

Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027”, MA 265 Vol. 2 I wish to comment on Amendment MA265 on Page 167 Vol. 2 at the consultation stage of the County Development Plan. This site was zoned “Community services/ facilities” presumably to respect its location beside the Regional Hospital, Tullamore and is now proposed as “New Residential”. “Health and Social Services” in the 2016 Census of Population accounted for 22% of Employment in Tullamore making the Hospital the single biggest employer in the town. There are good prospects that the Hospital, which is also the Headquarters of the Midland Regional Nursing School will need land to expand further; it is the site for the Midlands Level 3 Hospice and has links to St. James’ Hospital group and the University of Limerick (UL). The Council has been supportive of the Hospital in the past. The Council acquired land beside Arden Vale which it protected until the Hospital Authorities indicated that the land was needed for Hospital development. The Council should, if necessary, acquire this site because of its unique location beside the Hospital. The Council has an enviable record of acquiring land and making it available for critical developments. The following are some examples. Land at Clonminch which now is occupied by Government Offices. Forty acres at Cloncollig which is now occupied by Social and Affordable Housing, GaelScoil Eiscir Riada and Aura Leisure Centre. Land at Srah which is now occupied by the IDA site and Burlington Business Park. Dr. Kelly’s field, now used for sporting activities. Land at Arden Vale now occupied by Private housing. Land for Primary Schools, St Josephs and Scoil Eoin Pol 11 at Arden. Lands at Clonminch later developed for St Columba’s Place and Tara Crescent. Lands at O’Neill’s Place, Kilbride Paza and the Daingean Road, later developed for car parking. Lloyd’s Town Park. Two Industrial sites at Cloncollig. Two houses at Arden Road made way for the link to Clara Road from the Bypass In all the foregoing the Council held the lands for a period of years before Developments took place. In addition the Council undertook a multiplicity of developments, housing at Thornsberry Estate, Connolly/ Kearney Park, Clontarf Road, Arden View, Marian Place, O’Molloy Street, Pearce Park, Adams Villas, and Kilbride Street. The Council also demolished old buildings on the High Street and Kilbride Street to provide access to backlands; It acquired Acres Hall and refurbished it as Council Offices. Recently it made improvements to O’Connor Square. There are many sites that are more suitable for residential development including brownfield sites. There are other options for residential development that the Council could pursue. The development of the site of MA 265 for housing is not warranted. Yours respectfully,