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# **LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW**

*Chief Executives Report on Issues arising from Stage Two Consultation*

*Under Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended*

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LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL  
Comhairle Chontae Laoise



**Laois County Council**  
**Comhairle Chontae Laoise**

**12<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

# ***Chief Executive's Report to Members of Laois County Council under Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.***

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## Part 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

This report forms part of the statutory process for the review of the Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the preparation of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023. It sets out the procedures for preparation of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023 and summarises the National and Regional Context in which the Plan is being prepared. It lists and summarises the issues raised during the Second Stage Public Consultation period and gives the Chief Executives response[s] and recommendation[s] in relation to those issues. These are arranged according to the Section Headings of the Draft Plan though there is a separate section dealing with the Ministers submission and Chief Executives response and recommendation thereto. The report is submitted to the Members of Laois County Council for their consideration.

### 1.2 Legislative Background

The Chief Executive's Report is prepared and submitted in accordance with the requirements of Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. **Section 12(4)** of Act states inter alia that:

4. [a] *Not later than 22 weeks after giving notice under subsection (1) and, if appropriate, subsection (3), the manager of a planning authority shall prepare a report on any submissions or observations received under subsection (2) or (3) and submit the report to the members of the authority for their consideration.*

(b) *A report under paragraph (a) shall—*

(i) *list the persons or bodies who made submissions or observations under this section,*

(ii) *summarise the following from the submissions or observations made under this section:*

- *issues raised by the Minister; and*
- *thereafter, issues raised by other bodies or persons,*

(iii) *give the response of the manager to the issues raised, taking account of any directions of the members of the authority or the committee under section 11(4), the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the statutory obligations of any local authority in the area and any relevant policies or objectives of the Government or of any Minister of the Government and, if appropriate, any observations made by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands under subsection*

## Procedures for preparation of the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023

### 1.3 Timeframe

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended ( hereafter referred to as the Act), development plans will now run for a six year period and preparation of a new plan must commence not later than four years after the plan was adopted. The publication of a notice on **9<sup>th</sup> October 2015**, stating the intention to prepare a new Draft County Development Plan for the period 2017-2023 marked the formal commencement of the two year review process. Within two years of this date a new plan must be adopted by the Members of the Council. The Act sets out a number of key stages in the process.

### 1.4 First Stage

The first stage involved an **eight week preliminary consultation period, from 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015 through 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015**, during which submissions were invited on issues to be included in the Draft County Development Plan. A number of meetings were held with interested bodies, the Public and the County Council members. Service Providers were also consulted on their plans and operational

programmes. There were also meetings with key internal Council sections such as Road Design and Water Services on the subject of overall infrastructure provision in the county.

A Chief Executives report was then prepared and circulated to the Council members for their consideration on **25<sup>th</sup> January 2016**. The Chief Executives Report listed the persons who made submissions, summarised the issues raised and indicated the opinion and recommendation of the Chief Executive in relation to such issues. A Special Council Meeting was held on **21<sup>st</sup> March 2016** to discuss the Chief Executives Report.

Then followed a 12 week period for the actual preparation by the Executive of the Draft County Development Plan and its submission to Council members who had an 8 week period for its consideration at the end of which it became the formal Draft Plan. Briefing sessions for the members were held on 7<sup>th</sup> July and 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016 respectively. The Plan was adopted for public display at the Council meeting on the July 25<sup>th</sup> 2016 subject to a number of amendments.

#### 1.5 *Second Stage*

The Draft Plan went on public display for a **ten week period from 5<sup>th</sup> August through 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016**; the public consultation was extended by a further five weeks to **17<sup>th</sup> November 2016**.

Advertisements were placed in national and local newspapers and on the Councils web site inviting written submissions from members of the public and other interested parties. Notice of the making of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023 was also issued to the bodies prescribed under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.

The aim of the consultation process was to invite submissions on the policies and objectives contained in the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023. The Draft Plan was [is] made available at all Council Offices and Libraries throughout the County as well as on the Council website [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie).

Public consultation meetings were advertised in the local media, on the internet and through the members of the Laois Public Participation Network (PPN) inviting all interested parties to attend public workshops. Notices were also sent to a wide range of community, business and environmental organisations and other stakeholders, inviting them to participate in the consultation process. Public workshops were held in each of the three Municipal Districts of County Laois, as follows:

Date	Location	Attendance	Issues Raised
12 <sup>th</sup> September 2016	Abbeyleix for Portlaoise MD	16	Renewable energy, rural housing, design, built heritage, physical and social infrastructure, community planning
13 <sup>th</sup> September 2016	Ballylynan for Graiguecullen & Portarlinton MD	14	Renewable energy, rural and urban housing, design, economic development, landscape, tourism, broad band, physical and social infrastructure
20 <sup>th</sup> September 2016	Castletown for Borris-in-Ossory & Mountmellick MD	38	Renewable energy, rural and urban housing, flood risk, landscape, broad band, afforestation, physical and social infrastructure

Each of the workshops involved an overview of the process and timescale involved in the plan review and preparation as well as the likely key issues of concern to be considered. Submissions or observations regarding objectives and policies to deliver an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan were invited.

In addition to the public workshops, there were briefing sessions held with the **Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC of Laois County Council, Laois Comhairle na nOg and Laois Heritage Forum.**

Unlike during the first stage, pre-draft consultation period, requests or proposals for zoning of lands could be considered at this second stage consultation period.

#### 1.6 *Submissions*

A total of **80** no. valid submissions were received [see Appendix C]. The submissions, some of which are inter-linked, cover a wide range of topics including:

- guidance from the Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government and the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly [formerly Midland Regional Authority] in relation to population projections and housing land requirements as issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended [2no.];
- retention of or changes to existing land use-zonings at various locations throughout the county including in Portlaoise, Graiguecullen, Stradbally, Ballyroan, Mountrath, Killeshin,;
- provision of physical, social and community infrastructure at various urban and rural locations,
- type and location of renewable energy to be developed in the county.
- economic renewal, job creation and tackling of dereliction,;
- expansion of tourism and outdoor recreation sector,;
- general retailing and retail strategy with emphasis on sequential approach and favouring town centre over suburban locations for new retail development,;
- nature and landscape conservation;
- built environment including requests for de-listing of Protected Structures and creation of an additional Architectural Conservation Area and ,
- flood risk assessment

The written submissions have been analysed together with feedback on issues raised at the various public meetings held. It is notable that there is significant overlap in the issues raised at the workshops and in the written submissions.

#### 1.7 *Strategic Environmental Assessment*

An early consideration in making, reviewing or varying a Development Plan is the need to comply with the requirements of the **Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004** as amended. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt that plan or programme. **The SEA process includes:**

- preparing an Environmental Report where the likely significant environmental effects are identified and evaluated;
- consulting the public, environmental authorities and any EU Member State affected, on the environmental report and draft plan or programme;
- taking account of the findings of the report and the outcome of these consultations in deciding whether to adopt or modify the draft plan or programme;
- making known the decision on adoption of the plan or programme and how SEA influenced the outcome.

SEA is intended to provide the governing framework for influencing decision-making at an earlier stage when plans and programmes which give rise to individual projects are being developed. It should lead to more sustainable development through the systematic appraisal of policy options. The SEA process is carried out in parallel with preparation of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

According to **Section 11(7) (aa) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended:**

*The planning authority shall determine if a strategic environmental assessment or an appropriate assessment or both such assessments, as the case may be, is or are required to be carried out as respects one or more than one proposed modification that would, if made, be a material alteration of the variation of the development plan”.*

The EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) which was transposed into Irish Law in 2004 states: *(Article 1) The objective of this Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.*

The SEA process is being undertaken as part of the preparation of the new Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

A Draft Environmental Report, prepared by CAAS Consultants, was put on public display along with the Draft County Development Plan and was forwarded to the following statutory environmental bodies for their comments, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Department of Energy, Communications and Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Agency.

A separate environmental assessment detailing the submissions received from the prescribed environmental bodies as listed above and the chief executives response accordingly has been prepared as part of this overall report. This report will also include an environmental evaluation of the proposed amendments to policies and objectives as a result of consideration of the submissions received on the Draft Plan. It is imperative that the environmental implications of proposed amendments to policies are considered during this period.

## **1.8 *Appropriate Assessment***

The local authority is the competent authority in relation to planning and the **Habitats Directive**. An appropriate assessment of the policies and objectives of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 was carried out by CAAS Consultants. This was on put on public display and referred to the relevant environmental bodies during the second phase of public consultation.

## **1.9 *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment***

Flooding is a natural process that can happen at any time in a wide variety of locations. Flooding has significant impacts on human activities. It can threaten people's lives, their property and the environment. Assets at risk can include housing, transport and public service infrastructure, and commercial, industrial and agricultural enterprises. The health, social, economic and environmental impacts of flooding can be significant and have a wide community impact.

The frequency, pattern and severity of flooding are expected to increase as a result of climate change. Development can also exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off, altering watercourses and removing floodplain storage. There is a history of flooding of a number of urban and rural locations in County Laois. Significant flood events have occurred at regular intervals including in 1924, 1935, 1947, 1954, 1968, 1990, 2008 and 2009.

In November 2009, comprehensive flooding guidelines were introduced by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government to address the whole issue of flooding and to incorporate flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process. The guidelines are aimed at ensuring a more consistent, rigorous and systematic approach to fully incorporate flood risk assessment and management into the planning system. In accordance with these guidelines a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was undertaken in parallel with the preparation of the draft Plan is contained within Volume 3: The Draft Environmental Report.

The Council will strive to ensure that proper flood risk identification, assessment and management avoidance are integrated with the planning system to safeguard and provide for the future sustainable development of County Laois.

#### **1.10 Next Steps**

The next key stages in the process are as set out under **Sections 12[5] and 12[6]** respectively of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. **Section 12(5)** of the Act requires that:

*The consideration of a draft plan and the manager's report under paragraph (a) shall be completed **within 12 weeks** of the submission of the manager's report [this report] to the members of the authority.*

According to **Section 12(6)**:

*Where, following the consideration of the draft development plan and the manager's report, it appears to the members of the authority that the draft should be accepted or amended, subject to subsection (7), they may, by resolution, accept or amend the draft and make the development plan accordingly.*

#### **1.11 Members consideration of the Chief Executive's Report**

In making the development plan the members shall be restricted to considering:

- the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development plan relates,
- the statutory obligations of any local authority in the area and
- any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government

## Part 2: Issues raised and Chief Executives Response[s] and Recommendation[s]

### 3.1 Introduction

A summary of the issues raised during the second stage consultation process [and the Chief Executive's response and recommendation in relation to such issues] are presented in this section, which is broken down into three sub-sections.

**Section 3.2** deals with the submission from the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government, **Section 3.3** with the submission from the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly and **Section 3.4** with the submissions from all other parties.

For ease of reference, in Section 3.3, the issues raised in the submissions are referenced in accordance with the format and Section Headings of the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023:

**Volume 1** contains the written statement which is set out as follows:

<i>Section 1</i>	<i>Introduction &amp; Strategic Context</i>
<i>Section 2</i>	<i>Development Plan Strategy [Core Strategy]</i>
<i>Section 3</i>	<i>Housing Policy</i>
<i>Section 4</i>	<i>Social, Community &amp; Recreational Strategy</i>
<i>Section 5</i>	<i>Economic Development</i>
<i>Section 6</i>	<i>Infrastructure</i>
<i>Section 7</i>	<i>Heritage</i>
<i>Section 8</i>	<i>General Location and Pattern of Development</i>

**Volume 2** Contains the Settlement Plans for County Laois which have been informed by the Settlement Strategy in Volume 1. These plans illustrate the land use zoning for the towns and villages. Table 2 outlines the areas which are covered by Settlement Plans.

**Volume 3** Includes the following: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

NOTE

#### KEY TO READING THE CE REPORT

*For the purposes of reading this report please note the following*

- *Proposed amended text and new text is coloured **RED** in this document.*
- *Text with ~~STRIKETHROUGH~~ is proposed for deletion*
- *Text in **GREEN** is text from the Draft Plan as is.*

## Part 3.0 Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government,

### SUBMISSION NO. 69

The table below provides a summary of the issues raised by the Minister in his submission and the Chief Executive's response and recommendation accordingly.

Issues raised	Chief Executive's Response
<p><u>Core Strategy and Proposed Housing Allocation</u></p> <p>The Draft County Development Plan and its Core Strategy envisages that the population of Laois will grow to 89,790 persons by 2023, an increase of (11.5%). This is within the context of the previous very rapid population increase of the county in the 2002 to 2011 period. The overall population target translates into a housing requirement of 2,136 new homes over the plan period to 2023 and accordingly the Plan provides for 240 hectares of new residential development lands – divided between 78 hectares for Portlaoise and 162 hectares in the rest of the county. Table 5 (pg.29) details the Core Strategy in relation to the settlements in the county. Importantly, section 2.3 informs that there is currently an overzoning of residential lands relative to the proposed 2017-23 core strategy – 335 hectares countywide.</p> <p>The Department notes that the residential land allocations to Portlaoise and Portarlington are specified in Table 5 and it is stated that these settlements will be subject to Local Area Plans/Review of local area plans. However, there is no clearly stated timescale or mechanism to ensure that appropriate re-structuring of the existing zoned land bank is undertaken in subsequent local area plan processes. The Council is therefore requested to clarify the arrangements and timescales for ensuring compliance of relevant local area plans with the new core strategy and that new residential development proceeds in an orderly and structured fashion. Additional objectives and policy safeguards should be formulated by the Council in this regard for inclusion in the Plan. It is further noted that under revised regional structures, the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly will prepare a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) including revised statutory population and housing allocations for the counties of</p>	<p>Submission noted. The Planning Authority notes the advice from the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in relation to the Draft Plan.</p> <p>The responses and recommendations hereunder follow the sub-headings in the Dept. submission.</p> <p><b>Core Strategy and Proposed Housing Allocation</b></p> <p>Include the following objective OBJ<sub>1</sub> in Section 2 of the Draft Plan and re-number other objective accordingly.</p> <p><b>OBJ<sub>1</sub> The Planning Authority will undertake a review of the housing strategy subsequent to the adoption of the future Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy [RSES] by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.</b></p> <p>Amend original objective OBJ<sub>1</sub> so as to read as follows:</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council:</p> <p><b>OBJ<sub>2</sub> To review the Portlaoise Local Area Plan (2012-2018) and Mountmellick (2012-2018) and the joint Local Area Plans for Portarlington(2012-2018) and the Joint spatial Plan for Greater Urban Area of Carlow / Graiguecullen (2012-2018) [in association with Offaly County Council and Carlow County Council respectively during the period of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. New residential development in the local area plan areas shall only proceed in an orderly and structured fashion and be in accordance with the overall core strategy as set out in the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</b></p> <p><b>Settlement Strategy</b></p>

the region. County Laois is located within the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area and section 10(2A) (a) of the Planning & Development Act (as amended) requires that a housing strategy is consistent with the RSES.

Accordingly, it is recommended that an objective be included in the Draft Plan to undertake a review of the housing strategy subsequent to the adoption of the future RSES by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.

### Settlement Strategy

Section 2.5 and Figure 6 of the Plan details the proposed *Settlement Hierarchy* for County Laois – including specifying Rathdowney, Durrow and Ballylynan as Local Service Towns. However, the Department notes that the existing Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010-2022 (Section 4.9.2.3) identify Rathdowney and Durrow as Local Service Towns and that Ballylynan is not included in the designation. Ballylynan is also not included in the Core Strategy of the Draft Plan- Table 5 (pg.29).

As noted above, a new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) will be prepared by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly and this will include a settlement strategy for the region. Pending the adoption of this new regional strategy, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010-2022 remain the statutory regional guidance that the development plans of the individual local authorities of the region must be consistent with.

Changes to the Settlement Strategy at a regional level would therefore more appropriately be considered in the future statutory process for the RSES. In the meantime, the designation of Ballylynan as a Local Service Town should be re-considered as it would lead to inconsistency with and confusion between the County Development Plan and the Regional Planning Guidelines and it is suggested that another county development plan specific designation should be employed instead.

### Retail Development Hierarchy

The Retail Strategy for County Laois (Appendix 4) and (Table 12, pg.68) of the written statement designates Portlaoise as the Major Town Centre, Portarlinton as

The reason for inclusion of Ballylynan in Figure 6: Settlement Strategy was because of the phenomenal level of growth that has taken place in the settlement since Census 2002. In 2002, the population of Ballylynan was recorded at 430. By Census 2011 it had reached 1,084 which represents an increase in the order of 152%.

By way of comparison, the populations of Durrow and Rathdowney increased much more modestly; from 717 to 843 for Durrow [an increase of 18%] and from 1,111 to 1,208 in the case of Rathdowney [an increase of 9%].

The Planning Authority considered that Ballylynan should be referenced on account of such headline demographic trends. Save for Graiguecullen in the western Carlow environs, Ballylynan is by far the fastest growing urban centre in the south-east of the county.

Nonetheless, in view of the Departments concern regarding inconsistency with and confusion between the County Development Plan and the Regional Planning Guidelines,

**Ballylynan should be removed from the “Local Service Town” category and re-designated as a “Newly Emerging Local Service Town”. Figure 6 to be amended accordingly by inclusion of this category above “Villages >400” category and below “Local Service Town” category.**

### ***Retail Development Hierarchy***

In view of Depts. comments, Table 12 “Laois Retail Hierarchy” to be amended as follows.

The third row is to be renamed ***County Town Centre MRPGS: Service Towns*** and refer to the following towns: Abbeyleix, Mountmellick, Mountrath, and Stradbally.

Introduce a fourth row named ***County Town Centre MRPGS: Local Service Towns*** and refer to the following towns Durrow and Rathdowney.

***Introduce a fifth row named Newly Emerging Local Service Town and refer to Ballylynan.***

### ***Regeneration Objectives***

#### **DEPARTMENT'S SUBMISSION ON REGENERATION**

A County Development Plan is obliged under to section 10(1)(h) of the Planning & Development Act to include objectives concerning areas in need of regeneration. Laois County Council is also obliged to prepare a scheme for the Vacant Site Levy in order to levy appropriate sites in 2019.

the Key County Town Centre and with 7 county town service centres throughout the county. The RPGs provide for differentiation between Key Service Towns and Local Service Towns in the Southern Development Area of the region. It is considered appropriate that the retail function of the settlements within Laois conform to their designated role in the hierarchy. Currently it is proposed that Durrow (population 843 in 2011) and Mountmellick (population 4,735 in 2011) are both designated as county town retail centres in Table 12.

The Planning & Development Act 2010 requires that the core strategy of a development plan includes retail policy and that retail development proposed is consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines. The Department is of the opinion that the Council should examine the proposed retail hierarchy and ensure that it satisfactorily reflects the settlement hierarchy of the Draft Plan and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region 2010-2022.

Regeneration Objectives

A County Development Plan is obliged under to section 10(1)(h) of the Planning & Development Act to include objectives concerning areas in need of regeneration. Laois County Council is also obliged to prepare a scheme for the Vacant Site Levy in order to levy appropriate sites in 2019. In this regard, Policy CS12 - *Utilise the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 to incentivise urban regeneration, tackle land hoarding and dereliction, enhance the economic viability of housing developments, increase the delivery of social housing and encourage integrated mixed tenure developments* is noted.

However, the Department considers that the review of the Laois CDP provides an opportunity to more clearly identify and focus on the potential for regeneration in the context of the Vacant Site Levy and wider issues of urban regeneration. The Council is requested to provide additional place and site-specific policies and objectives related to regeneration to more comprehensively reflect regeneration policy in the County Development Plan.

Economic Development

Chapter 5 of the Plan deals with economic development in County Laois and the future development potential for same. It is aligned to the

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However, the Department considers that the review of the Laois CDP provides an opportunity to more clearly identify and focus on the potential for regeneration in the context of the Vacant Site Levy and wider issues of urban regeneration. The Council is requested to provide additional place and site-specific policies and objectives related to regeneration to more comprehensively reflect regeneration policy in the County Development Plan.

CE REPORT RESPONSE

The commencement of legislation empowering local authorities to tackle vacancy, encourage regeneration and ramp up housing delivery under the *Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015* is noted, as is the requirement for planning authorities to establish and maintain a Vacant Site Register. In response to the Department's submission it is proposed to address the implementation of this legislation in the County Development Plan more comprehensively as follows:-

1. Amend CS10 to read:

~~Encourage that areas of vacant, derelict and under used land within existing built up areas (brownfield sites) be brought into productive use as an alternative to the use of greenfield sites which inevitably involve some loss of natural resources~~

*Provide for active and efficient use of derelict sites, vacant premises, neglected lands, disused (brownfield) or underused lands that are zoned and served by existing public infrastructure and facilities, to consolidate the urban form, improve streetscapes, support housing delivery and smarter travel as well as strengthen the vitality and vibrancy of urban areas, by way of the development management process and other mechanisms including the imposition of levies under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and Derelict Sites Act 1990, the preparation of opportunity site briefs and the consideration of incentives in the preparation of Development Contributions Scheme(s).*

2. Amend CS12 to read:

~~Utilise the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and~~

Laois Economic and Community Plan 2016-21 (LECP) and provides an analysis of the current economic/employment profile of the county and identifies strategic sectors for growth as part of a sustainable approach to overall development of the county.

However, the Department notes that there is limited comment in relation to the extent of employment and commercial zonings present in County Laois, their uptake for development and appropriate levels of future provisions in this regard. This information would be a key element of the core strategy and it is considered that the chapter would benefit from a section detailing such zoning information and in relation to the overall employment potential and strategy within the county.

Wind Energy

Appendix 5 of the Plan provides the wind energy strategy for the county and Section 6.6.1.4 references wind energy development in the infrastructure chapter. While it is noted that Section 6.6.1.4 acknowledges the Wind Energy Development Guidelines it would benefit from clearer objectives in relation to the facilitation of wind energy developments within County Laois.

Section 6 of the Wind Energy Strategy features 'Development Control Standards for Wind Farms in County Laois' including section 6.1 - 'Buffer Zones' requiring a setback of 1.5km for wind developments from schools, dwellings, community centre and all public roads. This is also included in policy EN7 (pg.119) in Chapter 6 - 'Ensure a setback of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development'.

The planning authority has not included any evidential basis for this set-back restriction, nor any spatial or geographical analysis to indicate whether there is any land, of sufficient scale and appropriate configuration that exists that can comply with this requirement and at the same time maximise the contribution that County Laois can make in ensuring that wind energy can make in achieving national renewable energy targets.

Indeed, from information available to the Department such as Geodirectory address points, given the level of dispersed rural housing in particular, no such lands exist, development of wind energy sites would become

~~Housing Act 2015 to incentivise urban regeneration, tackle land hoarding and dereliction, enhance the economic viability of housing developments, increase the delivery of social housing and encourage integrated mixed tenure developments~~

*It is an objective of this Council to increase the delivery of housing units in areas of need and to encourage and facilitate the appropriate development and renewal of areas that are in need of regeneration in order to prevent (i) Adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land (ii) Urban blight or decay (iii) Anti-social behavior, or (iv) A shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses*

**3. Insert new section called 3.3 Implementation of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015**

*The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 provides for the imposition of a Vacant Site Levy within areas where housing is required and areas in need of renewal.*

**3.3.1 Vacant Housing Sites**

*By reference to criteria set out in the 2015 Act as they apply to Laois (set out below), Laois County Council has determined that a need for housing exists in the Towns of Portlaoise, Portarlington, Mountmellick and Graiguecullen. The Planning Authority may determine that a need for housing exists in additional Laois Towns during the Plan period.*

- (a) The projected increase in the number of households as per Core Strategy and Housing Strategy during the period 2017-2023 is significant - Portlaoise (1824), Portarlington (271), Mountmellick (257), Graiguecullen (215)*
- (b) The cost of house prices and the cost of renting are increasing indicating increased housing need*

LAP Town	Rent (Source: average monthly rent prt.b.ie)	Purchase (Source: Q3 2016 DAFT Report)
Portlaoise	€597.76 - 2015 €548.21 - 2014	Not disaggregated by town over time.
Portarlingto	€537.23 - 2015 €482.28 - 2014	County figures per Daft Report (Q3 2016) Average Price:
Mountmellic k	€499.20 - 2015 €468.67 - 2014	

impossible and in effect, the restriction is tantamount to a ban on wind energy developments. Such a ban is a clear breach of both Government policy on renewable energy and the statutory guidelines on wind energy published by the Minister under Section 28 of the Act and the subject of a current focused review which is about to conclude.

The Department notes that map 1.6.5 of the Plan details areas of the county that are 'open for consideration' and 'not for consideration' for wind energy development. However, the extent of potential for wind energy would appear to be severely restricted when the spatial requirements of policy EN7/section 6.1 is considered. This stipulation, coupled to the set-back restrictions would further copper-fasten policies that would have the effect that the entire county of Laois would be barred from accommodating wind energy development.

This resultant situation is in clear conflict with the objectives in the County Development Plan supporting renewable and wind energy development in the county and similarly at odds with settled Government policy which supports the development of wind energy infrastructure and which reflects internationally and EU binding obligations on Ireland which it is imperative to comply with.

If each planning authority seeks to unreasonably fetter and restrict renewable energy projects through the planning process, then these binding obligations will not be achieved with serious budgetary implications in terms of fines.

Mindful of the policy and legal responsibilities under the planning and local government acts, the Planning Authority is therefore respectfully requested to delete Policy EN7 and Section 6.1 (Appendix 5) from the Draft Plan because they are profoundly contrary to the objectives underlying national policy and guidelines on wind energy development in relation to maximising the contribution to renewable energy targets from wind energy.

Moreover, it should be noted that in the case of several county development plans to date, the Minister has directed planning authorities to remove non-renewable energy compliant policies and objectives related to wind energy development under Section 31 under the Planning and Development Acts.

If the Council does not comply with this request, I wish to advise you that the Minister would be likely

<i>Graiguercullen</i>	€600.26 – 2015 €584.98 – 2014	€152,362 Yr-on-Yr: +11.5% Quarter-on-Quarter: +3.6% From Trough: +46.9%
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(c) *Cited area of choice on social housing waiting list (September 2016) indicate housing need in these Towns – Portlaoise (944), Portarlington (377), Mountmellick (322), Graiguecullen (63). Note: up to 3 choices of area per household relates.*

(d) *The number of habitable houses available for purchase and for rent is less than 5% of the total number of habitable houses in the area, indicating housing need.*

LAP Town	Source: daft.ie on 30/09/16 No. properties for sale + rent > or < 2011 Population / Household Size (2.87) / 20
<i>Portlaoise</i>	190 (sale) + 18 (rent) < 350 5% of 7019 - Pop: 20,145
<i>Portarlington</i>	48 (sale) + 4 (rent) < 136 5% of 2714 - Pop: 7,788
<i>Mountmellick</i>	32 (sale) + 1 (rent) < 82 5% of 1650 - Pop: 4735
<i>Graiguercullen</i>	3 (sale) + 1 (rent) < 69 5% of 1382 - Pop: 3,966

**3.3.2 Vacant Regeneration Sites**

*Laois County Council has identified the following Regeneration Area in Portlaoise as being in need of renewal. Additional Regeneration Areas may be identified in Portlaoise or in other Laois towns during the Plan period.*



to consider the use of his powers to direct the planning authority accordingly.

Instead, the members of Laois County Council are requested to make their decision in a manner consistent with Government policy and mindful of the EU and international climate change obligations that such Government policy must take account of. The planning authority is furthermore reminded to have regard to any observations made by the Eastern & Midlands Regional Assembly, Office of Public Works, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency and Irish Water. In this regard, Laois County Council must satisfy itself that it has met the relevant requirements as appropriate, and that the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-23 is fully compliant with its obligations under planning legislation.

The officials of the Department are available to discuss the matters raised above.

*Due to its location, the area benefits from extensive existing public infrastructure including roads, water infrastructure, Portlaoise train station and schools (primary, secondary, further education), existing facilities include a running track, public park, family resource centre in the vicinity, as well as the commercial and civic services available in the Town Centre. Appropriate development of sites in this Regeneration Area has the potential to make efficient use of public infrastructure and facilities, deliver homes, enable smarter travel and sustainable communities as well as contribute to the implementation of the Council's Core Strategy, Housing Strategy and Retail Strategy in Portlaoise, as set out in this Plan.*

*The Regeneration Area currently includes disused lands in neglected condition; its streetscapes are marred by inactive gap sites or derelict buildings that detract from its character, appearance and amenity. There are indications of anti-social behavior in the Area and its vicinity, especially along Harpur's Lane with a number of derelict houses along that Street. In the opinion of the Planning Authority the existence of vacant sites within the Regeneration Area exacerbates anti-social behavior in the area. Appropriate development of sites in this Regeneration Area has the potential to provide passive surveillance and active land uses, enlivening and enhancing the character, appearance and amenity of the area.*

**Vacant Site Policies**

*HP13*

*Maintain the Laois Register of Vacant Sites, entering or deleting Sites from the Register in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 and related Departmental Guidance*

*HP14*

*Identify additional Regeneration Area(s) and/or make determinations that a need for housing exists in additional Laois Towns during the Plan period as appropriate*

*HP 15*

*Implement the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 by entering vacant housing sites on the Laois Register of Vacant Sites and thereafter imposing levies in accordance with the Act within lands zoned Residential 1 or Residential 2 in Portlaoise, Portarlinton, Mountmellick, Graiguecullen and any other Laois towns with an identified housing need, as appropriate*

*HP16*

*Implement the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and*

*Housing Act 2015 by entering vacant regeneration sites, located within the Portlaoise Regeneration Area identified herein, or within any other identified Regeneration Area, on the Laois Register of Vacant Sites and thereafter impose levies in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015*

*HP17*

*Facilitate the development of all classes of dwelling units within the Regeneration Area identified herein in Portlaoise notwithstanding zoning restrictions relating to some classes of dwelling units set out in the zoning matrix of the Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2012-2018, this policy shall become defunct once the Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2012-2018 is superseded.*

***Economic Development***

The Council fully recognises the importance of having a sound economic base so as facilitate the sustainable economic, social and community development of the county going forward. Laois County Council is mindful of the need to ensure that economic development and employment opportunities within the county are maximized so as to cater for the dramatic increase in population that has occurred over the past two decades in particular.

***Recommendation***

***Include a sub-section 5.2 entitled “Industrial and Commercial Zoning” and re-number other sub-sections accordingly.***

***Laois County Council is proposing extensive industrial and commercial land-use zonings in the draft Plan. The Council is mindful of the need to ensure that economic development and employment opportunities within the county are maximized so as to cater for the dramatic increase in population that has occurred over the past two decades in particular.***

***The type and quantum of such zonings are as follows and are listed in order of size:***

- Industrial: 242 hectares***
- Enterprise and Employment: 229 hectares***
- General Business 141 hectares***
- Transport and Utilities: 76 hectares***
- Tourism: 42 hectares***
- Retail Warehousing: 20 hectares***

***This is a total of 750 hectares [1,852 acres].***

*By way of comparison this exceeds by a factor of 3, the amount of land earmarked for residential development [240 hectares] in the Core Strategy Table on page 29 of the draft Plan.*

*In addition other zonings which are more generic in name allow for a certain level of economic development. For example the land use light industry is considered as "open for consideration" [without invoking a material contravention procedure] in Town and Village Centres zonings.*

*As expected the bulk of the industrial and associated zonings are located in accordance with the settlement strategy which in turn adheres to advice from the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines as to the optimum siting of population growth and employment generation. The Principal Town of Portlaoise, the Key Service Town of Portarlington and the Service Towns of Abbeyleix, Graiguecullen, Mountmellick, Mountrath and Stradbally collectively account for 487 hectares [65%] of the overall total.*

*The Council is also mindful of the economic development opportunities presented as a result of recent large scale road and rail infrastructure projects throughout the county such as the M7 and M8 Motorway and various rail upgrades.*

*This has been of major benefit to Portlaoise following on from its designation in both the NSS and RPGs as an Inland Port and National Transport Node In recognition of this designation, the Council has been pro-active and has serviced and zoned a large landbank at Togher, due south of the town centre and directly adjacent to the M7, for various enterprise and employment activities. The ability of this site to facilitate Foreign Direct Investment development opportunities will be maximised during the Plan period.*

*Moreover, the Council has allocated economic development and employment generating land use zonings in a number of smaller settlements that benefit from being in close proximity to the improved road and rail transport network. These locations include Borris-in-Ossory, Ballacolla, Ballybrittas and Rathdowney.*

#### **Wind Energy**

A number of commercial windfarm projects have been

	<p>both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</li> <li>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</li> <li>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</li> <li>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</li> </ol> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines.with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not</p>
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	<p>governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of a holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li>• Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li>• Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li>• Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li>• Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li>• Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li>• Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is</p>
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defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.

The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.

**Recommendation**

The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.

In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.

It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:

**Remove** Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice  
~~EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development~~

	<p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b> <del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</del></p> <p>.</p>
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## Part 4.0 Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA)

### SUBMISSION NO. 5

The table below provides a summary of the issues raised by the Eastern and Midlands Regional Authority (EMRA) and the Chief Executive's response and recommendation accordingly.

<b>Issues raised</b>	<b>Chief Executive's Response &amp; Recommendation</b>
<p>The Assembly acknowledges the effort of Laois County Council to co-ordinate the policies and objectives of the Laois Draft Development Plan so that they are consistent with the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs). The Assembly considers that the overall population and housing targets proposed in the core strategy and the policies and objectives contained in the Draft Plan are generally consistent with the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.</p> <p>The remainder of this submission will address specific issues and broadly follows the chapter headings of the draft Development Plan, under the following headings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction and Strategic Context</li> <li>2. Development Plan Strategy (Core Strategy) and Housing</li> <li>3. Social, Community and Recreational</li> <li>4. Economic Development</li> <li>5. Infrastructure</li> <li>6. Heritage</li> <li>7. General Location and Pattern of Development</li> <li>8. SEA, AA and SFRA</li> <li>9. Other</li> </ol> <p><b>1. Introduction and Strategic Context</b></p> <p>The Assembly welcomes the preliminary 'Introduction and Strategic Context' Chapter that provides a good overview of the Draft Plan's direction and contents. This chapter further provides information with regard to current issues facing County Laois and this is further enhanced by the use of infographics. Reference to the EMRA at Section 1.3 and the inclusion of Figure 1 that illustrates the configuration of the Regional Assemblies is welcome. It is considered, however, that a section specifically detailing the regional context, including the forthcoming Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, would be beneficial.</p> <p><b>2. Development Plan Strategy (Core Strategy) and</b></p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>The Planning Authority greatly welcomes the advice from the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) in relation to the draft Plan. The responses and recommendations hereunder follow the sub-headings in the EMRA submission.</p> <p><b>Introduction and Strategic Context</b></p> <p>Include the following objective OBJ<sub>1</sub> in Section 2 of the Draft Plan and re-number other objective accordingly.</p> <p><b>OBJ<sub>1</sub></b></p> <p><i>The Planning Authority will undertake a review of the housing strategy subsequent to the adoption of the future Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy [RSES] by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.</i></p> <p>Amend original objective OBJ<sub>1</sub> so as to read as follows:</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council:</p> <p><b>OBJ<sub>2</sub></b></p> <p><i>To review the Portlaoise Local Area Plan (2012-2018) and Mountmellick (2012-2018) and the joint Local Area Plans for Portarlinton(2012-2018) and the Joint spatial Plan for Greater Urban Area of Carlow / Graiguecullen (2012-2018) [in association with Offaly County Council and Carlow County Council respectively] during the period of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. <b>New residential development in the local area plan areas shall only proceed in an orderly and structured fashion and be in accordance with the overall core strategy as set out in the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</b></i></p>

## Housing

The Core Strategy of the Draft Development Plan (DDP) comments extensively on population, housing and the zoned land requirements for Laois County. The Assembly welcomes the inclusion of Figure 4 depicting Laois in a Regional Context in accordance with the RPGs. The inclusion of 13 strategic aims as part of the Core Strategy, which are considered to support the RPGs, are beneficial additions that underpin the Core Strategy. These include, for instance, Aim 1 which provides for growth in line with the settlement hierarchy prescribed by the RPGs and Aim 4 which aims to optimise the benefits of Laois' location in accordance with the RPGs.

With regard to the population targets for the County, it is noted that overall population targets are provided as part of the Core Strategy Table (Table 5). The methodology used to determine the population targets is considered to be sound and in keeping with the RPGs and the reference to Census 2016 is considered to enhance Section 2.2 of the DDP.

It is noted as part of the Core Strategy Table (Table 5), that a density allocation has been identified for Portarlington which is below the density specified for the lower order settlements of Service Towns and Local Service Towns. The Assembly consider that the DDP could benefit from clarity being provided on this issue with a view to ensuring and promoting the growth of Laois in accordance with the principle of sustainable growth envisioned in the RPGs. It is also noted that the allocation to 'Open Countryside' may not have been complete as part of the Core Strategy Table.

Section 2.3 of the DDP indicates that there is a requirement to reduce the quantum of zoned land in the county. This is reflected in the Core Strategy Table that prescribes the quantum of zoned land for the settlements throughout the County. It is noted, however, that there is no indication of how this reduction in zoned land is to be realised as part of the DDP and policies have not been included to secure the implementation of this aspect of the Core Strategy. In this regard it is considered appropriate that policies of this nature be included as part of the DDP Core Strategy. These policies should also seek to address any transitional periods from the adoption of the DPP to pending the adoption of relevant Local Area Plans, implementing the policies and objectives of the Core Strategy.

The settlement hierarchy as identified as part of the DDP is generally consistent with the settlement hierarchy defined at Section 4.7 of the RPGs. In addition the role and function of each settlement category has been outlined and it is considered that this will assist in the preparation of future LAPs within the County. Notwithstanding this, it is noted

## *Development Plan Strategy (Core Strategy) and Housing*

The reason for inclusion of Ballylynan in Figure 6: Settlement Strategy was because of the phenomenal level of growth that has taken place in the settlement since Census 2002.

That year the population of Ballylynan was recorded at 430. By Census 2011 it had reached 1,084 which represents an increase in the order of 152%.

By way of comparison, the populations of Durrow and Rathdowney increased much more modestly; from 717 to 843 for Durrow [an increase of 18%] and from 1,111 to 1,208 in the case of Rathdowney [an increase of 9%].

The Planning Authority considered that Ballylynan should be referenced on account of such headline demographic trends. Save for Graiguecullen in the western Carlow environs, Ballylynan is by far the fastest growing urban centre in the south-east of the county.

Nonetheless, In view of the Departments concern regarding inconsistency with and confusion between the County Development Plan and the Regional Planning Guidelines, Ballylynan should be removed from the "Local Service Town" category and re-designated as a "Newly Emerging Local Service Town". Figure 6 to be amended accordingly by inclusion of this category above "Villages >400" category and below "Local Service Town" category.

## *Social, Community and Recreational*

Comments noted. No change to Draft Plan.

## *Economic Development*

The Council fully recognises the importance of having a sound economic base so as facilitate the sustainable economic, social and community development of the county. Going forward. Laois County Council is mindful of the need to ensure that economic development and employment opportunities within the county are maximized so as to cater for the dramatic increase in population that has occurred over the past two decades in particular.

## *Recommendation*

***Include a sub-section 5.2 entitled "Industrial and Commercial Zoning" and re-number other sub-sections accordingly.***

that Ballylinan has been included as a Local Service Town at Sections 2.5.1, 2.5.2 and figure 6 of the DDP. Given that the settlement hierarchy in the Plan should reflect that contained in the RPGs, clarity on the status of this settlement should be provided.

The Assembly welcomes the inclusion of Section 2.7.1 that deals with the Future and Longevity of the Core Strategy and in this regard the Local Authority are requested to consider updating this paragraph to reflect the current processes with regard to the preparation of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies.

The Key Principles of the Housing Strategy are considered to be in keeping with the RPGs and in particular the first principle which seeks to work to deliver the population targets specified as part of the DDP. The inclusion of a policy in Section 3.1 ensuring consistency with the Core Strategy would further support this principle.

### 3. Social, Community and Recreational

The inclusion of this chapter is welcome by The Assembly and is considered to be in keeping with Chapter 6 of the RPGs in particular. It is considered that policies such as NRA 6 (which recognizes the role played by natural amenities as a major resource for visitors and local people) supports the RPGs and specifically OBJ EO2 of the RPGs which aims to promote and explore the feasibility of Lough Ree, Mid Shannon, Slieve Blooms and Clonmacnoise being designated as a National Park. Likewise policies included at Section 4.3.1 with regard to Open Space Provision are supportive of objective EO4 of the RPGs which seeks to formulate a hierarchy of Open Space provision within the region.

### 4. Economic Development

The Economic Development Strategy presented as part of the DDP is welcomed by the Assembly. Reference to complementarity with the Laois LECP is a worthy addition to the DDP as detailed at Section 5.1 and policies ECN 4, ECN 8, ECN 19, TM1 and TM2. Furthermore, the continuation of the designated Togher Inland Port is a welcome inclusion as part of the DDP and reinforces policy EDP 6 and objective EDO 4 of the RPGs for the Midland Region.

The policies in this chapter would benefit from a more analytical approach by the local authority to the complex issue of lands to be identified for enterprise and employment. Such an approach could consider the wide ranging typology, nature of employment and jobs ratio in

***Laois County Council is proposing extensive industrial and commercial land-use zonings in the draft Plan. The Council is mindful of the need to ensure that economic development and employment opportunities within the county are maximized so as to cater for the dramatic increase in population that has occurred over the past two decades in particular.***

***The type and quantum of such zonings are as follows and are listed in order of size:***

- ***Industrial: 242 hectares***
- ***Enterprise and Employment: 229 hectares***
- ***General Business 141 hectares***
- ***Transport and Utilities: 76 hectares***
- ***Tourism: 42 hectares***
- ***Retail Warehousing: 20 hectares***

***This is a total of 750 hectares [1,852 acres].***

***By way of comparison this exceeds by a factor of 3, the amount of land earmarked for residential development [240 hectares] in the Core Strategy Table on page 29 of the draft Plan.***

***In addition other zonings which are more generic in name allow for a certain level of economic development. For example the land use light industry is considered as "open for consideration" [without invoking a material contravention procedure] in Town and Village Centres zonings.***

***As expected the bulk of the industrial and associated zonings are located in accordance with the settlement strategy which in turn adheres to advice from the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines as to the optimum siting of population growth and employment generation. The Principal Town of Portlaoise, the Key Service Town of Portarlington and the Service Towns of Abbeyleix, Graiguecullen, Mountmellick, Mountrath and Stradbally collectively account for 487 hectares [65%] of the overall total.***

***The Council is also mindful of the economic development opportunities presented as a result of recent large scale road and rail infrastructure projects throughout the county such as the M7 and M8 Motorway and various rail upgrades.***

***This has been of major benefit to Portlaoise following on from its designation in both the NSS and RPGs as an Inland Port and National Transport Node In***

the County. It could provide for a methodology to link quantum of land zoned for enterprise and employment, to floor space and density of employment and to projected job numbers. This would provide for an evidence based approach, as required in a core strategy, to policy making and support the scale, nature and location of enterprise and employment zoned lands.

It is noted that the Retail Hierarchy identified as part of the DDP includes Ballylinan in the third tier as a 'MRPG Service Town'. In accordance with section 2 – Core Strategy above, the policy hierarchy for retail centres should reflect that contained in the RPGs and in this regard clarity on the status of Ballylinan should be provided. The maintenance of the existing hierarchy, as a specified policy in the RPGs, is considered prudent pending the adoption of any future RSES.

In addition to the above, the grouping together of Service Towns and Local Service Towns into the same hierarchy tier of Table 12 could potentially erode the function of the higher order Service Town settlements. In this regard the Local Authority should consider the reorganisation of Table 12, Laois Retail Hierarchy, to ensure the status of these settlements in accordance with the hierarchy prescribed by the RPGs.

The Tourism Section presented at Section 5.10 of the DDP is supportive of policies contained at Chapter 7 of the RPGs. In particular, the inclusion of policy that promotes walking and cycling in the Slieve Blooms is welcomed and in keeping with policy TP7 of the RPGs which seeks to promote the Tourism Potential of the Slieve Blooms as a major regional facility in a sustainable manner.

## 5. Infrastructure

The RPGs promote regional sustainable growth and recognize that this growth can only be achieved through the provision of high quality infrastructure by the alignment of land use planning with transport planning, water services and waste management. In this regard the settlement strategy expressed as clear policies in the RPGs support the growth and consolidation of the settlement hierarchy and its existing settlements, and therefore requirement for infrastructure capacity to facilitate this growth is also supported.

With regard to Transportation, the inclusion of Policy TRANS 4 of the DDP which seeks to advance Togher as the primary location for off-line motorway services is welcome and in keeping with objective TIO 8 of the RPGs which supports the development of the necessary national road

*recognition of this designation, the Council has been pro-active and has serviced and zoned a large landbank at Togher, due south of the town centre and directly adjacent to the M7, for various enterprise and employment activities. The ability of this site to facilitate Foreign Direct Investment development opportunities will be maximised during the Plan period.*

*Moreover, the Council has allocated economic development and employment generating land use zonings in a number of smaller settlements that benefit from being in close proximity to the improved road and rail transport network. These locations include Borris-in-Ossory, Ballacolla, Ballybrittas and Rathdowney.*

### Infrastructure- Wind Energy

A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:

1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications **Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237** refer.
2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetoohy. Planning application **Pl. Ref. 10/129** refers.
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This is a total of 32 no. turbines with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.

infrastructure required for the national inland port at Portlaoise.

In reference to the Wind Energy Strategy, it is noted that a number of areas currently identified as suitable for wind energy as part of the Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 have been omitted as part of DDP (Figure 21). In addition, the inclusion of policy EN7 is also noted, which further restricts the development of wind turbines within a distance of 1.5km from any schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development. In pursuing this aspect of the DDP, the Planning Authority should be cognisant of the circular PL 20-13 of 20 December 2013 issued by the then Department of Environment Community and Local Government (now DHPCLG) and the advice contained within.

## 6. Heritage

The Assembly recognises the range of heritage features within Laois and supports policies included as part of the DDP to protect and enhance this environment in line with Chapter 6 of the RPGs. The Local Authority are asked to reconsider the inclusion of Section 7.5.3, Demolition of Protected Structures, having regard to Policies EP9-EP11 of the RPGs.

## 7. General Location and Pattern of Development

This section of the draft Development Plan is considered to be a useful section where zonings, policies, objectives and standards relating to the preparation and assessment of planning applications are listed.

## 8. SEA, AA and SFRA

The SEA is considered to be comprehensive and incorporates the necessary environmental requirements. Figure 3.1 of the Environmental Report clearly shows how the SEA methodology is employed as an iterative process where the Draft Plan and associated SEA, AA and SFRA documents were prepared in an iterative manner and multiple revisions of each document were prepared, each informing subsequent iterations of the Draft Plan.

The inclusion of objective FDO 1 and policies FD1-FD5 as part of the DDP to support the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is noted and in particular policy FD2, that requires the management of flood risk to be in accordance with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities. The intention of policy FD1 to ensure that flood

Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.

Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.

By way of **objective OBJ1** of Section 6 of the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of a holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.

Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.

These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.

In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.

In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.

Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.

It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years

risk management is incorporated into the preparation of Local Area Plans is also welcome particularly given the upcoming Local Area Plans to be prepared in the County.

### 9. Other

Resilience is another principle that could be considered in the Development Plan, as a concept it can be described as “The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.” (UNISDR, 2009). This can be broken down and applied for critical infrastructures such as transport networks; utilities, public places and more recently IT and supply systems. In this regard the Assembly is engaged in a Horizon 2020 funded, 3 year project to prepare a European Resilience Management Guideline to support the practical application of resilience. The outcomes and learnings of this project will be disseminated to all the regions stakeholders who are involved in critical infrastructure, including the local authorities.

from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.

In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.

A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:

- Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output
- Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW
- Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW
- Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW
- Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW
- Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW
- Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW

Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.

The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.

### **Recommendation**

The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.

In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.

It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:

**Remove** Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice  
~~EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development~~

**Remove** Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.

**~~6.1 Buffer Zones~~**

~~Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.~~

**Heritage**

We note the comments in relation to the range of heritage policies included as part of the DDP to protect and enhance this environment in line with Chapter 6 of the RPGs.

Policies EP9-EP11 of the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines state in relation to Architectural Heritage

**EP9** To seek the conservation, protection and enhancement of the architectural heritage of the Midland Region for future generations.

**EP 10** To encourage the sympathetic reuse and rehabilitation of buildings of architectural heritage value in accordance with best practice.

**EP 11** To seek the preservation and protection of buildings of heritage value including the industrial archaeology of the Midland Region, and utilize the rich, varied and locally distinctive architecture of the Midland Region in branding and promotion of the region.

Section 7.5.3 of the draft Plan states in relation to protected

	<p>structures:</p> <p>Total or substantial demolition of a Protected Structure or any significant element of the Protected Structure will not be acceptable in principle, save in exceptional circumstances where demolition and redevelopment would produce substantial strategic benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.</p> <p>In effect this is in reference to Section 57 10[b] of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended which states: <i>A planning authority, or the Board on appeal, shall not grant permission for the demolition of a protected structure or proposed protected structure, save in exceptional circumstances.</i></p> <p>As provided for in the legislation, the Planning Authority does not envisage a situation where a Protected Structure would be demolished save in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>No change to draft Plan is recommended.</p> <p><b>7. General Location and Pattern of Development</b> Commentary on this is noted</p> <p><b>8. SEA, AA and SFRA</b> This is dealt with in the CAAS Report at the rear of this report.</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation</i></b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>
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## Part 5.0: Issues raised on Volume 1

**Submission has been arranged in accordance with each of the relevant sections of this Draft Plan.**

**Volume 1** contains the written statement which is set out as follows:

<i>Section 1</i>	<i>Introduction &amp; Strategic Context</i>
<i>Section 2</i>	<i>Development Plan Strategy [Core Strategy]</i>
<i>Section 3</i>	<i>Housing Policy</i>
<i>Section 4</i>	<i>Social, Community &amp; Recreational Strategy</i>
<i>Section 5</i>	<i>Economic Development</i>
<i>Section 6</i>	<i>Infrastructure</i>
<i>Section 7</i>	<i>Heritage</i>
<i>Section 8</i>	<i>General Location and Pattern of Development</i>

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Name & Issues Raised	Name & Issues Raised	Chief Executive's Response & Recommendation
<p>SUBMISSION NO. 39</p> <p>Keep Ireland Open</p>	<p><b>1.0 Introduction</b> 3<sup>rd</sup> para We submit that you should include the names of the adjoining counties.</p> <p><b>1.2 Planning Context</b> 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence We submit that this should be replaced by: <i>The Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) requires that a <b>Development Plan shall, so far as is practicable, be consistent with National and Regional Plans, Policies and Strategies which relate to proper planning and development and is also required to have regard to Guidelines by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government.</b></i></p> <p><b>1.2.1 National and Regional Context</b> <b>Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2020</b> We submit that you should include an additional <b>Sub secs:</b> 1 <b>Development Plan Objectives:</b> <i>As Sec 10 of the 2000 Planning Act, as amended by sec 7 of the 2010 Planning(Amendment) Act, requires the inclusion of a list of <b>mandatory development plan objectives, these should be listed, these preferably as an App.</b></i> 2 <b>County Heritage Plan</b> <i>Have regard to* the <b>County Heritage Plan.</b></i> Taken from <b>2011 Plan 1.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para 9<sup>th</sup> pt.</b> <i>*Comply with would be better.</i> 1.3 <b>County Profile</b> 1.3.1 <b>National Context</b> We submit that you should include additional provisions: 1 <b>Department Planning Guidelines</b> should be listed. See <b>Longford 1.2.1 NPG.</b> Also <b>2011 Plan 1.1 T 1.</b> 2 <b>Two year Review</b> required by Sec 15(2) of the <b>2000 Planning Act.</b> See <b>Sth Tipp 1.4 Monitoring &amp; Review 1<sup>st</sup> pt.</b> 3 <i>Actively strive to secure the <b>financial resources to implement the pols and objs.</b></i></p>	<p>Submission Noted and the following amendments are proposed :</p> <p><i>Section 1.2 - <b>The Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) requires that a <b>Development Plan shall, so far as is practicable, be consistent with National and Regional Plans, Policies and Strategies which relate to proper planning and development and is also required to have regard to Guidelines by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government.</b></b></i></p> <p>In Section 1.2.1. it is proposed to include the following -</p> <p><b>MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be consistent as far as possible with National Plans, Strategies and Policies which relate to proper planning and sustainable development</li> <li>2. Have regard to the effects implementing the plan will have on adjoining local authorities</li> <li>3. Set out the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Laois County Council</li> <li>4. Contain a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the development objectives for County Laois</li> <li>5. Objectives for the zoning of land for the use of particular areas for particular purposes (whether residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, as open space or otherwise or a mixture of such uses) where and to such an extent as the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires the uses to be</li> <li>6. Objectives for the provision of infrastructure including transport, energy and communication facilities and water supplies. Objectives for the provision of (or facilitation of provision of) waste recovery and disposal facilities in accordance with the Waste Management Plan made in accordance with the Waste Management Act 1996.</li> <li>7. Objectives for the conservation and protection of the environment (including, in particular</li> </ol>

	<p>Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> 1.7 &amp; Kerry 1.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para(7).          4 The Plan must include a statement in accordance with <b>Sec 28</b> of the Planning &amp; Development Act(as amended by Sec 20 of the 2010 Act) as to how the Plan has implemented or not implemented the policies and objectives of the Minister. See <b>Kildare</b> Table of Contents xi &amp; <b>Offaly</b> 1.2 Planning(Ministerial) Guidelines,          5 <i>In accordance with Sec 10(1D) of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) include a statement which demonstrates that the development objectives in the Development Plan are consistent, as far practicable, with the <b>protection and conservation of the environment</b>.</i> Taken from Galway 1.9 1<sup>st</sup> para.</p>	<p>archaeological heritage and natural heritage) and the conservation and protection of European sites.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Objectives for the integration of the planning and sustainable development of County Laois with the social community and cultural requirements of the County and its population</li> <li>9. Objectives for the preservation of the character of the landscape (including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest)</li> <li>10. Objectives for the protection of structures (or parts of structures) which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.</li> <li>11. An objective for the preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas</li> <li>12. Objectives for the development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration</li> <li>13. Objectives for the provision of accommodation for travellers and the use of particular areas for that purpose</li> <li>14. Objectives for the preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities</li> <li>15. Objectives for the control of the siting of new establishments, of the modification of existing establishments, and of the development in the vicinity of establishments for the purposes of reducing the risk , or limiting the consequences, or a major accident</li> <li>16. Objectives for the provision of services for the community including in particular schools, crèches and other educational and childcare facilities.</li> <li>17. Include a strategy for ensuring the proper planning and sustainable development of the County provides for housing of the existing future.</li> </ol> <p><b>The Planning and Development Act 2010 includes the following additional objectives for</b></p> <p>“the encouragement, pursuant to Article 10 of the <b>Habitats Directive</b>, of the management of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species;</p> <p>The promotion of <b>compliance with environmental standards</b> and objectives established—</p>
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		<p>(i) For bodies of surface water, by the European Communities (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009;</p> <p>(ii) for groundwater, by the European Communities (Groundwater) Regulations 2010; which standards and objectives are included in river basin management plans (within the meaning of Regulation 13 of the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003);”</p> <p>the provision, or <b><u>facilitation of the provision, of services for the community</u></b> including, in particular, schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities;</p> <p>The protection of the <b><u>linguistic and cultural heritage</u></b> of the Gaeltacht including the promotion of Irish as the community language, where there is a Gaeltacht area in the area of the development plan;</p> <p>The promotion of <b><u>sustainable settlement and transportation</u></b> strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) reduce energy demand in response to the likelihood of increases in energy and other costs due to long-term decline in non-renewable resources,</li> <li>(ii) reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, and</li> <li>(iii) address the necessity of adaptation to climate change;</li> </ul> <p>in particular, having regard to location, layout and design of new development;</p> <p>the preservation of <b><u>public rights of way</u></b> which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility, which public rights of way shall be identified both by marking them on at least one of the maps forming part of the development plan and by indicating their location on a list appended to the development plan, and</p> <p><b><u>landscape</u></b>, in accordance with relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes and developed having regard to the European Landscape Convention done at Florence on 20 October 2000</p> <p><i>Have regard to* the County Heritage Plan.</i></p>
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		<p><b>Under 1.3 County Profile it is proposed to add the following</b></p> <p><b>Section 28 Department Planning Guidelines</b></p> <p><b>Following Section 1.3.5. a new section in relation to monitoring and review of the objectives is proposed as follows</b></p> <p><b>Two year Review required by Sec 15(2) of the 2000 Planning Act.</b></p> <p>A statement in accordance with <b>Sec 28</b> of the Planning &amp; Development Act(as amended by Sec 20 of the 2010 Act) as to how the Plan has implemented or not implemented the policies and objectives of the Minister is proposed for inclusion.</p>
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# SECTION 2: Development Plan Strategy [Core Strategy]

Name & Issues Raised Number	Chief Executive's Response & Recommendation
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO 30</b></p> <p>Yvonne Jackson Failte Ireland</p> <p>Failte Ireland are seeking to enhance the partnership approach between the County Council and the Authority and ensure that the expertise of both organisations is shared. The submission seeks to enhance the policy coverage in the new Development Plan to ensure a meaningful framework is established for the enhancement of tourism in the County, and the wider Region, during the plan period. It has been prepared with inputs from professional planners as well as various strands within Failte Ireland. It provides the council with a concise single submission from the Authority dealing with all aspects of tourism- from strategic planning, to visitor experience and destination management.</p> <p>Throughout the Plan there are a number of references to Ireland's Ancient East. Fáilte Ireland would like to ensure that the terminology used is correct and consistent with their branding initiative.</p> <p>We note one particular area where a change of text is required as follows: • Para 2.1.6 - In the paragraph after Zone D there is a reference to 'Ireland's Ancient East' trail. Please note that it is not a trail. This should be replaced with 'Ireland's Ancient East' initiative.</p>	<p>We note the commentary in relation to the Irelands Ancient East Initiative and propose to</p> <p>change of text where required</p> <p><b>Zones D</b> (Timahoe/ Swan) and <b>Zone E</b> (Slieve Blooms) have very definite rural and natural amenity with mixed farming and forested uplands. This scenario will lead to low levels of change in this zone – apart from increased pressure due to the development of tourism pursuits based on the natural amenities of these zones – walking, cycling, boating. Visitor attractions such as Abbeyleix Heritage House, Timahoe Round Tower and the Rock of Dunamais are indicated on the “<b>Irelands Ancient East</b>” <del>Trail</del> <b>Initiative</b> to encourage the growth of the tourism product within this County. It is anticipated that related and complimentary tourism could flourish in this zone subject to environmental and proper planning sustainable development standards.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO.33</b></p> <p>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p> <p>We acknowledge the commitment given under 2.1.4 <i>Core Strategy Alignment with Other Plans and Programmes- Objective OBJ 1</i> to review the Local Area Plans for Portlaoise (2012–2018) and Mountmellick (2012-2018) and to prepare Joint Local Area Plans for Portarlington (2012-2018) and a Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Urban Area of Carlow/Graigucullen (2012-2018). The requirements of the SEA, Floods, Water Framework and Habitats Directives and associated relevant national regulations and guidelines, in particular, should be taken</p>	<p><b>Submission Noted</b></p> <p>It is proposed to amend OBJ1 to state as follows</p> <p><b>OBJ 1</b> <i>To review the Portlaoise Local Area Plan (2012-2018) and Mountmellick (2012-2018) and the joint Local Area Plans for Portarlington(2012-2018) and the Joint spatial Plan for Greater Urban Area of Carlow / Graigucullen (2012-2018) [in association with Offaly County Council and Carlow County Council respectively] during the period of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. <b>New</b></i></p>

	<p>into account in preparing these LAPs.</p>	<p><b><i>residential development in the local area plan areas shall only proceed in an orderly and structured fashion and be in accordance with the overall core strategy as set out in the Laois County Development plan 2017-2023.</i></b></p> <p>The Planning Authority is legislatively bound to implement the requirements of the SEA, Floods, Water Framework and Habitats Directives and associated relevant national regulations and guidelines, in preparing these LAPs.</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO.56.  An Taisce,</p>	<p><b>2.1 Strategic Aims</b> An Taisce note 13 Strategic Aims outlined in Section 2.1.2 of the draft CDP. An Taisce recommend that strategic aims are included that have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Green sustainable development and promoting development patterns that encourage walking and cycling; and</li> <li>☑ Water quality.</li> </ul> <p>The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) recognises the importance of protecting the quality of water and makes provision in the first schedule (Part IV) for objectives which may be included in the development plan in this regard.<sup>1</sup></p> <p><sup>1</sup> Planning Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2007</p> <p>The management of surface and ground water in accordance with the provision of the EU Water Framework Directive will be one of the most crucial overarching challenges for the PA. Human activities have led to deterioration in water quality over many years. Ireland faces an immense challenge in achieving 'good' status in all water bodies. The achievement of our Water Framework Directive obligations will have linked benefits in the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, combating climate change, improving human health, protecting landscape and creating more sustainable settlement patterns.</p> <p><b>It should be a Strategic Aim of the PA to protect our water quality and achieve our obligations under the WFM.</b> The CDP should include a suite of integrated policy measures to ensure that the PA's legal obligations under the WFD and the operable River Basin Management Plan are achieved.</p>	<p><b>Submission Noted.</b> The comments in relation to the Strategic Aims are noted and it is proposed to include amend Aim 9 and 10 as follows</p> <p><i>Aim9 Facilitate the economic , social and green sustainable development of the County through the provision of adequate transport infrastructure including walking and cycling infrastructure and initiatives and optimise the return of investment on infrastructure while preserving the natural and built heritage;</i></p> <p><i>Aim10 Ensure a good quality of life and good health for the residents of Laois through maintaining and improving waste water treatment and water supplies and to minimise the adverse impacts of development on the environment through policies for the management of waste and emissions and management and protection of our water quality and seek to achieve our obligations under the Water Framework Directive;</i></p> <p>Water quality is dealt with in section 6.2.5.2, POLICIES ws27 – ws46 relate. Policies for the protection of water quality are integrated in many areas of the Draft Plan.</p>

<p>SUBMISSION 74</p> <p>Marc Van Den Bergh and Dave Fingleton</p> <p>On behalf of</p> <p>People Over Wind Save Our Stradbally RTS Substation Action Group Wind Aware Ireland Laois Wind Energy Awareness Group Concerned Residents of Spink Swan, Wolfhill and Luggacurran Wind Aware Group</p>	<p>This submission requests that we add the following new policy</p> <p>Add new CS16</p> <p>Ensure that environmental decision-making complies with the requirements of the Aarhus convention and the 7th Environmental Action Plan of the European Union.</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission in relation to the requirements of the Aarhus convention and the 7th Environmental Action Plan of the European Union. Laois County Council carried out its function having due regard to the provisions of these pieces of European legislation.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO. 64</p> <p>Carlow County Council c/o Bernard Duff Administrative Officer,</p>	<p>Acknowledges receipt of correspondence. Notes that Graiguecullen maintains its designation as one of five Service Towns in the County Settlement Hierarchy. Furthermore, the function of Graiguecullen in meeting the Core Strategy population figures has also largely been maintained with a potential requirement of 23 ha required over the plan period.</p> <p>This represents a slight increase from the 20ha required over the Joint Spatial Plan for the Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Plan period 2012-2018. The revised population targets/housing land requirement will inform the review of the Joint Spatial Plan for the Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2012-2018 which will be prepared jointly between Carlow and Laois Local Authorities. The review of this plan is due to commence in 2017.</p> <p>The preparation / adoption of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 should also have regard to any policies and recommendations which may be made by the relevant Minister as a result of the Boundary</p>	<p>Submission noted. The Planning Authority welcomes the input from Carlow County Council in relation to the draft Plan.</p> <p>The population targets and follow-on housing land requirements for Graiguecullen, as indicated in the draft Core Strategy, will among other considerations, inform the upcoming review of the Joint Spatial Plan for the Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2012-2018 which will be prepared jointly by Carlow and Laois Local Authorities.</p> <p>The preparation and adoption of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 shall also have regard to any policies and recommendations which may be made by the relevant Minister as a result of the Boundary Committee Review of the Local Government Boundary in Graiguecullen between Carlow County Council and Laois County Council, under Part V of the Local Government Act 1991.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>

	<p>Committee Review of the Local Government Boundary in Graiguecullen between Carlow County Council and Laois County Council, under Part V of the Local Government Act 1991.</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION NO. 77 Offaly County Council,</p>	<p>Offaly County Council notes that the core strategy to 2023 in the draft plan provides for a county population target of <b>89,790</b> and a target for Portlaoise of <b>25,382</b>. This would result in County Laois comprising c. 27% of the population of the Midlands Special Planning Area by 2022/2023. It is also noted that the Regional Planning guidelines figures as amended by the Technical Working Group in 2013 are considered to be out of date and that the National Planning Framework and the RSEs are awaited. The Council anticipates that the NPF would give direction on population targets for the Special Planning Area and that the RSEs would decide the appropriate distribution within the Special Planning Area. Notwithstanding this, Counties within the Midlands Special Planning Area should continue to work together to promote the prime location of the Midlands Region as a counterbalance to Dublin as an area to live, work and invest.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Planning Authority welcomes the input from Offaly County Council in relation to the draft Plan. Laois County Council is mindful of the exceptional population growth that has occurred in County Laois and in the county town of Portlaoise over the past two decades. In particular from Census 2006 to Census 2011 the population of the county increased by 20% from 67,059 to 80,559. This was the highest recorded growth rate nationwide.</p> <p>Over the same period Portlaoise grew in population from 14,613 to 20,145, an increase of 38%. There are a number of factors that have influenced these exceptional demographic trends including the availability of an excellent support infrastructure in areas such as transport and communications, housing supply, school, leisure and community facilities. In practical terms, the population projections in the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 and the 2013 Midlands Region Technical Working Group paper insofar as they relate to County Laois as a whole and Portlaoise as county town are no longer applicable.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the forthcoming National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the EMRA region will advise in relation to quantum and location of future population.</p> <p>Laois County Council is fully committed to working with all the counties that make up the Midlands Special Planning Area of the overall EMRA region to promote the prime location of the Midlands Region as a counterbalance to Dublin as an area in which to live, work and invest.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Include the following objective OBJ<sub>1</sub> in Section 2 of the Draft Plan and re-number other objective accordingly.</p> <p><b>OBJ<sub>1</sub> The Planning Authority will undertake a review of the housing strategy subsequent to the</b></p>

		<p><b>adoption of the future Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy [RSES] by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.</b></p> <p>Amend original objective OBJ<sub>1</sub> so as to read as follows  <b>OBJ<sub>2</sub> To review the Portlaoise Local Area Plan (2012-2018) and Mountmellick (2012-2018) and the joint Local Area Plans for Portarlinton(2012-2018) and the Joint spatial Plan for Greater Urban Area of Carlow / Graiguecullen (2012-2018) [in association with Offaly County Council and Carlow County Council respectively] during the period of the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. New residential development in the local area plan areas shall only proceed in an orderly and structured fashion and be in accordance with the overall core strategy as set out in the Laois County Development plan 2017-2023.</b></p>
<p>SUBMISSION 3                  Brian Stanley                  T.D.                  Cllr. Aidan Mullins,                  Cllr. Caroline Dwane                  Stanley</p>	<p><b>Submission on Settlement Strategy</b></p> <p>Derelict Sites and Revitalising our Towns and Villages.</p> <p>Several town and villages in Laois have extensive dereliction in what was once the commercial core of these settlements. Much of the residential quarters and ‘on the street housing’ is now unfit for habitation, while the commercial sections are also beyond use.</p> <p>As part of a concentrated effort to revitalise the core of these towns and villages and to get people living in them, we are proposing the following:</p> <p>That favourable consideration be given to planning application to demolish old buildings that have fallen into a derelict state and are beyond refurbishment and replace them with either ‘on the street housing’ or buildings constructed for commercial or community purposes.</p> <p>Also, to utilise every opportunity that may arise to access funding for to enhance the infrastructure and the streetscapes in those location where there is a lot of unused derelict buildings.</p>	<p>The Planning Authority welcomes the contribution of this submission in relation to the revitalization of derelict structures within the towns and villages of county Laois. We currently have the following policies within the plan in relation to this theme – ECN22-ECN 27 relate</p> <p>The Current development Contribution Scheme for Laois has the following exemptions and reductions which help to assist in the redevelopment of many of these sites. 100% reduction of development levies where works have been carried out to restore a protected structure This is something that can be examined in the context of reviewing the Development Contribution Scheme 2013-2017.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan</p>

## SECTION 3: Housing Policy

Name & Issues Raised Number		Chief Executive's Response
SUBMISSION 42 Mary White	<p>The implementation of the strategy and objectives in the draft plan has the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of Laois for the period of the plan. To strengthen that contribution I am asking that consideration be given to the following comments,</p> <p>HP 6 "It is the policy of the planning authority to reserve 10% of all lands... should be changed to a minimum of 10% ". This would allow flexibility to respond to any changes in the requirement for social housing.</p>	<p>Submission noted</p> <p>The requirement for the Planning Authority to reserve 10% of all lands for residential use is required by legislation with no allowance now to go above 10% of the lands in question. This is <b>provided for under Section 31 [b] of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015.</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan</p>
SUBMISSION NO.56. An Taisce,	<p>The CDP should seek to ensure that new housing developments have regard to the design, permeability and layout of the development for walking and cycling. Ensuring connectivity through the development of a clever street network that incorporates walking and cycling paths linking to key destinations is essential in the move away from car orientated urban patterns</p> <p>Future housing stock needs to provide for comfortable, functional, energy efficient living environments. There needs to be a strong focus in not only reducing our transport emissions but also reducing carbon emissions produced by domestic energy. According to the SEAI Residential Roadmap 'our homes account for more than a quarter of Irish energy related emissions'. During the next decade, we must 'continue to push the envelope towards cutting edge building standards for new homes'.</p> <p>The CDP should seek to ensure that <b>new builds incorporate and pursue energy initiatives and technologies in order to create resilient neighbourhoods and reduce our environmental footprint.</b></p>	<p>Submission noted. There is a big emphasis in the Draft Plan to ensure that new housing developments have regard to the design, permeability and layout of the development for walking and cycling. Ensuring connectivity through the development of a clever street network that incorporates walking and cycling paths linking to key destinations is essential in the move away from car orientated urban patterns. The following policies and development Control Standards will be applied - TRANS 20 and TRANS 21.</p> <p>Future housing stock needs to provide for comfortable, functional, energy efficient living environments. There needs to be a strong focus in not only reducing our transport emissions but also reducing carbon emissions produced by domestic energy. According to the SEAI Residential Roadmap 'our homes account for more than a quarter of Irish energy related emissions'. During the next decade, we must 'continue to push the envelope towards cutting edge building standards for new homes'. The Draft Plan has included the following policies with regard to ensuring that <b>new builds incorporate and pursue energy initiatives and technologies in order to create resilient neighbourhoods and reduce our environmental footprint - EN8 -EN10 relate.</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan</p>

# SECTION 4: Social, Community & Recreational Strategy

Name & Number	Issues Raised	Chief Executive's Response & Recommendation
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 18.</b></p> <p>Sean Mullins,</p>	<p>This submission relates to the proposed development of a Greenway Network In County Laois.</p> <p>Laois has always been strategically positioned with regard to the development of transport connections from Dublin to the South and the South West. The National Primary Routes to Cork and Limerick went through Laois. They have now been replaced by the M7 and M8 again running through Laois. Mainline rail connections to Cork and Limerick run through Laois. It is obvious that from its location and topography that Laois is transport friendly.</p> <p>If the South and the South West are to be connected to Dublin by Greenway, as suggested by the Minister [Patrick O'Donovan], Laois County Council should be promoting the positives that Laois can offer in providing this facility. The grand canal provides a direct connection between Dublin and Monasterevin which is very close to the Laois Border. The grand canal in and around Dublin City is already a greenway and there is no doubt that this facility will be developed through counties Dublin and Kildare to connect to the Barrow Blue way</p> <p>Laois County Council should prepare proposals to connect from Monasterevin through Laois to link to other counties en route to the South and Southwest.</p> <p>The development of greenways from Dublin to the S and SW is an opportunity to bolster commercial activity in Laois through the development of tourism by providing access from Dublin via a new transport corridor to amenities in Laois such as the Slieve Blooms and the historic towns of Portlaoise, Portarlinton and Mountmellick and the heritage town of Abbeyleix.</p> <p><b><u>Monasterevin to Portlaoise</u></b></p> <p>There are a number of options.</p> <p>Follow the river bank of the Barrow to Portarlinton and Mountmellick (connect through the Owenass). This route would also pass the Historic Lea castle</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>There is a big emphasis in the Draft Plan on the promotion and development of leisure and recreational activities and facilities throughout County Laois. This is referenced in numerous statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 4.3 <i>Natural &amp; Recreational Amenities</i> and Section 5.10 <i>Tourism</i> which state:</p> <p><i>"The preservation and enhancement of natural amenities and recreation amenities is an integral part of the development of the county, both in terms of providing an attractive and accessible resource for the county's population and in terms of attracting inward investment from tourism and increasing the marketability of Laois as a location for industry, business and commercial activity. The Council recognises the importance of amenities and recreational amenities in the social, economic and cultural well-being of the county and aims to protect preserve and enhance these amenities through the following policy areas."</i></p> <p><i>The growing trend towards activity based tourism and adventure tourism provides a significant opportunity for County Laois. It is essential that resources upon which these activities are based are protected from inappropriate development and that Laois County Council works in partnership with a range of organisations to capitalise on and maximise the potential of such opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>This will focus on building projects in key destinations and the implementation of a targeted marketing brand in order to develop a high quality visitor destination and experience in Laois. This Plan will identify projects that will bring this brand to life and link with the wider Ireland's Ancient East brand.</i></p>

<p>which dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. There are public rights of way along the banks of the Barrow /Owenass established by the Monasterevin, Portarlinton and Mountmellick angling clubs. These rights run the full length of the rivers between Monasterevin to Mountmellick.</p> <p>From Mountmellick access to the Slieve Blooms is possible. Connection from Mountmellick to Portlaoise could be achieved along the perimeter of the bog at Kyletalesha or along the county roads in parallel with the N80 or along the abandoned rail line from Mountmellick to Portlaoise.</p> <p>Follow the perimeter of the M7 from its crossing of the Barrow branch of the Grand Canal. Significant lengths of this route are in the control of the State or semi state bodies i.e. The Heath (Board of Works) and The Derris [Coillte) and access roads (Laois County Council). This route is significantly shorter than 1. above but would not serve Portarlinton and Mountmellick.</p> <p>Follow the line of the abandoned Portarlinton/Mountmellick branch of the Grand Canal from Monasterevin to Portarlinton to Mountmellick and the abandoned rail line from Mountmellick to Portlaoise. Significant sections of these lines have been incorporated into adjoining lands.</p> <p><b><u>South West of Portlaoise</u></b></p> <p>Even if a greenway linking Laois with Dublin only went as far as Portlaoise or Abbeyleix it would be of great benefit to the county. This benefit would be greatly enhanced if a through route could be provided to Cork and Limerick. Planning in this regard could not proceed without consultation with adjacent counties. There are a number of options in this regard.</p> <p>Follow the perimeter of the existing main rail line as far as Limerick junction and then follow the separate lines to Cork and Limerick.</p> <p>Follow the perimeter of the existing main rail line as far as Ballybrophy and then divide for Cork and Limerick.</p> <p>Follow the perimeter of the M7 and M8 motorways</p> <p>Following the options outlined above should minimise severance problems and also give two options one on</p>	<p><i>Laois County Council is well placed to capitalise on the growing demand for experiential holidays in a perceived 'wild' setting with outdoor activity opportunities on offer throughout the county with an emphasis on walking and angling. Participation in adventure activities is becoming increasingly popular amongst visitors from overseas and from within the island of Ireland. This includes the popular activities such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>walking and cycling and other activities including</i></li> <li>• <i>game and coarse angling,</i></li> <li>• <i>kayaking &amp; canoeing,</i></li> <li>• <i>golf and equestrian pursuits.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>This focus, in partnership with stakeholders and local community groups, has led to the development of projects such as cycle-ways, greenways and the development of linear and looped walking trails. These projects can be developed in a sustainable way, in harmony with a high quality environment. The Council recognises that these routes cannot come into existence or remain in existence without the full co-operation of the owners of private property on the routes.</i></p> <p><i>The Council may seek to continue to identify and facilitate opportunities for harnessing the potential of the scenic areas, lakes and waterways in a manner that is compatible with the natural heritage and environment of the area. There are also likely to be further opportunities in creating water-based trails or 'Blueways' over the period of the Plan which the Council may support where appropriate.</i></p> <p>The following policies relate - <i>TM 16, TRANS46, TRANS50, TRANS56, TM 18, TM 19, and TM 22.</i></p> <p><b><i>Recommendation</i></b></p> <p>Include the following objective:</p> <p><b><i>OBJ1 Establish a working committee representing relevant to investigate the feasibility of developing a Greenway Network throughout County Laois, and linking County Laois to regional and national Greenway Networks.</i></b></p>
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	<p>either side of the line with switching sides at bridges.</p> <p>It would also be possible to extend the Laois greenway network from Portlaoise to Abbeyleix and Kilkenny along the abandoned rail line connecting these towns or along the banks of the river Nore.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusion</u></b></p> <p>There is an opportunity here that needs to be grasped immediately or it will be lost to others for ever. I would recommend as follows.</p> <p>An objective with regard to the provision of greenways serving Laois internally and connecting Laois with Dublin, Kilkenny, the South and the Southwest should be included as appropriate in the proposed County Development plan 2017 – 2023.</p> <p>A committee be assembled representing all interested parties including Laois County Council, Bord na Mona, Coillte, Irish Rail, the IFA, Laois Tourism, Laois Business and Laois Walking and Cycling reps to plot a way forward.</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION NO.33</p> <p>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p>	<p>We note <i>Table 7 Specific Objectives for Leisure Facilities in County Laois</i>, and in particular, <i>Objectives 11 Barrow Blueway</i> and <i>12 Castletown to Durrow Blueway</i> and the inclusion of a number of Blueway/Waterway policies and objectives under 8.6.1 <i>Chapter 2 Development Strategy</i>.</p> <p>Given the potential for negative environmental effects associated with developing both of these tourism initiatives, the Plan should consider including a specific policy/objective to ensure these are subject to environmental assessments, where required, in accordance with the EIA and Habitats Directives. The protection of ecological corridors and associated habitats and the management/control of invasive species will be of particular relevance.</p> <p>The Plan and SEA ER should also consider the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects, associated with Blueway development, and establish and implement appropriate mitigation measures to avoid significant adverse environmental effects.</p>	<p><b>Submission Noted</b></p> <p>As part of the SEA and Plan preparation process, a number of amendments to emerging Draft Plan provisions were recommended for integration into the Plan. These include the following: <b>TM 18, TM 19, CS13</b></p>

<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p>4.2.4 Burial Grounds</p> <p>We submit that you should amend the title to: Historic Graveyards/Burial Grounds</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional paras:</p> <p>1 Burial Grounds are an important part of local heritage and often contain standing remains or sites of earlier structures. Listed Burial Grounds are protected under Sec 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. Consultation with the NMS of the DoAHG is necessary prior to undertaking works. Taken from Galway 9.6 2nd para last 3 sentence.</p> <p>2 The majority of the older/historic burials grounds are listed in the RMP and protected as archaeological monuments by the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. Taken from Kerry 9.11 1st para 4th sentence.</p> <p>We submit that you should include a Table of Historic Graveyards See Donegal 10.10 T 28.</p> <p>pol 3 We submit that this should be replaced by: Protect, preserve, enhance, conserve and maintain the cultural heritage of archaeological/historic graveyards and historic burial grounds(including those identified in the RMP), and continue to encourage and promote local involvement and community stewardship in the care, maintenance, rehabilitation, management and conservation of these graveyards in accordance with legislation and best conservation and heritage and principles and best practice guidelines in co-operation with the DoAHG. Development may be restricted or conditions imposed on development requiring substantial excavation in or adjacent to them. Maintain all burial grounds in the Council's charge in good condition. Extensions to archaeologically significant medieval burial grounds will not be considered if the extension would constitute proven risk to archaeological heritage. Support and assist communities in the care and conservation of historic graveyards through the Historic Graveyards Grants Scheme. Based on Nth Tipp 8.4.5 HERT 25 (i) &amp; (ii), Kildare 12.83 AH4, Carlow 8.13 Pol 7 1st &amp; 2nd pts &amp; 9.2 Pol 3 6th pt, Offaly 7.19 AAHP-13, Meath 9.6.9 CH OBJ 11, Kerry 9.11 SC-54, Galway 9.7 Obj ARC 4 &amp; 10.9 Pol CF 6 last sentence, Sligo 7.2.6 Pol P-AH-6, Leitrim 3.4.5 1st para 1st sentence Pols 28 &amp; 29 &amp; Limerick 6.7 COM O18.</p> <p>We submit that you should include an obj: Provide public access to graveyards. Taken from Westmeath 5.33 P-AH4.</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>The following amendments are proposed</p> <p><b>4.2.4 Historic Graveyards and Burial Grounds</b></p> <p>Burial Grounds are an important part of local heritage and often contain standing artefacts or sites of earlier structures. Listed Burial Grounds are protected under Sec 12 of the National Monuments(Amendment) Act 1994. Consultation with the NMS of the DoAHG is necessary prior to undertaking works.</p> <p>The majority of the older/historic burials grounds are listed in the RMP and protected as archaeological monuments by the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004.</p> <p>Replace Policy BG 3</p> <p><del>Protect the cultural heritage of historical burial grounds within County Laois and encourage their management and maintenance in accordance with conservation principles</del></p> <p>with the following wording</p> <p><b>Protect, preserve, enhance, conserve and maintain the cultural heritage of archaeological/historic graveyards and historic burial grounds(including those identified in the RMP), and continue to encourage and promote local involvement and community stewardship in the care, maintenance, rehabilitation, management and conservation of these graveyards in accordance with legislation and best conservation and heritage and principles.</b></p> <p>Access to Graveyards is generally accommodated where possible. Grants are available via the Heritage Council and the Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Council will continue to work with any body / group who wish to apply for such funding.</p> <p>4.3 NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES</p> <p>Amend 3rd para to state the following</p> <p>Countryside recreation refers to a wide range of activities including horse riding, cycling, walking, picnicking, <del>countryside drives</del>, off-road biking, nature</p>
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<p>4.3 NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES</p> <p>3rd para We submit that:  A You should delete country drives on 1st line as it is not recreational activity. Also, it is not in keeping with the principles of sustainable development to which many references are made in the Draft. AND</p> <p>B You should also include: wildlife and heritage trails, bird/ deer/golden eagle watching, rafting, hill walking, mountain running, mountaineering, swimming in waterways and boating and that these activities be coordinated, where appropriate, with adjoining counties.</p> <p>4th para last sentence We note that the strategic plan mentioned in the 2011 Plan has apparently not been prepared.  We submit that you should include a pol: Support, promote and facilitate the provision and the development of outdoor activities and preserve, improve and extend rural recreational amenities and explore the potential for rural recreational tourism in conjunction with Tourism bodies, WI, FI, National Trails Office and NPW to diversify the range of tourist experience and extend the tourist season. Based on 2000 Planning and Development Act Sec 10(2) (j), Roscommon 3.5 Pol 3.64, Westmeath 6.21 P-LLM 2 5th line, Galway 4.14.Obj EDT17 &amp; Kerry 5.3 T11 T 12.  pols  1.v We submit that this should be amended and re-positioned in 7.12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE as a proposed additional pol 3.</p> <p>6 We submit that this should be replaced by: Recognizing the role played by natural amenities and landscape, as part of our heritage and as a major resource both for visitors and local people, identify, provide, support, maintain, promote, encourage, protect, preserve, improve, safeguard and enhance public access to our natural heritage including mountains, uplands moorlands, forests, rivers, lakes, valleys, nature reserves, scenic areas, areas of natural beauty and to the countryside generally by creating a meaningful network of access routes as the opportunity or need arises. This will be done in co-operation with state agencies, other interested bodies and local community groups. Based on Sth Tipp 6.3.7 Pol AEH10, Carlow Chpt 8 Natural Heritage 2nd pt, Longford 6.2.2 NHB 3, Co Her Plan 47, Sth Dublin 9.40 Pol 16, DLR 4.1.1.1 Pol LHB1, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Access to Heritage &amp; Amenities AC-oia &amp; b,</p>	<p>trails, bird watching, painting, photography, field studies, orienteering, para –gliding and hang- gliding, rock climbing, <i>back-packing, caving, mountaineering, hill walking</i> and adventure sports, <i>camping in the wild</i>, archaeological guided walks and water related activities such as swimming, boating, canoeing and kayaking, <b>wildlife and heritage trails, bird and animal watching, rafting, hill walking, mountain running, mountaineering, swimming and boating. Laois County Council continues to work with the adjoining Counties to further develop and coordinate countryside recreation activities in an environmentally sustainable manner.</b></p> <p>Include the following policy</p> <p><b>NRA 8</b></p> <p><b>Support, promote and facilitate the provision and the development of outdoor activities and seek to preserve, improve and extend recreational amenities.</b></p> <p><b>Include the following objective -  Explore the potential for rural recreational tourism in conjunction with Tourism bodies, Waterways Ireland, Failte Ireland, National Trails Office and National Parks and Wildlife to diversify the range of tourist experience and extend the tourist season.</b></p> <p>Include the following new policy</p> <p><b>NRA 9</b></p> <p><b>Recognizing the role played by natural amenities and landscape, as part of our heritage and as a major resource both for visitors and local people, support and protect public access to our natural heritage including mountains, uplands moorlands, forests, rivers, lakes, valleys, nature reserves, scenic areas, areas of natural beauty and to the countryside generally .</b></p> <p>4.3.1 Open Space provision</p> <p>There is a lot of common ground between both open space provision and various other sections such as economic development , tourism and heritage within the plan and it is proposed to cross reference this section with Section 7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS and Chpt 5: SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS.</p>
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	<p>Monaghan 7.4 Obj RAO 9 &amp; Sligo 4.4 P-TOU-6 &amp; 6.5 P-SRO-9.</p> <p>4.3.1 Open Space provision 14 We submit that this should down to county on 4th line be re-positioned in 7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS and replaced by additional obj 1.</p> <p>17 &amp; 18 4.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR LEISURE FACILITIES Table: Specific Objectives 7.10 We submit that this should re-positioned in a proposed additional Sub sec in Chpt 5: SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 50</b></p> <p>Durrow Development Forum c/o Mary Walsh,</p>	<p>This submission relates to the proposed development of a 37 kms Green Network Cycle Trail in Durrow.</p> <p>Applicant asks that Laois County Council enters into a memorandum of understanding with all relevant stakeholders to examine the feasibility of developing a Green Network Cycle Trail in Durrow. The trail would involve linkages between the seven forests surrounding the town, namely Bishops Wood, Capponellan Wood, Course Wood, Derry Wood, Dunmore Wood, Knockanoran Wood and Knockatrina Wood.</p> <p>In particular the proposal is for 3 No. Forest Loop Trails, namely a “Green Network Cycle Trail” to commence at a Start Point in the town of Durrow and proceed along the Abbeyleix Road to encompass the Dunmore Wood element of the “Leafy Loop Walk”. It will include a cycle trail through the Eco-Forest/Alluvial Wood site at Knockanoran Wood and Bishop’s Wood. The proposed extended trail is through Capponellan Wood and finishing at the Start Point in Durrow.</p> <p>This proposal would allow for 3 No. in the main, off-road loop cycle trails of varying distance, starting and finishing in Durrow.</p> <p><b>Route No. 1 (Blue Line)</b></p> <p>This trail will begin at a Start Point in the town of Durrow and proceed along the existing cycle lane on the Abbeyleix Road to the junction of the New Line road. Turn left here and then right into Dunmore Wood car park. Proceed along the main graveled pathway in Dunmore Wood returning to the car park and exiting onto the New Line road. Turn right here in the direction of the Ballacolla road junction. Take a</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the excellent work being carried out by Durrow Development Forum in the promotion of the town in areas such as tourism, recreation and environmental awareness.</p> <p>There is a big emphasis on recreational development, including in the South Laois area, in the Draft Plan. This is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 4.3 <i>Natural &amp; Recreational Amenities</i> and Section 5.10 <i>Tourism</i> which state:</p> <p><i>“The preservation and enhancement of natural amenities and recreation amenities is an integral part of the development of the county, both in terms of providing an attractive and accessible resource for the county’s population and in terms of attracting inward investment from tourism and increasing the marketability of Laois as a location for industry, business and commercial activity. The Council recognises the importance of amenities and recreational amenities in the social, economic and cultural well-being of the county and aims to protect, preserve and enhance these amenities through the following policy areas.”</i></p> <p><i>The growing trend towards activity based tourism and adventure tourism provides a significant opportunity for County Laois. It is essential that resources upon which these activities are based are protected from inappropriate development and that Laois County Council works in partnership with a</i></p>

<p>left here and then a right down Knockanoran Lane to the wood entrance. Proceed along the proposed boardwalk/cycle track on the North/Eastern side of the River Erkina through Knockanoran Eco-Forest/Alluvial Wood site crossing a proposed newly provided footbridge. Return along the proposed boardwalk/cycle track on the North/Western side of the River Erkina, crossing the existing steel bridge and following the forest track to Knockanoran Lane. Continue to the Ballacolla Road junction, turning right here into Durrow. (8.5K approx).</p> <p><b>Route No. 2 (Yellow Line)</b></p> <p>Follow the Blue Line as above. On the proposed North/Western boardwalk/cycle track take the exit for the Yellow Line into Bishop's Wood Forest/Alluvial Wood site. Continue on the graveled pathway through Bishop's Wood and exit onto the Dublin-Cork Road. Turn left here and follow the proposed new cycle lane to Start Point in Durrow. (12.5K approx).</p> <p><b>Route No3 (Red Line)</b></p> <p>Traverse the "Blue and Yellow Lines" above, to exit Bishops Wood at the Dublin-Cork road. Cross the road at this point and enter Capponellan Wood. Continue on the main graveled road to the Balach Road junction. Turn left here and follow this road, entering Durrow at the Derry Road-Kilkenny Road junction. Turn left here through the streets of Durrow to the Start Point at the Bridge. (16K approx).</p> <p>The specific infrastructural elements of the Green Network Cycle Trail include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision of a "metered" bicycle station in Durrow where bicycles can be hired and returned. All bicycles should carry a clear and permanent logo and number, to ensure identification. This facility would also include a cycle wash area.</li> <li>2. Liaison with Coillte and Durrow Scouts with a view to the refurbishment of the existing concrete shed structure at Dunmore Wood car park. To include an environmental education centre in a Log-Cabin type structure with an audio visual facility. Consideration should be given to extending this building to include an office, a flora and fauna exhibition area and a coffee dock.</li> <li>3. Provision of a new car park at the entrance to</li> </ol>	<p><i>range of organisations to capitalise on and maximise the potential of such opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>This will focus on building projects in key destinations and the implementation of a targeted marketing brand in order to develop a high quality visitor destination and experience in Laois. This Plan will identify projects that will bring this brand to life and link with the wider Ireland's Ancient East brand.</i></p> <p><i>Laois County Council is well placed to capitalise on the growing demand for experiential holidays in a perceived 'wild' setting with outdoor activity opportunities on offer throughout the county with an emphasis on walking and angling. Participation in adventure activities is becoming increasingly popular amongst visitors from overseas and from within the island of Ireland. This includes the popular activities such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• walking and cycling and other activities including</li> <li>• game and coarse angling,</li> <li>• kayaking &amp; canoeing,</li> <li>• golf and equestrian pursuits.</li> </ul> <p><i>This focus, in partnership with stakeholders and local community groups, has led to the development of projects such as cycle-ways, greenways and the development of linear and looped walking trails. These projects can be developed in a sustainable way, in harmony with a high quality environment. The Council recognises that these routes cannot come into existence or remain in existence without the full co-operation of the owners of private property on the routes.</i></p> <p><i>The Council may seek to continue to identify and facilitate opportunities for harnessing the potential of the scenic areas, lakes and waterways in a manner that is compatible with the natural heritage and environment of the area. There are also likely to be further opportunities in creating water-based trails or 'Blueways' over the period of the Plan which the Council may support where appropriate.</i></p> <p>NRA2, NRA3, NRA6, NRA14, NRA17, TM 14, TM 16, TRANS46, TRANS56 relate .</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Re-word policies TM14 and TM18 as follows:</p>
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	<p>Knockanoran Eco-Forest/Alluvial Woodland site.</p> <p>4. Provision of a boardwalk/cycle track extending through Knockanoran Eco-Forest/Alluvial Wood site along the north/eastern side of the Erkina River.</p> <p>5. Provision of a new foot bridge across the Erkina River at the most suitable point of this forest.</p> <p>6. Provision of a return boardwalk/cycle track on the north/western side of Knockanoran Eco-Forest/Alluvial Woodland site to join with the existing steel bridge structure spanning the River Erkina.</p> <p>7. Liaison with Laois County Council with a view to providing a marked cycle lane extending from the Bishop's Wood exit on the Cullahill Road, to Durrow.</p>	<p><i>TM14 Support in principle and investigate the feasibility of, subject to compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directive, developing and marketing off-road Slieve Bloom Mountain Biking Trail by Coillte and Durrow Green Network Cycle Trail in co-operation with relevant stakeholders including Durrow Development Forum.</i></p> <p><i>NRA18 Investigate the feasibility of developing walking and cycling routes [such as the Slieve Bloom Mountains Biking Project, Durrow Green Network Cycle Trail] to reflect recreational value and to implement strategic green corridors and ensure that any plan or project associated with open space planning, recreation or tourism is subject to Appropriate Assessment Screening in compliance with the Habitats Directive, and subsequent assessment as required.</i></p> <p><i>TRANS56 Support the designation of forest cycling areas in Laois such as at cycle club trails at Durrow, Cullenagh, Fossey and Cullahill Mountain.</i></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 37</b></p> <p>Mark Clancy on behalf of Woodenbridge Paddlers</p> <p><b>SUBMISSION 58</b></p> <p>Michael G. Phelan, Woodenbridge Paddlers Association,</p>	<p>These submissions relate to the proposed development of a recreational facility centred on the River Erkina near Durrow.</p> <p>The proposed project presents good potential to develop a 5.2km trail from Woodenbridge to Castle Durrow. The primary trailheads identified in the feasibility report are at Woodenbridge and Castle Durrow. This would provide a short yet attractive trail travelling through a varying landscape which would complement the existing activities of Castle Durrow, Woodenbridge Paddlers and the Laois Partnership. The Erkina Blueway would be suitable for beginner or novice trail users as well as supervised groups of juniors such as schools, scouts and youth groups.</p> <p>The proposed trail passes through a Special Area of Conservation and a proposed Natural Heritage Area. Consultation and collaboration with the National Parks and Wildlife Service is recommended to ensure that any potential issues are addressed early on in the trail development process. The development of pull in</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the excellent work being carried out by Woodenbridge Paddlers Association in the promotion of tourism and recreation in south County Laois.</p> <p>There is a big emphasis on recreational development, including in the South Laois area, in the Draft Plan. This is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 4.3 <i>Natural &amp; Recreational Amenities</i> and Section 5.10 <i>Tourism</i> which state:</p> <p><i>“The preservation and enhancement of natural amenities and recreation amenities is an integral part of the development of the county, both in terms of providing an attractive and accessible resource for the county’s population and in terms of</i></p>

	<p>points at locations of particular historical or ecological interest with information signs would contribute positively to the user's experience.</p> <p>As the trail is based on an inland river, there are some safety challenges to consider, especially with regards to user information and assisting users to make informed decisions about suitable water levels. The proximity of the trails to the river bank shore combined with the short distance between trailheads helps to mitigate against some of those risks.</p> <p>The development of the Erkina Blueway will require some civil engineering works to be carried out at both the Woodenbridge and Durrow trailheads. The primary development costs will be around building parking at Woodenbridge and Durrow castle, providing water access steps at Castle Durrow. Some dredging works may also be required in the first half of the trail, however consultation with the NPWS, Local Authority and all relevant stake holders must be completed in order to complete these works.</p> <p>The development and installation of appropriate signage, including finger point signs, trailhead signs and on the water signage will also be required. The graphic design and branding work has already been completed for the Blueway concept and can be made available to the Erkina River Blueway development group upon submission of a branding application form which has been attached in Appendix A of the report. A development action plan is documented at the end of this feasibility report to help expedite the completion of the Erkina Blueway Trail.</p> <p>Canoeing Ireland and Sport Ireland-National Trails Office consider the project to be suitable for development and support further development of the trail.</p>	<p><i>attracting inward investment from tourism and increasing the marketability of Laois as a location for industry, business and commercial activity. The Council recognises the importance of amenities and recreational amenities in the social, economic and cultural well-being of the county and aims to protect, preserve and enhance these amenities through the following policy areas."</i></p> <p><i>The growing trend towards activity based tourism and adventure tourism provides a significant opportunity for County Laois. It is essential that resources upon which these activities are based are protected from inappropriate development and that Laois County Council works in partnership with a range of organisations to capitalise on and maximise the potential of such opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>This will focus on building projects in key destinations and the implementation of a targeted marketing brand in order to develop a high quality visitor destination and experience in Laois. This Plan will identify projects that will bring this brand to life and link with the wider Ireland's Ancient East brand.</i></p> <p><i>Laois County Council is well placed to capitalise on the growing demand for experiential holidays in a perceived 'wild' setting with outdoor activity opportunities on offer throughout the county with an emphasis on walking and angling. Participation in adventure activities is becoming increasingly popular amongst visitors from overseas and from within the island of Ireland. This includes the popular activities such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• walking and cycling and other activities including</i></li> <li><i>• game and coarse angling,</i></li> <li><i>• kayaking &amp; canoeing,</i></li> <li><i>• golf and equestrian pursuits.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>This focus, in partnership with stakeholders and local community groups, has led to the development of projects such as cycle-ways, greenways and the development of linear and looped walking trails. These projects can be developed in a sustainable way, in harmony with a high quality environment. The Council recognises that these routes cannot come into existence or remain in existence without the full co-operation of the owners of private property on the routes.</i></p>
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<p>SUBMISSION 42 Mary White</p>	<p>SOC<sub>3</sub> "Ensure the provision and implementation of primary and secondary education facilities in concert with the planning and sustainable development of residential areas in order to maximise the opportunities for use of walking, cycling and use of public transport".</p> <p>This objective will strengthen communities and will lead to an enhanced quality of life. Access to preschool and primary school is essential. A child will not walk more than 1 to 1.5 km. Access to a</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>RESPONSE</p> <p>The Planning Authority notes the comments in relation to policy SOC<sub>3</sub> and policy SOC 4 and is cognisant of the benefits of locating schools in close proximity to residential areas. In terms of SOC 4 where the spirit of the policy is to ensure that other sources of education are also looked in</p>

	<p>school that is more than 1.5km away can be a significant additional disadvantage for children, who for various reasons, are already disadvantaged. The vision for Laois must give priority to access to education.</p> <p>SOC 4 <i>“Support the development of multi-campus educational facilities”</i></p> <p>This objective contradicts SOC<sub>3</sub> in respect of primary schools. Appropriately sized primary Schools should be part of a local neighborhood community whether existing or new. This will foster the community of ownership of the primary school and put education at the centre of the community.</p> <p>The concept of multi campus is suitable for 2nd and 3rd level facilities.</p> <p>NRA 13 <i>“Encourage developers to pool land for the purposes of open space requirements to allow for the provision of multipurpose amenity areas (e.g. playing pitches) as well as small ancillary open spaces within residential areas”</i></p> <p>This is a very worthwhile land use objective. It could be strengthened by replacing the word encourage with require.</p>	<p>terms of education planning for a village or town. In some cases this may mean preschool development in close proximity to a primary school or primary and secondary locating together. It will have different meaning in different urban contexts.</p> <p>NRA 13 <i>“Encourage developers to pool land for the purposes of open space requirements to allow for the provision of multipurpose amenity areas (e.g. playing pitches) as well as small ancillary open spaces within residential areas”</i></p> <p>This is a very worthwhile land use objective. It could be strengthened by replacing the word “encourage” with “require”.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 70</b></p> <p>Staff Our Libraries Community Group c/o Geraldine Moore,</p>	<p>In the draft Social, Community and Recreational Strategy the proposed policy of the council regarding the library services is to “CUL<sub>3</sub> Investigate the delivery of library services to rural villages using public private partnerships and electronic networking, subject to availability of resources”. The format of these “public private partnerships” is unclear and until clarified or expanded upon should be withdrawn until the public have been informed and consulted.</p> <p>We would recommend that the delivery of library services to rural villages be maintained entirely as a function of Laois County Council as this would be in keeping with the ethos of the public library service.</p> <p>In relation to “CUL<sub>2</sub> Provide new library facilities in the Principal Town of Portlaoise during the lifetime of the Plan”, we are aware that this proposal may include the provision of staff less hours. We believe the council has not taken into full consideration the safety and equality of access of this proposal. We believe that the council should undertake to provide new library facilities in Portlaoise which will be fully staffed during all opening hours and whose services shall be accessible to each and every individual.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having an adequate library service in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going educational, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>The library service is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 4.2. 3 <i>Cultural Facilities</i> which states:</p> <p><i>“The library service of Laois County Council plays an increasingly important educational, community, information and outreach role in the county. It has also become an important venue for cultural activities. In terms of future projects, replacement libraries are planned for Portlaoise, which is under increased pressure as a result of the huge population growth.</i></p> <p><i>Libraries such as Portlaoise, Portarlinton, Stradbally, Mountmellick, Abbeyleix, Mountrath and Durrow serve as key arts and culture outlets within the County.</i></p>

<p><u>Equality of access:</u></p> <p>In Section 4.2 of the draft plan it is proposed policy to “SOC2 Ensure that all new development shall be designed in order to allow <i>for universal access for all people.</i> “</p> <p>Staff less libraries by the very criteria they impose do not allow “universal access for all people”. Up to now, the public library is the last remaining public space where people can come in-you don't even need to be a member -this is universal access. However, users for the staff less system must be library members -to join one needs photo ID and proof of address- and be pre-registered for the staff less hours by signing a contract. This is not universal access.</p> <p>County Councils have a duty to consider equality of access regarding their service delivery under both Part II Section 5 of the Equality Status Act 2000-2015 and Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. The council need to ask who will be excluded by introducing staff less libraries?</p> <p>In the pilot scheme on which this proposal is based, there was no research done in to analyse the demographics of users. In a response to a question in the Dáil on 08/11/16, Minister Simon Coveney responded that “Data on the operation of the pilots, including the numbers of service users, was collected by the respective local authorities. This data was not broken down on a gender basis; accordingly, the information requested is not available” (Available at <a href="https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2016-11-08a.481&amp;s=staffless+libraries#g482.q">https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2016-11-08a.481&amp;s=staffless+libraries#g482.q</a>)</p> <p>It has been reported from pilots in the UK where demographic data was collated that:</p> <p>“Pilots in some authorities show far more men than women are willing to enter an apparently unsupervised library (ratio of 90% male to 10% female mentioned in one workshop)”</p> <p>(Available at <a href="http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/about-public-libraries-news/unstaffed-libraries">http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/about-public-libraries-news/unstaffed-libraries</a>)</p> <p>When introduced initially in the pilot scheme the staff less service was limited to those over 18years of age. Tubbercurry Library has not extended its service to 16-18 year olds. Offaly Library services on 17/06/16</p>	<p><i>CUL1, CUL2, CUL3, CUL4, CUL5, CUL6, CUL7, CUL8, CUL9, CUL10</i> relate to same.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No Change to plan</p> <p>The fundamental issue of <b>how</b> the library service in County Laois is staffed and resourced is not a matter for the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p>
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extended its service to 16 and 17 year olds. County Laois has the highest population of 0-18 year olds, as a proportion of its overall population. The Central Statistics Office(CSO) and Department of Education and Science projections indicate that birth rates will remain relatively high for the foreseeable future at least, resulting in a growing percentage of those in the standard school-going age cohorts of 0-18. This large proportion of the population in Co. Laois who will be excluded from the staff less libraries. In Section 4.2.3 Cultural Facilities the proposed policy of the council is to "CUL4 Provide and improve access for the disabled in both existing and planned library and cultural accommodation" A recent post on our Facebook page:

"A library worker who contacted the page to highlight one of these reasons. He had that day spent some time helping a partially sighted borrower pick out an audio book by reading the blurbs for her. He points out that unstaffed hours make no provision for borrowers who need a help like this from staff".

(<https://www.facebook.com/StafffourLibraries/> posted on 6 October at 21:46pm)Or the following post following an article on [thejournal.ie](http://thejournal.ie):

"As a person with a disability I wouldn't use a staff less library. How would I contact the emergency services if something were to happen? It would cost more money to install the necessary equipment than to hire a librarian to work in that library. I worked the Saturday shift in Vancouver community college and I've dealt with a few incidents that warranted a response from the security services, but was unable to do so due to my hearing disability and being able to use a telephone."

Posted on comments on Sep 24th 2016, 11:59 PM at <http://www.thejournal.ie/readme/staffless-libraries-ireland-2993352-Sep2016/>

Within Co. Laois, there was a public meeting in Portarlinton Community Centre on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October. These are the comments and concerns of members of the public who were at that meeting. Shauna O'Kane who spoke on behalf of her clients with disabilities at Galro, stating that "My Open Library is marginalising already vulnerable individuals". Geraldine Moore, who is a lifelong library user, questioned whose vision this was "as it certainly wasn't the library users" and told of how a library user with visual disabilities had rang her worried about

	<p>how he would access this service. The head of Portarlinton Active Retirement raised concerns of older library users who are not comfortable with new technology. Some may well argue that these customers can access the library during staffed hours but why should these groups be excluded from a new service provided by the council.</p> <p>Our concerns regarding these issues of equality were sent to the Equality Officer of Laois County Council on 04/11/16 and we are awaiting their response. By its very nature staff less libraries cannot and will not provide universal access. The Council will be introducing inequality into a service that was previously equal and open to all.</p> <p><u>Safety:</u></p> <p>In Section 4.2.5 of the draft development plan it is stated that sustainable communities are well-designed places where people feel safe and secure. There are seven attributes of sustainable communities that are particularly relevant to crime prevention have emerged from in-depth research into crime prevention and urban design practice and theory were also outlined in the draft. We believe staff less libraries compromise these attributes and may well create a public space within which people are not safe and secure and do not feel so.</p> <p>On Page 17 of the LGMA report on the pilot staff less libraries scheme stated categorically that “There were no anti-social or other incidents in any of the three branches and all users complied with the terms and conditions of use”. Under a response from a Freedom of Information request we now know that in Offaly, 111 members had their open library membership temporarily withdrawn due to breaches of terms and conditions. These included incidents of tailgating, giving their card to another person to use and opening the door to allow access to another person. One member had their open library membership permanently withdrawn due to being under the influence of alcohol. More worrying was the fact that there were 6 incidents of children being left unsupervised in the library during unstaffed hours.</p> <p>Tailgating had already been identified as a potential hazard in staff less libraries. In a PowerPoint presentation at the Library Association of Ireland conference on 15/04/2016 problems identified with the pilot were :“User Education, Tailgating, ICT</p>	
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	<p>connections”(Available online at <a href="https://libraryassociation.ie/node/101082">https://libraryassociation.ie/node/101082</a>) In Appendix 2 of the LGMA report on the staff less library pilot scheme on “general areas for documentation during pilot extension” one area is: “The issue of users not registered for the Open Library service tailgating registered users on entry to the library (i.e. how big a problem and any measures of dealing with the issue)” (page 34 on LGMA report).Tailgating had been identified as a problem but no action has been taken to mitigate against it as it cannot be prevented. The staff less library system is inherently unsafe.</p> <p>The CCTV is recorded but not monitored live. It is monitored retrospectively. Hence CCTV will only record any incidents; it will not alert any security to intervene. In order for security to be alerted a member of the public needs to contact them. This is putting the onus on members of the public to either intervene in a situation or to alert the security which can put a member of the public in a situation of conflict. Staff less libraries represent an unacceptable risk to the safety of members of the public and children. They are inherently unsafe and no technology can mitigate against their abuse in terms of tailgating, allowing access to others and adequate child safety.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 73</b></p> <p>Ger Scully,</p>	<p>Proposes the establishment of a Regional Centre of Excellence for Disability Sports in Portlaoise [to be located in the green area beside the Portlaoise Leisure Centre off Ridge Road].</p> <p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Participants of sports have also been shown to have a higher aerobic capacity than those with an equivalent disability who do not play the sport. Even more importantly though is the role of sport socially and psychologically. Sport is used as a tool to learn new skills, not only sport skills but skills, which assist with daily living activities. Sport has been shown to have positive physical benefits for the individuals who participate at all levels. For wheelchair users, It has been shown to increase strength and stability around the shoulder, which in turn makes activities of daily living (transferring in and out of their chair, pushing, driving) easier, in some cases allowing individuals to develop complete independence in these activities.</p> <p>"I still learn a lot from other wheelchair users, that they do things a certain way that I didn't know. "Wow I might be able to try that ... that might work for me!" I've taught a few people a couple of things. You're not going to sit around in a conversation and talk about</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>There is a big emphasis on sport and recreational development in the Draft Plan. This is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 4.3 <i>Natural &amp; Recreational Amenities</i> which states:</p> <p><i>“Recreation, leisure and sport are important components of a good quality of life and have major land use implications. Adequate and accessible provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities including swimming pools and public parks is an important consideration in assessing the quality of life in a town or area. It is likely to become more important as densities in central areas increase and pressure from competing land uses becomes more intense. Open space policies will be considered in the context of these provisions as required in the Development Management Standard section of the Plan.</i></p> <p><i>The preservation and enhancement of natural amenities and recreation amenities is an integral part of the development of the county, both in terms</i></p>

<p>how to get in and out of the bath, but you come to a tournament and you're rooming with someone and they can't. You teach them how to do it."</p> <p>Sport highlights what you can do, it develops your ability to be independent and provides an environment where people with severe disabilities can focus on what they can do rather than what they can't do.</p> <p>There are many disability sporting activities being played in Ireland today both indoor and outdoor. Some of these activities are:-</p> <p>Wheelchair Rugby &amp; Rugby 7's          Wheelchair Basketball          Wheelchair Gaelic Football          Wheelchair soccer          Wheelchair Table Tennis          Wheelchair Badminton          Boles          Blind Soccer          Indoor and Outdoor Athletics</p> <p>These activities are being played on basketball and large community halls courts all over the Country. They exist because of strong volunteerism and club fundraising. This is the ideal situation because the clubs exist in close proximity to users. And these can be played in conventional sporting facilities.</p> <p>However there is also a need to have a Regional/National centre to facilitate disability sports at a Regional/National level. There is a clear need to formally align sports and disabilities more closely and in this regard a centre of excellence for disability sports is the appropriate direction to take. Irish Wheelchair Association have used this model for a great number of years through their Sports section. They have regional officers delivering on programmes of activity all over the Country. They also have sports centre and gym at their HQ. Their facilities are adequate but small and limited in terms of what they can deliver.</p> <p>So why is Portlaoise a sound location for a centre of excellence for disability sports?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Good road network in and out of the County.</li> <li>2. Rail link close to existing facilities.</li> <li>3. Bus link.</li> <li>4. Existing swimming pool and astro turf facilities on site.</li> <li>5. Room to facilitate complex.</li> </ol>	<p><i>of providing an attractive and accessible resource for the county's population and in terms of attracting inward investment from tourism and increasing the marketability of Laois as a location for industry, business and commercial activity. The Council recognises the importance of amenities and recreational amenities in the social, economic and cultural well-being of the county and aims to protect preserve and enhance these amenities through the following policy areas.</i></p> <p><i>Given that Portlaoise has been designated as a National Transportation Hub in the National Spatial Strategy and its supremacy as a Principal Town within the Midland Regional Settlement Strategy and the Settlement Strategy as indicated in this Plan, Laois County Council will investigate the potential to develop a regional sports centre that would incorporate a range of facilities currently lacking in the region.</i></p> <p>NRA2, NRA3, NRA4, NRA7 relate</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to plan</p>
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	<p>6. Large general population to use facilities to cover day today running of facilities.</p> <p>What's the proposal?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two court basketball court with treatment rooms and storage.</li> <li>2. Underground parking facilities.</li> <li>3. Healthy living restaurant space to be leased out.</li> <li>4. Indoor athletics facility.</li> <li>5. Covered Pedestrian walkway from Train Station to Leisure centre along the boundary of the rail track.</li> </ol> <p>Who are the stakeholders?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Laois County Council</li> <li>2. Parish</li> <li>3. HSE</li> <li>4. Departments</li> <li>5. Disability groups</li> <li>6. Other sporting groups</li> <li>7. National organisations (IWA etc)</li> </ol> <p>Meetings have already taken place with most of the stakeholders and all of those stakeholders who we met with have agreed to support and drive such a proposal. A proposed facility like what is being suggested here would provide Portlaoise with the ability to hold both National and International events throughout the year in able and disabled sports, thus attracting many visitors to come and visit Laois.</p> <p>If successful in delivering on this project we would hope to host the European Wheelchair Rugby Championships in 2021. This is a ten team tournament and has the potential to bring many participants and spectators. In recent years disability sporting activities are aligning themselves to the able bodied version of the sport. Wheelchair Table Tennis is now under the Governance of Table Tennis Ireland, Swimming has done the same and Wheelchair Rugby are in negotiations with the IRFU.</p> <p>There are two points to be made here.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We have both able bodied and disabled sports in Portlaoise. There is a large following for the able bodied version of these sports which has the potential to increase support for the disabled activity.</li> <li>2. This embraces the whole notion of Social inclusion of a large group of already marginalised people.</li> </ol>	
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<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 77</b></p> <p>Offaly County Council,</p>	<p>Offaly County Council fully supports, subject to environmental considerations, policy TM19 which cites the opportunity to link the proposed Barrow Blueway with Portarlinton. Offaly County Council, in cooperation with Bord na Mona and Coillte has identified the potential to further link this blueway/cycling and walking route to the Grand Canal, the Shannon and further to the National Cycle Route 11 and the Royal Canal in Co. Weestmeath.</p>	<p>Submission noted. This point is already covered by Policy TM19.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan is required.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 76.</b></p> <p>Department of Education &amp; Skills c/o Veronica Kelly,</p>	<p>School provision</p> <p>It is important that there is sufficient educational infrastructure to meet the needs of the community. The Department has worked closely with the Council in relation to securing sites for educational infrastructure and the Department will continue to work closely with the Council in relation to the provision of new schools and the development of existing schools and emphasises the critical importance of the Council ensuring sufficient land is zoned for this purpose. In our submission dated 4 December 2015 to the Pre-Draft plan the Department has already made the Council aware of the need to reserve a site of approximately 12 acres for a new 1,000 pupil post-primary school to open in September 2017 to serve the Portlaoise feeder area.</p> <p>Schools may develop within the lifetime of the Development Plan. It is important that suitable sites, taking the documents referenced in appendix 2 of this submission into account, are zoned to cater for this provision. The Department requests that the Council consider including a specific school/education land use zoning objective and identify suitably located lands to meet the educational infrastructure needs within the Development Plan in accordance with Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Appendix F (DEHLG, 2007) and the Department of Education and Skills Technical Guidance Documents for primary schools and for post-primary schools.</p> <p>In this regard land should be zoned where provision of services and access will not hinder the development of the school within the required timeframe. The Council is requested to consider favourable implementation strategies and phasing in the identification of school specific sites in order to ensure ready access to existing infrastructure and to avoid the risk of disproportionate costs by the Department towards such infrastructure to benefit the receiving communities.</p> <p>The Department requests that site reservations are</p>	<p>Submission noted. The Council fully acknowledges the advice, support and assistance it receives from the Department of Education &amp; Skills in planning for this important sector which plays a central role in the on-going social, community and economic development of the county.</p> <p>The sector is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 4.2.1 Education and policies as follows - SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, SOC4, SOC5 , SOC6, SOC7, SOC8, SOC9, SOC10, SOC11.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>State correct departmental title: <b>Department of Education and Skills</b>, not <del>Department of Education and Science</del>.</p> <p>Include the following wording at start of Section 4.2.1:</p> <p><b>Education is critical to achieving the full socio-economic potential of the study area.</b></p> <p><b>In terms of planning for the provision of education infrastructure in Portlaoise, the primary role of the Planning Authority is to identify and reserve sufficient lands at the most optimum locations within the study area.</b></p> <p><b>In general, where new schools are required, they should be located close to, or within the main residential areas of urban settlements so that as many students [and teachers] as possible can walk or cycle to school. The opportunity should be taken to locate the schools so that they naturally contribute to the development of a sense of community. Proximity to open space areas should also be a factor for consideration as this would allow ready access to these amenities and other aligned facilities by the schools and in the strategic long-term may future-proof these schools for possible future expansion should that be necessary.</b></p>

	<p>made, where possible, as close as possible to community facilities such as sports facilities, libraries etc. so that these can be shared between the school and the community. The Department is also open to the concept of multi-campus school arrangements, for example where two or three primary schools are located side by side or a primary school and a post primary school sharing the same site. Both of these approaches can have the effect of reducing the land take for school development.</p> <p>It would be strategically valuable for the educationally zoned lands to be placed beside open-space or green-belt zonings if possible, as this would allow ready access to these amenities and other aligned facilities by the schools and in the strategic long-term may future-proof these schools for possible future expansion should that be necessary.</p> <p>Where possible, land adjacent to existing schools should be zoned appropriately to allow for the potential future expansion of these schools. In addition, the Council is requested to consider a policy of introducing a buffer zone around existing school sites, where possible. This would facilitate adequate separation from housing while allowing reasonable scope for increased school heights particularly in established neighbourhoods identified for consolidation or intensification of population.</p> <p>Using the projected population targets published in the Draft Plan Volume 1: Written Statement – Table 5: Core Strategy Table and applying the information used to calculate educational infrastructure requirements as set out in Appendix 1, the last 2 columns of the table below outlines the number of primary classrooms and the number of post primary school places which would be required to meet the projected increase in population as set out in the draft Development Plan, if this level of population growth was to materialise.</p> <p>The projected population targets referenced in the draft Plan provides figures for 2011 and projected figures for 2023. Five of these 11 years have already elapsed so the additional children will already be attending the existing primary and post-primary schools. However, in relation to the additional educational infrastructure which may arise as a result of such a population increase, the growth of 9,231 would result in the need for an additional 41 classrooms at primary level and 785 school places at post-primary level across the county. If none of these</p>	<p>School and other educational premises represent a valuable resource in terms of land and buildings, which generally are only used on a partial basis. The dual use of educational facilities, where it does not conflict with the delivery of the education service can contribute to meeting the wider needs of the community, by helping to satisfy demand for a variety of activities.</p> <p>Section 28 Guidelines entitled The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice [DoEHLG, 2008] is the pre-eminent guiding document against which applications of this type will be considered.</p> <p>The Department of Education and Skills Technical Guidance Document TGD-025 Identification and Suitability Assessment of Sites for Primary Schools 2012 will also be consulted.</p> <p>Add an additional policy SOC 1 and re-number others accordingly as follows:</p> <p>SOC1 Encourage, promote and facilitate the provision of education infrastructure and related facilities in accordance with Section 28 national guidelines entitled The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice [DoEHLG, 2008].</p> <p>The reservation of a specific site for a new post-primary school in Portlaoise can be dealt with at the review stage of the Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2012-2018.</p>
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	<p>projected numbers were to be catered for in existing schools, this population growth would equate to the need for primary and post-primary accommodation in the relevant towns as outlined in the table above. In terms of site size, a new primary school ranging in size from 16-24 classrooms, as a guide, requires 1.6 hectares (4 acres).</p> <p>In relation to the Portlaoise area, as already referred to the Department has made the Council aware of the need to reserve a site of approximately 12 acres for a new 1,000 pupil post-primary school to open in September 2017 to serve the Portlaoise feeder area.</p> <p>It is important that sufficient lands in the areas where significant additional population is likely to arise, is zoned educational, to ensure that educational infrastructure can be put in place to meet the needs of these new communities.</p> <p>With regard to the projections for the other areas referred to above, the Department would expect that the existing primary and post-primary schools should be capable of catering for the projected increase in pupil numbers. In some instances this may necessitate an extension to existing schools subject to site suitability and agreement of the various stake holders. The matter will be kept under review.</p> <p><b>Programme of Capital Investment</b></p> <p>A new programme of capital investment in schools, listing the school projects planned to go to construction during the years 2016 to 2021 was published on the 17th November 2015. For your information, the school projects in the Laois area included on this programme are listed in Appendix 3 to this submission.</p> <p>Please see appendix 1 for details in relation to how the Department calculates educational requirements based on demographic projections from the Council; references to technical guidance and other documents which relate to educational provision at appendix 2 and the projects included in the 6 year construction programme from 2016-2021 at appendix 3. All Technical Guidance Documentation used in the design of all new school buildings and extensions are available from the Department's website <a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a></p> <p>Demographic changes in the Laois area will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis and it is possible</p>	
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	<p>that further educational requirements may arise over the lifetime of the Development Plan. Accordingly it is important that sufficient land is zoned for educational use.</p> <p>The Department is available to meet with Council officials to discuss in more detail the educational implications arising from the draft Plan. The Department will continue to liaise with the Council in relation to relevant LAPs etc.</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION No 63</p> <p>Marc Van Den Bergh</p>	<p>I fully agree with the overall vision for the county, i.e. <b>“County Laois will be a cohesive and sustainable community of people enjoying distinct but interrelated urban and rural environments, where the natural environment is protected, cultural and built heritage is safeguarded, where opportunities for existing residents and future generations to live, work, visit and enjoy safely and as equals, without compromising the environmental integrity of our county”.</b></p> <p>I agree with the policy to support Local Sports and Community Groups in the development of facilities, and also to protect leisure and recreation facilities. One of the growing sports in Laois is hockey. There's Abbeyleix Hockey Club and also a Portlaoise senior ladies hockey team, however, there is no hockey pitch in Laois. The Abbeyleix Hockey Club uses the tennis courts in Abbeyleix for training during the winter season, but has to travel to Naas or Kilkenny for matches. Laois should get at least one all-weather hockey pitch that can be used by the hockey clubs and perhaps other sports groups. This can either be located at Abbeyleix Tennis Club, at Portlaoise Leisure Centre, or at one of the new secondary schools. In other counties such facilities are either provided as part of the community leisure facilities, or in secondary schools.</p> <p>Finally, regarding Education, paragraph 4.2.1., I agree with SOC2 that Laois should develop some third-level education facilities in the county. Currently our young people are forced to leave the county, and many don't return as a result. Laois should concentrate on areas that fit in the socio-economic profile and activities in the county, e.g. agriculture, forestry, crafts studies, future energy studies.</p> <p>During current CDP excellent progress has been made regarding primary and secondary education facilities with many new school buildings. The emphasis for next CDP should be on the establishment of third level education facilities in the county.</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission in relation to the provision of a hockey pitch within the County. This could be covered by policies NRA 2 and NRA 3 in relation to the provision of such a facility.</p> <p>Commentary in relation to education is noted and supported with policies in the Draft Plan</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>

<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 68.</b> Laois Sports Partnership and Laois County Council Sport &amp; Leisure Section</p>	<p>The following issues were raised</p> <p>Accessibility for sport and recreation Universal design should be implemented in relation to the design of all sport and recreation indoor and outdoor facilities to maximise access to all users.</p> <p>Continue to invest in regular needs analysis to determine these sport and recreational needs of communities within County Laois.</p> <p>To develop a County Sport &amp; Recreation Strategy that responds to needs identified. To identify funding sources and devise timelines for implementation. LCC, LSP &amp; LECP Strategies to feed in to overall Strategy for Sport and Recreation.</p> <p>4.2.1 Education To ensure that provision is made for adequate space for the development of accessible sport, recreation and play indoor &amp; outdoor facilities for all educational institutions/bodies from pre-school through to third level in County Laois.</p> <p>To ensure as part of the conditions of planning permission that these facilities are made available for community use outside school hours at affordable rates.</p> <p>To provide advice and support to educational institutions in relation to roll out of sport, recreation and play within the school and provision of advice and support on development &amp; funding of sport &amp; recreational facilities progress that aim (REF: Laois Walking &amp; Cycling Strategy) that each school is serviced by safe, accessible and appropriate walking/Cycling routes and has adequate provision for parking/storage of bicycles on school site</p> <p>4.2.2 Health Care Facilities Provision of walking/cycling pathways servicing main health care facilities in Co Laois and adequate provision for parking/storage of bicycles on site for staff and visitor. Provision of Play facilities on site at main community and hospital facilities that service the needs of children and appropriate recreation indoor &amp; outdoor recreational facilities at centres &amp;</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>It is proposed to revise the introduction to the section under Section 4.1. by including the following wording</p> <p><b>Laois Sports Partnership and Laois County Council are to continue to facilitate the development of quality and inclusive sport and recreation facilities, programmes and projects through capacity building.</b></p> <p>In relation to Accessibility and the issue of universal design , this is covered under the following objective</p> <p><b>OBJ 2(soc2)</b></p> <p><b>Ensure that all new development shall be designed in order to allow for universal access for all people</b></p> <p>This includes the design of all sport and recreation indoor and outdoor facilities to maximise access to all users.</p> <p>Regular needs analysis to determine sport and recreational needs of communities within County Laois is an operational matter for the sections within Council dealing with same.</p> <p>There is a policy in the Draft Plan</p> <p><b>NRA26</b></p> <p><b>Devise and adopt, in co-operation with other relevant agencies, a “Play Plan for County Laois” setting out a strategy for the provision, resourcing and implementation of improved social and play opportunities for children and the youth of the County.</b></p> <p>4.2.1 Education</p> <p>It is important the open space provisions are met in relation to all educational facilities and this is identified in the guidelines pertaining to the provision of pre schools and primary and secondary schools in the national guidance documents , however it is proposed to include the following policy</p> <p>Adequate space for the development of accessible sport, recreation and play indoor &amp; outdoor facilities for all educational institutions/bodies from pre-school through to third level in County Laois is covered by the relevant guidelines in</p>
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	<p>hospitals that service the needs of older adults &amp; people with disabilities</p> <p>Designation of St Fintan's grounds as a public park facility with appropriate recreational facilities &amp; pathways.</p> <p>4.2.4 Burial Grounds</p> <p>To ensure that burial grounds are serviced by a walking &amp; cycling pathways and adequate provision for parking of bicycles to encourage healthier transport alternatives</p> <p>4.2.5 Crime Prevention</p> <p>To ensure that all new Sport, recreational play facilities are located and designed to ensure safety of all users and any future redevelopments of existing facilities design additional security features into their proposals – e.g. visibility, lighting &amp; CCTV</p> <p>4.3 Natural &amp; Recreational Amenities</p> <p>NRA7 Explore the potential of locating a regional sports centre at Portlaoise Leisure Centre with a particular focus on its potential to serve as a regional centre of excellence for Disability Sport. This would require the complimentary development of accessible links to Portlaoise Train Station &amp; Portlaoise College Athletic Track – e.g. sheltered accessible pathways</p> <p>4.3.1 Open Space Provision</p> <p>NRA9 –LCC must update County Play &amp; Recreation Strategy. Need also to reference National Play &amp; Recreational Strategies</p> <p>Seek to develop and maintain all Parks to Green Flag Award standard.</p> <p>Encourage and support in consultation with NPW, National Trails Office, Waterways Ireland &amp; Inland Fisheries, the development of the Blueway developments in line with appropriate directives as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- River Erkina – Woodenbridge - Durrow &amp; future link to Nore</li> <li>- River Nore – Castletown – Durrow – Ballyraggett</li> <li>- River Barrow – Portarlinton – Monasterevin</li> <li>- Barrowline – Monasterevin – Vicarstown - Athy</li> </ul> <p>This includes the development of adjacent&amp; linkage walking/cycling trails and changing &amp; jetty facilities in</p>	<p>relation to same – Department Guidelines on childcare facilities and Section 28 Guidelines entitled The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice [DoEHLG, 2008]. These are the pre-eminent guiding documents against which applications of this type will be considered.</p> <p>Policy SOC 7 encourage the opening up of educational facilities to serve a community function</p> <p>The provision of advice and funding opportunities in relation to the roll out of sport, recreation and play within the school is an operational matter which is currently being carried out by Laois County Council Sports Section and Laois Sports Partnership.</p> <p>The requirements for appropriate walking and cycling routes and bicycle parking / storage is a consideration in the design of any new school and where possible is retro fitted in existing circumstances.</p> <p>4.2.2 Health Care Facilities</p> <p>The requirements for appropriate walking and cycling routes and bicycle parking / storage is a consideration in the design of any new school and where possible is retro fitted in existing circumstances.</p> <p>The provision of play facilities within medical institutions is considered appropriate or necessary given the main function of such facilities. Recreational Areas are in general located within the vicinity of such facilities and can be used by visitors to such places.</p> <p>The designation of St Fintan's grounds as a public park facility with appropriate recreational facilities &amp; pathways is not a matter for the County Development Plan process and should be considered in the Local Area Plan process.</p> <p>4.2.4 Burial Grounds</p> <p>All Burial grounds cater for people visiting.</p> <p>4.2.5 Crime Prevention</p> <p>The safety aspect in design of sports / recreational facilities is required under law.</p>
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	<p>strategic locations. May also require additional development of amenity areas &amp; carparking.</p> <p>With the development of Blueways provision may be required to facilitate the storage of canoes etc to meet the anticipated increase in local water sport clubs. Develop additional natural play spaces in line with DCYA recommendations.</p> <p>Maintain &amp; Develop amenity areas in the Slieve Blooms and equip with facilities</p> <p>Explore in partnership with Coillte , Bord na Mona &amp; OPW the potential to develop outdoor recreational facilities – orienteering courses, cycle trails, park runs etc</p> <p>To encourage &amp; support the development of 3 cycling hubs in Co Laois as detailed in Draft Walking &amp; Cycling Strategy</p> <p>Identify &amp; develop as appropriate in each community (village/town) a safe walkway/pathway that will facilitate community physical activity &amp; health gains.</p> <p>NRA 26 – Amend TO Play &amp; Recreational Plan???</p> <p>Develop the potential of Co Laois as an Outdoor Activity Hub by developing an outdoor education unit at Portarlinton Leisure Centre which will include climbing, archery &amp; canoeing facilities including jetty &amp; storage facilities.</p> <p>1) Housing Development (DMO4)</p> <p>We recommend the implementation of adequate high quality open space and recreation provision for the wider population to include the following;- informal play spaces, safe well-lit pathways which will facilitate children learning to cycle, adults able to walk safely and encouraging social interaction between local resident</p> <p>The walking and cycling strategy should be included as an appendix.</p>	<p>4.3 Natural &amp; Recreational Amenities – leave as is</p> <p><i>NRA7</i> <i>Work in co-operation with Laois Sports Partnership in exploring the potential for clustering facilities to provide a regional sports centre in a strategic location.”</i></p> <p>4.3.1 Open Space Provision Replace NRA9 with the following – <del>Ensure that a range of options are explored for the provision of open space in consultation with the County play strategy;</del></p> <p><b>Update the County Play and Recreation Strategy in consultation with the National Play &amp; Recreational Strategies</b></p> <p>There is a big emphasis on recreational development, including in the South Laois area, in the Draft Plan. This is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 4.3 <i>Natural &amp; Recreational Amenities</i> and Section 5.10 <i>Tourism and the following policies</i> in the Draft Plan relate</p> <p><i>NRA2,NRA3,NRA4,NRA6,NRA17,TRANS46,TRANS47,TRANS48,,TM 18,, TM 19, TM 20, TM 22</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Add an additional policy as follows and re-number others accordingly:</p> <p><i>TM 23 Subject to compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives, support in principle the development and marketing of the Erkina River Blueway Trail in association with all relevant stakeholders including Woodenbridge Paddlers Association and facilitate related commercial opportunities in Darrow as well as opportunities to link with other tourist and recreational facilities in the area.</i></p> <p>Amend wording of policy Trans48 as follows:</p> <p><i>TRANS48</i></p> <p><i>Develop on-road cycle trail with a Rathdowney Trailhead to facilitate sporting and general cycling as well as link points of interest including</i></p>
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## SECTION 5: Economic Development

Name & Issues Raised	Chief Executive's Response & Recommendation
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 2</b></p> <p>Minister for Agriculture, Food &amp; Marine,</p>	<p>Acknowledges receipt of correspondence and makes no comment in relation to the draft Plan</p> <p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 7</b></p> <p>Roadstone Limited, c/o SLR Global Environmental Solutions,</p>	<p>Roadstone Limited has a number of property assets within the Laois County Council administrative area, including Ballyadams Quarry and Lisduff Quarry. These property assets provide aggregates to Laois and the surrounding region.</p> <p><b>Importance of Extractive Industries</b></p> <p>The importance of the extractive industries to the wider economy and the need to protect the operations of working quarries and proven aggregate resources is firmly established in planning policy.</p> <p>The extractive industry provides the necessary raw materials for the majority of building and infrastructure development in Ireland. Roads, motorways, homes, schools, hospitals, colleges, factories, water and sewerage systems are all constructed with construction aggregates and concrete products. The construction of power stations, railways, wastewater and water treatment plants and sporting stadia is heavily dependent on the supply of crushed stone, concrete and other building materials made from aggregates. Aggregate extraction can only take place where suitable aggregate resources exist; they are a 'tied' resource. It is considered, therefore, that planning policies should be carefully constructed to avoid adverse effects on aggregate resources and the related extractive industries and added value production that are essential for our built environment, infrastructure and future economic development.</p> <p>Like many forms of development, extractive industries have the potential to cause harm to the environment, heritage and the landscape if not appropriately designed and managed. However, aggregates are a necessary resource and are of great importance to the economy and society. In addition, well managed and designed quarry sites</p> <p>Submission noted.</p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of the aggregates and extractive industry sector in County Laois and the crucial role it plays in the on-going infrastructural development of the county.</p> <p>The industry is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 5.9 <i>Rural Economic Activities</i> which states:</p> <p><b>Mining and Aggregates</b></p> <p><i>"The Council recognises that the aggregate and concrete products industry contribute to the development of the national, regional and local economies by the proper use and management of natural resources for the benefit of the community and the creation of employment opportunities. These products are required as essential building materials in the social and economic development process including the provision of housing and infrastructure. Laois County Council will seek to safeguard these valuable resources for future extraction."</i></p> <p><i>The National Guidelines on Quarries and Ancillary Activities for Planning Authorities (DOEHLG, 2004) is the guiding document against which applications for quarries and ancillary activities will be considered."</i></p> <p>A map of known quarrying sites in County Laois is presented as Figure 13.</p> <p>Polilies for the sector in the draft Plan are - <i>RUR7, RUR8, RUR9</i></p>

	<p>minimise environmental effects. There is also the potential for habitat creation through the restoration of quarry sites following the cessation of operations.</p> <p>Given that it is not generally viable to transport aggregates over long distances, each county and region, including Laois, should have its own sources of aggregates in order to achieve many of the housing, development and infrastructure projects that will be envisaged in the draft development plan. In order to ensure that existing and any future proposed extractive industry schemes are feasible under the development plan for the period 2017 -2023, we recommend that the development plan refers to:</p> <p>[i] The important role of the extractive industry in the delivery of infrastructure, housing and other social and economic benefits.</p> <p>[ii] The potential for quarries and pits to deliver environmental benefits in the form of habitat creation and not only the potential for environmental risks.</p> <p>[iii] Securing of long-term future supply of aggregates and value-added products including concrete products, blacktop etc.</p> <p>It is considered that Laois County Council should seek to balance the necessary development of extractive industries with the protection of the environment in the forthcoming development plan.</p> <p>In addition, it is recommended that the following polices should be included in section 5.9 in the 'Land-based/resource based economic policies' as policies RUR7 and RUR8 and that policies RUR7 to RUR9 should be renumbered accordingly:</p> <p><i>To support the necessary and important role of the extractive industries in the delivery of building materials for infrastructural and other development and to recognise the need to develop extractive industries for the benefit of society and the economy</i></p> <p>and</p> <p><i>To secure the long-term supply of value-added products (such as concrete products and asphalt)</i></p>	<p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Add the following wording to <b>Section 5.9:</b></p> <p><i>“Aggregate extraction can only take place where suitable aggregate resources exist; they are a ‘tied’ resource. It is considered, therefore, that planning policies should be carefully constructed to avoid adverse effects on aggregate resources and the related extractive industries and added value production that are essential for the built environment, infrastructure and future economic development.</i></p> <p><i>Like many forms of development, extractive industries have the potential to cause harm to the environment, heritage and the landscape if not appropriately designed and managed. However, aggregates are a necessary resource and are of great importance to the economy and society. In addition, well managed and designed quarry sites minimise environmental effects. There is also the potential for habitat creation through the restoration of quarry sites following the cessation of operations.</i></p> <p>Include additional policies as follows:</p> <p><i>RUR XX -To support the necessary role of the extractive industries in the delivery of building materials for infrastructural and other development and to recognize the need to develop extractive industries for the benefit of society and the economy</i></p> <p>and</p> <p><i>RUR XX-To secure the long-term supply of value-added products (such as concrete products and asphalt, which are often, but not always, produced in conjunction with aggregate extraction.</i></p> <p>Append the following wording to <b>policy RUR9:</b></p> <p><i>Investigate the feasibility of mapping the full extent of aggregate resources of the county during the lifetime of the County Development Plan 2017-20213 and Seek to prevent the sterilisation and inappropriate development of aggregate and mineral resources in order to ensure a sustainable supply of these non-</i></p>
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	<p><i>within the county, which are often, but not always, produced in conjunction with aggregate extraction.</i></p> <p><b>Sterilisation of Mineral Resources</b></p> <p>Policy RUR9 seeks to investigate the feasibility of mapping aggregate resources. There is no reference in either the text or the other extractive industries policies to the need to prevent the sterilisation and protect aggregate or other mineral resources from inappropriate development. It is considered that this matter should be addressed by the inclusion of the following text to policy RUR9:</p> <p><i>“Seek to prevent the sterilisation and inappropriate development of aggregate and mineral resources in order to ensure a sustainable supply of these non-renewable resources.”</i></p> <p><b>Pit and Quarry Buffer Zone</b></p> <p>Figure 13 identifies the various quarries and pits in the county and indicates a 1km buffer zone. The purpose of this zone is neither explained in the text nor referred to in the policy. The purpose of the buffer zone should be clarified in the draft development plan.</p> <p><b>Noise</b></p> <p>Policy ES16 requires activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise monitors. In the case of extractive industries, it is standard practice to undertake periodic noise monitoring using mobile noise monitoring equipment in accordance with an agreed monitoring programme. It is considered that the requirement to install permanent noise monitors would be inappropriate in the case of the extractive industries. It is considered that policy ES16 should be revised as follows:</p> <p><i>ES16 Require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures and to undertake noise monitoring in accordance with an agreed monitoring programme.</i></p> <p><b>Built Heritage and Archaeology</b></p> <p>In relation to built heritage, OBJ2 refers to the designation of public rights of way to archaeological sites and national monuments,</p>	<p><i>renewable resources.</i></p> <p>Amend <b>objective OBJ 2</b> as follows [in thicker italics] :</p> <p><i>OBJ 2 Recognise the importance of archaeology and National Monuments as part of our heritage and provide public access, subject to reasonable conservational restrictions, <b>reasonable considerations of public safety and avoidance of adverse effects on extant land uses</b>, to Archaeological Sites and National Monuments in state, Council or private ownership. Traditional access routes will be designated as public rights of way. In other cases, routes will be acquired either by agreement with landowners or way of compulsory powers. Appropriate signage will be put in place”;</i></p> <p>Amend <b>objective OBJ2</b> [Archaeological Heritage] as follows:</p> <p><i>OBJ2 Secure the preservation (in situ) of existing archaeological monuments including the integrity of town defences, town walls, embankments, town gates, bastions or ancillary fortifications or portions thereof. <b>Preservation by record may also be appropriate in some circumstances [as determined by the Planning Authority] in accordance with Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage.</b></i></p> <p>Amend policy <b>DM53 [Hedgerows]</b> as follows:</p> <p><i>Hedgerows define rural landscapes and are valuable for terrestrial forms of wildlife. They are particularly important for birds and woodland plants. They provide commuting and feeding corridors for bats. Where they are found in settlements they are significant habitats and corridors for biodiversity.</i></p> <p><i>Good hedgerows can easily be identified by their structure and location in the landscape. Best quality hedgerows will have all the following characteristics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>i. a few mature trees,</i></li> <li><i>ii. a three tier structure (with trees, shrubs and herbs)</i></li> <li><i>iii. few gaps and</i></li> </ul>
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	<p>including those in private ownership. We note that a national monument exists within the Roadstone landholding at Lisduff. Given that this site comprises an operational quarry, it would not be appropriate to provide public access to this site. It is considered that OBJ2 should be revised as follows:</p> <p><i>“OBJ 2 Recognise the importance of archaeology and National Monuments as part of our heritage and will provide public access, subject to reasonable conservational restrictions, public safety and avoidance of adverse effects on extant land uses, to Archaeological Sites and National Monuments in state, Council or private ownership. Traditional access routes will be designated as public rights of way. In other cases, routes will be acquired either by agreement with landowners or way of compulsory powers. Appropriate signage will be put in place”;</i></p> <p>In relation to archaeological heritage, OBJ2 refers to the preservation of existing archaeological monuments in their settings (<i>in situ</i>). <i>Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage</i> was published in 1999 by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. These guidelines provide for the preservation of archaeological heritage <i>in situ</i> or by record to allow development to proceed in certain circumstances. It is considered appropriate that OBJ2 recognise the potential need for the preservation of archaeological sites or national monuments by record and that the text is amended as follows:</p> <p><i>OBJ2 Secure the preservation (in situ) of existing archaeological monuments including the integrity of town defences, town walls, embankments, town gates, bastions or ancillary fortifications or portions thereof. Preservation by record may also be appropriate in some circumstances in accordance with Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage.</i></p> <p>Objectives OBJ2, OBJ3 and OBJ7 and policies ARCH10 and ARCH14 refer to the setting of archaeological monuments and national monuments. The concept of the setting of a national monument or an archaeological monument does not appear to be addressed in national policy and, in particular, in the <i>Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage</i>. In a pamphlet titled</p>	<p><i>iv. will not have been cut into a box shape. Shrubs (almost always) include hawthorn, blackthorn or and possibly dog rose.</i></p> <p><i>v. The herb layer is found under the shrub layer. It should form a strip of tall grassland along the margin of the hedgerow.</i></p> <p><i>In dealing with applications for new developments, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:</i></p> <p><i>i. Retention of a connected network of good quality hedgerows;</i></p> <p><i>ii. The value of hedgerows as green infrastructure (landscape, biodiversity, shelter, supporting services to agriculture/horticulture;</i></p> <p><b><i>iii. The avoidance of the unnecessary removal of hedgerows;</i></b></p> <p><b><i>iv. If it is necessary to remove a hedgerow, developers should be reminded of their obligations under the Wildlife Acts not to remove or interfere with them during the bird nesting season, between March 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August. Also, replacement or compensatory planting of hedgerows using indigenous species such as whitethorn or blackthorn only will be required;</i></b></p> <p><i>v. Proposals to integrate hedgerows into the layout of a new linear feature such as a road/pedestrian/cycle track;</i></p> <p><i>vi. Depending on the potential risks of anti-social activity or requirements for a more garden look the margins of these new hedgerows/woodlands/new shrubberies could be planted with colourful non natives (for amenity) or spiny shrubs to deter vandals.</i></p> <p><i>By occasionally mowing the grass margin of hedgerows (or part of it), they will look managed. As litter will accumulate in long grass along their margins arrangements will have to be made to carry out regular clean ups;</i></p> <p><i>vii. Encouragement should be given to develop a new linear feature of biodiversity value such as a hedgerow or dry stone wall, particularly if this type of habitat is found adjacent to the development site;</i></p> <p><i>viii. The use of native tree and shrub species similar to those found in adjacent hedgerows in new or replacement hedgerows;</i></p> <p><i>ix. The wholesale removal of hedgerows to facilitate the achievement of adequate sightline visibility for one-off houses in the countryside will not be encouraged.</i></p>
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	<p><i>Archaeology in the Planning Process</i>, the National Monuments Services refers to “<i>a buffer or fallow area around a monument, sufficient to protect the amenity and setting of the monument</i>”, which is understood to refer to the zone of notification rather than the wider landscape setting. It should also be noted that the Code of Practice between the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Irish Concrete Federation does not refer to the setting of archaeological or national monuments.</p> <p>It is considered that the above objectives and policies should be revised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OBJ<sub>2</sub> – as above</li> <li>• OBJ<sub>3</sub> – delete</li> <li>• <i>OBJ<sub>7</sub> Require the preparation and submission of an archaeological assessment detailing the potential impact of any development on both upstanding monuments, and buried structures and deposits;</i></li> <li>• <i>ARCH<sub>10</sub> Protect the integrity, character, value and zone of notification of Recorded Monuments and Places and the zone of notification of National Monuments from inappropriate development;</i></li> <li>• <i>ARCH<sub>14</sub> Protect and enhance archaeological monuments including town walls, town embankments and ditches, town gates, bastions or ancillary fortifications.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Hedgerows</b></p> <p>Policy NH<sub>27</sub> refers to the protection of hedgerows from unnecessary removal and policy DM<sub>53</sub> refers to removal of hedgerows only for reasons of public safety and a requirement that hedgerows are only removed outside of the bird nesting season. It is considered that these policies are somewhat contradictory. It is submitted that hedgerows will need to be removed in some instances to facilitate development; this is particularly the case with extractive industries. As outlined above, extractive operations can only be located where the relevant resources exist. In the case of surface extraction, such as at quarries and pits, the removal of hedgerows is likely to be necessary to access the relevant resources.</p> <p>In some, but not all, cases hedgerows can be restored. Notwithstanding the need to remove hedgerows, quarry and pit restoration can result in the creation of new or replacement habitats. It is considered that the policies cited above should be clarified and it should be acknowledged that hedgerow removal may be necessary to facilitate some development, and, in particular, extractive operations.</p>	<p>Other policies and objectives for this sector to remain unchanged.</p>
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	<p>It is considered that Policy DM53 should be revised to reflect Policy NH27 as follows:</p> <p><i>Hedgerows define rural landscapes and are valuable for terrestrial forms of wildlife. They are particularly important for birds and woodland plants. They provide commuting and feeding corridors for bats. Where they are found in settlements, they are significant habitats and corridors for biodiversity.</i></p> <p><i>Good hedgerows can easily be identified by their structure and location in the landscape. Best quality hedgerows will have all the following characteristics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>i. a few mature trees,</i></li> <li><i>ii. a three tier structure (with trees, shrubs and herbs)</i></li> <li><i>iii. few gaps and</i></li> <li><i>iv. will not have been cut into a box shape. Shrubs (almost always) include hawthorn, blackthorn or and possibly dog rose.</i></li> <li><i>v. The herb layer is found under the shrub layer. It should form a strip of tall grassland along the margin of the hedgerow.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>In dealing with applications for new developments, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>i. Retention of a connected network of good quality hedgerows;</i></li> <li><i>ii. The value of hedgerows as green infrastructure (landscape, biodiversity, shelter, supporting services to agriculture/horticulture;</i></li> <li><i>iii. The avoidance of the unnecessary removal of hedgerows;</i></li> <li><i>iv. If it is necessary to remove a hedgerow, developers should be reminded of their obligations under the Wildlife Acts not to remove or interfere with them during the bird nesting season, between March 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August;</i></li> <li><i>v. Proposals to integrate hedgerows into the layout of a new linear feature such as a road/ pedestrian/cycle track;</i></li> <li><i>vi. Depending on the potential risks of anti-social activity or requirements for a more garden look the margins of these new hedgerows/woodlands/new shrubberies could be planted with colourful non natives (for amenity) or spiny shrubs to deter vandals.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>By occasionally mowing the grass margin of hedgerows (or part of it), they will look managed. As litter will accumulate in long grass along their</i></p>	
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	<p><i>margins arrangements will have to be made to carry out regular clean ups;</i></p> <p><i>vii. Encouragement should be given to develop a new linear feature of biodiversity value such as a hedgerow or dry stone wall, particularly if this type of habitat is found adjacent to the development site;</i></p> <p><i>viii. The use native tree and shrub species similar to those found in adjacent hedgerows in new or replacement hedgerows;</i></p> <p><i>ix. The wholesale removal of hedgerows to facilitate the achievement of adequate sightline visibility for one-off houses in the countryside will not be encouraged.</i></p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 8</b></p> <p>Laois Farm Forestry Group,</p>	<p>The Laois Farm Forestry Group (LFFG) was established in 2009 to represent private forestry owners in County Laois who have planted forestry prior to 2002. Promoted by the Teagasc Forest Development Department, IFA Farm Forestry and local forest owners, it provides a representative voice for private forest owners with plantations now approaching or at the stage of timber production.</p> <p>The private forestry resource is significant in Laois and has a growing contribution to make to the rural economy of the county. The land area planted is considerably in excess of the national average with more than half the forest asset in the county in private ownership – mostly local farmers. There is scope to expand forestry further as financial returns from it notably and consistently outperform those from other agricultural enterprises. The local policy framework should support further afforestation and should also assist mobilization and utilization of the timber products. The development of downstream timber based activities, already well established, provides for indigenous economic activity in rural areas of the county and should be provided for in the plan.</p> <p>In addition, there is a developing market in the heat and power sector for lower grade forest products. There is potential to replicate the successful deployment of renewable heat from forest based products which has occurred in other regions, particularly in western counties, within county Laois. The proposed introduction of the Renewable Heat Incentive by the Department of the Environment may expedite the development of this market.</p> <p>The local policy framework should support the</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of the forestry sector in County Laois.</p> <p>It also notes the presence of a number of timber processing plants throughout the county and their potential for further expansion and job creation particularly in rural areas in the western half of the county.</p> <p>Afforestation is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 5.9 <i>Rural Economic Activities</i> which states:</p> <p><b>Afforestation</b></p> <p><i>“Forests and woodlands are a natural resource which can provide commercial, recreational, environmental, amenity and aesthetic benefits. There is considerable potential to develop this sector in County Laois from its current relatively low base. The Council recognises the importance of forestry, its value added potential, and the opportunities it offers for on-farm diversification. Emphasis on forestry has increased because of its role in economic development and employment and the potential of forestry to sequester carbon, thereby offsetting the production of green house gases such as methane, nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide. Nonetheless, the benefits arising from carbon sequestration must be balanced against the need to carefully manage forestry [especially coniferous plantations] so that it does not result in damage to visual amenity, residential amenity, soil and water quality or biodiversity. State</i></p>

	<p>development of this market and the necessary infrastructure and facilities that are required in order to facilitate its operation. In this instance it may be necessary to site such developments outside of the current zoned areas given the dispersed nature of the forest plantations within the county.</p> <p>The further development of the private forestry resource and the related downstream timber based activities will ensure that the value of the local private forestry resource is maximised and that the potential wealth creation is retained and distributed locally.</p>	<p><i>ownership accounts for 63% of afforestation in County Laois."</i></p> <p>The forestry sector also has an important role to play in the renewable energy sector as referenced in Section 6.6.1.2. <b>Bioenergy.</b></p> <p><i>"Bio energy is energy extracted from biomass which includes biological material such as plants and animals, wood and waste.</i></p> <p><i>Bio energy is produced through many different processes: combustion and anaerobic digestion being the most common and widely used. Combustion is the process whereby biomass (for example wood chips) is burned to produce process heat or to heat space or hot water. Anaerobic digestion involves the bacterial transformation of biomass (for example animal manure) to methane gas or biogas. The biogas can be used to fuel a stationary gas engine or gas turbine to produce electricity, or burned in a boiler to provide heat or to raise steam. Biogas can also be compressed and used as a transport fuel. The majority of current biomass derived energy comes from wood combustion to produce heat.</i></p> <p><i>The Council supports the potential of growing biomass crops on cutaway bogs and at other suitable locations. The Council supports the use of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Plants which would be fired by environmentally friendly low carbon fuels such as biomass."</i></p> <p>RUR 2 and EN4 relate to this.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The sector is well catered for under a number of different sections of the draft Plan; no amendment required.</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO.33</p> <p>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p>	<p>We note the intention in <i>Section 5-Economic Development</i>, to develop Togher as a National Enterprise Park (NEP), as designated in the National Spatial Strategy and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines. The adoption by the Council in April 2010 of a master plan for the development of the Togher site is also noted. It should be ensured that any development associated with the Togher NEP is prepared and implemented in accordance with the relevant requirements of the</p>	<p><b>Submission noted.</b></p> <p>Lower tier plans and projects are required to comply with relevant environmental legislation (such as that cited by this part of the submission) and the Draft Plan includes a number of provisions to this effect.</p> <p>The SEA considers the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects,</p>

	<p>EIA, Habitats, Floods and Water Framework Directives.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects, arising out of multiple developments at Togher and appropriate mitigation measures to avoid significant adverse environmental effects should be established and implemented.</p>	<p>associated with Plan provisions including those relating to Togher and identifies other Plan provisions, including those detailed above, that will mitigate against effects.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p>5.9 RURAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY Agriculture</p> <p>2nd para 4th sentence We submit that this should be replaced by: Recognising the increasing demand for recreational space, provision should be made for the recreational use of agricultural land, particularly commonage and other rough grazing land which shall be regarded primarily as a recreational resource. Based on Kilkenny 6.2 Commonage Land, Sligo 4.2.3 P-AGD-1 &amp; Nth Tipp Agriculture 4.4.1h).</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional paras:</p> <p>1 Farmers will be encouraged to see themselves as custodians of the countryside and the rural landscape which are valuable to present and future generations and provides an amenity for enjoyment of the general population. Based on NSS 5.2.3 last pt in 1st list of pts on page 101, Cavan 3.5 EDO6 1st sentence &amp; Leitrim 3.7.2 2nd para under Pol 61.</p> <p>2 Agriculture is an integral part of the management of large parts of the rural environment and landscape and provides an amenity for enjoyment of the general population. Taken from Leitrim 3.7.2 2nd para under Pol 61.</p> <p>pols</p> <p>We submit that you should include:</p> <p>1 Protect rural amenities, natural archaeological and natural heritage, visual amenities, eco-systems, conservation areas, landscape and scenic views from adverse impacts of agricultural practices and development particularly in high amenity areas and ensure that it is appropriate in nature and scale, and ensure it does not have an undue negative impact on the visual/scenic amenity of the countryside and identify mitigating measures where required. Integrate into the landscape, including the minimal use of signage. Developments and practices must be necessary for the efficient use of the farm and must ensure that they are conducted in a manner consistent with the protection of the environment and in line with</p>	<p>Submission Noted, Commentary in relation to agriculture is noted. However due to the critical importance of agriculture in County Laois from a commercial perspective, recreational pursuits / activities are supported subject to the necessary consents and agreements being in place.</p> <p>Include the following policies</p> <p>RUR XX</p> <p>Protect rural amenities, natural archaeological and natural heritage, visual amenities, eco-systems, conservation areas, landscape and scenic views from adverse impacts of agricultural practices and development particularly in high amenity areas and ensure that it is appropriate in nature and scale, and ensure it does not have an undue negative impact on the visual/scenic amenity of the countryside and identify mitigating measures where required. Integrate into the landscape, including the minimal use of signage.</p> <p>Afforestation</p> <p>The contribution of forestry to fostering rural tourism is acknowledged in Section 5.10.1 and can be cross referenced in section 5.9. Policies RUR<sub>2</sub>, RUR<sub>3</sub> cover much of what is being suggested.</p> <p>While it is acknowledged that there is an impact of forestry plantations on the landscape, the matter of planning regulations to regulate this issue is not for Council but National Government policy and legislation.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges that Coillte have provided access to many of their forests and support the use of forests for recreational use. TM 10 covers the support necessary to further</p>

	<p>national legislations and relevant guidelines. Based on Longford 4.4.1.1 AGR 2 2nd sentence, Carlow 3.5.8 Pol 14 1st pt, Offaly 2.9 RDP-05 &amp; 10.6 RDO4, Kildare 10.5.2 AG2, Westmeath 3.35 P-GA3, Kerry 4.8 ES-28 2nd pt, 11th pt, Louth 3.3 RD 4 &amp; 5 &amp; 3.4 RD 9, Leitrim 2.3 Pol 2b), Limerick 5.6.1 ED 019 (a), Waterford 6.7.1 2nd para (a), (d) &amp; (e), Roscommon 3.4.1 Obj 3.6 &amp; Wicklow 8.3.2 AGR1.</p> <p>2 Promote, at national level, the adoption of a Land Use Strategy.</p> <p>Note All EU countries (including Ireland) are under increasing pressure from the EU to comply with various EU Directives. In response to this Scotland adopted a Strategy in 2011. See the 2014 Report of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food and Marine page 10.</p> <p>Afforestation</p> <p>1st para 1st sentence We submit that this should be added: Forests and woodlands are a natural resource with potential for tourism and as a link in the green infrastructure network. Based on NSS 5.2.3 3rd pt in 2nd list of pts &amp; Kilkenny 6.5 1st para, 5th para 1st sentence &amp; 2nd sentence.</p> <p>Last sentence We submit that this should be upgraded to a pol.</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional paras:</p> <p>1 The NSS states that with effective management, based on coherent policy guidelines the development of forestry can be a positive force by fostering rural tourism. Taken from Wicklow 8.2.2 3rd para 3rd pt.</p> <p>2 The Council would welcome a revision of the planning regulations that would bring forestry plantations under the control of the planning system as nothing alters a landscape more than large scale forestation, yet such planting is largely outside the control of Councils. Initial forestation is classified as an exempt development under the 2001 – 2013 Planning Regulations, while an EIA is only required for planting of more than 50 hectares. Taken from Leitrim 3.7.3 1st para.</p> <p>3 Coillte have provided access to many of their forests and support the use of forests for recreational use and are to be commended for their “Open Forest” policy. Based on Kilkenny 6.5 5th para &amp; Wexford 15.9 last para 2nd sentence.</p> <p>4 The council has a role both in planning for initial</p>	<p>the development of forest parks and the tourism potential of same in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The role of the Council is limited in the preparation and adoption of an Indicative Forest Strategy, however the Council will engage in participating in any such process as an important means of contributing to its objective of protecting and enhancing natural resources and landscape.</p> <p>Include the following policies</p> <p>RUR xx Protect access routes to upland walks and rights of way.</p> <p>RUR xx Not to permit the convergence of the forest edge and the skylines and avoid geometric shapes particularly in uplands and monitor forestry applications in elevated and prominent landscapes and being conscious of the potentially negative visual impact of forestry development on landscape quality, conservation and harmony and on the surrounding area in terms of its nature and scale (including clear-felling activity), protect from injury scenic and exposed/elevated landscapes, scenic routes, views, prospects and vistas(including to water and valley approaches to the hills), Geological sites, National Monuments, heritage features, Aquatic zones, and in Primary and Secondary Amenity Areas.</p> <p>Ensure that exclusion zones are applied to sites of archaeological importance and areas of archaeological potential. The Council will seek to have such planting and felling conducted in a manner which takes into account best practice in forestry planting and felling in the context of landscape design so that it integrates into the landscape.</p> <p>RUR xx Discourage new forestry development, except for broadleaf in Sensitive Rural Landscapes and Visually Vulnerable Areas, along designated Scenic Routes (Broadleaf forestry will be open to consideration in these areas).</p> <p>RUR xx</p>
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	<p>forestation and expansion. Planning permission is required where an EIA is required. In certain Protected Landscapes planting may be restricted or prohibited. Applications to the forest service for planting are referred to the council for its observations. Taken from Leitrim 2.6 4th para.</p> <p>5 The afforestation of recent decades has left a considerable legacy of adverse landscape and visual impacts. It is recognised that new woodland planting offers valuable landscape opportunities. Taken from Leitrim 3.7.3 Table 12 Strategy 1st para 1st &amp; 2nd sentences.</p> <p>Tables We submit that you should include Tables with Maps of:</p> <p>1 Recreational/amenity forests. See DLR App 8 Recreation Access Routes. Also without maps: Meath 4.6.1 2nd para 5th pt &amp; Kildare 14.11.3(i).</p> <p>2 FS Guidelines See Kilkenny 6.5.1 2nd para.</p> <p>objs</p> <p>1 Encourage the development of forest parks. Recognising the recreational and tourism potential of Coillte's "Open Forest" Policy, promote, provide, protect and encourage greater public access to forestry and woodlands, both state and private, subject to compliance with the Habitats and Bird Directives, for amenity educational purposes recreational and tourism activities including walking, hiking, orienteering and other non-noise generating activities and the provision mountain bike trails, bridle paths, nature trails, and, in line with the FS Guidelines, development of purpose-built trails and cycle tracks in co-operation with Coillte, FS, private landowners, stakeholders and other agencies for the benefit of local people and visitors. Support the FS in their encouragement of private forestry developers to provide access. Retain existing public right of way through forest lands. Based on Midland RPG 3.3.4.7 last para 1st pt, 2011 Plan 7.13 P42, Kildare 10.5.5 FT11, Carlow 3.5.12 E.D 18 2nd &amp; last pts, Kilkenny 6.5 last para, Nth Tipp 4.5 EV27, Westmeath 3.41 P-F4 &amp; 5, Meath 9.7.8 OBJ7 &amp; 10.10 POL 17, Limerick 5.6.2 Pol ED2od), Wexford 15.5 RS 14 &amp; Sth Dublin 4.3.9.x.</p> <p>2 Retain existing rights of way and identify them and established walking routes before planting commences and maintain them as Rights of Way/Walking Routes. Taken from Cavan 3.9 EDP15 &amp; EDO 31, Mayo 3.1.2 Forestry P/ED A 5, 2011 Plan</p>	<p>Forest development should follow current best practice and adhere to/be in accordance with Forest Service Guidelines and in respect of Landscape Guidelines where landscape objectives should focus on compatibility and enhancement of existing local landscape character. It should have regard to* FS "Code of Best Forest Practice (2000)".</p> <p>The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) has policies for the control of the uplands above 225m.</p> <p>Peatlands</p> <p>Section 5.9. deals with peatlands and acknowledges the potential of such areas for Tourism, amenity, educational and research purposes and alternative energy production. It is considered appropriate to include the following objectives:</p> <p><b>OBJ XX</b> Plan and prepare for the future use of large industrial peatland sites when peat harvesting finishes in conjunction with NPWS, Coillte and ESB/Bord na Mona and other stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Mining and Aggregates</b></p> <p>Include the following text</p> <p>The following National Guidelines (as may be superseded and/or updated) should be complied with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Environmental Management(EPA 2006);</li> <li>ii. Quarries and Ancillary Activities: DOECLG Guidelines 2004);</li> <li>iii. Environmental Code(ICF 2006);</li> <li>iv. Geological Heritage Guidelines(ICF &amp; GSI 2008);</li> <li>v. Archaeological Code of Practice((ICF &amp; DOECLG 2009);</li> <li>vi. Secs 261 &amp; 261A Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2013.</li> </ol> <p>The Planning Acts and Regulations (as may be amended) sets out the thresholds for EIAs and landscape and visual assessments are carried out as part of the development management process. It is considered appropriate to include a development management standard as a</p>
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	<p>7.13 P45 &amp; Sligo 4.2.1 P-FOR-6.                  Note If this isn't done walking routes tend to become subsumed into the network of forest roads thus making it very difficult, over time, to establish the existence of these routes.</p> <p>3 Promote, encourage, facilitate, support and be actively involved in Neighbourhood Schemes by identifying suitable areas and support other initiatives that aim to establish and enhance woodlands for recreational purposes in partnership with local communities. Based on Galway 11.9 Pol AFF9 2nd sentence, Kildare 10.5.5 FT 9, Westmeath 3.41 O-F3, Meath 10.10 RD OBJ 4 &amp; Monaghan 7.4 RAO 15.</p> <p>4 Engage with Coillte in developing off-road cycling trails at (local) in accordance with Coillte' Off-road Cycling Strategy (2012). Taken from Carlow 3.5.12 E.D 18 5th pt.</p> <p>5 Liaise with strategic partners such as Bnam, NPWS and Coillte on the identification of land use strategies for appropriate areas of forestry focusing on the their tourism, environmental, amenity and heritage values. Taken from Offaly 2.12 TP-06.</p> <p>6 Introduce design guidance in respect of coniferous afforestation. Taken from 2011 Plan 13.9.4 P66.</p> <p>7 Recognising the potential of forestry on rural economies promote rural tourism. Taken from Monaghan 5.6.2 FYO 2.</p> <p>8 Have regard to "Forestry Development – Guide for Planning Authorities (DoECLG). Taken from Carlow 3.5.12 E.D Pol 18 4th pt.</p> <p>9 Council in co-operation with the FS shall encourage and promote the adoption of an Indicative Forest Strategy as an important means of contributing to its objective of protecting and enhancing natural resources and landscape. Taken from Leitrim 3.7.3 3rd para 1st sentence below Pol 63.</p> <p>10 Council will work towards the establishment of a County Forestry Advisory Committee to work with the FS and Coillte. Taken from Leitrim 3.7.3 3rd para 2nd sentence below pol 63.</p> <p>pols                  1 Recognising its tourism value, support the FS in</p>	<p>guide to preparing planning applications with respect to the aggregate extraction industry</p> <p>DM68</p> <p>Applications for new development for aggregate extraction, processing and associated processes,</p> <p>a) Have regard to* the Landscape Character Assessment / Sensitivity Rating and its recommendations</p> <p>b) Include screening proposals</p> <p>c) Submit a detailed landscape and visual assessment must be submitted with proposals and will be used to determine the extent of the area of visual influence. The Planning authority will impose strict conditions on planning permissions requiring appropriate mitigation measures to reduce impacts on the surrounding area.</p> <p>d) require that development is phased and each phase is rehabilitated to the highest possible standards before the next phase is commenced and the applicant must submit a detailed restoration programme on the manner and timing of restoration and after care/re-use</p> <p>e) Carry out processing and storage of extractive aggregates in a manner minimises the impact on the natural environment.</p> <p>f) Recognising that the aggregates and concrete products industry have a particularly sensitive role in relation to the environment and any development of aggregate extraction, processing, delivery and associated concrete production must be carried out in a manner which minimises adverse effects on the environment and has due regard for visual amenities.</p> <p>g) Provide details and plans of any other buildings, plant and structures to be erected.</p> <p>The requirements for EIS in the context of this type of development is set out in the Planning and Development Act (2000 as amended and Regulations (2001 as amended).</p>
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	<p>preventing forestry from obstructing existing public rights of way, traditional walking routes or recreational and tourism amenities and facilities. Based on Kilkenny 6.5.2 3rd pt, Carlow 3.5.12 E.D 18 3rd pt, Westmeath 3.41 P-F5, Nth Tipp 4.5.1 ENV26f) &amp; 2011 Plan 7.13 P 43.</p> <p>2 Protect access routes to upland walks and rights of way. Taken from 2011 Plan 7.13 P48.</p> <p>3 Not to permit the convergence of the forest edge and the skylines and avoid geometric shapes particularly in uplands and monitor forestry applications in elevated and prominent landscapes and being conscious of the potentially negative visual impact of forestry development on landscape quality, conservation and harmony and on the surrounding area in terms of its nature and scale (including clear-felling activity), protect from injury scenic and exposed/elevated landscapes, scenic routes, views, prospects and vistas(including to water and valley approaches to the hills), Geological sites, National Monuments, heritage features, Aquatic zones, and in Primary and Secondary Amenity Areas. Ensure that exclusion zones are applied to sites of archaeological importance and areas of archaeological potential. The Council will seek to have such planting and felling conducted in a manner which takes into account best practice in forestry planting and felling in the context of landscape design so that it integrates into the landscape. Based on 2011 Plan 7.13 P46, Westmeath 3.41 PF3, Meath 10.10 POL 16, Kildare 10.5.5 FT 5 &amp; 7, Nth Tipp 4.5.1e) in list of pts &amp; Pol ENV 26a), Leitrim 3.7.3 2nd para below Pol 63 &amp; Table 12 Strategy 3rd para, Sligo 4.2.1 P-FOR- 7 1st sentence, Carlow 11.10.7 1st para 3rd &amp; 4th sentences &amp; last para, Kilkenny 6.5 4th para 1st sentence, Sth Tipp 9.20 1st para (i) &amp; (ii) &amp; 2nd para 1st &amp; 4th pts, Wexford 6.4.8 Obj ED22 &amp; Monaghan 5.6.1 FYO 3. Also Limerick 5.6.2 Pols1st para recommends different height limits for each area. Note See also 7.18 LANDSCAPE LCT 4.37 2nd sentence.</p> <p>4 Strongly discourage on steep slopes above the 300 metre line. Where possible, existing areas under forestry will be reduced and/or redesigned following clear felling. Taken from 2011 Plan 7.13 P47, Waterford 10.36.5 last pt &amp; *Leitrim 3.7.3 Table 12 Strategy 2nd para * mentions particular areas</p> <p>5 Discourage new forestry development, except for</p>	
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	<p>broadleaf in Sensitive Rural Landscapes and Visually Vulnerable Areas, along designated Scenic Routes (Broadleaf forestry will be open to consideration in these areas). Taken from Sligo 4.2.1 P-FOR-2 &amp; Roscommon 3.4.2 pol 3.39.</p> <p>6 Forest development should follow current best practice and adhere to/be in accordance with Forest Service Guidelines and in respect of Landscape Guidelines where landscape objectives should focus on compatibility and enhancement of existing local landscape character. It should have regard to* FS “Code of Best Forest Practice (2000)”. *Be in accordance with would be better Based on Carlow 11.10.7 1st para 2nd sentence, Wicklow 8.4.5 2nd sentence, Roscommon 9.35 last para last sentence &amp; Leitrim 3.7.3 Pol 63.</p> <p>7 *Have regard to “Forestry Development – Guide for Planning Authorities” (DoECLG 1997). Taken from Carlow 3.5.12 E.D18 4th pt. *Comply with would be better</p> <p>8 Planting in the vicinity of public roads should be carried out in strict accordance with the FS Guidelines. Roadside planting should aim to enhance and complement existing visual amenities, without impeding views and prospects, particularly in sensitive highly scenic areas and should be set back at least 30 metres. Taken from Carlow 3.5.12 2nd para.</p> <p>9 Consider forestation only in areas identified as suitable for such development in the Landscape Character Assessment. Taken from Galway 11.9 Obj AFF19 2nd sentence, Roscommon 3.4.2 Pol 3.40 &amp; Leitrim 3.7.3 last para. Also Nth Tipp 4.5 ENV26 e).</p> <p>10 *Request an EIS where the cumulative limits of 50ha is reached the Council will request an EIS. Taken from Limerick 7.2.6 last para. *Require would be better</p> <p>11 Where an Indicative Forest Strategy has been adopted it should be promoted where it can be demonstrated that development will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment or visual amenities. Taken from Mayo Vol 1 2. Forestry FY-01.</p> <p>Peatlands 1st sentence</p> <p>We submit that you should include an additional</p>	
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	<p>para: Recognise that intact protected raised boglands/peatlands offer a wonderful and unique opportunity to experience nature and heritage and are a critical natural, archaeological, ecological and environmental resource. Based on Longford 4.5 Bogs, Woods and Rural Landscape, Nth Tipp 4.8 2nd para 1st line, Kildare 14.8.2 LL4 &amp; 2011 Plan 13.9.5 pol NH 13 /P69.</p> <p>We submit that you should include objs:</p> <p>1 Plan and prepare for the future use of large industrial bog sites when peat harvesting finishes as there is potential for the development of tourism amenities in conjunction with NPWS, Coillte and ESB/Bord na Mona. Based on Westmeath P-PTL4 &amp; Longford 4.5 TOU 23 last pt.</p> <p>2 Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders towards achieving a national peatlands strategy and national peatlands park. Taken from Offaly 7.4 NHO-12.</p> <p>3 Implement any relevant recommendations in the DoAHG's National Peatland Strategy when finalised. Taken from DLR 4.1.3.1 last pt.</p> <p>4 Recognising that the potential of bogs, including industrial peatlands, to provide opportunities for recreation and tourism, Council will, where appropriate cooperate with adjoining councils(names counties) to facilitate this potential. Taken from Longford 4.5 TOU 2 1st &amp; 2nd sentences.</p> <p>We submit that you should include pols:</p> <p>1 Protect peatlands/boglands from inappropriate development and conserve their character, appearance, environmental and heritage values and quality and historic walkways in conjunction with the BnM, NPWS, Coillte, FI and other bodies. Limiting extraction to boglands currently under development will help to minimise impacts by localising effects and thus protect landscape character. Ensure that peatland areas which are designated under international and national legislation are conserved and managed. Based on Kilkenny 8.2.7 DMS, Offaly 2.12 TP-06, 2.13 TO-05 &amp; 7.3 NHP-12, Kildare 10.5.6 BL1 to 4, Meath 9.7.6 1st para 2nd sentence, Westmeath 5.12 P-PTL1 &amp; 2 &amp; 5.12 O-PTL3, Clare 17.3.12 Obj &amp; Leitrim 3.8.3.2 Obj 63.</p> <p>2 Support the preparation of a plan at regional level for the development of industrial peatlands that promotes tourism and environmental protection. Taken from Longford 4.4.1.1 AGR 4 2nd para.</p>	
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	<p>3 Have regard to provisions of (draft) National Peatlands Strategy, (draft) national Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and a Review of Raised Bog NHAs. Taken from Kerry 10.6 NE-30.</p> <p>Mining and Aggregates                  2nd para We submit that this should be replaced by: The following National Guidelines (as may be superseded and/or updated) should be complied with:                  A Environmental Management(EPA 2006);                  B Quarries and Ancillary Activities: DOECLG Guidelines 2004);                  C Environmental Code(ICF 2006);                  D Geological Heritage Guidelines(ICF &amp; GSI 2008);                  E Archaeological Code of Practice((ICF &amp; DOECLG 2009);                  F Secs 261 &amp; 261A Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2013. Taken from Galway 13.10 DMS 37a). Also Carlow 11.16 1st para, Offaly 8.13 2nd para, Kilkenny 6.4.2 1st &amp; 2nd pts, Meath 11.14 last para 7th pt, Sth Tipp 5.6.2 5th pt, Nth Tipp 4.7.1 &amp; Longford 4.6 1st para.</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional paras:                  1 Upland Areas are considered sensitive in landscape terms, due to their elevated and conspicuous nature. The location of quarries has the potential for significantly affecting landscape by visual intrusion, especially when development reaches primary ridgelines. Development on or in the vicinity of major ridgelines has the potential to affect the visual integrity of a wide area. In some cases, visibility can be partially screened by occurring topography (i.e. the quarry will only be visible on one side of the hill or screened by undulating lands) and vegetation (i.e. forestry and planting will screen the lower quarry faces). Nevertheless, the visual impact on the landscape is likely to be significant. The Extractive Industry can impose impacts on landscapes of scenic, historic and geological interest and archaeological feature and can have a serious impact on the recreational and amenity values. Based on Offaly 2.8.6 1st para 2nd sentence, Kildare 10.7.1 1st para from 2nd sentence &amp; 2nd para, Kerry 8.2 2nd para 1st sentence &amp; Roscommon 9.34 2nd para 1st &amp; 5th pts.                  2 The Council favours the use of existing licensed quarries over proposals for extraction from green field sites. Taken from Offaly 8.13 4th para 1st sentence.                  3 There is excellent material, worthy of inclusion,</p>	
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	<p>in Kildare 10.7.2 to 10.7.7 dealing with other aspects of the Industry.</p> <p>4 Whether it is a new quarry or an extension to an existing quarry Council must determine the need for the development in terms of national importance and its impact on the local economy and need to protect the environment. The scale of the proposal will be a considered. Taken from Carlow 3.5.7 2nd para.</p> <p>5 The Planning Acts and Regulations (as may be amended) sets out the thresholds for EIAs. Taken from Wicklow 8.4.6 Planning Requirements for Extractive Developments EIA 1st sentence.</p> <p>We submit that you should include objs:</p> <p>1 Positively engage inter-alia with lobby groups, local amenity groups, other councils, National Park and Wildlife Service and ensure that state bodies in the on-going development and review of the Council's management and control. Taken from Wexford 6.4.5 Obj ED16.</p> <p>2 Advice from the relevant statutory body will be sought and considered. Taken from Kerry 7.13 4th para 1st sentence.</p> <p>We submit that you should include pols:</p> <p>1 Applications for new development for aggregate extraction, processing and associated processes, shall identify existing public rights of way and walking routes which may be impacted on are adjacent to the development site. They shall be kept free from development as Rights of Way/Walking Routes. Ensure that tourist, natural or recreational amenities will not be materially affected through rigorous licensing development control and enforcement measures. Based on Kilkenny 6.4.2 DMS 5th pt, Sth Tipp 5.6.2 (iii), 2011 Plan 7.16 P55, Kildare 10.8 EI 5 last pt, Westmeath 3.43, Carlow 11.16 last para 1st pt, Meath 11.14 1st para 2nd sentence, Cavan 3.8 EDO25, Sligo 4.2.4 P-MEQ-2 &amp; 3 &amp; Wicklow 8.3.5 Obj EX1.</p> <p>Note Pending a complete listing of public rights of way, walking routes, as prospective rights of way, should be protected.</p> <p>2 Have regard to* the Landscape Character Assessment / Sensitivity Rating and its recommendations Taken from Galway 6.21Obj EQ2 c.*Conform to would be better.</p> <p>3 Development of aggregates(stone and sand/gravel deposits) will not be permitted in tourism and high amenity areas(including buffer zones), in the vicinity of recorded monuments,</p>	
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	<p>World Heritage Sites and zones of archaeological potential. In other areas development will be prohibited unless it is carefully sited and designed and when the environment and the character of the landscape, particularly sensitive landscapes, AONBs, natural heritage and archaeological heritage and potential, eskers, areas of geological or geomorphological interest, areas of ecological importance, national monuments, listed views and prospects, lakes, river corridors and associated wetlands and places of natural beauty or interest are safeguarded, preserved, conserved and protected to the greatest possible extent and that development does not adversely affect amenities for local people and visitors. Applicants for new or extensions to existing quarries shall indicate the use of hills and existing trees or other screening to be retained or removed and any proposed screening, grassing or planting of trees or scrubs and proposals for their maintenance to determine the extent of the area of visual influence and this screening whether by natural or by alternative means must be retained for the life of the planning permission and of methods to reduce environmental impact including the potential impacts to visual amenity and other relevant considerations together with proposals for their mitigation. The Planning Authority will place the onus on the developer to prove that the proposed development can be accommodated in the landscape of the surrounding area without detracting from its character and will impose strict conditions on planning permissions relating to the avoidance or mitigation of visual and other environmental impacts. As it is of paramount importance to ensure that a proposal does not significantly adversely impact on any stated designation or amenities, the onus is on the applicant to submit relevant documentary evidence in this regard. Operations should not have a detrimental environmental effect on designated or proposed conservation sites. Based on Carlow 3.5.7 Pol 13 1st pt &amp; 11.16 last para 4th 5th 11th &amp; 12 th pts, Meath 10.12 RD POL 22 &amp; 27 &amp; 11.14 last para 6th pt, Kildare 10.8 EI 3, 5 &amp; 9, Sth Tipp 5.6.2 4th line &amp; (i), Nth Tipp 4.7 Pol ENV 28 a) &amp; b), Offaly 2.8.6 3rd para &amp; 2.9 RDP-14 1st &amp; 2nd sentences, Longford 4.6 MA 2 c) &amp; m), Waterford 19.8 3rd para, Kerry 8.2 last para 3rd sentence, Cork 6.12 EE 12-3 3rd para, Limerick 5.6.3 ED 026 down to amenities in 3rd line, Donegal 7.1.2.1 &amp; 2, Cavan 3.8 EDP7 &amp; EDO23, Wexford 18.16 3rd pt &amp; Galway 13.10 DMS 37f) (k) &amp; (l) 1st sentence.</p>	
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	<p>4 As the visual impact of a quarry or mine is likely to extend beyond its boundaries a detailed landscape and visual assessment must be submitted with proposals and will be used to determine the extent of the area of visual influence. The Planning authority will impose strict conditions on planning permissions requiring appropriate mitigation measures to reduce impacts on the surrounding area. Development must not adversely affects the amenity value of adjoining and neighbouring land. Based on Kerry 8.2 2nd para 3rd sentence &amp; 13.13 5th para 1st &amp; 2nd sentences, Waterford 6.21 2nd sentence &amp; Westmeath 3.43 P-E17.</p> <p>5 An EIS, including a remedial EIS, will be required where the thresholds outlined in Sch 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations are met. Ensure that Proposals for aggregate extraction include an assessment of the impact on the natural heritage and on the coastal processes of erosion, deposition and flooding. The Planning Authority will also exercise its powers under Article 103-subsection (1) to require an EIS for sub-threshold development where it is considered that the development would be likely to have significant* effects on the environment or heritage. Appropriate mitigation measures and details of re-instatement after use must be included. *material would be better. Based on Nth Tipp 10.14.1, Longford 4.6 3rd para, 2011 Plan 12.12 3rd para, Fingal 8.4</p> <p>LAND RECLAMATION AND AGGREGATE EXTRACATION LR02, Kerry 13.13 last para 2nd sentence, 3rd sentence &amp; Galway 13.10 DMS 37i).</p> <p>6 Require that development is phased and each phase is rehabilitated to the highest possible standards before the next phase is commenced and the applicant must submit a detailed restoration programme on the manner and timing of restoration and after care/re-use to ensure that the site is left in a satisfactory state for such beneficial use as an amenity for ecology and recreation as is agreed with the Council, with input from an ecologist, and is carried out within 12 months of cessation. Old disused quarries, sand and gravel pits should be restored and landscaped to its original character and with reference to the LCA. All buildings, plant, roads and paved areas should be removed unless otherwise agreed. The record of</p>	
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	<p>past restoration by the developer will be taken into account. Based on Kilkenny 6.4.2 3rd pt &amp; ) &amp; 3rd pt 1st sub pt, Meath 10.12 POL RD 26, Westmeath 3.42 6th pt, 3.43 P-E19 &amp; 11.14 4th para 1st line &amp; last para 5th pt, Longford 4.6 AM 2 (l), Offaly 2.9 RDP-14 2nd part of 2nd sentence, Nth Tipp 4.7 Pol ENV 28 g) &amp; j) &amp; 10.14.5, Sth Tipp 5.6.2(vi) &amp; (vii), Kildare 10.8 E1 12, Sligo 4.2.4 P-MEQ-5, Roscommon 3.4.4 Pol 3.55 &amp; 9.34 last para 2nd pt, Cavan 3.8 EDP9 2nd para, Kerry 8.2 last para 15th line, Wicklow 8.4.6 General last 2 pts &amp; Limerick 10.8.2 3rd para last pt.</p> <p>7 Carry out processing and storage of extractive aggregates in a manner minimises the impact on the natural environment. Taken from Fingal 8.4 LAND RECLAMATION AND AGGREGATE EXTRACTION OBJ LR03.</p> <p>8 Recognising that the aggregates and concrete products industry have a particularly sensitive role in relation to the environment and any development of aggregate extraction, processing, delivery and associated concrete production must be carried out in a manner which minimises adverse effects on the environment and has due regard for visual amenities. Based on Kerry 8.2 NR 7-7, Wexford 6.4.5 Obj ED12 &amp; Leitrim 3.7.7 para 1st sentence under Pols.</p> <p>9 Minimise environmental impacts through rigorous application of licensing, development management and enforcement requirements. Taken from Cork 6.12 EE 12-3 1st para. Also Nth Tipp 4.7 3rd para &amp; Kilkenny 6.4.2 4th pt.</p> <p>10 Details of the location of all existing developments in adjoining land and in the vicinity of the site that might be affected by development works or extractive operations including those in which she/he has an interest and will seek that the current quarries are worked out and restored before new sites are allowed. Based on Galway 13.10 DMS 37b) &amp; j), Nth Tipp 4.7 Pol ENV 28 &amp; Wicklow 8.4.6 Land &amp; Mineral Interest.</p> <p>11 Have regard to the Planning Acts and associated Regulations (as may be amended) to determine if an EIA is required. In sub-threshold instances reference shall be made to "Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development DoEHLG 2003" and if by virtue of its nature and extent the proposals will be screened for EIA in accordance with current best practice and</p>	
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	<p>guidance documents. Based on Kerry 8.2 2nd para last sentence, Wicklow 8.4.6 EIA, Carlow 11.16 3rd para 1st sentence &amp; Nth Tipp 10.14.1.</p> <p>12 Provide details of proposed site and the reason for its selection over possible alternatives. Taken from Wicklow 8.4.6 Nature of Deposit last pt.</p> <p>13 The Archaeological Code of Practice (DoECLG/ICF 2009) Guidelines will be used in the archaeological assessment of extractive development application, with best practice adopted. Taken from Westmeath 3.42.5.1. Also 2011 Plan 14.9 Obj BH 12/020.</p> <p>14 Where proposed development is within 300m of a recorded monument/archaeological site or is likely to have a material impact on the visual amenities of the monument/site, applicants/operators shall employ an archaeologist or suitably qualified person to undertake an archaeological assessment to be submitted with the planning application. Taken from Donegal 7.1.3.4.</p> <p>15 Applicants for new or extensions to existing quarries shall submit a detailed landscape and visual assessment which shall identify the area of visual influence and include details of impacts on designated amenity areas. Taken from Cavan 3.8 EDO26.</p> <p>16 Refer applications for development to GSI for mineral extraction, quarrying developments/extensions and any developments involving excavations greater than 50,000m or one ha in area and consult with GSI with regard to any developments likely to have an impact on listed sites. Based on Louth 3.8 RD 28 &amp; Kildare 10.8 EI 6.</p> <p>17 Provide details and plans of any other buildings, plant and structures to be erected. Taken from Wicklow 8.4.6 Ancillary Operations &amp; development.</p> <p>pols: 3 We submit that this should be repositioned in Afforestation in proposed obj 1.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p><b>5.10 TOURISM</b></p> <p>We submit that as Tourism and Countryside Recreation have much in common they should be dealt with together preferably as a separate section. See <b>DPG 3.5 Box 3 B Economic Development 3<sup>rd</sup> pt &amp; Kilkenny</b> Chpt 7.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> para</p> <p>We submit that you should include Natural Assets from the <b>2011 Plan</b> Table 17.</p> <p><b>Fig 14 Tourist Attractions</b></p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>Whilst the Tourism and Countryside Recreation have much in common in relation to economic development potential and contribution to the quality of life of the citizen of County Laois and the visitors like. The importance of tourism as a contributor to the economic potential of the county is of paramount priority to the Council and so it is felt that it should remain as part of the economic development strategy for the</p>

	<p>12<sup>th</sup> para We submit that this should be repositioned in a proposed new SEC: WALKING AND CYCLING - RECREATION WALKING &amp; CYCLING as an additional para.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> We note that this walking/cycling is dealt with in at least eight places in the Draft. Walking/Cycling is a broad issue and encompasses the reasons why people walk or cycle including travelling to work, schools and shops and for exercise and for recreation. As walking/cycling is becoming an increasingly important part of peoples' lives we feel that it merits a separate section. At the very least it should be cross referenced.</p> <p><b>5.10.1 Laois's Tourism Strategy 1st para I.</b> We submit that this should be repositioned in the proposed additional <b>Sub sec: SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS</b></p> <p>V. 1<sup>st</sup> sentence We submit that you should add: It promotes enhanced awareness and positive appreciation of local resources, traditions, ways of life and opportunities to optimise the use of amenities and share the benefits throughout the area. Rural tourism can play an important role in enhancing, supporting and diversifying the economy of rural communities and is based on local amenities including archaeological natural heritage. Eco-tourism involves responsible travel that conserves the environment and improves well-being of local people and contributes to the growth of tourism. Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.9.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para, <b>2011 Plan</b> 3.3.2 Agri-tourism, <b>Meath</b> 4.6.5 2<sup>nd</sup> para, <b>Kerry</b> 5.14 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences, <b>Cork</b> 8.9.8 &amp; <b>Wexford</b> 7.4.5 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences.</p> <p>VIII We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol.</b></p> <p>iX 2<sup>nd</sup> para <b>pols:</b> 2 3 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; 4 We submit that these should be merged and replaced by: <i>Encourage, support, facilitate and promote the provision, sustainable development and expansion, subject to compliance with Habitats and Birds Directive, of eco-, geo- &amp; green-tourism and tourism based on spirituality, heritage, the diaspora, food, farmhouse accommodation, open-, pet-farms and trekking centres, and based on low impact tourist such as paragliding, botany, photography, painting, bird watching orienteering, angling, walking, cycling,</i></p>	<p>county. Countryside recreation on the other hand is important in terms of social infrastructure and the benefits it has to improving the quality of life for people in the county. Whilst projects like the Slieve Blooms, waterways, greenways etc will cross over both areas, it is important that there are policies to emphasis their contribution to both sectors of life. It is however important that they are cross referenced with one another.</p> <p><b>Table 17 from the County Development Plan 2011-2017 shall be reinstated</b></p> <p>Walking/Cycling is a broad issue and encompasses the reasons why people walk or cycle including travelling to work, schools and shops and for exercise and for recreation. As walking/cycling is becoming an increasingly important part of peoples' lives and in different areas of people's lives, it will be cross referenced through the plan.</p> <p>Rural tourism plays a significant role in the rural economy of the county, in partnership with stakeholders and local community groups, which can lead to the development of projects such as looped walks, cycle ways, and the development of walking trails. These projects can be developed in a sustainable way, in harmony with a high quality environment. It promotes enhanced awareness and positive appreciation of local resources, traditions, ways of life and opportunities to optimise the use of amenities and share the benefits throughout the area. Rural tourism can play an important role in enhancing, supporting and diversifying the economy of rural communities and is based on local amenities including archaeological natural heritage. Eco-tourism involves responsible travel that conserves the environment and improves well-being of local people and contributes to the growth of tourism.</p> <p>A section on the Slieve Blooms shall be incorporated with Cross referencing from Section 4.4 Specific objectives for leisure activity in this section, <b>Table 7: Specific Obj 10.</b> And Section <b>6.1.3.1 Walking and Cycling Strategy Slieve Bloom Walking and Cycling Hub</b></p>
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	<p>canoeing &amp; kayaking, caving and yoga &amp; meditation, in particular around historic towns and villages in appropriate locations in order to diversify the range of tourist experience and to extend the tourist season. Based on Sligo 4.2.3 P-AGD-7 1<sup>st</sup> line &amp; 4.4.2 P-TOU-10, Roscommon 3.4.1 Pol 3.32 &amp; 3.5 Pol 3.64, Louth 3.5 RD 16 3<sup>rd</sup> lines, <b>Westmeath</b> 3.35 P-GA6, <b>Meath</b> 4.6.5 2<sup>nd</sup> para 7<sup>th</sup> line &amp; 4.6.8 ED POL31, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 6.11.2 last para 9<sup>th</sup> line, <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.9.3 DMS 1<sup>st</sup> pt, <b>Kildare</b> 5.9 .8 ECD44 1<sup>st</sup> line down to <i>pet farms</i>, Wicklow 9.3.6 TTP 2, Cork 5.615 16<sup>th</sup> line, <b>Carlow</b> 8.8 Pol 2 4<sup>th</sup> pt &amp; <b>Midland RPG</b> 7.3 TP13.</p> <p><b>Note</b> We have omitted the reference In <b>pol</b> 3 to the Slieve Bloom Mountains as this will be included in the proposed additional <b>Sub sec</b> and also the reference to Inland Waterways as this will be included in 7.14 WATERWAYS and WETLANDS.</p> <p>9 We submit that this should be merged with: <i>Ensure that all built elements of agri-tourism protect and conserve the landscape and the natural environment and are appropriately located and designed and satisfactorily assimilated into the landscape and do not have an unduly negative impact on the visual/scenic amenity of the countryside. Ensure that buildings/works shall be designed, located and screened will not take away from the rural character and appearance of the area. Buildings in visually sensitive areas must address the surroundings.</i> Based on <b>Kildare</b> 5.9.8 ECD 44 7<sup>th</sup> line, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 4.4.3 Pol ENV 22(a) &amp; (d) &amp; 6.11.2 b) &amp; d), Kerry 5.14 T6o 2<sup>nd</sup> line &amp; 62 2<sup>nd</sup> last line, Lei trim 2.3 Pol 2b) &amp; Louth 3.5 RD 16.</p> <p>10 We submit that you should include an additional <b>pol</b>: <i>As environmental <b>heritage</b> is an important amenity upon which tourism depends and that it can be enjoyed and cherished by future generations <b>protect, conserve</b> and enhance them, strictly control all tourism and recreational development that might be detrimental and ensure that enforcement procedures are adhered to and by use of landscape character assessment and that developments are appropriate in scale and balance having regard to pertaining environmental conditions and sensitivity and are sited and designed to the highest quality and standards, be clustered to form a distinct and unified feature in the landscape, utilise suitable materials and colours, and be readily absorbed in its surroundings by taking advantage of existing vegetation and/or topography, and be satisfactorily assimilated into the landscape so that</i></p>	<p><i>It is proposed to amend CBS 20 to acknowledge that a joint coordinated approach to development within the Slieve Blooms should be undertaken.</i></p> <p>Co-operate with adjoining local authorities and other agencies in relation to cross border sites such as the <b>Slieve Blooms</b> and waterways and ensure a coherent and strategic approach to their sustainable development and conservation.</p>
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	<p>they do not have an undue negative impact on the countryside or general amenities, natural and archaeological heritage features, areas of special amenity, appearance and character of landscapes, rivers, forests, wildlife and environmentally sensitive areas, scenic or visual amenities an along designated Scenic Routes and or degrade or alter the natural environment. The Council will use its statutory procedures to ensure that natural amenities remain visually unspoilt. Based on <b>Offaly</b> 2.11.10 2<sup>nd</sup> para, <b>Kilkenny</b> 2.12 TP-04, 6.2.4 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> pts &amp; 7.3 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 5<sup>th</sup> pts, <b>Westmeath</b> 3.14 P-GT3, <b>Meath</b> 4.6.8 ED POL 27, <b>Sth Tipp</b> 5.6.1 5<sup>th</sup> para (ii), (iii) &amp; (iv), <b>Carlow</b> 8.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt &amp; Obj EDT 1 4<sup>th</sup> pt, Sligo 4.4.2 P-TOU-2 &amp; 4, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 2 Tourism TM-01, Wicklow 9.3.1 &amp; 2 &amp; Limerick 5.5.2 last para.</p> <p><b>Walking/Cycling</b>  14 &amp; 15 We submit that they should be repositioned in a proposed additional <b>Sub sec:</b> SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS  16 We submit that this should be repositioned in a proposed additional <b>SEC:</b> WALKING AND CYCLING RECREATION -WALKING &amp; CYCLING  Objs 4, 10 &amp; 14.  17 As for 16 RECREATION - WALKING Obj 1.</p> <p><b>Blueway/Waterways development</b>  21 We submit that:  A you should add: <i>The scale, size and use of the proposed development shall be appropriate to the area.</i> Taken from Wicklow 9.3.1 TR3 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences. AND  B it should be repositioned as an additional Pol 5.10.1 <b>Laois Tourism Strategy.</b></p> <p>22 We submit that this sub sec should deal with on water activities and that off water activities should be dealt with in 7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS as an <b>obj.</b> Consequently, only canoe trails should be retained here.</p> <p><b>Heritage Assets</b>  23 &amp; 24</p> <p>25 We submit that this should be repositioned in 7.9 ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE pol 12 and replaced.</p> <p>We submit that you should include an additional <b>Sub sec: SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS:</b></p> <p>1 Include from <b>4.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR LEISURE ACTIVITY Table 7: Specific Obj 10.</b></p>	
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	<p>2 Include from <b>5.10.1 Laois's Tourism Strategy I</b> &amp; pols 14 &amp; 15.</p> <p>3 Include from <b>6.1.3.1 Walking and Cycling Strategy Slieve Bloom Walking and Cycling Hub</b></p> <p>4 pol: Re-instate from the <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.9.4 P68: <i>Actively propose the designation of the <b>Slieve Blooms</b> as a Special Amenity Area and seek an Order to that effect.</i></p> <p><b>Note</b> Orders have already been made covering the Liffey Valley, the Howth peninsula (both in Dublin) and Bray Head (in Wicklow). By all accounts they are working very well.</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION NO.56.</p> <p>An Taisce,</p>	<p><b>2.3 Town and Village Management</b></p> <p>An Taisce note Policy ECN30 which states that it is policy of the Council to:</p> <p>'Provide short-stay parking in town centres to support business activities, balancing the need to encourage people into the town centre against sustainable and land-use efficiency consideration'</p> <p>An Taisce recommend that a detailed survey and analysis of existing car parking provision is conducted. Any additional provision of car parking, where it is not necessary could be detrimental to the town centre and be an inefficient land-use. Traffic congestion and surface car-parking can undermine the physical and environmental qualities of the public realm and detract from important historic features and streetscapes. The limitation of car-parking to what is necessary would help achieve Policy RET 14 and RET 15.</p> <p>'Improve the public realm of town centres through the encouragement of high quality civic design, including but not limited to the provision of attractive street furniture, lighting and effective street cleaning' (RET 14)</p> <p>'Undertake measures to improve the accessibility of town centres by developing a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment, which improves safety and limits traffic congestion where possible' (RET 15)</p> <p>Out-of-town commercial land or retail development must be strictly prohibited. An Taisce note and support policy RET5 which states that it is policy of the council to:</p> <p>'Protect the location of existing retail uses in town and village centres, the re-location of these uses to edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations will not be accepted'</p> <p>Where it has been permitted historically, <b>car</b></p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Planning Authority notes the comments in relation to car parking.</p> <p>Any additional provision of car parking, where it is not necessary could be detrimental to the town centre and be an inefficient land-use.</p> <p>Laois County Council are mindful of the fact that traffic congestion and surface car-parking can undermine the physical and environmental qualities of the public realm and detract from important historic features and streetscapes. To this end a public realm plan is being prepared for the town of Portlaoise which will address these very issues. Similar plans have been done for Abbeyleix and Durrow.</p> <p>The Planning Authority notes the comments and support in relation to RET5 in relation to out of town shopping centres.</p> <p>The Planning Authority also notes the comments in relation to car parking charges which are an element of the Development Contribution scheme currently being reviewed.</p> <p><b>2.4 Rural Economic Activities</b></p> <p>Ireland's principle resource is our abundant availability of fertile agricultural land. The CDP should include policy to promote the sustainable local exploitation of natural resources for local markets.</p> <p>The Draft Plan has the following policy which</p>

	<p><b>parking charges</b> must be made mandatory to level the playing field and the unfair competitive advantage occurring to 'big box' out-of-town retailers from free car parking charges.</p> <p><b>2.4 Rural Economic Activities</b> Ireland's principle resource is our abundant availability of fertile agricultural land. The CDP should include policy to promote the sustainable local exploitation of natural resources for local markets. The CDP should include a policy for the <b>promotion of local farmers markets and identify locations where farmers markets can take place.</b></p> <p>2.4.1 Peatlands It is noted that the draft CDP states that 'the development of the country's peat resources will be promoted and facilitated by the Council also which recognizes the potential of peatland areas for tourism, amenity, educational and research purposes. They could also potentially accommodate large scale alternative energy production in the form of solar and wind'.</p> <p>An Taisce consider that the CDP should also recognise peatlands as a <b>valuable store of carbon</b>. Peatlands are one of the world's most important ecosystems. Covering a mere 3% of the world's terrestrial surface, peatlands contain 550 gigatonnes of carbon, making them the most important long term carbon sinks in the terrestrial biosphere. This ability of peatlands to store CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas means they have a net cooling effect on the global climate. <b>Our management of peatlands has to be sustainable.</b> Disturbances in the form of industrial and domestic peat extraction, private afforestation, overgrazing, wind farms and recreational activities have and are having major negative impacts on the hydrology and ecology of these habitats. <b>The rewetting and restoration of peatland has the capacity to secure existing carbon stock and reinitiate the carbon sequestration capacity of degraded peatlands.</b> The CDP should also ensure that a <b>high level of assessment is completed in relation of wetland habitats subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation.</b></p>	<p>seeks to encourage markets in town/ village centre locations, it is proposed to amend this policy to be more specific stating the following</p> <p>ECN 25 Support the hosting of markets (including farmers markets), events or festivals in town/village centre locations and the running of town-based cultural/learning facilities such as the Dunamais Theatre, the Stradbally Arthouse and Laois' library network in the interests of vitality and vibrancy</p> <p>The commentary in relation to section 2.4.1 Peatlands is noted. It is proposed to include the following paragraph</p> <p>Peatlands are one of the world's most important ecosystems. Covering a mere 3% of the world's terrestrial surface, peatlands contain 550 gigatonnes of carbon, making them the most important long term carbon sinks in the terrestrial biosphere. This ability of peatlands to store CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas means they have a net cooling effect on the global climate. Our management of peatlands has to be sustainable. The rewetting and restoration of peatland has the capacity to secure existing carbon stock and reinitiate the carbon sequestration capacity of degraded peatlands.</p> <p>It is proposed to amend policy RUR 4 as follows</p> <p>Support the appropriate sustainable management of peat extraction and related manufacturing activities subject to environmental, traffic and planning considerations and ensure that that any plan or project associated with peatland development is subject to the appropriate assessment screening in compliance with the Habitats Directive , and subsequent assessment if required;</p>
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<p><b>SUBMISSION NO</b> <b>30</b></p> <p>Yvonne Jackson Failte Ireland</p>	<p>Failte Ireland are seeking to enhance the partnership approach between the County Council and the Authority and ensure that the expertise of both organisations is shared. The submission seeks to enhance the policy coverage in the new Development Plan to ensure a meaningful framework is established for the enhancement of tourism in the County, and the wider Region, during the plan period. It has been prepared with inputs from professional planners as well as various strands within Failte Ireland. It provides the council with a concise single submission from the Authority dealing with all aspects of tourism- from strategic planning, to visitor experience and destination management.</p> <p>The submission has been prepared having regard to the tourism profile of the County; the existing policy context in the Draft County Development Plan; and an established template for sustainable tourism policies being used by Failte Ireland to guide Planning Authorities.</p> <p><b>COMMENTARY ON THE DRAFT PLAN</b></p> <p>The authority is generally supportive of the draft plan and again welcomes the opportunity to assist the County Council in the important area of policy preparation. The Authority is acutely aware of the complex range of issues that a Development Plan must tackle. It is also mindful of both the responsibilities and limitations of the prevailing legislation and the role that the Development Plan plays in a statutory context. Our submission has been fully informed by these considerations.</p> <p>The key comments the Authority would like to make in respect of the current plan are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Draft Plan is well structured and provides a comprehensive coverage of topics. The inclusion of detailed settlement strategies for the County is particularly welcome- not least as Laois' towns and villages are focal points of tourism and economic activity. The inclusion of tourism specific policies under the settlement strategies is very positive. The inclusion of 'tourism' zoning in the settlement plan maps is also particularly welcome. As are the objectives maps included for the various settlements.</li> <li>2) The vision statement (para.1.0) underpinning the Plan is positive and the reference to the importance of protecting the County as a place to 'live, work, visit and enjoy' is welcome.</li> </ol>	<p>Laois County Council acknowledges the submission made by Failte Ireland and the generally supportive comments made.</p> <p>The Authority would like to see additional references to tourism in the strategic aims of the Development Plan as this is the most meaningful way to ensure that infrastructure and resources are used rationally and economically and the real dynamics of the market are hardness.</p> <p>A reference to tourism or visitors in section 4.3.1 paragraph is recommended</p> <p>INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING text is recommended after the second paragraph in Para. 5.10 –Tourism.</p> <p>Proposed texts, after second paragraph in Para. 5.10 – Tourism: "Ireland's Ancient East, established in 2016, has a target growth in visitor numbers of 600,000 (21%) to the region and an additional visitor revenue of €204 million (28%). To offer visitors a compelling motivation to visit the east of Ireland, Failte Ireland has developed a new umbrella destination brand called Ireland's Ancient East. The brand is rooted in the rich history and diverse range of cultural heritage experiences that are particularly prevalent in the East, South and Midlands regions of Ireland. The new destination brand has been designed to appeal to the key customer segments – namely the Culturally Curious and the Great Escapers – and to present this large geographic area in a cohesive and unified manner. Ireland's Ancient East offers a personal experience of 5,000 years of Europe's history. A journey of discovery in a lush green landscape that attracted warring settlers for millennia, illuminated by stories told by the best story tellers in the world. The key strategic objectives of the Ireland's Ancient East initiative are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To drive growth in international visitor numbers, tourism revenue and associated tourism employment in the regions which currently underperform in these areas.</li> <li>• To move Ireland's east and south from a transit and day tripping zone to a destination which attracts international overnight visitors.</li> <li>• To develop a world class</li> </ul>
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	<p>3) The strategic Aims (para.2.1.2) of the plan include reference to building on the economic strengths and tourism opportunities of the County. It is encouraging to see tourism being recognised as a economic driver for the County. The Authority would like to see additional references to tourism in the strategic aims of the Development Plan as this is the most meaningful way to ensure that infrastructure and resources are used rationally and economically and the real dynamics of the market are hardness.</p> <p>4) The inclusion of a Core Strategy Map (Para. 2.1.6) which provides a geographical illustration of how Laois is envisaged to develop over the plan period, includes the identification of areas suitable for tourism development. The authority would like to commend the Council on the recognition of the development potential of tourism throughout the County.</p> <p>5) The inclusion of policies in relation to natural and recreational amenities and open space (Para 4.3) is positive. A reference to tourism or visitors in section 4.3.1 paragraph is recommended</p> <p>6) The Draft Plan recognises tourism as a key economic driver in Chapter 5. There are a range of policies set out in this chapter in relation to tourism. These policies are comprehensive and Failte Ireland is generally supportive of them. References to tourism as an economic driver in the development of rural settlements and the inclusion of specific policies in relation to this are also welcome. The Authority would like to commend the Council on the comprehensive range of policies in the Economic Development Chapter dealing with tourism.</p> <p>7) The inclusion of the County's Tourism Strategy in the Draft County Development Plan is welcomed. As the Development Plan is a statutory document, this is the most meaningful way to give effect to the aims and objectives of the strategy.</p> <p>8) The policies for tourism (Para 5.10) are good, though somewhat generic in places. These would benefit from additional coverage – particularly arising from a more comprehensive evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the sector.</p>	<p>visitor experience, this delivers fully on the brand promise. To differentiate Ireland's east, south and midlands destination, within the international tourism marketplace, on the basis of the quality of its heritage experiences and a clear and memorable narrative, this links all experiences within it. Additional contextual information (Para.5.10) ,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To disperse visitor traffic across the geography by encouraging the exploration of both the well-known attractions (in some cases congested) and lesser known sites and experiences (hidden gems).</li> <li>• To ensure Ireland's Ancient East is delivered in accordance with the principles of sustainable tourism, ensuring that economic, social and environmental benefits are delivered in a balanced way.</li> </ul> <p>During the life-time of this Plan there will be a phased roll-out of the branding strategy, with investment in tourism signage and the enhancement of the visitor experience across the programme area. The strategy will develop Ireland's Ancient East as a destination that is easy for the independent visitor to explore, interpret, understand and appreciate. The implementation strategy will deal with on the ground information as well as promotional aspects of the brand and the accessibility of sites, possibly including mechanisms for pre-booking, ticketing and improved management. The strategy will enhance the visitor experience by promoting innovation in product development including the delivery of information through foreign languages and using digital technology where appropriate.</p> <p>Proposed text, to be inserted after first paragraph on page 76:</p> <p>Failte Ireland data indicates that County Laois attracted approximately 57,000 overseas visitors in 2015. This demonstrates Laois' potential as a tourism destination. Initiatives such as Ireland's Ancient East aim to further increase the numbers of visitors to the county.</p> <p>Remove second last paragraph from Para 5.10 as it is out of date.</p> <p><del>Failte Ireland data indicates that County Laois</del></p>
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	<p>9) The detailed policy objectives for Tourism and Recreation are assessed in detail in the second section of this report, which includes specific amendments, as proposed.</p> <p>10) There is good connectivity and cross referencing of policy areas throughout the Draft Plan.</p> <p><b>PROPOSALS FOR THE LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b> We have prepared this [part of the submission drawing on existing strategies for the enhancement and management of tourism in the County</p> <p>Proposed statements are based on identified gaps in policy coverage and recommended good practice in the area of sustainable tourism. We have set out explanatory text for discussion among the plan writing team and then included boxed text intended for consideration as a direct insert to the plan itself.</p> <p><b>COMMENTARY AND PROPOSALS ON THE DRAFT PLAN</b> Wind Energy Planning; A key area of planning that can impact on tourism is wind energy planning. Failte Ireland is generally supportive of wind and renewable energy developments when appropriately and sensitively site located within the landscape. Failte Ireland welcomes the inclusion of the Draft Wind Energy Strategy for County Laois in Appendix 5 of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023 The Authority also welcomes the objective OBJ1 in chapter 6, para. 6.6 which commits to “prepare a renewable Energy Strategy for County Laois during the lifetime of the plan”</p> <p><b>VOLUME 2 – SETTLEMENT PLANS</b> It is very encouraging to see Settlement Plans for such a large number of towns and villages throughout the County. The Authority is encouraged by the inclusion of tourism and Irelands Ancient East in a number of the economic development policies associated with the settlement Plans. The Authority would also like to commend the Council for the inclusion of the objective maps in addition to the zoning maps for each of the settlements.</p> <p><b>CONCLUDING REMARKS</b></p>	<p><del>attracts a low number of overseas visitors and less overseas tourism revenue than surrounding counties — revenue of €11 million and overseas visitor numbers of 37,000 in 2012. Despite the absence of a tourism tradition in Laois, Fáilte Ireland recorded an increased level of overseas visitors (40%) and revenue (73%) during <i>The Gathering 2013</i>. This demonstrates Laois’ potential as a tourism destination.</del></p> <p>Para 5.1 Add proposed text to end of first paragraph of introductory text.</p> <p>This section deals with the economic development of Laois including town/village centre management, retail, tourism, inward investment, local entrepreneurship and the rural economy. A sound local economy is fundamental to fostering sustainable communities and a good quality of life. This Development Plan seeks to create the conditions to support the sustainable economic development of County Laois during the Plan period 2017-2023. The Council will engage and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the economic potential of the tourism sector is secured for the benefit of the local economy. In addition to the economic benefits associated with the sector, Laois County Council is committed to protecting, promoting and enhancing the natural resources of the County making it a nicer place to live and visit.</p> <p>Additional contextual information (Para. 5.10)</p> <p>Fáilte Ireland promotes the incorporation of the principles of sustainability in the County Development Plan. The following five principles have been prepared to encapsulate the need to achieve a balance between appropriate tourism development and economic, environmental and social sustainability.</p> <p>Failte Ireland’s Guidance on Sustainable Tourism Fáilte Ireland have developed five key principles that ensure developments achieve a balance between appropriate tourism development and economic, environmental and social sustainability. Developments will be assessed having regard to compliance with these, and the associated policies .</p> <p>Principle 1: Tourism, when it is well managed</p>
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	<p>We wish to take this final opportunity to commend the County Council on the Draft Development Plan and reiterate the commitment of Failte Ireland to working with the Authority on achieving the plan objectives over the coming years.</p> <p>Additional contextual information (Para.5.10) The text relating to Tourism requires additional detail to provide a more thorough assessment of the needs of the tourism sector within the lifetime of the Plan. Based on the assessments undertaken by Failte Ireland, the addition of the following text is recommended after the second paragraph in Para. 5.10 –Tourism.</p> <p>Proposed texts, after second paragraph in Para. 5.10 – Tourism: “Ireland’s Ancient East, established in 2016, has a target growth in visitor numbers of 600,000 (21%) to the region and an additional visitor revenue of €204 million (28%). To offer visitors a compelling motivation to visit the east of Ireland, Failte Ireland has developed a new umbrella destination brand called Ireland’s Ancient East. The brand is rooted in the rich history and diverse range of cultural heritage experiences that are particularly prevalent in the East, South and Midlands regions of Ireland. The new destination brand has been designed to appeal to the key customer segments – namely the Culturally Curious and the Great Escapers – and to present this large geographic area in a cohesive and unified manner. Ireland’s Ancient East offers a personal experience of 5,000 years of Europe’s history. A journey of discovery in a lush green landscape that attracted warring settlers for millennia, illuminated by stories told by the best story tellers in the world. The key strategic objectives of the Ireland’s Ancient East initiative are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To drive growth in international visitor numbers, tourism revenue and associated tourism employment in the regions which currently underperform in these areas.</li> <li>• To move Ireland’s east and south from a transit and day tripping zone to a destination which attracts international overnight visitors. • To develop a world class visitor experience, this delivers fully on the brand promise. To differentiate Ireland’s east, south and midlands destination, within the international tourism marketplace, on the basis of the quality of its heritage experiences and a clear and memorable narrative, this links all experiences within it. Additional contextual information</li> </ul>	<p>and properly located, should be recognised as a positive activity which has potential to benefit the host community, the place itself and the visitor alike. Sustainable tourism planning requires a balance to be struck between the needs of the visitor, the place and the host community.</p> <p>Principle 2: Our landscapes, our cultural heritage, our environment and our linguistic heritage all have an intrinsic value which outweighs their value simply as a tourism asset. However, sustainable tourism planning makes sure that they can continue to be enjoyed and cherished by future generations and not prejudiced simply by short term considerations.</p> <p>Principle 3: Built development and other activities associated with tourism should in all respects be appropriate to the character of the place in which they are situated. This applies to the scale, design and nature of the place as well as to the particular land use, economic and social requirements of the place and its surroundings.</p> <p>Principle 4: Strategic tourism assets – including special landscapes, important views, the setting of historic buildings and monuments, areas of cultural significance and access points to the open countryside, should be safeguarded from encroachment by inappropriate development.</p> <p>Principle 5: Visitor accommodation, interpretation centres, and commercial / retail facilities serving the tourism sector should generally be located within established settlements thereby fostering strong links to a whole range of other economic and commercial sectors and sustaining the host communities.</p> <p>Sustainable tourism facilities, when properly located and managed can, especially if accessible by a range of transport modes, encourage longer visitor stays, help to extend the tourism season, and add to the vitality of settlements throughout the year. Underlying these principles for Sustainable Tourism, the definitions of economic, environmental and social sustainability, against which any tourism project should be assessed, are defined as follows: Economic sustainability must be considered to ensure that the tourism sector is</p>
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	<p>(Para.5.10) ,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To disperse visitor traffic across the geography by encouraging the exploration of both the well-known attractions (in some cases congested) and lesser known sites and experiences (hidden gems).</li> <li>• To ensure Ireland's Ancient East is delivered in accordance with the principles of sustainable tourism, ensuring that economic, social and environmental benefits are delivered in a balanced way.</li> </ul> <p>During the life-time of this Plan there will be a phased roll-out of the branding strategy, with investment in tourism signage and the enhancement of the visitor experience across the programme area. The strategy will develop Ireland's Ancient East as a destination that is easy for the independent visitor to explore, interpret, understand and appreciate. The implementation strategy will deal with on the ground information as well as promotional aspects of the brand and the accessibility of sites, possibly including mechanisms for pre-booking, ticketing and improved management. The strategy will enhance the visitor experience by promoting innovation in product development including the delivery of information through foreign languages and using digital technology where appropriate.</p> <p>It is further recommended that the value of the tourism sector is included in order to increase awareness of the contribution of the sector to the local economy. It is recommended that paragraphs on tourism figures are repositioned as follows: Proposed text, to be inserted after first paragraph on page 76: Failte Ireland data indicates that County Laois attracted approximately 57,000 overseas visitors in 2015. This demonstrates Laois' potential as a tourism destination. Initiatives such as Ireland's Ancient East aim to further increase the numbers of visitors to the county. Please remove second last paragraph from Para 5.10 as it is out of date. "Failte Ireland data indicates.....tourism destination."</p> <p>Additional references in CDP Text 10 Economic Development- Para 5.1 Add proposed text to end of first paragraph of introductory text. This section deals with the economic development of Laois including town/village centre management, retail, tourism, inward investment, local</p>	<p>managed. The key strengths of the County include landscape, heritage, natural environment, and lifestyle and amenity pursuits. The sector is highly affected by seasonality and there are extremes in visitor numbers at key attractions contrasted with smaller attractions which struggle to maintain visitor numbers. These 'peaks and troughs' should be carefully managed to ensure the protection of natural resources. Tourism innovation should also be encouraged – particularly where it brings about environmental benefits. Finally, for projects to be economically sustainable they should meet the needs of the permanent and also visitor population alike, so the preparation of robust business plans for all such developments will ensure proposals are viable and sustainable.</p> <p>Additional contextual information (Para.5.10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental sustainability will be central to the development and protection of a viable tourism sector and this is a key consideration in a County where tourism attractions are located in environmentally sensitive areas and close to historic areas where the quality of the built heritage and environment must be protected from inappropriate development – whether tourism related or not. The 'mainstreaming' of policy guidance tools such as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will undoubtedly address any deficits in relation to many of these key policy areas.</li> <li>• Social Sustainability is arguably more difficult to assess. Many of the potentially negative impacts of tourism development can however be addressed through careful consideration of the social and cultural nature of the receiving environment. The impacts that large-scale developments can have on existing local communities policies can be assessed having regard to the impact of visitor numbers on local quality of life, culture and heritage – with a particular emphasis placed on unique areas such as culturally sensitive areas where small impacts</li> </ul>
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	<p>entrepreneurship and the rural economy. A sound local economy is fundamental to fostering sustainable communities and a good quality of life. This Development Plan seeks to create the conditions to support the sustainable economic development of County Laois during the Plan period 2017-2023. The Council will engage and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the economic potential of the tourism sector is secured for the benefit of the local economy. In addition to the economic benefits associated with the sector, Laois County Council is committed to protecting, promoting and enhancing the natural resources of the County making it a nicer place to live and visit.</p> <p>Additional contextual information (Para. 5.10) Fáilte Ireland promotes the incorporation of the principles of sustainability in the County Development Plan. The following five principles have been prepared to encapsulate the need to achieve a balance between appropriate tourism development and economic, environmental and social sustainability. The text below may be incorporated into the introductory text associated with Para. 5.10 on Tourism in Chapter 5. It could also be incorporated as a new stand alone section preceding Para. 5.10.1. 11 Proposed text, in Para. 5.10 of before Para.5.10.1 Fáilte Ireland's Guidance on Sustainable Tourism Fáilte Ireland have developed five key principles that ensure developments achieve a balance between appropriate tourism development and economic, environmental and social sustainability. Developments will be assessed having regard to compliance with these, and the associated policies .</p> <p>Principle 1: Tourism, when it is well managed and properly located, should be recognised as a positive activity which has potential to benefit the host community, the place itself and the visitor alike. Sustainable tourism planning requires a balance to be struck between the needs of the visitor, the place and the host community. Principle 2: Our landscapes, our cultural heritage, our environment and our linguistic heritage all have an intrinsic value which outweighs their value simply as a tourism asset. However, sustainable tourism planning makes sure that they can continue to be enjoyed and cherished by future generations and not prejudiced simply by short term considerations. Principle 3: Built development and other activities associated with tourism should in</p>	<p>over time may have a significant cumulative effect.</p> <p>Amend ECN4 with additional text as follows:</p> <p>“Support the marketing of Laois for Inward Investment and as a visitor destination within the Ireland’s Ancient East initiative through the Laois LECP”.</p> <p>Amend ECN17 as follows</p> <p>“Seek to provide opportunities for highly-skilled outbound commuters to work locally through local employment opportunities, tourism opportunities, the development of an e-working centre or working from home....”</p> <p>Amend ECN 21 as follows:</p> <p>“Encourage the maintenance of town/village centre buildings and improve the quality of the public realm in town/village centres making them more attractive and safe to locals and visitors, as well as more pedestrian and cycle-friendly. Prepare Public Realm Strategies, where appropriate, liaising closely with residents, visitors and other relevant stakeholders;”</p> <p>Amend ECN24 as follows</p> <p>Retain and foster a mix of uses in town/village centres including commercial, community-based, civic, educational, recreational , Tourism and religious to bolster the central role of town/village centres in the day-to-day lives of Laois people</p> <p>Amend ECN30 as follows</p> <p>Provide short-stay parking in town centres to support business and tourism activities, balancing the need to encourage people into the town centre against sustainable transport and land-use efficiency considerations</p> <p>Amend Retail OBJ4 as follows</p> <p>“Acknowledge the importance of the principal, key service and service towns in providing a wide range of both convenience and comparison and visitor shopping in locations close to centres of population and larger, more remote retail hinterlands;”</p>
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	<p>all respects be appropriate to the character of the place in which they are situated. This applies to the scale, design and nature of the place as well as to the particular land use, economic and social requirements of the place and its surroundings. Additional contextual information (Para.5.10) Principle 4: Strategic tourism assets – including special landscapes, important views, the setting of historic buildings and monuments, areas of cultural significance and access points to the open countryside, should be safeguarded from encroachment by inappropriate development. Principle 5: Visitor accommodation, interpretation centres, and commercial / retail facilities serving the tourism sector should generally be located within established settlements thereby fostering strong links to a whole range of other economic and commercial sectors and sustaining the host communities. Sustainable tourism facilities, when properly located and managed can, especially if accessible by a range of transport modes, encourage longer visitor stays, help to extend the tourism season, and add to the vitality of settlements throughout the year. Underlying these principles for Sustainable Tourism, the definitions of economic, environmental and social sustainability, against which any tourism project should be assessed, are defined as follows: Economic sustainability must be considered to ensure that the tourism sector is managed. The key strengths of the County include landscape, heritage, natural environment, and lifestyle and amenity pursuits. The sector is highly affected by seasonality and there are extremes in visitor numbers at key attractions contrasted with smaller attractions which struggle to maintain visitor numbers. These ‘peaks and troughs’ should be carefully managed to ensure the protection of natural resources. Tourism innovation should also be encouraged – particularly where it brings about environmental benefits. Finally, for projects to be economically sustainable they should meet the needs of the permanent and also visitor population alike, so the preparation of robust business plans for all such developments will ensure proposals are viable and sustainable. 12 Additional contextual information (Para.5.10)</p> <p>• Environmental sustainability will be central to the development and protection of a viable tourism sector and this is a key consideration in a County where tourism attractions are located in environmentally sensitive areas and close to</p>	<p>Amend Retail OBJ5 as follows</p> <p>“Acknowledge the importance of local service towns, villages and rural serviced settlements and hinterlands in suburban and rural locations in meeting local and visitor shopping needs.”</p> <p>Amend RET4 as follows</p> <p>“Ensure that the retail needs of the County’s residents and visitors are met as fully as possible within the.....”</p> <p>Amend RET14 as follows</p> <p>“Improve the public realm of town centres through the encouragement of high quality civic design, including but not limited to the provision of attractive street furniture, lighting and effective street cleaning. Prepare Public Realm Strategies, where appropriate, liaising closely with residents, visitors and other relevant stakeholders.”</p> <p>Insert THE FOLLOWING NEW POLICY AFTER RUR1</p> <p>RUR XX</p> <p>“Support and facilitate agri-tourism and the work of farming / local bodies within the county in the promotion of the rural economy, including agriculture development, tourism adaptation, rural diversification and in the development of new initiatives to support farming.”</p> <p>Amend TM7 as follows</p> <p>Support and promote the existing festivals and cultural events which take place in the county and facilitate the establishment of new events where viable to increase the profile of the county as a key tourism destination and enjoyable place to be;</p> <p>Insert THE FOLLOWING NEW POLICY AFTER TM2</p> <p>TM XX</p> <p>“Direct the provision of tourist related facilities, such as information offices and cultural centres,</p>
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	<p>historic areas where the quality of the built heritage and environment must be protected from inappropriate development – whether tourism related or not. The ‘mainstreaming’ of policy guidance tools such as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will undoubtedly address any deficits in relation to many of these key policy areas. • Social Sustainability is arguably more difficult to assess. Many of the potentially negative impacts of tourism development can however be addressed through careful consideration of the social and cultural nature of the receiving environment. The impacts that large-scale developments can have on existing local communities policies can be assessed having regard to the impact of visitor numbers on local quality of life, culture and heritage – with a particular emphasis placed on unique areas such as culturally sensitive areas where small impacts over time may have a significant cumulative effect. Commentary and Proposals on Policy Objectives in the Draft Plan The relevant policy objectives for Tourism are assessed as follows: 14 Policy / Objective Comment ECN4 Good policy that would be strengthened with additional text as follows: “Support the marketing of Laois for Inward Investment and as a visitor destination within the Ireland’s Ancient East initiative through the Laois LECP”. ECN5 Good Policy in relation to improving the visitor experience. ECN17 Good policy in relation to home based economic activity. Would be strengthened with additional reference to tourism as follows: “Seek to provide opportunities for highly-skilled outbound commuters to work locally through local employment opportunities, tourism opportunities, the development of an e-working centre or working from home...” ECN 21 Good policy that would be strengthened with additional text as follows: “Encourage the maintenance of town/village centre buildings and improve the quality of the public realm in town/village centres making them more attractive and safe to locals and visitors, as well as more pedestrian and cycle-friendly. Prepare Public Realm Strategies, where appropriate, liaising closely with residents, visitors and other relevant stakeholders;” ECN24 Good policy. Would benefit from the inclusion of tourism as a use. ECN25 / ECN29 Good policy relating to events and activities. And tourism business. ECN30 Good Policy in relation to short term parking. Would be strengthened by additional reference to tourism as follows: “Provide short-stay parking in town</p>	<p>into town and village locations to support and strengthen the existing economic infrastructure of such centres. In all cases, the applicant must submit a robust assessment setting out the sustainability of any proposal with respect to economic, environmental and social sustainability, as defined herein.”</p> <p>Amend TM9 as follows</p> <p>Promote and facilitate the development of <b>rural tourism</b> such as including but not limited to open farms, on-farm craft villages and visitor centres and the reuse and refurbishment of vernacular buildings (houses or farm/industrial buildings) for tourist related facilities, including holiday home accommodation; where these are not detrimental to the character, scenic value and rural amenity of the surrounding area, including protecting and maintaining biodiversity, wildlife habitats, water quality, rural landscape character, scenic amenities and nature conservation. Proposals will be required to demonstrate a need to locate in a particular area and demonstrate compliance with the Development Management Standards set out in Chapter 8;</p> <p>Amend TM10 as follows</p> <p>“Work in collaboration with Coillte, neighbouring local authorities, Fáilte Ireland, community organisations and other interested parties to develop new forest accommodation, with required ancillary facilities, access, signage and trails for walking, cycling, mountain-biking and horse-riding.”</p> <p>Amend TM11 as follows</p> <p>“Continue to work in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and other key stakeholders on the development of the Ireland’s Ancient East branding strategy, to implement the programmes and plans of the Ireland’s Ancient East initiative over the lifetime of the plan and to maximise the tourism potential of the county. As part of that process Laois County Council will liaise with Fáilte Ireland on the development of the over-arching strategy, as well as any smaller scale plans or programmes that are prepared to give effect to that strategy. Laois County Council will consult with Fáilte Ireland as required, on assessment of any such plans, programmes or policies to ensure that they are adequately screened or assessed in full</p>
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	<p>centres to support business and tourism activities, balancing.....” Commentary and Proposals on Policy Objectives in the Draft Plan, continued 15 Policy / Objective Comment Retail OBJ4 Good objective – could be strengthened by the inclusion of a reference visitor retail as follows: “Acknowledge the importance of the principal, key service and service towns in providing a wide range of both convenience and comparison and visitor shopping in locations close to centres of population and larger, more remote retail hinterlands;” Retail OBJ5 Good objective – could be strengthened by the inclusion of a reference to visitor retail as follows: “Acknowledge the importance of local service towns, villages and rural serviced settlements and hinterlands in suburban and rural locations in meeting local and visitor shopping needs.” RET4 Good policy in relation to retail. Would benefit from the inclusion of tourism retail as follows: “Ensure that the retail needs of the County’s residents and visitors are met as fully as possible within the.....” RET14 Good policy in relation to the public realm. Could be strengthened by additional text as underlined: “Improve the public realm of town centres through the encouragement of high quality civic design, including but not limited to the provision of attractive street furniture, lighting and effective street cleaning. Prepare Public Realm Strategies, where appropriate, liaising closely with residents, visitors and other relevant stakeholders.” Insert after RUR1 *New Policy: “Support and facilitate agri-tourism and the work of farming / local bodies within the county in the promotion of the rural economy, including agriculture development, tourism adaptation, rural diversification and in the development of new initiatives to support farming.” Commentary and Proposals on Policy Commentary and Proposals on Policy Objectives in the Draft Plan, continued 16 Policy / Objective Comment TM1-TM6 TM8 Good policies supporting tourism as an economic driver in the County. TM7 Good policy in relation to Festivals and Events. Would be strengthened with additional text as underlined: “Support and promote the existing festivals and cultural events which take place in the county and facilitate the establishment of new events where viable to increase the profile of the county as a key tourism destination and enjoyable place to be. Inset after TM2 *New Policy: “Direct the provision of tourist related facilities, such as information offices and cultural centres, into town and village locations to support and strengthen the existing economic</p>	<p>compliance with Directives including the SEA Directive and the Habitats Directive.”</p> <p>Insert THE FOLLOWING NEW POLICY AFTER TM11</p> <p>TM xx</p> <p>Facilitating Fáilte Ireland initiatives for the development of tourism experiences in the County that are fit for purpose and deliver on the Ireland’s Ancient East brand promise, within the context of the land use management and infrastructural provision in the County.</p> <p>Amend TM17 as follows</p> <p>“Co-operate with National Trails Office (management standards), Fáilte Ireland, National Way Marked Way Advisory Committee, Coillte, the Heritage Council and other relevant bodies, in order to support the sustainable development, maintenance and enhancement of walking routes at appropriate locations throughout the county, including but not limited to, drying rooms for walkers and repair facilities for cyclists subject to compliance with the policies and objectives of the Plan particularly as they relate to the protection if the natural environment subject to compliance with the Habitats and Bird Directives.”</p> <p>Amend TM21 as follows and relocate to after TM 11</p> <p>“Encourage the clustering of tourism enterprise in town and village centres in the interest of sustainable tourism development and the enhancement of the public realms of town and village centres to maximise their tourism potential; in all cases, the applicant must submit a robust assessment setting out the sustainability of any proposal with respect to economic, environmental and social sustainability, as defined herein.”</p> <p>Amend TM22 as follows</p> <p>“Seek to maintain existing walking and cycling trails as well as facilities associated with angling and examine the feasibility of setting up additional walking/cycling trails or canoe/bridle trails and support the development and funding</p>
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	<p>infrastructure of such centres. In all cases, the applicant must submit a robust assessment setting out the sustainability of any proposal with respect to economic, environmental and social sustainability, as defined herein.” TM9 Well intentioned objective but restrictive in terms of possible developments – which may inhibit the development of a good range of innovative approaches. “Promote and facilitate the development of rural tourism such as including but not limited to open farms, on-farm craft villages.....” TM10 Good policy that would be strengthened with added text as underlined: “Work in collaboration with Coillte, neighbouring local authorities, Fáilte Ireland, community organisations and other interested parties to develop new forest accommodation, with required ancillary facilities, access, signage and trails for walking, cycling, mountain-biking and horse-riding.” Commentary and Proposals on Policy Objectives in the Draft Plan, continued 17 Policy / Objective Comment TM11-TM13 TM11 Good policies on Ireland’s Ancient East. Would benefit from re-wording text as follows: “Continue to work in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and other key stakeholders on the development of the Ireland’s Ancient East branding strategy. to implement the programmes and plans of the Ireland’s Ancient East initiative over the lifetime of the plan and to maximise the tourism potential of the county. As part of that process Laois County Council will liaise with the Authority on the development of the over-arching strategy, as well as any smaller scale plans or programmes that are prepared to give effect to that strategy. Laois County Council will consult with the Authority as required, on assessment of any such plans, programmes or policies to ensure that they are adequately screened or assessed in full compliance with Directives including the SEA Directive and the Habitats Directive.” Insert after TM11 *New Policy: Facilitating Fáilte Ireland initiatives for the development of tourism experiences in the County that are fit for purpose and deliver on the Ireland’s Ancient East brand promise, within the context of the land use management and infrastructural provision in the County. TM14 – TM16 Good policies in relation to walking / cycling. TM17 Good policy in relation to walking / cycling. Would benefit from additional text as underlined: “Co-operate with National Trails Office (management standards), Fáilte Ireland, National Way Marked Way Advisory Committee, Coillte, the Heritage Council and other</p>	<p>for general enhancements along trails and in collaboration with the National Trails Office, provide up to date information on trail locations and routes.”</p> <p>INSERT THE FOLLOWING NEW POLICIES AFTER TM26</p> <p>TM xx Develop a management plan for specific busy tourist sites in order to facilitate the effective accommodation of large numbers of tourists at sensitive locations.</p> <p>TM xx Support the implementation of Ireland’s Ancient East by facilitating the provision of visitor information– in line with the policies and objectives with respect to heritage sites; and integrating the objectives of Ireland’s Ancient East with transport programmes in the County</p> <p>TM xx Encourage and support the provision of foreign language interpretation interventions in order to ensure the appropriate interpretation and appreciation of the county’s heritage asset.</p> <p>TM xx Encourage and support the provision of a wider range of accommodation types are available throughout the county in order to ensure that the county is an attractive location to spend increased amounts of time for a wide range of visitors.</p>
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	<p>relevant bodies, in order to support the sustainable development, maintenance and enhancement of walking routes at appropriate locations throughout the county, including but not limited to, drying rooms for walkers and repair facilities for cyclists subject to compliance with the policies and objectives of the Plan particularly as they relate to the protection of the natural environment subject to compliance with the Habitats and Bird Directives.” Commentary and Proposals on Policy Objectives in the Draft Plan, continued 18 Policy / Objective Comment TM18-TM20 Good policies in relation to Blueway / Waterways TM21 Good policy in relation to location of tourism enterprise and development. Would benefit from additional text as underlined: “Encourage the clustering of tourism enterprise in town and village centres in the interest of sustainable tourism development and the enhancement of the public realms of town and village centres to maximise their tourism potential; in all cases, the applicant must submit a robust assessment setting out the sustainability of any proposal with respect to economic, environmental and social sustainability, as defined herein.” It is also suggested that this policy is relocated to after Policy TM11 as it does not directly relate to blue ways/ waterways. TM22 Good policy on trails. Would benefit from additional text as underlined: “Seek to maintain existing walking and cycling trails as well as facilities associated with angling and examine the feasibility of setting up additional walking/cycling trails or canoe/bridle trails; support the development and funding for general enhancements along trails and in collaboration with the National Trails Office, provide up to date information on trail locations and routes.” TM23-TM26 Good policies on Heritage Assets. Insert after TM26 *New Policy: Develop a management plan for specific busy tourist sites in order to facilitate the effective accommodation of large numbers of tourists at sensitive locations. *New Policy: To support the implementation of Ireland’s Ancient East by facilitating the provision of visitor information– in line with the policies and objectives with respect to heritage sites; and integrating the objectives of Ireland’s Ancient East with transport programmes in the County Commentary and Proposals on Policy Objectives in the Draft Plan, continued 19 Policy / Objective Comment *New Policy: Encourage and support the provision of foreign language interpretation interventions in order to ensure the appropriate interpretation and</p>	
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	<p>appreciation of the county's heritage asset. TM27 Good Policy on accommodation. Insert after TM27 *New Policy: Ensure that a wider range of accommodation types are available throughout the county in order to ensure that the county is an attractive location to spend increased amounts of time for a wide range of visitors. TM28-TM29 Good general policies.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION 52</b>  Department of Communications, Climate Action &amp; Environment</p>	<p><b>Section 5.10 TOURISM</b> <b>Include reference to the importance of geology, geoheritage and geotourism, e.g:</b> Geoheritage, which is inextricably linked with biodiversity, archaeology, social history and intangible heritage, is fundamental to the promotion of heritage and tourism, and adds another dimension to any heritage trail, walkway, information panel, leaflet or app. Over the past number of years geology has become a large part of Irish tourism. Geotourism has become increasingly popular with the recognition that geology underpins all natural and built heritage. Ireland currently has three UNESCO Global Geoparks, with at least two more aspiring Geoparks at various stages of application and validation. These Geoparks, along with other tourism initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Ancient East, have bolstered tourism in various part of Ireland and helped to increase its levels in areas that were previously not as popular with tourists. This trend should be encouraged to continue throughout the country, and with geological audits being completed and information being made more available to the general public, geology should be a large part of any tourism initiative that may be introduced.</p> <p><b>5.9 RURAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES</b> <b>Mining and Aggregates</b> <b>Land-based/resource-based economic policies</b> <b>Reference should be made to the GSI-ICF Quarrying Guidelines that help support a balance between the extractive industry and the preservation and promotion of geological heritage.</b> The Irish Geological Heritage Programme of the GSI continues to promote a partnership between geological heritage and active quarrying and has produced guidelines with the Irish Concrete Federation on how to address geological heritage features when identified in pits and quarries. The guidelines aim to achieve a balance between heritage ideals and ongoing development, and are</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>The comments in relation to <b>the importance of geology, geoheritage and geotourism, e.g:</b> Geoheritage, which is inextricably linked with biodiversity, archaeology, social history and intangible heritage, is fundamental to the promotion of heritage and tourism, and adds another dimension to any heritage trail, walkway, information panel, leaflet or app.</p> <p>Policy TM 3 TO include</p> <p>Support in principle the development or expansion of a tourism proposition around the Slieve Bloom Mountains, Laois' Inland Waterways, Laois' historic towns and villages, heritage-based tourism, activity-based tourism, <b>GEO TOURISM</b>, eco-tourism, food-based tourism, diaspora-based tourism and spiritual tourism. Proposals for sustainable tourism development will be required to demonstrate a need to locate in a particular area and demonstrate compliance with the Development Management Standards;</p> <p>The comments in relation to Mining and Aggregates and Land-based/resource-based economic policies are noted.</p> <p>RUR 7 will be amended to state</p> <p>Support in principle the expansion of the aggregates and concrete products industry which offers opportunity for employment and economic development generally subject to environmental , traffic and planning considerations and ensure that any plan or project associated with extractive industry is subject to Appropriate assessment screening in compliance with the Habitats Direction and subsequent assessment as required , <b>applicants for planning permission shall have regard to the GSI-ICF Quarrying Guidelines.</b></p>

	<p>available to download from the GSI website at:  <a href="http://www.gsi.ie/Programmes/Heritage+and+Planning/Planning/Quarrying+Guidelines.htm">http://www.gsi.ie/Programmes/Heritage+and+Planning/Planning/Quarrying+Guidelines.htm</a></p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 78</b></p> <p><b>Catherine Casey</b>  <b>Heritage Officer</b>  <b>LCC</b></p>	<p><b>VOLUME 1 WRITTEN STATEMENT</b></p> <p><b>Section 5.8.1 Retail Policies and Objectives</b>  Request the addition of wording to Policy RET14 so that it reads “Improve the public realm of town centres through the encouragement of <u>conservation of built heritage</u> and high quality civic design, including but not limited to provision of attractive street furniture in keeping with the existing heritage of the area, lighting and effective street cleaning”</p> <p><b>Section 5.10 Tourism</b></p> <p><u>Page 75, Section 5.10</u>  <u>Paragraph two:</u> Please correct “Aghadoe Abbey” to “Aghaboe Abbey”  <u>Paragraph Three</u> Please edit “Ireland’s Ancient East Story” to “Ireland’s Ancient East”  <u>Paragraph Four:</u> Please amend line two to state “Under the Ireland’s Ancient East Programme, signage has been installed at the following sites: Emo Court, the Rock of Dunamase, Heywood Gardens, Timahoe Round Tower and Abbeyleix Heritage House. It is the aim of Laois County Council to facilitate and encourage signage at further sites of importance including Donaghmore Workhouse and Agricultural Museum, Aghaboe Abbey, Killeshin Romanesque Church and others”.</p> <p><u>Section 5.10.1 Laois Tourism Strategy</u>  <u>Page 77, Paragraph II:</u> Please correct Aghadoe Abbey to Aghaboe Abbey</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>Response</p> <p><b>Amend</b> RET14 so that it reads</p> <p>“<b>Improve the public realm of town centres through the encouragement of conservation of built heritage and high quality civic design, including but not limited to provision of attractive street furniture in keeping with the existing heritage of the area, lighting and effective street cleaning</b>”</p> <p><b>Section 5.10 Tourism</b></p> <p><u>Page 75, Section 5.10, Paragraph 2:</u></p> <p>Replace “<del>Aghadoe</del> Abbey” with “Aghaboe Abbey”</p> <p><u>Paragraph Three</u></p> <p>Replace “<del>Ireland’s Ancient East Story</del>” with “Ireland’s Ancient East”</p> <p>Amend line two of Para 4 to state “<b>Under the Ireland’s Ancient East Programme, signage has been installed at the following sites: Emo Court, the Rock of Dunamase, Heywood Gardens, Timahoe Round Tower and Abbeyleix Heritage House. It is the aim of Laois County Council to facilitate and encourage signage at further sites of importance including Donaghmore Workhouse and Agricultural Museum, Aghaboe Abbey, Killeshin Romanesque Church and others</b>”.</p> <p><u>Section 5.10.1 Laois Tourism Strategy</u>  <u>Page 77, Paragraph II:</u>  Replace “<del>Aghadoe</del> Abbey” with “Aghaboe Abbey”</p>

<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 34</b></p> <p>RGDATA,</p>	<p>RGDATA is the representative association for independent family grocers in Ireland. It represents supermarkets, convenience stores, forecourt stores and local shops some of which are aligned to various symbol groups and some which operate under their own family name. The independent sector represents about 34% of the Irish grocery market and members' shops are located in towns, villages and urban areas.</p> <p>RGDATA represents the owners of many shops, supermarkets, convenience stores and forecourt stores throughout Laois. Our members have a keen interest in supporting their local economy and in ensuring that the towns, villages and urban centres throughout Laois are vibrant and attractive places to live, work, shop and to do business.</p> <p>RGDATA supports sustainable retail development, vibrant town centres, villages and communities and a diversity of shops that people can walk to. RGDATA has been to the fore in advocating a planned approach to retail developments in Ireland based on the principles of sustainable development. RGDATA strongly supports the Retail Shopping Directive introduced in 1998, and has been a firm advocate of the Retail Planning Guidelines introduced by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government in 2001 and updated in 2012.</p> <p>RGDATA wishes to make the following points:</p> <p><b>Vacancy:</b></p> <p>Laois County Council should commit to applying the strict interpretations contained in the Retail Planning Guidelines, to ensure that there is a vibrant, efficient and competitive retail sector, vibrant towns and villages and local shops that people can walk to. The focal point for residents in any community and surrounding hinterlands is the core of the town centre.</p> <p>RGDATA urges that vacant sites in towns and villages are fully investigated for reuse and that developers with new retail proposals are directed to design their proposed plans to fit into the existing retail zones, town centres and villages in a manner that will enhance their role as centres, their economic performance, retain existing jobs and facilitate the creation of new jobs. The Authority should use its powers actively to resist</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Planning Authority welcomes the input from RGDATA in relation to the draft Plan.</p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having a vibrant retail sector in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>The retail sector is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 5.8 <i>Retail Development</i> which states inter alia:</p> <p><i>A Draft Retail Strategy has been prepared to coincide with the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023. The Draft Retail Strategy was carried out by Future Analytics Consulting Ltd., in consultation with Laois County Council, in accordance with provisions set out in the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012). The document is available at Annex 2 of this Plan.</i></p> <p><i>Retail is an important employment sector in Laois. More generally shopping is a lynchpin for the vitality of town and village centres. More than 75% of retail floorspace is located in Portlaoise and it is necessary to retain that primacy to reduce leakage to other counties. Proposals for retail development will be considered in the context of the retail hierarchy and sequential approach set out in the Laois Retail Strategy 2017-2023, the quantum of new convenience and comparison floorspace identified as appropriate therein, the Retail Planning Guidelines and the policies below.</i></p> <p><i>The Retail Strategy will indicate where the additional retail floorspace should be located. In this context, the location and extent of new retail development must have regard to the planning framework for the county and will be assessed against the criteria contained in the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012) and the Development Management Standards contained in Section 8.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will promote greater vitality in town</i></p>
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	<p>proposed developments that do not deliver on these criteria and encourage developers to redesign or relocate proposed developments so that they enhance the existing centres and do not create a counter attraction depleting the existing centres and creating a net loss of jobs in the area.</p> <p><b>Town Health Checks Sustainable Development:</b></p> <p>RGDATA respectfully suggests that in order to ensure sustainable retail development and promote the vibrancy and vitality of Town Centres in the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023, it should state that no new retail developments should be approved until Town Centre Health Checks are undertaken in key towns in the county.</p> <p>A Town Centre Health Check will identify the key data about the town and assist the Local Authority in identifying exactly what new development is required, what is in the best interests of promoting a good retail mix, what will best service the actual population of the town, ensure the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre and provide sustainable development.</p> <p>Section 3.1 Retail Health Check Analysis of County Laois, contained in the Draft Laois Retail Strategy document, outlines the principles of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 regarding the maintenance of the vitality and viability of town centres. RGDATA welcomes this approach. The Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 include an Appendix on Town Centre Strategy which states:</p> <p><i>Such a strategy will generally contain:</i></p> <p><i>a profile of the city or town centre, which will identify the essential qualities of the centre and seek to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the community it serves by consolidating and building on its existing strengths;</i></p> <p><i>a 'visioning statement, where a shared vision is drawn up and a strategy and action plan for the centre are then prepared to implement the statement;</i></p> <p><i>implementation proposals, which can range from the strategic to the specific, indicating responsibilities and delivery timetables; and</i></p> <p><i>provisions for monitoring and review, to ensure that</i></p>	<p><i>centres through the implementation of a sequential approach to the location of all subsequent retail development. This sequential approach prioritises development within the town centres or core retail areas at the expense of more peripheral edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations, which traditionally have poorer functional and spatial linkages with the core. This approach recognises the importance of core areas as the most suitable locations for higher order fashion and comparison goods, as they are easily accessible for the majority of the catchment population and also provide a compact and sustainable critical mass of commercial activity and public amenities, thereby reducing the need to travel.</i></p> <p><i>The Retail Planning Guidelines state that the order of priority for the sequential approach is to locate retail development in the town centre and only to allow retail development in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations where all other options have been exhausted.</i></p> <p><i>All applications for retail developments at edge-of-centre or out-of-centre will be subject to the sequential test as outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines. Where an application for a retail development edge of centre and out of town centre is lodged to the planning authority, the applicant shall demonstrate that all town centre options including but not limited to opportunity sites have been assessed and evaluated and that flexibility has been adopted by the retailer in regard to the retail format.</i></p> <p><i>RET 1, RET3, RET4, RET5, RET 6 relate</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>In relation to RGDATA's suggestion that in order to ensure sustainable retail development and promote the vibrancy and vitality of Town Centres in the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023, it should state that no new retail developments should be approved until Town Centre Health Checks are undertaken in key towns in the county, there is no such express provision for this in the Retail Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>Accordingly the Council will not be including such a statement in the Plan.</p>
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	<p><i>the appropriate actions are being progressed and that changing circumstances are considered.</i></p> <p><i>“The city/town centre strategy will generally be prepared by the planning authority in liaison with stakeholders such as retailers, customers, chambers of commerce, and community groups. This liaison should continue through the various stages of the implementation of the centre strategy.</i></p> <p><i>While the strategy can be done at any time it is probably best done either in parallel with the development plan process or just before the process begins so that it can inform the policies and objectives of the development plan, if resources permit”.</i></p> <p><b>Retail Hierarchy:</b>          RGDATA wish to emphasise the importance of confirming the retail hierarchy and role of centres, when assessing planning proposals and developments. We ask that Laois County Council, when dealing with these matters should take account of the views of retailers, shoppers and property owners.</p> <p><b>Village shops and Local/ Neighbourhood Centres:</b>          The level of retail provided in villages and neighbourhood centres should relate to the local area and the Council should ensure that villages retain their self-sufficiency and neighbourhood centres retain their community status. Village shops and neighbourhood centres are supposed to service the local catchment area and not create a counter attraction to the existing town centres.</p> <p>Annex I.5 of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 state: Local Centre or Neighbourhood Centre:  <i>“comprise a small group of shops, typically comprising newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population”.</i></p> <p>RGDATA would have concerns that over development of local or neighbourhood centres would result in drawing business away from nearby towns, which are already experiencing high vacancy rates and loss of footfall.</p> <p><b>Parking</b></p>	<p>In relation to the issue of parking, the Councils Development Contribution Scheme 2013-2017 is biased in favor of town centre locations.</p>
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	<p>We are aware of the challenges many town centres face with restrictive parking regimes and we ask Laois County Council to address this issue as you continue the process of reviewing the County Development Plan. In recent years pay parking and high fines for clamping have been introduced in town centres, while free parking is available in out of town developments. This has been found to be prohibitive and acts as a disincentive for consumers to shop in the town centres. Consumers increasingly opt to avail of the free parking in out of town retail centres.</p> <p>We ask for a fair and equitable balance to be achieved for the future protection of the town centres.</p> <p><b>Land Use Zoning:</b></p> <p>Land use zoning policies should ensure that lands zoned for general employment should be reserved for projects that will generate local jobs, support Irish producers and suppliers, provide a route to market for small local producers and farmers and create opportunities for re-investment in the local community.</p> <p>The County Council should make a specific commitment in this plan that retail warehousing should be accommodated only on lands specifically zoned for such purposes.</p> <p>RGDATA also asks that when assessing new proposed retail developments in Retail Parks, that they are restricted to the sale of bulky goods only as stated in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012:</p> <p><b>Retail Parks:</b></p> <p><i>'A single development of a least three retail warehouses with associated car parking'</i></p> <p><b>Retail Warehouse:</b></p> <p><i>'A large single-level store specialising in the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods, and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers'.</i></p>	
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# SECTION 6: Infrastructure Strategy

Name & Issues Raised Number	Chief Executive's Response & Recommendation	
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>		
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 6.</b> Dublin Airport Authority,</p>	<p>Acknowledges receipt of correspondence and makes no comment in relation to the draft Plan.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 22</b> Aisling Phelan,</p>	<p>This submission is in relation to Policy TT 10/P35 of the County development Plan 2011-2017. This is Policy TRANS<sub>14</sub> in the draft Plan.</p> <p>Applicant argues that this policy is unduly restrictive to people like herself whose family only owns a brownfield site [not a farm] accessing onto such roads. In her case, the cost of refurbishing the existing cottage is prohibitive. To replace the original dwelling would make more sense from a cost point of view. However, the policy, in its current wording, rules out this option.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>The Planning Authority has adopted a restrictive policy in relation to development access onto the strategic regional road network for two main reasons, namely to protect the carrying capacity of such routes and to optimise traffic safety.</p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having an adequate regional road infrastructure in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>Regional road infrastructure is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan, particularly in Section 6.1.2.2 <i>Strategic Regional Roads</i> which states inter alia:</p> <p>Policies TRANS<sub>12</sub>, TRANS<sub>13</sub>, TRANS<sub>14</sub> and TRANS<sub>15</sub> relate.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Given the established traffic generation from such sites, include an additional policy as follows and re-number others accordingly:</p> <p><b>TRANS XX</b></p> <p><b>Consider permitting access for replacement dwellings for persons who [or their families] own the original house and site for a minimum of 10 years [documentary evidence in this regard to be submitted] subject to the following provisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The original dwelling is in-situ and is habitable;</b></li> <li>• <b>The cost of refurbishment of and/ or extension to the original dwelling is prohibitive;</b></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The applicant complies with the provisions of the local need factor of the rural housing policy as outlined in Section 2.6. 1;</i></li> <li>• <i>An alternative site with access onto a minor road is not available;</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed development can be accommodated without the creation of a specific traffic hazard;</i></li> <li>• <i>Where possible an existing entrance is used;</i></li> <li>• <i>The Councils road standards are fully met;</i></li> <li>• <i>The site is of minimum size of 0.202 hectares [0.5 acres];</i></li> </ul> <p><i>If necessary, a replacement septic tank drainage system in accordance with the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice: Waste Water Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (p.e ≤10) 2009 shall be installed on the site.</i></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO 30</b></p> <p>Yvonne Jackson Failte Ireland</p>	<p>Insert after TRANS 4 *New Policy: Support sustainable travel in the tourism sector by the promotion of public transport use and by undertaking enhancements to overall accessibility thereby making the County easier for visitors to navigate. Integrate the County's transport and tourism strategies to promote increasingly sustainable travel patterns among visitors to the County.</p> <p>TRANS 31 Good policy in relation to coach and bus parking</p> <p>TRANS 35- TRANS 56 Good policies in relation to walking and cycling as sustainable modes of transport. Good referencing to Tourism Policies in Section 5. Would benefit from the inclusion of text... for residents of and visitors to the County... In a number of the policies in this section of the Plan.</p>	<p>Laois County Council acknowledges the submission made by Failte Ireland and supportive comments made.</p> <p>It is proposed to Insert a new policy after TRANS 4 as follows</p> <p>TRANS xx</p> <p><i>Support sustainable travel in the tourism sector by the promotion of public transport use and by undertaking enhancements to overall accessibility thereby making the County easier for visitors to navigate. Integrate the County's transport and tourism strategies to promote increasingly sustainable travel patterns among visitors to the County.</i></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Catherine Casey</b> <b>Heritage Officer LCC</b></p>	<p><b>Section 6.1.2 Roads</b></p> <p>Please add a policy relating to the importance of controlling the spread of invasive species (eg Japanese Knotweed) on the roads network.</p> <p><u>Example</u> "It is a policy of the Council to seek to prevent and control the spread of invasive plant species along the roads network"</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>Response The Planning Authority recognizes the implication of the spread of invasive species e.g japanese Knotweed along the Road network and is also aware that works have been carried out by Area Engineers to eradicate it.</p> <p>INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING POLICY</p> <p>TRANS xx <i>Seek to prevent and control the spread of invasive plant species along the roads network"</i></p>

<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 35</b> Transport Infrastructure Ireland,</p>	<p>Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) welcomes consultation on the Draft Laois County Development Plan, 2017 - 2023, and the opportunity to comment on emerging policies and development objectives scheduled in the Draft Plan.</p> <p>The Council will be aware that TII was established in August, 2015. TII is the operational name of the National Roads Authority and the Roads Act, 2015, sets out the legal structure for the transfer of the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) functions, etc., to the Authority. TII's observations, provided in the following submission, seek to address issues concerning the safety, capacity and strategic function of the national road network in accordance with TII's statutory function and the provisions of official policy. To that effect TII provides the following comments for the Council's consideration;</p> <p><b><u>MANAGING EXCHEQUER INVESTMENT AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE</u></b></p> <p>The Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) are a planned set of transport networks across Europe. The TEN-T regulations target a gradual development of the transport network with the core network a priority (by 2030) followed by the remainder of the comprehensive network (by 2050). The TEN-T regulations define the objective of increasing the benefits for road users by ensuring safe, secure and high-quality standards for road users and freight transport, co-ordinated, to achieve integrated and intermodal long-distance travel routes across Europe.</p> <p>In Ireland, the core network currently consists of the route from Northern Ireland via Dublin to both Cork/Ringaskiddy and Limerick/Foynes. As a result of this directive, the N/M7 and N/M8 through Laois have been identified as part of the EU TEN-T Core Network which has repercussions and action requirements for policies and objectives which should be considered in the preparation of the new County Development Plan.</p> <p>These routes are highly important national roads and are identified as Strategic Radial Corridors in the National Spatial Strategy and are important inter-urban transport corridors linking Regional</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Plan will review and update where necessary the roads policies and objectives of the draft Plan to ensure they have regard to the relevant DoE and TII guidelines.</p> <p>Suggested cross referencing will be carried out.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Text in Section 6.1.1 will be reworded as follows:</p> <p><i>These Guidelines set out planning policy considerations relating to development affecting national roads including motorways, national primary and national secondary roads. In summary, the guidelines require that planning authorities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Have due regard to the protection of investment in and the strategic function of national roads;</i></li> <li>• <i>Protect alignments for future national roads projects;</i></li> <li>• <i>Restrict the numbers of new access points to national roads,</i></li> <li>• <i>Restrict proposals which intensify use of existing access points and junctions, particularly on stretches of national road outside of the 60kmh speed limit zones;</i></li> <li>• <i>Co-operate with TII regarding the management of national roads.</i></li> </ul> <p>Include a cross reference between Policy TRANS 5 and Section 2.6 where Rural Housing Policies are outlined; such a cross reference would be of benefit to prospective applicants.</p> <p>Include other cross referencing with Policy TRANS 5 in the Draft Plan in relation to development objectives that have the potential to give rise to a demand for access or additional trips on the national road network, so future applicants are aware of the implications of development proposals affecting national roads; examples in this regard include Section 5.9 Rural Economic Activities, including Mining and Aggregates, Policy TM 9, Rural Tourism and Section 6.6.1 Renewable Energy, etc.</p> <p>Include other cross referencing with Section 8.5 Development Management Standards of the Draft Plan to include reference to official policy on access control to national roads.</p>
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	<p>Gateways with the greater Dublin Area and give access to regional and international markets, including through strategic airport and port locations as well as linking with other strategic national roads. The Council will also be aware that the N80 is identified as a Strategic Linking Corridor in the National Spatial Strategy and in tandem with these routes already mentioned in a national context, the N77 and N78 are identified as important interregional routes in the Midlands Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines, 2010-2022. Reference to the N80 Rosslare-Carlow-Moate in Section 6.1.2.2 of the Draft Plan requires updating following reclassification.</p> <p>These national roads play a key role within Ireland's overall transport system and in the country's economic, social and physical development. It is of particular importance that policies and objectives are drafted which allow the network of national roads to continue to play the intended strategic role in catering for inter-urban and inter-regional transport requirements that will serve Ireland's economic competitiveness by providing faster, more efficient and safer access to and from our major ports, airports, cities and large towns.</p> <p>TII acknowledges that the Draft Plan acknowledges Laois' transport connectivity to domestic and international markets in Section 5.4 and in that regard TII wishes to ensure in so far as practicable, the preservation of the efficiency, capacity and safety of national roads to assist in fulfilling this strategic role.</p> <p>Having regard to the foregoing, TII acknowledges and welcomes inclusion of Core Strategy Policy CS7 to safeguard the capacity of the national road network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012). However, it is noted that the national road network is not very clearly represented on the Core Strategy Map included in Figure 5 of the Draft Plan and the Council may wish to address this prior to Plan adoption.</p> <p>It is noted that there are a number of road projects included in the Draft Plan and associated Settlement Plans in Volume II that have potential implications for the national road network; in such cases, the Authority</p>	
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	<p>acknowledges that it is beneficial to identify road schemes that are proposed to be delivered at a local/regional level within the term of the Plan. Though, the Council should be aware that TII may not be responsible for financing such additional projects. In addition, such projects should be developed by the Council to complement the strategic function of the national road network and should not undermine or compromise this function.</p> <p><b>Other Transport Proposals</b></p> <p>TII notes the objectives in Section 6.1.3.1 of the Draft Plan concerning the provision of strategic cycling links, where such proposals have an interaction with national roads; TII advises that proposals should be developed to safely complement the strategic function of national roads. Consultation in relation to proposals impacting on national roads should be referred to TII.</p> <p><b>Land Use &amp; Transport Integration</b></p> <p>Related to the foregoing and in particular in relation to land use planning and transport integration, the Authority notes the commitment to continue to develop Togher as a National Enterprise Park (Policy ECN2) and to continue to promote and facilitate the development of Portlaoise as a Principal Town/National Transport Mode (Policy CS16).</p> <p>The objective to review the Portlaoise Local Area Plan, 2012 – 2018, is noted and welcome, OBJ 1 Section 2.1.4 refers, and TII would welcome consultation on the Local Area Plan when prepared. In addition, it is noted that the Draft Plan makes no reference to the Portlaoise Traffic Model which, in the Authority's opinion and based on previous correspondence on this matter, including appeals, is required to be updated to support the preparation of the new local area plan. TII would welcome clarification of proposals in relation to updating the Portlaoise Traffic Model.</p> <p><b><u>DoECLG SPATIAL PLANNING &amp; NATIONAL ROADS GUIDELINES (2012)</u></b></p> <p>In addition to the above, TII's submission on pre-draft consultation advised that it is of particular</p>	
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	<p>importance that policies and objectives are drafted which allow the network of national roads to continue to perform their intended strategic role in catering for inter-urban and inter-regional transport requirements that will serve Ireland's economic competitiveness by providing faster, more efficient and safer access to and from our major ports, airports, cities and large towns.</p> <p>There is a critical need to manage these assets in accordance with national policy as outlined in Smarter Travel (DTTAS, 2009) and the provisions of the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoECLG, 2012).</p> <p>Having regard to the foregoing, TII welcomes the inclusion of reference to the DoECLG Guidelines in the Draft Plan, though it is recommended that the Council review the relevant text in Section 6.1.1;</p> <p><i>These Guidelines set out planning policy considerations relating to development affecting national roads including motorways, national primary and national secondary roads. In summary, the guidelines require that planning authorities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Have due regard to the protection of investment in and the strategic function of national roads;</i></li> <li>• <i>Protect alignments for future national roads projects;</i></li> <li>• <i>Restrict the numbers of new access points to national roads, <del>subject to a very limited number of exceptions;</del></i></li> <li>• <i>Restrict proposals which <del>unduly</del> intensify use of existing access points and junctions, particularly on stretches of national road outside of the 60kmh speed limit zones;</i></li> <li>• <i>Co-operate with <del>the NRA</del> TII regarding the management of national roads.</i></li> </ul> <p>In terms of access to national roads, TII acknowledges and welcomes the inclusion of Policy TRANS 5 in the Draft Plan which reflects the provisions of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines concerning access to national roads.</p> <p>In the interests of clarity, the Authority recommends that consideration be given to including a cross reference between Policy</p>	
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	<p>TRANS 5 and Section 2.6 where Rural Housing Policies are outlined as it is noted that no reference to the restriction on access to national roads is included; such a cross reference would be of benefit to prospective applicants.</p> <p>In addition to the above, the Council may consider it beneficial to include other cross referencing with Policy TRANS 5 in the Draft Plan in relation to development objectives that have the potential to give rise to a demand for access or additional trips on the national road network, so future applicants are aware of the implications of development proposals affecting national roads; examples in this regard might include Section 5.9 Rural Economic Activities, including Mining and Aggregates, Policy TM 9, Rural Tourism and Section 6.6.1 Renewable Energy, etc. Such cross referencing is considered particularly relevant as Section 8.5 Development Management Standards of the Draft Plan does not appear to include reference to official policy on access control to national roads.</p> <p>Although the Council has indicated a policy approach concerning access to national roads in the Draft Plan consistent with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines, it is noted that the Council has not consulted the Authority on the identification of 'exceptional circumstances' where a less restrictive approach to access might apply. The Council will be aware that the DoECLG Guidelines refer to such proposals in Section 2.6 of the Guidelines and TII advises that the Authority remains available to liaise with the Council in this regard if required.</p> <p>As advised in TII's initial submission on the Draft Plan, where 'exceptional circumstances' are proposed it will be important that the appropriate evidence base is developed to support proposals.</p> <p><b>Retailing</b></p> <p>The Authority notes and welcomes the support for safeguarding and improving town centres and promotion of the sequential test outlined Section 5.8 of the Draft Plan and associated objectives, including Objective RET13.</p> <p>The Council will be aware that the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) include an explicit</p>	
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	<p>presumption against large out of town retail centres located adjacent or close to existing, new or planned national roads/motorways. This policy provision is not stated in the Draft Plan and the Authority would welcome this presumption against large out of town retail centres located adjacent or close to existing, new or planned national roads/motorways being incorporated into Section 5.8 of the Draft Plan and associated objectives in the interests of clarity.</p> <p><b>Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audits (RSA)</b></p> <p>TII notes and welcomes the inclusion of reference to the requirement of both TTA and RSA in the Section 6.1.2.5 and DM51 of the Draft Plan. In the interests of clarity, references to TII Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and TII DMRB in the Draft Plan should be updated to TII Publications which has replaced the DMRB referencing system.</p> <p>The Traffic &amp; Transport Assessment requirement outlined in Section 5.6 of the Draft Laois County Retail Strategy (Appendix 4) would also benefit from updating from a 2007 reference year to the updated Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines, 2014.</p> <p>The Authority also referred to Road Safety Impact Assessment (RSIA) in pre-draft consultation. RSIA is described in the EU Directive on Road Infrastructure Safety Management (EU RISM) 2008/96/EC as a strategic comparative analysis of the impact of a new road, or for substantial modifications to an existing road, on the safety performance of the road network (refer to TII Publications PE-STY-02003 'Road Safety Impact Assessment' (NRA HD 18 formerly referred)); the Authority would welcome this addressed in the Draft Plan prior to adoption.</p> <p>TII notes that Section 6.18 Safety Aspects of 'Development Control Standards for Windfarms in County Laois' outlined in Appendix 5 Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Plan advises applicants for windfarm developments to '<i>consult with the National Roads Authority, prior to making an application, in order to agree a setback distance from the road</i>' where national</p>	
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	<p>roads and motorways are concerned. TII recommends, in the interests of clarity, amendment of this provision to indicate that consultation should be undertaken with the planning authority in the first instance and in accordance with established practice, the planning authority can consult directly with TII if required.</p> <p><b>Service Areas</b></p> <p>The Authority acknowledges that Roadside Service Stations and On-line and Off-line Service Stations are addressed in Section 6.1.2.4 of the Draft Plan and associated Policy references Policy TRANS 22 and Policy TRANS 23.</p> <p>Having regard to the TII Service Area Policy (2014) and the location of existing off-line service areas at junctions on the M7 and M8 as noted in the Service Area Policy, it is not the intention of TII to promote any on-line service area proposal in County Laois.</p> <p>Section 6.1.2.4 of the Draft Plan correctly acknowledges that the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines state that a proliferation of such facilities at national road junctions should be avoided and in that regard, TII considers that the short term need for service areas on the M7/M8 in County Laois, as outlined in the TII Service Area Policy and having regard to established plan led proposals, is addressed; further additional service area proposals at national road junctions could result in the proliferation of such facilities.</p> <p>TII is concerned that Section 6.1.2.4 and Policy TRANS 22 of the Draft Plan do not support the provisions of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines that seek to avoid a proliferation of private off-line service area facilities at national road junctions. The consideration of proposals on a case by case basis, promoted by Policy TRANS 22 does not address the requirement for a co-ordinated approach by planning authorities when drafting development plans, particularly when considered in combination with Policy TRANS 23 which promotes Togher as a location for a future off-line service area.</p> <p>Accordingly, TII requests and recommends a</p>	
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	<p>review of Section 6.1.2.4 of the Draft Plan and associated policies to ensure consistency with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and to have regard to TII's Service Area Policy (2014).</p> <p><b>Signage</b></p> <p>TII acknowledges and welcomes reference to the TII Policy on the Provision of Tourist &amp; Leisure Signage on National Roads (March 2011) and the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines in Policy TRANS 10 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>TII notes that reference is made to the importance of events and festivals as a key driver of the local economy in Laois in Section 5.10.1 of the Draft Plan and the reference to Electric Picnic. TII considers that it is imperative that the Council, through event licensing or otherwise, co-ordinate an effective traffic management strategy for major events including Electric Picnic in the interests of road safety and safeguarding the strategic function of the national road network. TII remains available to liaise with the Council.</p> <p><b><u>Local Area Plans/Development Strategies</u></b></p> <p>In relation to existing settlement plans and local area plans included in the Draft Plan and outlined in detail in Volume II, the Authority provides the following observations;</p> <p>The Authority acknowledges the close alignment of development zoning/development objectives with speed limits along the national road network in the relevant local area plan/settlement plans included in Volume II. However, there are a limited number of instances where zoning proposals appear to adjoin the national road network outside the reduced 50 – 60kph urban speed limit area and no access strategy has been presented to address this potential conflict with official policy.</p> <p>Prior to the adoption of the Draft Plan, the Authority recommends that the following subject sites are reviewed and development objectives, access/zoning of the subject sites are addressed to conform with the provisions of official policy;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 'Residential Strategic Reserve 2018 –</li> </ul>	
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	<p>2024' lands to the north of Abbeyleix adjoining the N77, national secondary road, at a location where an 80kph speed limit applies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On the northern approach to Durrow, lands to either side of the national road outside the 60kph speed limit area are zoned for a mix of General Business and Enterprise and Employment.</li> <li>▪ To the south east of Durrow lands are designated with a 'Residential Strategic Reserve 2018 - 2024' adjoining the N77, national secondary road, at a location outside the urban 50 - 60kph speed limit.</li> <li>▪ The settlement map for Ballylynan indicates lands both to the north and south of the town designated with zoning objectives where lands adjoin the N78 outside the 50kph urban speed limit area.</li> </ul> <p>In relation to the above locations, TII recommends that zoning designations and access to the subject lands to comply with Policy TRANS 5 of the Draft Plan is resolved prior to adoption of the Development Plan.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 55</b> Councillor Jerry Lodge,</p>	<p>Asks that 50 kph speed limit for Ballyroan be extended as follows:</p> <p>by an extra 205 metres on the Portlaoise Road [Strategic Regional Route R 425] and by an extra 418 metres on the Spink Road [County Primary Road L-</p> <p>This is to facilitate the development of additional badly needed community facilities in the village.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b><i>The review of the Speed limits is not function of the review of the County Development Plan.</i></b></p> <p>RECOMMENDATION No change to plan</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b> <b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p><b>SECTION 6: INFRASTRUCTURE</b> <b>6.1.1 POLICY CONTEXT</b> <b>Smarter Travel - National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020</b> We submit that this should be repositioned in the proposed additional <b>Sec: WALKING AND CYCLING - PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</b> 5<sup>th</sup> para.</p> <p><b>objs</b> 1 We submit that this should be repositioned as above - 1<sup>st</sup> <b>obj.</b></p> <p><b>6.1.3 Pedestrians and Cyclists</b></p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>Smarter Travel - National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020 will continue to be mentioned in the policy context section.</p> <p>The comments related to the Barrow Blueway, Slieve Bloom walking and cycling Hub and South Laois Walking and Cycling Hub are welcomed, however it is important that this is kept within the section on walking and cycling and cross referencing can be made with this section and Section 7. 14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS - RIVER</p>

	<p>We submit that this text should be repositioned as above as paras 6 &amp; 7.</p> <p><b>6.1.3.1 Laois Walking and Cycling Strategy</b> As above RECREATION – WALKING &amp; CYCLING after text.</p> <p><b>Fig 16: Walking Trails</b> As above RECREATION – WALKING After text</p> <p><b>Fig 17: Cycle Routes</b> As above RECREATION – CYCLING After text</p> <p><b>pols:</b> 35 As above RECREATION – CYCLING as additional <b>pol 6</b>.</p> <p>36 As above PHYSICAL ACTIVITY and replaced by <b>pol 2</b></p> <p>37 As above PHYSICAL ACTIVITY and replaced by <b>obj 1</b>.</p> <p>38 As above RECREATION and replaced by <b>obj 2</b>.</p> <p><b>Barrow Blueway</b> <b>pol 41</b> We submit that this should be repositioned in 7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS – RIVER BARROW as an additional <b>obj</b>.</p> <p><b>Slieve Bloom Walking and Cycling Hub</b> We submit that this should be repositioned in proposed new <b>Sub sec: SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS</b>.</p> <p>2 We submit that this should be repositioned in proposed additional <b>Sub sec</b> in Chpt 5: SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS. See <b>2011 Plan 8.2</b>.</p> <p><b>South Laois Walking and Cycling Hub</b> We submit that this should be repositioned in WALKING AND CYCLING – RECREATION as an additional <b>Sub sec</b>.</p>	<p>BARROW, SECTION 5 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SECTION 4 RECREATION</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b> <b>No change to plan EXCEPT FOR CROSS REFERENCING</b></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p>We propose that you should include an additional <b>SEC: WALKING AND CYCLING</b></p> <p><b>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY text</b></p>	<p>Submission Noted. Walking and Cycling is dealt with in Section 6.1.3. These sections will be cross referenced in section 7 as there are common areas to both.</p> <p>We acknowledge the contextual information submitted</p>

	<p>1 <i>Cycling and walking(including safe walking and cycling routes) promote a healthier lifestyles in keeping with the Dept of Health's "Healthy Ireland" (2013) which recognises that there is an urgent need to enable individuals to incorporate more <b>physical activity</b> into their lives. These activities could improve the health and well being of both individuals and society, promote physical health, improve quality of life and tackle sedentary lifestyles. Based on <b>Midland RPG</b> 5.2.3 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences, <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence, <b>Kildare</b> 6.3.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Sth Dublin 6.3.0 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence, Kerry 7.2.3 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences, <b>Westmeath</b> 8.9 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, Fingal 4.1 CYCLING &amp; WALKING &amp; Leitrim 3.10.7 Text last sentence &amp; 3.10.8 Text last sentence.</i></p> <p>2 <i>It is essential to provide for the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. The <b>Government's "Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland"</b> identifies the increased provision of cycle lanes and safer facilities for pedestrians as a key priority. Cycleways and safe pedestrian routes should be encouraged as part of design teams for recreational development. Taken from Kerry 7.2.3 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences.</i></p> <p>3 <i>The <b>NCPF (DoT 2009)</b> aims to create a strong cycling culture which would provide health benefits, a more friendly environment for cycling and improved quality of life. One of its aims is to provide and promote a strong cycling culture by designating high quality rural cycle networks, including inter-urban routes, to encourage cycling for leisure and recreation for both visitors and local people. Council is influenced and informed by DoTT's NCPF. Based on <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 6<sup>th</sup> para, <b>Kildare</b> 6.2.5 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, <b>Carlow</b> 5.1 NCPF, <b>Westmeath</b> 8.10 1<sup>st</sup> para, DLR 2.2.2 9<sup>th</sup> pt &amp; Wexford 15.6 5<sup>th</sup> para.</i></p> <p>4 <i>Monaghan 6.2.3 sets out, in detail, the specific objs of NCPF including :</i></p> <p>3 <i>Provide designated rural cycleways especially for visitors and recreational users.</i></p> <p>5 <i>Ensure that all surfaces used by cyclists are maintained to a high standard and are well lit.</i></p> <p>6 <i>Ensure that all cycling networks are sign posted to an agreed standard</i></p> <p>12 <i>Improve driver education and driving standards so that there is a greater appreciation for the safety of cyclists.</i></p>	<p>with regard to other plans involved in the walking and cycling remit such as <i>Dept of Health's "Healthy Ireland" (2013), The Government's "Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland", The NCPF (DoT 2009) and the Irish Trails Strategy, Failte Irelands Strategy for the Development of Irish Cycling Tourism (2007)</i> these documents have been taken into account in framing the policies in the draft plan and have been referenced in both Section 1.2., Section 6.1.3 and Section 7.</p> <p>The policies suggested are deemed to be duplicate of what is already included within the plan with regard to walking and cycling in sections 4, 5, 6 and 7., Cross referencing of these sections will be done. It is proposed to include the following however new policies that have not been included previously</p> <p><b>TRANS XX</b></p> <p><i>Investigate the possibility of developing and utilising existing <b>abandoned road/ rail</b> infrastructure for the purposes of walking and cycling.</i></p> <p>The employment of staff as requested in the submission (walking officer and cycling officer )is not a matter for the County Development Plan.</p>
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	<p>16 <i>Improve enforcement of traffic laws to enhance cycling safety and respect for cyclists.</i>          See <b>DoTT's NCPF (2009)</b> page 9. Also <b>Westmeath 8.10 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; Kilkenny 11.1.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.</b>          4 <b>National Cycle Network Scoping Study (2010)</b> identifies a comprehensive network of cycle routes. Taken from Louth 6.5.11.3 1<sup>st</sup> para.          5 Include 6.1.1 <b>Smarter Travel – NCPF.</b>          6 &amp; 7 Include text from <b>6.1.3 Pedestrians and Cyclists</b>  <b>objs:</b>          1 <i>Encourage and facilitate safe walking walking and cycling routes as a viable alternative to the private car and implement, support, promote, encourage, adhere to and facilitate the sustainable principles, goals, targets, initiatives, strategies and actions of DoTT's Transport's "Smarter Travel, Cycle and Walking Strategy", develop a strategy to promote the development of the necessary infrastructure.</i> Based on <b>Kilkenny 11.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Offaly 4.6 STAP-08 1<sup>st</sup> part of last sentence, Kerry 7.2 RD-8, Leitrim 3.6.1 Pol 44, Sligo 8.1 SO-MOB 2 &amp; Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 3 Land Use Integration &amp; Transport L5-03.</b>          2 <i>Promote, encourage and facilitate the development of the public footpath network and cycling and walking routes as sustainable transport modes that are more user-friendly and suitable for people of different generations and levels of fitness, to facilitate individual <b>health and wellbeing</b> and promoting a more active lifestyle, by providing quality green space. Support awareness campaigns promoting the health benefits of walking and cycling.</i> Based on <b>Westmeath 7.13 O-REC13, Meath 9.7.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> pt, Kildare 6.5.2 ST2, Nth Tipp 7.5.8 Obj INF 29, Cavan 4.4 PIO61, Clare 11.3.5 Obj, Kerry 7.2.3 RD-29, Fingal 4.1 CYCLING AND WALKING TO 7 &amp; Limerick 8.2.5 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> line.</b>          3 <i>Promote and facilitate the <b>development of cycle routes</b> in accordance with the National Cycle Scoping Study 2010.</i> Taken from Louth 6.5.11 EDE 21.          4 <b>Support</b> and implement the key <b>goals, targets and actions of the NCPF.</b> Taken from Kerry 7.2 RD-8.  <b>RECREATION</b>  <b>WALKING</b>  <b>text</b>          1 <i>The <b>Irish Trails Strategy</b> brings significant economic benefits and Council recognises the importance of hill walking from a social and an</i></p>	
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	<p><i>economic point of view and it opens up the countryside. Based on Carlow 8.11.10 1<sup>st</sup> line, Leitrim 3.10.7 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; last sentences &amp; Sligo 8.4 P-CW-6/</i></p> <p><i>2 The Council will cooperate with relevant agencies, both public and private, adjoining local authorities and local landowners with a view to <b>increasing trails</b>, hiking/walking routes-particularly in the uplands. Steps to encourage routes may include secure parking and publication of maps. Taken from DLR 4.1.2.16 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> sentences.</i></p> <p><i>We submit that you should include a <b>Table</b> with maps of <b>Way-marked Ways</b> of medium/long-long distance walking routes, Greenways Sli na Slainte, heritage/historic walking trails, pilgrim paths, paths to mass rocks and holy wells, looped walks, hill walks, forest walks and other defined walking trails with accompanying maps and a data base should be set-up and up-dated as new trails emerge. To this you should add: Following the adoption of the Plan a temporary register of additional routes shall be maintained and should be included in the web site pending inclusion in the next Plan.</i></p> <p><i>Include <b>Fig 16 Walking Trails</b> from <b>6.1.3 Pedestrians and Cyclist</b>.</i></p> <p><i>We submit that you should include a <b>Table</b>. See <b>Kilkenny</b> App 3.</i></p> <p><b>pols:</b></p> <p><i>1 Co-operate with the <b>National Trails Office</b>(Management Standards), National Waymarked Ways Advisory Committee, Coillte, DoTT, Heritage Council, FI local tourism bodies and other relevant bodies, local councils and other national programmes, in order to support, promote and facilitate the sustainable development, protection, maintenance and enhancement of a regional and local network of walking, running, hiking, mountain bike trails and other recreational activities at appropriate location throughout the county, because of their recreational and tourism potential. These should be waymarked/signposted and listed where feasible and the routing of new trails and the rerouting of existing trails off public roads should be encouraged. Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.3.2 5<sup>th</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> line, Sth Dublin 9.4.0.3 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, DLR 4.1.2.16 Pol LHB17, Kerry 5.5 T-26, Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.3.8, Galway 4.7 Pol ED45 &amp; Fingal 8.4 RE 36.</i></p> <p><b>Note</b> It should be realised that access on these Ways, unless they are public rights of way, are at</p>	
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	<p>the discretion of landowners.</p> <p>2 <i>Support, improve and expand and upgrade <b>Slí na Sláinte</b> routes in partnership with Tourist interests and the relevant Government Depts. These should be waymarked/signposted where feasible.</i> To which you should add: <i>in view of the obesity and diabetes crisis.</i> A Table should be included. Based on DLR 4.1.2.16 Pol LHB17, Roscommon 9.25.3 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, <b>Westmeath</b> 7.13 O-REC13, Fingal 8.4 RE 36 &amp; Louth 6.7.1 1<sup>st</sup> para.</p> <p>3 <b>Research and map existing network of traditional paths</b> used for leisure purposes to determine their legal status. Taken from <b>Carlow</b> 8.11.10 Obj 3 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.</p> <p>4 <i>Support and promote the holding of a <b>Walking Festival</b> to attract visitors and celebrate the diverse landscape and heritage of the county.</i> Based on <b>Roscommon</b> 8.7.1 5<sup>th</sup> para last sentence &amp; <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 A COUNTRY WALKING STRATEGY 2<sup>nd</sup> para.</p> <p>5 <i>Employ a full time <b>Walks Officer</b> at an appropriate senior level.</i> Note Many counties employ one.</p> <p><b>CYCLING</b> <b>text</b></p> <p>1 <i>Council recognises the importance of cycling routes from a <b>social and an economic point of view</b> and that they facilitate, access to the countryside.</i> Taken from <b>Leitrim</b> 3.10.8 text 1<sup>st</sup> and last sentences.</p> <p>2 <i>FI's <b>Strategy for the Development of Irish Cycling Tourism (2007)</b> recommends the designation of a cycling network around the country and the improvement of existing routes with better sign posting, road surfaces and greater safety for the cyclist. The NCPF(DOT 2009) includes a policy to construct this National Cycle Network and to expand it to include rural recreational routes, paying special attention to the opportunities of using both the extensive disused rail network and canal / river tow-path networks as cycling / walking routes. The development and expansion of the network will be implemented by various Government bodies including local authorities. This strategy was developed to determine how best to renew the popularity of cycling, how to encourage visitors and how to ensure that cycle tourism can generate visitor spending in rural areas and describes measures to attract both domestic and overseas visitors including some longer more challenging routes.</i> Based on <b>Wexford</b> 15.6 6<sup>th</sup> para &amp; <b>Carlow</b> 5.1 FI Strategy. Also <b>2011 Plan</b> 1.1 last para 7<sup>th</sup> pt.</p>	
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3 *Cycling is a **growing in popularity** both as a sport and as a means of transport.* Taken from Kerry 5.5 5<sup>th</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.

4 *FI notes that cycle tourism represents a growing and valuable market for rural areas as it offers opportunities for the development of cycle hire and cycling holiday operations. Cyclists stay longer in an area, and since they cannot carry much provisions, they need to shop locally.* Taken from Wexford 15.6 7<sup>th</sup> para.

5 ***EuroVelo** is the European Cycle Route Network and the European Cyclist's Federation is coordinating the development of a network of high-quality cycle routes that connect the whole continent.* Taken from Kerry 6<sup>th</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.

6 *FI identifies the Dublin Galway cycle route which includes links to Carlow connecting Tullamore & Portlaoise.* Taken from **Midland RPG** 5.2.3 last para 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences.

Include **Fig 17: Cycling Routes** from **6.1.3 Pedestrians and Cyclist**.

We submit that you should include a **Table**. See Donegal 10.12. Also **Carlow** 8.11.11 & **Westmeath** 8.11.

To this you should add: *Following the adoption of the Plan a temporary register of additional routes shall be maintained and should be included in the web site pending inclusion in the next Plan.*

**pols:**

1 *Promote, facilitate and encourage the development and expansion of **safe** cycling facilities and cycle routes (including adjoining counties). Support the continued development of cycle routes by identifying routes and by laying particular emphasis on those that link existing cycle routes and tourist destinations. Support and implement FI's Strategy for the Development of Irish Cycle Tourism and liaise with the Sports Council, the NTA and other bodies in the development of cycling touring routes particularly in tourist areas and areas of high amenity, implement the relevant policies of the DoTT's NCPF(2009) and the National Cycleway Network Scoping Study(2010) so that there is an integrated and coherent network. Cycle routes should be designed using current thinking and best practice from experience in other locations, lower speed limits and priority over motorised transport to ensure road safety for pedestrians and cyclists.*

*Support the development of the National Cycle Network and enhance and maintain these routes with better sign posting, lighting and road surfaces, including signing/lining and the use of*

	<p>coloured surfaces, separation from vehicular traffic, the provision of cycling maps and the promotion of looped routes. Encourage the development of off-road cycling. Ensure that the upgrading of roads will not impact negatively on the safety and perceived safety of cyclists. Improve driver education and driving standards so that there is a greater appreciation for the safety of cyclists and improve enforcement of traffic laws. Routes should, where possible, follow off-road tracks and quiet country roads. Based on FI's <b>Strategy for Development of Cycling Tourism</b> Executive Summary(2007) 3<sup>rd</sup> pt page 6 &amp; 4.2.3 page 23, DoTT's NCPF(2009) OO Breadth of Interventions page 7 6<sup>th</sup> pt on right hand col &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> pts, Pol 3.4 on page 22 &amp; Pol 6.2 page 26, <b>Offaly</b> 4.6 STAP-08 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 4th lines &amp; 7.14 LAO-03, <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 P53 &amp; 59, <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 pol 8 4<sup>th</sup> &amp; 15<sup>th</sup> pts, <b>Kilkenny</b> 11.1.1.1, <b>Kildare</b> 14.12.1 CR 9, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 7.5.8 Obj INF 29, <b>Kildare</b> 6.5.2 ST 17, <b>Westmeath</b> 8.13 O-WC8 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, Cork 10.2 TM 2-2d), Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.39 &amp; 42 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, Cavan 4.1.2 Objs 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, Waterford 6.13 Obj ECD 5, Wexford 15.6 Obj RS26 &amp; 27, Donegal 4.1.3 T-P-41, Fingal 4.1 CYCLING &amp; WALKING last para &amp; Kerry 5.4 T-23 &amp; 5.5 2<sup>nd</sup> para. Also <b>2011 Plan</b> 1.1 last para 7<sup>th</sup> pt.</p> <p>2 Assign an officer at appropriate senior level as a "<b>Cycling Officer</b>". Taken from DoT's NCPF(2009) Pol 17.3.</p> <p>To which you should add before officer, full-time</p> <p>3 Investigate the possibility of developing linear cycle routes utilising existing <b>abandoned road infrastructure</b>. Taken from Louth 8.16 Pol TC 31.</p> <p>4 Implement the recommendations and proposals within the <b>NCN Scoping Study(2010)</b>. Taken from Galway 5.4 Obj TI 19.</p> <p>5 Promote and support the expansion of cycle facilities and liaise with FI, Sports Council, NTA and other bodies to <b>develop cycle touring routes</b> including those linking with adjoining counties particularly in areas of high amenity. Based on <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 Pol 8 16<sup>th</sup> pt, <b>Kildare</b> 14.12.1 CR 9, <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 P59 &amp; <b>Midland RPG</b> 5.11 TIO6 1<sup>st</sup> pt.</p> <p>6 Include pol 35 from <b>6.1.3 Pedestrians and Cyclists</b></p> <p><b>WALKING &amp; CYCLING</b></p> <p><b>text</b></p> <p>1 Recognise the importance of walking routes and cycleways. Development of maintained walking routes and cycleways bring the <b>economic benefits of tourism</b> to rural areas as cyclists,</p>	
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	<p>walkers and backpackers stay longer in an area, and since they cannot carry much provisions they need to shop locally. International trends suggests that walking and cycling tourism have the potential to grow considerably. Taken from Cork 8.7.1 1<sup>st</sup> line &amp; 8.7.3 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence. Also Kilkenny 7.9.2.2 5<sup>th</sup> line.</p> <p>2 Promotion of walking and cycling will be <b>focused on leisure and tourism</b> particularly in terms of lakes, /waterways and canals. Taken from <b>Midland RPG</b> 5.2.3 3<sup>rd</sup> para.</p> <p>3 Walking and cycling represent a way to discover and enjoy <b>the pleasures of rural areas</b>. Taken from Monaghan 7.5 2<sup>nd</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> line &amp; Fingal 8.4 CYCLING &amp; WALKING 1<sup>st</sup> line.</p> <p>4 The promotion of walking and cycling requires pedestrian and cycle facilities that form a coherent network placing a strong emphasis <b>safety</b> and are free from obstruction and are given priority over vehicular traffic. Taken from <b>Offaly</b> 4.5.2 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>5 Greenways are a <b>collective network of open spaces</b>, existing and proposed greenways, cycle routes and waterways. They can provide corridors for long distance pedestrian and cycle routes and help to link open spaces into a cohesive green infrastructure. Once they are formally identified, mapped and developed they can become an extremely valuable resource which could extend beyond county boundaries. They are shared routes for non-motorised users including walkers, cyclists and horse riding for pleasure, recreation and tourism. Taken from DLR 4.2.2.2 Greenways Network &amp; 4.2.2.7 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>6 <b>Off-road walkways and cycleways</b> can be established through informal agreements with landowners, through formal agreements, or acquisition. Taken from Kerry 5.4 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence. Also <b>Carlow</b> 8.12 4<sup>th</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; Pol 6 11<sup>th</sup> pt.</p> <p>7 <b>Former railway lines</b> can provide excellent greenways. have the potential for use as corridors for amenity access, free from motorised traffic. Based on Kerry 5.5 4<sup>th</sup> para &amp; <b>FI Strategy for Development of Cycle Tourism Executive Summary</b> 9<sup>th</sup> last line on page 26, <b>Laois Walking and Cycling Strategy</b> Include 6.1.3.1 <b>pols</b></p> <p>1 Support, promote and actively encourage the development of interlinked cycleways and walkways greenways and walking and cycling routes(mention routes), including long distance</p>	
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walkways, in conjunction with the Irish Sports Council, IW, FI, NTA and other stakeholders to provide **linkages with trails**, particularly those with a historical association, **in adjoining counties** in partnership with their councils, the state, private and voluntary sectors. Based on **Westmeath** 3.16 O-ST3, **Kilkenny** 7.3.2 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence, **Longford** 5.1.3 PED 3, **Carlow** 8.11.10 Pol 5 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, **Kildare** 14.12.1 CR4 & 9, **2011 Plan** 10.7 P59, Louth 6.5.11 EDE 23 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, DLR 4.2.2.7.8, Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.39, Wicklow 9.3.6 TTP3 & Monaghan 7.5 CWO 4.

2 *Walking and Cycling will be promoted, facilitated and encouraged by the installation of infrastructure (for example new/wider pavements, retrofitted if necessary, and cycle parking facilities maintaining and enhancing existing facilities securing the development of a network of safe cycle routes and footpaths on existing roads, proposed roads and on new road improvement schemes and on routes reserved exclusively for pedestrians and cyclists. Provide, improve and extend the network of cycle lanes and pedestrian routes on existing roads, on all new regional, local distributor and local collector roads and on roads being up-graded, to create a **safer**, more convenient, pleasant, attractive and more user-friendly environment. Road safety will be improved by lower speed limits and priority over motorized transport. Ensure that the needs of walkers and cyclists are given full consideration in proposals to upgrade public roads by using experience in other locations, and by continually upgrading the condition of existing footpaths in all areas and provide controlled and uncontrolled crossings, where warranted, at all major crossings. Advise other road users on the need for safe behaviour near pedestrians and cyclists. Where there is sufficient road widths consider providing footways on rural roads to provide improved pedestrian access to/from villages/towns. Based on **Carlow** 5.3.2 Pol 8 13<sup>th</sup> pt, **Kildare** 6.5.2 ST 2 & 13, **Westmeath** 2.3.1 Principle Aims 3<sup>rd</sup> pt & 8.13 P-WC1, **2011 Plan** 10.5 P08 & 68, **Longford** 5.1.1.1 ROADS 2, **Meath** 6.9 TRAN POL 22, Kerry 5.4 T-20, DLR 12.1.12 Walking 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Wexford 8.3 Obj TO9 last pt, FINGAL 4.1 WALKING & CYCLING TO 7 & 9 & Wicklow 11.3 CW2 & 3. Also **2011 Plan** 10.5 P54.*

3 **Signpost and waymark** *Walking and Cycle Routes with appropriately designed quality signage so as to facilitate visitors. Based on **Kildare** 14.12.2 CR 10, **Nth Tipp** 6.11.3 3<sup>rd</sup> line, **2011 Plan***

	<p>10.7 P70, <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 Pol 8 12<sup>th</sup> pt 2<sup>nd</sup> line, Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.37 &amp; Leitrim 3.6.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>4 <i>Create, promote, improve, develop, support, enhance, actively encourage and facilitate the sustainable provision of walking, rambling and cycling at appropriate locations as appropriate for recreational and tourism activities by identifying more dedicated walking and cycling routes to enable the creation of a high quality, integrated, coherent and comprehensive dedicated off road <b>network of countryside cycling/walking routes and tourist trails</b>, to key destinations, amenities and leisure activities, including looped walks, local walks, community walks and medium/long distance walks) and the public/rural footpath network, in rural areas (including suitable linear lands along cutaway bogs, established rights of way, strategic green corridors(including waterway corridors) and other off-road routes to exploit their vast recreational and tourist potential(including international, activity and adventure tourists). Map suitable recreational routes and promote and facilitate the development of such routes having cognisance of national policy. Enhance and extend existing routes, by utilising links from residential areas through parks and open spaces to link with existing waymarked trails and facilitate a green infrastructure network and linking with Sli na Slainte and existing or new public rights of way, to provide access to mountains, lakeshores and rivers particularly where these have a historical association. Bring mountain amenities closer to residential communities by promoting the establishment of a network of formal footpaths, off road paths and cycleways that facilitate casual walkers and cyclists. The development of various cycling/walking routes have helped to open up diverse landscapes and promote tourism. Support proposals that improve pedestrian routes and that improve and develop walking and cycle networks. Investigate the provision of dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes along routes of high amenity. Based on <b>DPG</b> 3.5 Box 3 B Infrastructure 3<sup>rd</sup> pt, <b>Midland RPG</b> 5.10 TIP4, <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 P71, <b>Meath</b> 4.6.8 2<sup>nd</sup> para, ED POL 40 &amp; 6.9 TRAN POL15, <b>Westmeath</b> 3.14 P-GT7, <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.9.2.2 last sentence &amp; 11.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> line,, <b>Longford</b> 4.5 Tourism Product 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; 5.1.3 PED 3 &amp; 5, <b>Offaly</b> 2.12 TP-05, 4.5.1 4<sup>th</sup> para 7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> pts, 4.6 STAP-06, 7.14 LAO-03 &amp; 7.16 ROWP 0-1, <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.1 Pol 7 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> pts, 5.3.2 Pol 8 1<sup>st</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> line,</i></p>	
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	<p>8.11.10 Obj 3 1<sup>st</sup> pt &amp; 8.12 Pol 6 8<sup>th</sup> pt, <b>Kildare</b> 6.5.2 ST 8, <b>Sth Tipp</b> 6.6 SEAHO 5, <b>2011 Plan</b> 6.2 P16 &amp; 10.7 P62, Sth Dublin 4.5.0 Pol 6.1, 6.3.0 Pol 3.1 &amp; 9.4.0. Pol 16.5, Leitrim 3.6.2 Obj 29a, Roscommon 8.7.1 pol 8.36, Cork 10.2 TM 2-1b) &amp; 8.7 TO 7-4, Sligo 4.4.2 P-TOU-7 &amp; 8.4 o-CW-1, Monaghan 7.5 CWO 4, Kerry 5.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences, Waterford 6.13 Obj ECD 5, Fingal 4.1 TO 4 5<sup>th</sup> line &amp; 8.4 RE 31 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences &amp; 32 &amp; Donegal 4.1.3 Pol T-P-40. Also <b>Meath</b> 4.6.8 ED OBJ9.</p> <p>5 <i>Seek opportunities and explore the potential for the development of suitable walking routes, cycle tracks and bridle paths along <b>historic access routes</b> including inter-county trails such as Sli Dala and protect and signpost them.</i> Based on Leitrim 3.6.3 Obj 29, <b>Longford</b> 4.5 Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park(sic) last para &amp; <b>Offaly</b> 7.20 AAHO-3.</p> <p>6 <i>For the benefit of local people and visitors, support and encourage <b>cycling and walking groups</b> to work in co-operation with local community groups Regional Tourism Authority, FI, NWMWC, Coillte the Heritage Council and adjoining councils in the development, expansion, maintenance and enhancement of routes(including long distance walking and cycle tourist routes and heritage trails).</i> Based on <b>Co Her Plan</b> 60 1<sup>st</sup> sentence last clause, <b>Offaly</b> 7.16 ROWP-02, <b>Carlow</b> 8.12 Pol 6 9<sup>th</sup> pt, <b>Kildare</b> 6.5.2 ST8 &amp; 14.12.1 CR 6, Kerry 5.4 T-21 &amp; 9.7 Obj SG 9-27 &amp; Leitrim 3.6.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>7 <i>Actively encourage, promote and facilitate the development of the disused railway including related signage and waymarking from Mountmellick, through Portlaoise to Abbeylaois and on to Kilkenny for heritage and outdoor activities including medium and long-distance <b>walking and cycling routes</b> and bridle paths to improve access to rural tourist attractions, in cooperation with CIE, FI and the National Waymarked Ways Committee linking them where appropriate, and without compromising their possible re-opening. Protect, enhance, conserve, safeguard and preserve potential greenway routes from inappropriate development by prohibiting development along or near these rail lines which could compromise their development as walking/cycle routes in the future. Protect, enhance, conserve and where appropriate restore their conservation value notwithstanding that they may be re-opened as rail lines. Where these corridors have been compromised by development, adjacent land which could provide opportunities to</i></p>	
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	<p><i>bypass such an impediment and reconnect these routes for walking/cycling shall be protected for this purpose. Ensure that landscape impacts are minimise by designs and materials. While it should be possible to provide most routes along the existing track alignment, there may be a need for diversions and deviations following detailed survey and design work and consultation with landowners. The aim is to include these routes in a map in the Plan. Meanwhile adequate protection needs to be given to abandoned rail lines so as to avoid inappropriate development that could compromise their viability. Based on <b>Offaly</b> 7.17 ROWO-02, <b>Westmeath</b> 8.13 O-WC4, <b>Sth Tipp</b> Pol INF3 last sentence, <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 Pol 8 2<sup>nd</sup> pt &amp; 8.12 Obj 4 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.3.2 Obj 7E, Kerry 5.5 T-27 &amp; 7.2.3 RD-30, Louth 6.5.11 EDE 20, Cork 8.7.6, Leitrim 3.6.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> sentence, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Natural Heritage NH-oif ), Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.39 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Wexford 15.6 Obj 25, Donegal 4.1.3 Pol T-P-30, Clare 11.10a) &amp; Wicklow 16.5 Obj HC3.</i></p> <p><i>You should add: <b>Where feasible, provide separate trails for walkers and cyclists in the interests of safety and convenience with appropriate surfaces for each type of user.</b></i></p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>1 Progress so far: Completed: Rathkeale Co Limerick to the Kerry border Westport Co Mayo to Achill Sound Waterford City to Dungarvan</p> <p>In progress: Galway City to Clifden Donegal 01.12 provides rough walkways along the old Loughmore to Barnesmore, Cloghan to Glenties and Barnesbeg Gap to Glenties Lines.</p> <p>2 As well as being a magnificent recreational resource, the opening up of these old rail lines can provide excellent amenities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders for local people and visitors.</p> <p>3 The separation of walkways and cycleways is the practice in other countries particularly in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.</p> <p>8 <b>Develop an overall Walking and Cycling Policy/Strategy within two years of the adoption of the Plan, working in partnership with state, tourism, private and voluntary sectors, walking clubs and community groups. The Strategy should list National Trails Network, Sli na Slainte, Pilgrim Paths, mountain trails and other defined walking trails and walking routes, disused roads, canals,</b></p>	
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	<p>river banks, railways, and undertake to carry out a feasibility study to investigate the recreational use of these routes and the potential of establishing walking and cycling routes, maps showing walking and cycling routes. Based on <b>Kildare</b> 14.12.1 CR 3, <b>Offaly</b> 4.7 STAO-1, <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.3.2 2<sup>nd</sup> Obj 7C &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> para, <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 COUNTY WALKING STRATEGY &amp; P 64, DLR 2.2.7.1 1st para, Monaghan 7.5 7<sup>th</sup> para &amp; Fingal 4.1 TO 13.</p> <p><b>Note</b> Galway, Waterford &amp; Louth have adopted Walking/Cycling Strategies</p> <p>9 <i>Implement the recommendations and proposals in the Walking &amp; Cycling Strategy.</i> Taken from Galway 5.4 Obj TI 19.</p> <p>10 <i>Provide <b>car parking</b> and/or lay-by for walkers and cyclists, (from your local knowledge name important locations) and other appropriate points to access amenities and scenic areas. To which you should add: from 9am until dark.</i> Based on <b>Nth Tipp</b> 7.5.7 Obj INF 28 7<sup>th</sup> line, <b>Kildare</b> 14.12.1 CR 14, Sligo 4.4.2 P-TOU-5 &amp; <b>Longford</b> 6.4 AM 3.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>1 The absence of car parks can cause unnecessary friction between landowners and recreational users.</p> <p>2 The primary responsibility for the provision of car parking lies with councils</p> <p>11 <i>Establish new Walkways and cycle routes on a <b>legal and permanent basis</b>.</i> Taken from <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 Pol 8 12 pt 1<sup>st</sup> line, &amp; <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 P70.</p> <p>12 <i>Encourage and promote the provision bicycle renting, <b>guided walks and walking/cycling tours</b> in partnership with state, private and voluntary sectors.</i> Based on Limerick 6.10.3 Obj COM O27b) &amp; Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.36 8<sup>th</sup> line.</p> <p>13 <i>Investigate <b>funding opportunities</b>, including DoTTS, NTA and associated transport agencies and LEADER for the development and extension of walking/cycling trails, Greenways including off-road trails, inter-county waymarked walking and cycle routes.</i> Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.3.2 5<sup>th</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> line, <b>Westmeath</b> 3.14 O-GT6 &amp; Sth Dublin 4.5.0 Action,</p> <p>14 <i>Support and promote programmes and initiatives and implement on a progressive basis the development of <b>bridle paths</b> that are attractive and traffic free and actively encourage the use bridle paths for the development of medium and long distance walking and cycling routes to improve access to rural tourist attraction.</i> Based on <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 Pol 8 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 P 71, Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.39 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Kerry 9.7 SG 9-26 &amp; Galway 10.11 Pol RA</p>	
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	<p>5. 15 <i>Encourage, facilitate and support the <b>maintenance of the public footpath network and walking and cycling routes.</b> Based on <b>Co Her Plan</b> 60 1<sup>st</sup> sentence 1<sup>st</sup> clause, <b>Carlow</b> 8.11.10 Obj 3 1<sup>st</sup> pt, Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.37, Monaghan 7.5 CWO 4, <b>Meath</b> 4.6.8 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 3 Pedestrians &amp; Cyclists 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; Cavan 9.4.1 Objs 2<sup>nd</sup> p.</i></p> <p>16 <i>Protect and promote <b>Greenways and provide linear parks</b> to facilitate the spread of rural landscape into urban areas and work with adjoining local authorities and other stakeholders to achieve and improve external linkages and corridors.</i> Based on DLR 4.2.2.7 Pol OSR8, Sligo 8.4 P-CW-5, Donegal 9.3 Pols CCG-P-18 &amp; Fingal 8.4 RE 43.</p> <p>17 <i>Maintain a <b>register of approved national trails</b> and other walking and cycling routes and promote their greater use.</i> Taken from Roscommon 8.7.1 Obj 8.7</p> <p><b>Note</b> This list is no substitute for the listing of public rights of way.</p> <p>18 <i>Preserve, support and protect the integrity and scenic quality of existing or potential walking routes(including local walks, long-distance walks and waymarked Ways) and cycleways and their settings by <b>prohibiting the intrusion of development</b> along these routes particularly those in scenic and high amenity areas and along inland waterways. Take into account the impact of proposed development when considering applications for permission for developments in their vicinity in order to protect the integrity of these important recreational and tourism resources.</i> Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.3.5 DMS, <b>2011 Plan</b> 10.7 P56 &amp; 57 <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 Pol 8 7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> pts, <b>Kildare</b> 14.12.2 RW 2, Louth 6.5.11 EDE 22, DLR 4.1.2.14 LHB15, Roscommon 8.7.1 Pol 8.41, Donegal 4.1.3 T-P-36, Wexford 8.2.1 Pol WR1, Cork 10 2 TM 2-1b), Sligo 8.4 P-CW-6 &amp; Monaghan 7.5 CWO 5,</p> <p>19 <i>Protect listed walks from development that create or have the potential to <b>create disamenities.</b></i> Taken from Cavan 9.4.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para. <b>South Laois Walking and Cycling Hub</b> Include from <b>6.1.3 Pedestrians and Cyclists.</b></p>	
<p>SUBMISSION 63 Marc Van Den Bergh</p>	<p>It is encouraging to see that Laois CDP has a Walking and Cycling Strategy (chapter 6.1.3.1), and while the objectives are great, they are also aspirational in nature. OBJ3, Make Laois Towns</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p>It is an objective in each of towns and vilklages to improve and extend the footpaths where feasible. For example</p>

	<p>more pedestrian and cycle-friendly, is great, but misses substance. I propose to add a paragraph for each town in Laois with specific improvements that can be implemented during the lifetime of this CDP. E.g for Stradbally, the majority of walking and cycling by children will be between the main amenities, i.e. National School, Library, GAA grounds, Playground. There should be footpaths/cycle lanes off the main roads between these amenities so parents and children can safely walk or cycle. Similar key amenities should be identified for other towns.</p> <p>Additionally, there should be a walking path / cycle lane separate to the main road from Stradbally to Oughaval woods to encourage people to use these beautiful facilities. Currently, there are always many cars in the car park, as driving is the only option, but many people would prefer to walk or cycle up. Also this provides tourists with the possibility to first walk in the forest and afterwards stroll into Stradbally for food or something to drink.</p> <p>For other towns in Laois, at a minimum it should be possible for children to cycle and walk safely from the main housing estates to the primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>Objectives TRANS50, 51, 52 and 55 won't be achievable without this.</p> <p>Another excellent objective (OBJ4) is to promote Laois as a walking and cycling destination. The landscape in Laois is excellent for these activities, and absolutely beautiful. However, even as a life-long cyclist, I wouldn't recommend anyone to cycle in Laois, and definitely not encourage families or tourists to participate in a cycle trip, as it is simply too dangerous. Figure 17 on page 94 shows cycle routes, but I dare any council councilor to cycle these routes. These are just lines on a map; there are no cycling facilities that I'm aware of. Proper cycle lanes should be provided, preferably separate from cars. Proper sign posts and rest facilities should be provided along the routes. This is really an untapped opportunity for county Laois that should be explored further.</p> <p>Laois has some excellent walking trails for people with any level of fitness. Specifically around Stradbally, I suggest to create an off-the-road, looped, walking trail around the Cosby Estate that can serve as a day trip for visitors, many of</p>	<p>ST 16 Provide dedicated cycling corridor along the main street within the town centre and improve footpaths incrementally and facilitate the provision of cycle parking at buildings and community use especially schools.</p> <p>Providing a walking footpath from Stradbally to Oughval woods along the N80 is a matter for the TII and Road Design Section of LCC.</p> <p>One example of good cycleway infrastructure is the connection between Durrow and Abbeyleix which is used by a vast number of people both walking and cycling.</p> <p>It is not always possible given the road geometry and specific circumstances and a number of policies are included within the plan to investigate the feasibility of greenways (off road) which would support the connectivity of the towns within the county.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>
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	<p>whom will have something to eat or drink in Stradbally or surrounding villages afterwards. This footpath also serves as a safe entrance from the car parks to Electric Picnic festival. Linking key tourist sites would be ideal for longer walks or cycle trips, e.g. a loop between. Rock of Dunamase, Cosby Estate, Timahoe Round Tower.</p>	
<b>WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER SERVICES</b>		
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 21</b> Irish Water,</p>	<p>Irish Water welcomes the opportunity to review the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. As outlined in our correspondence at Pre-Draft Consultation stage Irish Water's objective is to provide both drinking water and wastewater infrastructure capacity to meet the domestic requirements of the Settlement and Core Strategy of development plans prepared in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines. Irish Water is confident that there is sufficient capacity in water services to meet the population targets set out in the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>In relation to Water Supply please be advised of the following:</p> <p>Irish Water is progressing the scope to identify required upgrade works at the Kilminchy Water Treatment Plant (WTP) which serves Portlaoise. These works, when complete, will ensure the provision of a safe and secure water supply at sufficient capacity to meet the projected demand for the area.</p> <p>An ongoing upgrade is being undertaken at La Bergerie Water Treatment Plant (serving Portarlinton) and will be complete by mid 2017.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the investigation to identify a new Fermoyle Source will be concluded by 2017.</p> <p>In relation to Wastewater please be advised of the following:</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Portlaoise Drainage Area Plan [OAP] will be complete by mid 2017. Irish Water will carry out a load assessment (anticipated to be complete by Q3 2017) and subsequent load management will ensure sufficient capacity at the plant.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Planning Authority welcomes the input from Irish Water in relation to the draft Plan.</p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having an adequate and fully resourced water and wastewater infrastructure in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>Water and wastewater infrastructure is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 6.2 <i>Water and Wastewater Services</i> which states inter alia:</p> <p>Policies such as <i>Si, WS2, WS3, WS4, WS5, WS6, WS7 relate.</i></p> <p>There are also numerous objectives in Section 6.2 for provision of water and wastewater infrastructure in Portlaoise, Portarlinton, Mountmellick, Castletown, Durrow, Ballinakill and county-wide.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Add an additional policy as follows:</p> <p><b>WSxx</b></p> <p><b><i>Protect both ground and surface water resources and to work with Irish Water to develop and Implement Water Safety Plans to protect sources of public water supply and their contributing catchment.</i></b></p> <p>Replace Policy WS1 as follows:</p> <p><b>WS1</b> <del>Facilitate the delivery of Irish Water's Water Services Investment Programme, and all subsequent Water Services Investment</del></p>

	<p>Storm Water Management works in the vicinity of Mountmellick Road Portlaoise are complete.</p> <p>Works are ongoing at Portarlinton Wastewater Treatment Plant to improve environmental standards and are due to be complete by Q3 2017.</p> <p>Irish Water plans to undertake upgrade works at Mountmellick Water Treatment Plant which are due for completion by Q1 2018.</p> <p>Irish Water proposes upgrading Castletown Wastewater Treatment Plant to provide capacity in two phases with phase 1 being complete by Q2 2017 and phase 2 by Q3/Q4 2017.</p> <p>Irish Water has an Inlet Works Programme and the Borris-in-Ossory WwTP will be considered for inclusion in the programme. Inlet works are complete at Ballyroad WwTP.</p> <p>Irish Water will assess the roll out of SCADA across wastewater infrastructure as required.</p> <p>We note that the objectives relating to specific treatment plants are very detailed in the Draft County Development Plan and we suggest amending the detailed objectives with a single objective as follows:</p> <p>'It is the objective of the Council to work with Irish Water to facilitate the timely delivery of ongoing and future upgrades of water supply and wastewater services to meet the future needs of the County and the Region.</p> <p>Irish Water also suggests that a number of objectives relating to water supply in the Draft County Development Plan be amended:</p> <p>Amend Policy WS1 as follows</p> <p>“Facilitate the delivery of Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016 and Investment Plan for 2017-2021, and all subsequent Irish Water Investment Plans.”</p> <p>and</p> <p>“Ensure that all lands zoned for development are serviced by adequate water services.”</p>	<p><del>Programmes, to ensure that all lands zoned for development are serviced by an adequate wastewater collection and treatment system.</del></p> <p><i>WITH</i></p> <p><b><i>Facilitate the delivery of Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016 and Investment Plan for 2017-2021, and all subsequent Irish Water Investment Plans and ensure that all lands zoned for development are serviced by adequate water services.”</i></b></p> <p>Replace wording of Policy WS5 as follows</p> <p><del>to ensure that the overall allocation of 15 million litres of potable water per day (15MLD) is provided in relation to IWS East/Midlands Water Supply Project to ensure a resilient water supply for Laois thus ensuring that Portlaoise, the County Town is included in the “Benefiting Corridor”</del></p> <p><b><i>WS5 “To promote and support the implementation of Irish Water's Eastern and Midlands Region Water Supply Project.”</i></b></p> <p>Add an additional objective as follows and re-number others accordingly:</p> <p><b><i>OBJ XX</i></b></p> <p><b><i>It is the objective of the Council to work with Irish Water to facilitate the timely delivery of ongoing and future upgrades of water supply and wastewater services to meet the future needs of the County and the Region.</i></b></p>
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	<p>Amend Policy WS2 as follows:</p> <p>“To refuse residential development that requires the provision of private waste water facilities, other than single house systems.</p> <p>Only permit the provision of private wastewater treatment facilities to serve a single dwelling house where it demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed wastewater treatment system is in accordance with the Code of Practice; Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (EPA, 2009) and subject to complying with the provisions and objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive, relevant River Basin Management Plan and the Habitats Directive.”</p> <p>Amend Policy WS5 as follows:</p> <p>“To promote and support the implementation of Irish Water's Eastern and Midlands Region Water Supply Project.”</p> <p>Include the following Policy:</p> <p>“Protect both ground and surface water resources and to work with Irish Water to develop and Implement Water Safety Plans to protect sources of public water supply and their contributing catchment.”</p>	
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**SURFACE WATER , DRAINAGE AND FLOODING**

<p><b>SUBMISSION No</b>  <b>Brian Stanley</b>  <b>T.D.</b>  <i>Cllr. Aidan Mullins, Cllr. Caroline Dwane Stanley</i></p>	<p><b>Submission on Land Zoning</b></p> <p>Areas where there is a Flood Risk.</p> <p>The zoning in the New County Development (CDP) reflects the report of the new CFRAM study currently underway to access areas that are at risk of flooding in the County.</p> <p>Those areas of Laois that were incorrectly deemed to be at risk of flooding under the initial and flawed CFRAM report need to be removed from the list of those designated at risk of flooding. This has caused problems for householders trying to obtain insurance cover.</p> <p>However, residential and commercial development must not take place on those areas that are deemed to be at risk of flooding in the</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>Objective FD 01 of the Draft Plan states that:</p> <p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p> <p><i>Undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>It is the understanding of Laois County Council that the technical aspect of CFRAM flood mapping has been concluded by the OPW. However an order has not yet been made to bring it into legal effect ADVISING Local Authorities to implement it.</p>
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	<p>new CFRAM process.</p>	<p>Also, it is also important to note that the CFRAM mapping does [will] not include all of the watercourses in County Laois in which case the Council will continue to be guided by the original Strategic Flood Risk Analysis in the exercise of its development management functions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as within Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan.</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO.16 Dermot Dobbyn,</p>	<p>This submission relates to a c. 0.5 hectares [1.2 acres] site located at Meelick in the southern outskirts of Portlaoise. It is c. 3 kms from the town centre and due northeast of the Maldron Hotel.</p> <p>The lands in question are within the Portlaoise town development boundary and are zoned "Residential 1. Established" in the Portlaoise Local Area 2012-2018.</p> <p>The lands are also in Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan. Residential development and most other types of development are not allowed in Flood Zone A.</p> <p>Applicant requests that the flood risk status of the lands be amended in light of the latest information to emerge from the South East draft <i>Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM]</i> study prepared by the Office of Public Works. This indicates that the said lands are now clear of flood risk.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Objective FD 01 of the Draft Plan states that:</p> <p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p> <p><i>Undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>It is the understanding of Laois County Council that the technical aspect of CFRAM flood mapping has been concluded by the OPW. However an order has not yet been made to bring it into legal effect ADVISING Local Authorities to implement it.</p> <p>Also, it is also important to note that the CFRAM mapping does [will] not include all of the watercourses in County Laois in which case the Council will continue to be guided by the original Strategic Flood Risk Analysis in the exercise of its development management functions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as within Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan.</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO.33 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p>	<p>We note the inclusion of the various Settlement Maps that accompany the Plan, which highlight the areas at significant risk of flooding within each settlement (where relevant). This should prove useful in helping to inform proper planning and sustainable development in these settlements.</p>	<p><b>Submission Noted</b></p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Objective FD 01 of the Draft Plan states that:</p> <p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p>

	<p>The Plan should ensure that zoning and development proposals remain consistent with the requirements of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DEHLG, 2009) and take into account the Shannon CFRAMS Flood Risk Management Plans and associated flood risk maps. Where existing undeveloped zoned lands are identified as being at significant flood risk (Flood Zone A or B), the Plan should consider the possibility of re-zoning or de-zoning these vulnerable lands to a less vulnerable land use, where relevant and appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>The Plan has been subject to an appropriate level of SFRA as per the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and zonings are compliant with these Guidelines.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO. 45</p> <p>W.P. &amp; R.O. Holdings c/o John Spain Associates,</p>	<p>This submission relates to a c. 40.5 hectares [100 acres] site located at Meelick in the southern outskirts of Portlaoise. It is c. 3 kms from the town centre and straddles both sides of the M7 Motorway. The vast bulk of the site is on the north side of the Motorway and due east of the Maldron Hotel.</p> <p>The lands are immediately outside the town development boundary as indicated in both the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 and are unzoned.</p> <p>The majority of the lands are in Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan. Residential development and most other types of development are not allowed in Flood Zone A.</p> <p>Applicant requests that the flood risk status of the lands be amended in light of the latest information to emerge from the draft South East CFRAM study prepared by the Office of Public Works. This indicates that the said lands are now clear of flood risk.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>Objective FD 01 of the Draft Plan states that:</p> <p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p> <p><i>Undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>It is the understanding of Laois County Council that the technical aspect of CFRAM flood mapping has been concluded by the OPW. However an order has not yet been made to bring it into legal effect ADVISING Local Authorities to implement it.</p> <p>Also, it is also important to note that the CFRAM mapping does [will] not include all of the watercourses in County Laois in which case the Council will continue to be guided by the original Strategic Flood Risk Analysis in the exercise of its development management functions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as within Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan.</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO. 65.</p> <p>Audrey Powell &amp; Gus Fahy,</p>	<p>This submission relates to a site located in a rural area at Oldmill c. 3 kms south-east of Stradbally on the timahoe side.</p> <p>We are making a submission regarding our</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>Objective FD 01 of the Draft Plan states that:</p>

<p>property at Oldmill, Stradbally. When we built our house some 15 years ago it was not classified as being on a flood plain but somewhere in the intervening years it has become listed as such.</p> <p>This came as a huge shock to us, we only discovered it to be so in the past week when having acquired Sale Agreed on our property we were informed that the sale couldn't go through due to the prospective buyers being unable to secure a mortgage because the property is listed as on a Zone A flood plain.</p> <p>The Timogue River/stream or in some cases referred to as the crooked River borders our property. We say stream because that is exactly what it is, a glorified stream.</p> <p>We have owned this site for almost 17 years and have never known it to flood or cause us concern. Before we purchased it we made enquiries from neighbours whose property is also bordered by this water course. They have been living in the area for over 30 years at this time and have never known it to flood. We have spoken to people whose families have lived along the course of the river/stream for generations and their response is similar.</p> <p>The Barrow Drainage Board keep the river cleaned from just above our site into Stradbally therefore keeping the flow and preventing any build up. We maintain our river banks (which are well above the water level) and remove any debris that falls into the river i.e. branches of tree's etc.</p> <p>We don't understand the criteria used to determine a flood zone; looking at the map we have, it shows our neighbours property with 3 different zones i.e. their garden is in zone A, part of their house is in Zone B and the remainder of the house is clear?</p> <p>We respectfully request that our house and the surrounding area be re-assessed because as of the moment we and the neighbouring families have become victims of the ruling, trapped in the situation and unable to move on with our lives.</p> <p>We ask that the original zoning of our property i.e. that of a flood free zone be restored as there is no substantive evidence to suggest otherwise.</p>	<p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p> <p><i>Undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>It is the understanding of Laois County Council that the technical aspect of CFRAM flood mapping has been concluded by the OPW. However an order has not yet been made to bring it into legal effect ADVISING Local Authorities to implement it.</p> <p>Also, it is also important to note that the CFRAM mapping does [will] not include all of the watercourses in County Laois in which case the Council will continue to be guided by the original Strategic Flood Risk Analysis in the exercise of its development management functions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as within Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan.</p>
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	<p>They have submitted statements from a number of neighbours to the effect that the site is flood-free. Moreover their agent [Liam Ryan] has provided a section and photographs of the river indicating its invert level, historical flood level and adjoining bank levels. These are also positive from the point of view of potential flood risk.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 66.</b></p> <p>Geraldine &amp; John Delaney,</p>	<p>This submission relates to a site located in a rural area at Timogue c. 3 kms south-east of Stradbally on the timahoe side.</p> <p>We are making a submission regarding our property at Whitefield, Timogue, and Stradbally. Our house was built in 1992 and at that stage our site/part of our land was not classified as being on a flood plain but somewhere in the intervening years it has become listed as such.</p> <p>The Timogue River or in some cases referred to as the Crooked River, borders our site and travels through part of our farm land.</p> <p>We purchased this farm in 1977 and have lived at the same address for almost 40 years. One of the first jobs done on the farm was to erect a new flat mass concrete bridge which replaced a small arched bridge and this helped increase subsequently reclaimed and drained as it was very overgrown as the property was vacant for a number of years.</p> <p>We build our present house in 1992 and installed a standard septic tank as per our planning permission. We also raised our house an extra row of blocks at the time of building. We have never had an issue with either the house or the septic tank. As we own over 100 acres we would not have considered this site if there was any threat of the river ever flooding or causing us any concern. We would never have envisaged the site being re-zoned as a flood plain. The Planning Department had no issues or concerns when planning permission was sought.</p> <p>We maintain the river and all drains and watercourses on our land to make sure there are no blockages and no debris collecting or causing any problems. The barrow drainage board cleans the river as far as our bridge and this helps keep the water flowing and preventing any backup. The embankments are well raised on both sides</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Objective FD 01 of the Draft Plan states that:</p> <p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p> <p><i>Undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>It is the understanding of Laois County Council that the technical aspect of CFRAM flood mapping has been concluded by the OPW. However an order has not yet been made to bring it into legal effect ADVISING Local Authorities to implement it.</p> <p>Also, it is also important to note that the CFRAM mapping does [will] not include all of the watercourses in County Laois in which case the Council will continue to be guided by the original Strategic Flood Risk Analysis in the exercise of its development management functions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as within Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan.</p>

	<p>as a result of the Barrow Drainage Board depositing the silt from the river over the years. The last time the river was cleaned by the Barrow Drainage Board they removed a large tree which had fallen into the river between us and Stradbally Town and also part of an old stone bridge/ weir.</p> <p>There is a weir still in existence close to the town of Stradbally and this occasionally collects debris. It would be advisable to have this removed as it serves no purpose and only slows down the flow of the river.</p> <p>A major clean up job was also carried out in Stradbally and all the way up to Vicarstown over recent years as It was reported that Stradbally was flooded in 1990 and 1995 but no details of flood depths or extends were found. This cleaning resulted in the river flowing freely and decreasing any risk of built up. Stradbally town or surrounding areas have never flooded since.</p> <p>Having built our house on a site that is now classified as Flood Zone A and FLOOD ZONE B means that our property cannot be sold as no mortgage provider will give a mortgage for purchase of property even though there has never been any issues with flooding. As the flood risk was identified by "Broadscale outline on OSi National Height Model" used countrywide it means that part of my site is in Flood Zone A, part is in Flood Zone B and my house and front garden is clear.</p> <p>We have examined the background behind the classifications and we feel that it is unfair to just re-zone properties because of their proximity to a river without any consultation on the ground and or investigation as to the history of the area.</p> <p>We respectfully request that our site and the surrounding area be re-assessed because as of the moment we and the neighbouring families have become victims of this ruling, trapped in the situation.</p> <p>We ask that the original zoning of our property i.e. that of a flood free zone be restored as there is no substantive evidence to suggest otherwise.</p>	
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<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 67.</b></p> <p>Niall Walker,</p>	<p>This submission relates to a site located in a rural area at Oldmill c. 3 kms south-east of Stradbally on the Timahoe side.</p> <p>As residents of Oldmill Stradbally we would like to make a submission in relation to the flood zoning of our home, surrounding site and surrounding town land. Currently our home is situated within flood zone A, as our property borders the Timogue River also known as the Crooked River.</p> <p>We purchased our home in 2012, over the course of the last four years we have yet to see river water levels rise more than three quarters up the bank. Within this time the river has withstood very heavy rain fall over numerous long periods of time. The river consistently maintains a quick and consent flow, and is yet to show any signs of rising to a point where it breaches its banks.</p> <p>I have researched and investigated this issue to great length within the local community, where I have spoken to many elderly residents who have lived all their lives in Stradbally. Every resident I have spoken with has confirmed they have never witnessed the Timogue river breach its banks, nor has it ever come close to doing so. It is also worth highlighting floodmaps.ie has no record of flooding within the Stradbally area.</p> <p>Considering the above, we would welcome an explanation as to why our site and surrounding area is situated within flood zone A. In addition, we would kindly request that a flood re assessment be carried out on our site and surrounding area, as we and many others within our towns land believe there is no hard evidence to support its current zoning.</p> <p>In addition, their agent [Liam Ryan] has provided a section and photographs of the river indicating its invert level, historical flood level and adjoining bank levels. These are also positive from the point of view of potential flood risk.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Objective FD 01 of the Draft Plan states that:</p> <p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p> <p><i>Undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>It is the understanding of Laois County Council that the technical aspect of CFRAM flood mapping has been concluded by the OPW. However an order has not yet been made to bring it into legal effect ADVISING Local Authorities to implement it.</p> <p>Also, it is also important to note that the CFRAM mapping does [will] not include all of the watercourses in County Laois in which case the Council will continue to be guided by the original Strategic Flood Risk Analysis in the exercise of its development management functions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as within Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan.</p>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>		
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO.33</b></p> <p>Environmental Protection Agency</p>	<p>Consideration should be given to including a reference in the Plan to the National Mitigation Plan (which is currently being prepared by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA). This plan seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across a range</p>	<p><b>Submission Noted</b></p> <p>Provisions in relation to climate change such as a commitment to prepare a Climate Change Adaptation Plan have been integrated into the Plan.</p>

(EPA)	<p>of sectors (transport, energy, agriculture etc.) in collaboration with other Government Departments including the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS), and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). The Plan should ensure that the relevant aspects of this plan will be incorporated, as relevant and appropriate, on completion. The EPA has recently published climate adaptation guidance „Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guideline – Research Report 164“ (EPA, 2016). This guidance will help to inform the preparation of a Climate Adaptation Strategy for the county.</p> <p>We note commitments included in the Plan to the preparation/undertaking of a number of policies/strategies/studies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable Energy Policy</li> <li>• Climate Adaptation Strategy</li> <li>• Tree Preservation and Mapping Study</li> <li>• Review of Ecological Mapping</li> <li>• Open Space Plan</li> <li>• Mapping Public Rights of Way</li> <li>• Visual Impact Statement for the Rock of Dunamase</li> </ul> <p>Consideration should be given to the inclusion of a commitment that these plans/strategies/studies be completed and their recommendations adopted within specified time scales and where feasible within the lifetime of the Plan. This should be on a prioritised basis. This is in the context of future development in the Plan area being informed by these initiatives.</p>	<p>Reference to be added to Section 6.3.3 <i>Climate Change</i> the draft Plan as follows</p> <p><i>The National Mitigation Plan is currently being prepared by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) and relevant aspects of this plan will be incorporated into Laois County Development Plan by way of variation, as relevant and appropriate, on completion of the plan.</i></p>
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**CONTROL OF MAJOR ACCIDENTS HAZARDS DIRECTIVE**

<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 1.</b> Health &amp; Safety Authority,</p>	<p>Acknowledges receipt of correspondence and makes no comment in relation to the draft Plan.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>
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**ENERGY AND COMMUNICATIONS**

<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b>  <b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p><b>6.6.1.1 Hydro Energy</b> We submit that you should include a <b>pol:</b> Ensure that new hydro energy schemes take into account the <b>impact on public rights of way</b> and walking routes. Taken from <b>Carlow 6.3.2 Pol 6 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.</b> Also <b>Kildare 8.11.3 HD 3 3<sup>rd</sup> pt &amp; 2011 Plan 9.</b> ENERGY P/13. <b>Note</b> Many counties have a policy and we</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p><b>6.6.1.1 Hydro Energy</b> Include the following policy</p> <p>EN xx</p> <p><b>Ensure that new hydro energy schemes take into account</b></p>
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<p>submit that you should do likewise especially in view of the proposal made in 2009 by the Spirit of Ireland Group about pump storage/hydro schemes. In many schemes the minuscule amount of power produced doesn't compensate for the environmental damage and loss of access rights for recreational users.</p> <p><b>6.6.1.4 Wind Energy</b>  3<sup>rd</sup> para We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and replaced by: <i>Planning applications shall comply with <b>DECLG Guidelines(2006)</b> or any future guidelines and the best international practices and standards.</i> Based on Louth 9.4.1 EnCo 16 &amp; Carlow 6.3.1 Pol 5.</p> <p>We submit that you should include an additional <b>para</b>: <i>Site suitability is an important factor having regard to possible adverse impacts on public rights of way.</i> Taken from Nth Tipp 7.13.5(ii) 2<sup>nd</sup> para.</p> <p>We submit that you should include a <b>pol</b>: <i>Identify existing public rights of way and established walking routes and preserve them as public rights of way and walking routes. Take into account, when assessing planning applications, the impact on public access to the countryside including <b>public rights of way</b>, walking routes, recreational amenities and the openness and visual amenity of the countryside.</i> Based on Wicklow 14.3 2 (i) WE1 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, Meath 11.15.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> pt, Cavan 4.7.3 PIO117.8, Fingal 4.3 RENEWABL ENERGY eno5(iii) &amp; Sligo 12.7.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para last pt. Also Kildare 8.11.2 WE 3 3<sup>rd</sup> pt &amp; 2011 Plan 9 ENERGY P13.</p> <p><b>6.6.3 Electricity</b>  2<sup>nd</sup> para We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and merged with <b>pol</b> 1 which we support and that you should add: <i>Where development is of a scale that requires approval under the Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006, the applicant shall include as part of the planning approval/application document, a study by a suitable qualified independent body demonstrating whether the proposal is incorporating the most appropriate technology and method of construction. Locate power lines in non-scenic amenity areas in the interests of visual amenity, where possible, having regard to Landscape Sensitivity Rating Assessment. The applicant shall also ensure the planning application involving the siting of power lines and other overhead cables, fully consider the impacts on the landscape, National Monuments,</i></p>	<p><b>the impact on public rights of way and walking routes.</b></p> <p><b>6.6.1.4 Wind Energy</b></p> <p>Include the following policy</p> <p>EN xx</p> <p><i>Planning applications shall comply with <b>DECLG Guidelines (2006)</b> or any future guidelines and the best international practices and standards.</i></p> <p>Include the following paragraph</p> <p><i><b>Site suitability</b> is an important factor having regard to possible adverse impacts on public rights of way.</i></p> <p>Include the following policy</p> <p>EN xx</p> <p><i>Identify existing public rights of way and preserve them as public rights of way. Take into account, when assessing planning applications, the impact on public access to the countryside including <b>public rights of way</b>, recreational amenities and the openness and visual amenity of the countryside.</i></p> <p><b>6.3 Electricity</b>  2<sup>nd</sup> para We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and merged with <b>pol</b> 1 which we support and that you should add:</p> <p><i>The applicant shall ensure the planning application involving the siting of power lines and other overhead cables, fully consider the impacts on the landscape, National Monuments, archaeology, views of special amenity value. Where impacts are inevitable mitigation measures to minimise their obstructiveness must be provided for. The development shall be consistent with international best practice with regard to siting and design. Applications for new transmission lines shall be accompanied by a justification statement of the regional importance of and the need for the proposed development.</i></p> <p>Include the following para</p> <p><i>Overhead power lines and ancillary development can frequently detract from <b>visual amenities</b>.</i></p> <p>Add to ELEC 3</p>
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	<p>archaeology, views of special amenity value and should follow natural features of the environment. Where impacts are inevitable mitigation measures to minimise their obstructiveness must be provided for. In these instances an Appropriate Assessment or other ecological assessment will be required. The undergrounding of transmission lines(including existing overhead cables), HV power lines and associated equipment shall be considered firstly as part of a detailed consideration and evaluation of all available options. The development shall be consistent with international best practice with regard to siting and design. Applications for new transmission lines shall be accompanied by a justification statement of the regional importance of and the need for the proposed development. Based on <b>Carlow</b> 6.1 Pol 2 5<sup>th</sup> pt 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, <b>Meath</b> 8.1.10 EC POL 19, <b>Kildare</b> 8.8, Fingal 4.3 OVERHEAD CABLE Obj EN14 (i) Wexford 11.2.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para 6<sup>th</sup> line, Louth 9.2 EnCo 7, Galway 13.9 DMS 31 a) to c), Cork 9.6 ED 6-2, Cavan 4.7.1 Obj PIO106 &amp; Monaghan 15.16 EGP 3 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>We submit that you should include an additional <b>para</b>: <i>Overhead power lines and ancillary development can frequently detract from visual amenities.</i> Taken from Fingal 4.3 OVERHEAD CABLES.</p> <p><b>pols</b> 3 I, II &amp; IV</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional <b>pols</b>:</p> <p>1 <i>Ensure that the ability of the area to absorb overhead transmission lines is considered with reference to the National Landscape Strategy 2015.</i> Taken from <b>Carlow</b> 6.1 Pol 2 4<sup>th</sup> pt.</p> <p>2 <i>Cognisance will be taken of the Code of Practice between the DoECLG and Eirgrid(2009).</i> Taken from Cavan 4.7.1 PIO 109.</p> <p>3 <i>Ensure that landscape and visual assessment of planning application shall focus on the potential to impact upon landscape designations and important designated sites.</i> Taken from <b>Carlow</b> 6.1.2 5<sup>th</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p><b>6.6.5.2 Telecommunications Masts and Antennae</b></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> pt We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and replaced by: Promote and facilitate the sharing of facilitates. Due to their visual impact, it is desirable to limit the number of masts by require the co-location of</p>	<p>Facilitate the provision of and improvements to energy networks in principle, provided that it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. The development is required in order to facilitate the provision or retention of significant economic or social infrastructure;</li> <li>II. The route proposed has been identified with due consideration for social, environmental and cultural impacts;</li> <li>III. The design is such that will achieve least environmental impact consistent with not incurring excessive cost;</li> <li>IV. Where impacts are inevitable mitigation features have been included;</li> <li>V. Proposals for energy infrastructure should be assessed in accordance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.</li> <li>VI. <i>Ensure that the ability of the area to absorb overhead transmission lines is considered with reference to the National Landscape Strategy 2015.</i></li> <li>VII. <i>Cognisance will be taken of the Code of Practice between the DoECLG and Eirgrid(2009).</i></li> <li>VIII. <i>Ensure that landscape and visual assessment of planning application shall focus on the potential to impact upon landscape designations and important designated sites.</i></li> </ol> <p><b>6.6.5.2 Telecommunications Masts and Antennae</b></p> <p>Include new policy</p> <p>TELE xx</p> <p>Promote and facilitate the sharing of facilities. Due to their visual impact, it is desirable to limit the number of masts by requiring the co-location of new or replacement antennae on existing masts or preferably a single mast so that the scale, character and sensitivity of the landscape is respected. Co-location and clustering of new masts and support structures on existing sites will be required unless a fully documented case is submitted explaining the precise circumstances which mitigate against co-location and clustering. <del>Any locations with more than two separate support structures will generally be considered to have no remaining capacity for any further structure as the proliferation of masts in a particular area could be injurious to the visual amenities, and therefore having regard to the potential adverse visual impacts of the proliferation of masts, particularly in open countryside,</del> applicants will be required to demonstrate the need to locate a new mast in a particular location where proliferation may present an issue. Proposals for standalone installations should demonstrate that the developer has made reasonable</p>
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<p>new or replacement antennae on existing masts or preferably a single mast so that the scale, character and sensitivity of the landscape is respected. Co-location and clustering of new masts and support structures on existing sites will be required unless a fully documented case is submitted explaining the precise circumstances which mitigate against co-location and clustering. Any locations with more than two separate support structures will generally be considered to have no remaining capacity for any further structure as the proliferation of masts in a particular area could be injurious to the visual amenities, and therefore having regard to the potential adverse visual impacts of the proliferation of masts, particularly in open countryside, applicants will be required to demonstrate the need to locate a new mast in a particular location where proliferation may present an issue. Proposals for standalone installations should demonstrate that the developer has made reasonable efforts to share with other existing users or proposed sites in the vicinity. Where it is not possible to share a support structure, the applicant should, where possible, share the site or an adjacent site so that the antennae may be clustered. In sensitive landscape areas the presumption will be that applications must meet the co-location requirements. Where it has been proven that there is a need for new/expanded coverage in a particular area, the applicant shall show that all existing masts and support structures have been examined to determine if the attachment of new antennae to existing structures can provide the coverage required, the applicant shall submit either a Discovery Series Map or similar map type (to be agreed with planning authority) to the scale of 1:50,000 the location of all telecommunication structures within a radius of 1km of the proposed site, indicating the coverage area of the proposed facility and a technical evaluation of the capabilities of these masts to take additional antennae and provide the coverage required. Avoid a proliferation of masts and aerials in the upland areas (names mountain area) in order to protect their amenity value and their unspoilt character. Masts will not be permitted above 150m unless it can be clearly demonstrated that it is not possible to locate antennae on the existing clusters at Wolfrap Mountain. Applicants shall</p>	<p>efforts to share with other existing users or proposed sites in the vicinity. Where it is not possible to share a support structure, the applicant should, where possible, share the site or an adjacent site so that the antennae may be clustered. In sensitive landscape areas the presumption will be that applications must meet the co-location requirements. Where it has been proven that there is a need for new/expanded coverage in a particular area, the applicant shall show that all existing masts and support structures have been examined to determine if the attachment of new antennae to existing structures can provide the coverage required, the applicant shall submit either a Discovery Series Map or similar map type (to be agreed with planning authority) to the scale of 1:50,000 the location of all telecommunication structures within a radius of 1km of the proposed site, indicating the coverage area of the proposed facility and a technical evaluation of the capabilities of these masts to take additional antennae and provide the coverage required. Avoid a proliferation of masts and aerials in the upland areas (names mountain area) in order to protect their amenity value and their unspoilt character.</p> <p><del>Masts will not be permitted above 150m unless it can be clearly demonstrated that it is not possible to locate antennae on the existing clusters at Wolfrap Mountain.</del> Applicants shall indicate whether or not they are willing to share the proposed masts with other telecommunication operators. Comply with the Code of Practice of Sharing Radio Sites issued by the Commission for Communication Regulation.</p> <p>We note the comments in relation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> pts in section 6.6.5.2 and the proposed new policies, however they would be better incorporated into the development management section under DM 66 and cross referenced in this chapter.</p> <p><del>Prohibit construction of telecommunication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment in primary and secondary amenity areas,</del> in visually sensitive areas including at locations detrimental to designated protected views and/or prospects and scenic routes or in close proximity to public amenity areas.</p> <p>Where feasible, proposed development pertaining to the installation of potentially obtrusive technology shall be located in non-sensitive landscapes. Protect areas of significant landscape importance from the visual intrusion of large scale telecommunications infrastructure.</p> <p>When considering planning applications the Council will not favourably consider applications which would impact</p>
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<p>indicate whether or not they are willing to share the proposed masts with other telecommunication operators. Comply with the Code of Practice of Sharing Radio Sites issued by the Commission for Communication Regulation. Based on <b>Offaly</b> 4.15 CIP-02, <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 4<sup>th</sup> para, <b>Kildare</b> 8.12 TL 8,19 &amp; 9.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 5<sup>th</sup> pt, <b>Westmeath</b> 10.16 P-ICT6, <b>Carlow</b> 6.11.3 Pol 1 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, 11.18.1 last para 3<sup>rd</sup> pt 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, 11.6.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; 11.18.1 last para 3<sup>rd</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences &amp; Fingal 4.4 TELECOM Obj IT07, Cavan 4.8 P10118 &amp; DLR 8.2.9.9 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> pts We submit that these should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and merged with <b>pols</b> 8 &amp; 9 and that you should add: Prohibit construction of telecommunication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment in primary and secondary amenity areas, at locations detrimental to designated protected views and/or prospects and scenic routes or in close proximity to public amenity areas. Where feasible, proposed development pertaining to the installation of potentially obtrusive technology shall be located in non-sensitive landscapes. Protect areas of significant landscape importance from the visual intrusion of large scale telecommunications infrastructure. When considering planning applications the Council will not favourably consider applications which would impact on visual amenities, fragile or sensitive landscape of historic importance. Structures should be located to limit visual impacts and to integrate into the landscape especially in areas of sensitivity, scenic amenities and geological sites. Except in exceptional circumstances, locations along major tourist routes must be avoided. Where appropriate, masts, antennae and fencing should be in harmony with their surroundings and should be of dull or neutral sky grey colour so as to be less visually obtrusive. Green or black is the preferred at ground level. White or bright colours will not be permitted. Where masts are proposed outside existing forest areas, applicants will be required to demonstrate the reasons why forest sites are unsuitable. Proposals shall be subject to all material considerations, including environmental designations and amenity considerations. In assessing applications advice of the relevant statutory bodies will be sought</p>	<p>on visual amenities, fragile or sensitive landscape of historic importance. Structures should be located to limit visual impacts and to integrate into the landscape especially in areas of sensitivity, scenic amenities and geological sites.</p> <p>Except in exceptional circumstances, locations along major tourist routes must be avoided.</p> <p>Where appropriate, masts, antennae and fencing should be in harmony with their surroundings and should be of dull or neutral sky grey colour so as to be less visually obtrusive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green or black is the preferred at ground level. White or bright colours will not be permitted.</li> </ul> <p>Where masts are proposed outside existing forest areas, applicants will be required to demonstrate the reasons why forest sites are unsuitable.</p> <p>Proposals shall be subject to all material considerations, including environmental designations and amenity considerations. In assessing applications advice of the relevant statutory bodies will be sought and considered. Support structures should be kept to the lowest feasible height.</p> <p>Avoid hilltops except where technical or coverage requirements make it essential.</p> <p>Subject to visual and landscape considerations, support structures will normally be required to be designed to facilitate the attachment of additional antennae to facilitate co-location.</p> <p>The number of ancillary buildings/containers shall be kept to the minimum and the need for each structure must be clearly justified.</p> <p>They should be located in accordance with the provisions of the DoECLG Guidelines 1996(or as may be amended).</p> <p>Proposals for removal and reinstatement of lands shall be identified as part of the planning application procedure A bonding arrangement must be put in place.</p> <p><b>pols</b> Renumber 5 to 6</p> <p>INSERT NEW POLICY</p> <p>Demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the <b>DOECLG Guidelines</b> on “Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (1996) “and the Circular Letter of</p>
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	<p>and considered. Support structures should be kept to the lowest feasible height. Avoid hilltops except where technical or coverage requirements make it essential. Subject to visual and landscape considerations, support structures will normally be required to be designed to facilitate the attachment of additional antennae to facilitate co-location. The number of ancillary buildings/containers shall be kept to the minimum and the need for each structure must be clearly justified. They should be located in accordance with the provisions of the DoECLG Guidelines 1996(or as may be amended). Based on <b>Sth Tipp</b> 7.7 Pol INF 13 (i) &amp; (iii), <b>Kildare</b> 19.9.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 9<sup>th</sup> pt(except 4<sup>th</sup> sentence), <b>2011 Plan</b> 9.9 P33, <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 TEL 2, <b>Carlow</b> 6.11.3 3<sup>rd</sup> para last pt &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> para, <b>Meath</b> 11.12 5<sup>th</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> line, Fingal 4.4 TELECOM Obj ITo8 &amp; 09 6<sup>th</sup> pt, Sligo 11.2 P-TEL1 &amp; 2, Wicklow 14.6 Rural Locations 1<sup>st</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> sub pts, Mast/antennae design 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> pts, Site layout/design 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; last pts, Waterford 10.39 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, Limerick 10.14.2.2 2<sup>nd</sup> line, Kerry 7.5.2 ICT-4 &amp; 13.14 Landscape Considerations 1<sup>st</sup> para, Donegal 4.3.3 Pol TC-P3 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, Galway 7.7 Pol ICT 2 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Monaghan 15.15 TEP 9, Wexford 9.3.1 Obj TCo6 1<sup>st</sup> para (a) &amp; (c) &amp; 12.7.3 A, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 3 Information &amp; Telecom TC-01 5<sup>th</sup> line &amp; 02, Cork 9.7 ED 7-1 last para. Also <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para a) &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> para (i) &amp; (ii) &amp; <b>Nth Tipp</b> 7.14 SERV 29 1<sup>st</sup> para a).</p> <p>last pt We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and replaced by: It shall be a condition the permission that when antennae and their support structures are no longer being <b>used</b> and no new user has been identified they should be removed and the site re-instated at the operator's expense. It shall also be an obligation of the original operator to inform the Council if he intends to dispose of the site to another suitable operator. A bonding arrangement must be out in place. Based on Cavan 4.8 PIO124 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence &amp; 126, Wicklow 14.6 Obsolete Structures &amp; <b>Westmeath</b> 14.11.2 last pt.</p> <p><b>pols</b> 5 This should be re-numbered as 6 as there are already a 5. We submit that this should be replaced by:</p>	<p>2012(PLo7/12)(as may be may be amended) and other publications and material as may be relevant.</p> <p>Replace TELE10</p> <p><del>Ensure the location of telecommunications structures minimise and/or mitigate any adverse impacts on communities, the natural and built environment and public rights of way.</del></p> <p>WITH</p> <p>Existing Public Rights of Way <del>and established walking routes</del> will be identified prior to any new telecommunication developments (including associated processes) which will be prohibited if they impinge thereon or on recreational amenities, public access to the countryside, communities or the natural and built environment.</p> <p>INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING POLICY</p> <p>TELE xx</p> <p><del>Seek the establishment of an appropriate body at regional or national level to monitor installations regarding proliferation, co-location and the use of the best available technology to prevent negative environmental impacts.</del></p> <p><del>Set up and maintain a register of approved telecommunication structures to provide a useful input in the assessment of future developments and to maximise the potential for future mast sharing and co-location.</del></p> <p><b>Access roads</b> will be permitted only where they are absolutely necessary. The applicant shall be required to demonstrate that the greatest care has been taken in terms of minimising visual impact on landscapes, particularly sensitive or historic landscapes, natural environment by ensuring that they do not scar the landscapes and that they follow the natural contours so as to minimise their visual intrusion and should be bordered with scrubs and that they are designed and landscaped to avoid visual and environmental disruption of the landscape. It shall be a condition of permission that the land is reinstated at the end of the construction period. In the event that a developer requires that an access track be retained, the developer shall indicate the justification for doing so as part of the planning application and indicate the frequency of visits which will be required to service the site and facility.</p> <p>Incorporate the following in the Development</p>
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<p>Demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the <b>DOECLG Guidelines</b> on “Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (1996) “and the Circular Letter of 2012(PL07/12)(as may be may be amended) and other publications and material as may be relevant. Taken from Sth Dublin 1.6.2 1<sup>st</sup> para. Also <b>Meath</b> 11.12 1<sup>st</sup> para, <b>2011 Plan</b> 9.9 P30, <b>Westmeath</b> 10.16 P-ITC7, <b>Carlow</b> 6.1 Pol 1 3<sup>rd</sup> pt, <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para c), <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 TEL 1 &amp; <b>Offaly</b> 4.15 CIP-01.</p> <p>10 We submit that this should be replaced by: Existing Public Rights of Way and established walking routes will be identified prior to any new telecommunication developments(including associated processes) which will be prohibited if they impinge thereon or on recreational amenities, public access to the countryside, communities or the natural and built environment . Based on Roscommon 4.7 Pol 4.70, Cavan 4.8 P10123, <b>2011 Plan</b> 9.9 P35, Fingal 4.4 IT 11 &amp; <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> pt. Also <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.</p> <p><b>Note</b> Pending a complete listing of public rights of way walking routes, as prospective rights of way, should be protected.</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional <b>pols:</b></p> <p>1 Seek the establishment of an appropriate body at regional or national level to <b>monitor</b> installations regarding proliferation, co-location and the use of the best available technology to prevent negative environmental impacts. Taken from <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 TEL 7.</p> <p>2 Set up and maintain a <b>register</b> of approved telecommunication structures to provide a useful input in the assessment of future developments and to maximise the potential for future mast sharing and co-location. Taken from <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.2.</p> <p>3 Access <b>roads</b> will be permitted only where they are absolutely necessary. The applicant shall be required to demonstrate that the greatest care has been taken in terms of minimising visual impact on landscapes, particularly sensitive or historic landscapes, natural environment by ensuring that they do not scar the landscapes and that they follow the natural contours so as to minimise their visual</p>	<p><b>Management Standards in section 8 DC 66</b></p> <p>Prohibit <b>satellite dishes</b> in areas which would cause unacceptable harm to visual amenities or would materially harm the character and appearance of rural areas. The design and visual appearance of masts, antennae of satellite dishes and their associated equipment shall be as unobtrusive as possible. Cumulative effect of dishes in the area should be considered.</p> <p>Cables and wire connections shall be located underground.</p> <p>Where masts are located in areas of high amenity, landscapes of exceptional or high value or international or national importance and high sensitivity as indicated in the Landscape Character Assessment, there shall be a presumption to provide a “<b>Landscape Impact Report</b>” to allow proper assessment of the visual impact. Surrogate (coniferous trees) shall be considered.</p> <p>Strive to reduce the number of telecommunication structures by ensuring that <b>ComReg’s Code of Conduct</b> is implemented.</p> <p><i>Masts will only be permitted if supported by an acceptable Visual and Environmental <b>Impact Assessment Report</b>. In sensitive landscape and amenity areas the presumption shall be that applications must meet the co-location requirements or be supported by a Visual Impact Assessment Report that will demonstrate that the development can be satisfactorily absorbed into the landscape. VIA required within a focal point/view or in sensitive landscapes.</i></p> <p><del>When the owner of a site <b>disposes</b> of it they will be required to inform the Council so that they will be in a position to enforce any continuing conditions.</del></p> <p>Applicants must demonstrate the significance of the proposed development <b>as part of the telecommunications network</b>.</p> <p>Discourage the development of individual telecommunications support structures and antennae for <b>private use</b>.</p>
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	<p>intrusion and should be bordered with scrubs and that they are designed and landscaped to avoid visual and environmental disruption of the landscape. It shall be a condition of permission that the land is reinstated at the end of the construction period. In the event that a developer requires that an access track be retained, the developer shall indicate the justification for doing so as part of the planning application and indicate the frequency of visits which will be required to service the site and facility. Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para a), <b>Carlow</b> 6.11.3 6<sup>th</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> line, Mayo Vol 2 55.3 1<sup>st</sup> pt, Cavan 4.8 PIO124, Wicklow 14.6 Access roads, Limerick 10.14.3.2 1<sup>st</sup> para, Donegal 4.3.3 TC-P-7 1<sup>st</sup> clause, Galway 13.9 DMS 32c) 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; last sentences &amp; Kerry 13.14 Access Roads. Also <b>Meath</b> 11.12e) &amp; <b>Carlow</b> 11.18.1 last para last pt.</p> <p>4 Prohibit <b>satellite dishes</b> in areas which would cause unacceptable harm to visual amenities or would materially harm the character and appearance of rural areas. The design and visual appearance of masts, antennae of satellite dishes and their associated equipment shall be as unobtrusive as possible. Cumulative effect of dishes in the area should be considered. Based on Cork 9.7.8 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; last pts, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 6.14.1 Pol SERV 32 &amp; <b>Kildare</b> 19.9.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 9<sup>th</sup> pt 4<sup>th</sup> sentence.</p> <p>5 Cables and wire connections shall be located underground. Taken from <b>Offaly</b> 8.22 last para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences &amp; <b>Carlow</b> 11.18.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.</p> <p>6 Where masts are located in areas of high amenity, landscapes of exceptional or high value or international or national importance and high sensitivity as indicated in the Landscape Character Assessment, there shall be a presumption to provide a “<b>Landscape Impact Report</b>” to allow proper assessment of the visual impact. Surrogate (coniferous trees) shall be considered. Taken from <b>Meath</b> 12.12 5<sup>th</sup> para 6<sup>th</sup> line.</p> <p>7 Strive to reduce the number of telecommunication structures by ensuring that <b>ComReg's Code of Conduct</b> is implemented. Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> 9.9 P31 &amp; <b>Meath</b> 8.2.3 EC POL 31.</p> <p>8 <i>Masts will only be permitted if supported by an</i></p>	
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	<p><i>acceptable Visual and Environmental <b>Impact Assessment</b> Report. In sensitive landscape and amenity areas the presumption shall be that applications must meet the co-location requirements or be supported by a Visual Impact Assessment Report that will demonstrate that the development can be satisfactorily absorbed into the landscape. VIA required within a focal point/view or in sensitive landscapes. Based on Galway 7.7. Pol ICT 2 last sentence &amp; 13.9 DMS 32a) &amp; Cavan 4.8 PIO119 &amp; 121.</i></p> <p>9 When the owner of a site <b>disposes</b> of it they will be required to inform the Council so that they will be in a position to enforce any continuing conditions. Taken from <b>Meath</b> 8.2.3 last para.</p> <p>10 Applicants must demonstrate the significance of the proposed development <b>as part of the telecommunications network</b>. Taken from Sth Dublin 11.6.2 last para.</p> <p>11 Discourage the development of individual telecommunications support structures and antennae for <b>private use</b>. Taken from <b>Kildare</b> 8.12.1 TL 11.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO 9</b> James Muldowney The Save Our Mountain Committee</p>	<p>You may be aware that J &amp; C Wind Limited has applied for planning permission to erect a wind turbine at Gorteenahilla, Cullahill Mountain to which there was nearly one hundred objections and is currently being dealt with under request for further information by Laois County Council. An impact statement has recently been submitted by the applicants to which our experts will be objecting to as incomplete and inaccurate.</p> <p>We note that part of the proposed draft plan is for Cullahill Mountain to be designated as “not suitable for wind farms”. Whilst we welcome this development and congratulate you and your fellow councillors in making such decision, we urge caution on two fronts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The definition of Cullahill Mountain. We assume that this is defined as the “the uplands running from Durrow along the Kilkenny border to the Laois border on the N77 north of Johnstown” thereby taking in towns lands of Glenmacolla, Gorteenahilla, Bunlacken, Ballykealy and Ballagh which are intrinsically part of the Cullahill Mountain range.</li> <li>2) The definition of “wind farms”. We assume the intent was to include single turbines and suggest “not suitable for</li> </ol>	<p>The Planning Authority notes the comments in relation Cullahill Mountain and wind farm development.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and</p>

	<p>wind turbine development”</p> <p>In making the decision to save Cullahill Mountain, highly regarded as a tourist destination, you are clearly aware of its importance as an area of outstanding natural beauty, containing many listed walks, a special Area of Conservation and considerable endangered species.</p> <p>The further suggestions as to increasing the mandatory set back distance to 1500 meters are both logical and welcome. This committee recognises the need for alternative energy solutions but believe that this must be achieved with the minimum level of impact on the residents of our island and must not be driven by economically driven reasoning alone.</p> <p>We whole heartedly thank you for your diligence and support in this matter.</p> <p>Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance.</p>	<p>locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Remove Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p>Remove Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Draft Wind Energy Strategy of the draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b></p> <p><del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</del></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 15</b></p> <p>Andy Dunne</p>	<p>This submission is made in relation to the stark and most likely illegal contradiction between the renewable energy policy as presented in the Draft Plan and the subsequent stifling of its delivery by proposed development control standards.</p> <p>The Draft Plan sets out the Council's policy on energy in Section 6.6 of Volume 1. It states that:</p> <p><i>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</i></p> <p>In relation to wind energy the Draft Plan notes that the development of wind power in Ireland has accelerated in recent years and that the Council will have regard to the Wind Energy</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county.</p> <p>These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer.</li> </ol>

<p>Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities when considering wind energy applications.</p> <p>Appendix 5 to the Draft Plan contains the Draft Wind Strategy. Pages 3 to 11 of this document clearly and logically set out the national and international context for the further development of wind energy. Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Draft Wind Strategy outline the development of wind energy in Laois to date and present a rationale for further development. This essentially leads to the production of a zoning map - Map 1.6.5 - Wind Energy. It is notable that, despite the earlier favourable commentary in the Draft Plan about the need for greater deployment of wind energy in the county, the overall area essentially zoned positively for wind i.e. 'Preferred' and 'Open for Consideration' in the zoning map referred to above has been very significantly reduced in comparison to the overall zoned area on the comparable map in the current County Development Plan.</p> <p>Proposed development control standards for wind farms in Co. Laois are detailed on page 26 to 28 of Appendix 5 of the Draft Plan. In relation to the 'Buffer Zones' criterion (6.1), the required setback distance from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm developments is proposed to be a minimum of 1.5 km.</p> <p>This proposed standard is fundamentally at odds with the existing Wind Energy Development Guidelines to which the Council earlier in the Draft Plan commits to adhere to.</p> <p>Taking the proposed 'buffer zone' standard and the revised zoning mapping together effectively terminates wind energy development in Co. Laois.</p> <p>While this outcome may be the agenda of a small and vociferous lobby group in the county, it does not reflect the majority view (in the recent local and general election a number of candidates espousing anti-wind positions ran but did not get elected), it runs counter to all sustainability and economic development strategies and it opposes government and EU policy. Indeed the latter point will probably</p>	<p>Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</p> <p>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</p> <p>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</p> <p>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</p> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of a holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the</p>
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	<p>prevent acceptance of the Draft Plan by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government.</p> <p>The draft policy on wind energy development in Co. Laois therefore needs to be amended to reflect development norms, national guidelines and policy and development imperatives.</p>	<p>lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li>• Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li>• Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li>• Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li>• Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li>• Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li>• Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal</p>
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		<p>waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation</i></b></p> <p>Remove Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice</p> <p><del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p>Remove Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Draft Wind Energy Strategy of the draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b></p>
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		<p><del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</del></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION No 3</b>  <b>Brian Stanley T.D.</b>  <i>Cllr. Aidan Mullins, Cllr. Caroline Dwane Stanley</i></p>	<p><b>Submission regarding Wind Energy Strategy.</b></p> <p>Wind farms and Rural Communities</p> <p>Only those areas zoned by Councillors in the County Development Plan for wind farms should be considered for planning permission.</p> <p>Wind Turbines must be located at least a distance of ten times their height from the nearest dwelling, school or crèche. Basing the set back distance pro rata to the height of the turbine provides the maximum protection for residents as some turbines may be in excess of 150 metres in height.</p> <p>No turbine must be located in such a way as to have shadow flicker from the blades passing over a dwelling or school at any time of the day.</p> <p>Noise levels from wind turbines must not exceed the levels set by the World Health Organisation.</p> <p>Prior to construction adequate bonds must be lodged with the local authority to cover any costs that may arise from damage to the public infrastructure, such as roads or bridges.</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</li> <li>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</li> <li>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</li> <li>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</li> </ol> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have</p>

	<p>been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of a holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p>
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		<p>policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Remove</b> Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice</p> <p><del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b></p> <p><del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</del></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 23</b> Galetech Energy Services</p>	<p>Firstly, the Draft Wind Energy Strategy proposes that wind turbines to be erected must be a minimum distance of 1.5 kilometres from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads. This is evidently in conflict with the DoEHLG 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines, which do not impose a mandatory separation distance between wind turbines and nearby receptors. Not only does this proposed setback distance contravene national policy, its implementation would essentially lead to a sterilisation of County Laois from future wind energy developments. <b>Figure 1</b> below represents the land take which would remain available for wind energy developments if such a policy were introduced at national level.</p> <p>It is noteworthy that the remaining land resource for wind energy development within County Laois is largely comprised of the Slieve Bloom Mountains, which are subject to SAC and SPA designations; and have been classified as 'Areas Not Open for Consideration' as part of the Draft Wind Energy Strategy 2017-2023. Our</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</li> <li>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl.</b></li> </ol>

<p>client considers it essential that the planning authority and elected representatives adopt a plan which is consistent with national policy, ministerial guidelines and Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. This is crucial in order to provide progressive and sustainable measures to combat climate change and provide for future energy requirements.</p> <p>Significantly, it is noted that the SEA Environmental Report for the Draft Laois CDP 2017-2023, which was carried out an external consultant, outlines that</p> <p><i>'It is noted that Objective EN7 includes a requirement for a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development' which would limit Laois County Council's ability to contribute towards the National Renewable Energy Action Plan target of 40% of electricity demand to be provided by renewable energy by 2020. In addition, the distance specified is not consistent with Government policy on the issue.'</i></p> <p>Our client would like to reiterate that the setting of such a separation distance under any future County Development Plan (CDP), would cut across and undermine Government policy to deliver more indigenous renewable energy and reduce our current 85% imported fossil fuel dependency. Ruling out what could be suitable sites on an arbitrary basis could hinder our ability to meet the ambitious, but necessary and legally binding EU renewable energy and EU climate change commitments.</p> <p>Secondly, the Draft Wind Energy Strategy proposal that all wind monitoring masts require planning permission is a direct contravention of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), which states; under Schedule 2, Part 1, Class 20A; that masts for the mapping of meteorological conditions are considered exempt development, subject to a number of conditions and limitations.</p> <p><b>De-Classification of 'Preferred Areas' for Wind Energy</b></p> <p>On the basis of the 2011-2017 Wind Energy Strategy, our client has developed detailed proposals for an 11 no. turbine wind farm on</p>	<p><b>Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</p> <p>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</p> <p>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</p> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines.with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of an holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p>
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<p>lands which are identified as 'Preferred Areas' and 'Areas Open for Consideration' in the townlands of Graignahown, Knockardugar, Boleybawn, Ironmills (Kilrush) and Garrintaggart in south County Laois. A planning application based on the above proposals was submitted to the Planning Authority on 30/05/2016, and is currently the subject of a request for further information. A response to this request is currently being prepared.</p> <p>The proposed wind farm has been designed to fully comply with national, regional and local energy and planning policies and is expected to produce 110GWh of electricity every year which will provide clean energy for almost 20,000 homes, and will prevent over fifty thousand tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year from being released into the atmosphere. In accordance with the Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007) and the SEAI's Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (2013), the proposed development will also maximise efficient public investment in infrastructure through making use of the permitted Laois-Kilkenny Reinforcement Project (An Bord Pleanála PL11.VA0015). As detailed in Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Laois CDP 2017-2023, this area is to be classified as 'Areas not for Consideration'</p> <p>The development of renewable energy infrastructure is a long term investment with a long lead time and which requires policy certainty. In accordance with the SEA process and the principles of evidence-based planning, the Planning Authority must provide a justification as to why a location which was considered suitable for wind energy in the current development plan is no longer considered so. Following a detailed assessment of the draft Wind Energy Strategy, the SEA Environmental Report for the Draft Laois CDP 2017-2023, and Section 6 of the Draft Laois CDP 2017-2023 Volume 1: Written Statement; it is noteworthy that a detailed explanation has not been put forward outlining the reasoning behind the changes in classification. Furthermore, the Landscape Character Type (LCT) within which the subject site is located has not been altered; with the LCT being identified as 'Hills and Upland Areas'. It is logical, therefore, that when the subject site</p>	<p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li>• Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li>• Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li>• Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li>• Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li>• Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li>• Drenid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p>
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	<p>was considered a 'Preferred Area' under the current CDP, and the LCT has not been altered under the subsequent draft CDP, the site should remain as a 'Preferred Area' for wind energy development.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b>          The Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 has a vital role to play in establishing the land-use planning framework for renewable energy and in cascading key national energy and climate policy priorities to the local level. If Ireland is to achieve its binding commitments, it is absolutely essential that long term policy certainty is provided in order to maintain and stimulate investment in appropriately located renewable energy technologies. For this reason, our client submits that all of the current designations for 'Preferred Areas' and 'Areas Open for Consideration' for wind energy in County Laois should be fully maintained in the Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023, and that the imposition of a mandatory 1.5km setback from dwellings and other receptors be removed to ensure complete and absolute conformity with the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006) and the SEAI's Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (2013).</p>	<p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Remove</b> EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice  <del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b>  <del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</del></p>
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<p>SUBMISSION NO. 29</p> <p>Eirgrid,</p>	<p>This submission is made in the context of our role as the Transmission System Operator (TSO) which operates and plans for the future development of the national electricity transmission network. This submission serves as an update to our previous submission made in December 2015.</p> <p><b>2.0 SUGGESTED REVISION TO TEXT</b></p> <p>The update pertains to the references in sub-section 6.6.3 of the Infrastructure Section (Section 6). Section 6.6.3 pertains to Electricity and sets the context for Grid25 and Grid25 Implementation Programme.</p> <p>The following <b>Section 2.1 and 2.2</b> are suggested update to the text in this subsection of the Draft County Development Plan. While <b>Section 2.3</b> below is some suggested additional text for inclusion of the relevant sub-section of the Draft County Development Plan.</p> <p><b>2.1 Grid25</b></p> <p>GRID25, our grid development strategy, was published in 2008 and is now due for review. EirGrid therefore published a draft strategy entitled <i>Your Grid, Your Views, Your Tomorrow: Ireland's Draft Grid Development Strategy for Consultation</i> in March 2015.</p> <p>The aim of <i>Your Grid, Your Views, Your Tomorrow</i> was to start a dialogue about the need for grid development, and to seek opinions and suggestions from anyone impacted by the plans. The draft strategy consultation ran from the 27 March to the 5 June 2015. Feedback on the draft strategy is currently being reviewed with the aim of informing the preparation of a Grid Development Strategy to be published in 2016. The draft strategy can be viewed at the following link: <a href="#">EirGrid-Draft-Grid-Development-Strategy</a>.</p> <p>The draft strategy considers the facilitation of renewable energy in the East Region. This is addressed in p.52 of Appendix 1, which states that <i>"To meet Dublin demand growth it is necessary to install additional transformer capacity and increase circuit capacity to the north and south of the city, and into the city itself. These projects will strengthen the network</i></p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having an adequate electricity supply infrastructure in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>Electricity supply is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 6.6. 3 <i>Electricity</i> which states:</p> <p><i>"EirGrid's strategy GRID 25 sets out the future requirements of the electricity network up to 2025. The subsequent GRID25 Implementation Plan 2011-2016 (IP) is a practical strategic overview of how the early stages of Grid25 are intended to be implemented.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will support the reinforcement of the electricity transmission grid to improve energy supply to the county. Where strategic route corridors have been identified, the Council will support the statutory providers of national grid infrastructure by safeguarding such corridors from encroachment by other developments that might compromise the provision of energy networks, provided these corridors do not have adverse impacts on residential amenity or the environment. Where proposed high voltage lines traverse existing or proposed residential areas they should be located underground where appropriate, in the interest of residential amenity.</i></p> <p><b>It is policy of the Council to:</b></p> <p><i>ELEC1 Ensure the provision, where feasible, of electricity cables been located underground, especially in the urban environment, and generally within areas of public open space;</i></p> <p><i>ELEC2 Support the statutory providers of national grid infrastructure by safeguarding such strategic corridors from encroachment by other developments that might compromise the provision of energy networks where strategic route corridors have been identified;</i></p> <p><i>ELEC3 Facilitate the provision of and improvements to energy networks in principle, provided that it can be demonstrated that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• The development is required in order to facilitate</i></li> <li><i>• the provision or retention of significant economic or</i></li> <li><i>• social infrastructure;</i></li> </ul>
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	<p><i>for all electricity users, and in doing so will improve the security and quality of supply”.</i></p> <p><b>2.2 Grid25 Implementation Programme</b></p> <p>With regard to the Grid25 Implementation Programme, it should be noted that EirGrid is currently preparing a new Grid Implementation Plan and associated SEA. The revised Grid Implementation Plan will replace EirGrid's original “Grid 25 Implementation Programme 2011-2016”, and is a regional spatial 6 year Development Plan for grid development.</p> <p><b>2.3 White paper on Energy Policy Framework 2015-2030</b> Building on the 2007 White Paper ‘<i>Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland</i>’, the 2015 White Paper sets out Ireland’s energy future and confirms the core objectives of sustainability, security of supply and competitiveness. Chapter 7.3 of the White Paper recognises the need for the development and renewal of energy networks to meet economic and social goals. It endorses the strategic programmes of the energy infrastructure providers, subject to their adherence to national and international standards for design and construction, and to community consultation.</p> <p><b>3.0 The Transmission Network and Landscape</b></p> <p>Objective 6 in the Section 6.6 of the Energy and Communications Chapter aims to protect areas of recognised landscape importance and significant landscape views from construction of large scale visually intrusive energy transmission infrastructure, alternative routing or transmission methods shall be used in this instance.</p> <p>The issue of compatibility of land-uses and landscape areas with high voltage powerlines is a subject which EirGrid is very cognisant of. For this reason in 2012, EirGrid appointed Consultants to undertake an evidence-based study on the actual visual and landscape effects of the presence of transmission infrastructure over a range of Ireland’s typical landscapes. The Study included towers and substations located in different Landscape Character Types (LCTs) around Ireland and included locations in County Laois. The findings of the studies have</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The route proposed has been identified with due consideration for social, environmental and cultural impacts;</i></li> <li>• <i>The design is such that will achieve least environmental impact consistent with not incurring excessive cost;</i></li> <li>• <i>Where impacts are inevitable mitigation features have been included;</i></li> <li>• <i>Proposals for energy infrastructure should be assessed in accordance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Include the following text after first paragraph of Section 6.6.3.</p> <p><b>Grid25</b></p> <p>GRID25, the grid development strategy, was published in 2008 and is now due for review. EirGrid therefore published a draft strategy entitled <i>Your Grid, Your Views, Your Tomorrow: Ireland’s Draft Grid Development Strategy</i> for consultation in March 2015.</p> <p>The aim of <i>Your Grid, Your Views, Your Tomorrow</i> was to start a dialogue about the need for grid development, and to seek opinions and suggestions from anyone impacted by the plans. The draft strategy consultation ran from the 27 March to the 5 June 2015. Feedback on the draft strategy is currently being reviewed with the aim of informing the preparation of a Grid Development Strategy to be published in 2016. The draft strategy can be viewed at the following link: <a href="#">EirGrid-Draft-Grid-Development-Strategy</a>.</p> <p>The draft strategy considers the facilitation of renewable energy in the East Region. This is addressed in p.52 of Appendix 1, which states that <i>“To meet Dublin demand growth it is necessary to install additional transformer capacity and increase circuit capacity to the north and south of the city, and into the city itself. These projects will strengthen the network for all electricity users, and in doing so will improve the security and quality of supply”.</i></p> <p><b>Grid25 Implementation Programme</b></p> <p>With regard to the Grid25 Implementation Programme, it should be noted that EirGrid is currently preparing a new Grid Implementation Plan and associated SEA. The revised Grid Implementation Plan will replace EirGrid’s original “Grid 25 Implementation Programme 2011-2016”, and is a regional spatial 6 year Development Plan for grid</p>
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	<p>been concluded and can be viewed on our environmental webpage:  <a href="http://www.eirgridgroup.com/about/in-the-community/environment">http://www.eirgridgroup.com/about/in-the-community/environment</a></p>	<p>development.</p> <p><b>White Paper on Energy Policy Framework 2015 2030</b></p> <p>Building on the 2007 White Paper ‘<i>Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland</i>’, the 2015 White Paper sets out Ireland’s energy future and confirms the core objectives of sustainability, security of supply and competitiveness. Chapter 7.3 of the White Paper recognises the need for the development and renewal of energy networks to meet economic and social goals. It endorses the strategic programmes of the energy infrastructure providers, subject to their adherence to national and international standards for design and construction, and to community consultation.</p> <p><b>The Transmission Network and Landscape</b></p> <p>The issue of compatibility of land-uses and landscape areas with high voltage powerlines is a subject which EirGrid is very cognisant of. For this reason in 2012, EirGrid appointed Consultants to undertake an evidence-based study on the actual visual and landscape effects of the presence of transmission infrastructure over a range of Ireland’s typical landscapes. The Study included towers and substations located in different Landscape Character Types (LCTs) around Ireland and included locations in County Laois. The findings of the studies have been concluded and can be viewed on its environmental webpage:<a href="http://www.eirgridgroup.com/about/in-the-community/environment">http://www.eirgridgroup.com/about/in-the-community/environment</a></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 36</b></p> <p><b>KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL</b></p>	<p>Having regard to the <u>Wind Energy Strategy</u> of the Draft Laois County Development Plan please note the following:-</p> <p>Section 10.5 and Appendix J of the <i>Kilkenny County Development Plan 2014-2020</i> sets out the Wind Energy Development Strategy and policies of Kilkenny County Council in relation to Wind Energy. Outlined below are extracts from Section 10.5, including Figure 10.2 Wind Energy Development Strategy Map.</p> <p><b>10.5.3 Development Management Guidance</b>  All wind farm applications will be assessed in accordance with the <i>Wind Energy Development Guidelines</i> and the Wind Energy Development Strategy, as outlined in Appendix J. This has divided the areas of highest wind speeds in the county into three wind strategy categories, see Figure 10.2 as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preferred</li> </ol>	<p>The Planning Authority welcomes the input from Kilkenny County Council in relation to the draft Plan. In order to achieve alignment and uniformity between the wind energy strategies of both counties, the draft County Laois Wind Energy Strategy to be amended and the “Open for Consideration” designation for the area in question to be revoked.</p> <p>Proposed additional text above map 1.6.5.</p> <p><b>The Council’s approach to wind energy has been prepared to inform developers, landowners and the public of the most appropriate sites for the location of wind energy proposals. This approach accords with the guidelines on Wind Energy Development to identify preferred areas and areas where the wind farms should not be considered. This followed an analysis of areas suitable for wind energy development within the County. This assessment utilised a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) approach examining a range of factors relating to wind energy development including: wind energy potential (through the</b></p>

	<p>2. Open for consideration 3. Unsuitable</p> <p>It is noted that an area east of Ballinakill, Co. Laois, is identified on Map 1.6.5 – Wind Energy as being an area ‘Open for Consideration’. Please note that this is located adjacent to an area in County Kilkenny which has been identified on Figure 10.2 Wind Energy Development Strategy map (below) of the Kilkenny County Development Plan as being ‘Unsuitable’ for wind energy development (Area 7). This area situated in County Kilkenny is summarised in the Wind Energy Strategy as being an area which is very prominent in the landscape and is in very close proximity to a number of towns. In this regard, the area in County Kilkenny immediately adjacent to this area identified as ‘Open for Consideration’ would be sensitive to proximate wind farm developments of a significant nature within County Laois and as such, could suffer undue visual consequences arising from same.</p>	<p>Wind Speed Atlas, <a href="http://www.seai.ie">www.seai.ie</a>), proposed and existing grid connections, natural heritage designations, landscape sensitivity. The strategy identifies the following:</p> <p><b>Preferred Area</b> - These areas are considered suitable for windfarm development because of sufficient wind speeds, access to grid network, and established patterns of enquiries.</p> <p><b>Area Open for Consideration</b> – These are the only areas, outside the preferred areas, open to consideration for appropriate wind energy proposals. They have been identified having regard to a range of factors, including wind energy potential (through the wind speed atlas <a href="http://www.seai.ie">www.seai.ie</a>), existing grid connections, proposed grid connections, natural heritage designations and landscape sensitivity, the road infrastructure is adequate and where likely conflict with natural heritage designations can be protected.</p> <p><b>Area not for consideration</b> – Areas where wind energy proposals will not be favoured have been identified due to the significant environmental, heritage and landscape constraints. These include; SAC and SPA (Natura 2000) Sites, NHAs, unspoiled areas of EHSAs, Areas of Fresh Water Pearl Mussel, important views and prospects. It is considered that these areas have little or no capacity for wind energy development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Amend draft County Laois Wind Energy Strategy accordingly.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 41</b> Kildare County Council</p>	<p>The inclusion of a Draft Wind Strategy for County Laois in Appendix 5 is noted. Page 22 of same refers to four classification areas indicated on Map 10. From a review, Map no. 10 does not appear in the Draft Plan, however this may be mislabeled as Map 1.6.5 which is included.</p> <p>Regarding same, from the wind strategy map included it is not clear as to the status of lands located outside the four classification areas, whereby a significant portion of such lands adjoin the county boundary with Kildare. Clarification would be welcomed on the status of such lands in terms of potential wind energy development.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Planning Authority welcomes the input from Kildare County Council in relation to the draft Plan</p> <p>Map number to be corrected from 10 to 1.6.5.</p> <p>The lands outside of the four wind classification areas did not warrant designation because the prevailing wind regime is inadequate to support a commercial wind energy development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Map number to be corrected from 10 to 1.6.5.</p> <p>In view of the fact that the lands outside of the four wind classification areas did not warrant designation because the prevailing wind regime is considered inadequate to support a commercial wind energy development, the map no. 1.6.5</p>

		to be amended to increase the designation of such areas as "Areas not for consideration".
<p>SUBMISSION NO.56.</p> <p>An Taisce,</p>	<p><b>2.5 Solar</b></p> <p>Section 6.6.1.2 identifies 'solar power' as a means of renewable energy. It is noted that in general is has been 'limited to domestic installations'.</p> <p>There is the opportunity to further promote and encourage the development of Solar PV. In recent years, countries across the world have begun to reverse their dependency of fossil fuels. One such method of reducing dependency is through the development of Solar PV. France for example requires all new buildings in commercial areas to be partially covered by either solar panels or green roofs.</p> <p>Solar PV is an excellent distributive renewable energy source ideal for local and community placement. Laois County Council should use this as an opportunity to encourage the development of renewable energy in tandem with new development proposals.</p> <p><b>An Taisce recommend that a strong emphasis is placed on the development of renewable energy, with particular emphasis in the CDP on new commercial/warehouse/industrial development.</b></p> <p>With regards to ground-mounted arrays, solar farms are not specifically identified in the classes of EIA development listed within the EIA Directive or in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. Whilst the development of renewable energy is encouraged, the CDP should include a policy that <b>ensures optimum site suitability, protecting biodiversity, landscape sensitive areas, archaeological and architectural heritage and good tillage land.</b></p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having a robust renewable energy infrastructure [including from solar power] in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>Solar energy is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 6.6.1.3 <i>Solar Power</i> which states:</p> <p><i>"Solar energy development in County Laois in general has been limited to domestic installations for solar thermal energy. However, it is anticipated that there will be significant growth in ground mounted solar installations over the coming years. The principal reason for this is that solar PV systems which produce electricity directly from solar radiation are becoming more widespread as their advantages become apparent and as installation costs fall. Due to its long hours of daylight, particularly in the summer, Ireland has good potential to capture energy from the sun. In terms of sunlight County Laois normally typically receives c. 1000 kWh/m2/year. The sunniest months are May and June. During these months, sunshine duration averages between 5 and 6.5 hours per day over most of the county. For optimally located PV systems, each installed kW can be expected to produce in the order of 850kWh (units) of electricity per year in Ireland. A 4kW system would thus produce approximately 3,400kWh / year for consumption.</i></p> <p><b>Ground-Mounted Arrays</b></p> <p><i>The following site selection criteria for ground mounted arrays generally apply:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Typically suited to lowing-lands due to the need for level sites,</i></li> <li>• <i>Accessibility/proximity to electricity networks. In general, it is not viable to locate solar farms over 1km from network infrastructure,</i></li> <li>• <i>Extensive site curtilage,</i></li> <li>• <i>South facing aspect with either flat terrain or sloping gently,</i></li> <li>• <i>Land free from obstacles that may cause shading.</i></li> </ul>

		<p>As they are relatively new, solar farms are not specifically identified in the classes of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development listed either in the EIA Directive or in Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.</p> <p>The Council is supportive of the development and expansion of the ground mounted solar energy sector throughout the county subject to normal planning and environmental considerations. However there will be a presumption against their location in sensitive areas including Natura 2000 sites, flood plains and on productive agricultural land.”</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 38</b> <b>Bord na Mona plc</b></p>	<p><b>Section 6.6.1.3 Solar Energy</b></p> <p>Bord na Móna notes and concurs with the conclusion by the council in this section that it is anticipated that there will be significant growth in ground mounted solar installations over the coming years. Bord na Móna has indicated within its annual report in 2015 its intention to evaluate the potential for solar farms on cutaway peatlands. It is important that the County Development Plan provides clarity on the site selection criteria that should be applied to ground mounted arrays. The CDP does list a number of criteria in this section. Further criteria that should also be considered aside from those listed in this section would be landscape and visual impact, local ecology and archaeological considerations. In addition, there may be opportunities for Laois to take full advantage of existing and newly planned infrastructure where renewable energy technologies could complement each other and make efficient use of new and existing grid assets within the county.</p> <p>It is also the view of Bord na Móna that sites such as cutaway peatlands should be acknowledged as being more suitable with respect to location of solar farms in contrast to the agricultural lands that are typically proposed for this type of development. Food Wise 2025 is a 10-year vision for the Irish agri-food industry, which builds on Food Harvest 2020. Under this vision, agricultural exports are seen as having the potential to grow to €19 billion per annum, an 85% increase on the 2012-14 average. This level of agricultural ambition will undoubtedly put pressure on land use in Ireland. It is noted that the CDP indicates in this section that ‘there will be a presumption against their location in sensitive</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having a robust renewable energy infrastructure [including from solar power] in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>Solar energy is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 6.6.1.3 <i>Solar Power</i> which states:</p> <p><i>“Solar energy development in County Laois in general has been limited to domestic installations for solar thermal energy. However, it is anticipated that there will be significant growth in ground mounted solar installations over the coming years. The principal reason for this is that solar PV systems which produce electricity directly from solar radiation are becoming more widespread as their advantages become apparent and as installation costs fall.</i></p> <p><i>Due to its long hours of daylight, particularly in the summer, Ireland has good potential to capture energy from the sun. In terms of sunlight County Laois normally typically receives c. 1000 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year. The sunniest months are May and June. During these months, sunshine duration averages between 5 and 6.5 hours per day over most of the county. For optimally located PV systems, each installed kW can be expected to produce in the order of 850kWh (units) of electricity per year in Ireland. A 4kW system would thus produce approximately 3,400kWh / year for consumption.</i></p> <p><b>Ground-Mounted Arrays</b></p> <p>The following site selection criteria for ground mounted arrays generally apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typically suited to lowing-lands due to the need for level sites,</li> </ul>

	<p>areas including Natura 2000 sites, flood plains and on productive agricultural land'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility/proximity to electricity networks. In general, it is not viable to locate solar farms over 1km from network infrastructure,</li> <li>• Extensive site curtilage,</li> <li>• South facing aspect with either flat terrain or sloping gently,</li> <li>• Land free from obstacles that may cause shading.</li> </ul> <p>As they are relatively new, solar farms are not specifically identified in the classes of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development listed either in the EIA Directive or in Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.</p> <p>The Council is supportive of the development and expansion of the ground mounted solar energy sector throughout the county subject to normal planning and environmental considerations. However there will be a presumption against their location in sensitive areas including Natura 2000 sites, flood plains and on productive agricultural land.”</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Amend text to include reference to additional criteria</p> <p><b>Landscape and visual impact, local ecology and archaeological considerations.</b></p> <p>Given the likely low levels of traffic associated with solar energy sites, especially post-construction, amend Policy TRANS 16 as follows:</p> <p><i>It is the policy of the Council to:</i></p> <p><i>TRANS 16</i>  <i>Restrict development requiring access onto Regional Roads where speed limits in excess of 50kph apply, This restriction will not necessarily apply in the following cases:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In the case of applications for single-dwelling units for a famer or a farmer's son or daughter, permission may be considered, where evidence submitted clearly demonstrates that an alternative site accessed from a local road is not available and where the Council's road standards can be met. Also, the farm in question is of minimum size of 37 hectares [91 acres];</i></li> <li>• <i>In the case of applications for commercial developments unsuited to existing allocated development areas such as enterprise parks and town centres, such as waste disposal facilities, large-scale wind farms, solar farms or quarries and</i></li> </ul>
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		<p><i>associated aggregate processing and manufacturing, where the development will not adversely affect road safety.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>In the case of development relating to established farm activity where the development will not adversely affect road safety.</i></li> </ul> <p>Amend text in sub-section <i>Ground-Mounted Arrays</i> to include reference to additional criteria:</p> <p><i>Landscape and visual impact, local ecology and archaeological considerations. avoidance of material glint and glare on neighbouring residential properties and on transportation and aviation safety;</i></p>
<p>SUBMISSION 40</p> <p>Stella Burke Irish Wind Energy Association</p>	<p>The Irish Wind Energy Association (IWEA) welcomes the development of the <b>Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023</b> as a strategic planning framework for the county. This submission follows on from our previous submission to the pre-draft stage consultation dated 4th December 2015.</p> <p>IWEA is Ireland's leading renewable energy representative body and as such has an active interest in the potential for renewable energy, and in particular wind energy in County Laois. As the proposed amendments to the County Development Plan will inform the vision, objectives and policies for the entire county, IWEA would like to make the following comments which we request the planning authority take into consideration in the finalisation and adoption of the Development Plan.</p> <p>IWEA is extremely concerned in relation of some of the proposed provisions of the CDP and we would question why wind energy is being targeted in a way which stands in direct conflict with National Wind Farm Planning Guidance. IWEA is clear that a setback distance from wind energy of 1.5km as is proposed effectively sterilises the county for future wind energy development, allied with this, we can see the complete removal or reclassification of a number of areas deemed suitable for wind energy development in the Current Laois County Development Plan, 2011-2017 (Current CDP).</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</li> <li>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</li> <li>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</li> <li>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</li> </ol>

		<p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of an holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series</p>
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	<p>of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines</p>
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		<p>review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p>Remove Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice  <del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 44</b></p> <p><b>Claire Walsh Element Power Ireland Limited</b></p>	<p><b>Specific Comments on the Draft County Development Plan &amp; Wind Energy Strategy, 2017-2023</b></p> <p>Element Power welcomes the Council's statement in the Draft Laois County Development Plan, 2017-2023 (Draft CDP) to prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy during the lifetime of the Plan and approves of the policy measures in Volume 1, Written Statement, Section 6.6.1.4 Wind Energy as follows:</p> <p><i>'EN1 Encourage and favourably consider proposals for renewable energy developments and ancillary facilities subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria; in order to meet national, regional and county renewable energy targets and to facilitate a reduction in CO2 emissions and the promotion of a low carbon economy, and in compliance</i></p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county.</p> <p>These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer.</li> </ol>

<p><i>with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; EN3 Promote and facilitate wind energy development in accordance with Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Wind Energy Development (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2006) and the Wind Energy Strategy which forms part of this Plan, and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria; and EN4 Promote and encourage the development of energy from renewable sources such as hydro, bio energy, wind, solar, geothermal and landfill gas subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained In Section 8.'</i></p> <p>Element Power however is discouraged by the lack of support and promotion of renewable energy sources in the Draft CDP Core Strategy and has a serious concern with the policy measure proposed in Volume 1, Written Statement, Section 6.6.1.4 Wind Energy as follows:</p> <p><i>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development'.</i></p> <p>This policy measure is entirely contradictory to EN1, EN3 and EN4 and as detailed herein it will sterilise the entire county from any further wind energy development, ruling out locations where wind energy development could otherwise be entirely acceptable from an environmental and planning perspective.</p> <p>The Draft Laois Wind Energy Strategy, 2017-2023 (Draft WES) proposes the <b>complete removal</b> or <b>downgrading</b> in classification of a number of areas deemed 'Preferred' or 'Open for Consideration' in the Current Laois County Development Plan, 2011-2017 (Current CDP). Element Power is extremely concerned at the negative approach to wind energy development in the county and the detrimental impact this measure will have on the viability of not only future projects, but projects that are currently at an advanced pre-planning stage within the county.</p> <p>Circular Letter PL 20-13 advised local authorities to defer amending their existing Development Plan policies relating to wind</p>	<p>Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</p> <p>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</p> <p>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</p> <p>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</p> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of a holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the</p>
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<p>energy until such time as the review of the current Department of the Environment, Heritage &amp; Local Government Wind Energy Development Guidelines, 2006 (DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines) is completed. Planning authorities are required to have regard to guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in the performance of their functions. The DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines were issued under Section 28 of the Act and although being reviewed in part they have not been rescinded, withdrawn or updated at the time of writing. Laois County Council is therefore acting in direct contravention of its national and regional obligations by proposing revisions to its wind energy policy.</p> <p><b>Specific Issues with the Draft Wind Energy Strategy 2017-2023</b></p> <p>The strategy recognises that <i>'Ireland is currently extremely vulnerable both in terms of meeting future energy needs and ensuring price stability'</i> and acknowledges that <i>'the challenges of climate change resulting from increasing greenhouse gas emissions needs to be tackled effectively, strategically and urgently'</i>.</p> <p><b>Sterilisation of Landscape</b></p> <p><b>Development Control Standards</b></p> <p>Buffer Zones In addition to policy measure EN7, Section 6 of the Draft WES reiterates the proposed 1.5km setback distance from turbines as follows: <i>'Ensure a setback distance of 1.5km of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development'</i>.</p> <p>Volume 1 Written Statement, Section 6.6.1.4 specifically states: <i>'the Council will have regard to the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2006) in relation to the siting and development of wind turbines and the information required as part of the planning application'</i>.</p> <p>The proposed 1.5km setback distance is undoubtedly contrary to the above statement and grossly out of step with the current 500m setback distance as set out in the DoEHLG</p>	<p>lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries</p>
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<p>Wind Energy Guidelines.</p> <p>These guidelines are intended to afford adequate residential protection, ensure a consistency of approach throughout the country and to not place undue restrictions on developers which is the stated key objective of the Guidelines. Furthermore, the Draft WES ignores the requirement as set out within Section 3.1 of the DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines for a reasonable balance to be achieved between Government Policy and Local Proper Planning considerations as follows:</p> <p><i>'The development plan must achieve a reasonable balance between responding to overall Government Policy on renewable energy and enabling the wind energy resources of the planning authority's area to be harnessed in a manner that is consistent with proper planning and sustainable development.'</i></p> <p>Planning authorities are required to have regard to national policy and guidance when considering matters such as setback distances and should not seek to set individual setbacks which effectively restrict development in their individual functional areas.</p> <p>It is assumed that the application of the proposed 1.5km setback has not been assessed in a GIS land mapping context in the drafting of this policy and therefore the true ramifications of this measure on wind energy development have not been adequately comprehended. Element Power has carried out its own assessment of the serious impact of this proposed 1.5km setback distance. Figure 1 illustrates that a minute 0.02% (areas indicated in green) of the 'Areas Open for Consideration' will be left available for wind energy development. Element Power consider this proposal stark. It highlights the serious restriction the Draft WES would have on future wind energy development in County Laois. It removes the requirement for a Wind Energy Strategy for County Laois by sterilising all lands within the county, irrespective of the suitability of the landscape character and its classification as 'Preferred' or 'Open for Consideration' in the WES.</p> <p>We would also like to note the analysis in Figure 1 is based on setback distance only and</p>	<p>and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Remove</b> Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice  <del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p>
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	<p>does not take into consideration other constraints such as viable wind resource, land availability, cumulative impacts with other wind farms, environmental buffers etc which when applied would further reduce the already minute area available for development.</p> <p>It is worth pointing out in July 2016, the neighbouring County of Kildare issued a consultation on their Draft CDP 2017-2023 which did not recommend a setback distance above that of the DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines. In 2014, Roscommon County Council proposed a setback distance greater than the current 500m distance which had a Ministerial Direction issued against it and the proposal subsequently removed.</p> <p><b>Element Power strongly reject the proposed 1.5km setback distance. It is clearly uninformed and lacks justification with no quantitative study presented in the Draft CDP or WES. The proposal contravenes national and government policy and guidance, Circular Letter PL20-13 and is not in line with the policy measures of the Draft CDP, specifically EN3 which states that Laois County Council will 'facilitate wind energy development in accordance with Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Wind Energy Development (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2006)'.</b></p> <p><b>Ancillary Structures and Equipment</b> Section 6.12 of the Draft WES states '<i>all wind monitoring masts require planning permission</i>'. We wish to note that while planning permission is required for most elements of a wind farm development there are some developments which are (normally) exempt from planning. These include temporary met masts with a total height not exceeding 80m and being erected for a maximum of 15 months within a 24-month period. Refer to SI 235, Planning and Development Regulations Amendment 2008.</p> <p><b>Element Power request that Laois County Council review this proposal in light of the above Regulations.</b></p> <p><b>Landscape Character Types (LCT)</b> The original Landscape Character Assessment</p>	<p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b> <del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development</del></p>
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(Current LCA) for the County of Laois was undertaken and published as a supporting document to the Current CDP in 2011. The LCA was undertaken to classify and describe the landscape of County Laois, providing an evidence based characterisation of the county's landscape components, the process of which was to assist in consistent decision making to achieve a balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape. Seven different Landscape Character Types (LCT) for the County are identified with three of these LCT's considered for wind energy development namely LCT 1: Hills and Upland Areas, LCT 5: Peatland Areas and LCT 7: Rolling Hills Areas. To a lesser extent, certain undesignated peatlands are identified as 'Preferred' for wind energy development. Draft Appendix 6 LCA and Map 6 sets out the 7 different LCT's within County Laois. The policies, recommendations and extent of these LCT's all remain unchanged from the Current LCA. Refer to Appendix I. The Draft WES sets out policy in relation to the LCT's considered for wind energy development and as stated above, the policies, recommendations and extent of these LCT's remain unchanged from the Current CDP.

**Hills and Upland Areas**

The Current WES classifies part of the Hills and Upland Areas of County Laois as 'Open for Consideration' and 'Preferred' for wind energy development. The DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines provides guidance on the siting and design in landscape character types such as Hilly and Flat Farmland which relates to this LCT and the Draft WES advises that the siting and design principles of the DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines should be applied in relation to this LCT. The wording in Section 4.5 of the Draft WES under the heading 'LCT 1: Hills and Upland Areas' specifically states *'The Wind Energy Strategy has identified these upland areas for consideration in terms of future wind energy development and states that any such development must be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts.'* The reclassification of areas considered for wind energy development as proposed in Draft Map 1.6.5 is now inconsistent with the above text. The majority of the Hills and Upland

	<p>Areas previously considered 'Preferred' or 'Areas Open for Consideration' for wind energy development due to their sparse populations, viable wind regime, avoidance of designations and relatively low sensitivity/some capacity to absorb wind development are now either reclassified as 'Areas Not for Consideration' or removed entirely from the Area Classifications. The altered methodological approach to these wind energy reclassifications should be outlined in the Draft WES to ensure accordance with existing national guidelines, however there are no methodology revisions proposed.</p> <p>The Draft WES proposes these changes without any reasoning or new evidence base beyond the Draft WES stating <i>'having regard to the landscape character assessment policies, amendments have been made to the areas to reflect these policies'</i>. As stated above, the policies, recommendations and extent of the Hills and Upland Areas LCT remain unchanged from the Current CPD/WES so the reasoning for these reclassifications are unfounded.</p> <p>Element Power supports proper planning and development and questions the restrictive move to reduce viable wind energy development in the Hills and Upland Areas - areas which largely coincide with the elevated areas of the county and which are identified as areas for wind energy development in the Current and Draft WES. Additionally, when the proposed 1.5km setback is considered, there are no areas available for future wind energy development within LCT 1: Hills and Upland Areas. This is further incompatible with the Current and Draft WES classifications and would render the selection of a wind energy site in Laois as geographically impossible.</p> <p><b>Peatland Areas and Lowland Agricultural Areas</b></p> <p>In the central portion of County Laois, the Landscape Character Types of Peatland Areas and Lowland Agricultural Areas are classified as 'Preferred' in the Current WES. National guidance provides guidance on the siting and design of wind energy developments on these landscape character types which is best described as Flat Peatland or Hilly and Flat Farmland in the DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines. The Draft WES proposes to remove</p>	
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	<p>the 'Preferred' classification of these lands without reasoning or any proposal to identify the potential of this lands under any alternative classification.</p> <p>The Lowland Agricultural Area covers the largest proportion of County Laois and is comprised primarily of pastoral and tillage agriculture. It is generally a flat open landscape with an enclosed character with well-treed road corridors, dense hedgerows, parkland and areas of woodland. There are no protected views or prospects within the portion of lands designated as 'Preferred' in the Current WES.</p> <p>The character of Peatlands is described in the Landscape Character Assessment as strikingly flat and landcover is raised bog much of which is now exhausted and being considered for alternatives uses including afforestation, amenity and wind energy. Section 7.18 of the Draft CDP Written Statement sets out the following policy measure specifically in relation to LCT 5 Peatland:</p> <p><i>NH36 Support the identification of projects that have the potential to achieve commercial value such as industrial developments, renewable energy, tourism developments etc. while at the same time promoting high environmental standards and supporting Biodiversity objectives.</i></p> <p>Again, Element Power believes this policy cannot be implemented to support renewable energy development when Peatland areas deemed 'Preferred' in the Current WES are undesignated and removed from the Area Classifications in the Draft WES. In addition, when the proposed setback distance of 1.5km is applied to 'Areas Open for Consideration', only 0.02% of LCT 5: Peatland Areas is available for potential wind energy development. This stands contrary to Policy NH36.</p> <p><b>Rolling Hills Areas</b></p> <p>LCT 7: Rolling Hills Areas are presented in the Draft WES as a LCT considered for wind energy development. When the proposed setback distance of 1.5km is applied there are no areas available for potential wind energy development in this LCT.</p> <p><b>Adjoining County Strategies</b></p> <p>Section 4.11 'Wind Energy Strategies in</p>	
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	<p>Adjoining Counties' states that wind energy strategies from Counties Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, North Tipperary and Offaly were examined as part of the methodology and the areas within those counties identified as being favourable towards wind energy development immediately adjoining County Laois are highlighted. Element Power would like to point out that these areas are no longer highlighted in Draft Map 1.6.5.</p> <p>The Current WES represents a clear link between the LCT's considered for wind energy development and the wind energy Area Classifications however this link is clearly broken in the Draft WES. As detailed above the <b>removal</b> and <b>downgrading</b> in classification of area previously considered for wind energy development is proposed without justification or any new evidence base.</p> <p><b>Element Power request the Wind Energy Area Classifications revert to the existing and Current WES which represents a consistent methodology and approach to wind energy development while also complying with the requirements of strategic national policy and guidelines.</b></p> <p><b>Incoherent Mapping with the Wind Energy Strategy Methodology</b></p> <p>The landscape of County Laois currently holds areas that are 'Preferred', 'Open for Consideration' and 'Not for Consideration' to wind energy development. These area classifications and their geographical locations within County Laois are discussed further below. The methodology surrounding the selection and classification of lands considered for wind energy development is clearly outlined in Sections 4 and 5 of the Current WES and repeated in Sections 4 and 5 of the Draft WES. The classifications of lands for wind energy development encompass the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind Resource Mapping</li> <li>• Transmission Network/Grid proximity</li> <li>• Settlement Patterns</li> <li>• Designated Areas</li> <li>• Landscape Character Types</li> <li>• Views and Prospects</li> <li>• Archaeology</li> <li>• Recreation, Tourism and Amenity</li> <li>• Landslide Susceptibility</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind Energy Strategies in Adjoining Counties</li> </ul> <p>This methodology is aligned with the approach taken by a range of local authorities when considering and drafting a Wind Energy Strategy for their county and in the past was also adopted by Laois County Council in the preparation of their original and Current WES. However, Laois County Council in their Draft WES are now proposing to significantly reclassify lands previously considered for wind energy development through the use of <b>incoherent mapping with the WES methodology</b>. This is presented in Map 1.6.5 of the Draft WES and is proposed without any new evidence or basis as detailed below.</p> <p>The Landscape Character Assessment, 2011-2017 for County Laois remains unchanged in the Draft CDP. Designated Views and Prospects as seen in Map 1.7.11 of the Draft CDP remain unchanged from the Designated Views and Prospects identified in the Current CDP signifying that these View and Prospects are once again considered sympathetic and aligned with the View and Prospects of the County. No further areas within Laois have been identified as sensitive or evolving into an increasingly sensitive area. County Laois in their Draft CDP hasn't incurred any changes in relation to International, European or National ecological designations. Such changes can often influence the reclassification of designated wind energy areas to ensure the application of European legislation is addressed at a county level.</p> <p>Primary ecological and heritage sensitivities such as Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) are afforded to a range of sites in County Laois and currently shape the existing wind energy classifications. These designations lend no reasoning to the extensive changes proposed in Map 1.6.5 for the Draft WES.</p> <p>The detail provided in the Draft WES in relation to wind resource mapping, proximity of lands to a grid connection, archaeological monuments and landslide susceptibility all remain effectively unchanged from the Current WES, whilst settlement patterns from 2012 remain similar to settlement patterns in 2016.</p>	
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	<p>It does not accord that an unchanged landscape in relation to its character, views and prospects, ecological designations and sensitivity should be subjected to such a dramatic reclassification as proposed in the Draft WES for lands which were previously considered for wind energy development.</p> <p>Element Power believe the methodology outlined in the Draft WES has not been applied to the final wind energy map (Map 1.6.5 'Wind Energy').</p> <p>The purpose of the WES is to assist the Planning Authority in taking a streamlined approach to wind energy planning applications and ultimately assist in the decision making process. If the Draft Map 1.6.5 is adopted, the re-classification of wind energy areas will result in an incoherent strategy for local authorities to work from and would be contrary to existing wind energy guidance.</p> <p><b>Element Power request that the discord between Sections 4 and 5 of the Draft WES and Map 1.6.5 is rectified to ensure that the correct methodology is adequately reflected in the final graphical representation of areas considered for wind energy development. An accurate application of this methodology is presented in the Current WES 'Wind Energy Strategy Map' and as such, is a more suitable instrument for local authorities and developers alike to evaluate the suitability of lands for wind energy development.</b></p> <p><b>Wind Energy Area Classifications</b></p> <p>Element Power understand that the Draft WES proposes to replace the existing 'Wind Energy Strategy Map' with Map 1.6.5 'Wind Energy'. Refer to Appendix II. Section 6 and 'Map 1.6.5 Wind Energy' of the Draft WES subdivides Co. Laois into four distinct area classifications based on the suitability of the county to wind energy generation.</p> <p><b>Strategic Areas</b></p> <p>This classification remains unchanged from the Current WES, with no areas in the county identified as 'Strategic Areas' and deemed eminently suitable for wind energy development.</p>	
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	<p><b>Preferred Areas</b></p> <p>Four areas are identified as 'Preferred Areas' in the Current WES. The Draft WES seeks to significantly reduce these areas and limit the 'Preferred Areas' to one specific area of the county which is a former Bord na Móna cutaway bog near Rathdowney and in which six no. turbines are already operational.</p> <p>This one 'Preferred Area' constitutes a minor 0.5% of the land area of the entire county and as demonstrated in Figure 1, when the proposed setback distance of 1.5km is taken into consideration there are no areas available for development within the 'Preferred Area' classification. We fail to understand how Laois County Council have identified this area as 'Preferred' when the proposed setback distance sterilises all wind energy development in this area. There is no justification given in the Draft WES for the <b>complete removal</b> or <b>downgrading</b> of the wind energy area classifications for the remaining three 'Preferred Areas'. A significant portion of land running from the former Bord na Móna cutaway bog known as Cul na Móna between Portlaoise, Abbeyleix and Mountrath has been completely removed from the area classifications. The Current WES acknowledges that within this area <i>'turbines of minimum 100ms height would need to be utilised to harness the prevailing wind at these sites'</i>. However, no reasoning or new evidence base is given for the complete removal of this previously 'Preferred Area'. We are extremely concerned that this area is proposed for removal without foundation and is not based on any objective assessment.</p> <p>The remaining 'Preferred Areas' in the Current WES including Cullahill Mountain, Cullenagh Mountain near Ballyroan, extending eastwards to Luggacurren and Timahoe, southwards towards the Kilkenny border incorporating parts of The Swan, Wolfhill and Bilboa and westwards towards Spink and Ballinakill are all reclassified as 'Not for Consideration'. This represents a significant <b>twofold reclassification</b> for areas which in the Current WES are considered 'Preferred Areas' for wind energy development. These areas are classified as preferred in the Current WES due to their sparse populations,</p>	
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	<p>viable wind regime, avoidance of designations and relatively low sensitivity/some capacity to absorb wind development. They fall under the description of the Hills and Upland LCT which in the Draft WES contains the wording <i>'The Wind Energy Strategy has identified these upland areas for consideration in terms of future wind energy development and states that any such development must be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts'</i>. The Current WES acknowledges that these areas are elevated and exposed with numerous coniferous tree plantations which offer some, albeit limited screening potential. Element Power questions on what basis these areas are no longer preferred. The Draft WES does not contain any altered methodological approach to the wind energy classifications. As detailed above it does not accord that an unchanged landscape in relation to its character, views and prospects, ecological designations and sensitivity should be subjected to such a significant reclassification as proposed in the Draft WES for lands which were previously considered for wind energy development and for the extensive changes as proposed in Map 1.6.5.</p> <p>The Draft WES states <i>'having regard to the landscape character assessment policies, amendments have been made to the areas to reflect these policies'</i>. As stated above, the policies, recommendations and extent of the Hills and Upland Areas LCT remain unchanged from the Current CPD/WES so the reasoning for these reclassifications are unfounded.</p> <p>Element Power questions the seriously negative approach to the reclassification of these areas due to the lack of justification and transparency provided and the Councils motivation for proposing these amendments where three out of four previously 'Preferred Areas' which have not experienced any landscape character changes are now considered 'no go areas'. Element Power is extremely concerned at this reclassification and the lack of evidence for it. <b>Element Power reject this reclassification in its entirety and request that the 'Preferred Areas' in the Current WES remain to ensure a consistent methodology and approach to wind energy development.</b></p> <p><b>Areas Open for Consideration</b></p>	
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	<p>'Areas Open for Consideration' in the Current WES are described as <i>'areas that exhibit economically viable wind speeds, are sparsely populated, have some capacity to absorb wind development but which are sensitive enough to require a detailed site-by-site appraisal before any assumptions are made as to the suitability of the area for development'</i>.</p> <p>The Draft WES proposes to reduce these areas from 14% to 8% of the county. This reduction is again due to the reclassification of two out of four areas previously identified as 'Areas Open for Consideration' to 'Areas Not for Consideration', which predominantly surround the previously 'Preferred' upland areas of Timahoe extending eastwards to Luggacurren, southwards to The Swan, Wolfhill, Bilboa and westwards towards Spink and Ballinakill. The Current WES states <i>'applications in these areas will be treated on their merits with the onus on the applicant to demonstrate why the development should be granted permission'</i>. The Draft WES makes no such statement however once again states <i>'having regard to the landscape character assessment policies, amendments have been made to the areas to reflect these policies'</i>. This is the only reasoning provided for the reduction in the 'Areas Open for Consideration' and as stated above the policies, recommendations and extent of LCT 1: Hills and Upland Areas to which the above areas relate remain unchanged so the reasoning for these amendments is unsupported.</p> <p>Element Power questions how these reclassifications are in support of national and government policy for renewable energy development when Figure 1 demonstrates that of the 'Areas Open for Consideration', 0.02% is available to wind energy development.</p> <p><b>Element Power reject this reclassification in its entirety and request that the 'Areas Open for Consideration' in the Current WES remain.</b></p> <p><b>Areas Not for Consideration</b></p> <p>The Draft WES proposes to significantly increase the Current WES 'Areas Not for Consideration' from 10% to 18%. A large portion of these additional areas, comprise of areas currently considered 'Preferred' or 'Open for Consideration' in the Current CDP. It is clearly nonsensical that an unchanged landscape, currently considered for wind</p>	
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	<p>energy development, which hasn't encounter any changes to its landscape character or classification methodology should be subjected to such significant reclassification. Element Power questions this highly negative approach. All of these additional areas are identified in the Current CDP as either sparsely populated, have viable wind speeds or potential capacity to absorb wind energy development but which are sensitive enough to require a detailed site by site appraisal. These areas are now reclassified without explanation, lending no reasoning to the extensive changes proposed in Draft Map 1.6.5. The EIA process is a well-established part of the planning process in assessing the individual merits of a wind farm application and is designed to ensure that any potentially significant adverse effects are avoided or mitigated for each specific application and area.</p> <p><b>Element Power reject this reclassification and request that Laois County Council review these reclassifications and allow the areas identified within the Current CDP to be assessed at a project specific level and justified where suitable through the EIA process.</b></p> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>Element Power fully supports a nationally consistent and strategic approach to development. However as detailed above we have <b>serious concerns with the Draft Laois County Development Plan and Wind Energy Strategy, 2017-2023 which are in contrast to proper strategic planning and if implemented will sterilise all potential further wind energy development in the County of Laois.</b></p> <p>The Draft CDP acknowledges Ireland's target of meeting 40% of its energy demand from renewable resources by 2020 and states that Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy. The Draft CDP states '<i>a number of areas in the county have been identified with potential for wind energy generation</i>' and '<i>it is the policy of the Council to support in principle and in appropriate scales and locations, the development of wind energy resources in County Laois.</i> However as detailed</p>	
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	<p>above this is untrue and Element Power is concerned at the wholly negative approach taken to wind energy development in the county.</p> <p>The proposed setback distance of 1.5km is uninformed and lacks justification as no quantitative study has been provided in the Draft CDP or WES. The proposal is <b>grossly out of step with the current 500m setback distance as set out in the DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines</b> and contravenes national and government policy and guidance, Circular Letter PL20-13 and is not in line with the policy measures of the Draft CDP, specifically EN3 which states that Laois County Council will <i>'facilitate wind energy development in accordance with Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Wind Energy Development (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2006)'</i>.</p> <p>The preparation of a clear strategy, methodology and identification of geographical areas where wind energy development is encouraged or permissible is necessary to ensure clarity for all parties. This provides a greater degree of clarity for the wind industry, local residents and groups. This has not been achieved by Laois County Council in their review of the Draft CDP and WES. Element Power has serious concerns with the <b>complete removal and downgrading</b> in classification of areas previously considered 'Preferred Areas' or 'Open for Consideration' to wind energy development. These proposals represent significant reclassifications that are presented without basis, for areas which have not experienced any landscape character changes and for which the methodological approach to classifying these areas remains unchanged from the Current CDP and WES. It does not accord that an unchanged landscape in relation to its character, views and prospects, ecological designations and sensitivity as presented in the Draft CDP and WES should be subjected to such significant reclassifications. These reclassifications are proposed without foundation through the use of <b>incoherent mapping with the WES methodology</b>, are not based on an objective assessment and set an unwelcome precedent for improper forward planning in Co. Laois. The Draft CDP and WES will unnecessarily and inappropriately terminate the implementation of European,</p>	
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	<p>National and Local policy to generate additional electricity from renewable sources which would otherwise satisfy the requirements of national policy and guidelines and the requirements of proper planning and sustainable development. Element Power would like to reiterate that wind energy is the most cost competitive, mature and readily available large-scale resource that can help Ireland meet its renewable energy targets.</p> <p><b>Element Power reject in the strongest manner the proposals of Laois County Council in relation to increased setback distance and the significant reclassification of areas previously considered for wind energy development. We request Laois County Council to review and take into consideration all of our comments and views in this submission. We remain firmly of the view that Laois County Council are in contravention of both National Guidelines and Government Policy in relation to renewable energy policy, undermining Irish climate change targets and the DoEHLG Wind Energy Guidelines which are currently under review and which have not been rescinded, withdrawn or updated at the time of writing.</b></p>	
<p>SUBMISSION 49</p> <p>Ciaran Mc Gill Coillte</p>	<p>The submission addresses the potential implications of the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017 – 2023 on the potential of Coillte’s estate for wind energy generation in County Laois. In this regard, it is considered that the proposed changes have the potential to undermine the potential future development of Coillte’s lands in County Laois for wind energy generation.</p> <p><b>Draft Development Plan-Renewable Energy Policy</b></p> <p>Coillte welcomes the renewable energy policies set out in Section 6.6.1.4 Wind Energy, Volume 1 of the <i>Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017 – 2023</i> (Draft CDP) specifically policy objectives EN1, EN2 and EN4. Coillte also welcomes Laois County Council’s statement in the Draft CDP to</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</li> <li>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties</li> </ol>

<p>prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy during the lifetime of the Plan</p> <p>However, having reviewed the Draft CDP, Coillte wish to highlight that the wider implications of national policy needs to be seriously considered in the Development Plan Strategy, policy and objectives particularly in terms of how our energy targets can be met. The adopted Development Plan must include clear policies and objectives fully supporting the delivery of wind energy developments in locations which benefit from an excellent wind resource, good connection capability to the National Grid and which can be realised with minimum adverse impacts on the local environment. The delivery of wind energy development in the County should meet specific planning and development criteria in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. It is submitted that the Planning Authority has a duty to facilitate wind energy development with respect to national policy but also in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the County in the County Development Plan.</p> <p>However, the Draft CDP does not do this. In this regard, Coillte has serious concerns with the changes to the wind area classifications and development control standards included in the Draft CDP and Draft Wind Energy Strategy (WES) insofar as they relate to wind farm development in the County. These changes are considered a significant departure from the current CDP, WES and the current Wind Energy Development Guidelines, 2006 (Wind Energy Guidelines) issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). It is further considered that these run entirely contrary to the spirit, intention and indeed policy imperative of renewable energy policies EN<sub>1</sub>, EN<sub>3</sub> and EN<sub>4</sub> included within the Draft CDP.</p> <p>From a practical perspective, Coillte considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no basis for changes to the</li> </ul>	<p>Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</p> <p>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</p> <p>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</p> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines.with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ<sub>1</sub></b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of an holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the</p>
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	<p>wind area classifications and development control standards in the Draft CDP. Nothing has changed scientifically, environmentally, technically or socially to support such a change, in particular in relation to the re-designation of sites in the Draft WES.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed changes are prohibitive and will restrict Laois' abilities to encourage inward investment, its ability to develop a low carbon economy in line with energy policies EN1 included within the Draft CDP</li> <li>• The proposed changes will reduce the opportunities available to local communities to develop local initiatives with the financial supports offered by wind farm developments.</li> <li>• The changes will undermine the ability of Ireland to achieve binding renewable energy targets.</li> <li>• The proposed re-designations will significantly impact the development potential for wind energy throughout the County</li> </ul> <p>In terms of a policy framework for wind energy projects, Coillte considers the Draft WES to be significantly inconsistent with:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wind Energy Guidelines, (issued under section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts, in 2006);</li> <li>• The Midland Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022, in relation to the areas identified as suitable for wind energy/renewable energy development;</li> <li>• National targets for generation of energy consumption from renewable energy sources by 2020, (as derived from EC Directive 2009/28 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources); and</li> <li>• National Government policy commitments to increase on and offshore wind energy production indicated in the Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012-2020.</li> </ul>	<p>renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end</p>
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<p><b>Draft Development Plan-Wind Energy Strategy</b></p> <p>The Draft CDP acknowledges Ireland's target of meeting 40% of its energy demand from renewable resources by 2020 and states that Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy. The Draft CDP further states '<i>a number of areas in the county have been identified with potential for wind energy generation</i>' and '<i>it is the policy of the Council to support in principle and in appropriate scales and locations, the development of wind energy resources in County Laois</i>'.</p> <p>However, the conclusions of the Draft WES as presented in Figure 1.6.5 (reproduced as <b>Figure 1</b> in this report) do not support this. The number of areas in the County previously identified with potential for wind energy generation has been substantially and without obvious foundation reduced. In this regard:</p> <p>No areas in the County are identified as 'Strategic Areas' deemed eminently suitable for wind energy development.</p> <p>Only one 'Preferred Area' is identified as suitable for wind energy development in the Draft WES- constituting approx. 0.5% of the land area of the entire County, and there is no justification given for the complete removal or reclassification of the remaining three 'Preferred Areas' identified in the current WES. These areas include lands owned by Coillte with the potential for wind energy generation.</p> <p>The omission of the Cullenagh Mountain which was previously located within 'Preferred Area No. 3' has also been done so entirely without justification. This is notwithstanding specific reference to Cullenagh Mountain in section 3.0 of the Draft WES which notes that the bulk of wind generation activity so far has been in three places including "<i>an upland area at Cullenagh Mountain roughly between Abbeyleix and Portlaoise in the centre of the county where there is a valid permission under</i></p>	<p>uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Remove</b> Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice</p> <p><del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b>  <del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads</del></p>
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	<p><i>PI Ref 13/268 for 18 no. turbines with a projected output of c. 45 MW. This has yet to be constructed”.</i></p> <p>The Draft WES also proposes to reduce the current WES ‘Areas Open for Consideration’ from 14% of the County to approx. 8%. This reduction is again due to the reclassification of two out of four areas previously identified as ‘Areas Open for Consideration’ to ‘Areas Not Open for Consideration’. Once again this is without foundation and has implications for lands owned by Coillte with the potential for wind energy generation.</p> <p>The Draft WES also proposes to significantly increase the current WES ‘Areas Not Open for Consideration’ from approx. 10% to approx. 18% of the land area of the entire County. All of these additional areas are identified in the current CDP as either sparsely populated, have viable wind speeds or potential capacity to absorb wind energy development but which are sensitive enough to require a detailed site by site appraisal. At the very least these areas should remain ‘Open for Consideration’.</p> <p>Of particular concern to Coillte is the fact that the majority of Cullenagh Mountain and its permitted Cullenagh Wind Farm thereon is unexplainably no longer a ‘Preferred Area’ but primarily included within an ‘Area Not for Consideration’, as indicated in Figure 1.6.5 (reproduced as <b>Figure 1</b> in this submission). The majority of Cullenagh Mountain is also no longer specifically referred to in Section 5 of the Draft WES as a ‘Preferred Area’; however the area referred to as an ‘Open for Consideration Area’ retains its designation (see Figure 1.6.5). This is clearly anomalous. In this regard, Coillte is not aware of any material change to wind resources, the transmission network, settlement pattern, designated areas, and/or landscape character area types which would result in such a change from 6 years ago. Indeed the only material change is that planning permission has now been granted for 18 no. turbines at this location through the statutory planning process, and the pre-construction phase for the wind farm is now well advanced.</p>	<p><del>in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development</del></p>
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	<p>The implications of the changes to the wind classification area are identified with reference to The Wind Energy Map in WES 2012 – 2017 (<b>Figure 1</b>) and Figure 1.6.5 of the Draft WES 2017 – 2023 (<b>Figure 2</b>). For information we have also identified the location of the permitted Cullenagh Wind Farm.</p> <p>We would also specifically refer to the Draft Landscape Character Assessment 2017 – 2023 (Appendix 6 of the Draft CDP) which clearly sets out the following: <i>‘The Wind Energy Strategy has identified these upland areas for consideration in terms of future wind energy development. Any such development must be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts. The siting and design of wind energy proposals shall be in accordance with the Planning Guidelines for Wind Energy Development for Planning Authorities [DoEHLG, 2006] and the County Laois Wind Energy Strategy’.</i></p> <p>However, the majority of the upland areas are now identified as <i>‘Areas not for Consideration’</i> including re-classification of areas previously identified as either <i>‘Permitted Areas’</i> and/or <i>‘Areas Open for Consideration’</i>. As noted previously, a substantial amount of land owned by Coillte, particularly in upland locations, is suitable for the generation of wind energy including <i>inter alia</i> the fact that they generally have a good separation distance to houses and site disturbance has already taken place in the initial planting and subsequent management - including clearfelling. Coillte therefore respectfully asks Laois County Council to review its wind energy strategy in respect of upland areas within County Laois.</p> <p><b>Development Control Standards for Wind Farms in County Laois</b></p> <p>Coillte is also concerned regarding the proposed setback distance from wind turbines of 1.5km from schools, dwellings, community centres, and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development. This requirement is reinforced by policy objective EN7: <i>‘Ensure a set-back</i></p>	
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	<p><i>distance of 1.5 of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development'.</i></p> <p>This policy requirement effectively sterilises the County for future wind energy development. The approach taken by Laois County Council will effectively undermine wind energy development in the County, ruling out locations where wind energy could otherwise be entirely acceptable from an environmental and planning perspective.</p> <p>It has been reiterated by the Department of the Environment in relation to the Westmeath, Roscommon and Donegal County Development Plans through a Section 31 Direction, that Planning Authorities are required to have regard to guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in the performance of their functions. The Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 were issued under section 28 and although being reviewed in part they have not been rescinded or withdrawn. The Draft Wind Energy Strategy is in direct contravention of Laois County Council's national obligations in respect of renewable energy and contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of Laois.</p> <p><b>Coilltes Approach to Wind Farm Development</b></p> <p>n working to realise the potential of its estate for renewable energy development, Coillte carefully considers the social, economic and environmental impact a project may have on the surrounding area. In terms of developing our renewable energy resources we are committed to:</p> <p>Early, open, transparent and meaningful public participation and consultation with stakeholders and local communities;</p> <p>Best in class Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment that enhances and preserves local ecology and the habitats therein;</p> <p>Complying with all relevant environmental legislation, health and safety legislation, regulations and other requirements as they arise;</p>	
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	<p>Minimising the impact of wind farm development on the surrounding landscape and surrounding forestry in so far as that is possible through careful siting and design; Considering the impact on recreational users, and also the opportunity there may be when developing a wind farm to develop enhanced recreational facilities; and Mitigating against the risk of pollution and conducting our business in an environmentally friendly way.</p> <p>In this regard, Coillte seeks to identify suitable sites for a wind farm following a rigorous plan led environmental and technical evaluation process which has specific regard to complying with relevant County Development Plan, Wind Energy Strategy and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Governments (DoEHLG) 'Wind Energy Planning Guidelines, 2006', and in close consultation with the relevant Planning Authority, the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht, Inland Fisheries Ireland and other stakeholders.</p> <p>In summary, Coillte makes significant investments in bringing its sites through the planning process. This is the process which led to the identification of the Cullenagh site, Cullenagh, County Laois. The pre-construction phase is now well advanced and Coillte is looking forward to the constructing and commissioning phases. In this regard, Coillte want to establish the Cullenagh Wind Farm as a 'best in class' wind farm project based on rigorous plan-led environmental and technical assessment and proactive community engagement.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>In conclusion, Coillte has serious concerns on the implications of the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017 - 2023 on the potential of Coillte's estate for wind energy generation in County Laois. It considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no basis for changes to the wind area classifications and development control standards in the Draft CDP. Nothing has changed scientifically, environmentally, technically or socially to support such a change, in particular in relation to the re-designation of sites in the Draft WES.</li> <li>• The changes are prohibitive and will</li> </ul>	
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	<p>restrict Laois' abilities to encourage inward investment, its ability to develop a low carbon economy in line with energy policies EN1 included within the Draft CDP and it will reduce the economic opportunities available for the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The changes will undermine the ability of Ireland to achieve binding renewable energy targets.</li> <li>• The re-designations will seriously restrict the development potential of Coillte lands throughout the County as a substantial portion of the 'Preferred Areas' and 'Open for Consideration Areas' identified in the 2012 -2017 WES are in Coillte ownership, and are very suitable for wind farm development, as outlined above. Thus Coillte's potential for growth and economic potential, aligned with national policy will be seriously affected should the Draft WES be adopted in its current format.</li> </ul> <p>Accordingly:</p> <p>Coillte requests Laois County Council to review its Draft WES in its entirety. The proposed changes to the wind area classifications and development control standards in the Draft CDP are contrary to 'plan led' development and is contrary to good planning practice.</p> <p>Coillte requests Laois County Council to review the Draft WES classification of upland areas within the County and in particular its re-classification of areas previously identified as either 'Permitted Areas' and/or 'Areas Open for Consideration' but which are now classified as 'Areas not for Consideration'. This includes forested areas which can be very suitable for wind farm development.</p> <p>Coillte requests the removal of Policy EN7 and the development control standard requiring a setback distance of 1.5 kilometre of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all 'Open for Consideration Areas' for wind farm development as it is contrary to Section 28 Government Guidance</p> <p>In respect of its permitted Wind Farm at Cullenagh, Coillte requests that the Draft Wind Energy Strategy 2017 - 2023 be</p>	
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	<p>amended as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Section 5 of the Draft WES, specifically identify the Cullenagh Mountain area as a Preferred Location for wind energy generation (as is the case in the current WES and consistent with the fact that planning permission has been granted for a wind farm at this location). Modify Map 1.6.5 of the Draft WES to identify the Cullenagh site as having 'Approved Capacity' for wind generation (and include a new symbol to acknowledge the site has planning permission).</li> <li>Modify Map 1.6.5 of the Draft WES to identify Cullenagh Mountain as within a 'Preferred Area' for wind generation (as is the case in the current WES) or at the very least as being in an 'Area Open for Consideration' consistent with the fact that planning permission has been granted for a wind farm at this location.</li> </ul> <p>Finally, Coillte is aware that the Irish Wind Energy Association (IWEA) has made a comprehensive submission on the Draft CDP and fully supports the points raised therein.</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION No 51 Colm Ryan Light source Renewable Energy Holdings Limited</p>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Lightsource Renewable Energy (Lightsource) is Europe's leading utility scale solar energy generator. We are primarily focused on utility scale ground and roof mounted photovoltaic installations, which we maintain and operate, selling the electricity generated either for use on the national grid network, or directly to a specific high energy user.</p> <p>Lightsource recently launched Ireland's first solar farm at Crookedstone Road, Nutts Corner, Co. Antrim, which directly powers Belfast International Airport. Lightsource have planning approval for a further 10 sites across Northern Ireland, the largest being a 25MW (100 acre) solar farm project in Maghaberry, Co. Antrim.</p> <p>We currently have a live planning application for a 19.1MW (82 acre) solar farm at Monaraha, Cahir, Co. Tipperary (Planning Register Reference: 16600565), and other projects under development in the Republic.</p>	<p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having a robust renewable energy infrastructure [including from solar power] in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>Solar energy is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 6.6.1.3 <i>Solar Power</i> which states:</p> <p><i>"Solar energy development in County Laois in general has been limited to domestic installations for solar thermal energy. However, it is anticipated that there will be significant growth in ground mounted solar installations over the coming years. The principal reason for this is that solar PV systems which produce electricity directly from solar radiation are becoming more widespread as their advantages become apparent and as installation costs fall. Due to its long hours of daylight, particularly in the summer, Ireland has good potential to capture energy from the sun. In terms of sunlight County Laois normally typically receives c.</i></p>

	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your Draft County Development Plan for County Laois (2017-2023). Lightsource welcomes the proactive and supportive references to solar development in County Laois.</p> <p>The Development Plan is in general a well thought out and clearly structured document, and provides consistent direction for development in County Laois. However, we feel that there is scope to add further value to the document. I have addressed these issues, however welcome the opportunity to discuss further if required.</p> <p>Please note that these comments only address ground mounted solar, and do not seek to comment on the overall approach to renewables set in this document.</p> <p><b>Section 6.6.1.3 Solar Power</b> This section correctly identifies a number of site selection criteria that should be considered for ground mounted solar arrays. Lightsource supports and wishes to commend Laois County Council for their support for Ground Mounted Solar Farms. In particular, the Council's following statement on page 117: <i>"The Council is supportive of the development and expansion of the ground mounted solar energy sector throughout the county subject to normal planning and environmental considerations."</i></p> <p>We make the following comments and recommendations on the criteria specified below:</p> <p>☐ "Accessibility/proximity to electricity networks"</p> <p>Grid connection and capacity is one of the major challenges for solar developers in the Republic of Ireland. Other grid constraints in addition to capacity availability that will impact on the viability of a solar farm would be as follows:</p> <p>- Necessary grid reinforcement works that will make a solar farm project uneconomic. These costs will only become known when a firm connection offer is made, which could be years</p>	<p>1000 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year. The sunniest months are May and June. During these months, sunshine duration averages between 5 and 6.5 hours per day over most of the county. For optimally located PV systems, each installed kW can be expected to produce in the order of 850kWh (units) of electricity per year in Ireland. A 4kW system would thus produce approximately 3,400kWh / year for consumption.</p> <p><b>Ground-Mounted Arrays</b> <i>The following site selection criteria for ground mounted arrays generally apply:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typically suited to lowing-lands due to the need for level sites,</li> <li>• Accessibility/proximity to electricity networks. In general, it is not viable to locate solar farms over 1km from network infrastructure,</li> <li>• Extensive site curtilage,</li> <li>• South facing aspect with either flat terrain or sloping gently,</li> <li>• Land free from obstacles that may cause shading.</li> </ul> <p><i>As they are relatively new, solar farms are not specifically identified in the classes of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development listed either in the EIA Directive or in Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.</i></p> <p><i>The Council is supportive of the development and expansion of the ground mounted solar energy sector throughout the county subject to normal planning and environmental considerations. However there will be a presumption against their location in sensitive areas including Natura 2000 sites, flood plains and on productive agricultural land."</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Amend text to include reference to additional criteria</p> <p><i>Landscape and visual impact, local ecology and archaeological considerations, avoidance of material glint and glare on neighbouring residential properties and on transportation and aviation safety;</i></p> <p>Correct sp in first criterion:</p> <p><i>Typically suited to <b>low-lying</b> lands due to the need for level sites</i></p> <p><b>Development Contributions</b></p> <p><i>A revised Development Contribution Scheme for Laois County Council covering the period 2018-2022 will be</i></p>
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<p>after an application is made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complicated cable / overhead line connection route, whereby the local topography, geology and or land ownership makes the grid connection route uneconomic for the solar farm to proceed; and</li> <li>- Possibility of group processing of grid applications. This is where the DNO or TSO decides to process a number of grid applications in a group and they then all share the grid connections costs. For this process to be successful the solar farms must have planning granted prior to the group processing to commence.</li> </ul> <p>As set out in Class 26 or 27 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 many grid connection routes fall under the Exempted Development provisions, and as such are not required to be covered in the planning application for non-EIA developments (a subject I cover further below). In addition, at the time an applicant is applying for planning permission, the details of the exact point of connection and location of the grid connection cable route will often not have been finalised, due to the timeframes involved in receiving a confirmed grid offer from ESB Networks or EirGrid.</p> <p>Requests for information, either at submission or as a Further Information request, relating to Grid Connections and Applications for Grid, would prove difficult for developers to respond to given the requested information may not be available. It may be possible to provide indicative information, however where final details are not available of the grid connection, this should not prejudice the assessment or determination of the solar farm application.</p> <p>☐ <i>“solar farms are not specifically identified in the classes of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development listed either in the EIA Directive or in Schedule 5 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended”.</i></p> <p>In the High Court decision on the <i>O’Grainna and other v An Board Pleanála (12 December 2014)</i> Judicial Review [the O’Grainna judgement], the Court held that for a wind farm proposal constituting EIA development, submitting separate applications for the wind turbine infrastructure and the grid connection</p>	<p><i>prepared for early in 2017.</i></p> <p>In the new scheme there will be reference to solar energy development in the chargeable classes of development.</p>
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	<p>was considered inappropriate “project splitting”.</p> <p>It is therefore critical that applicants understand whether or not their project is considered to be EIA development <i>prior</i> to the preparation and submission of a planning application. If the proposal is not considered to be EIA development, then an application can be sought for planning permission for the solar farm itself, and grid connection works either provided for as Exempted Development, or permission sought separately once details are known.</p> <p>Lightsource formally submits requests to Local Planning Authorities to assess and screen proposed solar farms to determine whether they constitute EIA development, and whether they will require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or not. This request is submitted at the pre-application stage and comprises of an indicative layout with supporting information relating to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Site Development Characteristics</li> <li>☐ Location of the Development</li> <li>☐ Characteristics of Potential Impacts</li> <li>☐ Solar Farm Components</li> <li>☐ Site Selection Criteria</li> <li>☐ Example EIA screening determinations</li> </ul> <p>In the UK of the 165 screening requests submitted by Lightsource just 12 were deemed to constitute EIA due to site specific circumstances.</p> <p>To date mixed responses have been received from the</p> <p>Part 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) sets out the range of energy projects to which EIA requirements apply; however solar farms are not specifically identified in the classes of EIA development in either Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5, nor are solar farms specifically listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Having reflected on the EIA Directive and Planning and Development Regulations, Lightsource believe it is likely that the majority of proposed solar farms will not constitute EIA development and that the submission of an EIS</p>	
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	<p>will not be required.</p> <p>Furthermore, we note the comments of the Planning Inspector on the approved solar farm at Coolroe, Tintern, Co. Wexford (An Bórd Pleanála Case reference: PL26 .244351) and wish to highlight the following quote: <i>“I do not consider that the requirement for EIA would have been triggered due to the nature of the proposed development and its location”</i>. Whilst we fully accept every site is determined on its own merits we strongly believe that a suitably located solar farm should not constitute an EIA regardless of scale.</p> <p>Lightsource raises serious concerns with the following statement on page 117 regarding its reference to productive agricultural land: <i>“However there will be a presumption against their location in sensitive areas including Natura 2000 sites, flood plains and on productive agricultural land”</i>.</p> <p>While there may be a political or community preference for development on brownfield land, the reality is that a well screened greenfield site will often be more appropriate for a solar farm than a more visible brownfield site. In addition, much brownfield land is already earmarked for housing, leisure or employment developments.</p> <p>A greenfield site is not in itself inappropriate for solar development, and likewise not all brownfield sites are appropriate for solar development. Some of the key public concerns regarding solar PV on greenfield land include visual impact and loss of agricultural land. Visual impact can be addressed through appropriate site selection and incorporating suitable mitigation measures. With regards to the loss of agricultural land, solar farms are temporary and reversible, therefore there is no permanent loss. Ireland has one of the most ambitious renewable energy targets of any country in Europe, aiming for 16% of total energy to come from renewables by 2020, with 40% of electricity to come from renewable sources. If the assumed remaining renewable energy capacity were to be met primarily through solar farms (6.4GW<sub>2</sub>) on green field land, this would represent approximately 0.4% of agricultural land in Ireland (7 acres per MW x 6,400MW = 44,800/11,065,000acres of agricultural land in Ireland<sub>3</sub> = 0.0040x100 =</p>	
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	<p>0.4%). If the total derived from ground mounted solar farms is closer to a third of the above figure the amount of agricultural land temporarily involved would reduce to less than 0.14% of such land in Ireland.</p> <p>Many existing solar farms in the UK and Europe employ a dual productive use, by incorporating agricultural production alongside energy generation through the grazing of sheep or other small livestock within the solar array. Lightsources operate sites with sheep grazing and free range chicken grazing. The co-use of the site is actually beneficial for the solar farm operator, as it reduces the requirement to mow the grass on site.</p> <p>Diversification into renewable energy will increase farm income security, reducing the farm owner's vulnerability to agricultural subsidy cuts and commodity price changes. Moreover, it can serve to protect the farming tradition by removing the incentive, seen increasingly often on farms, to sell parcels of land to maintain income for the benefit of the remainder of the holding.</p> <p>Including a presumption against the development of solar farms on agricultural land will significantly curtail the potential for solar farm development in the County and lead to unnecessary refusals of appropriately sited solar farms. In light of the above we strongly recommend deleting the reference to "on productive agricultural land".</p> <p><b>Development Contributions</b></p> <p>We note that the Draft Development Plan does not make any specific recommendations</p> <p><b>Development Contributions</b></p> <p>We note that the Draft Development Plan does not make any specific recommendations relating to developer contributions and ground mounted solar farms.</p> <p>Under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2015 developers are to pay the Planning Authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and. This payment is made in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme adopted by the Council.</p> <p>It is noted that there is no class within the development contribution scheme which relates to solar farms. Therefore, we recommend the following condition be imposed on planning permissions for solar farm developments, which is in accordance</p>	
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	<p>with other approvals for ground mounted solar elsewhere in the Country:</p> <p><i>“The developer shall pay to the Planning Authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the Planning Authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2015, or by way of a separate agreement with the Planning Authority.</i></p> <p><i>The contribution shall be paid upon commencement of development or in such phase payments as may be agreed with the Planning Authority and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the scheme or agreement at the time of payment.</i></p> <p><b>Reason:</b> <i>It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2015 that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under Section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission”.</i></p> <p>The rationale for development contributions is to ensure that new development contributes equitably to enhancements of existing, or new, infrastructure and facilities as necessitated by the demand created by the development. A condition, such as that worded above, will provide flexibility for determining an appropriate contribution level.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION</b> 42 Mary White</p>	<p>EN 7 “Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development”</p> <p>This is a very disappointing objective. The setback requirement, particularly in relation to public roads will ensure that there will effectively be no wind farm development in Laois for the period of the plan. This requirement negates the Laois County Council Wind Energy Strategy.</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has</li> </ol>

	<p>been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</p> <p>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</p> <p>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</p> <p>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</p> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines.with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County</p>
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	<p>Council is committed to the preparation of a holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from</p>
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		<p>agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p>Remove Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice  <del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy</p>
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		<p>and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b>  <del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development</del></p>
<p>SUBMISSION 62</p> <p>Ray Conroy</p> <p>Laois Wind Energy Awareness Group</p>	<p>As such, we will be commenting on the 'appendix 5, wind energy strategy' aspect of the proposed CDP.</p> <p>1. Observation. The fact that the appendix it is called 'Wind energy Strategy' is immediately at odds with the objective of the National Renewable Action Plan, which has an obligation to examine and assess all types of renewable energy forms available – Page 3 of appendix states</p> <p>'Ultimately, this document will clarify the Council's policy towards renewable energy developments in the county, form the basis for a more streamlined assessment of planning applications and ultimately assist in the decision making process of the Planning Authority.'</p> <p>In 'CONCEPT, CAPACITY, VALUE' (section 2) of appendix, much is made of various national and EU plans and targets , but we would argue that said plans and programs, whilst been useful as a reference, should in no way be the main drivers in any plan that is been specifically designed for our county, on a stand-alone basis, i.e. a 'COUNTY' development plan. The link to said plans (section 2.2 -National and EU policies' the ESD is highlighted for energy savings, with 5 key objectives given precedence in appendix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out of a multi-annual National Insulation <b>Programme for Economic Recovery</b> to assist homeowners substantially reduce their energy bills,</li> <li>• Support to businesses to increase competitiveness through tax allowances for energy-efficient technologies,</li> <li>• Introduction of an <b>Energy Demand Reduction Target</b>,</li> <li>• Encouragement of public sector towards purchasing only green goods and services as part of target to reduce</li> </ul>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><i>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</i></p> <p><i>The Planning Authority awaits guidance from National Government and in particular the Department of Communications, environment , etc with regard to set back distances from dwellings, schools, standards in relation to shadow flicker, noise , etc .</i></p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</li> <li>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</li> <li>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</li> <li>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</li> </ol> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines.with an energy output</p>

	<p>energy usage in the public sector by 33%,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of an electric vehicle deployment strategy to provide for a minimum of 10% of national passenger car and light commercial fleet being electrically powered by 2020.</li> </ul> <p>Mention is made of other renewable energy sources, bio-mass, hydro, CHP, solar, photovoltaic, etc. but NO indication is given that these forms of renewable energy generation have been investigated, either to justify inclusion in plan or exclusion from our county development plan. Regarding energy reduction, electrical vehicles rollout, how to encourage use of 'green' goods and or services, support for business etc., beyond a mention in aspirations, the appendix contains no other references as to how the CDP could address these stated 'key objectives'. This is a real oversight, and should be rectified in any finalised draft for a CDP section that is addressing 'renewable energy' in our county.</p> <p>The statement is made pg. 10 appendix.</p> <p><b>2.13 Projected Capacity</b></p> <p>In order to reach EU 2020 renewable energy targets it is assumed that <b>7,800 MW</b> will need to be installed and operational by that year on the island of Ireland [c. 6,500MW in Ireland and c. 1,300 MW in Northern Ireland). In addition to the large scale wind farms, there is also expected to be circa 4,500 Microgeneration installations [single turbine units] across the island of Ireland over the next number of years with a capacity of approximately 38.5 MW (c. 34MW in Ireland and c. 4.25MW in Northern Ireland).</p> <p>We think it is unreasonable for any public body to base its entire 'renewable policy' on an ASSUMPTION.</p> <p>We would like clarity of the source of these assumptions, and indeed in the mentioned projected capacity, how much, if any of this has been assigned or targeted to our county, and on what basis, if any, these targets are reached.</p> <p>The pages 10-32 of this appendix are exclusively devoted to Wind Energy development potential</p>	<p>equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of an holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas</p>
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<p>in county Laois.</p> <p>We welcome the fact that the council has devoted some thought to the issue, however we would demand that a similar level of investigation is given to all other possible forms of renewable energy, as well as energy reduction, targeted education of identified sectors, and business's. This would enhance our county development plan, as well as opening up the sector to more competition , and enhanced transparency , thus not leaving the council or its employee's open to accusations of allowing unfair advantage to one sector over another potentially competing sector.</p> <p>Regarding the section given over exclusively to wind in appendix 5, we have a few observations .</p> <p>A. That a' 1.5km setback from schools , dwellings, community centres be enforced 'is welcomed as a start. However, we would propose that no fixed measurement be recommended in any proposed changes to guidelines – As is highlighted by the advances in technology mentioned in appendix, we would propose that the wording of proposal be amended to be</p> <p>'ensure a setback distance of a minimum of 10 times the tip height of a proposed wind turbine from any dwelling house, school or other centres where members of a community congregate '</p> <p>B. Remove Ambiguity.</p> <p>Either an area IS 'open for consideration for wind farm development ' or it is NOT . In the map supplied in appendix 5, ONLY area's shaded yellow should be included as suitable for consideration, all areas outside of identified zones should be marked and identified as 'NOT been open' for consideration . -</p> <p>Allowing that some areas of our county could be considered, we would be of the opinion that to do so would be contrary to proper</p>	<p>collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m3 of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to</p>
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<p>sustainable development in any case. The council makes reference to the 'SEAI's wind map to identify areas suitable for wind farm development, in so doing it immediately identifies that there is no area of Laois that should be considered for wind farm development . If, as is stated, Ireland has such a wonderful wind resource, it would be going against all best sustainable practices to use other than areas that are eminently suitable for purpose , of which none exist in our County.</p> <p>'Areas deemed eminently suitable for windfarm development and reserved for such purposes. Applies to useable areas that have economically viable wind speeds, have no designations, are sparsely populated, are in close proximity to a grid connection and have the ability to absorb wind development.</p> <p><b>It is considered that there are no such areas in County Laois.'</b></p> <p><b>C. Decommissioning of associated infrastructure at end of life. (Section 6.2).</b></p> <p>A condition of permission for any renewable energy infrastructure must be accompanied by a full and complete set of plans and condition on how the site shall be restored to its original condition at end of life. This should be accompanied by a bond, payable by the developer, and held in trust by the granting authority; the sole purpose of this bond shall be to enable the removal of any and all associated infrastructure with the granted development at the end of the developments term of existence. This should be fully costed by an independent assessor before any grant is given, and paid by developer into a 'protected' account for the purpose of decommissioning. In the case of 'Wind Farms', the amount shall be enough to not only dismantle the wind turbines, and any associated roadways that were installed to facilitate the development, but must also take into account the decommissioning of the grid connection infrastructure associated with a development . This condition must be applied to all 'time limited' infrastructure that is associated with any renewable energy development. As a starting point we would suggest that the decommissioning bond payable by developer should be at least equal to</p>	<p>inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Remove</b> Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice</p> <p><del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><del><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b> Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development</del></p> <p>Proposed additional text above map 1.6.5.</p> <p><b>The Council's approach to wind energy has been prepared to inform developers, landowners and the public of the most appropriate sites for the location of wind energy proposals. This approach accords with the guidelines on Wind Energy Development to identify preferred areas and areas where the wind farms should not be considered. This followed an analysis of areas suitable for wind energy development within the County. This assessment utilised a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) approach examining a range of factors relating to wind energy development including: wind energy potential (through the Wind Speed Atlas, www.seai.ie), proposed and existing grid connections, natural heritage designations, landscape</b></p>
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<p>the development charge applied to any development. This would cover future uncertainty over who would ultimately be responsible for decommissioning of either abandoned or redundant infrastructure, and ultimately save the cost been foisted onto the <b>residents</b> of granting authority, avoid socialising costs whilst enabling the privatisation of profits.</p> <p>D. Noise (section 6.8 of appendix)</p> <p>‘Permitted maximum noise levels at noise sensitive residences shall be in compliance with noise specifications of the DoEHLG “Wind Energy Guidelines”. Once commissioned the development will be monitored. In the event that the monitoring shows that any turbine is exceeding its projected noise levels and is having a detrimental noise impact, mitigating measures shall be agreed with the Local Authority.’</p> <p>We would suggest that the wording of above proposal be amended to read</p> <p>‘Permitted maximum noise levels at noise sensitive residences shall be in compliance with noise specifications of the DoEHLG “Wind Energy Guidelines”. Once commissioned the development will be monitored <b>by an independently appointed body</b>. In the event that the monitoring shows that any turbine is exceeding its projected noise levels and is having a detrimental noise impact, <b>the identified turbine shall be turned off until mitigating measures are agreed with , and tested to be satisfactory by</b> the Local Authority.’</p> <p>Finally, we would like to draw to the attention of the council, a recent ruling by the European Court of Justice in relation to including plans for wind farm development in regional/county plans. We would trust that the Laois CDP can be certain that by including a section, specifically dealing with creating conditions that facilitate wind farm development in its area of control, it is in no way disregarding any of the very important points raised by the citizens of Wallonia (an area of Belgium, roughly equal in size to Connaught), and found</p>	<p>sensitivity. The strategy identifies the following:</p> <p><b>Preferred Area</b> - These areas are considered suitable for windfarm development because of sufficient wind speeds, access to grid network, and established patterns of enquiries.</p> <p><b>Area Open for Consideration</b> – These are the only areas, outside the preferred areas, open to consideration for appropriate wind energy proposals. They have been identified having regard to a range of factors, including wind energy potential (through the wind speed atlas <a href="http://www.seai.ie">www.seai.ie</a>), existing grid connections, proposed grid connections, natural heritage designations and landscape sensitivity, the road infrastructure is adequate and where likely conflict with natural heritage designations can be protected.</p> <p><b>Area not for consideration</b> – Areas where wind energy proposals will not be favoured have been identified due to the significant environmental, heritage and landscape constraints. These include; SAC and SPA (Natura 2000) Sites, NHAs, unspoiled areas of EHSAs, Areas of Fresh Water Pearl Mussel, important views and prospects. It is considered that these areas have little or no capacity for wind energy development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>In view of the fact that the lands outside of the four wind classification areas did not warrant designation because the prevailing wind regime is inadequate to support a commercial wind energy development, the map no. 1.6.5 to be amended to increase the designation of the areas as “Areas not for consideration”.</p>
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	<p>to be valid by the EJC. An <i>ECJ ruling is immediately applicable to all similar legislations in all the Member States. See link to ruling <a href="http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?language=en&amp;num=C-290/15">http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?language=en&amp;num=C-290/15</a></i></p> <p>'On October 27, 2016, the European Court of Justice has issued a ruling whereby the Walloon government (Wallonia, Belgium) has acted unlawfully in creating a "norme sectorielle" aimed at considerably facilitating the deployment of wind farms in Wallonia without properly informing the general public and asking their opinion on the matter as required by the European directive 2001/48/CE.'</p> <p><b>The essence of the ruling 'Articles 2(a) and 3(2)(a) of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment must be interpreted as meaning that a regulatory order, such as that at issue in the main proceedings, containing various provisions on the installation of wind turbines which must be complied with when administrative consent is granted for the installation and operation of such installations comes within the notion of 'plans and programmes', within the meaning of that directive.</b></p> <p>We trust that Laois County Council by including this plan for wind farm development, and by linking the same plan to National and regional plans within Ireland, is happy that both it, and our national regulators with responsibility for plans and programmes of this nature are acting within the boundaries of all relevant EU and national laws and directives, and can provide evidence of compliance.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION No 72</b>  Kieran Brophy</p>	<p>I would just like to point out that Spink has a protected building also, The Church. (St. Lazarians Chapel, Knock). Currently there is an application 16260 for an 11 windfarm from Pinewood (Coillte own 5 of these). This is within 1.2km of both the school and church. I welcome the 1.5km that is proposed as it will make Spink unsuitable for any Wind Farm. Height should also be linked to the height and windspan of turbines also as they are just increasing in size all the time.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p><i>Laois County Council is aware of the protected status of Saint Lazarians Chapel in Spink, rps ref. 374.</i></p> <p><i>The planning application referred to, Pl Ref 16/260, is subject to a further information request at present.</i></p> <p><i>In accordance with Section 34[2] of the Planning and</i></p>

	<p>Please take into account, all submissions from 16/260 Pinewoods (&amp;Coillte) current application, currently at Further Information and 13262 Galetch (Pinewood Wind Farm) which was withdrawn. Also submissions to Kilkenny County Councils 16440 and 13397 for same wind farm as they have REFUSED it on this grounds as it is not a suitable area.</p> <p>Please leave Spink area out of consideration of all future windfarms and protect our local people, who are clearly not in favour of any windfarm what so ever, protect our children, animals, bats, wildlife, walkways, rivers (pearl mussels under treat), and our birds (particularly the curlews that have re taken up residency in 2016 for the first time in nearly 20 years).</p>	<p><i>Development Act 2000 as amended, all matters relevant to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, including the third party submissions, will be considered at decision stage.</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p><i>No change to the draft Plan.</i></p>
<p>SUBMISSION 74</p> <p>Marc Van Den Bergh and Dave Fingleton</p> <p>On behalf of</p> <p>People Over Wind Save Our Stradbally RTS Substation Action Group Wind Aware Ireland Laois Wind Energy Awareness Group Concerned Residents of Spink Swan, Wolfhill and Luggacurran Wind Aware Group</p>	<p>We applaud Laois County Council for the efforts to take citizen's opinions into account into the draft County Development Plan (CDP) 2017-2023. We fully agree with the overall vision, i.e. <b><i>“County Laois will be a cohesive and sustainable community of people enjoying distinct but interrelated urban and rural environments, where the natural environment is protected, cultural and built heritage is safeguarded, where opportunities for existing residents and future generations to live, work, visit and enjoy safely and as equals, without compromising the environmental integrity of our county”.</i></b></p> <p>We believe that the draft CDP is a step in the right direction by putting the welfare of the people of Laois and protection of the environment as overriding priorities and by protecting communities in Laois from speculative developments such as wind energy developments that have divided communities in recent years, while at the same time supporting renewable energy projects and reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in appropriate places.</p> <p>We agree that county Laois is committed to increasing the use of renewable energy and reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and that this cannot be achieved by a single silver bullet, but only by a wide range of improvements. We argue that the reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions should be realised in a more efficient and less intrusive manner like e.g. improved insulation of houses and public buildings, reduction of emissions in</p>	<p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the points made in this submission.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Ireland has a target of meeting 40% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 and Laois County Council seeks to develop the county as a low carbon economy by making provision for the harnessing, storage and use of renewable energy.</p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</li> <li>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</li> <li>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</li> <li>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the</li> </ol>

<p>transport by promoting cycling and use of public transport, and the introduction of a wide range of effective renewable energy technologies.</p> <p>Compared to the current County Development Plan, renewable energy technologies have advanced significantly, and extensive experience and feedback has been gained from planning applications for renewable energy projects submitted during this period. It is therefore justified to review the Landscape Assessment as done in the draft CDP. Industrial wind turbines have significantly increased in size and height compared to the current CDP. Alternatives have advanced and may now be technologically and economically viable.</p> <p>We applaud Laois County Council for valuing and protecting the landscape, especially the hill tops, and the views in the county from any visually obtrusive development. The hills' prominent visual setting and the low lying surrounding landscape increase the likelihood of significant visual effects on the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>We note the important role that Laois County Council has in terms of providing a forum for the democratic representation of the local community as set out in the Local Government Act 2001 as amended.</p> <p>We appreciate that the Council has recognised the environmental development pressure exerted by wind energy, associated grid/road and substation infrastructure including the significant negative impacts that such development, if uncontrolled, would have on the integrity of the environment and human health. As such, we consider that the wind energy strategy is an important mechanism to provide guidance on areas strictly not open to such development - this is welcomed and should be retained. It is a likely scenario that wind energy developments will fully utilise any areas designated as open for development. According to the requirements of the SEA Directive, the likely significant effects arising from such a likely scenario must be set out in the SEA Environmental Report - however, this information is missing (the secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of permitting wind energy</p>	<p>vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>PL Ref.13/268</b> refers.</p> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County Council is committed to the preparation of an holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in</p>
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<p>&amp; grid infrastructure in these areas has not been documented in the Environmental Report). The cumulative impact must be considered together with existing/permitted/proposed developments such as the Laois-Kilkenny reinforcement project. We suggest that, at an absolute minimum, noise mapping should be conducted for this aspect of the Wind Energy Strategy before projects can rely on the areas designated as open to such projects, i.e. the zoning is effectively 'provisionally open for consideration subject to SEA assessment of the cumulative impacts'.</p> <p>We do believe there is still room for improvements; some additional and change of wording has been proposed to ensure that the CDP is evidence-based while consistent with national policy.</p> <p>The format of the response consists of 2 sections: 1. general observations, 2. recommended replacement texts in the main draft County Development Plan 2017-2023 document Volume 1 and 2, Appendix 5 and SEA Environmental report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Several references are made throughout the document to 'renewable energy' whereas in fact the only renewable energy seriously considered is wind energy. Alternatives should be actively explored and encouraged. For example, biofuel/ethanol, anaerobic digestion for methane, energy crops (trees, willow, elephant grass, rapeseed), Combined Heat Power Systems, domestic wind &amp; solar should all be explored.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The overriding observation is that at a national level, no Strategic Environmental Assessment or Cost Benefit Analysis have ever been performed to demonstrate that wind energy is indeed economically, environmentally and socially sustainable. Where expenditure is to exceed €20m, the Public Spending Code <a href="http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/">http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/</a> requires that a cost benefit analysis be prepared and submitted to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for approval. This has not been done.</li> </ul>	<p>this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ All renewable energy developments should be assessed based upon sustainable development principles. Those projects with the greatest community benefit at the least negative environmental or social effects should be prioritised. The "Precautionary Principle" should be applied to all industrial developments, that states that if an action or policy has a suspected risk of causing harm to the <u>public</u>, or to the <u>environment</u>, in the absence of <u>scientific consensus</u> (that the action or policy is not harmful), the <u>burden of proof</u> that it is <i>not</i> harmful falls on those taking an action that may or may not be a risk.</li> <li>□ Wind energy can never be considered to be a 'direct substitute for imported fossil fuels'. Due to the intermittency of wind, a back-up source of energy is required. This is referred to as "Spinning Reserve". Back-up coal and gas plants cannot be turned off and must be kept running to provide electricity as soon as the wind stops or varies. These back-up plants operate at 50% of normal efficiency and produce more CO<sub>2</sub> per megawatt of electricity produced than if they were running at full capacity.</li> <li>□ SEAI states that Ireland avoided fossil fuel imports of €255m in 2014, of which €200m is attributable to wind energy.<sup>1</sup> SEAI also states that 18.2% of electricity comes from wind<sup>1</sup>, yet it has only been responsible for a €200m (or 4%) avoidance of fossil fuel imports. Therefore we argue that the assertion in 1.2 third paragraph that wind energy... 'will lead to significant savings on the national fuel bill' is incorrect. We suggest to remove this incorrect statement.</li> </ul> <p><sup>1</sup> SEAI - Energy in Ireland 1999 - 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Broad statements about Ireland having a large wind resource must be balanced against the severe technical limitations of harnessing this resource effectively. Ireland has a significant wind resource, but incorporating wind energy onto the national grid becomes increasingly challenging as the percent of wind increases. It is accepted that incorporating</li> </ul>	<p>incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Remove</b> Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice</p> <p><del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><del><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b> Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development</del></p> <p>The following is also proposed to be included</p> <p>Additional objective:</p> <p><b>OBJ8 To facilitate a sustainable and diverse mix of developments which limit the net adverse impacts associated with global warming such as promoting renewable energy, the growth of local farm produce and the promotion of sustainable modes of public transport.</b></p> <p>Include as new policy</p>
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	<p>more than 50% wind on an isolated grid without large scale hydro storage is particularly difficult. Ireland is now at this limit and attempting to achieve 60% wind incorporation. The CO<sub>2</sub> savings achieved at this level of wind penetration become insignificant due to the system technicalities and need for permanent backup. The ESB confirms this position when they state that “CO<sub>2</sub> savings from wind energy tend towards zero as the amount of wind on the system increase”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ As an inland and relatively flat county, it is questionable how viable a site Laois is for wind energy in comparison to many other counties. Especially as alternative energy sources become more widely available, we anticipate that the least viable wind farms will be abandoned (highly likely once subsidies are removed) and county Laois, the inhabitants and landowners will be left cleaning up the mess. We therefore strongly recommend including a section on decommissioning of Wind farms in Appendix 5.</li> <li>□ We believe that Combined Heat Power Systems would suit especially Portlaoise, where heat produced by manufacturing plants (like e.g. the saw mills) can be re-used to heat places with large consumption like Portlaoise hospital and prison.</li> <li>□ The draft National Landscape Strategy 2014-2024 states that "The landscape belongs to all of us. We must start to plan holistically for its sustainable future. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning".</li> </ul> <p>Also the European Landscape Convention recognizes the importance of all landscapes and not just exceptional landscapes, as having a crucial bearing on quality of life. These are fundamental statements which should shape industrial developments in rural areas. Renewable energy developments, such as industrial wind turbines, pylons and substations, or any other industrial development must pay respect to these objectives. A significant increase in Laois' wind energy potential</p>	<p>It is policy of the Council to promote PV Solar for domestic or local use on rooftops of domestic dwellings, industrial, agriculture and public buildings.</p> <p>Proposed additional text above map 1.6.5.</p> <p>The Council's approach to wind energy has been prepared to inform developers, landowners and the public of the most appropriate sites for the location of wind energy proposals. This approach accords with the guidelines on Wind Energy Development to identify preferred areas and areas where the wind farms should not be considered. This followed an analysis of areas suitable for wind energy development within the County. This assessment utilised a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) approach examining a range of factors relating to wind energy development including: wind energy potential (through the Wind Speed Atlas, <a href="http://www.seai.ie">www.seai.ie</a>), proposed and existing grid connections, natural heritage designations, landscape sensitivity. The strategy identifies the following:</p> <p><b>Preferred Area</b> - These areas are considered suitable for windfarm development because of sufficient wind speeds, access to grid network, and established patterns of enquiries.</p> <p><b>Area Open for Consideration</b> – These are the only areas, outside the preferred areas, open to consideration for appropriate wind energy proposals. They have been identified having regard to a range of factors, including wind energy potential (through the wind speed atlas <a href="http://www.seai.ie">www.seai.ie</a>), existing grid connections, proposed grid connections, natural heritage designations and landscape sensitivity, the road infrastructure is adequate and where likely conflict with natural heritage designations can be protected.</p> <p><b>Area not for consideration</b> – Areas where wind energy proposals will not be favoured have been identified due to the significant environmental, heritage and landscape constraints. These include; SAC and SPA (Natura 2000) Sites, NHAs, unspoiled areas of EHSAs, Areas of Fresh Water Pearl Mussel, important views and prospects. It is considered that these areas have little or no capacity for wind energy development.</p> <p>Map 1.6.5 Wind energy highlights the 'Area Open to Consideration' and the 'Area not for consideration'.</p> <p>The commentary in relation to the importance of Dysart Woods as a Local amenity area is noted. The views from this point are proposed to be included on Map 1.7.11 Figure 29 of the Draft Plan.</p>
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cannot be achieved without serious consequences for the landscape quality of rural Ireland and the people who inhabit it.

- The small number of hills in county Laois have high visual importance and require protection from any visually obtrusive development. As these hills can be viewed from wide areas a disproportionate amount of visual damage can occur at the site itself but also damage to views of the site from other locations. Industrial development of such sites is not appropriate due the high visual amenity that our small number of low hills provide in County Laois.

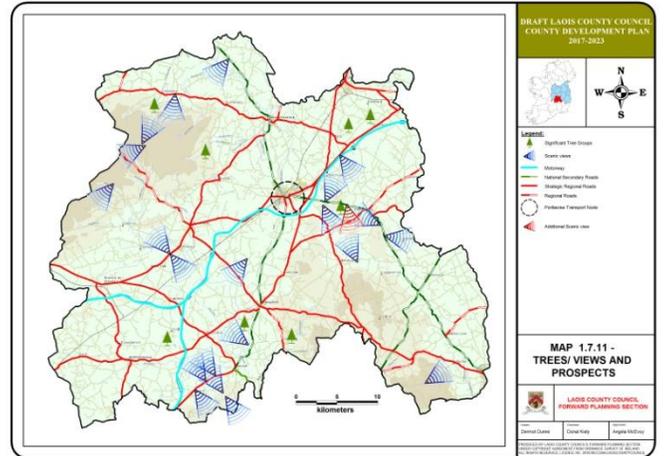
- County Development Plan 2006-2012, Part 2, section 1.8.4, and Part 8 section 8.26 dealt with Special Areas of Development Control. This should be reinstated in 2017-2023 CDP, Volume 2 Settlement Plans, section 1. The following text should be added:

There are areas in need of special protection due to their sensitive character and these areas have been identified as Special Areas of Development Control. In general they overlap with NHA and SAC designation, however, some of the areas lie outside of these designations but warrant special consideration due to their visual amenity.

The following areas are Special Areas of Development Control:

- Slieve Blooms
- Rock of Dunamais
- Killeslin Plateau
- Aharney / Cullahill Mountain
- The Heath
- The Windy Gap / Luggacurren

Note - Cullenagh mountain is the only other mountain in Laois after the Slieve Blooms. It's absence from Special Areas of development Control is noteworthy. Cullenagh Mountain is also a significant amenity area easily accessible from the largest population center Portlaoise town. For these reasons, it should be included as a 'Special Area of Development Control'



The commentary in relation to the protection of the Nore Pearl Mussel “*Margaritifera durrovensis*” has been considered in the Draft Plan and the SEA for the Draft Plan. Conditions in relation to individual permissions vary depending on the nature of development and the level of mitigation required as a result of the development should it be allowed. The commentary in relation to the wording of the condition “**Prior to the commencement of construction, proposals for the environmental monitoring of construction works on site by an environmental scientist or equivalent professional, including the monitoring of the implementation of construction-stage mitigation measures, and illustrating compliance with the requirements set out above, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority, together with associated reporting requirements.**” Is also noted but is specific to one permission.

The commentary in relation to the proposed addition Under LCT1 for Hills and Rolling areas is noted, however this is viewed to be unduly restrictive in relation to the agricultural sector in particular.

Regarding the supplementary submission from Irish Doctors Environmental Association, there is no express reference to human health or quality of life in Section 4.5 of the current [2006] Wind Energy Guidelines which sets out **General Considerations in the Assessment of Wind Energy Planning Applications.**

In relation to noise, the outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines will inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan.

The criteria in Section 34 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended, govern how the Planning Authority

	<p>There will be a general presumption against development in Special Areas of Development Control unless it can be demonstrated by means of a landscape assessment and appropriate landscape and building design proposals that the proposed development will enhance the overall landscape character of the site and its visual context. The onus will be on the applicant to ensure that the proposed development is integrated sensitively into the existing landscape.</p> <p><b><i>SS8 Special Areas of Development Control</i></b></p> <p>It is the policy of the Council to prohibit visually obtrusive development in Special Areas of Development Control.</p> <p>□ On page 119 a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development has been included. We think that Laois County Council is right to include a setback distance given the fact that 3 Ministers have now promised to release new Wind Energy Guidelines imminently, but we're still waiting and progress has been stalled by successive ministers. Wind turbines are getting bigger and bigger, and communities, planners and developers have no suitable direction or guidelines to work with. In view of the increasing number of health cases seemingly relating to wind turbine noise &amp; effects, and in the absence of the revised wind energy guidelines, the county council should err on the side of caution and include a setback distance of 10x the height of the wind turbine from noise sensitive receptors. This is in line with other European countries and acknowledges the widely accepted and endorsed form of environmental protection that is given in the "precautionary principle". Other counties and countries have proposed similar setback distance, e.g. Co</p>	<p>deals with all planning applications including those for wind energy development.</p> <p>No change to text.</p>
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	<p>Wicklow (10x turbine height with minimum of 1km), Co Donegal (10x turbine height), Co Offaly (3.2km), Westmeath (10x turbine height), Bavaria (10x turbine height). Articles about Noise, backing up a significantly larger setback distance, have been added in the Appendix.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ For clarity of all parties involved, Laois County Council should clearly mention the contribution amount for wind farm developments in the county. We propose a contribution of at least €10,000 per MW, subject to minimum of €30,000 per turbine, which is in line with counties Kilkenny, Louth and Galway. Counties Cavan and Donegal are proposing a contribution of €20,000 per MW</li> <li>□ Wind energy developments are likely to fully utilise any areas designated as open for development. According to the requirements of the SEA Directive, the likely significant effects arising from such a likely scenario must be set out in the SEA Environmental Report - however, this information is missing (the secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of permitting wind energy &amp; grid infrastructure in these areas has not been documented in the Environmental Report). The cumulative impact must be considered together with existing/permitted/proposed developments such as the Laois-Kilkenny reinforcement project, these effects include noise emissions, risk to water/groundwater, shadow flicker, risk to human health impairment of landscape character and visual amenity. We suggest that at an absolute minimum, noise mapping should be conducted for this aspect of the Wind Energy Strategy before any projects can rely on the areas designated as open to such projects. i.e. the zoning is effectively 'provisionally open for consideration subject to SEA assessment of the cumulative impacts'.</li> </ul>	
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	<p>□ The recent news that Ballyfin house has just won the best hotel in the world award shows the untapped potential for tourism in Laois.</p> <p><i>A supplementary submission from Irish Doctors Environmental Association was appended to this submission which in essence wished to address the Laois Draft County Development plan, Section 6 Infrastructure, 6.4.4 and section 6.6.1.4., 6.8 and the particular consequences for human health in relation to Noise produced from Industrial Scale wind turbines.</i></p> <p><i>Their contention is that the Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006 (2006 Guidelines), are wholly inadequate to protect human health and the quality of life of the population. They do not provide a night noise level “appropriate” to protect human health, as the Guidelines do not provide a “Health-Based Limit Value”.</i></p> <p>In determining these Noise limits, the authors of this county development plan must give due regard to the right to bodily integrity under Article 40.3 of the Constitution, the requirements of Article 3 of the EIA Directive concerning the impact of certain projects on human health, and the right to privacy and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).</p> <p>The Noise Limit Value contained in the Wind Energy Guidelines (2006) is inappropriate, as it is based on outdated advice from 36 years ago, which the World Health Organisation had superseded in 1999.</p> <p>The noise limit value in the Wind Energy Guidelines (2006), was derived from ETSU-R-97.</p> <p>The ETSU guidance, published in the UK in 1997 determined a wind turbine noise limit value based on:</p> <p>(i) <i>quality of life considerations</i>: which followed international best practice in advising that wind turbine noise should not exceed background noise levels by more than 5dB(A); which in itself is a moderate to severe impact and</p> <p>(ii) <i>the protection of sleep and health</i>: the ETSU noise limit was derived from the 1980 WHO <i>Environmental Health Criteria 12</i>.</p>	
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	<p>The Wind Energy Guidelines (2006) ignored both the ETSU recommendation in relation to the magnitude of impact and failed to take cognisance of the update in 1999 of World Health Organisation guidance (WHO Guidelines for Community Noise). As far back as 1999 the WHO advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) a lower noise value limit than originally conceived in 1980 was required to protect sleep;</li> <li>(ii) the nature of the noise source needed to be considered in relation to any noise limit and</li> <li>(iii) that noise level exposure should be based on the use of the dB LAeq noise measurement indicator.</li> <li>(iv) that exposure to environmental night noise of 30dB LAeq can give rise to adverse health effects</li> </ul> <p>It is also a concern that The Department of Health did not input into the 2006 Guidelines. Furthermore, it has been confirmed in 2015 that the Department of Health <i>“has not carried out any research into the effects of industrial wind turbines on human health.”</i></p> <p>The Irish Doctors Environmental Associations wrote to, inter alia, the DoECLG by email and post dated the 17th of February 2015 regarding the deficiencies of the proposed Wind Energy Guidelines concerning health, legality, constitutionality and human rights. The submission was prepared by appropriately qualified health professionals of very high standing in appropriate disciplines. Our concerns are shared by a broader body of health professionals.</p> <p>Together with contributions from leading national and international experts in the respective fields of health and acoustics we examined the DoECLG Proposed Revisions to the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 and are deeply concerned about the proven adverse health effects inherent in what is being proposed, and we provided the legal context for these deficiencies including risk of State liability should the Guidelines proceed as drafted.</p> <p>The 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines fail to provide a “Health-Based Limit Value”.</p> <p>We set out the evidence to support this statement below -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Article 40.3 of the Constitution guarantees the personal rights of citizens, including the right to bodily integrity. In <i>Ryan v Attorney</i></li> </ul>	
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	<p><i>General</i> [1965] IR 294, this was defined as requiring that “no process which is or may, as a matter of probability, be dangerous or harmful to the life or health of the citizens or any of them may be imposed (in the sense of being made compulsory) by an Act of the Oireachtas.” The right to bodily integrity must be protected by the State “as far as practicable”. We suggest that the Planners in setting out its noise limits plan, would find it difficult to argue that it has protected its citizens to the standard required by Article 40.3 when WHO findings highlighted, as far back as 1999 and reiterated in 2009, that exposure to environmental night noise of 30dB(A)eq can give rise to adverse health effects (see table below), and that this is so especially in the case of children, older people and those with existing chronic illnesses.</p> <p>ii. In terms of EU law, This view was confirmed by the CJEU in <i>Leth v Republik Österreich Land Niederösterreich</i> (Case C-420/11) in which the Court stated (at para 28) that:</p> <p>“It follows from Article 1(1) of, and from the first, third, fifth and sixth recitals in the preamble to, Directive 85/337 that the purpose of that directive is an assessment of the effects of public and private projects on the environment <b>in order to attain one of the Community’s objectives in the sphere of the protection of the environment and the quality of life. The information which must be supplied by the developer in accordance with Article 5(1)</b> of, and Annex IV to, Directive 85/337, as well as the criteria which enable Member States to determine whether small-scale projects, meeting the characteristics laid down in Annex III to that directive, require an environmental assessment, also relate to that purpose.” (emphasis added)</p> <p>iii. In terms of the European Convention on Human Rights, the WHO, in its <i>Night Noise Guidelines for Europe 2009</i>, cited the decision of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in <i>Hatton v United Kingdom</i> (2003) 37 EHRR 28, in which the ECtHR recognised the right to sleep as comprising part of the right to privacy and family life in Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. This underlines that WHO recognised the direct link between environmental noise and the State’s responsibility for the protection</p>	
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	<p>of fundamental rights.          Planning authorities are under a statutory obligation under Section 34 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, to consider <b><i>“the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.”</i></b> . One of the most significant matters that comes within <i>“proper planning and sustainable development,”</i> is the protection of the health and safety of persons and ensuring public health. If a planning authority has set a wind turbine noise limit on the basis of the authoritative findings of WHO regarding the impact of noise on health, which should be the case with Laois County Council’s County Development Plan, then it will be exceptionally difficult for a Minister to try and impose a higher guideline limit value that could reasonably be foreseen to have an adverse effect on the health of the public impacted.  <b>Conclusion:</b>          We recommend that a provision should be introduced in section 6.4.4.; <i>“to protect human health and the quality of life of the population”</i> through incorporating <i>“a night time noise limit of limit of 30db of Lnight outside from wind energy developments”</i>.</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION 75          Niall Headen</p>	<p>I would just like to point out that Spink has a protected building also, The Church. (St. Lazarians Chapel, Knock).          Currently there is an application 16260 for an 11 windfarm from Pinewood (Coillte own 5 of these). This is within 1.2km of both the school and church. I welcome the 1.5km that is proposed as it will make Spink unsuitable for any Wind Farm. Height should also be linked to the height and windspan of turbines also as they are just increasing in size all the time.          Please take into account, all submissions from 16/260 Pinewoods (&amp;Coillte) current application, currently at Further Information and 13262 Galettech (Pinewood Wind Farm) which was withdrawn. Also submissions to Kilkenny County Councils 16440 and 13397 for same wind farm as they have REFUSED it on this grounds as it is not a suitable area.          Please leave Spink area out of consideration of all future windfarms and protect our local people, who are clearly not in favour of any windfarm what so ever, protect our children, animals, bats, wildlife, walkways, rivers (pearl mussels under treat), and our birds (particularly the curlews that have re taken up</p>	<p>Submission noted.  <b>Response</b>  <i>Laois County Council is aware of the protected status of Saint Lazarians Chapel in Spink, rps ref. 374. The planning application referred to, Pl Ref 16/260, is subject to a further information request at present.</i>  <i>In accordance with Section 34[2] of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, all matters relevant to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, including the third party submissions, will be considered at decision stage.</i>  <b>Recommendation</b>  <i>No change to the draft Plan.</i></p>

	residency in 2016 for the first time in nearly 20 years).	
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## SECTION 7: HERITAGE

Name & Issues Raised	Chief Executive's Response & Recommendation
<p><b>Submission no 24</b></p> <p><b>Ricky Whelan on behalf of Irish Wildlife Trust</b></p>	<p><u>Proposed items for inclusion</u></p> <p>Having reviewed the draft county development plan we believe the following items listed below should be added or elaborated upon within the plan.</p> <p><b>TPOs- Tree Preservation Orders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the first instance certain trees/groups of trees of unique value within the county should be afforded TPOs - these trees may be of a great age, have a historic relevance, be unique or rare or define a particular place or area.</li> <li>• Develop a database of trees protected under TPOs within the county, make the database available online and at council buildings for members of the public to reference.</li> <li>• Develop and make easily available a system for members of the public to apply to have a tree or group of trees protected by a TPO. The process should include a system by which landowners (of lands which the trees exist) are informed and given the opportunity to feed into the process or contest if there is good reason.</li> <li>• The first TPOs should be fully in place by mid 2017 with a relevant member of council staff tasked to oversee and manage the database and applications on an ongoing basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Landfill Site after use policy</b></p> <p>An Appropriate Assessment should be funded and carried out by the council to investigate the potential after use and future purpose of Kyletalesha Landfill once it is fully decommissioned.</p> <p>It is felt that there is merit to use the site for the conservation on nature and development of habitats in the future. There are a number of reasons this would be an effective and positive use of the site;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is unlikely to be attractive or suitable for commercial or other uses.</li> <li>• The site is surrounded by a number of natural and semi natural habitats, the area would be colonised by many species from the neighbouring habitats in a short space of time.</li> <li>• Good access already exists to the site and the staff from the council and at the site have the skills and knowhow to develop the site as a</li> </ul>
<p>Submission Noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The following policies have been included in relation to TPOs</p> <p><i>NH20,NH21,NH22,NH23 ,NH 24,NH25 relate</i></p> <p>During the Period of the last development plan , some work was done on comilinig a list of trees worthy of protection, however owing to the need for specialist involvement in survey said trees no further progress was made.</p> <p>The process of protecting trees is done under the Planning and Development Act 2000. During the next plan period it is the intention of the Planning Authority to further this work subject to resources and funding being available to do so.</p> <p><b>Landfill Site after use policy</b></p> <p>The comments in relation to the Landfill site and its afteruse are noted. Waste recovery and disposal are referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan, particularly in Section 6.4 <i>Environmental Services</i>.</p> <p>There is no direct reference in this section to the closure of the former County landfill site at Kyletalesha and the potential after-uses of the site.</p> <p>However, there is reference to the use of the site for extraction of landfill gas in another Section, 6.6.1. <i>Renewable Energy</i>.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Make reference to the closure of the Kyletalesha landfill site in the text in Section 6.4.1 as follows:</p> <p><i>The County landfill site at Kyletalesha is now closed and the Council will investigate the feasibility of using the site for alternative activities such as energy production, nature conservation</i></p>	

	<p>nature refuge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be a hugely positive, proactive and cost affective project if planned and developed correctly.</li> <li>• This is not a new concept and is tried and tested method in Ireland, the UK and all over the world. See link for reference: <a href="#">Landfill to Nature</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Invasive Species</b> The draft development plan does not go far enough to identify actions required to tackle invasive species within the county during the plan period. Invasive species pose a massive economic and environmental threat, nowhere near enough attention is given to the issue in Laois. The following actions are required;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A relevant member of the council staff needs to be appointed to oversea all issues and projects relating to Invasive species removal in the county.</li> <li>• Develop a County Invasive Species Management Plan, many counties including our neighbours in Offaly have robust management plans and Laois could use the same documents altered to a local context.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The plan would involve input from all stakeholders</li> <li>○ The plan would outline a work strategy to eradicate high risk species from the county.</li> <li>○ The plans actions would need to be reviewed on an annual basis.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District engineers and roads staff could easily follow up and map new invasive plant species infestations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• A county database of Invasive plant species infestations (mapped) should be developed.</li> <li>• Follow up treatment by contractors or council staff should be carried out on an annual basis in an effort to eradicate these species.</li> <li>• Public engagement and outreach needs to be developed in the county to promote the issue to landowners and inform them of the law and best practice guidelines on treating the threat on their lands.</li> </ul>	<p><i>and other suitable activities.</i></p> <p>Add an additional <b>policy ES3</b> and re-number others accordingly as follows:</p> <p><i>ES3</i></p> <p><i>Investigate the feasibility of using the former County landfill site at Kyletalesha for alternative activities such as energy production, nature conservation and other suitable activities.</i></p> <p><b>Invasive Species</b></p> <p>The following policies have been proposed within the draft Plan for invasive species - <i>NH38,NH39.</i></p> <p>The actions required to prevent the spread of invasive species will be developed through an Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) policy on the Management of Invasive Species during the plan period in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan.</p>
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<p><b>Submission no 28</b></p> <p><b>Pamela Tynan PPN on behalf of Birdwatch Ireland (Laois Branch)</b></p>	<p>The Laois Branch of Birdwatch Ireland requests that Laois County Council include the Landfill Site at Kyletelisha as a nature and recreational area in the development plan.</p> <p>The site is about 80 acres is considered to be an ideal natural recreational area for the people of Mountmellick and Portlaoise, including schools in the local towns and villages. The location would also attract passing tourists. It would compliment other recreational areas in the locality and the country.</p>	<p><b>Landfill Site after use policy</b></p> <p>The comments in relation to the Landfill site and its afteruse is noted.</p> <p>Waste recovery and disposal are referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan, particularly in Section 6.4 <i>Environmental Services</i>. There is no direct reference in this section to the closure of the former County landfill site at Kyletalesha and the potential after-uses of the site. However, there is reference to the use of the site for extraction of landfill gas in another Section, 6.6.1. <i>Renewable Energy</i>.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Make reference to the closure of the Kyletalesha landfill site in the text in Section 6.4.1 as follows:</p> <p><i>The County landfill site at Kyletalesha is now closed and the Council will investigate the feasibility of using the site for alternative activities such as energy production, nature conservation and other suitable activities.</i></p> <p>Add an additional <b>policy ES3</b> and re-number others accordingly as follows:</p> <p><i>ES3</i></p> <p><b><i>Investigate the feasibility of using the former County landfill site at Kyletalesha for alternative activities such as energy production, nature conservation and other suitable activities.</i></b></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO 30</b></p> <p>Yvonne Jackson Failte Ireland</p>	<p>Built Heritage OBJ1-OBJ11 Good general objectives in relation to Built Heritage. Would benefit from additional reference to tourism / visitors.</p> <p>Insert after OBJ1 *New Objective To work with stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, the Arts Council, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in County Laois.</p> <p>Insert after BH 7 *New Policy: Favourably consider proposals for tourism and recreation development, which involve the reinstatement, conservation and / or replacement of existing disused buildings, and to adopt a positive interpretation of plan policies to encourage such development.</p>	<p>Laois County Council acknowledges the submission made by Failte Ireland and the generally supportive comments made.</p> <p>Include new OBJECTIVE</p> <p><b><i>To work with stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, the Arts Council, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in County Laois.</i></b></p> <p>Insert after BH 7 *New Policy:</p> <p><b><i>Favourably consider proposals for tourism and</i></b></p>

	<p>BH8 Good policy in relation to Vernacular buildings. Would benefit from rewording as follows: “Recognise the importance of the contribution of vernacular architecture which may not be protected to the character of a place to the attraction of a place to live, work and visit, and to provide clear guidelines and interpretations of plan policies to promote where feasible the protection, retention and appropriate revitalisation and use of vernacular built heritage, including structures that contribute to the landscape and streetscape character and discourage the demolition of these structures.”</p> <p>BH9 Well intentioned policy, but restrictive in terms of possible developments – which may inhibit the development of a good range of innovative products and approaches. “Promote the re-use of old buildings for rural development opportunities. A range of small-scale uses for old buildings may be possible without substantial alteration such as including but not limited to arts and craft workshops or tourism and self-catering accommodation, small-scale manufacturing industry, such as including but not limited to cheese making, small-scale engineering and furniture making.”</p> <p>ARCH4 Good Policy which would benefit from additional text as follows: “Promote and develop the importance of the Rock of Dunamais as a cultural and tourism resource; in all cases, the applicant must submit a robust assessment setting out the sustainability of any proposal with respect to economic , environmental and social sustainability,</p>	<p>recreation development, which involve the reinstatement, conservation and / or replacement of existing disused buildings, and to adopt a positive interpretation of plan policies to encourage such development.</p> <p>AMEND THE FOLLOWING POLICY</p> <p>BH9  “Promote the re-use of old buildings for rural development opportunities. A range of small-scale uses for old buildings may be possible without substantial alteration such as including but not limited to arts and craft workshops or tourism and self-catering accommodation, small-scale manufacturing industry, such as including but not limited to cheese making, small-scale engineering and furniture making.”</p> <p>AMEND THE FOLLOWING POLICY</p> <p>ARCH4  “Promote and develop the importance of the Rock of Dunamais as a cultural and tourism resource; <del>in all cases, the applicant must submit a robust assessment setting out the sustainability of any proposal with respect to economic , environmental and social sustainability,</del></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p><b>SECTION 7: HERITAGE</b></p> <p><b>7.1 INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p><b>7.2 LAOIS HERITAGE PLAN 2014-2019 text</b></p> <p>We submit that you should include an additional <b>para</b> listing the <b>main objectives</b> of the Plan. See <b>Sth Tipp</b> 6.3.7 end of page 71.</p> <p>We submit that you should include <b>objs</b>:</p> <p>1 <i>The current Heritage Plan will be <b>reviewed</b> prior to its expiry. Based on <b>Longford</b> 6.2 HER 2 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, <b>Meath</b> 9.4 last para 7<sup>th</sup> line, <b>Kildare</b> 13.3.2, <b>Sth Tipp</b> 6.5 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence &amp; <b>2011 Plan</b> 13 1 obj NH 13 008.</i></p> <p>2 <i>Implement, <b>promote and support</b>, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders (including the Co Heritage Forum, the Heritage Council, community groups and the wide public) the aims and objectives</i></p>	<p>Submission Noted. In relation to the Laois Heritage Plan , there are a good number of objectives that do not need to be reiterated to avoid duplication, however the following objectives are proposed to be included -</p> <p><i><b>OBJ xx</b></i>  <i><b>Implement, promote and support, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders (including the Co Heritage Forum, the Heritage Council, community groups and the wide public) the aims and objectives contained in the Laois County Heritage Plan 2014-2019 and any revision thereof and take cognisance, in assessing planning applications and preparing development plans, the provisions of the Plan.</b></i></p> <p>The staffing of Laois County Council is not a matter for the County Development Plan.</p>

<p>contained in the Plan and any revision thereof and take cognisance, in assessing planning applications and preparing development plans, the provisions of the Plan. To which you should add: See our web-site (insert address). Based on Louth 5.2 1 HER 1, Galway 9.9 Pol NHB 6, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Heritage GH-01, <b>Sth Tipp</b> 6.5 Pol AEH 14, Kildare 13.8.1, Sligo 7 O-H-I, Cork 12.1 HE 1-2, <b>Westmeath</b> 5.3 P-NH10 &amp; Meath 9.5 CSA SP 4.</p> <p>3 <b>Continue to employ a Heritage Officer and to fill vacancies as they arise.</b></p> <p><b>Note</b> Grants may be available from the Heritage Council. Also it might be possible to employ an intern.</p> <p><b>7.3 CONTEXT</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence 1<sup>st</sup> pt We submit that you should add: which states that “archaeological considerations need to take full account of the planning and development process”. Taken from Waterford 8.38 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; DLR 6.1.2(i) last para. Also <b>Offaly</b> 7.18.6 last para last sentence.</p> <p><b>7.4 BUILT HERITAGE</b></p> <p><b>objs</b></p> <p>1 We submit that the reference to <i>archaeological heritage</i> should be merged with 2 and re-positioned in 7.9 ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE and merged with <b>pol</b> 12.</p> <p>2 <i>Recognising the importance of archaeology and National Monuments as part of our heritage and inheritance and an important element in long term economic development, provide, promote, enhance, preserve, facilitate, encourage, support, improve and protect public access to archaeological sites National Monuments, battlefields, castles and sites of historic interest, in direct ownership, guardianship or control of the Council and/or the State or private ownership including those listed in the RMP, promote walking routes thereto with appropriate signage. Designate traditional walking routes as public rights of way in consultation with the NMS. In other cases, routes will be acquired by agreement with landowners or by way of compulsory powers Seek to maximise tourism potential.</i> Based on <b>Midland RPG</b> 6.8 EP7, <b>Carlow</b> 8.5.2 Obj 2, 9.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para last sentence &amp; Pol 3 4<sup>th</sup> pt, <b>Meath</b> 9.6.9 CH POL 6, <b>Offaly</b> 7.19 AAHP-07, <b>2011 Plan</b> 8 Tourism TM8/P15, <b>Longford</b> 6.2.1 ARC 4 &amp; ARC 8, Sth Dublin 9.4.0.4, Leitrim 1.10.2h), Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Access to Heritage &amp; Amenities AC-01a &amp; b &amp; Wexford 14.5 AHO6 &amp; 9.</p> <p>3 &amp; 5 We submit that these should be merged and re-positioned as in 7.9 and merged with <b>pol</b> 14.</p> <p>8 We submit that this should be re-positioned in <b>7.9.2 Rock of Dunamais</b> and merged with <b>pol</b> 4.</p> <p>9</p>	<p>The commentary in relation to archaeological heritage is noted and during the course of the development management process , the legal requirements in relation to validation, referral and decision making of sensitive sites with potential archaeological impact are complied with. To this end the policies and objectives OBJ1 –OBJ9 and policies ARCH 1-ARCH 17 provide guidance in this regard.</p> <p><i>DM 58 STATES AS FOLLOWS</i></p> <p>In general the following guidelines will apply where developments may have an impact on the county's archaeological record:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The archaeological remains of potentially significant sites within the Zone of Archaeological Potential will be preserved or investigated;</li> <li>2. Outside of the Zone of Archaeological Potential where in the opinion of the Planning Authority developments involve major ground disturbances, particularly in the vicinity of known monuments, planning conditions in relation to archaeology may also be applied;</li> <li>3. The Council will require that archaeological investigation be undertaken prior to the commencement of development. All such investigations must be undertaken by a qualified archaeologist in consultation with Laois County Council and the Office of Public Works;</li> <li>4. When deciding to grant permission for developments within the Zone of Archaeological Potential, the Council may impose conditions which render the developer liable for the cost of the archaeological investigation or the preservation of the archaeological record;</li> <li>5. <b>Such development shall be assessed in the context of the following documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accord with the Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (DoAHG 1999).</b></li> <li>• <b>The National Monuments Acts</b></li> </ul> </li> </ol>
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<p><b>7.9 ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE</b></p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence We submit that you should also include, if present, <i>round towers, high crosses, burial sites, ringforts, tower houses, Fulacht Fia, raths, court tombs, portal tombs, wedge tombs, cairns, earthworks, abbeys and souterraines. A monument can be defined as a man-made structure or group of structures or a natural structure altered by man.</i> Taken from Cavan 7.5.1. Also <b>Kildare</b> 12.7 1<sup>st</sup> para.</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> para</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional paras:</p> <p>1 Mention the principal <b>archaeological sites, monastic sites, areas of special archaeological interest and National Monuments.</b> See <b>Carlow</b> 9.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> line, <b>Meath</b> 4.6.1 1<sup>st</sup> para, <b>Offaly</b> 7.18.10 to 15 &amp; <b>Westmeath</b> 5.31 2<sup>nd</sup> para.</p> <p>2 <b>Monuments Acts 1930-2004</b> is comprised of:</p> <p>A <i>National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the State or a county council</i></p> <p>B <i>Historic monuments or archaeological areas recorded in the Register of historic monuments</i></p> <p>C <i>Monuments recorded in the RMP</i></p> <p>D <i>National Monuments which are subject to Preservation orders</i></p> <p>E <i>All previously unknown archaeology that becomes known.</i></p> <p>Taken from Cavan 7.5.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Louth 5.9.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; DLR 6.1.2(i) 2<sup>nd</sup> para.</p> <p>3 <i>Archaeological Heritage and any new archaeological sites subsequently discovered are <b>protected from unauthorised damage</b> or interference through powers and functions under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004.</i> Based on <b>Kildare</b> 12.3.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; last para last sentence &amp; Louth 5.9.1 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence.</p> <p>4 <i>All excavation, digging, ploughing or ground disturbance in proximity to National Monuments in State or Council ownership or guardianship or the subject of <b>preservation orders</b>(National Monuments) and registration orders requires the written consent of the Minister of AHG(Section 5 of the National Monuments(Amendment Act) 2004. Where necessary the Minister will issue preservation orders to ensure protection is afforded to sites believed to be under threat. The National Monuments Acts provide for the protection of all previously unknown archaeology that becomes known.</i> Based on <b>Offaly</b> 7.18.8 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; <b>Kildare</b> 12.3.2 last para.</p> <p>5 <i>Council recognises that archaeology is an important <b>historic and economic asset.</b></i> Based on Louth 5.91 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence &amp; Donegal 6.3.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>6 <i>There is a requirement to <b>notify the Minister of ECLG</b> of an intention to carry out works to or at a</i></p>	<p>1934- 1994.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have regard to Heritage Council's Archaeology and Archaeology and Development Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers(2000).</li> </ul> <p><b>7.10 NATURAL HERITAGE</b></p> <p>The commentary in relation to natural heritage is noted and it is acknowledged that the county has a rich and diverse heritage. Laois County Council continues to work with stakeholders, including local communities, to protect, conserve, preserve, manage, enhance, safeguard, facilitate, maintain and, where appropriate restore, the quality and character of the natural heritage and environment as is specified in Obj 1-8.</p> <p><b>7.12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p> <p>The commentary in relation to green infrastructure is noted and has been dealt under a series of headings and policies such as NH1 – NH39 dealing with diverse topics such as the Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Invasive Species, Biodiversity, Riparian Buffer Zones , etc .</p> <p><b>NH XX</b></p> <p><i>Conserve, enhance, manage, <b>protect</b>, facilitate, improve the green infrastructure network, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and develop new Green Infrastructure by recognising the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the protection and management of heritage.</i></p> <p><b>7.13 TREES AND WOODLANDS</b></p> <p>Comments are noted.</p> <p><b>7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS</b></p> <p>It is important that waterways and wetlands be left within the heritage chapter as they are an intrinsic part of our Natural Heritage. The opportunities to develop tourism by linking waterways in urban settlements with waterways in the Border Midlands and South East Regions is acknowledged in the tourism chapter. The issue of Public access to mountain, lakeshore, riverbank and other places of natural beauty or recreational utility is dealt with under policies PRW 1-PRW7.</p> <p><b>7.15 RIPARIAN BUFER ZONES</b></p>
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<p><i>recorded monument two months before commencing that work pursuant to Sec 12.3 of the National Monuments(Amendment) Act 1994. The granting of planning permission does not affect ministerial decisions under the National Monument Act 2004 as amended. Based on 2011 Plan 14.9 ARCHAEOLOGY footnote 16 under pols &amp; Offaly 7.18.6 last para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence 1<sup>st</sup> clause.</i></p> <p><i>7 The Minister has powers to issue <b>preservation orders</b> to ensure protection of sites believed under threat. Taken from Carlow 9.2.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para last sentence.</i></p> <p><i>8 It should be noted that some Recorded Monuments” are also National Monuments and are afforded a <b>higher level of protection</b> by a requirement to obtain positive consent from the Minister before any works that might affect them can be carried out. Taken from Louth 5.9.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.</i></p> <p><i>9 <b>Monuments which may be defined as national monuments</b> are also in the ownership of councils which have similar responsibilities under the National Monuments Act s(1930 -2004) to DAHG. Taken from Louth 5.9.1 4<sup>th</sup> para.</i></p> <p><i>10 <b>Preservation by record</b> of an RPM site which entails the excavation and removal of an archaeological site or feature can only be permitted by licence from the DoH LG as outlined in the National Monuments legislation. Taken from Fingal 6.2 ARCHAEOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT last para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</i></p> <p><i>11 Areas of high archaeological potential may exist <b>outside the boundaries</b> of conventionally recognised monuments, especially in wetlands ,former wetlands and the inter-tidal zone. Taken from Sligo 7.2.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para last sentence.</i></p> <p><i>12 <b>Battlefield sites</b> have a significant place in our history and development as a nation. They contribute to the historic environment and are ripe for development as an economic resource. The Zone of Archaeological Potential battlefield and siege sites can be quite extensive and can include features such as camp sites, fortifications and mass burials. The conservation, management and protection of views and prospects of battlefields is complex and is an emerging area. Studies are currently underway nationally regarding the future requirements for their protection. (mentions names). Based on Cork 12.3.13 &amp; Louth 5.9.3.</i></p> <p><i>13 <b>Archaeological Landscapes</b> can be of regional, national and international importance and every effort should be made to ensure their protection and preservation. Taken from Kerry 11.3.7 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences.</i></p>	<p>The commentary in relation to riparian buffer zones is noted; however this may be problematic particularly in an urban context which would effectively sterilize zoned and serviced land. 15m buffer zones will allow for the creation of connectivity between sites.</p> <p>The development of sports related facilities within waterways is dealt with in Section 4 and under policies TM18 - TM22 of the Draft plan. Consultation on these types of development is governed by the planning and development legislation.</p> <p>The commentary in relation to the Grand Canal and the River Barrow is noted and it is proposed to include the following under Section 7.14 -</p> <p><b>BARROW LINE OF THE GRAND CANAL text</b></p> <p><i>The Grand Canal is a man-made linear waterway and is a key element of green Infrastructure and has a unique setting of historic character. The towpath provides an uninterrupted corridor for pedestrians and cyclists.</i></p> <p><b>NH XX</b></p> <p>Promote and <b>develop the towpaths</b> along the Barrow Line in co-operation with Waterways Ireland and neighbouring local authorities.</p> <p><b>NH XX</b></p> <p><i>Investigate the possibility of developing long distance walking routes, within the lifetime of the Plan, along the disused <b>Mountmellick Line</b>.</i></p> <p><b>NH XX</b></p> <p><i>Facilitate the development of the Grand Canal for <b>cycling, walking and nature study</b>.</i></p> <p><b>NH XX</b></p> <p>Support the development of the <b>amenities and recreational potential</b> of the River Barrow, in co-operation with the NPWS, IW, adjoining Councils and other relevant authorities.</p> <p><b>7.18 LANDSCAPE</b></p> <p>The contextual information as submitted in</p>
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<p>14 <b>Record of Monument and Places</b> is a statutory audit of archaeological monuments and affords protection to structures and features under the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts 1930-2004). Taken from Donegal 6.3.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>15 Archaeological Heritage <b>is not confined</b> to known monuments and sites identified in the RPM. Taken from Donegal 6.3.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> sentence.</p> <p>16 Some monuments are protected by being in the ownership of the State or are the subject of preservation orders(National Monuments) and registration orders. The Council recognises the National Monuments in state ownership/care that are <b>cared for by the OPW</b> and is committed to work in partnership with them to protect, preserve and enhance them. Based on <b>Kildare</b> 12.3.2 last para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; Donegal 6.3.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> sentences.</p> <p>17 The areas known as Zones of Archaeological Potential are areas where intense archaeology is present. Taken from Donegal 6.3.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence</p> <p>18 Certain Monuments on the RPM deemed to be national importance are <b>designated as National Monuments</b>. Taken from Sth Dublin 9.1.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para last half of sentence.</p> <p><b>objs</b></p> <p>3 We submit that this should be merged with 8 DM58.1 &amp; 4 &amp; 7.9 pol 14 and replaced by: <i>Recognising that archaeology is an important element in long term economic development by promoting, protecting, supporting, conserving, sympathetically enhancing, preserving, managing and safeguarding for present and future generations, in consultation with the DoAHG and other relevant bodies, archaeological heritage, in-situ or by record, including the intrinsic value, character, amenity, visual integrity, context and settings of National/Recorded Monuments including town walls, tower embattlements and ditches, town gates, bastions or ancillary fortifications or newly-discovered archaeological sites and/or sub-surface archaeological remains, of known and unknown archaeological areas(including areas of archaeological potential and areas of special archaeological interest), sites and features(and their settings and landscapes and either above or below ground), in the ownership or guardianship of the State or the Council, including those identified in the RMP, RHM &amp; SMR, castles, monuments and features of historic interest National Monuments that are the subject to Preservation Orders, by prohibiting development which might be detrimental to the character of the site and its settings by reason of its location, scale, bulk or detailing. In general, developments within or adjacent to sites or which might affect them and in particular those within</i></p>	<p>relation to Landscape is noted and has been included in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). The LCA will be updated to refer to The National Landscape Strategy 2015 – 2025 which sets out its aims and objectives and contains a commitment to prepare a National LCA that will be followed by the publication of the Planning Guidelines on LCA.</p> <p>The <b>Planning and Development Acts 2011-2010</b> requires that a Development Plan shall include objectives relating to “landscape in accordance with relevant Government policies or objectives relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention”. Section 7.18 and Policies LS01-LS57 all relate to the landscape policies for the County.</p> <p><b>Fig 30 Landscape Character Assessment</b> will be amended to be more legible</p> <p>Cross referencing with the Landscape Character Assessment will be carried out.</p> <p><b>7.19 AMENITY VIEWS AND PROSPECTS</b></p> <p>Commentary in relation to views and prospects is noted. Table 27 indicates all the <i>Designated Amenity Views and Prospects in County Laois</i>. The following policies in the plan deal with the protection of views and prospects – AV1 – AV3</p> <p><b>7.20 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY</b></p> <p>The commentary in relation to Public Rights of Way is noted and the Planning Authority is cognissant of the requirements of the <b>2010 Planning and Development (Amendment) Act</b> Sec 7(b)(ii)(o) which states that</p> <p><i>The <b>preservation of public rights of way</b> which give access to mountains, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility, which public rights of way shall be identified both by marking them on at least one of the maps forming part of the development plan and by indicating their location <b>on a list appended to the development plan.</b> *</i></p> <p>The comments in relation to the listing of public rights of way are noted, particularly where the lack</p>
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	<p>a 20m radius of National Monuments included in the RMP and Zones of Archaeological Potential will not be permitted and proposed development within 75m will be discouraged. Ensure that development is sensitively sited and designed appropriately and extend this protection to cover additions or alterations that may arise during after the adoption of this Plan and impose conditions on development that might impact on sites of archaeological potential to ensure that appropriate measures, including buffer zones, are taken. Ensure, through the application of appropriate design standards and criteria that land uses do not give rise to significant losses of the integrity, quality or content of archaeological materials except as may be conditioned or directed by the appropriate heritage agencies. The Council will, in assessing planning applications for new development (including redevelopment, any ground works, refurbishment and restoration) within areas of archaeological potential or within close proximity of recorded monuments, take account of the archaeological heritage of the area. Developments which would injure or affect the settings and character of sites or which would be seriously injurious to their cultural value, will be prohibited within areas of archaeological potential and within close proximity of recorded monuments will take account of the archaeological heritage of the area and will take cognisance of the potential for subsurface archaeology. Protect and safeguard historic landscapes, which would unduly sever or disrupt their relationship, connectivity and/or inter-visibility between sites. Views to and from archaeological monuments should not be obscured by inappropriate development. Require applicants to take into consideration the impacts of development on the landscape and demonstrate that their proposal has been designed to take account of the heritage resource of the landscape. Ensure that full consideration is given to the protection of archaeological heritage when undertaking, approving or authorising development in order to avoid unnecessary conflict between developers and protection of archaeological heritage. Ensure that provision is made through the development control process for the protection of previously unknown archaeological sites and features. Council will ensure the implementation of the relevant legislative, statutory and policy provisions including Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and the National Monuments Act 1930. The Council may impose conditions on applications within zones of archaeological potential requiring the developer to pay the cost of an archaeological investigation. Adjust building lines and construction methods to avoid damage as far as practicable. Based on <b>2000 Planning</b></p>	<p>of certainty on access may affect the rights of local people and also walking tourism to reach its full potential. Laois County Council is not in a position to list all public rights of way. This is very resource heavy and detailed legal advice would be necessary to authenticate the public rights of ways as identified or potentially challenged. Funding has not been available to this end to pursue such a matter.</p> <p><b>7.21 GEOLOGY</b></p> <p><b>The commentary is noted with regard to Section 7.21 on Geology and it is proposed to include the following text -</b></p> <p><b>The Council recognises that Geology is an intrinsic component of natural heritage within the Planning Acts and Regulations and the Heritage Act 1995 to be protected and promoted for its heritage value and for its potential for recreational and geo-tourism initiatives and that it must ensure that geological heritage is adequately addressed in Development Plans.</b></p> <p><b>While the most important geological sites and geomorphological scientific sites will be designated as NHAs the National Heritage Plan (2002) has recommended the recognition and <b>protection of other important sites</b> known as County Geological Sites. The Irish Geological Programme (a partnership between the GSI and NPWS) identifies CGs, that although of national, regional and local importance will not receive the statutory protection of NHA sites.</b></p> <p><b>pols:</b>  <b>GEO 1 ——— <del>Protect from inappropriate development the County Geological Sites listed in Table 25.1 as notified by the Geological Survey of Ireland;</del></b></p> <p><b>Work with stakeholders to <b>protect</b>, preserve, enhance, maintain, manage, conserve, recognise and, where appropriate, restore the character conservation value and integrity of these sites for their amenity, scientific, heritage and historic values(including County Geological Sites listed in Table 28, proposed NHA's, areas near site and areas of geomorphological.</b></p> <p><b>INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING POLICIES</b></p> <p><b>GEO XX</b></p>
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<p><b>&amp; Development Act Sec 10(2)(c), European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, Valetta 1992(ratified by Ireland) &amp; First Sch Part IV 6, DPG 4.26 1<sup>st</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> line &amp; 4.27 1<sup>st</sup> pt, Offaly 7.18.8 1<sup>st</sup> para, 7.19 AAHP-04 &amp; 08 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; 7.20 AAHO-05 &amp; 06, Kildare 12.2 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, 12.8.4 AH1 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence &amp; 12.9 AAO 14 &amp; 16, Kilkenny 8.3.1 026 &amp; 27, Carlow 9.2 Pol 3 1<sup>st</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; last pts 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; 11.17 2<sup>nd</sup> para last pt, 2011 Plan 16 DCS 63 5<sup>th</sup> pt, Westmeath 5.33 P-AH3 &amp; O-AH1 &amp; 8, Meath 5.33 O-AH9 &amp; 9.6.9 CH POL 7 &amp; OBJ 7, Sth Tipp 6.4.3 Pol AEH13, Longford 6.2 HER 1 &amp; 6.2.1 ARC 1 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences, 2, 3, 11 &amp; 12, Nth Tipp 8.4.6 HERT 26, DLR 6.1.2(i) 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence, Cork 8.2 TO 2-1 &amp; 12.3 HE 3- b), Fingal 6.2 STATEMENT OF POLICY 1<sup>st</sup> clause &amp; AHO1, Sligo 7.2.6 AH 3 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences &amp; 10, Donegal 6.3.2.1 &amp; 6.3.3.1, 3 &amp; 4, Galway 9.3 Pol GH 3 &amp; 9.7 Pol ARC 1, 4 &amp; 5, Roscommon 6.7 Pol 6.9 &amp; 6.7.4 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, Monaghan 4.12.2 Obj AHO 1 &amp; 2, Clare 18.3.4 CDP 18-5a) &amp; Leitrim 1.10.2h).</b></p> <p>7 We submit that this should be merged with 8 DM58.5 and replaced by: An <b>Archaeological Impact Assessment and Method Statement</b> is to be carried out(funded by the applicant) by a suitably qualified/licensed archaeologist prior to the commencement of any activity, in respect of development in areas in or adjacent to(minimum of 30m) a Recorded Monument in State care or other archaeological heritage or within a zone of archaeological potential or where are clusters of known archaeological sites in the vicinity, that may, from <b>its size, location, bulk, detailing or nature</b>, including large scale development such as road or drainage schemes, wind farms, housing estates, industrial parks or shopping centres, have a significant effect on the surrounding landscape, upstanding structures, buried structures and deposits, those that are extensive in terms of areas(ground disturbance of ½ ha or more) or length (1km or more) or proposals involving extensive ground clearance, including sub surface elements with no visual surface remains, potential sites located in the vicinity or large complexes of sites or monuments, present or former wetlands, unenclosed rivers or lakes and developments that require an EIA or an EIS. This may lead to further subsequent archaeological mitigation – buffer zones/exclusion zones, monitoring, pre-development testing, excavation and/or refusal of planning permission. If permission is granted, a suitably qualified archaeologist must carry any necessary archaeological work. The Council, as a condition on such developments, may also consider the preservation of all or part of the archaeological</p>	<p>Encourage and facilitate the development of geo-tourism by conserve and managing geological resources, and by the development of a Rock Trail (named), <b>Geoparks</b> or other similar geo-tourism initiatives.</p> <p><b>Table 28: County Geological Sites</b></p> <p>It is proposed to include the following section</p> <p><b>ESKERS</b></p> <p>The Council recognises the unique <b>importance of esker landscape</b> and its archaeological and historic value. All proposals for sand and gravel extraction will be determined by considering the need to conserve the environment and the extent to which proposed developments would be damaging. There is a <b>presumption against new quarry development</b> on eskers. 3 The Council recognises that the exploitation of deposits can have seriously damaging <b>environmental impact</b> on the esker network.</p> <p><b>The following policies are proposed for inclusion</b></p> <p>ESK xx</p> <p><i>Protect, preserve and conserve the landscape and natural heritage and geo-diversity values of esker systems from inappropriate development. Ensure that any plan or project affecting eskers are adequately assessed with regard to their potential impact on the environment.</i></p> <p>ESK xx</p> <p><i>Assess applications for <b>quarrying activity and gravel extraction</b> and other development in proximity to eskers, with respect to their landscape importance or amenity value and the need to conserve them free from inappropriate development and to conserve their environmental character values and the extent to which proposals would damage these qualities.</i></p> <p><b>B NATIONAL PARK</b></p> <p>Comments in relation to a National Park are noted and we acknowledge it represents a major recreational amenity for both local people and visitors especially due to the very restricted access</p>
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<p>remains in the area covered by the permission. Each planning application shall be assessed on its own merits. An archaeological assessment shall establish the extent of archaeological material associated with the monument or site and shall ensure that the development can be designed so as to avoid or minimise any potential effects on archaeological heritage. If a monument or site included in the RMP is incorporated into a development the monument and attendant buffer area shall be ceded to Council Ownership once the development and associated landscaping works are complete so that the future protection of the monument can be assured. Development taking place either above or below ground which is within or adjacent to or might affect sites and features of historic and archaeological interest shall respect the character of the site and its settings and designed with care for their character. Development will only be permitted where the Council, in consultation with the DoAHG, considers it acceptable as per the assessment and subject to any mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse impact on the monument and/or its settings. Archaeological testing should be carried out where it is deemed that a proposed may have an impact on an archaeological site or monument. Strictly control development proposals on unzoned lands which may be detrimental to any area, site, structure or monument or detract from its setting. An assessment will be required – to be carried out by a licensed archaeologist – of developments which may impact on a national or recorded monument, the designated zone of archaeological importance surrounding any monument or other site of archaeological significance. Based on <b>DPG</b> 4.28 2<sup>nd</sup> para, <b>Westmeath</b> 5.33 P-AH3 &amp; 7, <b>Kildare</b> 12.8.4 AH3, <b>Carlow</b> 9.2.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences &amp; 9.2 Pol 3 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>Meath</b> 11.18 1<sup>st</sup> pt, <b>Offaly</b> 7.18.9 1<sup>st</sup> pt, <b>Longford</b> 6.2.1 ARC 6, <b>Sth Tipp</b> 9.26 Archaeology 1<sup>st</sup> para, <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.3.1 Dms 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>Sth Dublin</b> 11.5.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para, <b>Cavan</b> 7.5 BHO21 5<sup>th</sup> pt 2<sup>nd</sup> sub-pt, <b>Mayo</b> Vol 2 App 5 Archaeological Assessment 1<sup>st</sup> para, <b>Fingal</b> 6.2 ARCHAEOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT 3<sup>rd</sup> para &amp; 6.2.08 down to Assessments, <b>Cork</b> 12.3.15, <b>Waterford</b> 10.47, <b>Roscommon</b> 6.7 Obj 6.2.7 &amp; 6.7.4 1<sup>st</sup> para, <b>Kerry</b> 11.3 H-27, <b>Wicklow</b> 16.3 AR2 &amp; <b>DLR</b> 8.2.11.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>8 We submit that you should substitute assessed against for have regard to. Taken from <b>Westmeath</b> 3.42.5. AND</p> <p>that you should include:</p>	<p>rights to many such areas and also as it protects areas of ecological importance.</p> <p><b>The WORLD HERITAGE SITES mentioned in the submission relate to Durrow Co Offaly. There are no such sites in Co Laois for consideration.</b></p> <p><b>Waterways and wetlands are dealt with in section 7.14,</b> Walking and Cycling is dealt with in Section 6.1.3. These sections will be cross referenced in this section as there are common areas to both.</p>
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	<p>A Accord with the Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (DoAHG 1999). Taken from Sth Dublin 11.5.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> clause. Also <b>2011 Plan</b> pol BH P29 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>B Assess the impact on Part IV Planning and Development Act 2000. Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> 16 DCS60 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.</p> <p>C Assess the impact on The National Monuments Acts 1934- 1994. Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> DCS60 last pt.</p> <p>D Have regard to Heritage Council's Archaeology and Archaeology and Development Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers(2000). Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b>14.9.2 pol BH 14 P22 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>9 We submit that this should be deleted as is dealt with in 7.9.2 <b>pol</b> 3.</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional <b>pols</b>:</p> <p>1 Promote, facilitate, support and seek to protect the conservation of <b>Archaeological Landscapes</b> and seek to designate them within two years of the adoption of the Plan, particularly landscapes containing several Recorded Monuments or very important sites(sites should be named), in recognition of their high density of archaeological Monuments and their national heritage significance, in consultation with the DoECLG as part of the updated Landscape Character Assessment to be prepared following publication of the National Landscape Strategy/National Landscape Character Assessment. Based on Galway 9.7 Pol ARC-6 &amp; Obj ARC 1 4<sup>th</sup> line, Roscommon 6.7 Obj 6.24, <b>Kildare</b> 12.8.4 AH 7, Wexford 14.5 Obj AHo8 &amp; <b>Westmeath</b> 5.33 O-AH6. Note The proposed two year timescale is our suggestion.</p> <p>2 <i>Promote historic and archaeological heritage as a <b>tourism resource</b> in partnership with the Regional Tourism Authority.</i> Based on Leitrim 3.9.7 Obj 92, <b>Kildare</b> 5.9.4 ECD22, <b>Carlow</b> 8.8 Pol 2 7<sup>th</sup> pt &amp; <b>Westmeath</b> 3.16 P-ST3.</p> <p>3 Identify archaeologically sensitive <b>historic landscapes</b>. Taken from Fingal 6.2 STATEMENT OF POLICY last clause.</p> <p>4 Through an ongoing <b>review of archaeological potential</b>, ensure the protection and preservation of archaeological monuments and features not yet listed in the RPM &amp; SMR and as yet unrecorded. Taken from</p>	
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	<p>Kerry 11.3 H-28 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>5 Seek to identify and record important historic <b>Battlefield</b> sites. Taken from Donegal 8.1.3.12.</p> <p>6 Any <b>proposed new development</b> or which may impact on the integrity and/or setting of any monument, site feature or area of archaeological, historical or heritage importance, within areas of archaeological potential and within close proximity to sites under the protection of this Plan, on sites not yet included in the RMP or where an archaeological assessment is required, shall be <b>submitted to the DoAHG</b>, An Taisce, the Heritage Council and/or the National Museum, in accordance with National Monuments legislation, accompanied by a comprehensive report by a licensed archaeologist, and to prescribed bodies(as set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000), two months before commencing work, for their observations/comments prior to a planning decision being made. Any proposal development which may impact on the integrity and/or setting of any monument, site or area of archaeological, historical or heritage importance under the protection of this Plan and/or the DoAHG shall be referred to this department and the County Archaeologist for observation/comment prior to a decision on any planning decision being made. Require that proposal requiring an AIA must be referred to the relevant Prescribed Bodies and proposals for development affecting present or former wetlands, unenclosed land, rivers or estuaries. Full archaeological excavation shall be carried out where recommended by the NMS or any superseding body. Take into account/take cognisance of their observations, recommendations, advice and guidance, as to whether or not to grant Planning Permission or of any condition(s) to be imposed and take into account the views of other interested bodies. Based on <b>Meath</b> 9.6.9 CH POL 9, <b>Westmeath</b> 14.8.6 (i) &amp; (iii), <b>Nth Tipp</b> 8.4.6 2<sup>nd</sup> para after Pol, <b>Offaly</b> 7.19 AAHP09 &amp; 11, <b>Longford</b> 6.2 HER 5 &amp; 6.2.1 ARC 1 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence &amp; 9, <b>2011 Plan</b> 14.9 Specific Obj BH 018 &amp; BH P28 &amp; 29 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, <b>Carlow</b> 11.17 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>Offaly</b> 7.18.6 3<sup>rd</sup> para, Kerry 11.3 H-26 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, Galway 13.11 DMS 45 2<sup>nd</sup> para last sentence, Sligo 7.2 O-AH-2, DLR 8.2.11 last para, Fingal 6.2 AH08, Leitrim 3.9.8 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences, Cavan 7.5.2 BHO 22 to 24, Waterford 10.47, Wexford 14.5 AH04, Limerick 10.10.2 1<sup>st</sup> para 5<sup>th</sup> line &amp; Roscommon 9.32 2<sup>nd</sup> para. Also <b>Kildare</b> 19.12.4 1<sup>st</sup> para 7<sup>th</sup> line, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 8.4.6 HERT 26 10<sup>th</sup> line &amp; <b>Carlow</b> 9.2.2 last para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p>	
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	<p>7 Ensure that <b>development</b> (including transport, electricity, sewerage, telecommunications, water supply electricity, road works, forestry, renewable energy and extractive industries) located in or close to Recorded Monuments and Places, known archaeological monuments, zones of archaeological potential or archaeological landscapes does not detract from the setting of the feature and is sited and designed appropriately and sympathetically with its character. Based on Kerry 11.3 H-29, <b>2011 Plan</b> 14.9.2 P21, Cork 12.3 HE 3-6, Clare 18.3.4 CDP 18.8 &amp; Monaghan 4.12.2 AHP 7.</p> <p><b>8 Guidelines</b> In considering planning applications:  A Assess against Archaeological &amp; Development Guidelines for Good practice for Developers and the DoECLG/ICF Archaeological Code of Practice (2009). Taken from <b>Westmeath</b> 3.42.5.</p> <p>B Shall accord with the Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (DoAHG 1999). Taken from Sth Dublin 11.5.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> clause. Also <b>2011 Plan</b> 14 BH P29 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>C Assess the impact on Part IV Planning and Development Act 2000. Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> 16 DCS60 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.</p> <p>D Assess the impact on The National Monuments Acts 1934- 1994. Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> 16 DCS60 last pt.</p> <p>E *Have regard to Heritage Council's Archaeology and Archaeology and Development Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers(2000). Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> 14.9.2 pol BH 14 P22 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.  *Comply would be better.</p> <p>F *Cognisance will be taken of the "<b>Code of Practice between ESB National Grid and the Minister for the Environment</b> in relation to Archaeological Heritage. Taken from Cavan 7.5.2 BHO19.  *Comply would be better.</p> <p>9 Recognising the importance of <b>archaeological</b> or historic <b>landscapes</b> and the connectivity between sites, ensure their active protection and safeguarding from development that would unduly sever or disrupt the relationship and/or inter-visibility between sites and the views to and from sites.  Based on Kerry 11.3 H-30, Wexford 14.5 AHO6 &amp; Fingal 6.2 AHO1. Also <b>Offaly</b> 7.19 AAHP-17 2<sup>nd</sup> clause.</p>	
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	<p>10 In cases where permitted works will impinge on known archaeological sites and monuments, their settings and archaeological remains the developer will be required to employ a suitably qualified/licenced archaeologist, at the applicants expense, to carry out <b>licensed pre-development</b> testing, surveys or test/ and or/monitoring trial <b>excavations</b> and geophysical surveys and submit a report in advance of development or where permission is granted for development that requires mitigation of impacts on archaeological heritage. Where necessary, the Council may impose conditions that will affect sites of archaeological potential to ensure that adequate measures are taken to identify and mitigate the impact of development, by requiring professional supervision. Ensure that a suitably qualified archaeologist carries all archaeological works that require mitigation of impacts. Based on <b>Carlow</b> 9.2 Pol 3 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> pts &amp; 11.17 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> pt, <b>Westmeath</b> 5.33 O-AH9, <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.3.1 Dms 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>Kildare</b> 19.12.4 3<sup>rd</sup> para, <b>Offaly</b> 7.18.9 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>Longford</b> 6.2.1 ARC 10 &amp; Mayo Vol 2 App 5 3<sup>rd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> pt.</p> <p>11 Where permission is given by the DoAHG to <b>preserve archaeological remains by record</b> the excavations must be carried out by a licenced archaeologist and are to be fully recorded in line with best practice who shall submit a report to the DoAHG and a copy thereof sent to the Council. Taken from Fingal 6.2 ARCHAEOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT last para last 2 sentences.</p> <p>12 Have regard to <b>Historic Landscape Character Assessments</b> in assessing planning applications. Taken from Monaghan 4.12.2 AHP 8.</p> <p>13 Manage the archaeological sites and monuments owned by the Council, or where it is responsible for, for according to best practice and encourage and promote <b>management and maintenance</b> of archaeological heritage in accordance with conservation principles and best practice guidelines. Taken from <b>Meath</b> 9.6.9 CH OBJ 11 &amp; <b>Offaly</b> 7.19 AAHP-18.</p> <p>14 When considering development proposals, within areas of Archaeological Potential and on, or in close proximity to, sites of known archaeological significance, regard will be had to <b>Sec 12 of the National Monuments(Amendment) Act, 1994</b> or as may be amended. Taken from <b>Kildare</b> 19.12.4 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p>	
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	<p>15 <i>A <b>Conservation Plan</b> may be required for development in the vicinity of a site or monument, to ensure the ongoing protection of the monument and its setting.</i> Taken from Sth Dublin 11.5.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.</p> <p>16 Within areas of Special Archaeological Interest and other sites of archaeological potential, the Council may require that an <b>onsite assessment</b> is carried out by trial works. Taken from Louth 5.9.1 HER 22.</p> <p>17 Seek to identify and record important historic battlefield sites and protect and preserve their archaeological value including their settings (mention names) of significant archaeological potential and refer all planning applications within sites and their environs to the NMS of the DoAHG. Based on Donegal 8.1.3.12, Sth Dublin 9.1.1 Obj 4 &amp; Galway 9.7 Obj ARC 5.</p> <p><b>18 Where upstanding or buried remains of Recorded Monuments exist, a visual impact assessment will be required to ensure adequate consideration of any potential visual impact that a proposed development may have on them and should be undertaken to demonstrate the continued preservation of an archaeological monument and its settings and context to enable potential visual impacts to be considered and to define the buffer area. Based on Carlow 9.2 Pol 3 last pt last sentence, Monaghan 4.12.2 AHP 5 &amp; 2011 Plan 14.9 Obj 019 last sentence.</b></p> <p>19 Strictly control development proposals on <b>unzoned land</b> which may be detrimental to any area, site, structure or monument of archaeological significance, or detract from its setting. The Council shall seek an assessment by a licenced archaeologist of developments which may impact on a national or recorded monument, the designated zone of archaeological importance surrounding any monument or site of archaeological significance. Development will only be permitted where the Council, in consultation with the DAHG considers it acceptable and subject to any necessary mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse impact. Taken from <b>Longford</b> 6.2.1 ARC6</p> <p>20 <i>Publish a list with accompanying maps of heritage sites which are open to the public. This is to be published on line with interactive mapping.</i> Taken from <b>Co Her Plan</b> 45.</p> <p><b>7.9.1 RPM Tables 22 &amp; 23</b> We submit that you should include additional <b>Tables</b> of:</p> <p>1 <b>Areas of Special Archaeological Interest</b> See</p>	
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	<p>Louth 2.7 T 2.9.                  2 <b>Battlefield Sites</b> See Galway 9.7 Obj ARC 5.                  3 <b>Archaeological Landscapes</b> See Kerry Vol 2 App 3.  <b>7.9.2 Rock of Dunamais</b>  <b>text</b>  <b>pols</b>                  13 &amp; 4  <b>7.9.3 Zones of Archaeological Potential</b>                  text and maps  <b>pols</b>                  5 to 7  <b>pols</b>                  10 We submit that this should be deleted as it already dealt with in 7.4 BUILT HERITAGE <b>obj</b> 3.                  11 We submit that this should be repositioned in 7.9.3.                  12 Include from 7.4 merged <b>objs</b> 1 &amp; 2 and replaced.                  14 Include from 7.4 merged <b>objs</b> 3 &amp; 5                  16 We submit that:                  A that it should be repositioned as an additional <b>obj</b> in 7.9 and that in 2<sup>nd</sup> para you should insert or adjacent to after in. AND                   B that pt iv should be merged with 8 DM58.2 and replaced by: Where a development would result in ground disturbance within a Zone of Archaeological Potential and in sites on or abutting Monuments identified in the RMP, or a previously unknown archaeological feature the retention of a licensed archaeologist will be required and if he/she deems that development threatens the site, work must be immediately suspended until direction is given by the DoAHG and require him/her to furnish a report to the Council and the local library. Archaeological monitoring should be carried out during the course of development works where it is considered necessary to identify potential archaeological deposits or features. Planning conditions may be applied and if the site works proceed a licensed archaeologist should be employed to supervise and monitor the development. Based on <b>Westmeath</b> 14.86 (iv) &amp; (v), <b>2011 Plan</b> 14.9.4 4th &amp; last para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, <b>Offaly</b> 7.19 AAHP-12, Sth Dublin 11.5.1 last para, Leitrim 3.9.8 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Fingal 6.2 ARCHAEOLOGY AH04 &amp; Cavan 7.5.2 BHO21 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.   <b>7.10 NATURAL HERITAGE</b>   <b>text</b>                  We submit that you should include additional <b>text</b>:                  1 <i>The county has a <b>rich and diverse heritage</b> that includes the countryside, rivers, lakes, woodlands, geology, mass paths and holy wells and special</i></p>	
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	<p><i>elements on our landscape and seascapes and is a core component of green infrastructure and can be of national and international importance and provides recreational activities. Protection, conservation and enhancement of our natural heritage and geology and the promotion of management of the landscape, coast, the environment of our environment and the provision of public access brings benefits for the health, well-being, quality of life, enjoyment and pride for local people now and for future generations and it also brings economic benefits by the influx of visitors. Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> paras &amp; 8.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para, <b>Fingal</b> 5.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para, <b>Wicklow</b> 16.5 1<sup>st</sup> para last pt, <b>Kerry</b> 10.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> para 3rd line, <b>Sligo</b> 7. 1 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> paras &amp; <b>Leitrim</b> 1.10.2h)</i></p> <p>There is excellent material in <b>Galway</b> 9.8.1 which would repay study for possible inclusion.</p> <p>2 Mention the names of local features including mountains rivers woodlands and canals. See <b>Carlow</b> 8.4 NATURAL AMENITIES.</p> <p>3 Consider appropriate rural recreational and tourism related developments which would facilitate <b>public access</b> to sensitive landscapes. Taken from <b>Wexford</b> 14.4.3 Lo8 1<sup>st</sup> line.</p> <p><b>objs</b></p> <p>2 We submit that this should be repositioned in should re-positioned in a proposed additional sub sec in Chpt 5: SLIEVE BLOOM MOUNTAINS. See <b>2011 Plan</b> 8.2.</p> <p>3 As we assume that the designation referred to is to a National Parks we submit that you should include wording to remove any uncertainty. <b>Note</b> We note that this has been carried forward from the 2011 Plan which indicates in the last five years that no progress has been made.</p> <p>4 As the reference to access has already been dealt with in 4.3 pol 6, we submit that it should be deleted.</p> <p>5 We submit that this should be repositioned in 7.18 LANDSCAPE and replaced by <b>pol 8</b> in <b>General Landscape pols</b>.</p> <p>6 We submit that these should be repositioned in 7.12 GREEN INTRASTRUCTURE and merged with proposed additional pol 1.</p> <p>7 We submit that this should be repositioned in 7.2 LAOIS HERITAGE PLAN and merged with proposed additional <b>obj</b> 2.</p>	
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We submit that you should include an additional **pol/obj**:

Work with stakeholders, including local communities, to **protect**, conserve, preserve, manage, enhance, safeguard, facilitate, maintain and, where appropriate restore, the quality and character of the natural heritage and environment including rivers, streams and other waterways, wetlands, woodlands and forests, areas of scenic beauty, the character and distinctiveness of scenic landscapes of high amenity value, the general amenity of the countryside and in particular to maintain/develop linkages between them, for the benefit of future generations while maximising their recreational, amenity, quality of life and tourism potential for the present generation by resisting development that may have a negative impact. Where uncertainty exists as to the potential impact of proposed development full account shall be taken of Precautionary Principles. Create opportunities in suitable locations for active recreation and the provision of visual relief from the built environment and avoid unnecessary harm and reduce the effect of harm where it cannot be avoided. Where removal of these features is unavoidable appropriate measures to replace like with like should be considered. Implement the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) which protects the natural heritage. Promote best practice guidelines with regard to natural heritage, conservation and management and designate High Amenity Zones. Based on **DPG 2.1 9<sup>th</sup> line**,

& Protection of Natural heritage 3.5 Box 3 Environment, Heritage & Amenities last pt, 2000 Planning & Development Act Sec 10.2 ©, Offaly 7.4 NHO-02, Kildare 13.8.2 1,

**Kilkenny 8.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Longford 6.2.2 NHB 1 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Westmeath 7.13 P-REC1, Meath 4.6.8 ED POL 29, Carlow 8.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, 8.8 Pol 2 last pt & 9.1 Pol 1 2<sup>nd</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence & 8<sup>th</sup> pts, Kerry 6 Tourism Overall Obj T 6-2 & 10.1 NE-1 1<sup>st</sup> line & 4, Galway 4.14 Pol EDT 1, 9.3 pol GH 3 & 4 & 9.9 Pol NHB 1, Leitrim 3.8.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> pt & 2<sup>nd</sup> para i. to iii, DLR 4.1.3.1 Pol LHB19 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Natural Heritage NH-01, Monaghan 4.6.7 BDP 1, Cavan 8.2 NHEP1, Wicklow 9.3 1<sup>st</sup> para 5<sup>th</sup> pt & Donegal 6.1 Aim. Also **Offaly 2.11 4<sup>th</sup> para**.**

#### **7.12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

##### **text**

1<sup>st</sup> para We submit that this should be merged with additional material: Our environment and heritage resources can be described as Green Infrastructure and are a vital resource for our future. They can be

broadly defined as an interconnected network of green space which should be strategically planned so that it conserves natural ecosystems, values and functions including rivers(named) inland waterways, canals(named), wetlands and woodlands and provides enhanced environmental, social and economic benefits. It should protect the rural environment and should provide safe and attractive routes for walking and cycling. Green Infrastructure can provide more places for people to access nature, outdoor recreation, archaeology and encourages physical activity and improved health, wellbeing and quality of life by providing quality green spaces and provides coastal and countryside landscapes are a key green infrastructure not only for their intrinsic value as places of natural beauty but also because of their importance for recreation and tourism sets how a network of green space can be developed so as to benefit natural heritage as well as society. It should provide tourism and recreational recreational resources and improved health and well being. Based on

**Offaly** 7.5.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence & 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> pts, **Kilkenny** 8.2.2 1<sup>st</sup> para, Sth Dublin 8.0 1<sup>st</sup> para, DLR 4.1.1 4<sup>th</sup> para 7<sup>th</sup> pt, Galway 9.8 Green Infrastructure 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Kerry 10.9 text, Louth 5.15.5, Cork 13.1.1 & 13.3.51, Fingal 3.1 1<sup>st</sup> para & Wexford 14.3.

There is excellent material in Monaghan 4.10 & 4.10.1 & Sth Dublin 8.0 which could be included.

We submit that you should include additional **paras**:

1 **Comhar's Sustainable Development 2010 Creating GI** sets out how a network of green space can be developed to benefit the natural heritage as well as society. Taken from Galway 9.8 Green Infrastructure last sentence 1st clause.

2 **Strategy** will guide and assist in development of a countryside network to fully recognise the cumulative positive impact generated by creating **connectivity** between open spaces, rivers, wetlands, woodlands, mountains and coastal areas. Taken from DLR 4.2.1.1 text 3rd sentence.

**Map** See **Offaly** 7.5.3 Map 7.14.

**Table** See Louth App 14 Vol 29b) & M 5.17

**pols**:

4 We submit that this should be re-positioned in an additional sub sec: **ESKERS** in proposed pol 2.

We submit that you should include additional **pols**:

1 *Develop and implement a comprehensive **Green Infrastructure Strategy** that will form the basis for the identification, protection, enhancement, expansion, and management of the GI network and which reflects a long term perspective, in accordance with international*

*best practice and emerging national guidance, during the lifetime\* of the Plan in consultation with stakeholders including BnaM, Coillte, NPWS WI, farmers, community groups and NGOs as appropriate and ensure that it protects existing green infrastructure for open space and recreation, water management, archaeological heritage and landscape and ensure that it integrates existing communities through appropriate planning, ongoing management and governance. Based on **Offaly** 7.7 GIO-01 & 04, **Kilkenny** 8.2.2 Obj 8D, Sth Dublin 8.0 Obj 2, Cork 13.2 GI 2-1, Cavan 8.11 NHE046 & Fingal 3.2 Obj GIO1 to 3 & 5.*

*\*Within 2 years would be better.*

*See also very detailed Strategy in Wexford 14.3.2.*

**Note** At least three counties have adopted a Strategy.

*2 **Promote**, support and develop a coherent, integrated and evolving green infrastructure network that can connect to a regional network. It should incorporate items of historic, heritage or landscape importance as amenity features and linear features such as canals and river banks. In recognition of its economic value and its importance as a non-renewable resource, encourage, promote, develop and facilitate physical activity and improved health and well-being by providing green spaces for walking, cycling and other active recreational activities Provide and promote an attractive and safe network of paths and cycle in order to retain, improve and enhance accessibility to Green Infrastructure linking key green space sites, parks and open spaces and heritage assets where feasible and appropriate. Require the integration of Green Infrastructure in all areas of public space. Based on **Kildare** 14.12.6 GI 1, **Meath** Green Infrastructure 9.7.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> pt in list of **pts**, **Longford** 6.1 Green Infrastructure, **2011 Plan** 13.1 NH 13 /007, **Offaly** 7.6 GIP-01, Sth Dublin 8.1.0 Pol 2 & Obj 7, Louth 5.15.5 HER 65 & 74, Galway 9.9 Pol NHB 3, Monaghan Green Infrastructure 4.10.1 GIO 3 & Kerry 10.9 NH-42.*

*3 **Conserve, enhance, manage, protect, facilitate**, improve the green infrastructure network, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and develop new Green Infrastructure by recognising the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the protection and management of heritage. Resist and restrict development that would damage, degrade, fragment or prejudice it. All planning proposals must provide for the protection of green infrastructure by preventing adverse impacts on ecological connectivity and, where appropriate, for the provision of new green infrastructure. Based on Sth Dublin 8.1.0 Obj 3, DLR 4.2.1.1 Pol OSR1, Galway 9.9 Pol NHB 3, Cork 13.3.1, Fingal 3.2 FINGAL'S GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE Obj*

	<p>G107 &amp; Kerry 10.9 NE-42.</p> <p>4 Require that all <b>Land Use Plans</b> protect, manage and where possible provide green infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner to integrate green infrastructure into developments and ensure that they are cohesive with Green Infrastructure corridors linking adjoining lands. Taken from <b>Offaly</b> 7.6 GIP-03.</p> <p><b>pol</b> 12 We submit that this should be repositioned in 7.21 GEOLOGY in proposed additional <b>pol</b> 4 and replaced.</p> <p><b>7.13 TREES AND WOODLANDS</b></p> <p><b>Fig 29 Trees, Views and Prospects</b> We submit that the right hand panel is illegible and needs rectification.</p> <p><b>pols</b></p> <p>22 We submit that this should be repositioned in 5.9 RURAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES Aforestation in additional pol 3.</p> <p><b>7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS</b></p> <p>We submit that WETLANDS should be dealt with as an additional <b>Sub sec</b>.</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional <b>paras</b>:</p> <p>1 <i>There are opportunities to develop tourist by <b>linking waterways in urban settlements with waterways in the Border Midlands and South East Regions</b>. Taken from <b>NSS</b> Box 5.1.</i></p> <p>2 <i>Recognise that <b>river corridors</b>, including streams and canals are very important assets and contribute significantly to the character, amenity, scenic value, ecology, history and culture and support tourism, recreation and quality of life for local people and visitors enabling them to walk along towpaths and enjoy the surroundings of the waterside and engage in recreational purposes such as walking, horse riding, cycling, bird watching and various on-water activities. There is scope to form an interconnecting network of routes along rivers as part of a network of walking and cycling routes. Based on <b>FIs Development for Cycle Tourism (2007)</b> Traffic-Free Routes 5<sup>th</sup> last line on page 26, <b>Carlow</b> 8.10.5 2<sup>nd</sup> para last sentence, 8.11.8 1<sup>st</sup> para 5<sup>th</sup> line &amp; 9.1.7, <b>Westmeath</b> 5.15 1<sup>st</sup> para, <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.6 1<sup>st</sup> para, Roscommon 7.4 last para, <b>Longford</b> 6.2.2.7 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, DLR 4.1.2.7 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; Leitrim 3.10.4 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</i></p> <p><b>Note</b> This is merged with 7.18 LANDSCAPE LCT3.17</p> <p>We submit that you should include <b>Tables</b> of:</p> <p>1 The main rivers. See <b>Kildare</b> 14.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para 11<sup>th</sup> line, <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.6 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; <b>2011 Plan</b> 2.1 3<sup>rd</sup></p>	
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	<p>para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.</p> <p>2 Existing or potential riverside and lakeside walks/cycle routes. See Kildare 5.9.5 ECD 29 &amp; Carlow 8.11.10 7<sup>th</sup> line.</p> <hr/> <p>3 <b>Main Riverside Amenity Areas.</b> See 2011 Plan 8.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para.</p> <p>We submit that you should include <b>objs:</b></p> <p>1 <i>In partnership with NPWS, local Wildlife Rangers, WI, community groups and other relevant stakeholders, provide, preserve, promote, support, encourage, develop, facilitate, increase and improve <b>public access</b> to and around lakes, rivers(named)(including a riparian corridor on both sides), canals and navigational and non-navigational waterway corridors(together with rivers and streams and valleys) to provide amenities and recreational facilities the provision of land-based recreational activities, including walking, cycling, mountain biking, horse riding, wildlife/bird watching, angling and other non-noise generating activities in order to harness their tourist/recreational potential and focusing on linear features such as canal and river banks and walking paths. Reserve land adjacent to river and canal banks and lakeshores to facilitate these activities. In areas adjacent to inland waterways, including lakes canals and rivers, where planning permission is sought, conditions may be attached requiring the retention of or creation of public access to facilitate the creation of or expansion of walking/cycling routes. Based on <b>National Heritage Plan</b> 4.17, <b>Midland RPG</b> 7.3 TP5, <b>Westmeath</b> 3.16 P-ST6, 5.16 P-RLC4 &amp; O-RLC1, 6.27 O-LM2 &amp; 7.13 O-REC9, <b>Offaly</b> 7.2.21 4<sup>th</sup> pt &amp; 7.16 ROWP-03, <b>2011 Plan</b> 6.2 P13, 8 Tourism P19, 10.7 P62 &amp; 13.1 P007 &amp; <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.6 last para last sentence, <b>Sth Tipp</b> 6.3.4 Pol AEH 7, <b>Longford</b> 5.1.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; 6.2.2.7 ILW 3, 5 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, 7 &amp; 9, <b>Kildare</b> 5.9.5 ECD 29, 34 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; 36 &amp; 14.12.1 CR 7, <b>Carlow</b> 8.8 Pol 2 5<sup>th</sup> pt, 8.12 Pol 6 10<sup>th</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; 9.1.8 Obj 4 2<sup>nd</sup> pt 3<sup>rd</sup> line, 7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> pts, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Access to Heritage &amp; Amenities AC-01a, Wexford 15.13 4<sup>th</sup> pt &amp; Leitrim 3.10.4 Pol 106.</i></p> <p><b>Note</b> This is merged with 7.18 LANDSCAPE LCT3.28 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>2 <i>Protect, enhance and improve <b>existing public rights of way</b> and where possible, provide additional access to inland waterways including lake shores, river and canal banks, through the acquisition of land for public rights of way, through agreement with existing landowners. Taken from <b>Longford</b> 6.2.2.7 ILW 5 1<sup>st</sup> sentence &amp; 6.</i></p> <p>3 <i>Promote the <b>natural, historic and amenity</b></i></p>	
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**potential** of (named rivers) and all watercourses to facilitate the development of amenity, recreational benefits and the quality of life for local people and visitors and to address the long term management and protection of these corridors and to strengthen links at regional level. Maximise the use of canals and other watercourses as tourist amenities in co-operate with WI, NPWS and community groups to develop their quality and amenities and where the opportunity arises seek to provide amenities by linking existing fragmented green spaces and focusing on linear features such a canal and river banks and walking paths. Based on **Midland RPG** 7.3 TP4, **Kilkenny** 7.3.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Sth Dublin 8.2.0 Pol 3, **Carlow** 8.11.8 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence & **2011 Plan** 8 TM 8 P19 & 13.1 P007.

4 In co-operation with WI, NPWS and community groups, encourage, promote and use the potential of canal towpaths for designated walking and cycle routes, both as recreational and tourism amenities and the promotion of links with any designated walking cycling routes, existing or proposed. Based on Longford 6.2.2.7 ILW 10 1<sup>st</sup> sentence & Kildare 5.9.5 ECD 29.

5 **Uncover existing culverts** where possible. Taken from Sth Dublin 8.2.0 Obj 4.

**7.15 RIPARIAN BUFER ZONES**

1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> paras

3<sup>rd</sup> para We submit that the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence should be upgraded to a **pol** and that you should substitute 30 to 50 for 15. Taken from **Offaly** 8.15.4 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

We submit that you should include an additional para: **Riparian buffer zones** or corridors are lands which are directly adjacent to or surrounding a natural or artificial waterway and are areas that are physically or visual linked to waterways and are multi-functional in nature. They include major and secondary rivers, intermittent or permanent creeks and streams, gullies and drainage lines where surface water collects and lakes. Riparian land extends from the edge of the waterways to adjoining terrestrial land and are used to protect watercourses from the impact of development. As they are particularly vulnerable to damage from inappropriate development any development must ensure their protection. Based on DLR 4.1.3.7 2<sup>nd</sup> para last sentence, Louth 10.7 1<sup>st</sup> para & 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, **Offaly** 7.2.21 1<sup>st</sup> para, **Carlow** 9.1.8 1<sup>st</sup> para & **2011 Plan** 13.6 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.

We submit that 31 to 35 should be repositioned in 7.14 and that 36 should be repositioned in the proposed additional sub sec: WETLANDS proposed pol 3.

31 We submit that this should be replaced by: As

	<p>watercourses are important assets, in respect of both navigable and non-navigable waterways and riparian zones and corridors, maintain, manage, preserve, protect, conserve, safeguard, enhance and improve their amenity and recreation value and, where appropriate, restore waterway corridors and riparian zones, including floodplains and valleys of rivers, streams, canals(including towpaths), springs, lakes and other watercourses(including shorelines in immediate adjoining area and skyline development on surrounding hill crests). Keep waterways free from inappropriate development and incompatible use to ensure that public use is not prejudiced by incompatible use, such as facilities for noise-generating sports and interference with public walking and cycling routes and public rights of way. Protect, maintain and enhance their natural heritage, appearance, quality and landscape character and archaeological heritage and avoid adverse visual impacts so as to maintain their aesthetic, ecological, amenity and tourism and recreational values from the impacts of dispersed and highly visible development. Create and maintain buffer zones and riparian corridors and keep them in an open state and in a natural condition by discouraging culverting or realignment. Prohibit developments which are likely to have significant adverse visual impacts, either individually or cumulatively, on the character of river valleys and where there is no overriding need for the development to be in that particular location. Ensure that, where an overriding need is demonstrated for a particular development in the river valleys, careful consideration is given to site selection. The development should be appropriate in scale and be sited, designed and landscaped in a manner which minimises potential adverse impacts on the landscape. Take into account any landscape, nature or archaeological designations. Locate new development in water corridor landscape character areas towards existing structures and mature vegetation. Seek during redevelopment the creation of a riparian buffer strip, where practicable. Development in identified floodplains and riparian corridors must not adversely affect the river's function as a green infrastructure corridor. Adopt a regional approach in the protection of watercourses by co-operating with neighbouring counties. Development proposals in or adjacent to river corridors will be considered favourably providing that land filing, diverting, culverting or realignment of river or stream corridors and that they do not have a negative effect on the distinctive character and appearance of the waterways corridor and the specific characteristic and landscape elements of the specific</p>	
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site and its context do not involve land filing, diverting, culverting or realignment of river or stream corridors and that they do not have a negative effect on the distinctive character and appearance of the waterways corridor and the specific characteristic and landscape elements of the specific site and its context. Liaise with adjoining counties, where appropriate, regarding development along rivers. Based on **Kildare** 13.8.6 1W 2 & 5, 14.8.5 WC 1 & 3 & 14.9.2 WV 4, **Offaly** 4.20 EnvP-23 & 7.3 NHP-13, **Kilkenny** 7.3.4 1<sup>st</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> pts, 8.2.6 last para 1<sup>st</sup> line & Dms 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> pts, **Westmeath** 5.16 P-RLC3, 4 & 14 & 10.7 P56, **2011 Plan** 13.6 P24, **Carlow** 5.3.2 Pol 8 7<sup>th</sup> pt, 8.11.8 Pol 4 2<sup>nd</sup> pt & 9.1.7 Obj 3 1<sup>st</sup> pt & 4 1<sup>st</sup> pt, **Longford** 5.3.2 SFRA 3 & 6.2.2.7 ILW 1 2<sup>nd</sup> line, 3, 8 & 9, **Meath** 9.7.10 NH POL 21, DLR 4.1.3.7 LHB25, 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> pts, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Natural Heritage NH-01f), Roscommon 7.4 Pol 7.8 & Obj 7.30, Leitrim 1.10.2g) & 3.8.3.2 Obj 63, Wexford 14.4.3 Lo5 & 6 & Galway 8.7 Obj Fl 3 & 9.9 Pol NHB 4.

**Note** This is merged with 7.18 LANDSCAPE LCT3.28 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.

32 We submit that this should be replaced by: *Require that developments along rivers, canals, lakes and other watercourses provide for set aside land for walking/cycling routes and to provide, promote and facilitate the creation of waterside linear parks and an interconnecting network of green open spaces to link with existing fragmented green spaces existing parks and open spaces with towns and other settlements in their vicinity and extend to adjoining counties forming inter-county tourism links, in cooperation with their councils.* Based on **Kilkenny** 7.3.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para & 7.3.4 last pt, **Kildare** 5.9.5 ECD 34 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence & 36, 14.12.1 CR 7 & 14.12.3 OS 5, **2011 Plan** 13.1 P007 & 13.6 NH 13 P23, **Carlow** 8.11.10 1<sup>st</sup> para 8<sup>th</sup> line, **Westmeath** 6.2.7 O-LM5 & Leitrim 3.10.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

33 & 35

We submit that you should include additional **pols**:

1 Normally only permit proposals for **development associated with water sports** adjacent to waterways where all the following criteria are met: The proposed facilities are compatible with existing use of water including non-recreational uses, will not result in damage to features of archaeological heritage, can be satisfactorily integrated into the landscape, will not have an unacceptable impact on visual amenities especially in important scenic areas and will not result in over intensification of use leading to excessive noise. Taken from **2011 Plan** 16 DCS 55.

2 **Improvements to access will be taken into account**

*when considering development proposals that increase, secure, improve and enhance public access, including the development of walking/cycle routes to inland waterways, including regional/linear parks and river valley landscapes provided that developments are appropriate in scale and are sited, designed and landscaped in a manner which minimises potential adverse impacts on the landscape.* Based on **Kilkenny** 7.3.4 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, **Carlow** 8.11.8 last sentence (a) & (c), **Wexford** 14.4.3 LO8 & **Roscommon** 7.4 Obj 7.32.

3 As **Water sports** cover a wide range of activities from tranquil uses such as angling, sailing, canoeing, rowing and sail boarding to powered activities such as water-skiing and powerboat uses, the Council may require management plans for particular areas to address the compatibility of such varying uses and may introduce bye-laws restricting or prohibiting **jet-skiing and water skiing**. Based on **Kilkenny** 7.3.4.1, **Leitrim** 3.10.3 4<sup>th</sup> para & **Carlow** 8.11.9 1<sup>st</sup> para 6<sup>th</sup> pt & 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> line.

**Note** Mayo has bye laws

4 **Consult with WI, NPWS, DoECLG, IW and local communities** on development proposals that may affect inland waterways, rivers, lakes, canals or water courses. Taken from **Westmeath** 5.16 P-RL8 & **Carlow** 9.1.7 Obj 3 4<sup>th</sup> pt.

5 *In line with item 6 of the first schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) seek to preserve a strip 10m wide along the banks of large **drainage channels**(greater than 5mwide) and 5m wide elsewhere. This will not prevent the development of riverside walks and other amenities that do not compromise access for drainage purposes.* Taken from **Offaly** 8.17.1.

We submit that you should include an additional **sub secs**:

#### **A BARROW LINE OF THE GRAND CANAL**

##### **text**

*The Grand Canal is a **man-made linear waterway** and is a key element of green Infrastructure and has a unique setting of historic character. The towpath provides an uninterrupted corridor for pedestrians and cyclists.* Taken from **Sth Dublin** 9.2.4 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.

##### **objs**

1 Promote and **develop the towpaths** along the Barrow Line in co-operation with Waterways Ireland and neighbouring local authorities. Taken from **Kildare** 5.9.5 ECD 33.

2 *Investigate the possibility of developing long distance walking routes, within the lifetime of the Plan, along*

	<p><i>the disused Mountmellick Line.</i> Based on <b>Kildare</b> 14.11.5 CR5.</p> <p>3 <i>Facilitate the development of the Grand Canal for <b>cycling, walking</b> and nature study.</i> Taken from Sth Dublin 9.2.4.2.</p> <p><b>pol</b>  <b>Protect</b>, preserve, maintain, improve and enhance the national heritage, recreational and amenity value (including walking and cycling) of the <b>Grand Canal corridor</b> its towpaths by ensuring that development along and adjacent to the Grand Canal protects and incorporates high value natural heritage features including watercourses, wetlands, woodlands and includes a buffer area to facilitate a fully functioning Green Infrastructure network. Based on <b>Offaly</b> 7.3 NHP 14, 7.9 AHAPo1 &amp; 7.18.6 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence &amp; Sth Dublin 9.2.4.5.</p> <p><b>B RIVER BARROW</b></p> <p><b>text</b>  1 The towpath is a significant <b>amenity resource</b>. Taken from <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.3.3.2 1<sup>st</sup> para.</p> <p>2 The Barrow Corridor is a <b>significant natural asset</b> with great potential for tourism and recreation and in particular for Nature and Wildlife Sites of interest and <b>enhancement of the Barrow and South Leinster Ways</b>. Taken from <b>Carlow</b> 8.10.5 last para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 5<sup>th</sup> pts. Also <b>Midland RPG</b> 6.3.10 last sentence.</p> <p><b>obj</b>  Support the development of the <b>amenities and recreational potential</b> of the River Barrow, in co-operation with the NPWS, IW, adjoining Councils and other relevant authorities. Based on Wexford 15.5 Obj RS 15, <b>Kildare</b> 5.9.5 ECD 33 &amp; <b>Carlow</b> 5.3.2 pol 8 2<sup>nd</sup> pt 3<sup>rd</sup> line.</p> <p>Include additional <b>obj</b> from <b>6.1.3 Pedestrians and Cyclists</b> pol 41.</p> <p><b>C RIVER NORE</b></p> <p><b>obj</b>  Develop, promote and protect its <b>recreational and tourism potential</b>. Taken from <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.3.3.1 last para. Also <b>Midland RPG</b> 6.3.10 last sentence.</p> <p><b>7.18 LANDSCAPE</b></p> <p><b>text</b>  1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence  2<sup>nd</sup> sentence We submit that this should be replaced</p>	
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by: LCAs are defined by the Heritage Council in its Base Line Audit “as unique, geographically specific areas of a particular landscape type. Each has its own individual character and identity even though it shares the same generic characteristics with other areas of the same type”. Taken from Kerry 12.2.2 1<sup>st</sup> para.

2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> paras

We submit that you should include additional **paras**:

1 **The National Landscape Strategy 2015 – 2025 sets out its aims and objectives and contains a commitment to prepare a National LCA that will be followed by the publication of the Planning Guidelines on LCA.** Taken from DLR 4.1.2(i) last para last 2 sentences.

2 Our outstanding world-renowned Landscape is a **precious national asset** and its attractiveness and integrity are central to the tourist industry. In particular, its rivers and uplands are highly scenic and are of significant visual amenity value, provide opportunities to develop tourism and recreational facilities, contribute to a high quality of life and wellbeing for local people and provide a positive experience for visitors. All aspects of our natural heritage comes together in the landscape so that it constitutes an important part of people’s lives and gives individuals a sense of identity and bestows a sense of place in their surroundings. The key to a successful landscape policy is the ability to retain, conserve, protect and manage change in a manner that respects the natural environment. Based on **NSS 3.5.3 4<sup>th</sup> pt, Wicklow 17.9.1, Kilkenny 8.2.10 3<sup>rd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence & 8.2.10.4 2<sup>nd</sup> para, Longford 4.5 Bogs, Woods & Rural Landscape 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Donegal 6.1.1 Landscape Conservation, Kerry 12.1 1<sup>st</sup> para, Cork 13.5.1 & Wexford 14.4 1<sup>st</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence.** Also there is excellent text in Fingal 5.4 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION & DLR 4.1.1.

3 **The Planning and Development Acts 2011-2010** requires that a Development Plan shall include objectives relating to “landscape in accordance with relevant Government policies or objectives relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention”. The European Landscape Convention promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. The Convention defines landscape as “as an area perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”. Taken from DLR 4.1.2(i).

	<p>4 The Council will take a <b>pro-active approach</b> to the landscape with policies that seek to conserve and enhance the strongly distinctive landscape character by protecting significant landscape elements that are intrinsically important or contribute to general amenity. Landscape assets are non-renewable resources. Taken from DLR 4.1.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para.</p> <p>5 The <b>Heritage Act 1995</b> classifies landscape as areas, sites, vistas and features of significant scenic, archaeological, geological, historical and ecological interest. Taken from Galway 9.10 last para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>6 Under the EIA Directive – <b>Environmental Impact Statement/Assessment</b> the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment is required. The thresholds for such assessment are listed in the Planning and Development Regulations 2011(as amended). Taken from Galway 13.11C) 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences. <b>Note</b> This seems to refer to an EIS.</p> <p>7 A <b>Historic Landscape Character Area</b> is a detailed holistic study of the historic development and environmental significance of an area and offers a dynamic perspective of the total landscape thereby contributing to the management and promotion of sustainable development within the areas. Taken from DLR 4.1.21 last para.</p> <p>8 <b>Heritage Landscapes</b> are those areas where sensitive environmental resources – scenic, ecological and historic, are located and are envisioned as the most valued part of the county as well as the wider community – both National and International. Their principle role is to sustain natural heritage. Taken from Clare 16.4.5 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> para. Also there is further excellent material in the 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; last para.</p> <p><b>Fig 30 Landscape Character Assessment</b> We submit that the right hand panel is illegible and needs rectification.</p> <p><b>LCT1 Hills and Upland Areas</b> We submit that you should include <b>text</b> from 1<sup>st</sup> para from 1<sup>st</sup> para of <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.9.1.</p> <p><b>pols</b></p> <p><b>LCT3 River Corridors and Lakes</b> We submit that you should include <b>text</b> from <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.9 3</p>	
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	<p><b>pols</b> We submit these should be repositioned in 7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS in particular 18, 19 &amp; 23</p> <p>17 Merged with proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> additional para.</p> <p>28 1<sup>st</sup> sentence Merged with proposed additional obj 1. 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence Merged with pol NH 31.</p> <p><b>ICT4 Mountain Areas</b> We submit that you should include <b>text</b> from <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.9.4.</p> <p><b>pols</b></p> <p><b>ICT5 Peatland Areas</b> We submit that you should include <b>text</b> from <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.9.5.</p> <p><b>pols</b> We submit these should be repositioned in 5.9 RURAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES</p> <p>We submit that you should include additional <b>General Landscape pols</b>:</p> <p>1 <b>Review the Landscape Character Assessment</b> and the Landscape objectives in the Plan, following the publication of the National Landscape Strategy and future guidelines issued by a Minister of the Government with respect to landscapes and will include capacity studies for different forms of development and will involve consultation with adjoining councils. Based on Wexford 14.4.3 Lo2 &amp; Kerry 12.2.2 ZL-2, Also <b>Offaly</b> 7.14 LAO-06. <b>Note</b> This Strategy was adopted in 2015.</p> <p>2 Recognizing the diverse and unique landscape character of the county and in accordance with Sec 204 of the 2000 Planning and Development Act, designate/zone <b>Landscape Conservation Areas</b> (mention local areas) in partnership with DoECLG and the Heritage Council, within two years of the adoption of the Plan, in order to achieve its objective of protecting and enhancing the landscape. Physical development shall not adversely impact on areas designated as visually important/sensitive. Based on <b>Kildare</b> 14.10 LO 3, <b>Monaghan</b> 4.4.1 LPO 2, <b>Leitrim</b> 3.8.8, <b>Longford</b> 6.1.1 LCA 2 &amp; <b>Meath</b> 9.11 2<sup>nd</sup> para.</p> <p>3 Investigate the feasibility of preparing a <b>Historic Landscape Characterisation</b> and utilize the results to complement and contribute to a comprehensive LCA. Taken from <b>Offaly</b> 7.14 LAO-05.6.</p>	
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	<p>4 Submit periodic <b>State of the Landscape</b> Reports to the appropriate Government Department which will take note of changes to the landscape and the progress of integrating landscape into the work of the Council and on meeting landscape quality objectives as required by NLS Act 2015 Action 6.</p> <p>5 Preserve, maintain and protect the amenity value, visual integrity and rural character of open/unfenced landscape of the <b>uplands, areas of rough grazing</b> and commonage and secure access thereto. Discourage inappropriate development in open countryside and prohibit developments which are likely to have significant adverse visual impacts, either individually or cumulatively, on the character of the uplands, unless there is no overriding need for the development to be in that particular location. Where an overriding need is demonstrated ensure that it is appropriate in bulk and scale and is sited, designed and landscaped in a manner which minimises potential adverse impacts on the landscape. Ensure that development will not significantly interfere or detract from scenic uplands and that particular regard is had to potential impacts of new developments and require that proposed developments demonstrate that every effort has been made to reduce visual impacts(including site selection and design) and that visually prominent sites have been avoided to minimise visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, public amenities, settlements and roads. Have particular regard to the potential impacts of development on sensitive upland areas and materially consider the difficulty of establishing and maintaining screening vegetation. Based on <b>Kildare</b> 14.8.3 LU 1, 4 &amp; 5, <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.10 DMS 6<sup>th</sup> pt, Wexford 14.4.3 LO3, 5 &amp; 6, Sth Dublin 4.3.9.xii last para, Sligo 7.4.4 P-LCAP-12 &amp; Galway 9.11 Obj LCM 3 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>6 Safeguard and <b>protect skylines</b> and ridgelines from development by resisting development which do so. Based on Nth Tipp 4.2 ENV 3(c), Fingal 5.2 LC o6, Cork 13.6 GI 6-1d), Donegal 6.1.3.12 &amp; Monaghan 4.4 LPP3.</p> <p>7 Ensure that the visual impact of developments on <b>steep slopes</b>(i.e &gt;10%) or elevated sites(e.g. reservoirs or telecommunication structures) are minimized or mitigated and will not be conspicuous or have a disproportionate or dominating visual impact(due to excessive bulk, scale or siting) on the environment as seen from public areas, scenic routes, viewpoints or settlements. Based on <b>Kildare</b> 14.8.3 LU 2 &amp;</p>	
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	<p><b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.10 DMS 4<sup>th</sup> &amp; 5<sup>th</sup> pts,</p> <p>8 Work with stakeholders to <b>protect</b>, sustain, conserve, preserve, manage, promote, enhance and value the diversity, distinctiveness, scale, character, appearance, sensitivity and visual and scenic quality, amenity value of the open countryside and the natural beauty of the <b>landscapes</b> and the natural environment in accordance with relevant government policy and guidelines, by ensuring that they meet high standards of siting and design and are holistic and in the interest of the common good for current and future generations for the benefit of both local people and our visitors and a major economic asset. Applicants shall satisfactorily demonstrate that new development are in accordance with the LCA and can be as adequately absorbed into its surroundings without significant adverse visual impacts to its overall landscape value and archaeology and that they are appropriate in scale and sited, designed and landscaped having regard to their settings in the landscape and taking into account site contours and levels, so as to ensure that any potential adverse visual impacts are minimised, where there is no overriding need for the development to be in that particular location. Encourage appropriate development which would enhance an existing degraded landscape and/or which would enhance and introduce views to or from public viewpoints. Developments which fails to appropriately integrate into the landscape with due regard to visual impact shall be resisted. Adopt a regional approach in the protection of the environment, co-operating with neighbouring counties in the protection of the landscape. Based on <b>2000 Planning &amp; Development Act</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Sch Part IV 7, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 4.2 Pol ENV 2 &amp; 4.2 Key Landscape Aims(i), 3<sup>rd</sup> pt, <b>Meath</b> 9.8.3 last para 4<sup>th</sup> line &amp; 9.8.6 LC SP 1, <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2 2nd para, 8.2.10 4<sup>th</sup> pt last sentence, 8.2.10.1 Obj 8G &amp; 8.2.10 DMS 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> pts, <b>Offaly</b> 7.13 LAP-01 &amp; 7.14 LAO-01, <b>Westmeath</b> 3.14 P-GT5, 6.4 P-LCA1 &amp; 6.21 P-LLM1 &amp; 2, <b>Longford</b> 6.1.1 LCA 1 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, <b>Kildare</b> 14.8 LA 2 &amp; 14.10 LO 4, Leitrim 1.10.2g) &amp; 4.1.1 2<sup>nd</sup> para 3, Fingal LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT OBJS LCo5, Cork 13.6 GI 6-1c), Kerry 10.1 NE-1 1<sup>st</sup> line, 12.1 ZL-1, Monaghan 4.4.1 LPO 1 &amp; LPP 3 &amp; Wexford 14.4 2<sup>nd</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> line &amp; 14.4.3LO4 &amp; 7.</p> <p>9 <b>Protect</b>, conserve, preserve and enhance the visual integrity, local and regional distinctiveness, character, scenic. amenity and recreational values and visual quality of areas of the <b>sensitive</b>, important and outstanding and unspoilt <b>landscapes</b>(including historic and archaeological landscapes), scenic areas,</p>	
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	<p>areas of natural beauty or interest, high amenity areas and the environs of geological and geomorphological, archaeological or historic sites from intrusive and/or unsympathetic developments by prohibiting development where it would be injurious or detract from natural and tourism amenities. Resist development such as houses, forestry, masts, extractive operations, landfill, caravan parks and large agricultural/horticultural units which would interfere with the character of highly sensitive and visually vulnerable areas. Ensure, where an overriding need is demonstrated for a particular development in the vicinity of sensitive landscape, that irrespective of its scale, careful consideration is given to site selection. It is of critical importance that development is appropriate in scale and be sited, designed and assimilated into the landscape in a manner which minimises potential adverse impacts on the landscape. Proposed developments, where located within or adjacent to sensitive landscapes, may be required to provide a landscape report detailing how the proposal will impact on the landscape and mitigation measures to be taken. Ensure that new development does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of highly sensitive areas and does not detract from its scenic value. New development will not be permitted if it causes unacceptable visual harm, or introduces incongruous landscape elements. Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.10 DMS last pt,</p> <p><b>Westmeath</b> 3.14 P-GT6, 6.23 P-HAA &amp; 5, <b>Kildare</b> 14.8.1 LA 1, <b>Meath</b> 9.8.5 LC OBJ 1, <b>Longford</b> 6.1.1 LCA 1 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, <b>Sth Tipp</b> 6.3.1 Pol AEH4, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 4.2 Key Landscape Aims (ii) &amp; 4.2.1 ENV 3 (d), <b>Sth Dublin</b> 9.20 Pol 7, <b>Louth</b> 3.10.7 1, <b>Galway</b> 9.11 LCM 2 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, <b>Cork</b> 8.2 TO 2-1, <b>Cavan</b> 8.7 NHEO 24 &amp; 25 &amp; 8.8.1 NHEO26, <b>Fingal</b> LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT OBJS LC 03 &amp; <b>Donegal</b> 6.1.2 5 1<sup>st</sup> sentence 1<sup>st</sup> clause, 8 &amp; 6.1.3.10.</p> <p>10 Preserve and enhance the landscape character and support and implement the provisions of the <b>National Landscape Strategy</b> and provide for sustainable management of landscapes including archaeological, upland landscapes and implement any relevant recommendations contained in the DoAHG's National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015- 2025. Based on <b>DLR</b> 4.1.2.1 Pol LHB2, <b>Waterford</b> 8.2 Pol ENV 2, <b>Meath</b> 9.8.2 LC POL 1 &amp; <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.10 last para last sentence.</p> <p>11 <i>Ensure the preservation, enhancement and protection of the uniqueness of a landscape character</i></p>	
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	<p>type by having regard to the character, value and sensitivity of the of a landscape when determining planning applications. Applications for development that would impact on landscape must be in accordance with the LCA. Ensure that development reflects and, where possible, reinforce the distinctiveness and sense of place of the landscape character types by taking into account elements such as geology scenic quality, historic heritage and tranquillity. Ensure that proposed developments would not conflict with the policies and objectives set out in the <b>Landscape Character Assessment</b> and associated map in accordance with the Government's guidance on LCA and National Landscape Strategy. Ensure the preservation of the uniqueness of a landscape character type by having regard to the character, value and sensitivity of the landscape when determining planning applications. Based on <b>Nth Tipp</b> 4.2 Pol ENV 2, <b>Meath</b> 9.8.5 LC SP 1, <b>Kildare</b> 14.10 LO 1, <b>Offaly</b> 16.3 P16-02, Sth Dublin 9.2.0 Pol 7.1 &amp; 2, Fingal 5.4 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS OBJS LC01 &amp; 2.</p> <p>12 <i>Preserve and enhance the character of the landscape by ensuring that proposed developments would not conflict with the policies and objectives set out in the <b>Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2000)</b> and any updated versions of these guidelines published during the lifetime of the Plan. Based on DLR 4.1.2.1 Pol LHB2 1<sup>st</sup> sentence down to Convention on 10<sup>th</sup> line &amp; Wexford 14.4.3 Lo1 1<sup>st</sup> line</i></p> <p>13 <b>Prohibit advertising structures and hoardings in open countryside by using Council's enforcement powers to secure their removal, including those affixed to trails, wheeled vehicles etc.</b> Taken from <b>Kildare</b> 14.8.1.5.</p> <p>14 <i>Consider appropriate rural recreational and tourism related <b>developments</b> which would <b>facilitate public access</b> to landscapes particularly Upland Landscapes. Taken from Wexford 14.4 Lo8 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</i></p> <p>15 As considerable care will be needed to successfully locate large-scale developments without becoming unduly obtrusive and as their location, design and siting will need careful consideration applicants for development in areas of medium to exceptional landscape values and in uplands and river valleys, will be required if requested by the Council, to prepare a <b>visual impact and landscape assessments</b> using agreed and appropriate viewing points and methods of assessment and involving an evaluation of the visibility and prominence of the proposal, where proposed development may have a significant and adverse effect on landscape character or scenic views or prospects, to include photomontages, on- site</p>	
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	<p>height poles and Landscape/Visual impact statements setting out alternative sites that were considered and proposals demonstrating that the landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided. Based on <b>Meath</b> 9.8.5 LC POL 2, <b>Westmeath</b> 6.4 O-LCAI, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 4.2.1 para after Pol, Sth Dublin 11.5.4(ii) 1<sup>st</sup> para, Cork 13.6.9 &amp; Roscommon 7.6 Obj 7.37.</p> <p>16 Liaise and <b>co-operate with adjoining councils</b> to ensure that development plan policies are consistent in the protection and management of landscape and that they support the co-ordinated designation of sensitive landscape particularly where transboundary vulnerabilities are identified. Based on Louth 2.4 CON 9 &amp; Cavan 8.7 NHEO25 last sentence. &amp; Sligo 7.4.4 o-LCAP-2.</p> <p>17 An <b>EIS</b> may be required for certain public and private projects and for development proposals below the statutory thresholds as per “Guidance for Consent Authorities on Sub Threshold Development(2003) and may be required in accordance with the provisions of Part 10 of Assessment and Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended). Taken from Galway 13.11 DMS 40c) 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and last sentences.</p> <p>18 Ensure that the results of the <b>Historic Landscape Characterisation</b> studies carried out are taken into account in the development of plans and in the assessment of projects on an ongoing basis and that development reflects and reinforces the distinctiveness and sense of place of identified historic landscape types, including the retention of important features or characteristics. Commission new HLC projects with a view to obtaining complete coverage. Taken from Fingal 5.4 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION Objs.</p> <p>19 Require that all proposed developments in <b>Heritage Landscapes</b> must demonstrate that every effort has been made to reduce the visual impact and must demonstrate that sites have been selected to avoid visually prominent locations, that site layouts avail of existing topography and vegetation, visibility from scenic routes, walking trails, public amenities and roads and that design must minimise height and visual contrast through careful choice of form, finishes and colour. Taken from Clare 16.4.5 &amp; 16.5.</p> <p><b>7.19 AMENITY VIEWS AND PROSPECTS</b></p> <p><b>text</b> 1<sup>st</sup> sentence We submit that you should add: <i>which are of enormous <b>amenity value</b> to residents and</i></p>	
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visitors. Many are considered to be of great natural beauty or interest and may be located in the County or in adjoining ones and in particular include (name scenic areas). Some landscapes will form a cohesive set, such as river or lake drives, while some appear suddenly and provide a new and interesting angle on a natural feature including panoramic prospects of rural, mountain, hill and urban landscapes. The protection, conservation and preservation of these assets and also valuable scenic routes which offer a very attractive views of differing landscapes is of primary importance and requires management of the landscape. There is a need to protect and conserve them where they adjoin public roads. Development, where permitted, should not hinder or obstruct them and should be designed and located to minimise their impact. Some views/prospects are intermittent in nature and appear through gaps in vegetation or buildings and are not restricted to public roads. Based on Sth Dublin 9.2.11st para, Clare 16.5 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence & 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Kerry 12.4 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences, Louth 5.15.4 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence, Galway 9.12, DLR 4.1.2.5 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence & last para, Fingal 5.4 VIEWS & PROSPECTS, Wicklow 17.9.2 1<sup>st</sup> para & Leitrim 3.8.9 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

2<sup>nd</sup> sentence We submit that this should be prefixed by: *There may however be a number of individual views and prospects that also warrant protection.* Taken from **2011 Plan** 13.10 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.

We submit that you should include additional **text**: *The designation of views and prospects (distant objectives) provides the basis for the protection of views/prospects of visually vulnerable features such as the Rock of Dunamaise.* Taken from **2011 Plan** 13.10 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.

3<sup>rd</sup> sentence We submit that this should be upgraded to a **pol**.

We submit that you should include a **Table of Scenic Routes** with accompanying Maps. See **Longford** T 6.2 & App 6.

**pols:**

We submit that these should be merged and replaced by: *Protect, preserve, safeguard, improve, enhance and conserve the character and quality of views, focal points and prospects, visual linkages between established landmarks and landscape features and designated Scenic Routes, or on views to and from places of natural beauty or interest to recorded monuments or when viewed from the public realm and particularly from adjoining public roads (although not restricted thereto) and river valleys, canal corridors, lakes, lakeshores, rivers, unspoilt mountains, uplands, historic sites, views of historic significance, natural beauty, of high or special amenity value or interest by prohibiting*

*intrusive and insensitive levels development that would interfere with the character and visual amenity of the landscape or adversely affect tourism and enhance them by removing derelict sites under the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990 and structures and eyesores and by ensuring that structures or other developments do not seriously obstruct these views. Applicants must specify materials to be used demonstrate that proposed development does not negatively impact on the character of a scenic route and that the views towards visually vulnerable or sensitive areas are not obstructed or degraded. Protect scenic amenity routes from insensitive development by integrating them into landscape areas. Curtail development along canal and river banks that could cumulatively affect the quality of a designated view. Applicants in the environs of a scenic route and/or an area with important views and prospects must demonstrate that there be no adverse obstruction or degradation of views towards and from vulnerable landscape features and that the design, site layout and landscape of the proposed development must be appropriate, along with mitigation measures, to prevent significant alterations to the appearance and character of the area. Due regard will be paid in assessing applications to the span and scope of the view/prospect and the location of the development within that view and prospect. Encourage appropriate landscape and screen planting for existing or proposed developments along scenic routes. Ensure that developments in river valleys will not adversely affect or detract from protected views (especially from bridges) or distinctive linear sections of river valleys (including floodplains when viewed from settlements. Resist development such as houses, forestry, extractive operations, landfills, caravan parks and large agricultural units which would interfere with a prospect. Prevent development which would block or interfere with a protected view. In evaluating planning applications in the foreground of protected views and/or prospects consideration will be given to the effect of such development. Where possible, seek the removal or lowering of walls or other obstructions. Careful management and special controls will be attached to permissions to maintain their inherent interests. The Council will take into account the views and prospects of adjoining counties(mentions names) in assessing planning applications. Based on **Kildare** 14.10 LO 7, 14.9.1 SR 1, 14.9.2 W 1 & 2, 14.9.3 HV 1 & 14.10 LO 5 & 6, **Meath** 9.10 LC OBJ 5, **Offaly** 7.13 LAP-03 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, **Kilkenny** 8.2.10.6 Obj 8H & 9<sup>th</sup> para, **Westmeath** 6.25 P-VP1 & 3, **Longford** 6.1.1 LCA 3, **Carlow** 9.1 Pol 1 10<sup>th</sup> pt, Sth Dublin 9.2.1 Obj1, Sligo 7.4.4 O-LCAP-7, DLR 4.1.2.5 1<sup>st</sup> para last sentence, 2<sup>nd</sup>*

para 1<sup>st</sup> pt & 4<sup>th</sup> para, Fingal 5.4 VIEWS & PROSPECTS Obj VP02, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Views & Prospects VP-01, Roscommon 7.6 Obj 7.40, Cavan 8.8.1 NHEO28 & 29, Wicklow 17.9.2 VP1, Louth 5.15.3 HER 62, Limerick 7.3.7 j EH 017(a) & (c), Cork 13.7 GI 7-1 & 3a), Leitrim 3.8.9 Pol 102 & 4.1.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> pt, Waterford 8.1, **Nth Tipp** 4.2.1 ENV 3 (a) & (b) & Galway 9.13 1<sup>st</sup> sentence c).

#### 7.19.1 Cross Border Sites

#### 7.20 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY text

We submit that you should include additional **paras**:

1 *Public Rights of Way have existed over the centuries and constitute an **important recreational amenity** for local people and visitors and an economic asset. They enable the enjoyment of high quality landscape and provide a valuable link to natural assets such as lakes bogs and forests. A public right of way is a person's right of passage along a road or path, even if the route is not in public ownership. Council recognises the importance of maintaining and protecting Public Rights of Ways. Based on **Midland RPG** 6.5.1.2 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences, **Kilkenny** 7.3.5 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, **Westmeath** 7.14 1<sup>st</sup> para, **Kildare** 14.11.3 (iv), **Louth** 7.5 text last sentence, Galway 10.12, Leitrim 3.6.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> line, Cavan 8.10 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences, Cork 13.4.6, Monaghan 7.4.1 4<sup>th</sup> line, Clare 11.3.6 & Wexford 15.9 1st para.*

2 *The **2010 Planning and Development (Amendment) Act** Sec 7(b)(ii)(o) requires that: **The preservation of public rights of way which give access to mountains, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility, which public rights of way shall be identified both by marking them on at least one of the maps forming part of the development plan and by indicating their location on a list appended to the development plan.** \*It is intended that this will preserve Rights of Way for recreational purposes for current and future generations.*

\*Taken from **Kerry** 9.10 2<sup>nd</sup> para last sentence.

#### Notes:

1 **The wording in the Planning Act is quite clear: Each new development plan must fulfil the above requirement and no deferment will be permitted. See DOCELG letter to all Councils of 25/10/12 (PL 09/12).**

2 **Counties who have complied so far: DLR App G, Meath App14, Kerry Vol 2 App 6, Roscommon 8.7 Map 19, Donegal 10.13(routes not properly described or mapped), Sth Tipp 6.3.7 3<sup>rd</sup> para(not**

**marked on maps), Westmeath App 8, Cavan 8.10 Table 8.4 & Kilkenny App D.**

3 We submit that the listing of public rights of way is an urgent matter as the **lack of certainty on access** has not only affected the rights of local people but has been the major cause of the failure of walking tourism to reach its full potential.

4 There is an excellent **modus operandi for listing** taken from Cavan 8.10 NHEO45 & Wexford15.9 Obj RS 34: *Identify the existing public rights of way which give access to mountains, lakeshores, riverbanks or other places of natural beauty or recreational activity using the following methodology:*

*Place an advert in local papers seeking submissions from the public to identify public rights of way which give access to mountains, lakeshores, riverbanks or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility.*

*Identify existing rights of ways, paths, and access points to mountains, lakeshores, riverbanks or other places of natural beauty or recreational activity.*

*Identify access points to mountains, lakeshores, riverbanks or other places of natural beauty or recreational activity which the Council have maintained or repaired with a view to identifying public rights of way.*

*Carry out a desktop analysis of public records, maps, aerial photographs and newspaper accounts to identify reputations of public rights of way.*

Once the list is compiled, advertise and put it on display. The public will be invited to make submissions on the validity of the public rights of way.

*Endeavor to verify and list the public rights of way and begin the formal process for designating rights of way under Section 14 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).*

*Vary the Plan to include the list and map showing the public rights of way.*

**pols**

1 We note that, in spite of the commitment in the **2011 Plan**, no progress appears to have been made in listing. We submit that it is not too late to include an Interim list in the Plan.

2 We submit that this should be replaced by: Recognizing the importance of established public rights of way for the common especially in tourist areas and those which provide access to archaeological sites, National Monuments, lakeshores, riverbanks, upland areas, water corridors or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility and to encourage cycling and walking, maintain, preserve, protect, conserve, enhance, maintain, support, promote and improve public rights of way in County

Laois. To which you should add: Ensure that they are effectively maintained by controlling undergrowth, trees and bushes. Based on **Carlow** 5.3.2 last para 1<sup>st</sup> line & 8.12 Pol 6 1st pt, **Meath** 9.7.9 NHPOL 20, **Westmeath** 7.15 P-PROW<sub>1</sub> & 3 3<sup>rd</sup> line, **Kildare** 14.12.2 RW 1, **Sth Tipp** 6.3.7 Pol AEH<sub>10</sub> down to way, Fingal 8.4 RE<sub>35</sub> 1<sup>st</sup> line, Galway 10.13 Pol PRW 1, DLR 4.1.2.3 LHB<sub>14</sub> 1<sup>st</sup> pt, Monaghan 7.4.1 RAO 10, Roscommon 8.6 Obj 8.5 & 8.7.1 Pol 8.37, Kerry 9.10 SC-50 & Cork 4.15.4.

3 We submit that this should be replaced by: Encourage and facilitate the creation of additional rights of way and extend existing ones by investigating named areas to facilitate the development of waymarked ways and looped walks, by undertaking a review/survey of green links, cycling routes and by bringing forward proposals within two years of the adoption of the Plan, either by agreement or by the use of compulsory powers, for the creation of public rights of way particularly in areas of high amenity and to the River Barrow, to areas of high amenity recreational importance, uplands, lake shores, river banks, forests, heritage and scientific sites, areas of historic or archaeological importance, National Monuments, to create a meaningful network. Promote their greater use and designate traditional walking routes to the coast as public rights of way. Provide linkages from built up areas to the countryside and to link with public rights of way in adjoining counties. Based on

**Carlow** 8.12 Obj 4 1<sup>st</sup> pt, Pol 6 1<sup>st</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> line & 6<sup>th</sup> pt, **Westmeath** 7.15 O-PROW<sub>3</sub>, **Sth Tipp** 6.3.7 Pol AEH<sub>10</sub>, **Longford** 6.4 AM 6 1<sup>st</sup> sentence 1<sup>st</sup> line, **Nth Tipp** 8.3.5 Pol HERT 18 & 8.3.5 1<sup>st</sup> para, **Kilkenny** 7.3.5 2<sup>nd</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> line, Sth Dublin 9.4.0 Action, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 3 Pedestrians & Cyclists 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, DLR 4.1.2.3 LHB<sub>14</sub> 2nd & 3rd pts, Leitrim 3.10.7 Obj 108 & Kerry 9.10 last para.

4 We submit that this pol should be sub-divided into:

A Sign posting AND

B Keeping free from obstruction

A We submit that this should be replaced by: *Provide adequate signposting and waymarking on rights of way.* Taken from **Carlow** 8.12 Obj 4 last pt & **Westmeath** 7.15 O-PROW<sub>4</sub>.

**Note** It is most important that public rights of way are marked on the ground because:

1 As a notification to the public that a right of way exists. Walkers cannot be expected to access Co Development Plans

2 Signage would alert local residents to planning applications affecting the integrity of rights of rights of way

	<p>3 Directional signage during the course of the route would prevent involuntary trespass on private property and prevent walkers getting lost which might impinge on walker safety.</p> <p>B We submit that you should insert after obstruction, by prohibiting development. Taken from DLR 4.1.2.13 LHB14 4<sup>th</sup> pt.</p> <p>6 We submit that you should include an additional pt: (iii) <i>the diverted route is of at least equal character and convenience</i>. Taken from Mayo Vol 2 40.2.</p> <p>7 We submit that this should be replaced by: Existing Public Rights of Way and established walking routes shall be identified prior to any new forestry planting, new infrastructural, energy/telecommunications <b>or golf course developments and any other development capable of affecting the respective right of way</b>. Based on Kildare 14.12.2 RW 3 &amp; Sligo 12.7.13 1<sup>st</sup> para.</p> <p><b>Note</b> Words in <b>bold</b> are additions</p> <p><b>We submit that you should include an additional pol: Identify mass paths and routes to holy wells, mass rocks and penal mass stations for designation as public rights of way.</b></p> <p><b>7.21 GEOLOGY</b> <b>text</b></p> <p>We submit that:</p> <p>A The first sentence should be replaced by: The Council recognises that Geology is an intrinsic component of natural heritage within the Planning Acts and Regulations and the Heritage Act 1995 to be protected and promoted for its heritage value and for its potential for recreational and geo-tourism initiatives and that it must ensure that geological heritage is adequately addressed in Development Plans. Based on Sth Dublin 9.7.0 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Donegal 7.1.1 6<sup>th</sup> para &amp; <b>Kildare</b> 13.7.4. <b>AND</b></p> <p>B We support the remainder There is excellent text from Leitrim 3.8.3.8 1<sup>st</sup> para worthy of inclusion.</p> <p>We submit that you should include an additional para: While the most important geological sites and geomorphological scientific sites will be designated as NHAs the National Heritage Plan (2002) has recommended the recognition and <b>protection of other important sites</b> known as County Geological Sites. The Irish Geological Programme(a partnership between the GSI and NPWS) identifies CGs, that</p>	
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	<p>although of national, regional and local importance will not receive the statutory protection of NHA sites. Taken from Donegal 7.1.1 last para.</p> <p><b>pols:</b></p> <p>1 We submit that this should be replaced by: Work with stakeholders to <b>protect</b>, preserve, enhance, maintain, manage, conserve, recognise and, where appropriate, restore the character conservation value and integrity of these sites for their amenity, scientific, heritage and historic values(including County Geological Sites, proposed NHA's, areas near site and areas of geomorphological. Further enhance geodiversity by additional measures to conserve geosites. Ensure that any plan or project affecting karst formations or other important geological and geomorphological systems are adequately assessed for their potential geophysical or ecological impacts. Based on <b>Planning Act 2000</b> First Sch Part IV 6, <b>Longford</b> 6.2.2.6 GEO 1, <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2 last para, <b>Carlow</b> 9.1.11 Obj 7, Fingal 5.3 COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITES Obj GH01, Wicklow 17.6 GY2, Roscommon 7.2 Obj 7.3, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Natural Heritage NH-01e), Galway 9.9 Pol NHB 5 &amp; Obj NHB 4, Cavan 8.5.1 27 &amp; 10.1 NE-1. Also <b>Longford</b> 6.2.2 NHB 4 &amp; <b>Offaly</b> 7.2.13 last para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.</p> <p>3 We submit that this should be replaced by: Provide, encourage, promote, facilitate and support access and public rights of way to geological and geomorphological features and systems of heritage. Based on <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.4 Dms, Wicklow 17.6 GY4, Fingal 5.3 Obj GH 02, Sligo 4.4.1 P-TOU-9, Louth 5.6 HER 9 &amp; DLR 4.1.3.10 last para. Also <b>Westmeath</b> 5.8 P-GEO4. We submit that you should include additional <b>pols:</b></p> <p>1 Encourage and facilitate the development of geo-tourism by conserve and managing geological resources, and by the development of a Rock Trail(named), <b>Geoparks</b> or other similar geo-tourism initiatives. Based on Cavan 8.5.1 NHEP14 &amp; Wicklow 17.6 GY5.</p> <p>2 <b>Identify</b> sites of geological interest. Taken from Leitrim 3.7.3.8 Pol 82.</p> <p>3 <b>Promote the importance of County Geological Sites</b> through the County's Heritage Plan. Taken from Sth Dublin 9.7.0 Obj last clause.</p> <p>4 Recognise, protect and safeguard the significant geological value of sites in accordance with the National Heritage Plan and "Geological Heritage Guidelines for Extractive Industry" and avoid</p>	
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inappropriate development though **consultation with the GSI** in advance of proposals which are likely to impact on sites particularly those involving major developments entailing significant ground excavation, such as quarrying, road excavations, tunnels, major drainage works and foundations for major buildings and have regard to\* their recommendations.

\*comply with would be better. Based on **Westmeath** 5.8 P-GEO1 & 4 4<sup>th</sup> line, **Kilkenny** 8.2.4, Wicklow 17.6 GYI, Roscommon 7.2 Obj 7.3 & **Offaly** 7.2.13 1<sup>st</sup> para 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence.

5 Investigate development of a **Geological Heritage Trail** using the recent publication "The Geology and Offaly" by De Lohn Feehan, and the result of the Survey outlined in Action 20 of the County Heritage Plan. Taken from **Co Her Plan** 49.

**Table 28: County Geological Sites** We submit that you should include **Maps**: See **2011 Plan** 1.13.7.

We submit that you should include additional **Sub secs**:

**A ESKERS**

**text**

1 The Council recognises the unique **importance of esker landscape** and its archaeological and historic value. All proposals for sand and gravel extraction will be determined by considering the need to conserve the environment and the extent to which proposed developments would be damaging. Taken from **Offaly** 2.8.6 last para 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences.

2 There is a **presumption against new quarry development** on eskers. Taken from **Offaly** 8.13 last para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.

3 The Council recognises that the exploitation of deposits can have seriously damaging **environmental impact** on the esker network. Taken from **Offaly** 2.8.6 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence.

**Table** We submit that you should List and Map Eskers. See **Offaly** M 7.8(no list) & **Westmeath** App 11 (m Vol 2).

**pols:**

1 Increase cycling and **pedestrian access** and maintain esker heritage. Taken from **Westmeath** 5.10 O-ESK2.

	<p>2 <b>Protect</b>, preserve and conserve the landscape and natural heritage and geo-diversity values of esker systems from inappropriate development. Ensure that any plan or project affecting eskers are adequately assessed with regard to their potential impact on the environment. Based on Galway 9.9 Obj NHB 4, <b>Offaly</b> 7.10, <b>Westmeath</b> 5.10 P-ESK1 &amp; <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.3 P04.</p> <p>3 Assess applications for <b>quarrying activity and gravel extraction</b> and other development in proximity to eskers, with respect to their landscape importance or amenity value and the need to conserve them free from inappropriate development and to conserve their environmental character values and the extent to which proposals would damage these qualities. Based on <b>Westmeath</b> 5.10 P-ESK2, Galway 9.9 Obj NHB 7 &amp; Roscommon 7.3 Obj 7.19.</p> <p><b>B NATIONAL PARK</b></p> <p><b>text</b>  A National Park represents a <b>major recreational amenity</b> for both local people and visitors especially due to the very restricted access rights to many such areas and also as it protects areas of ecological importance.</p> <p><b>pol:</b> Promote the <b>designation</b> of the Slieve Blooms as a <b>National Park</b> given its important ecological landscape. Based <b>Westmeath</b> 3.16 O-ST5 &amp; <b>Midland RPG</b> 7.4 T02.</p> <p><b>OR</b>  <b>Undertake a feasibility study to report</b>, within one year of the adoption of this Plan, on areas such as (local) which are considered to be suitable for designation as a National Park and promote any proposals with the NPWS. Taken from <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.1 P003.</p> <p><b>C WORLD HERITAGE SITES</b></p> <p><b>1 Sites on Tentative List</b></p> <p><b>text</b>  The Tentative List is an inventory of those sites which a country intends to <b>consider for nomination to the World Heritage List</b>. Nominations will only take place after consultation with the relevant stakeholders, interested parties and local communities. Taken from Galway 9.14 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences &amp; Louth 5.9.9 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences.</p> <p><b>objs</b>  1 Support and <b>promote the designation of Durrow as a Unesco World Heritage Sites</b>. Based on <b>Meath</b> 9.6.8 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; <b>Mayo</b> Vol 1 Chpt 4 Archaeological Heritage AoH-01h).</p> <p>2 Avail of <b>Dahg grant scheme for Durrow</b>.</p> <p><b>pol</b></p>	
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	<p><b>Protect</b> and preserve from inappropriate development and maintain the Outstanding Universal Value of the tentative WHS of Durrow and engage with other national and international initiatives which promote special places of natural heritage. Based on Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 4 Archaeological Heritage AoH-01h), Louth 3.10.7 6 &amp; 5.9.9 HER 31 &amp; Galway 9.15.</p> <p><b>Sites not on the tentative list:</b></p> <p><b>Support and promote the candidature</b> of (from your local knowledge) for inclusion in the “Tentative List”. Based on <b>Kerry</b> 5.12 T-55 &amp; Wicklow 16.3 1<sup>st</sup> para 5<sup>th</sup> line.</p> <p><b>D WETLANDS text</b></p> <p>Wetlands are <b>very important assets</b> which contribute significantly to the character and amenity of the county and support tourism, recreation and quality of life for both local residents and tourists and they should be protected and maintained for their landscape values. Taken from <b>Carlow</b> 9.1.7 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; last para 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence. Also <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.6 1<sup>st</sup> para &amp; <b>2011 Plan</b> 13.5 1<sup>st</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> sentence. There is excellent material in Kerry 10.6 text.</p> <p><b>pols:</b></p> <p>1 In partnership with the NPWS and other stakeholders facilitate <b>public access</b> to wetlands and protect the recreational, tourism and amenity potential of wetlands and provide for an intrinsic network. Based on Kerry 10.6 NE-29, <b>Meath</b> 9.7.10 Nh POL21, <b>Carlow</b> 9.1 Pol 1 7<sup>th</sup> pt &amp; <b>Kilkenny</b> 8.2.6 last para last sentence.</p> <p>2 Ensure that the <b>impacts on archaeology</b> are taken into consideration when assessing development proposals involving drainage or loss of wetlands and protect, conserve and enhance existing wetlands, which are vital green infrastructure, from destruction, infilling, fragmentation, degradation and other inappropriate development and seek to protect and conserve their quality, character and features by controlling adjacent development by use of buffer zones. Based on <b>Offaly</b> 7.3 NHP-11, <b>Longford</b> 5.3.2 SFRA 2 &amp; 3 &amp; 9.9 Pol NHB 4, Sth Dublin 7.2.0.9, DLR 4.1.3.7 1<sup>st</sup> para 6<sup>th</sup> pt &amp; Kerry 10.6 NE-28.</p> <p>3 Include pol 36 from 7.14 WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS .</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION NO. 48</p> <p>Dr. Eoin Sullivan, Gort Archaeology,</p>	<p>My submission refers to Section 7: Heritage of the Draft Development Plan and Section 4: The SEA Environmental Report prepared by CAAS Ltd.</p> <p>Section 7.1 Wording of Introduction - “will seek to continue to protect [the] natural [and cultural] resources of the county through the enforcement of policies and relevant legislation [.]”</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>Section 7.1 Wording of Introduction - “will seek to continue to protect [the] natural [and cultural] resources of the county through the enforcement of policies and relevant legislation [.]”</p> <p>Section 7.4 OB]1 – Comments Noted.</p>

	<p>2. Section 7.4 OBJ1 – I think it is a welcome objective of Laois County Council who “will provide public access, subject to reasonable conservational restrictions, to archaeological sites and national monuments in State, Council and private ownership”. This is a very proactive step on the part of the Council which will enrich the tourism offerings in the County.</p> <p>3. Section 7.4 OB6 &amp; OBJ11 – These appear to be the same objective. To designate additional ACA’s in specified areas, implies that there are already designated ACA’s in these areas, which is not the impression given in OBJ6 and is stated not to be the case in the last paragraph of Section 7.7.</p> <p>4. Section 7.5.4 BH2 – the acronym DAHG is no longer in use. The Minister read the name of her Department into the Dáil record as Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA) on 6th July 2016.</p> <p>5. Section 7.9 Wording - “Archaeology is an irreplaceable link with the past and is to be found in [virtually] every townland in County Laois”.</p> <p>6. Section 7.9 Comment: When listing the four categories of archaeological heritage, the text in the categories does not match the content of the tables referred to in categories ii and iii. Table 22 lists National Monuments, while Table 23 lists Monuments Protected by Preservation Orders Table 23 does not list National Monuments as is stated in the text.</p> <p>7. Section 7.9 OBJ8 – while referring specifically to extractive industries in the context of County Laois, the Code of Practice for Bord Na Mona should also be referenced. In the same vein, the other Archaeological Codes of Practice would be worth referring to in relevant portions of the Development Plan <a href="https://www.archaeology.ie/codes-of-practice">https://www.archaeology.ie/codes-of-practice</a>. Currently the Code of Practice with TII is at an advanced stage (pers. comm.).</p> <p>8. Section 7.9.2 – Incorrect name of Government Department (see 4 above).</p> <p>9. Section 7.9.3 – probably a moot point but as most archaeological excavations will be undertaken by either private developers or state/ semi-state bodies with agreed Codes of Practice, the enforcement of standards for archaeological excavations rests legally with the National Monuments Service and the</p>	<p>3. Section 7.4 OB6 &amp; OBJ11 – These appear to be the same objective. To designate additional ACA’s in specified areas, implies that there are already designated ACA’s in these areas, which is not the impression given in OBJ6 and is stated not to be the case in the last paragraph of Section 7.7.</p> <p>4. Section 7.5.4 BH2 – Replace <b>DAHG</b> with the <b>Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA)</b> Replace wording in Section 7.9 to say “Archaeology is an irreplaceable link with the past and is to be found in [virtually] every townland in County Laois”.</p> <p>Section 7.9 Comments noted in relation to the tables referred to in categories ii and iii. Table 22 lists National Monuments, while Table 23 lists Monuments Protected by Preservation Orders Table 23 does not list National Monuments as is stated in the text. These will be corrected.</p> <p>Amend OBJ8 to state – <i>When considering proposals for extractive Industry, the applicant shall have regard to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>the Archaeological Code of Practice agreed between Irish Concrete Federation and National Monuments Division;</i></li> <li>• <b>the Code of Practice for Bord Na Mona</b></li> <li>• <b>and other Archaeological Codes of Practice</b> <a href="https://www.archaeology.ie/codes-of-practice">https://www.archaeology.ie/codes-of-practice</a>.</li> <li>• <b>Currently the Code of Practice with TII is at an advanced stage (pers. comm.).</b></li> </ul> <p>Section 7.9.2 – Replace <b>DAHG</b> with the <b>Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA)</b></p> <p>The Commentary is noted in relation to the legal requirements for archaeological investigations. The employment of a Council staff is not a matter for the County Development Plan process.</p> <p>Section 7.9.4 include the following wording – “significant archaeological <del>assets</del>–[features] and</p>
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	<p>National Museum of Ireland. Whilst an admirable policy to ensure highest standards are pursued, in reality the County Council has no means or statute to enforce this policy in the absence of a County Council Archaeologist. Indeed the engagement of a County Archaeologist would be a worthwhile and progressive overarching objective for Section 7 of the County Development Plan 2017-2023 which I submit the County Council should consider.</p> <p>10. Section 7.9.4 Wording – “significant archaeological assets [features] and industrial archaeological [archaeology] in the county”.</p> <p>11. Section 7.10 - Incorrect name of Government Department (see 4 above).</p>	<p>industrial <del>archaeological</del> [archaeology] in the county”.</p> <p>Section 7.10 - Replace <del>DAHG</del> with the <b>Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DAHRRGA)</b></p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO.56.</p> <p>An Taisce,</p>	<p><b>2.6 Heritage</b></p> <p>It is important to recognise the contribution that all historic features and structures have on our heritage, including those that are not listed in the Record of Protected Structure (RPS).</p> <p><b>The CDP should include an objective which seeks to protect structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH).</b></p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>Many if not all of the structures of Regional Status and higher on the NIAH have been protected as Protected structures</p> <p><b>OBJ 5</b></p> <p>Protect all structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures, that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical character or interest in County Laois;</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>No further action</p>
<p>SUBMISSION 52</p> <p>Department of Communications, Climate Action &amp; Environment</p>	<p>To assist you with the preparation of Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023, please find below the comments from the Irish Geological Heritage Programme of the Geological Survey Ireland, a division of the Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment.</p> <p>Due to past under-promotion of its significance, geology should be highlighted as the underpinning layer and an integral part of both heritage and the environment, as this is not always appreciated. Hence, references to geology as a key part of heritage and the environment, is strongly recommended.</p> <p><b>GEOLOGICAL HERITAGE</b></p> <p>The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) is in partnership with NPWS (the National Parks and</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>It is noted that the Laois County audit was conducted in 2016 which was an action of the Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017, through a partnership between Laois County Council, the GSI and the Heritage Council.</p> <p>The final completed audit is expected to be published in late 2016.</p> <p>It is proposed to include <b>the finalised list of 30 County Geological Sites which will replace the existing list of CGS in Table 28 under Section 7.21 Geology</b></p> <p>INCLUDE list</p>

	<p>Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht), to identify and select important geological and geomorphological sites throughout the country for designation as geological NHAs (Natural Heritage Areas). This is addressed by the IGH Programme (Irish Geological Heritage &amp; Planning) of GSI, under 16 different geological themes, in which the minimum number of scientifically significant sites that best represent the theme are rigorously selected (by a panel of theme experts).</p> <p>County Geological Sites (CGS), as adopted under the National Heritage Plan, include additional sites that may also be of national importance but which were not selected as the very best examples for NHA designation. All geological heritage sites identified by GSI are categorised as CGS pending any further NHA designation by NPWS. CGSs are now routinely being included in County Development Plans and in the GIS of planning departments, to ensure the recognition and appropriate protection of geological heritage within the planning system.</p> <p><b>Draft Laois CDP 2017-2023: Written Statement</b>  <b>Section 7.21 GEOLOGY</b>  <b>Please insert the additional sentence in the opening paragraph:</b></p> <p>It is (delete 'is') also identifies many sites of national or local geological heritage importance, which are classed as County Geological Sites (CGS). <b>All sites recommended for NHA designation are currently classified as CGS.</b> These sites will be protected primarily through their inclusion in the County Development Plan.</p> <p>County Geological Sites (CGS) have been surveyed as part of an on-going national programme of County Geological Heritage Audits since 2004, and to date over half of the country has been completed.</p> <p>The Laois County audit was conducted in 2016 as an action of the Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017, through a partnership between Laois County Council, the GSI and the Heritage Council. The final completed audit is expected to be published in late 2016. The resulting reports and GIS data will be available via the Laois County Council website, and the GSI Public Map Viewer (Geological Heritage Layer) at: <a href="http://www.gsi.ie/Mapping.htm">http://www.gsi.ie/Mapping.htm</a> and for download at:  <a href="http://www.gsi.ie/Programmes/Heritage+and+Planning/County+Geological+Sites+Audits/">http://www.gsi.ie/Programmes/Heritage+and+Planning/County+Geological+Sites+Audits/</a></p> <p><b>The finalised list of 30 County Geological Sites should replace the existing list of CGS in Table 28 under Section 7.21 Geology – FINALISED LIST TO FOLLOW.</b></p> <p>The programme of CGS documentation is an on-</p>	<p>It is further noted that the identification of a site as a CGS has no implied statutory restriction and there are no notifiable actions required from the landowner. It is merely a guide to ensure that due consideration is given to geological heritage in the planning process, in order to promote and protect its scientific, educational and tourism potential, as appropriate.</p>
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	<p>going, dynamic process, and additional sites may be added through new exposures such as quarries and road cuttings, and through notifications from local community knowledge.</p> <p>The identification of a site as a CGS has no implied statutory restriction and there are no notifiable actions required from the landowner. It is merely a guide to ensure that due consideration is given to geological heritage in the planning process, in order to promote and protect its scientific, educational and tourism potential, as appropriate.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 17</b></p> <p>Councillor Mary Sweeney,</p>	<p>Asks that Ballyroan be considered for designation as an architectural Conservation Area. Refers to the historic core of the village and the need to give suitable guidance regarding potential new development in that area.</p>	<p>Submission noted. Given the prevailing character and typology of the existing core of the village, Ballyroan is a suitable candidate for designation as an Architectural Conservation Area.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Amend Objective OBJ 16, Section 7 of the Draft Plan to include reference to Ballyroan as follows:</p> <p><i>OBJ 16: Designate Architectural Conservation Areas in Ballyroan, Mountmellick, Moutrath, Stradbally and Portarlinton [the latter in conjunction within Offaly County Council] over the Plan period.</i></p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Catherine Casey Heritage Officer LCC</b></p>	<p><b>SECTION 7 HERITAGE</b></p> <p><u>7.4 Built Heritage, Page 127</u></p> <p>OBJ6 and OBJ11 in relation to Architectural Conservation Areas are duplicates of the same objective. (Note the number of objectives is confusing and should perhaps be revised to reflect the section to which each objective relates).</p> <p><u>7.10 Natural Heritage, Page 136</u></p> <p>Consider the addition of an objective to prevent the spread of alien invasive species. Example:” It is an objective of Laois County Council prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species within the county.”</p> <p><u>Page 136</u></p> <p>Objective 3 may be redundant and should possibly be removed?</p> <p><u>Page 137</u></p> <p>Policy Bio1 should be amended to read: “Comply with the objectives of the National Biodiversity Plan 2011-2016 (and any future National Biodiversity Plan which may be adopted during the period of this plan) as appropriate to County Laois”.</p> <p>Policy BIO3 appears to end mid-sentence</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>Built Heritage, Page 127 – Noted OBJ 11 to be removed</p> <p><del>OBJ11 – Designate additional ACAs in the towns of Mountmellick, Mountrath, Stradbally and Portarlinton [in association with Offaly County Council];</del></p> <p>The issue of invasive species is covered under Section 7.17 .</p> <p><u>Page 136</u></p> <p>Objective 3, page 136 it is noted that the designations within the Slieve Blooms are already in place and outside of the control of the Local Authority.</p> <p><del>OBJ 3 – Undertake a feasibility study to report, within one year of the adoption of this Plan, on areas which are considered to be suitable for designation such as the Slieve Blooms and promote any proposals with the National Parks and Wildlife Service;</del></p>

	<p>The references to legislation in footnote 18 should be updated: The current Habitats Regulations in force are The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015. The current Wildlife Acts in force are the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012.</p> <p><u>Section 7.12.2 page 138</u> Change reference to legislation as follows: For European Union (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997, change to “The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015”</p> <p>The current Wildlife Acts in force are the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012.</p> <p><u>7.12.2 SACs</u> Please list the sites on table 24 in alphabetical order by site name</p> <p><u>7.12.3 SPAs</u> Please list the sites on table 23 in alphabetical order by site name</p> <p><b>Section 7.21 Geology</b> Please find attached the report of the survey of geological heritage sites in Laois, carried out in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland during 2016. The details contained in table 1 of this report (and also on the attached spreadsheet for ease of reference) should replace Table 28 on page 153 of the draft plan. Full GIS Shape files for mapping of these sites are available. I request that a map showing the location and names of the County Geological Sites be added to the CDP, using the data in the attached spreadsheet.</p> <p><b>Please revise policy GEOL1 to state:</b> “Protect from inappropriate development the County Geological Sites listed in Table 28 as surveyed in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland in 2016”</p>	<p>Amend the following policy</p> <p><b>BIO1</b>      <del>Comply with the objectives of the National Biodiversity Plan 2011-2016 (and any future National Biodiversity Plan which may be adopted during the period of this plan) as appropriate to County Laois. The objectives cover the conservation of biodiversity in the wider countryside both within and outside protected areas, the strengthening of the knowledge base on biodiversity and increasing public awareness and participation in the subject.</del></p> <p>Amend Policy BIO3 to read as <b>The references to legislation in footnote 18 should be updated: The current Habitats Regulations in force are The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015. The current Wildlife Acts in force are the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012.</b></p> <p><b>BIO3</b>      <del>Contribute towards compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines<sup>1</sup>, including</del></p> <p><u>Section 7.12.2 page 138</u> Change reference to legislation as follows: For European Union (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997, change to “The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015”</p> <p>It is noted that the current Wildlife Acts in force are the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012.</p> <p>Amend para as follows</p> <p>Special Areas of Conservation are prime wildlife areas, considered to be important on a European as well as</p>
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<sup>1</sup> the following and any updated/superseding documents:

- EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)<sup>[1]</sup>, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)<sup>[2]</sup>, the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)<sup>[3]</sup>, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).
- National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976<sup>[4]</sup>, the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 (SI No. 349 of 1989) (as amended), the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011) and the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008<sup>1</sup>.
- National policy guidelines (including any clarifying Circulars or superseding versions of same), including the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010.
- Catchment and water resource management Plans, including the Shannon International and the South Eastern River Basin Management Plans 2009-2015 (including any superseding versions of same).
- Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016: Ireland's 2<sup>nd</sup> National Biodiversity Plan (including any superseding version of same).
- Ireland's Environment 2012 (EPA, 2012, including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.

		<p>Irish level. The legal basis on which SACs are selected and designated is the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), transposed into Irish law in the <del>European Union (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997</del>. <b>The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015</b> The Directive lists certain habitats and species that must be protected within SACs. Irish habitats include raised bogs, blanket bogs, turloughs, sand dunes, machair, heaths, lakes, rivers, woodlands, estuaries and sea inlets. The species which must be afforded protection under the Habitats Directive include inter alia all our bat species, Salmon, Pearl Mussel, Common Frog, Pine Marten, Mountain Hare and Otter. There are eight SACs to date in County Laois.</p> <p><b>Table 24 and Table 23 will be listed in alphabetic order</b></p> <p><b>Section 7.21 Geology</b></p> <p>The commentary in relation to the report Please of the survey of geological heritage sites in Laois, carried out in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland during 2016 is noted and the details contained in <b>table 1</b> of this report (and also on the attached spreadsheet for ease of reference) is proposed to replace <del>Table 28</del> on page 153 of the draft plan.</p> <p>Full GIS Shape files for mapping of these sites are available. I request that a map showing the location and names of the County Geological Sites be added to the CDP,</p> <p><b>GEOL1 to be replaced as follows:</b></p> <p><del>GEOL1      Protect from inappropriate development the County Geological Sites listed in Table 28 as notified by the Geological Survey of Ireland;</del></p> <p><b>“Protect from inappropriate development the County Geological Sites listed in Table 28 as surveyed in partnership with the Geological Survey of Ireland in 2016”</b></p>
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## **SECTION 8: General Location and Pattern of Development**

Submission No	Submissions Name and Detail	Response and Recommendation of the Chief Executive
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p><b>6.6.5.2 Telecommunications Masts and Antennae</b></p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> pt We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and replaced by: Promote and facilitate the sharing of facilitates. Due to their visual impact, it is desirable to limit the number of masts by require the co-location of new or replacement antennae on existing masts or preferably a single mast so that the scale, character and sensitivity of the landscape is respected. Co-location and clustering of new masts and support structures on existing sites will be required unless a fully documented case is submitted explaining the precise circumstances which mitigate against co-location and clustering. Any locations with more than two separate support structures will generally be considered to have no remaining capacity for any further structure as the proliferation of masts in a particular area could be injurious to the visual amenities, and therefore having regard to the potential adverse visual impacts of the proliferation of masts, particularly in open countryside, applicants will be required to demonstrate the need to locate a new mast in a particular location where proliferation may present an issue. Proposals for standalone installations should demonstrate that the developer has made reasonable efforts to share with other existing users or proposed sites in the vicinity. Where it is not possible to share a support structure, the applicant should, where possible, share the site or an adjacent site so that the antennae may be clustered. In sensitive landscape areas the presumption will be that applications must meet the co-location requirements. Where is has been proven that there is a need for new/expanded coverage in a particular area, the applicant shall show that all existing masts and support structures have been examined to determine if the attachment of new antennae to existing structures can provide the coverage required, the applicant shall submit either a Discovery Series Map or similar map type (to be agreed with planning authority) to the scale of 1:50,000 the location of all telecommunication structures within a radius of</p>	<p>Submission Noted</p> <p>Cross reference Development Control Standard 66 with Section <b>6.6.5.2 Telecommunications Masts and Antennae</b> – Policies TELE 5 – TELE 10 relate to this type of development. Include the following under DM 66</p> <p>To facilitate the evaluation of development proposals for the erection of antennae and support structures, applicants/developers/operators will be required to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Submit a reasoned justification as to the need for the particular development at the proposed location in the context of the operators overall Plans to develop a network in County Laois ;</li> <li>2) Indicate what other sites or locations in the County were considered;</li> <li>3) Submit evidence of consultations, if any, with other operators with regard to the sharing of sites and/or support structures;</li> <li>4) Provide a <b>“Visual Impact Report”</b> to allow proper assessment of the visual impact on the receiving landscape in addition to submitting proposals to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development including the construction of access roads, additional poles and structures;</li> <li>5) Furnish a statement of compliance with the International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA) Guidelines (Health Physics, Vol. 54, No. 1(Jan) 1988) or the equivalent European Prestandard 50166-2 which has been conditioned by the licensing arrangements with the Department of Transport, Energy and Communications;</li> <li>6) Furnish evidence that an installation of the</li> </ol>

	<p>1km of the proposed site, indicating the coverage area of the proposed facility and a technical evaluation of the capabilities of these masts to take additional antennae and provide the coverage required. Avoid a proliferation of masts and aerials in the upland areas (names mountain area) in order to protect their amenity value and their unspoilt character. Masts will not be permitted above 150m unless it can be clearly demonstrated that it is not possible to locate antennae on the existing clusters at Wolftrap Mountain. Applicants shall indicate whether or not they are willing to share the proposed masts with other telecommunication operators. Comply with the Code of Practice of Sharing Radio Sites issued by the Commission for Communication Regulation. Based on <b>Offaly</b> 4.15 CIP-02, <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 4<sup>th</sup> para, <b>Kildare</b> 8.12 TL 8,19 &amp; 9.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 5<sup>th</sup> pt, <b>Westmeath</b> 10.16 P-ICT6, <b>Carlow</b> 6.11.3 Pol 1 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, 11.18.1 last para 3<sup>rd</sup> pt 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, 11.6.2 2<sup>nd</sup> para &amp; 11.18.1 last para 3<sup>rd</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> sentences &amp; Fingal 4.4 TELECOM Obj IT07, Cavan 4.8 PIO118 &amp; DLR 8.2.9.9 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> pts We submit that these should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and merged with <b>pols</b> 8 &amp; 9 and that you should add: Prohibit construction of telecommunication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment in primary and secondary amenity areas, at locations detrimental to designated protected views and/or prospects and scenic routes or in close proximity to public amenity areas. Where feasible, proposed development pertaining to the installation of potentially obtrusive technology shall be located in non-sensitive landscapes. Protect areas of significant landscape importance from the visual intrusion of large scale telecommunications infrastructure. When considering planning applications the Council will not favourably consider applications which would impact on visual amenities, fragile or sensitive landscape of historic importance. Structures should be located to limit visual impacts and to integrate into the landscape especially in areas of sensitivity, scenic amenities and geological sites. Except in exceptional circumstances, locations along major tourist routes must be avoided. Where appropriate, masts, antennae and fencing should be in harmony with their surroundings and should be of dull or neutral sky grey colour so as to be less visually obtrusive. Green or black is the preferred at ground level. White or bright colours will not be permitted. Where masts are proposed outside</p>	<p>type applied for complies with the above Guidelines.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7) Cables and wire connections shall be located underground where feasible.</li> <li>8) Where appropriate, masts, antennae and fencing should be in harmony with their surroundings and should be of dull or neutral sky grey colour so as to be less visually obtrusive. Green or black is the preferred at ground level.</li> <li>9) Subject to visual and landscape considerations, support structures will normally be required to be designed to facilitate the attachment of additional antennae to facilitate co-location. The number of ancillary buildings/containers shall be kept to the minimum and the need for each structure must be clearly justified. They should be located in accordance with the provisions of the DoECLG Guidelines 1996(or as may be amended).</li> <li>10) Restoration plans shall be submitted with the application for when antennae and their support structures are no longer being <b>used</b> and no new user has been identified.</li> </ol>
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	<p>existing forest areas, applicants will be required to demonstrate the reasons why forest sites are unsuitable. Proposals shall be subject to all material considerations, including environmental designations and amenity considerations. In assessing applications advice of the relevant statutory bodies will be sought and considered. Support structures should be kept to the lowest feasible height. Avoid hilltops except where technical or coverage requirements make it essential. Subject to visual and landscape considerations, support structures will normally be required to be designed to facilitate the attachment of additional antennae to facilitate co-location. The number of ancillary buildings/containers shall be kept to the minimum and the need for each structure must be clearly justified. They should be located in accordance with the provisions of the DoECLG Guidelines 1996(or as may be amended). Based on <b>Sth Tipp</b> 7.7 Pol INF 13 (i) &amp; (iii), <b>Kildare</b> 19.9.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 9<sup>th</sup> pt(except 4<sup>th</sup> sentence), <b>2011 Plan</b> 9.9 P33, <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 TEL 2, <b>Carlow</b> 6.11.3 3<sup>rd</sup> para last pt &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> para, <b>Meath</b> 11.12 5<sup>th</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> line, Fingal 4.4 TELECOM Obj ITo8 &amp; 09 6<sup>th</sup> pt, Sligo 11.2 P-TEL1 &amp; 2, Wicklow 14.6 Rural Locations 1<sup>st</sup> pt 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> sub pts, Mast/antennae design 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> pts, Site layout/design 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; last pts, Waterford 10.39 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, Limerick 10.14.2.2 2<sup>nd</sup> line, Kerry 7.5.2 ICT-4 &amp; 13.14 Landscape Considerations 1<sup>st</sup> para, Donegal 4.3.3 Pol TC-P3 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, Galway 7.7 Pol ICT 2 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, Monaghan 15.15 TEP 9, Wexford 9.3.1 Obj TCo6 1<sup>st</sup> para (a) &amp; (c) &amp; 12.7.3 A, Mayo Vol 1 Chpt 3 Information &amp; Telecom TC-01 5<sup>th</sup> line &amp; 02, Cork 9.7 ED 7-1 last para. Also <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para a) &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> para (i) &amp; (ii) &amp; <b>Nth Tipp</b> 7.14 SERV 29 1<sup>st</sup> para a).</p> <p>last pt We submit that this should be upgraded to a <b>pol</b> and replaced by: It shall be a condition the permission that when antennae and their support structures are no longer being <b>used</b> and no new user has been identified they should be removed and the site re-instated at the operator's expense. It shall also be an obligation of the original operator to inform the Council if he intends to dispose of the site to another suitable operator. A bonding arrangement must be out in place. Based on Cavan 4.8 PIO124 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence &amp; 126, Wicklow 14.6 Obsolete Structures &amp; <b>Westmeath</b> 14.11.2 last pt.</p> <p><b>pols</b> 5 This should be re-numbered as 6 as there is</p>	
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	<p>already a 5.                  We submit that this should be replaced by: Demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the <b>DOECLG Guidelines</b> on “Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (1996) “and the Circular Letter of 2012(PL07/12)(as may be may be amended) and other publications and material as may be relevant. Taken from Sth Dublin 1.6.2 1<sup>st</sup> para. Also <b>Meath</b> 11.12 1<sup>st</sup> para, <b>2011 Plan</b> 9.9 P30, <b>Westmeath</b> 10.16 P-ITC7, <b>Carlow</b> 6.1 Pol 1 3<sup>rd</sup> pt, <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para c), <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 TEL 1 &amp; <b>Offaly</b> 4.15 CIP-01.</p> <p>10 We submit that this should be replaced by: Existing Public Rights of Way and established walking routes will be identified prior to any new telecommunication developments(including associated processes) which will be prohibited if they impinge thereon or on recreational amenities, public access to the countryside, communities or the natural and built environment . Based on Roscommon 4.7 Pol 4.70, Cavan 4.8 PIO123, <b>2011 Plan</b> 9.9 P35, Fingal 4.4 IT 11 &amp; <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 1<sup>st</sup> pt. Also <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.  <b>Note</b> Pending a complete listing of public rights of way walking routes, as prospective rights of way, should be protected.                  We submit that you should include additional <b>pols</b>:</p> <p>1 Seek the establishment of an appropriate body at regional or national level to <b>monitor</b> installations regarding proliferation, co-location and the use of the best available technology to prevent negative environmental impacts. Taken from <b>Longford</b> 5.5.3 TEL 7.</p> <p>2 Set up and maintain a <b>register</b> of approved telecommunication structures to provide a useful input in the assessment of future developments and to maximise the potential for future mast sharing and co-location. Taken from <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.2.</p> <p>3 <b>Access roads</b> will be permitted only where they are absolutely necessary. The applicant shall be required to demonstrate that the greatest care has been taken in terms of minimising visual impact on landscapes, particularly sensitive or historic landscapes, natural environment by ensuring that they do not scar the landscapes and that they follow the natural contours so as to minimise their visual intrusion and should be bordered with scrubs and that they are designed and landscaped</p>	
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to avoid visual and environmental disruption of the landscape. It shall be a condition of permission that the land is reinstated at the end of the construction period. In the event that a developer requires that an access track be retained, the developer shall indicate the justification for doing so as part of the planning application and indicate the frequency of visits which will be required to service the site and facility. Based on **Kilkenny** 9.4.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para a), **Carlow** 6.11.3 6<sup>th</sup> para 4<sup>th</sup> line, **Mayo** Vol 2 55.3 1<sup>st</sup> pt, **Cavan** 4.8 PIO124, **Wicklow** 14.6 Access roads, **Limerick** 10.14.3.2 1<sup>st</sup> para, **Donegal** 4.3.3 TC-P-7 1<sup>st</sup> clause, **Galway** 13.9 DMS 32c) 3<sup>rd</sup> & last sentences & **Kerry** 13.14 Access Roads. Also **Meath** 11.12e) & **Carlow** 11.18.1 last para last pt.

4 Prohibit **satellite dishes** in areas which would cause unacceptable harm to visual amenities or would materially harm the character and appearance of rural areas. The design and visual appearance of masts, antennae of satellite dishes and their associated equipment shall be as unobtrusive as possible. Cumulative effect of dishes in the area should be considered. Based on **Cork** 9.7.8 3<sup>rd</sup> & last pts, **Nth Tipp** 6.14.1 Pol SERV 32 & **Kildare** 19.9.3 2<sup>nd</sup> para 9<sup>th</sup> pt 4<sup>th</sup> sentence.

5 Cables and wire connections shall be located underground. Taken from **Offaly** 8.22 last para 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> sentences & **Carlow** 11.18.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.

6 Where masts are located in areas of high amenity, landscapes of exceptional or high value or international or national importance and high sensitivity as indicated in the Landscape Character Assessment, there shall be a presumption to provide a "**Landscape Impact Report**" to allow proper assessment of the visual impact. Surrogate(coniferous trees) shall be considered. Taken from **Meath** 12.12 5<sup>th</sup> para 6<sup>th</sup> line.

7 Strive to reduce the number of telecommunication structures by ensuring that **ComReg's Code of Conduct** is implemented. Taken from **2011 Plan** 9.9 P31 & **Meath** 8.2.3 EC POL 31.

8 *Masts will only be permitted if supported by an acceptable Visual and Environmental **Impact Assessment** Report. In sensitive landscape and amenity areas the presumption shall be that applications must meet the co-location requirements or be supported by a Visual Impact*

	<p><i>Assessment Report that will demonstrate that the development can be satisfactorily absorbed into the landscape. VIA required within a focal point/view or in sensitive landscapes. Based on Galway 7.7. Pol ICT 2 last sentence &amp; 13.9 DMS 32a) &amp; Cavan 4.8 PIO119 &amp; 121.</i></p> <p>9 When the owner of a site <b>disposes</b> of it they will be required to inform the Council so that they will be in a position to enforce any continuing conditions. Taken from <b>Meath 8.2.3</b> last para.</p> <p>10 Applicants must demonstrate the significance of the proposed development <b>as part of the telecommunications network</b>. Taken from Sth Dublin 11.6.2 last para.</p> <p>11 Discourage the development of individual telecommunications support structures and antennae for <b>private use</b>. Taken from <b>Kildare 8.12.1 TL 11</b>.</p>	
<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 39</b></p> <p><b>Keep Ireland Open</b></p>	<p>We submit that you should include an additional <b>Sec PLANNING ENFORCEMENT</b> to be placed as <b>8.2: Planning Enforcement</b></p> <p><i>The council has extensive powers under the Planning and Development Act 2000 to <b>take enforcement action</b> where unauthorised development has occurred, is occurring or, where permitted, development has not, or is not being carried out, in compliance with the planning permission granted. Planning legislation will be enforced to ensure that the environment is not jeopardised by inappropriate and environmentally damaging development and ensure that the policies and objectives of the Plan are implemented and adhered to and to ensure that the integrity of the planning system is maintained and that it operates for the benefit of the whole community. The Council will take enforcement action in cases of unauthorised development, where it is appropriate to do so, consistent with the provisions of Part VIII of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended by the Planning and Development(Amendment) Act 2010.</i></p> <p><i>Under planning legislation any development which is not specifically exempt development requires planning permission and development which does not have permission is unauthorised development, as is development which has been or is being carried out on breach of conditions.</i></p> <p><i>In carrying out its enforcement functions, the Council may issue Warning Letters and /or Enforcement Notices or take injunctive proceeding</i></p>	<p><i>Submission noted.</i></p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p><i>Planning Enforcement is a statutory function of the Planning Authority and governed by legislation as set out in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.</i></p> <p><i>The definition of an unauthorised development is set out in law and is not a reserved function of the Local Authority; therefore there is no benefit in defining it within the County Development Plan.</i></p> <p><i>Laois County Council has an active Planning and Environmental Enforcement Section which will continue to carry out its statutory powers in relation to unauthorised and illegal development.</i></p> <p><i>Fencing of hitherto open land is covered by Article 9 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. Access to the countryside is dealt with under sections on recreation, tourism and Walking and cycling.</i></p> <p><i>The issue of access through golf courses has not arisen in County Laois</i></p> <p><i>Noise generating sports is covered under NRA 22</i></p>

	<p><i>pursuant to Sec 160 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.</i>  <i>Proceedings for non-compliance with an Enforcement Notice will be taken in the District Court in most cases or where appropriate, injunctions will be sought in the Circuit Court or High Court. In all cases the Council will seek to recover its costs, in addition to any fines imposed by the Court. Based on Kildare 19.1.1 &amp; Louth 11.7.</i></p> <p><b>8.3 DESIGN</b></p> <p><b>DM25 Commercial development in rural areas</b></p> <p><b>DM34 Developments associated with water sports</b></p> <p><b>DM40 Advertisements on public roads</b></p> <p><b>DM58 Archaeological investigations</b></p> <p><b>DM66 Telecommunications</b></p> <p>1 &amp; 2 We submit that these should be merged and replaced by: <i>Submit a reasoned justification as to the need for the development at a particular location, particularly where proliferation may present an issue, including a map covering an area within a minimum radius of 10km showing all antennae operated by the applicant and its existing coverage, details of antennae operated by other competing companies and the reason why coverage cannot be provided by sharing existing antennae and equipment and any prior consultations which the developer may have had with other mast owners and that there is no other location which would provide adequate telecommunication coverage.</i>  Based on <b>Sth Tipp</b> 7.7 2<sup>nd</sup> para below Pol INF 12, <b>Nth Tipp</b> 7.14 SERV 29 a) &amp; c) in 2nd list of pts, <b>Carlow</b> 11.18.1 5<sup>th</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt, <b>Kilkenny</b> 9.4.2.1 5<sup>th</sup> para, <b>Meath</b> 11.12 last para c), Wicklow 14.6 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> pts &amp; Wexford 9.3.1 3<sup>rd</sup> para.</p> <p>3</p> <p>4 We submit that you should add: <i>and on the natural environment particularly in areas of sensitive landscapes or of historic importance.</i>  Taken from Waterford 7.2.1 1<sup>st</sup> para 2<sup>nd</sup> pt.  We submit that you should include additional <b>Sub secs:</b></p> <p><b>A Fencing of Hitherto Open Land</b></p> <p><b>text</b></p> <p><b>1 It is a requirement of the Planning Regulations 2001 Art 9(I)(a)(x) that the fencing or enclosure of land open to or used by the</b></p>	
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	<p><b>public during the ten years preceding such fencing or enclosure for recreational purposes or as a means of access to any seashore, mountain or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility, requires planning permission. Wire fencing constitutes visual pollution and destroys the “away from it all” feeling which makes upland areas such an attraction for both local people and visitors. There has been a large increase in the amount of new fencing in upland areas. Barbed wire has been used in most of this new fencing, which, in the absence of stiles or gates, makes access for recreational users of our countryside almost impossible. Traditional hill-sheep farming rarely required fencing, but since the introduction of REPS(now AEOS), sheep-farmers must, in certain circumstances, stock-proof their land. The challenge is to ensure that such fencing will be done in a manner that will meet the requirements of AEOS without impinging on access for hill walkers. Taken from Kilkenny 6.2 Fencing.</b></p> <p><b>Note</b> The erection of fencing in any land habitually open to or used by the public for recreational purposes or as a means of access requires planning permission under the Planning &amp; Development Act 2000(as amended).</p> <p><b>pol:</b> <i>The following criteria will be used when considering planning applications for new fencing of hitherto open land: Fencing in upland or amenity areas will not normally be permitted unless <b>such fencing is essential to the viability of the farm</b> and that it conforms to the best agricultural practice. The nature of the material to be used, the height of the fence, and in the case of a wire fence the type of wire to be used will be taken into account. Stiles or gates at appropriate places will</i></p> <p><i>top line of wire. Taken from Kilkenny 6.2.4 last pt.</i></p> <p><b>Note</b> As fencing may have a cross-county dimension it is important that this development plan should be in conformity with those in adjoining counties.</p> <p><b>B Golf Courses</b></p> <p><i>Ensure that golf course development does not impinge on existing public rights of way or walking routes by identifying them prior to development. Based on Kildare 14.12.2 RW 3 &amp; Sligo 6.5 P-SRO-13.</i></p> <p><b>Note</b> Recreational users and golfers don't mix! While there are rights of way over golf courses, they aren't satisfactory: walkers run the risk of being hit by golf balls and golfers are distracted by</p>	
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	<p>people talking and moving about.</p> <p><b>C Noise Generating Sports</b></p> <p><i>Development proposals for <b>Noise Generating Sports</b> will not normally be permitted unless there is no conflict with the enjoyment of areas used for informal recreation. Taken from <b>Kilkenny</b> 7.7.2 last para 3<sup>rd</sup> pt. To which you should add:</i></p> <p><i>Adopt Bye-laws banning the use of motor bikes and quads (except for bona fide agricultural purposes) in privately- owned areas of rough grazing (including commonage) and motorised para gliders.</i></p> <p>Note Louth &amp; Sligo have adopted by-laws.</p>	
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## Part 6: Issues raised on Volume 2

Issues summarised in relation to each of the towns and villages within the county including submissions made for zonings within the settlements.

### Volume 2 - Settlement Strategy

Submission No	Submissions Name and Detail	Response and Recommendation of the Chief Executive
SUBMISSION 74	This submission requests that in addition to what is already stated in Section 1.	Volume 2 deals specifically with the settlement plans for the county towns and villages and not the open countryside. Policies in relation to the protection of rural amenities, natural amenities, etc are covered in Volume 1 of the Draft plan – Section 7.
Marc Van Den Bergh and Dave Fingleton	There are areas in need of special protection due to their sensitive character and these areas have been identified as Special Areas of Development Control. In general they overlap with NHA and SAC designation, however, some of the areas lie outside of these designations but warrant special consideration due to their visual amenity.	Policies in relation to the Designated and non designated areas are covered under Section 7 and in particular in section 7.18 landscape which replaced the Special Areas of Development Control included in former plans.
On behalf of	The following areas are Special Areas of Development Control:	This ensures all part of the landscape (in total 7 landscape type character areas) have policies to protect their integrity as well as guidance to allow for appropriate forms of development in meeting with national, regional and local policy and objectives.
People Over Wind Save Our Stradbally RTS Substation Action Group Wind Aware Ireland Laois Wind Energy Awareness Group Concerned Residents of Spink Swan, Wolfhill and Luggacurran Wind Aware Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slieve Blooms</li> <li>• Rock of Dunamaise</li> <li>• Killeshin Plateau</li> <li>• Aharney / Cullahill Mountain</li> <li>• The Heath</li> <li>• The Windy Gap / Luggacurran</li> <li>• Cullenagh Mountain</li> </ul>	Recommendation – No change to plan.
	There will be a general presumption against development in Special Areas of Development Control unless it can be demonstrated by means of a landscape assessment and appropriate landscape and building design proposals that the proposed development will enhance the overall landscape character of the site and its visual context. The onus will be on the applicant to ensure that the proposed development is integrated sensitively into the existing landscape.	
	Add to existing list.	
	<b>SS8 Special Areas of Development Control</b> It is the policy of the Council to prohibit visually obtrusive development in Special Areas of Development Control.	
<b>PORTLAOISE</b>		
SUBMISSION No 12 Ivor OLoughlin	The five premises represented employ in excess of 120 jobs in the centre of town. We have a good working relationship with each other and co-ordinated our efforts to help make the Old Fort Quarter Festival this summer a huge success. All suggestions in this submission are the result of	<i>The views expressed within the submission are noted. A public realm plan / vision</i>

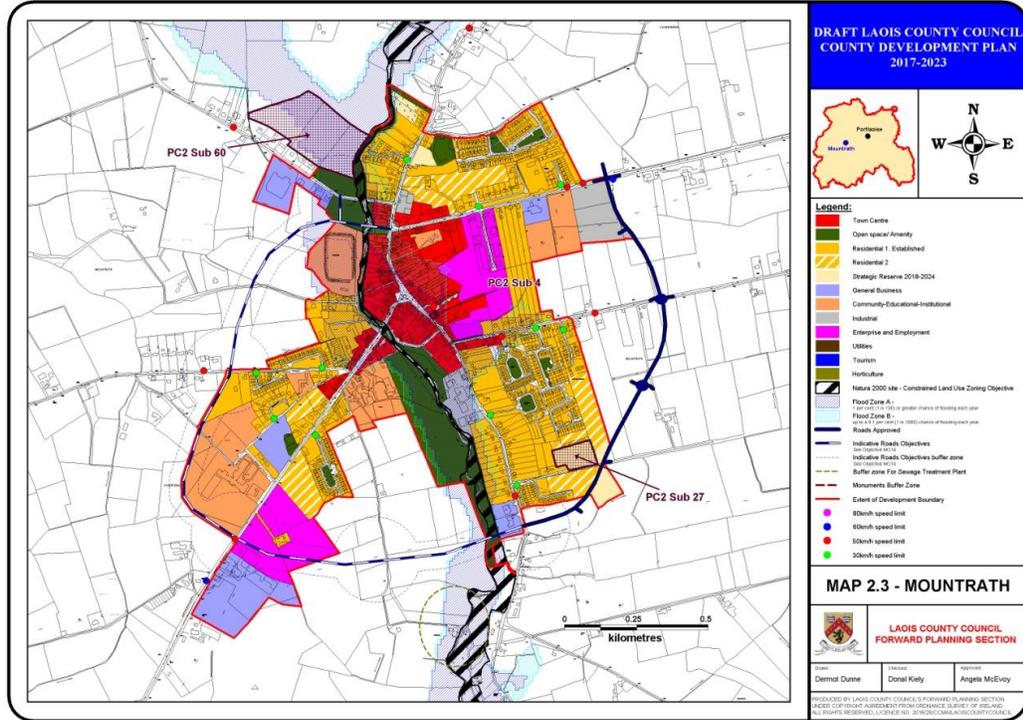
	<p>discussions held between the owners of the five premises listed above.</p> <p><b>Pedestrianised Street:</b> We suggest that at minimal disruption to the existing road layout, Lower Main Street could be pedestrianised from 6pm Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. The time of 6pm is so as not impact on existing retail units on the Main Street. If Main Street was pedestrianised from the Courthouse down to the new library building it would allow for the creation of a safe night time destination within the town. This would have numerous benefits. During the warmer summer months, it would enable weekly music, theatre and other events to be organised. It has potential to become a footfall generator for visitors from outside the town and the county. Tied in with branding highlighting the Old Fort Quarter it could be very easy to create a social/culinary quarter that could be developed in a similar way to 'An Old Town' or 'Latin Quarter'. Due to the success of the Old Fort Quarter Festival, the need for a town centered cultural quarter with regular events is something that there is an appetite for amongst the people of Laois as a whole. This 'space' could be very easily used to facilitate this.</p> <p><b>Shelter:</b> Although it may involve a more significant investment, some form of roof structure along the Main Street would also greatly increase footfall. The key feature of the Old Fort Festival was the roofing of the Main Street and it allowed the festival to go ahead regardless of the weather. Sheltered outdoor shopping spaces are very common on the European continent. Although these are mainly in purpose built shopping centres, some form of covered corridor along the Main Street would be essential for successfully pedestrianizing the street.</p> <p><b>Traffic Direction:</b> Should the traffic direction on Church Avenue be reversed, it could easily create a loop around the Old Fort (Fort Protector). This would massively increase the exposure the Fort gets from visiting tourists and the public in general. In addition to the benefit of creating a loop around the Fort it would enable cars travelling down Main Street to turn left at the new library should they not get parking as the progress down Main Street. Once the school vacates its existing location, this may be easily achieved in terms of traffic management. It would also alleviate some of the traffic congestion at the bottom of Main Street at peak times during the day. At present if visitors to the Town Centre do not get parking on the Main Street, their next stop is back around towards shopping centre. If we are serious about generating footfall to a revitalised town centre, this is a cost effective and workable solution that would yield results immediately.</p> <p><b>Street Furniture:</b> We ask that any renovation of the Lower Main Street (Old Fort Quarter) in terms of redesign, incorporates street furniture and signage that reflect the heritage aspect of this section of the town. For visitors to the town they should be fully aware through signage that they are entering an area of cultural/historical importance. This could be achieved by creating a heritage themed public space that links with the Fort, the new public library and the aforementioned 'social/culinary quarter'. As witnessed by the public support during the Old Fort Quarter Festival and the positive feedback received after the event, the public have an appetite for a public space such as this.</p>	<p><i>statement for the development of Portlaoise is currently being undertaken and will have proposals and actions incorporated into it in relation to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Pedestrianisation</i></li> <li>• <i>Shelter</i></li> <li>• <i>Street furniture</i></li> <li>• <i>Traffic circulation and</i></li> <li>• <i>Vacant buildings</i></li> </ul> <p><i>It is envisaged that the actions of the Public Realm Strategy will inform the New Local Area Plan for Portlaoise for the period 2018-2024.</i></p> <p><i>Policies have been incorporated into this Draft with respect to Town Centre Management in the shape of the following</i></p> <p>ECN 18 , ECN 20, ECN21, ECN22 ,ECN23, ,ECN24, ECN 25, ECN26 , ECN 27,ECN 28, ECN 29, ECN 30 relate</p> <p><i>The Portlaoise Local Area Plan (LAP) will be reviewed within one year of adoption of the County Development Plan 2018-2024.</i></p> <p><i>The review of the Portlaoise LAP will involve a reassessment of the housing land requirement to be compliant with the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines and the newly adopted County Development Plan. The plan will also contain a strategic flood risk assessment for the town of Portlaoise and will be subject to a Strategic Environmental</i></p>
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	<p>Linkage: As was mentioned during the public meeting relating to future town planning the idea of linking the two sides of the town centre is very important. There is a real disconnect between the established 'Old Town' and the new shopping centre. The fact that there is effectively a dual carriageway running through the centre of the town has enhanced disconnect. A well signposted, well-lit and well maintained pedestrian route linking the two distinct areas of town would be of enormous benefit to the Main Street.</p> <p>Vacant Buildings: There are a number of buildings in the town centre/Main Street that are in disrepair and have a negative impact on the area on a daily basis. We would ask that the owners of these buildings be contacted and at the very least paint and maintain their premises. It should not be acceptable that the idleness of some have consequences for many within the town centre.</p>	<p><i>assessment and Appropriate Assessment.</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation: no further action in relation to this submission</b></p>
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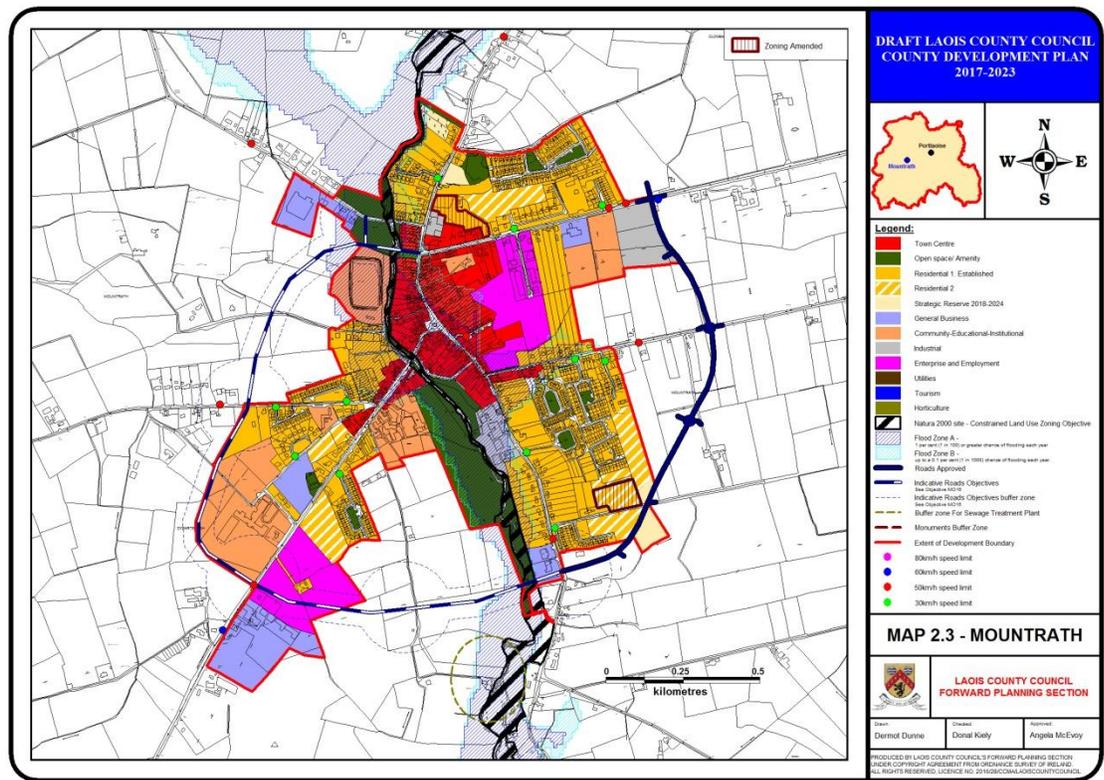
**GRAIGUECULLEN**

<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 61</b></p> <p><b>Anne &amp; Tom Dormer c/o John Delaney Architect,</b></p>	<p>This submission relates to 2 no. sites totalling c. 1.85 hectares [4.56 acres] in the applicants ownership located at Graigue, Sleaty Road in the northern outskirts of Graiguecullen, Carlow.</p> <p>The sites are separated by a section of the Carlow Northern Relief Road which is part of the National Secondary Route Network.</p> <p>The northernmost site, which is the larger of the two, is actually just outside the development boundary of Graiguecullen as established in the Joint Spatial Plan for the Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area 2012-2018. It is unzoned.</p> <p>The southernmost site is just within the town boundary. It is zoned "Open Space &amp; Amenity" in the Joint Spatial Plan which zoning precludes most types of development. Both sites are in designated flood risk areas.</p> <p>Applicants request that the land be given a residential zoning. They argue that lands have not flooded in the last 20 years, that land levels are 9 metres over level of River Barrow, and 600-900 mms over level of Northern Relief Road which is itself 8 metres over level of River Barrow. They also claim that there is an over-saturation of light industrial and commercial zoning in the area</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><i>The Graiguecullen Local Area Plan (LAP) as part of the Joint Spatial Plan for the Carlow / Graiguecullen Urban Area and Environs will be reviewed within one year of adoption of the County Development Plan 2018-2024.</i></p> <p><i>The review of the Graiguecullen LAP will involve a reassessment of the housing land requirement in conjunction with Carlow County Council to be compliant with the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines and the newly adopted County Development Plan. The plan will also contain a strategic flood risk assessment for the town of Portlaoise and will be subject to a Strategic Environmental assessment and Appropriate Assessment.</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p><b>No further action in relation to zoned areas in Graiguecullen e at this time</b></p>
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MOUNTRATH



Map below indicates proposed amendments to zoning

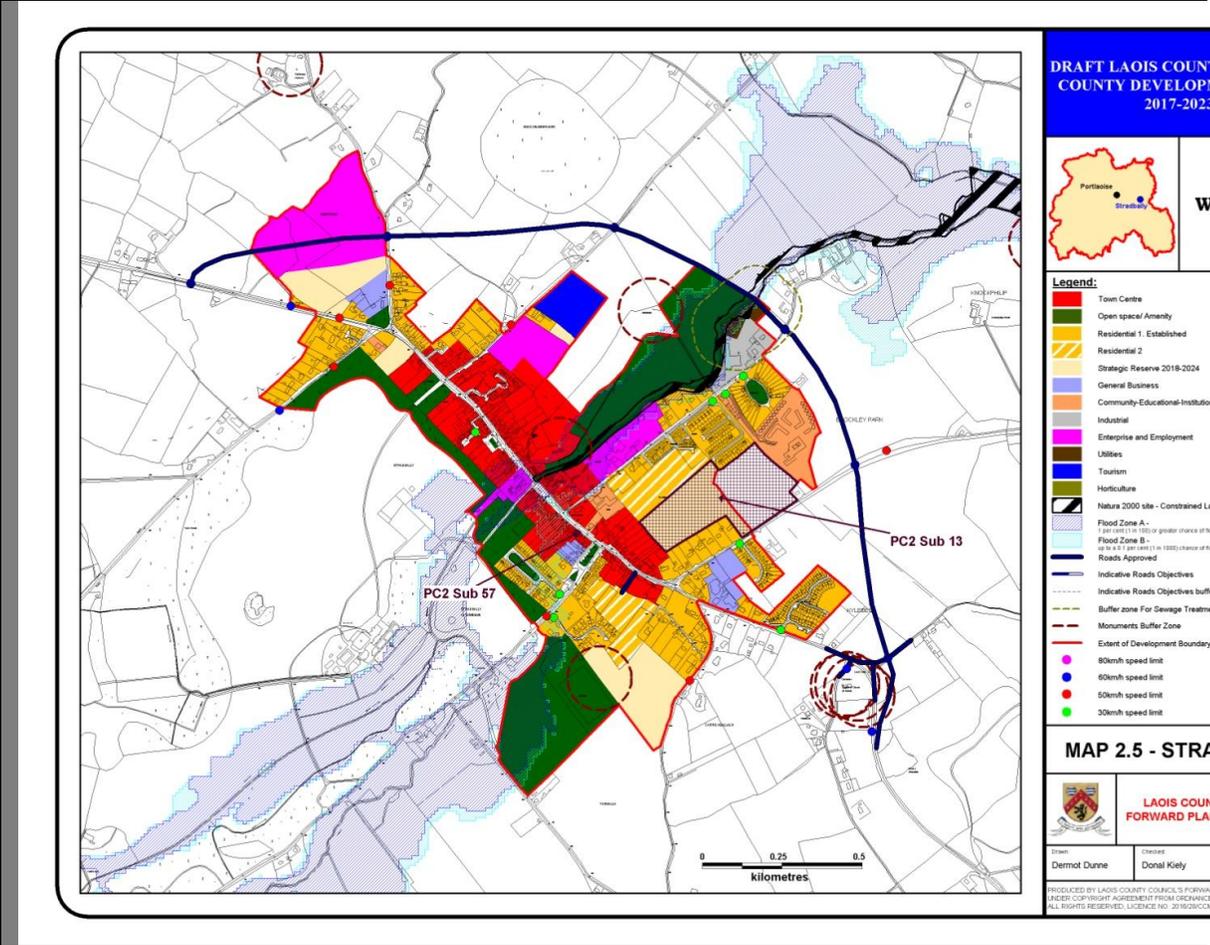


<p><b>SUBMISSION 27</b>  <b>Superior Formwork Limited c/o Jason Redmond &amp; Associates Consulting Engineers,</b></p>	<p>Our client has a current planning application with the planning department in relation to this site. The site was the subject to planning application for residential developments, 04/60 which was granted for 123 no houses, a crèche, new entrance, and all associated site works. The house consists of 30 No. 3 bedroom terraced houses, 1 No. 3 bedroom detached house, 68 No. 3 bedroom semi detached houses and 24 No. 4 bedroom semi detached houses.</p> <p>We have prepared two simple maps on the basis of amp 2.3 of the current Portlaoise local area plan. The first plan (16.158 – LAPo1) Is a master plan showing the site location in context to Mountrath. The second plan (16.158 –LAPo2) is a larger scale map showing the site context to the surrounding zoning matrixes. The site boundary outlined in red for identification purposes. With reference to this plan can be seen that the site is currently zoned for strategic reserve 92018-2024)</p> <p>Our client requests respectfully that Laois County Council consider strongly the alteration of the site zoning from Strategic Reserve to Residential 2. To the north of the subject site is the existing Rush Hall residential development which was granted planning under 04/60. This permission took in the full area of the site (which incorporates the area to be altered). To the east the current zoning is residential 2 and Laois County Council has granted planning for a 49 unit housing development under planning ref 15143. To the south of the lands to be altered it is also currently zoned Residential 2 with the housing estate adjacent to this granted under planning reg ref 99947.</p> <p>In addition to the above we feel there is a strong logic for altering the zoning in terms of allowing completion of an incompleteness development site. The extension of the residential 2 would allow the completion of an unfinished development and with lands currently zoned residential to the north and west and residential 2 to the east and south.</p>	<p>Submission noted. The Planning Authority is not opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons.</p> <p><u>Location</u></p> <p>The lands referred to abound an unfinished housing estate which was granted planning permission under 04 /60.  This is a continuation of Rushall Estate which is serviced.</p> <p>Based on the overall housing land requirement for Mountrath of <b>9 hectares</b> up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, while there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town, this is a site that has a previous zoned permission which was half built out until the down turn and its viability has been demonstrated as current planning application is pending permission – ref 16/488</p> <p>In order to ensure that the housing land requirement for the town of Mountrath is not exceeded some of the lands to the rear of the Portlaoise road is being proposed for strategic reserve</p> <p><u>Flooding</u>  The site is outside the flood zones.</p> <p><u>Services</u>  The site is adequately serviced.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>It is recommended that the site be zoned for residential 2 purposes.</p>
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<p><b>SUBMISSION NO. 60.</b></p> <p><b>D. J. Doheny,</b></p>	<p>This submission relates to a c. 7.5 hectares [18.5 acres] site in the applicants ownership located in the northern outskirts of Mountrath. It is c. 1 kms from the town centre, across the road from the mart and to the rear of a number of long standing dwellings fronting onto the R 440-Kinnitty Road within the town speed limits.</p> <p>The lands are immediately outside the town development boundary as indicated in both the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 and are unzoned.</p> <p>The majority of the lands are In Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan. Residential development is not allowed in Flood Zone A.</p> <p>Applicant requests that the lands be zoned residential.</p> <p>In support of his application, applicant states that “the location has a number of existing advantages including full road frontage, footpaths, public lighting, new mains sewage pipe runs alongside the road, parallel to the site, old mature trees for aesthetics, riverside setting for aesthetics, shortwalk to town centre with all services and amenities and within town limits”.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>The Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons.</p> <p><i>Location</i></p> <p>The lands referred to are outside the town development boundary as indicated in both the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 and are unzoned.</p> <p>A development here of the scale proposed would be completely at variance with the principle of the sequential approach to the location of new development.</p> <p>The <b>sequential approach</b> in effect favours town centre, edge of centre and inner suburban locations over suburban locations for reasons of promoting sustainability, urban compactness and ease of serviceability. There is a <b>strong</b> presumption against the leapfrogging effect which leads to ad-hoc and disjointed development at relatively long distances [such as in this case] from the town centre.</p> <p><i>Housing Land Requirement</i></p> <p>Based on the overall housing land requirement for Mountrath of 9 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.</p> <p>It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of Mountrath is governed by and shall comply with the target of 9 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p><i>Flooding</i></p> <p>The majority of the lands are in Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan. Residential development is not allowed in Flood Zone A.</p>
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	<p><u>Services</u></p> <p>The site is devoid of adequate service infrastructure including foul drainage facilities. Also it is unclear how access to the site would be achieved. According to the map submitted with the submission, there appears to be no direct access onto the adjoining public thoroughfare.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands unzoned</p>
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**STRADBALLY**



**SUBMISSION 13**

**Tm Philips Consultancy on behalf of Declan McLoughlin**

This submission relates to a c. 5.4 hectares [13.3 acres] site in the applicants ownership located due east of Main Street, Stradbally between R428 Athy Road and Church Lane.

In the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017, c. 30% of the site [the portion closest to the town centre] is zoned “Residential 2” with the remaining portion [c. 70%] zoned “Strategic Reserve.”

In the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023, the zoning has been changed. The lands with “Residential 2” zoning designation have now been dezoned to “Strategic Reserve” and the lands with “Strategic Reserve” zoning designation have now been

Submission noted.

Response

The Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons.

Location

The lands referred to are in suburban location, c. 1.5 kms north-east of the town centre.

	<p>de-zoned entirely and now lie outside of the town development boundary.</p> <p>There have been a number of recent planning applications for large scale housing developments on the lands. The most recent application is PI 07/1670 Ref under which permission for 255 no. housing units and a crèche was granted by Laois County Council. The development never went ahead however and the permission is now expired. An application to extend its duration was refused by Laois County Council under PI Ref 12/342.</p> <p>Applicant requests either of two zoning actions. His preferred request is for the entire landholding of c. 5.4 hectares [13.3 acres] be zoned “Residential 2”. His secondary request is for the lands de-zoned from “Residential 2” to “Strategic Reserve” be returned to the original zoning.</p> <p>In support of his application, applicant argues that the zoning map as presented in the Draft Plan is an anomaly and does not follow a physical boundary, that the lands are serviceable and that their development would ultimately represent a logical extension of the town.</p>	<p>A development here of the scale proposed would be completely at variance with the principle of the sequential approach to the location of new development.</p> <p>The <b>sequential approach</b> in effect favours town centre, edge of centre and inner suburban locations over suburban locations for reasons of promoting sustainability, urban compactness and ease of serviceability. There is a <b>strong</b> presumption against the leapfrogging effect which leads to ad-hoc and disjointed development at relatively long distances [such as in this case] from the town centre.</p> <p><i>Housing Land Requirement</i></p> <p>Based on the overall housing land requirement for Stradbally of 6 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.</p> <p>It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of Stradbally is governed by and shall comply with the target of 6 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave zoning unchanged.</p>
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		<p><u>Enterprise &amp; Employment Development</u></p> <p>There is a big emphasis on promotion of economic development and job creation in the Draft Plan. Due to its proximity to the Motorway Network [Grantstown Interchange is only 10 kms to the southwest] and by extension the Greater Dublin Area and other large urban centres, there is considerable potential for enterprise and employment activities at this site.</p> <p>The site is subject to oversight by EPA and there may be issues in relation to remediation.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to the draft Plan; leave zoning of lands for ["Enterprise &amp; Employment"] unchanged</p>
<p><b>PC2/SUB53</b> Mary White Abbeyleix Tidy Towns</p>	<p><b>Observation for County Development.</b></p> <p>1) <b>Housing Provision</b> Part of the stone arch site should be designated as a land bank for housing. It is a very desirable site, adjacent to the town and amenities, in a beautiful Sylvain setting. We would recommend that Laois Co Co should give consideration to the possibility of purchasing the site for housing.</p> <p>2) <b>Social and Physical Infrastructure</b> The excellent public recreational space on the 11 hectare site at Fr Breen Park Abbeyleix, can no longer meet the sporting needs of the expanding population in the town and its environs.</p> <p>Provisions should be made to allocate land on the site formally known as Preston Park on the Well Rd Abbeyleix (opposite Ballymullen Rd junction) as a playing/ training pitch for sports.</p> <p>The site could have a dual purpose it could be used as a dog park.</p> <p>We have been approached by responsible dog owners to source a suitable space they could meet greet and train dogs and pups in a communal setting. The aim would be to encourage less responsible dog owners to be very respectful to their community.</p> <p>Their message would be Dog Fowling is the responsibility of the owners and is not acceptable. Dog parks work very successfully on the continent.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the excellent work being carried out by Abbeyleix Tidy Towns group in promoting environmental awareness, community involvement and civic spirit in the town.</p> <p>However the Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons.</p> <p><u>Housing Land Requirement</u></p> <p>Based on the overall housing land requirement for Abbeyleix of 10 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 "Development Strategy", there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.</p> <p>It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of Abbeyleix is governed by and shall comply with the target of 10 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p>

	<p>The buy in from the dog owners would ensure effective patrolling of 'Canine space'</p>	<p>Laois County Council has no plans to purchase this site for future housing development. It already has a significant land bank in the town.</p> <p><i><u>Enterprise &amp; Employment Development</u></i></p> <p>There is a big emphasis on promotion of economic development and job creation in the Draft Plan. Due to its proximity to the Motorway Network [Grantstown Interchange is only 10 kms to the southwest] and by extension the Greater Dublin Area and other large urban centres, there is considerable potential for enterprise and employment activities at this site.</p> <p>The site is subject to oversight by EPA and there may be issues in relation to remediation.</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation:</i></b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave zoning of lands for ["Enterprise &amp; Employment"] unchanged.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION No 54</b> John Bonham</p>	<p>I wish to make the following submission on the County Development Plan 2017-2023 in relation to the "stone arch site", Ballacolla Road, Abbeyleix.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The character of the Ballacolla Road should be retained particularly in relation to any new development that might occur on the "stone Arch Site"</li> <li>2) The Architectural Conservation Area guidance should apply to any development in this area.</li> <li>3) The hedgerow screening should be retained along the Ballacolla road to minimise any impact the future development might have;</li> <li>4) The potential for some residential development - low density should be examined for the site along well Road/Ballacolla Road;</li> <li>5) The stone arch site should be redeveloped and vacant site levy should be looked at for the site</li> </ol>	<p>Submission noted. The Planning Authority notes the comments in relation to the "Stone Arch Site" which is zoned for Enterprise and Employment and Open Space in part along the Ballcolla Road.</p> <p>There is a big emphasis on promotion of economic development and job creation in the Draft Plan. Due to its proximity to the Motorway Network [Grantstown Interchange is only 10 kms to the southwest] and by extension the Greater Dublin Area and other large urban centres, there is considerable potential for enterprise and employment activities at this site.</p> <p>It has always been the objective of the Council that this site be brought back into use for the good of the town of Abbeyleix.</p> <p>Based on the overall housing land requirement for Abbeyleix of 10 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 "Development Strategy", there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to]</p>

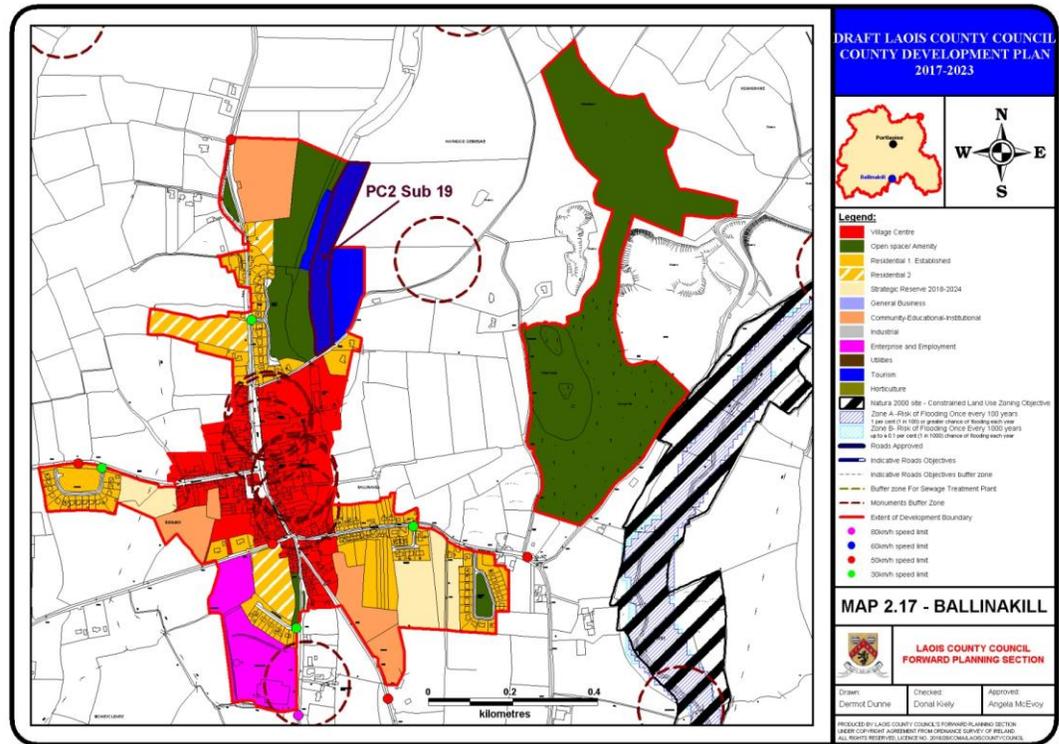
		<p>other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.</p> <p>It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of Abbeyleix is governed by and shall comply with the target of 10 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>The architectural Conservation area for Abbeyleix runs past this site to take in the character area of the South School, etc and so any proposals for the site would have to be compliant with the policy guidance in relation to this area.</p> <p>The Council will consider the implementation of the Vacant Sites levy with respect to the site.</p> <p>The site is subject to oversight by EPA and there may be issues in relation to remediation.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Amend AB 06 in the written statement for Abbeyleix Town Plan</p> <p>Protect individual trees, groups of trees and hedgerows on all approach roads , particularly the Ballcolla and Cork Roads , Ladies Hill , church Grove and the Vicarage</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION No 32</b> <b>Padraig Callanan,</b></p>	<p>This submission relates to a c. 3.1 hectares [7.65 acres] site in the applicants ownership located at the rear of the Fairways Estate off the Ballyroan Road, Abbeyleix, c. 1.5 kms north-east of the town centre.</p> <p>The site is zoned “Strategic Reserve” in both the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Applicant requests that the lands be zoned residential. The lands are serviced and accessible through either Fairways or the National Secondary Route N77.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>The Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons.</p> <p><i>Location</i></p> <p>The lands referred to are in suburban location, c. 1.5 kms north-east of the town centre.</p> <p>A development here of the scale proposed would be completely at variance with the principle of the sequential approach to the location of new development.</p>

		<p>The <b>sequential approach</b> in effect favours town centre, edge of centre and inner suburban locations over suburban locations for reasons of promoting sustainability, urban compactness and ease of serviceability. There is a <b>strong</b> presumption against the leapfrogging effect which leads to ad-hoc and disjointed development at relatively long distances [such as in this case] from the town centre.</p> <p><u>Housing Land Requirement</u></p> <p>Based on the overall housing land requirement for Abbeyleix of 10 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.</p> <p>It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of Abbeyleix is governed by and shall comply with the target of 10 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as zoned “Strategic Reserve”.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION 71</b> <b>Brian Maher</b></p>	<p>This submission relates in particular to Abbeyleix and the surrounding district but it also seeks to highlight issues, strategies and objectives that relate to County Laois as a whole. It is essential that the emerging Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017 - 2023 (hereafter DCDP) recognises and anticipate changes that will require to be consistent with and supportive of wider national spatial and socio-economic policies, strategies and objectives to be set in the future National Planning Framework.</p> <p><b>2.0 Population and Housing</b> Housing Provision Objective AB 10 should be amended in light of the commissioning of the new wastewater facility which currently states; “...no further development occurs until appropriate</p>	<p>Submission noted and commentary relating to the development of Abbeyleix for a variety of purposes is also noted. It is proposed to update the Abbeyleix Town Development Plan to include the following</p> <p>AB 10</p> <p>Mixed use applications which comprise of a housing element will also be accepted within the town centre zoning though loss of active commercial or retail floor space to residential use will not be accepted, <del>no further development occurs until appropriate water supply and waste water infrastructure capacity is provided</del></p>

	<p>water supply and waste water infrastructural capacity is provided”.</p> <p><b>3.0 Vacant and Underutilised Lands – The Stonearch Site</b>          The former Stonearch facility which occupied the former Abbeyleix Railway Station to the south west of Abbeyleix Town Centre should be considered for a change of Land Use Zoning from Enterprise and Employment due to the fact that the site has not been redeveloped since 2001 when the facility closed. As there is a recognised requirement for additional sports facilities the area might be considered as a sports field with a potential for a residential use on the old Stonearch facility footprint as well as part of the green space.          The provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 include a vacant site levy to be charged and levied for each year beginning in 2018. This may well provide for the bringing forward of the site under its current land use zoning designation as Enterprise and Employment.</p> <p><b>4.0 Vacant and underutilised lands – Abbeyleix Hospital</b>          The potential exists for the further expansion of Abbeyleix District Hospital. The overall site comprises approximately 2.2 Hectares (5.4 acres). The existing hospital building shown in blue occupies approximately 9% of the total site area which demonstrates a huge potential for expansion within the site.          The site plan below shows an extension in yellow to facilitate a combined 50 bed unit. The addition of the extension shows that the total building footprint is occupying less than 11% of the total site area. This indicates that there is still potential for expandability within the existing site area. This will aid in providing for the opportunity to develop the service provision within the Abbeyleix District Hospital site without the need to acquire additional lands.          A 100 bed nursing home unit over 2 storey's is shown below in yellow to the south of the existing Community Nursing Unit facility which would have the benefit of sharing facilities, including external amenity and car parking provision.          Abbeyleix Hospital showing potential expansion within the 2.2ha site (Not to scale)</p> <p><b>5.0 Sequential Development Strategy</b>          Prioritise the infill of existing vacant plots within the existing two-storey typology and encourage where possible rear access to existing deep plots to permit</p>	<p><b>3.0 Vacant and Underutilised Lands – The Stonearch Site</b>          Based on the overall housing land requirement for Abbeyleix of 10 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.</p> <p>It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of Abbeyleix is governed by and shall comply with the target of 10 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Laois County Council has no plans to purchase this site for future housing development. It already has a significant land bank in the town.</p> <p><u>Enterprise &amp; Employment Development</u></p> <p>There is a big emphasis on promotion of economic development and job creation in the Draft Plan. Due to its proximity to the Motorway Network [Grantstown Interchange is only 10 kms to the southwest] and by extension the Greater Dublin Area and other large urban centres, there is considerable potential for enterprise and employment activities at this site.</p> <p>The site is subject to oversight by EPA and there may be issues in relation to remediation.</p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave zoning of lands for [“Enterprise &amp; Employment”] unchanged.</p> <p>It is noted that this area is in need of regeneration and the Council will explore options under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 to encourage development of this site.</p> <p><b>The commentary in relation to Abbeyleix</b></p>
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	<p>mews type residential development and compatible artisan uses. Promote the sequential and phased development of the strategic land-banks to the north west from town centre with pedestrian linkages and traffic connections where practical while avoiding impact on the existing continuous building lines along Main Street and Market Square. Develop an innovative sequential development strategy that prioritises adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the deep plots while allowing for development opportunities to the rear.</p>	<p><b>Hospital is noted. The site is zoned for town centre development which allows for the potential expansion proposals of the hospital as outlined subject to proper planning and sustainable development.</b></p> <p><b>We note the comments in relation to the</b> Prioritisation of infill of existing vacant plots within the existing two-storey typology and encourage where possible rear access to existing deep plots to permit mews type residential development and compatible artisan uses.</p> <p>Policy ABo2, AB 07, AB15, AB 16 are supportive in this regard.</p>
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BALLINAKILL



**SUBMISSION No 19 Martin Hyland,**

This submission relates to a c. 2.2 hectares [5.5 acres] site in the applicants ownership located at Haywood Demesne in the northern-eastern outskirts of Ballinakill.

The lands are zoned “Tourism” in both the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

Applicant requests that the lands be zoned residential.

Submission noted.

The Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons. Dwellings are allowed in principle in the “Tourism” land use zoning designation as indicated in Table 31, Volume 1 of the draft Plan.

Location

The lands referred to are in suburban location, c. 1.5 kms north-east of the town centre. A development here of the scale proposed would be completely at variance with the principle of the sequential approach to the location of new development. The **sequential approach** in effect favours town centre, edge of centre and inner suburban locations over suburban locations for reasons of promoting sustainability, urban compactness and ease of serviceability. There is a **strong** presumption against the leapfrogging effect which leads to ad-hoc and disjointed development at relatively long distances [such as in this case] from the town centre.

Housing Land Requirement

Based on the overall housing land requirement for County Laois of 240 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located

lands as identified by application of the sequential approach. It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of County Laois is governed by and shall comply with the target of 240 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

Tourism Development

There is a big emphasis on tourism development in the Draft Plan. Due to its proximity to major local attractions such as Haywood Gardens and walking and cycling trails, there is considerable potential for tourism related development in the nearest urban centre which is Ballinakill.

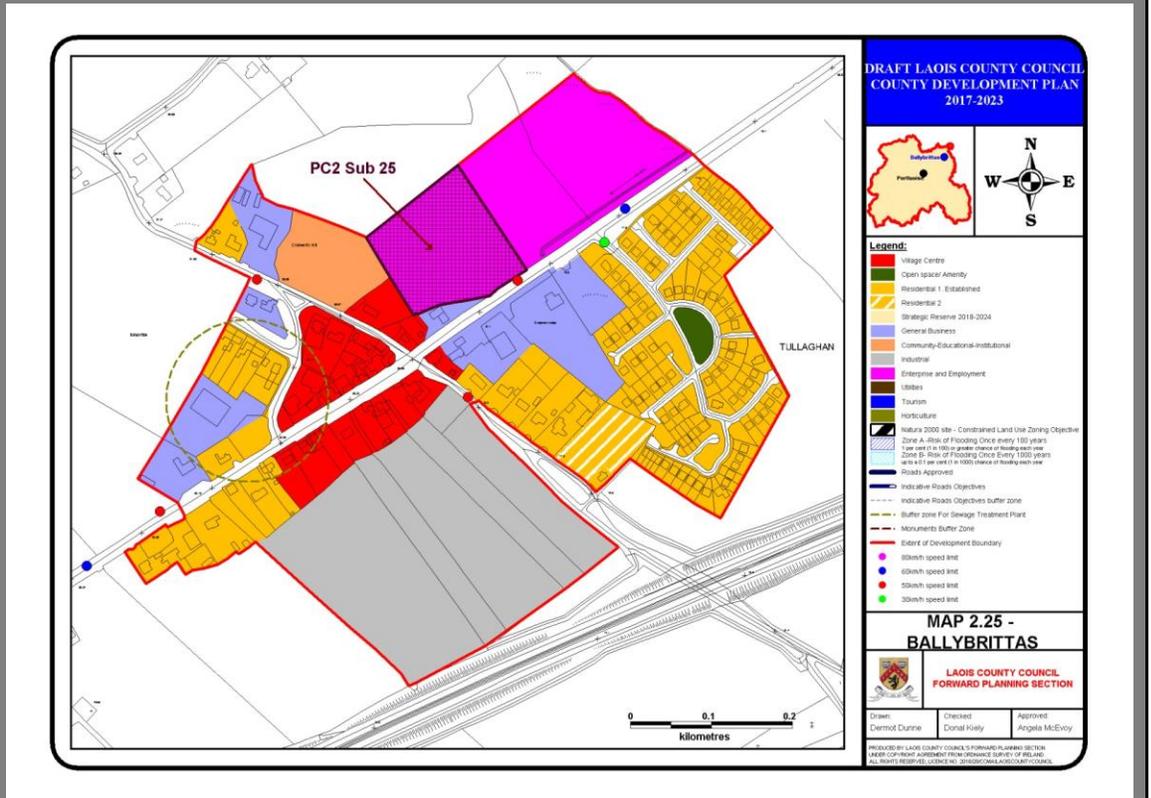
Services

The site is devoid of adequate service infrastructure including foul drainage facilities.

**Recommendation:**

No change to the draft Plan; leave zoning [for "Tourism"] unchanged.

BALLYBRITTAS



**SUBMISSION NO. 25**  
**John Quigley**  
 c/o **Leslie Colton**  
 Architect,

This submission relates to a c. 2 hectares [4.94 acres] site located in Ballybrittas. The land is just off the village centre, immediately adjacent to the village filling station and fronts onto Strategic Regional route R445 [formerly N7 National Primary Route]. It is within the village speed limits.

The lands are zoned “Enterprise & Employment” in both the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

Applicant requests that the lands be zoned residential.

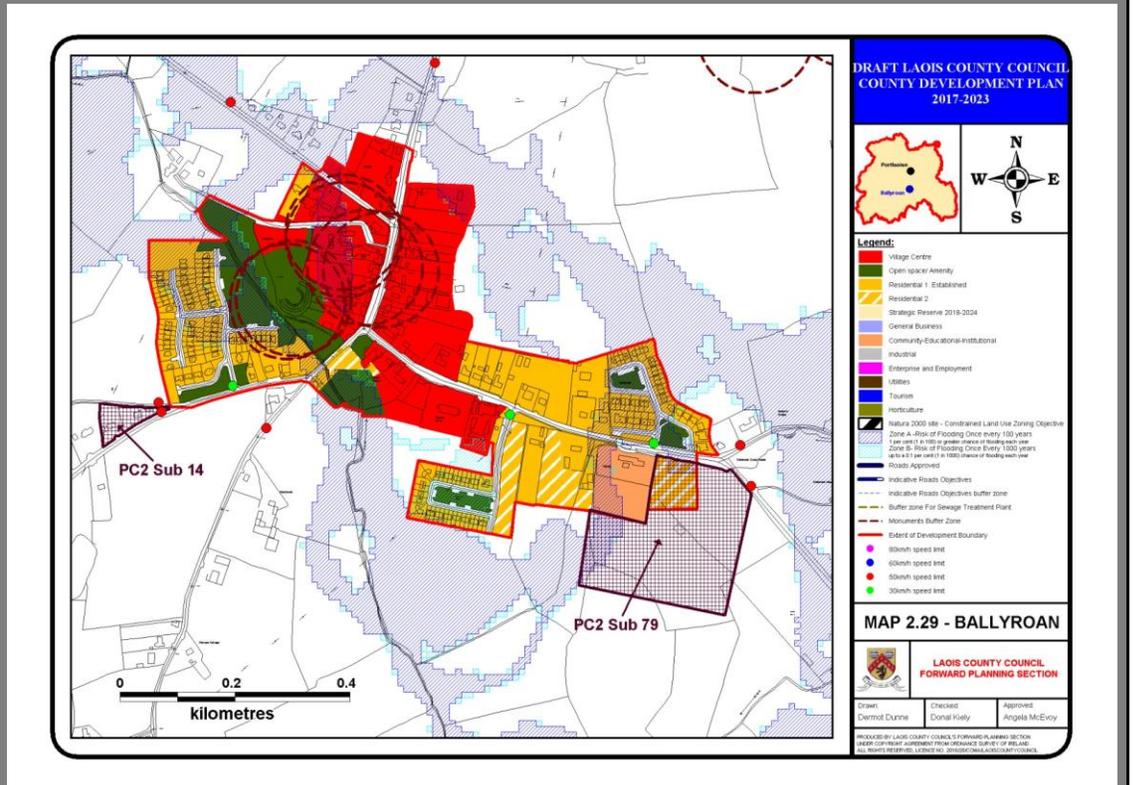
Submission noted. The Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons. Based on the overall housing land requirement for County Laois of 240 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the village. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach. It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of County Laois is governed by and shall comply with the target of 240 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

There is a big emphasis on economic development and job creation in the Draft Plan. Due to its proximity to the Motorway Network [New Inn Interchange is only 5 kms to the southeast] and by extension the Greater Dublin Area and other large urban centres, there is considerable potential for enterprise and employment activities at this site.

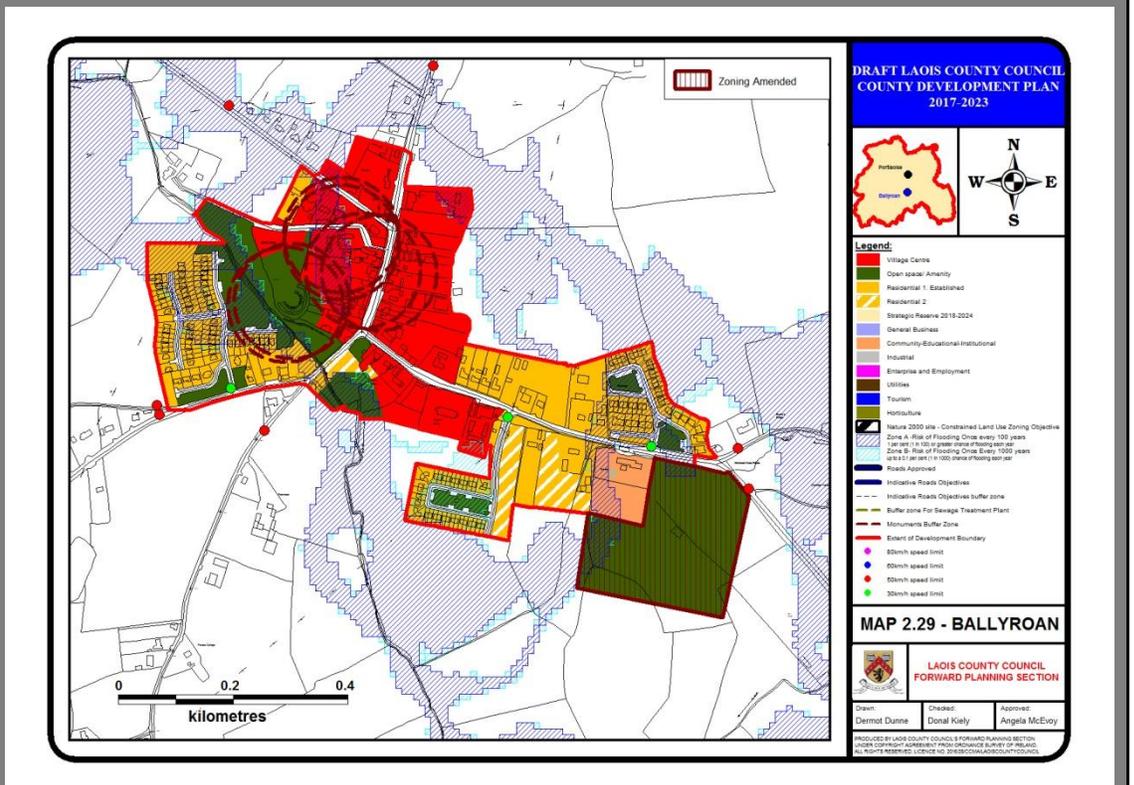
**Recommendation:**

No change to the draft Plan; leave zoning of lands for [“Enterprise & Employment”] unchanged

BALLYROAN



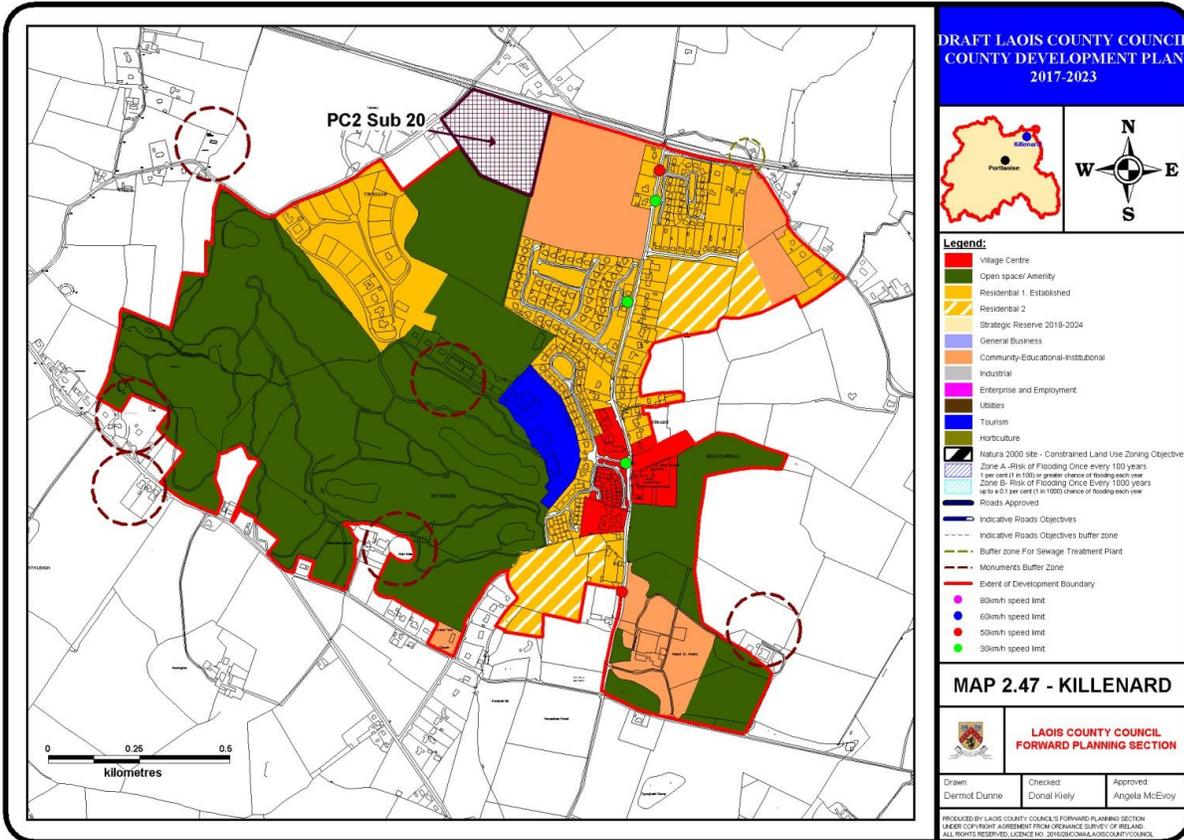
Proposed amendments to the zoning map



<p><b>SUBMISSION</b> 14 Michael Drennan</p>	<p>Having viewed the new draft development plan it has come to my attention that my lands at Newtown, Ballyroan, has been de-zoned. As there is an existing planning permission on this land for 3 No. Dwelling that is valid until 28/7/19. I would like to request the retention of residential zoning for this site.</p>	<p>Submission noted. The Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons. In the event of the residential zoning of these lands being removed and the lands having no zoning, this action will <b>not</b> in any way invalidate or revoke the current planning permission which remains valid until its expiry date in July 2019.</p> <p>The lands referred to are outside the proposed town boundary as indicated in the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. A development here of the scale proposed would be completely at variance with the principle of the sequential approach to the location of new development. The <b>sequential approach</b> in effect favours town centre, edge of centre and inner suburban locations over suburban locations for reasons of promoting sustainability, urban compactness and ease of serviceability. There is a <b>strong</b> presumption against the leapfrogging effect which leads to ad-hoc and disjointed development at relatively long distances [such as in this case] from the town centre. . Based on the overall housing land requirement for County Laois of 240 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the town. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach. It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of County Laois is governed by and shall comply with the target of 240 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as de-zoned.</p>
<p><b>SUBMISSION</b> 79 Brian Maher on behalf of Ballyroan Development Association</p>	<p>This submission is intended to provide an opportunity to facilitate a consolidated Sports Ground facility with a children’s playground, community centre within the settlement of Ballyroan and we request that the Laois County Council Development Plan 2017 – 2023;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise in policy and objectives the proposal for a co-located Community Facility with integrated education, community hall, playground, playing pitches, walking track and shared set-down and car parking within Ballyroan.</li> <li>• Zone existing soccer club lands for</li> </ul>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>This submission is related to submission no. 55 from Councillor Jerry Lodge regarding relocation of speed limits on the Spink Road [County Primary Road L-2778].</p> <p>In the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017, the lands in question are within the village boundary and are zoned a combination of “Residential 2”, “Strategic Reserve” and “Open Space</p>

	<p>development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the extension of the settlement envelope.</li> </ul>	<p>&amp; Amenity”.</p> <p>However, In the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023, the bulk [c. 80%] of the lands are now outside the village boundary and the minority portion [c. 20%] inside the boundary is zoned “Residential 2”.</p> <p>There are lots of merits in the proposal to amalgamate the GAA, soccer and athletics grounds and relocate them from their current locations on the outskirts of the village to one overall site albeit only partly within the village boundary as indicated in the draft Plan. The proposed location immediately adjacent to Scoil Bhríde National School is an added bonus.</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation</i></b></p> <p>Amend draft Plan accordingly and relocate the affected portion of Residential 2 zoning to elsewhere in the village, for example to lands across the road and due north-east of Sue Ryder Centre [there was a previous application for a housing development on part of these lands under Pl Ref 07/930].</p>
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Killenard



**SUBMISSION NO. 20.**

**Thames Builders Inc. c/o Kilgallen & Partners,**

This submission relates to a c. 5.4 hectares [13.3 acres] site located on the outskirts of Killenard c. 1 kms northwest of the village centre. The lands are just outside the Killenard development boundary as established in the current Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 and the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

The lands are bounded to the north by the Iarnroid Eireann railway track, to the south by part of the Heritage golf course, to the west by a County Road and 2 detached properties and

Submission noted.

**Response**

The Planning Authority is very mindful of the national trend towards an aging population and the need for suitable accommodation to be made available for that cohort.

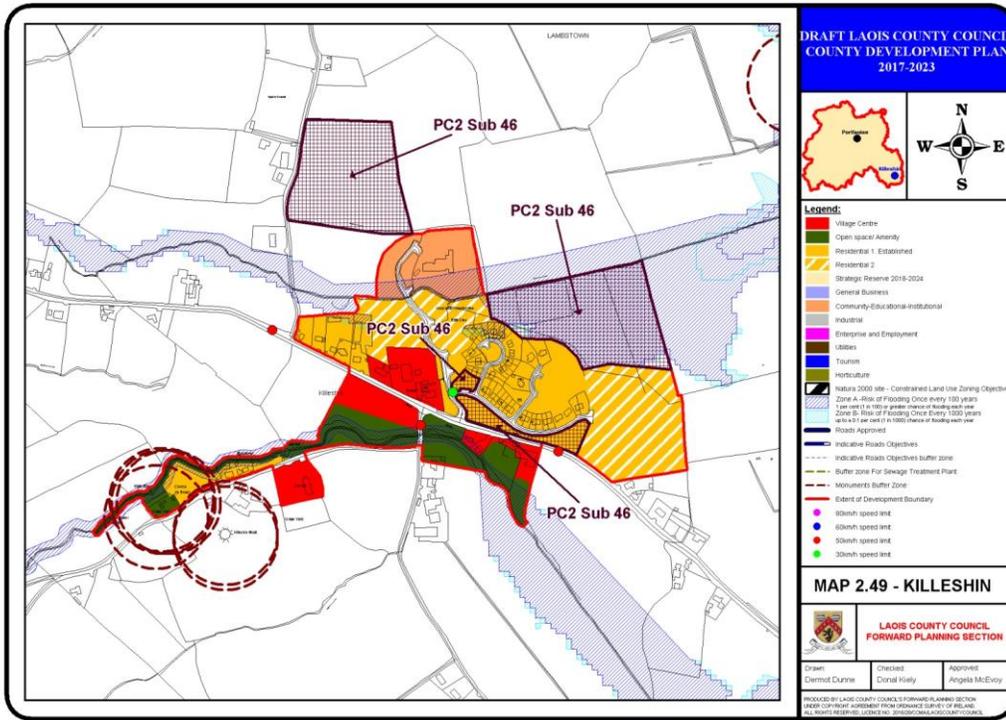
According to the Central Statistics Office, the overall population of Ireland will have increased to 6.4 million people by 2046 and the number of elderly will have increased by 200,000 by 2046. Preliminary CSO results for the 2016 Census indicates that Ireland's population continues to grow and County Laois continues to experience rapid population growth above the national average. The challenges facing the country in meeting the health and social care needs of a rapidly ageing population are well documented. The crisis in the Health Sector/Accident & Emergency Department and lack of step-down facilities is the focus of daily commentary in all national media forums.

Of particular significance, the Country will experience a rapid increase in our older, old population:

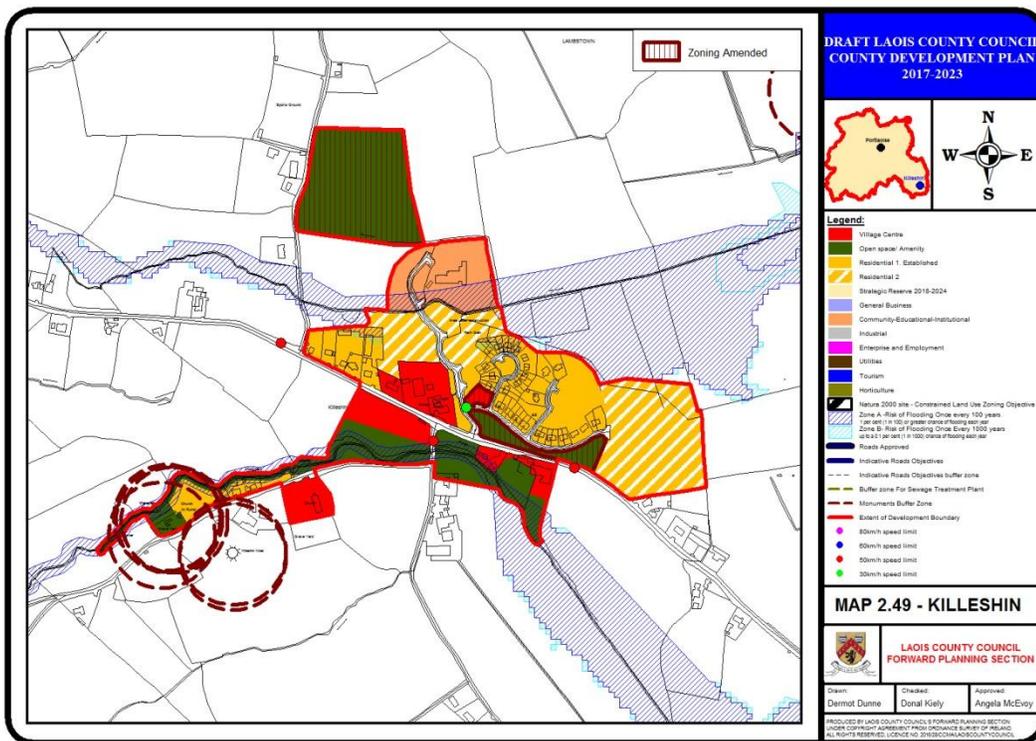
- 65+ population cohort will expand from 860,000 (2026) – 1.4 million (2046)
- Cohort 85+ is set to escalate by 46% in 2021
- 80+ segment will account for 470 -480,000 in 2046

	<p>to the east by lands zoned “Community Educational Institutional” and which are owned by the applicant.</p> <p>Applicant requests that the lands be zoned “Community Educational Institutional” and that the town boundary be extended accordingly.</p> <p>In support of his application, applicant argues that the zoning map as presented in the Draft Plan is an anomaly and does not follow a physical boundary, that the lands are serviceable and that their development would ultimately represent a logical extension of the town.</p>	<p>compared to 128,000 in 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand for long-stay beds will increase to 45,000 by 2036</li> <li>• Demand for short-stay beds is predicted to double</li> <li>• Supply gap of between 18,000 – 24,000 beds by 2036</li> <li>• Minimum efficient and compliant nursing home size is 60+ beds</li> </ul> <p>Health Information and Quality Authority indicates that over 70% of private nursing homes are below this threshold and the problem is most acute outside major urban areas. The above figures are conservative if one used the HSE's average annual growth rate of 8% 2016 projections then the potential 65+ figure would reach 1,350,000 by 2023. The onus is on the private sector to deliver this supply as the HSE/Department is committed to no new public registrations for the foreseeable future as available funding is committed to upgrading existing public facilities to HIQA standards.</p> <p>Housing for the elderly is referenced in various policies and objectives (<i>HP8, HP9, HP10, HP11 and SOC 22</i>) throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 3 <i>Housing Policy</i> and Section 4 <i>Social, Community and Recreational Strategy</i>.</p> <p>It is however noted that water services are an issue within the Killenard area. It is therefore premature at this point in time to zone additional lands for “Community Educational Institutional”. Until such time as there is a further requirement for this type of development, the lands shall remain unzoned and can be reviewed during a further county development plan review.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Draft Plan to remain unchanged</p>
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KILLESHTN



Amendments to zoning maps proposed as follows

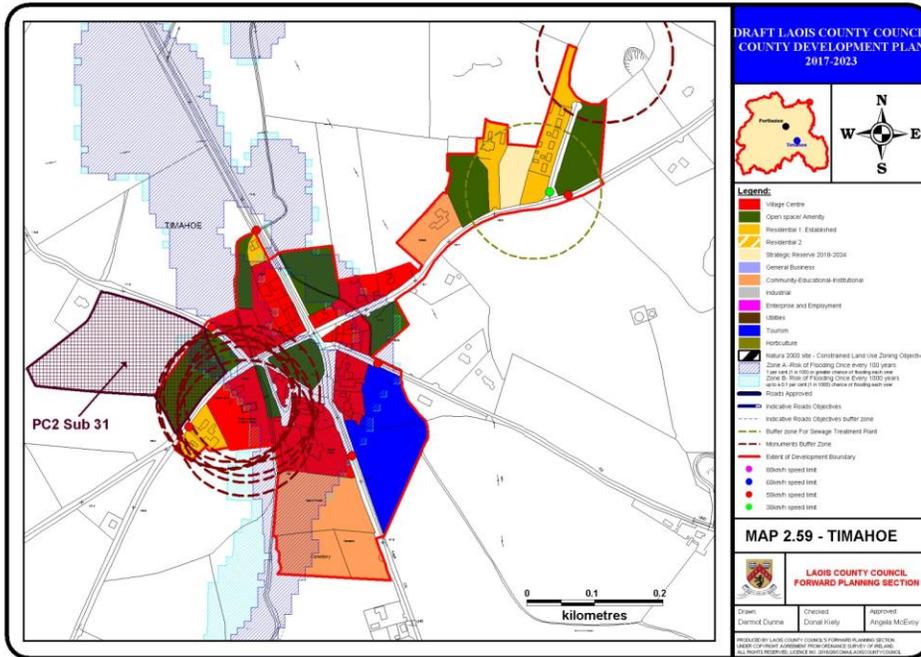


<p><b>SUBMISSION 46</b></p> <p>Katharine Larkin</p>	<p><b>Request the</b> following amendments be made to the draft plan (please refer to the attached Laois County Council map 2.49, annotated)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Areas A and B – it is suggested that the existing village open spaces and recreational facilities at Killeshin village, including the 14 acre GAA/Soccer complex, are included within the Development Boundary and are designated Open Space/Recreation.</li> <li>2) Area C – It is requested that the zoning of this area is changed from residential 1 to Village Centre to facilitate mixed/general business are (in accordance with previous zoning in the 2011-2016 Laois County Council Development Plan and the 2007 Killeshin village plan)</li> <li>3) Area D – It is requested that the zoning of this area is changed from Agricultural to Village centre or Residential 1 Zoning to facilitate planning of residential development (these lands were formerly zoned for primary development in the Laois County Development Plan 2006-2011). This area is immediately adjacent to housing development: road access , storm water services and foul Sewerage runs up to the site boundary. At current rates of demand (approximately 20 houses a year) in Killeshin, this land would be required to be brought forward for planning and development in the latter half of the plan period 2017-2023. Should Laois County Council not wish to provide in full and in advance for this projected demand, designating the lands as Strategic Reserve as an alternative would be an indication that it would be timely and reasonable to commence initial design work on the project.</li> <li>4) It is requested that flood risk designation indicated for Killeshin Village by blue hatching is removed from map no. 249 in accordance with the findings of the Killeshin</li> </ol>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Areas A and B – it is suggested that the existing village open spaces and recreational facilities at Killeshin village, including the 14 acre GAA/Soccer complex, are included within the Development Boundary and are designated Open Space/Recreation.</li> </ol> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The bulk of the lands referred to are outside the proposed village boundary as indicated in the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023. However it is acknowledged that there has been development within the village of Killeshin such as an increase in residential units, new school and some village enterprises within the grounds of the old school. The GAA and Soccer clubs have invested in their grounds which cater for the population of the village and catchment areas.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION –</b></p> <p><b>Zone the Lands incorporating the Soccer / GAA for recreational and open space</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) Area C – It is requested that the zoning of this area is changed from residential 1 to Village Centre to facilitate mixed/general business are (in accordance with previous zoning in the 2011-2016 Laois County Council Development Plan and the 2007 Killeshin village plan)</li> </ol> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The lands proposed as an extension to village centre is a logical progression given the location of the school and to ensure continuity of services throughout the village. It is noted that to date the village of Killeshin has been served off the R430 which highly trafficked strategic regional route with little capacity for future development onto it.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION –</b></p> <p><b>Zone Area C as an extension to the village core area.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Area D – It is requested that the zoning of this area is changed from Agricultural to Village centre or Residential 1 Zoning to facilitate planning of residential development (these lands were formerly zoned for primary development in the Laois County Development Plan 2006-2011). This area is immediately adjacent to housing development: road access, storm water services and foul Sewerage run up to the site boundary. At current rates of demand</li> </ol>
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	<p>Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment, 2016, prepared by IE Consulting Engineers, attached.</p> <p>I attach a copy of the proposed Killeshin zoning map as set out in the Draft LCDP with the proposed changes indicated thereon, and copies of the consecutive zoning maps for Killeshin referred to the above.</p> <p>Also attached is letter of confirmation by IE Consulting that the site Specific Flood Risk Assessment which they carried out at Killeshin, 2016, as appended, is an SSFRA which addresses the above Area D.</p>	<p>(approximately 20 houses a year) in Killeshin, this land would be required to be brought forward for planning and development in the latter half of the plan period 2017-2023. Should Laois County Council not wish to provide in full and in advance for this projected demand, designating the lands as Strategic Reserve as an alternative would be an indication that it would be timely and reasonable to commence initial design work on the project.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The <b>sequential approach</b> in effect favours village centre for reasons of promoting sustainability, urban compactness and ease of serviceability.</p> <p><u>Housing Land Requirement</u></p> <p>Based on the overall housing land requirement for County Laois of 240 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the village of Killeshin. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.</p> <p>It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of County Laois is governed by and shall comply with the target of 240 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION –</p> <p><b>Leave lands marked D as unzoned. No change to plan.</b></p> <p>4) It is requested that flood risk designation indicated for Killeshin Village by blue hatching is removed from map no. 249 in accordance with the findings of the Killeshin Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment, 2016, prepared by IE Consulting Engineers, attached.</p> <p>I attach a copy of the proposed Killeshin zoning map as set out in the Draft LCDP with the proposed changes indicated thereon, and copies of the consecutive zoning maps for Killeshin referred to the above.</p> <p>Also attached is letter of confirmation by IE Consulting that the site Specific Flood Risk Assessment which they carried out at Killeshin, 2016, as appended, is an SSFRA which addresses the above Area D.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p>
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		<p>It is acknowledged that a Site specific flood risk assessment has been carried out by IE Consulting which provides the evidence base for its removal. However</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION –</p> <p>It is an objective of Laois County Council to:</p> <p>Objective FD 01:</p> <p><i>Laois County Council will undertake a review [and amendment if necessary] of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Laois following the publication of the flood mapping which is being produced as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management [CFRAM] Studies by the OPW.</i></p> <p>It is the understanding of Laois County Council that the technical aspect of CFRAM flood mapping has been concluded by the OPW. However an order has not yet been made to bring it into legal effect ADVISING Local Authorities to implement it.</p> <p>Also, it is also important to note that the CFRAM mapping does [will] not include all of the watercourses in County Laois in which case the Council will continue to be guided by the original Strategic Flood Risk Analysis in the exercise of its development management functions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave lands as within Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan</p>
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TIMAHOE



SUBMISSION 31

**Mairin Scully**  
 We Mairin and Tony Scully are submitting an application to have our 8 acre field in Timahoe zoned for Residential development  
 There is road frontage across from the round tower and also road frontage on the Raheenduff Road.

Submission noted.  
 The Planning Authority is opposed to this zoning proposal for the following reasons.

Location

The bulk of the lands referred to are outside the proposed town boundary as indicated in the draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023.

A development here of the scale proposed would be completely at variance with the principle of the sequential approach to the location of new development.

The **sequential approach** in effect favours town centre, edge of centre and inner suburban locations over suburban locations for reasons of promoting sustainability, urban compactness and ease of serviceability. There is a **strong** presumption against the leapfrogging effect which leads to ad-hoc and disjointed development at relatively long distances [such as in this case] from the village centre.

Housing Land Requirement

Based on the overall housing land requirement for County Laois of 240 hectares up to target year 2023, as set out in Chapter 2 “Development Strategy”, there is no need for additional residentially zoned lands in the village. If this land were to be zoned, it would be at the expense of [and not additional to] other more suitably located lands as identified by application of the sequential approach.

It is important to stress that the future population [and by extension the housing land requirement] of County Laois is governed by and shall comply with the target of 240 hectares set by the core strategy of the draft Laois County

		<p>Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p><u>Services</u></p> <p>The site is devoid of adequate service infrastructure including foul drainage facilities.</p> <p><u>Heritage</u></p> <p>The portion of the land holding [c. 30%] zoned “Open Space &amp; Amenity” is also a significant monument buffer zone associated with the Round Tower site across the road.</p> <p><u>Flooding</u></p> <p>A minor portion of the lands in the “Open Space &amp; Amenity” zoning category are in Flood Zone A as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis of the Draft Plan. Residential development is not allowed in Flood Zone A.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>No change to the draft Plan; leave bulk [c. 70%] of lands as unzoned with the remaining portion [c. 30%] closer to the village zoned “Open Space &amp; Amenity”.</p>
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## Part 7: Issues raised on Appendices

### SUBMISSIONS IN RELATION TO APPENDICES TO THE DRAFT PLAN

#### APPENDIX 1 :RPS

<p>SUBMISSION NO. 4 Niamh Morrin,</p>	<p>Makes a request that her property, a two storey shop premises at Shannon Street, Mountrath be removed from the current Record Of Protected Structures. The property is entered under <b><u>RPS reference 278.</u></b></p> <p>The property is vacant, in a poor condition, has been flooded and been broken into on numerous occasions.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p>  <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>The structure does not have a rating from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage [NIAH].</p> <p>The structure's exterior could be protected by way of proposed ACA designation as referenced in Objective OBJ 16, Section 7 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p><i>OBJ 16: Designate Architectural Conservation Areas in Mountmellick, Mountrath, Stradbally and Portarlinton [the latter in conjunction within Offaly County Council] over the Plan period.</i></p> <p><b><i>Recommendation:</i></b></p> <p>Remove from the RPS</p>
<p>SUBMISSION NO. 11 Clodagh &amp; John Wallace c/o Vivian Cummins Architects,</p>	<p>Make a request that their property, a single-storey thatched dwelling house off Main Street, Ballylynan, be removed from the current Record Of Protected Structures. The property is entered under <b><u>RPS reference 309.</u></b></p> <p>The property was badly fire damaged in December 2012 and the thatched roof was completely lost. It is currently vacant and in a derelict condition.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p>

	<p>The applicants have also submitted a planning application under Pl Ref 16/485 to remove the derelict structure from the site and replace it with 2 no. semi-detached dwellings. By letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016, the Planning Authority has sought further information in relation to certain aspects of the planning application.</p>	 <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>The structure does not have a rating from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage [NIAH].</p> <p>Nonetheless and notwithstanding its present derelict state and the loss of the thatched roof, the property is one of a limited number of thatched buildings in County Laois and is capable of being renovated. Thatch is a distinctive feature of the built heritage of this country, and must be protected from further loss.</p> <p>A survey of the thatched houses of Laois, conducted in 2007 and updated in 2010, recorded a total of 61 sites of thatched buildings, including farmhouses, urban dwellings, public houses and ruins.</p> <p>Given that the structure has lost its integrity and character due to fire damage and its current negative impact on the streetscape, it is recommended that the site be removed from the RPS.</p> <p><b><i>Recommendation:</i></b></p> <p>Remove from the RPS</p>
<p>SUBMISSION no. 43</p> <p>Mountmellick Development Association c/o Paddy Buggy,</p>	<p>Makes a request that the MDA building at Irishtown, Mountmellick be removed from the current Record Of Protected Structures. The property is entered under <b><u>RPS reference 703</u></b>.</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p>  <p><i>Response</i></p>

		<p>The structure has been given a regional rating by NIAH.</p> <p>While the original mill exterior retains little of special interest, internal features such as the beams and ironmongery are of special interest.</p> <p>Recommend inclusion in the RPS notwithstanding objection. MDA may seek a declaration as to what constitutes exempted development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Retain in the Record of Protected Structures.</p>
<p>SUBMISSION no. 57 Paddy Nolan,</p>	<p>Makes a request that his property, a two storey terraced dwelling house located at Main Street, Stradbally, be removed from the current Record Of Protected Structures. The property is entered under <b>RPS reference 750.</b></p>	<p>Submission noted.</p>  <p><i>Response</i></p> <p>The structure has been given a local rating by NIAH.</p> <p>Structure's exterior could be protected by way of proposed ACA designation as referenced in Objective OBJ 16, Section 7 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p><i>OBJ 16: Designate Architectural Conservation Areas in Mountmellick, Moutrath, Stradbally and Portarlinton [the latter in conjunction within Offaly County Council] over the Plan period.</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Retain on RPS.</p>

<b>APPENDIX 2 : RETAIL STRATEGY 2017-2023</b>		
<p>SUBMISSION 47  Matthew Kennelly Chairperson</p>	<p>Downtown Portlaoise is a traders association representing over 50 businesses in Portlaoise town. We are run on a voluntary basis, and any money raised through membership is</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p>

<p>Portlaoise</p>	<p>spent on several projects, including seasonal markets and Christmas lights.</p> <p>The implementation of the strategy and objectives in the draft plan has the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of Laois for the period of the plan.</p> <p>Our submission is based on the <b>RETAIL STRATEGY</b>.</p> <p>We are asking that consideration be given to the following comment:</p> <p>5.6 Criteria for the Assessment of Future Retail Development “A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) may be required for retail developments over a particular threshold (100sqm)” should be changed to “Will be required”. This would remove any ambiguity about when a TTA was required. Where there are no issues, the report will be short and therefore arguably not a significant requirement for the developer.</p> <p>We agree with the objectives listed, in particular: X. “Engage with the relevant stakeholders and incentivise to ensure that the environmental attractiveness of town/local centres is enhanced”.</p> <p>We look forward to providing our views on enhancing Portlaoise Town Centre.</p> <p>With regard to the policies, we support them. In particular we welcome Policy 13, improving the public realm of town centres, and we will continue to work with Laois County Council on the development of the Portlaoise Public Realm Strategy. We are actively recruiting new members and are working hard to get more people to participate in the workshops and share their views.</p> <p>Policy 14 “improve the accessibility of town centres” is another welcome policy. A number of our members have been involved in the current discussions on Lyster Square.</p>	<p>The Planning Authority welcomes the input from RGDATA in relation to the draft Plan.</p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having a vibrant retail sector in County Laois so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>The retail sector is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 5.8 <i>Retail Development</i> which states inter alia:</p> <p><i>A Draft Retail Strategy has been prepared to coincide with the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023. The Draft Retail Strategy was carried out by Future Analytics Consulting Ltd., in consultation with Laois County Council, in accordance with provisions set out in the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012). The document is available at Annex 2 of this Plan.</i></p> <p><i>Retail is an important employment sector in Laois. More generally shopping is a lynchpin for the vitality of town and village centres. More than 75% of retail floor space is located in Portlaoise and it is necessary to retain that primacy to reduce leakage to other counties. Proposals for retail development will be considered in the context of the retail hierarchy and sequential approach set out in the Laois Retail Strategy 2017-2023, the quantum of new convenience and comparison floor space identified as appropriate therein, the Retail Planning Guidelines and the policies below.</i></p> <p><i>The Retail Strategy will indicate where the additional retail floor space should be located. In this context, the location and extent of new retail development must have regard to the planning framework for the county and will be assessed against the criteria contained in the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012) and the Development Management Standards contained in Section 8.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will promote greater vitality in town centres through the implementation of a sequential approach to the location of all subsequent retail development. This sequential approach prioritises development within the town centres or core retail areas at the expense of more peripheral edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations, which traditionally have poorer functional and spatial linkages with the core. This approach recognises the importance of core areas as the most suitable locations for higher order fashion</i></p>
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<p>SUBMISSION 47</p> <p>Matthew Kennelly Chairperson Downtown Portlaoise</p>	<p>Downtown Portlaoise is a traders association representing over 50 businesses in Portlaoise town. We are run on a voluntary basis, and any money raised through membership is spent on several projects, including seasonal markets and Christmas lights.</p> <p>The implementation of the strategy and objectives in the draft plan has the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of Laois for the period of the plan.</p> <p>Our submission is based on the <b>RETAIL STRATEGY</b>.</p> <p>We are asking that consideration be given to the following comment:</p> <p>5.6 Criteria for the Assessment of Future Retail Development “A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) may be required for retail developments over a particular threshold (100sqm)” should be changed to “will be required”. This would remove any ambiguity</p>	<p>Submission noted.</p> <p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Council fully recognises the importance of having a vibrant retail sector in Portlaoise and County Laois as a whole so as to facilitate the on-going economic, social and community development of the county.</p> <p>The retail sector is referenced in various statements, policies and objectives throughout the draft Plan particularly in Section 5.8 Retail Development which states inter alia:</p> <p><i>A Draft Retail Strategy has been prepared to coincide with the preparation of the Draft County Development Plan 2017- 2023. The Draft Retail Strategy was carried out by Future Analytics Consulting Ltd., in consultation with Laois County Council, in accordance with provisions set out in the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012). The document is available at Annex 2 of this Plan.</i></p> <p><i>The Retail Strategy will indicate where the additional retail floor space should be located. In this context, the</i></p>

	<p>about when a TTA was required. Where there are no issues, the report will be short and therefore arguably not a significant requirement for the developer.</p> <p>We agree with the objectives listed, in particular: X. “Engage with the relevant stakeholders and incentivise to ensure that the environmental attractiveness of town/local centres is enhanced”.</p> <p>We look forward to providing our views on enhancing Portlaoise Town Centre.</p> <p>With regard to the policies, we support them. In particular we welcome Policy 13, improving the public realm of town centres, and we will continue to work with Laois County Council on the development of the Portlaoise Public Realm Strategy. We are actively recruiting new members and are working hard to get more people to participate in the workshops and share their views.</p> <p>Policy 14 “improve the accessibility of town centres” is another welcome policy. A number of our members have been involved in the current discussions on Lyster Square.</p>	<p><i>location and extent of new retail development must have regard to the planning framework for the county as a whole and will be assessed against the criteria contained in the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012) and the Development Management Standards contained in Section 8.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will promote greater vitality in town centres through the implementation of a sequential approach to the location of all subsequent retail development. This sequential approach prioritises development within the town centres or core retail areas at the expense of more peripheral edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations, which traditionally have poorer functional and spatial linkages with the core. This approach recognises the importance of core areas as the most suitable locations for higher order fashion and comparison goods, as they are easily accessible for the majority of the catchment population and also provide a compact and sustainable critical mass of commercial activity and public amenities, thereby reducing the need to travel.</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Change wording of Section 5.6 from:</p> <p>“A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) may be required for retail developments over a particular threshold (100sqm) as set out in the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003, and the Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2007.”</p> <p>to</p> <p>“If and when deemed necessary by the Planning Authority following consideration of all relevant factors a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) will be required for retail developments over a particular threshold (100sqm), as set out in the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003 and the Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2007.”</p>
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## APPENDIX 2 : WIND STRATEGY 2017-2023

<p>SUBMISSION 62</p> <p>Ray Conroy</p> <p>Laois Wind Energy</p>	<p>As such, we will be commenting on the ‘appendix 5, wind energy strategy’ aspect of the proposed CDP.</p> <p>2. Observation. The fact that the appendix it is called ‘Wind energy Strategy’ is immediately at odds with</p>	<p><b>Wind Energy</b></p> <p>A number of commercial windfarm projects have been both approved and built in the county. These are:</p> <p>1. A commercial wind farm comprising 8 no. turbines, has been approved and developed on a site in the south-east of</p>
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<p>Awareness Group</p>	<p>the objective of the National Renewable Action Plan, which has an obligation to examine and assess all types of renewable energy forms available – Page 3 of appendix states</p> <p>'Ultimately, this document will clarify the Council's policy towards renewable energy developments in the county, form the basis for a more streamlined assessment of planning applications and ultimately assist in the decision making process of the Planning Authority.'</p> <p>In 'CONCEPT, CAPACITY, VALUE' (section 2) of appendix, much is made of various national and EU plans and targets , but we would argue that said plans and programs, whilst been useful as a reference, should in no way be the main drivers in any plan that is been specifically designed for our county, on a stand-alone basis, i.e. A 'COUNTY' development plan.</p> <p>The link to said plans (section 2.2 –National and EU policies' the ESD is highlighted for energy savings, with 5 key objectives given precedence in appendix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out of a multi-annual National Insulation <b>Programme for Economic Recovery</b> to assist homeowners substantially reduce their energy bills,</li> <li>• Support to businesses to increase competitiveness through tax allowances for energy-efficient technologies,</li> <li>• Introduction of an <b>Energy Demand Reduction Target</b>,</li> <li>• Encouragement of public sector towards purchasing only green goods and services as part of target to reduce energy usage in the public sector by 33%,</li> <li>• Development of an electric vehicle deployment strategy to provide for a minimum of 10% of national passenger car and light commercial fleet being electrically powered by 2020.</li> </ul> <p>Mention is made of other renewable energy sources, bio-mass, hydro, CHP, solar, photovoltaic, etc. but NO indication is given that these forms of renewable energy generation have been investigated , either to justify inclusion in plan or exclusion from our</p>	<p>the county between The Swan, Bilboa and Castlecomer. Planning applications <b>Pl. Refs. 04/935 and 09/237</b> refer.</p> <p>2. A commercial wind farm, comprising 4 no. turbines [part of a larger 16 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny] has been approved and developed on a site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 10/129</b> refers.</p> <p>3. A commercial wind farm, comprising 2 no. turbines [part of a larger 8 turbine farm with the other turbines to be placed on lands immediately adjacent in County Kilkenny] has been approved for another site in the south-west of the county between Rathdowney and Templetuohy. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref. 14/139</b> refers.</p> <p>4. A commercial wind farm comprising 18 no. turbines has been approved for a site in the centre of the county in the vicinity of Cullenagh Mountain and mid-way between Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Planning application <b>Pl. Ref.13/268</b> refers.</p> <p>This is a total of 32 no. turbines.with an energy output equivalent of c 82 MW which by industry norms would supply the energy consumption requirements of c. 114,000 no. households which is well in excess of the population of County Laois.</p> <p>Moreover, a large amount of wind energy projects have been approved and developed in adjoining local authority areas on sites which straddle or are in very close proximity to the County Laois border. These include Lisheen and Bruckana wind farms in Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny which comprise a total of 42 no. turbines and adjoin the south-western county boundary near Rathdowney and Errill, Cullahill Mountain wind farm in County Kilkenny which comprises 4 no. turbines and also adjoins the south-western county boundary near Cullahill and Monaincha Bog wind farm which comprises 15 no. turbines and adjoins the western county boundary near Borris-in-Ossory.</p> <p>Therefore in the greater County Laois area, to date 93 no. industrial wind turbines have either been approved and developed [73 no.] or been approved and are pending construction [20 no.]. By any standard, this represents a high degree of exposure to wind energy development notwithstanding the fact that individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p>
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<p>county development plan. Regarding energy reduction, electrical vehicles rollout, how to encourage use of 'green' goods and or services, support for business etc. , beyond a mention in aspirations, the appendix contains no other references as to how the CDP could address these stated 'key objectives' . This is a real oversight, and should be rectified in any finalised draft for a CDP section that is addressing 'renewable energy ' in our county.</p> <p>The statement is made pg. 10 appendix.</p> <p><b>'2.13 Projected Capacity</b> In order to reach EU 2020 renewable energy targets it is assumed that <b>7,800 MW</b> will need to be installed and operational by that year on the island of Ireland [c. 6,500,MW in Ireland and c. 1,300 MW in Northern Ireland). In addition to the large scale wind farms, there is also expected to be circa 4,500 Microgeneration installations [single turbine units] across the island of Ireland over the next number of years with a capacity of approximately 38.5 MW (c. 34MW in Ireland and c. 4.25MW in Northern Ireland).</p> <p>We think it is unreasonable for any public body to base its entire 'renewable policy' on an ASSUMPTION.</p> <p>We would like clarity of the source of these assumptions, and indeed in the mentioned projected capacity, how much, if any of this has been assigned or targeted to our county, and on what basis, if any , these targets are reached.</p> <p>The pages 10-32 of this appendix are exclusively devoted to Wind Energy development potential in county Laois.</p> <p>We welcome the fact that the council has devoted some thought to the issue, however we would demand that a similar level of investigation is given to all other possible forms of renewable energy, as well as energy reduction, targeted education of identified sectors, and business's. This would enhance our county development plan, as well as opening up the sector to more competition , and enhanced transparency , thus not leaving the council or its employee's open to accusations of allowing unfair advantage to one sector over</p>	<p>The Council is legally obliged to take account of National Guidelines in the formulation of Planning Policy. The setback requirements proposed in EN7 are considered to be an inappropriate means of regulation in this area, which directly contravene National Guidelines. The outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. It is anticipated that issues raised in many of the submissions such as noise and shadow flicker will be addressed in the aforesaid Guidelines review. The preparation by the Government of a Renewable Energy Planning Framework for Export is also necessary to inform local policy formulation.</p> <p>In the overall consideration of these matters, account must also be taken of obligations in relation to meeting Renewable Energy targets which apply both nationally and locally.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate in this regard to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of almost the entire county for Wind Energy projects. Having regard to the ongoing review of National Policy, to the submission of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, and the Council's legal obligations to adhere to National Policy, it is recommended that EN7 not be proceeded with pending the finalisation of both the review of the National Guidelines on Wind Energy and the Planning Policy Framework for Renewable Energy Export in accordance with the following:</p> <p><b>Remove</b> Policy EN7 from the Draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice <del>EN7 Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development</del></p> <p><b>Remove</b> Section 6.1 of Appendix 5: Wind Energy Strategy of the draft Plan in order to comply with National Policy and guidelines and ministerial advice.</p> <p><b>6.1 Buffer Zones</b> <del>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</del></p> <p><b>Designation</b></p> <p>The lands outside of the four wind classification areas did not warrant designation because the prevailing wind</p>
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<p>another potentially competing sector.</p> <p>Regarding the section given over exclusively to wind in appendix 5, we have a few observations</p> <p>E. That a 1.5km setback from schools, dwellings, community centres be enforced 'is welcomed as a start. However, we would propose that no fixed measurement be recommended in any proposed changes to guidelines - As is highlighted by the advances in technology mentioned in appendix, we would propose that the wording of proposal be amended to be</p> <p>'ensure a setback distance of a minimum of 10 times the tip height of a proposed wind turbine from any dwelling house, school or other centres where members of a community congregate'</p> <p>F. Remove Ambiguity.</p> <p>Either an area IS 'open for consideration for wind farm development' or it is NOT. In the map supplied in appendix 5, ONLY area's shaded yellow should be included as suitable for consideration, all areas outside of identified zones should be marked and identified as 'NOT been open' for consideration.</p> <p>Allowing that some areas of our county could be considered, we would be of the opinion that to do so would be contrary to proper sustainable development in any case. The council makes reference to the 'SEAI's wind map to identify areas suitable for wind farm development, in so doing it immediately identifies that there is no area of Laois that should be considered for wind farm development. If, as is stated, Ireland has such a wonderful wind resource, it would be going against all best sustainable practices to use other than areas that are eminently suitable for purpose, of which none exist in our County.</p> <p>'Areas deemed eminently suitable for windfarm development and reserved for such purposes. Applies to useable areas that have economically</p>	<p>regime is inadequate to support a commercial wind energy development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p> <p>In view of the fact that the lands outside of the four wind classification areas did not warrant designation [because the prevailing wind regime is considered inadequate to support a commercial wind energy development], map no. 1.6.5 is to be amended to increase the designation of such areas as "Areas not for consideration".</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Section 2 of the Wind Energy Strategy entitled "Context, Capacity, Value" simply provides a contextual background to the development of the wind energy industry at local level.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Reasonable assumptions are an inherent component of any future projections for wind energy output. The assumptions come from industry sources.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Individual counties are not governed by a wind energy output quota system.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Include additional development control standard in Section 6 of the Wind Energy Strategy as follows:</p> <p><b>6.19 Decommissioning of associated infrastructure at end of life.</b></p> <p>A planning application permission for any renewable energy infrastructure [including wind] must be accompanied by a full and complete set of plans and condition on how the site shall be restored to its original condition at end of life. This should be accompanied by a bond, payable by the developer to the planning authority; the sole purpose of this bond shall be to enable the removal of any and all associated infrastructure with the granted development at the end of the developments term of existence.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>In relation to noise threshold, the outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Renewable Energy in general</b></p> <p>By way of <b>objective OBJ1</b> in the Draft Plan, Laois County</p>
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	<p>viable wind speeds, have no designations, are sparsely populated, are in close proximity to a grid connection and have the ability to absorb wind development.</p> <p><b>It is considered that there are no such areas in County Laois.'</b></p> <p><b>G. Decommissioning of associated infrastructure at end of life. (Section 6.2).</b></p> <p>A condition of permission for any renewable energy infrastructure must be accompanied by a full and complete set of plans and condition on how the site shall be restored to its original condition at end of life. This should be accompanied by a bond, payable by the developer, and held in trust by the granting authority; the sole purpose of this bond shall be to enable the removal of any and all associated infrastructure with the granted development at the end of the developments term of existence. This should be fully costed by an independent assessor before any grant is given, and paid by developer into a 'protected' account for the purpose of decommissioning. In the case of 'Wind Farms', the amount shall be enough to not only dismantle the wind turbines, and any associated roadways that were installed to facilitate the development, but must also take into account the decommissioning of the grid connection infrastructure associated with a development . This condition must be applied to all 'time limited' infrastructure that is associated with any renewable energy development. As a starting point we would suggest that the decommissioning bond payable by developer should be at least equal to the development charge applied to any development. This would cover future uncertainty over who would ultimately be responsible for decommissioning of either abandoned or redundant infrastructure, and ultimately save the cost been foisted onto the <b>residents</b> of granting authority, avoid socialising costs whilst enabling the privatisation of profits.</p> <p>H. Noise (section 6.8 of appendix)</p> <p>'Permitted maximum noise levels at noise sensitive residences shall be in compliance with noise specifications of</p>	<p>Council is committed to the preparation of an holistic Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy [LARES] during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan 2017-2023.</p> <p>Looking to the future, in addition to wind energy Laois County Council will explore other potential options in the renewable energy sector, for example solar, bio, hydro, geothermal and landfill gas.</p> <p>These are all referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p> <p>It is estimated that every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li>• Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li>• Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li>• Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li>• Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li>• Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li>• Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from</p>
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	<p>the DoEHLG “Wind Energy Guidelines”. Once commissioned the development will be monitored. In the event that the monitoring shows that any turbine is exceeding its projected noise levels and is having a detrimental noise impact, mitigating measures shall be agreed with the Local Authority.’</p> <p>We would suggest that the wording of above proposal be amended to read</p> <p>‘Permitted maximum noise levels at noise sensitive residences shall be in compliance with noise specifications of the DoEHLG “Wind Energy Guidelines”. Once commissioned the development will be monitored <b>by an independently appointed body</b>. In the event that the monitoring shows that any turbine is exceeding its projected noise levels and is having a detrimental noise impact, <b>the identified turbine shall be turned off until</b> mitigating measures <b>are</b> agreed with , <b>and tested to be satisfactory by</b> the Local Authority.’</p> <p>Finally, we would like to draw to the attention of the council, a recent ruling by the European Court of Justice in relation to including plans for wind farm development in regional/county plans. We would trust that the Laois CDP can be certain that by including a section, specifically dealing with creating conditions that facilitate wind farm development in its area of control, it is in no way disregarding any of the very important points raised by the citizens of Wallonia (an area of Belgium, roughly equal in size to Connaught), and found to be valid by the EJC. An <i>ECJ ruling is immediately applicable to all similar legislations in all the Member States. See link to ruling <a href="http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?language=en&amp;num=C-290/15">http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?language=en&amp;num=C-290/15</a></i></p> <p>‘On October 27, 2016, the European Court of Justice has issued a ruling whereby the Walloon government (Wallonia, Belgium) has acted unlawfully in creating a “norme sectorielle” aimed at considerably facilitating the deployment of wind farms in Wallonia without</p>	<p>agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p>
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	<p>properly informing the general public and asking their opinion on the matter as required by the European directive 2001/48/CE.'</p> <p>The essence of the ruling '<b>Articles 2(a) and 3(2)(a) of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment must be interpreted as meaning that a regulatory order, such as that at issue in the main proceedings, containing various provisions on the installation of wind turbines which must be complied with when administrative consent is granted for the installation and operation of such installations comes within the notion of 'plans and programmes', within the meaning of that directive.</b></p> <p>We trust that Laois County Council by including this plan for wind farm development, and by linking the same plan to National and regional plans within Ireland, is happy that both it, and our national regulators with responsibility for plans and programmes of this nature are acting within the boundaries of all relevant EU and national laws and directives, and can provide evidence of compliance.</p>	
<p>SUBMISSION 74</p> <p>Marc Van Den Bergh and Dave Fingleton</p> <p>On behalf of</p> <p>People Over Wind Save Our Stradbally RTS Substation Action Group Wind Aware Ireland Laois Wind Energy Awareness Group Concerned Residents of</p>	<p><b>Page 3, 1.1</b>                  Replace current text with text from EPA "Ireland's Environment 2016", page 177. Published November 2016.</p> <p>Renewable Energy  <i>Energy derived from sustainable sources such as wind, sunlight, oceans, geothermal, biomass and biofuels is referred to as renewable energy. Ireland has considerable renewable energy resources, only a fraction of which are utilised to address our energy requirements. See <a href="http://www.seai.ie/Renewables/">www.seai.ie/Renewables/</a> for information. The deployment of associated technologies, including wind turbines, solar panels (photovoltaic and thermal), has increased significantly in recent years.</i></p> <p><i>Wind, ocean, solar, hydro and geothermal energy do not produce GHG emissions or emissions of air pollutants such as particulates, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. Use of these renewable resources can have considerable co-benefits for human health and ecosystems. Meeting energy requirements from renewable resources can provide significant economic and employment benefits at local to national scales.</i></p> <p><i>Bioenergy arises from combustion of various</i></p>	<p>Much of this is already referenced in Section 6.6.1 of the Draft Plan which, under the sub-heading of Renewable Energy, considers hydro-energy, bio-energy, solar power, landfill gas, wind energy, geothermal energy and micro-renewable energy.</p> <p>In terms of solar, to date the Council has received planning applications for 3 no. solar energy projects with an energy output equivalent of c. 15 MW while a landowner with a very extensive landbank in the county has made a submission to the Draft Plan pointing to its suitability for future commercial solar energy development.</p> <p>In terms of landfill gas, the Council will actively explore the potential of the former county landfill site at Kyletalesha in this regard.</p> <p>Landfill gas is recovered from the landfill through a series of gas wells that are drilled into the body of waste. The wellheads are connected via a pipe network and gas collection is then carried out by applying low level suction (-150mbar) to the wells.</p>

<p>Spink Swan, Wolfhill and Luggacurran Wind Aware Group</p>	<p><i>materials, including wood, animal wastes, and liquid biofuels such as biodiesels and alcohols. Historically, wood was the largest renewable energy source in Ireland; however, it was largely derived from unsustainable harvesting practices which led to Ireland's forest being steadily reduced so that just 1.5% of the total land area was under forest in the early 20th century (DAFM, 2008).</i></p> <p><i>Sustainable bioenergy has the potential to replace some fossil fuels but a range of support measures will be required to incentivise this switch. Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015<sup>2030</sup> (DCCA, 2015) includes measures to introduce a Renewable Heat Incentive from 2016 to reward each unit of renewable heat produced and used. Unsustainable bioenergy production can result in significant emissions of GHGs, while the biomass combustion process, particularly at a domestic level, and if not adequately regulated, can produce considerable emissions of air pollutants.</i></p> <p><i>Use of solar energy in Ireland has been limited thus far to direct water heating. However, the improvement in efficiency of photovoltaic (PV) technologies and the remarkable decline in their costs mean that there has been an increase in the use of these technologies to provide electrical energy, with systems being installed in public, commercial and private buildings. If the trends in technological development and cost continue then PVs may become a major source of energy for Ireland.</i></p> <p><b>Page 3, 1.1</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>One of Ireland's greatest natural resources is wind. The country has one of the most advantageous wind regimes in Europe suitable for the production of electricity especially during the winter months when energy demand is at its highest. Over the course of the last decade in particular, there has been a growing interest in the development of wind farming to harness this valuable and renewable resource</p> <p>With</p> <p><i>Ireland has a significant wind resource which may in some instances be sufficient to generate electricity. Incorporating wind energy onto the national grid becomes increasingly challenging as the percent of wind increases. It is accepted that incorporating more than 50% wind on an isolated grid without large scale hydro storage, as is the case in Ireland's situation, is particularly challenging to achieve.</i></p> <p><b>Page 3, 1.2</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>In contrast, boosting investment in renewable energy and new technologies has wide-reaching benefits and will play a fundamental part in the</p>	<p>It is estimated that Every tonne of degradable waste will produce about 6m<sup>3</sup> of landfill gas per year for ten years from the time of emplacement or 1 million tonnes of mixed waste will sustain a 1MW utilisation project for 15 years.</p> <p>In addition to electrical power generation, LFG can also be used for combined heat and power (CHP), kiln firing and as a heating or vehicle fuel. LFG is similar to 'natural' or fossil gas and can be fed into the 'natural' gas network.</p> <p>A number of landfill gas projects have already been developed in Ireland including at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunsink Landfill, Dublin-5MW output</li> <li>• Friarstown, Tallaght, County Dublin-1MW</li> <li>• Ballyogan, Leopardstown, County Dublin-2MW</li> <li>• Balleally, Lusk, County Dublin-5MW</li> <li>• Tramore Valley, Cork-2MW</li> <li>• Arthurstown, Kill, County Kildare-4.2MW</li> <li>• Drehid, Allenwood, County Kildare-5.6 MW</li> </ul> <p>Energy from bio-mass offers much potential too. Biomass is defined in the RE Directive as the biodegradable proportion of products, waste and residues from agriculture, forestry [both of which are very important components of the Laois economy] and related industries and the bio-degradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.</p> <p>The anaerobic digestion of biomass can result in two end uses: the generation of heat and/or electricity, or the production of biomethane as a transport fuel or for grid injection.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>In relation to Page 3 – 1.1 Add the following text after 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph of Section 6.6.1</p> <p><b>Wind, solar, hydro and geothermal energy do not produce GHG emissions or emissions of air pollutants such as particulates, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. Use of these renewable resources can have considerable co-benefits for human health and ecosystems. Meeting energy requirements from renewable resources can provide significant economic and employment benefits at local to national scales.</b></p> <p>-----</p> <p>In relation to 3.1.1. No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>In relation to 3.1.2. No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>In relation to 3.1.2. No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p>
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<p>government's strategy for growth and expansion of the green sector.                  With  <i>In contrast, investing in a range of proven, sustainable renewable energy technologies is beneficial and will play a key part in the government's strategy for growth and expansion of the green sector.</i></p> <p><b>Page 3, 1.2</b>                  Replace                  Moreover, the greater use of renewable energy resources as a direct substitute for imported fossil fuels will lead to significant savings on the national fuel bill                  With  <i>Moreover, the greater use of a range of renewable energy sources, of which wind is one, as a partial substitute for imported fossil fuels, in combination with increased energy efficiency, should lead to a reduced national fuel bill. Notwithstanding the significant limitations of incorporating intermittent and unreliable renewable energy onto the grid as identified in section 3.1.1</i></p> <p><b>Page 15</b>                  Ballyprior is missing on table of SACs, even though it is included in the SEA doc.</p> <p><b>Page 16</b>                  Natural Heritage Area (NHA) Stradbally Hill (code 001800) needs to be clarified and pinpointed on the map; it's exact location is unclear, which leads to confusion, for example in previous planning application:  <a href="http://www.laois.ie/media/Media_3830.en.pdf">http://www.laois.ie/media/Media_3830.en.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Chapter 5 page 22-25</b>                  Areas not for consideration -&gt; make the text similar to the map 1.6.5 (see proposal below)</p> <p><b>Page 22</b>                  Replace                  These are areas identified as particularly unsuitable for windfarm development. This category is used for areas which due to their scenic, ecological or tourism values are unable to accommodate development of this type.                  Along with the Slieve Bloom Mountains and Cullahill Mountain, the other key area recommended for inclusion in this category are "The Seven Hills of Laois" a series of hills eg Rock of Dunamaise, Corrigreen Hill that extend in a north-south trajectory between Portlaoise and Stradbally.                  With</p>	<p>Include Ballyprior SAC site code 00256 in Table 8 of Wind Energy Strategy.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Location of Stradbally Hill NHA in Map 8 of Wind Energy Strategy to be clarified.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Chapter 5 – Page 22 -25 - No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 22 - No change to text.                  Page 18 - No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Replace reference to Type 7: Rolling Hills Areas with reference LCT 7: Rolling Hills Areas.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 19 - No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 20 - No change to text.                  Page 23 - No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 24 – The suggested text of <i>It is a policy of the Council to encourage all wind energy developers to engage in preplanning consultation with the Planning Authority in relation to development proposals. <u>If the application is solely for the generation of income with no clear use for the electricity generated locally, the application will be refused.</u></i></p> <p>The legal and financial implications of this suggested policy as underlined are unclear.</p> <p>No change to text. The issues of Pre-planning meetings are dealt with under Section 7.1 of the Wind Energy Strategy.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 24 – remove IWEA</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 25 - No change to text. Figure suggested is arbitrary. No such height reference in the current Wind Energy Guidelines; can be revisited if amended on foot of review of National Guidelines.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 26 - Pending the outcome of the review of the Wind Energy Guidelines, it is not considered appropriate to introduce policies which may unilaterally restrict consideration of Wind Energy projects.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 26 6.4 No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 26 - In relation to noise, the outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p>
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<p><i>These are areas identified as particularly unsuitable for windfarm development. This category is used for areas which due to their scenic, ecological or tourism values are unable to accommodate development of this type. Along with the Slieve Bloom Mountains and Cullahill Mountain, the other key areas in this category are "The Seven Hills of Laois", a series of hills eg Rock of Dunamaise, Corrigeen Hill that extend in a north-south trajectory between Portlaoise and Stradbally, the area between the Windy Gap and Ballyprior (south-east of Stradbally), Fossy Mountains, Cullenagh, and the upland areas around The Swan, Luggacurren and Wolfhill.</i></p> <p><b>Page 18</b></p> <p>Replace The Wind Energy Strategy has identified these upland areas for consideration in terms of future wind energy development. Any such development must be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts. The siting and design of wind energy proposals shall be in accordance with the <i>Planning Guidelines for Wind Energy Development for Planning Authorities [DoEHLG, 2006]</i> and the County Laois Wind Energy Strategy.</p> <p>With <i>The Wind Energy Strategy has identified some of these upland areas for consideration in terms of future wind energy development. Any such development must be carefully sited to minimise negative impacts. The siting and design of wind energy proposals shall have regard to the Planning Guidelines for Wind Energy Development for Planning Authorities [DoEHLG, 2006] and the County Laois Wind Energy Strategy.</i></p> <p><b>LCT 1 will not be considered for any industrial development due to their importance from a tourism and landscape character preservation in Laois.</b></p> <p><b>Page 19</b></p> <p>Repace Type 7 With LCT 7</p> <p><b>Page 19</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>Overall, this is a complex landscape incorporating several elements within a rolling landform. Land cover reflects this complexity with tillage and pasture agriculture, pockets of wetlands and raised</p>	<p>Page 26 – No change to text, the commentary in relation to “quiet areas” is noted.</p> <p>In section 6.9, add the following text at end of 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph “<b>such as European Sites.</b>”</p> <p>-----</p> <p>In section 6.11., add the following text “ <b>groundwater or drinking water</b>”.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 27 , 6.13 Grid Connection</p> <p>The issue of consent in this regard is not a matter for the review of the County Development Plan.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 28 - No change to text.</p> <p>Include an additional development control standard in Section 6 of the Wind Energy Strategy as follows:</p> <p><b>6.19 Decommissioning of associated infrastructure at end of life.</b></p> <p><b>Planning application permission for any renewable energy infrastructure [including wind] must be accompanied by a full and complete set of plans and condition on how the site shall be restored to its original condition at end of life. This should be accompanied by a bond, payable by the developer to the planning authority; the sole purpose of this bond shall be to enable the removal of any and all associated infrastructure with the granted development at the end of the developments term of existence.</b></p> <p>-----</p> <p>Page 30 – 7.3.1. -No change to text.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>6.6.1.4 Page 118 - In relation to noise, the outcome of the ongoing review of the Wind Energy Guidelines 2006 will be available to inform policy in this area and subsequently will be brought forward for formal incorporation into the Plan. No change to text.</p>
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	<p>bog, small coniferous plantations and occasional deciduous copses. Varied enclosures include hedgerows with significant amounts of trees and some post and wire fencing. Settlement is quite frequent though commonly dispersed. Considerable evidence of new one-off house building in the vicinity of settlements.</p> <p>With</p> <p><i>Overall, this is a complex landscape incorporating several elements within a rolling landform. Land cover reflects this complexity with tillage and pasture agriculture, pockets of wetlands and raised bog, small coniferous plantations and occasional deciduous copses. Varied enclosures include hedgerows with significant amounts of trees and some post and wire fencing. Settlement is quite frequent though commonly dispersed. Considerable evidence of new one-off house building in the vicinity of settlements. Because of the above, LCT7 areas are not open for consideration for wind energy development, except single turbines for on-site consumption and where application to the grid is permissible.</i></p> <p><b>page 20</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p><u><i>Views and prospects worthy of preservation</i></u></p> <p>With</p> <p><u><i>Areas with views worthy for consideration will not be open to any visually obtrusive development</i></u></p> <p><b>page 23</b></p> <p>Include</p> <p>Areas open for consideration: please add “only areas in yellow on the Laois Wind Map 1.6.5 are considered areas open for consideration”.</p> <p><b>Page 24 top</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>Applications in these areas will be treated on their merits with the onus on the applicant to demonstrate why the development should be granted permission.</p> <p>With</p> <p><i>Applications in these areas will be treated on their merits with the onus on the applicant to demonstrate</i></p>	
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	<p><i>why the development should be granted permission. It is a policy of the Council to encourage all wind energy developers to engage in preplanning consultation with the Planning Authority in relation to development proposals. <u>If the application is solely for the generation of income with no clear use for the electricity generated locally, the application will be refused.</u></i></p> <p><b>Page 24</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>WES4: Community Involvement and Gain Laois County Council will seek to promote community involvement and require community benefit where possible in proposed windfarm developments.</p> <p>With</p> <p><i>WES4: Community Involvement and Gain Laois County Council will seek to promote community involvement in line with the Aarhus convention, and require community benefit where possible in proposed renewable energy developments. The Council encourages developers to engage with the local community in preplanning stage to investigate the potential for local community <u>benefits or losses</u> that may arise, and/or arrangements for local community investment. <u>If the cost to the community outweighs the benefits the application will be refused.</u></i></p> <p><b>Page 24</b></p> <p>WES3: County Partnership Approach Remove</p> <p>Irish Wind Energy Association as they are a lobby group and should not be included.</p> <p><b>Page 25</b></p> <p>Include</p> <p>WES 8, Additional criteria. 3. The planned wind turbine shall not be higher than 50m.</p> <p><b>Page 26, 6.1</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>Ensure a setback distance of 1.5 kms of wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</p>	
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	<p>With</p> <p><i>Ensure a setback distance of 10 times the tip height of the wind turbines (ground to top of the rotor blade) from centres of human habitation, like schools, residential dwellings, etc. and SAC or NHA site borders in all areas open for consideration for windfarm development.</i></p> <p>Page 26, 6.4</p> <p>Replace</p> <p><i>In order to preserve the spatial, scenic and rural integrity of the areas open to consideration the cumulative effect will be taken into account so as to avoid multiplicity of wind farms in these areas</i></p> <p>With</p> <p><i>In order to preserve the spatial, scenic and rural integrity of the areas open to consideration the cumulative effect will be taken into account so as to avoid multiplicity of industrialisation in these areas</i></p> <p><b>Page 26 Noise</b></p> <p>Add the following text:</p> <p><i>In keeping with the objective of protecting the health and wellbeing of Laois residents, the precautionary principal will be adhered to in relation to noise levels from Industrial Wind Turbines. Permitted maximum night time noise shall be limit of 30db of Lnight outside from wind energy developments, as recommended by the World Health Organisation WHO. Once commissioned, the development will be monitored. In the event that the monitoring shows that any turbine is exceeding its projected noise limits, it will be required to immediately cease operation until mitigating measures are agreed with the local authority, and only begin operating again when the developer has demonstrated compliance with noise limits.</i></p> <p><b>Page 26 Noise</b></p> <p>Add the following text:</p> <p><i>The council will incorporate an LAeq noise measurement index in accordance with noise measurement recommendations of the World Health Organisation "Guidelines for Community Noise" 1999.</i></p> <p><b>Page 26 Noise</b></p>	
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	<p>Add the following text:</p> <p><i>In "Ireland's Environment 2016", published in November 2016, EPA stated that the key messages from a recent report from the EEA (European Environment Agency) on quiet areas in Europe are that noise pollution is having a major adverse impact on human health across Europe, and that protecting those areas that are not yet affected by noise will bring significant health and wellbeing benefits. Source: EEA, 2016a. Mapping Europe's Quiet Areas. EEA, Copenhagen.</i></p> <p><b>Page 26 Environmental Monitoring</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>Environmental monitoring will be required in sites adjacent to sensitive or vulnerable areas.</p> <p>With</p> <p><i>Environmental monitoring will be required in sites adjacent to sensitive or vulnerable areas. Specific monitoring and mitigation measures will be required in areas affecting the life cycle of the Fresh water pearl mussel. A zero silt condition will be placed on all developments within the catchment area of the fresh water pearl mussel.</i></p> <p><b>Page 27, 6.11 Aquifers</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>The developer shall have responsibility to demonstrate that any proposed development will not have any significant impacts upon aquifers.</p> <p>With</p> <p><i>The developer shall have responsibility to demonstrate that any proposed development will not have impacts upon aquifers, groundwater or drinking water.</i></p> <p><b>Page 27, 6.13, Grid Connection</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>While the grid provider is responsible for grid connections, details of likely routes shall be included with the planning application. connections within the wind farm will be laid underground.</p> <p>With</p> <p><i>The grid connection manifestly forms part of any wind farm project and any wind farm development application must include the grid work required to connect the wind farm to the national grid.</i></p>	
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	<p><i>The application for the whole project is required to be accompanied by an environmental impact statement pursuant to Article 16 of Chapter 1 in Part V of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. Any application that is not accompanied by an environmental impact statement for the whole project, as a matter of law, cannot be considered any further.</i></p> <p><i>Wind farm applications need to comply with the requirement of Article 22(2)(g) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 for a planning application made under section 34 to be accompanied, where the applicant is not the legal owner of the land or structure concerned, by "the <u>written</u> consent of the owner to make the application".</i></p> <p><i>For grid connections by way of underground cable under the public road, the developer needs to get written consent from the owner of the land in question. Laois County Council as the road authority has the statutory function to repair and maintain public roads pursuant to section 13 of the Roads Act, 1993. However, that statutory function does not equate to "ownership". The roads could loosely be said to be under the control of Laois County Council insofar as Laois County Council as the road authority has a statutory function in relation to public roads, but they are certainly not within the ownership of Laois County Council. The requirements of Article 22(g) are that where the land is not in the ownership of the applicant, the applicant must submit written consent by the owner.</i></p> <p><i>There are a limited number of roads that are in the ownership of Laois County Council (typically new roads where the lands in question were acquired through Compulsory Purchase order). The vast majority of public roads as defined by the Roads Act, 1993 are in private ownership of the owners of lands adjacent to the road as the folio extends to the center of the road. Consent by means of a wayleave agreement from the owner of the land is required for any planning application for underground cabling works for grid connection along the public road.</i></p> <p><b>Page 28, 6.18</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p>For single turbine development proposals, the development control standards as indicated above will not necessarily apply as such impacts as noise and shadow flicker are generally less significant than in the case of the larger, commercial type windfarm developments.</p> <p>With</p>	
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	<p><i>For single turbine development proposals, the development control standards as indicated above will apply.</i></p> <p><b>Page 28, 6.19</b> Add new paragraph</p> <p>6.19 Decommissioning of wind turbines</p> <p><i>The developer shall submit a decommissioning plan to be agreed with the Planning Authority to ensure the turbines will be removed by the developer at the end of their life time and the site shall be brought back to its original state before the wind development took place, unless an alternative use for the site has been agreed in advance with the Planning Authority.</i></p> <p><i>Prior to works commencement, the developer shall provide a bond to the planning authority for the financing of full project decommissioning works. This will ensure there are sufficient funds available for said purpose should the developer cease business or the infrastructure become obsolete or unprofitable</i></p> <p><b>Page 30, 7.3.1</b></p> <p>Please add that:</p> <p><i>only areas in yellow on the Laois Wind Map 1.6.5 are considered areas open for consideration.</i></p> <p><b>7.4 , page 30</b></p> <p>Please add:</p> <p><i>All applications that will have any impact on the Fresh water pearl mussel habitat will require an EIS.</i></p> <p><b>6.6.1.4 Page 118</b></p> <p>Replace</p> <p><i>The Council will have regard to the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2006) in relation to the siting and development of wind turbines and the information required as part of a planning application.</i></p> <p>With</p> <p><i>The Council will have regard to the Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2006) in relation to the siting and development of wind turbines and the information required as part of a planning application. The council will incorporate an LAeq noise measurement index in</i></p>	
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	accordance with noise measurement recommendations of the World Health Organisation "Guidelines for Community Noise" 1999.	
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## Part 8: Issues raised on SEA(Draft ER), AA (Draft NIR) and Updates Arising

### Response to Submission No 80 from Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
A	<p><b>Nature Conservation</b></p> <p><b>Draft Plan</b> This Department welcomes the strong protection given to the natural heritage by the proposed policies and objectives within the draft Plan.</p>	Noted.	None.
B	<p>Where there are potential impacts mitigatory policies have been used. Such policies use wording such as <i>“subject to appropriate assessment screening compliance with the Habitats Directive and subsequent assessment as required.”</i> While this is at plan stage care needs to be taken that expectations are realistic and it is not found, at project stage, that it may not be possible to progress the project due to effects on the natural heritage. It is noted that in some instances the words <i>“investigate the</i></p>	<p>Noted. Recognition of legal requirements from the various provisions is noted. It is not considered that additional reference to legal requirements is required. With respect to public water projects, Draft Plan provision WS 4 is referred to:</p> <p>“WS4 Work with IW on developing and upgrading the water supply schemes so as to ensure an adequate, resilient, sustainable and economic supply of piped water meeting targets in relation to quality as set out in the IWs WSSP is available for domestic, commercial, industrial, fire safety and other use for the sustainable development of the county in accordance with the settlement structure identified in this Plan. All</p>	None.

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<p><i>feasibility</i>” are also used for some proposed projects, which would be prudent to avoid problems at project stage.</p> <p>With regard to the above, consideration should be given as to whether some of the other objectives and policies also need to be subject to Appropriate Assessment screening etc. such as the public water supply objectives which may result in the abstraction of more water than at present.</p>	<p>Capital projects and programmes associated with the provision of water supply or wastewater and surface water treatment must be assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in order to avoid adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites”.</p>	
C	<p>It is not clear to this Department what exactly Policy NH 15, <i>“Engage with the National Parks and Wildlife Service to ensure Integrated Management Plans are prepared for all Natura sites (or parts thereof) and ensure that plans are fully integrated with the County Development Plan and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations and with special regard to local communities.”</i> actually means. Is the Local Authority proposing to develop such plans and are they seeking the support of this Department?</p>	<p>This provision provides for engagement with the National Parks and Wildlife Service with the objective of inputting into Integrated Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites. It is not intended that the Council will prepare these plans.</p>	None.
D	<p>The Local Authority should note that this Department is currently prioritising the preparation of site specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) defined by a list of attributes and targets and accompanied by supporting documents. Where these are not available for a site it is</p>	Noted.	None.

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<p>recommended to consult the detailed conservation objectives for other sites which have the same qualifying interests. For example, if a site without detailed conservation objectives has otters as a qualifying interest one could refer to the River Barrow and River Nore SAC site specific conservation objectives to see how otters are treated. When the SSCOs and supporting documentation are taken into account they will, in many instances, indicate how a site should be managed.</p>		
E	<p>When considering archaeological sites the issue of bats also needs to be considered such as at the Rock of Dunamase.</p>	<p>Noted. Bats and their key habitats (i.e. breeding sites and resting places), which are strictly protected wherever they occur, whether inside or outside the above sites, are protected under Annex IV (Habitats Directive) species of flora and fauna.</p>	<p>None.</p>
F	<p>It is unclear what type of designation the Natural Heritage objective "OBJ 3" is referring to.</p>	<p>OBJ 3 is being removed</p>	<p>None.</p>
G	<p>Policy BIO<sub>1</sub> in the Natural Heritage section should be amended to include any future national Biodiversity Plan made within the lifetime of the County Development Plan.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>Amended to state same</p>
H	<p>Wildlife Sites in policy BIO<sub>2</sub> needs to be defined.</p>	<p>Noted. Wildlife sites are:                      (a) an area proposed as a natural heritage area and the subject of a notice made under section 16(1) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000,                      (b) an area designated as or proposed to be designated as a natural heritage area by a natural heritage area order made under section 18 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000,                      (c) a nature reserve established or proposed to be established under an</p>	<p>To insert the following footnote into Policy BIO<sub>1</sub>                      The Planning and Development Act 2010 defines a 'wildlife site' as:                      (a) an area proposed as a natural heritage area and the subject of a notice made under section 16(1) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000,                      (b) an area designated as or proposed to be designated as a natural heritage area by a natural heritage area order made under section 18 of the Wildlife</p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
		<p>establishment order made under section 15 (amended by section 26 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976,</p> <p>(d) a nature reserve recognised or proposed to be recognised under a recognition 5 order made under section 16 (amended by section 27 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976, or</p> <p>(e) a refuge for fauna or flora designated 10 or proposed to be designated under a designation order made under section 17 (amended by section 28 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976.</p>	<p>(Amendment) Act 2000,</p> <p>(c) a nature reserve established or proposed to be established under an establishment order made under section 15 (amended by section 26 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976,</p> <p>(d) a nature reserve recognised or proposed to be recognised under a recognition 5 order made under section 16 (amended by section 27 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976, or</p> <p>(e) a refuge for fauna or flora designated 10 or proposed to be designated under a designation order made under section 17 (amended by section 28 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000) of the Wildlife Act 1976.</p>
I	<p>Section 7.12.2 on page 138 refers to the European Union (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997. The Local Authority should note that the current Regulations in force are The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015. The current Wildlife Acts in force are the Wildlife Acts 1976-2012.</p>	Noted.	To replace references as suggested.
J	<p><b>Natura Impact Report</b> The NIR contains the Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening and a shorter section on AA. While conservation objectives are mentioned briefly in section 3.3 there appears to have been no real assessment or discussion of the impact of the objectives and policies using these conservation objectives. Instead the mitigatory policies are referenced.</p>	Noted.	Table 3.4 will be updated to include more detailed evaluation of the sites and assessment of the impact of the objectives and policies.
K	<p><b>SEA Environmental Report</b> This Department welcomes</p>	The source of this indicator will be (see Table 9.1) "Internal monitoring of likely	None.

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	the fact that protected species are included in the Strategic Environmental Objectives but it is unclear from table 10.1 how exactly this will be monitored.	significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)" and "Consultations with the NPWS (at monitoring evaluation – see Section 10.4)."  Furthermore (see footnote 45 in Section 10), "The likely significant effects of development proposals on environmental sensitivities are further determined during the development management process. By documenting this determination (e.g. whether a proposed development will impact upon a Protected Structure or whether a proposed development can be adequately served with water services) while granting permissions, or at a later date, the requirement to monitor the effects of implementing the Plan can be achieved. "	
L	The glossary should include a definition of the term Wildlife Sites.	Noted.	Include a definition of the term Wildlife Sites.
M	Please note that architectural heritage and archaeological observations, if any, will follow in due course.	Noted.	None.

## Response to Submission No 5 from Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
A	<b>SEA, AA and SFRA</b> The SEA is considered to be comprehensive and incorporates the necessary environmental requirements. Figure 3.1 of the Environmental Report clearly shows how the SEA methodology is employed as an iterative process where the Draft Plan and associated SEA, AA and SFRA documents were prepared in an iterative manner and multiple revisions of each document were prepared, each informing subsequent iterations of the	Noted.	None.

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	Draft Plan.		
<b>B</b>	The inclusion of objective FDO 1 and policies FD1-FD5 as part of the DDP to support the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is noted and in particular policy FD2, that requires the management of flood risk to be in accordance with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities. The intention of policy FD1 to ensure that flood risk management is incorporated into the preparation of Local Area Plans is also welcome particularly given the upcoming Local Area Plans to be prepared in the County.	Noted.	None.

### Response to Submission No 48 from Gort Archaeology

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
<b>A</b>	<b>Section 4: The SEA Environmental Report prepared by CAAS Ltd.</b> My submission regarding the SEA Environmental Report is that the Consultants should rectify the name of Minister Humphries Department, as it was changed prior to the report being written.	Noted.	To replace relevant references to the "Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht" with references to the "Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs".
<b>B</b>	Figure 4.14 of the Landscape Category Map in the SEA Environmental Report shows Scenic Views.	Noted.	None.
<b>C</b>	It is unclear whether these Scenic Views are the same views as shown in the photographs in Appendix 6. If these are not the Scenic Views, I would submit that it would be beneficial for the readers understanding of the subject matter, if a selection of these	The scenic views are not related to the photos contained in Appendix 6. They are however related to the views and prospects contained in the Draft Plan. This is explained at Section 4.10.5 of the SEA Environmental Report.	To amend the "Scenic Views" entry on the legend of Figure 4.14 Landscape Category Map as follows: "Scenic Views and Prospects, indicative locations".

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	views, with reference code to the Figure 4.14 for each Scenic view, were included in the Development Plan.		

**Response to Submission No 33 from the Environmental Protection Agency**

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
A	<p>The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) acknowledges your notice, dated 4th August 2016, regarding the preparation of the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 (the Plan) and associated SEA Environmental Report (the SEA ER).</p> <p>A number of key additional considerations are outlined below that should be taken into account in finalising the Plan.</p> <p><b>Specific Comments on the Draft Plan</b></p> <p>We acknowledge and welcome that many of the issues raised in our SEA Scoping submission, dated the 19th November 2015, have been incorporated into the Plan and the SEA ER. While we note the inclusion of 3.4.3 <i>Submissions</i>, within this section, there would be merit in providing a short summary of the submissions received and how the key issues raised have been considered in the Plan and associated SEA.</p> <p>We acknowledge the commitment given under 2.1.4 <i>Core Strategy Alignment with Other Plans and Programmes- Objective OBJ 1</i> to review the Local Area Plans for Portlaoise (2012—2018) and Mountmellick (2012-2018) and to prepare Joint Local Area Plans for Portarlinton (2012-2018) and a Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Urban Area of Carlow/Graiguecullen (2012-2018). The requirements of the</p>	<p>These issues are noted. The final version of the SEA Environmental Report to accompany the adopted Plan will include a summary of submissions, or parts of submissions, made with respect to the SEA throughout the process, including at scoping.</p>	<p>To include the a summary of submissions, or parts of submissions, made with respect to the SEA throughout the process, including at scoping in the final version of the SEA Environmental Report to accompany the adopted Plan.</p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	SEA, Floods, Water Framework and Habitats Directives and associated relevant national regulations and guidelines, in particular, should be taken into account in preparing these LAPs.		
<b>B</b>	We note the inclusion of the various Settlement Maps that accompany the Plan, which highlight the areas at significant risk of flooding within each settlement (where relevant). This should prove useful in helping to inform proper planning and sustainable development in these settlements. The Plan should ensure that zoning and development proposals remain consistent with the requirements of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DEHLG, 2009) and take into account the Shannon CFRAMS Flood Risk Management Plans and associated flood risk maps. Where existing undeveloped zoned lands are identified as being at significant flood risk (Flood Zone A or B), the Plan should consider the possibility of re-zoning or de-zoning these vulnerable lands to a less vulnerable land use, where relevant and appropriate.	The Plan has been subject to an appropriate level of SFRA as per the Flood Risk Management Guidelines and zonings are compliant with these Guidelines.	None.
<b>C</b>	Consideration should be given to including a reference in the Plan to the National Mitigation Plan (which is currently being prepared by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA). This plan seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across a range of sectors (transport, energy, agriculture etc.) in collaboration with other Government Departments including the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS), and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). The Plan should ensure that the relevant aspects of this plan will be incorporated, as relevant and appropriate, on completion. The EPA has recently published climate adaptation guidance „Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guideline 2 Research Report 164“ (EPA,	Provisions in relation to climate change such as a commitment to prepare a Climate Change Adaptation Plan have been integrated into the Plan.  Plan is being amended as follows  <i>The National Mitigation Plan is currently being prepared by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA) and relevant aspects of this plan will be incorporated into Laois County Development Plan as a variation, as relevant and appropriate, on completion of the plan.</i>	

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	2016). This guidance will help to inform the preparation of a Climate Adaptation Strategy for the county.		
D	<p>We note commitments included in the Plan to the preparation/undertaking of a number of policies/strategies/studies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Renewable Energy Policy</li> <li>☑ Climate Adaptation Strategy</li> <li>☑ Tree Preservation and Mapping Study</li> <li>☑ Review of Ecological Mapping</li> <li>☑ Open Space Plan</li> <li>☑ Mapping Public Rights of Way</li> <li>☑ Visual Impact Statement for the Rock of Dunamaise</li> </ul> <p>Consideration should be given to the inclusion of a commitment that these plans/strategies/studies be completed and their recommendations adopted within specified time scales and where feasible within the lifetime of the Plan. This should be on a prioritised basis. This is in the context of future development in the Plan area being informed by these initiatives.</p>	<p>Noted however this is dependent on financial and staff resources.</p>	<p>None.</p>
E	<p>We note <i>Table 7 Specific Objectives for Leisure Facilities in County Laois</i>, and in particular, <i>Objectives 11 Barrow Blueway and 12 Castletown to Durrow Blueway</i> and the inclusion of a number of Blueway/Waterway policies and objectives under <i>8.6.1 Chapter 2 Development Strategy</i>.</p> <p>Given the potential for negative environmental effects associated with developing both of these tourism initiatives, the Plan should consider including a specific policy/objective to ensure these are subject to environmental assessments, where required, in accordance with the EIA and Habitats Directives. The protection of ecological corridors and associated habitats and the management/control of invasive species will be of particular relevance.</p> <p>The Plan and SEA ER should also consider the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects, associated with Blueway development, and establish and</p>	<p>As part of the SEA and Plan preparation process, a number of amendments to emerging Draft Plan provisions were recommended for integration into the Plan. These include the following:</p> <p><b>Blueway/Waterway Development – TM 18</b></p> <p><i>Promote and investigate the feasibility of, subject to compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives, the sustainable development and improvement of facilities and infrastructure supporting water based tourism activities, (including shore side interpretive centres and jetties). Development proposals outside settlement centres will be required to demonstrate a need to locate in the area and will be required to ensure that the ecological integrity and water quality of the river or lake, including lakeshore and riparian habitats, is not adversely affected by the development.</i></p> <p><b>Blueway/Waterway Development –</b></p>	<p>To update the following text in Section 8.6.4 “Chapter 5: Economic Development” of the SEA Environmental Report to indicate that blue and greenways are part of the consideration:</p> <p><i>The development of new and existing walking, cycling and driving routes/trails and the development of linkages between trails in Laois and adjoining counties have the potential to contribute towards a better management of tourism in sensitive areas and thereby benefitting various environmental components including habitats at certain locations (SEOs B1 B2 B3). The reference to protecting environmental quality and landscapes and to sustainable development would contribute towards beneficial effects upon the protection/management of all environmental components</i></p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<p>implement appropriate mitigation measures to avoid significant adverse environmental effects.</p>	<p><b>TM19</b>  <i>Support in principle and investigate the feasibility of, subject to compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives, developing and marketing the development and marketing of the Barrow Blueway by Waterways Ireland and if consented facilitate related commercial opportunities in Vicarstown, Portarlinton, Graiguecullen and Portlaoise as well as opportunities to link the Barrow Blueway with Portarlinton or Portlaoise;</i></p> <p><b>Durrow</b>  <i>Investigate the feasibility, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, of enhancing the Durrow road network as necessary and reserving land and pursuing funding for new orbital/relief routes.</i></p> <p><b>CS13</b>  <i>Contribute towards compliance with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) - and relevant transposing Regulations.</i></p> <p>The SEA considers the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects, associated with Plan provisions including those relating to Blueway development and identifies other Plan provisions, including those detailed above, that will mitigate against effects.</p>	<p><i>(SEOs B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1).</i>  <i>As with other developments and uses, those related to tourism and recreation would present the potential for significant adverse environmental effects to arise with regard to all environmental components (SEOs B1 B2 B3 PHH1 S1 W1 W2 W3 M1 M2 M3 C1 CH1 CH2 L1).</i></p> <p><i>The development of walkways, cycle ways, trails and routes presents a variety of potentially adverse effects (upon environmental components including soil, water, landscape, cultural heritage and emissions to air and waste) that would be likely to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure are often constructed in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams. Potential adverse effects would be mitigated both by measures which have been integrated into the Draft Plan which provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development (see Section 9) and by measures arising from lower tier assessments (including those for the preparation of lower tier strategies, plans or programmes).</i></p>
F	<p>We note the intention in <i>Section 5-Economic Development</i>, to develop Togher as a National Enterprise Park (NEP), as designated in the National Spatial Strategy and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines. The adoption by the Council in April 2010 of a masterplan for the development of the Togher site is also noted. It should be ensured that any development</p>	<p>Noted. Lower tier plans and projects are required to comply with relevant environmental legislation (such as that cited by this part of the submission) and the Draft Plan includes a number of provisions to this effect.</p> <p>The SEA considers the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects, associated with Plan provisions</p>	<p>None at this stage.</p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<p>associated with the Togher NEP is prepared and implemented in accordance with the relevant requirements of the EIA, Habitats, Floods and Water Framework Directives. Consideration should be given to the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects, arising out of multiple developments at Togher and appropriate mitigation measures to avoid significant adverse environmental effects should be established and implemented.</p>	<p>including those relating to Togher and identifies other Plan provisions, including those detailed above, that will mitigate against effects.</p>	
G	<p><b>Specific Comments on the SEA Environmental Report</b> We acknowledge that the Plan (and associated zoning) has been informed by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment carried out, particularly with respect to the appropriate zoning of lands in each of the settlement areas.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>None.</p>
H	<p>In the <i>Non-Technical Summary</i> (NTS), there is merit in summarising the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment findings.</p> <p>Aspects relating to the key Mitigation and Monitoring Measures, such as <i>Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources</i>, may also be useful to include.</p>	<p>Material from the SFRA is already provided in the SEA Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary.</p> <p>Aspects relating to the key Mitigation and Monitoring Measures are already included in Section 5 of the NTS (see Table 5.1)</p>	<p>To provide a more detailed summary of the SFRA findings in the Non-Technical Summary.</p> <p>To cross-reference Table 10.1 from the main Environmental Report by adding the following sentence to Section 5 of NTS:</p> <p><i>For more details relating to the key Mitigation and Monitoring Measures, please refer to Table 10.1 in the main body of the Environmental Report.</i></p>
I	<p>We welcome the inclusion of <i>Section 4.11 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivity Mapping</i> and the accompanying map <i>Figure 4.15 Overlay Mapping of Environmental Sensitivities</i>. The NTS may also benefit by including <i>Figure 4.15</i>.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>Add Figure 4.15 to the NTS.</p>
J	<p>We note the commitment under <i>4.8.1 Water Services</i> to „...work closely with Irish Water to ensure that the provision of water/waste water will not be a limiting factor in terms of targeted growth...“. The Plan should include a strong commitment to protecting and improving water quality within the Plan</p>	<p>Noted – the programme provides for the monitoring of trends in water quality status over time.</p>	<p>None.</p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<p>area, in accordance with the requirements of the WFD, in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, including Irish Water. On-going monitoring of trends in water quality status should also be incorporated into the SEA monitoring programme over the lifetime of the Plan. The EPA has recently launched <a href="http://www.catchments.ie">www.catchments.ie</a>, which promotes a catchment management approach to managing water resources in Ireland and provides detailed information on water quality assessments and trends, and would be a useful resource in reporting on water quality in the Plan area.</p>		
K	<p>In <i>Section 8: Evaluation of Draft Plan Provisions</i>, we acknowledge the Plan objectives relating to various development/upgrade proposals in areas such as Walkways, Cycleways, Blueway/Waterways, Roads, Flood Defences, Schools etc. The Plan should include provisions to ensure that any proposed development including tourism, residential, industrial, energy related or infrastructural, is prepared and implemented in accordance with the relevant requirements of EIA, Habitats, Floods and Water Framework Directives. The Plan and SEA/ER should consider the potential for likely significant effects, including cumulative effects, arising out of multiple developments over the lifetime of the Plan, and establish and implement appropriate mitigation measures to avoid significant adverse environmental effects.</p>	<p>Lower tier plans and projects are required to comply with relevant environmental legislation and the Draft Plan includes a number of provisions to this effect. There are multiple references to the cited legislation in the Plan and its provisions.</p> <p>A number of Plan provisions are noted, for example:</p> <p><b>CS13</b>  <i>Contribute towards compliance with EU Directives - including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (85/337/EEC, as amended) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) - and relevant transposing Regulations.</i></p> <p><b>WS34</b>            Comply with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive 2000;</p>	None.
L	<p>In <i>Table 9.1 Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Draft Plan</i>, there would be merit in including a specific commitment to the protection, and where feasible, the enhancement of undesignated biodiversity within the Plan area.</p>	<p>Various provisions will contribute towards the protection of non-designated biodiversity within the Plan area, including those detailed under "Biodiversity and Ecological Networks".</p>	None.

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
M	<p>We note the inclusion of <i>Table 10.1 – Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources</i>. Where possible, the Plan should include the frequency of monitoring for each of the Strategic Environmental Objectives described. Linking the Plan implementation review and SEA related monitoring and reporting will assist in assessing the contribution of the Plan to protecting environmental sensitivities and vulnerabilities in the Plan area.</p>	<p>Noted. Frequency of monitoring is included in Section 10 of the Environmental Report (See Table 10.1).</p>	<p>None.</p>
N	<p>The intention in <i>Table 10.1 Selected Indicators, Targets and Monitoring Sources</i> to review the Councils Ecological Network Mapping is noted. The nature and extent of the ecological network mapping undertaken to date should be clarified and summarised in the Plan. Consideration should be also given to including a commitment to undertake green infrastructure mapping for relevant areas within the county and ecological/habitat mapping within the various settlements. These commitments would contribute significantly to informing appropriate future zoning and development while at the same time protecting ecological corridors and linkages (and associated biodiversity) at a Plan level. It would also be useful to acknowledge the role of ecosystem services in the Plan area. Promoting community based engagement in citizen science and specific community initiatives would also be useful. This is in the context of their potential contribution to the protection, monitoring and management of environmental resources and sensitivities at a local level, while also supporting sustainable growth of local communities.</p>	<p>The Plan includes various provision in relation to the provisions of green infrastructure.</p>	<p>None.</p>
O	<p>We note that Chapter 10 Monitoring Measures, Section 10.3 Sources states that “<i>Where significant effects - including positive, negative, cumulative and indirect - have the potential to occur upon, for example, entries to the RMP, entries to the RPS or ecological networks as a result of the undertaking of</i></p>	<p>This is provided at Footnote 45:  <i>The likely significant effects of development proposals on environmental sensitivities are further determined during the development management process. By documenting this determination (e.g. whether a proposed development will</i></p>	<p>None.</p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<p><i>individual projects or multiple individual projects such instances should be identified and recorded and should feed into the monitoring evaluation.</i></p> <p>The Plan or SEA or both should outline how this information is to be integrated into the Plan/SEA monitoring programme. In developing the settlements within the plan area, the potential for cumulative effects should also be carefully monitored and mitigated for.</p>	<p><i>impact upon a Protected Structure or whether a proposed development can be adequately served with water services) while granting permissions, or at a later date, the requirement to monitor the effects of implementing the Plan can be achieved.</i></p>	
P	<p>The reference to the National Peatlands Strategy included under <i>Appendix 1- Relationship with Legislation and other Plans and Programmes</i>, is noted. It should be ensured that the relevant aspects of the National Peatlands Strategy are reflected the Plan and that any proposed development takes into account the potential impacts at an appropriate level.</p>	<p>It is not considered necessary to add additional provisions from an SEA or AA perspective</p>	<p>None.</p>
R	<p>The extent of Strategic Reserve lands included under <i>Volume 2-Settlement Plans</i> is noted, particularly in the case of Abbeyleix and Stradbally. The Plan should clarify whether additional lands have been zoned in the Settlement Plans to accommodate these or if these lands had previously been zoned. For all settlement plans, the proper and sustainable development of zoned lands within the Plan area should be ensured and zoning should remain consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines, County Core Strategy, and the requirements of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DEHLG, 2009).</p>	<p>No additional lands have been zoned for strategic reserve in this Draft plan.</p>	<p>None.</p>
S	<p>In relation to <i>Additional Plans/Programmes to consider</i>, the following may also be important to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft National Bioenergy Plan (DCCAE), currently under preparation. SCP151002.2 EPA Submission on the Draft Laois CDP &amp; SEA/ER 2017-2023 12.10.16</li> <li>- Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE), recently commenced</li> </ul>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>Add the following to <i>Additional Plans/Programmes to Appendix I of the SEA Environmental Report</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft National Bioenergy Plan (DCCAE), currently under preparation. SCP151002.2 EPA Submission on the Draft Laois CDP &amp; SEA/ER 2017-2023 12.10.16</li> <li>- Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework</li> </ul>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	- National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) - Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)		(DCCAE), recently commenced - National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) - Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)
T	<b>Future Amendments to the Draft Plan</b> Where amendments to the Plan are proposed, these should be screened for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria as set out in Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations and should be subject to the same method of assessment applied in the “environmental assessment” of the Draft Plan.	Noted. Where there are amendments, these will be screened for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the SEA Regulations.	Noted.
U	<b>SEA Statement- “Information on the Decision”</b> Following adoption of the Plan, an SEA Statement, should summarise the following: ☐ How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan; ☐ How the Environmental Report, submissions, observations and consultations have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan; ☐ The reasons for choosing the Plan adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and, ☐ The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the Plan.	Following adoption of the Plan, an SEA Statement, will be prepared that will summarise issues, including how environmental consideration have been integrated into the Plan.	None.
V	A copy of the SEA Statement with the above information should be sent to any environmental authority consulted during the SEA process.	The SEA Statement will be circulated to environmental authorities alongside LAP documents.	None.

## Response to Submission No 52 from the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
A	<b>Draft Laois CDP 2017-2023: SEA Environmental Report:</b>  <b>GLOSSARY</b> The following terms should be	Noted.	Add the following terms and description in the Glossary of the SEA:  <b>Geodiversity:</b> Geodiversity (and

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<p><b>included in the Glossary of the SEA:</b></p> <p><b>Geodiversity:</b> Geodiversity (and Geological Heritage) refers to the variety of rocks, minerals, natural processes, landforms, fossils and soils that underlie and determine the character of our landscape and environment. Geology is the science that comprises the study of the Earth, the rocks of which it is composed and the processes by which it evolves. It is, in effect, the story of our planet and every rock holds clues to understanding its evolution.</p> <p><b>Natural Heritage:</b> The Heritage Act (1995) defines natural heritage as including flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, inland waterways, heritage gardens and parks.</p>		<p><i>Geological Heritage) refers to the variety of rocks, minerals, natural processes, landforms, fossils and soils that underlie and determine the character of our landscape and environment. Geology is the science that comprises the study of the Earth, the rocks of which it is composed and the processes by which it evolves. It is, in effect, the story of our planet and every rock holds clues to understanding its evolution.</i></p> <p><b>Natural Heritage:</b> <i>The Heritage Act (1995) defines natural heritage as including flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, inland waterways, heritage gardens and parks.</i></p>
B	<p><b>Section 4.5 Soil</b> This Section should be renamed as 'Soil and Geology' as it contains the following sub-section:</p> <p><b>4.5.3 County Geological Sites</b> The text here should be replaced with:</p> <p>The Laois County audit of County Geological Sites (CGS) was conducted in 2016 as an action of the Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017, through a partnership between Geological Survey Ireland, Laois County Council, and the Heritage Council. All geological heritage sites identified by GSI are classified as CGS pending any further NHA designation by NPWS. The inclusion of CGS in the County Development Plan ensures the recognition and appropriate protection of geological heritage. The Geological Survey has identified and documented the following 30 CGS within County Laois:</p> <p><b>[The finalised list of 30 County Geological Sites should replace the existing list of 25 CGS in Section 4.5.3. - FINALISED LIST TO</b></p>	<p>The heading of the sub-section relates to the environmental component "soil", as is specified by the SEA Directive. "Geology" is not referred to by the SEA Directive. Consequently no change to this section is being made to the SEA Environmental Report.</p>	<p>Replace the existing text at sub-section 4.5.3 County Geological Sites with the following:</p> <p><i>The Laois County audit of County Geological Sites (CGS) was conducted in 2016 as an action of the Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017, through a partnership between Geological Survey Ireland, Laois County Council, and the Heritage Council. All geological heritage sites identified by GSI are classified as CGS pending any further NHA designation by NPWS. The inclusion of CGS in the County Development Plan ensures the recognition and appropriate protection of geological heritage. The Geological Survey has identified and documented 30 CGS within County Laois.</i></p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
	<b>FOLLOW]</b>		
C	Figure 4.6 Areas of Geological and Geomorphological Interest This caption should be replaced by 'Groundwater Source Protection Areas', as it is inaccurate.	Noted.	Replace caption under <b>Figure 4.6 Areas of Geological and Geomorphological Interest</b> by 'Groundwater Source Protection Areas'.

## Submission No 74 from People over Wind

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
Page 2 of 24, Paragraph 3	It is a likely scenario that wind energy developments will fully utilise any areas designated as open for development.	LCC	None.
Page 2 of 24, Paragraph 3	<p>According to the requirements of the SEA Directive, the likely significant effects arising from such a likely scenario must be set out in the SEA Environmental Report - however, this information is missing (the secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of permitting wind energy &amp; grid infrastructure in these areas has not been documented in the Environmental Report).</p> <p>The cumulative impact must be considered together with existing/permitted/proposed developments such as the Laois-Kilkenny reinforcement project. We suggest that, at an absolute minimum, noise mapping should be conducted for this aspect of the Wind Energy Strategy before projects can</p>	<p>The SEA Environmental Report considers, inter alia, the full range of likely significant environmental effects arising from implementation of the Plan including secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects (see Section 7 and Section 8 of the Environmental Report). Cumulative effects are considered throughout these sections including at Section 7.3. Taking into account the various mitigation measures that have been integrated into the Plan, residual adverse effects are identified (see Section 7.6 and 8.5). Positive effects are also identified (see Section 7.5).</p> <p>Energy issues are one of various Plan issues considered in the assessment of alternatives (Section 7) and Plan provisions (Section 8). The consideration is commensurate with the strategic nature of the Plan.</p> <p>Plan provisions relating to wind energy are assessed in Section 8 of the Environmental Report and the following text is provided (page 129):</p> <p><b>“Wind</b> <i>Positive Effects: Contribution towards</i></p>	None.

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	<p>rely on the areas designated as open to such projects, i.e. the zoning is effectively 'provisionally open for consideration subject to SEA assessment of the cumulative impacts'.</p>	<p><i>renewable energy and minimisation of greenhouse gases targets</i></p> <p><i>Potential Negative Effects, if unmitigated:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Potential impacts include those associated with construction and operation of the turbines and ancillary facilities and infrastructure (including roads and electrical infrastructure)</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential human health impact: shadow flicker, noise, and impacts arising from bog bursts and landslides</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential impact upon designated and non-designated biodiversity and flora and fauna including birdlife</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential interactions leading to change in structure of soil and geology and changes to drainage</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential impacts on water status during construction - this could interact with drinking water sources and biodiversity</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential impacts upon the context of protected archaeological and architectural heritage - including the context of this heritage - as well as unknown archaeological heritage</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential impacts upon traffic during construction due to transportation of turbine components</i></li> <li>• <i>Changes to the character of areas would be likely to occur however visual impacts would depend on various factors including the size, number and spacing of the turbines, perception of the relevant areas and any cumulative effect arising from multiple wind farms</i></li> </ul> <p><i>It is noted that Objective EN7 includes a requirement for “a setback distance of 1.5 km of Wind turbines from schools, dwellings, community centres and all public roads in all areas open for consideration for wind farm development” which would limit Laois County Council’s ability to contribute towards the National Renewable Energy</i></p>	

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
		<p><i>Action Plan target of 40% of electricity demand to be provided by renewable energy by 2020. In addition, the distance specified is not consistent with Government policy on the issue."</i></p> <p>Any development applying for permission under the Plan would have to comply as relevant and appropriate with the various mitigation measures that have been integrated into the Plan. These include provisions relating to noise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>CS15 Assess proposals for development in terms of, inter alia, potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, the Council shall ensure the introduction of mitigation measures in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.</i></li> <li>• <i>Noise Policies and Objectives</i></li> <li>• <i>ES11 Require an assessment of impact of the developments on noise levels, having regard to the provisions of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Acts 1992 and 2003 and the EPA Noise Regulations 1994 when assessing planning applications;</i></li> <li>• <i>ES12 Ensure that relevant planning applications comply with the provisions of any Noise Action Plan or noise maps relating to the area;</i></li> <li>• <i>ES13 Restrict development proposals causing noise pollution in excess of best practice standards.</i></li> <li>• <i>ES14 Regulate and control activities likely to give rise to excessive noise, other than those activities which</i></li> </ul>	

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
		<p><i>are regulated by the EPA;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>ES15 Ensure new development does not cause an unacceptable increase in noise levels affecting noise sensitive properties. Proposals for new development with the potential to create excessive noise will be required to submit a construction and/or operation management plan to control such emissions;</i></li> <li>• <i>ES16 Require activities likely to give rise to excessive noise to install noise mitigation measures and monitors. The provision of a noise audit may be required where appropriate.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Page 18 Bullet 1</b></p>	<p>“Energy amenities’ - this term appears multiple times in both the SEA Environmental Report and the SEA non-technical summary. The term is considered inappropriate and misleading in the context of this document which uses the phrase ‘amenity’ regularly to indicate the usual understanding of the word i.e. “the quality of being pleasant or agreeable” as defined by the Merriam-Webster online dictionary. All references to ‘Energy amenity / amenities’ should be replaced with ‘energy infrastructure’.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	<p>To replace to word “energy amenity” with “energy infrastructure”.</p>
<p><b>Page 18 Bullet 2</b></p>	<p>It is noted that reference is made on page 129 to ‘promoting’ wind energy development. It would be inappropriate and premature of the council to promote one form of renewable energy above others without having completed an objective analysis and consideration of alternatives in the context of the energy requirements of the county.</p>	<p>Noted , EN3 states <i>Promote and facilitate wind energy development in accordance with Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Wind Energy Development (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2006) and the Wind Energy Strategy which forms part of this Plan, and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria;</i></p> <p>This is in line with Government Policy.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p><b>Page 18</b></p>	<p>It is also noted that</p>	<p>The text referred to by the submission</p>	<p>To update wording in the SEA</p>

Ref	Submission Section	Response	Updates to SEA ER and AA NIR arising, if any
<b>Bullet 3</b>	references to noise emissions are almost always associated with transport corridors throughout the documents. This should be corrected throughout as disturbance from noise & light is not restricted to roads only e.g. windfarms are major infrastructure which can have similar effects. Additional information about Noise and recommended setback distance has been provided in the Appendix.	relates to an example of how species could be disturbed. This example can be expanded upon to address the issue raised.	Environmental Report as follows:  • Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors <b>or from infrastructure and other developments</b> ) and displacement of protected species
<b>Page 18 to Page 20</b>	This table makes a number of recommendations for changes to the text of the SEA Environmental Report	<p>One of the recommended changes relates to noise and is covered above.</p> <p>One of the recommended changes relates to energy amenities and is covered above.</p> <p>A number of the changes relate to the deletion of the words “significant” and/or “likely”. These changes cannot be accommodated as the wording reflects the requirements of assessment provided by the SEA Directive and transposing Regulations.</p> <p>One of the recommendations relates to the following potential effect described under “Population and Human Health” in the SEA Environmental Report: “Potential interactions if effects upon environmental vectors such as water and air are not mitigated”. This wording can be updated to include emission however not in the way suggested as emissions are not an environmental vector.</p> <p>One of the recommendations is relation to EN3 – This is in line with Government Policy.</p>	<p>To update wording in the SEA Environmental Report as follows:</p> <p>Potential interactions if effects <b>(such as those arising from emissions)</b> upon environmental vectors such as water and air are not mitigated</p>

## Appendix A: Summary of Issues Raised at Meetings and Manager's Response and Recommendations

Public consultation meetings were advertised in the local media, on the internet and through the members of the Laois Public Participation Network (PPN) inviting all interested parties to attend public workshops. Notices were also sent to a wide range of community, business and environmental organisations and other stakeholders, inviting them to participate in the consultation process. Public workshops were held in each of the three Municipal Districts of County Laois, as follows:

### **Community Groups from Central Area** (approx 16 people in attendance) meeting with Planning Officials on Abbeyleix Community Centre

Renewable energy, rural housing, design, built heritage, physical and social infrastructure, community planning

### **Community Groups from Western Area** (38 people in attendance) meeting with Planning Officials on. in the Community Centre Castletown

Renewable energy, rural and urban housing, flood risk, landscape, broad band, afforestation, physical and social infrastructure

### **Community Groups from Eastern Area** (14 people in attendance) meeting with Planning Officials on Community Centre Ballylinan

Renewable energy, rural and urban housing, design, economic development, landscape, tourism, broad band, physical and social infrastructure

## Appendix B: List of Submissions Made

<b>SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED</b>		
Submissions No	Name	
1	Tara Horigan	HSA
2	Graham Lennox	Dept of Agriculture
3	Brian Stanley	TD
4	Niamh Morrin	Protected structure Owner
5	Jim Conway	EMRA
6	Jane Roche	DAA
7	Tim Paul	Roadstone Ltd
8	Eoin Phelan	Laois Farm Forestry
9	James Muldowney	Save our Mountain, Cullahill
10	Marie Doyle	An Bord Pleanala
11	Vivian Cummins	For Clodagh and John Wallace Ballylinan (Protected Structure)
12	Ivor O'Loughlin	Portlaoise
13	Hannah Breshears	For Declan O'Loughlin - Zoning Stradbally
14	Michael Drennan	Zoning Ballyroan
15	Andy Dunne	Wind Submission
16	Dermot Dobbyn	Flooding Portlaoise
17	Mary Sweeney	ACA request Ballyroan
18	Sean Mullins	Greenway Development
19	Martin Hyland	Zoning Ballinakill
20	Thames Builders	Zoning Killenard
21	Olwyn James	Irish Water

22	Aisling Phelan	Roads submission
23	Simon Carleton	Gaeltech
24	Ricky Whelan	Irish Wildlife Trust
25	Leslie Colton	For John Quigley – Zoning Ballybrittas
26	The Old Fort Quarter Committee	Portlaoise
27	Jason Redmond	For Superior Framework – Zoning Mountrath
28	Pamela Tynan	For Birdwatch Ireland Laois Branch
29	Gael Gibson	EIRGRID
30	Yvonne Jackson	Failte Ireland
31	Mairin Scully	Zoning Timahoe
32	Paudraig Callanan	Zoning Abbeyleix
33	David Galvin	EPA
34	Carmel Egan	RGDATA
35	Michael Mc Cormack	TII
36	Anne Maria Walsh	Kilkenny County Council
37	Michael G Phelan	Erjkina Blueway
38	Pat Ring	Bord na Mona
39	Rodger Garland	Keep Ireland Open
40	Stella Burke	IWEA
41	Ken Kavanagh	Kildare County Council
42	Mary White	General
43	Paddy Buggy	MDA – Protected Structure
44	Claire Walsh	Element Power
45	John Spain	For W.P and R.O Holdings – Flooding Meelick Portlaoise
46	Katharine Larkin	For Ian McDonald – Zoning Killeshin
47	Matthew Kennelly	Portlaoise
48	Dr Eoin Sullivan	Heritage
49	Ciaran Mc Gill	Coilte
50	Mary Walsh	Durrow Development Forum
51	Colm Ryan	Lightsource – Solar Energy
52	Noelle Carroll	Dept of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
53	Mary White	Abbeyleix Tidy Towns
54	John Bonham	Abbeylix
55	Jerry Lodge	Speed Limits Ballyroan
56	Ian Lumley	An Taisce
57	Paddy Nolan	Protected Strucutre Stradbally
58	Michael G. Phelan	Erkina Blueway
59	Chris Kavanagh	Abbeyleix Park Development
60	Dj Doheny	Zoning Mountrath
61	John M Delany	For Anne and Tom Dormer – Zoning Graiguecullen
62	Ray Conroy	Laois Wind Energy Awareness Group

63	Marc van den Bergh	General Comments
64	Bernard Duff	Carlow County Council
65	Audrey Powell	Flooding Stradbally
66	John & Geraldine Delaney	Flooding Stradbally
67	Niall Walker	Flooding Stradbally
68	Anne Marie Maher	Laois Sports Partnership
69	Ciara Gilgunn	Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government
70	Geraldine Moore	Staff our Libraries
71	Brian Maher	General
72	Kieran Brophy	Wind Submission - Spink
73	Ger Scully	Disability Sports submission
74	Marc Van Den Bergh/ Dave Fingleton	People over Wind
75	Niall Headen	Wind Submission - Spink
76	Veronica Kelly	Dept of Education and Skills
77	Andrew Murray	Offaly County Council
78	Catherine Casey	Laois Heritage Society
79	Brian Maher	General Submission
80	Dept. Of Arts, Heritage, Regional and Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	General Submission on Heritage

## Appendix C: PRESCRIBED BODIES NOTIFIED

No	Prescribed Authority
	Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government
	An Bord Pleanála
	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food,
	Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht,
	Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources,
	Minister for Defence,
	Minister for Education and Skills,
	Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport,
	An Chomhairle Ealaíon,
	The Office of Public Works
	Dublin Airport Authority,
	in the case of a planning authority any part of whose functional area is affected by the DTI Strategy, the Dublin Transportation Office (or any body that replaces that office),
	EirGrid,
	Environmental Protection Agency,
	ESB (Electric Ireland),
	Forfar, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
	Fáilte Ireland,
	Health Service Executive,
	Heritage Council,
	Health and Safety Authority
	Inland Fisheries Ireland,
	National Roads Authority / Transport Infrastructure Ireland
	in the case of a planning authority any part of whose functional area is situated within the functional area of the Shannon Free Airport Development Company Ltd., that Company,
	An Taisce — the National Trust for Ireland,
	any planning authority whose area is contiguous to the area of the planning authority that prepared the draft,
	any local authority, including town councils, and any city and county development board in the area to which the draft relates, and
	➤ <i>Offaly County Council</i>
	➤ <i>Kilkenny County Council</i>
	➤ <i>Tipperary County Council</i>
	➤ <i>Kildare County Council</i>

➤ ***Carlow County Council***

***Laois Community Development Committee***

***Laois Public Participation Network***

The regional authority or regional assembly within whose region the functional area of the planning authority is situated, and any regional authority whose region is contiguous to the region of the first-mentioned authority,

➤ ***Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly***

Irish Water.

## Appendix D: Indicative Timeframe for Review and Making of County Development Plan

Time period	CDP Preparation
Weeks 58-85	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manager reports to Council on submissions (12 weeks) by January 2017</li> <li>1. Members consider report and decide whether to adopt draft plan or to amend it adopt the draft plan or to amend it (12 weeks) Publish amendments (3 weeks)</li> </ol> <p><i>SEA PROCESS</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manager reports to Council on submissions Members consider report and decide whether to</li> <li>2. Environmental Report may have to be modified if material amendments are proposed</li> </ol>
Weeks 85-89	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Public and statutory consultees may make written submissions on material amendment(s) to draft plan during 4-week display period</li> <li>3. Further transboundary consultation [if needed]</li> </ol> <p><i>SEA PROCESS</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public and environmental authorities may make written submissions on any likely significant environmental effects of material amendment(s)</li> </ol>
Weeks 89-99	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manager reports to Council on submissions (4 weeks)</li> <li>2. Members consider report and decide whether to adopt or omit material amendment(s)(6 weeks)</li> </ol> <p><i>SEA PROCESS</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manager reports to Council on submissions received</li> </ol>
Weeks 99-104	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Members adopt draft plan</li> </ol> <p><i>SEA PROCESS</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public is informed of the decision, of the reasons how consultations were taken into account</li> <li>2. Details of proposed monitoring measures published</li> </ol>
Weeks 104-108	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New plan comes into operation</li> </ol> <p><i>SEA PROCESS</i></p> <p>Commencement of monitoring</p>