



Taghmon Local Area Plan 2009-2015

Report of the Manager on the Extension of the Duration of the Taghmon Local Area Plan 2009-2015

**Prepared pursuant to Section 19(1)(e)(ii) of the Planning and
Development Act 2000 (as amended)**

May, 2014

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Taghmon Local Area Plan 2009-2015 (hereon referred to as the LAP) is the main public statement of planning policies and objectives for the village of Taghmon. The LAP was made by Wexford County Council on the 14th September 2009 and is used to guide the assessment of all development proposals in the plan area.

The LAP has a lifetime of six years and would be due to expire on the 13th September 2015. The Planning Authority may decide to make a new LAP, amend or revoke the existing LAP before then. The first act of making, amending or revoking of any LAP is the issuing/publishing of notices under Section 20(3)(a)(i) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

However, the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced a new section, Section 19(1) (d), which allows for a planning authority, as they consider appropriate, by resolution to defer the issuing/publishing of said notices for a further period not exceeding five years, thereby effectively prolonging the duration of the LAP.

The resolution must be made not more than five years after the making of the previous LAP. The Taghmon Local Area Plan (LAP) was made by the Members of Wexford County Council on the 14th September 2009 and therefore such a resolution must be passed before the **13th September 2014**.

1.2 Process

Where the Planning Authority considers that it would be appropriate by resolution to defer the sending of the notices, the Members of the Planning Authority shall:

- (i) Notify the Manager of the decision of the Authority to defer the sending and publishing of the notices, giving the reason therefore, and
- (ii) Seek and obtain from the Manager

- a) An opinion that the LAP remains consistent with the objectives and core strategy of the relevant development plan,
- b) An opinion that the objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured, and
- c) Confirmation that the sending and publishing of the notices may be deferred and the period for which they may be deferred.

Having received the report of the Manager, the Members may determine that it would be appropriate to defer to the sending of the notices for an agreed time giving reasons therefor.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

This report examines whether it would be appropriate to defer the commencement of the review of the existing LAP. This will require an examination of:

- a) Whether, in the opinion of the Manager, the LAP remains consistent with the objectives and Core Strategy of the current Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 (hereon referred to as the Plan), and
- b) Whether, in the opinion of the Manager, the objectives of the LAP have or have not been substantially secured.

This report is laid out as follows:

- (1) An analysis of the content of the existing LAP vis-à-vis the Core Strategy of the Plan with regard to the following:
 - Settlement Strategy and associated settlement hierarchy
 - Population allocation and residential zoning
 - Service infrastructure
 - Retail Strategy
- (2) An analysis of the objectives of the LAP to determine if they are consistent with the Plan
- (3) An analysis of whether or not the objectives of the LAP have been substantially secured.

2.0 Consistency with the Objectives and Core Strategy of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019

2.1 Core Strategy in the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to present a medium to long term evidence-based strategy for the spatial development of the county. It must show that the development objectives in the Plan, are consistent as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and Regional Planning Guidelines for the South-East Region 2010-2022 (SERPGs).

The Core Strategy sets out the Settlement Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy for the county. It defines the role of the settlements and aims to further develop the county's strong network of settlements to support the balanced development of the county's urban and rural areas.

The Core Strategy allocates population targets to the towns, villages and rural areas in the hierarchy and details the quantum of residential zoned land required to accommodate the population targets.

2.1.1 Taghmon and the Wexford County Development Plan's Core Strategy

The Development Strategy for Taghmon as set out in the LAP is to “ensure that the village develops as a sustainable balanced settlement with appropriate amounts of residential, commercial, industrial, tourism and recreational development while also protecting its archaeological and built environment”. The LAP supports the development of Taghmon as a self-supporting community. It outlines that the lands zoned for residential development were carefully chosen to allow for the sequential development of lands closest to the village centre. The LAP includes policies and objectives to maintain the role of Taghmon as an important service centre for the surrounding rural hinterland and to encourage the expansion of retail and commercial services to meet the needs of the existing and future population.

The Settlement Hierarchy set out in the Core Strategy designates Taghmon as a Strong Village¹. The Strategy outlines that these villages have established populations with the potential to support additional growth and seeks to consolidate these villages by concentrating new growth in the village centres.

Population Allocation and Land Use Zoning

The Core Strategy does not identify a population allocation or a quantum of residential zoned land for each individual Strong Village. Instead, it provides a combined figure for Strong Villages, Smaller Villages and Rural Areas to be appropriately allocated between them.

There is currently 34.5ha of undeveloped residential zoned land in the LAP area. This is a significant amount of land. The zoning provisions in Taghmon are considered adequate for the current lifetime of the LAP and the possible extended lifetime and there is sufficient land zoned for residential development to ensure that this settlement can fulfil its role as a Strong Village. There are also appropriate controls in the Plan to regulate the development of this land, in particular:

Objective SS06

- To ensure the density of residential developments is appropriate to the location of the proposed development having regard to the benefits of ensuring that land is efficiently used. In deciding on the appropriate density for a particular location the Council will have regard to the existing grain and density of the settlement, the proximity of the site to the town or village centre or public transport nodes, the availability of existing services, the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the accompanying Urban Design Manual-A Best Practice Guide (DEHLG, 2009) and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards in Chapter 18.

¹ There are references in the LAP to Taghmon being a 'District Growth Area'. At the time of making the LAP, it was so designated in the County Development Plan 2007-2013. While the current County Plan has renamed it to Strong Village, its role within the Settlement Strategy for the county remains the same.

Objective SS22

- To encourage new residential development in accordance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria including the availability of adequate wastewater treatment capacity and drinking water capacity and the development managements contained in Chapter 18.

As set out in Objective SS23² of the Core Strategy, the Council will apply the sequential approach to the development of residential land, focusing on the development of lands closest to the village centre first. 'Leap-frogging' of undeveloped lands will not be considered, unless it can be justified that there are sound planning reasons for doing so.

Service Infrastructure

Since the making of the LAP, a new water supply reservoir and pipeline have been constructed to improve the water supply for Taghmon. Works are currently ongoing for a new pumping station which will pump the wastewater from Taghmon to Wexford Town. This new wastewater treatment arrangement allocates a 4,500 P.E. for Taghmon. There are also plans to extend the natural gas network to Taghmon. The presence of these significant pieces of infrastructure will mean that residential development of an appropriate scale can be considered.

Retail Strategy

The Core Strategy outlines that the development of retail services in Strong Villages will be focused on providing support services for their respective populations and rural hinterlands. The objectives in the LAP are consistent with this designated role.

² Objective SS23 reads: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that new residential development complies with the sequential approach to the development of land which is focus on developing of lands closest to the village centre first.

2.1.2 Taghmon and the Objectives of the Wexford County Development Plan

The policies and objectives in the LAP have been cross-referenced with the objectives in the Plan. The policies and objectives are substantially consistent with those of the Plan. It should be noted that if there is a policy/objectives which is not consistent, the objective in the Plan takes precedence as it is the 'parent' plan.

Having regard to the foregoing, it is considered that the Taghmon LAP remains consistent with the objectives and Core Strategy of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019.

3.0 Assessment of whether the Objectives in the Taghmon Local Area Plan have been secured

3.1 Assessment

The policies and objectives in the LAP are set out under a number of separate sections ranging from population, village centre, employment and economic activity to transportation and infrastructure, wastewater treatment and water supply and flood risk management. While discussed separately all the sections are inter-related and the securing of objectives under one section is likely to be dependent on another section.

The securing of many of the policies and objectives in the LAP are for the most part linked to new development proposals in the plan area, for example, policies and objectives relating to housing, employment and economic activity, infill development, retail and commercial and amenity and recreational open space

To date, and largely due to the current economic situation, there have been limited development proposals or development activity in the plan area. Since the making of the LAP, 11 planning applications have been granted planning permission:

- Five of these planning applications were for individual houses, one of which has been constructed.
- Six planning applications were for works minor in nature.

As such, the lack of development has delayed the implementation and securing of many of the LAP's objectives.

As outlined in Section 2.1 significant works are being undertaken to improve the infrastructure serving the LAP area. The presence of these significant pieces of infrastructure will mean that as the country's economic situation improves Taghmon will be well positioned to attract new development opportunities. This in turn will facilitate the securing of the LAP's policies and objectives during the extended lifetime of the Plan.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this report, it is the opinion of the Manager that:

- the provisions of the Taghmon LAP 2009-2015 are substantially consistent with the objectives and Core Strategy of the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019,
- the objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured, and
- accordingly, it is appropriate to defer the sending of the notices under Section 20(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) for a period of five years until the 13th September 2019.

4.2 Next Stage

Having regard to the above, the Members may determine that it would be appropriate to defer the sending of the notices to review the LAP for an agreed time period.

The Members must notify the Manager of the decision to defer the sending of the notices, giving the reasons therefore. Notification of the resolution must also be published in the local newspapers not later than 2 weeks after the resolution is passed, placed on the Authority's website and made available for inspection by Members of the public during office hours of the Planning Authority.