

18th April 2023

Senior Executive Officer,
Planning Department,
Kildare County Council,
Áras Chill Dara,
Devoy Park,
Naas,
Co. Kildare
W91 X77F.

Re: Adopted Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029

A chara,

The Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) acknowledges the adoption of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029 (the Development Plan) by the members of Kildare County Council on 9th December 2022.

The Office also acknowledges receipt of your letter of 22nd December 2022 further to section 31(AM)(6) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended (the Act). The Office has reviewed the adopted plan in accordance with the legislative requirements set out in section 31(AM) of the Act.

The Office wishes to congratulate the planning authority on the delivery of a well presented Development Plan, which provides a clear and concise strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Kildare over the plan period.

In particular, the Office commends the planning authority on the adoption of an evidence-based Development Plan that provides for the delivery of key national planning objectives which promote the development of County Kildare in a sustainable manner through driving economic growth, employment and prosperity and in providing access to services and cultural facilities.

The Development Plan embraces many of the challenges and opportunities identified in the *Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework* (NPF) and the *Regional, Spatial and Economic Strategy* (RSES) including directing future housing and economic growth to the MASP, which includes Maynooth, Leixlip and Celbridge, thus demonstrating the planning authority's commitment to the guiding principles for growth of the Dublin Metropolitan Area as set out in the EMRA RSES.

Furthermore, the Office welcomes the extent of policy direction for economic development which has been informed by the *Kildare 2025 Economic Development Strategy* and includes sectoral opportunities and supporting objectives for each tier of the economic development hierarchy.

The Office also commends the planning authority for the preparation of an Implementation and Monitoring Framework and the inclusion of specific actions throughout the Development Plan which will ensure that measurable outcomes can be clearly assessed at the monitoring and implementation stage.

However, and notwithstanding the good progress made by your planning authority in addressing non-sequential land use zonings during the draft and material alterations stages of the Development Plan, considerable lands remain zoned in a number of the smaller towns and villages. The Development Plan does, however, provide a strong policy framework to manage development in these smaller settlements consistent with the core strategy of the plan and national and regional policy for compact growth and a sustainable pattern of development.

In relation to the designation of Clane as a self-sustaining town, while the Office accepts the reasons given by the elected members, there is a concern that this approach has the potential to result in unsustainable and disproportionate growth relative to the capacity of its social and physical infrastructure. In this regard the Office supports the Development Plan strategy to prioritise regeneration on sites that are amenable to walking and cycling to the town centre so that the most central development sites in the town are prioritised for new development first.

Regarding the decision of the planning authority to retain lands zoned for employment uses at Ladytown, the Office stresses the importance of preparing an Urban Design Framework to underpin the longer term vision for a strong economic corridor at this

location, and the need for consultation with the NTA to ensure the promotion of active and sustainable modes of travel will be delivered.

Overall, however, the Office is satisfied with the outcome of the adopted Development Plan and the manner in which the vast majority of its recommendations and observations were addressed, and considers that the Development Plan as adopted sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area that is consistent with national and regional policy.

In conclusion, the Office welcomes the adoption of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029, and looks forward to continued engagement with Kildare County Council in the implementation of national and regional policy at the local level.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "AM O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a diagonal slash at the end.

Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Planning Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations
