

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE Aras an Chontae, Council Chamber, ON Tuesday, 8th March, 2022 AT 10.15am.

PRESENT: Councillor Joe Murphy, Cathaoirleach 2021/2022 **PRESIDED**

MEMBERS: Cllr E. Kelly, Cllr T. Crosby, Cllr D. Kilduff, Cllr M. McDermott, Cllr A. Waldron, Cllr V. Byrne, Cllr L. Callaghan, Cllr J. Cummins, Cllr N. Dineen, Cllr P. Fitzmaurice, Cllr J. Keogh, Cllr O. Leyden, Cllr M. Mulligan, Cllr J. Naughten, Cllr K. Shanagher and Cllr T. Ward.

OFFICIALS: Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive
Shane Tieman, Chief Executive
Patricia Bohan, Meetings Administrator
Pio Bymes
Mary Grier, Senior Planner
Claudette Collins, Asst. Staff Officer

Apologies: .

34.22 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST (SECTION 177 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2001 AS AMENDED)

There were no disclosures of conflict of interest declared.

35.22 RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TITLE OF THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Murphy
SECONDED by Cllr. Cummins

It was **AGREED** to to formally amend the title of the Plan to *Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028* and amend all documentation accordingly.

36.22 INTRODUCTION ON DRAFT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Cathaoirleach welcomed the Members to the meeting to consider the outcome of the consultation process and the Chief Executive response and recommendations.

Mr. Shane Tiernan, Director of Services for Planning gave an introduction to the Members as to the current status of the Draft Plan and the statutory requirements with regard to the adoption of the Plan:

- This is the final phase of the plan – there were 25 submissions (some overlapping) and 15 Chief Executive recommendations following the material alterations agreed at the meeting on 16th November.
- Only the submissions and recommendations on the material alterations can be discussed and decided today.
- If adopted today, the Draft Plan will come into effect six weeks after adoption
- The decisions taken today have to be submitted to the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) within five working days of this meetings with all associated documentation as is required.
- In the event of the planning authority decides in the course of making the plan not to comply with the recommendation set out in the submissions of the Office of the Planning regulator to make the plan in a manner which is inconsistent with any of the recommendations from the Office of the

Planning regulator the Chief Executive is obliged to formally notify the offers of this in writing and provide reasons for such a decision.

- The Council, in its deliberations, are obliged to implement the recommendations of the OPR and to observations have to strongly be taken into account. The OPR states that the Draft Plan should generally be consistent with National Policy.
- The details of the consultation process were outlined by the Director. The Material alterations agreed by the members at the meeting on 16th November went on public display until 14th January. Throughout the process there has been significant local publicity in relation to the plan, in local newspapers, social media and a dedicated website. The Members must make the plan by 25th March.
- The Members have been circulated with the Appropriate Assessment Determination and this will be required to be adopted by resolution later in the meeting.

37.22 S3.20 OFFICE OF PLANNING REGULATOR - RENEWABLE ENERGY 1

The Director stated that the OPR has stated in its submission that the Draft Plan is generally consistent with National Policies and National Frameworks and has responded through proposed material alterations in a generally positive manner to the OPR recommendations and observations. The OPR is strongly commending the planning authority for the preparation of the Planning and Infrastructure Assessment and acknowledgement of the work that has been involved in amending the population allocations within the Core Strategy and welcoming the information provided on baseline modal share and the inclusion of modal share targets.

In response to a query on the definition of Implement of address the OPR recommendations, he stated that recommendations relate to clear breaches of the relevant legislative provisions of the National and Regional Policy Framework and policy of the government as set out in ministerial guidelines under Section 28 the planning authority and the Chief Executives recommendations will be aligning with what the definition of a recommendation is for the purpose of the OPR.

OPR recommendation on Setback Distances for Wind and Biomass Projects:

In accordance with the provisions of section 12(18) and section 28(1)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and having regard to:

- (i) the government's commitment in the Climate Action Plan 2021, which sets a target of increasing the share of electricity demand generated from renewable sources up to 80% by 2030;
- (ii) National Policy Objective 55 which promotes renewable energy use and generation to meet national targets;
- (iii) the section 28 *Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006)*; and
- (iv) the specific planning policy requirement set out in the *Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change (2017)*,

the planning authority is required to omit the setback distances introduced as material amendments to the draft Plan and Renewable Energy Strategy for wind energy and biomass energy.

Material amendments MA50, MA172, MA51 and MA173 refer.

Chief Executive recommendation No 1

That the plan be made without Proposed Material Amendments MA50, MA51, MA172 and MA173.

The Director stated that the recommendation of the OPR is that Planning Authority is required to omit the setback distances introduced as material amendments to the draft plan on renewable energy strategy for wind energy. The decision taken at the meeting on 16th November was a clear breach of national policy with regard to renewables.

The separation distances as set out under the proposed amendments in relation to wind energy are contrary to those set out in the 2006 wind energy guidelines and also contrary to the draft revised wind energy development guidelines of December 2019. The proposed amendments if retained would significantly undermine the contribution of the development plan to meet national renewable energy targets and our Climate Action Plan 2021 and contrary to specific planning policy requirements contained in the in guidelines for Planning authorities and would also conflict with the strategic aims of the plan which outlines the county's commitment to climate action. The Chief Executive is recommending that we revert to the OPR recommendation i.e the Draft plan without amendments.

The members discussed the recommendation as follows:

- While the recommendation is unpalatable to the Members, in the absence of national policy to revise the guidelines, there appears to be no choice but to accept this.
- We are aware that our renewable energy targets have to be met by 2030 – but there are alternatives.
- Planning permission for windfarms should not bypass Local Authorities.
- Agree with wind energy but it should be off shore.
- The war in Ukraine will focus us as a country to be more self-sufficient in providing necessary resources. Heating oil is now being rationed and it shows our dependency on fossil fuels.
- Refusal to accept this recommendation could jeopardise the plan. There has been a failure of Government to update policies and the wind energy guidelines have not been updated since 2006. The wind turbines have changes in size and scale since.
- Ireland needs to utilise its own resources, however we need to be cognisant of communities and support their wishes. Wind is not the only renewable resource. It is unfortunate that this must be accepted but it is a National issue to address and national policy is taking into account the communities affected – an undemocratic process.
- In the last development plan the same issue arose and we fought our case but received a direction from the Minister – nothing has changed with regard to the guidelines since and in having to address the climate issue, this need has become more acute.
- We need to accept this and cannot insulate communities from the reality of the climate crisis – urgent action is needed. Wind is our biggest asset and can also be complimented with solar power. We could in fact be a net exporter of excess energy to Europe – the future could be a deficit of adequate electricity and our next generation will not thank us if we do not act now.
- We need to be self-sufficient and wind is not the only answer – solar power is a quicker solution – balance is necessary as this greatly affects communities.
- There needs to be a limit on the size and scale of onshore wind farms.
- Can the plan be amended if the guidelines on wind energy changes?

In reply to the points raised the Director confirmed that any proposal for a wind farm mandatorily must go to An Bord Pleanála for decision. Our plan is cognisant of the wind guidelines and will be amended if they

change. We have a target of 80% renewables by 2030 and this will be a huge challenge to achieve. The Chief Executive commented that the Members had articulated their views very well. There is a new reality with regard to energy requirements and a realisation of what needs to be done. Communities will be heard but it is important to accept that wind energy is essential for this country to adapt to. The full rigours of the planning process will be applied to any applications. The Council has a Climate Unit and will be working with communities and this is the way forward.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby
SECONDED by Cllr. Kilduff

It was **AGREED** to accept the Chief Executive Recommendation No1

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Naughten
SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to write to the Minister in relation to the urgent need to revise the Wind Energy Guidelines.

38.22 S3.20 - OFFICE OF THE PLANNING REGULATOR - RENEWABLE ENERGY 2

OPR Recommendation on Renewable Energy Targets:

In accordance with the provisions of section 12(18) and section 28(1)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and having regard to:

- (i) the government's commitment in the Climate Action Plan 2021, which sets a target of increasing the share of electricity demand generated from renewable sources up to 80% by 2030;
- (ii) National Policy Objective 55 which promotes renewable energy use and generation to meet national targets;
- (iii) the section 28 *Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006)*, and
- (iv) the specific planning policy requirement set out in the *Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change (2017)*,

the planning authority is required to include specific targets based on relevant and meaningful metrics, for how County Roscommon will contribute to realising overall national targets on renewable energy and climate change mitigation, and in particular wind energy production and the potential wind energy resource (in megawatts).

Chief Executive Recommendation No 2:

That the Plan be made to include proposed MA174 and with a further additional amendment as per page 12 of the CE Report:

- a) Include the following additional text in the 2nd introductory paragraph of Section 3 (Renewable Energy in County Roscommon) in the *Renewable Energy Strategy*:

At present there is 112 MW of renewable energy being generated in County Roscommon, with the potential for 262 MW to be produced. The figure for potential generation was taken from research undertaken by the Western Development Commission and included in their report "Making the Transition to a Low Carbon Society in the Western Region" (2020). The target of potential generation capacity includes connected, contracted and ECP processed developments and future developments should include renewable energy projects put forward by Sustainable Energy Communities. While it should be noted that capacity is not available at all times, the currently connected renewable generation is well above the

average county demand.”

Include the following additional text and table in Volume I, Chapter 8 of the Draft Plan, in the Electricity Generation subsection of Section 8.5 (Integrating Climate Action into County Roscommon):

At present there 112 MW of renewable energy is being generated in County Roscommon, with the potential for 262 MW to be produced. The figure for potential generation was taken from research undertaken by the Western Development Commission and included in their report “Making the Transition to a Low Carbon Society in the Western Region” (2020). The target of potential generation capacity includes connected, contracted and ECP processed developments and future developments should include renewable energy projects put forward by Sustainable Energy Communities. While it should be noted that capacity is not available at all times, the currently connected renewable generation is well above the average county demand.

Connected Wind (MW)	Connected Hydro and other RE (MW)	Total Connected RE (MW)	Contracted (MW)	Total Connected & Contracted (MW)	Total Connected & Contracted & ECP (MW)	Demand Max (MW)	Demand Min (MW)
112	0	112	14	126	262	48	10

Table 8.1 Renewable Energy Potential in Co. Roscommon

In response to a query on the census figures included in the plan, will the Plan be updated to reflect the Census 2022 statistics, the Director stated that it will take some time for those figures to become available and the plan will include the figures included now.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins

SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executive Recommendation No 2

39.22 S3.20 - OFFICE OF PLANNING REGULATOR- CORE STRATEGY LOCAL AREA PLANS

Observation from OPR:

Having regard to the provisions of section 19(2b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the Act), concerning the time limit for ensuring consistency between existing Local Area Plans and the development plan, the planning authority is advised to provide greater clarity and certainty for the public by introducing a minor modification to amend the wording proposed in material amendments MA11 and MA12 (Section 2.7 of the draft Plan) to make clear that where any objective of an LAP is no longer consistent with the development plan, the planning authority will as soon as may be (and no later than one year after the making of the development plan) amend the LAP to make it consistent.

No changes are recommended by Chief Executive.

In response to queries from members as to submissions from the public and the lack of awareness as to some of the issues, the Chief Executive confirmed that the process is ongoing for over a year and is very

transparent and that every effort is made to engage with the community and submissions are encouraged at every stage of the process. There is a huge appetite to build in established settlements and the Members have all fought for a population achievement—it is important to hold an appropriate level of growth.

40.22 S3.20 - OFFICE OF PLANNING REGULATOR - ZONING AMENDMENTS

OPR Recommendation – Zoning Amendments - Castlerea:

Having regard to national and regional policy objectives NPO 3c, NPO 18a, NPO 11 and RPO 3.2, section 4.19 of the section 28 Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007) in respect of the sequential approach, and section 10 (2)(n) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and the requirement for zoned land (in hectares) as set out in the Core Strategy, the peripheral location, outside the CSO settlement boundary, of the lands subject of rezoning amendments MA117 and MA120, the planning authority is required to omit the following zoning amendments from the draft Plan:

- (1) MA117 Castlerea as the proposed rezoning would be inconsistent with national and regional policy objectives promoting compact growth, proportionate growth, and sequential development;
- (2) MA120 Castlerea as the proposed rezoning would be inconsistent with national and regional policy objectives promoting development within existing towns and villages, sequential development, and sustainable land use and transportation.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 3:

That the Plan be made with Material Amendment MA117 (i.e. to extend the settlement boundary to include the lands on the Ballinlough Road and zoned as ‘New Residential.’

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Dineen

It was **AGREED** to accept the Chief Executive Recommendation No 3

Chief Executive Recommendation No 4:

- (a) The Plan be made without Material Amendment MA120;
- (b) Amend the Land Use Zoning Maps for Castlerea to omit the lands outlined in MA120; and
- (c) In conjunction with the land use zoning amendments, amend tables contained in the Castlerea Settlement Plan containing details of (i) Land Use Zoning Extents and (ii) Strategic Industrial / Enterprise as set out below:

Proposed Zoning Areas	Hectares
New Residential	7.07
Existing Residential	68.31
Town Core	23.64
Outer Core	38.71
Strategic Industrial/Enterprise Zones	17.51 15.14
Agriculture	7.23
Greenbelt	67.07
Unzoned	15.89

The changes arising from the above recommendations are reflected in the amended Settlement Maps in Appendix 2 of this report. Please note that only Map 1 *Land Use Zoning* has been included in this report. All other maps in the Settlement Plan will be updated to reflect the changes in the adopted Plan.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fitzmaurice

SECONDED by Cllr. Waldron

It was **AGREED NOT TO** accept Chief Executive recommendation No 4

The Director advised that a Direction may be received with regard to this decision.

41.22 S3.20 OFFICE OF PLANNING REGULATOR - EXTENSION OF SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

OPR Recommendation:

Having regard to national and regional policy objectives which support compact growth, the sustainable development of rural areas and promote the proportionate growth of rural towns, namely NPO 3c, NPO 15, and NPO 18a, and section 4.19 of the Section 28 Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007) in respect of the sequential approach, the planning authority is required to omit the following zoning amendments from the draft Plan:

- i. **MA160 Athleague**, as the proposed settlement boundary extension would promote leapfrogging of development to a peripheral location removed from services and be inconsistent with national and regional policy objectives promoting sequential development and proportionate growth of rural towns and villages;
- ii. **MA164 Taghmaconnell**, as the proposed settlement boundary extension is unwarranted in view of the extent of undeveloped lands already included in the boundary and the unserviced nature of the settlement and would be inconsistent with national and regional policy objectives promoting sequential development and proportionate growth of rural towns; and
- iii. **MA167 Hodson Bay/Barrymore**, as the proposed settlement boundary extension would promote further unsustainable low density residential development in a location under strong urban influence where there is a lack of social and community services.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 5:

- (a) That the Plan be made without Material Amendments MA160, MA164 and MA167.
- (b) Amend the boundaries in the Village Plans for Athleague and Taghmaconnell and the Hodson Bay Area Plan to omit the lands outlined in (i), (ii) and (iii) above respectively.

The changes arising from the above recommendations are reflected in the amended Settlement Maps in Appendix 2 of this report.

The members discussed recommendation MA160 – Athleague:

- There is a substantial part of Athleague on a flood plain that cannot be developed and it also has a historical area.
- We can address the OPR recommendation by keeping land zones and highlight those not suitable for development

The Director commented that there is enough land included for development.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon

SECONDED by Cllr. Ward

It was **AGREED NOT TO** accept the Chief Executive recommendation No 5 in relation to Athleague MA160

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Naughten

It was **AGREED** to accept the Chief Executive recommendation No 5 in relation to Taughmaconnell MA164

The Members discussed the recommendation in relation to MA167 – Hodson Bay/Barrymore:

- There has been significant investment in the Hodson Bay area and the members made a reasonable proposal
- A desktop exercise is different to the situation on the ground – there are substantial areas in this zone that cannot be developed.
- There is huge potential in the Hodson Bay area for development.
- It is important that this issue is addresses, the property owner also owns white lands that will never be developed but would have been more appropriate for development and it makes sense to include these lands.
- This rationale should be conveyed to the OPR

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Ward

SECONDED by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED NOT TO** accept the Chief Executive recommendation No 5 in relation to Hodson Bay/Barrymore MA167

42.22 S3.20 OFFICE OF PLANNING REGULATOR - LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVE

OPR Observation – Land Use Zoning Objective:

Having regard to national and regional policy objectives promoting compact growth, in particular NPO 3(c) and RPO 3.1, the planning authority is requested to make a minor modification by including a footnote to the land use zoning matrix to clarify that the land use objective for ‘unzoned land’ in the Tier 4 settlements is as specified in the chief executive’s report on submissions to the draft Plan.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 6:

That the Plan be made to include Material Amendments MA77, MA99, MA127 and MA143 (which pertain to the zoning matrix in the Ballaghaderreen, Castlerea, Elphin and Strokestown Area Plans respectively). As per proposed MA77, MA99, MA127 and MA143, amend the zoning matrix to reflect the addition of ‘Existing Residential’ and ‘Agriculture’ land use classes and the inclusion of explanatory footnotes as detailed in the Chief Executives Report Page 18

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Shanagher

SECONDED by Cllr. Cummins

It was **AGREED** to accept the Chief Executives Recommendation No 6

In response to a query on if a family member not in farming have a right to building a house, the Senior

Planner confirmed that when zoning agricultural land agreed previously it was solely for farming – there are no restrictions elsewhere on white lands.

43.22 S3.20 OFFICE OF THE PLANNING REGULATOR - TIERED APPROACH TO ZONING

OPR Observation:

The planning authority is requested to make a minor modification to include maps to accompany the Planning and Infrastructure Assessment Report provided under material amendment MA74 in order to demonstrate that the spatial priorities for development are based on evidence, and to outline in a user friendly manner the methodology applied in the assessment. The Office notes that a number of sites are considered to contribute to compact growth but the methodology for this conclusion is not entirely clear. Further, the report's findings state that all sites are 'tier 1' whilst in section 3 several sites receive a score of 2. The planning authority is advised to provide clarity on these points.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 7:

That the Plan be made to include proposed Material Amendment MA74 and with the following additional amendment:

- (a) Include a map for each of the 4 Settlements referenced in the Planning and Infrastructure Assessment Report, to identify the sites that were assessed. (The proposed maps are contained in Appendix 3 of this report and will be added to Appendix 5 of Volume I of the Plan when adopted).

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten

SECONDED by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executives recommendation No 7.

44.22 S3.20 OFFICE OF PLANNING REGULATOR - FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Having regard to NPO 57 and the detailed requirements of section 28 guidelines The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009), the planning authority is required to make a minor modification to ensure that all of the recommendations set out in the chief executive's report on submissions to the draft Plan (Recommendations 70 – 77) and those provisions relating to flood risk management set out in section 4.3 of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the draft Plan are integrated into the adopted Plan.

Chief Executive Recommendation:

The recommendations set out in the Chief Executive's report on submissions to the Draft Plan will be fully integrated into the adopted Plan.

Flood risk matters are discussed further in Submission No. S3.7 from the Office of Public Works. In order to address all flood risk related content in a holistic manner, it is proposed to address this in the response and recommendations under Submission No. S3.7.

45.22 S3.25 -NORTHERN AND WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

The submission from the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) outlines that many of the proposed alterations are minor in nature involving additional narrative and references to technical documents or updated technical guidelines. The alterations that have been considered to have regional significance and whether in the opinion of the Assembly they are consistent or otherwise with the RSES have been outlined in the submission. Where material alterations are not commented on, the NWRA advise that it is considered that they are relatively minor and would generally be supported by the Assembly.

The Material Alterations that the submission relates to as referenced in the Plan: MA1, MA5, MA6, MA7, MA8, MA10, MA11, MA12, MA17, MA18, MA22, MA25, MA26, MA39, MA43, MA45, MA49, MA50, MA51, MA54, MA56, MA57, MA172, MA173.

The Chief Executive has not recommended any changes in light of the submission.

46.22 S3.1 PRESCRIBED BODIES - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

EPA Submission:

This submission provides a brief outline of the role and function of the EPA as an environmental authority and its approach to land use plans. The EPA's guidance document '*Strategic Environmental Assessment of Local Authority Land Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources*' has been included with the submission. Advice is also contained in the submission in respect of the fact that further modifications to the Draft Plan should be subject to the same method of assessment as originally applied in the 'environmental assessment of the Draft Plan,' as well as the requirement for the Planning Authority to prepare an SEA Statement once the Plan is adopted.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 8:

Include the following recommendations of the SEA Environmental Report:

(8a) To include the following before the final paragraph of Section 1.7 (Implementation and Monitoring) in Volume I of the Plan:

The Council shall, in conjunction with the Regional Assembly and other sources as relevant, implement the monitoring programme as set out in the SEA Environmental Report and Statement. This will include the preparation of stand-alone SEA Monitoring Reports:

To accompany the report required of the manager under section 15(2) of the Act, including information in relation to progress on, and the results of, monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementation of the development plan;

On the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan, in advance of the beginning of the review of the next Plan.

(8b) Include the following before the final paragraph of Section 7.4 Road Transportation and Movement in Volume I of the Plan:

Where projects for new infrastructure, including green infrastructure, are not already provided for by existing plans / programmes or are not already permitted, then the feasibility of progressing these projects should be examined, taking into account planning need, environmental sensitivities as identified in the SEA Environmental Report and the objectives of the plan relating to sustainable mobility. A Corridor and Route

Selection Process should be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection.

(8c) Amend policy objective NH 10.5 (Volume I, Chapter 10) as set out below:

NH 10.5

Ensure that no plans, programmes, etc. or projects are permitted that give rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of European Sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects, (either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects).

(8d) Amend policy objective NH 10.6 (Volume I, Chapter 10) as set out below:

NH 10.6

Ensure that any plan or project that could have a significant adverse impact (either alone or in combination with other plans and projects) upon the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 Site or would result in the deterioration of any habitat or any species reliant on that habitat will not be permitted unless in exceptional circumstances.

(8e) To include the following at the end of the final paragraph of Section 10.7 (10.7 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows), Chapter 10, Volume I of the Plan:

The Habitats Directive provides a level of protection to Annex IV species, such as Bats and Otter. Proposed developments, including all proposals where woodland, tree or hedgerow removal is proposed, should be consistent with this.

(8f) Amend policy objective NH 10.13 (Volume I, Chapter 10) as set out below:

NH 10.13:

“Protect and enhance the valuable peatland resource in County Roscommon whilst protecting the heritage and environmental value of these peatland areas. The aims of the National Peatlands Strategy and the implementation of the National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation Management Plan 2017-2022 and the Enhanced Decommissioning Rehabilitation and Restoration Scheme will be supported.

(8g) Include the following at the end of the final paragraph of Section 10.8 (Peatlands) in Chapter 10, Volume I of the Plan:

Developments sited on peatlands have the potential to increase overall carbon losses, potentially undermining expected carbon savings (in the case of renewable energy developments) and damaging rare habitats of European importance. It is recommended that when developing project proposals for developments on peatlands, assessments are undertaken that consider peatland stability, carbon emissions balance and hydrology and ecology.

(8h) Include the following at the end of the final paragraph of Section 10.10 (Inland Waterways):

The Council shall be available to engage with the NPWS with the objective of facilitating the monitoring and surveying of wetland sites in Roscommon.†

And Include the following associated footnote:

† Consideration should be given to Inland Fisheries Ireland’s guidance document “Planning for watercourses in the urban environment” (2020).

(8i) Include the following policy objective after policy objective NH10.16 of Section 10.10 (Inland Waterways) in Chapter 10, Volume I of the Plan:

NH10.TBC

Support the sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture industry in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Inland Fisheries Ireland.

(8j) Amend the following paragraph of Section 10.15 (Green Infrastructure Strategy) in Chapter 10, Volume I of the Plan:

The Green Infrastructure Strategy will include provisions for improved accessibility across the County through improved and connected walking and cycling routes whilst also ensuring adequate protection to the existing environment and ecology of the landscape. Proposed infrastructure should contribute towards the protection or enhancement of existing green infrastructure and have regard to the “Connecting with nature for health and wellbeing” EPA Research Report 2020. The Strategy will seek to ensure that areas and networks of green infrastructure are identified, protected, enhanced, managed and created to provide a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits to communities.

(8k) Include the following at the end of the final paragraph of Section 12.3 (Chapter 12, Volume I), under the sub-heading ‘Pre-planning’:

Proposals for development should demonstrate compliance with the various written provisions of the Plan, as relevant, including those relating to environmental protection and management. Environmental considerations, such as those related to elevated levels of flood risk or ecological designations may limit the types of uses that may be possible at certain sites. Prospective applicants are encouraged to engage with the Planning Authority at the earliest opportunity to seek guidance as to the appropriateness of emerging proposals.

(8l) Include the following at the end of the final paragraph of Section 12.18 (Tourism and Recreation Facilities) of Chapter 12, Volume I of the Plan:

Proposed developments should seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant environmental effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance. Proposals should also ensure that new projects and activities are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor/habitat management plans may be required. Considerations should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals.

(8m) Include the following at the end of the paragraph titled ‘Sustainable Design’ of Section 12.5 (Overarching Planning Principles) of Chapter 12, Volume I of the Plan:

Lighting fixtures should be designed so as to avoid creating glare and should have minimum environmental impact.

(8n) Include the following after the bullet points in the paragraph titled ‘Assessments Required’ of Section 12.5 (Overarching Planning Principles) in Chapter 12 of Volume I:

Proposals for development will be assessed in terms of potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the area through pollution by noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or cause pollution of air, water and/or soil, mitigation measures should be included in order to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level. Proposals shall also ensure that investigations are carried out in relation to the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.

The EPA's publication Code of Practice: Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites (2007) shall be taken into account as relevant.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 9:

Update Section 9 of the SEA Environmental Report to reflect the final integration of recommendations into the Plan and reflect finalised policy objective numbers and sub-section locations of all recommendations.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Keogh

SECONDED by Cllr. Fallon

It was **AGREED** to accept the Chief Executives recommendation No. 8 and recommendation No 9

47.22 S3.7 PRESCRIBED BODIES - OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS (OPW)

Submission from OPW:

The submission welcomes the alterations that have been made to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) but raises a number of items which the OPW describe as opportunities for the Draft Plan before it is finalised:

- Constrained Land Use Planning
- Updated Mapping
- Integration of Provisions relating to Flood Risk Management into the Plan

Chief Executive Recommendation No 10:

Include the policy objective detailed below in each of the following Village Plans and number the additional policy objective in each - Arigna, Ballintober, Ballyfarnon, Ballyforan, Bellanagare, Castlecoote, Cloonfad, Knockcroghery, Lecarrow and Tulsk:

To ensure applications for development on lands identified as flood risk areas shall be subject to a Specific Flood Risk and Justification Test, in accordance with the *Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2009) or any superseding guidelines and circulars.

It was confirmed by the Senior Planner that all developments in a village will be required to carry out the Specific Flood Risk and Justification test.

The members discussed the recommendations as follows:

- The maps of strategic flooding include one in a hundred year events and some areas included never flooded
- Will there be adverse effects of the River Shannon on some villages along the Shannon?
- What is involved in this assessment – the type and cost?

In reply Mr. David L'Estrange from the Consultants stated that Ministerial guidelines are to be followed and this criteria includes 1/100 and 1/1000 year flood events and the maps indicate this. It is noted that some of these areas never have flooded despite some significant recent rainfall events. The OPW mitigation measures will benefit the towns and villages along the River Shannon. Any application for planning permission has to comply with these guidelines and the information on flood risk is constantly updating.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Naughten
SECONDED by Cllr. Crosby
It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executive Recommendation No. 10

Chief Executive Recommendation No 11:

Incorporate provisions relating to Flood Risk Management from the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as an additional Appendix to the Plan – refer to Appendix 4 of this report. The additional Appendix will be included in Volume I of the Plan.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Fallon
SECONDED by Cllr. Naughten
It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executive Recommendation No. 11

48.22 S3.9 PRESCRIBED BODIES - IRISH WATER

Submission from Irish Water:

Irish Water welcome the inclusion of proposed material alterations arising from its submission on the Draft Plan. The submission also includes further comment on a number of the proposed amendments:

- MA1, MA74, MA120, Environmental Reports

Chief Executive Recommendation No 12:

Update the Environmental Reports to refer to the Irish Water Investment Plan 2020 -2024 instead of the Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Murphy
SECONDED by Cllr. Cummins
It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executive Recommendation No 12.

49.22 S3.17 -PRESCRIBED BODIES - ESB

Submission from ESB:

ESB acknowledge the overall ambition of the Draft Plan to reinforce climate change policies, but note that some of the proposed Material Alterations undermine that position and would make delivery of Government Climate Action Policy and achieving legally binding national emissions reduction targets even more difficult.

The Minister of Communications, Climate Action and Environment recently launched Climate Action Plan 2021 which commits Ireland to a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050, and a reduction of 51% by 2030. Among the most critical measures in the Government's Climate Action Plan is that 80% of electricity will be generated by a mix of 5 GW offshore wind, 8 GW onshore wind and 1.5 - 2.5 GW from solar PV.

- MA50 and Associated MA172 (wind turbine separation distance)
- MA72 – Sustainable Transport

Chief Executive Recommendation No13:

That the Plan be made with the following additional amendments to MA72:

- a) Amend the Development Management Standards text relating to Electric Vehicles in Section 12.24

(Roads and Transportation) as follows:

All developments should provide facilities for the charging of battery operated cars at a rate of at least 20% of the total car parking spaces. The remainder of the parking spaces should be constructed so as to be capable of accommodating future charging points, as required. Rapid Charging points should be provided within centres of commercial activity in collaboration with ESB networks.

Include the following table in Section 12.24 (Roads and Transportation) of Volume I, Chapter 12 (Development Management Standards):

Proposed Development	EV Charging Points
Residential multi-unit developments both new buildings and buildings undergoing major renovations (with private car spaces including visitor car parking spaces).	A minimum of 1 EV charge point space per five car parking spaces (ducting for every parking space shall also be provided)
New dwellings with in-curtilage car parking	Installation of appropriate infrastructure to enable installation of recharging point for EV's.
Non-residential developments (with private car parking spaces including visitor car parking spaces with more than 10 spaces e.g. office developments)	Provide at least 1 recharging point, and a minimum of 1 space per five car parking spaces should be equipped with one fully functional EV Charging Point.
Developments with publicly accessible spaces (e.g. supermarket car park, cinema etc.)	Provide at least 1 recharging point, and a minimum of 1 space per five car parking spaces should be equipped with one fully functional EV Charging Point.

Table 12.3 EV Charging Point Standards

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Callaghan

SECONDED by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executive Recommendation No 13

50.22 SUBMISSIONS FROM PRESCRIBED BODIES- NO CHANGES RECOMMENDED

Submissions received from the following Prescribed Bodies:

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Mayo County Council
- Geological Survey Ireland
- Department of Education
- Eirgrid
- National Transport Authority

The Chief Executive recommended no changes to the Plan from the submissions received and this was noted by the Members.

51.22a S3.3 GENERAL SUBMISSIONS - PATRICK DIFFLEY

Submission:

The submission relates to a portion of land in Strokestown which was initially zoned as 'Town Core' in the Draft Plan but has been shown as 'Outer Core' zoning in the maps published in the Material Alterations. It is requested that the lands remain as 'Town Core'.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 14:

- (a) Amend the zoning maps in the Strokestown Settlement Plan to show the lands identified in the submission as 'Town Core' (refer to revised land use zoning map for Strokestown (Map 1) in Appendix 2).
- (b) In conjunction with the land use zoning amendment, amend the table contained in the Strokestown Settlement Plans containing details of (a) Land Use Zoning Extents and (b) Strategic Industrial / Enterprise as set out below:

Proposed Zoning Areas	Hectares
New Residential	2.66
Existing Residential	19.79
Town Core	28.45
Outer Core	31.29
Strategic Industrial/Enterprise Zones	4.6
Agriculture	4.94
Greenbelt	-
Leisure Tourism/Amenity	36.19
Unzoned	0.85

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby
SECONDED by Cllr. Byrne

It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executive Recommendation No 14.

51.22b S3.13 GENERAL SUBMISSION - ENERGIA RENEWABLES

The Submission relates to Wind Energy Developments and objects to the inclusion of MA50, MA172 and MA176. The submission outlines that MA50, MA172 and MA176 do not accord with the Chief Executives Report which was prepared following on the Draft Plan, or with the Environmental Reports that accompany the plan.

With regard to MA50 and MA172, the Director of Services outlined that this matter had been discussed at length earlier in the meeting in the response to Recommendation 1 of the OPR submission. In conjunction with that, the recommendation is that the plan be made without amendments MA176 and that the map entitled areas of wind energy be included as originally detailed in the Renewable Energy Strategy which formed part of the Draft Plan.

Chief Executive Recommendation No 15:

That the Plan be made without Material Amendment MA176 and that Map 7 entitled 'Areas of Wind Energy' be included as originally detailed in the Renewable Energy Strategy which formed part of the Draft Plan (Refer to Appendix 2 of CE report for the recommended revised Map 7)

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Cummins
SECONDED by Cllr. Crosby

It was **AGREED** to accept Chief Executive Recommendation No 15

52.22 GENERAL SUBMISSIONS - NO CHANGES RECOMMENDED

The following General Submissions were received:

- S3.5 Keep Ireland Open
- S3.6 Paula Finn Carleton
- S3.10 S and J Egan
- S3.11 Tim and Annette Daire
- S3.13 EDF Renewables
- S3.13 Energia Renewables (MA50 & MA172)
- S3.18 FuturEnergy Ireland
- S3.19 Wind Energy Ireland
- S3.21 Dark Skies Roscommon
- S3.22 Greensource
- S3.23 Enerco
- S3.24 Cllr. Anthony Waldron

The Chief Executive recommends no changes are required or have been dealt with in previous submissions.

53.22 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Crosby

SECONDED by Cllr. Fitzmaurice

It was **AGREED** that the Chief Executive sign an Order to give effect to an Appropriate Assessment Determination under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028

In carrying out this Appropriate Assessment (AA), the Council is taking into account the matters specified under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), including the following:

- The consolidated Natura Impact Report;
- The Natura Impact Report for the Proposed Material Alterations;
- The Natura Impact Report prepared for the Draft Plan;
- Written submissions made during the Plan preparation process; and
- Ongoing advice on AA from the Council's agents.

As part of the AA, it was identified that the Plan may, if unmitigated, have significant effects on 59 (no.) European sites. Factors that could potentially affect the integrity of European sites include:

- Provisions, such as those relating to settlement, place making, housing, community, built heritage, economic, retail, tourism, transport, water services, flood risk management, waste and environmental infrastructure, energy and information infrastructure and green infrastructure development, which introduce sources for effects through construction phase such as habitat destruction, light pollution, hydrological interactions and disturbance effects;
- Loading pressures from the operational phase of developments – these sources could result in habitat loss, disturbance effects, interactions with water quality and habitat fragmentation; and
- Increasing visitors to sensitive areas during the operational phase of, for example, recreational and tourism developments.

The Chief Executive, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with and adopts the reasoning and conclusions presented and determines that:

- Implementation of the Plan would have had the potential to result in effects to the integrity of European sites, if unmitigated.
- The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and conservation objectives of the European sites have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and reliably mitigate effects where these cannot be avoided. In addition, any lower-level plans and projects arising through the implementation of the Plan will themselves be subject to AA when further details of design and location are known.
- In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects have been considered in this assessment and the mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Plan – these measures are robust and will ensure there will be no effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of the implementation of the Plan either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects.
- Having incorporated mitigation measures, the Plan is not foreseen to give rise to any effect on the integrity of European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects¹. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species, for which these sites have been designated.

54.22 ADOPTION OF ROSCOMMON DRAFT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr. Leyden

SECONDED by Cllr. Keogh

It was **AGREED** having considered the Plan, the Proposed Material Alterations, the CE Reports on Consultations and

- The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the Draft Plan
- The Appropriate Assessment (AA) Natura Impact Report for the Draft Plan
- The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the Draft Plan
- The SEA Environmental Report for the Proposed Material Alterations
- The Natura Impact Report for the Proposed Material Alterations
- Written submissions relating to SEA, AA and SFRA made during the Plan preparation process
- Ongoing advice on SEA, AA and SFRA from the Council's agents
- The final, consolidated Natura Impact Report
- The final AA Determination

in accordance with the provisions of Section 12(10) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), to make the Plan, as recommended by the Chief Executive and as further modified by way of motions and resolutions at this Special Council Meeting today Tuesday 8th March 2022 and that the Council then proceeds in accordance with Section 12(12) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to publish notice of the making of the Plan.

The Director thanked the Members for their deliberations on the plan and advised that the Draft County Development Plan will come into effect in 6 weeks from today- 19th April. If there are Directions issued from the Minister, a draft of the directions will be issued before then and all parts of the Plan outside of a Draft Direction will come into effect.

The Plan will bring county Roscommon to a new place and see it develop into the future. He thanked the


¹ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

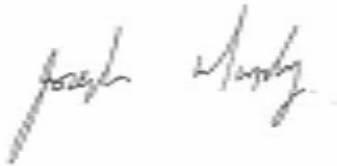
public for their engagement with the plan and the Planning team for all of their work to bring it to fruition.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the commitment, dedication and sincerity of the Elected Members to the process from the start. There were many valuable debates that were most encouraging and he thanked the Planning Team led by Mary Grier for the amount of long hours they had dedicated to the plan. He paid special tribute to Pio Bymes who is leaving the Council to take up a position elsewhere, for his dedication and professionalism and who's approach to the Plan was recognised as a model of best practice throughout the country.


This concluded the business of the Special Meeting.

The foregoing Minutes are Confirmed and Signed:


Meetings Administrator



Cathaoirleach


Countersigned