

Objections to Housing Development LA05/2022/0033/F

Location: Inside Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP) Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Objection One: Planning Policy

The proposed development is legally repugnant to newly adopted planning policies and will provide a planning precedent that will undermine any future protective presumptions for open space in the LVRP.

- **Adherence to New Policies:**
 - Until the courts direct the Department or the Councils differently, the **Local Development Plan 2032**, adopted on **26th September 2023**, and its supporting policies prevail.
 - The plan-led systems afford not just significant materiality but **determinative weight** to the new planning policies that offer protection from development of this nature in the LVRP.
 - **Previous plans and policies** referred to in Section 2 of the Developer's Rebuttal Report ceased to be extant, except for the **Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2015 (SPPS)**.
 - **Relevant Policies in LCCC's LDP 2032:**
 - **Pg 32, Strategy 7:** Protect and enhance our designated natural heritage assets, including the LVRP AONB, ensuring they remain unspoilt for future generations.
 - **Pg 105:** The LVRP is a unique tourism/recreation asset requiring protection for future generations. (1.8 million visitors, 2022–2023).
 - **Pg 107:** Refers to the LVRP Five-Year Management Plan (2017–2022) and the LVRP 10-Year Strategic Vision, focusing on six key themes.
 - **Pg 118, Strategic Policy 19:** Protect and enhance natural heritage, maintain landscape quality, and safeguard LVRP integrity while allowing appropriate access.
 - **Pg 163:** Proposals impacting the setting should be strongly resisted to preserve the green wedge surrounding the settlement.
 - **Non-infill Site:** This is **not an infill site**, defined as a gap in land with continuously built-up frontage with adjacent public road or private laneway.
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Objection Two: Environmental Impact

The Council and statutory agencies have failed in their requirements to adequately assess the ecological and landscape integrity of the site and have failed to carry out a positive EIA determination within Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 of The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (N. Ireland) 2017.

- **Key Issues:**
 - **165+ Year-Old Hawthorn Hedge:**
 - Priority habitat destroyed, affecting wildlife corridors, soil erosion control, water runoff, and carbon sequestration.
 - **Loss of Over 1 Ha of Grasslands and Scrub Land:**
 - Critical habitats and foraging areas for priority protected species (e.g., Badgers, Barn Owls, Bats, and Hedgehogs) will be removed.
 - **SLNCI Proximity:** Adjacent to a Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance, where development is presumptively opposed.
 - **EIA Screening Deficiencies:**
 - Relies on a simplistic "Yes/No" approach, criticized by the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee (ACCC).
 - Does not address Schedule 3 criteria of EIA Regulations 2017.
 - **Additional Failures:**
 - **AECOM Ecology Assessment:** Lacks seasonal assessments and disregards eyewitness reports.
 - **Habitats Regulation Assessment:** Fails to recognize hydraulic connections to Belfast Lough SPA.
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Objection Three: Infrastructure

The proposed development places additional strain on already inadequate infrastructure.

- **Sewerage:**
 - **Drumbeg Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW)** has been at capacity since at least 2019.
 - Supplementary Information confirms 17 houses will exacerbate existing sewerage issues.
 - No adherence to British Code of Practice Flows and Loads for sewage treatment systems.

- **Flooding:**
 - Quarterlands Road and the site experience persistent flooding, as highlighted in **Rivers Agency Flood Maps (2023)**.
 - Concerns remain unaddressed, despite photographic evidence.
 - **Traffic:**
 - Quarterlands Road is too narrow to accommodate increased traffic.
 - No provision for disability access, public transport, cyclist safety, or pedestrian safety (**TRA 8 ignored**).
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Objection Four: Design, Siting, and Layout

The proposed design is incompatible with the character of the local area.

- **Key Concerns:**
 - **Building Heights:** Proposed ridge heights (8–8.5m) are disproportionate to nearby single-storey or 1.5-storey cottages.
 - **Safety Risks:** Shared surface design increases accident risks, especially for children and disabled individuals.
 - **Loss of Amenities:** Residents will lose green space, privacy, and the quiet rural environment.
 - **Legal Considerations:**
 - Violates **Protocol 1, Article 1** (Protection of Property).
 - Contravenes **Article 8(2)** (Right to Private and Family Life) as established in **Britton v SOS**.
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Further Information

For more detailed objections and evidence, visit www.quarterlands.com or consult the **Supplementary Information**.