



**LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Comhairle Chontae Laoise**

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**LAOIS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**2017-2023**

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## **VOLUME 2: Settlement Plans**

*Adopted on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017  
In effect from 24<sup>th</sup> July 2017  
Forward Planning Department,  
Laois County Council*

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Introduction and Characterisation

Written Objectives

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Introduction and Characterisation

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## INTRODUCTION

This volume deals with the detailed planning of towns, villages and employment lands in County Laois. It contains specific objectives for each settlement and provides for future physical, economic and social development. The preparation of specific objectives means that the Council can focus on the individual characteristics and needs of each settlement. These objectives include land use zonings, as well as more specific objectives to enhance the functioning of each settlement, together these elements constitute settlement plans.

## PURPOSE

*To provide a Plan for the consolidated and sensitive development of each town and village in order to cater to the needs of local residents, traders and other stakeholders for the next 6 years, while maintaining and enhancing the settlement's essential character and sense of place.*

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## CONTEXT

The Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023 in Section 2 sets out a Settlement Strategy which seeks to promote the development of the town and villages within the county. To support the settlement strategy, settlement plans have been prepared for each designated town and village. The aim of the Settlement Plans is to provide a framework for future development over the duration of the plan, to ensure that new development is co-ordinated and contributes to the social and economic fabric of the settlement. The Plans will have a key purpose of informing the general public, statutory authorities and other interested bodies of the broad land use policies to guide development. The Settlement Plans take the form of a zoning map which outlines the land use objectives and a written statement outlining the characteristic features of the settlement and specific development objectives.

The objectives are informed by submissions received as part of the public consultation process, survey data, masterplans and village design statements prepared for some settlements and data relating to flood risk, special habitats, environmental receptors, monuments, protected structures, townscape analysis and Architectural Conservation Areas. In addition, the settlement plans are informed by the status of each settlement within the settlement hierarchy, transport links and infrastructural capacity. The settlement plans are consistent with regional and national planning guidelines.

These settlement plans build on the county-wide objectives and policies contained in Volume I and should be read in conjunction with it. Objectives and policies articulated in Volume I that are relevant to the settlement plans are not repeated in this volume.

This volume excludes the four towns of Portlaoise, Portarlington, Mountmellick and Graiguecullen. A Local Area Plan (LAP) relates to each of these four towns and the zonings and objectives for each town are contained within these LAPs. These four Local Areas Plans will be reviewed after the County Development Plan has been adopted. Rural development and the development of settlement nodes referred to in the Settlement Hierarchy are dealt with in Volume I of the Draft Development Plan.

### **General Objectives for Settlement Plans**

- SS1**     *Applications in excess of ten houses in small villages should prepare a School Impact Report, Community Facilities Audit/ Open Space Needs Report, in consultation with the local community;*
- SS2**     *Densities in towns will be in the order of 12-20 dwelling units per hectare; densities in villages shall be compatible with the prevailing density in the vicinity of the development site, higher densities may be suitable depending on the location within the village and the design quality of any proposed scheme;*

- SS3** All new developments should be integrated into the existing settlements by means of appropriate siting of new developments, vehicular and pedestrian linkages, development layouts and building design;
- SS4** Community infrastructure such as graveyards or schools shall not become land locked by new developments thereby retaining possibilities for expansion;
- SS5** Encourage sheltered housing provision within the towns and villages;
- SS6** Apartment developments will not generally be considered within village settings except where they are done as a refurbishment of an existing building;
- SS7** Ensure that the habitats detailed in the habitat map for each settlement are considered in assessing and development proposals for the town. Detailed guidance for individual habitat types is given in Section 6 of Volume 1 of the County Development Plan.

## SECTION 2: SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

Settlement Hierarchy within County Laois 2011-2017	
<b>Principal Town</b>	
Portlaoise and Environs	Local Area Plan relates
<b>Key Service Town</b>	
Portarlinton and Environs	Local Area Plan relates
<b>Service Town</b>	
Abbeyleix	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Mountrath	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Stradbally	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Mountmellick	Local Area Plan relates
Graigucullen	Local Area Plan relates
<b>Local Service Town</b>	
Rathdowney	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Durrow	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
<b>Other Settlements (exceeding 400 population)</b>	
Ballyllynan	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Clonaslee	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Borris in Ossory	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Ballinakill	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
<b>Villages (less than 400 population)</b>	
Arles	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Attanagh	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Ballacolla	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Ballybrittas	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Ballyfin	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Balyroan	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Camross	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Castletown	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Clough	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Coolrain	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Cullahill	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Emo	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Errill	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Killenard	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Killeens	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Killeshin	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Newtown Doonane	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Rosenallis	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Shanahoe	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
The Swan	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Timahoe	Settlement Plan within Volume 2
Vicarstown	Settlement Plan within Volume 2

## **SERVICE TOWNS**

**ABBEYLEIX**

**MOUNTRATH**

**STRADBALLY**





## ABBEYLEIX

### *Context and Characterisation*

Abbeyleix is located in the south of County Laois on the old N8 (Cork-Dublin Road), now the N77. Abbeyleix is 14 km from Portlaoise and 15 km from M8 Junction 3 on the M8 motorway.

The origins of Abbeyleix were as a twelfth century ecclesiastical settlement. It subsequently evolved as a fine example of an eighteenth century planned town built by Viscount De Vesci of the Abbeyleix Demesne.

In terms of urban form, Abbeyleix has a very wide Main Street which is enclosed on both sides by a continuous building line. The Main Street opens onto a semi-circular Market Square which functions as a public open space and as a market on Saturdays. The Market House dates from the 1830s, award-winning conservation works to the structure were recently carried out and the structure now functions as the town library and exhibition space.

The Main Street benefits from sensitive public realm improvement works. Most of the buildings on the Main Street are two storey and many are decorated with ornamental plaster brackets, plaster window and door mouldings and have sliding sash windows. Painted timber shopfronts with applied lettering also form part of the character of the Main Street. Commercial and residential buildings on the Main Street open directly onto the footpath which makes for a vibrant town centre.

Fine structures within Abbeyleix include the Church of Ireland, Bank of Ireland, Morrissey's Public House and the above mentioned Market House. There are significant opportunities for backland development in Abbeyleix. Outside the Main Street, Abbeyleix is served by narrow circuitous streets; many of these streets that resemble country lanes have no footpaths. Abbeyleix has enjoyed its status as a Heritage Town for a number of years. The local community secured funding for the special character appraisal of Abbeyleix with a view to designating an Architectural Conservation Area. An appraisal has been prepared and the Council is supportive of the designation.

Abbeyleix is well-known nationally, mainly because of its location on the old Cork-Dublin Road (formerly the N8, now the N77). Abbeyleix is also served by the R425 to Ballyroan, R430 to Mountrath and to Carlow, R433 to Ballacolla and R432 to Ballinakill. Abbeyleix is served by national and Laois Trip bus services. Traffic congestion and heavy traffic volumes were a major problem for the town before the opening of the M8 motorway. However, Abbeyleix's location on a busy route also led to the establishment of a number of hotels, cafés, restaurants and public houses to serve people travelling on this national route.

Abbeyleix is a service town as indicated in the Spatial Settlement Strategy contained in the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022 and the County Settlement Strategy as indicated in Section 2 of Volume 1 of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023. It supports the Principal Town of Portlaoise. It also provides important retail, residential and service functions within its historic core for its residents and the surrounding hinterland. It offers amenity facilities to residents and tourism functions to visitors, including conference facilities in the Manor Hotel, the Sensory Gardens and Heritage Centre. There are a number of major employers in Abbeyleix; these include Supervalu, First Ireland Spirits, district hospital, banks and credit union. There are also a range of services including solicitors, accountants, doctors, beauticians, hairdressers, public houses and small shops providing employment in the town.

The zoning of a substantial land-bank to the south of the town located at the junction of the R433 to the motorway and the N77 provides opportunity for significant enterprise development and job creation on strategic lands.

### *Social and Physical Infrastructure*

Public recreational space is found at Father Breen Park to the west of Main Street and includes GAA, soccer and tennis amenities. Abbeyleix Golf Club to the north east of Abbeyleix provides a valuable amenity for its members. A playground area is situated adjacent to the Heritage House overlooking the Main Street. An extensive off-road walking route known as the Lord's Walk is signposted.

Two primary schools currently exist in the town of Abbeyleix, Scoil Mhuire and South Parish School. The town also has its own vocational school

providing a range of adult learning opportunities. The community centre has a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role in Abbeyleix. There is a fire station located to the north of the town. Abbeyleix has well established active community groups within the area.

Abbeyleix has its own wastewater treatment plant and its water supply comes from the Aughfeerish and Ballyglissen Spring Public Supply and a number of Group Water Schemes. Abbeyleix is currently served by wireless broadband. A recycling bring-bank is located at the petrol station to the south of the town.

### ***Written Objectives***

#### **Character and Built Form**

- AB01 Preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the Abbeyleix Architectural Conservation Area (ACA);
- AB 02 Encourage redevelopment or restoration of derelict, vacant or underused buildings within the town centre as appropriate and also infill development and backland development;
- AB 03 Encourage the maintenance and use of all town centre structures, especially the upper storeys to secure their longevity and support the town's vibrancy;
- AB 04 Ensure the use of quality building materials and best conservation practice in relation to protected structures and buildings within the ACA;
- AB 05 Maintain the quality and features of the public realm on Main Street and Market Square by way of street cleaning, litter collection and enforcement of derelict sites legislation;
- AB 06 Protect individual trees, groups of trees and hedgerows on all approach roads, particularly the Ballacolla and Cork Roads, Ladies Hill, church Grove and the Vicarage
- AB 07 Encourage sensitive and well-designed infill development, historicist or contemporary approaches will be accepted depending on the site context;
- AB 08 Retain traditional painted timber shopfront and traditional advertisement styles and ensure that any new shopfronts or advertisements do not detract or erode the special character of the ACA.

- AB 09 Support and promote the implementation, where feasible, of the strategy contained in the Abbeyleix Sustainable Community Plan;

#### **Housing Provision**

- AB 10 Mixed use applications which comprise of a housing element will also be accepted within the town centre zoning though loss of active commercial or retail floor space to residential use will not be accepted;
- AB 11 Housing to be provided in line with Housing Strategy 2017-2023;
- AB 12 Densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare are suitable for Abbeyleix;

#### **Economic Development**

- AB 13 Advance Abbeyleix as a tourism destination as well as a stopping point during long journeys in line with the ***"Irelands Ancient East"*** Initiative;
- AB 14 Support further growth of the tourism sector in Abbeyleix by harnessing the potential of its Heritage Town and Architectural Conservation Area status, fostering tourism initiatives, ensuring the best use of the Heritage Centre and other resources and facilitating commercial enterprises associated with tourism;
- AB 15 Grow commercial development that serves local people and builds on the existing vibrant and vitality of the town centre;
- AB 16 Support local businesses as a way of sustaining local supply chain and local employment;
- AB 17 Expand the economic base of the town centre by way of mixed use backland development;
- AB18 Promote industrial opportunities on lands zoned within the town of Abbeyleix;
- AB 19 Promote a local energy market through co-operation between large energy users and through the creation of market for local bio-fuel by farming community;
- AB 20 Assist the community in obtaining land within the development zone of Abbeyleix, to accommodate, amongst others:
  - i. Allotments for individual vegetable growing;
  - ii. A community garden for co-operative vegetable and fruit growing on a bigger scale;
  - iii. Co-operative animal and poultry production;

- iv. Public amenities to facilitate a food fair and/or other similar event;
- v. Training and demonstration facility

#### Infrastructure

- AB 21 Provide and enhance strategic and recreational pedestrian and cycling linkages and associated street lighting as per the indicative objectives map and cycle parking at buildings in community use, especially schools and open up a wider cycle and pedestrian linkages to connect with villages nearby, in particular Ballyroan, Ballinakill, Raheen, Shanahoe and Durrow;
- AB 22 Enhance Abbeylax road network as necessary and reserve land and pursue funding for new orbital/relief routes as specified on objectives map and consider the impacts of the by-pass and seek to manage the traffic movement through the town in light of this change;
- AB 23 Facilitate mobility and movement of persons with special needs by way of providing ditched kerbs at crossing points, even footpath surfaces, tactile pavings, audible traffic light signals for pedestrians, disabled parking spaces and ensuring slopes that form part of the pedestrian network do not exceed 1 in 5; in particular, disabled parking is to be provided at buildings in community use;
- AB 24 Provide disabled parking and cycle parking at Market Square to improve access to the bus stop and library;
- AB 25 Encourage the intensive use of existing community and sporting facilities and develop outdoor multi-use games areas and seek to expand the existing sports facilities within Fr Breen Park to meet the growing demands of the various clubs sharing the facilities;
- AB 26 Develop additional community facilities which are flexible and capable of being managed for a number of different uses; in particular youth-related facilities, an Elderly Day Care Service and Nursing Home, community-based healthcare facilities and school extensions or school-based facilities;
- AB 27 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground within the ACA to enhance its appearance;

- AB 28 Provide ducts in new roads which can accommodate cabling for CCTV, broadband and other cable-based services;

- AB 29 Continue the restoration programme for Killamuck Bog south of Abbeylax.

- AB 30 Liaise with the relevant authorities to provide Heritage Town signage at the M7/M8 Motorway exits from both the northern and southern approaches to Abbeylax;

- AB 31 Upgrade and widen the pedestrian approaches on the Portlaoise Road and to connect Abbeylax Bog to the Cork Road.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- AB 32 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;

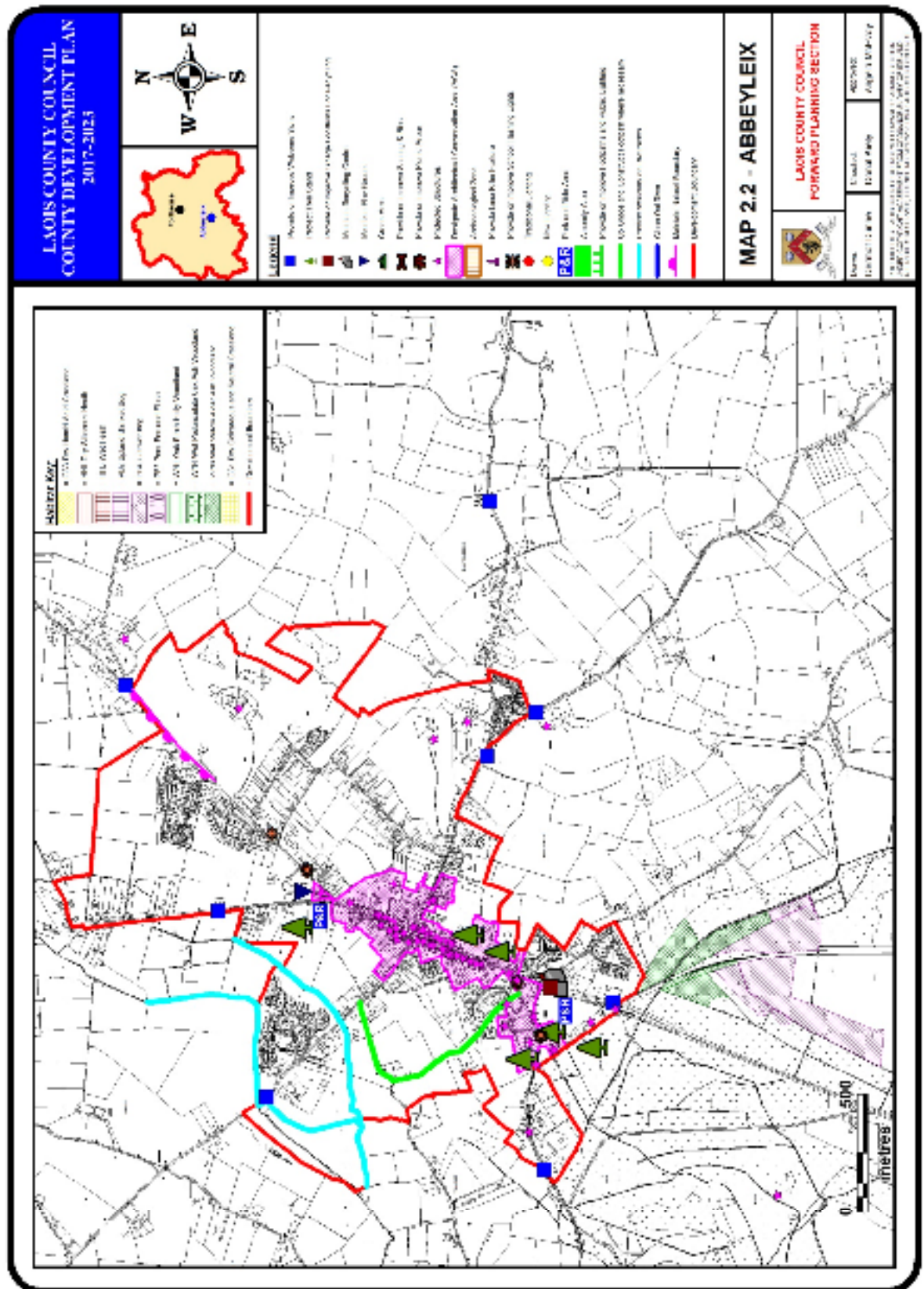
- AB 33 Ensure that SuDS are implemented in all new developments as appropriate and relevant;

- AB 34 Ensure no significant loss of alteration of floodplain and works are assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;

- AB 35 Ensure full compliance with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;







## MOUNTRATH

### *Context and Characterisation*

Meaning Moin Ratha (Bog of the Fort), Mountrath is a medium-sized town located at the foot of the Slieve Blooms on the old N7 Dublin-Limerick road, now the R445, approximately 14 kms south west of Portlaoise and 8 kms from junction 18 on the M7/M8 motorway network. Mountrath is a service town as indicated the County Settlement Strategy as defined in Section 3 of Volume 1 of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023

Sir Charles Coote founded the town in the 17th century along the left bank of the Mountrath River and it soon developed into a centre for iron, brewing, cotton and farming. Nearby iron deposits fed into the iron works while the extensive forests in the area provided charcoal. The town expanded in the 18th century with the development of facilities such as the fever hospital and became a centre of significance for the County.

Mountrath has a compact form, its shape is largely influenced by the Mountrath River flowing northwest to southeast and the local road network. The layout of the town has changed little over time retaining its original relationship with the river and features such as the Market Square. Other historic references, such as the churches and the ruins of the old foundry remain, bearing evidence of the town's historical significance and historic past. Typically, the town is urban in character with the majority of buildings fronting directly onto the main road, one building deep. Mountrath's buildings are diverse in age, height, roof profiles and elevational treatments. This diversity is particularly notable in Market Square and the streets leading onto Market Square.

Mountrath provides an important retail, service and amenity function for residents and the local hinterland. The primary streets of Mountrath are focused on Patrick Street, Main Street, Church Street and Shannon Street. These streets are distinctly urban and characterised by a mixture of uses and building styles. This area was previously heavily trafficked, but changed with the opening of the M7 motorway. Secondary streets such as the Rushin Road, Shannon Road and Abbeyleix Road link the surrounding residential and rural areas within the urban core.

Costcutter and Centra provide convenience shopping in the town centre. Important employment centres in the town include Telfords Hardware outlet, the timber processing plant on the Abbeyleix approach road and the Enterprise Park on the Portlaoise approach road. There are also a range of services including doctors, beauticians, hairdressers, public houses, garages and small shops providing employment in Mountrath. Small commercial areas have developed on the outskirts of the town.

### *Social and Physical Infrastructure*

Mountrath is located in the foothills of the Slieve Blooms, an area rich in ecology and wildlife and popular for walking and trekking. Tourists accessing the Slieve Blooms from the M7 will do so via Mountrath. The Slieve Blooms are now signposted on the M7 motorway.

Mountrath Amenity Park is located adjacent to the river, near the Market Square and provides picnic areas and a playground. A sculpture and mature trees add visual interest. The Mountrath River is a Special Area of Conservation and joins with the River Nore south of the town between Castletown and Kilbricken. Stepping stones and pedestrian bridges join the left and right bank of the Mountrath River at the Amenity Park. A linear walk skirts the rear of properties that lie on the western side of the Main Street and joins the Amenity Park with the R440 to the Slieve Blooms. Several pedestrian linkages join this river walk with the Main Street including the Council's car park, the Quaker graveyard and narrow lane ways.

Mountrath is served by two primary schools and a new secondary school. Mountrath has a healthy community ethic which is displayed through the work of the Development Association and the Tidy Towns Committee. A community centre is located beside the church on the Roscrea Road which caters for a number of organisations. A youth theatre exists in the town since 2006. A public library is located close to Market Square. The GAA grounds are located beside the river in the centre of the town. Mountrath also has the benefit of a golf course though it is located outside the development boundary.

Mountrath has its own wastewater treatment plant. Mountrath's water supply has been upgraded in the recent past. Mountrath is currently served by wireless broadband. Mountrath is served by National and Laois Trip bus

services. A recycling bring bank is located in the Council car park on Main Street.

### ***Written Objectives***

#### Character and Built Form

- MO 1 Create a new civic space as proposed within the Mountrath Framework Plan 2004 to facilitate everyday uses such as bus stop, waiting areas and special uses such as farmers market and/or festivals;
- MO2 Encourage redevelopment or restoration of derelict, vacant or underused buildings within the town centre as appropriate and also infill development and backland development; encourage the maintenance and use of all town centre structures, especially the upper storeys to secure their longevity and support the town's vibrancy;
- MO3 Ensure new development compliments and enhances the townscape, uses quality building materials and employs best conservation practice in relation to protected structures;
- MO4 Retain traditional painted timber shopfront and traditional advertisement styles and ensure any new shopfronts or advertisements must not detract or erode the special character of the town;
- MO5 Undertake public realm improvement works along the Main Street and in Market Square and maintain the historic town pumps;
- MO6 Pay special attention to the visual amenity of approach roads into Mountrath, protecting mature trees and enhancing by way of further landscaping;
- MO 7 Promote the riverside walk within Mountrath and provide street lighting to linkages between the riverside walk and the Main Street;
- MO8 Encourage mews style backland development along the riverside to provide passive supervision of the riverside walk and ensure lighting of the riverside pathway is provided as part of any mews style scheme.

#### Housing and Land Availability

- MO9 Mixed-use applications which comprise a housing element will be accepted within the town centre zoning, though loss of

active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will not be accepted;

- MO10 Housing to be provided in line with Housing Strategy 2017-2023;
- MO11 Densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare are suitable for Mountrath.

#### Economic Development

- MO12 Market Mountrath as the gateway to the Slieve Blooms and as a tourism destination;
- MO13 To protect and improve the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and its commercial core;
- MO14 Encourage small scale indigenous enterprise units at appropriately zoned lands.

#### Infrastructure

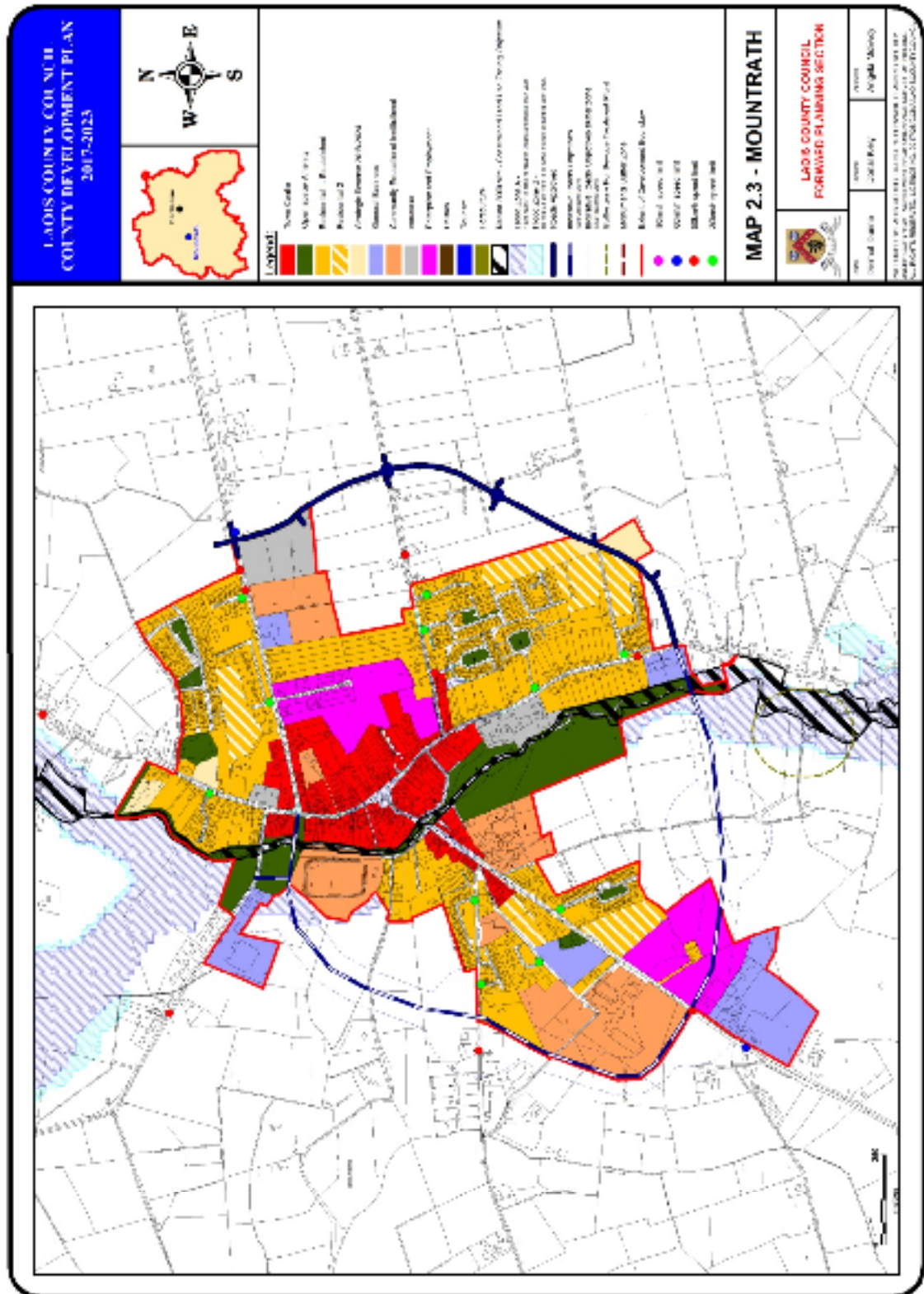
- MO15 Provide and enhance strategic and recreational pedestrian and cycling linkages and associated street lighting and cycle parking at buildings in community use, especially schools;
- MO16 Investigate the feasibility, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, of enhancing the existing road network as necessary and reserving land and pursuing funding for new orbital/relief routes;
- MO17 Carry out changes to carriageway and parking arrangements within the Market Square, giving more emphasis to north/south vehicular transport and also to pedestrian and cycle transport;
- MO18 Facilitate mobility and movement of persons with special needs by way of providing dished kerbs at crossing points, even footpath surfaces, tactile pavings, audible traffic light signals for pedestrians, disabled parking space and ensuring slopes that form part of the pedestrian network do not exceed 1 in 5; in particular, disabled parking shall be provided at buildings in community use;
- MO19 Actively manage short term parking in and around the Market Square;
- MO20 Encourage the intensive use of existing community and sporting facilities;

- MO21 Develop additional community facilities which are flexible and capable of being managed for a number of different uses, in particular youth-related facilities, community-based health facilities, extensions to schools and school facilities and an outdoor multi-use games area;
- MO22 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground within the historic core of Mountrath to enhance its appearance;
- MO23 Provide ducts in new roads which can accommodate cabling for CCTV, broadband and other cable-based services;

Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- MO24 Avoid encroachment on the Natura 2000 site and implement buffer zone;
- MO25 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This includes recreation Plans or maintenance Plans for the river area that have the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site. Road developments that involve crossing the Natura 2000 site or other impacts will ensure that the alternative routes have been considered to minimise the impact on the Natura 2000 sites;
- MO26 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- MO 27 Ensure full compliance with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;







## STRADBALLY

### *Character and Context*

Stradbally is a medium-sized town located on the N80 National Secondary Route approximately 12 km southeast of Portlaoise. The town is surrounded by pleasant undulating land much of it used for tillage farming.

Stradbally is a service town as indicated in the County Settlement Strategy as defined in Section 2 of Volume 1 of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023.

The structure of Stradbally is that of a long linear street with two squares on the western side – the Market Square and the Courthouse Square. A wide and open boulevard, it is the primary focus of the village. Stradbally developed under the influence of the Cosby Family, owners of Stradbally Hall located west of the town, at the end of the seventeenth century. The formal setting out of the Main Street indicates its origins as a planned estate village. Stradbally has a strong and distinctive urban form. Key architectural focal points include the churches, the renovated mill building, the canopy over part of Market Square and the courthouse.

Milling was an important activity in the development of the town. This function has declined and one of the mill structures has been adapted to residential use in the centre of town. The primary function of the town is that of a service centre for the surrounding agricultural hinterland and it is also an important centre for steam machinery enthusiasts. Stradbally Hall hosts an annual Steam Rally. Stradbally Hall also hosts the annual music festival known as the Electric Picnic Festival which draws significant visitor numbers into Stradbally. These events will continue to contribute to the economic growth and prosperity of the town and will also contribute to the development of Stradbally as a tourism destination. Stradbally is located 4.5 km from the Rock of Dunamase, Laois' most striking national monument. Other attractions include the Steam Museum on Main Street and walking routes through Oughaval Wood located on the outskirts of the town.

At the south-western end of the town is a green area (Courthouse Square) which is framed by the Courthouse at the western end and surrounded on

both sides by two storey dwellings. The streetscape is defined by the buildings fronting onto the green area thereby creating a strong sense of place and enclosure. This is the principal open green space within the development envelope of the town. The Market Square and its distinctive canopy is the principal hard-surfaced open space in the town; much of this space is now used for car parking and vehicular access to properties to the rear of the Square. Other smaller open spaces relate to residential estates.

Within the historic core, the building orientation and heights play an important role in not just defining street edges but also capturing specific views and creating a sense of enclosure and place. The retention of the estate gates and views between the estate and the Main Street indicate the intrinsic economic and historic links between the estate and the town.

Major employers in Stradbally include McKeown's Stone and the Supervalu retail outlet. There are also a range of services including doctors, beauticians, hairdressers, public houses, garages and small shops providing employment in Stradbally.

### *Social and Physical Infrastructure*

Stradbally has three primary schools; the Boys Primary school on the Vicarstown road Scoil Aonghusa located on Glebe Lane and Cosby National School, on the Main Street.

A playground and the GAA playing fields are located to the southwest of the town within the development envelope. Stradbally has a Church of Ireland Church and a Catholic Church located on the Main Street of the town. The branch library is located in the Courthouse, which has recently been renovated. The Civil Defence headquarters is located on the Abbeylax Road. Stradbally has a healthy community ethic as is evident from the work of the Development Association and the Tidy Towns Committee.

To the west, Stradbally Hall Demesne provides a wooded back drop to the town. Stradbally Lake brown trout fishery has been subject to extensive restoration and is located on the Cosby Estate in Stradbally. The Stradbally/Timogue River running under the Main Street is a Special Area of Conservation.

Stradbally has its own wastewater treatment plant. Stradbally is currently served by wireless broadband. Stradbally is served by National and Laois Trip bus services. A recycling bring bank is located at Market Square.

### ***Written Objectives***

#### **Character and Built Form**

- ST1 Conserve the elements that make up Stradbally's historic streetscape and sense of place by ensuring public realm improvements and new developments are sympathetic to local context, including building orientation, roof profiles, layout, materials, elevational features;
- ST2 Encourage redevelopment or restoration of derelict, vacant or underused buildings within the town centre as appropriate and also infill development and backland development;
- ST3 Encourage the maintenance and use of all town centre structures, especially the upper storeys to secure their longevity and support the town's vibrancy;
- ST4 Encourage good conservation practice in the refurbishment of protected structures throughout the town;
- ST5 Enhance the public realm, including maintaining the town pumps;
- ST6 Audit the signage on approach roads and in the square area and provide landscaping elements and welcome signs incorporating natural materials on the approach roads in consultation with the Tidy Towns Committee.

#### **Housing and Land Availability**

- ST7 Mixed-use applications which comprise a housing element will also be accepted within the town centre zoning, though loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will not be accepted;
- ST8 Housing to be provided in line with the Housing Strategy 2017-2023;
- ST9 Densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare are suitable for Stradbally.

#### **Economic Development**

- ST10 Develop commercial tourism services in the town and facilitate the marketing of Stradbally as a tourism and events destination;
- ST11 Facilitate the provision of commercial services in the town centre for local residents and the wider hinterland;
- ST12 Encourage the more intensive use of the existing Market House and Square;
- ST13 Support the continued functioning of existing commercial enterprises in the town and provide space for the establishment of additional small-scale indigenous enterprises;
- ST14 Encourage the development of large scale enterprise or industry on Greenfield lands allocated for industrial use adjacent to the planned bypass of the town.

#### **Infrastructure**

- ST15 Pursue funding and reserve lands for the construction of an N80 bypass around Stradbally which is a priority road for Laois and for the Midlands Region;
- ST16 Provide dedicated cycling corridor along the Main Street within the town centre and improve footpaths incrementally and facilitate the provision of cycle parking at buildings in community use, especially schools;
- ST17 Facilitate mobility and movement of persons with special needs by way of providing dished kerbs at crossing points, even footpath surfaces, tactile pavings, audible traffic light signals for pedestrians, disabled parking space and ensuring slopes that form part of the pedestrian network do not exceed 1 in 5;
- ST18 Improve parking facilities along the Main Street and in the two squares—Market Square and Courthouse Square without reducing the amount of public open space;
- ST19 Identify a bus stop area and develop related disabled parking spaces and cycle parking stands in consultation with the local community and bus service providers;
- ST20 Develop lands within flood zone A to the east of Main Street as a town park with access from the Main Street.

- ST21 Support provision, expansion or redevelopment of social infrastructure: public open space, youth-related facilities, educational structures and ancillary facilities, childcare facilities, and healthcare facilities, outdoor multi-game play areas;
- ST22 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground on the Main Street and adjacent to the principal open spaces to enhance its appearance;
- ST23 Provide ducts in new roads which can accommodate cabling for CCTV, broadband and other cable-based services;

Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- ST24 Avoid encroachment on the Natura 2000 site, implement buffer zone, and ensure no loss of bankside vegetation;
- ST25 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. Road developments that involve crossing the Natura 2000 site or other impacts will ensure that the alternative routes have been considered to minimise the impact on the Natura 2000 sites;
- ST26 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- ST27 Ensure full compliance with all existing planning permissions and with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- ST28 Ensure that recreational use is directed away from sensitive areas within the Natura 2000 site;
- ST29 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation.







## **LOCAL SERVICE TOWNS**

**RATHDOWNEY**

**DURROW**

**BALLYLYNAN**



## RATHDOWNNEY

### *Character and Context*

Rathdowney is located on the River Erkina in the south west of County Laois, approximately 36 kilometres from Portlaoise. Rathdowney is located on the Abbeyleix to Templemore section of the R433. The town is located 6.5 km from an interchange with the Cork – Dublin Motorway (M8), 10.5 km from an interchange with the Limerick – Dublin Motorway (M7) and 7 km from Ballybrophy train Station connecting Dublin with the Limerick and Cork mainline rail services.

Rathdowney is a Local Service Town as indicated the County Settlement Strategy as defined in Section 2 of Volume 1 of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023.

The urban structure of the town is quite compact with the Market Square dominating the urban form. Other prominent focal points within the town centre are the Mill Pond, Mill Street, Pound Street, the Protestant Church, and the River Erkina.

The cattle mart has been redeveloped as a large convenience supermarket in the town centre. The Rathdowney Retail Outlet is located on the Johnstown Road, which currently lies vacant. A second convenience supermarket is located alongside the Outlet Centre.

The main employers in Rathdowney include Meadow Meats, Brand Central, Supervalu, Dunnes Stores, Midland Hardware and local banks. There are also a range of services including solicitors, accountants, doctors, beauticians, hairdressers, public houses and small shops providing employment in the town. Public recreational space is found at the GAA and soccer playing fields located to the south of the main street. Rathdowney Golf Club which is located to the south east of the town [outside the town's development boundary] provides a valuable amenity for its members.

The town acts as a higher order service and employment centre for its catchment. Rathdowney is an important local service centre for the surrounding agricultural hinterland. It has an established industrial base and is suitable for further industrial development. Rathdowney's location in proximity to the M7 and M8 provides

the town with an opportunity to develop as the Local Service Town for south west County Laois.

### *Physical and Social Infrastructure*

Rathdowney has a Catholic and Church of Ireland Church as well as a community health centre and a library. The HSE has a residential house (Erkina House) in Rathdowney, which also serves as an outpatient clinic and is used by mental health associations.

The education facilities in Rathdowney are

- Scoil Bride and
- the Convent School
- Church of Ireland National School
- St. Fergal Post Primary School

Rathdowney's Community Resource Centre has a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role and is centrally located within the town.

Rathdowney's water supply is from the Bealeady and Kilcorcan Group Water Schemes and the Arcon Mines public water supply. Rathdowney has its own wastewater treatment plant. Rathdowney is currently served by wireless broadband. Rathdowney is served by Laois Trip bus services. A recycling bring bank is located south of the Square.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| RD 1 | Ensure new development compliments and enhances the townscape, uses quality building materials and employs best conservation practice in relation to protected structures;   |
| RD2  | Reinforce the urban structure of The Square in particular by way of maintenance, renovation, redevelopment and infill development;   |
| RD3  | Encourage redevelopment or restoration of derelict, vacant or underused buildings within the town centre as appropriate and also infill development and backland development; encourage the maintenance and use of all town centre structures, especially the upper storeys to secure their longevity and support the town's vibrancy; |

RD4 Enhance approach roads, Johnstown Road, Conoboro Road, Donaghmore Road, Errill Road by way of landscaping;

#### Housing and Land Availability

RD5 Encourage densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare are suitable for Rathdowney;

RD6 Implement the Housing Strategy 2017-2023;

#### Economic Development

RD7 Facilitate commercial development within the town centre and enterprise development on the Johnstown Road;

RD8 Consider renewing the Rathdowney Market Square as a functioning market place on a once-weekly or once-monthly basis;

RD9 Promote the development potential of Rathdowney on the basis of its location in proximity to the M7 and M8 and Ballybrophy Railway Station

RD10 Promote Rathdowney as Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ) and work with interested partners such as Laois LEO, Laois Partnership, Carlow IT to support the "Inspire Rathdowney" Initiative.

#### Infrastructure

RD10 Provide and enhance strategic and recreational pedestrian and cycling linkages and associated street lighting as per the indicative objectives map and cycle parking at buildings in community use, especially schools;

RD11 Enhance the Rathdowney road network as necessary and reserve land and pursue funding for new orbital/relief routes as specified on objectives map;

RD12 Facilitate mobility and movement of persons with special needs by way of providing dished kerbs at crossing points, even footpath surfaces, tactile pavings, audible traffic light signals for pedestrians, disabled parking space and ensuring slopes that form part of the pedestrian network do not exceed 1 in 5;

RD13 Identify a bus stop area and develop related disabled parking spaces and cycle parking stands in consultation with the

local community and bus service providers;

RD14 Develop Greenfield lands within flood zone A to the south of the town centre as a town park and encourage the enhancement of the pond area for amenity use;

RD15 Encourage the renovation of the community centre located in the town centre to provide flexible spaces, capable of being managed for a number of different uses and encourage the development of additional facilities as necessary;

RD16 Support provision, expansion or redevelopment of social infrastructure: public open space, educational structures and ancillary facilities, childcare facilities, and community-based healthcare facilities and in particular youth facilities and healthcare facilities for the elderly;

RD17 Encourage provision of an Ambulance Service, perhaps in conjunction with the location of the new Rathdowney Fire Station in consultation with the local service providers;

RD18 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground on the Main Street and adjacent to the principal open spaces to enhance its appearance;

RD19 Provide ducts in new roads which can accommodate cabling for CCTV, broadband and other cable-based services;

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

RD20 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;

RD21 Implement SuDS where appropriate;

RD22 Ensure full compliance with all existing planning permissions and with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;

RD23 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation.





## DURROW

### *Character and Context*

Durrow is an attractive settlement in the south of the county, on the old N8 Cork-Dublin Road, now the main Portlaoise Kilkenny Road (N77,) the regional road (R639) to Johnstown and the regional road (R434) to Ballacolla.

Durrow Castle set in its own demesne in the centre of the town provides both a landmark building as well as a source of employment and economic opportunity. The River Erkina flows through the village meeting with the River Nore on the outskirts of the town. Mature trees and wooded areas enhance the character of the town and integrate the town into the surrounding hilly landscape.

Durrow is a Local Service Town as indicated in the County Settlement Strategy as defined in Section 2 of Volume 1 of the Draft County Development Plan 2017-2023

The urban form of the town is tightly clustered and focused on a central green, known as The Square. The Square in Durrow is the heart of the town with several fine buildings which date from the 19th century. Buildings in Durrow are predominantly two to three storeys in height with buildings of a high architectural order overlooking the central green. In order to preserve the special character of the town it has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area.

The Square provides a central focus to the town, an important link between the village and the Castle Durrow Estate. However, within the Square, pockets of green open space have become traffic islands and this is leading to the *gradual erosion* of the character of these areas. These areas are widely used as an amenity for local children. The greatest problem in this area is the dominance of traffic throughout the entire Square area, although this has significantly changed with the opening of the M8 motorway. Another issue is the erosion of its character by the dominance of parking in the south of the Square.

The area known as the Pound is a small area at the junction of Carrigan Street and the Derry Road, to the south of the village. This has been landscaped and the work of local artists displayed with seating provided. Tae Lane has been planted and landscaped to provide a small amenity area. This

development incorporates the Top Pump and street lighting.

Durrow has well established active community groups within the area. A Village Design Statement was carried out in 2002 in consultation with the community. The Statement provides a strong, locally based, advisory input into future development and planning policy in the area.

Durrow provides an important retail, service and amenity function for its residents and local hinterland. Durrow was a traditional stopping point on the N8 (Cork - Dublin) road and has a long-established tradition of hotel and catering as a result.

The main employers in Durrow include Durrow Castle, Dunnes Garden Nurseries, the Castle Arms Hotel. There are also a range of services including doctors, hairdressers, banks, public houses, garages and small shops providing employment in Durrow.

### *Social and Physical Infrastructure*

Durrow is served by a primary school in the grounds of the Castle off the main street. A crèche is located within the Square. A playground was opened in 2009 for the community at the Old Boys School on the Kilkenny Road.

A community centre is located beside the church on the Kilkenny Road which caters for a number of organisations. Durrow Courthouse has been successfully restored and is currently being used as a library and exhibition /meeting area for the use of the local community.

The River Nore runs just east of Durrow and is the largest in the Durrow area. Much of the river flows through mature woodland. Some vegetation along the banks of the river has been cleared to provide a walkway known as the Leafy Loop. The Erkina is the second largest river in the Durrow area. The Erkina flows from the northwest through the town and joins the Nore about one mile east of Durrow. The rivers have many deep pools and contain stocks of natural wild brown trout and pike. Durrow would provide a good launching point or stopping point for canoeists if a quayside slip were in place.

Durrow has its own wastewater treatment plant. Durrow's water supply is from the Convent and Fermoy Wells. Durrow is currently served by



wireless broadband. Durrow is served by national and Laois TRIP bus services.

### ***Written Objectives***

#### Character and Built Form

- DU1 Preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of Durrow's Architectural Conservation Area (ACA);
- DU2 Have regard to the Village Design Statement (VDS) when determining planning applications;
- DU3 Encourage redevelopment or restoration of derelict, vacant or underused buildings within the town centre as appropriate and also infill development and backland development; encourage the maintenance and use of all town centre structures, especially the upper storeys to secure their longevity and support the town's vibrancy;
- DU4 Ensure the use of quality building materials and best conservation practice in relation to protected structures and buildings within the ACA;
- DU5 Improve the quality of the public realm and in particular of the open spaces in the centre of Durrow including the provision of seating away from the principal carriageways to allow for the supervision of children, the improvement of street lighting and the maintenance of the town pumps;
- DU6 Protect and plant groups of trees on the principal approach roads and audit signage on all approach roads;
- DU7 Encourage the use of traditional shopfronts in the The Square Area;
- DU8 Promote the 18<sup>th</sup> Century character of the Square Area for tourism gain;
- DU9 Repair / replace the temporary weir on River Erkina at Old Stone Bridge.

#### Housing

- DU10 Mixed-use applications which comprise a housing element will also be accepted within the town centre zoning, though loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will not be accepted;
- DU11 Housing to be provided in line with Housing Strategy 2017-2023;

- DU12 Promote densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare.

#### Economic Development

- DU13 Promote Durrow as a tourism destination as well as a stopping point during long journeys;
- DU14 Harness the tourism potential associated with the waterways and wooded walks surrounding the town and the towns special character; such as; providing a boat slip and related facilities along the river bank in the town centre, upgrading the river amenity area near the Old Stone Bridge and Tae Lane area and building on the existing base of hotel and catering services;
- DU15 Upgrade the river amenity area near the Old Stone Bridge and the Tae Lane area;
- DU16 Facilitate the development of enterprise to the north of the town, taking advantage of the road network and in order to provide local employment for local people;
- DU17 Expand the economic base of the town centre by way of mixed-use backland development to the east of the town centre;
- DU18 Maintain and improve the range of commercial services available in the town centre;
- DU19 Promote the environmental tourism potential of Knockanoran woods / Bishop Woods alluvial woodland site.

#### Infrastructure

- DU 20 Improve pedestrian linkages and provide cycle path linkages within the town as per the objectives map and facilitate the provision of cycle parking at buildings in community use, especially schools;
- DU21 Investigate the feasibility, subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, of enhancing the Durrow road network as necessary and reserving land and pursuing funding for new orbital/relief routes;;
- DU22 Facilitate mobility and movement of persons with special needs by way of providing dished kerbs at crossing

- 
- points, even footpath surfaces, tactile pavings, audible traffic light signals for pedestrians, disabled parking spaces in strategic locations and ensuring slopes that form part of the pedestrian network do not exceed 1 in 5; in particular disabled parking is to be provided at buildings in community use;
- DU23 Provide disabled parking and cycle parking in association with the existing bus stopping area;
- DU24 Encourage the intensive use of existing community and sporting facilities and develop additional facilities which are flexible and capable of being managed for a number of different uses;
- DU25 Continue to underground the overhead power lines within the ACA area to enhance its visual amenity and appearance;
- DU26 Provide ducts to new roads which can accommodate cabling for CCTV, broadband and other cable-based services;

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- DU27 Avoid encroachment on the Natura 2000 site, implement buffer zone, and ensure no loss of bankside vegetation or other semi-natural vegetation within the site;
- DU28 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
- DU29 Ensure that recreational use is directed away from sensitive areas within the Natura 2000 site;
- DU30 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- DU31 Ensure full compliance with all existing planning permissions and with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- DU32 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- DU33 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation.









## BALLYLYNAN

### *Character and Context*

Ballylynan's water supply is from the Rahin Group Water Scheme and the Kyle Public Water Supply. Ballylynan has its own wastewater treatment plant. Ballylynan is served by Carlow Regional College bus services.

Ballylynan village is located in south-east County Laois in close proximity to the Carlow/Kildare border, approximately 28 km from Portlaoise on the N78 National Secondary Route between Athy and Castlecomer. The Main Street is located in a northeast, southwest trajectory along the N78. The commercial services and retail uses are located along this Main Street. A number of smaller roads serving new residential estates located north of the village core are located off the Main Street.

The architecture of Ballylynan is diverse, consisting of some detached vernacular cottages located to the southeast of the village along the Main Street. Single and two-storey buildings are arranged along a straight building line, opening directly onto the Main Street. Twentieth-century buildings of various layouts are also present on the Main Street. The buildings on Main Street are finished with a mixture of plaster and stone, a number of the older structures have sliding sash windows. A number of mature trees to the southeast contribute to the character of the village.

The village consists of residential areas, three convenience retail outlets, four public houses, a Post Office, takeaway, , a national school, Garda Station, community hall, health centre, new library, GAA pitch, a Roman Catholic church and cemetery

There is one primary school in the village of Ballylynan. Ballylynan's St Anne's Community Centre has a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role. Ballylynan has a library located in the village shopping centre.

## ***Written Objectives***

### Residential development

- BLN 1 Mixed-use applications which comprise a housing element will be open to consideration within the Village Centre zoning, loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will not be accepted;
- BLN2 Housing to be provided in line with Housing Strategy 2017-2023;
- BLN3 Promote densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare.

### Character and Built Form

- BLN4 Consolidate the village centre by way of infill development, backland development and redevelopment as appropriate and enhance the public realm;
- BLN5 Ensure that new development is sympathetic to the village and ensure the use of quality finishing materials in particular along the Main Street;
- BLN6 Protect established mature trees to the southeast;
- BLN7 Secure the former thatched vernacular cottage (RPS 308) from future endangerment and encourage its restoration as the cottage used to be an architectural focal point within the village.

### Economic Development

- BLN8 Encourage a good range of commercial services within the village centre;
- BLN9 Facilitate the development of enterprise uses to the northeast to take advantage of the good road network.

### Infrastructure

- BLN10 Improve pedestrian linkages (including traffic calming and footpaths) within the town and provide cycling linkages as per the objectives map and cycle parking at buildings in community uses, in particular at the national school;
- BLN11 Repair of road surface to GAA grounds and provide signage to the GAA grounds and amenity areas;
- BLN12 Encourage the more active use of the community centre including the potential for the interchanging of crèche and other community services in the Centre;

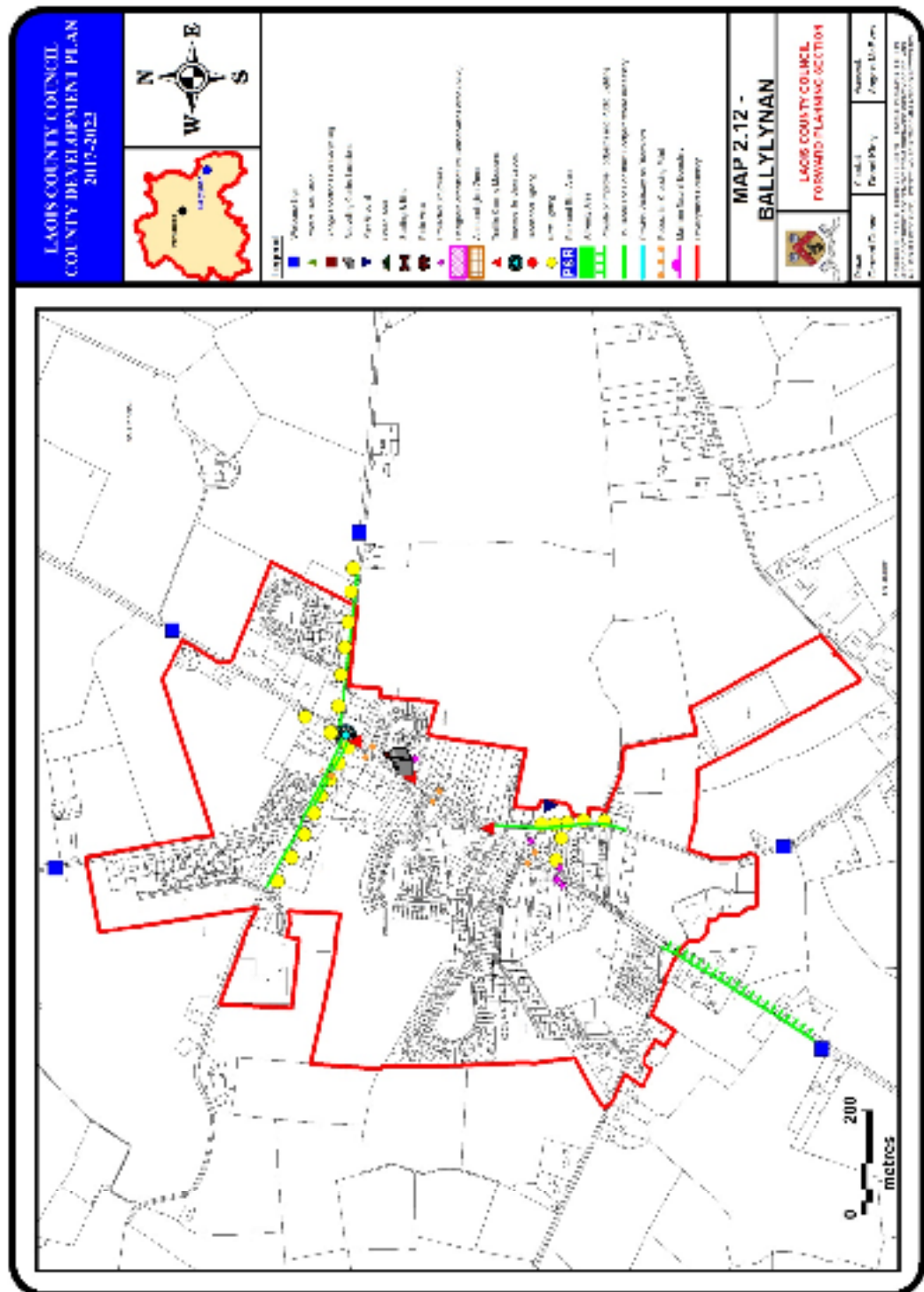
- BLN13 Facilitate the provision of educational facilities including extensions to existing facilities subject to proper planning and sustainable development criteria
- BLN14 Provide demarcated parking areas at the health centre, church and graveyard;
- BLN15 Identification of a suitable location for a bus stop and related disabled car parking spaces and cycle parking stands;
- BLN16 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground;
- BLN17 Provide a playground at Ballylynan;
- BLN18 Support provision and enhancement of physical infrastructure as needed (Water supply, Wastewater Treatment, Transport).
- BLN 19 Ensure adherence to policy in the context of zoning of all lands along National roads in Section 6 of Volume 1 – Written statement.

### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- BLN20 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
- BLN21 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- BLN22 Ensure full compliance with all existing Planning permissions and with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- BLN 23 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation.







**LARGE VILLAGES (POPULATION  
EXCEEDING 400)**

**CLONASLEE**

**BORRIS IN OSSORY**

**BALLINAKILL**

**KILLENARD**

## CLONASLEE

### *Context and Character*

Clonaslee is an attractive settlement located on the R422, northwest of Portlaoise, at the base of the Slieve Bloom Mountains and on the Clodiagh River.

Clonaslee provides an important retail, service and amenity function for residents and the local hinterland. There are a number of small local employers in Clonaslee which provide a range of services including doctors, hairdressers, public houses, garages and small shops. Due to its proximity to the Slieve Bloom Mountains, Clonaslee has potential for the development of tourism.

Clonaslee is a settlement of special architectural interest. Within the historic core the building orientation and heights play an important role in not just defining street edges but also capturing specific views and creating a sense of enclosure and place.

Clonaslee is essentially composed of two streets. The Main Street has the formal layout of an estate village, comprising a wide and open boulevard, with a continuous building line enclosing the boulevard on either side and creating a vista which terminates in the Visitor's Centre, formerly the Church of Ireland. The boulevard with its two-storey simple, rendered and generally well-proportioned buildings, orientated towards the street and punctuated by the cut-stone former church, is the primary focus of the village.

The streetscape of the Tullamore Road is quite different. At the southern end, closer to the village, two-storey buildings create a strong feeling of urban enclosure on one side; a stream is located on the other. Beyond the church gates, the building form changes and one-storey buildings predominate.

To the west of the main boulevard and along the principal thoroughfare, a small triangular green space contributes to the character of the village. Buildings front onto the green creating a strong sense of place and enclosure. A small hard landscaped square directly in front of Hickey's pub, close to the bridge over the Clodiagh River

provides fine views of the Main Street and the river.

Access to Clonsalee was facilitated in the 19th century by the Cut, an impressive mountain pass cut through red sandstone. Nearby are the ruins of the Gothic mansion Brittas House and Castlecuffe, an early 17th century fortified dwelling.

Clonaslee benefits from direct access to walking routes, open space, woodland and waterways on the Brittas Road. The prominent position of the gates of the Brittas House Estate reinforces the close relationship between the estate and the village.

Clonaslee is nestled in the foothills of the Slieve Blooms. This is an area rich in wildlife with more than 65 bird species, fallow deer, wild goats, foxes, badgers, hares and stoats. This area is very popular among walkers. In 2007 The Laois-Offaly Walking Partnership re-routed the Slieve Bloom Way to attract walkers into the village of Clonaslee. Clonaslee has two looped walks – the Rickets Rocks looped walk and the much longer Glendinoregan looped walk. Clonaslee also has 6 waymarked walks identified on the map board at the heritage centre.

Clonaslee is well-served by way of social infrastructure. The village has two primary schools, one in the village and one at Castlecuffe. A community crèche is located in the old boys school which caters for between 30-35 children. A vocational school also exists in Clonaslee. This school is located in the grounds of the well-utilised community centre. Clonaslee has a healthy community ethic. A playground, a recycling bring bank and all weather playing pitches where basketball and badminton are played are also located adjacent to the community centre. A GAA pitch is located within the village but requires some attention to the entrance.

Clonaslee has its own wastewater treatment plant. Its water supply is sourced from the Clodiagh River. Clonaslee is currently served by wireless broadband. The village is served by Laois Trip bus services which run twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from Clonaslee to Portlaoise.

### ***Written Objectives***

#### Residential development

CLON 1 Mixed-use applications which comprise a housing element will be open to



consideration within the village centre zoning, loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will not be accepted;

CLON2 Housing to be provided in line with Housing Strategy 2017-2023;

CLON3 Promote densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare.

#### Built Form and Context

CLON4 Preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of Clonaslee Architectural Conservation Area (ACA);

CLON5 Have regard to Village Design Statement (VDS) in the determination of planning applications or the carrying out of public realm works;

CLON6 Encourage best conservation practice in relation to protected structures and development within the ACA;

CLON7 Ensure development carried out outside the ACA boundaries is sympathetic to the character of the village;

CLON8 Encourage restoration or redevelopment of derelict sites throughout the village;

CLON9 Encourage infill and backland redevelopment within the village centre as appropriate;

CLON10 Enhance approach roads into the village through tree planting, verge treatment or the construction of stone walls.

#### Economic Development

CLON11 Encourage the growth of tourism in Clonaslee in particular commercial tourism services;

CLON12 Retain and improve the range of commercial services available in the village.

#### Infrastructure

CLON13 Improve pedestrian linkages in the town and provide cycling linkages as per the objectives map and cycle parking at buildings in community use, particularly schools;

CLON14 Facilitate the mobility of persons with special needs by way of disabled parking provision and suitable pedestrian network;

CLON15 Encourage provision of an Elderly Day Care Service and Nursing Home in consultation with the Health Services Executive and local developers;

CLON16 Enhance GAA facilities; support provision, expansion or redevelopment of Social Infrastructure (Public Open Space, Educational Amenities (School and Child-care), Community Facilities);

CLON17 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground;

CLON18 Work with Offaly County Council to manage the condition of the Clodiagh River.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 sites)

CLON19 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;

CLON20 Implement SuDS where appropriate;

CLON21 Ensure full compliance with all existing planning permissions and with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;

CLON22 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation;

CLON23 Ensure that groundwater abstractions that form part of planning applications do not negatively impact on the hydrology of the adjacent esker and bog habitats.





## **BORRIS IN OSSORY**

### ***Character and Context***

Borris in Ossory is located on the old N7 Dublin-Limerick road, now the R445, and adjacent to junction 21 of the M7 motorway. Borris in Ossory is located 5 kms from Ballybrophy Train Station which provides mainline rail services between Cork, Limerick and Dublin and to smaller settlements such as Roscrea. The village is also a long-established stopping point for inter-urban bus links. Geographically, Borris in Ossory is located in west Laois, close to the Tipperary border between the towns of Mountrath and Roscrea.

The village centre comprises of the Main Street which accommodates the main retail, commercial, institutional, educational and residential functions of the village. There are a number of protected structures in this part of the village. Although the village centre is compact and the architectural quality of the village is strong, Borris in Ossory suffers from dereliction and poor maintenance of some buildings and would benefit from enhancement of the public realm. Architectural focal points include the Church of Ireland and former courthouse. During 2014 and 2015, works were carried out to conserve the delicate decorative stonework at the courthouse and to restore the historic railings and gates round the building.

Recreational space in Borris in Ossory is found at the Gaelic playing fields located 1.5km to the east of the village. The amenities include a playing pitch, dressing and meeting rooms. While, the existing community facilities at Borris in Ossory are limited, an extensive range of community groups are present in the village. O'Brien Hall has an important communal and recreational role within

### ***Written Objectives***

the local community. The Council will encourage the more active use of the hall.

Regarding childcare facilities, the village has a play school, crèche, after school club and school collection services. A new primary school opened in 2012.

The present public water scheme in Borris in Ossory is sourced at Donaghmore borehole. Borris in Ossory has its own wastewater treatment plant. A town link service connects nearby towns and villages.

### Residential development

- BIO 1 Mixed-use applications which comprise a housing element will be considered within the Village Centre zoning, loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will not be accepted;
- BIO 2 Housing to be provided in line with Housing Strategy 2017-2023;
- BIO 3 Promote densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare.

### Built Form and Context

- BIO 4 Consolidate the village centre by way of infill development, backland development and redevelopment as appropriate;
- BIO 5 Encourage restoration or redevelopment of derelict sites, vacant or underused buildings within the village centre;
- BIO 6 Extend the quantity and improve quality of the open space to the front of the old courthouse to provide an appropriate setting to this protected structure as well as an amenity for local people;
- BIO 7 Enhance the appearance of the Main Street by means of tree planting.
- BIO 8 Examine the feasibility of potential uses for Borris in Ossory Court House during the lifetime of the plan;
- BIO 9 Continue a programme of restoration to the Courthouse Building in line with Conservation principles, supervised by a qualified conservation professional;

### Economic Development

- BIO 10 Encourage industrial development to the west of the town to harness the development potential arising from the proximity to the motorway interchange, require the preparation of a masterplan including site specific flood risk assessment for these lands;
- BIO 11 Facilitate business and enterprise development on appropriate lands within and adjoining the village centre;
- BIO 12 Retain and improve the range of commercial services available in the village.

### Infrastructure

- BIO 13 Facilitate the provision of a feeder bus link between Ballybrophy Station and Borris in Ossory to provide for the integration of the rail and road network;
- BIO 14 Improve pedestrian linkages in the town and provide cycling linkages as per the objectives map and cycle parking

at buildings in community use, particularly schools;

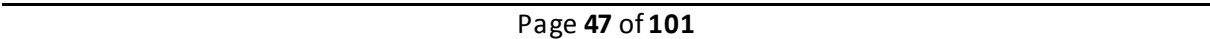
- BIO 15 Facilitate the mobility of persons with special needs by way of disabled parking provision and suitable pedestrian network;
- BIO 16 Enhance traffic safety at the Skeirke and Rock Road intersections;
- BIO 17 Facilitate traffic management improvements at the junction between the Main Street and the Rathdowney Road;
- BIO 18 Provide enhanced community facilities in Borris in Ossory, such as a playground subject to available funding.
- BIO 19 Enable the improvement of circulation within the church car park;
- BIO 20 Support provision, expansion or redevelopment of social infrastructure (public open space, educational amenities (school and child-care), community facilities;
- BIO 21 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground;

### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- BIO 22 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- BIO 23 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- BIO 24 Ensure full compliance with all existing planning permissions and with relevant measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- BIO 25 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation.







## BALLINAKILL

### *Character and Context*

Ballinakill is a village of special architectural character located in the south of Laois and served by local roads and the Abbeyleix to Ballyraggett section of the R432. In the past the village had important fairs, a brewery, woollen and tanning factories. The town now provides retail, commercial and community services to its residents and the wider hinterland.

The main architectural character of the village is the Main Street which runs from the approach road from Abbeyleix to the Castlecomer road. The Square area also retains its built form with two and three storey buildings framing it. The configuration of streets around the large rectangular square dates from the eighteenth-century. Some historic painted timber shopfronts have been retained to village centre properties. Some of the buildings onto the Square require attention. Small infill developments have occurred off the Square area. A monument in the square is dedicated to the local men who died in the 1798 rebellion. A zone of archaeological significance is located over part of the village centre. The village entrance from Abbeyleix is marked by two trees known as Toll Trees where a toll was paid by visitors to the town.

A number of new residential areas have been established around the town, namely Heywood Village lakeside homes on the Abbeyleix approach road, Monaclear on the Durrow Road and Masslough Meadow Estate at the top of Chapel Street.

The community centre is located on the Main Street and is used by the local groups, which caters for a wide catchment area. GAA playing fields are located to the north of the village. An outdoor swimming pool is located off Main Street within the village centre and is well-used during the summer months, weather permitting. Ballinakill benefits from ready access to walks to and around the Mass Lough and to and around the landscaped gardens of the Heywood Demesne designed by Lutyens, managed by the Office of Public Works and open to the public.

### *Written Objectives*

### Residential development

- BK 1 Mixed-use applications which comprise a housing element will be considered within the Village Centre zoning, loss of active commercial or retail floorspace to residential use will not be accepted;
- BK 2 Housing to be provided in line with Housing Strategy 2017-2023;
- BK 3 Promote densities in the order of 12 dwelling units to the hectare.

### Character and Built Form

- BK 4 Preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of Ballinakill's Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and any protected structure within the village envelope;
- BK 5 Examine the feasibility of making the Toll trees at entrance to village subject of a Tree Preservation Order;
- BK 6 Encourage the restoration or redevelopment of vacant and derelict buildings in the village centre;
- BK 7 Consolidate the village centre by way of appropriate and sensitive design consistent with the existing streetscape.

### Economic Development

- BK 8 Promote walking routes in and around the Mass Lough and to and around the landscaped gardens of Heywood in the village centre by way of a notice board;
- BK 9 Encourage the development of commercial tourism facilities;
- BK 10 Retain and improve the range of commercial services available in the village centre;
- BK 11 Encourage additional employment opportunities at the Mart site.

### Infrastructure

- BK 12 Improve pedestrian linkages in the town and provide cycling linkages as per the objectives map and cycle parking at buildings in community use, particularly schools;
- BK 13 Facilitate the mobility of persons with special needs by way of disabled parking provision and suitable pedestrian network;
- BK 14 Consult with the OPW in relation to the reopening of walks;

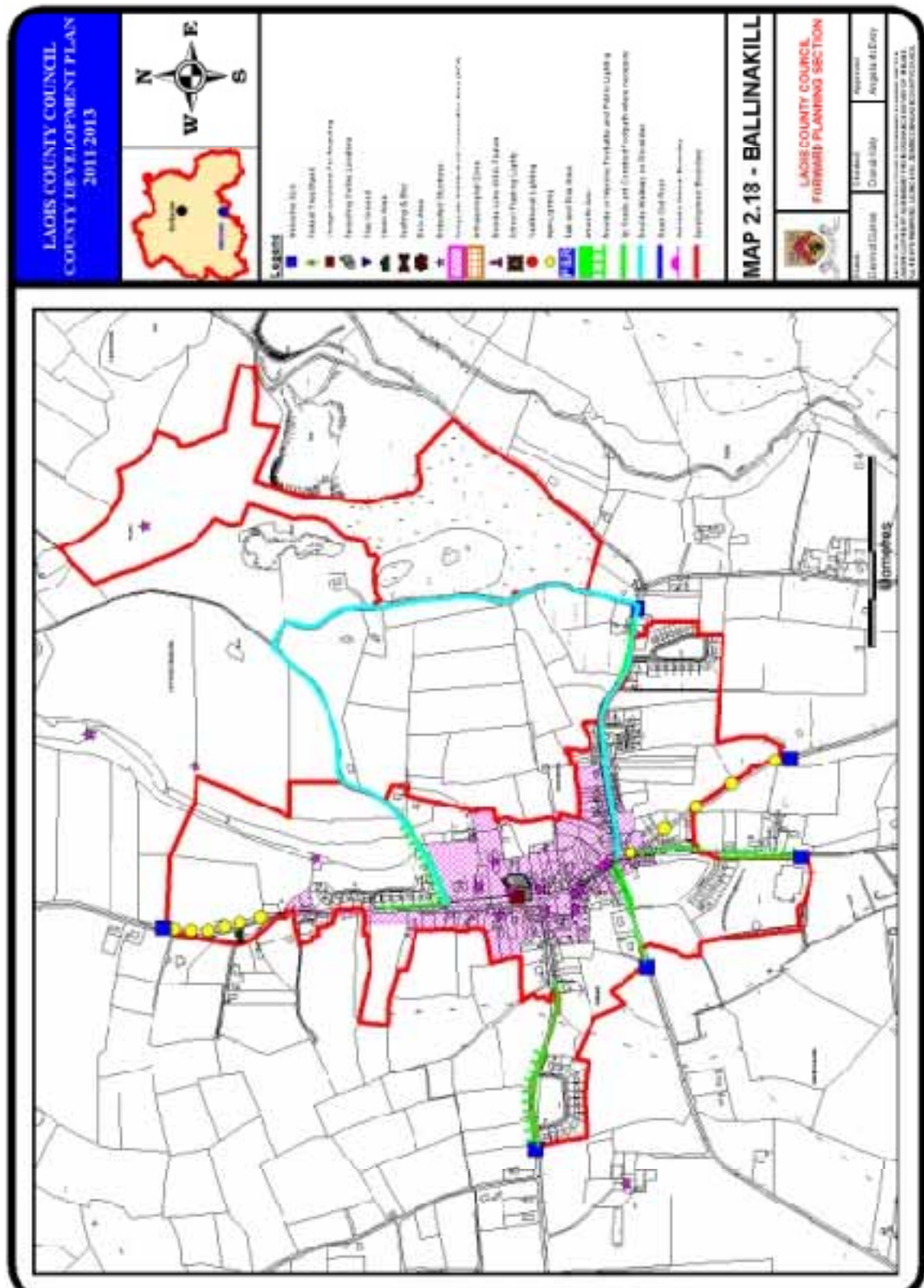


- BK 15 Restore the Walkways particularly at Brewery Lane and Dunphys Lane;
- BK 16 Upgrade the outdoor swimming pool and provide an associated amenity space;
- BK 17 Provide a playground at Ballinakill;
- BK 18 Support provision, expansion or redevelopment of Social Infrastructure (public open space, educational amenities (school and child-care), community facilities;
- BK 19 Encourage the removal of overhead power lines and their placement underground;

Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- BK20 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- BK 21 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- BK 22 with the upgrade are assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- BK 23 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- BK 24 Ensure that recreational use is directed away from sensitive areas within the Natura 2000 site;
- BK 25 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation.





## KILLENARD

### *Character and Context*

Killennard Village is located in northeast Laois in close proximity to the Kildare border, approximately 2.5 km from the former N7 Dublin to Portlaoise Road, 4 km from the M7 and 3 km from the town of Portarlinton to the northwest.

Killennard is located within relative proximity to the urban areas of Portlaoise, Portarlinton and Monasterevin. Killennard Village has experienced substantial growth and development pressure. The village development envelope for Killennard stretches from Mount Saint Anne's crossroads to the railway bridge in the North.

The village consists of residential areas, a hotel, restaurant, extensive leisure and golf amenities, retail units, a public house, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches and cemeteries, a national school, community centre, shop and GAA pitch.

The village centre is defined by the Catholic Church, community centre, and the national school buildings. Pedestrian facilities within the village centre are good. Killennard has a diverse building stock, though most buildings are of a similar scale. Groups of mature trees on the approach road into the village contribute to the character of the settlement.

Developed areas of public open space are currently lacking in Killennard. A substantial area of land is zoned for open space at Mount Saint Anne's. GAA playing fields are located to the south of the village. There is an extensive leisure resource based at The Heritage Golf and Country Club including a championship and par 3 golf course, international bowls arena, leisure centre, healthspa and private walking track.

Killennard's Community Centre has a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role. A nursing home and sheltered housing complex within the development envelope has secured planning permission.

Buildings in the Record of Protected Structures in Killennard include Mount Saint Anne, Lea Church and Saint John's Catholic Church. The source of water supply for Killennard is from a borehole and a water treatment plant in Lough. Effluent from

Killennard is pumped, via a rising main, to the wastewater treatment works in Portarlinton.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- KD 1 Maintain recent public realm improvements;
- KD 2 Develop a tree planting scheme and landscape plan for the village centre to include the placing of native species of trees, plants and flower beds along the streetscape particularly outside the church and community centre;
- KD3 Retain a modest building scale along the main thoroughfare of Killennard.
- KD4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre.

#### Economic Development

- KD5 Support the established tourism and spiritual businesses in the village such as The Heritage Hotel, Golf and Spa complex, Mount St Annes Retreat House, etc;
- KD6 Support the development of further enterprises and commercial uses on suitably zoned lands within Killennard;

#### Infrastructure

- KD7 Provide disabled parking spaces within or adjacent to the village centre;
- KD8 Examine suitable locations for the development of passive public open space;
- KD9 Provide a playground;
- KD10 Encourage the enhancement of community services and the more active use of the community centre including the potential for the interchanging of crèche and other community services.
- KD11 Ensure the proposed works on Duke Street Bridge Killennard and at Mount Henry Crossroads to Killennard Community Centre are carried out subject to available funding;

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- KD12 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- KD13 Implement SuDS where appropriate









**SMALL VILLAGES (POPULATION  
LESS THAN 400)**

**Arles  
Attanagh  
Ballacolla  
Ballybrittas  
Ballyfin  
Ballyroan  
Camross  
Castletown  
Clough  
Coolrain  
Cullahill  
Emo  
Errill  
Killeen  
Killeshin  
Newtown Doonane  
Rosenallis  
Shanahoe  
The Swan  
Timahoe  
Vicarstown**

## ARLES

### *Context and Character*

Arles is a small picturesque village located on the N80 approx. 9 kilometres west of Carlow Town. Despite its limited size and population, Arles enjoys a relatively healthy service base including church, national school, Garda station and public house. In addition, a housing scheme and related treatment system (PE 150) has been developed on the south-eastern approach to the village doubling the population of the village and supporting its sustainability as a settlement.

A small semi-circular public open space provides a pleasant setting to the public house and adjacent buildings. The existing community facilities in Arles are relatively well-established. GAA playing fields are located to the north of the village and playing fields are also located at the school. There is one primary school in the village of Arles which caters for pupils from the village and wider catchment area.

As a result of Arles' location on the N80, heavy traffic flows are experienced on a daily basis through the main thoroughfare of the village. This has implications for safety, congestion and the overall attractiveness of Arles. A by-pass of Arles is planned in the medium term.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- ARL1 Reinforce the approaches to the village through the provision of Welcome signage and planting of native trees;
- ARL2 Support the maintenance of the quality of the small open space in the village centre;
- ARL3 Encourage suitably designed infill development and the restoration or redevelopment of derelict or vacant properties;
- ARL4 Housing development shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

- ARL5 Support the retention of village centre uses within the village core such as the church and church grounds, public house use in Arles;

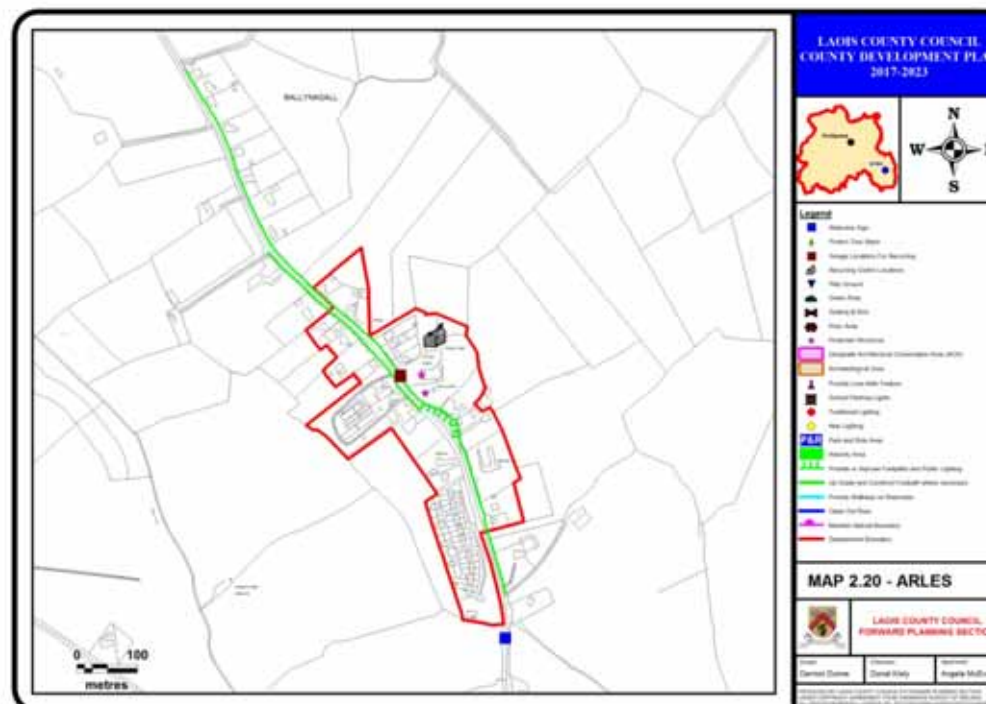
- ARL6 Facilitate the expansion of village centre development appropriate to scale of development within the village of Arles and subject to planning and development standards;

#### Infrastructure

- ARL7 Provide and improve footpath and cycle path in the village centre and between the village centre, the residential estate and the GAA playing fields;
- ARL8 Provide traffic calming measures and a convenient pedestrian crossing in response to high traffic volumes and in association with new pedestrian and cycle linkages;
- ARL9 Provide disabled parking within the village centre;
- ARL10 Carry out incremental improvements to the existing road network.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- ARL11 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
- ARL12 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- ARL13 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan.



## ATTANAGH

### *character and Context*

Attanagh is situated in the southeast of the county, 4 km from both Durrow and Ballyraggett and just inside the county boundary with Kilkenny. Attanagh is located on a local road (L17510) which joins with the N77, a short distance away to the south. The name Attanagh comes from the Irish 'Ath Thanaide' meaning shallow or narrow ford. The early development of the village centred on a local Augustinian monastery. Significant industrial activity in the form of corn milling and brick works became established in the late nineteenth century.

Nonetheless there have been some positive developments in recent years with some local enterprises e.g. Irish Flyfishers and the Game Shooting Museum. A major refurbishment of the local Group Water Supply Scheme has also taken place. Furthermore, Attanagh benefits from the activities of its Residents Association which has adopted a proactive approach to the future development of the village. The nearest community centre is in Ballyouskill, Co. Kilkenny approx. 2 km away. Attanagh also lacks a church. The nearest Catholic Church is also in Ballyouskill, Co. Kilkenny while the local Church of Ireland is now closed.

Attanagh is disjointed with the core of the village being formed by the presence, in close proximity to one another, of public buildings including the post office, museum, converted schoolhouse and Church of Ireland which unfortunately is now disused. There are ample opportunities for sensitive infill development throughout the village.

### **Written Objectives**

#### Character and Built Form

- ATN1 Erect welcome signage and planting of native trees at the approaches to the village to encourage a sense of place;
- ATN2 Encourage the restoration or redevelopment of derelict or vacant properties in the village centre as appropriate;
- ATN3 Encourage infill development to consolidate the structure of the village;
- ATN4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within village centres.

#### Economic Development

- ATN5 Promote the Irish Flyfishers and Game Shooting Museum as a tourism destination;
- ATN6 Retain the post office function of Attanagh;
- ATT7 Facilitate the expansion of village centre development appropriate to scale of development within the village of Arles and subject to planning and development standards;

#### Infrastructure

- ATN8 Provide footpath and streetlighting between the post office, museum, converted schoolhouse and Church of Ireland;
- ATN9 Provide disabled parking within the village centre;
- ATN10 Implement incremental improvements to the existing road network;
- ATN11 Support the reuse of the Church of Ireland structure for a community use.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- ATN12 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- ATN13 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- ATN14 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- ATN15 Ensure that recreational use is directed away from sensitive areas within the Natura 2000 site;
- ATN16 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation;
- ATN17 Avoid encroachment on the Natura 2000 site and implement a buffer zone [10-30 ms where feasible or as determined following consultation with the Inland Fisheries Ireland] along the riparian corridor.



## BALLACOLLA

### *Context and Character*

Ballacolla village is located in south County Laois at the crossroads of the R433 Abbeyleix to Rathdowney and the R434 Durrow to Borris in Ossory regional roads. The village is 4 kms from junction 3 of the M8, 8 kms West of Abbeyleix, 11.4 kms East of Rathdowney, 6 kms North of Durrow and 16 kms South of Borris in Ossory.

Ballacolla's sense of place and definition is formed by the group of buildings located at the four corners of the village's crossroads. The village centre accommodates the retail and institutional uses including the Catholic Church. Late nineteenth century and twentieth century buildings of mostly two-storey pitched buildings are orientated towards the street and finished in plaster.

Ballacolla is attractive and rural in character, but has not had significant growth in the past. Ballacolla's location on the regional road between Abbeyleix and junction 3 of the M8 is expected to result in increased employment opportunities which will increase the self-sufficiency of the village.

The Rathdowney approach road area comprises of the community facilities of the village including the GAA grounds, Grantstown Nature Reserve, community centre and hall, national school and Garda station. There is one primary school in the village of Ballacolla, St. Pius X National School. Ballacolla's community centre has a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role. Adjoining the community centre is the indoor activity hall which serves indoor recreational needs acting as a school gym and Gaelic training facility. The Grantstown Nature Reserve is a 2 acre park and picnic area located close-by. The present group water scheme in Ballacolla is sourced at a spring.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- BA 1 Erect welcome signage and planting of native trees at the approaches to the village to encourage a sense of place;
- BA2 Encourage the restoration or redevelopment of derelict or vacant

properties in the village centre, as appropriate;

- BA3 Encourage suitable infill development.
- BA4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

- BA5 Facilitate enterprise development on allocated lands to the east of the settlement;
- BA6 Promote the Grantstown Nature Reserve as a tourism destination;
- BA7 Support the retention of village centre uses within the village core such as the church and churchgrounds, shop, creamery, public houses uses in Ballacolla;
- BA8 Facilitate the expansion of village centre development appropriate to scale of development within the village of Ballacolla and subject to planning and development standards;

#### Infrastructure

- BA 9 Implement incremental improvements to the existing road network;
- BA10 Protect and retain the range of community services within Ballacolla;
- BA11 Support the reuse of the Church of Ireland structure for a community use.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- BA12 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
- BA13 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- BA14 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;





## BALLYBRITTAS

### *Character and Context*

Ballybrittas village is located on the old N8 Cork-Dublin road, now the R445. Ballybrittas is located 1 km from junction 15 of the M7. Ballybrittas is served by national bus services. Ballybrittas Village has experienced substantial development pressure in recent years as a result of the growth of surrounding towns and the opening of the M7 motorway.

The village has a dispersed structure and heterogenous building stock. The village straddles the old N8 and perpendicular approach roads. Ballybrittas has a strong economic base for a settlement of its size with two petrol stations, a convenience shop, two public houses, a post office and restaurant. A number of enterprise developments are also located in Ballybrittas including a campervan sales business, a carpentry and joinery enterprise.

Ballybrittas has a weak base in relation to community facilities. However, a number of facilities are located in nearby Rath, including a national school, playing pitches, crèche and a community centre. The village contains a residential estate of large detached houses which strengthens the sustainability of the settlement, as well as a bungalow development and a number of other dwelling units of varying styles and sizes.

Water supply is from two boreholes located in the vicinity of Killenard which utilise an existing reservoir. The water supply is shared with Killenard and Portarlinton. Ballybrittas has a shared wastewater infrastructure, which connects to Killenard and is pumped from there to Portarlinton.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- BB1 Encourage suitable infill development to consolidate the urban structure of Ballybrittas;
- BB2 Provision of landscaping and welcome signs incorporating natural materials;
- BB3 Encourage the maintenance of buildings and encourage the restoration or redevelopment of derelict, vacant or underused village centre buildings as appropriate;
- BB4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing

density of the village, higher densities may be considered within village centres.

#### Economic Development

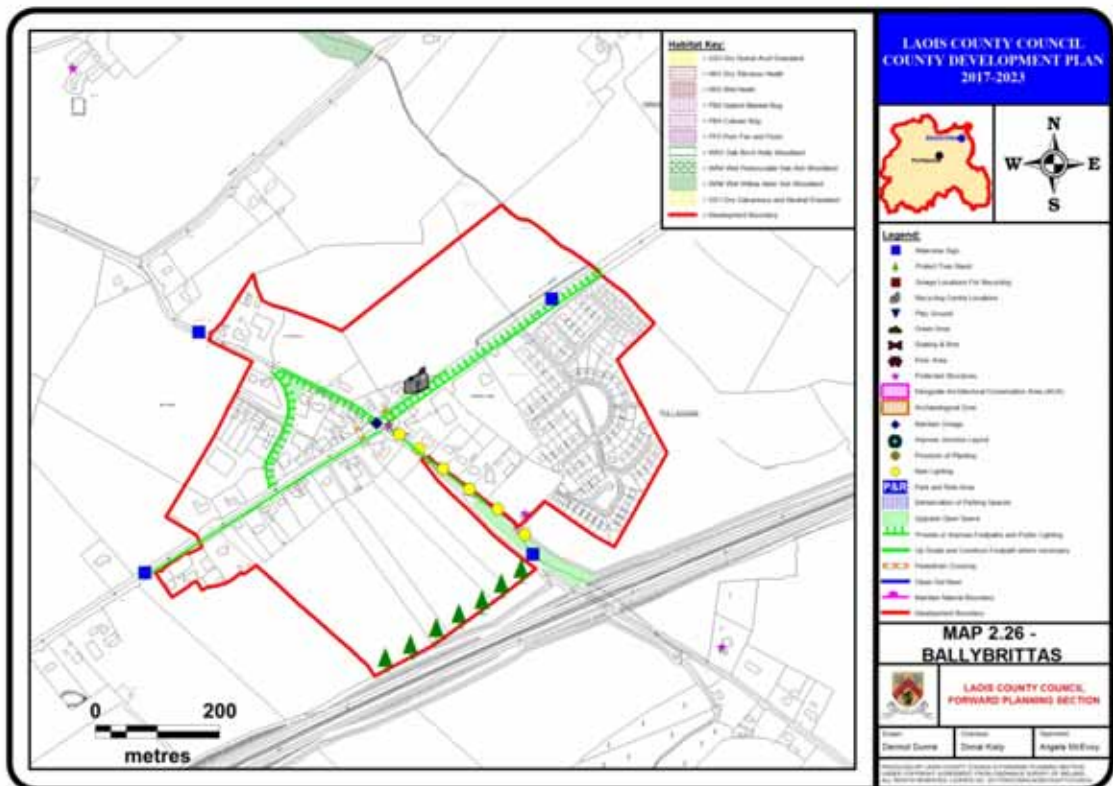
- BB5 Harness the potential of the villages' accessibility to the motorway through the appropriate development of lands for enterprise and employment, general business and industrial development subject to proper planning and sustainable development design and standards;
- BB6 Facilitate the expansion of village centre development appropriate to scale of development within the village of Ballybrittas subject to planning development and design standards;

#### Infrastructure

- BB7 Support the development of lands for community use to enable the development of flexible community facilities in the village;
- BB8 Provide footpath and cycle path within the village centre and between the village centre and the residential housing estates and between the village centre and the lands zoned for community use;
- BB9 Provide pedestrian crossing within the village centre in association with the above pedestrian and cycle linkages and also with reference to the bus stop;
- BB10 Upgrade existing bus stop and provide associated disabled parking and cycle stands;
- BB11 Develop areas of public open space, as these are currently lacking in Ballybrittas.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- BB12 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- BB13 Implement SuDS where appropriate.



## BALLYFIN

### *Character and Context*

Ballyfin is a small village located 9 kilometres west of Portlaoise, 8 kilometres northwest of Mountrath and 10 km southeast of Mountmellick. It provides a setting for Ballyfin House and Demesne, one of the finest country houses in Ireland.

The house and demesne were initially established by the Coote family. It was purchased in 1927 by the Patrician Brothers who subsequently established one of the largest and highest profile second level education centres in County Laois at Ballyfin. As part of a rationalisation Plan, the Brothers sold on the property to a consortium which secured planning permission from Laois County Council to carry out an extensive refurbishment programme including conversion of the school premises to an upmarket hotel. Refurbishment works to the house and restoration works to the demesne grounds are ongoing.

Other than the development of a new national school, no significant development has taken place in the village in recent years. The urban structure of Ballyfin is dispersed presenting opportunities for infill development. Ballyfin does not have a distinct building style. Instead a variety of building types are evident ranging from traditional redbrick semi-detached units to contemporary stone or plaster finished properties.

Despite its small size, the village is relatively well served in terms of community facilities including a Catholic church, community hall, GAA playing fields, national school and recycling bring bank. There are no retail or commercial services in Ballyfin Village.

Water supply in the village is by means of a public watermain extending from Portlaoise. Ballyfin is located on a local road (L1227) to Portlaoise which in turn joins with the Strategic Regional Route R423 Mountrath/Mountmellick section a short distance away to the northwest.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- BF1 Encourage welcome signs and landscaping works on the approach roads into Ballyfin to strengthen the sense of place;
- BF2 Encourage suitable infill development to consolidate the urban structure;
- BF3 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre;

#### Economic Development

- BF4 Support the potential for complimentary tourism activities to the Ballyfin Demesne Hotel within the locality;

#### Infrastructure

- BF7 Protect existing community infrastructure in the village;
- BF8 Improve pedestrian facilities within the village centre and cycle parking at community buildings especially the national school;
- BF9 Improve road network incrementally;

#### Habitats ( Natura 2000 Sites)

- BF10 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- BF11 Implement SuDS where appropriate;



## BALLYROAN

### *Context and Character*

Ballyroan Village is located south of Portlaoise, and north of Abbeyleix on the R425 regional road. Ballyroan has experienced development pressure in the past as a result of the growth of surrounding towns such as Portlaoise and Abbeyleix. Ballyroan is serviced by Laois Trip bus services.

The village stretches in a linear manner along the Main Street (R425) and has extended along the Raheen and Spink roads also in a linear manner. The village centre accommodates retail, commercial services, institutional and community functions. Much new residential development has occurred on the eastern side of the village.

There are two primary schools in Ballyroan. Ballyroan's Community Centre has a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role. A village green is located to the south of the Main Street in Ballyroan. This amenity area provides for the passive recreational needs of the community. Active recreational space is found at the GAA playing fields located east of the village. The GAA grounds include playing fields and dressing room facilities. A second playing pitch, a community playing pitch, is located on the Portlaoise Road and the pitch is currently utilised by the Boys National School and for soccer facilities.

Ballyroan's water supply is from the Crubeen Upper Group Water Scheme and the Tullore Spring Public Water Supply. This supply is currently at capacity and a new source is required. Ballyroan has its own Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- BR1 Encourage suitable infill development within the village;
- BR2 Encourage restoration or redevelopment of derelict, vacant or underused structures in Ballyroan, as appropriate;
- BR3 Protect (RPS 657) from endangerment and secure the longevity of this seventeenth century structure;
- BR4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within village centres.

#### Economic Development

- BR5 Support the functioning of Ballyroan as a retail, commercial and community service centre for residents of the village and the wider hinterland,

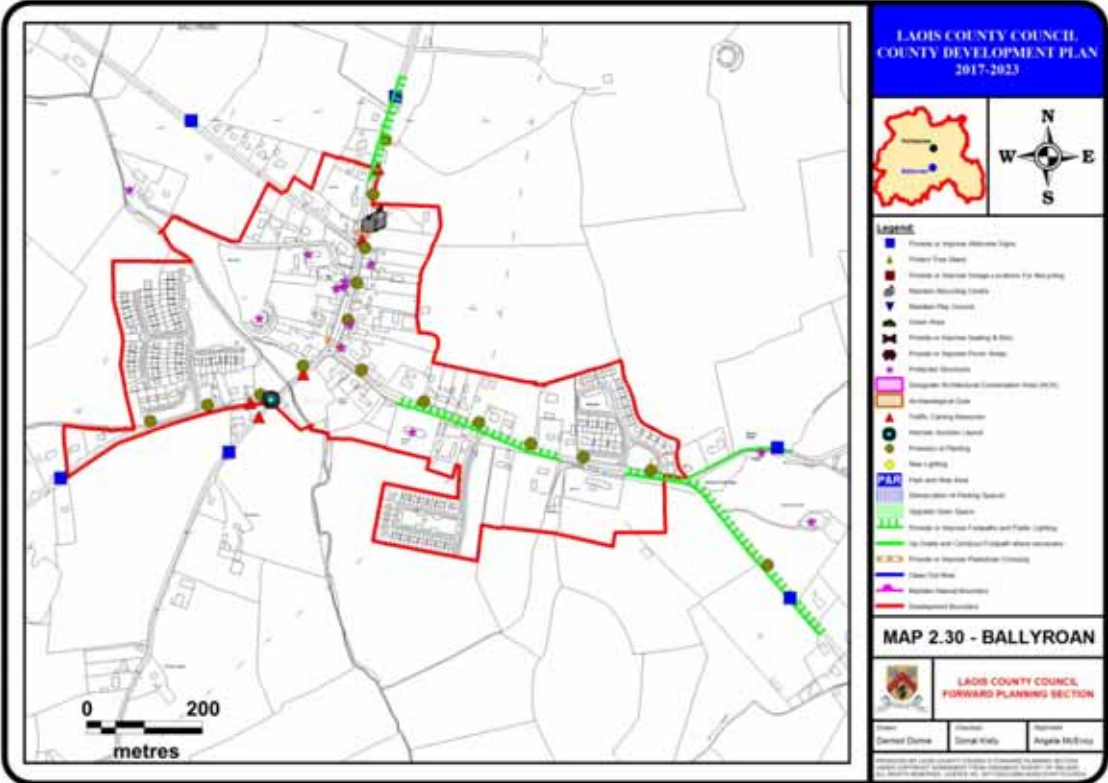
#### Infrastructure

- BR6 Provide and improve pedestrian linkages and cycle linkages within the village centre and between the village centre and community facilities and residential estates;
- BR7 Encourage the development of cycle parking at the school;
- BR8 Encourage the more intensive use of the Community Centre including the potential for the interchanging of crèche and other community services in the centre;
- BR9 Provide a playground at Ballyroan;
- BR10 Provide disabled parking within the village centre and at buildings in community use;
- BR11 Liaise with Irish Water to secure adequate water supplies to facilitate future development in Ballyroan.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- BR12 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This includes residential or commercial plans with potential for indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 site;
- BR13 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- BR14 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- BR15 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation.





## CAMROSS

### *Character and Context*

Famed for the exploits of its hurling teams, Camross is a small picturesque village located in the Slieve Bloom Mountains, 10 kilometres northwest of Mountrath. The village of Camross developed in a linear pattern along a local road. The Georgian Gothic church, which is now in a ruined state, is a strong architectural focal point within the village.

Extensive local afforestation activities played a major part in the initial development of the village. While still important, this industry is undergoing rationalisation in recent years with a consequent reduction in local employment opportunities.

Despite its limited size and population, Camross has a relatively healthy service base including church, national school, FAS [Poet's Cottage], public house and newly-built community hall and crèche. There is no shop in Camross. The national school was recently refurbished and extended and now caters for over 100 children.

The GAA grounds are located approximately three kilometres from the village. Recreational space can be found at the school playing fields. Most residential development in the village takes the form of a number of one-off houses served by individual septic tanks together with more longstanding dwelling units also on individual septic tanks.

External finishes include plaster on the modern dwellings as well as natural stone on the more traditional buildings in the western end of the village. Boundary walls are of natural stone and contribute to the character of the settlement.

At present, buildings within Camross are served by private well water supply. A possible public water supply has been identified on the Local Authority land on the eastern end of the village. A wastewater treatment system (250 PE) was developed by Laois County Council on the eastern approach to the village.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

CM 1 Encourage suitable infill development within the village;

CM 2 Protect (RPS 372) from endangerment and secure the longevity of this architectural focal point;

CM 3 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

CM 4 Support the existing uses within the village such as the public house use and encourage the development of village centres uses such as the local shop subject to development management standards;

CM 5 Develop commercial tourism facilities to take advantage of the Poet's Cottage and the proximity of the settlement to the Slieve Blooms;

#### Infrastructure

CM 6 Provide or improve footpath within the village centre and extend to new residential estate;

CM 7 Examine the feasibility of developing a passive public open space in the village;

#### Habitats ( Natura 2000 Sites)

CM 8 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;

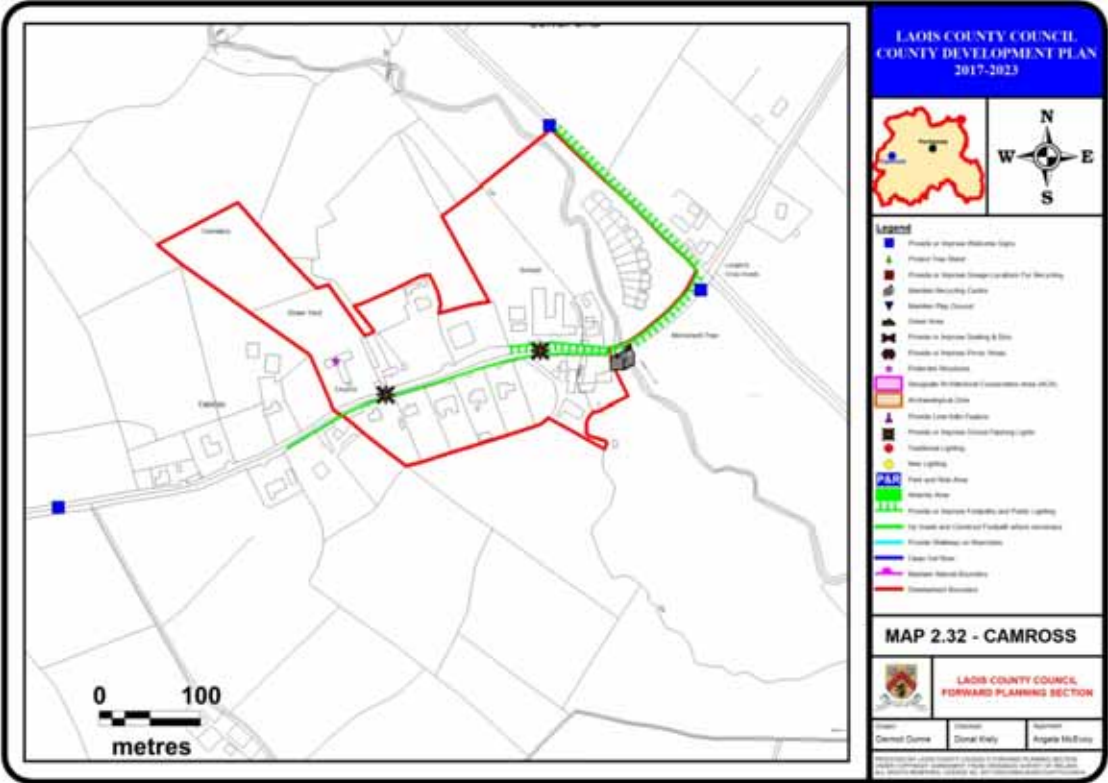
CM 9 Implement SuDS where appropriate;

CM 10 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;

CM 11 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation;

CM 12 Ensure that recreational use is directed away from sensitive areas within the Natura site;

CM 13 Avoid encroachment on the Natura 2000 site and implement buffer zone of 10-30 ms where feasible or as determined following consultation with the Inland Fisheries Institute.



## CASTLETOWN

### *Character and Context*

Castletown is located close to the old N7 (Dublin-Limerick) road. This picturesque Georgian village has many sites of historical interest. A castle built here in 1182 by Hugh de Lacy became the centre of an important Norman Borough. The ruins of the St. Coedus Church still stand in the old cemetery at Churchtown. Also of interest is Gash Gardens.

The approaches to the village are pleasant and well-maintained. A small landscaped green separates the old N7 from the entrance to the village, the bridge with its Victorian-style lanterns over the River Nore frames the approach from the Mountrath road. Castletown is a former Tidy Towns winner.

The village developed around the central green area with period homes which are protected, the De La Salle Monastery which provides a retreat centre and nursing home and the church. Off the green are small private developments such as Pilgrim Hill/Gash Townsland—individual dwellings, Gash Court and Elderfield Drive. The Main Street runs from the Green to the entrance onto to the N7 and is mostly characterised by residential use, two storey and single storey in height. At the top of the Main Street is Saint Patrick's Terrace and the newly built local authority state. These also have a good mixture of design types incorporating both two storey and single storey.

Castletown benefits from a number of passive open spaces. These include the main green with large mature trees, well-supervised by surrounding buildings and a riverside picnic area adjacent to a weir and mill race and popular among artists. The riverside walk is accessible from this picnic area and extends upstream under and past the old N7. A golfcourse is located downstream of the picnic area.

Tennis Courts are located at the community centre but are not currently in use. Two community centres exist within the village, the community centre on the banks of the River Nore which is used by various groups such as Bridge, Foroige etc and by the community generally. An ICA hall is located along the main street in the village.

The De La Salle Monastery in the Village is used as both a retreat centre which caters for a local and national audience and also as a nursing home for

retired brothers affiliated to the Order. No crèche facility outside of private providers exists in the village.

The River Nore is a designated Special Area of Conservation and the habitat associated with this SAC is the freshwater pearl mussel and salmonoid fish species. Sewage treatment facilities are deficient and in need of upgrading and the water supply is limited.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- CAS1 Preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of Castletown's Architectural Conservation Area (ACA);
- CAS2 Support the redevelopment of the mill building back for active use subject to proper planning and sustainable development and design standards and flooding related policies given that the structure is located within flood zone A;
- CAS3 Support a Conservation study of the Castle walls and Turret;
- CAS4 Protect and preserve trees on all approach roads and the central green;
- CAS5 Landscaping features and welcome signs incorporating natural materials to be located on the approach roads to the village in consultation with the community;
- CAS6 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre.

#### Economic Development

- CAS7 Support the functioning of Castletown as a centre for retail, commercial, institutional and community uses;
- CAS8 Promote the tourism sector in Castletown having regard to its architectural heritage and proximity to walking routes, golf course and riverside amenity area;

#### Infrastructure

- CAS9 Encourage an appropriate community use for the Old Boys National School;
- CAS10 Improve pedestrian linkages within the village centre and facilitate the provision of cycle parking, especially at schools;

- CAS11 Provide seating areas to the main green;
- CAS12 Encourage the placing of overhead power lines underground to enhance the character of the ACA and examine the feasibility of providing underground broadband cable in association with the above works.

Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- CAS13 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This includes recreation, residential or maintenance plans for the river area that have the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site;
- CAS14 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- CAS15 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan and with the freshwater pearl mussel Nore River Basin Management Plan;
- CAS16 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation;
- CAS17 Ensure that recreational use is directed away from sensitive areas within the Natura site;
- CAS18 Avoid encroachment on the Natura 2000 site and implement buffer zone of 10-30 ms where feasible or as determined following consultation with the Inland Fisheries Institute.







## Clough

### *Character and Context*

Clough is a picturesque late 18th century village set in the heart of the south Laois countryside and located on a local road. Clough Church built, in 1770 and refurbished in 1871, is one of the main features of the village. The church was built alongside St. Canice's Monastery, Aghaboe and is of great historical significance. Clough is situated near Grantstown Lake. Clough can be accessed via the R434 road and is close to Rathdowney.

Clough has experienced significant growth and development in the past five years. The village development envelope for Clough stretches from a south east direction wrapping itself around the village core. The village core consists of the community centre, graveyard, playschool, school and church. One public house which also is a bed and breakfast is located within the village centre.

The village contains a new residential area consisting of 28 houses and a related wastewater treatment plant. A working farm complex is located at the eastern end of the village on the approach road into the village. Traditional dwellings two-storey in height face onto the main road through the village, finished with a mixture of render and stone. A small galvanised single storey dwelling sits on the junction of the main road with the Garryduff Road. This dwelling was previously thatched. It is a particularly attractive feature within the village centre. The Church is located on the western approach to the village from Rathdowney. It is well maintained within its own setting.

There is one primary school in the village of Clough which caters for 86 pupils. The school was recently renovated and extended. The Community Centre is located in the centre of the village it is used by local groups such as the ICA. A playschool is run there also, which caters for a wide catchment area.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- CL1 Consolidate the urban structure of the village by way of infill development;

- CL2 Landscaping features and welcome signs incorporating natural materials to be located on the approach roads to the village in consultation with the community;
- CL3 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre.

#### Economic Development

- CL4 Support commercial uses within the village centre necessary for the population of the village;

#### Infrastructure

- CL5 Provision of a footpath within the village centre;
- CL6 Recreational activities are provided in the nearby Ballacolla Village which has a variety of sports facilities. The Council will seek to identify and develop active and passive recreational facilities in Clough;
- CL7 Secure cycle parking facilities at the national school, church and community centre;
- CL8 Improve road network incrementally.

#### Habitats ( Natura 2000 Sites)

- CL9 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This includes residential or commercial developments that involve discharges to adjacent watercourses;
- CL10 Implement SUDS where appropriate;
- CL11 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- CL12 Ensure that the WWTP is upgraded to meet the requirements of the population and that all works associated with the upgrade are assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;



## COOLRAIN

### *Character and Context*

Coolrain is situated in the west of the county in the foothills of the Slieve Blooms, 6 kilometres from Mountrath and 7 km from Borris in Ossory. It lies due north of the approved M7/M8 motorway.

As with Camross, extensive local afforestation played a major part in the initial development of the village. While still important, this industry is undergoing rationalisation in recent years with falling employment levels. With this in mind there have been some tourist initiatives in Coolrain which aim to broaden the economic base of the village by capitalising on its proximity to the Slieve Blooms.

Coolrain has experienced only a very limited amount of development, mainly in the form of one-off dwellings on individual septic tanks located primarily on its southern and eastern outskirts. At the same time, properties in the centre of the village have fallen into disuse and dereliction.

The traditional village of Coolrain developed in a linear pattern along a local road but there are significant gaps along this main street which provide ample opportunities for backland and infill development. A number of vernacular style cottages with thatched roofs are located on the main road and these contribute significantly to the attractiveness of the settlement. Other buildings along this main street are single and two-storey traditional style structures with pitched roofs. Roadside boundary treatments are of stone. A number of archaeological monuments are located at Antrim, east of the village centre. The river to the south of the village is a Special Area of Conservation.

Coolrain does not have its own public water supply at present. A recycling bring bank is located in the village centre. The absence of foul drainage infrastructure is a development constraint. Other constraints include the limited service and community base in the village.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- COOL1 Infill development to consolidate Main Street and backland development to the east of the Main Street;
- COOL2 Ensure development along the Main Street is sympathetic to the vernacular character of some of its buildings;
- COOL3 Encourage the restoration or redevelopment of derelict, vacant or underused structures, as appropriate;
- COOL4 Landscaping features and welcome signs incorporating natural materials to be located on the approach roads to the village in consultation with the community;
- COOL5 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre.

#### Economic Development

- COOL6 Support the establishment of a retail unit or additional commercial uses within the village;
- COOL7 Encourage the development of commercial tourism facilities at Coolrain to take advantage of the proximity of the settlement to the Slieve Bloom Mountains;

#### Infrastructure

- COOL8 Maintain the footpath network within the village centre;
- COOL9 Provide a direct pedestrian link between the main street and the monuments at Antrim by way of backland development if the opportunities arise;
- COOL10 Improve incrementally the existing road network;
- COOL11 Support the establishment of additional community services;
- COOL12 Provide disabled parking within the village centre.

#### Habitats ( Natura 2000 Sites)

- COOL13 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This includes recreation or residential plans for the river area that have the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site;
- COOL14 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- COOL15 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed

- under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;
- COOL16 Ensure that new housing has sufficient wastewater treatment facilities and conditions of maintenance attached;
- COOL17 Ensure that any flood defence works or river channel maintenance is assessed according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and carried out in accordance with the NPWS and IFI authorisation;
- COOL18 Ensure that recreational use is directed away from sensitive areas within the Natura site;
- COOL19 Avoid encroachment on the Natura 2000 site and implement buffer zone of 10-30 meters where feasible or as determined following consultation with the Inland Fisheries Ireland.



## CULLAHILL

### *Character and Context*

Cullahill is located in south County Laois, 5 kilometres southwest of Durrow and 6 kilometres northeast of Johnstown, County Kilkenny. It is located on the old N8 Cork - Dublin road, now R639 and it is anticipated that enterprise opportunities will arise following the bypassing of the village. Cullahill has experienced only a very limited amount of development in recent years, mainly in the form of one-off dwellings on individual septic tanks located primarily on its southwestern outskirts. At the same time, properties in the centre of the village have fallen into disuse and dereliction.

Cullahill village centre is focussed along the R639, formerly the N8. The settlement extends onto two local roads to the northwest and a local road to the southeast. The village centre is disjointed with its focal point formed by the presence of a shop and filling station, community hall, recycling bring bank, public house and agricultural supplies outlet. A church and primary school [130pupils] are located to the northwest. The building stock in Cullahill is diverse.

Defining features of Cullahill include the dramatic topography of the village, natural stone boundary walls along the northwestern approach and an attractive picnic area in the village centre. A 15th century Tower House on the eastern outskirts contributes to the character of Cullahill. Public water supply in Cullahill is from a local Group Water Supply Scheme. There are no public foul drainage facilities in Cullahill and all dwellings in the village are served by private wastewater treatment systems.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- CU1 Consolidate the urban structure of the village by way of infill development;
- CU2 Encourage the restoration or redevelopment of derelict or vacant structures within the village centre;
- CU3 Landscaping features and welcome signs incorporating natural materials to be located on the approach roads to the village in consultation with the community.

- CU4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village.

#### Economic Development

- CU5 Support the existing retail and commercial uses within the village and facilitate their expansion subject to proper planning and sustainable development and design standards;

#### Infrastructure

- CU6 Enhance and extend the footpath within the village centre;
- CU7 Provide disabled parking within the village centre and at the school;
- CU8 Provide a pedestrian crossing to the R639 within the village centre;
- CU9 Secure cycle parking facilities at the national school and community centre;

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- CU11 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive particularly any developments that involve discharges to adjacent watercourses.
- CU12 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- CU13 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan.





## EMO

### *Character and Context*

Emo is located in northeast County Laois on the R422 Regional Road, with convenient access to the motorway network serving Dublin, Cork and Limerick. Emo's most distinctive feature is the James Gandon designed Emo Court and Park dating to 1790. It is located to the east of the village centre. Emo Court is one of the finest stately homes in Ireland. The crossroads in Emo marks the centre of Emo Village. The village centre accommodates the retail, service, and institutional needs of Emo, including a church and health centre.

The Village Centre has a mixture of modern and traditional style bungalows and two storey dwellings. Finishes include both knap and dash plaster as well as natural stone. Vernacular windows are generally of vertical emphasis and sliding sash design. Roofs are generally slated. The traditional streetscape could be negatively affected by any development that alters the building line or overall appearance of the streetscape.

The Emo Community Centre plays an important communal and recreational role within the local community. Emo Court provides readily available passive open space and walking routes. Active public open space in Emo is found at the GAA playing fields. The amenities include a playing pitch, dressing and meeting rooms. There is a school adjacent to the GAA grounds. The present public water scheme in Emo is supplied from the Kilminchy reservoir. Emo does not have its own wastewater treatment plant. The village is served by Regional College Services and Town Link bus providers. The Portarlinton Railway Junction is located north of the village.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- EO1 Designate an ACA within Emo and have regard to the special character appraisal in the determination of planning applications or the carrying out of works to the public realm;
- EO2 Structures and features demonstrating the historical development of Emo Court

including stone walls, stone dwellings and associated outbuildings should be retained, restored, preserved and enhanced;

- EO3 Ensure infill development is sensitive to the special architectural context;
- EO5 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

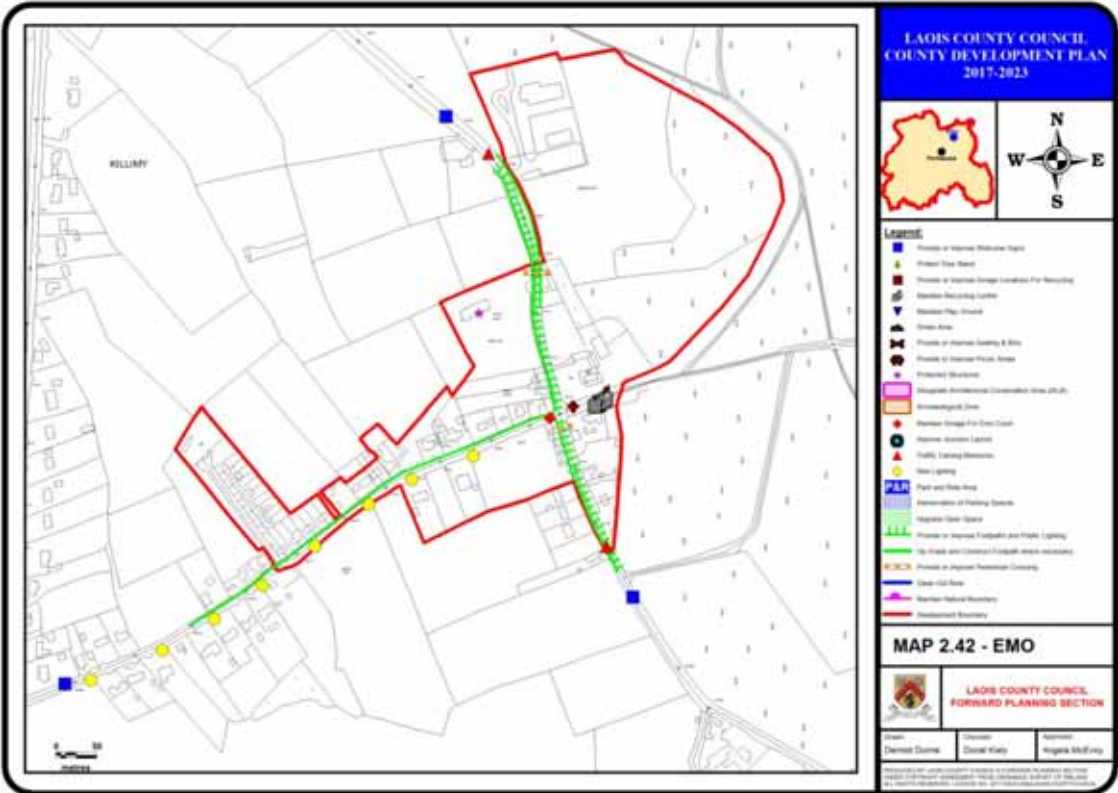
- EO6 Support the existing commercial services such as the shop, public house, etc in Emo and facilitate their expansion subject to proper planning and sustainable development and design standards;
- EO8 Foster the development of tourism and related commercial tourism facilities at Emo.

#### Infrastructure

- EO9 Provide a pedestrian and cycle link between the village centre and the school and playing pitches and secure cycle parking at these community buildings;
- EO10 Provide disabled parking within the village centre and at the school;
- EO11 Encourage the enhancement of community services and the more active use of the centre;
- EO12 Support the provision of a recycling bring bank in the village centre.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- EO13 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- EO14 Implement SuDS where appropriate.



## ERRILL

### *Context and Character*

Errill village is located in southwest Laois close to the Tipperary/ Kilkenny border, 6.5 kilometres from Rathdowney and 16 kilometres from Borris in Ossory. Errill village has experienced some residential growth in recent years. Errill has a limited range of physical and social infrastructure.

The village development envelope for Errill stretches from the central diamond area in a linear manner along all four approach roads. The village core centres around Errill's convenience retail outlets and public houses. The diamond shape of Errill village centre with its small green open spaces is its most distinctive feature. The village centre accommodates retail and institutional uses including the Catholic Church. There are traditional style buildings of 1 and 2 storeys facing onto the diamond, finished with a mixture of render and stone with vertically emphasised set back and sliding sash style windows. Roof pitches vary little and are generally slated.

The Rathdowney approach road comprises the privately owned sports grounds and a long established semi-detached housing development. The southern area comprises of a mixture of new and old dwellings. The older dwellings comprise of semi-detached bungalows, of dash plaster finishes and horizontal and vertically emphasised windows and set back doors some with tiled roof porches. All of the dwellings have small walled front gardens. The newer residential development comprises two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings. The fenestration comprises a mixture of vertical and horizontally proportioned wooden windows and simple wooden doors covered by slated roof porches. The dwellings have small front gardens bounded by hedgerows.

There is one primary school in the village of Errill, St Colmcille's National School located half a kilometre from the village centre. The 3 classroom school uses the adjoining playing pitches for sporting activities. Errill's Community Centre, St Bernadette's Hall, has potential for a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role. The GAA playing fields are active open spaces located to the east of the village.

Water supply is from the Errill Group Water Scheme. Errill has its own wastewater infrastructure. Capacity to provide additional

infrastructure is limited by the outfall capacity for wastewater discharge. Errill is located on the R433 Rathdowney to Templemore road. The village is served by the County Laois Local Trip bus service. A recycling bring bank is located within the village centre.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- ERR1 Protect the distinctive diamond shape and related green open spaces and ensure infill development or redevelopment is sympathetic in relation to building lines, roof profiles and building heights;
- ERR2 Enhance the soft landscaping and provide seating to the central passive open spaces;
- ERR3 Encourage the restoration or redevelopment of derelict, vacant or underused structures, as appropriate;
- ERR4 Consolidation of the built environment through appropriate and sensitive infill development;
- ERR5 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

- ERR6 Support the existing commercial services such as the shop, public house, etc in Errill and facilitate their expansion subject to proper planning and sustainable development and design standards;

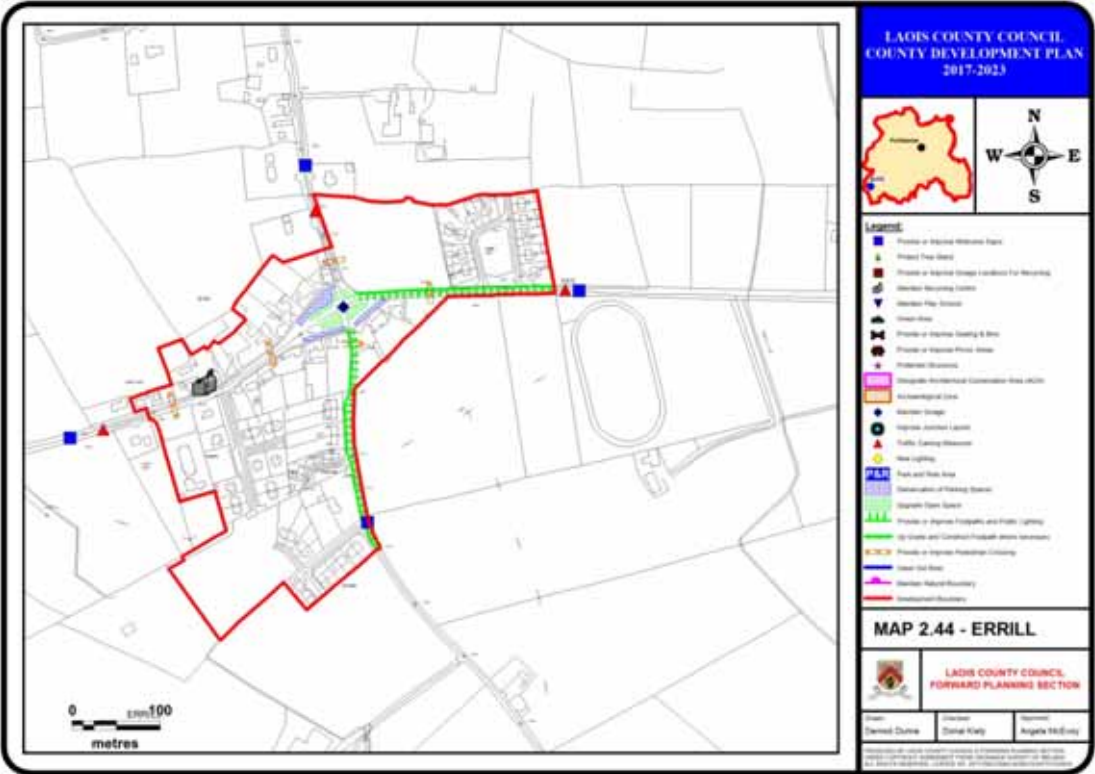
#### Infrastructure

- ERR7 Improve pedestrian linkages and provide cycling linkages within the village centre and between the village centre, residential housing estates and the GAA playing fields;
- ERR8 Provide disabled parking within the village centre;
- ERR9 Provide incremental improvement to the existing road network.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- ERR10 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, particularly any developments that involve discharges to adjacent watercourses;

- ERR11 Implement SuDS where appropriate;  
ERR12 Ensure full compliance with all existing  
licences and with measures prescribed  
under the South Eastern River Basin  
Management Plan;





## KILLEEN

### *Character and Context*

Killeen village is located in east County Laois in close proximity to the Kildare border, approximately 10 km from Carlow Town. The village development envelope for Killeen is centred on a cross road. The village consists of newly built residential areas, a public house, a Roman Catholic church and cemetery, a national school, community centre and a commercial unit.

Killeen has a diverse building stock, though most buildings are of a similar scale. The village has a playground - "Tír Shúgartha" Land of Play located at the Killeen Community Centre. Killeen's Community Centre has a multifunctional communal, educational and recreational role.

The main source of water supply is from a borehole. Foul drainage is catered for by means of a treatment plant installed as part of a housing development in the village.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- KL 1 Maintain recent public realm improvements;
- KL 2 Develop a tree planting scheme and landscape plan for the village centre to include the placing of native species of trees, plants and flower beds along the streetscape particularly outside the church and community centre;
- KL 3 Retain a modest building scale along the main thoroughfare of Killeen;
- KL 4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre;

#### Economic Development

- KL 5 Support the development of enterprise and commercial uses on suitably zoned lands within Killeen;

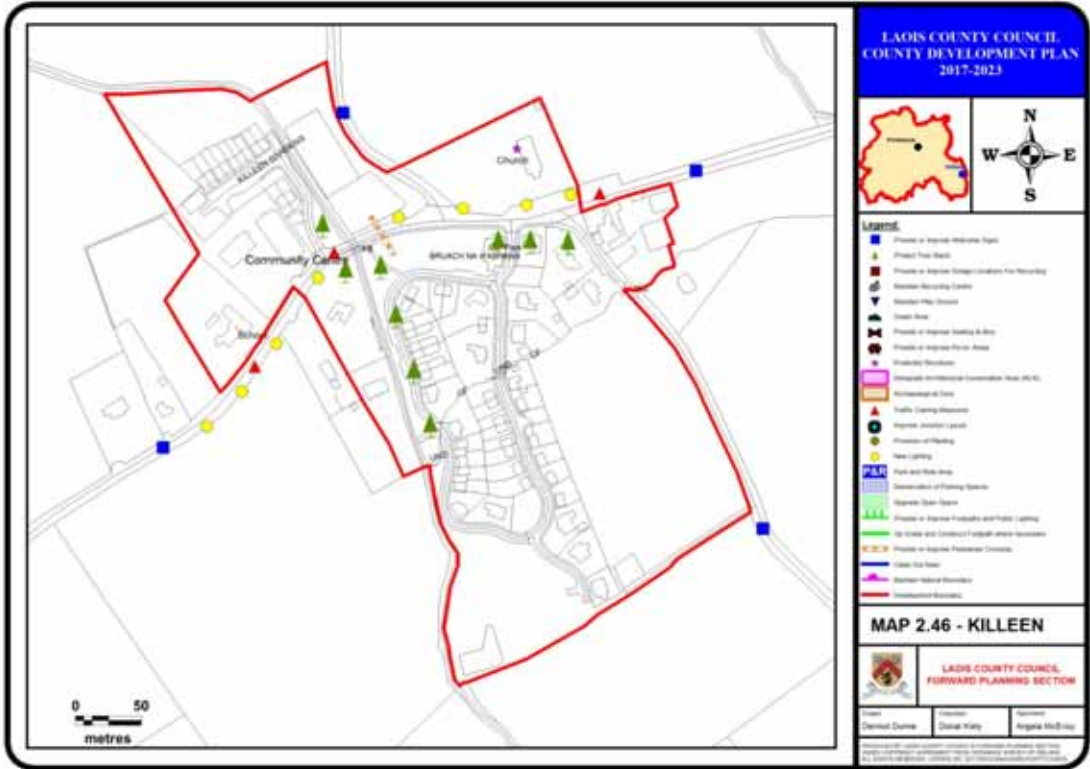
#### Infrastructure

- KL 6 Provide disabled parking spaces within or adjacent to the village centre;

- KL 7 Examine suitable locations for the development of passive public open space;
- KL 8 Encourage the enhancement of community services and the more active use of the community centre;
- KL 9 Improve pedestrian linkages and provide cycling linkages within the village centre and between the village centre and residential areas.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- KL 10 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- KL 11 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- KL 12 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;



## KILLESBIN

### **Character and Context**

Killesbin village is located in southeast Laois in close proximity to Carlow Town and on the Regional Road (R430) between Abbeyleix and Carlow. Killesbin has experienced significant growth and development pressure in recent years as a result of its proximity to Carlow Town.

The development envelope for Killesbin stretches in a northwest to southeast direction along the R430 and along an adjacent local road. The village consists of residential areas, a village shop, two public houses, a national school, a Roman Catholic Church and cemetery, a community hall, GAA club, soccer club, tennis courts and crèche. South of the R430 and within the development boundary is an upland area where the parish church, medieval church ruins with its fine Romanesque doorway, motte and old graveyard are located. This part of the village is sensitive to development.

A new primary school has been provided in the village of Killesbin. The community centre on the site of the old national school has a number of businesses operating on site, including; The Den childcare facility, hairdresser, tea rooms and a range of services.

The water supply for Killesbin is supplied currently from Carlow County Council. The grounds of the medieval church can be used for passive recreation. Public recreational space is found at the GAA playing fields located to the north east of the village.

### **Written Objectives**

#### Character and Built Form

- KN1 Protect and enhance the archaeological heritage of Killesbin;
- KN2 Encourage suitable infill development within the village;
- KN3 Encourage the maintenance of all boundary treatments within the village.
- KN4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre;

- KN5 Facilitate the provision of sheltered housing facilities for the elderly;

#### Economic Development

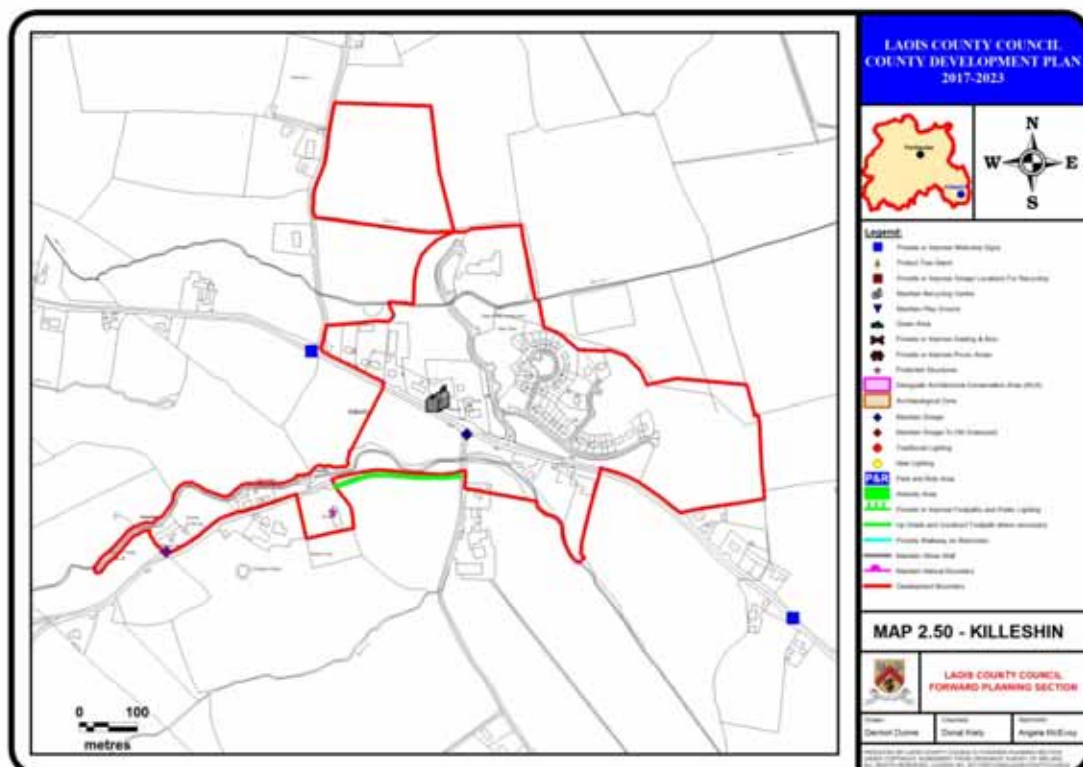
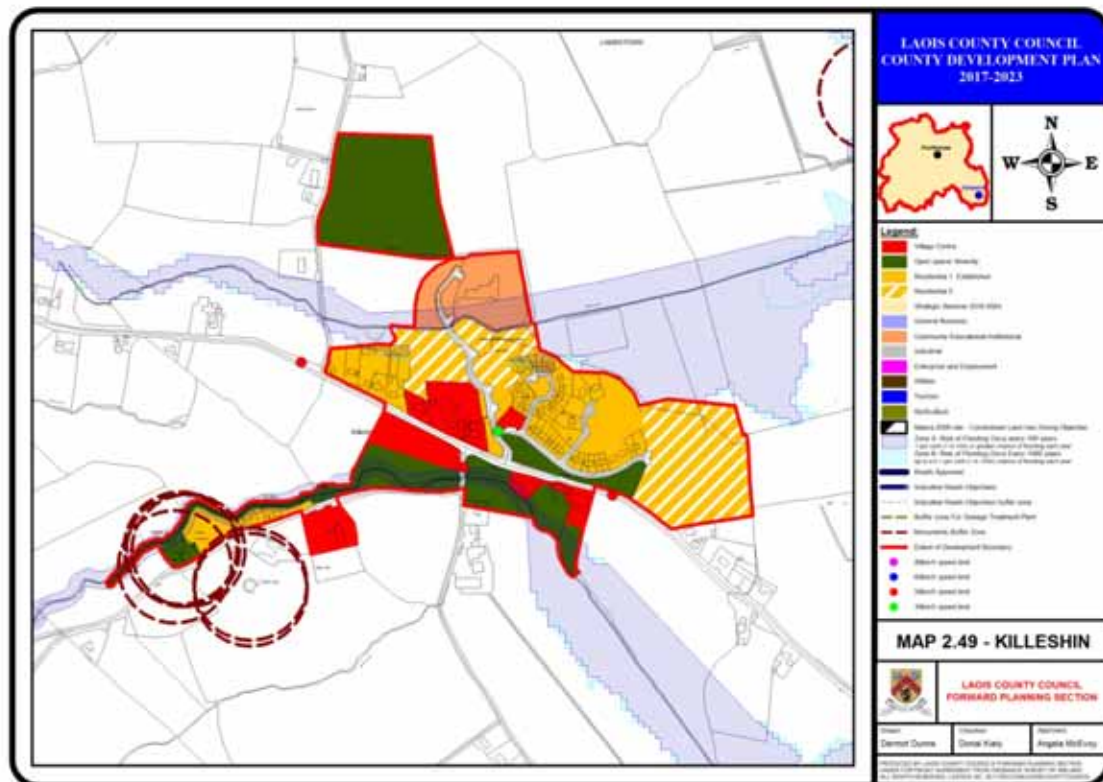
- KN6 Protect the existing retail use of Killesbin and facilitate and support the provision of commercial services within the village centre;

#### Infrastructure

- KN7 Enhance pedestrian and cycle linkages within the village centre and between the village centre and new residential estates and the church, including a pedestrian crossing, ensure the provision of cycle parking at the school, community centre and playing fields;
- KN8 Provide disabled parking within the village centre;
- KN9 Improve road network incrementally;
- KN10 Facilitate the upgrading of car parking at the graveyard;
- KN11 Facilitate the development of an outdoor all weather area for sports and games, a children's playground;
- KN12 Encourage the provision of a public garden with allotments for the benefit of the local community;
- KN13 Facilitate future extensions to THE DEN community childcare facility;
- KN14 Review the speed limits into Killesbin village;
- KN15 Ensure traffic management measures are put in place for the school;
- KN16 Facilitate the development of an underpass at Cappalug Road subject to having the necessary funding in place;
- KN17 Review car parking provision in conjunction with the community to investigate possibilities for additional spaces;
- KN18 Extend footpath from Killesbin cross (opposite) school all the way to the church subject to funding becoming available.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- KN19 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- KN20 Implement SuDS where appropriate.



## NEWTOWN DOONANE

### *Character and Context*

Newtown Doonane is located in southeast County Laois in close proximity to the Carlow/Kildare border. This village is a linear village along the R430 Carlow Abbeyfeix regional road and includes the intersection with the N78. The village has a disjointed urban structure, although it has experienced significant growth in recent years. The development envelope for Newtown Doonane stretches in a North East direction along the N78 and extends eastwest along the adjoining linear approach roads. The village core centres around the school, community centre, credit union, public house and residential areas. Recycling facilities, an established industrial use and a lay-by along with the public house are located at the crossroads.

There is one primary school in the village of Newtown Doonane which currently contains approximately 65 pupils. An old school house is used as a community centre for recreational pastimes and group meetings. A playschool also operates from this building. There is a HSE medical centre at the back of this building. Outside of the village area is the church in Doonane which serves the area. A GAA pitch is located along the N78, north of the village. The GAA grounds include two playing fields and basic dressing room facilities. A small area of passive open space is located at the crossroads and within housing estates. There is a deficit of public open space within the village centre.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- ND 1 Consolidate the urban form by way of infill development that encloses the principal thoroughfare of the village using shared vehicular access points, where possible;
- ND 2 Maintain the modest scale of buildings within the village centre;
- ND 3 Ensure passive open space is provided within the village centre as part of any significant development proposals.
- ND 4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

- ND 5 Retain industrial and enterprise uses within the village and provide for their expansion as necessary;
- ND 6 Harness the economic potential associated with the proximity of the village to the national road network;
- ND 7 Support the development of industrial lands and enterprise and employment lands for further economic development;

#### Infrastructure

- ND 8 Provide a dedicated cycling and pedestrian network within the village centre and between the village centre and the GAA grounds to the north of the village;
- ND 9 Provide for traffic calming within the village centre;
- ND 10 Provide disabled parking within the village centre;
- ND 11 Enhance the modal interchange point at the lay-by opposite the public house.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- ND 12 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This includes recreation, residential or commercial plans with potential for indirect impacts on the Natura 2000;
- ND 13 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- ND 14 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;







## ROSENALLIS

### Character and Context

Rosenallis is located on the Regional Road (R422) between Mountmellick and Clonaslee in the foothills of the Slieve Bloom Mountains. The origins of Rosenallis dates back to the early Christian era. Rosenallis grew as a village when, like Mountmellick, it became a Quaker colony and linen centre. Places of interest include the Quaker Graveyard and the Church of Ireland Church. Rós Fhionnghlaise is the Irish name for Rosenallis meaning the 'Wood of the Clear Stream'.

The village developed around a bend in the regional road. The core of the village centres around two public houses and some residential dwellings. There are community and institutional uses within the village centre and to the northwest of the village centre. A semi-circular passive green space with a miniature ornamental thatched cottage also functions as a picnic area. A number of monuments associated with the church are located within the development envelope of Rosenallis. The Church of Ireland presents the most distinctive architectural element in the village.

The national school caters for 68 pupils. The Community Centre is located beside the new primary school site and is used by a variety of groups in the local catchment area. Rosenallis is served by Rural Trip Bus services on Tuesdays and Fridays.

### Written Objectives

#### Character and Built Form

- ROS1 Provide landscaping features and welcome signage incorporating natural materials on approach roads;
- ROS2 Encourage the restoration or redevelopment of derelict, vacant or underused structures, as appropriate;
- ROS3 Ensure consolidation of the built environment through appropriate and sensitive infill development;
- ROS4 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre;

#### Economic Development

- ROS5 Encourage the use of the lands that have been zoned for tourism to the south of

the village on the road to the Glenbarrow eco-walk for tourism amenities;

- ROS6 Protect existing retail and commercial uses;

#### Infrastructure

- ROS7 Provide and maintain dedicated pedestrian and cycling linkages between the town centre, the community uses and the shop to the west;
- ROS8 Provide disabled parking within the village centre and at buildings in community use to the west of the village centre;
- ROS9 Protect and make the best use of existing social infrastructure;
- ROS10 Improve road network incrementally.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- ROS11 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive particularly any developments that involve discharges to adjacent watercourses;
- ROS12 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- ROS13 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;



## SHANAHOE

### *Character and Context*

Shanahoe is situated in the centre of the County Laois, 8 kilometres west of Abbeyleix and 7 kilometres south of Mountrath. It lies due east of the M7/M8 Motorway. Shanahoe has a disjointed linear structure and lacks a discernible centre. In addition, there are no retail or commercial uses in the village. It has experienced only a very limited amount of development, mainly in the form of one-off dwellings on individual septic tanks located primarily on its eastern outskirts. Properties in the centre of the village have fallen into disuse and dereliction. The village is made up of community and institutional uses including the church, national school, a recycling centre and community hall. The absence of foul drainage infrastructure or any group water scheme has constrained development.

Shanahoe does not have a distinct house type or style of its own. The building stock consists of a mix of detached single and two-storey dwellings with a variety of finishes including nap and render plaster and natural stone has been used. A defining feature of Shanahoe is the presence along the Abbeyleix approach road of natural stone boundary walls coupled with a number of mature deciduous trees in the same location.

There is a lack of public open space in Shanahoe. The school playing fields offer the sole recreational open space within the village. The local GAA pitches are located approximately 2 kms outside the village. There are approximately 65 students attending the school in Shanahoe. The Community Hall has a communal and recreational role within the local community.

### *Written Objectives*

#### Character and Built Form

- SHAN1 Ensure new development is of a suitable layout and that densities have regard to the semi-rural character of the village comprising low-density buildings set back from the road;
- SHAN2 Consolidate the urban form of the village by way of infill development in order to strengthen a sense of place;
- SHAN3 Erect welcome signage in appropriate materials on approach roads to reinforce the sense of place;

#### Economic Development

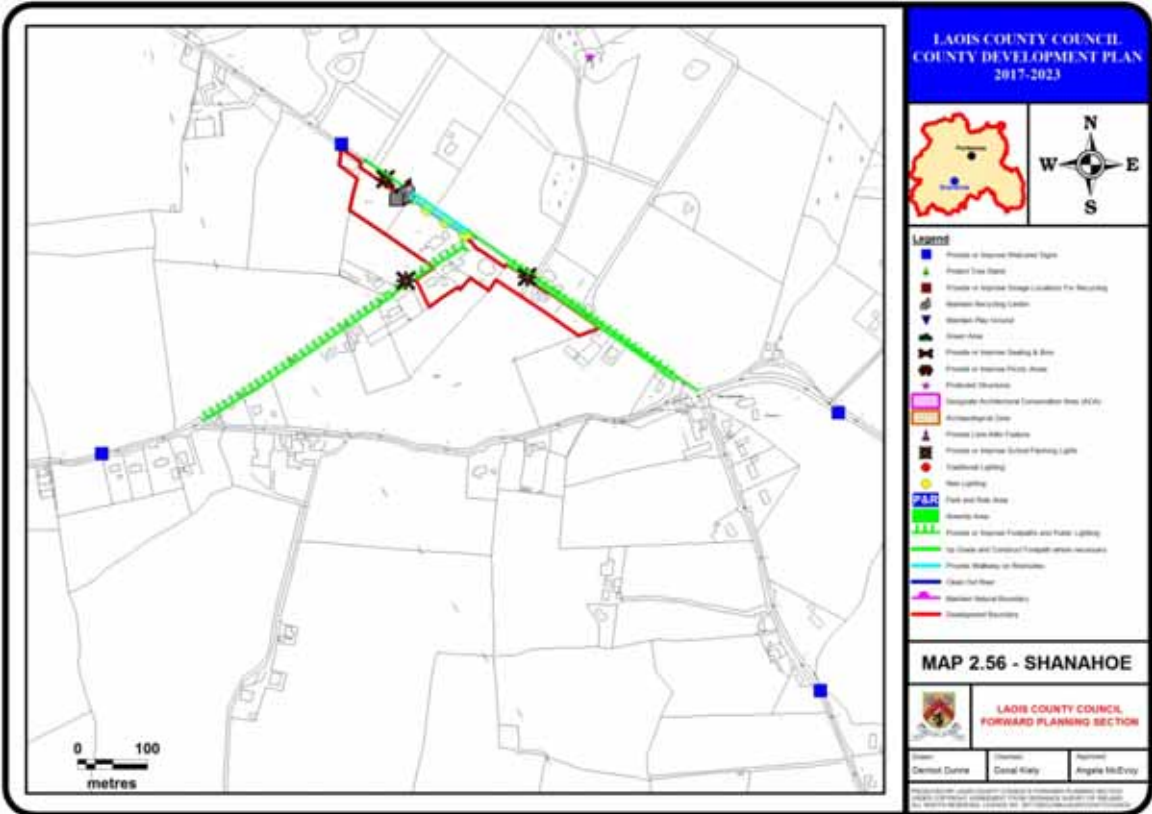
- SHAN4 Encourage the establishment of retail or commercial uses within the village centre;

#### Infrastructure

- SHAN5 Establish the pond as an amenity area;
- SHAN6 Establish a footpath to the front of the community and institutional facilities to enhance accessibility;
- SHAN7 Provide or facilitate the provision of disabled parking spaces at community or institutional facilities.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- SHAN8 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive particularly any developments that involve discharges to adjacent watercourses;
- SHAN9 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- SHAN10 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan.



## THE SWAN

### ***Character and Context***

The Swan is located on the Regional Road (R430) between Abbeylax and Carlow. The Swan is one of the newest villages to develop in County Laois. Its initial growth centred on the establishment in 1935 of Flemings Fireclay factory. Utilising the local fireclay reserves, it has acted as the lynchpin of the local economy ever since. Coal mining was also an important local industry but has declined in recent years.

The Swan has a low level of services and facilities. This village is linear in style. The most distinctive features of the village are a small Council housing estate arranged in a semi-circle around a small green and the use of redbrick in many of the village buildings. This use of this local material distinguishes The Swan from other settlements in Laois.

The only commercial service in the village is a public house, vacant commercial building. There are a number of community uses within the village including a school, community centre and recycling bring bank. The HSE clinic is currently vacant. The green open spaces in the Swan are passive in nature and are associated with residential housing estates.

### ***Written Objectives***

#### *Character and Built Form*

- SW1 Ensure the continuing use of the locally produced red brick in future developments in order to reinforce the distinctive character of The Swan and in the interests of sustainability;
- SW2 Protect recorded monuments in the Swan.
- SW3 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village, higher densities may be considered within the village centre.

#### *Economic Development*

- SW4 Support the maintenance and establishment of retail and additional commercial services at The Swan;
- SW5 Support the continuing functioning of the Fireclay factory and provide for its expansion as necessary subject to proper

planning and environmental standards being met;

#### *Infrastructure*

- SW6 Improve or develop footpaths and cycle paths linking the village centre with residential housing estates and community uses;
- SW7 Provide disabled parking within the village centre and at buildings in community use to the east;
- SW8 Develop a pedestrian crossing within the village centre.

#### *Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)*

- SW9 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- SW10 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- SW11 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;







## TIMAHOE

### Character and Context

The village of Timahoe is located on R426 [Portlaoise-The Swan] in a broad and fertile valley to the south of Portlaoise. The cohesive urban form of Timahoe, the layout of buildings around and overlooking a large central green and the proximity and connection to the well-preserved Medieval round tower are essential and special characteristics. Recent development in the village has not detracted from the special character of the village. The village is designated as a Candidate Architectural Conservation Area. The village has potential as a tourism attraction.

The houses are built around a large central green commonly known as the Goosegreen. St. Mochua established a monastery here in the seventh century. Burned in 1142, it was refounded by the O'Moores. A 12th century round tower standing 30m high is located in the village. The tower is unusually intact and it is ornamented with a fine carved Romanesque doorway above ground level. There was a monastic community here as late as 1650. Sites of interest in the area include a castle, built by Hugh de Lacy in 1189. A pleasant stream separates the round tower and church from the village green and these two elements are connected with a pedestrian bridge as well as a vehicular road.

The community facilities namely the church, community hall and recycling area are all located south of the village centre. The buildings overlooking the green consist of single-storey detached structures and older two-storey terraced and semi-detached structures. The structures exhibit a strong building line. Traditional painted timber shopfronts with restrained lettering are also a feature.

The approach roads are well signposted and the presence of trees on the Portlaoise Road softens the approach to the village and creates a pleasant vista. Vacant premises exist in the village which should be encouraged for redevelopment to appropriate uses particularly the old HSE building off the Green and the old garage.

There is one primary school in the village of Timahoe which caters for pupils in the area. There

are no community childcare facilities within the area. Child minding is provided in a private capacity. The community centre is located to the rear of the church and is used for sporting facilities and the commencement of youth club activities which caters for a wide catchment area. Within this area also is the bring bank for recycling. GAA playing fields are located outside the development envelop to the north of the village. The village is well-served in relation to passive green open space in the form of the central green. There is no public sewage treatment facility in the village.

### Written Objectives

#### Character and Built Form

- TM1 Preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of Timahoe's Architectural Conservation Area (ACA);
- TM2 Have regard to the special character appraisal of the ACA in determining planning applications;
- TM3 Protect and preserve trees on the Portlaoise approach roads, and landscaping and ornamental features on the central green and mature trees in and around the round tower;
- TM4 Encourage the full use of vacant or underused structures, in particular any structures overlooking the central green;
- TM5 Landscaping features and welcome signs incorporating natural materials to be located on the approach roads to the village in consultation with the community.
- TM6 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

- TM7 Protect the established retail and commercial functions within the village;
- TM8 Promote the tourism product offered in Timahoe having regard to its archaeological and architectural heritage, proximity to the Timahoe Nature Reserve, walking routes and Fossey Mountain;
- TM9 Advance Timahoe as a tourism destination as well as a stopping point during long journeys in line with the **"Ireland's Ancient East"** Initiative;

#### Infrastructure

- TM10 Support the provision of wastewater treatment at Timahoe;

- TM11 Encourage the placing of overhead power lines underground to enhance the character of the ACA and examine the feasibility of providing underground broadband cable in association with the above works;
- TM12 Establish a footpath and cycle path between the village centre and the school and ensure the provision of cycle parking at the school;
- TM13 Provide disabled parking within the village centre.

Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- TM14 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- TM15 Implement SuDS where appropriate;
- TM16 Ensure full compliance with all existing licences and with measures prescribed under the South Eastern River Basin Management Plan;



## VICARSTOWN

### *Character and Context*

Vicarstown Village is located in east County Laois in close proximity to the Kildare border, 6 kilometres northeast of Stradbally on the R427 Regional Road. Vicarstown originally developed as an 18th Century port on the Grand Canal. Vicarstown has not experienced growth similar to that which has occurred in other villages in closer proximity to Portlaoise and the M7. Vicarstown is an attractive settlement, its remoteness makes it tranquil and it is popular among waterway-based tourism such as boating and fishing. The canal is a National Heritage Area which links to the Stradbally River SAC at Cormac Aqueduct.

The approach of Vicarstown from the west is softened by mature trees and hedgerows. Focal points on this approach include the Catholic Church and Old School House. The village centre is disjointed. Commercial uses are located around the Grand Canal. A number of historic industrial warehouses face onto the canal, these are suitable for re-use and could potentially make a fine contribution to the village. Residential development consists of bungalows and two-storey dwelling houses.

The tow path along the Grand Canal provides an extensive walking network immediately accessible from the village. Active recreational space is found at the GAA playing fields located to the west of the village. The GAA grounds includes two playing fields, dressing and meeting room facilities. The residents of Vicarstown currently avail of educational facilities in Stradbally, Rath, Portlaoise, Mountrath and Monasterevin. Vicarstown GAA Clubhouse has a multifunctional communal, and recreational role. The Old School House also provides for multifunctional communal and recreational needs of the community. A derelict community hall exists in the centre of Vicarstown. A recycling bring bank is provided opposite the public house.

Vicarstown's water supply is from the Kyle Public Water Supply. Vicarstown does not have its own wastewater treatment plant. Vicarstown is located on the R427 Stradbally, Kildangan/Athy road. Vicarstown is currently served by a weekly town link service.

### Written Objectives

#### Character and Built Form

- VIC1 Facilitate the re-use or redevelopment of derelict or vacant structures as appropriate;
- VIC2 Facilitate the re-use of the cut-stone warehouses along the Grand Canal, the provision of commercial tourism facilities is provided for under the village centre zoning and would be particularly suitable;
- VIC3 Retain and maintain the stone walls within the village;
- VIC4 Protect trees and hedgerows on approach road from Stradbally;
- VIC5 Preserve and enhance Protected Structures in Vicarstown;
- VIC6 Housing developments shall be of a density compatible with the prevailing density of the village;

#### Economic Development

- VIC7 Facilitate the provision of boating facilities at Vicarstown as recommended by Fáilte Ireland to facilitate the expansion of the tourism sector;
- VIC8 Encourage the provision of tourist related amenities / infrastructure within the village centre to compliment the natural tourism product of the Grand Canal;

#### Infrastructure

- VIC9 Provide a pedestrian and cycle network within the village centre and between the village centre and the GAA playing fields and secure cycle parking at the playing fields and in the village centre;
- VIC10 Examine the feasibility of providing a hard-surfaced cycle and pedestrian path along the tow path of the canal having regard to its environmental sensitivities;
- VIC11 Provide disabled parking within the village centre.

#### Habitats (Natura 2000 Sites)

- VIC12 Ensure that any development that has the potential to impact on the Natura 2000 site is subject to Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;
- VIC13 Implement SuDS where appropriate

