

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 10TH
OF SEPTEMBER 2024 IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE**

PRESENT: Councillor Pdraig Fleming (Cathaoirleach) In The Chair

Councillors Aisling Moran Tommy Mulligan
James Kelly Marie Tuohy
John King Caroline Dwane Stanley
Aidan Mullins Paddy Bracken
Seamus McDonald John Joe Fennelly
Catherine Fitzgerald Paschal McEvoy
Ollie Clooney Conor Bergin
Barry Walsh Willie Aird
Vivienne Phelan Ben Brennan

IN ATTENDANCE:

Messrs Donal Brennan, Acting Interim Chief Executive, Julie Bergin, A/Director of Finance, Ms. Angela McEvoy, Director of Services, Mr. Paul Mcloughlin, A/Director of Services, Ms. Carmel McNicholl, A/Director of Services, Ms. Irene Delaney, Administrative Officer & Ms. Michelle McCormack, S.O., Mr. David O' Hara, Senior Planner, Mr. Donal Kiely, Senior Executive Planner & Ms. Olive O' Donnell, Executive Planner.

142. Consideration of the Draft Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2024-2030 (LAP) and the report of the Chief Executive on the submissions received during the public consultation period and to make or amend the Draft Plan in accordance with Section 20(3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

DISCLOURE OF INTERESTS Ms. Irene Delaney, A.O., Corporate Affairs outlined the Members statutory obligations pursuant to Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended regarding the Disclosure of Interests.

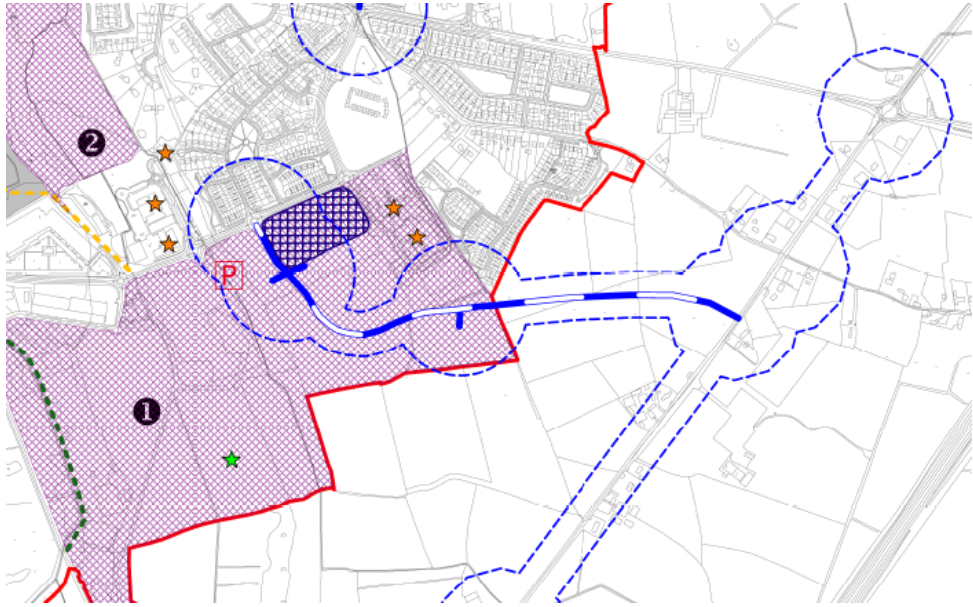
The Members were previously circulated with a copy of the Chief Executive's Report on the Public Consultation on the **Draft Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2024-2030** on the 9th August 2024.

Ms Angela McEvoy DOS advised that 37 submissions were received within the statutory consultation period. A number of in-committee workshops were held with the Members to facilitate consideration of the report in August and September. Mr David O'Hara, Senior Planner took the Elected Members through the Chief Executives Report. The Chief Executive's Report was referred to for the full detailed response and recommendation as appropriate.

The Members were advised that in considering the matters in the Chief Executive's report they should take account of the following:

- 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

The Members were asked to formally consider the Draft Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2024-2030 and the report of the Chief Executives on the submissions received during the public consultation period and to make or amend the Draft Plan in accordance with Section 20(3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

<p>Submission Number: LS-C97-30</p>	<p>Submission Name: Office of the Planning Regulator</p>
<p>Chief Executive Recommendation: <u>Recommendation no. 1-Masterplan Site 3, south-east Portlaoise</u></p>	
<p>This has been amended insofar as the zoned lands outside the current town boundary have been removed. This is indicated in map attached hereunder.</p>	
	
<p><u>Recommendation no. 2-integrated land use and transport planning</u></p>	
<p>Include new text as follows in Section 11: “Transport & Movement”.</p>	
<p>Replace Table 9: Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives in Section 11.5.1 of the Draft LAP with the transport objectives as set out in Section 5 of the draft LTP.</p>	
<p><i>Transport Objective 1</i></p>	<p><i>Develop a multi-modal transport plan to identify interventions that enable a transition to sustainable and low carbon transport modes.</i></p>
<p><i>Transport Objective 2</i></p>	<p><i>Apply the 15-minute town concept, providing excellent links to public transport for when longer journeys are needed and supporting town centre living and working as outlined in Portlaoise 2040.</i></p>
<p><i>Transport Objective 3</i></p>	<p><i>Identify opportunities to ensure more children can travel safely to school by walking and cycling.</i></p>
<p><i>Transport Objective 4</i></p>	<p><i>Maximise the ability of natural environment assets such as River Triogue and Togher Woods to facilitate safe and permeable walking and cycling. Create new green and blue infrastructure.</i></p>

Transport Objective 5	Enhance the vibrancy, accessibility, liveability and safety of Portlaoise through place-making and a Healthy Streets approach, producing a better balance of public space.
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Table 9: Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives

Transport Objective 1	Support the Compact Growth of Portlaoise through the careful integration of land use and transport planning.
Transport Objective 2	Improve and prioritise access to local services by sustainable modes, in particular walking and cycling, with links to public transport for longer journeys.
Transport Objective 3	Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public transport services in Portlaoise.
Transport Objective 4	Maximise the potential of natural environment assets and the design and layout of the built environment to facilitate connectivity and safe and permeable walking and cycling networks.
Transport Objective 5	Enhance the vibrancy, accessibility, liveability and safety of Portlaoise through improved public realm, place-making and a Healthy Streets approach.

Table 9: Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives

Active travel, i.e. walking, wheeling, cycling or scooting, is the most sustainable form of mobility, and can benefit both individuals and society in many different ways.

Land use planning and the design of the built environment are key determinants in someone choosing to cycle, walk or scoot. Where in the past car ownership propelled streets to be designed in a manner that prioritised the movement of cars, recent years have shown a willingness to re-examine the role our streets play as places that support cycling, scooting and walking.

Government investment in Active Travel has increased significantly in recent years, reflecting commitments made to move away from the private car towards more sustainable travel modes, as summarised in the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI), the Climate Action Plan 2023 and the National Sustainable Mobility Policy.

This Local Transport Plan aims to prioritise active travel modes in Portlaoise. Continued investment in active travel modes will be guided by the speed at which they can be achieved, in accordance with prevailing government guidance.

The following are Measures by mode in line with the DMURS User Hierarchy. Recommendations are out for walking, cycling and permeability, followed by Public Transport (bus and rail), the Roads Network, Parking Management, and Supporting Measures.

[This should be read in conjunction with the draft Local Transport Plan].

Measure AT 1: Laois County Council Active Travel Programme

Laois County Council and the NTA will work in collaboration to successfully deliver the following Active Travel schemes by 2028:

- Dublin Road (Grenville Estate to Kilminchy roundabout)
- Stradbally Road (Southern Circular Road to Tyrells Site)
- Beladd Active Travel Scheme
- Triogue Way
- Father Brown Avenue Active Travel Scheme
- R445 Mountrath Road - Rapid Deployment Scheme
- Borris Road Scheme
- Safe Routes to School – Maryborough National School
- Southern Circular Road Active Travel Scheme

Measure JN 1: Development Management of Junctions

Laos County Council will adhere to the design standards and principles for junctions identified in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, the Cycle Design Manual, and TII Publications, including the Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads, and DMURS Advice Note 6: Priority Junction Tightening Measures to ensure pedestrian and cyclist priority at any new junctions in Portlaoise.

LCC will adhere to DoECLG’s Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities and limit the number of new entrances or junctions on national roads, thereby preserving their strategic transport function.

LTP Active Travel proposals that interact with the N80 and N77 will do so in a manner that prioritises safe active travel routes while maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities. Detailed design and implementation of such proposals shall be in compliance with TII Publications and proceed subject to the agreement of TII.

Laos County Council will adhere to DoECLG’s Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities and avoid the creation of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses to national roads where a speed limit greater than 50km/h applies ~~limit the number of new entrances or junctions on national roads,~~ thereby ~~preserving~~ maintaining their strategic transport function. LCC will also adhere to the requirements outlined in Section 2.7 of DoECLG’s Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities.

LTP Active Travel proposals that interact with the National Roads Network, including the N80 and N77, ~~N80 and N77~~ will do so in a manner that prioritises safe active travel routes while maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Measure JN 2: Evidence-Based Approach to Junction Improvements

The LTP has identified a series of junctions across the Study Area that require an upgrade to their design to align with DMURS standards and TII Publications, as appropriate. LCC, with input from key stakeholders TII and NTA, will review these junctions and upgrade them in the short- to medium-term following the LTP’s order of priority.

Junctions along roads with a history of dangerous collisions which will require upgrades include:

- Mountmellick Rd / Coote St (N80)
- Dublin Road (R445)
- Main Street
- James Fintan Lalor Ave (N80) & surrounds
- Timahoe Roundabout (James Fintan Lalor N80/Well Rd R426)
- Stradbally Road

These junctions will be upgraded as part of individual projects such as Safe Routes to School, cycling infrastructure projects or a standalone junction improvement package.

Measure JN 3: Placemaking at Junctions and Roundabouts

The Portlaoise LTP recognises the important placemaking function that junctions can serve. Laois County Council will take a multi-disciplinary approach, as recommended in DMURS, to ensure that the place making function of junctions is enhanced as they are upgraded, specifically Market Square. This includes seating opportunities, public art or landscaping.

Measure WK 1: Portlaoise 2040 & the Town Centre Pedestrian Network

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, including the NTA, TII, National Disability Association (NDA), and local groups to improve the safety, accessibility, and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment of Portlaoise Town Centre through the delivery of the ambitious revitalisation programme, as set out in Portlaoise 2040.

This will include the implementation of the Strategy Objectives and Policies under 'A Walkable Town Centre' as part of Portlaoise 2040 and beyond, and the implementation of new speed limits of 30km/h.

Measure WK 2: Street Clutter Audit

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to undertake a Street Clutter Audit, as recommended in DMURS, in the short-term across the Study Area. The audit will inform a programme to remove unnecessary street furniture that clutters the public realm and makes pedestrian wayfinding more difficult.

Measure WK 3: Portlaoise 2040 & Pedestrianisation

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, including key stakeholders TII and NTA, to deliver the following, as set out in Portlaoise 2040:

- Support the development of key public areas as pedestrian priority areas, and the eventual pedestrianisation of Lyster Sq. to connect with the retail areas south of James Fintan Lalor Avenue.

- Support the pedestrianisation of Lower Sq. and Main St. during key hours to provide additional public space and a suitable setting for the new county library.
- Investigate the pedestrianisation Bull Lane and enhancement of other laneways in Portlaoise town centre.
- Improvement of pedestrian desire lines.
- Improvement of pedestrian crossing facilities.

Measure WK 4: Portlaoise Pedestrian Network

- Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, including key stakeholders TII and NTA, to improve the safety, attractiveness, liveability, and active travel function provided by Portlaoise's Arterial, Link & Local Streets. This will include:
 - Upgrading and retrofitting of existing footpaths
 - Providing new footpaths where necessary
 - Implementing new speed limits and traffic calming measures
 - Retrofitting cul-de-sac development and implementing filtered permeability measures
 - Implementing public realm improvements, such as soft landscaping, tree planting and filtered permeability measures

Measure WK 5: Wayfinding

Laois County Council will develop a consistent wayfinding system in Portlaoise along the lines of the Legible London system, in order to improve the legibility of the town and raise the profile of key destinations.

Measure WK 6: Public Art

Laois County Council will work with local community groups / artists to identify and assess the possibility of introducing colour and street art to the links between Main Street / Lower Square and Lyster Square and other areas around Portlaoise.

This will be carefully considered by LCC as buildings may be Protected Structures and / or within an Architectural Conservation Area.

Measure WK 7: Walkability Audit

Laois County Council will continue regular walkability audits with a variety of stakeholders, including Age Friendly Ireland, Wheelchair Association and Vision Ireland. These will be undertaken at locations where demand for pedestrian activity is high, and where deficiencies in the network have been identified. This is to include continuous monitoring post-completion.

Measure WK 8: Accessibility

Laois County Council will ensure that all streetscape and public realm improvements follow the principles of Universal Design and will ensure that active travel and public realm schemes are fully accessible for all through the following actions:

- Creation of a stakeholder group with members of Age-Friendly Ireland, Portlaoise Town Team, disability groups, youth groups, Green-Schools and other stakeholder groups to improve the safety, accessibility, and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment of Portlaoise.
- Design all active travel and public realm projects in line with the DMURS and other national guidance documents.

Measure WK 9: Safety in Public Spaces

The Council will also consider the following elements to improve the safety of public space and ensure that all members of the community feel safe:

- Good quality lighting
- Active ground floor frontage
- Legibility and wayfinding – provide clear sightlines through a space
- Co-design with local community groups where possible

Measure CY 1: Portlaoise Cycle Network

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with the NTA, TII and other stakeholders to deliver the Portlaoise Cycle Network by 2042. This includes routes outlined in the NTA's CycleConnects Plan and TII's National Cycle Network and additional local improvements identified throughout the course of this LTP.

Short-medium term:

- Development and completion of the Primary and Secondary Cycle Networks
- Further implementation of the network in line with new development opportunities and traffic calming.

Long term:

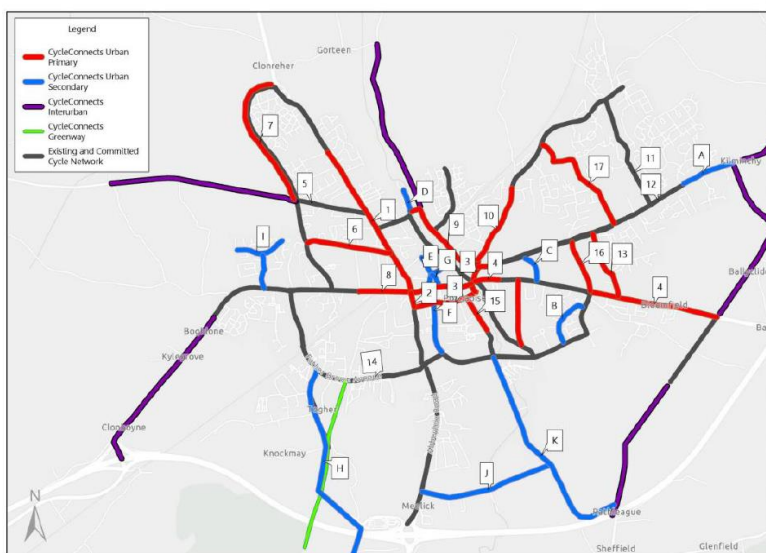
- Completion of Inter-urban and Greenway Cycle Networks
- Ongoing maintenance and improvement of cycle infrastructure
- Completion of all Active Travel Schemes

Measure CY 2: CycleConnects

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with the NTA, TII and other stakeholders to deliver the CycleConnects plans for Portlaoise by 2042, including the greenway projects. Based on existing projects and prioritising delivering projects that support Safe Routes to School, it is expected that the following schemes will be completed by 2028 subject to availability of funding, compliance with NTA Project Approval Guidelines and all necessary environmental and planning processes:

- Ballyfin Road (5 on map)
- Harpur's Lane (6 on map)
- Mountrath Rd/ Grattan Street (8 on map)

- **Borris Road (10 on map)**
- **Collier's Lane (17 on map)**
- **Father Browne Avenue (14 on map)**
- **New Road/ Well Road (15 on map)**
- **Beladd Cycle Scheme (16 on map)**



Combined with the existing cycle network and projects that Laois County Council has committed to deliver, CycleConnects proposals produce a safe, coherent, and direct network.

Measure CY 3: National Cycle Network

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with TII, the NTA and other stakeholders to deliver the National Cycle Network plans for Portlaoise by 2042. Laois County Council will work in collaboration with TII and the NTA to create connections between the urban cycling network in Portlaoise and the inter-urban network in the National Cycle Network.

Measure CY 4: Quietways

Working in conjunction with the NTA and other stakeholders, Laois County Council will identify a network of Quietways in the short to medium-term. These Quietways will improve pedestrian and cyclist accessibility throughout Portlaoise and help deliver the network of primary routes outlined in Cycle Connects. The LTP identifies options for a Quietway (pictured to the right) as an alternative route to the Urban Primary route proposed in CycleConnects along Mountmellick Road/Coote Street (N80).

Measure CY 5: Cycle Parking

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to carry out the following:

- Continue to support an uplift in both high-quality short-stay and long-stay public cycle parking throughout Portlaoise Town Centre and key destinations such as Lyster Square, People's Park, Laois Shopping Centre, Lismard Business Park, Clonminam Business Park, Kylekiproe Industrial Estate, Portlaoise Retail Park, and the Railway Station, which is envisaged to play a significant role as a multi-modal interchange.

- Examine the feasibility of providing dedicated, high-quality cycle (e-scooter) parking hubs in key destinations such as the town centre and railway station.
- Ensure the provision of off-street, accessible cycle parking facilities as part of any significant new development.
- Consider innovative practices such as on-street bike hangers and the use of indoor vacant spaces for dedicated public off-street bike parking hubs that are secure, sheltered and easily accessed.
- Consider the colocation of cycle parking facilities with car clubs, bus stops and other forms of sustainable transport infrastructure through the development of Mobility Points.
- Develop a policy for the parking of shared bike service bicycles in advance of opening a scheme in Portlaoise.

Measure PY 1: Permeability in Residential Areas

Laois County Council will work with the NTA and other stakeholders to ensure that filtered permeability is secured in all new residential estates, providing safe and direct access to commercial developments and where possible, schools.

Laois County Council will aim to retrofit connectivity where possible.

Measure PY 2: Permeability and the New Portlaoise Town Bus Service

Laois County Council will work with the NTA and other Stakeholders to ensure that the users of the town bus service enjoy accessible and direct access to the bus service. This will include the use of filtered permeability measures to open up impermeable, cul-de-sac layouts and walled boundaries which are preventing the ease of movement between residential areas and future bus stop locations.

See also Measure PT 1 for the short, medium and long-term recommendations for the New Portlaoise Town Bus Service.

Measure PY3: Permeability to Schools – Supplementary Measures

Laois County Council will work with the NTA, local schools and other stakeholders to ensure that filtered permeability is secured, providing safe and direct access to schools from surrounding areas, including:

- Supporting Safe Routes to School schemes
- Developing and completing the Primary and Secondary Cycle Networks enabling children and their parents or guardians to cycle safely to school.

Measure PY4: Filtered Permeability

It is an objective of Laois County Council to create a fully permeable environment for pedestrians and cyclists across Portlaoise. Laois County Council will ensure that:

- Existing informal permeability points are formalized where possible.
- Existing formal permeability points are upgraded and retrofitted where possible.
- Filtered permeability is secured in all new residential estates, commercial developments and where possible, schools.

The safety and attractiveness of these connections for all ages and abilities will be an important consideration, including lighting, sightlines and passive surveillance.

Measure PT 1: New Town Bus Network

Laois County Council will work with the Service Planning Team at the NTA, Bus operators, landowners, TII and other relevant stakeholders on the following:

Short-term:

- Deliver the New Town Bus Service for Portlaoise.

Medium-term:

- Examine the potential for an additional route (P3 Route) along the Southern Circular Road to enable more children to take the bus to school.

Long-term:

- Examine the potential for the town bus network to serve the J17 National Enterprise Park
- Investigate the reuse of the Togher Railway Line for sustainable transport
- Promote the use of public transport in the J17 Enterprise Park

Measure PT 2: Regional Bus Network

Laois County Council will work with the Service Planning Team at the NTA, Bus operators, landowners, and other relevant stakeholders to maintain and enhance regional bus networks in line with the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan and will make further improvements to routes where demand is identified.

Measure PT 3: Local Link Services

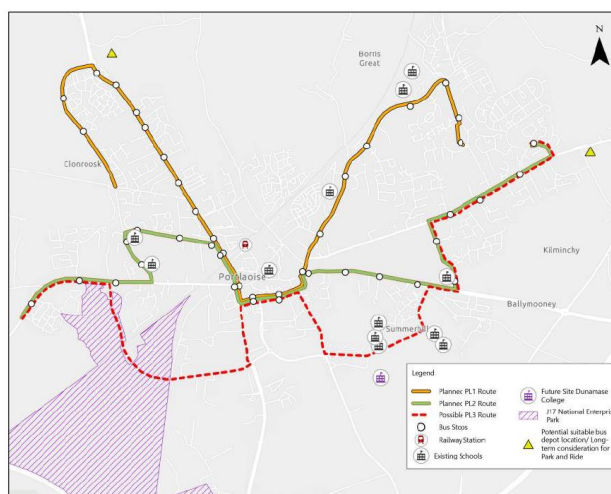
Laois County Council will work with the Service Planning Team at the NTA, Bus operators, and other relevant stakeholders to maintain and enhance Local Link services where required.

Measure PT 4: Bus Stops and Shelters

Laois County Council will work with the NTA to ensure that each bus shelter that accompanies the new Town Bus Service will be consistent and legible and will include the following:

- Real Time Information (RTI)
- Standardised bus stop sign, pole, and information panel
- Accessible Kerbing
- Seating and Lighting
- Landscaping where applicable

Laos County Council will ensure that permeability is secured between all existing and proposed bus stops with residential areas, schools, and key attractors.



The Proposed Town Bus Network in Portlaoise

Measure PT 5: Portlaoise Railway Station Facilities

Laos County Council will work with the NTA and Irish Rail, to improve the facilities available in Portlaoise Railway Station.

Measure PT 6: Pedestrian and Cycling Accessibility at Portlaoise Railway Station

Laos County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, such as Irish Rail and the NTA, to improve the accessibility to Portlaoise Railway Station. At a minimum this will include:

- **Increasing permeability to the Railway Station and Triogue Way from Beechfield and Woodlawn Villas.**
- **Improving the cycling infrastructure to the standards set out in CycleConnects for Urban Secondary Routes.**
- **Improving the pedestrian environment on Station Rd, Railway St, Ridge Rd & the entrance to the station on Coote St.**

Measure PT 7: Multi-Modal Interchange Hub

Laos County Council will work with the NTA, Irish Rail and relevant stakeholders to progress Portlaoise Railway Station as a high-quality Multi-Modal Interchange Hub to enable seamless transfer between different modes and services.

This will include the provision of a bus stop outside the station (on Coote Street), a bike hire scheme, and bike lockers and parking.

Objective PM 1: Parking Management Strategy

Laois County Council will develop a Parking Management Strategy that will manage the provision of car parking spaces in Portlaoise in accordance with the following broad principles:

- Reallocate road space to establish a hierarchy of parking need for on-street parking that will support ambitious public realm and civic space proposals in Portlaoise 2040 and the Portlaoise LTP, taking care to ensure the continued provision of blue badge parking, delivery bays and a limited supply of short-stay car parking and discourage long-stay commuter parking.
- Maximise the efficiency of the existing car parking spaces, so that one space can serve multiple purposes, for example as a loading bay, taxi rank or public seating.
- Ensure that long-stay parking will largely take the form of consolidated off-street car parking on the periphery of places of high pedestrian activity to curtail movement of unproductive vehicular through traffic and elimination of search traffic movements.
- Manage the availability and cost of public car parking in the town centre core to encourage a higher turnover of spaces, aiming for an occupancy rate of 85% that represents a good use of the available land and reduces the amount of driving searching for parking.
- Consolidate some existing parking to the periphery of the town centre core at locations that are well connected by good quality walking, cycling and public transport networks.

Objective PM 2: Parking Management Policy

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to implement maximum parking standards for new development and allow low or no private vehicle developments as per the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Objective PM 3: Park and Stride

Laois County Council and relevant stakeholders will:

- Assess the capacity of private car parks to serve as Park and Stride locations to the town centre and the Summerhill School Campus.
- Promote the use of Park and Stride locations for journeys into Portlaoise Town Centre and the Summerhill School Campus through management of parking in the town centre and at school locations.

Objective PM 4: Park and Ride

Laois County Council will:

- examine the feasibility for Park and Ride facilities in Portlaoise in conjunction with the NTA, TII and other relevant stakeholders. ~~Engage with the NTA, TII and relevant Work with the relevant stakeholders, including the NTA, to investigate the possibility of co-locating Park and Ride facilities with bus depots; and, if possible, progress development to deliver multi-purpose Park and Ride facilities in conjunction with the town bus service for Portlaoise~~

- Include EV charging facilities for cars and buses and PV generation in any planned Park and Rides.
- Promote the use of Park and Ride facilities through appropriate pricing of the Park and Ride and town centre parking and giving priority to public transport so that Park and Ride users can experience a reliable service.

Measure PM 5: Mobility Hubs

Laois County Council will undertake an assessment to determine the feasibility of Mobility Hubs, in terms of number of hubs, car parking capacity per hub, operations, management, funding, complementary uses and facilities, etc.

Laois County Council will consider Mobility Hubs in future development and forward planning.

Measure PM 6: Mobility Points

Laois County Council will identify locations within existing on-street parking to provide for mobility points (car club vehicle, hire bike scheme).

Measure RN 1: Principles of Road Development

Laois County Council will work with NTA, TII and all other relevant stakeholders to:

- Balance the needs of road users so the roads in Portlaoise can perform their national, strategic transport function while promoting vibrancy, accessibility and lower emissions.
- Optimise the existing road and street network within Portlaoise to encourage more people to walk, cycle or take public transport for their everyday journeys.

Measure RN 2: National Roads Requirements

Laois County Council will preserve the strategic function and safety of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and in compliance with TII Publications (Standards and Technical) and subject to the agreement of TII.

In particular, Laois County Council will:

- Continue to contain development within the existing built-up footprint, thereby minimising sprawl and reducing the distances of journeys and reliance on private vehicles and preserve the strategic function and safety of the M7, N80 and N77.
- Limit development with access onto the National Road network, preserving to maintain its safety and strategic transport function.
- Ensure that any LTP proposals that interact with the M7, N80 and N77 comply with TII Publications.

Measure RN 3: National Roads and Sustainable Travel

~~Laois County Council will work with TII and NTA and all other relevant stakeholders to incorporate active travel on the National Road Network by:
Working with the relevant stakeholders to progress plans in Portlaoise 2040 to redesign James Fintan Lalor Avenue (N80).
Working with relevant stakeholders to redesign junctions, roundabouts & crossings on the National Road Network to better facilitate pedestrians and cyclists, using guidance in DN-GEO-03084 to apply treatments described in DMURS and DN-GEO-03060 regarding junctions.
Progressing plans to provide segregated cycle lanes for the entirety of the National Road Network within Portlaoise or, when carriageway widths do not allow, provide alternate safe, coherent, direct, accessible, comfortable and attractive cycle connectivity.
Liaising with the NTA and TII to design bus stops for the new town bus service.
Working with relevant stakeholders to provide gateway treatments at the entrance to Portlaoise from the National Road Network to mark the entrance to the urban environment."~~

Objective RN 4: New Local Roads

Laois County Council, the NTA and TII will:

- Design all new roads to be consistent with the Road Design Principles 1-7 outlined above.
- Subject all new road schemes to stringent feasibility and environmental assessment processes.
- Consider and design new roads to ensure consistency between their function, form and layout.
- Design new roads with appropriate urban speed limits and full provision for walking, cycling, and future public transportation use if required.

Objective RN 5: Regional Roads and Sustainable Travel

Laois County Council will promote the use of the Regional Road Network for sustainable transport by:

- Working with relevant stakeholders to provide gateway treatments at the entrance to Portlaoise on Dublin Road (R445), Mountrath Road (R445) and Rathleague Road (R425) to mark the entrance to the urban environment and the start of the 50km/h speed limit zone.
- Working with relevant stakeholders to redesign junctions, roundabouts, and crossings on the Regional Road Network to better facilitate pedestrians and cyclists.
- Progressing plans to provide safe infrastructure for active travel for the entirety of the Regional Road Network within Portlaoise.
- Liaising with the NTA to design bus stops on the Regional Road Network to serve the new Portlaoise town bus service.

Objective RN 6: Local Roads and Sustainable Travel

Laois County Council will prioritise the use of the Local Road Network (LRN) for sustainable transport by:

- Providing gateway treatments at the entrance to Portlaoise on Ridge Road at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Rathevan Road where residential development starts to mark the entrance to the urban environment and the start of the 50km/h speed limit zone. Working with relevant stakeholders to redesign junctions, roundabouts, and crossings on the Local Road Network to better facilitate pedestrians and cyclists as discussed in Chapter 10 of LTP– Junctions.
- Progressing plans to provide segregated cycle lanes along select Local Roads—Harpur’s Lane, Ballyfin Road, Borris Road—prioritising access to primary and secondary schools as discussed in Chapter 12 of LTP– Cycling.
- Liaising with the NTA and TII to design bus stops to serve the new Portlaoise town bus service.
- Providing SUDS and Green Infrastructure along the Local Road Network.
- Ensuring that new developments connect to the existing street grid at numerous points, providing permeability and avoiding cul de sacs.

Objective RN 7: Town Centre Streets

Laois County Council and relevant stakeholders will:

- Redesign Market Square roundabout into a signalised junction with the reallocation of space to serve the public realm (as recommended in Chapter 10 of LTP– Junctions).
- Pedestrianise Lower Main Street, providing a public area outside the new county library and removing Main Street’s function as a through route.
- Reverse the existing one-way system on Church Street, Church Avenue, Railway Street and Bridge Street.
- Reconfigure Lyster Square.
- Improve the laneways to enhance their security and attractiveness.
- Complete plans to introduce one-way flow for motor traffic on Station Road and construct a cycle lane.

Objective RN 8: Speed Limit Review

Laois County Council will:

- Liaise with the Department of Transport to advance a review of all speed limits within Portlaoise and, where suggested, lower the existing speed limit.
- Prioritise the town centre, streets in front of schools and local streets for the delivery of 30km/h speed zones.
- Carry out a design review of streets on which the speed limit has been lowered to ensure that the design speed matches the posted speed limit.

Measure SM 1: Micromobility and Shared Schemes

Laois County Council will:

- Establish the feasibility of initiating an e-bike and e-scooter pilot scheme(s), once legislation permits.
- Proactively ensure careful siting of dedicated e-bike and e-scooter parking areas at key destinations that do not inhibit pedestrian movement (e.g., Town Centre and Train Station).
- Work with car club companies to investigate and develop car club facilities in Portlaoise.

Measure SM 2: Green Schools & Active Schools

Laois County Council will encourage all schools within the Portlaoise Study Area to undertake a Green Schools Audit on an ongoing basis to inform the detailed design of projects. At a minimum, this should include:

- Front of School Audits
- Gap analysis of existing infrastructure on-site e.g., sheltered and secure cycle or scooter parking

Laois County Council will encourage all schools in Portlaoise to progress the continuation and expansion of the Active School Flag Programme.

Measure SM 3: Safe Routes to School

Laois County Council will aim to implement measures consistent with the Safe Routes to School Programmes throughout Portlaoise.

This includes targeted infrastructural improvements to facilitate initiatives such as the School Bike Buses, Walking Buses and Park & Stride drop-off areas within walking distance of schools.

Measure SM 4: School Planning and Design

Planning for new schools and the expansion of existing schools will prioritise access for pedestrians and cyclists. Detailed design shall maximise the priority for pedestrians and cyclists accessing the school.

Measure SM 5: Playful Active Travel School Zones

Laois County Council will continue to work with service providers, schools and other relevant stakeholders to implement Playful Active Travel School Zones along school routes in Portlaoise.

Measure SM 6: Playful Streets

Laois County Council will investigate the potential to implement Playful Street Schemes throughout neighbourhoods in Portlaoise and implement where possible.

Measure SM 7: Healthy Streets

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that active travel and public realm projects in Portlaoise take into consideration the 10 indicators of the Healthy Streets Approach.

Measure SM: Workplace Travel/ Mobility Management Plans

Laois County Council and the NTA will continue to expand workplace travel planning in Enterprise and Employment zoned land in Portlaoise. Laois County Council will work to identify appropriate employers suited to initiating Mobility Management Plans

Measure SM 9: SuDS & Green Infrastructure

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Green Infrastructure (GI) will be included along active travel schemes and as part of any future public realm projects in Portlaoise.

Include an additional objective as follows:

TM015: Develop a ‘Parking Management Strategy that will manage the provision of car parking spaces in Portlaoise’ (PM1) based on a range of principles including consolidation of parking and managing the availability and cost of parking.

Recommendation no. 3-climate action

Include additional policy In Section 5. “Climate Change” as follows:

Policy CCP2: In accordance with Action 47 of the Laois Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, to investigate the feasibility of Shared or District Heating in Portlaoise.

In addition to the specific policies and objectives contained in this chapter, other Chapters have included policies to provide for alignment between the draft LAP and the Laois Climate Action Plan 2024, as follows:

CHAPTER	HEADING	CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE ACTION
Chapter 5	<i>Town Centre Revitalisation</i>	<i>champions compact brown field town centre development over its suburban counterpart</i>
Chapter 7	<i>Placemaking</i>	<i>supports ‘active land management’ by making the regeneration and development of existing built-up areas as attractive and as viable as Greenfield development through investment in infrastructure where appropriate</i>
Chapter 8	<i>Housing</i>	<i>promotes the reoccupation of vacant residential stock within Portlaoise Town Centre, including ‘Living Above the Shop’ units.</i>
Chapter 9	<i>Economic Development</i>	<i>seeks an integrated transport approach linked to land use objectives which encourages a reduction in the need for travel, tackling traffic congestion and promoting public transport, cycling, walking as alternative means of travel to the use of car.</i>

Chapter 10	<i>Infrastructure and Environmental Services</i>	<i>requires all new developments to include proposals for Sustainable Drainage Systems</i>
Chapter 11	<i>Transport and Movement</i>	<i>sets out the overall policy approach which is very much focused on achieving a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport.</i>
Chapter 12	<i>Community Services</i>	<i>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.</i>
Chapter 13	<i>Built Heritage</i>	<i>positively consider proposals to improve, alter, extend or change the use of protected structures so as to render them viable for modern use, subject to consultation with suitably qualified Conservation Architects and / or other relevant experts, suitable design, materials and construction methods</i>
Chapter 14	<i>Biodiversity and Natural Heritage</i>	<i>positively consider proposals to improve, alter, extend or change the use of protected structures so as to render them viable for modern use, subject to consultation with suitably qualified Conservation Architects and / or other relevant experts, suitable design, materials and construction methods</i>

Table 6: Climate Action Measures

Observation no. 2-monitoring and implementation

Include additional text in Section 15: “Implementation & Monitoring”.

Addendum to Section 15.1.

In the preparation and drafting of this LAP every effort has been made, as far as is practicable, to formulate policies and objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic.

Many policies and objectives in the LAP relate to development management processes, which can be implemented through established internal procedures in Laois County Council. The intention of other policies and objectives in the LAP can be wide-ranging, and for this reason their successful implementation can necessitate a collaborative approach with a range of agencies and stakeholders, including local communities, governmental and non-governmental bodies and agencies.

It should also be noted that there are policies and objectives aimed at supporting an intended outcome, rather than being the direct means of delivering the outcome. In this regard, the implementation of policies and objectives in the LAP, including the desired planning outcomes, can be subject to external factors such as the availability of resources, political support, and economic circumstances in terms of funding in both County Councils and the availability of capital from other sources.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney.

Submission Number: LS-C97-6	Submission Name: Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA)
<p>Chief Executive Recommendation:</p> <p>The following changes are proposed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Section 5 of the draft LAP to make reference to Figure 7.4 Climate Strategy of the RSES. <div data-bbox="300 656 863 1144" data-label="Diagram"> <p>The diagram, titled 'Climate Action', features a central map of the region. Surrounding the map are five colored circles, each representing a key area of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built Environment (Purple circle): Promote sustainable development patterns to achieve compact urban development and low energy buildings. Sustainable Transport (Blue circle): Reduce modal split towards public transport, walking and cycling and roll out EV charging infrastructure. Energy & waste (Green circle): Identify Strategic Energy Zones and develop leading opportunities, research and pilot trials for clean energy and a circular economy. Flood resilience & water (Red circle): Address flood risk and coastal erosion, to ensure resilience of critical infrastructure and water resources in the Region. Green Infrastructure & Eco-system services (Orange circle): Plan and deliver infrastructure and ecosystem services, including development and land use plans. <p>At the center of the map, the text reads: 'Climate Action. Reduce emissions by 40% by 2030 and support transition to a low carbon Region by 2050.'</p> <p>Figure 7.4 Climate Strategy</p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Section 9 of the draft LAP to make reference to Figure 6.3 Economic Strategy of the RSES which has the five key principles including Smart Specialisation, Clustering, Orderly Growth, Placemaking and Future Proof and Risk Management. Section 9 of the draft LAP to be further strengthened in relation to the identification of strategic employment sites in the draft LAP by referring to the 'Guiding Principles to Identify Locations for Strategic Employment Development' as set out in Section 6.3 of the RSES. <p>These are:</p> <p>Planning to accommodate strategic employment growth at regional, metropolitan and local level should include consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of Technology and Innovation Poles - Institutes of Technology (IoTs) and Universities, as key strategic sites for high-potential growth of economic activity. Current employment location, density of workers, land-take and resource/infrastructure dependency, including town centres, business parks, industrial estates and significant single enterprises. Locations for expansion of existing enterprises. Locations for new enterprises, based on the extent to which they are people intensive (i.e. employees/customers), space extensive (i.e. land), tied to resources, dependent on 	

the availability of different types of infrastructure (e.g. telecoms, power, water, roads, airport, port etc.) or dependent on skills availability.

- Locations for potential relocation of enterprises that may be better suited to alternative locations and where such a move, if facilitated, would release urban land for more efficient purposes that would be of benefit to the regeneration and development of the urban area as a whole, particularly in metropolitan areas and large towns.
- Within large urban areas where significant job location can be catered for through infrastructure servicing and proximity to public transport corridors

Having regard to the above, strategic employment sites identified in the study area include Clonminam and National Enterprise Park Togher, IDA Business Park on Mountrath Road as well as the hospitals and prisons on Dublin Road and the council offices and Dept. of Agriculture offices in the town centre.

4. Section 10 of the draft LAP to be further strengthened by making reference to the guiding principles for Sustainable Drainage Systems as set out in Section 10.2 of the RSES.

10.4 Surface Water Drainage & Green-Blue Infrastructure

Uisce Eireann encourages the inclusion of policies and objectives on the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Green-Blue Infrastructure in new developments including the public realm and retrofitted in existing developed areas, in line with NPO 57 of the National Planning Framework and the guiding principles for Sustainable Drainage Systems as set out in Section 10.2 of the RSES.

Include additional policies as follows:

- KIP9: encourage the integration of ‘soft’ measures including SuDs, green space, Green Infrastructure and permeable surfaces in the design of drainage and sustainable water management of existing and future developments.
- KIP10: require the use of SuDS in public and private developments in urban areas, both within developments and within the public realm to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of sustainable drainage techniques for new development or for extensions to existing developments, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.
- KIP11: enhance biodiversity and amenity and ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where flood risk management measures are planned.
- KIP12: encourage the use of Green Roofs where expansive roofs are proposed such as industrial, apartment, civic, commercial, leisure and educational buildings, and non-porous surfacing to create safe places.

The draft LAP will reference the recent publication of ‘Nature Based Management of Urban Rainwater and Urban Surface Water Discharges – A National Strategy’ by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, May 2024.

Section 7 of the draft LAP to be further strengthened by making reference to the ‘Guiding Principles for the Integration of Land Use and Transport’ in Section 8.3 of the RSES.

Amend Policy PCP4 as follows:

Apply increased residential densities where appropriate having regard to ~~Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas (2009)~~ Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024] and apply appropriate development management measures in ensuring growth is appropriate and in compliance with the RSES 2019;

Amend text as follows:

As set out under the ~~National Planning Framework, the~~ Eastern & Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the Core Strategy of the Laois County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, Portlaoise is designated as a Key Town within the settlement hierarchy.

The Table of Contents with reference to Appendix A to be corrected to include:

Appendix C Local Transport Plan

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney.

Submission Number: LS-C97-34	Submission Name: National Transport Authority
Chief Executive Recommendation: Part A. NTA Observations - Portlaoise Draft Local Area Plan (LAP) 2024 – 2030 Section 5. “Climate Change” - Revise as follows: figure 16 ‘Objectives Map for the Portlaoise LAP’ has been amended as follows	

Section 9. “Economic Development” – Revise as follows:

Standardise name and description of Togher Masterplan area to ensure consistency throughout and it will be renamed **J17 National Enterprise Park**.

Section 11. “Transport and Movement” – Revise as follows:

Amend Section 11.3 of the Draft LAP to reads as follows.

A key aim of this Draft LAP is therefore to promote compact, connected neighbourhoods based on street patterns and forms of development that will make walking and cycling, especially for local trips, more attractive in line with national policy such as [a] the **National Sustainable Mobility Policy (DoT, 2022)**, which sets a strategic framework for public transport and active travel to 2030, [b] the **National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland [DoT, 2021]** which includes the road user modal hierarchy in Ireland as: **1. Active Travel (Walking & Cycling); 2. Public Transport; 3. Private Vehicles and the intervention hierarchy which is: 1. Maintain; 2. Optimise; 3. Improve; 4. New,** [c] “**Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future**” (2009) and [d] “**Irelands First National Cycle Policy Framework**” (2009) which promote sustainable travel movements and encourage people to find alternative ways to travel reducing car dependency.

Replace Table 9: **Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives** in Section 11.5.1 of the Draft LAP with the transport objectives as set out in Section 5 of the draft LTP.

Transport Objective 1	Develop a multi-modal transport plan to identify interventions that enable a transition to sustainable and low-carbon transport modes.
Transport Objective 2	Apply the 15-minute town concept, providing excellent links to public transport for when longer journeys are needed and supporting town centre living and working as outlined in Portlaoise 2040.
Transport Objective 3	Identify opportunities to ensure more children can travel safely to school by walking and cycling.
Transport Objective 4	Maximise the ability of natural environment assets such as River Triogue and Togher Woods to facilitate safe and permeable walking and cycling. Create new green and blue infrastructure.
Transport Objective 5	Enhance the vibrancy, accessibility, liveability and safety of Portlaoise through place-making and a Healthy Streets approach, producing a better balance of public space.

Table 9: Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives

Transport Objective 1	Support the Compact Growth of Portlaoise through the careful integration of land use and transport planning.
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Transport Objective 2	<i>Improve and prioritise access to local services by sustainable modes, in particular walking and cycling, with links to public transport for longer journeys.</i>
Transport Objective 3	<i>Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public transport services in Portlaoise.</i>
Transport Objective 4	<i>Maximise the potential of natural environment assets and the design and layout of the built environment to facilitate connectivity and safe and permeable walking and cycling networks.</i>
Transport Objective 5	<i>Enhance the vibrancy, accessibility, liveability and safety of Portlaoise through improved public realm, place-making and a Healthy Streets approach.</i>

Table 9: Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives

Section 11. “Transport & Movement” - Revise as follows:

Park and Ride and Interchange Facilities

- ~~TM 04 ‘To facilitate the provision of a “park and ride” on the CBS lands to serve Portlaoise Railway Station which incorporates car parking and a bus stop/terminus~~ To examine the feasibility for Park and Ride facilities in Portlaoise in conjunction with the NTA, TII and other relevant stakeholders.
- ~~TM06 ‘To promote the development~~ investigate the development of a transport interchange on James Fintan Lalor Avenue including bus stops and facilities in conjunction with the NTA.

Public Transport” - Revise as follows:

Include in Section 11 in draft LAP a sub-section on Public Transport as follows:

Bus Services

- Portlaoise is relatively well served by regional buses yet lacks a dedicated town bus service. Most bus services calling at Portlaoise are private services licensed by the National Transport Authority that connect Portlaoise to other environs. There is neither a central point for transfer between services in Portlaoise, nor transparent information around the services provided and the potential connections available due to the decentralised nature of publicly operated bus services.
- The most frequent inter-urban service is Route 726, served by Big Green Bus, to the Red Cow Luas stop and Dublin Airport. It makes 24 trips daily on an hourly schedule.
- After the 726 Bus, no. 830 is the next most frequent service. Operated by Slieve Bloom Coach Tours, it makes 7 trips from Portlaoise to Tullamore per day Monday to Friday (5 trips on Saturday) and 5 trips from Tullamore to Portlaoise from Monday to Saturday.
- Route 73 is a Public Service Obligation funded route operated by Bus Eireann between Waterford and Athlone via Portlaoise that runs once or twice a day (depending on the day of the week).

- Local Link Services provide connectivity 7 days a week from Portlaoise to Birr, Roscrea, and Thurles. Additional destinations, including Athlone TUS, Tullamore LOETB and Mount Lucas Training Centre, are served by Demand Responsive Transit routes (DRT) that offer less frequent service based on demand (see Figure 2-6).
- The first Local Link service often runs around 7am, the last is often around 8pm or 10pm, making it difficult for people with early morning or late evening travel needs to use the bus service to reach their destinations.

Rail Services

- Portlaoise Railway Station is strategically located 350m north of the town centre. It is the busiest county town railway station in the Midlands Region with up to 36 trains to Dublin and 38 trains from Dublin per day. The number of trains stopping daily was recently increased in December 2023. Weekday morning service begins at 5.33am for trains to Dublin and 7.40am for trains to Cork and Limerick. The last train weekday departs at 9.40pm for Cork and 10.30pm for Dublin.
- For both the bus and rail networks, the deficits in the pedestrian and cycling facilities within Portlaoise diminish the useability of the inter-urban bus services and high-frequency rail services from Portlaoise. The lack of first and last mile active travel connections makes it difficult for people to access public transport, decreasing the attractiveness of public transport.

Revise Development Objective TM 03 as follows:

- TM 03 ~~‘Cooperate and facilitate Irish Rail, Bus Éireann and private operatives in the provision and frequency of public transport services, operation of services and facilities’~~
‘Work with the NTA, public transport operators including Irish Rail, Bus Éireann and Local Link to provide and facilitate improved public transport services and infrastructure.’

Active Travel

Include in Section 11 in draft LAP the following text from draft LTP.

Active travel, i.e. walking, wheeling, cycling or scooting, is the most sustainable form of mobility, and can benefit both individuals and society in many different ways.

Land use planning and the design of the built environment are key determinants in someone choosing to cycle, walk or scoot. Where in the past car ownership propelled streets to be designed in a manner that prioritised the movement of cars, recent years have shown a willingness to re-examine the role our streets play as places that support cycling, scooting and walking.

Government investment in Active Travel has increased significantly in recent years, reflecting commitments made to move away from the private car towards more sustainable travel

modes, as summarised in the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI), the Climate Action Plan 2023 and the National Sustainable Mobility Policy.

This Local Transport Plan aims to prioritise active travel modes in Portlaoise. Continued investment in active travel modes will be guided by the speed at which they can be achieved, in accordance with prevailing government guidance.

The following are Measures by mode in line with the DMURS User Hierarchy. Recommendations are out for walking, cycling and permeability, followed by Public Transport (bus and rail), the Roads Network, Parking Management, and Supporting Measures.

[This should be read in conjunction with the draft Local Transport Plan].

Measure AT 1: Laois County Council Active Travel Programme

Laois County Council and the NTA will work in collaboration to successfully deliver the following Active Travel schemes by 2028:

- Dublin Road (Grenville Estate to Kilminchy roundabout)
- Stradbally Road (Southern Circular Road to Tyrells Site)
- Beladd Active Travel Scheme
- Triogue Way
- Father Brown Avenue Active Travel Scheme
- R445 Mountrath Road - Rapid Deployment Scheme
- Borris Road Scheme
- Safe Routes to School – Maryborough National School
- Southern Circular Road Active Travel Scheme

Measure JN 1: Development Management of Junctions

Laois County Council will adhere to the design standards and principles for junctions identified in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, the Cycle Design Manual, and TII Publications, including the Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads, and DMURS Advice Note 6: Priority Junction Tightening Measures to ensure pedestrian and cyclist priority at any new junctions in Portlaoise.

LCC will adhere to DoECLG's Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities and limit the number of new entrances or junctions on national roads, thereby preserving their strategic transport function.

LTP Active Travel proposals that interact with the N80 and N77 will do so in a manner that prioritises safe active travel routes while maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads

Guidelines for Planning Authorities. Detailed design and implementation of such proposals shall be in compliance with TII Publications and proceed subject to the agreement of TII.

LCC will adhere to DoECLG's Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities and avoid the creation of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses to national roads where a speed limit greater than 50km/h applies ~~limit the number of new entrances or junctions on national roads,~~ thereby ~~preserving~~ maintaining their strategic transport function. LCC will also adhere to the requirements outlined in Section 2.7 of DoECLG's Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities.

LTP Active Travel proposals that interact with the National Roads Network, including the N80 and N77, ~~N80 and N77~~ will do so in a manner that prioritises safe active travel routes while maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Measure JN 2: Evidence-Based Approach to Junction Improvements

The LTP has identified a series of junctions across the Study Area that require an upgrade to their design to align with DMURS standards and TII Publications, as appropriate.

LCC, with input from key stakeholders TII and NTA, will review these junctions and upgrade them in the short- to medium-term following the LTP's order of priority.

Junctions along roads with a history of dangerous collisions which will require upgrades include:

- Mountmellick Rd / Coote St (N80)
- Dublin Road (R445)
- Main Street
- James Fintan Lalor Ave (N80) & surrounds
- Timahoe Roundabout (James Fintan Lalor N80/Well Rd R426)
- Stradbally Road

These junctions will be upgraded as part of individual projects such as Safe Routes to School, cycling infrastructure projects or a standalone junction improvement package.

Measure JN 3: Placemaking at Junctions and Roundabouts

The Portlaoise LTP recognises the important placemaking function that junctions can serve. Laois County Council will take a multi-disciplinary approach, as recommended in DMURS, to ensure that the place making function of junctions is enhanced as they are upgraded, specifically Market Square. This includes seating opportunities, public art or landscaping.

Measure WK 1: Portlaoise 2040 & the Town Centre Pedestrian Network

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, including the NTA, TII, National Disability Association (NDA), and local groups to improve the safety, accessibility, and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment of Portlaoise Town Centre through the delivery of the ambitious revitalisation programme, as set out in Portlaoise 2040.

This will include the implementation of the Strategy Objectives and Policies under 'A Walkable Town Centre' as part of Portlaoise 2040 and beyond, and the implementation of new speed limits of 30km/h.

Measure WK 2: Street Clutter Audit

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to undertake a Street Clutter Audit, as recommended in DMURS, in the short-term across the Study Area. The audit will inform a programme to remove unnecessary street furniture that clutters the public realm and makes pedestrian wayfinding more difficult.

Measure WK 3: Portlaoise 2040 & Pedestrianisation

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, including key stakeholders TII and NTA, to deliver the following, as set out in Portlaoise 2040:

- Support the development of key public areas as pedestrian priority areas, and the eventual pedestrianisation of Lyster Sq. to connect with the retail areas south of James Fintan Lalor Avenue.
- Support the pedestrianisation of Lower Sq. and Main St. during key hours to provide additional public space and a suitable setting for the new county library.
- Investigate the pedestrianisation Bull Lane and enhancement of other laneways in Portlaoise town centre.
- Improvement of pedestrian desire lines.
- Improvement of pedestrian crossing facilities.

Measure WK 4: Portlaoise Pedestrian Network

- Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, including key stakeholders TII and NTA, to improve the safety, attractiveness, liveability, and active travel function provided by Portlaoise's Arterial, Link & Local Streets. This will include:
- Upgrading and retrofitting of existing footpaths
- Providing new footpaths where necessary
- Implementing new speed limits and traffic calming measures
- Retrofitting cul-de-sac development and implementing filtered permeability measures
- Implementing public realm improvements, such as soft landscaping, tree planting and filtered permeability measures

Measure WK 5: Wayfinding

Laois County Council will develop a consistent wayfinding system in Portlaoise along the lines of the Legible London system, in order to improve the legibility of the town and raise the profile of key destinations.

Measure WK 6: Public Art

Laois County Council will work with local community groups / artists to identify and assess the possibility of introducing colour and street art to the links between Main Street / Lower Square and Lyster Square and other areas around Portlaoise.

This will be carefully considered by LCC as buildings may be Protected Structures and / or within an Architectural Conservation Area.

Measure WK 7: Walkability Audit

Laois County Council will continue regular walkability audits with a variety of stakeholders, including Age Friendly Ireland, Wheelchair Association and Vision Ireland. These will be undertaken at locations where demand for pedestrian activity is high, and where deficiencies in the network have been identified. This is to include continuous monitoring post-completion.

Measure WK 8: Accessibility

Laois County Council will ensure that all streetscape and public realm improvements follow the principles of Universal Design and will ensure that active travel and public realm schemes are fully accessible for all through the following actions:

- Creation of a stakeholder group with members of Age-Friendly Ireland, Portlaoise Town Team, disability groups, youth groups, Green-Schools and other stakeholder groups to improve the safety, accessibility, and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment of Portlaoise.
- Design all active travel and public realm projects in line with the DMURS and other national guidance documents.

Measure WK 9: Safety in Public Spaces

The Council will also consider the following elements to improve the safety of public space and ensure that all members of the community feel safe:

- Good quality lighting
- Active ground floor frontage
- Legibility and wayfinding – provide clear sightlines through a space
- Co-design with local community groups where possible

Measure CY 1: Portlaoise Cycle Network

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with the NTA, TII and other stakeholders to deliver the Portlaoise Cycle Network by 2042. This includes routes outlined in the NTA's CycleConnects Plan and TII's National Cycle Network and additional local improvements identified throughout the course of this LTP.

Short-medium term:

- Development and completion of the Primary and Secondary Cycle Networks
- Further implementation of the network in line with new development opportunities and traffic calming.

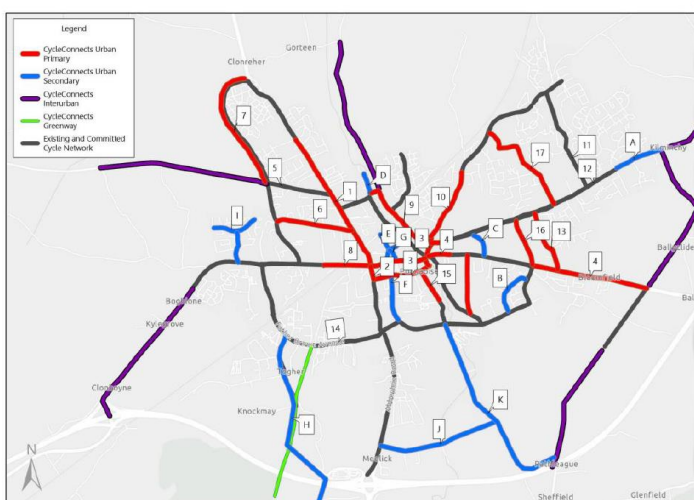
Long term:

- Completion of Inter-urban and Greenway Cycle Networks
- Ongoing maintenance and improvement of cycle infrastructure
- Completion of all Active Travel Schemes

Measure CY 2: CycleConnects

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with the NTA, TII and other stakeholders to deliver the CycleConnects plans for Portlaoise by 2042, including the greenway projects. Based on existing projects and prioritising delivering projects that support Safe Routes to School, it is expected that the following schemes will be completed by 2028 subject to availability of funding, compliance with NTA Project Approval Guidelines and all necessary environmental and planning processes:

- Ballyfin Road (5 on map)
 - Harpur's Lane (6 on map)
 - Mountrath Rd/ Grattan Street (8 on map)
 - Borris Road (10 on map)
 - Collier's Lane (17 on map)
 - Father Browne Avenue (14 on map)
 - New Road/ Well Road (15 on map)
 - Beladd Cycle Scheme (16 on map)
-



Combined with the existing cycle network and projects that Laois County Council has committed to deliver, CycleConnects proposals produce a safe, coherent, and direct network.

Measure CY 3: National Cycle Network

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with TII, the NTA and other stakeholders to deliver the National Cycle Network plans for Portlaoise by 2042. Laois County Council will work in collaboration with TII and the NTA to create connections between the urban cycling network in Portlaoise and the inter-urban network in the National Cycle Network.

Measure CY 4: Quietways

Working in conjunction with the NTA and other stakeholders, Laois County Council will identify a network of Quietways in the short to medium-term. These Quietways will improve pedestrian and cyclist accessibility throughout Portlaoise and help deliver the network of primary routes outlined in Cycle Connects. The LTP identifies options for a Quietway (pictured to the right) as an alternative route to the Urban Primary route proposed in CycleConnects along Mountmellick Road/Coote Street (N80).

Measure CY 5: Cycle Parking

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to carry out the following:

- Continue to support an uplift in both high-quality short-stay and long-stay public cycle parking throughout Portlaoise Town Centre and key destinations such as Lyster Square, People’s Park, Laois Shopping Centre, Lismard Business Park, Clonminam Business Park, Kylekiproe Industrial Estate, Portlaoise Retail Park, and the Railway Station, which is envisaged to play a significant role as a multi-modal interchange.
- Examine the feasibility of providing dedicated, high-quality cycle (e-scooter) parking hubs in key destinations such as the town centre and railway station.
- Ensure the provision of off-street, accessible cycle parking facilities as part of any significant new development.

- Consider innovative practices such as on-street bike hangers and the use of indoor vacant spaces for dedicated public off-street bike parking hubs that are secure, sheltered and easily accessed.
- Consider the colocation of cycle parking facilities with car clubs, bus stops and other forms of sustainable transport infrastructure through the development of Mobility Points.
- Develop a policy for the parking of shared bike service bicycles in advance of opening a scheme in Portlaoise.

Measure PY 1: Permeability in Residential Areas

Laois County Council will work with the NTA and other stakeholders to ensure that filtered permeability is secured in all new residential estates, providing safe and direct access to commercial developments and where possible, schools.

Laois County Council will aim to retrofit connectivity where possible.

Measure PY 2: Permeability and the New Portlaoise Town Bus Service

Laois County Council will work with the NTA and other Stakeholders to ensure that the users of the town bus service enjoy accessible and direct access to the bus service. This will include the use of filtered permeability measures to open up impermeable, cul-de-sac layouts and walled boundaries which are preventing the ease of movement between residential areas and future bus stop locations.

See also Measure PT 1 for the short, medium and long-term recommendations for the New Portlaoise Town Bus Service.

Measure PY3: Permeability to Schools – Supplementary Measures

Laois County Council will work with the NTA, local schools and other stakeholders to ensure that filtered permeability is secured, providing safe and direct access to schools from surrounding areas, including:

- Supporting Safe Routes to School schemes
- Developing and completing the Primary and Secondary Cycle Networks enabling children and their parents or guardians to cycle safely to school.

Measure PY4: Filtered Permeability

It is an objective of Laois County Council to create a fully permeable environment for pedestrians and cyclists across Portlaoise. Laois County Council will ensure that:

- Existing informal permeability points are formalized where possible.
 - Existing formal permeability points are upgraded and retrofitted where possible.
-

- Filtered permeability is secured in all new residential estates, commercial developments and where possible, schools.

The safety and attractiveness of these connections for all ages and abilities will be an important consideration, including lighting, sightlines and passive surveillance.

Measure PT 1: New Town Bus Network

Laois County Council will work with the Service Planning Team at the NTA, Bus operators, landowners, TII and other relevant stakeholders on the following:

Short-term:

- Deliver the New Town Bus Service for Portlaoise.

Medium-term:

- Examine the potential for an additional route (P3 Route) along the Southern Circular Road to enable more children to take the bus to school.

Long-term:

- Examine the potential for the town bus network to serve the J17 National Enterprise Park
- Investigate the reuse of the Togher Railway Line for sustainable transport
- Promote the use of public transport in the J17 Enterprise Park

Measure PT 2: Regional Bus Network

Laois County Council will work with the Service Planning Team at the NTA, Bus operators, landowners, and other relevant stakeholders to maintain and enhance regional bus networks in line with the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan and will make further improvements to routes where demand is identified.

Measure PT 3: Local Link Services

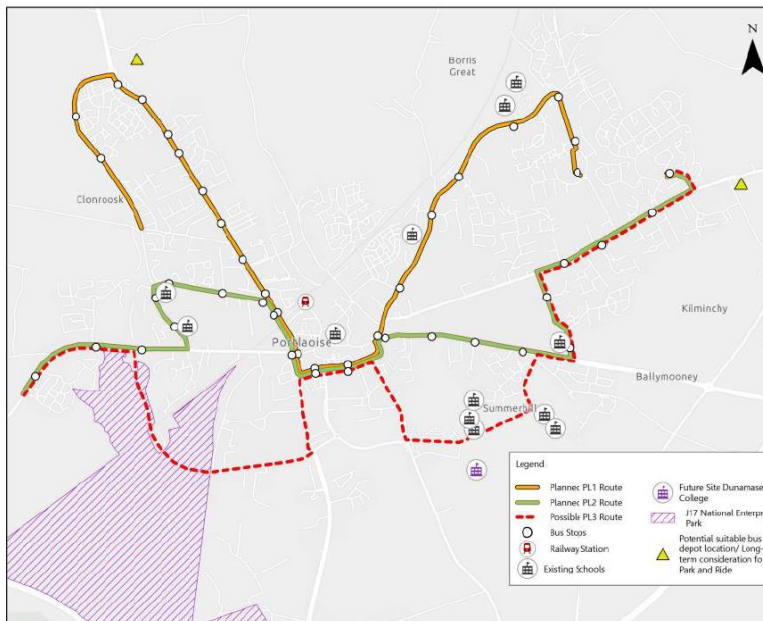
Laois County Council will work with the Service Planning Team at the NTA, Bus operators, and other relevant stakeholders to maintain and enhance Local Link services where required.

Measure PT 4: Bus Stops and Shelters

Laois County Council will work with the NTA to ensure that each bus shelter that accompanies the new Town Bus Service will be consistent and legible and will include the following:

- Real Time Information (RTI)
- Standardised bus stop sign, pole, and information panel
- Accessible Kerbing
- Seating and Lighting
- Landscaping where applicable

Laois County Council will ensure that permeability is secured between all existing and proposed bus stops with residential areas, schools, and key attractors.



The Proposed Town Bus Network in Portlaoise

Measure PT 5: Portlaoise Railway Station Facilities

Laois County Council will work with the NTA and Irish Rail, to improve the facilities available in Portlaoise Railway Station.

Measure PT 6: Pedestrian and Cycling Accessibility at Portlaoise Railway Station

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders, such as Irish Rail and the NTA, to improve the accessibility to Portlaoise Railway Station. At a minimum this will include:

- **Increasing permeability to the Railway Station and Triogue Way from Beechfield and Woodlawn Villas.**
- **Improving the cycling infrastructure to the standards set out in CycleConnects for Urban Secondary Routes.**
- **Improving the pedestrian environment on Station Rd, Railway St, Ridge Rd & the entrance to the station on Coote St.**

Measure PT 7: Multi-Modal Interchange Hub

Laois County Council will work with the NTA, Irish Rail and relevant stakeholders to progress Portlaoise Railway Station as a high-quality Multi-Modal Interchange Hub to enable seamless transfer between different modes and services.

This will include the provision of a bus stop outside the station (on Coote Street), a bike hire scheme, and bike lockers and parking.

Objective PM 1: Parking Management Strategy

Laois County Council will develop a Parking Management Strategy that will manage the provision of car parking spaces in Portlaoise in accordance with the following broad principles:

- Reallocate road space to establish a hierarchy of parking need for on-street parking that will support ambitious public realm and civic space proposals in Portlaoise 2040 and the Portlaoise LTP, taking care to ensure the continued provision of blue badge parking, delivery bays and a limited supply of short-stay car parking and discourage long-stay commuter parking.
- Maximise the efficiency of the existing car parking spaces, so that one space can serve multiple purposes, for example as a loading bay, taxi rank or public seating.
- Ensure that long-stay parking will largely take the form of consolidated off-street car parking on the periphery of places of high pedestrian activity to curtail movement of unproductive vehicular through traffic and elimination of search traffic movements.
- Manage the availability and cost of public car parking in the town centre core to encourage a higher turnover of spaces, aiming for an occupancy rate of 85% that represents a good use of the available land and reduces the amount of driving searching for parking.
- Consolidate some existing parking to the periphery of the town centre core at locations that are well connected by good quality walking, cycling and public transport networks.

Objective PM 2: Parking Management Policy

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to implement maximum parking standards for new development and allow low or no private vehicle developments as per the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Objective PM 3: Park and Stride

Laois County Council and relevant stakeholders will:

- Assess the capacity of private car parks to serve as Park and Stride locations to the town centre and the Summerhill School Campus.
- Promote the use of Park and Stride locations for journeys into Portlaoise Town Centre and the Summerhill School Campus through management of parking in the town centre and at school locations.

Objective PM 4: Park and Ride

Laois County Council will:

- examine the feasibility for Park and Ride facilities in Portlaoise in conjunction with the NTA, TII and other relevant stakeholders. ~~Engage with the NTA, TII and relevant Work with the relevant stakeholders, including the NTA, to investigate the possibility of co-locating Park and Ride facilities with bus depots; and, if possible, progress development to deliver multi-purpose Park and Ride facilities in conjunction with the town bus service for Portlaoise~~
- Include EV charging facilities for cars and buses and PV generation in any planned Park and Rides.
- Promote the use of Park and Ride facilities through appropriate pricing of the Park and Ride and town centre parking and giving priority to public transport so that Park and Ride users can experience a reliable service.

Measure PM 5: Mobility Hubs

Laois County Council will undertake an assessment to determine the feasibility of Mobility Hubs, in terms of number of hubs, car parking capacity per hub, operations, management, funding, complementary uses and facilities, etc.

Laois County Council will consider Mobility Hubs in future development and forward planning.

Measure PM 6: Mobility Points

Laois County Council will identify locations within existing on-street parking to provide for mobility points (car club vehicle, hire bike scheme).

Measure RN 1: Principles of Road Development

Laois County Council will work with NTA, TII and all other relevant stakeholders to:

- Balance the needs of road users so the roads in Portlaoise can perform their national, strategic transport function while promoting vibrancy, accessibility and lower emissions.
- Optimise the existing road and street network within Portlaoise to encourage more people to walk, cycle or take public transport for their everyday journeys.

Measure RN 2: National Roads Requirements

Laois County Council will preserve the strategic function and safety of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and in compliance with TII Publications (Standards and Technical) and subject to the agreement of TII.

In particular, Laois County Council will:

- Continue to contain development within the existing built-up footprint, thereby minimising sprawl and reducing the distances of journeys and reliance on private vehicles and preserve the strategic function and safety of the M7, N80 and N77.
- Limit development with access onto the National Road network, preserving to maintain its safety and strategic transport function.
- Ensure that any LTP proposals that interact with the M7, N80 and N77 comply with TII Publications.

Measure RN 3: National Roads and Sustainable Travel

~~Laois County Council will work with TII and NTA and all other relevant stakeholders to incorporate active travel on the National Road Network by:~~

~~Working with the relevant stakeholders to progress plans in Portlaoise 2040 to redesign James Fintan Lalor Avenue (N80),~~

~~Working with relevant stakeholders to redesign junctions, roundabouts & crossings on the National Road Network to better facilitate pedestrians and cyclists, using guidance in DN-GEO-03084 to apply treatments described in DMURS and DN-GEO-03060 regarding junctions.~~

~~Progressing plans to provide segregated cycle lanes for the entirety of the National Road Network within Portlaoise or, when carriageway widths do not allow, provide alternate safe, coherent, direct, accessible, comfortable and attractive cycle connectivity.~~

~~Liaising with the NTA and TII to design bus stops for the new town bus service.~~

~~Working with relevant stakeholders to provide gateway treatments at the entrance to Portlaoise from the National Road Network to mark the entrance to the urban environment.”~~

Objective RN 4: New Local Roads

Laois County Council, the NTA and TII will:

- Design all new roads to be consistent with the Road Design Principles 1-7 outlined above.
- Subject all new road schemes to stringent feasibility and environmental assessment processes.
- Consider and design new roads to ensure consistency between their function, form and layout.
- Design new roads with appropriate urban speed limits and full provision for walking, cycling, and future public transportation use if required.

Objective RN 5: Regional Roads and Sustainable Travel

Laois County Council will promote the use of the Regional Road Network for sustainable transport by:

- Working with relevant stakeholders to provide gateway treatments at the entrance to Portlaoise on Dublin Road (R445), Mountrath Road (R445) and Rathleague Road (R425) to mark the entrance to the urban environment and the start of the 50km/h speed limit zone.
- Working with relevant stakeholders to redesign junctions, roundabouts, and crossings on the Regional Road Network to better facilitate pedestrians and cyclists.
- Progressing plans to provide safe infrastructure for active travel for the entirety of the Regional Road Network within Portlaoise.
- Liaising with the NTA to design bus stops on the Regional Road Network to serve the new Portlaoise town bus service.

Objective RN 6: Local Roads and Sustainable Travel

Laois County Council will prioritise the use of the Local Road Network (LRN) for sustainable transport by:

- Providing gateway treatments at the entrance to Portlaoise on Ridge Road at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Rathevan Road where residential development starts to mark the entrance to the urban environment and the start of the 50km/h speed limit zone. Working with relevant stakeholders to redesign junctions, roundabouts, and crossings on the Local Road Network to better facilitate pedestrians and cyclists as discussed in Chapter 10 of LTP– Junctions.
- Progressing plans to provide segregated cycle lanes along select Local Roads—Harpur’s Lane, Ballyfin Road, Borris Road—prioritising access to primary and secondary schools as discussed in Chapter 12 of LTP– Cycling.
- Liaising with the NTA and TII to design bus stops to serve the new Portlaoise town bus service.
- Providing SUDS and Green Infrastructure along the Local Road Network.
- Ensuring that new developments connect to the existing street grid at numerous points, providing permeability and avoiding cul de sacs.

Objective RN 7: Town Centre Streets

Laois County Council and relevant stakeholders will:

- Redesign Market Square roundabout into a signalised junction with the reallocation of space to serve the public realm (as recommended in Chapter 10 of LTP– Junctions).
- Pedestrianise Lower Main Street, providing a public area outside the new county library and removing Main Street’s function as a through route.
- Reverse the existing one-way system on Church Street, Church Avenue, Railway Street and Bridge Street.
- Reconfigure Lyster Square.
- Improve the laneways to enhance their security and attractiveness.
- Complete plans to introduce one-way flow for motor traffic on Station Road and construct a cycle lane.

Objective RN 8: Speed Limit Review

Laois County Council will:

- Liaise with the Department of Transport to advance a review of all speed limits within Portlaoise and, where suggested, lower the existing speed limit.
- Prioritise the town centre, streets in front of schools and local streets for the delivery of 30km/h speed zones.
- Carry out a design review of streets on which the speed limit has been lowered to ensure that the design speed matches the posted speed limit.

Measure SM 1: Micromobility and Shared Schemes

Laois County Council will:

- Establish the feasibility of initiating an e-bike and e-scooter pilot scheme(s), once legislation permits.
- Proactively ensure careful siting of dedicated e-bike and e-scooter parking areas at key destinations that do not inhibit pedestrian movement (e.g., Town Centre and Train Station).
- Work with car club companies to investigate and develop car club facilities in Portlaoise.

Measure SM 2: Green Schools & Active Schools

Laois County Council will encourage all schools within the Portlaoise Study Area to undertake a Green Schools Audit on an ongoing basis to inform the detailed design of projects. At a minimum, this should include:

- Front of School Audits
- Gap analysis of existing infrastructure on-site e.g., sheltered and secure cycle or scooter parking

Laois County Council will encourage all schools in Portlaoise to progress the continuation and expansion of the Active School Flag Programme.

Measure SM 3: Safe Routes to School

Laois County Council will aim to implement measures consistent with the Safe Routes to School Programmes throughout Portlaoise.

This includes targeted infrastructural improvements to facilitate initiatives such as the School Bike Buses, Walking Buses and Park & Stride drop-off areas within walking distance of schools.

Measure SM 4: School Planning and Design

Planning for new schools and the expansion of existing schools will prioritise access for pedestrians and cyclists. Detailed design shall maximise the priority for pedestrians and cyclists accessing the school.

Measure SM 5: Playful Active Travel School Zones

Laois County Council will continue to work with service providers, schools and other relevant stakeholders to implement Playful Active Travel School Zones along school routes in Portlaoise.

Measure SM 6: Playful Streets

Laois County Council will investigate the potential to implement Playful Street Schemes throughout neighbourhoods in Portlaoise and implement where possible.

Measure SM 7: Healthy Streets

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that active travel and public realm projects in Portlaoise take into consideration the 10 indicators of the Healthy Streets Approach.

Measure SM: Workplace Travel/ Mobility Management Plans

Laois County Council and the NTA will continue to expand workplace travel planning in Enterprise and Employment zoned land in Portlaoise. Laois County Council will work to identify appropriate employers suited to initiating Mobility Management Plans

Measure SM 9: SuDS & Green Infrastructure

Laois County Council will work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Green Infrastructure (GI) will be included along active travel schemes and as part of any future public realm projects in Portlaoise.

Include an additional objective as follows:

TM015: Develop a 'Parking Management Strategy that will manage the provision of car parking spaces in Portlaoise' (PM1) based on a range of principles including consolidation of parking and managing the availability and cost of parking.

Part B. NTA Observations - Portlaoise Draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2024 – 2030

Mapping & Terminology

A map of the extent of the LTP study area is already included on Page 2, Part A of the draft LTP document.



Standardise name and description of Togher Masterplan area to ensure consistency throughout as the area has been renamed **J17 National Enterprise Park**.

Maps of Portlaoise Cycle Network and proposed improvements are already included in the draft LTP.

Masterplan Areas

The LTP will be amended to reflect the J17 National Enterprise Park Masterplan.

Chapter 10. Junctions

1. "Measure JN1" has been amended as per NTA recommendation.

Measure JN 1

Development Management of Junctions

Laois County Council will adhere to the design standards and principles for junctions identified in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, the Cycle Design Manual, and TII Publications, including the Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads, and DMURS Advice Note 6: Priority Junction Tightening Measures to ensure pedestrian and cyclist priority at any new junctions in Portlaoise.

LCC will adhere to DoECLG's Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities and **avoid the creation of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses to national roads where a speed limit greater than 50km/h applies** ~~limit the number of new entrances or junctions on national roads,~~ thereby ~~preserving~~ maintaining their strategic transport function. LCC will also adhere to the requirements outlined in Section 2.7 of DoECLG's Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities.

LTP Active Travel proposals that interact with the **National Roads Network, including the N80 and N77, N80 and N77** will do so in a manner that prioritises safe active travel routes while maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Chapter 15. Roads

2. "Measure RN2" has been amended as per NTA recommendation.

~~Objective~~ Measure RN 2

National Roads Requirements

Laois County Council will preserve the strategic function **and safety** of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads **Guidelines** and in compliance with TII Publications (Standards and Technical) **and subject to the agreement of TII.**

In particular, Laois County Council will:

- Continue to contain development within the existing built-up footprint, thereby minimising sprawl and reducing the distances of journeys and reliance on private vehicles and preserve the strategic function **and safety** of the **M7**, N80 and N77.
- Limit development with access onto the National Road network, **preserving to maintain** its **safety and** strategic **transport** function.
- Ensure that any LTP proposals that interact with the **M7**, N80 and N77 comply with TII Publications.

3. Text amended in draft LTP. Objectives are now referred to as measures to align with the other chapters in the draft LTP.

Chapter 16. Parking Management

Text has been amended in draft LTP so that 'objectives' are changed to 'measures' throughout the chapter.

Park and Ride

Revise Objective PM 4 in draft LTP as follows:

'Objective PM 4

Laois County Council will:

- **examine the feasibility for Park and Ride facilities in Portlaoise in conjunction with the NTA, TII and other relevant stakeholders. ~~Engage with the NTA, TII and relevant Work with the relevant stakeholders, including the NTA, to investigate the possibility of co-locating Park and Ride facilities with bus depots; and, if possible, progress development to deliver multi-purpose Park and Ride facilities in conjunction with the town bus service for Portlaoise~~**

Chapter 18. Modelling & Assessment of Outcomes

Transport Objectives are referred to in text in draft LTP.

Chapter 19. Implementation

A map of the extent of the LTP study area is already included on Page 2, Part A of the draft LTP document. Two maps are included in the draft LTP for active travel schemes and public transport

and roads projects. As it stands, the text emphasises that the complexity of the projects involved makes it unrealistic to deliver them in the short- term. The following text has been added in the draft LTP:

Many of the future changes to the cycle network within the town centre will occur in tandem with major schemes under Portlaoise 2040, which has URDF funding. While recognising the need for urgent climate action, many of these schemes in the town centre will occur in the medium to longer term rather than the short term as a result.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney.

Submission Number:

LS-C97-15

Submission Name:

Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Chief Executive Recommendation:

The following amendments to the Draft Local Transport Plan [LTP] are proposed.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 1 – revise as follows:

Include reference to the draft LTP in contents page of the draft LAP.

Portlaoise Study Area boundary already noted in map in Chapter 1.

Study Area Boundary has been added to the following maps:

- Ch. 6 - Fig. 6.1
- Ch. 6 - Fig.6.9
- Ch. 10 - Junction Improvements Map
- Ch. 13 - Location of Schools
- Ch. 13 - Possibilities for New / Upgraded Permeability Connections
- Ch. 16 - Potential Locations for Mobility Hubs within Portlaoise.

Study Area map (as discussed above) makes it clear that the M7 is not included in the Study Area. The list does not include the M7 because it is not in the Study Area.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 2 - revise as follows:

Amended accordingly in draft LTP.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 3 - revise as follows:

Standardise name and description of Togher Masterplan area to ensure consistency throughout. The area has been renamed **J17 National Enterprise Park** since the adoption of the last LAP.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 4 - revise as follows:

The following text has been added at the end of Section 6.4.

The Masterplan forms part of the evidence base for this LTP.

Fig. 6.7 in Section 6.4 has been removed.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 5 – revise as follows:

- In pg. Part B – 4 within text:

“Based on DMURS and TII **Standards Publications**, the following should be included in the design of new or upgraded junctions”.

- In pg. Part B – 4 in call out text:

“Note that throughout the entire length of National Roads through towns and villages, the design shall also comply with all relevant requirements within TII Publications **(Standards)** for National Roads **DN-GEO-03084**”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 6 – Revise as follows:

- “Measure JN 1
Development Management of Junctions
 - LCC will adhere to DoECLG’s Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities and **limit** avoid the **creation of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses to national roads where a speed limit greater than 50 kmh applies** ~~number of new entrances or junctions on national roads~~, thereby **maintaining** ~~preserving~~ their strategic transport function. **LCC will also adhere to the requirements outlined in Section 2.7 of DoECLG’s Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidance for Planning Authorities.**

LTP Active Travel proposals that interact with **the National Roads Network including** the N80 and N77, will do so in a manner that prioritises safe active travel routes while maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities. Detailed design and implementation of such proposals shall be in compliance with TII Publications and ~~proceed~~ subject to the agreement of TII”.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 7 – Revise as follows:

- “Measure JN 2
Evidence-Based Approach to Junction Improvements

- The LTP has identified a series of junctions across the Study Area that require an upgrade to their design to align with DMURS standards and TII Publications, as appropriate.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 9 – Revise as follows:

It is noted that subsection 12.6 entitled Cycling Network Improvements includes: 12.6.1 Portlaoise 2040; 12.6.2 Cycle Connects; 12.6.3 Arterial and Link Streets; 12.6.4 Neighbourhood Streets; 12.6.5 Greenways / Blueways. Further it is noted that the National cycle network is included under subsection 12.6.2.

- “12.6.2 Cycle Connects and National Cycle Network

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 10 - Revise as follows:

TII notes Measure CY 1 is entitled Portlaoise Cycle Network. It is not clear to TII where that “network” in its entirety is depicted. TII recommends a clear depiction and scheduling of all elements of the proposed Portlaoise Cycle Network.

- “Measure CY 1
Portlaoise Cycle Network
The Portlaoise Cycle Network is identified in Figure 12-X. Laois County Council will work ~~in collaboration with the NTA, TII and other stakeholders~~ to deliver the Portlaoise Cycle Network by 2042 subject to work in collaboration with the NTA, TII and other stakeholders as appropriate.

The Portlaoise Cycle Network ~~This~~ includes routes outlined in the NTA’s Cycle Connects Plan and TII’s National Cycle Network and additional local improvements identified throughout the course of this LTP.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 11 - Revise as follows:

TII notes Measure CY 2 entitled Cycle Connects. In view of Cycle Connects originating with the NTA, clarifications are recommended for the role of TII.

- “Measure CY 2
Cycle Connects

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with the NTA, ~~TII and other stakeholders~~ to deliver the Cycle Connects plans for Portlaoise by 2042, including the greenway projects. Based on existing projects and prioritising delivering projects that support Safe Routes to School, it is expected that the following schemes will be completed by 2028 subject to availability of funding, compliance with NTA Project Approval Guidelines, TII Publication compliance where appropriate and all necessary environmental and planning processes:

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 12 - Revise as follows:

TII notes Measure CY 3 entitled National Cycle Network. Revision of the Measure text is recommended to ensure consistency between cycling Measures of the draft LTP.

- **Measure CY 3
National Cycle Network**

The NCN aligns with the NTA's Cycle Connects programme of urban and county-level cycle networks, as well as other cycle routes and networks in various stages of development, including the EuroVelo routes, national and regional greenways, and the Strategic Plan for Greenways in Northern Ireland.

Laois County Council will work in collaboration with TII, the NTA and other stakeholders to deliver the National Cycle Network plans for Portlaoise by 2042. ~~Laois County Council will work in collaboration with TII and the NTA to create connections between the urban cycling network in Portlaoise and the inter-urban network in the National Cycle Network.~~ High level recommendations are outlined below in Table 12-1.”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 13 - Revise as follows:

In the interests of public safety, it is recommended that permeability interventions are subject to appropriate technical and design standards where they interact with public roads.

- **“Measure PY4
Filtered Permeability**

It is an objective of Laois County Council to create a fully permeable environment for pedestrians and cyclists across Portlaoise. Laois County Council will, **subject to adherence with DMURS and TII Publications where appropriate**, ensure that:

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 14 - Revise as follows:

In common with the recommendation for Permeability measures, In the interests of public safety, it is recommended that public transport interventions are subject to appropriate technical and design standards where they interact with public roads.

- **“Measure PT 4
Bus Stops and Shelters**
Laois County Council will work with the NTA to ensure that each bus shelter that accompanies the new Town Bus Service will be consistent and legible, **subject to adherence with DMURS and TII Publications where appropriate** and will include the following:

- Real Time Information (RTI)
- Standardised bus stop sign, pole, and information panel
- Accessible Kerbing
- Seating and Lighting
- Landscaping where applicable

Laos County Council will ensure that permeability is secured between all existing and proposed bus stops with residential areas, schools, and key attractors.”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 15 - Revise as follows:

- In pg. Part B – 59 in call out text:

“Note that throughout the entire length of National Roads through towns and villages, the design shall also comply with all relevant requirements within TII Publications (~~Standards~~) for National Roads. ~~DN-GEO-03084~~”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 16 - Revise as follows:

TII offers the following recommendations for clarity.

- “Portlaoise lies north of the M7 motorway, a route part of the core Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T). The National Roads within Portlaoise—Mountmellick Road (N80), Coote Street (N80), Abbeyleix Road (N77), James Fintan Lalor Avenue (N80) and the Stradbally Road (N80)— connect Portlaoise with destinations throughout Ireland. ~~They are assets of~~ Elements of the national road network are operated and managed by a combination of (Public Private Partnerships) PPP Concessions, Motorway Maintenance and Renewal Contracts (MMaRC) and local road authorities in association with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and any improvements on them shall comply with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) and all relevant requirements within TII Publications (~~Standards~~) for National Roads. At the same time, they form part of the arterial road network within Portlaoise and provide access to many areas in Portlaoise. The proposed objectives balance providing the necessary transportation infrastructure, while not inducing demand for additional private vehicle journeys.”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 17 - Revise as follows:

TII offers the following recommendations for clarity.

- “Objective RN 2
National Roads Requirements

Laois County Council will preserve the strategic function **and safety** of the National Roads Network in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads **Guidelines**, and in compliance with TII Publications (Standards and Technical) **and subject to the agreement of TII**. In particular, Laois County Council will:

- Continue to contain development within the existing built-up footprint, thereby minimising sprawl and reducing the distances of journeys and reliance on private vehicles and preserve the strategic function **and safety** of the **M7**, N80 and N77.
- Limit development with access onto the National Road network, preserving **to maintain its safety and strategic transport** function.
- Ensure that any LTP proposals that interact with the **M7**, N80 and N77 comply with TII Publications.”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 18 - Revise as follows:

- Objective RN 3
National Roads and Sustainable Travel

~~Laois County Council will work with TII and NTA and all other relevant stakeholders to incorporate active travel on the National Road Network by:~~

~~Working with the relevant stakeholders to progress plans in Portlaoise 2040 to redesign James Fintan Lalor Avenue (N80).~~

~~Working with relevant stakeholders to redesign junctions, roundabouts & crossings on the National Road Network to better facilitate pedestrians and cyclists, using guidance in DN GEO 03084 to apply treatments described in DMURS and DN GEO 03060 regarding junctions.~~

~~Progressing plans to provide segregated cycle lanes for the entirety of the National Road Network within Portlaoise or, when carriageway widths do not allow, provide alternate safe, coherent, direct, accessible, comfortable and attractive cycle connectivity.~~

~~Liaising with the NTA and TII to design bus stops for the new town bus service.~~

~~Working with relevant stakeholders to provide gateway treatments at the entrance to Portlaoise from the National Road Network to mark the entrance to the urban environment.”~~

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 19

- Reference to RN **“Objectives”** to be changed to **“Measures”** as appropriate.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 20 - Revise as follows:

TII note the content of subsection 15.3 New Roads

- Opening paragraph:
-

“Following the NIFTI Hierarchies (see Figure 15-1), proposed **local** road schemes **would will** only proceed after alternative solutions, such as expanding the active travel network, enhancing the public transport network, introducing traffic and/or demand management measures, optimising and improving the existing road network, are determined to be insufficient to address the need that the proposed **local** road scheme addresses. Any new roads within the **LTP** Study Area will be designed to promote walking, cycling and public transport use.”

- In “Road Design Principles”:
 - “1. The development of new **local** road schemes will occur in accordance with the principles of the National Planning Framework, particularly NSO 1 Compact Growth and NSO 4 Sustainable Mobility, and the Government’s investment priorities ~~included~~ in the NDP.
 - 2. The development of new local roads must ensure that the capacity and function of the National Road Network and its ability to carry strategic traffic is not compromised (NSO 2 Enhanced Regional Connectivity) **in accordance with the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012)**.
 - 7. Key stakeholders, TII and the NTA, and all relevant stakeholders will be consulted on any **local** road development project and all applicable design standards will be followed. Any roads project requires the relevant statutory and project approval processes, including environmental appraisals, feasibility studies, and public consultation.”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 21 - Revise as follows:

- Objective RN 4: New Local Roads
Laois County Council, ~~the NTA and TII~~ will:
 - **Design all new local roads in accordance with national design standards and guidance including DMURS, TII Publications and the Cycle Design Manual, as appropriate.**
 - Design all new **local** roads to be consistent with the Road Design Principles 1-7 outlined above.
 - Subject all new **local** road schemes to stringent feasibility and environmental assessment processes.
 - Consider and design new **local** roads to ensure consistency between their function, form and layout.
 - Design new **local** roads with appropriate urban speed limits and full provision for walking, cycling, and future public transportation use if required.”

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 22 - Revise as follows:

In terms of the modelling and requests for the data sets, this commentary is noted however it should be noted that the modelling carried out by DBFL on behalf of LCC is based on the Land use Zoning

for Portlaoise which was adopted as part of the County Development Plan process for the current CDP 2021-2027. This will not change as part of this process.

Draft LTP Recommendation No. 23 - Revise as follows:

- In opening paragraph (pg. Part C - 8):
“This section assumes that projects ~~that have received~~ are in receipt of NTA or TII funding and are in the design phase with committed funding up to the construction phase, or under construction, will be brought to completion in the near future. This category includes projects such as the Father Browne Avenue Active Travel Scheme, the Mountrath Road (R445) Rapid Build Scheme and the Triogue Way. A full list of NTA or TII currently funded projects are provided in table XX-XX.”
- In penultimate paragraph (pg. Part C - 8):
“Aside from projects delivered by central exchequer capital investment, the implementation of the projects proposals identified suggested in this LTP will require funding and incur on-going operational costs. ~~Other forms of supplementary F~~funding and agreements have been or are likely to be sought including:
 - The NTA’s Active Travel Investment Programme
 - Development contributions for strategic allocated to transport infrastructure
 - ~~Site specific development contributions and/or~~
 - Land agreements through the development management process.”

The following amendments are proposed regarding the Draft Local Area Plan [LAP]

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 1

Include reference to the draft LTP in contents page of the draft LAP.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 2 - Revise as follows:

To ensure consistency between terminology in draft LAP and draft LTP, substitute word proposals for word solutions in subsections 2.4 Local Transport Plan (pg. 6) and 11.5 Local Transport Plan (pg. 88) of the draft LAP.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 3 - Revise as follows:

Revision of text in subsection 2.4 Local Transport Plan

- “The LTP consists of an Area Based Transport Assessment [ABTA] that identifies the appropriate transport solutions for the Portlaoise urban area to ensure the integration of land use and transport planning and that policy for increasing public transport and active travel mode share are realised. This is included in Appendix A of this plan with the main findings incorporated by way of policy objectives”.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 4 - Revise as follows:

Replace Table 9: **Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives** in Section 11.5.1 of the Draft LAP with the transport objectives as set out in Section 5 of the draft LTP.

Transport Objective 1	Develop a multi-modal transport plan to identify interventions that enable a transition to sustainable and low carbon transport modes.
Transport Objective 2	Apply the 15 minute town concept, providing excellent links to public transport for when longer journeys are needed and supporting town centre living and working as outlined in Portlaoise 2040.
Transport Objective 3	Identify opportunities to ensure more children can travel safely to school by walking and cycling.
Transport Objective 4	Maximise the ability of natural environment assets such as River Triogue and Togher Woods to facilitate safe and permeable walking and cycling. Create new green and blue infrastructure.
Transport Objective 5	Enhance the vibrancy, accessibility, liveability and safety of Portlaoise through place-making and a Healthy Streets approach, producing a better balance of public space.

~~Table 9: Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives~~

Transport Objective 1	Support the Compact Growth of Portlaoise through the careful integration of land use and transport planning.
Transport Objective 2	Improve and prioritise access to local services by sustainable modes, in particular walking and cycling, with links to public transport for longer journeys.
Transport Objective 3	Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public transport services in Portlaoise.
Transport Objective 4	Maximise the potential of natural environment assets and the design and layout of the built environment to facilitate connectivity and safe and permeable walking and cycling networks.
Transport Objective 5	Enhance the vibrancy, accessibility, liveability and safety of Portlaoise through improved public realm, place-making and a Healthy Streets approach.

Table 9: Portlaoise Local Transport Plan Objectives

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 5 - Revise as follows:

See commentary immediately above.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 6-Revise as follows:

Amend the preamble in Section 11.5.2 as follows:

~~Some of~~ **The** key principles identified for Portlaoise include:

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 7- Revise as follows:

Revision of reference to TII in subsection 11.1 Introduction

- The Council will continue to provide for all components of the transportation system which are within its own remit and will encourage and facilitate the development of those other elements provided by external agencies, such as the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), ~~made up of the former NRA and RPA~~

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 8 - Revise as follows:

- Facilitate a limited level of new accesses or the intensified use of existing accesses to the national road network on the approaches to or exit to Portlaoise that are subject to a speed limit zone between 50 kmh and 60 kmh otherwise known as the transition zone. Such accesses will be considered where they facilitate orderly urban development and would not result in a proliferation of such entrances, leading to a diminution in the role of these transitional zones. The Council will have regard to the nature of the proposed development and the volume of traffic to be generated by it and the implications for the safety, capacity and efficient operation of the national road. A Road Safety Audit, prepared in accordance with ~~TII Publications the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (NRA, 2010)~~, shall be submitted where appropriate.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 9 - Revise as follows:

Labelling, referencing and presentation of figure 12 Zoning Map of Portlaoise LAP, adopted in Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027

- TII suggests that the draft LAP label in Figure no. 12 would benefit from a larger scale map and clearer source referencing in pg. 27 under subsection 4.4 Zoning, as follows:

“Figure 12: Zoning Map of Portlaoise LAP, adopted ~~as Map 2.2~~ in Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027”.

- In conjunction, the following clarification in subsection 15.4 Development Management would be of benefit:

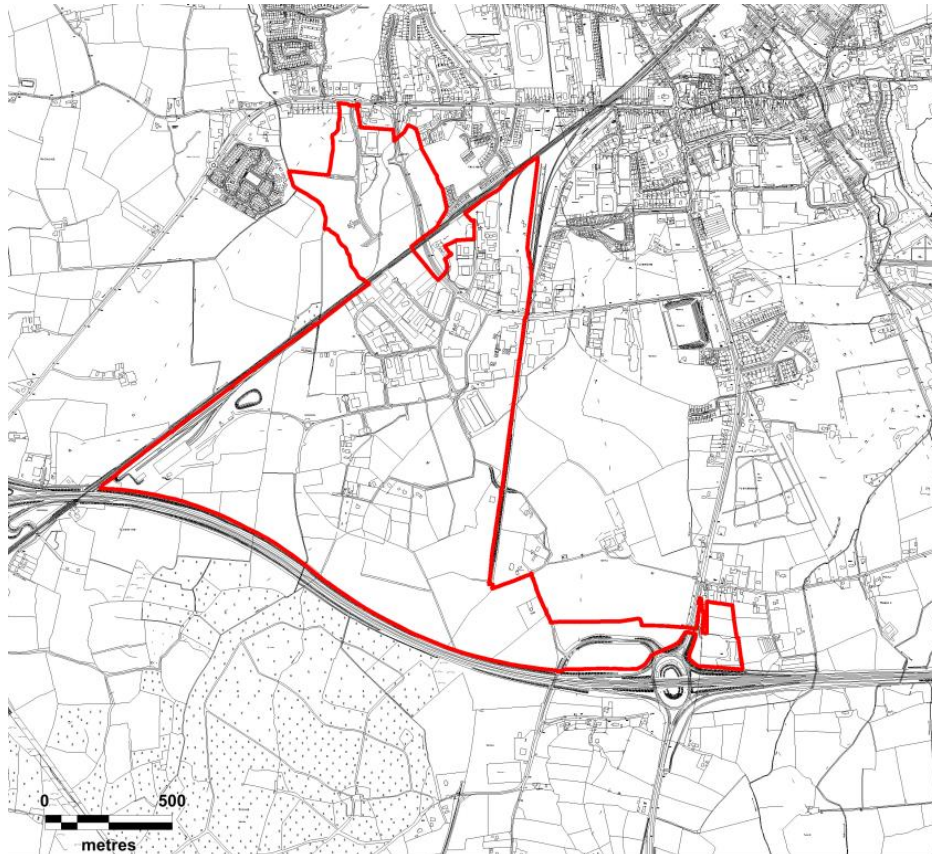
“Land use zoning for Portlaoise Local Area Plan functional area was carried out as part of the making of the overall Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 which was adopted in January 2022. ~~Land use zoning objectives for Portlaoise are depicted on Map 2.2. of the County Development Plan, repeated as figure 12 of this LAP.~~”

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 10 - Revise as follows:

Amend Figure 16 “Objectives Map for Portlaoise LAP” accordingly including presentation on a larger format page.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 11 - Revise as follows:

Substitute **Map 4-j17 National Enterprise Park Master Plan** in Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2018-2024 for ~~Figure 21: “Togher Area Masterplan”~~ in subsection 9.3. of draft LAP.



Map 4- J17 National Enterprise Park Master Plan



Figure 21: “Togher Area Masterplan”

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 12 - Revise as follows:

Standardise name and description of togher masterplan area to ensure consistency throughout with the following name **J17 National Enterprise Park**.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 13 - Revise as follows:

The Council prepared an updated Masterplan (appendix to this plan) for the Togher landbank in 2017 that provided a framework for the most effective presentation in terms of layout and design, land management and traffic modelling associated with the site.

Draft LAP Recommendation No. 14 - Revise as follows:

Revision of Planning and Development Objective PCO 3 and ED 05

- Planning and Development Objective PCO 3:
 “To promote and support the development of an enterprise and employment campus at National Enterprise Park, Togher Area. Development shall be plan led ~~and subject to a masterplan~~ in accordance with the **J17 National Enterprise Park Master Masterplan in Appendix XX of this LAP.**”
- Planning and Development Objective ED 05:
 “Develop Junction 17 National Enterprise Park (Togher) and Improve the existing built environment of the Togher/Clonminam Area; in line with the **J17 National Enterprise Park Master Masterplan in Appendix XX of this LAP.**”

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly

Submission Number: LS-C97-37	Submission Name: Department of Transport [DoT]
Chief Executive Recommendation:	
Update Section 11.3, relating to Smarter Travel, as follows. Substitute reference to Department of Transport's National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022) for reference to Government policy documents 'Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future' (2009) and 'Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework' (2009).	
General	
Substitute reference to 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response for reference to the 2019 version of DMURS.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Barry Walsh McEvoy seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney

Submission Number: LS-C97-27	Submission Name: Office of Public Works
Chief Executive Recommendation: No further action	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy

Submission Number: LS-C97-32	Submission Name: Environmental Protection Agency
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change.	

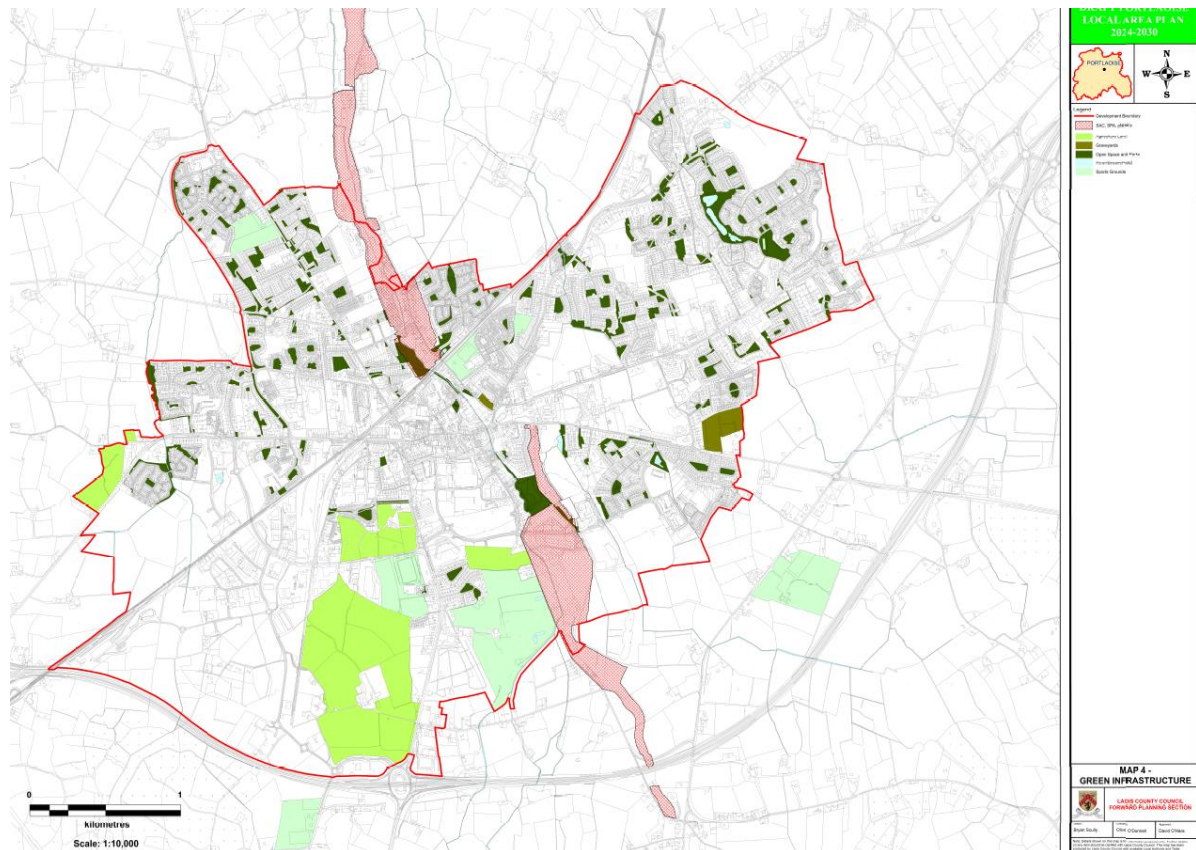
This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy

Submission Number: LS-C97-21	Submission Name: Uisce Eireann
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy

Submission Number: LS-C97-33	Submission Name: Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage
<p>Chief Executive Recommendation:</p> <p><u>Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).</u></p> <p>This section to further strengthened by additional text as follows:</p> <p>Uisce Eireann encourages the inclusion of policies and objectives on the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Green-Blue Infrastructure in new developments including the public realm and retrofitted in existing developed areas, in line with NPO 57 of the National Planning Framework and the guiding principles for Sustainable Drainage Systems as set out in Section 10.2 of the RSES.</p> <p>Include additional policies as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• KIP9: encourage the integration of ‘soft’ measures including SuDs, green space, Green Infrastructure and permeable surfaces in the design of drainage and sustainable water management of existing and future developments.• KIP10: require the use of SuDS in public and private developments in urban areas, both within developments and within the public realm to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of sustainable drainage techniques for new development or for extensions to existing developments, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.• KIP11: enhance biodiversity and amenity and ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where flood risk management measures are planned.• KIP12: encourage the use of Green Roofs where expansive roofs are proposed such as industrial, apartment, civic, commercial, leisure and educational buildings, and non-porous surfacing to create safe places. <p>The draft LAP will reference the recent publication of ‘Nature Based Management of Urban Rainwater and Urban Surface Water Discharges – A National Strategy’ by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, May 2024.</p> <p><u>Green Infrastructure.</u></p>	

The following map is proposed to be included which identifies the current Green Infrastructure within the town.



Alignment with Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030

Include reference to the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030 (NBAP] in Section 2.5 Other Plans and Guidelines of the Plan

- Project Ireland 2040
- Climate Action Plan 2023
- National Development Plan 2021-2030
- National Planning Framework 2018
- Eastern and Midland Region Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031
- Laois County Development Plan 2021 – 2027
- Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 – 2028
- Housing for All-a New Housing Plan for Ireland 2021
- Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016 - 2021
- Laois Heritage and Biodiversity Strategy 2021 – 2026
- Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns 2022
- **National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030**

- Local Area Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2013
- Manual for Local Area Plans 2013
- National Climate Change Adaptation Framework; Building Resilience to Climate Change 2012
- Our Sustainable Future, A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012
- Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure 2012
- Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012
- National Broadband Plan 2012
- National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010
- Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009
- Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 - 2020
- National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009 - 2020
- National Cycle Policy Framework
- Water Services Strategic Plan, A Plan for the Future of Water Services

Invasive Species

Amend Objective NH 012 as follows:

“Facilitate the work of agencies including Laois County Council redressing the issue of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species”,

Move to No Net Loss of Biodiversity

Include an additional policy as follows:

NHP9: “Promote a no net loss of biodiversity approach through strategies, planning, mitigation measures, appropriate offsetting and/or investment in Blue-Green infrastructure”.

Protection of Rookery and Roost for Rooks and Jackdaws

Include an additional objective as follows:

NH016: Make a Tree Preservation Order to protect a significant tree group, which is important as a rookery and roost for rooks and jackdaws, at the Downs Portlaoise and Portlaoise Town Park.

Ridge of Portlaoise Proposed Natural Heritage Area (Site Code: 000876)

The zoning of lands is not being undertaken as part of this draft Plan. The Land use zoning for the Portlaoise Local Area Plan functional area was carried out as part of the making of the overall Laois County Development Plan 2021 - 2027 which was adopted in January 2022.

The zoning of lands is not being undertaken as part of this draft Plan.

The Great Heath of Portlaoise Proposed Natural Heritage Area (Site Code: 000881)

This is outside the study area of the draft Plan and is already covered by suitably appropriate objectives in the Laois County Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

Suggested Amendment to Objective CMO 9

Amend objective CMO 9 to read as follows: “Plant pollinator friendly, drought-resistant plants/trees in public amenity areas to provide shade and increase green infrastructure linkages”.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy

Submission Number:
LS-C97-36

Submission Name:
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications

Chief Executive Recommendation:
Section 2: Plan Composition

Include additions / deletions in ‘Section 2.5 Other Plans & Guidelines’ as highlighted hereunder: The Draft LAP has been prepared having regard to national, regional and local policy documents, in addition to Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), including the following:

- ~~Climate Action Plan 2023~~
- Climate Action Plan 2024
- National Adaption Framework 2024
- Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

Section 5: Climate Change

Add the following to the end of section 5.1 as follows:

National Adaptation Framework 2024

Ireland's second statutory National Adaptation Framework (NAF) was published in June 2024 and replaces the first iteration of the framework published in 2018. The NAF outlines a whole of government and society approach to climate adaptation in Ireland. It also aims to improve the enabling environment for adaptation through ongoing engagement with civil society, the private sector, and the research community.

Amend section 5.2 with the following deletion and addition:

~~5.2 Laois County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024~~

~~The Laois County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 features a range of actions across six thematic areas, including: Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations; Infrastructure and Built Environment; Land Use and Development; Drainage and Flood Management; Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure and Community Health and Wellbeing.~~

~~The Strategy sets out a number of 'Adaptation Actions' including:~~

- ~~• To ensure that Climate Change adaptation considerations are mainstreamed and integrated successfully into all functions and activities of the local authority ensuring operational protocols, procedures and policies implement an appropriate response in addressing the diversity of impacts associated with climate change.~~
- ~~• To build capacity and resilience within Laois County Council to respond to climate change and climate change/severe weather events.~~
- ~~• To ensure and increase the resilience of infrastructural assets and the built environment, informing investment decisions.~~
- ~~• To integrate climate action considerations into land use planning policy and influence positive behaviour.~~
- ~~• To manage the risk of flooding through a variety of responses.~~
- ~~• To provide for enhancement of natural environment to work positively towards climate action.~~
- ~~• To promote effective biodiversity management and enhance protection of natural habitats and landscapes.~~
- ~~• To build capacity and resilience within communities.~~

5.2 Laois County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029

In accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, Laois County Council are required to prepare a climate action plan for its administrative area. The Laois County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 was adopted in January 2024. It sets out how the Local Authority aims to achieve its role within the National Climate Objective over the next 5 years and beyond toward 2050. The purpose of the Climate Action Plan is to:

- To deliver on national obligations to achieve the National Climate Objective of becoming a Climate Resilient, Biodiversity Rich, Environmentally Sustainable and Carbon Neutral Economy by no later than the end of 2050.
- To deliver and promote evidence-based and integrated climate action by way of adaptation and mitigation measures, centered around a strong understanding of the role and remit of the local authority on climate action.

The adopted Climate Action Plan therefore acts as key instrument to strengthen the links between national and international climate policy and the delivery of effective climate action at local level. its plays a significant role in reinforcing the commitment by local government to lead on place-based climate action.

Amend Objective CMO 1 in section 5.5 as follows:

‘Support and facilitate the creation of a Decarbonisation Zone in the Key Town of Portlaoise, in line with the objectives of the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029’

Add the following objectives to section 5.5 as follows:

CMO 20 - ‘Support the actions of the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 to increase awareness of the Portlaoise Low Carbon Town and encourage greater participation of the wider community’.

CMO 21 - ‘Support the actions of the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 to enhance public realm and conserve and enhance biodiversity’.

CMO 22 - ‘Support the actions of the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 to facilitate the modal shift to active travel and sustainable mobility in Portlaoise’.

CMO 23 - ‘Support the actions of the Laois Local Authority Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 to identify decarbonisation pathways for Portlaoise to achieve 2030 targets and promote principles of circular economy’.

CMO 24 – ‘Encourage and support a transition to renewable energy sources in Portlaoise, subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations’.

CMO 25 – ‘Support and promote the use of renewable energy technologies and supporting infrastructure at appropriate scales in residential, commercial and community developments and support the principle of on-site energy generation for self-consumption’.

CMO 26 - ‘Support the Climate Action Team in the undertaking of an investigation of the feasibility of Shared or District Heating in Portlaoise’.

CMO 27 – ‘Support, in conjunction with key stakeholders, the implementation of the Laois County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 and facilitate its role as a driver in the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation in Portlaoise, and the translation of national climate policy to local and community levels in the town.

CMO 28 – ‘Promote measures to reduce vacancy and the underuse of existing building stock and support initiatives that promote the reuse, refurbishment and retrofitting of existing buildings within Portlaoise, in line with the ambitions of the National Residential Retrofit Plan’.

CMO 29 – ‘Support the sustainable management of waste and enable a significant reduction in the production of waste in Portlaoise, in line with the principles of the Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy (DECC, 2021).

CMO 30 – ‘Promote circular economy principles and the incorporation of sustainable waste management measures within developments, in line with the “Best practice guidelines for the preparation of resource & waste management plans for construction & demolition projects” guidance’.

CMO 31 – ‘Promote high-quality, secure, and reliable digital connectivity in Portlaoise in line with the objectives of:

- (i) The National Broadband Plan,
- (ii) Dimension 2 of the 'Harnessing Digital – the Digital Ireland Framework' which supports the rollout of 5G, and
- (iii) National Strategic Objective 6 of The National Development Plan 2021-2023'.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy

Submission Number: LS-C97-38	Submission Name: Department of Education
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

Following detailed discussion on the topic of the provision of education facilities within the town of Portlaoise and the need for additional facilities, it was unanimously agreed that the following objective be included by way of amendment in the Local Area Plan as per the County Development plan EDPO 9 which seeks to 'Undertake a feasibility study for Portlaoise for the provision of a school / education infrastructure within six(6) months of the adoption of the Local Area Plan'.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paddy Bracken seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy

Submission Number: LS-C97-28	Submission Name: Electricity Supply Board
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly

Submission Number: LS-C97-20	Submission Name: RMLA agent for An Post
Chief Executive Recommendation: No Change.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-4	Submission Name: An Garda Síochána
Chief Executive Recommendation: Add policy PM 07 in Section 7: Placemaking as follows:	
“The design and layout of new development shall have regard to crime prevention principles including legibility, permeability, active frontages, natural surveillance, visibility, street lighting, defensible space, and other measures”.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

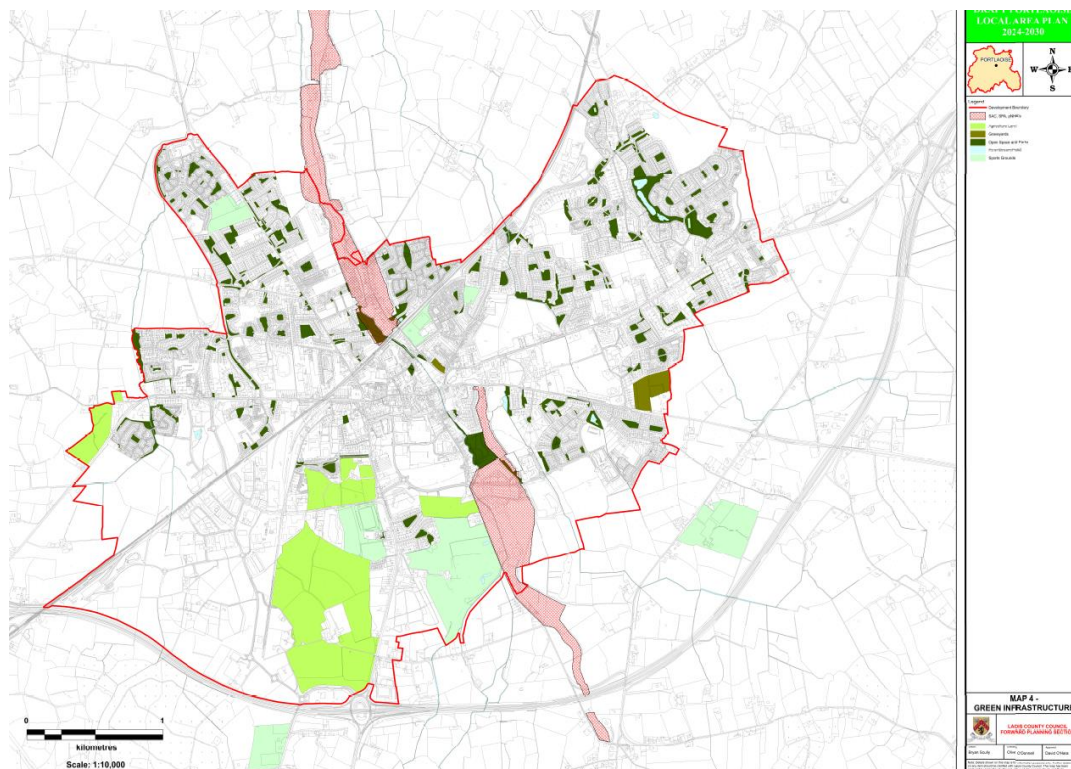
Submission Number: LS-C97-13	Submission Name: HSE Environmental Health Department
Chief Executive Recommendation: Include additions in ‘Section 2.5 Other Plans & Guidelines’ as highlighted hereunder:	
The Draft LAP has been prepared having regard to national, regional and local policy documents, in addition to Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), including the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022 • Smarter Travel Policy 2009 -2020 and/or recent updates • National Cycle Policy Framework 2009 – 2020 and/or recent updates • Government Road Safety Strategy 2021 –2030 • Get Ireland Active – National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland • Healthy Ireland - A Healthy Weight For Ireland Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016 – 2025 • Our sustainable future –A Framework for Sustainable Development • A Resource Opportunity – Waste Management Policy in Ireland 2012 	
Add section 14.4 in Section 14: Biodiversity and Natural Heritage as follows:	
14.4 Community Gardens and Allotments	
Community gardens and allotments utilise small spaces efficiently. They have a number of key benefits including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing physical activity to all age groups and different abilities. • Quality of life, mental health and well-being benefits. • Providing sustainable, locally grown food. • Bringing vacant / idle lands into active use. • Environmental, biodiversity and community benefits. 	

Laois County Council supports the provision of community gardens and allotments in Portlaoise.

Add policy NH 016 in Section 14: Biodiversity and Natural Heritage as follows:

Support local community groups in the development of community gardens and allotments, subject to residential amenity and compliance with all planning and environmental considerations.

The following map is proposed to be included which identifies the current Green Infrastructure within the town.



This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Ollie Clooney seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly

Submission Number:
LS-C97-24

Submission Name:
The Heritage Council

Chief Executive Recommendation:

Policy PC 4 will be updated to state:

Apply increased residential densities where appropriate having regard to ~~Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas (2009)~~ The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact

Settlements guidelines published in January 2024 and apply appropriate development management measures in ensuring growth is appropriate and in compliance with the RSES 2019;

Amend BHO7

Consider the change of use of protected structures, provided that it can be shown that the structure, character, appearance and setting will not be adversely affected ~~or where it can be shown it is necessary to have an economic use to enable its upkeep.~~

Nh016

Protect Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) from developments that would adversely affect their special interest

.....to require new developments to identify, protect and enhance ecological features by making provision for local biodiversity (for example, through provision of swift boxes or bricks, bat roost boxes, green roofs, etc.) and improve the ecological coherence of wider green infrastructure.

..... It is an objective of the Council to protect existing swift roosts as identified in the County Swift Survey and as they relate to Portlaoise and ensure existing nest sites are not lost through inappropriate renovation or destruction.

..... In dealing with applications for new developments, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following: • Inclusion of swift nesting opportunities in new buildings through use of swift brick or swift nest boxes where appropriate BNH 16 Work with relevant stakeholders such as the Office of Public Works (OPW) and local stakeholders to develop a Landscape Conservation Assessment in relation to the Heath and its attributes during the plan period.

The following document shall be added to the sources:

NH P7

Make Tree Preservation Orders as appropriate included for reasons of ecology and character value using “Amenity Trees and Woodlands – a Guide to their Management in Ireland” published by the Tree Council of Ireland.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney

Submission Number: LS-C97-31	Submission Name: Inland Fisheries Ireland
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Ollie Clooney.

2.2 Local Bodies

Submission Number: LS-C97-3	Submission Name: Portlaoise Innovation Centre DAC
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-23	Submission Name: Community Gardens Ireland
Chief Executive Recommendation: Add section 14.4 in Section 14: Biodiversity and Natural Heritage as follows: 14.4 Community Gardens and Allotments Community gardens and allotments utilise small spaces efficiently. They have a number of key benefits including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing physical activity to all age groups and different abilities.• Quality of life, mental health and well-being benefits.• Providing sustainable, locally grown food.• Bringing vacant / idol lands into active use.• Environmental, biodiversity and community benefits. Laois County Council supports the provision of community gardens and allotments in Portlaoise. Add policy NH 016 in Section 14: Biodiversity and Natural Heritage as follows: Support local community groups in the development of community gardens and allotments, subject to residential amenity and compliance with all planning and environmental considerations.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Vivienne Phelan seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley.

Submission Number: LS-C97-25	Submission Name: Aldi Stores (Ireland) Ltd
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor John Joe Fennelly seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy

Submission Number: LS-C97-29	Submission Name: An Taisce Green Schools
Chief Executive Recommendation: No Change.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

2.3 Zoning Related Submissions

It was noted that the zoning maps for Portlaoise are contained in the County Development Plan 2021-2027 and therefore the zoning for Portlaoise is covered by a different legal process.

The following submissions and response of the CE was noted in relation to each submission.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-7	Submission Name: Thomas Keane
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-8	Submission Name: Michael Hanley
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-9	Submission Name: Denis Graham
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-10	Submission Name: Kellyville Ltd.
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-11	Submission Name: Solus Developments Ltd.
Chief Executive Recommendation: No Change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-16	Submission Name: Graham Developments
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-17	Submission Name: Graham Developments
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-18	Submission Name: Graham Developments
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-19	Submission Name: Graham Developments
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

Submission Number: LS-C97-35	Submission Name: Bircrest Ltd / Hollybrook Homes
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change to zoning Amend section 7.4.4 'Masterplan Site 3: Portlaoise South-East' of Section 7: Placemaking with the following deletion and addition: The western end of the site is zoned "General Business" in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027. The eastern end is un-zoned.	
There are six zonings on this landbank, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General Business, ▪ Open Space & Amenity, ▪ Residential 2: New Proposed Residential, ▪ Strategic Reserve (2027-2031), ▪ Neighbourhood Centre, ▪ Community, Educational & Institutional. 	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Paschal McEvoy seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

2.4 Individual Submissions

Submission Number: LS-C97-1	Submission Name: Niall Kavanagh
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

Submission Number: LS-C97-2	Submission Name: Rosie Palmer Green Party Representative for Portlaoise
Chief Executive Recommendation: It is proposed to amend	

Para 12.3. to state as follows: “The built and natural environment of Portlaoise, including its public roads and footpaths, open spaces, Pairc an Phobail, the River Triogue Linear Park and Togher Wood and Bog support an array of sports, recreation and play activities such as walking, jogging, cycling. These are supplemented by gyms and leisure facilities, such as the Leisure Centre and Saint Marys Hall.”

Add the following policies objectives:

CSC 07 Facilitate additional sports facilities on lands identified in the Tyrrells Masterplan site.
CSC 08 Facilitate future extensions to the existing sports and recreation facilities subject to proper planning and sustainable development and environmental considerations.
CSC 09 Facilitate sports clubs and community groups in the acquisition and/or use of lands for sports and recreation purposes and support the delivery of multi-use sports facilities (including play facilities and swimming pool) on appropriately zoned land within the plan area.

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald.

Submission Number: LS-C97-5	Submission Name: Ray Harte
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Catherine Fitzgerald.

Submission Number: LS-C97-14	Submission Name: Julian Nagi
Chief Executive Recommendation: No Change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley.

Submission Number: LS-C97-22	Submission Name: Mary White
Chief Executive Recommendation: No change	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley seconded by Councillor Willie Aird.

Submission Number: LS-C97-26	Submission Name: Ann Fingleton
Chief Executive Recommendation: No Change.	

This was agreed on the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Paschal McEvoy.

That concluded consideration of each submission.

Resolution to Amend the Draft Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030

A motion to amend the Draft Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2024-2030, as recommended by the Chief Executive and as further amended by way of resolutions by Councillor Willie Aird seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley was proposed and a Roll call vote held as follows:

COUNCILLOR		FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
FIRST NAME	SURNAME			
William	AIRD	✓		
Conor	BERGIN	✓		
Paddy	BRACKEN	✓		
Ben	BRENNAN	✓		
Ollie	CLOONEY			Absent
Caroline	DWANE STANLEY	✓		
John Joe	FENNELLY	✓		
Catherine	FITZGERALD	✓		
Padraig	FLEMING	✓		
James	KELLY			Absent
John	KING	✓		
Seamus	MCDONALD			Absent
Paschal	MCEVOY	✓		
Aisling	MORAN			Absent
Tommy	MULLIGAN	✓		
Aidan	MULLINS			Absent
Vivienne	PHELAN	✓		
Marie	TUOHY			Absent
Barry	WALSH	✓		

Resulting in 13 votes in favour with 6 Members Absent.

We the Members of Laois County Council having considered the Draft Plan and associated appendices and the Chief Executive's Report on the submissions received circulated to the Members on the 9th August 2024 in accordance with the provisions of Section 20(3)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), at a special meeting of Laois County Council on 10th of September 2024 hereby resolve, to amend the Draft Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2024-2030, as recommended by the Chief Executive and as further amended by way of resolutions agreed at the Special Council Meeting on the 10th of September 2024 on the proposal of Councillor Willie Aird, seconded by Councillor Caroline Dwane Stanley with 13 Members voting in favour, no Members voting against and no member

abstaining (it was noted that 6 Members were absent) and to proceed in accordance with Section 20 (3)(e) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended).

The Planning Authority shall determine if a strategic environmental assessment or appropriate assessment or both such assessments are required to be carried out in respect of one or more than one proposed material alteration. Screenings for SEA and AA must be undertaken within two weeks of the Members agreeing proposed material amendments and full assessments, if required, would be completed within three weeks.

The material amendments must be prepared and placed on public display within a period of three (3) weeks of the passing of the resolution. Once on public display, members of the public then have a period of four (4) weeks to view and make submissions or observations on the material amendments.

Within a period of 8 weeks of the publication of the notice of material amendments, a further Chief Executive's Report on the submissions received must be submitted for the consideration of the Elected Members.

Angela McEvoy Director of Services advised that it is expected that the plan will be adopted in December 2024. Ms McEvoy thanked the staff involved in preparing the plan

142.ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE SCHEME 2024-2029

The Members were circulated with the draft Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2024-2029, the adoption of which was unanimously agreed on the proposition of Councillor Willie Aird and seconded by Councillor John Joe Fennelly.

143.MEMBERSHIP OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

It was agreed to postpone the consideration of this item to the September agenda of Laois County Council.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

SIGNED: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

CERTIFIED: _____
**DIRECTOR OF SERVICES
CORPORATE AFFAIRS**
