

10.7 Inland Waters and Riparian Zones states:

- *“The network of inland water systems in the County, including rivers, streams and groundwater, are home to a variety of habitats and species, and contribute significantly to the character and amenity of the County, supporting tourism, recreation and the quality of life for those living and visiting here. These inland waters also fulfil an important function as ecological corridors, for fish and wildlife movement, connecting related habitats and designated sites and enabling the movement of species from place to place. Watercourses may also be of significance in terms of a town’s traditional and social history.....*
Maintaining inland waters such as rivers and streams in an open, semi-natural condition can provide effective measures to protect and maintain biodiversity, while also helping to manage fluvial and pluvial flooding. A riparian zone is a vegetated area near a watercourse, which helps shade and partially protect it from the impact of adjacent land uses. It is both discrete in ecological and geographical entity, with flora and fauna that is often distinctly different from those found in neighbouring areas. The riparian zone is the point of contact between the land (i.e. the terrestrial ecosystem) and the freshwater body (i.e. the aquatic ecosystem) and plays a key role in protecting/improving water quality in watercourses, thus providing environmental benefits.” **For Carlow County Council to include support for a Blueway development (under 11.6 Tourism and Recreation, or within the final County Development Plan for 2022-28) already refused by Carlow County Council and An Bord Pleanála, would be in direct contravention of the above**

Carlow County Council is required to meet its conservation objectives.