

Appendix 2- Strategic Policy Guidance and Legislation

This is not intended to read as an exhaustive list of relevant policy documents.

International Context

The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe-the Granada Convention-1985 (ETS No 121).

The Convention was ratified by Ireland in 1997 and recognises that architectural heritage constitutes an irreplaceable expression of the richness and diversity of Europe's cultural heritage which fosters the economic, social and cultural development of states and regions.

The European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage the Valetta Convention -1992 (ETS NO 143).

The Convention provides the basic framework for policy on the protection of archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory. The State undertakes to seek to reconcile and combine the respective requirements of archaeology and development plans by ensuring that archaeologists participate in planning policies, development schemes, development plans,

Convention on Biological Diversity-1992

Under the Convention, each country agrees to undertake a number of actions to halt the loss of biodiversity and reduce threats to ecosystems services, including the development of a National Biodiversity Plan or Strategy.

The Habitats Directive and Appropriate Assessment-92/43/EEC-1997

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as “The Habitats Directive”, provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA):

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

This requirement is implemented in the Republic of Ireland by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477/2011) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The DoEHLG published Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities in December 2009 (revised in February 2010).

European Landscape Convention –The Florence Convention-2000 (ETS No 176).

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) – known as the Florence Convention (ETS No. 176) - defines landscape as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”, and applies to both rural and urban landscapes. The Convention requires landscape to be integrated into planning policies and promotes interaction between local and central authorities, and transfrontier cooperation to protect landscapes. The Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended) state that landscape in the Act has the same meaning as in Article 1 of the ELC. The Convention recognises that landscape has an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields, and constitutes a resource favourable to economic activity and whose protection, management and planning can contribute to job creation and is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere. Article 5 of the Convention states that each Party undertakes:

- a) To recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity;
- b) To establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning through the adoption of the specific measures set out in Article 6;
- c) to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies mentioned in paragraph (b) above;
- d) To integrate landscape into its regional and town planning policies and in its cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as in any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape.

Article 6 of the convention details specific measures for each party to undertake including the establishment of procedures for enhanced public participation, awareness raising, training and education, identification and assessment of landscapes, formulation of landscape objectives, and implementation of landscape policies and management instruments.

European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations-2014

All drinking water must comply with the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2014 which set standards for 48 individual microbiological, chemical and indicator parameters. Irish Water is responsible for the production and distribution of drinking water from public water supplies. These regulations provide the EPA with supervisory powers for public water supplies. The EPA can direct Irish Water to improve the management or quality of a public water supply. The Local Authorities have a similar supervisory role in relation to certain group water schemes and small private supplies. Under the regulations, Irish Water must notify the EPA of drinking water quality failures or risk to public health from a public water supply. Irish Water are required to carry out regular monitoring of public water supplies and group water schemes, and submit these results to the Environmental Protection Agency each year for their Annual Report on Drinking Water Quality.

EU Floods Directive-2007

The EU Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks [2007/60/EC], often referred to as the 'Floods' Directive, came into force late in 2007². The Floods Directive was transposed into Irish Law in 2010 (Statutory Instrument No. 122 of 2010 European Communities (Assessment and

Management of Flood Risks) Regulations 2010. The Regulations set out the responsibilities of the OPW and other public bodies in the implementation of the Directive and detail the process for implementation of the measures set out in the Flood Risk Management Plans.

Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and access to Justice in Environmental Matters-The Aarhus Convention-1998

The Aarhus Convention lays down a set of basic roles to promote citizens involvement in environmental matters and improve enforcement of environmental Law; its provisions are broken down into three Pillars: Access to information, Public Participation in environmental decision making and Access to justice. Same has given rise to the European Directive 2003/4/EC on Public Participation, both of which have been transposed into Irish Law. Ireland ratified the Convention on 20th June 2012.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)-1992

A range of international climate change agreements and frameworks have been approved that provide information on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptations. The work of the UNFCCC provides countries with detailed technical information, including current and future climate change projections, which enables them to determine practical adaptation actions to improve their long term resilience.

Linked to the work of the UNFCCC – The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, on 11 December 1997 and took effect from 16th February 2005. It sets binding targets for 37 industrialised countries and the European Community for reducing emissions. Additionally, ‘The Paris Agreement’ was agreed on 12 December 2015. All 196 members under the umbrella of the UNFCCC agreed to hold the increase in global temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to keep the more stringent target of below 1.5 degrees in sight. The European Union and its Member States provide funding and support to climate change adaptation in countries within the UNFCCC.

European Union Adaptation Strategy-2013.

The European Union published its Adaptation Strategy in April 2013 with the overall aim of increasing climate resilience across Europe. Through increased coordination and providing a more consolidated approach, the Adaptation Strategy will enhance the preparedness and effectiveness of all governance levels to respond to the impacts of climate change

The Strategy is focused on three key objectives:

- Promoting action by Member States
- ‘Climate-proofing’ action at EU level
- Better informed decision making

The primary adaptation initiatives promoted by the Strategy are achieved through the provision of mitigation and adaptation requirements within EU sector policies and funding mechanisms. The initiatives run across a range of areas including:

- infrastructure and buildings
- marine and inland water issues
- forestry
- agriculture and
- social cohesion

National Context

The Local Government Reform Act-2014

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 gives legislative effect to the proposals contained in ‘Putting People First’, and provides for a range of changes to the organisation and work of local authorities. Local Authorities are now required to develop a Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) which seeks to establish an integrated approach to economic and local community development at county level, while Regional Assemblies are in turn required to produce Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies. Further changes include the establishment of the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC’s), and Local Enterprise Offices (LEO’s) within Local Authorities. A new Regional Assembly Structure has been established reducing the total number of regions to 3; Meath is located within the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA).

The National Monuments Acts 1930-2004

The Acts provide for the protection of the archaeological heritage. There are a number of protective mechanisms:

- 1). Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister or a local authority or subject to a Preservation Order or Temporary Preservation Order:

All excavation, digging, ploughing or disturbance of the ground in proximity to National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, or of the Local Authority or subject to a Preservation Order, requires the consent in writing of the Minister (Section 14 as substituted by Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004).

The details of National Monuments in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, or subject to a preservation order, are contained in Appendix 11. In relation to all such sites, Meath County Council recommends that potential developers consult as early as possible with the relevant agencies (such as the National Monuments Service of the Department of the Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) and Meath County Council in order to ensure that archaeological concerns can be integrated into development proposals at as early a stage as possible.

Where necessary, the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will make Preservation Orders to ensure protection is afforded to national monument sites believed to be under threat.

2). Monuments on the Register of Historic Monuments established under the Section 5 of the National Monuments (Amendment Act) 1987.

Under the provisions of Section 5(8) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987 any person who plans to carry out work in the vicinity of a monument recorded on the Register of Historic Monuments must give 2 months notice to the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Owners of lands on which a monument listed on the Register of Historic Monuments is situated have been notified of the presence of the monument and the legal protection which applies.

3). Monuments on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

Structures, features, objects or sites listed in the RMP are known as Recorded Monuments. The RMP also delineates zones of archaeological potential around the core area of certain historic towns to protect their significant archaeological heritage.

Under the provisions of Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994, any person who plans to undertake development work which may impinge upon a Recorded Monument or area of archaeological potential must give 2 months written notice to the Minister for the Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Copies of the Record of Monuments and Places for County Meath are available for public consultation in the Council's Planning Department, throughout the network of libraries in County Meath or online at www.archaeology.ie.

Furthermore, Section 26(2) of the National Monuments Act provides that any digging or excavation work for archaeological purposes must be carried out under licence issued by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Details of archaeological licences and how to apply can be found on the website www.archaeology.ie.

Section 3 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987 makes specific provisions for the protection of shipwrecks and underwater archaeological objects. Meath's rivers and tidal estuaries may contain such objects and any development within these areas should take into consideration the potential for archaeological discoveries.

Apart from the National Monuments Acts The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, formerly the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, has issued a number of key policy or guidance documents on archaeological heritage including:

Waste Management Acts 1996-2013

Waste management in Ireland is regulated by the Waste Management Acts, 1996 to 2013, which require Local Authorities to prepare detailed plans on the management of waste. It involves the provision of recycling facilities, enforcement of litter legislation, implementation of packaging and other regulations, and the provision of education on all aspects of the environment. By virtue of the provisions of the Waste Management Acts 1996-2013 the objectives of the Waste Management Plan are deemed to be included in the Plan of the area.

Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage-1999; Policy and Guidance on Archaeological Excavation-1999

A National Policy on Town Defences was published in 2008, which states that the known and expected circuits of the defences (both upstanding and buried, whether of stone or embankment construction) and associated features of all town defences are to be considered a single national monument and treated as a unit for policy and management purposes. This framework outlines a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ of archaeological remains and preservation of their character, setting and amenity. Town walls and defences survive to a greater or lesser extent in the towns of Trim, Kells, Navan and Athboy.

Ministerial Guidelines

The provisions of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) allow for the issuing of guidelines by the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government to Planning Authorities regarding their functions, which the authorities must have regard to in the carrying out of their functions. A large number of these guidelines have been issued addressing a range of topics including development management, Development Plans, childcare facilities, retail development, the provision of schools and the planning system, architectural heritage protection, quarries, flood risk and ancillary facilities and residential development in urban areas.

Section 28(1B) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that a statement be appended to the Development Plan which demonstrates how the Planning Authority has implemented the policies and objectives contained in the Ministerial guidelines when considering their application to the Development Plan area. Section 28(1B) also requires that the statement should demonstrate, if applicable, that the Planning Authority has formed the opinion that it is not possible, because of the nature and characteristics of the Development Plan area or a part thereof, to implement certain policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the guidelines when considering the application of the those policies in the Development Plan area and must give reasons for the forming of this opinion and why the policies and objectives of the Minister have not been implemented.

The statement as required under Section 29(1B) is included as Appendix 15 of the Development Plan.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) Meath-2002

The work of the NIAH involves identifying and recording the architectural heritage of Ireland, from 1700 to the present day. Ministerial recommendations for the addition of structures to the RPS are made on the basis of the evaluations of the NIAH. The NIAH carried out a desktop survey of Historic Gardens and Demesnes in Ireland, which commenced in 2003 and identified approximately 300 such sites in the County.

Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatment Systems for Single Houses-EPA-2021 as amended.

The EPA Code of Practice: Wastewater Treatments Systems for Single Houses establishes an overall framework of best practice in relation to the development of wastewater treatment and disposal systems in un-sewered rural areas, in order to promote the protection of the environment and

specifically water quality. All planning applications for rural dwellings on unserved sites are required to demonstrate compliance with the Code of Practice³.

Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Water Services-Dept of Housing, Planning & Local Government-2018

These Guidelines are intended to provide best practice guidance in relation to the interface between the statutory planning and development functions of the Planning Authorities and the delivery of water services by Irish Water. The key aims of the guidelines are to:

- Provide advice to planning authorities on the operational framework within which Irish water must operate to deliver water services;
- Establish mechanisms for effective engagement between Planning Authorities and Irish water across all relevant functions of Planning Authorities, and Draft Meath County Development Plan 2020-2026
- Ensure that the planning process, in setting out a spatial framework for national growth and development, will relate to and inform the planning and delivery of water services by Irish Water at national, regional and local levels.

Wastewater Discharge Licenses/Authorisations -2007

Effluent discharges to waters require a licence in accordance with Section 4 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 to 1990. The Council monitors and enforces all discharge licences to waters to ensure compliance with discharge licence conditions. Irish Water is responsible for issuing and enforcing Section 16 discharge licences to public sewers.

Water Services Acts 2007-2014

The Water Services Act 2007-2014 incorporate a comprehensive review, update and consolidation of all existing water services legislation, and facilitates the establishment of a comprehensive supervisory regime to ensure compliance with specified performance standards. The Act includes provision to introduce a licensing system to regulate the operations of group water services schemes, amend the Environmental Protection Act 1992 to assign responsibility for supervision of sanitary authority water supplies to the EPA, strengthen administrative arrangements for planning the delivery of water services at national and local level, and place duties of care on users of water services in relation to

water conservation, protection of collection and distribution networks, and prevention of risk to public health and the environment.

As per Section 36 of the Water Services Acts 2007-2014, Meath County Council, as the Water Services Authority, is required to produce a Water Services Strategic Plan having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of its functional area. The Plan shall have regard to the provisions of —

- Relevant Development Plans, regional or spatial planning guidelines, housing strategies or special amenity area orders, as appropriate, made under the Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended),
- A water quality management plan or a programme of measures made under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 as amended for the area to be covered by the water services strategic plan, or for any other area that could affect that plan,
- A Waste Management Plan under the Waste Management Acts 1996 to 2013 for the area to be covered by the water services strategic plan, or for any other area that could affect that plan,
- River basin management plans and associated programmes of measures under the EU Water Framework Directive for the area to be covered by the Water Services Strategic Plan, or for any other area that could affect that plan.

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities-Dept of Environment, Community and Local Government-2009

This document addresses flood risk management within the planning system. It requires that a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) be prepared as part of a County Development Plan review in support the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan. The SFRA is carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009) and will form part of the Development Plan.

The Guidelines also inform the development management process in terms of the carrying out of site specific flood risk assessments (where required) and the application of the sequential approach and justification tests , where required. In tandem with the advice from the OPW.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)-2005

Following on from the GSDSDS the local authorities in the GDA introduced new policies in relation to surface water drainage. These provisions included a commitment to the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new public and private developments, effective implementation of this

policy will ensure that any future development does not increase flooding or pollution of water bodies. SuDS aim to mimic the natural drainage of a site to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of waterways. The Council and Irish Water strongly endorse and advocate the comprehensive application of SuDS in the County in the interests of environmental sustainability.

Project Ireland 2040-National Planning Framework-2018

As referred to in Section 1.3 of the Plan the National Planning Framework was adopted and published in July 2018. This document proposes a shift in policy away from ‘*balanced regional development*’ and the designation of ‘*gateways and hubs*’ as set out in the NSS as follows “*From an administrative and planning point of view, Ireland is divided in to three regions: the Northern and Western, Southern, and Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly areas. We need to manage more balanced growth between these three regions because at the moment Dublin, and to a lesser extent the wider Eastern and Midland area, has witnessed an overconcentration of population, homes and jobs. We cannot let this continue unchecked and so our aim is to see a roughly 50:50 distribution of growth between the Eastern and Midland region, and the Southern and Northern and Western regions, with 75% of the growth to be outside of Dublin and its suburbs. More balanced growth also means more concentrated growth.*”¹ A greater emphasis has been placed on the concentration of development in cities and their surrounding metropolitan areas, with a target of 50% of national growth up to 2040 being directed to the 5 cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, and Waterford. There is less emphasis on the growth of large towns below city level, other than a statement that large towns with population >10,000 in 2016 in the Eastern and Midland Region should grow up to 30% between 2016 and 2040. Small Towns with a population of <10,000 have a targeted growth of 15% of their 2016 population by 2040.

An NPF Implementation Roadmap, published in July 2018 has factored in a ‘transition period’ that takes account of current land use zonings and extant permissions. This period of transition is to operate until 2026 with the intention that growth would slow in the Eastern and Midland Region post 2026. At this time, it is intended that a comprehensive assessment of the first full round of City/County Development Plans prepared under the NPF and RSEs will be carried out to identify if the National and Regional Policy Objectives are being successfully implemented.

Project Ireland 2040-National Development Plan -2018-2027

The National Development Plan sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the new National Planning Framework (NPF). This will guide national, regional and

¹ Page 11 of the NPF

local planning and investment decisions in Ireland over the next two decades, to cater for an expected population increase of over 1 million people.

The National Development Plan sets out the Government's commitment to meeting Ireland's infrastructure and investment needs over the next ten years, through a total investment estimated at €116 billion over the period. This level of capital spending will ensure ongoing employment maintenance and creation with appropriate regional development. It will also provide clarity to the construction sector, allowing the industry to provide the capacity and capability required to deliver Government's long-term investment plans.

The National Development Plan also illustrates the commitment to reforming how public investment is planned and delivered. This will be achieved through a decisive shift to integrated regional investment plans, stronger co-ordination of sectoral strategies and more rigorous selection and appraisal of projects to secure value-for-money. A new funding model for Exchequer funded public investment is being put in place to ensure that resources are allocated to projects and programmes that meet NDP priorities. This includes a number of innovations being introduced in the NDP, including:

- Long-term (10 year) strategic approach to investment, in support of the 10 National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF.
- Sustained increase in investment share of national income to meet infrastructural needs.
- All Departments' capital programmes fully funded for 5-year period.
- Longer term key Strategic Investment Priorities funded to completion.
- Establishment of four new funds, with a combined allocation of €4 billion, to be allocated on a competitive basis for projects which meet the criteria of the funds.
- Establishment of a new National Regeneration and Development Agency to maximise the potential use of under-utilised land banks in cities and towns.

Smarter Travel-A Sustainable Travel Future-2009-2020

“Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Travel Future 2009-2020” details Government policy in the area of transport. Five key goals are set out in the document:

- (i) To reduce overall travel demand,
- (ii) To maximise the efficiency of the transport network,
- (iii) To reduce reliance on fossil fuels,
- (iv) To reduce transport emissions,
- (v) To improve accessibility to transport.

National Transport Authority-Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035

This transport strategy provides a framework for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in the Greater Dublin Area over the next two decades. The strategy has identified that since the 1990’s car ownership in Meath has consistently risen even through the recession years and is now reaching saturation point. Cycling mode share in the County is low. The strategy emphasises the need for additional walking and cycling infrastructure in the region and outlines the improvements required to achieve this.

National Cycle Policy Framework-2009-2020

The “National Cycle Policy Framework 2009- 2020” is complementary to the aspirations of “Smarter Travel”. The intention of the document is to create a strong cycling culture in Ireland and ensure that all areas are bicycle friendly. It references the role that planning has in supporting and encouraging the use of bicycles and refers to the need for local authorities to have policies, objectives and action plans consistent with the Policy Framework. Several wide ranging objectives to improve the conditions for cycling and to encourage more users of this mode of transport are detailed. A number of these are particularly applicable to planning and include:

- Supporting the planning, development and design of towns and cities in a cycling and pedestrian friendly way. This emphasises the need for more compact, mixed use

developments which are permeable and well connected to existing developments, ensuring more direct routes for the more sustainable modes of travel.

- Ensuring that the urban road infrastructure (with the exception of motorways) is designed/retrofitted so as to be cyclist friendly and that traffic management measures are also cyclist friendly. A new approach is needed to the design of urban roads in which the car does not dominate.
- Providing cycle friendly routes to all schools, adequate cycling parking facilities within schools and cycling training to all school pupils. There must be a special focus on making the trip to school and college safe and attractive for cyclists as part of creating a cycling culture.
- Providing secure parking for bikes. It must be easy for cyclists to park their bikes as close as possible to their destination.

Investing in our Transport Future-A Strategic Investment Framework for Land Transport-Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport-2015.

This document considers the role transport should play in the future of the Irish Economy and seeks to identify a strategy for the development and management of Irelands land transport network. The framework is intended to guide key land transport investment decisions over the next number of decades. The document also provides a set of criteria against which to assess national and regional land use planning policy, including the development of a possible new spatial planning framework. It also functions as a filter for new transport investment projects prior to their appraisal for suitability for inclusion in national or regional schemes.

Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government 2012.

These guidelines set out planning policy considerations relating to development affecting national primary and secondary roads, including motorways and associated junctions, outside the 50-60 kmph speed limit zones for cities, towns and villages

Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan-2014-2024

This document focuses on establishing an inventory of cycling facilities in Dublin, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow and identifies potential cycle routes such as greenways, cycle paths, cycle lanes, and roads. The plan sets out a ten year strategy to guide investment into cycling in the GDA and seeks to increase the regions cycle network fivefold in length to 2,840km. 4

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) –Department Transport Tourism and Sport and Department of Environment and Local Government-2013

The focus of the manual is to create streets that are safe, attractive and comfortable for all users. It presents a series of principles, approaches and standards that are necessary to achieve balanced, best practice design outcomes with regard to street networks and individual streets. *Well designed streets can create connected physical, social and transport networks that promote real alternatives to car journeys, namely walking, cycling or public transport.* The manual gives guidance on the layout of new developments and on the design of individual roads and streets taking into account streetscapes, urban design as well as engineering criteria. The manual must be taken into account by all Planning Authorities when permitting or planning development.

National Aviation Policy for Ireland- Department Transport Tourism and Sport - 2015

This document serves as a general guidance document for the development of aviation within the Country. It highlights three principal goals for the Irish aviation sector:

- *To enhance Irelands connectivity by ensuring safe, secure and competitive access, responsive to the needs of business, tourism and consumers;*
- *To foster the growth of aviation enterprise in Ireland to support job creation and position Ireland as a recognised global leader in aviation; and,*
- *To maximise the contribution of the aviation sector to Irelands economic growth and development.*

Government Policy on Architecture-2009-2015

The Government Policy on Architecture 2009- 2015 recognises the place of architecture in society as an expression of cultural, aesthetic, and social values, both past and present, and the challenges and expectations of the future in shaping a sustainable quality environment. Its publication comes at a time of increased public interest in these issues and its recommendations include the implementation of 45 actions by a number of government departments, the Office of Public Works, the Heritage Council, the Arts Council, local authorities and other agencies.

The implementation programme of the Policy will be carried out on the basis of prioritisation of the actions. Recognising that such priorities will be subject to further inbuilt processes and reviews, the timeframe for delivery of individual actions should be seen in the context of the overall timeframe of the Policy, while recognising that many actions will have a lifetime that extends beyond 2015.

Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities-2011

The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 are issued under Section 28 and Section 52 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended). Under Section 52(1), the Minister is obliged to issue guidelines to planning authorities concerning development objectives,

a) for protecting structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, and

b) for preserving the character of architectural conservation areas. Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Act require planning authorities to have regard to them in the performance of their functions.

A Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland-DoECLG-2012

The objectives of the Framework are to identify and prioritise policy areas and mechanisms where a sustainable development approach will add value and enable continuous improvement of quality of life for current and future generations and set out clear measures, responsibilities and timelines in an implementation plan. The Framework draws on the model established by the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and concentrates on gaps where limited progress has been made and which still present formidable challenges. The priorities for action cut across many of the key challenges and include:

- An effective framework for transition to an innovative, low-carbon and resource-efficient society;
- Identifying and adopting policies that can help achieve a shift towards greener growth;
- Protecting and restoring our biodiversity and ecosystems so that benefits essential for all sectors of society will be delivered;
- Protecting and enhancing Ireland's green infrastructure which can be defined as a 'network of green spaces that help conserve natural ecosystems and provide benefit to human populations through, for example, water purification, flood control, food production and recreation'. Such spaces include woodlands, coastlines, flood plains, inland lakes and rivers, hedgerows and city parks;
- Securing health, social well being and gender equity to enable full participation in society and economic development;
- Effective governance arrangements to ensure delivery of sustainable development;

- A partnership approach to implementation of the Framework;
- Developing a set of indicators to measure and report on progress.

Ireland's 4th National Energy Efficiency Action Plan-Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment 2017-2020

Ireland's 4th National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP) published in 2017 reaffirms the country's commitment to delivering a 20% reduction in energy demand across the economy by 2020 in tandem with a more challenging target of 33% reduction in public sector energy use. The NEEAP outlines energy efficient measures that will be implemented to reach the national energy saving targets.

National Mitigation Plan -2017

Confronting climate change is the global imperative of our generation. It presents huge challenges as well as opportunities for Ireland and for the international community. We must meet these challenges and grasp these opportunities head on if we are to achieve the transformation that will be required to enable the Country to transition effectively to a low carbon and climate resilient future.

This is a whole-of-Government Plan, reflecting in particular the central roles of the key Ministers responsible for the sectors covered by the Plan – Electricity Generation, the Built Environment, Transport and Agriculture, as well as drawing on the perspectives and responsibilities of a range of other Government Departments. Government has already implemented a wide range of policies and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the economy and we are actively developing proposals to further expand measures already in place and to implement additional measures. This Plan describes in detail these existing measures and those under consideration. Ireland faces a significant task in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, the current profile of which reflects both the particular structure of our economy as well as the outcome of curtailed public and private investment capacity over the course of recent years. The choices available to us to achieve the deep decarbonisation required are neither straightforward nor cost-free.

The measures we develop now will position Ireland to harness a range of benefits into the future, for example in terms of the creation of sustainable green jobs, sustaining food production, deepening our energy security, improving the quality of our lives and making our working and built environments healthier. In this way the measures that are implemented through this Plan will lay the foundations

for transitioning Ireland to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.

To support this ongoing work, the Plan also includes over 100 individual actions for various Ministers and public bodies to take forward as we move to implementation of what will be a living document. Progress will be reported on by Government annually in its Annual Transition Statement, and will be supplemented as necessary by further actions and measures each year. Importantly, the Government recognises that this first Plan does not provide a complete roadmap to achieve the 2050 objective, but begins the process of development of medium to long term mitigation choices for the next and future decades. This will be an ongoing process, including the preparation of successive National Mitigation Plans at least every five years as provided for in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, 2015. To support the inclusive nature of this work, the Government has also established a National Dialogue on Climate Action. The National Dialogue will provide an opportunity to create awareness, engagement and motivation to act (locally, regionally and nationally).

National Adaptation Framework-Planning for a Climate resilient Ireland-2018

The National Adaptation Framework (NAF) sets out Ireland's first statutory strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different Government sectors, including the local authorities. This 'NAF – Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland' was published on 19 January 2018. The Framework aims to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change but also seeks to promote any positive effects that may occur.

This NAF will build on the substantial work already carried out under the existing NCCAF and ensure that climate adaptation in Ireland is brought forward in line with EU and international best practice.

Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act-2015

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 is the key policy instrument to address the issue of climate change in Ireland. The Act sets out a roadmap for Ireland's transition towards a low carbon economy and details mechanisms for the implementation of the 'National Low Carbon Transition and Mitigation Plan' (National Mitigation Plan) published on the 19/07/2017, to lower Ireland's level of greenhouse emissions and a 'National Climate Change Adaptation Framework' (National Adaptation Framework) final submissions accepted on the 27/10/17 and 27 submissions received, to provide for responses to changes caused by climate change – Both of which were be

submitted for approval in 2018. They will be renewed every five years and are required to include tailored sectoral plans.

The Act requires public bodies to actively consider mitigation and adaptation efforts, drawing on the objectives set out in the National Low-Carbon Roadmap, national adaptation framework and sectoral adaptation plans

National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (NCCAF)-2012

The Framework provides the policy context for a strategic national adaptation response to climate change in Ireland. It highlights the role of planning and development in implementing adaptation measures and recognises the benefits of wider stakeholder engagement in achieving climate change objectives at a local level.

The NCCAF provides an overview of challenges for sectors that are impacted from climate change, including:

- water,
- coasts,
- marine,
- agriculture,
- forestry,
- biodiversity,
- energy,
- transport,
- communications,
- insurance,
- heritage;
- and health

The European Green Deal

The European Green Deal plans to make the EU's economy sustainable and climate neutral by 2050 and position the EU as a Global leader. This will be achieved by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities, and making the transition just and inclusive for all. The goals of the Green Deal will be enshrined in law. Actions under the Green Deal include:

- The Just Transition Mechanism: making sure no one is left behind

- Investing in Climate neutral and circular economy
- EU funded projects to green the economy
- A Climate Pact
- Circular Economy Action Plan
- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
- Renovation Wave
- Methane Strategy
- Offshore Renewable Energy
- A new European Bauhaus
- Chemicals Strategy for sustainability
- European Year of Rail 2021
- From Farm to Fork

Climate Action Plan – To Tackle Climate Breakdown

The Climate Action Plan is a national policy document adopted in 2019. The Plan identifies the critical nature of the challenge faced as a result of global warming. The Plan underpins this ambition to deliver a step-change in our emissions performance over the coming decade by setting out clear 2030 targets for each sector and the expected emissions savings that will result. The overall aim will allow Ireland to meet its EU targets for 2030 and will also be well placed to meet our mid-century decarbonisation objectives.

The National Marine Planning Framework

The NMPF is a national plan for Ireland's maritime area, setting out, over a 20 year horizon, how we want to use, protect and enjoy our seas. The NMPF sits at the top of the hierarchy of plans and sectoral policies for the marine area. The plan has been informed by existing sectoral plans and will, in turn, be used to inform future cycles of those plans in an ongoing feedback loop. It provides a coherent framework in which those sectoral policies and objectives can be realised.

The Marine Plan will cover Ireland's maritime area, including internal waters (sea area), territorial seas, exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf. The maritime area comprises approx. 490,000 km² and extends from mean high water mark at the coast seaward to in excess of 200 nautical miles in parts.

This NMPF contains the objectives, policies and supporting actions the Government considers necessary to support the effective management of marine activities and more sustainable use of our

marine resources. It sets out the policy, legislative and regulatory context for Marine Spatial Planning in general and, more specifically, for the development of Ireland's first plan. Consideration of the objectives of the plan, once adopted, will form part of the decision-making process for marine developments and activities.

Putting People First-Action Programme for Effective Local Government-2018

Putting People First – Action Programme for Effective Local Government sets out the plans for the greater alignment of local government and local development. It seeks to provide Local Authorities with more autonomy in the support of enterprise and the promotion of wider economic development, thereby creating and sustaining jobs. Its four key objectives are:

- Doing more for the economy, enterprise and the local economy
- *Building a local government system for the 21st Century*
- *Local Government that is soundly funded, working better and serving the community*
- Good governance, strong leadership and democratic accountability

Action Plan for Jobs 2017

This document is a high level, ambitious, all-of-Government initiative designed to mainstream creativity in the life of the nation so that individually and collectively, Irish people at home and abroad, can realise their full creative potential. The purpose of the document is to respond to the immediate challenge of the UK's decision to leave the EU and also to inform the Government's response to a more volatile and changing external environment by strengthening the resilience and agility of the Country's enterprise base.

Action Plan for Jobs: Mid East Region 2016-2017

Since the "Action Plan for Jobs" process commenced in 2012 a number of Regional Reports have been published. The Government has published the "Action Plan for Jobs: Mid East Region". This plan covers Counties Kildare, Meath and Wicklow. The plan identifies that the region has significant existing enterprise strengths and assets. It notes that increased collaboration can be facilitated by building on the recent reforms such as:

- *The growing impact of LEO;*
- *The new mandate of Education and Training Boards;*
- *The strengthening of Regional Offices of the IDA and Enterprise Ireland;*
- *The reform of Local Government with emphasis on economic development role;*
- The blueprint of a stronger policy framework to underpin sectoral opportunities. Draft Meath County Development Plan 2020-2026

Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment-(Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)-2016-2021

The Capital Plan presents the Government's €42 billion framework for infrastructure investment in Ireland over the period 2016 to 2021. The plan is committed to the provision of high quality infrastructure. It outlines allocations for new projects across a number of key areas and funding to ensure that the present stock of national infrastructure is refreshed and maintained. In particular it mentions the commencement of the Slane By-Pass and the Laytown – Bettystown link road.

Winning Foreign Direct Investment-IDA Ireland-2015-2019.

This strategy aims to increase foreign direct investment at a regional level, more evenly throughout the Irish economy which positively impacts indigenous business and regional locations. The strategy seeks to continue winning investments and see the benefits flow as widely as possible in economic terms throughout Ireland. Ambitious targets include; 80,000 new jobs; 900 investments; €3bn R&D investments and balanced regional growth. The core role of IDA Ireland set out in this document is 'to create employment with economic and social benefits for the Irish people'.

Sustainable Rural Housing-Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005

The Circular letter PL2/2017, issued by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in May 2017, advised local authorities that the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines are currently being revised to ensure the rural housing policies and objectives contained in local authority development plans comply with Article 43 of the EU Treaty on the freedom of movement of citizens. This Plan will be varied, if necessary, to ensure compliance with any revised Guidelines, when finalised.

Realising our Rural Potential: Action Plan for Rural Development-Dept of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs-2017

This government strategy is aimed at delivering real change for people living and working in rural Ireland. The objective of the Action Plan for Rural Development is to “unlock the potential of rural Ireland through a framework of supports, at national and local level, which will ensure that people who live in rural areas have increased opportunities for employment locally, and access to public services and social networks”.

A number of key initiatives proposed as part of the Strategy include the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and the Delivery of the 2014-2020 EU LEADER Programme. The Action Plan for Rural Ireland builds on the commitments contained in the Charter for Rural Ireland (referenced below) and sets out a clear roadmap for its implementation.

Charter for Rural Ireland- Dept of Environment, Community & Local Government-2016.

This Charter contains a number of commitments which help to establish the foundations for the rejuvenation of the rural economy and rural society as a whole. The Charter is “a statement of Government commitment to support Rural Ireland’s regeneration and to underpin the future sustainable development of Ireland’s rural communities.”

Rural Development Programme- -Dept of Agriculture, Food and the Marine-2014-2020.

This programme is based on the EU framework for rural development and the objective of the programme is to foster the development of rural areas through innovation, locally based, bottom up development strategies. In the County the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) and Leader are the programme implementation bodies.

Rural Economic Development Policy Statement and Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ)

The Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) was established in 2012 following the severe impact of the economic downturn on rural areas. The REDZ (Rural Economic Development Zone) initiative was a recommendation contained within the CEDRA and is intended to complement the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and cater for projects between the towns and surrounding hinterland that maximise local assets in areas such as tourism, culture, heritage and other areas that support rural economic activity.

Funding was allocated for 18 pilot initiatives across the country². Under the REDZ Scheme the Council/Meath Enterprise was successful in its application in 2015 and 2016 to develop a Digital Hub

² <https://www.chg.gov.ie/rural/rural-development/rural-economic-development-zone-redz/>

at the Kells Enterprise Centre in two phases. This Hub is marketed to new start up companies to function as incubation space and as a location for training programmes in digital innovation, Phase 1 is now complete. The Kells Electoral Area was designated as a REDZ Zone (refer to chapter 4 Economy and Employment Strategy).

Planning & Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016.

This Act provides that certain planning applications for certain types of housing development³ could be made directly to An Bord Pleanála. The associated regulations, the Planning and Development (SHD) Regulations 2017 came into effect in July 2017.

The Strategic Housing Development legislation was introduced as part of the Governments Policy- 'Rebuilding Ireland' and was intended to accelerate the delivery of large housing and student accommodation proposals. This legislation will expire on the 25th February 2022 and will be replaced by new legislation that will restore decision making in respect of large-scale housing developments.

Regional Context

-Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031

This Strategic Plan (RSES) identifies regional strengths, opportunities and pressures and provides policy responses in the form of Regional Strategic Objectives (RSO's) which follow on from the NSO's within the NPF. The RSES provides a framework for future investment to better manage regional planning and economic development throughout the region. The RSES will support the implementation of the NPF and the NDP.

There are a number of different elements to the RSES and include a Spatial Strategy, Economic Strategy, Metropolitan Plan, Investment Framework and Climate The Vision Statement included within the Draft RSES is "To create a sustainable and competitive region that supports the health and

³ Residential Development in excess of 100 units/student accommodation in excess of 200 beds.

wellbeing of our people and places, from urban to rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all”.

The growth enablers for the Hinterland area include “compact and sustainable growth of towns with 30% of all growth to develop within the existing built up area” and “focus on improving existing economies and creating the quality of life to attract investment”. There are three key principles set out within the RSES based around Economic Activity, Healthy Place Making and Climate Action and the sixteen parallel Regional Strategic Outcomes include A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise and Innovation, Sustainable Development patterns, Compact Growth and Urban Regeneration, Integrated transport and land Use and Build Climate resilience.

National Transport Authority-Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035

The National Transport Authority has a statutory obligation to prepare a Strategic Transport Plan for the Greater Dublin Area. The strategy is of relevance to the Meath County Development Plan as according to section 9(6A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), each Planning Authority in the GDA must ensure that its Development Plan is consistent with the transport strategy of the Authority.

The strategy document constitutes a strategic transport plan for the GDA for the next 18 years. A number of fundamental tenets underlie the draft strategy objectives. These include the adoption of a hierarchy of transport users with pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users at the top of the hierarchy. Consequently these users should have their safety and convenience needs considered first. A second key principle is the requirement that land use planning and transport planning need to be considered together in the overall development of the GDA region.

The land use measures set out in the strategy seek to:

- Focus person-trip intensive development, particularly key destinations such as retail and offices, into Dublin City and Designated Town centres within the GDA (for Meath these equate to the Large Growth Towns I identified in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010, i.e. Navan and the Drogheda environs); and
- Focus any person-trip intensive development outside Dublin City and designated Town centres to locations served by stations on the existing and proposed rail network (particularly Metro and DART).

As per the Strategy development densities should be higher in these areas. In addition, intensive development should also take place in areas well served by rail. Development should take place at these locations in advance of other locations. The Strategy identifies that mixed use development will be the primary pattern of growth in all areas, with an emphasis on commercial uses in centres, and on residential uses in other areas served by public transport.

Greater Dublin Area Strategic Drainage Study-Dublin Region Local Authorities 2005

The Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS) was commissioned in 2001 to carry out a strategic analysis of the existing foul and surface water systems in Dublin City, Fingal, South Dublin, Dun Laoighaire-Rathdown, Meath, Kildare and Wicklow County Councils. It delivered an overview of the performance of the drainage infrastructure in the region's catchments and proposed infrastructural improvement works to facilitate the anticipated future growth in the catchment to the year 2031 and beyond. Since the establishment of Irish Water (IW) the main elements of this policy have been incorporated into IW's policy.

The GSDSDS concluded that in addition to optimising the capacity of the existing wastewater treatment plants in the GDA that a new regional wastewater treatment facility, including a new orbital sewer to intercept flows from the Ringsend catchment was required in north Dublin with an outfall to the Irish Sea. The site selection process was completed in 2013. An Bord Pleanála is currently assessing a Strategic Infrastructure Development application for a new treatment plant and outfall, a decision is due in 2019. This plant is expected to be operational by 2024 will serve the Meath towns of Dunboyne, Ashbourne and Ratoath and the villages of Clonee and Kilbride.