



LEITRIM COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023 - 2029
VOLUME I – WRITTEN STATEMENT
Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Plan



Comhairle Chontae Liatroma
Leitrim County Council



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Proposed Amendments / Material Alterations to Volume I – Written Statement of the Draft Leitrim Development Plan 2023-2029	1
1.2	Document Format	1
2	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	2
	CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	13
	CHAPTER 5: TOURISM	14
	CHAPTER 6: URBAN SETTLEMENTS	21
	CHAPTER 8: TRANSPORT	27
	CHAPTER 9: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY	34
	CHAPTER 10: RURAL DEVELOPMENT	38
	CHAPTER 11: HERITAGE.....	53
	CHAPTER 12: CLIMATE ACTION & RENEWABLE ENERGY	58
	CHAPTER 13: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT STANDARDS.....	64



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Proposed Amendments / Material Alterations to Volume I – Written Statement of the Draft Leitrim Development Plan 2023-2029

The proposed amendments / material alterations detailed in this document pertain only to Volume I of the *Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029*. Please refer to the accompanying *Introduction* document for details of this stage of the plan preparation process and information on how and when to make submissions / observations on the proposed amendments / material alterations.

The proposed amendments / material alterations to Volume I should be read in conjunction with the proposed changes set out in Volume II, Volume III, Volume IV and the *Associated Documents*.

1.2 Document Format

All proposed amendments / material alterations are included in the order of Sections in Volume I, with each proposed change being assigned a unique reference number. The original location in the *Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029* is referenced where applicable (references to page numbers are to the Draft Plan page number).

Proposed changes to the text of the Draft Plan are displayed in the following format:

- Proposed new text is identified in **red**.
- Proposed text omissions from the Draft Plan are identified by a single line **strikethrough**.

2 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Proposed Amendment MA 1

Section	Title	Page
1.8	<i>Implementation and Monitoring</i>	12

To amend Section 1.8 'Implementation and Monitoring' of the Draft Plan as follows:

Implementation

Leitrim County Council is fully committed to securing and monitoring the implementation of the key aims and objectives of this Plan. **The Development Plan is the key strategy to structure the development of Co. Leitrim over the six-year statutory time period of the plan. It seeks to address the physical, economic, social and environmental needs of the community, in terms of supporting structured new development, enhancing valued assets and amenities and protecting the environment.** The Council will continue to occupy a leadership role to progress and secure the Plan policies and objectives to achieve the sustainable development of the county. **The implementation of the Development Plan is a key strategic focus for Leitrim County Council and requires a concerted range of actions by the entire organisation in order to be successfully implemented. The Local Authority will need to utilise its wide range of statutory powers and responsibilities to achieve the objectives of the development plan.** The successful implementation of a significant number of the policies and objectives of this Draft Plan will necessitate on-going collaboration and support from across a range of agencies and stakeholders. The implementation of this Plan will depend also on the economic climate, political support and the availability of funding from various sources including by the Council itself.

The Planning Department of the Council is the main section responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Plan. However, it is important to note that this Plan co-ordinates the work and objectives of other key departments within Leitrim County Council, such as Economic Development, Local Economic Office, Tourism, Community, Roads, Environment and Emergency Services. In some cases, responsibility for the implementation of certain objectives may be external, such as by Irish Water, Waterways Ireland and Transport Infrastructure Ireland. In addition to those interdependencies, the achievement of certain objectives is also influenced by factors that are outside the control of the Council, including international and national economic circumstances, government funding and private sector investment confidence in the economy. This is most evident in the area of building affordable houses. In fulfilling the development management function of assessing individual planning application, this will be central to the implementation of the Plan objectives with regard to management of land and uses.

Ensuring resources and establishing systems to effectively perform this monitoring and analysis function is therefore a key responsibility of the Planning Authority. A new approach to plan implementation and monitoring is required from that previously in place for the 2015-2021 County Development Plan. An effective development plan process will involve a positive cycle of policy development with measurable indicators formulated, implementation activities led by the Local Authority, monitoring, reporting and policy analysis.



Monitoring

The objectives detailed in this *County Development Plan* have been developed where possible to be specific, achievable and measurable. Much of the data required for effective monitoring and evaluation will be readily available within Leitrim County Council, including established linkages between planning application databases and GIS. Utilisation of established mechanisms of this nature will facilitate on-going data capture and a spatial expression of results. This will be used in the preparation of a monitoring and evaluation report on the implementation of the Plan. In other instances, it will require the setting up and management of data capturing by other departments including the Housing and Environment Departments.

In order to assess the success with which the development plan is being implemented, the Planning Authority commits to establishing a frequent, reliable and ongoing monitoring system for our new Draft Plan as a permanent function.

This will comprise

- a) Core Strategy Monitoring
- b) Plan Objectives Monitoring (including SEA Monitoring)

Core Strategy Monitoring (Annual)

The development plan has a primary role in land use and spatial development policy and in particular regarding the provision of new housing development. The monitoring role must provide a focus on development patterns occurring under the settlement strategy of the development plan and the tracking of the nature of new development that is occurring.

The Planning Authority will report on these planning and development trends and analyse these trends spatially, with accompanying mapping, to illustrate the development trends being experienced at settlement level and to assess the consistency of such trends with the agreed housing and population targets as set out in the Core Strategy of the development plan. The data required for successful monitoring will be a mixture of information readily available in Leitrim County Council (e.g. from the development management function) and from externally/independently provided sources (e.g. CSO).

This 'Core Strategy Monitoring' shall occur annually and include the indicators contained in the recently published Development Plan Guidelines as applicable.

Plan Objectives Monitoring

Under the provisions of Section 15(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Council has a statutory obligation to secure the implementation of the objectives of the Plan and to prepare a progress report on achieving the objectives not more than 2 years after the making of this Plan.

The objectives to be included in the 2-year progress report must include indicators that are that aligned with reporting for other related national policies (e.g. climate change, water quality, etc) or for the purposes of monitoring the SEA. The monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan is a statutory requirement of the SEA Directive and the planning authority shall refer to the EPA's guidance document '*Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statements and Monitoring*' and any future review.

Additionally, under Section 22A (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), each Local Authority within the Regional Assembly is required, every 2 years, to prepare and submit a



report to the Assembly setting out progress made in supporting objectives, relevant to that authority, contained in the RSES.

CHAPTER 2: CORE STRATEGY

Proposed Amendment MA 2

Section	Title	Page
2	<i>Core Strategy</i>	Throughout Development Plan Suite of Documents

Replace all references to 'Tier 2A Sub Regional Growth Centre' contained within the Draft Plan including maps with 'Tier 2A Self-Sustaining Growth Town'.

Proposed Amendment MA 3

Section	Title	Page
2.11	<i>Core Strategy Policies and Objectives</i>	29

Amend Core Strategy Objective CS OBJ 9 as follows:

- CS OBJ 9** To prepare a Joint Local Area Plan (LAP) for Carrick-on-Shannon/Cortober in conjunction with Roscommon County Council **and informed by a Local Transport Plan prepared in consultation with the National Transport Authority, within one year of the adoption of the Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029.** The Local Area Plan shall determine the land use zoning objectives for Carrick-on-Shannon and ensure that the quantum of land identified for residential development adheres to that indicated in Table 2.6 of this Core Strategy. The LAP shall ensure sustainable, compact, sequential growth in the combined urban centre by consolidating the existing footprint with a focus on the redevelopment and regeneration of identified infill and brownfield sites.

Proposed Amendment MA 4

Section	Title	Page
2.7	<i>Housing Yield from Proposed Lands</i>	25

Amend Table 2.6 (overleaf) as follows:

	Urban Centre	Household Allocation 2022-2028	% Allocation	A. New Residential (ha)	B. New Residential (Low Density/Infill) (ha)	C. Mixed Use (ha)	Yield A	Yield B	Yield C	Total Household Yield
Tier 1							15-30 units/ha	10 units/ha	20 units/ha	
Key Town	Carrick-on-Shannon ^A	362	30	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	362
Tier 2A							20 units/ha	10 units/ha	15 units/ha	
Self-Sustaining Growth Town	Ballinamore	97	8	2.62	2.67	2.24	52	27	34	113
	Manorhamilton	97	8	3.46	2.99 6.14	0	69	30 61	0	99 130
Tier 2B Support Towns							15 units/ha	10 units/ha	15 units/ha	
	Dromahair ^B	48	4	2.71	0.3	0	41	3	0	44
	Drumshanbo	48	4	2.81	2.37 3.29	0	42	5 14	0	47 56
	Mohill ^C	48	4	0	1.07	4.49	0	11	67	78
	Kinlough	48	4	2.54	1.15	0.3	38 63	12	5	55 80
Tier 3 Key Villages	Carrigallen	36	3	2.33	0.15	0.2	35	3	3	41
	Dromod	24	2	2.09 3.56	0	0	31 53	0	0	31 53
	Drumkeeran	36	3	2.05	0.49	0.8	31	5	12	48
	Drumsna ^D	24	2	1.05	0.08	0	16	2	0	18
	Leitrim	24	2	1.47 2.05	0.44	0	22 31	4	0	26 35
	Tullaghan ^E	24	2	0	3	1.035	0	12	16	28
	Sub Total			22.9	15.05	8.03	388	134	642	38
Tier 4 Villages	15 No.	86	7							85
Tier 5 Graigs	25 No.	61	5							60
Other	Rural Houses ^F	145	12							144
	Total	1,208	100							1,319 1,415

CHAPTER 3: HOUSING STRATEGY

Proposed Amendment MA 5

Section	Title	Page
3.17.1	<i>Introduction of Section 3.17 Rural Settlement Strategy</i>	48

Amend the second paragraph of Section 3.17.1 *Introduction of Section 3.17 Rural Settlement Strategy* as follows:

The Council will seek to ensure that rural development takes place in a manner that is compatible with the policy objectives of both the NPF and RSES, whilst ensuring to the maximum extent practicable the protection of environmental, biodiversity and heritage assets, the road network **including the provisions of Policy TRAN POL 2**, water quality and protected landscapes. This requires that the policy framework protects against over-spill and ribbon development from urban areas, does not facilitate urban generated rural housing and supports the National Strategic Outcomes of compact growth, sustainable mobility, transitioning to a low carbon and climate resilient society and sustainable management of our environmental resources.

Proposed Amendment MA 6

Section	Title	Page
3.17.5	<i>Replacement Houses</i>	53

Amend Section 3.17.5 as follows:

3.17.5 Restoration of Vernacular Dwellings and Replacement Houses in Rural Areas

Over the course of the previous County Development Plan, there ~~is~~ **was** a growing tendency to replace established rural dwellings rather than seeking to upgrade or modernise them. **Vernacular dwellings in the countryside reflect local traditional building forms and types and such structures contribute to the distinctive local character and built heritage of the county. Retaining, restoring and reusing such vernacular dwellings exemplifies sustainable development.** The Council encourages the restoration of **such vernacular houses dwellings** and other structures of note in the countryside, as opposed to their demolition and replacement. For this reason, there will be a presumption against the demolition of vernacular dwellings and structures where restoration or adaptation is considered by the Planning Authority to represent a feasible option.

Where it is proposed to demolish and replace an existing house which is considered to be a structure of ~~note~~ **distinctive local character** or a good example of vernacular architecture, a detailed and compelling justification for such a proposal shall be required to accompany a planning application. The refurbishment of derelict or abandoned buildings in the countryside is particularly favoured as being a sustainable response to revitalising rural areas. Proposals for restoration will **generally** be required to comply with the required standards for wastewater disposal and access.

A replacement house shall only be considered by the Planning Authority where the replacement house is **generally** contained within the curtilage of the previous house it is seeking to replace. **In this**

regard, 'curtilage' comprises of the footprint of the dwelling which the proposed replacement house seeks to replace as well as any immediate areas ancillary to the function of the original house including gardens, paths, driveways, yards, garages or sheds. Curtilage does not, however, extend to areas not ancillary to the function of the subject house, for example agricultural sheds or yards used for farming purposes.

The Council shall assess applications for refurbishment and/or replacement of existing housing stock in rural areas, having regard to the criteria for residential development contained in Chapter 13, Development Management Standards.

In the assessment of whether a house which it is proposed to replace is habitable or not, the Council will rely on the definition contained in Section 2 (Interpretation) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

A "Habitable House" means a house which:

- a) is used as a dwelling,
- b) is not in use but when last used was used, disregarding any unauthorised use, as a dwelling and is not derelict, or,

was provided for use as a dwelling but has not been occupied.

Proposed Amendment MA 7		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	Rural Settlement Strategy Policies	54

Amend policy RUR SET POL 2 as follows:

RUR SET POL 2 To manage the growth of areas that are under strong urban influence and identified as **Low Capacity Areas** (see Map No. 3 in Volume III – Book of Maps) to avoid their over development whilst accommodating demand from individuals for permanent residential development in Other Rural Areas, subject to normal planning considerations **and having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.**

Proposed Amendment MA 8		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	Rural Settlement Strategy Policies	54

Amend policy RUR SET POL 3 as follows:

RUR SET POL 3 To accommodate demand from existing members of the rural community for permanent residential development in **Low Capacity Areas** who have strong ~~links~~ **economic and social needs** to the area and who are an intrinsic part of the rural community in which planning permission is being sought, subject to normal planning considerations and who satisfy the following criteria:

1. Persons with a demonstrable social need to live in a particular local rural area:
 - Persons who have lived a substantial period of their lives in the local rural area¹ (minimum 18 months) in which the house is proposed.
2. Persons with a demonstrable economic need to live in the particular local rural area:
 - Persons employed full-time in rural-based activity such as farming, horticulture, forestry, bloodstock or other rural-based activity in the area in which they wish to build or whose employment is intrinsically linked to the rural area in which they wish to build, such as teachers in rural schools or other persons who by the nature of their work have a functional need to reside permanently in the rural area close to their place of work, provided that they have never owned a house in a rural area.

All applicants for one-off rural housing will need to demonstrate compliance with the qualifying criteria of one of the above two categories unless otherwise specified as being located within an area where this Rural Housing Policy does not apply.

Applicants relying on the economic need criteria involving part-time occupations in farming or natural resources-related activities, will be required to submit sufficient evidence to demonstrate same, for example (but not limited to) a herd number or hours of activity as a farmer. It should be noted that in such instances, any part-time occupation in farming or natural resources-related activities shall be the predominant occupation to any non-farming or non-natural resources-related incomes.

Proposed Amendment MA 9		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	<i>Rural Settlement Strategy Policies</i>	55

Amend Policy RUR SET POL 9 as follows:

RUR SET POL 9 To restrict new accesses to serve individual residential developments onto National Roads and the R280, **with access onto the R280 only considered** ~~save for~~ in exceptional circumstances where alternative access cannot be achieved.

¹ Local area is defined as within approximately a radius of 4km from the site, excluding defined urban areas (which relate only to the Carrick-on-Shannon development envelope containing land use zoning objectives). Where the site is of a greater distance, but the applicant can demonstrate significant ties with the area for example immediate family or well-established landownership, then these applications will be considered on their merits. This recognises applicants who are either a son or daughter of a landowner in which the house is proposed in which the landholding (as opposed to a site) is owned (or in the family name) for at least 10 years.

Proposed Amendment MA 10		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	Rural Settlement Strategy Policies	55

Insert the following policy in Section 3.17 *Rural Settlement Strategy* of the Draft Plan with subsequent policies to be renumbered appropriately:

RUR SET POL 10 To encourage the sensitive restoration of vernacular structures as an alternative to the construction of a one-off dwelling elsewhere subject to the following:

- The vernacular dwelling must be capable of being suitably restored to habitable accommodation in keeping with its original character without the necessity to demolish or significantly alter it.
- The distinctive character and original historic fabric of the structure is retained using appropriate traditional construction methods and materials.
- The development shall be subject to normal design requirements.

The applicant/occupant will not be required to comply with the criteria set out in policy RUR SET POL 3.

Proposed Amendment MA 11		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	Rural Settlement Strategy Policies	55

Amend policy RUR SET POL 10 (now RUR SET POL 11 following the insertion of MA 10) as follows:

RUR SET POL 10¹ To facilitate the replacement of a habitable dwelling, other than a vernacular dwelling, **in the countryside** subject to the following:

- a) The structure must have been last used as a dwelling and the internal and external walls and roof must be intact.
- b) **A report from a suitably qualified competent person shall be submitted to verify that the house is habitable and that its replacement is the most sustainable option.**
- c) The proposed replacement house shall generally be within the same curtilage of the existing house and the design of the replacement house shall be of a high standard whose scale and character is appropriate to the site, to existing development in the vicinity of the site and to the rural area generally.
- d) **A condition requiring the demolition of the existing house will normally be included in any grant of permission.**

Proposed Amendment MA 12		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	Rural Settlement Strategy Policies	53

Insert the following policy in Section 3.17 *Rural Settlement Strategy* of the Draft Plan:

RUR SET POL 12 To facilitate, where it can be demonstrated by an applicant that a dwelling is no longer suitable for habitation (i.e. structure is in a ruinous or dangerous condition), its replacement with a new dwelling as an alternative to the construction of a new single dwelling elsewhere in the countryside. The development proposal, in terms of siting, scale, layout and design, shall be sympathetic to the character of the original structure and the site. Documentary evidence in the form of a structural survey and photographs shall be submitted in support of the application. All other normal siting and design requirements will be applied, and the applicant/occupant will not be required to comply with rural housing policy criteria.

Proposed Amendment MA 13		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	Rural Settlement Strategy Objectives	56

Insert the following objective in Section 3.17 *Rural Settlement Strategy* of the Draft Plan with subsequent objectives to be renumbered appropriately:

RUR SET OBJ 4 To support the ongoing monitoring of new rural housing to ensure 20% of new rural development occurs on brownfield sites including partially previously developed sites (i.e. in towns/villages under 1,500 population and rural areas/countryside).

Proposed Amendment MA 14		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	Rural Settlement Strategy Objectives	56

To amend RUR SET OBJ 5 (now RUR SET OBJ 6 following the insertion of MA no. 13) as follows:

RUR SET OBJ 5~~6~~ To monitor the provision of single rural houses over the Plan period, having regard to the rural housing development target of 20% of all new housing in rural areas to be accommodated on brownfield sites, and ~~trends in rural housing and population during the lifetime of the plan~~ trends in rural housing and population during the lifetime of the plan to ascertain if further rural housing policy responses are required during the plan period.



Proposed Amendment MA 15		
Section	Title	Page
3.17	<i>Rural Settlement Strategy Objectives</i>	56

Amend objective RUR SET OBJ 6 (now RUR SET OBJ 7 following the insertion of MA 13) as follows:

RUR SET OBJ ~~6~~7 The Planning Authority shall provide a detailed report within one year of this County Development Plan coming into effect identifying all potential sites within villages and possibly graigs that are considered suitable to accommodate low density housing proposals. Where there is an issue in relation to the provision of piped wastewater treatment in villages (Glenfarne, Kilclare and Rossinver) and in graigs, the Council will pursue the resolution of such constraints in conjunction with **the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Irish Water**, and seek to explore appropriate funding measures for same.

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Amendment MA 16

Section	Title	Page
4.7	<i>Policies – Economic Development Support Role</i>	70

Amend policy EC DEV POL 4 as follows:

EC DEV POL 4 To maximise opportunities to strengthen links with ~~third~~ **higher** level institutions and ~~Sligo IT~~ **the Atlantic Technological University (ATU)** and investigate opportunities for employment creation in relation to climate change, biodiversity and developing a carbon neutral economy.

Proposed Amendment MA 17

Section	Title	Page
4.7	<i>Policies – Economic Development Support Role</i>	70

Insert the following policy as EC DEV POL 5:

EC DEV POL 5 To support and explore the potential development of a higher-level on-campus or off-campus facilities in the county, potentially in collaboration with the Atlantic Technological University (ATU), and to promote, and facilitate where possible, potential synergies between higher level education institutions such as ATU and enterprise sectors in Leitrim.

Proposed Amendment MA 18

Section	Title	Page
4.10	<i>Policies – Enterprise and Employment</i>	77

Amend objective ENT EMPL OBJ 4 as follows:

ENT EMPL OBJ 4 To work with Irish Water, **having regard to its connections policy**, and other infrastructure providers, to support the provision of services and facilities to accommodate the future economic growth of the county and to seek to ~~reserve~~ **provide** infrastructure capacity for employment generating uses.

CHAPTER 5: TOURISM

Proposed Amendment MA 19

Section	Title	Page
5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	94

Amend the second paragraph of Section 5.1 as follows:

Three airports serve the majority of Leitrim - Ireland West Airport Knock (50 minutes distant), Dublin (2 hours) and Belfast (3 hours). The Shannon-Erne waterway runs from the north east of the county to the south west, with Carrick-on-Shannon the '*navigational capital*' along the waterway. This coupled with the spectacular mountains and valleys of the northwest ensure a remarkable landscape for tourists to explore. ~~In 2018, Fáilte Ireland recorded total visitors to the county at 151,000 generating an estimated €38.5 million to the local economy.~~ **Fáilte Ireland's figures indicate that in 2019, Leitrim welcomed 1% of the 9.7 million overseas tourists who came to Ireland, spending 1% of the €5.2bn overseas tourism expenditure in Ireland, with a further 310,000 domestic visitors to Leitrim and Cavan generating an estimated €53m in revenue.** However, the COVID-19 pandemic presents a very challenging time for tourism as people have been unwilling or not permitted to travel. The tourism industry has suffered greatly, with significantly reduced revenue generation, redundancies and a loss of confidence in the industry and in travel in general. The Leitrim Tourism Strategy, "*A Growth Strategy for Tourism in Leitrim, 2015-2021*" outlined a target of 296,000 tourists to the county in 2021. This target cannot be realised due to the unforeseen pandemic, but opportunities present themselves and with the vast open space of Co. Leitrim and safety in the outdoors, the focus will be on promoting the strong tourism product around family, food and slow adventure tourism across our county. Initially the focus will be on domestic visitors but returning in the short term, to attracting foreign visitors back to our shores.

Proposed Amendment MA 20

Section	Title	Page
5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	94

Amend the fourth paragraph of Section 5.1 as follows:

In April 2018, Fáilte Ireland unveiled '*Ireland's Hidden Heartlands*' ~~focussing on the River Shannon and the Béara Breifne Way.~~ **Ireland's Hidden Heartlands** is a regional branded experience **which encourages consumers** to explore the green heartlands of Ireland's natural beauty, where activity and relaxation are centred around rural communities. **'Ireland's Hidden Heartlands' region includes the entire length of the River Shannon referred to in the Shannon Masterplan as well as the main sections of the Béara Breifne Way.** The Wild Atlantic Way continues to be a key driver for tourism growth for north Leitrim extending from the coastline inland to include Manorhamilton and Dromahair. It is through cohesive development and marketing of a variety of activities within the county that will ensure longer stay vacations and increased revenue. This Plan supports the development of accessible facilities and information points at tourist destinations to support tourism development throughout the county whilst also ensuring the protection of the environment.

Proposed Amendment MA 21		
Section	Title	Page
5.2	Policy Context	98

Insert the following text as Section 5.2.12 *Tourism Masterplan for the Beara Breifne Way*:

5.2.12 Tourism Masterplan for the Beara Breifne Way

The Tourism Masterplan for the Beara Breifne Way is based on the vision and aspirations of Fáilte Ireland and the regional destination brands, particularly Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands. The primary aim of the Beara Breifne Way is to attract visitors ‘*off the beaten track*’, creating significant economic and social benefits to the rural communities, towns and villages along the route. The existing Beara Breifne Way stretches from Dursey Island in Co Cork to Blacklion in Co Cavan. It runs for over 700km and traverses the counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, Offaly, Galway, Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim and Cavan. The Beara Breifne Way is made up of 12 existing National Waymarked Trails or long-distance walking routes, including the Leitrim Way, and sections of trail that link these. The Beara Breifne Way runs through the experience brand region of Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands and is a signature visitor experience in this destination. The route also traverses the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland’s Ancient East destination brands.

Fáilte Ireland has procured consultants to conduct a detailed infrastructural and visitor experience review of the Beara Breifne Way to bring the trail up to best-in-class international standards. The review includes a full trail audit, trail design, development of an interpretation framework, orientation and wayfinding strategies and environmental assessments for the Beara Breifne Way. The project is scheduled for completion Q2 2022 with the findings to be implemented through a collaborative approach with all stakeholders over the lifetime of the Tourism Masterplan (2030).

Proposed Amendment MA 22		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Policies	99

Amend policy TOUR POL 3 as follows:

TOUR POL 3 To preserve and protect verified public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank, **canals** or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility.

Proposed Amendment MA 23		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Policies	99

Amend policy TOUR POL 4 as follows:

TOUR POL 4 To develop opportunities for ‘Slow Adventure–Tourism’ or ‘Regenerative Tourism’ clusters to be established within the county.

Proposed Amendment MA 24		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Policies	99

Amend policy TOUR POL 6 as follows:

TOUR POL 6 To seek to sustainably manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that any new projects, such as blueways and greenways, are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones.

Proposed Amendment MA 25		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Policies	99

Amend policy TOUR POL 7 as follows:

TOUR POL 7 Where relevant, the Council and those receiving consent for development shall seek to sustainably manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects to sensitive habitats, including loss of habitat and disturbance. Management measures may include ensuring that new projects and activities are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor/Habitat Management Plans will be required for proposed projects as relevant and appropriate.

Proposed Amendment MA 26		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Policies	99

Insert the following policy in Section 5.3 *General Tourism Development* of the Draft Plan:

TOUR POL 10 To facilitate, where appropriate, proposals to improve access for all at existing tourism sites and facilities, and to require all new tourism related developments to ensure the development is accessible to everyone, regardless of their age, or ability.

Proposed Amendment MA 27		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Objectives	100

Amend Objective TOUR OBJ 5 as follows:

- TOUR OBJ 5** The Council, within **two years of the coming into effect of the County Development Plan** ~~the lifetime of this Plan aim to~~ **shall commence a process to identify, list and map public rights of way which give access** ~~preserve and enhance existing accesses and public rights of way~~ to recreational areas including the coast, upland areas, lakeshores, river-bank areas, ~~and~~ **heritage sites or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility.** When finalised, the Council will seek to preserve and enhance such existing accesses and public rights of way. The resultant list and map will then be inserted into the County Development Plan 2023-2029 by way of variation.

Proposed Amendment MA 28		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Objectives	100

Amend Objective TOUR OBJ 6 as follows:

- TOUR OBJ 6** To work with all relevant stakeholders to **promote and** support the implementation of the Shannon Tourism Masterplan, **the Tourism Masterplan for the Beara Breifne Way and findings of the technical trail audit for the Beara Breifne Way** and promote **and support the** 'Wild Atlantic Way' and 'Irelands Hidden Heartlands'.

Proposed Amendment MA 29		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Objectives	100

Insert the following objective in Section 5.3 *General Tourism Development* of the Draft Plan:

- TOUR OBJ 10** To support the preparation and implementation of Regional Tourism Plans and when complete, to support the continued collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and tourism stakeholders to ensure successful implementation and delivery of these Tourism Plans.

Proposed Amendment MA 30		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Objectives	100

Insert the following objective in Section 5.3 *General Tourism Development* of the Draft Plan:

TOUR OBJ 11 To support the preparation of Destination Experience Development Plans (DEDP) and other tourism masterplans both within the county and also those which crosses from the county into neighbouring counties in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and other tourism stakeholders.

Proposed Amendment MA 31		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Objectives	100

Insert the following objective in Section 5.3 *General Tourism Development* of the Draft Plan:

TOUR OBJ 12 To encourage and support investment in digital technology in the tourism sector, with a particular focus on sectors such as visitor attractions and activities with low digital presence and/or integration.

Proposed Amendment MA 32		
Section	Title	Page
5.3	General Tourism Development Objectives	100

Insert the following objective in Section 5.3 *General Tourism Development* of the Draft Plan:

TOUR OBJ 13 To support the future success and deliverability of The Beara Breifne Way and promote and identify the need for key facilities and services for visitors such as accommodation, signage, parking, and sustainable transport as identified in the ‘*Tourism Masterplan for the Beara Breifne Way*’ prepared by Fáilte Ireland.

Proposed Amendment MA 33		
Section	Title	Page
5.4	Arts, Culture, Heritage and Festivals Objectives	101

Amend objective ARTS OBJ 2 as follows:

ARTS OBJ 2 To support the development of Leitrim as a ‘Foodie Destination’ of food networks and trails, particularly those that can showcase the wealth of artisan food producers in the county in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland and other relevant stakeholders.

Proposed Amendment MA 34		
Section	Title	Page
5.5	<i>Greenways, Cycling and Walking</i>	101

Amend the second paragraph of Section 5.5 *Greenways, Cycling and Walking* as follows:

The development of Blueways and Greenways presents valuable opportunities for rural communities to attract more visitors. These values lie not only in the recreational opportunities that they offer but also in their potential to stimulate local businesses and regenerate local areas. Leitrim County Council is committed to the development of further Blueways and Greenways during the life of the next County Development Plan.

Proposed Amendment MA 35		
Section	Title	Page
5.6	<i>Adventure Tourism, Lakes and Waterways Policies</i>	102

Amend policy ADV TOUR POL 3 as follows:

ADV TOUR POL 3 To maintain water quality and develop shared facilities at designated water bathing sites.

Proposed Amendment MA 36		
Section	Title	Page
5.6	<i>Adventure Tourism, Lakes and Waterways Policies</i>	102

Insert the following objective in Section 5.6 *Adventure Tourism, Lakes and Waterways* of the Draft Plan:

ADV TOUR POL 4 To support both the enhancement of existing and development of new access to water locations in the county for recreation purposes. The provision of shared facility centres for water-based activities in the county shall be supported by the Council.



Proposed Amendment MA 37

Section	Title	Page
5.7	<i>Tourism Infrastructure and Visitor Services Policies</i>	102

Amend policy TOUR INF POL 4 as follows:

TOUR INF POL 4 To facilitate the sustainable development of a variety of quality tourist accommodation, ~~types,~~ including hotels, guesthouses, hostels, B&Bs, holiday homes, glamping/camping/caravan and campervans at suitable locations, throughout the county.

Proposed Amendment MA 38

Section	Title	Page
5.7	<i>Tourism Infrastructure and Visitor Services Objectives</i>	102

Amend policy TOUR INF OBJ 2 as follows:

TOUR INF OBJ 2 To facilitate the development of various accommodation such as hostels, hotels, guesthouses, hostels, B&Bs, holiday homes, glamping/camping/caravan and campervans along established walking/hiking routes and adjacent to existing tourism/recreation facilities, subject to satisfying normal planning criteria.

CHAPTER 6: URBAN SETTLEMENTS

Proposed Amendment MA 39

Section	Title	Page
6.10.2	<i>Land Use Zoning Principles</i>	117

Amend paragraph no. 2 of Section 6.10.2 – *Land Use Zoning Principles* as follows:

An infrastructure assessment was undertaken to differentiate between zoned land that is available for development and that which requires significant further investment for such development to be realised. This is referred to as a ‘*tiered zoning approach*’ and is required by the NPO 72 of the NPF. Irish Water were integral to the undertaking of this assessment and their co-operation is acknowledged in this regard. ~~However~~ It is the expressed view of Irish Water that ~~there was not considered~~ the county is well served by its water and wastewater treatment plants and, notwithstanding constraints associated with the Carrick-on-Shannon water treatment plant and the wastewater treatment plants at Drumshanbo, Mohill and Carrigallen which are expected to be addressed over the lifetime of the Plan, there were no capacity issues in any wastewater treatment plant or water treatment plant identified which would prohibit the realisation of the household or population levels stated in the Core Strategy of this Plan.

Proposed Amendment MA 40

Section	Title	Page
6.10.3	<i>Land Use Zoning Objectives</i>	118

Amend Table 6.1 of Volume I of the Draft Plan as follows:

Table 6.1: Land Use Zoning Objectives

Land Use Zoning	Objective
Town/Village Centre	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres through consolidation with an appropriate mix of retailing, commercial, cultural and residential activities.
Mixed Use	To provide for a mixture of residential and compatible commercial uses.
Existing Residential	To protect and enhance the established amenity of existing residential communities.
New Residential	To provide primarily for new residential development and community services at appropriate densities for the positioning of the centre in the Settlement Hierarchy and with an emphasis on quality of design.
Enterprise and Employment	To provide for enterprise and employment creation.
General	To protect and promote the character of the Rural Village and promote a vibrant community appropriate to available physical and community infrastructure.
Open Space and	To preserve, provide for and improve active and passive recreational public

Amenity	and private open space.
Social and Community	To protect and provide for community, social, recreational and educational services and facilities.
Tourism Related Development	To provide for and improve tourist amenities in the county. (See Note A)
Utilities	To provide land for public infrastructure and public utilities.
Agriculture	To provide for agriculture in a manner which protects the amenity of adjoining land uses.
Constrained Land Use	To ensure the appropriate management and sustainable use of flood risk areas designated as 'Constrained Land Use' on Settlement Plans.

Note A - Only water compatible tourism use will be considered on undeveloped lands in Flood Zone A.

Proposed Amendment MA 41		
Section	Title	Page
6.10.3	Land Use Zoning Objectives	119

Amend Table 6.2 of Volume I of the Draft Plan as follows:

Table 6.2: Land Use Zoning Objectives Guidance

Land Use Zoning	Guidance
Town/Village Centre	The Council will encourage and facilitate the development of under-utilised land and brownfield sites creating a mix of uses to make the town and village centres attractive places to visit, shop and live in. The full use of upper floors in buildings, preferably for residential use, will be encouraged. The character of the town and village centres shall be protected and enhanced. Development proposals should provide a use, scale, form and design that accords with the role, function and size of the town or village centre. These areas require high levels of accessibility by all modes, including pedestrian, cyclist and public transport (where feasible).
Mixed Use	A diversity of uses for both day and evening are encouraged. These areas also require high levels of accessibility for all modes, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible). Compatible uses within this zone includes residential, community buildings, civic buildings, entertainment, hotels, leisure and recreation, offices, professional/specialist services and restaurants. In determining the suitability of development within this zone, regard shall be given to the environmental impact of the proposed development on neighbouring uses.
Existing Residential	This zoning allows for the conservation and enhancement of the quality and character of existing residential areas, to protect residential amenities and to allow for infill development which is appropriate to the character and pattern of development in the area. This zone is intended primarily to protect established housing development

Land Use Zoning	Guidance
	<p>but may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to support the residential function of residential communities such as schools, crèches, small shops, doctor's surgeries, amenities, etc.</p>
<p>New Residential</p>	<p>High-quality residential schemes are encouraged with convenient and safe access to local services and the creation of a safe and pleasant local environment. New housing and infill developments should be of sensitive design, which are complementary to their surroundings. Adequate undeveloped lands have been zoned in the Plan for residential use to meet the requirements for both public and private house building over the Plan period. The Council will strive towards the ideal of mixed residential neighbourhoods, where people of different social and economic backgrounds and of different ages can live in proximity and harmony to one another.</p> <p>This zone is intended primarily for housing development but may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to foster the development of new residential communities. The Planning Authority will therefore consider favourably other appropriate uses which support the overall residential function of the area. The range of uses identified above in 'Existing Residential' zones are also appropriate in 'New Residential' zones.</p>
<p>Enterprise and Employment</p>	<p>This zoning promotes the development of employment uses that reinforce the enterprise and employment function of the subject area and require high environmental and design standards. The identification of such lands has been chosen to cluster the heavier, traffic generating activities, associated with certain types of enterprise such as industrial uses or those which require a substantial footprint associated with their function, towards the edge of centres, with good road access while ensuring minimal impact on residential areas.</p> <p>Care will be exercised by the Planning Authority in the consideration of the appropriateness of proposals seeking to develop heavy industry with environmental emissions, including noise and odour with regard to the impact of such uses on adjoining more sensitive uses and on the form of established development within such zones. Where any industrial development adjoins other land uses, Leitrim County Council will require that a buffer zone is provided for and landscaped in accordance with the Development Management Standards of this Plan.</p> <p>Where employment is a high generator of traffic, the location of new employment at appropriate scale, density, type and location will be encouraged to reduce the demand for travel.</p> <p>Residential or retail uses (including retail warehousing) will not be acceptable in this zone other than retail ancillary to another use such as showrooms.</p>
<p>General</p>	<p>The '<i>General</i>' land use zoning objective is provided within the Tier 4 settlements, <i>Villages</i>, and defines the extent of the settlement. It is different therefore in nature to the land use zoning objectives contained in the settlements in higher tiers. The objective seeks to protect and promote established villages within the rural area where housing needs can be addressed relative to their catchment and local services and smaller scale rural enterprises are to be provided. Population/growth will be managed through</p>

Land Use Zoning	Guidance
	<p>the Core Strategy to ensure sustainable population levels without providing for growth beyond local need and unsustainable commuting patterns.</p> <p>This land use zoning objective therefore provides for a range of potential land uses that can be accommodated in such settlements, at a scale commensurate with the level of existing development within the respective settlement. Such lands uses can include residential, commercial activity and enterprise and employment uses. This land use zoning objective reflects the need for a degree of flexibility to be employed in the future development of these smaller-scale settlements.</p> <p>In determining the suitability of proposed development within this zoning designation, regard shall be had to the potential adverse impacts on the receiving environment, including existing or neighbouring uses, infrastructural capacity demands, as well as environmental, ecological and amenity considerations.</p> <p>Whilst allowing for residential land use, it is not considered that such lands would be considered to be within the scope of 'Residential' or 'Mixed Use' land use zoning to which the provisions of Residential Zoned Land Tax (provision of Part 22A of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997) would apply.</p>
<p>Open Space and Amenity</p>	<p>The use of land shall include the provision of land for parks, public woodland, pedestrian routes and greenways, riparian zones, development incidental to the enjoyment of open space (including playgrounds, outdoor recreation centres and sports centres, civic/market square, village greens, landscaped areas, shelters, sanitary conveniences, play equipment, dressing rooms and similar facilities). It also provides for the use of such land or such facilities for games, educational and recreational purposes. High standards of accessibility are essential.</p> <p>The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a loss of existing open space.</p>
<p>Social and Community</p>	<p>In addition to identifying lands to safeguard their future provisions, these lands also contain existing community and social facilities such as community buildings, schools, hospitals and health centres, places of worship, football pitches and other generic or specific civic, social and community uses where the objective of the Planning Authority will be to protect such uses.</p>
<p>Tourism Related Development</p>	<p>These lands seek to provide for developments linked to tourism including all types of accommodation - guesthouses, hotels, hostels, holiday homes, etc, along with restaurants, pubs and other tourism related offerings.</p> <p>Note: Only water compatible tourism use will be considered on undeveloped lands in Flood Zone A.</p>
<p>Utilities</p>	<p>This zoning primarily provides for and preserves land in the ownership of the Council or other bodies charged with the provision of services such as electricity, telecommunications, water, wastewater etc. to individual towns and villages.</p>
<p>Agriculture</p>	<p>These are lands within the development envelope for which there is no current need for an identifiable use or on the basis of their topography or risk of flooding are not considered appropriate for an alternative use. The lands</p>



Land Use Zoning	Guidance
	are currently used for agriculture and can continue to be used for this purpose.
Constrained Land Use	See separate section below (Section 6.10.4)

Proposed Amendment MA 42		
Section	Title	Page
6.11	Land Use Zoning Zoning Matrix	125

Amend Table 6.5 of Volume I of the Draft Plan as follows:

Land Use	Town/Village Centre	Mixed Use	Existing Residential	New Residential	Enterprise & Employment	General	Open Space & Amenity	Social & Community	Tourism-Related Development	Utilities	Agriculture
Allotments	N	O	O	O	N	O	O	Y	O	N	Y
Amusement Arcade	O	O	N	N	N	O	N	N	O	N	N
Builder Providers	N	O	N	N	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Business and Technology Units	N	O	N	O	Y	O	N	O	N	N	N
Care Home	O	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	O	N	N	N
Car Park	Y	Y	N	N	O	Y	O	O	O	O	N
Cattle Shed/Slatted Units	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	O
Cemetery	N	N	N	N	N	O	O	Y	N	N	O
Childcare Facilities	Y	Y	O	Y	O	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Cinema/Dancehall	Y	Y	N	N	N	O	N	O	O	N	N
Civic and Public Building	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	O	Y	O	N	N
Community Facilities	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	O	Y	O	N	N
Cultural Uses/Library	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	O	Y	O	N	N
Distribution Depot	N	O	N	N	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Dwelling	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	O	N	O	N	N	O
Educational Facilities	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	O	Y	N	N	O
Funeral Home	O	O	O	O	O	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Garage/Car Repairs	N	O	N	N	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Guest House/Hotel/Hostel	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	O	Y	N	N
Halting Site	N	N	O	Y	N	O	N	Y	N	N	O
Heavy Commercial Vehicle Park	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
Heavy Industry	N	N	N	N	O	O	N	N	N	N	N
Hot Food Take-Away	Y	O	N	N	N	Y	N	N	O	N	N
Indoor Leisure	Y	Y	N	O	O	O	O	O	O	N	N
Light Industry	N	O	O	O	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Medical Services/Health Centre	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	N	O	N	N	N



Land Use	Town/Village Centre	Mixed Use	Existing Residential	New Residential	Enterprise & Employment	General	Open Space & Amenity	Social & Community	Tourism-Related Development	Utilities	Agriculture
Motor Sales/Car Showroom	O	O	N	N	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Off Licence	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	N	N	O	N	N
Office	Y	Y	O	O	O	Y	N	O	O	N	N
Outdoor Sport/Recreation	O	O	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	O
Park/Playground	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	O
Place of Worship	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	O	Y	N	N	N
Public House	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N
Public Utility/Infrastructure	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Recreational Buildings/Marina	Y	Y	O	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Repository Store Depot	N	O	N	N	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Restaurant	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	N	O	Y	N	N
Retail Warehouse	N	O	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Retirement/Nursing Home	O	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	O	N	N	N
Service Station	O	O	O	Y	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Shop (Comparison)	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Shop (Convenience)	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	N	N	O	N	N
Solar Energy Development	N	O	N	O	Y	O	N	O	O	Y	O
Stables/Stable Yard	N	N	O	O	N	O	O	N	N	N	O
Telecommunication Structure	O	O	O	O	Y	O	O	O	O	Y	O
Tourism Development	Y	Y	O	O	N	Y	Y	O	Y	N	O
Tourist Camping/Caravan Park	N	N	O	O	N	Y	O	O	Y	N	O
Warehouse (Wholesale)	N	O	N	N	Y	O	N	N	N	N	N
Workshop	O	O	O	O	Y	O	N	O	O	N	O

CHAPTER 8: TRANSPORT

Proposed Amendment MA 43

Section	Title	Page
8.3	<i>Legislative and Policy Context</i>	150

Insert the following text under the heading *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, 2019* in Section 8.3 – *Legislative and Policy Context*:

In May 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to accommodate additional space for pedestrians and cyclists and to optimise the space available on streets, an Interim Advice Note was issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) to Local Authorities. The Interim Note provides guidance in order to assist in the implementation on a number of measures including:

- Widening of footpaths.
- Potential pedestrianisation of some streets.
- Potential one-way systems.
- Altering traffic signal times.
- Providing additional temporary facilities for cyclists.
- Provision of some external space where appropriate to support business activities.

Proposed Amendment MA 44

Section	Title	Page
8.3	<i>Legislative and Policy Context</i>	150

Insert the following text under the heading *Local Link Rural Transport Programme Strategic Plan 2018 to 2022* in Section 8.3 – *Legislative and Policy Context*:

In June 2021, Phase 1 of the Pilot Integrated TFI Local Link Public Transport Project for Co. Leitrim commenced. The project consisted of the NTA and the Donegal Sligo Leitrim Transport Coordination Unit (TCU) working closely with the HSE to plan and develop a revised network of TFI Local Link services for Co. Leitrim. The services are designed to meet the needs of mainstream public transport users as well as the transport needs of passengers accessing (non-emergency) health care services.

Proposed Amendment MA 45

Section	Title	Page
8.4	<i>Integration of Land Use Planning and Transportation Policies</i>	152

Amend policy ILU POL 3 as follows:

ILU POL 3 To support the **maintenance and optimisation** ~~enhancement~~ of the county’s existing transport infrastructure to ensure its optimal use **in line with National with Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland’s (NIFTI’s) modal hierarchy** and seek to undertake appropriate traffic management measures to **prioritise road users in line with the modal hierarchy**. ~~reduce congestion and minimise travel times.~~

Proposed Amendment MA 46		
Section	Title	Page
8.4	<i>Integration of Land Use Planning and Transportation Policies</i>	152

Amend policy ILU POL 4 as follows:

ILU POL 4 To strengthen inter-regional connectivity, through the improvement of inter-urban road, **bus** and rail connectivity, with a particular emphasis on improved connectivity between the largest urban centres and access to ports and airports, for the movement of both people and goods.

Proposed Amendment MA 47		
Section	Title	Page
8.4	<i>Integration of Land Use Planning and Transportation Policies</i>	152

Amend policy ILU POL 5 as follows:

ILU POL 5 To promote **the integration of sustainable** land use ~~planning~~ and **transport planning** measures which facilitate **sustainable** transportation ~~options~~—**efficiency, economic, societal and climate** returns on transport investment and minimisation of environmental impacts.

Proposed Amendment MA 48		
Section	Title	Page
8.4	<i>Integration of Land Use Planning and Transportation Policies</i>	152

Amend policy ILU POL 6 as follows:

ILU POL 6 New transport infrastructure projects, including blueways and greenways, that are not already provided for by existing plans/programmes, which have been subject to environmental assessment, or are not already permitted, will be subject to feasibility assessment, considering need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report, and objectives relating to sustainable mobility. Where

feasibility is established, a Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken, where appropriate, in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection; and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection. **This Corridor and Route Selection Process will not be applicable to national roads schemes which are required to be progressed in accordance with statutory processes and TII Publications, including the Project Management Guidelines and Project Appraisal Guidelines.**

Proposed Amendment MA 49		
Section	Title	Page
8.7	Promoting Sustainable Mobility Objectives	159

Amend objective MSSM OBJ 1 as follows:

MSSM OBJ 1 To prepare a Local Transport Plan in collaboration with the National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Roscommon County Council and other relevant stakeholders for the Key Town of Carrick-on-Shannon and establish specific modal share targets for the town to be incorporated into the forthcoming Carrick-on-Shannon Local Area Plan. **This will include devising and implementing an effective monitoring programme for the achievement of the modal share targets contained therein.**

Proposed Amendment MA 50		
Section	Title	Page
8.7	Promoting Sustainable Mobility Objectives	159

Amend objective MSSM OBJ 2 as follows:

MSSM OBJ 2 ~~To promote, facilitate and co-operate with other transport agencies in devising and securing the implementation of the~~ **prepare a transport strategy for the county in co-operation with other transport agencies to include the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Department of Transport within 2 years of the publication of the POWSCAR data from the 2022 Census. The transport strategy will outline measures, if implemented, to achieve an agreed modal share target for private car for total commuter journeys within the county and a target of total commuter journeys to be undertaken by sustainable mobility modes such as walking, cycling and public transport within the life of this Draft Plan. This will include devising and implementing an effective monitoring programme for the achievement of the modal share targets contained therein.** (See also **ST OBJ 1** in Chapter 12 - Climate Change and Renewable Energy in this regard).

Proposed Amendment MA 51		
Section	Title	Page
8.8	<i>Walking and Cycling Policies</i>	160

Insert the following policy in Section 8.8 *Walking and Cycling* of the Draft Plan:

WC POL 6 To require adequate filtered permeability solutions in relation to large-scale residential, commercial or mixed-use development proposals (both in terms of new development and retrofitting into existing built-up areas) to facilitate active travel, accessibility and connectivity in settlements.

Proposed Amendment MA 52		
Section	Title	Page
8.8	<i>Walking and Cycling Policies</i>	161

Insert the following objective in Section 8.8 *Walking and Cycling* of the Draft Plan:

WC OBJ 6 To work with the Active Travel Initiative of the National Transport Authority to deliver a network of cycle routes in towns in order to encourage cycling as an everyday mode choice, in particular to provide cycling infrastructure near schools.

Proposed Amendment MA 53		
Section	Title	Page
8.9	<i>Blueways & Greenways</i>	161

Amend the second paragraph of Section 8.9 as follows:

Blueways are a network of multi-activity recreational trails, based on or alongside lakes, canals and rivers. They provide scenic routes into the heart of rural Co. Leitrim by walking, cycling, canoeing, kayaking or stand up boarding. Leitrim County Council in partnership with Waterways Ireland and **Fáilte Ireland**, have developed a valuable Blueway product over the past number of years between Battlebridge and Drumshanbo along the Leitrim Canal including the impressive floating boardwalk section at Acres Lake and onwards to connect to the Lough Allen Hotel & Lough Allen Centre at Currachuill, Drumshanbo. More recently, work has been completed on sections of the Ballinamore to Ballyconnell Canal between Leitrim Village and Kilclare along the former towpath. Carrick-on-Shannon and Drumshanbo form part of the Shannon Blueway with Leitrim Village and Ballinamore forming part of the Shannon Erne Blueway. The Council is currently undertaking environmental feasibility studies of options to link Carrick-on-Shannon to Leitrim Village and Battlebridge by way of dedicated Blueway. This project is also included in the approved Shannon Master Plan within the Hidden Heartlands area.

Proposed Amendment MA 54		
Section	Title	Page
8.10	Public Transport Policies	166

Insert the following policy in Section 8.10 *Public Transport* of the Draft Plan:

PT POL 9 To ensure new development areas and employment land-uses are permeable for walking and cycling and are laid out in such a way as to facilitate the operation of public transport by residents and employees.

Proposed Amendment MA 55		
Section	Title	Page
8.10	Public Transport Objectives	166

Insert the following objective in Section 8.10 *Public Transport* of the Draft Plan:

PT OBJ 5 To provide suitable infrastructure on public transport corridors to improve safety and efficiency for public transport users.

Proposed Amendment MA 56		
Section	Title	Page
8.10.6	Bicycle Parking Policies	168

Amend policy BP POL 1 as follows:

BP POL 1 To ensure the provision of appropriate secure, safe, convenient and accessible bicycle parking facilities as part of any new developments in towns and villages ~~centre locations~~ to encourage modal shift away from private cars to more sustainable modes of transport.

Proposed Amendment MA 57		
Section	Title	Page
8.10	Public Transport Objectives	166

Insert the following policy in Section 8.10.6 *Bicycle Parking* of the Draft Plan:

BP POL 5 To ensure the provision of appropriate secure, safe, covered, lit, convenient and accessible long-stay bicycle parking facilities as part of any new developments

such as places of employment or schools to encourage modal shift away from private cars to more sustainable modes of transport.

Proposed Amendment MA 58		
Section	Title	Page
8.11.2.1	<i>N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project</i>	170

Insert the following text in Section 8.11.2.1 *N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project*:

Details on the Preferred Transport Solution were announced in May 2022 comprising of the following components: (1) Active Travel Component (2) Public Transport Component (3) Demand Management Measures and (4) a Road Component.

The non-road components advocate improvements to the walking and cycling infrastructure within Carrick-on-Shannon and Cortober, in addition to enhancements to local bus services and specific interventions to control demand and reduce trips, all of which would support an increase in sustainable trip making. This, in turn, could lead to a reduction in traffic levels and congestion in the town.

The road component of the Preferred Transport Solution includes the development of a new urban street in Carrick-on-Shannon, linking the Castlecara Road just south of St. Mary's GAA club to the Leitrim Road (R280) north of Lis Cara housing development, in addition to a Preferred Option Corridor in which the existing road infrastructure can be upgraded or new infrastructure can be built. The corridor deviates from the existing N4 to the west of Cortober, Co. Roscommon where it progresses off-line south of the existing N4, north of the Dublin-Sligo railway line. The corridor progresses east, crossing the R368 and subsequently crossing the River Shannon in the townland of Cordrehid on the Cortober side of the River Shannon over to the townland of Attiroy on the Carrick-on-Shannon side of the River Shannon. The corridor joins the existing N4 again in the townland of Lisseeghan. The corridor then progresses eastwards along the line of the existing N4 and ceases in the townland of Faulties, as announced in May 2022.

Proposed Amendment MA 59		
Section	Title	Page
8.11.2.5	<i>N4 Carrick-on-Shannon to Dromod Project</i>	170

Amend Section 8.11.2.5 *Exceptional Circumstances* as follows:

Government policy regarding access onto national roads as provided for in the “*Spatial Planning & National Roads Guidelines*” seeks to avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development/intensification of traffic from existing entrances onto national roads outside the 60 kph speed limit. Section 2.6 of the guidelines provides for exceptional circumstances to the above general policy provision. Planning Authorities may identify stretches of national roads where a less restrictive approach may be applied as part of the Development Plan process. The guidelines provide that a less restrictive approach may be adopted in the case of developments of national and regional strategic importance which by their nature are most appropriately located outside urban areas, and where the

locations concerned have specific characteristics that make them particularly suitable for the developments proposed.

~~It is not the intention of the Planning Authority to identify any such locations in the Draft Plan. It is the intention of the Planning Authority to develop and agree a policy for access off the national roads in conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland in the following instance:~~

- ~~• To facilitate a significant economic development off the N4 National Primary Road east of Carrick-on-Shannon.~~

~~This development is of regional strategic importance and is included in the RSES.~~

Public water and wastewater projects will be progressed in the county over the coming years which may require the creation of additional access points or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60 km/hr apply. These projects are necessary to meet strategic growth and environmental objectives in local, regional and national planning policy. Such projects may also be applicable to the provisions of ‘exceptional circumstances’ and subject to engagement between Irish Water, TII and Leitrim County Council.

Proposed Amendment MA 60		
Section	Title	Page
8.11	Roads Policies	173

Amend policy TRAN POL 2 as follows:

TRAN POL 2 To protect the national road network from inappropriate new access points and the intensification of existing accesses onto or adjacent to national roads in accordance with the requirements of Section 2.5 of Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG,2012) to maintain traffic capacity, minimise traffic hazard and protect and maximise public investment in such roads.

Proposed Amendment MA 61		
Section	Title	Page
8.11	Roads Policies	173

Amend policy TRAN POL 5 as follows:

TRAN POL 5 To avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development/intensification of traffic from existing entrance onto national roads outside the 60kph speed limit, ~~except at the following location:~~

- ~~• N4 east of Carrick-on-Shannon to facilitate a significant economic development² (See Map No. 4 Volume III – Book of Maps – Access to National Primary Road Exceptional Circumstances which is included at smaller scale below).~~

⁵~~-This project will subject to the outcome of the Appropriate Assessment process.~~

CHAPTER 9: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY

Proposed Amendment MA 62

Section	Title	Page
Throughout Draft Plan documentation	<i>Reference to Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications</i>	Where relevant

Replace references in the Draft Plan to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment with Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications where relevant.

Proposed Amendment MA 63

Section	Title	Page
9.8	<i>Flood Risk Management Policies</i>	189

Amend policy FRM POL 11 as follows:

FRM POL 11 To require proposals for development to comply with requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines including providing detailed design specifications as may be required to assess the impact of development.

- a) Extensions of existing uses or minor development within flood risk areas shall not: obstruct important flow paths; introduce a number of people into flood risk areas; entail the storage of hazardous substances; have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities; or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- b) Applications for development within Flood Zones A or B, and on lands subject to the mid-range future scenario floods extents, as published by the Office of Public Works, shall be subject to site specific flood risk assessment. Such assessments shall consider climate change impacts and adaptation measures and shall provide details of structural and nonstructural flood risk management measures, to include, but not be limited to specifications of the following:

Floor Levels

In areas of limited flood depth, the specification of the threshold and floor levels of new structures shall be raised above expected flood levels to reduce the risk of flood losses to a building, by raising floor heights within the building structure using a suspended floor arrangement or raised internal concrete platforms.

When designing an extension or modification to an existing building, an appropriate flood risk reduction measure shall be specified to ensure the

threshold levels into the building are above the design flood level. However, care must also be taken to ensure access for all is provided in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations.

Where threshold levels cannot be raised to the street for streetscape, conservation or other reasons, the design shall specify a mixing of uses vertically in buildings - with less vulnerable uses located at ground floor level, along with other measures for dealing with residual flood risk.

Internal Layout

Internal layout of internal space shall be designed and specified to reduce the impact of flooding [for example, living accommodation, essential services, storage space for provisions and equipment shall be designed to be located above the predicted flood level]. In addition, designs and specifications shall ensure that, wherever reasonably practicable, the siting of living accommodation (particularly sleeping areas) shall be above flood level.

With the exception of single storey extensions to existing properties, new single storey accommodation shall not be deemed appropriate where predicted flood levels are above design floor levels. In all cases, specifications for safe access, refuge and evacuation shall be incorporated into the design of the development.

Flood-Resistant Construction

Developments in flood vulnerable zones shall specify the use of flood-resistant construction aimed at preventing water from entering buildings - to mitigate the damage floodwater caused to buildings.

Developments shall specify the use of flood resistant construction prepared using specialist technical input to the design and specification of the external building envelope – with measures to resist hydrostatic pressure (commonly referred to as “tanking”) specified for the outside of the building fabric.

The design of the flood resistant construction shall specify the need to protect the main entry points for floodwater into buildings - including doors and windows (including gaps in sealant around frames), vents, air-bricks and gaps around conduits or pipes passing through external building fabric.

The design of the flood resistant construction shall also specify the need to protect against flood water entry through sanitary appliances as a result of backflow through the drainage system.

Flood-Resilient Construction

Developments in flood vulnerable zones that are at risk of occasional inundation shall incorporate design and specification for flood resilient construction which accepts that floodwater will enter buildings and provides for this in the design and specification of internal building services and finishes. These measures limit damage caused by floodwater and allow relatively quick recovery.

This can be achieved by specifying wall and floor materials such as ceramic tiling

that can be cleaned and dried relatively easily, provided that the substrate materials (e.g. blockwork) are also resilient. Electrics, appliances and kitchen fittings shall also be specified to be raised above floor level, and one-way valves shall be incorporated into drainage pipes.

Emergency Response Planning

In addition to considering physical design issues for developments in flood vulnerable zones, the developer shall specify that the planning of new development also takes account of the need for effective emergency response planning for flood events in areas of new development.

Applications for developments in flood vulnerable zones shall provide details that the following measures will be put in place and maintained:

- provision of flood warnings, evacuation plans and ensuring public awareness of flood risks to people where they live and work
- coordination of responses and discussion with relevant emergency services i.e. Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue, Civil Defence and An Garda Síochána through the SFRA; and
- awareness of risks and evacuation procedures and the need for family flood plans.

Access and Egress During Flood Events

Applications for developments in flood vulnerable zones shall include details of arrangements for access and egress during flood events. Such details shall specify that:

- flood escape routes have been kept to publicly accessible land;
- such routes will have signage and other flood awareness measures in place, to inform local communities what to do in case of flooding;
- this information will be provided in a welcome pack to new occupants.

Further Information

Further and more detailed guidance and advice can be found at <http://www.flooding.ie> and in the Building Regulations.

- c) In Flood Zone C, where the probability of flooding is low (less than 0.1%), site-specific Flood Risk Assessment may be required and the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed. The County Development Plan SFRA datasets and the most up to date information on flood risk, including that relating to climate scenarios, should be consulted by prospective applicants for developments in this regard and will be made available to lower-tier Development Management processes in the Council.

Proposed Amendment MA 64		
Section	Title	Page
9.10	Waste Management	194

To insert the following text as a further paragraph in Section 9.10 *Waste Management* of the Draft Plan:

This accords with the transition to a more circular economy and bio economy, as espoused in national policy in the form of the *Whole-of-Government Circular Economy Strategy* launched in December 2021, where the value of bio- based products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste is minimised. This Draft Plan supports the move to a more circular economy as this will save resources, increase resource efficiency, and help to reduce carbon emissions. The successful implementation of circular economy principles will help to reduce the volume of waste that the county produces.

Proposed Amendment MA 65		
Section	Title	Page
9.12	Noise Pollution Policies	199

Insert the following policy in Section 9.12 *Noise Pollution* of the Draft Plan:

NP POL 4 Development proposals should identify and implement noise mitigation measures, where warranted, for development proposed in the vicinity of existing or proposed national roads. The costs of implementing mitigation measures shall be borne by the developer, as the Authority will not be responsible for the provision of additional noise mitigation.

CHAPTER 10: RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Amendment MA 66

Section	Title	Page
10.4	<i>Rural Economy Policies</i>	208

Insert the following policy in Section 10.4 *Rural Economy* of the Draft Plan:

RUR ECON POL 6 To avoid the creation of any additional access point from new development or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses to national roads to which speed limits greater than 60 kmh apply.

Proposed Amendment MA 67

Section	Title	Page
10.6	<i>Forestry</i>	212

To amend Section 10.6 *Forestry* of the Draft Plan as follows and to include the report titled *Landscape Capacity Study for Commercial Forestry - Co. Leitrim (March 2022)* as Appendix VI of the final Draft Plan when adopted. This will require a renumbering of the remaining 6 no. appendices as they are numbered on the basis of their respective chapters.

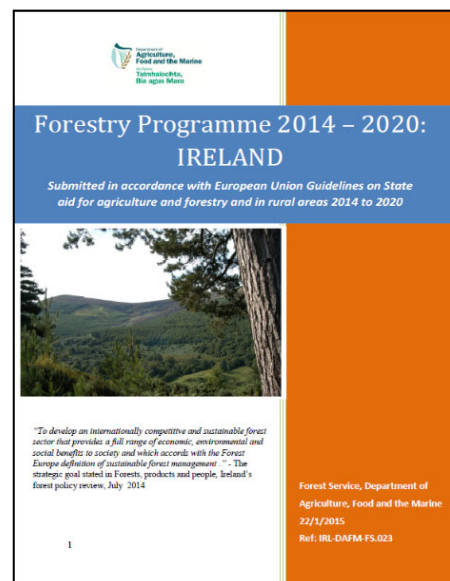
10.6 Forestry

10.6.1 National Policy

The national policy and ambition on forestry (plantation forestry) is extremely clear as set out in the Forestry Programme 2014 – 2020 which is presently being reviewed. The Forest Programme seeks *“to develop an internationally competitive and sustainable forest sector that provides a full range of economic, environmental and social benefits to society and which accords with the principles of sustainable forest management”*.

To realise this ambition, there are a series of financial supports in place of up to 100% set up grants for establishment and maintenance of new plantation forests and woodlands including fencing. The grant aid and premiums on offer depend on the species planted with higher rates available for deciduous trees.

The Climate Action Plan 2019~~21~~²¹ states that under the current National Forestry Programme, 2014-2020, afforestation rates have been recorded at an average of 5,500 ha per year. This is below the target rate and at these rates, Ireland will not achieve its 18% land cover target by 2046. The Climate Action Plan seeks to increase afforestation rates from their





current levels to an average of 8,000 ha per year, in order to reach our forestry land cover target of 18% by the second half of this century. This will be achieved through engaging with a range of landowners, from farmers through to State Bodies and Local Authorities. While this will mostly yield benefits in the longer term, it will also contribute to our 2030 target through carbon sequestration and displacing other high carbon uses of land. It is also proposed to supplement the attractive financial incentives already in place (for faster afforestation, sustainable forest management, and wood mobilisation). provides for a number of actions relating to forestry development and recognises the important role forestry provides as the single largest land-based climate change mitigation measure available to Ireland. In addition, the Plan recognises the increasing potential of forestry in providing sustainable substitute products for conventional carbon-heavy construction materials such as concrete, brick and steel. Relevant actions provided in the Climate Action Plan 2021 relating to forestry development include:

- the implementation of 'Project Woodland', the government initiative to develop a shared approach for trees, woods and forests and to inform the preparation of the new Forestry Strategy and new Forestry Programme for publication in 2023 (Actions 364 and 365);
- Implement Forestry Programme 2014-2022 (includes 2-year extension) (Action 366);
- Increase the level of afforestation to meet targets (Action 367); and
- Increase output of forestry licences to meet demand (Action 368).

It is notable that, aside from Action 367 which identifies the planting of 1,500ha of native woodland on Bord na Móna cut-over-bogs and unlike the previous Climate Action Plan 2019, no other planting target is provided in the Climate Action Plan 2021, with the presumption that the new Forestry Programme to be published in 2023 will identify such targets.

Forestry can play an important role in helping with climate change mitigation, through carbon sequestration and the provision of renewable fuels and raw materials. Forestry is a major carbon sink and afforestation is the most significant mitigation option that is available to Ireland's land use sector.

Ireland is committed to the practice of Sustainable Forest Management, which, under the Helsinki and Lisbon Agreements, means '*the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way and at a rate that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regenerative capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions as local, national and global levels and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems*'. A key objective of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's 'Growing for the Future – A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Forestry Sector in Ireland' (1996) has remained '*to develop forestry to a scale and in a manner which maximizes its contribution to national economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment*'.

10.6.2 Forestry in Leitrim

Co. Leitrim has the highest ratio of forestry planted of any county in the State at 18.9% in 2017 compared to the national average level of 11%. Preliminary results from the 4th National Forestry Inventory (NFI), completed in 2022, indicates that the extent of forest cover in the county in 2021 has increased to 20.1% (32,039ha), with Leitrim remaining the county with the highest percentage of forest cover, compared to a national average level of 11.6%³. Notwithstanding these preliminary results, it should be noted that at the time of writing the 3rd edition of the NFI, conducted in 2017, remained the most comprehensive dataset on national forest cover.

³ 'Forest Statistics Ireland 2022', Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (2022)



The soils in Co. Leitrim are generally well-suited to commercial forestry plantation development as they are rich in mineral gley, surface water gley, peaty gley and brown poolzolic soils. The favourable soil and climatic conditions result in relatively rapid growth rates of coniferous species where the strength and quality of the wood is less than where it grows at a slower rate. However, Furthermore, poor root penetration can often lead to windthrow with its associated environmental consequences including aquatic issues arising.

Private plantation forests accounted for just over half (51.3%) of the forest area in the county in 2017 with the remaining (48.7%) consisting of publicly owned forestry managed for the State by Coillte. The extent of these lands are shown in Figure 10.2. This is qualified by noting that an additional 846 hectares of lands have been planted since 2017 up to and including 2021 based on the *Forest Statistics Ireland 2022* report from DAFM.

Figure 10.2: Extent of Forest Cover in Co. Leitrim 2017

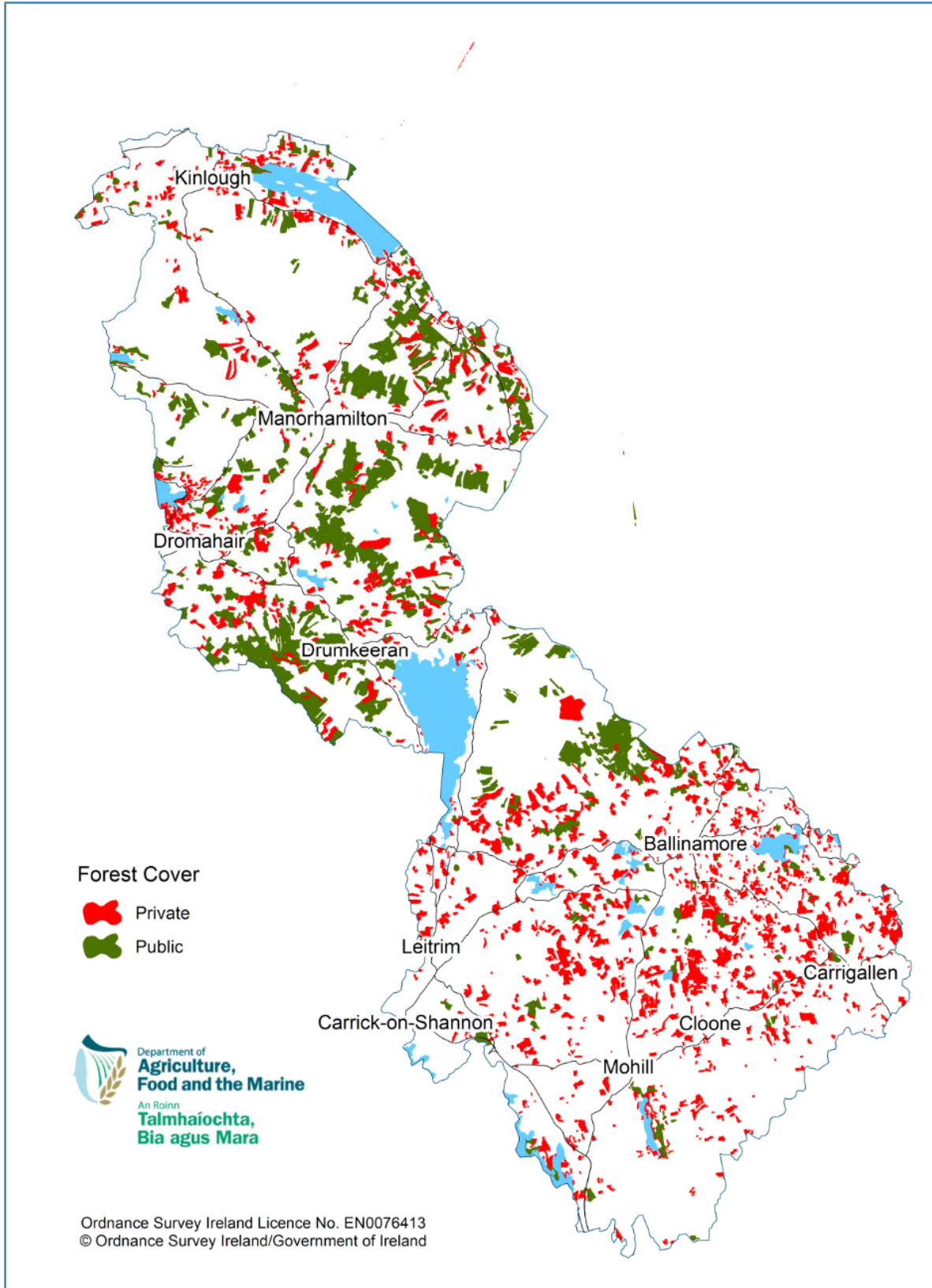
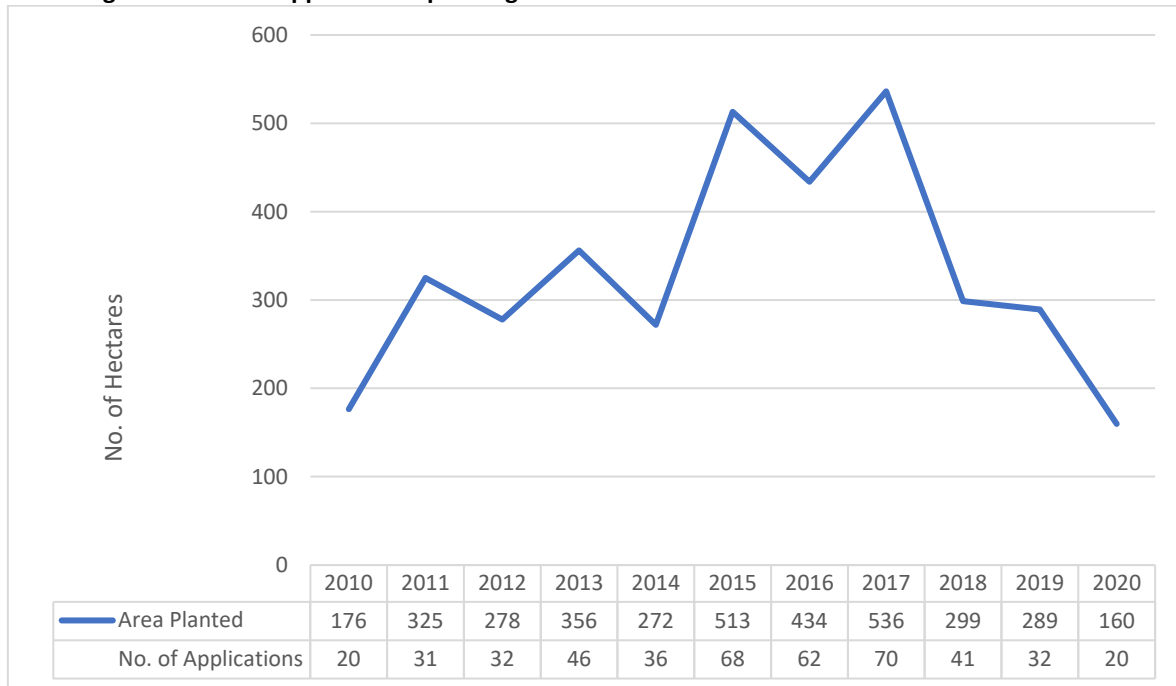
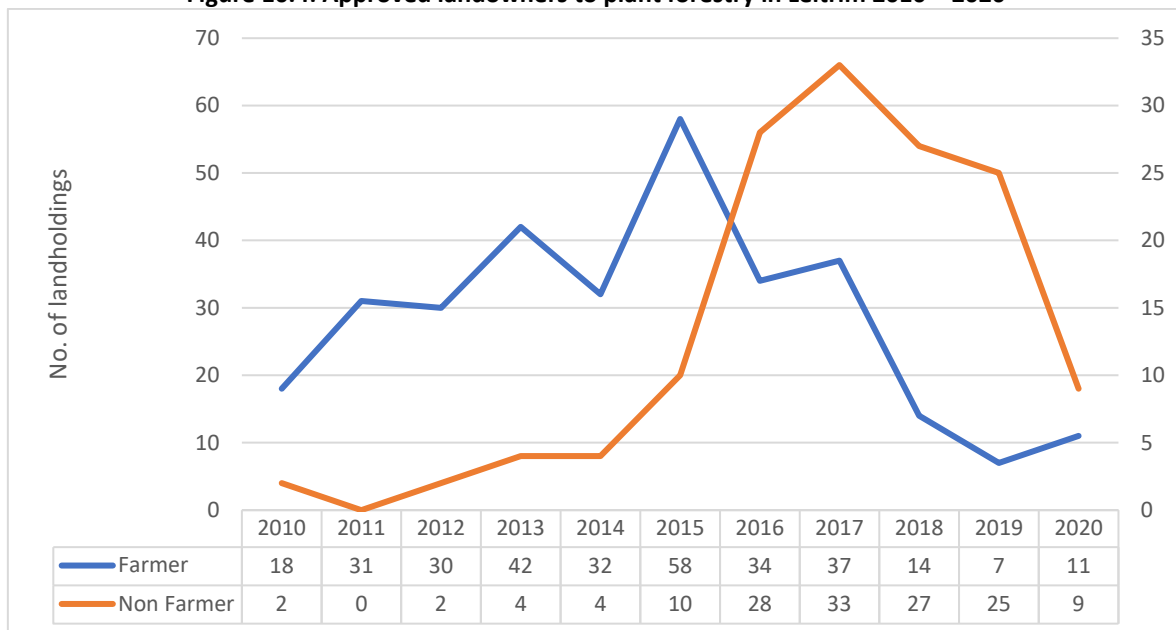


Figure 10.3: Area approved for planting in Additional Area Planted in Co. Leitrim 2010 – 2020



Source: Forest Service, Department of Agriculture

Figure 10.4: Approved landowners to plant forestry in Leitrim 2010 – 2020



Source: Forest Service, Department of Agriculture

In terms of species, conifers account for 70% of the total forest area in the county. Sitka spruce is the dominant species accounting for 61.3% of the total forest area which is higher than the national figure of 51%. The growth rates of trees in the county for conifers is high – for Sitka spruce in private stands, growth rates are estimated to be 20% higher than the national average. Native species account for 30.7% of the forest area in the county which is slightly higher than the national figure of 26.6%. Birch is the dominant native species accounting for 10.7% with alder accounting for 4.8%. **The figures in this paragraph are extracted from the report ‘The Socio-Economic Impact of Forestry in Co. Leitrim’, Dr. Áine Ní Dhubháin *et al*, (2019) School of Agriculture and Food Science, University College Dublin.**

Figure 10.3 indicates a steady rise in the extent of land ~~approved for planting~~ **planted in Co. Leitrim** by the Forest Service from 176 hectares of land in 2010 to 536 hectares in 2017. The number of landholdings in 2017 was 70 and the average holding ~~approved for planting~~ **planted** was 7.7 hectares/19 acres (Figure 10.4). There has been a marked reduction in the number of applications approved since 2018., ~~primarily as a result of the number of appeals brought against decisions.~~ **It should be qualified that Figure 10.3 relates to lands actually planted and should not be confused with the extent of lands licensed for afforestation by the Forest Service. For instance in 2021, 98 hectares of lands were planted for commercial forestry whilst 236 hectares of lands was licensed for planting. The license holder has 3 years from the date of a license to plant.**

Of particular note from Figure 10.4 is that ~~in 2015 marked a milestone in which~~ the number of investors or non farmers who were approved to plant commercial forestry in Co. Leitrim exceeded the number of farmers who were approved to plant part of their own lands. This resulted from changes in the grant aid provided by the Department of Agriculture which now encouraged investors into the sector to assist in reaching the national target set out in the Forestry Programme. In each subsequent year since 2015, the number of investors or non farmers approved for planting has exceeded the number of farmers approved to plant their own lands. **This may have included farmers from outside the county who have acquired lands in this county as an investment or as a means of offsetting carbon from their main farming activities. This level of information was not available to the Local Authority.**

Notwithstanding the thrust of Government policy, the extensive volume of afforestation in Co. Leitrim raises some concerns. Once planted for forestry, land is unlikely ever to revert to alternative agricultural use, reducing the possibility of expanding or consolidating neighbouring farms. Extensive and dense tree planting can lead to an oppressive and featureless landscape, increasing the sense of isolation of remaining residents, while clear-felled forests leave an ugly scar on the landscape. The harvesting of timber **which often necessitates the construction of extensive lengths of forest access roads** can put great stress on the road network, with minor roads bearing loads far beyond their design capacity. It is argued by the haulage sector that the creation of forest access roads can have a far greater impact on the surface of local roads than the extraction of timber. **The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine have indicated in their Forest Statistics Report (July 2022) that between 2011 -2021, the construction of 42.8km of private forest roads were grant aided in Co. Leitrim⁴. The Local Authority is left to rely on the provisions of the Roads Act 1993, as amended, to seek to recover the cost of damage to local roads but with very limited success.**

However, it is important to recognise the value of forestry related employment with 560 jobs⁵ associated directly and indirectly with forestry/wood processing in Leitrim (2018). All elements of the **commercial plantation** forestry value chain are present in Co. Leitrim – forestry contractors and management companies, forest harvesting and haulage (McMorrows Haulage Ltd., Dowra), saw mills and manufacturing (Crowes, Mohill), firewood (McMorrows, Dowra) and manufacturing (Masonite, Drumsna and Merenda, Manorhamilton). **It is also acknowledged that the lands planted with commercial plantations often replaces land that was previously farmed and that there is a potential displacement employment effect as a result of lands being planted. In addition to the socio economic costs, the impact of the loss of agricultural land on sustaining a rural farming population does need careful consideration at a national policy level. The results of the Census of Agriculture 2020 were not available to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan.**

⁴ 'Forest Statistics Ireland 2022', Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (2022)

⁵ This figure was provided to the Local Authority by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine



~~The Good Energy Alliance Ireland produced a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Baseline Report for Co. Leitrim in December 2019. It is estimated that forestland removes over 190,000 tonnes of CO² equivalent from Leitrim in effect offsetting 44% of the CO² produced by our population. This has a monetary equivalent of just under €5m. Forests and forest products therefore play an important role in mitigating climate change by sequestering and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO²). Fast growing Sitka Spruces perform better when it comes to removing carbon from the atmosphere, as opposed to native woodland, hence their utilization as a quick return climate mitigation policy tool. The carbon sequestration rate per hectare by forests in Co. Leitrim is deemed to be 12% higher than the national rate. About 45-50 hectares of forest are clear felled each year;~~

~~Of the total amount of commercial forestry that is clear felled each year (979 hectares licensed to be clear felled in 2021), 30% of the total tree volume is left on the forest floor after logging with the remaining 10% used for wood fuel. The remainder, 60% is processed, mainly for the construction industry. the CO² captured during the tree life remains locked in the wood until the product decays or is burnt. This excludes consideration to the clear felling and thinning of commercial forestry, transporting and processing the timber product and the burning of wood products for energy all of which causes emissions of carbon to the atmosphere whilst clear felling results in significant carbon losses from the soil.~~

~~The nature of commercial plantation forestry in Co. Leitrim is such that until a more detailed study is undertaken of the previous use of the lands planted / licensed to be planted regarding their former carbon sequestration function to include peatlands and the environmental cost of harvesting to include creation of extensive forest access roads that the true climate change mitigation impact is unquantified. Equally, there has to be an acknowledgement of the addition of carbon to the atmosphere from the burning of wood products.~~

10.6.3 Afforestation and the Planning System

Afforestation ~~as a land use~~ is, in the main, outside the control of the Planning Authority with the exception of the creation and material widening of accesses onto the national road system or when an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required for planting of more than 50 hectares. Initial afforestation of lands is classified as exempted development which does not require planning permission. To date, no planning application lodged to this Authority for the planting of trees. Certain categories of consent applications to the Forestry Service, ~~being part of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine~~, for planting or felling are referred to the Planning Authority for its observations but it is the Forest Service, as competent authority, who ultimately decides upon the submitted consent application and how much weight to attribute to the Planning Authority's comments. This Council would welcome a revision of the Planning legislative provision that would bring forestry plantations under the control of the planning system.

10.6.4 Afforestation and the Landscape

The Landscape Character Assessment (refer to Section 11.15) has identified forestry along with wind turbines as the greatest forces of change in altering the character of our landscape. Commercial forestry plantations tend to be a dominating landcover and have an eroding impact in scenic areas of the county including Lough Melvin. The original lakeside landscape character is much eroded as a result. The review noted an increase in commercial coniferous forestry especially apparent in the farmed lowlands south of Slieve Anierin and similar plantations of smaller scale occur in the uplands in particular the lower slopes of Dough Mountain. The Character Assessment states that the extent of additional forestry land use *"is controversial due to the resultant change and negative impact on the County's landscapes"*. In Landscape Character Type 3 *'Wooded Lakeside Farmland'*, the extent of the woody vegetation cover is such that the landscape is quite visually enclosed in many places. In Landscape Character Type 5 *'Moorland Plateaus'*, patches of commercial coniferous forestry feature

in this landscape and in some locations, these plantations dominate and have eroded the moorland landscape character. The plantation of commercial coniferous forestry also tends to be highly visible at higher elevations. In Landscape Character Type 9 ‘*Drumlin Farmland*’, patches of commercial coniferous forestry are dispersed throughout this landscape, some areas being fairly extensive in size. The plantation of coniferous forest is indicated as being a frequent feature and has become influential in the local landscape character.

It is noted that there is an area of deciduous woodland at O’Donnell’s Rock which is one of only a few naturally developing woodlands on the Leitrim limestone mountains. This is of particular interest as it demonstrates the natural succession of this woodland type on steep ground.

In relation to landscape quality, condition and sensitivity, the Landscape Character Assessment indicates that the condition of the landscape is adversely affected in places by commercial coniferous forestry. Extensive areas of commercial coniferous forestry have resulted in the loss of hedgerows, pasture and field patterns and thus, key landscape characteristics have become eroded. Plantation of coniferous forestry also obscures stretches of the Black Pig’s Dyke and tree roots threaten delicate archaeological remains. Where large forestry blocks exist on undulating landform, large scale felling, leaves significant areas of the landscape scarred. In comparison, in areas where commercial coniferous forestry is absent, the landscape is in relatively good condition as evidenced by the strong field patterns defined by a dense hedgerow structure.

Following the completion of the review of the Landscape Character Assessment, of designated landscapes and of protected views and prospects, Leitrim County Council commissioned RPS to then undertake a landscape capacity assessment for future commercial forestry planting in Co. Leitrim. The purpose of the landscape capacity assessment is to inform the policy framework for forestry which will be contained in the Draft County Development Plan 2023-2029. The objective of the study is to determine the suitability or capacity of landscapes to accommodate further commercial forestry plantations. The assessment has been undertaken in order to provide clear guidance in the light of recent debate on the issue of commercial forestry in Co. Leitrim and the need to achieve a balance between the national policy arena, the demands for commercial forestry plantations and conservation of landscape character and visual amenity including residential visual amenity. This report titled ‘Landscape Capacity Study for Commercial Forestry - Co. Leitrim (March 2022) will form Appendix VI of the final Draft Plan when adopted.

The report primarily outlines a baseline for each Landscape Character Type (LCT) followed by a sensitivity assessment of each to commercial forestry. The capacity of each LCT to accommodate commercial forestry is outlined, along with design guidance.

The following table is extracted from the report and is considered the conclusion of the Capacity Study.

Table 10.2: Landscape Sensitivity - Study Findings

ID	LCT Name	Sensitivity	Capacity
LCT 1	Coastal Plain	Very High	None
LCT 2	Coastal Drumlin Farmland	High	Limited
LCT 3	Wooded Lakeside Farmland	High	Limited
LCT 4	Cliffed Uplands and Landslips	Very High	None
LCT 5	Moorland Plateau	Very High	None
LCT 6	Moorland Hills	High	Very limited capacity at higher

ID	LCT Name	Sensitivity	Capacity
			elevations and on steep sided mountain slopes.
LCT 7	Upland Farmland and Foothills	Medium to High	Yes
LCT 8	Valley Farmland	Low	Yes
LCT 9	Drumlin Farmland	Low	Yes
LCT 10	Major Loughs	N/A	N/A
LCT 11	Drumlin Loughs and Stream Margins	Very High	None
LCT 12	River Floodplain	Very High	None
LCT 13	Low Limestone Outcrops	Very High	None
LCT 14	Drumlin Farmland with Peat Bogs	Low	Yes
LCT 15	Undulating Hill Farmland	Low	Yes
LCT 16	Steep Mountain Peaks	Very High	None
LCT 17	Tabular Hills	Very High	None

Note: Leitrim County Council are presently undertaking a landscape capacity assessment of the ability of the landscape to absorb further commercial forestry plantations. This may be finalised in time to inform the final County Development Plan before it is finalized.

10.6.5 Forestry Policy Framework

Leitrim County Council supports a transition away from the current monoculture coniferous forestry model dependent on clear felling to one that is consistent with climate change, biodiversity, enhances community life and supports the local economy. The Draft Plan aims to support the sustainable growth of forestry as an economic activity and as an effective ~~role as a~~ climate mitigation measure whilst affording maximum protection to the rural environment, residential amenity and to the receiving landscape. The Draft Plan will seek to maximise the employment creation potential of timber grown locally and also recognise the importance of the forestry value chain to our local economy. The development of woodchip production from thinnings, for alternative energy provision, will be encouraged as an on-farm scale activity.

The Council also recognises that forests and woodlands can have a significant recreational and amenity value in the local community such as Coillte's Glenfarne Demesne and Derrycarne forests. While walking is the most popular activity, forest recreation embraces other specialised activities including orienteering, mountain biking, horse riding and fishing. The Council are keen to further exploit opportunities in in this area. In line with Forest Service Guidelines, the Council will support the development of roads, tracks, rides, and purpose-built trail and cycle tracks in selected locations. The Council will also support and encourage the carbon neutral harvesting of forestry.

Equally, the protection of rural communities is also an integral part of the policy framework of this Plan including the protection of agriculture and of farming practices and livelihoods. The introduction of large-scale forestry into an area can have potentially negative impacts on visual, social and environmental grounds and thus must be appropriate in terms of their scale and location.

This Draft Plan cannot seek to remove a statutory entitlement, i.e. exempted development status of afforestation as it is beyond the ability of ~~the~~ a development plan to do so. The Draft Plan can



however provide the **evidential** basis for the Planning Authority to **contribute to the forest consent process of the Forest Service through** comment on forest consent applications that are referred by the Forest Service to the Council for comment **and also give a commitment that the Local Authority intends to take a more proactive role over the life of the Draft Plan where a proposed forestry plantation is at variance with the policy framework contained therein.**

Landscape capacity to accommodate further commercial plantations is a key consideration for Leitrim County Council in deciding whether or where forestry expansion occurs. The Council generally favours deciduous over coniferous planting on the basis that native species of deciduous trees sit more comfortably in the Co. Leitrim landscape and also have more benefits for biodiversity.

The Local Authority position will be informed by the recommendations contained in the Landscape Capacity Study for Commercial Forestry (March 2022) in our responses to all applications for Tree Planting and Tree Felling referred to the Local Authority by the Forest Service.

Responses from Leitrim County Council on Applications Submitted to the Forest Service for Tree Planting Applications

The following stated responses to consent applications to the Forest Service for Tree Planting by the Local Authority is qualified on the basis of such commercial plantations comprising primarily of coniferous plantations although it should not be assumed that no such concerns would arise for an exclusive broadleaf plantation.

In the Landscape Character Types which have been determined as having a very high or high sensitivity to further commercial forestry plantations and no capacity or very limited capacity for further plantations (LCT 1 Coastal Plain, LCT 4 Cluffed Uplands and Landslips, LCT 5 Moorland Plateau, LCT 6 Moorland Hills, LCT 8 Valley Farmland, LCT 11 Drumlin Loughs and Stream Margins, LCT 12 River Floodplain, LCT 13 Low Limestone Outcrops, LCT 16 Steep Mountain Peaks and LCT 17 Tabular Hills refers), the Local Authority will object to all further Tree Planting applications on the basis of potential adverse and cumulative impacts to the sensitive receiving landscape.

In the Landscape Character Types which have been determined as having a ‘high’ or ‘medium to high’ sensitivity to further commercial forestry plantations and very limited or limited capacity for further plantations (LCT 2 Coastal Drumlin Farmland and LCT 3 Wooded Lakeside Farmland refers), the Local Authority will object to such applications where the siting of such plantations is recommended for exclusion in Section 4.2.1.3 of the Landscape Capacity Study for Commercial Forestry on the basis of the determinantal impact to the sensitive receiving landscape.

For the remaining Landscape Character Types (LCT 7 Upland Farmland and Foothills, LCT 9 Drumlin Farmland, LCT 14 Drumlin Farmland with Peat Bogs and LCT 15 Undulating Hill Farmland refers) which have been determined as having a medium to low sensitivity to further commercial forestry plantations and capacity for further plantations, the Local Authority will object only to those limited areas therein where the siting of such plantations is recommended for avoidance in Section 4.2.1.3 in the Landscape Capacity Study for Commercial Forestry.

In all instances, regard will be given to the siting and design guidance for each Landscape Character Type which have been determined as having some level of capacity for further commercial plantations. Furthermore, any proposed commercial forestry plantation must not have a detrimental impact on a designated Protected View or Prospect identified in this Draft Plan.

Afforestation should be avoided on lands containing deep peat soils and where the land slope is steep, especially where the latter slopes towards a water body.



Policy **AGR POL 4** seeks to identify and protect from inappropriate forms of development areas of High Nature Value agricultural land in the county to include consideration of future climate scenarios and water quality and availability for agricultural purposes. The impact of forestry plantations on such identified areas of High Nature Value farmlands needs to be carefully considered.

The Council will also give consideration to the designation of North Leitrim, Sliabh an Iarainn and its hinterland as a Landscape Conservation Area in conjunction with **TOUR OBJ 3** which seeks to investigate the feasibility and potential of this area as a National Park/Recreational Area designation. The designation of this area as a Landscape Conservation Area may allow for exempted development to be brought under the control of the Local Authority subject to the prescription of the Minister of such development.

~~In certain Protected Landscapes, it would be the preference of this Local Authority if commercial planting was restricted or prohibited altogether. As such commercial forestry is exempted development, there is frustration within the Local Authority that this express objective cannot be realised.~~

~~This will be on the following basis:~~

~~On steep slopes above the 300m contour line, new afforestation will be strongly discouraged in the response of the Local Authority to any application to the Forest Service for tree planting and tree felling and it would be the objective of this Local Authority if the existing area under forestry was reduced, restructured and/or redesigned following clearance. This is considered particularly important around the flanks of Dough, Boleybrack and Sliabh an Iarainn, where forestry is most intrusive.~~

~~Elsewhere, particular attention will be paid to retaining (or restoring) views to the water and valley approaches to the hills. This applies particularly to the following areas:~~

- ~~• around the shores of Lough Melvin, Lough Gill, Lough Allen & the smaller loughs around Ballinamore.~~
- ~~• within the distinctive river corridor landscapes of the Shannon and the Cullies rivers, where open wetland areas and views to the water are key landscape characteristics.~~
- ~~• in Glenaniff, the Scardan and Owennayle valleys on the north and east of the Boleybrack uplands, and the Yellow River valleys north and south of Sliabh an Iarainn.~~

~~New woodland planting may be considered acceptable in:~~

- ~~1. Areas of marginal agricultural land on the fringes of the uplands below the 300m contour. These areas already have a distinctive wooded character, provided by strong hedgerows and natural woodland regeneration. They provide relatively good growing conditions for broadleaves. Such areas occur in all the northern glens and the lower hill slopes below the 300m contour line.~~
- ~~2. The drumlin landscapes of the central and southern lowlands, which have considerable further capacity to accommodate woodland expansion, provided that the underlying topography is not obscured by blanket planting over wide areas.~~
- ~~3. Other areas where there is scope to restore or enhance the landscape's distinctive character. These include abandoned farmland, amenity landscapes, the landscape settings to settlements and areas degraded by urban, industrial or infrastructural development.~~



Areas of Low Capacity:

~~These include the county's mountain and moorland landscapes and steep slopes above and around 300m AOD. These are characteristically open landscapes. New woodlands are highly visible and seldom in keeping with moorlands character. Further afforestation in these areas will be strongly discouraged.~~

Policies

- FOR POL 1** ~~To seek the sustainable development of the forestry sector in Co. Leitrim To encourage the development of sustainable forestry to a scale and in a manner which maximises its contribution to and does not detract from, the economic and social wellbeing of the county, and which is compatible with the protection of the environment including the avoidance of likely significant effects on European Sites (SACs and SPAs) and other designated and non- designated habitats and sensitive landscapes~~
- FOR POL 2** ~~To encourage sustainable forestry development, which is established planted, managed and harvested in accordance with national and European law and standards set by the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine~~Guidelines for landscape, forest harvesting, archaeology, biodiversity and water quality.
- FOR POL 3** ~~To ensure forestry development is of appropriate scale and character whilst ensuring that the development does not have a negative visual impact on the countryside or cause pollution or degradation to wildlife habitats, natural waters or areas of ecological importance.~~To have regard to the recommendations contained in the Landscape Capacity Study for Commercial Forestry (March 2022) which forms Appendix VI to this Draft Plan in informing the responses submitted by the Local Authority to all relevant applications for Tree Planting and Tree Felling licenses to the Forest Service or subsequent appeals to the Forestry Appeals Committee. This will be line with the content of Section 10.6.5.
- FOR POL 4** To encourage the provision of public access in conjunction with relevant stakeholders to new and existing forests through walking and bridle paths, recreational areas and other similar facilities.
- ~~**FOR POL 5** To reply to referrals from the Forest Service (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine) seeking to plant additional land for afforestation on the basis of the guidance provided Section 10.6.5 of the Draft Plan.~~
- FOR POL 5** To actively participate in the consenting process by the Forest Service on applications seeking to plant additional land for afforestation or tree felling which mandates replanting in landscapes sensitive to commercial plantations or other environmental grounds to ensure that the policies and objectives contained in this Draft Plan are secured.

Objectives

- FOR OBJ 1** To work in conjunction with the relevant key stakeholders to develop and expand suitable industries dependent on the considerable timber resource of the county such as fuel-wood production, sawmills and stake producing facilities.
- FOR OBJ 2** To co-operate with the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to encourage and promote the preparation and implementation of an Indicative Forest Strategy for the county **consistent with the policy framework of this Draft Plan.**
- FOR OBJ 3** ~~To undertake and adopt a landscape capacity assessment of the county to determine the suitability of landscapes to accommodate further commercial forestry plantations.~~ **To give consideration to the designation of North Leitrim, Sliabh an Iarainn and its hinterland as a Landscape Conservation Area in conjunction with TOUR OBJ 3 which seeks to investigate the feasibility and potential of this area as a National Park/Recreational Area designation.**
- FOR OBJ 4** To actively participate in any Regional Fora established by the North West Regional Assembly to ensure sustainable ~~afforestation~~ **land management of the forested area of** across the region.
- FOR OBJ 5** **To actively make representations to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in the review of the Irish Forestry regime and the any subsequent development of a new national Forestry Strategy.**

10.6.6 Trees and Hedgerows

Trees, woodlands and hedgerows are an important natural and landscape asset within the county and provide a biodiversity function in the provision of food, habitat and shelter in exposed areas, and also act as pollution filters and carbon sinks. Trees are valuable natural resources that improve the quality of life in our communities and make our neighbourhoods greener and more livable, while providing many other social and ecological benefits. With an increasing need for greener and more sustainable urban communities, there is also a growing awareness of the value of trees in settlements. There are only 2 no. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) adopted in the county. The Council will consult with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine advisors regarding its recommendations on Tree Felling Licence applications.

Ash Dieback disease is caused by the *Chalara fraxinea* fungus. The disease causes leaf loss and crown dieback in affected trees, and it can lead to tree death. The disease was first identified in Ireland in a plantation in Co. Leitrim in Autumn 2012 on plants imported from continental Europe. The disease is now prevalent throughout most of the island of Ireland and is likely to cause the death of the majority of the ash trees over the next two decades. The decline poses a risk to landowners and others for both public safety and deterioration of woodland cover and the ecological, social and economic benefits these woodlands provide. Leitrim County Council supports the measures underway by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Teagasc and Council for Forest Research and Development in the development of an ash breeding programme identifying and planting species of ash that are tolerant to the disease.

Hedgerows are a characteristic feature of the rural landscape and provide an important habitat for many species and act as a wildlife corridor for small mammals, birds and bat species. The removal of existing roadside boundaries, except to the extent that this is needed for a new entrance and traffic

safety purposes, shall be resisted where at all possible. Where disruption is unavoidable the replacement with 'like for like' boundary hedges and trees will be required. Elaborate walls and gates in rural areas will be discouraged. The Council encourages the augmentation of existing hedgerows and stands of trees and the planting of new trees and hedgerows, using native broad leaf species, where possible of local provenance, at the boundaries of new housing developments and around new housing, to create shelter and help absorb/assimilate the new development into the receiving landscape.

Policies

- TREE POL 1** To require the submission of landscape plans, where appropriate, to accompany planning applications for rural development proposals prepared by competent professionals and to promote the use of native trees for boundary treatment and shelter belts.
- TREE POL 2** To retain and protect significant stands / lengths of existing trees/hedgerows/woodlands, and seek increased planting of native trees, where appropriate, in new developments.
- TREE POL 3** To protect and preserve existing hedgerows in new developments and where their removal is necessary to seek their replacement with new hedgerows of native species and of native provenance indigenous to the area.

Objective

- TREE OBJ 1** To consider the use of Tree Preservation Orders for the preservation of any tree, trees or group of trees or woodland of special amenity or environmental value.
- TREE OBJ 2** To support the measures being undertaken by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Teagasc, Council for Forest Research and Development (COFORD) dealing with the effects of Ash Dieback disease and in the development of an ash breeding programme identifying and planting species of ash that are tolerant to disease.

Proposed Amendment MA 68		
Section	Title	Page
10.7	Extractive Industry and Building Materials Production	223

Amend policy AGG RES POL 7 as follows:

AGG RES POL 7 To ensure that development for aggregates/mineral extraction, processing and associated processes does not significantly impact in the following areas:

- a) Special Areas of Conservation and/or Special Protection Area
- b) Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas
- c) other areas of importance for the conservation of flora and fauna
- d) areas of significant archaeological potential
- e) in the vicinity of a recorded National Monument

- f) sensitive landscapes
- g) County Geological Sites and/or sites of geological importance

Proposed Amendment MA 69		
Section	Title	Page
10.7	<i>Extractive Industry and Building Materials Production</i>	223

Insert the following additional policy in Section 10.7 *Extractive Industry and Building Materials Production* of the Draft Plan:

AGG RES POL 8: To ensure that the extraction of minerals and aggregates protects to the maximum practicable extent the visual quality of the receiving landscape and do not adversely affect the environment or adjoining existing land uses.

Proposed Amendment MA 70		
Section	Title	Page
10.7	<i>Extractive Industry and Building Materials Production</i>	223

Insert the following additional policy in Section 10.7 *Extractive Industry and Building Materials Production* of the Draft Plan:

AGG RES POL 9: The use of the following chemicals as a processing agent shall not be permitted as part of any proposed processing operation located above or adjacent to surface or ground waters, or which could potentially impact such waters regardless of their location - mercury, cyanide or cyanide compounds, breakdown products of cyanide, or sulfuric acid. These present an unreasonable risk of environmental harm due to the toxicity of such chemicals and their demonstrated potential to cause damage to the environment.

CHAPTER 11: HERITAGE

Proposed Amendment MA 71

Section	Title	Page
11	<i>Heritage</i>	224

Amend the title of Chapter 11 of Volume I – Written Statement to *Heritage & Biodiversity*.

Proposed Amendment MA 72

Section	Title	Page
11.12	<i>Invasive Species Policy</i>	238

Amend policy IS POL 1 as follows:

IS POL 1 To require relevant development proposals to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species on proposed development sites and (if necessary) require applicants to prepare and submit an Invasive Species Management Plan where such a species exists to comply with the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015 and the EU Regulation on Invasive Alien Species 1143/2014.

Proposed Amendment MA 73

Section	Title	Page
11.19	<i>Streetscapes and Areas of Good Urban Design Policies</i>	262

Insert the following policy in Section 11.19 *Streetscapes and Areas of Good Urban Design* of the Draft Plan:

BH POL 8 To promote awareness and the appropriate adaptation of the county's architectural and archaeological heritage to deal with the effects of climate change.

Proposed Amendment MA 74

Section	Title	Page
11.21	<i>Archaeological Heritage</i>	261

Amend the last paragraph of Section 11.21 *Archaeological Heritage* as follows:

The archaeological heritage of Co. Leitrim includes, according to the *European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, 1992 (Valetta Convention)* structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, all recorded monuments as well as their contexts, and moveable objects; situated both on land and under water. This means that the archaeological heritage is not confined to the archaeological sites within the Record of Monuments and Places, but also includes any archaeological site that may not have been recorded yet, as well as archaeology beneath the ground surface, **underwater archaeological heritage**, as well as the context of any site. Co. Leitrim has a **rich underwater archaeological heritage that includes protected wrecks that lie off the coast of the county, log boats and artefacts that have been recorded from the county's lakes and inland waterways, crannóga, fish-traps, riverine and lacustrine built heritage and many other forms of underwater archaeological heritage**. One underwater heritage order in the county (UHO 1/90), which refers to Lough Donogher, located to the north east of Cloone.

Proposed Amendment MA 75		
Section	Title	Page
11.22	Archaeological Assessment	261

Amend Section 11.22 *Archaeological Assessment* as follows:

The Council will protect all such sites and monuments and their settings from inappropriate development. All planning applications likely to interfere with such a recorded site, **protected wreck or underwater archaeological heritage site**, monument or zone of archaeological interest will be referred to the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, An Taisce and the Heritage Council. Regard will be given to the advice and recommendations of these bodies in respect of whether planning permission should be granted and the nature of conditions to be attached to any grant of planning permission.

All aspects of archaeological heritage and underwater cultural heritage, in all environments, shall be considered in the development process, including impacts on unidentified elements of the archaeological and underwater cultural heritage. Areas that have developed around watercourses, including rivers and lakes may contain known and/or previously unknown underwater archaeological sites, structures, features or artefacts, and this should be considered when reviewing the existing Development Plan and developing policies for the new plan. Likewise, reclaimed areas may also contain previously unknown, buried archaeology that could be revealed during development impacts. Any plan should include this in its policy and objectives section. Sites such as slipways, historic quays, quay furniture, fixtures and fittings, fish traps, harbours with associated marine infrastructure, including causeways, as well as specific sites such as shipwrecks, log boats, etc., singular sites such as rock cut platforms and steps, and of course artefactual material associated with sites or as individual depositions in underwater environments, etc. can all be retained and preserved in intertidal/foreshore and underwater contexts or on land previously covered by water (e.g. reclaimed areas).

The Council will have regard to the guidance document, *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage*, as published by the National Monument Service in 1999.

Proposed development on, or in close proximity to, a site and monument of archaeological significance will only be allowed where development does not adversely affect their character and

setting. Where allowed, the Council will use planning conditions and agreements to enable an archaeological assessment, on-site monitoring, testing and/or excavation by a licensed archaeologist.

Proposed Amendment MA 76		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	Archaeological Heritage Policies	262

Amend policy ARCH POL 1 as follows:

ARCH POL 1 To secure the preservation (i.e. preservation in-situ or in particular circumstances where the Council is satisfied that this is not possible, preservation by record as a minimum) of all archaeological remains and sites of importance such as National Monuments, Recorded Monuments, **protected wrecks and underwater archaeological heritage**, to include their setting and context.

Proposed Amendment MA 77		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	Archaeological Heritage Policies	262

Insert the following policy after Section 11.23 *Industrial Archaeology and Canals* of the Draft Plan:

ARCH POL 4 To protect, preserve and promote the archaeological value of underwater archaeological sites and objects in rivers, lakes, intertidal and subtidal environments. In assessing proposals for development, the Council will take account of the archaeological potential of rivers, lakes, intertidal and sub-tidal environments. Where flood relief schemes are being undertaken, the Council will have regard to the 'Archaeological Guidelines for Flood Relief Schemes' (DHLGH and OPW 2021).

Proposed Amendment MA 78		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	Archaeological Heritage Policies	262

Insert the following policy after Section 11.23 *Industrial Archaeology and Canals* of the Draft Plan:

ARCH POL 5 To support community initiatives and projects regarding preservation, presentation, publication of and access to archaeological heritage and underwater cultural heritage, provided such are compatible with appropriate conservation policies and standards, having regard to the guidance and advice of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Proposed Amendment MA 79		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	Archaeological Heritage Objectives	262

Amend objective ARCH OBJ 2 as follows:

- ARCH OBJ 2** To ensure that any development (above or below ground **or underwater**), within the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest **or protected wreck or area of underwater archaeological heritage** shall not be detrimental to the archaeological remains, character of the site or its setting.

Proposed Amendment MA 80		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	Archaeological Heritage Objectives	262

Amend objective ARCH OBJ 3 as follows:

- ARCH OBJ 3** To require, where appropriate, that an archaeological assessment **or underwater archaeological impact assessment** be carried out by a suitably qualified person prior to the commencement of any activity that may impact upon archaeological heritage, **including underwater archaeological heritage**.

Proposed Amendment MA 81		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	Archaeological Heritage Objectives	262

Amend objective ARCH OBJ 4 as follows:

- ARCH OBJ 4** To protect the zones of archaeological potential, as identified in the Record of Monuments and Places, **protected recks and underwater archaeological heritage**.

Proposed Amendment MA 82		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	Archaeological Heritage Objectives	262

Amend objective ARCH OBJ 4 as follows:



ARCH OBJ 5 To protect archaeological sites, **protected wrecks and underwater archaeological heritage** discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places, which are recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record.

Proposed Amendment MA 83		
Section	Title	Page
11.23	<i>Archaeological Heritage Objectives</i>	262

Insert the following objective in Section 11.23 *Industrial Archaeology and Canals* of the Draft Plan:

ARCH OBJ 6 To support research and the production of a Conservation Management Plan for the

CHAPTER 12: CLIMATE ACTION & RENEWABLE ENERGY

Proposed Amendment MA 84

Section	Title	Page
12.2.3	<i>National, Regional and Local Legislative and Policy Context – Climate Action Plan – To Tackle Climate Breakdown (2019)</i>	275

Amend the text contained in Section 12.2.3 *National, Regional and Local Legislative and Policy Context* under the heading *Climate Action Plan – To Tackle Climate Breakdown (2019)* as follows:

Climate Action Plan – ~~To Tackle Climate Breakdown~~ Securing Our Future (2019~~21~~)

The Climate Action Plan provides a statement of Government policies relevant to decarbonisation and adapting to a changing climate, with ~~183~~⁴⁹³ no. specific actions over ~~12~~ a number of sectors and charts an ambitious course towards decarbonisation **halving our GHG emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050**. Figure 12.1 provides an infographic of some of the actions contained in the Plan. The Plan also reflects Ireland’s commitment to achieving the 17 no. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed by the United Nations in 2015. The SDGs address the environmental, economic, and social challenges that the world needs to tackle by 2030 to ensure a sustainable future.

It reflects the central priority that climate change will have in Ireland’s political and administrative systems into the future, setting out governance arrangements including the carbon-proofing of government policies, the establishment of carbon budgets, the strengthening of the Climate Change Advisory Council and providing greater accountability to the Oireachtas.

~~Under the Climate Action Plan the following actions are recognised as being specific to Local Authorities:~~

~~**Action 64** – Introduce minimum Building Energy Rating (BER) standards in the Local Authority social housing stock as part of retrofit works being carried out on older stock or refurbishment of vacant dwellings.~~

~~**Action 65** – Develop and establish a climate action toolkit and audit framework for Local Authority development planning to drive the adoption of stronger climate action policies in relation to the patterns and forms of future development.~~

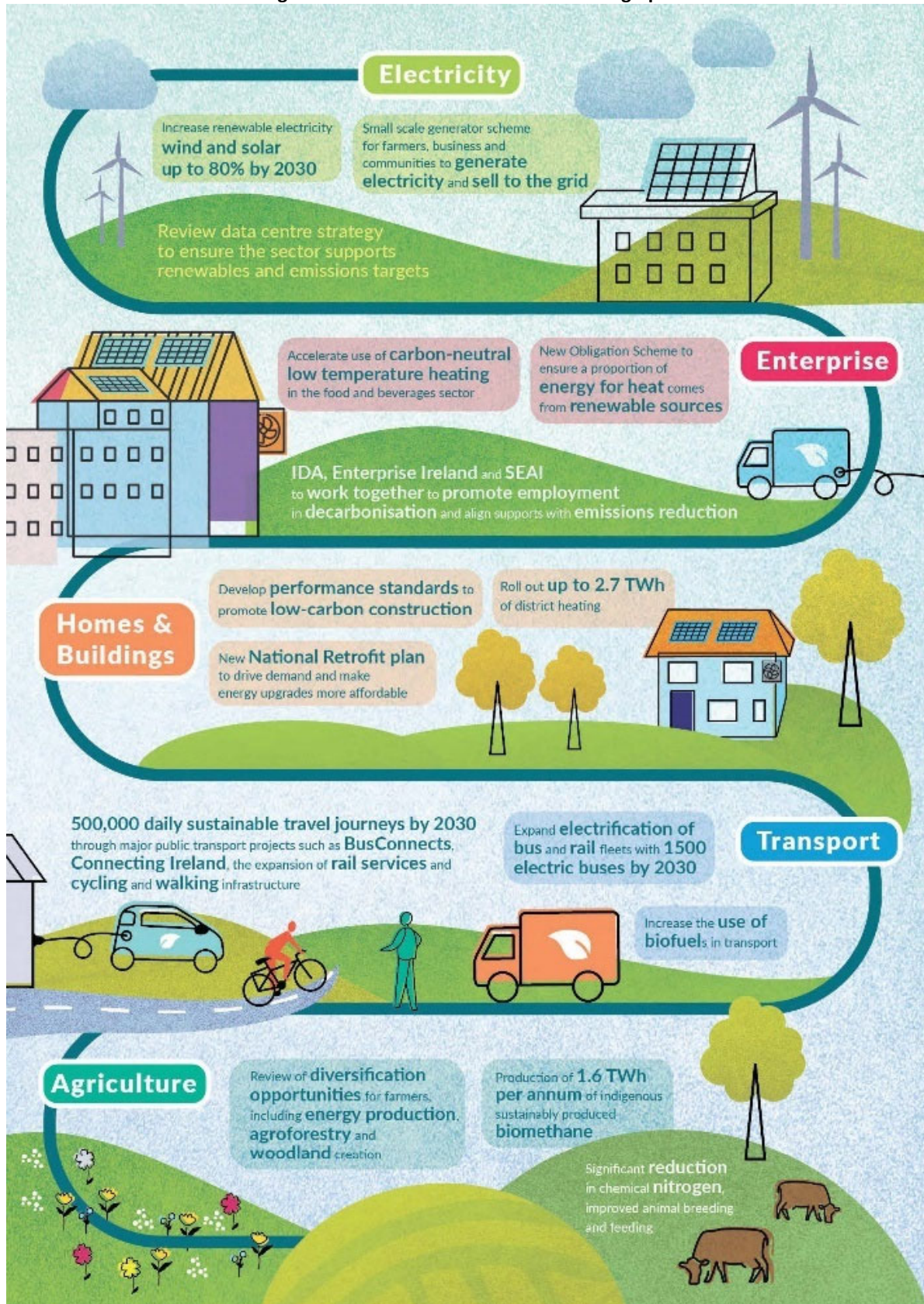
~~**Action 66** – Roadmap to develop supply chain to support the phase out of fossil fuel boilers in new dwellings.~~

~~In addition,~~ The Climate Action Plan contains a series of actions where Local Authorities are identified as key stakeholders in their respective delivery. This includes Action ~~165~~⁸⁰ which requires each Local Authority to identify and develop plans for one “Decarbonising Zone” within their functional area in collaboration with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). In respect of this action, Leitrim County Council has identified Carrick-on-Shannon as its designated ‘Decarbonising Zone’ (DZ) with a



series of implementation plans for developing the Carrick-on-Shannon DZ to be included in the Leitrim County Council Climate Action Plan, as required by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Bill (2021).

Figure 12.1: Climate Action Plan 2021 Infographic



Proposed Amendment MA 85		
Section	Title	Page
12.6.2	Wind Energy	287

Amend the bullet points provided in the fourth paragraph of Section 12.6.2 *Wind Energy* of the Draft Plan as follows:

- wind speed and resource.
- environmental, ecological, heritage and amenity constraints **by applying an exclusion zone around key biodiversity and physical attributes. Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) sites were excluded, however Natural Heritage Area (NHA) and proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) sites were not excluded. Watercourses and physical constraints were also excluded using buffer distances related to construction activities and safety.**
- land take being > 5 km² to take into account the spatial requirements generally for commercially scaled wind farm developments.
- set-back distances from housing using the minimum separation distance of 500m from all sensitive receptors as identified in the 2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines (WEDG) and the 2019 Draft WEDG **and as a means of identifying sites of strategic scale for the purposes of determining, more practically, the renewable energy target for the county as required under item (2) of the Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) prescribed in the *Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change (2017).***
- availability of grid infrastructure.

Proposed Amendment MA 86		
Section	Title	Page
12.6.2	Wind Energy	288

Insert the following text in Section 12.6.2 *Wind Energy* after Figure 12.4 *Sensitivity Mapping Highlighting Areas of Potential Wind Energy Development*:

The central aim of the sieve mapping and technical analysis undertaken is to highlight areas of the county with the potential to accommodate wind energy development identified as ‘Available Areas’ in Figures 6.3 and 6.3b of the *County Leitrim Renewable Energy Strategy*, subject to significant landscape/visual constraints amongst other environmental considerations. Notwithstanding the areas identified in Figures 6.3 and 6.3b of the RES, this does not preclude projects, typically of smaller-scale, from being brought forward in other areas including land adjacent to ‘Available Areas’, subject to other project-specific environmental considerations and assessments.

Moreover, it is accepted that that minimum setback distances from sensitive receptors (i.e. dwellings) can be relaxed where wind energy project developers can demonstrate the written consent of affected landowners and householders and which can be taken into consideration in the assessment of any planning application for wind energy development where this arises.

Proposed Amendment MA 87		
Section	Title	Page
12.6.2	Wind Energy	290

Insert the following text in Section 12.6.2 *Wind Energy* after Table 12.3 *Co. Leitrim Wind Energy Target Potential to 2030*:

Notwithstanding the targets provided above in Table 12.3, it should be noted that the figures provided do not represent a ‘ceiling’ or ‘cap’ on the potential of renewable energy that can be generated in the county up to 2030. The figures provided are seen as practicable and achievable targets for the county over this period. Moreover, the Plan notes the provisions of Action 102 of the Climate Action Plan 2021 which includes an objective to develop a new spatial policy for large scale wind and solar development, in support of the target to increase the share of electricity demand generated from renewable sources to up to 80% and that this will be implemented through a regional planning initiative. When implemented, this will give counties like Leitrim the platform to review and if necessary, revise upward the renewable electricity targets contained in this Draft Plan.

Proposed Amendment MA 88		
Section	Title	Page
12.6.4	Bioenergy	294

Insert the following text as the first paragraph in Section 12.6.4 *Bioenergy*:

Bioenergy forms part of a wider bioeconomy framework which comprises those parts of the economy that use biological resources from land and sea to produce food, feed and bio-based materials and energy. The National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy (Government of Ireland, 2018) sets out the ambition for Ireland to be a global leader for the bio-economy, through a co-ordinated approach that harnesses Ireland’s natural resources, and competitive advantage. It seeks to promote greater coherence between the sectors of the bio-economy, to strengthen the development of bio-based products and grow the relevant markets for them, and to access funding available at EU level as well as leveraging private investment. Moreover, the NPF and the RSES highlight the potential of the bioeconomy in promoting more efficient use of renewable resources and in supporting rural economic development and employment.

Proposed Amendment MA 89		
Section	Title	Page
12.6.4	Bioenergy Policies	294

Insert the following policy in Section 12.6.4 *Bioenergy* of the Draft Plan:

BE POL 5 To support the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy (Government of Ireland, 2018) and any review thereof, having consideration to the strategic

importance of the bio-economy to rural Co. Leitrim and support the NWRA in its preparation of a feasibility study for the Northern and Western Region to identify (and map) areas of potential growth to inform the National Transition Agenda, enabling a Low Carbon, resilient nation.

Proposed Amendment MA 90		
Section	Title	Page
12.6.4	<i>Bioenergy Policies</i>	294

Insert the following policy in Section 12.6.4 *Bioenergy* of the Draft Plan:

BE POL 6 To support, in principle, the development of appropriately scaled local multi-feedstock bio-refining hubs across the region as well as the potential creation of bio-districts/clusters.

CHAPTER 13: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Proposed Amendment MA 91

Section	Title	Page
13.9.1	<i>Building Heights</i>	308

Amend text in Section 13.9.1 *Building Heights* as follows:

*~~"In all settlements~~ **Elsewhere**, other than Carrick-on-Shannon, the extent of any increased building height shall be limited to 3-4 storeys high. Any increase in building height above this ~~limitation is considered unacceptable with~~ **will be carefully considered due to** the potential to give rise to considerable adverse impacts on the character, scale and form of such settlements as well as adverse impacts on residential amenity".*

Proposed Amendment MA 92

Section	Title	Page
13.13.1	<i>Service Stations</i>	326

Insert the following additional bullet point in Section 13.13.1 *Service Stations*:

*Proposals for new on-line or off-line motorway service facilities will be assessed in accordance with the guidance set out in the *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DECLG (2012)*.*

Proposed Amendment MA 93

Section	Title	Page
13.13.5	<i>Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage</i>	327

Insert the following additional paragraph in Section 13.13.5 *Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage*:

*Signage on National Roads will be strictly controlled and will generally be only permitted in accordance with the provisions set out in Section 3.8 of the *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012)* and the *TII Policy on the Provision of Tourism and Leisure Signage on National Roads (2011)*.*

Proposed Amendment MA 94		
Section	Title	Page
13.15.1	Natural Heritage	332

Amend the fourth paragraph of Section 13.15.1 *Natural Heritage* as follows:

Where full Appropriate Assessment is required, the assessment shall be based on best scientific knowledge **and undertaken** by a person with **appropriate** ecological expertise **and qualifications**. It shall address the potential impacts of the plan or project on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site. The impacts assessed must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of approving the plan or project, considered with any current or proposed activities, developments or policies impacting on the site. The potential impacts of policies outside Natura 2000 sites but potentially impacting upon them (known as ‘*ex situ*’ impacts) must also be included in the assessment. (Refer to: ‘*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities*’, DoEHLG (2009)).

Proposed Amendment MA 95		
Section	Title	Page
13.6	Transport	334

Amend text relating to the last paragraph of Section 13.16 *Transport* as follows:

In respect of road design issues within towns and villages, the Council will have regard to the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (DMURS) (DTTS and DECLG, 2013, updated 2019~~20~~) **and the TII publication, *The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads* (TII Publications DN-GEO-03084).**

Proposed Amendment MA 96		
Section	Title	Page
13.6.1	Traffic and Transport Assessments	334

Amend text in Section 13.16.1 *Traffic and Transport Assessments* as follows:

Where a new development has significant car trip potential, a detailed assessment of (i) the transportation systems available, and (ii) the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding environment and transportation network should be appraised through the submission of a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA). Traffic and Transport Assessment is a methodology used to assess the transport impacts of a proposed development, incorporating any subsequent measures necessary to ensure roads and junctions and other transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development remains fit for purpose and encourages a shift towards sustainable travel modes. Traffic and transport assessments shall be carried out in accordance with the ‘*Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines*’ (NRA/TII, 2014) and shall be applicable for all categories of road.

Subthreshold developments will be considered on a case-by-case basis having regard to the relevant criteria contained in the 'Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines'.

Proposed Amendment MA 97		
Section	Title	Page
13.6.4	Entrances and Sightlines	335

Amend the last paragraph of Section 13.16.4 *Entrances and Sightlines* as follows:

A relaxation of these sight distance requirements may be considered satisfactory in exceptional circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated that no other suitable alternative proposal is available and where the proposal would be in accordance with the provisions as set out in the ~~NRA/TII 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges – NRA TD 41-42/11'~~ or the ~~'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street'~~ (DTTS and DECLG, 2013, updated 2019), as appropriate. **Publications.**

Proposed Amendment MA 98		
Section	Title	Page
13.6.10	EV Charging Points	338

Amend Section 13.16.10 – *EV Charging Points* as follows:

All developments should provide facilities for the charging of battery-operated cars at a rate of up to ~~10%~~ **20%** of the total car parking spaces. The remainder of the parking spaces should be constructed (wiring and ducting provided) so as to be capable of accommodating future charging points, as required. New residential development should accommodate at least one car parking space equipped with two EV charging points for every ten no. car parking spaces being provided for the associated development. The remainder of the car parking spaces should be constructed so as to be capable of accommodating future charging points, as required. EV charging spaces should be clearly demarcated with appropriate signage.

Proposed Amendment MA 99		
Section	Title	Page
13.18.2	Extractive Industries	342

Amend Section 13.18.2 – *Extractive Industries* as follows:

The Planning Authority will not facilitate the development of the extractive industry and permit such workings unless it has been shown that the following criteria can be met; having taken into account the reduced demand for aggregates that will come about through improved recycling of construction and demolition waste:



- The environment and the landscape will be safeguarded to the greatest possible extent during all life cycle stages of the process,
- Such operations have good access to, or are within reasonable distance of, the national or regional road network and do not adversely affect the residential or tourism amenity of the area,
- Satisfactory provision will be made for a beneficial after use of the land that does not conflict with other planning objectives for the area,
- The working, landscaping, restoration and after care of the site will be carried out to the highest standards in accordance with the approved scheme.

The development, continuation of use or diversification of activities relating to the extractive industry will be assessed having regard to the *'Quarrying and Ancillary Activities Guidelines'* (DoEHLG, 2004) (or any superseding national policy document), *'Guidelines for Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry'* (EPA, 2006), *'Guidance on Biodiversity in the Extractive Industry'* (NPWS), *'Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry'* (GSI, 2008), the Archaeological Code of Practice (2009) and the Irish Concrete Federation Environmental Code (2005) and any other relevant superseding policy guidance.

Applicants should submit the following information at application stage:

- Map showing total site area, highlighting area to be excavated, and any ancillary proposed development, nearest dwellings, or any other development (within 1 km of the site)
- Description of the aggregate(s) to be extracted, method of extraction, any ancillary processes (such as crushing, concrete manufacture, etc.), equipment to be used, stockpiles, storage of soil and overburden, storage of waste materials and proposed/existing settling ponds
- Total and annual tonnage of extracted aggregates, expected life of the extraction, maximum extent and depth of working and proposed phasing programme
- Description of development works (buildings, fixed and mobile plant, roads, fuel tanks, water supply and drainage, earth mounds, etc.)
- Description of water courses and water table depth, natural and cultural heritage, traffic impact and waste management
- Description of cumulative impact when taken together with other quarries in the vicinity
- Likely environmental effects including the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report where relevant
- Proposed mitigation measures
- Phased restoration and after-care proposals, and
- Proposals for surface water management and flood risk minimisation.

Where proposals for the working out of minerals and aggregates are submitted in the *Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)* or an *Area of High Visual Amenity (AHVA)*, existing landscape quality shall remain the overriding priority and such proposals must illustrate that the benefits of the development will outweigh any adverse environmental consequences. The Planning Authority shall evaluate the need to conserve the environment, character and natural beauty of AONBs and AHVAs and the extent to which the proposed development would materially damage these qualities. It shall also examine the national need for that specific mineral or aggregate substance to be worked and the availability of the resource in less sensitive locations.

The Council may require the submission of an EIAR for sub-threshold development where it is considered that the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The restoration of disused pits and quarries to productive agricultural use will be encouraged where

appropriate having regard to all appropriate environmental considerations. Other possible post closure uses may be considered such as recreational facilities and natural habitat areas.

A condition requiring the lodgement of a financial bond will be included in any grant of permission to ensure the satisfactory reinstatement of the site following the completion of extraction. A Special Development Contribution in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), may be imposed for the upgrade or maintenance of the local road network to facilitate the proposed development.

Proposed Amendment MA 100		
Section	Title	Page
13.19.1	<i>Caravan, Glamping and Camping Developments</i>	343

Remove the second bullet point of Section 13.19.1 *Caravan, Glamping and Camping Developments* as follows:

- ~~Compliance with the Regulations for Caravan and Camping Parks (Bord Fáilte 2009)~~

Proposed Amendment MA 101		
Section	Title	Page
13.20.1	<i>Wind Energy</i>	345

Insert the following additional bullet point in the fourth paragraph of Section 13.20.1 *Wind Energy*:

- **Impact on peat stability and robust geotechnical assessment of potential for peat slippage.**