

To whom it may concern,

I am a resident in Warrenpoint and I have a number of items I would like to bring to your attention.

Please read the following concerns carefully, with regards to the Air and water issues and how it can be addressed as this is causing issues regarding the residents and tourism.

An initial criticism of the report was its length (over 400 pages), the lack of named authors, and the language used. This report is important for all the locals of Newry, Mourne and Down, and should be detailed in a way that is accessible to members of that community. There was also little information as to how the public could actively engage with the report.

(A) Our tourism is a major concern and we have had a number of complaints, especially in May, June, July and August from locals and tourists to our town. One which was included from tourists arriving to our port on the cruise ships and publicised on UTV News.

It is a disgrace Re-Gen have taken the joy of the visiting tourists and passengers who sailed up our stunning Lough and were welcomed to Warrenpoint with the above issues.

We had a number of festivals in Warrenpoint and not one was free from the dreadful smell and flies.

(B) The noise during the night with cranes loading bales from Re-Gen storage, along with their lorries full of their waste arriving which increase the night noise.

Not forgetting the increase of flies in the local homes daily. This is an ongoing issue.

We feel it is now time for you to take this into consideration as many households and families are being deprived of enjoying their homes and our beautiful town plus affecting our tourists arriving.

Also regarding the storage of non - recyclable Refuse derived fuel that have been causing locals to have illnesses and respiratory problems.

Recently Warrenpoint Harbour Authority announced they had removed the above from Warrenpoint Harbour which sadly has not been recognised by the people of the town.

Information on how the development could impact tourism in the area is detailed in the report under the following headings: Tourism (pages 112-114); Sustainable Transport (page 123); Historic Environment (pages 144-145); and Coastal Development (150 - 152).

As the plan states “it will support sustainable forms of tourism which value our environment and cultural heritage”, I have detailed below a few possible avenues for improvement that a number of members from the local community have agreed on.

1. The formation of sustainable cycle routes linking up with the greenway and the new bridge.
2. We have a Narrow Water Keep maintained by Narrow Water Estate which could potentially be developed as a Living In Story Project.
3. The importance of maintaining and preserving the Pilgrim Route.
4. The restoration of the Warrenpoint Swimming Pool to its original Edwardian structure, re-establishing it as an open-air saltwater bath with an historical significance and beauty, encouraging tourism and becoming a space where locals can experience community and the known health benefits of swimming in the salt water pool.

(C) Air and Water

The storage of non-recyclable waste on Warrenpoint Harbour is continuing to cause physical and emotional distress to residents. The report states the council will carry out assessment(s) to protect against pollution. However the report does not mention the current problems being faced with pollution such as air pollution (air quality and odours), sound pollution caused by night time loading, light pollution, and pests such as flies and rats.

It must be noted that these already present issues have not been included in the report.

Concerns have also been raised about the sprays used to minimise the smells and the impact this could have on residents' physical and mental health. In addition, the impact the runoff

from the bales and sprays would have on the rich wildlife of the Lough and its surroundings has been discussed. Seasearch are currently collecting more data on the flora and fauna that is home to the Lough and new species that with warming waters are migrating there. The Lough and landscape is rich with biodiversity that needs to be protected. The report discusses harm prevention, but does not acknowledge how these concerns are already present for wildlife, residents and tourists. For the area to develop further tourism, people need to know that the air they are breathing and the water they are swimming in is safe. I would like to request a baseline study of the health of the Lough is conducted. Warrenpoint has been classified as only satisfactory, and more information needs to be gathered regularly and presented detailing why that is the case – whether due to sewage, pollution from industry, etc.

(D) Biodiversity

The proposed Development Plan aims to develop Warrenpoint Port into a ‘major port’. In the face of unprecedented biodiversity loss across the globe due to a multitude of detrimental and extractive anthropogenic activities, any plans to develop land must have respect for the environment and biodiversity at the fore. The DDP mentions environmental legislation regarding the requirement of development projects to not pose considerable threat to the environment. However, it does not mention in detail, how designated sites of conservation concern will be protected against the expansion of Warrenpoint Port and industrial activities. Warrenpoint Port is situated within Carlingford Lough ASSI and is close to Carlingford Lough SPA and Carlingford Lough RAMSAR. It is also adjacent to Carlingford Shore SAC on the county Louth side. Other designated sites near Warrenpoint include Greenan Lough ASSI, Derryleckagh ASSI, Derryleckagh SAC and Rostrevor Wood SAC. It is herein that questions of concern regarding biodiversity are presented:

- Where will this port expand into, and how will this impact biodiversity within designated sites?
- What measures will be in place to ensure that industrial activities do not cause severe damage to the waters of Carlingford Lough, as has been and continues to be the case?

The DDP is not nearly ambitious enough regarding the protection and conservation of biodiversity within the council area. A sensitive approach to the environment and the natural world must be the priority within any development plans to ensure that both the people and the planet do not face detrimental impacts from ill-advised and ill-planned development projects.

Issues from the local community which are not addressed and will likely be exacerbated by any industrial expansion in and around Carlingford lough include:

- Water quality
- Degradation of marine and estuarine habitat and loss of biodiversity
- Habitat and species designation not respected (SAC, ASSI, SPA)
- Lack of wildlife corridors and habitat creation for biodiversity
- Transboundary issues related to environmental concerns.

Solutions to these issues:

- Frequent and thorough water testing for pollutants
- Improving biodiversity potential in urban environments through planting native trees sourced from local seed stock, creation and management of native wildflower meadows and invasive species control
- Ensuring that environmental legislation is enforced for the protection of various habitat designations in and around Carlingford Lough
- Communication with Louth County Council to implement a cross-border protocol for raising environmental concerns and accountability.

I strongly urge The Local Development Plan Team to consider all outlined issues, questions and to take suggested actions as it concerns the wellbeing of all current and future residents, the future of Warrenpoint, Carlingford Lough, and wider surroundings as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Thank you.

