

Dear, Sir,

I am contacting you to express my concerns regarding the impact on the environment the proposals contained in the Planning Bill might have in the long term. It appears to me that, if the Bill goes through, undue weight will be given to the claimed economic benefits of a development proposal, to the detriment of the environment and the public. This is a retrograde step.

Developers can and will make wholly unrealistic claims regarding the economic benefits a development will bring to an area or community. These claims are rarely verifiable and in any case the circumstances can change overnight, often resulting in the developer disappearing. On the other hand, undertakings regarding the measures that will be taken to protect a community or environment are easily forgotten or worked around once a development gets under way, and the impact is there for ever unless someone, usually with public money, undertakes to put matters right.

I would suggest that these are widely held perceptions and I am most disappointed that the Department did not feel the need to hold a full public consultation on the Bill – rather than just a limited consultation being held by the Committee. These perceptions might easily have been corrected had the public been given more information about the Bill and an appropriate period of time in which to reach a more informed conclusion.

Regards,

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