



To whom it may concern,

Please accept this e-mail as my own response to the consultation on your draft Local Development Plan.

As an MLA for East Belfast I am especially interested in aspects of the plan that I believe are particularly relevant to the current context of planning and development in the Dundonald area, including the Dundonald Park & Ride and Dundonald Amenities (Schools/Services).

It is clear that there is a significant and ever growing number of concerns for the Dundonald area. Specifically around factors of congestion and capacity at health and education services, that further development would only exasperate if planning does not have effective policy to bolster enforcement of conditions and S76 agreements.

It is important that planners ensure this plan is strong enough, not only to ensure developers are conditioned or subject to agreements that help remedy the problems that would be caused by further development in the area (most crucially in on the eastern edge of the town towards Newtownards and Comber), but there is adequate enforcement that means that developers must carry out relevant conditions at an early phase of development and cannot allow conditions to lapse, be significantly delayed relative to the rest of their development or in any other way abdicate their responsibility. The need for greater road, water, education, health and retail infrastructure, as well as public amenity space, to support further growth in this community is clear and those who seek to gain from development should be expected to contribute to that. I am largely happy with the LDP in this regard having played particular attention to sections 2 (Community Facilities in Settlements) and 11 (Access and Transport) but would seek reassurance from planners that the policy is robust enough not only to put conditions and agreements in place, but also to ensure and enforce those agreements.

With regard to TRA3 Access to Protected Routes, while I understand that other parts of the council area will have particular issues relating to the significant motorway and dual carriageway infrastructure in the greater Lisburn area, I would ask for consideration that none of the restrictions laid down in this section would be an obstacle to the development of a much demanded and required main road linking a location near or beyond Quarry Corner with Millmount roundabout or another suitable nearby location. This would help ease traffic through more residential routes (Grahamsbridge Road, Old Dundonald Road/Comber Road) that have been routinely used as rat runs between the Comber Road and Dundonald village/Upper Newtownards Road/Kempe Stones Road. Again, I would like to see those seeking to develop in that area be conditioned or be subject to S76 agreements that would insist that the contribute significantly to that road infrastructure. Any such road should be appropriate in scale and location, taking account of the fact that it will be used by significant commuters through traffic rather than simply by residents, and should be sensitive to any impact existing residents. In a similar vein, Dundonald also faces significant problems with commuter parking as the Dundonald Park and Ride is routinely over capacity; thus any further development should also take this capacity issue for public transport into consideration – a Park and Ride facility that is already clearly inadequate to support demand at peak times cannot be expected to support an even larger community.

Overall I believe the content of the LDP is positive and, if implemented robustly, will assist in most if not all of these concerns that I have routinely had representations on from constituents; but reassurance on the ability to tie down and enforce policy to a greater level than has been the case will be key. Furthermore, as a general point, I would repeat my previous requests those proposals should be considered collectively by planners to ensure a holistic approach and perspective to the development of and impact of same upon Dundonald, rather than piecemeal approach which will likely exacerbate the already significant challenges being faced on a number of levels.

Best regards,
Joanne Bunting MLA

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