

Save the Strawhall Woodland Campaign Steering Group



Carlow County Council
Athy Road
Carlow
3rd February, 2024



Submission on Carlow Graiguecullen Joint Urban Local Area Plan

To whom it may concern

I am writing on behalf of the Save the Strawhall Woodland Campaign Steering Group.

1. Our group welcomed the proposed zoning of the woodland at Strawhall as Open Space and Amenity.

However, we note that a submission, CLW-C79-27, has been received by Carlow County Council on behalf of Greencore in respect of the woodland. We also note that while Greencore are not contesting the proposed new zoning on this woodland, they are seeking clarification on the proposed zoning in regards to “essential upgrade works” which they plan to carry out to the southern boundary of the woodland.

We are concerned about what the “essential upgrade works” would entail as this woodland “constitutes an ecologically valuable area of mixed, predominantly deciduous woodland with many fine specimen trees” and there is also a protected Badger Sett (Wildlife Act 1976) in the woodland. Please see Baseline Ecological Survey and also copy of email received from the Wildlife Unit of the Dept of Agriculture attached.

We had hoped that this woodland was now under the care of Carlow County Council following the letter sent to Greencore by Carlow County Council on 20th April, 2023 (copy attached).

We request that Carlow County Council protects this woodland from any interference by Greencore and if the zoning of Open Space and Amenity does not afford this protection that the woodland is rezoned with an appropriate zoning which will preserve and protect the woodland and all the flora and fauna living there.

Our research indicates that this woodland, as well as Strawhall House, the site of Carlow Gateway Business Park, the adjoining lands and the former Sugar Factory lands would all have originally been

part of the Oak Park Demense. We believe that this woodland and all the adjoining lands, currently managed by Greencore, including the former Sugar Factory lands, should be afforded the same protection as if they were still part of the Oak Park Demense.

2. Submission for rezoning of the former Sugar Factory lands from Enterprise and Employment to Open Space and Amenity.

We submit that this site is ideal to develop as a tourism attraction and it is already a landmark site and place of interest due to the Lime Kiln/Cooling Tower, a protected structure under this JULAP. We request that a zoning Open Space and Amenity be considered for these lands.

We refer you to:

Chapter 4: Economic Development, Retail and Tourism

p.38 "Natural Capital – Natural Assets such as the River Barrow and Burren River contribute to healthy placemaking as green and blue areas for leisure and amenity, and also provide important ecosystem services which adapt to climate change. Project Carlow 2040 recognises the potential to better utilise these assets in a way that fully realises their amenity value, and in a manner that will improve connectivity to the town centre and enhance the public realm."

p.41 "Developing the tourism economy of Carlow-Graiguecullen in a manner that improves its profile as a tourism destination, grows tourism related employment, and enhances its tourist product offering and visitor experience."

4.3 Strategic Employment Land

9-Former Sugar Factory Land

5.7 Regeneration Action Plan

Core theme of Transport and Movement: "5. Build on natural assets and biodiversity and particularly R. Barrow and Burren River."

Core theme of Environment and Sustainability: "3. Protect and enhance unique biodiversity and landscape."

"The land is directly linked to the town centre by the R417 Athy Road, which is sited along its entire eastern boundary."

"Significant remediation (decontamination) works have been carried out on the land to date to render it suitable for uses other than industrial..."

"The preparation of a masterplan should accompany any development proposal on this land, to include a vision for the overall land parcel to ensure development does not take place in a piecemeal manner and suitable integrates with existing development and infrastructure."

p.56 "EE. P: Encourage and support the development of strategic employment lands in a comprehensive and sequential manner which uses existing infrastructure effectively and efficiently, ensuring development proposals are designed to the highest architectural and landscaping standards, with natural site features such as trees and hedgerows to be retained and enhanced as an integral part of any scheme."

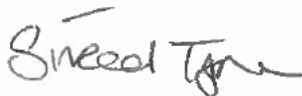
p.67 This JULAP seeks to support existing tourism assets such as the River Barrow and Carlow Castle, seeking to improve these and others through the enhancement of the public realm."

4.6.1.1 River Barrow and Burren River

p.71 Tourism – Policies (TD. P1, TD. P3, TD. P4, TD. P5, TD. P7, TD. P9, TD. P10, TD. P11, TD P.12, TD. P17

If time allowed there are many other references we have identified and indeed other comments, observations and even submissions we would have liked to make /but unfortunately the submission deadline is looming.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sinead Tynan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sinead Tynan