



Laois County Council

**POLICY FOR NAMING OF
HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS,
COMMEMORATIVE NAMING OF INFRASTRUCTURE
AND
THE PROVISION OF MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS AND
PLAQUES.**

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SECTION 1

Context

Laois County Council recognises that public commemoration and memorials offer opportunities to honour, celebrate, or remember a person, group of persons or events of significance. They provide an opportunity for the Council to highlight important social, cultural and economic contributions to society, to celebrate the uniqueness of the County and to create a 'sense of place' which is of significant importance to citizens and visitors.

This policy sets out the process by which Laois County Council will consider the commemoration of events or individuals who have shaped the County, by the naming of infrastructure and housing developments or by the installation of monuments, memorials and plaques in the public realm. In relation to the naming of new housing developments, the importance of place names cannot be underestimated and, by ceasing to use, or ignoring, the rich variety of indigenous place names in County Laois, we are in danger of losing a vital part of our heritage. It is also important to ensure that no duplication of names occurs (in new developments) in order to avoid any confusion as regards postal addresses.

Under the Planning & Development Act (2000), the County Council is empowered, when granting planning permission, to add conditions that require the developer to consult with the Local Authority in relation to the naming and numbering of the development. This is dealt with in the Development Control Standards section of the County Development Plan.

SECTION 2

Naming and Memorials Committee

The Naming and Memorials Committee will replace the current Placenames Committee. The Naming and Memorials Committee will oversee and advise the implementation of this policy document for Laois County Council and provide strategic oversight to ensure that relevant, appropriate and agreed development naming, monuments, memorials and plaques are facilitated. In addition, it will be important to ensure that Developers erect appropriate signage at entrances to Estates to reflect the requirements of the Naming and Memorials Committee.

Specifically, the Naming and Memorials Committee will make recommendations to Laois County Council and / or Municipal District Committees regarding the following:

- Naming of new (residential) developments
- Naming of key/strategic infrastructure and other infrastructure
- Installation of monuments, memorials and plaques in the public realm.

It is important for the County Council to establish a policy on this matter because of the

- need to have clarity regarding the policy and procedures for the consideration of proposals from individuals and interest groups
- high level of demand for the naming of infrastructure and the erection of memorials and plaques
- emotive nature of requests where people are recently deceased need to ensure that a proliferation of memorials and plaques does not detract from the wider amenity and enjoyment of public spaces
- need to enforce the policy of Laois County Council in relation to naming of residential developments, ensuring that all new developments, including County Council developments, have appropriate names
- need to promote and present interpretations of existing place-names around the County
- need to promote the use of Irish language names, which are easily pronounced by non-Irish speakers
- need to promote awareness of the capacity under the Local Government Act to change names of places and encourage use of appropriate names in such instances.

Proposals for the naming of infrastructure and dedication of memorials and plaques must be formally submitted through the agreed process. Where there are no proposals the Naming and Memorials Committee shall make proposals for the naming of infrastructure and dedication of memorials.

The Naming and Memorials Committee will consider all applications deemed to be valid under the terms of this policy. The Committee may, at its discretion, request additional information on any proposal.

Committee Composition

The Naming and Memorials Committee will comprise of Elected Members, supported by officers of Laois County Council including representatives (as required) from Planning, Heritage, Infrastructure, Housing and Community Sections of Laois County Council, with full membership as follows:

- Three Elected Members from each Electoral Area (total 9 Elected Members)
- Senior Planner,
- Senior Engineer (Transportation)
- Other officers from Laois County Council's Planning, Heritage, Infrastructure, Housing and/or Community Sections, as required
- Representative of Laois County Community Forum (1)
- Representative of Laois Heritage Forum (1)

Terms of Office

The Elected Members will be nominated and approved by Laois County Council and shall comprise three Elected Members from each Municipal District. The term of office for Elected Members will be consistent with the term of the Council. Any casual vacancy arising will be filled by nomination and approval of Laois County Council.

Chair

The Chair will be an Elected Member, filled by nomination and approval of Laois County Council.

Quorum

Quorum to be determined by the Naming and Memorials Committee at the first meeting of the Committee.

Frequency of Meeting

The Naming and Memorials Committee will meet 3 times per calendar year, once every 4 months. The Naming and Memorials Committee will also meet as required as and when requests for naming of housing estates are received. The Secretary to the Committee shall be the Administrative Officer for Planning. In the event that there is no item on the agenda for decision, then the meeting will not occur until the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Added Advices

The Committee may call on the advice of internal and/or external parties (who are not members of the Committee) in the evaluation of proposals. These experts will be requested to submit a report on proposals relevant to their expertise and/or be invited to attend and contribute to meeting/s of the Committee.

Public Consultation

The Naming and Memorials Committee may advertise seeking public comment or convene public meetings on proposals which are of particular interest to a locality.

Voting

Where possible recommendations of the Naming and Memorials Committee will be made by agreement. In the event of a vote on a recommendation only those Elected Members present at the meeting may cast a vote. The Chair will have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

Final Decision

All decisions relating to the naming of housing developments shall be decided by the Naming and Memorials Committee.

All other recommendations of the Naming and Memorials Committee will be brought before the relevant Municipal District Committee for final decision for the naming of local infrastructure and the erection of local memorials, plaques or monuments.

For large scale, strategic infrastructure, monuments and memorials the recommendations of the Naming and Memorials Committee will be brought to Laois County Council for final decision.

SECTION 3

Commemorative Naming Principles

- A Monument is a lasting tribute to a person, group or event. Therefore, the Council needs to be confident that the subject of such a memorial is of sufficient importance that the decision to approve a monument will stand the test of time.
- Where multiple proposals are made for the naming of major infrastructure, civic space or the erection of a monument in the public realm, the Committee will endeavour to select a name which best reflects the context, locality and importance of the infrastructure and history of the county.
- Laois County Council encourages different ways of commemoration. This can be achieved through
 - History, archive and research projects which take place within a locality or community or on a countywide basis.
 - Community development projects (arts, sport, education, etc.) dedicated to the memory of individuals, groups or events.
 - The development of digital media, which also enables new ways of thinking about and commemorating the past.
- A register will be established which records the naming of infrastructure and the erection of monuments and plaques.

Criteria

The following are criteria for all proposals on the naming of public infrastructure or the erection of a monument or plaque in honour of a person, group or event:

- The person/s must have been born or lived in Laois and have had strong and/or enduring connections with the county. The person/s must also have made a unique and outstanding contribution to the life or history of Laois through outstanding achievement, distinctive service or significant community contribution.
- In the case of an event to be commemorated, this must have occurred in Laois.
- An event will have to have occurred at least 5 years previously unless it is of extraordinary and long-lasting consequence to the county.
- In considering proposals for naming of infrastructure or erection of civic monuments or plaques, consideration will be given to what other infrastructure, monuments or plaques exist in honour of the person/s or event.
- Proposals to commemorate living persons will not be considered. Nominees should be deceased at least 5 years. A lesser period may be considered by the Committee in exceptional cases with subsequent agreement by the County Council.

- Evidence of consent must be supplied from members of family, estate or group connected with the individual or event to be commemorated.
- All proposals to erect monuments, memorials or plaques will have to comply with planning regulations. Any proposal to erect a plaque on a building that is a protected structure or is located within an Architectural Conservation Area will be referred for consultation to the Planning Department for clarification.
- Permission of the owners and where relevant lease holders /building managers of private property or buildings will have to have been sought and demonstrated to have been granted in writing at the time of application.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Under the Planning & Development Act (2000), the County Council is empowered, when granting planning permission, to add conditions that require the developer to consult with the Local Authority in relation to the naming and numbering of the development. This is dealt with in the Development Control Standards section of the County Development Plan.

The Naming Committee will provide a strategic view to ensure that relevant, appropriate and agreed names are used in future new developments. In addition, it will be important to ensure that Developers erect appropriate signage at entrances and at appropriate locations throughout the development to Estates

The Laois County Development Plan 2017-2023 and Draft Plan 2021-2027 contains the following development control standard in relation to naming of residential developments:

NAMING OF ESTATES

Naming and numbering of residential estates shall be approved in advance by the Naming and Memorials Committee of the Planning Authority. Developers must submit the following:

- Proposed placename;
- Reasons for their choice.

Naming of streets and residential estates shall reflect the local place names and local people of note, heritage, language or topographical or landscape features as appropriate and shall incorporate old place names from the locality as much as possible. The use of bi-lingual and Irish-Language signs will be encouraged.

Signage should be of appropriate size and material and shall be erected in a timely manner.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure includes buildings, bridges, roundabouts and other structures.

- Consideration will only be given to the naming of major infrastructure such as roundabouts, buildings (non-residential), facilities and bridges. Minor infrastructure will not be considered for naming. Parks, fire-brigade stations and utility facilities will not be named after individuals or events. Names of parks, fire-brigade stations and other infrastructure will reflect the locality or townland.
- A majority of the Committee members present must agree on a recommendation for the naming of major infrastructure such as a bridge or major civic building.
- Generally, an individual can only be commemorated with one piece of infrastructure.
- Every attempt will be made to reflect the diversity of the community when considering persons or events to be commemorated.

Monuments

A Monument is deemed to be a three-dimensional structure or a high and low relief, of architectural or sculptural design, erected to commemorate a person or event

- Proposals may be subject to planning legislation depending on their nature and design.
- Generally, an individual can only be commemorated with one monument.

Plaques

A Plaque is an inscribed tablet fixed to a wall or other surface.

Plaques are typically installed to commemorate the place of residence or work of a notable individual or the occurrence of a significant event. Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines (The Department of the Housing, Local Government & Heritage), recognises the value which a plaque can have in marking the historical context of a building including existing fixtures and features.

- Plaques will conform to a standard design and agreed wording. Laois County Council will provide a design template for plaques which it approves (please see page 16 of this document).

- Plaques can only be affixed to the original building or to an appropriate site nearby where the original building was in existence.
- Generally, an individual can only be commemorated with one plaque or memorial.
- The erection or replacement of business plaques or nameplates are not covered under this policy,

Community Memorials

A Community Memorial is a discreet memorial (for example a tree or bench in a park, street or public space) dedicated to a person or group or to commemorate an event.

- Proposals for community memorials such as a bench or tree planting to be installed in a Council park, or public space will be directed to the relevant Municipal District of Laois County Council for recommendation.

Irish Language

The use of bi-lingual signage that contains Irish language translation shall be implemented in accordance with the requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003 and any regulations enacted under same.

SECTION 4

General Procedures

The agreed procedure is as follows:

- Upon receiving planning permission, developers will be required through planning conditions to submit names and numbering scheme for each proposed development, with reasons why the proposed names have been chosen.
- The Committee may inform the planning department of the nature of conditions to be applied to planning permissions to ensure that the requirements of this Policy are complied with.
- Laois County Council Planning Section will forward place-name proposals to the Naming and Memorials Committee for consideration.
- The Committee will meet every 4 months and as required as and when requests for naming of housing estates are received to consider proposed names.
- The Committee may decide to accept or reject the name proposed
- In the case where the name has been rejected or where place-names are to be proposed, alternative names may be suggested
- These proposed names will be forwarded to the developer to make the choice. The developer may choose to re-negotiate or have further discussions on the matter
- The developer will then submit the final place-name choice to the Planning Section
- Planning Section, in consultation with the Naming and Memorials Committee, will accept or reject the proposed place-name.
- The importance of reverting to Developers in relation to naming of estates as soon as possible will be emphasised at all times.
- Proposals must be made in writing on an official application form available from Laois County Council by post or email (Appendix I) and must demonstrate compliance with regard to this policy.
- A marked map and photographs of the proposed location must be submitted with the completed application form.
- The text of the proposed wording for a monument or plaque must be provided along with visualisations (design, drawings) of the proposal.
- The Commemorative Naming Committee will only consider complete and valid proposals.
- Support materials such as publications, texts, photographs, videos etc will be accepted. All reasonable care will be taken with such support material. Laois County Council and its promoters or managers do not accept responsibility for any loss or damage which may occur. Applicants will be required to collect support material within one month of being informed of the decisions of Laois County Council.
- The design and text of any wording associated with the naming of infrastructure or the erection of a monument must be agreed with Laois County Council.

- Wording on monuments / plaques will be in English and Irish, and other languages where appropriate.
- The costs involved in naming infrastructure or the erection of a monument or plaque will be borne by the proposers. Proposers will have to demonstrate that the required funding is available for the proposal.
- It is a matter for the original promoter of a plaque to maintain the “goodwill” agreement with the building owners and to maintain the appearance of the plaque in perpetuity. Furthermore, Laois County Council will not be responsible for future maintenance and upkeep of plaques promoted and erected by a private individual or group.
- It is acknowledged that plaques can add to the special interest of a building and it is recommended that they are retained in situ and not removed unless damaged beyond repair.
- Laois County Council may initiate the naming of infrastructure or the erection of a monument or plaque through the Commemorative Naming Committee, and in such circumstances may fund or part-fund the initiative.
- All works carried out as part of a proposal to the Commemorative Naming Committee must comply with all relevant legislation including relevant Laois County Council bye laws.
- The decision to permit the erection of a plaque is subject to a written contract or agreement with Laois County Council. This will take the form of a letter of consent that will issue to the proposer once the committee has reached a decision.
- This policy will be reviewed every 5 years by the Commemorative Naming Committee. This committee may make proposals in such a review.

This Policy Document was approved by Laois County Council at its meeting held on

(DATE) _____

Signed: _____
Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council

APPENDIX I – Application form

APPLICATION FORM

Please note, all proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in the Commemorative Naming of Infrastructure and Provision of Monuments Memorials and Plaques Policy Document

A. Name of Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

B. Person or event to be nominated for memorial:

C. Nomination for (please tick box)

Naming of Infrastructure: Location: _____

Monument: Location: _____

Plaque: Location: _____

Renaming of estate: Location: _____

Naming of Housing

Development: Location: _____

D. Biographical or Historical information on the person or event and reason for the nomination (no more than 500 words). Please attach.

E. Written consent from a relative/estate of the person to be commemorated has been submitted Yes No

F. Written consent from the owner of the building where the plaque will be located has been submitted Yes No

G. Applicants for Plaques or Monuments will need to submit additional information as set out on page 2 of this Application Form.

H. I/we have read the criteria as set out in the Commemorative Naming Policy Document. Please tick box to confirm.

Signature of applicant: _____ **Date:** _____

Completed Application Forms should be returned to: **Corporate Affairs Section, Laois County Council, Áras an Chontae, JFL Avenue, Portlaoise, Co Laois.**

Additional Information Required:

Plaques

- Address of building
- Status of the building
 - That the building is located in the Laois County Council jurisdiction
 - Whether the building is listed on the Register of Protected Structures
- Photograph of building
- Proposed exact location of plaque on building
- Proposed wording of plaque (Laois County Council will have the final decision on wording)
- Name and address of owner of the building
- Name and address of person who will be responsible for the long term maintenance of the plaques

Please see criteria in our Policy Document regarding the 5 year rule.

Please note in order to maintain uniformity of Laois County Council plaques, it is important to set a word limit and keep all plaques similar in design and content e.g.:

- (Line 1) Name of Person/Event to be Commemorated
- (Line 2) Date of birth – date of death or date of event
- (Line 3) Profession / Renown as **(limited to 32 characters)**
- (Line 4) Lived / Died / Worked Here

The Irish language translation must also appear first on all Laois County Council plaques and must be at the same size and of an equal or larger font size.

Dimension of Plaques (2 types)

33 cm and 45 cm (roundel)

In certain instances, an alternative format for plaques may be utilised subject to the consideration of specific criteria.

Monuments

- Address and location
- Photograph of location and context
- Status of location i.e. City Council/private property
- Description of monument
- Design of monument
- Exact wording of inscription (if relevant)
- Written consent of property owner (if private)
- Name and address of person who will be responsible for the long term maintenance of the monument