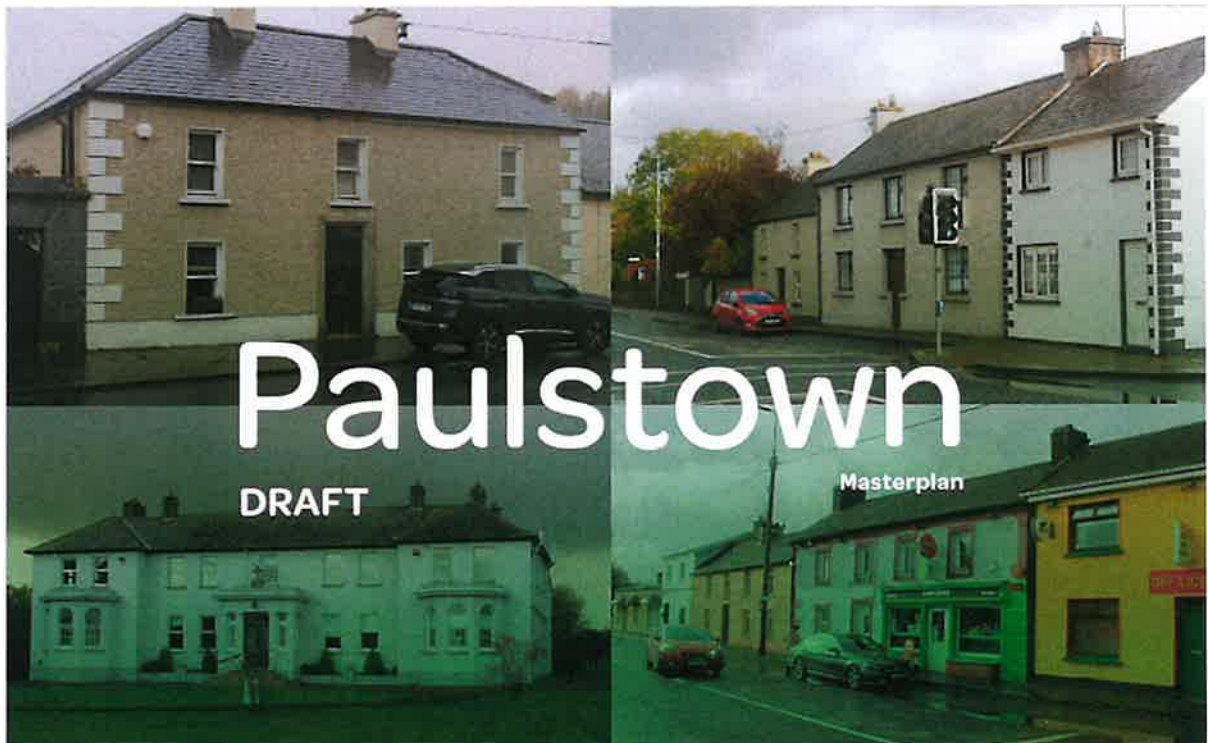


**Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council**



**A./ Director of Services Report on Submissions
received regarding the Draft Paulstown Masterplan**



September 2024

Denis Malone
A./ Director of Services

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1 Introduction

This report addresses the submissions received during the 4-week public consultation period from **Friday 5th April 2024 to Friday 3rd May 2024** in relation to the Draft Paulstown Masterplan.

The purpose of the report is to:

- (a) Report on the written submissions/observations received in relation to the Draft Paulstown Masterplan during the public consultation period.
- (b) Set out the A. Director of Services response to the issues raised in the submissions/observations and;
- (c) Make recommendations to the Elected Members on the issues arising from the consultation process.

This report is being furnished to the Elected Members of Castlecomer Municipality District, for their consideration.

1.1 Draft Masterplan

The draft Paulstown Masterplan brings together opportunities for investment, improvement and development across a wide range of potential locations. The plan is not a blueprint, as it does not include a land use zoning map but is rather a flexible framework which seeks to set out how opportunity sites might come forward in a manner which responds positively to context and creates good quality, connected and integrated places.

The purpose of the Masterplan is to guide the development of Paulstown into the future and to influence and deliver on real change for the town to make it a more attractive destination to live, work, visit and do business.

Considering the Development Plan objectives for Paulstown, the following set of principles were developed to guide the ideas, actions and strategies for the masterplan.

- Streets and Public Spaces – Consider the potential which could be harnessed by upgrading the public realm and creating attractive public amenity spaces.
- Movement – Connectivity with Main Street and its surrounding areas is the golden thread which helps connect where we live, work and play and in turn supports the economic health of the town.
- Heritage and Identity – Celebrate the culture and heritage of Paulstown, defining its image and making it a destination for visitors.
- Built Form and Use – Reuse of existing vacant/derelict buildings to provide new community facilities and/or tourism offerings.
- Vitality and Vibrancy – Ensure Paulstown is an economically viable community with the capacity to generate income and employment necessary to maintain or improve the town.
- Sustainability and Climate Resilience – Resilient towns promote sustainable development, well-being and inclusive growth.

1.2 Planning Context

Planning Authorities have a statutory responsibility to plan for the sustainable development of their areas, primarily through the development plan process but also through local area plans. Non-statutory framework plans and site development briefs can supplement but not replace the function of statutory plans.

The Masterplan is intended to be a non-statutory design framework and will offer non-statutory guidance to supplement the provisions as set out in the Kilkenny City & County Development Plan 2021-2027. In the case of all such non-statutory documents, the policy context must be set by statutory plans.

The Paulstown Masterplan has been developed within the national, regional and local policy context and therefore aligns with the following planning policy documents;

- National Planning Framework
- Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region
- Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Town Centre First, A Policy Approach for Irish Towns

1.3 Documents on Public Display

The documents put on public display for the Draft Paulstown Masterplan were:

- Draft Masterplan
- Public Notice
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Applicability Report

All of the above documents were placed on the consult.kilkenny.ie consultation website and on the Council's own website. Hard copies of the documents were on public display in the following locations:

- Planning Office, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny
- Paulstown Community Hall, Shankill, Paulstown, Co. Kilkenny
- Area Office of Thomastown Municipal District, Lady's Well Street, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny
- Castlecomer Area Office, Kilkenny Street, Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny

Submissions could be made from **Friday 5th April 2024 to Friday 3rd May 2024** (both dates inclusive) by:

Email to e-mail to ourplan@kilkennycoco.ie

Online at <http://consult.kilkenny.ie/>

Written submissions to the A./Senior Planner, Planning Department, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny.

1.4 Public Consultation

Pre-draft consultation

Public consultation in the form of a stakeholder workshop was held in **Paulstown Community Hall** on Wednesday 18 January from 6:30pm – 8:30pm. Over 50 persons attended the workshop.

During the workshop, stakeholders were divided into small groups to discuss proposed interventions that could be undertaken as part of the masterplan. These discussions involved both engagement with the interventions proposed and free discussions on what the workshop participants would like to see. A high volume of qualitative feedback was received.

Following a presentation of the proposed interventions, participants were asked to undertake a 'dream and draw' exercise in small groups. This involved identifying spaces within the town that should be considered by the Masterplan proposals, drawing on ideas for interventions, and highlighting priority areas for development.

A workshop report was written containing a summary of the feedback which informed the Draft Paulstown Masterplan.

Consultation on Draft Masterplan

During the 4-week consultation period, a drop-in public information evening was held in Paulstown Community Hall on **Monday 22nd April, 2024 from 5pm to 8pm** where the draft masterplan and environmental documents were on display. Members of the Planning team along with the area community officer in the local authority and Turleys Ireland were in attendance to discuss the contents of the plan, clarify issues, and answer queries from the public.

The event was well attended with **43** signatures on the sign in sheet, which did not capture all attendees on the night.

2.0 Submissions received during Public Consultation

A list of the submissions received are included below:

Reference	Name
1	Catherine O'Keeffe
2	Fiona O Neill
3	Valerie Tobin
4	Linda Healy
5	Martin Maher
6	Ann Marie Byrne
7	Daithi Troy
8	Paulstown Development Association
9	Derek Walshe

3.0 Summary of Issues Raised, A./ Director of Services Response and Recommendations

Sub. No.	From	Summary of Issues	A./ Director of Services Response & Recommendation
KK-C254-1	Catherine O'Keefe	<p>The submission raised concern in relation to the current car parking facility at Scoil Bhride, Paulstown. It is suggested that a redesign of the current parking area and utilisation of the current green area is required to provide a safe environment for all.</p>	<p>A./ Director of Services Response:</p> <p>In July, 2024, Scoil Bhride, Paulstown was accepted for Round 3 of the Safe Routes to School programme.</p> <p>An Taisce will arrange to meet with the school and other stakeholders in late 2024 to prepare a delivery plan. Once agreed, the delivery plan and proposed works will be submitted to the NTA for funding. It is anticipated that works will commence in Paulstown as soon as the existing schemes being worked on in Kilkenny city are complete.</p>
			<p>A./Director of Services Recommendation:</p> <p>Addition of text under Intervention 05 Cycling and Walking (pg. 44 of plan) as follows;</p>
			<p>The Council will work with An Taisce and Scoil Bhride, to prepare a delivery plan and establish proposed works under the Safe Routes to School Programme, to</p>

KK-C254-2	Fiona O'Neill	<p>The submission is in relation to universal design. It is stated that statistics from the CSO regarding the number of people living in Paulstown with disabilities and reference to the Local Authority Disability Strategy document should be included. Queries how many disabled parking bays are accounted for in the assessment.</p>	<p>improve traffic and pedestrian movement in this area of Paulstown.</p>
<p>A./ Director of Services Response:</p> <p>Section 12.13 of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 includes a development management requirement for a minimum of 2% car parking spaces as accessible parking bays, to be applied at the discretion of the Council, depending on the nature of the proposal.</p> <p>Whilst statistics specifically for Paulstown relating to persons with disabilities are difficult to obtain, reference to the Disability Strategy Document for the Council can be referenced in the text of the masterplan.</p> <p>In all public parking proposals, the number of accessible parking bays are at the discretion of the Council.</p>			<p>A./ Director of Services Recommendation:</p> <p>Additional text to be added under 01 Public Realm Enhancement, Key Features;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public realm improvements should take heed of the Councils' Disability Inclusion

KK-C254-3	Valerie Tobin	<p>The submission states that the viability and vitality of a small town is based off a mix of the 4 A's – Attractions, Accessibility, Amenity and Action. The situation in Paulstown is then discussing under each heading, noting existing attractions, amenities and public transport. It is further noted that development and improvement need to be an action. It is not believed that the priorities outlined are correct and the submission provides a revised list of the items in order of priority, including a new suggestion to liaise with local attractions and businesses to highlight what Paulstown has to offer and get listings on VisitKilkenny.ie. Concern is raised regarding the list of priority items as published, stating that they may take some time to achieve.</p>	<p>Strategy and any guiding national documents.</p> <p>A./ Director of Services Response: In relation to the list of priorities as published in Table 6.2 (pg.57) of the masterplan, the Planning Authority note that the delivery of these priorities is dependant on funding and other factors. Therefore projects/developments could potentially be upgraded in priority, throughout the lifetime of this masterplan.</p>
KK-C254-4	Linda Healy	<p>The submission is in relation to housing and employment which they believe are two large deficits in the plan and need to be considered and included. The author believes that the masterplan indicates the Council's recognition of Paulstown's growth potential and that the masterplan should provide the community with a template for short term and long term goals that can be reviewed and developed as the plan takes shape and the community evolves.</p> <p>The submission identifies errors in the document that they consider should be rectified.</p> <p>The issues of development in Paulstown is considered, noting that it is largely undeveloped therefore gifting the community the ability to plan the town they want for the future. The submission suggests that</p>	<p>A./ Director of Services Recommendation: No change to Draft Masterplan</p> <p>A./ Director of Services Response: The Planning Authority note that the masterplan area only covers the area as designated in Figure 4.21 'Settlement Boundary for Paulstown' as contained within the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 and is therefore consistent with same.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that there is no spare capacity in the water and wastewater treatment plans presently. However construction of the new Water Treatment Plant has recently</p>

	<p>the plan should provide for a fully comprehensive population report including hinterland population serviced by the village that will allow for the correct planning of the future of the village. Item 1 of the National Development Plan – Compact Growth is referenced.</p> <p>Concern is raised over water/wastewater services capacity.</p> <p>Economic development is referred to in the context of the provisions of the County Development Plan. It is also noted that water services capacity impacts on the potential economic growth of the village however that there is merit in identifying a potential location for future economic activity within the plan.</p> <p>The submission states that the proposals in the draft plan are reliant on the cooperation of private landowners.</p> <p>Issues of accessibility and public realm were discussed, and the development of the GAA playing pitches and future planned clubhouse.</p> <p>It is suggested that the community would benefit from a second workshop.</p>	<p>commenced and it is expected that spare capacity will become available in Q4 2025.</p> <p>The upgrade to the Wastewater Treatment Plant will be undertaken under the Small Towns & Villages Growth Programme (STVGP). Whilst there is presently no completion date for this, it will be expected to be at least 5 years i.e. the end of 2029.</p> <p>In relation to the cooperation of landowners, it is noted that each proposal would be subject to its own relevant permission and consent process and would be addressed with the landowner at such time.</p> <p>In relation to the development of the GAA pitches, the Planning Authority note that further expansions of the GAA club are subject to an application which would include a public consultation period.</p> <p>The Planning Authority note that two consultation events were held during the preparation of the Draft Paulstown Masterplan and the plan presented to elected members and we are now</p>
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			<p>looking to adopt a final masterplan, however it is noted that the public would still have the opportunity to comment on any projects that arise from the masterplan as they will have their own application process including a public consultation period therefore a further workshop will not be held.</p>
			<p>A./ Director of Services Recommendation: No change to Draft Masterplan.</p>
<p>KK-C254-5</p>	<p>Martin Maher</p>	<p>The submission suggests that a further workshop/consultation would be beneficial.</p> <p>It is stated that provision of parking at the school should be given priority. The local GAA / Development Lands and the adjacent school are said to be the busiest hubs in the village and it would be useful if the plan linked the two locations in terms of safe pedestrian/vehicular access/traffic calming and amenities.</p> <p>Prospect of a business hub would be beneficial giving the number of people remote working.</p>	<p>A./ Director of Services Response: In relation to a further workshop being requested, two consultation events were held during the preparation of the Paulstown Masterplan, which were well attended on both nights.</p> <p>It should be noted that the key actions under each intervention outlined in the masterplan would each require their own statutory process to be formally implemented, therefore the public still have the opportunity to comment on these projects as they arise, thus there is no further need for a workshop on this plan.</p>

In relation to the issue of safe infrastructural networks between the school and the GAA lands, Scoil Bhride, Paulstown was recently accepted for Round 3 of the Safe Routes to School programme.

An Taisce will arrange to meet with the school and other stakeholders in 2024 to prepare a delivery plan. Once agreed, the delivery plan and proposed works will be submitted to the NTA for funding. It is anticipated that works will commence in Paulstown as soon as the existing schemes being worked on in Kilkenny are complete.

In relation to the prospect of a business hub, the Planning Authority consider that there is merit in including reference to this in the masterplan under Section 10 Community Hall, where a key action could be included for consideration of a business hub with the provision of a new community centre.

A./ Director of Services Recommendation:

It is recommended that there be an addition of text under Intervention 05

			<p>Cycling and Walking (pg. 44 of plan) as follows;</p> <p>The Council will work with An Taisece and Scoil Bhríde, to prepare a delivery plan and establish proposed works under the Safe Routes to School Programme to improve traffic and pedestrian movement in this area of Paulstown.</p> <p>It is also recommended that an additional key action be added under Intervention 10 – Community Hall (pg.51 of plan), with the following text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of a business hub in Paulstown, possibly with it being integrated into a new community centre in the town.
<p>KK-C254-6</p>	<p>Ann Byrne</p>	<p>The submission states that the map used for Paulstown is only the village itself and not the entire area, suggesting that this gives a shortfall on the population and potential for other areas to be developed.</p> <p>A central point for Paulstown that does not revolve around sport to cater for all ages and abilities is desired.</p> <p>The issues of parking and pedestrian accessibility at the school were raised.</p> <p>A follow up consultation is requested.</p>	<p>A./ Director of Services Response:</p> <p>The masterplan area relates to the area designated within the red line boundary in Figure 4.21 'Settlement Boundary for Paulstown' as contained within the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027. It is accepted however that Paulstown serves a much larger hinterland, thus the purpose of the masterplan is to improve the amenities and services in Paulstown to ensure the vitality of the town going forward.</p>

In relation to a central point for Paulstown, we refer to submission no. KK-254-5 under which a recommendation has been made to include a key action for a business hub with the provision of a new community centre. The community hall and business hub together could create a space that would potentially counterbalance the sporting facilities offered within the village.

In relation to traffic issues at and around the school, the school has been selected in July 2024 under Round 3 of the Safe Routes to School programme.

Following this, An Taisce will arrange to meet with the school and other stakeholders in 2024 to prepare a delivery plan. Once agreed, the delivery plan and proposed works will be submitted to the NTA for funding. It is anticipated that works will commence in Paulstown as soon as the existing schemes being worked on in Kilkenny are complete.

The Planning Authority note that two consultation events were held during the preparation of the Draft Paulstown

			<p>Masterplan and the plan presented to elected members and we are now looking to adopt a final masterplan, however it is noted that the public would still have the opportunity to comment on any projects that arise from the masterplan as they will have their own application process including a public consultation period; therefore, a further workshop will not be held.</p>
			<p>A./ Director of Services Recommendation:</p> <p>It is recommended to add the following key action under Intervention 10 – Community Hall (pg. 51 of plan):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of a business hub in Paulstown, possibly with it being integrated into a new community centre in the town.
<p>KK-C254-7</p>	<p>Daithi Troy</p>	<p>The submission outlines comments for the draft masterplan under the following headings: <u>Settlement boundary</u> The submission states that the study area needs to be defined. <u>Sustaining Paulstown into the future</u></p>	<p>A./ Director of Services Response:</p> <p>The Planning Authority note that the masterplan area only covers the area as designated in Figure 4.21 'Settlement Boundary for Paulstown' as contained within the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 and is therefore consistent with same.</p>

	<p>The submission states that Paulstown requires investment to enabled serviced land to be provided and developed.</p> <p><u>Community facilities and amenities</u></p> <p>The submission notes the community hall and pitches stating that its relocation elsewhere is not a realistic proposition as the facility is dependant on fund raising and grant applications.</p> <p>Omitted strengths include the playground and footpath loop which surrounds the village.</p> <p><u>Plan Framework</u></p> <p>Item 6 – Rail Halt should indicate the footpath around the village which requires completion between the Gowran Road Roundabout and the village centre.</p> <p>Other observations noted in relation to pedestrian linkages, traffic calming and set down/drop off facilities and sustainable transport options at the school.</p> <p><u>Implementation</u></p>	<p>The purpose of the masterplan is to influence and deliver on real change for Paulstown, and can be seen as a beneficial tool to leverage funding and investment.</p> <p>The Planning Authority acknowledges that there are other amenities in Paulstown and note that the GAA club is under expansion and has the community hall therefore is listed as a strength. While acknowledging the playground and footpath loop, the list of amenities outlined in the masterplan is not an exhaustive list.</p> <p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the suggestion to include the footpath around the village, and it is considered that there is merit in including a new key feature under Item 04 'Road and Footpath Improvements' to look at the footpath around the village and explore the opportunity to complete this.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that there is no spare capacity in the water and wastewater treatment plans presently. However construction of the new Water Treatment Plant has recently commenced and it is expected that spare</p>
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		<p>It is stated that the table needs to be included as an essential priority investment by Uisce Eireann in order to sustain the future of the village and facilitate development.</p> <p>Completion of the footpath by KCC between the Gowran Road roundabout and the village is also a key item.</p>	<p>capacity will become available in Q4 2025.</p> <p>The upgrade to the Wastewater Treatment Plant will be undertaken under the Small Towns & Villages Growth Programme (STVGP). Whilst there is presently no completion date for this, it will be expected to be at least 5 years i.e. the end of 2029.</p>
KK-C254-8	Paulstown Development Association	<p>The submission welcomes the preparation of a strategic review of the village and the association is keen to engage in the process. A second community consultation workshop is requested.</p>	<p>A./ Director of Services Recommendation:</p> <p>It is recommended to add the following key feature under Intervention 04 – Road and Footpath Improvements (pg. 43 of plan):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the feasibility to complete the footpath between the Gowran Road roundabout and the village centre. <p>A./ Director of Services Response:</p> <p>The Planning Authority note that two consultation events were held during the preparation of the Draft Paulstown Masterplan and the plan presented to elected members and we are now looking to adopt a final masterplan, however it is noted that the public would still have the opportunity to comment on any projects that arise from the</p>

		<p>It is suggested that residents of the hinterland of Paulstown are not adequately considered.</p> <p>Other sporting organisations should be considered – e.g. Paulstown Boxing Club, Paulstown 06 Soccer Club, Basketball etc.</p> <p>The association is of the opinion that the areas of Shankill Castle and the moving of the community hall are overly focused on in the plan, both with significant limitations in terms of amenity value.</p> <p>The proposal for an amenity route from Main Street to Paulstown national school is welcomed.</p>	<p>masterplan as they will have their own application process including a public consultation period; therefore, a further workshop will not be held.</p> <p>The Planning Authority note that the masterplan area only covers the area as designated in Figure 4.21 'Settlement Boundary for Paulstown' as contained within the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 and is therefore consistent with same.</p> <p>The Planning Authority acknowledges the submission and a recommendation shall be made to change the wording of Item 1 under strengths from GAA Club to 'Vibrant GAA Club/Sporting Facilities/Sport Groups'.</p> <p>The Planning Authority notes that the aim of developing a new community hall is to provide for a non-sport focused community centre which will cater for other amenities and potentially act as a business hub as mentioned previously. This would be to counterbalance the community facilities provided at the GAA Club.</p>
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	<p>It is stated that the employment potential for residents and enhancement of public transport are not adequately considered.</p> <p>It is considered that overall the draft plan lacks cohesion.</p>	<p>It is considered that Shankill Castle is one of the most important tourist attractions in Paulstown therefore it is important to have it mentioned within the plan.</p> <p>With Scoil Bhride accepted for Round 3 of the Safe Routes to School programme, it is possible that an amenity route from the Main Street to the national school could be examined under this project.</p> <p>The Planning Authority acknowledged employment issues from the public workshops, and it is noted that the purpose of the master plan is to act as a tool for leverage of funding. Issues of employment would be looked at in more depth in the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027.</p>
		<p>A./ Director of Services Recommendation:</p> <p>It is recommended in the SWOT analysis diagram on page 29, change Item 1 under 'Strengths' from: 'GAA Clubs' to: 'Vibrant GAA Club/Sporting Facilities/Sport Groups'</p>

KK-C254-9	Derek Walshe	<p>The submission makes a number of proposals under the sections titled Architectural Heritage, Employment, Celebrate Heritage and a proposed new section titled Tourist Accommodation.</p> <p>It is proposed to include the Mounthrothe House in Section 3.3.3 Architectural Heritage and under Intervention 08 'Celebrate Heritage'. The historical significance of the house has been outlined in the submission.</p> <p>The submission states that there are a lot of businesses that are not referenced in the plan.</p> <p>A new section titled 'Tourist Accommodation' is suggested, stating that there is no reference to tourist accommodation in the masterplan.</p>	<p>A./ Director of Services Response</p> <p>The content of this submission is duly noted.</p> <p>Section 3.3.3 is referring to the town and the area falling within the settlement boundary as per Figure 4.2.1 of the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan, thus Mounthrothe House is not falling within this area, thus not mentioned.</p> <p>There are a large number of businesses in Paulstownand whilst acknowledged, cannot all be mentioned in the plan. However Section 2.1 could acknowledge these businesses in some form.</p> <p>The planning authority acknowledges the proposed new section for tourist accommodation, and considers that there is merit to include reference to visitor/tourist accommodation in the masterplan.</p>
<p>A./ Director of Services Recommendation:</p> <p>It is recommended to include a new Intervention under Built Form and Activity, titled 'Visitor Accommodation' containing the following key actions:</p>			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage with local stakeholders to understand what level of accommodation could support the local tourism initiatives. - Undertake a feasibility study to assess local provision of visitor accommodation and future demand for varying types of accommodation. <p>It is recommended to change the wording in Section 2.1 of the masterplan as follows;</p> <p>The small town has a large amount of businesses and amenities includes (but not exhaustive) a newsagents, two pubs, a primary school, a health centre, a GAA club / community centre, two churches (a Catholic and a Church of Ireland church), a bicycle shop, a hair salon, a creche and a childrens playground.</p> <p>Section 3.3.10 Employment can also be expanded to include the following sentence:</p> <p>There is a wide variety of businesses throughout the town and environs including service providers such as tilers, plasterers, accountants, child minders, timber products, general contractors, artists, shot and sand blasting to name but a few.</p>
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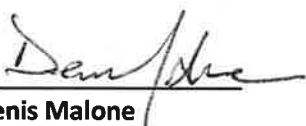
4.0 Next Steps

The Members are requested to consider the Report of the A./ Director of Services and adopt this non-statutory Masterplan with all, some or none of the amendments as proposed.

Following adoption, the changes as required will be made to the plan prior to its publication.

5.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Members adopt the plan with the recommendations of the A./ Director of Services as set out in the report.



Denis Malone
A./ Director of Services
Kilkenny County Council