



Planning Consultants

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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: 18th October 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Draft Longford Town Local Area Plan 2025-2031

We, RMLA Limited, are acting for our Client, Tesco Ireland Limited, Gresham House, Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin in response to the publication of the Draft Longford Town Local Area Plan 2025-2031 (hereafter 'Draft LAP'). Tesco Ireland Limited (hereafter 'Tesco Ireland'), being one of the primary convenience retailers in Ireland, welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the Draft LAP. 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.

The retail sector makes a major contribution to Longford Town and its environs, by increasing the vitality and viability of its town centre. It also acts as an economic anchor, creating significant employment and indirect economic and social activity. Having regard to this, we welcome this opportunity to engage with the Local Authority in respect of the Draft LAP.

Respectfully, we also encourage the Local Authority to engage with stakeholders in the retail sector. This will ensure that appropriate policies and objectives are brought forward in the new LAP, which will attract both new investment to Longford Town, while also protecting the viability and vitality of existing retail premises within the town without unfairly burdening some existing businesses/locations.

Background

Tesco Ireland is one of the primary convenience retailers in Ireland with 177 stores in cities and towns across the country. Within Longford Town, Tesco operates a well-established retail store within Longford Shopping Centre that provides an important service to the community. To ensure these facilities can continue to provide for the needs of local customers, it is imperative that the Draft LAP acknowledges the importance of convenience retailing as part general retail policy. Additionally, it is important that transport policies are supportive of the continued operation of these stores.

The Draft LAP, in line with the County Development Plan, projects a population of 12,510 persons in Longford Town for 2027, an increase of 2,502 persons from 2016. As existing residential areas in Longford Town expand and new residential areas are developed, it is imperative that established retail facilities are protected, and that the sustainable growth of these centres is accommodated in line with the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012).

Longford Shopping Centre

The Draft LAP has identified the Longford Shopping Centre as a 'Strategic Site'. The Draft LAP states that during the lifetime of the LAP, a Masterplan will where appropriate be prepared for each of the sites identified as 'Strategic Sites'. The below objective is set out:

- **MP 05:** *Masterplans shall be prepared for the identified 'Strategic Sites' in consultation with the community and also with relevant statutory bodies during the lifetime of this Plan. Additional areas suffering from social and economic deprivation will also be prioritised.*

Tesco Ireland is supportive of the above and welcomes investment in Longford Shopping Centre. Our client respectfully requests existing retail should be supported by the Local Authority, in the interest of viability and ensuring the continued provision of a high-quality retail offering. Furthermore, it is requested that full collaboration and discussions are held with Tesco Ireland, being an anchor tenant, during the preparation of the Masterplan Plan.

Local Transport Plan

The Draft LAP includes a Local Transport Plan (LTP) prepared in close collaboration with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). Our client 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.*

Delivery and Access

As outlined above, Tesco Ireland operates a store situated in the Longford Shopping Centre. The Local Transport Plan highlights a number of proposed measures including the below and as illustrated in figure 1:

- **TM1:** *St Mel's Rd One-Way system.*
- **TM2:** *Longford Shopping Centre Main St Entrance Vehicular Restriction.*

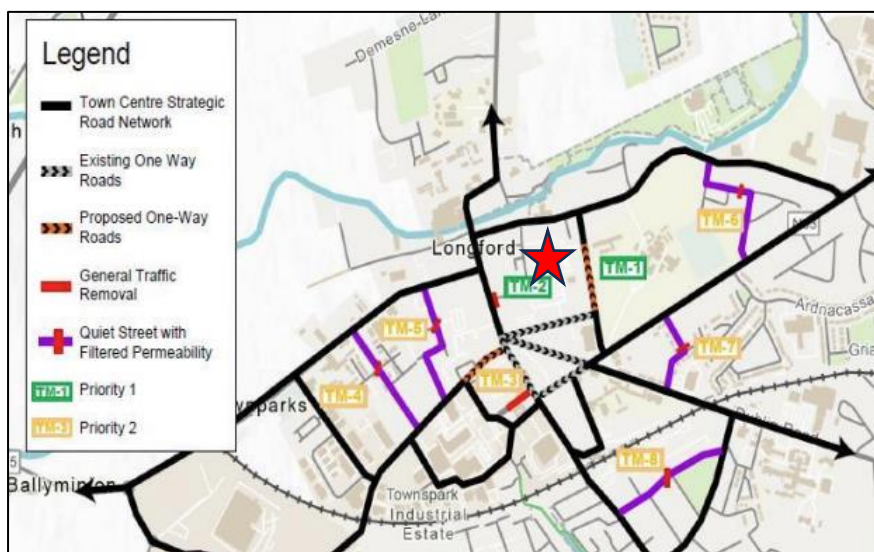


Figure 1: Traffic Management Schemes Map (Longford Shopping Centre indicated by star).

In addition to the above, the LTP includes a car parking strategy which proposes a range of measures to improve sustainable modes of transport and car parking facilities within the town. Figure 2 below shows the proposed car parking strategy for the Longford Shopping Centre and as set out under objective CP10:

- **CP10:** *New one-way system at Longford Shopping Centre car park*

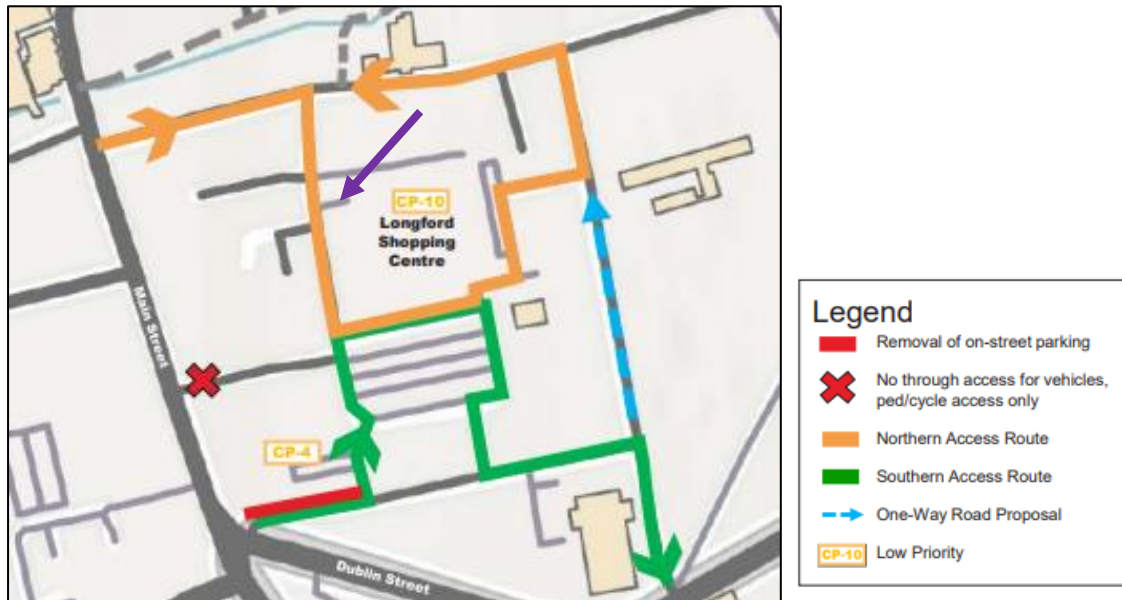


Figure 2: Longford Shopping Centre Car Park Strategy (Shopping Centre Service Yard indicated by purple arrow).

While our client welcomes proposals to provide a safer environment for customers of the Shopping Centre, our client would like to seek clarification on the above proposals. As outlined in Figure 1, Great Water Street and Camlin View are not indicated as being proposed one-way systems, however, under Figure 2 a new one-way system is proposed into the car park via Camlin View.

It is our understanding from the above that a one-way system will be implemented for customers/traffic accessing the car park, as this proposal is not illustrated on the wider traffic management scheme map outlined in Figure 1. Should Camlin View become one-way this would cause significant difficulties in servicing the existing store, as the store is currently serviced via Great Water Street and Camlin View. The same is also used to exit the service yard (indicated in Figure 2).

If it were proposed to make Camlin View one-way this would result in delivery vehicles exiting through the customer car park, an area not originally designed for deliveries, this would therefore, raise health and safety concerns for pedestrians and customers, contrary to the objectives of the LTP.

The Tesco store requires regular access for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV's) to facilitate efficient deliveries and the segregation of delivery and customer vehicles reduces traffic hazards. Any restrictions or changes to road layouts could obstruct HGV access, which could impact the ability to manage deliveries and maintain smooth operations. It is requested that the Local Authority have regard for HGV movements and all other operational requirements associated with the retail service throughout both the design, construction and operational phases of any such works.

Tesco Ireland welcomes and supports the undertaking of the Local Transport Plan and introduction of measures to improve pedestrian safety and public realm improvements as outlined in Figure 1. As outlined above, this submission is made to seek clarification that it is not the intention to make Camlin View one-way.

It is requested that the Local Authority carefully consider the operational requirements of Tesco Ireland at all stages of the development process of any proposed schemes, and it is further requested that full collaboration and discussions are held prior to and during any such works. It is further requested that advance notice of any planned closures/diversions etc, are communicated to Tesco to minimise as much as possible any disruption to Tesco's operations and their customers.

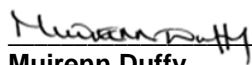
Conclusion

Our client welcomes the publication of the Longford Town Local Area Plan 2025-2031 and the opportunity to engage with the Local Authority prior to the finalisation of the Plan. Tesco Ireland is an established retail operator in Longford Town and is committed to providing the best possible service to its customers.

Having regard to the above, our client wishes to seek clarification on the proposed Longford Shopping Centre Parking Strategy and confirmation that delivery vehicles will be able to safely exit the existing service yard and continue via Camlin View, maintaining the current situation.

We respectfully request that the Local Authority continues to engage with retail operators to understand their operational requirements as part of any future transportation strategies/ active travel works. We trust that the points raised in this submission will be considered by the Local Authority. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Faithfully,



Muirenn Duffy

Director

For and on Behalf of RMLA Limited