



Laois County Development Plan 2021 - 2027



Issues
Paper

What is a County Development Plan

The County Development Plan is an overall strategy for the future development of County Laois over the next 6 years. It shows the type of development that is needed in order to support our communities and local economy while addressing many of the economic, social and environmental issues we face today. The current Laois County Development Plan has been in place since July 2017 and is the basis for providing the right development in the right place, to achieve balanced and sustainable growth in Laois over the lifetime of the Plan and beyond. This review has come at a time of renewed growth in the Country and presents new challenges in the way we plan for our future.

What Guides our Plan

It is a statutory requirement of every Planning Authority to prepare a County Development Plan which is guided by national policy. The policies and objectives of the new Plan will be required to align with our national and regional planning policy, the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Regional area. Such national and regional policy is also supported by a capital investment programme to ensure the right balance between future development and infrastructure in a sustainable and consolidated manner.

Sustainable development and climate mitigation and adaptation will be key drivers of the policies and objectives of the Plan. Our settlement and transportation objectives must include measures to reduce energy demand and greenhouse gas emissions to aid in our transitioning to a low carbon sustainable society. The Plan will also include a rigorous set of environmental assessments, ie a Strategic Environmental Assessment, an Appropriate Assessment and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which will consider the potential effects of the Plan on the environment and on habitats and species protected by EU designations.



This is **your** opportunity to tell us what **you** think before we prepare the new Laois County Development Plan 2021 - 2027

What is an Issues Paper

This Issues Paper is the first step in the preparation of a new Plan for the County and presents an overview of the plan making process, key facts and figures about County Laois and an un-exhaustive list of the main development issues currently affecting the County which identifies the kind of planning matters that the next Plan could address. The success of the next Plan depends on the active participation from **YOU** - citizens, community groups and stakeholders that are engaged in County Laois. **YOUR** input at the start of the Plan making process is important so that the final Plan can reflect and respond to **YOUR** concerns and aspirations. There will be further opportunities to engage at each stage of the Plan process which is illustrated overleaf.



Where are we in the Plan process?

WE ARE HERE



Public Consultation - Issues Paper

Chief Executive Report on Consultation

Direction from Elected Members

STAGE 1 PRE-DRAFT

Week 1 - 48



PREPARATION OF DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Week 48 - 85

STAGE 2 DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Public Consultation - Draft Plan

Chief Executive Report on Submissions

Consideration of CE Report by Elected Members



STAGE 3 AMENDMENTS TO DRAFT PLAN



Public Consultation - Amendment

Chief Executive Report on Submissions

Consideration of CE Report by Elected Members

Week 85 - 104



ADOPTION OF LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021 - 2027



Indicates your opportunity to have your say

County Laois: Did you know?

POPULATION



Population of Laois

84,697

5.1% Population increase from 2011

Female 49.5%



Male 50.5%



Population projection for County Laois until 2026

94,000



SETTLEMENT PATTERN

34 zoned settlements in the County



243 hectares

zoned for new residential development

43,718 of the population resides in rural areas, with 40,979 residing in urban areas



Portlaoise is Ireland's **fastest** growing town



Laois has a diverse and multicultural population with 7.1% non-Irish nationals residing in the County

ECONOMY



18,505 people work in County Laois

11,477

of the population commute to other counties for work

495 hectares

zoned for employment and enterprise development

PORTLAOISE

A vision and funding in place for Portlaoise to become the 1st Low Carbon town centre in the Country



Central location on major transport corridors linking

Dublin, Cork and Limerick

60 minutes
45 minutes



County Laois: The issues

DEVELOPING A GROWTH AND SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

At the core of the Plan is the consideration of a settlement hierarchy for the County which sets out key locations for population, housing and employment ensuring compact growth in our towns and villages.

- Where should the increase in population within the County be directed to achieve balanced growth?
- How do you suggest we make our towns and villages more compact and avoid undesirable sprawl, making the most of brownfield lands?
- How can we deliver new development in a way that better aligns the location of population growth and employment growth, allowing towns to become more self-sustaining and balanced rather than based on commuter driven activity?
- How do we ensure the most effective use of land, infrastructure and resources?
- Do you think the settlement hierarchy should be changed and if so, how?
- How can Laois contribute to addressing national housing issues?



DEVELOPING AN ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Economic activity within the County drives population growth and the requirement for improved services.

- Can you identify suitable locations for strategic employment development for large scale employment and enterprise activity?
- How do you suggest we create a competitive business environment supporting economic development and job creation?
- How can we improve retail opportunities within the County and how can we ensure significant leakages of retail expenditure can be eliminated?
- Are there infrastructural deficits which are inhibiting economic growth and development in the County?
- Is there demand for innovative designated hubs/co-working spaces that would mitigate long commuting times?
- Are there any areas that have the potential to be developed for tourism and recreational purposes?

INFRASTRUCTURE AND MOVEMENT

The provision of adequate infrastructure, including road and rail, together with public transport which must be integrated with land use development to ensure sustainable communities.

- Is new or improved transport infrastructure required in the County and where?
- How can we co-ordinate and integrate transport and land use planning in order to reduce the demand for travel and dependence on private car?
- What should be done to encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport more?
- How can we create successful streets that easily facilitate the needs of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians in our towns and residential areas?
- What measures can be taken to improve water quality?
- How can the Plan support the relevant external agencies in the provision of electricity, gas, water and wastewater, renewable energy, telecommunication and broadband infrastructure?
- Are there adequate recycling facilities in the County and if not where should they be located?

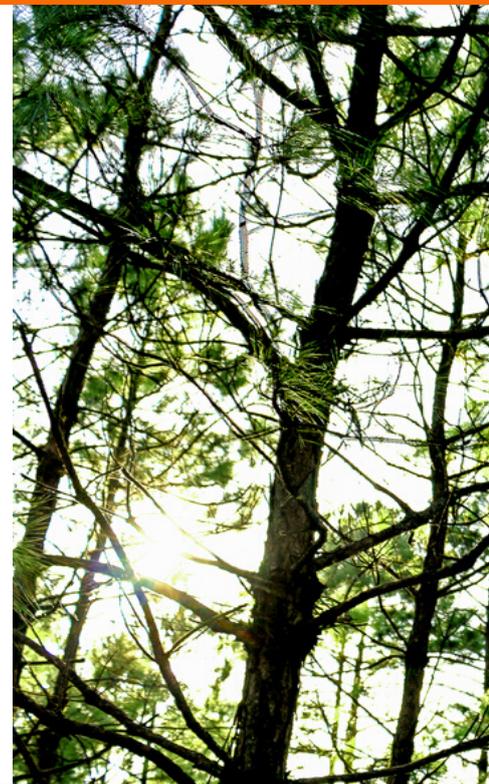


County Laois: The Issues

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

The Plan must ensure that there is a balance between development of land and the protection of our environment. In order to be fully mindful of the environment, we must integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation measures into planning practice.

- What are the main environmental issues that currently face Laois?
- How can the Council achieve a balance between the growth of the County and the protection of the environment?
- How can we encourage the use of green roofs, green streets or other green infrastructure approaches (e.g. tree planting) in new or existing development to provide solutions in relation to water management and the need to adapt to the predicted and unpredictable impacts of climate change?
- Should the Plan give positive support to the development of renewable energy at the expense of other considerations?
- What additional measures should be taken to protect the environment?
- What should the Council do to promote bio-energy production from waste, agri-food effluents, manures, municipal solid waste and sewage?



PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE

The historic story of the people of Laois is contained within the landscapes, archaeological sites and historic buildings around the County.

- How can change to the quality, character and amenity value of our landscapes be managed?
- Are there any buildings or structures of special interest in your area that should be added to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS)?
- How can the Plan encourage the reuse of Protected Structures that have fallen into disuse?
- Should we change any of our existing Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) or can you identify any new ones?
- How can natural heritage and biodiversity be enhanced?
- How can greater access to the natural, built and archaeological heritage be facilitated, while having regard to the sensitive nature of many sites?

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The review of the Plan presents a vital opportunity to assess existing social, community and cultural facilities across the County and to plan for future needs for an inclusive society.

- How can the Plan assist in meeting community infrastructure needs?
- What policies and objectives need to be put in place to ensure recreational and community resources meet the demand of Laois' growing population, while protecting existing resources from inappropriate development?
- How can the Council work with education stakeholders to facilitate current and future educational requirements in appropriate locations?
- Are the needs of different cultural, ethnic, youth, elderly and persons with a disability being accommodated in our community?
- Are the current standards for public open space provision associated with new developments appropriate?





HOW CAN I HAVE MY SAY?

It is important to provide a range of ways for everyone to get involved in the review of the Laois County Development Plan 2017 - 2023 and the adoption of a new Plan. The 1st Stage of the consultation process runs from the **6th January until the 2nd March 2020** inclusive. Submissions or observations must be submitted to us by **4pm on 2nd March** and can be made in one of the following ways:



In writing to:
Laois County Development Plan Review,
Forward Planning Team,
Laois County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
JFL Avenue,
Portlaoise,
Co. Laois.



Send us an email at: cdp@laoiscoco.ie

The submission or observation can be on any topic that you think might be relevant to the proper planning and sustainable development of County Laois. All submissions and observations must include your name, address and an outline of your views and comments. Please note your name and comment will be published for public viewing online at www.laois.com/planning.

For more information and regular updates on the new Laois County Development, please visit www.laois.com/planning or on social media at:

- Twitter: @LaoisCouncil
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LaoisCountyCouncil>

IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE

A series of information events are planned for early 2020 for the following dates and venues:

ABBEYLEIX HERITAGE HOUSE	14th January 6pm - 8pm
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CLONASLEE HERITAGE CENTRE	16th January 7pm - 9pm
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KILLESBIN COMMUNITY CENTRE	21st January 6pm - 8pm
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NEXT STEPS...

Following the Stage 1 consultation process, a report on the submissions received will be prepared and presented to the Elected Members. Following this, the Draft Plan will be prepared and put on public display in Q4 2020.



PLEASE NOTE: Submissions should not relate to a request or proposal for zoning of particular land for any purpose at this stage. Any submission requesting or proposing the zoning of land will not be considered or accepted at this stage.

Laois County Council

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