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12th June 2024

Re: Proposed Material Alterations to the Carlow-Graiguecullen Draft Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2024-2030

Dear Sir/Madam

I refer to the above. The Department of Education wishes to make the following submission to the proposed material alterations to the draft Carlow-Graiguecullen Draft Joint Urban Local Area Plan 2024-2030.

In relation to housing projections as per proposed amendments No 2 and No 3, the Department notes the proposed change to the 2030 projected housing targets as originally identified in in the draft JULAP. Amendment No. 2 proposes 444 additional units whereas Amendment No.3 outlines the increase in the overall unit target requirement for Carlow from 1,663 to 2,107 units. The Department notes that the proposed housing unit target for Graiguecullen remains at 276.

In the context of the potential impact on school place provision that may result from the adoption of these amendments to the JULAP, I would like to refer to the Department's original submission to the Draft JULAP where it stated the following:

At this moment in time, the Department has assessed that if the projected growth identified above for Carlow/Graiguecullen materialises, it will put pressure on existing primary school facilities to accommodate the demand for extra school places. However, if the expansion of existing schools is not a practical or viable option, the possibility of establishing a new primary school in the Carlow/Graiguecullen area may need to be considered. Presently, the Department cannot state that there is a definitive requirement for a new future primary school. However, the Department would ask both Councils to consider the option of zoning one suitable and appropriate site on the understanding that such a zoning can be revisited at a future date.



Therefore, in consideration of proposed amendments No. 2 and No 3, the Department would like to update and amend that statement as follows:

The Department notes the revised housing units targets as outlined in Amendment No.3. Following assessment of these new figures, the Department has now identified a potential future requirement for the provision of an additional primary school within the Carlow/Graiguecullen area. Should the development of the revised targeted amount of housing units materialise, the possibility of establishing a new primary school may need to be considered at some future date. At this point, the Department would like to acknowledge the Chief Executive's opinion as per the CE report on JULAP submissions that welcomes further engagement with the Department relating to potential future extensions to existing facilities or potential new education facilities should such needs arise. Taking into account the CE's opinion and the proposed amendments above, the Department would now request that both Councils ensure that there is sufficient land/s appropriately zoned for potential future educational use. This request is made on the understanding that such zonings can be reviewed at a future date.

The proposed revised housing targets as per Amendment No. 3 could see an increase in post-primary school place demand but it is currently expected that this extra requirement could be accommodated by existing facilities and their potential expansion if required.

The Department acknowledges the crucial importance of the ongoing work of the Councils in ensuring sufficient and appropriate land is zoned for educational needs. The Department wishes to thank Carlow and Laois County Councils for the consideration given to the Department's submission to the draft Development Plan. We look forward to continuing to work with you.

If you have any queries in respect of the above, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mairead Garry
Statutory Plans
Forward Planning Section