

# Material Alterations Draft Longford County Development Plan



## Volume III ANNEX

## Contents

**Annex 4: Revised Housing Strategy**

**Annex 5: Infrastructure Assessment Report – NEW INCLUSION**

**Annex 6: Settlement - Asset Based Criteria Table – NEW INCLUSION**

**Annex 7-9: Revised Retail Strategy**

*(Note: Existing Annexes will be renumbered as a result of these 2 no. above additional inclusions).*

**\* For details how to make a submission please see:**

***Material Alterations Report: Draft Plan, Volume 1 – 1.0 Introduction and Format.***

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## Annex 4: Revised Housing Strategy

Proposed Amendment ANN.4.1		
Section	Heading	Page no.
Annex 4	Housing Strategy	30-114

Replace the existing Housing Strategy with the following revised Housing Strategy in Annex 4:

### Annex 4: Revised Housing Strategy

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# Longford Housing Strategy 2021 - 2027

Submission by:



**Future**Analytics

On behalf of:



*March 2021*

*Fourth Draft*





## Contents

1	Introduction .....	53
1.1	Overview .....	53
1.2	Housing Strategy / HNDA – Guiding Principles .....	53
1.3	Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA).....	64
1.4	Methodology .....	96
2	Strategic, Legislative and Policy Landscape .....	1411
2.1	National Legislation and Policy .....	1411
2.1.1	Planning and Development Act 2000 .....	1411
2.1.2	Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2018.....	1411
2.1.3	The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.....	1512
2.1.4	Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 .....	1512
2.1.5	The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 .....	1613
2.1.6	Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework .....	1613
2.1.7	Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework .....	1815
2.1.8	Project Ireland 2040 – National Development Plan 2018-2027 .....	1916
2.1.9	Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (December 2020) .....	1916
2.1.10	Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities .....	2017
2.1.11	Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016 .....	2017
2.1.12	National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy 2018-2021 .....	2219
2.1.13	Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform .....	2320
2.1.14	Construction 2020: A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector .....	2320
2.1.15	The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016.....	2421
2.2	Regional Policy .....	2421
2.2.1	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031.....	2421
2.3	Local Policy .....	2522
2.3.1	Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 .....	2522
2.3.2	Longford County Housing Strategy 2015-2021.....	2522
2.3.3	County Longford Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2022 .....	2623
2.3.4	County Longford Age Friendly Strategy 2015-2020 .....	2623
2.3.5	Longford County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 .....	2623
3	Current Context: Review and Analysis of Existing Supply and Needs.....	2724
3.1	Population .....	2724
3.2	Existing Housing Stock and Supply .....	2926
3.2.1	Stock and Composition .....	2926
3.2.2	Housing Tenure .....	3128

3.2.3 Unfinished Housing Development .....	3330
3.2.4 Housing Permissions .....	3431
3.3.5 Social Housing Stock .....	3532
4 Housing Needs in Longford .....	3734
4.1 Overview .....	3734
4.2 Inputs.....	3835
4.2.1 Population Projections .....	3835
4.2.2 Estimated Households .....	3835
4.2.3 Income Analysis .....	4538
4.2.5 Central Bank Rules and Mortgage Capacity .....	4942
4.2.6 Analysis of Historic Ownership Market.....	5043
4.2.7 Analysis of Historic Private Rental Market.....	5447
4.3 Assessment of Needs .....	5548
4.3.1 Ownership.....	5548
4.3.2 Private Rental.....	6253
4.4 HNDA Components .....	6655
4.4.1 Household Composition.....	6655
4.4.2 Household Tenure.....	6856
4.4.3 Single Rural Dwellings .....	6957
4.5 Conclusion .....	7660
5 Meeting Housing Requirements in Longford .....	7761
5.1 Overview .....	7761
5.2 Social Housing Supply and Demand .....	7761
5.2.1 Existing Social Housing Needs.....	7761
5.2.2 Meeting Social Housing Demand .....	7862
5.5.3 Delivery Methods and Targets .....	8165
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Overview .....	4
1.2 Housing Strategy / HNDA – Guiding Principles .....	4
1.3 Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA).....	5
1.4 Methodology .....	8
<b>2 Strategic, Legislative and Policy Landscape.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 National Legislation and Policy .....	12
2.1.1 Planning and Development Act 2000 .....	12
2.1.2 Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2018.....	12
2.1.3 The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.....	13
2.1.4 Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 .....	13

2.1.5	The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 .....	14
2.1.6	Project Ireland 2040—National Planning Framework .....	14
2.1.7	Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework .....	16
2.1.8	Project Ireland 2040—National Development Plan 2018–2027 .....	17
2.1.9	Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities .....	17
2.1.10	Rebuilding Ireland—Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016 .....	18
2.1.11	National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy 2018–2021 .....	19
2.1.12	Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform .....	20
2.1.13	Construction 2020: A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector .....	21
2.1.14	The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011–2016 .....	21
2.2	Regional Policy .....	22
2.2.1	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019–2031 .....	22
2.3	Local Policy .....	22
2.3.1	Longford County Development Plan 2021—2027 .....	22
2.3.2	Longford County Housing Strategy 2015–2021 .....	23
2.3.3	County Longford Local Economic and Community Plan 2016–2022 .....	23
2.3.4	County Longford Age Friendly Strategy 2015–2020 .....	23
2.3.5	Longford County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019–2024 .....	24
<b>3</b>	<b>Current Context: Review and Analysis of Existing Supply and Needs .....</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1	Population .....	25
3.2	Existing Housing Stock and Supply .....	27
3.2.1	Stock and Composition .....	27
3.2.2	Housing Tenure .....	30
3.2.3	Unfinished Housing Development .....	31
3.2.4	Housing Permissions .....	32
3.3.5	Social Housing Stock .....	33
<b>4</b>	<b>Housing Needs in Longford .....</b>	<b>35</b>
4.1	Overview .....	35
4.2	Inputs .....	36
4.2.1	Population Projections .....	36
4.2.2	Estimated Households .....	36
4.2.3	Income Analysis .....	39
4.2.5	Central Bank Rules and Mortgage Capacity .....	43
4.2.6	Analysis of Historic Ownership Market .....	44
4.2.7	Analysis of Historic Private Rental Market .....	48
4.3	Assessment of Needs .....	49

4.3.1 Ownership.....	49
4.3.2 Private Rental.....	55
4.4 HNDA Components.....	57
4.4.1 Household Composition.....	57
4.4.2 Household Tenure.....	58
4.4.3 Single Rural Dwellings.....	59
4.5 Conclusion.....	62
<b>5 Meeting Housing Requirements in Longford.....</b>	<b>63</b>
5.1 Overview.....	63
5.2 Social Housing Supply and Demand.....	63
5.2.1 Existing Social Housing Needs.....	63
5.2.2 Meeting Social Housing Demand.....	64
5.2.3 Delivery Methods and Targets.....	67
<b>6 Policy Objectives to Deliver the Housing Strategy.....</b>	<b>70</b>



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

This Housing Strategy has been prepared by ~~Future Analytics Consulting~~ **KPMG Future Analytics** on the behalf of Longford County Council to meet the statutory requirements set out under Section 94 of Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Under Part V of the Act, each planning authority must prepare a Housing Strategy which will cover the period of its development plan, ~~i.e. Q1 2021 2022 – Q4 2027 in this instance.~~<sup>1</sup> Each strategy must have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and must address the overall supply of housing within the administrative boundary of the Local Authority. The Housing Strategy also addresses relevant provisions contained within the Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Act, 2009 and the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015.

The purpose of the Housing Strategy is to ensure that the proper planning and sustainable development of County Longford provides for the housing of the existing and future population of the area in the manner set out in this Strategy. The County Development Plan and the Housing Strategy will embrace the Vision set out in the Social Housing Strategy 2020 which states that “*every household in Ireland will have access to secure, good quality housing suited to their needs at an affordable price in a sustainable community*”.

The Housing Strategy is a critical component which informs the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan, playing a key role in translating national housing policies and housing supply responses to the local level. Since the previous Housing Strategy was prepared there have been significant changes in planning legislation and policy. In particular, this Housing Strategy must be consistent with the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES).

In line with this, the NPF requires each Local Authority to undertake a Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) which must underpin and support the preparation of housing strategies and all related housing policy outputs. The HNDA for County Longford, as elaborated in Section 1.2 – 1.4. and Section 4, provides a robust evidence base to inform decision-making around ~~the current and future housing supply~~ **in accordance with the HNDA requirements as set out in the NPF and all other relevant statutory requirements, including the DHLGH’s “Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities”.** ~~and investment in housing related infrastructure and services, the location and requirements for different house types, sizes and tenures.~~

## 1.2 Housing Strategy / HNDA – Guiding Principles

An evidence-based and future-proofed methodological approach has been adopted to ensure that the Housing Strategy for County Longford meets the housing needs of the county and its residents while remaining in keeping with local, regional and national guidelines. The Strategy is underpinned by a HNDA which provides a robust baseline to inform and guide policies and objectives under the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Declines in the construction sector and wider economic activity during the previous decade, coupled with Ireland’s economic recovery have led to ongoing challenges around fluctuations in the supply, demand and price of housing. It has also led to opportunities, with a greater mix of house types and tenures diversifying Ireland’s housing market. Increased levels of activity in the construction sector will provide new homes to meet current and projected demand and contribute to County Longford’s social housing stock by way of Part V obligations.

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<sup>1</sup>The Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 is expected to come into force in Winter 2027 for a duration of six years. For modelling purposes, the HNDA has rounded this period to the nearest whole quarters, covering Q1 2022 – Q4 2027 inclusive.

The HNDA incorporates a range of socio-economic and demographic data to analyse current levels of demand and supply within Longford and project for future need over the lifetime of the Development Plan (i.e. to 2027) and beyond to 2031. It incorporates demand across different tenures, including owner-occupied, the rental sector and social housing and provides estimates of future housing needs based on employment growth, income levels and affordability in the housing market as described in detail in Section 1.4.

### **1.3 Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA)**

Under Section 94 (1) (a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), each planning authority:

*“shall include in any development plan a strategy for the purpose of ensuring that proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan provides for the housing of the existing and future population of the area in the manner set out in the strategy”.*

In order to ensure that the plan-making system is supported by a robust methodology to inform policies and funding initiatives around housing and associated land requirements, the NPF has introduced a new requirement for each Local Authority to develop a Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA). The HNDA will support the preparation of housing strategies and all related housing policy outputs, e.g. city and county development plans, local area plans, traveller accommodation plans etc.

The NPF indicates that the purpose of the HNDA tool is to:

- Assist local authorities to develop long-term strategic views of housing need across all tenures.
- Provide a robust evidence base to support decisions about new housing supply, wider investment and housing related services that inform an overall national housing profile.
- Inform policies about the proportion of social and affordable housing required, including the need for different types and sizes of provision.
- Provide evidence to inform policies related to the provision of specialist housing and housing related services.

The NPF notes that HNDAs are designed to give broad, long run estimates of what future housing need might be, rather than precision estimates and this is described in further detail in Section 2.1.9. The approach must be logical, sequential and allow for updating, monitoring and evaluation, therefore the HNDA undertaken as part of this Development Plan spans two key stages – current and future outlook; and assesses three core areas: Population, Housing and Economy. These are set out in Figure 1.1 with the sequential steps involved in the development and application of this HNDA model presented in Section 1.4

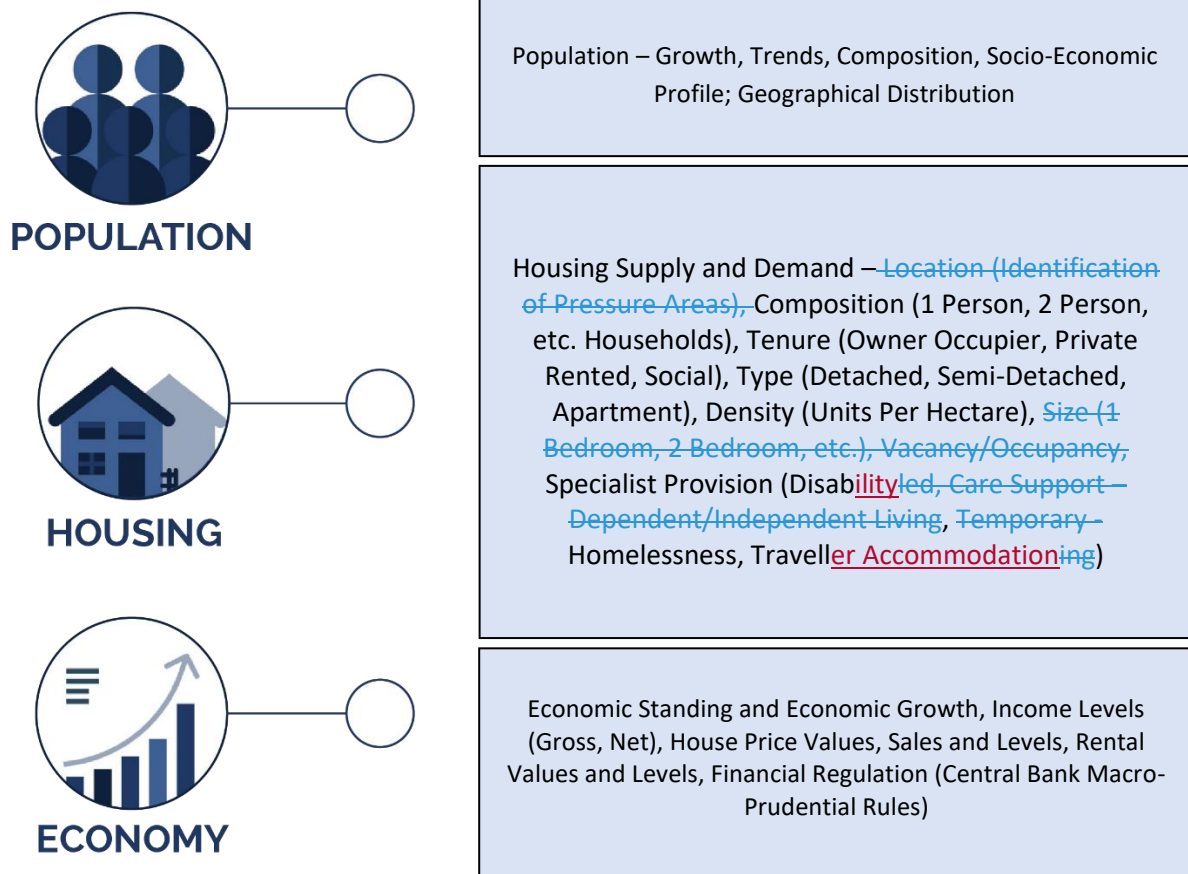


Figure 1.1: HNDA Assessment Areas. Source: ~~Future Analytics Consulting~~ **KPMG Future Analytics**

The methodological approach along with key inputs and outputs to the HNDA is summarised in Figure 1.2. This process seeks to enhance how acute and unmet demand for housing is identified before it arises by providing a robust assessment of regional and localised influences, such as population and migration, in quantifying needs and demands. The key evidence inputs which drive the model are:

1. **Demographic trends, affordability trends and wider economic trends.** The use of **economic forecasting or econometric** work underpins this section. Data requirements include **household composition/projections, house prices, rents, ~~number of first time buyers (FTBs)~~ and loan to value (LTV) mortgage rates, economic activity and employment rates**, etc.
2. **Housing Stock Profile Pressures (and existing need) and management issues.** This involves undertaking a detailed profile of local **housing stock ~~and stock pressures~~**, including **local authority housing**, to identify the main ~~pressures~~ **issues** relating to supply and demand, ineffective stock and overall condition as well as priorities for future stock management. Information is required on **dwelling size, dwelling type, dwelling condition and stock pressures (occupancy/under occupancy stock turnover**, etc.).
3. **Estimating Future Housing Need and Demand.** This is broken down into: **owner occupation, private sector, below market rent and social rent**.

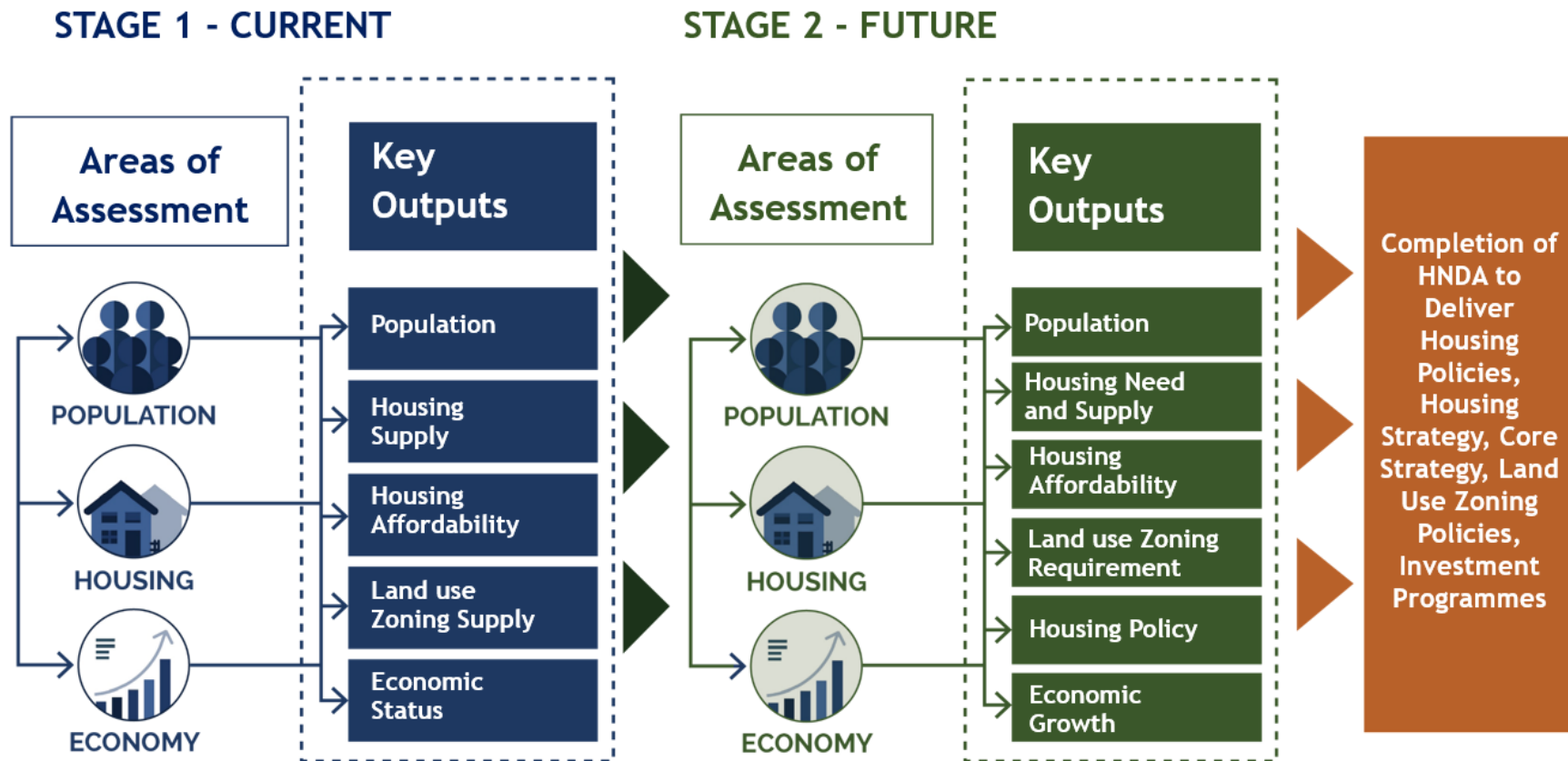


Figure 1.2: Schematic of HNDA Approach. Source: Future Analytics Consulting/KPMG Future Analytics [OK1]



## 1.4 Methodology

This Section ~~sets out the sequential steps~~ provides an overview of the ~~components~~ components involved in the development and application of this HNDA model. There are ~~three~~ four components of the model, as shown in Figure 1.32.



**Figure 1.32: Overview of the HNDA Model**

The first component of the model explores population and household scenarios for the county over the plan period. A number of population scenarios for County Longford have been investigated to 2031 and a 'Policy-Intervention Scenario' has been applied for the purpose of this analysis into the housing needs of the county as described in detail in Section 4.2.1. ~~This stage of analysis also comprises an investigation into Average Household Size, as a key determinant of future housing need.~~

The second component alongside population projections is the determination of future households. This is established through the calculation of the Housing Supply Target for the plan period for County Longford in accordance with the 'Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning' DHLGH guidelines (December 2020), as described in Section 4.2.2. This provides plan period targets and annualised household figures for analysis in the HNDA.

The ~~second~~ third component relates to an assessment of housing and rental affordability. This assessment supports the identification of social (and affordable) housing needs for County Longford during the plan period. There are ~~12~~ 15 steps ~~inherent as part of~~ in this, as illustrated in Table 1.2

Finally, ~~analysis of progress towards key targets for social housing under Rebuilding Ireland has been set out in addition to specific examination of single rural dwellings within County Longford~~ Section 5 brings together the HNDA outputs and analyses how current and future housing need can be met while Section 6 sets out policy objectives for the delivery of this Housing Strategy for County Longford.

The ~~following~~ overall structure of this Housing Strategy is summarised in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1: Structure of the Longford Housing Strategy 2021-2027**

Section 2	Strategic, Legislative and Policy Landscape
Section 3	Current Housing Context: Review and Analysis of Existing Supply and Needs
Section 4	Future Housing: Projected Housing Need and Supply

<b>Section 5</b>	Analysis of Housing Requirements in Longford
<b>Section 6</b>	Policy Objectives to Deliver Housing Strategy
<b>Section 7</b>	Conclusion

**Table 1.2: Approach to the HNDA for the Longford Housing Strategy 2021-2027**

Step	Method
Step 1 Determination of Annual Population Projections	<p>Determination of annual population <del>that is projected or an established projection target to be in the County</del> over the County Development Plan period.</p> <p>The agreed population projection scenario / target can reflect a “low”, “medium” or “high” growth projection-based upon county, regional, national and global specific factors. Longford County Council have applied a high growth scenario that aligns with the NPF <del>as described in detail in the Core Strategy</del>.</p>
<u>Step 2</u> <u>Determination of Pre-Plan Total Households</u>	<u>Determination of pre-plan total households based on latest CSO data and estimation of pre-plan housing completions</u>
<del>Step 3</del> Determination of <del>Average Household Size and</del> Additional Households <del>Required</del>	<p><u>Determination of additional households over the plan period based on agreed Housing Supply Targets</u><del>Determination of the additional anticipated increase in households per annum over the Development Plan period based on the application of an average household size for the projected population.</del></p> <p><del>In order to consider the average household size, the County Council should advise as to whether the average household size should be adjusted over time and whether alignment with the NPF is necessary.</del></p>
Step <del>3</del> 4 Calculation of Estimated Distribution of Household Disposable Incomes	<p>Calculation of estimated distribution of annual and weekly household disposable income per decile of the established (by the CSO) of the 10 deciles in the baseline year.</p> <p>The national annual disposable incomes per decile are adjusted to city/county level based on application of an “inflater” or “deflator” rate.</p>
Step <del>5</del> 4 Calculation of Average Annual Household Disposable Income Distribution	<p>Calculation of estimated distribution of annual household disposable income per household decile throughout the Development Plan period.</p> <p>This calculation considers a forecast GDP growth rate to reflect anticipated change incomes over the Development Plan period. It should be noted, that this approach is also taken in relation to average annual gross income for the purpose of understanding mortgage capacity and qualification.</p>
Step <del>6</del> 5 Calculation of Average Monthly Household Disposable Income Distribution	<p>Calculation of estimated distribution of monthly household disposable incomes for each of the 10 household deciles throughout the Development Plan period.</p> <p>This is an exercise to ensure that incomes are scaled to provide the monthly (rather than annual) estimates of disposable income per household in each decile.</p>

<p>Step <b>76</b></p> <p>Determination of Distribution of Total Anticipated Households</p>	<p>This is the calculation of estimated distribution of household units for each of the 10 household deciles throughout the Development Plan period.</p> <p>The number and distribution of total households per decile throughout the Development Plan period reflects projected number of private households per year during the Development Plan period as well as the distribution of housing units in the State from the Household Budget Survey.</p>
<p>Step <b>87</b></p> <p>Determination of Distribution of Additional Anticipated Households</p>	<p>Calculation of estimated distribution of additional anticipated household units for each of the 10 household deciles throughout the Development Plan period.</p> <p>Similarly to the step above, this specifically reflects the number of additional anticipated households per decile per year throughout the Development Plan period.</p>
<p>Step <b>98</b></p> <p>Calculation of Projected House Price Bands</p>	<p>Calculation of projected house price bands based on the percentage split of the established (by the DHPLG) 8 price bands.</p> <p>Historic transactional housing market data is considered to understand changes in average house price and future adjustments. This facilitates an estimation of each of the projected house price bands and proportional market split based on the split of the 8 price bands and a projected annual price increase or decrease.</p>
<p>Step <b>109</b></p> <p>Calculation of Mortgage Capacity of Households</p>	<p>Determination as to whether households in each decile can qualify for a mortgage that enables them to purchase a house in the lowest price band under the current macro-prudential rules, as set out by the Central Bank of Ireland.</p> <p>This is based on understanding the threshold in the lowest price band per year during the Development Plan period and application of the “<i>Annuity Formula</i>”. The “<i>Annuity Formula</i>” is based on the determination of an “<i>Affordability Threshold</i>”, a “<i>Loan to Value Ratio</i>”, an “<i>Annual Percentage Rate (APR) - Interest Rate</i>”, the determination of a “<i>Monthly Percentage Rate (MPR) - Interest Rate</i>”, and the determination of a “<i>Loan Term (Years/Months)</i>”.</p> <p>If a household in any decile does not have sufficient income to meet the macro-prudential rules (i.e. 3.5 times their gross income is less than 90% of the value of purchase a house in the lowest projected price band), they do not qualify for a mortgage and progress to private rental (See Step 11). Those households that can qualify for a mortgage progress to the needs assessment for ownership (See Step 10).</p>
<p>Step <b>110</b></p> <p>Calculation of Projected Needs for Ownership</p>	<p>Calculation of the approximate affordable house price for each of the ten deciles per year during the Development Plan period based on the application of the ‘<i>annuity formula</i>’. Once established, a calculation of the households surplus and/or deficit per price band is undertaken with respect to the number of households that can qualify for a mortgage:</p> <p>a) Based on the application of the “<i>Annuity Formula</i>” calculate the housing affordability (i.e. Approximate Affordable House Price) for each of the 10 household deciles.</p>



	<p>b) Based on the determination of additional households required, the projected house price bands and the housing affordability, calculate the number of households not meeting the “<i>Affordability Criteria</i>”. This facilitates a calculation of the surplus/deficit of household at the lowest price band with respect to the number of households that can qualify for a mortgage.</p>
<p>Step 12<sup>4</sup> Calculation of Projected Needs for Private Rental</p>	<p>Calculation of the households that will not meet the affordability criteria to privately rent a home during the Development Plan period with respect to the number of households that cannot qualify for a mortgage.</p> <p>Historic rental market data is analysed to enable an estimate of projected rental price by unit type during the plan period. Based on this and the household income, a calculation of the households not meeting the affordability criteria to privately rent a home has been undertaken with respect to the number of households that cannot qualify for a mortgage and those households that cannot afford to purchase a home.</p>
<p>Step 13<sup>2</sup> Summary of Projected Social Housing Need</p>	<p>Calculation of the households who can be classified as having an affordability problem during the Development Plan period so as to adequately inform the necessary provision units within the City/County.</p> <p>This is a summary of the anticipated housing need for the City/County Council as set out in the preceding steps and reflects assessments for both mortgage qualification and private rental affordability. Specifically, the number of additional households anticipated over the Development Plan period, the number of those households that do not qualify for a mortgage and number of those households that do not qualify for a mortgage and cannot afford private rental is provided based on the outcomes of the preceding steps.</p>
<p>Step 14 <u>Historic Data Analysis and Approximate Projection of Tenure, Size Cohort, and Dwelling Type.</u></p>	<p><u>Calculation of historic intercensal change for private household tenure, cohort sizes and dwelling type to determine annualised change. This informs the basis of an annual rate of change for which additional anticipated households can be roughly forecasted for household tenure, cohort sizes and dwelling type.</u></p>
<p>Step 15 <u>Analysis of Single Rural Dwellings</u></p>	<p><u>Analysis of CSO Granted Permissions data to determine distribution of rural one-off dwellings.</u></p>

## 2 Strategic, Legislative and Policy Landscape

### 2.1 National Legislation and Policy

#### 2.1.1 *Planning and Development Act 2000*

Under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) Local Authorities are required to ensure that their Development Plans are consistent with high-level strategic policies and national population projections. As such Development Plans are to incorporate a Core Strategy that demonstrates consistency with relevant national and regional objectives as set out in the NPF and RSES as well as the strategic policy as described herein such as Rebuilding Ireland.

Local Authorities are also required to prepare and incorporate a Housing Strategy into their Development Plan, the purpose of which is to ensure that the housing needs of the existing and future population of the development plan area are met. Section 94 of the Act states that:

*“...each housing strategy should have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of an area and should be concerned with the overall supply of housing within the planning authority.”*

The Act further specifies that Housing Strategy’s must consider:

- The existing and likely future need for social housing
- The need to ensure that housing is available for people of different incomes.
- The need to ensure the availability of a mixture of house types and sizes to cater for the requirements of different categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities
- the need to counteract segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

#### 2.1.2 *Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2018*

The Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2018 is a recent, relevant legislative update. This amendment exempts the temporary change of use of certain vacant commercial premises to residential use, i.e. this can occur without the need to obtain planning permission. However, this change of use, and any related works, must occur by 31 December 2021. In addition, the existing structure or part of the structure, which is the subject of the change of use, is required to be vacant for a period of two years immediately prior to when the development takes place. A number of other conditions and limitations apply, notably including:

- There shall be no more than 9 individual residential units within a building (i.e. staying below the Part V social housing threshold).
- No works permitted to protected structures unless a s.57 declaration has issued to indicate the works will not affect the character or elements of the structure which has been identified for protection.
- Works to the ground floor of any structure shall not conflict with an objective in a development plan for the structure to remain in retail use, with the exception of works solely for the provision of on-street access to upper floors.
- The exemption applies to existing buildings that have a current commercial use (with reference to Class 1, 2, 3, and 6 of Part 4 to Schedule 2 of the Principal Regulations).

### **2.1.3 The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016**

The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 provides a legislative basis for measures introduced under the Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness to expedite the construction of large-scale residential developments. These “strategic housing developments” avail of a fast-track application process, whereby applications for planning permission are submitted apply directly to An Bord Pleanála. This measure was introduced under the Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness in order to streamline the planning process and accelerate the delivery of new housing and student accommodation units.

Part 2(3) of the Act defines the following types of developments as qualifying as Strategic Housing Developments:

- a) the development of 100 or more houses on land zoned for residential use or for a mixture of residential and other uses,
- b) the development of student accommodation units which, when combined, contain 200 or more bed spaces, on land the zoning of which facilitates the provision of student accommodation or a mixture of student accommodation and other uses thereon,
- c) development consisting of shared accommodation units that when combined contain 200 or more bed spaces on land the zoning of which facilitates the provision of shared accommodation or a mixture of shared accommodation and other uses,
- d) development that contain a mixture of houses, student accommodation or shared living units,
- e) the alteration of an existing planning permission granted under section 34 (other than under subsection (3A) where the proposed alteration relates to development specified in paragraph (a), (b), or (c).

Under this streamlined application process applicants engage with the relevant Local Authority and An Bord Pleanála in a Pre-Application Consultation to discuss a proposed development, determine its legitimacy and highlight any potential issues that may arise. Then upon submission of an application for planning permission, An Bord Pleanála are to provide a decision within sixteen weeks of application. To maintain this deadline there is no provision for the applicant to provide further information in support of their application once submitted, and no provision for an appeals process by which the applicant or any third party can dispute An Bord Pleanála’s decision. As such decisions to grant or refuse permission for strategic housing developments can only be disputed by way of a Judiciary Review.

### **2.1.4 Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015**

Under Part V Section 91(4)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 there is a social housing requirement of 10% which planning authorities must apply to planning permission for housing on all lands zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses. The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act was introduced in 2015 and it includes amendments to the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Specifically, these amendments determine thresholds for this social housing requirement and specify how private developers can meet their obligations to contribute to the provision of social housing.

The previous social housing obligations were not applicable in the case of developments including four or fewer residential units, however the new obligations are not applicable in respect of developments that include nine or fewer units. The use of cash payments as an alternative to social housing units is no longer permitted, and provision has been made for the transfer of residential units outside the lands which are subject to planning permission, but within the relevant Development Plan area. The full list of social housing delivery options now permitted are outlined below.

### ***Part V delivery options (Post Act 2015)***

- The transfer of ownership of lands, subject to the planning permission application to a local authority for the provision of social housing remains the default option. The land option must be acceptable to the local authority
- The transfer of ownership to the local authority, or persons nominated, of completed social housing units on the land, subject to planning permission
- The transfer of ownership to the local authority, or person nominated, of completed social housing units on other land, not subject to the planning permission. There is no longer a requirement for the developer to build housing units on other land to fulfil his/her Part V obligations. The developer might have a stock of suitable houses or he/she can simply acquire housing units for such purposes. This allows social housing units to be delivered in a more timely fashion in another location, in the event that the development that is the subject of the planning permission does not meet the social housing or mixed tenure needs of the local authority:
- The Part V obligation can now be fulfilled by developers through long term leasing of properties: and
- A combination of the Part V options above is also allowed.

The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 also introduced wider changes aimed to encourage activity in the construction sector. A vacant site levy was introduced, which provides Local Authorities with the power to apply levies to property owners who do not take steps to develop vacant and under-utilised in areas identified for priority development under the local Development Plan. Developers were also permitted to avail of reduced development contributions for developments that had previously been granted permission but were yet to commence.

### ***2.1.5 The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009***

The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 makes amendments and extensions to provisions under the Housing Acts 1966 to 2004 to provide Local Authorities with a strategic framework for the delivery and management of housing services. This requires Local Authorities to adopt housing services plans to cover the delivery and management of housing services within the Local Authorities' areas, as well as homelessness action plans and anti-social behaviour strategies. It provides a legislative basis for objective methods to assess need and allocating social housing support which incorporate household size, household income and house and rental prices within a Local Authority's administrative area. The Act also extends the legislative basis for the provision of rented social housing by means of leasing or contract arrangements with private landlords.

### ***2.1.6 Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework***

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a high-level strategy that will shape Ireland's growth and development up to the year 2040. Drawing upon lessons learned from the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2022, the NPF calls for a shift from an uncoordinated "business as usual" approach to planning, and provides a framework for the sustainable development of Ireland's existing settlements.

The NPF sets an overall national target to deliver 550,000 additional households by 2040. This is supported by a number of National Policy Objectives that seek to deliver residential development at a suitable density and scale:

- **National Policy Objective 32:** To target the delivery of 550,000 additional households to 2040.
- **National Policy Objective 33:** Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location
- **National Policy Objective 35:** Increase residential density in settlements, through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and increased building heights.



To underpin the delivery of these targets the NPF requires Local Authorities to develop a Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) as noted in Section 1 and set out in National Policy Objective 37 as follows:

*“A ‘Housing Need Demand Assessment’ (HNDA) is to be undertaken for each Local Authority Area in order to correlate and accurately align future housing requirements. The HNDA is:*

- to be undertaken by Local Authorities with coordination assistance to be provided by the Regional Assemblies, and also at a Metropolitan scale, particularly where inter-county and inter-regional settlement interactions are to be planned for and managed;*
- to primarily inform housing policies, housing strategies and associated land use zoning policies as well as assisting in determining where new policy areas or investment programmes are to be developed;*
- and to be supported, through the establishment of a coordination and monitoring unit to assist Local Authorities and Regional Assemblies in the development of the HNDA (DHPLG, Regional Assemblies and the Local Authorities). This will involve developing and coordinating a centralised spatial database for Local Authority Housing data that supports the HNDA being undertaken by Local Authorities.”*

The NPF also emphasises the need for more affordable homes for sale or rent. More proactive land management and coordinated and efficient provision of enabling infrastructure, particularly on Local Authority and State-owned lands, are set out as central measures to delivering affordability in the housing sector.

Housing will need to be well-located, affordable and diverse in order to cater for the increased demand particularly for smaller homes suitable for one and person households. Housing should be re-usable, adaptable and accessible to ensure that homes can meet the changing needs of households over time (Objective 34). New housing provision should be met within existing settlements and should be tailored to meet the future housing needs of the settlement in which it is located.

Building resilience and being able to adequately respond to future demand will also involve the re-use of existing housing stock. Higher residential densities are to be pursued in urban areas with a greater emphasis on infill/brownfield, reduction in vacancies, area or site based regeneration and increased building heights (Objective 35).

Objective 36 of the NPF provides a commitment to introduce new statutory guidelines that will ensure consistency of approach, implementation and monitoring of housing requirements at a regional (Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies), metropolitan and local authority levels (Core Strategies).

The NPF also sets out measures and objectives to reconcile future housing requirements effectively. For this, key evidence inputs to inform and drive robust, evidence based Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) Models that underpin local authority Housing Strategies are set out as follows:

- Demographic trends, affordability trends and wider economic trends.
- Housing Stock Profile Pressures (and existing need) and management issues.
- Estimating Future Housing Need and Demand.

Objective 37 sets out a requirement for Local Authorities to undertake HNDAs to form housing policies, strategies and land use zoning policies and to facilitate more informed decision making on investment programmes for housing. Furthermore, coordination and monitoring units are to be established to assist Local Authorities and Regional

Assemblies in the development of the HDNA. This unit will also be responsible for a new centralised spatial database for Local Authority housing data that informs the development of the HNDAs.

### 2.1.7 Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework

The Implementation Roadmap for the NPF supports the alignment of national, regional and local planning policy and objectives. It provides transitional population projections for the period up to 2031 and sets out mechanisms to ensure that Development Plans align with the NPF and RSES in addressing the six-year period up to 2026/2027. They allow for the Development Plan Review Process to be deferred on a once-off basis up to three months after the relevant RSES has been finalised, and for Review Processes underway to be suspended until the relevant RSES has been finalised. This aims to ensure that Development Plans can benefit from latest available data and policy contexts. Recently adopted plans that were completed before the relevant RSES can also be brought forward for early review or variation to render them consistent with relevant regional policies and objectives.

As such, most City and County Development Plans will undergo a process of review by 2020/2021 and will cover the six-year period up to 2026/2027. 2027 will provide an assessment of the first full round of Development Plans that have been prepared in accordance with the NPF and RSES for Ireland's three regions. This assessment will coincide with several other key deadlines; 2026 is also a Census Year (i.e. updated demographic and socio-economic data is likely to be available) and 2027 will see a review of the ten-year National Development Plan. Further, Development Plans prepared in 2020/2021 will commence review in 2025/2026 and will require demographic data for the six-year period beyond to 2031. Therefore, the Roadmap provides transitional population projections in line with these deadlines, noting that:

*“The critical population projection periods are to 2026 and 2031, with a particular emphasis on the initial six-year period to 2026, for city and county development plans that are to be formulated during the 2019-20/21 period.”*

**Table 2.1 Transitional Regional and County Population Projections to 2031 for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly**

Regions and Counties	2016	2026	2031
<b>Mid-East</b>			
Kildare	222,500	249,000-254,000	259,000-266,500
Meath	195,000	216,000-221,000	225,500-231,500
Wicklow	142,500	155,000-157,500	160,500-164,000
Louth	129,000	139,000-144,500	144,000-151,500
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>689,000</b>	<b>759,000-777,000</b>	<b>789,000-813,500</b>
<b>Midlands</b>			
Westmeath	89,000	96,500-98,500	100,000-102,500
Laois	84,500	92,500-94,000	95,500-97,500
Offaly	78,000	85,000-86,500	88,000-90,000
<b>Longford</b>	<b>41,000</b>	<b>44,500-45,500</b>	<b>46,000-47,000</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>292,500</b>	<b>318,500-324,500</b>	<b>329,500-337,000</b>
<b>Dublin</b>			
Dublin	1,347,500	1,489,000-1,517,500	1,549,500-1,590,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,329,000</b>	<b>2,566,500-2,619,000</b>	<b>2,668,000-2,740,500</b>

### **2.1.8 Project Ireland 2040 – National Development Plan 2018-2027**

Building resilience in housing is a key element of Project Ireland 2040 with wide ranging measures set out in the NPF and the associated National Development Plan 2018-2027. With regards to housing, this includes measures to reduce vacancy rates and to bring habitable properties back into use particularly in cities and large towns where demand is highest. The NPF provided for the establishment of a land-management to be known the National Regeneration and Development Agency, to release strategically located land banks for redevelopment. This objective has been effected through the establishment of the Land Development Agency (LDA), which has now commenced operation.

In terms of social housing, the National Development Plan will, through a planned capital investment of over €4.2 billion, seek the delivery of some 40,000 new social housing homes by 2021. Direct Local Authority build, acquisitions, refurbishment of formerly empty homes and provision by housing bodies were identified as the chief delivery mechanisms. By 2021, it was aimed to have 12,000 social housing homes made available annually by Local Authorities and approved housing bodies for social housing. This level of provision was to be maintained over the remainder of the period of the National Development Plan, resulting in 112,000 households having their housing needs met through social housing by 2027. The NPF advocated the development of diverse neighbourhoods with a healthy balance of public and private housing.

### **2.1.9 Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (December 2020)**

The NPF is based on demographic and econometric projections undertaken by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) in 2017. Following publication of the NPF in 2018, the NPF 'Roadmap' circular was issued to all planning authorities, setting out projected county population ranges for 2026 and 2031. As part of the development plan process, planning authorities must demonstrate the manner in which their core strategy and other elements of the plan are consistent with the established NPF Roadmap population projections for their local authority area.

In order to strengthen the relationship between national and regional population projections and their integration into the development planning process at local authority level, the Department commissioned the ESRI to further develop work previously undertaken for the NPF. The findings of the ESRI work were published as a research paper on Structural Housing Demand at County Level in December 2020. Following publication of this, the 'Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended)' was published.

This ESRI research applies the projection model to four different development scenarios:

- Baseline – projecting a 'business as usual' scenario which is based on current trends and medium-term projections for the Irish economy;
- NPF 50:50 City – consistent with the NPF strategy;
- High Migration – incorporating assumptions around high international migration flows into Ireland based on higher economic growth than the baseline; and
- Low Migration – incorporating assumptions around lower international migration flows into Ireland based on lower economic growth than the baseline.

The ESRI research model is intended to enable structural household demand levels for each local authority area to be set out under the four different scenarios for each year to 2040. The Section 28 Guidelines state that "The NPF 50:50 City scenario is broadly consistent with the National Planning Framework strategy and consequently, the 2018 NPF 'Roadmap' document". As such, the Section 28 Guidelines further indicate that this is the recommended housing

demand scenario to be used by planning authorities in their planning functions in order to plan for the provision of housing to meet projected levels of demand in their administrative area, in accordance with the NPF strategy.

Thus, planning authorities must now demonstrate the manner in which their core strategy and other elements of the plan are consistent with the NPF 50:50 City housing demand projection scenario identified by the ESRI. Deviation from this scenario, the Guidelines state, must be evidence-based and consistent with these guidelines.

The Guidelines set a methodology for the application of population and housing projections into Local Authority plan processes. The calculation of the housing supply target for County Longford is detailed in Section 4.2.2.

#### ~~2.1.9~~**2.1.10** *Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities*

In March 2018 the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government updated the guidelines relating to the Design Standards for New Apartments. These guidelines have been adopted in appreciation of the need to move towards higher density and more sustainable forms of living within Ireland's urban areas, to which apartment living is deemed essential. They also recognise the importance of the challenge in meeting the housing needs of a growing population in Ireland's key cities, thus following the direction of travel outlined in the NPF.

The guidelines state that County Development Plans must appropriately consider the need to both sustainably increase housing supply and to ensure that a greater proportion of housing development takes place within its existing built-up areas. However, they warn that while it has become practice for some statutory development plans to specify an across-the-board mix (types/sizes) in relation to the composition of individual apartment schemes, there is a need for greater flexibility with regard to approaches to apartment mix more generally. This is particularly relevant where a comprehensive HNDA has not been undertaken. To this effect the following Specific Planning Policy forms part of the guidelines:

*"Apartment developments may include up to 50% one-bedroom or studio type units (with no more than 20-25% of the total proposed development as studios) and there shall be no minimum requirement for apartments with three or more bedrooms. Statutory development plans may specify a mix for apartment and other housing developments, **but only further to an evidence based Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA)**, that has been agreed on an area, county, city or metropolitan area basis and incorporated into the relevant development plan(s)." (emphasis added)*

As such, the production of a Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDA) provides local authorities with an up to date and robust evidence base thus allowing them to appropriately determine and plan for the specific housing/apartment needs (including household compositions) within their administrative area covering the period of their statutory development plan.

#### ~~2.1.10~~**2.1.11** *Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016*

*Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness* was published in July 2016. This Action Plan recognises issues around supply and affordability in Ireland's housing sector and provides a multi-stranded approach to achieve key housing objectives up to 2021. These include an increase in the supply of social housing, increasing housing build numbers to services different tenures, and tackling homelessness. Actions to meet these objectives are organised under five pillars:

- Pillar 1: Address Homelessness

- Pillar 2: Accelerate Social Housing
- Pillar 3: Build More Homes
- Pillar 4: Improve the Rental Sector
- Pillar 5: Utilise Existing Housing.

Actions under Pillar 1 of the Action Plan were aimed at enhancing supports for homeless people and families and alleviating the unacceptable level of families in emergency accommodation. Key actions included a Rapid-Build Housing Programme to expediate social housing supply, with a target of 1,500 rapid-delivery units by 2018, and enhanced Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) supports. In January 2016 rent limits were increased under the national Rent Supplement and HAP schemes, to provide greater security for tenants and families that are at risk of becoming homeless if their rent increases.

Pillar 2 built upon actions delivered under the Social Housing Strategy 2020. That Social Housing Strategy was published in 2014 and it set a commitment to deliver 35,000 new social housing units by 2020. The Action Plan further increased this target to the delivery of 47,000 new social housing units over the period 2016-2021 and pledged enhanced support for existing initiatives for the delivery of social housing through the following:

- **Local Authority Construction & Acquisition (also known as the Social Housing Investment Programme (SHIP))** - To provide funding to local authorities for the provision of social housing by means of construction and acquisition. It also covers expenditure under the Rapid Build Housing Programme, Part V acquisitions, Land Aggregation Scheme and the Special Resolution Fund for unfinished housing developments.
- **Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)** - To provide essential funding to AHBs for the provision of accommodation for persons with specific categories of housing need such as Homeless and Older Persons, People with Disabilities, Returning Emigrants and Victims of Domestic Violence.
- **Vacant Housing Repair and Leasing Initiative** - This scheme enables local authorities, having identified appropriate vacant privately-owned properties in their functional areas, to provide upfront financial assistance to meet reasonable renovation works and to enter into long term lease arrangements with property owners. Renovation costs will be recouped from rent over an agreed period.
- **Part V Delivery** - The Action Plan sets out a commitment to ensure adequate resources are made available to both local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies, to allow them to purchase or lease newly built private dwellings to the fullest extent envisaged by Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000. In addition, where appropriate, the leasing of additional privately developed dwellings beyond the extent envisaged by Part V is supported. Furthermore, the up-front purchase of the Part V social housing requirement will be facilitated, subject to the introduction of strict controls.

Significantly Pillar 3 of the Action Plan introduced measures for a stream-lined planning application process to allow applications for larger housing development schemes (comprising 100 units or more) to be made directly to An Bord Pleanála. These measures were given a legislative basis in the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 as set out in Section 2.1.3.

Pillar 4 of the Action Plan focuses on the rental sector and its growth in the overall tenure mix for Ireland's housing sector. A declining rate of home ownership, decreasing household size, a growing population influenced by high inward migration rates, and increasing rates of new household formation were identified as factors pointing to the growth of the rental sector and the increased role it is likely to play into the future. The Action Plan notes that a strong rental sector supports a mobile labour market *"better able to adapt to new job opportunities and changing household circumstances"* and is suited to accommodating a range of households - including mobile professionals, students and indeed lower-income households.

Pillar 5 recognises that achieving optimum occupancy of both social and private housing stock is an effective way of meeting housing needs. It commits to the development of an overall national vacant housing re-use strategy, as well as introducing the following actions to ensure that our existing housing stock is utilised in an efficient manner to meet housing demand:

- **Better management of social housing stock** -A vacated social house should not remain vacant for an extended period. The refurbishment and re-letting of units between tenancies with minimal delay will be achieved through the adoption of a national re-letting performance standard across all local authorities, a preventative maintenance approach to housing stock management and funding mechanisms to incentivise the swift turnaround of units.
- **Choice-based letting** -Choice-based letting is a method used to allocate social housing in a manner that offers more choice and involvement for applicant households in selecting a new home. Local Authorities that have implemented such an approach have seen refusal rates drop, and so a choice-based allocation system will be introduced and implemented across all Local Authorities in a manner tailored to their specific circumstances.
- **Review of Tenant (Incremental) purchase** - The ongoing review of the Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme in consultation with Local Authorities, to make the scheme more attractive for social housing tenants and help people who would otherwise struggle to buy a home to meet their home ownership ambitions.
- **Housing Agency Vacant Housing Purchase Initiative** - The Housing Agency will receive up to 70 million in capital funding to support the acquisition of suitable portfolios of vacant properties for social housing directly from financial institutions and investors.

#### **2.1.11 2.1.12 National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy 2018-2021**

The National Vacant Housing Reuse Strategy was published in 2018 to support Pillar 5 of the Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness. Drawing together policies and actions aimed at reducing vacancy in Ireland's housing stock it sets out the Strategic Objective of:

*“ensuring that existing housing stock is used to the maximum degree possible – focusing on measures to use vacant stock to renew urban and rural areas.”*

To accomplish this overall Strategic Objective the Strategy sets out a range of actions that will be implemented at a national and local level, grouped under five key objectives.

- **Objective 1 Establish robust, accurate, consistent and up-to-date data sets on vacancy.** - This includes actions aimed at securing an accurate picture of vacancy rates across different Local Authorities and identifying recoverable dwellings that can be re-introduced into the housing stock.
- **Objective 2 Bring forward measures to ensure, to the greatest degree possible, that vacant and underused privately owned properties are brought back to use** - This includes actions aimed at identifying and addressing barriers to bring private properties that are subject to long-term vacancies back into the housing stock.
- **Objective 3 Bring forward measures to minimise vacancy arising in Social Housing Stock** - This includes actions for the effective management of our national social housing stock to ensure that vacant social houses do not remain vacant for extended periods of time.
- **Objective 4 Continued engagement with and provision of support to key stakeholders to ensure suitable vacant properties held by banks, financial institutions and investors are acquired for social housing use** -This includes actions to ensure that the Housing Agency has adequate capital funding to acquire vacant properties from NAMA and other stakeholders for use as social housing.
- **Objective 5 Foster and develop cross-sector relationships, collaborating in partnership to tackle vacant housing matters** - This includes actions to tackle vacancy in urban and rural areas such as the utilisation of the



Urban Regeneration and Rural Regeneration Development Fund's and the rollout of a dedicated Urban Regeneration Scheme, as well as support partnerships between Government Departments and Local Authorities.

#### ~~2.1.12~~ **2.1.13 Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform**

The Social Housing Strategy 2020: Support, Supply and Reform was adopted in November 2014 and sets out the framework for the delivery of new social housing and for social housing assessment, delivery and financing. The vision set out Strategy that:

*"every household in Ireland will have access to secure, good quality housing suited to their needs at affordable prices in a sustainable community".*

The national Social Housing Strategy is based on three pillars:

- **Pillar 1:** Provide for 35,000 new social housing units, over a six-year period, to meet the additional social housing supply requirements as determined by the Housing Agency<sup>2</sup>;
- **Pillar 2:** Support up to 75,000 households through an enhanced private rental sector; and
- **Pillar 3:** Reform social housing supports to create a more flexible and responsive system.

Phase 1 sets a target of 18,000 additional housing units and 32,000 HAP/RAS units by the end of 2017. Phase 2 sets a target of 17,000 additional housing units and 43,000 HAP/RAS units by end 2020. The Strategy states that significant exchequer funding will be allocated to ensure that the early phases of the Strategy will deliver on the targets. An enhanced role for the Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) is also a key component to deliver the vision.

The Strategy also states that a new tenant purchase scheme for existing local authority houses will be put in place. The development of an individual housing 'passport' that would facilitate tenant mobility between local authorities will be examined.

Exchequer funding of €5.7bn has been committed to by the Government over the lifetime of the Strategy, and Longford County Council expects to spend in excess of €200 million from this fund in the delivery of its Social Housing Programme 2017 to 2019.

#### ~~2.1.13~~ **2.1.14 Construction 2020: A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector**

Construction 2020 was published by the Government in 2014 and sets out a detailed, time-bound set of actions to support the return of Ireland's construction sector to sustainable levels. The vision is that Ireland will have a competitive, innovative, dynamic, safe and sustainable construction sector; one that makes its full and proper contribution to the economy and to job creation, and one that is based on best practice and capable of delivering the economic and social infrastructure we need to build to sustain a prosperous future.

Some of the key commitments include:

- Putting in a place a National Framework for Housing Supply and an Annual Statement of Projected Housing Supply and Demand;

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<sup>2</sup> Increased to 47,000 units in *Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016*

- Establishing a Housing Supply Coordination Task Force for Dublin;
- Assessing existing construction and property data sources for appropriateness including identifying any gaps and quality shortcomings;
- Examining the key barriers to housing mobility and make recommendations to Government;
- Developing a national policy towards professionalising the private rental sector;
- Establishing a working group and invite public comment on the feasibility and impact of setting minimum thermal efficiency performance standards in rental properties;
- Publishing a Social Housing Strategy and introducing legislation to regulate the Approved Housing Body sector;
- Review of Part V requirements;
- Publishing of the Homelessness Implementation Plan and implementation of the key recommendations of the Homelessness Oversight Group's First Report in Q2 2016;
- Continuing to implement the Government Action Programme on Unfinished Housing Developments and the Budget 2014 Special Resolution Fund.

#### **2.1.142.1.15 The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016**

The National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016 sets out a framework of initiatives to provide for the housing needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged households. The Strategy was affirmed in the Action Plan for Housing and extended to 2020 to deliver on its aims and continue to guide and progress policy. The strategy has nine strategic aims:

- To promote and mainstream equality of access for people with a disability to the full range of housing options available suited to individual and household need.
- To develop national protocols and frameworks for effective interagency cooperation which will facilitate person-centred delivery of housing and relevant support services.
- To support people with a disability to live independently in their own homes and communities, where appropriate.
- To address the specific housing needs of people with an intellectual and/or physical disability, moving from congregated settings in line with good practice, including through the development of frameworks to facilitate housing in the community.
- To address the specific housing needs of people with a mental health disability, including through the development of frameworks to facilitate housing in the community, for people with low and medium support needs moving from mental health facilities, in line with good practice.
- To consider good practice in the design, coordination and delivery of housing and related supports.
- To facilitate people with a disability to access appropriate advice and information in respect of their housing needs.
- To improve the collection and use of data/information regarding the nature and extent of the housing needs of people with a disability.
- To provide a framework to support the delivery, monitoring and review of agreed actions.

## **2.2 Regional Policy**

### **2.2.1 The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019-2031**

The RSES for the Eastern and Midland region came into force in June 2019, superseding the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Midland Region. The RSES is a high-level plan that seeks to support the implementation of the NPF by providing a strategic planning and economic framework for the region's sustainable growth and development. It

echoes the NPF in emphasising sustainable development patterns and seeks to focus growth within the footprint of existing urban areas and in key regional growth settlements. The RSES seeks to determine at a regional scale how best to achieve the shared goals set out in the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) of the NPF. To this end, the RSES sets out 16 Regional Strategic Outcomes (RSOs), which are aligned with international, EU and national policy and which in turn set the framework for city and county development plans.

Specifically, the RSES sets out Regional Policy Objectives to support Local Authorities in completing Housing Need Demand Assessments as required under the NPF and to provide for a diverse range of housing types and tenures. The strategy seeks to:

*“Support local authorities, approved housing bodies and other sectoral agencies in the provision of a greater diversity of housing type and tenure, including social and affordable housing and exploring new models of low-cost rental and affordable homeownership”.*

In relation to Longford, the Settlement Strategy for the region designates Longford town as a ‘Key Town’. The designation of these settlements under the Settlement Hierarchy for the region has informed the settlement hierarchy as described in detail in Core strategy whilst the relevant Regional Policy Objectives has informed the development of this Housing Strategy for Longford.

## **2.3 Local Policy**

### **2.3.1 Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027**

The Longford County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 sets out the planning framework during the plan period demonstrates consistency with national and regional policy hierarchy. It provides a clear evidence-base for the reservation of land to meet housing and population targets whilst setting a vision for County Longford that are underpinned by strategic aims to ensure delivery against objectives.

The County Development Plan aims to build on the strategies, policies and objectives of the previous County Development Plan (2015 – 2021 ) which was prepared during a time of economic uncertainty stemming from a global and national crisis. The review process and preparation of the Plan has had regard to key recent development trends and national, regional and local policy developments, with a particular regard being placed on the need to deliver social housing within County Longford as described herein.

### **2.3.2 Longford County Housing Strategy 2015-2021**

The Longford County Housing Strategy 2015-2021 provided a comprehensive review of demographics and housing demand within County Longford to inform the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021. It projected need for the planning provision of housing, as well as the demand for social and affordable housing within the County based on data from the 2011 census and regional population targets. This analysis identified a requirement for 2,120 households during the lifetime of the County Development Plan.

Given the difficult economic situation at the time the Housing Strategy did not envision Longford County Council building a substantial number of social or affordable housing units during the Plan’s lifetime. However, it was acknowledged that there would be a need for social housing irrespective of overall social housing output. In order to meet this, need the Housing Strategy advocated for the implementation of Part V requirements of 14% in all new housing schemes subject to the type and location of the housing units required by the planning authority at a given

time. This Strategy will be superseded by this Housing Strategy and the County Development Plan as described in Section 2.3.1.

### **2.3.3 County Longford Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2022**

The Longford Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021 was completed to meet provisions under the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The LECP is an action-focused plan whose purpose is to identify and implement actions to achieve sustainable economic growth and improved social outcomes within County Longford. A series of LECP objectives and actions to achieve these ambitions are set out throughout the plan.

### **2.3.4 County Longford Age Friendly Strategy 2015-2020**

The Longford Age Friendly Strategy 2015 -2020 was developed by the Age Friendly Alliance following an extensive consultation with older people throughout the county. In achieving the overall vision of the Strategy which is *'to make Longford a better place to grow old in'*, 42 actions have been developed based on and in alignment with the Age Friendly Ireland (AFI) Programme. Longford's ambition to become age friendly includes to:

- Become one of the greatest places to grow old in;
- Have easily accessible public buildings, shops and services;
- Incorporate older people's views into significant decisions being made about the County;
- Promote a positive attitude to ageing and address stereotypes about older people; and
- Create opportunities for older people to be engaged with their County socially, as employees and as volunteers.

Within the strategy, the following information in relation to housing has been raised by older people as an issue in relation to their accommodation needs:

- Older people feel that they need more support to continue to live independently.
- Policing of privately rented dwellings, particularly with regard to anti-social behaviour is an area of concern for older people.
- Older people would like more information about, and access to grants to improve security, e.g. locks and alarms.
- Improved street lighting is needed in existing housing developments and new builds, to make older people feel safer.

### **2.3.5 Longford County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024**

The Longford County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) 2019-2024 fulfils requirements under the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. The TAP aims to meet the accommodation needs of travellers in Longford within a five-year period up to 2024 whilst recognising the ethnic identity of the Traveller community and aiming to provide accommodation that is suitable to their specific needs. As such, the TAP provides for standard housing options, as well as traveller-specific accommodation such as halting sites, temporary/emergency sites and one-off rural houses within County Longford. It is Council policy that different housing options will be provided in accordance with an assessment of need and are subject to feasibility.

### 3 Current Context: Review and Analysis of Existing Supply and Needs

#### 3.1 Population

Census 2016 results show that Ireland's population stood at 4,761,865 in April 2016, an increase of 173,613 (3.8%) since April 2011. There were 200 urban settlements across the country, which together accommodated 63% of Ireland's population. County Longford is located within the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area, the most populous region in the state with over 2.3 million people. Recent trends show that population growth is set to continue having regard to the Region's young demographic profile and a return to net inward migration as the Country returns to economic growth after a severe economic crash in 2008.

A brief overview of the population in County Longford shows that the county saw a population increase of 4.8% (1,873 additional persons) between 2011 and 2016, as the population increased to 40,873 from 39,000 people. As the Key Town within the County Longford settlement hierarchy, Longford Town experienced a rate of growth broadly consistent with the county average between 2011 and 2016, with the population increasing by 4.24%. The population change across the various settlements identified in the settlement hierarchy is set out in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Population Growth in Longford 2011-2016**

County	Population 2011	Population 2016	Growth Rate (2011-2016)	Growth Rate % (2011-2016)
<b>Longford County</b>	39,000	40,873	1,873	4.80%
<b>Settlements</b>				
Longford Town	9,601	10,008	407	4.24%
Granard <sup>3</sup>	1,021	1,096	75	6.8%
Edgeworthstown	1,744	2,072	328	18.81%
Ballymahon	1,563	1,877	314	20.09%
Lanesborough (County Longford) <sup>4</sup>	727	757	30	4.0%
Abbeyshrule <sup>5</sup>	-	224	-	-
Ardagh <sup>5,4</sup>	-	210	-	-
Aughnaccliffe	148	177	29	19.59%
Ballinamuck <sup>5,4</sup>	-	232	-	-
Ballinalee	308	347	39	12.66%
Cloondara <sup>5,4</sup>	-	449	-	-
Carriglass <sup>5,4</sup>	-	161	-	-
Drumlish	835	931	96	11.5%
Keenagh	498	581	83	16.67%
Legan	199	215	16	8.04%
Newtownforbes	759	778	19	2.50%

<sup>3</sup> CSO Settlement boundary change between 2011-2016; 2011 boundaries used here. 2016 boundaries give a population of 816.

<sup>4</sup> County Longford population for Lanesborough derived through analysis of CSO Census 'Small Area' data

<sup>5</sup> CSO data unavailable for 2011. 2016 figures are based on analysis of CSO Census Small Areas and include some rural hinterlands.

The population distribution across urban and rural areas in County Longford remained consistent between 2011 and 2016. According to the CSO, 13,957 people (34.2%) were living in urban settlements<sup>6</sup> in Longford in 2016 whilst 26,916 (65.85%) were living in smaller towns and villages, as well as in the rural remainder of the county. In 2011, census results showed a distribution between the urban and rural population as 33.1% and 66.9% respectively. Thus, the marginal increase (+ 1%) in urban living in County Longford was broadly aligned with the prevailing state-wide direction of travel of urbanisation.

The age profile of the EMRA region in 2016 was relatively young with nearly half a million children or approximately 1 in 5 people (22%) in the Region aged under 14 years of age. In County Longford this figure is broadly similar, standing at 23.3% as set out in Table 3.2. In total, the number of children of pre-school age (0-4 years) in Longford is 3,051 (7.5%). 5,205 (12.7%) are of primary school going age (5-12 years) and a further 3,432 (8.4%) are of secondary school going age (13-18 years). An extended age profile of the county is presented in Figure 3.1.

Census 2016 results show that Ireland's population has been getting steadily older since the 1980s. In 2016, 37.2% of the Irish population were aged 45 and over, compared with 34.4% in 2011 and 27.6% in 1986. 13.4% of the national population were over 65 years in 2016. As with the state, both the EMRA region and County Longford are ageing. As the RSES notes, by 2031 there will be a significant increase in the regional population aged over 65 and as such, there is a need to plan for adequate healthcare, accommodation and services to enable independent living for as long as possible, encourage active lifestyles and address isolation for older residents.

**Table 3.2: Age Dependency Ratios (2016)**

	0-14 years	15-64 years	Over 65 years	Young Age Ratio (%)	Old Age Ratio (%)	Total Dependency Ratio (%)
<b>County Longford</b>	9,508	25,541	5,824	23.3%	14%	37.5%
<b>MD</b>						
MD Ballymahon	3,244	8,915	1,994	22.9%	14.1%	37.0%
MD Granard	2,430	6,569	1,675	22.8%	15.7%	38.5%
MD Longford	3,834	10,057	2,155	23.9%	13.4%	37.3%

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<sup>6</sup> The CSO defines a settlement of more than 1,500 people as 'urban'.

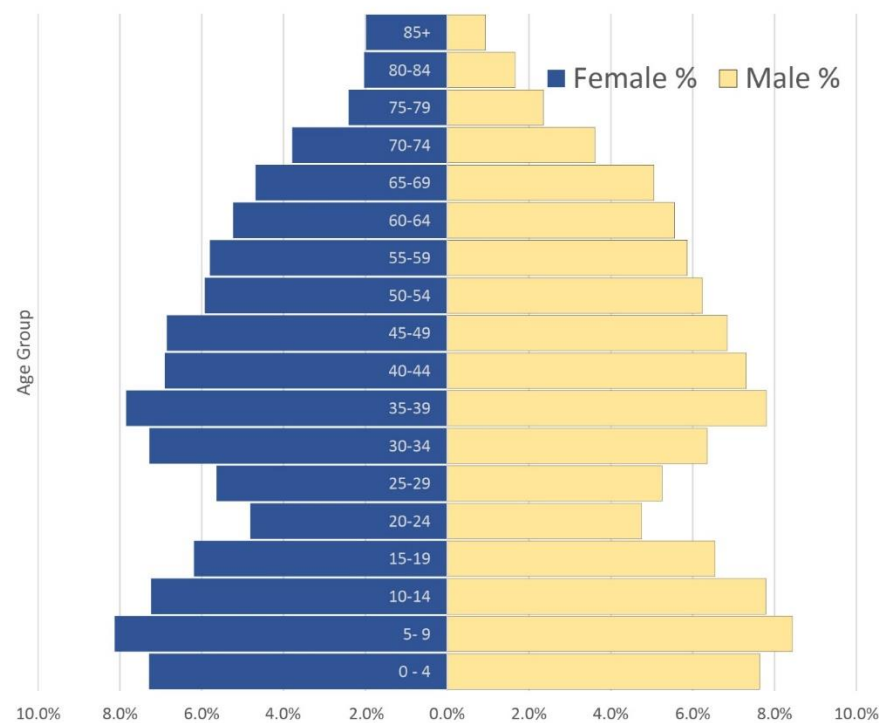


Figure 3.1: Age Profile for County Longford

## 3.2 Existing Housing Stock and Supply

### 3.2.1 Stock and Composition

Census 2016 results record a total housing stock of 18,591 units in County Longford, which represents a marginal decrease of 232 units since 2011. The number of vacant units in 2016 stood at 2,824 (excluding holiday homes and those dwellings deemed to be temporarily absent).

The 2011 Census data does not distinguish between categories of vacancy and indicates that there were 4,363 unoccupied dwellings in 2011. In contrast, the 2016 data illustrates the number of temporarily absent dwellings, unoccupied holiday homes and other vacant dwellings. For comparison purposes, the total number of vacant dwellings across these three categories in 2016 is 3,445. As such, there is an overall decline of 918 in the number of vacant dwellings between 2011-2016. This indicates the existing vacant stock absorbing much of the growing need for housing in the county. A summary of the information on the existing housing stock is provided in Table 3.3.

The proportional breakdown of housing tenures, privately owned, privately rented and publicly rented accommodation in the three Municipal Districts of Ballymahon, Granard and Longford is set out in Table 3.6. As can be seen home ownership in Longford MD (at 50%) is below the county average while privately rented (24%) and social housing i.e. rented from the Local Authority and rented from voluntary bodies (22%) are well above the county average. Home ownership (77%) is highest and well in excess of the county average (63.7%) in Granard MD where social housing provision is also at its lowest (8%).

**Table 3.6: Household Tenure – Occupancy Type County Longford and Municipal Districts 2016**

<u>County Longford</u>	<u>Owner occupied with mortgage</u>	<u>Owner occupied no mortgage</u>	<u>Rented from private landlord</u>	<u>Rented from Local Authority</u>	<u>Rented from voluntary body</u>	<u>Occupied free of rent</u>	<u>Not stated</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>No. households</u>	<u>3,864</u>	<u>5,753</u>	<u>2,621</u>	<u>2,031</u>	<u>167</u>	<u>257</u>	<u>399</u>	<u>15,092</u>
<u>% Households</u>	<u>26%</u>	<u>38%</u>	<u>17%</u>	<u>13%</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>100%</u>
<u>MD Ballymahon</u>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>No. households</u>	<u>1,443</u>	<u>1,984</u>	<u>872</u>	<u>657</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>5,209</u>
<u>% Households</u>	<u>28%</u>	<u>38%</u>	<u>17%</u>	<u>13%</u>	<u>&lt; 1%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>100%</u>
<u>MD Granard</u>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>No. households</u>	<u>1,146</u>	<u>1,880</u>	<u>398</u>	<u>319</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>3,938</u>
<u>% Households</u>	<u>29%</u>	<u>48%</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>8%</u>	<u>&lt; 1%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>100%</u>
<u>MD Longford</u>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>No. households</u>	<u>1,275</u>	<u>1,889</u>	<u>1,351</u>	<u>1,055</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>5,945</u>
<u>% Households</u>	<u>21%</u>	<u>32%</u>	<u>23%</u>	<u>18%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>100%</u>

The proportional breakdown of housing tenures, privately owned, privately rented and publicly rented accommodation in the three Municipal Districts of Ballymahon, Granard and Longford is set out in Table 3.6. As can be seen home ownership in Longford MD (at 50%) is below the county average while privately rented (24%) and social housing i.e. rented from the Local Authority and rented from voluntary bodies (22%) are well above the county average. Home ownership (77%) is highest and well in excess of the county average (63.7%) in Granard MD where social housing provision is also at its lowest (8%).



**Table 3.6: Household Tenure – Occupancy Type County Longford and Municipal Districts 2016**

County Longford	Owner occupied with mortgage	Owner occupied no mortgage	Rented from private landlord	Rented from Local Authority	Rented from voluntary body	Occupied free of rent	Not stated	Total
<b>No. households</b>	3,864	5,753	2,621	2,031	167	257	399	15,092
<b>% Households</b>	26%	38%	17%	13%	1%	2%	3%	100%
<b>MD Ballymahon</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>No. households</b>	1,443	1,984	872	657	21	93	139	5,209
<b>% Households</b>	28%	38%	17%	13%	<1%	2%	3%	100%
<b>MD Granard</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>No. households</b>	1,146	1,880	398	319	6	83	106	3,938
<b>% Households</b>	29%	48%	10%	8%	<1%	2%	3%	100%
<b>MD Longford</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>No. households</b>	1,275	1,889	1,351	1,055	140	81	154	5,945
<b>% Households</b>	21%	32%	23%	18%	2%	1%	3%	100%

**Table 3.3: Existing Housing Stock (2016)**

County	Housing stock	Holiday homes	Other vacant	Temporarily Absent	Total vacancy	% Vacancy <sup>7</sup>
<b>Longford</b>	18,591	278	2,824	343	2,824	15.19%
<b>MD</b>						
MD Granard	5,027	128	870	75	870	17.31%
MD Ballymahon	6,343	102	911	104	911	14.36%
MD Longford	7,221	48	1,043	164	1,043	14.44%

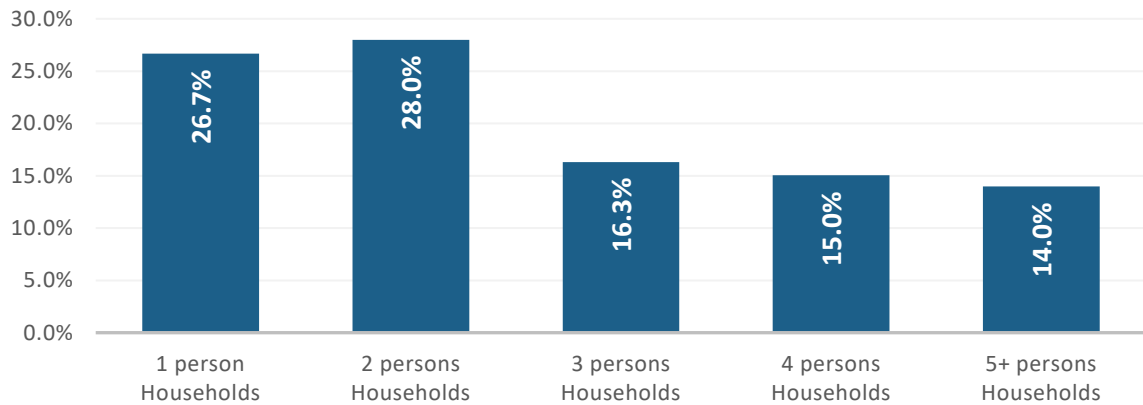
Household size cohort represents the number of people per households. Over half (54.7%) of households in Longford in 2016 had just one or two persons living in that household as illustrated Table 3.4; however this generally compares to the national figures on household size cohorts.

**Table 3.4: Existing Household Size Cohorts (2016)**

County Longford	Households	Persons	Households %	Persons %
1 person	4,035	4,035	26.7%	9.9%
2 persons	4,233	8,466	28.0%	20.8%
3 persons	2,466	7,398	16.3%	18.1%
4 persons	2,274	9,096	15.0%	22.3%

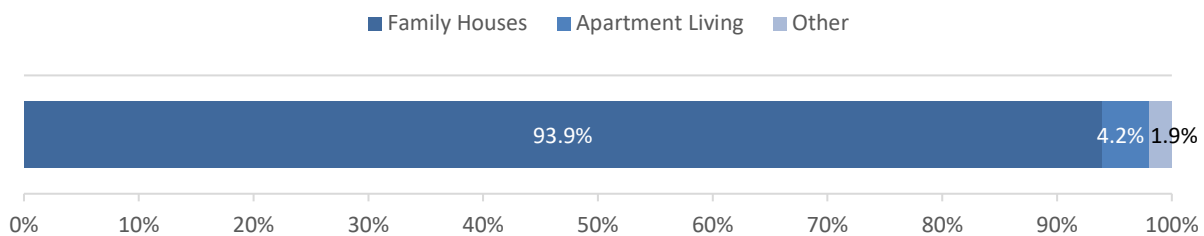
<sup>7</sup> The percentage vacancy rate provided is based on 'Other Vacancy' category as a percentage of total housing stock and excludes vacant holiday homes and those temporarily absent.

5+ persons	2,114	11,780	14.0%	28.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,122</b>	<b>40,775</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



**Figure 3.2: Household Composition in County Longford**

There were 15,122<sup>8</sup> private households and an average household size of 2.70, which is marginally lower than the national rate of 2.75. 93.9% of households comprised of a house or bungalow while 4.2% were apartments in 2016. At a national level, 12% of all occupied households in Ireland were apartments. The NPF notes that while the overall proportion of households living in apartments is growing, we remain considerably behind European averages in terms of the numbers and proportion of households living in apartments, especially in our cities and larger towns and this is particularly evident within County Longford. Further, the NPF states that apartments will need to become a more prevalent form of housing, particularly in Ireland's cities in order to more effectively address the challenge of meeting the housing needs of a growing population in our key urban areas.



**Figure 3.3: Existing Household Typology % (2016)**

### 3.2.2 Housing Tenure

Home ownership remains the dominant tenure in Longford with 63.7% of households within this category in 2016. 40% of these households pay a mortgage. 17.4% of households were in the private rental market, while 14.6% (2,198) of rented properties comprise social housing, an increase of almost 3% since 2011. Table 3.5 provides a concise illustration of housing tenures across Longford County.

<sup>8</sup> CSO 2016 – Including Caravan/Mobile Home as a household

**Table 3.5: Housing Tenure County Longford (2016)**

County Longford	Households	Persons	Households %	Persons %
Social Housing <sup>9</sup>	2,198	5,758	14.6%	14.1%
Rented (Privately)	2,621	7,259	17.4%	17.8%
Owner Occupied (All)	9,617	26,155	63.7%	64.2%

The proportional breakdown of housing tenures, privately owned, privately rented and publicly rented accommodation in the three Municipal Districts of Ballymahon, Granard and Longford is set out in Table 3.6. As can be seen home ownership in Longford MD (at 50%) is below the county average while privately rented (24%) and social housing i.e. rented from the Local Authority and rented from voluntary bodies (22%) are well above the county average. Home ownership (77%) is highest and well in excess of the county average (63.7%) in Granard MD where social housing provision is also at its lowest (8%).

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<sup>9</sup> The specifically relates to all households that rent from the local authority or voluntary body

**Table 3.6: Household Tenure – Occupancy Type County Longford and Municipal Districts 2016**

County Longford	Owner occupied with mortgage	Owner occupied no mortgage	Rented from private landlord	Rented from Local Authority	Rented from voluntary body	Occupied free of rent	Not stated	Total
<b>No. households</b>	3,864	5,753	2,621	2,031	167	257	399	15,092
<b>% Households</b>	26%	38%	17%	13%	1%	2%	3%	100%
<b>MD Ballymahon</b>								
No. households	1,443	1,984	872	657	21	93	139	5,209
% Households	28%	38%	17%	13%	< 1%	2%	3%	100%
<b>MD Granard</b>								
No. households	1,146	1,880	398	319	6	83	106	3,938
% Households	29%	48%	10%	8%	< 1%	2%	3%	100%
<b>MD Longford</b>								
No. households	1,275	1,889	1,351	1,055	140	81	154	5,945
% Households	21%	32%	23%	18%	2%	1%	3%	100%

### 3.2.3 Unfinished Housing Development

The 2017 National Housing Development Survey which tracks progress on unfinished housing developments since 2010 indicates that there were 11 unfinished housing developments in County Longford at the time of the 2017 survey. However, following the inspection of these 11 unfinished housing development sites in 2017, a further reduction in unfinished housing developments (36.4%) was achieved, leaving a remaining 7 sites to be brought forward to 2018. A total of 548 units are spread across these 7 sites. Of the 548 units, 23.9% are occupied and 9.1% are nearing completion as set out in Table 3.7.

**Table 3.7: Unfinished Housing Developments (Source: DHPLG 2017)**

Status	Number of Units
Occupied	131
Vacant	76
Near Complete	50
Partially constructed (to wall plate, DPC or foundations)	31
Not started	0
Planning Expired	260
<b>All units</b>	<b>548</b>

### 3.2.4 Housing Permissions

Table 3.8 illustrates the number of granted planning applications (by unit) in County Longford between 2006 and 2019. As discussed in further detail in Section 4.4.3, it should be noted that the quantum of applications and thus indirectly, the number of granted units during specific years in that period (i.e. the overall market dynamics) has varied greatly and likely been influenced by the macroeconomic trends (including the recession and rising costs to build a home). Longford County Council confirm that this was notable in relation to the overall number applications submitted for houses and apartments in settlements during and following the recession in the mid-late 2000s.

59.2% of these relate to permissions granted for houses and apartments via development scheme applications, while 40.8% relate to one-off houses. The yearly average of one-off houses granted planning permission over the 2006-2020 period is 63%. A more a specific analysis focusing on the last three years (2018-2020) indicates that ~~on average, 54.641%~~ of the total number of residential units granted have been for one-off houses.

**Table 3.8: Granted Planning Applications for Residential Units in County Longford between 2006 and 2019**

Granted Planning Applications	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Grand Total
No. Houses and Apartments	515	658	245	309	1	2	2	17	2	6	13	20	44	110	144	<b>2,088</b>
No. One-Off Houses	263	309	207	86	57	35	41	24	19	35	54	76	53	80	74	<b>1,413</b>
Houses and Apartments % of Total	66.2%	68.0%	54.2%	78.2%	1.7%	5.4%	4.7%	41.5%	9.5%	14.6%	19.4%	20.8%	45.4%	57.9%	66.1%	<b>59.6%</b>
<del>Single Rural Dwelling</del> One-Off House % of Total	33.8%	32.0%	45.8%	21.8%	98.3%	94.6%	95.3%	58.5%	90.5%	85.4%	80.6%	79.2%	54.6%	42.1%	33.9%	<b>40.4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>3,501</b>

### 3.3.5 Social Housing Stock

In accordance with Section 9 of the Housing Act 1988, housing authorities are required to undertake an assessment of housing need in their administrative area. The social housing stock in County Longford as of March 2020 is as set out in Table 3.9.

**Table 3.9: Current Social Housing Stock (March 2020)**

	County Longford
Housing Stock (directly owned by Longford CC)	2,121
Social Leasing	124
Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) or other Leasing Programme	210
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Units	334
Approved Housing Body (AHB) Units	514
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,789</b>

#### 3.3.5.1 Approved Housing Bodies – AHBs

AHBs also provide social housing and are formed for the purpose of relieving housing need and the provision and management of housing. They are established by a voluntary management board to benefit the community in which they are based, and are approved and funded by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Housing cooperatives such as these AHBs can provide both social rented housing and housing to purchase. AHBs are self-help and jointly owned member/user housing associations or societies. Projects undertaken may be in response to the needs of the elderly, people with disabilities, homeless persons or families and single people on low incomes. Some AHBs may be formed to specialise in meeting a particular housing need, others develop with broader aims. The specific housing services offered will depend on the aims or concerns of the members, the needs of tenants as well as the financial and other resources available for both capital costs and ongoing management running costs.

A list of AHBs that are active in County Longford is set out below:

**Table 3.10: Operational Approved Housing Bodies in County Longford**

List of Operational Approved Housing Bodies in the County
Cluid
Respond
Tuath
iCare Housing CLG
St. Christopher's Housing Association
Disabled Persons of Longford
County Longford Association for Mentally Handicapped
Newgrove Housing Association
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

### 3.3.4.2 Social Housing Vacancy

Table 3.11 sets out the current social housing stock by unit type across county Longford and within each MD. This demonstrates that the proportion of the stock owned

**Table 3.11: Current Social Housing Stock owned by Longford County Council by Unit Type (March 2020)**

	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4-bedroom	5-bedroom	Total
<b>County Longford</b>	34	556	1,378	142	9	2,119
MD Ballymahon	3	160	423	34	3	623
MD Granard	14	122	284	22	3	445
MD Longford	17	263	642	84	3	1,009
MD not classified		11	29	2		42

Table 3.12 sets out the current status of that social housing stock and as of March 2020, there were 84 vacant social housing units in Longford. The majority of those vacant units are in varying stages of being re-let, under maintenance, under offer and/or accepted for tenants.

**Table 3.12: Current Status of Social Housing Stock owned by Longford County Council (March 2020)**

	Allocated	Occupied	Redundant	Vacant	Total
<b>County Longford</b>	60	1,960	15	84	2,119
MD Ballymahon	8	608		12	628
MD Granard	28	411	6	31	476
MD Longford	24	941	9	41	1015

## 4 Housing Needs in Longford

### 4.1 Overview

This chapter sets out the demographic, economic and social inputs of relevance and estimates the projected population, households and associated housing needs in County Longford during the plan period. Specifically, this chapter demonstrates how the various demographic and market factors interact with the assessment of future housing needs and demands within County Longford. This aligns with the methodology that has been described in Section 1.4 and the chapter has therefore been structured in the following way with further details also available in the relevant appendices:

- Section 4.2 (Inputs) – Describes the relevant information that has supported the analysis that has been undertaken herein.
- Section 4.3 (Assessment of Needs) – Describes the assessment of projected needs for ownership and private rental (in Section 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 respectively). A summary of the calculation of the households who can be classified as having an affordability problem during the plan period so as to adequately inform the necessary provision units within County Longford has been set out in Section 4.3.3.
- Section 4.4 (HNDA Components) - Describes the specific analysis that has been undertaken in relation to the dynamic components of the housing market in County Longford as set out under National Policy Objective 37 of the NPF.

The majority of the information presented herein relates to the plan period ~~(i.e. Q1 2021-2021 – Q4 2027/2027)~~. The Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 is expected to come into force in late November 2021 for a plan period of six years; for modelling purposes and to calculate the Housing Supply Target following departmental guidance, this has been rounded to the nearest whole quarters, covering Q1 2022 – Q4 2027 inclusive. Where appropriate the information for additional years has been identified and have been presented to understand progression from the baseline (i.e. 2016). Further details on the analysis undertaken is presented in Appendices 1 - 4.



## 4.2 Inputs

### 4.2.1 Population Projections

The future population of County Longford has been set out for target years 2026 and 2031 in the National Planning Framework Implementation Roadmap (July 2018). A number of population scenarios for County Longford have been investigated to 2031 and a 'Policy Intervention Scenario' has been applied for the purpose of this analysis into the housing needs of the county. In accounting for the NPF population growth targets, an interpolation of the required level of change per annum was developed for County Longford from baseline year 2016 to NPF target years 2026 and 2031, to thus produce annualised figures between the Q1 2021-2022 and Q4 2027-2027 lifetime of the plan. This was first done for the period 2016 to 2026, and then for the period 2027 to 2031 (as there are different growth rates per period). On this basis, the future population in County Longford has been projected through an interpolation of the targets as set out in the NPF to 2026 and 2031.

The projected population over the plan period in County Longford is outlined in Table 4.1 with the year-on-year increase further detail is provided in Appendix 1. The population of County Longford will increase by 2,614 people during the plan period to a total of 45,800 in 2027.

**Table 4.1: Overview of Projected Population throughout the plan period (as per 'High NPF' aligned scenario)**

Projection Scenario	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
NPF High Aligned	43,187	43,649	44,112	44,575	45,037	45,500	45,800	46,100
Growth (absolute)	463	463	463	463	463	463	300	300
Growth (relative)	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.7%	0.7%

### 4.2.2 Estimated Households

As part of the development plan process, planning authorities must demonstrate the manner in which their plan is consistent with the NPF and established NPF Implementation Roadmap population projections for their local authority area. In December 2020, the DHLGH issued guidelines to assist planning authorities to incorporate these projections into the preparation of development plans and housing strategies in a consistent and coherent approach.

These Guidelines build on research undertaken by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) into regional demographics and structural housing demand at county level. The ESRI's research applies a projection model to four different development scenarios, including a Baseline ('business as usual') scenario and the 'NPF 50:50 City Scenario.' The Section 28 Guidelines state that "the NPF 50:50 City scenario is broadly consistent with the National Planning Framework strategy and consequently, the 2018 NPF 'Roadmap' document". As such, the Section 28 Guidelines indicate that this is the recommended housing demand scenario to be used by local authorities to plan for the provision of housing to meet projected levels of demand.

Thus, planning authorities must now demonstrate the manner in which their core strategy and other elements of the plan are consistent with the established NPF Roadmap population projections for their local authority area and accordingly, with the related NPF 50:50 City housing demand projection scenario identified by the ESRI.

The Guidelines set a methodology for the application of population and housing projections into Local Authority plan processes and the setting of Housing Supply Targets for the relevant plan period.

As set out below, Longford County Council have finalised the following calculation of housing demand for the plan period. Longford County Council will not pursue optional adjustments ('E' or 'F'), and therefore will pursue **a total housing supply target of 2,568** for the Longford County Development Plan over a plan period<sup>10</sup> anticipated to cover approximately Q1 2022 – Q4 2027 inclusive.

**Table 4.2: Calculation of Housing Supply Targets for County Longford over the plan period<sup>11</sup>**

Longford County Council		Annual Average Households	Total Households
<b>A</b>	ESRI NPF scenario projected new household demand 2017 to end Q4 2027	277	3,042
<b>B</b>	Actual new housing supply 2017 to end Q3 2021 (Source: CSO to Q4 2020, pro-rata of 2020 data for remainder)	103	517
<b>C</b>	Homeless households and unmet need <sup>12</sup>	-	43
<b>D</b>	<b>Plan Housing Demand = Total (A-B+C)</b> <b>For plan period Q1 2022 – Q4 2027 (6 years)</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>2,568</b>
<b>E</b>	<i>Potential Adjustment 1 to end 2026 portion of plan period – not pursued</i>		
<b>F</b>	<i>Potential adjustment 2 to end 2026 portion of plan period to facilitate convergence to NPF strategy, applicable where B exceeds or is close to D (where justified) – not pursued</i>		

Table 4.3 identifies the additional households that are anticipated during the plan period. The Core Strategy includes all population and household figures between 2016 and the end of the plan period. The additional years and units built will be adjusted when local area plans are being prepared. The estimation of the projected number of households was undertaken following determination of the projected population. Census 2016 indicates that the 40,755 people living in 15,122 private households in County Longford resulted in an average household size of 2.70 which is marginally lower than the state average of 2.75. However, the NPF states that the national average is expected to decline to around 2.5 by 2040, whilst acknowledging that urban households tend to be smaller than in the suburbs or rural parts of the country.

A graduated change in average household size has therefore been used (i.e. If we assume alignment with the NPF by 2040, the average household size is projected to be 2.61 by the end of the plan period for County Longford). This was achieved through application of interpolated decline in household size throughout the timeline between 2016 (baseline census year) and 2027 as set out in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Overview of Estimated Average Household Size in Longford throughout the plan period**

Average Household Size	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
	2.66	2.65	2.64	2.63	2.62	2.61	2.61

<sup>10</sup> For calculation purposes, the plan period has been rounded to whole quarters.

<sup>11</sup> Following 'Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning' (DHLGH, December 2020)

<sup>12</sup> Homeless households as of January 2021, plus unmet need as of Census 2016; source: DHLGH, February 2021.

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The Census 2016 results indicate that Longford had a population to household ratio of 2.70 which is lower than the state average of 2.75. However, the NPF states that this is expected to decline to around 2.61 by 2027. Analysis of historic trends has undertaken to determine the evidence-based graduated reduction in average household size<sup>13</sup> within this plan to 2027. As shown in Table 4.3, the average household size is thus projected to be 2.61 at the end of the plan period and this has facilitated an estimation of the number of households within County Longford.

By applying the relevant household size to projected population increases, it is possible to forecast required household numbers. As summarised in Table 4.3, the number of households in County Longford is expected to increase from 15,122 in 2016. This will increase by 1,169 houses during the plan period, equating to a total of 16,982 households in 2027, or the equivalent of an additional 167 units per annum on average. Further information is provided in Appendix 1.

**Table 4.3: Overview of Projected Households in County Longford throughout the Plan Period<sup>14</sup>**

Year	Total Population	Number of Households*	Average Household Size*	Additional Houses Required Per Annum	Total Additional Houses Required—2021–2027	Average Additional Houses Required Per Annum—2021–2027
2016	40,873	15,122	2.70	-	-	-
2017	41,336	15,294	2.69	172	-	-
2018	41,798	15,467	2.68	173	-	-
2019	42,261	15,640	2.67	173	-	-
2020	42,724	15,814	2.66	174	-	-
2021	43,187	15,988	2.66	174	-	-
2022	43,649	16,162	2.65	175	-	-
2023	44,112	16,338	2.64	175	-	-
2024	44,575	16,514	2.63	176	-	-
2025	45,037	16,690	2.62	177	-	-
2026	45,500	16,868	2.61	177	-	-
2027	45,800	16,982	2.61	115	1,169	167

County Longford	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Total households over the Plan period	16,067 <sup>15</sup>	16,495	16,923	17,351	17,779	18,207	-

<sup>13</sup> The average household size applied to derive future household counts was linearly interpolated between actual 2016 census data (2.70) and NPF target household sizes for 2026 and 2031.

<sup>14</sup> \*Note: Average Household Size is being not being applied to determine anticipated households from total projected future population growth. I instead of total persons in private households (in order to align with target population figures), the additional households over the period are informed directly by the HST calculations, see Table 4.2.

<sup>15</sup> Informed by the addition of recorded housing completion between 2017-Q4 2020, including an assumed continuation of 2020's rate of completion through full year 2021 (122 dwellings).

<u>Total additional households over the Plan period</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>2,568</u>
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The number and distribution of total households per decile throughout the plan period has been estimated from the distribution of housing units in the State from the Household Budget Survey<sup>16</sup>. Table 4.4 identifies the distribution of total households across each of the ten deciles during the plan period.

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<sup>16</sup> CSO (2017) Household Budget Survey 2015-2016 - Table HS029: Households in sample by deciles and year.

**Table 4.4 Distribution of total households per decile (No. Households) in County Longford**

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1st Decile	<del>1,579</del> 1,588	<del>1,621</del> 1,605	<del>1,663</del> 1,623	<del>1,705</del> 1,640	<del>1,747</del> 1,657	<del>1,789</del> 1,669
2nd Decile	<del>1,699</del> 1,709	<del>1,744</del> 1,727	<del>1,789</del> 1,746	<del>1,834</del> 1,764	<del>1,880</del> 1,783	<del>1,925</del> 1,795
3rd Decile	<del>1,682</del> 1,692	<del>1,727</del> 1,710	<del>1,772</del> 1,729	<del>1,817</del> 1,747	<del>1,861</del> 1,766	<del>1,906</del> 1,778
4th Decile	<del>1,677</del> 1,687	<del>1,722</del> 1,706	<del>1,767</del> 1,724	<del>1,811</del> 1,742	<del>1,856</del> 1,761	<del>1,901</del> 1,773
5th Decile	<del>1,647</del> 1,657	<del>1,691</del> 1,675	<del>1,735</del> 1,693	<del>1,778</del> 1,711	<del>1,822</del> 1,729	<del>1,866</del> 1,741
6th Decile	<del>1,598</del> 1,607	<del>1,640</del> 1,624	<del>1,683</del> 1,642	<del>1,725</del> 1,660	<del>1,768</del> 1,677	<del>1,810</del> 1,689
7th Decile	<del>1,546</del> 1,555	<del>1,587</del> 1,572	<del>1,628</del> 1,589	<del>1,669</del> 1,606	<del>1,711</del> 1,623	<del>1,752</del> 1,634
8th Decile	<del>1,551</del> 1,560	<del>1,592</del> 1,577	<del>1,633</del> 1,594	<del>1,674</del> 1,611	<del>1,716</del> 1,628	<del>1,757</del> 1,639
9th Decile	<del>1,544</del> 1,553	<del>1,585</del> 1,570	<del>1,626</del> 1,586	<del>1,667</del> 1,603	<del>1,708</del> 1,620	<del>1,749</del> 1,631
10th Decile	<del>1,546</del> 1,555	<del>1,587</del> 1,572	<del>1,628</del> 1,589	<del>1,669</del> 1,606	<del>1,711</del> 1,623	<del>1,752</del> 1,634
<b>Total</b>	<del>16,067</del> 16,162	<del>16,495</del> 16,338	<del>16,923</del> 16,514	<del>17,351</del> 16,690	<del>17,779</del> 16,868	<del>18,207</del> 16,982

Similar to the preceding step, the number of additional anticipated households per decile has been estimated throughout the plan period. Table 4.5 identifies the distribution of additional anticipated households across each of the ten deciles during the plan period.

**Table 4.5 Distribution of additional households per decile (No. Households) in County Longford**

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1st Decile	<del>42</del> 17	<del>42</del> 17	<del>42</del> 17	<del>42</del> 17	<del>42</del> 17	<del>42</del> 11
2nd Decile	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 19	<del>45</del> 19	<del>45</del> 19	<del>45</del> 19	<del>45</del> 12
3rd Decile	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 19	<del>45</del> 12
4th Decile	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 18	<del>45</del> 19	<del>45</del> 12
5th Decile	<del>44</del> 18	<del>44</del> 18	<del>44</del> 18	<del>44</del> 18	<del>44</del> 18	<del>44</del> 12
6th Decile	<del>43</del> 17	<del>43</del> 17	<del>43</del> 17	<del>43</del> 18	<del>43</del> 18	<del>43</del> 11
7th Decile	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 11
8th Decile	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 11
9th Decile	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 11
10th Decile	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 17	<del>41</del> 11
<b>Total</b>	<del>428</del> 175	<del>428</del> 175	<del>428</del> 176	<del>428</del> 177	<del>428</del> 177	<del>428</del> 115

#### **4.2.3 Income Analysis**

Disposable income is the amount of income, after tax is deducted, that is available for spending and saving. It functions as an important measure of housing affordability<sup>17</sup> in an area i.e. the ability of a household to purchase their own home. The weekly and annual disposable incomes at national level from the CSO's Household Budget Survey (from 2015-2016) have been adjusted to county level based on application of "inflater/deflator" rate (by comparing the relative differences between the State and County Longford in terms of non-decile split household disposable income).

Information at sub-county level is not available and the county information has been considered accurate for the purpose of this analysis. The Average Annual Disposable Income for County Longford from the CSO's Household Budget Survey was €17,542 (less than 1% below the Midlands Region average), therefore a county deflator of 0.850 has been applied (on the basis of a national average annual disposable income of €20,638)<sup>18</sup>.

As noted above, disaggregation into ten income segments or 'deciles' has been undertaken to represent the proportion of households in Longford within each decile during the survey. Table 4-6 indicates that in 2017 after taxes, about one third of the households in County Longford (i.e. the first three deciles) have an average annual disposable income of up to €20,921, or the equivalent of €402 per week.

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<sup>17</sup> Section 93 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, defines 'affordability' as "a person who is in need of accommodation and whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments of a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs because the payments calculated over the course of a year would exceed 35% of that person's annual income net of income tax and pay related social insurance..."

<sup>18</sup> The measure of price inflation/deflation in an area, relative to the national measure at that time.



Table 4.6: Calculation of Distribution of Weekly and Annual Household Disposable Incomes in County Longford

Income Range	Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2009-2010)	Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2015-2016)	Percentage Change from 2009-2010 to 2015-2016	Assumed Annual Percentage Income Increase from 2010 to 2016	Adjusted Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2017)	Percentage of Households in Each Category (State)	Average Annual Disposable Income (State) (€) (2017)	Longford County Deflator	Longford Average Annual Disposable Income (€) (2017)
1st Decile	189	197	4.5%	0.9%	199	<del>9.83%</del> 9.8%	10,357	0.850	8,803
2nd Decile	301	324	7.8%	1.6%	329	<del>10.57%</del> 10.6%	17,131	0.850	14,561
3rd Decile	431	466	8.0%	1.6%	473	<del>10.47%</del> 10.5%	24,613	0.850	20,921
4th Decile	549	594	8.1%	1.6%	603	<del>10.44%</del> 10.4%	31,364	0.850	26,659
5th Decile	669	726	8.4%	1.7%	738	<del>10.25%</del> 10.3%	38,380	0.850	32,622
6th Decile	803	866	7.9%	1.6%	880	<del>9.94%</del> 9.9%	45,736	0.850	38,875
7th Decile	972	1,026	5.6%	1.1%	1,038	<del>9.62%</del> 9.6%	53,974	0.850	45,877
8th Decile	1,184	1,216	2.7%	0.5%	1,222	<del>9.65%</del> 9.7%	63,547	0.850	54,014
9th Decile	1,473	1,473	0.0%	0.0%	1,473	<del>9.61%</del> 9.6%	76,615	0.850	65,122
10th Decile	2,289	2,229	-2.6%	-0.5%	2,217	<del>9.62%</del> 9.6%	115,300	0.850	98,003

It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic is also likely to impact on the housing market in terms of house prices and market rental rates. Analysis of the historic information from the Property Price Register and the Rental Tenancies Board has been undertaken to ~~better reflect~~ understand local circumstances. This has been described in Section 4.2.5 and Section 4.2.6 respectively, however the macroeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has ~~most likely~~ not yet materialised in the local housing market.

To inform the forward projection of affordability in County Longford during the plan period, the baseline figures have been inflated annually using forecasted growth rates in relation to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The forecasted GDP rates have considered the estimated distribution of household disposable incomes for 2016 from the CSO's Household Budget Survey and been determined based on historic and the latest forecasted GDP growth rates during the plan period (from the Department of Finance, Central Bank, ESRI and European Union – refer to Section 4.2.4).

Based on the ~~current~~ available consensus in economic outlook at the time of production of this study and as described in detail in Appendix 4, GDP growth of 8.2% and 5.5% was considered during 2018 and 2019 respectively, whilst a -9.4% decline is anticipated ~~is~~ expected during for 2020. A -6.4% recovery in 2021 and a 2.8% GDP growth has been conservatively applied thereafter. The key outputs of this are shown in Table 4.7 which highlights a notable difference in average annual disposable incomes across each of the 10 deciles for each year during the plan period.

**Table 4.7: Average Annual Household Disposable Incomes per decile in County Longford**

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>% Growth</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
1st Decile	9,956	10,225	10,501	10,764	11,033	11,309
2nd Decile	16,468	16,913	17,370	17,804	18,249	18,705
3rd Decile	23,661	24,299	24,956	25,579	26,219	26,874
4th Decile	30,150	30,964	31,800	32,595	33,410	34,245
5th Decile	36,895	37,891	38,914	39,887	40,884	41,906
6th Decile	43,966	45,153	46,372	47,532	48,720	49,938
7th Decile	51,885	53,286	54,724	56,093	57,495	58,932
8th Decile	61,088	62,737	64,431	66,042	67,693	69,386
9th Decile	73,650	75,639	77,681	79,623	81,613	83,654
10th Decile	94,358	96,905	99,522	102,010	104,560	107,174

Given the context provided and information as outlined above (i.e. Calculation of Average Annual Household Disposable Income Distribution), the incomes have been scaled to provide the monthly (rather than annual) estimates of disposable income per household in each decile as described in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Average Monthly Household Disposable Incomes per decile in County Longford**

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>% Growth</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
1st Decile	830	852	875	897	919	942
2nd Decile	1,372	1,409	1,447	1,484	1,521	1,559
3rd Decile	1,972	2,025	2,080	2,132	2,185	2,240
4th Decile	2,512	2,580	2,650	2,716	2,784	2,854
5th Decile	3,075	3,158	3,243	3,324	3,407	3,492
6th Decile	3,664	3,763	3,864	3,961	4,060	4,162
7th Decile	4,324	4,440	4,560	4,674	4,791	4,911
8th Decile	5,091	5,228	5,369	5,504	5,641	5,782
9th Decile	6,138	6,303	6,473	6,635	6,801	6,971
10th Decile	7,863	8,075	8,293	8,501	8,713	8,931

#### 4.2.4 Economic Outlook

The local and regional economy is a critical part of the housing market needs and incomes which can impact on demand and supply. In order to understand the longer-term economic outlook for County Longford, particularly in relation to how household incomes may change over time forecasted growth rates in relation to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have been considered as described in detail in Appendix 4.

Further, it should be noted that this Strategy has been prepared during the COVID-19 pandemic which is ongoing at the time of writing and publication. As such, prioritisation in relation to future forecasted GDP growth has been given to those data sources that are reflective of [this emerging consensus on economic outlook](#). The following GDP growth rates have therefore been applied herein for those reasons as set out in Appendix 4:

- **2020:** -9.4% GDP growth (i.e. contraction of the economy) which is the average of the economic forecasts that have been determined from the average of those forecasts from Davys, the ESRI, Central Bank, Department of Finance and European Union that reflect the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- **2021:** 6.4% GDP growth which aligns with the latest Davys, Department of Finance and European Union forecasts (i.e. the only datasets for next year that reflects the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic).
- **2022:** 2.8% GDP growth which aligns with the Department of Finance forecast<sup>19</sup>
- **2023 - 2024:** 2.7% GDP growth which aligns with the Department of Finance forecast<sup>19,14</sup>
- **2025 onwards:** 2.5% GDP growth which aligns with the Department of Finance forecast<sup>19,14</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> This forecast was issued by the Department of Finance in advance of the COVID-19 pandemic, however it is considered reflective of their anticipated return to pre-pandemic levels of output as set out in the April 2020 document from the Department of Finance.

#### 4.2.5 Central Bank Rules and Mortgage Capacity

The Central Bank have put measures in place that set limits on size of mortgages that consumers can borrow to purchase a home. These measures have been set through the use of loan-to-value (LTV)<sup>20</sup> and loan-to-income (LTI)<sup>21</sup> limits. An assumed preference for home ownership over rental has been applied as part of this model. It has therefore been analysed whether households could qualify for a mortgage that would enable them to purchase a house in the lowest price band under these rules. The key variables used to determine whether households in a decile can qualify for a mortgage are therefore:

- LTV ratio of 0.90
- a maximum LTI ratio of 3.5; and
- the upper value of the first house price band for that year (as set out in Section 4.2.5).

As such if a household does not have sufficient income to meet the Central Bank rules (i.e. 3.5 times their gross income is less than 90% of the value of purchase a house in the lowest projected price band for that year), they do not qualify for a mortgage that would enable them to purchase a home. Table 4-9 describes the mortgage capacity of households on that basis and further detail is provided in Appendix 2.

**Table 4.9: Mortgage Capacity of Households per decile (euro) in County Longford based on Central Bank Rules**

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1st Decile	32,797	33,682	34,591	35,456	36,343	37,251
2nd Decile	54,866	56,347	57,869	59,315	60,798	62,318
3rd Decile	79,591	81,740	83,946	86,045	88,196	90,401
4th Decile	104,151	106,963	109,851	112,597	115,412	118,297
5th Decile	132,383	135,957	139,628	143,118	146,696	150,364
6th Decile	163,673	168,092	172,631	176,946	181,370	185,904
7th Decile	199,945	205,344	210,888	216,160	221,564	227,103
8th Decile	243,819	250,403	257,163	263,593	270,182	276,937
9th Decile	310,973	319,370	327,993	336,192	344,597	353,212
10th Decile	509,561	523,319	537,449	550,885	564,657	578,774

Table 4.9 outlines that during the plan period, the first decile (throughout the entire plan period) does not have sufficient gross household income to meet the requirements of the Central Bank rules. Specifically, 3.5 times their gross income is less than 90% of the value of purchase a house in the lowest projected price band and hence they do not qualify for a mortgage and progress to private rental. Those households that can qualify for a mortgage progress to the need's assessment for ownership.

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<sup>20</sup> The LTV limit requires one to have a minimum deposit before you can get a mortgage. First-time buyers are allowed up to 90% LTV, meaning they're required to provide a minimum deposit of 10% upfront for any property.

<sup>21</sup> The LTI limit restricts the amount of money one can borrow to a maximum of 3.5 times your gross income.

#### 4.2.6 Analysis of Historic Ownership Market

This section sets out background information on house price trends in the current market within County Longford. To ensure the most up to date market context, 2019 has been selected as the baseline year and property transactions as recorded on the Residential Property Price Register during that year have been considered representative to understand house prices and the distribution of housing units per price band. Table 4.10 sets out the 385 transactions that occurred in County Longford across the eight price bands during 2019.

**Table 4.10: House Sales<sup>22</sup> in County Longford in 2019**

Price Band	Number of Transaction	Percent of Transactions
0-50,000	40	10.4%
50,000-75,000	53	13.8%
75,000-100,000	81	21.0%
100,000-150,000	105	27.3%
150,000-200,000	52	13.5%
200,000-250,000	32	8.3%
250,000-300,000	12	3.1%
300,000+	10	2.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

It is important to consider how house prices may change over time, particularly fluctuations during the plan period. Specifically, the distribution of the price of units in the housing market during 2010 – 2019 have been reviewed for County Longford. The distribution of price bands in 2019 has been held fixed during the plan period because the selection of the nominated price bands and associated distribution of houses within those price bands in 2019 was considered reflective of a functioning, typical housing market for the area following review of information from Daft<sup>23</sup> and the CSO<sup>24</sup> which further contextualised the historic market in County Longford. Table 4.11 sets out the historic information on the housing market in County Longford for context.

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<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that this relates to House Sales that are inclusive of VAT

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.daft.ie/report/ronan-lyons-2019q4-dafthouseprice>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/prices/residentialpropertypriceindex/>

**Table 4.11 Historic House Price Metrics in County Longford**

Year	RPPR	CSO HPA02	CSO HPM02	CSO HPA06	Daft
<b>2011</b>	-26.0%	-33.0%	-32.62%	-24.90%	-57.4%
<b>2012</b>	-17.6%	-14.1%	-16.11%	-16.50%	9.9%
<b>2013</b>	-19.6%	-12.4%	-10.37%	-10.50%	-4.1%
<b>2014</b>	2.9%	16.5%	15.88%	5.80%	12.2%
<b>2015</b>	5.0%	2.3%	4.37%	14.00%	-20.7%
<b>2016</b>	15.5%	17.5%	15.96%	15.30%	9.8%
<b>2017</b>	15.2%	6.1%	5.48%	12.10%	19.5%
<b>2018</b>	9.3%	8.2%	7.25%	12.60%	6.5%
<b>2019</b>	17.3%	21.8%	21.68%	6.30%	-3.1%

Given the context of the recent recession and subsequent periods of growth, the average house price change over the past five years has been used as a basis for future changes in average house price from 2021 onwards (i.e. future baseline). Given the volatile nature of County Longford's property sales as illustrated in Table 4.11, an average of the five-year historic data recorded by the PPR, CSO (HPA02, HPM02 and HPA06) and Daft.ie reported statistics was applied. Overall, these future estimations for the housing market in County Longford are considered reflective of economic conditions and housing supply generally improving and its associated positive influence on the housing market.

It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic is also likely to impact on the housing market in terms of house prices and market rental rates as identified in Section 4.2.4. This macroeconomic outlook has therefore been considered in addition to the historic information that has been set out above. As such, an adjusted rate of reduction has been applied in addition to relevant data in relation to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the housing market.

Recent research<sup>25</sup> estimates how the COVID-19 pandemic may impact on the housing market from 2020 and 2022. For the purpose of this analysis, the 'sluggish' recovery scenario set out by ESRI has been adopted and this indicates a -7%, -17%, -12% dip below the baseline in 2020, 2021 and 2022. These impacts have been factored into the estimated change in average house price growth during those years and it is anticipated therefore that the average house prices within County Longford may change over time as described in Table 4-12. Further information in relation to the projected house price bands per year is provided in Appendix 3.

**Table 4.12: Actual and Anticipated Change in Average Prices in the Housing Market**

2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1.0%	14.8%	11.7%	8.8%	12.8%	2.8%	-7.2%	-2.2%	9.8%	8.0%	6.0%	6.0%	4.0%

<sup>25</sup><https://www.esri.ie/publications/property-prices-and-covid-19-related-administrative-closures-what-are-the-implications>

This information has supported the estimation of projected house price bands based on the percentage split of the 8 price bands as outlined in Table 4.11. The following is therefore considered to reflect market changes to the end of the plan period including:

- Annual short-term decline in growth from 2020 at 2.8%, down 10% from 2019.
- Decline in projected band prices in 2021 with -7.2% change with a rebound to -2.2% by 2022
- Return to growth somewhat in line with historic growth at 9.8% with gradual conservative reduction applied thereafter.

Based on the above, the projected house prices during the plan period have been determined as set out in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.14: Calculation of projected house price bands during the plan period**

Year	Average Price Change	1st Band	2nd Band		3rd Band		4th Band		5th Band		6th Band		7th Band		8th Band
2019	12.8%	50,000	50,001	75,000	75,001	100,000	100,001	150,000	150,001	200,000	200,001	250,000	250,001	300,000	300,001
2020	2.8%	51,403	51,404	77,105	77,106	102,807	102,808	154,210	154,211	205,613	205,614	257,017	257,018	308,420	308,421
2021	-7.2%	47,706	47,707	71,559	71,560	95,411	95,412	143,117	143,118	190,823	190,824	238,529	238,530	286,234	286,235
2022	-2.2%	46,659	46,660	69,989	69,990	93,319	93,320	139,978	139,979	186,638	186,639	233,297	233,298	279,957	279,957
2023	9.8%	51,235	51,236	76,853	76,854	102,470	102,471	153,705	153,707	204,941	204,942	256,176	256,177	307,411	307,412
2024	8.0%	55,334	55,335	83,001	83,002	110,668	110,669	166,002	166,003	221,336	221,337	276,670	276,671	332,004	332,005
2025	6.0%	58,654	58,655	87,981	87,982	117,308	117,309	175,962	175,963	234,616	234,617	293,270	293,271	351,924	351,925
2026	6.0%	62,173	62,175	93,260	93,261	124,347	124,348	186,520	186,521	248,693	248,694	310,866	310,868	373,040	373,041
2027	4.0%	64,660	64,661	96,990	96,992	129,320	129,322	193,981	193,982	258,641	258,642	323,301	323,302	387,961	387,962



#### 4.2.7 Analysis of Historic Private Rental Market

This section sets out background information on rental price and demand by unit type within the current rental market in County Longford. To ensure the most up to date market context, 2019 has been selected as the baseline year and rental information as recorded by the Residential Tenancies Board during that year have been considered representative.

An overview of the market rents for County Longford during 2019 is provided in Table 4-15 with further historic information in relation to the rental prices by unit type provided in Appendix 3.

**Table 4.15: Private Rental Market Price in 2019**

RTB Data for Longford County 2019					
One bed	Two bed	Three bed	Four plus bed	All bedrooms	YOY change (All)
461	559	599	683	587	7.7%

It should be noted that historic demand by unit type was extracted and analysed to understand specific demand in the private rental market over time. Table 4.16 sets out the varying demand for individual unit types during 2011 – 2019 which is considered reflective of the typical demand for an individual unit type within County Longford. As such, this demand by unit type has been held fixed to understand future demand per unit type throughout the plan period.

**Table 4.16: Projected Demand by Unit Type in the Private Rental Market**

RTB Demand %	
1 Bed	10.8%
2 Bed	30.6%
3 Bed	44.0%
4+ Bed	14.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Similar to the house prices, historic information has been considered to forecast future changes in market rents by unit type going forward. Specifically, analysis of the change in average rental price for all bedroom units over the past four years (i.e. 2016 – 2019) has been used as a baseline. Additionally as set out in Section 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 and in the absence of any rental market specific analysis, the impact and recovery from the COVID pandemic under the ‘sluggish scenario’ as outlined by ESRI<sup>26</sup> has also been factored into the analysis of future market rental prices (i.e. in the same manner as the house prices as described in Section 4.2.5).

The changes in rental prices are therefore anticipated to be 1.5% growth in 2020, 8.5% decline in 2021 and 3.5% decline in 2022 with growth of 8.5% onwards with a conservative tapering over the plan period. Table 4.17 sets out the projected rental prices by unit type on this basis.

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<sup>26</sup> Under the assumption that the nature of COVID-19s impact on the housing market effects the rental market alike

**Table 4.17: Projected Rental Prices by Unit Type in County Longford**

Year	Annual Change	One bed	Two bed	Three bed	Four plus bed
2021	1.5%	428	519	556	634
2022	-8.5%	413	501	537	612
2023	-3.5%	448	544	582	664
2024	8.5%	484	587	629	717
2025	8.0%	523	634	679	775
2026	8.0%	565	685	734	837
2027	5.0%	593	719	770	878

### 4.3 Assessment of Needs

#### 4.3.1 Ownership

Housing Affordability is associated with disposable income available to a household which has been determined as described in detail in Section 4.2.3.

Section 93 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, defines affordability by setting the parameters for an ‘eligible person’ as "a person who is in need of accommodation and whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments of a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs because the payments calculated over the course of a year would exceed 35% of that person's annual income net of income tax and pay related social insurance...". It therefore is generally accepted that if housing costs exceed 35 per cent of a household’s disposable income, the housing is unaffordable and housing costs consume a disproportionately high amount of household income. Based on this information, we have calculated the number of households not meeting the “Affordability Criteria”.

The projections for household income during the plan period are applied to the DoECLG Model Housing Strategy annuity formula as set out in Table 4.18. This formula determines the maximum affordable house price for each of the ten income deciles based on a number of evidence-based variables that have been established through analysis of historic mortgage data from the Central Bank of Ireland. The key variables used in the annuity formula include an affordability threshold of a maximum of 35% expenditure of household income on mortgage costs, a loan to value ratio of 0.90, an annual interest rate (APR) of 3%, and a loan term of 29 years.

**Table 4.18: Approximate Affordable House Price per decile in Longford County**

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1st Decile	74,933	76,956	79,034	81,010	83,035	85,111
2nd Decile	123,944	127,290	130,727	133,995	137,345	140,779
3rd Decile	178,075	182,883	187,821	192,516	197,329	202,262
4th Decile	226,915	233,041	239,333	245,317	251,450	257,736
5th Decile	277,677	285,174	292,874	300,196	307,701	315,393
6th Decile	330,899	339,833	349,008	357,734	366,677	375,844
7th Decile	390,496	401,040	411,868	422,164	432,718	443,536
8th Decile	459,762	472,175	484,924	497,047	509,473	522,210
9th Decile	554,306	569,272	584,642	599,258	614,240	629,596
10th Decile	710,156	729,330	749,022	767,747	786,941	806,614

Based on the determination of additional households required (Refer to Section 4.2.2), the projected house price bands (i.e. Table 4.14), the determination of households that can qualify for a mortgage (Refer to Section 4.2.5) and the calculation of housing affordability (Refer to Table 4.18), the housing surplus/deficit per price band has been determined as set out in Table 4.19.

A surplus within a price band has been identified where the number of housing units anticipated is greater than the number of households that qualify for a mortgage and have the ability to purchase a home at the upper value of that house price band. A deficit has been identified within a price band where there is a fewer households anticipated compared to the number of households that qualify for a mortgage and have the ability to purchase a home at the upper value of that house price band.

Throughout the plan period, there is generally a housing surplus in the lower price bands and housing deficit in the higher price bands as identified in Table 4.19. A sufficient number of houses are anticipated overall as households in the upper price bands can purchase a house in a lower price band.

Additionally, the first decile (throughout the plan period) will not qualify for a mortgage (due to the current Central Bank rules), therefore there will be sufficient number of houses within County Longford to those households that qualify for a mortgage and have the ability to purchase a home at the upper value of the lowest house price band.

Table 4.19: Determination of ~~Mortgage Qualification for Households~~ **Purchase Affordability for Households Qualifying for Mortgage** in County Longford for the plan period

Year	Range	No. of Additional Anticipated Households	Running Total	Affordability Threshold	Household Price Band(s)	Upper Value of Price Band	No. Households That Qualify for a Mortgage	% Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	No. Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	Housing Surplus (+) or Deficit (-) per Price Band
2022	1st Decile	0	0	74,933	1st Band, 2nd Band, 3rd Band	93,319	14	45.2%	71	57
	2nd Decile	18	18	123,944	4th Band	139,978	15	27.3%	43	28
	3rd Decile	18	37	178,075	5th Band	186,638	16	13.5%	21	5
	4th Decile	18	55	226,915	6th Band	233,297	16	8.3%	13	-3
	5th Decile	18	73	277,677	7th Band	279,957	15	3.1%	5	-10
	6th Decile	17	90	330,899	8th Band	None	None	2.6%	4	-
	7th Decile	17	107	390,496						
	8th Decile	17	124	459,762						
	9th Decile	17	141	554,306						
	10th Decile	17	157	710,156						
	-	157	-	-	-	-	-	100.00%	157	77.02

Year	Range	No. of Additional Anticipated Households That Qualify for a Mortgage	Running Total	Affordability Threshold	Household Price Band(s)	Upper Value of Price Band	No. of Households That Qualify for a Mortgage Able to Purchase at Upper Value	% of Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	No. Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	Housing Surplus (+) or Deficit (-) per Price Band
2022	1st-Decile	0	0	74,933	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Bands	93,319	34	45.2%	174	140
	2nd-Decile	45	45	123,944	4th-Band	139,978	37	27.3%	105	69
	3rd-Decile	45	90	178,075	5th-Band	186,638	40	13.5%	52	12
	4th-Decile	45	135	226,915	6th-Band	233,297	39	8.3%	32	-7
	5th-Decile	44	179	277,677	7th-Band	279,957	37	3.1%	12	-25
	6th-Decile	43	221	330,899	8th-Band	None	None	2.6%	10	-
	7th-Decile	41	262	390,496						
	8th-Decile	41	304	459,762						
	9th-Decile	41	345	554,306						
	10th-Decile	41	386	710,156						
	-	386 (of 428)	-	-	-	-	-	100.00%	386	
2023	1st-Decile	0	0	76,956	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Bands	102,470	36	45.2%	174	138
	2nd-Decile	45	45	127,290	4th-Band	153,705	39	27.3%	105	66
	3rd-Decile	45	90	182,883	5th-Band	204,941	43	13.5%	52	9
	4th-Decile	45	135	233,041	6th-Band	256,176	42	8.3%	32	-10
	5th-Decile	44	179	285,174	7th-Band	307,411	41	3.1%	12	-29
	6th-Decile	43	221	339,833	8th-Band	None	None	2.6%	10	-
	7th-Decile	41	262	401,040						

Year	Range	No. of Additional Anticipated Households That Qualify for a Mortgage	Running Total	Affordability Threshold	Household Price Band(s)	Upper Value of Price Band	No. of Households That Qualify for a Mortgage Able to Purchase at Upper Value	% of Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	No. Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	Housing Surplus (+) or Deficit (-) per Price Band
	8th-Decile	41	304	472,175						
	9th-Decile	41	345	569,272						
	10th-Decile	41	386	729,330						
	-	386 (of 428)	-	-	-	-	-	100.00%	386 (of 428)	
2024	1st-Decile	0	0	79,034	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Bands	83,001	29	24.2%	93	65
	2nd-Decile	45	45	130,727	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Bands	166,002	51	48.3%	186	136
	3rd-Decile	45	90	187,821	5th-Band	221,336	45	13.5%	52	7
	4th-Decile	45	135	239,333	6th-Band	276,670	44	8.3%	32	-12
	5th-Decile	44	179	292,874	7th-Band	332,004	42	3.1%	12	-30
	6th-Decile	43	221	349,008	8th-Band	None	None	2.6%	10	-
	7th-Decile	41	262	411,868						
	8th-Decile	41	304	484,924						
	9th-Decile	41	345	584,642						
	10th-Decile	41	386	749,022	-	-	-	100.00%	386 (of 428)	
	-	386 (of 428)	-	-						
2025	1st-Decile	0	0	81,010	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Bands	87,981	30	24.2%	93	64
	2nd-Decile	45	45	133,995	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Bands	175,962	53	48.3%	186	134
	3rd-Decile	45	90	192,516	5th-Band	234,616	47	13.5%	52	6
	4th-Decile	45	135	245,317	6th-Band	293,270	46	8.3%	32	-14
	5th-Decile	44	179	300,196	7th-Band	351,924	43	3.1%	12	-31
	6th-Decile	43	221	357,734	8th-Band	None	None	2.6%	10	-
	7th-Decile	41	262	422,164						
	8th-Decile	41	304	497,047						

Year	Range	No. of Additional Anticipated Households That Qualify for a Mortgage	Running Total	Affordability Threshold	Household Price Band(s)	Upper Value of Price Band	No. of Households That Qualify for a Mortgage Able to Purchase at Upper Value	% of Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	No. Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band	Housing Surplus (+) or Deficit (-) per Price Band
	9th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>345</u>	<u>599,258</u>						
	10th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>386</u>	<u>767,747</u>						
	-	<u>386 (of 428)</u>	-	-	-	-	-	<u>100.00%</u>	<u>386 (of 428)</u>	
<u>2026</u>	1st-Decile	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>83,035</u>	<u>1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Bands</u>	<u>93,260</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>24.2%</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>63</u>
	2nd-Decile	<u>45</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>137,345</u>	<u>3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Bands</u>	<u>186,520</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>48.3%</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>132</u>
	3rd-Decile	<u>45</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>197,329</u>	<u>5th-Band</u>	<u>248,693</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>13.5%</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>4</u>
	4th-Decile	<u>45</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>251,450</u>	<u>6th-Band</u>	<u>310,866</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>8.3%</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>-22</u>
	5th-Decile	<u>44</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>307,701</u>						
	6th-Decile	<u>43</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>366,677</u>						
	7th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>262</u>	<u>432,718</u>						
	8th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>304</u>	<u>509,473</u>	<u>8th-Band</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>2.6%</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>-</u>
	9th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>345</u>	<u>614,240</u>						
	10th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>386</u>	<u>786,941</u>						
	-	<u>386 (of 428)</u>	-	-	-	-	-	<u>100.00%</u>	<u>386 (of 428)</u>	
<u>2027</u>	1st-Decile	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>85,111</u>	<u>1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Bands</u>	<u>96,990</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>24.2%</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>62</u>
	2nd-Decile	<u>45</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>140,779</u>	<u>3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Bands</u>	<u>193,981</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>48.3%</u>	<u>186</u>	<u>131</u>
	3rd-Decile	<u>45</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>202,262</u>	<u>5th-Band</u>	<u>258,641</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>13.5%</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>-8</u>
	4th-Decile	<u>45</u>	<u>135</u>	<u>257,736</u>						
	5th-Decile	<u>44</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>315,393</u>	<u>6th-Band</u>	<u>323,301</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>8.3%</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>12</u>
	6th-Decile	<u>43</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>375,844</u>	<u>7th-Band</u>	<u>387,961</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>3.1%</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>27</u>
	7th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>262</u>	<u>443,536</u>	<u>8th-Band</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>2.6%</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>-</u>
	8th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>304</u>	<u>522,210</u>						
	9th-Decile	<u>41</u>	<u>345</u>	<u>629,596</u>						

<u>Year</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>No. of Additional Anticipated Households That Qualify for a Mortgage</u>	<u>Running Total</u>	<u>Affordability Threshold</u>	<u>Household Price Band(s)</u>	<u>Upper Value of Price Band</u>	<u>No. of Households That Qualify for a Mortgage Able to Purchase at Upper Value</u>	<u>% of Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band</u>	<u>No. Housing Units Anticipated per Price Band</u>	<u>Housing Surplus (+) or Deficit (-) per Price Band</u>
	<u>10th Decile</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>386</u>	<u>806,614</u>						
	<u>:</u>	<u>386 (of 428)</u>	<u>:</u>	<u>:</u>	<u>:</u>	<u>:</u>	<u>:</u>	<u>100.00%</u>	<u>386 (of 428)</u>	



#### 4.3.2 Private Rental

Analysis of affordability in relation to private rental has been undertaken in order to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the housing market. The key variables used to determine whether households in a decile can qualify for a private rental for a specific unit are:

- Disposable income per decile throughout the plan period as described in Section 4.2.3;
- Projected market rents per unit type as set out in Section 4.2.6;
- Additionally, the demand for a particular unit type (as set out in Section 4.2.6) has been factored to estimate what type of unit the additional anticipated households are more likely to prefer to rent.

As such if a household does not have sufficient income to meet the private rental rates for a unit in a given year (i.e. 35% of their disposable income is less than average market rent), they cannot afford the rent by themselves. An overview of those that cannot afford private rental is provided in Table 4.20, with further information per decile per unit provided in Appendix 3.

**Table 4.20: Number of additional anticipated households that do not qualify for a mortgage and cannot afford private rental (based on RTB Demand allocation by Unit Type)**

Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1 Bed	<del>52</del>	<del>52</del>	<del>52</del>	<del>52</del>	<del>52</del>	<del>51</del>
2 Bed	<del>135</del>	<del>135</del>	<del>135</del>	<del>135</del>	<del>135</del>	<del>133</del>
3 Bed	<del>188</del>	<del>188</del>	<del>188</del>	<del>188</del>	<del>188</del>	<del>185</del>
4+ Bed	<del>63</del>	<del>63</del>	<del>63</del>	<del>63</del>	<del>63</del>	<del>62</del>
<b>Total</b>	<del>4217</del>	<del>4217</del>	<del>4217</del>	<del>4217</del>	<del>4217</del>	<del>4211</del>

#### 4.3.3 Summary of Projected Needs during the Plan Period

This section summarises the overall housing requirements for County Longford having regard to the analysis that has been undertaken as described in detail in Section 4.2 and 4.3.

Between ~~Q1 2021-2022~~ and ~~Q4 2027~~, a population increase of ~~3,076~~~~2,614~~ people is projected for County Longford. This indicates that the total population in County Longford will be 45,800 people by ~~the end of 2027~~ as set out in Section 4.2.1 and described in detail in the Core Strategy.

The population targets for this plan period establishes a total housing target of ~~1,169~~~~2,568~~ additional anticipated households ~~during 2021–2027 for County Longford~~. This is the equivalent of an average of ~~167~~~~428~~ units per annum across County Longford during the plan period. This will result in a total of ~~16,982~~~~18,207~~ households in County Longford by ~~Q4 2027~~ as set out in Section 4.2.2 and described in detail in the Core Strategy.

The anticipated social housing need for Longford County Council as set out in the preceding steps, reflects the assessments for mortgage qualification and the affordability for ownership and private rental. The social (and affordable) housing requirement within County Longford throughout the plan period is equivalent to those that do not qualify for a mortgage and those that cannot afford private rental, which is equivalent to 9.8% of the total of additional households in County Longford during ~~Q1 2021–2022 – Q4 2027~~. This is the ~~identified social (and affordable) housing requirement of 252 households~~ for the plan period which has been summarised in Table 4.21 and ~~Figure 4.1~~~~Figure 4-1~~.

**Table 4.21: Summary of Anticipated Additional Households and Requirements for the Plan Period**

		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2021-2027
Additional Anticipated Households	<u>Total</u>	<del>428</del> <sup>175</sup>	<del>428</del> <sup>175</sup>	<del>428</del> <sup>176</sup>	<del>428</del> <sup>177</sup>	<del>428</del> <sup>177</sup>	<del>428</del> <sup>115</sup>	<del>2,568</del> <sup>428</sup> 69
No. of Additional Households That Do Not Qualify for a Mortgage	<u>Subset of Above</u>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>11</sup>	<del>252</del> <sup>42</sup> 115
No. of Additional Anticipated Households That Do Not Qualify for a Mortgage <del>and AND</del> Cannot Afford Private Rental	<u>Subset of Above</u>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>17</sup>	<del>42</del> <sup>11</sup>	<del>252</del> <sup>42</sup> 115
Housing Shortfall (%)	<u>Of Total</u>	<del>9.8%</del> <sup>9.8%</sup>	<del>9.8%</del> <sup>9.8%</sup>	<del>9.8%</del> <sup>9.8%</sup>	<del>9.8%</del> <sup>9.8%</sup>	<del>9.8%</del> <sup>9.8%</sup>	<del>9.8%</del> <sup>9.8%</sup>	<del>9.8%</del> <sup>9.8%</sup>

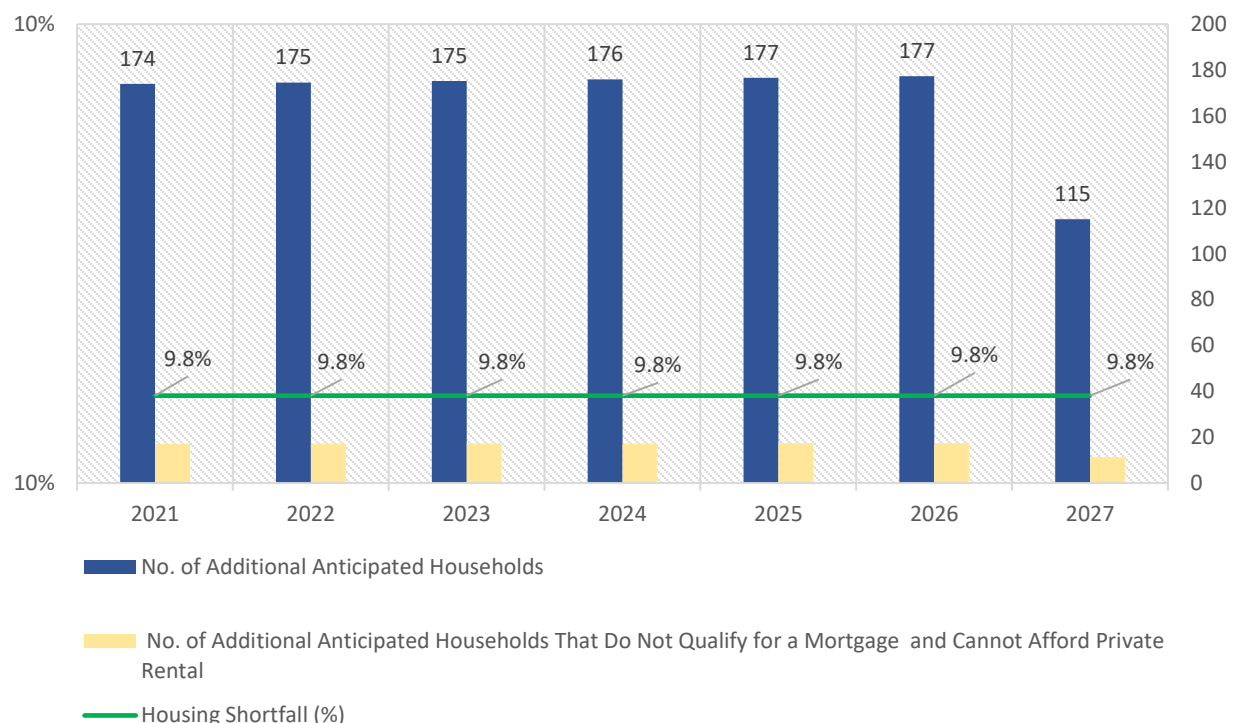
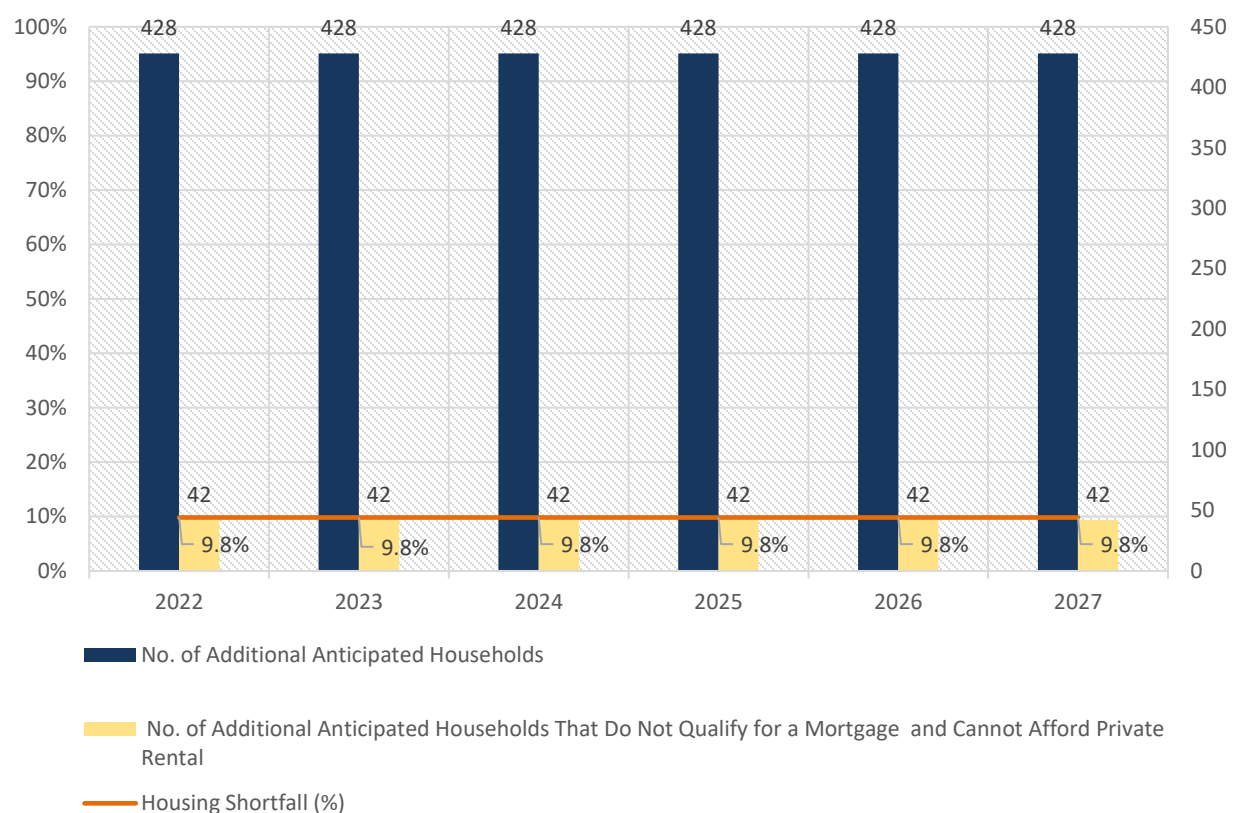


Figure 4.1: Summary of Longford County Social (and Affordable) Housing Needs throughout the plan period



## 4.4 HNDA Components

### 4.4.1 Household Composition

As set out in Section 6.6 of the NPF, information on household composition and projections in relation to household size are informative evidence inputs that can assist with understanding stock profile pressures. Analysis of the historic household sizes (specifically the household size cohort per household) has therefore been undertaken to help discern and forecast how the composition of households may change during the plan period.

Analysis of historic information (i.e. during the 2002, 2006, 2011 and 2016 Census) in relation to the composition of households has been undertaken at the County level to understand these dynamics and estimate how they may change over time. Specifically, the intercensal average has been used to determine a trended annual average change in household composition and this indicates the following changes can be anticipated during the plan period:

- 1 person households will increase by an average of 0.19% annually
- 2 person households will increase by an average of 0.18% annually
- 3 person households will increase by an average of -0.03% annually
- 4 person households will increase by an average of -0.05% annually
- 5+ person households will increase by an average of -0.28% annually

Figure 4.2 and Table 4.22 indicates the estimated proportion and number of households by size during the plan period.

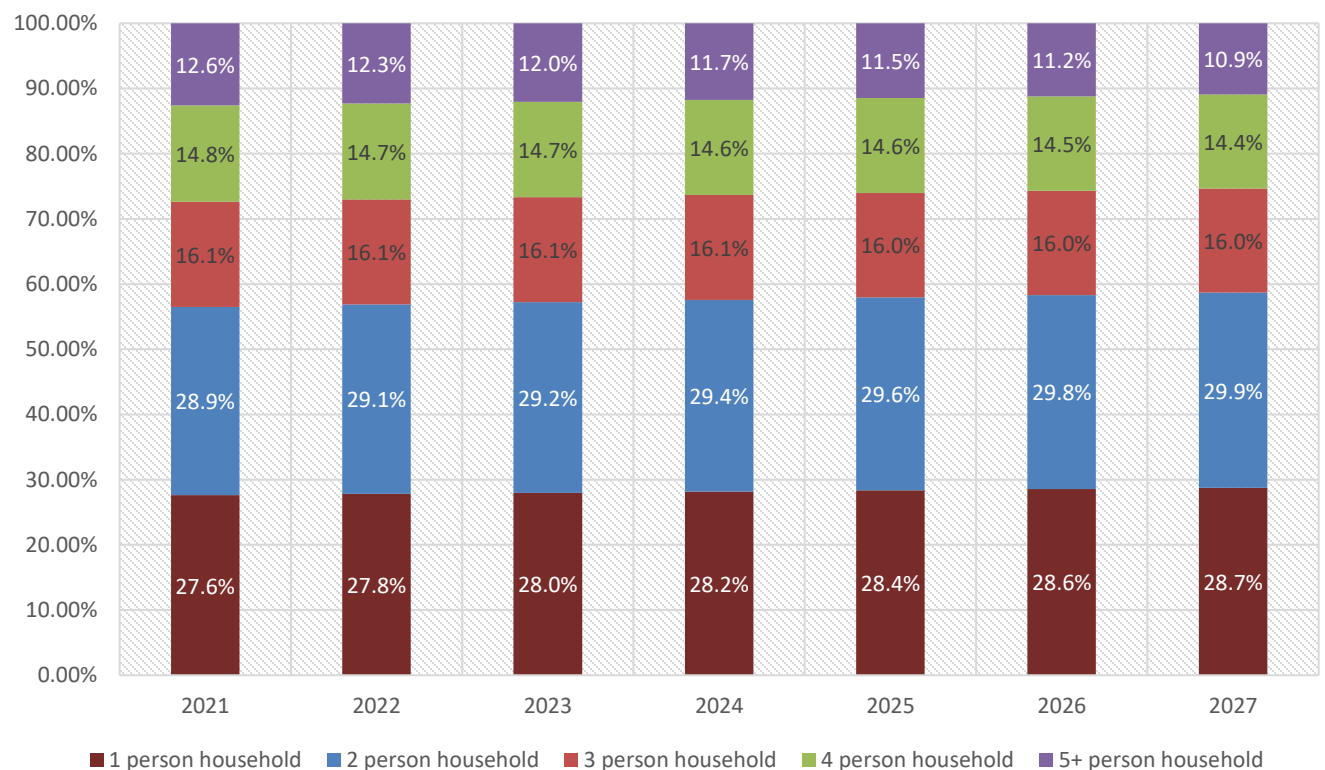


Figure 4.2: Forecasted Household Size Cohort in County Longford during the plan period

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**Table 4.22: Household Size Cohort Forecasts for Additional Anticipated Households in County Longford during the plan period**

<del>Total</del> Additional Anticipated Households	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	<del>2028</del>
1 Person Household	<u>119</u> <sup>47</sup>	<u>120</u> <sup>47</sup>	<u>121</u> <sup>47</sup>	<u>121</u> <sup>47</sup>	<u>122</u> <sup>47</sup>	<u>123</u> <sup>31</sup>	<u>726</u>
2 Person Household	<u>124</u> <sup>49</sup>	<u>125</u> <sup>49</sup>	<u>126</u> <sup>49</sup>	<u>127</u> <sup>49</sup>	<u>127</u> <sup>50</sup>	<u>128</u> <sup>32</sup>	<u>758</u>
3 Person Household	<u>69</u> <sup>28</sup>	<u>69</u> <sup>29</sup>	<u>69</u> <sup>29</sup>	<u>69</u> <sup>29</sup>	<u>68</u> <sup>29</sup>	<u>68</u> <sup>19</sup>	<u>412</u>
<del>At Least</del> 4 Person Household	<u>63</u> <sup>51</sup>	<u>63</u> <sup>51</sup>	<u>63</u> <sup>51</sup>	<u>62</u> <sup>51</sup>	<u>62</u> <sup>51</sup>	<u>62</u> <sup>33</sup>	<u>374</u>
<del>5 + Person Household</del>	<u>53</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>298</u>
<b>Total Additional Anticipated Households</b>	<del>428</del> <u>175</u>	<del>428</del> <u>175</u>	<del>428</del> <u>176</u>	<del>428</del> <u>177</u>	<del>428</del> <u>177</u>	<del>428</del> <u>115</u>	<del>2,568</del>

#### 4.4.2 Household Tenure

Tenure is another important consideration for the delivery of housing and Section 6.6 of the NPF identifies the need to estimate the demand for different tenure types. Analysis of the historic tenure split has therefore been undertaken to help discern and forecast how the household tenure may change during the plan period.

Analysis of historic information for County Longford (i.e. during the 2002, 2006, 2011 and 2016 Census) in relation to the household tenure has been to understand these dynamics and estimate how they may change over time. Specifically, the intercensal average has been used to determine a trended annual average change in household tenure.

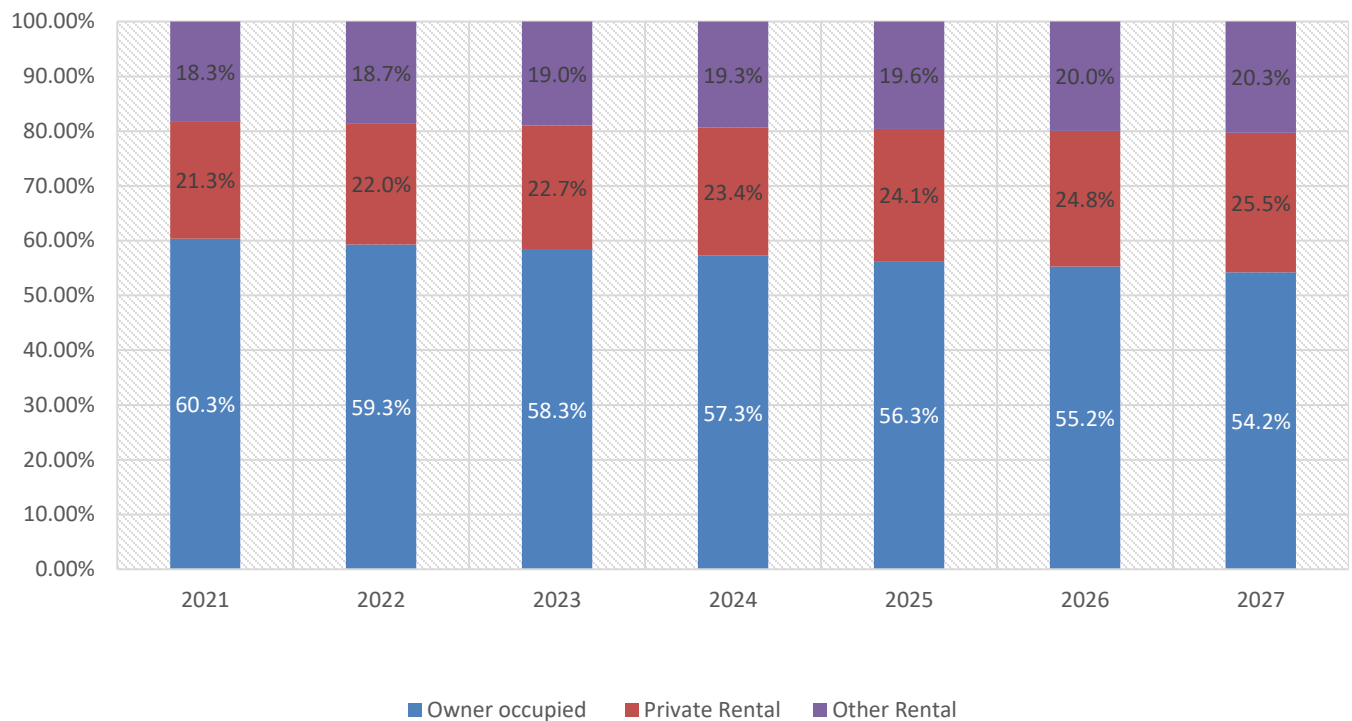
Historic data indicates the intercensal observed change between 2002-2016 and an annual average change applied forward for the plan period as a continuation of trends was applied. The following changes can be anticipated during the plan period:

- Annual average change of -1.02% observed in owner occupied households (average intercensal change of -5.1%)
- Annual average change of 0.7% observed in privately rented households (average intercensal change of -3.5%)
- Annual average change of 0.33% observed in other rented households (average intercensal change of -1.6%)

The applied changes for the additional anticipated households are indicated in Table 4.23 and Figure 4.3.

**Table 4.23: Household Tenure Forecasts for Additional Anticipated Households in County Longford during plan period**

Additional Anticipated Households	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Owner occupied	<u>254</u> <sup>104</sup>	<u>250</u> <sup>102</sup>	<u>245</u> <sup>101</sup>	<u>241</u> <sup>99</sup>	<u>236</u> <sup>98</sup>	<u>232</u> <sup>62</sup>	<u>1,458</u> <sup>671</sup>
Private Rental	<u>94</u> <sup>38</sup>	<u>97</u> <sup>40</sup>	<u>100</u> <sup>41</sup>	<u>103</u> <sup>43</sup>	<u>106</u> <sup>44</sup>	<u>109</u> <sup>29</sup>	<u>610</u> <sup>272</sup>
Other Rental	<u>80</u> <sup>33</sup>	<u>81</u> <sup>33</sup>	<u>83</u> <sup>34</sup>	<u>84</u> <sup>35</sup>	<u>85</u> <sup>35</sup>	<u>87</u> <sup>23</sup>	<u>500</u> <sup>225</sup>
<b>No. of Additional Anticipated Households</b>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>428</u>	<u>2,568</u>



**Figure 4.3: Household Tenure Forecasts for Households in County Longford during plan period**

#### 4.4.3 Single Rural Dwellings

Analysis of historic information (i.e. during 2006 – 2019) on granted planning applications (by number of units) in County Longford has been undertaken. This helps understand the proportion of housing units that are single rural dwellings that have been approved during that period and provides an indication of the dynamics between the urban and rural housing market within the county. This data classifies new housing units as either apartments/flats, houses built as part of a scheme, and single or one-off houses (which are predominately rural, although inclusive of some homes built within settlements).

As outlined in Table 4.24, approximately 40.41% of granted units during that period were for one-off houses. This equates to an average 635.2% per year, however large fluctuations were evident throughout the years as illustrated in Figure 4.4. Therefore, the trajectory for future applications should be moderated with this in mind. It should be noted that whilst these are granted planning applications (by unit), **this does not equate to a housing unit which has been built.**

These fluctuations may be associated with the wider economic context, associated demands for particular dwelling type or locational preferences within the housing market as well as variables such as land availability, resource availability and/or demands in any given year. Generally, it is recognised that a single rural dwelling is sized according to what the applicants can afford to build along with their actual requirements. Analysis has determined that the average floor size for one-off houses has also been analysed for context as set out in Table 4.25 and determined to be 267.16 m<sup>2</sup> during that period.



Data on new homes completed between 2011 and 2020 is also available from the CSO.<sup>27</sup> This shows that the number of one-off homes completed in County Longford has also fluctuated greatly over the past decade but has also seen a notable decline, from a high of 89% in 2013 to a low of 35% in 2019. Overall, 58% of homes completed over the period were classed as one-off houses. The proportion of one-off houses built increased to 58% in 2020. However, this may reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with multi-unit developments potentially more subject to disruption than one-off homes. Completions also represent a lag compared to planning permissions, due to the time taken to construct new homes and scheme homes in particular. As such, recent data on permissions can indicate potential delivery in the medium term as permissions move to completions. It therefore can represent a more robust basis for considering potential future trajectory.

As detailed previously, Longford County has a total housing target of 2,568 units over the plan period. If the total proportion of historic one-off granted planning permissions (40.4% of all granted units between 2006 and 2020) were applied to this target, this **would equate to 1,036 units delivered as one-off houses.**

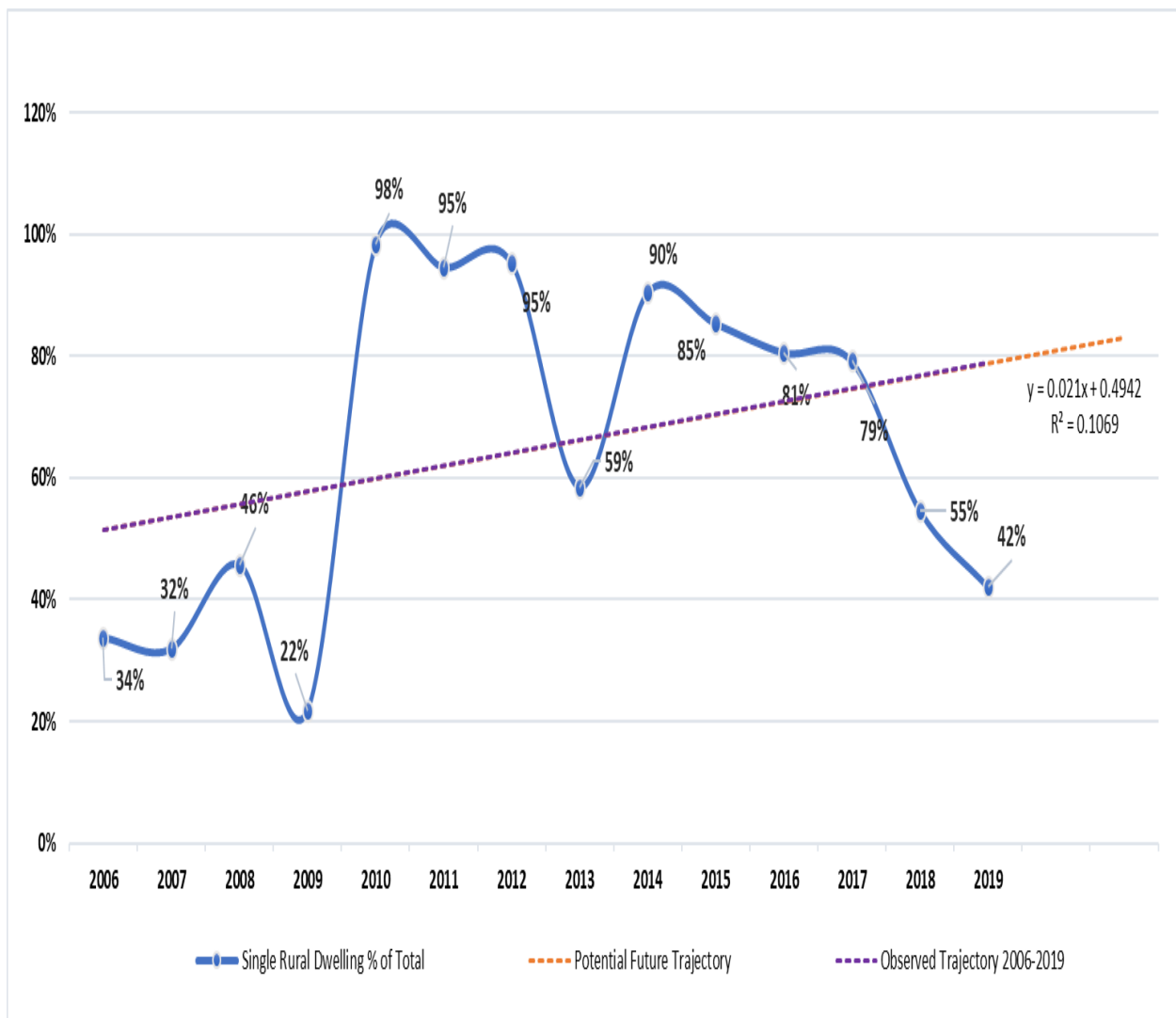
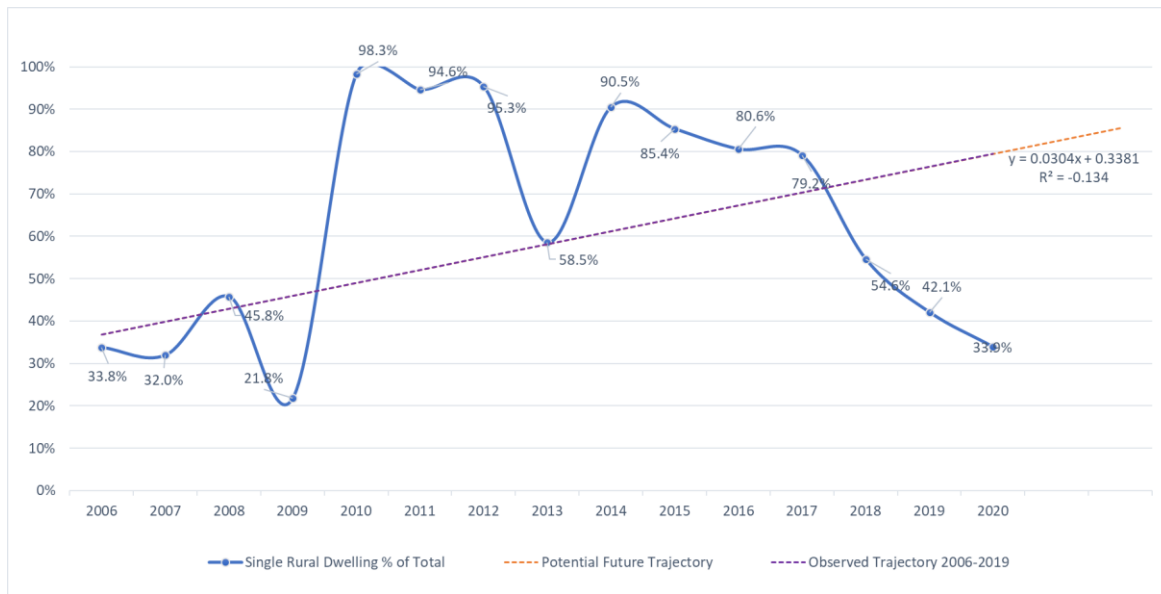
However, it must be noted that this is a projection based on historic trends and the baseline conditions and factors that have enabled recent single rural dwelling delivery. It is a 'policy-off' forecast that may not reflect future policy decisions at national and local level or future market conditions. It is also based on data from some years when the housing market was frequently operating abnormally and following unsustainable cycles of boom and bust. Absolute numbers of one-off homes delivered since 2011 have remained relatively stable, while proportions have tended to decline as overall housing delivery increases. This may be the case over the plan period 2021-2027 if overall housing delivery meets targets and delivers greater housing affordability and housing options for rural communities within towns and villages.

Furthermore, there is now a clear impetus in planning policy through the NPF to direct more housing delivery towards existing settlements with a target of delivering at least 30% of all new homes in County Longford delivered within the built-up footprint of existing settlements. It therefore will be appropriate for the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 to balance potential demand for single rural dwellings (as informed by historic trends) against broader planning goals in allocating new housing for rural areas through the Core Strategy.

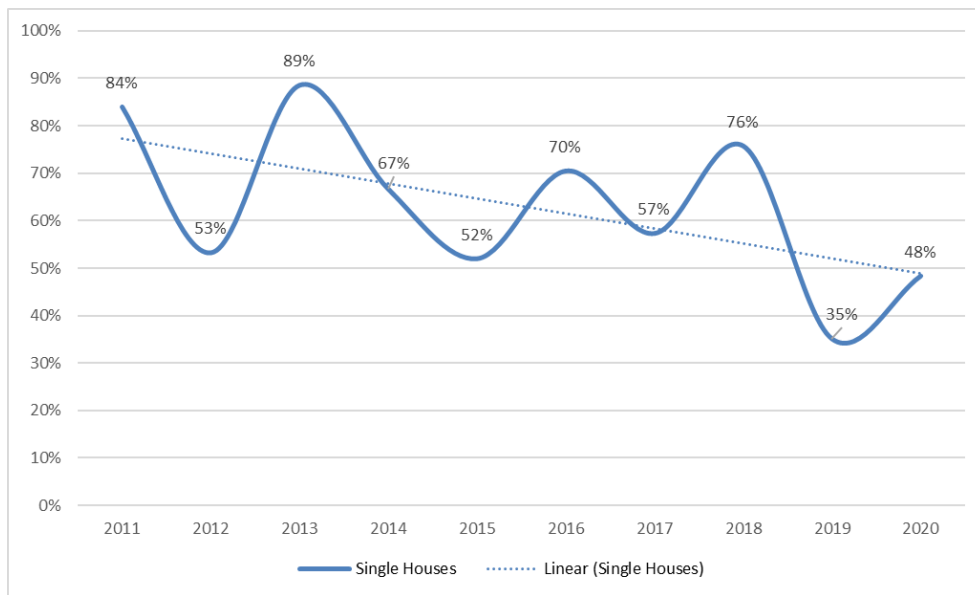
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<sup>27</sup> This data is based on ESB electricity connections. It is also classified in terms of single houses, scheme houses, and apartments/flats. At local authority level, data on single houses completed also includes houses built within settlements. However, the CSO has indicated that at national level over 80% of these single houses are rural, and the proportion is likely to be higher in a rural county such as Longford.





**Figure 4.4 Analysis of Historic Granted Planning Applications (in Units) for One-Off Houses in County Longford**



**Figure 4.5 Analysis of Historic Completions (in Units) for One-Off Houses in County Longford**

**Table 4.24: Analysis of Historic Granted Planning Applications (in Units) for One-Off Houses in County Longford**

Granted Planning Applications	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Houses and Apartments #	515	658	245	309	1	2	2	17	2	6	13	20	44	110	<del>144</del>	<del>1,944</del> 2,088
<del>Single Rural Dwelling</del> One-Off House #	263	309	207	86	57	35	41	24	19	35	54	76	53	80	<del>74</del>	<del>1,339</del> 1,413
Houses and Apartments %	66.2%	68.0%	54.2%	78.2%	1.7%	5.4%	4.7%	41.5%	9.5%	14.6%	19.4%	20.8%	45.4%	57.9%	<del>66.1%</del>	59.62%
<del>Single Rural Dwelling</del> One-Off House %	33.8%	32.0%	45.8%	21.8%	98.3%	94.6%	95.3%	58.5%	90.5%	85.4%	80.6%	79.2%	54.6%	42.1%	<del>33.9%</del>	40.48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>190</b>	<del>218</del>	<del>3,283</del> 501

**Table 4.25: Analysis of Floor Size of Granted Planning Applications for One-Off Houses in County Longford**

Granted Planning Applications	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average
Average floor size of SRD (m <sup>2</sup> )	235.73	245.70	268.68	301.50	312.23	281.03	278.80	288.28	252.95	275.03	243.25	255.73	253.80	247.60	<del>269</del>	267.2916

**Table 4.26: Analysis of Historic Housing Completions (in Units) for One-Off Houses in County Longford**

Housing Completions	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Houses and Apartments #	<del>8</del>	<del>36</del>	<del>4</del>	<del>18</del>	<del>24</del>	<del>18</del>	<del>32</del>	<del>16</del>	<del>85</del>	<del>63</del>	<del>304</del>
One-Off House #	<del>42</del>	<del>41</del>	<del>31</del>	<del>36</del>	<del>26</del>	<del>43</del>	<del>43</del>	<del>50</del>	<del>46</del>	<del>59</del>	<del>417</del>
Houses and Apartments %	<del>16%</del>	<del>47%</del>	<del>11%</del>	<del>33%</del>	<del>48%</del>	<del>30%</del>	<del>43%</del>	<del>24%</del>	<del>65%</del>	<del>52%</del>	<del>42%</del>

<u>One-Off House %</u>	<u>84%</u>	<u>53%</u>	<u>89%</u>	<u>67%</u>	<u>52%</u>	<u>70%</u>	<u>57%</u>	<u>76%</u>	<u>35%</u>	<u>48%</u>	<u>58%</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>131</u>	<u>122</u>	<u>721</u>

#### 4.5 Conclusion

Between 2021 and 2027, this Strategy forecasts a population increase of 3,076 in County Longford. This in turn indicates a total population of 45,800 in 2027 and a total housing target for Longford of ~~2,568~~ ~~1,169~~ units over the plan period 2021-2027, the equivalent of 167 units per annum.

It has been determined that ~~252~~ ~~115~~ of the ~~2,568~~ ~~1,169~~ additional anticipated households will not qualify for a mortgage during the plan period. Additionally, these ~~252~~ ~~115~~ households will not meet the affordability criteria for private rental. Households which are identified as not qualifying for a mortgage and not being able to meet the 'Affordability Criteria' over the plan period are therefore considered to require social (and affordable) housing. This equates to an average of 9.8% of the additional anticipated households or the identified social requirement throughout the plan period is ~~252~~ ~~115~~ units.

## **5 Meeting Housing Requirements in Longford**

### **5.1 Overview**

This chapter set out specific information summarising the existing situation about how social housing support is administered by Longford County Council, with the latest existing data, delivery methods and targets set out herein. There are several means available to Longford County Council to meet need for social housing. An overview of how social housing support is currently administered by Longford County Council, including the existing delivery methods and progress against targets is set out in Section 5.5.3.

These mechanisms to deliver social housing will help form the basis of meeting identified social housing need over the plan period. This information therefore informs the development of policy objectives for this Housing Strategy that have been presented in Section 6 as it sets out the existing situation in advance of the implementation of the policy objectives as well the overview of the projected future requirements in relation to housing in County Longford (which have been set out in Section 4.5).

### **5.2 Social Housing Supply and Demand**

#### ***5.2.1 Existing Social Housing Needs***

The Social Housing Support Need Analysis identifies the latest situation (as of March 2020) in relation to the existing social housing need of County Longford. In March 2020, 933 households were on the social housing waiting list in County Longford as set out in Table 5.1.

With respect to unit type requirements, the greatest demand is for three-bedroom properties which account for 56.5% of the need. This is followed by two-bedroom units (37.2%). The overall requirements and current demand by unit type as well as the specified location within County Longford are detailed in Table 5.1.

It should be noted that the assessed future housing need over the plan period of ~~115~~252 units is in addition to the existing requirement for 933 households as recorded on the social housing waiting list in March 2020. It should also be noted that whilst 933 households are currently on the social housing waiting list, between 2018 and 2019, the social housing waiting list in County Longford reduced by 8.5%.



**Table 5.1: Social Housing Need by Unit Type and Area (March 2020)**

Area of Choice	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total Applicants
Ardagh	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
Aughnaccliffe	0	9	9	0	<b>18</b>
Ballinalee	0	17	16	0	<b>33</b>
Ballinamuck	0	3	5	1	<b>9</b>
Ballymahon	2	43	63	2	<b>110</b>
Clondra	0	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
Colehill	0	5	4	1	<b>10</b>
Drumlish	0	12	34	6	<b>52</b>
Edgeworthstown	0	35	46	2	<b>83</b>
Granard	0	9	17	2	<b>28</b>
Kenagh	0	14	14	0	<b>28</b>
Killashee	1	3	12	1	<b>17</b>
Killoe	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Lanesboro	2	16	20	1	<b>39</b>
Legan	0	7	6	1	<b>14</b>
Longford	14	165	267	21	<b>467</b>
Newtowncashel	0	0	1	0	<b>1</b>
Newtownforbes	0	7	12	1	<b>20</b>
<b>Longford County Total Number</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>933</b>
<b>Longford County Total %</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>37.2%</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **5.2.2 Meeting Social Housing Demand**

### **5.2.2.1 Overview**

Longford County Council will continue to meet their identified social housing provision requirements via a combination of the existing delivery schemes that are in place. Currently, social housing support is administered by the Housing Department within Longford County Council through those mechanisms summarised below and described in further detail thereafter:

- A social rented tenancy in a property owned and managed by the local authority and a tenancy in a property the local authority is managing or has leased from a private owner.
- A social rented tenancy in property owned and managed by an approved housing body (AHB).

- Longford County Council provides accommodation specifically for Travellers and for people with specific housing needs such as older persons, people with disabilities and the homeless etc.
- A tenancy where the local authority arranges short or long-term leases with private landlords for particular properties (i.e. people that are in receipt of rent supplement for 18 months or longer are eligible to apply for this type of accommodation).

#### **5.2.2.2 Social Rental Tenancy from and/or via the Local Authority**

This relates to a social rented tenancy in any property that owned and managed by Longford County Council or alternatively, this may relate to any tenancy in a property that Longford County Council is managing or has leased from a private property owner. These can include:

- Construction Projects – This is the construction of properties specifically by Longford County Council.
- Acquisitions - This is the purchase by Longford County Council of a second-hand house on the open market.
- Portfolio Acquisitions – This related to suitable portfolios of vacant properties which can be secured by Longford County Council from financial institutions and investors.
- Turnkeys - Longford County Council buy a new house(s) from a developer, that are ready for a tenant to move into.
- Provision of Social Housing under Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - While the provision of social housing via traditional Part V mechanism will continue to play a role in the delivery of social housing in County Longford, other delivery channels for social housing are likely to be more significant in terms of their potential to contribute to the social housing targets set out. The statutory context for the provision of social and affordable housing has changed under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015. The amendments include that there will be a requirement for up to 10% social housing in developments in excess of nine units. The use of cash payments in lieu of social housing provision is no longer allowed. Provision is made for the transfer of completed units on other land not subject to the planning permission to be provided. Provision is also made for the Part V obligation to be fulfilled by developers through long term leasing of properties and rental accommodation availability agreements.
- Buy and Renew - Under this scheme Longford County Council can buy sub-standard properties, which have been vacant for over a year, refurbish them and bring them back into use through the Council's housing stock. The purchase cost plus the cost of refurbishment can't exceed what a comparable property would attain on the private market. This initiative, which complements the Repair & Leasing Scheme, is designed to assist local authorities and AHBs (Approved Housing Bodies) to harness the accommodation potential that exists in certain vacant properties for social housing use.
- Tenant Purchase Scheme: In January 2016, a new scheme for the purchase of existing local authority houses came into effect – The Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016.

#### **5.2.2.3 Social Rental Tenancy from an AHB**

This relates to a social rented tenancy in any property that is owned and managed by an AHB. As set out in Section 3.3.5.1, AHBs provide social housing and are formed for the purpose of relieving housing need and the provision and management of housing. They are established by a voluntary management board to benefit the community in which they are based and are approved and funded by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Such housing cooperatives (i.e. the AHBs) can provide both social rented housing and/or housing to purchase. AHBs are self-help and jointly owned member/user housing associations or societies. Projects undertaken by an AHB may be in response to the needs of specific communities such as the elderly, people with disabilities, homeless persons or families and single people on low incomes. Some AHBs have also been formed to specialise in meeting a particular housing need whilst others have been developed with broader aims. The specific housing services offered will depend on the aims or concerns of the members, the needs of tenants as well as the financial and other resources available for both capital costs and ongoing management running costs. As set out in Section 3.3.5.1, there are nine AHBs operating in County Longford.

#### **5.2.2.4 Specialist Support Provided by Longford County Council**

[Wexford-Longford](#) County Council provides accommodation specifically for individual groups such as travellers and for people with specific housing needs such as people with disabilities and the homeless. The current delivery programmes responding to specific needs include the Refugee Resettlement Programme and the Traveller Accommodation Plan. Under the Refugee Resettlement refugees are being allocated social housing in Longford. The families are part of approximately 4,000 people which the government has committed to receiving through the Irish Refugee Protection Programme. County Councils will continue to work with Central Government and relevant State Agencies Office in responding to its requirements to support refugees as they undergo their resettlement process in Co. Longford.

Under the provisions of the Housing Traveller Accommodation Act 1998, all Local Authorities are required to prepare, adopt and implement a Traveller Accommodation Programme (TAP) to meet the accommodation needs of the county's indigenous Traveller community. The current TAP for Longford County Council sets out the strategy for the provision of Traveller accommodation and support services during 2019-2024. An assessment of the accommodation need was carried out to inform the TAP. This statutory assessment of need assessed all applicants seeking assistance with accommodation. The number of approved Traveller families seeking accommodation is 23. Having regard to this it is considered that a total of 108 units of accommodation should be provided over the five-year programme to cater for the existing demand and projected demand as set out in Table 5.2. The following housing options will be utilised to accommodate this need throughout the plan period for the TAP (i.e. 2019 – 2024):

- Standard Local Authority Housing
- Traveller Voluntary Housing Bodies
- Group Housing
- Long Term Leasing
- Rental Accommodation Scheme
- Housing Assistance Payment Scheme
- Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan.

**Table 5.2: Breakdown of Traveller Accommodation Targets in Longford 2019-2024 in Longford**

Type	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Transient	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent Halting Site	0	0	0	0	0	0
Standard L.A Housing	12	12	12	12	12	60
HAP	6	5	5	4	4	24
RAS/Lease	2	2	2	2	2	10
Voluntary Housing Body	2	2	2	2	2	10
Group Housing	0	0	0	4	0	4

<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>108</b>
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#### **5.2.2.5 Local Authority Support for Leases with Private Landlords**

This relates to a tenancy where the local authority arranges short or long-term leases with private landlords for particular properties. Specifically, this applies to people that have been in receipt of rent supplement for 18 months or longer who are deemed eligible to apply for this type of accommodation from Longford County Council. They can receive this support by way of either the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) or Repair and Lease.

HAP is a scheme under the Housing Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2014 for people who have a long-term housing need and who qualify for social housing support. It is administered by housing authorities and will eventually replace long-term rent supplement (i.e. RAS). The HAP scheme aims to allow all social housing supports to be accessed through the local authorities (i.e. Longford County Council in this instance) in order to enable people to take up full-time employment whilst maintaining their housing support. Under the HAP scheme, the applicant finds appropriate private rented accommodation (within specific caps) and the Local Authority then pays the landlord directly and the tenant pays a rent to the local authority based on the differential rent scheme.

The RAS is an initiative to cater for the accommodation needs of certain persons in receipt of rent supplement, (i.e. who are assessed as having a long-term housing need, normally for more than 18 months). Longford County Council pays rent directly to the accommodation providers on behalf of the tenant (which is a maximum of 92% of the market rent). Longford County Council makes use of the private and voluntary sector to engage in a contractual arrangement that secures medium-long term rented accommodation on behalf of the applicant/tenant.

The Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness introduced a new scheme, the Vacant Housing Repair and Leasing Initiative (i.e. Repair and Lease). This scheme specifically targets the delivery of social housing and seeks to ensure that existing housing stock is used to the maximum degree possible. The basis of the scheme is that repair and improvement works to suitable vacant properties are funded to bring them up to the standard for rented accommodation and the cost of the works is then deducted from lease payments over an agreed lease term.

#### **5.5.3 Delivery Methods and Targets**

It is anticipated that Longford County Council will continue to meet their social housing needs via a combination of these existing delivery schemes (as set out in Section 5.5.2) and through the introduction or greater emphasis of other either existing or recently established schemes and mechanisms. This section assesses different delivery channels available to County Longford and their progress to date in achieving the recent targets in relation to social housing (i.e. as set out in the Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness) has been examined.

As set out in Section 2.1.11, Rebuilding Ireland recognises issues around supply and affordability in Ireland's housing sector and provides a multi-stranded approach to achieve key housing objectives up to 2021. A national commitment to deliver 138,000 additional social housing units during 2016-2021 which equates to 83,760 HAP homes, 3,800 RAS homes and over 50,000 new homes (broken down into 33,617 builds, 6,830 acquisitions and 10,036 leases).

Within County Longford, a target of delivering 309 properties during 2018 – 2021 was set out by Rebuilding Ireland. Additionally, a target of delivering 257 units across all social housing delivery streams was set for 2019 as illustrated in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3: Social Housing Targets for County Longford that have been set out under Rebuilding Ireland**

Targets 2018-2021	Targets 2019				
Build, Acquisition and Leasing	Build	Acquisition	Leasing	HAP and RAS	All-social housing streams
309	76	7	15	159	257

Progress on the delivery of social housing units is documented as part of quarterly updates by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. The most recently available progress update is the annual summary data to the end of 2019 and is documented in Table 5.4. This demonstrates that the total output in County Longford in 2019 was 308 units, which indicates that Longford County Council achieved 120% of its Rebuilding Ireland Target to 2019. This follows 2018 when Longford County Council also exceeded the target by delivering 326 units or 148% of its requirements.<sup>28</sup>

In total between 2018-2021, 309 units were targeted to be delivered by way of ‘building, acquisition and leasing’. Through 2018-2019, Longford County Council have already delivered 261 units through these mechanisms. Thus, over the course of 2020-2021 only 48 additional units are required to be delivered through ‘building, acquisition and leasing’ mechanisms in order to meet the Rebuilding Ireland targets. This is an encouraging indicator as to Longford County Council’s ability to provide its social housing requirements in line with the aspirations of Rebuilding Ireland.

**Table 5.4: Progress on Rebuilding Ireland Social Housing Targets 2019**

County Longford to the end of 2019	Total #
All Build Total	87
Acquisition Total	49
Leasing	8
RAS <sup>[2]</sup> & HAP <sup>[3]</sup>	164
<b>Total Output 2019 under Rebuilding Ireland</b>	<b>308 Units Delivered</b> <b>120% of target</b>

1. New leasing units operational are defined as the number of new leasing units delivered under this scheme in the given period. This program was previously known as long term leasing until 2014.

2. RAS - New transfers is defined as the number of households which have moved from Rent Supplement to RAS in that specific year. It includes households who remained in their existing accommodation and those for whom the LA had to source new properties.

<sup>28</sup> Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, ‘Details of social housing delivery on a local authority basis for 2019’. Online: <https://rebuildingireland.ie/news/details-of-social-housing-delivery-on-a-local-authority-basis-for-2019/>

3. *HAP - New Households Supported refers to the number of qualified households with an established housing need who are being accommodated under the HAP scheme for that year.*

|

## 6 Policy Objectives to Deliver the Housing Strategy

This section builds on the analysis of housing requirements presented in the HNDA and Housing Strategy. It sets out draft policy objectives below to guide and deliver new homes of appropriate type and tenure to meet Longford's housing requirements over the plan period.

**Table 6.1: Policy objectives for the Longford Housing Strategy 2021-2027**

It is a policy of Longford County Council:	
<b>HO1</b>	To provide new homes to meet expected future housing requirements in the County as identified <u>by the Housing Supply Target in the HNDA</u> . A total of <u>1,169</u> <del>2,568</del> new homes shall be provided over the plan period to meet requirements a result of forecast population growth. New homes shall be provided in a planned and coordinated manner in accordance with the aims and policies of the Core Strategy, the RSES, and the National Planning Framework.
<b>HO2</b>	To seek the provision of an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures to ensure homes for communities in towns, villages and rural areas and to meet the needs of people of all incomes and needs.
<b>HO3</b>	To provide for new housing in existing settlements to ensure that settlements grow in a manner that is sustainable, includes provision of sufficient social and economic infrastructure, and to a scale which aligns with the Settlement Hierarchy set out in the Core Strategy.
<b>HO4</b>	To provide new housing in rural areas including one-off homes in accordance with the Development Plan where it meets the social and economic needs of these areas, tackles isolation, and promotes social inclusion.
<b>HO5</b>	To provide housing appropriate to the needs of the elderly (in accordance with the Longford Age Friendly Strategy 2015-2020 and any subsequent strategies), persons with disabilities, lone parents, Travellers, and the homeless. The Council shall support and promote the use of Universal Design principles and life-long adaptability in new housing developments to meet the needs of diverse groups and an aging population.
<b>HO6</b>	To seek high quality of design in all housing development having due regard to Government policy relating to sustainable development, which aims to reduce the demand for travel within existing settlements, and the need to respect and reflect the established character of rural areas.
<b>HO7</b>	To provide social and affordable housing to meet forecast future housing need over the plan period as identified in the HNDA. The Council will endeavour to deliver a further <u>115</u> <del>252</del> social and affordable housing units over the plan period to meet this forecasted need as resources allow. New units shall be delivered having regard to the aims and policies of the Core Strategy and the

It is a policy of Longford County Council:	
	needs of local communities, including the need to deliver sustainable development, social integration and an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures.
<b>HO8</b>	To make use of a range of delivery mechanisms to provide new social and affordable homes including new builds, acquisitions, renovations and acquisitions of vacant homes, leasing, and housing supports including RAS and HAP.
<b>HO9</b>	To require that 10% of lands zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, be reserved for social and affordable housing in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and any future revised Guidance.
<b>HO10</b>	To tackle vacancy and to secure new homes, tackle dereliction and deliver regeneration by bringing vacant sites back into use. This shall be pursued through the application of the vacant site levy in accordance with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015. The Council shall also endeavour to bring about the timely re-use of vacant Council-owned housing stock.
<b>HO11</b>	To promote the regeneration of town centres through the retention of town centre residential units and through encouraging the reuse of upper floors above commercial premises for residential accommodation.
<b>HO12</b>	To provide appropriate accommodation to meet the needs of the Travelling Community and to secure the implementation of the Longford County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024.
<b>HO13</b>	To support the on-going monitoring and review of the HNDA in accordance with the forthcoming guidance on HNDA methodology to be issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.



## Annex 5: Infrastructure Assessment Report – NEW INCLUSION

Proposed Amendment ANN.5.1		
Section	Heading	Page no.
Annex 5	Infrastructure Assessment Report	115

Insert the Infrastructure Assessment Report, used to identify the existing and projected level of infrastructure provision within settlements to accommodate additional development, into the amended Draft Plan.

### **Annex 5: Infrastructure Assessment Report**

*(Note: Existing Annexes will be renumbered as a result of the above additional inclusion).*

# Infrastructure Assessment Report



**Aras an Chontae,  
Great Water Street,  
Longford,  
N39 T9K5**

## Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT .....	5
3. SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY – ASSET-BASED CRITERIA.....	7
4. METHODOLOGY OF CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT .....	9
APPENDIX A - INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT - RESIDENTIAL & EMPLOYMENT LANDS.....	13
Appendix - A1 Key Town Longford Town .....	14
Appendix – A2 Self-Sustaining Growth Towns Granard.....	18
Appendix – A3 Self-Sustaining Towns Ballymahon.....	22
Appendix – A4 Self-Sustaining Towns Edgeworthstown .....	24
Appendix – A5 Self-Sustaining Towns Lanesborough .....	28
Appendix – A6 Towns & Villages Aughnacliffe.....	30
Appendix – A7 Towns & Villages Ballinalee .....	32
Appendix – A8 Towns & Villages Drumlish .....	34
Appendix – A9 Towns & Villages Keenagh.....	39
Appendix – A10 Towns & Villages Legan .....	41
Appendix – A11 Towns & Villages Newtownforbes.....	43
Appendix – A12 Smaller Villages & Settlements Abbeyshrule, Ardagh, Ballinamuck & Clondra .....	46
APPENDIX B - INITIAL SIEVE MAPPING EXERCISE.....	53
APPENDIX C – FURTHER ITERATIVE MAPPING .....	63
APPENDIX D: ROADS DEPARTMENT INFRASTRUCTURAL SETTLEMENT EVALUATION .....	75
APPENDIX E: WATER SERVICES DEPARTMENT INFRASTRUCTURAL SETTLEMENT EVALUATION .....	82

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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This report has been developed in order to provide an assessment of available infrastructure to service the Settlements of County Longford and inform the County Development Plan and the land zoning assessment of the hierarchy of settlements in the Plan

The National Planning Framework (NPF) emphasises the requirement for better linkage between the zoning of land for development and the availability of or investment in infrastructure that is required to facilitate development. The following three National Policy Objectives (NPOs) are relevant:

**NPO 72a:** Planning authorities will be required to apply a standardised, tiered approach to differentiate between (i) zoned land that is serviced and (ii) zoned land that is serviceable within the life of the plan.

**NPO 72b:** When considering zoning land for development purposes that require investment in service infrastructure, planning authorities will make a reasonable estimate of the full cost of delivery of the specified services and prepare a report, detailing the estimated cost at draft and final plan stages.

**NPO 72c:** When considering zoning land for development purposes that cannot be serviced within the life of the relevant plan, such lands should not be zoned for development.

The NPF further states that an Infrastructural Assessment must be aligned with the approved infrastructural investment programme(s) of the relevant delivery agency(ies), or be based on a written commitment by the relevant delivery agency to provide the identified infrastructure within a specified timescale (i.e. within the lifetime of the plan). The Planning Authority may also commit to the delivery of the required and identified infrastructure in its own infrastructural investment programme (i.e. Budgeted Capital Programme) in order to support certain lands for zoning. The Infrastructural Assessment must include a reasonable estimate of the full cost of delivery of the required infrastructure to the identified zoned lands.

Further guidance will be provided by the Department Housing, Planning and Local Government in respect of Infrastructural Assessments in updated Statutory Guidelines that will be issued under Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The purpose of this report is therefore to:

- Identify potential sites for residential and employment zoning within the main settlement hierarchy of County Longford;
- Examine the suitability of a site for future development based on NPF objectives, the RSES and the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 etc;
- Assess the infrastructure requirements to service each site;

- Assess and weight the planning and serviceability/infrastructural provision for each site to enable a Tier to be assigned, as may be applicable; and
- Where sites are identified as Tier 1 or Tier 2 lands, the assessment should clearly identify the likely development services required to support new development and where possible provide an indicative timeframe for delivery i.e. short to medium term or longer term.

It noted from the outset, in terms of reasonable estimate of costs, that Irish Water, has indicated that it does not have resources or capacity to carry out such an exercise and therefore no costings have been provided in terms of water services.

It should be noted that this report forms a working draft of the overall Infrastructure Assessment Report and forms a 'live' document during the development plan process, owing to recommended amendments to land use zonings arising from the public consultation process of the plan, as well as recommendations from prescribed bodies such as the office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) and the Office of Public Works, among others. Moreover, the Water Services Section and Environment Section of Longford County Council are currently undertaking an assessment of estimated costs for future infrastructure provisions with the aim of providing this estimated costing with the finalised Infrastructure Assessment Report to be inserted into the amended Draft Plan.

## 2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

---

There have been a number of significant developments which will influence future land use zoning in County Development Plans and Local Area Plans. In particular, the National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out a tiered approach for zoning lands as discussed in Section 1 of this report. The following National Policy Objectives are relevant:

- National Policy Objective 72a: *‘Planning authorities will be required to apply a standardised, tiered approach to differentiate between i) zoned land that is serviced and ii) zoned land that is serviceable within the life of the plan’.*
- National Policy Objective 72b: *‘When considering zoning lands for development purposes that require investment in service infrastructure, planning authorities will make a reasonable estimate of the full cost of delivery of the specified services and prepare a report, detailing the estimated cost at draft and final plan stages’.*
- National Policy Objective 72c: *‘When considering zoning land for development purposes that cannot be serviced within the life of the relevant plan, such lands should not be zoned for development’.*

The NPF places an emphasis on the need for compact, smart and sustainable growth and requires 30% of all new housing to be within existing urban footprints (outside of the five cities), thus reducing the amount of greenfield land required to meet future housing requirements.

Moreover, the NPF specifically discusses the prioritising of development lands and states that there are “many other planning considerations relevant to land zoning beyond the provision of basic enabling infrastructure including overall planned levels of growth, location, suitability for the type of development envisaged, availability of and proximity to amenities, schools, shops or employment, accessibility to transport services etc. Weighing up all of these factors, together with the availability of infrastructure, will assist planning authorities in determining an order of priority to deliver planned growth and development” (emphasis added).

The NPF further notes that Guidance will be issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to infrastructural assessments.

Appendix 3 of the NPF provides a methodology for a tiered approach to land zoning as referred to in NPO 72a. The implementation of this tiered approach allows for greater co-ordination between land use zoning and infrastructure availability. Appendix 3 of the NPF provides a description of Tier 1 (Serviced Zoned Land) and Tier 2 (Serviceable Zoned Land) as follows:

### **Tier 1: Serviced Zoned Land**

Land that is able to connect to existing development services i.e. road and footpath access, public lighting, foul sewer drainage, surface water drainage and water supply, for which there is service capacity available.

**Tier 2: Serviceable Zoned Land**

Land that is not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but has the potential to become fully serviced within the life of the Plan. The potential for the delivery of the required services and / or capacity to support new development must be identified.

It is therefore appropriate that sustainable planning criteria are used to inform the assessment of each site, in addition to infrastructural criteria, in line with the NPF's requirement of the prioritisation of development land.

In this regard, lands have only been identified for development where they are able to connect to existing development services for which there is service capacity available or has the potential to become fully serviced within the life of the Plan.

### 3. SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY – ASSET-BASED CRITERIA

	Settlement	Population 2016	NEW growth allocation 2016-27	NEW Population Growth to 2027	Remaining Wastewater Capacity (P.E.)	Water capacity (IW submission)	WWTP Future investment	Connectivity - Transport Infrastructure
Key Town (Density 35-40 units/ha)	Longford Town	10,008	25.0%	2502	3,804	Some headroom available		Very good - Train Station, bus services, national road network, inter-regional links
Self-Sustaining Growth Town (25 units/ha)	Granard	1,096	25.0%	274	1,411	Some headroom available		Local bus services, Bus stops x2, national road network
Self-Sustaining Towns (25 units/ha)	Edgeworthstown	2,072	15.0%	311	201	Some headroom available	IW indicate WWTP upgrade planned post-2024	Very good - Train Station, bus services, national road network, inter-regional links
	Ballymahon	1,877	15.0%	282	0	-	IW indicate WWTP upgrade planned post-2024	Local bus services, national road network, good inter-regional links to Athlone, Mullingar
	Lanesborough	757	20.0%	151	1,338	Some headroom available		Local bus services, national road network - proximity and links to Longford and Roscommon Town
Towns and Villages (20 units/ha)	Aughnaccliffe	177	18.0%	32	c.250 (2018)	Some headroom available		Bus stop x1
	Ballinalee	347	18.0%	62	442 (2018)	Some headroom available		Limited - no public transport provision
	Drumlish	931	15.0%	140	150	Some headroom available	IW Indicate capacity of 150	Bus stop x1
	Keenagh	581	18.0%	105	308 (2018)	Some headroom available		Bus stop x1
	Legan	215	16.0%	34	808 (2018)	Some headroom available		Limited - no public transport provision
	Newtownforbes	778	18.0%	140	811 (2018)	Some headroom available		Bus stop x1, national road network, good links to Longford Town
Serviced Rural Villages (15 units/ha)	Abbeyshrule	224	15%	34	215 (2018)	Some headroom available		Limited - no public transport provision
	Ardagh	210	15%	32	392 (2018)	Some headroom available		Limited - no public transport provision
	Ballinamuck	232	15%	35	446 (2018)	Some headroom available		Bus stop x1
	Clondra	449	15%	67	442 (2018)	Some headroom available		Limited - no public transport provision
Rural Settlement Clusters								
Open Countryside		20,919	3.5%	727				
Total		40,873	12%	4,927				



The table above distils the proposed growth strategy for the county in terms of settlement hierarchy, projected population and housing growth and allocation per settlements and settlement tier, as well identifying some of the critical infrastructural features pertaining to these settlements. Further details on specific infrastructural deficits and requirements for relevant settlements over the plan period will be furnished in the finalised draft Infrastructural Assessment Report, pending final agreement with internal departments and costing/budget requirements.

## 4. METHODOLOGY OF CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT

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In the absence of Departmental guidance, which is expected to issue under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) as referred to in the NPF, this Infrastructural Assessment has been developed in accordance with Appendix 3 of the NPF.

The Planning Department undertook a review of the available land supply within the defined study areas of the main settlements of Longford as defined in the Core Strategy. This included the following settlements as defined in the Settlement Hierarchy:

<b>Key Town</b>	Longford Town	
<b>Self-Sustaining Growth Towns</b>	Granard	
<b>Self-Sustaining Towns</b>	Ballymahon Edgeworthstown Lanesborough	
<b>Towns &amp; Villages</b>	Aughnacliffe Ballinalee Drumlish	Keenagh Legan Newtownforbes
<b>Villages &amp; Smaller settlements</b>	Abbeyshrule Ardagh	Ballinamuck Clondra

To inform the appropriate zoning of land, the Infrastructure Assessment comprises of quantitative and qualitative research analysis.

The qualitative analysis consists of a template of criteria to gather pertinent information from the relevant departments within Longford County Council. This method is to be used to gain an understanding of underlying conditions and provide insights into infrastructural issues.

The quantitative assessment comprises of an interactive assessment of the subject lands (residential – employment), combining existing and proposed zoning, overlaid with infrastructural mapping depicting key infrastructure elements such as foul sewer, water main, pumping station, roadway, pathway etc. in order to appropriately determine and allocate lands as Tier 1 ('Connected'), or Tier 2 ('Potential Development') and areas of 'No Development'.

This Infrastructural Assessment was conducted on an iterative basis, liaising with the Water Services and Roads Departments of the Council, with additional input from Irish Water in identifying potential shortfall in water supply and wastewater treatment capacities and where targeted investment in upgrading of such infrastructure may likely take place over the plan period, notwithstanding Irish Water's own Strategic Funding Plan.

A critical feature of this process was the overarching requirement to provide for more 'compact growth' forms of future development within our settlements, regardless of scale, whereby a town centre first approach in terms of sequential development was advocated in identifying primary land for development.

- **Appendix A** of this report provides the detailed assessment of lands for each of the settlements following the Infrastructure Assessment. Each settlement has a written text summary explaining the process and referencing the iterative Infrastructure Assessment process undertaken in the drafting of the County Development Plan.
- **Appendix B** provides an overview of the initial sieve mapping process conducted in respect of infrastructure provisions within each of the settlements.
- **Appendix C** of this report details further iterative mapping of respective settlements where subject sites were brought forward from the initial sieve mapping exercise.
- **Appendix D** of this report includes the infrastructure assessment scoring for the main settlements provided by the Roads Section.
- **Appendix E** of this report includes the Infrastructure Assessment scoring for the main settlements provided by the Water Services Department.

Whilst this approach is in accordance with the overarching principles espoused in the NPF, and particularly in accordance with NPO 3c, there are scenarios in some settlements where more peripheral lands are serviced and more centralised lands are not. Whilst these incidences are infrequent, it remains prudent to develop out these serviced lands irrespective of their location given the levels of investment that have taken place in servicing such lands to begin with.

All selected sites within the settlements were identified and analysed against Infrastructure capacity in terms of:

- Water supply
- Wastewater capacity
- Drainage, extent of SuDS requirements and flood risk
- Roads and transportation
- Level of conformance to and ability to contribute to the achievement of Strategic Outcomes of the NPF (principally fulfilling compact growth); and
- Compliance with emerging/Draft Core Strategy with respect to settlement hierarchy and interrelated quantum of population and housing growth and resultant land requirements to accommodate projected growth.

The identified sites were afforded a planning and serviceability weighting (Score of 100 to 0) to assess the overall suitability for zoning within the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027. The weighting applied to the sites is represented by a traffic light system and ranges from:

	A 'high' level of planning and serviceability/infrastructural provision coloured green.
	A medium level of planning and serviceability/infrastructural provision coloured orange / light red.
	A poor level of planning and serviceability/ infrastructure provision coloured dark red.

In the case of lands identified as falling within the 'high' level of serviceability rating a green colour was applied which equates to Tier 1 lands in accordance with the NPF tiered approach to zoning. Such lands are serviced land, comprising of lands that are able to connect to existing development services for which there is service capacity available and therefore be able to accommodate new development. In such instances the site achieves sustainable planning criteria also.

Where lands were deemed to have a 'medium' level of serviceability rating an orange/light red colour was applied. These lands can be described as serviceable land, comprising lands that are not currently sufficiently serviced to support new development but have the potential to become fully serviced within the life of the Plan or where there are planned infrastructure upgrades. In such instances the sites were considered to achieve a moderate status on sustainable planning criteria also.

In the event that lands demonstrated a 'low' level of serviceability they were excluded from consideration in forming the designation of zonings for the plan area. There are major infrastructural deficiencies and/or these sites achieved a poor status on sustainable planning criteria. These lands would be classed as 'No Development' and excluded from further assessment.

Tier Determination Range			
High	Tier 1	100-67	Serviced
Medium	Tier 2	66-33	Serviceable
Low		32-0	No Development/Un-serviced and Unserviceable within Plan lifetime

The findings of both the qualitative and quantitative assessments have informed an evidence-based assessment of each site. As a result of this assessment it is clear that, for a range of infrastructural reasons, some sites are better placed to deliver employment and residential use in the short to medium term (Tier 1 lands).

The scoring assessments of the identified lands from the further iterative mapping process for the relevant settlements by the Roads Department and Water Services Department are presented in Appendix D and Appendix E of this report respectively.



## APPENDIX A - INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT - RESIDENTIAL & EMPLOYMENT LANDS

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The lands zoned for residential and employment lands have been assessed according to the infrastructure available to service the sites. The lands identified as being serviced are identified in the following settlement plans.

The background and preliminary background information used in the iterative process of assessing the settlements and the identified sites are included in the preceding appendices.

The revised settlement land-use zonings have been informed by the submission from the OPR and EMRA which requested that the zoning of lands be informed by an Infrastructure Assessment, flood zonings, and alignment with and consideration of National Planning Policy especially in respect of compact growth and the aim of delivering growth within establishment settlements and within their defined CSO settlement boundaries. The settlements are presented according to the settlement hierarchy.

<b>Key Town</b>	Longford Town	
<b>Self-Sustaining Growth Towns</b>	Granard	
<b>Self-Sustaining Towns</b>	Ballymahon Edgeworthstown Lanesborough	
<b>Towns &amp; Villages</b>	Aughnaccliffe Ballinalee Drumlish	Keenagh Legan Newtownforbes
<b>Villages &amp; Smaller settlements</b>	Abbeyshrule Ardagh	Ballinamuck Clondra

The following maps and plans show the proposed land-use zoning changes for the main settlements and these should be read in conjunction with the following:

- **Appendix B** provides an overview of the initial sieve mapping process conducted in respect of infrastructure provisions within each of the settlements.
- **Appendix C** of this report details further iterative mapping of respective settlements where subject sites were brought forward from the initial sieve mapping exercise.
- **Appendix D** of this report includes the infrastructure assessment scoring for the main settlements provided by the Roads Section.
- **Appendix E** of this report includes the Infrastructure Assessment scoring for the main settlements provided by the Water Services Department.

## Appendix A1 - Key Town: Longford Town

The land-use zonings for Longford Town have been revised in accordance with this Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use zoning plan for Longford is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the initial infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 (January to April) and informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021).

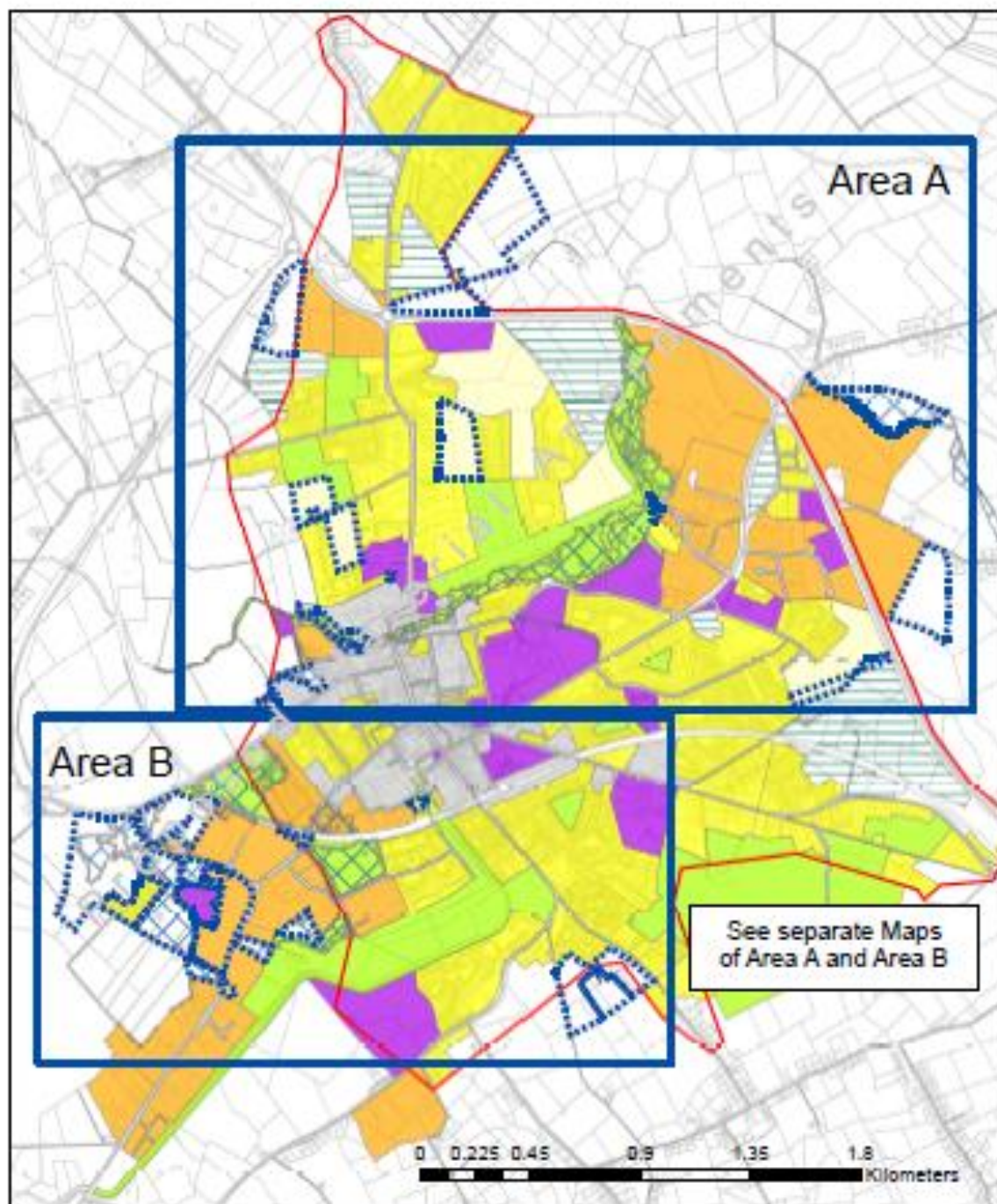
An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions. Therefore, the quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial / commercial / warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning map identifies and presents a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF.

The (further iteration of the) Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary has highlighted specific areas that are subsequently identified as undevelopable and or constrained, lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan Longford Proposed Material Amendments (June 2021) identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

Of specific note are the amendments to the zonings to the north and east of the Longford town and the N4 national road. Additional changes are located along the river Camlin in the centre of Longford, as well as lands to the south-west and south of the town. Part of these lands are identified to be constrained uses and impacted by flood issues.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Longford Town are presented in Appendices B and C of this report respectfully.

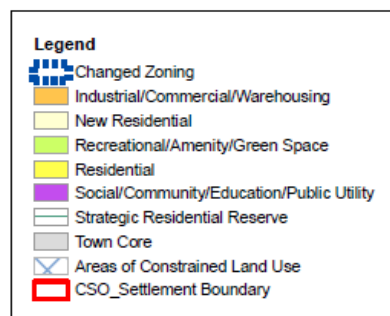
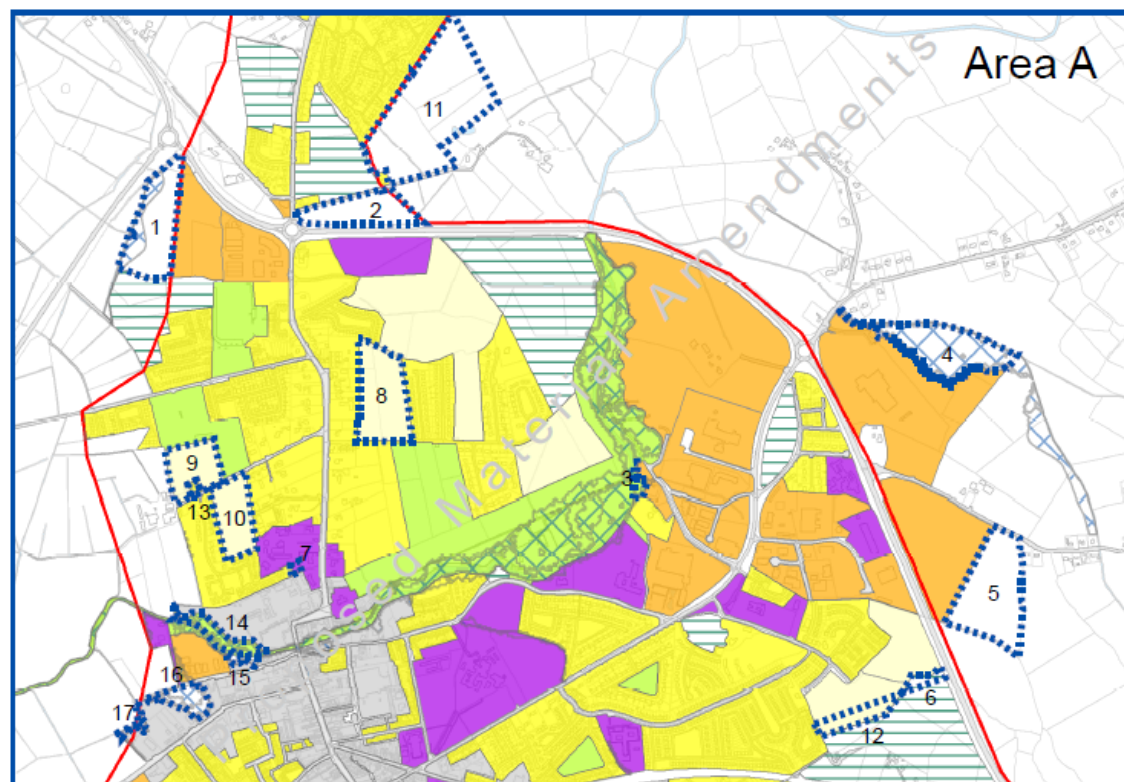




Longford Town  
Proposed Material Amendments  
Outline of Area A & Area B  
County Development Plan 2021-2027



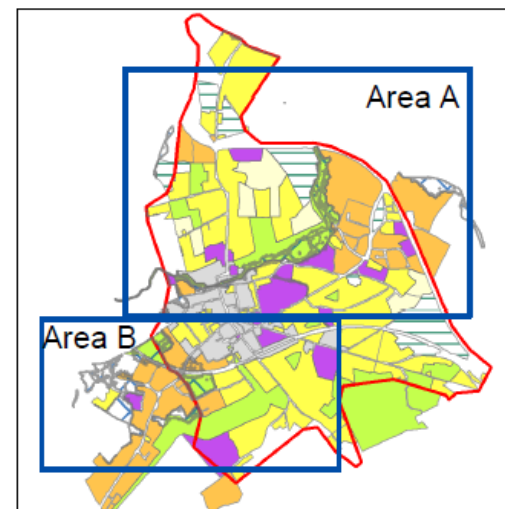




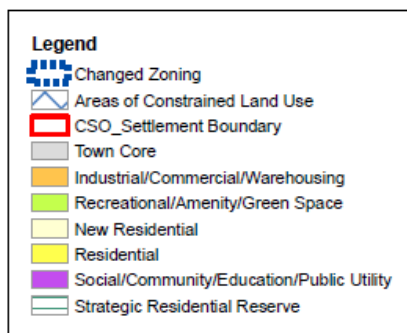
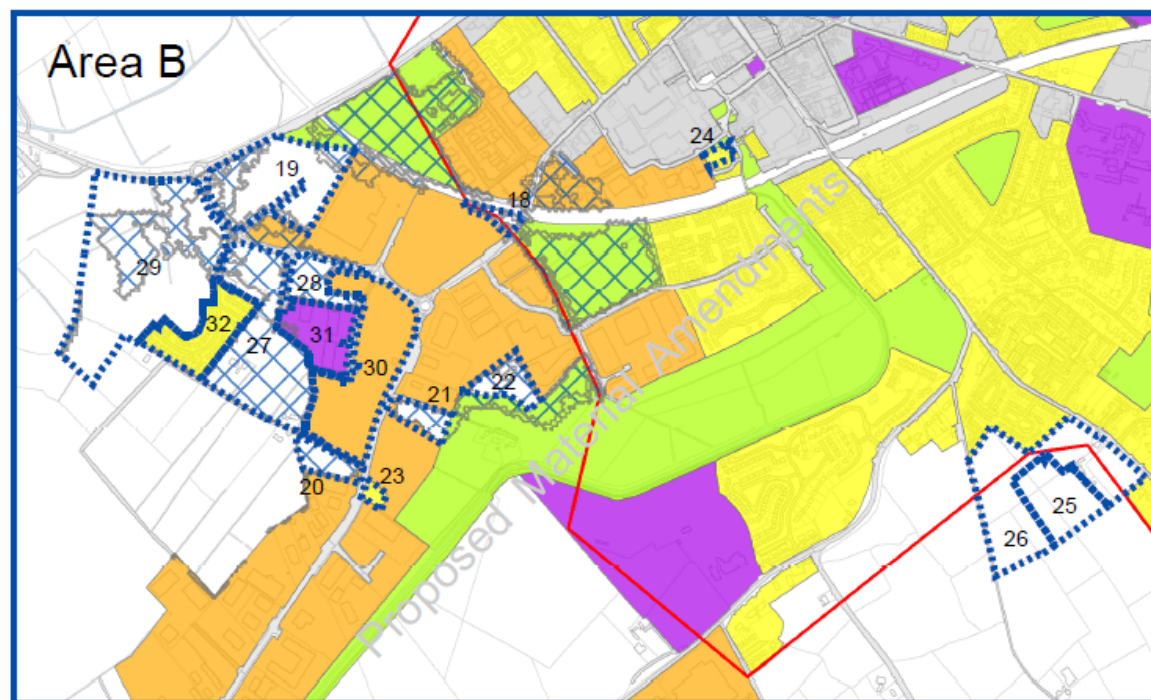
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## Longford Town Proposed Material Amendments



Zoning Changes - Area A		
Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing	No Zoning	1
	No Zoning	2
	Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	3
	No Zoning	4
	No Zoning	5
New Residential	Residential Reserve	6
	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	7
Residential Reserve	New Residential	8
	New Residential	9
	New Residential	10
	No Zoning	11
	New Residential	12
	Residential	13
Town Core	No Zoning	14
	No Zoning	15
	No Zoning	16
	No Zoning	17

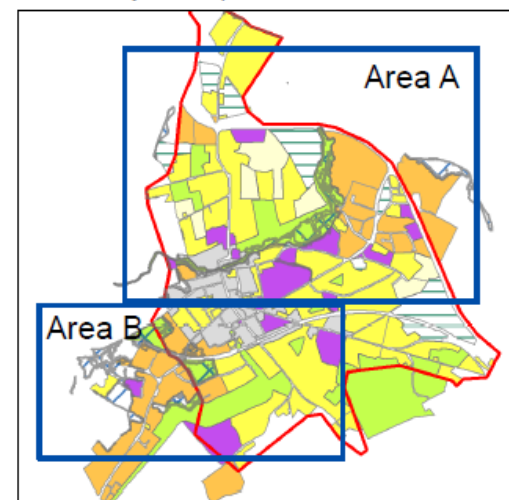


0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Kilometers

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## Longford Town Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



### Zoning Changes - Area B

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing</b>		
No Zoning	No Zoning	18
No Zoning	No Zoning	19
No Zoning	No Zoning	20
No Zoning	No Zoning	21
No Zoning	No Zoning	22
Residential	Residential	23
Residential	Residential	24
<b>Recreation/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
No Zoning	No Zoning	25
<b>Residential Reserve</b>		
No Zoning	No Zoning	26
<b>Site Resolution Objective</b>		
No Zoning	No Zoning	27
No Zoning	No Zoning	28
No Zoning	No Zoning	29
Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing	Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing	30
Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	31
Residential	Residential	32

## Appendix A2 - Self-Sustaining Growth Towns: Granard

The land-use zonings for Granard Town have been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the initial infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 and informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary has highlighted specific areas that are subsequently identified as undevelopable and or constrained, lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified. The revised zoning map for Granard identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

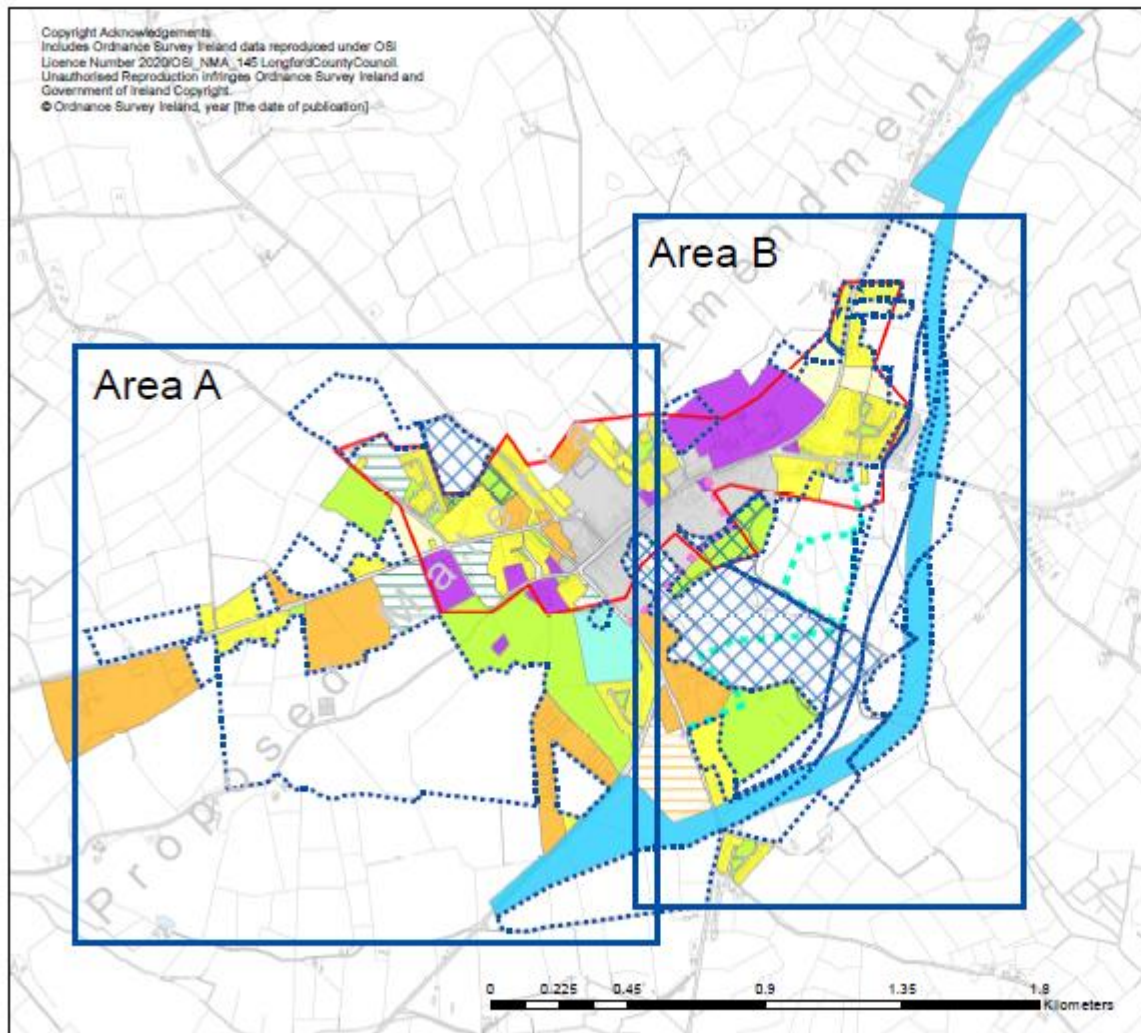
The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced within Granard. Within Granard significant areas of land have been revised and the land-use maps showing zone 'A' west of the town and zone 'B' east present the proposed amendments.

In the Granard area 'A' large areas of land have been de-zoned from industrial/commercial/warehousing, in particular those areas outside of the CSO settlement boundary and along the regional and national roads. The revised zoning plan presents a more compact form of development. Granard Area 'B' to the east of the town a significant number of amendments are indicated reflecting the constrained land-use (flooding) issues and the identified CSO boundary. Lands beyond this boundary have been de-zoned accordingly.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Granard are presented in Appendices B and C of this report respectfully.



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## Granard Proposed Material Amendments Area A & Area B

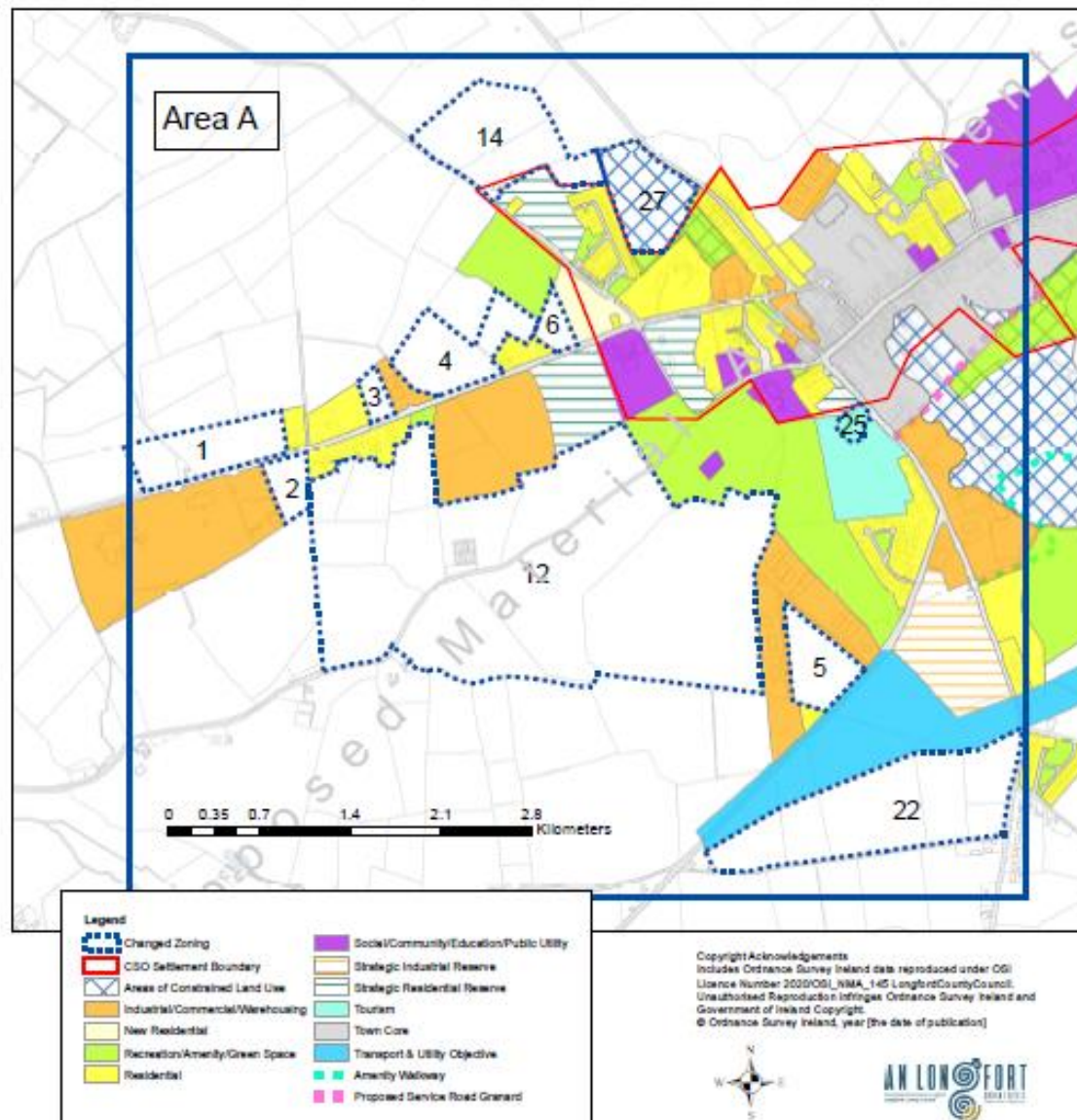
County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

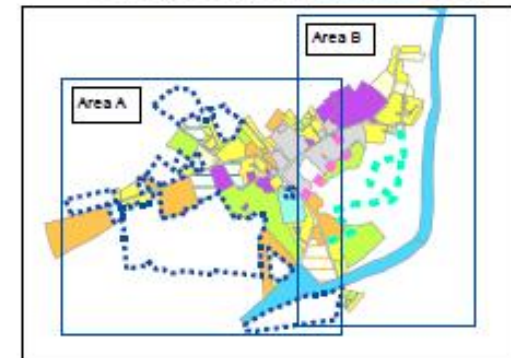
- Changed Zoning
- Areas of Constrained Land Use
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Industrial Reserve
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Tourism
- Town Core
- Transport & Utility Objective
- Amenity Walkway
- Proposed Service Road Granard

See separate Maps  
of Area A and Area B





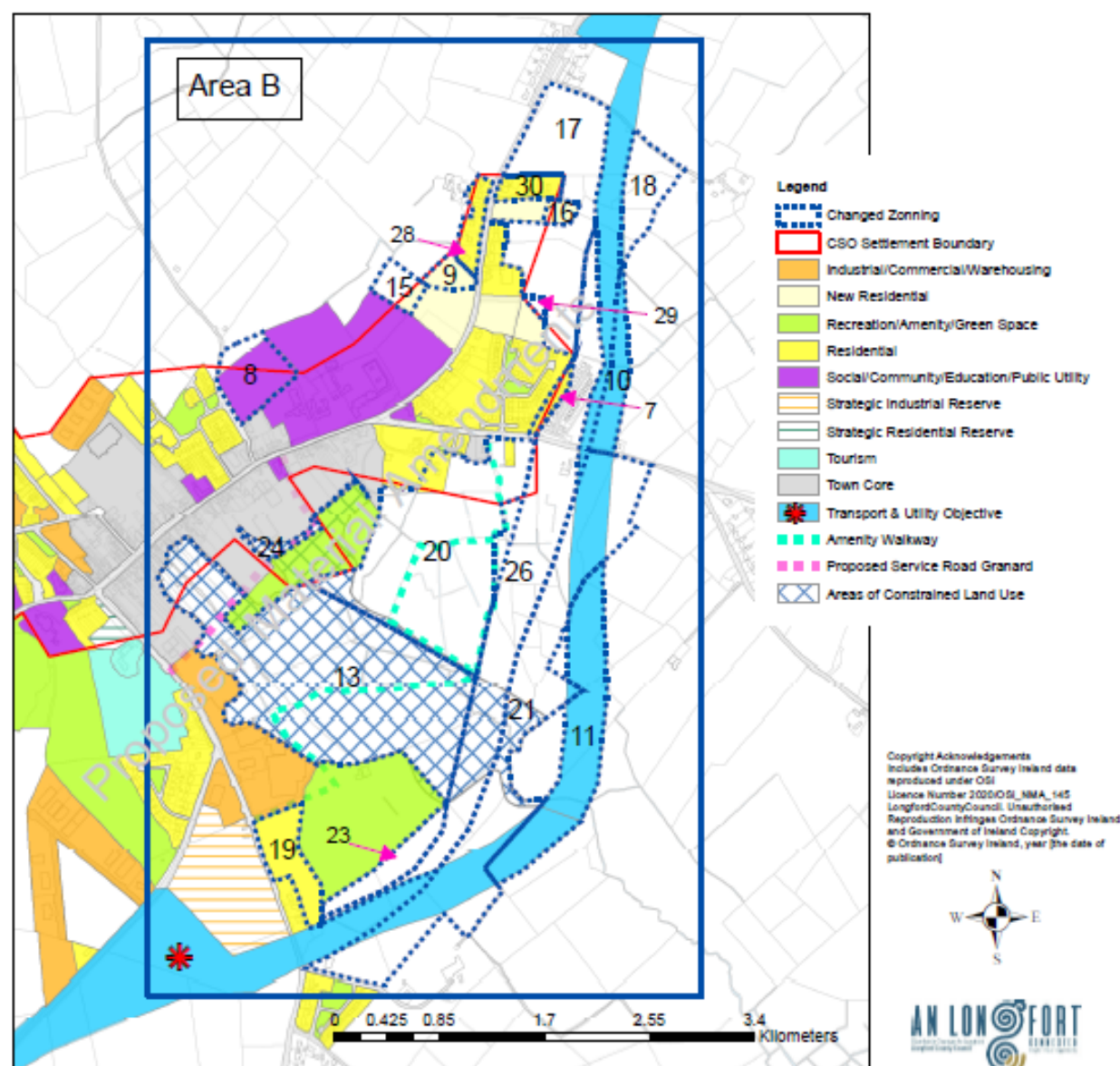
## Granard Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



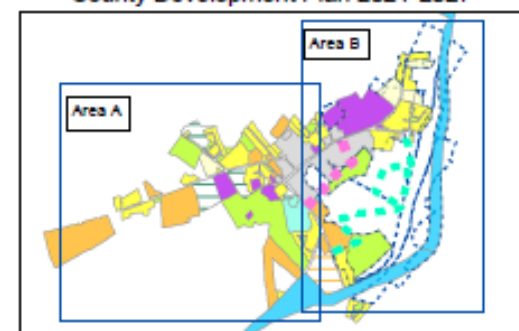
### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing</b>		
No Zoning		1
No Zoning		2
No Zoning		3
No Zoning		4
No Zoning		5
<b>New Residential</b>		
No Zoning		6
<b>Recreation/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
No Zoning		27
<b>Recreational/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
No Zoning		12
<b>Residential Reserve</b>		
No Zoning		14
<b>Strategic Industrial Reserve</b>		
No Zoning		22
<b>Town Core</b>		
Tourism		25





## Granard Proposed Material Amendments - Area B County Development Plan 2021-2027



Zoning Changes - Area B		
Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>New Residential</b>		
Residential		7
No Zoning		29
<b>No Zoning</b>		
New Residential		9
Transport & Utility Objective		10
Transport & Utility Objective		11
Residential		28
<b>Recreational/TownCore/Industrial</b>		
No Zoning		13
<b>Social/Community/Education/Public Utility</b>		
Residential		19
<b>Strategic Industrial Reserve</b>		
Social/Community/Education/Public Utility+ No Zoning		8
No Zoning & Residential		20
No Zoning & Transport & Utility Objective		21
No Zoning		23
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
New Residential & No Zoning		15
New Residential		16
No Zoning		17
No Zoning		18
Residential		30
<b>Town Core</b>		
No Zoning		24
<b>Transport &amp; Utility Objective</b>		
No Zoning		26
<b>Legend</b>		
Amenity Walkway - New		
Transport & Utility Objectives - New position for proposed road		

## Appendix A3- Self-Sustaining Towns: Ballymahon

The land-use zonings for Ballymahon has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

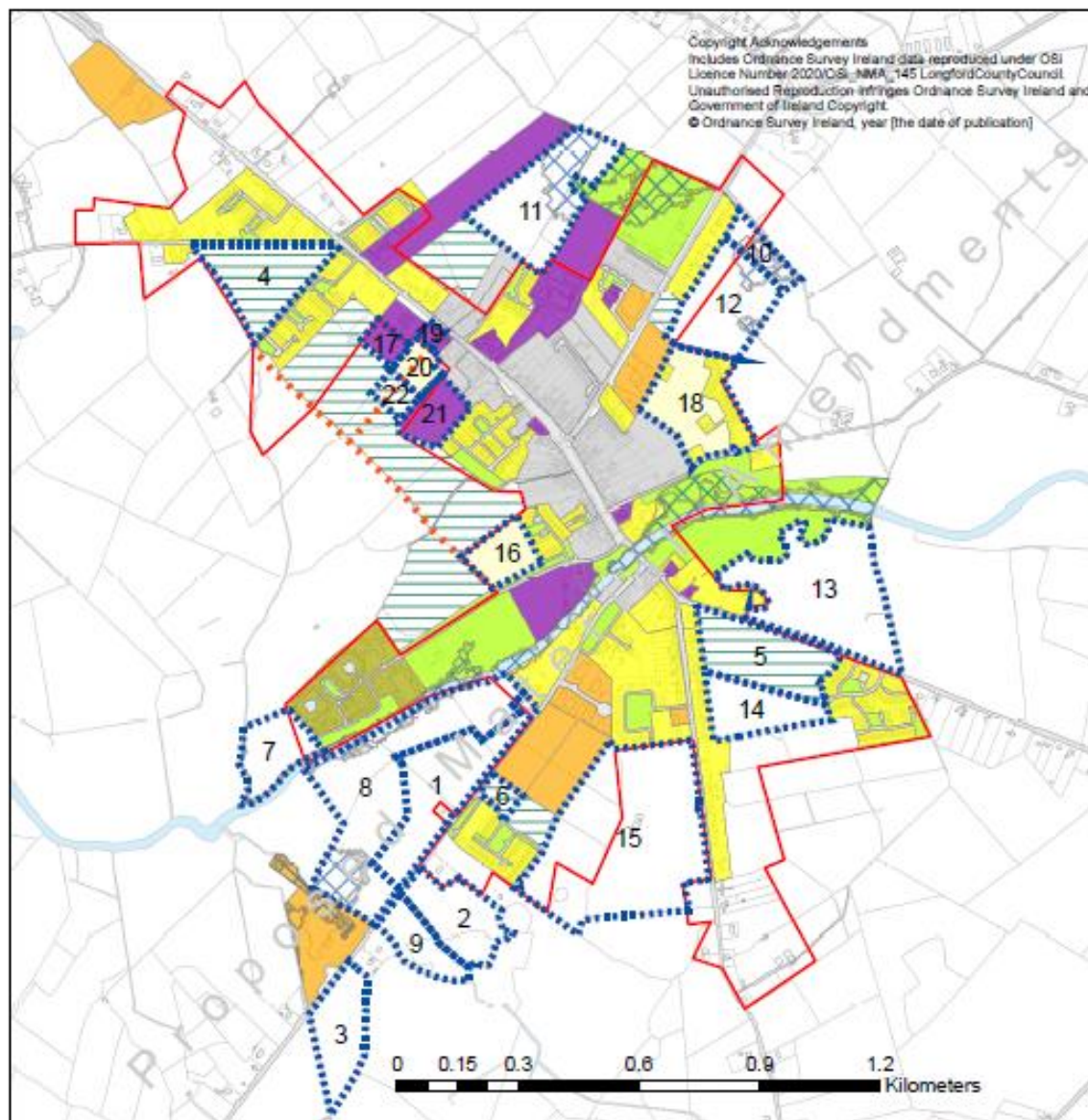
The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary has highlighted specific areas that are subsequently identified as undevelopable and or constrained, lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The revised settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified. The subsequent zoning map for Ballymahon identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced within Ballymahon significant areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned. The settlement has significant infrastructure capacity issues which have been identified and as a consequence the quantum of residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing lands zoned within the town settlement have been significantly reduced. The revised zoning plan presents a more compact form of development, with proposed new residential development located within the defined CSO settlement boundary following the principle of compact growth and sustainable urban development. Significant areas to the south of the town, the north and east of the town have been de-zoned.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Ballymahon are presented in Appendices B and C of this report respectfully.



## Ballymahon Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

- Changed Zoning
- Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity & Green Space
- Residential
- Residential/Community Services/Med. Centre
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Town Core
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Areas of Constrained Land Use
- Proposed Roadway

### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing	No Zoning	1 - 3
New Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	4 - 6
Recreation/Amenity/Green Space	No Zoning	7 - 10
Residential Reserve	No Zoning	11 - 15
	New Residential	16
	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	17
Site Resolution Objective	Residential & New Residential	18
Town Core	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	19, 21
	New Residential	20
	Strategic Residential Reserve	22
Proposed Roadway		





## Appendix A4 - Self-Sustaining Towns: Edgeworthstown

The land-use zonings for Edgeworthstown has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

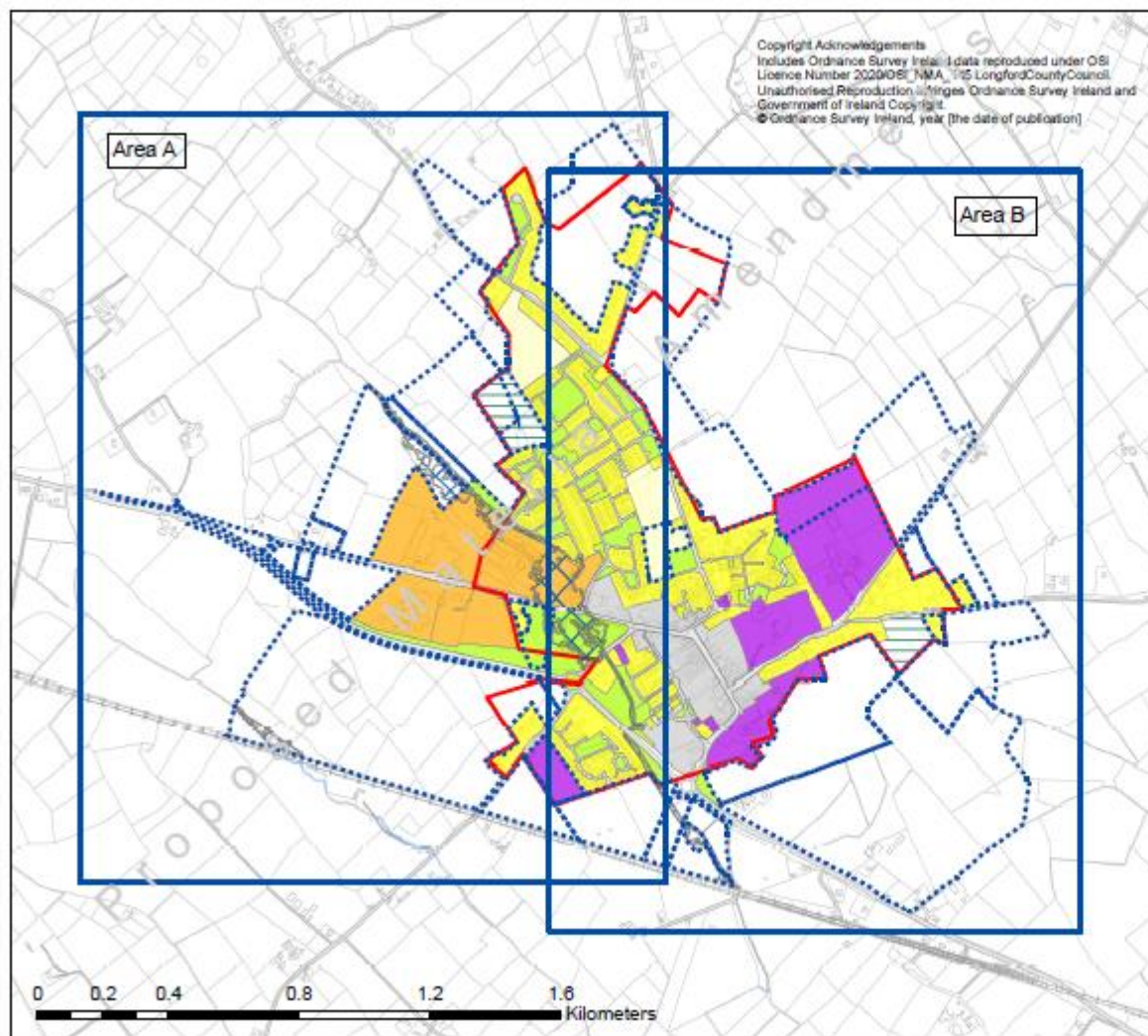
The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plans (Area A west and Area B east) identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning map identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

Within Edgeworthstown significant areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned. The settlement has significant infrastructure capacity issues, especially in relation to wastewater which have been identified and as a consequence the quantum of residential, residential reserve and industrial/commercial/warehousing and reserve lands zoned within the town settlement have been significantly reduced.

Significant areas within Area A to the north, west and south of the town have been de-zoned. Significant lands within the Area B (east) have also been re-zoned including lands to the north, east and south of the town

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Edgeworthstown is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.



## Edgeworthstown Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

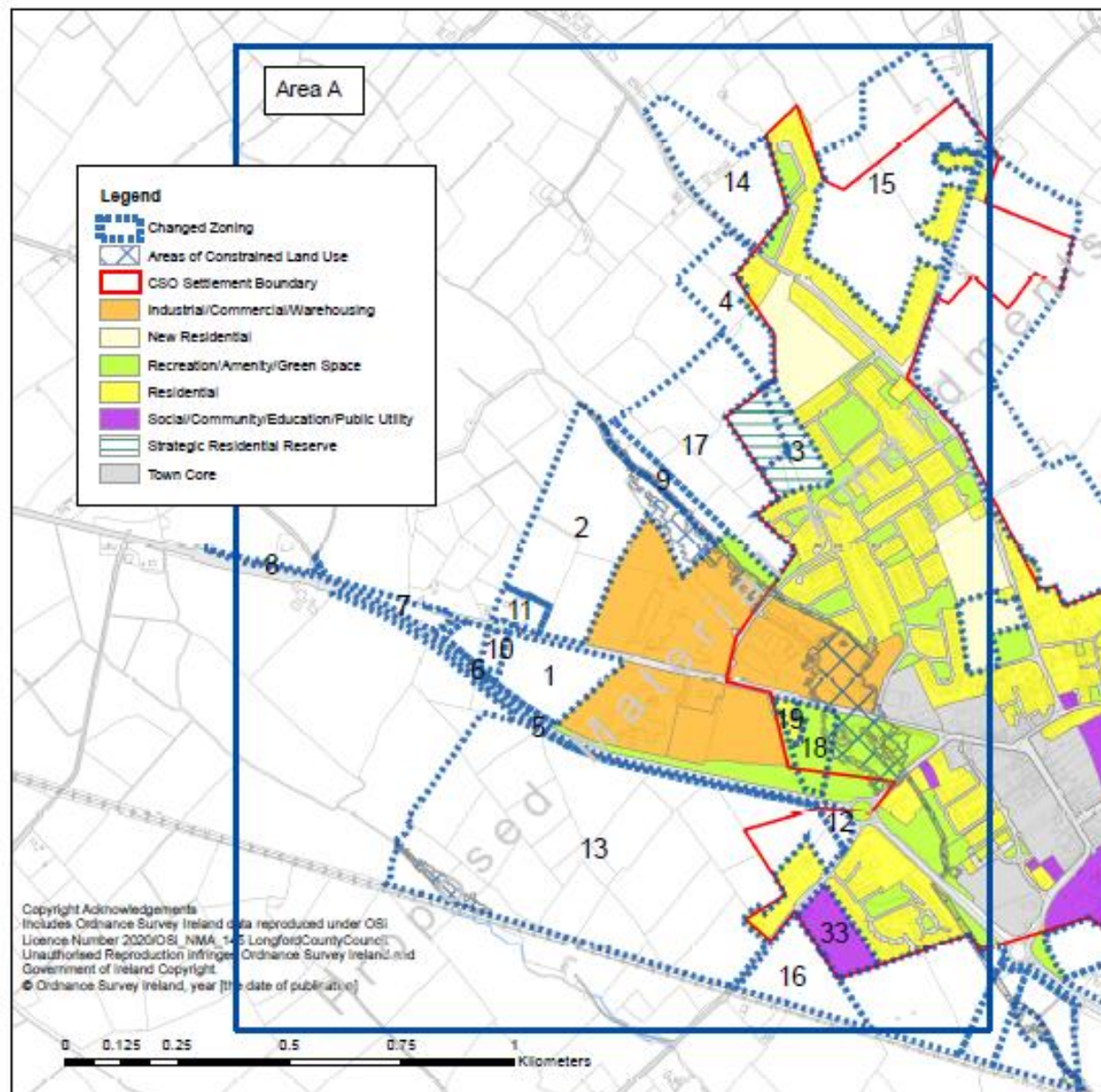
### Legend

- Changed Zoning
- Areas of Constrained Land Use
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity/Green Spaces
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Town Core

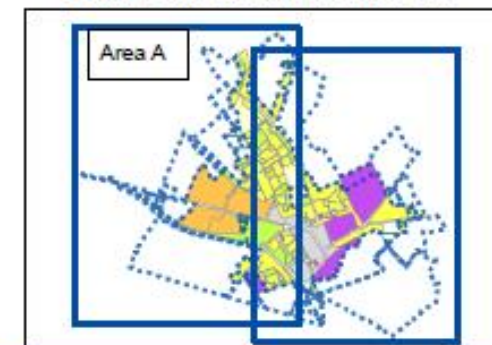
See separate Maps  
of Area A and Area B





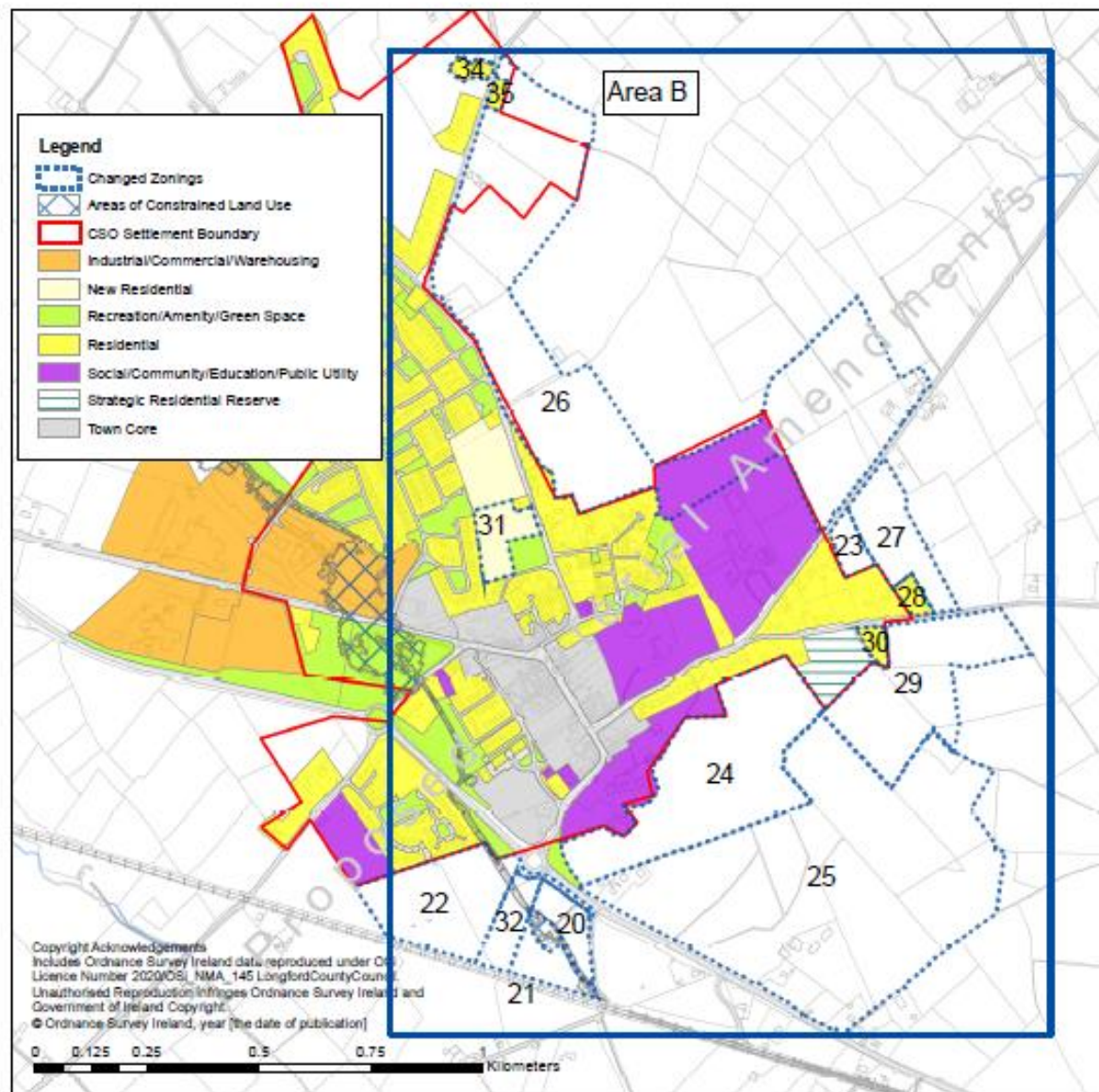


## Edgeworthstown Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

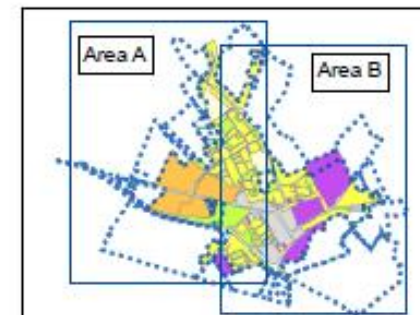


Changed Zoning		
Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No.: Area on Map
Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing	No Zoning	1, 2
New Residential	Strategic Residential Reserve	3
	No Zoning	4
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	No Zoning	5 - 9
	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	33
Residential	No Zoning	10, 11
Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	No Zoning	12
Strategic Industrial Reserve	No Zoning	13
Strategic Residential Reserve	No Zoning	14 - 17
	Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	18
	Residential	19





## Edgeworthstown Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



Changed Zoning		
Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No.: Area on Map
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	No Zoning	20 - 22
Residential	No Zoning	23
Social/Community/Education	No Zoning	24
Strategic Industrial Reserve	No Zoning	25
Strategic Residential Reserve	Residential	34, 26, 30, 35
	Social/Community/Education/Public Use + No Zoning	26
	No Zoning	27, 29
	New Residential	31
Transport and Utilities Infrastructure	No Zoning	32





## Appendix A5 - Self-Sustaining Towns: Lanesborough

The land-use zonings for Lanesborough has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

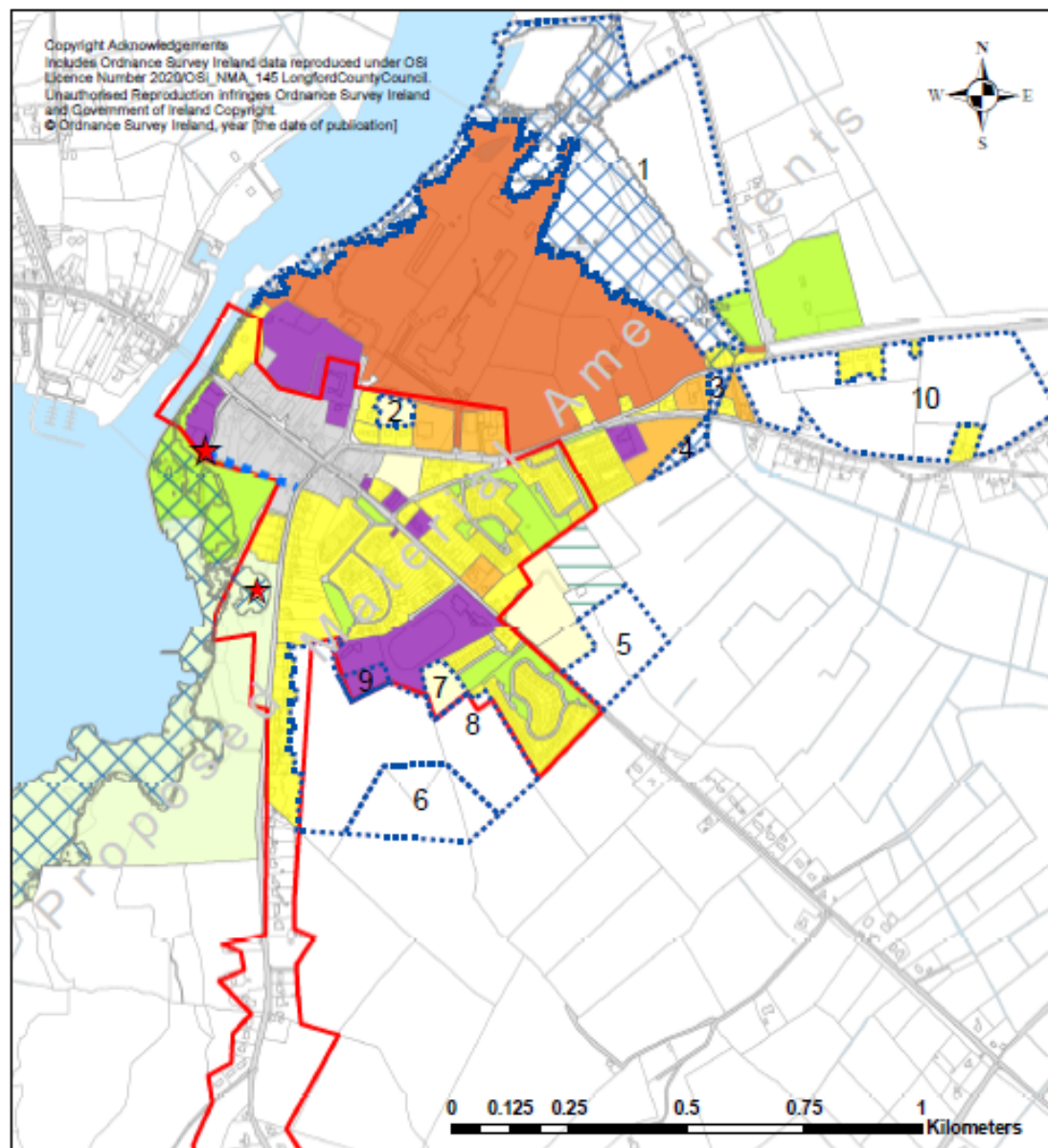
Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning map identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

Within Lanesborough significant areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned and or de-zoned. Significant areas to the north, east and south of the town have been de-zoned in particular lands which were zoned Strategic Residential Reserve. Proposed new residential lands are now located within the existing CSO boundary.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Lanesborough is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.



## Lanesborough Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

- Changed Zoning
- Areas of Constrained Land Use
- Proposed Road - New
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Industrial/Alternative Energy
- Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing
- New Residential
- Protected Area/Passive Amenity
- Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Town Core
- Tourism Objective/URDF Funded Projects - New

### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>Industrial/Alternative Energy</b>		
	No Zoning	1
	New Residential	2
<b>Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing</b>		
	No Zoning	3
	No Zoning	4
<b>New Residential</b>		
	No Zoning	5
<b>Recreational/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
	No Zoning	6
<b>Residential</b>		
	New Residential	7
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
	No Zoning	8
	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	9
	No Zoning	10

- Tourism Objective/URDF Funded Projects - New
- Proposed Road - New



## Appendix A6 - Towns & Villages: Aughnacliffe

The land-use zonings for Aughnacliffe has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

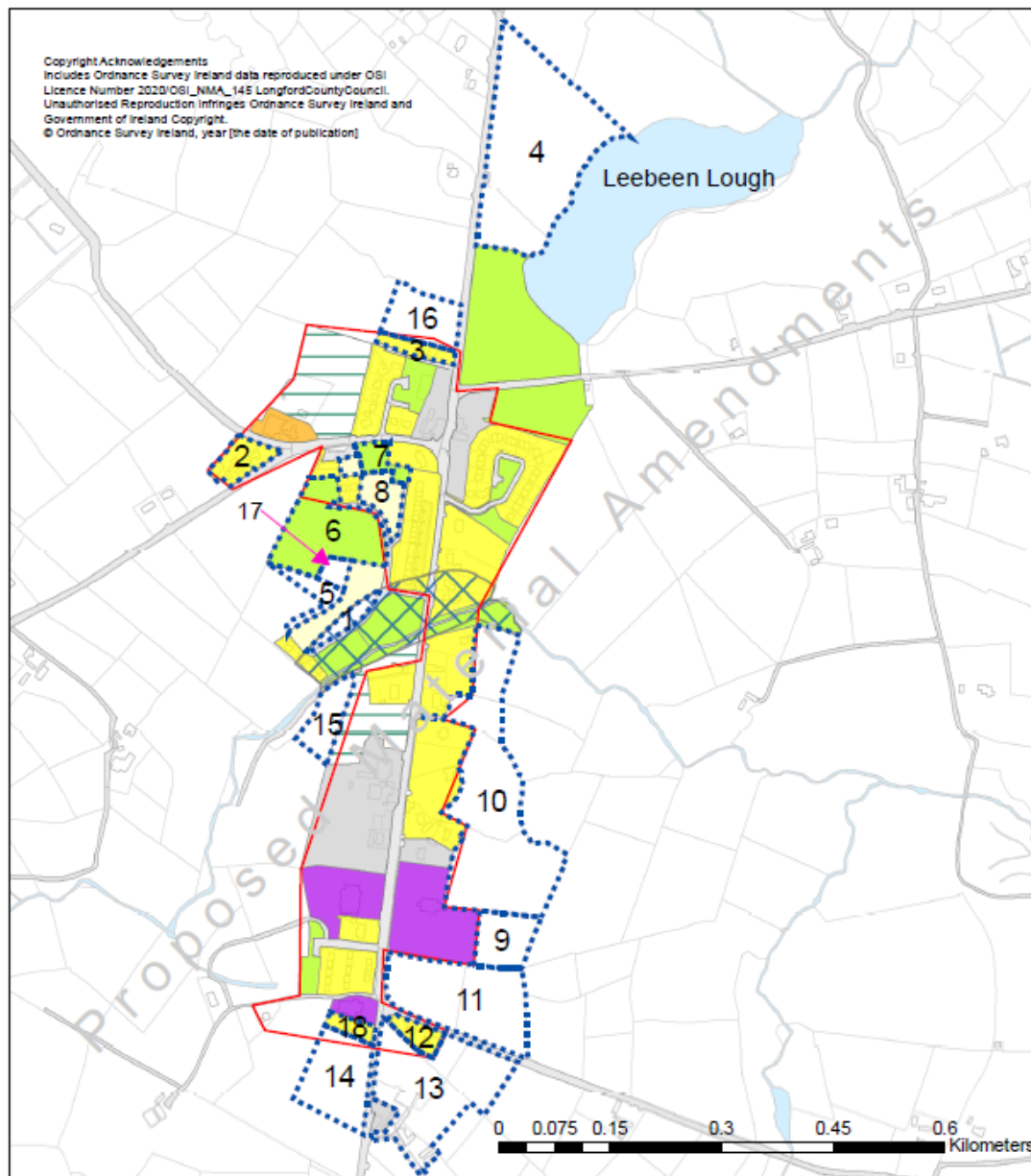
The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning map identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

Within Aughnacliffe large areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned and or de-zoned. The revised zoning plans presents a more compact form of development, with proposed new residential development located within the defined CSO settlement boundary following the principle of compact growth and sustainable urban development.

Significant areas to the north, lands to the west, the east and the south of the town have been revised. The amount of lands zoned Strategic Residential Reserve have been reduced.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Aughnacliffe is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.



## Aughnaclyffe Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

	Changed Zoning		Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
	CSO Settlement Boundary		Residential
	Areas of Constrained Land Use		Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
	Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing		Strategic Residential Reserve
	New Residential		Town Core

### Changed Zoning

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No.: Area on Map
-------------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------

#### New Residential

No Zoning	1, 17
-----------	-------

#### No Zoning

Residential	2, 3
-------------	------

#### Recreational/Amenity/Green Space

No Zoning	4
-----------	---

#### Site Resolution Objective

No Zoning	5
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	6, 7
New Residential	8

#### Social/Community/Education/Public Utility

No Zoning	9
-----------	---

#### Strategic Residential Reserve

No Zoning	10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16
Residential	12
Residential	18





## Appendix A7 - Towns & Villages: Ballinalee

The land-use zonings for Ballinalee has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

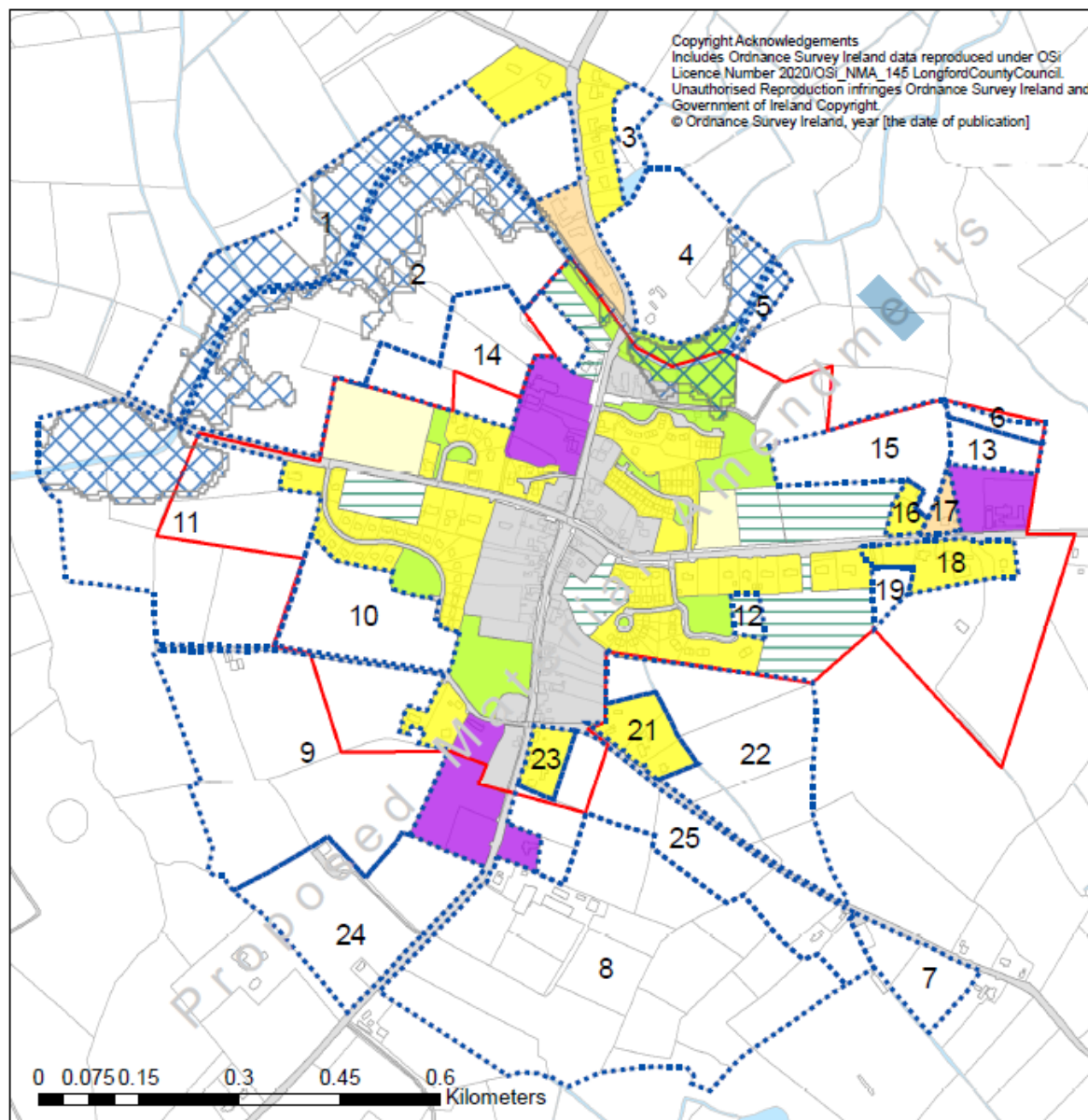
The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning map identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

Within Ballinalee significant areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned and or de-zoned. The revised zoning plan presents a more compact form of development, with proposed new residential development located within the defined CSO settlement boundary following the principle of compact growth and sustainable urban development.

Significant areas to the north identified as constrained use have been de-zoned, further lands to the west and east and to the south have also been revised. The quantum of lands zoned as Strategic Residential Reserve and Recreation/Amenity/Green Space lands have been de-zoned.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Ballinalee is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.



## Ballinalee Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

	Changed Zoning		Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
	Areas of Constrained Land Use		Residential
	CSO Settlement Boundary		Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
	Light Industrial/Commercial/Servicing		Strategic Residential Reserve
	New Residential		Town Core

### Changed Zoning

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No.: Area on Map
<b>Recreational/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
	No Zoning	1 - 11
<b>Residential</b>		
	Strategic Residential Reserve	12
<b>Social/Community/Education/Public Utility</b>		
	No Zoning	13
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
	No Zoning	14, 15, 19, 22, 24, 25
	Residential	16, 18, 21, 23
	Light Industrial/Commercial/Servicing	17



## Appendix A8 - Towns & Villages: Drumlish

The land-use zonings for Drumlish has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning maps identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

Within Drumlish significant areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned and or de-zoned. The revised zoning plans (Area A – west) (Area B- east) presents a more compact form of development, with proposed new residential development located within the defined CSO settlement boundary following the principle of compact growth and sustainable urban development.

**Map zoned Area A (west)** identifies significant areas to the north identified as constrained use have been de-zoned, further lands to the west and east and to the south have also been revised. Additional existing residential lands have been included.

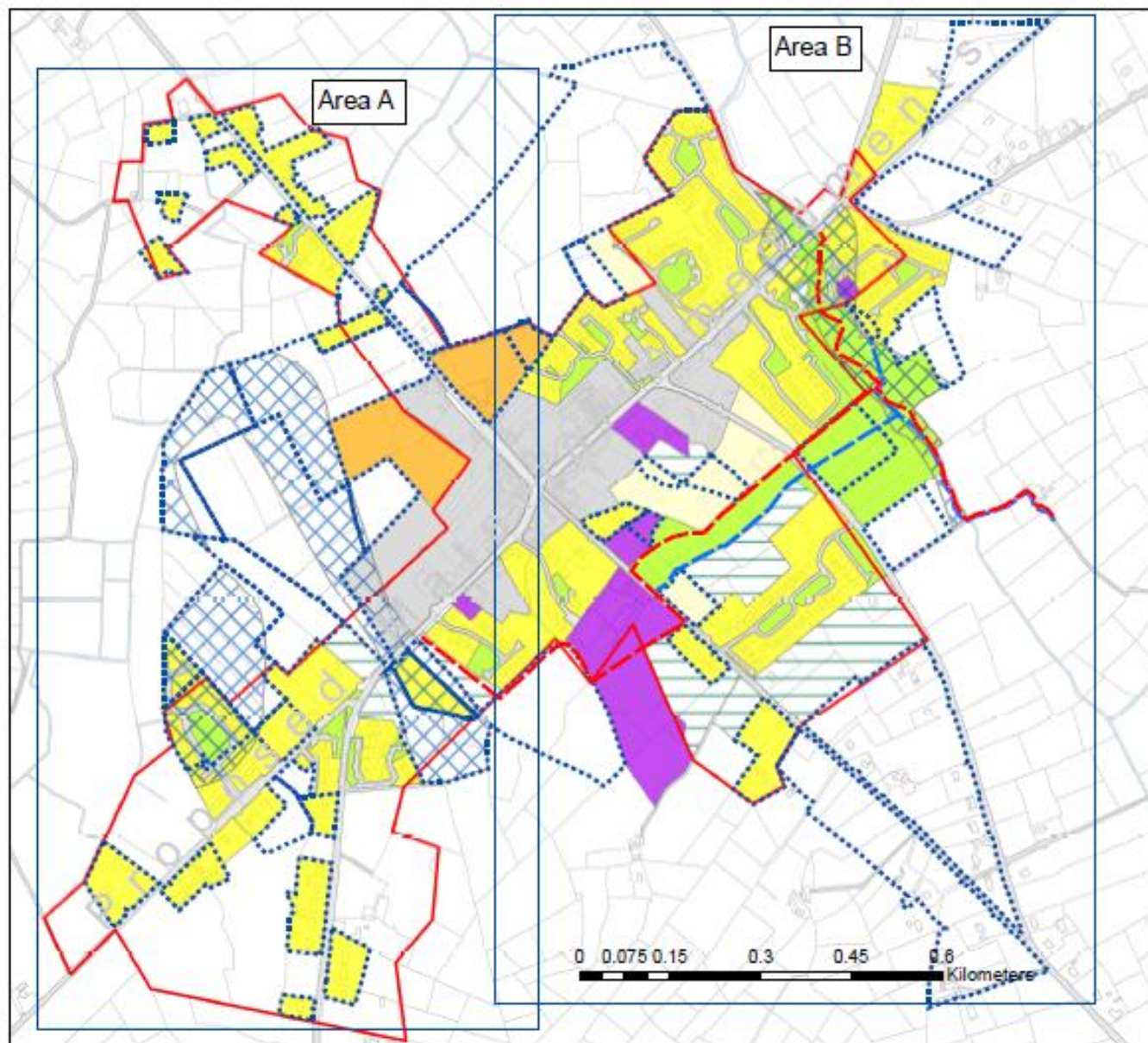
**Map zoned Area B (east)** identifies large areas as constrained use, and significant lands have been de-zoned which had been previously zoned as Strategic Residential

Reserve; in particular those located around the periphery of the settlement and outside of the CSO boundary.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Drumlish is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.



# Drumlish Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



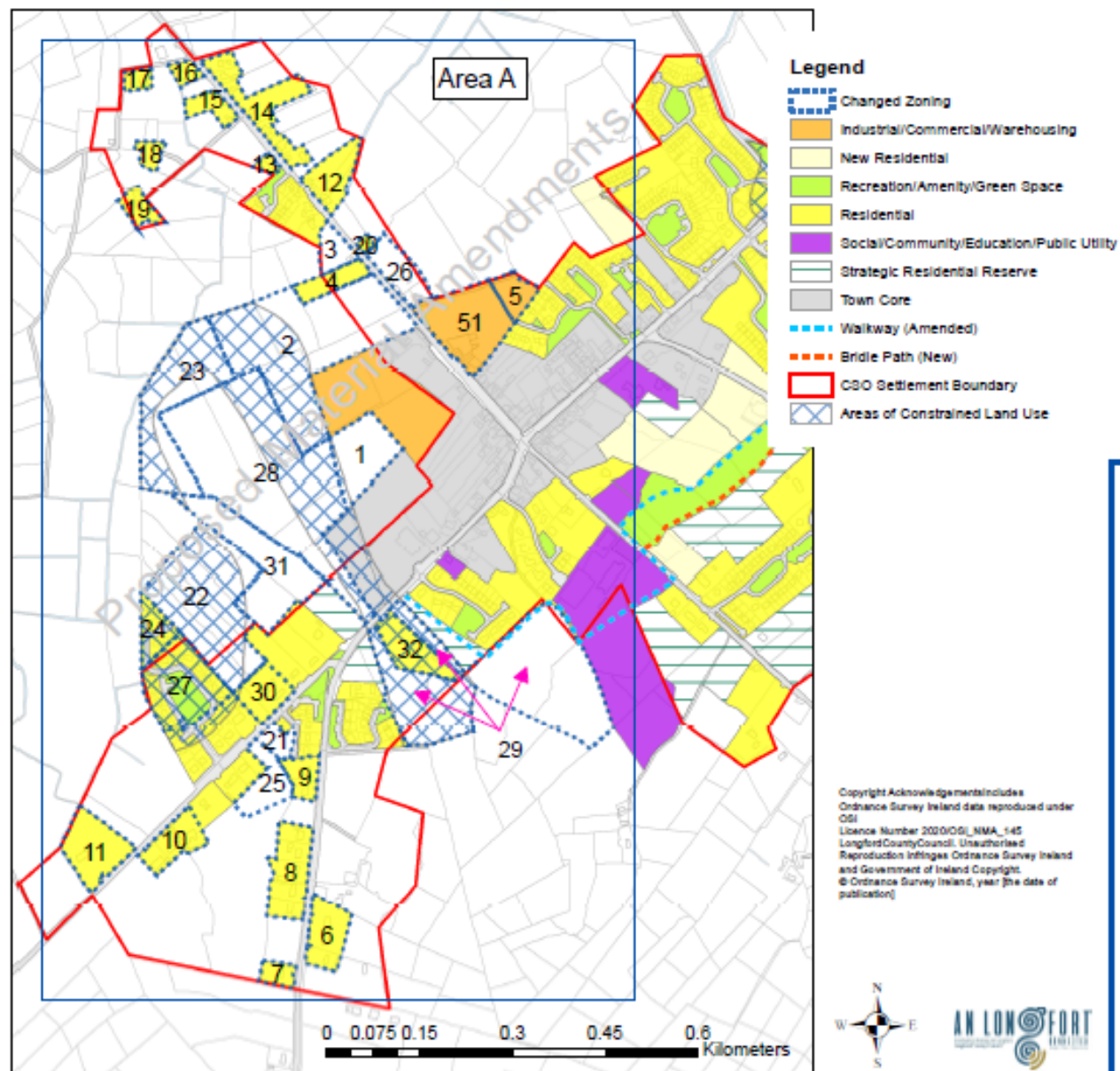
## Legend

- Changed Zoning
- Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Town Core
- Walkway
- Bridle Path
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Areas of Constrained Land Use

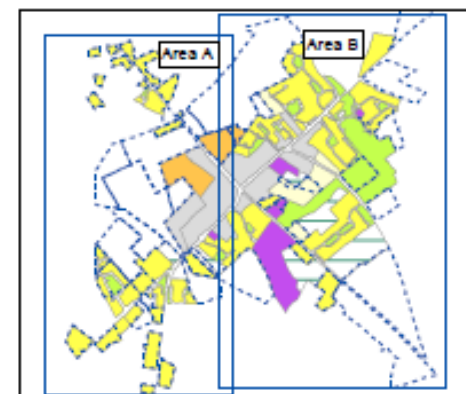
See separate Maps  
of Area A and Area B

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## Drumlish Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



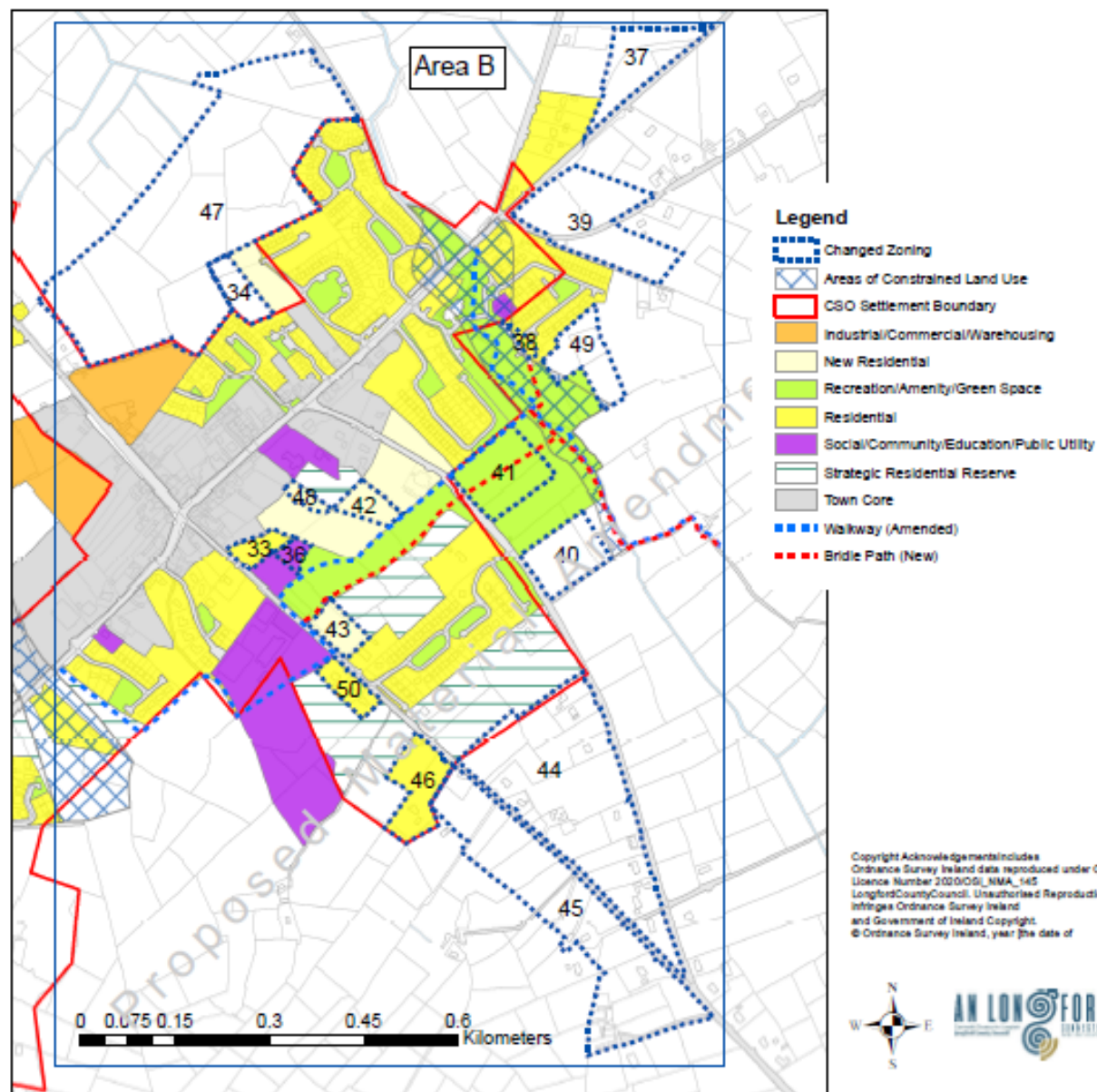
### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Attention: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing</b>		
No Zoning		1 - 3
Residential		4
<b>New Residential</b>		
Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing		5
<b>No Zoning</b>		
Residential		6 - 20
<b>Recreational/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
No Zoning		21
No Zoning		22 - 23
Residential		24
<b>Residential</b>		
No Zoning		25 - 26
<b>Site Resolution Objective</b>		
Residential		27
<b>Strategic Industrial Reserve</b>		
No Zoning		28
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
No Zoning		29, 31
Residential		30, 32
<b>Town Core</b>		
Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing		51

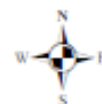
Walkway (Amended) Bridle Path (New)



# Drumlish Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



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## Zoning Changes - Area B

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
New Residential	Residential	33
	No Zoning	34
	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	36
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	No Zoning	37
	Residential	38
Strategic Residential Reserve	No Zoning	33, 40, 44, 45, 47, 49
	Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	41
	New Residential	42, 43, 48
	Residential	46, 50

Walkway (Amended)  
Bridle Path (New)

## Appendix A9 - Towns & Villages: Keenagh

The land-use zonings for Keenagh has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

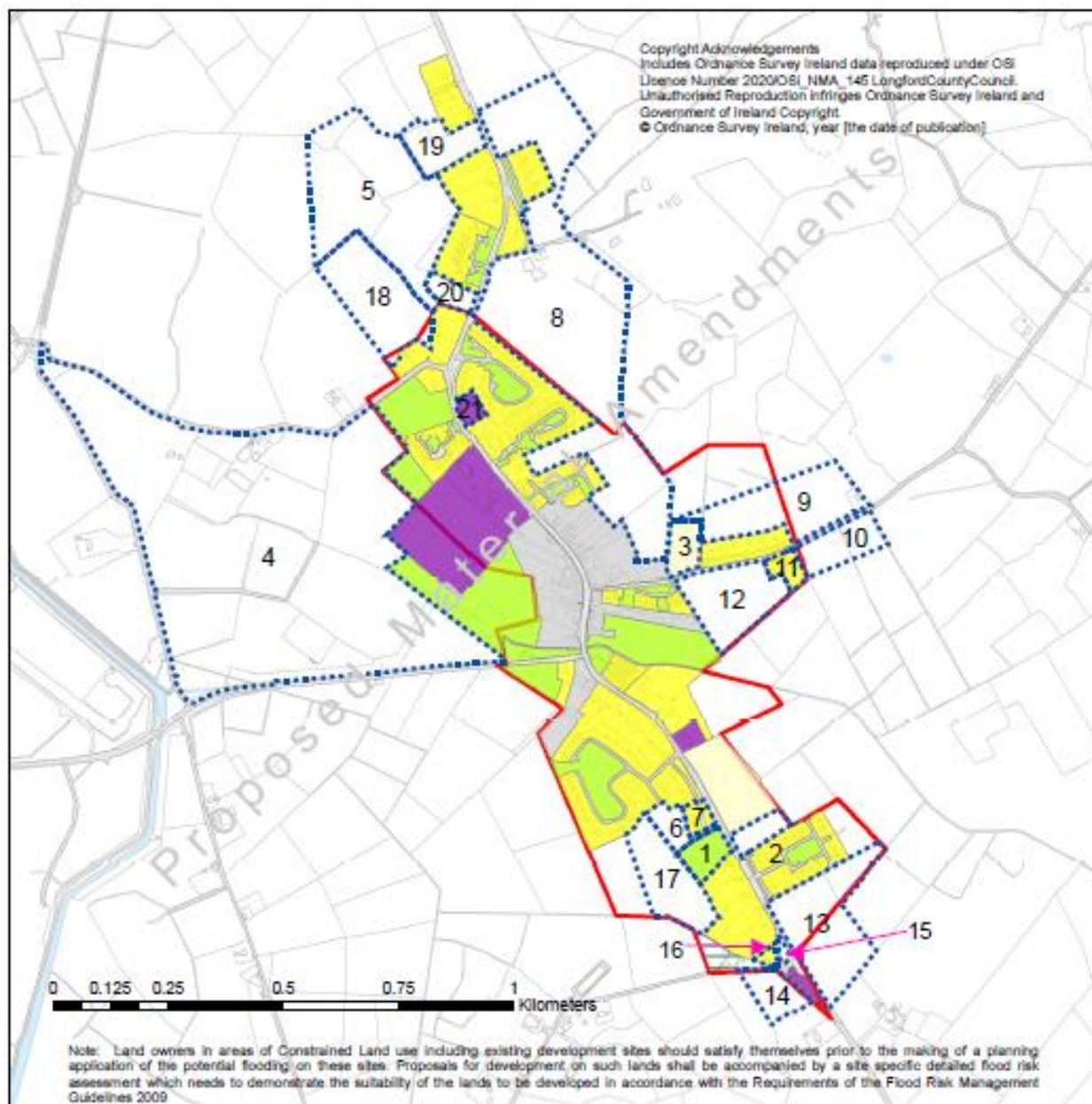
The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

Within Keenagh the quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced, large areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned and or de-zoned. The revised zoning plan presents a more compact form of development, with proposed new residential development located within the defined CSO settlement boundary following the principle of compact growth and sustainable urban development.

Significant areas to the north, to the south west and east have been revised and lands de-zoned identified as constrained use have been de-zoned, further lands to the west and east and to the south have also been revised. The quantum of lands zoned for Strategic Residential Reserve zoned lands have been de-zoned and New Residential lands zoned within the CSO boundary.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Keenagh is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.





## Keenagh Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

- Changed Zoning
- Areas of Constrained Land Use
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity & Green Space
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Town Core

Zoning Changes		
Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
New Residential	No Zoning	2
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	No Zoning	4
	No Zoning	5
Residential	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	21
Site Resolution Objective	Recreation/Amenity/Green Space	1
	No Zoning	6
	Residential	7
Strategic Residential Reserve	New Residential	3
	No Zoning	8 - 10, 12 - 19
	Residential	11, 16
Town Core	No Zoning	20



## Appendix A10 - Towns & Villages: Legan

The land-use zonings for Legan has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

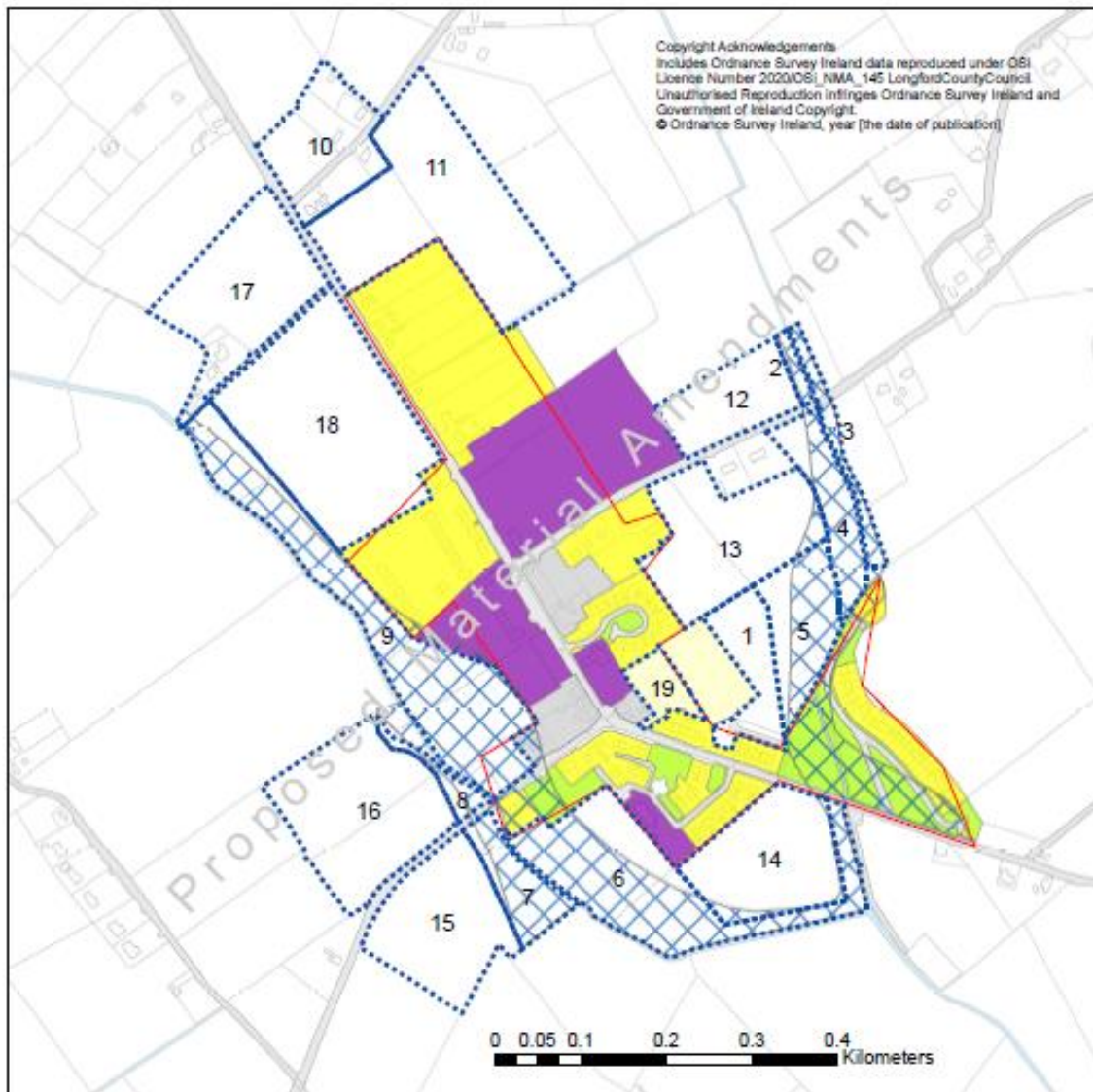
The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning maps identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

Within Legan significant areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned and or de-zoned. The revised zoning plan presents a more compact form of development, with proposed new residential development located within the defined CSO settlement boundary following the principle of compact growth and sustainable urban development.

Significant areas to the north, to the south west and east have been revised and lands de-zoned identified as constrained use have been de-zoned, further lands to the west and east and to the south have also been revised. The quantum of the lands zoned Strategic Residential Reserve have been de-zoned.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Legan is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.



## Legan Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

- Changed Zoning
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Areas of Constrained Land Use

### Appendix\_B

- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Town Core

Zoning Changes		
Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
New Residential	No Zoning	1
Recreation/Amenity/Green Space	No Zoning	2 - 9
Strategic Residential Reserve	No Zoning	11 - 18
Town Core	New Residential	19





## Appendix A11 - Towns & Villages: Newtownforbes

The land-use zonings for Newtownforbes has been revised in accordance with the Infrastructure Assessment framework and the resulting land-use plan for the settlement is presented below.

The settlement maps presented in the initial Draft County Development Plan 2021-2027 were based on the current County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the preliminary infrastructure assessment undertaken in early 2020 which informed the review of the land-use zonings for the key settlements and the drafting of the County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Following the Public Consultation on the Draft Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the review of Submissions and Observations received during the consultation period (27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 until 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021) the land use zoning plans for the settlements were revised and the Further Iteration Plans are included in this report under Appendix C (produced during the period December 2020 to March 2021). An additional review of the Infrastructure Assessment Report was undertaken following the development of the Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions received, specifically the submissions from the OPR and EMRA as well as other thematic and area specific submissions.

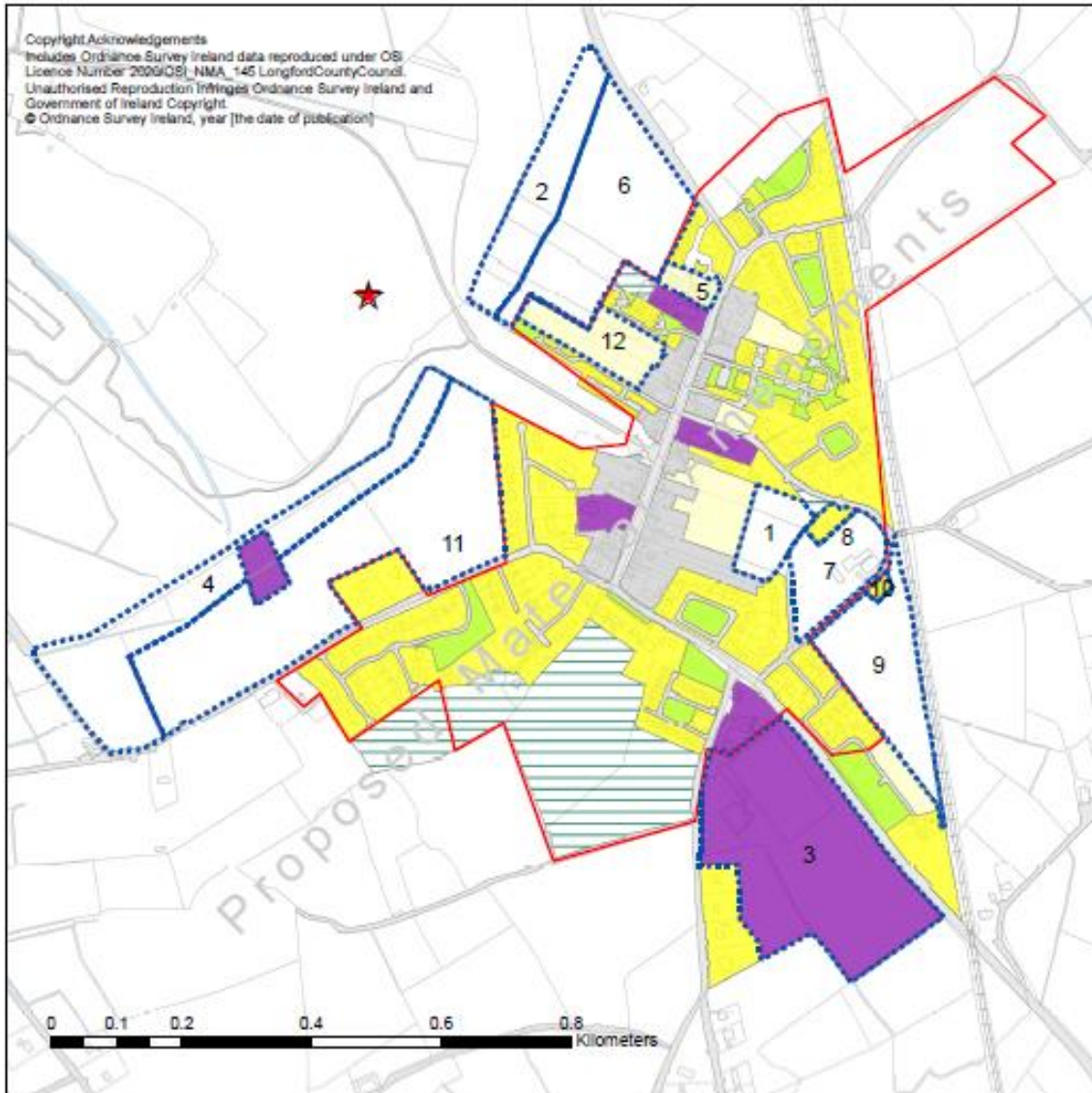
The Infrastructure Assessment, the inclusion of the flood risk zonings and the CSO settlement boundary have identified areas that are constrained and lacking the infrastructure required to the service the lands, or lands at high risk of flooding. The subsequent settlement plan identifies those sites where land-use zonings have been amended/revised and the changes identified.

The quantum of lands zoned new residential and industrial/commercial/warehousing have been reduced. The revised zoning maps identifies a more sustainable and compact form of development reflecting the CSO boundary of the town and core principle of the NPF, the EMRA RSES and Submission of the OPR on the Draft Plan.

Within Newtownforbes significant areas of land have been revised and lands re-zoned and or de-zoned. The revised zoning plan presents a more compact form of development, with proposed new residential development located within the defined CSO settlement boundary following the principle of compact growth and sustainable urban development.

Significant areas to the north, to the west and east have been revised and lands de-zoned identified as constrained use have been de-zoned, further lands to the west and east and to the south have also been revised. The quantum of lands zoned Strategic Residential Reserve have been de-zoned. New residential development sites have been reduced and located within the defined CSO boundary.

The previous Initial Sieve Mapping and the further iterative mapping for Newtownforbes is presented in Appendices B and C of this report.



## Newtownforbes Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

	Changed Zoning		Residential
	Areas of Constrained Land Use		Social/Community/Education/...
	CSO Settlement Boundary		Utility
	New Residential		Strategic Residential Reserve
	Recreation/Amenity & Green Space		Town Core
			Tourism & Events

### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
New Residential	No Zoning	1
Recreation/Amenity/Green Space	No Zoning	2, 4
	Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	3
Social/Community/Education/Public Utility	New Residential	5
Strategic Residential Reserve	No Zoning	6, 7, 9, 11
	Residential	8
	Residential	10
	New Residential	12

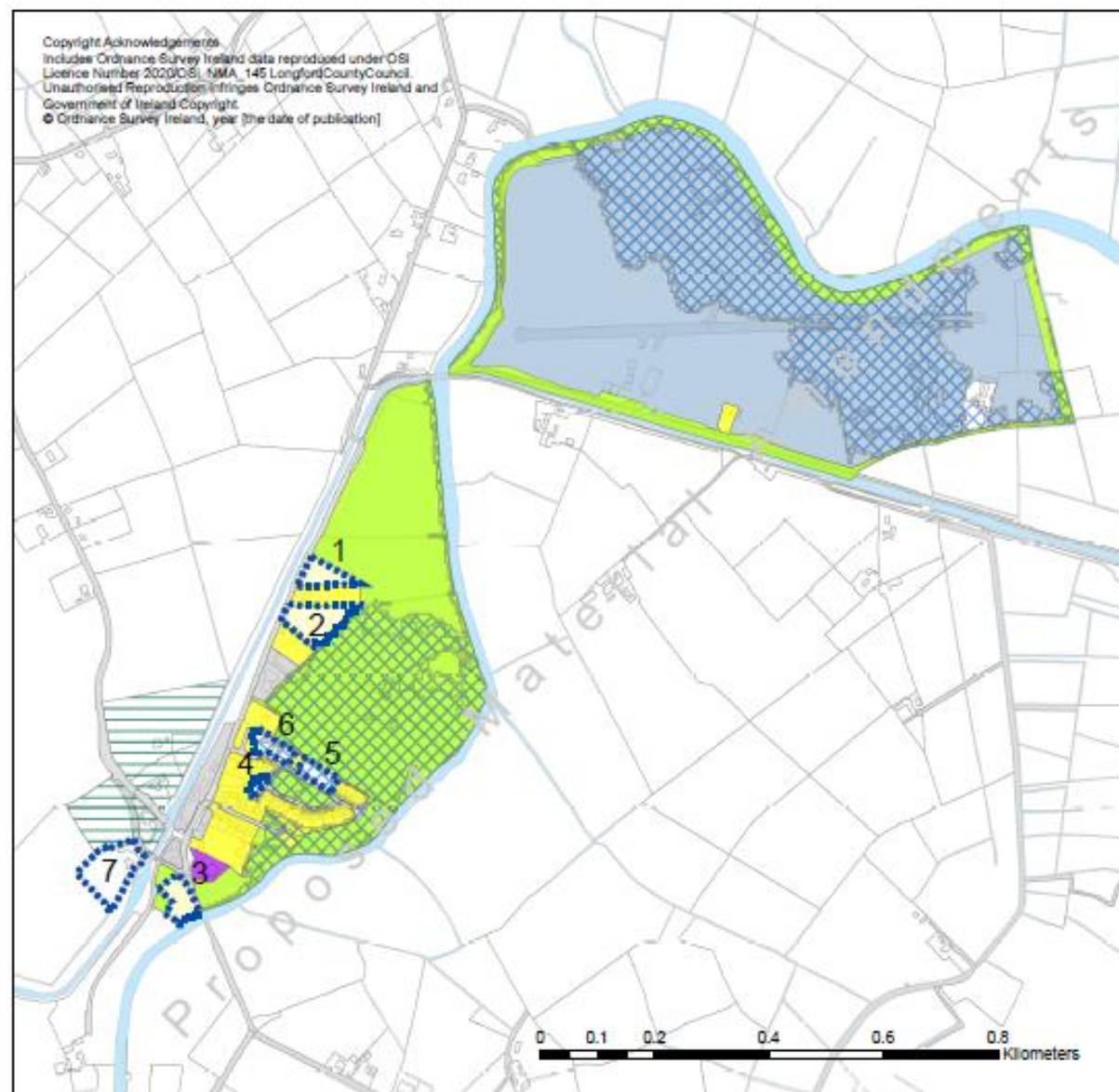


## Appendix A12 - Smaller Villages & Settlements: Abbeyshrule, Ardagh, Ballinamuck & Clondra

The following settlements and their land-use zonings have been reviewed and revised according to the CSO boundary, constrained land use and the submissions from the OPR and EMRA requesting more compact growth.

- Abbeyshrule
- Ardagh
- Ballinamuck
- Clondra

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## Abbeyshrule Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

- Zone Changes selection
- Areas of Constrained Land Use
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Airport Development Objective
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Town Core

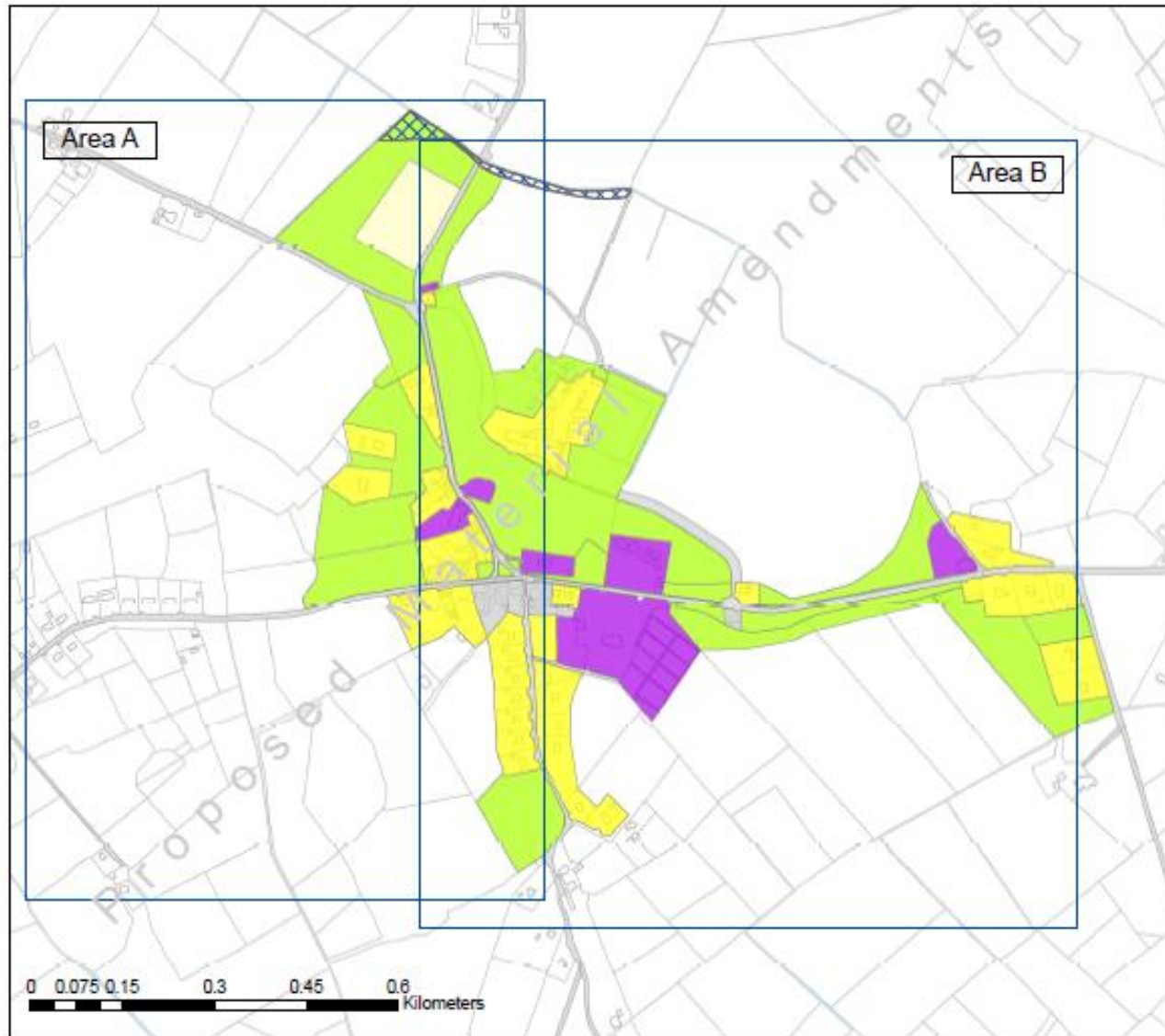
### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>Recreation/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
	New Residential	1
	New Residential	2
	New Residential	3
<b>Residential</b>		
	No Zoning	4
	No Zoning	5
	No Zoning	6
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
	No Zoning	7





# Ardagh Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



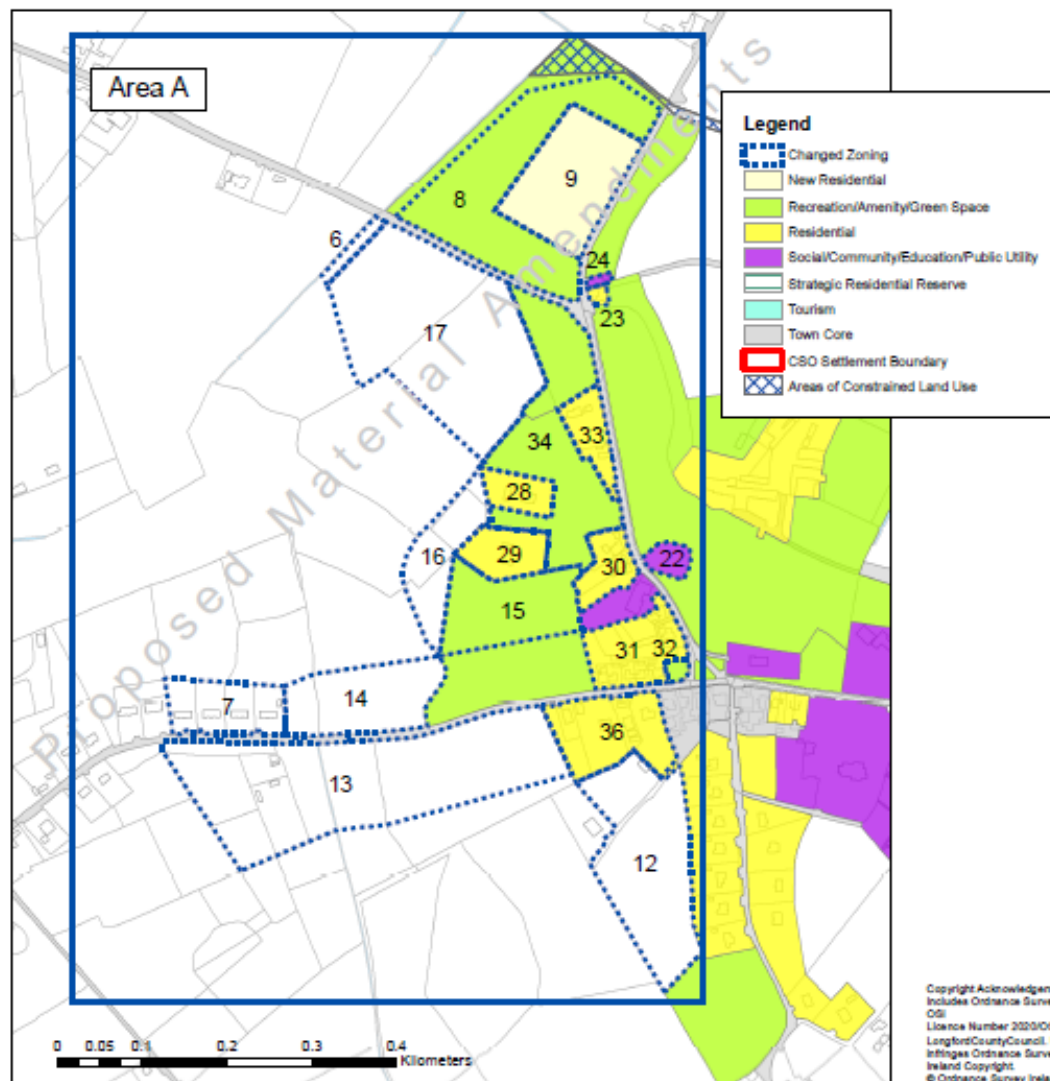
## Legend

- Changed Zoning
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity/Green Space
- Residential
- Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Tourism
- Town Core
- CSO Settlement Boundary
- Areas of Constrained Land Use

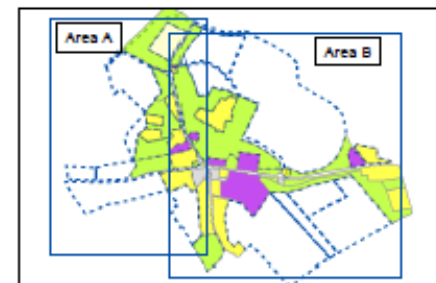
See separate Maps  
of Area A and Area B

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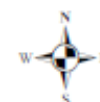


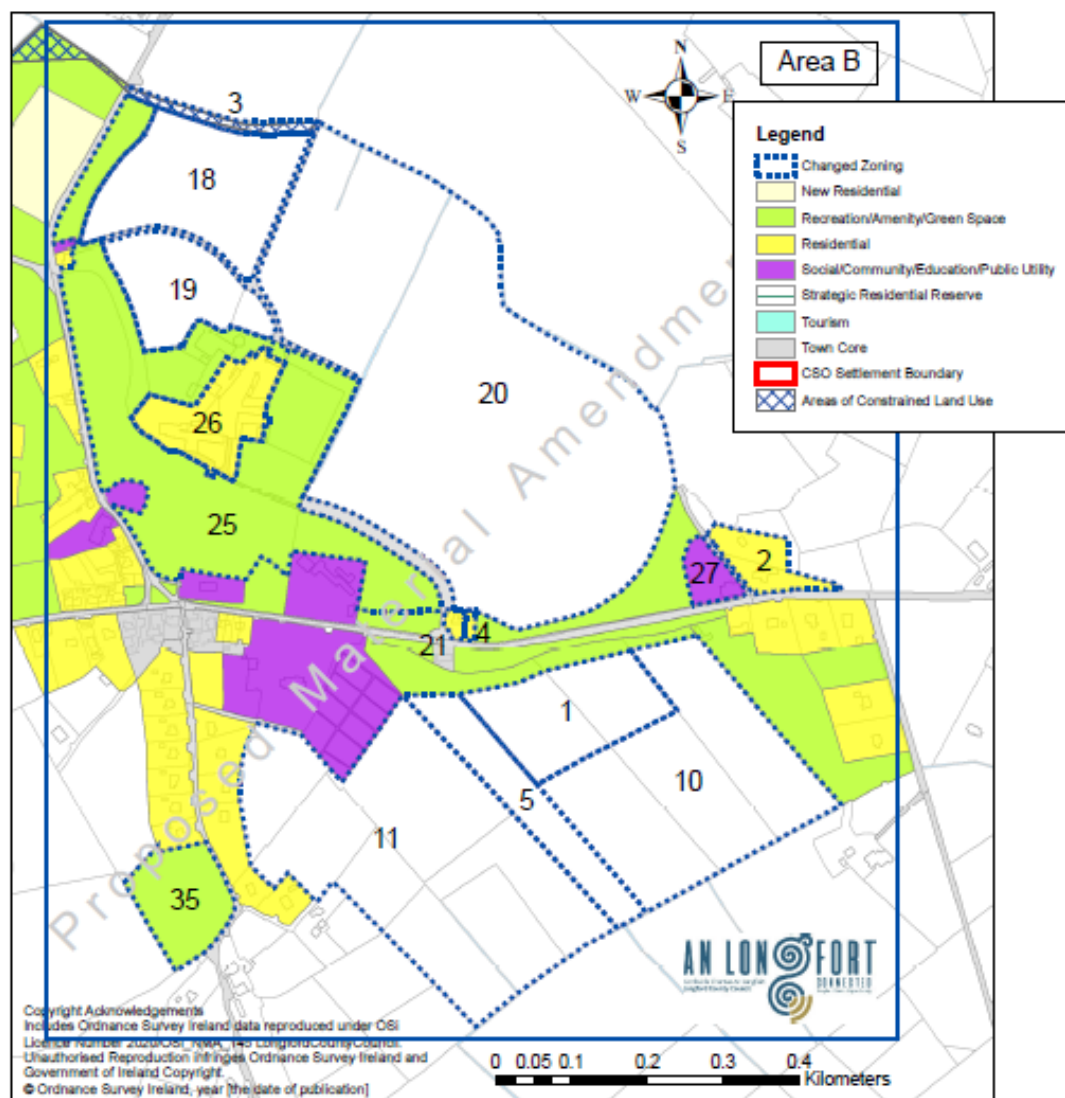
## Ardagh Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



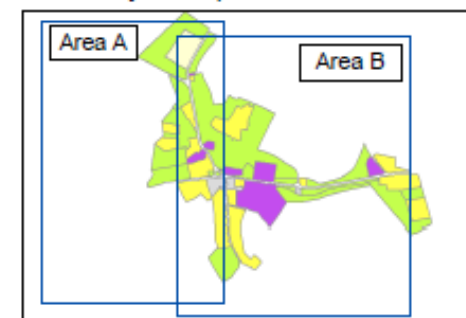
Changed Zoning		
Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No.: Area on Map
<b>Recreational/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
No Zoning		6
<b>Residential</b>		
No Zoning		7
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space		8, 15
New Residential		9
No Zoning		12, 13, 14, 16, 17
<b>Tourism</b>		
Social/Community/Education/Public Utility		22, 24
Residential		23
<b>Town Core</b>		
Residential		28 - 31, 33, 36
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space		32, 34

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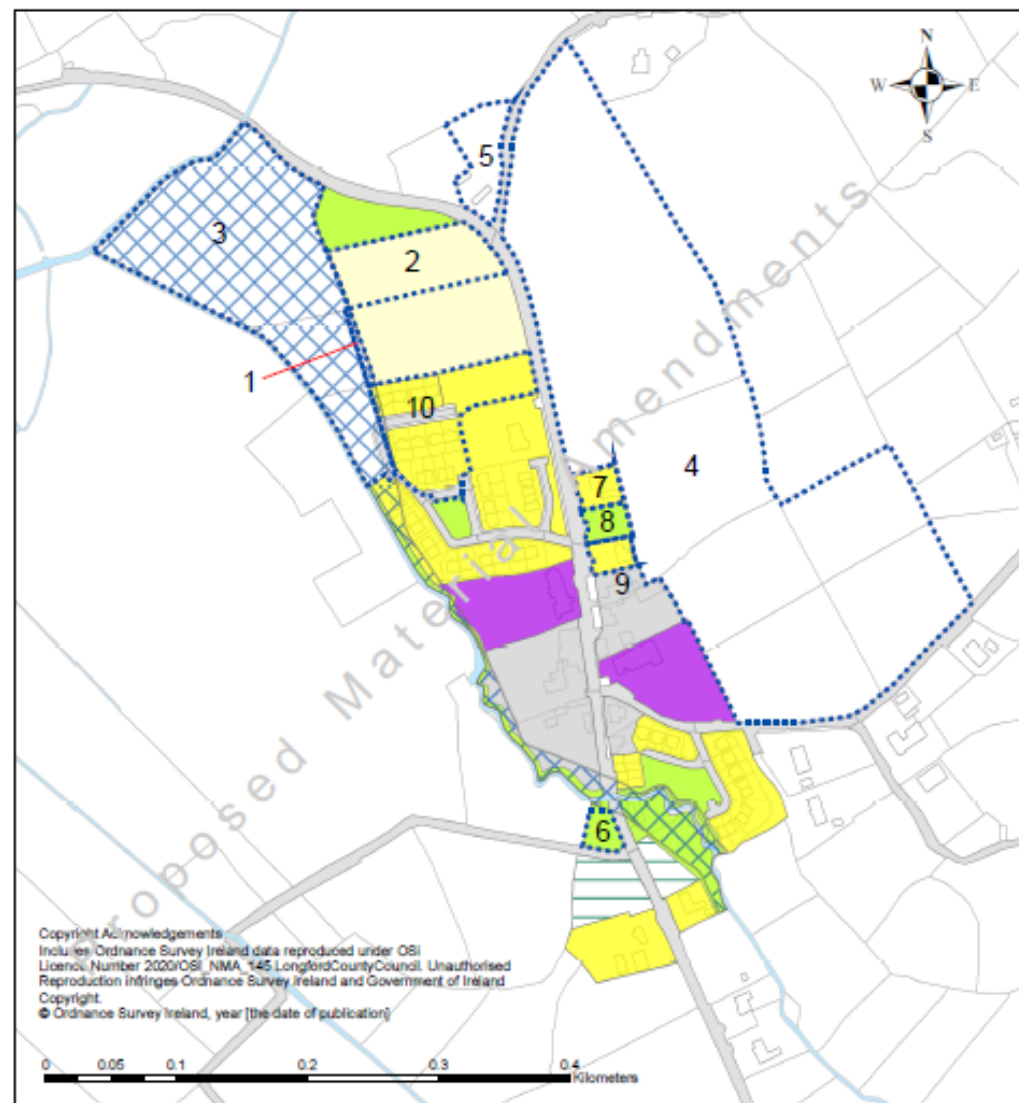


## Ardagh Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027



### Changed Zoning

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>New Residential</b>		
No Zoning		1
<b>No Zoning</b>		
Residential		2
<b>Recreational/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
No Zoning		3
Residential		4
No Zoning		5
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
No Zoning		10
No Zoning		11
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space		35
<b>Tourism</b>		
No Zoning		18
No Zoning		19
No Zoning		20
Residential		21
Recreational/Amenity/Green Space		25
Residential		26
<b>Town Core</b>		
Social/Community/Education		27



## Ballinamuck Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

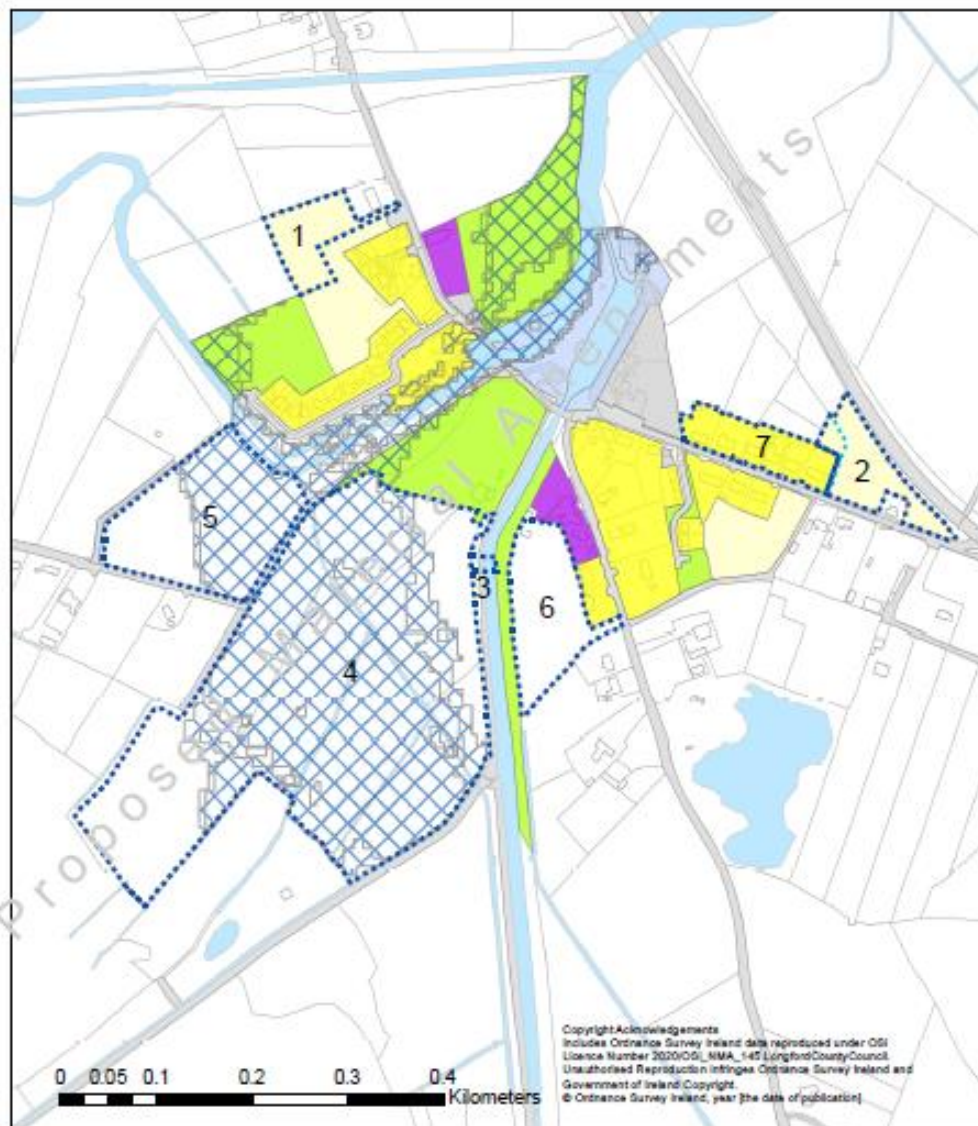
	Changed Zoning		Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
	New Residential		Strategic Residential Reserve
	Recreation/Amenity/Green Space		Town Core
	Residential		CSD Settlement Boundary
			Areas of Constrained Land Use

### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>New Residential</b>		
	No Zoning	1
	Residential	10
<b>Recreational/Amenity/Green Space</b>		
	New Residential	2
	No Zoning	3
<b>Strategic Residential Reserve</b>		
	No Zoning	4
	No Zoning	5
	Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	6
<b>Town Core</b>		
	Residential	7
	Recreational/Amenity/Green Space	8
	Residential	9







## Clondra Proposed Material Amendments County Development Plan 2021-2027

### Legend

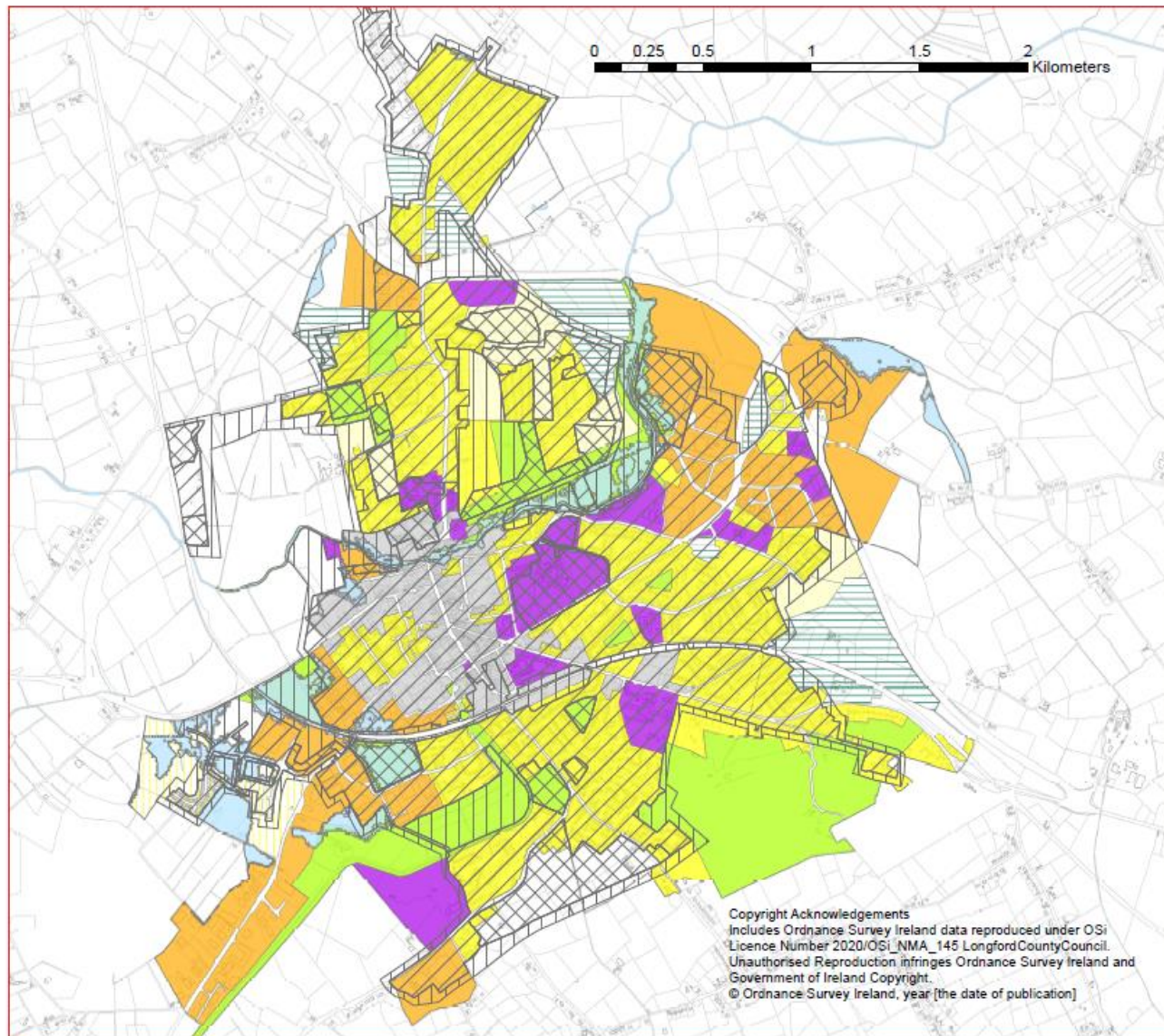
	Changed Zoning		Residential
	Canal Redevelopment Area		Social/Community/Education/Public Utility
	New Residential		Town Core
	Recreation/Amenity/Green Space		Proposed Road
			CSO Settlement Boundary
			Areas of Constrained Land Use

### Zoning Changes

Draft Plan: Zoning in Draft Plan	Alteration: Amended Zoning	Parcel No: Area on Map
<b>No Zoning</b>		
	New Residential	1
	New Residential	2
	Residential	7
<b>Pedestrian Bridge</b>		
	No Zoning	3
<b>Tourism</b>		
	No Zoning	4
	No Zoning	5
	No Zoning	6



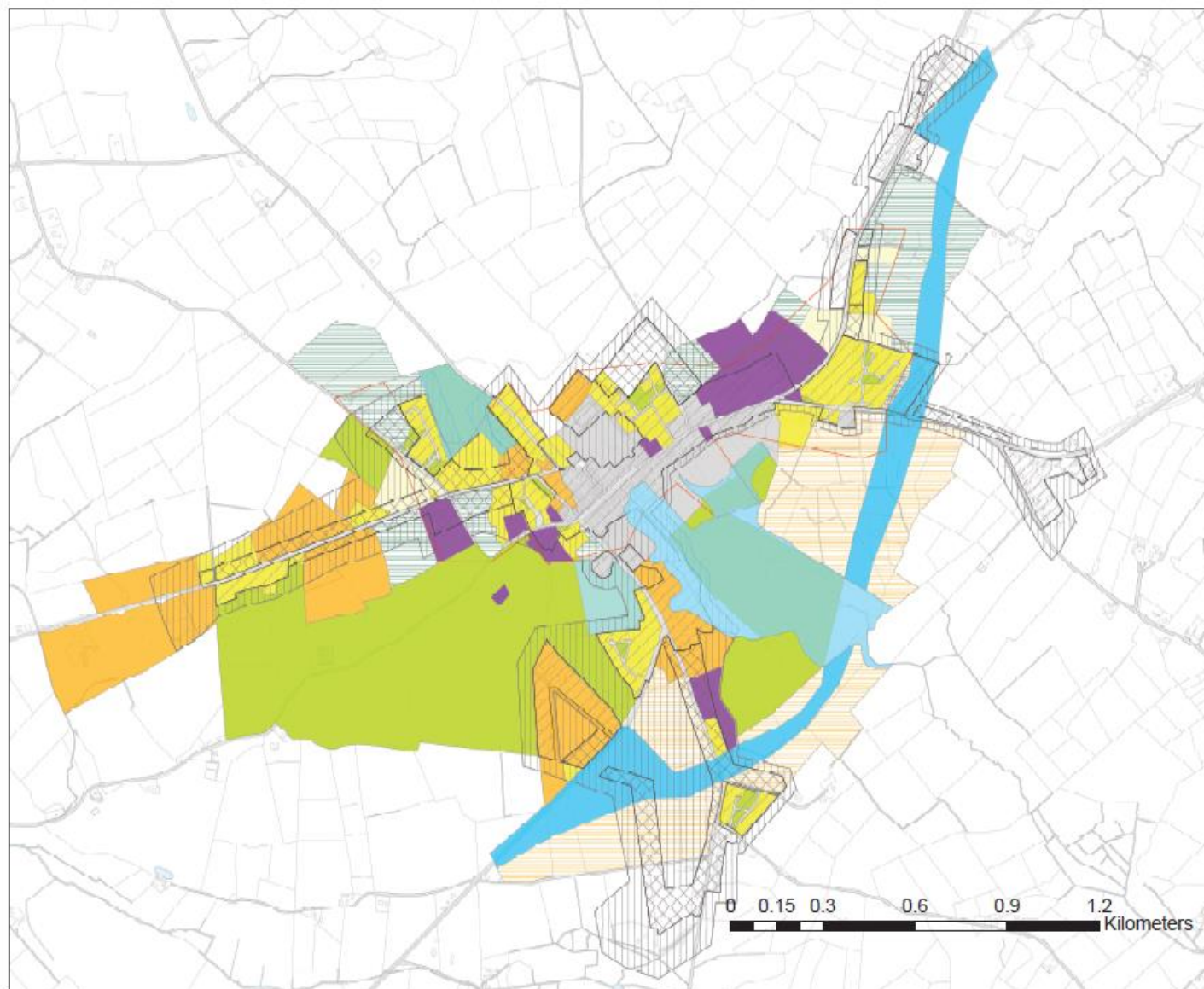
## APPENDIX B - INITIAL SIEVE MAPPING EXERCISE



## Longford Town Initial Infrastructure Assessment

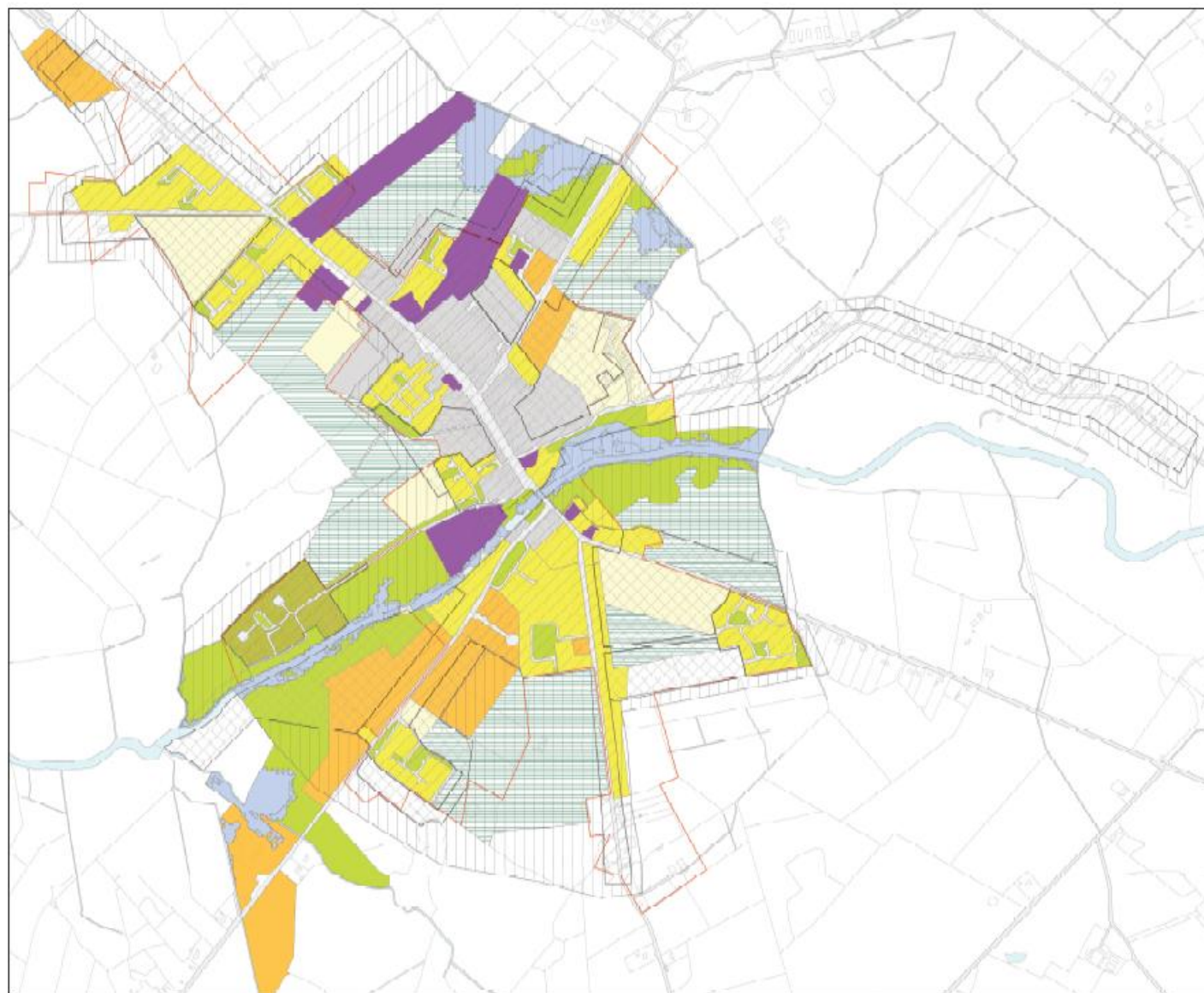






## Granard Initial Infrastructure Assessment





# Ballymahon Initial Infrastructure Assessment

## Legend

- Potential\_Development
- No\_Development
- Connected
- Longford\_Settlement\_Flood\_Zones\_2008 10
- County\_Longford\_CSO\_Settlements

## Ballymahon\_polygon

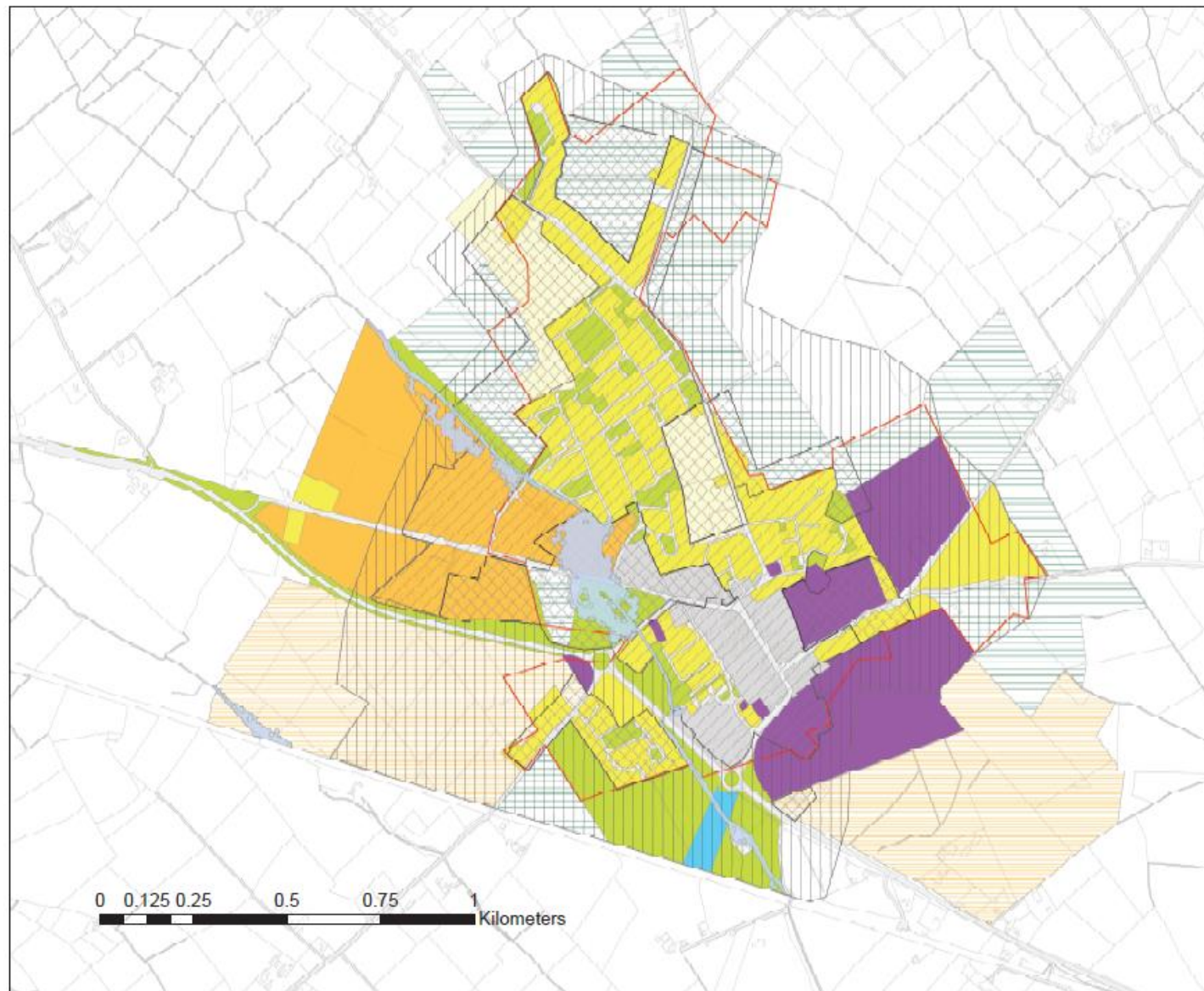
<all other values>

## Appendix\_B

- Industrial/Commercial/Warehousing
- New Residential
- Recreation/Amenity & Green Space
- Residential
- Residential/Community Services/Med Centre
- Site Resolution Objective
- Social/Community/Public Utility
- Strategic Residential Reserve
- Town Core

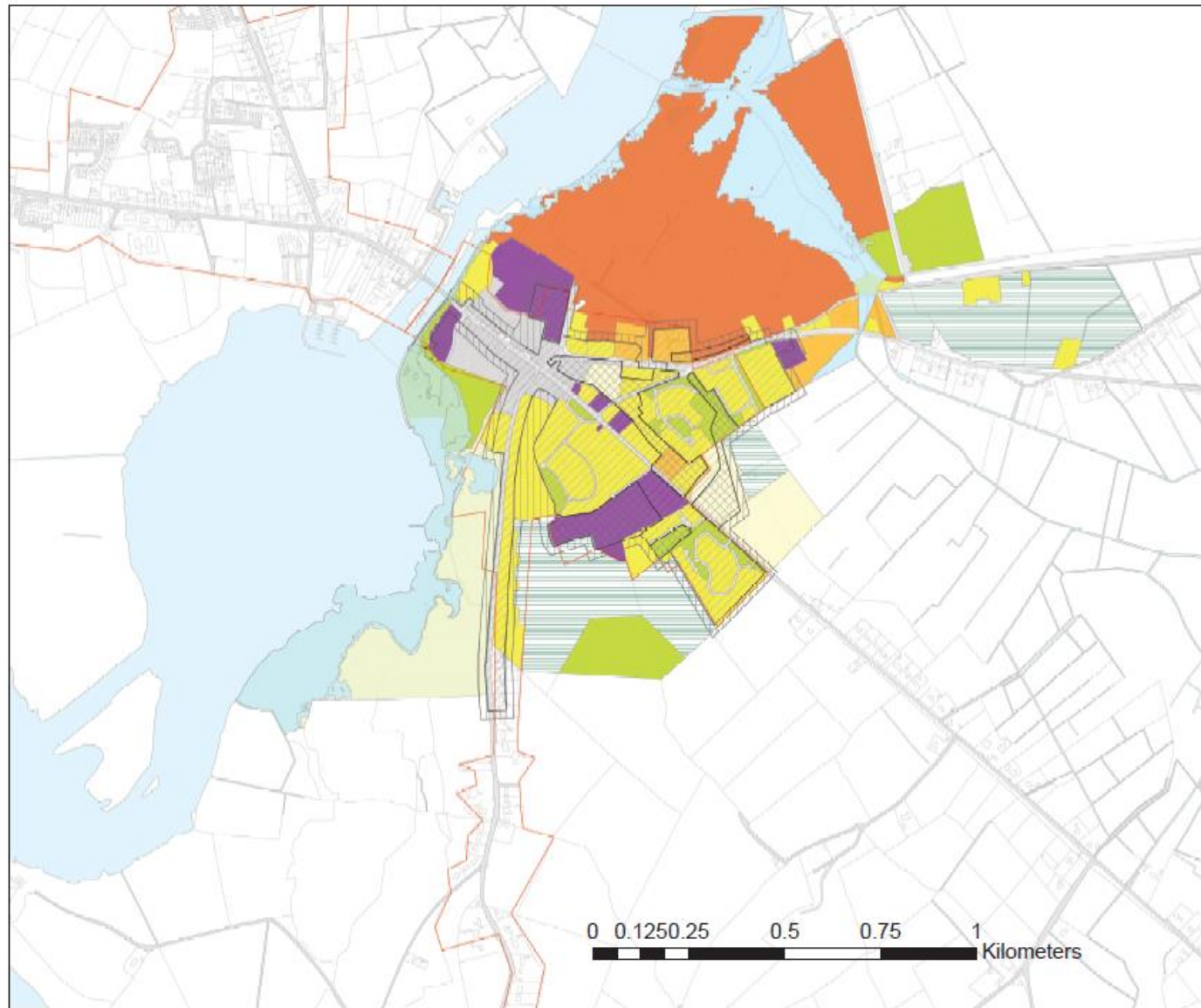






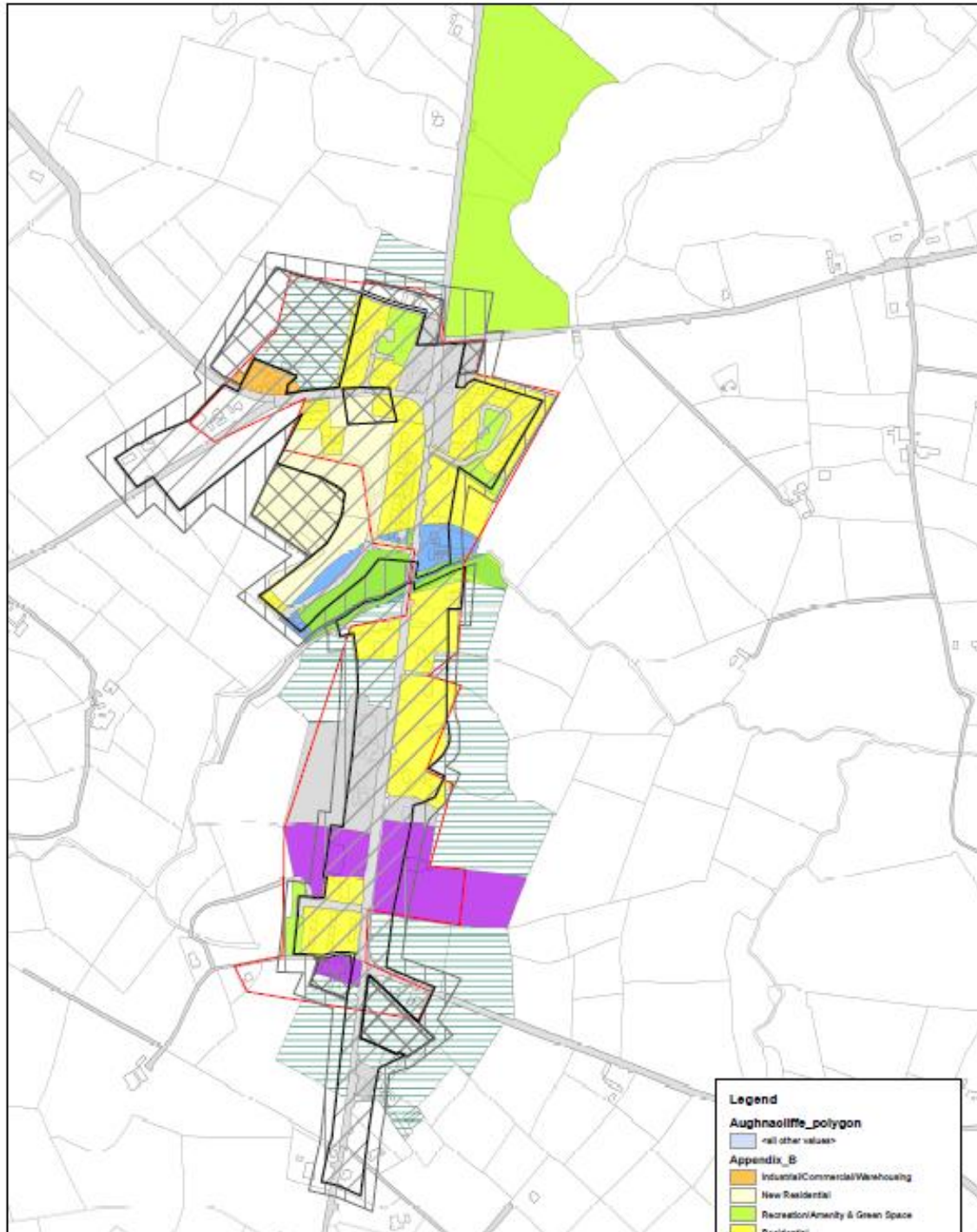
## Edgeworthstown Initial Infrastructure





## Lanesborough Initial Infrastructure

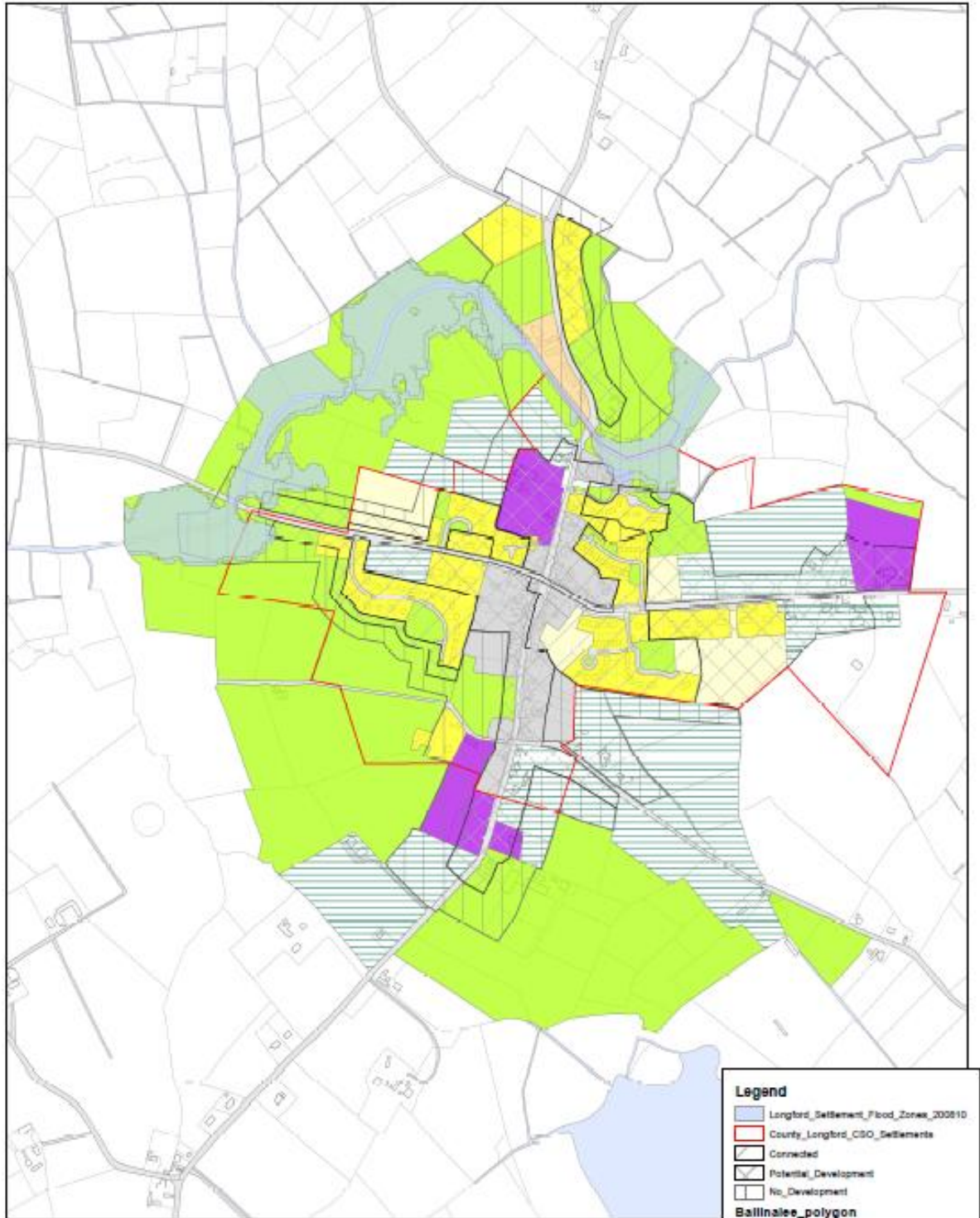




# Aughnaclyffe Initial Infrastructure Assessment

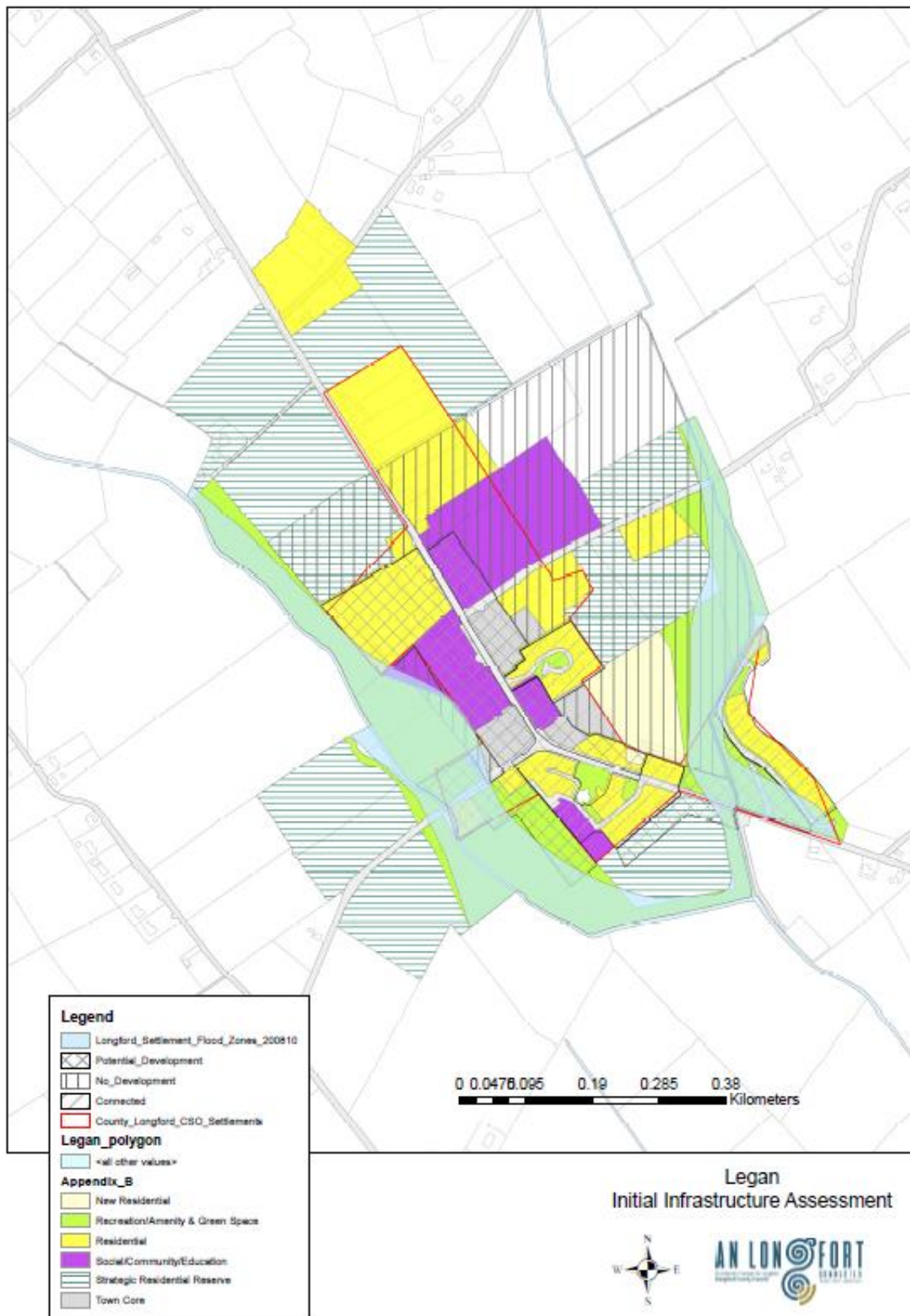




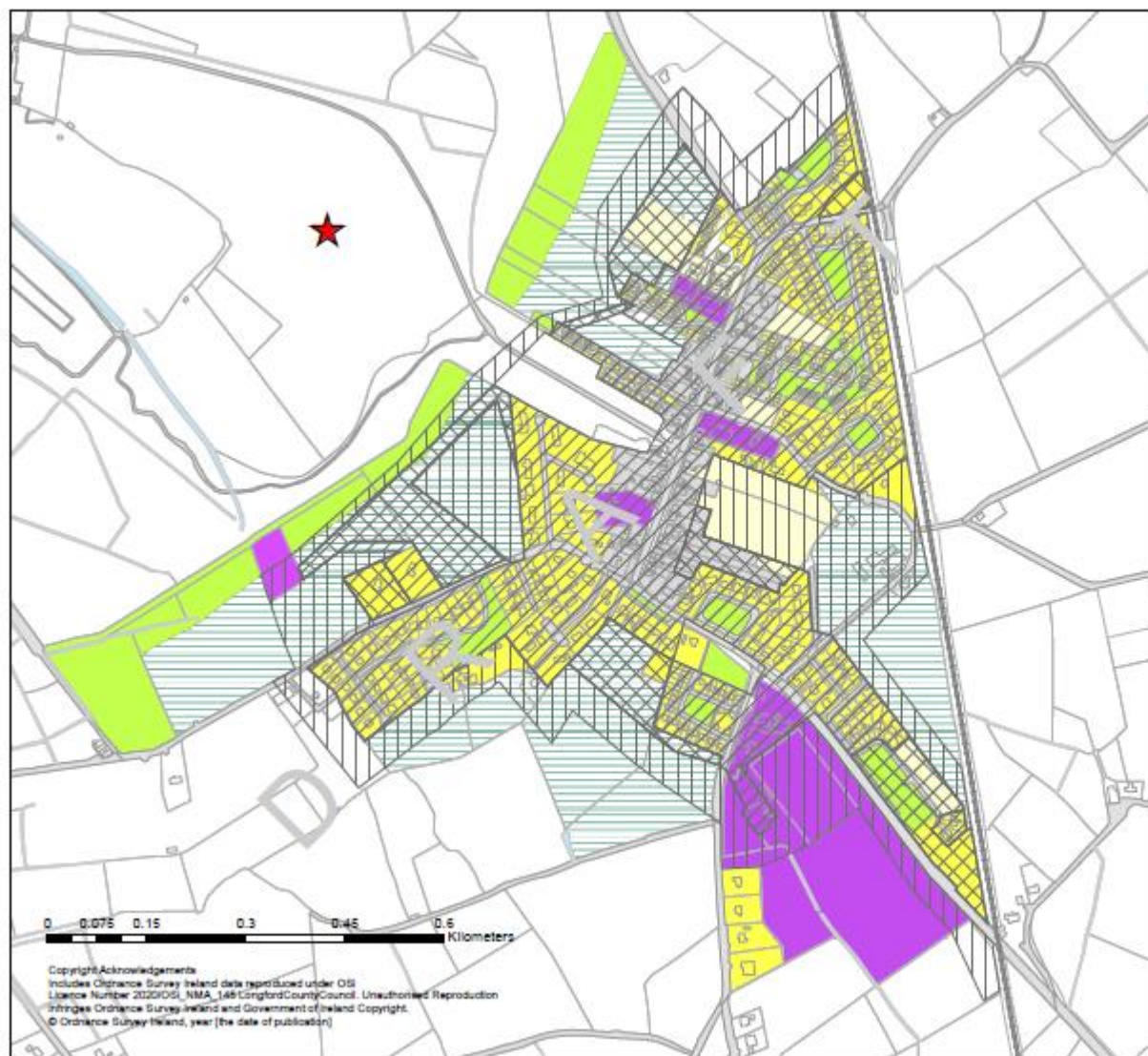


## Ballinalee Initial Infrastructure Assessment





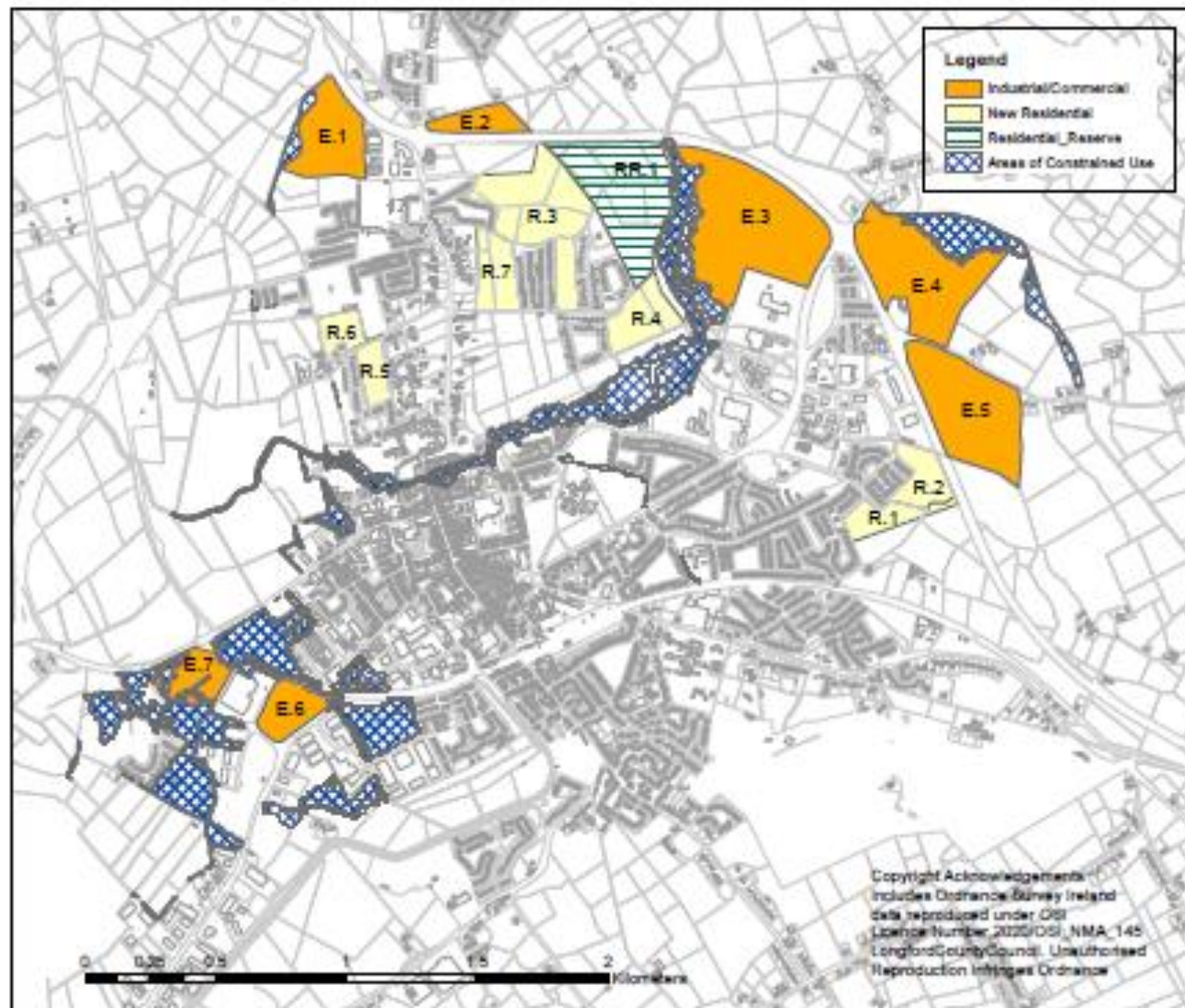




## Newtownforbes Initial Infrastructure Assessment



## APPENDIX C – FURTHER ITERATIVE MAPPING



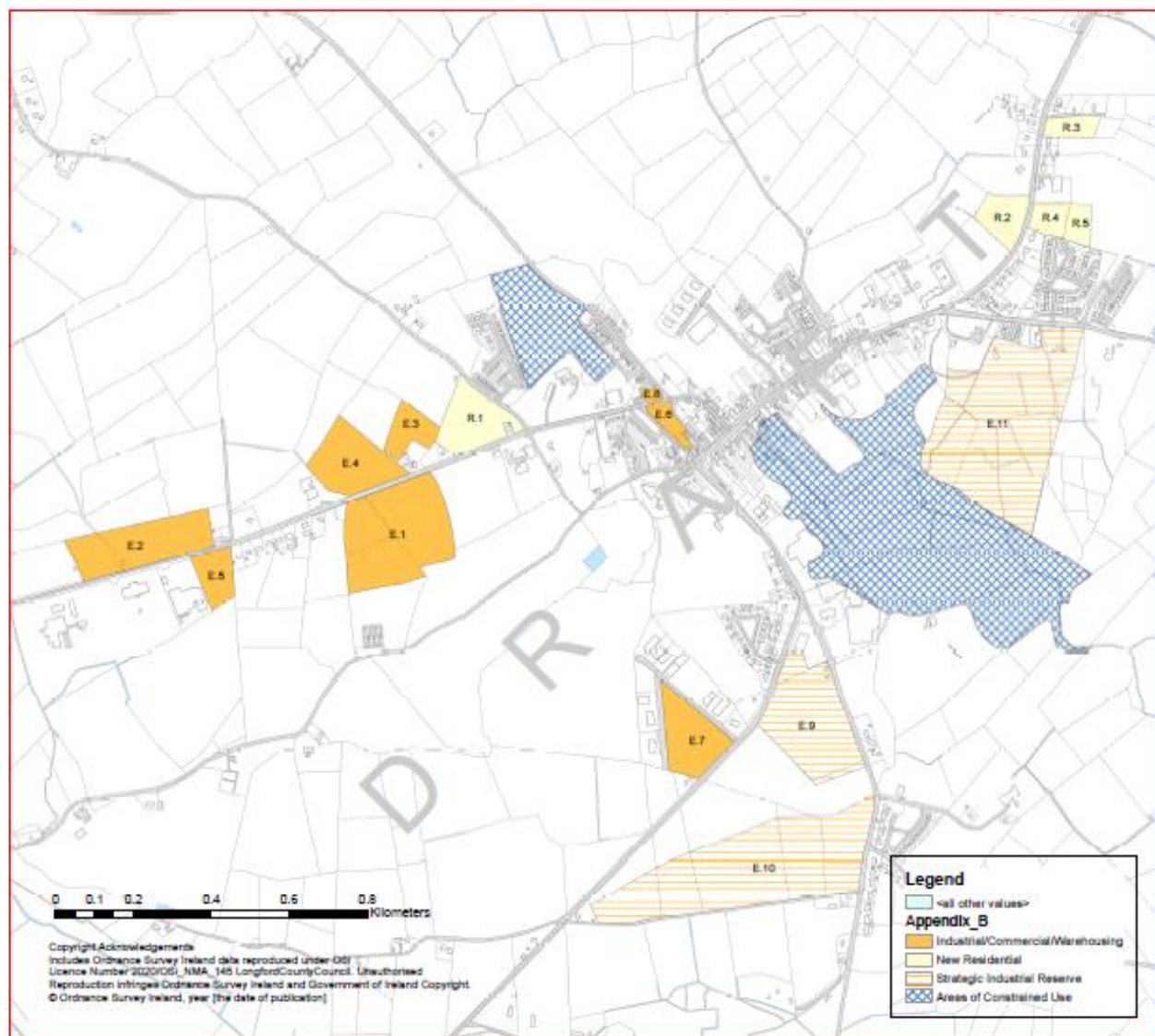
# Longford Town Infrastructural Assessment- Further Iteration

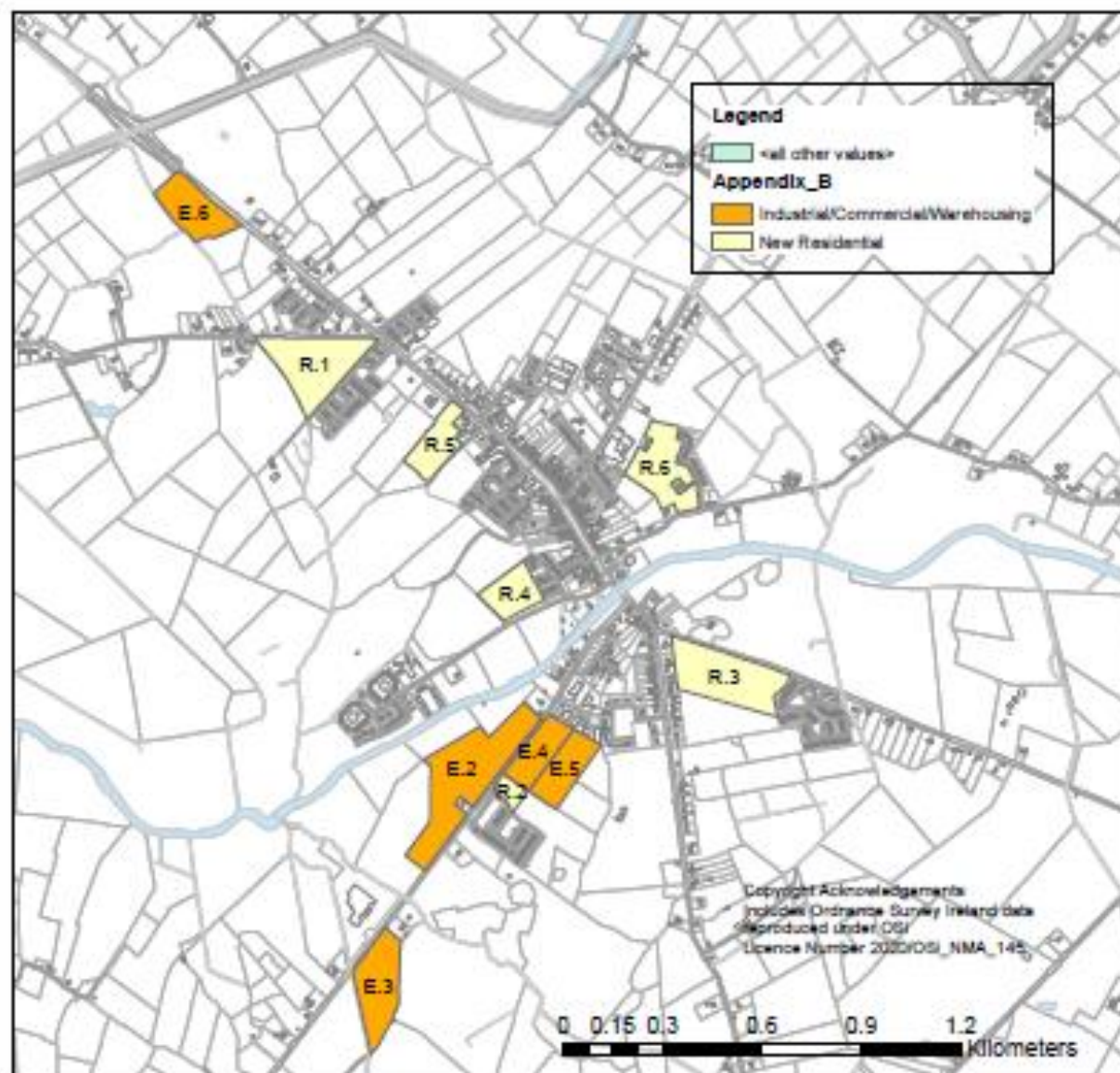




# Granard Infrastructural Assessment- Further Iteration

Notes:

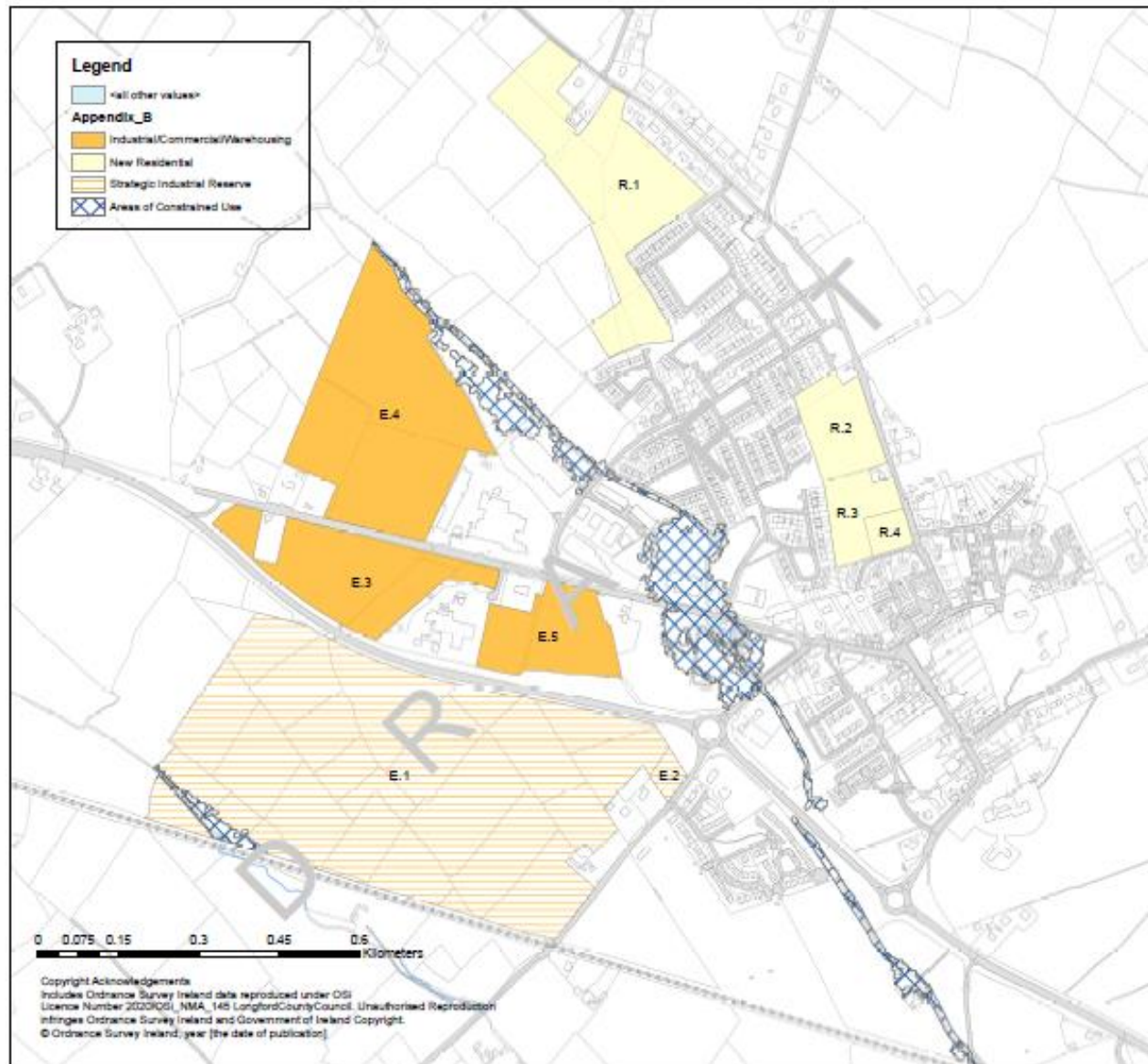




## Ballymahon Infrastructural Assessment- Further Iteration

Notes:



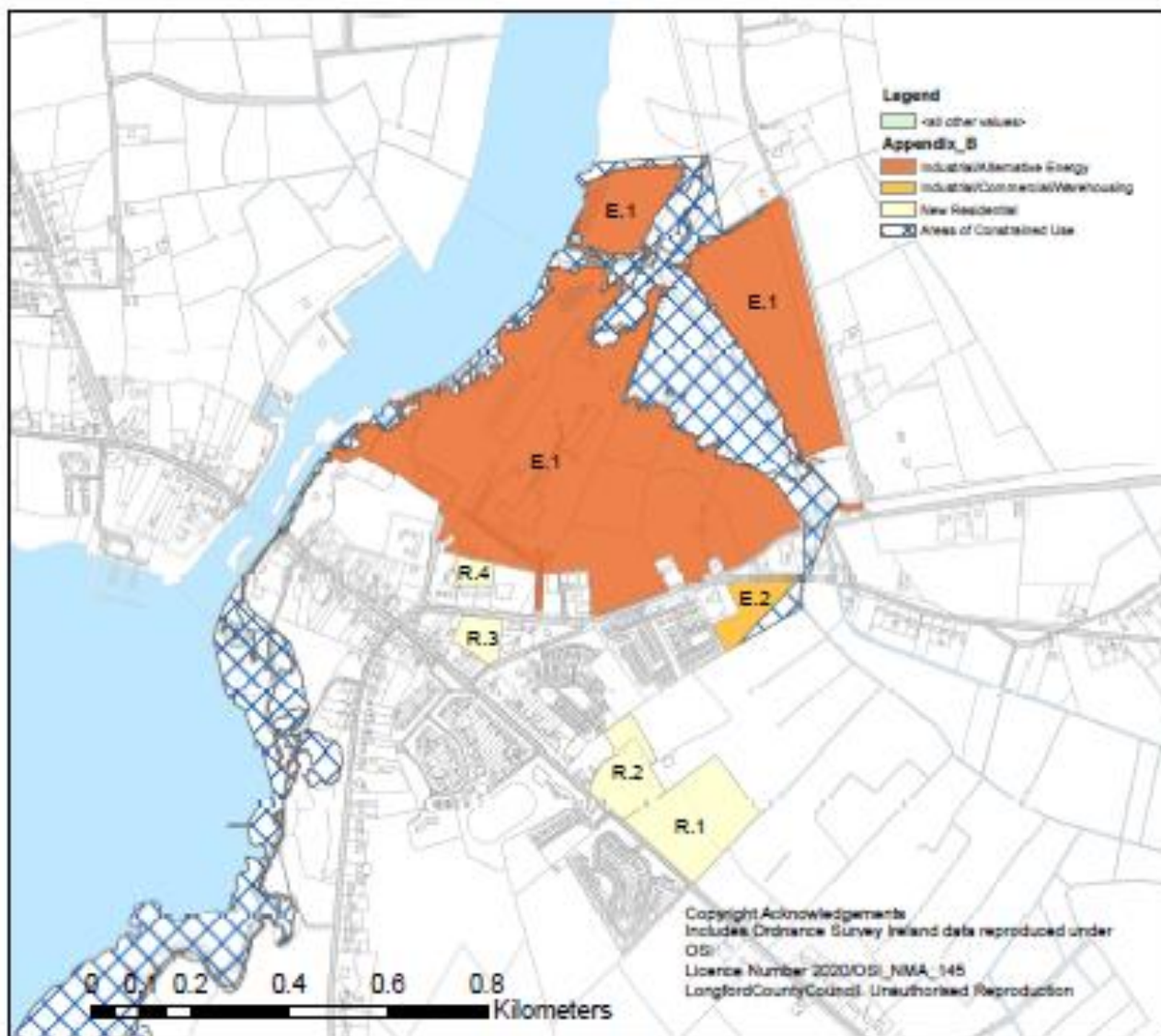


## Edgeworthstown Infrastructural Assessment- Further Iteration

Notes:







## Lanesborough Infrastructural assessment- further iteration

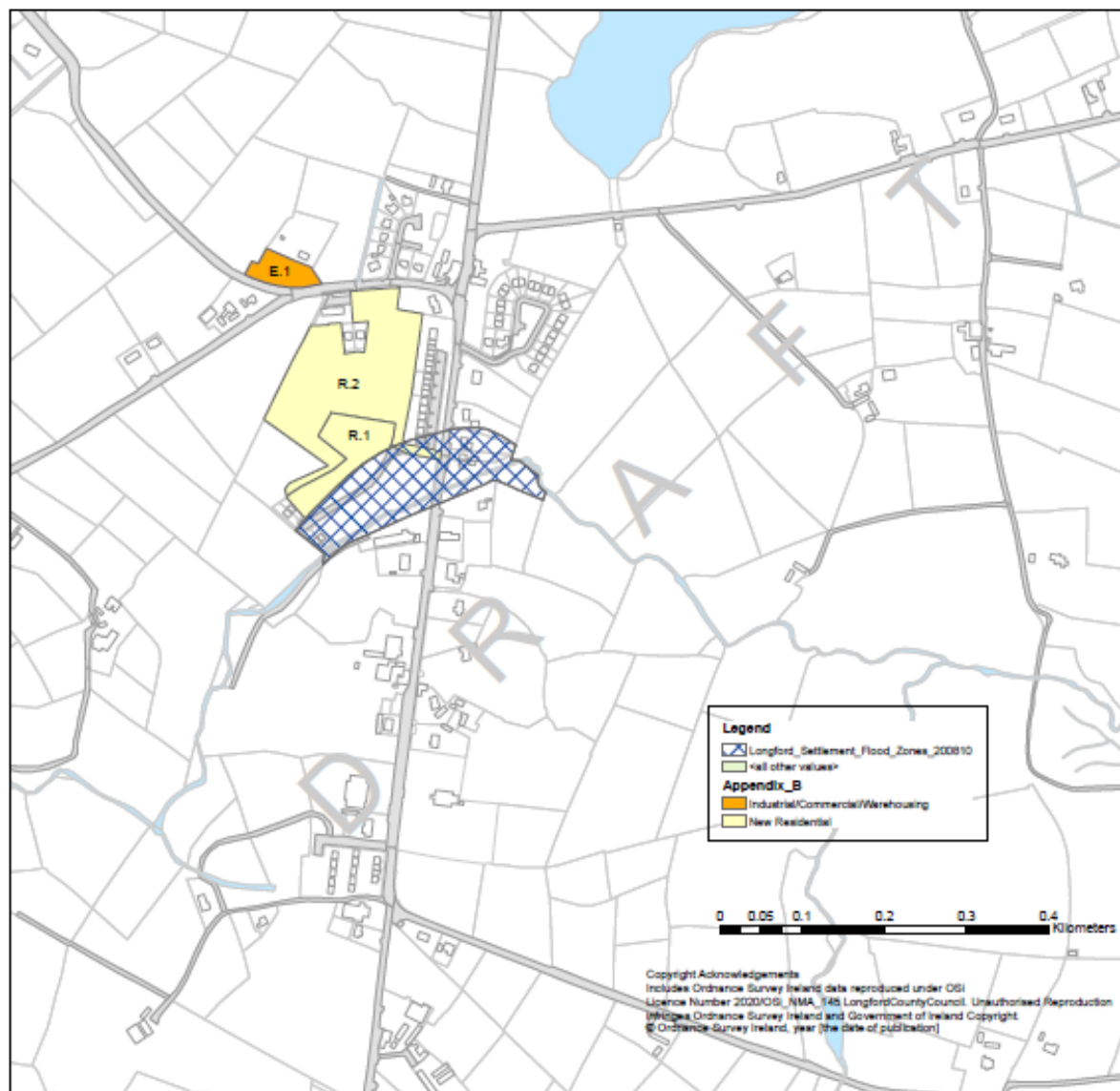
Notes:



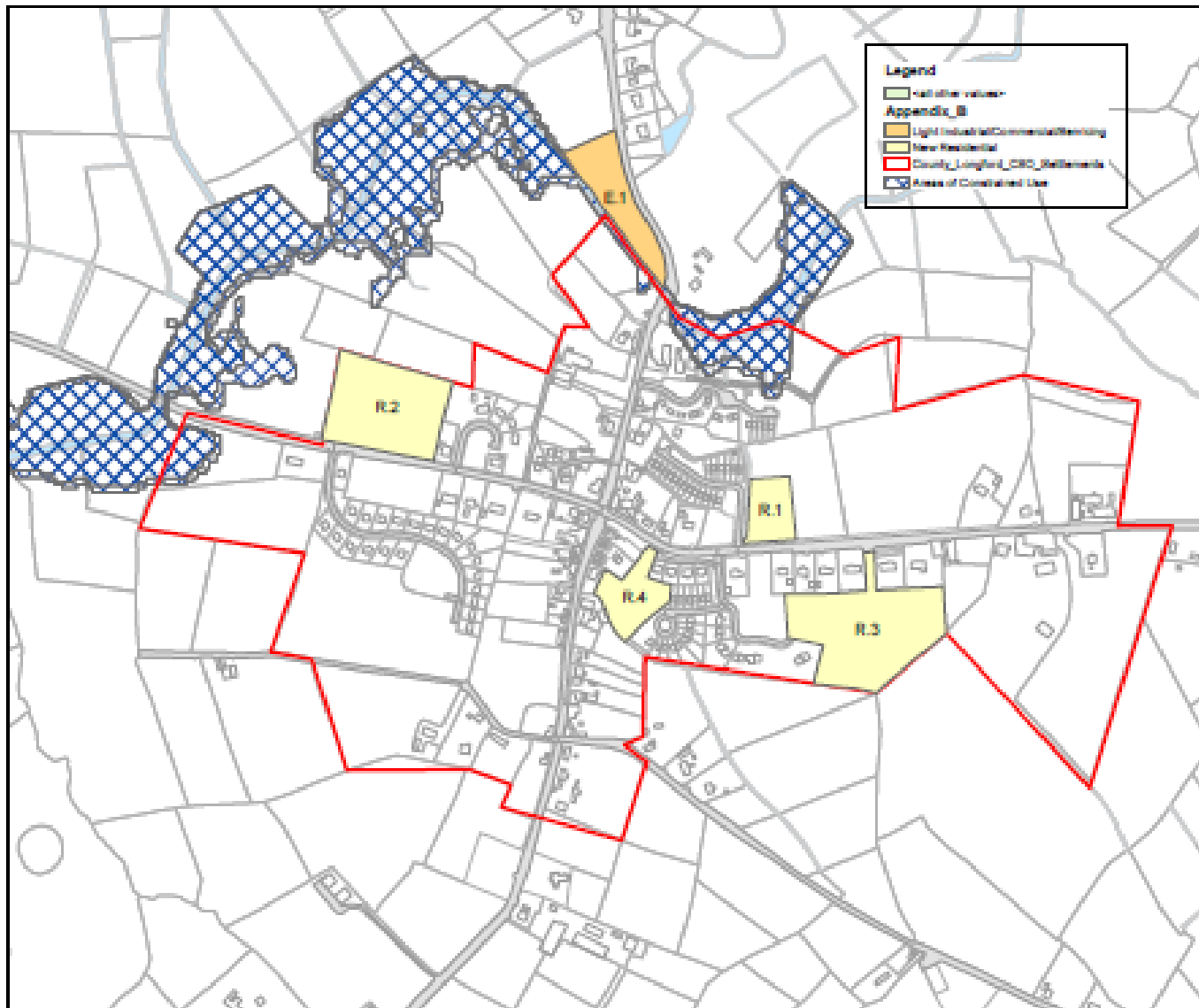


# Aughnaccliffe Infrastructural Assessment- Further Iteration

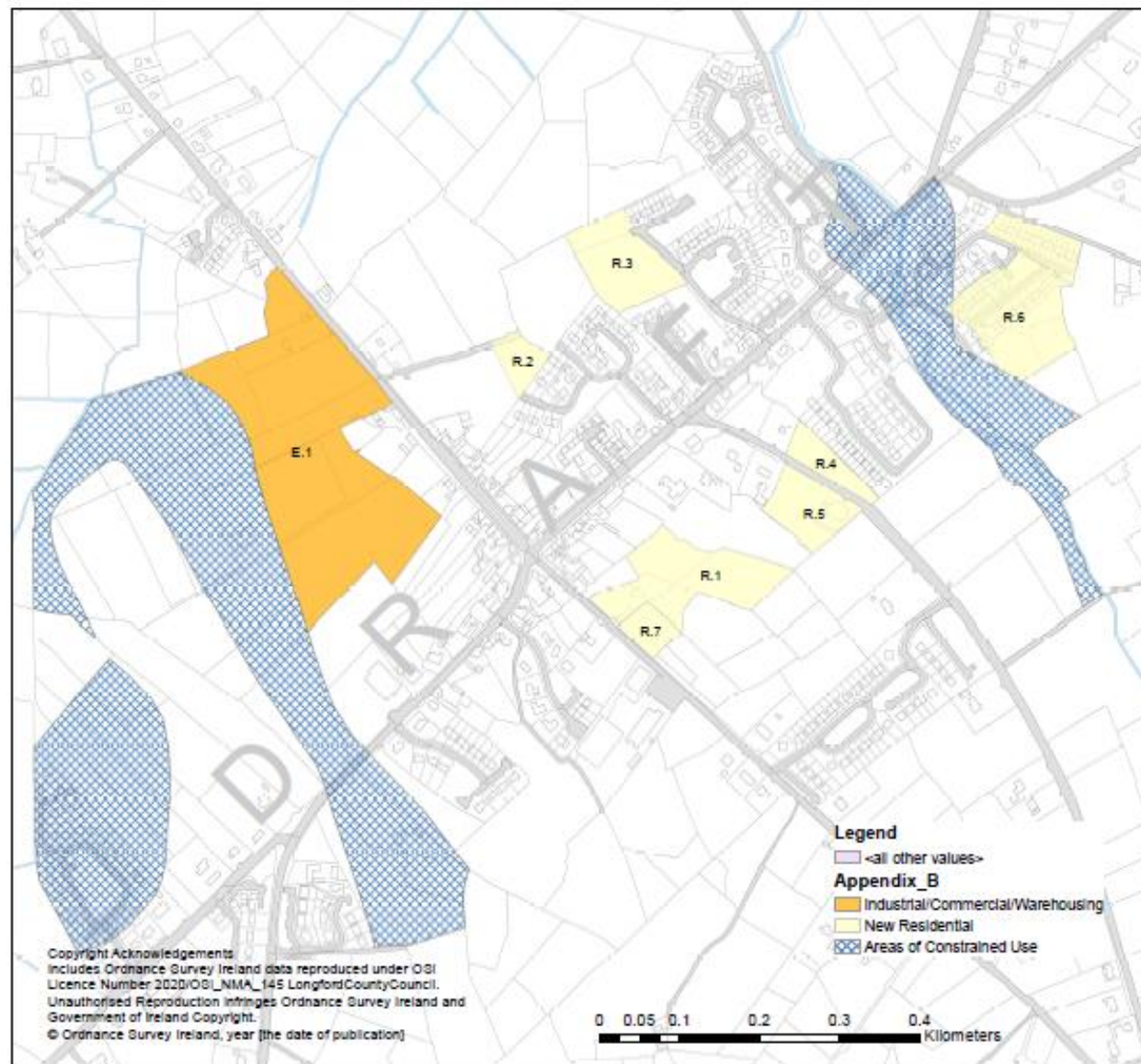
Notes:



# Ballinalee Infrastructural assessment- Further Iteration



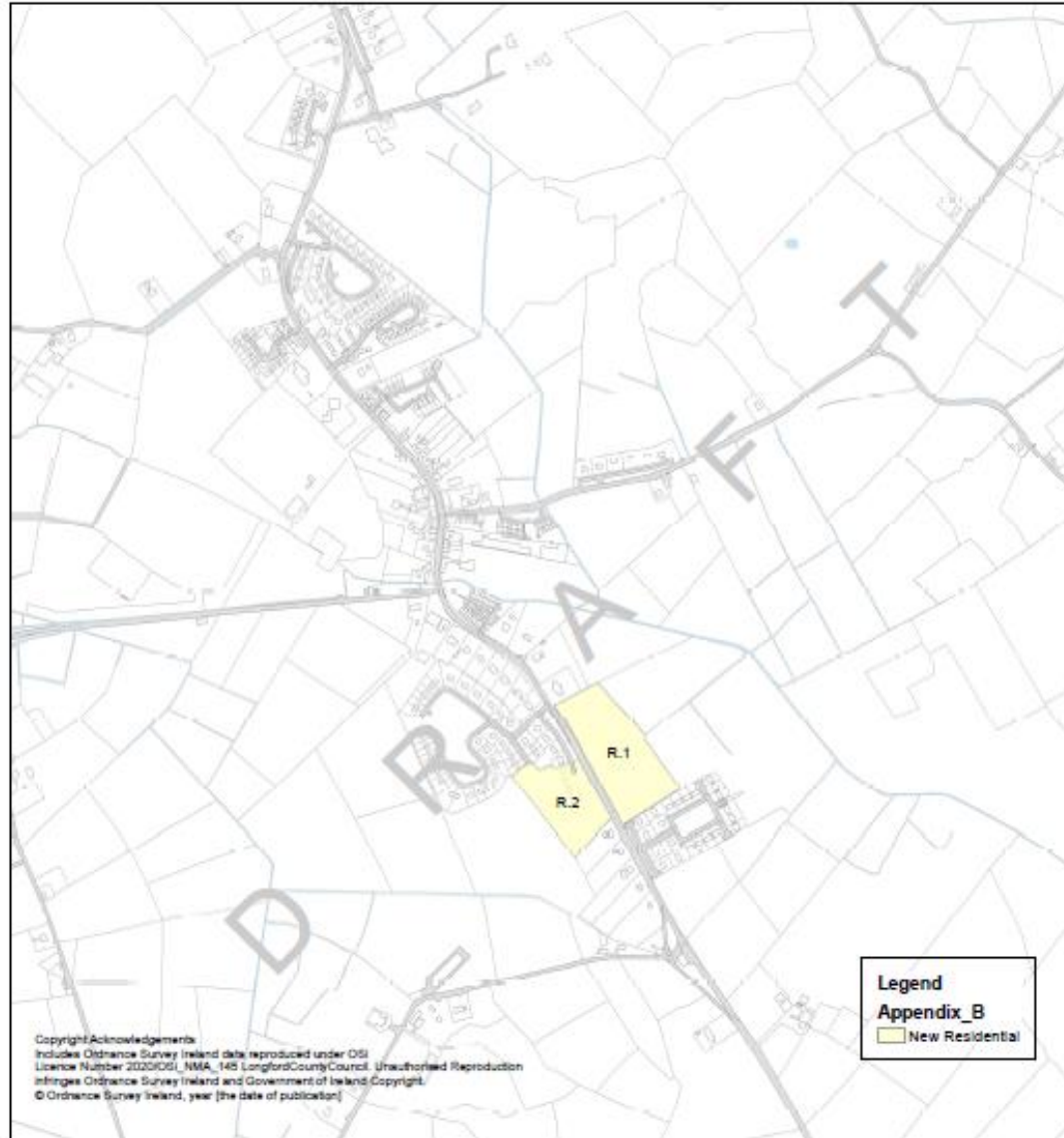
# Drumlish Infrastructural assessment- Further Iteration



Notes:

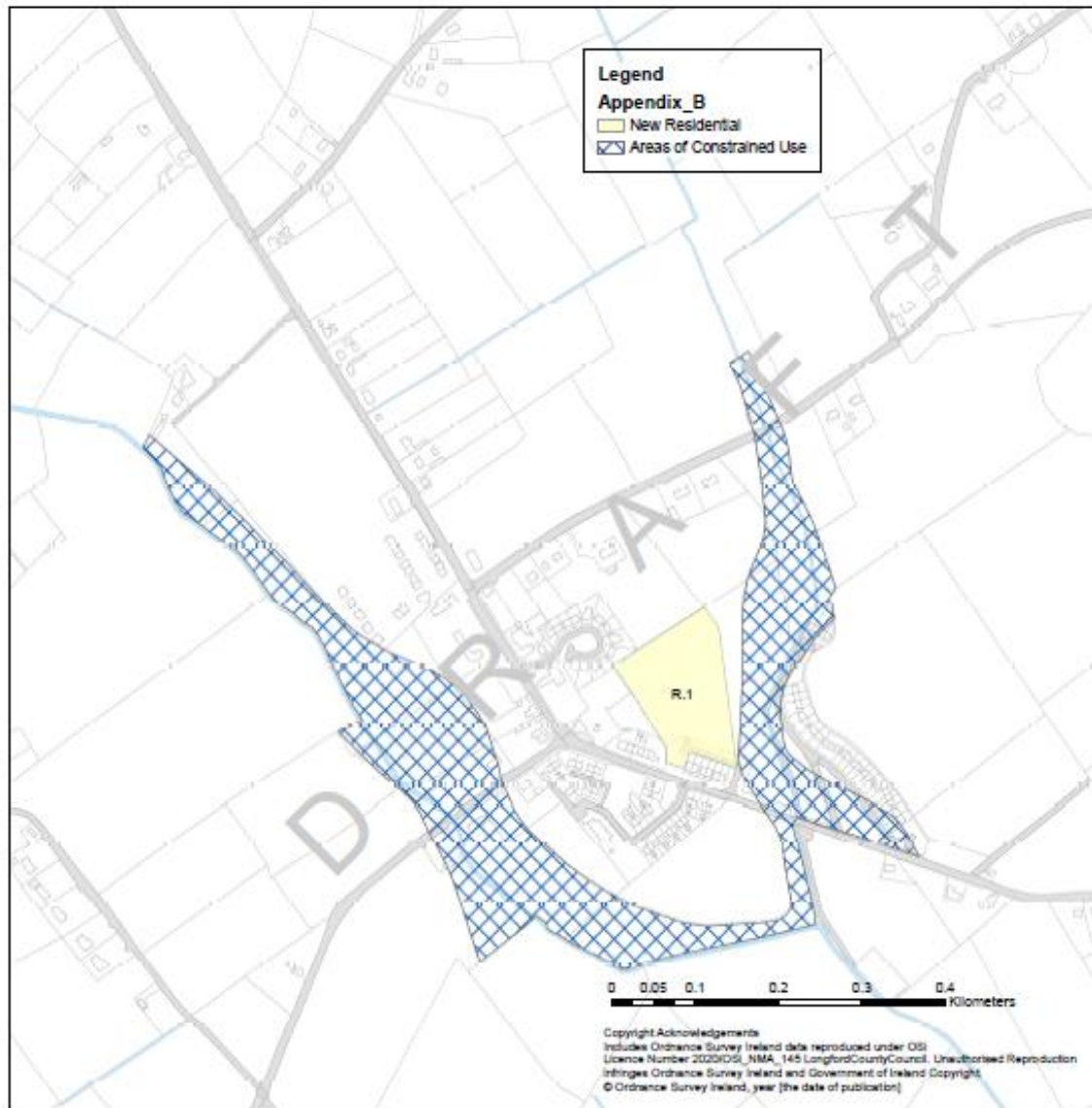


# Keenagh Infrastructural Assessment- Further Iteration



Notes:





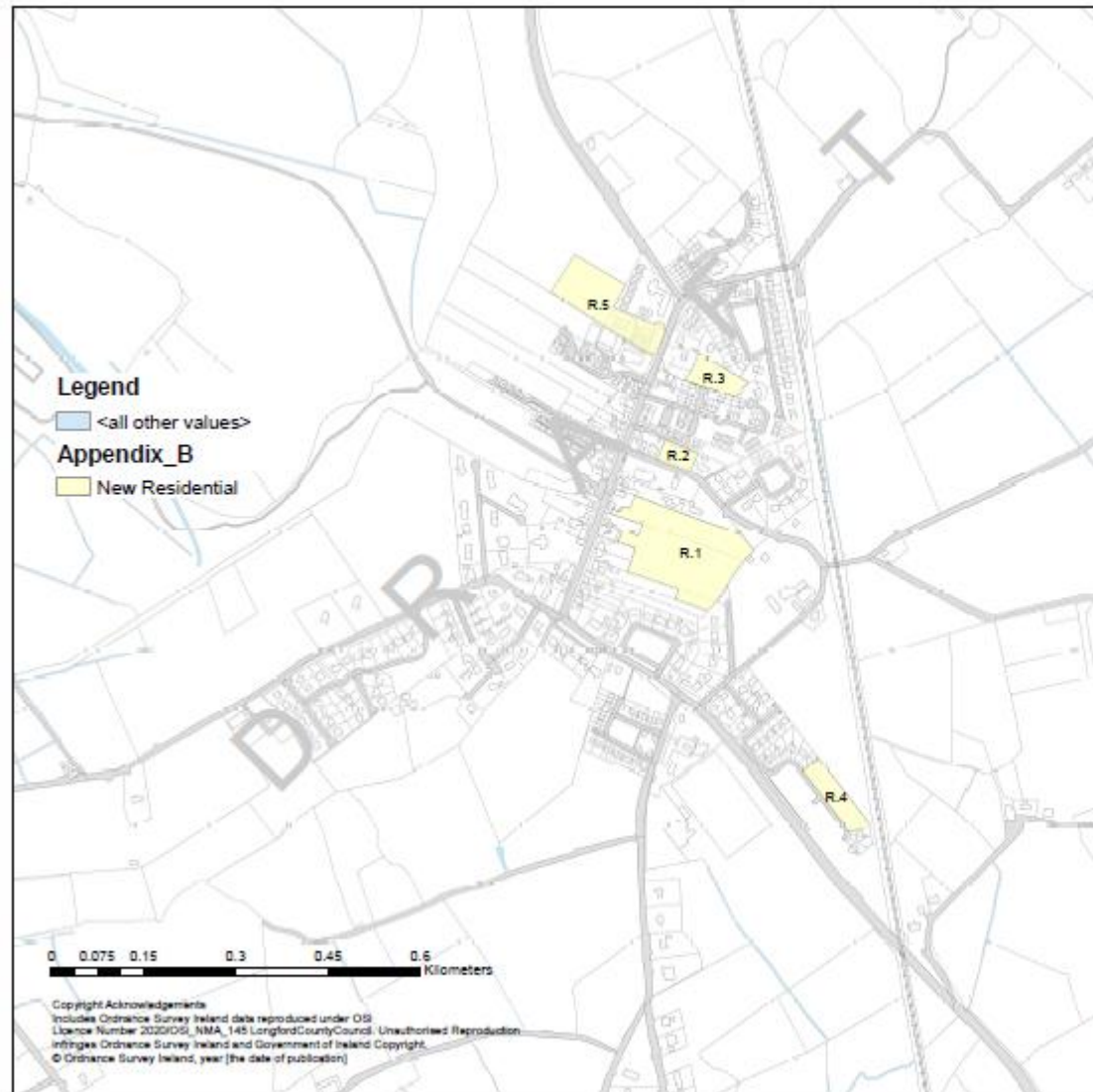
## Legan Infrastructural assessment- Further Iteration

Notes:





# Newtownforbes Infrastructural Assessment- Further Iteration



Notes:





## APPENDIX D: ROADS DEPARTMENT INFRASTRUCTURAL SETTLEMENT EVALUATION

LONGFORD-TOWN	NAME	CAPACITY							
WATER-SUPPLY-SOURCE									
WWTP									
HOUSING-LANDS--SEE-ZONING-MAP		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING								
Roads-&-Transportation	100	100	90	50	100				
Water-Supply	100								
Wastewater	100								
Drainage,-Flooding	100	80	80	90	90				
TOTAL				140	190	0	0	0	
EMPLOYMENT-LANDS-SEE-ZONING-MAP		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING								
Roads-&-Transportation	100	50	50	50	50	50	100	100	
Water-Supply	100								
Wastewater	100								
Drainage,-Flooding	100	50	50	80	80	50	70	70	
TOTAL		100	100	130	130	100	170	170	
Guidance-Notes									
1. Please refer to the settlement Map / Plan for the identified Residential and Employment zoned lands									
2. A score for each zoned area according to level of existing infrastructure High (Well-Served-100-67), Medium (Served-66-33), Low (Poorly-Served-32-0)									
3. The total figure will adjust--this is a formatted cell to provide a sum total for the 4 identified categories for each zoned land area--please do not adjust this									

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT - ROADS DEPARTMENT

SETTLEMENT GRANARD

GRANARD	NAME	CAPACITY
WATER SUPPLY SOURCE		
WWTP		

HOUSING LANDS - SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONING REF		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	100	100	100	70		
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50	50	50	50		
TOTAL		150	150	150	150	120	0	0

EMPLOYMENT LANDS SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONING REF		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	100	70	100	100	100	100
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50	50	50	50	30	100
TOTAL		150	150	120	150	150	130	200

E8	E9	E10	E11
100	100	100	100
30	50	50	80

Guidance Notes

1. Please refer to the settlement Map / Plan for the identified Residential and Employment zoned lands
2. Please apply a score for each zoned area according to level of existing infrastructure High (Well Served 100-67), Medium (Serviceable 66-33), Low (Poorly Served 32-0)
3. The total figure will adjust - this is a formatted cell to provide a sum total for the 4 identified categories for each zoned land area - please do not adjust this

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT - ROADS DEPARTMENT

SETTLEMENT BALLYMAHON

BALLYMAHON	NAME	CAPACITY
WATER SUPPLY SOURCE		
WWTP		

HOUSING LANDS - SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONING REF		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	100	100	100	100	60	
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	80	50	10	50	50	80	
TOTAL		180	150	110	150	150	140	0

EMPLOYMENT LANDS SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONINGS		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	100	100	100	50	100	
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50	50	50	50	50	
TOTAL		150	150	150	150	100	150	0

Guidance Notes

1. Please refer to the settlement Map / Plan for the identified Residential and Employment zoned lands
2. Please apply a score for each zoned area according to level of existing infrastructure High (Well Served 100-67), Medium (Serviceable 66-33), Low (Poorly Served 32-0)
3. The total figure will adjust - this is a formatted cell to provide a sum total for the 4 identified categories for each zoned land area - please do not adjust this

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT - ROADS DEPARTMENT

SETTLEMENT EDGEWORTHSTOWN

EDGEWORTHSTOWN	NAME	CAPACITY
WATER SUPPLY SOURCE		
WWTP		

HOUSING LANDS - SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONING REF		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	100	100	100			
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50	50	50			
TOTAL		150	150	150	150	0	0	0

EMPLOYMENT LANDS SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONINGS		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	0	50	100	100	100		
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50	50	50	50		
TOTAL		50	100	150	150	150	0	0

Guidance Notes

1. Please refer to the settlement Map / Plan for the identified Residential and Employment zoned lands
2. Please apply a score for each zoned area according to level of existing infrastructure High (Well Served 100-67), Medium (Serviceable 66-33), Low (Poorly Served 32-0)
3. The total figure will adjust - this is a formatted cell to provide a sum total for the 4 identified categories for each zoned land area - please do not adjust this

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT - ROADS DEPARTMENT

SETTLEMENT LANESBOROUGH

LANESBOROUGH	NAME	CAPACITY
WATER SUPPLY SOURCE		
WWTP		

HOUSING LANDS - SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONING REF		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	100	70				
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50	30				
TOTAL		150	150	100	0	0	0	0
EMPLOYMENT LANDS SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONINGS		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	70					
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50					
TOTAL		150	120	0	0	0	0	0

Guidance Notes

1. Please refer to the settlement Map / Plan for the Identified Residential and Employment zoned lands
2. Please apply a score for each zoned area according to level of existing infrastructure High (Well Served 100-67), Medium (Serviceable 66-33), Low (Poorly Served 32-0)
3. The total figure will adjust - this is a formatted cell to provide a sum total for the 4 identified categories for each zoned land area - please do not adjust this



# INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT - ROADS DEPARTMENT

## SETTLEMENT                  DRUMLISH

DRUMLISH	NAME	CAPACITY
WATER SUPPLY SOURCE		
WWTP		

HOUSING LANDS - SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONING REF		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100	100	100	100	100	80	
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	50	50	50	50	50	80	
TOTAL		150	150	150	150	150	160	0

EMPLOYMENT LANDS SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONINGS		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7
CRITERIA	WEIGHTING							
Roads & Transportation	100	100						
Water Supply	100							
Wastewater	100							
Drainage, Flooding	100	80						
TOTAL		180	0	0	0	0	0	0

### Guidance Notes

1. Please refer to the settlement Map / Plan for the identified Residential and Employment zoned lands
2. Please apply a score for each zoned area according to level of existing infrastructure High (Well Served 100-67), Medium (Serviceable 66-33), Low (Poorly Served 32-0)
3. The total figure will adjust - this is a formatted cell to provide a sum total for the 4 identified categories for each zoned land area - please do not adjust this

## APPENDIX E: WATER SERVICES DEPARTMENT INFRASTRUCTURAL SETTLEMENT EVALUATION

# INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT 20210305

Consider (determine, calculate) a reasonable estimate for the full cost of delivery of these services per unit

headroom capacity in existing network, pump and treatment plant

reduction in capacity available on sequence of which area is developed in relation to other areas

distance to connection point on existing service

number of units (housing or trade, dry type) at what stage of staged development

## Wastewater availability of infrastructure

Green identifies that the far Well		Tier 1	100-67	served
Amber the lands can be sen Medium		Tier 2	66-33	
Red the lands are not serv Poorly			32-0	serviceable
Assessment				
	PE design	2020 PE actual Headroom		
LONGFORD D0060	20000	PE 2020 AER	15,608	4,392
Granard D0187	3200	PE 2020 AER	2,672	528
Ballymahon Wwtp	2125	PE 2020 AER	2,359	- 234
Edgeworthstown Wwtp	2700	PE 2020 AER	2,746	- 46
Lanesborough	1600	DBO Dec2020 report	1,534	66
Aughnaccliffe Wwtp	400	DBO Dec2020 report	298	102
Ballinalee Wwtp	600	DBO Dec2020 report	190	410
Drumlish Wwtp	1200	PE 2020 AER	1,082	118
Kenagh Wwtp	1000	LD 2020 records	464	536
Legan Wwtp	1000	LD 2020 records	142	858
Newtownforbes Wwtp	1800	PE 2020 AER	930	870
Abbeysrule	300	DBO Dec2020 report	87	213
Ardagh	300	DBO Dec2020 report	17	284
Ballinamuck	500	LD 2020 records	113	387
Clondra	600	DBO Dec2020 report	206	395

## SEE ZONING MAP FOR ZONING REFERENCE NUMBER

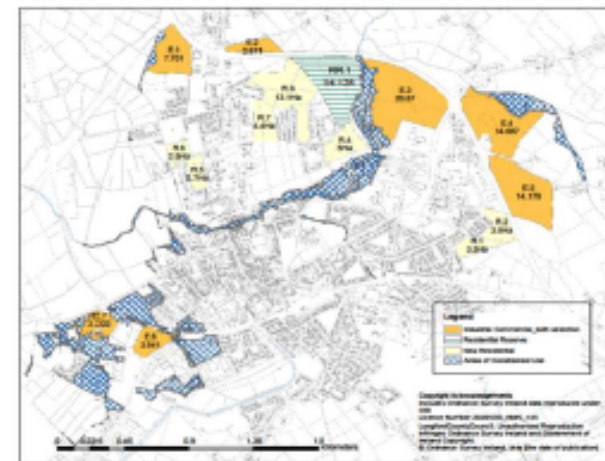
HOUSING LANDS	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
LONGFORD TOWN	98	98	96	96	73			
GRANARD	38	38	39	35	33			
BALLYMAHON	6	44	12	33	35	35	39	43
EDGEWORTHSTOWN	55	53	52	34				
LANESBOROUGH	40	42	37					
AUGHNACLIFFE	99	94						
BALLINALEE	98	97	82	98				
DRUMLISH	91	41	90	99	99	9	63	
KEENAGH	88	93						
LEGAN	94							
NEWTOWNFORBES	89	76	63	68	89			
Abbeysrule	17							
Ardagh	94							
Ballinamuck	94							
Clondra	94							

EMPLOYMENT LANDS	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11
LONGFORD TOWN	47	64	92	100	55	62	66				
GRANARD	53	28	53	57	34	4	56	4	47	57	32
BALLYMAHON	29	30	1	49	47	46					
EDGEWORTHSTOWN	22	31	30	30	30						
LANESBOROUGH	expensive	expensive									
AUGHNACLIFFE	82										
BALLINALEE	100										
DRUMLISH	100										
KEENAGH											
LEGAN											
NEWTOWNFORBES											
Abbeysrule											
Ardagh											
Ballinamuck											
Clondra											

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT		7702.0	7471.0	24970.0	14467.0	14176.0	9343.0	3232.0		7702.0	7702.0	7702.0
Sailmaker	LOWFORD PONTS	5800.0	5800.0	11020.0	8000.0	2700.0	2800.0	4000.0	14280.0			
Water supply zone	Gough Point	7 Military	\$1,211									
Population	LOWFORD ZONES	5.8	3.8	18.1	8	2.7	2.8	4.4	14128	14758		
Facilities & levels												
Water level	Water level	2.801	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
Water level, 2010		81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
Water level, 2010		81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91
See Savings table for reference number		7.701	2.871	20.497	14.687	14.176	9.341	3.123				

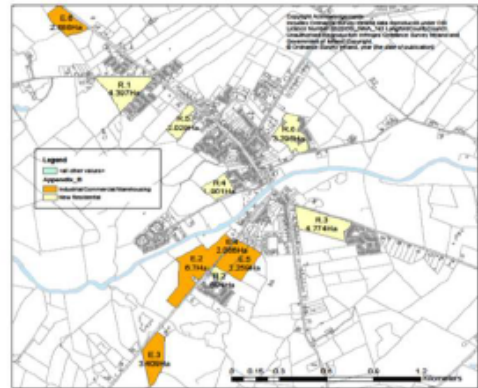
report, detailing the estimated cost at each plan stage.

classification required services

[illegible][illegible]Longford Town  
Infrastructural Assessment-  
Further Iteration



INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT									
Settlement	BALLYMORION	25/ha	67000	80960	20640	22580	26880		
Water supply zone	3 M3/day		49870	5960	47760	18020	20260	8260	
Agglomeration	Ballymoran 00006		4.887	0.584	4.774	1.901	3.029	3.286	
Accidental loads			81	82	83	84	85	86	87
Watermeter	headloss	467	1.8	2.8	3.8	4.8	5.8	6.8	7.8
Employment loads			81	82	83	84	85	86	87
Watermeter	headloss	467	1.8	2.8	3.8	4.8	5.8	6.8	7.8
See Daring Maps for reference number report detailing the estimated cost at each plan stage									
Description required services									
150	CONNECTION	89.39							
	extra on connection	442							
	NETWORK								
	Network upgrade	850							
	Network new road	300							
	Network upgrade green	300							
	Network new green	100							
	PUMP								
	SCADA	14000							
	Water chamber	4000							
340	CONNECTION	89.39							
	extra on connection	442							
	NETWORK								
	Network upgrade	850							
	Network new road	300							
	Network upgrade green	300							
	Network new green	100							
	PUMP								
	SCADA	14000							
	Water chamber	4000							
Costs per unit									
Score to take									
Plant needs upgrade									
Description required services									
150	CONNECTION	89.39							
	extra on connection	442							
	NETWORK								
	Network upgrade	850							
	Network new road	300							
	Network upgrade green	300							
	Network new green	100							
	PUMP								
	SCADA	14000							
	Water chamber	4000							
31	CONNECTION	89.39							
	extra on connection	442							
	NETWORK								
	Network upgrade	850							
	Network new road	300							
	Network upgrade green	300							
	Network new green	100							
	PUMP								
	SCADA	14000							
	Water chamber	4000							
Costs per unit									
Score to take									
Plant needs upgrade									





[illegible]

Edgeworthstown  
Instructional Assessment-  
Further Session



Page 89 | 95

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT		B990			
Settlement	BALLINALEE	5000	17540	22170	6880
Water supply zone	rough trade 7 Ml/day	35,111			
Appropriation	Ballinalee Area	0.509	1.794	2.217	0.688
Residential lands		81	82	82	84
Watermain	headroom	300	85	84	76
Employment lands		51	52	54	54
Watermain		96	95	93	91
Watermain		0.899			

See zoning maps for reference number

Report, detailing the estimated cost at draft plan stage

description required service network stream cro 240m upgr 300m new public access PS upgrade

CONNECTION extra on connection 442 0 0 0 0 0

Network upgrade 230 0 0 0 0 0

Network new road 230 0 0 0 0 0

Network upgrade green 230 0 0 0 0 0

Network new green 230 0 0 0 0 0

PUMP 14000 0 0 0 0 0

SCADA 4000 0 0 0 0 0

valve chamber 4000 0 0 0 0 0

variable speed 13000 0 0 0 0 0

lanishing 2500 0 0 0 0 0

Atm pump replace 14000 0 0 0 0 0

charge meter 4000 0 0 0 0 0

recirculation electric 2500 0 0 0 0 0

rising main 250 0 0 0 0 0

Pump start/stop cost 200000 0 0 0 0 0

NEWTP records per 1000 2.7 0 0 0 0 0

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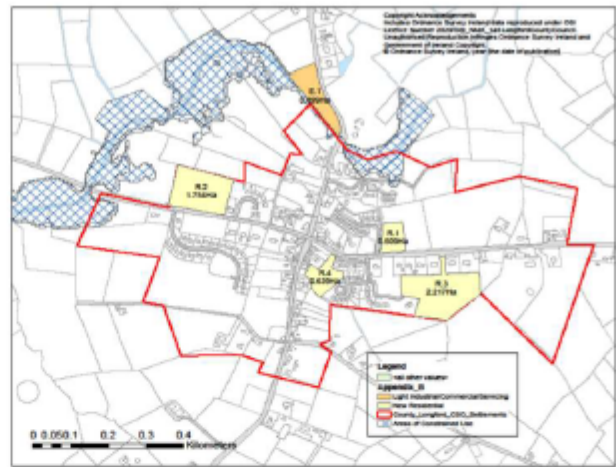
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Ballinalee Infrastructure assessment - Further iteration



Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

Costs per unit

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Page 91 | 95

# INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Settlement	KEENAGH		27990	17570
Water supply zone	Lough Forbes	7 MI/day	31,111	
Agglomeration	Keenagh A0325		2,799	1,757
Residential lands			R1	R2
Wastewater	headroom	436	91	86
Employment lands			E1	E2
Wastewater			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

See Zoning Maps for reference number

report, detailing the estimated cost at draft plan stage

description required services	network	
	SPS	clough dillon up cloghree well upgrade
	WWTP	

CONNECTION	3929		196430	117870	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
extra on connection	442	IW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NETWORK			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Network upgrade	230	roads section																	
Network new road	200																		
Network upgrade green	150																		
Network new green	100																		
PUMP			32000	32000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCADA	14000	Jacobs Tobin reports	1	1															
valve chamber	4000		1	1															
variable speed	12500		1	1															
benching	2500		1	1															
Atex pump replace	13000		1	1															
discharge +vent	3500		1	1															
recertification electric	2500		1	1															
rising main	250																		
Pump Station new	250000	Auburn quotes 2019																	
WWTP upgrade per 1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.7	0	216	131	81	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NETWORK+SPS+WWTP	sum total	418320	248430	169870	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
size land parcel estimated	king water DMA fig	m2	130*120	250*105															
housing density estimated	O Dammit reports	number	30	25															
29 dwellings/ha	m2		27990	17570															
=(12+8+4)*10*(1+15green+3school+10busin	if pump		26390	15970	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
348 m2/ dwelling			80	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
737.1 m2/ dwelling			38	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
=(12+8+9+6)*(3+12+3)*(1+15 road+1 schoo	2/3 1/3 split		66	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14 dwellings/ha	50:50 split		59	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
added dwelling PE	216	chosen number	50	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost % figure in table																			
3900 100																			
8000 67		-124																	
12000 33		-118																	
16000 0		-121																	
Costs per unit			4,969	5,662	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Score to table			91	86	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

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Plant needs upgrade



Settlement	LEGAN	16720
Water suppl	Abbeyshrule 3 MI/day	13,333
Agglomerati	Legan A0545	1.672
Residential lands		R1
Wastewater	headroom 758	94
Employment lands		E1
Wastewater		#DIV/0!

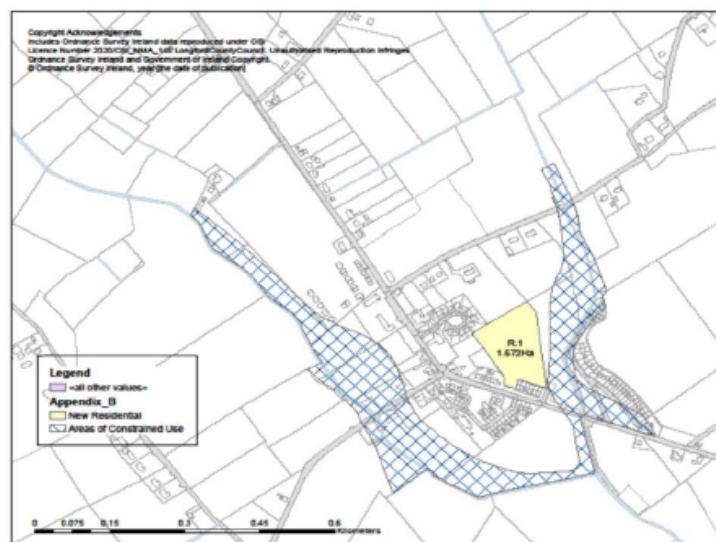
report, detailing the estimated cost at **draft** plan stage

SPS  
WWTP

WATER			
CONNECTION	3929		137515 0
extra on connection	442	IW	0 0
NETWORK			25000 0
Network upgrade	250	roads section	100
Network new roads	200		
Work upgrade	150		
Network new growth	100		
PUMP			0 0
SCADA	14000	ibis Tobin reports	
valve chambers	4000		
variable speed	12500		
benching	2500		
Alex pump replacement	13000		
discharge level	3500		
recertification electrical	2500		
rising main	250		
Pump Station replacement	250000	turn quotes 2019	

[illegible][illegible]

## Plant needs upgrade



## Abstract

# INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Settlement	NEWTOWNFORBES	23010	1940	3490	4470	7720												
Water supply zone	Lough Forbes	7 Ml/day	31,111															
Agglomeration	Newtownforbes D 0317		2.301	0.194	0.349	0.447	0.772											
Residential lands			R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14		
Wastewater	headroom	690	86	70	70	73	83	#DIV/0!										
Employment lands			E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14		
Wastewater			#DIV/0!															

See Zoning Maps for reference number

report, detailing the estimated cost at draft plan stage

description required services		network	180m new	60m road	1.50 new	+ 30 upgrade	80m reroute	80 upgrade										
		SPS					cluin doire2	upgrade										
		WWTP																
CONNECTION	3929		157160	15716	23574	31432	58995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
extra on connection	442	FW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NETWORK			66000	15000	22500	0	32000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Network upgrade	250	roads section	120	60	50		80											
Network new road	200		180		50													
Network upgrade green	150						80											
Network new green	100																	
PUMP			0	0	0	26500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCADA	14000	Jacobs Tobin reports				1												
valve chamber	4000					1												
variable speed	12500																	
benching	2500					1												
Atex pump replace	13000																	
discharge event	3500					1												
recertification electric	2500					1												
rising main	250																	
Pump Station new	250000	Auburn quotes 2019																
WWTP upgrade per 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.7	0	197.1	108	10.8	16.2	21.6	40.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NETWORK+SPS+WWTP sum total		448817	223160	30716	46074	57932	90935	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
size land parcel estimate	drinking water DMA figures	m2	199*120	58*33	80*39	135*32	200*46+93*33											
housing density estimate	O Dammit reports	number	60	5	8	10	36											
32 dwellings/ha		m2	23010	1940	3490	4470	7720											
→(11+10+4+6)*77*(1+15green+15school+10business)	# pump		23010	1940	3490	2870	7720	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
315 m2/ dwelling			73	6	11	14	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1832 m2/ dwelling			13	1	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
→(15+4+8+6+15+6)*(4+13+4+8)*(1+15 road+1 sch)	2/3 1/3 split		53	4	8	10	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 dwellings/ha	50:50 split		43	4	6	8	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
added dwelling PE	197	chosen number	40	4	6	8	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost % figure in table																		
3900 100																		
8000 67		-124																
12000 33		-118																
16000 0		-121																
Costs per unit			5,579	7,679	7,679	7,242	6,062	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Score to table			86	70	70	73	83	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

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Plant needs upgrade

# INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Settlement	Abbeysrule	3230	5910	2910														
Water supply zone	Ballymahon 3 MI/day	31,111																
Agglomeration	Abbeysrule A0101	0.323	0.591	0.291														
Residential lands			R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14		
Wastewater	headroom	183	68	33	4	#DIV/0!												
Employment lands		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14			
Wastewater		#DIV/0!																

See Zoning Maps for reference number

report, detailing the estimated cost at draft plan stage

description required services		network	75	260	140													
		SPS	PS upgrade		PS upgrade													
WWTP																		
CONNECTION	3929		19645	39290	19645	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
extra on connection	442	FW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NETWORK			20000	65000	50000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Network upgrade	250	roads section	80	260	200													
Network new road	200																	
Network upgrade green	150																	
Network new green	100																	
PUMP			0	16000	8000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCADA	14000	be Tobin reports		0.667	0.333													
valve chamber	4000			0.667	0.333													
variable speed	12500																	
benching	2500																	
Atex pump replace	13000																	
discharge vent	3500			0.667	0.333													
recertification electric	2500			0.667	0.333													
rising main	250																	
Pump Station new	250000	sum quotes 2019																
WWTP upgrade per 1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.7	0	54	13.5	27	13.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NETWORK+SPS+WWTP	sum total	237580	39645	120290	77645	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
size land parcel estimated	water DMA m2		86*76	152*108	215*91													
housing density estimate	dammit repc number		20	15	25													
23 dwellings/h	m2		3230	5910	2910													
=((11+10+11+6)*8*(1+15 green+5 sch	if pump		3230	4310	1310	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
440.8	m2/ dwelling		7	13	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2046.33	m2/ dwelling		2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
=((23+9+15+6)*(9+19+5)*(1+(15 road	2/3 1/3 spli		5	10	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 dwellings/h	50:50 split		4	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
added dwelling PE	54 chosen nu		5	10	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost % figure in table																		
3900	100																	
8000	67	-124																
12000	33	-118																
16000	0	-121																
Costs per unit			7,929	12,029	15,529	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Score to table			68	33	4	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

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Plant needs upgrade

## **Annex 6: Settlement - Asset Based Criteria Table – NEW INCLUSION**

Proposed Amendment ANN.6.1	
Section	Heading
Annex 6	Settlement – Asset Based Criteria Table

**Include the Settlement – Asset Based Criteria Assessment Table in conjunction with proposed material amendment CH4.7 (Part 1: Written Statement).**

### **Annex 6: Settlement – Asset Based Criteria Assessment Table**

*(Note: Existing Annexes will be renumbered as a result of the above additional inclusion).*

Settlement	Scale (Population size and rate of increase/decrease between 1996-2016) where data provides for comparison.  Longford County – (30,166 - 40,873) = +35.5%	FAC Medium Population Projection Year 2027 (and rate of change from 2016)	Function	Infrastructure: (Wastewater, water supply, broadband connectivity)	Human Capital (Level of education, skillset of labour force)	Placemaking (Public realm spaces, connectivity of spaces, residential and employment densities)	Enterprise Ecosystem (Formation rates for new businesses, growth of existing businesses – scale-ups, numbers of employment in types of sector)	Connectivity (Transport infrastructure, urban and rural transport options)	Natural Capital (Open space and green infrastructure provisions, environmental and ecologically sensitive sites, flood extents)
Longford Town	6,984 - 10,008 (43% increase)	<b>12,389 (+23.8%)</b>	<b>Jobs to Resident Workforce Ratio</b> = 1.596. Note: The average ratio of jobs to resident workers in the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area is 0.86.  Main employment, administrative and retail	<u>Wastewater</u> 20,000 PE (Collected PE = 17,623 – 2,377 PE Remaining Capacity).  <u>Broadband</u> Settlement serviced by 100% High-Speed Fibre Broadband Coverage	<u>5 Primary Schools</u> 1,208 places enrolled 2019/2020  <u>1 Special School</u> 29 places enrolled 2019/2020  <u>3 Post-Primary School</u> 1,401 places enrolled 2019/2020	A number of formal and informal public and communal spaces and public realm features associated with the settlement, notably the Albert Reynolds Peace Park and the Royal Canal amenity features. Good pedestrian connectivity. Vehicular connectivity	Labour Force participation rate = 60.2%. Unemployment rate = 19.6% based on 2016 Census.  Jobs to Resident Workforce Ratio = 1.596. Note: The average ratio of jobs to resident workers in the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area is 0.86.	Good public transport links available, including Irish Rail services, Bus Éireann local and national services. Good walking connectivity throughout and around the settlement. Recognised deficiency in dedicated cycle lanes.	A number of formal and informal green spaces and key amenity features present, most notably, the Albert Reynolds Peace Park and the Royal Canal, with ecological corridor linkages throughout. Nearest Natura 2000 site is approx. 3km west of town centre (Brown

			centre in County Longford with a high level of public transport services and connectivity within local, regional and national settings.				Key employment industries within the settlement include manufacturing, commerce and trade and professional services which together, make up of the 15,172 total number of persons at work in Longford Town based on the 2016 Census.		Bog SAC – Site Code: 002346).
Edgeworths town	737 - 2,072 (181% increase)	<b>2,606</b> <b>(+25.8%)</b>	Second largest settlement in population terms. Good level of social and community infrastructure such as schools, library, sports grounds. High-level of public transport connectivity owing to Irish Rail station	<u>Wastewater</u> 2,700 PE (Collected PE = 2,656 – 44 PE remaining capacity)  <u>Broadband</u> Settlement serviced by 99% High-Speed Fibre Broadband Coverage	<u>2 Primary Schools</u> 404 places enrolled 2019/2020		Jobs to Resident Workforce Ratio = 0.735.		



			and proximity to N4 route.  <u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>						
Ballymahon	790 - 1,877 (138% increase)	<b>2,341</b> <b>(+24.7%)</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 2,125 PE (Collected PE = 2,622)  <u>Broadband Settlement</u> serviced by 93%-96% High-Speed Fibre Broadband Coverage	<u>1 Primary School</u> 355 places enrolled 2019/2020  <u>2 Post-Primary Schools</u> 1,079 places enrolled 2019/2020		Jobs to Resident Workforce Ratio = 0.817.		
Lanesborough - Ballyleague	984 - 1,454* (48% increase)	<b>N/A</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 3,200 PE (Collected PE = 2,191 – 1,009 PE Remaining Capacity)	<u>2 Primary Schools</u> 165 places enrolled 2019/2020		Jobs to Resident Workforce Ratio = 0.646.		

			<u>Retail Hierarchy</u>		<u>1 Post-Primary School</u> 193 places enrolled 2019/2020 **				
Granard	1,173 – 1,096*** (-0.06% decrease) CSO Settlement defined population (2016) = 816	<b>1,003</b> <b>(+22.9% in CSO defined Settlement population)</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>  Strong rural-urban interdependencies are a feature of the Region, with positive correlations between rural economic performance and regional accessibility.	<u>Wastewater</u> 3,200 PE (Collected PE = 1,775 – 1,425 PE Remaining Capacity).  <u>Broadband</u> Settlement serviced by 100% High-Speed Fibre Broadband Coverage	<u>1 Primary School</u> 190 places enrolled 2019/2020  <u>2 Post-Primary School</u> 731 places enrolled 2019/2020		Jobs to Resident Workforce Ratio = 2.353.		
Abbeyshrule	224 (Small Area - 2016 Census)	<b>N/A</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 300 PE (Collected PE = 85 – 215 PE	-				

			<u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>	Remaining Capacity).  <u>Broadband Settlement</u> identified for planned fibre broadband deployment					
Ardagh	471 (2 no. Small Areas – 2016 Census)	<b>N/A</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 450 PE (Collected PE = 58 – 392 PE Remaining Capacity).	<u>1 Primary School</u> 221 places enrolled 2019/2020				
Aughnaccliffe	177 (2016)	<b>223 (+25.98%)</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 300 PE – unknown collection and headroom PE	<u>1 Primary School</u> 113 places enrolled 2019/2020				
Ballinamuck	232 (Small Area - 2016 Census)	<b>N/A</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 500 PE (Collected PE = 64 – 436 PE Remaining Capacity).	<u>1 Primary School</u> 87 places enrolled 2019/2020				

			<u>Retail Hierarchy</u>						
Ballinalee	347 (2016 Census)	<b>441 (+27%)</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 600 PE (Agglomeration = 194 PE 2018)	<u>1 Primary School</u> 149 places enrolled 2019/2020				
Clondra	202 (Small Area - 2016 Census)	<b>N/A</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 600 PE (Collected PE = 158 – 442 PE Remaining Capacity).	<u>1 Primary School</u> 97 places enrolled 2019/2020				
Drumlish	274 – 931 (240% increase)	<b>1,173 (+26%)</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>  <u>Ratio between jobs and resident workers</u>  <u>Retail Hierarchy</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 1,200 PE (Collected PE = 1,005 – 195 PE Remaining Capacity)	<u>1 Primary School</u> 230 places enrolled 2019/2020				
Keenagh	223 – 581 (161% increase)	<b>732 (+26%)</b>	<u>Commuter Trips</u>	<u>Wastewater</u> 1,000 PE (Collected PE =	<u>1 Primary School</u>				

			Ratio between <u>jobs and resident workers</u>  Retail Hierarchy	692 – 308 PE Remaining Capacity)	167 places enrolled 2019/2020				
Legan	215	<b>260 (+20.9%)</b>	Commuter Trips  Ratio between <u>jobs and resident workers</u>  Retail Hierarchy	Wastewater 1,000 PE (Collected PE = 192 – 808 PE Remaining Capacity)	1 Primary School 45 places enrolled 2019/2020				
Newtownforbes	470 – 778 (66% increase)	<b>965 (+19.3%)</b>	Commuter Trips  Ratio between <u>jobs and resident workers</u>  Retail Hierarchy	Wastewater 1,800 PE (Collected PE = 976 – 824 PE Remaining Capacity)	1 Primary School 363 places enrolled 2019/2020				

## **Annex ~~7~~9: Revised Retail Strategy**

Proposed Amendment ANN.9.1		
Section	Heading	Page no.
Annex <del>7</del> 9	Retail Strategy	173-240

Replace the existing Retail Strategy with the following revised Retail Strategy in Annex ~~7~~9:

**\* To be read in conjunction and support of proposed amendment CH8.5 (Part 1: Written Statement) for which a Revised Retail Strategy has been prepared.**

## **Annex 9: Revised Retail Strategy**

---



# **Material Alterations to Draft Longford County Retail Strategy 2021-2027**



**Aras an Chontae,  
Great Water Street,  
Longford,  
N39 T9K5**

**Planning Department**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	i
1 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Function of the Updated Longford Retail Strategy .....	1
1.2 Methodology.....	1
1.3 Consideration of Vacancy .....	2
1.4 Definition of the Retail Typologies .....	3
1.5 Retail Planning Policy Context .....	3
1.5.1 National Policy Context .....	4
1.5.2 Regional Policy Context .....	6
1.5.3 Local Policy Context .....	8
1.6 Core Retail Areas .....	11
2 Retail Trend Analysis and Assessment of Competing Centres.....	14
2.1 Retail Trend Analysis.....	14
2.2 The Changing Nature of Retail Services in Ireland.....	15
2.3 Retail Experience Economy.....	17
2.4 Assessment of Competing Retail Centres.....	18
2.4.1 Introduction.....	18
2.4.2 Competing Centres .....	19
3 Health Check Analysis.....	23
3.1 Retail Health Check Analysis of Co. Longford.....	23
3.2 Longford Town.....	23
3.3 Granard.....	27
3.4 Edgeworthstown .....	29
3.5 Ballymahon.....	31
3.6 Lanesborough .....	33
3.7 Other Settlements .....	34
3.8 Summary of Commercial Floorspace Activity Since 2013 .....	35
3.9 Healthcheck Conclusions.....	37
4 Projected Floorspace Requirements .....	39

4.1	Introduction.....	39
4.2	Population of County Longford.....	39
4.3	Expenditure Estimates.....	40
4.4	Turnover and Floorspace Capacity .....	48
4.5	Additional Retail Floorspace Requirements.....	50
4.6	Additional Retail Floorspace Requirement.....	52
5.	Retail Strategy and Policy Guidance.....	54
5.1	Retail Objectives and Policy Recommendations.....	54
5.2	Retail Strategy Overview.....	54
5.3	Key Retail Principles .....	55
5.4	Recommended Retail Policy Objectives.....	56
5.5	Criteria for the Assessment of Future Retail Development .....	60
5.6	Criteria for the Assessment of Different Development Types .....	61
5.7	Monitoring and Review .....	62
6.	Conclusion.....	64

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Longford County Retail Strategy 2021-2027 has been compiled as part of the County Development Plan 2021-2027. It represents a re-assessment of the County's previous Retail Strategy 2015-2021 which has been prepared in a period of economic transition marked by moderate growth following the economic recession that characterised the years from 2007-2014.

Whilst this strategy has been prepared in a more positive national economic environment than the previous strategy, it clearly illustrates the on-going impacts which the recession has had on the retail market in the County, as characterised by long-term vacancy levels in many of the County's main retail centres. Moreover, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will have a significant bearing on overall economic growth, particularly between 2020 and 2021, which in turn will have implications for future retail expenditure and projected retail floorspace development.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant public health measures introduced over this period, predominantly the three lengthy periods national lockdown restricting multiple retail operations, have also undermined the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the strategy by suspending a substantive element of overall retail activity during the period 2020-2021. At the time of writing, (June 2021) the majority of this substantive sector was beginning to open up again. However, with further emergency public health measures, such as an additional lockdown thereby restricting retail activity once again, cannot be ruled out.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that traditional retail patterns will change significantly post-Covid-19, with an increased demand on online shopping, with more competing land uses, aside from retail, arising in town centres. Consequently, this Retail Strategy should be viewed as an interim strategy in advance of a comprehensive review, post-Covid-19, of the qualitative and quantitative aspects of retail centres within the County.

Notwithstanding this, the Strategy provides notable evidence of the economic resilience of Longford's retailers and its economy, as well as providing the quantitative basis for future retail development in the County over the Plan period.

The purpose of the Longford County Retail Strategy is to ensure that the development of retail floorspace within the County is grounded in an evidence-based framework during its 6-year lifecycle. In this way, the development of additional retail floorspace can be assessed against a set of clearly defined and evidence-based criteria. This will allow for the development of a healthy retailing environment within County Longford addressing high levels of vacancy and economic decline/stagnation in urban centres and reinforcing the vitality of its urban centres facilitating competitiveness in the County and the wider midlands region.

The main findings and recommendations of this retail strategy include:

- Longford Town retains the majority of retail floorspace within the county and remains at the top of the Longford County Retail Hierarchy.

- The findings of healthcheck analysis on each of the main settlements within County Longford indicates that the settlements continue to provide vital services and functions to their residents and their surrounding hinterlands.
- A number of urban streetscape improvement schemes have been proposed for these settlements, as well as funding being secured for their development, which will make a significant contribution to the overall amenity values of the main settlements in the County.
- Despite the resurgence of the national economy in recent years, there remains high levels of vacancy within peripheral areas of the four main settlements of the County.
- The overall vacancy rate within County Longford is currently ~~16.59.34~~%, which is slightly substantively less than the vacancy rate of 17.7% for the County recorded in the previous Retail Strategy 2015-2021, owing to the subsequent occupation of a number of vacant units of large floorplates as well as other premises being the subject of change of use planning permissions from retail to commercial or industrial land uses.
- Of the three retail categories, the proportion of vacancy is highest in the comparison retail floorspace category, with 21.1% of all such floorspace within the County currently vacant.
- Since 2013, only 246.5 square metres of additional retail floorspace has been built.
- Planning permission for a further 2,481 square metres of retail floorspace is due to expire before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2022; if not renewed or implemented prior to expiration.
- 2,036 square metres of floorspace (convenience) is due to expire before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2022, if not renewed or implemented prior to expiration.
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is anticipated to result in a severe drop in economic growth between 2019 and 2020, before recovering rapidly in 2021 with modest growth anticipated in the years thereafter for the duration of the strategy.
- There is a requirement for at least an additional ~~4,0672,100~~m<sup>2</sup> – ~~3,200~~m<sup>2</sup> of convenience, ~~3,4132,000~~m<sup>2</sup> – ~~2,650~~m<sup>2</sup> comparison and ~~2,20010,928~~m<sup>2</sup> – ~~4,850~~m<sup>2</sup> of bulky goods retail floorspace between 2021 and 2027.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Function of the Updated Longford Retail Strategy

The overriding aim of the Retail Strategy is to create the appropriate conditions necessary to foster a healthy and vibrant retail environment in County Longford over the Development Plan period of 2021-2027, in the context of national, regional, and local plans, strategy, policy and guidance. To this end, the Strategy acts as an essential tool in assessing the quantum, scale and type of retail development required over the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 period as well as providing the vital evidence base for the relevant policies and objectives contained within Chapter 8: *Economic Development* and Chapter 16: *Development Management Standards* of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 to guide future retail development over the plan period.

### 1.2 Methodology

This Retail Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the provisions set out in the '*Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities*', (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2012). The preparation of this strategy has coincided with a period of national economic growth following the sustained economic decline that characterised between the years of 2007-2014. Notwithstanding this, the rate of recovery from this economic crash has not been equitable across the country, and has largely been confined to the largest conurbations of the state, most notably within the Greater Dublin Area. However, there is increasing evidence and sentiment that more pronounced growth is now being experienced in areas outside of these locations, including County Longford.

Despite experiencing a period of resurgent growth in recent years, a number of settlements within County Longford still retain long-term vacancy levels of properties within their respective town centres. This level of long-term vacancy coincides with a more general discussion at a national-level regarding the changing nature of town centres in Ireland, where the traditional role of retail is being challenged to offer a greater range of retail choice in terms of functions and accessibility for shoppers. In this regard, there is recognition that the evening and night-time economy has a significant part to play in revitalising town centres and traditional retail cores not just in providing increased accessibility for consumers through later opening hours, but also in providing a more immersive and vibrant experience for consumers and users of town centres throughout the day and evening.

In the backdrop of the preparation of this Retail Strategy, the uncertainty of the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union remains. Moreover, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will have a significant bearing on overall economic growth, particularly between 2020 and 2021, which in turn will have implications for future retail expenditure and projected retail floorspace development.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant public health measures introduced over this period, predominantly the three lengthy periods national lockdown restricting multiple retail operations,

have also undermined the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the strategy by suspending a substantive element of overall retail activity during the period 2020-2021. At the time of writing, (June 2021) the majority of this substantive sector was beginning to open up again. However, with further emergency public health measures, such as an additional lockdown thereby restricting retail activity once again, cannot be ruled out.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that traditional retail patterns will change significantly post-Covid-19, with an increased demand on online shopping, with more competing land uses, aside from retail, arising in town centres. Consequently, this Retail Strategy should be viewed as an interim strategy in advance of a comprehensive review, post-Covid-19, of the qualitative and quantitative aspects of retail centres within the County.

Despite this uncertainty, and the form of future trading arrangements with the UK, retailing remains a fundamental economic function and vital service sector within County Longford.

The applied methodology of this Retail Strategy considers these aspects in detail with the following identified as key objectives of this Retail Strategy:

- Define the retail hierarchy in the County and related retail core boundaries;
- Undertake a health check appraisal of the key retail centres in Longford to ascertain the need for interventions in these areas;
- Identify the broad requirement for additional retail floorspace development in the County over the Development Plan period to support the established settlement hierarchy; and
- Provide guidance on policy recommendations and criteria for the future assessment of retail development proposals over the Development Plan period of 2021-2027.

### **1.3 Consideration of Vacancy**

The preparation of the Longford County Retail Strategy considered retail floorspace vacancy in detail. A survey of existing floorspace in the county was undertaken (between October 2018 and September 2019), which identified a cumulative total of ~~5,618~~~~10,066~~ square metres of vacancy across convenience, comparison and bulky retail categories. This equates to ~~46.5~~~~59.34~~% of the total retail floorspace in the County. Based on market insights, a frictional vacancy rate of 10% was held across the respective categories to foster competition in the market and the residual total was a factor in the calculated demand model. Identified demand over the plan period was subsequently rationalised on the basis of this vacancy to determine adjusted floorspace requirements. The modelled outputs illustrate that there is an identified need for additional retail floorspace from the beginning of the Plan period in 2021, across convenience, comparison and bulky retail categories.

In undertaking the preparation of this Retail Strategy, Longford County Council has sought to take a proactive approach to addressing the issue of retail floorspace vacancy, while remaining cognisant of its responsibility to facilitate growth in retail and general economic activity within the



County. The Retail Strategy has taken a cumulative approach to depleting vacant floorspace, while accommodating additional floorspace where it is required.

#### **1.4 Definition of the Retail Typologies**

Annex 1 of the 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines provides clear guidance on the classification of the two types of retail goods categories, convenience and comparison and defines each category as follows:

##### Convenience:

This category includes all supermarkets, convenience stores and retail food outlets (excluding fast food takeaways, restaurants, cafes including sandwich bars) serving food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods.

##### Comparison:

This list of goods which fall under this category is as follows: clothing and footwear, furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods), medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment, educational and recreation equipment and accessories, books, newspapers and magazines, goods for personal care, goods not elsewhere classified and bulky goods.

##### Bulky Goods:

While bulky goods category is listed under the classification of comparison floorspace above, it is considered appropriate to make a distinction within the Retail Strategy between pure comparison floorspace and floorspace used for the sale of bulky goods.

The Annex 1 definition includes a list of goods which are considered to fall within the bulky goods category as follows: Goods generally sold from retail warehouses where DIY goods or goods such as flat pack furniture are of such size that they would normally be taken away by car and not be portable by customers travelling by foot, cycle or bus, or that large floorspace would be required to display them e.g. repair and maintenance materials; furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings; household appliances; tools and equipment for the house and garden; bulky nursery furniture and equipment including perambulators; bulky pet products such as kennels and aquariums; audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment; catalogue shops and other bulky durables for recreation and leisure. It should be noted that the above classifications are not exhaustive. Bulky goods not mentioned in the above list should be dealt with on their own merits in the context of the definition of bulky goods.

#### **1.5 Retail Planning Policy Context**

The following provides an overview of the relevant national, regional and local policy instruments that will influence the future development of the retail sector in the County.

### 1.5.1 National Policy Context

#### **Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework**

The National Planning Framework sets out the Government's high-level strategic plan for the future growth and development of the country out to the year 2040, by which time it is estimated that an extra 1 million people will be living in the country. The NPF sets out a long-term spatial strategy for the country and forms the pinnacle of a hierarchy of spatial plans from which corresponding Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, County/City Developments Plans and Local Area Plans follow. The NPF sets out a series of shared development goals which are expressed in the NPF as ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) which address a range of development goals.

A key principle underpinning the NPF is that of 'compact growth' which espouses the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages in order to add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. In this regard, it is recognised that retail development will be a critical element in providing an appropriate quantum and mix of retail uses which will contribute to and enhance the viability and vitality of urban settlements and their centres.

#### **Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)**

The Retail Planning Guidelines, published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) in 2012, aim to ensure that the planning system continues to play a key role in supporting competitiveness in the retail sector for the benefit of the consumer in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development. The Guidelines provide a comprehensive retail planning and development framework to guide regional assemblies and planning authorities in the preparation of retail policy objectives for their respective strategies and development plans, as well as guiding An Bord Pleanála and planning authorities in assessing planning applications or appeals. The Guidelines are also a key source of information to retailers and developers in formulating retail development proposals. The Guidelines and accompanying '*Retail Design Manual*' have increased standards in relation to design, access and mobility, signage, landscaping, the creation of place, and town centre integration including fostering a mix of uses.

The Guidelines contain five key policy objectives for retail development:

1. Ensuring that retail development is plan-led;
2. Promoting city/town centre vitality through a sequential approach to development;
3. Securing competitiveness in the retail sector by actively enabling good quality development proposals to come forward in suitable locations;
4. Facilitating a shift towards increased access to retailing by public transport, cycling and walking in accordance with the Smarter Travel Strategy; and
5. Delivering quality urban design outcomes.

The Guidelines emphasise that in order to ensure proper planning and sustainable development, retail development and activity must follow the settlement hierarchy of the State and retail development should be appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement or part of the settlement in which it is located as designated by the NPF, relevant Regional Spatial Economic Strategy and the Core Strategies of Development Plans.

The Guidelines also provide specific guidance for the content and role of Development Plans. The following are key messages from the Guidelines for planning authorities to have regard to in the preparation of Development Plans:

- Development Plans must set out clear evidence-based policies and objectives in relation to retailing in a discrete section of the Plan;
- Joint or multi-authority retail strategies, where required, will guide the preparation of retail policies and objectives in the relevant development plans;
- The need for any additional retail warehousing should be carefully assessed in view of the significant levels of recent provision and potential impacts on vitality and viability of city and town centres;
- At a minimum, Development Plans must:
  - State the elements of their settlement hierarchy in line with the relevant Regional Planning Guidelines (now replaced by Regional Spatial Economic Strategies (RSEs));
  - Outline the level and form of retailing activity appropriate to the various components of the settlement hierarchy in its Core Strategy;
  - Define, by way of a map, the boundaries of the core shopping areas of city and town centres and also location of any district centres;
  - Include a broad assessment (square metres) of the requirement for additional retail floorspace only for those plans in the areas covered by a joint multi-authority retail strategy;
  - Set out strategic guidance on location and scale of retail development to support the settlement hierarchy, including where appropriate identify opportunity sites which are suitable and available, and which match the future retailing needs of the area;
  - Identify sites which can accommodate the needs of modern retail formats in way that maintains the essential character of the shopping area;
  - Include objectives to support action initiatives in city and town centres, such as mobility management measures that both improve accessibility of retail areas, while aiming to develop a pedestrian and cyclist friendly urban environment and vibrant street life;
  - Include public realm interventions aimed at improving the retailing experience through high-quality civic design, provision of attractive street furnishing, lighting and effective street cleaning/business improvement district type initiatives; and

- Identify relevant development management criteria for the assessment of retail developments in accordance with these guidelines.

As referenced above, the Guidelines also advocate strict guidance in relation to the sustainable organisation of retail activity in Ireland to reflect the existing national settlement structure and hierarchy. This retail hierarchy reflects the broad tiers of urban development and recognises that such a system of classification is indicative only, with scope for overlap between the specific retail functions provided in each tier.

### **Retail Design Manual (2012)**

Accompanying the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) is the Retail Design Manual which outlines the contribution value of high-level design to the future health of town centres and sets out the key principles of urban design which should form the framework for policies to promote quality design in Development Plans and Local Area Plans. Key urban design principles include context and character; access and connectivity; density and mixed uses and includes case studies to demonstrate the application of these principles. Given its function as a complementary document to the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012), the Manual will be particularly relevant in any future retail development and upgrade works to town centres in Longford and most notably in Longford Town which forms the primary retail destination in the County.

### **1.5.2 Regional Policy Context**

#### **Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy**

The Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) is the strategic plan and investment framework which provides policy context for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly which comprises of the following twelve local authorities: Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, Laois, Louth, Meath, Kildare, Wicklow, Fingal, Dublin City, South Dublin and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. The RSES provides a regional expression of the NPF which subsequently gives direction to policy making decisions at a local level through the County Development Plan.

The Eastern and Midland RSES sets out a number of high-level Regional Strategic Outcomes (RSOs) that have been developed having regard to the National Strategic Outcomes set out in the NPF. The RSES sets out a Growth Strategy for the Region in line with the growth identified in the NPF. A key element of in the development of the Growth Strategy is an asset/potential based criteria approach which integrates an evidence-based approach to the identification of suitable settlements within the Region which have the capacity for additional growth. Related to this Growth Strategy is a Settlement Strategy set out in the RSES which identifies a Settlement Hierarchy for the Region and an identification of key growth areas that will see significant development up to 2036 and beyond. In this regard, the RSES sets out the asset-based settlement typology strategy to inform the settlement hierarchies and strategies of each local authority as presented in their respective development plans.

The RSES recognises the importance of the retail sector as a significant employer and economic contributor to the region, as well as its key role in placemaking and creating attractive liveable environments. The RSES also emphasises the significant role retail can play in acting as a significant attraction for consumers as well as providing an accessible environment for other retailers and commercial service providers through the provision of strong mixed use commercial core.

The RSES reinforces the principles for retail development as established in the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012, and places emphasis on ensuring that retail development is plan-led with the promotion of town centre vitality through the sequential approach to development and the promotion of good quality development in appropriate locations whilst also facilitating a modal shift and the delivery of quality urban design outcomes.

A key feature of the RSES's retail development policy is its Retail Hierarchy for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area. In this regard, the RSES prescribes five spatial levels of retail centres or functions: Level 1 – Metropolitan Centre (Dublin City Centre); Level 2 – Major Town Centres and County (Principal) Town Centres (including Longford Town); Level 3 – Town and/or District Centres & Sub-County Town Centres (key services towns including Granard); Level 4 – Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres, Small Towns and Villages; and Level 5 – Corner Shops/Small Villages.

The RSES include the following policy objectives with respect to the retail sector:

***RPO 6.9: EMRA will support the preparation of a Retail Strategy / Strategies for the Region in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 to update the retail hierarchy and apply floorspace requirements for the Region.***

***RPO 6.10: Future provisions of significant retail development within the Region shall be consistent with the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 and the retail hierarchy for Region, expressed in the RSES, until such time as this hierarchy is updated.***

The RSES also addresses the need for town centres to maintain and enhance their vitality and vibrancy and refers to the Framework for Town Centre Renewal (Retail Consultation Forum, 2017) which sets out an action plan and a range of suggested supports for town centre renewal which has the potential to support viable and sustainable towns and villages that meet the long term needs of our society, economy and environment. In this regard, the RSES contains the following policy objectives for town centre renewal:

***RPO 6.11: Local Authorities shall include objectives in Development Plan and Local Area Plans supporting emphasis on placemaking for town centres, for example through the inclusion of a Placemaking Strategy for towns and implementation of Town Centre Renewal Plans.***

**RPO 6.12:** *Local Authorities shall support the preparation of Design Guidelines to provide for improvements in the appearance of streetscapes and for revitalising vacant spaces for example with cost effective, temporary uses that build on the longer-term vision for space.*

**RPO 6.13:** *EMRA will support the use of targeted financial incentives to re-establish the dominant role of town centres provided for in planning policy to encourage a greater take up of town centre development opportunities for retail, residential, commercial, and leisure uses.*

### 1.5.3 Local Policy Context

#### Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027

The Development Plan outlines the spatial development framework for County Longford to develop sustainably over the period 2021-2027 and provides a local expression of national and regional planning policy as reflected in the National Planning Framework and the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy respectively. A critical element of the Development Plan is the Settlement Strategy which provides the geographic framework to guide the location and scale of future development within the County over the plan period and takes cognisance of the regional settlement and retail hierarchies presented in the RSES. An intrinsic feature of this Settlement Strategy is the Settlement Hierarchy which assigns the settlements within County Longford in accordance with the spatial structure and settlements typologies set out in the RSES and categorises areas for development within the County across five tiers as illustrated below:

Longford Town – Key Town
<del>Edgeworthstown &amp; Ballymahon</del> Granard – Self-Sustaining Growth Towns
Granard <del>Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon</del> & Lanesborough – Self- Sustaining Towns
Towns and Villages
Rural

#### Tier 1 – Longford Town – Key Town

Longford Town is identified in the RSES as being a ‘Key Town’ within the region on account of its role as an economically active service town providing employment for its surrounding area as well as being endowed with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as a regional driver to complement the Regional Growth Centre of Athlone. Its Tier 1 placing is also reflective of the substantial retail and administrative functions on offer in Longford Town, as well as its level of physical as well as social infrastructure which serves a broad, cross-regional hinterland. Accordingly, it is considered that the majority of industrial, commercial, business and retail development will also be channelled to Longford Town.



## **Tier 2 – Edgeworthstown and BallymahonGranard - Self-Sustaining Growth Towns**

~~Granard has a robust employment base, with a particular focus on manufacturing in the food and agricultural sectors, with the Pat the Baker food manufacturing company and Kiernan Milling both significant employers. In 2016, there were a total of 269 resident workers within Granard, however 633 total jobs were recorded, giving a jobs to resident workers ratio of 2.35; the highest recorded ratio within the regional area. Granard also acts as an important retail centre to its inhabitants and wider hinterland, as reflected in its designation in the RSES as a Level 3 retail centre (Town and/or District Centres & Sub-County Town Centres (Key Service Centres)). Moreover, given its proximity to the Longford-Cavan border, Granard performs as a key service provider and retail centre for a broad hinterland which extends beyond the County boundary.~~

~~The settlements of Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon have seen significant growth over the twenty-year intercensal period between 1996 and 2016 with their populations increasing by approximately 181% and 138% respectively over this period. Even within a regional context, this level of growth is recognised as being significant. The Development Plan places emphasis on maintaining and consolidating sustainable levels of growth for each of the settlements, in accordance with their position within the Settlement Hierarchy and in cognisance of the supporting roles both settlements will perform in the balanced development of the county in tandem with Longford Town and other settlements, as well as across the wider regional context in supporting the Regional Growth Centre of Athlone.~~

## **Tier 3 – GranardEdgeworthstown, Ballymahon and Lanesborough – Self-Sustaining Towns**

~~Both Granard and Lanesborough~~The settlements of Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon and Lanesborough fulfil critical roles in supporting their respective communities and wider rural areas, and as such, are designated as ‘Self-Sustaining Towns’ within this Settlement Strategy. ~~The settlements of Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon have seen significant growth over the twenty year intercensal period between 1996 and 2016 with their populations increasing by approximately 181% and 138% respectively over this period. Edgeworthstown has a long-established manufacturing and light-industrial base, with particular focus on agri-food and the service sector and also has excellent transports links owing to its proximity to key transport corridors in the form of the N4 and the Sligo-Dublin InterCity rail line. Similarly, Ballymahon has a strong manufacturing and light-industrial base, with a key retail and service-sector standing within the county, with significant growth in tourism-orientated services such as food and drink, hostelryes, and tourist accommodation which has coincided with the opening of the nearby Longford Forest Center Parcs resort in 2019.~~

~~Granard acts as an important driver for local economies in the area, with a number of industries located within the town which have generated significant employment opportunities. The importance of its retail function is also recognised in the RSES wherein Granard is designated as a Level 3 Retail Centre – ‘Town and/or District Centres & Sub-County Town (Key Service Centre)’.~~ Lanesborough provides an important role in the provision of local-level retailing, social and leisure functions and local services to its wider hinterland. The Development Plan places strong



emphasis on the growth of the local economies in Granard and Lanesborough and the development of its vital administrative and social functions to support and complement growth in the region.

#### **Tier 4 – Town and Villages**

##### **Aughnacleiffe, Ballinalee, Drumlish, Keenagh, Legan and Newtownforbes**

These settlements have unique attributes in terms of natural and/or built heritage and specific cultural and historic associations that require specific designation to protect and enhance their character. Each settlement also has the necessary infrastructure capacity available to accommodate additional growth and to sustain and enhance existing services for the needs of their hinterlands and acting as catalysts for the rural economy of the county.

#### **Tier 5 – Rural**

##### **Serviced Rural Villages: Abbeyshrule, Ardagh, Ballinamuck and Clondra.**

**Rural Settlement Clusters: Abbeylara, Ballycloughan, Ballywillan, Barry, Bunlaghy, Carriboy, Colehill, Coolarty, Cullyfad, Derraghan, Dring, Enybegs, Forgney, Killashee, Kilnatraun, Legga, Lisryan, Melview, Moydow, Moyne, Mullinalaghta, Newtowncashel, Ratharney, Stonepark and Taghshinny.**

##### **Open Countryside**

The Settlement Hierarchy acknowledges the importance of rural areas in Longford for sustaining the vitality of rural communities. In terms of the future development of these areas, this strategy places emphasis on maintaining existing rural settlement clusters with a view to the long-term enhancement of existing services and facilities and also the retention and creation of local-level employment opportunities in such small-scale settlements. These locations provide existing social and community infrastructure and services such as schools, shops, post offices, public houses and residential housing. Residential development in these areas will only be permitted at a small-scale, commensurate with existing levels of development and reflective of the character of existing settlements. Small-scale development which will alleviate the pressures for one-off housing in the open countryside will be permitted in these areas.

#### **Longford Retail Hierarchy**

The purpose of the retail hierarchy is to indicate the level and form of retailing activity appropriate to the various urban centres in the County. Taking a criteria-based approach enables the Council to protect each centre's overall vitality and viability, whilst allowing each centre to perform its overall function within the County's settlement hierarchy. It is the core concept of the retail hierarchy that the principal urban areas (county towns) are supported by key service towns, local service towns and to a lesser extent, smaller villages. As such this retail strategy focuses primarily on the upper levels of the hierarchy. It is important to note that this is not to deter or discourage smaller scale retail development and investment in the smaller villages. Rather, it is important to set a clear hierarchy which identifies where the distribution of new retail floorspace should be delivered and which is appropriate in scale and character to the hierarchical role of the centre.

The Longford County Retail Strategy 2015-2021 contained five tiers of retail hierarchy and was based predominantly on the settlement hierarchy produced as part of the first Longford Core Strategy prepared in 2012, the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) and the then latest Midland Regional Planning Guidelines, published in 2010.

The retail hierarchy proposed in this Strategy adopts a similar methodology whereby the ranking of each retail centre has taken into account their respective placing within the settlement hierarchy of the County, as outlined in the Core Strategy of the Development Plan, as well as the Retail Hierarchy for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly as prescribed in the RSES. In respect of the latter and as referenced previously, the RSES has assigned Longford Town and Granard as Level 2 and Level 3 retail centres respectively in its Retail Hierarchy.

Taking account of the above, the revised Longford County Retail Hierarchy consisting of five tiers has been adopted for inclusion in this Strategy and is set out below:

Hierarchy Level	Retail Hierarchy Settlement Designation	Settlements
<b>Tier I</b>	Principal Retail Centre	Longford Town
<b>Tier II</b>	Key Service Centre	Granard
<b>Tier III</b>	Service Centres	Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon
<b>Tier IV</b>	Local Service Centre	Lanesborough
<b>Tier V</b>	Rural Centres and Local Shops	Serviced Rural Villages, Rural Settlement Clusters and the Open Countryside of County Longford

### **Retail Policies and Objectives Contained Within Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027**

The Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 also contains a number of policies and objectives specific to retail development which were informed by this Retail Strategy and its recommendations. These policies and objectives are outlined below:

#### **1.6 Core Retail Areas**

A key policy objective of the Retail Planning Guidelines is the promotion of greater vitality in town centres through the implementation of a sequential approach to the location of all retail development. This 'sequential approach' prioritises core areas within town centres over edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations, which may in some cases, have poorer functional and spatial linkages with the core. This approach recognises the importance of core areas as the most suitable locations for higher order fashion and comparison goods, as they are easily accessible

for the majority of the catchment population and also provide a compact and sustainable critical mass of commercial activity and public amenities, thereby reducing the need to travel.

Given its scale and dominance of retail development and uses relative to other settlements in the County, Longford Town is the most pertinent settlement to be subject to a defined core retail area. The assessment of the County's retail centres carried out under the previous Longford Retail Strategy 2015-2021 recognised the curtailment of retail activity from the commercial core of Longford Town, realised in the most extreme terms by the levels of commercial vacancy experienced in the economic downturn preceding the strategy. Despite the expectation that the levels of commercial vacancy would recede over the period of the previous Retail Strategy, a considerable level of commercial vacancy remains in the town.

Given the level of commercial vacancy within the settlement, coupled with a relative underperforming commercial and retail market, the Core Retail Area of Longford Town remains that which was defined under the previous Retail Strategy, namely the dense clustering of key commercial activities and is bounded by the primary thoroughfares of Main Street to the West and Dublin Street to the South, and by the secondary thoroughfare of Ballymahon Street to the South West. In accordance with the guidance on the location of all new retail activity set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines, Longford Town's Core Retail Area is to be the focus and preferred location for retail development during the plan period.

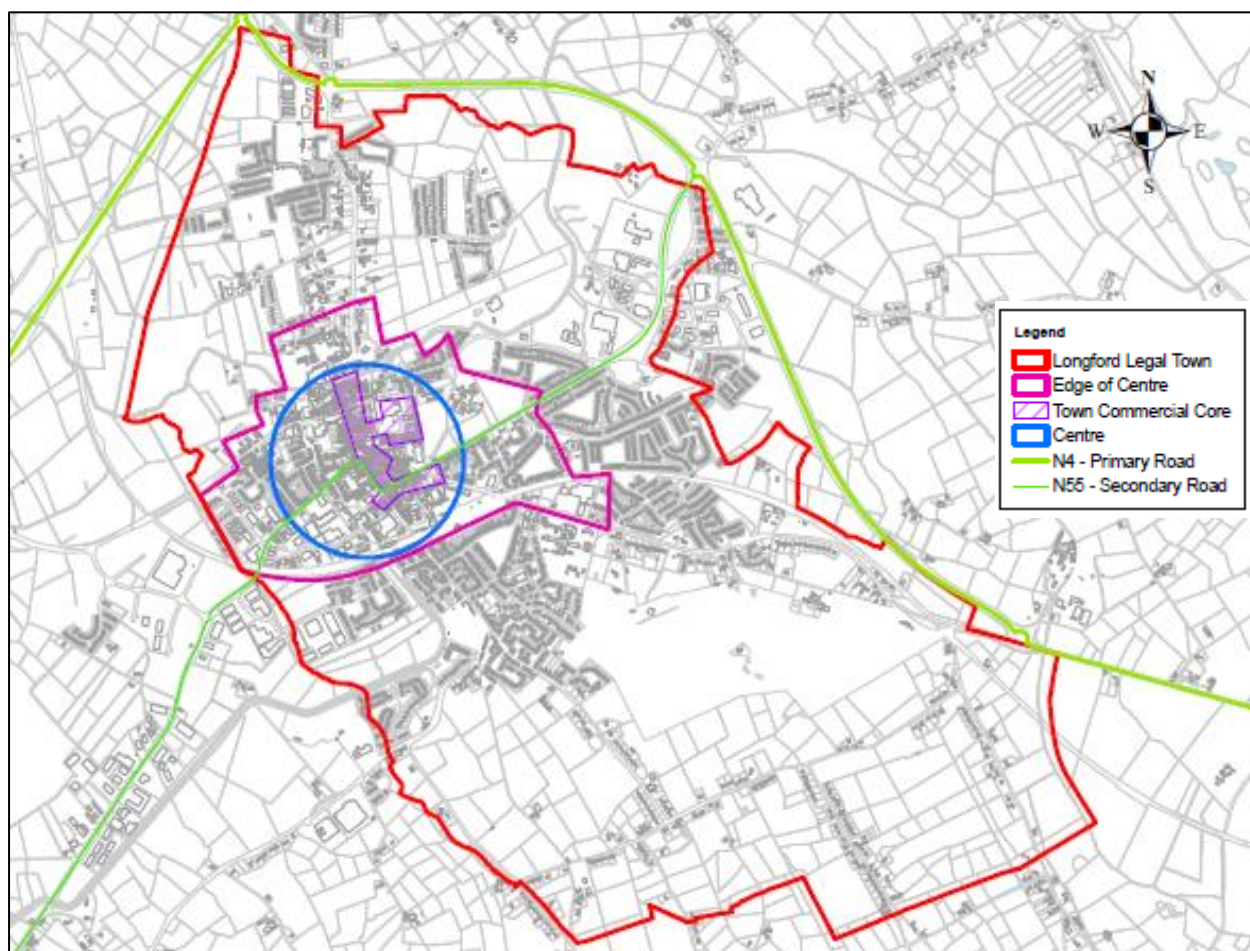


Figure 1: Defined Retail Areas of Longford Town

## 2 RETAIL TREND ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF COMPETING CENTRES

### 2.1 Retail Trend Analysis

The retail sector is a vital element of the national, regional and local economy. Nationally there are 280,000 persons employed in the provision of retail services with approximately 72% of employees based outside Dublin<sup>1</sup>. Retail is also the biggest contributor to the Irish exchequer, generating 23% of total tax receipts in Ireland and more than twice that of the second largest sector in Ireland<sup>2</sup>. Regionally, many of the largest towns exhibit the broadest retail offer, in keeping with the retail hierarchy set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012. This is not to discount the role of smaller towns and settlements where the provision of retail services is often an essential feature of these communities, fulfilling the important role of providing local goods and services to the population and the surrounding rural hinterlands.

The economic downturn which preceded the previous Longford County Retail Strategy 2015-2021 severely affected the retail sector in Ireland with a 25% drop in sales and job losses in the range of 50,000. A legacy of this economic downturn has been an increase in vacancy rates within many towns and counties, as well as the replacement of higher order comparison and convenience retailing in primary frontage locations with lower order retailing or commercial premises such as bookmakers or takeaways. Furthermore, impacts of the decline in national retail sales and overall economic activity also disproportionately affected independent retailers, many of whom have had higher cost bases than the multiples with which they competed. Such trends have impacted on the attractiveness of many areas as retail destinations and urban environments in general.

Notwithstanding, from an assessment of the pre-Covid-19 pandemic Retail Sales Index, published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) for May 2019, there has been an increase in the value of national retail sales in comparison with the corresponding months in each of the preceding four years. In May 2019 the adjusted Retail Sales Value index for all retail business excluding motor trades and bars was calculated to be 108.7 (using 2015 as the base year of the index = 100). The adjusted Retail Sales Values for the same month in the preceding years of 2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015 are published as 106.9, 104.8, 101.0 and 97.8. This trend in the retail sector is reflective of the sustained period of gradual economic recovery experienced nationally since the commencement of the economic recovery in 2014.

In terms of the future economic projections, the economic legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic will have immediate effects. It should be noted that the information provided herein is correct at the time of writing and it is recognised that the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic is subject to change that may affect the national economy. As such, the future GDP growth estimates have been provided reflect the published data from those sources as outlined herein to reflect the macroeconomic situation as data is limited at this time.

<sup>1,2</sup> Retailireland.ie. (2018). *Retail in Depth*

The information set out in Table 2.1 collates a number of sources in relation to forecasted GDP growth (and decline) from 2020 onwards.

**Table 2.1: Forecasted GDP growth (2020 – 2025)**

Source	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
ESRI-Economic Quarterly (March 2020) <sup>3</sup>	-7.1%					
ESRI-Economic Quarterly (May 2020) <sup>4</sup>	-10.3%	7.1%				
Central Bank Q2 2020 Bulletin <sup>5</sup>	-8.3%					
Department of Finance (Feb 2020) <sup>6</sup>	3.9%	3.0%	2.8%	2.7%	2.7%	2.5%
Department of Finance (April 2020) <sup>7</sup>	-10.5%	6.0%				
EU Spring 2020 Economic Forecast <sup>8</sup>	-7.9%	6.4%				
Davy's Paper (May 2020) <sup>9</sup>	-10.3%	7.1%				

Whilst the precise impact of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic on the domestic economy remains uncertain, the economic outlook provided by the ESRI would indicate an initial contraction of GDP before a rapid return to moderate level of growth, ~~more stabilised period of modest growth~~ far removed from the era of boom and bust economic trends that characterised the Celtic Tiger economic era and subsequent recession. This sustainable growth trajectory is also reflected in the retail projections contained in this strategy for County Longford.

## 2.2 The Changing Nature of Retail Services in Ireland

The challenges the retail sector faces also goes beyond macroeconomic considerations and the potential impacts of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, due to the changing nature of shopping habits. The continued growth of online shopping is mirroring a shift in consumption patterns. Several factors driving growth in this sector include consumers' appetite for value for money and greater variety, the increased usage of mobile devices, smart home voice assistants, improved

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.esri.ie/publications/quarterly-economic-commentary-spring-2020>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.esri.ie/publications/quarterly-economic-commentary-summer-2020>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.centralbank.ie/publication/quarterly-bulletins/quarterly-bulletin-q2-2020>

<sup>6</sup> <https://assets.gov.ie/70914/3db3ecde06404a62a369b880a3d7ea23.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>

[https://opac.oireachtas.ie/AWData/Library3/Documents%20Laid/pdf/SPU%202020%20Final\\_300420\\_171423.pdf](https://opac.oireachtas.ie/AWData/Library3/Documents%20Laid/pdf/SPU%202020%20Final_300420_171423.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-performance-and-forecasts/economic-forecasts/spring-2020-economic-forecast\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-performance-and-forecasts/economic-forecasts/spring-2020-economic-forecast_en)

<sup>9</sup> <https://static.rasset.ie/documents/news/2020/05/new-econ-forecast-may-27th.pdf>



security and convenience, as well as increased marketing and use of social media promoting online campaigns. A major challenge to the traditional retail format is that from online retailers. In 2017, online sales accounted for just over 12% (€5bn) of the overall retail sales (€40bn) of that year. Significantly for Irish retailers, however, 60% of this online retail trade went to foreign retailer<sup>10</sup>.

Global online shopping is likely to increase in market share in the coming years with companies such as Amazon continuously increasing their offering to compete on both a global, national and local level<sup>11</sup>. Euromonitor International figures recently revealed that Irish shoppers are the fifth biggest internet shoppers on the planet — with €720.10 per capita and €3.3bn spent in total in 2017<sup>12</sup>. Euromonitor International, predict that online sales in Ireland could reach just under the €5bn mark by 2022. Increasingly busy lifestyles, broadband penetration, and the rising use of technology in addition to customers' appetite for value for money and variety will continue to drive the growth of online shopping.

One significant trend which has impacted on the viability of retail services in Irish centres, and especially town centres, has been the drive by retailers to increase the size of floor plates in which they operate, precipitating the move towards out of town shopping centres and retail parks. Out of town or edge of centre retail has become a growing feature of the Irish retail offer since the 1980's but there has been a significant increase in the number of such centres, as well as their size and scale, since the early 2000's. These shopping centres and retail parks have become a feature of many urban centres throughout the country, consisting of a mixture of retailers catering to consumer demands for convenience, comparison and bulky goods. The proliferation of out of town shopping centres and retail parks has also coincided with the increasing market presence of large European and UK multinational multiples in the Irish market.

These trends, coupled with the underlying difficult economic conditions which characterised the period between 2007 and 2014, have also contributed to sizeable increases in vacancy rates within town centres, as some retailers close or move to other locations which better meet their requirements. Those that remain are forced to compete for the shrinking market share as the retail attraction of the town diminishes. The provision of parking has become another issue of note, as many towns now impose parking charges which are not applicable in out of town centres. Despite the cap on the size of retail units imposed by the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012, there remains a demand for larger multiple convenience retailers now offering a growing proportion of comparison goods within their stores.

In the case of the larger scale multiples, this move towards the provision of comparison goods reflects the policy of increasing diversification which many are pursuing to obtain a greater market

<sup>10</sup> UCD Smurfit School, *Consumer Market Monitor – Q4 2017* (2017)

<sup>11</sup> PWC (2018). [online] Available at: <https://www.pwc.ie/publications/2018/retail-consumer-report-2018.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Irish Examiner (2018). Fivefold Increase in Online Shopping Since 2007. p.11



share. These multiples are continuing to broaden the range of comparison goods which are available from their stores. This is reflected in the retail market share in Ireland which is dominated by three multiples: Dunnes Stores, SuperValu and Tesco which collectively make up approximately two thirds of the Irish convenience retail market<sup>13</sup>. All three retailers have become increasingly involved in the comparison market over the last decade.

**Table 2.24: Multiples share of the Irish convenience market (Source: Kantar Worldpanel, September 2019)**

Retailer	Market Share (%)
<b>Dunnes Stores</b>	22.2
<b>Tesco</b>	21.4
<b>SuperValu</b>	21.4
<b>Aldi</b>	12.5
<b>Lidl</b>	11.9
<b>Other Outlets</b>	10.6

The anticipated increases in online sales may have a significant impact on the future demand for retail floorspace in the medium to longer term. Some industry experts predict that the need for larger convenience/comparison stores will subside as an upward trend in home deliveries gathers pace. At present, a large proportion of the main high street convenience retailers offer online shopping with home delivery as an alternative to in-store shopping, with many multiple retail chains giving increasing priority to online aspects of their retail offer. Moreover, the UK market has seen the introduction of exclusively online convenience retailers without any physical stores of their own such as Ocado. More recently, the world's largest e-commerce marketplace, Amazon, has launched its own online convenience retail brand, Amazon Fresh in the UK, US, Germany and Japan. Whilst none of these exclusively online convenience retail services are in operation in Ireland, it remains clear that online convenience retailing is a burgeoning service with the potential to radically change the traditional retailing landscape and provide for increased demand for storage and distribution facilities.

### 2.3 Retail Experience Economy

The changing nature of retail is not just confined to the physical infrastructure and the means of trade transactions. Increasingly, retail analysts and economists have referred to the increasing importance of the 'experience economy' for retail. In this regard, a growing trend in the retail evolutionary processes have guided economic value from commodities to goods and services to a point where consumer empowerment via technology has upset the traditional power differential between the retailer and the consumer to a stage where customers now expect more. This 'experience economy' goes beyond the physical aesthetics of the retail offer in terms of urban design and quality of environment and relies on the behavioural aspects of the consumer.

<sup>13</sup> Kantar Worldpanel (2019), *Grocery Market Share* - September 2019

Whilst the principle of the ‘experience economy’ relies on the behavioural aspects of the customer, analysts have identified four key factors determining a customer’s shopping experience:

1. Environment – encompassing the overall atmosphere and ease of transactions.
2. Education – referring to the participation of events driven by consumers’ desire to improve knowledge/skills (e.g. demos, product advice and how-to information).
3. Escapism – encapsulates the desire to seek changes in one’s daily routine.
4. Entertainment – captures the activities designed to influence desire of products/brands (e.g. exhibitions and live events).

## 2.4 Assessment of Competing Retail Centres

### 2.4.1 Introduction

The retail industry is highly competitive and Longford’s location relative to national transport linkages is a primary consideration in this regard. Two National Primary Routes, the N4 and the N5, which connect the West and East Coasts, converge on the County, in addition to the rail line linking Sligo to Dublin. The presence of these infrastructural links, which have undergone significant upgrades in the last decade, has made the urban centres of the Greater Dublin Area much more accessible than was previously the case. It is now possible to travel between Longford Town and Dublin City Centre in 82 minutes by car and 110 minutes by train, while the travel times from Longford to retail centres such as the Liffey Valley Centre or the Blanchardstown Centre by car can be as little as 74 minutes.

A summary table of the various distances and travel times between the main urban centres of Longford and those which they compete with is presented below.

**Table 2.32: Summary table of distances and travel times by road between the main urban centres of County Longford and the main urban and retail centres which they compete<sup>14</sup>.**

		Longford	Granard	Edgeworthstown	Ballymahon
Athlone Town-Centre	Distance	41.9km	53.1km	40.6km	21.4km
	Time	48min	54min	42min	26min
Blanchardstown Centre	Distance	117km	111km	102km	109km
	Time	1hr 18min	1hr 17min	1hr 5min	1hr 15min
Cavan Town-Centre	Distance	52.1km	29km	41.3km	60.1km
	Time	52min	33min	43min	58min
Dublin City-Centre	Distance	119km	118km	105km	109km
	Time	1hr 24min	1hr 22min	1hr 11min	1hr 21min
Dundrum Town Centre	Distance	129km	123km	115km	121km
	Time	1hr 43min	1hr 42min	1hr 34min	1hr 42min
Liffey Valley Retail Park	Distance	109km	109km	96km	99km
	Time	1hr 14min	1hr 12min	1hr	1hr 11min
Mullingar	Distance	43km	43km	26km	30km
	Time	37min	35min	24min	26min
Sligo Town-Centre	Distance	89km	106km	100km	96.9km
	Time	1hr 10min	1hr 30min	1hr 20min	1hr 30min

<sup>14</sup> Travel times and distances taken from Google Maps.

**Table 2.34: Summary table of travel times by road between the urban centres of County Longford which feature rail links and the available competing centres served by the same rail lines<sup>15</sup>.**

	Longford	Edgeworthstown
Dublin City Centre	1hr 52min	1hr 35min
Mullingar	30min	18min
Sligo	1hr 25min	1hr 35min

### 2.4.2 Competing Centres

In evaluating the retail alternatives which currently exist within easy access to the main settlements of County Longford, such as the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre and Retail Park, Dublin City Centre, Athlone or Mullingar, it is clear that these regional retail attractors are amongst the biggest competition to the existing retail offer in the County.

#### Liffey Valley Shopping Centre

Liffey Valley Shopping Centre is anchored by M&S and Dunnes Stores and offers a range of national multiples, including Carraig Donn, Easons and Lifestyle Sports, as well as large international comparison multiples such as Coast, H&M, Oasis, River Island and Topshop. The adjacent retail park includes Argos, B&Q, Carpet Right and Halfords, all of which would be classified as being within the bulky goods retail category. In addition to the retail offering, there are also other leisure amenities available, including a large multi-screen cinema as well as numerous restaurants and eateries.

Unlike many of the more recent out of town retail parks which have been developed in the last number of years, there are no large convenience multiples located within this complex, although M&S does provide a convenience offer. An extension of 10,500sqm has been completed in recent years and provides accommodation for a Penneys store as well as six restaurants over three floors and a reconfiguration of the existing VUE Cinema.

#### Blanchardstown Centre

The Blanchardstown Centre is recognised as one of the primary retail locations in the wider Dublin Region, and due to its location only a short distance from the M50, is easily accessible to people travelling from County Longford. As with Liffey Valley, the Blanchardstown Centre offers an abundance of free parking spaces within an extensive shopping centre and retail park complex.

The shopping centre offers several large multiples, both Irish and international, and includes some of the largest department stores within the country such as Penneys, Debenhams and Marks & Spencers. As with the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre, it also plays host to a range of both Irish (including Dunnes Stores, Easons, Lifestyle Sports and Newbridge Silverware) and internationally (French Connection, Oasis, River Island and Zara) based multiples. In addition, within the retail

<sup>15</sup> Timetable and rail travel information current as of 21/03/2019, as obtained from Irish Rail website.

park there are a variety of convenience, comparison and bulky goods category retailers, including Harvey Norman, Mothercare, Next, and Mr. Price. This substantial retail offering is further reinforced by a wide range of other amenities including a multi-screen cinema, a theatre, a bowling alley and leisure complex, restaurants and eateries, a hotel and a library.

### **Dublin City Centre**

The retail offering of Dublin City Centre, in keeping with its position at the top of the national retail hierarchy (as set out within the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012), is the largest within the country. As with both Liffey Valley and the Blanchardstown Centre, the improvements in infrastructural linkages have enhanced the attraction of the city as a shopping destination to wider catchments across the country. The retail offering, which is located throughout several large shopping centres (including the Ilac Centre, the Jervis Centre and the St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre), as well as shopping districts (such as the Grafton Street and Henry Street areas) features a number of large department stores as well as flagship stores of many national and international comparison retailers.

Unlike the free parking provided in competing out-of-centre or suburban centres such as the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre and the Blanchardstown Centre, parking is not free and can be relatively expensive. However, it is notable that this element does not undermine the attraction of Dublin City Centre as a retail destination given its significant modal choice and frequency of public transport, including regular train services from Longford Town and Edgeworthstown to and from Dublin City Centre to Connolly and Pearse Street Stations, as well as direct bus links from Longford Town to Dublin by public and private operators.

### **Athlone**

The town of Athlone is considered to be one of the primary shopping destinations within the Midland Region. Boasting a healthy and vibrant town centre, Athlone offers significant competition to retailers operating in the urban centres of County Longford. The opening of the Athlone Towncentre shopping centre in 2007 supplemented the strong retail offer already in existence at Golden Island Shopping Centre. In addition, there is a sizeable retail park located on the periphery of the town on the Old Dublin Road which serves as a location to support a number of retail warehouse type operations providing a range of goods from the convenience, comparison and bulky retail categories. The town offers a mixture of free and pay parking facilities, which offer substantial choice for those travelling by car, and there is a dedicated bus route which operates between Longford Town and the centre of Athlone on a daily basis.

The retail offer of the town itself is located within quite a compact area, with both shopping centres located within or close to the commercial core of the town. Amongst the retailers who operate from the town are comparison retailers, Barratts, Next, Zara and Oasis, with most of the convenience retailers also having a substantive presence within the town. Athlone also has a number of discount foodstores such as Mr.Price which is located in an edge-of-centre location.

There are also a number of bulky goods stores including B&Q, Ganlys and Homevalue, all of which are all located in out-of-centre locations near the N6 Athlone Bypass.

### **Mullingar**

Mullingar, like Athlone, is easily accessible from County Longford owing to the presence of the N4 road and the Irish Rail Intercity railway line between Longford Town, Edgeworthstown and Mullingar. There are a sizeable number of national and international multiples in Mullingar including Dunnes Stores and Tesco. The Harbour Place shopping centre located in the Town Centre was developed in the mid 1990's and hosts the aforementioned Dunnes Stores in addition to a number of national and international multiples, these including Carraig Donn, Boots and Holland & Barrett. Like Athlone, the retail offering in Mullingar has increased by way of the Fairgreen Shopping Centre in 2005 and mainly hosts comparison offering. Although Mullingar's convenience, comparison and bulky goods retail offering is slightly smaller than Athlone, Mullingar still represents a significant alternative to shopping in Longford.

### **Other Competing Centres**

The **Dundrum Town Centre**, which first opened in 2005, is Ireland's largest shopping centre extending to approximately 125,000 sq.m of retail floorspace spread across over 130 stores. Unlike its competitors, the Liffey Valley or Blanchardstown Shopping Centres, Dundrum is slightly less accessible from County Longford, owing to its location approximately 1.5km from the Ballinteer exit off the M50 motorway.

**Cavan Town** also offers competition to retailers located in the north of County Longford, such as Granard. The Church Street and Main Street shopping area of the town includes a number of national and internal convenience and comparison retailers such as Carphone Warehouse, Dunnes Stores, Tesco, Boots, Easons and Clarks, as well as a large number of independent comparison retailers. In addition, to the substantial retail offering of the town centre itself, there are a number of retail parks which accommodate a number of large-scale comparison and bulky goods retailers, with most of the main convenience multiples having a presence in the town also.

**Sligo Town's** location relative to centres in Longford means that retail competition only really extends itself to those people who are travelling to Sligo for other purposes, who may subsequently conduct their retail business there. Sligo Town currently features town shopping centres, both of which are centrally located within the town. There are also several retail parks, located on the edge of the town at Carraroe and Cleveragh.

**Carrick-On-Shannon** also offers competition to retailers located in the north and west of County Longford, including those in Longford Town, owing to its accessibility along the N4 National Route. The town comprises of two distinct areas, physically separated by the River Shannon with the southwest bank comprising the Cortober area within the jurisdiction of Roscommon County

Council and the northeast side within Leitrim County Council jurisdiction. Out of centre retail parks are in-situ on the western and eastern ends of the town, with the bulk of the town's main street shopping area comprising of several independent convenience and comparison retailers. There is also a strong presence of tourism-related commercial uses and a good quality urban design environment with amenity spaces fronting onto the River Shannon.

### 3 HEALTH CHECK ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 Retail Health Check Analysis of Co. Longford

Retailing and the provision of retail services is one of the primary functions of any urban settlement. The Retail Planning Guidelines clearly highlight how the concepts of vitality and viability are central in maintaining and enhancing town centres. As defined in Retail Planning Guidelines “*vitality is a measure of how buoyant a centre is, whilst viability refers to the commercial well-being of a town*”. The degree to which the ‘health’ of a town centre can be measured depends on a number of factors however the Retail Planning Guidelines provide general direction as to the fundamental factors which include the following:

- **Attractions** – these underpin a town and comprise the range and diversity of shopping and other activities which draw in customers and visitors.
- **Accessibility** – successful centres used to be accessible to the surrounding catchment area via a good road network and public transport facilities, and to encompass good linkages between car parks, public transport stops and the various attractions within the centre.
- **Amenity** – a healthy town centre should be a pleasant place to be in. It should be attractive in terms of environmental quality and urban design, it should be safe, and it should have a distinct identity or image.
- **Action** – to function effectively as a viable commercial centre, things need to happen. Development and improvement projects should be implemented efficiently; there should be regular and effective cleaning and maintenance and there should be co-ordinated town centre management initiatives to promote the continued improvement of the centre.

This health check analysis has been undertaken to evaluate the retail functions of the main urban settlements of Co. Longford, assessing the attraction, accessibility and amenity of each centre with the aim of making evidence-based recommendations regarding future actions for their improvement. These actions will be formulated to reinforce the existing retail offering within each of the towns, and where possible expand it, through the suggestion of issues to be addressed or measures to be continued or extended.

#### 3.2 Longford Town

Longford Town is the primary settlement and largest population centre within County Longford. Centrally located within the County, and having the advantage of excellent quality local, regional and national linkages, the town has become a settlement of regional importance. The value of the town and the support function which it provides to its residents as well as those of its hinterland has been recognised within both a national and regional context. The Retail Planning Guidelines have defined the town as a Level 3 settlement, assigning it the role of providing a retail support at a sub-regional level<sup>16</sup>. The importance of the town within a local and regional context has also

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<sup>16</sup> Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), Section 2.2.3, page 11.



been recognised in the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, which has defined the town as being a 'Key Town' within its settlement strategy, which has subsequently been reflected in the Core Strategy of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

### **Attraction**

In defining the attraction of Longford Town, its location is a key strength, both within the context of the County and in terms of its infrastructural linkages beyond the County. Due to its location within the national infrastructure network, there is a high volume of passing traffic, which brings with its vital retail expenditure inflow. The variety and diversity of the retail offer is much greater than that available in other settlements in the County across convenience, comparison and bulky goods retail categories.

Each of the main convenience multiples has a presence within the town. Tesco operates from a commercial core of the town, within the Longford Centre shopping centre. Planning permission was granted for a substantial redevelopment of this site in 2010, however this permission subsequently expired in 2017 without any development taking place. Other multiples such as Dunnes Stores, SuperValu, Lidl and Aldi operate stores on the periphery of the town centre, while a number of small and medium scale convenience retailers operate from stores in and around the town.

Comparison retailers within Longford Town are, for the most part, clustered into two main areas, namely the commercial core of the town and the N4 Axis Retail Park on the northern edge of the town. The commercial core of the town is dominated by a number of independent comparison retailers alongside a number of multiples including Boots, Sports Direct and Dealz. The N4 Axis Retail Park features a variety of retailers in both comparison and bulky goods categories in addition to a number of restaurants. The remaining comparison retail floorspace within the town is located within a series of small district centres within the periphery of the town.

### **Accessibility**

Longford is strategically located within the national transportation network, with the town forming an important interchange on the East-West road network, giving excellent access to the town from the immediate hinterland and adjoining regions.

Accessibility within the town itself has been improved in recent years with the opening of the N5 Longford Bypass, which now diverts all through traffic directly onto the N4 to the north-west of the town. This has seen the removal of a substantial amount of traffic congestion and has eased both vehicular access and pedestrian permeability throughout the main commercial core of the town. This easing has been very beneficial to the town centre and the retailers who operate within it.

The provision of car parking within the town is good, with a number of both public and private car parks located at various locations in and around the town centre and periphery, all of which operate an hourly tariff system. There is also on street parking available throughout, and which is

also subject to hourly tariffs. Free car parking is available at a number of car parks located in more peripheral locations within town.

The remain some problems which can impact on the accessibility of the town and cause periodic congestion. Delivery and service vehicles accessing the various premises within the town only have access to a small number of loading bays, in particular on Main Street and Ballymahon Street, which can result in issues of double parking on occasion and can cause congestion.

### **Amenity**

Longford is an attractive town, with a mature streetscape which features a variety of buildings of differing size, age and character. The amenity of its commercial core has benefited from the completion of the N5 Longford Bypass, which removed heavy volumes of traffic from the town centre. The streetscape of the town has retained its local character, with a range of traditional shopfronts serving to maintain the town's distinctive identity. Architecturally, the town showcases a range of vernacular style buildings reflecting the historic nature of the town such as the Courthouse, Church of Ireland, Connolly Barracks, St. Mel's Cathedral as well as distinct residential characters areas of Battery Road and St. Mel's Terrace.

Amenity and landscaping measures are ongoing throughout the town as part of an overall regeneration of the urban environment, with specific public realm redevelopments identified for the Market Square/Harbour View, Grafton Court/Longford Shopping Centre and the Royal Canal Basin. A significant element of the overall regeneration vision for the town is that of the Camlin Quarter Urban Design and Economic Framework which sets out a guide for the future economic and development potential of the Camlin Quarter which measures 22ha and encompasses Great Water Street, Little Water Street, Connolly Barracks, Richmond Street, the Camlin River and the western end of the Albert Reynolds Peace Park. Within this Quarter are a number of landmark buildings such as the Riverside Shopping Centre, buildings associated with Connolly Barracks complex and the 'Provider's' Building, all of which are currently vacant. It is envisaged that the Framework will act as a major catalyst for the regeneration of this area of Longford Town and bring enhanced amenity features for visitors and inhabitants.

### **Assessment**

The Health Check Assessment indicates that Longford Town has a relatively good mix of comparison and convenience retailing with a number of national and international multiples well represented, along with a number of well-established independent local retailers. The town also provides for an adequate level of financial institutions and service providers throughout. Notwithstanding the above, as per retail surveys conducted, there is approximately 8,800m<sup>2</sup> of vacant retail space in Longford Town. The levels of decline in comparison retailing witnessed in the previous Retail Strategy over the period 2007-2013 remains, albeit at a significantly reduced rate for the period 2013-2019, especially in the peripheral parts of the town and on the northern end of Main Street, where longstanding vacancy is particularly problematic. In addition, many previously higher order comparison and convenience retailing in primary frontage locations has

been replaced with lower order retailing or commercial premises such as bookmakers or takeaways with a proliferation of such low order uses in some areas.

A number of areas within the town have been identified for regeneration and urban renewal. These include areas and properties within the Camlin Quarter. In this regard, the Camlin Quarter Urban Design and Economic Framework sets out the principles and envisaged scope of redevelopment for this area with the hope that this framework will act as a major catalyst for the overall regeneration of this area. In addition to the Camlin Quarter area, there is significant scope for the redevelopment of the brownfield 'Townspark' area which features a high proportion of commercial vacancy. Moreover, the site of the Longford Shopping Centre, and associated surface car park, affords a significant redevelopment opportunity. Whilst planning permission for a previous redevelopment scheme of this site has since lapsed with no development taking place, the redevelopment of this site remains a key element to the overall regeneration of Longford Town, given its central location and existing linkages with the core retail area to the west.

The general quality of the public realm and streetscape within the town centre is good, although the continuing trend of long-term vacancy rates does raise substantial concerns that dereliction is becoming a rising issue in some areas of the town. Similarly, while the overall amenity of the town remains at a good level, there is still capacity for improvement, especially in the provision of pedestrian linkages and related infrastructure as well as deficiencies in the overall connectivity of the urban street structure.

A brief assessment of rental asking prices for retail units within the town illustrates that location is a key factor with asking prices varying from €121 to €361 per m<sup>2</sup> per annum for shop units. The sale price varies from between €370 and €2,000 per m<sup>2</sup>. A similar assessment of the rental asking prices for retail units show that prices can vary from €34.44 to €166.68 per m<sup>2</sup> per annum<sup>17</sup>.

#### **Action Plan:**

The health check has identified a number of key areas in Longford Town which require action. These are listed below:

- Further develop the primary and secondary shopping frontages for Longford Town, thereby better consolidating the Main Street, Dublin Street and Ballymahon Street (primary shopping frontages) in addition to better defining the role of adjoining streets (secondary shopping frontage).
- Identify and develop a sustainable use for the former Connolly Barracks site.
- Address vacancy levels to both the Longford Town Shopping Centre and the northern section of Main Street.
- Develop a coherent functionality between the Longford Town Shopping Centre, the southern part of Bridge Street, the northern section of Main Street and the remainder of

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<sup>17</sup> Information taken from analysis of published retail property prices available on Daft.ie on 16/09/2019.

the town centre including Main Street, Ballymahon Street, Dublin Street and New Street to provide an easily identifiable commercial core.

- Improve the accessibility to and attractiveness of Market Square for both pedestrians and shoppers in addition to achieving higher order retail in this area.
- Identify any vacant sites/gap sites/backlands which can be used for the provision of uses ancillary to retail, i.e. parking.
- Prepare Shopfront Design Guidelines to encourage creating attractive frontages appropriate to their setting.
- Increase the number of electric vehicle (EV) charging points in the town centre and retail centre car parks; and
- The preparation of environmental enhancement plans to allow for increased footfall throughout the town centre.

### 3.3 Granard

Located in the north-east of the County, Granard is the fourth largest urban settlement in County Longford, with a range of shops, public houses, community facilities and services and social infrastructure. The Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 Core Strategy identifies Granard as a ‘Self-Sustaining Town’ within the County’s Settlement Hierarchy. Granard acts as an important driver for local economies in the area, with a number of industries located within the town which have generated significant employment opportunities. The importance of its retail function for its rural hinterland is also recognised in the RSES wherein Granard is designated as a Level 3 Retail Centre – ‘Town and/or District Centres & Sub-County Town (Key Service Centre)’. Whilst its position as a third-level settlement within the Settlement Hierarchy is reflective of a number of elements ranging from historic population trends to physical and social infrastructure, Granard is positioned as a second tier Retail Centre within this Strategy. This is reflective of the important retail function and services it provides for its broad rural hinterland and population catchment to the north-east of the County (and the neighbouring counties of Cavan and Westmeath).

#### Attraction

In order to establish the attraction of Granard, it is necessary to examine its key defining characteristics. Having a traditional linear townscape, Granard’s Main Street is defined by its terraces of 19th -20th century mixed commercial premises. In this context, vernacular-style shop frontages add a distinct sense of character and ambience at street level. This simple urban morphology is further complemented by a rich built and archaeological heritage. The motte to the south west of Main Street, which is classified as a National Monument in State Guardianship, is a notable historical feature which is visually prominent from the entirety of Main Street. Notwithstanding, due to its location on the N55 national secondary route and its strategic role as a local and regional connector, Granard’s attractive urban character is undermined by large volumes of heavy vehicular through traffic, which significantly impacts upon both local vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and public safety. This traffic congestion, in addition to high levels of

haphazard on-street parking, negatively impacts on the quality, capacity and character of the town's core public realm.

Granard possesses a dynamic and diverse selection of local shops, cafes, pubs and leisure facilities to attract people into the town centre. The settlement's retail offer is clustered around the commercial core of Main Street and is typically dominated by retail service provision, such as cafes and pubs, convenience retail in the form of local grocery shops and specialist retail, including florists and hardware stores. There are few instances of the comparison or bulky goods retail categories in Granard and a limited offer of convenience multiples, with only the SuperValu supermarket chain having a presence on Main Street within the town core. A cursory examination of the commercial retail unit market in Granard has revealed that there is availability in the market throughout the settlement with concentrated levels of unit availability in streets adjacent to the commercial core, such as Barrack Street.

### **Accessibility**

Granard benefits significantly from its strategic location on national road infrastructure, with the N55 that passes through the town forming an important link in the north-south transportation network as it passes through the midlands. This has allowed the town to develop as a gateway between the north midlands and the north-west, connecting Longford to the settlements of Cavan and Dundalk as well as the wider road network of Northern Ireland. The road connections between Granard and its surrounding hinterland are also relatively good, enabling it to fulfil its role as key service town, enhancing the growth of its rural hinterland. However, it is also inadequately served by public transport, and as it is car dominated, does not cater to more vulnerable road users, including cyclists.

### **Amenity**

While Granard possesses an attractive town centre in terms of its improved environmental quality and vernacular urban character, its amenity to potential customers and service providers is greatly under mined by its congested core, lack of permeability, pedestrian safety issues and poor provision of amenity related infrastructure such of pedestrian crossings, high quality street furniture and passive recreation space. Granard has also benefitted from funds secured under State supported streams such as the Town and Village Renewal and in particular, the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) where €2.87m funding was secured for the development of a heritage and amenity park located adjacent to the historic Granard motte. It is envisaged that this project, along with other urban improvement schemes initiated in recent years such as the redevelopment of the Granard Buttermarket and public realm, will act as catalysts for more longer-term improvements to the urban environment and overall amenity in the town.

### **Assessment**

The retail offering of Granard remains in keeping with its position within the Longford County Retail Hierarchy, with a diverse mixture of retail outlets and general service provision. The accessibility and amenity of the town continues to be impacted upon by the presence of high

volumes of vehicular traffic passing through the town. There is also evidence of long-term vacancy levels in units at the north-eastern end of Main Street and leading onto Barrack Street, and from the town centre to Market Street. Such levels of longstanding vacancy inevitably impact on the overall vitality and viability of the town.

An evaluation of the retail rental market in the town indicates that the average retail asking prices for retail units equates to €91 per m<sup>2</sup> per annum for shop units<sup>18</sup>.

### **Action Plan**

This health check has identified a number of key areas in Granard which require action. These are listed below:

- Implement measures to better manage and control traffic circulation and street parking.
- Put in place improved pedestrian crossings and infrastructure.
- Identify any vacant sites/gap sites/backlands which can be used for the provision of retail/facilities ancillary to retail, i.e. parking.
- Direct the provision of future retail development within the town into the existing commercial core of the Main Street and encouraging active frontages that adequately address and engage with this historic streetscape.
- Implement the provision of the longstanding road objective to provide a relief road to bypass the town along the N55 thereby diverting road freight volumes away from the town centre and improving its overall environment.
- Develop more coherent traffic/movement management systems within the town centre for road, pedestrian and cycle users, with a particular emphasis on the junction of Main Street and Market Street.

### **3.4 Edgeworthstown**

The location of Edgeworthstown, on the eastern side of the County, along with the presence of two important national road linkages have long defined the town's attraction, accessibility and amenity. As a result, the town itself has developed to become a strategic interchange in the national road network and serves as a gateway to County Longford for those travelling from the east. The Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 Core Strategy identifies Edgeworthstown as a 'Self-Sustaining Growth Town' within the County's Settlement Hierarchy.

#### **Attraction**

As with Longford Town, the location of Edgeworthstown is a key strength, with the N4 national primary and N55 national secondary routes both passing through the town. This has allowed it to take advantage of the high volume of passing trade, and to offer a mixture of services which become tailored to the needs of both local residents and those who are just passing through. The

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<sup>18</sup> Based on information gathered from local auctioneer knowledge of the retail market within the town (16/09/2019)



layout of the town is dominated by the Main Street which is orientated primarily on an East West axis and was formally part of the N4 national primary route.

There is a diverse mixture of convenience and comparison retail units located within the town in addition to a small amount of retail warehousing, located on the western periphery of the town. The retail offer of town is complimented by a range of other services including pubs, cafes, hairdressers and restaurants. There is a heavy concentration of retail activities within the core of the town, located along Dublin Street, Main Street and Pound Street, while there is a small concentration of bulky goods retail units located along the Longford Road. The majority of the retail premises within the town appear to be well kept, although vacancy does appear to be higher in more peripheral areas.

### **Accessibility**

Edgeworthstown is very accessible, located as it is on an important interchange between the N4 national primary route, which links Dublin and the east of the country with the counties of Leitrim, Mayo, Sligo and Roscommon, and the N55, which connects the midlands to the north-west. As well as this road linkage, there is also a rail service which operates between Dublin and Sligo, and which is located just to the south of the town. Car parking within the town centre is restricted to on-street parking.

### **Amenity**

The amenity of Edgeworthstown is dominated by its location within the national road network, with the town forming an important interchange between the N4 and the N55. The N55, which links Cavan Town to Athlone, carries a high volume of HGV traffic, all of which passes through the centre of the town, with negative impacts on amenity.

The streetscape of the town is attractive and is dominated by a largely traditional urban fabric and built form, which includes a mixture of stone front and plaster rendered buildings of various ages and functions. Many recent additions to the building stock of the town have taken place on the western periphery of the town.

### **Assessment**

The retail offering which currently exists in Edgeworthstown is of sufficient quality and variety to continue to satisfy the role of a Strategic Town, as designated in the Settlement Hierarchy of the County Longford. There is also potential for further retail growth within the town, which reduce the vacancy rates within the more peripheral parts of the town. While the presence of the N55 does create some problems, it is also a key strength for the town. Enhancements to the pedestrian linkages and general amenity of the town could bring about substantial benefits and alleviate the negative impacts of the N55 while retaining its benefits. The retail offer is characterised by convenience food stores in the form of SuperValu and Costcutter, with a small number of specialist independent comparison retailers also, typically along Main Street of the town.



There is notable evidence of longstanding vacancy amongst some of the units within the town, particularly along the periphery of the town centre in particular the former Hotel Edgeworth and the former Ulster Bank. In respect of the latter building, there are currently plans to utilise this building as an Innovation Hub for the town with hot-desk and remote working facilities proposed to bring this substantial and architecturally significant building back in to use. Notwithstanding, there are plans in place to develop a community library within the town centre, along with further public realm improvement works along Main Street also. It is envisaged that this scheme will act as a catalyst for more longer-term improvements to the urban environment and overall amenity in the town.

### **Action Plan**

This health check has identified a number of key areas in Edgeworthstown which require action. These are listed below:

- Environmental enhancement plans to allow for increased footfall throughout the town.
- Take measures to improve the public realm and pedestrian linkages in the town centre.
- Look to minimise the impact of the N55 on the amenity of the town.

### **3.5 Ballymahon**

Located to the south of the County, Ballymahon is situated between the larger settlements of Athlone and Longford Town. In this context, the urban centre provides for important residential, retail, social and leisure functions. Under the Settlement Hierarchy of the previous Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021, the town was classified as a 'Local Service Town'. However, owing to the exceptional growth, in population terms the town has experienced between the intercensal period of 2011 to 2016 where the town recorded a population increase of approximately 20% during this period. Further developments in recent years within the town and nearby, such as the Longford Wood Center Parcs site, have further enhanced the profile of the town. As a result, Ballymahon has been designated as a 'Self-Sustaining Growth Town' within the Settlement Hierarchy of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

### **Attraction**

Ballymahon exhibits a traditional linear market town structure, with its commercial activity being predominantly clustered around a compact urban core centred on Main Street. The broad width of this central thoroughfare, relative to the height of the mixed commercial buildings which front onto it, combine to give Main Street a distinctive and spacious character. The quality of the streetscape and the associated public realm in Ballymahon is also good, with many traditional shopfronts still intact. There is also a generous provision of pedestrian infrastructure such as crossings and street furniture. The settlement is situated adjacent to the River Inny to the east of Lough Ree, which gives the locality its unique topographical character.

Ballymahon possess a good range of retail outlets and services relative to its size, with a variety of small cafes, pubs, grocery and specialist independent retailers. There appears to be very few

incidences of national or international retail multiples within the settlement, which consists generally of independent retailers. Moreover, there is a significant night time economy in Ballymahon with a number of restaurants, pubs and a hotel in operation.

### **Accessibility**

Ballymahon is served by a relatively good road network which includes the N55 national secondary route from Athlone to Cavan and the R392 regional route. However, the town is relatively poorly served by public transport facilities and is heavily reliant on car-based access in comparison to some of the other settlements within the County. There is a generous amount of car parking on the Main Street, owing to its width streetscape typically seen of a market town environment. The town experiences high volumes of traffic passing through both the N55 and R392, particularly at the north-western end of Main Street/R392 owing to associated school traffic with the Vocational School, Mercy Secondary School and St. Matthew's National School located within this vicinity. The town has been the subject of a review of infrastructural and urban design requirements which has identified improved traffic management measures at the junctions of the N55 and R392 north and south of the River Inny. Further plans for improving pedestrian and cycling permeability within the town centre are also in place, as well as measures to better utilise backland areas of Main Street to accommodate car parking thereby improving accessibility within the town.

### **Amenity**

Overall, Ballymahon exhibits relatively high levels of public amenity and a high-quality townscape and is able to provide a good mixture of retail services to residents and passers-by alike. It also features a good quality and well-maintained public realm, in addition to high standards of vehicular management and pedestrian infrastructure. As discussed previously, there are currently plans in place to provide public realm upgrade improvement works along the Main Street/R392 road section of the town, as well as the provision of a more coordinated traffic and parking management system to serve Ballymahon. Moreover, further plans are at an advanced stage to develop cycling and pedestrian links to amenity features within the wider vicinity of the settlement. It is envisaged that these measures will further enhance the amenity value of Ballymahon and its town centre.

### **Assessment**

The compact nature of the urban core of Ballymahon, and the presence of the N55, which passes through a substantial part of the town core, has been a key economic strength for the town, and has helped to sustain retail activity. Planned infrastructural improvements in the form of junction upgrades to the N55 and R392 routes north and south of the River Inny, together with pedestrian/cycling and public realm improvements to the Main Street/R392 town centre will also lead to significant enhancements of the urban environment of the town. In terms of the dynamism of its commercial market at present, there are a number of retail units currently available for rent

particularly in the town's Main Street, with rental prices ranging between €61 and €208 per m<sup>2</sup> per annum for shop units<sup>19</sup>.

### **Action**

This health check has identified a number of key areas in Ballymahon which require action. These are listed below:

- Implement measures to improve public realm, pedestrian infrastructure and quality of streetscape.
- Manage traffic congestion and implement traffic calming.
- Continue to proactively manage car parking, circulation and public realm in the town centre.
- Improve access to the town core by non-vehicular modes of transport.

## **3.6 Lanesborough**

Lanesborough is defined as a 'Self-Sustaining Town' within the settlement hierarchy of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, whose functions include providing important local level retail, social, leisure and service function to its broad hinterland.

### **Attractiveness**

Located on the eastern bank of the River Shannon at the northern perimeter of Lough Ree, the settlement of Lanesborough is characterised by a linear core urban form, known locally as 'Main Street', which had developed perpendicular to the adjacent river, rising gradually away from it. The townscape is defined predominantly by a non-uniform building line. The Main Street also features a high percentage of residential structures. Lanesborough offers its community a limited mix of retail services such as convenience retail, cafes, pubs and other commercial services, distributed intermittently along Main Street. A second key defining feature is its narrow and inconsistent public realm, which is dominated by car parking, heavy traffic flows and poor-quality hard landscaping, features which all conspire to make this urban centre inhospitable to pedestrians. Lanesborough offers its community a limited mix of retail services such as limited convenience retail, pubs, specialist shops and service retail, which are often not clustered together and distributed intermittently along Main Street.

### **Accessibility**

Lanesborough, which is located adjacent to one of the main bridging points on the River Shannon, is well connected to its wider region by the N63 national secondary route which links Longford to Roscommon and also to the R392 regional road which links the town to Mullingar. As a result, the

<sup>19</sup> Information taken from analysis of published retail property prices available on Daft.ie on 16/09/2019.

town is subject to regular traffic congestion, impacting on poor circulation within its commercial core.

### **Amenity**

The presence of high levels of poorly managed on-street car parking, heavy vehicular congestion, poor sightlines and access/egress arrangements and the poor provision of pedestrian facilities, all conspire to significantly undermine the amenity value of this settlement for the local community. In addition, the townscape possesses a very poor relationship with the River Shannon, with the buildings located on the lower reaches of Main Street failing to adequately utilise or respond to this important local amenity. Future plans and projects for the settlement include the provision of an interpretative centre on the eastern banks of the River Shannon to showcase the tourism offering in the region and public realm improvement works to Main Street.

### **Assessment**

As with the example of Ballymahon, the presence of a high volume of passing traffic is an important strength for Lanesborough. The town itself has retained its functionality and continues to support a range of important support services which can be availed of by the residents of Lanesborough and its surrounding rural hinterland.

### **Action**

This health check has identified a number of key areas in Lanesborough which require action. These are listed below:

- Implement measures to improve public realm, pedestrian infrastructure and quality of streetscape.
- Manage traffic congestion and implement traffic calming.
- Continue to proactively manage car parking, circulation and public realm in the town centre.
- Improve access to the town core by non-vehicular modes of transport.

## **3.7 Other Settlements**

### **Newtownforbes**

Newtownforbes is designated as a '*Town and Village*' settlement (Level 3 settlement tier) within the settlement hierarchy of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027. Located to the north west of Longford Town, Newtownforbes plays a critical role in sustaining the viability of local rural communities by providing essential services such as housing, lower level retail and important social facilities that allow for local growth. Located along the N4 national primary route, the settlement is well connected to the wider region and also to its immediate rural environs via the local route L1005. Newtownforbes has a distinctive rural village character with good quality public realm and limited provision of local services and convenience retail. It also possesses good provision of car parking, a general lack of vehicular congestion and safe pedestrian access. In

terms of its amenity, Newtownforbes' Main Street features a number of intermittent green spaces attached to institutional and community buildings.

### **Action**

The health check has identified a number of key areas in Newtownforbes which require action. These are listed below:

- Continue to proactively manage car parking, circulation and public realm
- Ensure a good provision of convenience and local service retail is maintained going forward.
- Identify public realm improvements such as painting schemes, window displays, planting, as well as improvements to pedestrian and cycling permeability/mobility within the town centre.

### **Drumlsh**

Drumlsh is also designated as a '*Town and Village*' settlement within the settlement hierarchy of the Plan and provides housing, local level retail and social facilities to its dependant rural communities, thereby acting as a local growth centre for the rural economy. The settlement of Drumlsh is clustered around a central crossroads and is served by the R198 regional route which links it to Longford Town to the South. This rural village has retained much of its charm and is characterised by high-quality public realm and the limited provision of local convenience and service retail. It also possesses good provision of well managed on-street car parking, a general lack of vehicular congestion and a safe pedestrian environment.

### **Action**

The health check has identified one key area in Drumlsh which require action. These are listed below:

- Continue to proactively manage car parking, circulation and public realm in the town centre.

## **3.8 Summary of Commercial Floorspace Activity Since 2013**

The previous Longford County Retail Strategy 2015-2021 was prepared in 2013 and 2014 and followed a period of significant economic decline which characterised local and national economies for much of the period between 2007 and 2014. Against this economic landscape, the previous Retail Strategy identified a total vacant floorspace of approximately 10,745m<sup>2</sup>, which represented 17.73% of the total retail floorspace for the county, and comprised of 2,275m<sup>2</sup> convenience; 2,172m<sup>2</sup> comparison; and 6,298m<sup>2</sup> bulky goods floorspace vacancies.

In line with national trends, Longford has experienced a stagnation in retail construction activity since 2013, particularly in comparison and bulky retail floorspace provision. Evidence of this inactivity is provided in the analysis of the quantum of planning applications permitted and subsequently advanced in the intervening period, which is set out in Table 3.1 below.

It is noted that there has been a significant reduction in submitted applications for retail development since the previous Retail Strategy was prepared in 2013, with approximately 3,736m<sup>2</sup> of retail development being permitted since 2013 including permissions granted for extension of duration applications for retail development previously permitted prior to 2013. However, only a small quantum of actual additional retail development has commenced since 2013 (approximately 246.5m<sup>2</sup>). It is also worth noting that the majority of retail floorspace commenced/delivered since 2013 has been in the convenience category (approximately 84% of total retail development since 2013). As a result, there has been little change in the baseline figure for total retail floorspace within the County over and above that which was used in the formulation of the existing retail strategy for the County.

Moreover, it is also noted that two thirds (approximately 67%) of the permitted floorspace since 2013 will have expired by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 if not renewed or implemented.

**Table 3.1: Outline of all permitted, commenced and outstanding retail development planning permissions since 2013.**

Granted and Commenced Retail Developments since 2013				
Retail Category	Permitted	Commenced	Expired or considered to be expired	Due to Expire by 01/01/2022
Total Convenience	2,446.5m <sup>2</sup>	208m <sup>2</sup>	-	2,036m <sup>2</sup>
Total Comparison	1,265.3m <sup>2</sup>	38.5m <sup>2</sup>	-	445m <sup>2</sup>
Total Bulky	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,711.8m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>246.5m<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>2,481m<sup>2</sup></b>

In addition to the limited growth in retail floorspace, activity since 2013 has also been characterised by a marginal decrease in total vacancy rates in the County, further emphasising the stagnation that the market within County Longford has been experiencing in the period since the preparation of the previous Retail Strategy. As illustrated in Table 3.2, a total of 5,618.94~~10,066.54~~m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace is currently vacant across the County (16.54% of total). Table 3.3 summarises existing levels of retail floorspace in County Longford, taking account of development activity and existing levels of recorded vacancy across the County.

**Table 3.2: Summary of all existing vacancy (2020~~19~~) by retail category.**

Total Vacancy by Retail Category	
Floorspace Category	m <sup>2</sup>

Total Vacant Convenience Floorspace	<del>4,866.95</del> <u>1,087.00</u>
Total Vacant Comparison Floorspace	<del>1,435.62</del> <u>2,382.40</u>
Total Vacant Bulky Floorspace	<del>5,817.19</del> <u>3,096.32</u>
Total Vacant Floorspace	<del>10,066.54</del> <u>5,618.94</u>

Table 3.3: Summary of all existing retail floorspace, including 2013 and 2019 baseline figures and the vacancy rate for 2019, by retail category.

Baseline Assessment of Retail Floorspace 2019						
	2013 Baseline (m <sup>2</sup> )	Development Activity 2013-2019 (m <sup>2</sup> )	2019 Baseline (m <sup>2</sup> )	Total Vacancy (m <sup>2</sup> )	Floorspace in use (m <sup>2</sup> )	Available Floorspace in use (%)
Convenience	13,239.40	<del>+208</del>	<del>13,447.40</del>	<del>1,087.00</del> <u>1,866.95</u>	<del>12,360.40</del> <u>11,580.45</u>	<del>91.92%</del> <u>86.12</u>
Comparison	11,247.46	<del>38.5</del> <u>693.46</u>	<del>11,285.96</del> <u>10,554.00</u>	<del>1,435.62</del> <u>2,382.40</u>	<del>9,118.38</del> <u>8,903.56</u>	<del>86.40%</del> <u>78.89</u>
Bulky	36,130.00	0	<del>36,130.00</del>	<del>3,096.32</del> <u>5,817.19</u>	<del>33,033.68</del> <u>30,312.81</u>	<del>91.43%</del> <u>83.90</u>
Total	60,616.60	<del>-246.5</del> <u>485</u>	<del>60,863.36</del> <u>31.00</u>	<del>5,618.94</del> <u>10,066.54</u>	<del>54,512.06</del> <u>50,796.82</u>	<del>90.66%</del> <u>83.46</u>

### 3.9 Healthcheck Conclusions

Retail provision is a key component of town centres and provides a major contribution to their vitality and viability. According, the retention of retail as a core function within a town centre remains a key element for any urban settlement. The health check analysis was carried out during a period of national economic recovery, however a quantitative assessment of retail floorspace within the County reveals a relatively stagnated retail development market when compared with similar assessments conducted for the previous Retail Strategy.

Overall, the results of the healthcheck analysis appear to indicate that, in spite of obvious and substantial difficulties in retail sector over the last 6 years relating to vacancy rates an underdeveloped market, the main settlements in County Longford continue to provide the necessary retail services required by their communities. Longford Town remains the most important retail centre within the County and is the location for the majority of the retail floorspace within both the comparison and bulky goods retail categories. It is also the chosen location for the larger convenience multiples, who, with the exception of SuperValu, have chosen the town as their sole operations within the County. All of the other settlements within the County continue to fulfil their ancillary roles to the primary centre, supporting their local communities and surrounding hinterlands, in keeping with respective positions within both the settlement and retail hierarchies.



Vacancy levels account for just over 16% of the total retail floorspace within centres across County Longford. This level of vacancy reinforces concerns expressed under health check appraisals carried out for the previous Retail Strategy. It is imperative that those retail units which are vacant at present are not allowed to become derelict. In this regard, the Council has identified a number of actions required, as well as presently undertaking a number of initiatives, aimed at addressing these issues for the identified retail centres.

In tandem with a number of policy initiatives, urban design principles and planning guidance established elsewhere within the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, this suite of planning policy measures will seek to arrest any further decline of town centres through targeted, site specific approaches and to improve the overall quality of environment of our urban centres as well as improving and enhancing retail provision within our identified retail centres. Underlying this approach will be cognisance of the retail hierarchy established in this Retail Strategy and ensuring that the future development of retail in these towns will not have an adverse impact on the primacy of Longford Town and in keeping with the existing scale and character of these respective settlements.

## 4 PROJECTED FLOORSPACE REQUIREMENTS

### 4.1 Introduction

This section establishes the future retail floorspace requirements for County Longford within the convenience, comparison and bulky goods retail categories, as specified within the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012. The assessment below has been produced having regard to existing floorspace capacity and projections on future demand for retail services within the County and takes account of identified levels of vacancy detailed in Section 3. This will ensure that future retail and other development in town centres will absorb existing vacancy which may otherwise hamper the vitality and viability of centres.

In brief, the following methodology has been used to define the future retail floorspace requirements for Co. Longford:

- Undertake an estimate of the population at base year and design year.
- Estimate the available expenditure per capita for each of the retail categories (convenience, comparison and bulky goods) at the base year and design year.
- Compile a projection of the total available expenditure in the base year and design year for residents of County Longford allow for assumed expenditure inflows and outflows.
- Undertake a projection of the likely increase of available expenditure which will support the provision of additional floorspace.
- Estimate the likely average turnover of new floorspace in convenience, comparison and bulky goods retail categories.
- Estimate the capacity for additional floorspace within each of the three retail categories, taking account of the existing vacancy rates and planning permissions.

### 4.2 Population of County Longford

The population of Longford has demonstrated substantial growth since 1996 with the most sizeable increases occurring since 2002. An analysis of census figures between 2002 and 2016 reveals that the population of the County expanded from 31,068 to 40,873, representing an increase of some 31.56% over this fourteen-year period. Whilst the inter-censal period of 2011-2016 was characterised by significant economic contraction across the country, the population of County Longford still maintained a steady increase, albeit not to the same extent as the preceding period from 2002 to 2011.

The starting point in any assessment of future floorspace requirements is projected population growth over the plan period. In this regard, future population forecasts for the County are presented in the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) publication, *'Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework'*, and subsequently retained in the Eastern and Midland RSES, and provide for a population range with 20% variation for targets years of 2026 and 2031.

Taking the upper level of the population forecast range for each of the target years, the population of the County is expected to increase by 4,627 persons between 2016 and 2026 and increasing by a further 1,500 persons during the period from 2026 to 2031. Using these population forecasts, the Core Strategy of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 has provided an overall population allocation for the County up to the year 2027 thereby coinciding with the plan period. This equates to a total County population growth of 4,927 to the year 2027, with the vast majority of this additional population growth to be accommodated within the settlements of Longford Town, Granard, Edgeworthstown, Ballymahon, Granard and Lanesborough. The level of envisaged population growth within Longford Town means that it should be the primary location for the majority of additional retail floorspace forecast to emerge over the plan period.

Population projections for the county for 2021 (the first year of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027), 2026 (population target year), 2027 (the final year of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027) and 2031 (population target year) are presented in Table 4.1 below and have regard to the figures contained within Longford County Council's Core Strategy and Housing Strategy over the period of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027.

**Table 4.1: Recorded Populations and Population Projections for County Longford**

2011	2016	2021	2026	2027	2031
39,000	40,873	43,187	45,500	45,800	47,000

### 4.3 Expenditure Estimates

The expenditure analysis upon which the subsequent floorspace turnover calculations are formulated, have been projected using figures derived from a number of Central Statistics Office (CSO) sources including the Annual Services Inquiry, the County Incomes and Regional GDP 2015 and the Retail Sales Index.

Per capita spend on an annual basis from 2016 to 2030<sup>20</sup> has been established using the population projections outlined above in addition to the expenditure projections which will be outlined below and from the latest available historic figures for the change in the retail economy (CSO Retail Sales Index) up until the year 2018. The projection of future per capita spend for County Longford thereafter has ve been based upon an assumed increase-range of per capita growth (and decline) percentages derived from a number of sources in relation to forecasted GDP growth (and decline) from 2020 onwards, as identified in Table 2.1 above which ranges between -9.4%2% and 6.43-9% per annum for both convenience and comparison goods from 202046 onwards. This perceived volatility stems from the economic repercussions of the Covid-19

<sup>20</sup> Using the latest available CSO County Incomes and Regional GDP data (23/09/2019), to include for the remaining 2 years of the existing plan, the 6-year operational period of this strategy, plus 3 additional years, as specified within the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

pandemic, largely over the years 2020-2021, as discussed previously, before returning to more sustainable growth patterns for the remainder of the strategy period. The forecasted per capita spend estimates for convenience and comparison retail in County Longford over this period is set out in Table 4.2 below.

~~The per capita growth percentages have been derived from the latest available historic figures for the change in the retail economy (CSO Retail Sales Index) up until the year 2018 and with the ESRI's predictions for change in GDP for the period 2016-2025 (*Ireland's Economic Outlook – Perspectives and Policy Challenges* (2016)). This growth rate is in line with the latest term economic outlook and has been detailed in Table 4.2 below.~~

# PROPOSED MATERIAL AMENDMENTS: DRAFT COUNTY LONGFORD RETAIL STRATEGY 2021-2027

**Table 4.2: Recorded Populations and Population Projections for County Longford** **Determination of Per Capita Spend on Convenience and Comparison Retail for County Longford (2016-2030)**

Determination of Per Capita Spend on Convenience and Comparison Retail Expenditure					
Year		Annual Growth Rate (%)		Per Capita Spend (€)	
		Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison
2016	Per Capita Spend - Nationally	-	-	€3,987	€3,604
2016	Per Capita Spend - Adjusted for County Longford (National Index = 100; Longford Index = 85)	85	85	€3,389	€3,063
2017	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3.9	3.9	€3,521	€3,182
2018	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3.2	3.2	€3,634	€3,284
2019	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3.2	3.2	€3,750	€3,389
2020	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	-9.4	-9.4	€3,398	€3,071
2021	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	6.4	6.4	€3,615	€3,267
2022	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.8	2.8	€3,716	€3,359
2023	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.7	2.7	€3,817	€3,449
2024	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.5	2.5	€3,912	€3,536
2025	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.5	2.5	€4,010	€3,624
2026	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.5	2.5	€4,110	€3,715
2027	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.5	2.5	€4,213	€3,808
2028	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.2	2.2	€4,306	€3,891
2029	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2	2	€4,392	€3,969
2030	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2	2	€4,479	€4,049

Determination of Per Capita Spend on Convenience and Comparison Retail Expenditure					
Year		Annual Growth Rate (%)		Per Capita Spend (€)	
		Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison
2016	Per Capita Spend - Nationally	-	-	€3,987	€3,604
2016	Per Capita Spend - Adjusted for County Longford (National Index = 100; Longford Index = 85)	85	85	€3,389	€3,063
2017	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3.9	3.9	€3,521	€3,182
2018	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3.2	3.2	€3,634	€3,284
2019	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3.2	3.2	€3,750	€3,389
2020	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3	3	€3,863	€3,491
2021	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	3	3	€3,979	€3,596
2022	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.8	2.8	€4,090	€3,696
2023	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.8	2.8	€4,204	€3,800
2024	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.8	2.8	€4,322	€3,906
2025	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.6	2.6	€4,435	€4,008
2026	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.6	2.6	€4,550	€4,112
2027	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.2	2.2	€4,650	€4,203
2028	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2.2	2.2	€4,752	€4,295
2029	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2	2	€4,847	€4,381
2030	Per Capita Spend - County Longford	2	2	€4,944	€4,469

This table also illustrates an adjustment in the per capita spend for County Longford to account for lower average income levels when compared to the national average. The national per capita spend has been calculated based upon the total retail spend (inclusive of VAT) per capita in 2016. The Dublin Region has a higher level of disposable income (118.4 in 2016), which has an effect of inflating the national wages. The average disposable income in the majority of counties is less than 100, with CSO County incomes and Regional GDP 2016 report indicating that the disposable income in County Longford is 15 index points lower than the national average. Therefore, the available per capita retail spend in County Longford in 2016 (base year) for was €3,389 for convenience goods and €3,063 for comparison goods. Using these per capita retail spend

projection figures, the total available spend for convenience, comparison and bulky goods, as calculated, is presented in Table 4.3.

# PROPOSED MATERIAL AMENDMENTS: DRAFT COUNTY LONGFORD RETAIL STRATEGY 2021-2027

**Table 4.3: Recorded Populations and Population Projections for County Longford**

Longford County Total Available Expenditure - Convenience / Comparison / Bulky Goods							
Year	Population	Convenience Per Capita Spend (€)	Comparison Per Capita Spend (€)	Convenience Total Available Spend (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend - Excluding Bulky Goods (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend - Bulky Goods Only (€)
2016	40,873	€3,389	€3,063	€138,518,597	€125,193,999	€100,155,199	€25,038,800
2017	41,336	€3,521	€3,182	€145,551,124	€131,550,043	€105,240,034	€26,310,009
2018	41,798	€3,634	€3,284	€151,887,598	€137,276,988	€109,821,591	€27,455,398
2019	42,261	€3,750	€3,389	€158,484,313	€143,239,141	€114,591,313	€28,647,828
2020	42,724	€3,398	€3,071	€145,159,885	€131,196,438	€104,957,150	€26,239,288
2021	43,187	€3,615	€3,267	€156,123,893	€141,105,779	€112,884,623	€28,221,156
2022	43,649	€3,716	€3,359	€162,212,288	€146,608,509	€117,286,807	€29,321,702
2023	44,112	€3,817	€3,449	€168,359,119	€152,164,054	€121,731,244	€30,432,811
2024	44,575	€3,912	€3,536	€174,379,373	€157,605,199	€126,084,159	€31,521,040
2025	45,037	€4,010	€3,624	€180,591,406	€163,219,674	€130,575,740	€32,643,935
2026	45,500	€4,110	€3,715	€187,009,164	€169,020,085	€135,216,068	€33,804,017
2027	45,800	€4,213	€3,808	€192,948,246	€174,387,866	€139,510,293	€34,877,573
2028	46,100	€4,306	€3,891	€198,484,765	€179,391,807	€143,513,446	€35,878,361
2029	46,400	€4,392	€3,969	€203,771,951	€184,170,400	€147,336,320	€36,834,080
2030	46,700	€4,479	€4,049	€209,191,231	€189,068,381	€151,254,704	€37,813,676

Longford County Total Available Expenditure - Convenience / Comparison / Bulky Goods							
Year	Population	Convenience Per Capita Spend (€)	Comparison Per Capita Spend (€)	Convenience Total Available Spend (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend - Excluding Bulky Goods (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend - Bulky Goods Only (€)
2016	40,873	€3,389	€3,063	€138,518,597	€125,193,999	€100,155,199	€25,038,800
2017	41,336	€3,521	€3,182	€145,551,124	€131,550,043	€105,240,034	€26,310,009
2018	41,799	€3,634	€3,284	€151,891,232	€137,280,273	€109,824,218	€27,456,055
2019	42,262	€3,750	€3,389	€158,488,063	€143,242,531	€114,594,024	€28,648,506
2020	42,725	€3,863	€3,491	€165,031,105	€149,156,174	€119,324,939	€29,831,235
2021	43,188	€3,979	€3,596	€171,824,090	€155,295,718	€124,236,574	€31,059,144
2022	43,650	€4,090	€3,696	€178,524,705	€161,351,776	€129,081,421	€32,270,355
2023	44,111	€4,204	€3,800	€185,461,639	€167,621,422	€134,097,138	€33,524,284
2024	44,574	€4,322	€3,906	€192,655,722	€174,123,481	€139,298,785	€34,824,696
2025	45,037	€4,435	€4,008	€199,717,959	€180,506,376	€144,405,101	€36,101,275
2026	45,500	€4,550	€4,112	€207,017,196	€187,103,474	€149,682,779	€37,420,695
2027	45,800	€4,650	€4,203	€212,966,552	€192,480,540	€153,984,432	€38,496,108
2028	46,100	€4,752	€4,295	€219,077,483	€198,003,638	€158,402,911	€39,600,728
2029	46,400	€4,847	€4,381	€224,913,213	€203,278,009	€162,622,407	€40,655,602
2030	46,700	€4,944	€4,469	€230,894,741	€208,684,152	€166,947,322	€41,736,830



Table 4.3 above illustrates the projected increases in population, per capita spend in both convenience and comparison goods, and total available spend in all three retail categories from 2016 to 2030. This includes the complete operational lifecycle of the Retail Strategy from 2021 to 2027, ~~and the requirement for an additional 3 years up to 2030 in line with the Retail Planning Guidelines.~~

This shows the total available spend for all retail goods growing from approximately €263m in 2016 to a projected ~~€405~~€367m at the end of this retail strategy period in 2027 to over ~~€398~~€439m in 2030. ~~This projected level of increase within the total available spend of the County represents projected growth rates of approximately 35% and 40% respectively.~~

Table 4.4 illustrates the adjusted retail spend for County Longford from 2016 to 2030. In adjusting the total available convenience retail spend, it has been projected that approximately 15% of the total annual available spend on convenience goods will be lost to competing centres outside the county, these including those within close proximity to certain parts of the county such as Athlone (South Longford), Mullingar (East Longford) and Cavan (North Longford), and also to the country's top shopping destinations such as Liffey Valley and Blanchardstown. In addition to the outflow referred to above, it has been projected that there will also be inflows of retail spend. This has been estimated to be equivalent to 5% of the total annual available spend on convenience goods in County Longford. This inflow is primarily accounted for by passing trade (N4, N55, N63) and the use of the county's retail offering by residents of neighbouring counties (Westmeath, Cavan, Leitrim and Roscommon).

# PROPOSED MATERIAL AMENDMENTS: DRAFT COUNTY LONGFORD RETAIL STRATEGY 2021-2027

**Table 4.4: Projections of the total available convenience retail spend, as adjusted to account for inflow and outflow.**

Total Available Expenditure - <u>Convenience</u>					Total Available Expenditure - <u>Comparison - Non-Bulky Goods</u>					Total Available Expenditure - <u>Comparison - Bulky Goods</u>				
Year	Convenience Total Available Spend (€)	Convenience Total Available Spend Outflow (%)	Convenience Total Available Spend Inflow (%)	Adjusted Convenience Total Available Spend (€)	Year	Comparison (Non-Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend (€)	Comparison (Non-Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend Outflow (%)	Comparison (Non-Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend Inflow (%)	Adjusted Comparison (Non-Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend (€)	Year	Comparison (Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend (€)	Comparison (Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend Outflow (%)	Comparison (Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend Inflow (%)	Adjusted Comparison (Bulky Goods) Total Available Spend (€)
2017	145,551,124	15%	5%	130,996,012	2017	105,240,034	10%	2%	96,820,831	2017	26,310,009	20%	1.5%	21,442,657
2018	151,887,598	15%	5%	136,698,839	2018	109,821,591	10%	2%	101,035,864	2018	27,455,398	20%	1.5%	22,376,149
2019	158,484,313	15%	5%	142,635,881	2019	114,591,313	10%	2%	105,424,008	2019	28,647,828	20%	1.5%	23,347,980
2020	145,159,885	15%	5%	130,643,896	2020	104,957,150	10%	2%	96,560,578	2020	26,239,288	20%	1.5%	21,385,019
2021	156,123,893	15%	5%	140,511,504	2021	112,884,623	10%	2%	103,853,853	2021	28,221,156	20%	1.5%	23,000,242
2022	162,212,288	15%	5%	145,991,059	2022	117,286,807	10%	2%	107,903,863	2022	29,321,702	20%	1.5%	23,897,187
2023	168,359,119	15%	5%	151,523,207	2023	121,731,244	10%	2%	111,992,744	2023	30,432,811	20%	1.5%	24,802,741
2024	174,379,373	15%	5%	156,941,436	2024	126,084,159	10%	2%	115,997,427	2024	31,521,040	20%	1.5%	25,689,647
2025	180,591,406	15%	5%	162,532,265	2025	130,575,740	10%	2%	120,129,680	2025	32,643,935	20%	1.5%	26,604,807
2026	187,009,164	15%	5%	168,308,247	2026	135,216,068	10%	2%	124,398,783	2026	33,804,017	20%	1.5%	27,550,274
2027	192,948,246	15%	5%	173,653,421	2027	139,510,293	10%	2%	128,349,469	2027	34,877,573	20%	1.5%	28,425,222
2028	198,484,765	15%	5%	178,636,289	2028	143,513,446	10%	2%	132,032,370	2028	35,878,361	20%	1.5%	29,240,865
2029	203,771,951	15%	5%	183,394,756	2029	147,336,320	10%	2%	135,549,415	2029	36,834,080	20%	1.5%	30,019,775
2030	209,191,231	15%	5%	188,272,108	2030	151,254,704	10%	2%	139,154,328	2030	37,813,676	20%	1.5%	30,818,146

# PROPOSED MATERIAL AMENDMENTS: DRAFT COUNTY LONGFORD RETAIL STRATEGY 2021-2027

Total Available Expenditure - <u>Convenience</u>					Total Available Expenditure - <u>Comparison - Non-Bulky Goods</u>					Total Available Expenditure - <u>Comparison - Bulky Goods</u>				
Year	Convenience Total Available Spend (€)	Convenience Total Available Spend Outflow (%)	Convenience Total Available Spend Inflow (%)	Adjusted Convenience Total Available Spend (€)	Year	Comparison Total Available Spend (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend Outflow (%)	Comparison Total Available Spend Inflow (%)	Adjusted Comparison Total Available Spend (€)	Year	Comparison Total Available Spend - Bulky Goods (€)	Comparison Total Available Spend Outflow (%)	Comparison Total Available Spend Inflow (%)	Adjusted Comparison Total Available Spend (€)
2016	€138,518,597	15%	5%	€124,666,737	2016	€125,193,999	10%	2%	€115,178,479	2016	€25,038,800	20%	1.5%	€20,406,622
2017	€145,551,124	15%	5%	€130,996,012	2017	€131,550,043	10%	2%	€121,026,039	2017	€26,310,009	20%	1.5%	€21,442,657
2018	€151,891,232	15%	5%	€136,702,109	2018	€137,280,273	10%	2%	€126,297,851	2018	€27,456,055	20%	1.5%	€22,376,684
2019	€158,488,063	15%	5%	€142,639,256	2019	€143,242,531	10%	2%	€131,783,128	2019	€28,648,506	20%	1.5%	€23,348,532
2020	€165,031,105	15%	5%	€148,527,994	2020	€149,156,174	10%	2%	€137,223,680	2020	€29,831,235	20%	1.5%	€24,312,456
2021	€171,824,090	15%	5%	€154,641,681	2021	€155,295,718	10%	2%	€142,872,061	2021	€31,059,144	20%	1.5%	€25,313,202
2022	€178,524,705	15%	5%	€160,672,234	2022	€161,351,776	10%	2%	€148,443,634	2022	€32,270,355	20%	1.5%	€26,300,340
2023	€185,461,639	15%	5%	€166,915,475	2023	€167,621,422	10%	2%	€154,211,708	2023	€33,524,284	20%	1.5%	€27,322,292
2024	€192,655,722	15%	5%	€173,390,150	2024	€174,123,481	10%	2%	€160,193,603	2024	€34,824,696	20%	1.5%	€28,382,127
2025	€199,717,959	15%	5%	€179,746,163	2025	€180,506,376	10%	2%	€166,065,866	2025	€36,101,275	20%	1.5%	€29,422,539
2026	€207,017,196	15%	5%	€186,315,477	2026	€187,103,474	10%	2%	€172,135,196	2026	€37,420,695	20%	1.5%	€30,497,866
2027	€212,966,552	15%	5%	€191,669,897	2027	€192,480,540	10%	2%	€177,082,097	2027	€38,496,108	20%	1.5%	€31,374,328
2028	€219,077,483	15%	5%	€197,169,735	2028	€198,003,638	10%	2%	€182,163,347	2028	€39,600,728	20%	1.5%	€32,274,593
2029	€224,913,213	15%	5%	€202,421,892	2029	€203,278,009	10%	2%	€187,015,768	2029	€40,655,602	20%	1.5%	€33,134,315
2030	€230,894,741	15%	5%	€207,805,267	2030	€208,684,152	10%	2%	€191,989,420	2030	€41,736,830	20%	1.5%	€34,015,517

As with the total available convenience retail spend, the total available comparison and bulky goods retail spend must also be adjusted. In doing so it has been projected that 10% of the total comparison retail spend will be lost to competing centres, but that the inflow of spend will also be much lower, at just 2%. In adjusting the total available bulky retail spend, the outflow lost to competing centres has been projected to be more substantial, at 20%, while the inflow of retail spend has been projected as being just 1.5%.

#### 4.4 Turnover and Floorspace Capacity

This section identifies the turnover and floorspace capacity which will be used to calculate the subsequent minimum additional floorspace requirements over the lifetime of this retail strategy. The defined average turnover rate per square metre of floorspace in each of the three categories has been illustrated in Table 4.5. This methodology uses the total expenditure available within the County for each category and divides it by the amount of existing floorspace within that category.

The resulting figure has been used as the basis for the projection of future floorspace requirements, through a comparison exercise against the projected disposable income which is available within the specific category. The overall 2020 baseline figures indicate that 60.09% of all retail floorspace in the County is of the bulky goods retail category, while convenience and comparison retail floorspace account for 22.36% and 17.55% respectively.

**Table 4.5: Current Retail Floorspace Per Retail Category and Estimated Turnover per Square Metre for County Longford**

Retail Floorspace for Convenience and Comparison Goods and Turnover							
Retail Floorspace Analysis					Retail Category Turnover		
Retail Category	2020				2020		
	Gross Floor Area (sqm)	Net Floor Area (sqm)	Net Area as a % of Gross Area	Net Area as a % of Overall Total Net Area	Adjusted Total Available Spend	Net Floor Area (sqm)	Turnover Per sqm (€)
Convenience	16,809	13,447	80.00%	22.36	€130,643,896	13,447	€9,715
Comparison - Non-Bulky	13,193	10,554	80.00%	17.55	€96,560,578	10,554	€9,149
Comparison - Bulky	45,163	36,130	90.00%	60.09	€21,385,019	36,130	€592
Overall Total	75,164	60,131	-	100.00	€248,589,494	-	

## Retail Floorspace for Convenience and Comparison Goods and Turnover

Retail Floorspace Analysis					Retail Category Turnover		
Retail Category	2019				2019		
	Gross Floor Area (sqm)	Net Floor Area (sqm)	Net Area as a % of Gross Area	Net Area as a % of Overall Total Net Area	Adjusted Total Available Spend	Net Floor Area (sqm)	Turnover Per sqm (€)
Convenience	16,809	13,447	80.00%	22.09	€142,639,256	13,447	€10,607
Comparison - Non-Bulky	14,107	11,286	80.00%	18.54	€131,783,128	11,286	€11,677
Comparison - Bulky	45,163	36,130	90.00%	59.36	€23,348,532	36,130	€646
Overall Total	76,079	60,863	-	100.00	€297,770,916	-	

## 4.5 Additional Retail Floorspace Requirements

**Table 4.6: Outline of the cumulative projected additional retail floorspace requirements per annum, as adjusted for vacancy, from 2019-2030.**

Additional Floorspace Requirements for Convenience and Comparison Goods - Adjusted for Vacancy												
Year	Convenience				Comparison - Non-Bulky				Comparison - Bulky			
	Total Annual Cumulative Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Additional Annual Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	Additional Floorspace Development Requirement (sqm)	Total Annual Cumulative Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Additional Annual Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	Additional Floorspace Development Requirement (sqm)	Total Annual Cumulative Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Additional Annual Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	Additional Floorspace Development Requirement (sqm)
2016												
2017												
2018												
2019	14,682		1,087.00		11,523		1,435.62		39,446		3,096.32	
2020	13,447	-1,234	0	-2,321	10,554	-969	2,404.39	0	36,130	-3,316	6,412.74	-9,729
2021	14,463	1,016	0	-1,306	11,351	797	1,607.24	-810	38,859	2,729	0	-7,000
2022	15,027	564	0	-742	11,794	443	0	-367	40,374	1,515	0	-5,485
2023	15,597	569	0	-172	12,241	447	0	79	41,904	1,530	0	-3,955
2024	16,154	558	0	385	12,678	438	0	517	43,403	1,498	0	-2,456
2025	16,730	575	0	961	13,130	452	0	969	44,949	1,546	0	-910
2026	17,324	595	0	1,556	13,597	467	0	1,435	46,546	1,597	0	687
2027	17,874	550	0	2,106	14,029	432	0	1,867	48,024	1,478	0	2,165
2028	18,387	513	0	2,619	14,431	403	0	2,270	49,402	1,378	0	3,543
2029	18,877	490	0	3,108	14,815	384	0	2,654	50,718	1,316	0	4,859
2030	19,379	502	0	3,610	15,209	394	0	3,048	52,067	1,349	0	6,208

# PROPOSED MATERIAL AMENDMENTS: DRAFT COUNTY LONGFORD RETAIL STRATEGY 2021-2027

Additional Floorspace Requirements for Convenience and Comparison Goods - Adjusted for Vacancy												
Year	Convenience				Comparison - Non-Bulky				Comparison - Bulky			
	Total Annual Cumulative Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Additional Annual Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	Additional Floorspace Development Requirement (sqm)	Total Annual Cumulative Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Additional Annual Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	Additional Floorspace Development Requirement (sqm)	Total Annual Cumulative Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Additional Annual Floorspace Requirement (sqm)	Vacant Floorspace (sqm)	Additional Floorspace Development Requirement (sqm)
2016												
2017												
2018												
2019	13,447		522.25		11,286		1,253.80		36,130		2,204.19	
2020	14,003	556	0	33	11,752	466	787.87	0	37,622	1,492	712.59	779
2021	14,579	576	0	610	12,236	484	304.14	180	39,170	1,549	0	2,328
2022	15,147	569	0	1,178	12,713	477	0	657	40,698	1,528	0	3,855
2023	15,736	589	0	1,767	13,207	494	0	1,151	42,279	1,581	0	5,436
2024	16,346	610	0	2,377	13,719	512	0	1,663	43,919	1,640	0	7,076
2025	16,946	599	0	2,976	14,222	503	0	2,166	45,529	1,610	0	8,686
2026	17,565	619	0	3,596	14,742	520	0	2,686	47,193	1,664	0	10,350
2027	18,070	505	0	4,101	15,165	424	0	3,109	48,549	1,356	0	11,707
2028	18,588	519	0	4,619	15,601	435	0	3,545	49,942	1,393	0	13,100
2029	19,083	495	0	5,114	16,016	416	0	3,960	51,273	1,330	0	14,430
2030	19,591	508	0	5,622	16,442	426	0	4,386	52,636	1,364	0	15,794



The methodology used to identify the future requirements for additional retail floorspace takes account of the existing baseline floorspace figures including actual vacancy and an additional frictional vacancy, the calculated turnover per m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace, and the projected available retail spend. This is replicated across each of the retail categories. The key steps taken as part of the methodology include the following:

- The total cumulative floorspace requirements are calculated for each year using the turnover per sq.m and the available spend for each retail category.
- The baseline floorspace figure from the preceding year is subtracted from the total cumulative floorspace requirement to produce the additional annual floorspace requirement.
- The vacancy rate (as adjusted to allow for a 10% frictional vacancy requirement) is deducted from the additional annual floorspace requirement to define the additional floorspace development requirement, which is the final output of the exercise.

Table 4.6 also illustrates the impact of the forecasted economic decline arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and the effect of an assumed -9.4% decline in retail spend in both convenience and comparison retail spend for the year 2020. This results in a negative requirement for additional retail floorspace in this year across all three categories of retail which, along with existing vacant floorspace across convenience, comparison and bulky goods retail categories, negates the theoretical requirement for additional retail floorspace to cater for projected retail spend until the years 2024 (in the case of convenience retail floorspace development), 2023 (in the case of comparison retail floorspace development) and 2026 (in the case of bulky goods retail floorspace development). However, it should be emphasised that this does not signify that no additional retail development should take place before these respective years, but rather demonstrates the impact of economic volatility on projected retail floorspace development.

#### 4.6 Additional Retail Floorspace Requirement

The initial baseline projections for floorspace requirements for the period to 2030 are set out in Table 4.6 above. These projections have been formulated to include adjustments for existing vacancy levels, as well as a frictional vacancy rate of 10% to ensure vital choice and competition in the market. Having regard to calculated demand, and identified vacancy, including the need to maintain a frictional vacancy rate, there is a requirement to plan for additional retail floorspace over the plan period.

The Retail Planning Guidelines advise that Retail Strategies Should “*assess the broad requirement for additional development over the plan period.... These assessments of future retail requirements are intended to provide **broad guidance** as to the additional quantum of convenience and comparison floorspace provision. They should not be treated in an **overly prescriptive** manner, nor should they serve to inhibit competition*”. For this purpose, it is not the intention of this strategy to present figures as some form of cap on retail permissions in the County, but rather to guide the general scale of overall retail provision.

Significant consideration has also been given to the quality of existing vacant retail floorspace, including the prospective suitability of available floorspace to meet the future needs of retailers in the County. A summary of additional floorspace requirements over the Longford County Development Plan period 2021-2027 for the convenience, comparison non-bulky and comparison bulky categories is set out in Table 4.7 below.

**Table 4.7: Summary of additional floorspace requirements over the 2021-2027 period**

Additional Floorspace Requirements 2021-2027	
Retail Category	Floorspace (sqm)
Additional Convenience	2,100-3,200
Additional Comparison	2,000-2,650
Additional Bulky	2,200-4,850

Additional Floorspace Requirements 2021-2027	
Retail Category	Floorspace (sqm)
Additional Convenience	4,067
Additional Comparison	3,413
Additional Bulky	10,928

## 5. RETAIL STRATEGY AND POLICY GUIDANCE

### 5.1 Retail Objectives and Policy Recommendations

This section of the strategy contains key retail objectives to encourage and accommodate future retail development in County Longford. It also sets out criteria for the assessment of future retail proposals, in accordance with the overall aims of the Development Plan and the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines (DoECLG) 2012.

### 5.2 Retail Strategy Overview

It is considered that the majority of future floorspace requirements will be provided within the commercial core of Longford Town, taking account of its role as the Principal Retail Centre in the County, and the fact that approximately 50.73~~39~~% of the envisaged population growth for the County over the plan period to 2027 is expected to take place within the town environment itself. As detailed in Section 4.2, the latter should precipitate a demand for convenience, comparison and bulky goods floorspace as the plan period progresses.

The focus of concentrating the provision of new retail floorspace within Longford Town underpins the ‘town centre first’ approach as per the Retail Planning Guidelines and will also strengthen the competitiveness of the county as a whole relative to other competing centres thereby reducing outward revenue leakage.

The spatial distribution of new floorspace in Co. Longford will be guided by the County Retail Hierarchy. Issues of location and scale are of paramount importance to the assessment of future retail proposals in the County. An overly prescriptive approach in defining the scale acceptable in different areas could inhibit potential improvements to the vitality and viability of smaller centres. Providing a broad framework for assessment purposes, the guidance in Table 5.1 provides a suitably broad framework for assessment purposes, while allowing sufficient flexibility to be applied on a case-specific basis.

**Table 5.2: County Retail Hierarchy**

Hierarchy	Settlement Type	County Centre	Appropriate Retail Type
Tier I	Principal Retail Centre	Longford Town	Major convenience and comparison

<b>Tier II</b>	Key Service Centre	Granard	Large to Medium scale convenience and medium scale comparison
<b>Tier III</b>	Service Centres	Edgeworthstown and Ballymahon	Medium scale convenience along with small to medium scale comparison, including tourism-related comparison
<b>Tier IV</b>	Local Service Centre	Lanesborough	Medium scale convenience along with small-scale comparison including tourism-related comparison
<b>Tier V</b>	Rural Centres and Local Shops	Serviced Rural Villages, Rural Settlement Clusters and the Open Countryside of County Longford	Predominantly lower order convenience, but not excluding tourism-related comparison

### 5.3 Key Retail Principles

Having regard to the information presented above in relation to the health check analysis of the main urban settlements of County Longford and the additional floorspace requirements of the County between 2021 and 2027, a series of recommended key retail principles have been devised. The primary purpose of these key retail principles will be to inform the development of policy objectives which will protect and reinforce existing retail offering and look to develop additional retail services, in keeping with the role of the settlements of County Longford, as prescribed in the Core Strategy and the Eastern and Midland RSES.

Specifically, these principles will look to inform policies that will:

- I. Ensure that the retail needs of the County's residents are provided for as much as possible within the County, whilst taking cognisance of the Regional Retail and Settlement Hierarchy as established in the Eastern and Midland RSES;
- II. Ensure that County Longford possesses a clear policy framework that will inform both the conception and assessment of retail development proposals and help to guarantee that the strategic and local convenience and comparison retailing needs of the County are met;
- III. Maintain, and where possible, enhance the existing competitiveness of the County's main centres by facilitating the development of additional retail floorspace where it can be clearly established that such development will result in tangible improvements to the retail offering of the County;
- IV. Encourage reductions in floorspace vacancy, taking account of suitability, obsolescence, and the identification of alternative uses for existing vacant floorspace within the urban centres of the County;
- V. Facilitate the regeneration of areas with scope for improvement or where there may be a high level of vacancy, obsolescence or emerging issues of dereliction, subject to the provisions of the Sequential Test;
- VI. Maintain an appropriate mix of uses and protect night-time amenities in town centre locations whilst taking cognisance of the central tenet of 'compact growth' as espoused in the National Planning Framework in targeting a greater proportion of future residential development within or close to built up areas.

- VII. Engage with the relevant stakeholders and incentivise to ensure that the environmental attractiveness of town/local centres is enhanced; and
- VIII. Address the issue of retail expenditure leakage out of the County to competing centres by looking to develop the retail offering in the County within key retail sectors where this leakage occurs.

In following these principles, the goal of the Longford County Retail Strategy 2021-2027 will be to encourage the development of a healthy, vibrant and sustainable retail environment within the urban centres of County Longford.

#### 5.4 Recommended Retail Policy Objectives

Having regard to the objectives which have been outlined above, the following retail policy objective recommendations are provided and take cognisance of national and regional planning policy as well as the assessment presented in this Retail Strategy. These policy recommendations are intended to inform retail-specific policies presented in Chapter 8: *Economic Development* and Chapter 16: *Development Management Standards* of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, thereby forming an integral component of the strategic policy framework which will ensure that all development within the County is carried out in keeping with the ideals of sustainable development.

The recommended retail policy objectives outlined below have been created with the aim of supporting the expansion of the retail offering of County Longford in a sustainable manner, whilst also seeking to develop urban environments that support an appropriate mix of uses which sustain town centres and enhance their vitality and viability and the overall quality of life of our urban places. The policy objective recommendations outlined below have been formulated with the aim of supporting the expansion of the retail offering of County Longford in a sustainable manner. Therefore, these policy objective recommendations have been designed to encourage the reuse, renewal and regeneration of vacant floorspace where possible. This approach aligns with national and regional planning policy in seeking to secure more compact and sustainable growth of our urban environments focussing on the reuse and redevelopment of previously developed 'brownfield' land and existing buildings.

Notwithstanding this key policy emphasis, where the reuse or adaptation of vacant floorspace would have a negative impact upon a retailer's ability to compete, the construction of new retail floorspace would be permissible. Any application for the development of additional retail floorspace would require a detailed assessment to ensure that it is in keeping with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area within which it is proposed and provided that it can satisfy the relevant criteria as established within this Retail Strategy, the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Retail Planning Guidelines.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 1:** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all retail development permitted accords with the relevant requirements and criteria as established within the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 and the Longford County Retail Strategy 2021-2027.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 2:** It is the policy of the Council to guide retail development where practical and viable in accordance with the framework provided by the Sequential Approach to enable the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres to be sustained and strengthened.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 3:** It is the policy of the Council to permit retail development of a size and scale which is appropriate to the level of the town/settlement area, including its population, as defined within the County Retail Hierarchy. This policy will aim to consolidate and reinforce all existing retail enterprises within the County and permit the development of additional retail floorspace where such development is deemed to be appropriate by Longford County Council.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 4:** When bringing forward proposals for the creation of new retail floorspace, the Council will require applicants to undertake an assessment of the quality and suitability of existing and available floorspace in the County relative to the circumstances of their proposals.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 5:** It is the policy of the Council to discourage new retail development if they would either by themselves or cumulatively in conjunction with other developments seriously damage the vitality and viability of existing retail existing retail centres within the County. This policy is aimed at protecting the existing vitality and service provision of the towns, and particularly the town centres, of County Longford by preventing the development of retail enterprises in inappropriate locations or at a scale which would have a negative impact on retail competition within the County.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 6:** When assessing retail planning applications, it will be Council policy to have regard to the findings of the capacity assessment contained in the Longford County Retail Strategy 2021-2027, including the ability to counteract expenditure leakage. The onus will be on any applicant to demonstrate in a Retail Impact Assessment that the proposed floorspace is appropriate, having regard to the quantum of floorspace required within that specific urban centre or settlement, in addition to evidencing all other relevant variables as specified within the Retail Planning Guidelines.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 7:** It is the policy of the Council to encourage, in the first instance, developments which promote and protect the Longford Town Core Shopping Area as the primary location for high order comparison and large-scale convenience retail development in the County, subject to the criteria of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012. In principle, this will not

preclude the consideration of proposals in locations where mitigating and robustly justified special circumstances apply.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 8:** It is the policy of the Council to promote the reuse of vacant retail floorspace. Where no viable retail use can be sustained, alternative uses will be assessed on their own merits against the requirements of the proper planning and sustainable development of the areas within which they are located. This policy will be used to ensure that all proposals for the reuse of existing retail floorspace can be evaluated and the proportion of vacancy can be reduced. In addition, the identification and introduction of alternative uses for vacant retail floorspace will reduce the possibility of such floorspace falling derelict.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 9:** It is the policy of the Council to look to encourage the consolidation of other non-retail-based services within the town centres of the County utilising existing vacant retail floorspace where necessary. This policy will aid in enhancing the vitality of town centres, encouraging them to maintain their role as employment locations in addition to reducing the proportion of vacant retail floorspace and recognising the value which non-retail uses can contribute to the local economy through the provision of employment and general economic benefit.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 10:** It is the policy of the Council to continue to improve the public realm of urban centres through the encouragement of high-quality civic design, including but not limited to the provision of attractive street furniture, lighting and effective street cleaning. In addition, the introduction of business improvement district type initiatives to the principal settlements of County Longford will be evaluated to establish the contribution that such proposals could make to the viability and vitality of town centres within the County.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 11:** It is the policy of the Council to undertake measures to improve the accessibility of town centres by developing a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment, which improves safety and limits traffic congestion where possible. A particular focus of this policy will be the development of additional pedestrian crossings where necessary within Longford Town centre, as well as other settlements within the County where high volumes of vehicular traffic can be seen to inhibit pedestrian movement.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 12:** It is the policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate retail innovation, where appropriate, to help diversify the County's retail profile and offer. Where possible, this retail innovation should be directed towards existing urban centres and settlements in the first instance but will not preclude the development of retail enterprises in other locations, where the retail innovation in question cannot be sustained within any alternative location. Such development proposals will be assessed on their own merits and must satisfy the assessment criteria of the Retail Planning Guidelines.



**Policy Objective Recommendation 13:** It is the policy of the Council to require a Retail Impact Assessment to be carried out for development proposals in the following general circumstances:

- a) Proposals featuring greater than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of net floorspace for both convenience and comparison type developments in the four main towns;
- b) Proposals featuring greater than 500m<sup>2</sup> of net retail floorspace for both convenience and comparison type developments in district towns and other settlements;
- c) Or where the Planning Authority considers the development may impact on the vitality and viability of a town centre.

The Retail Impact Assessment shall include, at minimum, the criteria set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 and should demonstrate how the proposed development:

- Supports the overall strategy for town centres as set out in the development plan and not materially
- diminish the prospect of attracting private sector investment into one or more town centres;
- Does not cause an adverse impact on one or more town centres, either singly or cumulatively with recent developments or other outstanding planning permissions, sufficient to undermine the quality of the centre or its role in the economic and social life of the community;
- Does not diminish the range of activities and services that a town centre can support;
- Does not cause an increase in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail area that is likely to persist in the long term; and,
- Ensures a high standard of access both by public transport, foot and private car so that the proposal is easily accessible by all sections of society.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 14:** It is the policy of the Council to protect and enhance the amenities and character of town centres in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The Council will encourage the further improvement and development of commercial, service, social and cultural functions which its town and village centres perform while ensuring the protection of the important heritage and architectural quality of their streetscapes. This will apply to the skyline, shop fronts and advertising structures.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 15:** It is the policy of the Council to identify under-utilised and obsolete areas for potential renewal and to encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings in the county's main towns, villages and smaller centres. The Council will use its statutory powers, where appropriate, to facilitate this and will consider such buildings and lands for inclusion in the Register of Derelict Sites or the Vacant Sites Register.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 16:** It is the policy of the Council to align, as far as practicable, new retail development with existing and proposed public transport infrastructure and

services and encourage access by foot and cycling to reduce the dominance of private car access. Where multiple private car parking of four or more spaces is a feature of any new retail development, developers will be required to provide at least 25% of the total car parking provision for electric vehicles (EVs) including associated charging units, ducting and ancillary infrastructure. Retail development incorporating car parking under spaces will be required to provide at least one EV car parking space including associated charging units, ducting and ancillary infrastructure.

**Policy Objective Recommendation 17:** It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the principles provided in the Shopfront and Signage Design Guidelines 2021-2027, prepared by Longford County Council and included in Annex 6 of the Longford County Development Plan 2021-2027, and the Retail Design Manual 2012 (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) in the assessment of any retail development.

### 5.5 Criteria for the Assessment of Future Retail Development

All applications for significant retail development should be assessed against a range of relevant criteria. The Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) provide the main principles for assessing new retail proposals. The Guidelines state that the main planning considerations for retail development include:

1. Location (site selection);
2. Suitability of use (land use zoning and specific policies/objectives);
3. Size and scale (impact, form and design); and
4. Accessibility (access and servicing arrangements).

#### The Sequential Test

All applications for retail developments at edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations will be subject to the sequential test, where the following applies:

The Retail Planning Guidelines state that *“the order of priority for the sequential approach is to locate retail development in the city/town centre (and district centre if appropriate), and only to allow retail development in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations where all other options have been exhausted. Where retail development in an edge-of-centre site is being proposed, only where the applicant can demonstrate satisfactorily to the planning authority that there are no sites or potential sites including vacant sites/units within a town centre or within a designated district centre that are (a) suitable (b) available and (c) viable, can an edge-of-centre site be considered.*

*Where retail development on an out-of-centre site is being proposed, only in exceptional circumstances where the applicant can demonstrate satisfactorily to the planning authority that there are no sites or potential sites either within the centre of a town or designated district centre or on the edge of the town centre that are (a) suitable (b) available and (c) viable, can that out-of-centre site be considered”.*

### **Retail Impact Assessments:**

Retail Impact Assessments will be required for significant retail development where due to its scale and/or location, it may impact on the vitality and viability of centres. These assessments will be prepared in accordance with the current Retail Planning Guidelines, which requires an applicant to address the following criteria and demonstrate whether or not the proposal would:

- Support the long-term strategy for city/town centres as established in the development plan, and not materially diminish the prospect of attracting private sector investment into one or more such centres;
- Have the potential to Increase employment opportunities and promote economic regeneration;
- Have the potential to increase competition within the area and thereby attract further consumers to the area;
- Respond to consumer demand for its retail offering and not diminish the range of activities and services that a centre can support;
- Cause an adverse impact on one or more centres, either singly or cumulatively with recent developments or other outstanding planning permissions (which have a realistic prospect of implementation) sufficient to undermine the quality of the centre or its wider function in the promotion and encouragement of the arts, culture, leisure, public realm function of the town centre critical to the economic and social life of the community;
- Cause an increase in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail area that is likely to persist in the long term;
- Ensure a high standard of access both by public transport, foot and private car so that the proposal is easily accessible by all sections of society; and/or
- Link effectively with an existing city/town centre so that there is likely to be commercial synergy.

### **Traffic and Transport Assessment**

A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) may be required for retail developments over a particular threshold (100m<sup>2</sup>), as set out in the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003, and the Traffic Transport Assessment Guidelines 2007.

A TTA must examine the transport impacts of a proposed development, incorporating any subsequent measures necessary to ensure roads, junctions and other transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development are adequate to accommodate the proposed development without causing additional delays to existing and future traffic. More importantly, TTA is also important in demonstrating how a proposed retail development incorporates sustainable travel modes.

## **5.6 Criteria for the Assessment of Different Development Types**

### **Large Convenience Stores**

The Retail Planning Guidelines set a 3,000m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace cap on food store development outside the four Dublin Authority areas, and the cities of Cork, Limerick/Shannon, Galway and Waterford. This strategy absorbs this requirement, which applies to new stores as well as to extensions to existing retail premises.

### **Retail Parks and Retail Warehouses**

Retail warehouse complexes generally comprise an agglomeration of retail warehouses grouped around a common car park selling mainly bulky household goods. There is an expectation that most of the goods purchased can be transported off-site by the customer and because of this they are generally located on the edge or outside of the built-up urban area.

The key consideration in determining the distribution of floorspace is defining the appropriate and sustainable location for such retail activities. In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines there should be a presumption against the further development of out-of-centre retail parks and a preference for sites in or adjacent to town centres to ensure the potential for linked trips and commercial synergy. Key criteria for the assessment of retail warehouse applications include both the scale and design of the development, appropriate vehicular access and the quantitative need for such development. The Retail Planning Guidelines state that individual retail units should not be less than 700sq.m and not more than 6,000sq.m in size. These figures are gross floor area, including storage, garden centres etc. It is essential that the range of goods sold is restricted by planning conditions to bulky household items as those defined within the Retail Planning Guidelines such as household appliances, furniture and furnishings. The proportion of non-bulky goods should be limited to 20% should be clearly delineated on planning application drawings.

### **Local Shops**

Local shops play a vital role in catering for the daily or causal needs of nearby residents or of those passing by. Primarily convenience outlets, they provide a readily accessible service for basic goods, especially for the less mobile members of communities.

Where appropriate, local shops shall be recognised in the relevant parts of the Development Plan, with ample provision for the establishment of other neighbourhood shops and services made in the zoning of additional land for residential development, where necessary.

### **Retailing and Motor Fuel Stations**

Local shops attached to petrol filling stations are a growing sector of the retail market. However, the size of the shop associated with any petrol filling station should take account of the fact that large shops can attract additional custom, large numbers of cars can cause disruption and the preferred location for retailing is in town centres. The Retail Planning Guidelines state that when the size of such retail units is in excess of 100m<sup>2</sup> the sequential approach should apply.

## **5.7 Monitoring and Review**

The Retail Planning Guidelines advise planning authorities to regularly monitor trends in their areas, and update retail policies and strategies as appropriate. The council acknowledges that

the retail sector is one of the most dynamic sectors in the economy and that trends, influences and information can change over time. The Council is therefore committed to monitoring the contents of this strategy to ensure that:

- I. The Retail Strategy and its baseline data are kept as up to date as possible;
- II. Mechanisms that are in place to monitor the progress of the strategy are appropriate and fit for purposes over its lifetime; and
- III. The Council can intervene in a positive and timely manner through a variation to the Development Plan in order to address changing circumstances, as considered necessary.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The Longford County Retail Strategy 2021-2027 has been prepared for Longford County Council in accordance with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2012. The policy recommendations formulated as part of this Retail Strategy will form a key input into the overall planning policy framework

In compiling this Retail Strategy, due regard has been had to the most up-to-date information regarding population growth projections, the prevailing economic outlook, current retail trends and retail sales information. This has been used to provide a firm basis on which to inform future policy direction with the aim of enhancing and developing the retail offering of Co. Longford including the principal settlement Longford Town, other main settlements to smaller settlements, prioritizing the vibrancy of the town centre including its redevelopment and revitalisation where possible.