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From: Aine Bourke <abourke@mkoireland.ie>
Sent: Wednesday 13 January 2021 12:03
To: cdp
Cc: Lucy Hammond; Colm Ryan
Subject: 201052 - Draft Longford Dev Plan Submissions
Attachments: Longford Dev Plan Submissions – F – 201052 – 2021.01.11 - PV.pdf; Cover letter - Longford Dev Plan Subs - 201052 - 2021.01.13.pdf

Importance: High

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached our submissions to the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 on behalf of our client Patrick Rogers Estates Limited, which relate mainly to the Longford Greyhound Stadium site located in Longford Town.

We would be most grateful if you would confirm receipt of this submission and the attached Submissions Report and Cover Letter at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,
Aine.



Aine Bourke BA, MPlan, MRTPI

Planner

MKO

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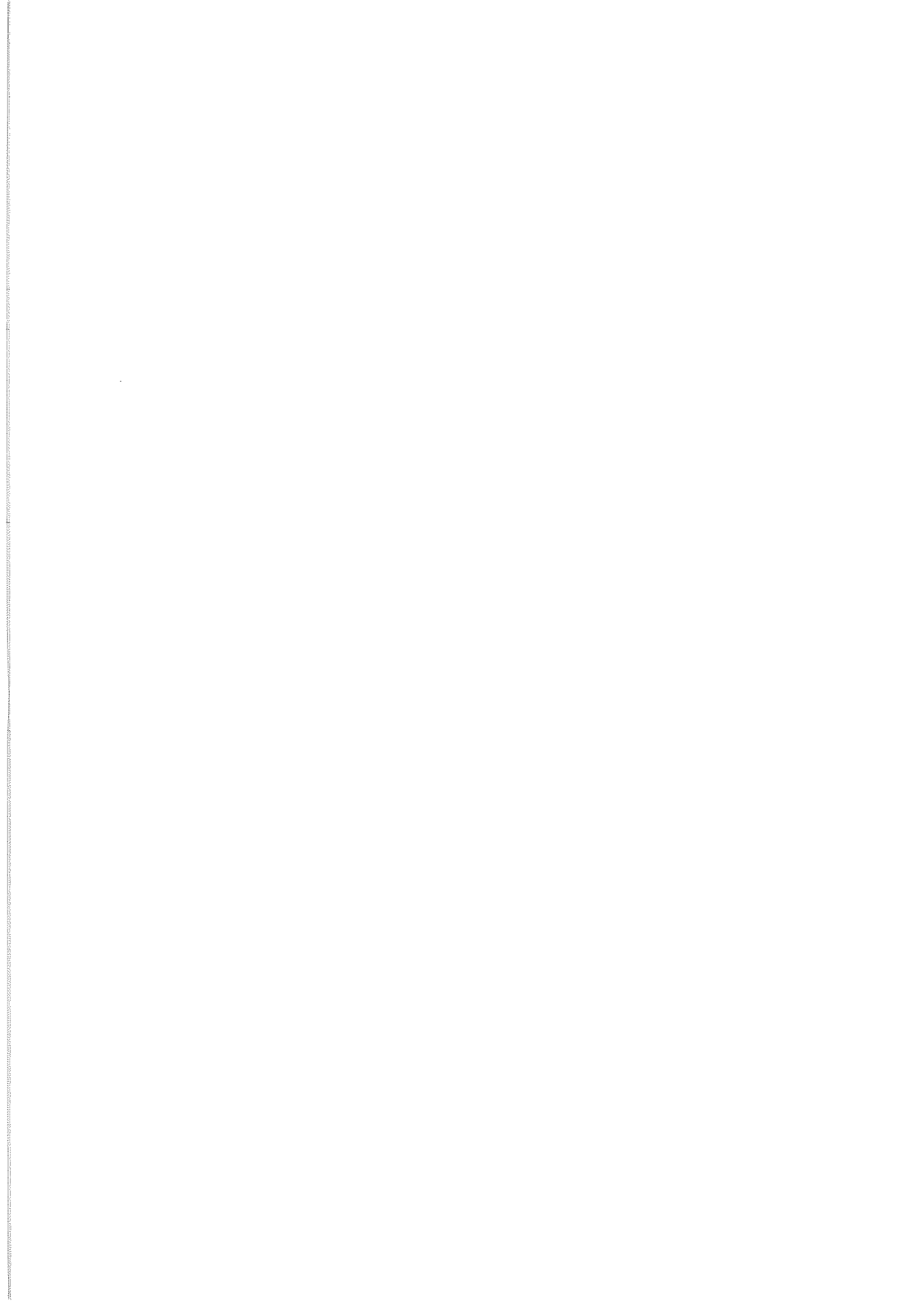
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Planning Department
Longford County Council Offices,
Aras an Chontae,
Great Water Street,
Longford
N39 NH56

Our Ref: 201052
Your Ref: N/A

13th January 2021

Re: Submissions to Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027
Site: Longford Greyhound Stadium

Dear Sir/Madam,

MKO have been appointed by Patrick Rogers Estates Limited to review the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and prepare submissions which relate to the Longford Greyhound Stadium.

Our client is taking a logical approach towards the planning and development of Longford town centre. Such an approach is key to ensuring that suitable lands are developed in the most efficient and sustainable manner feasible, to meet known housing shortages, to meet the aims and objectives of national and regional policy and guidance of the same, and to meet the residential requirements of a growing population as per the Core Strategy for Longford.

Please find attached to this cover letter, a report prepared by MKO which forms the content of our submission to the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

We respectfully request that the Planning Authority take cognisance of this submission and would be grateful for written confirmation of receipt of this submission.

Should any further information be required or should the Planning Authority have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact MKO at the details below.

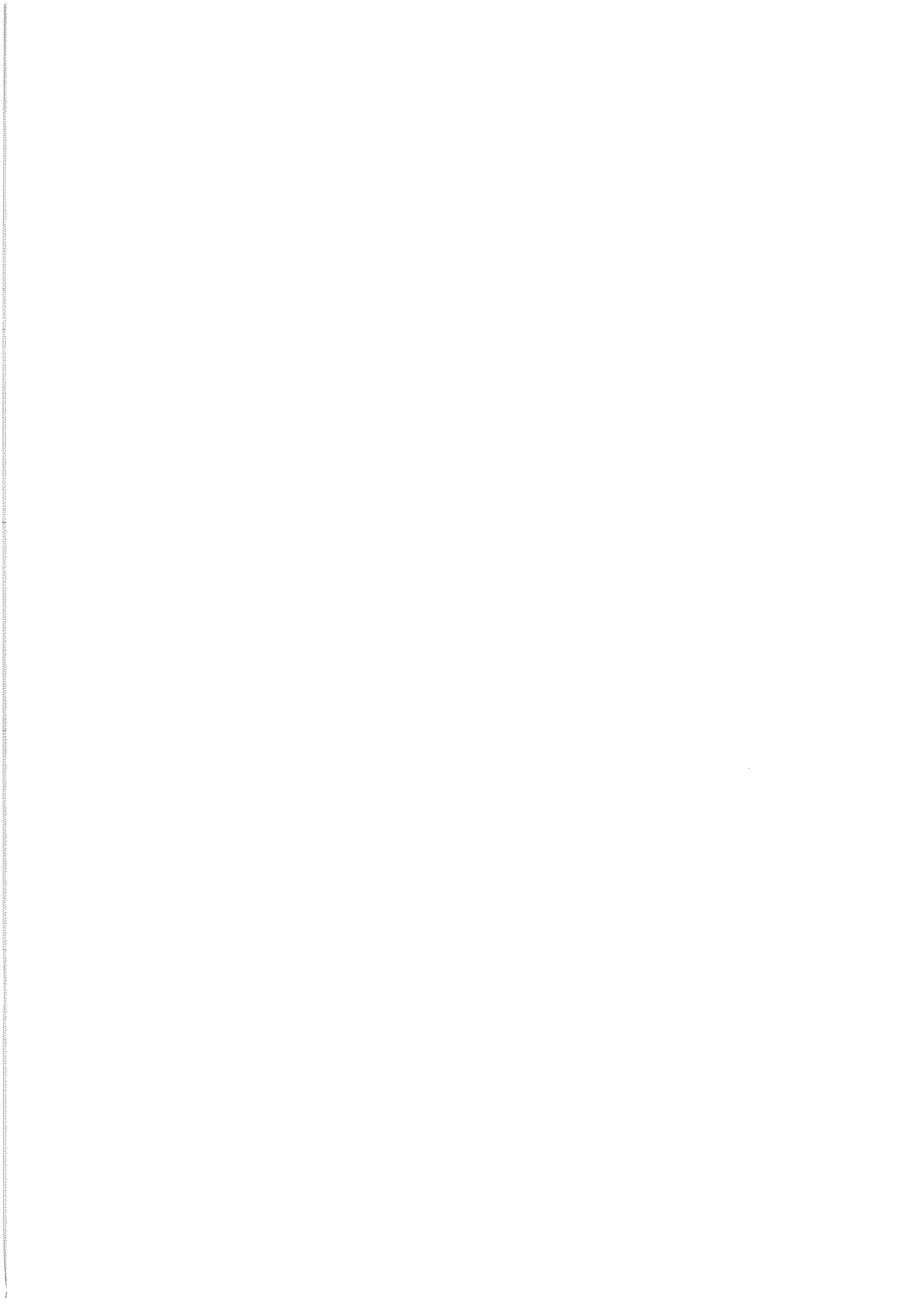
Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Aine Bourke'.

Áine Bourke *BA(Hons) MPlan MRTPI*
Planner
MKO

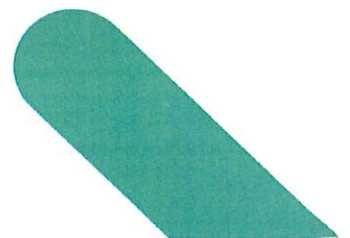
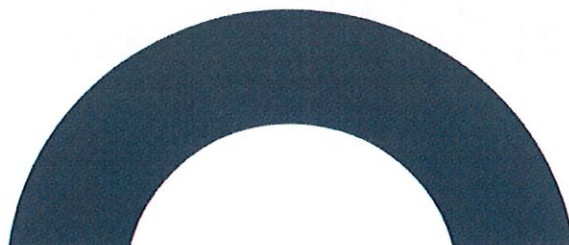
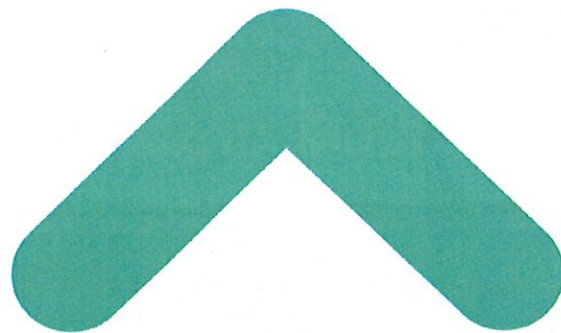
-By Email-





Development Plan Submission

Longford Greyhound Stadium





DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: Patrick Rogers Estates Limited

Project Title: Longford Greyhound Stadium

Project Number: 201052

Document Title: Development Plan Submission

Document File Name: Longford Dev Plan Submissions – F – 201052 – 2021.01.11

Prepared By: MKO
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MKO have been appointed by Patrick Rogers Estates Limited to prepare a submission to Longford County Council on the Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 with specific reference to the land-use zoning in place. We respectfully request that the Planning Authority take cognisance of this submission with regard to the Recreational, Amenity & Green Space land-use zoning objectives contained in the Draft County Development Plan.

The site is located to the south of Longford Town Centre, in the Glack Townland, approximately 0.8km from the Main Street. Currently, the site is vacant and disused, formerly functioning as the town's Greyhound Stadium which is now closed. Access to the site is from Park Road.

The site is currently zoned for Recreational, Amenity & Green Space in the Draft CDP. We are making this case for this submission to change the zoning of land to Residential or New Residential.

The following Report outlines our case for this change in zoning. The key findings outline that the change to Residential land-use zoning would be extremely beneficial to the town. There is a current housing shortage in the country, with Longford Town employers seeking local housing which is part of a supply and demand issue that is not being met. The provision of residential development for this location is not only accessible, part of the residential urban footprint of the town, but meeting national and regional compact growth objectives and fighting climate change with the sustainability of this location.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Preamble

MKO have been appointed by Patrick Rogers Estates Limited to prepare a submission to Longford County Council on the Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 with specific reference to the land-use zoning in place. We respectfully request that the Planning Authority take cognisance of this submission with regard to the Recreational, Amenity & Green Space land-use zoning objectives contained in the Draft County Development Plan.

This report will be outlined as follows:

Section 1 – Executive Summary

The executive summary outlines a one-page summary of the findings in the report for the submission to Longford Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Section 2 – Introduction

This section outlines the contents of the report. The site description and site context will outline the characteristics of the site and its surroundings; including but not restricted to ecological, archaeological and heritage, landscape, and visual characteristics. Relevant planning history of the site and its surroundings will be outlined.

Section 3 – Zoning Objective of Draft Plan

This section outlines the proposed land-use zoning objective of the subject site as defined in the Draft CDP 2021-2027, zoned for Recreational, Amenity & Green Space.

Section 4 – Growth of Longford Town

This section outlines the growth of population and employment, current and future, in Longford Town which will indicate a need for residential development.

Section 5 – Planning Policy Framework

This section outlines the planning policy framework for residential development. This is assessed with the following documents:

- Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy: Eastern and Midlands 2019-2031
- Longford Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027

Section 6 – Regeneration

This section outlines national, regional, and local planning policy relating to regeneration and how this relates to the subject site.

Section 7 – Conclusion

This section concludes our case of a submission to the Draft CDP for the change of zoning from Recreational, Amenity to Residential or New Residential.

This report includes the following appendices:

- **Appendix 1** ‘Closure of Longford Greyhound Track is “a very sad time” says Racing Manager’ – Longford Leader article, 1st April 2020.
- **Appendix 2** ‘Longford in line for multimillion-euro regeneration windfall’ – Longford Leader article, 5th November 2020.

2.2 County Development Plan Review

The *Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021* is currently under review process. The Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 is in its second stage of review of the draft plan; the public consultation of which is currently taking place from 27th October 2020 to 18th January 2021. This Report forms the basis for a submission to the draft plan review.

Our client is taking a logical approach towards the planning and development of Longford Town centre. Such an approach is key to ensuring that suitable lands are developed in the most efficient and sustainable manner feasible, to meet known housing shortages, to meet the aims and objectives of national and regional policy and guidance of the same, and to meet the residential requirements of a growing population as per the Core Strategy for Longford.

2.3 Site Description

The subject site is located to the south of Longford Town Centre, in the townland of Glack. Located on the subject site is the vacant Greyhound Stadium. As a result of the withdrawal of funding by the Irish Greyhound Board, the tenant operating the stadium announced its closure and the last race meeting took place on 23rd March 2020. With no financial support from the Irish Greyhound Board, there is no possibility for the site to be utilised for greyhound racing again (see Appendix 1).

The subject site extends to 2.9ha and is located 0.8km from the Main Street. The western boundary of the site abuts the Royal Canal. Located to the north, east and south of the site are predominantly residential areas. Access to the site is from the L1127 Park Road. Longford Train Station is located 0.4km from the site, which serves the Dublin Connolly – Longford commuter service and the Dublin – Sligo Intercity route. The location of the train station also marks the start to the Town Core zoned area.



Figure 1. Subject site (Source: Myplan.ie, Edited by MKO)

2.3.1 Services

The existing residential area has access to many local services which are in close proximity to the subject site. Located directly opposite the site is a local convenience store, with 2 large supermarkets, Lidl and Dunnes Stores located 750m from the site. Within 500m the town's core retail centre commences where there is accessibility to an array of goods and services.

Medical services are easily accessed by local residents, with Longford Medical Centre located 500m and Midoc Longford located 800m from the site. Within closest proximity is a dental centre located 750m to the site. The town is well serviced with an abundance of pharmacies, of which the closest are 450m and 550m from the site.

The area is well serviced by national and secondary schools within a 1km walking distance to the site. The opportunity for adult and further education is available in 2 proximate locations.

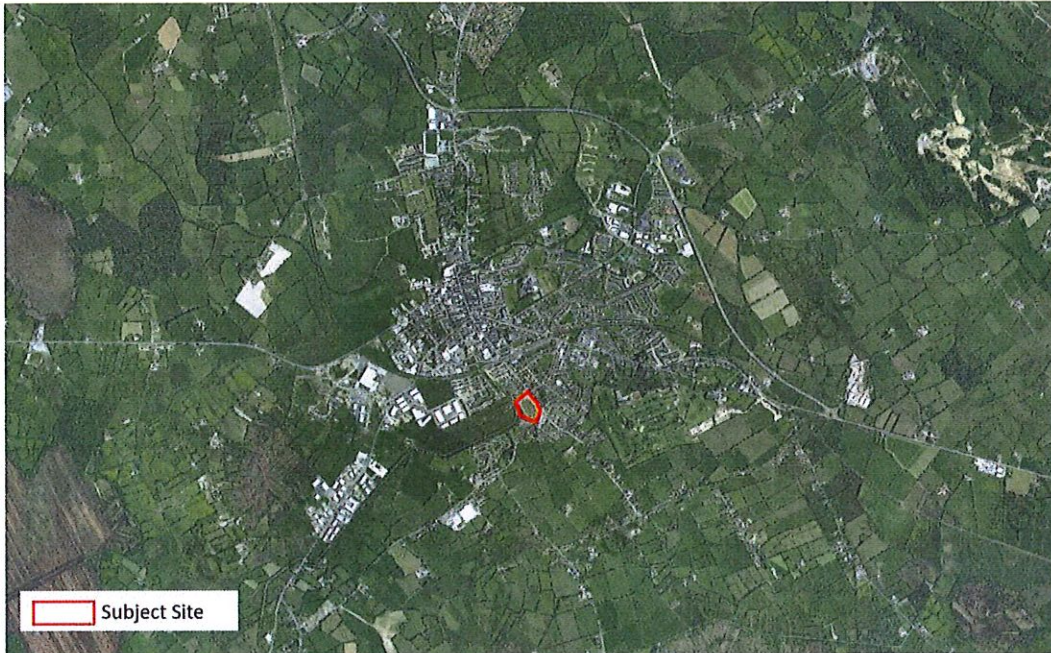


Figure 2. Subject site within Longford Town (Source: Myplan.ie, Edited by MKO)

2.3.2 Ecology

The site is located adjacent to the Royal Canal pNHA (Site Code. 002103) which can be seen in **Figure 3**. Pertinent designated sites and their approximate distances to the subject site are highlighted below:

- > Derrymore Bog pNHA (Site Code. 000447) – 2.14km
- > Carrickglass Demesne pNHA (Site Code. 001822) – 3.6km
- > Brown Bog SAC (Site Code. 002346) – 3.72km
- > Brown Bog pNHA (Site Code. 000442) – 3.72km
- > Mount Jessop Bog NHA (Site Code. 001450) – 3.95km
- > Mount Jessop Bog SAC (Site Code. 002202) – 3.95km
- > Ballykenny-Fishertown Bog SPA (Site Code. 004101) – 5.45km
- > Lough Forbes Complex SAC (Site Code. 001818) – 5.45km
- > Lough Forbes Complex pNHA (Site Code. 001818) – 5.45km
- > Rinn River NHA (Site Code. 000691) – 9.4km
- > Lough Bannow pNHA (Site Code. 000449) – 10.9km

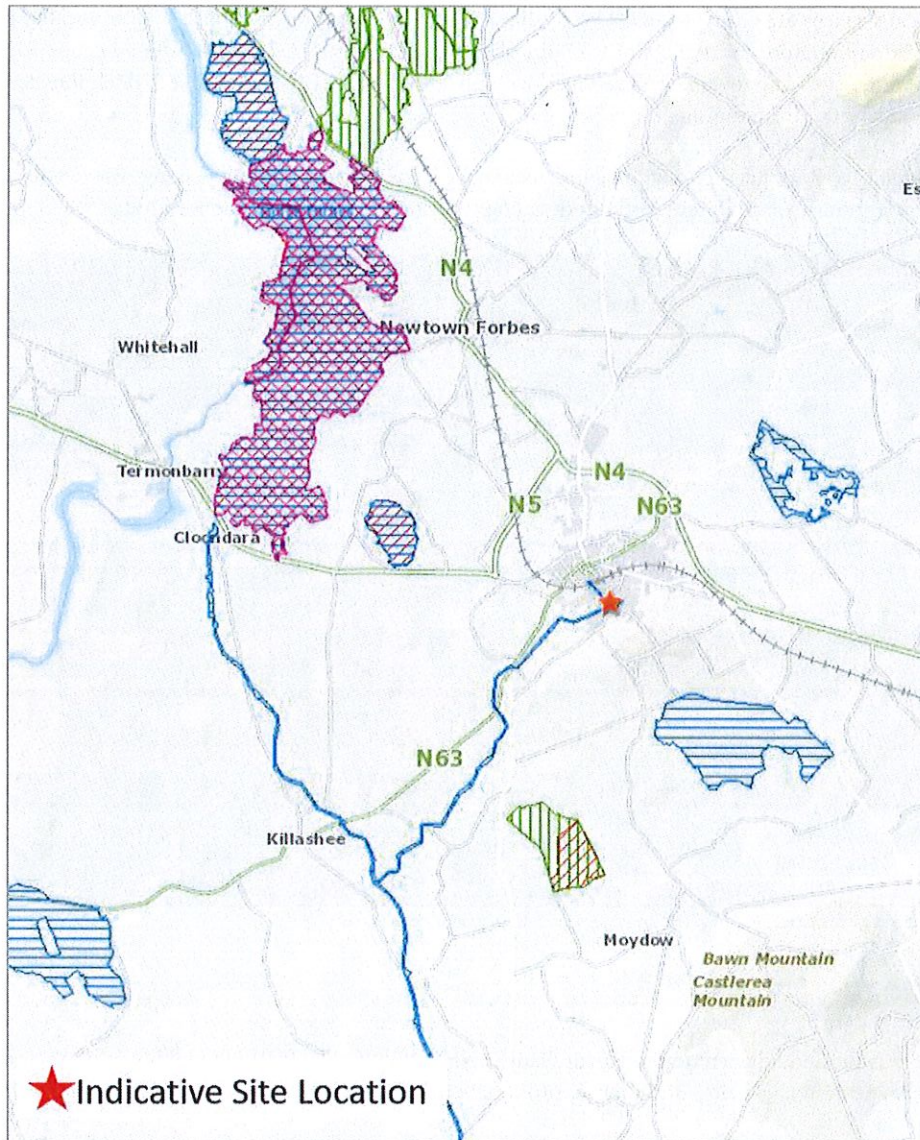


Figure 3. Ecological sites within close proximity to the subject site (Source: NPWS website, Edited by MKO)

2.3.3 Heritage and Archaeology

There are no recorded monuments or archaeological structures located on the subject site. As seen in **Figure 4**, south east of the site is a noted ‘Redundant Record’ – represented on the 1914 OS 6-inch map but since evidence suggests this is not the remains of an archaeological monument. There are a number of protected structures and national monuments located within the town centre and its surroundings, to the north of the subject site.

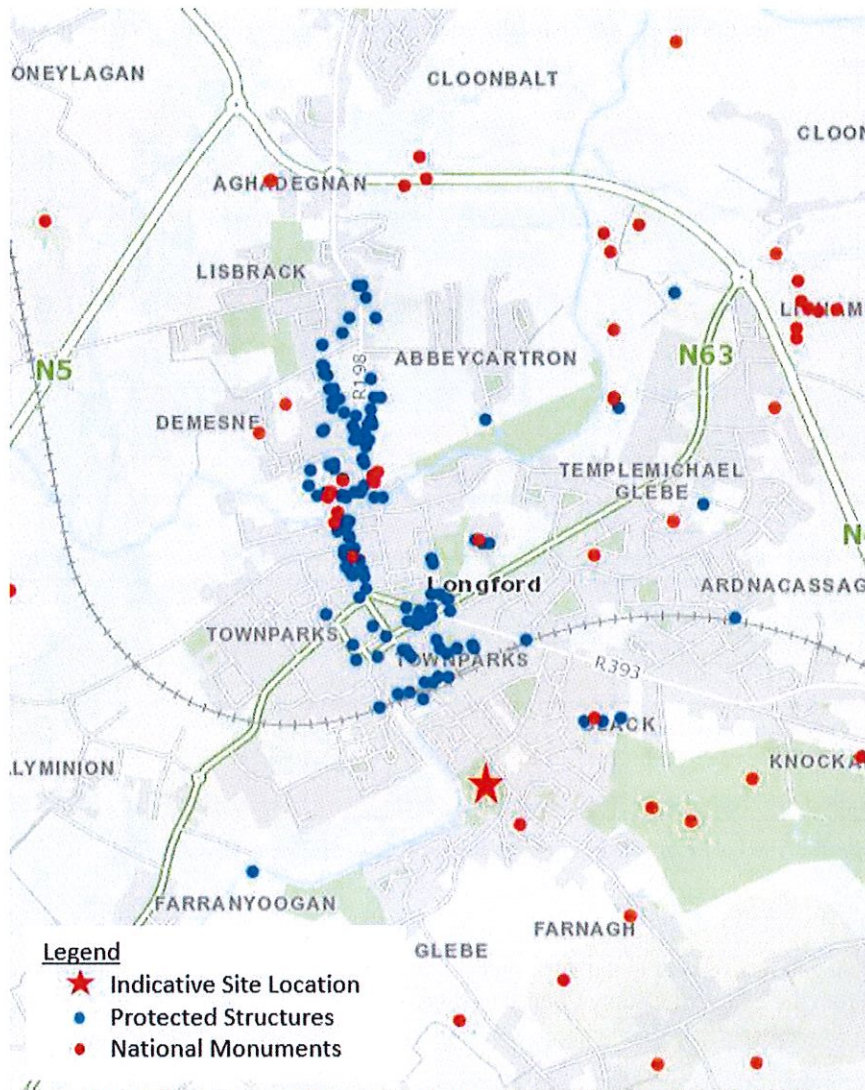


Figure 4. Heritage sites in relation to the subject site (Source: Myplan.ie, Edited by MKO)

2.3.4 Landscape and Visual

Longford Town is located within the Landscape Character Area named as Unit 4 – Central Corridor. This landscape area is relatively flat and low-lying with a strong hierarchical urban system of Longford, Edgeworthstown and Newtownforbes. The landscape sensitivity is Low with potential areas of Medium-High in areas of woodland, riverbanks, and the vicinity of the Aquifer.

The Royal Canal is listed as an important landscape feature in Longford based on its heritage associations and its influence on the landscape. Works are ongoing throughout the county in opening up the canal and protecting the bridges, towpaths, lock keeper cottages and lock gates that were built to support the canal. The impact of the canal will be appropriately considered based on the adjacent location to the subject site.

2.4 Planning History

The following planning history outlines recent planning applications for residential development in the locality of the site. The planning history of the area shows that a large proportion of the residential development took place in this area between the late 1990's and the early-mid 2000's. Residential

development within this area is most typically granted permission as the area is predominantly residential.

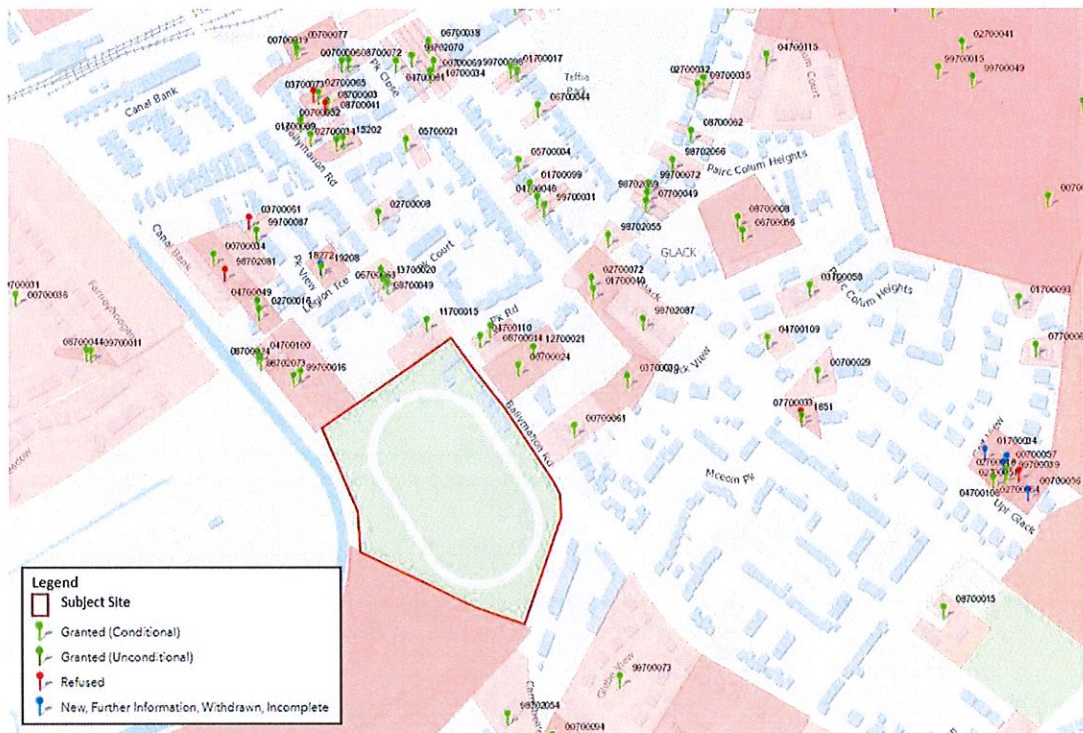


Figure 5. Planning history of the area (Source: Longford County Council map viewer, Edited by MKO)

The planning history relating to the site is outlined in the following table in chronological order, sourced from the Longford County Council website.

Table 1 Planning History relating to the site (Source: Longford County Council ePlanning website)

Planning Reference	Description	Decision
12700021	Application for permission for the following: 1. The construction of a new single storey extension of 64 sq.m to the rear of the existing house, accommodating 3 new bedrooms and en-suite bathroom. 2 Construction of a new single storey accessible entrance porch to the front and associated ramp. 3. Modification to front elevation to provide gable in place of existing dutch gable. 4. Associated ancillary accommodation with internal modifications and all associated site works at Teach Solas, Townparks, Longford.	Grant permission subject to 7 conditions 30 th October 2012.
11700015	Application for permission for a proposed first floor extension to the side of the existing dwelling and all ancillary site works, Grandville, Townparks, Longford.	Granted permission subject to 6 conditions 19 th August 2011.
08700014	Application for permission for a proposed extension to rear, demolition of front wall, provision of car parking spaces to	Granted permission subject to 14

Planning Reference	Description	Decision
	side erection of bollards along shop front, existing door blocked up, new timber facade to front elevations incorporating new signage, construction of new boundary walls to side and rear, connection to existing sewerage and all ancillary site works, Park Road, Longford.	conditions 27 th May 2008.
04700100	Application for permission for the erection of a two-storey dwellinghouse attached to existing two-storey dwellinghouse, demolition of existing garage, new connection to existing public sewer and water supply and all ancillary site works, No. 7 Legion Terrace, Longford.	Granted permission subject to 9 conditions 15 th March 2005.
00700094	Approval for that granted under Pl. 00/17 2nd August 2000 for proposed single storey dwelling and ancillary works. Farnagh, Longford.	Grant permission subject to 14 conditions 13 th March 2001.
00700024	Application for permission to build 2 No. single storey extensions and associated external work. Park Road, Longford.	Grant permission subject to 9 conditions 23 rd June 2000.
00700061	Application for permission to extend to existing premises. Fallons Centra, Park Road, Longford.	Grant permission subject to 6 conditions 10 th November 2000.
99700073	Application for permission for 34 no. semi-detached dwelling houses. Farnagh, Longford.	Grant permission subject to 19 conditions 30 th November 1999.
99700016	Application for the development of 6 No. dwelling house, access road, boundary walls and ancillary works. Legion Terrace, Longford.	Granted permission subject to 12 conditions 14 th December 1999.

3. ZONING OBJECTIVE OF DRAFT PLAN

The Draft CDP has zoned this land for Recreational, Amenity & Green Space. **Figure 6** indicates the land-use zoning of the Draft CDP in relation to the subject site.

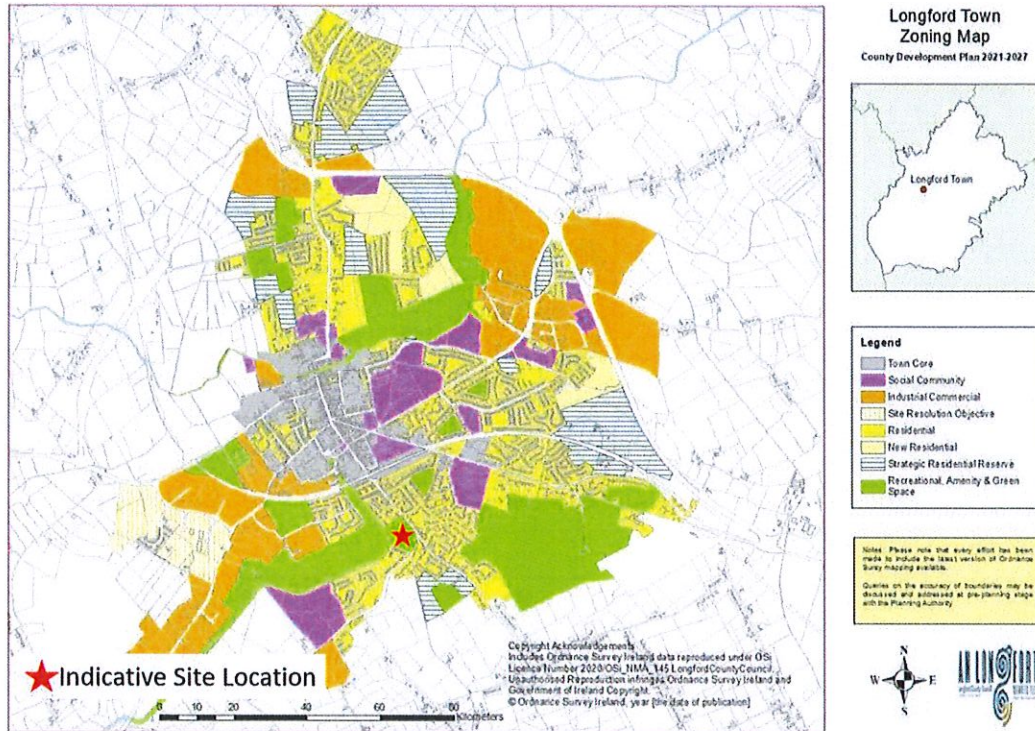


Figure 6. Longford Town Zoning Map (Source: Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027, Edited by MKO)

As visible in **Figure 6**, under the new draft CDP there are several sites zoned for Recreational, Amenity & Green Space, directly to the east and west of the subject site. There is already an existing provision of Amenities in Longford Town, including but not confined to; Longford RFC, Pearse Park GAA, Sports & Leisure Centre, Longford Golf Club, Skating Rink, Royal Canal Amenity Walk, The Mall/Albert Reynolds Peace Park which makes part of the Slí na Sláinte trail.

The subject site, which is zoned for Recreational, Amenity & Green Space is in a fragmented location encased in residential developments. There is a clear imbalance of zoned space between the north side and south side of the railway line. Where New Residential is zoned, there is a lacking provision of Recreational, Amenity & Green Space to compliment these areas.

The Draft CDP states consideration for the purpose of the Recreational, Amenity & Green Space zoning is in

“The area previously used as the Longford Dog Track in recognition of its historical and cultural significance to Longford Town shall be protected for the amenity purposes and use of the public”.

The current need for the town should be focused on the residential development to supply housing for the town’s growing employment sector. Creating a strong urban core that promotes compact growth will be more suitable to the subject site. Developing New Residential on the town’s peripheries will see a negative impact to the town and its sustainability in the town centre.



A change of zoning of this site would not have a negative impact on the access to recreational and amenity sites within the town. Access to the Royal Canal Amenity Walk could be made more easily accessible with a potential pedestrian/cycle pathway through the site for local residents.

4. GROWTH OF LONGFORD TOWN

4.1 Population

The Midlands region and the counties of Laois, Longford Offaly and Westmeath are under influence from Dublin City and the Metropolitan area and have subsequently experienced substantial growth at unsustainable rates.

Longford Core, Settlement and Housing Strategies outline a predicted population growth from 41,000 in 2016 to 44,500-45,500 in 2026 and further reaching 46,000 to 47,000 by 2031. Being the largest town in the county and listed a 'Key Town' under the RSES, Longford is recognised as providing a large employment service that provides for the wider area. Longford's potential in becoming a 'regional driver to complement the Regional Growth Centre of Athlone'.

The population of County Longford in 2016 was 40,873. The settlement of Longford Town was home to 10,008 of those, 25% of the county's population (CSO statistics). The NPF Implementation Roadmap outlines the population predictions for each county until 2031.

By 2026 it is predicted that the population of County Longford will grow between 44,500-45,500. By 2031 it is predicted that the population will grow between 46,000 and 47,000.

4.2 Employment

In recent years, Longford Town has become a key economic driver of the county and subsequently the greater midlands region. Its strategic location, strong transport links (Sligo-Dublin railway line, N4 and N5 road networks), and growing tourism industry are all core facilitators of employment growth. The town has become an attractive location for large multi-national companies in the fields of biomedical, pharmaceutical, and agri-food sectors.

The 2016 Census showcased that Longford Town has a high job to resident workers ratio (1.596), and there is significant in-commuting to the town centre for work. The Draft CDP states that

"Given its strong employment base, its critical mass and its designation within the region under the RSES, Longford Town will be the focus for much of the economic development and projected population growth for the County for the period of this plan".

Based on the population predictions and the recognition of employment growth to come, the provision for new residential developments will be necessary to facilitate said growth. Traditionally, working professionals prefer to live within the urban centres as opposed to in rural locations commuting into the town for employment.

5. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The following planning policy relates to the policies and objectives of key documents outlining the policies and objectives for residential developments which support the change of zoning for this site. They are as follows:

- Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy: Eastern and Midlands 2019-2031
- Longford Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027

5.1 Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework

A zoning change for the subject site in the Draft CDP to Residential or New Residential would comply with National policies and objectives. As part of the NPF Strategy for Compact Growth, it is stated that

“Targeting a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing ‘footprint’ of built-up areas”.

The targeted pattern of growth outlined by the NPF for the Eastern and Midland region is outlined with 30% of all new housing being targeted for outside Dublin City and suburbs, with this housing targeted within existing urban footprints. By 2040, the region is projected to grow by half a million, to 2.85 million.

The provision of additional residential development in Longford Town would be directly meeting NPF targets, policies and objectives including the following:

National Policy Objective 32 states that it is a policy of the NPF

“to target the delivery of 550,000 additional households to 2040”.

A housing demand of 25,000 per year will be needed between 2018 and 2040 to meet targets. In order to do this and meet the overall target of 550,000 new houses it is outlined that Ireland’s future homes need to

“be located in places that can support sustainable development - places which support growth, innovation and the efficient provision of infrastructure, are accessible to a range of local services, can encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling, and help tackle climate change” (our emphasis added).

“be delivered in our cities and larger towns (where large-scale housing demand exists), where homes and the appropriate supporting services can be delivered more efficiently and effectively at less cost to the State in the long-run”.

The National Core Principles to guide the delivery of future housing state that future housing development should

“Prioritise the location of new housing provision in existing settlements as a means to maximising a better quality of life for people through accessing services, ensuring a more efficient use of land and allowing for greater integration with existing infrastructure” (our emphasis added).

The vacant Greyhound Stadium site in Longford has suitable criteria to meet compact growth targets, the greater housing need target and to meet sustainable development targets. Its central location within Longford Town will prevent further urban sprawl occurring, will encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport being in an easily accessible location, particularly to the train station, helping the

greater climate change problem that we are facing. It is also located within an area that has adequate access to services, the infrastructure to support the development and an existing residential settlement area.

5.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy: Eastern and Midlands 2019-2031

The Regional Strategy recognises that

“an overall lack of adequate housing supply to meet a growing population has resulted in affordability issues and increasing homelessness, with a resulting negative impact on quality of life and regional competitiveness”.

“One of the key challenges facing the Region is the need for better alignment between population growth, location of residential development and employment to create healthy and attractive places”.

The outlined Growth Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region will:

“Embed a network of Key Towns through the Region to deliver sustainable regional development”.

A change in zoning by the Local Authority for the vacant greyhound stadium site in Longford Town would meet Regional Policy Objective 3.3 which states that

“Local authorities shall, in their core strategies, identify regeneration areas within existing urban settlements and set out specific objectives relating to the delivery of development on urban infill and brownfield regeneration sites in line with the Guiding Principles set out in the RSES” (our emphasis added).

Longford is listed as a Key Town in the Strategy and is located within the Gateway Region that supports Dublin City & Suburbs as the most significant economic driver of the region. Key Towns are of regional importance and act as growth drivers and it states that

“In this regard, higher densities in core strategies should be applied to higher order settlements such as Dublin City, Regional Growth Centres and Key Towns” (our emphasis added).

Regional Policy Objective 4.26 outlines that

“Core Strategies in local authority development plans shall support objectives to achieve a minimum of 30% of housing in Key Towns by way of compact growth through the identification of key sites for regeneration”.

Key priorities for Longford Town, which is recognised as having a young, diverse and growing population, are

“to promote compact growth, the regeneration of the town centre and to expand Longford’s role as a hub for enterprise, employment and tourism”.

Regarding the residential development of the town

“The delivery of housing in Longford Town is essential to support the overall role and success of the settlement. A key focus for the settlement is to encourage the provision of high-quality housing development at the right locations over the coming years in order to ensure wider societal benefits and the sustainability and enhancement of facilities such as schools, shops,

recreation facilities and open spaces. Central to this is the requirement to provide high quality housing products that meet a variety of housing needs, including those required by employees of existing and potential industry and enterprises within the town”.

The Regional Strategy outlines an Asset Test for the strategic location of new residential development which considers; Scale, Function, Services, Placemaking, Economic, Connectivity, Environment, and Infrastructure.

5.3 Longford Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027

The proposed policies of the new draft plan also support the Key Principle 5 which outlines that as part of Chapter 4: Core, Settlement and Housing Strategies outlines that a key principle of the Draft CDP, which supports National and Regional objectives is to

“Give effect to the principle of ‘compact growth’ by targeting at least 30% of all new residential development to occur within the existing built-up footprints of towns and villages within the county, with a focus on infill and brownfield land development, rather than peripheral development patterns”.

This is further reinforced by County Policy Objectives CPO 4.1 which states that it is a policy of the Draft Plan to

“Promote the sustainable growth and development of the county in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy and population targets established within the Core Strategy and commensurate with the network of urban centres, villages and rural areas presented in the Settlement Strategy and their respective capacities to assimilate sustainable levels of future development”.

CPO 4.2 states that it is a policy of the Draft Plan to

“Require at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements to be located within the existing built-up footprint of the settlements, in an effort to make settlements more compact and reduce unsustainable urban sprawl and ribbon development”.

The Core Strategy outlines the quantum of land required for New Residential in Longford Town which is 14ha. The subject site is 2.9ha and the change of zoning to New Residential for the site will provide significantly to the proposed quantum of land in the core strategy. Higher densities are deemed appropriate for the Key Town of Longford Town, with 30 units per hectare. The potential for approximately 87 units on the site would prove beneficial in meeting national, regional, and local policies and objectives.

According to the draft CDP, in some cases there is an opportunity to exceed the quantum of land as

“the quantum of new residential zoned lands in some settlements will deliberately exceed the minimum quantum of land required for future residential development as detailed in the Core Strategy”.

6. REGENERATION

The existing use on the site is a former Greyhound Stadium, which is now closed, and there is no possibility for the site to be used for this purpose in the future. The infrastructure which is on the site has become run down over the years and there is a potential for the site to become derelict as a whole in the long term and potentially become an eyesore to the local residents and the wider town. The rezoning of these lands, particularly to a residential zoning would be of greater benefit to the town of Longford than the current use and zoning. The regeneration policies outlined below support a change in zoning and would apply to the site itself.

6.1 Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework

Under the NPF, there has been an allocation of a €2 billion investment to the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). Launched in 2018 the URDF is a 10-year national programme that is aimed for the five main cities of Ireland and large towns (with a population over 10,000). Longford Town would be the only town applicable for this fund in the county, which would allow funding to regenerate the core town area of town centres.

The NPF outlines one of two core strategies of the URDF to create

“A new National Regeneration and Development Agency working with local authorities to release strategically located land banks suitable for redevelopment and designation for future public and private housing provision that will be affordable for housing providers to develop, and for people to buy or rent. A package of strategic publicly owned sites being developed for public housing purposes primarily, but with a mix of private housing and affordable homes as part of mixed-tenure communities”.

Recent articles have stated that up to €13million of the URDF is reportedly allocated for Longford Town in the regeneration of the Camlin Quarter, incorporating the old Connolly Barracks, an overall area of 55 acres and will be distributed over a 4-5-year period. It is predicted that with this funding, Longford Town will become more of a destination in attracting new businesses (See Appendix X)

Our client is taking a proactive approach to building vacancy and is keen to revive the vitality and viability of their site before it becomes run-down and a potentially attractive area for anti-social behaviour to occur. The National Strategy for regeneration is focused on residential development and this site would meet the requirements of this strategy. If employment rises and businesses grow within the town, there will be a greater need for accessible housing for a new employment population.

6.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy: Eastern and Midlands 2019-2031

The objectives of the RSES which aim to achieve compact growth with urban regeneration support the key principles, as well as National objectives. Of the 16 Regional Strategic Outcomes there is a focused regional objective for compact growth and urban regeneration which states that it is an objective to

“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”.

This supports the key principle of Healthy Placemaking which outlines that it is a Regional principle

“to promote people’s quality of life through the creation of healthy and attractive places to live, work, visit and study in”.

The Regional Strategy recognises that

“Longford Town has a number of strategic areas that can act as regenerative catalysts increasing the residential, economic and leisure potential of the town centre, whilst also addressing vacancy, derelict buildings and enhancing the vibrancy of the town”.

Regional Policy Objective 4.62 outlines that it is an objective of the Strategy to

“Support the plan-led development and regeneration of publicly owned land banks in the town for residential, employment, education, community, cultural and recreational opportunities and the consolidation of the town centre and the enhancement and linking of brownfield and outlying sites to the town centre, with a focus on the regeneration of underused buildings and strategic sites”.

6.3

Longford Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027

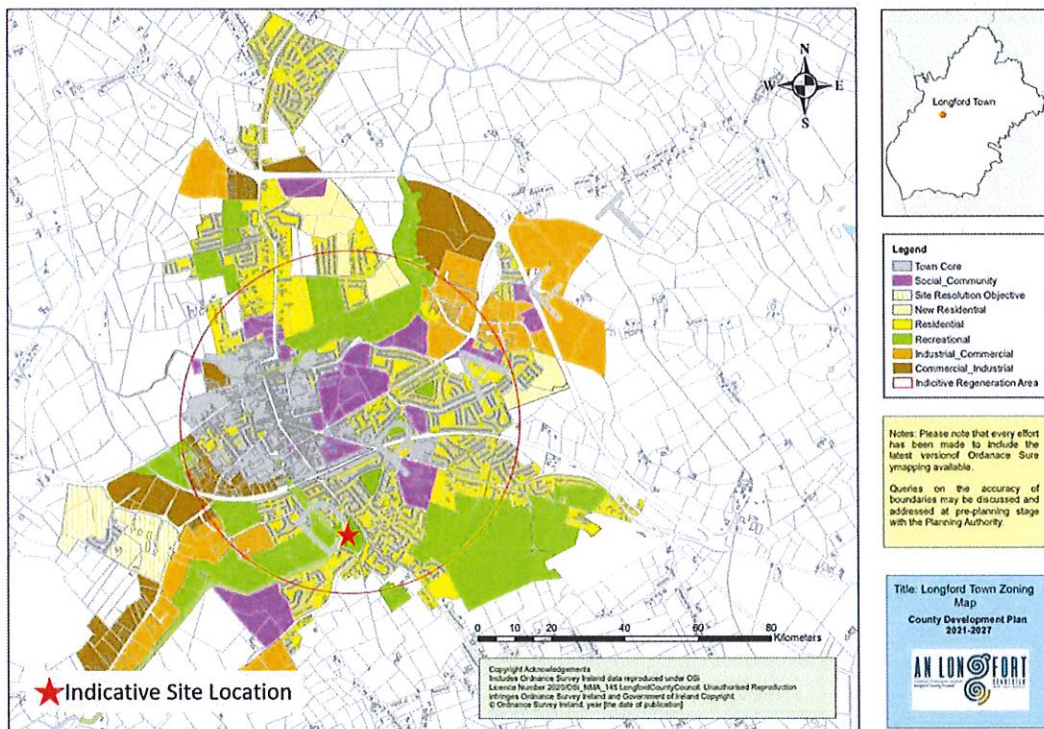


Figure 7. Longford Town Zoning Map with indicative regeneration area (Source: Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027, Edited by MKO)

Local regeneration policy for Longford Town supports national and regional objectives, and as seen in **Figure 7**, the subject site is located within the Indicative Regeneration Area for Longford Town under the Draft CDP. Utilising the vacant site of the Greyhound Stadium would be positively meeting regeneration targets for the town, on a national, regional, and local scale.

CPO 6.51 states that it is an objective of the Draft CDP to

“Promote the appropriate development and regeneration of the designated ‘regeneration areas’ identified in this Plan and to include ‘vacant sites’”.

Of the key principles of the Settlement Strategies Key Principle 5 states that it is a principle to

“Give effect to the principle of ‘compact growth’ by targeting at least 30% of all new residential development to occur within the existing built-up footprints of towns and villages within the county, with a focus on infill and brownfield land development, rather than peripheral development patterns”.

Key Principle 12 states that it is a principle to

“Identify targeted renewal and regeneration schemes within settlements to address areas of decline and to act as catalysts for future investment and development within specific settlements”.

7. CONCLUSION

This report has outlined the submission to support a change in zoning for the subject site from Recreational, Amenity & Green Space as outlined in the draft CDP to Residential or New Residential.

The existing area is predominantly residential, and there is already the infrastructure in place to support a new residential development. The location is within walking distance to the town centre and to strong transport links including the train station. The location to jobs and employment centres creates a viable and attractive place in which to live. The site is located between two large recreational spaces of the Royal Canal Amenity Walk to the west and the Longford Golf Club and surrounding areas to the east.

The growth projections for Longford's employment and population indicate that the future development of residential units will be required in order to support this growth and in doing so, support compact growth objectives of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

The development of residential units in this location would create a logical inclusion of the existing residential sites with a defensible boundary to the Royal Canal open space. All areas zoned for New Residential under the draft CDP are located to the north of the town, and this would be a viable option for a site south of the river.

In zoning this land for New Residential or Residential the Local Authority would allow our client to continue to take a proactive approach to regeneration, which will support the regenerative objectives for the town centre.

The previous use for the site as a Greyhound Stadium is now defunct with no possibility of returning. The existing structure on the site is in a rundown state and there is the potential that this area will become one of anti-social behaviour, creating an unattractive and unsafe area for the existing residents.



APPENDIX 1

'CLOSURE OF LONGFORD GREYHOUND TRACK IS "A VERY SAD TIME" SAYS RACING MANAGER' – LONGFORD LEADER ARTICLE, 1ST APRIL 2020

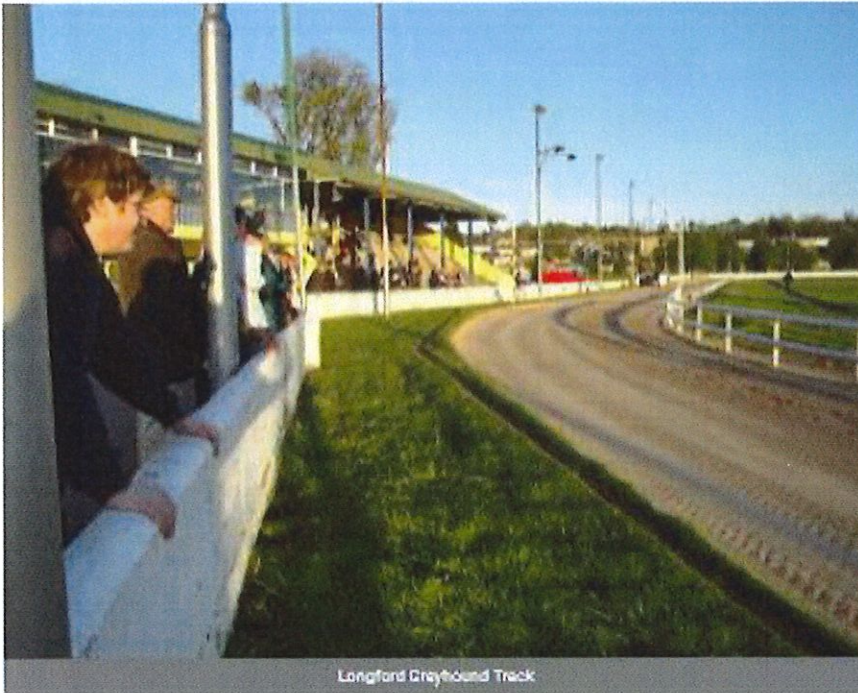
Closure of Longford Greyhound Track is "a very sad time" says Racing Manager



by Kevin Forde 1 Apr 2020

Email: kevin.forde@longfordleader.ie

0 comments



Longford Greyhound Track

Racing Manager Paddy Farrington has acknowledged that it is "a very sad time" for the people of Longford and beyond who put so much support into Longford Greyhound Track, which held its last meeting just over a week ago.

"After over 80 years the curtain has come down on this iconic venue. Over them years this venue has brought great joy to so many and has a huge amount of history behind it," said Mr Farrington.

"While this is a very sad time for the people involved in the track it also has been a chance to reflect on what was such a great social venue and offered so much more than just a greyhound racing track.

"Passionate people came here each week hoping to have the next derby winner and with that they made great friends and shared laughter and joy.

"Thanks to all supporters of the track who passionately fought to help it survive and thanks to the staff who created a lovely atmosphere always.

"Longford greyhound stadium would like to wish everyone the best through these challenging times."

The final race meeting was held on Monday, March 23, following a recent Indecon report, which recommended the Irish Greyhound Board seize funding for Longford and three other tracks.

[Read also: Final race meet held in Longford last Monday](#)

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APPENDIX 2

*LONGFORD IN LINE FOR
MULTIMILLION-EURO REGENERATION
WINDFALL' – LONGFORD LEADER
ARTICLE, 5TH NOVEMBER 2020*



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EXCLUSIVE: Longford in line for multi million euro regeneration windfall

UP TO €13M COULD BE ROLLED OUT BY GOVERNMENT BOSSES FOR CAMLIN QUARTER REDESIGN IN BIGGEST SINGLE INVESTMENT IN RECENT MEMORY



by Liam Cosgrove 5 Nov 2020

Email: liam.cosgrove@longfordleader.ie

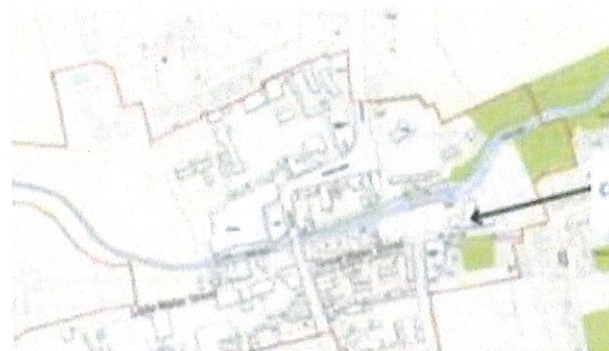
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Fianna Fáil's Joe Flaherty is calling on Longford County Council's regeneration team to look at the possibility of developing a National Transport Museum

Longford's regeneration plans could be in line for a major 'transformational' multi million euro cash injection which will pave the way for the redevelopment of the county town's Camlin Quarter.

The Leader understands the project, which is at application stage, is likely to see up to €13m being ring-fenced through the State's Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF).



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The planned investment rollout subject to approval, will be distributed over a four to five year period and incorporate a 55 acre area which includes moves to rejuvenate the former [Connolly Barracks](#) site, construct an innovation and technological hub inside the old Provider's building as well as undertaking major restorative works along Great Water Street and the lower end of town.

It's believed the announcement will represent the largest single State backed investment in the county in recent memory and comes over two years since the so-called '[Camlin Quarter](#)' plan was unveiled.

[ALSO READ: Junior Housing Minister in Longford to set seal on multi million euro Camlin Quarter plan](#)

Cathaoirleach of Longford County Council Cllr Paul Ross said the news was "transformational" in underpinning Longford's socio-economic future.

"It's multi-functional and will regenerate that end of the town," said the Fine Gael councillor.

"One can argue that Ballymahon, Edgeworthstown and Granard have been given (funding) boosts in recent times and that the town needed a major investment and now it has it."

Details surrounding the finer points of the Government's outlay, the Leader understands, will be signed off on by the Department of Local Government under which Longford-Westmeath Fine Gael TD Peter Burke is a junior minister.

It's also understood not all of the funding will be distributed in one fell swoop, but rather in stages across a four to five year period.

"This won't come in one big cheque or anything like that but it is what you would call a 'big ticket' item," said Cllr Ross.

The incumbent county council cathaoirleach said the anticipated eight figure windfall was a development that would go a long way towards complimenting ongoing moves to revamp the county town's Market Square and Shopping Centre areas.

"There was somewhere in the region of €3m for the Longford Connected (Public Realm Enhancement) Project, though this (€13m Camlin Quarter investment) will leave a lasting legacy for Longford town," he said.

Fellow Fine Gael Councillor Paraic Brady went a step further, saying the funding had all the hallmarks of making Longford a business and shopping destination to be rivalled with.

"It is going to put Longford on the map, not only as a town but as a pride of place and a destination to come and visit," he said, while paying tribute to the efforts of council bosses and regeneration officers.

"It will be something spectacular for that end of town and will attract new business and shoppers to town and will give Longford a whole new lease of life that it needs."

Tags: [Urban Regeneration and Development Fund](#), [Connolly Barracks](#), [Camlin Quarter](#)

