

Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030

Submitted by

Portarlington Community Development Association (PCDA)



Introduction:

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 Community Development Association (PCDA) would like to provide the following submission for consideration under the Proposed Portarlington Joint Local Area Plan 2024-2030.

1. Urban Regeneration:

Creation of greenway from Monastrevin to Portarlington via the Barrow river and also a greenway via Derryounce via Daingean windfarm on to the Grand Canal way connecting Tullamore to Edenderry.

Promotion of outdoor leisure activities connecting rural communities and to highlight Portarlington as 'go to' destination for hiking (Derryounce, Garryhinch), fishing (Derryounce/ River Barrow), Golf (Portarlington GC and Heritage GC).

Promotion of Portarlington as a place to visit or stay for people attending national ploughing championships, Electric Picnic, Forest Fest etc.

2. Car parking:

Creation of additional parking at commercial units in Gracefield, Kilmalogue and in Portarlington Town Centre, Entrance to Derryounce Lakes and Trail from Bog Lane Portarlington.

Conduct surveys to identify parking shortages and areas for improvement.

3. Transport (Traffic, Bus, Bicycle lanes, Greenway):

Increase Bus routes to and from Portarlington connecting to surrounding townlands Cloneygowan, Geashill, Killenard, Emo.

Identify bicycle routes surrounding the town -i.e. canal road to Portlaoise road, ballymorris road and Portlaoise road.

Install proper pedestrian crossings at roundabouts surrounding schools to maximise safety of pedestrians.

Conduct traffic surveys to identify bottlenecks and plan routes to ease traffic. Identify where roads could be opened, widened and also review and implement the current road objectives for Laois and Offaly side of Portarlinton.

4. Economic Development:

Establish a task force for attracting employment into Portarlinton via IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Chambers Ireland. Task force to work on ideas to attract new industries into Portarlinton and provide employment.

5. Policing:

Due to population expansion the Garda service in Portarlinton needs to be 24/7 and adequately resourced. Through the joint policing plan and cooperation with An Garda Siochana the local citizens need proper Garda cover to minimise crime and anti social behaviour.

6. Maintenance and Upkeep of Existing Infrastructure:

Review all existing infrastructure, to ensure prompt action is taken where lighting needs fixing, footpaths need repairing and all general services are maintained without delay. Develop an APP that will allow for maintenance issues to be reported and acted upon without delay. This will help improve the overall appearance of the town.

7. Housing:

Ensure adequate housing plans are in place to cater increasing demand. Including housing for young first time buyers, and senior citizens.

8. Services for senior citizens:

Broaden the services and activities available for Senior citizens, including housing, transport, access to senior citizen groups.

9. Youth Initiatives / spaces:

Ensure visible supports and services for young people, Mental Health Supports, Youth clubs, awareness programmes (gambling, Drugs, addiction), Mentoring, social initiatives for Youth to meet and mix.