

Portlaoise A National Demonstration Project

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Why Portlaoise ?

- Town has experienced rapid growth in past 15 years (> 80%), now over 22,000
- High % of people under 35 yrs....54% (nat avge 47%)
- Evidence of “doughnut effect” in town centre, pop decline, vacant and derelict sites, challenging trading environment
- Significant outward migration of workers (11,500 daily)
- Reflective of outer archipelago of Towns like Navan, Mullingar, Tullamore, Carlow etc.
- Pressing need for intervention to bring cohesion to large residential estates (tenure management, community supports, training)
- Integration of new communities

For action



People and Community Participation

- Local consultation and engagement , participative plan making and place making
- Listening
- Capturing what people want to see in their own town as it expands towards a greater population
- The establishment of a Town Team, town health check (energy, positivity and ownership)
- Preparation of a Shared Vision and incorporation into the Statutory Local Area Plan



2040

- And Beyond



A VISION FOR PORTLAOISE

A STRATEGY FOR A BETTER TOWN CENTRE

May 2017



Urban Greening on JFL Avenue



Main elements of “A Vision for Portlaoise 2040 and Beyond”

- Policies and objectives align very closely with “Ireland 2040”
- The creation of a low carbon Town Centre
- A walkable Town Centre (Public Realm, Accessibility
- Exposure of Cultural and Built Heritage
- Development of the River Triogue Blueway for amenity and safe routes to school
- The connection of the Old and New Town
- Provision of Accommodation and Living in the Town Centre Area
- Provide for working and better business in Town Centre

What has been achieved so far?

- Vacancy/occupancy survey completed
- Designs prepared for laneway improvements
- Tenders invited for new Portlaoise Library on Main Street
- Heritage works on Old Fort Protector Wall and St Peters Graveyard
- Purchase of vacant and derelict buildings
- Progress on relocation of Courthouse to new Campus
- Plans being advanced for Old Convent Site (ACA)
- Plans being advanced for additional car and bicycle parking beside Portlaoise Railway Station
- New Circular Relief Road proceeding to construction

Continued

- Plans advanced for Triogue Cycle Way
- Local Enterprise Office training for retail (Brexit and on-line challenges)
- New Fort Protector mid summer Festival
- Purchase of lands (c80 acres) at J17, Togher for Business and Employment
- CPO for 3 derelict properties submitted to ABP , oral hearing has taken place and decision awaited.
- Draft Plans for transformational regeneration of severely disadvantaged housing estates.
- Appointment of Research Officer by LCC

Our view of what needs to be demonstrated

- How working though and with people can bring back vitality to the Urban Core and lead to better community ownership
- What a new sustainable and low carbon urban community and economy could look like,
- How business and heritage can work together and are mutually beneficial
- Can we entice people back to live in urban centres
- How business clusters work in regional towns
- Urban design and public realm, how it brings confidence to place and people

Continued

- How to successfully repurpose existing building stock
- Can we demonstrate how to combine all our relevant resources and capacity to bring cohesion to large residential estates?

**Our Proposals for funding
under the URDF are...**

Confidential until Sept 28th

Excerpt from “A Vision for PortLaoise” a strategy for a better Town Centre

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmMDbGe1YqE>