

Comhairle Chontae Laoise
Laois County Council



Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026

Revised May 2022

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Section 1: INTRODUCTION

In light of the Government’s recent publication of “Affordable Housing Act 2021”, “Housing Circular 28/2021 on Affordable Housing Act 2021 - Amendments to Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000”, and “*Housing for All; a New Housing Plan for Ireland*” in September 2021, Laois County Council has prepared the following **Housing Delivery Action Plan** in relation to the provision of social and affordable housing in Laois for the period 2022-2026.

This plan has been informed by the Laois County Housing Strategy & Housing Needs Demand Assessment, which was prepared by the Council during the preparation of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027¹(CDP). This has also been informed by the Core Strategy which sets out a vision for Laois with the following aim in relation to the provision of housing -

AIM: TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF HOUSING IN A RANGE OF LOCATIONS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTY’S POPULATION, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON FACILITATING ACCESS TO HOUSING TO SUIT DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLD AND TENURE NEEDS IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER AND IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS. (LAOIS CDP 2021-2027)

The development of the Core Strategy within the Laois CDP 2021-2027 has been guided by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government ‘Guidance Note on Core Strategies’ (2010), taking into account relevant changes brought about through the publication of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The Core Strategy provides relevant information to demonstrate consistency with both the NPF and RSES and sets out core aims that, in turn, define and shape the following:

- preferred growth locations,
- revised population targets and population distribution and
- land use zoning requirements.

These are expressed in the Core Strategy Table 2.15 *Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027* and related zoning maps in Volume 2, Settlement Plans. The settlement hierarchy for County Laois is defined below:-

Table 1: Settlement Hierarchy for Laois

SETTLEMENT TYPOLOGY	SETTLEMENTS	POPULATION 2016
KEY TOWNS	Portlaoise	22,050
	Graiguecullen	4,692
SELF-SUSTAINING GROWTH TOWNS	Portarlinton	6,596 (8,368 total including Offaly side)

¹ Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 due for adoption by Laois County Council on 6th January 2022.

SETTLEMENT TYPOLOGY	SETTLEMENTS	POPULATION 2016
SELF-SUSTAINING TOWNS	Mountmellick	4,777
	Abbeyleix	1,770
	Stradbally	1,350
	Mountrath	1,774
TOWNS AND VILLAGES	Durrow	835
	Rathdowney	1,271
	Ballylinan	1,101
VILLAGES (Pop > 500)	Clonaslee	566
	Killenard	671
	Ballyroan	563
	Borris In Ossory	508

The distribution of future population and household growth in the Draft Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 is based on the key principles of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Regional Social and Economic Strategy (RSES) of delivering more compact growth. Growth is therefore targeted in large urban centres that have the capacity and greatest potential for growth on a sustainable platform. In addition, an Infrastructure Assessment (IA) has informed the land use zoning.

In accordance with the principles of compact growth, at least 30% of housing within settlements is to be within the existing built up footprint area in conjunction with sequential development of settlements. The preferred choice for residential development is within town and village centres, however there are limiting factors which may be applicable e.g. the historic formation of many of the main towns in County Laois, flooding implications (as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)), inadequate access, limited and fragmented land holdings and the requirement to facilitate retail development in these locations in accordance with the sequential test under the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012).

The Draft Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 has recognised the social and economic benefits of the redevelopment of brownfield lands to promote urban regeneration and will continue to support the delivery of compact growth and regeneration of under utilised sites in towns and villages throughout Laois. The sites identified and referred to hereafter in the proposed delivery programme aligns and is fully consistent with this approach.

The Housing Delivery Action Plan is consistent with the Draft Laois County Development 2021-2027 and its associated appendices and environmental assessments. The next section of this plan will set out the details of both social and affordable housing delivery as appropriate over the period 2022-2026, in line with targets set under *Housing for All*.

Section 2: SOCIAL HOUSING

2.1 Social Housing Delivery Targets under *Housing for All*

Table 2 sets out the annual new build social housing delivery targets under *Housing for All* over the next 5 years as outlined by the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on 20th September 2021.

Table 2: Annual Social Housing Delivery Targets 2022-2026

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Units	200	79	80	87	88	534

2.2 Housing Demand

In terms of Key Settlement areas within the County, Table 3 indicates where the most significant level of housing demand occurs:

Table 3: Social Housing Demand per Settlement

SETTLEMENT TYPOLOGY	SETTLEMENTS	Demand (%)
KEY TOWNS	Portlaoise	43%
	Graiguecullen	2%
SELF-SUSTAINING GROWTH TOWNS	Portarlinton	16%
SELF-SUSTAINING TOWNS	Mountmellick	17%
	Abbeyleix	9%
	Mountrath	6%
OTHER TOWNS AND VILLAGES		7%

The total number of approved applications as at 12th May 2022 (revised from 6th December 2021) is 1,771 (*Gross need*). A further break down of the information below indicates demand by household size and also demand on an MD basis (based on first preference), which indicates Portlaoise as the dominant location for first preference choice.

Table 4: Division of demand by bedroom

1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	5+ bed
731	553	394	88	5

Table 5: Division of demand by MD (based on first preference of area)

Portlaoise	Borris-in-Ossory/ Mountmellick	Portarlington/Graiguecullen
1,201	315	256

At 12th May 2022, housing demand, excluding HAP/RAS/Transfers, was 856.

2.3 Housing Applicants with a Disability

At the time of compiling Laois County Council’s Strategic Housing Plan for People with Disabilities (May 2021), there 250 applicants on the Laois County Council social housing list with a disability, categorised as follows:

Table 6: Breakdown of need of applicants with disability

Category	No of Applicants
Physical	142
Sensory	13
Mental Health	42
Intellectual	53
TOTAL	250

It is intended that Laois County Council’s Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities (adopted at the Council meeting of the 13th December 2021) will form an integral part of the Housing Delivery Action Plan and will promote and support the delivery of accommodation for people with disabilities using all appropriate housing supply mechanisms. The Strategy will also support longer term strategic planning.

The objective of the Housing Delivery Action Plan is to ensure that all our citizens enjoy an adequate standard of housing accommodation appropriate to their needs, and as far as possible, in a location and tenure of their choice and to provide a responsive and supportive housing service for those in need of assistance.

Laois County Council will endeavour to set aside at least 10% of its total annual allocations to Persons with a Disability. Allocations will be considered from the following Housing options:

- Existing Standard Social Housing
- Specially Adapted Social Housing
- Direct Build by the Local Authority
- Part V
- Nominations to Approved Housing Bodies (AHB’s)
- RAS/ Leasing

An average of 280 allocations are made in Laois annually via the above housing mechanisms. The current approved figures show a planned provision of 18 units in respect of purpose-built disability accommodation via CAS and LA Direct Build schemes. Other units within schemes in our approved pipeline, which have ground floor bedroom and bathroom facilities e.g., accessible bungalows, will be

prioritised for allocation to applicants with a disability, both housing list and transfer applicants. Transfers will also be considered for those tenants who wish to surrender a bungalow/accessible property which would accommodate a person with a disability.

2.4 Older Persons

The 2016 Census shows that County Laois had a slightly lower than average proportion of older adults with approximately 11% of the population in the County aged 65 or over. This is compared to the national average of approximately 13%. At the end of Q1 2022, 16% of approved social housing applicants were aged over 55 years.

Age friendly housing in Laois will be delivered under a number of headings, including direct local authority construction and through approved housing body delivery. It is estimated that 60 units specifically targeted as age friendly housing will be delivered over the plan period. There are a number of other schemes also at the planning stage that will include age friendly housing, but not included in the HDAP approved figures, but may come to fruition by 2026.

This will mean that the demand for nursing homes, residential care homes and sheltered housing accommodation is continuing to grow. It also means that our housing developments need to be adaptable to cater for the future changing needs of our aging population.

The 'Age Friendly Ireland' Initiative is a key policy document that provides leadership and guidance in identifying the needs and opportunities of an ageing population.

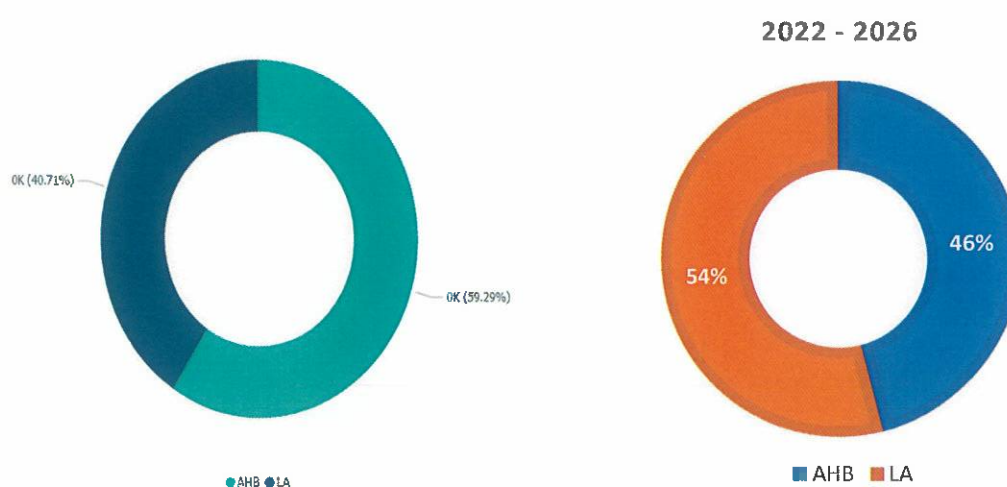
It is the policy of the Council to address the special needs of the elderly , furthermore it is the policy of the Council to meet the needs of the elderly by providing accommodation in central, convenient and easily accessible locations to facilitate independent living where possible.

2.5 Approved Housing Body Engagement

Laois County Council has developed strong working relationships with the Approved Housing Body Sector in recent years.

The strength of this partnership is reflected in the considerable number of new social housing delivered by Approved Housing Bodies in the County, with the support of Laois County Council and the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. This is reflected in the following pie chart which shows the 59% delivery of units by AHB's during 2018-2021.

Figure 1: AHB Delivery 2018-2021 and Proposed AHB Delivery 2022-2026



The level of private construction development has presented opportunities for the Approved Housing Body sector in the County through the Capital Advance Lease Facility (CALF), opportunities which have been proactively availed of.

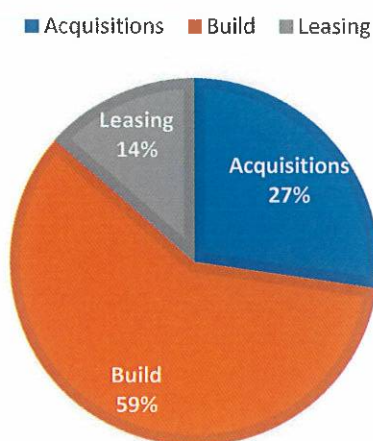
Given the above, it is anticipated that this ratio of delivery will continue in 2022 and 2023, as we honour existing commitments currently in the planning and design stages. Laois County Council is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with Approved Housing Bodies in fulfilling our common objective of social housing delivery for those applicants on our social housing waiting list.

2.6 Social Housing Build Delivery 2018-2021

The table below indicates the breakdown of social housing delivery under the Rebuilding Ireland Programme 2018 – 2021.

Figure 2. Delivery of Social Housing under RBI Programme

SOCIAL HOUSING DELIVERY 2018-2021



252 units were added to our housing stock over the RBI period 2018-2021, with stock now totalling 2,286 units. 89 units were delivered via direct build and turnkey developments between 2018 and 2021, shown on Table 7 below.

Table 7: Direct build and Turnkey units delivered under RBI 2018-2021

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Units</i>
Conniberry Way, Portlaoise	33
The Orchard, Stradbally	6
Harpurs Lane	1
Hillview, Portlaoise	2
Ballymorris, Portarlinton	22
Shannon St., Mountrath	6
Coolroe, Ballybrittas	1
Main Street, Borris-In-Ossory (Turnkey)	6
Corbally, Clonaslee (Turnkey)	7
Main Street, Borris-In-Ossory (Turnkey)	5

2.7 Approved Social Housing Pipeline Delivery – *Housing for All* – 2022-2026

A firm supply pipeline is in place for delivery in excess of targeted 534 additional social homes during the plan period 2022-2026. The table below sets out the DHLGH approved pipeline 2022-2026 in respect of:

- a. LA Construction projects
- b. LA Turnkey projects
- c. AHB CALF projects
- d. AHB CAS projects
- e. Part V

Table 8: Approved build delivery under *Housing for All* (including proposals on Tracker not included in approved figs May 2022)

MD	Settlement Area	Scheme	No of units	Year of estimated delivery	TYPE of Delivery
Borris-in-Ossory/ Mountmellick	Durrow/Rathdowney /Errill	Moore Street, Rathdowney	6	2022	LA Construction
	Durrow/Rathdowney /Errill	Sean Doire, Cork Road, Durrow	22	2022	LA Construction
	Durrow/Rathdowney /Errill	St Kieran's Park, Errill	14	2023	LA Construction
	Durrow/Rathdowney /Errill	Mooreville, Rathdowney	7	2023	LA Construction
	Durrow/Rathdowney /Errill	Derry Road, Durrow	18	2024	LA Construction
	Mountmellick	Pattison Est. Mountmellick	10	2022	LA Construction
	Mountmellick	Harbour Court, Mountmellick	6	2023	LA Construction
	Mountrath/Castletown /BinOssory	Rushall, Mountrath	2	2025	LA Construction
	Mountrath/Castletown /BinOssory	Moanbaun, Mountrath	9	2025	LA Construction
	Mountrath/Castletown /BinOssory	Featherbed Lane, Borris in Ossory	5	2022	LA Turnkey
Graiguecullen/ Portarlington	North (Portarlington)	Spa Street, Droughill, Portarlington	26	2022	AHB CALF
	North (Portarlington)	Ballymorris Green, Portarlington (Ph 1/3)	15	2022	AHB CALF

	North (Portarlington)	Ballymorris Green, Portarlington (Ph 2/3)	19	2022	AHB CALF
	North (Portarlington)	Ballymorris Green, Portarlington (Ph 3/3)	12	2023	AHB CALF
	North (Portarlington)	Bracklone Street, Portarlington	12	2025	LA Construction
	North (Portarlington)	Coolroe, Ballybrittas	1	2022	LA Turnkey
	North (Portarlington)	Market Square, Portarlington	18	2023	LA Turnkey
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Doirinn Alainn, Ballylinan	9	2023	AHB CALF
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Carraig Glas, Stradbally	26	2024	LA Construction
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Rathvarna, Killeshin	2	2022	LA Part V
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Bruach Na Habhainn, Killeen	3	2022	LA Turnkey
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	The Orchard, Ballylynan	2	2022	LA Turnkey
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	The Orchard, Ballylynan	3	2022	LA Turnkey
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Church Avenue, Stradbally	31	2023	LA Turnkey
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Bruach Na Habhainn, Killeen	1	2023	LA Turnkey
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Doonane	12	2024	LA Turnkey
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Ballyadams	1	2024	LA Turnkey
Portlaoise	Ballyroan/Abbeyleix /Ballinakill	Gleann na Glaise, Ballyroan	10	2022	LA Construction
	Ballyroan/Abbeyleix /Ballinakill	Main Street, Ballinakill	3	2025	
	Portlaoise	Clonrooske Abbey, Portlaoise	32	2022	AHB CALF
	Portlaoise	The Springs, Portlaoise (2 phases)	43	2022	AHB CALF
	Portlaoise	Holdbrook, Portlaoise	10	2022	AHB CALF
	Portlaoise	Goldencroft, Portlaoise (Ph 1/3)	13	2022	AHB CALF

Portlaoise	The Maltings & Roselawn, Harpers Lane, Portlaoise (Ph 1/2)	15	2022	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	Harpers Lane, Portlaoise	44	2023	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	Goldencroft, Portlaoise (Ph 2/3)	24	2023	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	Goldencroft, Portlaoise (Ph 3/3)	30	2023	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	The Maltings & Roselawn, Harpers Lane, Portlaoise (2/2)	40	2023	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	The Meadows, Mountrath Road, Portlaoise	48	2023	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	Hepburn Court, Portlaoise	54	2023	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	South Dublin Road, Kilminchy, Portlaoise	36	2023	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	Curragh na Mona, Abbeyleix Rd, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	39	2024	AHB CALF
Portlaoise	Presentation Convent & Lands, Portlaoise,	15	2024	AHB CAS
Portlaoise	Presentation Convent & Lands, Portlaoise,	36	2024	AHB CAS
Portlaoise	County Hotel, Main Street, Portlaoise	10	2024	AHB CAS
Portlaoise	Clonrooske, Knockmay	11	2024	LA Construction
Portlaoise	Iona, Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise	7	2024	LA Construction
Portlaoise	Ard Branagh, Portlaoise	6	2022	LA Part V
Portlaoise	Aughnaharna , Portlaoise	2	2022	LA Part V
Portlaoise	Stradbally Road, Portlaoise	80	2025	Mixed Tenure
	TOTAL	900		

Social Housing Programme Summary

Table 9 Below sets out the Social Housing build delivery programme by Municipal District and general settlement area to be delivered across the various capital mechanisms. Below also includes units that are proposed, under discussion and subject to approval, but yet to be included in our supply pipeline is also included in this table.

Appendix I demonstrates the housing typology, i.e., number of bedrooms, in respect of each of the above proposed schemes.

Table 9: Approved and Proposed Social Housing unit numbers by Municipal District (May 2022)

Settlement	Estimated Part V (Private & LDA)	Existing LA Landbank (SHIP)	Future land Purchases	LA Turnkey	*LA Buy & Renew	AHB CALF	AHB CAS	Social Homes via Mixed Tenure	Total Social Homes to be delivered
Portlaoise	8	18			*4	428	61	**80	595
Ballyroan /Abbeyleix /Ballinakill		13							13
Portlaoise MD	8	31	0			428	61	80	608
North (Portarlinton)		12		19		72			103
South (Stradbally to Graiguecullen)	2	26		53		9			90
Portarlinton/ Graiguecullen MD	2	38		72		81			193
Mountmellick		16			*10				16
Mountrath/ Castletown/ BinOssory		11		5	*10				16
Durrow/ Rathdowney/Errill		67							67
Borris-in-Ossory /Mountmellick MD		94		5		0			99
Total	10	163	0	77	*25	509	61	**80	925

**LA Buy and Renew projects being considered are not part of the overall social housing build delivery figures.*

***This figure is only being considered to include affordable/cost rental housing; only a portion will likely be included in social housing build delivery figures*

Table 10: Proposed delivery programme by year (approved and proposed units)

Year	Estimated Part V (Private & LDA)	Existing LA Landbank	Future land Purchases	LA Turnkey Development	LA Buy & Renew	AHB CALF	AHB CAS	Other	Total Homes to be delivered
2022	10	48		14	*4	182			254
2023		27		50	*1	288			365
2024		62		13	*5	39	61		175
2025		26			*5			**80	106
2026					*10				
TOTAL	10	163	0	77	*25	509	61	**80	925

**LA Buy and Renew projects being considered are not part of the overall social housing build delivery figures.*

***This figure is only being considered to include affordable/cost rental housing; only a portion will likely be included in social housing build delivery figures*

2.8 Part V Delivery

An analysis of existing Part V Agreements on foot of permitted planning permissions for housing development in Co. Laois shows a total of 14 social housing units for delivery via Part V for the period 2022-2026. A further 52 units will be delivered, if planning permissions currently in place are realised in the next 4 years. Some Part V agreements (non AHB acquired) are yet to be approved.

Table 11: No of units proposed to be delivery by Part V

Scheme	Town	No of units	Expected Year of delivery
Ard Branagh	Portlaoise	6	2022
Summerhill Lane	Portlaoise	2	2022
Cross of Newtown	Ballyroan	2	2023
Aghnaharna	Portlaoise	2	2022
Rathvarna	Killeshin	2	2022
Fairways	Killenard	3	2023
Cullenbeg Park	Mountmellick	7	2024
Mountrath Road	Portlaoise	7	2024
Rahin Towers	Ballylinan	1	2024
Ballycullenbeg	Mountmellick	6	2024
Rivendell	Graiguecullen	2	2024
Killenard	Killenard	9	2024
Rathevan	Portlaoise	9	2024
Killenard	Killenard	8	2024
TOTAL		66	

2.9 Leasing

Table 12 sets out current approved long-term leasing projects, all of which have a term of 25 years, with the exception of the Repair & Lease (RLS) which has a 10-year term.

Table 12: Long term leasing projects (May 2022)

YEAR LEASE COMMENCED	LEASE TYPE	AREA	NO. OF UNITS
2019 - 1 Unit	RLS - PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	1
2020 - 13 Units	LTL - PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	3
	LTL - PRIVATE OWNER	Portarlinton	2
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	2
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Portarlinton	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Mountrath	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Coolrain	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Mountmellick	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Ballylinan	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Ballintubbert	1
2021 - 13 Units	LTL - PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	2
	LTL - PRIVATE OWNER	Mountmellick	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	2
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Ballybrittas	2
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Graiguecullen	2
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Mountrath	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Portarlinton	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Rathdowney	1
	RAS - PRIVATE OWNER	Mountmellick	1
2022 - 8 Units	LTL - PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	1
	LTL - PRIVATE OWNER	Portarlinton	1
	MTR - PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	4
	SHLS – PRIVATE OWNER	Portarlinton	1
	SHLS – PRIVATE OWNER	Portlaoise	1
TOTAL			35

*MTR – Mortgage to Rent

2.10 Land

It is noted that adding to the Council Land bank provides a possible challenge to the delivery of the Housing programme beyond 2026. Table 13 sets out the remaining Council land bank including those lands included in the Land Aggregation (LAG) Scheme. A number of these sites proceeding through master planning, design, etc for social, affordable and cost rental housing development. However, some sites will have constraints in terms of their zoning, flood issues, location and services.

Table 13: Current land bank

Land Bank Name	Original Amt of land (HA)	Land Serviced / Not Serviced	Is Land Designated for housing	Use for Land	Is it at any Stage in the Housing Approval Scheme?
Stradbally Road, Portlaoise - 17/21 (Tyrells)	1.98	Serviced	Yes	Residential	No - Master Plan finalised Mixed Tenure options being explored
Tullyroe, Abbeyleix - 06/21 (Old water pumping station)	1.70	Serviced	No	n/a	future development
Ballinakill - Castlecomer Road - 03/21 (LAGS)	1.25	no	No	Zoned Mixed Use	LAGS (proposal for caravan park)
Ballinakill - Bride Street - 04/21 (LAGS)	0.89	Serviced	not currently	Zoned Mixed Use	LAGS
Corrig, Stradbally - LS-0013	1.20	Serviced	Yes	n/a	No – possible further phase of current planned development
Timahoe - LS-0018	1.49	no	No	Zoned open space	
Serviced sites, Clonaslee - 2 x 0.15ha sites remaining	0.30	Serviced	Yes	n/a	Serviced Sites (Flooding issues)
Woodbrook, Mountrath - 12/21 (LAGs)	1.71	Serviced	Yes	n/a	LAGS
Portlaoise Road, Mountrath - 14/21 (LAGs)	3.10	Serviced	No	Zoned Community /Educational	LAGS
Rathdowney, Golf Club Road - 08/21 (LAGS)	4.10	no	No	Tourism	LAGS
Castletown, Churchfield - 09/21 (LAGS)	1.47	Serviced	Yes	n/a	LAGS
Ballacolla Road, Durrow	1.117	Serviced	Yes (0.79 ha)		Future development
Total	20.307				

During the previous plan period under RBI, the following Land banks were purchased :

- For small infill housing scheme at Harbour Court, Mountmellick (6 units) – scheme to be delivered in 2023:
- for future mixed-use housing proposals at Stradbally Road, Portlaoise (proposed 80 units approx) as part of a larger land bank which is the subject of a masterplan and for a design team is being engaged and mixed tenure options are being explored with a view to creating a sustainable neighbourhood within the town of Portlaoise – possible delivery of scheme 2025 / 2026.

Future Land Purchases:

The following land banks have been acquired or are being considered by Laois County Council: -

- Former Maryborough school site, Stradbally Road, Portlaoise – potential for social housing scheme comprising 12 units (approx.)
- Other lands currently identified in Portlaoise and Abbeyleix as having potential for social/affordable/mixed use tenure housing and will be pursued accordingly.

On the 7th December 2021, Expressions of Interest were invited from landowners interested in disposing of land (Greenfield or Brownfield) with appropriate zoning within the county for the development of housing. Similarly, Expressions of Interest were invited for advanced purchase turnkey arrangements for social and/or affordable housing. All expressions of interest are currently being assessed.

Serviced Sites

The opportunity to provide serviced sites is being promoted and encouraged by Laois County Council. The Laois CDP 2021-2027 provides for where such serviced sites could be accommodated and policies promoting same have been included. Cluster Housing Schemes in villages will be considered as an alternative to one off housing and as an affordable option to local people. This style of development can be developed in a sustainable way respecting the unique aspects of the town / village and the site itself, whilst also responding to current housing needs and economic and social needs.

The Housing Authority intends to avail of the Croí Cónaithe Funding Stream to advance proposals for serviced sites and also to address vacancy in some of the towns and villages in the county.

Table 14 sets out proposals for future serviced sites in County Laois. Other sites will also be explored on foot of the request for expressions of interest for land, if appropriate.

Table 14: Proposed Serviced Sites for Laois

Location	Status	No of potential sites
Derry Road, Durrow	Stage 1 approved	8
Doonane	Stage 1 approved	2
Castletown (LAGS land not yet serviced)	Proposal	9
Ballyroan Road, Abbeyleix	Proposal	4

Section 3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

3.1 Housing Need Demand Assessment / Housing Strategy

The Laois County Council Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is an important step in providing a robust, shared and agreed evidence base on housing need and demand to support the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the associated Housing Strategy.

It helps to inform the Development Plan to consider the scale of house building and to plan for the quantum of land required to deliver this. It also informs the Laois County Housing Strategy, providing direction to tackle housing need and demand in accordance with strategic priorities for housing and related services.

The preparation of the HNDA was undertaken by Downey Planning Consultants supported by the Housing Department of Laois County Council and other research experts. Full details of HNDA can be seen in Appendix 1. The extensive process was carried out as part of the preparation of the Laois Housing Strategy. The HNDA also reflects assessments for mortgage qualification and the affordability for ownership and private rental.

The HNDA estimates the future numbers of additional homes to meet existing and future demand. From the evidence shown in the analysis of additional housing demand suggested by the ESRI, it is expected that of the overall 3,998 additional no. housing demand estimated over the lifetime of the Plan, an average of 2.3% of the anticipated additional households would not qualify for a mortgage but can afford private rental, 10.5% would not qualify for a mortgage and cannot afford private rental, and 18% would not qualify for a mortgage and cannot afford either private rental or cost rental housing, thereby falling within the social housing provision.

The HNDA remains under review to adapt to changing market influences.

Minimum targets recently issued by Dept of Housing in relation to the delivery of Affordable Purchase/Cost Rental housing by the local authority are as follows:

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	TOTAL
LA Affordable Purchase & Cost Rental Delivery Target	5	7	10	8	8	38

Expressions of Interest were invited via advertisement and LCC website in December 2021 in respect of:

- a. Appropriately zoned land for housing development
- b. Advanced Purchase arrangements for un-commenced residential developments with planning permission.

Expressions of Interest submitted for advanced purchase turnkey arrangements are currently being examined. The Council's Housing Team also met local builders on a face to face basis, to explore the potential of affordable and cost rental agreements.

A survey of potential purchasers of affordable houses was recently published, closed on 1st April 2022.

Total no of responses	84	
Couples	44	52%
Individuals	40	48%
Median income*	€37,500	
Income range reported	€0 - €76,360	
Average price of a home respondents think they can afford	€151,702.38	
Median price of a home they could afford on income (Income X 3.5 plus 10% deposit)	€170,000	
Price range reported	€35,000 - €367,000	
Most popular location	Portlaoise	
Second most popular location	Mountmellick/Abbeyleix	
Most preferred house type	House	

**It should be noted that 5 respondents did not insert income details when completing the survey.*

3.2 Delivery of Affordable Housing

Laois County Council advertised on the 7th December 2021 seeking proposals to purchase un-commenced residential developments through turnkey arrangements for affordable and mixed tenure housing. Home builders and housing developers with planning permission for suitable houses or apartments where construction has not yet commenced, are asked to consider entering an advance purchase arrangement with the local authority to provide affordable and mixed tenure housing. All options are being explored in this regard.

The planning for location and number of affordable housing development is contingent on further market soundings undertaken over the plan period.

3.3 Part V (Affordable)

Coming to effect from 3rd September 2021, the Housing Circular 28/2021, amends Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The Programme for Government contained commitments in relation to expanding Part V to encompass affordable purchase and cost rental units and introducing affordable homes requirements to Part V. Part 6 of the Affordable Housing Act 2021, which was enacted on 21 July 2021, gives effect to this commitment.

The principal change to Part V made by these amendments is to increase the Part V contribution for new housing developments from 10% social housing to a mandatory 20% requirement, at least half of which must be applied to social housing provision and up to half of which may be applied to affordable and cost rental housing.

It is noted that these changes to Part V primarily apply to land purchased on or after 1 August 2021.

An analysis of all future planning permissions with a cross check for the date of purchase of the sites will be carried out to ascertain the best application of the new Part V rules so to optimise affordable housing proposals in the right locations.

3.4 Turnkey Developments

Expressions of interest received for advance purchase arrangements for turnkey developments are currently being and will be analysed in terms of its location and suitability for affordable housing.

Section 4: VACANT HOMES

A Vacant Homes/ Regeneration internal working group (comprised of SEO Housing, Vacant Homes Officer, Derelict Sites Technician, Planner and Chief Technician) has been established to map and examine vacancy and dereliction in a number of towns.

To date surveys been completed in Mountmellick and Mountrath with further towns and villages set to be surveyed over the coming months. Information on this survey is currently being mapped.

When the vacancy status of the identified properties is established, the Working Group will assess the future potential use of such properties, in terms of housing or other use. A plan for acquisition of properties, subject to available funding and/or use of the CPO process will then be determined for each area.

This will be dependent on

- (a) the number of viable properties for residential use,
- (b) the requirement for and level of social housing already in that locality and
- (c) the capacity of the local authority to carry out works to the property with funding provided for under the **Buy and Renew / Buy and Renew Construct Scheme** criteria if dereliction is extensive, or the property is difficult to renovate for housing purposes.

Owners will also be encouraged to use the **Repair and Lease Scheme** to bring properties back into use.

For example, in the towns surveyed to date, the following is the target for addressing vacancy over the plan period-

<i>Town</i>	<i>No of properties surveyed</i>	<i>% of suitable properties suitable for Residential purpose</i>	<i>No of properties currently under consideration for Buy and Renew</i>
<i>Mountmellick</i>	123	46%	1
<i>Mountrath</i>	92	76%	
<i>Others</i>			7 <i>(5 properties currently in CPO process; 1 acquisition and 2 confirmed CPO's)</i>

Generally across the County, Expressions of Interest have been invited via advertisement on www.laois.ie for vacant /derelict properties that have the potential for housing provision.

4.1 Compulsory Purchase Order

The *Housing for All Plan*, on the back of the Indecon Report on the Taxation of Vacant Residential

Property promotes “a major programme of CPO’s to be activated by the local authority even when these houses are not to be used for social housing”.

Laois County Council has successfully used CPO legislation to acquire derelict and vacant houses in a variety of locations throughout Co Laois. This will continue to be pursued during the HDAP period 2022-2026.

Through our housing and regeneration role, we recently sought and obtained the agreement of the elected members to further pursue this objective, i.e., where appropriate and subject to ascertaining a local demand make houses available on the open market for housing development where no social housing demand exists.

Table 19: Status of CPO’s (May 2022)

Vacant Properties acquired by CPO now in Council ownership	15
Properties currently undergoing CPO	5

4.2 Repair and Lease

Table below sets out the current status of Repair and Lease applications.

Table 20: Repair & Lease (May 2022)

Applications received to date	35
Applications approved to proceed	6
Applications under consideration	3
No. of Leases commenced	1
Applications Refused	26*

*Applications refused as properties deemed to be unsuitable for the R&L Scheme due to:

- (a) their location in areas of low housing demand or;
- (b) the extent of works required exceeded the Scheme limit or;
- (c) works were commenced or almost complete before an application was submitted, which is not permitted under the R&L Scheme.

Section 5: MONITORING AND POTENTIAL CONSTRAINTS

Monitoring of the Housing Delivery Action Plan will be carried out on a monthly basis through review and update of the Tracker. A review of the Housing Delivery Action Plan will be carried out on an annual basis to review delivery and potential constraints and challenges.

The following constraints/ challenges have been identified from the outset in relation to hindering delivery of the housing targets identified

- Unactivated planning permissions for housing on private sector lands, thus decreasing the potential for Part V delivery;
- Servicing of lands in small towns and villages, particularly in relation to Irish Water Investment programme
- Land bank constraints in areas of need, particularly urban areas – inability to acquire appropriately zoned land for social housing construction;
- Level of interest in affordable housing in affordable locations and affordability constraint in terms of raising a 10% deposit of market value of homes;
- Staff resources to drive delivery of capital programmes, including direct build, turnkey acquisition, addressing vacancy for housing provision and development of affordable/mixed tenure housing options.

Signed: Georgina Ireland

Georgina Ireland
Senior Executive Officer
Housing and Regeneration

Signed: Angela McEvoy

Angela McEvoy
Director of Services
Housing, Planning and Regeneration

Signed: John Mulholland

John Mulholland
Chief Executive
Laois County Council

MD	Settlement Area	Scheme	No of units	Year of estimated delivery	TYPE of Delivery	1Bed House	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	4 Bed House	5+ Bed House	1Bed Apartmt /Duplex	2Bed Apartmt /Duplex	3Bed Apartmt /Duplex
	North (Portarlinton)	Ballymorris Green, Portarlinton (Ph 3/3)	12	2023	AHB CALF								
	North (Portarlinton)	Bracklone Street, Portarlinton	12	2025	LA Construction		12						
	North (Portarlinton)	Coolroe, Ballybrittas	1	2022	LA Turnkey			1					
	North (Portarlinton)	Market Square, Portarlinton	18	2023	LA Turnkey		15					2	1
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Doirinn Alainn, Ballylinan	9	2023	AHB CALF			9					
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Carraig Glas, Stradbally	26	2024	LA Construction		15	9	2				
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Rathvarna, Killeshin	2	2022	LA Part V			2					
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Bruach Na Habhainn, Killeen	3	2022	LA Turnkey			3					
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	The Orchard, Ballylynan	2	2022	LA Turnkey			2					
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	The Orchard, Ballylynan	3	2022	LA Turnkey			3					
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Church Avenue, Stradbally	31	2023	LA Turnkey		2	20	9				
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Bruach Na Habhainn, Killeen	1	2023	LA Turnkey								
	Stradbally to Graiguecullen	Doonane	12	2024	LA Turnkey		12						

MD	Settlement Area	Scheme	No of units	Year of estimated delivery	TYPE of Delivery	1Bed House	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	4 Bed House	5+ Bed House	1Bed Apartmt /Duplex	2Bed Apartmt /Duplex	3Bed Apartmt /Duplex
	Portlaoise	The Meadows, Mountrath Road, Portlaoise	48	2023	AHB CALF			19	9			20	
	Portlaoise	Hepburn Court, Portlaoise	54	2023	AHB CALF		20	34					
	Portlaoise	South Dublin Road, Kilminchy, Portlaoise	36	2023	AHB CALF		13	23					
	Portlaoise	Curragh na Mona, Abbeyleix Rd, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	39	2024	AHB CALF		12	10	2		2	13	
	Portlaoise	Presentation Convent & Lands, Portlaoise,	15	2024	AHB CAS							15	
	Portlaoise	Presentation Convent & Lands, Portlaoise,	36	2024	AHB CAS		4				14	18	
	Portlaoise	County Hotel, Main Street, Portlaoise	10	2024	AHB CAS						8	2	
	Portlaoise	Clonrooske, Knockmay	11	2024	LA Construction		7	4					
	Portlaoise	Iona, Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise	7	2024	LA Construction		1	2			4		
	Portlaoise	Ard Branagh, Portlaoise	6	2022	LA Part V			6					
	Portlaoise	Aughnaharna , Portlaoise	2	2022	LA Part V			2					
	Portlaoise	Stradbally Road, Portlaoise	80	2025	Mixed Tenure			28	2		14	36	
	TOTAL		900										

Note: Buy and Renew projects not included on this table