



Comhairle Contae
an Chabháin
Cavan
County Council

An aerial photograph of a stone tower, likely a round tower, situated on a lush green island in the middle of a wide river. The scene is captured at sunset, with a warm, golden glow over the water and the surrounding forested hills. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. The tower is a circular stone structure with several small windows and a flat top. The river flows around the island, and the surrounding landscape is densely wooded with green trees.

Cavan Socio-Economic Statement September 2023



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1

Introduction



Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029

Cavan County Council is currently in the process of developing its new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) to cover the 2023-2029 period. The integrated plan for County Cavan is intended to guide the county's sustainable development over the next six years. It will be ambitious in scope and promote collaboration for the purpose of achieving sustainable economic growth in the region, particularly in relation to job creation, further development of the tourism sector and the regeneration of towns and villages. In doing so, the community development principles of wellbeing, inclusion, education and employment have been prioritised. To ensure that it succeeds in its objectives, it is envisaged that the new LECP will be championed, owned and driven by all key stakeholders across the county (including industry, community, non-governmental organisations (NGO) and Cavan County Council).

The plan will be aligned with key policies at local, regional and national level. This includes the National Planning Framework (NPF) (2018), and the National Development Plan 2021-2030; the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (NWRA RSES); and relevant policy documents for County Cavan, such as the Connected Cavan Digital Strategy, the current LECP framework, and the County Development Plan (2022-2028). Considering the current climate crisis, the LECP will be informed and underpinned by the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Government's Climate Action Plan (2021) which will help ensure that climate and biodiversity action is central to Cavan's decision-making process.

Comprehensive public and stakeholder consultation continues to be central to the LECP's development. A number of strands of consultation have been conducted over previous months, including online surveys (both business and community-focussed), focus groups/workshops and 1-1 key stakeholder interviews. Through these engagement formats, Cavan County Council encourages a range of public, NGO, and private sector stakeholders and the general public to have their say on the plan's development. This engagement will also help ensure that the plan is a true reflection of the needs and ambitions of Cavan's wider population.

Purpose of this document – a starting point for discussion

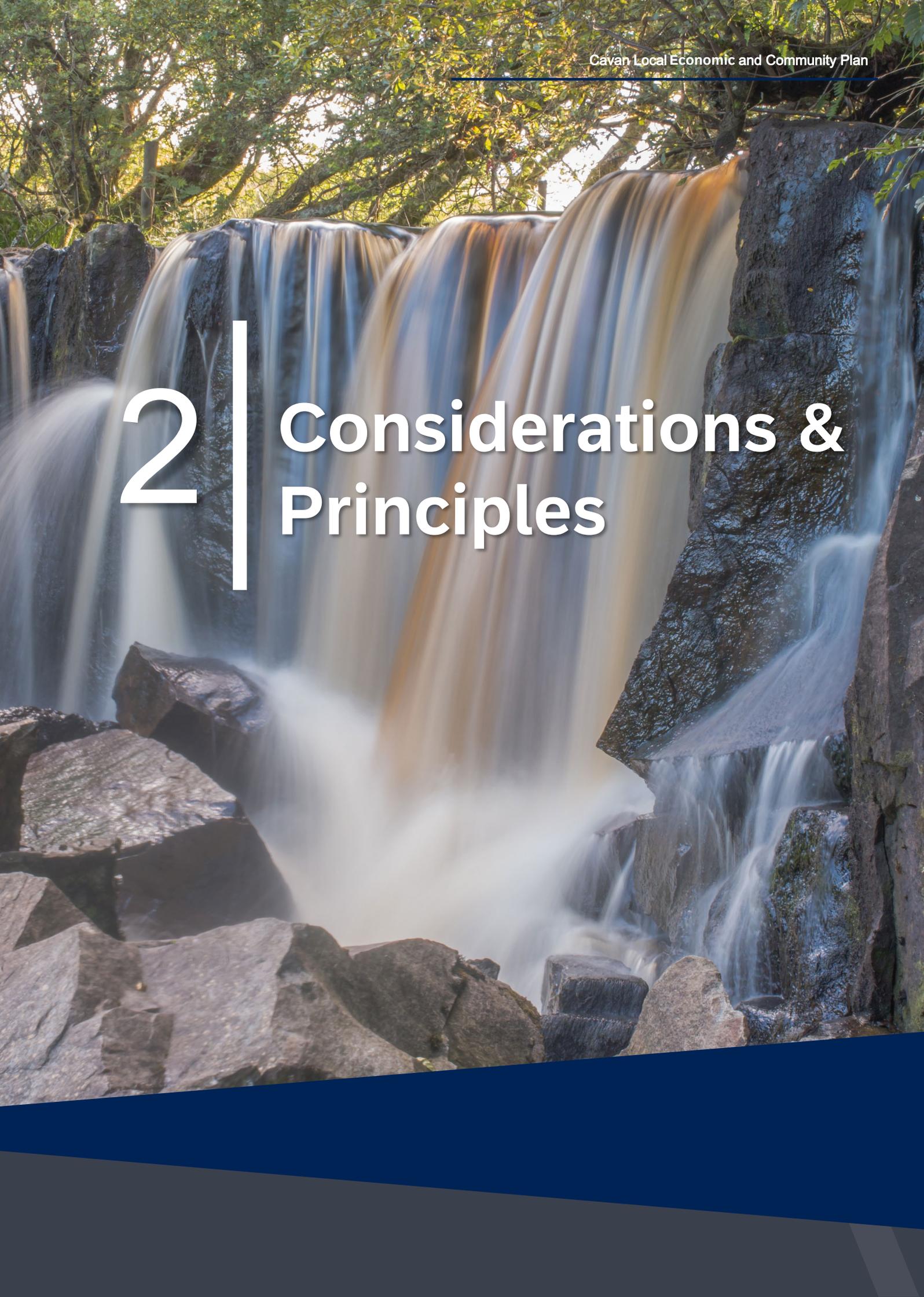
The purpose of this document is to set out the initial strategic direction for the new LECP in the form of draft high-level goals and associated outcomes. As outlined below, the socio-economic statement is based on an initial review of relevant policy and an analysis of the socio-economic profile of the county.

It should be noted that this document is a work-in-progress and also does not necessarily reflect the contents of the finalised LECP. The socio-economic statement contained in this document is intended to serve as a starting point for discussion – i.e. to stimulate ideas and debate around Cavan's goals and ambitions as it looks towards 2029.

Upon receipt of feedback on the various topics, the socio-economic statement will be iteratively revised to ensure that the high-level goals are reflective of and aligned with the views and needs of the entire community. These consultation findings will then be used to develop specific objectives, actions and outcomes for the final LECP.

2

Considerations & Principles



Considerations & Process

Considerations of cross cutting priorities

The 2021 LECP Guidelines issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development outline a number of cross cutting priorities to be considered in the development of the new LECPs. These are:



Furthermore, in alignment with the above, the LECP is also required to support the Public Sector Duty to prevent discrimination, promote equality and protect human rights. As such, these areas will be taken into consideration and reflected in the development of the goals, objectives, outcomes and actions.

LECP Process

The six stage LECP development process as per the new LECP Guidelines is outlined below. The publishing of this document represents the start of **Stage Three of the Public Consultation**.



3

Policy Framework Overview



3.1 Policy Overview – Context and Understanding

This section provides a brief overview of some of the key policies at international, national, regional and local level that are influencing the development of Cavan and to which the new LECP will be aligned. Given the importance of the UN Sustainable Development Goals to the new plan, the SDGs are expanded on in slightly more detail below. A more extensive list of policies are provided in the appendix. These policies will help to inform and chart the direction of this LECP and its key elements of goals, objectives, desired outcomes and actions.

From the review of relevant policies and strategies some of the key areas that Cavan can draw upon and align with include:

Community

- Providing quality of life through compact and sustainable growth of settlements, associated services and amenities.
- Strengthening local communities to help reverse and address rural decline.
- Capitalising on Cavan’s existing quality of life, natural amenities and cultural heritage to galvanise its strengths as a place to live and work.
- Ensuring the revitalisation of town and village centres to create vibrant settlements across the County.

Economic

- Generating economic growth and diversification of local and regional economies, including through supporting SME and micro business creation.
- Advancing development of infrastructure to support emerging employment sectors and to embrace new ways of remote and flexible working.
- Encouraging population growth in settlements of all sizes, supported by job creation and enhanced employment opportunities.

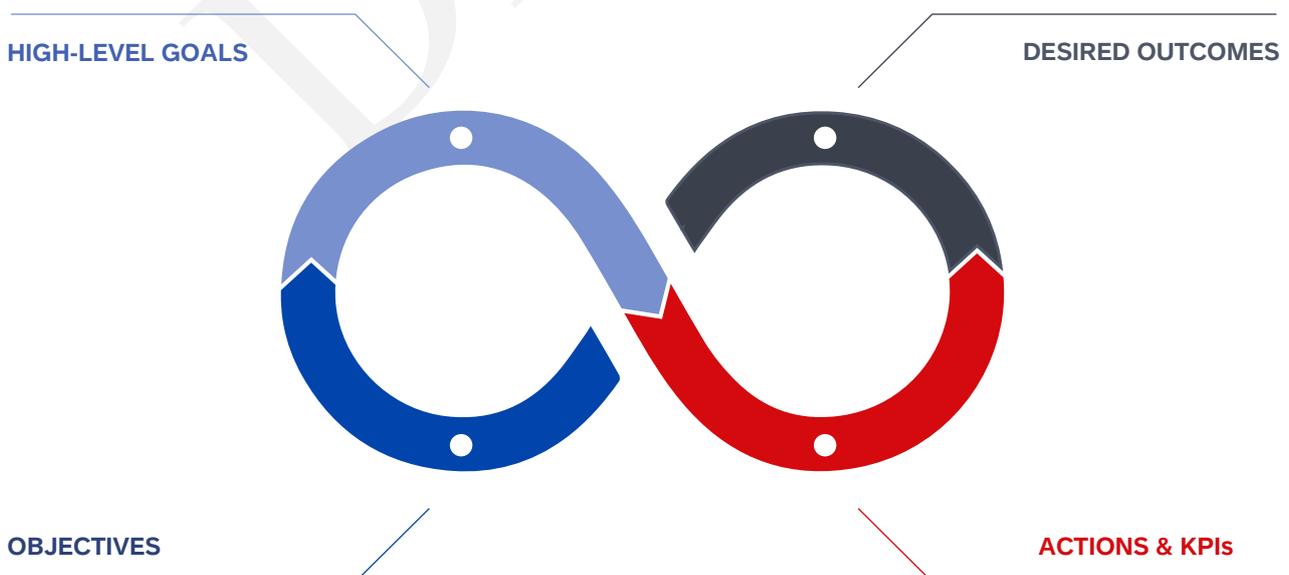


Figure 3.1: Key Elements of the LECP

3.2 International Policy

2030 Agenda – UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals

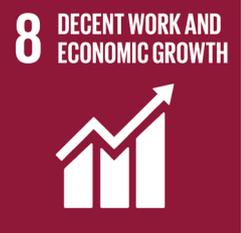
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go together with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve the natural environment and biodiversity.



Of the 17 SDGs outlined in the 2030 Agenda, several share a strong alignment with the purpose and objectives of the Cavan Local Economic and Community Plan...

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Creating cities, towns, villages and communities which are safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable are key objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals. These objectives are closely aligned with those found throughout Irish spatial planning policy. Ensuring access to high-quality services, creating positive economic, social and environmental links are key to achieving this SDG, which will be echoed throughout Cavan’s new LECP.



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

In line with SDG 11, promoting sustained, inclusive economic growth and fulfilling employment for all is strongly aligned with the objectives of the SDG’s. Creating a diverse economy, achieving full and productive employment and decent work is a central foundation of both previous, current and future iterations of planning policy for County Cavan.

SDG 13: Climate Action

The urgency and scale of climate action is ever-increasing. The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent public health restrictions has, for instance, revitalised our sense of value in the natural environment. It has provided a prime opportunity for us to take urgent collective action to combat climate change – through our actions, our governments, our institutions and our policies.



3.3 National Policy

Project Ireland 2040

National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a high-level strategy that aims to shape growth and development in Ireland out to the year 2040. The NPF draws upon lessons learned from the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 and provides a framework for the sustainable development of Ireland's existing settlements, as an alternative to an uncoordinated "business as usual" approach to development. As a framework document it sets in train a process by which more detailed planning documents must follow, including the relevant RSES and County Development Plans. The Strategy also contains a range of National Policy Objectives (NPOs) providing a wider context for targeting future growth across the country.



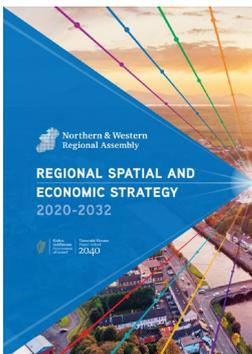
**Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland**

National Development Plan 2021 - 2030

The National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030 sets out the investment priorities that underpin the implementation of the National Planning Framework as part of Project Ireland 2040. Through a total investment of €165 billion, this level of capital spending aims to ensure ongoing cross-sectoral regional development and public investment. A large proportion of this investment is directed into major national infrastructure projects. These relate to sustainable mobility, international and regional connectivity, the transitions to a low carbon and climate-resilient economy, compact growth, as well as enhanced amenities and natural and built heritage.

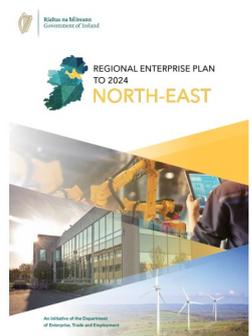
**Tionscaldal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040**

3.4 Regional Policy



Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy for the NWRA

The RSES for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) provides an overarching framework for the creation and enhancement of attractive places with the necessary supporting infrastructures to stimulate enterprise investment and to realise economic potential. The RSES primarily aims to support the delivery of the programme for change set out in Project Ireland 2040 - the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan 2021-2030 (NDP). As the regional tier of the national planning process, it will ensure coordination between the City and County Development Plans (CCDP) and Local Enterprise and Community Plans (LECP) of the nine local authorities in the region in order to achieve the objectives of Project Ireland 2040.



North-East Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024

The Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 for the North-East is a strategic regional document which outlines the challenges and opportunities influencing the development of enterprise in the North-East region. Building on the actions achieved through previous Regional Enterprise Plans, the plan focuses on existing and emerging strengths in areas unique to the North-East towards achieving new objectives and actions for the region out to 2024.

The Plan contains five strategic objective areas relating to matters such as promoting the region, the digital economy, supporting SMEs, mainstreaming climate action in enterprise and developing existing and emerging growth sectors.

3.5 Local Policy

Cavan County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

The Cavan County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 sets out the proposed policies and objectives for the development of the county over the 6-year plan period. The Development Plan seeks to develop and improve, in a sustainable manner, the social, economic, environmental and cultural assets of Cavan. Mandatory requirements include the inclusion of objectives for the zoning of land, the provision of infrastructure, the conservation and protection of the environment, and the integration of planning and sustainable development with the social, community and cultural requirements of the County and its population. The Plan aims to support Cavan's aim of being a county where people can have a good quality of life, which is a better place to live, work and makes a contribution to national economic growth by promoting sustainable development and facilitating stable economic growth.

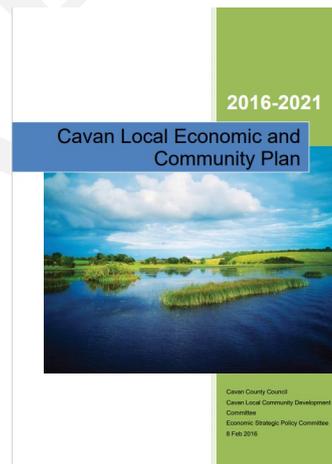


Cavan County Development Plan
INCORPORATING A LOCAL AREA PLAN
FOR CAVAN TOWN 2022-2028



Cavan LECP 2016 – 2021

This document is the previous iteration of the Local Economic and Community Plan for County Cavan and identifies goals, objectives and actions to promote and support the economic and community development of Cavan. The Plan was focused on achieving the county vision “that Cavan 2021 will be a place that we can be proud of; a place where people can have a good quality of life; a better place to live, to work and to enjoy.” It has been reviewed for learnings for the new LECP as well as the identifications of areas that can be built upon in the new plan to support the goals and ambitions of this edition of the LECP.



Cavan Digital Strategy 2021 to 2024

The Digital Strategy for Cavan 2021-2024 (*Connected Cavan*) aims to encourage and support citizens, businesses, and visitors to harness the potential of a digitally enabled society through digital adoption and innovation. This Strategy will also inform the current and future County Development Plan and new LECP for Cavan. It builds on existing resources, knowledge, networks and plans to “pave the way for future prosperity, cohesion and sustainability across the economy and communities of the county. ... We commit to develop and activate communities through exposure to digital content and technology and support people to discover the value of using digital in their daily lives” (Councillor Clifford Kelly, Cathaoirleach of Cavan County Council, 2021).



An aerial photograph of a stone ruin, likely a church or monastery, featuring a prominent circular stone tower. The ruins are surrounded by a cemetery with numerous headstones. In the background, a large lake is visible, surrounded by green hills under a cloudy sky. The text '4 | Snapshot Profile' is overlaid on the image.

4 | Snapshot Profile

Snapshot Socio-Economic Analysis

Introduction

This section provides an initial snapshot overview of a selection of key areas including demographics (population), housing, the economy, social and community, and the environment. The findings from this analysis and the policy review have been used as a starting point to identify strengths, constraints, opportunities and threats for the county. This has informed the development of the initial draft High-Level Goals and will be utilised further to stimulate discussion during the consultation process.

The findings outlined below are based largely on the analysis of 2016 Census data with 2022 Census data used where available. Census 2022 data will become available in finer detail over 2023. Further up-to-date information has also been incorporated from other departmental and agency releases, as well other sources such as the SEAI, Pobal, and GeoDirectory.

County Cavan is part of the regional development area administered by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly. This region comprises eight counties (i.e. Galway, Roscommon, Monaghan, Mayo, Leitrim, Donegal, Sligo, Cavan). Within this report whenever the word 'region' is used, it denotes the region covered by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly.



Figure 4.1: Socio-Economic Analysis

Snapshot Socio-Economic Analysis

Demographics

Census 2022 results reveal a continued upward population growth trend for Ireland as a whole, with the state's total population increasing 7.6% in 6 years and representing the largest figure since the Famine. This increased population trend is also reflected in County Cavan which grew by 6.6% in the same period, the 17th highest growth rate in the country. Today, the county's population stands in 2022 at 81,201, the 20th most populated county in the state. This figure represents a fifth consecutive census day increase in the population since 1996.

- The county has a low **population density** with an average of 67 people per square kilometre. The western part of the county has a lower population density than the central and eastern parts. The primary urban settlement in the county is Cavan Town (CSO 2016, 10,914 population). The largest town west of Cavan Town is Belturbet (CSO 2016, 1,369 population).
- The 6.6% **population growth rate** between 2016 and 2022 was a substantial increase from the 4% growth rate between 2011 and 2016.
- Cavan's population grew both by **new births and inward migration** to the county, the region and the state. The net inward-migration rate for Cavan in 2022 was 5 per 1000 which was slightly less than the rate of natural increase of 6 per 1000.
- Cavan has a growing cohort of older and younger persons. The largest **age cohorts** are the 0-9 and 30-39 age groups, accounting for 14.4% and 14.2% of the total population respectively. Although the smallest age cohort in 2016 was the 80 and over age cohort (3.7%), between 2011 and 2016 the largest growth recorded by an age cohort was in the 60–69 group (18.3%). The 20–29 group experienced a 18.2% decrease.
- In 2016, Cavan's population largely consisted of Irish **nationals** at 87% of the population. The largest grouping of foreign nationals was those from the UK and Poland which accounted for 3% each of the county's population. The number of Ukrainian nationals in the County increased significantly in 2022.
- In 2016, White Irish and White Irish Travellers made up 84.6% of Cavan's population, with 10% of the population being members of other White **ethnic groups**. By themselves Travellers make up 6.3% of the total population of the county with less than 1% of the population made up of other ethnic groups.

Cavan - Population by Gender and Age Group (2016)

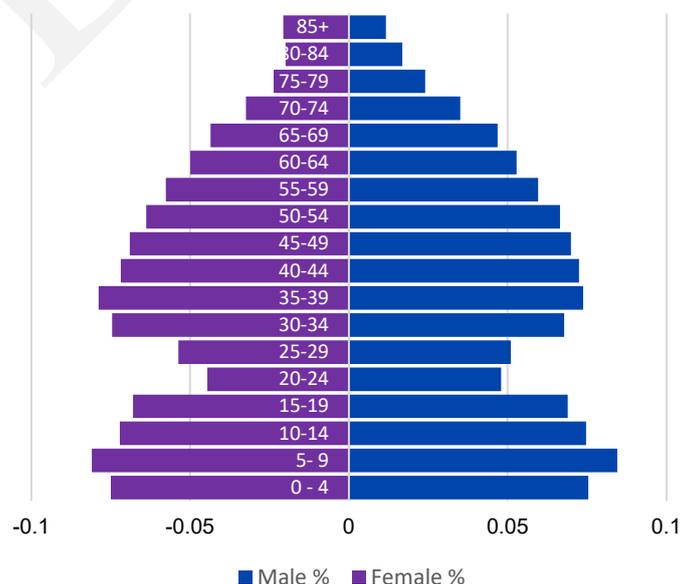


Figure 4.2: Cavan population pyramid

Snapshot Socio-Economic Analysis

Housing

The high population growth rate between the 2016 to 2022 period was not reflected in the housing stock growth rate for the same period, either within the region or across the state. The national housing stock rate increase between 2016 and 2022 was 6%, compared to a 3% increase in Cavan during the same period.

- County Cavan's **housing stock** stood at 34,601 in 2022, which represents an increase of only 890 units since 2016.
- In 2022, Cavan County was at the lower end of national league table for **housing construction**, ranking 31st in the country amongst local authority areas.
- 35% of Cavan's 2016 **housing** units were built between 2001 and 2010, with only 1.7% of the 2016 housing stock built after 2011.
- Owner occupied with no mortgage and Owner occupied with mortgage made up 39.8% and 31.7% of total **tenures** respectively. By contrast, Rented from a Private Landlord stood at 15.6%. These figures are broadly in line with regional/national figures.
- There was a 2.9% decline in the **ownership rates** (from 74.2% to 71.5%) for the county between 2011 and 2016. This was primarily from the group categorised as Owner occupied with mortgage who declined by - 4.0% though this was partially offset by an 1.1% increase in those categorised as Owner occupied with no mortgage.
- In 2022, Cavan's **housing stock vacancy rate** stood at 11.8% (4,074), the sixth highest vacancy rate in Ireland. The rate was the 6th highest number in the country (accounting for 2.44% of national vacancies) and the fifth highest rate in the region.
- The **top 5 reasons for vacancy** given during the 2022 Census in Cavan were "Deceased" (20%), "Rental Property" (18.7%), "Farmhouse" (11.8%), "Renovation" (11.1%), "Other Reason" (14.8%). The top three reasons account for 51.5% of vacancy.

Reasons for House Vacancy - Cavan, Region, and National 2022

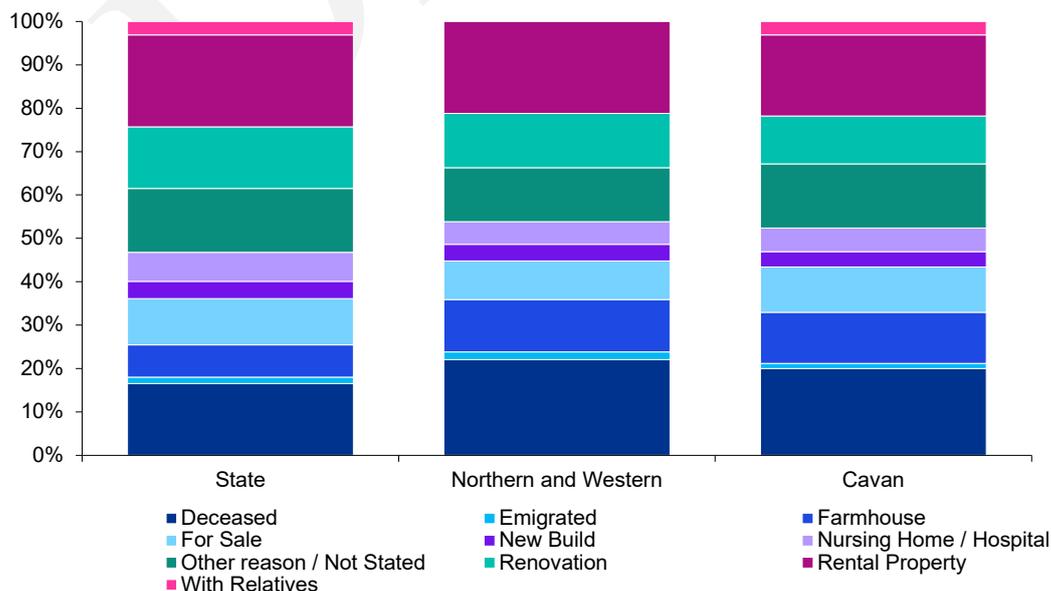


Figure 4.4: Reasons for house vacancy

Snapshot Socio-Economic Analysis

Economy

The economy of Cavan is mixed in character with employment split across industries such as agriculture, forestry (i.e. primary industry), manufacturing (i.e. secondary industry), and services (i.e. tertiary industry). In 2016, 50.2% of employment was in the tertiary sector with the remaining 18.3% and 16.7% in the primary, secondary industries respectively.

- **Notable employers** in the county include Abbott Ireland Nutrition Division, Kingspan, Mannok, and Saint-Gobain Construction materials.
- **Key economic initiatives** include the county's Food Cluster and Food Strategy, the Cavan Digital Hub, Diaspora Engagement, and Tourism Development Plans. Cavan is also part of Ireland's 'Hidden Heartlands'.
- In terms of **industry sub-categories**, in 2016 "Professional Services", "Commerce and Trade", and "Manufacturing Industries" accounted for 21.0%, 19.6%, 16.7% of employment respectively. In comparison, the share for "Professional Services" was 24.7% at the regional level and 13.8% at the national level while the share for and "Manufacturing Industries" was 23.5% at the regional level and 11.4% at the national level.
- The 2020 Business Demography provides a breakdown of the total **business employment** within the county based on the various size classes. Of the 17,624 employed by businesses: under-10 employee businesses account for 27.6% of employment, 10-19 employee businesses account for 14.4%, 20-49 employee businesses account for 17.4%, 50-249 employee businesses account for 27.8%, while 250 and over employee businesses account for 12.7%.
- According to the county's socio-economic **Catchment Profiles** (2016), 22.3% of Cavan people commute out of county. According to Census 2016, commuters in Cavan saw the biggest rise in their average commuting time, which rose by 8.8 per cent between 2011 and 2016 to over 28 minutes.
- There are some clear divergences across **gender's economic status**. In 2016, 58% of men were employed compared to 46% of women. Between 2011 and 2016 the number of women employed had grown by 1.6%, while the number of men in employment increased by 4.9%. Only 1% of men were looking after the home/family compared to 18% of women, potentially indicating a lack of childcare services across Cavan.
- Between 2015 and 2019, **disposable income** per person rose from €16,629 to €18,668. This is lower than the figure for the region at €19,093 and the national average of €20,055, as per the 2019 national accounts.
- Cavan had the eighteenth highest **business vacancy rate** in the country at 12.9% as reported in the GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report Q2 of 2022.
- Cavan will benefit from **€65m National Broadband investment** which, once complete. has potential to connect up to 16k premises in the Intervention Area (IA).
- In 2021, Cavan Town was granted **€14.49M for the Cavan Town Regeneration Project** as part of the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

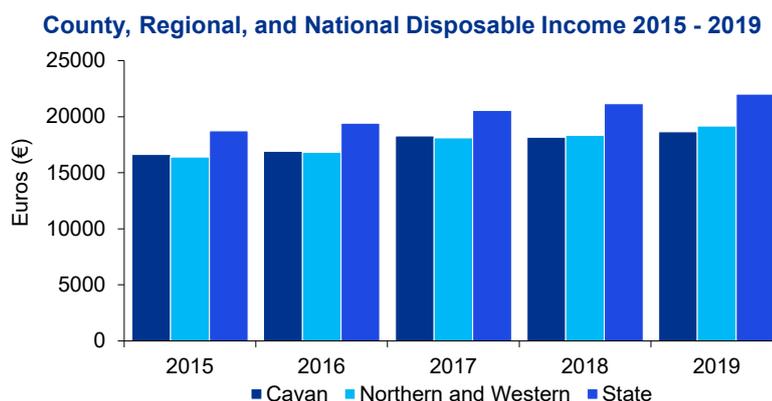


Figure 4.5: Disposable income

* 2022 data is due to be revised later in the year.

Snapshot Socio-Economic Analysis

Social and Community

Building a strong community involves addressing interrelated areas such as health, education, social deprivation, and heritage. The following are some key social and community attributes of County Cavan.

- Cavan has a strong **education base**, including Cavan Institute (Further Education and Training college) in Cavan town. According to the IDA (2022), Cavan is accessible to 170,000 students and to over 50,000 graduates from seven universities and two Institutes of Technology within a 90-minute drive.
- According to the CSO 2016, 14% of Cavan's population live within 10km of the **north-south border**. A total of 493 in Cavan, crossed the border to work and school (Census 2016).
- In 2016, 42.9% of Cavan's population aged 15 and over have completed some form of **tertiary education**. This is slightly below the region (44.8%) and below that of the state (48.1%).
- As of 2021, the most prevalent **category for tertiary qualifications** obtained in Cavan is social sciences, business and law (10%) followed by engineering, manufacturing, and construction (9.5%).
- In Census 2016, 60.6% of people in Cavan reported themselves as being in **Very Good Health** which is slightly above figures for both the region (57.9%) and the state (59.4%). A further 26.8% of people classified themselves as being in **Good Health** which is less than the wider region (28.7%) and the state (27.6%).
- Cavan utilised the Government's **COVID-19 supports** at a higher rate than the region, with a higher rate in 2020, 2021, and 2022 with the 3rd, 4th, and 4th highest rate in the region respectively.
- As of November 2022, just over 62,000 **Ukrainian nationals** arrived in Ireland, of which 1,162 (2% of the total migrant number) arrived in Cavan.
- The **POBAL Deprivation Index Score** for Cavan in 2016 was -3.91, which is lower than the state (-1.74) and region (-2.83) scores and classes the county as "marginally below average". 77.4% of people in Cavan live in an area categorised as "marginally below average"/"disadvantaged". 22.6% are classified as living in a "marginally above average" area according to the Index.
- In terms of **household composition**, couples/families with children make up 40.6% of households, while families in the adult/empty nest/retired stage account for 45.4% of all households. Meanwhile, single person households account for 24.8% of all households while lone parents make up 9.6% of households. (2016)
- Cavan has one of the highest **suicide rates** in the country. Feedback from stakeholders indicates that suicide affects people of all age groups.

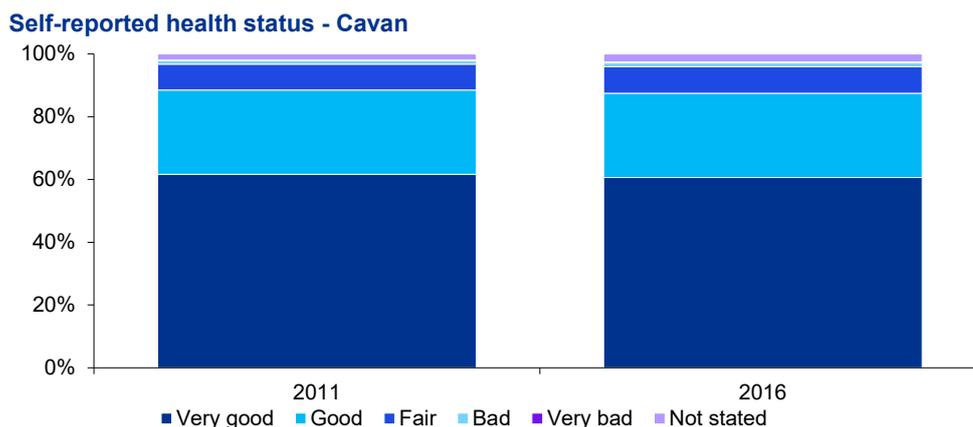
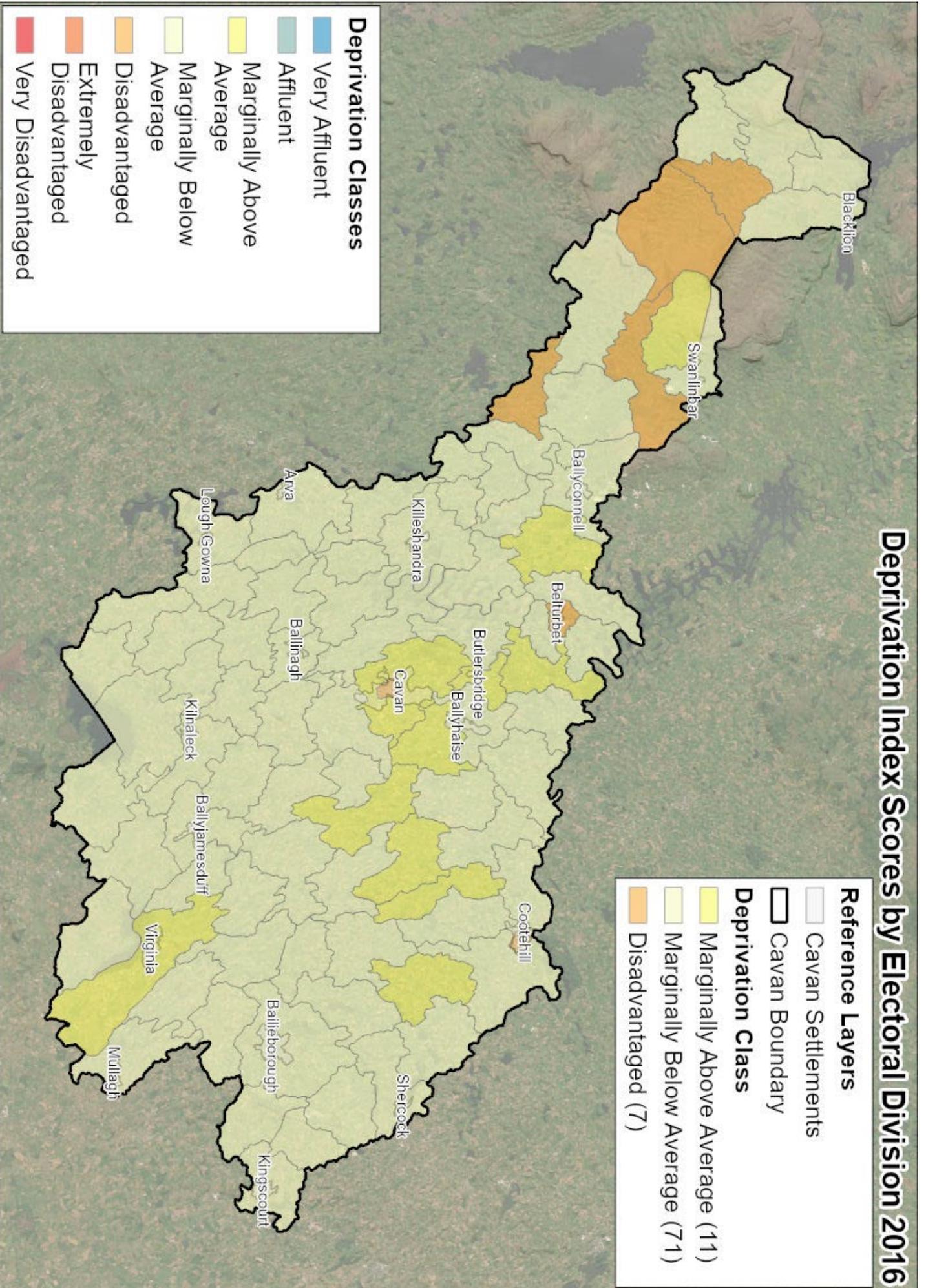


Figure 4.6: Health status



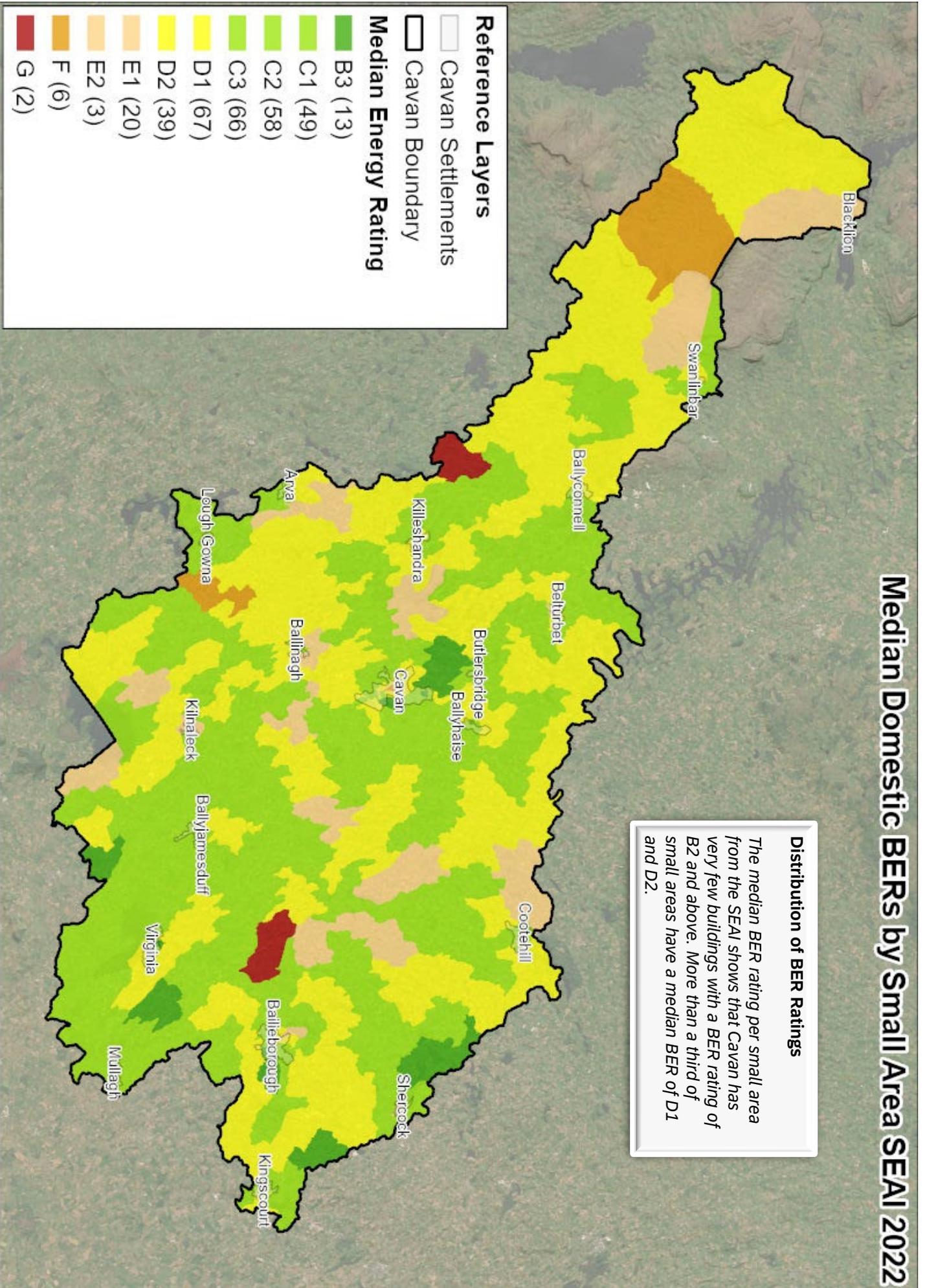
Snapshot Socio-Economic Analysis

Environment

Ireland is facing a climate and biodiversity crisis with EU and national policy necessitating the integration of climate action into all areas of life (incl. industry, building and transportation). To help ensure that the necessary adaptation and mitigation efforts contribute to a Just Transition, the following provides a selection of relevant information.

- Just over 23% of households in Cavan use electricity for **heating** with the most prevalent source for domestic heating being oil, representing more than 58% of the county's total energy consumption. Taken together, fossil fuel sources account for 77% of all home heating in Cavan (58% Oil, 8% Mains Gas, 8% LPG, 3% Solid Fuel).
- Data from the SEAI (2022), shows that Cavan's energy efficient buildings are clustered in and around towns and villages with areas with lower **BER ratings** generally situated in rural areas.
- Approximately 71% of those **commuting** to work, school, or college in Cavan use a personal motor vehicle while only 21% of commuters walk, cycle or use public transport. (2016)
- In 2016, the percentage of people "**working at or mainly from home**" was 4%. This figure is likely to have increased following the post-pandemic shift to hybrid and remote working.
- The SEAI supports 12 **Sustainable Energy Communities** in the county which are focussed on a range of community development and sustainability initiatives.
- In 2020 and 2021, the number of new **electric vehicles** sold in Cavan increased by 192% from 38 to 111. As of November 2022, there are 8 public EV charging stations in Cavan, with another 182 granted permission.
- There are 5 **wind farms** in County Cavan (incl. in (Gartnaneane and Coreen) with a total of 69 turbines and a total capacity of 103.5 MW. (SEAI).
- In 2022, an EPA study of the **ecological status of Irish rivers** between 2016 and 2021 found that 59% of Cavan's rivers are considered either good or high quality with 20.5% of Cavan's rivers of poor quality (caused primarily by human activity). Meanwhile, 20.8% of lakes were rated as Bad or Poor but with a much lower level of lakes showing Good or High quality (1% and 2% respectively).
- **Flooding** is a major issue for the county. In recent years heavy rain caused significant subsidence in Bailieborough and a landslide at Benbrack Mountain in west Cavan. In Cavan Town, some 54 homes and 56 non-residential properties are currently considered at risk of flooding.
- Cavan county has six Special Areas of Conservation (**SACs**) incl. Boleybrack Mountain, Corratirrim, Cuilcagh – Anierin Uplands, Killyconny Bog, Lough Oughter and the River Boyne and Blackwater. There are three Special Protection Areas (**SPAs**) (incl. Loughs Oughter, Kinale, Derragh, and Sheelin) and two Natural Heritage Areas (**NHAs**) (incl. Slieve Rushen Bog, Lough Kinale and Derragh Lough).

Median Domestic BERs by Small Area SEAI 2022



5

Initial SCOT Analysis



5.1 Initial SCOT Analysis

A high level study into Cavan's Strengths, Constraints, Opportunities, and Threats (SCOT) was conducted and several major points across each category were identified.

Strengths – can be understood as the **advantages** of Cavan in the **present day**. They can be seen as a 'snapshot' of the present day.

Constraints – can be understood as the **challenges** facing the County at present, where they represent a 'snapshot' of Cavan.

Strengths

- Cavan has a growing population with early stage families accounting for over a quarter of the population.
- Cavan has a reputation as a welcoming, friendly and safe county. The county has a strong culture of volunteerism and social advocacy – i.e. champions for their communities.
- The local economy is well developed, with over half of businesses in the professional services, commerce and trade, and manufacturing industries. The vast majority of employment in the county is provided by SMEs and micro firms.
- Notable large employers with roots in the region include Mannok and Kingspan – companies which provide success stories and role-models for local entrepreneurs.
- The county has a developing digital economy – including the Cavan Digital Hub and associated facilities which support remote and hybrid work.
- Ongoing socio-economic initiatives in the county include the food brand "Created in Cavan", "Cavan Calling" diaspora engagement plan and tourism development plans.
- The county has a number of high quality hotels providing suitable accommodation options to visitors. (incl. Hotel Kilmore and Farnham Estate Spa and Golf Resort)
- Local education providers include the CMETB, Cavan Innovation and Technology Centre, Cavan Institute (which has a €40 million expansion planned) as well as the Ballyhaise Agriculture College.
- The county can offer a high quality of life, natural amenities, and a lower cost of living than other parts of the country.
- Cavan has a high level of people reporting themselves in Good or Very Good health.
- Cavan has an attractive landscape, including lakes, waterways, and rolling hills (e.g. Shannon-Erne Navigation, UNSECO Global GeoPark).

Constraints

- Cavan is constrained by a relatively low rate of housing construction combined with many vacant homes. Inadequate waste and grey water treatment facilities are cited as a key reason.
- Derelict, vacant and un-used commercial and residential buildings undermines the viability and appeal of urban centres. This is accentuated by "fast visits" and a general lack of footfall.
- A lack of childcare options limits employment and thus social mobility opportunities in the county for women especially.
- Most small areas in Cavan are considered marginally below average or disadvantaged.
- Cost of living increases are putting significant pressure on local people who face increased housing, heating, and grocery prices.
- Cavan has a sizable older population who require additional supports and services into the future.
- Successfully integrating new arrivals (incl. Ukrainian and other refugees) is an ongoing, evolving challenge.
- There is a lack of publicly accessible greenspace and natural amenities in the county.
- Younger people in particular report issues around social inclusion - including a limited range of recreational options and limited public transport options.
- Building Energy Rating data from the SEAI indicates that Cavan still faces a significant challenge in meeting its decarbonisation and climate action objectives.
- The county requires road investment - including to improve east-west mobility (i.e. to the Dublin-Belfast corridor) and to relieve local congestion on the Virginia bypass.
- The public transport system such as the Local Link bus service requires investment, including to expand routes and increased service frequency.
- Broadband rollout is incomplete in some parts of the country - limiting local business, employment, and social opportunities.

DRAFT

5.1 Initial SCOT Analysis

A high level study into Cavan's Strengths, Constraints, Opportunities, and Threats (SCOT) was conducted and several major points across each category were identified.

Opportunities – can be understood as the **future strengths** of a place or County. They represent the potential advantages available to Cavan and its communities.

Threats – can be understood as the **future constraints** of a place or County. They represent the potential challenges facing Cavan and its communities.

Opportunities

- The county's proximity to the Northern Ireland border and to the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor are both selling points for Cavan as an attractive location to live, work and do business.
- Existing initiatives in agri-food, tourism, and rural regeneration could encourage increased inward investment.
- Cavan has untapped potential as a sustainable tourism destination given its natural and built heritage sites.
- Action to reduce unemployment including through skills development and entrepreneurship supports could help stimulate the county's wider economy.
- There are opportunities to improve tertiary education attainment within the county relative to peer counties.
- The county's strong manufacturing base (incl. construction focussed firms) could pivot towards opportunities in green and sustainable building practices.
- There are growing partnership opportunities between educational institutions, industry and community bodies.
- The county has zoned land which could be developed on a partnership basis for community, residential and business purposes.
- There are significant funding opportunities for the county, including URDF, RRDF, LEADER, the PEACEPLUS programme.
- The county could benefit from opportunities in the decarbonisation and sustainability fields – incl. renewable energy generation, building energy efficiency, and electrified and active transport.

Threats

- Economic opportunities in other counties and internationally (including in Northern Ireland) may encourage younger people to migrate from Cavan.
- Housing purchase and rental affordability rates have deteriorated significantly since 2016.
- Extreme weather events (incl. flooding, storms and extreme temperature) will place additional strain on the built infrastructure and may lead to increased energy demand.
- The transition towards a low carbon economy (incl. buildings and transport) may cause friction between affluent and less-affluent community members.
- Demographic changes will need to be planned for – including the provision of services to the young, the old, and new arrivals.
- Global economic uncertainties including increased cost of living undermine efforts to improve the lives of the people of Cavan.
- Cavan's widely dispersed population limits the ability of services to reach people as well as the effectiveness of interventions.
- Mental and physical wellbeing is an ongoing challenge in the county, requiring input and support from many stakeholders.
- Cavan faces competition from other regions around housing, employment and lifestyle opportunities.
- Inadequate transport linkages in the county exacerbate inequalities and limit socio-economic opportunities.



6 | Consultations

6.1 Consultation Process & Findings

This Chapter summarises the various consultations which were undertaken as part of the analysis to inform the Cavan LECP 2023-2029. The LECP has been developed in a collaborative and cooperative manner through engagement with a wide range of key stakeholders including the public, Public Participation Network (PPN), community representative groups, Cavan County Council, state agencies, education providers and the private sector. The following was undertaken:

- Three in-person focus-group and public consultation sessions in Cavan, Ballyjamesduff, and Cootehill (February 14th-28th 2023).
- Online business survey (see section 10 for full results)
- Online community survey (see section 10 for full results)
- Individual meetings with key stakeholders from the public, private and community sectors
- Written submissions

The aim of these engagements, in conjunction with the socio-economic analysis, was to identify key priorities and needs that could be addressed through the High-Level Goals, objectives and actions of the plan and reflected in the desired outcomes. This includes discussion of community issues such as service provision and social inclusion and economic issues such as attracting inward investment and developing the green economy (e.g. renewable energy and retrofitting).

The extensive consultation exercise was, therefore, designed to identify opportunities and needs as well as secure vital buy-in from key stakeholders who will ultimately be the drivers and champions of specific actions contained in the Implementation Plan. In doing so, the public participation process sought to generate a sense of shared ownership for the High-Level Goals, and secure the buy-in of key stakeholders, including the public.

The targeted engagement process brought together key stakeholders from a wide range of fields including government agencies, the private sector, community and voluntary groups, the environment, health, education, creative sector, heritage, tourism, as well as younger and older groups. Representative groups which were involved include the Cavan Economic Forum, Local Development Companies (LDCs), County Council staff, multicultural groups, Cavan County Museum, Comhairle na nÓg, Cavan Drug and Alcohol Forum, Local Link, Citizens Information, Family Resource Centre, Cavan Disability Network, Cavan Travellers Consultation, Volunteer Cavan, and Cavan Childcare Committee.

What key objectives would you prioritise to create a sustainable and prosperous future for the people of Cavan?

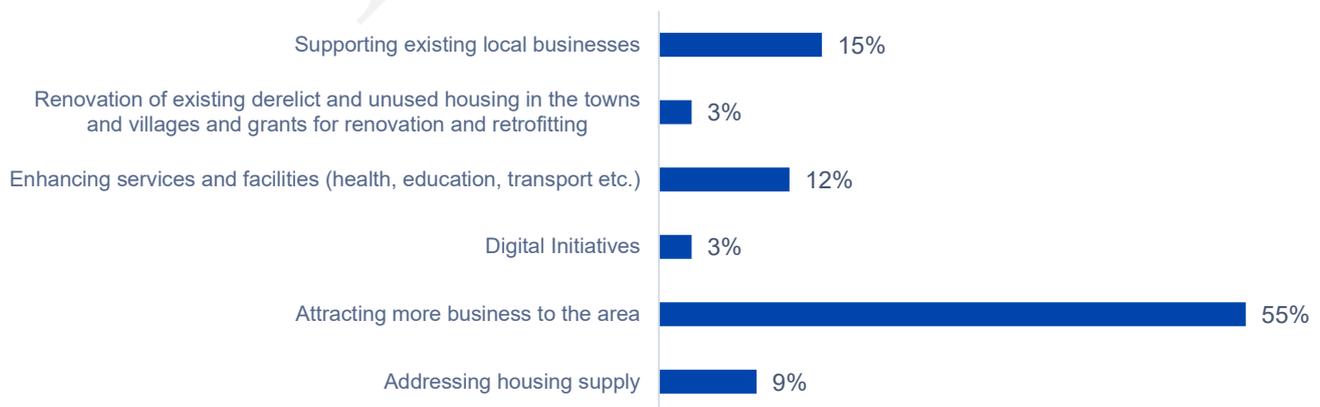


Figure 6.1: Views on Cavan's key objectives

6.2 Key Themes from the Consultation

All written submissions and survey responses were collated and reviewed as part of the consultation analysis as well as the key points raised during the workshops. The included:

- **Written Submissions** – 4 submissions were received including from: The Cottage Market Cavan CLG, West Cavan Bogs Association, a local Sustainable Energy Community, and a private individual.
- **Community Survey** – 34 survey responses were received. The survey sought community views in relation to areas such as Cavan's greatest assets, barriers to living and working in Cavan, service provision, remote working, climate change and the use of smart technology amongst other areas.
- **Business Survey** – 21 survey responses were received. The survey sought views of the private sector in relation to Cavan's main strengths and barriers as a place to do business, solutions to the county's urban centres, climate action, Brexit and COVID-19.

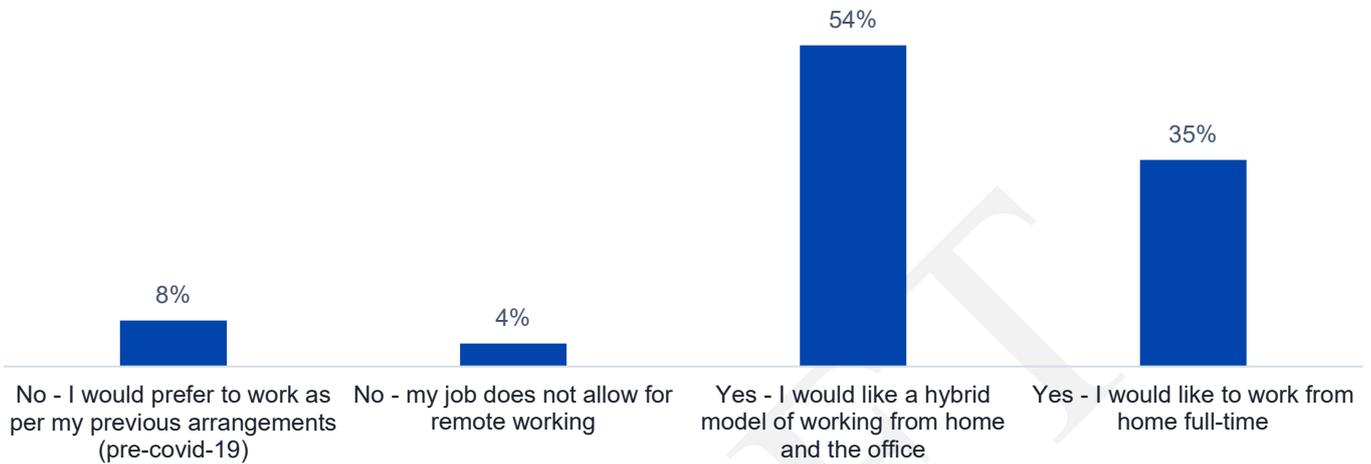
The combined analysis of the different strands of the consultation identified several key themes aligned to economic and community needs. A sample 'snapshot' of points under these themes are outlined below. The findings of the consultation have been used to assist in the identification of what the county needs and its key strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats. Similarly, ideas and suggestions put forward by the community and other key stakeholders have been incorporated, both directly and indirectly, into the goals, objectives, key desired outcomes, and actions.

6.2.1 Economy, Employment, and Housing

- The **lack of accommodation**, particularly affordable rental and purchase housing, was regularly mentioned. The issue was highlighted as undermining the county's ability to attract investment, to grow its population and to adequately sustain and service its communities. This relates issues such as increasing mortgage rates, planning permission challenges and limited step down options for older people in towns.
- The county's **tourism industry** needs to be developed - including the type and quality of tourism offerings. The industry is restrained by a lack of accommodation including limited hotel beds and alternative options such as farm stays and regenerative tourism. Participants felt that the county's tourism offerings – including Tullydermot Waterfalls, Shannon Pot and Glyncarr Waterfall – are underpromoted and that it is difficult to sell what is 'unique' about Cavan.
- Participants highlighted the **important role which education providers such as** Cavan Institute plays in developing the skills required by employers. Participants also underlined the importance of educational initiatives to develop financial literacy, digital skills and apprenticeships.
- **Areas of interest for economic development** which were mentioned include opportunities in the green economy (e.g. renewable energy, retrofitting apprenticeships, ag-tech, agrifood, and engineering.). The contribution of indigenous businesses such as Glanbia, Kingspan, and Mannok was highlighted.
- Participants highlighted the importance of the **Cavan Business Hub** for providing shared hybrid/remote work and start-up spaces.
- The county's access to the **Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor and strong cross-border ties** were mentioned as advantages for the county.
- A key challenge for the county is in **retaining and attracting its workforce**, including its younger talent. To do so, the participants mentioned the need for accessible, meaningful and flexible employment opportunities along with improved local transport, working hubs and childcare supports.

6.2.1 Economy, Employment, and Housing (cont.)

Into the future, would you be interested in working from home on a more regular basis?



If provided with the option to work remotely (including in a hybrid format), which of the following options would be more likely?



Figures 6.2 & 6.3: Community survey questions on working remotely

6.2.2 Infrastructure and Accessibility

- Considering Cavan's location as a midlands border county and its relative proximity to Dublin and Belfast, the **east-west road connections** require improvements.
- The shortage of **public transport options and frequency** throughout the county was highlighted as an area that needs improvement, particularly in rural areas. Specific action areas include the Local Link Bus service, interlinked services and interchange connectivity as well as edge of town infrastructure (crossings, feeder services, etc.). Participants indicated support for the rollout of rural taxi services – such as the local hackney pilot being tested in Killeshandra.
- The consultation identified a **desire and need for safe, sustainable and active transport** and associated infrastructure throughout the county. Participants mentioned the need for more well-segregated cycleways, greenways, improved pedestrian paths, disabled parking spaces as well as road and pothole maintenance.

6.2.3 Environment and Sustainability

- Participants indicated their **concern around the impacts of climate change**, particularly the threat posed by flooding. Participants also highlight issues around the degradation of land and waterway ecosystems..
- The importance of **protecting the county’s biodiversity** was also highlighted, as well as the associated challenges facing farmers. Among the suggestions presented include the development of community gardens and the rewilding and restoration of natural ecosystems.

What is your view about the impact of climate change on businesses in Cavan?

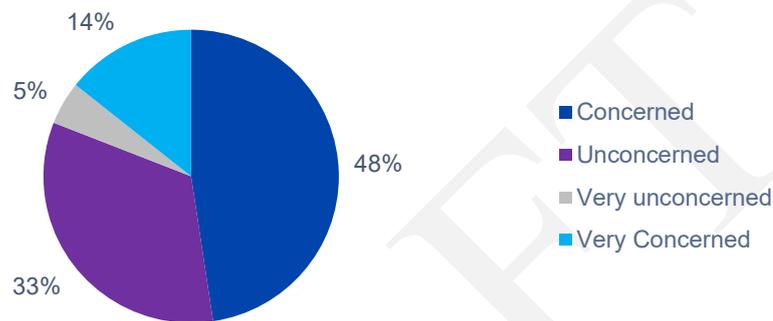


Figure 6.4: Views on the impact of climate change on County Cavan from the business survey

- Shared and **active mobility options (incl. Greenway development)** were identified as mechanisms for reducing the county’s **over-reliance on private car ownership**, whilst at the same time reducing rural isolation. Participants also mentioned the importance of walks and hikes such as the Cavan Way.
- Suggestions to develop Cavan’s **green economy**, included the promotion of retrofitting apprenticeships and the rollout of solar and wind energy projects. Participants highlight the importance of linkages with education providers and support for grassroots community initiatives (e.g. Tidy Towns, Sustainable Energy Communities) and business ventures (e.g. eco-tourism and agri-tourism).
- **Natural amenities** in County Cavan include the UNESCO Geopark, fishing and angling in the county’s waterways. Participants suggestions included the need for more parks and greenspace across the county as well as the potential restoration of bogland for recreational and educational purposes.

Which of these green initiatives would you see benefitting Cavan the most?

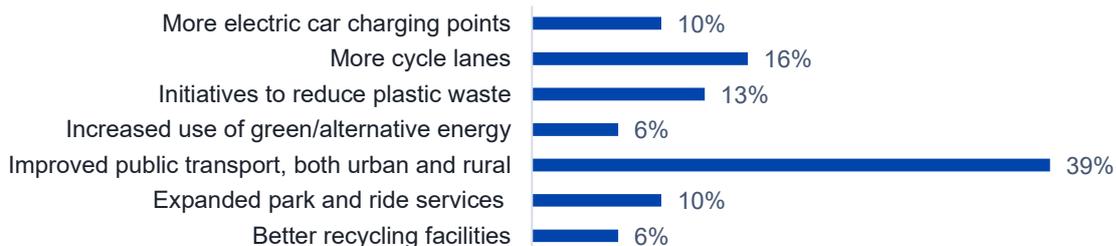


Figure 6.5: Green Initiative Suggestions from the community survey

6.2.4 Community and Quality of Life

- Participants indicated that the **county's greatest assets** are the 'warmth of its people' and its natural amenities such as its waterways and hiking trails.
- Cavan's **active heritage, culture and arts sector** was mentioned as a key strength of the county and a key contributor to social inclusion and community well-being. This includes Cavan's strong food culture, the Irish language, the recent Fleadh Ceoil and the Ramour Theatre and Cavan Town Hall.
- The county has a strong **sporting culture** with the community largely centred around the GAA. However, according to some participants, there is a need for shared sports amenities and facilities as well as alternative recreational options (e.g. Youth Clubs).
- As reflected by the county's high suicide rate, there is a **need to address mental health issues** across all groups and ages. In particular, it is important to ensure engagement between educators, experts and parents. Amongst younger people, there is a need to provide physical spaces for growth and development and to address issues around isolation and lack of services.

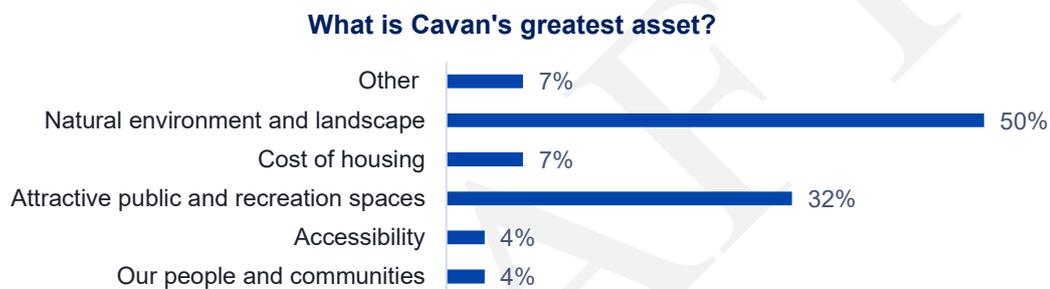


Figure 6.6: Cavan's Greatest Assets

- Participants highlighted the importance of engaging with and integrating **vulnerable groups** such as younger and older people, people with disabilities, people on low incomes, as well as minority groups (incl. Travellers, new arrivals, migrants) and geographically isolated people. Amongst the suggestions mentioned were the provision of language classes and working through a fulltime county Access Officer.
- Concerns were raised about **anti-social behaviour** across the county (particularly in Ballyjamesduff) including organised crime and drugs. The issue of **domestic violence** was also highlighted as one which needs to be addressed.
- There is a **strong culture of volunteerism** benefitting the wider community which needs to be nurtured and supported. Suggestions include the progression of the county's 'Age Friendly' strategy and engagement with key stakeholders around the development of a Family Resource Centres. Other suggestions include simplifying the volunteer screening process and supporting various outreach and fund-raising activities.
- Areas of deprivation** are present to different degrees across the county with multi-dimensional efforts needed to address the issues (incl. education, sports, culture and arts). Participants mentioned the new 'working poor' population (due to cost of living increases) and high school leaving rates amongst disadvantaged groups in particular. It is felt that some areas in the county are being left behind with East Cavan experiencing growth and West Cavan experiencing depopulation and rural decline.
- In terms of **amenities and facilities**, participants mentioned the lack of parks and playgrounds, community gardens and men's and women's sheds. Facilities such as bins and seating in the public realm as well as pet fouling control measures were also mentioned.
- Additional service requirements identified** include the need for more citizens information services, legal advice, affordable healthcare, counselling and childcare services. The need to improve education and employment options of all groups, through the provision of digital connectivity and digital literacy training was also mentioned.

7

High-Level Goals & Outcomes



Emerging High Level Goals

The initial findings from the policy review, socio-economic analysis, and SCOT analysis outlined above have allowed for the identification of some key areas and themes that could potentially be addressed in the new LECP. This includes opportunities and associated strengths that can be built upon as well as constraints and gaps that are affecting the County. Taken together, this has allowed for the formulation of six draft High Level Goals that propose an initial strategic direction for the new LECP. These goals are outlined in the figure below and elaborated on in the pages that follow.

The draft High Level Goals have been formulated with reference to the new *'Local Economic and Community Plans Guidelines 2021'*. These Guidelines provide a recommended framework for the development and format of the LECP. Under this framework, the High Level Goals will inform the development of Objectives and Outcomes under the following three headings:

- Economic Elements
- Economic and Community Elements
- Community Elements

The indicative High Level Goals adhere to this format. Goals 1 and 2 predominantly relate to the economic elements of the LECP. Goals 3 and 4 relate to economic and community elements, while Goals 5 and 6 relate to community elements. It is noted that these Goals are integrated and mutual and that each element will play an important role in supporting economic and community development in County Cavan.

Furthermore the goals seek to reflect Cavan's commitment to become a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable county that is growing, inclusive, and welcoming. At the same time the Goals are realistic and achievable. As mentioned, these goals represent a starting point for discussion and they will be revised and refined where appropriate as the new LECP is developed following further analysis and feedback.



Figure 7.1: High Level Goals

Goal 1. Cavan will have a dynamic, innovative, and equitable economy that supports enterprise and employment.

This goal looks to support Cavan's economy through proactive actions to attract new investment, reward innovation and build on existing strengths. Although the county has a strong base of economic activity and numerous existing business clusters, more can be done to support local entrepreneurship. These clusters include construction materials providers (e.g. Mannock & Kingspan) who provide an important source of employment activity in the county. In the agriculture and food economies, there is a need to support both big and small producers. Therefore, expanding the employment base and creating new job opportunities will be a key element to Cavan's success moving forward. This economic development will help to underpin further investment into the wellbeing of the community, reduce unemployment and poverty, and improve the quality of life of all within the county. This could include to:

- Build deeper relationships with key actors including Enterprise Ireland, the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), and the IDA to help foster and attract high-value jobs and sustainable employment. The indigenous businesses and FDI related companies will create wider spill-over growth to the county.
- Use digitalisation and new technologies including the implementation of Cavan's Digital Strategy and the Cavan Digital Hub to ensure that the county remains competitive and benefits from changing work patterns (i.e. remote and hybrid working).
- Create an optimal business environment that supports existing businesses, incentivises new business creation and acts as a key attractor for potential investors by providing business supports, talent, enterprise space, broadband availability, and transport infrastructure.
- Support Cavan's economy as it adapts to the Brexit transition. This is vital given Cavan's border location.
- Develop the retail, accommodation and hospitality sectors and increase their importance to Cavan's economy and community through initiatives like Created in Cavan.
- Strengthen transport linkages and infrastructure to improve economic activity and better take advantage of wider regional and national growth engines such as the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor.
- Support other key sectors such as professional services that contribute to the economic diversification and growth of Cavan.
- Promote and support Social Enterprises which are particularly important in areas with a low population.

Key Questions...

- What can be done to further support existing businesses?
- How can Cavan attract new businesses and investment to help diversify its economy?
- Are there any opportunities that Cavan should look to capitalise on for growth?

SDG Alignment



Goal 2. Cavan will support the development of sustainable tourism in the county that appreciates the county's natural, built and cultural heritage.

Cavan is a place of great natural beauty. The county contains a variety of different natural features and landscapes (e.g. Geopark, Forest Parks, Lough Sheelin, Lough Ramor). It also has a rich culture and built heritage (e.g. Cavan Burren Park, Shannon Erne Waterway, Cavan County Museum) with a welcoming community. Taken together, these assets contribute to an enhanced sense of place and a charming appeal to visitors. Similarly, they also highlight Cavan's strong tourism potential which can contribute to the overall development of the county, its liveability, and the health of the economy. In light of Brexit, attracting both domestic and international tourists from further afield has gained a renewed importance. As such, this goal looks to harness the county's tourist potential, while championing, protecting and strengthening Cavan's heritage. This could include to:

- Support and encourage participation in cultural, heritage and creative initiatives and the agencies that assist them (e.g. Creative Ireland, The Heritage Council, The Arts Council, Fáilte Ireland).
- Build on the opportunities that exist to further develop Cavan as a tourism destination as part of its inclusion in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.
- Develop Cavan's night-time economy, in collaboration with the tourism, arts and hospitality sectors.
- Ensure a coordinated approach to the promotion and development of Cavan's tourism offering across strategically important channels and stakeholders.
- Strengthen the county's culture and heritage infrastructure, including capacity building and skills development to build on existing strengths in arts and culture.
- Support the sustainable development – both economic and environmental – of outdoor and active tourism (e.g. walking, cycling, horse riding, angling, boating, and lakeside activities). A likely key focus will be on developing Blueway and Greenway projects.
- Ensure that Cavan's sensitive landscapes, places and objects are well cared for and appropriately presented.

Key Questions...

- What markets should Cavan focus on and what tourism products are needed to meet the demands of these target markets?
- How does Cavan best balance the development of the tourist sector with the need to care for the natural, built and intangible heritage that people come to experience.

SDG Alignment



Goal 3. Cavan will facilitate life-long learning and further education and training opportunities to support the personal development and attainment of its people.

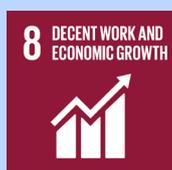
Life-long learning and upskilling is vital in the personal development and career advancement of many people across the county. It contributes to the wellbeing of the wider community through increasing employability and economic independence. This in turn reduces unemployment and poverty. Ensuring that Cavan has a skilled workforce that aligns with employer needs will help develop a dynamic economy that can attract investment and nurture entrepreneurship. In terms of upskilling and life-long learning, Cavan Institute and Ballyhaise Agricultural College are both essential providers of training and education. External universities could also be engaged to allow residents to learn and grow. Actions under this goal could include to:

- Work to facilitate life-long learning in Cavan, in particular, to contribute towards EU targets for 15% of adult participation in life-long learning.
- Work in collaboration with training and education providers to ensure appropriate education and skills provision across the county that is accessible and inclusive for all the community.
- Promote linkages and collaboration between the private sector actors, public sector bodies, as well as education and training providers to identify and address skill needs and shortages across the county.
- Prepare the community for the jobs of the future and to exploit opportunities where the county is well situated in areas such as the green economy – especially in the construction sector – and sustainable tourism.
- Work to address the digital skills gap where it exists and promote the development of such skills in all age groups to improve digital literacy and economic opportunities.
- Work with industry and social enterprises to provide pathways for people to use their skills to enrich their communities and contribute to the well-being of the county.

Key Questions...

- What can be done to encourage more people to participate in life-long learning?
- What specific training should be provided that will lead to the best opportunities for Cavan's economic growth?

SDG Alignment



Goal 4. Cavan will support the regeneration and revitalisation of its towns, villages, and localities as attractive places to live, work and visit.

Irish towns and villages are facing significant challenges in relation to high levels of commercial vacancy, dereliction and more generally, rural decline. Cavan's location on the border – especially during the period of the Troubles – has not been conducive to the economic development of its towns and villages. The uncertainty caused by Brexit has again brought a dynamic to Cavan that other counties located away from the border do not have to deal with to the same extent. Regardless of this, the decline of rural towns and villages in Cavan is part of a wider national and international trend. Several national policies such as the Town Centre First Policy and Our Rural Future seek to specifically address this challenge. Under this goal, Cavan will work to support the regeneration and revitalisation of towns and villages across the county, thereby ensuring the development of vibrant and resilient communities. Actions under this goal could include to:

- Support Cavan's towns and villages by seeking the necessary funding from national and EU sources to implement regeneration and revitalisation initiatives.
- Collect relevant data and apply well-targeted strategic approaches to plan for the future of Cavan's towns and villages.
- Make every town and village a Smart Village (i.e. using data, technology and innovation to enhance places, understand how they are used, and develop new solutions).
- Implement targeted public realm interventions to enhance town and village centres – i.e. to create vibrant, attractive and inclusive spaces for all persons, regardless of circumstances.
- Implement measures which will improve footfall in the county's towns and villages – i.e. to support local businesses and create active local communities that are safe and welcoming.
- Identify the ownership of vacant and derelict buildings and repurpose for potential community, residential, creative and commercial uses.
- Explore options to reduce traffic congestion and improve uptake of more sustainable transportation options.
- Embrace sustainability and quality of life elements associated with nature and walkable settlements as a competitive advantage for the county.

Key Questions...

- How can people be encouraged back into the centre of Cavan's towns and villages?
- How can the quality of life of those living in the county's towns and villages be improved?

SDG Alignment



Goal 5. Cavan will be an inclusive, healthy and equitable county that supports wellbeing across its communities.

Cavan County Council, in collaboration with key stakeholders, will work to ensure an equitable county that promotes social inclusion and diversity. In line with the Healthy Ireland Framework 2019-2025, the council will improve health and wellbeing by creating and continually improving the county's physical and social environments. The council will also develop community resources that help people to support each other and achieve their potential. The goal will also look to support those who are most vulnerable and address deprivation where it exists. This could include to:

- Ensure access to services for all, including healthcare, childcare, housing and education.
- Ensure the provision of adequate supports for the people of Cavan and work across all groups to reduce the threat of rural isolation and ensure they are supported to meaningfully participate in society.
- Build on and support innovation projects that promote inclusion and tackle inequality and exclusion in the county.
- Deepen and expand the work of the Cavan Sports Partnership.
- Healthy Cavan and Slaintecare Healthy Communities to continue to promote a healthy and active lifestyle with the county across communities.
- Deepen and expand the work of the Cavan Sports Partnership to continue to promote a healthy and active lifestyle within the county across communities.
- Continue work to reduce deprivation and poverty where it exists, including through increasing employment in well-paying roles and enhance skills and educational attainment in vulnerable groups.
- Implement initiatives that promote positive mental health and healthy life choices for the benefit of all the community, especially those at acute risk of isolation.
- Work with our communities to ensure their participation in policy design within the county, so that the council's work represents all communities within Cavan.
- Develop initiatives that celebrate diversity and inclusion and encourage people to actively participate in the development of their communities and the County.

Key Questions...

- What are the best actions/initiatives to improve the community's mental and physical health?
- How can social cohesion be strengthened and inequality lessened?

SDG Alignment



Goal 6. Cavan will proactively support climate action to create resilient and sustainable communities.

Cavan has an abundance of natural assets that adds to the appeal the county has for residents, workers and visitors alike. The natural environment contributes not only to Cavan's tourism potential but more importantly to the quality of life and wellbeing of communities across the county. Therefore, it is vital that the natural environment, its ecosystems and habitats are protected for future generations. As such, we will strive to realise national, regional and local goals towards developing and supporting climate action to create sustainable communities and support national objectives to reach Net Zero emissions by 2050. In order to realise these climate action ambitions, sustainable practices must be integrated across all areas of life and services, with the UN SDGs underpinning the new LECP. This could include to:

- Build upon Cavan's generation and use of renewable energy sources, including through exploring the development of micro-generation and larger-scale renewable energy projects where appropriate.
- Pilot innovative projects and increase participation in sustainability initiatives across the community and private sector, including in relation to projects that will address the current biodiversity crisis.
- Encourage and increase the use of more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport (including in rural areas) and active modes of travel (including through increased cycleways and walking routes).
- Increase the necessary infrastructure (i.e. EV Charging points) in the county to support the use of Electric Vehicles.
- Increase the uptake of electric vehicles and ensure the necessary infrastructure (i.e. EV charging points) is in place to support their use.
- Increase the accessibility and integration of innovative farming approaches and technologies across Cavan – i.e. to help them become more economically and environmentally sustainable.
- Support the development of the green economy to further realise the economic benefits of going green, particularly within existing economic clusters such as construction material providers.

Key Questions...

- How can climate change adaptation be a force for improving residents' quality of life?
- What can be done to reduce the county's carbon emissions and increase biodiversity?
- Are there any innovative environmental projects or initiatives that you would like to see introduced in Cavan?

SDG Alignment



8

Objectives & Actions



8.1 Objectives & Actions

Goal 1: Cavan will have a dynamic, innovative, and equitable economy that supports enterprise and employment.

Objective 1.1: Improve the attractiveness of the county as a place to grow a business.

- 1.1.1. *Support new and existing indigenous enterprises and encourage innovative entrepreneurship.*
- 1.1.2. *Ensure adequate zoning and access to suitable serviced sites and enterprise space (including incubation centres) to promote a positive business environment.*
- 1.1.3. *Develop Cavan's ambition for a green and digital economy.*
- 1.1.4. *Develop appropriate infrastructure, in line with the County Development Plan, such as broadband, water, roads, etc which supports economic and enterprise development in County Cavan.*
- 1.1.5. *Support retail businesses on our main streets to survive and thrive through e-commerce, increased footfall and innovative actions.*

Objective 1.2: Coordinate new pathways into employment in the county rewarding upskilling and training.

- 1.2.1. *Investigate the skills need of the county, including current and future skills especially in high potential sectors, and create a strategic plan to develop and attract skilled individuals to live and work in the county.*
- 1.2.2. *Encourage and support the development and delivery of educational at all levels to increase the range of skills across the county.*
- 1.2.3. *Work with education providers, such as CMETB, Cavan Institute, Cavan Innovation and Technology Centre, along with industry players to create pathways from education to employment including vocational and academic training with a focus on in-demand sectors such as engineering/construction/green energy.*

Objective 1.3: Develop the county's brand and attractiveness for inward investment

- 1.3.1. *Attract FDI to support job creation in partnership with the local authority and enterprises agencies.*
- 1.3.2. *Promote County Cavan as an attractive investment location.*
- 1.3.3. *Building upon existing work in identifying suitable development land, work will be undertaken to facilitate and develop these lands in line with the County Development Plan (CDP) and the objectives of the LECP.*

Objective 1.4: Develop key infrastructure projects enabling economic development. *

- 1.4.1. *Support Cavan Town to be an attractive location for investment underpinning its designation as a key town for growth as set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032.*
- 1.4.2. *Develop appropriate infrastructure which will enhance County Cavan's attractiveness as a location for FDI investments.*
- 1.4.3. *Support the delivery of infrastructure such as housing, water, roads etc, in our towns and villages which will enhance their potential for enterprise development and investment.*

* in line with the wider planning framework

8.1 Objectives & Actions

Goal 2: Cavan will support the development of sustainable tourism in the county that appreciates the county's natural, built, artistic, and cultural heritage.

Objective 2.1: Support and develop both new and existing attractions and infrastructure that complement the existing strengths of the county.

2.1.1. Complete and implement an updated Tourism Development Plan to support the growth of tourism in the county and deliver benefits across urban and rural Cavan. Such a Plan will be subject to screening for environmental assessments and, as relevant, subsequent assessments.

2.1.2. Support an approach to tourism that builds upon the county's rich artistic, cultural, and food heritage.

2.1.3. Building on the County's strengths in the food sector, continue to promote Cavan food, particularly through the 'Created in Cavan' brand and Cavan Food Network.

2.1.4. Support the development and enhancement of tourist accommodation, particularly in areas where capacity is low. Particular attention should be paid to glamping, campsites and those accommodations focusing on sustainability.

Objective 2.2: Support new and existing tourism opportunities that protect and enhance the natural heritage of the county.

2.2.1. Seek opportunities for implementing Regenerative Tourism projects to sustainably develop and renew Cavan's natural heritage.

2.2.2. Explore opportunities to sustainably develop and manage Cavan's waterways for angling, leisure, and tourism in collaboration with local communities, partners, and national authorities.

2.2.3. Building on Cavan Calling, create a set of impactful initiatives focused on the diaspora that attract those with a Cavan connection to visit and dwell in the county.

2.2.4. Continue to promote the development of recreational Infrastructure and other active travel measures within the county to support active enjoyment of the county.

2.2.5. Support key tourist attractions including the Cuilcagh Lakelands GeoPark, Cavan County Museum, Dún a Rí Forest Park and Killykeen Forest Park to reach their full commercial, social and educational potential.

2.2.6. Support Cuilcagh Lakelands continuing designation as a UNESCO GeoPark landscape.

Objective 2.3: Support and promote the "This is Cavan" tourism brand.

2.3.1. Build upon and strengthen the success of the "This is Cavan" brand.

2.3.2. The Cavan tourism offering will be promoted in collaboration with national agencies to national and international audiences and buyers.

8.1 Objectives & Actions

Goal 3: Cavan will facilitate life-long learning and further education and training opportunities to support the personal development and attainment of its people.

Objective 3.1: Develop the range and depth of post-secondary and life-long learning options available to people in the county by working with education partners such as CMETB, Cavan Institute and Ballyhaise Agricultural College.

3.1.1. The county will support education providers such as CMETB and Cavan Institute in the delivery of further education and training options to enhance career development and skills formation, including traineeships and apprenticeships.

3.1.2. Support education providers in the county in accessing additional funding and pursuing partnerships to enhance educational opportunities in Cavan.

3.1.3. Encourage and facilitate the provision of life skills training including financial literacy, energy sustainably, nutrition, and other skills as identified.

3.1.4. The Irish language will be supported and promoted within Cavan as part of the county's intangible cultural heritage.

3.1.5. Develop life-long learning options throughout the county to educate and enrich the lives of people from all over Cavan.

Objective 3.2: Providing accessible education opportunities to support the integration and participation of all our communities across the county.

3.2.1. Working with older people to develop attractive life-long learning options that improve the ability of older people to connect with and participate in the community.

3.2.2. Facilitate new communities in Cavan to engage in education and training to support their participation and integration into the community and the workplace.

3.2.3. Support those with disabilities and/or additional needs to engage in education and training programmes.

3.2.4. Continue to enhance inclusivity and accessibility of education and training provision to enable participation by all, in particular those experiencing disadvantage / hardest to reach.

Objective 3.3: Support the development of third-level educational provision within the county.

3.3.1. Work with relevant stakeholders within the county such as Cavan Institute, CMETB and third level institutions nationally, to explore the options to support the provision of third level courses within the county.

3.3.2. Leverage the recent Government announcement of a new FET College of the Future for Cavan Institute as a suitable location for delivery of third level courses, from a range of providers.

8.1 Objectives & Actions

Goal 4: Cavan will support the regeneration and revitalisation of its towns, villages, and rural parishes as attractive places to live, work and visit.

Objective 4.1: Facilitate Active Living and Connectivity for all communities in Cavan.

4.1.1. Explore the development of transport solutions to support the participation of all society but particularly young people in our sports clubs, social clubs, schools, and communities across rural and urban Cavan.

4.1.2. Support the development of community recreational resources across rural and urban Cavan.

4.1.3. Support the implementation of measures and infrastructure to promote active travel within the county both for main journeys as well as last mile options.

Objective 4.2: Effectively use housing as a tool to develop more resilient communities across the county.

4.2.1. Ensure adequate zoning and access to suitable serviced sites for social and affordable housing throughout the county.

4.2.2. Encourage compact and well serviced development within the established settlements of the county.

4.2.3. Using funding sources from national (e.g. Croí Cónaithe, URDF, RRDF) and European sources (e.g. the Green New Deal, PEACEPLUS), bring derelict and other existing property up to standard in areas of demand.

4.2.4. Support a variety of residential developments in the county to provide options that support all stages of life, in particular step-down housing close to town and village centres.

4.2.5. Encourage the reuse of existing dwellings and structures across rural Cavan for housing.

4.2.6. Support the provision of social and affordable housing across Cavan.

4.2.7. Support the provision of adaptable and accessible housing in accordance with the local housing disability strategy and all national policy initiatives.

Objective 4.3: Support the revitalisation of town and village centres across the county.

4.3.1. Support the renovation of derelict commercial premises and identify opportunities to bring derelict properties back into use.

4.3.2. Continue to redevelop and support the work of the council and communities to create attractive and welcoming public spaces.

4.3.3. Explore the development of physical and digital infrastructure to support more sustainable ways of working, living, and commuting across rural and urban Cavan.

8.1 Objectives & Actions (Goal 4 contd.)

Objective 4.4: Build up capacity in our volunteer-led services and social enterprise sectors.

4.4.1. Support the work of groups and Community Champions across rural and urban Cavan to foster and develop new community initiatives.

4.4.2. Support communities to examine the development of new accessible community spaces in suitable locations across the county.

4.4.3. Continue to provide and enhance early-stage and ongoing capacity building for social enterprises and volunteer organisations and community groups across the county.

Objective 4.5: Support the development of Cavan's arts and culture sector as a way of improving residents' quality of life

4.5.1. Support the implementation of the county's new arts and culture strategies to sustainably develop the sector in Cavan and attract target audiences.

4.5.2. Explore linkages and funding opportunities with local, National and European agencies to deliver innovative and inclusive arts and creative projects.

4.5.3. Support measures which facilitate inclusion and participation in the Arts, particularly for those in marginalised sectors of society.

4.5.4. Support the further development of Library, Archive, Museum and Genealogy services in Cavan.

8.1 Objectives & Actions

Goal 5: Cavan will be an inclusive, healthy and equitable county that supports wellbeing across its communities.

Objective 5.1: Promote an open approach to health and wellbeing in the county.

5.1.1. An open approach to addressing mental health will be implemented in the county in partnership with national research institutes, and through engagement with local organisations, community groups and charities working on the ground.

5.1.2. Supporting the implementation of national health policy and improving access to healthcare for the people of the county through initiatives such as Enhanced Community Care.

5.1.3. Conduct a survey of marginalised and vulnerable populations to determine gaps in provision of socially inclusive healthcare and incorporate these into future planning decisions.

5.1.4. Continue to strengthen collaboration between the public, community and voluntary sectors to encourage a holistic approach to tackling gaps and inequalities in health and wellbeing.

Objective 5.2: Improve Accessibility and Inclusivity of Public Services across the county

5.2.1. Conduct an audit of existing public infrastructure. Analyse this to ensure its accessibility and ability to serve the whole community. Implement recommendations into design of services and facilities.

5.2.2. Conduct an audit in the county to understand gaps and address the challenges to accessibility in the county's settlements and community buildings across rural and urban Cavan.

5.2.3. Continue to implement the Cavan Age Friendly strategy and support the full and active participation of older people in the social life of the county.

Objective 5.3: Develop opportunities that support social inclusion and promote the active participation of all people especially the marginalised in the social life of the community.

5.3.1. Examine the creation of indoor and outdoor space in appropriate locations to provide young people a place to affordably socialise (including spaces for people with mobility and/or learning difficulties or sensory issues).

5.3.2. Examine the development of spaces for the county's older population to socialise and meet.

5.3.3. Support the Volunteering Sector in the county to grow its capacity and place volunteering at the heart of community engagement.

5.3.4. Support efforts to increase the physical activity and recreation levels within the county including the work of the Cavan Sports Partnership, , the Local Sports Plan, along with the development of Cavan Regional Sports Campus, (subject to screenings for assessments being undertaken, as relevant).

Objective 5.4: Improve the physical and mental wellbeing of all the people of Cavan.

5.4.1. Develop community programs in alignment with the 3rd National Strategy on Domestic Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Implementation Plan.

5.4.2. Support an evidence-based approach to combatting Drugs and Alcohol abuse and misuse in the county.

8.1 Objectives & Actions

Goal 6: Cavan will proactively support climate action to create resilient and sustainable communities.

Objective 6.1: Cavan will proactively continue to support climate action.

6.1.1. Implement the county's Climate Action Plan and conduct a baseline emissions study to understand the current level of emissions in the County and the gap to targets for 2030 and 2050.

6.1.2. Support the development of Sustainable Energy Communities across the county.

6.1.3. Support projects across the county where they contribute effectively to meeting the county's Climate Action targets.

Objective 6.2: Develop further climate adaptation and mitigation actions at scale with sponsorship and outside funding.

6.2.1. Continue supporting the development of the Cavan Town Decarbonisation Zone.

6.2.2. Cavan County Council will review its operations and assets in order to reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency.

6.2.3. Cavan County Council will support and encourage policies and development which increase the energy efficiencies of existing buildings and encourage zero emissions new builds.

6.2.4. The Council will explore linkages and opportunities to work with European, national, and local funding partners to deliver innovative projects for the betterment of the county.

6.2.5. Support the development of sites dedicated to the production of renewable energy in the county and support the journey to Net Zero by 2050.

Objective 6.3: Protect and support the environment of Co. Cavan.

6.3.1. Support policies to reduce transport emissions by improving transport planning and adopting the Avoid-Shift-Improve approach.

6.3.2. Support and encourage the development of a more sustainable agriculture sector in the County through education, action, and proactive adaptation in accordance with the Cavan Climate Action Plan and national policies.

6.3.3. Support and encourage the growth of the circular economy and bioeconomy.

6.3.4. Support the implementation of local biodiversity support actions within Cavan including smaller initiatives and larger projects in line with the National Biodiversity Action Plan.

6.3.5. Protect and enhance the water quality of Cavan's water bodies in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive and other environmental functions.

6.3.6. Build climate resilience in our infrastructure to combat the effects of climate change.

9

Conclusion & Next Steps

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9.1 Conclusion and Next Steps

In developing a Local Economic and Community Plan for Cavan the creation of a comprehensive Socio-Economic Statement and subsequent stakeholder consultation programme has been essential to ensuring it reflects the needs and capacity of the County. This draft reflects both the literature review and fieldwork undertaken.

The short second round of consultations being undertaken in September 2023, will assist in how the plan's actions are implemented and prioritised.

Information about upcoming consultation sessions is available on the Council website at www.cavancoco.ie.

Comments on this document are welcome until September 12th. Submissions can be sent to niall.conway@kpmg.ie or posted to Niall Conway, KPMG, 1 Stokes Place, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, D02 DE03

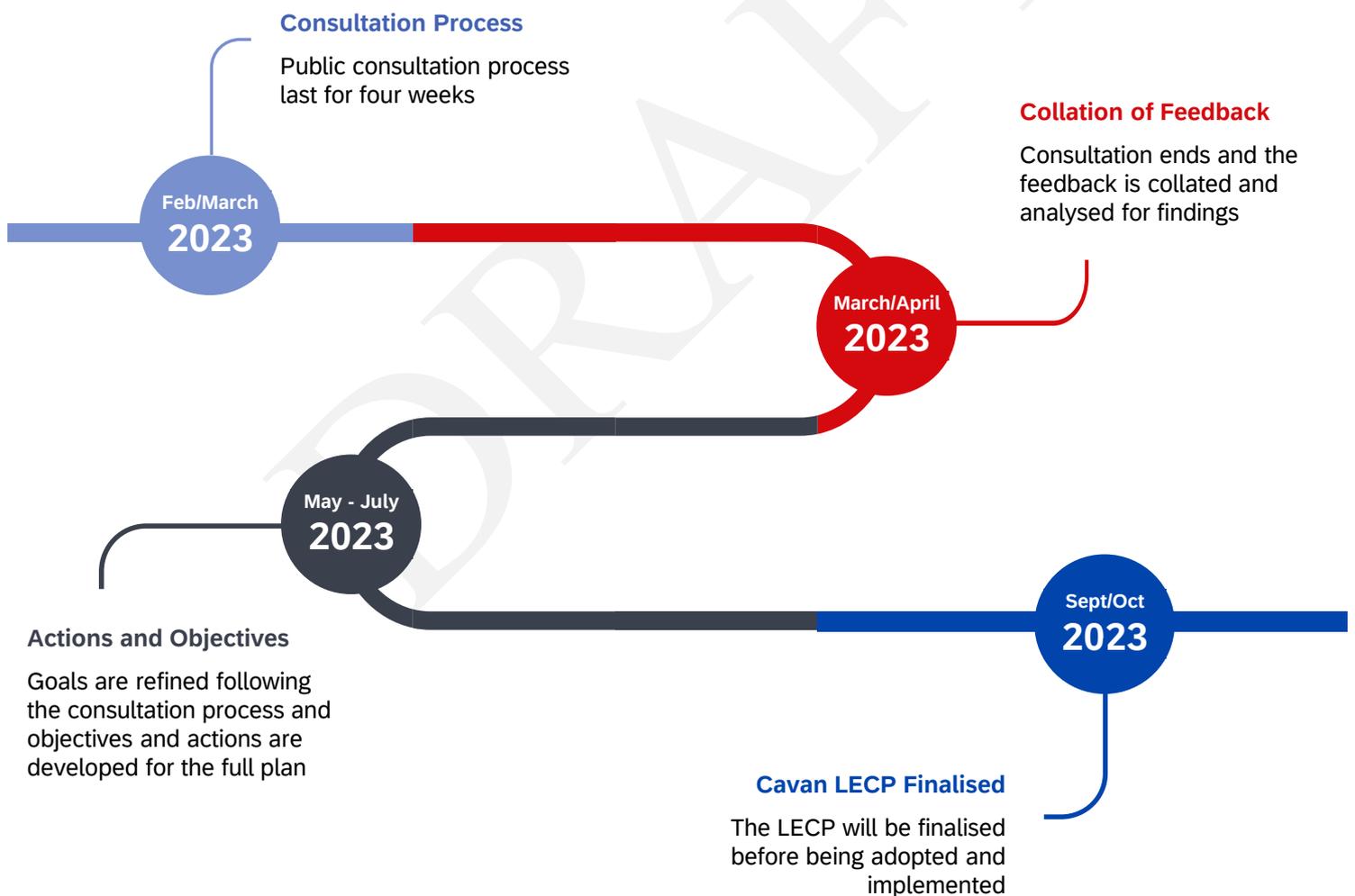


Figure 9.1: Cavan LECP Indicative Timeline

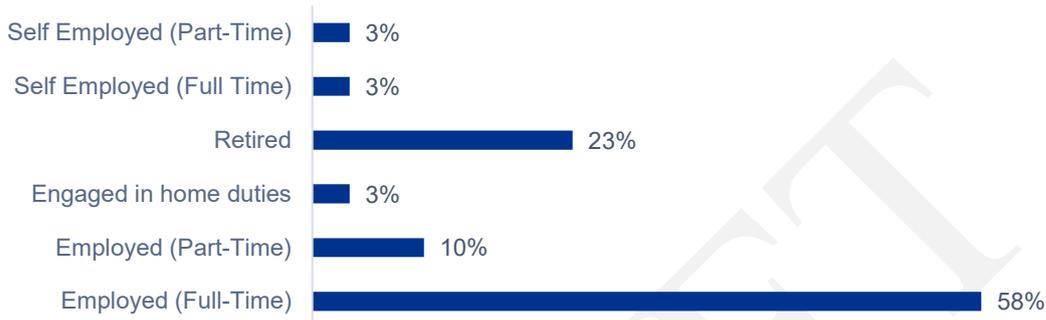
10 | Appendices Public Consultation

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10.1 Community Survey Results

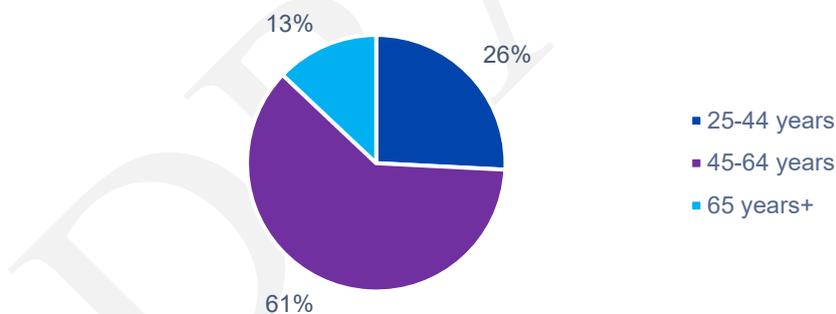
The following are additional charts derived from the community surveys that have not been previously incorporated into the consultation findings section of the document.

How would you best describe your present principal status?



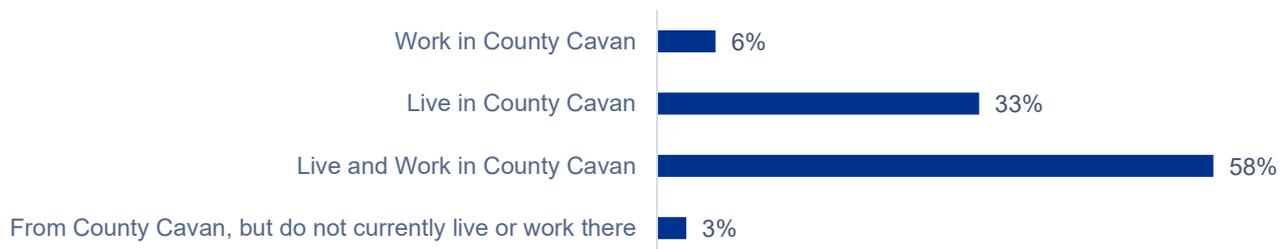
A majority of the community members who engaged with the consulting process and filled out the survey were in full-time employment. The remainder included other principal statuses such as retirees, part-time employment and self-employment.

What age bracket do you fall into?



61% of survey respondents were between the ages of 45 and 64, all of whom are above the age of 25.

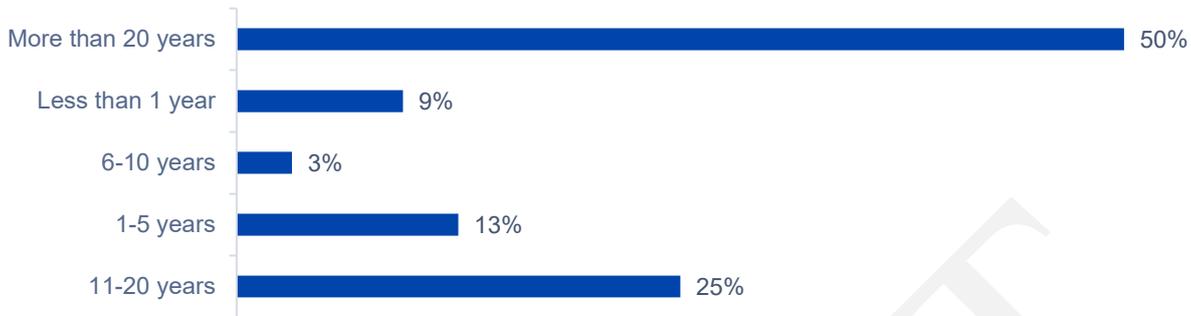
How would you describe your connection with County Cavan?



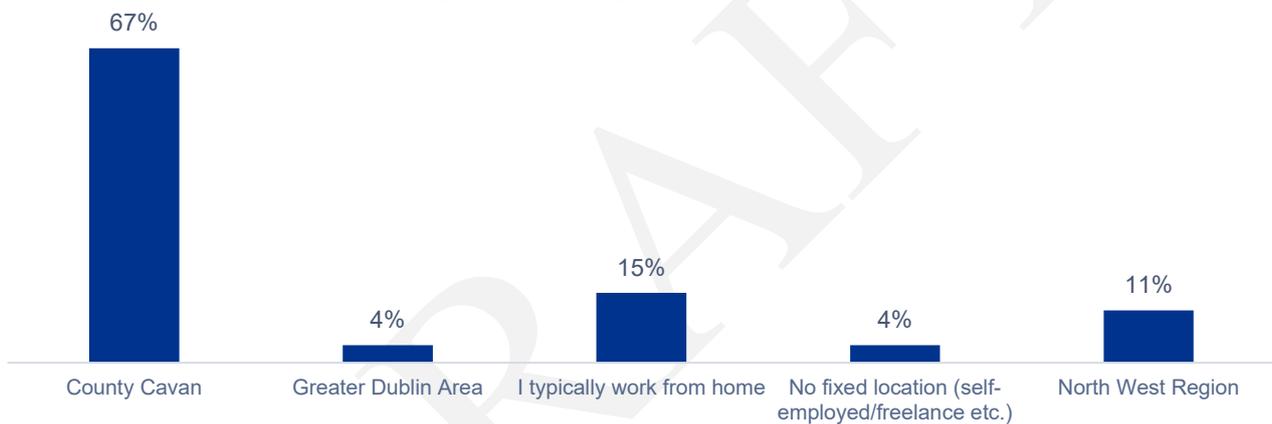
Almost all survey respondents currently reside in County Cavan with 58% of respondents also working in County Cavan.

10.1 Community Survey Results (cont.)

How long have you lived and/or worked in County Cavan?

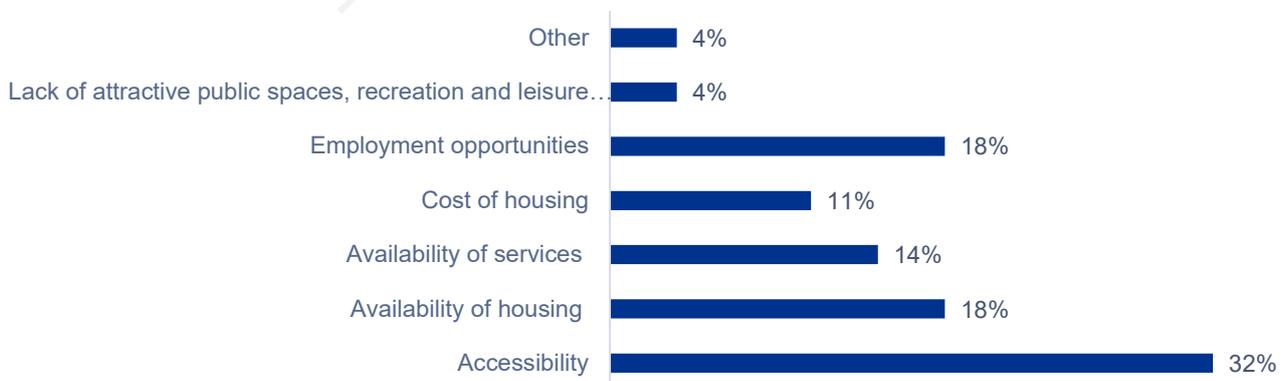


If employed, where is your usual place of work?



67% of the employment was based in County Cavan, with the rest occurring in the Northwest Region, Greater Dublin Area or working from home.

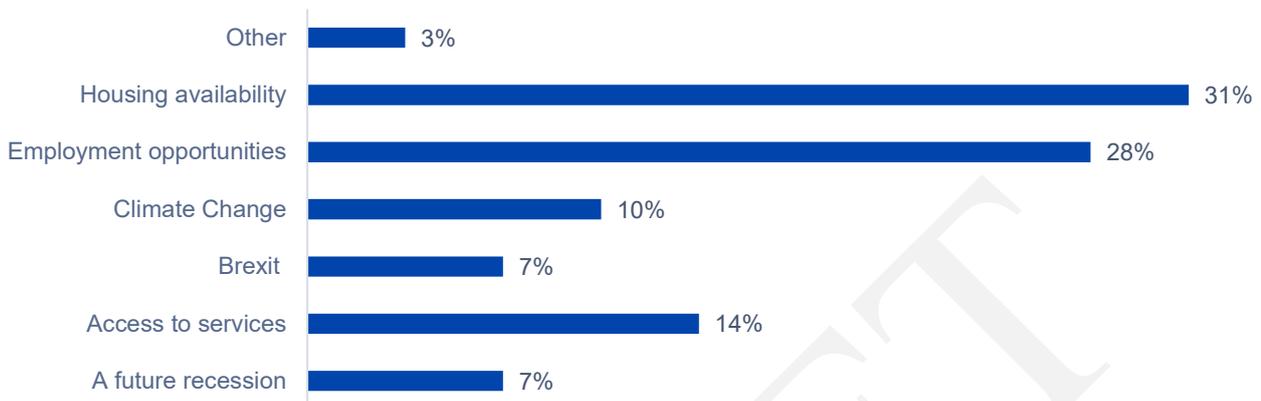
What are the main barriers to people coming to live and work in Cavan?



According to the survey results, the main barriers to people coming to live and work in Cavan is accessibility (at 32%). Other notable barriers include the lack of available housing, services and employment opportunities.

10.1 Community Survey Results (cont.)

What is the biggest threat, issue or concern for the future development of Cavan?

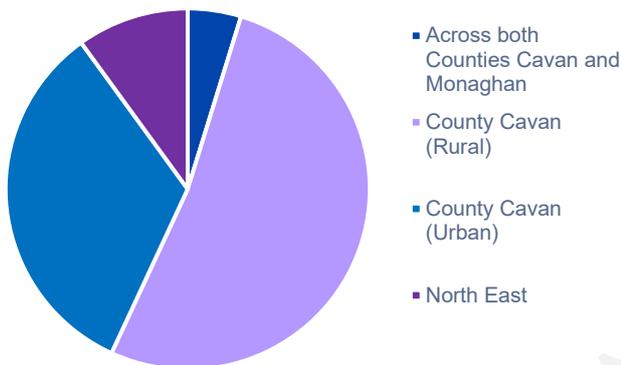


31% of survey respondents believe housing availability is the biggest threat for the future development of County Cavan. Another 28% feel that a lack of employment opportunities is the biggest concern. Climate change and access to services also ranked highly as a concern. Some survey respondents also added written submissions, the most notable examples being lack of public transport/infrastructure and emigration of younger generations.

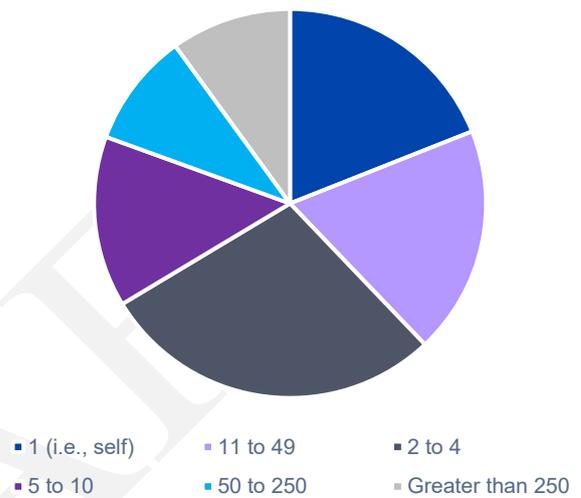
10.2 Business Survey Results

In addition to the community surveys, a number of businesses in Cavan were surveyed. The following sections contains insights which were gathered from the survey.

Where is your business located?



Approximately how many people does your business/organisation directly employ?



A majority of the businesses surveyed were located in the rural Cavan, with a considerable amount also in urban Cavan. Businesses ranged in sizes from one person to those employing more than 250 people.

How many years have you been operating at your current location?



10.2 Business Survey Results (cont.)

In your view, what is Cavan main strength as a place to do business?

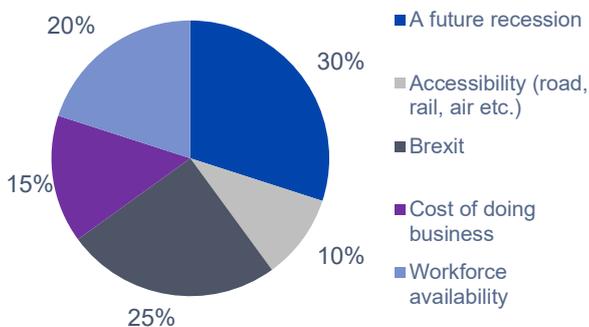


32% of businesses believed that Cavan’s lower cost of doing business is its greatest strength as a place to do business. Workforce availability and accessibility are also considered strengths of doing business in Cavan. However, as per the following chart, transport accessibility was also ranked as a significant constraint of doing business for some respondents.

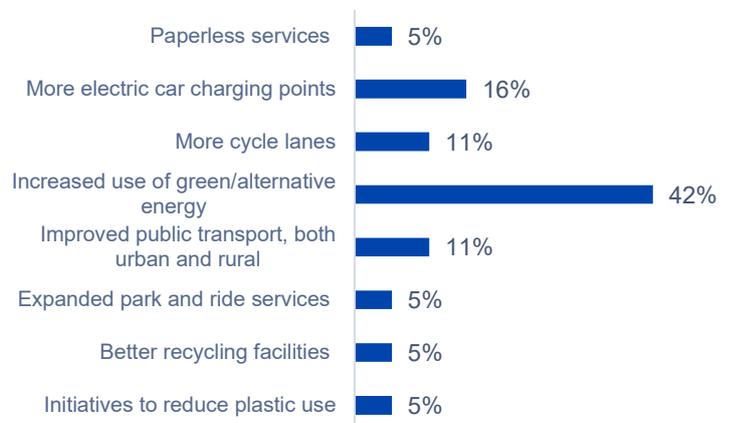
In your view, what is Cavan's main constraint as a place to do business?



In your view, what is the biggest threat or concern businesses have for the future economic growth of Cavan?



Which of these green initiatives would you see benefitting Cavan the most?



When asked about the threats to future economic development, a future recession was rated as one of the most significant. 42% of businesses, meanwhile, believed that increased use of green and alternative energy would be the best green initiative to benefit Cavan.