

MAYO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2008-2014

This Plan was made and adopted by Mayo County Council on the 6th Mayo 2008. Variation No 1 was made on the 11th November 2009 (to incorporate Ministerial Direction). Variation No 2 was made on the 17th October 2011 (to incorporate a Core Strategy).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This is the Development Plan for County Mayo, which has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000-2005 and the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010. This Plan builds on the review of the Mayo County Development Plan 2003-2009.

Development Trends & Key issues

Many of the issues identified during the last review of the plan are still relevant in the context of the current review, particularly in relation to matters such as infrastructural deficiencies, environmental protection, rural housing, economic development, development of our natural resources and towns/villages.

Key Issues:

Population

- *How to meet projected population growth of the County within the context of a Core Strategy and supporting Settlement Strategy which is consistent with the framework set out in the NSS and Regional Guidelines*
- *To meet the minimum indicative target population of 26,000 by 2016 and 28,700 by 2022 as indicated in the RPGs*
- *Mayo's high incidence of vacant properties and how to address this trend within the context of the Core Strategy.*

Employment & Enterprise

- *Provision of physical, social and economic infrastructure in the linked hub, Westport as its natural extension, and other towns.*
- *Creation of linkages within the County and to the gateways.*
- *Provision of alternative employment for farmers leaving agriculture and/or moving to part-time farming.*
- *Promotion of the educational/research capabilities of Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT Castlebar) as a key element in attracting investors to the County.*

Infrastructural Deficiencies

- *Strengthening of the infrastructure base and prioritising the delivery of key strategic roads, rail, air, telecommunications and energy infrastructure to the County.*

Land Use, Rural and Urban Settlement

- *To implement the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines having regard to:*
 - *the particular circumstances of the County in terms of traditional settlement patterns and recent demographic trends*
 - *the careful management of the development of the rural environs of the Ballina/Castlebar hub and Westport as its natural extension, and other areas outside Clár designation, under pressure.*
- *To strengthen the role of the County's towns and villages in the context of a more balanced approach to a settlement strategy, which emphasizes the crucial and strategic role of the towns and villages in addressing rural decline and maintaining vibrant rural communities*
- *The plan equally recognises the vital role, which those who live in rural areas play in supporting the vibrancy of their adjacent towns and villages.*

Environment & Landscape

Water Quality Protection

- *Protection and improvement of water quality in compliance with the EU Water Framework Directive and support of the Western River Basin District Project*

Sustainable Landscape Management and Protection Where Necessary

- *Sustainable management and protection where necessary, of the traditional landscape character of the countryside.*
- *How to accommodate new development without compromising the outstanding quality of Mayo's landscape, which is recognized as one of the County's major economic resources.*
- *How to maintain and improve access to and enjoyment of the recreational amenities of the countryside.*

Flood Risk/Soil Erosion

- *The sustainable management of the conflicting factors, which may lead to flooding or other adverse environmental impacts.*

The Coast

- *The integrated management of the coastal zone areas of the County.*

Natural Resources

- *The sustainable development of the County's wind resources.*
- *The sustainable development of other renewable energy sources and other valuable natural resources to their full potential, in a manner that has due regard to environmental protection, bio-diversity, conservation and the preservation of visual, scenic and residential amenities.*

Heritage & Conservation

Nature Conservation

- *How to provide for new development without compromising the conservation value of designated sites and non-designated sites of recognized conservation value.*

Cultural and Architectural Heritage

- *The need to protect and conserve the heritage of monuments and buildings and their settings from inappropriate development.*

Tourism

- *To ensure that the full potential of tourism as an economic and social force is realised in a sustainable manner, with due regard to the impact on local communities and the natural environment*
- *To attract greater numbers to the County, provide better facilities and attractions; and to foster a longer stay and greater regional and seasonal spread holiday product*
- *Increased coordination, cohesion and co-operation between agencies involved in the delivery of the tourism product.*

Community, Recreation & Social Inclusion

- *To ensure that the provision of Social, Community and Recreation facilities is fully integrated into the planning and sustainable development of the county.*

Islands & Gaeltacht Maigh Eo

- *The need to ensure that the population on the Islands and in the Gaeltacht is stabilized and increased, in order that they remain viable communities, retaining their uniqueness of culture and language.*
- *Protection and promotion of the distinctiveness of the Gaeltacht areas within the County.*

The development plan has been prepared taking into account:

- the concept of ‘**sustainable development**’
- the application of **European law and directives**
- the objectives of the **National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines**
- existing and emerging **national legislation**
- the **County Development Board Strategy**
- the **Corporate Strategy of Mayo County Council**
- Mayo County Council **policy decisions**
- the Development Plan as ‘**shared vision**’
- the need for a Development Plan that is **inclusive** and offers **equal opportunities**

The Development Plan provides the land use framework within which other strategies including Local Area Plans, the Mayo County Retail Strategy, the Mayo Housing Strategy, The Record of Protected Structures and the Mayo Wind Energy Strategy will operate.

The County Development Plan incorporates a Core Strategy which set out an evidenced based strategy for the spatial development of the County and demonstrates that the development objectives in the plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Guidelines for the West Region 2010 – 2022 (RPGs).

The Development Plan has been subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

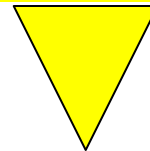
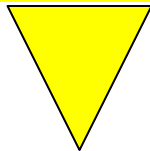
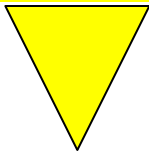
The focus for the Plan developed from the Mission Statement of Mayo County Council’s Corporate Plan, the County Enterprise Board Strategy, and the key issues facing the county.

The Key Aim of the Council is to provide a framework for sustaining and developing communities throughout County Mayo. This will be achieved by setting out policies that:

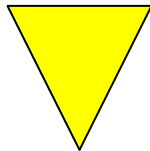
1. promote sustainability and improve quality of life;
2. encourage population retention, inward migration and address the imbalances in the demographic structure;
3. help support those who wish to live, work and invest in County Mayo.

The framework will be delivered through the production of a robust **Development Plan** to enable sustainable development.

<p>Mayo County Council Mission Statement</p> <p>Mayo County Council is a democratically elected local authority whose purpose is to sustain and improve the quality of life for all people in the County. The Development Plan must advance a land use strategy within the overall Mission Statement and reflect the Council's Corporate Plan.</p>	<p>Strategic Context</p> <p>Over the two census periods the population of the county has grown by almost 11%. The latest population projections are for further growth until at least 2016 by another 15%. This will have effects on the current population structure, community development and social fabric of the county. There is a need for a positive development framework that can play a part in shaping the population growth of the county to create balanced, sustainable communities.</p>	<p><i>Le Chéile le Neart</i></p> <p>Working with community partners, the Development Plan can aid the implementation of the Mayo County Development Strategy 2002-2012 which seeks to have Prosperous Communities and Capable & Sustainable Communities</p>
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Development Plan Focus



A land use strategy for sustaining the communities of County Mayo

The Overall Strategy of the County Development Plan is:

- *To promote population growth towards a projected County population of 143,640 by 2016 and 150,800 by 2022 by facilitating sustainable economic and social development, with due regard to the complimentary role of both urban and rural areas in the overall development of the County*
- *To define a strong sub-regional role for Mayo as a counter balance to the major urban areas of Galway City and Sligo, having regard to the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Guidelines*
- *To develop the Linked Hub of Castlebar/Ballina and Westport as its natural extension, as the spine around which the sustainable development of County Mayo will be structured, and to promote this extended Hub in the future development of spatial policy, both regionally and nationally*
- *To support the implementation of the hub status of Castlebar/Ballina and Westport as its natural extension, and to strengthen and enhance the County's urban structure, in particular the targeted development of the Key Towns as set out in the Regional Guidelines, and other towns identified by the Council*
- *To promote sustainable vibrant rural communities*
- *To promote sustainability and vibrancy in rural communities, including small towns and villages*
- *To promote the future growth and development needs of the County in a sustainable manner, and to ensure that the benefits of economic growth and prosperity are spread to all parts of the County*
- *To improve the quality of life and social well-being of all those living, working and visiting Mayo, by ensuring a high quality and sustainable residential, recreational, travel and working environment.*
- *To promote and facilitate the provision of a sound infrastructural base throughout the County, in particular critical infrastructure, which will enhance intra/inter-regional linkages, in order to improve the economic competitiveness of Mayo*
- *To protect, conserve and manage in a prudent and sustainable manner the County's outstanding natural and built heritage; its cultural resources and to seek the enhancement of these resources where appropriate and feasible*
- *To protect, promote and enhance the distinctiveness of the linguistic and cultural heritage of Gaeltacht Mhaigh Eo, without compromising the linguistic heritage of these areas.*

To progress the Overall Strategy, a Core Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010. The Core Strategy sets out how the objectives in the Development Plan are consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines. A central component of the Core Strategy is the County Settlement Strategy based on a settlement hierarchy which is consistent with the spatial structure, aims and objectives of the NSS and RPGs.

The Core Strategy

The Core Strategy supports the establishment of a settlement hierarchy which reflects the development role of various categories of settlement throughout the County. Within this hierarchy, the linked Castlebar-Ballina hub, twelve Key towns, fifteen smaller towns and villages; and the countryside, including sixty eight small rural villages, all have complementary roles to play in the future growth and prosperity of Mayo.

An overarching aim is to encourage the development of a critical mass of people in the linked hub to enable it to act as a key driver of social and economic development, both within the West Region and the County, whilst also supporting the network of Key towns and smaller settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy and supporting sustainable and vibrant rural communities in the rural villages and countryside.

Key objectives are:

1. Support population growth for the County towards 143,640 persons by 2016 and 150,800 persons by 2022
2. Promotion and development of Ballina and Castlebar as a linked hub and in the creation of a critical mass of population of 26,000 by 2016 and 28,700 by 2022
3. Promotion and development of the strategic role of the Key Towns which include Westport, as an extension of the linked hub, Béal an Mhuirthead (Belmullet), Ballinrobe, Ballyhaunis, Claremorris, Charlestown, Louisburgh, Swinford, Killala, Newport, Knock and Kiltimagh
4. The strengthening of the network of smaller towns and villages of the County
5. The strengthening of the rural villages in the wider rural areas
6. The support of sustainable development in the countryside and the facilitation of those who wish to live in the open countryside in accordance with the principles set out in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines
7. The regeneration of rural areas that have experienced population decline in a sustainable manner
8. Promotion of compact sustainable urban development
9. Provision of infrastructure to meet the development needs of the Settlement Hierarchy
10. Consolidation of population growth in a way which best facilitates travel by sustainable modes in accordance with the Department of Transport 'Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020'
11. Development of strong transport links between the Galway gateway, other gateways and the linked hub and Westport together with the more peripheral areas
12. Maintain and protect the safety and efficiency of the national road network given its strategic role in catering for transport requirements between the linked hub and other settlements in the settlement hierarchy and other inter-urban and inter-regional transport requirements.

Housing and Housing Land Requirements for 2016

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to provide a transparent evidence-based rationale for the amount of land proposed to be zoned for residential and allied mixed-use zonings in the development plan. The Core Strategy sets out:

- relevant population figures and housing land requirement for the various urban centres in its area
- a schedule of the local area plans that will have to be amended to take account of the Core Strategy and
- the timeframe for such amendments.

Core Strategy Tables have been compiled which summarise the key statistics relating to the distribution of future population together with associated housing requirements for 2016 and 2022 and the shortfall/excess of residential lands in relation to population targets. They also set out details relating to existing residential zonings in the Local Area Plans and the Town and Environs Plans for Ballina, Castlebar and Westport (as the Environs of these towns are within the jurisdiction of Mayo County Council).

Key Issues for the Core Strategy

Three key factors were identified which were taken into consideration in determining future housing and residential land requirements and levels of excess:

- The high level of vacant units throughout the County
- The potential housing yield from unfinished estates
- The potential housing yield from housing developments already permitted but not yet commenced.

Excess Residential Zoned Lands

There is excess residential zoning in all six towns, with a combined total excess of 244 hectares. Therefore, in order to be consistent with the Core Strategy the local area plans for Ballinrobe, Ballyhaunis, Swinford, Charlestown-Bellaghy and Kiltimagh will require to be amended within one year of adoption of the Core Strategy. A review of the Local Area Plan for Claremorris will commence following adoption of the Core Strategy as it was adopted in 2006 and is therefore due for review.

The following options will be considered in order to address surplus lands/housing when reviewing/amending the Local Area Plans:

1. Discontinuing the Zoning Objective
2. Re-zoning for other alternative appropriate uses
3. Including surplus residential lands as a “Strategic Land Reserve and/or
4. Phasing of development.

The County Settlement Strategy

The County Settlement Strategy (CSS) recognises that the different categories of settlement throughout the County; including the larger urban settlements, medium and smaller towns, rural villages and rural areas all have complementary roles to play in the future growth and prosperity of Mayo. The County Settlement Strategy sets out how this potential can be realized in order to advance the implementation of the Core Strategy.

Key guiding principles for the County Settlement Strategy are:

1. The development of a critical mass of people in the linked hub to enable it to act as a key driver of social and economic development both within the County and throughout the Western Region
2. Strengthening the network of Key towns and smaller settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy in order to encourage more strategically focused and plan-led development throughout the county’s small town and village structure thereby avoiding unsustainable commuter driven and car based development
3. Supporting sustainable and vibrant rural communities in the rural villages and countryside.

The principal policy objectives in relation to the County Settlement Strategy in the Development Plan are:

THE COUNTY SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

P/CSS 1 & P¹/CSS 2	Ballina/Castlebar Linked Hub and Westport as its natural extension
P/CSS-2.1–P/CSS-2.3	Key Towns
P/CSS-3.1–P/CSS-3.3	Other Towns and Villages
P/CSS 2.1 & P/CSS 2.2	Strategic Development Policies & Objectives for <u>All</u> Towns and Villages
O/CSS-2.1–CSS-2.7	Objectives for Towns and Villages:
CSS-3.1–CSS-3.8	Rural Villages Policies
CSS-3.9–CSS-3.11	Rural Villages Objectives
P/Z-1 – P/Z-3	Zoning Policies
O/Z-1–O/Z-4	Zoning Objectives
P/RH-1–P/RH-16	Rural Housing Policies
P/RH-HH 1–P/RHH-3	Holiday Homes and Second Home Development
RH-OD1 & RH-OD 2	Other Development in Rural Areas

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

P/ED-IE 1–P/ED-IE4	Industry & Enterprise Policies
O/ED-IE1–O/ED-IE6	Industry & Enterprise Objectives
P/ED-A1–P/ED-A8	Agriculture Policies
O/ED-A1	Agricultural Objective
P/ED-F1–P/ED-F3	Forestry Policies
O/ED-F1	Forestry Objective
P/ED-AF1–P/ED-AF6	Marine Resources, Aquaculture & Fishing Policies
O/ED-AF1	Marine Resources, Aquaculture & Fishing Objective
P/ED-T1–P/ED-T9	Tourism Policies
O/ED-T1–O/ED/T4	Tourism Objectives
P/ED-EI 1–P/ED/IE5	Extractive Industries Policies
O/ED-EI 1	Extractive Industries Objective
P/ED-RT1–P/ED/RT11	Retailing Policies
O/ED-RT1–O/ED/RT8	Retailing Objectives
P/ED-SS1	Major Accidents & Seveso II Sites Policy
O/ED-SS1–O/ED/SS5	Major Accidents & Seveso II Sites Objectives

TRANSPORT & PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

P/TI-R1–P/TI-R5	Roads Policies
O/TI-R1–O/TI-R9	Roads Objectives
P/TI-LUT1 & P/TI-LUT2	Land Use Integration & Sustainable Transport Policies
O/TI-LUT1 & O/TI-LUT2	Land Use Integration & Sustainable Transport Objectives
P/TI-P1	Parking Provision Policy
O/TI-P1	Parking Provision Objective
P/TI-PC1–P/TI-PC9	Pedestrians & Cyclists Policies
O/TI-PC1–O/TI-PC3	Pedestrians & Cyclists Objectives
P/TI-RL1–P/TI-RL2	Rail Policies
O/TI-RL1–O/TI-RL2	Rail Objectives
P/TI-AI & P/TI-A2	Air Transport Policies
O/TI-AI & O/TI-A3	Air Transport Objectives
P/TI-PH 1	Piers & Harbours Policies

¹ Generally, a P prefix signifies a Policy and O signifies an Objective

O/TI-PH 1	Piers & Harbours Objective
P/TI-WS1–P/TI-WS3	Water & Sewerage Policies
O/TI-WS1–O/TI-WS3	Water & Sewerage Objectives
O/TI-W1 & O/TI-W2	Waste Objectives
P/TI-TC1 & P/TI-TC2	Telecommunications Policies
O/TI-TC1	Telecommunications Objective
P/TI-E1 & P/TI-E4	Energy Policies
P/TI-RE1–P/TI-RE9	Renewable Energy Policies
O/TI-RE1–O/TI-RE10	Renewable Energy Objectives
O/TI-G1 & O/TI-G2	Gas Objectives
P/TI-IC1–P/TI-IC3	Infrastructure Corridors Policies

HOUSING, SOCIAL & COMMUNITY

P/HC-1–P/HC-3	Housing-General Policies
P/HC-UH1–P/HC-UH7	Urban Housing Policies
O/HC-UH1–O/HC-UH5	Urban Housing Objectives
O/HC-TA1	Traveller Accommodation Objective
P/HC-SC1–P/HC-SC4	Social & Community Policies
O/HC-SC1	Social & Community Objective
P/HC-HL1	Health Policy
P/HC-ED1 & P/HC-ED2	Education Policies
O/HC-ED1	Education Objective
P/HC-CP1	Childcare & Play Policies
O/HC-CP1–O/HC-CP3	Childcare & Play Objectives
O/HC-LS1	Library Services Objective
P/HC-BG1	Burial Grounds Policy
O/HC-BG1 & O/HC-BG2	Burial Grounds Objectives
P/HC-FE1	Fire & Emergency Services Policy
O/HC-FE1 & O/HC-FE2	Fire & Emergency Services Objectives
P/HC-A1	Arts Policies
P/HC-PC1	Public Conveniences Policy
P/HC-SOS 1–P/HC-SOS 3	Sports & Open Space Policies
O/HC-SOS1–O/HC-SOS4	Sports & Open Space Objectives
P/HC-NA1	Natural Recreation & Amenities Policies
O/HC-NA1 & O/HC-NA2	Natural Recreation & Amenities Objectives
P/HC-SP1	Swimming Pools Policy
O/HC-SP1	Swimming Pools Objective
P/HC-ACC1	Access to Enjoyment of Amenities & Facilities Policy
O/HC-ACC1	Access to Enjoyment of Amenities & Facilities Objective
P/HC-CC1	Camping & Caravan Parks Policy
P/HC-G1 & P/HC-G3	Gaeltacht Mhaigh Eo Policies
O/HC-G1 to O/HC-G3	Gaeltacht Mhaigh Eo Objectives
P/HC-IS1 to P/HC-IS4	The Islands Policies

ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE & CONSERVATION

Environmental Protection

P/EH-WQ1–P/EH-WQ6	Water Quality Policies
O/EH-WQ1–O/EH-WQ3	Water Quality Objectives
P/EH-LC1 & P/EH-LC2	Landscape Protection Policies
P/EH-VP1 & P/EH-VP2	Views and Prospects Policies
P/EH-AN1–P/EH-AN3	Air Quality & Noise Pollution Policies
P/EH-CZ1–P/EH-CZ5	Coastal Zone Management Policies
O/EH-CZ1–O/EH-CZ3	Coastal Zone Management Objectives
P/EH-F1–P/EH-F3	Flooding & Soil Erosion Policies
P/EH-AD1	Advertising Policy

Heritage

P/H-G1–P/H-G4	Heritage Policies
O/H-G1–P/H-G3	Heritage Objectives
P/EH-NH1–P/EH-NH6	Natural Heritage Policies
O/EH-NH1	Natural Heritage Objective
P/EH-AH1 & P/EH-AH2	Archaeological Heritage Policies
P/EH-BH1	Built Heritage Policies
O/EH-BH1 & O/EH-BH2	Built Heritage Objectives
O/EH-ACA1 & O/EH-ACA2	Architectural Conservation Areas Objectives
P/EH-OA1	Other Aspects of the Built Heritage Policies

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Drawing on the policies set out in the Development Policies and Objectives section, it is essential that the overall approach to land use and the management of development in the County is supported by the application of established principles and best practice.

The criteria and standards set out in the Development Management Guidelines, while there to provide the planning authority's requirements concerning particular aspects of the design of developments, will operate with a certain amount of flexibility in certain circumstances. Such flexibility will only be applied where proposed development is otherwise consistent with proper planning and sustainable development. The Development Management Guidelines stress that while many of the standards are the minimum acceptable, good design is the most important requirement. Good designers can utilise standards in achieving a high degree of design rather than seek derogations from them.