





# Office of the Planning Regulator

Quarter 4 of 2022

**Activity Report** 



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# Introduction

This is the twelfth of a series of quarterly activity reports that the Office of the Planning Regulator (the OPR) will publish on its website as an overview of the nature and extent of its functions across its statutory mandate. These are:

- (i) evaluation of the statutory plans of the local government system;
- (ii) reviews and examinations of local authority systems and procedures used in the delivery of planning services to the public; and
- (iii) undertaking programmes relating to training, education, research and public awareness in relation to the benefits of planning.



# **Evaluation of Statutory Plans**

## **Notification of Consultations on Statutory Plans**

In Q4 of 2022, 15 consultations on statutory plans opened for public consultation.

Planning authorities are required to notify the OPR at specified stages of the plan making process, such as when a public consultation is launched. Table 1 sets out a breakdown of notifications received by the OPR of consultations on statutory plans by plan-type. In Q4 of 2022, the majority of notifications received by the OPR related to issues papers for local area plans.

Table	Table 1: Notification of Consultations on Statutory Plans				
Mater	ial Alterations to Draft City/County Development Plans:				
•	Leitrim Council				
•	Fingal Clare Council	3			
•	Clare County Council				
Variat	ions to Draft City/County Development Plans:				
•	Cork City Council	1			
Issue	s Papers for Local Area Plans				
•	Longford County Council (Longford LAP 2023-2029)				
•	Tipperary County Council (Roscrea LAP 2023-2029, Thurles LAP				
	2024-2030, Nenagh LAP 2024-2030, Clonmel LAP 2024-2030)	7			
•	Laois County Council (Portlaoise LAP 2022-2028)				
•	Limerick City & County Development Plan (Abbeyfeale LAP				
	2023-2029)				
Draft	Local Area Plans:				
•	Limerick City and County Council (Castleconnell LAP 2023-2029,	3			
	Caherconlish LAP 2023-2029)	3			
•	Offaly County Council (Edenderry LAP 2023-2029)				
Mater	Material Alterations to Local Area Plans				
•	Limerick City and County Council (Rathkeale LAP 2023-2029)	Į.			
Total		15			

## **OPR Submissions on Statutory Plans**

OPR submissions on statutory plans may include recommendations and/or observations.

Recommendations issued by the OPR relate to clear breaches of the relevant legislative provisions, of the national or regional policy framework and/or of the policy of Government, as set out in the Ministerial guidelines under section 28 of the Act. The local authority is required to implement or address recommendation(s) made by the OPR in order to ensure consistency with the relevant policy and legislative provisions. Failure to comply with a recommendation may lead to the issuing of a Ministerial Direction under section 31 of the Act.

Observations take the form of a request for further information, justification on a particular matter, or clarification regarding particular provisions of a plan on issues that are required to ensure alignment with policy and legislative provisions. The local authority is requested by the OPR to action an observation.

A submission may also include advice on matters that the OPR considers would contribute positively to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The OPR requests that local authorities give full consideration to any advice contained in a submission.

The OPR made 19 submissions to local authorities in Q4 2022. These submissions were in relation to:

Table 2: Submissions on Statutory Plans				
Material Alterations to City/County Development Plans:				
Galway City Council				
Kildare County Council	4			
Leitrim County Council				
Fingal County Council				
Material Alterations to Local Area Plans:	4			
<ul> <li>Limerick City and County Council (Rathkeale LAP 2023-2029)</li> </ul>	1			
Variation to County/City Development Plans:				
<ul> <li>Cork City Council (Variation No. 1 to the Cork City Development</li> </ul>	1			
Plan 2022-2028)				
Issues Papers for Local Area Plans:				
<ul> <li>Carlow County Council / Laois County Council (Carlow</li> </ul>				
Graiguecullen Joint LAP 2023-2029)				
<ul> <li>Kildare County Council (Maynooth &amp; Environs Joint LAP 2024-</li> </ul>				
2030)	9			
<ul> <li>Longford County Council (Longford LAP 2023-2029)</li> </ul>	9			
<ul> <li>Limerick City and County Council (Abbeyfeale LAP 2023-2029)</li> </ul>				
<ul> <li>Tipperary County Council (Roscrea LAP 2023-2029, Thurles LAP</li> </ul>				
2024-2030, Nenagh LAP 2024-2030, Clonmel LAP 2024-2030)				
<ul> <li>Laois County Council (Portlaoise LAP 2022-2028)</li> </ul>				
Draft Local Area Plans				
<ul> <li>Fingal County Council (Lissenhall East LAP 2023-2029)</li> </ul>				
<ul> <li>Offaly County Council (Birr LAP 2023-2029)</li> </ul>	4			
<ul> <li>Limerick City and County Council (Castleconnell LAP 2023-2029,</li> </ul>				
Caherconlish LAP 2023-2029)				

Total	19
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OPR submissions during Q4 2022 related to all Regional Assembly areas, a breakdown of which is available in Figure 1 below<sup>1</sup>.

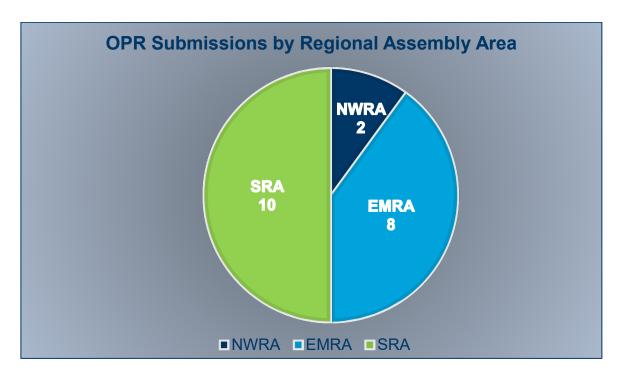


Figure 1: OPR Submissions by Regional Assembly Area

## **OPR Recommendations and Observations**

Table 3 sets out the number of observations and recommendations contained in each submission. It should be noted that, due to the strategic nature of issues papers, the OPR does not make formal observations or recommendations in respect of issues papers. Strategic advice and/or guidance is offered instead.

Table 3: Recommendations and Observations made by the OPR <sup>2</sup>					
Submissions Observations Recommer (number) (number) (number)					
Material Alterations to City/County Development Plans	4	5	21		
Material Alterations to Local Area Plans	1	-	-		

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The chart 'OPR Submissions by Regional Assembly Area' notes 20 submissions rather than 19, as noted in Table 2, because the Carlow Graiguecullen JLAP is recorded here as a submission in both EMRA & SRA (Laois & Carlow) <sup>2</sup> The OPR does not issue recommendations or observations at Issues Paper stage

Variation to County/City Development Plans	1	-	1
Draft Local Area Plans	4	3	8
Total	10	8	30

## **OPR Recommendations and Observations: Legislative and Policy Categories**

The evaluation and assessment of plans considers the following legislative and policy matters:

- Consistency with the National Planning Framework (NPF);
- Consistency with the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES);
- Consistency with the relevant Development Plan (DP);
- ➤ Relevant guidelines for planning authorities made under section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the Act), including consistency with specific planning policy requirements (SPPR) specified in those guidelines;
- Consistency with the NTA Transport Strategy (if in the Greater Dublin Area);
- Consistency with the legislative provisions for statutory plans as provided for under the Act;
- Consistency with legislative provisions in relation to Climate Action.

The following are some of the key themes evident in the recommendations and observations in the OPR's submissions in Q4:

- Section 28 guidelines: zoning, flood risk and core strategy.
- Legislative requirements: zoning; core strategy.
- **Hierarchy of plans**: alignment with National Planning Framework and RSES in relation to flood risk, zoning, rural housing and core strategy.

In Q4 2022, consistency with national and regional policy and planning guidelines were the basis of the recommendations and observations made in the OPR's 10 submissions.<sup>3</sup> The recommendations and observations contained in these submissions are broken down in tables 4 and 5 below. Please note that as some recommendations and observations cover more than one legislative provision, the numbers presented in tables 4 and 5 will differ from those in table 3 due to this overlap.

Across all recommendations and observations issued in Q4 2022, the most common themes emerging were core strategy, zoning and flood risk.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This number excludes OPR submissions on issues papers as the OPR does not make formal observations or recommendations in respect of these submissions.

Table 4: OPR Recommendations	Number
Consistency with NPF	27
Consistency with RSES	16
Consistency with DP	8
Consistency with NTA TS for GDA	-
Policy Matters re section 28 Guidelines	24
Consistency with Legislative Provisions	13
Consistency with Legislative Provisions re Climate Change	5
Other	3
Total	96

Table 5: OPR Observations	Number
Consistency with NPF	1
Consistency with RSES	1
Consistency with DP	3
Consistency with NTA TS for GDA	2
Policy Matters re section 28 Guidelines	3
Consistency with Legislative Provisions	3
Consistency with Legislative Provisions re Climate Change	-
Other	3
Total	16

## **Adopted Plans - Outcome of OPR Submissions**

The following plans were revoked by Limerick City & County Council in Q4 2022:

- Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2021-2027
- Castletroy Local Area Plan 2021-2027
- Kilfinane Local Area Plan 2012-2017 (as extended)

The Office made no recommendations in relation to the revocation of these plans.

Three city/county development plans were adopted by planning authorities in Q4 2022, listed chronologically by adoption below:

- Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028
- Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029
- Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

In addition, the outcome of the assessment of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, which was adopted in Q3, occurred in Q4.

- The Office made 25 recommendations at the draft and material alterations stage to the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- The Office made 8 recommendations at draft and material alterations stage to the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028.
- The Office made 18 recommendations at draft and material alterations stage of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029.
- The Office made 20 recommendations at draft and material alterations stage to the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029.

One Local Area Plan was adopted by a planning authority in Q4 2022;

Lissenhall East Local Area Plan 2023-2029 (Fingal County Council)

The outcome of the OPR's review of recommendations to adopted plans are detailed in table 6 and table 7 below: Table 6 details the adopted plans where the OPR's recommendations were satisfactorily addressed. Table 7 details the adopted plans where the OPR's recommendations were not satisfactorily addressed.

Table	6:	Adopted	Plans	_	Outcome	of	OPR	Submissions:	Recommendations
satisfa	cto	rily addres	sed						

Plan	Local Authority	Recommendat ion Issued	Outcome
Dublin City Development Plan	Dublin City Council	Yes (8)	All Recommendations
2022-2028	•	, ,	satisfactorily addressed
Kildare County Development	Kildare County Council	Yes (20)	All Recommendations
Plan 2023-2029	Tanada County Countin	,	satisfactorily addressed
Lissenhall East Local Area	Fingal County Council	_	Under Review
Plan 2023-2029	i ingai county countin		- C

Table 7: Adopted Plans – Outcome of OPR Submissions: Recommendations not all satisfactorily addressed

Plan	Local Authority	Recommendation Issued	Outcome
Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029	Galway City Council	Yes (18)	5 Recommendations not satisfactorily addressed
Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 <sup>4</sup>	Wicklow County Council	Yes (25)	3 Recommendations not satisfactorily addressed

## **Draft Directions**

Further to section 31AM of the Act, where the OPR is of the opinion that a plan has been made in a way that is not consistent with any recommendations made by the OPR, or that the plan has been made in a manner which fails to set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area concerned, the OPR may deem that it is merited for the Minister to issue a direction.

In Q4 2022, the OPR issued proposed draft directions to the Minister in respect of the following plans: adopted Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and adopted Galway City

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Adopted 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 (Q3) and assessment completed in Q4 2022

Development Plan 2023-2029. Following from this, the Minister issued a Draft Direction to Wicklow County Council in October 2022. The draft direction process for Galway City remains ongoing at the end of Q4 2022. Further information on the Directions process and the OPR's proposed draft Directions are available on the OPR website.

### **Final Directions**

Further to section 31(AN) of the Act and following from consideration of the Minister's draft Direction, the chief executive's report on submissions and submissions received directly from elected members, the OPR issued recommendation of a (final) Direction to the Minister in Q4 2022 in relation to the following plans:

- Adopted South Dublin County Development Plan 2022—2028 (South Dublin County Council)
- Adopted Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (Cork City Council)
- Adopted Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 (Mayo County Council)
- Adopted Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028 (Kerry County Council)
- Variation No. 2 to the Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024 (Donegal County Council)

The OPR's proposed Directions are available on the OPR website

## **Other Related Activity**

## **Tracking the Delivery of Residential Development**

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), in collaboration with Meath County Council (MCC) and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has developed dashboard solutions as 'proof of concept' for tracking and monitoring the delivery of residential development in the context of national, regional and local authority targets, zoned land, infrastructural capacity, planning consents and the activation there of. The dashboards focus on the settlement of Navan, Co. Meath and interrogate the interaction between policy and activation and its application in relation to monitoring the delivery of homes. The project forms the basis for ascertaining the viability of national application within the 31 local authorities, in the context of the delivery of the government's vision for the housing system contained in 'Housing for All – a new housing plan for Ireland'.

During Q4, further data/functionality improvements were to the HDDA dashboard including the addition of GeoDirectory data to track housing completions at a site level. The scope of the project also extended to documenting the business processes and learnings in order to gain an understanding of the what is achievable, locally and nationally, and where constraints and opportunities exist. This was progressed in Q4 and has helped identify the business, resource and system requirements for a wider rollout.

## **Plan Evaluations Interactive Map Viewer**

The development of this internal decision support tool was finalised during Q4. The map viewer provides access to spatial information and analysis tools relevant to the plan evaluation process.



# **Reviews and Examinations**

## **Case Handling**

## **Cases Activity**

The OPR provides a service to the public in relation to a variety of planning-related case types including queries or general information requests, submissions on aspects of the operation of the planning process, and complaints about the delivery of planning services.

During Q4, a total of 46 cases were received and 44 cases were closed by the OPR, detailed by month in figure 2.

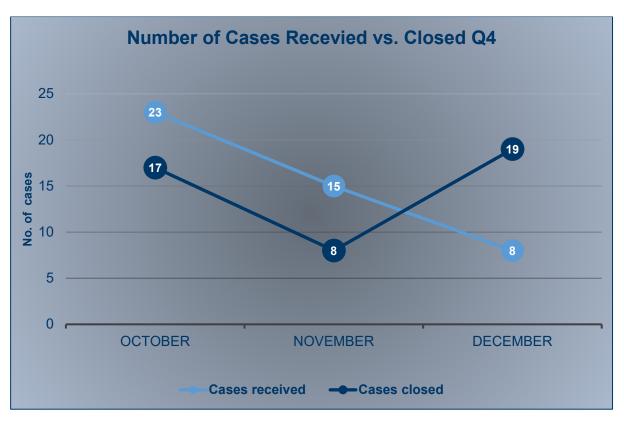


Figure 2: Number of Cases Received vs. Closed Q4

The 44 cases closed in Q4 are categorised as follows:

- o 26 complaints
- 13 queries (including one Oireachtas query)
- o 5 submissions

While some of the cases received can be handled in a relatively straightforward manner, many of the cases involve the consideration of voluminous and complex technical detail. Often, especially with regard to complaints, the processing of cases requires engaging in a series of correspondence with the customer and / or the relevant local authority. This is demonstrated by the fact that the 44 cases closed in Q4 are estimated to have taken approximately 220 working hours to process.

While a broad range of themes arose in the OPR's case handling during Q4, a number of dominant themes prevailed. The most common singular themes included cases relating to technical / statutory enquiries, statutory plan making, enforcement / unauthorised development and other.



Figure 3: Case Types

The theme titled 'other' includes a variety of issues such as An Bord Pleanála, planning conditions, local authority development / part 8, and protected structures.

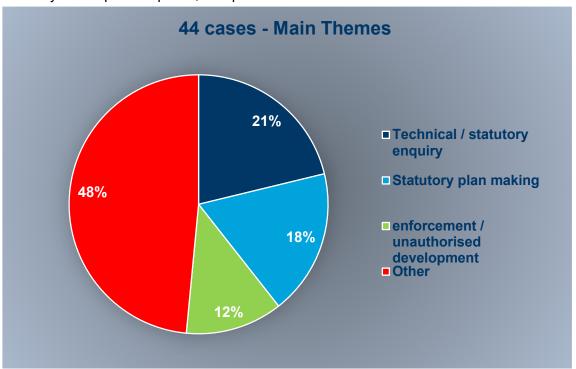


Figure 4: OPR Cases-Main Themes

## **Complaints**

The statutory provisions are precise with regard to the types of complaints that fall within the OPR's remit to examine. For a complaint to be considered examinable under the legislation, it must relate to the organisation of a local authority and of the systems and procedures used by it in the performance of its planning functions.

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While the matters raised were given appropriate technical consideration, and clarifying information issued to the complainants, one of the 44 complaints closed during Q4 was subjected to the formal statutory preliminary examination process. It would be unusual that only one of the cases closed in a particular quarter would have been subject of preliminary examination, however this is not to suggest that no examinations were being conducted during Q4. A number of complex cases were under progression during the quarter and will be reported upon conclusion.

With regard to the 26 complaints closed, only one reached the statutory threshold for examination on the basis that the matters raised were not procedural or systemic. A further portion of these complaints could not be examined in the statutory context as they related to An Bord Pleanála; while the complexities of these cases were given appropriate consideration, the OPR is not currently statutorily empowered to examine complaints about An Bord Pleanála.

## **Planning Reviews**

## Review of An Bord Pleanála

Taking account of the urgent need to progress measures aimed at restoring public confidence, the OPR formally initiated a focussed review of certain systems and procedures used by An Bord Pleanála in the delivery of its statutory planning functions in August 2022. The terms of reference for the review are available at: <a href="https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Terms-of-Reference-for-Review.pdf">https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Terms-of-Reference-for-Review.pdf</a>

The report on the first phase of the review process was published on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022. This report makes 11 recommendations for implementation by An Bord Pleanála and the Minister, or for consideration in the context of the wider planning system and legislation. This review report is available at: <a href="https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/OPR-Review-Report-Phase-1-of-ABP-Review-1.pdf">https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/OPR-Review-Report-Phase-1-of-ABP-Review-1.pdf</a>

The report on the second phase of the review process was published on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Building on the first phase, this report contains 23 wide-ranging recommendations designed to restore An Bord Pleanála's capacity to deliver timely, robust, balanced and independent quasijudicial planning decisions. Measures are also identified to ensure a positive culture in the leadership and management of the organisation and actions required to turn around an overhang of planning cases with improved arrangements for internal governance and procedural transparency. This review report is available at: <a href="https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Phase-2-Review-Report-FINAL.pdf">https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Phase-2-Review-Report-FINAL.pdf</a>

## **Local Authority Planning Reviews**

During Q4, work continued on the fifth and sixth OPR reviews through ongoing engagement with Waterford City & County Council and Offaly County Council in relation to the reviews that initiated in Q2 2022.

A six-month post-implementation review was conducted with Galway City Council, to review their implementation of the OPR's recommendations. A similar check in was carried out with Tipperary County Council, 12 months after OPR's initial review.



# Research, Education, Training and Public Awareness

## **Councillor Training**

In Q4 the OPR continued to fulfil its statutory mandate to conduct education and training programmes for members of planning authorities in respect of matters relating to proper planning and sustainable development.

In November the OPR delivered a planning training webinar for local authority elected members, in conjunction with the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG).

The webinar entitled 'The Role of Planning in Protecting Ireland's Water Quality' focused on:

- Water protection and ensuring good status for all water bodies;
- The Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and the role of local authorities;
- Water management in urban areas; and
- Water quality and planning.



Elected Members Training, November 2022

Presentations were delivered by representatives from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage including David Flynn, Principal Adviser, Water Division, Averil Gannon, Policy Adviser, Water Division, Laura Courtney and Jason Taylor, Planning Advisers, National and Regional Urban Planning Policy Division.

During Q4 discussions took place with the AILG regarding the continuation of the OPR-AILG programme of planning training for local authority elected members. Dates and topics were agreed in principle for the 2023 training events.

## **Local Authority and Regional Assembly Staff Training**

In line with the OPR's statutory mandate to conduct education and training programmes for staff of local authorities and regional assemblies in respect of matters that are relevant to the functions of the OPR, the OPR delivered a webinar in October entitled 'Learnings from the OPR Reviews of Local Authorities'.

The webinar provided an overview of:

- The background to OPR reviews, details of the review programme, the review process, the timeline, the review report and the post review follow-up;
- Learnings from OPR reviews including recurrent themes, identification of good practice and shared learnings; and
- A local authority's experience of an OPR Review – Tipperary County Council's experience.

Presentations were delivered by Emma Nevin and Marian Hutchin, Planning Officers with the OPR's Reviews and Examinations team and Eamon Lonergan, Director of Services for Planning, Tipperary County Council.

Carlow County Council's new online preplanning enquiry system was also showcased at the webinar by Pádraig O'Shea, Senior Executive Planner with Carlow County Council.

Learnings from OPR
Reviews of Local Authorities

An Overview of how the
OPR Conducts Reviews

Highlights from the OPR's
Reviews of Local Authorities

A Local Authorities

A Local Authority's
Experience of an OPR Review

Carlow County Council will also deliver a brief demonstration
of their new online pre-planning enquiry system

Friday, 21 October 10 am -12 pm Register: webinars@opr.ie

Local Authority and Regional Assembly Staff Training, October 2022

During Q4 the OPR engaged with the OPW and

the new National Town Centre First Coordinator regarding the delivery of planning training events for Local Authority and Regional Assembly Staff in Q1 2023. Dates for the training events have been agreed and promotion will commence early in Q1 2023.

Throughout Q4, engagement with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has been on-going in relation to the funding and governance structures required to implement the sectoral Learning and Development Strategy. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be published early in 2023.

## **National Planning Knowledge Group**

The tenth meeting of the National Planning Knowledge Group (NPKG) was held in October as part of which the OPR provided an update on the work that has been advanced under the Strategic Planning Research Programme (2020-2022) and presented the research projects that the OPR intends to include in the new Research Programme (2023-2025). The proposed new research projects were discussed in detail and were endorsed by the NPKG. Details of the OPR's training and public awareness initiatives were also presented to the NPKG and were welcomed by the Group.

## **OPR Research Output**

During Q4, consistent with the Strategic Planning Research Framework, the OPR advanced work on a number of research projects within the original Strategic Planning Research Programme (2020-2022) and published a new Strategic Planning Research Programme to cover the period 2023-2025.

## **Strand One (Planning Issues) Projects**

In Q4 the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) advanced work on the 'InPLACE – Investigating Planning, Place-Making and Commuting' project. Fieldwork commenced in two of the Phase 2 towns (Kanturk-Banteer and Mountbellew) in October and will be progressed in the remaining Phase 2 towns shortly. The ICLRD team are working to issue a final report by Q2 2023. It is envisaged that the findings from the research will have significance for a range of public policies, many of which are within the remit of local authorities, and all of which will influence local communities such as health, housing, environment, community development, social policy, transportation and spatial planning.

During Q4 the First Order Draft of Volume 2: Achieving Climate Neutrality by 2050 of the EPA Five-Year Assessment of Irish Climate Change Research (5YAR) was issued for review. Comments and feedback were provided to the project team in November. The OPR participated in a subsequent inperson workshop coordinated by the EPA to consider research gaps and policy considerations arising from the first order draft. This included a broad range of stakeholders from government departments and NGOs. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held in Q1 2023.

## **Strand Two (Planning Performance) Projects**

During Q4, work was advanced on the OPR-EPA funded project 'Public Participation and Performance Criteria in Strategic Environmental Assessment: The Way Forward to Advancing Practice' or 'SEAWAY'. An online survey was undertaken by the project team in October/November and interviews commenced with national and international experts. The OPR attended and contributed to the Steering Committee meeting in November. The case study pilot for the project is scheduled to commence early in 2023.

## **Strand Three (Planning Practice) Projects**

In Q4 the OPR finalised and published a Practice Note on 'Planning Conditions' and an associated conditions compendium. The purpose of this practice note (PN03) is to promote greater consistency in the use of standard conditions and to support planning authorities in devising their own manual of conditions. The practice note contains information and guidance on how to draft standard planning conditions and the reasons for the attachment of conditions to a grant of planning permission.

## **New Strategic Planning Research Programme**

During Q4, following engagement with the NPKG and other key stakeholders, the OPR finalised and published a new Strategic Planning Research Programme for the period 2023-2025. Work has already commenced on the procurement of consultants to assist in the delivery of research projects provided for in this programme namely 'Practice Note PN04 – Planning for Employment Growth – The Development Plan and Employment Lands' and 'Practice Note PN05 – Planning Enforcement'.

## **Public Awareness Initiatives**

## **Planning Leaflets**

In Q4 in line with the OPR's commitment to regularly review and update the planning leaflets, all 15 leaflets in the planning leaflet series were reviewed by the OPR's technical team in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The updated leaflets (English and Irish versions) were published on both the OPR and Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage websites in Q4.

## **The Planning Process**

In Q4 the OPR published a new online resource entitled 'The Planning Process' which provides easy access to information on the three key stages of the planning application process. The new resource sits within the Public Awareness section of the OPR's website and contains animated explainer videos, flowcharts, links to planning authority online resources and relevant planning leaflets.



The Planning Process-Animated Explainer Video

The resource was designed and developed to help prospective applicants for planning permission to navigate their way through the planning application process. This process is broken down into three key stages including the 'Pre-Application Consultation' stage, the 'Planning Application' stage and the 'Planning Decisions and Appeals' stage. A separate subpage has been created for each of these three stages and each subpage contains an animated explainer video, an index of local authority online resources and a flowchart which was designed to complement the video and to provide practical information on the planning application process.

Enhancing the public's understanding of the planning process is a key function of the OPR and this new resource contributes to the public's awareness and understanding of planning and should prove to be a very practical and useful resource.



## **Communications and Stakeholder Engagement**

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

In October and November 2022 the OPR hosted meetings of the Plans Evaluation Forum, which involves liaising with key prescribed authorities in relation to the assessment and evaluation of plans.

#### Communications

## **Quarterly Newsletter**

In November, we issued our winter <u>newsletter</u>. Among its contents were an address from the Planning Regulator, the annual report, details of our "becoming a planner" videos, information about training webinars and recruitment.

## Overall, it had:

- 747 recipients
- An open-rate of 63.2%
- Total clicks of 2,898

## **Annual Overview of the Planning System 2021**

We published this <u>report</u> in December. It reviews key trends and outputs in 2021 in the wider planning system in Ireland. It includes comparisons with data in previous years and is the only analysis of its kind of the Irish planning system.

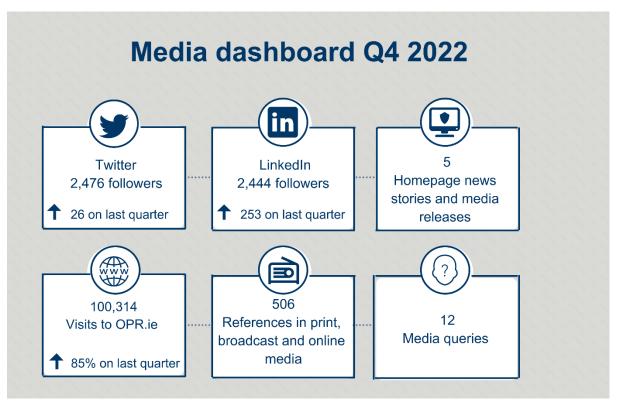
## **Media Engagement**

There was significant media engagement during this period. Particularly in relation to coverage of our <u>Annual Overview of the Planning System 2021</u>. There were print and broadcast interviews in national media, including an interview with the Planning Regulator <u>on RTE Radio's News at One.</u>

To further promote the report, we produced and published a <u>video</u> featuring the Planning Regulator outlining the main aspects of the report. So far, it has generated over 200 views.

We published news stories on the OPR's website on:

- Planning Regulator Publishes Overview of Planning System Reviewing Key Trends and Outputs
- Office of the Planning Regulator Publishes Report on Second Phase of An Bord Pleanála Review
- New Series of Videos which Explain the Planning Application Process Launched
- Planning Leaflet Series Updated
- OPR Publishes Practice Note on Planning Conditions



Media Dashboard, Q4 2022





Oifig an Rialaitheora Pleanála Office of the Planning Regulator