

## Regional Planning Policy & Casework

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Your Ref: 2021/ 2021/C005- 2021/C007

Our Ref: LA10/2017/1249/F,  
LA10/2019/1386/F &  
LA11/2019/1000/F

20 December 2024

Dear Programme Officer

### **RE: THE TIMETABLE FOR THE DALRADIAN CONJOINED PUBLIC LOCAL INQUIRIES**

I refer to the Commission's letter received on 16 December 2024 and the timetable for the Dalradian Conjoined Public Local Inquiries ("**PLI**") included therein.

#### **The timetable**

The timetable includes limited detail about the areas which will be discussed at the PLI. For example, the timetable indicates that "landscape & visual impact" will be considered between 24 to 26 February 2025 but provides no details as to the areas which will be considered within this overarching topic.

In order to ensure the PLI proceeds efficiently, the Commission should:

- Include a list of sub-topics or issues in the timetable (in relation to each of the overarching topics that have been listed in the timetable);
- Specify which "Departmental Consultees Required" are required for each sub-topic or issue; and
- Provide a time estimate for each sub-topic or issue.

This will allow all parties to organise their attendance and will enable the Department to coordinate relevant expert witnesses for appropriate days. A more detailed timetable will also enable interested parties, and members of the local community, to plan their attendance in advance, which would be helpful in light of the Commission's decision not to facilitate online participation in the PLI.

The Department expects the Commission to provide a complete revised timetable, containing an appropriate level of detail, by **6 January 2025**. However, ahead of this (and by no later than **24 December 2024**), it would be helpful if the Commission could provide an indication of the sub-topics or issues that will be considered under each of the overarching topics that will be considered in weeks commencing 13 and 20 January 2025. When amending the timetable, the Commission may wish to refer to previous timetables, such as the timetable for the Doraville Wind Farm 2018/C007 (a copy of which is appended to this letter).

### **Neutrality**


The Department reiterates its **neutrality** in relation to the applications which will be considered at the PLI. As it has emphasised consistently, the Department neither supports nor opposes the applications, and has convened this PLI in order to facilitate public participation and to ensure that the applications are independently and rigorously examined. Whilst the Department will fully assist the Commission throughout the PLI to deal with any queries which fall within its remit, the Department will only reach a conclusion upon receipt of the Commission's report and consideration of all of the information presented.

### **Role of consultees**

The Commission has referred to Fermanagh & Omagh District Council (FODC) and Derry City & Strabane District Council (DCSDC) as "Departmental Consultees Required". To be clear, although these councils are statutory consultees under the Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016, they are independent public bodies. The Department cannot require their attendance and is not responsible for any evidence which they may place before the Commission.

Yours sincerely

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Interim Deputy Secretary  
Climate, Planning and Public Transport