



PORTARLINGTON REGENERATION STRATEGY 2030 APRIL 2021

CE report on the written submissions received at
Pre-Draft Stage

[Abstract](#)

The following is a synopsis of the submissions received during the first stage of consultation and an opinion on the submission with recommendation to go into the strategy. The recommendation also signposts where the issues have been dealt with in the strategy that is proposed.

SUB. REF. NO.	01
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Peteriluke Quinn
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	1. Employ local people from the town to assist in regeneration work as enough skilled workers to assist main contractor with works
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	Sustainable Job creation for the population of Portarlinton is one of the main objectives of the Laois and Offaly County Development Plans, Portarlinton LAP 2018-2024 and this Regeneration Strategy.

SUB. REF. NO.	02
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Thomas Fallon
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Serious consideration should be made about a ring road around Portarlinton between the Laois and Offaly end of the town 2. Traffic calming on the Lea road from Killenard turn off into town, a roundabout installed at the top of the canal road on the Lea road 3. Traffic lights on French Church Street at SuperValu 4. All over cable to be underground and extra spare ducting to be installed for other utilities e.g., broadband 5. Public lights upgrade to led lights 6. Flooding of all local roads to be addressed 7. IDA businesses park to be created for more work in the town 8. A new secondary school to be built for the existing one and we also need another secondary school in the town
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>Laois County Council has received funding from the National Transport Authority to commission a Local Transport Plan for Portarlinton which includes both the OCC and LCC areas in 2021.</p> <p>The scope of this study will look at existing transport patterns, key infrastructural requirements and future transport requirements with key service providers.</p> <p>A programme of undergrounding cabling is currently underway in Portarlinton Town centre.</p> <p>Broadband – LCC have been approved to offer free WIFI in public places under an EU initiative. Portarlinton Town centre has been chosen for this and works will commence in 2021 to be completed by April 2022.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	03
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Thomas Cullen
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. I find access into the town very slow and dangerous if I choose Spa Street. Spa Street is a narrow street. Its importance is the route to north Kildare and to Edenderry and Mullingar. This route brings many HGV's and large farm equipment attached to tractors, buses for schools and cars all into Spa Street daily at all hours of the day and night. The residents on Spa street park their cars on this narrow street and this then adds to the problem. Two HGV's can take 10 minutes to pass each other if they meet on Spa Street plus the backlog. Narrow footpaths now make this a scary place for residence, for school-going children, and for people to walk. Basically, Spa street is becoming a serious issue for everyone.</p> <p>I would encourage LCC to construct a new bridge from the junction of Marian Hill over the river Barrow towards the link road (Fire Station direction) and connect with the Link road with a roundabout. This would then allow Spa Street to be closed off to residents only / cyclists and walkers.</p> <p>2. Portarlinton suffers most winters with flooding. A flooding protection plan from the French St bridge (Co Offaly) to just beyond the Spa St bridge (Co. Laois) would benefit our town and give peace of mind to residents. It must cost hundreds of thousands of euro most years to pay fire services and council workers to be called out. The flooding barrier could be installed during winter months and removed during summer months. This in the long run would save money and ensure our rescue services are available for life saving and more important work.</p> <p>3. Portarlinton has become a busy modern town. It has developed and attracted new estates and businesses. Yet when I look at our town, I see a lot of sad derelict empty buildings. One of these buildings is the old cinema, this building will no longer have a purpose for our town. Propose to demolish it and to make the site an outdoor picnic/eating area complete with unmovable picnic tables. Grant licenses for food businesses (mobile hotdog burger/ ice cream/ tea/coffee), the same type of mobile coffee shops seen at Kildare village. Other local food businesses would also benefit. The popular Asian Wok & Eddie's Hot Pot plus others would be happy for this.</p> <p>4. Ryan's garage in the Square: I would like the Council to look at the Idea of introducing tourism and a bus rest/stop location on the Sq. The garage could be a tourist shop like the Carrolls of Dublin. You could have a small Museum upstairs and like I said tables for eating over at</p>

	<p>the old cinema. By encouraging tourism, we could be a stop away from bringing in cycling rentals and walks to the Derryounce Way & cycling routes to Emo. Not everyone knows we have a tourist hotspot here in Portarlinton. Golf/ fishing/cycling/walking are not being advertised. Tourists can access our town by Train/Bus/Car. My vision is if we can encourage tourism, we can encourage hostels and hotels into Portarlinton.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>Laonis County Council has received funding from the National Transport Authority to commission a Local Transport Plan for Portarlinton which includes both the OCC and LCC areas.</p> <p>The scope of this study will look at existing transport patterns, key infrastructural requirements and future transport requirements with key service providers.</p> <p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles; • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm; • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul’s and Saint Michael’s Churches. <p>The principal actions outlined in Section 7 detail these specifically.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	04
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Caitlin Hyland
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident (business student if CIT)
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>My idea is to create a collaborative work/study studio:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. office space with printing, fax etc. amenities, desk spaces that can be rented on a monthly/yearly basis. An option to rent a desk with a computer or to bring your own laptop. This would be beneficial to people working or studying from home who do not have the space to create an office space with no distractions with all the amenities they need. 2. a board room space that can be rented for business meetings, group projects or club meetings. 3. an area to hold classes and clubs, where people of the town can pitch their ideas to set up a programme to share their skills e.g., Flower arranging, seasonal crafts, furniture up styling, interior design etc. 4. a content creation space with camera equipment, back drops etc. This could be rented out to students who need to film presentations, small businesses, E-businesses and brick and mortar businesses who might not necessarily have the space to create marketing content, and photograph stock. It would also be for the ever-growing Instagram platform for people to have a space to create content. 5. a communal lunchroom with kitchen amenities, this could also be an opportunity to partner with local businesses to offer lunch deals and discounts to members that could be advertised in the lunchroom. <p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>We welcome the submission in relation to providing a workspace / study studio within the town centre.</p> <p>We are cognisant of the Remote working spaces being provided at the Portarlinton Enterprise Centre and space available to students in this location, however there is a possibility to look at some of the vacant buildings within the town centre for this purpose in the future. This will be supported by way of Principal Action No 5.6 in the Draft Regeneration Strategy.</p> <p>The rehabilitation of the Market House as detailed in Principal Action No 1 outlines the design approach and uses to be encouraged within this space.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	05
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Karen Dunne
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. The town needs a larger chain store on the main street, not on the outskirts.</p> <p>2. Something that will bring footfall back to the main street not away from it. Would be amazing to see a Dunnes or Tesco opening on the main street.</p> <p>3. We need the refurbishment of some of our older buildings now abandoned and derelict.</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>Retail development within the county is guided by the Laois / Offaly Retail Strategy. Portarlinton is considered a Level 3 Town (or District Centre / Sub County Town) in the Retail Hierarchy as detailed in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019.</p> <p>There is scope for additional convenience and comparison shopping within the County and in Portarlinton if required.</p> <p>Any future large-scale retail development will be subject to retail impact assessments to ensure the impact on existing facilities is assessed.</p> <p>The Strategy has proposed mechanisms and interventions for derelict and vacant buildings to bring them back into use and carry out improvements to them to improve the appearance of the streetscape.</p> <p>Opportunity sites have been identified in the Town Centre which could facilitate retail / commercial development. This is detailed in Principal Action No 5 – Promotion of Sustainable uses within the Town Centre – OS 4 Landholding off Foxcroft Street.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	06
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Tom Ennis
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restore/improve the riverside walk towards Lea Castle, perhaps by linking it to the recently improved walking routes in town 2. In light of the surge in working from home, encourage local retailers, gyms, amenities, etc. to ensure they are open between 8-9am, lunchtime, and 5-7pm. Since Covid-19 hit, there's a lot of former commuters that will be free to avail of the town's retail and service opportunities who were otherwise on a train or taking their lunch in Dublin 3. As a practical measure, perhaps put informal signs around the various housing estates which state the walking time to the town centre. 4. Ensure ongoing funding for the Christmas tree, it is an intrinsic part of the town. Nostalgia is useful in supporting and enhancing the sense of community 5. Advertising hoardings at the train station, but only for the use of local businesses. Don't underestimate how many of the town's new residents (who are still commuting) don't realise what's on offer locally 6. Derryounce is already a great amenity, but perhaps more information in situ regarding the history of peat extraction 7. The one good thing that has happened at the cinema is the mural. More in the same vein would be great, perhaps even a graffiti space which is periodically whitewashed to encourage new efforts.
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>Principal Action No 8 of the Strategy is to develop green and blue infrastructure which looks to improve linkage to LEA castle, however it should be borne in mind that this property is in private ownership.</p> <p>The opening hours of properties is beyond the scope of the Regenerations Strategy and is subject to compliance with conditions of planning permissions.</p> <p>Locating distance markers at entrances to estates is an innovative way of encouraging walking from residential areas to the town centre and</p>

	<p>other amenities and will be considered in the context of the Local Transport Plan and Local Area Plan.</p> <p>A Marketing plan to include signage/ interpretation of the social / cultural / heritage and innovative wall art in various locations will be considered and planned for the town.</p> <p>Principal Action No 3 sets principles in relation to wayfinding, signage, lighting, street furniture, etc.</p>
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SUB. REF. NO.	07
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Mary Glendinning
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. Would they be any chance of some major retail stores like Pennys or Dunnes coming into the town or a retail park, to liven the place up.</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>Retail development within the county is guided by the Laois / Offaly Retail Strategy. Portarlinton is considered a Level 3 Town (or District Centre / Sub County Town) in the Retail Hierarchy as detailed in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019.</p> <p>There is scope for additional convenience and comparison shopping within the County and in Portarlinton if required.</p> <p>Any future large-scale retail development will be subject to retail impact assessments to ensure the impact on existing facilities is assessed.</p> <p>The Strategy has proposed mechanisms and interventions for derelict and vacant buildings to bring them back into use and carry out improvements to them to improve the appearance of the streetscape.</p> <p>Opportunity sites have been identified in the Town Centre which could facilitate retail / commercial development. This is detailed in Principal Action No 5 – Promotion of Sustainable uses within the Town Centre – In particular OS 4 Landholding off Foxcroft Street.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	08
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Harald Pitschek
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. There has to be CCTV installed around Market Square and Main Street to monitor and prosecute antisocial behavior. Failing to do this will result in rapid deterioration of any investment. CCTV is also needed at the Maxol roundabout to discourage boy racers who are speeding up and down Station Road and Bracklone Street in the evenings, posing a serious safety risk.</p> <p>2. Market square should be a lively and beautiful focal point for the whole community, where people like to spend a bit of time, including benches, bicycle racks to encourage cycling and some flowers/shrubs (please avoid cheap plastic containers). There should be no car parking on the square otherwise the area will be given over to car drivers again and walking is discouraged.</p> <p>3. There should be a supervised meeting point for children and teenagers as I feel there is very little for them to do in Portarlington apart from the sports pitch by the community centre. Could Market House be used as a games/play area or learning centre for digital technologies or music?</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>CCTV is currently being investigated by the Business Association in conjunction with Laois County Council and An Gardai Siochana.</p> <p>The vision of the Regeneration Strategy is to be heritage led from the Market square out to the suburban areas.</p> <p>Improving the public Realm in the Market Square (Principal Actions 1 and 2) is a key consideration to make it an attractive focal point and trailed head for several natural and built heritage assets in the area. The palette of materials will be cognisant of the requirement to use quality materials.</p> <p>Whilst the town of Portarlington has many facilities for the youth in comparison to other towns of similar scale and nature – Peoples Park – playground/ leisure centre/ MUGA, the intention is to use the Market House and Square for many community functions/ exhibitions/ classes potentially. Uses relating to the youth will also be considered.</p> <p>Outdoor events will also be considered here.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	09
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Michael Dunne
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. I'd like to see Fr. Francis Brown SJ images feature on Tourist Information posts across the town. The collection features photos of various industries from those times, including Odlums Mill, Travel Goods Ltd and The ESB Power Station (including its construction). It features photos of the building structures and the people who worked in them during those times. The ESB Power Station was demolished in the mid 90's, however The Derryounce Lakes and Trails Walkway now runs behind this former site and this is where I would like to see the tourist information post located there. Funding may be made available from the ESB themselves for this. The other two signs can be located at both the current Odlums site (maybe they could fund this too) and at the now derelict Arlington House on French Church Street where the Travel Goods factory operated.</p> <p>The Market House and Square are another prominent feature in Fr. Browne's collection. I am aware that Laois County Council have recently taken a long-term lease on the building and it does hold a great amount of history in the town. A true focal point. Another tourist information sign would be ideally located outside this building, showing photos from the Fr. Browne Collection and explaining its history and relevance during the market times. Like I said the Market Square should be a major focal point for the town and should be lit up with some lovely street lighting too. The collection also captures many people in the town during these market days and gives a great insight in to how it operated back then. Some of these photos would be another great feature on information posts in the Square.</p> <p>Another popular tourist location in the town is Carrick Wood and Spire. This also features in the Fr. Browne collection. One photo in particular shows construction workers on the road along this area with the spire in the background with little or no trees surrounding it. It captures a time when there was no sign of woodland there. An information post would be ideally situated there featuring this amazing photo (included with submission).</p> <p>Portarlinton Train Station is another prominent feature in this collection with photos of trains, passengers and the Train Station Master from the 1930's and 1940's. Another tourist information post featuring these photos would be ideally located at the exit of the station for passengers arriving at the town.</p> <p>Other locations in the town that feature in this collection are French Church Street, The Main Street, Spa Street, Station Road, Savoy Cinema and the Garda Station.</p>

	<p>2. I would propose a 'Fr. Browne's Portarlington' exhibition in the Market House once Laois County Council has carried out the work in this building. The exhibition would feature a hand-picked collection of prints of Portarlington highlighting its rich heritage and culture. I would be happy to curate such an exhibition with the help and funding from Laois County Council. I am a keen photographer, Portarlington native and resident and believe the people of the town would appreciate the opportunity to see this collection on display.</p> <p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>Principal Action 7 of the Draft Strategy details the proposed actions in relation to celebrating the heritage of Portarlington - French Huguenot, cinematic, the train Station, Odlum's Mills, ESB Power Station, Avon, Lea Castle and Derryounce Lakes and Trails.</p> <p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, and exhibitions of the history of Portarlington etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches.

SUB. REF. NO.	10
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Igor Cincilei
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. Would be wonderful if it'll be possible to make a small pedestrian street for people to walk. Cleaner air (from Bank of Ireland to the end of that street).</p> <p>2. We need more pedestrian crossings. It is very hard for drivers to see pedestrians crossing, especially when dark.</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>Laois County Council is actively preparing an application to the National Transport Authority seeking funding to commission a Local Transport Plan for Portarlinton which includes both the OCC and LCC areas. The scope of this study will look at existing transport patterns, key infrastructural requirements and future transport requirements with key service providers.</p> <p>The emerging Public realm strategy provides for a shared space on Main street to provide for pedestrian priority as well as set down areas for businesses and traders.</p> <p>Principal Action 4 deals with actions in this regard.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	11
NAME OF SUBMISSION	(Name to be with held)
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. I would like to see the cinema brought back into use. It's a wasted amenity in the town.</p> <p>2. I would also like to see a decent shopping precinct as we are consistently sending locals to larger towns such as Tullamore and Portlaoise and we do not have sufficient public transport serving those towns. Portarlington has long since been neglected of proper investment.</p> <p>3. I read this submission is for ALL of Portarlington Laois and Offaly, so I suggest investing some cash into the Offaly side of Port too. The people of Offaly have been consistently forgotten about despite the fact we spend most of our earnings in Laois. We are served by fire services, gardai and the Dept of Social Protection and post office. All doctor surgeries and pharmacies are in Laois side. The opinions and wishes of Offaly residents should be considered.</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>This Old Savoy Cinema is in private ownership; however, Laois County Council is in support of its redevelopment subject to proper planning and sustainable development and an appropriate use being proposed for it. This would add great benefit to the Market Square and align with plans by Laois County Council for the Market House.</p> <p>Principal Action No 1 of the Strategy deals with this.</p> <p>This Strategy has been prepared in consultation with Offaly County Council. Future land use (Local Area Plans as has been done in the past) and Transport Plans will continue to be carried out in conjunction with Offaly County Council</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	12
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Adam
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident (street artist)
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. There are many blank walls around Portarlinton that would really benefit with some color! I would love to get a number of artists involved in a street art festival in Portarlinton! I think this would be amazing for Portarlinton, even to have a few artists paint a mural would be great for the town. There have been many street art festivals in Ireland over the last few years and they have all been amazing for the local towns and communities! A couple of recent examples are 'seek Dundalk' and 'Ardu' in Cork. The festivals get great coverage by RTE and media. Murals are a great opportunity to reflect the local history, mental health awareness, creativity etc.... Also, there can be a broader brief for all the pieces to tie and link in together.</p> <p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>We welcome the contribution to hold a Street Art Festival in Portarlinton. This may be something that could be explored with Laois Tourism and the Arts Office or the Creative Ireland Programme.</p> <p>Under Principal Action 7 – celebration of the heritage of Portarlinton could reflect in Street Art throughout the town.</p> <p>Maintenance of street art is a consideration that will need to be addressed so that in time it does not detract from the public realm.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	13
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Johanna Krois
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident (Three Counties Hacking Club)
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written vi e-mail
	<p>I know people in the town were calling for the provision of a skate park in town, and Derryounce Walk and Trails got mentioned in previous plans.</p> <p>We are an equestrian club in the town, which is currently trying to achieve a designated area for horse trekking since the main Derryounce area has been made unaccessible over recent years. We are keen to find out if it is possible to submit a proposal to include such facility in the up coming regeneration plan.</p> <p>The horse riders of the town and surrounding had for many years facilitated and indeed created a lot of the now available walking tracks available at the Derryounce Lakes. Since the area was closed off as recreational purposes, it left the numerous horse riders of all ages without a safe space to exercise their horses. I am emphasising this part, as similiar recreational areas are being developed all over the country and many of the spaces that would have been previously accessible to all are now being solely limited to activities like walking and cycling.</p> <p>Most local woodlands don't permit horse riding anymore, neither is it permitted to ride along the canal banks anymore and now more and more areas like Lough Boora and Derryounce and Mount Lucas are being developed.</p> <p>Since horse riding is country wide still a very very popular sport we found that the rapidly growing access restrictions, to country side settings which allow to exercise horses in safety and keep this sport so enjoyable, are not an isolated problem to the midlands.</p> <p>We therefore recognised that there is an incredible demand for designated horse trekking areas.</p> <p>We are currently hoping to engage the local development group to recognise this fact too.</p> <p>There is only one official bridle path in the country, located on the Beara Peninsula in Cork. Ruptions of excitement went through the leisure horse world when news spread about it. The only down side to this facility is its location. It takes 5 hours to reach this location by car, travelling with a horsebox takes considerably longer. This length of travel time wants to be considered carefully by any horse lover as it takes a lot out of the animal.</p>

This is where Portarlinton would have its advantage. Located in the Midlands with easy access to the motorway. And vast areas of wood and boglands available to develop into a tranquil and diverse trekking route that will encourage social horse trekking for young and old but also endurance riding and orienteering if developed the right way. Besides it could further future establishments of equestrian centres, horse for hire to add to Portarlington's tourism portfolio or even therapy riding in the Midlands.

An area with designated riding tracks could easily cater for advertised, monthly ride outs, similar to the ones held in Donard Glen in Wicklow. An area yet again located out of a lot of people's way, and only accessible to the public during those ride outs. However said ride outs draw big crowds on the day, and within a few hours, several thousand euro are taken in that feed directly back into the community kitty of the area there.

From an economical point of view:

Every horse box that would travel to Portarlinton will generate business for fuel and snacks on the way, on destination sufficient parking (preferably monitored parking) will be required the installation and maintenance of the track would bring business to local contractors who know the area. Being a very physical exercise, riders are usually eager to recharge with food and beverages after exercise and several people may wish to stay over to facilitate the track for more than a day, thereby increasing demand in all forms of the hospitality sector. From Restaurants and Cafes to B&B's and paddock/stable hire. The management, booking and advertising of such track would open up further employment options. As you can see there is an abundance of job opportunity to a project like this, which will retain jobs for the locality into the future and not cease on completion of the project.

Besides it will encourage a fantastic activity suitable for young and old. Horse riding is a very versatile sport. One can get as much relaxation or thrill out of it as one seeks.

The possible establishment of a riding centre in the area itself would give great opportunity to engage the youth in our area, which is currently very little catered for. Different from other activities, horse riding however will teach them some important life lessons in regards to patience, empathy, confidence and persistence. And even for those who just enjoy handling animals instead of riding them it is a great way to spend time.

Again in summary:

Long term Local employment

Jobs through Installation/Maintenance

Jobs through IT and Management of project

Demand for secure parking

Increased demand for hospitality sector in town B&B's, stables/fields for hire

	<p>Increased revenue to shops, and fuel stations Opportunities for equestrian centres Opportunities for therapy riding in the Midlands</p> <p>Tourism: Attract domestic horse riders from all over the country Option to offer international tourists an alternative activity to explore the area via horse back - expand Portarlingtons tourism attractions</p> <p>Benefits to Portarlingtons population: Offering an age friendly activity to young and old Promoting interaction between young and old (horse riding is a long and constant learning process, young learns from old while both enjoy the same hobby) Offering an activity to kids that is fun and exhilarating, but also very educational Opportunities to expand the tracks in future to surrounding towns lands and other towns (encouraging trekking in different stages, orienteering and endurance riding)</p> <p>Location: The opportunity to establish a facility that is easily accessible for people from near and far due to central location and Motorway access. The area of Derryounce and surroundings is vast enough to provide for a facility like this without great interference with other activities.</p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>We acknowledge the submission made and the importance of horse trekking as an outdoor pursuit to the tourism economy in Laois and Offaly.</p> <p>This strategy deals specifically with the regeneration of the town centre and developing it as a trailhead for other tourism amenities within the catchment of Portarlington</p> <p>The proposal as outlined is considered more relevant in the context of a tourism strategy for the county – could be a cross boundary initiative / project that could be looked outside the scope of this strategy.</p> <p>The actions outlined in the strategy however are to enable a better visitor product within Portarlington to the potential equine market as they develop their outdoor activities within the region.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	14
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Antje Herzog-Gallagher
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Individual / resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Firstly, consider that Portarlington is the second biggest town in Laois after Portlaoise and has been neglected all the years. The French Festival & Blueberry Festival should be annual events supported by Local Enterprise Board and Laois Co Co and not being cancelled because local businesses can't afford the insurance or have not enough volunteers. Not only such events but local cafes pubs and restaurants would greatly benefit from main street being pedestrianised and covered over to allow for all Irish weather conditions. Also, a permanent stage or bandstand should be incorporated into the streetscape. 2. Main street has way too many empty buildings. Some buildings could be turned into a regular farmers market, or entice a Tesco express, M&S to move in. Encourage business on main street. The beautiful heritage windows should be highlighted. A simple brochure or walking tour app like they have already created for Edenderry & Tullamore would tell everyone about the town's heritage. 3. Community groups need rooms to hire, the community centre is booked out all the time. Ironically so many buildings are empty. 4. Pedestrian walkways need massive improvements (nobody should have to cross the busiest road (Edenderry Rd five times in order to walk into town). This should also include enough space for double buggies, wheelchairs, adequate bike and skating pathways. On Spa Street I am often on the main road to ensure that my children don't fall off the small path that is the pedestrian walk. My children should be able to walk safe to either the primary school or secondary school, instead they have to cross busy roads. 5. Derryounce is a brilliant amenity beside the French Quarter Cafe is a building which looks like an unused B&B. Promote this building to be reinstated as B&B (there are no B&Bs in town!), have a plan to promote it to walkers and tourists which will be within walking distance to Derryounce and town centre.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Derrycastle can only be reached by foot via the bog road entrance; have a walkway cycling path going all the way down the Edenderry Road. Incorporate the blue berry farm. 7. Link all the walks: carrick woods, odlum round, lea castle, derrycastle the bog rd. walkway, Treascon Mass Rock and Footstickbridge. Promote as such. 8. Erect more statues/memorials to remember Portarlington's French Heritage. 9. Make sure the Offaly side of Portarlington is included, especially with Christmas lights. The Offaly side has as many beautiful houses as the Main Street; encourage an upkeep of these. The footpaths all around town are used as parking spaces giving no room for pedestrians, address the issue with modifications to the streetscape. 10. Recently there was a movement for a skatepark, bring back a handball alley, anything to get all out and about and keep fit and healthy. An outdoor gym in the park. Allow for a kayaking jetty near the Leisure Centre. 11. The townlink stops should be proper shelters. The Market Square should be used as such. Why is the cinema not a cultural centre? <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>We welcome the contribution to hold Festivals in Portarlington. This may be something that could be explored with Laois Tourism and the Arts Office or the Creative Ireland Programme. Principal Action No 7 aims to celebrate the heritage of Portarlington under a range of headings.</p> <p>The Strategy supports the reuse of old buildings such as the French Church Café on French Church Street. Uses such as tourist amenities could be considered in this context.</p> <p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema;• Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations;• Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, and exhibitions of the history of Portarlinton etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches. <p>The Strategy proposes -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• connections to natural amenities such as Derryounce Lakes and Trails, Lea Castle, Carrick Wood, Emo Court and along the River Barrow. <p>Principal Action No 8 details the actions in relation to the development of green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>In preparing the Local Transport Plan for Portarlinton, alternative modes of transport and how they are facilitated within Portarlinton will be reviewed and improved. This is being supported by the National Transport Authority who are investing in walking and cycling infrastructure within urban areas. This will be borne in mind in the drafting of that Plan.</p>
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SUB. REF. NO.	15
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Jean Keogh
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. All the shops/premises need to pull together and uplift the front of their properties with adequate and appropriate signage and colour schemes that complement the main street. Like preservation orders on protected buildings, there should be a criteria that shops, business owners need to meet.</p> <p>2. I also think the town needs an abundance of trees planted right throughout the main street and ideally some areas a park free zones as cars are all that the eye can see.</p> <p>3. This would require some parking to be made available around the outer areas of the main street where land is idle, and space can be used wisely.</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>Business Supports as follows are available -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop Front Grant Scheme • Façade Enhancement Scheme <p>The Regeneration strategy will include proposals for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to shopfronts and building on the Streets in the Town Centre; • Planting and landscaping for the study area; • Undergrounding of cables for street lighting which has already commenced; • Public realm strategy map details the parking provision within the town centre.

SUB. REF. NO.	16
NAME OF SUBMISSION	David Orford
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. Heritage.</p> <p>The preparation of a Heritage Development Plan for the town should be a priority. The plan should be based around the key areas of Huguenot heritage, the Portarlington schools (a huge amount of information now available in John Powell's new book on the subject), and Lea Castle. The development of a town museum could be a focal point for visitors to the town and the starting point for a walking tour of the town. The development of a walkway (already started) from the town to Lea Castle would be a wonderful asset. The local authority should consider negotiating a lease with the owner of Lea Castle which would allow conservation plans, already prepared, to proceed and facilitate it's development as a tourist attraction.</p> <p>Portarlington has a rich industrial heritage which could also be incorporated into a town museum. The Power Station (the first peat burning station in Ireland), Bord na Mona, Odlums Mill, Grey Russell Sports, Arlington Jewels, Travel Goods Ltd, Irish Blouses are examples of such businesses.</p> <p>2. Derelict Buildings / Unused Buildings</p> <p>Derelict buildings have a very detrimental impact on the visual appearance of the town and very effort should be made by both county councils to address this problem in Portarlington. The town has lost many of its fine Georgian houses to dereliction over the past 50 years and it is vital that no more are lost. Every effort should be made to save Arlington House as it has a very important position in the history of the town, and it is a scandal that it has been allowed to deteriorate from pristine condition in 1980 to the state it is in today. The local authorities should work with and facilitate the owners of unused buildings in bringing them back into productive use.</p> <p>3. Flooding.</p> <p>Flooding has been an intermittent problem in Portarlington for many years with serious flooding occurring every so many years. It is important that this problem is addressed in an environmentally and visually sensitive way. Unsightly hard defenses should be avoided as should solutions which would cause problems further down river</p>

from the town. No further developments on flood plains should be allowed.

4. Developments in inappropriate locations.

The industrial units at the junction of Botley Lane and Patrick Street, while providing valuable industrial space, are very unsightly and not appropriate to the location on the banks of the River Barrow. Offaly County Council should work with the owner of these units to facilitate re-location to a designated industrial area. The site could possibly be re-developed for housing or retail use. Laois County Council is to be commended in acquiring a lease on the former Square Garage.

5. Two Local Authorities.

Part of the town is in County Laois and part in County Offaly. It is vital for the future development of the town that both local authorities work closely together for the benefit of the town in its entirety.

6. Visual appearance of retail businesses on main thoroughfares.

A plan for coordinating the overall visual appearance of retail units in the town in terms of a colour plan, signage, and window displays would greatly improve the overall visual appearance of the town. External shutters and neon signs should be discouraged or prohibited by the local authorities.

7. Traffic and parking.

The volume of HGV's and commercial vehicles passing through the town is a major issue which needs to be addressed by the local authorities. Patrick Street and French Church Street are particularly badly affected, especially by HGV's accessing the courier depots in the nearby industrial estate. Adequate parking needs to be provided in suitable locations to reduce the need for on street parking while at the same time providing easy access to the town center. A joined-up network of cycle tracks should be a priority.

8. Regeneration of Market Square.

I believe it is vital to find a suitable new use for the old cinema as it is highly unlikely that it will ever be used as a cinema again. I would suggest that consideration be given to converting it to a shopping arcade for small specialist retail businesses. Units could be rented to small specialist retail business that would not be viable paying normal commercial rents, businesses like arts and crafts, book sellers, antiques, and specialist food businesses. This would attract visitors to the town, help re-vitalise the area, and have a positive knock- on effect on other businesses. Similar arcades in Georges St.,

	<p>Dublin, the English Market, Cork, and the Blackrock market Dublin are very successful.</p>
	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches. <p>The principal actions outlined in Section 7 detail these specifically.</p> <p>This Old Savoy Cinema is in private ownership; however, Laois County Council is in support of its redevelopment subject to proper planning and sustainable development and an appropriate use being proposed for it. This would add great benefit to the Market square and align with plans for the Market House by Laois County Council. Principal Action 2 – Rehabilitation of Market Square which includes opportunity sites that refer to sites within the square such as the Savoy Cinema.</p> <p>The strategy is very cognisant that the Town should be read as one town and not a town of two sides and will work with Offaly County Council to ensure consistency of approach to materials, signage etc.</p> <p>Laois County Council and Offaly County Council have both been successful in securing funding to develop an active travel strategy / Local Transport Plan for Portarlington which will be coordinated over both the OCC and LCC areas.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	17
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Michael Turley
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>Submission summarised as follows</p> <p>Would like to see the Market House restored with the bottom half housing a sheltered space for an indoor market (possibly its original intent) and the upper floor housing a Huguenot Museum or the like.</p> <p>The other historic buildings in the square - the Church of Ireland and the Hall beside the old Savoy cinema should form a 3 building historic point of interest. There is an extensive amount of historic data within the French Church with records dating back to the 17th Century.</p> <p>There is also a rich history of high-quality education associated with the Town with many boarding schools teaching a great variety of subjects. You are probably aware that The Duke of Wellington and Edward Carson, to name but a few, both attended school in the town. This aspect has been recently documented by John Powell's new book "Schooling in Ireland 1695 - 1912" which gives details of the ones in Portarlington.</p> <p>The old Savoy cinema, I understand, is protected but it must be brought back into another use to add vibrancy the square area.</p> <p>Visitors to the town, arriving by train, will see a wonderful example of this type of architecture. Unfortunately, the building on the down rail side has been allowed to fall into a sad state of decay. IE have recognised this fact and are about to embark on a meaningful restoration of this wonderful building.</p> <p>The other great historic event was the arrival of the Huguenots in Portarlington. The original architecture is very evident in many of the fine old houses in the town. It is further evident in the local names such as Deveraux, Henriques, Blanc, Champ, Napier etc etc</p> <p>The square should be the new Cultural Quarter with the paving laid out to facilitate high quality food markets and pedestrian friendly areas.</p>

	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>The Strategy proposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • To reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles; • To rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter; • To design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm; • To reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • To Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • To rejuvenate the former Courthouse; and • To Provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches. <p>This Old Savoy Cinema is in private ownership, however Laois County Council is in support of its redevelopment subject to proper planning and sustainable development and an appropriate use being proposed for it. This would add great benefit to the Market square and align with plans for the Market House by Laois County Council.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	18
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Annamae Muldowney
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident (architecture student)
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>Plan attached outlines the following in relation to "Portarlinton – The Paris of the Midlands" summarized as follows :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create vast social space in the square • Create focal point in Market House • Refurb the savoy to a cinema / theatre for events • Refurb old hotel • Landscaping should link buildings • Shared surface for traffic • Allow people to spill out onto streets <p>Video shows potential uses for the Market House</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>The submission is welcome in relation to the proposed plan and the video made in relation to the Market House shows the potential for the Market House. The Market house is a protected structure and will require the expertise in its redevelopment of a conservation architect to bring it back to its original form and fit for new uses aligned with the potential in this submission.</p> <p>Principal Actions 1 and 2 deal with restoring and reusing the Market House and rehabilitation of the Market Square through a number of actions.</p> <p>Principal Actions 4 and 8 deal with actions to promote sustainable access and mobility and developing green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>The Regeneration strategy will include proposals to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunity sites such as the Old Hotel and the Savoy Cinema for new uses to promote the town as a place to live within and visit; • Encourage a Farmers market and uses in the Market Square to make better use of the public realm in this location; • Interpretation of the French history in the town; • Planting and landscaping for the study area.

SUB. REF. NO.	19
NAME OF SUBMISSION	KACCM Melia
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	A Portarlington Family
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many towns are in a similar situation, but they do not have the facilities or location to exploit. These towns in the shadow of large cities, have found success based on lending itself to feeding from the larger population centres. They grew from the natural amenity into bustling towns with high weekend trade as people chose to escape the city. The project at Derryounce, the planned river walk, the proximity to Emo court, Killenard heritage resort, the Slieve Blooms, proximity to large retail in Portlaoise, the well-known local vendors who have stood the testing times, there is a lot to entice someone to come. This is a temFigure for Laois and not just a single town. It needs to be put together right. The town itself as with many of our smaller towns have suffered to big retail as they cannot compete with large shopping centres as a leisure shopping destination. It needs a different attraction, we have let the infrastructure become uncontrolled and probably focused too much on the development of one large town with the intent that others would be economically fed from, this has not materialised. 2. The town itself is a pretty town but its hidden. You can see it on a quiet Sunday, the streets empty, the old buildings towering above, but it has been seriously neglected. There has been deterioration of the town infrastructure. Service providers mounting telegraph poles, excessive signage, the streets a patchwork of concrete and tarmac. There is a telegraph pole on Bracklone St. mounted in the middle of the path, there is not enough room to go either side of it. We let the historic past get hidden behind an awful mess of infrastructure and cluttered parking. 3. Abbeyleix provides a good example of what can be done with the local square. Abbeyleix has maintained a main street of retailers; no doubt it has its struggles. The square contains buildings as does the entire town contains buildings from the Huguenot period which would not look out of place on any street in Paris. However, the streets in Paris usually do not have telegraph poles, the horrific orange lighting, a mish mash of concrete and cracked pavement, all with a tarmac road and an abundance of signage for local towns. The streets in Paris have coordinated spacious parking, either on street or nearby, not intensive parking. The Square can be cobble locked, ornate street lamping, ample green planting, small green features like steppingstones that provide an interaction for children. An encouragement to reveal the historic buildings and drawing deeply on Heritage Ireland to provide some source of funding to reveal the past architecture, even the Market Square itself

should be part funded. Heritage Ireland provide enormous sources of funding to state houses that open for single days, or the outhouses on these state houses being renovated, this project would be open for all time for all. In this town the Irish cottage, Irish houses, sit side by side with Huguenot architecture very apt for a modern Ireland. This would be preserved for all generations.

4. The church and hall in the market square are great natural features which have been disregarded but are so picturesque. Some works are needed to reveal them. The area between the Savoy and the hall restored with planting and cobbles, the possibility of a small glassed roofed overhang and encourage street facing premises on that side of the Savoy. This may not be immediate but similar to during the recession create the inventive to businesses to come.
5. Local people's interaction with the Main Square is parkin; ideally parking could be sourced in the areas nearby leaving space to make it an area of public interaction and an anchor for footfall. A focus on greening the area, ornate planting, interactive features like steppingstones. The Market house restored, similar to Abbeyleix. Cobble lock surrounds with green areas. The parking sourced nearby would have no impact to access retail.
6. McDonagh Junction Kilkenny has an opened roofed area, but the costing might be exorbitant. The buildings are neatly housed within. It might be something to aspire too. Regardless of the roof, looking at the type of premises in that area clearly show what can be achieved. It is a perfect site to encourage a weekly artisan food market after the development. Focused on weekends to draw footfall which all retailers will benefit from. Encouragement to anchor the Main St. the loss of the Main Post office into an area to the local supermarket did little to improve the Main St. We now have another derelict building of historic importance. Perhaps the Main Post could be anchored nearby.
7. The Derryounce walkway is a great example of local driven desire to improve facilities. It would be ideal if along the Riverwalk some lighting and pathway were added. The old pumphouse and green area around it provided with an over river walkway and seats which would interconnect Derryounce to the Riverwalk. The pumphouse restored and incentivised to provide a tea, coffee and break area. Part of the moneys from which to fund the walk improvements. When the area is profitable begin the removal of the funding incentive.
8. This town is a Laois town and an Offaly town. We have a great attraction to cities nearby, for all our towns, the planned BnM resevoir can provide a catapult for the entire area that it surrounds but we need to remove the clutter and poor treatment of our main streets. We made huge mistakes such as covering in the canal and laying down tarmac, we should not make any more. In short, we need a cleanup and a few nice

	<p>features everything else is here and this should apply to all our towns.</p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
	<p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches. <p>Principal Actions 1 and 2 deal with restoring and reusing the Market House and rehabilitation of the Market Square through several actions</p> <p>Principal Actions 4 and 8 deal with actions to promote sustainable access and mobility and developing green and blue infrastructure.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	20
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Sharon Kennedy
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Director of Services, Housing, Community, Culture, Emergency Services and Edenderry Municipal District
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. Market Square: Offaly County Council recognises the potential for a redeveloped Market Square to become the focal point and heart of Portarlinton and supports the provision of a high-quality public realm in the Square with the potential to be a visitor destination for large public gatherings, events, festivals, and celebrations. By creating a strong visual connection from Spa Bridge to the Square visitors to Derryounce will be encouraged to lengthen their stay in the town.</p> <p>2. Traffic Management and Parking: Traffic congestion in the town is a significant issue, particularly on Patrick Street. There are only two bridge crossings of the River Barrow in the town, Spa Bridge and Barrow Bridge, which exacerbates congestion. Vehicles dominate many of Portarlinton's streets and largely unrestricted vehicle movement impact negatively of the attractiveness of the town centre and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Whilst consideration should be given to the walkability of the town centre and the potential for reduced parking, proposals to pedestrianise parts of the town centre would need to be informed by a Traffic Management Plan for the town. The provision of inner relief roads as detailed by Objectives TM-02, TM-03 and TM-04 from the Joint Local Area Plan for Portarlinton to the south of the town to alleviate the towns traffic congestion should be recognised as a priority.</p> <p>3. Derryounce: Derryounce walks and trails with its combination of bogs, lake side and forestry walks, is unique in both its proximity and direct 2km walking trail link to a town of the size of Portarlinton. Derryounce has the potential to form: (a) a significant part of a green infrastructure corridor along the River Barrow connecting Derryounce to the Green Flag Awarded Peoples Park in the centre of the town; and (b) part of a strategic link from Portarlinton to the Grand Canal via Mount Lucas, in line with the Midlands Cycling Destination 2016, which proposes to develop the midlands as an international cycling destination stimulating cycling and sustainable tourism in the region and with the Dublin Galway Euro Velo Route. This strategy can support the development of Derryounce in this regard by providing for high quality linkages from the Peoples Park, along the River Barrow to Derryounce Lakes and Trails (in accordance with Objective TMO12 of the Joint Local Area Plan) and along Spa Street towards Market Square and Main Street. The provision of a footbridge and boardwalk beside Spa Bridge would greatly facilitate a safe walking environment for pedestrians in this regard.</p>

4. Opportunity Sites:

There is a great opportunity to develop the towns centre significant backlands supporting National Strategic Outcome 1, 'Compact Growth', from the National Planning Framework. It is noted that the Study Area subject to this Urban Regeneration Strategy comprises two opportunity sites identified in Section 10.1 of the Joint Portarlinton Local Area Plan: (a) Opportunity Site No. 4: Landholding off Foxcroft Street; and (b) Opportunity Site No. 5: Arlington House

This Strategy should outline key indicative block/street plan and urban design place making principles. The consultants are referred to the Placemaking Principles adopted in the Draft Blundell Masterplan in Edenderry which sets out the building blocks for the regeneration and development of a site of approximately 13 hectares, stretching from JKL Street to the north all the way to Blundell Park to the south, in the town of Edenderry, Co. Offaly.

5. Patrick Street:

It is regrettable that Patrick Street is not included within the heritage led Urban Regeneration for Portarlinton Strategy as Patrick's Street with its distinctive streetscape, Huguenot Style houses and its original decorative fanlights retained over doorways form an important part of the Portarlinton's linear historical core which runs west to east from Patrick Street, through Market Square, to Main Street. Notwithstanding this, it is important that any vision in relation to the historic core of the town make appropriate reference to Patrick Street recognising its conservation value and the positive visual impression it provides from the Tullamore Road approach to the town centre. In addition, it should be noted that the appropriate reuse of the vacant boys' school on Patrick Street and the development of the lands at the Junction of Botley Lane and Patrick Street could play an important support role to the rejuvenation of the Portarlinton Town Centre. The Council notes and supports the Portarlinton Community Development Associations suggestions for: (a) Cohesive and attractive cross-jurisdiction signage to be provided within the town speed limits which incorporate an appropriate symbol highlighting the towns Huguenots history such as the fleur-de-lis; and (b) Street art in the form of sculptures to be added to the entrance roads to the town which reflect the towns unique culture and heritage e.g. its French connection, its agricultural basis, the links to Odlums Mill, the ESB, Bord Na Mona.

6. Connectivity and Permeability:

In line with Objectives TM-08 and TM-09 from the Joint Portarlinton Local Area Plan, the Strategy should promote and facilitate more sustainable modes of transport by incorporating a high-quality permeable pedestrian and cycling network into new development in town centre backlands and where possible retrofitting cycleways within the town centre and from the town centre to the train station, schools and green infrastructure in accordance with the principles set out in Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) and the NTA National Cycling Manual principles and standards.

	<p>7. Flooding: It is hoped that the Strategy outlines how the town can make the most of its location on the River Barrow and the carrying out of recent flood alleviation measures in order to provide functional public amenity space, wildlife habitats, riparian zones, pollinator areas and carbon sequestration areas along the river.</p> <p>8. Specific Projects: It would be very useful if specific projects for different parts of the Strategy area that could be undertaken in the future based on the vision and objectives of this Strategy be included in the document which could inform future funding applications under RRDF and ORIS and the preparation of the Joint Portarlington Local Area 2024-30. Proposals and projects should be listed in order of priority (based on the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) of Project Ireland 2040, National Planning Framework) and viability with indicative costs and timeframes for completion outlined.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>Principal Actions 1 and 2 deal with restoring and reusing the Market House and the rehabilitation of the Market Square through a number of actions.</p> <p>Principal Actions 4 and 8 deal with actions to promote sustainable access and mobility and developing green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>We note comments in relation to Blundell Masterplan in Edenderry and while this is a strategy for the whole of the town centre and actions to regeneration in a holistic sense, Principal Action No 5 highlights Opportunity sites within the town centre that will, when developed complement the Town Centre and will be based on the principles of Compact Growth, Placemaking, active travel and climate action.</p> <p>The strategy is very cognisant that the Town should be read as one town and not a town of two sides and we will work with Offaly County Council to ensure consistency of approach to materials, signage etc.</p> <p>Laois County Council and Offaly County Council have both been successful in securing funding to develop active travel strategy / Local Transport Plans for Portarlington which will be coordinated over both the OCC and LCC areas.</p> <p>The scope of this study will look at existing transport patterns, key infrastructural requirements and future transport requirements with key service providers. This will be done in conjunction with OCC Area staff and Roads and Planning Section.</p> <p>There is significant potential for off street carparking around the town centre not only to replace spaces that were removed from the centre</p>

	<p>but to increase the overall provision. The Strategy indicates existing and proposed availability of space for carparking within easy walking distance of the town centre. It also shows an approximate existing capacity.</p> <p>The Strategy is very supportive of the development of Derrycastle and has proposed connections and linkages to it to ensure that a trailhead can be developed within the Market Square in Portarlinton.</p> <p>The Strategy contains specific interventions for different parts of the Strategy area that could be undertaken in the future. Short, medium- and long-term actions are identified in this Strategy which could inform future funding applications under RRDF and ORIS and the preparation of the Joint Portarlinton Local Area 2024-30.</p> <p>Future proposals will ensure coordination between the two counties in relation to flood relief management.</p> <p>The Strategy will align all proposals and projects to the NPF / RSES and climate action requirements.</p>
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SUB. REF. NO.	21
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Portarlington Community Development Association
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Community Service
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. Market Square:</p> <p>The Market Square is at the heart of the town with one road leading to the town's main shopping street, another leading out towards Derrycastle, another runs along the River Barrow towards the town park, and finally a road toward the Offaly side of the town. The Church of Ireland French Church is also located on the square. The square is therefore a central link connecting the French history of the town, the Greenway of Derrycastle and the Blueway that is the River Barrow. It is therefore important that the Market Square Realm is transformed into an attractive and accessible focal point of the town.</p> <p>The PCDA would like the following to be considered for implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The addition of street furniture, planting, better street lighting and some street art to improve the visual look and amenity of the Market Square; b) The provision of public space, including the provision of suitable permanent retractable outdoor canopies, which could be used for a farmers' market, for the performing arts and for festivals; c) The acquisition of the old cinema on the Market Square for development as part of the public realm and used for community purposes and/or an indoor market; and d) That the development of any buildings in the Market Square be sensitive to the public realm. <p>2. Town Renewal:</p> <p>Flood defenses for the town to be addressed as a matter of priority particularly as the flooding occurs in the centre of the town impacting businesses and residents alike. Derrycastle Lakes & Trails has beautiful scenery, lakes, roads, walkways, paths and forested trails; the provision of secure car-parking at Derrycastle would assist in providing a tourism anchor for the town. We would like to see the provision of infrastructure which supports the connectivity of the Green-Blue ways in Portarlington (Derrycastle - Barrow River Walk - Lea Castle):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Further pedestrianization including the installation of a footbridge beside Spa Street Bridge, which would assist in connecting Derrycastle to the River Barrow Walk; b. If needed, purchasing any land along the river which would assist in development of river-based activities e.g. canoeing, fishing etc., also the purchase of any land required to provide a skate-park;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. The acquisition of land at the trailhead of Derrycastle to provide proper car-parking and enhance the entrance to the amenity; this area could also be used to provide a small museum/information booth; d. That there be agreed cohesive and attractive cross-jurisdictional signage within the town speed limits. Said signage should reflect the town's unique heritage and environmental amenities; e. The provision of infrastructural elements which highlight the town's Huguenot history including the usage and promotion of an appropriate symbol for the town such as the fleur-de-lis. The town symbol should be used in signage such as the town welcome signs in both the Laois and Offaly entrances into the town; f. Street art in the form of sculptures to be added to entrance roads to the town; these sculptures should reflect the town's unique culture and heritage e.g., its French connection, its agricultural basis, the links to Odlum's Mill, the E.S.B., Bord na Mona and the bogs etc. Suitable street art to be added to the public spaces in consultation with the community; g. Laois County Council to implement, in full, its own Streetscape Upgrade for Portarlinton Report as authored by Dr. Christy Boylan. h. Grass verges should have wildflowers added and be maintained in such a manner to assist and support biodiversity; i. That pedestrian crossings be provided at all roundabouts along with suitable and adequate lighting. That roundabouts be planted and maintained by the County Council; j. Safe cycleways be provided within the town; k. The provision of a skate park for the benefit of the youth of the town and to attract visitors to the town. l. The shopfront grant be increased to €3,000 and that the council actively engage and promote the uptake of same; m. Derelict buildings and sites within the town speed limits to be addressed; n. That consideration be given to pedestrianisation of part of Main Street (Foxcroft Street intersection up to the Market Square) in consultation with the traders affected. The pedestrianised areas to be enhanced with appropriate paving and the addition of greenery and street furniture. Permanent retractable canopies to be provided along Main Street to protect pedestrians and shoppers during wet weather and to encourage and support outdoor dining; o. The convent at Kilmalogue, the girls' primary school at Kilmalogue, and the boys' school on Patrick Street are
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	<p>all lying vacant and should be acquired and put to some training, community or housing use;</p> <p>p. We note that the overhead wires in Main Street and the Market Square areas are to be undergrounded; this is welcomed but is important that it be delivered;</p> <p>q. That the council complete its promised review of the inner relief road on the eastern side of Portarlington. The development of a relief road on the Bog Road as set out in the Draft Local Area Plan for Portarlington 2012-2018. This relief road would assist with easing traffic around Market Square.</p> <p>3.Cohesive Town Identity: The PCDA would like to see works carried out which support the town’s cultural heritage, its tourism potential, and which would benefit residents and visitors alike. As a town split between two counties, we believe that the development of the town must be cross-jurisdictional so as to deliver a cohesive and unified look to the town.</p> <p>4.Market House: The PCDA propose that ground floor space be provided for heritage, cultural and other exhibitions. The exhibitions could be community run and rotated throughout the year. We also suggest that space be provided for a permanent museum capable of supporting interactive digital elements.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul’s and Saint Michael’s Churches.

	<p>The principal actions outlined in Section 7 detail these specifically.</p> <p>Principal Actions 1 and 2 deal with restoring and reusing the Market House and rehabilitation of the Market Square through several actions</p> <p>Principal Actions 4 and 8 deal with actions to promote sustainable access and mobility and developing green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>The strategy is very cognisant that the Town should be read as one town and not a town of two sides and will work with Offaly County Council to ensure consistency of approach to materials, signage etc.</p> <p>Laois County Council and Offaly County Council have both been successful in securing funding to develop active travel strategy / Local Transport Plan for Portarlington which will be coordinated over both the OCC and LCC areas.</p> <p>The scope of this study will look at existing transport patterns, key infrastructural requirements and future transport requirements with key service providers. This will be done in conjunction with OCC Area staff and Roads and Planning Section.</p> <p>If car parking is to be removed to facilitate the town centre upgrade, alternative parking arrangements must be put in place if the plan is to gain stakeholder support.</p> <p>There is significant potential for off street carparking around the town centre not only to replace spaces that were removed from the centre but to increase the overall provision. The Strategy indicates existing and proposed availability of space for carparking within easy walking distance of the town centre. It also shows an approximate existing capacity.</p> <p>The Strategy is very supportive of the development of Derrycastle and has proposed connections and linkages to it to ensure that a trailhead can be developed within the Market Square in Portarlington.</p> <p>The Strategy contains specific interventions for different parts of the Strategy area that could be undertaken in the future. Short, medium- and long-term actions are identified in this Strategy which could inform future funding applications under RRDF and ORIS and the preparation of the Joint Portarlington Local Area 2024-30.</p> <p>Future proposals will ensure coordination between the two counties in relation to flood relief management.</p>
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SUB. REF. NO.	22
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Makeport Makerspace Portarlington
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Community Service
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. Portarlington has a heritage that we can draw on of educational excellence - springing from the time of the Huguenots and the multitude of schools that formed a key part of the town's history (at one point more than ten schools)</p> <p>2. Over the last decade the talent pool based in Portarlington has expanded and it is now home to Amazon Engineers, Microsoft Developers, Public Sector Digital Architects to name but a small subset.</p> <p>3. This in turn has been complemented with seven years of mentors and coderdojo ninjas learning technology skills and importantly as of the last two years starting to build applications in the IOT or "smart device" space. To back this up - we have over twenty junior mentors and coderdojo ninjas who are now either in STEAM college courses or working with IT companies like SAP and Intel and more will follow.</p> <p>4. In the last two years the Enterprise Centre became home to the Portarlington Innovation hub - delivering a remote working and connected office space with access to broad band facilities and hot desk facilities</p> <p>5. As part of the Innovation Hub - the Makerspace has been active over the last two years giving access to digital tools and fabrication courses for teenagers and adults across the town.</p> <p>6. The traffic chaos in the morning has become worse and it is clogging up the arteries of our town - We have started looking at how we can use "smart device" pollution monitors to promote the reduction in traffic at our schools in the morning and evening - with parents encouraged to let their kids walk some or all of the way to school and then showing them how much of a benefit this is having. This has already been done in pilots in Dublin schools</p> <p>7. The creation of Greenways and Blue ways along the Barrow - will help to take more people out of cars and been able to reach the heart of the town by foot or pedal. We want to be able to show in real terms just how valuable this is for the health of all of us in the town - by using simple smart pedestrian counters to show how popular these routes will be.</p> <p>8. The peat bog around Portarlington is a key part of our heritage. These areas hold more than one-quarter of all soil carbon, even though they account for only 3% of Earth's land area. We propose to use smart devices to track the health of our local bog and make this information available to view. As part of the regeneration, we need to put across the message that access to 5G and Wi-Fi zones in the town is required to enable us to keep the new wave of remote workers already living in the town based in the town and able to work anywhere here from our Innovation Hub to our pedestrian zone around the Square – bringing more and more business into the heart of our town.</p>

	<p>9. Finally as a town we need to harness how remote education can be used to allow our children take third level Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math's courses while based primarily here in our town. This will improve the business environment with more footfall in the shops and cafes of the town. We are uniquely positioned to make this happen - through partnerships with midland colleges such as Athlone and Carlow and by leveraging the projects done on the Smart Town in conjunction with the Makerspace and CoderDojo's.</p>
	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>We note from the submission the educational perspective given in relation to the change to technology skills and the requirement for Smart Device Space.</p> <p>We acknowledge all the work done by the local CODER DOJO in developing these skills within the town and the facilitation of the PEC to home these courses and training classes, we also note the investment in creating additional space at PEC and purchasing equipment to develop this area.</p> <p>We note the innovative solution to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • install smart device pollution monitors to promote a reduction in pollution and • pedestrian counters on walkways to show the pedestrian and cycling usage within the town centre • monitor the health of the bog <p>and will bring this to the attention of the Climate Action staff of LCC / OCC.</p> <p>There is potential to organise Portarlinton as a Sustainable Energy Community which would look at developing solutions in this regard It is proposed to development a FREE WIFI zone in the town centre.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	23
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Portarlinton Tidy Towns
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Community Service
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. Market Square:</p> <p>(a) To restore the Market Square original state. Market square is the main vocal point of the town and needs to be enhanced to capture the beauty of our town;</p> <p>(b) To use the market house for e.g., for Love Port Office, Museum and/or information centre;</p> <p>(c) To landscape parts of the square to include trees and flowers to improve the square and enhance its beauty while addressing biodiversity with its type of planting;</p> <p>(d) To have a sculpture commissioned and placed in the square that captures either our heritage or linkage to the boglands;</p> <p>(e) To have an information sign that clearly gives info about the beautiful areas to visit i.e.. Derryounce, lea castle, Corrig Woods, Emo etc. This should sign post people to the fabulous historic areas we have and also the great amenities present in our town(signage in keeping with the overall theme);</p> <p>(f) Market house to be restored and the underneath made accessible, like in the past for the likes of a farmer's market, seasonal markets etc.</p> <p>(g) The Savoy cinema to be turned into an arcade not unlike Georges Street or The English Market in Cork to permit locals and businesspeople to showcase their wares. This should include eateries and seating provided e.g., Altrincham Market in Manchester;</p> <p>(h) Any development of buildings on the square needs to be in line with keeping the heritage integrity of our town;</p> <p>(i) Traffic calming is required and to look at the current pedestrian crossing at the Phone Shop. It is a safety hazard and crashes have occurred here and a person has been knocked down. Its not located in a safe place and needs to be addressed;</p> <p>(j) To look at pathways. i.e., natural limestone. There needs to be a cohesiveness to the pathways throughout the main hub of the town;</p> <p>(k) Place cables underground and put in ornate lighting in keeping with the theme of the town; and</p> <p>(l) Cycle lanes need to be addressed</p> <p>2. Town Renewal:</p> <p>(a) Signage kept to a minimum throughout the town as they say less is more. For the signage that's in place for it to be consistent throughout and one in keeping with the town;</p> <p>(b) Cycle lanes to be addressed to allow kids to cycle to school. Currently traffic congestion as a result of bringing kids to school is a huge problem, not only for the towns people but for the environment. We would like to see our carbon footprint reduced. Landscaping throughout the town. Making use of empty spaces and enhancing them. Research has shown a town with trees has a 10% increase in people coming to the town centre;</p>

(c) A bin plan for Portarlinton. While many argue introducing bins can attract more rubbish the same can be said for no bins as you maybe required to carry your rubbish a fair distance due to the shortage of bins or strategically place them. (compactable bins) to avoid people dumping their rubbish;

(d) To look at installing drink fountains strategically to encourage people to use reusable bottles and fill their water bottles in turn reducing plastic waste;

(e) To look at placing bike stands into the town and look at the possibility of a renting bike facility at key areas, the station, the square Derryounce to encourage people to explore our town and reduce their carbon footprint as a result;

(f) To enhance our town to make it more attractive to businesses and educational facilities (colleges). We are in a unique position as we have on average 32 trains a day going through Portarlinton. If the town was also a SMART town it would give rise to future investments in our town; and

(g) To continue to link our greenways and blue ways . In turn this encourages tourism, reduces carbon emissions, pollution, enhances the town and permits it to reach its potential to what we know it can be

3. Town Centre:

(a) To enhance the overall look of the town and encourage the regeneration of business in the town;

(b) Lighting cables to go underground and place ornate lighting on buildings instead of poles;

(c) To ensure the integral heritage of the buildings in main street are maintained;

(d) To highlight key buildings throughout Portarlinton and acknowledge them with information plaques. These plaques need to be in keeping with our heritage. This can then be partnered with a chip that can link to an app on your phone that gives the complete history of the building;

(e) Dereliction and vacant buildings to be addressed and plans put in place re same;

(f) Pedestrianising Portarlinton from The Dublin Bar to the Square. Landscaping the town with trees and sitting to encourage foot fall;

(g) Providing alternative parking to the main street to address the fears of local businesses re reduced shopping. e.g., Hickeys field, the valeting yard at the weighbridge. Improving existing parking at The Peoples Park, behind centra and adjacent car park. Provide easy access pedestrian walkways to the main street to increase footfall. An attractive welcoming town centre makes a huge difference in bringing people to the town;

(h) Pathways consistent throughout;

(i) Promoting businesses to enhance their buildings with flower boxes, hanging baskets and attractive frontages to further enhance our town;

(j) Encourage certain businesses to place seating areas outside as an alternative. if the town is pedestrianised it would be possible; and

(k) Provide 5G and Wi-Fi hot spots.

	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches. <p>The principal actions outlined in Section 7 detail these specifically.</p> <p>The Regeneration strategy include proposals to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a walking and cycling within the town centre; • Encourage a Farmers market in the Market Square to make better use of the public realm in this location. • Interpretation of the French history in the town. • Provide appropriate infrastructure on the river barrow for canoeing, fishing etc; • Planting and landscaping for the study area; • Undergrounding of cables for street lighting which has already commenced. <p>There is potential to organise Portarlinton as a Sustainable Energy Community which would look at developing solutions in this regard It is proposed to develop a FREE WIFI zone in the town centre.</p> <p>A Marketing plan to include signage/ interpretation of the social / cultural / heritage and innovative wall art in various locations will be considered and planned for the town.</p> <p>A Local Transport Study for Portarlinton will address traffic and roads infrastructure looking at cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	24
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Jonathan McDonough
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would be great to see the walking track in the people's park with lights on at night so people can walk 24hrs a day, perhaps create a circular circuit. 2. Farmers market in the square with the road out front of the cinema pedestrianised. 3. Speed bumps on Patrick street to slow the traffic coming through the town with some more visible speed signs indicating drivers speed as they approach the digital sign. 4. A focal point with information displaying the French history in the town. 5. Sports hub somewhere on the river barrow so people can launch some canoes etc., perhaps a floating dock of some kind, can also be used by fishermen / women also with lights. 6. Perhaps more flower bedding areas in the square, also consider a fountain with lighting. 7. Bury the cables for street lighting, a heritage theme for street lighting similar to Abbeyleix.
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>The Regeneration strategy supports proposals to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a walking track in the people's park – Action 4 and 8 promote sustainable modes of transport and the development of green infrastructure to increase walking and cycling; • Encourage a Farmers market in the Market Square to make better use of the public realm in this location. • Interpretation of the French history in the town. • Provide appropriate infrastructure on the river barrow for canoeing, fishing etc; • Planting and landscaping for the study area; • Undergrounding of cables for street lighting has recently commenced. <p>A Local Transport Study for Portarlinton will address traffic and roads infrastructure looking at the need for Speed bumps on Patrick street to slow the traffic coming through the town with some more visible speed signs indicating drivers speed as they approach the digital sign.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	25
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Basil Mannion
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Local Authority Waters Programme Community Water Officer for Offaly, Laois and Westmeath
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>In undertaking this regeneration project in Portarlington please refer to the document "Planning for Watercourses in the urban environment – a guide to the protection of watercourses using buffer zones, Sustainable drainage systems, instream rehabilitation, climate/flood risk and recreation planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider restricted public and angler access to the River Barrow • Consider increased surface water runoff leading to unnatural river water flow – due consideration of sustainable drainage measures and rain gardens/swales to be considered. • Consider increased flooding and erosion problems – leave room for the River Barrow to expand during flood periods • Consider the loss of cover and food for fish and aquatic animals – maintain sufficient river bank riparian zones • Consider the loss of food and habitat for Riparian animals and plants – maintain sufficient river bank riparian zones • Consider the loss of riparian area and fragmentation of Riparian corridor resulting in reduction in Biodiversity • Prevent the introduction of non native plants such as Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam etc in imported soils. • Protect the aesthetic value and future potential amenity quality associated with the River Barrow for public use • Reduce/Eliminate poorly designed culverts and bridges which block fish and wildlife movement and act as fish barriers • Allow for passage and natural movement of natural river materials
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S
RECOMMENDATION**

The team is cognisant of the environmental implication of any works / uses adjoining the River Barrow and the potential impacts on the Conservation objectives of the SAC / SPA .

The Local Area Plan for Portarlinton as prepared and adopted by Laois County Council and Offaly County Council jointly provides for open space and amenity zoning along the river Barrow which maintain enough riverbank riparian zones. This has not changed as a result of this strategy.

The Strategy is supportive of the development of Blue and Green Infrastructure and actions are outlined in Principal Action 8.0 of the Strategy and Principal Action 4.0 Promote sustainable accessibility and mobility subject to stringent environmental assessments.

SUB. REF. NO.	26
NAME OF SUBMISSION	David Reed
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>1. I believe the lower part of main street should be pedestrianised. (Diagram A)</p> <p>We need to make our town centre, a focal area where events and shopping can take place in a quiet and safe environment. From Foxtrot Street, Lower Main Street's Roads and paths should be resurfaced, making them light and inviting and secure to anyone who lives or visits our town.</p> <p>Access for Taxis or deliveries would be by lowering bollards, triggered by sensors on allowed vehicles. (This system is currently being successfully used in Cambridge City Centre).</p> <p>All traffic coming from Foxcroft Street or upper main street to exit by Park Lane. This may require traffic management from Foxcroft Street to Park Lane.</p> <p>The current Access to the Square from the link road, to Frenchurch Street should be segregated / Fenced / Barriered (Diagram B). Only opening on Lower Main Street is to allow deliveries and taxis to exit, again by lowering bollards.</p> <p>The town centre should be a place to visit, not to pass through. Hopefully this would also encourage businesses, which can utilise the sidewalk such as cafeterias' and coffee bars.</p> <p>More public bins and perhaps more fauna and foliage could be added near the square.</p> <p>Extra Parking for lower main street could be possibilities as stated by the Red X (See Diagram A).</p>

	<p>2. The Old Savoy Cinema.</p> <p>The only good thing about the Savoy Cinema, is the outstanding mural of the 1992 film “Into the West”. This needs to change. We don’t need to lose our past, but we do need to combine it with the present. This derelict building should not be left as it is, reminding us of bygone days.</p> <p>A compulsory purchase order should be made for this building.</p> <p>This would allow it to be developed to perhaps include an all year market in the town. The market could expand, increase and grow during the summer months with outside stalls.</p> <p>The refurbished Savoy would also serve as a refuge, when the weather gets bad and shelter is needed. Not everyone wants to shelter in a pub with their children. With the new Savoy, they wouldn’t have to pick up and leave.</p> <p>Sporadic attractions and displays could also be brought to the town centre. Various Sculptures, Art, Buskers and so on. Anything that brings a vibrancy and freshness to the town. We should be able to talk about and advertise all the new things we could display in the town month on month, bringing people back to the town again and again.</p> <p>Yes, it would take a lot of planning – but let us think big. The future of our town is at stake and chances like this, to revitalise our town, don’t come along that often.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema;• Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations;• Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, and exhibitions of the history of Portarlinton etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches. <p>This Old Savoy Cinema is in private ownership, however Laois County Council is in support of its redevelopment subject to proper planning and sustainable development and an appropriate use being proposed for it. This would add great benefit to the Market square and align with plans for the Market House by Laois County Council.</p>
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SUB. REF. NO.	27
NAME OF SUBMISSION	David Murphy
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Portarlinton Multisport group is a collection of people from a range of different sporting activities. We are representatives from local swimming, running, kayak, cycling and triathlon clubs. We are the voice of 100s locals. With a population of over 8,500 in the town of Portarlinton, with 80% of these being of an active age, our submission is intended to highlight our needs and contribute to our community in the process.</p> <p>An untapped Resource</p> <p>The river Barrow flows through and wraps the town of Portarlinton in its arms and yet we do not acknowledge it. Towns such as Athy in Kildare, Bagnalstown and Carlow town and Graiguenamana in Kilkenny all have strong water sport cultures. Dragon boat races, Swimming, kayaking and triathlons are regularly seen in Athy and Carlow. Graiguenamana is a real example of how to promote water sport and tourism with its Community Activity Hub, Rowing Club, Diving boards and lifeguard patrolled areas.</p> <p>Requirement</p> <p>In order to promote water activity locally we need to start with safe access and egress to the river. There are multiple options available from temporary floating pontoons to permanent concrete structures. Multiple options are also available regarding location. Ideally, use the people's park as a hub for activity. Other plans that are currently in play i.e. linking Derryounce walk to Lea Castle will contribute to the town from a tourism perspective. This will also be of great benefit to local businesses.</p> <p>We need to acknowledge that the river runs low during the summer months and the installation of a weir or adding depth to a specific area would be needed. This is something that could be discussed with Laois County Councils Capital Projects Flood Relief programme and Waterways Ireland.</p> <p>Other Recommendations</p> <p>The current layout of the people's park is not very appealing, and the lack of use is evident on any day of the week. The single fact that there is no lighting is a major contributing factor. The</p>

layout of the paths is unstructured and leaves you wandering around aimlessly. We propose a 400m Athletics style track like the development of Smiths Field in Mountmellick. We have witnessed the popularity of this development first-hand and such a development in Portarlinton would be most welcome by both the general public and local Clubs. Juvenile GAA clubs are also using the green area in the middle of the track in Mountmellick. Parents are walking/jogging around the track while their children train, again contributing to a healthier community. The image below depicts ample room for such a development. Trees and shrubs can also be incorporated around the track and would be a welcome feature on windy winter evenings for walkers and runners alike. This would improve the Biodiversity in the park.

Anti-Social Behaviour has long been a problem in the people's park due to the lack of lighting. Our proposal above would lead to increased activity in the area and reduce the likelihood of this behaviour continuing.

The basketball court was seldom used in the early days and was more likely on the receiving end of vandalism. In recent years we have noticed its popularity grow. In fact, we would recommend either a bigger court or another court as there always seems to be bystanders waiting to play. There are few activities for teens as it is, so more would be welcome not to mention what the possibility that water sports has to offer.

Fishing is a long-lost activity on the river Barrow in Portarlinton. There is fish in the river but access even for seasoned fishermen can be difficult. Perhaps a few small pier type platforms could be installed along the river in the vicinity of the town.

More options to enhance our water activities and points at the park as an ideal place for a hub.

Rejuvenation of River Barrow Location

- **Create a pontoon type dock or jetty in the park (life park)**
- **Rejuvenate the river some 350m – 400m from bridge upstream**
 - **It will allow multiple water sport activities**
 - **River is clear of secondary water feed along this area**
 - **River opens up to allow canoes further along in the direction of the Red irons/Garryhinch/Mountmellick**
 - **Second pontoon access point at the people's park**

	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>We have made very demanding requests here when you consider the flora and fauna and the aquatic environment. The requirement for an EIS or NIS is quite evident, and we don't want to have a negative impact on our ecological environment. We also strongly recommend you work closely with the Capital Programmes Office in Laois County Council as the park is in a flood zone and works may complement our request.</p> <p>We believe our proposal makes perfect sense from an economical perspective and works towards a healthier and active community. The potential water activities can generate tourism as it does in our examples above of Kildare, Carlow and Kilkenny. Providing for our locals is of great importance and is the focus of this regeneration Strategy.</p> <p>We would like to thank you for taking the time to read our submission and we hope you see the value it has to offer.</p>
	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>The regeneration Strategy is supportive of developing walking and cycling and sustainable modes of transport within the town centre in Portarlinton. In drafting the strategy, the team is aware of proposals by the Sports Section to look at the Peoples Park and its future development.</p> <p>The team is also cognisant of the environmental implication of any works adjoining the River Barrow and the potential impacts on the Conservation objectives of the SAC / SPA .</p> <p>Such proposals could be looked at in the context of the Local Area Plan which will be subject to Strategic Environmental assessment and Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>The Strategy is supportive of the development of Blue and Green Infrastructure and actions are outlined in Principal Action 8.0 of the Strategy.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	28
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Noel Bodie
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>While huge amount of work has been done by Voluntary groups with regards to the Derrounce Lakes and Walks and the linking of the Greenway from the People's park to the rear of Kilnacourt Woods there is no work by Laois County Council to expand the walking / cycling areas within Portarlinton.</p> <p>The existing Cycle lanes on station road aren't protected and cars park on both the path and the cycle lane when dropping kids to the local primary schools which have approx 800 children. These are not safe for kids to either walk to school or cycle to school. They don't link and should be extended to both Corrig Wood and the Train Station.</p> <p>There is no Cycle Lane infrastructure through the town / link road or to the Secondary school which has over 1000 students on the Offaly side of town. There is no traffic by-pass to Portarlinton as a result huge Volumes of traffic must come into the town and HGV vehicles are a concern and danger to both pedestrians or cyclists.</p> <p>The Government and Health officials are encouraging from a Mental Health perspective to promote walking / cycling etc and Laois County Council aren't taking proactive steps in Portarlinton. At present we are being encouraged due to Covid-19 not to car share and avoid public transport.</p> <p>Portlaoise like many towns has an extensive Cycle Network with protected Cycle Lanes and Dublin is being very proactive in upgrading and encouraging cycling and most importantly safe cycling by installing protective cycle lanes. There is also a Climate / Green element to which if people cycled using a safe cycle network this would potentially remove a lot of traffic making short hop unnecessary journeys.</p> <p>The recent addition to the extension of the Blueway to the rear of Kilnacourt has opened up an area which is beautiful, majestic and really good opportunity to get back to nature and clear your head While there are obvious possible concerns of attracting Anti social behaviour however making a loop as supposed to an</p>

	<p>end point and making it accessible to both elderly, families and individuals will remove this risk.</p> <p>At present it is not accessible through the woods in Kilnacourt and it would not require much work to put in hard core and a short path. This would make the area accessible to residents from the whole of Kilnacourt and open a route from the People park to Kilnacourt, Maxol and either Station Road to the Schools / Train Station or back into the town.</p>
	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>Connectivity with the town of Portarlinton and development more sustainable modes of transport are of paramount importance in the development of this regeneration strategy. Providing more attractive Connections between Derrycastle the town kilnacourt and onto Lea Castle is one of the priorities and detailed in Action 8.0 Development of Green and Blue Infrastructure.</p> <p>The Strategy proposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to natural amenities such as Derrycastle Lakes and Trails, Lea Castle, Carrick Woods, Emo Court and along the River Barrow. <p>These actions Principal Action No 8 details the actions in relation to the development of green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>In preparing Active Travel / Local Transport Plan for the whole town of Portarlinton, alternative modes of transport and how they are facilitated within Portarlinton will be reviewed and improved. This is being supported by the National Transport Authority who are investing in walking and cycling within urban areas. This will be borne in mind in the drafting of that Plan to commence later in 2021.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	29
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Class 3A – Ms. Rafferty Scoil Padraig
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Childrens views
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>Our class was very excited to hear about the Portarlington Regeneration Project. We love learning in the outdoors and with Covid-19 we are learning outside more often.</p> <p>With Corrig Woods only a 15 minute walk away from our school it is the perfect place for outdoor learning. However, the footpath stops after the Railway Bar. After this, we have to walk on the grass verge beside the road. This is not very safe as cars drive quite fast there. When we turn up the road to Corrig Wood there is no path or grass verge for us to walk on. This is very unsafe and dangerous.</p> <p>We would love if there was a path all the way up to Corrig Woods as it would make getting there much easier and safer for everyone in our school and everyone in Portarlington. It would also make the woods accessible for people with disabilities as at the moment if you are in a wheelchair you cannot get up to Corrig Wood.</p> <p>Bringing our learning up to Corrig Woods helps with our wellbeing and brings us closer to nature in an active way.</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>We acknowledge the submission made by the children in Class 3A in relation to connecting to Carrick Woods, a great woodland amenity adjoining Portarlington. The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect to natural amenities such as Derryounce Lakes and Trails, Lea Castle, Carrick Woods, Emo Court and along the River Barrow. <p>These actions Principal Action No 8 details the actions in relation to the development of green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>In preparing Local Transport Plan for Portarlington, alternative modes of transport and how they facilitated within Portarlington will be reviewed and augmented. This is being supported by the National Transport Authority who are investing in walking and cycling within urban areas. This will be borne in mind in the drafting of that Plan.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	30
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Stephen Terry Deputy Principal Scoil Phádraig Portarlinton Co. Laois
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Individual
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written vi e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>Youth Centre Outdoor Yoga facility Public Gardens Hurling Wall Brighter lights on station road for evening walking/cycling Footpath out to graveyard. Very dangerous Wider footpaths More benches around the town to sit on More greenery and trees planted We said you could paint the old buildings in town and make them attractive so new shops would want to take them on. Drain the river and put benches around it for people to have picnics. Fishing spots by the river. A food truck kiosk idea beside the river also. A skate park for kids with a fence around it to stop anti-social behavior. A wi-fi hub so people could access free wifi in a part of town. An allotment area so people could grow their own vegetables. A farmers market so people could sell what they grow. Fix the basketball courts beside the astro as in relay the surface and new nets. An outdoor gym in the playground for kids to use. An arts centre/cinema with a cultural shop in the square. Open Astro pitches to the public Community farm / Petting Zoo Refurbish Portarlinton GAA centre Dog park More public bins on the streets, in the park More investment into electric cars- charging points Pedestrianize Main St Pathway to Corrig Woods from Train Station Pathway from Scoil Phádraig to Lough Gate</p>

	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	<p>The Regeneration strategy acknowledges the current provision of community / recreational and sports facilities within the town centre of Portarlinton, the Strategy supports any further development of this infrastructure</p> <p>The strategy includes proposals to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking and cycling within the town centre • Encourage a Farmers market in the Market Square to make better use of the public realm in this location. • Interpretation of the French history in the town. • Provide appropriate infrastructure on the river barrow for canoeing, fishing etc.; • Planting and landscaping for the study area; • Undergrounding of cables for street lighting which has already commenced. <p>There is potential to organise Portarlinton as a Sustainable Energy Community which would look at developing solutions in this regard</p> <p>It is proposed to develop a FREE WIFI zone in the town centre</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	31
NAME OF SUBMISSION	(Name to be withheld)
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Individual / resident
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	CHIEF
	<p>Submission deals with the physical and visual impressions of the town. It's not a tourist town, so needs to be made agreeable mostly to residents.</p> <p>Buildings such as Arlington House, and the Allied Irish bank building (formerly Flemming's Hotel) need repair in ways which can be easily maintained; Wilton House needs consideration, and along that a more rigorous application of planning regulations.</p> <p>Refers to The late Ronnie Mathews postcard collection and the potential for blue plaques on buildings to list former Huguenot residents and former schools which educated people like Edward Carson and Feargus O'Connor.</p> <p>Advocates the replacement of the mishmash of dire plastic unsympathetic shop fronts, for wood, or wood appearance.</p> <p>Advocates the removal to underground or elsewhere the plethora of wires which straggle along and across a narrow main street and disrupt views of architecture, as well as shops.</p> <p>There are several old and significant buildings where the owner, seeking to modernise and make legitimately more liveable in, have unfortunately added extras out of style or colour, replaced windows without reveals, out of style for glazing.</p> <p>The parochial hall in the town square could do with having the original windows replaced, perhaps also the clock, now in the French church and abandoned, could be re-installed in its round hole. The old cinema is Portarlinton's only bit of art deco, and the front should be preserved. However attractive in modern style, the dwelling at the back of the parochial hall is completely out of sympathy where it is. The square needs to be more than a traffic island, open to a meeting place, and wouldn't it be great if possible, a farmer's market, and stalls under the tholsel arches. If the square cannot be restored to</p>

	<p>use and attractiveness, then the town may continue to die from the centre</p> <p>I would argue the small house in Spa Lane at the back of the Weighbridge pub might be the oldest and C17th dwelling in the town, and its front has been horribly modernised. To make buildings attractive and sympathetic does not necessarily mean turning the clock back to hard times, or making houses difficult to live in.</p> <p>The Christian Brothers' School and Wilton House have both lost significant arches, and are in danger. Wilton house has major and important internal fittings. The Presentation convent looks as if in danger, and within that building are the structures on the earlier Catholic church.</p> <p>There is a museum collection of sorts in the Catholic Club building.</p>
	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, and exhibitions of the history of Portlarington etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul's and Saint Michael's Churches. <p>The Team acknowledges the rich heritage of Portlarington and the reference to the postcard collection of Ronnie Mathews. This has since been acquired by Laois County Council and will be archived and used to exhibition later to celebrate the rich heritage.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	32
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Maoilisa O'Chulachain – Portarlinton Business Association
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Business Association
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>VISION - The historic town of Portarlinton will be sensitively and sustainably enhanced through the provision of high-quality public realm by improving the town's attractiveness and functionality and as a place to live, work and visit</p> <p>OBJECTIVES</p> <p>Enhance environmental quality for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors</p> <p>Define and maximise the role of Portarlinton as a town centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe, attractive and good quality pedestrian environment day and night • Seek a sustainable balance between transport modes • Provide good quality spaces for recreation and play • Ensure accessibility for all members of the community <p>Maximise the role and quality of existing tourism assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities for new tourism attractions • Strengthen connectivity between attractions within the town • Support hospitality and associated retail activity <p>Improve the first impressions of Portarlinton</p> <p>Maintain a rich wildlife habitat for the benefit of biodiversity and local people Protect and enhance the historic fabric and identity of Portarlinton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support conservation of historic buildings and structures • contribute to the identification of sustainable new uses for old buildings • enhance the setting of landmark buildings and structures • imaginatively communicate the historical and cultural significance of Portarlinton • Accommodate sustainable future development via high quality infrastructure of public realm • identify and enhance the role and character of Portarlinton's existing open spaces

- guide the provision of new development to protect and enhance the existing town
- ensure high standards in the provision of new public realm

Portarlinton is located on the North East border of County Laois and South East of County Offaly

It is divided by the River Barrow with County Offaly on the north bank and County Laois on the south bank (and there are two county councils involved)It is critical that both county councils work in tandem on urban regeneration etc. for the benefit of the whole town

From a heritage point of view, it is imperative to take a holistic view and include Patrick St (on Offaly side) as much of the built heritage from Huguenot times on this street

The Town Centre connects the other parts of the town on each side of side it

Historic and cultural interpretation strategy

Realisation of potential of key heritage sites/ features to showcase town’s history and attract visitors is critical

A Heritage Development Plan for the town should be developed based around the key areas of Huguenot heritage, the Portarlinton schools and Lea Castle Port has also has a rich industrial heritage with the Power Station (the first peat burning station in Ireland), Bord na Móna, Odlum’s Mill, Grey Russell Sports, Arlington Jewels, Travel Goods etc.

Create a Port Heritage Centre or Museum (possibly in the Market House) Connect with Patrick Street (Co. Offaly) and Huguenot built heritage (e.g. Kilmalogue House), Lea Castle (Dempsey/ Clan Malier Heritage) and Emo Court

Built Form

Need to protect and accentuate unique Huguenot and Georgian built heritage

Architecture reflects the Huguenot influence:

- Calvinist tradition-> buildings tended to be without ostentation, but with fine doorways and large gardens to rear
- refugees who had suffered greatly from persecution in France-> buildings were built with safety in mind->back to the road with no windows or windows only at higher levels-> escape tunnels from houses on Patrick Street

- they brought new trees (pears and walnuts), vegetables and herbs with them which were planted in the gardens

Savoy Cinema

Significant features Possible development as an arcade (e.g. the Georges Street Arcade in Dublin or English Market in Cork) providing small units of between 250-500 sq. ft for the types of retail businesses that would not be viable paying normal commercial rents Businesses could include: craft shops, bookshops, antique shops, craft supplies, and of course specialist food shops and cafés

These are the types of specialist shops that people travel to and would bring people into the town It could involve putting in a 2nd floor with an open area in the centre, perhaps remove the corrugated iron roof and replace it with a glass roof.

Example-Georges Street Arcade / English Market

Significant features–English Church The English Church (now Parochial Hall) was originally built to be a feature on the Market Square Sited at the entry to Link Road, it sets the tone for that Streetscape It needs a considerable uplift that would not be within the financial resources of the Parish

Dilapidation and neglect

Failure to address dilapidation in the town centre will undermine other urban regeneration efforts-these are some examples from the Main St and French Church St

Flooding

Flooding has been an intermittent problem in Portarlington with serious flooding occurring every so many years on Patrick St and Spa St within the Town Centre It is important that this problem is addressed in an environmentally and visually sensitive way Unsightly hard defences and solutions that would cause problems further downriver from the town should be avoided There should be no further development on flood plains

Litter

Litter is a constant issue in Portarlington Consideration should be given to siting litter bins and dog litter bins throughout the public realm in the Town Centre in line with the Materials Palette

Environmental impact

'Greening' of Town Centre to improve environment and health and well-being of residents and visitors Create a low carbon town centre by reducing impact of cars/ traffic on the public realm and promoting walking/ cycling

Reduce emissions on Market Square/ Main Street/ at schools by reducing traffic volumes and reconfiguring traffic flows

Install EV recharging points throughout Town Centre to encourage greater use of electric vehicles

All adjacent to Portarlinton Natural heritage

Maximise Barrow frontage as a key environmental/ amenity asset Link with Special Area of Conservation at Lea Castle / peatlands at Derryounce/ Emo Court gardens and amenities

Developing a 'Smart Town'

Over past decade, Port has become home to a talent pool ranging from Amazon engineers and Microsoft developers to Public Sector digital architects

This is complemented by 7 years of mentors and Coderdojo ninjas learning IT skills and over the last 2 years starting to build applications in the IOT or "smart device "space

There are now over 20 junior mentors and CoderDojo ninjas attending STEAM college courses or working with IT companies like SAP and Intel with more to come

The Enterprise Centre is home to the Innovation Hub providing remote working and connected office space with access to broad band facilities and hot desk facilities

As part of the Innovation Hub, the Makerspace gives access to digital tools and fabrication courses for teenagers and adults Creating a 'Smart Town Centre', Makerspace can use "smart device" pollution monitors to promote the reduction in traffic at our schools in the morning and evening—showing the benefits with parents encouraging children to walk or cycle some or all the way to school

For example, Makerspace can:

- use "smart device" pollution monitors to promote the reduction in traffic at our schools in the morning and evening—showing the benefits for parents by encouraging children to walk or cycle some or all the way to school
- simple smart pedestrian counters to show how much walking routes, greenways and blue ways are being used. 5G /Wi-Fi zones are needed throughout the town

to enable the wave of remote workers based in the town and able to work anywhere from the Innovation Hub to the pedestrian zone around Market Square—bringing more and more business in to the heart of our town

We also need to avail of remote education technology to enable children and young adults take 3rd level Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Maths courses while based primarily in the town This will improve the business environment with more footfall in the shops and cafés of the town Portarlinton is well positioned to make this happen—through partnerships with midland colleges such as Athlone and Carlow—and also by leveraging the projects done on the Smart Town in conjunction with the Makerspace and CoderDojo’s

Open spaces

Market Square (discussed above) Peoples’ Park/ Barrow River bank walk (including Funeral Effigy of Hartlepool Family) Hickey’s Field (adjacent to Market Square and fronting Barrow River) should be considered for public use (e.g. car park) Land behind AIB on Upper Main Street Gateways to Derryounce and Lea Castle

Events

Public realm (principally the Market Square and Main Street) should support public events including:

- Weekly Farmers’ Market
- Seasonal markets (e.g. Christmas Fair, food fairs etc.)
- Festivals (e.g. French Festival) ◦Performing Arts (concerts, street theatre performances, lighting shows etc.)
- Public congregation Provide pop up anchorage facilities for traders/ musicians/ performers to quickly set up stalls/ stages/platforms/ marquees, power and lighting points, water taps, refuse disposal facilities, pop up seating, inflatable stages etc.

Gateways

The arrival experience should be designed to make first impressions of Portarlinton as positive as possible This should include:

- keeping signage to a minimum to avoid an unattractive and cluttered appearance

- planting street trees to contain the visual experience on arrival and screening unsightly buildings / unused ground
- floral displays to introduce colour and seasonal display/ interest
- boundary walls/ fences to be maintained and kept in good condition which requires cooperation of private landowners
- gateway locations within the public realm should be improved with planting, surface treatment, lighting and site-specific artworks that welcome people to Port

Access and circulation

Main national roads converging on Market Square (R420, R419, R423) High level of HVG and other traffic through Market Square seriously impacts on its value as public realm Traffic congestion in Town Centre particularly from cars crossing town to take children to schools on Station Road, Sandy Lane and Coláiste Íosagáin Important also to connect with Railway Station and Enterprise Centre

Cycle network

It is proposed that a cycle network be introduced by formally designating appropriate routes for bicycle use

This should be done in tandem with efforts to reduce vehicular congestion and traffic speeds, so that the bicycle can be promoted as a safe and viable alternative to the car Consideration should be given to bicycle lanes on wider roads and green/ blue routes for cycling away from roads particularly to/ from schools. Existing lanes should be joined up through the town centre to schools

Cycle lane Portarlinton at school start time Cycle lanes Portlaoise

There should also be adequate bicycle parking facilities with racks provided as part of the improvement of streets and public spaces close to key destinations (Market Square, Community Centre etc.) Cycling has a great potential to connect the Town Centre to Derrycastle, Lea Castle, the Railway Station, Enterprise Centre, Emo Court and Greenways/Blueways Consideration should be given to a ‘Velo’ scheme with bikes available for visitors to rent at key locations such as Market Square, Community Centre and the Railway Station

Proposed Cycle Ways

Port Town Trail

A core component should be the 'The Story of Portarlinton' Audio Guide (commissioned by Laois Co Co, Laois Partnership and Laois Tourism and produced by Arbata Heritage in 2014) and available on GuidiGO app

Erect stations for each of the 12 locations in the Trail with an information panel to share the significance of that location with visitors using a combination of text and graphics and lit during dark hours Key locations/features include Barrow Bridge, Market Square, Market House, French Church, Arlington House, Kilmalogue House, MainStreet, Peoples' Park, The Elms and East End Hotel, and Kilnacourt House Listowel reference

Car parking

Vehicular access and parking are vitally important to the town Currently cars park on Main Street, Market Square, Peoples' Park and also private parking provided by traders off the Link Road Need to review current parking arrangements with a view to reducing/ repositioning parking(except disabled parking) away from public realm spaces (Market Square and Main Street) to facilitate greater use by public/ pedestrians / cyclists and for events (e.g. markets, festivals and concerts)

Street Trees

Street trees have an important role to play in an urban environment like the Town Centre, where they mitigate against air and noise pollution, provide habitat for wildlife and serve to add visual interest throughout the year

The selection of tree species must be carefully carried out in relation to its ability to flourish in local conditions, its size and the appropriateness of its overall form and habit. Preference should be given to the use of native tree species where possible, due to their greater contribution to the local ecosystem For example, Tiliacordata 'Greenspire' is a species specially cultivated for its narrow form, making it ideal for use on streets Smaller trees for use should include Sorbus aucuparia (Rowan) and Betula pendula (Silver Birch)

Street and directional signage

A uniform signage design should be mounted on all town centre streets Directional signage is required for pedestrians and drivers navigating their way around the town providing clarity and consistency Propose a review of all directional signage to identify and remove all unnecessary signs and the introduction of a suite of pedestrian finger posts that are carefully designed and positioned These must not add to clutter and over provision Listowel reference

Frontage improvements

Dilapidation and the design and condition of frontages have a direct influence on the character and quality of the adjacent public realm. Inappropriate materials, fixtures, colours or textures have a negative impact on the wider area.

As most buildings are privately owned, it is important that mechanisms are implemented to bring about improvements to such frontages including prompt council action against dilapidation, with painting schemes etc.

Poor maintenance/lack of cleaning
Poor maintenance
Inappropriate/ disorganised signage/ cladding

Frontage improvements (cont'd) A programmatic approach is needed to remove / replace and tackle inappropriate:

- window types (replace with Sash windows)
- Ornamentation and signs
- superfluous metal fixtures and fittings
- garish colours or wall textures

General poor maintenance and upkeep needs to be addressed including buildings in public ownership (An Post)

Advertising signage

Undertake an audit of all signage to assess the distribution, impact and role of signage (e.g. on Link Road). Remove all unnecessary signs, relocation of inappropriately placed signs and redesign of signage to improve looks and contribute to its urban context. New signage should be controlled through a system of permissions to determine the necessity and duration of temporary signs. Clear guidelines on signage should be considered for retailers to advise on suitable scale, size and colours of signage specific to their building.

General Lighting Strategy

The Public Realm must be adequately lit to ensure perceived and real levels of safety, encouraging pedestrian and cycling activity on Summer evenings and Winter mornings and afternoons particularly in pedestrian areas, parks, footpaths and cycling lanes.

Design of light columns and fixtures should be consistent and appropriate to context with the use—for example—of street lighting fixed to buildings to reduce street clutter and in confined spaces.

Feature lighting strategy

	<p>Creative use of lighting can enhance the town centre by lighting landmarks and features (e.g. Market House, Market Square, French Church, Barrow Bridge) to accentuate their physical presence during hours of darkness and increase their value as visitor attractions</p> <p>Lighting should be sensitively designed to complement the character and settings of landmarks, whether they be buildings, monuments or natural features General and feature lighting must also be designed to keep light pollution to a minimum using low energy, environmentally efficient fittings</p> <p>Enhanced floral displays</p> <p>Floral displays should be used to add colour and seasonal interest Location and design of displays should be appropriate to context while maximising impact</p> <p>Formal planters that can be moved should be positioned in places where there is adequate room for pedestrian circulation</p> <p>Hanging baskets can be used where their visual impact will be most effective Window boxes are also an effective way to add seasonal colour and interest</p> <p>The town should aim to participate in the ‘Entente Floriale’ competition in 2021</p>
	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>The Strategy has been informed by this detailed submission which seeks to achieve many of the objectives that have been stated in the project brief and developed out during preparation of the Strategy.</p> <p>We support the Vision that has been proposed which is enshrined in Section 7 of the Draft Strategy.</p> <p>Laois and Offaly County Council are wholly supportive of the objectives as stated in this submission which also has been iterated throughout many of the submissions received</p> <p>The principal actions in the Draft Strategy captures and reflects all of the specific areas outlined in the submission (The Heritage of Portarlinton, Built Form, Dilapidation and neglect, Flooding, Litter, Environmental impact, Open spaces, Events, Gateways, Access and circulation, Cycle network, Port Town Trail, Car parking, Street Trees, Street and directional signage, Frontage improvements, Advertising signage, General</p>

	<p>Lighting Strategy, Feature lighting strategy, Enhanced floral displays)</p> <p>mentioned in this submission under the following actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Rehabilitation of the Market House 2 Rehabilitation of the Market Square 3 Improve the Public Realm within the Town Centre 4 Promote Sustainable Access and Mobility 5 Promote Sustainable Uses within the Town Centre 6 Create a Low Carbon Zone 7 Celebrate the Heritage of Portarlington 8 Develop the Green and Blue Infrastructure <p>The Strategy proposes to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remake the Market Square as a place which is usable as a public amenity and event space; • reconfigure the existing traffic movements within the square to increase the usable space provided to pedestrians while still providing turning movements required for vehicles. • rationalise design in the public realm to eliminate clutter and to design street surfaces, landscape features, and traffic management interventions in a coordinated and strategic approach, aimed at improving the look of private properties via a council framework within the public realm • reinforce the visual and physical connection to the Church of Ireland site and the architectural landmark of the Savoy Cinema; • Reduce the number of car parking spaces and move same to alternative, more appropriate locations; • Conserve and rejuvenate the former Courthouse and provide a significant civic event space within the historic town core as a venue for markets, small concerts, etc. and better integration of Main street and French Church Street and St. Paul’s and Saint Michael’s Churches. <p>The principal actions outlined in Section 7 detail these specifically.</p> <p>Separately, Laois County Council and Offaly County Council have received funding from the National Transport Authority to commission an Active Travel / Local Transport Plan for Portarlington which includes both the OCC and LCC areas.</p>
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	<p>The scope of this study will look at existing transport patterns, key infrastructural requirements and future transport requirements with key service providers.</p> <p>In relation to the development of Portarlinton as a SMART town , we are wholly supportive of this initiative and acknowledge all the work done by the local CODER DOJO in developing these skills within the town and the facilitation of the PEC to home these courses and training classes, we also note the investment in creating additional space at PEC and purchasing equipment to develop this area.</p> <p>We note the innovative solution to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• install smart device pollution monitors to promote a reduction in pollution and• pedestrian counters on walkways to show the pedestrian and cycling usage within the town centre• monitor the health of the bog <p>and have commenced discussion with Offaly County Council to develop some cross border IOT projects in relation to the above. It is proposed to develop a FREE WIFI zone in the town centre during 2021-2022.</p> <p>There is potential to organise Portarlinton as a Sustainable Energy Community which would look at developing solutions in this regard</p>
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SUB. REF. NO.	31
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Martin D'Alton (C/O Josephine Lee , OCC)
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Individual
SUBMISSION TYPE	Written via e-mail
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>Submission is in relation to the following Points -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traffic Management, 2. Patrick Street, 3. Community and Permeability, and 4. Specific Projects. <p>Portarlinton was founded in a loop in the River Barrow, apparently on an old road and a ford on the River Barrow at Bellatride (which can be translated as 'Beal Atha an tSraid, the Mouth of The Ford of the Road), where the Barrow Bridge is now.</p> <p>I mention this, as the town, originally central in this small loop, developed along these old routes to Bracklone in the east and on to Kilmalogue to the west in Offaly.</p> <p>This means that many parts of the current town, although geographically close to each other, are separated by the River Barrow and can seem quite distant from each other and take a long time to reach by foot.</p> <p>The modern development of the town has meant that many of the modern amenities and services of the town are at the extremities; although the church of Ireland is centrally located, the other amenities of schools services etc are at the extremities of the town previously mentioned;</p> <p>These include;</p> <p>Laois; The Primary School on the Station Road, The modern School on the Canal Road, McCann GAA Park and GAA Centre on the Canal Road, The Railway Station.</p> <p>Offaly. St. Michael's Catholic church, Scoil Iosagain (behind the catholic church). The Cemetery, of which the people of the town are rightfully proud.</p> <p>A very pleasing feature of the town is the River Barrow, and a great amenity is the river walk, developed many years ago by the town's anglers on the south side of the river.</p> <p>I believe there exists an opportunity for the two county councils to act in cooperation to greater integrate the two sides of the town.</p> <p>On Patrick Street, at Sam Gee's former Hardware Shop, there is a lane that leads to a former Maltings, and Sawmill, formerly</p>

	<p>powered by a defunct mill race. Below this is a field which regularly floods.</p> <p>On the other side of the river is 'Critchley's Close', or the Commons, whose level was raised about 20 years ago with spoil from an extension to the former 'Butler's Engineering Works. This field is opposite St. Michael's Park Estate and leads back to the town via Foxcroft Street and Sandy Lane.</p> <p>As can be seen from the attached map, a new route and bridge at this location would link the opposite ends of the town, and could help to provide a safe cycling and walking link to the schools in the town from the different parts, separate from the existing streets. It could in future become a feature along an enhanced River Walk. It would also provide a circular walk as an amenity in the town</p> <p>Another tentative link is show from Bracklone across the River Barrow to Bishop's Wood, but these areas are both in Co. Laois.</p>
	<p><u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u></p>
<p>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION</p>	<p>Connectivity with the town of Portarlinton and the development of more sustainable modes of transport are of paramount importance in the development of this regeneration strategy. Providing more attractive Connections along the River Barrow to Derryounce and through the town and onto Lea Castle. This is one of the priorities and detailed in Action 8.0 Development of Green and Blue Infrastructure.</p> <p>The Strategy proposes to augment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections to natural amenities such as Derryounce Lakes and Trails, Lea Castle, Carrick Woods, Emo Court and along the River Barrow. <p>These actions Principal Action No 8 details the actions in relation to the development of green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>This will be subject to stringent environmental impact assessment and appropriate assessment.</p>

SUB. REF. NO.	34
NAME OF SUBMISSION	Claire Shields
NATURE OF SUBMISSION	Individual
SUBMISSION TYPE	Laois.Cosult.ie
ISSUES RAISED & CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	<p>We are seeking support & measuring interest in a campaign to have a skate park built in our town. Skate parks offer our kids and young adults a structured way of enjoying their activity outdoors in a safer and less anti-social environment.</p> <p>We are looking to engage with Laois County Council to identify a suitable place and source funding to enhance our young people's ability to partake in an outdoor activity with other likeminded people which will also help them socially engage with their peers.</p> <p>Currently people travel to Portlaoise, Tullamore, Nass and Newbridge to use their skateparks.</p> <p>Link to Petition: https://www.change.org/p/laois-county-council-portarlington-needs-a-skate-park?</p>
	<u>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE</u>
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION	The Regeneration strategy acknowledges the current provision of community / recreational and sports facilities within the town centre of Portarlington, the Strategy supports any further development of this infrastructure

List of submissions made

01	Peterluke Quinn	INCL
02	Thomas Fallon	INCL
03	Thomas Cullen	INCL
04	Caitlin Hyland	INCL
05	Karen Dunne	INCL
06	Tom Ennis	INCL
07	Mary Glendining	INCL
08	Harald Pitzchek	INCL
09	Michael Dunne	INCL
10	Igor Cinclei	INCL
11	Name Withheld	INCL
12	ADW	INCL
13	Johanna Krois	INCL
14	Atje Herzog Gallagher	INCL
15	Jean Keogh	INCL
16	David Orford	INCL
17	Michael Turley	INCL
18	Anna Mae Muldowney	INCL
19	KACCM Melia	INCL
20	Sharon Kennedy OCC	INCL
21	Portarlinton Community Development Association (PCDA)	INCL
22	Make Port Markerspace	INCL
23	Portarlinton Tidy Towns	INCL
24	Johnathan McDonagh	INCL
25	Basil Mannion	INCL
26	David Reed	INCL
27	David Murphy	INCL
28	Noel Bodie	INCL
29	Class 3A Scoil Phadriag	INCL
30	Stephen Terry Scoil Phadraig	INCL
31	(Name withheld)	INCL
32	Maoilisa O’Culachain (Portarlinton Business Association)	INCL
33	Martin D’Alton (c/o Josephine lee OCC)	INCL
34	Claire Shiels	INCL