

# **Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Local Development Plan**

## **Draft Plan Strategy 2030**

### **INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION PUBLIC HEARING SESSIONS**

#### **CLOSING NOTES**

---

That brings us to the end of the topics and issues that I wanted to raise with participants and the public hearing sessions of the Independent Examination (IE) will shortly be brought to a close. The IE process is on-going whilst I am writing my report. If, upon review of the evidence already before me, I consider that a fundamental soundness issue has not been resolved, I reserve the right to correspond with any of the parties. If this were the case, details would be provided in the Examination Library on the Commission's web-site. I would only request additional information or seek further clarification that is essential to enable a decision regarding soundness to be made. Any unsolicited material that I have not requested will be returned to the sender by the Programme Officer without being passed to me.

In writing my report, I will aim for brevity and concentrate on:

- Reaching clear, reasoned conclusions on the plan's compliance with the statutory requirements and its soundness; and
- Presenting recommendations on any necessary modifications to the plan which are required to overcome any correctable shortcomings in regard to statutory requirements or soundness.

I will also address the issue of minor changes to the Plan suggested by the Council and/or raised as matters arising during the hearings.

For further information you are referred to the Commission's "Procedures for Independent Examination of Local Development Plans" version 2 December 2019, which is available on the Commission's web-site, and specifically paragraphs 37 – 41.

When complete, the report will be forwarded to the Department for Infrastructure who will be required to consider my recommendations but is not obliged to accept them. If this were the case, it would set out its reasoning for so doing.

I am mindful that delivery of the report has resource implications for both the Department and Antrim and Newtownabbey Council so my planned date for doing so aims to provide as much certainty as possible for both organisations whilst enabling

me to effectively discharge my responsibilities. There are many matters to be considered and I have pre-arranged periods of annual leave to factor into the equation. With this in mind, I hope to deliver the report to the Department by the end of January 2023. If it is ready before that, it will be promptly forwarded. When I have done so, the Commission's Examination Library will be updated accordingly and a news item published on its home page. Release of the report will be a matter for the Department.

Our Programme Officer, James Bickerstaff, will remain available to deal with any queries arising. I want to take this opportunity to thank him for his diligence, and thoroughness in administering this IE. I am also grateful for the input of Jemma Lynas on overseeing some of the public hearing sessions.

I would like to thank the Council and all participants for their contributions to the discussion and also for their co-operation and patience in getting through the hearing programme.

Before I close is there anything that the parties want to add or clarify?

A copy of these notes will be placed in the Examination Library on the Commission's website.

The public hearing sessions are now closed.

Commissioner Andy Speirs BSc MSc MRTPI

29<sup>th</sup> June 2022