

Consultation Period

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council has published its draft Plan Strategy, the first formal stage of the new Local Development Plan 2030, for public consultation.

The draft Plan Strategy is the first of two documents, which comprise the Local Development Plan 2030. It has been developed following extensive engagement with the public, stakeholders and our elected Members, including the publication of our Preferred Options Paper.

The draft Plan Strategy sets out how our Borough will grow and change up to the year 2030. It puts forward our Plan Vision for the future. It also contains a Spatial Growth Strategy indicating at a strategic level where growth should go in the Borough. It also sets out a range of Strategic Policies and Detailed Management Policies, which together will guide future planning decisions.

The draft Plan Strategy is published for formal public consultation over an 8-week period and the Council is inviting the submissions of representations, beginning on **Friday 26 July and closing on Friday 20 September 2019 at 5pm**.

The submission of representations in relation to the Council's draft Plan Strategy provides an opportunity for the public to influence the policies and proposals for the future planning and development within Antrim and Newtownabbey.

Please note that representations received after the closing period will not be accepted and will be subsequently returned.

Published alongside the draft Plan Strategy are a range of assessments including Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment), a draft Habitats Regulation Assessment and an Equality (Section 75) Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment Report. These assessments are also subject to public consultation during the formal public consultation period closing on Friday 20 September 2019 at 5pm.

Copies of the draft Plan Strategy and all supporting documents are available to view and download from our website at:

www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/draftplanstrategy.

Copies of all documents are also available for inspection at the Council Offices in Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey and Antrim Civic Centre, Antrim from Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm. Hard copies of the draft Plan Strategy are also available upon request.



Soundness Testing

A key feature of Northern Ireland's new Planning System is 'Soundness' which requires the draft Plan Strategy document to be tested at Independent Examination (IE) in terms of content, conformity and the process by which it has been prepared. Derived from established practices in England and Wales, it is considered that 'Soundness' testing will provide a more effective basis for examining Local Development Plans and consequently contribute towards a shorter IE process.

The purpose of the IE is to determine if the draft Plan Strategy satisfies statutory requirements and is 'sound'. The presumption will be that the draft Plan Strategy is 'sound' unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the IE stage.

The tests of soundness are based upon three categories which relate to how the draft Plan Strategy has been produced, the alignment of the document with central government regional plans, policy and guidance and the coherence, consistency and effectiveness of the content of the draft Plan Strategy. The tests of soundness are set out below:

| Procedural Tests | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| P1 | Has the DPD* been prepared in accordance with the Council's timetable and the Statement of Community Involvement? |
| P2 | Has the Council prepared its Preferred Options Paper and taken into account any representations made? |
| P3 | Has the DPD been subject to sustainability appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment? |
| P4 | Did the Council comply with the regulations on the form and content of its DPD and procedure for preparing the DPD? |
| Consistency Tests | |
| C1 | Did the Council take account of the Regional Development Strategy? |
| C2 | Did the Council take account of its Community Plan? |
| C3 | Did the Council take account of policy and guidance issued by the Department? |
| C4 | Has the Plan had regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the Council's district or to any adjoining Council's district? |
| Coherence and Effectiveness Tests | |
| CE1 | The DPD sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow and where cross-boundary issues are relevant it is not in conflict with the DPDs of neighbouring Councils. |



| | |
|--|---|
| CE2 | The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust evidence base. |
| CE3 | There are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring. |
| CE4 | It is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances. |
| *Development Plan Document (DPD) – Comprises of the draft Plan Strategy | |

Further information on Soundness can be found in Development Plan Practice Notes published by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). Of particular relevance is Practice Note 6 'Soundness' (Version 2) and Practice Note 9 'Submission and Handling of Representations', both are available to view at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/development-plan-practice-notes>.

In addition, the Planning Appeals Commission has also produced guidance entitled 'Procedures for Independent Examination of Local Development Plans' available at <https://www.pacni.gov.uk/procedural-guides>.

Making a Representation

As the main purpose of the IE is to determine whether the Development Plan Document (DPD) is 'sound', any person(s) wishing to make a representation to any part of the Plan should do so on the grounds of soundness. Any representation proposing a change to the Plan must demonstrate why the document is not sound having regard to the tests of soundness. Every representation should say precisely how the Plan should be changed in order to achieve soundness and should be supported, succinctly, by all the evidence thought necessary to justify the proposed change. Once the public consultation period has closed, **there will be no further opportunity to submit information unless the Commissioner requests it.**

Where several people share a common view on how the draft Plan Strategy should be changed, we encourage you to co-operate with each other, pool resources and make a single representation, for example, a local community group.

Those who make representations to the draft Plan Strategy should state whether they wish to have their representation considered at IE in writing or as an oral hearing. Unless people specifically request an oral hearing, the Commission will proceed on the basis that you are content that your representation will be considered in writing. The Commissioner will give every representation the same careful consideration regardless of whether the person who made it is heard orally or in written form.



Points to Remember:

- Representations will be made publicly available for inspection at the Council's Offices and online for counter-representations;
- Complete all relevant sections of the response form;
- Clearly state why you consider the draft Plan Strategy to be 'unsound', having regard to the soundness tests;
- There will be no further opportunity to submit information once the public consultation period closes unless the Commissioner requests it;
- We would encourage you to submit separate forms for each representation you wish to submit;
- Every representation should say precisely how the draft Plan Strategy should be changed in order to achieve soundness;
- Representations should be supported, succinctly, by all the evidence thought necessary to justify the proposed change; and
- Clearly, state whether you wish for your representation to be heard orally or in writing.

Submitting Your Representation

We recommend that you submit your representation via our on-line consultation hub, at www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/consultations, as this is the most efficient way to make a representation.

However, you can make a representation by completing this form and returning to us by **5pm on Friday 20 September 2019** either by email or by post.

Representations received after the closing period will not be accepted and will be subsequently returned.

What Happens Next

When the consultation has closed, the Forward Planning Team will collate the representations received and as soon as reasonably practicable, publish these online for a further 8-week period of consultation to allow counter-objections to be made. The representations will also be available for public inspection during this period at the Council's Offices in Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey and Antrim Civic Centre, Antrim from Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5pm.

Once this period of counter-representations has closed, the Forward Planning Team will collate the counter-representations and publish these online. They will also be made available for public inspection at the Council's Offices in Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey and Antrim Civic Centre, Antrim from Monday to Friday 8:30am to



5pm. The next anticipated step will be for the Council to contact the Department for Infrastructure to request an Independent Examination of the draft Plan Strategy.

Contact Us

For further assistance, please contact the Forward Planning Team at Mossley Mill, Newtownabbey:

By Post – Forward Planning Team

Mossley Mill
Carnmoney Road North, Newtownabbey
BT36 5QA

By Email – planning@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

By Telephone – 0300 123 6677



SECTION A – DATA PROTECTION AND CONSENT

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by producing a specific Local Development Plan Privacy Notice, which lets you know how we manage any personal information we receive from you. It contains the standards you can expect when we ask for, or hold, your personal information and an explanation of our information management security policy.

The Local Development Plan Privacy Notice can be found on our website at www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/gdpr/planning-gdpr/.

Please note that when you make a representation (or counter-representation) to the Local Development Plan your personal information (with the exception of personal telephone numbers, signatures, email addresses or sensitive personal data) will be made publicly available on the Council's website.

Copies of all representations will be provided to the DfI and an Independent Examiner (a third party) as part of the submission of the Local Development Plan for Independent Examination. A Programme Officer will also have access to this information during the IE stages of the Plan preparation

DfI, the Programme Officer the Independent Examiner will, upon receipt, be responsible for the processing of your data in line with prevailing legislation.

1. Please tick to confirm that you have read and understood the Council's Local Development Plan Privacy Notice.
 I confirm that I have read and understood the Local Development Plan privacy notice and I give my consent for Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council to hold my personal data for the purposes outlined.

You can contact the Council's Data Protection Officer via:

Post - Antrim Civic Centre, 50 Styles Way, Antrim BT41 2UB

Email - DPO@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

Phone - 028 9446 3113



SECTION B – YOUR DETAILS

2. Please specify if you are responding as an individual, as an organisation, or as an agent acting on behalf of an individual, group or organisation?

If you are responding as an agent or representing an organisation you will be the main point of contact for your client/organisation.

(Please select only one item)

- Individual
- Organisation
- Agent

| | Personal Details | Agent Details (If Applicable) |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Title | Mr | |
| First Name | Jim | |
| Last Name | Devlin | |
| Job Title (where relevant) | Head of Infrastructure | |
| Organisation (where relevant) | Department for Infrastructure Driver & Vehicle Agency | |
| Client Name (where relevant) | | |
| Address | 148-158 Corporation Street Belfast | |
| Post Code | BT1 3DH | |
| Telephone Number | 02890 254231 | |
| Email Address | Jim.Devlin@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk | |



SECTION C – REPRESENTATION

Your comments should be set out in full. This will help the Independent Examiner understand the issues you raise. You will only be able to submit further additional information to the Independent Examination if the Independent Examiner invites you to do so.

3. To which part of the draft Plan Strategy does your representation relate?

i) Paragraph Number: _____

ii) Policy Heading: 'DM1 Economic Development – Zoned Sites & Settlements'

➤ Strategic Policy (SP) Paragraph Number:

➤ Detailed Management Policy (DM) Paragraph Number:

DM 1.2

iii) Page Number in Document: 89

iv) Proposal Map (if relevant state location):_____

4. Do you consider the draft Plan Strategy to be:

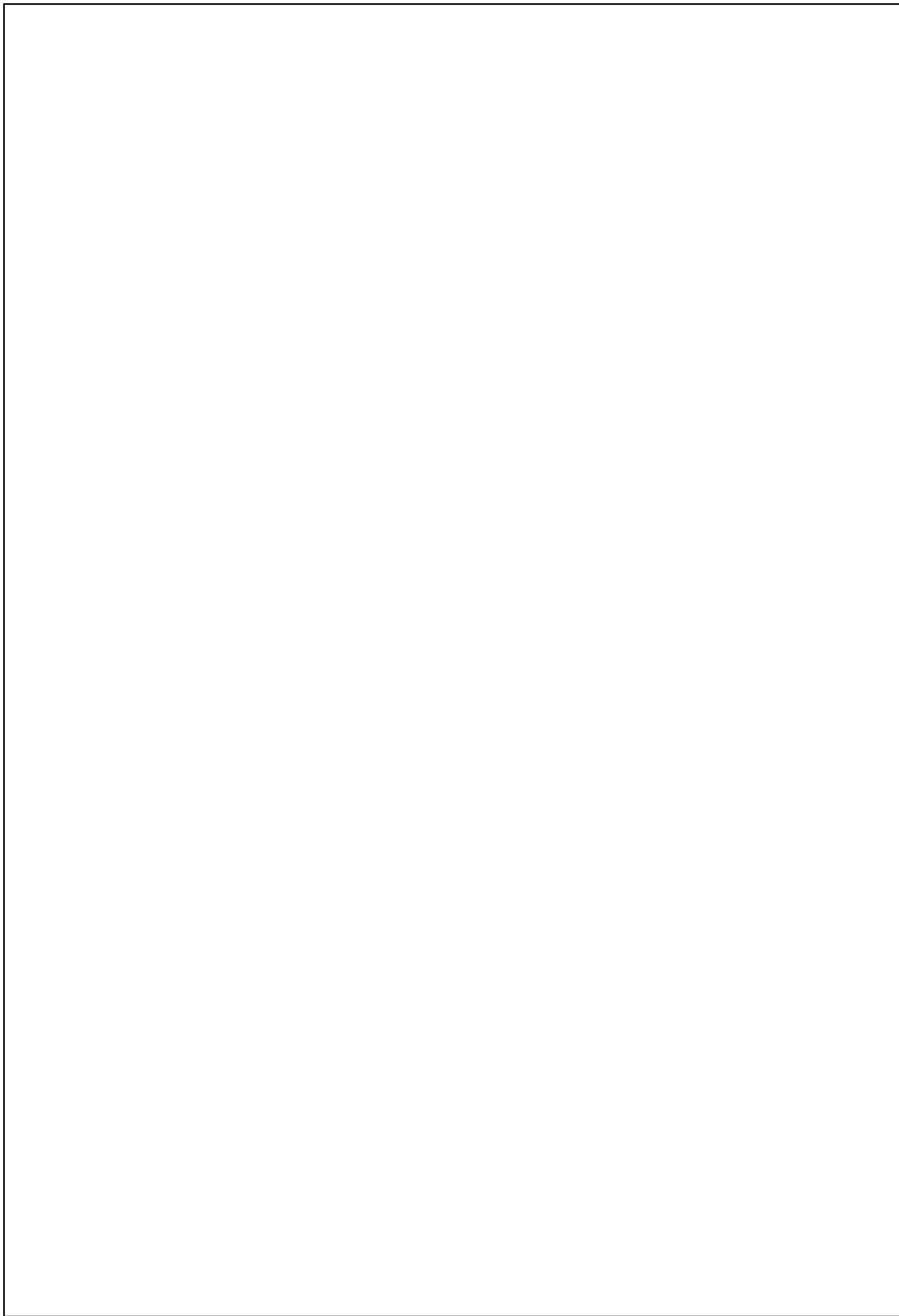
'Sound' (i.e. support)

'Unsound' (i.e. object)

5. If you consider the draft Plan Strategy to be '**SOUND**' and wish to support the draft Plan Strategy, please set out your comments below.

See Schedule A attached





(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)



6. If you consider the draft Plan Strategy to be '**UN SOUND**' please identify which test(s) of soundness your representation relates to having regard to the Department for Infrastructure's published Development Plan Practice Note 6 'Soundness' (Version 2).

Soundness Tests:

- P1** - Has the DPD¹ been prepared in accordance with the Council's timetable and the Statement of Community Involvement?
- P2** - Has the Council prepared its Preferred Options Paper and taken into account any representations made?
- P3** - Has the DPD been subject to sustainability appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment?
- P4** - Did the Council comply with the regulations on the form and content of its DPD and procedure for preparing the DPD?
- C1** - Did the Council take account of the Regional Development Strategy.
- C2** - Did the Council take account of its Community Plan?
- C3** - Did the Council take account of policy and guidance issued by the Department?
- C4** - Has the DPD had regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the Council's district or to any adjoining Council's district?
- CE1** - Does the DPD sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow and where cross-boundary issues are relevant it is not in conflict with the DPD's of neighbouring Councils?
- CE2** - Are the strategy, policies and allocations realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust evidence base?
- CE3** - Are there clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring?
- CE4** - Is it reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances?

¹ Development Plan Document (DPD) – Comprises of the draft Plan Strategy

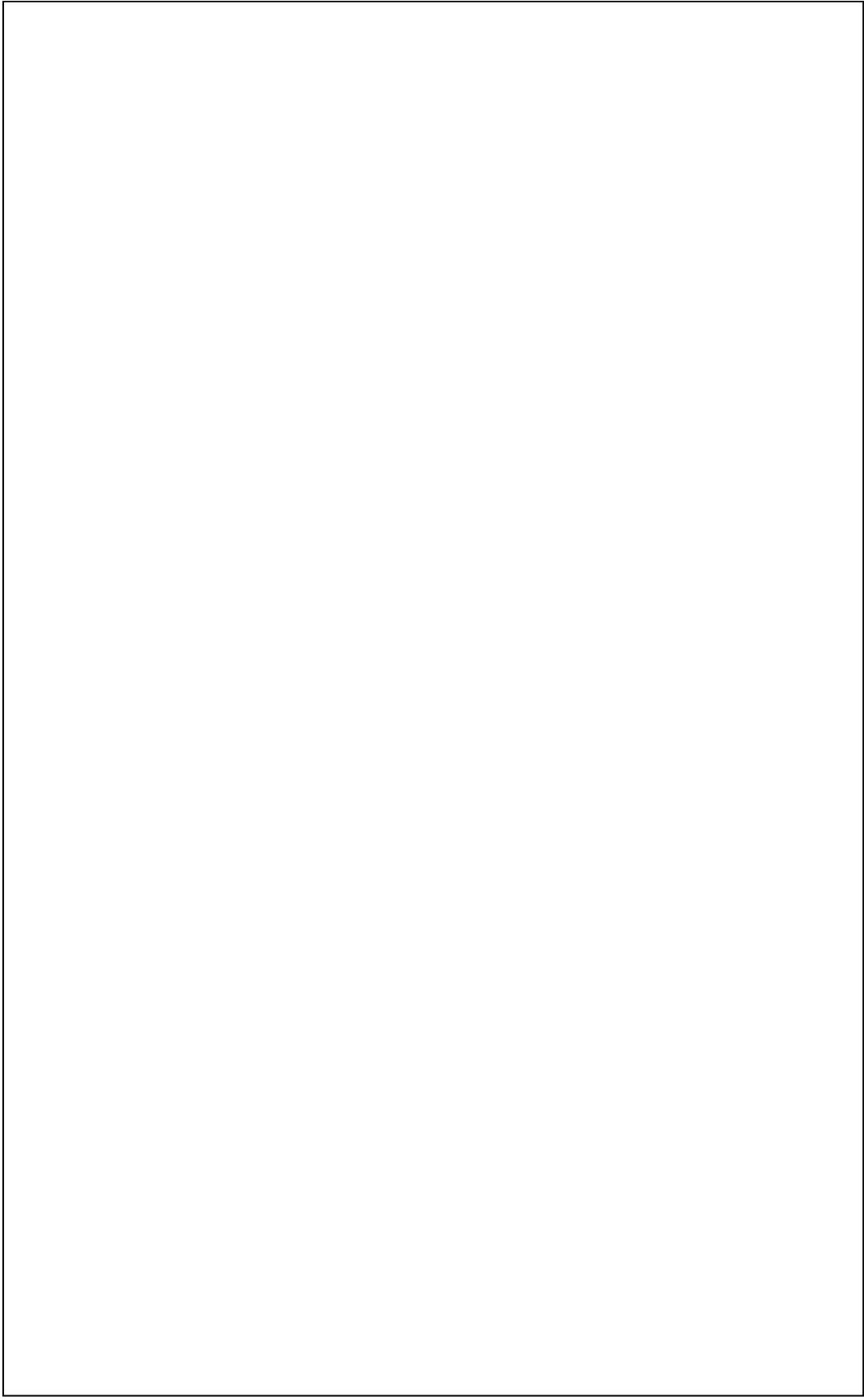


Details

7. Please give details of why you consider the draft Plan Strategy to be '**UNsound**' having regard to the test(s) you have identified above. Please be as concise as possible.

Please Note: Your representation should be submitted in full and cover succinctly all the information, evidence, and any supporting information necessary to support/justify your submission. ***This representation will be considered during the IE and there will be no further opportunity to submit information unless the Commissioner requests it.***





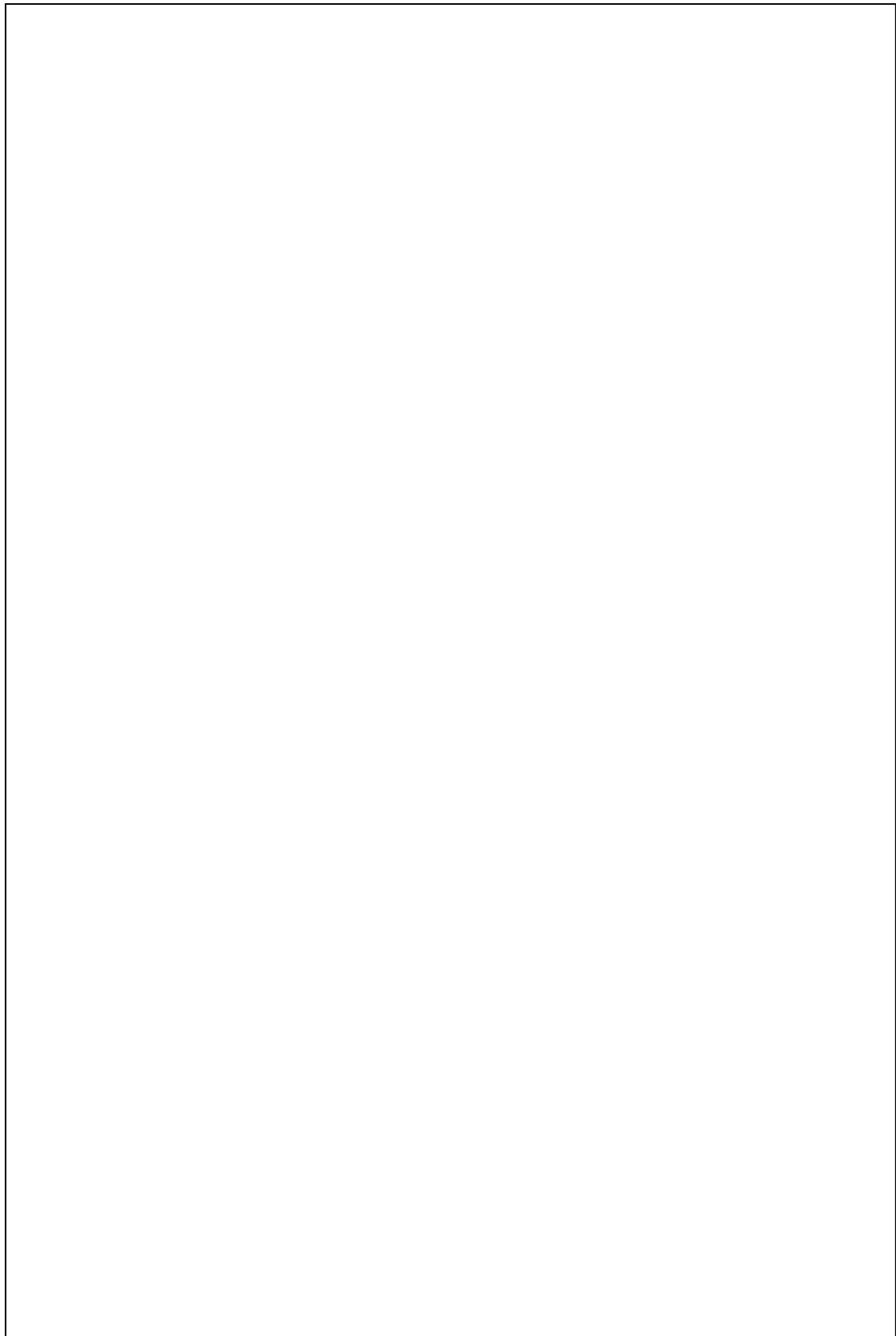
(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)



Modifications

8. If you consider the draft Plan Strategy to be '**UN SOUND**', please provide details of what, if any, modifications do you think should be made to the section, policy or proposal which your representation relates to? What specific modifications do you think should be made in order to address your representation? Please briefly state how your proposed alternative would meet the requirements of the Sustainability Appraisal and other published assessments.





(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)



9. If you are seeking a change to the draft Plan Strategy, please indicate how you would like your representation to be dealt with at Independent Examination:

Please Note: Unless you specifically request an oral hearing, the Commission will proceed on the basis that you are content to your representations considered in written form only. The Commissioner will give every representation the same careful consideration regardless of whether the person who made it is heard orally or not.

Please select only one item;

Written Representation

Oral Hearing

Signature: Jim Devlin (on behalf of Department for Infrastructure)

Date: 20/09/2019

Thank you for your response.



Schedule A

Representation to Antrim & Newtownabbey BC Local Development Plan Draft Plan Strategy on behalf of Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA)

1.0 Introduction

DVA is an Executive Agency within the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). It is charged with the provision of driver and vehicle testing, licensing and enforcement in Northern Ireland to ensure compliance with the requirements of all relevant European and national legislation.

DVA currently operate a network of 15 test centres and 2 satellite driving test centres. It carries out over 1,000,000 roadworthiness checks and almost 60,000 practical driving tests each year. The Agency's Compliance and Roadside Enforcement section also makes use of test centres and operational depots in Belfast, Craigavon and Newbuildings to ensure the roadworthiness standards of goods vehicles, buses, taxis, private cars and agricultural vehicles meet the necessary legislative requirements.

Rising demand and changes in legislative requirements coupled with constrained physical environments mean that a number of test centres are already experiencing demand exceeding capacity during the peak period from January to June each year.

Under its Infrastructure Project, DVA through Land & Property Services are currently in negotiations with a private landowner in relation to the purchase of lands to the south of Antrim Road, Mallusk with the intention of developing the site for a new vehicle test centre. If agreed, the centre will replace the existing DVA test centre at Commercial Way, Mallusk.

If the outcome of the current negotiations is positive, DVA will submit a Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) Request to Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council in relation to the proposed development. Depending on feedback from the PAD Process, DVA may then progress with the submission of a Full or Outline planning application.

2.0 Support for Draft Plan Strategy Policy DM 1 Policy DM 1: Economic Development – Zoned Sites and Settlements

The existing DVA test centre at Commercial Way, Mallusk is no longer fit for purpose and is too small to be redeveloped under the aforementioned Infrastructure Project. After an extensive site search exercise, DVA are progressing with plans to relocate their Newtownabbey / South Antrim test centre to lands at Antrim Road, Mallusk. The lands are currently designated as 'Land Zoned for Employment' in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan and are within the South of Antrim Road (Mallusk) 'Strategic Employment Land' (SEL) proposed by A&N BC's Draft Plan Strategy. This representation relates to these lands only and is not a general endorsement of planning policy relating to SELs.

A vehicle test centre does sit within any of the uses listed in the 'Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015' and as such is a 'sui generis' use. In this context, we welcome and support Paragraph DM 2 that relates to SELs and states,

"The Council will protect these strategic sites and resist proposals for alternative uses except where the development is ancillary to an existing use of the site or comprises a suitable sui generis employment use that will not lead to a significant diminution of the role of the SEL." (emphasis added)

We note that this policy has had regard to PPS 4 Planning & Economic Development 'Policy PED 7 Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses' that states that,

"Development that would result in the loss of land or buildings zoned for economic development use in a development plan (either existing areas or new allocations) to

other uses will not be permitted, unless the zoned land has been substantially developed for alternative uses.

An exception will be permitted for the development of a *sui generis* employment use within an existing or proposed industrial/employment area where it can be demonstrated that: the proposal is compatible with the predominant industrial use; it is of a scale, nature and form appropriate to the location; and provided approval will not lead to a significant diminution of the industrial/employment land resource in the locality and the plan area generally. Retailing or commercial leisure development will not be permitted except where justified as acceptable ancillary development.” (emphasis added)

Regard has also been given to the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), that states

“.....planning permission should not normally be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of land zoned for economic development use. Any decision to reallocate such zoned land to other uses ought to be made through the LDP process. While the same principle should also apply generally to unzoned land in settlements in current economic development use (or land last used for these purposes); councils may wish to retain flexibility to consider alternative proposals that offer community, environmental or other benefits, that are considered to outweigh the loss of land for economic development use.” (para. 6.89).

Whilst a planning application for the proposed development is still to be submitted, we note that the site area is likely to be in the region of 3 hectares. Table 1 below has been extracted from A&N BC's LDP Draft Plan Strategy 'Evidence Paper 3: Economic Growth' and provides detail on zoned employment land in draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (2014 Version).

BMAP (2014 Version)

| Reference | Site | Area (Ha) | Remaining Capacity in ELER (Ha) (approx.) |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Metropolitan Newtownabbey | | | |
| MNY 05 | Global Point | 90.71 | c.82.28 |
| MNY 06 | Antrim Road (North), Mallusk | 20.01 | c.17.49 |
| MNY 07 | Antrim Road (South), Mallusk | 32.66 | c.22.79 |
| MNY 08 | Abbey Business Park, Mill Road | 1.63 | c.0.00 |
| MNY 09 | Quay Road | 4.68 | c.0.70 |
| MNY 10 | Church Road | 18.09 | c.2.10 |
| MNY 11 | Doagh Road / Cloughfern Avenue | 22.09 | c.0.00 |
| MNY 12 | Glenville Road | 1.79 | c.0.00 |
| MNY 13 | FG Wilson, Doagh Road | 7.20 | c.0.00 |
| MNY 14 | Glenwell Road | 1.88 | c.0.00 |
| MNY 15 | Mallusk Industrial Estate (South) | 189.83 | c.4.68 |
| MNY 16 | Mallusk Industrial Estate (North) | 11.46 | c.0.71 |
| MNY 17 | Sealstown Road, Cottonmount | 2.10 | c.0.00 |
| Sub Total | | 404.13 | c.130.75 |

Table 1 Extract from Evidence Paper 3 – Economic Growth (Lands at Antrim Road (South) highlighted)

The potential development of 3 hectares for a DVA test centre will not lead to a significant diminution of the land zoned for industrial/employment uses (404.13 hectares) or that remains available for development (130.75 hectares). Furthermore, the proposed relocation from Mallusk Industrial Estate will allow the future redevelopment of the existing

centre (1.36 hectares) for alternative employment uses that characterise the surrounding industrial estate.

In relation to the SPPS and the comment that planning authorities should have flexibility to consider alternative proposals that offer community, environmental or other benefits, we note that the purpose of the vehicle test centre is to ensure vehicles comply with key roadworthiness and environmental requirements. As such, the proposed test centre will deliver community and environmental benefits that could be considered to outweigh the loss of land for economic development use.

To conclude and in relation to the lands at Antrim Road (South) only, DVA considers 'Policy DM 1: Economic Development – Zoned Sites and Settlements', to be sound. The Policy meets Soundness Tests C4 as A&N BC has had regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies; and CE4 as the consideration of *sui generis* uses on lands zoned for employment uses allows Council flexibility to deal with changing circumstances.