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| SECTION 25A REPORT |
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| Report Date | Local Authority  | Prepared By |
| 20/01/22 | Carlow County Council  | Wesley Keogh |

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The purpose of the table below is to assist the local authority in completing the Section 25A (1) report to the Regional Assembly. This report will be used by the Regional Assembly to complete the Section 25A(2) Monitoring Report to be submitted to NOAC and which will focus on progress made in securing the overall objectives of the RSES.

It is intended that the Monitoring Report will be succinct and therefore we would ask that the response to the questions are as short as possible and for example we do not need the full detail of each policy or programme outlined.

The Regional Assembly is keen to capture examples of good practice initiatives and actions undertaken by the Local Authority which relate to the objectives of RSES and would welcome the inclusion of such examples where appropriate.

For further information, please contact Dominic Walsh at dwalsh@southernassembly.ie or Alice Byrne Kelly at abyrnekelly@southernassembly.ie;

Please return the report to this office by Friday, 21st January, 2022.

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| This can be submitted by email to twoyearreport@southernassembly.ie; |
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| RSES tHEME & rpo Reference  | RSES IMPLEMENTATION IN DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY & SUPPORTING PROJECTS/INITIATIVES |
| **SUSTAINABLE PLACE FRAMEWORK & A TAILORED APPROACH** RPOS 2 TO 30 | **Has the Core Strategy been prepared in accordance with the guiding principles and typology of settlement contained in the RSES?** Please provide a brief summary. |
|  | Yes, Sections 2.3 to 2.8 in Chapter 2 of the Draft Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 (hereafter the Draft Plan) refer. Section 2.3Acknowledges that the Council must have regard to the RSES guiding principles and settlement typology in the allocation of future growth in the preparation of the Core Strategy. Section 2.4 Sets out the strategic elements of the growth strategy of the RSES that will influence growth and development in County Carlow.Section 2.5 Lists 6 strategic aims of the Core Strategy including “*i.To guide the future development of County Carlow in line with national and regional objectives set out in the NPF and RSES and other national guidelines and policies”.*Section 2.7 Notes the requirement for the Draft Plan to contain a settlement hierarchy, and that this settlement hierarchy must be consistent with the RSES and be within the framework of the RSES settlement typology.Table 2.1In accordance with the requirements of the RSES, the settlement typology and hierarchy for County Carlow is outlined in Table 2.1 (see below), which acknowledges the strategic role of Carlow as a regional and inter-regional growth driver, followed by the towns of Tullow and Muinebheag, and then a range of other settlements that have been identified on the basis of their nature and function and which comprise smaller towns, larger serviced villages, smaller serviced villages, and rural nodes.  **Table 2.1**

| **Settlement Tier** | **Settlement Typology** | **Description**  | **Settlements** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | **Key Town**  | Large population scale urban centre functioning as self – sustaining regional drivers. Strategically located urban center with accessibility and significant influence in a sub-regional context.  | Carlow Town  |
| 2 | **District Towns**  | Well-developed serviced settlements with a moderate level of jobs supporting services and community facilities with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining.  | TullowMuine Bheag |
| 3 | **Small Towns**  | Smaller towns with an urban structure providing local services and employment functions catering for a wider rural hinterland area. | RathvillyLeighlinbridgeBallonBorrisHacketstownCarrickduffTinnahinch  |
| 4 | **Larger Serviced Rural Villages**  | Serviced villages with established populations circa. 200 and settlement structure which provide important local level services.  | PalatineBallinabrannaghRathtoeFennaghMyshallClonegalKildavinTinryland |
| 5 | **Smaller Serviced Rural Villages**  | Villages with more limited services established populations <200 and settlement structure which provide important local level services and community facilities.  | BennekerryOld LeighlinNurneyArdattinGlynnTiknockBallinkillenBilboaSt MullinsClonmore |
| 6 | **Rural Nodes**  | Villages with established populations <200 and a weaker settlement structure but contain important local services and community facilities e.g. local schools, churches and community facilities | GrangeDrumpheaBallymurphyGarryhillRathannaNewtownNewtown Fennagh |

Section 2.8 Specifically highlights how the settlement hierarchy for the County corresponds with the settlement typology requirements of the RSES. This section of the Draft Plan also includes a suite of policies with support for the role of Key Town - Carlow Town (CSP. 1 to CSP. 4), District Towns (CSP. 5 to CSP. 7), Small Towns (CSP. 8 to CSP. 9), Larger and Smaller Serviced Villages (CSP. 10), and Rural Areas (CSP. 11).  |
| **SUPPORTING GROWTH / DEVELOPMENT OF KEY TOWNS**RPO 11 Key Towns | **KEY TOWNS** Please outline progress made in developing **Carlow’s Role as a Key Town** as envisaged in RPO 11 Key Towns and RPO14 Carlow Please identify any examples of planned/completed projects, good practice and other actions which you may wish to highlight in support of this theme. |
|  | To fulfil the designation of Carlow as a Key Town pursuant to RPO 11 and RPO 14, the following policies, objectives, and related provisions have been incorporated into the Draft Plan:**Chapter 1: Introduction and Context** Section 1.6Inclusion of Strategic Objective S. O2 to support and promote the role of Carlow Town as a Regional and Inter-regional economic growth driver and to fulfil its role as a Key Town.**Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy**Section 1.5.1Inclusion of Strategic Objectives for the future development of the Carlow Town with a focus on: **i.** Regeneration **ii.** Economic Development, **iii.** Residential Development**iv.** Tourism Development**v.** Enabling Infrastructure**vi.** Preparation of a Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP)/Local Area Plan (LAP) for Greater Carlow Urban Area with Laois County Council. Section 2.8Includes policies CSP. 1 to CSP. 4 which seek to ensure Carlow Town fulfils its role as a Key Town, and with specific support for sustainable development, quality of life, economic investment, the delivery of compact growth with at least 30% of new homes delivered with existing built-up footprint, the preparation of a Joint UAP for the Greater Carlow Urban Area with Laois County Council, and for regeneration and the delivery of the objectives of Project Carlow 2040, A Vision for Regeneration. **Chapter 3: Housing**Section 3.8Policy DN. P3 which seeks to align higher density residential development at appropriate locations to the Key Town of Carlow. **Chapter 4: Enterprise and Employment**Section 4.4.1.1Support for Carlow Town as the principal centre of economic activity in the County and one of the larger Key Towns in the Southern Region and recognition of RPO 14 in the RSES to strengthen and support the role of the town as a self-sustaining regional economic driver. The aforesaid is underpinned in the Draft Plan by Carlow Town Economic Development Policies and Objectives ED. P3 to ED. P10 and ED. O4 to ED. O5. **Chapter 15: Town and Village Plans/Rural Nodes**Section 15.1Support reiterated for the role of Carlow Town as a Key Town. This in addition to the key objective of the Draft Plan to promote sustainable development and compact growth in the town to strengthen its role as a self-sustaining regional and interregional growth driver, and the policy of the Council (CSP. 3) to prepare a Joint Urban Area Plan for the Greater Carlow Urban Area with Laois County Council, which will be informed by a local transport plan in consultation with the NTA and TII. **Planned/Completed Projects and Good Practice**‘Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration and Development’Progress has been made in supporting Carlow’s role as a key town through the launch in 2020 of the Council’s masterplan for Carlow Town entitled ‘Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration and Development’. The masterplan is an ambitious regeneration strategy that seeks to reinforce the critical role of the town centre through the achievement of a high quality connected urban environment with increased employment opportunities and a better quality of life for all. The success of Carlow as a Key Town will be dependent on the delivery of targeted compact growth of a minimum of 30%, through regeneration and redevelopment of vacant, infill and/or brownfield sites. In this regard, the Project Carlow 2040 Regeneration Strategy also seeks to re-establish a residential population within the Town Centre through the promotion of and provision for Town Centre living, as well as improved public realm spaces and better access and promotion of civic uses.A total of €15.6 million has been awarded under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) for key projects identified in ‘Project Carlow 2040’, and combined with match funding by Carlow County Council, this will see an overall regeneration investment of €20.8 million into the town over the next 20 years. Enterprise CampusIt is the intention of the Council to develop an innovative Enterprise Campus in Carlow Town which will accommodate office and technology space, remote working, and light manufacturing. The campus aims to stimulate economic development by providing a location for scale up companies with a vision that in four to five years they would be secure alternative accommodation as they expand their businesses. The campus will also include a white box studio, the first of its kind in the southeast, which will enable companies to create visual content in a studio space. The proposed Enterprise Campus has been the subject of the Part 8 process in 2021. |
| **SMALLER TOWNS AND VILLAGES**RPO 26 Towns & Villages RPO 31 Sustainable Place Framework | How Does the Development Plan support strengthen the **role and viability of towns and villages**? Please provide a brief summary of relevant objectives/initiatives including details of **housing units** planned/developed through programmes such as the ‘small towns and villages growth programme 2020-2024’ and progress made in the provision of **serviced sites**. |
|  | The Draft Plan supports strengthening the role and viability of towns and villages through the following policies, objectives, and related provisions:**Chapter 1: Introduction and Context** Section 1.6Inclusion of Strategic Objectives: * S. O4 - to promote consolidation and growth in the District Towns of Tullow and Muinebheag.
* S. O6 - to support the role of rural areas with an increased emphasis on the renewal of smaller towns and villages.
* S. O7 - to protect and enhance the unique character and identity of Carlow’s towns and villages and to improve quality of life and well-being through regeneration, healthy placemaking etc.

**Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy**Section 2.5Identifies 6 strategic aims for the Core Strategy including ***iv.*** *To promote the delivery of at least 30% of all new homes targeted in settlements within their existing built-up footprints and v. To support the achievement of more self-sustaining towns and villages through residential and employment opportunities and social and community facilities.* Section 2.7The formulation of a settlement hierarchy that is consistent with the RSES, that is informed by a broad range of considerations not limited to population and employment size, and which builds on a combination of social, economic, and natural assets available within the County’s towns and villages. Section 2.8.2Support for the role of Tullow and Muinebheag which are designated as District Towns corresponding with the towns and villages tier in the RSES and recognition of the need for targeted growth, supporting services and sustainable travel options in these towns. This is underpinned by District Towns Policies CSP. 5 to CSP. 7. Section 2.8.3Recognition and support for the role of Carlow’s Small Towns including Borris, Ballon, Leighlinbridge, Rathvilly, Hacketstown, Carrickduff and Tinnahinch, in addition to the important roles they have to play in providing services for surrounding local areas. This section of the Draft Plan also acknowledges in line with the RSES that facilitating housing in the small towns is paramount to ensuring the sustainability, vitality and viability of the rural places of the region, and that support for housing will including provision of serviced sites and/or lower density residential schemes. This is reinforced by the inclusion of Small Towns Policies CSP. 8 and CSP. 9. Section 2.8.4It is acknowledged that the County’s serviced villages will play an important role in delivering housing as a viable alternative to rural one-off housing, and this is supported by Policy CSP. 10. Section 2.16The Core Strategy Table included in Section 2.16 identifies the housing unit allocation for the period 2022-2028 for the designated District Towns, Small Towns, Larger Serviced Villages, Smaller Serviced Villages, and Rural Nodes and Rural Remainder. At the lower end of the settlement hierarchy Irish Water have confirmed that there are constraints for the WWTPs in three of the Larger Serviced Villages. However, since the publication of the Draft Plan they have announced projects selected for upgrade as part of the Small Town and Village Growth Programme. In the context of County Carlow, this includes Ballinabrannagh WWTP. Accordingly, it has been recommended through the Chief Executives Report on the submissions to the Draft Plan that additional growth be allocated to Ballinabrannagh comparable to other serviced settlements designated as Larger Serviced Villages. To align with other villages at this scale an additional 19 no. units are recommended for allocation to Ballinabrannagh.**Chapter 3: Housing**Section 3.3Inclusion of Regeneration Objective RA. O1 to support compact growth and the renewal of underutilized lands in urban areas. Section 3.3.3Recognition given for the need to promote and facilitate compact growth and the consolidation of urban areas through regeneration, as supported by Policy RA. P1 which seeks to facilitate investment in town and village areas.Section 3.5Notes that town and village centres have a key role and function as places to shop, work, access services and community facilities, visit, spend time and live. Also addresses housing in towns and villages that is to occur in line with the provisions of the Core Strategy, and notes that residential schemes will be directed to settlements, focusing on existing built-up areas, compact growth through the development of infill sites and brownfield/regeneration sites, the creation of residential communities on zoned lands, and consolidating the growth of rural villages in line with the Core Strategy to promote viable and vibrant centres. The aforesaid is underpinned by Policies TV. P1 and TV. P2. Sections 3.6 and 3.7Support the creation of sustainable communities and neighbourhoods and quality design and placemaking in residential developments, including the creation of attractive mixed tenure neighbourhoods and the promotion of energy conservation and efficiency (See Policies SC. P1 to SC. P3 and DP. P1 to DP. P5.Section 3.15The promotion of the use of underutilised infill, larger corner sites and planned coordinated backland development in existing residential areas. Policy UI. P1 refers.Section 3.16Recognition of the need to have regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements in facilitating rural generated housing need and the provision of single housing in the countryside.**Chapter 4**Section 4.4.1Council policy under ED. P1 seeks to maximise the efficiency of zoned lands to support economic development through facilitating the provision, upgrade or refurbishment of necessary infrastructure.Sections 4.4.1.2 and 4.4.1.3Policies and objectives supporting the role and economic development of District Towns and Small Town and Villages, through the encouragement of investment, the development of the tourist industry, the establishment of new economic roles and functions, the enhancement of public realms etc. All underpinned by policies ED. P11 to ED. P16 and Objectives ED. O6 to ED. O11. Section 4.7In addition to the Draft County Retail Strategy, the policies, objectives and related provisions in the Draft Plan seek to maintain and enhance the competitiveness of Tullow and Muinebheag, in addition to the enhancement and adaptation of the retail function of smaller towns and villages, the reduction of floorspace vacancy in town centres, the promotion and development of key town centre opportunity sites, (See Policies RT. P5 and RT. P13 and Objectives RT. O1 to RT. O9). **Chapter 5: Sustainable Travel and Transportation**Sections 5.3 to 5.5Policy provisions to support investment in sustainable transport, including improved walking and cycling connectivity routes, and the expansion of rural transport initiatives and public transport. Refer to Policy MS. P1, Objective MS. O1, Policies WC. P1 to WC. P4, Objectives WC. O1 to WC. O7, Policies PT. P1 to PT. P3 and Objectives PT. O1 to PT. O5.**Chapter 11: Tourism and Recreation**The chapter contains a suite of policies, objectives and related provisions aimed at promoting, enhancing and maximising the tourism and recreation potential of the County’s towns and villages. This includes recognition that tourism has the potential to contribute to the vitality and sustainability of local enterprises and the diversification of the rural economy with increased potential for the regeneration of towns and village. Tourism Development Policies TD. P1 to TD. P7 refer and Objectives TD. O1 to TD. O2. Section 11.5.7Support for the development of the tourism potential of historic towns and villages, through public realm enhancements and the facilitating of accommodation and services (See Policies HT. P8 to HT. P10). Section 11.5.8Policy HT. P14 which seeks to facilitate where appropriate, increased access to the County’s waterways from towns and villages where visitor services are located. Section 11.8Promotes and supports local culture, arts and entertainment and the use of public spaces in towns and villages for art events and performances. **Chapter 14: Rural Development**The provisions of the chapter aim to support the role of rural areas with an increased emphasis on the regeneration and renewal of smaller rural towns and villages. Section 14.3 Specifically addresses the role of towns and villages, and under Policies TV. P1 to TV. PP6 seeks to promote them as a key component of delivering viable rural communities, through the development of residential, employment and social infrastructure, support for Smart Towns and Villages, the encouragement of local investment, promotion of re-use and regeneration, and the protection of natural and built heritage assets. Section 14.3.2Includes Objectives TV. O1 to TV O4 aimed at targeting vacant premises and facilitating regeneration in towns and villages, with support for serviced sites for “build your own home opportunities”, investment for public realm improvements, and support for the implementation of Project Ireland 2040, Town and Village Renewal Scheme and RRDF.**Chapter 15: Town and Village Plans/Rural Nodes**Lower tiered towns and villages have been incorporated into the Draft Plan in Chapter 15, with specific commentary and a comprehensive suite of policies/objectives that provides a clear framework for each settlement type from Carlow Town down to Rural Nodes. The approach has been commended by the Office of the Planning Regulator as representing best practice. **Planned/Completed Projects and Good Practice**Tullow MasterplanThe Council has secured funding of €100k through the Governments Town Centre First Plans programme to support the development of a masterplan for Tullow Town. The preparation of the masterplan involves consultation with local community groups, retailers and the other relevant stakeholders in devising and delivering on the objectives of their respective masterplans.  |
| **RURAL AREAS / RURAL DEVELOPMENT / NETWORKS & CROSS BOUNDARY INITIATIVES**RPO 27 Rural RPO 28 Collaboration/ PartnershipRPO 29 Rural Settlement NetworksRPO 43 Rural Economy & EU Good Practice RPO 44 Common Agricultural Policy RPO 45 Action Plan for Rural DevelopmentRPO 46 Digital and Physical Infrastructure in Rural AreasRPO 47 Rural Partnership Models RPO 48 Innovation Hubs and Centres of ExcellenceRPO 49 Innovation in Rural areas RPO 50 Diversification | How Does Development Plan policy support **vibrant rural communities** and **sustainable economic development?**Please provide a brief summary of relevant objectives/initiatives including those relating to, the development of networks / shared resources between settlements? Please identify any examples of planned/completed projects, good practice and other actions which you may wish to highlight in support of this theme. E.G new walking/cycling routes developed between adjoining rural areas/villages, joint initiatives to support tourism, joint projects to develop digital and training resources. |
|  | The Draft Plan supports vibrant rural communities and sustainable economic development through the following provisions:**Chapter 4: Enterprise and Employment**Section 4.1Sets out a list of objectives to achieve the Draft Plan’s economic strategy, including to maximise the economic assets of attractive towns, villages and rural areas, and the promotion of the rural economy through diversification and support for rural resource-based industries. Sections 4.2.4 to 4.2.6Support for LECP 2016-2021 to ensure the local level framework is in place to support economic growth and community improvements (See Policy LECP. P1). Support for the implementation of the InCarlow Economic Development and Business Support Strategy under Policy EDS. P1. This includes recognition of the requirement to prepare a Local Enterprise Development Plan (LEDP) under the Service Level Agreement with Enterprise Ireland.Section 4.3.6Council Policy under CM. P1 seeks to address the rate of outbound commuting in the County through the provision of sustainable employment opportunities, including co-working facilities, digital hubs and e-working centres at appropriate locations. Section 4.4Identifies the Council’s Enterprise and Employment Strategy and includes Policy ES. P1 to support work in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, local authorities, the Regional Assembly and other relevant agencies. Section 4.4.1Addresses locations for economic development, to be guided by the Council’s Settlement Hierarchy and the land use zoning maps in Chapter 15 and recognises that continued infrastructural investment is critical for sustaining economic development activity. This section of the Draft Plan is underpinned by Policies ED. P1 to ED. P2 and Objectives ED. O1 to ED. O3. Objectives ED. O2 seeks to facilitate innovation in rural economic development and enterprise through diversification of the rural economy noting that a key component of viable rural communities is the promotion of sustainable rural towns and villages.Section 4.4.1.3This Section recognises that Carlow’s small towns and villages are vital to sustaining the County’s wide rural hinterland, providing sustainable rural employment, local services provision, commercial enterprises, indigenous industry and micro-enterprises. Section 4.4.6Includes Policy PT. P2 to protect land zoned for economic development, industry and employment related uses from inappropriate development, as well as Objectives PT. O1 and PT. O2 to support investment in property solutions that will directly facilitate the creation of new jobs and the development of specific projects in Tullow and Muine Bheag to ensure a geographic spread of employment and innovation opportunities. Sections 4.5 to 4.8Recognises the importance of the retail sector as a major employer and the transformation of which has been driven by consumers use, digital technologies, and new solutions for ‘bricks and mortar’ retail, all of which has accelerated by the Covid-19 Pandemic. This is underpinned by the Draft County Retail Strategy in which a County Retail Hierarchy is identified, and by the Retails Policies and Objectives included in Section 4.8 (See RT. P1 to P13 and RT. O1 to RT. O9). **Chapter 14: Rural Development**Section 14.2Acknowledges that in order to enhance the competitiveness of rural areas support will be required for innovation in rural economic development through the diversification of the rural economic, and that this needs to be sustained through investment in infrastructure such as high-speed internet to enable rural dwellers and businesses to connect to new markets. The aforesaid is reinforced by Policy RI. P1 and Objective RI. O1 which supports the implementation of Government policy ‘Our Rural Future, Rural Development Policy 2021-2025’ to unlock the potential of rural County Carlow.Section 14.3.1The Policies and Objectives in this section seeks to promote sustainable rural towns and villages as a key component of delivering viable rural communities,through the development of residential, employment and social infrastructure, support for Smart Towns and Villages, the encouragement of local investment, the promote of re-use and regeneration, and the protection of natural and built heritage assets. See Policies TV. P1 to TV. P6 and Objectives TV. O1 to TV. 04. Sections 14.4 to 14.8Support for agricultural development in the County including its role in maintaining population in rural areas (See Policy AG. P1), for the importance of the agri-food section in the rural economy, for farm diversification which has given rise to opportunities for rural tourism, renewable energy production, and leisure and recreational pursuits (See Policies FD. P1 to FD. P3), and for the role of horticulture and the equine industry. Sections 14.9 to 14.10Seeks to promote the tourism and amenity potential of forested areas (See Policy FR. P4) and recognises and promotes the importance of the fishing industry in the County as a major attraction (i.e. sport angling and coarse fishing – See Policy FA. P1). Sections 14.14 to 14.15Includes a suite of policy provisions for rural enterprises in recognition and support for their role in sustaining the rural economy. See Policies RE. P1 to RE. P6.Remote working, Co-Working and Home-Based Economic Activity is supported through Policies RH. P1 to RH P4, including the provision of advanced communication networks and services in towns, villages and rural areas, digital hubs, and start-up businesses. **Planned/Completed Projects and Good Practice**Joint Urban Area Plan (UAP)/Local Area Plan (LAP)A statutory joint UAP/LAP will be prepared for Greater Carlow Urban Area by Carlow County Council and Laois County Council during the lifetime of the new County Development Plan. The UAP will incorporate Carlow Environs and the Graiguecullen Urban Area and will be informed by a Local Transport Plan. It will provide a coordinated planning framework to identify and deliver strategic sites and regeneration areas for the future physical, economic and social development of Carlow Town to ensure it achieves targeted compact growth and to ensure that it has the capacity to grow sustainably and secure investment as a Key Town. InCarlow Economic Development and Business Support StrategyThe InCarlow Economic Development and Business Support Strategy was commissioned by the Council in 2020. The strategy profiles the economic structure of the County, identifies economic opportunities and proposes a range of actions to drive economic recovery and sustainable growth. It focuses on priority sectors for the County, external challenges and threats together with outlining the development and recovery plan for the County Carlow economy. The Strategy has informed the preparation of the Draft Plan.Enterprise Campus Part 8It is the intention of the Council to develop an innovative Enterprise Campus in Carlow Town which will accommodate office and technology space, remote working, and light manufacturing. The campus aims to stimulate economic development by providing a location for scale up companies with a vision that in four to five years they would be secure alternative accommodation as they expand their businesses. The campus will also include a white box studio, the first of its kind in the southeast, which will enable companies to create visual content in a studio space. The proposed Enterprise Campus has been the subject of the Part 8 process in 2021.Carlow Exchange - Part 8The Council has commenced construction on a covered open space in the centre of Carlow Town that will accommodate a multi-functional community space to be used for events, workshops, markets (including farmers market), festivals etc. The Carlow Exchange could become a Centre for exchange of information, culture, ideas, becoming an economic and social hub, and a place to host public events, tell stories and share ideas. The purpose of this project is to protect and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and to provide for and improve cultural, tourism, public facilities, amenity and other uses appropriate to the centre of a developing urban core. Barrow Valley GreenwayUnder the Carbon Tax Fund 2020 and as part of a Barrow Valley Greenway Initiative, the Council received funding in 2020 to investigate the feasibility of developing a greenway in the County utilising the route of the disused Carlow to Wexford railway line. The old railway line runs south from Muinebheag to Borris, where it crosses the Borris Railway Viaduct and then continues south to Wexford. The redevelopment and adaptation of the Borris Railway Viaduct Project as a civic amenity and walking/cycling route was completed by the Council in 2020. Outdoor Recreation StrategyAn Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2020-2023 has been prepared for the County, which provides a framework for the development of Carlow’s recreational assets, that will enhance the County as a place to live, work, visit, and play. The Strategy also recognises the opportunities that exist to collaborate and align with border counties in the provision and expansion of outdoor recreation facilities, programmes, services and the promotion for the River Barrow, Blackstairs Mountains, Northern Foothills, Two Sisters River Junction, and Castlecomer Plateau.  |
| **PLACEMAKING**RPO 31 Sustainable Place FrameworkRPO 61 Health Place Audit (HPA) for Place-making RPO 70 Bidding capacity | How Does the Development Plan support **Placemaking**? Please provide a brief summary of relevant objectives/initiatives.Please identify any examples of planned/completed projects, good practice and other actions which you may wish to highlight in support of this theme. E.g. Improvements to public realm, developing new streets/spaces/pocket parks |
|  | Placemaking is supported in the Draft Plan through the following policies, objectives, and related provisions:**Chapter 1: Introduction and Context**The vision for the County is to (inter alia) champion healthy placemaking and transformational regeneration.Section 1.6Strategic Themes and Objectives includes Objective S. O7 which seeks to protect and enhance character and identity of Carlow’s towns and villages through (inter alia) healthy placemaking and good quality design. **Chapter 4: Enterprise and Employment**Section 4.4.4Specifically addresses placemaking and sustainable design and recognises that placemaking has become increasingly important for enterprise development and is instrumental in ensuring the County captures sufficient human capital and talent. States that the Council will actively pursue place making initiatives, public realm improvements, regeneration of urban areas, reuse of vacant properties, together with protection and enhancement of built and natural heritage features as key components in placemaking which will support enterprise development. These placemaking provisions are underpinned by Policies PM. P1 to PM. P4 and Objectives PM. O1 to PM. O4. Sections 4.7 to 4.9Outlines the provisions of the Draft County Retail Strategy which recognises the importance of placemaking and that the viability of retail stores in the future will be heavily reliant on being located in quality urban settings. Retail policies include RT. P3 which seeks to promote and encourage town centre development that is designated to promote and support placemaking. Retail Objective CT. O5 seeks to implement the proposals contained in Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration, with a focus on (inter alia) placemaking and public realm improvements.**Chapter 12: Urban Design and Placemaking**This chapter of the Draft Plan include a comprehensive suite of policies, objectives and related provisions in recognition of and support for the importance of urban design and placemaking, including its role for health and wellbeing in the built environment, climate change adaptation, town and village centre vitality and vibrancy, and compact growth and regeneration. This is reinforced by the policies and objectives included throughout the chapter, including UD. P1 to UD. P3, HW. P1 to HW. P3, CC. P1 and CC. P2, TVC. P1 to TVC. P6, CGR. P1 to CGR. P4.Section 12.6.1Incorporates the provisions of Project Carlow 2040: A Vision for Regeneration and Development into the Draft Plan.Sections 12.7 to 12.10Chapter 12 sets out a list of best practice principles for urban design and placemaking, addressing (inter alia) character, regeneration, public realm, liveable environments, mobility, variety and viability, and environmental sustainability. A wide-ranging list of urban design considerations are also provided that should be taken into account in formulating development proposals and taking account of issues such as building scale/mass/composition, building type, heights, and building language and finishes. The importance of urban layout, road and street design is also addressed in the chapter, and with specific reference to the provisions of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013). It is requirement under Policy DS. P1 in Section 12.10 to require all medium-to-large scale and complex planning applications (30+ residential units, commercial development over 1,000sq.m., or other development proposals as required by the Planning Authority) to be accompanied by a Design Statement. The Design Statement must examine urban design and placemaking.**Planned/Completed Projects and Good Practice**‘Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration and Development’See previous description above. |
| **REGENERATION & SUPPORT FOR COMPACT GROWTH** (These RPOs identified as relating to Placemaking in Phase 3 analysis of RPOs)RPO 34 Regeneration, Brownfield and Infill DevelopmentRPO 35 Support for Compact GrowthRPO 36 LDARPO 37 Active Land ManagementRPO 38 Retrofitting Initiative PrioritiesRPO 176 10-minute” city and town concepts | How Does the Development Plan address **Compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites**? Please provide a brief summary of relevant objectives/initiatives. Has the Development Plan identified **priority locations** for Regeneration, Brownfield and Infill Development?Please briefly outline any examples of Regeneration Projects/Initiatives delivered to date or innovative examples of delivering quality high-density residential development, successful brownfield development or any projects to develop lands jointly with the LDA |
|  | The Draft Plan addresses compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites through the following policies, objectives and related provisions:**Chapter 1: Introduction and Context**Section 1.5.1Recognises that the success of Carlow as a Key Town will be dependent on the delivery of targeted compact growth of a minimum of 30%, through regeneration and redevelopment of vacant, infill and/or brownfield sites.**Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy**Sections 2.2 to 2.4Takes account of the policy provisions and key focus of the NPF and RSES in securing compact growth through the reuse of brownfield land and infill sites and existing buildings to deliver new homes and support urban regeneration.Section 2.8The inclusion of Carlow Town Policy CSP. 2 which seeks to deliver compact and sustainable growth in the town with at least 30% of new homes delivered in the existing built-up footprint including strategic brownfield sites. Section 2.8.3For the District Towns of Tullow and Muine Bheag it is Council policy under CSP. 7 to promote compact growth through maximising the delivery of new homes and development on brownfield and infill land. Sections 2.15 and 2.16 These sections of the Draft Plan address the ambitious targets for compact growth in the NPF and RSES, including that at least 30% of all new homes are to be delivered within the existing built-up footprints of settlements. Table 2.7 (Core Strategy Table)The Core Strategy in Table 2.7 details the potential number and percentage of housing units that can be accommodated on infill and brownfield lands across the settlement hierarchy.**Chapter 15: Town and Villages Plans/Rural Nodes**Lower tiered towns and villages have been incorporated into the Draft Plan in Chapter 15, with specific commentary and a comprehensive suite of policies/objectives that provides a clear framework for each settlement type from Carlow Town down to Rural Nodes. It is an objective of the Council to commence a review of the Tullow Local Area Plan and the Muine Bheag / Royal Oak Local Area Plan (which are due to expire in 2023) no later than one year following the adoption of the CDP. However, Strategic Policy and Constraints Maps have been prepared for both towns, which identify specific regeneration/opportunity sites within the built-up footprints of each.In addition to the foregoing, the Small Town Plans included in Chapter 15 for Rathvilly, Leighlinbridge, Ballon, Borris, Hacketstown and Carrickduff, all identify specific regeneration/redevelopment opportunities to promote and support the use of previously developed brownfield and infill sites within their established built footprints. Individual sites in each of the Small Town Plans are mapped as ‘Intervention Areas’, and the maps are accompanied by a site description and context, as well as an outline of what the redevelopment of them would contribute to in terms of securing compact growth etc. Policy to support and underpin the regeneration and redevelopment of the identified ‘Intervention Areas’ is also included in each of the Small Town Plans.  |
| **RSES ECONOMIC STRATEGY**RPO 40 Regional Economic ResilienceRPO 64 Facilitate new business formation, growth and industrial re-organisationRPO 72 BrexitRPO 74 Economic Risk Management System | How Does the Development Plan incorporate /support the **RSES Economic Strategy**? Please provide a brief summary.Does the Development Plan incorporate policies to support and develop the role of the Region’s **Economic Drivers?** |
|  | The Draft Plan supports the RSES Economic Strategy and role of the Region’s Economic Drivers through the policies, objectives and related provisions included in Chapter 4: Enterprise and Employment:Section 4.1In line with the RSES this section notes that the Draft Plan sets out an economic strategy to deliver on the regional and inter regional role for Carlow Town and to achieve greater prosperity in all areas of the County in accordance with 9 no. objectives. The objectives seek to (inter alia): * Promote the regional and inter regional role of Carlow Town as referred to.
* Maximise the County’s economic assets including 3rd level institutes and strategic location relative to Waterford and Dublin.
* Maintain, adapt and promote sufficient employment areas in the two District Towns.
* Encourage, support and facilitate enterprise development at appropriate locations.
* Promote the rural economy by facilitating diversification and supporting appropriate rural resource-based industries with a viable and vibrant network of smaller towns and villages.

Section 4.2.2Specific reference is made to the RSES Economic Strategy, including the economic vision for the region to enable sustainable, competitive, inclusive, and resilient growth. The economic principles in the RSES to achieve this vision are also included as Figure 4.1. In addition to the foregoing, Chapter 4 also incorporates a suite of policies and provisions to address and support:* The role of Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) - 4.2.4.
* The InCarlow Economic Development and Business Support Strategy - 4.2.5.
* The preparation of a Local Enterprise Development Plan (LEDP) - 4.2.6.
* The rate of outbound commuting - 4.3.6.
* A county enterprise and employment strategy - 4.4.
* Locations for economic development - 4.4.1.
* Carlow Town economic development, including Objective ED. O4 for the development of Carlow Town as a self-sustaining regional and inter-regional economic driver - 4.4.1.1.
* Districts Towns and Small Towns and Villages - 4.4.1.2 to 4.4.1.3.
* Priority Sectors for Carlow - 4.4.2.
* Education and Skills – 4.4.3.
* Placemaking and Sustainable Design - 4.4.4
* Property - 4.4.6.

Section 4.5The role of the retail sector is addressed from this section in the Chapter 4 and by reference to the provisions of the NPF, the RSES and the Draft County Carlow Retail Strategy. Retail policies RT. P1 to RT. P13, and Objectives RT. O1 and RT. O2, support the RSES Economic Strategy by seeking to facilitate a competitive and healthy retail environment in the County through (inter alia) reinforcing core retail areas, encouraging town centre development, and maintaining the competitiveness of the Carlow’s main towns. Specific retail policies and objectives for Carlow Town, Tullow and Muine Bheag are set out from Section 4.10. **Chapter 15: Town and Village Plans/Rural Nodes**Recognises that the towns, villages, and rural nodes throughout the county that are addressed in this chapter have a key economic function within the settlement hierarchy. Each of the Small Town Plans incorporated into Chapter 15 include a number of policies in support of economic development, which are grounded in their position in the retail hierarchy and on individual population and socio-economic profiles.  |
| **TOURISM**RPO 53 TourismRPO 54 Tourism & the Environment | Please Outline Key Development Plan policies that will support **Tourism development**Please briefly outline wider Council involvement in tourism development. |
|  | Key policies in the Draft Plan to support tourism development are set out in Chapter 11: Tourism and Recreation. They include:* Support for Failte Ireland Strategies in the County (See Policies FI. O1 and FI. O2).
* Tourism development policies in support of (inter alia) collaboration with relevant stakeholders to develop, promote and maximise the tourism potential of the County, to strengthen the value of the County as a tourist destination, the promotion of education tourism (See Policies TD. P1 to TD. P7).
* Objectives to support the implementation of the County Carlow Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2025 and key actions in the inCarlow Business Support and Economic Recovery Action Plan 2020, and the LEDP (See Objectives TD. O1 and TD. O2).

In addition to the foregoing, the policies, objectives and related provisions in Chapter 11 specifically address and support: * Heritage tourism, including natural heritage and amenities and the role of historic towns and villages (Policies HT. P1 to HT. P15),
* The development of greenways and blueways (Policies GB. P1 to GB. P2 and Objective GB. O1).
* Carlow Town-Destination Town (Objectives DT. O1 and DT. O2).
* Culture, arts, entertainment (Policies CA. P1 to CA. P4 and Objective CA. O1).
* Events and Festivals (Policy EF. P1).
* Carlow food, drink and craft (Policies FD. P1 to FD. P2 and Objective FD. O1).
* Tourist accommodation (Policies TA. P1 to TA. P2).

Policies and objectives supporting recreation in the County for residents and visitors alike are included from Section 11.12 (Policies R. P1 to R. P11 and Objectives R. O1 to R. O2). **Wider Council involvement in tourism development.**In 2019 Fáilte Ireland launched its ‘Destination Towns’ initiative, which included a €15.5 million funding programme from which €500,000 was allocated to each Local Authority in two rounds (in 2019 and 2020). The aim of the funding was to boost the attractiveness and appeal of destination towns nationwide, as they are recognised as key motivators for overseas holidaymakers coming to Ireland. The Council was successful in its application to Fáilte Ireland for this funding for Carlow Town, which will contribute towards enhancing public spaces together with wayfinding in the town in a way that develops tourism by engaging visitors and enhancing their experiences. Tourist Hub/Linger Space/Public Realm SpaceOn foot of the above noted Failte Ireland funding it is the intention of the Council under an approved Part 8 development to create a Tourist Hub/Linger Space/Public Realm Space in front of Visual Centre for Contemporary Art and adjacent to Carlow College, St. Patrick’s, and on the grounds of Carlow College, St. Patrick’s, College Street.County Carlow Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2025This strategy and action plan was commissioned by Carlow Tourism and has been prepared in the context of Ireland’s Ancient East. The purpose of the strategy is to:* improve the profile of Carlow as a holiday destination;
* maximise the economic outputs for tourism;
* grow tourism related employment; and
* improve the product offering and visitor experience.
 |
| **EMPLOYMENT LOCATIONS**RPO 62 Locations for Employment Development | Does the Development Plan identify future **Locations for Employment Development**? Please provide a brief summary of relevant objectives/initiatives. |
|  | **Chapter 4: Enterprise and Employment**Yes, this is specifically addressed from Sections 4.4.1 to 4.4.1.3 in Chapter 4 of the Draft Plan for Enterprise and Employment. Appropriate locations for economic development will be guided by the Council’s Settlement Hierarchy and land use zonings for employment generating uses have been identified in the town plans contained within Chapter 15. As part of the review process of further statutory plans during the life of the County Development Plan, additional employment zonings maybe identified for example as part of the Carlow Town Joint Urban Area Plan together with the District Towns of Tullow and Muine Bheag as appropriate.Policies ED. P1 to ED. P16 and Objectives ED. O1 to ED. O11 underpin the Council’s Settlement Hierarchy approach for future locations for economic and employment development, focusing on Carlow Town as the principle centre for activity as one of the Key Towns in the Region, followed by the two District Towns of Tullow and Muinebheag, and then Small Towns and Villages.**Chapter 14: Rural Development**Chapter 14 outlines detailed policies and objectives to support the continued role of small towns and villages and the rural countryside in the economic development of the County. Refer to Section 14.3 in the Chapter, Policies TV. P1 to TV. P6 thereunder, and Objectives TV. O1 to TV. O4. This suite of policies and objectives seeks to promote the economic role and function of the towns and villages by directing development to appropriate sites in the settlements and by targeting vacant premises and potential regeneration lands.  |
| **CLIMATE ACTION:****TRANSITION TO A LOW CARBON ECONOMY & SOCIETY**RPO 56 Low Carbon EconomyRPO 57 National Policy Statement on Bio-economyRPO 85 Renewable offshore energyRPO 88 National Mitigation Plan and National Adaptation FrameworkRPO 89 Building Resilience to Climate Change | Does the Development Plan **give priority to addressing Climate Action.**Please provide a brief summary of how the Development Plan addresses Climate Action. |
|  | **Chapter 7: Climate Action and Energy**Chapter 7 of the Draft Plan sets out a comprehensive suite of policies, objectives, and related provision to give priority to and address Climate Action, taking account of relevant European, national, regional and local level policy documents, strategies and objectives. See Overarching Policies CA. P1 to CA. P6 and Objectives CA. O1 to CA. O5.As a proportionate response to national Climate Action Plan 2019 targets Chapter 7 includes a total renewable energy target for the County under Objectives RE. O1.Table 7.2Table 7.2 in the Chapter clearly details how Climate Change, Mitigation and Adaptation measures have been incorporated into the provisions of each chapter of the Plan. **Renewable Energy Strategy**In support of the Draft Plan a new Carlow County Renewable Energy Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland’s (SEAI) Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (2013). The RES includes a comprehensive assessment and spatial evaluation of the County to identify the most suitable locations for renewable energy technologies, taking account of available natural resources, environmental considerations, impacts on local communities and quality of life. The RES is included as Appendix VI to the Draft Plan. The role of the RES is promoted and supported by Policy CA. P1 in Chapter 7, and the provisions of the RES are integrated into the content of the Chapter, grounded in data on the County’s energy profile, and wind and solar energy opportunity and constraints mapping.Carlow Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024The pre-existing Carlow Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024 is referenced in the Draft Plan, and Objective CA. O3 has been included with the effect of adopting the Strategy. |
| **DECARBONISATION**RPO 90 Regional Decarbonisation.RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport SectorRPO 94 Decarbonisation in the Agricultural Sector | Does the Development Plan include objectives that support **Decarbonisation**? Please provide a brief summary of objectives/initiatives including progress in identification of a Decarbonisation Zone |
|  | **Chapter 7: Climate Action and Energy**It is the policy of the Council under CA. P2 to support the transition of the County to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. Solar energy Objective SE. O3 seeks to investigate the feasibility of promoting solar energy developments on Council owned land to contribute to the transition to a low-carbon County. Renewable transport Policy RT. P3 encourages and supports the use of low carbon energy sources for public transport.Section 7.5.4.1 specifically addresses the requirement for the Council to identify a Decarbonisation Zone in the County under Action 165 of the Climate Action Plan 2019, and Section 7.6.2 lists the three priority areas in the RSES to address climate change, including the development of a Regional Decarbonisation Plan. In order to give effect to Decarbonisation, Policy CA. P1 promotes and supports any Regional Decarbonisation Plan prepared on foot of RPO 90 in the RSES, and it is an objective of the Council under CA. O2 in the Chapter to identify and develop a Decarbonisation Zone (DZ) in the County in accordance with Action 165 of the Climate Action Plan 2019. |
| **RESOURCE EFFICIENCY INCL. RENEWABLE ENERGY**RPO 98 Regional Renewable Energy StrategyRPO 109 Bio-Energy Implementation Plan | Does the Development Plan **support the development of renewable energy in accordance with national/regional policy/targets?**Please provide a brief summary of how the Development Plan addresses renewable energy |
|  | **Renewable Energy Strategy**In support of the Draft Plan a new Carlow County Renewable Energy Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland’s (SEAI) Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies (2013). The RES includes a comprehensive assessment and spatial evaluation of the County to identify the most suitable locations for renewable energy technologies, taking account of available natural resources, environmental considerations, impacts on local communities and quality of life. The RES is included as Appendix VI to the Draft Plan. The role of the RES is promoted and supported by Policy CA. P1 in Chapter 7, and the provisions of the RES are integrated into the content of Chapter 7, grounded in data on the County’s energy profile, and wind and solar energy opportunity and constraints mapping. |
| **BLUE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE** RPO 110 Ecosystem ServicesRPO 122 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)RPO 124 Green InfrastructureRPO 125 Green Infrastructure CorridorsRPO 126 BiodiversityRPO 127 Invasive SpeciesRPO 128 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020 | Does the development plan support the development of **Blue Green Infrastructure**, **ecosystem services and biodiversity.** Please provide a brief summary of how the Development Plan addresses these areasPlease identify any examples of planned/completed projects, good practice and other actions which you may wish to highlight in support of this theme. |
|  | **Chapter 9: Landscape and Green Infrastructure**The identification, protection and development of green infrastructure, including an ecosystems services approach, and their role and benefits for (inter alia) human well-being, biodiversity, and climate action, is comprehensively addressed and supported in Chapter 7.The is underpinned by Policies GI. P1 to GI. P10, and by the objective of the Council under GI. O1 to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the County. The Strategy will identify key green infrastructure aims and objectives for the County, taking account of the priority projects identified in this Development Plan and it will provide for the delivery of these projects including the provision of appropriate funding mechanisms.Section 9.12The role of green infrastructure in urban areas is also dealt with in the Chapter, in terms of its benefits for reducing air, water and noise pollution, for providing flood protection, and for providing more attractive urban spaces. Policies GI. P11 to GI. P14 seeks to address this by ensuring green infrastructure informs the development management process, and is incorporated into urban areas, green areas and open space.Section 9.13This section examines the role of SuDS as a form of green infrastructure, including its potential to contribute significantly to the urban green infrastructure network, and its ability to perform a multi-functional role that can create space for surface water management, as well as for biodiversity, recreation and amenity. Policies and objectives to support SuDS are contained in Section 6.5, Chapter 6.**Chapter 10: Natural and Built Heritage**The protection, management, and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity is addressed in this chapter, and specifically through Policies NH. P1 to NH. P9, and Objective NH. O1 which seeks to prepare a County Heritage Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan during the lifetime of this Plan to ensure the protection and appreciation of heritage and nature at local level including recognition of rich biodiversity of designation of existing special areas of conservation i.e. Blackstairs Mountains, Slaney River Valley and River Barrow and River Nore SAC.The protection of the biodiversity value and importance of Natura 2000 Sites and National Heritage Areas is also dealt with and supported in the Chapter, as well as non-designated area, habitats and species, woodlands, trees and hedgerows, inland waters and riparian zones, wetlands, and invasive alien species. See the policies and objectives included in Section 10.3 to 10.10.  |
| **WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE**RPO 110 Ecosystem ServicesRPO 111 Water ResourcesRPO 112 Water QualityRPO 121 Effective Collaboration to Implement River Basin Management Plans and Water Framework DirectiveRPO 122 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)RPO 123 River Basin Management Plan and Spatial PlanningRPO 124 Green InfrastructureRPO 126 BiodiversityRPO 127 Invasive Species | How does the development plan support the implementation of the **Water Framework Directive (WFD).** Please provide a brief summary of how the Development Plan addresses these areas with particular focus on the strategy taken take to protect and enhance Blue Dot Catchments. Please identify any examples of planned/completed projects, good practice and other actions which you may wish to highlight in support of this theme. This should include internal structures established to improve the interaction between planning and water quality issues.  |
|  | The Draft Plan includes support for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Blue Dot Catchment Programme through the following policies, objectives and related provision in Chapter 6, Infrastructure and Environment Management:Section 6.1.4Addresses the requirement to identify Drinking Water Protected areas under the WFD.Sections 6.3 and 6.4Includes Policies WW. P1 and WT. P1 to require private wastewater treatment systems for individual houses and systems for commercial and tourism use to comply with (inter alia) the WFD. Section 6.5Includes Policy SW. P1 to ensure adequate surface water drainage systems are in place to meeting the requirements of the WFD and River Basin Management Plan.Section 6.9.2This section in the chapter addresses the legal framework under the WFD to protect and enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems.Section 6.9.3Deals with the National River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2018-2021, which summarises significant pressures where waterbodies are at risk of not meeting WFD objectives.Section 6.9.5 (Blue Dot Programme)Addresses the network known as the Blue Dot Catchments Programme which been set up under the RBMP to support the protection of high-status objective sites. The WFD, RBMP and Blue Dot Programme are given specific support under Policies WQ. P1 to WQ. P4 and under Objectives WQ. P1 to WQ. P4. Objective WQ. P3 aims to implement the Blue Dot Catchment network programme under the RBMP to protect and maintain the excellent ‘High’ status water bodies. **Planned/completed projects, good practice and other actions**To try and improve the number of waters at satisfactory status and prevent further deterioration, the Council is working closely with The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO), the EPA and other agencies to identify the specific issues that are impacting on our rivers and to implement solutions in areas known as Priority Areas for Action. In County Carlow these are:* Slaney
* Burren
* Mountain
* Dereen
* Derry
* Dinin
* Lerr

Carlow TownIrish Water have budgeted and approved the following portfolio of works for Carlow Town, these works are projected for to take place to take place during 2022 and beyond:* Pollerton Road: mains rehab and replacement of backyard services.
* Staplestown Road: new trunk mains, transfer of services and replacement of any backyard services.
* St. Killian’s Crescent: mains rehab and replacement of backyard services.
* Carlow Town Centre (South) incl. Potato Market, Kennedy Avenue & Barrack Street: mains rehab and transfer of services.
* Granby Row: mains rehab and replacement of backyard services: design complete and sent to contractors for review.
* Hacketstown Road: mains rehab and transfer of services.

This work will improve water quality to consumers and dramatically reduce the number of leaks which currently impact on some areas of the distribution system. These works are difficult and will pose some nuisance to members of the public.Operations - WastewaterCarlow County Council staff continue to operate the twenty-four wastewater treatment plants in County Carlow on behalf of Irish Water. Eleven plants operate to the strict requirements of EPA Discharge Licenses.During November 2021: * Sampling programme continued as per requirements of Irish Water annual sampling programme. Parameters were analysed to meet the requirements of Wastewater Discharge Licences, Urban Wastewater Treatment Regulations and Certificates of Authorisation for the twenty-four wastewater plants.
* Wastewater operations providing an input into planned upgrade works to Mortarstown and Bagenalstown WWTPs.
* The EPA carried out Audits at Borris, Bagenalstown, Ballon and Carlow Town WWTP’s.
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| **DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY/SMART REGION/SMART CITIES**RPO 133 Smart CitiesRPO 134: Smart Cities and Smart Region: | How Does the Development Plan support development of a **Smart Region/Smart City/Smart Towns**. Please provide a brief summary of relevant objectives/initiatives.In rural areas, please outline progress made in the development **of Remote Working & Digital Hubs** and other relevant initiatives for the optimisation of digital connectivity. |
|  | **Chapter 14: Rural Development**The Council supports the Smart Village concept under the European Network for Rural Development in seeking to improve economic performance and quality of life in rural areas, potentially via digital and other technologies. Town and Villages Policy TV. P2 in Chapter 14 supports the concept of Smarts Towns and Villages by promoting: * Plans for village renewal and revitalisation of town and village centres;
* Investment in broadband infrastructure;
* Investment in social services;
* Implementation of climate and energy projects at a local level; and,
* Climate friendly mobility solutions.

Section 14.15Addresses remote working, co-working and home-based economic activity, including support for co-working facilities / digital hubs in the towns and villages throughout the county. This is underpinned by Policies RH. P1 to RH. P4.**Progress made in the development of Remote Working & Digital Hubs and other relevant initiatives for the optimisation of digital connectivity**Connected Hubs SchemeAs part of the Council's ongoing work supporting the development of Hubs & Broadband Connection Points (BCP), a coordinated approach was taken to support community groups, hubs, and facilities to enhance their services and create and enhance new Remote Working Hubs. This involved an investment of €114,000 under the Connected Hubs Scheme. The areas to benefit were geographically selected on the basis of a Remote Working Study which was co-ordinated on a Regional Basis by Carlow for the Local Enterprise Offices and is available to download at <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Carlow/News/South-East-Remote-Working-Study-Report.pdf> The investment was focused on: 1. Enterprise House Carlow Community Enterprise Centres CLG2. Ballon Business & Training Service. 3. Newtown St Mullins Community Centre. (BCP)4. Rathanna Community Centre. (BCP)5. Ballinkillen Community Centre.6. Ballymurphy Community Centre. (BCP)The projects involved investment in:* Collectively upgrade meeting and hub facilities in terms of meeting rooms
* Upgrade location energy efficiency to reduce cost and enhance environmental
* Collectively market the hubs as part of the overall assets of the county within the InCarlow brand of activities

Project: Upgrade of Broadband Connection Points to enable Remote Working Remote Working & Digital Hubs and other relevant initiatives for the optimization of digital connectivityFollowing the installation of High Speed Broadband into the Community Centre in Rathanna & Newtown, Carlow County Council worked with the communities under the Town & Village Accelerated Scheme to develop remote working hubs. An investment of €26,800 was made in hardware which was supported by the Broadband Officer and the Local Enterprise Office. These projects will come online in early 2022 and this investment will allow these centres to run a range of digital activities and remote working spaces for all members of the community. This will allow the communities to develop flexible working solutions by developing and enhancing digital workspaces. This proposal has enabled the community groups to develop more digital skills- whilst adhering to new Covid-19 social distancing protocols- with opportunities to facilitate:* Digital Training Classes
* Remote Working Hub
* Video conferencing and video calling
* Online training
* Digital teaching for teachers and lecturers
* The introduction of Internet of Things technology within each community centre Access to online backup systems and solutions
* Security and anti virus solutions
* Participation in remote learning for 2nd level and 3rd level students
* Meetings for local enterprises and SMEs with access to high quality broadband in a socially
* distanced environment

Project: Development of New Remote Working & Digital Hubs The Council on behalf of the South-East Local Authorities conducted research into the requirement for remote works in the form of the South East Remote Digital Working. The motivation for the South-East Remote Work study was to identify a cohort of potential start-up businesses and to understand remote work habits and behaviours in the South East on a regional and individual county level so that as a collective region we can work together to support economic opportunity. 900 individuals participated in the research which was conducted over 4 months. In respect of Carlow this has resulted in the following projects being developed and applied for National Funding:* Connected Hub - Firehouse – Hackestown

In 2020 the Hacketstown community in partnership with the Council engaged in the development of a Village Led Design Statement which involved significant stakeholder engagement to design and develop a 10-year framework for development of the Town. This statement is due to be launched in September 2021 and is currently in final consultation with the community in respect of the action plan. As part of this work one issue which was identified was the requirement for enterprise and remote working space in the Town to service the needs of the community. Under the Town & Village fund call for 2021/22 it is proposed to build a stand-alone building on the vacant site beside the former fire station which will be called the Firehouse – Enterprise & Remote Working Hub and be part of the Connected Hubs Network. The facility will contain 4 business and remote working units and facilitate up to 12 users. The development will be carried out by a partnership between Carlow Community Enterprise Centres, the Council, and the Local Community. This project is at funding application stage.* Connected Hubs – The Garden Room

The Council in partnership with the community have identified a derelict site in Myshall Village beside the current community centre for the development of the Garden Room. The project gets its name from the location as a traditional walled Garden. Phase 1 will be the development of the Hub and Phase 2 will be a wrap around Garden experience which is being explored by the community. Under the Town & Village fund call for 2021/22 it is proposed to build a standalone building on the vacant site beside the community centre which will be called The Garden Room – Enterprise & Remote Working Hub and will be part of the Connected Hubs Network. The facility will contain 4 business and remote working units and facilitate up to 12 users. The development will be carried out by a partnership between Carlow Community Enterprise Centres, the Council, and the Local Community. This project is at funding application stage.Development of a sustainable delivery for model for Hubs & Enterprise Centres - Carlow Community Enterprise Centres CLGEnterprise Centres CLG is a linked company to Carlow County Council and this partnership will be utilized as the model for the development of enterprise centres, connected hubs and the promotion of the County. During 2021, the Council developed a structured partnership to allow for the development of connected hubs and enterprise centres. The following projects are proposed to be developed in partnership with the company and local communities under the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund & Town & Village Renewal Fund & Regional Enterprise Funding which all support the Digital Agenda: * Bagenalstown Enterprise & Innovation Centre
* InCarlow Campus (including Digital White Box Studio)
* Connected Hubs – Hacketstown & Myshall & Rathvilly
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| **INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY/ PORTS/AIRPORTS, FREIGHT & LOGISTICS**RPO 139 Low Carbon International ConnectivityRPO 145: Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern RegionRPO:149: Airport Strategy for the Southern RegionRPO 141: Regional Freight StrategyRPO 143 Ports and Airports | How Does the Development Plan support the **Region’s International Connectivity**, development of ports, airports and policies in relation to freight and logistics.Please provide a brief summary of relevant objectives/initiatives |
|  | **Chapter 5: Sustainable Travel and Transportation**This chapter of the Draft Plan gives recognition and support to the Region’s International Connectivity with reference to the relevant provisions of the NPF and RSES, and through the following policies, objectives and related provisions:Section 5.5Highlights the strategic role and importance of public transport including rail and bus services in the County and the Region, with support for improvements and enhancements to same by Policies PT. P1 to PT. P3 and Objectives PT. O1 to PT. O5. Sections 5.8.1 and 5.8.2Addresses the strategic role of the motorway and national road network, and the connections to the midlands and southeast region and to Dublin City, Kilkenny City and Waterford City, in addition to Waterford Port and onwards. This strategic role is supported by Policies MN. P1 to MN. P3, Objective MN. O1, and by Policies NR. P1 to NR. P4 and Objectives NR. O1 to NR. O2. Section 5.9 Address freight transport and logistics, including the role of the motorway network (M9), the Rail Network, Waterford Port, and Waterford Airport, with potential opportunities for more sustainable freight movements to the Port. The promotion of rail freight services and the development of a logistics park in the County is supported by Policies FR. P1 and FR. P2.Section 5.11Includes air travel policies AT. P1 and AT. P2 to support the continued operation and growth of Waterford Airport as an important element of the transport and communications infrastructure of the region.  |
| **ENHANCED REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY**RPO 169 Strategic Road Network Improvement Priorities | Briefly outline Development plan policies to improve **enhanced regional connectivity** – by road/rail and public transport services. |
|  | See previous answer. |
| **SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY / LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS (AND OBJECTIVES/INITIATIVES**RPO 151 Integration of Land Use and TransportRPO 152 Local Planning ObjectivesRPO 154 Land Use PlansRPO 157 Local Transport Plans (LTP)RPO 163 Sustainable Mobility Targets RPO 165 Higher Densities | How does the Development plan support **sustainable mobility** – including walking cycling, the 10 minute city/ town, sustainable mobility targets.Please provide a brief summary of objectives/initiatives.Are there plans to undertake **Local Transport Plans** in respect of relevant settlements in your Local Authority.Please identify any examples of planned/completed projects, good practice and other actions which you may wish to highlight. |
|  | **Chapter 5: Sustainable Travel and Transportation**This chapter of the Draft Plan supports sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and the 10 minute town concept, by reference to relevant national policy including (inter alia) Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020, and through the inclusion of the following provisions:Section 5.2Policy LT. P1 to support the integration of land use and transportation.Section 5.3Support for sustainable mobility/modal shift through Policy MS. P1 and Objective MS. O1. Section 5.4Recognition of the importance of walking and cycling, and policies to support and prioritise same under WC. P1 to WC. P4 and Objectives WC. O1 to WC. O7. Also takes account of national targets for walking and cycling, 10-Minute Town ConceptObjective WC. O3 seeks to reduce walking and cycling distances to areas of employment, community services etc., through the implementation of the 10-Minute Town Concept, and the provision and maintenance of high-quality linkages and the delivery of local permeability links within existing communities.Objective WC. O7 identifies a number of specific schemes the Council want to secure the development of, including a pedestrian and cyclist footbridge between IT Carlow and the Barrow Way and improved permeability in existing residential areas in Carlow Town, and improved accessibility to Carlow Railway Station. Section 5.5It is an objective of the Council under PT. O1 to prepare a Local Transport Plan for Carlow Town in accordance with the Area Based Transport Assessment Guidelines (produced by the NTA and TII) and having regard to RPO 157 of the RSES for the Southern Region. The Material Amendments will also include an ABTA for Tullow and Muine Bheag.**Chapter 11: Tourism and Recreation**In addition to Chapter 5, this chapter gives further recognition and support for the important role of walking and cycling routes in the County, and public rights of way, through Policies R. P1 to R. P11, Objectives R. O1 and R. O2, and Policies RW. P1 to RW. P4. **Planned/Completed projects, Good practice**‘Project Carlow 2040 – A Vision for Regeneration and Development’Refer to previous description. |
| **INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES & PLACES -IMPROVING WELLBEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE**RPO 181 Equal AccessRPO 182 Ageing Population | Does the Development Plan include policies that will support and develop **Inclusive Communities and Places**? Please provide a brief summary of plan objectives & other initiatives that will improve **Social Inclusion and Quality of Life.** |
|  | Yes, Chapter 8 of the Draft Plan dealing with Community Development, includes a wide-ranging set of policies, objectives and related provisions to support and develop inclusive communities and places, which address:Sections 8.2 and 8.3Sustainable and inclusive communities and the role of local development and community groups. See Objectives LDC. O1 and LDC. O2. Sections 8.4 to 8.6Support for social inclusion under Policies SI. P1 and SI. P2, and social enterprises under SE. P1 to SE. P4, including Objective SE. O1 to develop a Social Enterprise Strategic Plan for the County.Section 8.7The promotion and support of community participation under Policy CP. P1 and Objective CP. O1, including the role of Carlow PPN and the Carlow Volunteer Centre.Section 8.8.Support is provided for diversity and inclusivity in relation to children and young people, older people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and the Traveller Community. This is underpinned by Policies YP. P1, YP. P2, OP. P1, OP. P2, Objective OP. O1, Policy PD. P1, and Objectives PD. O1 and PD. O2.Section 8.8.4Addresses the importance of universal access and design in the built environment in delivering on a more inclusive society, with specific reference to relevant best practice documentation. This is given effect by Policies UD. P1 to UD. P3. The remainder of Chapter 8 includes a comprehensive suite of provisions, taking account of:* Nationality, ethnicity and language, including support for the County Carlow Migrant Integration and Intercultural Strategy 2020-2024. See Policy NEL. P1 and Objective NEL. O1.
* The LGBTI+ Community, with specific support for National LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021. See Policies LGBTI. P1 to LGBTI. P4.
* The Travelling Community and Traveller Accommodation. See Policy TC. P1.
* The importance of community facilities. See Policies CF. P1 to CF. P6.
* The role of education and educational facilities, including the streamlining of educational facilities for people with special needs. See Policies ED. P1 to ED. P8.
* Childcare and healthcare facilities. See Polices CF. P1 to CF. P3 and HF. P1 to HF P5.
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| **LEARNING REGION**RPO 186: Lifelong Learning & RPOs 39, 63,Also RPO 187 Education & Training, RPO 190 Lifelong Learning & Healthy Cities Initiative  | Does the Development Plan include policies that support lifelong learning and development of a Learning Region?Please provide a brief summary of objectives/initiatives |
|  | Yes, the role of lifelong learning is addressed in Chapter 14 of the Draft Plan as one of a range of important services provided by Carlow libraries (Section 8.14). In addition, Section 8.4 dealing with social inclusion, gives recognition and support for the role of Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) in engaging with the most difficult to reach in the most disadvantaged areas, including the support it provides to individuals to improve the quality of their life through the provision of lifelong learning. This is underpinned by Policies SI. P1 and SI. P2. The development of a learning region is addressed in Section 8.10, and in particular through the policy provisions that support the role of IT. Carlow, Carlow College and Teagasc Agricultural Centre, in their contribution to the recognition given to Carlow as a regional centre for education and research in the RSES. This is in addition to the role of the Carlow Institute of Further Education, which is the largest provider of further education and training courses in the region and has recently moved to a new 10,000sq.m. campus. Specific support for the creation of a Technological University of the South East (TUSE) between IT Carlow and Waterford IT is addressed in Section 8.10.3. It is acknowledged in this section that The TUSE will serve the whole of the Greater South-Eastern Region (a population of over 1.6m), offering wide-ranging opportunities to learners, and collaborating with a broad range of civic, academic and industry partners for improved socio-economic development. The role of I.T. Carlow as part of a multi-campus TUSE will also further enhance its standing as a 3rd level institution and will strengthen and reinforce Carlow’s regional and inter-regional role in education, research, and innovation capacity. The foregoing is addressed by Education Facilities Policies ED. P1 to ED. P8, and by Objectives EF. O1 to EF. O3. Objective EF. O3 supports the development of I.T. Carlow as part of a Multi-Campus Technological University of the South East (TUSE). |
| **CULTURE, HERITAGE & THE ARTS** | Does the Development Plan include policies that support **culture, heritage & the arts**?Please provide a brief summary of objectives/initiatives |
|  | **Chapter 8: Community Development**Yes, the role and development of culture and arts in the county is comprehensively covered in Chapter 8 of the Draft Plan. Section 8.15 recognises that cultural and arts facilities are a vibrant element of social life in Carlow, and it also gives support to the County Carlow Local Arts Development Plan 2016-2021 and to the VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and George Bernard Shaw Theatre. A robust set of policies and objectives in support of the aforesaid include CA. P1 to CA. P7 and Objective CA. O1. These provisions deal with (inter alia) the provision of new and improved facilities, the promotion accessibility to facilities, funding opportunities and the role of the VISUAL, and support for the implementation of the County Carlow Local Arts Development Plan 2016-2021.**Chapter 11: Tourism and Recreation**The role of culture, heritage and arts in the tourism industry is also recognised and supported in this chapter, and with respect to:* Failte Ireland’s Ancient East Brand. See Objective FI. O1.
* Heritage Tourism. See Policies HT. P1 and HT. P2.
* Carlow’s Castles, Historic Houses and Gardens, and Garden Trail. See Policies HT. P3 to HT. P5.
* Pre-Christian heritage. See Policy HT. P6.
* Religious and Ecclesiastical Sites, including Carlow – Trails of the Saints. See Policy HT. P7.
* Historic Towns and Villages. See Policies HT. P8 to HT. P10.
* Natural Heritage and Amenities, including the Blackstairs and Waterway and Lakes, Forests and Woodlands. See Policies HT. P11. to HT. P15.

Section 11.8 onwards includes detailed provisions to support the development of culture, arts and entertainment in the County, with recognition of:* The County Carlow Local Arts Development Plan 2016-2021. See Objective CA. O1.
* The role of Events and Festivals. See Policy EF. P1.
* Carlow Food, Drink and Craft, including Carlow Food and Drink Strategy – The Taste of County Carlow 2020-2025. See Policies FD. P1 and FD. P1 and Objective FD. O1.
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| **GAELTACHTAÍ, GAELTACHT SERVICE TOWNS(GSTs) & IRISH LANGUAGE NETWORKS** | **Does the Development Plan policies that support Gaeltachtaí, Gaeltacht Service Towns (GSTs) & Irish Language Networks? Please provide a brief summary of objectives/initiatives** |
|  | N/A |
| **RECREATION & SPORTING FACILITIES INCL. BLUEWAYS & GREENWAYS** | Does the Development Plan include policies that support **recreation & sporting facilities** incl. **blueways & greenways**?Please provide a summary/overview of all recreation/ greenway/blueway projects planned /under way |
|  | Yes, Chapter 11 of the Draft Plan dealing with Tourism and Recreation provides a suite of policies and provisions to support recreation & sporting facilities, including. blueways & greenways. These include:Section 11.6 which addresses greenways and blueways as a key tourism infrastructural assets, which is underpinned by Policies GB. P1 to GB. P3 and Objective GB. O1 to support and facilitate the delivery of a greenway route(s) in the County where deemed feasible.Section 11.12 which examines the importance of recreation in the County, and which takes account of and supports the:* County Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2020-2023
* Carlow Outdoors Initiative
* Healthy Carlow County Plan 2018-202

Outdoor recreation is addressed and supported from Section 11.13, including the Governments ORIS, and the County’s walking and cycling routes. See Policies R. P1 to R. P11. Objective R. O1 seeks to support the implementation of the County Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2020-2023.The importance of open space and play areas in recreation is also covered in the chapter and given effect under Policies OS. P1 to OS. P9, Objectives OS. O1 to OS. O3, and Policies PA. P1 to PA. P3. Recognition for sports and leisure facilities is included in Section 11.16, and support for the development of same is underpinned by Policies SL. P1 to SL. P5, including Objectives SL. O1 and SL. O2. This includes recognition and support for the role of the County Carlow Local Sports Partnership.**Summary/overview of all recreation/greenway/blueway projects planned /under way**Barrow Valley GreenwayUnder the Carbon Tax Fund 2020 and as part of a Barrow Valley Greenway Initiative, the Council received funding in 2020 to investigate the feasibility of developing a greenway in the County utilising the route of the disused Carlow to Wexford railway line. The old railway line runs south from Muinebheag to Borris, where it crosses the Borris Railway Viaduct and then continues south to Wexford. Borris Railway ViaductThe redevelopment and adaptation of the Borris Railway Viaduct Project as a civic amenity and walking/cycling route by the Council was completed in 2020 and was supported by the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). Carlow Town Water Hub Activity CentreIt is an intention of the Council construct of a River Barrow Water Activity Centre at Carlow Town Park, Carlow Town. This project has been the subject of an applicant to An Bord Pleanala for approval and a decision is awaiting on same. The Council has had a long-term objective of developing a centralised Centre on the banks of the River Barrow creating a major community and recreational asset for Carlow Town. This water-based development will combine both recreational and economic briefs whilst also providing a base for many of the clubs active in the area. It will provide storage, changing and community facilities coupled with a central café facing onto the River and becoming the public face of the scheme. It will be developed by the Council as part of an urban regeneration initiative. |
| **REGIONAL VISION**RPO: 73: International Branding of the Region and reputation. | **How does the Development Plan Vision incorporate the RSES vision for the Region as ‘one of Europe’s most Creative, Innovative, Greenest and Liveable Regions’?** |
|  | The Draft Plan vision is consistent with the RSES vision for the Region, which is specifically taken account of in Section 1.4.2 in Chapter 1 and by Policy RSES. P1 thereunder. The vision is underpinned by strategic objectives that inform the policies and objectives throughout the Draft plan, included in Chapter 1. The Draft Plan vision states:*The Vision for County Carlow is to champion quality of life through local employment provision, high quality development, healthy placemaking and transformational regeneration, to grow and attract a diverse innovative economy, to support the transition to a low carbon climate resilient environment, to embrace inclusiveness and enhance our natural and built environment for future generations.* |

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| Please also indicate the progress that has been made with respect to the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for your Local Authority. |
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| This could include detail on:The expected review date and preparation of a new LECP and any preparatory work that has been carried out to date or is currently being planned for. Please indicate timeframes associated with same. |
| A new Carlow LECP must be in place by the end of this year 2022, and it is anticipated that the review process for the existing LECP 2016-2021 will commence in the first quarter of this year. |
| **Please provide any other comments that you would like to make with respect to your Local Authority and implementing the RSES. This may include any recommendations that you consider would facilitate this process.** |
| Please note that the public consultation period for the ‘Proposed Material Amendments’ to the Draft Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 will commence in late February for a period of 4 weeks, all the details of which will be made available on the Council’s online consultation portal at <https://consult.carlow.ie/en/consultation/draft-carlow-county-development-plan-2022-2028>  |

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| Please provide a contact point in the event that we need to contact you about this form. |
| Name: Wesley KeoghPosition: A/Senior Executive PlannerEmail: wkeogh@carlowcoco.ieContact phone number: 059 9170339 |
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