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Date: 15/01/2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Zoning Submission In Respect Of Businesses That Produce Local Foods.

I refer to the above and I wish to make the above-mentioned submission on behalf of a number of food producers. It is our professional opinion that the new County Development Plan should give as much support as possible to producers of homegrown foods and vegetables as this is an important sector in the local economy.

One of the main problems encountered by the industry is the lack of rental accommodation for seasonal workers who come into the country for 3 – 4 months during the summer period. It is our professional opinion that a provision should be made in the new County Development Plan so as to allow temporary onsite accommodation, subject to the necessary consents, to facilitate seasonal workers at these various locations. The reason been is that it is impossible to find temporary accommodation for the summer months for these workers.

In addition we recommend that this temporary accommodation should be serviced via an onsite sewerage treatment systems constructed and maintained by the business owner in accordance with the relevant EPA Guidelines applicable to such systems.

Another important point is that we recommend that the development contributions applicable to such business should be kept to a minimum as these businesses are usually operate seasonally and not on a full-time basis like the majority of other business.

Also missing from the current County plan is a provision for the construction of poly houses, Spanish tunnels or solo tunnels for the growing and harvesting of fruit crops or other horticulture crops with zero or minimum development charges. The fruit growing or horticulture industry has become highly specialised and any grower in this sector needs to have crops covered under poly houses or Spanish tunnels. Supermarkets have exacting standards

and any local grower that would grow fruit here in Co Longford is in competition with fruit from international markets as well as Wexford, Dublin and Meath (the above counties mentioned have no development charges). For these types of structures it is my professional opinion that we are stifling the growth of the horticulture sector in Co Longford. These structures sometimes can cover a big area so a charge per square metre can quickly run into a huge bill for potential developments. Therefore, in the interest of helping the horticulture industry in Co Longford, I believe there should be no development charges for the construction of poly tunnels, Spanish tunnels or solo tunnels.

Should you require any further clarity then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Signed: _____
Mark Cunningham, BEng, MSc, CEng, MIEI.