

**Independent Examination  
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council  
Local Development Plan 2030  
Draft Plan Strategy**

**Examination opening notes  
Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**

Good morning and welcome to the opening of the public hearing sessions of the Independent Examination of the Antrim and Newtownabbey Local Development Plan 2030 – Draft Plan Strategy. (Check that participants can hear/see me)

My name is Andy Speirs and I am a member of the Planning Appeals Commission. My Programme Officer, Mr James Bickerstaff, will be present for the duration of the hearing. He will be responsible for all technical aspects of the remote hearing sessions and will assist you with any queries that you may have in relation to the examination.

The purpose of the examination is to determine whether the local development plan is legally compliant and sound in accordance with the twelve tests of soundness identified in the Department for Infrastructure's Development Plan Practice Note 6: Soundness.

The hearing programme for weeks 1 and 2, together with the Guidance Notes and Remote Hearings Protocol, were published on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022. The hearing programme sets out the topics and issues that I wish to discuss as well as identifies the list of participants for each session. I will assume that participants in the hearing sessions are familiar with the guidance notes, protocol as well as the Commission's Procedures for Independent Examination of Local Development Plans, all of which are available on the Commission's website.

The initial public hearing sessions will run from today for a 2 week period until Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The questions for these initial 2 weeks sessions have been published on the Commission's website with the most recent version being version 2. The hearing programme for weeks 3 and 4 was also published last week and the questions for these latter sessions will be published in due course. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> weeks of hearings are currently envisaged to take place between Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June and Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July.

The public hearings will normally comprise of two daily sessions from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm and 2.00 – 4.00 pm. Participants should log on a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the starting time of each hearing session. Advice on joining the hearing sessions is contained within the Commission's Remote Hearings Protocol. If discussion of an issue can be completed with some run over of the indicative finishing time then this may be facilitated. If required, a roll-over day has been set aside at the end of week 2

in order to facilitate any unfinished discussions. A programme for any roll-over days will be published and updated on the Commission's website. **It is your responsibility to ensure that you check this regularly** as the start time, duration and number of sessions may alter in order to address any outstanding issues from the preceding day/s.

The remote hearing sessions will be conducted on the basis of the agenda in a 'round-table' manner. The Council will usually be invited to make an opening comment, followed by any participants who wish to contribute. The Council will then be given the opportunity to make any follow-up remarks. When discussion on an issue is complete, time permitting, I will move onto the next one. If different participants are joining discussion of an issue, there will be a short break between topics and issues to allow them to do so.

Your devices should be on mute at all times until I invite you to speak. If you need to communicate with other members of your team or take instruction, please do so in private using a separate means of communication.

If you wish to respond to a question, please avail of the 'raise hand' facility on Webex to indicate your desire to speak. I will give each of those who have raised their hands an opportunity to have their say. If another speaker has covered the point that you want to make, please lower your hand. Repetition of points already made will be curtailed. When you are invited to speak, you should turn your camera on, unmute your microphone, introduce yourself and, if appropriate, your organisation and/or client. There are a lot of issues to consider so please make your response brief and focused and adhere to the agenda bearing in mind that I have already read your written submission to the Council and the Council's evidence on the issue.

There will not be any cross examination, participant interruption or open discussion. Responses should always be directed to me. Participants will normally only be asked to speak once on each question. If invited to make a further contribution, please avoid repetition of points that either you or another party has already made. When you have finished speaking, please say so and at that stage please turn off your camera and mute your microphone.

I will terminate the discussion on any particular issue when I have enough information. You are reminded that recording of the proceedings is not authorised.

All information relating to the examination can be accessed at any time on the Commission website at [www.pacni.gov.uk](http://www.pacni.gov.uk) by clicking the link Independent Examination of Local Development Plans – Antrim and Newtownabbey. **Please check the website regularly for updates.** If you have any other queries please do not hesitate to contact the Programme Officer.

A copy of these Examination Opening Notes will be published on the Commission's website in the Antrim and Newtownabbey Library.

Before I move onto discuss the first topic I want to check are all participants clear on the protocol or are there any questions that you wish to raise?