

MAYO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2008-2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This is the new Development Plan for County Mayo, which has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000-2005. 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 Settlement Strategy, which meets the framework set out in the NSS and Regional Guidelines.*
- *To meet the minimum indicative target population of 28,597 for the linked hub by 2013.*
- *Mayo's high incidence of vacant properties and how to address this trend.*

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 County Development Plan also 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 Development Plan has been subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

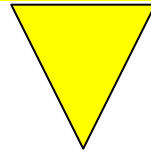
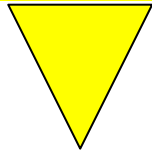
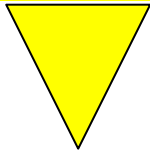
The focus for the Plan developed from the Mission Statement of Mayo County Council’s Corporate Plan, the County Enterprise Board Strategy, and the key issues facing the county.

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:

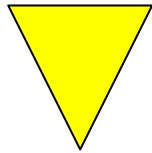
1. promote sustainability and improve quality of life;
2. encourage population retention, inward migration and address the imbalances in the demographic structure;
3. help support those who wish to live, work and invest in County Mayo.

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

Mayo County Council Mission Statement	Strategic Context	<i>Le Chéile le Neart</i>
<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>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>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>



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 137,174 by 2013 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.*

In order to guide and direct the Overall Strategy a spatial context for future development is required in the format of a **County Settlement Strategy**. This sets out an overall vision for the development of both urban and rural areas; and a spatial blueprint for the future growth and sustainable development of the County.

The County Settlement Strategy is based on the following principle requirements:

1. Promotion and development of Ballina and Castlebar as a linked hub and Westport as its natural extension
2. The promotion and development of the towns identified as Key support towns for targeted population growth
3. The strengthening of the network of smaller towns and villages of the County
4. The strengthening of the rural villages in the wider rural areas
5. 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
6. The regeneration of rural areas that have experienced population decline.

The principal policy objectives 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-3.4	Smaller Towns and Villages
P/CSS 2.2.2	Policy for All towns and Villages
CSS-2.1–CSS-2.7	Development Objectives for <u>All</u> 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-2	Zoning Policies
O/Z-1–O/Z-4	Zoning Objectives
P/RH-1–P/RH-12	Rural Housing Policies
P/RH-HH 1–P/RHH-3	Holiday Homes 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-A9	Agriculture Policies
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

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

O/TI-P1	Parking Provision Objective
P/TI-PC1–P/TI-PC8	Pedestrians & Cyclists Policies
O/TI-PC1–O/TI-PC4	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
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-E2	Energy Policies
O/TI-E1 & O/TI-E2	Energy Policies Objectives
P/TI-RE1–P/TI-RE8	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-SC5	Social & Community Policies
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-FE1	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 Policies
O/HC-SP1	Swimming Pools Objectives

P/HC-ACC1	Access to Enjoyment of Amenities & Facilities Policies
O/HC-ACC1	Access to Enjoyment of Amenities & Facilities Objectives
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 Policies

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-ACA1	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.