

Submission on Behalf of Geashill Tidy Towns

In Response to the draft Territorial Just Transition Plan for Ireland

February 2022

Geashill Tidy Towns welcomes Irelands Draft Territorial Just Transition Plan for the Midlands Region and makes the following Submission.

1. Territories Most Affected

We note that the research findings of the EnvEcon Report (Report on Challenges, needs and recommended actions for the most affected territories) identifies County Offaly as one of the most affected by the transition. We in Geashill Tidy Towns believe that County Offaly and particular communities within the county has been significantly more impacted than other counties in the territory.

We contend that funding & associated supports under the EU Just Transition Fund should be weighted on the basis of those areas within the defined territory most negatively impacted by transition.

2. Development Need & Actions

Geashill Tidy Towns acknowledge the breath of actions identified within the draft plan to support and stimulate economic growth and competitiveness, however we suggest that the scope of these actions should be extended to include supports that have a direct relevance to the community needs. We suggest that the scope of actions be extended to include supports for the development of tourism, creative industries, arts and culture & heritage, micro generation of renewable energy, biodiversity, micro enterprise and social infrastructure.

We contend that amending the draft plan to include these areas will further enhance the commitment to supporting a fair and equitable transition (NESC 2020).

3. Stakeholders in the Delivery and Implementation of Transition

Geashill Tidy Towns suggest that due consideration be given to recognising communities as a key stakeholder in the process of “taking a place based approach to” the transition to a green future. We know that our community has a range of assets (economic, social, cultural, environmental) at its disposal, that if supported in the right way can be harnessed to create jobs and add to the sustainability of our community. We suggest that local development/ social inclusion supports be used to resources community led innovation.

We express our thanks to the EU Commission, the Department of Environment, Climate Action and Communication and the Eastern & Midlands Regional Assembly for opportunity to respond to this public consultation on the Draft Territorial Plan for Ireland.