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ANNEX 3 BALLYMAHON LOCAL AREA PLAN

Annex 3: Ballymahon Local Area Plan 2009-2015

1. Introduction

This Local Area Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of **Section 19** of the **Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)**, which states that Local Area Plans may be prepared for any area in need of physical, social and economic renewal and areas which are likely to be the subject of large scale development. As required under **Subsection 2**, this plan is consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan, and sets out objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area over the period of this County Development Plan, 2009-2015.

This plan provides for zonings within the town, in order to facilitate the orderly and integrated progression of development within a defined town envelope.

Ballymahon is located on the River Inny to the east of Lough Ree, and is situated almost centrally between the large settlements of Athlone to the south-west, Mullingar to the east and Longford to the north.

Ballymahon is served by an adequate road network - the national secondary route (N55) from Athlone to Cavan passes through the town as well as the regional route (R392) from Lanesboro to Mullingar, which generates steady levels of traffic through the settlement.

2. Development Pressure

It is the policy of Longford County Council, as stated in the County Development Plan Settlement Strategy, to concentrate development in established settlements in order to promote economic use of existing infrastructure. The lands as outlined in the accompanying map are mainly concentrated within the speed limit and can be connected to mains sewerage and water and are easily accessible to the town centre without the use of a car.

3. Sustainable Development and Environmental Impact

Ballymahon exhibits a typical market town structure, based around a strong linear north-west/south-east axis. The main commercial activity is contained within a central core, for which a Strategic Environmental Improvement Plan has been prepared.

4. Zoning

The zonings contained within this document and illustrated on the accompanying map are indicative of the level and nature of development which is deemed by the Planning Authority to be appropriate to the area. The development envelope shown is indicative of areas within and on the outskirts of the town that the planning authority consider appropriate for development, while satisfying the objectives of local, regional and national policy as contained in the relevant development plans and

guidelines. The zonings are intended to be flexible and provided that the basic concepts of proper planning, residential amenity and good design practice are adhered to.

This plan should be read in conjunction with the requirements for development contained within the County Development Plan.

Potential developers are encouraged to consult with the Planning Authority regarding proposed developments in the Ballymahon area at the pre-planning stage.

The following zoning provisions should be read in consultation with the attached Zoning Map.

4.1 Residential

It is considered appropriate that existing residential areas are augmented and areas where gaps or “leapfrogging” of development have occurred are infilled (most noticeable on the eastern and western approaches into the settlement), and the town be consolidated for the purposes of an appropriate and sustainable town structure, creating a clear urban/rural divide.

The principles of sustainable development shall be taken into account when considering applications for residential development in the area, including the use of higher housing densities, natural, locally sourced materials, energy efficiency and transport implications, the impact on the existing ecology and

compatibility with local environmental conditions. Detailed landscape proposals will be required for submission with new developments and Housing development layouts should be designed with reference to the Guidelines for Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (DoEHLG) and the accompanying best practice guide.

Requirements will be imposed in relation to the provision of interconnecting public open spaces in connection with larger residential developments, with particular emphasis on riverside access and walking routes, as outlined under **Section 4.2**. Open space shall be designed with the following concepts in mind: safety, security, usability, access to the river, wildlife and habitat protection, character creation/preservation.

4.2 Recreational

The proposed utilisation of the River Inny as a riverside walk and park would provide a recreational backbone to the town which would provide a wildlife corridor through the town and a potential link to other outlying recreational areas such as Newcastle woods, providing a community base for walking, watersports and other outdoor pursuits.

4.3 Commercial/Residential Core

It is envisioned that much of the proposed retail/commercial development in the town would take place in the existing commercial core, revitalising the centre of Ballymahon and include provision for car-parking.

4.4 Residential/Commercial Core

This zoning primarily provides for residential development while facilitating the expansion of existing and proposed commercial premises and car-parking/commercial loading areas.

4.5 Industrial

Zonings of industrial nature are indicative and are adaptable to the nature, size and requirements of future employment/industrial development. The creation of local employment is the primary aim of this zoning, which is in accordance with council policies to halt the decline of rural Longford, while developing Ballymahon in line with National and Regional Policy. Hi-tech business/office, and industrial developments are considered appropriate at these locations.

Individual building layout, height, architectural detailing and landscaping shall be dealt with in the context of its location and situation in relation to the local topography and both existing and proposed developments.

4.6 Social/Community/Public Utility

This zoning encompasses community uses (such as schools, churches etc.), public utility and social/administrative designations such as the Fire and Garda Stations. Expansion of these services will be facilitated where needed and compatible with adjoining land uses.

4.7 Residential/Community Services/Medicentre

This zoning covers the former “workhouse” site to the south of the town on the western bank of the River Inny. The zoning provides for the installation of residential development at this location and allows for the establishment of a medicentre/community services facility. Development is already well established in this area, however, further proposals at this location shall be designed to the highest standard and shall take cognisance of the riverside location and the preservation of recreational and visual amenity in this context. In the case of mixed-use development, recreational amenity shall be preserved and in all cases, the circulation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic shall be organised in a safe and orderly manner.

5. Proposed Road Network and Access

Ballymahon is currently served by an adequate road network. Upgrading and widening may be required as traffic demands increase. Proposed developments shall be assessed individually in relation their impact on traffic and pedestrian safety.

6. Conclusion

The Local Area Plan as set out above will facilitate the development of the town in an orderly and planned manner. The plan provides for a satisfactory mix of development which shall allow existing and future residents to live, work and recreate in a sustainable manner. It also allows the planning Authority and potential developers to take

a pro-active approach in the development of the area.

NOTE:

Please note that every effort has been made to include the latest version of Ordnance Survey mapping available, and all attempts have been made to accurately assess boundaries and zonings. Queries on the accuracies of boundaries may be discussed and addressed at pre-planning stage with the Planning Authority.

