -

Hotel, Guest House, Bed & Breakfast, Guest Accommodation (e.g. a restaurant with rooms, or a motel) Tourist Hostel, Bunk-House (a rural hostel; very basic) or Campus Accommodation

- On P.190, in the para immediately under TOU 4 Hotels....., could I suggest the inclusion of the below wording stressing the need for operators of all types of tourist accommodation (as listed) to received certification from Tourism NI before they begin trading, and which should be included elsewhere in the draft Plan Strategy where felt appropriate – visit link for more info - <https://tourismni.com/startup-advice/> :-

Under the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, it stipulates that all tourist accommodation providers must receive certification from Tourism NI before they are allowed to begin operating.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Publication of Derry City & Strabane District Council's Local Development Plan 2032 - draft Plan Strategy and if you have any further queries, please don't hesitate to contact me

Regards

Martin

Martin Graham
Regional Manager

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Tourist enquiries for Belfast and Northern Ireland are handled on our behalf by the Visit Belfast Welcome Centre.

You can contact them on 028 9024 6609 or e-mail info@visit-belfast.com

Tourism Northern Ireland is an accredited Investor In People organisation

Tourism Northern Ireland (TourismNI) is the trading name of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board
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