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To: [Forward Planning](#)
Subject: Castleconnell Local Area Plan
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To whom it may concern,

I would like to make a submission to the Castleconnell Local Area Plan. Firstly, I would like to highlight the need to improve the bus service in the village. The bus only comes twice a day, and it can be very difficult to catch the bus going into Limerick as opposed to Nenagh, since the bus going to Limerick is not advertised on the online Bus Éireann schedule and there is no schedule posted locally in the village. I would like the area plan to reflect the need for a more frequent and more reliable bus service, with signposted stopping points and schedules. This would reduce reliance on private cars to get into town, which would reduce our carbon emissions and traffic congestion.

Secondly, I believe that the area plan must prevent the village from sprawling further and further outward, as has unfortunately happened with Limerick City. Castleconnell, like so many other Irish villages, is in serious danger of succumbing to a kind of urban sprawl, where the historic town centre is swamped by low-density housing developments radiating out into the countryside. I believe that the area plan should take action against this sprawl, which can have deleterious effects on service provision, carbon emissions, household transport costs, the environment, and human wellbeing. Efforts must be made to direct new inhabitants as close to the village centre as possible, and to reuse derelict brownspace. The new houses built in the disused yard beside the old pub are an excellent example of this, and are very beautiful to look at.

In addition, I think that more needs to be done to help Castleconnell's wildlife. The habitats (like the woodlands and meadows) have been fragmented by development, and the river shows significant signs of pollution (litter; foul scum forming on the surface). There are a number of steps the area plan could take to help our non-human residents, such as convening regular litter-picks, shifting the car-park area further back from the riverbank to prevent contamination from vehicle runoff, increasing the no-mow areas, and creating natural corridors between habitats. For example, the remaining conifers in the abandoned sitka spruce plantation in Coolbane Wood (which has been partly reclaimed by nature) could be felled, allowing further natural regeneration to take place. Also, local residents could be encouraged to make their back gardens more wildlife-friendly by replacing exotic hedges with native shrubs, letting wildflowers grow, and building ponds. Finally, species-rich areas could be safeguarded from development through formal designation, such as the wonderful meadow beside the fairy wood.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my submission. I hope you will take my suggestions into account when drafting the area plan.

Yours faithfully,
Rachel Beck.