

Forward Planning,
Planning Department,
Longford County Council,
Áras an Chontae,
Great Water Street,
Longford,
N39 NH56.

RMLA Limited,
Unit 3B,
Santry Avenue Industrial Estate,
Santry Avenue,
Santry,
Dublin 9,
D09 PH04

Email: admin@rmla.ie
Date: 9th October 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Draft Longford Town Local Area Plan 2025-2031

This submission has been prepared by RMLA on behalf of An Post, Exo Building, North Wall Quay, Dublin 1, D01 W5Y2100 in response to the publication of the Draft Longford Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (hereafter referred to as, the Draft LAP). An Post welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the preparation of a new Local Area Plan for the Longford Town area that will provide a basis for the sustainable development of the Town over the plan period in line with the objectives of the National Planning Framework (hereinafter, NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (hereinafter, RSES).

Please note all correspondence in relation to the submission should be sent to the Agents, RMLA Limited, Unit 3B, Santry Avenue Industrial Estate, Santry Avenue, Santry, Dublin 9, D09 PH04. We would request that the Local Authority keep us informed of any updates relating to this public consultation.

Operational and Supportive Requirements

An Post is continually assessing existing facilities and lands within their ownership to ensure a nationwide programme of development that will enhance their capability of providing a robust and reliable public service. In this regard, An Post welcomes the opportunity to engage with Local Authorities to ensure this future development can be undertaken in a sustainable and efficient manner that benefits local areas and accords with local and national policy.

Longford Town

An Post own and operate a regionally important postal facility in Longford Town and as part of a nationwide programme, An Post may consider the expansion and consolidation of their existing site in order to ensure the ability to continue to meet the operational needs of an expanding population and a growing market. In this regard, An Post is committed to providing a highly efficient postal service from its Longford facility, and in order to cope with modern requirement and increased pressures on the postal system it is important that necessary infrastructure and unrestricted access is in place to serve the facility.

Policy Objectives

It is considered important that during the preparation and finalisation of the Draft LAP, that the Local Authority carefully consider the existing and future operational requirements of An Post and include appropriate policies to support An Post's ambition to enhance postal facilities. An Post supports the following policy objectives included in the Draft LAP:

- **ECON 02:** *Support and promote Longford Town as a key hub for employment, enterprise and tourism within the Gateway Region, and in its role as an economic driver complementing the Regional Growth Centre of Athlone.*
- **ECON 06:** *Support the development and expansion of enterprise and employment within Longford Town, and to co-operate with all stakeholders, landowners and relevant agencies to attract investment, while at the same time ensuring there is no resultant negative impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.*
- **ECON 08:** *Support the economic development and regeneration of the town centre.*
- **ECON 12:** *Support and promote economic and enterprise development and activity in a manner which contributes to the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainably town.*

Local Transport Plan

The Draft LAP includes a Local Transport Plan (LTP) prepared in close collaboration with the National Transport Authority (National Transport Authority) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). An Post is supportive of the below objective to engage with stakeholders during the preparation and implementation of the LTP:

- **CPO 5.9:** *Prepare and implement a Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Longford Town in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and other relevant stakeholders. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and other relevant stakeholders, in accordance with the guidance note Area Based Transport Assessment 2019 (or any subsequent update) produced by the NTA and TII.*

Furthermore, the Local Authority also proposes to:

- **TM1:** *St Mel's Rd One-Way system*
- **TM3:** *Reorganisation of Market Square/Kilashee St One-way system.*
- **CP1:** *Rationalisation of Main St and Dublin St parking (to facilitate cycle infrastructure).*

It is requested that during both the planning and implementation stages of the improved active travel measures that the Local Authority also have regard to and recognise the importance of HGV movements and all other operational requirements associated with the postal service throughout both the construction and operational phases of any public realm and active travel works. It is further requested that full collaboration and discussions are held with An Post prior to and during any such works, to allow alternative routes (if required) to be investigated and communicated to colleagues so that any delays can be avoided as much as possible.

Deliveries & Access

Regarding accessibility, it is important that the specific requirements regarding access and deliveries to postal facilities, including post boxes and collection points, which are located in town centre areas are recognised. While access is typically required to premises on a 24-hour basis, early morning deliveries and late evening collections are of particular importance to ensure mail can be delivered onward to catchment areas in a timely manner. As outlined above, An Post operate a facility situated on Main Street which serves a significant rural catchment, is a regionally important facility within the postal network with these requirements.

In this regard, it is imperative that, in order to protect the smooth operation of the existing postal service in Longford Town, the times of deliveries/collections to/from An Post facilities as well as customer access must be protected at all collection points including retail offices, Delivery Service Units and post boxes. Any access restrictions could have a serious impact on the ability of An Post to meet the postal needs of the public and agreed service agreements with the State. It is requested that the Local

Authority recognise the unique operational requirements of An Post, during the finalisation of the Longford Town Local Area Plan 2025-2031 and in any future assessments.

Additionally, it is requested that Longford County Council engage with An Post should any future area plan or project propose to amend delivery operations in town centre locations. In this regard, it is important that sufficient vehicular access is maintained, and that appropriate loading bay space is provided to accommodate the collection and delivery of mail.

Engagement with An Post

An Post is committed to working with the Local Authority and local residents to minimise potential disturbances to adjacent properties and in providing emission free deliveries in town/city centres. As part of the preparation of any future public realm and movement strategies, An Post would welcome the opportunity to engage with Longford County Council to ensure sustainable solutions are considered to maintain an appropriate level of access whilst also improving the appearance and function of town centre areas for the public.

As mentioned previously, the efficient operation of postal facilities is central to the successful provision of postal services for businesses and personal customers across the area. In this regard, in order to protect the operations of the service, access for deliveries/collections must be maintained without restriction.

An Post welcomes and supports the undertaking of Local Transport Plans within Town Centres. However, it is requested that the Local Authority carefully consider the operational requirements of An Post at all stages of the development process for any active travel and public realm works, such as the provision of one-way systems. It is further requested that full collaboration and discussions are held with An Post prior to and during any such works.

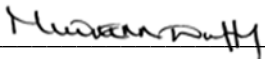
Conclusion

Our client welcomes the publication of the Draft Longford Town Local Area Plan 2025-2031 and the opportunity to comment on the future development of the Town. As outlined previously, An Post own and operate a postal facility in Longford Town and are continually aiming to enhance their capability of providing a robust and reliable public service.

We trust that the matters outlined above will be taken into consideration as part of the preparation and finalisation of the Longford Local Area Plan 2025-2031. We are available for discussion on any of the matters referred to above and request direct engagement with the Local Authority as part of the finalisation of this strategy.

We would appreciate if you could confirm receipt of this submission by return.

Yours faithfully,



Muirenn Duffy

Director

For and on Behalf of RMLA Limited