

Proposed Variation No. 1/Strandhill Mini-Plan of Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017

Explanatory Note

22 January 2013

A. The proposed Variation No. 1/Strandhill Mini-Plan

The Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017 (CDP) was adopted in May 2011 and became operational on 13 June 2011. In accordance with Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), a planning authority may at any time, for stated reasons, decide to make a variation of a development plan which for the time being is in force.

The proposed Variation No. 1/Strandhill Mini-Plan consists of a new **Chapter 44 Strandhill Mini-Plan** in **Volume 2 (Mini-Plans)** of the CDP. This chapter includes text and maps, along the same template as the other 30 mini-plans incorporated in the CDP.

The proposed Mini-Plan is accompanied on public display by the following supporting documents:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report
- Appropriate Assessment Report
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

These documents indicate that the implementation of the proposed Variation No. 1/Strandhill Mini-Plan will not have significant effects on the environment, including upon areas designated for protection under the Habitats Directive.

The public consultation on this proposed variation is carried out in a manner similar to the procedure set out in Section 20 (Consultation and adoption of local area plans) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, i.e. with a 6-week public consultation on the Draft Mini-Plan following a period of pre-draft consultation longer than two months (11 July to 1 October 2012). This approach has been chosen in order to ensure a meaningful consultation with the local community and other interested parties.

B. Reason for the proposed variation

The Strandhill Local Area Plan was adopted in 2003. It remained in force for six years, after which its life was extended by three years, to 2012. In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), this LAP must now be amended or revoked.

It is the intention of the Planning Authority to revoke the Local Area Plan and replace it with a mini-plan, which will be incorporated in the CDP as a variation. This will ensure that the plan for Strandhill is consistent with the policies and objectives of the CDP 2011, in particular the provisions of the Core Strategy in terms of population and housing land and the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

This is the reason for the proposed Variation No. 1/Strandhill Mini-Plan.

C. Core Strategy requirements – housing land provision

County Sligo's Core Strategy, included in the Sligo County Development Plan 2011-2017, provides relevant information to demonstrate consistency with the National Spatial Strategy and Border Regional Planning Guidelines and sets out core aims and strategic goals that, in turn, define and shape growth locations, population distribution and land use zoning for the County's settlements.

The Core Strategy allocated to Strandhill 14.4 hectares of greenfield housing land, which includes some 4.03ha of land with existing planning permissions for residential development (comprising some 204 potential residential units). This equates to 10.37 hectares of land which can be zoned for residential development in this Mini-Plan. Mixed-use lands are also included in this allocation based on an average ratio of 65% residential development in the mix of uses.

The Strandhill LAP 2003 zoned 66 hectares of land for residential purposes, with an additional 16.5 hectares for mixed uses. The current extent of greenfield lands zoned for housing in the Strandhill LAP, circa 20 ha, is in excess of the 14.4 ha allocation contained in the Core Strategy of the CDP 2011-2017. Therefore it is necessary to alter the zoning in the Mini-Plan.

Residential zoning is proposed to be retained on certain sites based on the existence of live planning permissions and proximity to the village centre and road infrastructure.

Most of the remaining land – in excess of the CDP allocation – previously zoned for residential uses, is proposed for inclusion in the Strategic Land Reserve (SLR). This designation recognises the suitability of these lands for housing development in the long term and the fact that they have been zoned residential in the 2003 LAP. The SLR designation seeks to prevent their utilisation for other, possibly inappropriate, activities, by safeguarding them for future housing development. The basis for such designation is Section 3.4.7 Strategic Land Reserve (p. 33 of the CDP) and the strategic zoning policies, particularly SP-Z-3 (p. 33 of the CDP).

A number of sites previously zoned residential are proposed to be included in the buffer zone, based on their peripheral location, removed from the village core, and/or previous refusal of planning permission by An Bord Pleanála.

D. Main differences between the 2003 LAP and the Draft Mini-Plan

1. Mixed use zoning at junction of Burma Road and Buenos Aires Drive

It was considered that this area, which already supports a mini-mart, a chemist and beauty parlour, has the potential to serve as a small neighbourhood centre for the village. Hence, several sites at this cross roads are proposed to be zoned for mixed uses to accommodate this.

2. Mixed use zoning on R292 behind Bree's public house

Land to the rear of Bree's public house fronting onto the R292 is proposed to be rezoned for mixed uses instead of solely residential uses. Given its strategic functional and visual location at the gateway to the village, it is considered that a mixed use zoning would facilitate a more appropriate utilisation of the site, particularly in conjunction with the adjacent land to the west, also zoned mixed use.



Fig. 1 Strandhill locations mentioned in this document

3. Community facilities zoning to the east of Airport Road (replacing mixed use zoning)

A portion of land to the east of the Airport Road is proposed to be rezoned for community facilities – it was zoned for mixed uses in the 2003 LAP. This allocation of land to community facilities compensates for the removal of similar zoning from lands (zoned in 2003) to the west of the Airport Road for a similar use. The 2003 zoning is considered incompatible with the Natura 2000 designation of the land.

The former mixed-use zoning for a ‘village centre’ does not appear to be viable in the present economic circumstances and foreseeable future. Therefore the remaining portion of this land is proposed for inclusion in the Strategic Land Reserve.

4. Buffer zone designation west and east of the Airport Road

The 2003 LAP zoned land to the west of the Airport Road for community facilities and to both east and west of the road for a business and enterprise park. These zonings are not considered to be compatible with the Natura 2000 designation of the land. Applying the precautionary principle, it was necessary to remove the community facilities and business/enterprise zoning from the SAC. The respective lands are now proposed to be excluded from the development limit and included in the buffer zone.

5. Strategic Land Reserve

The *Strategic Land Reserve* (SLR) designation is being used in this Mini-Plan for lands that were zoned for residential and mixed uses in the 2003 LAP and are now considered in excess of housing land requirements as per the Core Strategy.

The SLR designation recognises the suitability of these lands for housing/mixed use development in the long term and seeks to prevent their utilisation for other, possibly inappropriate, activities.

Land to the east of the Golf Club, which was zoned residential in the 2003 LAP, is proposed to be placed in the SLR having regard to its distance from the village centre and comparatively reduced connectivity to existing residential development.

A substantial amount of land zoned for mixed uses in the 2003 LAP (with the intention to create a new “village centre”) is proposed for inclusion in the SLR in the Draft Mini-Plan. It is considered that adequate land is available for mixed-use development within the built-up area for the lifetime of this plan. However, this will continue to be an appropriate location for mixed uses into the future.

6. Extensions to the Buffer Zone

The Buffer Zone is proposed to be extended in a southerly direction to include the entirety of the demesne lands of Culleenamore House and Rockview House.

The Buffer Zone is also proposed to be extended in an easterly direction to incorporate the upland area of Knocknarea and the land to the north and north-east of the village as far as the coast. It is considered that this revised plan limit represents better the true hinterland of the village in terms of its visual envelope and zone of influence.

Comparison of land zoned in the 2003 Strandhill LAP and in the Draft Mini-Plan
(greenfield and developed lands combined)

Selected zoning categories	Area of land zoned in 2003 (ha)	Area of land zoned in 2012 (ha)
Residential	66	48.6
Business and enterprise	20.4	7.3
Mixed uses	16.5	7.5
Community facilities	5.4	10.0
Strategic Land Reserve	NIL	14.4
Total area inside the Development Limit	169.32	146.64
Total area inside the Plan Limit	503.67	702

Fig. 2 Zoning changes in the Draft Mini-Plan 2013 compared to the LAP 2003

