



Jim Ward

Mr Andrew Murray
Director of Services for Planning
Offaly County Council
Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road,
Tullamore
Co. Offaly
R35 F893

Re: Material Alterations to Draft Portarlinton Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031 Response to

MA 49: Amend Map 1: Land Use Zoning of Draft JLAP to include the proposed Motion No: 2 in Offaly:

Amend the Flood Zone B within the Subject Site (shown below) from 'Open Space, Amenity and Recreation' to 'Industrial and Warehousing'.

Date: 08/05/2025

Dear Mr Murray,

I refer to the

Material Alterations to Draft Portarlinton Joint Local Area Plan 2025-203 released 10th April 2025, MA 49

Appendix 1 – MA 49 Amendment

Appendix 2 – MA 49 letter requesting clarification

Appendix 3 – Joint Portarlinton Development Plan 2025-2030 Submission.

Amend the Flood Zone B within the Subject Site (shown below) from 'Open Space, Amenity and Recreation' to 'Industrial and Warehousing'.

Draft JLAB 2014, June



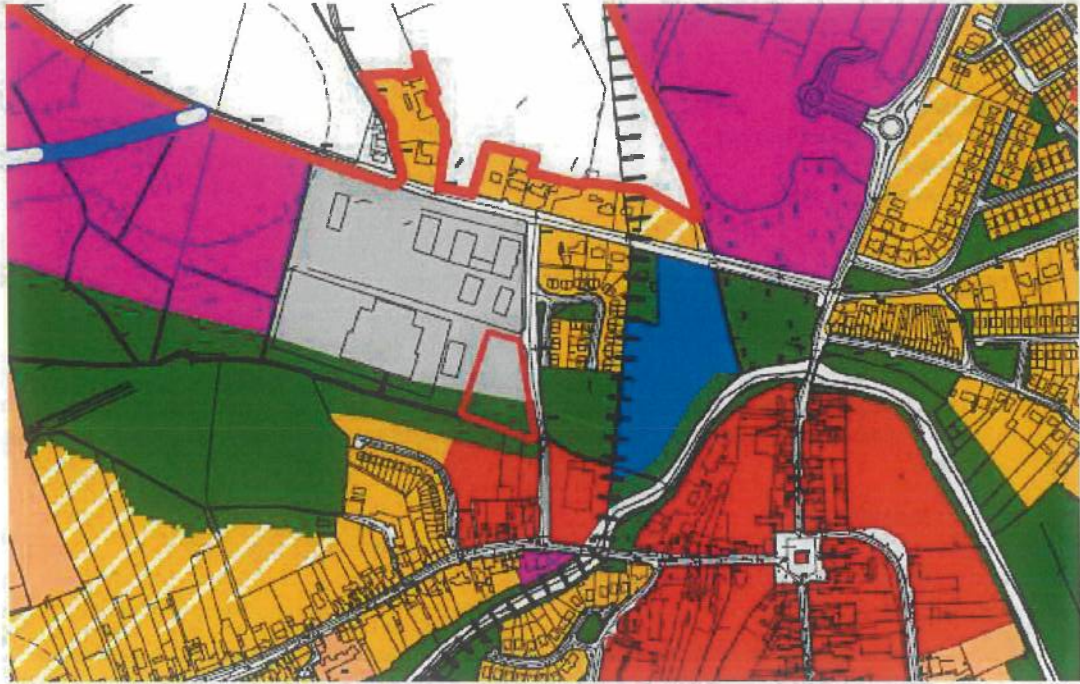
Draft JLAP 2024



(fig A)

Or at a minimum, the zoning adopted in the current JLAP 2018-2024,
as below (fig B)

3. **Current Laois Offaly Joint LAP 2018-2024**



The reasoning for this is highlighted in my request below, and my initial objection to the Joint Portarlington Development Plan 2025-2030 Submission.

- Flood defense being carried out will deem the site dry
- Draft LAP 04/06/2024 proposed the site as all industrial
- The site was sold by Offaly County Council as industrial, and now this proposed rezoning would render the site worthless.
- Site levels on the OPW flood map are outdated.

Is mise le meas,

Jim Ward,
MRIA,

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Mr Andrew Murray
Director of Services for Planning
Offaly County Council
Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road,
Tullamore
Co. Offaly
R35 F893

Re: Material Alterations to Draft Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031

CC: Anne Maire Delaney, Chief Executive Officer, Offaly County Council -

James Condon, Acting Senior Executive Planner, Offaly County Council -

Date: 15/04/2025

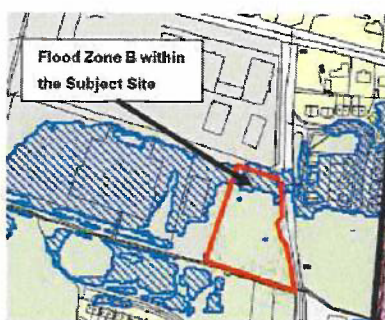
Dear Mr Murray,

I am the joint owner of an industrial site at Botley Lane, Portarlington Co Offaly, and I refer to the Material Alterations to Draft Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2025-203 released 10th April 2025, and in particular, the subject of a site in Botley Lane, Portarlington, Co Offaly

MA 49: Amend Map 1: Land Use Zoning of Draft JLAP to Include the proposed Motion No: 2 in Offaly:

Amend the Flood Zone B within the Subject Site (shown below) from 'Open Space, Amenity and Recreation' to 'Industrial and Warehousing'.

Extract from Draft JLAP below



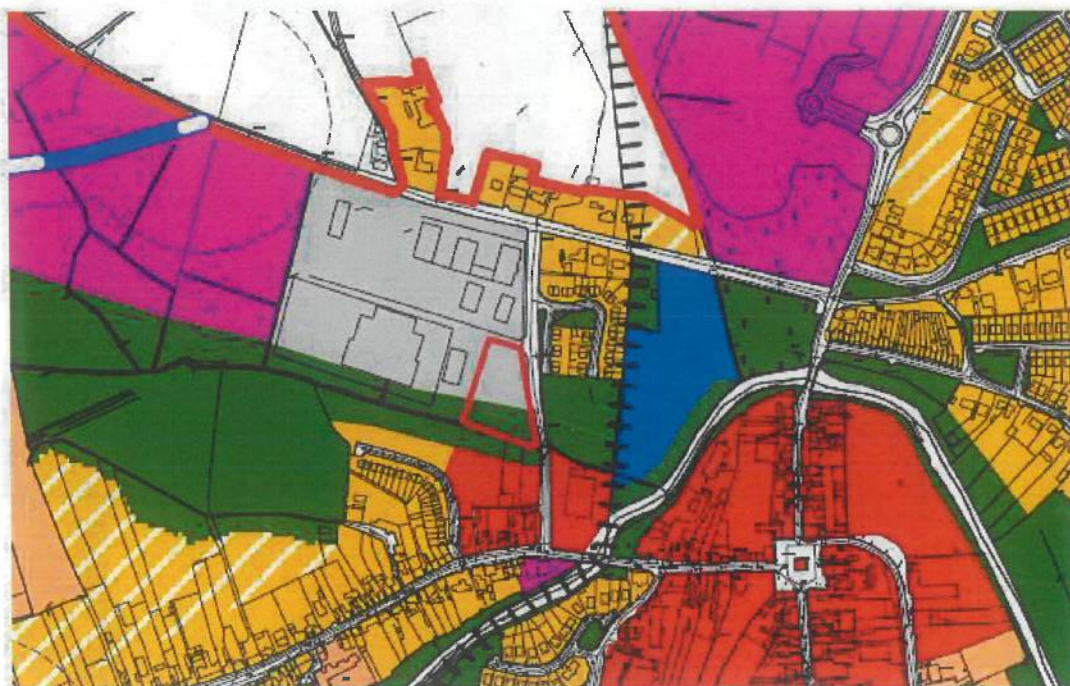
Proposed Material Amendment



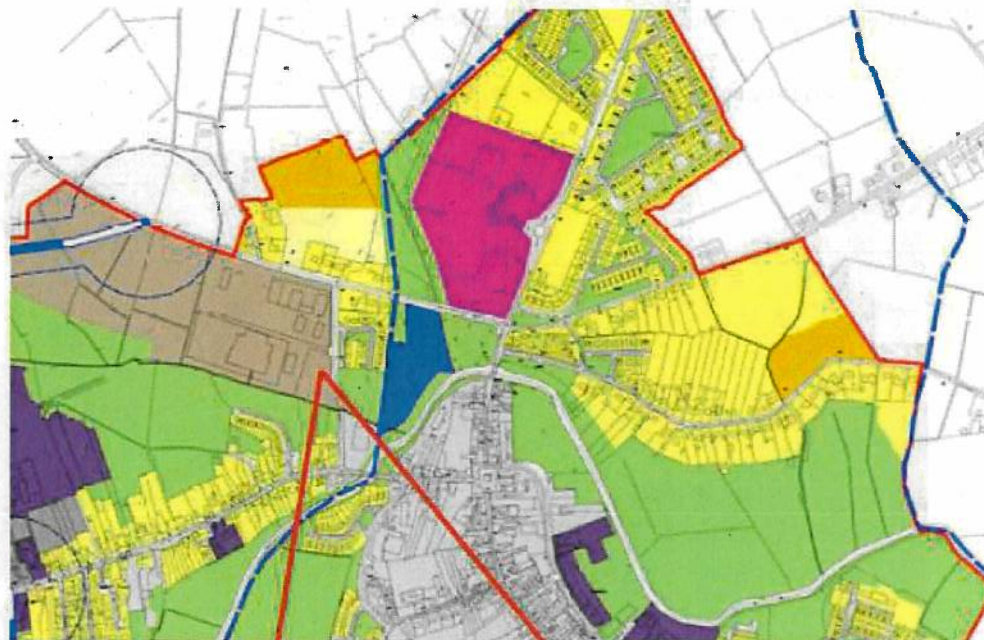
I wish to seek some clarification before making a submission regarding the the material alteration or before seeking legal advice.

As outlined in my submission to the draft JLAP, the site was originally purchased from Offaly County Council as an industrial zoned site. Please see below 2018-2024 JLAP

3. Current Laois Offaly Joint LAP 2018-2024



As joint owners, we have a planning application ready to submit; however, with the release of the proposed flood relief scheme, which is currently underway, we were advised to delay the submission pending the release of the new development plan, as the site would now be considered free from flooding. A draft zoning plan was shown to us. Please see below



Draft JLAP 2024, June

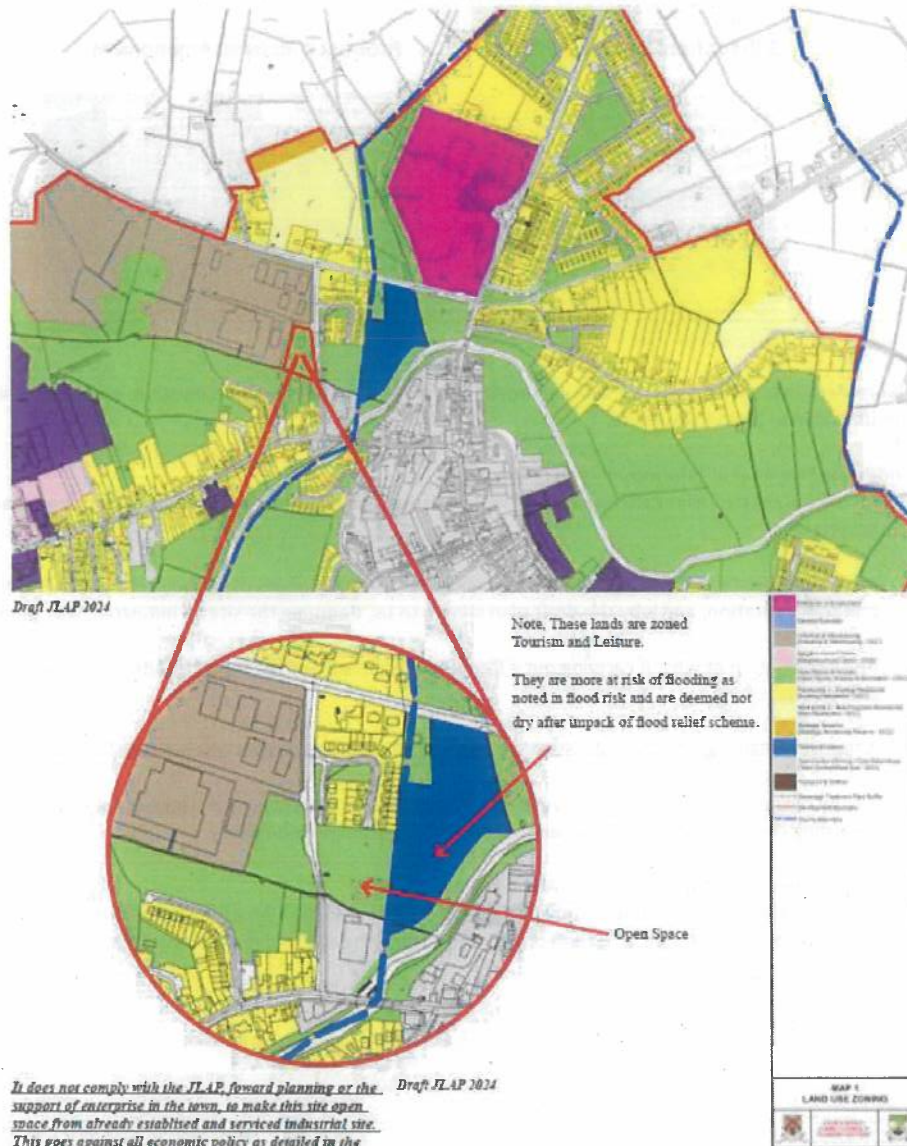


Draft JLAP 2024



Following this, in October 2025, the below zoning was released in the draft JLAP, indicating the site to be zoned open space. This is despite what we were previously advised. Please see below

Portarlinton Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2030



In response to this, I made a submission (attached in the appendix) This submission expressed our concerns regarding the negative impact that rezoning site would have, both as a financial burden to ourselves, and that it does not comply with the ethics of what the development plan and flood relief scheme set out to achieve. Also, this nullifies what we were sold as an industrial site by Offaly County Council.

Following my submission to the draft JLAP, the following material alteration was proposed and released on April 10th 2025.

MA 49: Amend Map 1: Land Use Zoning of Draft JLAP to Include the proposed Motion No: 2 In Offaly:

Amend the Flood Zone B within the Subject Site (shown below) from 'Open Space, Amenity and Recreation' to 'Industrial and Warehousing'.

Extract from Draft JLAP below



Proposed Material Amendment



The material alteration does not consider anything that was set out in our submission, and frankly, it deems the site unusable as an industrial site.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I request

1. An official copy of all records such as correspondence and meeting minutes that took place regarding the subject site.
2. A copy of the official meeting minutes regarding the zoning changes from the previous JLAP to the proposed material alteration, and why the draft plan shown to us, deeming the site all industrial, was then changed.
3. And explanation of why, if carrying out a flood relief scheme and deeming the site "Now Dry," would OCC change the zoning.
4. A report explaining why the submission to the draft development plan was not considered
5. A copy of the report regarding the vote taken between the LA official and members at the chamber meeting regarding the material alterations, and who voted regarding the motion.

Under the Sales of Goods and Services Act, I request

1. An explanation of how Offaly County Council can sell an industrial zoned service site in an established industrial, enterprise area, and then propose to rezone the site and make it worthless and not fit for purpose.

I hope to hear back from you shortly.

Is mise le meas,

Jim Ward,
MRIAI,

Joint Portarlington Development Plan 2025-2030 Submission

1. Introduction

This Submission is regarding the Draft Portarlington Local Area Plan 2025-2031. At the request of the owners MR Ward of Annamoe Portarlington Co Offaly.

The submission is regarding the subject site at **Botley Lane Industrial Estate, Portarlington, Co Offaly.**

2. Subject Site Information

Site Address:
Unit 11,
Botley Lane,
Portarlington,
Co Offaly

Folio Number: OY1330L

X:653855 Y: 712876



Google Maps

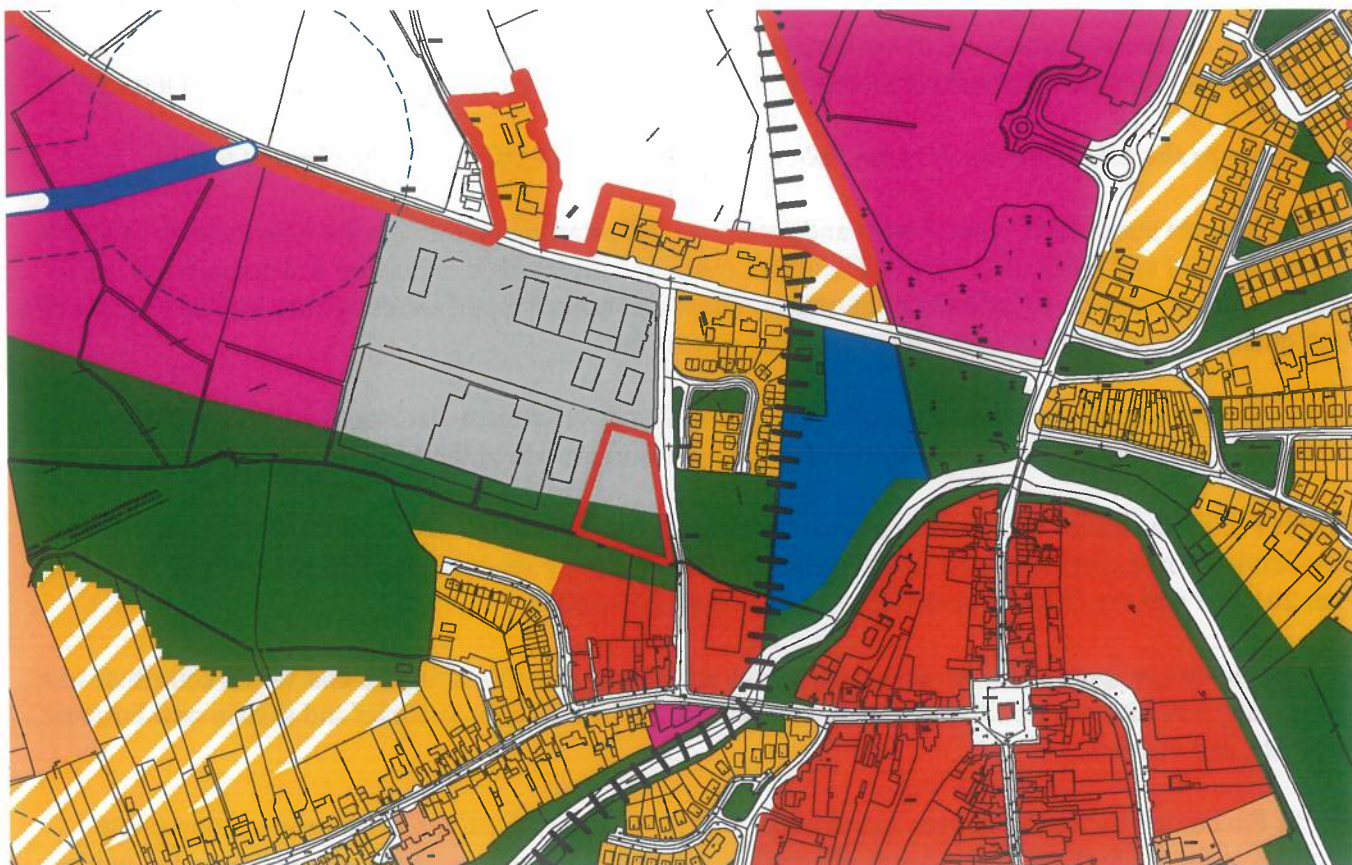


OSI Map

1. Aim of This Document

The purpose of this submission is to give an opinion regarding the lands mentioned above in order **To Retain the current zoning status of General industrial and Warehousing** set out in the 2018-2024 Joint Local Area Zoning Plan.

3. Current Laois Offaly Joint LAP 2018-2024



Current Zoning Map

The LAP states the Economic development underpins all chapters in this Joint Local Area Plan. The aim of the plan is to capitalise on Portarlinton's location on the regional road network, trainline and proximity to the motorway interchange at Monasterevin.

The zoning and servicing of land for enterprise, employment and industrial uses and in particular the commercial development at Portarlinton Enterprise Centre and Botley Lane represent an important opportunity to develop a cluster of complementary enterprises and more generally a larger, more robust and diverse economic basis for the town.

Future development proposals are contingent on key infrastructure. Currently capacity exists in the Foul Sewer Network, Waste Water Treatment Plant and Public Water Supply.

The zoning objectives for each of the land-use zones provide agility to respond to the demands from those looking to invest in Portarlinton. This plan sets the right conditions to secure inward investment and interest in Portarlinton as a business location and firmly embeds an economic development agenda into all other goals making their successful delivery more achievable.

The Local Enterprise Offices have been fully integrated into both the Local Authorities of Laois and Offaly. In addition to the LEO enterprise functions, the LEOs deliver the economic functions of the Councils and have a lead role in implementing the economic dimensions of the LECs and delivering local and regional initiatives within the Midland Action Plan for Jobs.

1. Policies

It is clear from the policies set out in the development plan, that the zoning on the subject site should be maintained as industrial to protect the integrity of employment, the town and policies set out in the LAP.

According to the LAP Policies: It is the Policy of both Laois and Offaly County Council to:

EEP1: Support sustainable employment and enterprise in Portarlinton through the identification of appropriately located and adequately serviced lands for business/employment, industrial and commercial developments, the promotion of investment in transportation and other support infrastructure and the creation of a high quality environment to encourage economic investment.

EEP2: Protect employment zoned land from inappropriate development that would undermine future economic activity or the sustainable economic development and growth of the town.

EEP3: Facilitate employment and enterprise development in the context of the role of Portarlinton as a Key Service Town consistent with objectives of the Core Strategy set out in the Laois County Development Plan 2017-23 and the Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020.

EEP4: Encourage appropriate development, works and supporting infrastructure that would contribute to a high quality and attractive built and social environment in Portarlinton to attract and sustain new business, residents, and visitors.

EEP5: Encourage the establishment and expansion of services and facilities in the town at appropriate locations to facilitate the business needs of employment and enterprise developments and potential tourism needs like conference facilities, hotel, accommodation, eateries and other similar services.

EEP6: Work collaboratively and in partnership with other stakeholders in the pursuit of development that would contribute positively to the economic development of the town.

EEP7: Support and work with Bord Na Mona and other relevant agencies in the sustainable diversification of former industrial peatlands in the Garryhinch area to uses such as green energy, eco-tourism and water storage. **EEP8:** Encourage the further development of the Portarlinton third level institute as a centre of excellence for a range of education and research related uses.

EEP9: Work in conjunction with the town's third level institution and neighbouring institutions including NUI Maynooth and Athlone and Carlow ITs in the creation and fostering of enterprise and research and development.

EEP10: Facilitate office development in commercial and employment centres.

EEP11: Continue to work with key stakeholders in the tourism industry including Waterways Joint Portarlinton Local Area Plan 2018 - 2024 29 Ireland, Failte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, National Parks and Wildlife Service, in order to develop the overall tourist and economic potential of the town, with particular emphasis on the cultural heritage, River Barrow and Derryounce Lakes and Trails.

EEP12: Encourage and facilitate the sustainable development of the tourism potential of Portarlinton in a manner that respects, builds on, protects and enhances the cultural, built and natural heritage of the town.

EEP13: Secure connectivity between Portarlinton with county, regional and national cycle networks via former Bord na Mona rail-lines and to capture positive economic, social, and cultural benefits associated with this connection.

EEP14: Where commercial and industrial enterprises exist as nonconforming but longestablished uses, to support their continued operation and reasonable expansion, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

OCC Industry

The use of land as 'Industry' shall be taken to include the use of land for industry/manufacturing, repairs, warehousing, distribution, open-storage, waste materials treatment and recovery and transport operating centres. The development of inappropriate mixes of uses, such as 'office-based development' and 'retailing' will not normally be encouraged

LCC Industrial & Warehousing

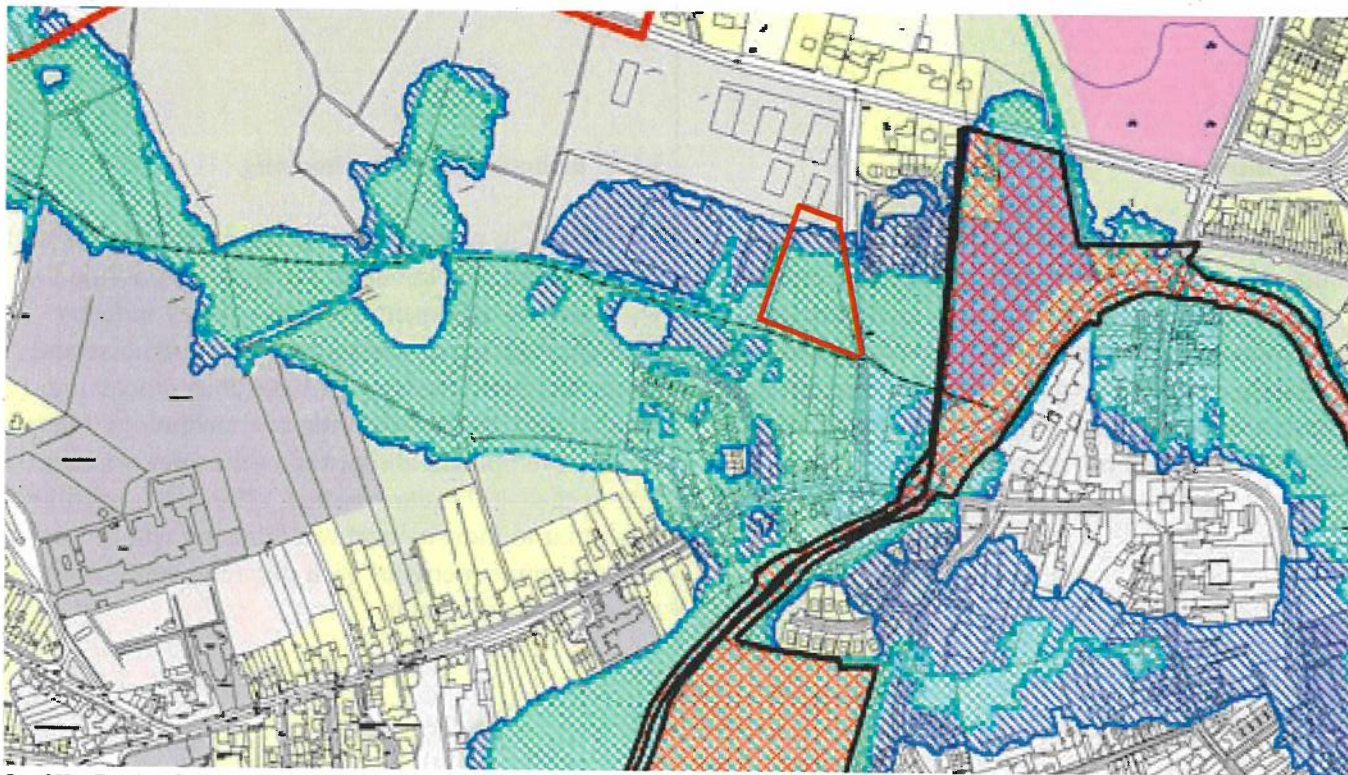
Objective: To provide for and improve industrial and warehousing development. **Purpose:** To provide for industrial development, including heavy industry with environmental emissions, including noise and odour and with intensive or hazardous processing. To also provide for light industry, technology related office development and general office development that exceed 400 square metres. Other uses, ancillary or similar to industry and warehousing will be considered on the merits of each planning application and may be acceptable.

Economic development underpins all chapters in the Joint Local Area Plan. The aim of the plan is to capitalise on Portarlinton's location on the regional road network, trainline and proximity to the motorway interchange at Monasterevin. The zoning and servicing of land for enterprise, employment and industrial uses and in particular the commercial development at Portarlinton Enterprise Centre and Botley Lane represent an important opportunity to develop a cluster of complementary enterprises and more generally a larger, more robust and diverse economic basis for the town.

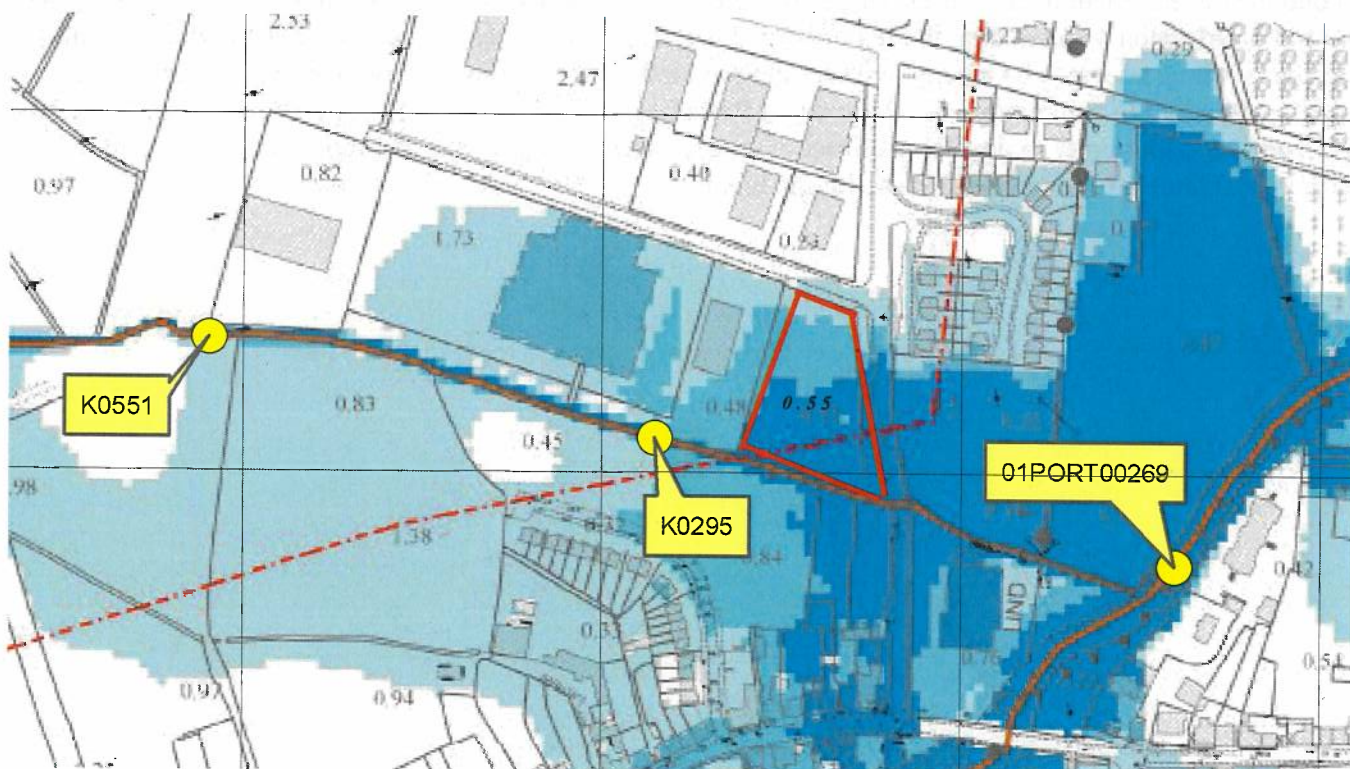
6. Portarlington Flood Impact

It is noted that the subject site is hindered by its location to the barrow river. According to the flood zoning maps, the site is hindered by flood zone A and B.

It Should be also noted that the OPW Maps Show the site at a nominal Datum of 55.00MOD. The Topographical Survey has a Nominal Level of 65.00 MOD

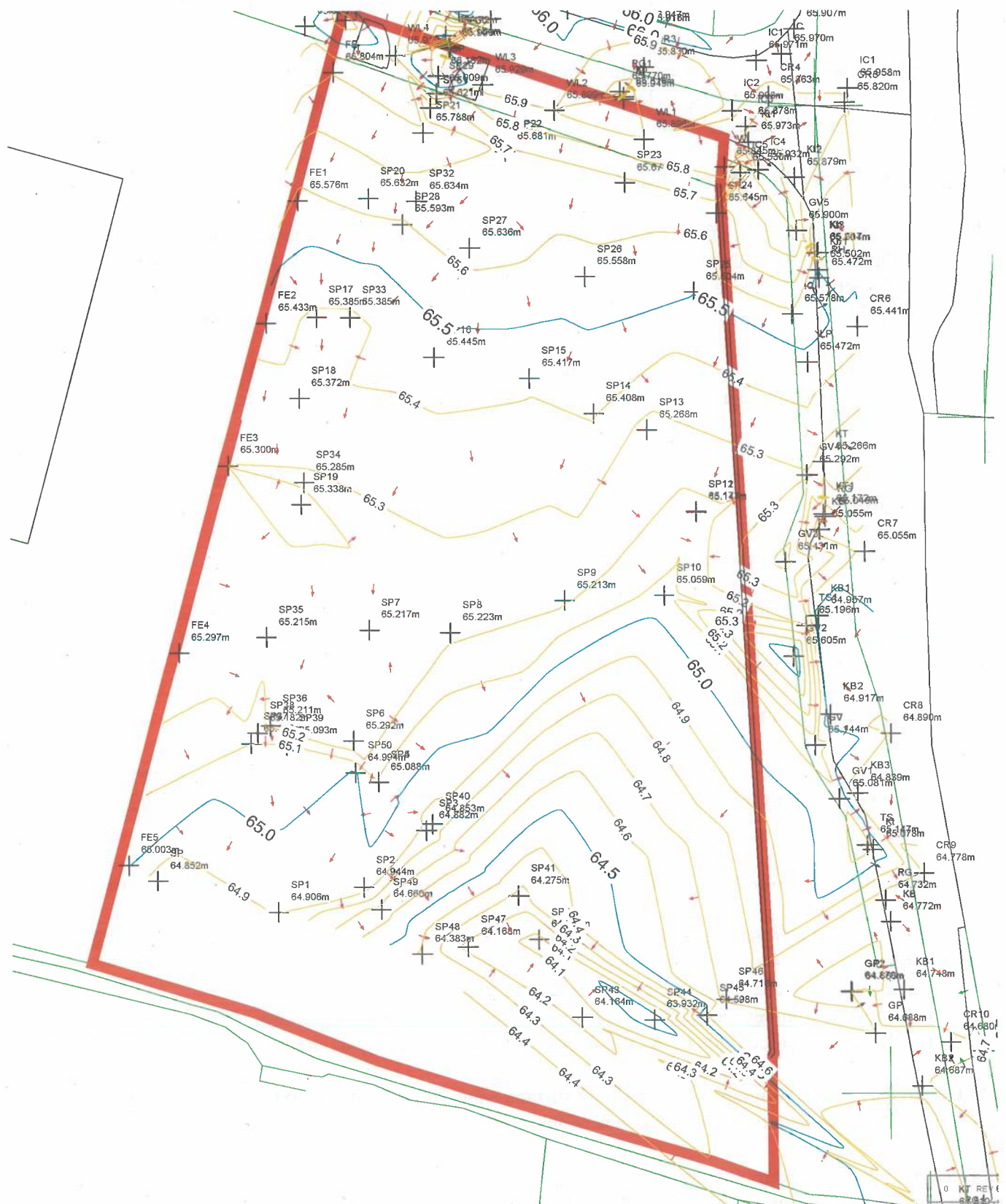


Land Use Zoning, SAC and Flood Maps



Former OPW Map

Existing Site Plan + Topographical Survey - True Level Reading



Existing Site Layout Plan

Scale 1:500

X= 653855 Y= 712876

Reproduced under Licence Number: 50189288

O.S. Map Sheet number: 3655-13

Site Boundary:

Site Area: 0.6 Ha

6. Portarlington Flood Relief Scheme

The Portarlington Strategic Flood Risk and Management Strategy was commissioned by Laois and Offaly County Councils in association with the Office of Public Works (OPW) to evaluate and quantify flood risk in Portarlington.

The study recommends a series of mitigation measures in the form of flood walls, levees, embankments and attenuation areas provided at various locations through the centre of Portarlington along the banks of the River Barrow and the Blackstick Drain.

The Strategy sets out three phases of works to address flood risk in the town:

Phase 1: Will reduce the risk of flooding to existing properties, primarily the town centre area including Spa Street and Patrick Street. This phase will also reduce the flood risk to a Joint Portarlington Local Area Plan 2018 - 2024, section of undeveloped land to the rear of Patrick Street, representing a key opportunity for Town Centre development.

Phase 2: Will improve the growth potential of the town between the Railway Bridge and Rosecourt, and will require a partnership approach between both Laois and Offaly County Councils. This phase cannot be carried out until Phase 1 is implemented.

Phase 3: Will also improve the growth potential of the town in the area south of Marian Hill, on the Laois side of the town.

Flood Management: Strategic Aim:

To develop and improve flood alleviation measures throughout the town and rural hinterland so as to complement the overall strategy for economic and population growth and to achieve improved physical and environmental protection Objectives:

It is an Objective of both Laois and Offaly County Council to:

FM O1: Manage flood risk in accordance with the requirements of "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities", DECLG and OPW (2009) and Circular PL02/2014 (August 2014).

FM O2: Support and co-operate with the OPW in delivering the South Eastern CFRAM Programme.

FM O3: To carry out infrastructural works in the Bog Road and Botley Lane areas of the town to alleviate flooding from the Blackstick Drain, a tributary of the River Barrow:

- (i) Raise public road levels and improve road drainage infrastructure,
- (ii) (ii) Improve drainage channels in Blackstick Drain and contributing drains,
- (iii) (iii) Refurbish all culverts to the Blackstick Drain and contributing drains.

FM O4: To carry out a programme of dredging surface water drains and to continue to ensure that the drains are regularly maintained to minimise the risk of flooding.

In December 2023 the joint venture of Binnies/Nicolas O'Dwyer presented the strategy and implicated proposed to be carried out in order to put in place the Portarlington Flood relief Scheme.

Relative to the site, two strategies were presented that would deem the subject site **'Now Dry'**

PORTARLINGTON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

Background, Project Timeline, Key Milestones and Standard of Protection

Poster

1

Background to the Study

Flood risk to Portarlinton and the surroundings with possible mitigation measures were assessed in detail as part of the South Eastern Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (South Eastern CFRAM Study). The results of the CFRAM study were used to develop a strategy and set cost-effective measures for the long-term management of flood risk along the River Barrow as set out in the Barrow Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) (Office of Public Works, 2017).

In August 2020, Binnies UK Limited (Binnies) and Nicholas O'Dwyer Limited (NOD) Joint Venture were commissioned to carry out the Portarlinton Flood Relief Scheme (FRS) by Laois County Council (LCC), working in partnership with the OPW.

Project Timeline and Key Milestones

TIMELINE OF SCHEME PROGRAMME										
ACTIVITY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	
Stage I - Scheme Development and Design										
Stage II - Planning Process										
Stage III - Detailed Construction Design and Tender										
Stage IV - Construction										
Stage V - Handover										

Project Objectives

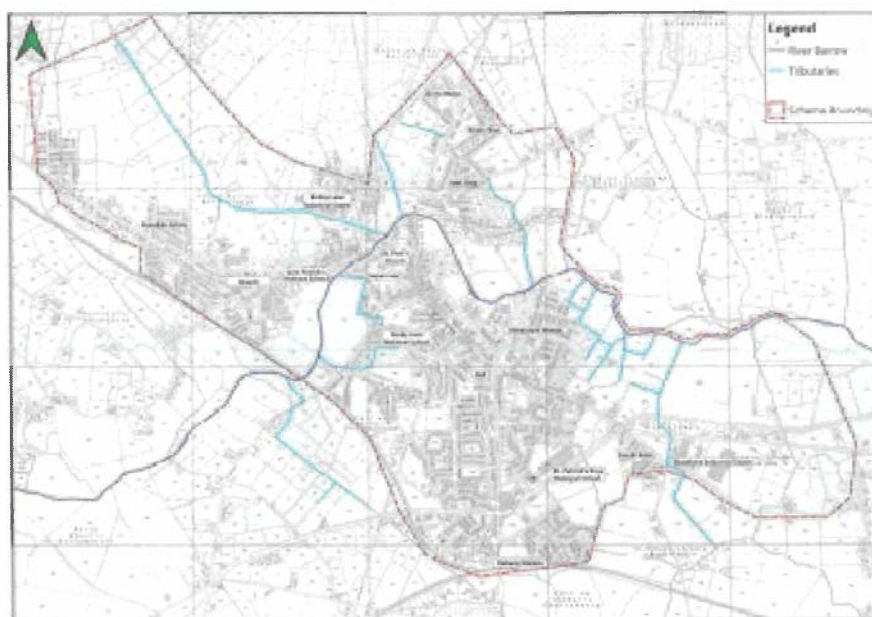
The objective of this project is the identification, design and submission (for planning consent) of a Flood Relief Scheme, that is:

- Technically,
- Socially,
- Environmentally, and
- Economically

acceptable, to alleviate the risk of flooding to the Community of Portarlinton to a determined Standard of Protection.



We are here



Standard of Protection

The Standard of Protection (SoP) for the Portarlinton FRS is the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) event.

This corresponds to the flooding caused by a 100-year return period event.

The scheme will also be assessed for adaption to climate change for flood events that are greater than the SoP.

PORTARLINGTON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

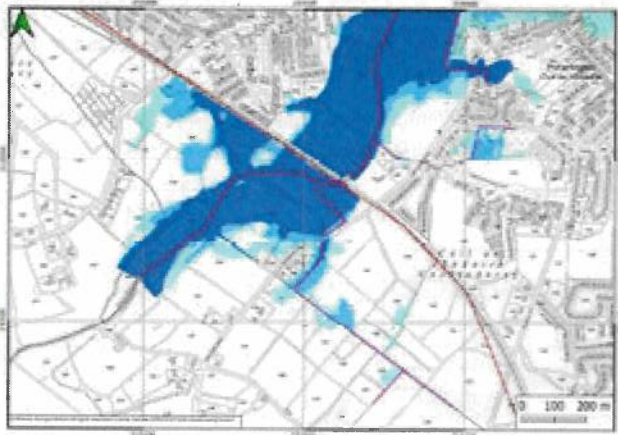
Present Day Scenario - Flood Extent Maps

Poster

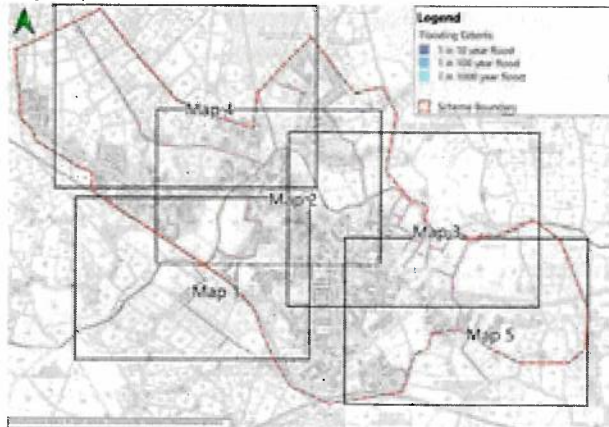
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Flood Extent Mapping

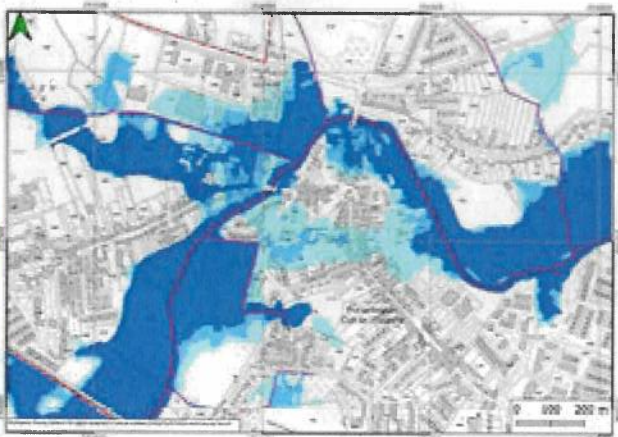
Flood Extent Map 1



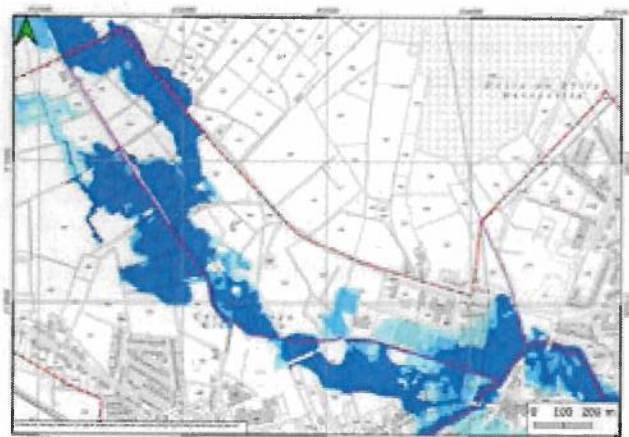
Key Map



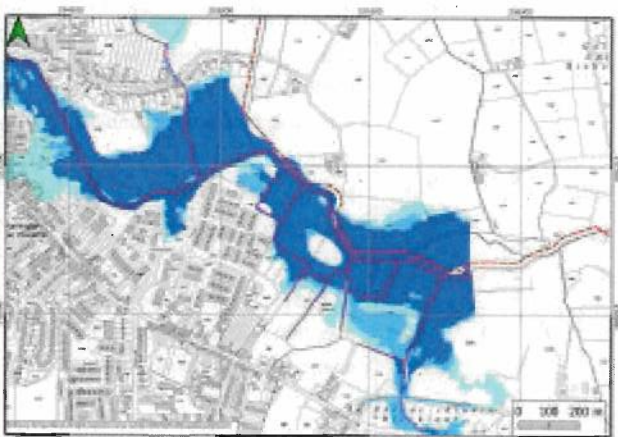
Flood Extent Map 2



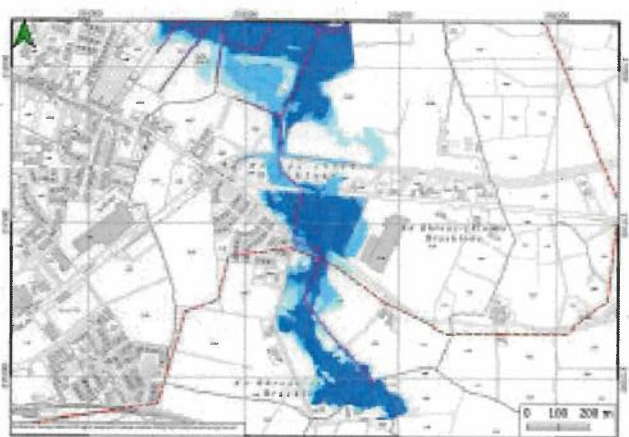
Flood Extent Map 4

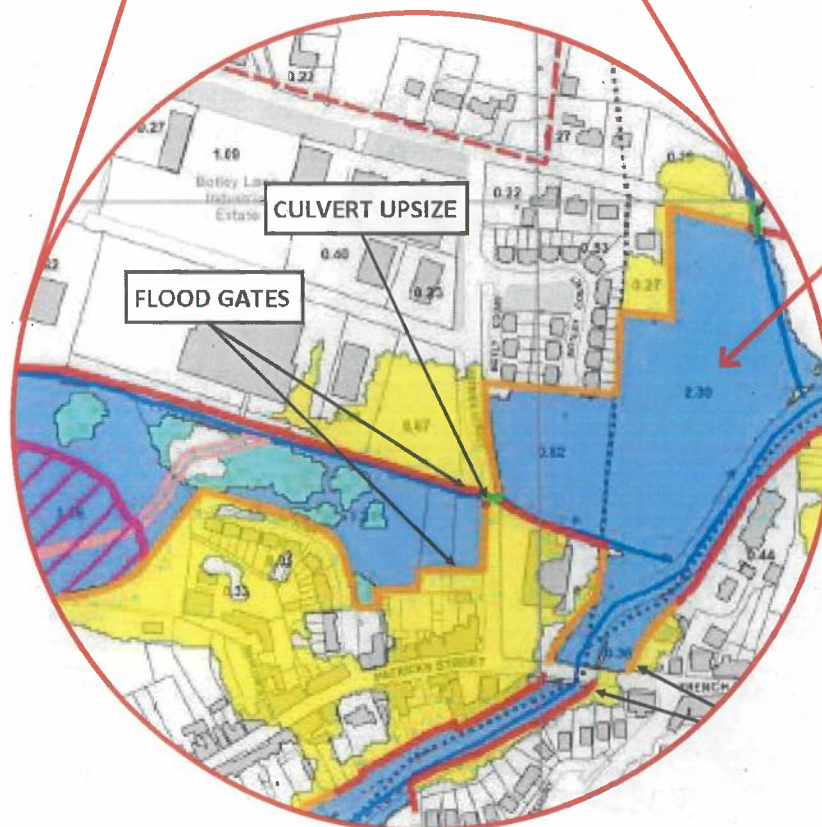
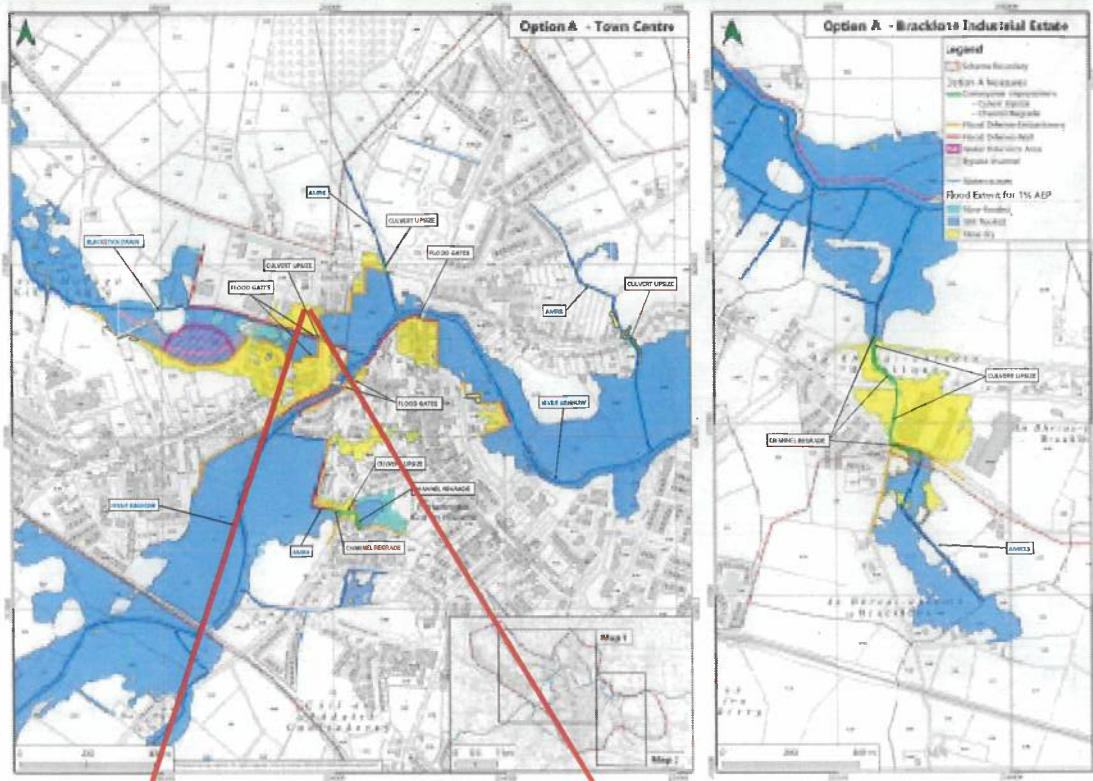


Flood Extent Map 3



Flood Extent Map 5

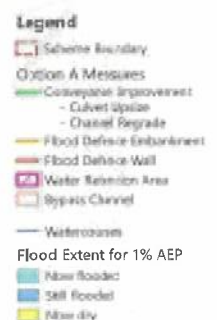


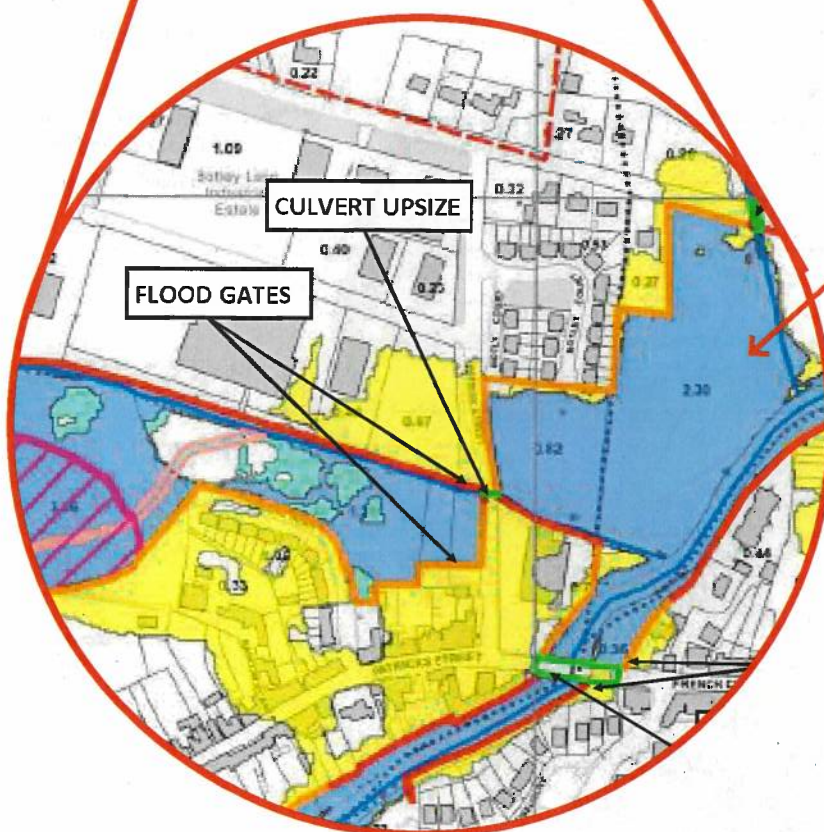
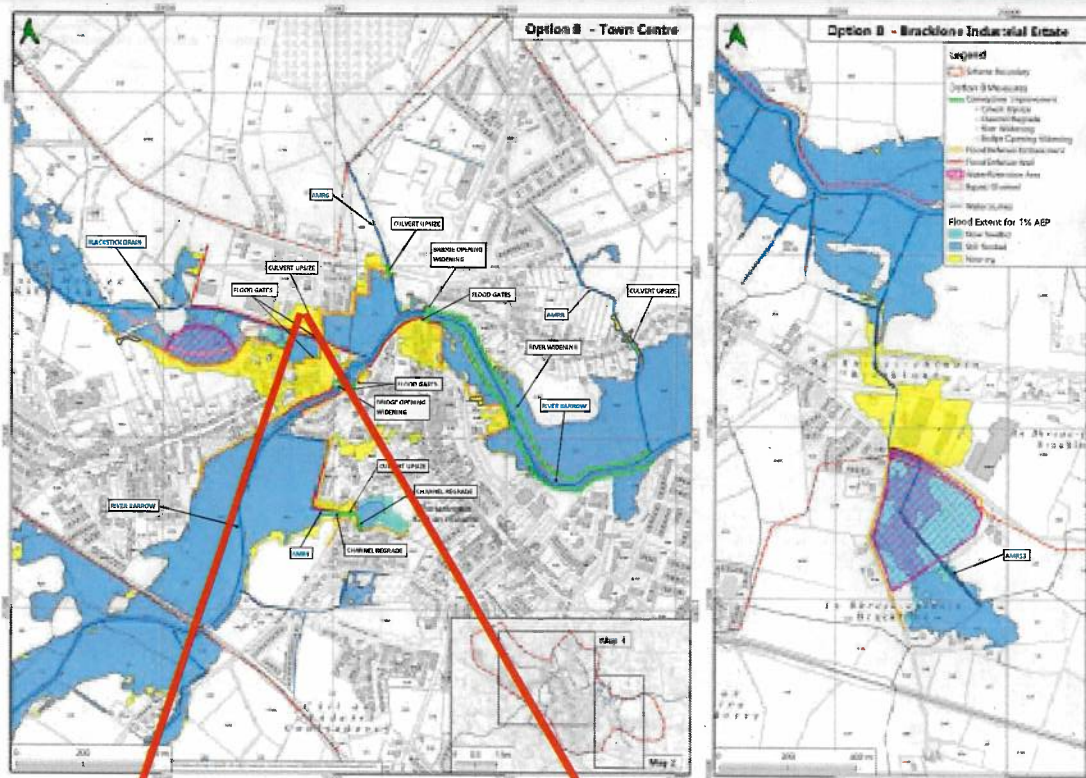


Note, These lands are zoned Tourism and Leisure.

They are more at risk of flooding as noted in flood risk and are deemed not dry after impact of flood relief scheme.

Subject Site = Now Dry





Note, These lands are zoned Tourism and Leisure.

They are more at risk of flooding as noted in flood risk and are deemed not dry after impact of flood relief scheme.

Subject Site = Now Dry

Legend

- Scheme Boundary
- Option A Measures**
 - Conveyance Improvement
 - Culvert Upsize
 - Channel Upgrade
- Flood Defence Enhancement
- Flood Defence Wall
- Water Retention Area
- Bypass Channel
- Watercourse
- Flood Extent for 1% AEP**
 - New Flooded
 - Still Flooded
 - Now Dry

PORTARLINGTON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

Option A - Hard Defences, Culverts Upsizes and Water Retention Area

Poster

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Option Description

Option A considers a mix of flood defence embankments and walls for the River Barrow and culvert upsizes at tributaries AMR4, Blackstick Drain, AMR6 and AMR13. For two of these culverts, a regrading of the section upstream and downstream is necessary to ensure sufficient depth of cover and improve conveyance. Additionally, the option includes a water retention area for the Blackstick Drain with a bypass channel.

No modifications are proposed to the existing bridges within the Scheme area (Barrow Bridge and Spa St. Bridge). The new defences are envisaged to tie in to the bridge deck and walls.

Flood gates are required at different locations along the Barrow floodplain and tributaries to maintain current access.

Flood defence heights are based on the 1%AEP event with an additional allowance typically 300mm for walls and 500mm for embankments.

The option would include the following defences divided per area.

Area	Defences	Average Heights	Total Lengths
Railway to AMR4 confluence	Embankment on the River Barrow Floodplain at the Left Bank	1.3m	290m
AMR4	Embankments and Walls on AMR4 Right Bank and River Barrow floodplain at the Right Bank	1.0m	410m
	Embankments and Walls on AMR4 Left Bank and around the Greenfield Area	2.0m	270m
	Culvert upsize to 1.20m and regrade of part of AMR4		100m (regarding)
AMR4 confluence to Barrow Bridge	Walls on River Barrow Left and Right Bank	1.8m	450m
Barrow Bridge to Spa Street Bridge	Walls on River Barrow Right Bank and Embankments and Walls along River Barrow Floodplain at the Left Bank Culvert upsize to 0.8m Height x 1.0m Width	1.2m	920m
Blackstick Drain	Water Retention Area (Wetland) with Bypass Channel from the Blackstick Drain Right Bank		18000m ² (area)
	Embankments on Blackstick Drain Floodplain behind proposed Water Retention Area	1.3m	630m
	Wall on Blackstick Drain Left Bank and Embankments on Blackstick Drain Right Bank	1.7m	885m
	Culvert upsize to 1.2m Height x 1.5m Width		
Spa Street Bridge to AMR8	Walls and Embankments on River Barrow Right Bank and on Floodplain at the Right Bank Culvert upsize to 0.8m Diameter	1.4m	530m
AMR13	Embankments and Wall around Greenfield Area	0.8m	510m
	No. 1 Culvert upsize to 1.5m Diameter; No. 1 Culvert upsize to 1m Height x 2.1m Width		200m (regarding)

Benefits	Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option A would protect approximately 144 properties from flooding for the 1% AEP event. The option does not increase downstream flood risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ There is potential for improvement of riparian habitats, creation of wetlands habitats, opportunities to encourage wildflowers/grasses and nesting birds at the Blackstick Drain proposed wetland. The following key transport routes are protected from the 1%AEP flooding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Barrow Bridge and Spa Street Bridge ⇒ Patrick's Street ⇒ Lea Road ⇒ Portlaoise Road and Foxcroft Avenue Portarlington's monuments are protected from the 1%AEP flooding. Portarlington's Botley lane and Bracklone industrial estates are protected from the 1%AEP flooding. Flood risk at the greenfield spaces currently used for grazing is mitigated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works may be required within the River Barrow's Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Mitigation of temporary construction impacts will be needed. Invasive species require treatment and removal before commencement of works to avoid spreading. The town's archaeological features may require monitoring during the flood defences' construction. Space for construction of defences between the Barrow and Spa St. Bridge and the Barrow left bank upstream of the Barrow Bridge is limited with several overhead and underground utilities crossings. The complexity of the construction will be significant. Space for construction of defences along AMR4 is also limited with several utilities crossings. Flood gates are unavoidable at various locations to maintain existing access. These measures require a warning and deployment plan. The option requires land acquisition for storage area.

PORTARLINGTON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

Poster

Option B - Hard Defences, Conveyance Improvements and Water Retention Areas

6

Option Description

Option B considers a mix of flood defence embankments and walls for the river Barrow with reduced height compared to Option A, a water retention area for the Blackstick Drain with bypass channel, widening of part of the Barrow River and three culvert upsizes at tributaries AMR4, Blackstick Drain, and AMR6. For one of these culverts, a regrading of the tributary section upstream and downstream of the structure is necessary to ensure sufficient depth of cover and improve conveyance. Increase to the open flow section is proposed for the existing bridges within the Scheme area (Barrow Bridge and Spa St. Bridge). Flood gates are required at different locations along the Barrow floodplain and tributaries to maintain current access.

Flood defence heights are based on the 1%AEP event with an additional allowance typically 300mm for walls and 500mm for embankments.

The option would include the following defences divided per area.

Area	Defences	Average Heights	Total Lengths
Railway to AMR4 confluence	Embankment on the River Barrow Floodplain at the Left Bank	1.1m	280m
AMR4	Embankments and Walls on AMR4 Right Bank and River Barrow floodplain at the Right Bank	0.8m	400m
	Embankments and Walls on AMR4 Left Bank and around the Greenfield Area	1.8m	270m
	Culvert upsize to 1.20m Diameter and Regrade of part of AMR4.		100m (regrading)
AMR4 confluence to Barrow Bridge	Walls on River Barrow Left and Right Bank	1.6m	450m
Barrow Bridge to Spa Street Bridge	Walls on River Barrow Right Bank and Embankments and Walls along River Barrow Floodplain at the Left Bank Culvert upsize to 0.8m Height x 1.0m Width Barrow Bridge and Spa Street Bridge Opening widening	0.9m	900m
Blackstick Drain	Water Retention Area (Wetland) with Bypass Channel from the Blackstick Drain Right Bank		18000m ² (area)
	Embankments on Blackstick Drain Floodplain behind proposed Water Retention Area	1.2m	630m
	Wall on Blackstick Drain Left Bank and Embankments on Blackstick Drain Right Bank Culvert upsize to 1.2m Height x 1.5m Width	1.3m	885m
Spa Street Bridge to AMR8	Walls and Embankments on River Barrow Right Bank and on Floodplain at the Right Bank	1.2m	530m
	River Barrow widening downstream of Spa Street Bridge		950m
	Culvert upsize to 0.8m Diameter		
AMR13	Embankments and Wall around Greenfield Area	1.2m	920m
	Water retention Area on the Greenfield Area		75500m ² (area)

Benefits	Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option B would protect 144 properties from flooding for the 1% AEP event. The option does not increase the flood risk downstream. Hard defences are lower than Option A. There is potential for improvement of riparian habitats, creation of wetlands habitats, opportunities to encourage wildflowers/grasses and nesting birds at the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ downstream of Spa Street Bridge ⇒ Blackstick Drain wetland, and ⇒ AMR13 water retention area. The following key transport routes are protected from flooding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Barrow Bridge and Spa Street Bridge ⇒ Patrick's Street ⇒ Lea Road ⇒ Portlaoise Road and Foxcroft Avenue Portarlington's monuments are protected from flooding. Portarlington's Botley lane and Bracklone industrial estates are protected from flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works may be required within the River Barrow's Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Mitigation of temporary construction impacts will be needed. Invasive species require treatment and removal before commencement of works to avoid spreading. The town's archaeological features may require monitoring during the flood defences' construction. Space for construction of defences between the Barrow and Spa St. Bridge and the Barrow left bank upstream of the Barrow Bridge is limited with several overhead and underground utilities crossings. The complexity of the construction will be significant. Space for construction of defences along AMR4 is also limited with several utilities crossings. Flood gates are unavoidable at various locations to maintain existing access. These measures require a warning and deployment plan. The option requires land acquisition for storage area. Permanent works for channel widening at the downstream of Spa Street Bridge will require a significant amount of excavations and possible diversion of existing services.

PORTARLINGTON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

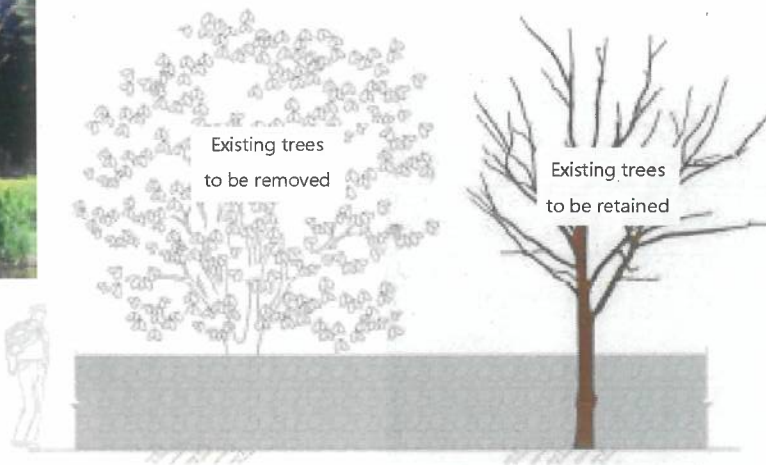
Flood Defence - Examples

Poster

7



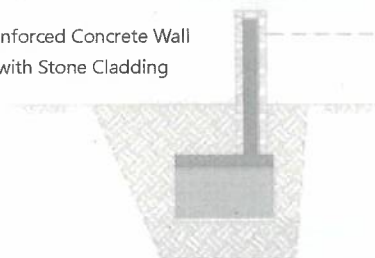
Proposed Wall Location
Downstream of Barrow Bridge



Proposed Location
Botley Lane

Type A
Proposed Flood Defence Wall

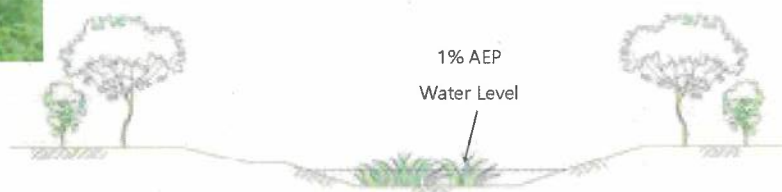
Reinforced Concrete Wall
with Stone Cladding



Proposed Location
Blackstick Drain



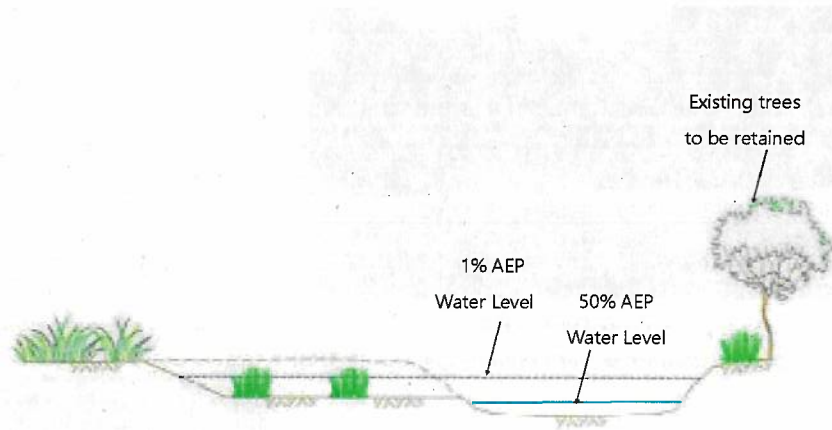
Type B
Proposed Flood Defence Embankment



Type C
Proposed Natural Water Retention



Proposed Channel Widening
River Barrow

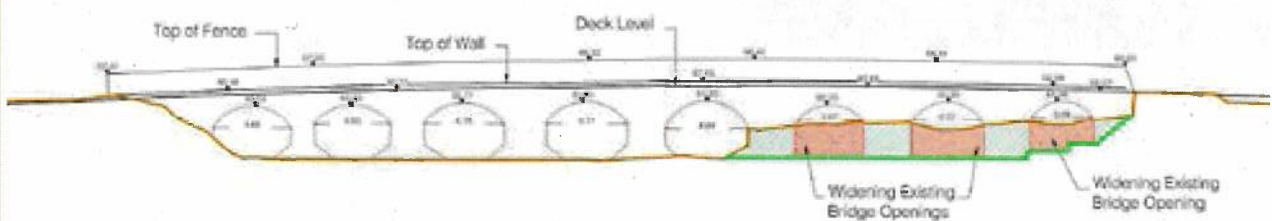


Type D Conveyance Improvement
Channel Widening



Proposed Bridge Widening
River Barrow

Type E Conveyance Improvement
Widening Existing Bridge Openings



PORTARLINGTON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

Environmental Constraints / Early Considerations

Poster

9

Protecting the History and Environment of Portarlinton

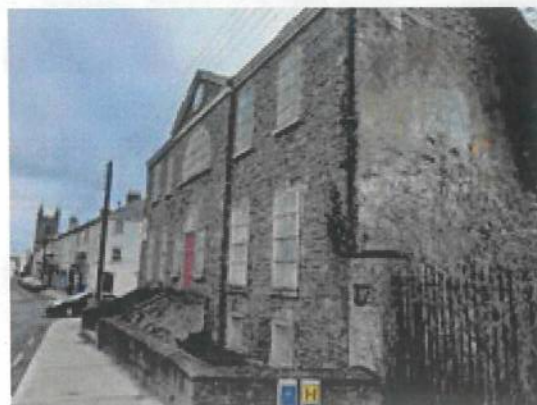
The historic town of Portarlinton is a heritage asset and the proposed flood relief scheme will aim to protect the town's archaeological significance. A detailed study was undertaken to assess impacts of potential flood defences on the archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage resources.

In total there are 90 protected structures within the Scheme Boundary of which:

- 64 historical buildings or structures
- 13 recorded monuments
- 3 heritage assets. Two of these are ringforts and the other is the historic town of Portarlinton.

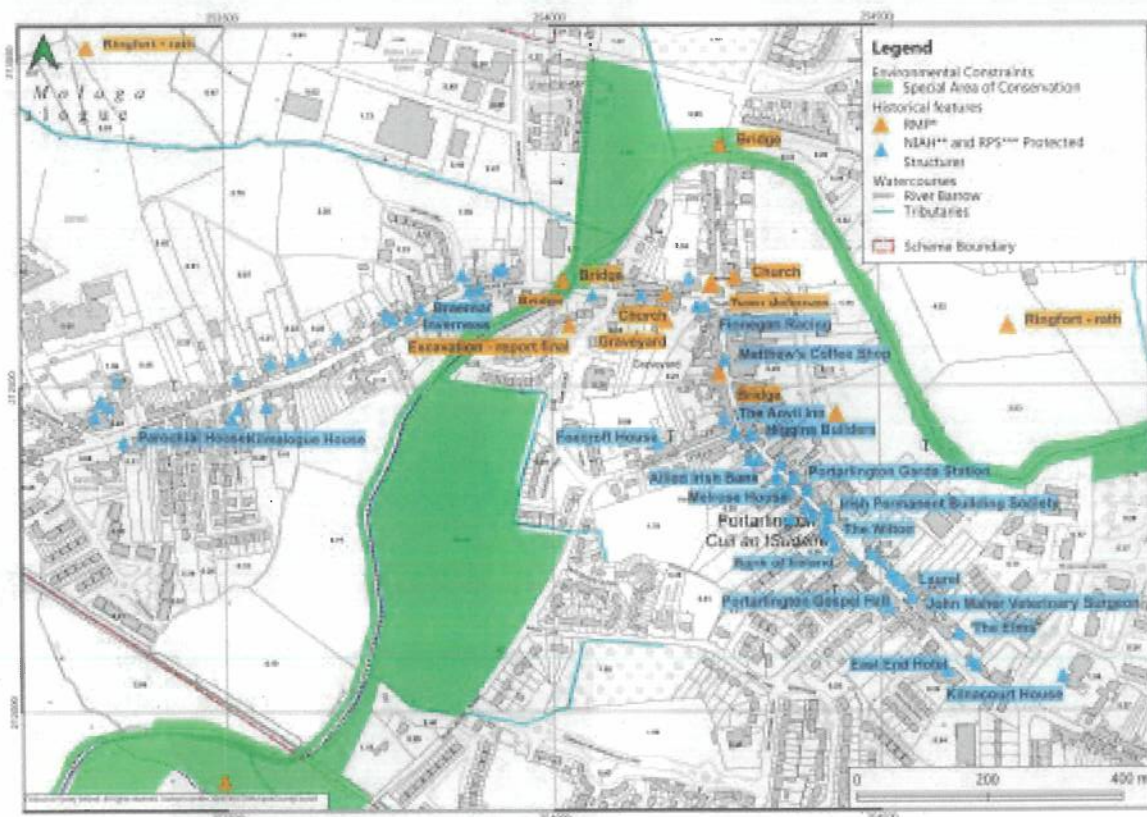
The Barrow Bridge and Spa St. Bridge are of particular historical significance therefore due consideration was given to any modification of these structure as part of the proposal.

The majority of the town historical city centre together lies within the archaeological notification area.



A view of Arlington House

Options A and B include works within the River Barrow Special Area of Conservation (SAC) therefore careful consideration is required during both design and construction to ensure that significant impacts to the qualifying features of the SAC are not negatively impacted.



Map of historical features and Environmental constraints within Portarlinton Scheme Boundary

*RMP — Record of Monuments and Places

**NIAH — National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

***RPS — Record of Protected Structures



Comhairle Chionnaithe Uilleann
Offaly County Council



Leix County Council
Area of Chionnaithe, Portarlinton, Co. Leix



OPW
Office of Public Works



2040
Towards a Greener Future



binnies
binaries



NICHOLAS
O'DWYER

PORTARLINGTON FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

Early Landscaping Ideas

Poster

10

Field and properties near the Derrycastle Trail



Wet meadows including wild flower and grass species could provide habitats for a range of animals, plants, insects and birds.

River bank behind Patrick Street and Rose Court



Opportunities for aquatic planting along new river flood defence walls and enhance habitats.



Open space adjacent to the R419 road



Further planting within the space to provide a woodland corridor to support existing wildlife initiatives in the location (such as the bug hotel).

View from the R419 road



Consideration of the materials used for the flood walls will help to soften any visual impacts and blend the new walls into their locations.

Open space adjacent to Marian Hill



Native planting along the new flood walls would create wildlife corridors and also assist in screening views from nearby areas of public open space or recreational opportunities such as the Derrycastle Trail cycle and footpath route.



View of floodwall within People's Park

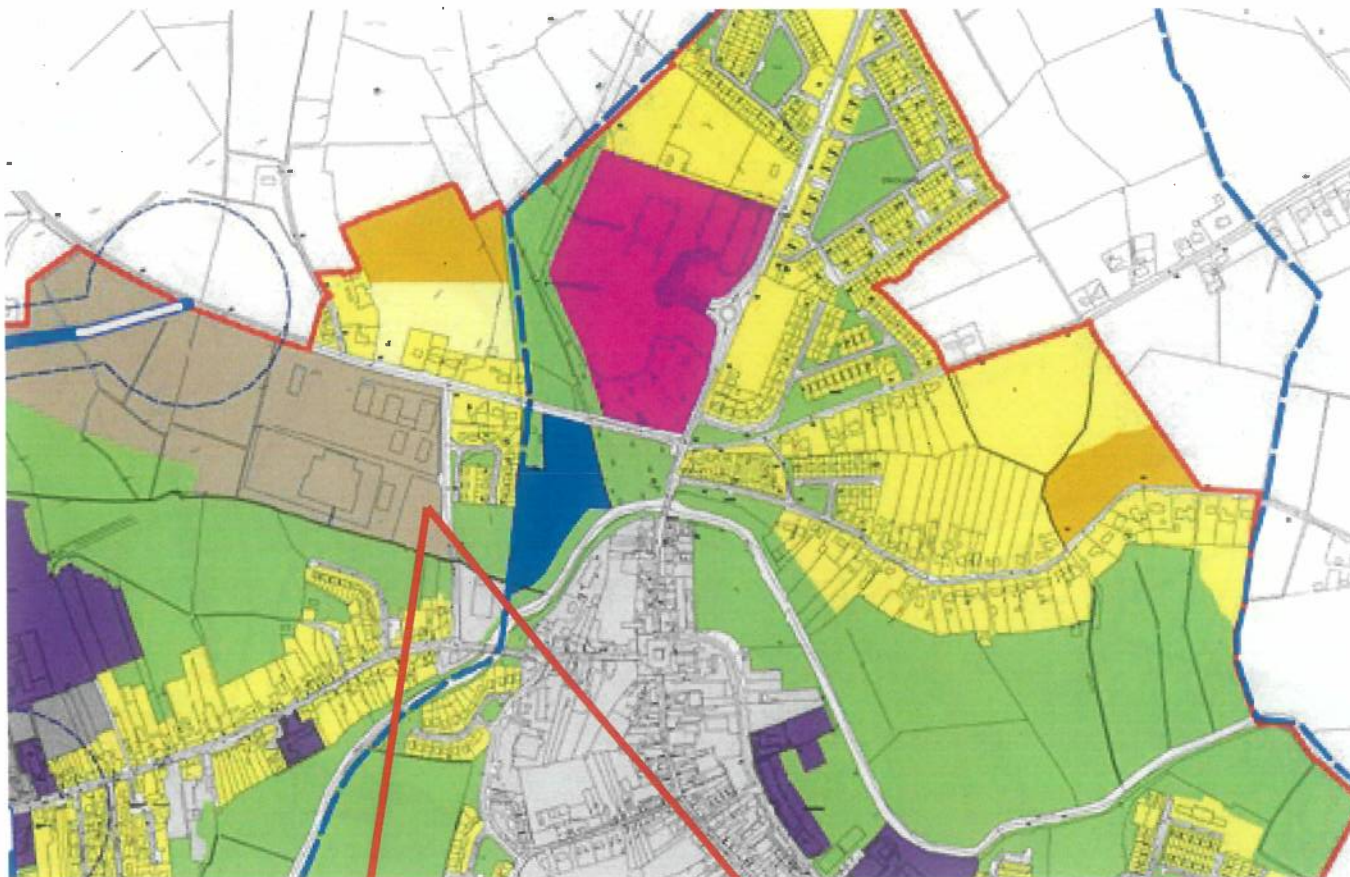


Native shrub and ground cover planting along the new flood wall would assist in blending it into the park, whilst also providing ecological benefits.

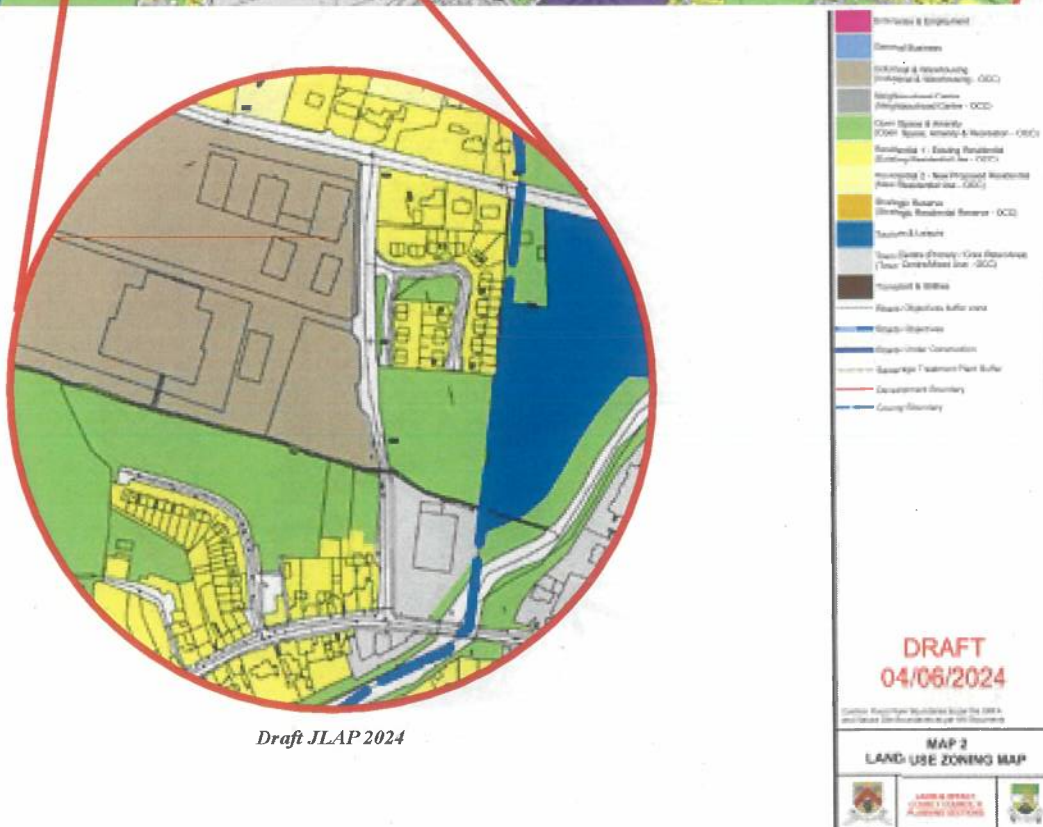


6. Portarlington Flood Relief Scheme - Consultation

At the consultation, it was discussed that a defence wall would be erected on the southern end of the site and as a result, the site would be free from flooding. It was also explained that the zoning of the site would now be improved to all Industrial. This was also set out in the June 2024 draft Joint LAP.

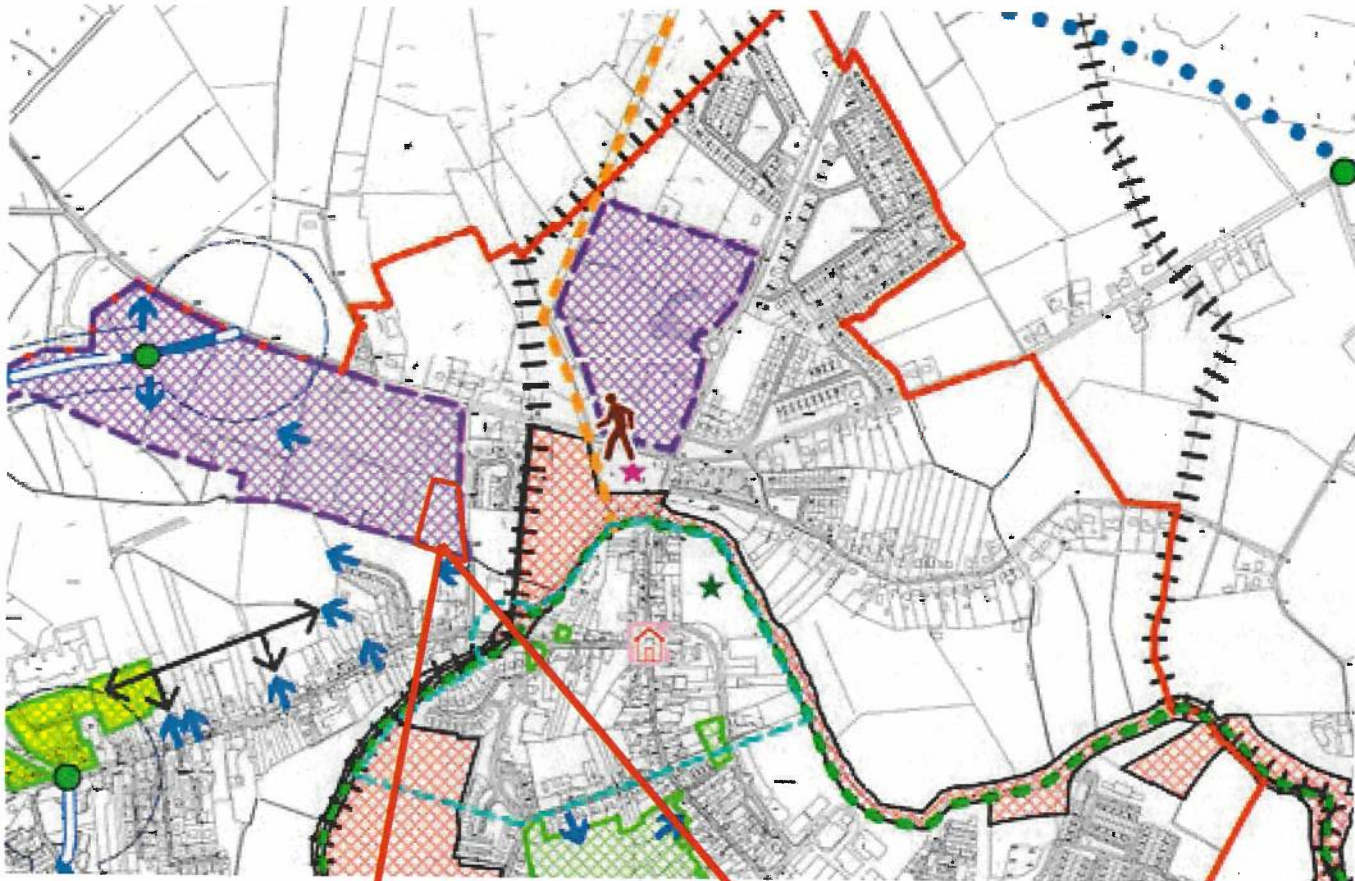


Draft JLAP 2024, June



Draft JLAP 2024

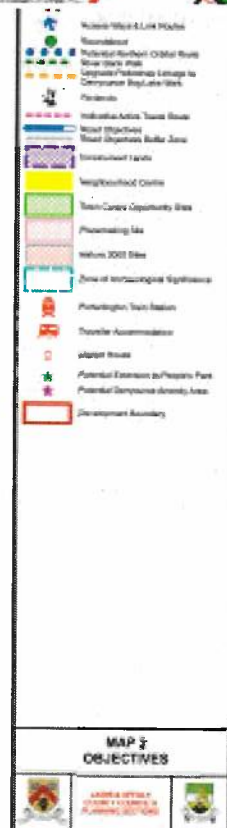
Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2030



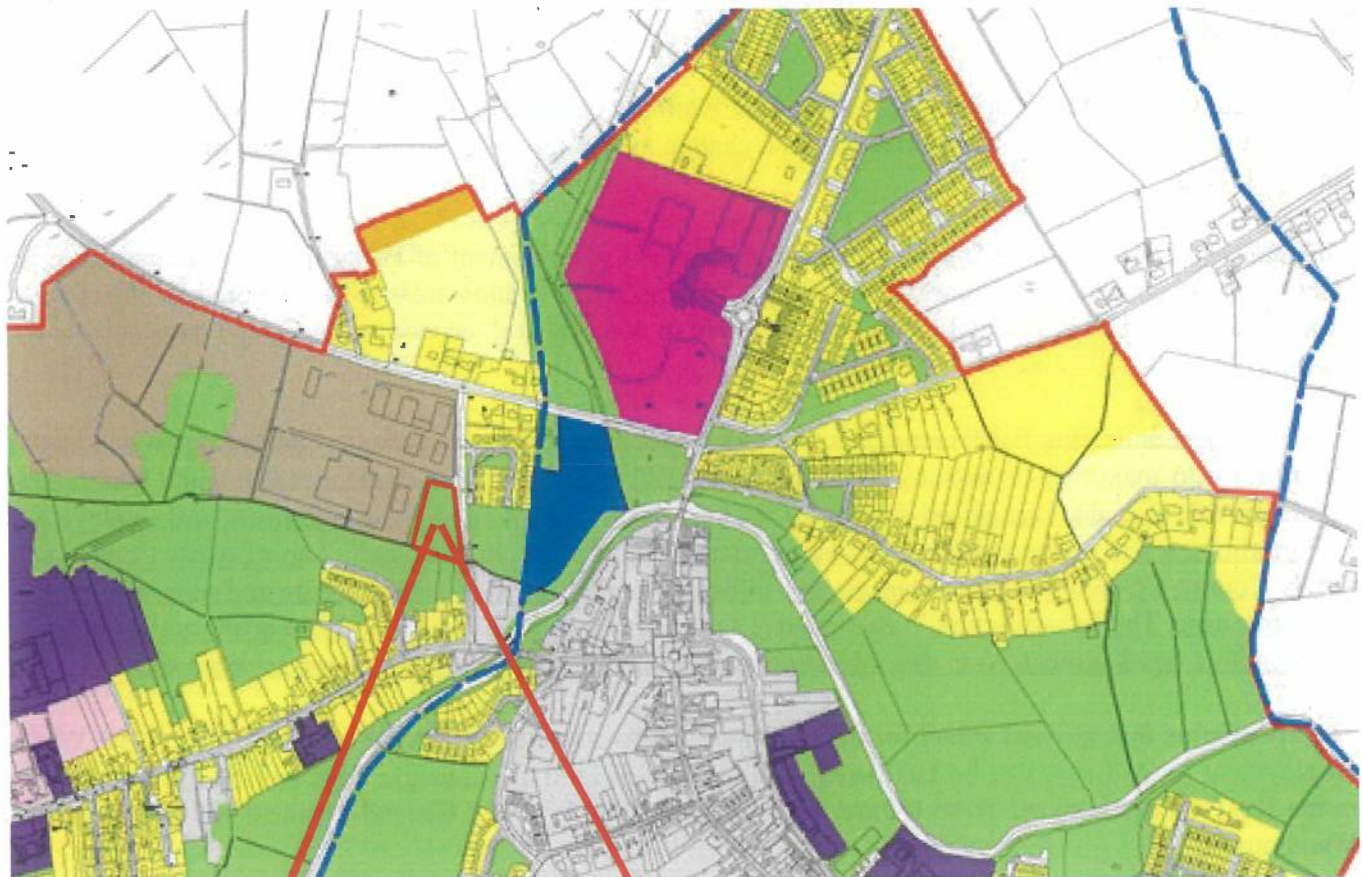
Draft JLAP 2024



Draft JLAP 2024



Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2030



Draft JLAP 2024

Note, These lands are zoned Tourism and Leisure.

They are more at risk of flooding as noted in flood risk and are deemed not dry after impact of flood relief scheme.

Open Space

It does not comply with the JLAP forward planning or the support of enterprise in the town, to make this site open space from already established and serviced industrial site. This goes against all economic policy as detailed in the JLAP. Also there is a green space buffer opposite the site.

Draft JLAP 2024



Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2030

The JLAP seeks to build on previous successful collaborations of both Laois and Offaly Council's in the preparation and adoption of Joint Local Area Plans for Portarlington.

This collaborative approach acknowledges the unitary functioning of the joint urban area in terms of land use planning and the day-to-day activities of the local population, moving beyond a traditional focus on local authority county boundaries.

I would contest that this proposal represents poor planning on existing land use. It also will have a serious effect on the owners financial security due to a change in zoning. This will put us at risk of defaulting with financial loans.

This approach seeks to ensure that the future growth and development of Portarlington is addressed in an integrated and coordinated manner, with strategic sites and regeneration areas to be delivered for the entirety of the urban area taking account of the compact growth and physical, economic, and social development requirements.

11.4.1 Zoned Lands This JLAP recognises that key to the economic development of Portarlington will be the ability for it to maximise its existing economic assets and overcome those challenges that could inhibit economic growth. It is also recognised that one of the key enablers in attracting new investment and employment to Portarlington will be the availability of appropriately zoned lands. In this regard, Laois County Council and Offaly County Council will aim to ensure that sufficient land is zoned to accommodate and support a diverse economic base. The Infrastructural Assessment (IA) accompanying the JLAP has informed the zoning of lands for economic development. Note that infrastructure for the site already existing, it is a serviced site.

The IA ensures that all land zoned for development can be serviced within the lifetime of the JLAP. While employment related uses can be facilitated on a number of land use zonings, there will be a specific focus in the JLAP on lands zoned Town Centre, Enterprise and Employment, General Business and Industrial and Warehousing.

The land use zonings support economic development and will ensure that Portarlington has the ability to maintain, increase and diversify its employment base, and at the same time ensuring that it is well positioned to capitalise on and accommodate unexpected economic development opportunities that may arise during the plan period.

A total of c. 18.99 ha. of land is zoned for Enterprise and Employment use in this JLAP, along with c. 44.53 ha. that is zoned for Industrial and Warehousing use and c. 3.79 ha. that is zoned for General Business use. These figures combined amount to c. 67.31 hectares of land that supports economic development. These lands, in conjunction with other zonings such as Town Centre, are considered adequate to serve the needs of a wide range of enterprise and employment opportunities over the lifetime of the JLAP and beyond.

11.4.2 Serviced Business and Industrial Parks (Employment Land) The Laois County Development Plan 2021-27 and the Offaly County Development Plan 2021- 2027 recognises that Portarlington is one of the primary locations for strategic employment within Co. Laois and Co. Offaly. Therefore, the zoned lands that are referred to in section 11.4.1

11.4.3 Supporting Established Employment Bases

The creation of sufficient employment opportunities in Portarlington is fundamental to building a sustainable community and to reducing the rate of outward commuting from the town.

This JLAP places a firm emphasis on supporting existing businesses and entrepreneurial development. In this respect, Laois and Offaly County Councils will support local enterprise and employment generating opportunities, facilitate the upskilling and training of the labour force and support the provision of key hard and soft infrastructure. In addition to this, it is recognised that building strong communities, improving the physical environments particularly the town centre and developing a strong identity for the town can do much to attract new businesses and investment.

In this regard, Chapter 8: Town Centre Revitalisation identifies various measures to revitalise the town centre including Enabling and Supporting Regeneration; Improving Public Realm; Addressing Vacancy; Implementing Statutory Land Activation Provisions; Adhering to respective Retail Strategy's; Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Core; and the development of Opportunity Sites.

11.5 Economic Development Policies and Objectives Planning and Development Policies It is the policy of Laois and Offaly County Council to:

Policy 11.1 Support economic development by maximising the efficiency of zoned lands and by advocating for and facilitating the provision, upgrade, or refurbishment of necessary supporting physical infrastructure.

Policy 11.2 Ensure that lands zoned for employment generating uses in Portarlinton are kept free from inappropriate development that would prejudice future economic growth and activity.

Policy 11.3 Encourage and support the re-use of vacant buildings for new employment generating developments.

Policy 11.4 Seek to address vacancy, dereliction, and the underutilisation of land and buildings in the town centre by supporting an appropriate mix of other alternative uses such as enterprise and business start-ups, offices, tourism and culture, hospitality, residential etc., subject to compliance with proper planning and environmental considerations.

Policy 11.5 Support employment generating uses on land zoned Town Centre as a key driver of urban regeneration.

Policy 11.6 Support the continued operation and reasonable development of existing non conforming uses provided that such uses do not: ☒ Result in a loss of amenity to adjoining properties. ☒ Cause an adverse impact on the environment. ☒ Cause an adverse impact on the visual amenity or character of the area. ☒ Inhibit the development of adjoining land in conformance with the land's zoning objective.

Policy 11.7 Encourage appropriate development, works and supporting infrastructure that would contribute to a high quality and attractive built and social environment in Portarlinton to attract and sustain new business, residents and visitors.

Policy 11.8 Encourage the establishment and expansion of services and facilities in the town at appropriate locations to facilitate the business needs of employment and enterprise developments and potential tourism needs like conference facilities, hotels, accommodation, eateries and other similar services.

Planning and Development Objectives It is the objective of Laois and Offaly County Council to:

Objective 11.1 Maximise the economic development potential of Portarlinton by capitalising on its economic assets, including its Key Service Centre designation and its excellent geographical location, and by promoting and marketing the area for significant economic investment and employment growth.

Objective 11.2 Support sustainable employment and enterprise in Portarlinton through the identification of appropriately located and adequately serviced lands for business/employment, industrial and commercial developments; investment in support infrastructure and the creation of a high-quality environment to encourage economic investment.

Objective 11.3 Engage with IDA Ireland and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in seeking to develop and attract potential economic opportunities into suitably zoned employment lands in Portarlinton.

Objective 11.4 Promote and support the role of local stakeholders including the Portarlinton Community Development Association, the Portarlinton Business Association, the Laois Partnership Company, the Laois Chamber Alliance and the Local Enterprise Offices in Laois and Offaly in driving the development of local enterprise and job creation in Portarlinton.

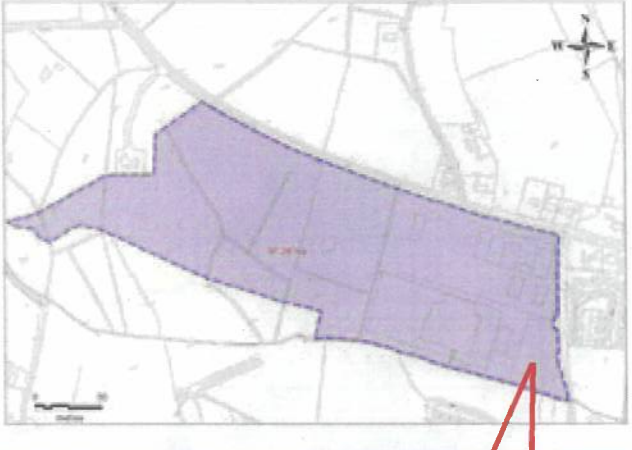
Objective 11.5 Identify infrastructural and service deficits experienced by existing businesses, and work towards addressing these deficits.

It is evident that the JLAP sets out to protect, promote and develop enterprise and industry in the town.

The subject site should remain as industrial as also stated in the JLAP 2025-2030.

Rezoning the land to be all open space, goes against the policy promoted in the JLAP and the importance and credibility of the flood relief infrastructure set out in the flood relief scheme.

De-zoning an existing serviced, industrial zoned site, in an established enterprise park does not support what the JLAP sets out to accomplish.

INDUSTRIAL ESTATE BOTLEY LANE, CO. OFFALY	
Map	
Access	Existing and well-defined access onto Botley Lane. Footpath access to the Town Centre.
Services	Serviced
Existing Uses	Mix of warehousing, engineering and industrial uses
Consolidation and Expansion	Very good level of occupation, almost at capacity
Development Guidance	Refer to Chapter 13 Development Management Standards of Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027. Note: DMS 71 and 74 apply to Industrial and Warehousing Developments.

11.4.3 Supporting Established Employment Bases

The creation of sufficient employment opportunities in Portarlington is fundamental to building a sustainable community and to reducing the rate of outward commuting from the town.

In the past, Portarlington had a number of large companies which provided a strong employment base for the town. In particular, the Avon Arlington factory, which opened in the late 1970s,

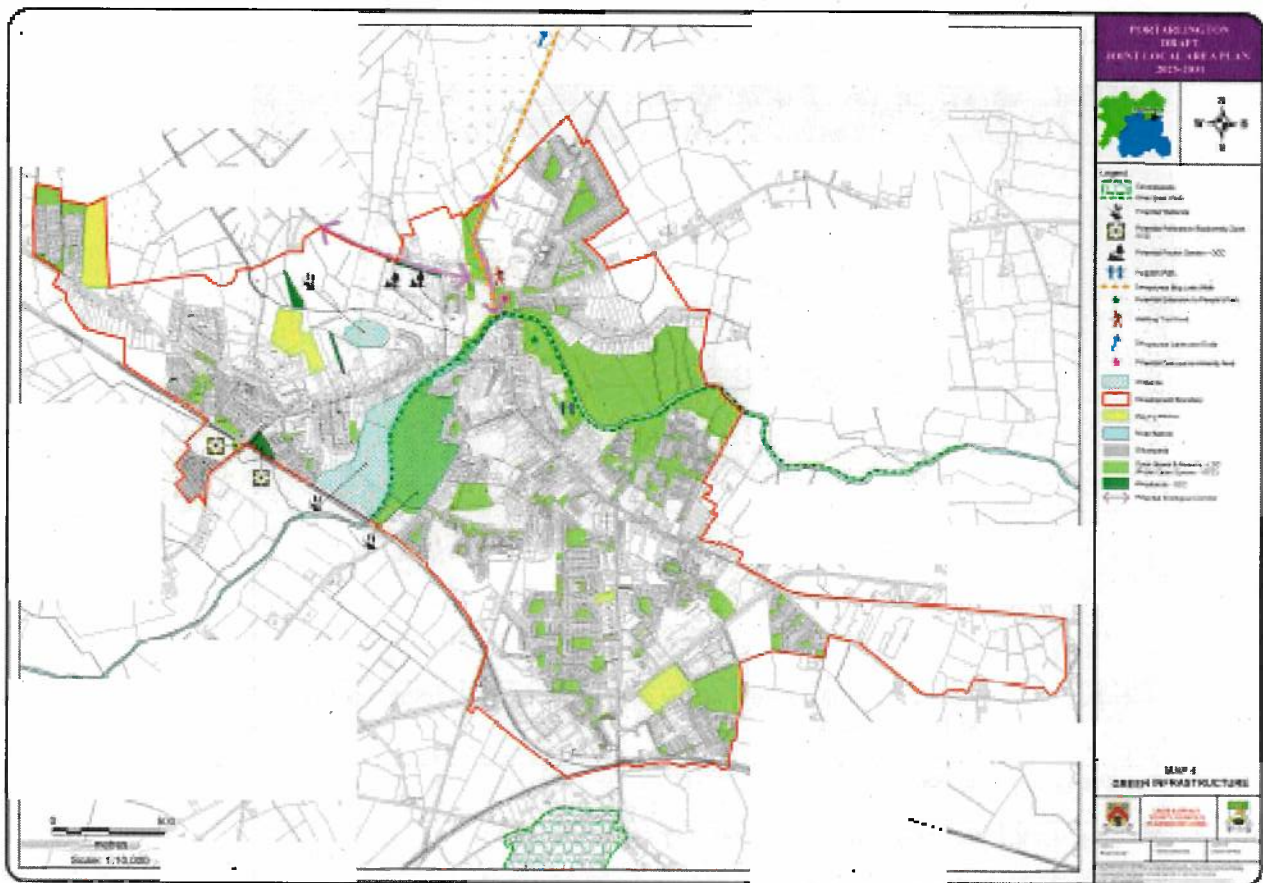
Draft JLAP 2024



Rezoning the land to be all open space, goes against the policy promoted in the JLAP

The existing site is serviced, industrial zoned site, in an established enterprise park.

Draft JLAP 2024



Draft JLAP 2024

A conflicting green infrastructure map set out in the draft JLAP suggest that the subject site be used as a pocket park. A pocket park can be established across the road on lands that are closer to the river which is already zoned for open space.

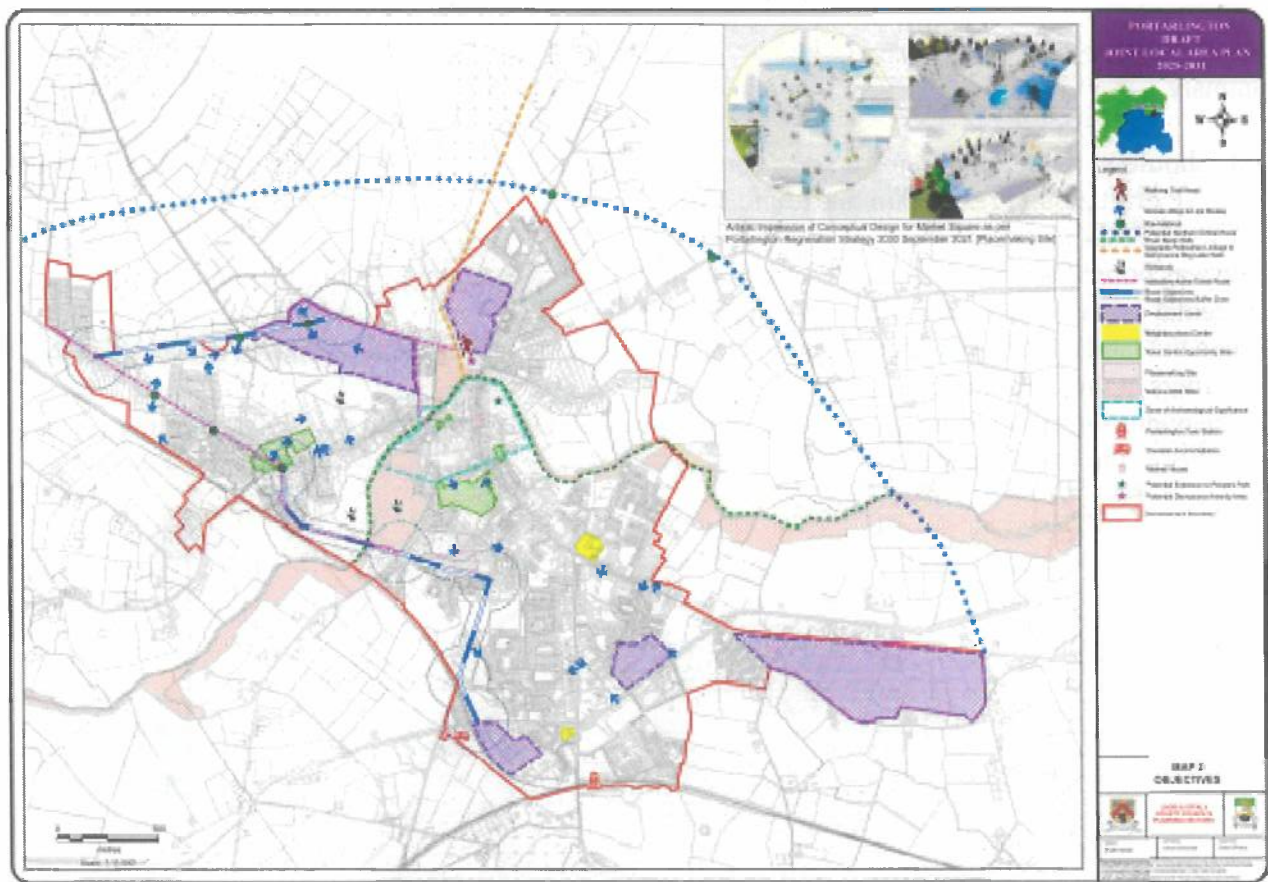
This idea goes against forward planning's idea to support enterprise, the purpose and qualities of the flood relief scheme and town regeneration planning.

It should be noted that there are already several public parks within walking distance from the site

1. Derryounce Walk - 281m distance
2. Portarlinton people's park - 500m
3. Barrow walkway - 205m
4. Portarlinton Town Centre - 350m

Another pocket park in this area will not benefit the town for numerous reasons

1. No foot fall as it is an industrial area
2. It has no passive surveillance
3. Will become an anti Social Hotspot



Draft JLAP 2024

Note the objectives map set out in the draft JLAP clearly stated the site at Employment lands

It is unclear to see the strategic objective of the rezoning proposed in the JLAP given the site is serviced and zoned already for use of employment and support of enterprise.

Summary

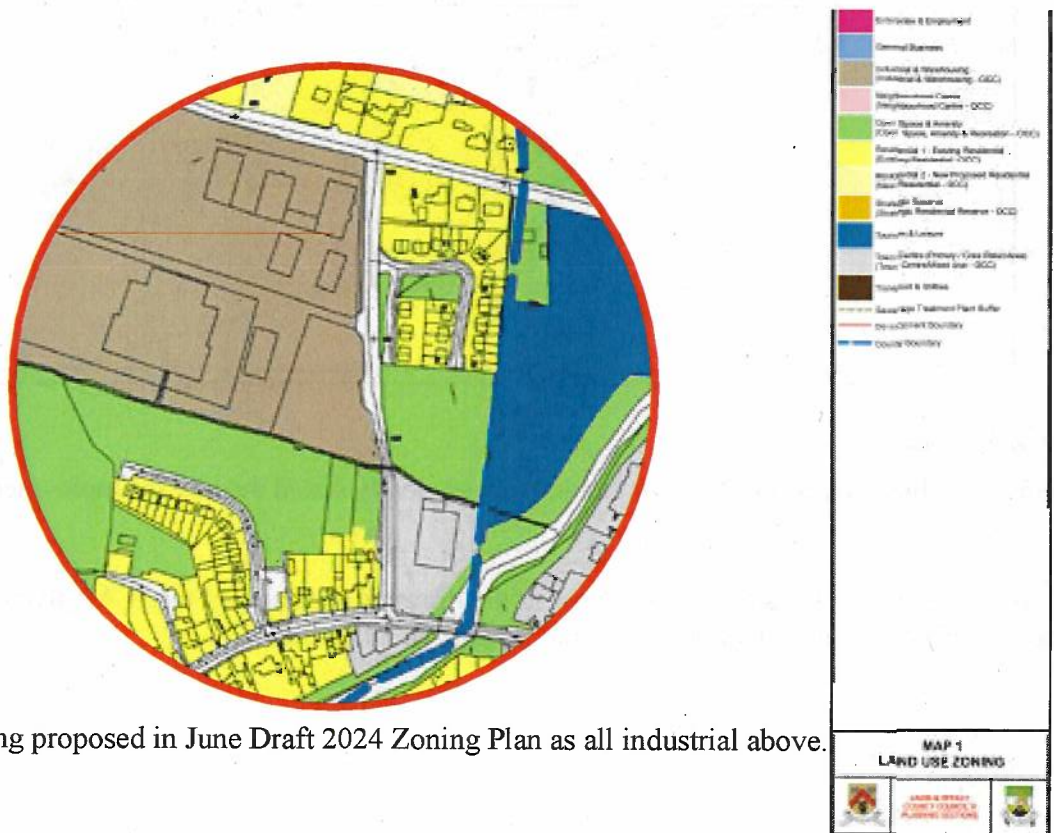
In summary

The site should at a minimum remain as its current zoning if not be completely zoned all industrial as stated in the JLAP draft zoning realized in draft June 2024.

The site was bought as an industrial site and the owners wish to develop it. To rezone as open space will have a detrimental impact financially and to their business plans.

To rezone the land as open space would not put faith in the flood relief scheme proposed and as was explained to the owners at the consultation.

We as the owners urge the zoning to be made all industrial and will work with the local authority to ensure the site is of benefit to its enterprise use.



Summary to retain zoning proposed in June Draft 2024 Zoning Plan as all industrial above.

It should be noted, that the owners have a planning application ready to submit, however, they were under the assumption that the site would change to all industrial as stated in the draft JLAP and flood relief scheme consultation

The site was purchased from Offaly County Council as a Zoned Industrial Site. See Folio in purchased in 2008. It would be not only against the objectives set out in the JLAP, but dishonourable the sale of the site as industrial and enterprise lands.

Yours sincerely

