

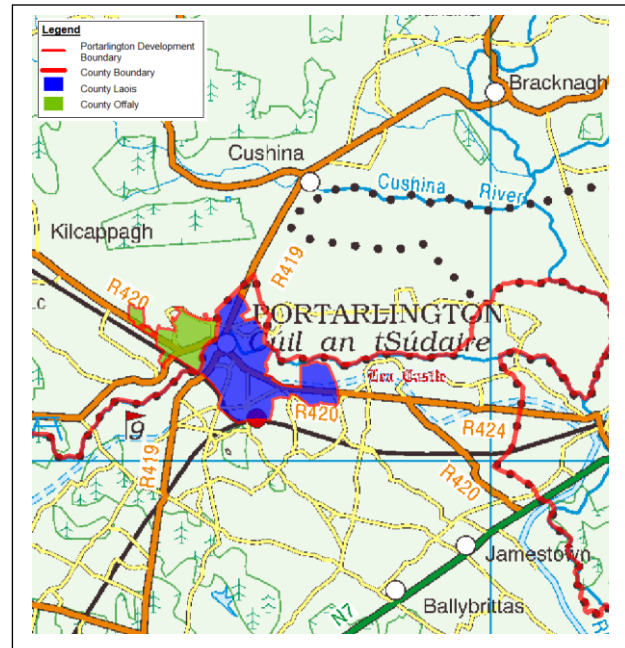
Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2024 - 2030



ISSUES PAPER SEPTEMBER 2023

What is a Joint Local Area Plan?

Section 18(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) allows for two or more Local Authorities to co-operate in the preparation of a **Joint Local Area Plan (JLAP)** in respect of any area that lies within the combined functional areas of the authorities concerned.



- ✚ The Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan (JLAP) 2024-2030 is being prepared to replace the existing Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2018-2024.
- ✚ The preparation of the Portarlington JLAP 2024-2030 is a collaborative process between Laois County Council and Offaly County Council.
- ✚ A JLAP provides a strategy for future development over a 6-year period. It guides the type of development that is needed in order to support communities and the local economy while addressing economic, social and environmental issues.
- ✚ The JLAP process provides you with an opportunity to help shape the future development of Portarlington

What Guides a JLAP?

- ✚ JLAP's have a legal status and are adopted in accordance with the requirements of The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- ✚ The policies and objectives of the new JLAP must align with the following spatial plans -
 - The National Planning Framework;
 - The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region;
 - The Laois County Development Plan (2021 - 2027);
 - The Offaly County Development Plan (2021 - 2027).
- ✚ The preparation of the JLAP must be informed by a set of environmental assessments - a Strategic Environmental Assessment, an Appropriate Assessment and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Stages of the JLAP process!

STAGE 1 - Pre-Draft

Information Gathering

Stakeholder Consultation

Screening and Scoping as part of Environmental Assessments

Preparation of the Draft JLAP and associated reports

STAGE 2 - Draft

Formal commencement of the JLAP process

Publication of the draft JLAP

Public Consultation

Preparation of the Chief Executive Report on submissions received

Elected Members resolve to make or amend the JLAP

STAGE 3 - Proposed Amendments

Publication of the 'Material Alterations'

Public Consultation

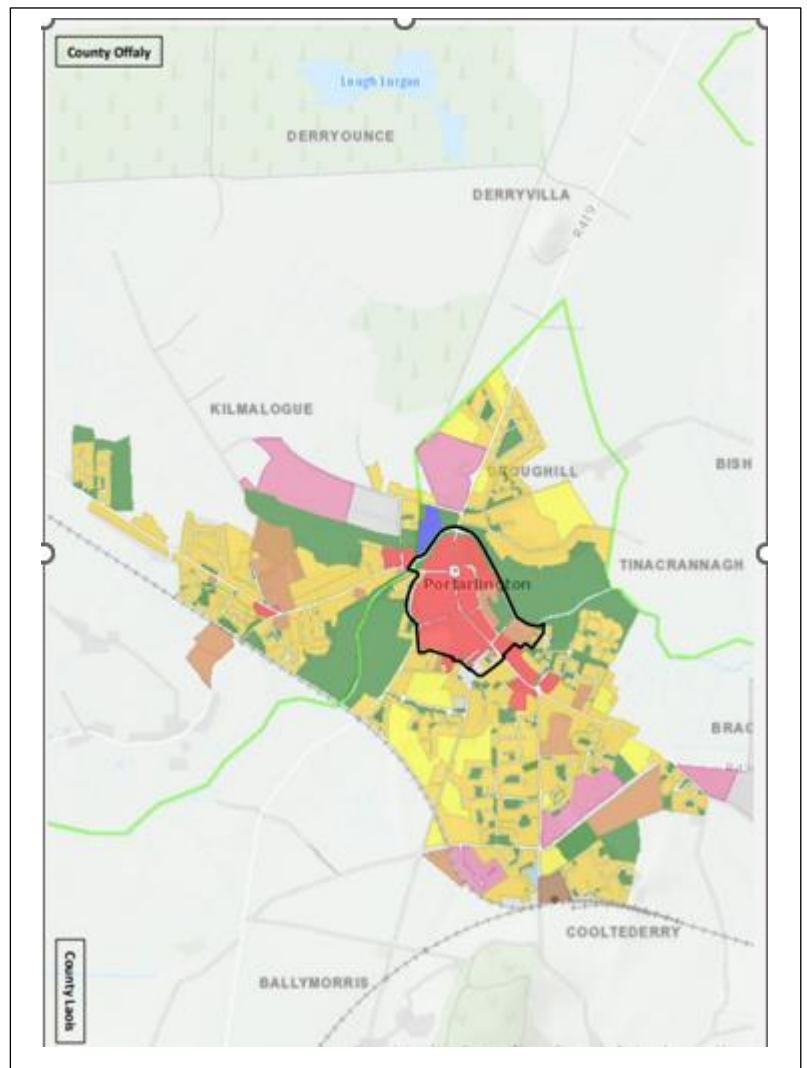
Preparation of the Chief Executive Report on submissions received

Adoption of the final JLAP

JLAP takes effect 6 weeks after adoption

PORTARLINGTON... ... Location in Context!

The town of Portarlington is situated on the Laois/Offaly county boundaries equidistant from the county towns of Portlaoise and Tullamore. In terms of Local Government, the town has dual administration by both Laois and Offaly County Councils. The majority of the urban area (approximately 75%) is located within the County of Laois (for CSO data purposes, this area is called Portarlington South) with the remaining portion (Portarlington North) in County Offaly. The River Barrow flows through the town in a west-east trajectory.



Portarlington.....Overview!

- ✚ **Key Service Centre** in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Regional area
- ✚ **Self-sustaining Growth Town** within the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027
- ✚ **Self-sustaining Town** within the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

POPULATION BY ELECTORAL DIVISION 2022 (Prelim Census Data):

- ✚ Portarlington South (Laois) - 7,856
- ✚ Portarlington North (Offaly) - 2,568

2016 (Actual Census Data)

- ✚ Portarlington South (Laois) - 7,138
- ✚ Portarlington North (Offaly) - 2,404

% change 2016 - 2022

- ✚ Portarlington South (Laois) +10.1%
- ✚ Portarlington North (Offaly) +6.8%

- ✚ **Diverse and multicultural population** with 14.1% non-Irish nationals residing in the settlement (CSO 2016)

- ✚ According to GeoView, Portarlington registered **commercial vacancy rates** of 19.8% in Q2 2020 and 15.4% in Q2 2021.

- ✚ Portarlington has many **entrepreneurial success stories**: Portarlington Enterprise Centre; Botley Lane Industrial Park; Polar Ice; Solas; Odlums

- ✚ As of 3rd February 2023, Portarlington had 1,194 individuals on the **Social Welfare Live Register**.

- ✚ The 2016 Census reported that Portarlington residents regularly **commute** either to work (93%) or to third-level study (7%). Of those commuting to work, 34% commute to a location within County Laois and 66% leave the County of Laois.

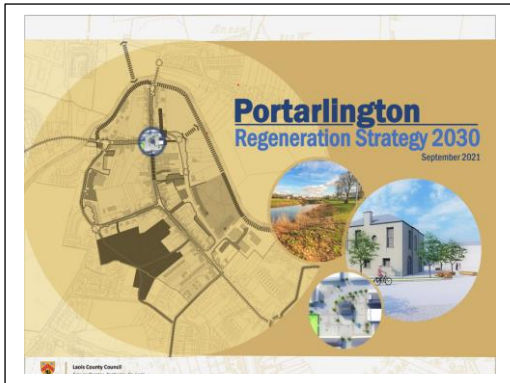
Strengths.....

- ✓ Excellent geographical location
- ✓ Train Station with frequent east west and north south service
- ✓ Strong community and business associations
- ✓ Good amenities - leisure; schools; health care unit; co-working hub
- ✓ Strong commercial and entrepreneurial tradition
- ✓ Rich natural and built heritage
- ✓ Tourism assets - River Barrow; Derrycastle Lakes; Carrick Wood / Spire; Lea Castle
- ✓ Good infrastructure - wastewater capacity, water supply

Challenges.....

- ❖ Town centre vacancy, dereliction & under-utilisation of buildings/ sites
- ❖ Continued commuting patterns to larger centres of employment
- ❖ Attracting private sector employment
- ❖ Housing delivery and affordability
- ❖ Traffic congestion and accessibility
- ❖ Flood risk and surface water management
- ❖ Addressing climate action measures
- ❖ Poor public realm & permeability within town centre

Progress since the adoption of the last JLAP!



The **Portarlington Regeneration Strategy 2030** was finalised and endorsed by the Elected Members from the Portarlington-Graiguecullen and Edenderry Municipal Districts. Key objectives:

- ✚ Develop a vision for Portarlington town centre
- ✚ Public realm improvements
- ✚ Develop connectivity proposals
- ✚ Identify key opportunity sites

Steering group established between the OPW and Laois County Council to progress a **Flood Relief Scheme** to alleviate the risk of flooding for the community. Consultants appointed.

Funding Allocations Secured.....



Market House:

€1.1 million secured under the Rural Regeneration Fund 2021 for the restoration and reuse of the **Market House**, to provide a range of public and community uses.



Derrynouce Lakes & Trails Project:

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme:

- **€50,000** to develop a 10-year Development Plan (2022)
- **€152,360** for improved footway connections and signage (2019)

Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS)

- ✚ 2021 - **€19,980** to develop the river walk along the River Barrow from the Peoples Park to Spa Bridge
- ✚ 2018 - **€18,792** for upgrade, promotion & signage of the Town walk to Lea Castle

Town And Village Renewal Scheme

- ✚ 2022 - **€500,000** to implement actions identified in the Portarlington landscape masterplan, including a central plaza/event space, playground upgrade and the upgrading of the park
- ✚ 2020 - **€22,500** for modification and enhancement of the Public Realm
- ✚ 2020 - **€100,000** for public realm enhancement works for Kilamalogue urban village
- ✚ 2019 - **€200,000** for public realm works and pathway improvements at People's Park to link the Leisure Centre with the Lake Development
- ✚ 2018 - **€100,000** for enhancement, increased accessibility and security in People's Park

PORTARLINGTON.....Matters to Consider!

Housing and Communities

Where is new housing needed and what type?
How can existing community facilities be maximised?
How can social inclusion be promoted?

Economic Development

How can enterprise and employment be promoted and where?
How can town centre vitality and vibrancy be enhanced?

Urban Design and Regeneration

What is your desired vision for Portarlington?
How can the town centre be revitalised and regenerated?

Movement and Active Travel

What are the key transport issues in Portarlington?
How can walking and cycling be encouraged?
How can the town be made more age-friendly?

Infrastructure

What are the main infrastructural issues in Portarlington?
How can waste reduction be encouraged?

Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

What are the important environmental issues for Portarlington?
How can the LAP best address the challenges of climate change?

Heritage, Amenity and Landscape

How can the LAP encourage heritage-led regeneration?
How can green spaces best be incorporated into new development?
How can the town best capitalise upon its tourism potential?



HAVE YOUR SAY.....

The 1st Stage of the consultation process runs from 21st September until 5pm on 19th October 2023. Submissions or observations must be made by via one of the following options:

POST:

Laois County Council,
Senior Planner,
Áras an Chontae,
JFL Avenue,
Portlaoise,
Co. Laois.

Or

Offaly County Council,
Senior Planner,
Áras an Chontae,
Charleville Road,
Tullamore,
Co. Offaly.

ONLINE:

Laois County Council: <http://consult.laois.ie>

Or

Offaly County Council: <https://submit.link/1QP>

EMAIL:

Laois County Council:
portarlingtonlap@laoiscoco.ie

Or

Offaly County Council: portlap@offalycoco.ie

DATE TO NOTE....

A public information event will be held as follows:

Date: Wednesday 4th October 2023

Time: 3pm - 7pm

Venue: Portarlington Library, Main Street, Portarlington.

NEXT STEPS.....

Following the Pre-Draft consultation process, a report on the submissions received will be prepared and presented to the Elected Members of Laois and Offaly, as appropriate.

Following this, a Draft Joint Local Area Plan will be prepared and published in Quarter 1 2024.

A further period of public consultation will take place and it is anticipated that the Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2024-2030 will be adopted in Quarter 3 2024.