Laois Local Economic and Community Plan

2023-2028

Appendix 7
Alignment of LECP with Local and Regional Policy

LCDC
Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil Laoise
Laois Local Community Development Committee

Laois County Council
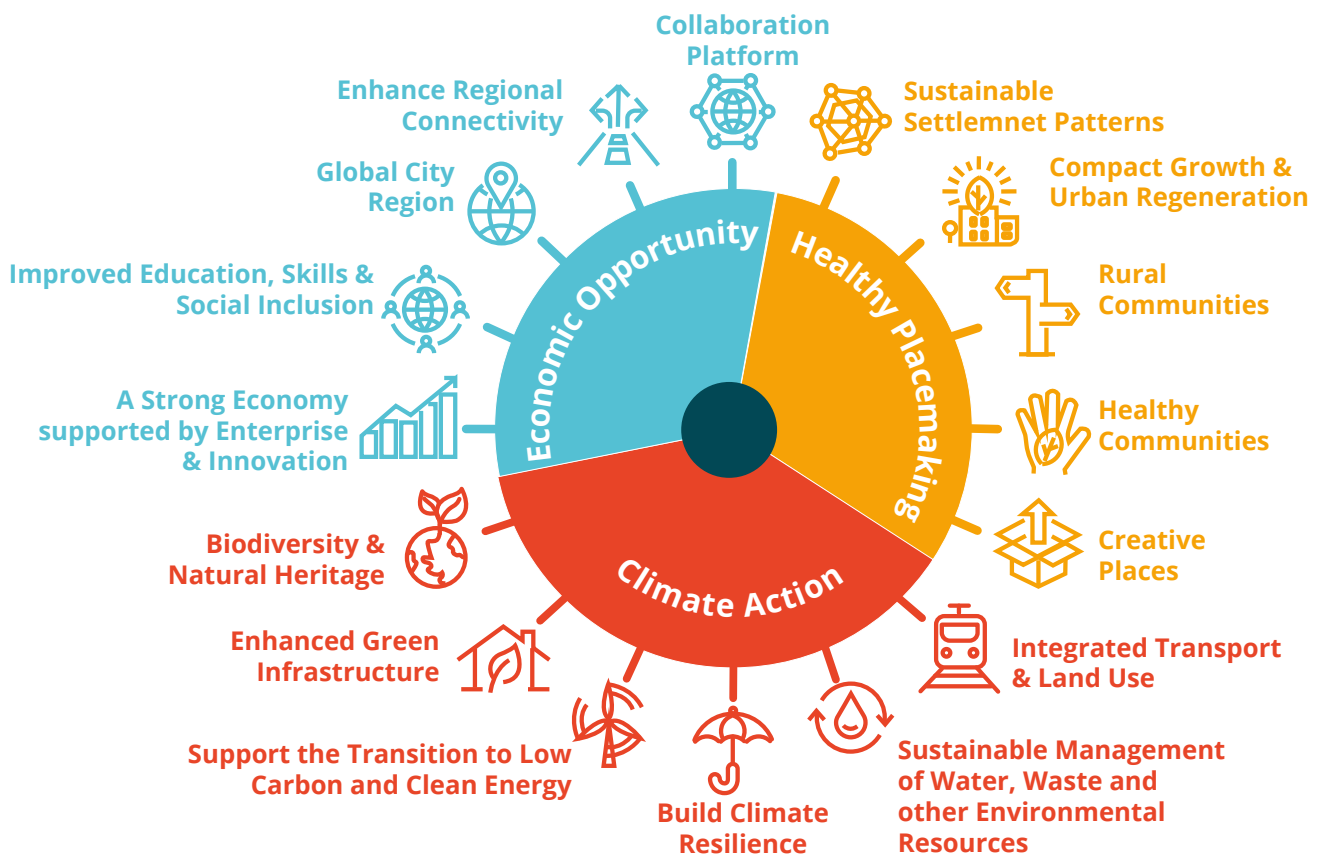Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

The Laois LECP must be consistent with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and the core strategy and objects of Laois County Development Plan. This LECP is an important tool to support the implementation of national and regional policy on economic development and local/community development as specified in Section 66B of the Local Government Reform Act, 2001 as amended. In this regard economic elements of this LECP were formulated in accordance with the regional framework as set out in the RSES.

The RSES provides high level statutory framework and economic strategy for each region that supports the implementation of the National Planning Framework and relevant economic policies and objectives of Government.

The RSES outlines a hierarchy for the Region, which shows Portlaoise as Level 2 [Major Town Centres and County (Principal) Town Centres], along with Portarlington and Graiguecullen as Level 3 [Town and/ or District Centres and Sub-County Town Centres (Key Service Centres)] within the retail hierarchy.

Three Key Principles of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031

Cross Analysis of the Goals and Objectives of the Framework LECP

Table 7.1: Demonstrating that LECP aligns with the strategic outcomes of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

RSES Strategy (Regional Strategic Outcomes)	High Level Goal
Sustainable Settlement Better manage the sustainable and compact growth of Dublin as a city of international scale and develop Athlone, Dundalk, Drogheda, and a number of key complementary growth settlements of sufficient scale to be drivers of regional growth.	HLG 4
Compact Growth and Urban Regeneration Promote the regeneration of our cities, towns, and villages by making better use of under-used land and buildings within the existing built-up urban footprint and to drive the delivery of quality housing and employment choice for the Region's citizens.	HLG 6
Rural Communities Support sustainable rural development and strengthen rural networks, economies, and communities. Manage urban generated growth in areas under strong urban influence and encourage sustainable growth in areas that have experienced decline or stagnation.	HLG 2, 3
Healthy Communities Protect and enhance the quality of our built and natural environment to support active lifestyles including walking and cycling, ensure clean air and water for all and quality healthcare and services that support human health.	HLG 5, 8
Creative Places Enhance, integrate, and protect our arts, culture, and heritage assets to promote creative places and heritage led regeneration.	HLG 6, 8, 9
Integrated Transport and Land Use Promote best use of Transport Infrastructure, existing and planned, and promote sustainable and active modes of travel to ensure the proper integration of transportation and land use Planning.	HLG 2
Sustainable Management of Water, Waste, and other Environmental Resources Conserve and enhance our water resources to ensure clean water supply, adequate wastewater treatment and greater resource efficiency to realise the benefits of the circular economy.	HLG 2
Build Climate Resilience Ensure the long-term management of flood risk and build resilience to increased risks of extreme weather events, changes in sea level and patterns of coastal erosion to protect property, critical infrastructure, and food security in the Region.	HLG 2
Support the Transition to Low Carbon and Clean Energy Pursue climate mitigation in line with global and national targets and harness the potential for a more distributed renewables-focused energy system to support the transition to a low carbon economy by 2050.	HLG 2

RSES Strategy (Regional Strategic Outcomes)	High Level Goal
Enhanced Green Infrastructure Identify, protect, and enhance Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services in the Region and promote the sustainable management of strategic natural assets such as our coastlines, farmlands, peatlands, uPlands woodlands and wetlands.	HLG 2
Biodiversity and Natural Heritage Promote co-ordinated spatial Planning to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of our protected habitats and species including landscape and heritage protection.	HLG 2, 9
A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise and Innovation To build a resilient economic base and promote innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems that support smart specialisation, cluster development and sustained economic growth.	HLG 3, 10
Improve Education Skills and Social Inclusion To improve education and develop the right skills to attract employers and retain talent and promote social inclusion to ensure opportunities for quality jobs across the Region.	HLG 7
Global City Region Promote Dublin as a global city region and protect and enhance international connectivity, including ports and airports and promote the Region as a gateway to Ireland.	N/A
Enhanced Strategic Connectivity Protect and enhance international connectivity and regional accessibility to support economic development, build economic resilience and support strengthened rural communities and economies including the blue-green economy and tourism.	HLG 3, 4
Collaboration Platform Provide a regional framework for collaboration and partnerships and to support local and regional bodies in leveraging funding and partnership opportunities.	HLG 1-10

Table 7.2: Regional Planning Objectives (RPO) in RSES Concordance

RSES RPO	RPO Summary (from RSES)	LECP High Level Goal (HLG) Sustainable Objective (SO)
4.71	Support delivery of the Portlaoise Regeneration.	HLG 6 SO 6.1, 6.3
4.79	Identify and provide policies that recognise the contribution that small towns, villages and rural areas contribute to social and economic well-being.	HLG 6 SO 6.1, 6.2, 6.3
4.84	Support the rural economy and initiatives in relation to diversification, agri business, rural tourism and renewable energy.	HLG 2, HLG 3, HLG 6 SO 2.2, 3.2, 3.3, 6.3
6.2	Support local authorities to ensure their LECPs... are sufficiently agile to account for unexpected opportunities.	LECP Framework
6.5	Explore projects in LECPs for the enhancement of the competitiveness of their rural areas by supporting innovation in rural economic development and enterprise through the diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and services.	HLG 2, HL 3, HLG 4 SO 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.4
6.6	Explore mechanisms for the emergence of a diversified sectoral mix in rural areas. This includes the identification of appropriate locations to drive regeneration of these rural towns.	HLG 1, HLG 2, HLG 3, HLG 4 SO 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2
6.7	Develop sustainable and economically efficient rural economies through initiatives to enhance sectors such as agricultural and food, forestry, ..., the bioeconomy, tourism, and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities.	HLG 1, HLG 2, HLG 4 SO 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3
6.14	EMRA will support the use of targeted financial incentives to re-establish the dominant role of town centres provided for in planning policy to encourage a greater take up of town centre development opportunities for retail, residential, commercial, and leisure uses.	HLG 6 SO 6.1, 6.2
6.23	Support enterprise development agencies and LEOs on the development of industries that create and employ green technologies and take measures to accelerate the transition towards a low carbon economy and circular economy.	HLG 4
6.27	Formal and nonformal education to targeted disadvantage groups and who have already identified the barriers to participation in lifelong learnings.	HLG 1, HLG 7 SO 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 1.2

continued

RSES RPO	RPO Summary (from RSES)	LECP High Level Goal (HLG) Sustainable Objective (SO)
6.28	Support local authorities in the design, development and roll-out of social enterprise practices, with a strong emphasis on collaboration.	HLG 1 SO 1.1, 1.2, 1.3,
6.38	Support enterprise agencies, REPs, LECPs, Regional Skill fora and local stakeholders on their introduction of contingency plans and pilot projects based on the strengths of the Region to counteract the effects from industrial decline and potential external shocks in the Region.	HLG 4 SO 4.5
7.15	Take opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenities and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats.	HLG 2
9.2	Support local authority and sectoral initiatives to increase active participation and social integration of minority groups, including non-Irish nationals and Travellers.	HLG 3, HLG 4, HLG 5 SO 3.4, 4.5, 5.1, 5.3,
9.14	Support the planned provision of easily accessible social, community, cultural and recreational facilities and ensure that all communities have access to a range of facilities that meet the needs of the communities they serve.	HLG 8 SO 1.3, 2.4, 6.1, 6.2 8.1, 8.3

Table 7.3: Tabulation of selected objectives from the County Development Plan with High Level Goals and Objectives in the Framework LECP

Extract from County Development Plan	Cross reference to LECP
CS05 Support the regeneration of underused town centre and brownfield/infill lands along with the delivery of existing zoned and serviced lands to facilitate population growth and achieve sustainable compact growth targets of 30% of all new housing to be built within the existing urban footprint of targeted settlements in the County.	HLG6 SO3.2, SO4.5, SO6.1, SO6.3
CS06 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 urban centres and targeted settlements in the County.	HLG6, HLG4 SO3.2, SO4.5, SO6.3
CS17 Support and facilitate the transition of Portlaoise to a low carbon centre of excellence in accordance with RPO 4.72 of the RSES.	HLG2
CS22 Promote consolidation in Self-Sustaining Growth Towns coupled with targeted investment where required to improve local employment, services and sustainable transport options and to become more self-sustaining settlements.	HLG2, HLG6
CS25 Promote commensurate population and employment growth in the designated Self-Sustaining towns, providing for natural increases and to become more economically self- sustaining, in line with the quality and capacity of public transport, services and infrastructure available.	HLG2, HLG6, HLG8, HLG10
CS29 Promote regeneration opportunities within these towns to ensure their viability as service centres for the surrounding areas.	HLG2, HLG6, HLG8
CS36 Contribute, as practicable, towards achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which came into force in 2016.	LECP
CMST5 Support localisation of jobs/shops/services to minimise the need for most common travel patterns.	HLG2, HLG10
CMLU1 Maintain a vibrant and healthy agricultural sector based on the principles of sustainable development whilst at the same time finding alternative employment in or close to rural areas to sustain rural communities.	SO2.3, SO3.3
SCP01 Deliver on the objectives and actions set out in the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (EMRA), Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (and any subsequent LECP) and relevant National Guidance documents to strengthen community and social development in the County.	LECP Framework

Extract from County Development Plan	Cross reference to LECP
SCP06 Promote social inclusion through equality of access to services and facilities and to assist in the removal of barriers to full participation in society.	HLG1, HLG7, HLG8
SCP017 Facilitate and support a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration of services and funding and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.	HLG1, HLG7, HLG8
EDP03 Facilitate the development of primary, second-level, third-level, vocational and lifelong learning facilities and digital capacity for distance learning including lifelong learning and Up-skilling generally to meet the needs of the County including mature adults i.e. back to school in existing educational infrastructure.	HLG7 SO1.2, SO5.1, SO7.1
ACP04 Continue to recognise the importance of the arts in areas of personal development, community development, employment and tourism and to endeavour to create further opportunities in each of these areas.	SO6.2, SO8.3
NRPO1 1 Support local sports groups and community groups in the development, improvement and expansion of facilities for sporting and recreational needs of all sectors and ages through the reservation of suitable land and the provision of funding where available and appropriate.	HLG1
ED5 Support entrepreneurship in County Laois and jobs-focused education and training programmes.	HLG2, HLG3, HLG7
ED17 Support community initiatives to foster stronger engagement between commuters and their local towns and villages.	HLG1
TC1 Support the implementation of LECP Economic Actions and LECP Community Actions related to the maintaining and enhancing the vitality and vibrancy of Laois Town and Village Centres in particular focusing on Portlaoise.	LECP Framework
TC11 Recognise and support the role of town/village-based community groups including trader groups that make a significant contribution to town/village centre management.	HLG1, HLG3
FA1 Support the development of the arts, crafts and food sectors and liaise with the Crafts Council of Ireland, Laois Partnership, Laois LEO, Fáilte Ireland, and other interested bodies to facilitate growth within this sector.	SO6.2, SO8.3, HLG4
FA3 Support and promote the existing festivals and cultural events which take place in the county and facilitate the establishment of new events where viable to increase the profile of the county as a key tourism destination.	HLG9 SO4.3, SO9.2, SO9.3

Extract from County Development Plan	Cross reference to LECP
DT4 Improve the visual appearance of towns and villages, protect their character and maximise their tourism potential by the continuance of environmental and public realm programmes, design control, development initiatives and the removal/ improving of dereliction where necessary.	HLG6
RL1 Maintain a vibrant and healthy agricultural sector based on the principles of sustainable development whilst at the same time finding alternative employment in or close to rural areas to sustain rural communities.	SO2.1, SO2.3, SO3.3, SO3.1
RL19 Facilitate land-based or resource-based economic activities in rural areas that support a sustainable environment and resilient communities.	SO2.1, SO2.3, SO3.3, SO3.1
TEL6 Co-operate with telecommunications service providers in the development of infrastructure, having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, normal planning and environmental.	SO4.2
BNH1 Protect, conserve, and seek to enhance the county's biodiversity and ecological connectivity.	HLG2 SO2.2