



Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: KCC-C55-181

Údar: Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park CLG

Stádas: Submitted

Aighneacht:

Promoting Sustainable Tourism to West Kildare as a Gateway to the Midlands & protecting our peatland biodiversity

Comhairliúchán:

Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029

Chapter 13 Importance of our Peatland Landscape.

Caibidil: Volume 1 - chapters » 13 - Landscape, Recreation & Amenity

Ábhair: landscape, recreation, amenity

Chapter 13

Add text in blue:

LR O13	Recognise that some cutaway and cut-over boglands may represent degraded landscapes and/or brownfield sites and thus are may potentially be fit to absorb a variety of development provided that the development proposal does not increase Green House Gas emissions or damage protected habitats or species.
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Reason for amendment: Recognition of the rehabilitation success of many cutaways which are now significant areas of biodiversity and effective carbon stores as evidenced by numerous sites in West Kildare including Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park and research carried out in Lullymore's Carbon Flux project since 2016.

Insert new action to implement objective in LR040

LR A 13 Engage with the Department of Housing , Local Government and Heritage and other County Councils and relevant stakeholders to advance the delivery of a new National Peatlands Park (see EC A7)

13.3 Landscape Character Assessment

Actions

It shall be an action of the Council to:

LR A1	Review and update the County Landscape Character Assessment, within two years of the adoption of this Plan ¹ , having regard to the European Landscape Convention Florence 2000, in accordance with all relevant legislation and guidance documents and to ensure consistency with the forthcoming National and Regional Landscape Character Assessment. All landscape character designations will be fully reviewed having regard to updated best practice guidance, LCAs of adjoining Local Authorities and other local relevant considerations, including clusters of biodiversity rich areas.
LR A2	Investigate the feasibility of preparing a Historic Landscape Characterisation of the county.
LR A3	Plant gateway roundabouts within the county with innovative design themes, having regard to traffic safety.

Change: Reevaluate West Kildare Bogs to Class 5 and postpone developments which would impact the landscape until an updated County Landscape Character assessment is completed. This would ensure the Bog of Allen's potential for rewilding and tourism is not irreversibly damaged by any proposed developments in the intervening period.

Reason: The original LCA was undertaken in 2004 at time when industrial peat extraction was prevalent and it undervalues the Bog of Allen's historical, cultural, religious and environmental importance. It also fails to reflect the significant rehabilitation and scientific research carried out in many of these peatlands and the growth of both domestic and international tourism to West Kildare over the past 18 years. It is also now widely accepted that Ireland's raised bogs have global significance as a carbon store and ecosystem treasures and that their protection and rehabilitation is the first line of defence in mitigating climate change and protecting biodiversity.

34	Views of the Bog of Allen including the Lullymore / Allen Bog group and the Hills of Allen, Grange and Dunmurry along the	Allenwood middle, Allenwood south, Lullymore
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R403 and R414 from Allenwood to Rathangan.	East, Lullymore West, Barnaran, Drumsru, Cappanargid, Killyguire and Newtown.
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Change: The inclusion of the Lullymore / Allen Bog Group is important as this is the view looking westward from Lullymore which is an established peatland tourism hub in West Kildare.

Reason: The panoramic and uninterrupted views across the Bog of Allen to the west are celebrated and promoted internationally by Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park (which attracted over 54000 fee paying visitors in 2019) and the IPCC.

Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

LR O37	Promote and enhance public access for all7 to the upland areas, rivers, lakes and other natural amenities of County Kildare, in conjunction with the relevant landowners and agencies, while protecting environmental sensitivities and ecological corridors.
LR O38	Ensure the biodiversity value of all sites are considered and protected in the development of outdoor recreational facilities including greenways through the preparation of an Ecological Impact Assessment which shall guide the location and design of such facilities.
LR O39	Support Coillte, Bord na Mona, Waterways Ireland and other state agencies to explore the provision of more recreational infrastructure at appropriate locations to include access ways and nature trails with a view to opening up state lands for recreational use.

LR O40	<p>Investigate the feasibility of developing a Peatlands National Park in consultation with Offaly County Council, Bord na Móna, Coillte, NPWS, local landowners and all other relevant stakeholders to include areas of (inter alia) high nature value, amenity, education/science and eco-tourism potential.</p>
LR O41	<p>Support the proposed Umeras Peatlands Park development of Umeras Community Development and explore links between the bog and nearby blueways and greenways, whilst ensuring nearby properties would not be negatively affected, in consultation with Offaly County Council, Waterways Ireland and all other relevant stakeholders.</p>
LR O42	<p>Lead and support the extension and interconnection of Greenways, Blueways, Peatways and trails within and outside County Kildare in consultation with Coillte, Bord na Móna and all other relevant stakeholders. The creation of an eco tourism destination supported by Kildare, Offaly and Laois County Councils, Failte Ireland and other stakeholders following the Blueway and encompassing peatland areas to the west as part of a National Peatlands Park has the potential to offer the visitor a unique experience to get “lost in wilderness” in a relaxed environment away from urban life. The Council recognises that the development of a range of outdoor activities based around our natural amenities of bogs, canals and rivers and the discovery of the area’s natural and built heritage would significantly support the future growth of tourism in Kildare and the midlands.</p>

Reason: Multiple environmental, community and socio-economic benefits for present and future generations.

Pictures attached are view from Peatland Biodiversity Boardwalk and Peatlands Exhibition.

Location Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park - Photographer Michel Anderton (both pictures).

Attachments:

KCC-C55-181-10421 - DSC_6940b1.jpg

KCC-C55-181-10422 - Bog Cotton1.jpg