



Oifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála
Office of the
Planning Regulator

OPR Ref: MA-017-23

3rd November 2023

Forward Planning Section,
Galway County Council,
Prospect Hill,
Galway,
H91 H6KX.

Re: Material Alterations to Draft Athenry Local Area Plan 2023-2029

A chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in preparing the proposed Material Alterations (the proposed Material Alterations) to the draft Athenry Local Area Plan 2023-2029 (the draft LAP).

As your authority is aware, a core function of the Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) is the strategic evaluation and assessment of statutory plans to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning. This includes a requirement to make submissions on statutory plans, including any observations or recommendations the Office considers necessary to ensure the effective co-ordination of national, regional and local planning requirements.

The Office has evaluated and assessed the proposed material alterations under the provisions of sections 31AO(1) and 31AO(2) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended (the Act), and within the context of the Office's earlier recommendations and observations.

The Office's evaluation and assessment of the proposed Material Alterations has regard to the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (the Development Plan), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and relevant section 28 guidelines.



Overview

The Office acknowledges the extensive work undertaken by the planning authority in responding to the issues raised by the Office in its recommendations and observations and in preparing the proposed Material Alterations.

As outlined in the Office's submission to the draft LAP, the Office concluded that the draft LAP sets out a positive, evidence-based, planning strategy to guide the development of Athenry over the six-year plan period. It was noted, however, that there were a number of matters required for the LAP to be consistent with the *National Planning Framework* (NPF), the RSES for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly as well as the Development Plan.

The Office considered it necessary to make three recommendations on the draft LAP, and made six observations where further consideration was advised.

The Office welcomes Material Alterations MA67 and MA68, which responds to Recommendation 1 and Recommendation 3 of the Office's submission to the draft LAP, and addresses requirements in relation to a tiered approach to zoning under NPO 72 (a-c). The Office notes that all of the sites that were zoned in the draft LAP are either Tier 1 or Tier 2 in terms of being serviced.

The Office was generally satisfied with the approach in relation to residential development in the draft LAP, in particular the general consistency with the core strategy of the Development Plan. While the Office has no objection to most of the Material Alterations that propose to zone land for residential development, there are a number of residential zonings, particularly Residential Phase 1 zonings, which are located on the periphery of the town and are not consistent with the core strategy. The decision to zone lands in such a manner was also raised in respect of the Development Plan, and was the subject of a Ministerial Direction.

The Office recommends, therefore, that your authority makes the LAP without the proposed Material Alterations identified in MA Recommendation 1, which undermine the very positive policies, objectives and strategies in the draft LAP, promoting



compact and proportionate growth, sustainable mobility and the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.

In relation to lands zoned for Employment Uses in the draft LAP, the Office notes that while an infrastructure assessment was provided as per Recommendation 3 of the Office's submission to the draft LAP, concerning Lands Zoned for Employment Uses, an adequate justification for the lands zoned in the draft LAP has not been provided. These matters will have to be considered by the Office in the context of its final assessment of the adopted LAP.

Further, the proposed Material Alterations to zone additional land for employment generating uses, in peripheral locations and in a piecemeal manner would not be consistent with a compact pattern of development in accordance with the National Strategic Outcome (NSO) for compact growth of the NPF. The Office notes that these locations, in some cases, are: not adequately serviced; poorly connected to the town centre; inconsistent with *Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns* (2022) (Town Centre First); and are provided without an evidence-base for such zonings.

In relation to flood risk management, the Office welcomes the general approach followed by the planning authority in terms of avoiding zoning land for residential development in flood risk areas. This is consistent with national policy to avoid placing people and property at unnecessary risk from future flood events. NPO 57 and *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2009) (Flood Guidelines) also require that the same approach be followed in terms of all land use zonings.

The Office had concerns in relation to flooding for the Furzypark area. While the Office welcomes proposed Material Alteration MA13 to address the flood risk concerns in Furzypark, it is noted that the OPW are seeking further clarification in relation to the flood extents in the Furzypark area. This matter is addressed in this submission under MA Recommendation 3 below.



Observations were included in the Office's submission to the draft LAP in relation to the mix of housing types, measurable vacancy targets to address Town Centre First policies and provide timelines for the delivery of the local transport plan (LTP) infrastructure. It is noted that these observations have not been addressed as part of the proposed Material Alterations and weaken the basis for implementation and delivery over the plan period.

Finally, the Office notes the proposed Material Alteration to zone additional land for Open Space/Recreation & Amenity, however the Office is concerned that these lands are in a peripheral location and are poorly connected to the town centre, particularly by walking and cycling, undermining the draft LAP objectives to promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies.

It is within this context, the submission below sets out three (3) recommendations and one (1) observation under the following four (4) themes:

Key theme	Recommendation	Observation
Core Strategy and Land Use Zoning for Residential Use	MA Recommendation 1	-
Land Use Zoning for Employment	MA Recommendation 2	-
Open Space Provision	-	MA Observation 1
Flood Risk Management	MA Recommendation 3	-

Recommendations issued by the Office relate to clear breaches of the relevant legislative provisions, of the national or regional policy framework and/or of the policy of Government, as set out in the Ministerial guidelines under section 28. As such, the planning authority is required to implement or address recommendation(s) made by the Office in order to ensure consistency with the relevant policy and legislative provisions.

Observations take the form of a request for further information, justification on a particular matter, or clarification regarding particular provisions of a plan on issues



that are required to ensure alignment with policy and legislative provisions. The planning authority is requested by the Office to action an observation.

A submission can include advice on matters that the Office considers would contribute positively to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The planning authority is requested by the Office to give full consideration to the advice contained in a submission.

1. Core strategy and land use zoning for residential use

The Office was generally satisfied that a sufficient supply of zoned land had been provided for in the draft LAP, consistent with the core strategy of the Development Plan.

The Office notes, however, that the proposed Material Alterations include a further 21 ha of lands zoned Residential Phase 1. It is noted that some Residential Phase 1 lands will be rezoned as part of the proposed Material Alterations and, as such, if all proposed Material Alterations are adopted, it will result in a net increase of approximately 19 ha, representing a total Residential Phase 1 zoning of circa 41 ha. This would provide c.88% Residential Phase 1 land over the core strategy requirement/draft LAP provision.

The Office acknowledges that in providing housing sites for development within settlements it may be necessary to zone more serviced land and sites for residential (or a mixture of residential and other uses) than would equate to meeting precisely the projected housing demand for that settlement. However, the scale of the proposed increase raises concerns in this case.

The Office also has concerns in relation to several of the proposed Material Alterations that are poorly located, lack the necessary infrastructure to be delivered in the lifetime of the LAP and are not necessary to ensure a sufficient supply of zoned land consistent with the core strategy in the recently adopted Development Plan.

The proposed Material Alterations that raise concerns are:

- Material Alterations MA5, MA40, MA41, MA43, MA46, MA47, MA49, MA65 - changing to Residential Phase 1;
- Material Alteration MA48 - changing to Residential Existing¹; and
- Material Alterations MA50, MA51, MA59, MA60 and MA24 - changing to Residential Phase 2.

Furthermore, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken to inform the decision making process for the proposed Material Alterations and has indicated multiple issues with a number of these sites. The SEA notes that the proposed Material Alterations (including Material Alterations MA40, MA41, MA43, MA46, MA47, MA49, MA51 and MA65) would introduce elements of the Less Compact Development alternative which would be inconsistent with the objectives and strategies in the draft LAP to promote compact growth and urban regeneration in support of NPO3c.

It is noted that Material Alterations MA40, MA41, and MA43 are sizable parcels of land (3.118 ha) in the context of the core strategy and are located to the south of the town adjacent to the rail line. These sites are accessed from a local rural road with no footpath or cycle path infrastructure, as highlighted in the infrastructure assessment undertaken as part of the proposed material alterations process. The zoning of these sites, as proposed, would increase vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the main access route to the town centre and crossing the rail line at a bridge which has limited capacity to accommodate increased movements. Furthermore, no timelines for the delivery of infrastructure, including the widening of a bridge over a rail line, have been provided despite this being requested as part of Observation 3 of the Office's submission on the draft LAP. Finally, it is noted that the SEA undertaken to inform the decision making process for the proposed Material Alterations,

¹ It is noted that the proposed Material Alterations document refers to this zoning as both Residential Existing and Existing Residential. As such the Office has referred to this zoning as Residential Existing which is consistent with the land use zoning objective at section 1.7 of the draft LAP.



indicates that these sites are unsuitable and could lead to negative impacts on the environment as well as being in excess of the core strategy requirement.

With regard to these sites the SEA report states:

Given the deviation from County Development Plan allocations and the locations of the areas proposed to be zoned, development at these locations would conflict with established higher-level objectives relating to compact growth, sustainable mobility and transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.

The Office also has concerns with regard to Material Alterations MA46 and MA49 which are both currently outside the settlement boundary and are proposed to be zoned Residential Phase 1 with a combined area of approximately 13 ha. The scale of this zoning, relative to the core strategy requirements, is a concern and would be inconsistent with national, as well as the Development Plan's, growth targets.

In this respect, the Office notes that the draft LAP provided sufficient land to meet anticipated development requirements set out in the core strategy in a sequential and coordinated manner. Furthermore, there are preferably located lands which are zoned and serviced to meet demand. There is, therefore, no evidence based rationale to support the requirement for the proposed Material Alterations MA46 and MA49 to ensure that adequate housing is available.

Furthermore, the lands are removed from the town, are located beyond the proposed Part 8 Relief Road, lack the required infrastructure and are less sequentially preferable, compared to other lands in the town of Athenry. Section 6.2.4 of the amended Athenry Draft Local Transport Plan notes that the narrowness of parts of the road at these sites will require the acquisition of set-backs from landowners. Appendix E (Infrastructure Assessment Proposed Residential Lands) of the draft LAP is consistent with this approach and notes a lack of lighting with Significant Intervention Required for each site. The required upgrades to the access road and respective timelines are uncertain and the sites are not considered to be serviced or serviceable within the lifetime of the LAP. Moreover, the rezoning of the land would



not represent a sequential approach to zoning for residential development, and as such would be inconsistent with section 6.2.3 of the *Development Plans, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)* (the Development Plans Guidelines).

Finally, it is noted that the SEA undertaken to inform the decision making process for the proposed Material Alterations, indicates that these sites are unsuitable and could lead to negative impacts on the environment.

With regard to these sites the SEA report states:

These Proposed Material Alteration would zone more sensitive, less well serviced lands, further away from the established built envelope of the settlement (outside of the Draft Plan boundary) with associated unnecessary potentially significant adverse effects on a variety of environmental components...

The Office has further concerns with proposed Material Alterations MA5 and MA47, as well as the associated Material Alteration MA48. Material Alteration MA5 is a 0.6 ha site, while Material Alteration MA47 consists of a 1.6 ha site. In combination, these sites could provide a significant number of units in the context of Athenry. Having reviewed Material Alteration MA47, it is noted that these lands: are outside the settlement boundary; are located outside of the relief road; are not sequentially preferable to other serviced lands; and are lacking infrastructure including pathways and cycling facilities. Further, there are concerns raised in the SEA as to the adverse environmental impact in relation to the proposed zoning alterations. The SEA concerns are the same as those raised for Material Alterations MA46 and MA49.

All three of these sites (Material Alterations MA5, MA47 and MA48) are located adjacent to each other and the LTP notes: The zoning of these additional lands to the south would require significant analysis and measures to be proposed at a project level to improve connectivity to these lands and crossing of the R348.

As such, the Office has concerns that safe and convenient pedestrian access to the town centre or local services is not available. The issues identified above



are also relevant to Material Alteration MA48 which is proposed to be zoned as Residential Existing, while there is not an existing dwelling on the site. As such, this zoning is not considered acceptable.

In relation to the proposed Material Alteration MA65, it is noted that this site is less sequentially preferable to other sites and that the lands are located outside of the settlement boundary. Moreover, and as noted above, the draft LAP provided sufficient land to meet anticipated development requirements set out in the core strategy in a sequential and coordinated manner. While the site is considered to be serviced, it is noted that these lands were not previously zoned. Having regard to the environmental concerns that are raised in the SEA, and that the draft LAP provides sufficient zoned land to meet the housing growth targets, the proposed Material Alteration is unjustified given that there is more suitably located zoned land available to provide for consolidated plan-led growth in Athenry in accordance with national and regional policy objectives.

There are also a number of sites proposed to be zoned Residential Phase 2 that raise concerns for the Office. The zoning proposed by Material Alterations MA50, MA51, MA59, MA60 and MA24 are outside of the settlement boundary for the town, are less sequentially preferable to other Phase 2 lands and do not have appropriate access to public roads and footpath provision.

In the case of Material Alterations MA50 and MA51, it is noted that Appendix E (Infrastructure Assessment Proposed Residential Lands) of the draft LAP indicates Significant Intervention Required with regard to the provision of services. It is also noted that the sites are all in close proximity to the permitted Part 8 Relief Road that is to be delivered by Galway County Council. As such it is not considered that these lands are suitable for a Phase 2 zoning at this time and that there is a sufficient quantity of Phase 2 zoned lands elsewhere in the town, which are more favourably located to deliver a compact form of development.

In the case of Material Alteration MA51, the SEA has also specifically outlined that:



These Proposed Material Alteration would zone more sensitive, less well serviced lands, further away from the established built envelope of the settlement (outside of the Draft Plan boundary) with associated unnecessary potentially significant adverse effects on a variety of environmental components...’.

In general the proposed Material Alterations, referred to above, risk undermining the positive policies, objectives and strategies in the draft LAP which promote compact growth and urban regeneration in support of policy objective CS 2 of the Development Plan and NPO 3c.

As outlined in this submission, many of the proposed zonings do not represent sequential development, particularly within the context of compact growth. The result is the zoning of land in excess of that which can reasonably be considered to be required to provide for the housing supply target consistent with the Development Plan core strategy. A number of the sites have infrastructure deficits and it is not clear when these will be resolved, while the SEA report identifies a number of these sites as having negative effects on the environment of Athenry.

MA Recommendation 1 – Land Use Zoning for Residential Use

Having regard to the provision of new homes at locations that can support compact and sustainable development, and in particular to the following:

- the core strategy of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028;
- national and regional policy objectives NPO 3, RPO 3.1 and RPO 3.2 for compact growth;
- the peripheral location of the lands and the policy and objective for the sequential approach to zoning in the *Development Plans, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)*; and

- NPO 72a-c and Appendix 3 of the NPF for the co-ordination of land use zoning, infrastructure and services,

the planning authority is required to make the LAP without the following proposed Material Alterations:

- (i) MA5 – Outside the Settlement Boundary to Residential Phase 1;
- (ii) MA24 - Agriculture to Residential Phase 2;
- (iii) MA40 – Residential Phase 2 to Residential Phase 1;
- (iv) MA41 – Agriculture to Residential Phase 1;
- (v) MA43 – Agriculture to Residential Phase 1;
- (vi) MA46 – Outside the Settlement Boundary to Residential Phase 1;
- (vii) MA47 – Outside the Settlement Boundary to Residential Phase
- (viii) MA48 – Outside the Settlement Boundary to Residential Existing;
- (ix) MA49 – Outside the Settlement Boundary to Residential Phase 1;
- (x) MA50 – Open Space/Recreation & Amenity to Residential Phase 2;
- (xi) MA51 – Outside the Settlement Boundary to Residential Phase 2;
- (xii) MA59 – Open Space/Recreation & Amenity to Residential Phase 2;
- (xiii) MA60 – Agriculture to Residential Phase 2; and
- (xiv) MA65 – Agriculture to Residential Phase 1.

2. Land use zoning for Employment

The Office, in its submission to the draft LAP, broadly welcomed the policies and objectives with regard to economic development and employment. Furthermore the Office acknowledged that RSES recognises the importance of Athenry as a town of Strategic Potential to develop along the Economic Corridor identified in the Development Plan.



However the Office had concerns with the extensive scale of land zoned for employment uses without an evidence-based rationale to demonstrate the need for such extensive lands in accordance with section 6.2.5 of the *Development Plans Guidelines*. In its submission to the draft LAP the Office noted the employment land use zonings included Town Centre (10.5 ha), Commercial/Mixed Use (11.7ha), Business and Enterprise (18ha), Business and Technology (88.1 ha) and Industry (24.8 ha). The draft LAP also includes Tourism zonings (5.5 ha).

The Office had concerns that a significant portion of the lands zoned for Industry are greenfield undeveloped lands located at the edge of the draft LAP boundary and outside of the town's CSO boundary. This approach has the potential to undermine and detract from town centre revitalisation, contrary to NPO 6, RPO 3.1 and Town Centre First, and further, would not contribute to a compact pattern of development in accordance with the NSO for compact growth of the NPF.

The Office sought an evidence-based rationale for the overall quantity and the spatial location of all employment generating land use zonings. In this regard, the Office issued Recommendation 3 (Lands Zoned for Employment Uses) in its submission to the draft LAP.

The Office welcomes the inclusion of Material Alteration MA68 (to include Appendix F Infrastructure Assessment for Employment lands) to the draft LAP which clarifies whether subject lands zoned for employment are serviced or serviceable consistent with NPO 72(a) and NPO 72(c).

Notwithstanding Material Alteration MA68, the Office notes the decision of the local authority not to address Recommendation 3 of its submission to the draft LAP and this will have to be considered by the Office in the context of its final assessment of the adopted LAP.

Further to the above, the Office notes that there are a number of proposed Material Alterations which seek changes to the lands zoned for employment use within the draft LAP, which would further add to the quantum of employment zoned land and moreover the piecemeal nature of the lands zoned for Industrial in peripheral



locations would not be consistent with a compact pattern of development in accordance with the NSO for compact growth of the NPF.

The Office has concerns, in particular, in relation to lands situated to the north-west of the town and outside of the relief road, which are the subject of Material Alterations MA56 (c. 6 ha), MA58 (c. 5 ha), MA64 (c. 2 ha), and MA55 (c. 2 ha). These Material Alterations are located outside of the settlement boundary and are identified as Tier 2, in Appendix F (Infrastructure Assessment for Employment Land) of the draft LAP, having regard to their location on the periphery of the town boundary, and the need for network connections to wastewater infrastructure. These sites are less sequentially preferable compared to other employment zoned sites in the town. The Development Plans Guidelines advise that the '*...proposed employment zonings must have a credible rationale, particularly with regard to location and type of employment*'.

Furthermore Material Alteration MA54 (c. 1 ha), which is proposed to be zoned for Business and Enterprise is removed from the town centre, and is identified as Tier 2 in Appendix F (Infrastructure Assessment for Employment Land) of the draft LAP, given its inadequate footpath connectivity. Moreover the lands subject to Material Alteration MA54 currently have no access and are dependent on the delivery of the Part 8 permission for the Relief Road.

These proposed employment land-use zonings, which would facilitate new and more intensive employment development removed from the town centre, work against the objectives of consolidation of the existing built urban footprint; conflicts with objectives in the draft LAP to build a much stronger urban core and vibrant town centre; and is contrary to NPO 6, RPO 3.1 and Town Centre First. In this regard, it is not clear that the LAP, with the proposed material alterations, contains an overall evidence-based strategy for employment uses which is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

MA Recommendation 2 – Lands Zoned for Employment Uses

Having regard to the provision of an evidence-based strategy for employment uses which is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and in particular to the following:

- an evidence-based rationale for both the requirement to zone lands and the location and type of employment in accordance with section 6.2.5 of the *Development Plans, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)* and the sequential approach to zoning for high intensity employment in accordance with Appendix A section 1.4;
- the National Strategic Objective for compact growth and NPO 74;
- the regeneration of towns under NPO 6 and RPO 3.1 and *Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns (2022)*; and
- NPO 72a-c and Appendix 3 of the NPF for the co-ordination of land use zoning, infrastructure and services,

the planning authority is required to review the following proposed Material Alterations and appropriately reduce the quantity of land required to accommodate employment growth in Athenry:

- (i) MA54 - from Agriculture to Business and Enterprise;
- (ii) MA55 – from Outside the Settlement Boundary to Industrial;
- (iii) MA56 - from Outside the Settlement Boundary to Industrial;
- (iv) MA58 - from Outside the Settlement Boundary to Industrial; and
- (v) MA64 – from Outside the Settlement Boundary to Industrial.

As part of this review, the planning authority is required to:

- a) provide an evidence-based rationale for the overall quantity and the spatial location of all employment generating land use zonings;



- b) consider all relevant infrastructural capacity in applying the tiered approach to zoning as well as taking realistic account of the impediments to the delivery of infrastructure within the plan period;
- c) omit any lands which cannot be justified under (i) and (ii) above; and
- d) include clear objectives in the LAP to facilitate and require pedestrian/cycling permeability between the employment lands and the town centre before or in tandem with the development of the said land.

3. Open Space provision

The Office generally welcomes the provision of lands zoned Open Space/Recreation & Amenity as well as the general approach that has been taken to education, social and community amenities as part of the draft LAP. Furthermore, it is noted that the Department of Education has made a submission on the proposed Material Alterations, welcoming Material Alteration MA63 as assisting in ensuring that sufficient and appropriate land is zoned for educational needs.

The Office notes that proposed Material Alteration MA37 provides for the zoning of land for Open Space/Recreation & Amenity to the south of the town. However, the purpose or need for the proposed zoning is not clear.

As noted above, in relation to proposed Material Alterations MA5, MA47 and MA48, there are number of issues in this area of the town relating to access and pedestrian facilities. It is important that any lands which would be open to the public are accessible using walking and cycling infrastructure rather than facilitating a pattern of car-dependent development. Such an approach would be inconsistent with the draft LAP objectives to promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies and contrary to the intentions of NSO 1 of the NPF for compact and connected settlements. The proposed Material Alterations, including the amended LTP, provide no details for how this land will be accessed. The Office, therefore, considers that the planning authority should provide a clarification as to the future use of the lands regarding: how it will be connected to the town in a sustainable manner; and its general suitability having regard to the issues raised above.



MA Observation 1 – Open Space Provision

The planning authority, in accordance with NSO 1 of the NPF, is requested to provide clarification as to the future intended use of the lands at proposed Material Alteration MA37, and to demonstrate how these lands will be accessible using active travel measures. If this is not possible, the planning authority is advised to consider making the LAP without Material Alteration MA37 (Outside Settlement Boundary to Open Space/Recreation & Amenity).

4. Flood risk management

As noted in the introduction to this submission, there are concerns with regard to the extents of the flood risk in the Furzypark area. The OPW submission to the proposed Material Alterations expresses concern that, while the inclusion of Material Alteration MA13 is welcomed, this Material Alteration does not account for the full extents of the flood risk area. The planning authority is therefore required to review this and take appropriate action.

There are concerns that this flood risk area could affect land zoned Industrial in the draft LAP at Furzypark to the south of the Athenry Roundabout (R348) and the adjacent lands which are proposed to be zoned as part of Material Alteration MA33.

The former lands were the subject of Recommendation 2 of the Office's submission to the draft LAP to avoid inappropriate zoning of lands at risk of flooding and should be reviewed by the planning authority.

In relation to the Material Alteration MA33 lands, the Office is concerned lands that are subject to a flood risk have similarly been zoned contrary to the Flood Guidelines and NPO 57.

The Office considers that the planning authority should engage with the OPW to assess whether the flood risk extents at Furzypark are correct and if any further changes are required.



MA Recommendation 3 – Flood Risk Management

Having regard to flood risk management, and in particular to the following:

- National Policy Objective 57; and
- *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2009) (Flood Guidelines),

the planning authority is required to:

- (i) review the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Furzypark area of Athenry to ensure that the flood risk extents proposed as part of Material Alteration MA13 are consistent with the relevant flood maps prepared by the OPW and other agencies;
- (ii) ensure that any flood risk associated with this area is assessed in accordance with the application of the sequential approach and the Justification Test where appropriate, and having regard to potential climate change effects and potential impact on adjoining vulnerable uses; and
- (iii) consider potential remedies for this matter at this stage of the local area plan making process which may include omitting or amending zonings that do not meet the Justification Test in accordance with the provisions of the aforementioned Flood Guidelines.

The planning authority should consult with the OPW regarding the Recommendation.

Summary

The Office requests that your authority addresses the recommendations and observation outlined above. As you are aware, the report of the chief executive of your authority prepared for the elected members under section 20 of the Act must summarise these recommendations and the manner in which they will be addressed.



Oifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála
Office of the
Planning Regulator

OPR Ref: MA-017-23

At the end of the process, your authority is required to notify this Office within five working days of the decision of the planning authority in relation to the material alterations to the draft LAP. Where your authority decides not to comply with the recommendations of the Office, or otherwise makes the LAP in such a manner as to be inconsistent with the recommendations of the Office, the chief executive must inform the Office accordingly and state the reasons for the decision of the planning authority.

Please feel free to contact the staff of the Office in the context of your authority's responses to the above, which we would be happy to facilitate. Contact can be initiated through plans@opr.ie.

Is mise le meas,

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Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations

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