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MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

**DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION
SCHEME 2024 - 2029**

September 2023



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1. Introduction

Section 48 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the Act) empowers Planning Authorities when granting planning permission to include conditions requiring the payment of a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefitting development in the area of the Planning Authority that is provided, or that it is intended will be provided, by or on behalf of the Local Authority.

The Act stipulates that the basis for the determination of a contribution shall be set out in a Development Contribution Scheme. The making of a Development Contribution Scheme is a reserved function of the Members.

In line with Government policy and before preparing this Development Contribution Scheme, Meath County Council prepared a comprehensive review of the existing Meath County Development Contribution Scheme 2016 - 2022. That review has informed the preparation of this document.

2. Rationale for Development Contributions

When new development occurs, it impacts on the capacity of existing infrastructure networks. Such development places a greater demand on the services that Meath County Council provides. It is considered equitable that developers contribute to the financial burden associated with the provision of enhanced infrastructure networks facilitating new development. However, the Development Contribution Scheme ensures that the cost of infrastructural improvements does not fall disproportionately on new development and takes account of benefit to existing development.

3. Types of Development Contributions

The Act provides for three types of development contributions that may be attached as conditions to grants of planning permission as follows:

3.1 General Development Contributions – Section 48 of the Act 2000 - 2022

Section 48 of the Act provides that a Planning Authority may, when making a grant of permission, include a condition requiring the payment of a contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefitting development in the functional area of the Planning Authority and that is provided, or that it is intended will be provided, by or on behalf of a Local Authority. The basis for the determination of the contribution is set out in the Development Contribution Scheme.

Section 48 of the Act gives the following meaning to “public infrastructure and facilities”:

- (a) the acquisition of land;
- (b) the provision of open spaces, recreational and community facilities and amenities and landscaping works;
- (c) the provision of roads, car parks, car parking places, surface water sewers, flood relief work and ancillary infrastructure;

- (d) the provision of bus corridors and lanes, bus interchange facilities (including car parks for those facilities), infrastructure to facilitate public transport, cycle and pedestrian facilities and traffic calming measures;
- (e) the refurbishment, upgrading, enlargement or replacement of roads, car parks, car parking spaces, surface water sewers, flood relief and ancillary infrastructure;
- (f) the provision of high-capacity telecommunications infrastructure, such as broadband;
- (g) the provision of school sites and
- (h) any matters ancillary to (a) to (g).

3.2 Special Development Contributions – Section 48(2)(c) of the Act 2000 - 2022

Section 48 of the Act also provides that a Planning Authority may, in addition to the terms of a General Development Contribution Scheme, require the payment of a special contribution in respect of a particular development where specific exceptional costs not covered by a Scheme are incurred by the Local Authority in respect of public infrastructure and facilities which directly benefit the proposed development. The Planning Authority must specify in a planning condition attached to the grant of permission, the particular works carried out, or proposed to be carried out, to which the contribution relates. A special contribution shall be applied to a planning permission where it is considered that the development (or part thereof) is exceptional and / or different based on the nature, scale, extent, intensification or unforeseen impact(s) as a result of the construction or operation of the development, and as such would not be covered by the projects listed under Appendix A. The Act makes provision for the reimbursement of Special Contributions if the specified works are not carried out.

For clarification purposes, exemptions and reductions shall not apply to Special Development Contributions.

3.3 Supplementary Development Contributions – Section 49 of the Act 2000 - 2022

Section 49 of the Act provides that a Planning Authority may, when granting planning permission include conditions requiring the payment of a contribution in respect of any public infrastructure service or project specified in a “Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme” that will benefit the development to which the planning permission relates.

The amount and manner of payment of a Supplementary Development Contribution is specific to each Scheme. The Scheme must specify the area to which it applies and must specify the public infrastructure project or service on which the supplementary contributions are to be expended. In the area for which the Scheme is adopted these contributions are payable in addition to those payable under the Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme.

Meath County Council has adopted Supplementary Development Contribution Schemes for the following projects:

1. Navan to Dublin Railway Line – Phase 1 - Clonsilla to Dunboyne (Pace) and
2. The Kells Backlands.

[Details of these Schemes are available on our website.](#)

4. Basis for the Determination of Contributions

The following data sets informed the preparation of the Scheme:

An estimation of development potential over the period of the Scheme is set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027. The Core Strategy of the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027 projects a population growth rate for the county of 33,800 and a total housing target of 16,958 units over the period of the Plan.

Commercial growth is estimated based on the average floor area of commercial development provided per annum over the lifetime of the previous Development Contribution Scheme (excluding the years 2020 & 2021 due to Covid). The analysis indicates that an average of 15,746 m² was delivered per annum during this period.

Projected Development

Residential	Non-Residential
16,958 units	94,470 m ²

The Council's Capital Investment Programme for the period 2023 – 2025 sets out the proposed capital projects to be undertaken and the relevant funding sources. The cost of the proposed infrastructure is €604m and requires development contributions of €70m.

Regard was also given to Government policy, local service programmes and the review of the Meath County Development Contribution Scheme 2016 - 2022.

The list of projects which may benefit from development contributions are set out in Appendix A. There will be an ongoing review of the infrastructure and facilities which can be funded during the life of the Scheme, based on the levels of actual development contributions collected and funding costs which apply. Not all the projects listed may be progressed during the period 2024 – 2029. This project list is indicative only, priorities may change, and other projects may be added and funded over the course of the Scheme.

5. Classes of Public Infrastructure

The Development Contribution Scheme provides funding for three general classes of public infrastructure or facilities, and their enabling costs as follows:

Surface Water Drainage - to include construction and improvement of the surface water network. Flood protection works.

Roads & Public Transport Infrastructure - to include the provision, refurbishment, upgrading, enlargement or replacement of roads, car parks, car parking places. The provision of bus corridors and lanes, bus interchange facilities (including car parks for these facilities). Infrastructure to facilitate public transport, cycle and pedestrian facilities and traffic calming measures.

Social Infrastructure - to include the provision of open spaces, recreational and community facilities, amenities and landscaping works. Broadband infrastructure and school sites.

The acquisition of land will be factored into each of the three classes of infrastructure accordingly.

Development contributions will be applied in the following proportions:

	Residential	Non - Residential
Surface Water Drainage	5%	3%
Roads	55%	74%
Social Infrastructure	40%	23%
TOTAL	100%	100%

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6. Schedule of Charges

The contributions payable in respect of public infrastructure and facilities are as follows:

Residential Development

Residential Development	Floor area (rounded to nearest m ²)	New Residential Contribution	Residential Extensions
	< 100 sq. m.	€6,000	Exempt
	100 - 140 sq. m.	€6,500	€3,250
	141 - 200 sq. m.	€7,500	€3,750
	201 - 300 sq. m.	€9,000	€4,500
	> 300 sq. m.	€11,000	€5,500

Non-Residential Development

Non-Residential Development		Contribution
Class 1: Commercial Property / Retail / Retail Warehousing (inc. General Office) ¹	Per sq. metre	€31
Class 2: Non-Financial / Non-Professional Services Office Use ² Data Centres	Per sq. metre	€11
Class 3: Industrial Manufacturing / Warehousing / Port Warehousing Property	Per sq. metre	€11
Class 4: Indoor Amenity / Play / Recreational / Sports Facility ³	Per sq. metre	€11
Class 5: Open Storage / Hard Surfaced Commercial / Open Port Storage Space ⁴	Per sq. metre	€9
Agricultural Development including stables / kennels	Per sq. metre	€9
Golf / Pitch & Putt Club	Per hectare	€250
Quarry / Extractive Industry ⁵	Per tonne	€0.10
Land Filling / Reclamation ⁶	Per tonne	€0.07
Telecommunications Mast ⁷ (except broadband)	Per mast	€5,000
Electricity Pylons 220kv 400kv	Per pylon Per pylon	€5,000 €10,000
Renewable Energy Initiatives (export to the Grid) ⁸	Per mega watt	€1,000 / 0.1 mw
Other ⁹	Per hectare	€15,000

¹ Commercial property relates to the provision of a business premises including any structure or other land which is normally used for the carrying out of any professional or commercial undertaking, including; an office (except for office use as described in note 2 below), a hotel, restaurant or public house, any structure or other land used for the purpose of, or in connection with, the functions of a

state authority, facilities for child minding, a day care centre, guest house or other premises providing overnight guest accommodation, club, boarding house or hostel, night club / dance hall, shop or supermarket, school or college, nursing home, hospital or health centre.

² Office use where services are not provided principally to visiting members of the public, excluding the provision of financial services and professional services which are considered commercial in nature e.g. call centres.

³ Applies to new construction only.

⁴ Includes the use of land for the parking of motor vehicles, the open storage of motor vehicles or other objects and the keeping or placing of any tents, campervans, caravans or other structures. This category does not apply to hard storage space and car parking facilities provided ancillary to a particular development.

⁵ Based on the volume of material extracted. Development contributions will be due each year based on the volume of material extracted in the previous calendar year. This does not apply to underground mining.

⁶ Based on the approved tonnage of material.

⁷ Relates to all free-standing telecommunications support structures including those in place for telephone, radio and TV relay or broadcasting. The contribution is a once off non-refundable payment in respect of each mast. Subsequent applications, to extend the life of temporary permissions indefinitely, shall not be liable for this contribution. Contributions shall not apply to any structure for the provision of broadband, or any other structure, including telecommunication masts where it is proposed to co-host telephone, radio and TV, as well as broadband. A waiver shall apply to any telecommunications infrastructure, both mobile and broadband being deployed as part of a Government endorsed telecommunications strategy, plan or initiative. Where mobile or broadband operators demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that their infrastructure provides services to customers who would not otherwise be able to avail of an adequate mobile or broadband service, such infrastructure shall not attract development contributions. The waiver applies to masts, antennae, dishes and other apparatus or equipment being installed for such communication purposes.

⁸ Applies to renewable energy initiatives which produce electricity for export to the national or international grids. Renewable energy initiatives used for domestic or on-site consumption of power shall be exempt. Where permission is sought for primary use for on-site consumption with the excess exported to the national grid, the first 0.5 mw shall be exempt from development contributions and any additional output charged at the rate for 0.1 mw thereafter (i.e. €1,000).

⁹ Development not coming within any of the foregoing categories e.g. energy storage facilities.

7. Exemptions and Reduced Contributions

The following categories of development will be exempted from the requirement to pay development contributions or will be required to pay a reduced contribution as outlined.

7.1 Temporary Permissions

Temporary planning permissions for a maximum of 5 years shall be levied at a rate equivalent to 33% of the development contribution normally attributable to a permanent development of that class and scale. In the event that the temporary permission is extended for an additional period, the full rate shall be applicable. In such circumstances an allowance shall apply where development contributions have already been paid in respect of a previously permitted temporary development on the subject site.

7.2 Residential and Non-Residential Development

Domestic extensions less than 100m² are exempt. This exemption is cumulative and limited to 100m² in total per dwelling.

Conversions of attic / garage to habitable use will be levied for development in excess of 100m². This exemption is cumulative and limited to 100m² in total per dwelling.

Development contributions for the accommodation of disabled person(s) shall be waived in full where a Housing Adaptation Grant, or similar grant administered by the Housing Department, is approved.

Changes of Use from existing permitted residential or non-residential use shall be exempt where development contributions have been paid in full for the existing use. Where the Planning Authority deems, that additional public infrastructure is required to facilitate the development a Special Development Contribution may apply.

Development by or on behalf of a voluntary organisation designed or intended to be used as a hostel, or other accommodation for persons with disabilities and is not to be used mainly for profit or gain shall be exempt.

Social housing units, including those which are provided in accordance with an agreement made under Part V of the Act or which are provided by a voluntary or co-operative housing association, which is recognised as such by the Planning Authority or units provided by the Local Authority itself shall be exempt. This exemption shall also apply to dwellings constructed on serviced sites sold by the Local Authority under the Low-Cost Sites Scheme.

In the case of a replacement house, a pro rata exemption shall be applied as follows: the floor area of the replacement (new) dwelling shall be calculated in accordance with the Meath County Council Development Contribution Scheme 2024 - 2029. The floor area of the dwelling to be replaced (existing) shall be calculated as a percentage of the replacement (new) dwelling and this percentage shall be deemed exempt from development contributions.

Derelict sites/sites in need of regeneration with Derelict Site Notices having been served (up to a maximum of 2 notices being served) - 50% reduction shall apply.

Rural Areas/Outside Plan Boundaries - Derelict sites and sites in need of regeneration at the discretion of Planning Authority - 25% reduction shall apply.

Developments in Architectural Conservation Areas as identified in the relevant Development Plan or Local Area Plan - 25% reduction shall apply.

Where a recreational facility is being provided within a commercial development, a reduction or exemption on the amenity contribution, where deemed appropriate, may be considered.

Crèche/Childcare Facilities - 50% reduction of the commercial rate shall apply.

Where a Local Authority is disposing of lands to small indigenous industries and/or where an incompatible town centre use is relocating to a suitably zoned location, these categories of development - 50% reduction of the relevant standard rate of contribution shall apply.

Expansions to existing authorised commercial, industrial and manufacturing operations (Class 1-5) shall be exempt where development contributions have been paid in full for the existing use. Where the Planning Authority deems that additional public infrastructure is required to facilitate the development a Special Development Contribution may apply.

Businesses grant aided or supported by IDA, Enterprise Ireland or Údarás na Gaeltachta - 50% reduction of the relevant standard rate of contribution shall apply.

Development by or on behalf of a voluntary organisation which is designed or intended to be used for social, recreational, educational or religious purposes by the inhabitants of a locality, or by people of a particular group or religious denomination and is not to be used mainly for profit or gain shall be exempt.

Educational facilities shall include provision by or on behalf of the Department of Education and Science, Education & Training Boards, Boards of Management or Patron Bodies shall be exempt.

For clarification purposes:

Where a proposed development qualifies for one or more exemptions within this section, the greater discount shall be applied.

7.3 Protected Structures

Change of Use applications for protected structures shall be exempt.

Where a development proposes the bringing back into use of a protected structure that is underutilised or not being used, even where new services are availed of, it is considered that the planning gain would warrant an exemption from development contributions.

7.4 Agricultural Development

In the case of all farm buildings and structures, the development contribution of €9 per square metre shall apply where the gross floor area of all structures on the farm holding exceeds 900m².

The following categories of agricultural development shall be exempted from the requirement to pay development contributions under the Meath County Council Development Contribution Scheme:

- All farm buildings and structures which are required to be constructed to comply with environmental protection regulations.
- Farm buildings and structures which are required to be constructed to comply with National Action Programmes implemented under EU Nitrates Directive as specified hereunder:
 - Works consisting of a roofed structure for the housing of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, horses, deer or rabbits.
 - Works consisting of roofless cubicles, open loose yards, self-feed silo or silage areas, feeding aprons, assembly yards.
 - Structures for the making or storage of silage or any other structures of a similar character or description.
 - Structures for the storage of slurry, yard water or farmyard manure.
- Glass houses and poly-tunnels, associated with intensive horticultural development.
- Farm buildings and structures which are approved for grant support under any grant scheme facilitated by the Department of Agriculture and Food.
- Intensive rearing of pigs / poultry: extensions or replacement of housing where there is no increase in numbers shall avail of the 100% exemption from development contributions.

8. Retention Permission

Exemptions and reductions shall not apply to permissions for retention of development.

9. Payment of Contributions

- (a) Conditions requiring payment of the relevant contributions will be included in all decisions to grant planning permission made following the making of this Scheme by the Planning Authority.
- (b) Contributions under the Scheme shall be payable in accordance with the conditions of permission. Contributions shall be payable at the index adjusted rate (Wholesale Price Indices - Building and Construction (Capital Goods)) pertaining to the year in which implementation of the planning permission is commenced. *
- (c) The Planning Authority may at its discretion facilitate the phased payment of contributions and may require the giving of security to ensure payment of contributions.
- (d) Contributions unpaid in full prior to commencement of development shall remain payable together with interest that may have accrued thereon at a rate equivalent to 2% above the ECB rate applicable on the 1st of January each year including the year of commencement of development. *

- (e) A 10% reduction shall apply where development contributions are paid in full within 28 days of issue of an invoice for the contributions by the Planning Authority. The discount shall apply to the quantum of development defined in the Commencement Notice and is available for each individual phase of multi-phase developments. Retention permissions shall not avail of this discount.
- (f) Where a development contribution is not paid in accordance with the terms of a condition laid down by the Planning Authority (or An Bord Pleanála), a Planning Authority may recover any contribution due as a simple contract debt in a court of competent jurisdiction. The Planning Authority reserves the right to initiate further enforcement action in respect of unpaid development contributions.
- * The Chief Executive shall, by written order, on or before the 28th of February each year direct whether indexation and / or interest shall be applied for the previous calendar year.

10. Appeals to An Bord Pleanála

An appeal may be brought to the Board where the applicant for planning permission considers that the terms of the Scheme have not been properly applied by the Planning Authority in attaching such a condition.

11. Ring Fencing of Income

Money accruing to a Local Authority under this Scheme shall be accounted for in a separate account and shall be applied to the provision of public infrastructure, facilities and their enabling costs on a countywide basis.

12. Duration of Scheme

The Scheme is effective from 1st January 2024. The Scheme may be reviewed from time to time by Meath County Council, having regard to the circumstances prevailing at any time. The Scheme shall continue to remain in force until such time as a subsequent Scheme is adopted.

Appendix A: The Projects

The list of projects which may benefit from development contributions are set out below. There will be an ongoing review of the infrastructure and facilities which can be funded during the life of the Scheme, based on the levels of actual development contributions collected and funding costs which apply. Not all the projects listed may be progressed during the period 2024 – 2029. This project list is indicative only, priorities may change, and other projects may be added and funded over the course of the Scheme.

Surface Water Drainage Projects

- Major improvements to Surface Water Drainage Networks
- Flood Relief Schemes
- Drainage Projects identified under the Climate Adaptation Strategy for Regional & Local Roads
- Digital Drainage Mapping System
- District Drainage maintenance and improvement works

Specific examples of schemes previously/being funded from Surface Water Drainage Levies

- Northlands Flood Relief Scheme, Bettystown
- Ashbourne Flood Relief Scheme
- Laytown Coastal Protection Works

Roads and Public Transport Infrastructure

- Public Lighting
- Forward Planning
- Transportation/Traffic Management Studies & Implementation
- Car Parks
- Land Acquisition and Capital Balances Regional Roads
- Pavement, structural and geotechnical projects
- Design and Implementation of Active Travel & Public Realm Projects
- Footpath Improvement schemes

Specific examples of schemes previously/being funded from Roads & Public Transport Infrastructure Levies

- Distribution Roads Navan – LRD 4 (from R147 to Blackwater River only), LRD 1A & LRD 1B.
- R157 Dunboyne – Maynooth
- N2 - N3 - N4 Link Design Road Ongar to Barnhill
- N2 Slane Bypass - Public Realm
- Duleek Bypass Feasibility Study
- Julianstown Feasibility Study
- R156 Dunboyne - Summerhill improvements
- Trim Outer Bypass
- Millennium Bridge
- Junction Improvements Kells & Public Realm
- Traffic Management Schemes – Kilberry, Julianstown, Batterstown & Curragha
- Ashbourne Frederick Street
- Boyne Greenway

- Boyne Valley to Lakelands County Greenway (Navan – Kingscourt)
- Royal Canal Greenway
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
- Ratoath Outer Relief Road
- Eastern Distributor Road Dunboyne – rail bridge
- Public Realm Schemes – Athboy, Dunshaughlin, Kells & Oldcastle
- Link Road R157 to Industrial Park Dunboyne
- Navan Rail – support to IE
- Ratoath Outer Relief Road

Social Infrastructure & Amenity Projects

- Provision of open spaces, recreational and community facilities, amenities, landscaping works, broadband infrastructure and school sites.
- Acquisitions of property for public buildings & amenities
- Upgrade/refurbishment/extension to Libraries
- Upgrade/refurbishment/extension to Swimming Pools
- Upgrade/refurbishment/extension to Courthouses and other amenity buildings
- Upgrade/refurbishment/extension to Burial Grounds
- Upgrade/refurbishment/extension to Parks
- Upgrade/refurbishment/extension to Playgrounds
- Upgrade/refurbishment/extension to Boat Slipways
- Drafting & Implementation of Public Realm Plans
- Economic Development Capital Costs
- Capital Balances Amenity Infrastructure
- Community Amenity Grant Scheme
- Civic Improvements Town / Village Centres
- Forward Planning
- Rural Regeneration Development Fund
- Urban Regeneration Development Fund
- Town & Village Amenity Works Incentive
- Community CCTV
- Age Friendly Public Realm Improvements
- Heritage & Conservation Projects
- Improved Pedestrian Linkages
- Walking Trails, Linear Parks
- Beach Development & Protection
- Park and Ride Facilities
- Improvements to Amenity Areas
- Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Schemes
- Mobility Service – Bike Rental
- CLAR Schemes
- Implementation of Conservation Management Plans

Specific examples of schemes previously/being funded from Social Infrastructure Levies

- New Libraries Bettystown / Ballivor / Navan
- County Archive (URDF)
- Blackwater Park

- Kennedy Road
- Ashbourne Linear Park
- Johnstown Community Facility
- Kells Heritage Centre
- Porch Fields Trim Improvements
- Solstice Arts Centre
- Hill of Ward
- Hill Of Tara
- Boyneside Trail - Laytown Bettystown Area
- Trim Visitor Centre
- Trim Town Hall Acquisition and Re-development
- Sports Infrastructure Fund – Rooske Road

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Appendix B: Additional Information

Meath County Council may at its discretion require that a developer to provide an art piece or other local amenity feature approved by the Planning Authority to be located on or, in the environs of, the development site. This requirement shall apply to:

- (i) Residential developments in excess of 75 dwellings.
- (ii) Non-residential developments in excess of 10,000m².

Note 1

Development contributions on telecommunications masts, electricity pylons and renewable energy initiatives will be allocated 100% to Social Infrastructure.

Note 2

For the purpose of this Scheme the floor area is ascertained by the internal measurement of the floor space on each floor of a building i.e. floor areas must be measured from inside the external wall. This area is provided by the applicant on the planning application form and is subject to technical verification by the Planning Authority.