



Proposed Variation no. 1 of the County Longford Development Plan 2021-2027

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT ON SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

May 2026

Forward Planning Section

Longford County Council

Contents

1.0 Introduction	2
1.1 Background and Reason for Proposed Variation No. 1	2
1.2 Proposed Variation	2
1.3 Public Consultation	3
1.4 Legislative Requirements for Chief Executive Report	3
1.5 Next Steps – Procedure Following Chief Executive Report	4
2.0 Submissions Received	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Chief Executive’s Recommendations – How to Read	6
2.3 Summary of Submissions, CE Response & Recommendations	7
2.3.1 Office of Planning Regulator (OPR)	7
2.3.2 National Transport Authority (NTA)	13
2.3.3 Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)	14
2.3.4 Office of Public Works (OPW)	15
2.3.5 Uisce Éireann (UÉ)	18
2.3.6 Electricity Supply Board (ESB)	19
2.3.7 Iarnród Éireann (IÉ)	20
2.3.8 Department of Education and Youth	21
2.3.9 Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage	22
2.3.10 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	24
2.3.11 An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland	26
2.3.12 Josephine Hagan	28
2.3.13 Camlin Partnership	30
Appendices	32
Appendix 1: Proposed Variation no. 1 o	33
Appendix 2: Copy of Public Notice	36

1.0 Introduction

This report relates to the issues raised in submissions and observations received from members of the public and prescribed and environmental bodies following the publication of the Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, pursuant under Section 58 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended). This report is furnished to the Elected Members of Longford County Council for their consideration.

1.1 Background and Reason for Proposed Variation No. 1

Proposed Variation No. 1 (Appendix 1) has been prepared to align the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 with the Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines: *The NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements –Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)*.

The First Revision of the National Planning Framework (NPF) (April 2025) sets out updated national and local population and housing targets to 2040. These targets anticipate a national population of 6.1 million by 2040, requiring the delivery of approximately 800,000 new homes, or 50,000 homes per annum. Projected population growth should be planned in accordance with NPF requirements. These requirements target a minimum of 30% of all new development on infill and brownfield sites within the existing built footprint of urban settlements of over 1,500, with a minimum of 20% of all development on infill and brownfield sites within the existing built footprint of rural settlements.

The reason for the proposed Variation no. 1 is in light of the updated policy objectives and growth projections set out in the First Revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) and associated guidelines and acknowledging the constrained delivery of housing in recent years. As such the Variation of the Development Plan now seeks to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned '*Strategic Residential Reserve*'. Activation of these lands will be subject to the principles of infrastructure-led compact growth, as well as the environmental considerations that underpin the Development Plan

1.2 Proposed Variation

Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 consists of the amendment to the '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' *Zoning Objective* text contained in Volume 2: Appendices. This shall be amended to allow for consideration of planning applications for residential development on '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoned sites which are demonstrably serviced and where such development would also comply with Compact Growth policies of the CDP.

1.3 Public Consultation

Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2021 was placed on public display from Friday 20 March 2026 to Friday 17 April 2026 (both dates inclusive). A public notice (appendix 2) was published in the Longford Leader dated Friday 20 March 2026 notifying members of the public that the Proposed Variation was on public display from the 20 March 2026 to the 17 April 2026. A copy of the statutory notice was sent to the prescribed statutory bodies and environmental bodies.

The following documents were placed on display:

- Proposed Variation No.1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.
- Initial Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report.
- Initial Draft Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report.

Documents for the proposed Variation were displayed at the following locations:

- Planning Office, Áras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford, N39 NH56
- The County Council's dedicated online public consultation portal at:

<https://consult.longfordcoco.ie/en/consultation/proposed-variation-no-1-longford-county-development-plan-2021-2027>

A total of 13 submissions/observations were received during the public consultation period, which can be viewed at: <https://consult.longfordcoco.ie/en/node/107/submissions>

1.4 Legislative Requirements for Chief Executive Report

In accordance with Section 58 (11)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended), the Chief Executive is required to prepare a report on the submissions or observations received during the public consultation period in respect of the Proposed Variation and submit the report to the members of the planning authority for their consideration. This report is required to:

- (i) list the persons who made submissions,
- (ii) provide a summary of any—
 - (I) recommendations and submissions made by the Minister,
 - (II) recommendations and submissions made by the Office of the Planning Regulator,
 - (III) submissions made by the regional assembly and the National Transport Authority, and
 - (IV) submissions made by any other persons in relation to the proposed variation,
- (iii) give the response of the Chief Executive to the issues raised in the submissions, taking account of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the statutory

obligations of the planning authority and any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or of any Minister of the Government,

(iv) set out the recommendations of the Chief Executive as to how any recommendations made by the Minister and the Office of the Planning Regulator in any submissions made by them should be dealt with, and

(v) where required, include the assessment of the Chief Executive of the proposed variation for the purposes of strategic environmental assessment or appropriate assessment, taking into account the submissions received under this section.

This Chief Executive (CE) report must be presented to the Elected Members no later than 8 weeks from the publication of the Proposed Variation (15 May 2026).

1.5 Next Steps – Procedure Following Chief Executive Report

The members consideration of the proposed variation and the Chief Executive's report shall be completed within 6 weeks from the date of the submission of the Chief Executive's report to the members. Where, following the consideration of the proposed variation and the Chief Executive's report, it appears to the members that the proposed variation should be made, they may, by resolution make the proposed variation. Where, it appears to the members that a modified version of the proposed variation should be made, they may, by resolution make a modified version of the proposed variation. Alternatively, the members may also refuse the making of the proposed variation.

Where, in making the proposed variation or a modified version of the proposed variation, the members do not comply with any recommendation made by the Minister or Office of the Planning Regulator, they shall, as soon as practicable following the making of the variation, so inform the Minister, or the Office of the Planning Regulator, as the case may be, by notice in writing which notice shall contain a statement of the reasons for the decision not to comply with the recommendation concerned.

If the Elected Members decide to materially alter the proposed variation, a further period of public consultation will be necessary, and the Planning Authority must screen the Proposed Material Alterations to determine if a Strategic Environmental Chief Executive's Report on Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021 –2027 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Appropriate Assessment (AA) or both are required for any of the Proposed Material Alterations. This screening, and if deemed necessary, the SEA or AA processes, must be carried out before proceeding to the public consultation period.

The public display period for any Proposed Material Alteration is a minimum period of four weeks. Submissions and observations will be invited with respect to any Proposed Material Alterations and following the statutory public consultation period a further Chief Executive's Report will also be prepared for the members consideration.

Members of the Council are restricted to:

- Considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area,
- The statutory obligations of any local authority in the area; and
- Any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government (such as Section 28 Guidelines).

In addition, the Elected Members, acting in the interests of the common good and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, must, in accordance with the *'Code of Conduct for Councillors' (July 2019)* prepared under the Local Government Act 2001(as amended), carry out their duties in a transparent manner, must follow due process and must make their decisions based on relevant considerations.

A variation made to a development plan shall take effect from the day that the variation is made.

2.0 Submissions Received

2.1 Introduction

The proposed variation was placed on public display during the period from 20 March 2026 to 17 April 2026 inclusive. Copies of the proposed variation were sent to the Minister, prescribed bodies, and environmental bodies as required by the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended). During the consultation period 13 no. submissions were received from the following:

Submission No.	Name
LD-C11-2	Josephine Hagan
LD-C11-3	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
LD-C11-4	Uisce Éireann
LD-C11-5	Office of Public Works
LD-C11-6	Department of Education
LD-C11-7	National Transport Authority
LD-C11-8	Camlin Partnership
LD-C11-9	Environmental Protection Agency
LD-C11-10	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
LD-C11-11	Office of Planning Regulator
LD-C11-12	Electricity Supply Board
LD-C11-13	Iarnród Éireann
LD-C11-14	An Taisce

This following section contains a summary of the 13 written submissions received as part of the consultation process and the associated CE Response and Recommendation.

2.2 Chief Executive's Recommendations – How to Read

Proposed Variation No. 1 (Appendix 1) seeks to amend the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 (the Plan), as follows:

- existing unchanged text of the Plan in black.
- proposed deletions in the original proposed variation: *blue italics with strikethrough*.
- proposed new text in the original proposed variation: *red italics*.

In response to submissions received, the Chief Executive may recommend changes to the text of the amendments in Proposed Variation no. 1, the provision of additional amendments to the County Development Plan, or changes to the documents accompanying Variation No. 1. Any further additional recommended changes to Proposed Variation No. 1 shall be indicated as follows:

- proposed additional deletions in *green italics with strikethrough*.
- proposed new text in *green italics*.

2.3 Summary of Submissions, CE Response & Recommendations

2.3.1 Office of Planning Regulator (OPR)

Submission no.	LD-C11-11
Name	Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR)
Subject	Implementation of the Housing Growth Guidelines; Flood Risk Management and Environmental Protection

Summary of Issues Raised:

A key function of the OPR is the assessment of statutory plans to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning. Recommendations relate to clear breaches of the relevant legislative provisions, of the national or regional policy framework and/or of the policy of Government. Planning authorities are requested to implement or address recommendations made to ensure consistency with the relevant policy and legislative provisions. The submission sets out the following recommendations:

1. Implementation of the Housing Growth Guidelines

Recommendation 1 – Implementation of the Housing Growth Guidelines

- (i) update and clarify approach to the Housing Growth Guidelines within chapter 4: Core, Settlement and Housing Strategies of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, update and include a revised Core Strategy Table to clarify the new housing growth requirements figure and include the 50% additional provision and updated quantity of additional lands proposed for housing and estimated yield housing units and new final overall target figures for the county;
- (ii) update and clarify the proposed updated proportion of growth per settlement in the county in core strategy table;
- (iii) provide an updated Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) of lands to be released from Strategic Residential Reserve to New Residential;
- (iv) provide details on the quantum (ha), density and housing yield of each new residential zoning within the SCA;
- (v) identify and review the serviceability of each zoning including accessibility to water and wastewater infrastructure, roads, lighting and footpaths;
- (vi) include updated reference to the Housing Growth Guidelines within chapter 4: Core Settlement and Housing Strategies, and the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).

Chief Executive Response

Proposed Variation No. 1 (Appendix 1) has been primarily prepared to align the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 with the Section 28 Ministerial

Guidelines: *The NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements –Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)*. The First Revision of the National Planning Framework (NPF) (April 2025) sets out updated national and local population and housing targets to 2040. These targets anticipate a national population of 6.1 million by 2040, requiring the delivery of approximately 800,000 new homes, or 50,000 homes per annum. Projected population growth should be planned in accordance with NPF requirements. These requirements target a minimum of 30% of all new development on infill and brownfield sites within the existing built footprint of urban settlements of over 1,500, with a minimum of 20% of all development on infill and brownfield sites within the existing built footprint of rural settlements.

Housing Growth Numbers

Under the Housing Growth Requirement Guidelines, Longford's new baseline annual housing requirement remains unchanged from the current existing Development Plan target of 428 dwellings per year. The Housing Growth Requirement Guidelines also provide that an 'additional provision' (previously referred to as headroom) of up to 50% be incorporated over and above the baseline annual housing requirement. For Longford there is sufficient 'New Residential' lands remaining for the remaining timespan of the Development Plan. This is set out in considerable detail in the '*Chief Executive Report: Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027: NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*'. This report was adopted by the Elected Members in December 2025.

However, in response to the correspondence to the Chief Executive dated 20 February 2026 from both the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, Proposed Variation No. 1 was subsequently devised in order to provide additional choice of location for the provision of these dwellings in accordance with core strategy figures.

Delivery Mechanism

The reason for the proposed Variation no. 1 is in light of the updated policy objectives and growth projections set out in the First Revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) and associated guidelines and acknowledging the constrained delivery of housing in recent years. As such the variation of the Development Plan now seeks to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned '*Strategic Residential Reserve*'. Activation of these lands will be subject to the principles of infrastructure-led compact growth, as well as the environmental considerations that underpin the Development Plan

Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 consists of the amendment to the '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' Zoning Objective text contained in Volume 2: Appendices. The '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' Zoning objective text included in CDP Volume 2, Appendices shall be amended to allow for consideration of planning applications for residential development on '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoned sites which are demonstrably serviced and where such development would also comply with compact growth policies of the CDP.

Proposed Variation No. 1, as published, is a mechanism which Longford County Council intends to utilise in accommodating and facilitating the additional housing growth requirement provided in the Housing Growth Requirement Guidelines. After the '*Existing Residential*' and '*New Residential*' zoning in the County Development Plan, the provision of the option of housing growth on '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' lands represent the next stage of residential zonings available in Longford. The sites are generally situated in proximity to existing zoning in the relevant urban areas and generally benefit from proximity to services that will be likely improved in the future. The lands zoned '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' are generally recognised as an appropriate area to cater for future strategic requirements to accommodate expansion of the town.

The delivery mechanism of Proposed Variation no. 1 incorporates a relax in the release of '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoned lands in the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027. Some of these lands overlap with the more recently adopted Longford Town Local Area Plan 2024-2026. As such these lands were previously assessed, or have been recently assessed, in the relevant Plans as appropriate areas for residential development, albeit for the longer term. However taking account of the Minister's requirement for the availability of additional housing lands in the immediate term, it is considered that these can be made available subject to proper planning and sustainable development, environmental considerations, flooding, serviceability and other planning considerations, as deemed satisfactory by the Development Management process to be considered on a case-by-case basis, and on the merits of each individual planning application.

These sites have been identified, through the County Development Plan process already as areas which can accommodate significant residential development and complementary uses to create sustainable communities. Given the significant residential development potential of the lands, it is reasonable to assume that it will provide another alternative option for housing delivery, subject to requisite infrastructure provision being developed in tandem and compliance with relevant core strategy provisions, environmental considerations, and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, all of which will be assessed on an individual case-by-case basis as part of the Development Plan process.

The Development Management process will incorporate and distribute the option of developing housing on additional lands as provided by Variation No. 1, on '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoned lands in a sustainable manner, underpinned by evidence-based assessments, and in accordance with the existing core strategy requirements. This approach will enable the sustainable development of settlements, the integration of land use and transportation planning and the creation of communities that are supported by appropriate infrastructure.

This was considered the most appropriate and balanced approach to integrating the Housing Growth Requirement Guidelines as quickly as possible for the remaining lifetime of the current County Development Plan. The approach leverages the priority of the planning authority to take account of the Housing Growth Requirement Guidelines, in conjunction with the availability of existing zoned '*New*

Residential' lands and the availability of other strategic landbanks, most of which are proximate to existing and/or future services and infrastructure provision for the remainder of the existing Development Plan duration.

Compliance with Compact Settlements Guidelines

In terms of the OPR's recommendation for the inclusion of reference to '*Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)*' (hereafter referred to as the Compact Settlements Guidelines) in the relevant sections of chapter 4: Core, Settlement and Housing Strategies of the County Development Plan as part of the variation, this is a misunderstanding by the OPR and is not part of this particular variation content, which is focused on the rewording of the '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoning objective. Attention is also drawn to the fact that the density levels specified in the Core Strategy Table (Table 4.10) are also within the density levels specified in the aforementioned Compact Settlement Guidelines. Furthermore, in Chapter 16 Development Management Standards of the Development Plan, in relation to '16.4.4. Residential Development', while reference is made to the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)* it also references 'any update thereof'. As such this provides the necessary update, and incorporation of the aforementioned Compact Settlements Guidelines without the necessity to specifically vary the Plan in this regard,

The Move to 10-Year County Development Plans

A key aspect to be noted is the upcoming formal commencement of the preparation of a new Longford County Development Plan in August 2026, to be completed under the new 2024 Act. The 2024 Act provides that zoning maps for all settlements are to be contained in the County Development Plan with a 10-year timeframe. The preparation of a new plan will include a review of the settlement hierarchy and housing growth allocation as part of an Integrated Overall Strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Longford over a 10-year period.

Clarification with the OPR

The OPR submission indicates that the proposed Variation includes the proposed potential release of all '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' lands in 11 settlements as additional zoning amendments. Rather the proposed variation amends the text of the '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoning objective, in order to reduce the barriers to development on this land and to allow for consideration of planning applications for residential development on '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoned sites which are demonstrably serviced and where such development would also comply with Compact Growth policies of the CDP.

The Proposed Variation expands the range of new residential development which will be considered on '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' zoned lands within the remainder of the lifetime of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 subject to amended provisions. The cases whereby new residential development will be considered on these lands has been altered so that rather only applying '*in exceptional circumstances*', consideration will be more broadly given to the release of these lands for residential development. This will be subject to established

planning criteria and in particular the requirement to remain within the overall residential land use targets as set out in the core strategy; and where there is factual evidence that such lands are/have become fully serviced in terms of water supply, wastewater and transport infrastructure. The proposed variation also specifies that any proposal for residential or mixed-use development (including residential) on such lands must have regard to the Core Strategy County Policy Objectives set out in Chapter 4 of the Development Plan. The proposal must also demonstrate capability to deliver residential development within the lifetime of the Plan, thus facilitating progress towards the housing targets for the respective settlement.

Discussion with the OPR on 20 April 2026 indicated that while the OPR has some reservations in relation to the absence of a strategic capacity assessment of the 'Strategic Residential Reserve' lands, it does welcome the Planning Authority's approach to amend the current 'Strategic Residential Reserve' policy to create additional residential development opportunities for the county, particularly over the short to medium term, and taking due account of the Housing Growth Guidelines.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2. Flood Risk Management

Recommendation 2 – Flood Risk Management and Environmental Protection

- (i) review and update the flood extent mapping datasets and flood extents based on updated National Indicative Fluvial Mapping (NIFM);
- (ii) carry out Strategic Flood Risk Assessments to an appropriate level on proposed Strategic Residential Reserve zonings potentially affected by flood risk, including Longford Town, Aughnacliffe and Ballinamuck and any flood extent changes identified and appropriate justifications for any decisions are made as set out in the Flood Guidelines;
- (iii) omit Strategic Reserve Residential lands located in flood zones A or B as identified in the updated NIFM flood mapping review at points (i) and (ii) including Strategic Residential Reserve lands north of Longford Town, Aughnacliffe and Ballinamuck; and
- (iv) review and update the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and SEA determination in light of emerging issues relating to flood risk management.

The Planning Authority is advised to liaise with the Office of Public Works to address this recommendation.

Chief Executive Response

The revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) is acknowledged which sets out National Policy Objective 78 to *"Promote sustainable development by ensuring flooding and flood risk management informs place-making by:*

- *Avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding that do not pass the Justification Test, in accordance with the Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management;*
- *Taking account of the potential impacts of climate change on flooding and flood risk, in line with national policy regarding climate adaptation.*

'Strategic Residential Reserve' lands allow for residential in certain circumstances. The proposed variation removes the exceptional circumstances, but nonetheless still requires the if the land is developed for strategic purposes that is subject to established planning criteria. This would include compliance with the relevant and most updated floodplain guidelines. It is considered that rather than further amending the variation, that this can be adequately addressed by way of consideration on a case-by-case basis as part of the development management process.

While Longford County Council propose a more flexible approach to planning applications for new residential development on lands zoned as '*Strategic Residential Reserve*', this will be subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, which will include consideration of flooding as part of the Development Management process. It is accepted that highly vulnerable residential development is not appropriate in Flood Zone A or B.

Longford County Council will use updated flood datasets and flood zones as part of the consideration of planning applications in the Development Management system. Longford County Council will continue to ensure that the *Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009)* are adhered to and that the sequential approach is followed. Where deemed necessary as part of the Development Management process, a flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail will be carried out and appropriate justification required for any decisions made as set out in the Guidelines.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.2 National Transport Authority (NTA)

Submission no.	LD-C11-7
Name	National Transport Authority (NTA)
Subject	Transport

Summary of Issues Raised:

Having reviewed the proposal to vary the CDP to support the implementation of the *Section 28 Guidelines on NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements*, the NTA are generally supportive of the proposed variation.

It is noted that future residential development will only be considered on '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' lands where there is sufficient evidence that lands are fully serviced, including from a transport perspective. Given the edge-of-settlement location of many of the Strategic Residential Reserve lands in the County, it is important that this criterion is robustly applied as part of the development management process, to ensure that development does not take place at locations that will not accommodate travel by sustainable modes of transport.

A continued commitment to the principle of compact growth and an integrated approach to land use and transport planning can ensure that Longford's primary towns develop in a sustainable manner in line with important national and local policy objectives.

Chief Executive Response

This content of this submission is noted.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.3 Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)

Submission no.	LD-C11-3
Name	Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)
Subject	Transport

Summary of Issues Raised:

TII welcomes proposals aimed at achieving *Project Ireland 2040* National Strategic Outcomes and incorporation of *NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements* Guidelines by this variation where they are complementary to official policy maintaining the strategic capacity and safety of the national road network.

TII seek to ensure carrying capacity, operational efficiency, safety and national investment made in national roads continue to be safeguarded by Development Plan policies. TII highlights amongst the extant *Core Strategy Policy Objectives* is the requirement to "Also refer also to CPO 5.17 in respect of the need to adhere to the provisions of official policy in relation to development accessing national roads". The current county Plan expressly recognises official national roads policy at *County Policy Objective 5.15: "To protect the capacity, efficiency and safety of the national road network in County Longford by complying with the 'Spatial Planning and National Roads -Guidelines for planning authorities' (2012)."*

In accordance with National Policy Objective 107 of the First Revision of the NPF "Continue to ensure the alignment of the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan through delivery of the National Strategic Outcomes", TII seeks to ensure that national roads network objectives are not undermined and that anticipated benefits of investment made in the national roads network not jeopardised. TII welcomes safeguarding the strategic role of the national road network and associated junctions in catering for safe and efficient movement of inter-urban and inter-regional strategic traffic in implementation of the variation.

TII is available to assist the Council in preparing appropriate evidence-based transport assessments to address development and/or land use zoning proposals in the proximity of national roads where such proposals are demonstrated as being in accordance with the provisions of official policy.

Any costs such as land acquisition, additional road infrastructure and environmental mitigation measures arising for the national roads network to accommodate local development proposals will be borne by the local authority and should be integrated in future local development contributions schemes.

Chief Executive Response

This content of this submission is noted.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.4 Office of Public Works (OPW)

Submission no.	LD-C11-5
Name	Office of Public Works (OPW)
Subject	Flooding

Summary of Issues Raised:


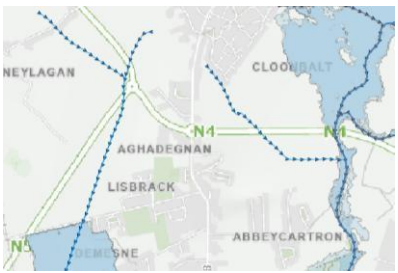
The revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) sets out National Policy Objective 78 to *Promote sustainable development by ensuring flooding and flood risk management informs place-making by:*


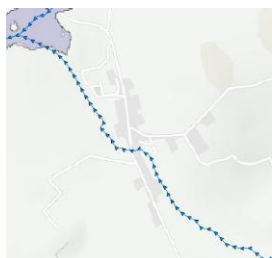
- *Avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding that do not pass the Justification Test, in accordance with the Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management;*
- *Taking account of the potential impacts of climate change on flooding and flood risk, in line with national policy regarding climate adaptation.*

Longford County Council propose allowing applications for new residential development on lands zoned as *Strategic Residential Reserve*. Highly vulnerable residential development is not appropriate in Flood Zone A or B.



The PFRA indicative flood mapping that was used to establish the flood zones in the County Development Plan has been superseded by national indicative fluvial, coastal and groundwater flood mapping, so the mapping provided in 2012 should no longer be used. Longford County Council should review and update the flood datasets and flood zones. Following this Longford County Council should ensure that the *Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009)* are adhered to and that the sequential approach is followed. Should any changes to zoning designations in areas of flood risk be implemented, it is important that a flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail is carried out and that there is appropriate justification for any decisions made as set out in the Guidelines.

Particular attention is drawn to Strategic Residential Reserve sites in Longford Town, Ballinamuck and Aughnacliffe. In the case of Longford and Ballinamuck, there are watercourses on or in the vicinity, which were not included in the OPW national programmes. Longford County Council may need to carry out their own flood risk assessments to inform the definition of Flood Zones for these areas.

	
<p><i>Longford Town</i></p>	<p><i>CFRAM and EPA watercourse features</i></p>

	
<p><i>Ballinamuck</i></p>	<p><i>EPA watercourse features</i></p>

In the case of Aughnaclyffe, the PFRA mapping extents used to establish the flood zones adjacent to the Strategic Residential Reserve has been superseded by the NIFM programme. NIFM may be used for strategic-level assessments, it should not be used as the sole basis for defining the Flood Zones, or for making planning policy.

	
<p><i>Aughnaclyffe</i></p>	<p><i>NIFM present day extents</i></p>

Chief Executive Response

The revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) is acknowledged which sets out National Policy Objective 78 to *Promote sustainable development by ensuring flooding and flood risk management informs place-making by:*

- *Avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding that do not pass the Justification Test, in accordance with the Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management.*
- *Taking account of the potential impacts of climate change on flooding and flood risk, in line with national policy regarding climate adaptation.*

Strategic Residential Reserve lands allow for residential in certain circumstances. The proposed variation removed the exceptional circumstances, but nonetheless still requires if the land is developed, that is subject to established planning criteria. This would include compliance with the relevant and most updated floodplain guidelines. It is considered that rather than further amending the variation that this can be adequately addressed by way of consideration on a case-by-case basis as part of the development management process.

While Longford County Council propose a more flexible approach to applications for new residential development on lands zoned as *'Strategic Residential Reserve'*,

this will be subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, which will include consideration of flooding as part of the Development Management process. It is accepted that highly vulnerable residential development is not appropriate in Flood Zone A or B.

Longford County Council will use updated flood datasets and flood zones as part of the consideration of planning applications in the Development Management system. Longford County Council will continue to ensure that *the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009)* are adhered to and that the sequential approach is followed. Where deemed necessary as part of the Development Management process, a flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail will be carried out and an appropriate justification required for any decisions made as set out in the Guidelines.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.5 Uisce Éireann (UÉ)

Submission no.	LD-C11-4
Name	Uisce Éireann (UÉ)
Subject	Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment Capacity

Summary of Issues Raised:

It is noted that the variation is to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned '*Strategic Residential Reserve*' while not impacting on the general Core Strategy figures. UÉ have no objection to the proposed changes.

UÉ publishes Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment Capacity Registers annually and updates to these will shortly be available online. The capacity registers are only an indication of available capacity at a point in time. However, should constraints emerge over the lifetime of the plan, new connections will be on a first-come, first served basis.

In relation to any network constraints that may emerge over the lifetime of the plan, and there is no UE project, upgrades can be developer driven.

Chief Executive Response

The content of this submission is noted.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.6 Electricity Supply Board (ESB)

Submission no.	LD-C11-12
Name	Electricity Supply Board (ESB)
Subject	Critical Infrastructure

Summary of Issues Raised:

Investment in infrastructure is crucial to economic and social well-being. Investment in infrastructure stimulates growth in the local economy. Infrastructure investment is necessary to support delivery of the target of 300,000 homes by 2030. ESB is building a sustainable company, investing in smart networks, renewable energy and modernising the generation portfolio. It is requested consideration is given to:

- Safeguarding the long-term operational requirements of ESB’s existing transmission and distribution assets—particularly high-voltage substations - essential to maintaining security of supply, network resilience, and the capacity to accommodate future growth.
- A proactive, collaborative partnership between Longford County Council and ESB to identify, zone, and secure suitable sites for new electricity infrastructure is critical to ensuring that network reinforcement keeps pace with increased residential zoning and population growth envisaged.
- Revised housing growth requirements supported by timely coordinated investment in electricity infrastructure. Critical network upgrades and capacity enhancements across transmission, medium-voltage, and low-voltage systems are essential to address constraints, facilitate renewable integration, and support sustainable residential and industrial development.
- Ensuring that public utilities are permissible under all zoning objectives is fundamental to enabling the efficient and cost-effective delivery of electricity infrastructure, reducing delivery risk, and avoiding delays that could undermine housing delivery and climate action commitments.
- Early engagement with ESB in the planning and design of roads, public realm works, and greenways should be explicitly supported, enabling coordinated provision of ducting and underground cabling and minimising future disruption and whole-life costs.
- Continued investment in electricity infrastructure is a prerequisite for achieving objectives under the NPF, Revised NPF housing targets, and Ireland’s transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient energy system.

Chief Executive Response

This content of this submission is noted and can be considered for future plan making.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.7 Iarnród Éireann (IÉ)

Submission no.	LD-C11-13
Name	Iarnród Éireann
Subject	Critical Infrastructure

Summary of Issues Raised:

The NPF states that planning and transport policies are interdependent. Integration of land uses with access to transport has cross-cutting benefits in terms of achieving compact patterns of development. TOD have potential to locate a significant proportion of future population, housing, employment, services and amenities along high-capacity transport networks and at transport nodes.

The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities contain key priorities for growth, including the delivery of sustainable and compact urban extension at scale, at suitable strategic and sustainable development locations. Locations should be close to the existing built-up footprint and served by existing/proposed public transport, i.e. within 1km walking distance of an existing/planned public transport node. IÉ support TOD around stations in Longford, to promote sustainable housing development.

IÉ requests where land adjacent to the railway is proposed for development, that zoning objectives to adequately protect the railway corridor boundaries, to allow for future expansion and improvement of the railway, shall be applied to the land in consultation with IÉ and CIÉ, with contact made at the earliest stage of development.

IÉ requests regard is given to limited structural clearances, widths, heights and geometric constraints associated with railway bridges and associated infrastructure, particularly in relation to vehicular access, road traffic, construction access and any proposed increase in traffic. Any works over/under railway bridges and within C.I.É/IÉ lands, require a prior licence agreement. Engagement is required during detailed design stage to confirm property boundaries and determine requirement for formal agreements. Proposed works must not adversely affect the structural integrity of bridges/safe railway operation.

IÉ requests the planning authority ensures zoning and development objectives adjacent to or served via railway bridges do not result in increased safety risk or operational constraint to the rail network. All proposals which require vehicular access via, or are otherwise dependent upon, a railway overbridge/underbridge shall demonstrate that safe and appropriate access can be achieved without adverse impacts on the railway structure and operations, or public safety.

Chief Executive Response

The content of this submission is noted. This is considered a Development Management issue.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.8 Department of Education and Youth

Submission no.	LD-C11-6
Name	Department of Education and Youth
Subject	Education

Summary of Issues Raised:

The purpose of the variation is to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned '*Strategic Residential Reserve*'. The current CDP includes a substantial '*Strategic Residential Reserve*', containing sites considered suitable for residential development over a longer term, beyond the life of the CDP. The proposed Variation introduces the following change: –alterations to the zoning objectives which set out criteria for residential development on sites included in the '*Strategic Residential Reserve*'; these alterations would support residential development on SRR lands which become fully serviced during the life of the CDP. No additional land is proposed to be zoned for development, and no other Plan policies or objectives are proposed to be altered.

The department welcomes the continued engagement with the Council regarding the development of both new and existing schools, as appropriate, and emphasizes the critical importance of the ongoing work of the Council in ensuring sufficient land is zoned for this purpose.

Chief Executive Response

This content of this submission is noted. The Variation does not modify the population targets at County or settlement level.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

2.3.9 Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage

Submission no.	LD-C11-10
Name	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Subject	Environmental Considerations

Summary of Issues Raised:

The Strategic Environmental Assessment should be undertaken by or in conjunction with a suitably qualified ecologist and other specialists as necessary, and in conjunction with the Natura Impact Statement/Natura Impact Report. This will facilitate full integration of biodiversity issues and concerns, particularly in relation to nature conservation sites, protected species, and ecological corridors and stepping stones. The EPA's *Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment Practitioner's Manual* is of particular relevance. The Environmental Report is required by the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) to contain information on the environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be significantly affected by the plan or programme, or modification thereof.

In general, no areas should be identified or targeted for development through land use zoning, re-zoning or other strategies without the availability of basic information on the ecological sensitivities of the lands in question, such as a habitat map, i.e. the precautionary principle should apply. This will also serve to ensure that other parties, in the absence of knowledge on any potentially significant ecological constraints that arise, do not develop expectations that may not or are unlikely to materialise, of the potential for development in such areas.

Chief Executive Response

The Proposed Variation has been subject to screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment. The Initial Draft SEA and Initial Draft AA take account of the Habitats Directive, higher levels plans and documents as appropriate, and relevant environmental provisions and guidance. These indicate that neither a full SEA nor a Stage 2AA (Natura Impact Report) is required for the Proposed Variation no. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

The SEA Environmental Report for Proposed Variation No. 1 addresses the requirements of the SEA Regulations. The SEA of Local Authority Land-Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources' document have been considered in the SEA of the Variation. Appropriate mitigation measures are cited in the Longford County Development Plan SEA Environmental Report and have been integrated into the existing County Development Plan and Proposed Variation.

Appropriate monitoring measures and associated information are cited in the SEA Environmental Report and have been integrated into the Proposed Variation or existing County Development Plan. When the County Development Plan is being reviewed, information relating to monitoring programmes will be considered and will inform the SEA and the review. The Guidance from the EPA has been taken into

account in preparing the monitoring programme for the County Development Plan.

The relevant environmental authorities have been consulted with as part of the Proposed Variation/SEA process. Any further alterations to the Variation will be screened for likely significant environmental effects in accordance with SEA Regulations.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No modification of the Variation is required.

2.3.10 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Submission no.	LD-C11-9
Name	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Subject	Environmental Considerations

Summary of Issues Raised:

- Available guidance should be taken into account in making the SEA Screening Determination and incorporates the relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the plan or programme.
- Where existing zoning in the County Development Plan does not accommodate the proposed increase in housing targets, as set out in the NPF, for the county and has not been previously assessed under SEA, AA, and SFRA at an appropriate level, then consideration should be given to these assessments for additional zoning and/or rezoning of lands that have potential for significant environmental effects.
- Potential for significant negative effects on population and human health, water quality and flood risk, biodiversity, flora and fauna, landscape and soil are highlighted. Climatic factors should be considered with reference to the most up to date Climate Action Plan and relevant Flood Risk Management Plan. The availability and capacity of existing critical infrastructure including wastewater and water supply should be considered in the context of the likely population increase associated with the housing target accommodated.
- Environmental Monitoring Table 7.1 of the NPF's SEA Statement (DHLGH, 2025). should be reflected, where relevant, in the context of future, environmental monitoring and related reporting associated with revised CDP implementation.
- Adequate appropriate critical service infrastructure should be in place, or required, to service development proposed and authorised.
- Align with sectoral, regional and local climate adaptation plans.
- Ensure aligns with relevant higher- level plans and programmes, NPF and RSES, OPW '[The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#)' (OPW, 2009).
- *Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2024 (EPA, 2024)* should be considered, and relevant aspects integrated in implementing Plan outputs/ recommendations.
- Available SEA Guidance & Resources are available on the EPA website.
- Where changes to the plan or programme are made prior to finalisation, or proposed following its adoption, these should be screened for potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 2 (S.I. No. 456 of 2025) or Schedule 1 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended) of the SEA Regulations, as appropriate.
- Appropriate Assessment - ensure complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive where relevant. Where Appropriate Assessment is required, key findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the plan or programme.

- SEA Determination - Prior to making determination, consult with the relevant environmental authorities. As soon as practicable after making determination as to whether SEA is required or not, make a copy including, if appropriate, reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection and send copy of determination to environmental authorities consulted.

Chief Executive Response

The Proposed Variation has been subject to screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment. The Initial Draft SEA and Initial Draft AA take account of the Habitats Directive, higher levels plans and documents as appropriate, and relevant environmental provisions and guidance. These indicate that neither a full SEA nor a Stage 2AA (Natura Impact Report) is required for the Proposed Variation no. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

The SEA of Local Authority Land-Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources’ document have been considered in the SEA of the Variation. The Variation aligns with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and is consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. The SEA Environmental Report for Proposed Variation No. 1 addresses the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

Appropriate mitigation measures are cited in the SEA Environmental Report and have been integrated into the Proposed Variation or existing County Development Plan. Appropriate monitoring measures and associated information are cited in the SEA Environmental Report and have been integrated into the Proposed Variation or existing County Development Plan. When the County Development Plan is being reviewed, information relating to monitoring programmes will be considered and will inform the SEA and the review. The Guidance from the EPA has been taken into account in preparing the monitoring programme for the County Development Plan. Any further alterations to the Variation will be screened for likely significant environmental effects in accordance with SEA Regulations.

The relevant environmental authorities have been consulted with as part of the Proposed Variation/SEA process.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No modification of the Variation is required.

2.3.1 An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland

Submission no.	LD-C11-14
Name	An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland
Subject	Environmental Considerations

Summary of Issues Raised:

While the urgency of housing infrastructure provision in the midst of a housing crisis is recognised, zoning for residential development should not compromise biodiversity conservation and restoration and compact settlement objectives.

Biodiversity Policy and Legal Context

The Habitats Directive seeks to preserve stepping stones and ecological corridors - ensure rezonings will not exacerbate further fragmentation of biodiversity habitat. Rezonings require assessment in light of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which filters through the EU Biodiversity Strategy, National Biodiversity Action Plan and county/local level plans, including the Longford County Biodiversity Action Plan 2025-2030.

Ensure sites of ecological significance capable of natural regeneration and assisted restoration, which could contribute to Nature Restoration Law implementation, are taken into consideration when activating new residential lands. It should be sought to avoid future development pressures on these sensitive sites and consider the need for buffer zones between zoned lands and ecological areas, as well as ensuring ecological connectivity at a landscape level. Independently conducted Ecological Impact Assessments could inform zoning designations.

Activation of strategic residential reserve sites should consider the requirements of the Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive, Birds Directive, Floods Directive. The Wildlife Act 2023 requires regard to plans, programmes or strategies concerning the promotion of biodiversity conservation and the objectives/targets of the National Biodiversity Action Plan. This applies to assessing proposed rezonings.

The Planning and Development Act 2024 indicates that the NPF must consist of, *“the integration of the pursuit and achievement of the national climate objective and National Biodiversity Action Plan into plan-led development in the State.”* The proposed rezonings require assessment for adherence to the NBAP to ensure absence of adverse impact on biodiversity. The NPF makes provision for conservation of the environment which the Council should have regard to. Consideration should be given to Section 50 of the PDA 2024 which seeks protection of trees and other significant ecological features within planning authority strategies, in accordance with the EU Biodiversity Strategy and NBAP.

Change of land use from a biodiversity rich site to residential development requires assessment against the biodiversity objectives in the Longford County Development Plan to ensure biodiversity interests are balanced with housing need.

The need for rapid housing and infrastructure delivery should not justify rolling back environmental safeguards. Compact settlement guidance prioritising brownfield sites, with the need for reversal of biodiversity loss under international, EU, national and local biodiversity objectives, need to be borne in mind.

Community and Social Infrastructure

In activating additional residential zoning, ensure consideration is given to social and community infrastructure zoning provision. A Social and Community Infrastructure Assessment should be carried out to determine sufficiency of existing community infrastructure to meet demand generated. Provision of community and social infrastructure in tandem with housing is essential for sustainable communities. In the past housing was rapidly rolled out without appropriate social and community infrastructure - *Jones v South Dublin County Council* [2024]. Draw upon the '15-minute city' concept to ensure compact settlement within walking and cycling range of services, amenities and access to public transport.

Chief Executive Response

The Proposed Variation has been subject to screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment. The Initial Draft SEA and Initial Draft AA take account of the Habitats Directive, higher levels plans and documents as appropriate, and relevant environmental provisions and guidance. These indicate that neither a full SEA nor a Stage 2AA (Natura Impact Report) is required for the Proposed Variation no. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Any proposed development considered on foot of the proposed variation on 'Strategic Residential Reserve' lands will be considered in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, which shall include consideration of all relevant guidelines including the Compact Settlement Guidelines.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No modification of the Variation is required.

2.3.12 Josephine Hagan

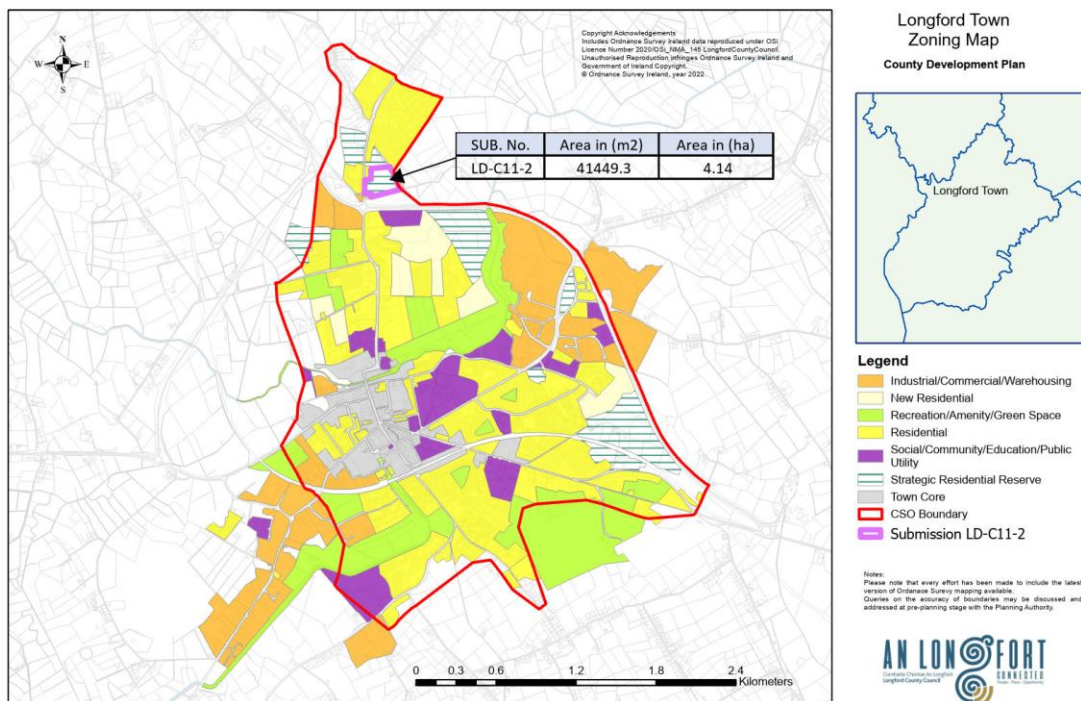
Submission no.	LD-C11-2
Name	Josephine Hagan
Subject	Zoning

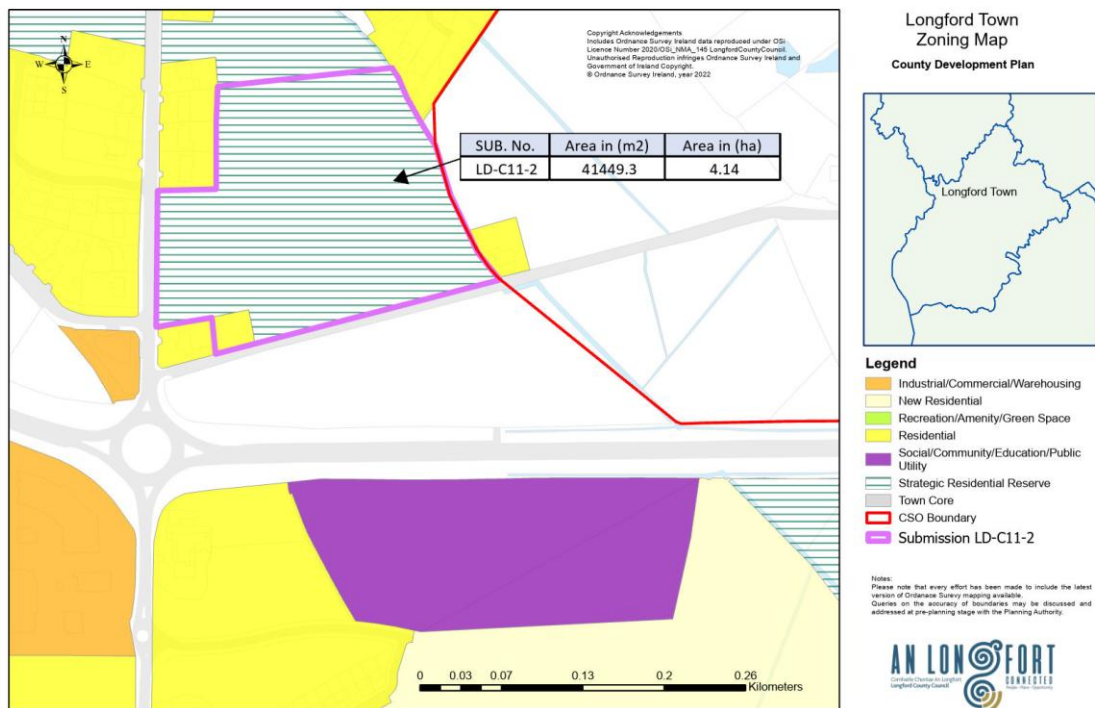
Summary of Issues Raised:

This is a request to rezone 10 acres at Aghadeganan, Co Longford. The lands are currently designated as 'Strategic Residential Reserve' under the Longford Town Development Strategy Plan 2025-2031.

Chief Executive Response

The relevant lands are mapped below. The site is currently zoned 'Strategic Residential Reserve' in the County Longford Development Plan 2021-2027. The lands are located on the northern periphery of the town boundary.





In terms of whether the site is 1) serviced, 2) serviceable or 3) unserviceable within the lifetime of the existing Plan the following is noted:

The site has boundaries to two public roads, R198 and L-50192. There are limited storm water services at the red cow roundabout. There is also a network of open drains to the east of this site. As such, provision for storm drainage, with appropriate design and attenuation, would seem to be possible at this site. With regards to roads and storm water drainage, it is considered that this is a serviced / serviceable site, subject to appropriate design and assessments. Uisce Eireann is the authority responsible for Water Mains and Foul Sewer services. There are records of water Main and Foul Sewer services in the vicinity of this site. Longford County Council have no authority or ability to comment on the capacity of these services to serve this or any site.

However, notwithstanding the above, it is not proposed to zone additional lands for 'New Residential' at this time. Rather the proposed variation seeks to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned *Strategic Residential Reserve*. Activation of these lands will be subject to the principles of infrastructure-led compact growth, as well as the environmental considerations that underpin the Development Plan.

Chief Executive Recommendation
No change.

2.3.13 Camlin Partnership

Submission no.	LD-C11- 8
Name	Camlin Partnership
Subject	Zoning

Summary of Issues Raised:

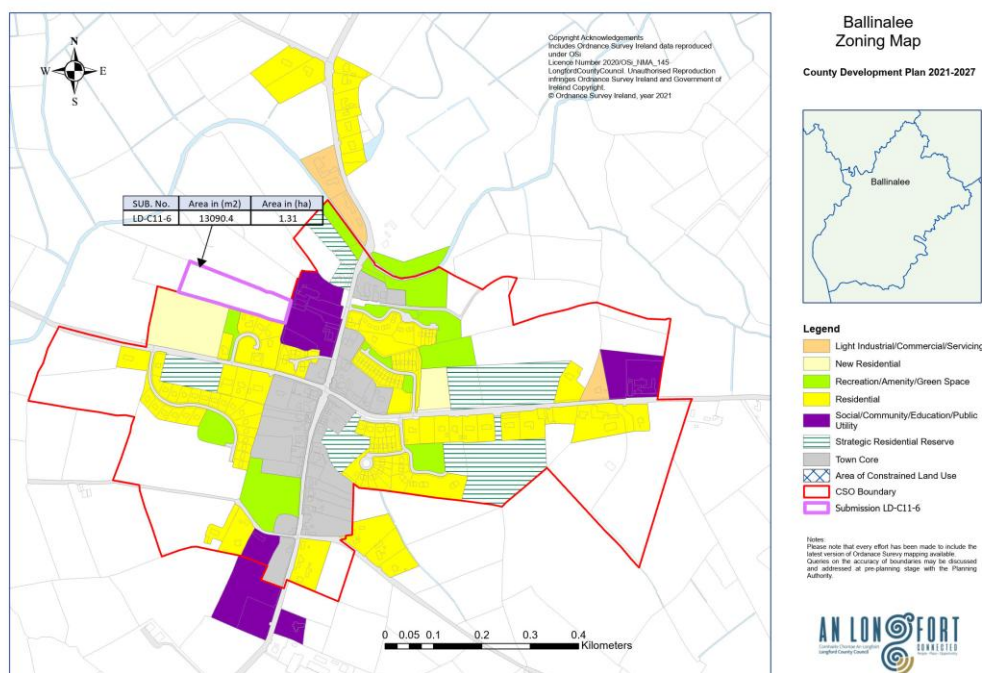
This submission requests the formal residential rezoning of a 3-acre land holding (Folio LD15840F). In line with the Council's goal to facilitate "infrastructure-led compact growth," these lands are uniquely positioned for immediate housing delivery because:

- Fully Serviced: The site has direct access to existing mains sewerage and water infrastructure.
- Accessible: The land is already served by a public footpath, linking it directly to the existing Camlin View development.
- Strategic Infill: Rezoning these 3 acres represents a logical extension of the current residential boundary, avoiding sporadic development.

Given the Council's objective to address constrained housing delivery, these serviced lands are a priority for residential activation.

Chief Executive Response

The lands are mapped below in the context of the County Development Plan 2021-2027. This site is located in Ballinalee and is unzoned. It is adjoining the following zoning categories: *'Residential. 'New Residential', 'Recreational/Amenity Open Space'* and *'Social/Community/Education/Public Utility'*.



In terms of the servicing of the site, the site does not have a direct boundary with a

public road. The laneway to the eastern boundary of the site is not a public road. Access to this site for development purposes would have to be through the existing zoned lands along its southern boundary.

It is the opinion of Road Design that the site is only accessible, for development purposes, from the R194 via the existing lands in the ownership of the Camlin Partnership, some of which is currently zoned residential and other plots currently not zoned.

For Storm Water Drainage Services, the proposed site for rezoning directly abuts the River Camlin which would serve as the outfall, subject to any limitations imposed by environmental requirements. Portions of the proposed site in the vicinity of the river Camlin are identified in the County Development Plan as being of constrained land use due to being located in the flood plain of the River Camlin. With regards to storm water drainage, this is a serviced site, subject to appropriate design and assessments.

With regard to other utilities, (Water mains, Foul Sewers, Electricity, Telecommunications,) Longford County Council have no authority or ability to comment on the capacity of these services to serve this or any site.

Notwithstanding the above, it is not proposed to zone additional lands for '*New Residential*' at this time. The proposed variation seeks to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned '*Strategic Residential Reserve*'. Activation of these lands will be subject to the principles of infrastructure-led compact growth, as well as the environmental considerations that underpin the Development Plan.

Chief Executive Recommendation

No change.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposed Variation no. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

1.0 Introduction

As per Section 58 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended) Longford County Council has prepared a proposed Variation (No.1) of the Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. The proposed Variation consists of the amendment to the *Strategic Residential Reserve Zoning Objective* text contained in Volume 2: Appendices.

2.0 Reason for Proposed Variation:

The First Revision of the National Planning Framework (NPF) (April 2025) sets out updated national and local population and housing targets to 2040. These targets anticipate a national population of 6.1 million by 2040, requiring the delivery of approximately 800,000 new homes, or 50,000 homes per annum. Projected population growth should be planned in accordance with NPF requirements. These requirements target a minimum of 30% of all new development on infill and brownfield sites within the existing built footprint of urban settlements of over 1,500, with a minimum of 20% of all development on infill and brownfield sites within the existing built footprint of rural settlements.

The reason for the proposed Variation no. 1 is in light of the updated policy objectives and growth projections set out in the First Revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) and associated guidelines and acknowledging the constrained delivery of housing in recent years. As such the Variation of the Development Plan now seeks to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned *Strategic Residential Reserve*. Activation of these lands will be subject to the principles of infrastructure-led compact growth, as well as the environmental considerations that underpin the Development Plan

3.0 Proposed Variation

The 'Strategic Residential Reserve' Zoning objective text included in CDP Volume 2, Appendices shall be amended to allow for consideration of planning applications for residential development on *Strategic Residential Reserve* zoned sites which are demonstrably serviced and where such development would also comply with Compact Growth policies of the CDP.

The existing Strategic Residential Reserve Zoning Objective text in Volume 2: Appendices shall be amended as follows:

the text in blue strike through shall be deleted:

the text in red shall be added.

Strategic Residential Reserve

To provide for the longer-term housing requirements of the town.

~~*Residential development, other than that set out below, will not be permitted on these*~~

~~*lands during the lifetime of the Plan. (It should be noted that lands zoned for the purposes of strategic residential reserve may be released for development over future*~~

~~*plan periods).*~~ *The following residential type of development may be considered acceptable:*

1) Where there is a live permission for residential development that has not been activated. The life of these permissions may be extended in accordance with the provisions of Section 42A of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended. ~~Proposals for new developments will not be considered over the lifetime of the current plan period.~~

2) A proposal for a single dwelling house may be considered under this zoning where:

a) the unit to be provided will serve as the permanent place of residence of the landowner or a member of his/her immediate family.

b) and where it can be clearly demonstrated that the provision of such a unit would not compromise the ability of the wider area of zoned land to be developed in the future.

c) and the dwelling would easily integrate with the existing and future development of the lands and those in the vicinity.

~~*3) In exceptional circumstances, where it can be clearly demonstrated by the developer that there is a significant difficulty in the release or identification of lands for a specific residential type development, consideration will be given to the release of lands zoned Strategic Residential Reserve, subject to established planning criteria and including in particular:*~~

~~*a) The requirement to remain within the overall residential land use targets as set out in the Core Strategy.*~~

~~*b) The lands are being developed in a sequential manner.*~~

~~*c) It has been clearly justified and demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, that there is a clear discrepancy between the supply and release of residentially zoned lands and the demand for residential units.*~~

b) There is factual evidence that such lands are/have become fully serviced in terms of water supply, wastewater and transport infrastructure.

*Any proposal for residential or mixed-use development (including residential) on such lands must have regard to the **Core Strategy County Policy Objectives** set out in **Chapter 4** of the Development Plan.*

The proposal must also demonstrate capability to deliver residential development within the lifetime of the Plan, thus facilitating progress towards the housing targets for the respective settlement.

Certain developments that can demonstrate a strategic element, (e.g. a significant commercial or social element), may be deemed acceptable.

Appendix 2: Copy of Notice



Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended) (Section 58)

Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

Notice of Proposed Variation No. 1

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 58 (7) of the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended) that Longford County Council as the competent authority, has prepared a Proposed Variation (No.1) of the Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. The Proposed Variation consists of the amendment to the ***'Strategic Residential Reserve' Zoning Objective*** text contained in Volume 2: Appendices.

Reason for Proposed Variation no. 1

The reason for Proposed Variation no. 1 is in light of the updated policy objectives and growth projections set out in the First Revision of the National Planning Framework (2025) and associated guidelines, acknowledging the constrained delivery of housing in recent years. As such the Proposed Variation of the Development Plan now seeks to facilitate appropriate development proposals on lands zoned *'Strategic Residential Reserve'*. Activation of these lands will be subject to the principles of infrastructure-led compact growth, as well as the environmental considerations that underpin the Development Plan

Content and Display of Proposed Variation no. 1

- Proposed Variation no. 1 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Initial Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report
- Initial Draft Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report

are available for public inspection at the Planning Department, Longford County Council, Aras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford, N39 NH56 from Friday 20 March to Friday 17 April, 2026 inclusive, from 10am to 1pm and from 2pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

The documents can also be viewed or downloaded via the Longford County Council's consultation portal <https://consult.Longfordcoco.ie/> Please note, the consultation portal remains open at all times during the statutory consultation period.

Making a Submission / Observation

Written submissions or observations may be made in respect of the Proposed Variation and associated environmental reports **by 4.00pm on Friday 17 April, 2026** and will be taken into consideration before the making of the Variation. Your name or address should be stated in your submission, and where relevant, the body or organisation represented. Children or groups/associations representing the interests of children are welcome to make submissions.

Please make your submission in **one** of the following ways:

Online: At Longford County Council's consultation portal:

<http://consult.Longfordcoco.ie/>

In writing: Written submissions or observations should be marked '*Proposed Variation no. 1*' and submitted to the Forward Planning Department, Longford County Council, Aras an Chontae, Great Water, Longford, N39 NH56.

Submissions will be published on the Council's Consultation Portal. A report will be prepared on submissions received and will include the names of those who made submissions. This report will be published on our website. Details of your privacy entitlements and obligations under GDPR are available on the Council website longfordcoco.ie

Deadline for Submissions

Submissions **MUST** be received by **4pm on Friday 17 April, 2026**.

Signed

Ms. Barbara Heslin

Director of Service (Physical Development)

Longford County Council