

Laois County Council Planning Department

Nathan Smith
Senior Executive Planner

13th March 2026



Comhairle Chontae
Laoise | Laois
County Council



Tionscald Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



Background

- Laois is rapidly expanding
- 2,895 completions from 2021 to 2025 (Q3)
- 811 social houses delivered since 2022
- Development of J17 Business Park
- Need to zone for additional houses following NPF review and section 28 guidelines – increase from c600 units per annum to over 1,800 per annum
- LCC is currently consulting on 3no. Variations
- Planning (proportionately) for the third highest level of housing growth in the country
- Additional houses will require the provision of additional jobs
- Estimated at 2,100 new jobs per annum if we achieve the housing provision target.



Infrastructure

- Issue arose over network capacity in Portlaoise (specific areas)
 - Potential delay to development of a derelict site which was CPO'd by the council and which had an approved part 8 for housing
 - Delay to private developers also
-



RTE 100 News Sport Entertainment Business Lifestyle Culture Gaige | Player

Move-in date for Portlaoise homes delayed due to lack of power

Updated / Tuesday, 15 Jul 2025 08:13



Some of the Sand Wood homeowners pictured outside their new houses which have yet to be connected to the

Collaboration

- Established a local team with LA Planning, Housing and the ESB to discuss issue and find solutions
 - Work around was found
 - ESB also brought forward more permanent solution by upgrading the existing substation in Portlaoise and Portarlinton
 - Development of housing is secure for the medium term
-



Bracklone, Portarlington

- New 110KV/MV substation 2km from Portarlington Town Centre
 - Permission granted in 2021
 - Caters for Portarlington and surrounding area but also improves capacity into the wider Portlaoise Area
 - Required as no capacity to feed any new loads in Portarlington
-



Employment

01

Meeting with IDA identified an issue with grid capacity in Portlaoise in Q2 2025

02

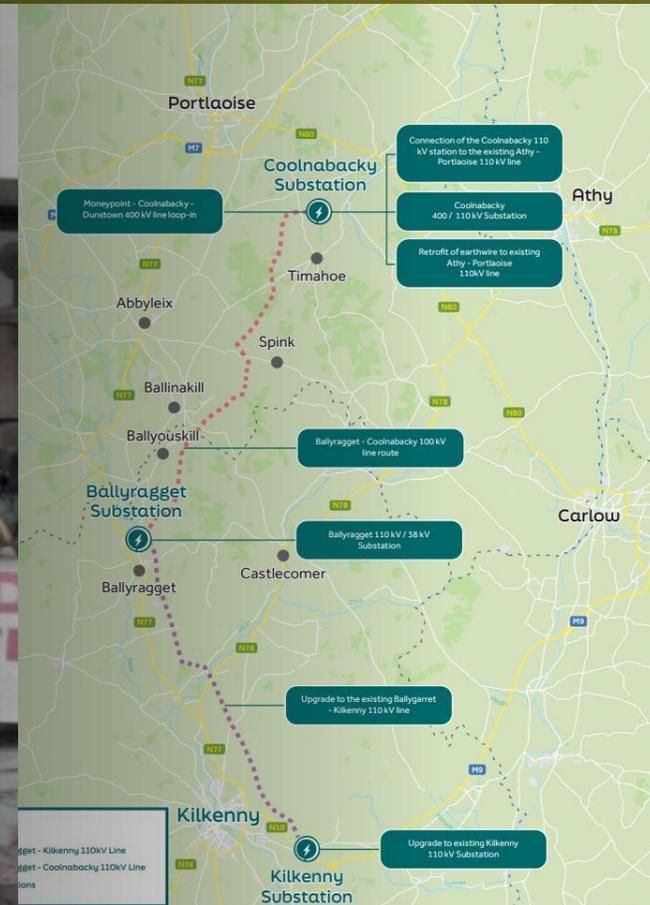
Set up a monthly meeting with ESB and IDA in relation to securing a development site for a new substation in Portlaoise which will provide adequate capacity for industrial developments.

03

New site secured and ESB have commenced the planning process with ACP –SID application expected in 2026.

Coolnabacky

- Laois Kilkenny Grid Reinforcement
- SID originally granted permission by ABP in April 2014 (11no. conditions)
- Includes a new 400/110 kV substation and new 110kV line
- Compliance of conditions 2017 to 2025 given multiple phases of development
- Local opposition continued during construction phase due to concerns of the impact of the development on the environment
 - LCC engaged with local community and ESB / Eirgrid to assist in managing matters arising.
- Ongoing liaison between LCC and ESB including regular site inspections during construction phase following detailed compliance submissions
- Nearing completion
- The project will address regional concerns on the grid



Conclusion



Engage with all service providers
early and often



Get the right people in the room to
deal with the issue