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	Prepared by the Forward Planning Sections of Carlow and Laois Local Authorities	

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE JOINT SPATIAL PLAN

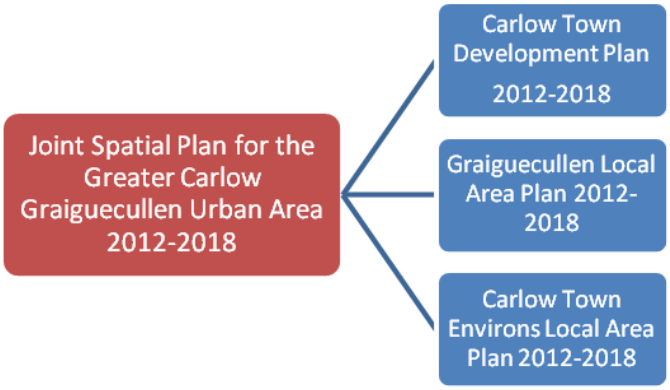
The Joint Spatial Plan is concerned with charting the future built, environmental, social and economic development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. It provides a detailed framework for the management and regulation of spatial development and use of land. Its goal is to retain the unique and special character of the Greater Urban Area, while also fostering positive change and good development. It is concerned with steering development so that it contributes positively to social, economic and environmental well-being, prioritising changes that are needed and identifying opportunities to enhance the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the available quality of life.

The Joint Spatial Plan is a wide-ranging policy statement dealing with issues such as population and settlement patterns; economic and employment trends; retail, commercial and industrial development; education, healthcare and community facilities; environmental management and heritage protection; infrastructure provision relating to transportation, energy and communications, waste-water treatment and water supply.

Planning has a critical role in pulling together the various strands of economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection, which are essential to sustainable development and the creation of sustainable communities.

STATUTORY STATUS

For the purposes of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011, this Joint Spatial Plan comprises a Town Development Plan as set out under sections 9-12 of the Act and two Local Area Plans as set out under sections 18-20 of the Act.



The Joint Spatial Plan is more firmly grounded in national and regional policies than preceding planning policy documents due to changes in legislation. The preparation of a Core Strategy set out in Part 2 of the Plan is a new requirement. The Core Strategy sets out the Councils' vision and strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. It contains the

cross-cutting core objectives that underpin the Joint Spatial Plan, as well as core aims which headline each thematic chapter.

The Core Strategy will also satisfy the legal requirements of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011, including (i) how the Development Plan is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines and had regard to section 28 National Planning Guidelines (ii) housing land requirement in respect of population projections set at national and regional level (iii) details of the transport network and retail centres.

PLAN-MAKING APPROACH

The collaborative involvement of three planning authorities in the preparation of this Plan is significant. The Draft Joint Spatial Plan comprising of the Carlow Town Development Plan, Graiguecullen and Carlow Town Environs Local Area Plans and has been prepared jointly by Carlow Local Authorities and Laois County Council on a shared-service basis . The joint approach emphasises the unitary functioning of the Greater Urban Area instead of the traditional focus on administrative areas. It lends itself to the preparation of a single coordinated development strategy which plays to the strengths of the composite areas and takes account of their environmental sensitivities. In addition, a joint approach lends itself to more integrated, effective and measurable evaluation of the environmental effects of implementing planning policy in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. The approach has been welcomed by elected members, external state organisations, community groups and members of the public.

The plan-making process also involved extensive consultation with external stakeholders to ensure key organisations involved in delivering services and individuals who live or work in the area helped shape the Plan. It was anticipated that this collaborative and participative approach to plan-making would make the Plan more effective and responsive to the local community.

CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Location and History

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is an important County Town in the South-East Region and is the principal centre of economic activity in County Carlow. Graiguecullen, County Laois is designated as a service town in the Midlands Region. The Greater Urban Area's strategic importance is underlined by its proximity to the Greater Dublin Area and Mid-East Region. It is an inland town sited on low-lying land, straddling the large River Barrow and a smaller watercourse, the River Burrin and is located to the east of the Castlecomer Plateau. The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area extends into Laois and is also located close to the Kildare and Kilkenny county boundaries. The functional hinterland of the Greater Urban Area extends into these adjoining counties.

The area has been settled for many millennia, the Browneshill Dolmen to the east of the Greater Urban Area being a prominent megalithic tomb dating to c.3,500 B.C. The construction of Carlow Castle (remains extant) in the thirteenth century to defend a crossing point of the River Barrow is the likely genesis for the development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. The Castle is located to the south of Graiguecullen Bridge on the eastern side of the River Barrow. Parts of the bridge, itself of historic significance, date back to the sixteenth century. Other significant developments include the construction of the first Catholic Cathedral and the first Catholic third-level education institution following relaxation of the penal laws.

More recently, the development of contemporary gallery and performance spaces at the VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre along with a newly refurbished space close by for the Carlow County Museum will shape the town centre. The provision of a high order Forest Park to the north will function as the green lungs for the urban area, while the upgrading of parts of the riverside path along the Barrow known as the Barrow Track provides a significant recreational amenity for visitors as well as locals.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is located 80 kilometres from Dublin with nine daily train services and numerous bus services to and from the capital. It is also within easy reach of other mid-sized towns in the Midlands and South-East being located 40 minutes from Portlaoise, 30 minutes from Kilkenny, 45 minutes from Enniscorthy. Wexford Town and Waterford City are approximately one hours drive from the town, with Rosslare Port and Waterford Airport located beyond.

Economy

Traditionally the economy was characterised by low value-added manufacturing and food manufacturing based on commodities produced in a rich agricultural hinterland and also an under-developed services sector. The local economy has changed significantly in recent years. The industrial base is now made up of a wide variety of industries ranging from multi-national enterprises employing skilled workforces of upwards of 100 people to very small indigenous enterprises serving local to international markets.

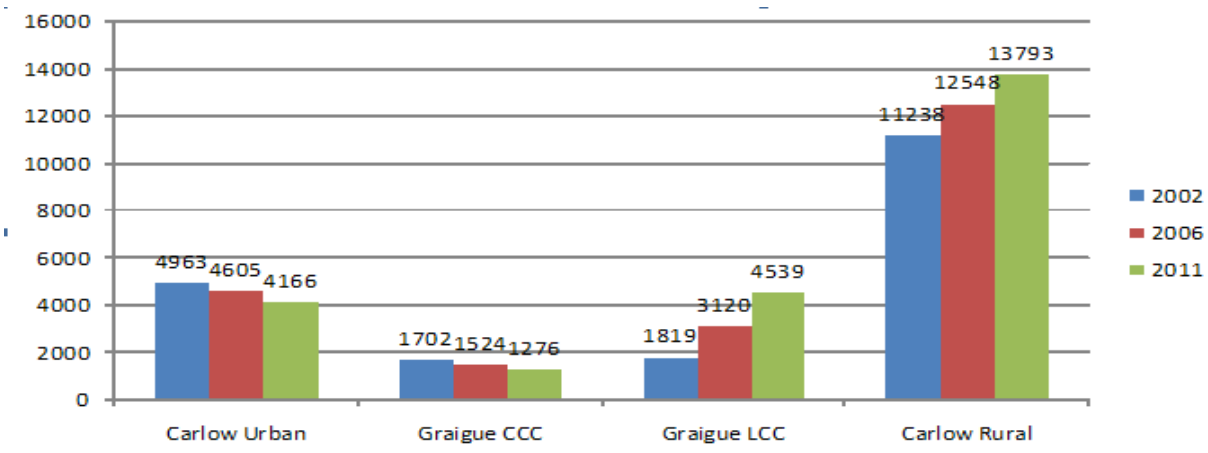
The South-East Regional Authority identified deficits in infrastructure and skill levels as the principal causes for underperformance of the South-East Region and some of these deficits have impacted on the Greater Urban Area. In the last number of years national economic conditions have deteriorated significantly with

growing unemployment figures. This has also been the case in Carlow, with a number of prominent companies such as Braun, Lapple and Irish Sugar closing, as well as a slump in the construction sector and related employment. However, considerable progress has also been made in addressing the identified deficits in infrastructure and skills and re-orientating the local economy towards potential growth sectors.

Population

The population of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area continues to grow and the proportion of County Carlow's population residing within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area also continues to increase. The distribution of the population within the Greater Urban Area is increasingly dispersed, with the population of inner-urban electoral divisions (Graigue Carlow, Carlow Urban) declining and exhibiting an older age profile.

Census Period	Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area	Carlow County	Proportion of County Carlow Population Residing in the Greater Urban Area
1996	11,721	41,616	28%
2002	18,487	46,014	40%
2006	20,724	50,339	41%
2011	23,030	54,532	42%



Infrastructure

Recent improvements to the physical and social infrastructure of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area include:

Completion of the M9 Motorway serving Dublin, Carlow Kilkenny and Waterford
Opening of VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre
Laying of Fibre Optic Open Access Broadband
Town Park orientated towards the River Barrow, marina, playgound and pedestrian bridge strengthening links between Graiguecullen and Carlow
Forest Park at Oak Park
OPW works in and around Carlow Castle to improve the visual appearance of its setting
Establishment of Delta Sensory Gardens
Carlow Eastern Relief Road and Inner Relief Road
Improvement in the frequency of the Dublin-Carlow-Waterford Train Service
Carlow Town Flood Relief Works and associated public realm improvements along the Barrow Track
Extension of the Northern Relief Road
Public Realm Improvement works at Haymarket
Opening of Carlow County Museum
New potable water source for Graiguecullen and also at Cannery Road
Outdoor Gym known as Tone Zone on the grounds of Eire Og GAA Club

The South-East Regional Authority (2010) considers that a strong third and fourth level education sector in the Region will act as a strong driver of innovation and entrepreneurship and will upgrade the Region's skillbase. The Midlands Regional Authority (2010) also considers that third and fourth level education is of vital importance to regional economic development. Targeted sectors include: Engineering, Business, ICT and Life Sciences. The presence of IT Carlow in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area was an acknowledged key factor in the attraction of multi-national companies requiring a highly-skilled workforce. The presence of these companies should serve to attract similar types of companies to the Area. The role of the Teagasc Research Centre at Oak Park is also important to the future economy of the Greater Urban Area and its skill-base and likewise Carlow College, another third-level education institution focused on the humanities and social science areas.

Although economic conditions remain challenging, it is important to make the most of the investment in educational, cultural and recreational infrastructure of the Greater Urban Area outlined above and the potential that investment offers to strengthen the services and enterprise sector of the local economy.

A number of residential areas are designated RAPID areas, which is a national programme aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunity available to residents living within these areas, which include the most disadvantaged communities in Irish Cities and Towns. Statistics indicate the average income within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is lower than the national average (2006 statistics). In addition, educational attainment levels in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area are low by national

standards. The local authorities will seek to address these differences by enabling sustainable economic development and encouraging participation in higher-level education.

SWOT ANALYSIS

The **SWOT analysis** of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area contained within the Carlow 800 Masterplan has been updated to reflect the current circumstances. The SWOT analysis identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the area.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
-Good quality of life available, including range of recreational amenities and attractive town centre -Good transport links (M9 motorway to Dublin and Waterford, intercity rail service to Dublin and Waterford, N80 road to Portlaoise and towards Rosslare) - Good telecommunications infrastructure (open access fibre network) -Tradition in certain sectors (e.g. engineering) -Presence of multi-national companies with highly-skilled workforces -Good quality agricultural hinterland, Teagasc Research Centre and tradition of food manufacturing -Established higher educational institutions (IT Carlow and Carlow College) with emphasis on innovation, research and enterprise. -Well-positioned for key markets in Ireland	-Drain of skilled people commuting to work outside Carlow or migrating to larger urban areas or abroad -Low income levels compared to national average -Tradition of manufacturing industry associated with low-skill levels -Under-developed services sector -Lack of identity for Graiguecullen -Fragmented service provision in local government services, health services and policing services
Opportunities	**Threats**
-Improving social infrastructure -Potential for clusters of biotechnology companies, pharmaceutical companies, engineering and software companies -Potential for stronger linkages between education and research institutions and commercial enterprise -National policy emphasis on agri-business, food production and green industry -Availability of large, centrally-located, serviced sites suitable for employment uses -Large extent of foreign investment and regional focus of IDA and Enterprise Ireland Strategies -Tourism infrastructure and heritage assets, tradition of the Arts -Designated partnership (formerly LEADER) areas for Carlow and Laois -Connectivity of South-East with the Greater Dublin Area and Midlands	-Contraction of national economy -Reduction in availability of state funding for projects and infrastructure -Increasing numbers of unemployed and long-term unemployed -Reduced EU structural funds -Review of decentralization programme -Time needed to address re-skilling of workers previously engaged in construction industry or low-skill manufacturing -The percentage of people with a third level qualification working in Carlow is low (31%) when compared to the national average (34.4%) and regional average (33.1%) -Fragmented administrative areas requiring Joint Approach to service provision -Lack of social infrastructure in some residential areas, particularly RAPID areas

PART 2: CORE STRATEGY

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the Joint Spatial Plan

The NSS seeks to address the spatial structuring and development of the Country up to 2020 in a manner that is internationally competitive, socially cohesive and environmentally sustainable. The primary mechanism for delivering development is by way of a regional polycentric growth model. This approach is consistent with the European Spatial Development Perspective (1999). The NSS includes six categories of centres within an urban hierarchy: gateway, hub, county town, <5000 town, 1500-5000 town, and urban centre (circa 1000). The NSS targets strategic centres with potential to be drivers of development within their own region and also categorises rural areas, thereby seeking to achieve a dynamic urban and rural structure. The NSS designates Carlow as a County Town in the South-East Region. The following is the primary settlement hierarchy within the South-East Region.

URBAN AREA	STATUS UNDER NSS AND SERPGS
Waterford City	Gateway
Kilkenny	Hub
Wexford	Hub
CARLOW	**COUNTY TOWN**
Clonmel	County Town
Dungarvan	County Town

One of the principal messages for the regional approach to spatial planning outlined in section 4.1 of the NSS is the need for the strengthening of County Towns, as both generators of business activity and delivery points for the key services that people need if they are to continue living in or be drawn to a particular area. Other more general messages of the NSS include: a wide range of work opportunities, a better quality of life and effective urban and rural planning.

Carlow is located on National Transport Corridors designated in the National Spatial Strategy that link Waterford and Dublin (M9 motorway and Dublin-Waterford rail line) and link Wexford and Athlone (N80).

The NSS categorises the rural hinterland to the north and west of the Greater Urban Area as having strong potential for diversification and to the south and east as having village strengthening and rural area opportunities. In areas identified as having strong potential for diversification, the NSS states diversification could be based around a possible mix of activities drawn from amongst tourism, forestry and enterprise sectors and attributes a strong role to local communities and business groups as well as state agencies. In areas identified for village strengthening and having rural area opportunities, local authorities are charged with examining and activating the potential for new residential, commercial and local-employment related development.

These rural elements are relevant to the preparation of the Joint Spatial Plan given the integrated approach to the spatial planning of metropolitan areas and their hinterlands advocated in the NSS. Historically in Carlow, there was a strong link between commodities produced in the rural hinterland of the Greater Urban

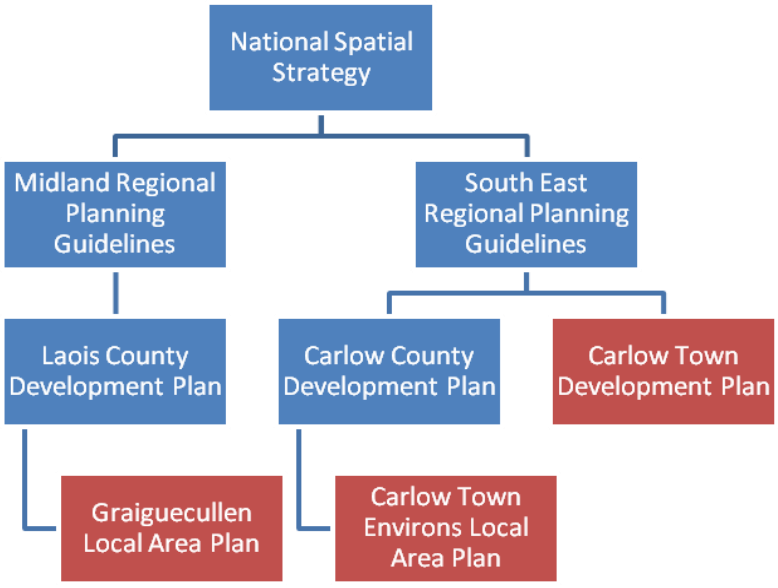
Area and the processing of raw materials at Greencore in Carlow Town to produce food stuffs. Renewed emphasis on this sector is relevant to the future planning of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

Relationship to National and Regional Guidelines and Policies

The National Spatial Strategy was published in November 2002. At its core was an objective for more balanced regional development and a polycentric growth model. The primary mechanism for the implementation of the NSS is by way of Regional Planning Guidelines that are made by Regional Authorities. The Regional Authorities were established with effect from 1st January, 1994 under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Authorities Establishment) Order 1993, with their role being expanded considerably by the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011.

The Joint Spatial Plan comprising of a Town Development Plan and two Local Area Plans will in turn implement the Regional Planning Guidelines. Most of the plan area falls within the South-East Region, with Graiguecullen, County Laois extending into the Midlands Region. The South-East Region comprises of the five counties of Carlow Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford and the river catchments of the Nore, Barrow, Suir and Slaney. The Midlands Region comprises of counties Longford, Westmeath, Offaly and Laois and the catchments of the Shannon, Nore and Barrow. The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area falls within the South-East River Basin District.

The South-East and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines represent a planning policy framework intended to achieve a better spatial balance of social economic and physical development throughout their respective region. The South-East Regional Planning Guidelines were made on 26th July, 2010 and the Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines were made on 20th July, 2010.



From time to time the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government will issue National Planning Guidelines; in accordance with section 28 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011. The Draft Spatial Plan was prepared having regard to the following thematic national planning guidelines:

Planning Guidelines (s. 28 of PDA 2000-2010)
1. Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004)
2. Architectural Heritage Protection for Places of Public Worship (2003)
3. Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and companion document Urban Design Manual (2009)
4. Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007)
5. Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005)
6. Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)
7. Development Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007)
8. Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007)
9. Quarries and Ancillary Activities Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004)
10. Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), Retail Design Manual (2012)
11. Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment [Strategic Environmental Appraisal]: Guidelines for Regional and Planning Authorities (2004)
12. The Planning System and Flood Risk Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities and companion technical appendices (2009)
13. Wind Energy Development: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006)
14. Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)
15. Landscape and Landscape Assessment Consultation DRAFT of Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2000)
16. Telecommunications Support Structures and Antennae Guidelines for Planning Authorities (1996)
17. Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012)

Other government objectives and policies were considered in the preparation of the Draft Spatial Plan, including:

The National Biodiversity Plan (2002) and related subsequent An Interim Review of the National Biodiversity Plan (2005)
NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SAC and SPA
National Climate Change Strategy 2000 and 2007-2012
DoEHLG (2002) National Heritage Plan
National Development Plan 2007-2013 (Investment Programme)
Sustainable Development : A Strategy for Ireland (1997) and subsequent related Making Ireland's Development Sustainable Review, Assessment and Future Action (2002)
Strategy to Reduce Emissions of Transboundary Air Pollution by 2010 (2003) and subsequent related National Programme for Ireland on Transboundary Pollutants – Update and Revision
National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020; Delivering a Sustainable Energy future for Ireland 2007- 2020 (DEMNR 2007)
Eirgrid (2007) Grid Development Strategy 2007-2025
DoEHLG (2009) Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015
Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020
National Cycle Policy Framework 2009
Transport 21 (2005) (Investment Programme)
River Basin Management Plans arising from Water Framework Directive, undertaken on a catchment basis: South-East River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015
Combat Poverty Agency (2002) The National Anti Poverty Strategy Revised

Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (1999)
Changing our Ways (1998), Preventing and Recycling Waste: Delivering Change (2002), Taking Stock and Moving Forward (2004), National Strategy for Biodegradable Waste (2006), South-East Waste Management Plan (2006) and Midlands Waste Management Plan (2006)

Positioning of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

Within the national and regional policy context, the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area will continue to maintain a strong competitive economic position within the South-East Region. The Joint Spatial Plan is framed by national and regional guidelines and also by the specific urban structure, functions and characteristics of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the South-East Region generally.

South-East Regional Settlement Hierarchy

Under the National Spatial Strategy, regional development is driven by gateways namely large urban settlements containing a critical mass of population. This critical mass enables a range of services and facilities to be supported and this in turn can attract and support higher levels of economic activity and improved quality of life.

Waterford is the designated gateway in the South-East Region. The gateways are supported by hubs which are also intended to be drivers of development. Kilkenny and Waterford are the hubs in the South-East. Unlike some other regions, in the South-East the primacy of the gateway and hubs in terms of population figures or urban functions is not pronounced.

Urban Area	Status under NSS and SERPGs	2006 Population	2011 Population
Waterford City	Gateway	49,213	51,519 (4.7%)
Kilkenny	Hub	22,179	24,423 (10.1%)
Wexford	Hub	18,163	20,072 (10.5%)
Carlow	County Town	20,724	23,030 (11.1%)
Clonmel	County Town	17,008	17,908 (5.3%)
Dungarvan	County Town	8,362	9,427 (12.7%)

According to the SERGs:

> *There is a distinctive settlement pattern in the South–East Region which distinguishes the region from other regions where one Gateway City may be particularly dominant. Waterford, as the Gateway, is the largest city in the region but the region possesses a strong urban structure unlike other regions. There is a network of sizable urban settlements in the region, including Hubs and County towns, each with its own hinterland and sphere of influence, and extensive services, including the presence of third and fourth-level education institutes.*

In light of the distinct urban geography of the South-East Region, the guidelines consider that Waterford, as the Gateway, Kilkenny and Wexford as well as the County Towns of Carlow, Clonmel and Dungarvan will

drive regional growth by providing a large and skilled population base, substantial capacity for additional residential and employment related functions and an improving transport network.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area contains uses associated with high-order urban settlements including the Institute of Technology Carlow, Carlow College, VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre, as well as the National Arable Crop Research Centre and planned National Bio-energy and Industrial Biotechnology Research Centre at Oak Park and a County Museum. The Greater Urban Area encompasses high-order open spaces such as Oak Park Forest Park and the Barrow Track and the associated Town Park with marina, as well as facilities for a wide range of sporting activities. In terms of health it is served by a district hospital as well as one established and one planned primary health care centre. Currently there is spare capacity in the Mortarstown Waste Water Treatment Plant, with land available for extension and a number of drinking water supply points ensure water security. While the local transportation system for pedestrian and cyclists has improved in recent years, cycling track provision remains patchy and disjointed and cycle parking deficient. Improvements are ongoing with regard to walking and cycling infrastructure with the award of funding for improvement works under the Active Travel Towns Scheme 2012.

The local economy includes multi-national and indigenous companies serving international as well as national and local markets. In terms of transport infrastructure, the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is directly served by the national motorway network (M9) and national rail network (Dublin-Waterford line) and is within a serviceable distance of Rosslare, Waterford and Dublin Ports and Waterford and Dublin airports. The Greater Urban Area is served by open access fibre-optic broadband network (Metropolitan Area Network - MAN) with cable runs linking the town centre with enterprise areas and business parks. It is noted that Carlow town satisfies many of the criteria for hub status as set out in table 3.1 of the National Spatial Strategy.

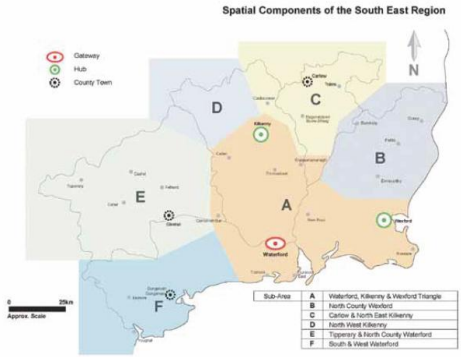
Characteristics of Hubs set out in the National Spatial Strategy
Significant urban population in the range of 20,000-40,000
Wide range of primary/secondary education facilities with option of third level or outreach facilities
Mix of local, medium, larger businesses serving local, regional and national/international markets
A important local node in transportation and communications terms: (a) national road and rail/bus network (b) access to national or regional airport (c) adequate access to port facilities (d) effective broadband access
Effective local transport system with facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
Local/regional hospital
Wide range of amenity, sporting and cultural facilities including public spaces and parks
Effective water services and waste management arrangements
Strategies for physical social and economic development
Phased zonings and servicing of land banks in anticipation of needs associated with growth
Industrial and local business parks

The role of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is set out in detail in the SERPGs and MRGGs. According to the SERPGs:

> Carlow, as a County Town is recognised as a critical element in the regional settlement structure for realising balanced regional development and an important focus for strengthening its own area.

From a spatial perspective, the SERPGs divide the Region into six sub-areas: A-F. The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is located in Sub-Area C – Carlow and North-East Kilkenny. The principal issues associated with this area include:

- Strong physical links to Midlands, Mid-East and Dublin Regions
- Strong population growth around Carlow Town - Influence of Greater Dublin Area is present
- Smaller towns and villages to be strengthened
- Urban generated rural housing to be carefully monitored and controlled
- Economic, Social and Cultural infrastructure to be improved.



The SERPGs consider the successful development of gateway, hubs and county towns will provide the region with locations of scale that will possess the population, skills, business services, infrastructure and existing enterprise base necessary to attract Foreign Direct Investment against similar competing locations nationally and internationally and to facilitate indigenous start-ups in advanced sectors – principally in the ICT sector.

A number of infrastructural elements are set out in section 4.1 of the SERPGs in order to support the development of critical mass and foster a wider range of enterprise and employment creation within the hubs and county towns of the South-East Region:

- Establishment of a University in the South-East Region and further development of Higher Education Institutes
- Improved links between HEIs and industry, particularly research and development
- Incubation centres
- Improved public transport within and between hubs and county towns and other settlements
- Improved water services infrastructure in compliance with all environmental legislation and the River Basin Management Plans
- Availability of serviced land banks and industrial estates
- Enhanced community and recreational facilities
- High quality telecommunications and energy supply and access (road and rail)
- First class office space
- Business and enterprise support services
- Development of innovation and training centres
- Improved public realm and public facilities in support of tourism development.
- Enterprise Ireland recommends that community-owned enterprise centres for the future would need to be of a higher quality with better facilities and more expertise in business development.

In the provision of high-quality infrastructure in the County Towns, care should be given to the type of industry likely to be attracted and their specific needs. According to the guidelines, the development of the County Towns would help to reduce travel-to-work journey times.

In relation to inter-regional issues, the Guidelines note there are towns located on or close to regional boundaries, such as Carlow Town, where the development of the town will have implications for surrounding rural areas within the functional area of another Regional Authority. The Guidelines hold that these inter-regional issues need to be discussed between authorities and policies devised which will allow the orderly and sustainable development of each. The Guidelines also note, there are urban areas, such as Carlow, located at the northern end of the South-East Region, which have a hinterland in more than one region. These can act as bridges between regions and can assist the development of inter-regional linkages and co-operation.

Midlands Regional Settlement Hierarchy

The settlement hierarchy consists of the linked Gateway of Athlone-Tullamore-Mullingar, the Principal Towns of Portlaoise and Longford (referred to as County Town in the NSS), Key Service Towns, Service Towns and Local Service Towns.

According to the MRPGs Settlement Hierarchy, Graiguecullen, County Laois is designated as a Service Town. Graiguecullen forms an important part of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and is located on the western side of the River Barrow. The administrative boundary between Carlow Town and County Laois is unusual, being based on the spire of the Church of Ireland which means part of Graiguecullen is administered by Laois County Council and part by Carlow Town Council.

The role of Graiguecullen, County Laois being a service town, is described in the MRPGs as follows

> Performing important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for local rural hinterlands and support the upper tiers of the urban hierarchy including the linked gateway and principal towns, experienced high levels of population growth over the last census period, in some cases without the necessary supporting services. As a result, the RPGs envisage that the development of these towns needs to be increasingly aimed at consolidating growth within the service town and better matching to the development of relevant supporting physical and social infrastructure.

Spatially the Midlands Region has been divided into 5 sub-areas, the Southern, Eastern, Central, Western and Northern Development Areas. Graiguecullen, County Laois is within the Southern Development Area.

The Guidelines describe the Southern Development Area (SDA) as retaining strong links with the Greater Dublin Area and serviced by national roads and rail network. The SDA has a well-defined hierarchical settlement structure, with Portlaoise, as the principal town, acting as the predominant urban structure and the driver of growth within this area. Service employment in numerous state, semi-state and local government organisations is significant, particularly in Portlaoise.

The focus and priority for the SDA is the consistent, sequential, and sustainable growth of Portlaoise so as to ensure that its role as a principal town is maximised, to support and contribute to the delivery of a successful urban network in association with the linked gateway.

The Guidelines refer to Graiguecullen, being located in the extreme southern tip of the SDA and heavily linked and connected to Carlow and the adjacent South-East Region for the majority of its services.

In the case of the preparation of any plans for Graiguecullen, the RPGs support and acknowledge the necessary cooperation required between the Local Authorities (Carlow and Laois) and other relevant agencies.

Policies specific to the SDA and relevant to the Joint Spatial Plan include:

- SDA P2 The SDA should plan for a future population growth by 2022 in the order of 10,906.
- SDA P3 Support the consolidation of the town and village network to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, level and pace
- SDA P4 Support the preparation of Joint Local Area Plans amongst the relevant Local Authorities to provide a planning framework for the future physical, economic and social development of Carlow/Graiguecullen
- SDA P5 Create the conditions necessary to cater for targeted employment generation, having particular regard to the location of this Development Area within the region and its innate strengths

- SDA P7 Focused development, promotion and expansion of Business and Technology Parks and local industrial parks in association with interagency collaboration to serve indigenous industries should also be pursued throughout the SDA

- SDA P8 Improve transport system particularly the N80 linking the principal town of Portlaoise to the linked gateway, Portlaoise to Carlow and the ports in the South-East Region

- SDA P9 Support and cooperate with the relevant agencies and departments to address any identified physical social and economic needs within the SDA

Key Messages from RPGs for the Joint Spatial Plan

Carlow Town is a **County Town** within the South-East Region, which itself has a distinctive settlement pattern, where the gateway of Waterford is not overly dominant and the region possesses a strong urban structure of hubs and county towns each with its own hinterland, sphere of influence and extensive services including the presence of third and fourth-level institutes.

In this context the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is recognised as **a critical element in the regional settlement structure** for realising balanced regional development and an important focus for strengthening its own area.

Population projections for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area are set out within the South-East and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines and these will inform the quantum of land zoned for residential use and the Guidelines both stress the importance of adopting a sequential approach to zoning, the **consolidation of urban form** and **sustainable transport**.

Both the South-East and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines place strong emphasis on the need to enhance and upgrade the **National Transport Corridor (N80)** between Wexford and Athlone. The improvement of this transport corridor is likely to involve the improvement of the road network and perhaps provision of a public transport service.

Both Guidelines refer to the **pivotal role of IT Carlow** and in improving the skill base of residents and driving economic development

Both Guidelines focus on the provision of suitable **infrastructure to enable economic development**, having regard to the characteristics and economic profile of the area and the development of **clusters** of inter-related businesses, enterprise activities and/or academic institutions

Both Guidelines recognize the **opportunities for tourism**, in particular waterways tourism and the importance of protecting special natural and built **heritage** assets on which tourism depends and of effective environmental management

Both Guidelines highlight the importance of **community** facilities as well as the importance of a **thriving town centre** to a good quality of life

Both Guidelines underline the importance of **inter-regional linkages and co-operation** in policy development particularly in the context of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

Regional Population Targets

The South-East Regional Planning Guidelines provide for the positioning of Carlow within the South-East Region and build on the regional approach set out in the National Spatial Strategy. The South-East RPGs set out population projections for County Carlow and Carlow Town as well as the rest of the Region. These population projections have been used to determine the quantum of land zoned for new residential development in the Joint Spatial Plan.

South-East Regional Planning Guidelines	County Carlow	Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area	County Balance
CSO Population figures 2006	50,349	20,724	29,625
SERPG Base Population figure 2010	56,155	22,126	34,029
CSO Population figures 2011	54,532	23,030	31,502
SERPGs Population projections 2016	59,451	23,768	35,683
SERPGs Population projections 2022	63,536	25,000	38,536

Population projections contained within the South-East Regional Planning Guidelines were framed around estimated baseline population figures for 2010. 2011 census results provided clarity on current population figures. It is clear that when the South-East Regional Planning Guidelines were adopted in 2010, the population of County Carlow was over-estimated by 1,623 people. This over-estimation informed this plan-making process and the core strategy as it relates to housing land requirement in Carlow.

Specific population projections for Graiguecullen, County Laois have been set down in the County Laois Development Plan 2011-2017 and accord with the Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines (2010). This Core Strategy sets out the amount of residential lands to be zoned in Graiguecullen, County Laois.

	Population 2006 (CSO)	**Projected Population 2018**	**Projected Population Growth to 2018**	**Projected increase in Households to 2018**	**Density (per ha)**	**Housing Land Requirement to 2018 (Inc. 50% headroom)**	**AREA (ha) proposed to be Zoned for Residential Development 2012 - 2018**
Graigue -cullen, County Laois	2,529	2,924	395	164	12	20	20

Based on County Laois Development Plan 2011-2017 Core Strategy. Figures based on household size of 2.4 persons per household and density of 12 units per hectare in accordance with Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (2010)

LOCAL RESEARCH AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

Having regard to local research and being consistent with local policy documents is important to the delivery of a successful Plan. This approach provides for a more robust evidence base, more ownership of the Plan and a cohesive message in relation to priorities and objectives for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Research and policy documents considered in the making of the Draft Spatial Plan included:

Murray O Laoire and BDO Simpson Xavier Consulting (2000) Carlow 800 Celebrating a Civic Vision for the 21st Century
Cunnane Stratton Reynolds (2003) Strategic Planning and Urban Design Advice for the Carlow Environs Area
Carlow County Development Board (2009) Review of Carlow County Development Board Strategy 2009-2012
DKM Economic Consultants and RPS Planning and Environment (2009) An Economic Profile of Carlow – an Input to the County's Economic Strategy Review
RAPID Programme Objectives
Carlow Heritage Plan 2003-2007 , Laois Heritage Plan 2007-2011
CHL (2000) Tourism Development Strategy for County Carlow; Laois Tourism Strategy 2006-2010
Collier, Bailey and Stark (2000) Carlow Centre for the Contemporary Visual Arts A National and International Ambition; Laois Arts Plan 2006-2011
County Laois Climate Change Strategy 2009-2012
County Laois Local Agenda 21 Strategy 2009
Carlow Local Authorities Disability Implementation Plan 2008 – 2015, Laois Disability Implementation Plan 2007-2010
Laois Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013, Carlow Traveller Accommodation Programme 2009-2013
Contae Ceatherlach: Scéim na Gaeilge
County Carlow Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012; Laois Play Strategy 2004-2008

DEVELOPING A CORE STRATEGY

Tri-Partite Approach

Prior to this Joint Spatial Plan, the development strategy for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area was set out in three policy documents relating to different parts of the Greater Urban Area, prepared by three planning authorities and running over three time horizons.

Planning Authority	Policy Document
Carlow Town Council	Carlow Town Development Plan 2009-2015
Laois County Council	Graiguecullen Local Area Plan 2007-2013
Carlow County Council	Carlow Town Environs Local Area Plan 2008-2014

The Development Strategy for the Carlow Town Development Plan 2009-2015 focused on the primacy of the Town Centre. The zoning map included a town centre zoning which includes parts of Graiguecullen along with an ellipse representing the Core Retail Area. Also included are town renewal objectives for (i) Graiguecullen, (ii) Barrack Street, (iii) Railway Street/Green Lane, and (iv) Kennedy Avenue/Potato Market.

The key principles of the Development Strategy included: the fulfillment of the role of the town as a regional centre within the South-East, the maintenance of a compact urban form, the creation of a more permeable and better connected, the improvement of accessibility, the promotion of balanced economic growth, the targeted provision of services and facilities to improve social inclusion, the support of the development of the town as a national centre for third and fourth-level education, the development of an integrated transport strategy for the town, the enhancement of the heritage of the town, promotion of good design and the promotion of the town as a commercial and cultural focal point.

The Development Strategy for the Graiguecullen Local Area Plan 2007-2013 was concerned with maintaining a development boundary broadly within the line of the Northern Relief Road and with pursuing the Roads Objective to provide a new connector road that crosses the Barrow to the south of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area connecting the R431 in Laois with the Kilkenny Road to the south of IT Carlow. The LAP also provided for a District Centre to the north of the Plan area, a neighbourhood centre to the south of the Shamrock Business Park and an additional neighbourhood centre to the south of the Plan Area. Much of the remaining lands were zoned for residential development.

The Development Strategy for the Carlow Town Environs Local Area Plan 2008-2014 focused on seven Action Areas also referred to as Districts and these areas are annotated by circles on the zoning map: Strawhall, Oak Park, Pollerton, Browneshill, Ballinacarrig, Quinnagh and Graiguecullen. The development strategy involved zoning of lands within these areas for a mix of uses. The LAP sets out urban design and development control objectives for their development. Lands for amenity, local neighbourhood facilities and community services and education are provided for within each District by zoning objectives.

Towards a Joint Core Strategy

The Joint Core Strategy is framed firmly within the context of national and regional planning guidelines to reflect legislative changes enacted under the Planning and Development Amendment Act 2010. This new context was very significant to the preparation of the Draft Joint Spatial Plan. Rather than merging the three development strategies set out in the preceding Plans, a joint re-working of the policy framework was carried out. This approach builds on some elements of the preceding plans; however many other elements changed considerably.

As required, this new approach demonstrates consistency with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines including the population projections contained therein. The Planning Authorities have justified the quantum of residential land zoned, linking it to the projected population size. In addition, the Joint Spatial Plan has had to address the issue of retailing and the demarcation of a joint retail hierarchy across the Joint Spatial Plan Area, comprising the town centre, district centres and neighbourhood centres.

There is a stronger emphasis in national planning policy on sustainable forms of transport and the need for higher densities and compact development so that areas can be feasibly and practically served by sustainable modes of transport (buses, walking and cycling). Detailed census results from for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area indicate that residents living more centrally use more sustainable forms of transport than residents living in outlying areas.

Also new national policy relating to Natura 2000 sites and flood risk mean these factors strongly influence zoning objectives and well as local planning policies. A number of steps are set out in respective planning guidelines for assessing the suitability of sites for zoning having regard to conservation of sites of special interest and flood risk.

The prevailing economic outlook, when preparation of the preceding plans was commenced in 2007 and in early 2008, was for high levels of economic growth. Presently (2012) the international and national economic outlook is considered challenging. National economic growth forecasts in the short-term are low and in the medium term are modest. This has informed the development strategy.

Although the economy is currently weak, it is important to bear in mind that it takes approximately two years to prepare a Town Development Plan and thereafter the Joint Spatial Plan is likely to be in force for around six years. Having regard to these timeframes, it is important that the Joint Spatial Plan provides for an upturn in the economy. The Local Authorities will provide for a growing population in line with the population projections. The Local Authorities will also continue to provide choice to prospective employers wishing to locate within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. However, it is also important that growth is focused on serviced and centrally located lands in order to make the most efficient use of public services, integrate land use with sustainable transport and support a vibrant and vital town centre.

The above factors have all influenced the contraction of the development boundary for this plan period, with the allocation of tracts of land for strategic reserve. The new context has also led to a more tailored approach that takes into consideration the environmental sensitivities of different areas and builds on the specific strengths and opportunities of other areas.

CARLOW TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN CORE STRATEGY

The following principles make up this core development strategy:

- Consolidate the urban area and provide for a retail hierarchy including town centre, district centres and neighbourhood centres in the interest of ensuring the vitality and viability of the town centre (Map of retail hierarchy contained in Part 3, Section 1)

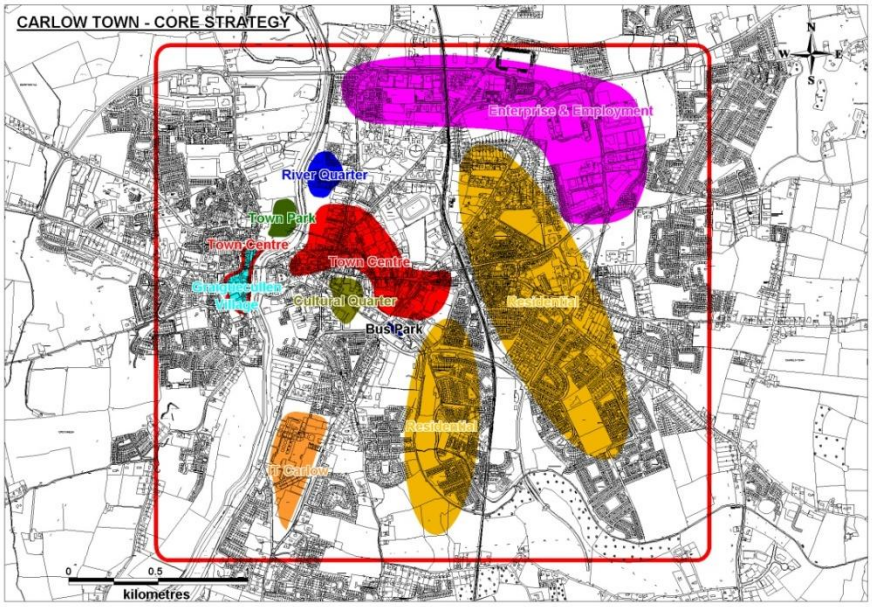
- Deliver development that supports sustainable modes of transport (Map of transport infrastructure contained in Part 3, Section 2)

- Advance key opportunity sites by preparing development briefs or urban design framework plans.

- Consolidate enterprise and employment areas, directing this type of development to serviced lands and brownfield sites in the interests of efficient use of resources and sustainable transport.

- Consolidate residential development by adopting a sequential approach and in light of reduced housing land requirement under the Regional Planning Guidelines and in order to provide for sustainable transport. (Table detailing housing land requirement in Part 2)

- Lands previously zoned for housing but not required during this plan period will be rezoned, dezoned and designated as strategic reserve and may be re-visited as part of the review process relating to the Joint Spatial Plan.

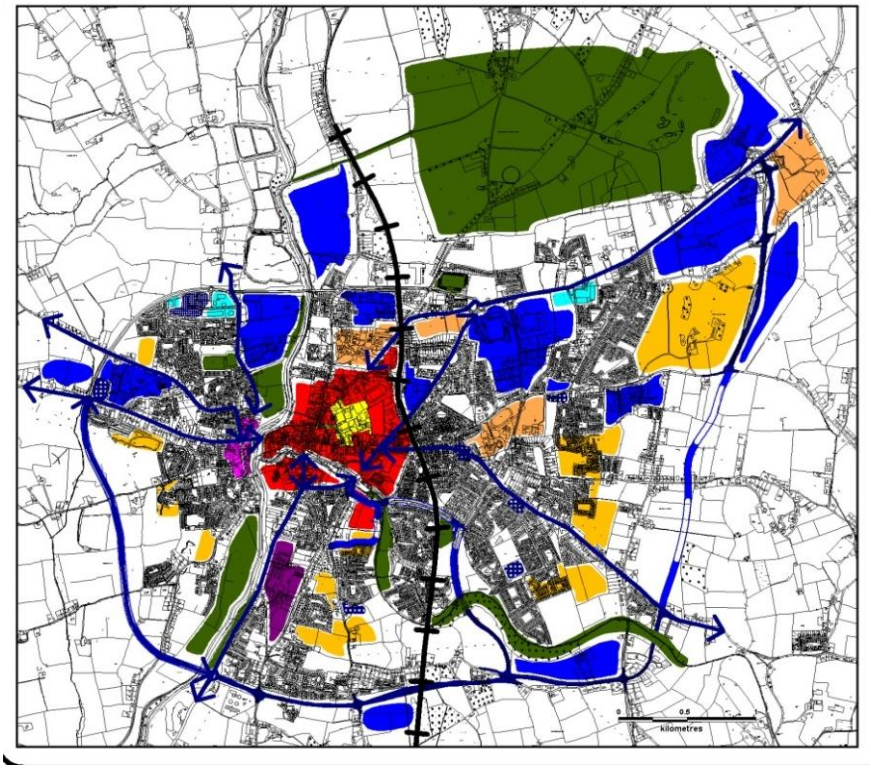


Core Strategy - Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

VISION FOR THE GREATER CARLOW GRAIGUECULLEN URBAN AREA

A high-functioning, inclusive, compact and accessible greater urban area, underpinned by a robust and diverse local economy comprising retail, commercial, industrial, education and tourism uses; with characteristics including a strong sense of place, a vibrant and vital town centre, opportunities for education and cultural experiences for all, a network of linked open spaces, recreational uses and other social infrastructure elements to provide for a good quality of life and increased emphasis on sustainable forms of transport and patterns of development

In order to actualise this vision for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Area, the following **cross-cutting core objectives** and **thematic core aims** will be pursued. Cross-cutting core objectives and thematic core aims along with the above vision form part of the Core Strategy.



CROSS-CUTTING CORE OBJECTIVES

CO1 Managed Change and Consolidated Growth

Ensure that change is managed in an orderly manner, is grounded in national and regional policy and happens in the interests of the common good, by giving careful consideration to site-specific sensitivities, consolidating the existing urban form and facilitating developments and projects that make a positive contribution to social, environmental or economic well-being.

CO2 Opportunity Sites

Present a schedule of landbanks within the Greater Urban Area which offer particular opportunities and are of strategic importance for the future development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, offering site briefs for each site.

CO3 Infrastructure Enabling Economic Development

Harness the economic development potential associated with infrastructure including IT Carlow, Carlow College, Teagasc Agricultural Research Centre, the VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre, broadband fibre network, other utilities, the railway network connecting Waterford, Carlow and Dublin, the N80, the M9 and road improvements within the Greater Urban Area. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

CO4 Jobs and Prosperity

Create a strong, efficient local economy, delivering growing numbers of jobs and a diverse range of industrial, commercial and retailing enterprises, which can be easily accessed by residents and visitors; in particular retail development shall be permitted in line with the retail hierarchy, strategy and guidelines.

CO5 Skilled Workforce

Provide for accessible and high-quality learning opportunities in order to support a strong and diverse local economy, support personal development and overcome barriers to taking part in learning and training.

CO6 Ease of Access

Promote sustainable modes of transport in particular public transport, cycling and walking, improve transport infrastructure generally and in particular for those with mobility impairments, and deliver development patterns that are conducive to sustainable modes of transport

CO7 Housing for All

Provide sufficient numbers and range of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the diverse housing needs of the Greater Urban Area. These homes should optimise access to public transport, jobs and services.

CO8 A Supportive Community

Ensure good quality education, health, sport, pastoral and other community-support facilities are provided for and accessible to all residents of the Greater Urban Area; good amenity and community-support facilities are needed in particular in disadvantaged areas.

CO9 Green Infrastructure

Provide for the long-term protection and improvement of the quality of the natural environment and provide ecological and recreational linkages in order to enhance biodiversity, the conservation status of special habitats; air, water and soil quality as well as the amenity value of these areas important to people residing in built-up urban areas.

CO10 Turning towards the River

Make the best use of the river side location of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area by improving the relationship between the built environment and watercourses in urban design terms, developing town centre sites adjacent to watercourses subject to flood risk assessment and appropriate assessment. In particular, enhance the amenity value of the Barrow Track and provide amenity space along the Burrin watercourse. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

CO11 Safe and Healthy Places

Ensure that new buildings and the spaces around them are designed and serviced so they are clean and all people can move safely and comfortably in and around them; provide a range of good quality public open spaces across the Greater Urban Area as well as walking and cycling networks to encourage better public health.

CO12 A Vibrant Culture

Encourage appreciation of and participation in the arts, recreational and leisure activities in order to enrich the lives of local people; in particular develop the concept of a cultural quarter within the town centre focused around VISUAL and the County Museum for residents and visitors and support the clustering of arts and culture-related businesses within this area.

C013 A Bi-lingual town

Promote the bi-lingual status of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and promote the use of Irish as a living language and as part of the town's culture though shop and street signage

CO14 A Sense of Place

Recognise and protect the special identity and distinctive heritage assets within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and ensure future changes are complementary to the existing sense of place with new structures and spaces achieving a high quality of design, respecting residential amenity and contributing positively to the appearance of the public realm.

CO15 Sustainable Energy, Design and Construction

Foster the development of the green economy including the sustainable production of energy and encourage development that minimizes the consumption of energy, water and non-renewable raw materials, reducing the impacts of climate change.

THEMATIC CORE AIMS

CA1 Economic Development and Inward Investment: Encourage the sustainable and dynamic economic development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area building on its pivotal role as a driver of economic growth in County Carlow and within the South-East and Midlands Regions;

CA2 Transport, Movement and Access: Develop a sustainable, efficient and safe transport network within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and deliver spatial development patterns that support universal access and sustainable modes of transport

CA 3 Physical Infrastructure: Ensure the provision of good-quality physical infrastructure to serve existing needs and capacity to enable the future sustainable development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area;

CA 4 Environmental Management: Accommodate growth and change in ways that respect and enhance the environment, mitigate against and adapt to climate change and that utilise energy, water and material goods efficiently;

CA 5 Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning: Provide for quality first, second, third and fourth-level education services along with lifelong learning opportunities, improve access to training and education for residents to improve the local skillbase and provide for student in-migration to access third and fourth level education from outside the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area;

CA 6 Recreation, Amenity and Open Space: Provide and enable the provision of a range of well-maintained and managed open spaces, sporting facilities and recreational facilities accessible to all, convenient to the town centre, people's homes and workplaces, catering to the needs and interests of different groups in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and in support of good public health;

CA 7 Sustainable Communities and Social Inclusion: Foster a sense of place, belonging and a good quality of life for all, by promoting social inclusion and community cohesion and ensuring the adequate provision of community facilities that cater to the diverse needs of individuals and the local society as a whole;

CA 8 Housing: To facilitate the provision of housing in a range of locations to meet the needs of the urban area's population, with particular emphasis on facilitating access to housing to suit different household and tenure needs in a sustainable manner;

CA 9 Heritage: Protect the natural, architectural and archaeological heritage of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the special character of its landscape in light of its contribution to the distinct character and identity of the Area;

CA 10 Urban Design and Built Form: Ensure the delivery of a safe, sustainable and liveable built environment suitable for everyone through good and well-considered design;

CA 11 Land-Use Zoning Objectives: Use land use zonings to shape the orderly development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, reflecting development needs, reducing conflict of uses, protecting resources, make efficient use of urban land and public infrastructure, reducing the need

to travel, promoting the renewal of under-utilized lands or brownfield sites and improving amenities and general quality of life

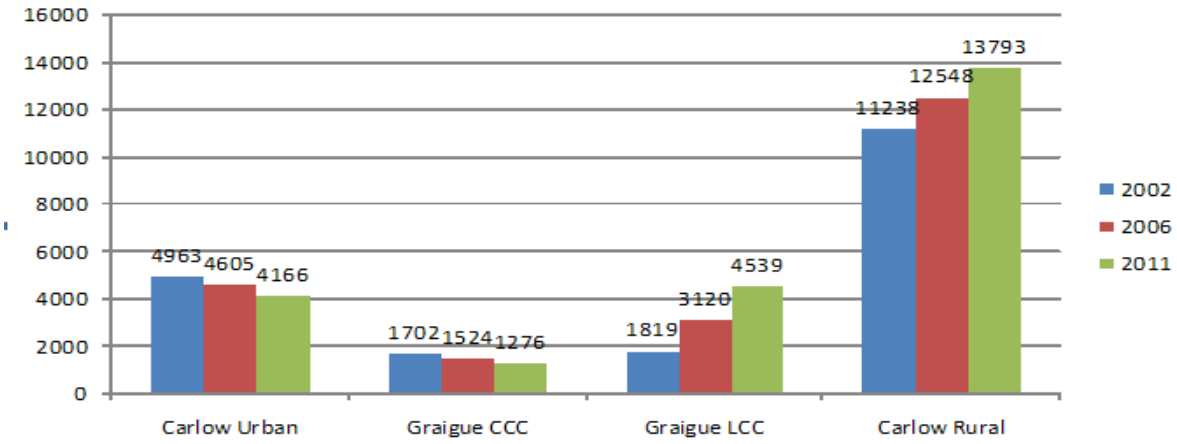
HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENT FOR THE GREATER CARLOW GRAIGUECULLEN URBAN AREA

This Plan identifies the housing land requirement for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area during the Plan period 2012-2018 in order to meet the respective population targets set out in the South-East Regional Planning Guidelines and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines.

Census Results and Trends

The preliminary 2011 census results were available when the Draft Joint Spatial Plan was being prepared, but the population of the Town was not published until April 2012. The preliminary results showed that the population of County Carlow was lower than that estimated in SERPGs by 1,623 persons. While the population of the electoral divisions that make up the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area was increasing overall. This trend of urbanisation is considered in keeping with the spirit of the SERPGs, principles of poly-centric regional development and developing critical mass in gateways, hubs and county towns.

	County Carlow	Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area	Relationship between population of Town and County
CSO 2002	46,014	18,487	40%
CSO 2006	50,349	20,724	41%
SERPG 2010 Baseline figures	56,155	22,126	39%
CSO 2011 preliminary results	54,532	Data not available, estimated in Draft JSP at 22,585	Data not available, estimated in Draft JSP at 41.4%
CSO 2011 final results published April 2012	54,612	23,030	42%



Methodology

The County Laois Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and allocates a housing land requirement figure for Graiguecullen, County Laois and this figure remains unchanged. The County Carlow Core Strategy has not yet been adopted (forthcoming).

The SERPGs used 2010 population estimates as a baseline for producing population projections, while the MRPGs used 2006 census results as baseline for producing population projections. SERPGs included the population of Graiguecullen, County Laois in its population estimates and projections for Carlow Town and the MRPGs and County Laois Core Strategy also provides population projections for Graiguecullen, County Laois.

In response to the preliminary census results, an evidence-based plan-making approach and policy approach of developing critical mass in the County Town and following consultation with the SERA, 1,623 persons was re-allocated from the County Balance to Carlow Town. SERPGs advocate a household size of 2.9, however Census 2011 indicates a lower household size figure, therefore the household size of 2.4 advocated by the MRPGs was used to ensure consistent approach in calculating housing land requirement.

This methodology informed the Joint Spatial Plan Core Strategy and will be reflected in the **County Carlow Core Strategy** (forthcoming) as follows:

	County Carlow	Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area	County Balance	Relationship between Town and County
2006 Census	50,339	20,724		41%
2010 SERPG	56,155	22,126	34,029	39%
2011 Final Census	23,030	54,612		42%
2016 SERPG	59,451	23,768	35,683	39.9%
2016 SERPG as amended by Carlow Town Core Strategy	59,451	23,768 +1,623 **=25,391**	35,683 -1,623 **=34,060**	42%

The detailed CSO 2011 results were made available in April 2012 and show a population of 23,030 in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Using the newly available and finalised census results for Carlow Town, the growth figures and Core Strategy table is proposed as follows.

The projected annual growth in the population of Carlow using the SERPG targets is 205.3 persons per annum when a constant growth rate is assumed. The Plan period is from 2012-2018. Using a flat population growth of 205 persons per annum, 410 persons are added to the 2016 amended population projection figure and this is the figure used for the purposes of projecting population growth during the plan period.

26,623 - 25,391 = 1232 / 6 = 205.3 = annual growth rate between 2016 and 2011

Year	Projected Population	
2016	25,391	
2017	25,596	+205
2018	25,801	+205

Population growth 2012-2018 = 25,801 (2018 Projection) – 23,030 (2011 census) = 2771

Area Concerned	Core Strategy Pop-ulation Increase to 2018	Number of Households 2.4 per household	Dwelling Units per hectare	Housing Land Require-ment Gener-ated	Housing Land Require-ment including 50% headroom	Existing Quant-um Zoned (ha)	Proposed Resident-ial Zoning (ha)
PROPOSED AMENDED CORE STRATEGY							
Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area	2771						
Settlement Strategy							
Carlow Town Centre	50						
Carlow Town – Residential Zoned Lands	1235	514.58	25	20.57	30.87 (10.29)	43	30
Graiguecullen County Laois	395	164	12	13	20	89	20
Carlow Town Environs – Residential Zoned Lands	1090	454.16	12	37.85	57 (18.92)	351	57

The housing land requirement is based on a density of 25 dwelling units per hectare in Carlow Town and 12 dwelling units per hectare in Graiguecullen, County Laois and Carlow Town Environs. Higher densities will be sought in appropriate locations in accordance with Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and policy framework set out within this Plan.

The amount of land zoned for residential use includes 50% headroom (over-zoning) to ensure choice in the market and to take account of some lands not coming forward for development. The population within the two Electoral Divisions of Graigue Carlow and Carlow Urban has declined over last three census periods (2011, 2006, 2002). Development within town centres can encounter difficulties in assembling large sites and providing access to such sites. However, the Core Strategy provides for a small population increase within

the lands zoned Town Centre, in response to Joint Spatial Plan policies to promote town-centre living, particularly on some opportunity sites.

South-East Regional Planning Guideline Population Projections for Carlow Town have been amended in light of discrepancy between the original Regional Planning Guidelines baseline figure (estimated in 2010) and population figures in the 2011 census results (difference of 1,623 in County Carlow). Housing lands within Graiguecullen, County Laois were determined by the Laois County Development Plan 2011-2017 Core Strategy which accords with Midland Regional Planning Guidelines.

(1) **Area Concerned**	**(2)** **Core Strategy Population Increase 2012-2018**	**(3)** **Housing Land Requirement (ha)**	**(4)** **Existing Zoning (ha)**	**(5)** **Proposed Zoning (ha)**
Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area	2771	107	483	107
Settlement Strategy within Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area				
Carlow Town – Town Centre Zoned Lands	50	None	None	None
Carlow Town – Residential Zoned Lands	1235	30	43	30
Graiguecullen, County Laois	395	20	89	20
Carlow Town Environs	1090	57	351	57
Total	**2771**		**482**	**107**

PART 3: THEMATIC STRATEGY

SECTION 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INWARD INVESTMENT

Core Aim 1: *Encourage the sustainable and dynamic economic development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area building on its pivotal role as a driver of economic growth in County Carlow and within the South-East and Midlands regions.*

3.1.1 Economic Profile and Emerging Sectors

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area has significant strengths that can be used to drive further economic development, attract inward investment and encourage local start-up companies. A healthy local economy is essential to underpin a healthy local community. In light of current challenging economic circumstances, a strong focus of this aspect of proper planning and sustainable development is important.

The educational and research institutions based within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area provide a strong competitive advantage to the area. These institutions include: IT Carlow, Carlow College, Teagasc Oak Park Research Campus and Met Eireann. Collectively, these institutions provide local employment, produce highly-skilled graduates, build on the skillset of personnel and establish the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as a place to do research. There is also strong potential for organisational links between education, research activities and commercial innovation and enterprise.

Similar to the wider South-East Region, the Greater Urban Area had an overly-traditional manufacturing base characterised by low-added value sectors and also an under-developed services sector. Manufacturing companies were increasingly drawn to lower-cost economies and as a result the economic profile of the area has changed in recent years with the closure of companies such as Lapple and Braun. This was followed by the opening of high-skilled, high-value added, multi-national companies such as the pharmaceutical company Merck, Sharpe and Dohme (MSD) and software company Unum, while some high-skilled indigenous companies such as Whitelight engaged in the international export of services continue to perform well. This ongoing restructuring of the local economy benefited from the availability of highly-skilled graduates; which both MSD and Unum included in their reasons for the decision to locate in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. However, restructuring has also led to unemployment among lower-skilled sections of the local workforce and this unemployment must be addressed. Unemployment in the construction and development sector is also an issue in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, though it is not as marked as elsewhere.

Historically in Carlow, there was a strong link between commodities produced in the rural hinterland of the Greater Urban Area and the processing of raw materials to make foodstuffs at Greencore, a large former employer to the north of the Greater Urban Area. The reform of the CAP system of agricultural subsidies means that farming will become increasingly commercialised. As a result national policy is focused on the intensification of farming and commodity production coupled with a drive towards increasing high added-value manufacturing using locally-produced commodities to produce food, bio-ethanol and other products for national and international markets. The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is well-located to the centre of rich agricultural lands and well-served by national transport infrastructure, making transport of commodities to a manufacturing base in the Greater Urban Area economically feasible and practicable. The location of the Teagasc National Crop Research Centre on a 225 hectare farm and proposed National Bio-energy and Industrial Biotechnology Research Centre at Oak Park adds to the attractiveness of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Area as a location for a large food manufacturing company or bio-fuel processing company.

In addition, it is anticipated that the significant investment in the cultural and amenity infrastructure of the Greater Urban Area including projects such as the VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre, Carlow County Museum, a marina adjacent to the Town Park and Oak Park Forest Park should encourage tourism and this will grow the services sector of the local economy. A growing services sector could remedy some of the unemployment created by the closure of companies such as Braun and Lapple and the decline in the construction sector. Key to a re-orientation of the local economy towards services and tourism is a strong focus on an attractive and bustling town centre.

The town centre economy is of crucial importance, in its role as a focal point for retail trade and commercial services. The concentration of a wide mix of uses within a small area gives rise to a multiplier effect, where a consumer making a trip to the town centre for the purposes of carrying out a number of tasks or trades, may also avail of other incidental services or retail opportunities. The nurturing of a vibrant and vital town centre is also of essential importance to retain its attractiveness as a social and tourism hub and ensure the Greater Urban Area is perceived as flourishing and successful. The availability of a good quality of life is also important in order to attract and retain mobile enterprise companies and skilled personnel.

The public and semi-state sector also makes a large contribution to the economy of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area including employers such as: IT Carlow, Carlow College, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Carlow Local Authorities, Teagasc, Met Eireann and the HSE. The maintenance of a strong public sector in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area provides the local economy with a stabilising element, especially in the current challenging economic environment.

Policy Context

EU 2020 Strategy – focuses on:

Smart growth: fostering knowledge, innovation, education and the digital society
Sustainable growth: promoting a low-carbon, resource-efficient and competitive economy
Inclusive growth: raising participation in the labour market, the acquisition of skills and the fight against poverty

The European Spatial Development Perspective (1999) and the **National Spatial Strategy (2002)** advocate a polycentric development strategy whereby growth is directed to a dynamic network of centres within each region, which build and sustain a critical mass of population, industry, services and infrastructure. This network is underpinned by synergistic and supportive economic relationships. This is an alternative to a mono-centric spatial structure, whereby the country is over dependent on the one large urban area.

National Recovery Plan 2011-2014
A short-term strategy for a return to sustainable growth in our economy that sets out in detail the measures that will be taken to put our public finances in order, identifies areas of economic activity which will provide growth and employment and specifies the reforms the Government will implement to accelerate growth in those key sectors. Objectives include:

- Building on strong export performance by improving competitiveness
- Enhancing productive capacity by maintaining investment in key infrastructure projects and in education.
- Removing barriers to employment
- Implement sector-specific measures to assist an increase to exports as well as an increase in domestic demand
- Supporting innovation through the innovation fund, other enterprise supports and the tax system and encourage small business development

Horizon 2020 IDA Strategy (2010) sets specific targets to be achieved by 2014:

- Creation of 62,000 new jobs
- Locating of 50% of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) outside Cork and Dublin
- Annual investment by clients of €1.7bn in research, development and innovation in Ireland.

The strategy highlights the essential importance of transport, energy and broadband infrastructure and the importance of keeping infrastructural charges and development contributions competitive in order to attract FDI to areas outside Dublin and Cork.

Transforming Irish Industry Enterprise Ireland Strategy 2008-2010 focuses on:

- Growing export sales
- Scaling up Irish companies
- Increasing high value research and development spend
- Driving the establishment of High Potential Start Up enterprises and delivering 50% of supported-start ups outside the Dublin Region.

It identifies existing growth sectors: food, environment, industrial sciences, life sciences, and software. It also identifies emerging growth sectors: environmental products and services, and construction products and services. Enterprise Ireland is also increasing its focus on specific growth sectors such as internationally traded services and cleantech sectors. It is anticipated that Enterprise Ireland client companies will create 60,000 jobs by 2016.

Building Ireland's Smart Economy: A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal (Dept of Taoiseach 2008) highlights six actions

- Securing the Enterprise Economy
- Building the Ideas Economy – Creating 'The Innovation Island'
- Enhancing the Environment and Securing Energy Supplies
- Investing in Critical Infrastructure
- Efficient and Effective Public Services
- Smart Regulation

Developing Ireland's Green Economy (Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources 2009) includes a recommendation for the designation of Green Zones to provide an opportunity for greater clustering and brand development of green economy activities and facilities. It also states that the provision of state-of-the-art environmentally friendly buildings and infrastructures (energy, water, waste treatment, etc.) in a green business park would support the development of the Green Economy.

Report of Innovation Taskforce (2010) emphasises the importance of broadband infrastructure and laboratory facilities for the development of sectors such as Information, Communication Technology (ICT), life sciences and green technology. It suggests that broadband provision be provided for in Local Authority Plans and infrastructural works.

Food Harvest 2020 – A Vision for Irish Agri-Food and Fisheries – (2010) Medium term strategy for the development of the agri-food, drinks, forestry and fisheries sector. Food Harvest 2020 is a strategic vision including ambitious targets to grow its exports of food and beverages by over 40% to €12 billion annually, increase the value of primary production by farmers and fishermen by €1.5 billion and value added processing by €3 billion and with the ending of milk quotas in 2015 grow milk output by an estimated 50%. Two pillars of growth strategy are smart growth (being innovative, investing in research, focusing on what the consumer wants, applying lean manufacturing techniques and ensuring scale at every level to maximise cost competitiveness) and green growth (build in a meaningful way on Ireland's green image to scientifically prove, and then market, the environmental sustainability of Ireland's food production systems.)

Teagasc - Towards 2030 Teagasc's Role in Transforming Ireland's Agri-food Sector and the Wider Bioeconomy (2008) Teagasc undertook a detailed 18-month technology foresight exercise to identify the research, innovation and support priorities for the next quarter century. Teagasc envisages that in 2030 the agri-food sector will be a core element of a bioeconomy that will be knowledge-based, innovation-driven, market-led and internationally competitive. The agri-food and wider bioeconomy will comprise four pillars: food production and processing, value-added food processing, agri-environmental products and services, energy and bio-processing. In this context Teagasc will continue to be, an organisation that supports science-based innovation in the sector, a key participant in the national strategy for science, technology and

innovation (STI) and internationally recognised for its excellence in supporting science-based innovation and the development of the knowledge-based bioeconomy.

The Strategy Document includes reference to proposals for A National Bioenergy and Industrial Biotechnology Centre by a research consortium involving Teagasc, the NUI colleges at Galway, Cork, Maynooth and Dublin, Trinity College Dublin and IT Carlow. The aim is to exploit biotechnology to generate chemicals, energy and materials from biomass and help develop the bio-refinery concept. This is now being considered for funding by Enterprise Ireland.

South-East Regional Bio-energy Implementation Plan 2008-2013

The key focus of the Plan is to analyse the scope and potential for bioenergy development in the Region, to identify and reduce barriers to the development of the sector and to harmonise the planning requirements for bioenergy development across the Region. The key objective of the Plan is to make the South-East a leader in the development of bioenergy in Ireland. This Plan was prepared in the context of emphasis on the importance of energy policy plays and energy production in fuelling a growing economy.

The Plan makes reference to the establishment of a National Bioenergy and Industrial Biotechnology Centre (NBIBC) with its main operations in Carlow and the establishment of a research fund to facilitate a virtual centre between all the main research labs in this area nationally. The initiative which is being progressed in the Region, represents a collaboration between Teagasc National Crop Research Centre, Carlow and participating laboratories in NUI Galway, NUI Cork, NUI Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, IT Carlow and NUI Maynooth. Teagasc Oak Park is taking a lead role in promoting this initiative. The NBIBC will carry out research in a range of areas including the transformation of lignocellulose for bioethanol which is the next generation of economic biofuel, the development of novel plants designed specifically for energy purposes, production of other high-value biomolecules and novel enzymatic and microbial engineering.

Retail Planning Guidelines (DoEHLG 2005) outlines a spatial framework for directing different types and sizes of retail development. The focus on maintaining the vibrancy and vitality of town centres underpins the guidelines. New Draft Retail Planning Guidelines were published in late 2011.

DKM Economic Consultants and RPS Planning and Environment (2009) An Economic Profile of Carlow – an Input to the County's Economic Strategy Review

Carlow County Development Board (2009) – Review of Carlow County Development Board Strategy mid 2009-end 2012, A Strategy for the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of County Carlow 2002-2012

Laois County Development Board (2009) – Review of Laois County Development Board Strategy Realising Our Potential 2002-2012

Fáilte Ireland: Strategy to Develop Irish Cycle Tourism (2007) recommends a designated cycling network around the country including the provision of traffic-free routes, as well as an improvement of current routes with better sign posting, road surfaces and greater safety for the cyclist.

Failte Ireland South-East Regional Tourism Development Plan 2008-2010
Key Market Focus: more domestic holiday visitors, car-touring British visitors, larger share of European visitors, grow number of US and cruise visitors

Strategic Goals:

- Position region as leading heritage destination
- Expand cultural events and other events on offer, positioning the South-East as a happening place
- Develop water and land-based access and recreational activities
- Roll out family fun and resorts activities
- Improve transport to and within the region

In the process of achieving these goals the following guiding principles will be key to success:

- Protect Ireland's principal strengths – people, the natural environment, and sense of place
- Ensure a focus on quality and economic value
- Develop attractors which fill a gap for a defined market demand
- Spread benefits around the region where this meets market needs and has community support
- Develop facilities that benefit residents and visitors alike
- Work closely with public authorities, agencies and other stakeholders to achieve objectives.

The goals will be achieved by pursuing a set of strategies and programme of actions in product development, marketing and business supports. Fáilte Ireland South-East will work with and facilitate public and private sector partners and other stakeholders to achieve the goals set out in this plan.

Failte Ireland (2011) Destination South-East Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2011-2013

Murray O Laoire Architects (2000) Carlow 800 Celebrating a Civic Vision for the 21st Century

Economic Development Objectives

ECN O01	Build on the role of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as the principal driver for economic development in County Carlow and reflecting its designation as a County Town in the South-East Regional Planning Guidelines, service town in the Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines and its designation as a Level 1 Tier 3 retail town and its location close to county boundaries
ECN O02	Utilise the Joint Spatial Plan policy framework to stimulate the expansion and diversification of the local economy, including the preparation of development briefs and steer the evolution of the local economy so that it accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the Greater Urban Area
ECN O03	Encourage a collaborative, positive and strategic approach to economic planning and development, in particular strengthening linkages between educational, research and enterprise activities and also strengthening linkages between commodity production in the rural hinterland and the potential for related urban-based manufacturing or processing
ECN O04	Work with other key agencies to cultivate a receptive administrative environment that is conducive to local entrepreneurship in small and medium enterprise sector and as well as large-scale inward investment
ECN O05	Zone sufficient land in appropriate locations for industrial and enterprise development, having regard to infrastructure and the core strategy
ECN O06	Make efficient use of improved infrastructure and services including the road, rail, broadband and water networks to support economic development and pursue funding for other infrastructural improvements important to the future economic health of the local economy.
ECN O07	Foster a compact and permeable town centre in order to support and generate synergistic commercial and retail relationships, to ensure the town centre is a bustling and attractive social and recreational hub that continuously builds on its potential to draw in locals and visitors
ECN O08	Promote the high quality of life within the Greater Urban Area in order to attract mobile enterprise investment and skilled workers
ECN O09	Grow the tourism share of the economy of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area by promoting, encouraging and facilitating its sustainable development

Industry and Enterprise

Foreign Direct Investment

The success of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area in attracting inward investment is a reflection of the combined efforts of the enterprise agencies, notably Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, and the local authorities. This experience has shown that the components of attracting successful inward investment include:

- The excellent ambassadorial work of the 'can do' people at IDA Ireland
- The work of Local Authorities of inviting in and supporting inward investors throughout the investment decision process
- The supportive environment for enterprise created by the Irish Government
- The overwhelmingly positive experience of other U.S. companies operating in Ireland
- The availability of the high speed fibre-broadband

IDA Ireland's Strategy for County Carlow within the South-East Region is to progress the development of a knowledge economy so that the county, and particularly the county town of Carlow, can compete both nationally and internationally for foreign direct investment.

While Carlow is promoted as an integral part of the South-East Region, it is also within range of the Greater Dublin region, with all of the infrastructure and services of the Capital within relatively easy reach. The target sectors for the Region reflect national policy in seeking to build a competitive knowledge economy which is seen as particularly important for Ireland in competing for high value foreign direct investment (FDI). Key ingredients for the creation of a successful knowledge economy are education, research and development and innovation. In this regard Carlow is well placed to adapt to Ireland's changing economic landscape.

Indigenous Enterprise

Enterprise Ireland data indicates a diverse indigenous enterprise base with 53 companies receiving assistance locally from the organisation which is strongly focused on assisting high-potential start up companies.

Industry and jobs have also been created in the county through the support of the NDP funded Carlow County Enterprise Board (CEB). The Carlow CEB facilitates the creation and development of micro-enterprises, along with the promotion of local development, by providing business information, advice and mentoring amongst several other supports. The Enterprise Board provides a pivotal role in bringing start-up businesses and micro enterprises to the stage where they have sufficient mass to avail of the services offered by Enterprise Ireland. Local companies supported in the past under these CEB initiatives include Netwatch (Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist), Sunshine Juices (Ulster Bank 2007 Business Achievers Award), Hot Irishman (World Young Business Achiever Award), Codd Mushrooms (Employing 75 people) and Whitelite Automation (Employing 25 people).

Carlow CEB is the agency responsible for the development of Carlow Community Enterprise Centres Ltd (CCECL), which was established to provide suitable and affordable space for new businesses. Enterprise House has since emerged from this initiative, which provides incubation space for start up businesses approximately 2km from the town centre.

Agri-business and Research Activities

In 2003, it was decided to relocate Teagasc to a new headquarters in Oak Park, to the north of Carlow Town Centre on the site of the existing National Arable Crop Research Centre. Teagasc is the semi-state body under the Department of Agriculture and Food that acts as the national research and advisory body for the agriculture and food industry. With Teagasc playing a central role in creating knowledge for the agriculture and food sectors, the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, with its prosperous agricultural hinterland, in turn provided a very attractive environment for the location of an agribusiness industry.

The research centre at Oak Park offers a high quality research station with the potential advantages of access to expertise and technical facilities that the industry can avail of. The Centre possesses laboratories and workshops equipped with the up-to-date technology for analytical and research purposes; thereby enabling Irish agriculture to keep pace with rapidly changing technology and research.

Oak Park offers a range of programmes to commercial farmers including farm planning, intensive agronomy and business appraisal, reflecting a renewed emphasis on farming for profit. The business service provides support on whole farm appraisal and planning as well as crop, machinery and labour efficiencies. There are other services on offer such as The Rural Development Programme, which provides services to individuals and groups who want to evaluate business opportunities in alternative enterprises such as organic farming, rural tourism, equine, husbandry, poultry, deer and goat production and artisan foods. In addition, The Teagasc Adult Training Programme provides an extensive range of courses to inform and train farmers in relation to business and technology developments and nutrient management.

In addition Teagasc is also involved in research in the bioenergy/biofuels area, an increasing area of interest as a result of declining margins in other agricultural sectors. The National Centre for Arable Crops Research at Oak Park runs biotechnology and bioenergy programmes. Oak Park is also the site of the proposed National Bio-energy and Industrial Biotechnology Research Centre (NBIBC), an investment worth an estimated €45m to the local economy.

The continued development and upgrading of its facilities by Teagasc is a clear indication of its commitment to this area of research and to the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area over the long-term. Teagasc, through its various research centre, also collaborates closely with IT Carlow.

Third and Fourth-Level Institutions

A significant competitive advantage for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Area is that it is home to two third level academic institutions: the Institute of Technology Carlow (ITC) and Carlow College (CC). Both institutions contribute significantly to the economic activity of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area by producing a highly qualified pool of educated graduates who are keen to locate in the local catchment area. The Greater Urban Area's third level academic base has been a key economic driver with both Merck Sharpe and Dohme and Unum including it among the key reasons for the decision to locate in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

In addition, education itself is the biggest industry in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and key to its future prosperity, with a third-level student population in excess of 5,500 and a combined full-time equivalent staff of around 500 in third-level institutions.

Institute of Technology Carlow (ITC)

ITC has approximately 5,000 students (produces almost 1,000 graduates per annum), consisting of 3,500 full time and 1,500 part time students. However, a significant number of these go onto further study. The Institute has approximately 400 full-time equivalent staff members. This employment in turn generates a vast amount of indirect employment through various knock-on effects throughout the county and the region which in turn adds to the economic output of the region.

Around 17% of ITC's graduates were employed locally. Thus there are opportunities in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area for companies seeking to locate in Ireland who need access to a ready supply of graduate workers with diverse skills.

Industry-Academic Collaboration

In addition to its academic programmes, ITC has significant educational and research partnerships and collaborations with national and international industries and higher educational institutions in Europe (approximately 58 European partner institutions across 16 countries), Asia and the US. ITC is also helping to contribute to the national objective of boosting Ireland's academic reputation in China through the establishment of formal links between Irish higher educational providers and China's leading institutes of learning. For example ITC-accredited computing programmes are now being delivered in Henan University of Finance and Economics in China. The Institute also has a collaborative relationship with Teagasc Oak Park Research Centre and engaged in delivering the National Bioenergy and Industrial Biotechnology Centre (NBIBC) in the Greater Urban Area. ITC was selected as model of industry-academic collaboration by the Department of the Taoiseach in 2007.

ITC's Research Development and Innovation (RDI) activities are complemented by various campus-based specialist centres and campus companies which provide a comprehensive range of infrastructure, business support services and specialised resources for start-up companies before and during their foundation.

In regard to innovation and small firms, the Innovation Voucher Scheme, set up by Government in March 2007, is administered by Enterprise Ireland. Under the scheme small businesses can apply for vouchers which can be used for research on their behalf in institutes of technologies, universities and other organisations. Under the scheme so far ITC has worked with the most companies having completed a total of 29 innovation research projects out of 204 research projects completed by the scheme so far.

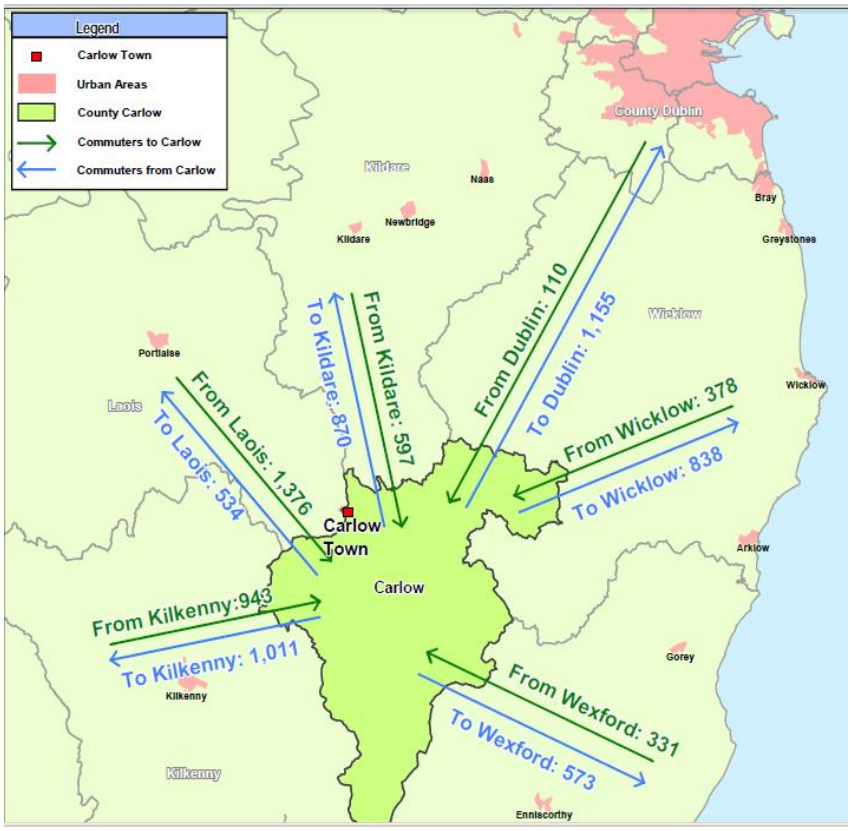
Carlow College

Carlow College, founded in 1782, offers a wide range of courses in humanities and social studies to its 500 strong student population at graduate and post-graduate levels. In 2007, Carlow College agreed a strategic collaborative partnership with Trinity College Dublin in the humanities and social sciences areas. The two institutions recognised the potential for exploiting their strong synergies particularly in the South Leinster region: TCD as a city university renowned for its research, Carlow College as a regional hub engaged in the delivery of flexible programmes in the humanities and social sciences.

Labour Resource of Commuters

Carlow's location in proximity to the Greater Dublin Area and large employment centres on the outskirts of Dublin City and County, has resulted in several positive 'spillover' effects for the county. Over the past decade, the County's population swelled with supply and affordability constraints in the Dublin housing market until 2007, and a general behavioural shift towards greater commuting distances. While this trend may have diminished, Carlow is now in a position to capitalise on this commuting trend, by encouraging firms to locate in a county with a pool of experienced workers who currently commute from Carlow to their place of work.

POWCAR dataset (Place of Work Census Anonymised Records 2006), suggests that over 5,000 of Carlow's residents are working outside Carlow, this is a significant labour resource available to Greater Carlow Graiguecullen which should be capitalised on to attract new businesses. Similarly the inter- regional role of the Greater Urban Area is also reflected in the fact that almost 4,000 residents from across the State work in Carlow, the majority from Laois, followed by Kilkenny, Kildare, Wicklow and Wexford.



Place of Work Commuting Census of Anonymised Records 2006

Industry and Enterprise Policies

ECN P01 Collaborate with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, County Enterprise Boards, Teagasc, Institute of Technology Carlow and Carlow College to drive growth in the industrial and enterprise base of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

ECN P02 Foster the development of clusters of complementary enterprises and specialist skills in particular sectors, including the following:

- Green economy including renewable energy
- Pharmaceutical research, development and production
- Food science, engineering and production
- Process engineering and manufacturing
- Bio-fuel research, development and production
- Life Sciences including Biotechnology
- Environmental Science and Bio-Energy
- Information Communication Technology and Digital Media
- Financial services
- Project management
- Business, management, sales and human resources

ECN P03 Steer proposals for labour-intensive enterprise development towards the town centre locations;

ECN P04 Direct industrial or enterprise developments with high space requirements towards suitable opportunity sites or serviced enterprise areas in order to make efficient use of existing transport, broadband and water services and with a view to creating small clusters of businesses locating together to achieve economies of scale

ECN P05 Work with relevant agencies to facilitate the full occupation of industrial, enterprise and business parks within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

ECN P06 Market the advantages of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as a suitable location for large-scale food production or other types of commodity processing such as bio-energy production;

ECN P07 Continue to facilitate and promote the development of the third and fourth-level education and research base in the Greater Urban Area in order enhance its competitiveness and strengthen the collaborative links between education and industry

ECN P08 Maintain the integrity of Oak Park as a field and laboratory research centre and facilitate the expansion of field and laboratory research and development carried out at the Oak Park Research Centre including the National Centre for Arable Crops Research and facilitate the development of a National Bioenergy and Industrial Biotechnology Centre at Oak Park

ECN P09 Foster the development of local start-up enterprises and encourage the full use of existing enterprise incubator space at IT Carlow and Enterprise House on O'Brien Road and facilitate the provision of additional incubator space

ECN P10 Support labour activation initiatives, research development and innovation initiatives, initiatives involving technical support, training and mentoring to entrepreneurs operated by IT Carlow and the County Enterprise Boards

Retail Development

Retail development is an important component of the local economy and is subject to a spatial policy context specific to different types and quantums of retailing. The Carlow Retail Strategy 2009-2015 relates to Carlow Town as well as Carlow County, the Laois Retail Strategy 2011-2017 relates to the County as a whole. Retail Strategy 2012-2018 relating to the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area was prepared on behalf of Carlow Local Authorities and Laois County Council to inform the Joint Spatial Plan retail hierarchy and specific policy framework (Appendix 5).

The key national policy focus in managing retail development is the protection and enhancement of the vitality and viability of the town centre. A Core Retail Area within the zoned town centre comprises Tullow Street, Dublin Street, the Barrow Track, Kennedy Avenue, Plas na Saoirse, Barrack Street including Fairgreen and Hanover. It is noted that the retail core is situated within the wider town centre area which contains a variety of other town centre activities including retail uses. The Joint Retail Hierarchy prepared as part of this Plan places the Core Retail Area, followed by the remainder of the town centre at the top of the hierarchy, followed by the Sleaty District Centre and Sandhills District Centre and then smaller neighbourhood centres. Proposals for retail development will be considered having regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

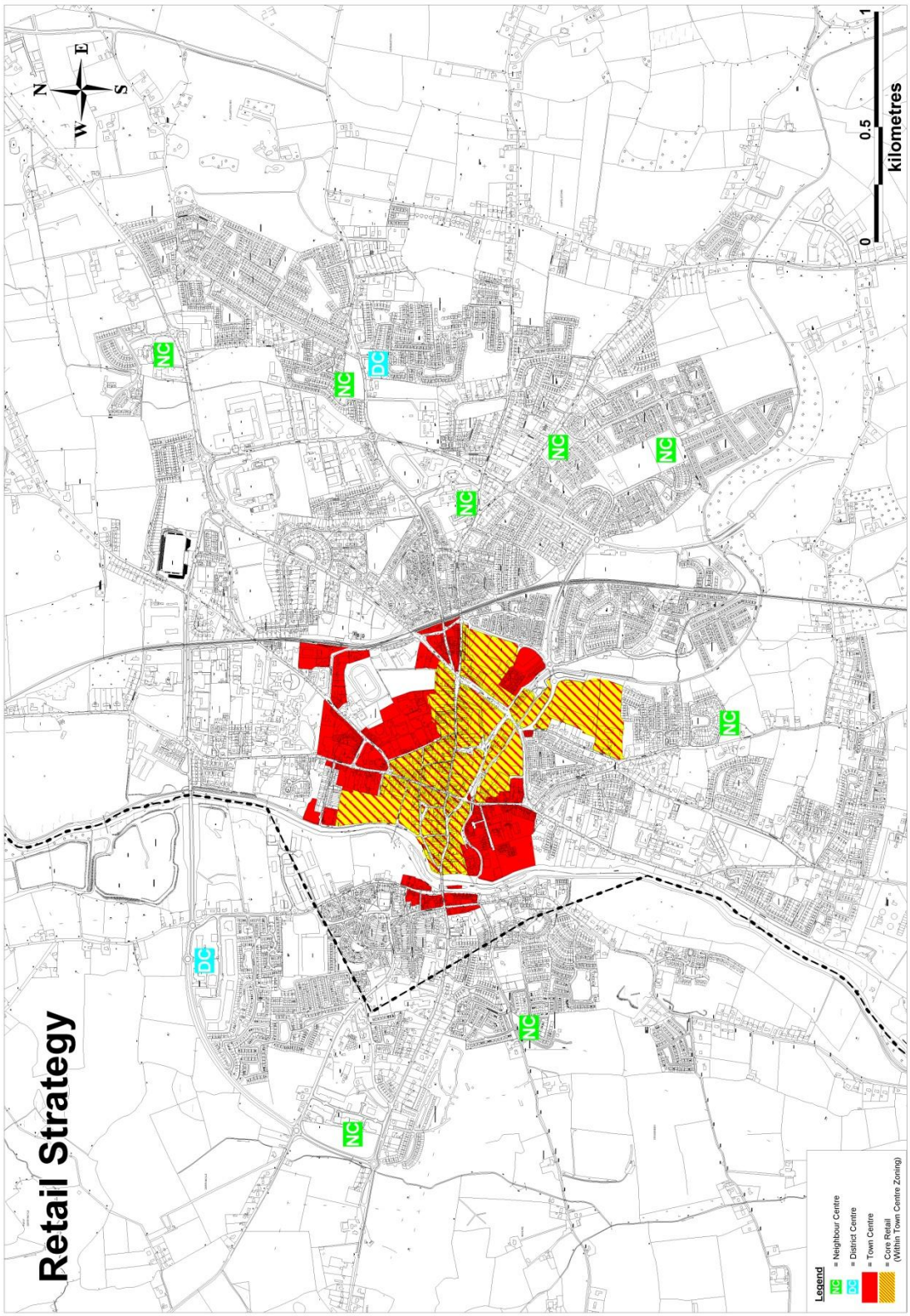
Retail Policies

ECN P11 Ensure retail proposals are determined having regard to the Joint Retail Hierarchy included in this Plan, the Joint Retail Policy Document and the Retail Planning Guidelines 2005 or as amended and do not undermine or erode the vitality or vibrancy of Carlow Town Centre;

ECN P12 Support the retail primacy of Carlow Town Centre within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and County Carlow and the focus for comparison retail development in accordance with the Retail Strategy and Retail Planning Guidelines 2005 or as amended;

ECN P13 Provide for the development of an appropriate quantum and type of retail uses at district centres and neighbourhood centres in accordance with the Joint Retail Hierarchy and Retail Strategy and Retail Planning Guidelines 2005 or as amended; Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

ECN P14 Facilitate the take-up of purpose-built retail warehousing units for the sale of bulky goods in appropriate locations;



Retail Hierarchy(Core Strategy)

Commercial Services

Professional services such as banking, legal and insurance services, trade services such as dry-cleaning and tailoring and catering services including restaurants, public houses and cafes are all well-suited to town centre locations and support the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre. A smaller quantum and range of these types of services are also suited to District and Neighbourhood Centres.

The provision of civic services such As a library and citizen advice bureau in the town centre along with religious and community services serve to attract people into the town centre supporting its vitality and means that people are more likely to avail of town centre retail and commercial services.

The diverse range of town functions including retail, commercial, civic, religious and community are mutually supportive. The location of these types of uses in the town centre helps bolster its central role in the lives of residents. A visually appealing town centre is important; people are more likely to spend time in a safe, attractive and well-maintained town centre.

Policies

ECN P15 Encourage the provision of commercial services, civic, religious and high-order community services within Carlow Town Centre to foster synergistic relationships between different uses and support its vitality and vibrancy

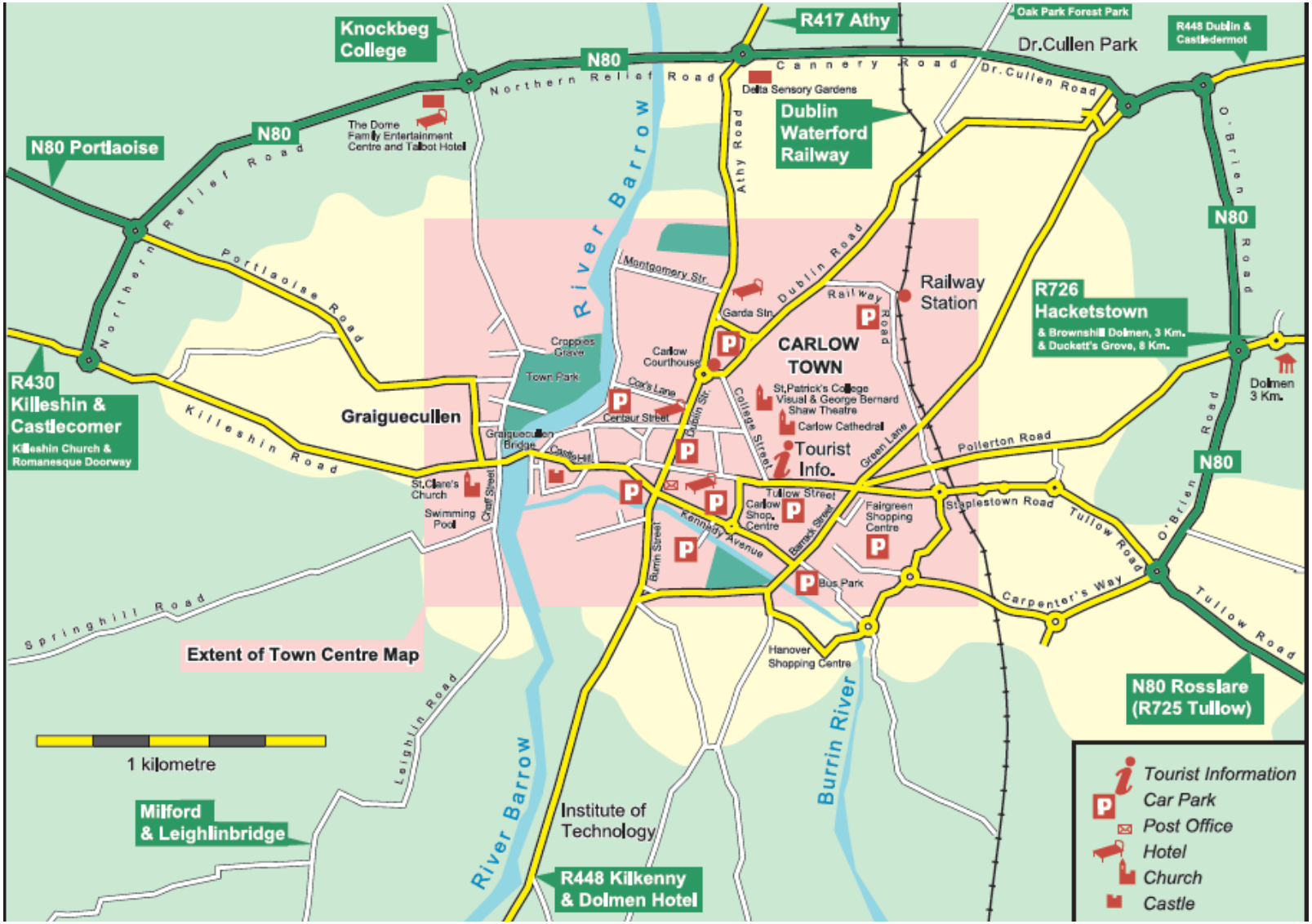
ECN P16 Encourage the provision of commercial services of an appropriate scale and order within designated district and neighbourhood centres

ECN P16 (A) Where an over-concentration of certain uses occurs within a small area of the town centre, further similar uses may not be permitted where it is considered that a further proliferation of such uses would adversely affect the vitality and vibrancy of part of the town centre, such uses may include turf accountants and hot-food takeaways. This policy will be balanced against vacancy and dereliction considerations.

Tourism

There has been significant public investment in tourism infrastructure in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area in recent years including VISUAL, the development of a purpose-designed County Museum and the improvement of the public realm relating to Carlow Castle. Enhanced public amenities for locals as well as visitors include the development of Oak Park Forest Park, the development of the Town Park, along with a floating pontoon and slip for boats and improvements to the Barrow Track and the development of the Delta Sensory Gardens. The private sector has also invested in this sector with two hotels being constructed in recent years.

The Cultural Quarter is an area within Carlow Town Centre which contains a number of cultural uses including the VISUAL, Carlow College, the Carlow County Museum, Carlow Tourism Office and the library. It is intended to brand this area and encourage the development of further cultural uses (Part 4 Section 1).



Tourism Map of Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

Eigse Arts Festival

The Eigse Arts Festival was founded in 1979 and is an annual 10-day multi-disciplinary festival. Éigse is Irish for poetry gatherings, indicating its initial strong focus on Irish and poetry. The content has since broadened to showcase a diverse range of arts and cultural events. The festival is run in conjunction with VISUAL and The George Bernard Shaw Theatre.

Delta Sensory Gardens

The gardens situated on a two and a half acre site were designed to provide a multi-sensory experience through the sight, touch, smell, and sound of plants, water features and other elements. Delta Sensory Gardens, officially opened in May 2007 consists of 16 interconnecting gardens including a health and wellness garden having opened recently. The award winning gardens have a therapeutic focus and benefit people of all abilities with a mix of formal and informal landscaping. The gardens are located to the rear of the Strawhall Industrial Estate, south of Cannery Road and east of the Athy Road. Although the gardens are well-signposted, pedestrian and cycle access to the gardens is poor and vehicular access is unattractive. Improvements to the access to the gardens would be desirable.

Relevant and adapted elements of Bord Failte SWOT of Tourism in the South-East Region	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Cultural Heritage	Low international awareness
Festivals, Arts and Events	Poor signposting
Landscape, including the rivers	Access and interpretation at historic sites
Climate (sunny South-East)	Public transport in evenings
Good transport access to Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and compact nature of town allows for easy movement within town	Seasonability and limited all-weather facilities
Strong domestic image and awareness	Some over-dependence on volunteers
Opportunities	**Threats**
Enhanced heritage and cultural linkages	Over-dependence on domestic tourism
Further development of festivals and arts	Further decline in international car-borne visitors and ferry services
Enhancement of environmental quality of the town centre	Environmental degradation
Improved access and interpretation of heritage assets	Urban behavioural issues
Gardens	
River-basin and water-based activities	
Waterfronts and cultural enhancements	
Food and restaurants	
Further development of walking and cycling routes	
Improve product integration and cross-selling	

Tourism Policies

ECN P17 Protect special natural, archaeological and architectural heritage assets along with the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre in order to support the development of tourism in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

ECN P18 Promote the marketing of the Cultural Quarter within Carlow Town Centre

ECN P19 Support and enhance the use of the exhibition and performance spaces at the VISUAL and the George Bernard Shaw Theatre in order to enrich the lives of local people as well as provide a high quality cultural experience for visitors

ECN P20 Develop, maintain and enhance the County Museum's collections and curatorship of artefacts and archives, its interpretation of local history and heritage and its displays and exhibits, in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland

ECN P21 Support heritage interpretation and initiatives to improve access to the arts and heritage such as the Carlow Heritage Trail, Heritage Week and other programmes or initiatives

ECN P22 Encourage the continued success of the annual Eigse festival in promoting cultural diversity, community spirit and establishing Carlow as a centre of artistic excellence

ECN P23 Foster the hosting of festivals in order to increase visitor numbers and increase the profile of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as a visitor destination

ECN P24 Encourage the development of commercial services for tourists subject to general planning considerations

Public Sector Employment

ECN P25 Maintain and facilitate the expansion of employment opportunities in the civil, public or semi-state sector in light of its importance to the robustness and diversity of the Greater Urban Area's local economy and as a stabilising influence in a challenging economic climate and in particular support and facilitate the decentralisation of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to Carlow Town.

Home-based Economic Activities Policies

Home-based activities are defined as small-scale commercial activities, which are secondary to the use of the premises as a residence and are permitted where the primary use of the dwelling remains residential and where the amenity of surrounding residences is not adversely affected. The planning authority, in considering applications for such uses, will consider the following:

- The nature and extent of the work;
- The effects on the amenities of adjoining properties particularly as regards hours of operation, noise and general disturbance;
- The anticipated levels of traffic generation; and
- The generation, storage and collection of waste.

Over the counter services, business signage, advertising hoardings, security gates/grills and excessive security lights are not normally appropriate in a residential area and should be subject to appropriate restrictions. The local authority may grant a temporary permission of two/three years for home-based economic activities to facilitate on-going monitoring of the activity.

ECN P26 Support home-based economic activities where these are ancillary to the main use of the property as a dwelling house and subject to traffic and residential amenity considerations

Live Work Units

A live work unit is a single unit or space within a building that is both a place to live and a place of business or commerce. It is distinct from a purely residential use. The development of live work units will be encouraged as they can lead to a more sustainable land use pattern in an area by providing for a mix of uses, ensuring a balance between day and night time activity and reducing commuting. They will be permitted in town centres or district centres, they may be considered in other zones, assessed on their individual merits, in particular on sites which have a frontage onto main or radial routes into the town. In considering applications for live work units, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

- Live work units in residential areas and residential blocks shall be located at ground floor or street level, unless a local plan or framework plan for an area has identified the street for retail use or complementary uses such as cafés, restaurants or bars.
- Live work units shall constitute part of the overall quantum of residential units in relation to Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2011.
- The residential component of a live work unit shall comply with Design Standards for New apartments (DoEHLG, 2007). The commercial component of each live work unit shall have a

minimum floor area equivalent to or greater than the residential floor area of the live work unit. The two separate elements must be integrated and the commercial element should not be physically separated or divided from the residential element.

- The live work units shall be assessed as a single unit for the purpose of determining financial levies/contributions.
- The minimum internal floor to ceiling height of live work units shall be 4 – 4.5 metres and the architectural design should be sufficiently open and transparent to allow the commercial use to illuminate and enliven the street.
- Separate provision shall be made for storage and refuse storage for the residential and commercial components of live work units.

ECN P27 Support the development of purpose-built or retro-fitted live-work units within the town centre or district centres, ensuring that such units are fit-for-purpose

Rural Development

The Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area relates primarily to urbanised lands, however the Carlow Town Environs Area and to a lesser extent Graiguecullen, County Laois contain lands in agricultural use or other land-based uses. Rural development proposals including proposals for quarrying, agricultural structures, forestry will be considered in the context of the County Carlow Development Plan 2009-2015 or as amended and the County Laois Development Plan 2011-2017, as relevant.

SECTION 2: TRANSPORT MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

Core Aim 2: *Develop a sustainable, efficient and safe transport network within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and deliver spatial development patterns that facilitate universal access and sustainable modes of transport*

National Context:

Smarter Travel- A Sustainable Transport Future –A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 -2020
In 2009, government published the above policy document which concluded that current transport and travel trends in Ireland are unsustainable and outlined a range of actions that will have complementary impacts in terms of travel demand and emissions including the following:

- Actions to reduce distance travelled by private car and to encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in close proximity to residential and employment areas to encourage people to live in close proximity to their place of work
- Actions aimed at ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking
- Actions aimed at strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets set in the policy document

Transport 21
Transport 21 is a capital investment framework agreed by the Government for the development of transport infrastructure and services for the period 2006 to 2015. It provides for investment in national roads, public transport and regional airports. Transport 21 includes the objective of affecting a significant modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking.

National Cycle Policy Framework
The National Cycle Policy Framework was introduced in April 2009 by the Department of Transport and has a mission to create a strong cycling culture in Ireland. The vision is that all cities, towns, villages and rural areas will be bicycle friendly. Aims include:

- Introduce cycle-friendly routes to schools, better cycle parking facilities in schools and promote safe cycling skills in school classrooms
- Reduce the volume of through traffic in the vicinity of schools and colleges

- Invest in better, safer cycle routes around the country for commuters, leisure cyclists and visitors. (Improve existing cycle routes and introduce new routes to best international standards)
- Increase cycling's share of the market, from 2% to 10%
- Invest in new, safe bike parking facilities in towns and cities around the country
- Introduce a new approach to the design of urban roads to better recognise the needs of cyclists and pedestrians.
- Retrofit major road junctions and roadways in key cities and towns to make them cycle-friendly.
- Develop cycling demonstration towns showing best practice in cycle-friendly urban planning, design and engineering.

Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines 2012 sets out new policies in relation to the management of the national road network, the integration of land use and transport decisions and strategies to shift the modal split.

Fáilte Ireland: Strategy to Develop Irish Cycle Tourism (2007) recommends a designated cycling network around the country including the provision of traffic-free routes, as well as an improvement of current routes with better sign posting, road surfaces and greater safety for the cyclist.

Provision of Cycling Facilities National Manual for Urban Areas (2006) includes detailed measures for integrating cycling infrastructure into the public realm.

National Secondary Roads Needs Study (NRA 2010) With the construction of the national motorway network completed, the NRA focused its attention on addressing deficiencies in the National Secondary Road (NSR) network. To that end, it commissioned the NSR Needs Study to identify an optimal future NSR network, which offers value for money. Of relevance to the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is the assessment of the N80. Specific improvements are recommended therein.

National Disability Strategy 2004 builds on existing policy and legislation including the Employment Equality Act 1998, the Equal Status Act 2000, the Equality Act 2004 and the Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 and the policy of mainstreaming service provision for people with disabilities within the State agencies that provide the service to citizens generally.

European Charter of Pedestrian Rights (1988) European Parliament:

- The pedestrian has the right to live in a healthy environment and freely to enjoy the amenities offered by public areas under conditions that adequately safeguard both physical and psychological well-being.
- The pedestrian has the right to live in urban and village centres tailored to the needs of human beings and not to the needs of the car and to have amenities within walking or cycling distance.
- Children, the elderly and the disabled have the right to expect towns to be places of easy social contact and not places that aggravate their inherent weakness.
- The disabled have the right to specify measures to maximise mobility, such as the elimination of architectural obstacles and the adequate equipping of public transport.
- The Charter includes recommendations on noise emissions, the creation of 'green lungs', control of speed limits through traffic calming

Regional Context

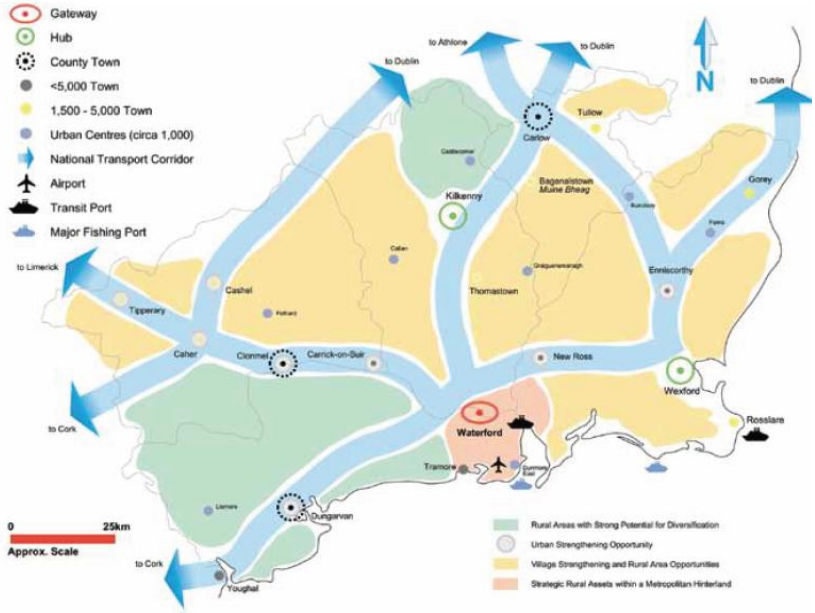
Sustainable regional transportation policy for the South-East and Midlands Regions are currently being developed. Both the South-East and Midlands RPGs emphasise the importance of upgrading the N80 to facilitate regional development and strengthen economic links within and between regions.

Transport Objectives

TRANS O01	Support the maintenance and improvement of the national transport corridors serving Carlow, in light of their importance in the positioning of the Greater Urban Area and as essential for its economic development
TRANS O02	Support the implementation of national transport policy as expressed in *Transport 21*, *Sustainable Transport Future –A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020* and *The National Cycle Policy Framework*
TRANS O03	Develop a Sustainable Transport Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and implement its recommendations in coordination with funding agencies, government departments and the National Transport Authority
TRANS O04	Establish the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as a cycling demonstration town showing best practice in cycle-friendly urban planning, design and engineering in accordance with the National Cycle Framework Policy
TRANS O05	Facilitate spatial development and land use patterns along with traffic management arrangements that make sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling and an intra-urban bus service) safe, practicable and feasible alternatives to the private car and reduce traffic congestion and associated emissions
TRANS O06	Ensure new developments are adequately served by transport infrastructure, both off-site (capacity and quality of roads in the vicinity and their lighting, footpaths, cycle paths, capacity of junctions relating to a new development) and on-site (adequacy of estate roads, including foot and cycle paths, signage, car and cycle parking, traffic calming, turning circles for emergency service vehicles, loading bays, set down areas, lay-bys, service lanes)
TRANS O07	Provide for universal access in the public realm, by undertaking works to improve the accessibility of the public realm for those with reduced mobility

National and Regional Transport Infrastructure

The attractiveness of particular locations depends on their relative accessibility and connectivity which in turn depends on the quality and quantity of the transport infrastructure. Two national transport corridors designated in the NSS are key to the accessibility and connectivity of the Greater Urban Area at a strategic level.



National Transport Corridors indicated in blue and intersecting at the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

The first national transport corridor comprises of the train line and the M9 which connect the Greater Urban Area with Dublin to the northeast and Kilkenny and the Waterford Gateway to the south. The improvement of the rail service and the completion of the M9 around Carlow in recent years mean that the Greater Urban Area is well-positioned and accessible.

The second national transport corridor is the N80 which connects Carlow with Portlaoise and the Midlands Gateway to the north east and with Enniscorthy and the N11 leading to Wexford and Rosslare Port to the South-East.

Many improvements have been made to local transport infrastructure in recent years such as the

- Development of the Eastern Relief Road
- Improvement of the Crossneen Bends

The completion of the Southern Relief Road and new bridging point over the River Barrow is considered important to the connectivity between the Midlands Region and South-East Region and to the local economy of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

JOINT SPATIAL PLAN
FOR THE GREATER CARLOW
GRAIGUECULLEN
URBAN AREA 2012-2018
N
S
E
W
Legend:
= Railway Station
= Coach Park
= IT Carlow Bus Stop
= Focus of walk at junction of Tullow/Dublin Streets
= 300m less than 10 minute walk
= 500m 10 to 15 minute walk
= Bus Route To: Stradbally, Portlaoise, Mountmellick, Killeigh, Tullamore, Clara, moate, AthloneBus Station, Ballymahon, Longford Railway Station
= Bus Route To: Ballickmoyler, Ares, Ballylynan, Athy, Castlemitchel, Stradbally, Portlaoise, Abbeyleix
= Bus Route To: Dublin Airport, Dublin George's Quay, Newland's Cross, Naas, Kilcullen, Castledermot
= Bus Route To: Tullow, Rathvilly, Baltinglass, Kiltegan, Hacketstown
= Bus Route To: Royal Oak, Paulstown, Gowran, Dungarvan, Thomastown, Ballyhale, Mullinavat, Waterford, Waterford IT, Tramore
= Route To: Leighlinbridge, Bagenalstown, Royal Oak, Paulstown, Kilkenny Railway Station, Kilkenny, Loughboy Bennetsbridge, Thomastown, Ballyhale, Mullinavat, Waterford Bus Station
= Railway Line Service To: Athy, Kildare, Newbridge, Sallins & Naas, Hazelhatch & Celbridge, Adamstown, Clondalkin Fonthill, Park West & & Cherry Orchard, Dublin Heuston
= Railway Line Service To: Muine Ireag (Bagenalstown), Kilkenny, Thomastown, Waterford Plunkett
SUSTAINABLE
TRANSPORT
CARLOW & LAOIS
COUNTY COUNCIL
PLANNING SECTIONS
Drawn:
Dermot Dunne
Checked:
Gormla O'Corrain
Approved
D. Walsh
Kilometres
PRODUCED BY LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLANNING SECTION
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Strategic Transport Policies

TRANS P01 Support the maintenance and improvement of the rail service and related network currently serving Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow and Dublin

TRANS P02 Maintain the operational efficiency and carrying capacity of the N80 in light of its strategic importance in the NSS, SERPGs and MRPGs as well as to the economy of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

TRANS P03 Encourage the improvement of the N80, in particular in line with the recommendations of the National Secondary Roads Needs Study (NRA 2010), having regard to its function as a key inter and intra-regional route. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors, as well as cumulative or in-combination effects

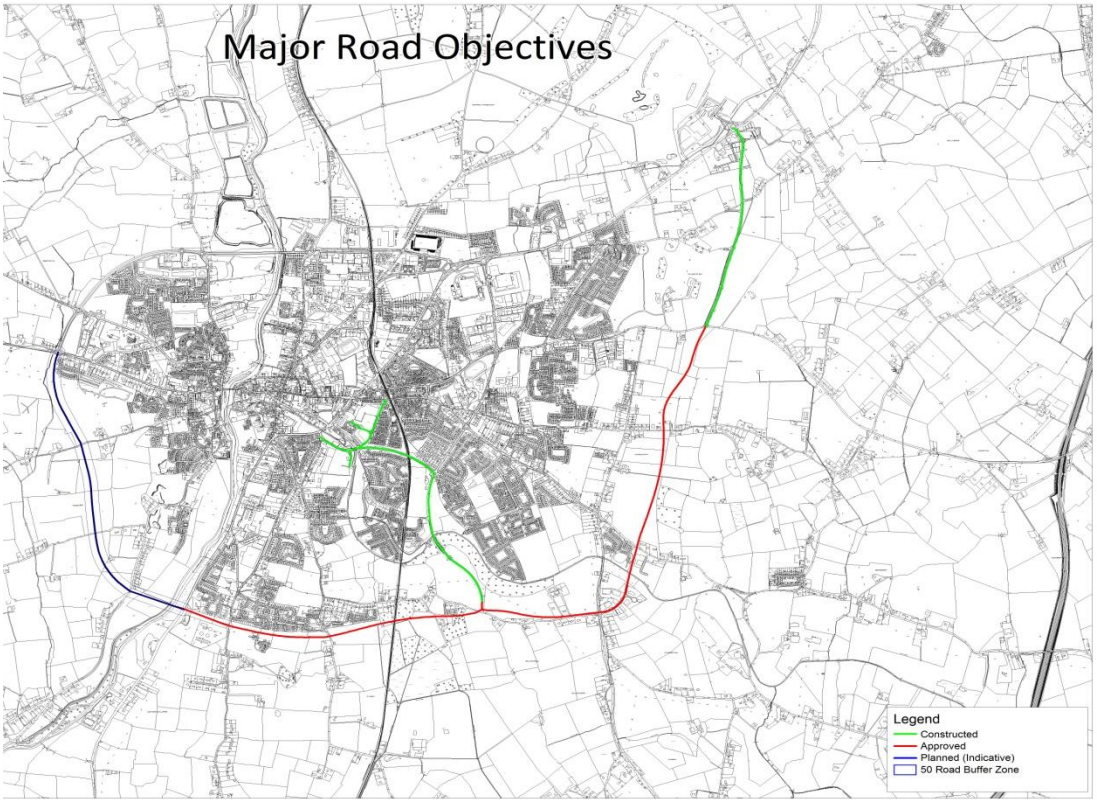
TRANS P04 Support the development and provision of a bus service along the N80 having regard to its status as a National Transport Corridor in the NSS, Smarter Travel 2009 and in support of the settlement hierarchies and population projections contained within the NSS, SERPGs and MRPGs

TRANS P05 Implement project recommendations following the preparation of a Sustainable Transport Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, in liaison with the National Transport Authority, including

a) the re-working of traffic management system within the Greater Urban Area,
b) the enhancement of the pedestrian and cycle transport network and
c) the provision of town bus services

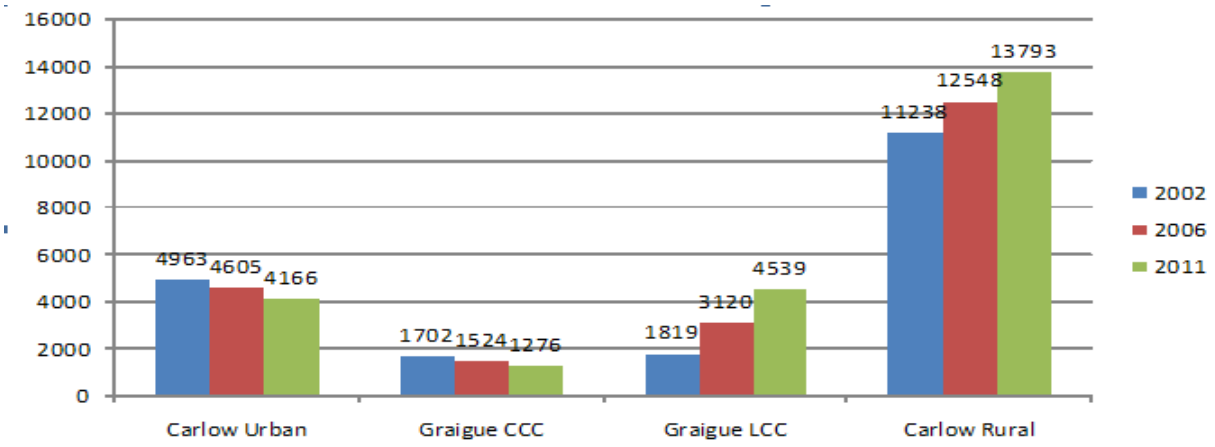
TRANS P06 Advance the completion of the Northern Relief Road including the provision of a new vehicular bridge over the River Barrow, to the east of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, in order to enhance connectivity between the Midlands and South-East Regions and within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors, as well as cumulative or in-combination effects

TRANS P07 Support the completion of the Inner Relief Road to the south of the River Burrin and the linking of the Inner Relief Road with the N80 to the east and the Southern Relief Road to the west. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors, as well as cumulative or in-combination effects

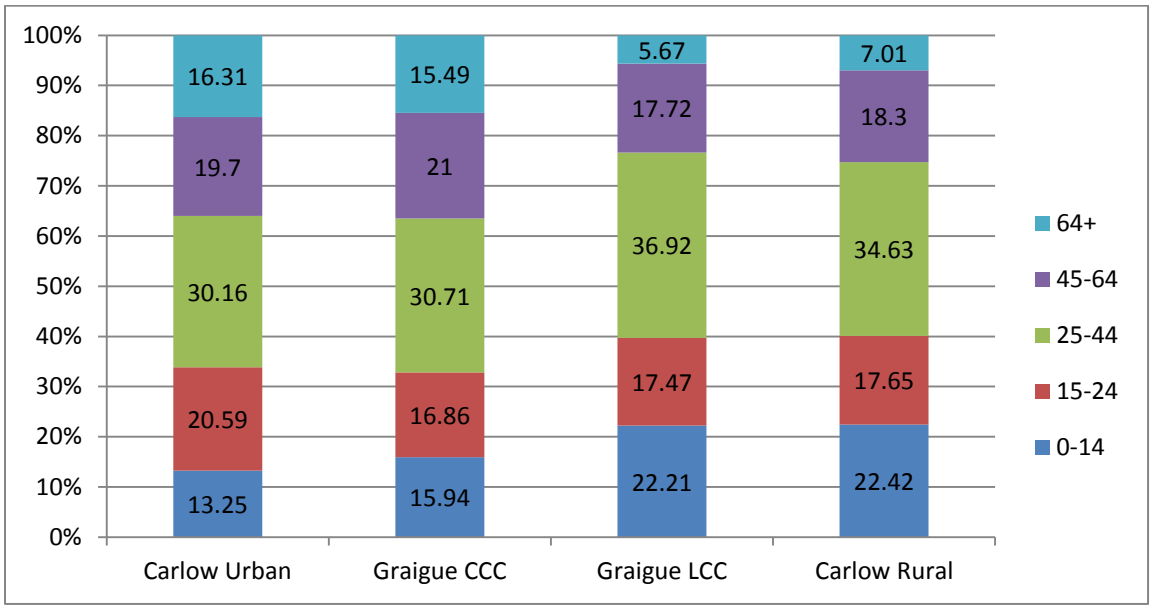


Sustainable Transport and Spatial Development

Population statistics from the 2002, 2006 and 2011 census categorised by electoral division indicate population decline in the more urbanised and historic areas of Carlow Urban and Graigue Carlow and population increase in the more suburban and rural areas of Carlow Rural and Graigue Laois. The most pronounced population growth occurred in Graigue Laois, this likely comprises of some one-off dwellings but also significant residential development within the Graiguecullen LAP area. In addition Carlow Rural and Graigue Laois have a younger age profile compared with Carlow Urban and Graigue Carlow. This may indicate that individuals moving to more suburban or rural areas are of family formation age.

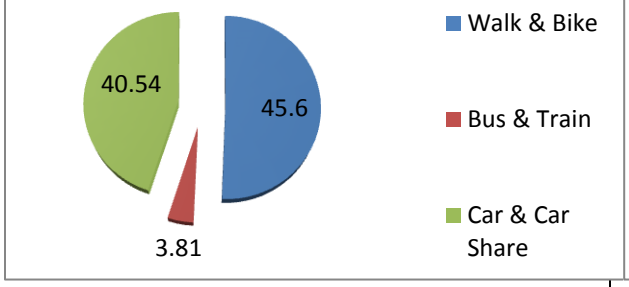


Population Growth

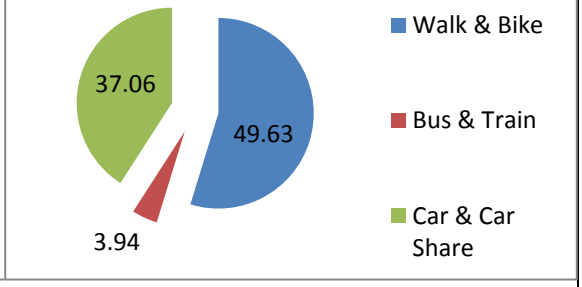


Population Profile 2006

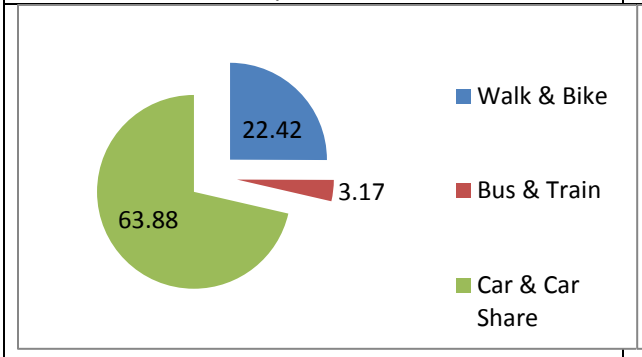
Carlow Urban Modal Split 2006



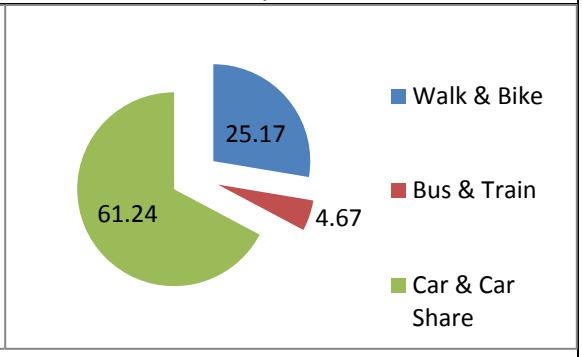
Carlow Urban Modal Split 2002



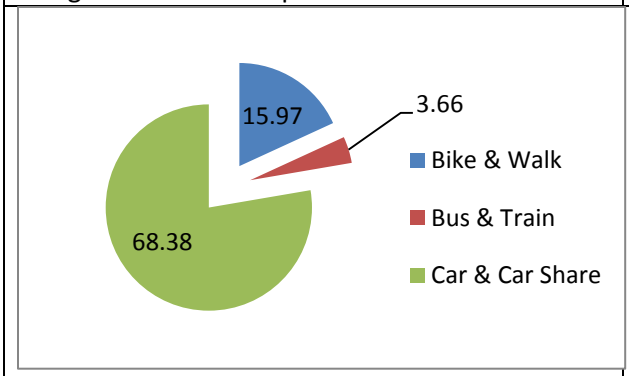
Carlow Rural Modal Split 2006



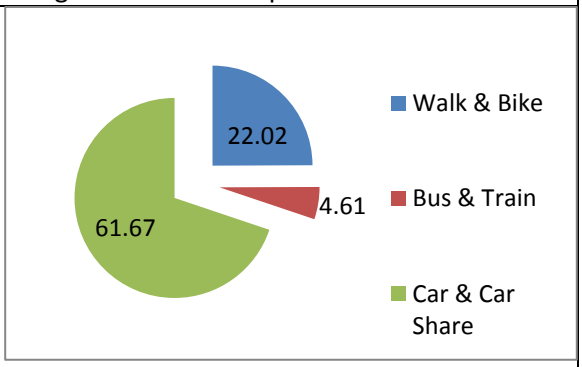
Carlow Rural Modal Split 2002



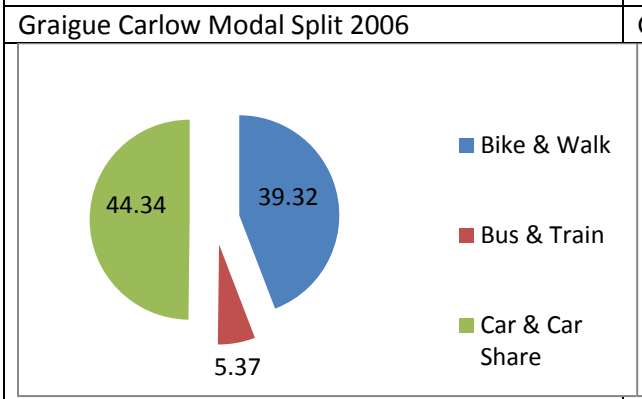
Graigue Laois Modal Split 2006



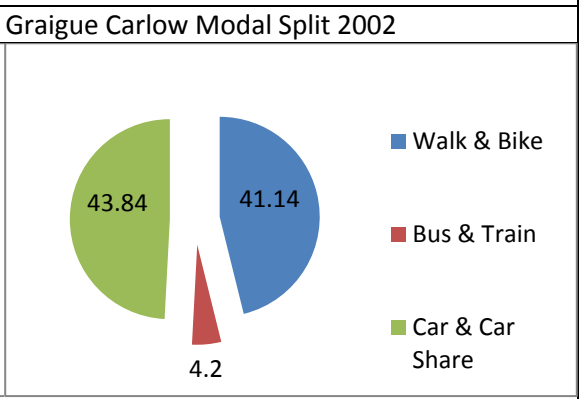
Graigue Laois Modal Split 2002



Graigue Carlow Modal Split 2006



Graigue Carlow Modal Split 2002



The above trends indicate that despite a strong emphasis in national policy on sustainable transport, the population of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is becoming more dispersed with outlying areas having younger population profiles, experiencing higher levels of population growth and using less sustainable modes of transport. Detailed results of the modal split from Census 2011 are not yet available.

The delivery of an integrated and sustainable transport system is only partially within the remit of the local authorities. It will also require funding, cooperation and coordination with other bodies including government departments, the National Transport Agency and service providers over a sustained period of time. The Councils are strongly committed to the encouragement of modal change away from the private car use. The following pattern of spatial development is necessary for the delivery of integrated sustainable transport:

- Development that is more concentrated than dispersed making public transport economically feasible and cycling and walking practical
- Higher residential densities, in the order of 35 units per hectare, in well-designed areas coupled with the provision of high quality public open space and community services
- Location of new housing as close as possible to employment opportunities and schools to reduce commuting distances
- The provision of high-order retail, commercial, public and community services in the town centres to give service users the opportunity to avail of several services as part of one trip
- The provision of lower-order services such as small convenience shops, primary health care, post office services in district centres; and amenities and services such as open spaces and childcare provision within residential areas to reduce the need to make trips
- Labour intensive employment uses and high density housing to be located in proximity to transport nodes or key destinations, such as the train station or in the town centre
- Use the sequential approach to zoning and development meaning a presumption in favour of developing from the centre most point outwards and a presumption against the development of isolated or outlying sites
- Prepare and adhere to mobility management plans detailing accessibility measures and measures to encourage sustainable modes of transport including the provision of secure cycle parking, showering and changing facilities and walking buses in the case of schools

Policies:

TRANS P08 Deliver a land use pattern and spatial development that will support integrated sustainable transport in particular reduce the need to travel and reduce travel distances

TRANS P09 Encourage the provision of integrated transport hubs allowing for easy modal shift, including the

a) provision of cycle parking at the train and bus stops
b) provision of bus lay-by spaces at the train station
c) maintenance of car parking spaces at the train station and bus park

TRANS P10 Enhance the public realm in the vicinity of Carlow Train Station and Carlow Bus Park as these are strategic entry points for locals and visitors

TRANS P11 Reduce the volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles and vehicular traffic generally travelling through the town centre and introduce traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds to make the town centre more pedestrian and cycle friendly

TRANS P12 Require the submission of Mobility Management Plans for development proposals accommodating in excess of 100 people as members of staff or as a student body or generating more than 400 vehicle trips per day

TRANS P13 Examine in consultation with transport providers, the feasibility of a Park and Ride Scheme or subvented intra-urban public transport as part of the Sustainable Transport Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

Vehicular Transport

Significant improvements to the road network within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area have been made in recent years including the completion of sections of the Inner Relief Road and Eastern Relief Road. The management of the vehicular transport network within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Area remains of significant importance in underpinning and enabling economic growth.

Vehicular Road Network Policies

TRANS P14 Support the commencement or completion of the following projects, providing these projects will not have significant adverse effects on environmental receptors including cumulative or in-combination effects

a. Western Relief Road (comprising extension of Northern Relief Road)
b. New multi-modal bridge joining the Western and Southern Relief Routes
c. Southern Relief Road
d. Eire Og Road
e. Eastern Relief Road

TRANS P15 Protect roads against development that would have a serious adverse effect on the capacity or operational efficiency of roads, cause their premature obsolescence, create serious traffic congestion or potentially give rise to traffic hazard

TRANS P16 Protect national roads against new access points or intensification of existing access points outside reduced speed limits except in exceptional circumstances, identified in a plan-led manner, following consultation with the NRA and in accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines 2012

TRANS P17 Restrict development requiring access onto regional roads or intensification of existing access points outside reduced speed limits

TRANS P18 Protect road frontages from ribbon development in the interests of the efficient use of land and sustainable development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

TRANS P19 Support the development of a new vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access points between specific housing estates and the surrounding transport network to remedy the current deficiencies in permeability and access

TRANS P20 Ensure new entrances provide effective visibility for the user of the entrance as well as user of the public road

TRANS P21 Require a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and Road Safety Audits (RSA) in relation to significant development proposals, to be carried out by suitably qualified consultants in accordance with Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (NRA), Traffic Management Guidelines (DoECLG/DoT/DTO) and HD19/09 Road Safety Audit Standards (NRA DMRB)

TRANS P22 Reserve lands indicated for road infrastructure and ensure such lands remain free from development

TRANS P23 Encourage and facilitate investment in the local road network including the improvement of local roads that are deficient in terms of alignment, structural condition or capacity, as resources allow. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors, as well as cumulative or in-combination effects

Cycling and Pedestrian Transport

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is suitable for walking and cycling given its size, relatively compact form and flat topography. A significant increase in these modes of transport could potentially improve local public health by increasing exercise levels and enhancing air quality. In addition, such modes of transport support a bustling and vibrant town centre and are compatible with an attractive public realm. Cycling and walking are also more environmentally sustainable than car transport and reduce congestion. Car dependency leads to a more dispersed urban layout contributing to social exclusion, by making job opportunities and services less accessible to those without a car. It can also reduce the patronage and feasibility of public transport provision. National policy is focused on moving away from the car for short-distance travel to work, school and college and also encouraging walking and cycling as tourism activities.

Currently children that live more than 3 miles from school qualify for subsidised school bus travel. Children living closer to school are considered to be within walking or cycling distance, however safety concerns mean that parents are reluctant to let their children make these journeys alone.

A new concept that is being advocated as a successful sustainable alternative to car trips is that of the *walking bus*. This aims for a new, safe, healthy and environmentally friendly approach to alleviating the undesirable effects of school run traffic congestion. It essentially involves escorting groups of children to school by registered adults. Small groups of children are walked a pre-defined route to and from school, with specified stops to pick up and drop off children.

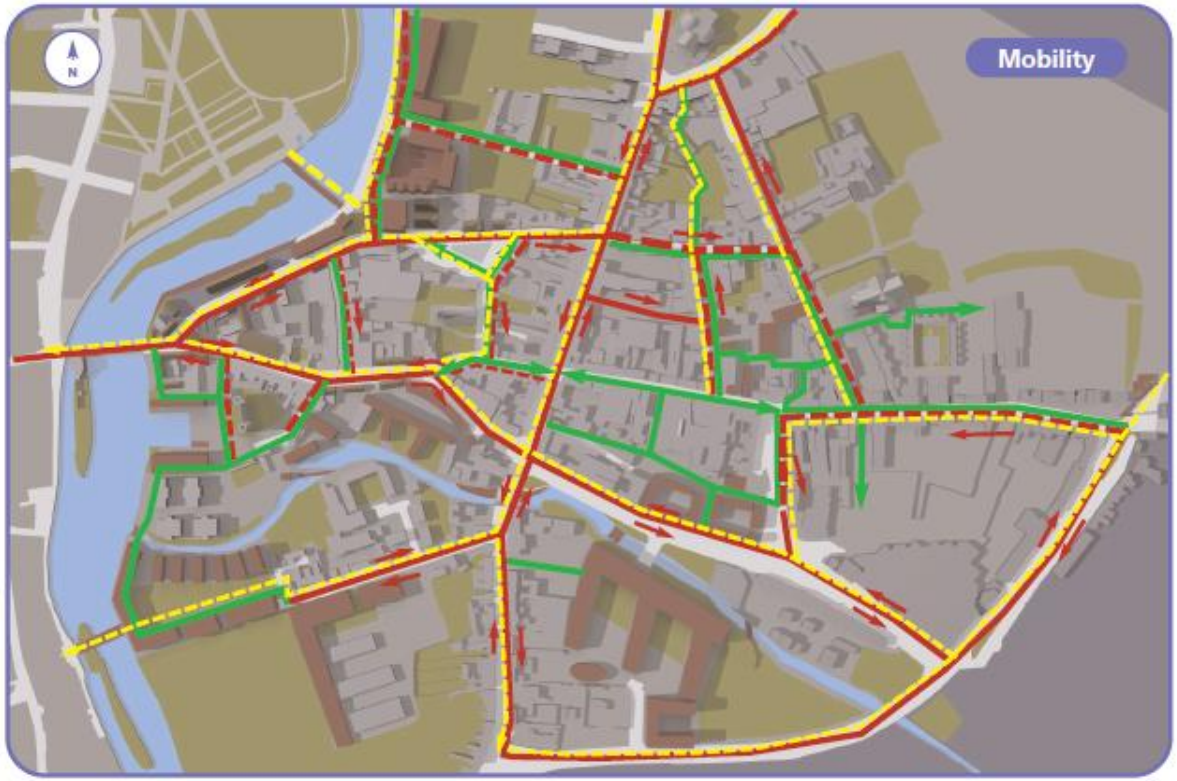
The provision of a safe, well-lit, convenient, coherent and comfortable network and associated infrastructure for walking and cycling is essential to encouraging an increase in these modes of transport. The provision of direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists in favour of more circuitous routes suitable for vehicular traffic is important. Recent improvements to the pedestrian and cycle network include the provision of the millenium footbridge linking the Town Park with the historic commercial core of Carlow. This provides good access to the Park from both sides of the River Barrow and provides more direct access to the pedestrian than the car driver.

One-way Traffic Routes
- Tullow Street Upper - westwards
- Potato Market - southwards
- Brown Street - eastwards
- College Street - northwards
- Charlotte Street - northwards
- John Street - southwards
- Church Street - southwards
- Haymarket - east side of the square - southwards
- Centaur Street - eastwards, east of Haymarket

Shared Surface
- Tullow Street Upper
- Potato Market
- College Street to Junction with Brown St.
- Brown Street
- Charlotte Street
- Cox's Lane
- Barrow Track
- Church Street
- Castle Street
- Haymarket
- Mill Lane

Pedestrian Network
- Tullow Street Lower
- Bridewell Lane
- Extension to Pembroke Road
- Route-ways through blocks

Cycle Network
- Permeates throughout the town centre
- Bicycle parks occuring regularly at hubs of activity



MAIN STREETS
RIVER BARROW
RIVER BURRIN
BRIDGE TO BRIDGE
PARK TO PARK
Urban Walks

URBAN WALKS

Policies

TRANS P24 Prioritise the movements of pedestrians and cyclists within the public realm by measures including the redistribution of car space to non car modes of transport, retrofitting road junctions to make them more cycle and pedestrian friendly and promoting walking routes

TRANS P25 Provide a coherent cycle network with emphasis on safety and keeping distances between origin points and key destination points as short and as direct as possible.

TRANS P26 Promote cycling and pedestrian routes to schools through the development of a *Safe to School* Programme including Walking Bus programmes

TRANS P27 Seek the provision of additional pedestrian and cycling linkages within the town centre and the Greater Urban Area generally to make the area more permeable and make these modes of transport faster than the private car, additional proposed linkages include:

1. Railway Street to Green Lane
2. Railway Street to College Street
3. College Street to Tullow Street
4. Athy Road to Riverside
5. Hanover/Inner Relief Road to Blackbog Road

The proposed linkage between Hanover/Inner Relief Road to Blackbog Road will be designed to protect the residential amenity and security of adjoining residents. This policy is dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

TRANS P28 Provide a network of green recreational routes, high quality pedestrian and cycling transport corridors with dedicated space in the following locations:
1. Along the Barrow Track within the Greater Urban Area
2. Between Barrow Track and Oak Park
4. Along the River Burrin between the N80 and Barrack Street
5. Bridge linking IT Carlow and Barrow Track

TRANS P29 Examine the feasibility in conjunction with transport providers of a rent-a-bike scheme within the Greater Urban Area, with service points located at key locations including Carlow Railway Station, IT Carlow, Carlow College, Plas na Saoirse, Barrack Street and at designated District Centres

TRANS P30 Support the provision of cycle parking racks within the public realm at key destination points and transport nodes and in areas that benefit from passive surveillance or high footfall to ensure security.

TRANS P31 Ensure cycle parking provided in association with development proposals is provided as close as possible to the destination entrance, prominent, secure and preferably covered.

TRANS P32 Apply the following standards in relation to cycle parking in association with development proposals:

LAND USE	CYCLE PARKING REQUIREMENT
Retail	Gross Floor Area
Convenience (food) store	1 per 100m^2 GFA
Shopping Centre	1 per 200m^2 GFA
Non Food Retail	1 per 250m^2 GFA
Retail Warehouses	1 per 250m^2 GFA
Employment	
Retail offices	1 per 250 m^2 GFA
General offices	1 per 150 m^2 GFA
Business and Technology	1 per 200 m^2 GFA
Light Industry (& related uses)	1 per 250 m^2 GFA
Warehousing and Distribution	1 per 500 m^2 GFA
Residential	
Standard Apartments	1 per unit in Town Centre, 0.50 per unit in suburbs
Student Accommodation	0.5 per bed-space
Hotel/Restaurant/Public House	
Hotels	1 per 10 bedrooms
Hostels	1 per 5 bedrooms
Public houses & hotel bars	1 per 200 m^2 GFA
Restaurants, cafes	1 per 200 m^2 GFA
Leisure Development	
Cinema/Theatre	1 per 30 seats
Fitness Centre/Sports Centre	1 per 150 m^2 GFA
Non-Residential Institutions	
Places of worship	1 per 50 seats
Primary school	0.1 per student
Post primary school	0.25 per staff
Further and higher education	0.25 per student, 0.10 per staff
Crèches	1 per 25 children
Clinics/Surgeries	0.5 spaces per room

Universal Access

Universal access is defined as environments, information and services that can be accessed and used by everyone, including people with a disability. This means that access for everyone becomes the norm. The most effective way to deliver universal access is to ensure consideration of plans on people with a disability. This applies to buildings, facilities, information and services and needs to be done at the very earliest stages of a design or proposal for change. Measures to improve the accessibility of the public realm include:

- Dished kerbs
- Tactile pavings
- Wide and obstruction-free, even-surfaced footpaths
- Public seating at key locations
- Audible pedestrian crossing signals
- Segregated cycle paths and cycle parking
- Pedestrian crossings in association with key intersections
- Disabled parking bays
- Mother and child parking bays
- Adequate public lighting

Improvements have been made to the accessibility of the Greater Urban Area, such as the integrating accessibility to the provision of services to the public at the Town Hall, which received an award from the National Disability Authority for its commitment to accessibility. Small scale improvements include the provision of a universally accessible pedestrian crossing and disabled parking spaces at Kennedy Avenue.

Policies

TRANS P33 Promote universal access to all spaces and buildings including the physical fabric of older urban areas and in particular public spaces, public buildings and services owned and operated by Local Authorities in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

TRANS P34 Continue to liaise with Carlow Access Movement (an organisation that comprises people with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities) as well as representatives from People with Disabilities in Ireland (PWDI) to help identify priorities and ensure progress in the delivery of Towards Universal Access for All Implementation Plan 2009-2015 (Carlow Local Authorities)

TRANS P35 Encourage the provision of a suitable lift and footbridge at Carlow Railway Station to make the station universally accessible

Car Parking

It is important that an appropriate level of short and long-term car parking is provided to serve the needs of commercial, retail and employment generators. An oversupply of car parking can encourage an excessive number of car trips and a loss of land that could be used far more efficiently. An undersupply could compromise the growth of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and discourage people from visiting the town centre.

The availability of short-stay parking is important for economic and business activities. It is preferable that short-term off-street parking be provided in the form of multi-storey car parks incorporating underground levels where practicable in lieu of large surface car parks. Some on-street parking may be removed in the town centre and at other key locations to facilitate the safe, pleasant and convenient passage of pedestrians and cyclists. However, on-street parking areas will continue to be needed for disabled parking, set-down areas and loading bays.

Long-stay car parks required on a full day basis by commuters are suitable in areas peripheral to the town centre to prevent traffic congestion within the town centre and encourage walking and cycling.

Policies

TRANS P36 Discourage the provision of extensive surface-based car parking within the town centre and free up such town centre sites for re-development

TRANS P37 Support the provision of short-stay multi-storey car parks at suitable locations within the town centre

TRANS P38 Encourage the provision of long-stay car parks at the edge of the town centre and at public transport nodes

TRANS P39 Ensure new multi-storey car parks are designed to be visually unobtrusive. They should generally be to the rear of street frontages, but may be permitted on street frontages in exceptional circumstances subject to very high quality design

TRANS P40 Provide for the undergrounding of car parking in association with new residential and mixed-use development within the town centre, where feasible. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

TRANS P41 Avoid the oppressive effect of large surface car parks on the public realm by way of landscaping and the delineation of pedestrian routes with different surface materials

TRANS P42 When considering applications for change of use, allowance and regard will be given to whether demand for car parking would be less or more intensive than for the existing use

TRANS P43 Apply the following standards in the consideration of planning applications: Car parking spaces shall be 2.4m wide and 4.8m long and clearly demarcated, Off-street loading spaces to measure 3.75m wide, 6m long and 4.25m high as relevant, Adequate access and turning circles for emergency vehicles is to be provided to new streets and supported by swept path analysis, as requested

TRANS P44 Provide for 5% of car parking spaces to be set aside for disabled parking and located as close as possible to destination entrance points, highlighted by surface colour variation and designed in compliance with relevant design specifications

TRANS P45 Apply the following car parking standards in association with new development, except where special circumstances apply, detailed below

Car Parking Standards	Carlow Town Centre Zoning	All Areas outside Town Centre Zoning
Retail		
Convenience (food) store	1 per 50 m^2 GFA	1 per 25 m^2 GFA
Shopping Centre	1 per 60 m^2 GFA	1 per 30 m^2 GFA
Non Food Retail	1 per 80 m^2 GFA	1 per 40 m^2 GFA
Retail Warehouses	1 per 60 m^2 GFA	1 per 30 m^2 GFA
Employment		
Retail offices	1 per 40 m^2 GFA	1 per 20 m^2 GFA
General offices	1 per 40 m^2 GFA	1 per 20 m^2 GFA
Business and Technology	1 per 40 m^2 GFA	1 per 20 m^2 GFA
Light Industry (& related uses)	1 per 100 m^2 GFA	1 per 50 m^2 GFA
Warehousing and Distribution	1 per 200 m^2 GFA	1 per 100 m^2 GFA
Residential		
Dwelling House	1 per unit	2 per unit
Standard Apartments	1 per unit	1.25 per unit
Student Accommodation	0.5 per unit	1 per unit
Hotel/Restaurant/Public House		
Hotels	0.5 per bedroom	1 per bedroom
Hostels	0.5 per bedroom or dormitory	1 per bedroom or dormitory
Public houses & hotel bars	1 per 40 m^2 GFA	1 per 20 m^2 GFA
Restaurants, cafes	1 per 20 m^2 GFA	1 per 10 m^2 GFA
Leisure Development		
Amusement Arcade, Gentlemen's Clubs, Casino	1 per 5 seats	1 per 5 seats
Cinema/Theatre/Sports ground with viewing stations	1 per 20 seats	1 per 10 seats
Fitness Centre/Sports Centre	1 per 20 m^2 GFA	1 per 10 m^2 GFA
Non-Residential Institutions		
Places of worship	1 per 20 seats	1 per 10 seats
Primary school	1 per two teachers, plus 5 additional spaces	1 per teacher, plus 5 additional spaces
Post primary school	1 per two staff members, plus 5 additional spaces	1 per staff member, plus 5 additional spaces
Further and higher education	1 per two staff members, plus 5 additional spaces	1 per staff member, plus 5 additional spaces
Crèches	1 per two staff member, plus one space per 5 children	1 per staff member, plus one space per 5 children
Clinics/Surgeries	1 spaces per health care practitioner plus	2 spaces per health care practitioner plus

In order to encourage sustainable transport (minimise additional car travel, reduce trip lengths and encourage use of sustainable means of travel) and in recognition of the importance of economic development and regeneration of Carlow Town Centre, the Planning Authorities will consider a relaxation of car parking standards in the following areas

1. **Carlow Town Cultural Quarter**

   Carlow Town Council will consider car-free development proposals within the Cultural Quarter because of the importance of this area to economic development and cultural vitality, its accessible location and the constraints associated with its fine urban grain and architectural heritage designations. The extent of the Cultural Quarter is indicated on the Objectives Map.

2. **Protected Structures at Risk**

   The Planning Authorities will consider car-free development proposals in the case of Protected Structures at Risk, where it is proposed to re-use, conserve or renovate such a Protected Structure to best-practice standards. Car parking will be required in association with the provision of new floor space within the curtilage of the protected structure (extensions or other infill development)

3. **Carlow Town Centre**

   Carlow Town Council will consider a reduction in the parking requirements for mixed-use developments within Carlow Town Centre based on an evaluation of existing available car parking and a needs assessment associated with the proposals, to be carried out in a robust and scientific manner eg TRICS using modes from similar sized settlements. The extent of Carlow Town Centre is indicated on the Carlow Town Zoning Map.

SECTION 3: PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Core Aim 3*: Ensure the provision of good-quality physical infrastructure to serve existing needs and capacity to enable the future sustainable development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area*

The provision of good quality infrastructure is of strategic importance to the proper planning of the Greater Carlow Graigucullen Area and of critical importance to the future sustainable development of the Area. This chapter deals with physical infrastructure including: potable water supply, waste water treatment, the electricity grid and gas supply network and broadband network. Transport infrastructure is addressed in section 2.

Objectives	
PI O01	Ensure Carlow Town Council, Laois County Council and Carlow County Council work together to provide good quality physical infrastructure for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.
PI O02	Provide an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of potable water and waste water treatment capacity for domestic, commercial and industrial use, having regard to its status as a County Town and Service Town within the regional settlement hierarchy. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors
PI O03	Encourage the development of electricity and gas infrastructure to ensure a secure supply for residents and enterprise, having regard to its status within the regional settlement hierarchy
PI O04	Protect and extend the open access fibre-based broadband network to facilitate e-working and distance learning and as well general economic development, having regard to its status within the regional settlement hierarchy

Potable Water Infrastructure

The availability of a drinking water supply is essential for public health and the economic growth of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Future predicted population growth and changing trends in water use are leading to increased demand for water. Thus, the Councils must seek to ensure prudent use of water resources while making adequate provision for future sustainable development.

The local authorities are required to implement objectives for drinking water supplies on the EPAs Remedial Action List. Carlow Town WSS is listed as a supply by the HSE where further investigation or improvement may be required. Testing is also carried out by the Health Service Executive and the

Regional Water Laboratory on an agency basis. The Councils recognise that the provision of a high quality and efficient water supply will ensure the long-term physical, environmental, social and economic development of the town.

The Councils will continue to implement water conservation practices across all water supplies. Works to be carried out will include district metering to detect and control leakage, the replacement of sections of pipework found to be in poor condition, metering and logging of individual premises in order to check water consumption, the requirement for dual flush toilets in new developments and the initiation of a programme to educate the public on water conservation measures.

The water supply system (2.7 million gallons) for Carlow town currently provides 1.5 million gallons for the Town Council area.

The Councils will ensure the full abstraction amount of 3 million gallons per day is availed of from the River Slaney, that Sion Cross provides up to 1 million gallons per day, that additional sources are developed (similar to the Oakpark boreholes) and that an additional 2 million gallons of storage are provided.

Improvements to the associated infrastructure include the provision of a new drinking water borehole at Springhill, County Laois with capacity to supply water to domestic and enterprise uses in Graiguecullen, County Laois. This water source will cater to existing demand of 1100 cubic metres per day and has spare capacity to cater for an additional 500 people. The source recently became operational. In addition to providing additional potable water capacity, this new source will strengthen water security for the Greater Urban Area as a whole.

Policies

PI P01 Ensure the treatment of a sufficient quantum of water to meet current and future drinking water needs for domestic, commercial and industrial use

PI P02 Undertake infrastructural improvement works to water supply infrastructure to minimise the loss of treated drinking water and to ensure the provision of good quality drinking water

PI P03 Implement Source Protection Zones around borehole water supply sources restricting development in and around these areas to protect against contamination

PI P04 Promote the prudent use of drinking water resources, rainwater harvesting and measures to reduce the use of potable water where non-potable water would suffice

PI P05 Conduct regular monitoring of drinking water to ensure compliance with EU Directives on 'Quality of Water Intended for Human Consumption'

PI P06 Assess all applications in the context of available infrastructural facilities and restrict those proposals that would put undue pressure on available resources

PI P07 Focus development in areas that are already served by mains water supply in the interests of efficiency and sustainable development, where development proposals are acceptable in principle the cost of extending mains water supply will be borne by the developer

Waste Water Treatment Infrastructure

An updated 'Needs Assessment' for water and wastewater infrastructure covering the period 2010-2012 has been prepared by the Water Services Section of Laois County Council and Carlow Local Authorities in accordance with DoEHLG Circular L6/09 of July 2009. The main purpose of the assessment was to develop an overall strategic investment Plan to meet the identified water and wastewater infrastructural requirements in the short to medium-term.

The provision of wastewater treatment infrastructure is imperative to facilitate the economic, social and physical development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and to support the settlement strategy set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines. In addition the continued improvement and provision of this infrastructure is necessary to meet the requirements of the E.U. Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive. An examination of the waste water infrastructure indicates that there is a need for further investment to meet future demands.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is served by the Mortarstown Waste Water Treatment Plant which has a capacity of 36,000 population equivalent (p.e.). A technical consultancy survey showed a p.e. of 31,500 loading in 2006. At that time, the contributing population was 20,000 approximately with an estimated industrial loading equivalent of 11,500 p.e. Since 2006, the population has increased by 1,000 approximately – however the closure of a number of enterprises equated to the increase leaving a residual p.e. of 4,500.

The population of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is projected to increase to 23,768 by 2016 and then to 25,000 by 2022 (South-East Regional Planning Guidelines 2010). Taking a flat annual growth rate between 2016 and 2022, the projected population of the area is within the current operational capacity of the waste water treatment plant without factoring in additional non-domestic demand. It is estimated that around 30% of loading will be contributed by non-domestic activities. Currently landfill lechate is accepted and treated at the waste water treatment plan which has a significant effect on its loading.

In the longer term additional capacity will be required. Plans to upgrade the treatment plant to 70,000 p.e. capacity were underway, however this infrastructural investment is uncertain in the current economic climate.

Sufficient hydraulic and organic capability is in place to cater for the projected population of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area until 2018, when this Plan will be superseded. Population growth will be managed by monitoring and limitation planning approvals.

Policies

PI P08 Expand waste water treatment capacity having regard to Carlow's status as a County Town and Graiguecullen's status as a Service Town within the Regional Planning Guidelines and the objective to expand its industrial and enterprise economic base

PI P09 Continue upgrading the combined and foul sewer network within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Area and encourage connection of unsewered domestic properties with mains sewerage

PI P10 Assess all applications in the context of available infrastructural facilities and limit those proposals that would put undue pressure on available resources. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

PI P11 Focus development in areas that are already served by the foul sewerage system in the interests of efficiency and sustainable development, where development proposals are acceptable in principle the cost of extending the foul sewer network will be borne by the developer

PI P12 Meet in full the requirements of the E.U. Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, Water Framework Directive and objectives of the South-East River Basin District Management Plan 2009

PI P13 Ensure that arrangements for the treatment and disposal of effluent from all forms of development are sustainable and meet environmentally acceptable standards. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

PI P14 Implement the Sludge Management Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area in compliance with the South-East River Basin Management Plan.

PI P15 Assess proposals to develop in close proximity to sewerage treatment plants and pumping stations having regard to:

- The nature of the effluent being treated;
- Prevailing wind direction;
- Noise;
- Type of treatment process employed;
- Sludge treatment;
- Visibility and screening of treatment plant

Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

PI P16 Development will not be allowed within 100m of a treatment works or 25m of a pumping station. This distance may be increased if significant environmental issues are likely to arise and will be considered on a site-by-site basis. The buffer area may be used to fulfil open space requirements.

Storm Drainage Infrastructure

The more historic parts of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area are serviced with a combined sewerage system. These sewer systems collect sanitary sewage and also stormwater runoff from hard-surfaced areas such as streets, roofs and car parks. Combined sewer systems can become overloaded, particularly during periods of wet weather. Under the Flood Relief Scheme the combined sewers are being replaced with storm and foul sewers to provide extra drainage capacity and alleviate flooding. In addition the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) form part of the policy framework for new development, section 4 deals with SUDS in detail.

Policies

PI P17 Continue to upgrade and develop the storm drainage infrastructure within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area in order to facilitate residential, commercial and industrial development

PI P18 Focus development in areas that are already served by the storm sewerage system in the interests of efficiency and sustainable development, where development proposals are acceptable in principle the cost of extending the storm sewer network will be borne by the developer; soakaways will generally not be accepted within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

Electricity and Gas Infrastructure

Electricity provision and generation in the form of a high quality, adaptable and efficient electricity network is central to securing the current and future development potential of The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Gas infrastructure is also important to the future development potential of the Urban Area. The Councils will work closely with the ESB Networks, Bord Gais and other relevant agencies to ensure adequate infrastructure is provided to serve the Greater Urban Area's current and future domestic, commercial and industrial needs. The Councils will also encourage key electricity supply agencies to develop and support green technologies to help diversify and future proof electricity generation in the Greater Urban Area.

Policies

PI P19 Support the development of electricity infrastructure to ensure a secure supply for current and future domestic, commercial and industrial needs and to ensure the grid has capacity to accept electricity generated locally

PI P20 Support the development of gas infrastructure to ensure a secure supply for current and future domestic, commercial and industrial needs

PI P21 Support the renewable electricity micro-generation to diversify the electricity supply base enhancing energy security and in the interests of sustainable development

Telecommunications Infrastructure

The Councils recognise the essential need for high quality communications and information technology networks in enabling economic development and to benefit the local community. Telecommunications encompasses fibre-based broadband network, telecommunications masts and associated antennae Telecommunications infrastructure contributes to quality of life in two ways: firstly, access to fast, reliable and cost effective communications can increase social inclusion, economic competitiveness and employment opportunities; and secondly, modern technologies can also contribute to sustainable goals by reducing the need to travel, by home working, tele-conferencing, distance learning and e-commerce.

European Broadband Policy

The European Commission has proposed a number of targets for member states in relation to the provision of broadband:
1. 2013 deadline for access for all to basic broadband
2. 2020 deadline for access for all to fast broadband, classified as speeds of 30 megabits per second (mbps) and 50% of European households to have subscriptions to ultra-fast broadband, classificed as above 100 megabits per second.
3. 2013 deadline for EU countries to open up the 800 MHz spectrum, with exceptions allowed until 2015 only in exceptional cases. Television stations currently used this spectrum to broadcast but it can also be used for wireless broadband provision.

National Context

The following policies and initiatives have been developed and include:

- National Broadband Scheme (delivery date October 2010-October 2012)
- Broadband to [Secondary] Schools Scheme (delivery date 2012)
- County and Group Broadband Scheme (established 2004, ongoing)
- Regional Broadband Scheme (DCENR, phase 1 delivered, phase 2 underway)
- Managing Ireland's Regional Fibre Optic Infrastructure and Enabling World Class Telecoms (Enet 2009)
- Next Generation Broadband: Gateway to Knowledge Economy (DCENR 2009)
- Ireland's Broadband Performance and Policy Actions (Forfas 2010)
- Next Generation Broadband in Ireland – Promoting the timely and efficient development of high speed broadband infrastructure and services (ComReg 2009)
- Spectrum Management Strategy Statement (ComReg 2008-2010)
- Report of Working Group on Spectrum Policy (DCENR 2008)
- Development of National Policy Framework for the Digital Dividend (DCENR 2009)
- Building Ireland's Smart Economy (Department of Taoiseach 2008)

Optical fibre systems are accepted as the best means of delivering fast and ultra-fast broadband. Other technologies can deliver fast broadband, including coaxial cable, twisted copper, wireless platforms or hybrids of these. However the competition between these technologies is primarily in providing last mile service (the link connecting the customer to the local exchange). The major long distance wires that comprise the Internet backbone should primarily be made of optical fibre (Forfas 2010).

Regional Context

The South-East Regional Authority, in partnership with its constituent local authorities, is managing the roll-out of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources' regional broadband programme in the South-East, known as SERPANT. This programme provides high speed, open access broadband networks in major towns and cities, known as Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs). The MANs are publicly owned allowing all telecommunication operators access to the networks.

As part of the Regional Broadband Programme, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) in conjunction with the local authorities have invested in a Metropolitan Area Network in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. This is a fibre-optic cable network in public ownership open to all telecommunication operators. Broadband speeds in the order of 20 megabits per second are available with direct connection to the MAN. The fibre network directly serves the principal employment areas of the town. This investment will underpin the future economic development of the area.

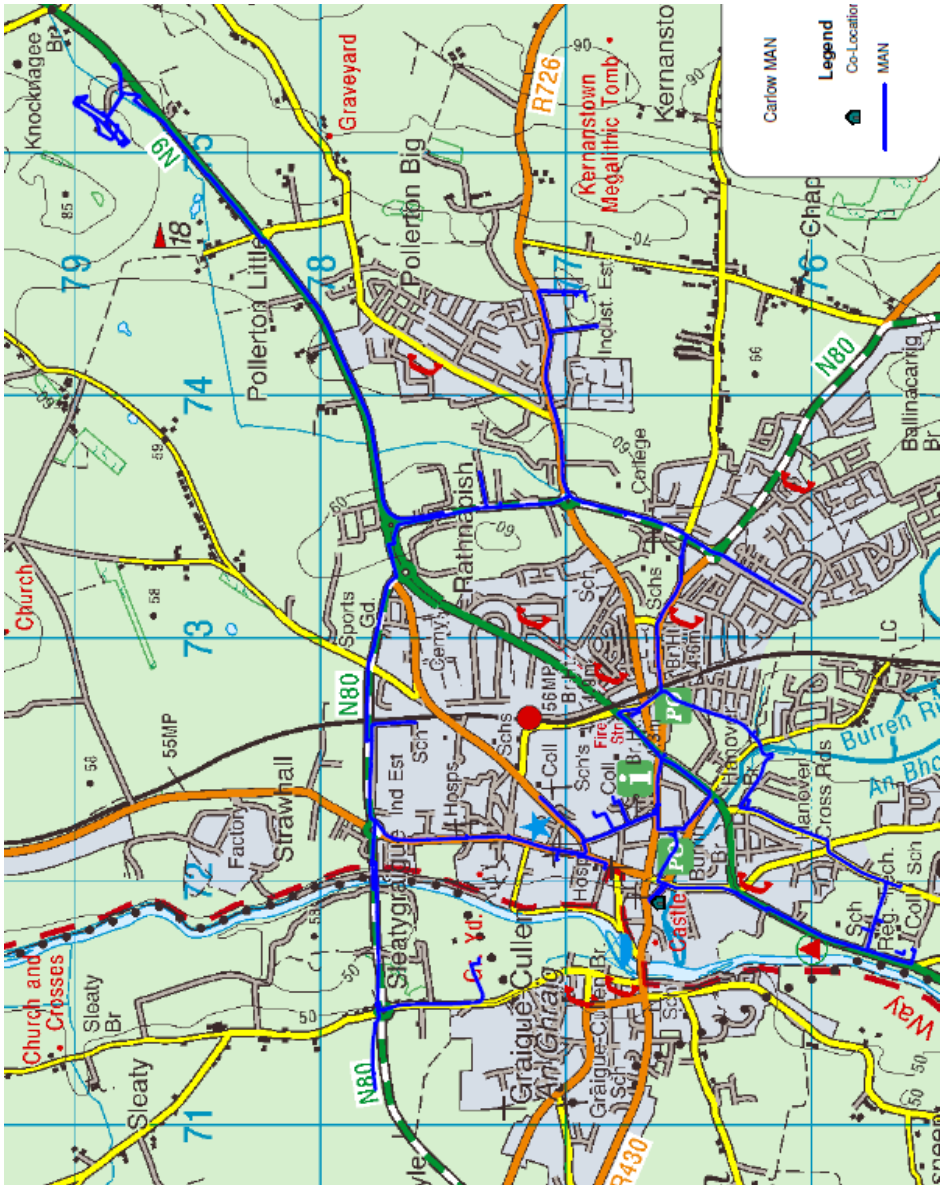
Broadband in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL)
ADSL is a technology that enables faster internet connections over existing copper telephone lines than a conventional modem can provide. ADSL is already available to all within the Greater Urban Area, however it will be important to ensure that these lines are now upgraded to ADSL2 which can provide higher speeds than current ADSL, in line with current government policy.

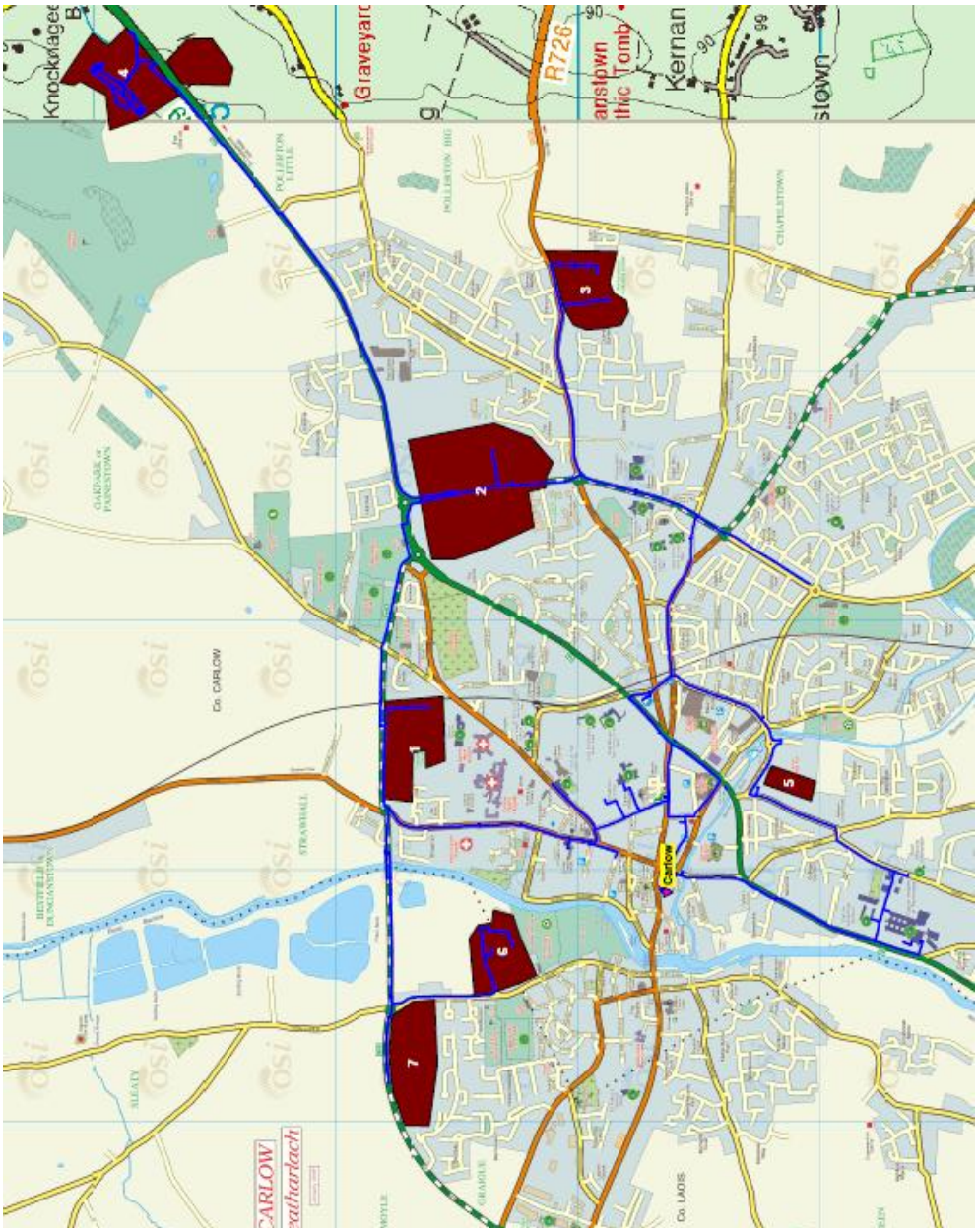
Wireless Broadband
Wireless broadband is a relatively new technology that provides high-speed wireless internet and data network access over a wide area. Under the new wireless standards Wireless Broadband can now provide speeds roughly equivalent to wired broadband access, such as ADSL or a cable modem. Wireless broadband is also currently being provided by a number of service providers in the Greater Urban Area. These service providers are liaising closely with the local authorities to improve the quality of their networks

Third Generation Mobile Broadband (3G)
Another extremely popular alternative for broadband in the Greater Urban Area is the 3G mobile networks. 3G networks are *mobile telephone networks* which evolved to incorporate high-speed internet access and video telephony. There are currently three mobile providers for 3G - Vodafone, O2 and 3. 3G coverage within the Greater Urban Area of a very high standard. However, all three companies are investing heavily on a national basis to further improve and expand these networks, thereby providing a viable alternative to ADSL and wireless broadband.

WIFI Mesh
In 2007 Carlow Local Authorities and enet deployed an open access wifi mesh on the metropolitan area network leveraging government investment in the MAN programme and covering the centre of Carlow Town. The mesh network provides fast synchronous internet access. The service is wireless, offers upload and download speeds in the order of 12 megabits per second and is designed to provide the last-mile service.



Open-Access Fibre Broadband Network



Open-Access Fibre Broadband Network and Enterprise Areas

Policies

PI P22 Work towards the availability of broadband speeds in the order of 24 mega bits per second throughout the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area to ensure the competitiveness and attractiveness of the Area

PI P23 Liaise with the South-East Regional Authority in relation to broadband funding schemes to enhance broadband capability

PI P24 Promote domestic and commercial use of the Metropolitan Area Network

PI P25 Expand the fibre-based open access broadband network (Metropolitan Area Network) as part of public realm works

PI P26 Require all new developments to be provided with fibre optic cabling in carrier neutral ducting and alongside other services where feasible

PI P27 Focus employment uses in areas that are served by fibre-broadband to make efficient use of public infrastructure investment

PI P28 Facilitate the provision of appropriate information and telecommunications infrastructure within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, encouraging the provision of telecommunications based services at appropriate locations subject to environmental considerations

PI P29 Have regard to the Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, when considering applications for telecommunications antennae and structures and ensure telecommunications masts are sited to minimise visual intrusion and encourage mast-sharing

PI P30 Encourage the sharing of masts and support structures where feasible

Ducting Infrastructure

Common ducting refers to any structure built above or below ground containing more than two types of public utilities including: water, communication (including broadband), heating (including district heating), electricity, drainage, ventilation, lighting and other relevant systems. Common ducting, usually located underground, centralises essential utilities in easily identifiable and accessible locations thereby cutting down on future road disturbance, environmental noise and nuisance and improving the efficiency and ease to which services can be maintained.

Policy

PI P31 Promote the use of common carrier-neutral ducting in accessible locations for utilities within new developments and when retro-fitting to enhance the management of roads and to improve traffic safety and the appearance of urban areas

SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Core Aim 4: *Accommodate growth and change in ways that respect and enhance the environment, mitigate against and adapt to climate change and that utilise energy, water and material goods efficiently*

Background

The effective environmental management of growth and change is of critical importance to the sustainability of the Joint Spatial Plan and its importance is reinforced by way of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process. The Council will ensure development does not result in environmental degradation.

Increasingly national policy is focused on reducing anthropogenic greenhouse gases and adapting to climate change In particular insofar as planning policy is concerned, it is focused on sustainable transport and compact urban development. This emphasis is compatible with budgetary constraints, with government increasingly concerned with justifying the nature, quantum and value-for-money of public investment in infrastructure including the servicing of lands. The efficient use of water, energy and material goods is therefore in focus for financial as well as environmental reasons. The environmental management objectives and policies set out below are informed by national and regional government policy.

Local authorities are concerned with assessment of the environmental effects of planning applications in consultation with organisations such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Inland Fisheries Ireland, National Parks and Wildlife Service and the monuments and architectural heritage sections of the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and the Health and Safety Authority. The local authorities also deal with the enforcement of legislation relating to some elements of air, water, soil pollution, while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) deals with other issues including the licensing of municipal waste-water treatment plants and the issuing of Integrated Pollution Prevention Control licenses to industry.

Objectives	
ENV O01	Deliver sustainable land use patterns including (i) a sequential approach to land use zonings starting with the town centre and moving outwards, (ii) a preference to brownfield and infill development instead of greenfield development, (iii) a vibrant and vital town centre designed to favour the pedestrian and the cyclist over the car driver and (iv) good quality high-density development that will support sustainable modes of transport instead of lower densities suited to the private car
ENV O02	Ensure development does not have serious or cumulative adverse effects on the quality of air, water, soil, protected species or habitats, biodiversity or cause serious noise or light pollution
ENV O03	Meet water quality targets set down in the South-East River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015 or as amended and ensure the implementation of this Plan does not conflict with the overall objectives of the Water Framework Directive
ENV O04	Address issues of mitigation of and adaptation to climate change including the reduction of anthropogenic green house gases
ENV O05	Encourage the use of Sustainable Design and Construction methodologies in the interests of sustainable development and environmental efficiency
ENV O06	Encourage the generation of renewable energy and the reduction of per capita energy and water consumption in the interests of sustainable development and energy efficiency
ENV O07	Encourage a reduction of the generation of waste and implement the integrated waste management approach, based on the EU Waste Management Hierarchy
ENV O08	Create an integrated and coherent green infrastructure network to enhance biodiversity and quality of life, provide for sustainable water management and a green setting for the urban area and prevent sprawl
ENV O09	Minimise the level of flood risk to people, business, infrastructure and the environment, through the identification and management of existing, and particularly potential future flood risks

Air Quality

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 emphasises that a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions will improve air quality.

Air quality in Carlow is classified as very poor as a result of elevated PM10 levels detected between 2004 and 2005 by the EPA. The health impacts of PM10 known as Black Smoke relate to its ability to penetrate into the respiratory tract. This inhalation can increase the risk, frequency and severity of

cardiopulmonary and respiratory disorders. PM10 are particles with diameters of 10 micrometers or less. In Ireland the main sources tend to come from coal burning and vehicle traffic.

With effect from August 1, 2011, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government made regulations under the Air Pollution Act 1987 introducing a ban on the sale of bituminous coal in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area (including the electoral divisions of Carlow Urban; Graigue Urban; Ballinacarrig; Carlow Rural; and Graigue Rural). These regulations were introduced to safeguard ambient air quality and protect human health from the harmful emissions which result from the burning of high sulphur bituminous coal. The related provisions are set down in S.I. No 270 of 2011, which amends the existing Air Pollution Act, 1987 (Marketing, Sale and Distribution of Fuels) Regulations 1998 (SI 118 of 1998).

In order to support the effective enforcement of these regulations by the local authorities, legislative changes to the Air Pollution Act 1987 are being considered by the Oireachtas as part of the Environment ((Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill and may been in place when this Draft Plan comes into effect.

Air Quality Policies

ENV P01 Raise awareness about changes to legislation banning smoky-coal burning

ENV P02 Ensure a sequential approach to land zoning and deliver good-quality high-density development and adequate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to support improved air quality

ENV P03 Request additional information as necessary where the Councils consider development proposals may have an adverse effect on air quality, and require the use of appropriate mitigation measures such as dust dampeners or chimney stack scrubbers as needed.

Water Quality

Clean water is one of our most important national resources, it is also a fragile resource that needs to be protected. National trends indicate that the number of high quality river sites has halved over the last twenty years and that ground water is undergoing significant and sustained decline in quality. In light of conclusive scientific data, it is clear that the quality of ground and surface water is under significant pressure.

The Water Framework Directive was adopted by the EU in 2000 in order to halt and reverse the decline in water quality. The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is located within the South-East River Basin District (SERBD). Monitoring of the river basins was carried out between 2007 and 2009 and the South-East River Basin District Management Plan (SERBDMP) 2009-2015 sets out ambitious and rigorous objectives of the Directive will be achieved in the South-Eastern River Basin District.

The SERBD is one of Ireland's largest river basin districts. The population is high compared with the rest of Ireland and there are several large urban centres, including the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Water is critical to the economy of the South-Eastern RBD, generating and sustaining wealth through activities such as agriculture, forestry, power generation, industry, services, transport and tourism.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area straddles the River Barrow, one of the principal catchments in the South-East Region and the River Burrin. The River Barrow is a candidate Special Area of Conservation also known as a Natura 2000 site or European designated site. Its protected status informed the RBMP 2009.

Currently ecological surface water quality is classified as moderate upstream and downstream of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area indicating the Greater Urban Area is not having a significant adverse effect on water quality. Groundwater quality in and around the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is classified as good.

The Waste Water Treatment Plan (WWTP) in Mortarstown is not overloaded. The waste water catchment network extends from the northern extent of Carlow town and includes sections of Graiguecullen with the catchment draining in a mainly southerly direction to the WWTP. The WWTP has secondary treatment with nutrient reduction and treatment includes anoxic, aerobic and anaerobic zones within the aeration basins. The waste water treatment plant was licensed by the EPA in 2009 (Ref D0028-01).

The ongoing flood relief works being undertaken include the upgrading of the existing sewerage network by constructing new storm and foul sewer lines, surface water and overflow chambers and pumping stations around the Greater Urban Area and this will serve to improve the functioning of the waste water treatment system.

16,000 cubic metres of drinking water is produced per day for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area including abstraction from the River Slaney at Rathvilley, abstraction from the River Burrin at Scion Cross, boreholes at the northern and western edges of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

Policies

ENV P04 Implement the provisions of the South-East River Basin District Management Plan 2009-2015

ENV P05 Ensure that the functioning of Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area does not cumulatively adversely effect water quality and seek to improve the water quality of the Barrow and Burrin watercourses in liaison with adjoining local authorities and in consultation with other competent authorities with responsibility for environmental management

ENV P06 Undertake the programme of infrastructural improvements set out in the Mortarstown Waste Water Treatment Plant License to upgrade the efficiency of wastewater treatment

ENV P07 Upgrade the storm and foul water drainage network in order to improve water quality, in particular complete programme of works relating to the upgrading of the storm and foul water drainage systems that forms part of the Carlow Flood Relief Scheme

ENV P08 Protect groundwater quality by way of aquifer protection zones, as necessary

ENV P09 Ensure that developments that may adversely affect water quality do not proceed unless and until mitigatory measures are in place, such as settlement ponds or oil interceptors

ENV P10 Ensure development proposals with potential to overload the waste-water treatment plant are not commenced or occupied until additional capacity is in place

ENV P11 Encourage the connection of existing residential dwelling served by septic tanks, treatment systems and boreholes with the municipal waste water treatment mains and drinking water supply, where available

ENV P12 Avoid the development of new unsewered single-family dwelling houses within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

ENV P13 When upgrading or where new on-site treatment systems are acceptable in principle, ensure only systems of a suitable design and in a suitable area are permitted in order to protect water quality. Alternative waste water treatment systems such as wetlands and the need for tertiary treatment will be considered on a case by case basis.

ENV P14 Implement the EPA Code of Practice for Wastewater Treatment Systems Serving Single Houses (2009) and use pathway risk map datasets as this data becomes available when assessing proposals for upgrading or new waste water treatment systems for unsewered properties in order to protect water quality

ENV P15 Implement inspection and licensing regime for septic tanks in accordance with national policy and in order to protect water quality

ENV P16 Undertake consultation with the Inland Fisheries Ireland, the EPA, the National Parks and Wildlife Service or other agencies, as necessary when considering proposals with potential to adversely effect water quality

Flood Risk

The severe flooding of parts of Carlow town in 2008 emphasise the importance of the consideration of flood risk in connection with planning applications. There has been significant investment in the protection of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area from flooding with the Carlow Flood Relief Scheme currently in the final stages.

A rigorous methodology for the assessment of flood risk in connection with development is in place in response to the EU Floods Directive and *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* (2009) issued by the DoECLG. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been carried out on behalf of the Councils as part of this Joint Spatial Plan. The SFRA identifies areas within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area that are at risk from flooding and quantifies the risk. Areas are identified as having a 1% chance of flooding each year (1 in 100 year flood), a 0.1% chance of flooding each year (1 in 1000 year flood) or less than 0.1% chance of flooding each year. This data then informs policies relating to existing developed areas and land use zoning decisions.

Policies

ENV P17 Protect the Greater Urban Area from flooding by completion of the Carlow Flood Relief Scheme including measures such as the construction of flood protection walls and embankments, improvements to foul and surface drainage systems and water conservation measures. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

ENV P18 Adopt a precautionary and preferential strategy to the management of flood risk by way of avoiding areas at risk of flooding, substituting less vulnerable land uses or subject to a justification test, managing and mitigating flood risk in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

ENV P19 Utilise the flood zones identified within the SFRA or the best available flood risk data to determine whether an area is at risk of flooding

ENV P20 Apply the following requirements when considering applications on sites at risk of flooding:

(i) All development proposals within or incorporating areas at moderate to high risk of flooding will require the application of the development management justification test in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009

(ii) All development proposals within or incorporating areas at moderate to high risk of flooding will require a site specific and appropriately detailed flood risk assessment. This shall be informed by the Stage 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments

(iii) Any proposal that is considered acceptable in principle shall demonstrate the use of the sequential approach to inform the site layout and design of development. Proposals shall also demonstrate that mitigation and management measures can be put in place and that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Urban drainage systems can have a significant effect on flood risk. Traditionally drainage systems were simply designed to ensure rainwater was removed as quickly from a particular site, however, this can lead to flooding in other areas further down the system and can also can degrade water quality. Current best practice takes a more holistic approach to rainwater management and surface run-off known as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

SUDS comprise a system of devices for managing surface water run-off in ways that reduce the quantity and speed of surface run-off and also improves the water quality of surface run-off, simulating drainage systems found in the natural environment. It also concerned with systems that require minimal energy input, and are easy to manage, resilient, environmentally-friendly and cost-effective.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) vary from infiltration trenches/soakways, filter drains and permeable pavements to swales, detention basins and stormwater wetlands. Other options which can also be used to assist stormwater runoff control include rainwater harvesting, roof water collection (water butts) and rooftop gardens.

Policies

ENV P21 Implement Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Policy prepared on behalf of Carlow Local Authorities within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, developers shall provide design specifications, calculations and rationale for proposed drainage systems

ENV P22 Surface water run-off is managed as close to its source as possible in line with the following drainage hierarchy to minimise the loading of urban storm water drainage systems and reduce flood risk:

- Store rainwater for later non-potable uses
- Use infiltration techniques such as porous hard surfaces, soft landscaping and green roofs
- Attenuate rainwater in ponds, swales or open water features for gradual release
- Attenuate rainwater by storing in tanks or sealed water features for gradual release
- Discharge into storm water collection system or watercourse (subject to license) having regard to capacity and quality of discharge

ENV P23 Encourage storm water discharge rates from new residential or commercial development that do not exceed that of a pre-development green or brownfield site

ENV P24 Encourage rainwater harvesting for reuse, as part of commercial or residential development proposals to meet the non-potable needs of the development

Soil Quality

Soils are generally resistant to pollution. However, unlike other environmental receptors once polluted soils are not resilient and remediation can include excavation and removal of contaminated material. The most common chemicals involved are hydrocarbons, solvents, pesticides and heavy metals. Contaminated soil can adversely affect human health and the natural environment.

Commonly-used measures to prevent soil pollution include the use of bunds around domestic and commercial fuel storage tanks, hard surfaces and interceptors to refuelling areas and impermeable base liners to protect underlying soil

Policies

ENV P25 Ensure that developments that may potentially adversely affect soil quality do not proceed unless mitigatory measures are used

ENV P26 Require the submission of land contamination surveys and decontamination proposals as necessary, when considering brownfield development proposals on lands that are potentially contaminated

ENV P27 Undertake consultation with the EPA or HSA or other statutory agencies in relation to the remediation of contaminated lands

Seveso II Directive

The EC Control of Major-Accident Hazards Directive (the Seveso II Directive, also known as the CoMAH Directive) places special responsibilities on operators of sites that have major accident potential. It also requires that land-use planning take into account this potential. There are currently no Seveso sites within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

Policies

ENV P28 In accordance with Seveso II, the Councils will ensure that the objective of preventing major accidents and limiting the consequences of such accidents are taken into account in the consideration of relevant planning applications, in particular in respect of

- The siting of new Seveso establishments
- Modifications to existing Seveso establishments
- Development in the vicinity of a Seveso establishment, which, by virtue of its type or siting, is likely to increase the risk or consequences of a major accident

ENV P29 The Councils will consult with the HSA or other relevant statutory agencies in order to obtain technical advice in respect of Seveso establishments before decisions are taken and such technical advice will be taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Noise Environment

In recent decades industrial processes have generally become cleaner and generate lower emissions including noise and vibrations, the importance of protecting noise sensitive environments such as residential areas remains an important function of planning policy.

Noise associated with construction works is considered to be temporary in nature and is generally not a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications. Noise mitigatory measures include soundproofing of industrial buildings or the specialist glazing of residential developments.

Policies

ENV P30 Utilise zoning objectives and employ industrial or enterprise buffer zones to achieve a balance between noise generating uses including certain industries and noise sensitive uses including residential areas

ENV P31 Request additional information as necessary where the Planning Authority considers development proposals may result in an inappropriate balance between noise sensitive and noise generating uses and require the use of appropriate mitigation measures and having regard to Environmental Noise Regulations (SI No. 140 of 2006)

ENV P32 Restrict development generating noise in excess of best practice standards

Light Pollution

Light pollution consists of excessive or obtrusive artificial light. Light pollution can disrupt ecosystems, adversely effect residential amenity and where lighting is excessive is a wasteful use of energy resources

Policies

ENV P33 Ensure new street lighting schemes to residential areas, the town centre and public open spaces are human in scale, with fixture designs that limit upward or horizontal light, in order to create safe and comfortable environments for the pedestrian, while limiting glare and ensuring energy efficiency.

ENV P34 Applications for the floodlighting of sports pitches, tourist attractions or other high-order structures will be carefully considered and will indicate horizontal and vertical luminance levels (lux levels)of the fixtures and include details of when the lighting are to be used. Floodlights are to have fully-shielded light fixtures with cowl accessories.

ENV P35 Ensure any lighting at Oak Park Forest Park and along the Barrow Track does not have an adverse effect on the special natural heritage interest of the areas

ENV 36 Reduce road-lighting along major roads where lighting exceeds road safety requirements

Waste Management

Waste is managed in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban area in the context of the South-East Waste Management Plan (2006) for the administrative areas of Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs and the Midlands Region Waste Management Plan (2005) for the administrative area of Graiguecullen, County Laois. In accordance with section 4 of the Waste Management Amendment Act 2001, the Carlow Town Development Plan, which forms part of the Joint Spatial Plan, is deemed to include the objectives contained in the South-East Waste Management Plan 2006.

Both Waste Management Plans are based on the EU waste management hierarchy, which prioritises waste prevention, minimisation, reuse/recycling, disposal with energy recovery ahead of landfill.

Waste Prevention is preferred to any other waste management option. By not generating waste, we can eliminate the need to handle, transport, treat, dispose of waste and avoid having to pay for these services.

A number of bring banks are located within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

Name of Bring Bank	Materials Accepted
Kernanstown Bring Bank	beverage cans, glass bottles and jars, textiles, newspapers, magazines, paper and card
Green Road (at Y Junction)	Beverage cans, glass bottles and jars, paper
Superquinn Car Park	Beverage cans, glass bottles and jars
Askea Church Car Park	Beverage cans, glass bottles and jars
Graiguecullen, Doyles of the Shamrock	Beverage cans, glass bottles and jars

The Powerstown Landfill and Recycling Centre located to the north of Leighlinbridge serves the Greater Urban Area along with the rest of County Carlow and accepts a wide range of materials for recycling such as electrical goods, waste cooking and vehicle oils, scrap metal, green waste along with general waste for landfill.

The National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste (2006) sets out measures to progressively divert biodegradable municipal waste from landfill in accordance with EU targets set out in EU Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste. A stronger emphasis on the sound disposal of biodegradable waste is emerging nationally. The National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (2008) satisfies article 6 of Directive 91/689/EC on hazardous waste and deals with issues such as the disposal of contaminated soil, domestic hazardous waste such as solvent based paint and batteries.

Policies

ENV P37 Support the implementation of the EU Waste Hierarchy priorisiting waste prevention, minimisation, re-use, recycling and energy recovery over landfill and implement the Regional Waste Management Plans when considering development proposals as well as by way of the Councils corporate plans and operational programmes

ENV P38 Ensure the provision of quality cost effective (Best Available Technology) waste infrastructure and services, which reflect and meet the needs of the community

including the availability of hazardous waste disposal facilities for residents and small enterprises

ENV P39 Require the provision of bring banks in association with development at district centres and neighbourhood centres and more generally encourage the provision of a network of bring banks accepting a range of recyclable goods across the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area subject to general planning considerations

ENV P40 Direct waste disposal or recycling uses that do not have a substantial land take, such as industrial anaerobic digester units, scrap yards, vehicle dismantling enterprises, recycling sorting centres, rendering plants to industrial zoned lands within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area subject to general planning considerations

ENV P41 Support the diversion of biodegradable waste from landfill in accordance with the National Strategy on Biodegradable Waste (2006) and encourage domestic, commercial and municipal composting in line with best practice standards and subject to general planning considerations

ENV P42 Encourage waste prevention, minimization, reuse and recycling and deter fly-tipping and backyard burning by:

(i) Using awareness raising initiatives aimed at commercial enterprises and individual residents
(ii) Effectively enforcing waste management legislation
(iii) Implementing the Polluter Pays Principle

ENV P43 Support the re-use of waste materials, including the responsible salvaging of building features and materials and the re-use of construction and demolition waste in order to make use of the embodied energy of such material goods and prevent waste

ENV P44 Foster the refurbishment and re-use of old buildings, the development of durable and flexible new structures and spaces that can be adapted and modified over time and insofar as practicable the future-proofing of buildings and public realm works in order to prevent waste and make efficient use of energy and material goods

ENV P45 Apply the following standards in relation to bin storage and proposed residential development

Unit Type	Bin Storage
Apartments	Space for storage of three-wheeled communal bins (bio-waste, dry recyclables, general waste) appropriate to number of units
House with no rear external access	Space for three-wheeled communal bins to front of property
House with rear external access	Space for three-wheeled communal bins to rear of property

ENV P46 Support the preparation and implementation of Litter Management Plans in order to protect the visual amenity of the Greater Urban Area and provide for the responsible disposal of waste.

Climate Change

Climate change is recognised as a significant global environmental problem. In response to this the Kyoto Protocol has set targets on Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. National policy The *National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012* highlights the need for a radical strategy to meet the climate change commitments made in the Kyoto Protocol.

The National Bio-Energy Action Plan and South-East Bio-Energy Implementation Plan 2008-2013, both contain targets for the development of renewable energy, while the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020 sets out objectives relating to the development of a secure, efficient and low-carbon energy supply.

Changes to Planning and Development Regulations that relate to micro-generation of renewable energy are noted. New Planning & Development Regulations came in to effect in July 2008 which makes the provision of wind turbines, combined heat and power (CHP) Plants, solar panels and biomass boiler units in association with industrial, commercial or public buildings exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission subject to certain conditions. The provision of the following items for domestic use is exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission subject to certain considerations (Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2007):

- Stand-alone wind turbines
- Building mounted wind turbines
- Building mounted solar panels
- Stand alone solar panels
- Ground source heat pumps
- Air source heat pumps
- Biomass (includes fuel storage tanks /structures)

Policies

ENV P47 Support the key objective of the *South-East Bio-Energy Implementation Plan* for the South-East to become a leader in the development of Bio-Energy in Ireland.

ENV P48 Encourage the carrying out of research in the field of bioenergy within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, having regard to the planned location of the National Bioenergy and Industrial Biotechnology Centre at Oak Park and the current research in the area of bio-fuels being carried out at Oak Park

ENV P49 Encourage the production of energy from renewable sources subject to general planning considerations, and in particular the micro-generation of renewable energy which is considered of particular relevance within The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Areas

ENV P50 Support the National Climate Change Strategy and, in general to facilitate measures which seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases including the delivery of sustainable land use patterns

ENV P51 Seek to improve the energy efficiency of its existing building stock, and to promote energy efficiency and conservation in the design and development of all new buildings

Sustainable Design and Construction

The methodology and details associated with the sustainable construction and use of buildings is complex, is undergoing rapid change and technological advancement. Although some technical elements below are administered by way of building control regulations, some are suitable for administration under the planning application process. Sustainable design and construction techniques may be considered during each stage in the life-cycle of a building: site selection, sourcing of materials, building and open space design, appliance specifications, workmanship and maintenance, re-use, demolition or restoration.

Policies

ENV P52 Encourage the use of sustainable design and construction techniques for all development works.

ENV P53 Proposed developments for over 100 housing units or for commercial or retail floor space exceeding 2000 sq metres shall be accompanied by a sustainability statement which will evaluate the proposals under the following headings:

(i) Land use efficiency

Re-use of buildings; re-use of brownfield sites; efficient use of land generally, reduce building footprints, compact development of lands in proximity to sustainable transport nodes, commercial services and municipal infrastructure

(ii) Reduction in water consumption and surface water generation

- rainwater and grey water harvesting systems;
- use sanitary goods with water-efficient settings;
- minimising and delaying surface runoff by using green roofs, permeable hard standings, water features or increasing proportion of open space devoted to soft landscaping

(iii) Reduction in energy consumption

- siting buildings in wind-sheltered locations, away from cold air pockets, in locations that benefit from good sunshine;
- orientating buildings and arranging windows to maximise solar gain and natural light balanced against the need for shade and comfortable spaces;
- careful working of internal spaces positioning rooms such as kitchen-dining rooms or cafeterias in areas that benefit from good sunlight and positioning offices and bedrooms in more shaded locations;
- constructing thermally massive walls that are super-insulated with thermal breaks, use windows with low-E values;
- use of energy efficient lighting systems;

- use A-rated white goods, harness sustainable energy by using solar tubes, photovoltaic panels, geothermal energy systems, wind turbines;
- installation and maintenance of high performance stoves or boilers that use timber or pellets from sustainable sources, combined heat and power units (CHP), create air-tight buildings with heat recovery ventilation systems;
- reduction in noise and light pollution; avoidance of micro-climatic effects such as the creation of wind tunnels in urban environments

(iv) Consideration of green house gas emissions, sustainable and local materials, and embodied energy

- recycling of building materials;
- use of sustainable and low-toxicity materials that are reclaimable, recyclable or rotatable such as sheep wool or straw bale insulation, lime-mortars, natural slate roofs in order to reduce waste and avoid Sick Building Syndrome;
- preference for materials with low embodied energy such as locally sourced timber-framed buildings, windows and fascia boards over concrete structures, uPVC windows and box fascias;
- construction of carbon neutral buildings; use of native species that thrive without high fertiliser or pesticide inputs in Landscaping Plans and the use of trees to sequester carbon

(v) Reduction in Waste Generation

- provision of sufficient space for the storage, separation and composting of waste;
- preparation of Waste Management Plans related to major construction works;
- preparation of end-of-life dismantling or Restoration Plans; use of anaerobic digestors;
- low input municipal wastewater treatment systems;
- in rural areas, maintenance of septic tanks and where appropriate, installation of ecological sewerage treatment systems such as reed bed systems that do not require mechanical or electrical inputs.

(vi) Support Ecology and Biodiversity

The incorporation of ecologically friendly elements into Landscaping Plans for public open space to commercial, civic or residential development is encouraged such as:

- the ornamental use of log piles or wood pyramids to function as micro-climates for invertebrates
- the use of seed, fruit or berry bearing species for birds and butterflies
- the avoidance of pollen-free plant varieties for bees and butterflies
- the provision of bird and bat boxes for nesting and roosting.
- the provision of artificial ponds or wetlands areas can form part of SUDS, as well as providing an opportunity for aquatic flora and fauna
- create new ecological linkages or stepping stones such as green verges to footpaths, hedgerows, tree belts, ditches, green roofs etc

SECTION 5: EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Core Aim 5: *Provide for quality first, second, third and fourth-level education services, along with lifelong learning opportunities, improve access to training and education for residents to improve the local skill base and provide for student in-migration to access third and fourth level education from outside the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area*

Background

Good primary and secondary level education is fundamental. Ireland's growing population indicates that the primary school-going population will continue to increase. The actual number of classrooms required for this period will depend on such factors as the spread of the additional pupils and the capacity of existing schools to meet this demand. The emerging spatial pattern of primary schooling needs reflects the distribution of rapidly developing residential areas. These include areas such as Carlow that are close to Dublin and attracted households of family formation age, undertaking waged labour in Dublin who were priced out of the Dublin housing market during the economic boom.

Primary Schools within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area include:

Bishop Foley N.S
Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc
Graiguecullen N.S
Educate Together NS
Bennekerry N S
Carlow N.S
Holy Family G.N.S
Holy Family Boys School
Scoil Muire Gan Smal
St. Josephs N.S
St. Lazarians N.S

Secondary Schools within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area include:

St Mary's Academy CBS
St Mary's Knockbeg College
St. Leo's College

Presentation College
Carlow Vocational School
Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach

In addition to the importance of education to the local economy and for the income-earning potential of the individual, education also plays a fundamental role in enriching people's lives and empowering people to strive to achieve their personal development aspirations. Education is important for people wishing to cultivate their interests outside of their working lives and for the cultural and social life of an urban area.

Access to learning and education is important in tackling social exclusion. Specialist programmes are important for reasons of justice and equality, so people who did not benefit from formal primary or secondary education or were unable to fully participate in formal education are not left behind. In particular literacy and numeracy problems are significant barriers to participating in many spheres of life and proactive and targeted programmes such as those operated by the National Adult Literacy Agency are important in redressing these problems.

Specifically tailored adult education programmes form a significant element of the educational and skills strategy. In addition to IT Carlow and Carlow College, Carlow VEC and Solas (FAS) offer important upskilling and re-skilling programmes. There is also increasing range of distance-learning courses and degrees available, these are increasingly accessible to local people because of improved broadband infrastructure.

The location of Institutes of Higher Learning in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area mean that the area is well placed to play an important part in the knowledge economy. Institute of Technology Carlow is particularly engaged with building linkages between education and industry and provides incubation space as well as mentoring services. Carlow College is involved in the humanities and social science and has academic links with Trinity College Dublin. In addition to the research activities carried out under the auspices of educational institutions, extensive field and laboratory research is carried out at the Teagasc Oak Park Campus, as part of the National Arable Crop Research Centre and also biotechnology research is being carried out and will be subsumed into the planned National Biotechnology and Bioenergy Research Centre at Oak Park. These education and research institutions cumulatively represent a strong competitive advantage for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area compared to similar-sized settlements.

Despite the presence of educational and research institutions in the Greater Urban Area, there is a low level of educational attainment among residents who work in the Area. This is compared to a much higher level of educational attainment among resident who commute to other areas for work. Specifically, over one-half of those who commute to Dublin have at least a third level qualification or higher as do those travelling to work in Kildare, Waterford and Cork. However less than one-third (31%) of persons working and living in Carlow only had a third level education or higher, implying that almost 70% had a second level education or lower. This was also the case for Carlow residents who worked in Wicklow (32%) and Laois (38%). The corresponding State average for persons employed with a third level education or higher is 38%.

The current challenging economic circumstances have focused policy makers on the need to build a 'smart economy' with a thriving enterprise sector and high quality employment. In this context it will be

necessary to improve access to training and education, provide a range of opportunities for up-skilling and re-skilling, and focus on investment in education. If the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is to develop its potential further and attract companies up the value chain that are less cost sensitive, it will need to ensure that its entire workforce, and not just those who commute, has the necessary skills and experience to advance the economic development of the area.

Objectives	
E&S O01	Improve access to education and educational attainment for all. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.
E&S O02	Support the provision of primary, secondary, third and fourth level education services in accessible locations in light of the high number of trips associated with such uses and in the interests of sustainable transport.
E&S O03	Support the concept of multiplex learning campuses in accessible locations, including facilities such as pre-schools, childcare and eldercare facilities, primary and second level schools, colleges of further education, sports and recreation facilities and specialist training centres
E&S O04	Support the growth and development of third and fourth level education and research institutions and specialist learning establishments such as language schools, in light of their contribution to the local economy, their role in providing education services to residents within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the South-East, Midlands and Mid-East Regions in accordance with the South-East and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines
E&S O05	Encourage targeted education programmes tackling social exclusion, providing labour activation measures, up-skilling, re-skilling and life-long learning opportunities to provide for personal development and improve the skill base of residents.
E&S O06	Encourage the use of education buildings and ancillary structures outside term time for educational, community development, amenity or tourism purposes in the interests of efficiency and sustainable development

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Central Statistics Office(CSO) and Department of Education and Science projections indicate that birth rates will remain relatively high for the foreseeable future at least, resulting in a growing percentage of those in the standard school-going age cohorts of 0-18. This has implications for provision of primary and secondary level schools infrastructure.

The Councils will have regard to the section 28 guidelines prepared by the Department of Education and Skills and Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in 2008*: The Provision of School and the Planning System, a Code of Practice for Planning Authorities* in the determination of planning applications for schools

Policies

E&S P01 Ensure that adequate and appropriate lands and services are zoned and reserved to cater for the establishment, improvement or expansion of primary and secondary educational facilities in the County.

E&S P02 Ensure special attention is paid to the location of new schools in accessible locations, deployment of sufficient sustainable transport infrastructure such as cycle lanes, stands, showering facilities and the use of initiatives to encourage sustainable modes of transport such as walking buses, car sharing schemes and safe routes to schools. These issues will be addressed as part of mobility management plans

E&S P03 Liaise with the Department of Education to assist in the identification of suitable sites for schools and ancillary facilities and facilitate the development of primary and secondary educational facilities to meet the needs of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, accessible to all members of the community

County Carlow Vocational Educational Committee (VEC)

County Carlow VEC is a statutory local education authority, which operates under the terms of the 1930 Vocational Education Act, its amendments and the 1998 Education Act. The VEC provides a comprehensive range of accessible lifelong learning education and training programmes and educational support services to the community. Carlow VEC serves over 7000 learners through its schools, colleges and adult education centres.

Carlow Institute of Further Education forms part of the VEC and has a long tradition of providing Further Education in the region. It shares a campus with the Institute of Technology Carlow and is restricted by the size of the site.

Current VEC Premises in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

The VEC currently occupies eleven separate locations in Carlow town, including premises owned by the Committee and others that are leased. Issues to be addressed are as follows

- Overcrowding
- Repair
- Inadequate accessibility
- No capacity for further expansion of services

County Carlow VEC proposes to undertake two developments in the short to medium term and has prepared two briefs to that end

- Lifelong Learning "Multiplex" Campus
- Carlow Institute of Education - new building

VEC Policies

E&S P04 Support the principle of developing a Carlow Lifelong Learning Campus of multiplex nature and a new campus for the Carlow Institute of Education in accessible locations in the interests of sustainable transport, sustainable communities and in support of the economy of the town centre

THIRD AND FOURTH LEVEL EDUCATION

Institute of Technology Carlow (ITC)

IT Carlow Strategic Plan (2008- 2013) identifies its primary goal to become the higher education provider of choice for learners in South Leinster through the provision of an academic portfolio which will further enhance IT Carlow's reputation as a higher education institute of international reputation and excellence. The Institute has a diverse academic portfolio of over 60 taught programmes to Level 9 (Masters) on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), a growing research portfolio to Doctoral level (Level 10 NFQ) in the Sciences and Technology, and an emerging research platform in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. More than 70% of students studying for major awards are enrolled on degree Programmes. The Institute currently runs programmes in the six counties of South Leinster through centres in Carlow, Wicklow and Wexford, and in conjunction with other organisations in Laois, Kilkenny and Kildare. In addition to third level degree courses, the recent addition of fourth level degrees will boost the Institute's ability to compete for students on an international basis.

Among the specialist areas on offer are degree courses in the following:

- Biosciences and Bioinfomatics
- Product Design Innovation
- Computer Games Development
- Environmental Technologies - Sport & Exercise
- Health Sciences - Aircraft Systems
- Pharmacy Technician Studies - TV & Media Production
- Law - Early Childhood Education & Care
- Communications & Public Relations

Educational delivery needs to be more flexible and accessible to learners of all ages and backgrounds and IT Carlow is involved in the delivery of such specialist programmes including:

- ITC's recently expanded Lifelong Learning Centre, which provides a range of lifelong learning opportunities for employees to upgrade their qualifications and to support companies in raising their awareness of changing technologies.

- ITC's Labour Market Activation Initiative is designed to help people who have received statutory redundancy since September 2007 or have been in receipt of social welfare payments over twelve months and want to fast track to a higher education qualification.

Student Profile
Carlow's position midway between Dublin and Waterford has led to ITC attracting students from right across the South Leinster region. The six counties of Kildare, Wicklow, Laois, Kilkenny, Carlow and Wexford provide 68% of ITC's students.

Graduate Profile
The 2008 First Destination Graduate Survey showed that over three-quarters (77.5%) of graduates worked in the services sector and almost one fifth (19.1%) worked in manufacturing and non-service industries. The significant proportion employed in services is indicative of the national trend and supports the classification of the types of enterprises expected to dominate Ireland's economic landscape.

ITC's Physical infrastructure
The Institute is engaged in developing and maintaining a physical infrastructure capable of supporting the delivery of its educational and research objectives and further enhancing its reputation. The current capital development programme includes the construction of:
• Phase II of the Engineering Technology Building
• The extension of the Barrow Centre and associated student support facilities
• The construction of a Sports Stand and external dressing room area
• The construction of a new teaching and research wing and administration building under the third-level PPP building programme.

The recent expansion of student social and recreational facilities should attract more students, thus enhancing the educated workforce and contributing to further economic development in the county. It is clear that the role of ITC is central to sustaining economic growth in Carlow and developing further in line with the new economic landscape which is set out for the Smart Economy.

Carlow College

Carlow College was originally developed as a seminary following the relaxation of the penal laws in the eighteenth century. Carlow College is an institute of higher learning centrally located in the town centre and benefitting from academic links with Trinity College Dublin. It also international partnerships with Carlow University, Pittsburgh and with St. Ambrose University, Davenport, Iowa and with 37 community colleges throughout the Illinois Consortium. Its academic courses are focused on the humanities and social science.

Oak Park Research Centre

The Teagasc Oak Park Research Centre is centred in the vicinity of Oak Park Demesne House to the north of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. It houses the National Arable Crops Research Centre and the planned National Biotechnology and Bio-Energy Research Centre. Research undertaken at Oak Park includes field and laboratory research and Teagasc also run a number of training courses for farmers and those engaged in rural diversification commercial initiatives. Met Eireann also undertake meterological field research at Oak Park.

Third and Fourth Level Education and Research Policies

E&S P05 Support the continued development and expansion of IT Carlow having regard to its importance in providing educational services in the South-East and Midlands Regions

E&S P06 Continue to facilitate and promote the development of the third and fourth level education and the research base in the Greater Urban Area to its maximum potential, relevant institutions include:

- Institute of Technology Carlow
- Carlow College (St. Patrick's)
- Carlow College of Further Education
- Teagasc Oak Park Research Centre

SECTION 6: RECREATION, AMENITY AND OPEN SPACE

Core Aim 6: *To provide and enable the provision of a range of well-maintained and managed open spaces, sporting facilities and recreational facilities accessible to all, convenient to the town centre, people's homes and workplaces, catering to the needs and interests of different groups in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and in support of good public health*

Background

The availability of recreational amenities, sporting facilities and open spaces are integral components of a good quality of life and good public health in an urban area. Open spaces can form important habitats for wildlife, be the setting for play and relaxation, sporting activities and meetings, act as buffers between conflicting land uses, perform screening functions within small sites, provide visual interest within a townscape and offer a different experience to the bustle of town life.

It is important that public open spaces, sports and recreational facilities are in accessible locations to ensure everyone can achieve a good quality of life and that a good balance is struck between specialised sporting or recreational facilities and ones that can be enjoyed by all.

Active recreation facilities include sports grounds, pitches and playgrounds as well as indoor facilities such as swimming pools and multi-purpose halls. Passive recreation facilities include gardens, woodland and parklands for meeting, sitting, informal play and strolling. Open spaces can be formally-designed using avenues of trees and geometric shapes or can have a more organic appearance with winding paths and irregular planting patterns. It is also important that a hierarchy of open spaces, recreational and sporting facilities is provided from the green within a housing estate used by people within the neighbourhood to a high order open space such as Oak Park attracting people from a wide geographic area and serving as the green lungs for the urban area.

With increasing emphasis on higher densities and population growth in national planning policy, it is crucial that new spaces and facilities are designed to the highest standards and well-maintained thereafter so that their potential usage is maximised.

Trees and planting are important features, contributing to local character, amenity and nature conservation. The Councils place a high value on preserving trees and providing for new trees in the course of considering planning applications and in public realm works.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban area has a wide variety of open spaces including playing fields, playgrounds, parks, riverside walks and woodland areas and residential greens. Open spaces not only incorporate land but also inland waterbodies which can offer important opportunities for sport, outdoor recreation and also visual amenity. Providing and protecting open space for its amenity, ecological, educational, social and community benefits is now well established as a critical planning principle - consistent with the principles of sustainable development and essential to the creation of sustainable communities.

Many of the open spaces suitable for sporting activities belong to privately managed clubs and organisations. Organisations such as the GAA, soccer clubs, rugby clubs, tennis clubs together with schools, convents and colleges provide a wide range of sporting and recreational facilities along with commercially operated leisure centres and golf clubs.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area has an attractive physical setting being set against the Castlecomer Plateau, straddling the Rivers Barrow and Burrin, with wooded demesne landscapes to the north and east of the town. Amenities developed that make the most of its setting and natural features and that are at the top of the hierarchy of open space include:

The Barrow Track – a tow path running along the River Barrow, developed as part of a navigation system in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, which linked the Grand Canal in Dublin with the River Barrow in Athy providing access to the South-East Region. The Grand Canal, Barrow River and related towpaths are now used by pleasure-crafts, anglers and walkers for amenity and leisure purposes. The tow path locally is known as the Barrow Track, but is also part of the much larger National Way-marked Trail known as the Barrow Way.

Oak Park Forest Park – Mature mixed species woodland area of Beech, Ash, Scots Pine, Larch, Oak, Sycamore and Hazel and adjacent to small lakes with woodland walks of varying lengths, picnic areas, parking, public conveniences. Opened in 2006 to the public and developed by Teagasc and Carlow Local Authorities.

Town Park – Centrally located open space along the River Barrow in Graiguecullen with a pedestrian bridge linking the Park and the historic core of Carlow Town. The Park is strongly influenced by riverside location, featuring a slipway, a small marina for docking; it connects with the Barrow Track and addresses the river frontage with wide steps from the Park to the water's edge with corresponding steps on the opposite bank of the River. All these features encourage interaction with the River. It also features a children's playground, a grid of lime trees, passive open space, terraced earthen embankments and a car park. The Park was developed by Carlow Local Authorities and was opened in 2003 and strengthens links between the historic town centre core to the east of the River and Graiguecullen to the west.

Plan of Carlow Town Park

National Policy Context

National Recreation Policy for Young People (2007)

Six guiding principles underpin the National Recreation Policy of Young People:

• Centred on young people: The best interests of young people should be a primary consideration in planning publicly funded recreational opportunities. Young people should be active participants in planning and implementing programmes and facilities, having regard to their age and experience.

• Family and community-oriented: Publicly funded programmes and access to recreational facilities should be established in a manner that supports and empowers families and communities.

• Equitable: All young people should have equality of opportunity and access to publicly funded recreation. A key element should be to target investment at communities most in need.

• Inclusive: The diversity of young people's experiences, cultures, lifestyles and levels of ability should be recognised in the design and implementation of recreation programmes and facilities.

• Action-oriented: Publicly funded recreation programmes and facilities should be focused on achieving specified results to agreed standards in a targeted and cost-effective manner.

• Integrated: Recreational facilities and programmes should be delivered in a coordinated manner through integrated needs analysis and policy-planning.

Seven objectives have been set out for the National Recreation Policy for Young People:

1. Give young people a voice in the design, implementation and monitoring of recreation policies and facilities

2. Promote organised activities for young people and examine ways to motivate them to be involved

3. Ensure that the recreational needs of young people are met through the development of youth-friendly and safe environments

4. Maximise the range of recreational opportunities available for young people who are marginalised, disadvantaged or who have a disability

5. Promote relevant qualifications/standards in the provision of recreational activities

6. Develop a partnership approach in developing and funding recreational opportunities across the statutory, community and voluntary sectors

7. Improve information on, evaluation and monitoring of recreational provision for young people in Ireland

National Play Policy 'Ready, Steady, Play', (Department of Health and Children 2004)
The objectives include:
• To improve the quality and safety of playgrounds and play areas;
• To ensure that children's play needs are met through the development of a child-friendly environment;
• To give children a voice in the design and implementation of play policies and facilities; and
• To maximise the range of public play opportunities available to all children, particularly children who are marginalised, disadvantaged or who have a disability.

Setting New Directions a Review of National Waymarked Ways in Ireland (2010)

In relation to the Barrow Way, the review found that usage among day-walkers was high and usage among multi-day walkers was moderate and stated the trail was easy in terms of terrain and suitability for different types of walkers. The review recommended the reclassification of the Barrow Way as a National Waterways Trail

Objectives	
REC O01	Work towards the development of a network of linked open spaces across the Greater Urban Area insofar as practicable, which are universally accessible, with cycling and pedestrian facilities and subject to Appropriate Assessment
REC O02	Ensure that where practicable, community, recreational and open space facilities are grouped or clustered to maximise usage and benefit from shared facilities such as car-parking and changing rooms and ensure such facilities are in accessible locations
REC O03	Ensure the provision of green open spaces link with and address the Burrin and Barrow Rivers where practicable to maximise the amenity and landscape value
REC O04	Liaise with community groups, interest groups, commercial organisations and partnerships and support initiatives to improve or provide additional recreational and sporting facilities or amenities, subject to resources
REC O05	Utilise zoning objectives, the development contribution schemes and development standards to ensure adequate sporting and recreational facilities and open spaces are provided for by way of the planning process
REC O06	Carry out an audit of the type and quantum of open spaces in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and ensure the Carlow Community and Sports Facilities Audit is up to date for reference as part of the development applications process to identify areas with deficiencies
REC O07	The Planning Authorities shall seek the preservation of public rights of qway which give access to lakeshores, rivershores or other places of natural beauty or creational utility**.**

County Carlow Sports Partnership

Established in October 2006, County Carlow Sports Partnership operates as a subcommittee of Carlow County Development Board and was responsible for the making of the County Carlow Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2008-2010. The Board of Management is representative of those agencies regarded as key influences in local sports development. The staff includes a Coordinator, Administrator and a Sports Disability Officer. Funded by the Irish Sports Council, the Sports Partnership was developed as a means to coordinate and promote the development of sport at local level. CCSP is part of a national network of 33 Local Sports Partnerships. Commenced in 2001, the Local Sports Partnership initiative has been supported by the Government, social partners, local authorities, VECs, Health Service Executive, educational institutions and various sporting organisations.

Sports Policies

REC P01 Coordinate with the County Carlow Sports Partnership and support the development of sport in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area based in identified need and aimed at increasing opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity by all

REC P02 Implement the County Carlow Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2008 – 2010 or as amended

REC P03 Protect existing sporting facilities against encroachment or redevelopment

REC P04 Promote the provision, maintenance and management of high quality indoor and outdoor sporting facilities which are accessible to all members of the community

REC P05 Facilitate the development of specialized sports facilities catering to the needs and interests of different groups within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

REC P06 Ensure sporting facilities are located in suitable areas and designed to ensure easy access and reduce traffic generation

REC P07 Support the development of the outdoor gym on the grounds of Eire Og GAA club and the provision of similar facilities in association with areas of public open space or existing sports facilities.

REC P08 Support the principle of developing water sports facilities, subject to general planning considerations and the following criteria:

a) The proposed facilities are compatible with any existing use of water, including non recreational uses;
b) It will not result in damage to sites of nature conservation importance or features of archaeological and built heritage;
c) The development can be satisfactorily integrated into the landscape or townscape surroundings and will not have an adverse visual impact;
d) The development will not result in the over intensification of use leading to pollution, excessive noise and nuisance.

REC P09 Support the principle of developing commercial leisure and sporting facilities subject to general planning considerations

Play Policies

REC P10 Support the maintenance of the playground at the Town Park, the upgrading of the playground at Hanover Park and the provision of similar playground areas in association with public open spaces or existing sports facilities

REC P11 Implement the County Laois Play Strategy 2004-2008 and as amended, insofar as it relates to Graiguecullen County Laois

Amenity Space and Development

The nature and amount of amenity space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the built environment. Amenity space includes private gardens, passive open space in business parks, balconies, roof gardens as well as communal open spaces, estate greens, tennis courts, playgrounds and multi-use games areas. Amenity space provides opportunities for passive as well as active recreation and has important ecological and environmental functions. Importantly, amenity space also provides an appropriate setting for buildings, ensuring a satisfactory relationship between buildings and making a positive contribution to the public realm.

Integrated pleasant, attractive and landscaped open space should form an intrinsic element in the design of new development. The quality of the space will determine the way it is used: well-maintained, accessible spaces that benefit from good passive surveillance are more likely to be used than poorly designed, neglected spaces. The Councils recognize that the type and amount of amenity space will vary according to the different site and locational circumstances. It is therefore important that minimum standards are set out in order to ensure sufficient land is provided for amenity purposes.

Soft landscaping can provide an opportunity for a development to respect and incorporate existing natural features, provide a pleasant environment for occupants and visitors and give a development a sense of being absorbed into the local landscape.

Public open space is considered of particular importance in relation to family dwelling units to provide opportunities for play and socialisation. Specific active play areas for children can be provided as part of residential developments for small sites as well as large expansive sites. These play areas may include fixed equipment such as rockers, cradle swings, carousels, balance beams, climbing frames providing a child with an opportunity for challenging, stimulating and social play. Teenagers also benefit from specialised recreational facilities such as skate parks or informal space for peers to gather as well as more formalised sporting facilities.

Outdoor gyms for adults are growing in popularity, with many local authorities taking the initiative to provide such facilities in existing public parks. Essentially these gyms consist of all-weather exercise equipment accessible to all, regardless of means. The intention behind the provision of such gyms is to increase public participation in exercise and improve public health. They are considered practicable for use on a year-round basis.

The precise location, type and design of open space provision and recreational facilities will be negotiated with developers according to the specific characteristics of the development, the site and its context. In calculating the area of the open space, the area of roads, car parking areas, grass margins, roundabouts, footpaths and visibility splays shall not be taken into account.

Open Space Policies

REC P12 Endeavour to provide a hierarchy of parks, open spaces and outdoor recreation areas within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area so that the population can participate in a wide range of active and passive recreational pursuits within easy reach of the town centre, their homes or places of work

REC P13 Improve the quality and quantity of public open spaces within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and provide for compatible uses within these areas such as cycle-routes, playgrounds and outdoor gyms

REC P14 Improve walking and cycling linkages between and within areas of open space to increase their accessibility

REC P15 Where the opportunity arises, visually or physically link existing lines of trees or hedgerows (including street trees) and green spaces to improve the ecological value of open spaces and the visual appearance of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

REC P16 Protect trees within the public realm in light of their amenity value and their contribution to the character of an area and exercise a presumption in favour of retaining trees or woodland areas on private lands, where they make a significant contribution to the character of an area

REC P17 In the provision of additional areas of public open space or improvement of existing public open spaces, favour areas where open space provision is currently deficient.

Spatial Open Space Policies

REC P18 Seek to establish a linear public open space linking the Barrow Track with Oak Park in the interests of public amenity, tourism and nature conservation

REC P19 Continue to maintain the quality and improve the accessibility of the Barrow Track and Oak Park Forest Park within the Joint Spatial Plan area, in coordination with other organisations.

REC P20 Reserve lands in order to provide a walking and cycling track along the River Burrin between the N80 and the town centre. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

REC P21 Reserve lands for a district public park with playground to the east of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as this area is under-served in relation to passive open spaces and has a large number of family dwelling units

Amenity Space and New Development Policies

REC P22 Require submission of a landscaping scheme in conjunction with development proposals where the site coverage is less than 100% and setting out details for the retention of existing trees, the protection and enhancement of other existing on-site features, planting proposals including a list of species and details of their age and proposed position and details of proposed hard landscaping

REC P23 Ensure amenity space (public and private) is designed to accord with the following principles:

a. Amenity space is of a practicable and usable configuration, designed as an integral part of a development and relates well to the design and character of the area

b. The provision of amenity space results in an acceptable relationship between buildings and improves the appearance of surrounding buildings and the public realm generally

c. Existing on-site features such as topography, mature trees, streams, ponds, hedgerows inform the design of amenity space

d. Landscaping schemes are coherent and appropriate to the type and design of development, including adequate space for planting belts and screening, sufficient amount and range of species, with preference to indigenous species

e. Planting does not create opportunities for crime by obscuring entrances to buildings or failing to provide passive surveillance of public open spaces

f. A clear demarcation between public open space and any private open space

Communal Open Space and Residential Development

Adequate areas of open space should be an integral part of any new residential development to meet the needs generated by that development.

All children and young people should have access to play space which should be within a reasonable and safe walking distance from home. The following indicative standards should be observed in the laying out of new residential development:

Play Space Type	Maximum walking distance from residential unit
Doorstep Playable Space	100m
Local Playable Space	400m
Neighbourhood Playable Space	800m
Youth Space	800m

Open space provision relating to the conversion of existing buildings with high site coverage and schemes catering for special needs such as accommodation for the elderly will be considered more flexibly having regard to the requirements of likely future residents.

In the interests of meeting strategic needs the Council may pool together the requirements of individual and small developments to provide facilities and amenities of a strategic nature at the higher end of the hierarchy. Developer contributions may also be sought and may be applied to improve existing facilities nearby.

Policies

REC P24 Require public open space in the order of 10% of the site where residential development comprising five or more units is proposed. Where provision of that order is not practicable by reason of site or locational constraints, development contributions may be accepted in lieu and will be allocated towards public leisure and amenities within the area.

REC P25 Ensure communal open space proposed in association with residential development is designed to accord with the following principles:

i. Open spaces are overlooked to promote usability and reduce the fear of crime

ii. Open spaces are functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the residential area

iii. A hierarchy of public open space types are provided in larger developments that are fit-for-purpose, interlinked, benefit from adequate sunlight and daylight, incorporate hard landscaping as well as soft landscaping to increase usability

iv. Open spaces are multi-functional, where practicable

REC P26 Ensure the following types of spaces and recreational facilities in association with new residential development:

Dwelling Units	Communal Amenities Required
<20	Landscaped passive recreational space Open space for informal play
21-50	Landscaped passive recreational space Open space for informal play Playground younger children (min 100 sq metres) Multi-use games area (tennis/basketball)
51-150	Landscaped passive recreational space Open space for informal play Playground for younger children (min 100 sq metres) Youth space suitable for teenagers (min 100 sq metres) Multi-use games area (tennis/basketball) Outdoor gym for adults
150+	Landscaped passive recreational space Open space for informal play Playground for younger children (min 100 sq metres) Youth space suitable for teenagers Outdoor gym for adults Multi-use games area (tennis/basketball) Grass sports pitch/playing fields

Private Open Space and New Residential Development

This is open space allocated to individual dwelling units for the exclusive use of each household.

REC P27 Apply the following minimum standards in relation to private open space for new residential development:

Unit Type	Town Centre	Suburban Areas
Apartments	5 sq metres	10 sq metres
Houses	10 sq metres per bedroom proposed	20 sq metres per bedroom proposed

Note: Marginal land strips measuring less than 1.5m wide and balconies, winter gardens or roof terraces less than 1.5m in depth will be excluded from calculations. Where it is proposed to provide infill development within the town centre or convert existing structures into apartments, a lesser quantum of private open space may be accepted or a contribution is paid in lieu at the discretion of the Council

REC P28 Ensure the adequate provision of boundary treatments are put in place in association with private open space, including:-

- vertical privacy screens between balconies
- timber, brick or plastered and capped blockwork walls boundaries between gardens measuring at least 1.4m in height and providing full privacy at ground floor level
- plastered and capped blockwork walls where rear gardens front onto the street measuring at least 1.8m in height

Commercial and Enterprise Development

REC P29 Ensure the provision of passive open space in association with enterprise areas in order to contribute to the utility and attractiveness of an area

REC P30 Utilise belts of trees or earthern berms as screening tools and to improve the attractiveness of the public realm

REC P31 Utilise flower baskets, planter boxes, individual semi-mature trees within areas of hardstanding, where site coverage is high and where commercial buildings address the public realm

SECTION 7: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Core Aim 7: *Foster a sense of place, belonging and a good quality of life for all, by promoting social inclusion and community cohesion and ensuring the adequate provision of community facilities that cater to the diverse needs of individuals and the local society as a whole*

Introduction

Building strong, inclusive communities is an integral part of striving for sustainable development. The provision of good quality housing and a range of employment opportunities are the most essential pre-requisites to the establishment of sustainable communities. In addition, the provision of and access to a range of support infrastructure in the areas of education, childcare, health, social, recreational and leisure facilities as well as the creation and maintenance of a high-functioning and attractive built environment are all essential underpinning elements of sustainable communities. Communities require opportunities to meet, interact and form bonds, in order for a sense of place, neighbourhood and belonging to emerge. Recognition of the diversity of people's needs is integral to building sustainable communities. Individual community activists and community groups play a significant role in the creation of cohesive communities.

The nature of the market economy means that economic success in the local economy does not automatically give rise to increased equality and social inclusion for all. Social exclusion occurs when individuals and communities are unable to participate fully in society for a range of reasons including low incomes, poor housing, high-crime environments, family problems, health difficulties including mental health, limited mobility, difficulties with literacy and numeracy, addiction and discrimination. The Joint Inclusion Report (Department of Social Protection 2004) defines social inclusion as: the process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live.

Access to housing (addressed section 8) and access to education (addressed in section 5) and the provision of recreational amenities and public open space (addressed in section 6) are key to addressing social exclusion and marginalisation.

National Policy Context

The **National Anti Poverty Strategy 1997-2007 (NAPS)** provides a framework for anti-poverty initiatives within local authorities and its implementation enhances the work that local authorities already carry out. The main objective of NAPS is "to reduce substantially and ideally eliminate poverty in Ireland and to build a socially inclusive society". Tackling this objective will require a multi sectoral - multi policy approach. The overall policy approach is to:

- Sustain economic growth and employment;
- Provide levels of income support to those relying on social welfare sufficient to sustain dignity and avoid poverty, while facilitating participation in employment and escape from welfare;
- Address the needs of groups at high risk of poverty with specific needs;
- Provide high quality public services to all;
- Tackle the vicious cycle of intergenerational transmission of poverty;
- Support disadvantaged communities.

National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (2007-2016)
The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion sets out the Government's strategic initiative to place the needs of the poor and socially excluded at the top of the national agenda. The strategy recognises the unacceptable scale of poverty and its impact on those directly affected and on wider society. It also notes the distinct spatial aspects of poverty in urban and rural areas. The strategy emphasises the importance of cross departmental policy response in dealing with the problem. The target of the strategy is to reduce consistent poverty below 2% of the population.

The strategy states that:
The future challenge is one of optimising the current employment and layout mix in Ireland, consistent with maintaining sustainable rates of economic and employment growth combined with policies aimed at tackling social exclusion, poverty and inequality

The **National Development Plan 2007-2013** also aims to promote social inclusion by:

- Promoting measures for the integration of the socially excluded into the labour force and equal opportunities for all
- Maintaining the effort to re-integrate those who are currently long-term unemployed into the labour force

Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and companion document **Urban Design Manual** (2009) emphasise the importance of providing community facilities in tandem with new housing in order to create sustainable communities.

National Childcare Investment Programme 2006-2010 – funding programme for new childcare facilities and led to the creation of the Carlow Childcare Committee and Laois Childcare Committee made up of statutory, community and voluntary representatives and are engaged in the delivery of childcare facilities

Childcare Facilities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) sets out national policy in relation to the provision of childcare

Wellbeing Matters A Social Report for Ireland (NESC 2009) points to a number of ways whereby the quality of life of older people can be improved through planning and the built environment.

National Action Plan Against Racism 2005-2008 provides strategic direction to combat racism and to develop a more inclusive, intercultural society in Ireland based on a commitment to inclusion by design, not as an add-on or afterthought and based on policies that promote interaction, equality of opportunity, understanding and respect.

RAPID

The Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) is a national programme is aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunity available to residents of the most disadvantaged communities in Irish cities and towns. It aims, in a focused and practical way, to reduce the deprivations faced by residents of disadvantaged communities. It attempts to do this through targeting significant state resources at the needs of disadvantaged areas.

Framework III of the Programme for Prosperity & Fairness sets out three objectives which are being met directly through the RAPID Programme.

These are:

- To develop a specific integrated policy focus, across the Social Inclusion Measures identified in the National Development Plan, directed at the social groups who are excluded, especially where cumulative disadvantage is pervasive.
- To tackle, in particular, the spatial concentration of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion within the 25 identified designated disadvantaged areas.
- To stem the social and economic costs of social exclusion by developing a range of integrated measures such that the physical, social and community infrastructure of designated communities is developed to allow them harness the social capital and capacity necessary for economic and community development.

The following principles underpin the implementation of RAPID

- Community participation and local ownership
- Promotion of Strategic Planning
- Co-ordination of provision of State Services
- Targeting of “additional” services, investment and facilities
- Building on existing structures
- Complementing existing initiatives
- Flexibility

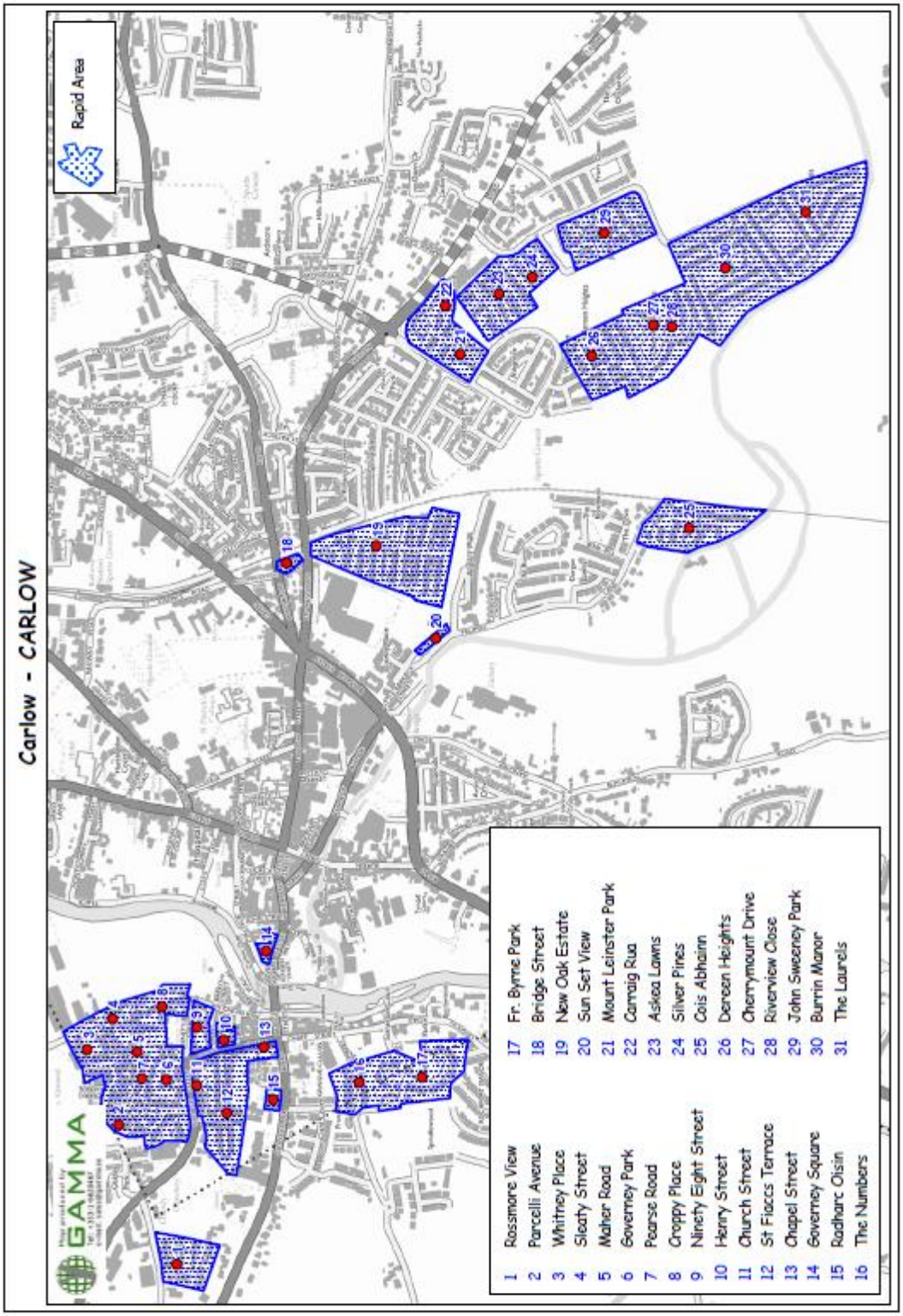


Figure 1 RAPID AREAS in the GREATER CARLOW GRAIGUECULLEN URBAN AREA

RAPID is led by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, but administered locally. RAPID in Carlow have been involved in the following projects including the redevelopment of Fiacc's Activity Centre in Graiguecullen:

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area includes a number of RAPID areas. A recurring problem in these RAPID residential areas was the provision of housing without supporting social infrastructure. A number of these areas are peripheral to the town centre for the purposes of walking and are not served by public transport or cycle lanes, which means residents in these areas who do not have access to a car find it difficult to access services. The development of District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres mean that some retail and commercial services needs are being met, but access to other services remains an issue. This is a legacy issue in a number of the RAPID areas, which are under-served in relation to services including parks, playgrounds, health-care services, cycle lanes and public transport

Objectives

SOC O01	Make the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area an attractive place to live and work by creating strong communities, facilitating and providing adequate community services and fostering a strong sense of place and belonging
SOC O02	In the implementation of the Joint Spatial Plan, ensure the planning authorities promote equality, diversity and social inclusion as a core value
SOC O03	Provide for the particular and diverse needs of specific groups in society, including those experiencing disadvantage and those with special needs
SOC O04	Provide for the coordinated delivery of community services within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area notwithstanding administrative boundaries
SOC O05	Encourage capacity building within local communities in order to harness local social capital and cultivate a strong civic society

Social Inclusion Policies

SOC P01	Support the voluntary sector which undertakes many beneficial community development and social inclusion projects and programmes
SOC P02	Foster the implementation of RAPID programme to address disadvantage and inequity
SOC P03	Encourage the implementation of the social and community elements of County Carlow and Laois Development Board Strategies
SOC P04	Support the development of Local Agenda 21 Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as provided for in Sustainable Development - A Strategy for Ireland 1997

SOC P05 Improve the quality and functioning of residential areas by implementing the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines ensuring new housing schemes are well-designed and are well-served by community facilities

SOC P06 Work systematically towards creating a universally accessible built environment, that is buildings, facilities and spaces that can be accessed and used by all

SOC P07 Minimise anti-social behaviour by creating a welcoming urban environment, measures to reduce crime and fear of crime include increasing passive surveillance of streets and open spaces, careful management of street lighting, provision of adequate litter receptacles, addressing dereliction and vacancy and careful management of the mix of day-time and evening uses within the town centre

Community Facilities Policies

SOC P08 Work with other statutory agencies and community groups to enable the optimum usage of existing community facilities, the enhancement of existing community facilities and the provision of additional community facilities

SOC P09 Ensure community facilities are located in areas where they can be easily accessed

SOC P10 Utilise the development contribution scheme to ensure adequate community facilities are provided in association new housing within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

SOC P11 Support the development of multi-purpose, shared or campus-based community facilities or the grouping of community facilities within an area

SOC P12 Ensure that new community facilities are provided in conjunction with new residential areas in a timely manner by way of phasing and planning conditions

SOC P13 Seek to address persistent deficiencies in community facilities in established residential areas, in particular focusing on disadvantaged areas

SOC P14 Provide for the particular and diverse needs of specific groups in society, in particular the establishment of specialised community facilities including indoor facilities for teenagers, the elderly, minority faith groups and immigrant communities

Childcare Facilities Policies

SOC P15 Encourage and facilitate the provision of quality, accessible childcare services of different types (before school, homework clubs, day-long places etc) and for children of different ages and in particular quality affordable childcare, in accordance with national policy and in order to give primary care-givers the opportunity to participate in waged labour

SOC P16 Have regard to strategies produced by local childcare committees in the consideration of planning applications for childcare facilities (Carlow County Childcare Committee Strategic Plan 2007-2010, Laois County Childcare Committee Strategic Plan 2007-2010)

SOC P17 Ensure the provision of childcare facilities of an appropriate type and scale in suitable locations, in particular childcare facilities at the following locations will normally be required

- Areas of concentrated employment
- Town Centre and District Centres
- In or in the vicinity of schools or major education facilities
- In or adjacent to community centres
- In the vicinity of public transport notes
- Within new and existing residential development

SOC P18 Avoid the provision of childcare facilities in peripheral locations to minimise traffic generation and ensure accessibility for disadvantaged communities where families may not have access to a car

SOC P19 Small-scale childcare facilities will be permitted within existing residential areas providing they do not have a significant adverse effect on the residential amenity of the area by way of traffic generation and parking

SOC P20 Require the provision of childcare facilities in tandem with proposals for new residential development, specifically one childcare facility with places for 20 children shall be required per 75 dwelling units – unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that sufficient or excessive childcare places are already available within the local area

Health Care Facilities Policies

SOC P21 Pursue the provision of casualty and maternity services in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area to serve the town and the wider catchment.

SOC P22 Provide for a range of healthcare facilities within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area including in-patient care, multi-disciplinary primary care centres, nursing home care, community-based care facilities, respite facilities, addiction facilities subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

SOC P23 Encourage the location of medical facilities and in particular specialist health-care facilities with large catchments in accessible locations such as within the town centre, district centres or close to public transport nodes, in order to reduce traffic generation and cater to those without access to the private car.

SOC P24 Encourage the provision of sheltered housing or nursing home care in proximity to a range of commercial services and/or public services in order to enhance the quality of life of residents, reduce potential for isolation and provide for community cohesion

SOC P25 The provision of small-scale health-care centres such as doctor's or dentist's surgeries within residential areas will be permitted providing they do not have a significant adverse effect on the residential amenity of the area by way of traffic generation and parking

Library Services Policies

Libraries play a key role in meeting the informational, cultural, educational and recreational needs of the community

SOC P26 Encourage the use of the Carlow Central Library by residents of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

SOC P27 Support library initiatives to engage with the community and offer opportunities for learning, including the running of book clubs, computer courses, running of festivals such as the Children's Book Festival, display of exhibits and the development of informal library space for teenagers

SOC P28 Support the expansion of library services, including the availability of online, archive and genealogy services

SOC P29 Develop links between Carlow Central Library and the libraries at IT Carlow and Carlow College

SOC P30 Encourage the use of mobile library services within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, focusing in particular on peripheral residential or disadvantaged residential areas

Fire Services Policies

SOC P31 Continue to provide an effective fire service within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

SOC P32 Ensure ease of access for emergency vehicles including fire service vehicles to newly-developed areas, including by way of submission of swept path analysis drawings where sites are constrained

Burial Grounds Policies

SOC P33 Facilitate the provision of new burial grounds, extension of existing burial grounds and crematoria as appropriate to cater to the diverse needs of a multi-cultural local society, ensuring such facilities do not have an adverse effect on water quality. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

SECTION 8: HOUSING

Core Aim 8: *To facilitate the provision of housing in a range of locations to meet the needs of residents living within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, with particular emphasis on facilitating access to housing to suit different household and tenure needs in a sustainable manner;*

A housing strategy was prepared by DKM Economic Consultants and RPS Planning and Environment on behalf of Carlow Local Authorities, relating to the functional areas of Carlow Town and Carlow County and covering the period 2009-2014. This housing strategy is contained within an appendix to this document. A housing strategy was prepared by NBA on behalf of Laois County Council, relating to its functional area, including Graiguecullen, County Laois and covering the period 2011-2017. These housing strategies were prepared in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. For the purposes of this Joint Spatial Plan, the Council's will rely on the above housing strategies to inform housing policy.

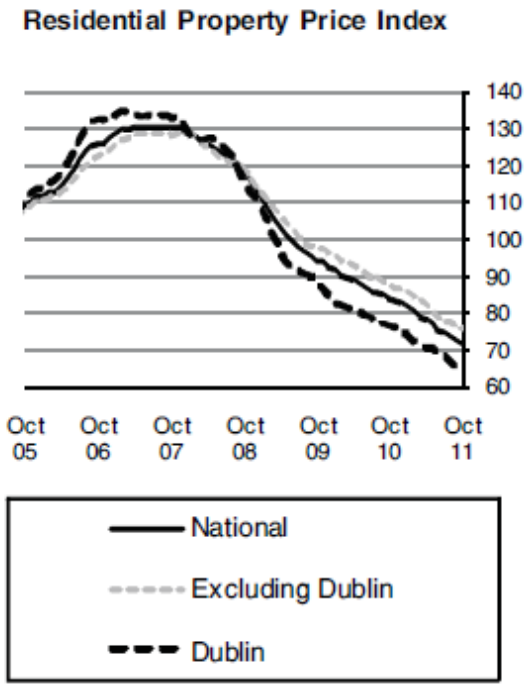
A housing strategy shall:

a) Include an estimate of, and provision for, the existing need and the likely future need for housing in the area covered by the development plan. The Planning Authority shall ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned in it's Development Plan for residential use (or for a mixture of residential and other uses), to meet the requirements of the Housing Strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the Development Plan.
b) Take into account the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income and in particular for those in need of social or affordable housing in the area. A housing strategy shall therefore provide that as a general policy a specified percentage, not being more than 20% of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for social and/or affordable housing.
c) Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the Planning Authority, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.
d) Counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

The needs of various groups, including the homeless, travellers and the elderly are addressed as part of the Housing Strategy.

National Context

The cost of housing has been in continuous decline since early 2007. According to the Residential Property Price Index (December 2011), compiled on the basis of mortgages drawn down, the price of dwelling units excluding Dublin stands at 43% lower than their peak in early 2007. Apartments have undergone the most significant price decreases. House prices in the year to December 2011 have fallen by 16.7%.



RPPI CSO (November 2011)

The RPPI figures produced by the CSO and based on mortgage draw-downs are similar to the Q3, 2001, Daft Report based on the asking prices for properties posted on daft.ie. According to Report, asking property prices have fallen by 45% outside Dublin.

In March 2011, the Central Bank published two macro-economic scenarios: a base scenario (based on EU Commission baseline forecast) and adverse scenario. The Central Bank stated the scenarios are not forecasts of outcomes, but two possible paths from a large range of future outcomes regarding property prices.

Central Bank House Price Scenarios				
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013
Base Scenario	-15.5	-13.3	-14.4	0.5
Adverse Scenario	-15.5	-17.4	-18.8	0.5

On balance, housing affordability has improved, but unemployment has risen and disposal income has declined. In addition liquidity and access to credit is now a major obstacle to housing transactions (Daft Report Q3 2011). Mortgage transactions are set to fall nationally to the lowest level since 1971 this year. Access to mortgage credit is a prerequisite for stabilisation in prices. A National Treasury Management Agency economic review (2012) anticipated further decline in residential property prices alongside further decline in disposable incomes.

The construction sector is in ongoing severe contraction with housing completions dropping from a peak of 90,000 housing units in 2007 to 26,500 units in 2009 and an estimated 14,000 units in 2010 (DECLG 2010). Notwithstanding this contraction housing stock remains high nationally (59,000), down slightly from the 62,000 dwelling unit average in 2008-2009.

Local Context

The average asking price for a dwelling unit in County Carlow stands at €184,651 in the third quarter of 2011 (Daft 2011).

Average Asking Price in County Carlow Daft.ie Q3 2011 in thousands				
1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed
€89	€123	€148	€239	€288

Profile of Housing Stock on Sale in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area Daft.ie Q3 2011						
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed & over	Sub-total
No.s	5	35	163	116	35	370

This represents a fall of 41% since peak prices broadly in line with national rates of decline recorded by the CSO.

Dataset	2004	2005	2006	2007
DECLG Data: Average New House	207,057	247,123	254,343	274,788
DECLG Data: Average Second-hand House	216,143	236,378	255,034	275,550
Ptsb/ESRI data: Average House	218,291	237,685	253,908	N/A

Property prices rose by 10.4% in County Carlow year-on-year to Q3, 2011. The Draft Report considers that this may be an aberration associated with low transaction levels or more likely may be due to sellers factoring in bidders' discounts below the advertised asking price. This trend is likely to reverse in Q4 2011.

In Leinster, the average time to sell in September was 7.5 months, significantly faster than in March (11 months) but similar to the same period last year.

Given the volatility in the housing market as well as the wider economy, it is difficult to make projections on house prices, disposable income, interest rates and housing transactions.

It is noted that the Carlow Housing Strategy 2009-2014 will be reviewed as part of the County Carlow Development Plan review process commencing in 2013 and changes to resulting policy can be incorporated into the Joint Spatial Plan by way of a Town Development Plan variation. The national downward trend in house prices, consumption, disposable income and GDP will stabilize in 2013, according to both the base and adverse property price scenarios produced by the Central Bank. Stabilisation of these factors will provide for a more credible position from which to make assumptions underpinning future projections regarding house prices, disposable income and affordability.

An update in relation to the current position relating to social housing, affordable housing and empty homes in Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs is set out below.

Publically-Owned Housing Landbanks and Stock

There are no funds available for construction projects in the short term. Indications are that a small amount of funding may be available in the coming years. The only planned project for the town environs is an infill development of 5 apartments in Maryborough Street, Carlow.

In terms of land banks, Carlow County Council has 2.2 ha in the townland of Paupish adjacent to local GAA grounds in Carlow Town Environs, purchased for social housing purposes in 2002. It is unlikely due to the current economic climate that these lands will be used for social housing purposes. There is a proposal under consideration for the transfer of these lands to the Housing Sustainable Communities Ltd., under the Land Aggregation Scheme. The Town Council has two further portions of land - approximately 5 ha. to the rear of this site - this portion is unserviced and development will not take

place in the current climate, and approx. 0.8ha. in Rathnapish which will be developed in the future when funds become available.

Affordable Housing Provision in Carlow Town Functional Area – October 18, 2011

1999 Scheme	Built
One-off - Carlow Urban	3
Burrin Road – Carlow Urban	14
Sub-total	17
Part V Affordable	**Built**
Carlow Urban	12
Part V Affordable	**Leased**
Carlow Urban	14

Four of these are in Palatine and two in Tullow. If purchased these will be let as social properties in the short to medium term.

Social Housing Statistics for Carlow Urban Area			
	2008	2009	2010
House Completions	2	22	
Carlow Town Council Voluntary & Co-op	53		
Acquisitions by Carlow Local Authorities	13	5	9
Carlow Local Authorities Housing Commenced and Under Construction	22	Nil	Nil
Carlow Local Authority Houses available for rent from existing stock	12	10	4
Sale of Local Authority Houses	1	1	1
Sales Approved	1	1	1
Applications for Sales Received	1	3	1
Carlow Local Authorities stock of rented dwelings	729	757	765
Carlow Local Authorities Rental Accommodation Transfers Completed	111	107	88

National Policy Relating to Social and Affordable Housing

In June 2011, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government announced the standing down of the Affordable Housing Scheme. The re-introduction of this scheme or other similar schemes is not being considered in the short to medium term due to the possible adverse affect they may have on house prices.

Current national policy for the provision of social housing accommodation is via the long-term leasing scheme. Local Authorities in general are having mixed experiences with engagement of the private market in the scheme. As it stands, it is estimated that a total of 70% - 75% of the current social housing list are in receipt of some form of social assistance to meet their housing need. It would appear for the present that there will not be a return to large scale capital construction.

With reduced numbers of planning applications and the slow down in house construction on private developments it is difficult to predict how the Part V requirement will be met in the current climate. It is the intention of Carlow Local Authorities to secure houses within developments either by purchase or lease in order to satisfy Part V requirements – in line with national policy on social inclusion and to counteract segregation. Such agreements are subject to available funding and will remain the priority of Carlow Local Authorities unless there is a national change in Housing Policy in relation to Part V. It is the intention of Laois County Council to secure houses within development by way of long-term leasing arrangements.

Social Housing Need

Assessment of Social Housing Need in Carlow Town and Environs	
Total on list in Carlow Town	1153
Total on list in Carlow Town Environs	95
In receipt of Rent Supplement Scheme in Carlow Town	75%

It is estimated by Carlow Local Authorities that approximately 70-75% of those on the social housing list are in receipt of rent allowance based on figures supplied by the HSE.

In relation to the provision for social housing, national policy is currently relying on the private rented market through rent supplement (brought in as short-term measure) and various leasing initiatives to support housing applicants. As stated above, as many as 70% - 75% of those on the current housing list are in receipt of a subsidy towards their rent payments. The remaining applicants have no rental assistance and currently, due to their income and/or the insecurity of their employment, are unable to secure a mortgage.

Social housing shall include the provision, through Approved Housing Bodies, of specially adapted dwellings for the elderly and disabled. All agreements will be made subject to the availability of capital funding.

HOUSING STRATEGIES

The principal features to emerge from the analysis presented above, the current policy context, the Core Strategy contained in Part 2 of the Joint Spatial Plan and the 2009 Carlow Housing Strategy and 2011 Laois Housing Strategy are as follows:

- The Core Strategic projects household formation sizes and numbers and allocates projected population growth to Carlow Town, Graiguecullen, County Laois and Carlow Town Environs in accordance with the respective Regional Planning Guidelines
- 14% of new residential development to be dedicated to social housing within Carlow Town and Carlow Town Environs, pursuant to Part V Agreements
- 12% of new residential development to be dedicated to social housing within Graiguecullen, County Laois, pursuant to Part V Agreements and by way of long-term leasing arrangements
- The quantum of lands zoned for residential use will be less than in preceding periods, despite this 50% headroom is provided to account for lands not coming forward for development and provide for choice
- In addition to residential zoned lands, town centre zoned lands also have housing capacity
- The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government calculated vacancy rates of housing developments in 2011, current housing vacancy rates within County Carlow are running at 15 vacant units per 1000 households and in within County Laois at 26 vacant units per 1000 households
- The specific needs of the Travelling Community will be met as detailed in the Traveller Accommodation Programmes 2009-2013 for Counties Carlow and Laois.

The Local Authorities recognise the important role played by the voluntary sector in meeting social housing need and will support and facilitate the expansion of that role. The Councils will seek to cater for social accommodation in a number of ways -

- the Voluntary Housing Sector and the Rental subsidy scheme
- the capital assistance scheme
- Rental Accommodation Scheme
- Housing Adaptation Grant
- Mobility Aids Grant
- Housing Aid for Older People Grant

The following are the key objectives for Housing Development:

- implement the policies contained in the DECLG document '*Building Homes, Sustaining Communities*'
- provide the necessary infrastructural investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output required to meet the current and anticipated levels of demand.
- zone adequate amounts of land for housing to provide a locational choice and allow for the probability that not all zoned land will be made available for development.
- strive for the highest quality built environment when assessing development proposals.
- encourage economy and efficiency in the use of land and services.

- promote a high standard of architecture in the siting and design of new housing developments.
- encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenure in individual schemes and to encourage variety, interest and social mix in private and social housing developments.
- ensure that the Council's housing policy and objectives are linked with employment, environmental, and infrastructural policies and objectives with the aim of improving the quality of life and the attractiveness of the Town. Flood assessment, energy efficient houses and adequate green spaces.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The settlement hierarchy as set out in PART 2: CORE STRATEGY outlines the distribution of projected population growth across Carlow Town, Graiguecullen County Laois and Carlow Town Environs.

The Councils will ensure that it achieves quality in terms of neighbourhoods and homes and choice in terms of location and tenures.

Quality in this context means the development of sustainable, integrated neighbourhoods which are easily served by public transport if possible. Additional features of sustainable neighbourhoods include:

- compact, energy efficient and high quality urban development;
- accessibility via public transport networks while meeting the needs of the pedestrian and cyclist;
- provision of amenities and services within reasonable distance.
- adequate drinking water and waste water facilities

The sustainability of communities is dependent on a balanced pace of development. Associated social infrastructure must be provided to ensure that a coherent sense of place and sense of community is preserved. This approach will ensure new development will respect the character of the Greater Urban Area. An appropriate residential development in any location will be determined by the following:

- The nature of the zoning applied at relevant lands
- The extent to which the design and layout follows a coherent design brief resulting in a high quality residential environment;
- Compliance with qualitative and quantitative criteria and policies set out in the Joint Spatial Plan;
- Proximity to points of access to the public transport network;
- Existing topographical, landscape or other features on the site, and;
- The capacity of the infrastructure, including social and community facilities, to absorb the demands created by the development.
- The emphasis will be on providing quality housing environments based on innovation and a design-led approach compliant with energy regulations.
- Emphasise quality, innovation and a design-led approach in all housing development with proposals appropriate to each site and location.
- Land use for residential development will take cognizance of "National Population Projections &
- Regional Population Targets 2010-2022"
- Consideration of residential development will be guided by "Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide" (2008).
- Land use for residential development will take cognizance of "National Population Projections &
- Regional Population Targets 2010-2022"

UNFINISHED HOUSING ESTATES

The National Housing Development survey methodology used the Department's existing knowledge of housing construction sites across the country focused on the:

- Location of the development (including GIS data to map each development);
- Number of originally approved housing units in the development;
- Construction status of each dwelling (either completed and occupied, completed and vacant; dwelling at a number of stages of construction or dwelling not commenced)
- Service and amenity status of the development with regard to completion of roads, footpaths, street lighting, water services and open spaces; and
- Activity levels on sites.

The following are the key results for County Carlow:

No. of units	Stage in Development Process
65	**developments have been inspected**, of which building activity was ongoing on 5 sites at the time of the survey;
3,693	dwellings have been estimated as being **approved** on the sites above;
1,652	dwellings **are complete and occupied**;
327	dwellings **are complete and vacant**;
333	dwellings **are near complete**, (e.g. units are watertight but require fitting out or connection to services to ready them for sale);
350	dwellings are at various **early stages of construction activity** from site clearance, foundations up to wall plate level;
1,031	Dwellings have not been commenced.

The following are the key results for County Laois:

No. of units	Stage in Development Process
70	**developments have been inspected**, of which building activity was ongoing on 5 sites at the time of the survey;
6,464	dwellings have been estimated as being **approved** on the sites above;
2,403	dwellings **are complete and occupied**;
636	dwellings **are complete and vacant**;
244	dwellings **are near complete**, (e.g. units are watertight but require fitting out or connection to services to ready them for sale);
571	dwellings are at various **early stages of construction activity** from site clearance, foundations up to wall plate level;
2,607	Dwellings have not been commenced.

Within Carlow Town, the Department identified 14 housing developments at different stages of completeness within Carlow Town. These developments included: 12 vacant houses and 64 vacant apartments. A number of uncompleted developments were identified in Graiguecullen by the Department.

Balanced Communities – Providing for a mix of house types, sizes and tenure

It is an objective of the Councils to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes are provided in each residential development. House design and layout reflect the requirements of different categories of households around the County- particularly those with special needs.

Housing and Estate Management

The Estate Management Section helps establish and support residents associations, meets with the residents associations, holds pre-tenancy courses, holds summer camps for children of local authority estates. The Estate Management Section also offers grants to assist residents associations in the development of their estates.

Homeless Persons

Where possible Carlow and Laois County Councils will actively promote integrated social housing solutions including Accommodation provision to relieve the problem of homelessness (as defined in the Housing Act 1988) and will promote the provisions of the Carlow and Laois Housing Strategies with regard to provision of housing for Homeless persons.

Housing Policies

HOUS P01 Implement the Carlow Housing Strategy 2009-2015 in tandem with the Laois Housing Strategy 2011-2017 which requires that up to 12% of land zoned for residential developments or for a mix of residential and other uses, is reserved to meet social and housing needs. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

HOUS P02 Ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area for residential use to meet the requirements of the Housing Strategy and to ensure that a scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the Joint Spatial Plan, ensure that any plan or project associated with the provision of new housing which has the potential to significantly affect a Natura 2000 site is appropriately assessed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive in order to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the site and in compliance with environmental legislation. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

HOUS P02A Make available housing to persons who have different levels of income;

HOUS P03 Ensure a choice of house types and sizes to cater for all categories of households;

HOUS P04 Counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social background;

HOUS P05 Promote estate management in all schemes across the Plan area in order to support the formation of sustainable communities;

HOUS P06 Encourage the provision of small scale community facilities in new housing developments e.g. meeting room, community storage facility to allow for shared expenses and a reduction in energy usage;

HOUS P07 Provide financial resources to the voluntary sector for the effective management of homeless accommodation;

HOUS P08 Promote targeted provision of accommodation for homeless persons;

HOUS P09 Audit and assess all local authority housing schemes in the County and determine if any would benefit from a regeneration plan to address problems associated with the physical design and layout, such as lack of natural surveillance, piecemeal provision of open space, excess provision of open space, lack of services and facilities, lack of permeability, isolation, peripherality, etc;

HOUS P10 Ensure that all houses in the ownership of the Local Authority, which are over 20 years old, are assessed for remedial and/or refurbishment works;

HOUS P11 Explore mechanisms to address the issue of incomplete developments through a variety of mechanisms including dialogue with developers, existing/adjoining residents, financial institutions, NAMA, State and Semi-State Agencies;

HOUS P12 Work in partnership with the voluntary housing bodies to address the social and affordable housing requirements of the area.;

HOUS P13 Encourage developers of privately owned estates, where there are high levels of vacancy, to consider releasing units under the Social Leasing Programme;

HOUS P14 Ensure that all future housing developments in the Plan area have regard to the development of neighbourhoods and sustainable communities;

In dealing with such developments it will be necessary to implement the DECLG 2010 Guidance Manual on *Managing and Resolving Housing Developments*. This will include maintaining a dedicated Unfinished Estates Team and an up-to-date Register of all unfinished Estates in each local authority area. It also recommends the use of available statutory powers as a means of resolving outstanding issues.

HOUS P15 Promote the development of "Site Resolution Plans" involving all stakeholders such as developers, financial institutions, receivers, bond companies, HSA and most importantly the residents of the estates.

ACCOMMODATION OF TRAVELLING COMMUNITY

The Councils will continue the process of providing housing and Traveller Accommodation Facilities for indigenous traveller families and will make provision also for transient families where there is evident need. The Councils will participate in the preparation and implementation of the Government's Traveller Accommodation Strategy.
The scope of the strategy programme was in response to Government guidelines.

- The setting up of a Traveller Accommodation Committee for the duration of the Programme.
- The assessment of accommodation and related needs among the travelling community in Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Area and the projected need for a five year period; the lifetime of the programme.
- The canvassing of Travellers, Traveller Support Groups and individuals for viewpoints relating to Traveller Accommodation in the Plan area.
- The employment of appropriate support staff in order to facilitate transition and related issues among travellers in Carlow.
- The provision of accommodation appropriate to the needs of traveller households within the duration of Carlow's Accommodation Programme.
- To co-ordinate the development of the programme between implementing authorities.

HOUS 16 Implement the objectives of the relevant Traveller Accommodation Programmes as adopted by the Councils during the period of this Plan.

THE ELDERLY

Carlow and Laois Local Authorities have been active over recent years in the provision and upgrading of accommodation for the elderly within its housing stock. Voluntary agencies have also had a lead role in providing for this sector of the community with many successful schemes up and running. With an ageing population and increasing demand for housing the elderly, the Councils are conscious of the need to increase provision.

Greater emphasis is now placed on the provision of lifetime adaptable housing, the provision of housing units in centrally located areas where there is access to all amenities such as shops, medical facilities, churches, etc. Provision through sheltered housing schemes is also an option that is encouraged. The special needs of the elderly such as security, medical care, and personal safety, amongst others is fundamental to the adequate provision of accommodation for this group within society.

It is the policy of the Councils to

HOUS 17 Encourage the provision of housing for the elderly in appropriate locations which will facilitate their continued integration in local communities and meet the needs of the aged population;

HOUS 18 Meet the needs of the elderly by providing accommodation in central, convenient and easily accessible locations to facilitate independent living where possible;

HOUS 19 Encourage a range of housing types in town centre and suburban locations;

HOUS 20 Encourage the provision of smaller dwelling units in new housing developments to allow for lifestyle transition;

HOUS 21 Encourage the provision of lifetime adaptable housing in order to ensure that people have the choice to stay in their own homes;

HOUS 22 Provide appropriate public transport points adjacent to accommodation for older people.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Voluntary Housing sector and other agencies are active in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area in terms of identifying and meeting the needs of those with disabilities. The Councils are working in partnership with various voluntary sector groups and associations to facilitate further identification of needs and provision of housing for those with disabilities. The housing needs of those on waiting lists and existing tenants with disabilities are generally being met through the Disabled Persons Grants Scheme which provides financial assistance for the adaption of accommodation. The Voluntary sector also caters for these needs.

The concept of lifetime adaptable housing will be applied to all new housing so that all new housing is easily adaptable without undue expense or works to the original house design.

It is the policy of the Councils to

HOUS 23 Provide for the housing needs of those with disabilities through the provision or adaption of appropriate accommodation;

HOUS 24 Work with the voluntary sector in the identification and provision of special needs housing for those with disabilities;

HOUS 25 Ensure that developments provide appropriate public transport points adjacent to accommodation for people with disabilities.

SECTION 9: BUILT AND NATURAL HERITAGE

***Core Aim 9**: Protect the natural, architectural and archaeological heritage of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the special character of its landscape in light of its contribution to the distinct character and identity of the Area*

Heritage encompasses a wide variety of places, structures and objects. The following items are included in its definition in the Heritage Act of 1995: monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, heritage gardens and parks, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, inland waterways, wreaks, geology.

A National Heritage Plan was published in 2002. This Plan sets out a vision for the management of national heritage. It recognises that conservation and management of our heritage plays an essential role in maintaining a high quality of life and recognises that our heritage is economically important particularly because of its role in the tourist industry. The aim of the National Heritage Plan is to *ensure the protection of our heritage and promote its enjoyment by all*. The publication of a National Heritage Plan was followed with the publication of county-based heritage plans. A Heritage Plan for County Carlow 2003-2007 and a Heritage Plan for County Laois 2007-2011 outline actions to be taken to conserve and raise awareness about the natural, built and cultural heritage of the county.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area features valued and varied heritage assets from the ancient formation of the town at a crossing point of the River Barrow around the defensive Carlow Castle of medieval date and later on a military barracks and a centre of learning at Carlow College. The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area was located at the edge of the pale, enriched by its good agricultural hinterland and the access to other urban areas and trade provided by way of the River Barrow. It evolved to become an important commercial, industrial and residential town. The industrialisation of the town was supported by the Barrow Navigation System linking Dublin with New Ross and the construction of the railways.

The natural and built environments of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area play an intrinsic part in the contemporary character and the historical development of the town.

Objectives	
HER O01	Encourage the conservation, interpretation of and promotion of the heritage of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area
HER O02	Promote the placing of items of archaeological, architectural, natural or other cultural significance within the public domain where practicable, including the display of artefacts in the Carlow County Museum, the availability of publications and reports relating to local heritage in the Carlow County Library and the holding of periodic Open House days.
HER O03	Support the review and implementation of Local Heritage Plans relating to County Carlow and to County Laois, as human and financial resources allow and support the undertaking of community heritage initiatives.
HER O04	Seek to realise the conservation objectives (NPWS 2011) of the River Barrow and River Nore candidate Special Area of Conservation and protect the special interest of the proposed Natural Heritage Area at Oak Park
HER O05	Protect and foster terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and protect against invasive species
HER O06	Seek to create a green infrastructure network of ecological stepping stones and ecological corridors to enrich and extent habitats and facilitate the movement and migration of species between areas.
HER O07	Ensure the protection of the special interest or character of all structures on the Record of Protected Structures within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area
HER O08	Preserve and enhance the special character of Architectural Conservation Areas within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area
HER O09	Preserve the integrity, character, value and settings of Recorded Monuments from inappropriate development and protect the settings of National Monuments from inappropriate development
HER O10	Ensure the appropriate management of development within Zones of Archaeological Potential to preserve monuments and artefacts in situ or by record.
HER O11	Protect the demesne landscapes to the north and east of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.
HER O12	Ensure new developments respond to the character of the surrounding landscape and landscape features and have regard to the landscape character assessment set out within this section
HER 013	Ensure that new place names reflect part of the cultural heritage or geography of the locality

HER 014 Promote the bi-lingual status of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

Natural Heritage

The most significant natural heritage feature of the town is the River Barrow, which separates the historic core of Carlow town centre from Graiguecullen Village on the western side of the River. Another significant natural heritage feature of the town is Oak Park Forest Park to the north of the Greater Urban Area.

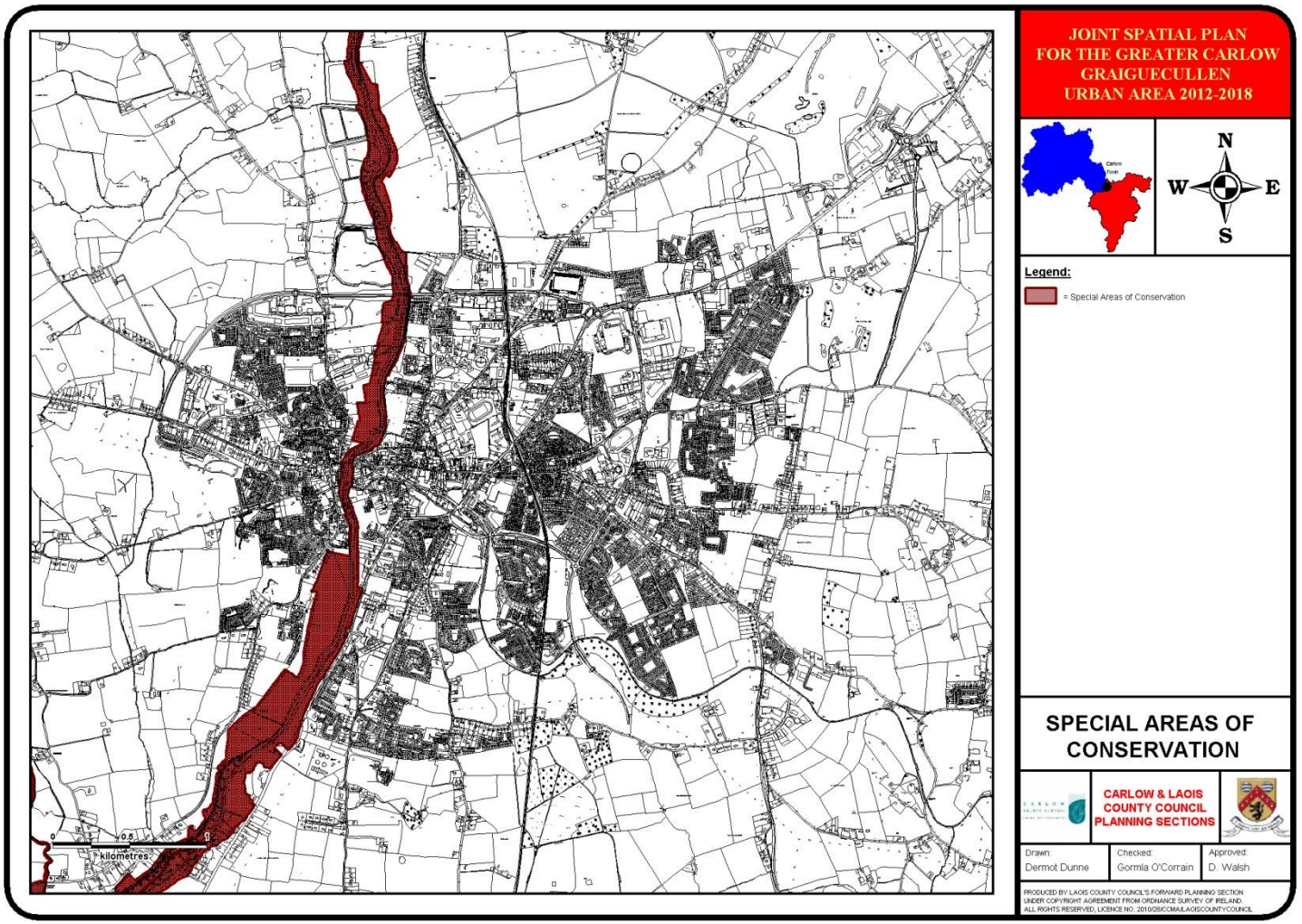
Candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC)

The Barrow is a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC), designated in Europe under the Habitats Directive and may also be referred to as a Natura 2000 site. In accordance with legislation, conservation objectives must be prepared for each cSAC. The overall objective of the Habitats Directive which provided for the designation of cSACs is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

• population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a longterm basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
• the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
• there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Conservation Objectives for priority species and habitats found within the cSAC 002162 were prepared and published in July 2011 and these objectives include attributes and targets for each priority species and habitat. Protected species in the Nore Barrow cSAC include the Salmon, Shad, Pearl Mussel and Otter.

In light of the special interest of cSACs special care and attention is given when an owner or developer proposes undertaking development or making changes that may effect the cSAC.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Proposed National Heritage Areas (pNHA)

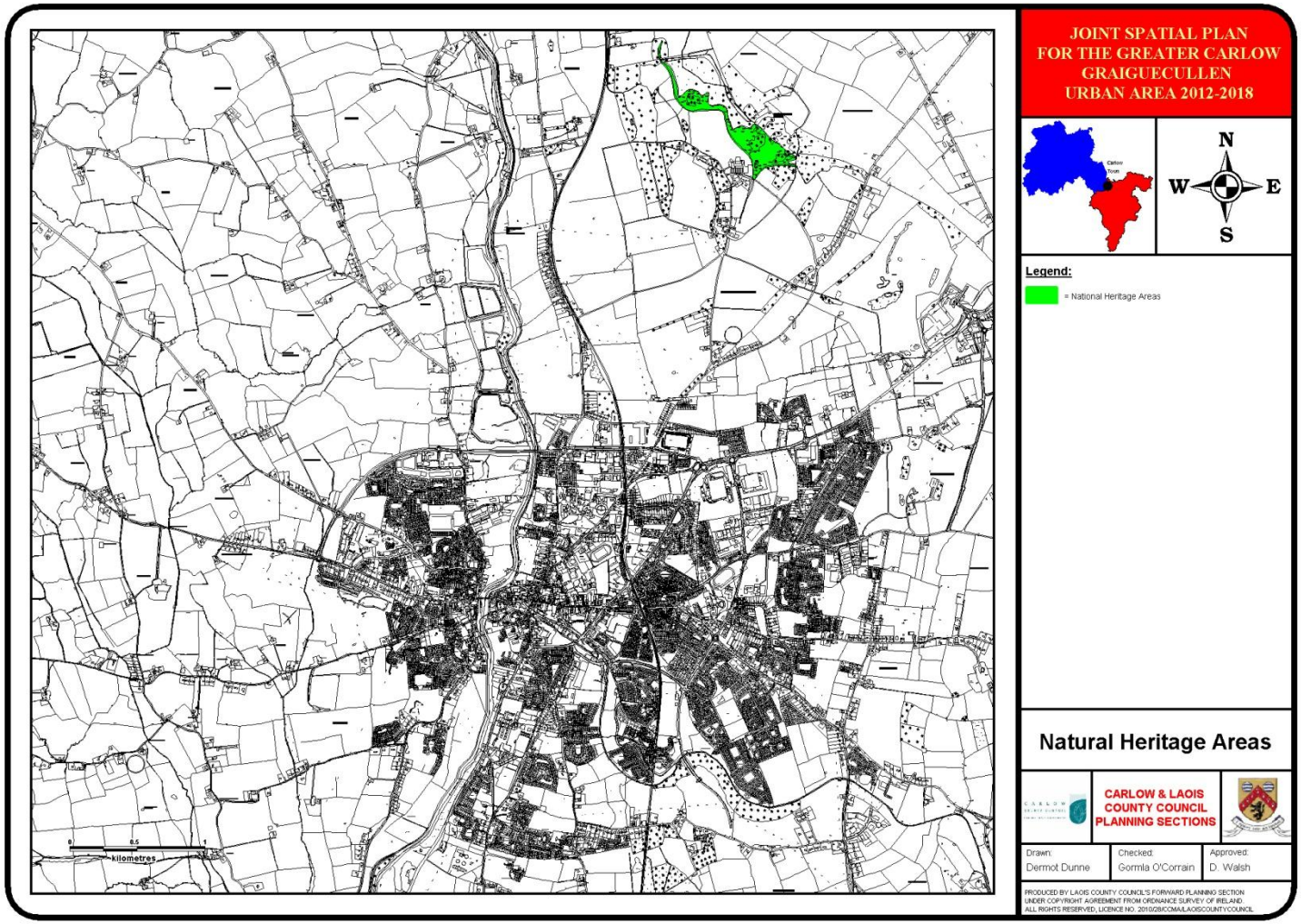
Natural Heritage Areas are designated sites that are considered important for the habitats present or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection.

In addition to designated NHAs, there are **630** proposed NHAs (pNHAs)**,** which were published on a **non-statutory** basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated. The pNHAs cover approximately 65,000ha and designation will proceed on a phased basis over the coming years.
Prior to statutory designation, pNHAs are subject to limited protection, in the form of:

1. Agri-environmental farm planning schemes such as Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS 3 and 4) and Agri Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS) continue to support the objective of maintaining and enhancing the conservation status of pNHAs. The farm plans operate for a period of 5 years. REPS 4 plans will continue to operate until 2014.
2. Forest Service requirement for NPWS approval before they will pay afforestation grants on pNHA lands
3. Recognition of the ecological value of pNHAs by Planning and Licencing Authorities.

Under the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000), NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation.

Oak Park to the north of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is a proposed NHA (site code 000810). It consists of a shallow artificial pond, bounded almost completely by woodlands. There are eight small islands bearing coniferous and deciduous trees within the lake. Much of the open water has been colonised by Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*). The site attracts a variety of birds and records have been kept since 1966. Oak Park is the largest area of still water in the county and is of regional and local value to birds.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Appropriate Assessment

Under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the Planning Authority must ensure that any plan or project in itself or in combination with other plans or projects will not proceed unless it has no significant effect on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites.

The evaluation of whether a plan or project will effect the conservation objectives of an cSAC (Natura 2000 site) is known as a Appropriate Assessment or Natura Impact Directive Assessment. A specific methodology relates to Appropriate Assessment and is set down in *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities* (2010). It involves a screening process and if the screening process determines that a full Appropriate Assessment is necessary, this will often involve devising mitigatory measures or consideration of alternative proposals if the plan or project is to proceed. The cost associated with the AA requirement is borne by the proponent of the Plan.

High-level spatial plans such as the South-East and Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines have been subject to the Appropriate Assessment process. This Draft Joint Spatial Plan was also subject to an Appropriate Assessment process (Appendix 3). Infrastructural projects such as the proposals for a new vehicular bridge over the River Barrow to the south of the Greater Urban Area will be subject to Appropriate Assessment. In addition, some planning applications will be subject to Appropriate Assessment, with most applications requiring no more than a screening process.

Designated Sites and Appropriate Assessment Policies

HER P01 Ensure all planning applications are screened to determine whether a full Appropriate Assessment is necessary in accordance with *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities* (2010) and ensure the application of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive

HER P02 Ensure full Appropriate Assessments carried out on behalf of developers are undertaken by competent and qualified professionals in accordance with *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities* (2010)

HER P03 Restrict development that would be likely either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, to give rise to significant adverse effects on Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives

HER P04 Protect the proposed National Heritage Area at Oak Park from developments that would adversely effect its special interest

HER P05 Consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Inland Fisheries Ireland as relevant when considering applications that may have an adverse effect on the special interest of designated sites or the biodiversity of non-designated sites.

Biodiversity and Non-Designated Sites

The Planning Authorities acknowledge that it is important to maintain and enhance the quality of the natural environment in its entirety as wildlife are not confined to designated sites and also its conservation is important for amenity purposes.

Biodiversity is short for biological diversity and refers to the variety of life on earth including animals, trees, plants, fungi and micro-organisms. Urban habitats are sometimes considered less important than rural areas for biodiversity, however the boundaries of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area extend into the rural hinterland and in addition urban environments can also include rich ecological areas and networks. Areas rich in biodiversity might include: public open space, private gardens, institutional open space, groups of trees, hedgerows, marginal land adjacent to playing fields and golf courses, road verges and ditches, railway embankments and the banks of rivers and streams.

The Councils have sought to integrate the protection and enhancement of biodiversity into the planning policy framework having regard to the National Biodiversity Plan 2002, which is currently under review. Regard has also been given to article 10 of the Habitats Directive which outlines the need to protect linear features and stepping stones for biodiversity in land use plans. It is also important to note that unlike Annex II species of the Habitats Directive, the presence of Annex IV species in an area does not lead to the designation of a Special Area of Conservation even though these species are protected. The integration of biodiversity into the planning policy framework is also advantageous to flora and fauna protected under Irish legislation (Flora Protection Order 1999 and Wildlife Act 1976). With support from the Heritage Council, some Councils have commenced habitat mapping of part of their functional areas. Habitat mapping related to Graiguecullen, County Laois has been undertaken.

Policies

HER P06 Maintain and enhance the quality of the natural environment in its entirety, and in particular woodland areas, hedgerows, tree-lined areas and riparian areas

HER P07 Undertake habitat mapping of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, prepare a Local Biodiversity Plan for the Area, including the consideration and designation of ecological networks and buffer zones as per HER O06, HER P09 and HER P10; undertake tree surveys and designate local sites of geological importance in consultation with the Geological Survey of Ireland as financial and human resources allow

HER P08 Ensure that landscaping schemes relating to business parks, residential development and other types of development foster biodiversity, as well as landscaping works in existing public open spaces.

HER P09 Foster the provision and protection of a network of ecological stepping stones and linkages and where practicable integrate this network with public open space provision in the interests of biodiversity and public amenity.

HER P10 Seek to provide an ecological linkage as well as an amenity linkage between Oak Park Forest Park and the Barrow Track in order to facilitate movement and migration of wildlife as well as providing a public amenity

HER P11 Protect bankside vegetation along the Barrow and Burrin watercourses and ensure the protection of a riparian buffer zone measuring at least ten metres along the watercourses on greenfield sites in the interests of biodiversity as well as public amenity

HER P12 Work with other agencies to address the issues of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as these species pose deleterious threats to native vegetation, wildlife and eco-systems

HER P13 Support the provisions of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act of 2000 which prohibits the cutting of hedges within the bird nesting season (March 1 until September 1)

Architectural Heritage

The Architectural Heritage of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area gives it a uniqueness of character. The protection of special historic buildings and special groups of historic buildings is important as these structures form a rich part of our cultural heritage, can tell us a lot about the economic and social history as well as displaying fine craftsmanship and technical advances. The objectives and policies relating to architectural heritage have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004)

Record of Protected Structures

The Planning and Development Act 2000 sets out a legal process for the designation and protection of structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical and social interest. These structures are known as Protected Structures and each planning authority maintains a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) within its functional area. A collated Record of Protected Structures located within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is set out in Appendix 4.

Well-known and significant Protected Structures within Carlow Town include the Court House, Carlow College and Carlow Cathedral, within Graiguecullen, County Laois include the Killeshin Church of Ireland and within Carlow Town Environs include Oak Park Demesne House and related Triumphal Arch and Brown's Hill House.

Financial Support

In light of the special interest of these structures, particular care and attention is given when an owner or developer proposes to modify or extent a protected structure. Financial support for the repair of protected structures may be available depending on the type of structure, nature of repairs and funding position of different organisations and may include (i) Conservation Grant Scheme administered by local authorities (ii) Heritage Council's Buildings-at-Risk and thatching fund (iii) DoEHLG's Civic Structures Conservation Grant and (iv) taxation benefits pursuant to Section 482 of the Consolidated Taxes Act 1997.

Declarations

Repairs to Protected Structures that are undertaken on a like-for-like basis will not usually require planning permission; where repairs materially affect the character of a protected structure or affect any element of its special interest, these works will require planning permission. In the case of Protected Structures, owners are often uncertain about what works require permission. In this instance a Section 57 Declaration may be sought, this allows an owner or occupier to seek the Councils' view on what works would require planning permission and what works would be exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission. This service is provided by the Councils free of charge.

Maintenance of and Works to Protected Structures

One of the best ways to protect historic buildings against decay and degradation is to ensure they are used. The securing of sustainable and viable uses for protected structures is therefore important. The special character of a Protected Structure cannot be replaced and unsympathetic and unsuitable alteration can result in the loss of the special interest of the structure. Demolition of a protected structure will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances. Most structures can generally and practically be repaired, once an economical and viable use can be found. It is also important to carefully maintain protected structures, any necessary refurbishment should be sensitively undertaken. Many Protected Structures can sustain a degree of sensitive alteration or extension; however a small number of structures may be sensitive to even slight alterations. Minor works can cumulatively effect the character of the Protected Structure, the preservation of less obvious elements such as the historic layout of a structure or the technical interest of construction techniques embedded in the design of a structure can be as important as aesthetically pleasing elements such as decorative cornicing or plasterwork or internal paneling.

The curtilage of a Protected Structure is normally taken to be the parcel of grounds associated with the protected structure. Attendant grounds are those areas that may not be immediate to the protected structure but are associated with them. Both the curtilage and attendant grounds of a protected structure are included for their protection within the definition of a protected structure . Proposals for alterations or extensions to a protected structure or for new development within its curtilage or attendant grounds should ensure that there is no damage to the special character of the protected structure. Any extensions or associated infill development should be appropriate in terms of architectural design, treatment, character, scale and form to the existing protected structure.

Types of Protected Structures

In the past, much of the attention relating to architectural heritage was focused on high-order historic structures including Georgian townhouses, religious church buildings or civic structures such as court houses. Buildings of lower architectural order such as coach houses, farm buildings or vernacular housing; industrial structures such as mills or canal locks and modernist structures were often under-represented. In the consideration of future additions to the RPS', the planning authorities will endeavour to ensure that good examples of different types of structures are represented on the RPS'.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) seeks to highlight a representative sample of the architectural heritage of each County and also raise awareness of the wealth of architectural heritage. NIAH is an inventory being prepared on behalf of the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the

Gaeltacht. Surveys of Counties Laois and Carlow have been completed and buildings of national and regional importance.

Buildings highlighted on the NIAH are recommended for inclusion by the Minister on the Record of Protected Structures. The Councils are progressively making additions to the RPS based on Ministerial Recommendations as resources permit.

Architectural Conservation Areas

The Planning and Development Act 2000 provides for the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) to allow for the designation of groups of buildings and spaces that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical and social interest. Special care and attention is given to the nature of development within an ACA or the setting of an ACA to ensure its conservation, this designation does not relate to the interior of buildings.

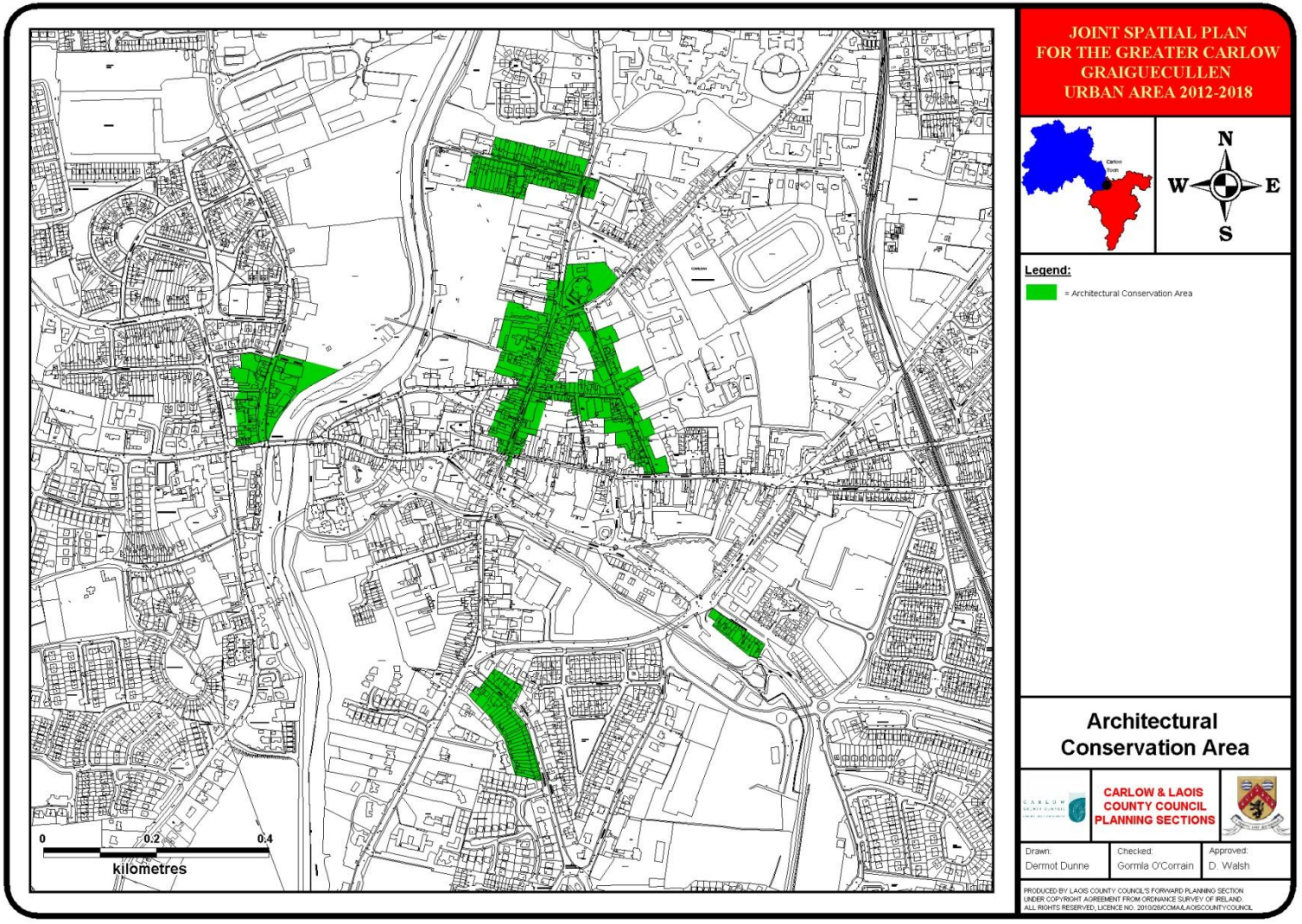
The ACA provides for the conservation of streetscapes and open spaces as well as individual structures, reflecting the observation that the special interest of the built environment is not confined to individual structures but also resides in the way they are arranged to make streets and open spaces as well as the special inter-relationships between structures.

ACAs could encompass, for example, a terrace of houses, a whole streetscape, town centre or a small cluster of structures associated with a specific building such as a mill or country house. Any works that would have a material effect on the character of an ACA require planning permission. ACAs can serve to ensure the preservation of grain, scale and building line or plot ratios of buildings in an area reinforcing its distinctiveness. The preservation and maintenance of public realm features such as street kerbing and street furniture such as post boxes or milestones as well the management of public open spaces is a key focus in the management of ACAs. The maintenance of key building features and materials such as shop fronts, chimneystacks or timber-framed sliding sash windows as well as building finishes such as slate roofing and lime render are also important elements in the conservation of the special character of ACAs.

ACAs may contain gap sites or incongruous buildings that detract from the character of the ACA and are suitable for wholesale redevelopment. The introduction of high quality structures of contemporary design may be suitable to these types of sites. It is important that change within ACAs is carefully managed by preserving what makes the ACA special, encouraging the refurbishment of buildings that are in poor condition, allowing for alterations and extensions where appropriate and enabling redevelopment where it will contribute positively to the special character of the area.

There are currently 7 ACAs within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, all located within the functional area of Carlow Town:

- Montgomery Street
- Dublin Street
- Granby Row
- Little Barrack Street
- Brown Street
- Maryborough Street
- College Street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Additional ACAs may be designated having regard to the criteria set out in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines and the availability of human and financial resources.

Protected Structures and ACA Policies

HER P14 The Councils will maintain a Record of Protected Structures relating to the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, including structures or parts of structures which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest

HER P15 Seek to ensure a representative sample of building types within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area form part of the RPS'

HER P16 Encourage the sensitive maintenance and full use of all structures within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area that form part of a Record of Protected Structures

HER P17 Encourage early engagement with the Planning Authority by way of a Section 57 Declaration or a Pre-Planning meeting when considering the undertaking of works to a Protected Structure

HER P18 Encourage the imaginative and sensitive design of proposals to extend or modify protected structures or develop new structures within their curtilage or attendant grounds, having regard to their special character.

HER P19 Ensure that works to a Protected Structure or to buildings or spaces within an Architectural Conservation Area do not adversely effect or cumulatively erode the special character of the Structure or ACA concerned.

HER P20 Request more detailed information, specialist assessments or specifications as necessary in order to fully assess proposals for works to a Protected Structure or in an Architectural Conservation Area

HER P21 Consult with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltact when considering proposals that may affect protected structures or architectural conservation areas and have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DOEHLG 2004) in the determination of planning applications.

HER P22 Offer a relaxation of development management policies and standards, where the repair and refurbishment of a Protected Structure or key building within an ACA that is in poor or fair condition is proposed and where works are to be carried out to best practice conservation standards. Relaxation of these standards is at the discretion of the planning authority and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

HER P23 Total or substantial demolition of a Protected Structure or any significant element of the Protected Structure will not be acceptable in principle, save in exceptional circumstances, for example where it can be decisively shown that a greater public interest will be served and this clearly outweighs the loss of architectural heritage.

HER P24 Consider favourably development proposals within an ACA that would either preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the ACA. In considering applications for changes of use within ACAs, the Council will be concerned with maintaining the character of that area

HER P25 Seek to retain historic street furniture and mature trees that contribute to the character of ACAs and avoid visual clutter in the public realm within ACAs

Conservation of Unprotected Structures and Areas

HER P26 Conserve and enhance the built heritage of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and ensure new development is sensitive to the character of the Area

HER P27 Support the conservation of historically significant street patterns, building lines, building scales and plot ratios, and the preservation of public realm features such as granite kerbing, historic drinking fountains, whether or not they benefit from protection in their own right

HER P28 Encourage the retention, refurbishment and re-use of historic structures that are not protected structures and are not located within ACAs, where structures make a positive contribution to the streetscape or contribute to the sense of place of a particular locality

HER P29 Encourage the retention of historic building fabric such as natural slate roofs, chimneystacks and pots, sliding sash windows, elevational features such as hood mouldings and string courses and rainwater goods

Characterisations and Policies related to Specific ACAs

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	OBJECTIVES
Montgomery Street	This is a quiet, largely residential street. It is the Council's policy to maintain the residential function of the street.	The following are the Council's objectives for this area. • Existing buildings should be, where possible, retained and well maintained. • New building must maintain existing building and height lines. • Materials and finishes should reflect existing patterns. Painted render and natural slates are the preferred materials in this area. • Windows must have a vertical emphasis. Square windows are acceptable only on the uppermost storey.
Dublin Street	Dublin Street is one of the most important streets in the town. It contains many 18th and 19th century buildings of considerable merit, a high proportion of which are listed for protection. The charm of this street lies in the harmonious relationships between a diverse and disparate collection of buildings. Overhead ESB wires, unsympathetic shopfronts and the poor maintenance of many of the buildings detract from the appearance of the street.	The following are the Council's objectives for this area. • To seek the co-operation of the ESB in reducing the visual intrusiveness of overhead wiring. • To improve street furniture and rationalise traffic and other signage to reduce visual clutter. • To encourage the painting and general maintenance of buildings on the street. • Proposed new development inserted or added to the existing streetscape should respect existing building lines and building heights. • Materials and finishes should reflect existing patterns. Painted render and natural slates are the preferred materials in this area. • The prevailing relationship of wall openings (windows, doors or other openings) to solid wall must be respected. Windows must have a vertical emphasis. Square windows are acceptable only on the uppermost storey. The use of curtain walling is unacceptable. • Particular care must be taken with the design of shopfronts. Shopfronts must be harmonious with those of neighbouring buildings. The height and scale of fascia boards should not diverge significantly from those of neighbouring buildings. • To encourage the use of upper floors for office or residential use. • To seek the co-operation of building owners for the fixing of public street lamps to the buildings along the street, replacing existing street lamps.
Granby Row		The Council resolves to protect the terraced streetscape at this location.
Little Barrack Street		The Council resolves to protect the streetscape and cobbled footpath on the south side of Little Barrack Street and the architectural and historical quality of the existing terrace of single storey houses along the street.
Brown Street	This is a quiet, largely residential street. Despite its proximity to Dublin Street and Tullow Street, the two most important commercial streets in the town, the street has failed to develop commercially. It is	• To enforce strict design controls on new buildings and shopfronts and alterations to existing structures. • New building must maintain existing building and height lines. • Materials and finishes should reflect existing patterns. Painted render and natural slates are the preferred materials in this area. • Windows must have a vertical emphasis. Square windows are acceptable only on the uppermost storey.

	the Council's policy to maintain the residential function of the street whilst encouraging the development of small scale specialist retailers, coffee shops and other traders that may complement the roles of Dublin Street and Tullow Street as primary shopping streets. The following are the Council's objectives for this area.	• A pedestrian priority scheme is to be introduced. A speed limit of 30 kph shall be imposed and the street will be resurfaced as a shared surface area. Bollards and other street furniture will be placed to reduce traffic speeds. • The open space on the corner of Brown Street and Charlotte Street, (in front of the Workman's Club) is to be planted with trees in a formal lay-out. Car parking will be reduced slightly but not eliminated.
Maryborough Street	This terrace is a good example of an Irish country town streetscape and is to be protected. Because of its location on the riverfront in the centre of town, it is important that the character of this area is protected and enhanced, that it is well maintained and made as attractive as possible. The following are the Council's objectives for this area.	• To enforce strict design controls on new buildings and shopfronts and alterations to existing structures. • Materials and finishes should reflect existing patterns. Painted render and natural slates are the preferred materials. • To seek the co-operation of business owners in the insertion of more sympathetic shopfronts. • The prevailing relationship of wall openings (windows, doors or other openings) to solid wall must be respected. Windows must have a vertical emphasis or be square. The use of curtain walling is unacceptable. • To develop a public footpath and cycle track between the existing buildings and the waterfront. • To seek the co-operation of the ESB in reducing the visual intrusiveness of overhead wiring. • To seek the co-operation of the ESB in rendering the existing brick sub-station.
College Street		It shall be an objective of the Council to consider replacing the wall between St. Patrick's College and Carlow Cathedral with railings. This would have the potential to open up this area, displaying the impressive architectural details of Carlow Cathedral and St Patrick's College. The removal of the wall between St. Patrick's College and College Street would provide the opportunity to develop.

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage comprises archaeological monuments and sites, sub-surface deposits, artefacts and relationships between these elements. Archaeological heritage informs our understanding of prehistoric, early, late and post medieval times and in part shapes our identity. The protection of significant archaeological sites, monuments and places is important as these resources are precious and irreplaceable.

National Monuments

National Monuments are designated by the Minister of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltact and are taken into the ownership and management of the state. The Councils may consider applications within the setting of a National Monument. Well-known National Monuments located within the Greater

Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area include Carlow Castle close of Graiguecullen Bridge and the Browneshill Dolman to the east of the plan area.

Recorded Monuments

The Minister maintains a Record of Monuments and Places or the Register of Historic Monuments comprise important archaeological assets mostly in private ownership. There is a requirement to notify the Minister of an intention to carry out works to a recorded monument two months before commencing that work pursuant to s.12 National Monument (Amendment) Act 1994. The planning authority may consider applications relating to recorded monuments or the settings of recorded monuments (shown on map below).

Areas of Archaeological Potential

Areas of Archaeological Potential are areas designated by the Minister as likely to contain subsurface archaeological deposits, the planning authority will consider planning applications within these areas. An area of archaeological potential is located within the historic core of Carlow town centre indicated on map below.

Groundworks within Areas of Archaeological Potential or in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument

Where it is proposed to undertake groundworks to lands within an area of archaeological potential or in the vicinity of a recorded monument the Council may require:

(a) The preparation of an archaeological field evaluation by a qualified and licensed archaeologist. This assessment comprises an account of the archaeological and historical background of the site, an evaluation of the nature, importance, extent and locations of archaeological remains and of the likely impacts of the development proposals on archaeological remains. Trial trenches may be excavated as part of the evaluation process. The submission of a contingency method statement indicating how the development will be carried out in order to minimise the impact on sub-surface archaeological remains. This could comprise (i) a statement advising how the potential location of archaeological remains informed the decision on where to locate structures within the site (ii) a no-dig specification in relation to hardstanding areas and boundary walls (iii) non-invasive foundations, such as hand-excavated foundation pads for lightly-loaded structures rather than trench foundations.

(b) The retaining of a qualified and licensed archaeologist to carry out a full archaeological excavation, of all areas that are subject to groundworks and the preservation of any archaeological remains found by record and the furnishing of a copy of the excavation report to the Council, the Carlow County Museum and the Carlow County Library.

(c) The retaining of a qualified and licensed archaeologist to supervise the carrying out of groundworks during the development process and when deemed necessary by the archaeologist, the cessation of groundworks pending the excavation of any potentially significant archaeological remains by the archaeologist, and the furnishing of an excavation report on same to the Council, the Carlow County Museum and the Carlow County Library.

Where archaeological remains, artefacts or features are found while development is underway, where no archaeological remains were indicated prior to the commencement of development development

works should cease, the archaeological substrata should not be disturbed further and the find should be reported to the National Museum of Ireland and the Minister for the Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht . It is important to note that the Minister may place a preservation order on any significant archaeological remains or monuments discovered regardless of the details of a planning permission.

Archaeological Policies

HER P30 Support the conservation, interpretation and appreciation of significant archaeological assets in the County

HER P31 Protect the settings of National Monuments from inappropriate development

HER P32 Protect the integrity, character, value and settings of Recorded or Registered Monuments or Places from inappropriate development

HER P33 Seek advice from the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht on planning applications that may adversely effect a recorded monument and have regard to the archaeological advice as it relates to individual sites and also the Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (DAHG 1999)

HER P34 Ensure the appropriate management of Zones of Archaeological Potential and the preservation of archaeological deposits and artefacts found preferably in situ or by record if necessary

HER P35 Seek the provision of additional information relating to the archaeological potential of a development site and/or the appointment of a qualified and licensed archaeologist while groundworks are being carried out

JOINT SPACIAL PLAN
FOR GREATER CARLOW
GRAIGUECULLEN
URBAN AREA 2012-2018
N
E
S
W
Legend:
= National Monuments
= National Monuments Buffer
= Zone of Archaeological Significance
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
HERITAGE
CARLOW & LAOIS
COUNTY COUNCIL
PLANNING SECTIONS
Drawn:
Diarmuid Dunne
Checked:
Gormla O'Corrain
Approved:
D. Walsh
Kilometers

Landscape

The aspects of our natural, built and cultural heritage that make up our landscape are intertwined. Landscape appraisals deal with land management including tillage farming, afforestation or quarrying, natural heritage features such as rivers and their flood plains and the built environment including structures, streets and open spaces. Landscape is dynamic and undergoes constant change. It responds to our society, economy and values. Human beings strongly influence landscapes in particular in and around urban areas such as the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Landscape also responds to natural processes including slow proccesses such as ecological succession, processes of sediment erosion and deposition associated with river basins as well as dramatic, periodic events such as floods. In light of the wide-ranging and intertwined elements that influence landscape, a holistic approach to its management is appropriate.

Carlow Town

Key urban landscape areas within the functional area of Carlow Town are built up areas protected by way of Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) designation. Carlow Town also includes a number of landmark buildings. Although these structures are protected by way of Protected Structure or Monument Designation, they are also important in the wider landscape.

Views of landmark buildings are important within the landscape, whether the views of the structures are panoramic or vistas. Views and vistas aligned with key buildings serve as vital orientation points in a townscape, especially for the visitor. Particular attention should be given to key views because of their importance to the composition of the townscape. Spaces associated with focal buildings contribute to their legibility and status within the landscape. The focal buildings listed below, each have a public function which can be strengthened through the definition of their surrounding open space.

The following landmark buildings are identified within Carlow Town:

- Carlow Castle
- Graiguecullen Bridge
- Carlow Cathedral
- Carlow Court House
- Carlow College
- The VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre
- Saint Mary's Church
- Carlow Town Hall

ST MARY'S CHURCH

THE COURTHOUSE

THE CATHEDRAL

THE CASTLE

Tullow Street and Dublin Street form the original street grid of Carlow, with their outlines clearly visible on early maps of the town. Their intersection represents the very core of the town centre, and should be physically recognised. Tullow Street represents one of its principal shopping streets but also a gateway into the historic heart of Carlow, leading from Shamrock Square to Governy Square and the Graiguecullen Bridge, traversing the town. Effective management of the urban landscape will draw people into the town centre from the emerging poles of activity along the town's fringes and carry them on a journey through the historic heart of Carlow to one of the town's greatest asset, the River Barrow and its banks. Connectivity with adjacent streets will be enhanced so that the "urban experience" is diffused throughout the town.

Arrival points, often key transport nodes or interchanges, are opportunities to signify 'urban gateways' within a large expanse of town centre and suburban development. Creating gateways provides identifiable markers for the visitor and inhabitant alike. The location of gateways can exploit existing focal buildings, views and vistas in the town and allow for new and interesting alignments to be visible in the skyline. The term 'gateway' need not be taken literally as signifying a gate, but has much wider possibilities, such as temporary or permanent public art pieces, pocket parks, landscape features or lighting beacons. Imaginative responses to the creation of these focal points in Carlow, serves a very important end, as it will contribute positively to the image and identity of the town, while clearly defining its historic town centre. Some key gateways into the Town Centre are marked on the accompanying map. It is recommended that their function be highlighted in future developments.

GATEWAYS TO CARLOW TOWN CENTRE

Open spaces make an important positive contribution to Carlow's urban landscape. Carlow has a variety and hierarchy of outdoor spaces; Shamrock Square, Haymarket and the Potato Market being some of the more formal public spaces. Open spaces are sometimes planned but more usually develop incidentally. The detailed management of urban space requires careful attention to the building line and volumetric massing in order to create the backdrop onto which is placed the landscaping, street furniture, public art, and most importantly, the people who provide the energy and vitality that forms a successful meeting space.

Landscape Character Assessment

The inclusion of landscape objective is a statutory requirement of a Development Plan in accordance with the European Landscape Convention (2000).

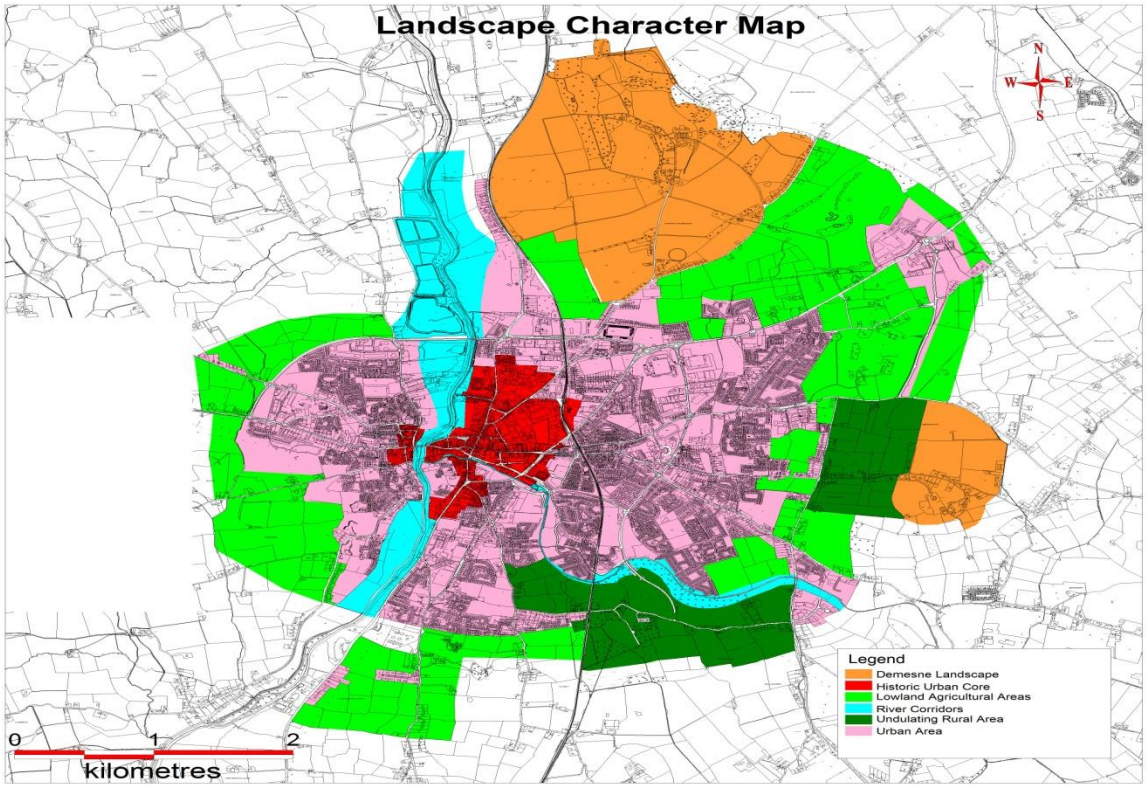
In accordance with the Draft Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities, a number of Landscape Character Types have been identified as part of the preparation of the Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. This is intended to inform the policy framework as well as the development management decision-making process.

Landscape Character Types (LCTs) are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they many occur in different localities throughout a defined

area. Nonetheless where they do occur, they commonly share similar combinations of geology, topography, land cover and historical landuse.

The Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area contains several LCTs:

1. Lowland Agricultural Areas
2. The River Corridors
3. Urban Fringe Areas
4. Rolling Lands with Strong Boundaries
5. Demesne Landscape
6. Historical Urban Fabric



TYPE 1: LOWLAND AGRICULTURAL AREAS

The Lowland LCT comprises primarily of pastoral and tillage agriculture on the outskirts of Carlow and Graiguecullen.

It is generally a flat open landscape with long range views towards the upland areas towards the Killeshin Plateau. Field patterns tend to be of large scale and are generally bounded by deciduous hedgerows containing mature trees. Farm sizes are larger than average.

Much of the lowlands have an enclosed character with mature trees lining roads, dense hedgerows, parkland and areas of woodland. Views of landmark buildings and landscape features including surrounding upland areas are a characteristic of this area and should be retained because the interaction between the lowlands and uplands is an important feature of this LCT.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Promote good agricultural practices to create a sustainable rural economy

2. Provide incentives for smaller rural/family farms to manage their land to avoid loss of hedgerows and species mix of hedgerows and field patterns

3. Design of all single one-off houses to be fully compliant with Rural House Design Guidelines

4. Area suitable for rural diversification

TYPE 2: The River Corridors

Morphology and character of the landscape is strongly influenced by the functioning of the river.

In and around the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, the River Barrow is at a mature stage with flat flood plains to either side excepting where strong geology predominates; mature bankside vegetation fringes the river, unless cleared for agricultural or urban development; the Barrow track walking alongside the River is also a feature of the landscape.

The Rivers Burrin is a smaller watercourse that does not exert the same influence on the surrounding landscape, though it too is associated with floodplain and bankside vegetation.

This LCT contains a wealth of historic features providing longstanding evidence of human influence on the landscape including Carlow Castle, Graiguecullen Bridge, Webber's Lock, Weir and the Barrow Track.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recognise the importance of river corridors for the functioning of the river including flooding and ensure associated flood risk informs land management as well as development

2. Where justified, ensure new or refurbished structures or spaces within the town centre address and respond to the river setting and open views

3. Conserve bankside vegetation where in recognition of its importance within the ecology of river basins generally and the sensitivity of the candidate Special Area of Conservation in particular

4. Protect and foster the development of additional public amenity areas in association with the river corridors

5. Preserve the scenic and recreational value of the river corridors

6. Protect structures of special interest and associated with rivers including industrial heritage

TYPE 3: URBAN FRINGE AREAS

Defining characteristics include radial and orbital roads with a mixture of ribbon-style housing, some in rural idiom others more suburban in character. These houses are often encircled with established suburban housing estates or with newer estates contiguous to agricultural lands, some underused in expectation of development. Business Parks, retail warehousing, neighbourhood centres are other uses found within this Landscape Character Type.

Some roads are orbital or suburban in character with street lighting and footpaths. However footpaths, cycle-paths and street-lighting can end abruptly. This landscape character type often has a discordant appearance at the edges with abrupt distinctions between suburban areas and the surrounding rural landscape. The suburban design of individual houses and residential estates with a formal character contrasts with the more sinuous and naturalised surrounding rural landscape.

Another characteristic of this LCT is the frequently disused or underused nature of former agricultural lands which are now zoned and set aside for future development or may be required for orbital route schemes.

The characteristics of this LCT mean that opportunities to represent the character or distinctiveness of the town at key gateways into the town are often under-utilized and instead the visitor can be presented with an unsympathetic and unfinished transition between an attractive rural landscape and an attractive historic town centre.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To create attractive gateways into the Greater Urban Area from surrounding rural areas using tree-planting, by upgrading boundary treatments or using landscape buffer zones to ensure a gradual and pleasant transition from rural to suburban and urban.

2. Utilize phasing conditions, as part of the development management process to discourage the unfinished appearance of partially constructed new developments

3. The use of landscaping conditions in relation to development within the urban fringe is of particular importance in softening the transition between suburban and rural.

4. Applications for single one-off houses to be rigorously assessed in order to prevent speculative development and ad-hoc unsustainable patterns of development

TYPE 4: Rolling lands with Strong Rural Boundaries

Gently, undulating attractive landscape, bounded by deciduous hedgerows containing mature trees. Roadways within this LCT are generally quite narrow and rural in character, more similar to laneways than thoroughfares. The experience of this LCT as being rural and undeveloped is emphasized by the strong enclosure of the roads with mature hedgerows and trees. The hedgerows are punctuated with field gates which open up occasional expansive panoramas and single one-off houses of diverse styles, some unsympathetically suburban in appearance.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To promote agricultural practices to create a sustainable rural economy

2. Provide incentives for smaller rural/family farms to manage their land to avoid loss of hedgerows and field patterns

3. Retain rural and undeveloped character of LCT, having regard to its attractiveness

4. Ensure one-off rural houses respond to rural character of the LCT, preserve hedgerows or present strong screen between road and garden to retain sense of enclosure, ensure landscaping schemes are sympathetic to the LCT

TYPE 5 Demesne Landscape

One of the significant landscape character types identified in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is demesne landscape. These landscapes are generally designed and are associated with Country Houses, dating mostly to the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The extent of the demesne is often indicated by gatehouses, estate walls and other structures as well as planting and field patterns and other landscape features.

The natural landscape usually plays a major role in the landscape design together with structures and planting. Features include tree-lined estate roads, ornamental lakes, designed panoramas and vistas, ha-has. Agricultural demesne lands are often very open with standalone or clusters of mature trees arranged informally within tillage or pasture fields rather than strong hedgerows.

The Oak Park demesne is located to the north of Carlow and owned by Teagasc (the Irish Agricultural Institute). The 800-acre estate is situated approximately three kilometres north of Carlow town and is surrounded by farmland and private detached houses. The Oak Park demesne was bought by Colonel Henry Bruen I in 1775. The current mansion at Oak Park is the result of four periods of expansion and remodelling carried out between 1797 and 1902. Carlow County Council, together with Teagasc, has already opened several walk routes through the 124-acre forest and by the lake, the longest of which runs for approximately three miles. This has proved extremely popular as a park with the residents of Carlow and its environs.

This park not only preserves fine examples of native plant species, but also provides a habitat for a wide range of wildlife. From a tourism perspective, this has the potential to attract nature enthusiasts, in particular ornithologists, as there is a wide variety of birds to be observed within the forest canopy and around the lake. The River Barrow is also known for its wide variety of species of birds at various times of the year. There is a sizeable lake, situated in front of the mansion which is a proposed Natural Heritage Area.

The second demesne landscape is known as the Browneshill Demesne. Built in 1763, Browne's Hill is one of the few surviving Georgian mansions in the county and should thus be considered as a work of considerable historical value. It was probably designed by the Georgian landscape architect, Matthhew Peters. This fine house originally comprised a detached six-bay three-storey over-basement structure, built in the Neo-Classical style with a granite ashlar façade. the high wall around the estate was built as part of a Famine Relief project in the 1840s.

Another significant landscape feature within the demesne landscape is the Brownshill Dolmen. The dolmen is a type of megalithic tomb most likely built between 2900 BC and 3500 BC and mostly likely to ritual significance. The capstone is believed to the largest within this monument type in Europe.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To promote agricultural practices to create a sustainable rural economy including field research and laboratory research related to agriculture, rural diversification and bio-energy

2. Maintain and enhance the 18th and 19th century estate landscapes and associated structures, parkland and woodland to develop them as a tourism resource, as well as the Brownshill Dolmen

3. Preserve fine tree specimens of landscape significance

4. Conserve valuable habitats including any national nature conservation designations

TYPE 6 Historic Urban Core

This Landscape Character Type is indicated in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area by street and building pattern on the first ordnance survey map dating to the mid-nineteenth century. This LCT is derived from successive stages of urbanisation. An urban settlement most likely became established as a result of its location at a strategic crossing point on the River Barrow, which later on become a bridging point. Extant parts of Graiguecullen Bridge are said to be late medieval in date.

It is generally characterised by fine urban grain, small urban blocks and strong enclosure of streets. Elevations often have a vertical emphasis and are finished with materials such as natural slate and lime renders that have acquired a patina of age. This LCT also contains Carlow Castle, a National Monument of late medieval date, as well as an Area of Archaeological Potential. LCT also includes areas that have been subject to infill development and wholesale redevelopment of some urban blocks such as providing for wider carriageways such as at Kennedy Avenue. The Barracks, Carlow College along with the Rivers Barrow and Burrin also shaped the urban morphology of the historic urban core.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In considering proposals for new structures and spaces within the historic urban centre should respond to the scale, massing, grain, roofscapes, building lines and elevational emphases of surrounding buildings; contemporary architectural approaches will be considered on a par with historicist approaches. Particular emphasis should be placed on the use of quality materials whether contemporary or traditional

2. The sensitive treatment of landmark sites such as those contiguous to the Rivers Barrow or Burrin, a road junction, corner sites, sites adjacent to public open spaces, sites within Architectural Conservation Areas or sites within the settings of Protected Structures or Monuments is of special importance

3. In the management of historic structures and spaces, regard must be given to the provision of universal access. Publications such as *Access Improving the Accessibility of Historic Buildings and Places* (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 2011) may be helpful in consideration

4. Utilities such as alarm boxes, electrical wiring, TV aerials, satellite dishes, and solar panels can have a negative impact on the townscape quality and character of the historic centre. To minimise the impacts of these utilities it is recommended that new electrical and other wiring should be fixed to facades so as to minimize the impact on the façade. Redundant and unused wiring should be carefully removed. Where unavoidable, such services should follow logical routes along architectural detailing to minimize their visual impact

5. Satellite dishes and solar panels will not normally be permitted on the front elevations, front slopes, front chimney stacks or above the ridge line of buildings. All external fixtures to buildings, e.g. alarm boxes, should be located so as to minimize their visual impact

6. All efforts should be made to retain and repair existing historic shopfronts. Painted traditional shopfronts contribute strongly to the character of the town centre. The arrangements of door and window opes should not be altered. Where repair or replacement is unavoidable, attention to the same high quality workmanship is essential and all detailing should closely replicate the existing

Landscape Policies

HER P36 Enhance the urban landscape of Carlow Town having regard to urban gateways, key open spaces, important landscape features such as the Rivers Barrow and Burrin and landmark structures. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

HER P37 Protect significant views of identified landmark structures within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

HER P38 Protect the demesne landscapes of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area including Oak Park Demesne landscape to the north and Brown's Hill Demesne landscape to the east

HER P39 Ensure the effective management of lands adjoining the Rivers Barrow and Burrin to maximize views and interaction with these important landscape features. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

Place Names

Place names are an important part of our cultural heritage, providing a link to the past and reflecting the natural, built and cultural heritage of a locality. It is important that place names of all new developments reflect local topography, history, culture, ecology or significant people or events and incorporate traditional and Irish language place names from the locality

Policies

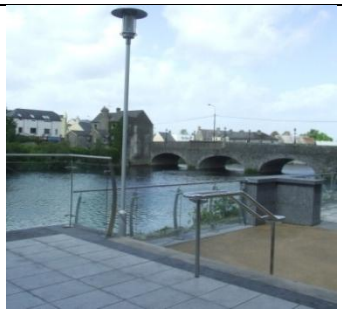
HER P41 Preserve historic place names and historic street names

HER P42 Ensure that the names of all new developments include local historical, heritage or cultural associations

HER P43 Encourage the use of bi-lingual or Irish language place names and signs

SECTION 10: URBAN DESIGN AND BUILT FORM

CORE AIM 10: Ensure the Delivery of a Safe, Sustainable and Liveable Built Environment Suitable for Everyone Through Good, Well-Considered Design



Background

Good design ensures the development and management of attractive usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. The promotion of high-quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact is important, not just in the short-term but over the lifetime of the development. With increasing emphasis in national policy guidelines on the development of higher densities and larger plot ratios, urban design is of crucial importance. Design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted.

It is anticipated that the majority of new households will be accommodated in urban areas for the foreseeable future in order to build the critical mass of County Towns such as Carlow and Service Towns such as Graiguecullen, County Laois. It is therefore important that the future development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is plan-led and meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents and workers, is sensitive to the environment and contributes to a good quality of life. Design is a creative as well as practical process and this section seeks to set out the objectives, policies and principles that the planning authorities consider essential to good design and a liveable urban environment. While some elements of design can be considered subjective matters of style, most relate to functioning of a building or new development and how it fits into the surrounding area. For example, either a contemporary or historicist structure can be suitable in a historic streetscape providing careful attention is given to the urban grain, massing, roof profiles and the durability and quality of elevational finishes.

National Policy Context

- Best Practice Urban Design Manual (2009)
- Design Standards for New Apartments (2007)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)
- Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015

Objectives	
DBF OO1	Have regard to national policy and best practice guidelines in the consideration of development proposals
DBF/O2	Deliver a high-quality built environment, by consolidating the urban structure, and reinforcing and enhancing the existing character with infill development or urban renewal and focusing on place-making with greenfield development
DBF/O3	Foster the development of attractive, usable, durable and adaptable structures, spaces and places in order to foster the development of sustainable and cohesive communities
DBF/O4	Ensure a satisfactory relationship between buildings and land uses and the delivery of new structures that are designed with special attention to the specific characteristics or features of the development site, its setting and the surrounding area
DBF/O5	Encourage successful coordination of proportions, forms, materials, colours and details in new development and ensure that new buildings are fit-for-purpose and use internal and external space efficiently
DBF/O6	Create and maintain a network of high-quality public open spaces in urban and suburban areas to foster good urban design and proper planning
DBF/O7	Encourage an improvement of the environmental quality of the existing streetscape in urban and suburban areas
DBF/O8	Ensure new streetscapes are well-considered and have regard to the principal functions of the street: place, movement, access, room for parking, drainage, conveyance of utilities and street-lighting
DBF/O9	Prepare development briefs and urban design framework plans to steer development and stimulate the market as necessary and as resources allow

Component Design Elements

A description of the design of development proposals can be broken down into a number of component elements for the purposes of description, these include:

1. Layout: urban structure

The framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way developments, routes and open spaces relate to one other, the orientation of buildings. The layout provides the basic plan on which all other aspects of the form and uses of a development depend.

2. Layout: urban grain

The pattern of the arrangement of street blocks, plots and their buildings in a settlement. The degree to which an area's pattern of blocks and plot subdivisions is respectively small and frequent (fine grain), or large and infrequent (coarse grain).

3. Landscape

The character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements, and the way these components combine. This includes all open space, including its planting and boundary treatment.

4. Density/Plot Ratio/Mix

The amount of development on a given piece of land and the range of uses. Density influences the intensity of development, and in combination with the mix of uses can affect a place's vitality and viability. The density of a development can be expressed in a number of ways. This could be in terms of plot ratio (particularly for commercial developments), number of dwellings, or the number of habitable rooms (for residential developments).

5. Scale/Height

Scale is the size of a building in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly in relation to the size of a person. Height determines the impact of development on views, vistas and skylines. Height can be expressed in terms of the number of floors; height of parapet or ridge; overall height; any of these in combination; a ratio of building height to street or space width; height relative to particular landmarks or background buildings; or strategic views.

6. Scale/Massing

The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces. Massing is the three-dimensional expression of the amount of development on a given piece of land.

7. Appearance/Details

The craftsmanship, building techniques, decoration, styles and lighting of a building or structure. This includes all building elements such as openings and bays; entrances and colonnades; balconies and roofscape; and the rhythm of the facade.

8. Appearance/Materials

The texture, colour, pattern and durability of materials, and how they are used. The richness of a building lies in its use of materials which contribute to the attractiveness of its appearance and the character of an area. Successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities tend to have characteristics in common.

Best Practice Design Manual

The Best Practice Design Manual (DoECLG 2009) sets out a number of criteria for the assessment of development proposals. The criteria can be considered in respect of small scale developments as well as proposals for medium to large scale developments and are summarised below:

1. Context: How does the development respond to its surroundings?
2. Connections: How well is the new neighbourhood / site connected?
3. Inclusivity: How easily can people use and access the development?
4. Variety: How does the development promote a good mix of activities?
5. Efficiency: How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
6. Distinctiveness: How do the proposals create a sense of place?
7. Layout: How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces?
8. Public realm: How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
9. Adaptability: How will the buildings cope with change?
10. Privacy / amenity: How do the buildings provide a high quality amenity?
11. Parking: How will the parking be secure and attractive?
12. Detailed design: How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

New Development Policy

DBF P01	Deliver development that creates or improves places or structures, so they are designed well-designed, feel safe, are well-organised, interesting to the eye and fit into their setting and have regard to the above assessment principles

Streetscape Management and Public Realm Improvements

Streetscape describes the space between buildings on either side of a street, and the elements contained within, such as paving materials, road surfaces, street furniture, lighting, signage and landscape treatment. The following principles are considered important to the design and maintenance of streetscapes:

1. Function:
Minimise clutter, remove redundant elements. Commercial use of footpath for tables and chairs relating to restaurants or bars can contribute to the vibrancy of a town centre or village and are appropriate where footpaths are sufficiently wide.

2. Quality:
Although resources are always limited, better quality materials and components will look better and last longer, returning better value when a whole life cycle approach is considered. The use of durable materials and a high standard of workmanship is encouraged.

3. Consistency:
Materials in the public realm and elements of street furniture should be consistent where possible to produce a coherent streetscape. Different operators that shape the public realm should coordinate as much as possible.

4. Sensitive to existing character:
The visual, spatial and historical characteristics of a street should inform the carrying out of any environmental improvements. Historic elements of the streetscape such as post boxes, drinking troughs and memorials are familiar landmarks within a local area. Sympathetic treatment of these elements and their settings is important. Formal arrangement and styling of street furniture are suited to formal streets; a more informal approach should be taken to organic or vernacular areas. A contemporary or historicist approach to the design of public lighting schemes, surface treatments, street furniture or signage can be equally valid, depending on the local context. Dark, neutral or muted colour schemes for materials work best and simple, timeless designs are often the most appropriate. Soft landscaping can contribute shade, softness and character to the built environment.

5. Safety and Balancing of Interests:
It is important to create a safe environment where walking and cycling represent viable alternatives to private vehicle use. In towns and villages, there is a balance to be stuck between the allocation of space to private car users to allow for fast transit and high throughput and the allocation of space for wider footpaths, footpaths on either side of the street and the provision of dedicated cycle paths.

6. Universal Access:
Footpath surfaces should be firm, even and slip-resistant and mobility measures such as tactile paving and dished kerbs should be provided in accord with relevant standards and best practice guidelines. The provision of public seating areas in town centres can be useful to elderly people as well as other users. Pedestrian and cycle networks should be continuous.

7. Legibility:
This means a place that has a clear image and is easy to navigate around. Signage, lighting, recognisable routes and landmarks all contribute to a sense of place and help users orientate themselves and navigate through an area.

Streets and Greenfield Development

The following guidelines relate to lightly trafficked new streets serving greenfield development for example a new residential estate or a new business park. Although the principles may be applied to other road types where appropriate.

1. Buildings first:
Generally, layouts of buildings and spaces should be considered first, and not be dictated by carriageway alignment.

2. Hierarchical Network of Streets:
Principal arterial routes that serve the new development should be wide and provide for designated vehicular, pedestrian and cycle travel; A reduction in street width, the use of footpaths on both sides of the street and the sharing of streets by pedestrian and car traffic is appropriate for collector/distributor streets which serve multiple buildings; the use of home zones where streets or small open spaces are shared by pedestrians, cyclists and cars are suitable for mews-style developments or where buildings are sited around small public spaces and will also be considered on a pilot basis. The street width should relate to building heights and the characteristics of the street.

3. Enclosure of Streets:
The extent of the street should be clearly defined and enclosed whether by a building line, where site coverage by buildings is high or by landscaping where site coverage by buildings is low.

4. Permeability:
Pedestrians and cyclists should have more than one route to get to a destination. Block sizes, open spaces and circulation networks that permit convenient, safe and comfortable linkages are desirable with new routes connecting to existing networks and movement patterns.

5. Traffic Calming:
The use of curving streets and junctions with turning radii that require low speeds are preferable over hard traffic calming infrastructure such as speed bumps. Changes in road surface materials can alert drivers to areas where they do not have right of way.

6. Streets as Public Spaces:
Streets make up a large proportion of our public realm, so it is important they are designed as spaces for people as well as spaces for movement. Landscaping, street furniture, finishing materials can contribute interest or character to a street making it a pleasant public space to use and move through

Home Zones /Ceantar Tithiochta

Home zones also known as ceantar tithiochta are residential areas where space is shared by vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians instead of dividing space into footpaths, cyclepaths and space for cars and parking. It is intended to encourage the movement of vehicles at very low speeds in residential areas and encourage more activities and socializing in the street.

Streetscapes Policy

DBF/P02 Deliver new development and public realm improvement works that are consistent with the above streetscape principles. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

DBF/P03 Encourage the incorporation of home zones as part of residential development proposals where the development demonstrates innovative design, good quality landscaping, pinch points to slow traffic and passive surveillance of the home zones

DBF/P04 Discourage the principle of gated communities as the concept works against the policies of enhancing permeability and connectivity within the Greater Urban Area.

Density of New Residential Development

While the Councils are supportive of higher density in principle, the higher the density proposed, the more challenging it is for the designer to create a well-considered, liveable and pleasant residential environment and therefore there is a strong association between higher density and the need for good quality design and this will be reflected in decision-making. The Council's will have regard to the Residential Density Guidelines (DoEHLG 1999) and the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines (DoEHLG 2009) in the consideration of appropriate densities. The Councils will not allocate specific density ranges to particular sites, instead a site-by-site approach will be taken.

DBF P05 Determine the appropriateness of proposed residential densities on the basis of the following criteria:

- The status of Carlow as County Town and of Graiguecullen, County Laois as service town in the regional settlement hierarchy
- The proximity of the development site to the town centre or a district centre
- Existing sustainable transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development site
- Necessary density to support the future feasible provision of an intra-urban bus service
- The prevailing density of residential development in the surrounding area
- Existing topography, landscape and other site features
- Physical and social infrastructure and related capacity
- The quality of the design concept, layout, landscaping, block formation etc
- Compliance with development plan qualitative and quantitative objectives and policies

Internal Space of New Dwelling Unit Policy

DBF P06 Apply the following minimum internal space standards are provided as part of development proposals

Unit type	Floor area of each unit	Storage area to be provided with apartments
1 bedroom house or apartment	50 sq m	3.5 sq m
2 bedroom house or apartment	76 sq m	8 sq m
3 bedroom house or apartment	90 sq m	10 sq m
4 bedroom house or apartment	102 sq m	12 sq m

A smaller quantum of internal space may be accepted, where proposals relate to the conversion of existing structures within the town centre or the provision of living space over a retail or commercial unit.

Roofscapes and Height

DBF P08 Ensure proposed building heights and roof profiles enhance rather than dominate the visual character of the surrounding area

DBF P09 Ensure development proposals are designed with special regard to landmark buildings and views that contribute to the character and sense of place within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

DBF P10 Encourage the siting of telecommunications antennae in discrete locations to minimise any negative visual intrusion

DBF P11 Accept roof profile alterations including dormer windows and hip-to-gable alterations only where such alterations do not detract from the character or appearance of the building or are detrimental to the street scene

Policy DBF P11(A) Building Lines

The Planning Authorities will normally seek to ensure that development is not carried out in front of established building lines. Generally, in urban areas of the county it will be an aim to create a continuous building line along a street edge. Development, which would infringe on an existing building line and would be prejudicial to residential amenity, or orderly development will not be allowed.

Building lines may be relaxed in the following cases:

- To incorporate key landscape features into the development layout,
- To incorporate key landmark buildings,
- Tor innovative designs which can positively enhance the townscape,
- For innovative housing layouts, where the traditional set back from the public footpath is flexible due to new designs, with a decreasing emphasis on the minimum required space to the front of dwellings.

Policy DBF P11(B) Corner/Side Garden Sites

The Planning Authorities will take into consideration the following, in assessing proposals for the development of corner/side garden sites;

- Does it reflect the character of the street?
- Integration and compatibility of design and scale with adjoining dwellings, paying attention to the established building line, proportion, heights, parapet levels and materials of adjoining buildings
- The maintenance of the front and side building lines where appropriate
- Impact on the residential amenities of adjoining sites
- Impact on the character of the streetscape
- The maintenance of open space standards and refuse storage for both existing and proposed dwellings
- The provision of a safe means of access to and egress from the site which does not result in the creation of a traffic hazard
- The provision of appropriate car parking facilities

- In general apartment blocks will not be considered for corner/side garden sites

Orientation of Buildings

The orientation of new structures is important within an urban design context. Within the town centre, it is important that retail uses and commercial services such as pubs and restaurants are retained on the ground floor and address the street to encourage active frontages and vibrant streets. In residential areas, it is important that houses overlook green open spaces so that parents can keep an eye on children playing outside. Along rivers and streets, it is important that buildings overlook watercourses in order to connect and make the most of their settings.

DBF P12 Ensure new structures or refurbished structures are orientated to take advantage of their settings, in terms of function and visual amenity

Extensions or Alterations to Existing Structures

DBF P13 Encourage extensions and alterations that harmonise with the principal building and fit into their site and surroundings in terms of scale, bulk, form and appearance

DBF P14 Restrict extensions or alterations where they have a significant adverse effect on neighbouring properties or the surrounding area

DBF P15 Ensure extensions are positioned and scaled to avoid significant adverse effects on the privacy of, or available sunlight or daylight entering habitable rooms within dwelling units

Infill Development

As sites for infill development are often small and constrained, particular attention must be paid to issues such as building lines, urban grain, privacy, light and materials. Where proposals are carefully considered and are appropriate to the scale of the site, infill development is in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development. Good infill development makes efficient use of land and should take place in areas such as the town centre that are well-served in terms of services and sustainable transport.

DBF P16 Encourage infill development, particularly within the town centre where proposals have regard to the character of the site and area and are not detrimental to the visual or residential amenity of the area

Backland Development

Development of backlands has widely varying results. Within town centres, backland development can provide opportunities for extending retail and commercial floorspace; it can also provide opportunities for assembling sites and dilapidated buildings to provide sustainable mixed use developments. Within suburban areas, backland development can result in inappropriate relationships between buildings and uses resulting in overlooking, loss of light and a discordant and over-developed appearance. In outlying areas that were originally rural in character and are characterised by large plots with mature vegetation,

backland development can be successfully accommodated without any adverse effects. Relevant considerations in the assessment of proposals for backland development include the pattern and configuration of existing development in the area, topography and vegetation, the design of the proposed backland development.

DBF P17 Accept backland development where it results in an appropriate relationship between buildings and uses, provides for adequate access and does not adversely affect the residential amenity of the area

Sub-division of Dwellings

Large areas of suburban residential development in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area have retained a pattern of use as single family dwelling units. In many cases the conversion of such dwellings to two or more units could lead to deterioration in the amenities and change in the character of these areas and therefore will not generally be permitted. In other locations, however, principally those along main routes into the town, the subdivision of large family sized dwellings may be permitted. Such subdivision may involve the subdivision of dwellings into individual distinct units on each floor. Where subdivision is being considered, factors such as the extent of open space within the site boundaries, landscaping schemes including the retention and planting of trees, the provision of onsite parking, the retention of existing railings and gates and screened refuse storage areas will be evaluated as part of the assessment. When subdivisions are allowed, they should be compatible with the architectural character of the building. The Councils may exercise some flexibility in relation to internal space, parking and amenity space standard in the case of conversions where the conversions are in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

DBF P18 There is a presumption against the subdivision of dwelling houses, except in the case of large dwelling houses located along heavily trafficked principal roads, subject to TRANS P15

Granny Flats and Ancillary Family Accommodation

A Granny Flat refers to a sub-division or extension of a single dwelling unit to accommodate a member of the immediate family and is generally acceptable, provided it is not a separate detached unit and that it is possible to provide direct access to the remainder of the house and there is no subdivision of the garden. The flat shall not be let or sold, other than as part of the overall property and shall revert to being part of the original house when no longer occupied by a family member.

DBF P19 Accept proposals for granny flat and ancillary family accommodation where there is a bona fide case for such accommodation and where it forms an integral part of the dwelling unit capable of reintegration

Active Commercial and Retail Frontages

Streets with continuous frontages of continuous retail and commercial uses that open directly onto the footpath provide active, people-oriented streets. They enhance passive surveillance and improve the amenity to the public domain by encouraging pedestrian activity. Such streets assist in supporting the economic viability of the area. Streets within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area that fall into this category include Tullow Street and Dublin Road.

DBF P20 Seek to retain existing active street frontages at ground floor level and provide additional active street frontages within the town centre in the interests of the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre

Shopfronts

The design and quality of shopfronts play an important role in the experience of a town centre environment. It is important that they should not compromise the local character, scale and architectural quality of the host building. Traditional shopfronts in Ireland are often of painted softwood with decorative consoles or pilasters in timber and fascia advertisements consisting of applied plasterwork lettering in distinctive fonts. Many date to the early twentieth century, with either restrained or exuberant styles.

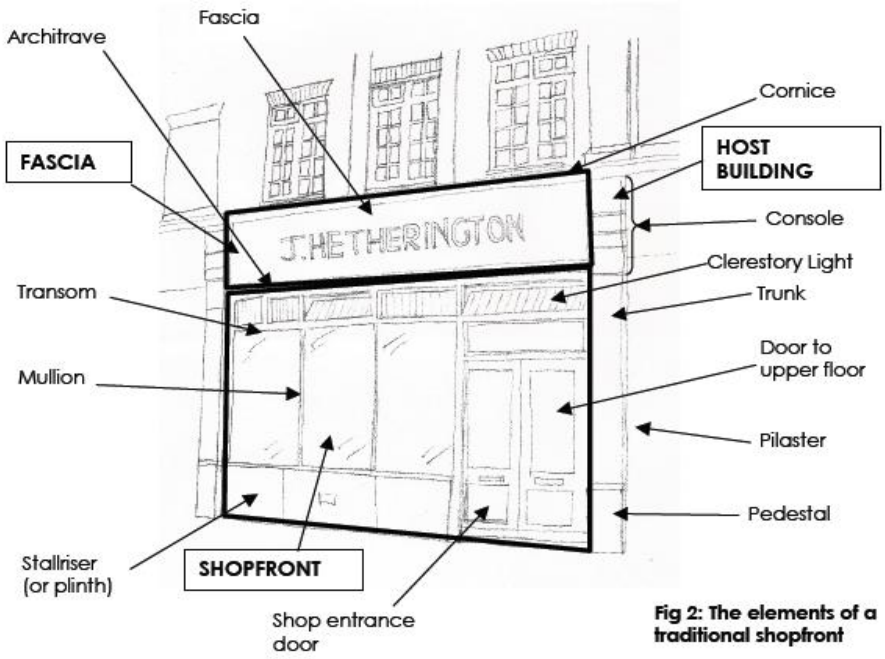


Fig 2: The elements of a traditional shopfront

Traditional shopfronts are usually comprised of the following proportions: the stallriser at the base of the shopfront usually occupies approximately a third of the height of the shopfront, the fascia board usually occupies approximately a fifth of the height of the shopfront, with the shop window making up the remainder.

Generally, the Council will seek the retention of traditional shopfronts encourage the reinstatement of these shopfronts, where they have fallen into disrepair. Contemporarily-designed bespoke shopfronts may be suitable to new commercial areas or to historic buildings if existing shopfronts are of poor quality. Though, the use of traditional materials, colours and signage can assist in integrating new shop fronts with older buildings. New shopfronts should respond in terms of scale and proportions to the host building regardless of style.

DBF P21 Seek the maintenance and retention of traditional shopfronts within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area in the interests of conserving the distinctive character of the area

DBF P22 Require a high-quality of design for new and replacement shopfronts

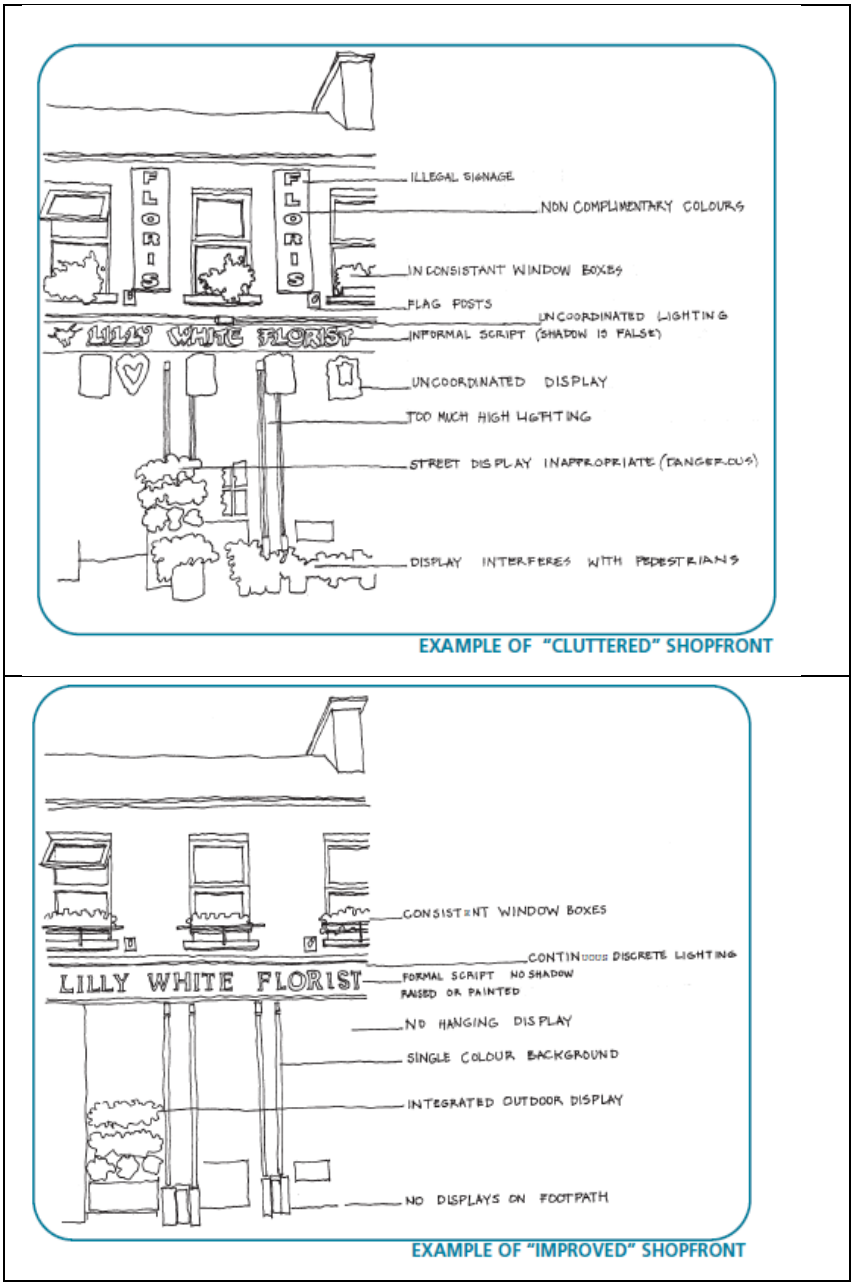
Shopfront Advertisment Policies

The Councils expects that shopfronts advertisements should contribute to the appearance of the shopfront or the street. As a general rule, subtle and simple schemes that have regard to colours, size, design and lettering work best. Where a business occupies more than one building, the fascia advertisement should not extend uninterrupted across two or more shopfronts. The fascia advertisement should not extend beyond the pilasters or obstruct any other architectural detail, such as the cornices or first floor sills. The depth of fascia advertisements should be consistent with those of any adjoining shops.

Shop advertisements generally do not require illumination other than street lighting or lighting of shop windows. Only late opening premises, such as public houses and restaurants, should require additional illumination. Where additional illumination is required, it should be discreetly positioned and kept to a minimum. Spot lighting, recessed trough lighting and halo lighting are generally acceptable. The fascia advertisement board should normally state only the name or trade of the business and the street number. Avoid oversized lettering and the application of too much additional information as this can create visual clutter. Letters should generally not exceed 60 percent of the height of the fascia. Painted wooden, matt finished advertisements or individually applied brass or chrome letters are preferred over large areas of highly-polished finishes, glossy plastic or perspex advertisements. Lettering or sign writing should usually be applied directly to the fascia.

The character and attractiveness of a shop front, building or street can be diminished by the insertion of insensitive advertisements and signs. The Councils will avoid the provision of multiple signs, whether large or small, which give rise to visual clutter on the buildings and streetscape. Flags should be used only on important and ceremonial occasions. No company or other commercial body or name should appear on any flag, bunting or other device. Fixings for flag poles should be neutral in colour and form. The use of clocks should be restricted to public or civic buildings.

Projecting hanging signs are a traditional form of additional advertising of commercial premises, they can complements the colour and design of the fascia, it can add interest and originality to a building and street scene. There should be no more than one hanging sign per shopfront and they should keep an adequate vertical clearance from the pavement



DBF P23 Support the design of shopfront fascia advertisements and projecting signs that enhance the character of the streetscene

DBF P24 Favour the use of discreet and minimal lighting of advertisements, where commercial premises are in use at night time

DBF P25 Support the use of the Irish language on shopfront advertisements

Security to Shopfronts

Internal lighting of shop windows tends to add positively to an area, inviting to window shopping out of business hours and deterring vandalism and antisocial behaviour. Roller shutter blinds deaden the streetscape creating an uninviting ambience and also the roller shutter boxes protrude from the shopfront creating a discordant appearance. Where security measures are required, internal lattice or mesh shutters, toughened glass or dismountable open grills are preferred.

DBF P26 Accept security measures that do not detract from the appearance of the shopfront or the streetscene

Canopies and Forecourt Dining Areas

Retractable straight canopies are a traditional element in the Irish streetscene. Curved or Dutch canopies are considered unsympathetic to traditional shopfronts and streetscene. The erection of canopies is subject to planning permission. Dining to the forecourt of commercial units has become increasingly popular in recent years and can contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of a town centre. Where the forecourt is part of the public realm, the placing of tables and chairs is subject to licence.

DBF P27 Provide for the use of straight canopies and support the use of forecourts for dining where footpaths are sufficiently wide and clear head height is provided.

Smoking Shelters and Beer Gardens

Public houses and restaurants form an important element in town life. The provision of beer gardens or dining areas to the rear of public houses or restaurants is generally acceptable and can contribute to the attractiveness of an urban area. However the hours of use may be restricted to daytime hours if it is considered that the noise generated would adversely affect the amenities of nearby residents. The piping of music to beer gardens or outdoor dining areas will not be accepted. The provision of smoking shelters which conform to environmental health standards is acceptable.

DBF P28 Provide for smoking shelters and beer gardens subject to the amenities of nearby residents and environmental health standards.

Advertisements and Signs

Advertisements and advertisement structures including signs, can separately, or more particularly in groups cause injury to visual amenities and can detract from the appearance of a building or an area; this is especially so when they are out of scale and character with their surroundings. They can also be a major distraction to roadusers and frequently result in traffic hazard. It is the policy of the Planning Authorities to strictly control all advertising signs in relation to their location, design, materials and function; the following are considerations in the assessment of advertisement applications:

- Free-standing hanging signs will be considered in association with hotel, hostel and B&B developments
- Projecting signs and banners will be restricted in size and number to prevent clutter

- The use of flagpoles should be restricted to civic buildings, community or sporting grounds and hotels
- Clocks should only be provided in association with civic structures and not used for advertisement
- The use of billboards will not generally be permitted
- Temporary hoardings may be approved where they can be used for the screening of building sites or land, which is unsightly

DBF P29 Ensure new advertisements (DBF P23-25 address shopfront advertisements) do not by reason of size, siting, design, clutter or illumination cause harm to the appearance of a building, space or general visual amenities and do not adversely affect traffic safety and having regard to the NRA policy *Provision of Tourist and Leisure Signage on National Roads*

DBF P29(A) Automatic Teller Machines

The provision of automatic teller machines requires planning permission. The normal functioning of the footpath and the character of the buildings and shopfront in which they are inserted will be protected. The planning authorities will strictly control the location of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) having regard to the following:

- The need to protect the character of the street, building or shop front into which they are to be incorporated into especially buildings on the Record of Protected Structures.
- The design and location must be such that they are safe and easily accessible.
- Canopies, signs and logos shall be discreetly incorporated into the overall design the avoidance of a traffic hazard
- Satisfactory arrangements are made in relation to litter control.

The provision of ATMs at petrol stations will be encouraged to facilitate drivers wishing to use them. In general, ATMs will not be provided where customers queuing may cause disruption to pedestrians.

DBF P29(B) Fast-food Take-Aways

Planning applications for new fast food take-away uses will be considered on their own merits. However, the cumulative impact of a number of take away restaurants in any particular area will be considered in the assessment of any planning application. Stringent controls will be applied with regard to litter collection and façade design. The latter may necessitate the alteration of corporate images in order to assimilate into the character of the area. Full shop front details will be required at application stage to assess the visual suitability of proposals in the area. The Planning Authorities may impose restrictions on opening hours as a condition of planning permission. The location of a fast food take-away in district or

neighbourhood centres, with complementary uses such as the convenience shop, chemist, video/DVD rental unit etc., would cut down on multiple trip generation in an area.

DBF 29(C) Night Clubs/Public Houses

In order to maintain an appropriate mix of uses and protect night-time amenities in towns, the planning authorities will, through the appropriate use of its development management powers, prevent an excessive concentration of pubs, bars, nightclubs and hot-food take-aways in any one area. The Councils will ensure that the intensity of any proposed use is in keeping with both the character of the area (i.e. residential, mixed use, etc.) and with adjoining businesses, when development proposals are being considered. Along with general planning issues such as traffic, waste etc., the following issues will also be considered in the assessment of applications for new premises and extensions to premises:

- The amenity of nearby residents, i.e. general disturbance, hours of operation, car parking, litter and fumes.
- New buildings must be designed to prevent noise escaping and with adequate provision for refuse disposal, storage and collection.
- The need to retain a suitable diversity of uses in the Town centre throughout the day and evening to maintain the vitality and viability of the Town.
- An important consideration for the local authorities will be the number and frequency of such facilities and events in such facilities.
- Facade design will be carefully controlled by the planning authorities and in particular the type and degree of advertising signage and lighting. The design shall respect the character of the street and the buildings.

DBF 29(D) Nursing Homes

The need for nursing homes and residential care homes in the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area is anticipated to grow into the future and these facilities should be integrated wherever possible into the established or planned residential areas, where their residents can avail of reasonable access to local services.

In determining planning applications for a change of use from a residential dwelling or other building to a nursing home the following will be considered:

- Whether such a use would not give rise to a traffic hazard and off-street car parking,
- The proximity to local services and facilities,
- Whether the size and scale is appropriate to the area.
- Creation of an alternative living environment with views from all bedrooms to landscaped/ planted areas.

- Impact on amenities of adjoining properties.
- A high level of residential amenity (including well designed open space) can be provided for residents of nursing homes with adequate outlook from bedrooms.

DBF 29(E) Bed and Breakfast, Guest House, Hotel, Hostel

Planning permission is required for the conversion of more than four bedrooms in a dwelling house into a bed and breakfast establishment, in accordance with Article 10(4) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001.

In determining planning applications for change of use to bed and breakfast, guest house, hotel or hostel in residential areas, the Planning Authorities will have regard to the following:

- Size and nature of facility
- The effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents
- The standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises
- The availability of adequate, safe and convenient arrangements for car parking and servicing
- The type of advertising proposed
- The effect on protected structures and/or conservation areas
- The number of existing such facilities in the area

DBF 29(F) Medical and Related Consultants

Currently premises for general practice and medical related consultants include a wide variety of building types ranging from adaptations of domestic premises for single-handed practitioners to purpose built premises for large group practices. In line with the Health Board's policy on primary care, the Planning Authorities will support the provision of health care consultants in district and neighbourhood centres. In assessing proposals for conversions in residential areas the Councils will normally permit conversion of part of a dwelling to a medical or related consultancy provided the dwelling remains as the main residence of the practitioner and where a local need has been demonstrated. The following considerations will also take into account:

- Amenity and privacy of adjacent occupiers
- Adequate off street parking facilities

Permission for a change of use of a dwelling house to a medical or related consultancy will be regarded as limited in duration to the period of such use by the applicant. In this regard, a dwelling house does not include any part of a dwelling unit within a block of apartments.

DBF 29(G) Petrol and Gas Filling Stations

A petrol station may include the following: petrol pumps, diesel pumps, gas dispenser, storage tanks, hose pipes and other vehicle services i.e. car washing, oil, water and air. It may also include the sale of goods related to motor trade, a cash kiosk, and a canopy over the pumps and provision of minor repairs, oil and tyre changes. Ancillary retail uses may be permitted such as small convenience type shops with a floor area generally not exceeding 100 sq metres of sales space. However, planning applications for the provision of such shops shall be applied for specifically. The layout of the station forecourt should be arranged to allow dedicated parking for those shopping at the shop. The most suitable location for petrol filling stations and associated commercial developments is on the outskirts of the town and within urban speed limits. They will not be permitted at locations where because of their appearance, noise, fumes etc. they would be injurious to the amenities of the area, nor will they be permitted in areas where there are traffic hazards or where hazards might be likely to arise. Any application for a new petrol filling station should provide sufficient road frontage, clear visibility, two points of access, sanitary convenience for public use, and the surface of the forecourt shall be graded, surfaced with bitumen macadam or other suitable material and drained to the satisfaction of the planning authority. A petrol/oil interceptor trap shall be fitted to the surface water drainage system.

SECTION 11: LAND USE ZONINGS

Core Aim 11: *Utilise land use zonings to shape the orderly development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, reflecting development needs, reducing conflict of uses, protecting resources, make efficient use of urban land and public infrastructure, reducing the need to travel, promoting the renewal of under-utilised lands or brownfield sites and improving amenities and general quality of life*

The purpose of land use zoning is to indicate the land use planning objectives of the planning authorities for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. The zoning of lands for particular purposes is a statutory objective of a Development Plan. The zoning objectives should be read in association with the objectives and policies set out in earlier sections and the zoning map appended this document.

Zoning also indicates to property owners and the general public the types of development which the Planning Authority considers most appropriate in each land use category. Zoning is designed to reduce conflicting uses within areas, to protect resources and, in association with phasing, to ensure that land suitable for development is used to the best advantage of the community as a whole.

Section 10(8) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 -2010 (as amended) states that there shall be no presumption in law that any land zoned in a particular development plan (including a development Plan that may have been varied) shall remain so zoned in any subsequent development plan.

Zoning Principles

In accordance with the Core Strategy, the County's zoning strategy is based on important principles in particular:

1. Ensuring a sufficient quantum of lands are zoned for various uses in appropriate locations to facilitate land use requirements for the Plan period, including projected population growth for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, economic development and the improvement of social and physical infrastructure subject to environmental considerations

2. Focusing on consolidating the built form of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, enhancing the vitality and vibrancy of Carlow Town Centre and delivering land use patterns that support sustainable modes of transport

The land use zoning matrix examines the acceptability of the common types of land uses in accordance with zoning objectives. Their acceptability is evaluated using three categories:

Y = Will Normally be Acceptable	A use which will normally be acceptable is one which the Councils accept in principle in the relevant zone. However, it is still subject to the normal planning process including policies and objectives outlined in the Plan.
O = Are Open for Consideration	A use which is open for consideration means that the use may be acceptable in principle depending on the characteristics of the particular site location and the detailed nature of the use and/or its related built form. More detailed assessment of the particular development proposals must be made before the Councils' determine its acceptability in principle. Following this consideration, where the use is determined to be acceptable in principle, this will not constitute a material contravention to the Plan.
X =Will Not Normally be Acceptable	Development which is classified as not normally being acceptable in a particular zone is one, which will not be entertained by the Local Authority except in exceptional circumstances. This may be due to its perceived effect on existing and permitted uses, its incompatibility with the policies and objectives contained in this Plan or the fact that it may be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The expansion of established and approved uses not conforming to land use zoning objectives will be considered on their merits.

Established Uses and Non-Conforming Uses

Throughout the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, there are uses which do not conform to the zoning objective for the area. These are principally uses which were already in existence on the 1st of October 1964. Extensions to and improvement of premises accommodating these uses may be permitted where the proposed development would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or prejudice the proper planning and development of the area. In some cases, the Councils may encourage relocation of permitted incompatible uses, for example by exchange of sites.

Existing uses which do not conform to the zoning objectives outlined will continue to operate. A reasonable expansion of non-conforming uses will generally be accepted notwithstanding the zoning objectives. The intensification of a non-conforming use will be considered with regard to zoning objectives as well as general planning considerations. Non-conforming uses which are small in scale and ancillary in nature to uses that are acceptable within a zoning catetory may be accepted without a material contravention.

Transitional Areas

While the zoning objectives indicate the different uses permitted in each zone, it is important to avoid abrupt transitions in scale and use at the boundary of adjoining land use zones. In these areas, it is necessary to avoid developments, which would be detrimental to the amenities of the more environmentally sensitive zone. For instance, in zones abutting residential areas particular attention

must be paid to the uses, scale, density and appearance of development proposals and to landscaping and screening proposals in order to protect the amenities of these residential areas.

Zoning

It is recognised that all zoned lands may not come forward for development purposes in an orderly or timely manner and that therefore an allowance must be made over and above the area required to accommodate the anticipated development during the plan period. The area zoned within the development boundary takes account of this fact and permits a more flexible approach to development.

Development cannot take place without the requisite standard of infrastructural services, and the presence of land use zoning objectives does not necessarily imply that infrastructural services or capacity exist but rather that a particular land use is appropriate to a specific location. The uses considered appropriate to each zone are shown in the land use matrix.

The General Zone Type is identified in respect of each zoning category for the purposes of GIS and in accordance with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government categories.

USE	OBJECTIVE	PURPOSE
Town Centre GZT No. M2	To protect the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and provide for town centre activities	The purpose of this zone is to protect and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural, tourism, public facilities, amenity and other uses appropriate to the centre of a developing urban core. Retail proposals will be considered in the context of the Retail Strategy and resultant retail policies. Certain uses such as amusement arcades will not be permitted at ground floor level within the town centre. An over-concentration of other uses including gaming uses, turf accountants and hot food takeaways may be detrimental to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and an excessive number of these uses within a town centre area may not be permitted. In light of the wide range of public and commercial services within the town centre, it is an objective of the Council to encourage the full use of town centre buildings and lands including the upper storeys of commercial premises, backlands and vacant properties. Warehousing and other industrial uses that require high space specifications or may be detrimental to the character of the town centre will not generally be permitted. Proposals for new development in areas at risk of flooding as identified within this zone will be subject to the development management justification test as outlined in "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines"2009. Proposals which may have significant effects on the conservation objectives of the candidate SAC will be subject to Appropriate Assessment
District Centre GZT No. M3	To provide for shopping, amenity, commercial and community facilities of a scale and type to serve residents living within the district without undermining the town centre	Purpose-built district shopping centres, anchored by a large foodstore, in suburban locations and containing a range of unit shops and non-retail service outlets (including banking, medical, catering, leisure, community or other non-retail services), performing an important retail function for the local community living within a 15-20 minute drive time of the site. Comparison retailing will be of a low order so as not to undermine the town centre. No clear size threshold for a district centre although, depending on the density of population in the catchment area. High-quality design and the practicality of sustainable modes of transport will be key considerations in the future development management of District Centres which will be managed in compliance with the Joint Retail Hierarchy, the Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

Neighbourhood Centre GZT No. M3 **Relates to Carlow Town Development Plan and Graiguecullen LAP only**	To provide for shopping, amenity, commercial and community facilities of a scale and type to serve residents living within the neighbourhood without undermining the town centre	Small groups of shops, typically comprising a newsagent, general grocery shop with floorspace of less than 500 sq metres, sub-post office and other small shops or commercial services of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population. Comparison shopping will not generally be provided for in Neighbourhood Centres. Neigbourhood centres will be managed in compliance with the Joint Retail Hierarchy, the Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.
Neighbourhood Centre GZT No. M3 **Relates to Carlow Town Environs LAP only**	To provide for shopping, amenity, commercial and community facilities of a scale and type to serve residents living within the neighbourhood without undermining the town centre	Small groups of shops, typically comprising a newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops or commercial services of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population. Comparison shopping will not generally be provided for in Neighbourhood Centres. Neigbourhood centres will be managed in compliance with the Joint Retail Hierarchy, the Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.
Retail Warehousing GZT No. C1.2	To provide for retail warehousing development	These are areas dedicated to the sale of bulky goods with common car parking areas and requiring extensive showroom space. These areas are provided for outside of the town centre because of their size, access and parking requirements. Units measuring less than 700 square metres are not suitable within areas zoned for retail warehousing as these may be more suitable for town centre locations. Individual retailing warehousing units in excess of 6000 square metres will not be permitted.
Residential 1 GZT No. R2.6	To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities	This zone is intended primarily for established housing development but may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to improve the residential amenity of residential communities such as schools, crèches, small shops, doctors surgeries, playing fields etc. It is an objective on land zoned for residential 1 to protect the established residential amenity and enhance with associated open space, community uses and where an acceptable standard of amenity can be maintained, a limited range of other uses that support the overall residential function of the area. Within this zoning category the improved quality of existing residential areas will be the Council's priority.

		In established residential areas in areas at risk of flooding as identified, where the replacement or the reconstruction of an existing dwelling is considered appropriate for wider planning reasons the planning authority should require that Development Management Justification Test is carried out in accordance with the "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines"2009; there will be no increase in the number of residential units or households. There will be no adverse impact on the function of the floodplain, watercourse or conveyancing routes; Residual risk is addressed and reduced where possible, for example through relocation of buildings, and /or flood resilience /resistance measures applied to the site and buildings.
Residential 2 GZT No. R1.6	To provide for new residential development, residential services and community facilities within the Plan period 2012-2018	This zone is intended primarily for housing development but may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to foster the development of new residential communities such as schools, crèches, small shops, doctors surgeries, playing fields etc. It is an objective, on land zoned for residential 2 to promote development mainly for housing, associated open space, community uses and where an acceptable standard of amenity can be maintained, a limited range of other uses that support the overall residential function of the area. Within this zoning category the improved quality of residential areas and the servicing of orderly development will be the Council's priority. New housing and infill developments should be of sensitive design, which are complimentary to their surroundings. No piecemeal development can take place unless it does not conflict with the possible future development of the reserved development areas of the town. Adequate undeveloped lands have been zoned in the Plan for residential use to meet the requirements for both public and private house building over the Plan period
Strategic Reserve GZT No. O1	To provide lands for future development in line with national and regional targets over the next Plan period 2018-2024	Regarding lands included in the Strategic Reserve land bank, it is important to highlight that the inclusion of such lands will not in any way infer a prior commitment on the part of the Councils regarding their future zoning during the preparation of the subsequent plan for the period 2018-2024. Such a decision will be considered within the framework of national and regional population targets applicable at that time and the proper planning and sustainable development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.
Open Space and Amenity GZT No. G5	To preserve, provide for and improve active and passive recreational public and private open space	The areas included in this zoning objective cover both private and public open space and are dispersed throughout urban centres of every size. The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a loss of open space.
Demesne Landscape	To conserve the special character of Demesne Landscapes and provide for	These areas usually consist of expansive areas of mostly agricultural lands punctuated by individual fine specimen mature trees, stands of trees and mature hedgerow, these areas are

GZT No. G3	research activities	often characterised by historic field patterns laid out in association with a demesne house. The Councils seek to conserve the special character of these demesne landscapes by retaining the open character along with the associated field and planting patterns. The undertaking of scientific research is also provided for within this zoning category.
Community Services, Education, Institutional Uses GZT No. S5	To protect, provide and improve community services including places of worship, primary and secondary education services and institutional uses along with ancillary amenity or recreational uses	This zoning of lands provides for local civic, religious, community, educational and other facilities and ancillary amenity or recreational uses. Proposals for new development in areas at risk of flooding as identified within this zone will be subject to the development management justification test as outlined in *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* 2009.
Leisure and Tourism GZT No. C5	To provide for and improve tourist and leisure amenities in the County	The areas included in this zoning objective are intended to meet with the needs of the tourists in the County as well as locals. Uses such as accommodation of all types, ancillary services such as food and beverage establishments and specific leisure or recreational uses will be encouraged within the use zone.
Resort GZT No. C5	To provide for resort uses	To provide leisure and recreational facilities and associated infrastructure.
Industrial GZT No. C2.2	To provide for and foster industrial development	This zoning provides for general industrial uses including heavy industrial uses associated with high inputs of energy, water and materials and the management of environmental emissions. The majority of these activities would not be compatible with residential environments. Light industrial activities and warehousing are also permitted under this zoning. Residential, leisure or retail uses (including retail warehousing) will not be acceptable in this zone. The layout of new employment sites will have to have regard for alternative sustainable modes of transport. Site layout should emphasize the necessary connections to the wider local and strategic public transport, walking and cycling networks. Where any this zoning category adjoins lands in residential, amenity or other noise sensitive uses, a buffer zone between these uses must be provided within the industrial zoned lands to reduce any adverse effects on the amenity of adjoining lands.
Enterprise and Employment GZT No. C6	To provide lands for enterprise and employment uses, that do not generate emissions including campus-style offices,	To promote the use of lands sites for the provision of new employment generating facilities. It is the policy of the Councils to ensure that there is adequate land available to facilitate opportunities for employment creation, and these lands will accommodate commercial and

	storage and warehousing uses, wholesaling and distribution, commercial services with high space and parking requirements where it may not be possible to find a town centre location	enterprise uses that are not suitable for town centre locations by reason of their high space specifications or the nature of the uses. Warehousing, commercial, enterprise and ancillary services should be provided in high quality landscaped campus style environments, incorporating a range of amenities. No new retail warehousing will be permitted within this land use. The uses in this zone may generate considerable amount of traffic by both employees and service traffic. Sites should therefore have good vehicular and public transport access. The implementation of mobility management plans will provide important means of managing these sites to enhance sustainability. Proposals for new development in areas at risk of flooding as identified within this zone will be subject to the development management justification test as outlined in *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* 2009.
Innovation and Business GZT No. C3	Provide for high-technology related office based industry and general offices over 200 sqm.	The main purpose of this zoning objective is to promote and encourage the provision of high technology industry and office-based industry. These industries include software development, information technology, telemarketing commercial research and development, data processing, publishing and media recording and media associated activities. General Offices where each office unit is in excess of 200sq m will also be acceptable in principle on sites zoned for Business and Technology The layout of new employment sites will have to have regard for alternative sustainable modes of transport and mobility management. Site layout should emphasize the necessary connections to the wider local and strategic public transport, walking and cycling networks. A high standard of landscaping will be required in association with the development of these lands.
Infrastructure and Utilities GZT No. N6	To provide for the needs of all transport users and other utility providers.	Car parks and commercial development associated with the provision of public transport services are considered appropriate in this zoning. This zoning also provides for and preserves land in the ownership of the Council or other bodies charged with the provision of services such as electricity, telecommunications, water, wastewater etc. to the town. The Planning Guidelines allow for consideration of the development of essential infrastructure such as primary transport and utilities distribution (including electricity generation) within flood zones as identified provided that it cannot be located elsewhere. Reconstruction or replacement and minor extensions or alterations to such infrastructure will not be required to satisfy the justification test. However and appropriate level of flood risk assessment should be carried out in accordance with *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines 2009*.

GREATER CARLOW GRAIGUECULLEN URBAN AREA – ZONING MATRIX

Proposed Use	Town Centre	District Centre	Neighbour-hood Centre	Retail Warehousing	Residential Existing	Residential Proposed	Industrial	Enterprise and Employment	Business and Innovation	Tourism and Leisure	Resort	Community	Infrastructure and Utilities	Open Space and Amenity	Demesne Landscape	Strategic Reserve
Abbatoir	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Advertising and Advertising Structure	O	O	O	O	X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	O	O	O	X	X	X
Allotment	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	Y	X	Y	O	Y	Y	O
Anerobic Digestor	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X
Apartments	Y	Y	Y	X	O	Y	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bank/Building Society	Y	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Betting Office	Y	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	O	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
Bring Banks	Y	Y	Y	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
Call Centre	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Car Park	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	O	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	O	O	O	O	O
Car Repairs	O	O	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Car Sales	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Caravan Park	X	X	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	O	Y (An-cillary only)	X	X	X	X	X
Cash and Carry/ Wholesale Outlet	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	O	O
Childcare Facilities	Y	Y	Y	O	Y	Y	O	O	O	X	O	Y	X	O	X	X

Proposed Use	Town Centre	District Centre	Neighbour-hood Centre	Retail Warehousing	Residential Existing	Residential Proposed	Industrial	Enterprise and Employment	Business and Innovation	Tourism and Leisure	Resort	Community	Infrastructure and Utilities	Open Space and Amenity	Demesne Landscape	Strategic Reserve
Cinema	Y	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X	X
Community Facility	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	X	X	O	O	Y	X	O	O	X
Concrete Asphalt Plant	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Conference Centre	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	Y	O	X	X	X	X
Craft Industry	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	X	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crematorium	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cultural Use	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	X	X	Y	Y	O	X	O	O	X
Dance Hall/ Discotheque	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	Y	X	X	X	X	X
Dentist/ Doctor's Surgery	Y	Y	Y	X	O	Y	X	O	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X
Drive Through Restaurant	O	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X	X
Field Research and Data Collection	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	Y	X
Funeral Home	O	Y	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X
Enterprise Incubator Units	Y	Y	O	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X
Gaming Uses (Commercial or Members Clubs)	Y (upper floors)[1]	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Garden Centre	O	Y	Y	Y	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X
Guesthouse	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X
Hair dressing Salon	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
Halting Site	X	X	X	X	O	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Hazardous Waste Deport	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

[1] And away from the main shopping streets

Proposed Use	Town Centre	District Centre	Neighbour-hood Centre	Retail Warehousing	Residential Existing	Residential Proposed	Industrial	Enterprise and Employment	Business and Innovation	Tourism and Leisure	Resort	Community	Infrastructure and Utilities	Open Space and Amenity	Demesne Landscape	Strategic Reserve
Heavy Vehicle Park	X	X	X	Y	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Holiday Home	Y	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	O	Y	X	X	X	X	X
Hospital	Y	O	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X	X
Hostel/Hotel	y	Y	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	O	Y	X	X	X	X	X
Hydro-electric power generation, renewable micro-energy generation	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Industry General	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry Light	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Laboratory Research	O	O	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	X	O	X	X	O	X
Library	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X
Licensed Premises (Public House)	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	X	X	Y	O	O	X	Y	X	X
Waste Incinerator	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Office-Based Enterprise	Y	O	O	X	X	X	O	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Playground	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X	O	O	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y
Primary Health Care Centre	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X
Recreational Facility	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	O	O	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	O
Recycling Sorting Centre	X	O	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	O	O(An-cillary only)	O	X	X	X	X
Restaurant/ Cafe	Y	Y	Y	O	O	O	X	O	O	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X

Proposed Use	Town Centre	District Centre	Neighbour-hood Centre	Retail Warehousing	Residential Existing	Residential Proposed	Industrial	Enterprise and Employment	Business and Innovation	Tourism and Leisure	Resort	Community	Infrastructure and Utilities	Open Space and Amenity	Demesne Landscape	Strategic Reserve
Retirement Home/ Sheltered Housing	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X
Sale of Bulky Goods	O	X	X	Y	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
School	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X	O	X	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X
Science/ Technology Based Enterprise	Y	X	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Scrapyard	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Service Station (Petrol)	Y	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shop (large including supermarket)	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shop (local)[2]	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	O	O	Y	O	Y	X	X	X	X
Swimming Pool	Y	Y	Y	X	O	Y	X	O	X	Y	Y	Y	X	O	X	X
Take-away	Y	Y	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Training Centre	Y	O	X	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	X	O	X
Veterinary Surgery	Y	Y	Y	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Warehousing	O	X	X	Y	X	X	O	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wet Laboratories	O	X	X	X	X	X	Y	O	Y	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Workshop	O	O	X	X	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

[2] A cap of 150 sq m applies to Shop (local) within Carlow Town Environs LAP

PART 4: SUB-AREA SPATIAL STRATEGY

SECTION 1: CARLOW TOWN

Core Aim: *Focus development on Carlow Town to drive growth within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the wider hinterland and ensure Carlow Town Centre remains at the heart of high-order retail, commercial, transport and tourism services provision.*

The purpose of this chapter is to set out specific objectives and policies that relate to the functional area of Carlow Town only. This chapter, along with the Core Strategy, thematic chapters and related maps form the Carlow Town Development Plan. Much of this chapter deals with Carlow Town Centre given its special importance and unique characteristics within the Carlow Town functional area, the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Areas and its wider sphere of influence. Suburban areas within Carlow Town are similar to other suburban areas within the Greater Urban Area which means that change within these areas is largely addressed in the common thematic chapters. A small number of specific objectives and policies relate to lands outside the town centre but within the Carlow Town functional area.

The functional area of Carlow town contains many of the material assets and commercial enterprises of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. It is bisected by the River Barrow and the Dublin to Waterford Railway line. It includes Carlow Town Centre, the Cultural Quarter, the River Quarter, Graiguecullen Village, the enterprise areas around O'Brien Road and at Strawhall, the Town Park, Carlow Train Station, Carlow Bus Park and Carlow Institute of Technology. Most of the functional area is already developed, with some greenfield lands to the east and south.

Notwithstanding the developed nature of Carlow Town, it is important that it continues to change and evolve and ensure it is at the heart of the future growth of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Most of the jobs, services, public transport infrastructure and many of the homes are all located within the functional area of Carlow Town, making this area the most environmentally sustainable location for future jobs, commercial activities and homes. Where possible, growth should be accommodated within the town centre by more efficient use of land and buildings. The Town Council will aim to increase the density of development where appropriate. The Town Council will identify opportunities for development or redevelopment. This town centre approach is supported by national policy which emphasizes the importance of a sequential approach in relation to retail development and zoning of residential lands, giving preference to town centre locations and moving outwards thereafter.

Given the largely developed nature of Carlow Town, the re-development of brownfield sites, site assembly, urban renewal, building refurbishments and changes of use are of particular importance to the future of the functional area of Carlow Town. New development must be carefully integrated with the existing town centre both in terms of design and to allow for easy access and increase permeability within the town.

Carlow Town Objectives

CTO1 Consolidate the built form of Carlow Town

CTO2 Reinforce the quantum and diversity of uses within Carlow Town Centre

CTO3 Advance and market the concept of the Cultural Quarter

CTO4 Promote the development of the River Quarter and Riverside Regeneration

CTO5 Encourage specific urban renewal projects and advance opportunity sites

CTO6 Seek to establish Graiguecullen Village as an identifiable urban quarter within Carlow Town

Consolidate Built Form

Carlow Town Centre and the surrounding lands within Carlow Town are the most sustainable within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area given the availability of high-order retail and commercial services, infrastructural services including broadband, sustainable modes of transport and as well as civic and leisure amenities.

Significant re-development has taken place within Carlow Town Centre in recent years including the provision of office space in and around Carlow Castle and the provision of mixed-use commercial and residential development along the waterfront over looking the town park and along Castle Hill. Other developments that consolidated the built form of Carlow Town include the development of the VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre and redevelopment of sites along Kennedy Avenue that adjoin the River Burrin.

It is essential that Carlow Town Council continues to make better use of existing land and buildings within Carlow Town Centre and wider Carlow Town functional area. This will involve maximising the use of existing building stock for example, by encouraging the use of vacant upper storeys of buildings or by exercising some flexibility in the consideration of applications to convert existing town centre buildings. It will involve providing for appropriate infill and backland development, redevelopment of under-used sites such as surface car parks within the town centre, as well as the assembly and wholesale demolition and re-development of suitable sites. Allied with this must be an emphasis on making Carlow Town Centre and wider Carlow Town pedestrian and cycle-friendly and providing good quality open space and community facilities.

Within town centres problems of land titles, tenures and fragmented ownership can inhibit site assembly and redevelopment and leading to problems of urban blight such as vacancy, dereliction and underuse. Carlow Town Council will continue to play an active role in seeking to bring forward suitable sites for redevelopment and improving linkages within the town.

These actions will deliver more sustainable patterns of development, ensuring that locations are fully exploited through high-density, mixed-use development and promoting sustainable transport choices, including reducing the need to travel and providing alternatives to car use. Maximising the use of existing land and buildings will be subject to environmental considerations such as the protection of architectural heritage and the reduction of flood risk.

Policies

CT P1 Focus development on Carlow Town Centre and the wider Carlow Town functional area to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and services and provide for sustainable land use patterns. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

CT P2 Facilitate the assembly of appropriate small sites, where feasible particularly within Carlow Town Centre to bring forward lands for redevelopment and improve permeability of the Town Centre.

CT P3 Actively promote appropriate backland and infill development as well as re-development of brownfield sites and under-used lands particularly within Carlow Town Centre and subject to environmental considerations and wider planning considerations.

CT P4 Exercise some flexibility in the application of internal space, amenity and parking policies in relation to appropriate small-scale refurbishment or small-scale conversion developments within the town centre.

Reinforce the Quantum and Diversity of Uses within Carlow Town Centre

The definition and reinforcing of the role and function of Carlow Town Centre within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and its wider hinterland is of critical importance. The town centre is the primary location for high-order shopping, commercial, leisure, community, civic and tourism services. Carlow Town Council is concerned with developing and supporting a thriving, attractive and inclusive town centre.

The location of a diverse and high-order services within the Town Centre ensures the town centre will remain the primary destination to do business and avail of services within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and its wider hinterland. A critical mass of services within one area that is walkable and attractive draws people in increasing footfall, it leads to multiplier effects in trade and creates the bustle and rich social life essential to a vital and vibrant town centre.

The vibrancy of a town centre along with sites of interest, restaurants, hotels and consumer choice in relation to shopping are also important to the attraction of tourists. The functioning of the mixed-use areas within the town centre is important at night time as well as during the day. Although the Town Council supports the commercial uses associated with the night-time economy, it is important to ensure associated uses do not lead to anti-social behaviour or adversely effect residential amenity.

The Town Council is also concerned about the potential for the erosion of the vitality and vibrancy of the traditional commercial core of Carlow Town with certain classes of units and a concentration of certain classes of uses. As a result the Town Council has introduced policies to protect prime commercial space within the traditional commercial core.

Policies

CT P5 Encourage the provision of a wide range of shopping, commercial, community, civic, tourism, amenity and transport services within Carlow Town Centre

CT P6 Direct high-order commercial, civic and tourism services to town centre locations

CT P7 Apply the recommendations of the Joint Retail Policy Statement along with relevant Retail Strategies, the Joint Retail Hierarchy and the Retail Planning Guidelines 2005 or as amended to safeguard and strengthen the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre

CT P8 Support the full occupation of newly-developed, purpose-built building stock in the town centre including office space, retail space and apartment units

CT P9 Encourage the use of upper storeys of commercial buildings as dwelling units within the town centre in order to enhance passive surveillance of the town centre and deter anti-social behaviour

CT P10 Restrict the use of ground floor space within the traditional commercial core for gaming uses or snooker halls, directing such uses to upper storeys and away from the main shopping streets

CT P11 Avoid an over-concentration of hot-food takeaways or turf accountants within the traditional commercial core

CT P12 Restrict the opening hours of Takeaways 02.00 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning and 00.00 on every other morning and encourage the provision of covered litter bins in or outside their premises (subject to license)

CT P13 Utilise statutory provisions relating to derelict sites to provide for efficient use of building stock and improve the visual amenity of Carlow Town Centre and the wider Carlow Town Area

CT P14 Support the holding of a weekly farmers market within Carlow Town Centre and the principle of establishing further occasional or periodic markets within the town centre

CT P15 Support the provision of commercial tourism uses in and around Marlborough Street in response of the marina's location in the Town Park in Graiguecullen

Advance and market the concept of the Cultural Quarter

The establishment of a well-known and recognisable area within the Greater Urban Area to be known as the Cultural Quarter will bring significant benefits to the area (Cultural Quarter indicated on Carlow Town Objectives Map). Significant investment in the cultural infrastructure of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area has been made in recent years leading to a concentration of cultural uses in and around College Street in Carlow Town Centre. This presents an opportunity to support and further develop a new role for this part of the Town Centre increasing use of this cultural infrastructure by locals as well as by visitors.

The envisaged cultural quarter encompasses College Street, Court Street, Brown Street, Charlotte Street and a small section of Tullow Street and within that area includes the following institutions associated with the arts and heritage: Carlow College, the VISUAL and the George Bernard Shaw Theatre, Carlow Cathedral, the Carlow County Museum, Carlow Tourism Office, the Carlow Central Library and Glor Ceatherlach.

The tower of the cathedral has been a town landmark since 1833 and the college has played an important role since its establishment in 1789. Carlow College donated lands for the development of the VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre which together constitute a strong landmark within the cultural quarter. Carlow College retains extensive lands to the east and north of the principal building and opportunities remain for sensitive infill development.

College Street is a narrow attractive street running from Tullow Street to the Courthouse with an urban atmosphere and imposing religious and cultural buildings. Opportunities to increase permeability within the cultural quarter and between the cultural quarter and the rest of the town centre should be utilized to reinforce its role and better integrate the area into the town centre.

Policies

CT P16 Establish the cultural quarter as a legible quarter within the townscape by way of public realm works

CT P17 Develop a marketing strategy associated with the cultural quarter concept and include the Annual Eigse Festival as a publicity platform

CT P18 Examine opportunities to support the establishment of the cultural quarter by way of the annual development contributions scheme

CT P19 Encourage the development of commercial uses associated or supporting existing cultural uses within the quarter as well as opportunities for Carlow College

CT P20 Facilitate temporary uses of vacant structures for publicly accessible creative and community uses such as community cafés, local markets, performance art events, art installations, galleries or artist studios

CT P21 Support the establishment of new pedestrian and cycle linkages between the cultural quarter and the rest of the town centre

Promote the Development of the River Quarter and Riverside Renewal

Our towns may have turned away from their riversides. Urban design principles would promote making riversides the centerpiece of the urban landscape. Their importance has been widely celebrated in recent years while being intricately linked with urban renewal. Rivers are dynamic, multi-functional systems. Rivers can simultaneously accommodate river dependent industry, a thriving tourism sector, a recreational space and a sporting arena, as well as being unique natural spaces. Flooding issues associated with riverside development and resulting damage must also be considered. The question as to whether the economic, cultural and ecological value of rivers can sit side-by-side and be fully realised is raised and requires attention and consideration in order to be achieved.

Many uses may be accommodated alongside rivers including river dependent' uses (such as rowing, diving, sailing, angling) and 'river enhancing' uses (such as the barrow track, café or restaurant uses). Other more general commercial and retail uses may be justified for riverside sites where these sites are within the town centre.

River Quarter

Opportunity Site 2

Opportunity Site 11

Barrow Track serving River Quarter

The identified River Quarter extends from Montgomery Street south to Cox's Lane (indicated on Carlow Town Objectives Map). The Quarter is also served by Bagenal Court. Both Cox's Lane and Bagenal Court have been recently upgraded to facilitate the development of this area. In addition, the upgrading of the Barrow Track in this area should facilitate development along this river frontage.

This part of Carlow has been relatively undeveloped in the urban context, being slightly peripheral to historic commercial core of Dublin Street and Tullow Street. This is not unusual as Irish towns have characteristically turned their backs on the rivers which flow through them. Industrial usage of the river also most likely discouraged residential development historically.

The dominance of the River Barrow on this Quarter will define its past, present and future development.

The River Quarter includes a number of opportunity sites suitable for wholesale development:

Opportunity Site 2: Barrow Track

Opportunity Site 11: Former Celtic Linen Site

Opportunity Site 16: Pig-slaughter house

Policies

CT P22 Promote the development of opportunity sites within the River Quarter, subject to appropriate assessment, flood risk considerations as well as other general planning considerations

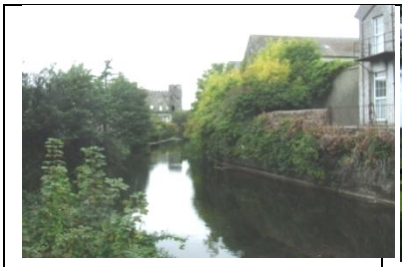
CT P23 Enliven and enhance the River Quarter, creating a focus for the River Quarter and a strong sense of place. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

CT P24 Ensure proposals make the most of the urban design opportunities presented by the riverside and town centre location of the River Quarter. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

Riverside Renewal

The Barrow and its tributary the Burrin are key to the future development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. These rivers are important scenically and as amenities for a range of water-based activities. The Barrow, in particular, presents a range of opportunities for development and is identified as a flagship attraction in the South-East Regional Tourism Plan 2000-2006.

River Barrow



Potential footbridge River Burrin

Webber Lock Cottage

Opportunity Site 6

Regeneration of both riverfronts to give a contemporary modern feel which will complement the cultural agenda for the town should be encouraged and attempts made to create a new integrated recreational / residential / working and arts quarter along the River Barrow. Development consistent

with such a vision would promote the inception of bars, restaurants, arts, workshops and a range of tourist amenities and facilities. The Barrow if properly developed as a waterfront area, has the potential to be a major tourism draw, in addition to serving as the nucleus of the community, providing a central location for both business and pleasure.

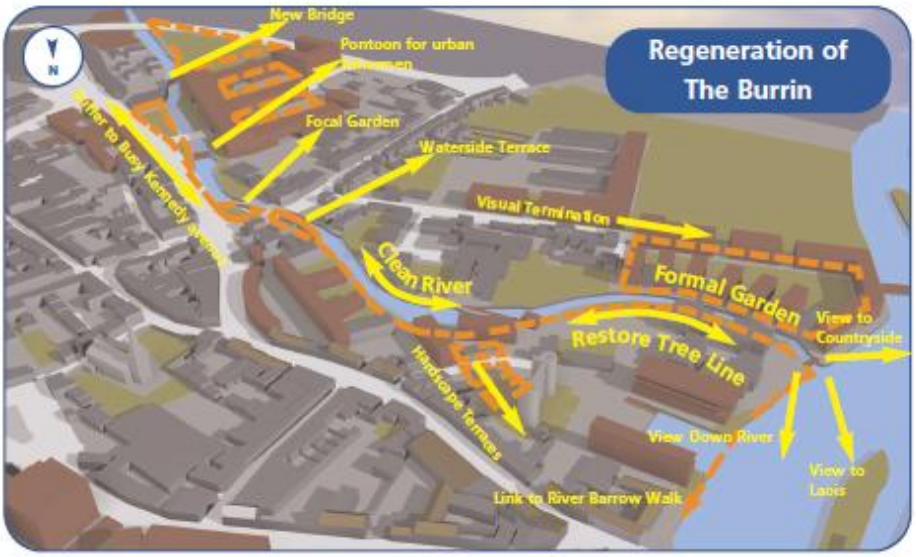
The Barrow offers visitors to the county the opportunity to cruise along its course. A number of marinas have been built along the Barrow, including a new marina and slip in the Town Park, Graiguecullen. Additional mooring facilities may also be appropriate to attract a large numbers of visitors. The derelict lock-keeper's cottage at Webber's Lock is a potential site for water-dependent leisure activities.

The Barrow river navigation extends from Athy to St. Mullins, where the river becomes tidal. For this length, the river is accompanied by a towpath, often known as 'the line' or 'the Barrow Track'. The River Barrow is identifiable as one of the prime tourist assets of County Carlow, and has a pivotal role to play in the development of tourism in the county. The recently-completed upgrading of the towpath walk provides significant opportunity for tourism associated with walking. The attractiveness of such walks is enhanced by their relative flatness, the opportunity they provide for accessing rural environments away from road traffic, the association with the water, and the interest provided by features of wildlife and industrial archaeology.

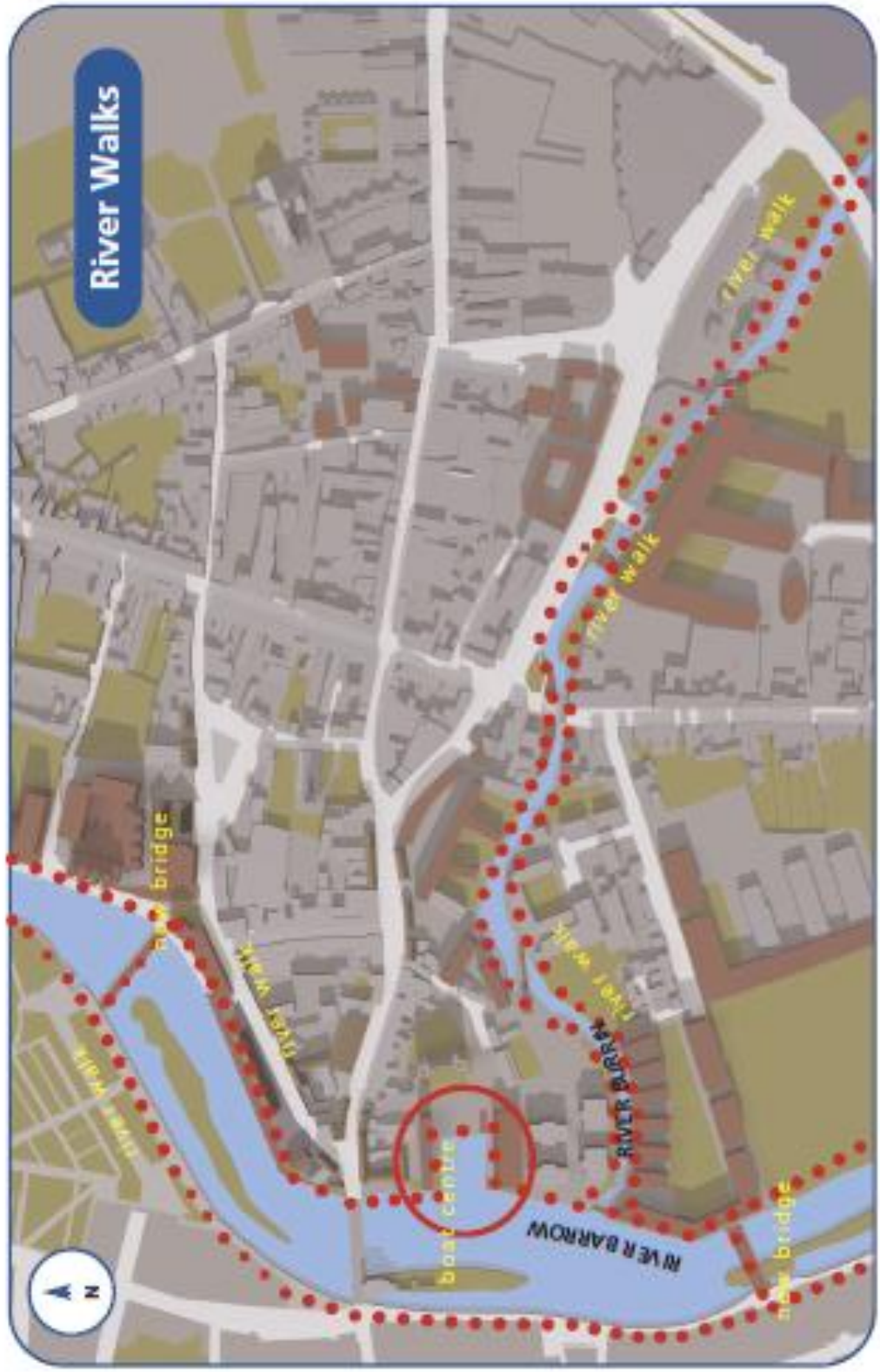
With the change in emphasis on the river from the commercial transport to amenity and tourism uses, the river, and its towpath continue to provide a physical and conceptual link between the settlements and the various potential tourism facilities along the Barrow Valley.

The Burrin

Regeneration of the banks of the Burrin could create a series of riverside walks interconnecting with the Barrow's own reinstated towpaths. The Carlow Town Objectives Map provides for a Riverside Park along the River Burrin enhancing its amenity and ecological value. Other works to improve enjoyment of the River Burrin and its linkage with the Barrow include an objective for a new pedestrian bridge between Opportunity Site 6 off Pembroke Road and the area around Carlow Castle which has recently been developed as office space.


Regeneration of The Burrin
New Bridge
Pontoon for urban
Focal Garden
Waterside Terrace
Visual Termination
Clean River
Formal Garden
View to Countryside
Restore Tree Line
Hardscape Terraces
View Down River
View to Lawn
Link to River Barrow Walk

Linkages
BARRACK STREET
Community
Park
Enterprise
Route to Potato Market
Residential Courts
Georgian Terrace
Garden
Route
Streets
Castle
CASTLE HILL


River Walks
river walk
river walk
river walk
river walk
river walk
new bridge
new bridge
boat centre
RIVER BARROW
RIVER BARROW
N

Policies

CTP 25 Promote the active use of the Barrow Track walkway and the provision of additional riverside walks and related signage, in particular a linear river walk and cycle path along the eastern/northern bank of the River Burrin, dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

CTP 26 Facilitate the development of water-dependent tourism uses along the River Barrow, subject to appropriate assessment

CTP 27 Seek the provision of a new pedestrian linkage over the River Burrin between the riverfront to Carlow Castle and the Pembroke Road Opportunity Site (OP 6), dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

CTP 28 Encourage the enhancement of riverside sites along the Rivers Barrow and Burrin without comprising the conservation objectives of the candidate Natura 2000 site, dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

CTP 29 Ensure flood risk is prevented, managed and mitigated against in any development proposals relating to riverside sites, dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

Establish Graiguecullen Village as an identifiable urban quarter within Carlow Town Centre

Graiguecullen straddles the Carlow/Laois border and two electoral districts: Graigue Urban (Carlow) and Graigue Rural (Laois). The historic part of Graiguecullen is known as Graiguecullen Village and runs parallel to the River Barrow. It was an established urban area as early as the mid-seventeenth century most likely developing because of its proximity to a key crossing point of the River. Graiguecullen has strong functional links with Carlow Town, with the older part of the area functioning as part of the town centre and the remainder as a suburb of Carlow Town. Graiguecullen is also served by a shopping centre to the north and small neighbourhood centre to the east providing retail and commercial services.

Graiguecullen experienced rapid growth between the last two census periods (2002-2006, 2006-2011) growing by a quarter between 2006 and 2011. This growth has placed strain on existing services and demand for additional services including the provision of a post office or credit union, the provision of a secondary school and the provision of a primary care centre. Community facilities available locally within Graiguecullen include the Town Park with a small marina and playground, primary schools, swimming pool, parish hall, Laois County Council Area Office, access onto the Barrow Track and sheltered housing for the elderly. A significant number of older people live in and around Graigue Village with young families living in the newly-completed housing estates further out. There is a strong sense of community within the area; however there is also a need to build community cohesion within newer housing estates.

The building stock of Graiguecullen is varied including large cut-stone warehouses and nineteenth century townhouses and detached houses, terraced cottages, local authority terraced housing, apartments, as well as housing estates constructed in the last two decades. The public realm in Graiguecullen Village is in need of upgrading to facilitate universal access and improve the appearance of the area. The reversal of dereliction would also substantially improve the area's appearance and could benefit the village economically making it more commercially attractive.

The upgrading of Bachelor's Walk between Graiguecullen Bridge and the Millennium Bridge shows the potential for further riverside improvements in Graiguecullen further south. The completion of the pedestrian bridge is important in providing stronger connection between the historic core of Carlow Town and that of Graiguecullen. A long-standing roads objective to provide a vehicular and pedestrian bridge to the south would further improve the connections between the two areas and would also serve to alleviate traffic congestion along Chaffe Street and at Graiguecullen Bridge.

CTP 29A Improve the appearance of Graiguecullen Village by

(i) Tackling dereliction

(ii) Facilitating infill development

(iii) Improving the public realm as resources allow

CTP 29B Protect and expand the range of community facilities provided in Graiguecullen Village including commercial services that serve a community such as a post office, bank or credit union

CTP 29C Improve the relationship between Graiguecullen Village and the River Barrow through building and streetscape design and the encouragement of uses associated with the River. Dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors.

Encourage Specific Urban Renewal and Advance Opportunity Sites

With the population of the older and more urbanised areas of Carlow Town declining continually over a number of censual periods, the renewal of these areas is of significant importance. Areas can be renewed by improving the appearance of the public realm, creating new linkages through existing open spaces and also by reducing block sizes with innovative infill development and advancing specific sites for re-development.

Some urban renewal projects of this nature have been undertaken in recent years including:

(i) Office development along the waterfront adjacent to Carlow Castle

(ii) Mixed-used residential and commercial development along the waterfront to the rear of the Town Hall

(iii) Mixed-used developments including retail, residential and commercial uses along the southern side of Kennedy Street and Kennedy Avenue and fronting the River Burrin

(iv) Mixed-use development at Shamrock Plaza

Other developments which are currently at the planning stage and the redevelopment of the sites have potential to contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre as well as consolidating the built form. These schemes include:

(i) Mixed use retail and residential development on the former Penney's Site off Kennedy Avenue

(ii) Mixed use retail and residential development of Barrow track site, fronting the River Barrow and to the rear of Carlow County Council Building on Athy Road, serviced by the recently improved Montgomery Street

(iii) Mixed use scheme at Court Place and College Street

The Carlow 800 Study was carried out on behalf of Carlow Town Council highlights specific opportunities for renewal within the town centre. These opportunities include better interaction with the Rivers Barrow and Burrin, key landscape features within Carlow Town. Previous small-scale local area plans have also highlighted opportunities for renewal. Preceding studies and small-scale Local Area Plans informed the preparation of Opportunity Site Briefs which outline the characteristics and opportunities associated with specific sites.

Policies

CTP 30 Support the principle of redeveloping the former Penny's site (Opportunity Site 1), Barrow Track site (Opportunity Site 2), Court Place site (Opportunity Site 3) referred to above and mapped.

CTP 31 Encourage the redevelopment of the listed sites having regard to the urban design frameworks as presented below

(i) Plas na Saoirse and Potato Market (Opportunity Site 4)

(ii) Stonemasons' Site (Opportunity Site 5)

(iii) Pembroke Road Sites (Opportunity Sites 6)

CTP 32 Facilitate the redevelopment of opportunity sites at

(i) Marlborough Street, Graiguecullen (Opportunity Site 7)

(ii) Barrack Street (Opportunity Site 8)

(iii) In and around Train Station (Opportunity Site 9)

CTP 33 Encourage the redevelopment or intensification of uses within employment opportunity sites including set out in appendix 5 at

(i) Former Braun Factory (Opportunity Site 10)

(ii) Former Celtic Linen Site (Opportunity Site 11)

(iii) Kelvin Grove Site (Opportunity Site 12)

(iv) Former Erin Foods Site (Opportunity Site 13)

(v) Former Lapple Factory (Opportunity Site 14)

(vi) Sleaty Road, which straddles boundary with Laois (Opportunity Site 15)

(vii) Kernanstown Industrial Estate, which straddles boundary with Carlow Town Environs (Opportunity Site 16)

(viii) Former Pig Slaughterhouse (Opportunity Site 17)

(ix) Hanover Retail Park (Opportunity Site 18)

PART 4: SUB-AREA SPATIAL STRATEGY

SECTION 2: GRAIGUECULLEN, COUNTY LAOIS

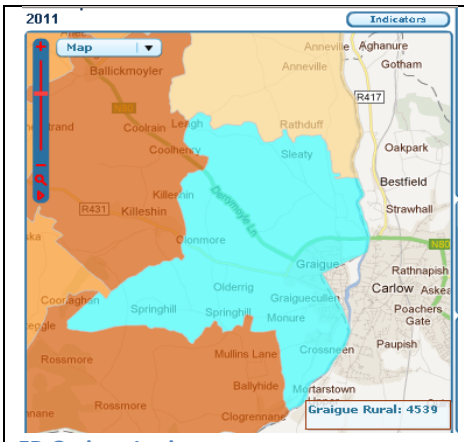
Core Aim: *Continue to perform important retail, residential, service and amenity functions within Graiguecullen and for its hinterland as well as supporting the settlement hierarchy as envisaged in the Midlands and South-East Regional Planning Guidelines 2010.*

Background

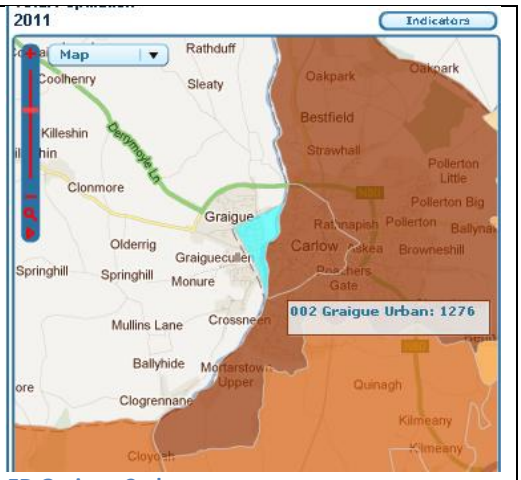
Graiguecullen straddles the Carlow/Laois border and two electoral districts: Graigue Urban (Carlow) and Graigue Rural (Laois). The historic part of Graiguecullen is known as Graigue Village or Graiguecullen Village and is administered by Carlow Town Council. It became an established urban area as early as the mid-seventeenth century most likely developing because it is contiguous to a key crossing point on the River Barrow. Parts of Graiguecullen Bridge are said to date to 1569. Graiguecullen, County Laois contains a number of newly-constructed residential and enterprise areas and arcs around the more historic area.

Graiguecullen has strong functional links with Carlow Town; with the historic Graiguecullen Village functioning as an urban quarter within the town centre and the remainder as a suburb of Carlow Town. Graiguecullen is also served by the Sleaty District Centre accessible from Sleaty Road and small neighbourhood centre on the Castlecomer Road providing local retail and commercial service. Enterprise Areas within Graiguecullen County Laois include the Shamrock Business Park, Barrowside Business Park and retail warehousing units in the Carlow Business Park on the Sleaty Road.

The population of the electoral district Graigue Carlow has been in decline over the last three census periods, declining by 25% between 2002 and 2011. While the population of the electoral district of Graigue, Laois increased dramatically by 150% between 2002 and 2011 to 4539. Graigue, Carlow has an older population profile as well as older building stock and is more densely populated than Graigue Laois. The extent of Graigue Laois is significantly larger than the Local Area Plan development boundary and more precise census figures on the population of the urbanized portion of Graigue, Laois will not be available until April 2012. In the 2006 census, around 81% of the population of Graigue Laois electoral district resided in the urbanized area of Graiguecullen, County Laois. On the basis of this relationship, the population of Graiguecullen County Laois is estimated at 3,600 in 2011.



ED Graigue Laois



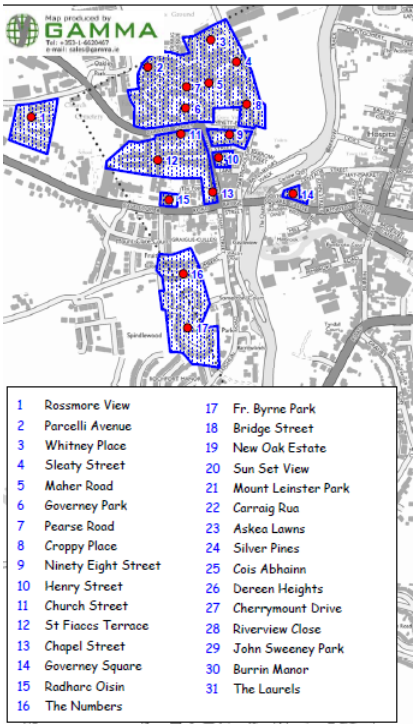
ED Graigue Carlow

As a result of population growth, demand for additional services including the provision of a post office or credit union, the provision of a secondary school and the provision of a primary care centre are paramount to the future servicing of the area.

Community facilities available locally within Graiguecullen include the Town Park with a small marina and playground, Graiguecullen National School and Educate Together National School, Doctor Cullen Park GAA club and playing fields, Graiguecullen/Carlow Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre, Graiguecullen Parish Hall, the Barrow Track and sheltered housing and community facilities for the elderly at Saint Fiacc's House.

Connection with Carlow improved with the construction of the pedestrian Millennium Bridge linking the Town Park in Graiguecullen with River Quarter in Carlow Town. The historic parts of Carlow and Graiguecullen are linked by Graiguecullen Bridge and the Bill Duggan Bridge links the two areas to the north.

A significant number of older people live in and around Graiguecullen Village with young families living in the newly-completed housing estates further out on the Northern Relief Road, Leighlin Road and Numbers Road. There is a strong sense of community within the area; however there is also a need to build community cohesion within newer housing estates. A number of residential areas within Graiguecullen in both Carlow and Laois are designated as RAPID areas. RAPID is a national programme aimed at improving the quality of life and the opportunity available to residents living within disadvantaged urban areas where average income and educational attainment levels are lower than national averages.



RAPID Areas Graiguecullen

The boundary between County Laois and County Carlow in Graiguecullen is unusual being based on the Church of Ireland spire and in some cases bisecting residential estates and buildings. The administrative division of Graiguecullen for the provision of policing, health and local government services can cause difficulties in accessing services as well as knowing which administrative authority to contact. Insofar as practicable, difficulties associated with administrative boundaries should be minimized. Both the Midland and South-East Regional Planning Guidelines (2010) emphasize the importance of inter-regional linkages and co-operation in policy development.

The newer residential areas are located in County Laois, many have been completed in recent years and function well, but others remain unfinished. Although much of Graiguecullen, County Laois is newly developed, geographically many of the newer estates in Graiguecullen are closer to Carlow Town Centre than well-established suburbs to the east and south of the town centre in Carlow. For this reason of proximity to the town centre along with the good level of community services, it is anticipated that when economic circumstances improve and house prices stabilize, demand for residential units in Graiguecullen is likely to return.

Graiguecullen Development Strategy

The Development Strategy for Graiguecullen is framed within the Core Strategy of the Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the Thematic Strategy (set out in Part 2 and 3), as well as the wider county, regional and national planning policy context.

Under the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (2010), Graiguecullen, County Laois is designated as a **service town** in its own right, one of five in County Laois. A service town is described in the guidelines as:

> Performing important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for local rural hinterlands and support the upper tiers of the urban hierarchy including the linked gateway and principal towns, experienced high levels of population growth over the last census period, in some cases without the necessary supporting services. As a result the RPGs envisage that the development of these towns needs to be increasingly aimed at consolidating growth with the service town and better matching to the development of relevant supporting physical and social infrastructure

Lands zoned for residential development in Graiguecullen include some areas where housing development has commenced, as well as greenfield lands. The quantum of lands zoned for residential development is consistent with the Laois Core Strategy as set out in the County Laois Development Plan 2011-2017 and reiterated in the Joint Spatial Plan Core Strategy in Part 2 of this document. A sequential approach was used in the zoning of residential lands in Graiguecullen in accordance with regional and national policy.

	Population 2006 (CSO)	**Projected Population 2018**	**Projected Population Growth to 2018**	**Projected increase in Households to 2018**	**Density (per ha)**	**Housing Land Requirement to 2018 (Inc. 50% headroom)**	**AREA (ha) proposed to be Zoned for Residential Development 2012 - 2018**
Graigue -cullen, County Laois	2,529	2,924	395	164	12	20	20

Based on County Laois Development Plan 2011-2017 Core Strategy. Figures based on household size of 2.4 persons per household and density of 12 units per hectare in accordance with Midland Regional Planning Guidelines (2010)

The following objectives are the principal elements of the Graiguecullen Development Strategy and are underpinned by Parts 2 and 3 of the Joint Spatial Plan.

Objectives

GL O1 Advance the completion of the Northern Relief Road between the Castlecomer Road and the Crossneen area and the construction of an associated multi-modal bridge between Graiguecullen and Carlow in association with Carlow County Council and in accordance with the Midlands and South-East Regional Planning Guidelines, subject to Appropriate Assessment

GL O2 Drive economic development of Graiguecullen, having regard to its status as Service Town in the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines

GL O3 Consolidate the urban form of Graiguecullen, County Laois in the interests of sustainable transport, sustainable communities and efficient use of public infrastructure subject to appropriate assessment

GL O4 Improve the relationship between Graiguecullen, County Laois and the River Barrow

GL O5 Support community development and community cohesion in Graiguecullen

Transport

The improvement of the National Transport Corridor (N80) between Rosslare and Portlaoise is a key objective of both the Midlands and South-East Regional Planning Guidelines (2010) as well as successive Statutory Plans prepared by Counties Laois and Carlow. This transport link is also a designated national transport corridor in the National Spatial Strategy.

The extension of the Northern Relief Road southwards towards Crossneen, the construction of new bridge for HGVs, cars, pedestrians and cyclists over the Barrow and the construction of the Carlow Southern Relief Road is of significant importance to the local economy as well as wider strategic importance. The status of the River Barrow as a candidate SAC means that the construction of the bridge will be subject to Appropriate Assessment pursuant to the Habitats Directive. The extension of the Northern Relief Road will improve traffic circulation within Graiguecullen and in particular for residential housing estates to the south of Graiguecullen, County Laois.

The improvement of cycling and pedestrian linkages in specific locations within Graiguecullen would improve opportunities to use sustainable transport. Although the off-road Barrow Track walking route runs close to Leighlin Road, there are no pedestrian linkages between the two transport corridors. The provision of such a linkage would improve recreational amenity and sustainable transport choices for residents of newly-developed estates along this road as well as residents of the wider area. Opportunities also exist for the extension of a pedestrian and cycle route north of the Town Park to the

Bill Duggan Bridge on the western side of the River Barrow. The related cross-cutting core objectives CO6, CO9 and CO10 underpin the following Graiguecullen Local Area Plan policies:

GL P 1 Liaise with the Carlow County Council, the National Roads Authority and other relevant agencies in order to progress the extension of the Northern Relief Road and alleviate traffic congestion on the Killeshin Road and Numbers Road, dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive

GL P 2 Provide for pedestrian linkages between the Leighlin Road and the Barrow Track and between the Town Park north to Bill Duggan Bridge as well as improving pedestrian facilities and provide cycle ways along the Northern Relief Road, on the Portlaoise Road (within the Northern Relief Road) and along Church Road

GL P 3 Provide for enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along radial routes from Graiguecullen Village to Northern Relief Road and in particular along Sleaty, Portlaoise, Castlecomer and Numbers Road as resources allow and prioritizing transport links associated with schools

Economic Development

The Joint Spatial Plan Core Strategy as well as the Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines (2010) and County Laois Development Plan 2011-2017 place strong emphasis on economic development and also on consolidated growth being fundamental to proper planning and sustainable development. The related cross-cutting core objectives CO2-4 underpin the following Graiguecullen Local Area Plan policies:

GL P4 Encourage the full use of vacant or under-used commercial and retail warehousing space at Doyles of the Shamrock and on the Sleaty Road

GL P5 Encourage economic development opportunities using opportunity site briefs prepared for the Glanbia Site, Sleaty Road District Centre and related Retail Warehousing and Barrowside Business Park

GL P6 Provide for a neighbourhood centre on the Numbers Road

Consolidated Urban Form

The Joint Spatial Plan Vision and cross-cutting core objective CO1, CO6 underpin the following Graiguecullen Local Area Plan policies:

GL P7 Seek the completion of unfinished residential housing estates, where considered appropriate by way of site resolution plans or other means, subject to resources

GL P8 Ensure a sequential approach is adopted in the development of residential areas in the interests of compact development and sustainable transport

Relationship with River

The improvement of the relationship between the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the River is a major theme of this Joint Spatial Plan and relates to all three areas (Carlow Town, Graiguecullen and Carlow Town Environs). Cross-cutting core objective *CO10 Turning towards the River* relates. Much of Flood Zone A (1% of greater chance of flooding each year) that relates to the River Barrow is located in County Laois because of local topography. In addition unlike some lands adjoining the River Barrow in the town centre, these lands do not benefit from flood relief works.

The affected lands in Crossneen and adjacent to Bill Duggan Bridge are prime in terms of the existing and proposed transport network and proximity to the town centre and services. In light of these characteristics, it is important that Laois County Council seek to maximize use of these lands while having regard to their location within Flood Zone A. Having regard to the *Planning System and Flood Risk Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, the Council considers these lands to be suitable for recreational uses and water-compatible commercial uses in particular. Failte Ireland (2011) has highlighted water-based tourism as a potential growth industry in this area.

The Barrow Track is an extensive walking route suitable for multi-day walking trips. The Barrow Track in the Crossneen area already functions well, though it is used by locals more than visitors. Its utility would be enhanced by linking it with Leighlin Road providing a circuit through Graiguecullen as well as linear route along the River. Likewise the provision of a pedestrian and cycle linkage between the Town Park and the Bill Duggan Bridge on the western side of the River Barrow would enhance permeability and sustainable transport choices. The provision of additional linkages would also improve pedestrian access to the town centre for residents of the Crossneen and Sleaty areas (provided for in GL P2 above).

The Barrow River itself is served by a small marina and slip within the Town Park and downsteam by a marina in Leighlinsbridge. The Barrow River is suitable for use by canal boats with channels around weirs as well as smaller crafts that can travel over the weirs. The Council would consider favourably the provision of further marina facilities in Graiguecullen, Laois.

GL P9 Provide for the development of further river-based recreational activities, including commercial recreational activities in Crossneen north of the proposed new bridge and also to the south of Bill Duggan Bridge, dependent on clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the

integrity of the Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

GL P10 Seek the improvement of the surface and appearance of the Barrow Track south of Graiguecullen Bridge, dependent on clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

Community Development

Saint Fiacc's Activity Centre is a new community centre nearing completion, located on the grounds of Saint Fiacc's House on the Castlecomer Road in Graiguecullen. The Centre will serve the local community in Graiguecullen, as well as the wider area. It will include an activity room where a wide range of events will be held, a computer area, community library, café and quiet room. Fiacc's Activity Centre is due to open in April 2012.

It is located very close to existing community uses such as the Graiguecullen National School, Graiguecullen/Carlow Swimming Pool, Graiguecullen Parish Centre across the road and existing community facilities for the elderly. The centre will be run by the Board of Saint Fiacc's The project received grant-aid from Laois Partnership, Carlow County Development Partnership and RAPID as well as benefiting from local fund-raising by the Friends of Saint Fiacc's. The operation of the activity centre will help foster community cohesion within Graiguecullen and surrounding areas.

GL P11 Support the establishment of Saint Fiacc's Activity Centre in Graiguecullen

GL P12 Provide for campus-based community facilities, which could include a secondary school or primary care centre in Graiguecullen in an accessible location

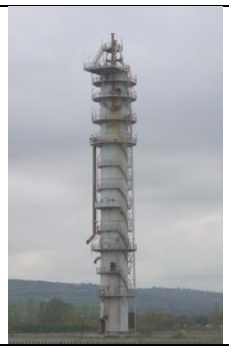
GL P13 Foster community cohesion within newly developed areas and between old and new parts of Graiguecullen

GL P14 Facilitate the provision of joint services or shared services to the Graiguecullen community, where feasible

PART 4: SUB AREA SPATIAL STRATEGY

SECTION 3: CARLOW TOWN ENVIRONS

Core Aim: *Support the role and functioning of Carlow Town in light of its County Town status in the South-East Regional Planning Guidelines by providing green lungs to the town, improving road infrastructure and making housing, community and enterprise lands available for development subject to a sequential approach to the orderly development of the urban area.*



Background

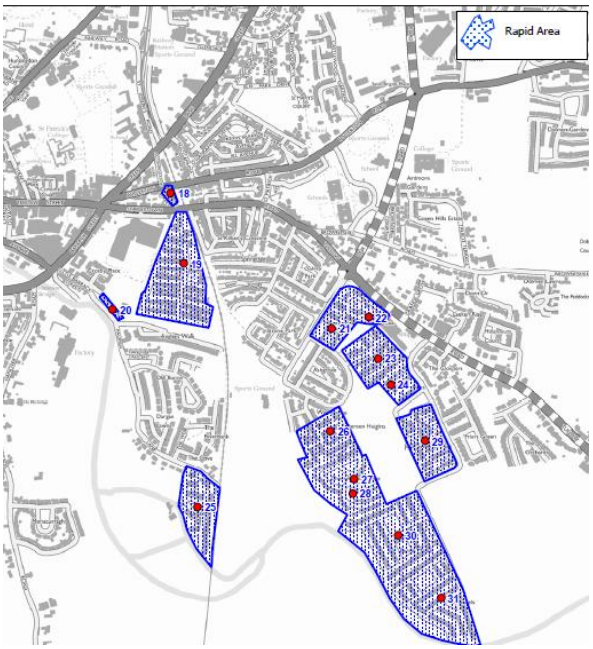
Carlow Town Environs is contiguous to Carlow Town but located in the functional area of County Carlow. It extends to the north, east and south of Carlow Town, while Graiguecullen is located to the west. The Environs area contains what are essentially suburbs of Carlow Town, though many important transport, water infrastructure, enterprise and recreational assets are located in the Environs.

Much of the Environs area is rural in character with Demense landscapes to the north at Oak Park and to the east at Browneshill, as well as rolling hills with a strong rural character to the south. The area is drained by the Rivers Barrow and Burrin.

Important sites or enterprises within the Environs include the former Greencore site on the Athy Road, the Teagasc Research Centre at Oak Park, and part of the Pollerton Industrial Estate which straddles the boundary with Carlow Town. Prime greenfield sites include lands newly-serviced by the Eastern Relief Road along with lands to be serviced by the Southern Relief Road. Merck Sharpe and Dohme is an important enterprise located on the Dublin Road to the north-east of the Town.

Much of Carlow Town Environs along with the outer parts of Carlow Town, are located on the Carlow Rural Electoral District, which has a growing population - increasing from 11,238 in 2002 to 12,548 in 2006 and to 13,793 in 2011. Established residential areas are located to the east and south, with a relatively new housing stock. Residents of Carlow Town Environs are largely served by Carlow Town Centre as well as the Sandhills District Centre and smaller Neighbourhood Centres at Askea and on the

Tullow Road for retail, commercial and community services. Within the Environs area, a primary school was recently granted planning permission on the Athy Road and plans are in place for the construction of a community centre in the John Sweeney Park area to the South-East of the town. A number of disadvantaged residential areas (as identified by the RAPID programme and mapped below) are close to the proposed centre.



Potable drinking water sources within the environs area include a borehole north of Cannery Road and a second borehole at Browneshill House. The waste water treatment plant at Mortarstown to the south of Carlow Town serves the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area as a whole. Key road infrastructure within the Environs area include a newly-constructed and serviced section of the Eastern Relief Road along with the planned Southern Relief Road intended to connect with County Laois by way of a multi-modal bridge over the River Barrow.

Significant heritage assets and recreational amenities within the Environs include the River Barrow and associated Barrow Track, the northern part is within the Environs area. Oak Park Forest Park is also a high order recreational amenity as well as proposed Natural Heritage Area. The Browneshill Dolmen to the east is a National Monument set within Demense landscape. The Burrin River is another natural heritage and landscape asset within the Environs.

Development Strategy

The Development Strategy for Carlow Town Environs is framed within the Core Strategy of the Joint Spatial Plan for the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and the Thematic Strategy (set out in Part 2 and 3), as well as the wider county, regional and national planning policy context.

Carlow Town Environs contains residential suburbs of Carlow Town and also contains some key recreational, infrastructure and heritage assets as well as important enterprise areas and established residential areas. Carlow Town is designated as a County Town in the South-East Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (SERPGs). Under the SERPGs, County Towns have significant potential for growth and development and are critical to the achievement of critical mass and balanced development across the region. The Guidelines also note the distinctive settlement pattern of the south-east, characterised by a strong urban structure made up of a network of sizable urban settlements including hubs and county towns each with its own hinterland, sphere of influence and extensive services. Carlow forms part of this strong urban structure for the South-East Region.

Under the Core Strategy contained in Part Two of the Joint Spatial Plan, 75 ha of residential lands is to be zoned in the Environs Area of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, based on a projected population growth of 985 people between 2012-2018.

Carlow Town Environs is located within Sub-Area C in the SERPGs. The position of the guidelines in relation to one-off housing in Sub-Area C is noted:

Urban generated rural housing to be carefully monitored and controlled

Applications for one-off rural houses within the Environs area will be considered against local need policies as set out in the County Carlow Development Plan 2009-2015 or as amended. Applications directly related to rural land-based uses such as agricultural buildings, quarrying and forestry within the Environs area will be dealt with similarly under the County Carlow Development Plan policy framework.

The following objectives are specific to Carlow Town Environs Area:

Objectives

CTE 01 Advance the development of the Southern Relief Road and the construction of an associated multi-modal bridge across the River Barrow between Carlow and Graiguecullen in association with Carlow County Council and in accordance with the Midlands and South-East Regional Planning Guidelines; dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

CTE 02 Advance the development of identified Opportunity Sites in the Environs in light of their development potential and strategic importance to the economic development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area

CTE 03 Consolidate the urban form of Carlow Town Environs in the interests of sustainable transport, sustainable communities and efficient use of public infrastructure

CTE 04 Support the provision of community services and recreational amenities and improve sustainable transport choices in association with established suburban residential estates in Carlow Town Environs

CTE 05 Seek the provision of a pedestrian, cycle and ecological linkage between the Barrow Track and Oak Park Forest Park to enhance the recreational functionality of these two high-order open spaces and enrich the biodiversity of these spaces

Transport

The improvement of the National Transport Corridor (N80) between the Rosslare, Carlow and Portlaoise is a key objective of both the Midlands and South-East Regional Planning Guidelines (2010) as well as successive Statutory Plans prepared by Counties Carlow and Laois. This route is also a designated national transport corridor in the National Spatial Strategy.

The development of the Southern Relief Road in the Ballinacarraig and Quinnagh areas and the construction of new bridge for HGVs, cars, pedestrians and cyclists over the River Barrow, linking with Crosneen in County Laois are of significant importance to the local economy as well as being of strategic regional importance. The status of the River Barrow as a candidate SAC means that the construction of the bridge will be subject to Appropriate Assessment pursuant to the Habitats Directive. The development of the Southern Relief Road will improve traffic circulation in and around Carlow Institute of Technology as well as some newly development residential housing estates and enterprise areas to the south of the town. The scheme will also strongly enhance linkages between Graiguecullen and Carlow Town as well as between Counties Laois and Carlow.

The improvement of cycling and pedestrian linkages in specific locations within Graiguecullen would improve opportunities to use sustainable transport. Although the off-road Barrow Track walking route runs close to Leighlin Road, there are no pedestrian linkages between the two transport corridors. The provision of such a linkage would improve recreational amenity and sustainable transport choices for residents of newly-developed estates along this road as well as residents of the wider area. Opportunities also exist for the extension of a pedestrian and cycle route north of the Town Park to the Bill Duggan Bridge on the western side of the River Barrow. The related cross-cutting core objectives CO6, CO9 and CO10 underpin the following Graiguecullen Local Area Plan policies:

CTE P1 Liaise with the National Roads Authority, Laois County Council and other relevant agencies in order to progress the development of the Southern Relief Road and multi-modal bridge, dependent upon clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive

CTE P2 Advance the extension of the Eastern Relief Road in the medium term, dependent on clear demonstration that there will be no impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive or significant adverse effects on other environmental receptors

CTE P2(A) Examine the feasibility of providing a vehicular relief road between the Athy Road and the Castledermot Road, in consultation with Kildare County County, as necessary and subject to the requirements of the Habitats and EIA Directive

CTE P3 Enhance linkages between the John Sweeney Park area and the surrounding transport network to improve permeability for residents

CTE P4 Provide for enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along radial routes from Carlow Town to peripheral residential areas in the Environs Area and in association with any proposed development generating significant trip numbers

CTE P5 Provide for pedestrian and cycle linkages between the Athy Road and the Barrow Track across the Former Greencore Site and between the Athy Road and Oak Park Forest Park

Economic Development

The Environs Area contains a range of lands suitable for new employment uses from brownfield sites such as the Former Greencore Site, serviced greenfield sites along the newly-developed Eastern Relief Road and unserviced greenfield sites along the proposed Southern Relief Road.

Any development of these lands should support the role of Carlow as County Town within the South-East Regional Planning Guidelines (2010), a vibrant and vital town centre and core objectives relating to consolidated growth and sustainable transport.

The Council has selected a number of sites within the Environs area that are considered of strategic importance to the economic development of the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area. Opportunity

site briefs have been prepared for each selected sites in order to advance their development and are set out in appendix 6.

CTE P6 Market the development of the following opportunity sites (OP16, OP 21-24) in the Environs Area

Consolidated Urban Form

The Joint Spatial Plan Vision and cross-cutting core objective CO1, CO6 underpin the following Carlow Town Environs Local Area Plan policies:

CTE P7 Seek the completion of unfinished residential housing estates in the Environs, where considered appropriate by way of site resolution plans or other means, subject to resources

CTE P8 Ensure a sequential approach is adopted in the development of lands moving from areas closest to the town centre outwards in the interests of sustainable transport and compact development

Carlow County Council will require an appropriately detailed site-specific flood risk assessment prepared in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) by a competent and qualified consultant in association with residential development proposals on lands zoned Residential 2 in Flood Zone A within Carlow Town Environs, to inform the decision-making process. This would include any lands with the symbol FRA indicated on the zoning map.

Community and Recreation

Oak Park and the Barrow Track passing through the Environs area to the north of Bill Duggan Bridge are high-order recreational spaces serving the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and surrounding area. If these two spaces were linked, residents of the town would benefit from a more extensive off-road walking network, increasing the functionality of the spaces. The provision of a stronger ecological linkage between these two spaces, for example by planting a new hedgerow bordering a walkway could enhance local biodiversity, by linking the Barrow (candidate Special Area of Conservation) with Oak Park Forest Park (proposed National Heritage Area). The design and routing of a link between the spaces would be required to protect any field based research being carried out at lands in Oak Park.

The provision of a green linear park including cycling and pedestrian paths along the River Burrin within the Environs area would improve the recreational amenity of residents and protect against flooding. Linear parkland protecting bankside vegetation which is an important habitat would also protect local biodiversity.

Most high-order community and recreational facilities will continue to be provided in Carlow Town to reduce transport by the private car. However, the provision of additional community and recreational facilities to serve local communities are needed in the Environs area.

The feasibility of a regeneration project in the John Sweeney Park area is currently being examined. This may involve the improvement of the relationship between houses and John Sweeney Park as well as the

provision of a community building and a shop to serve a number of housing estates. A number of these estates are considered disadvantaged (under the RAPID programme). This regeneration project has the potential to improve residential amenities and community cohesion.

CTE P9 Liaise with Teagasc, NPWS and other agencies to examine feasibility and support for the provision of a link between the Barrow Track and Oak Park in the interests of recreational amenity and biodiversity

CTE P10 Provide for a riverside public park with playground along the Burrin protecting bankside vegetation and including a pedestrian and cycle path in the interests of recreational amenity and biodiversity

CTE P11 Support the regeneration of the John Sweeney Park area including the provision of community facilities

Landscape

A detailed characterization and design appraisal relating to some landscape areas in the Environs area was undertaken on behalf of the Council by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds.

The study noted that agricultural uses pre-dominate land uses in the Environs area, though a number of residential areas have expanded into the Environs area. The Design Advice stated that the Environs area has a high quality landscape character physically defined by relatively gently undulating open farmland interspersed with pockets of long established residential.

It identified a number of key historic and landscape features that give the Environs area a unique sense of place. One of the most prominent of these is Brown's Hill to the east of the town. The mature natural landscape and naturally screen well-established dwellings associated with Brown's Hill provides high quality topographical variation to a comparatively lower contiguous landscape. Brown's Hill also offers the only naturally elevated and expansive view of the surrounding area within the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area.

The Burrin River to the South-East of the town centre flows westward through the environs area towards it confluence with the River Barrow in the town centre area. This watercourse functions as another key landscape character defining element of the Environs area.

In addition to the Burrin River and Brown's Hill, there are a number of notable natural heritage features in the Environs area. These include mature stands of trees and hedgerows both of which significantly contribute to the area's biodiversity and the landscape quality. If these areas are developed, these tree stands should be protected and sensitively incorporated into new developments as they present an opportunity to enhance the visual amenity and biodiversity of the area.

Although there are currently extensive areas of agricultural landuses in the environs area, there are few formal recreational spaces outside those of the northern fringe area. However, the key landscape defining features identified above present an opportunity to build an open space and recreational loop circling the town and proximate to the Eastern Relief Road. This loop could link the golf course to the north with Brown's Hill, the River Burrin and the River Barrow via a hierarchy of strategically located open spaces and recreational areas.

To ensure their effectiveness, such open spaces should link into the existing town fabric in a manner similar to that of the River Burrin and golf course, thereby providing connectivity of open spaces and continuity of biodiversity corridors.

The hierarchy of open spaces in this loop should facilitate the provision of formal recreational spaces (such as playing fields), public parks (including pocket parks) and wildlife corridors (such as along the River Burrin and its banks). This open space loop would help ensure the emergence of a high quality built environment in the Environs area.

Built structures of merit are largely confined to long established residents along Palatine Road, Green Road and on Brown's Hill. The Brownshill Dolmen is a significant landmark feature. The Oak Park Demesne is primarily used for agricultural centre. Oak Park House and the related Triumphal Arch are significant historic structures in the landscape. Much of the Demesne lands are formally landscaped and large sections of it are tree covered. The landscape character of the northern fringe of Carlow Town is significantly influenced by Oak Park Demesne.

Key natural features of this demesne include a relatively regular shaped field pattern of large plots divided by a series of access routes to Oak Park House. Many of these fields contain mature stands of deciduous trees which in conjunction with the more recently cultivated Teasgasc tree plantations provide a sense of enclosure within the Demesne. Closer to the Cannery Road end of the northern fringe, substantial stands of mature deciduous trees become a less frequent feature although there are a large number of notable mature trees; mostly horse chestnut, located on the lands between the Athy and Oak Park Roads immediately north of Cannery Road. These mature trees significantly contribute to the area's biodiversity.

Open farmland characterises those areas which are not directly associated with the demesne lands. Nevertheless even on these lands a regular shaped field pattern of large plots predominate. For the most part, the topography of the area is flat. This affords unobstructed views lines across much of the northern fringes. View lines of note include the vista from the Teagasc Headquarters South-Eastwards to the golf course and westwards over expansive areas of farmland. The view line from the Greencore lands across the River Barrow and into County Laois is also of a high quality. The golf course also

contributes to the landscape character of the northern environs area. Formally arranged and managed, the golf course helps maintain the continuity of green open spaces across the middle and northern portions of the subject lands. Although not accessible by the general public, the golf course presents an opportunity for use as a green backdrop into which future green corridors can link. By providing an existing managed green features in the area, the gold course also has the potential to act as a design cue for the provision of a hierarchy of green amenity spaces.

The concentration of sporting facilities to the south of Oak Park including the GAA grounds, rugby grounds, golf club and tennis courts along with the high quality plantation landscape of Oak Park Demesne, the consolidation of recreational in is area could furnish the town with a recreational or leisure quarter.

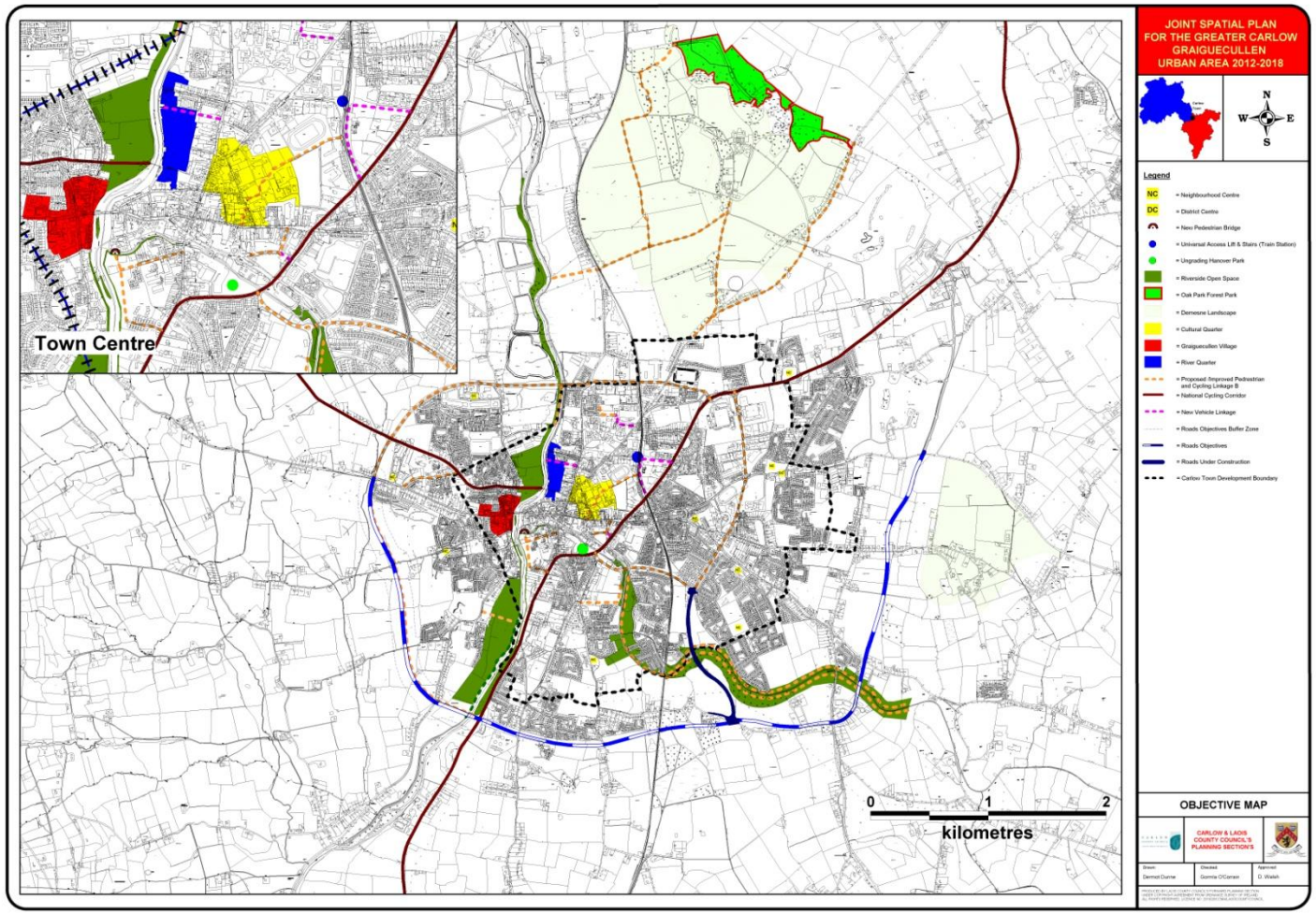
To the south of the Dublin Road, on approach to the town, land uses are centred on farming with a number of open fields present. Moving closer, sizable areas of residential development are evident. These areas represent the current limit of concentrated residential expansion by the town into the environs area as most other forms of urban generated housing in the environs area is limited in scale.

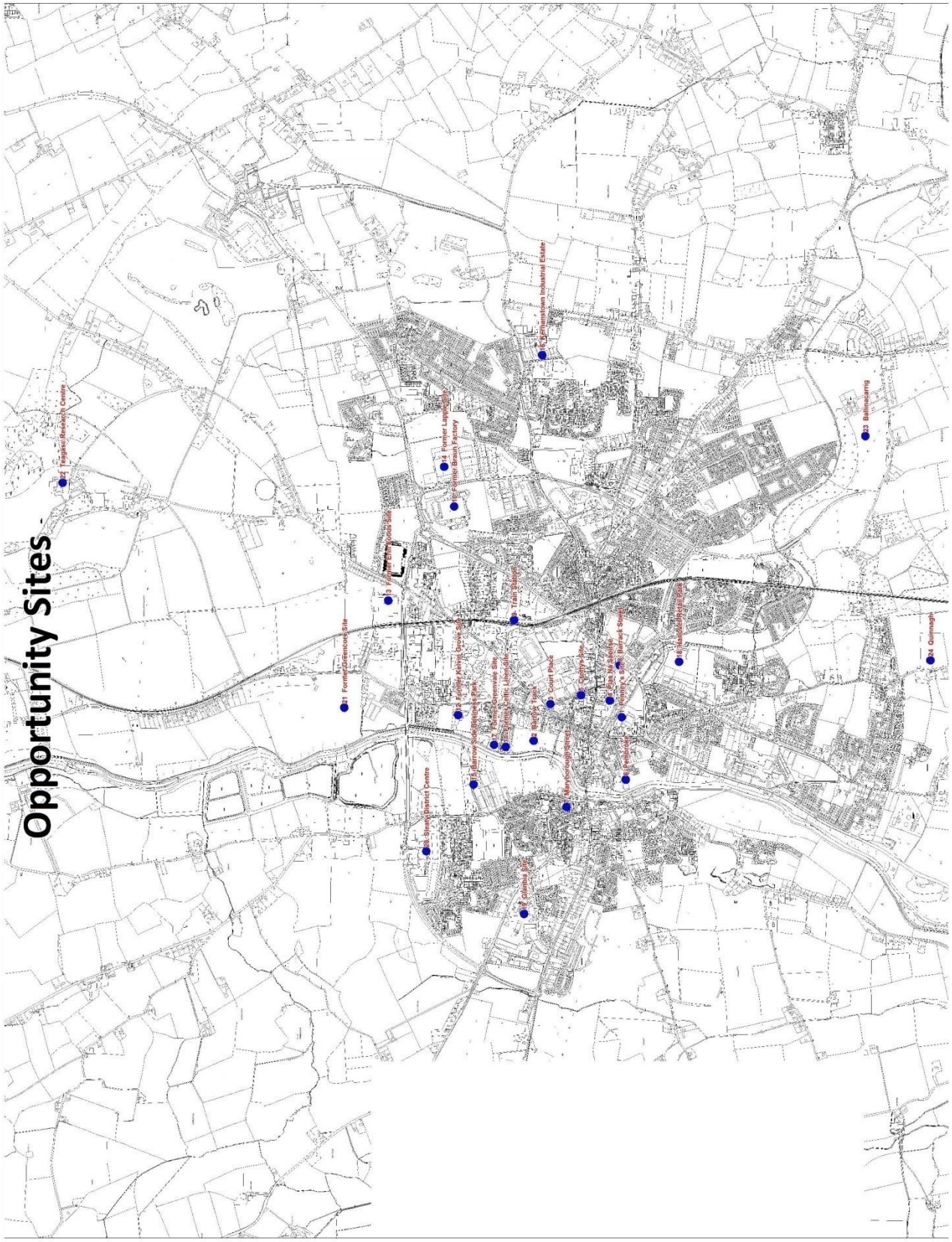
The amenity area along the River Barrow presents an opportunity to provide a connecting green corridor between the northern fringe area and the centre of the town. Careful planning could ensure this green link is connected to the open space and recreational loop circling the town and proximate to the Eastern Relief Road.

CTE P12 Use the above design advice to ensure the emergence of a high quality built environment in the Environs area that retains a strong sense of place and provides linked open spaces

JOINT MAPS AND OPPORTUNITY SITE BRIEFS

JOINT SPATIAL PLAN
FOR THE GREATER CARLOW
GRAIGUECULLEN
URBAN AREA 2012-2018
N
E
W
S
Legend
Town Centre
Residential 1 Established
Residential 2
Strategic Reserve 2018-2024
Amenity & Open Space
Community/Educational/Institutional
Industrial
Enterprise and Employment
Retail Warehousing
Business & Innovation
Tourism and Leisure
Demesne Landscape
Utilities & Strategic Infrastructure
Neighbourhood Centre
District Centre
Resort
Special Area of Conservation
Flood Zone A
Flood Zone B
FRA
Notwithstanding the Residential 2 Zoning relating to Rose Lands, in light of flood risk assessment, no development or infrastructure decisions relating to Residential development will be made in advance of the completion, preparation and consideration of a comprehensive flood risk assessment prepared in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) by a competent flood risk assessment specialist.
Roads Objectives Buffer Zone
Roads Objectives
Roads Under Construction
Carlow Town Development Boundary
Graiguecullen Development Boundary
Carlow Environs Development Boundary
LAND USE MAP
CARLOW & LAOIS
PLANNING SECTION'S
Drawn:
Dermot Dunne
Checked:
Donna O'Connor
Approved:
D. Walsh
0
1
2
kilometres


JOINT SPATIAL PLAN
FOR THE GREATER CARLOW
GRAIGUECULLEN
URBAN AREA 2012-2018
N
W
E
S
Legend
NC = Neighbourhood Centre
DC = District Centre
= New Pedestrian Bridge
= Universal Access Lift & Stairs (Train Station)
= Upgrading Hanover Park
= Riverside Open Space
= Oak Park Forest Park
= Demesne Landscape
= Cultural Quarter
= Graiguecullen Village
= River Quarter
= Proposed Improved Pedestrian and Cycling Linkage B
= National Cycling Corridor
= New Vehicle Linkage
= Roads Objectives Buffer Zone
= Roads Objectives
= Roads Under Construction
= Carlow Town Development Boundary
Town Centre
0
1
2
kilometres
OBJECTIVE MAP
CARLOW & LAOIS
COUNTY COUNCIL'S
PLANNING SECTION'S
Drawn
Dermot Dunne
Checked
Gormla O'Carrain
Approved
D. Walsh

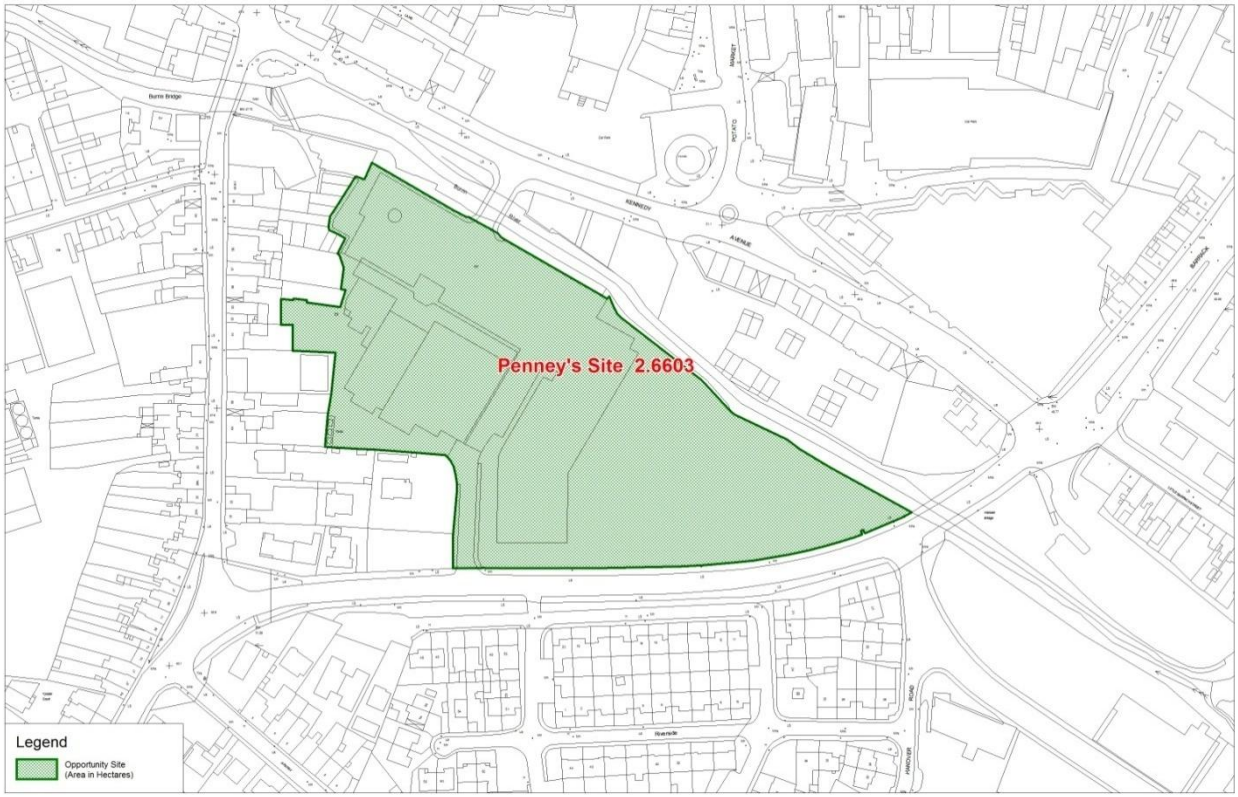

Opportunity Sites

SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITY SITE BRIEFS

Opportunity Site 2: Barrow Track Site

Opportunity Site 1: Former Penny's Site off Kennedy Avenue

Site Code: OP1



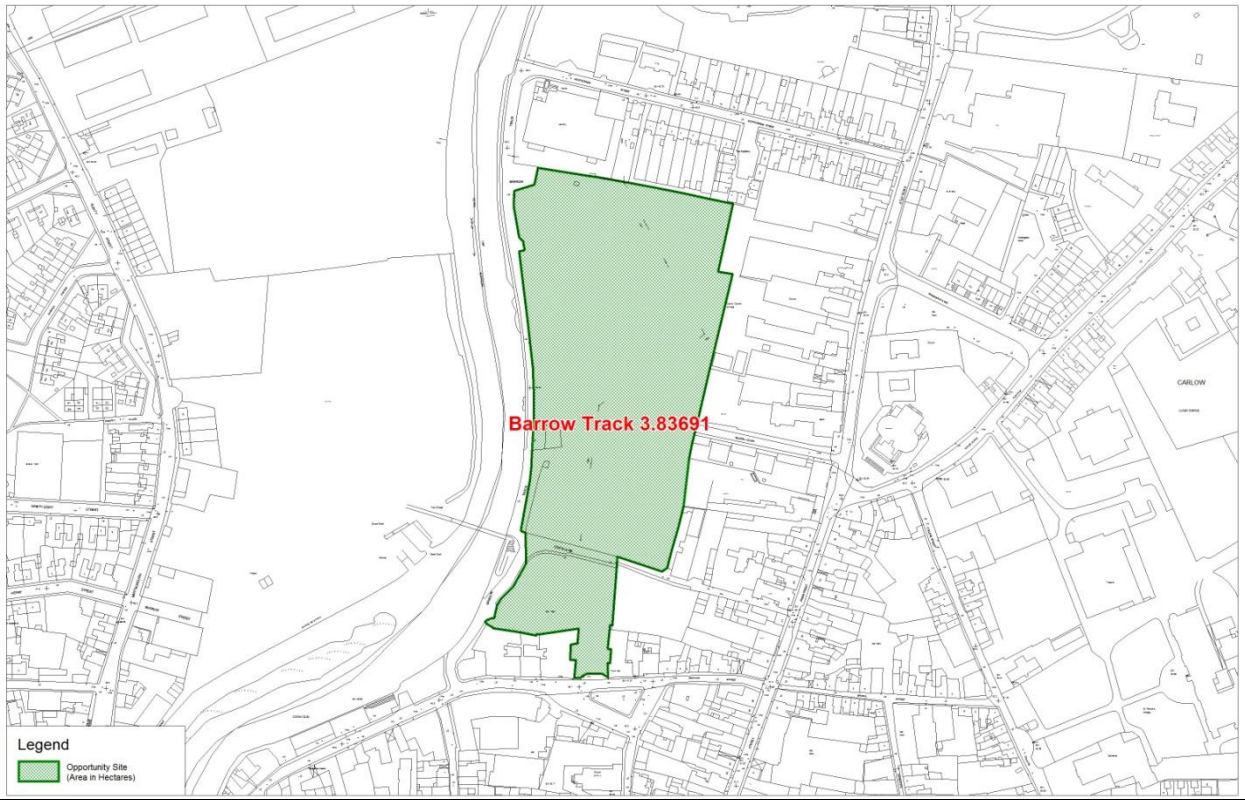
Zoning: Town Centre

Site Area (ha): 2.7 including portion of Public Open Space to be upgraded

Comments:

- Brownfield retail site
- Currently benefiting from planning permission for mixed-use development including substantial convenience and comparison element, some residential and commercial, planning permission includes flood defence measures
- If implemented, it is anticipated that authorised development would bring substantial benefits to the vitality and vibrancy of the Town Centre
- Site adjoins River Burrin
- Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments

Site Code: OP 2



Zoning: Town Centre

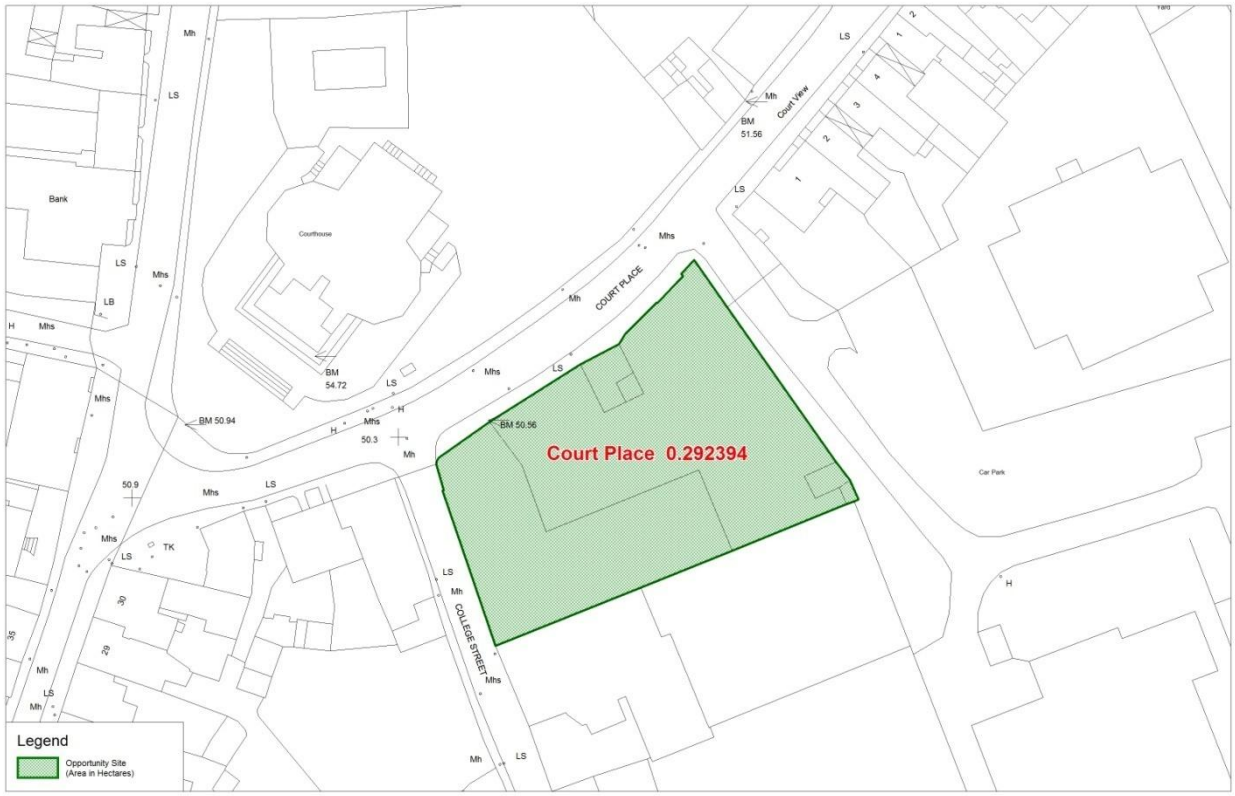
Site Area (ha): 3.8

Comments:

- Greenfield site with little vegetation/part public carpark
- Suitable for mixed-use development retail, commercial and residential
- Carpark site identified for decentralisation of Government department
- Adjacent to Natura 2000 Site: cSAC 002162
- No known contamination issues
- Serviced by new roads: Montgomery Street, Cox's Lane; served by Barrow Track
- Opportunity for well-designed scheme that addresses the River Barrow and takes advantage of open aspect
- Flood zone A relates to site – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments

Opportunity Site 3: Court Place

Site Code: OP3



Zoning: Town Centre

Site Area (ha): 0.3

Comments:

- Currently benefitting from planning permission for mixed-use development
- Suitable for high-density development, given proximity to railway station, traditional commercial core and cultural quarter
- Located within the setting of the Dublin Street and College Street Architectural Conservation Areas
- No known contamination issues
- Site benefits from proximity to traditional commercial core and cultural quarter

Opportunity Site 4: Plas na Saoirse and Potato Market

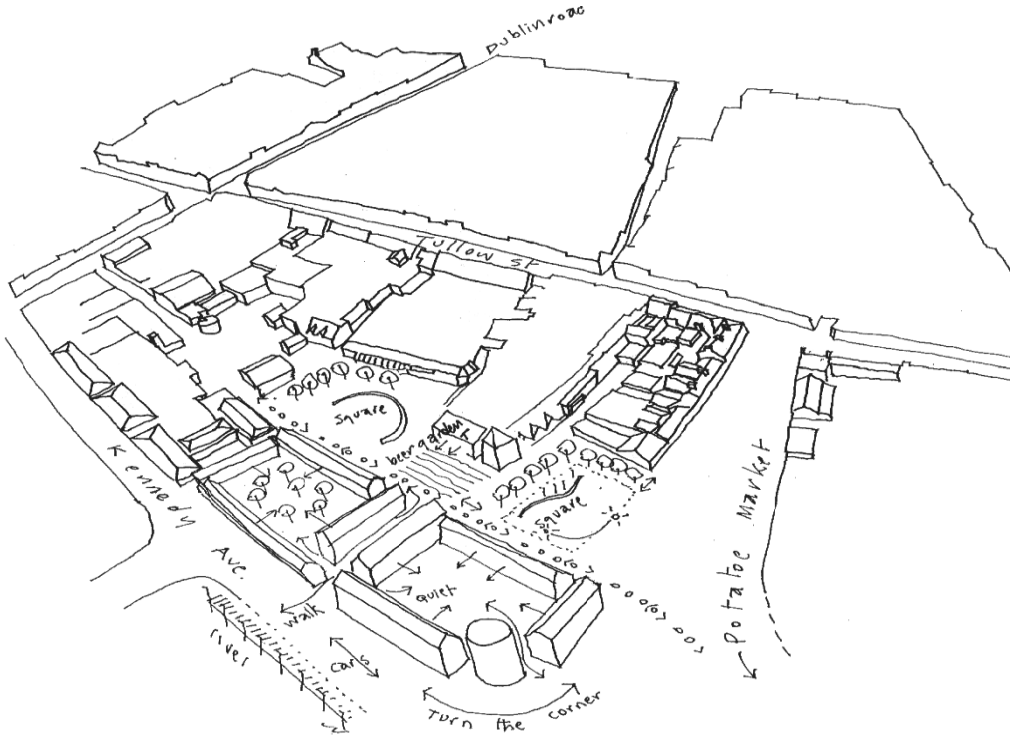
Site Code: OP4

Zoning: Town Centre

Description

The existing surface car park at Plas na Saoirse fragments the town centre presenting a large expanse of open space along Kennedy Avenue. This area is a gateway into the town centre and is currently uninviting. Shopping within the town centre is mainly distributed between the traditional commercial core located along Dublin Street and Tullow Street and newer shopping areas at the Fairgreen and Carlow Shopping Centre with chain stores and large floor plates. The redevelopment of Plas na Saoirse offers an opportunity to integrate these areas more closely, by enhancing pedestrian linkages between then. The proposals also provide a stronger townscape along Kennedy Avenue, enhance the quality and usability of the open space improving the setting of the tree of life and providing open space suitable for an outdoor market, underground car parking and additional floorspace to contemporary specifications suitable for retail and commercial uses on the ground floor, and for office and residential use above ground floor level. A proposed block pattern, isometric and section illustration make up an urban design framework plan for the redevelopment of Plas na Saoirse. Proposed public realm improvement works to the Potato Market to be carried out in association with the redevelopment of Plas na Saoirse are described below.

Infill block pattern indicated in Red



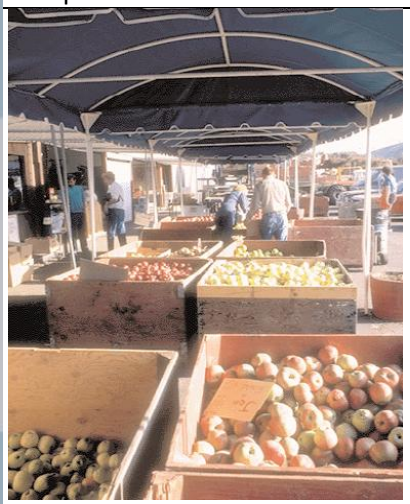
Isometric Illustration of Block Pattern, Landscaping and Movement

Section of New Courtyard Development at Plas na Saoirse

The Potato Market is currently a heavily trafficked public space giving access to surface car parks. The Carlow 800 study proposes the renewal of the public realm, including the reduction of space dedicated to vehicular traffic along Potato Market, the holding of regular open air or canopied markets along Potato Market and the introduction of shared pedestrian and vehicular space to the south. The public realm works should be carried out alongside the redevelopment of Plas na Saoirse.

Proposed Public Realm Improvement Works

Sample Shared Surface



Sample Canopied Market

Sample Market Kiosk

Part of this site (OP 4) is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments.

Opportunity Site 5: Crotty's Site

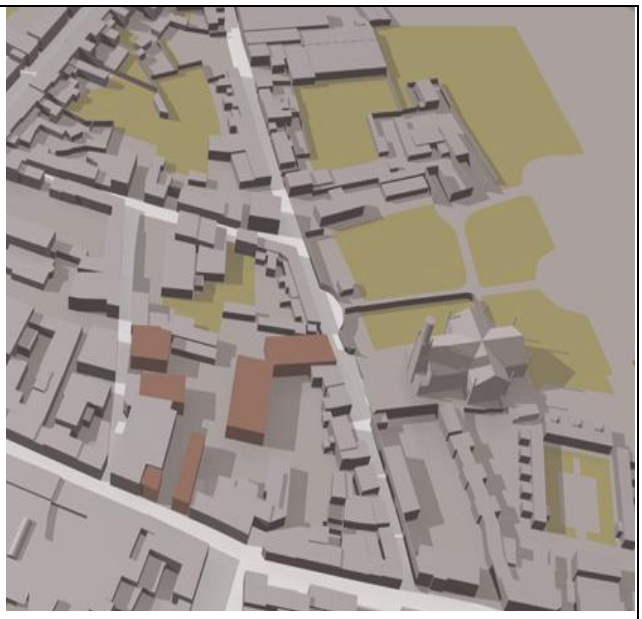
Site Code: OP5

Zoning: Town Centre

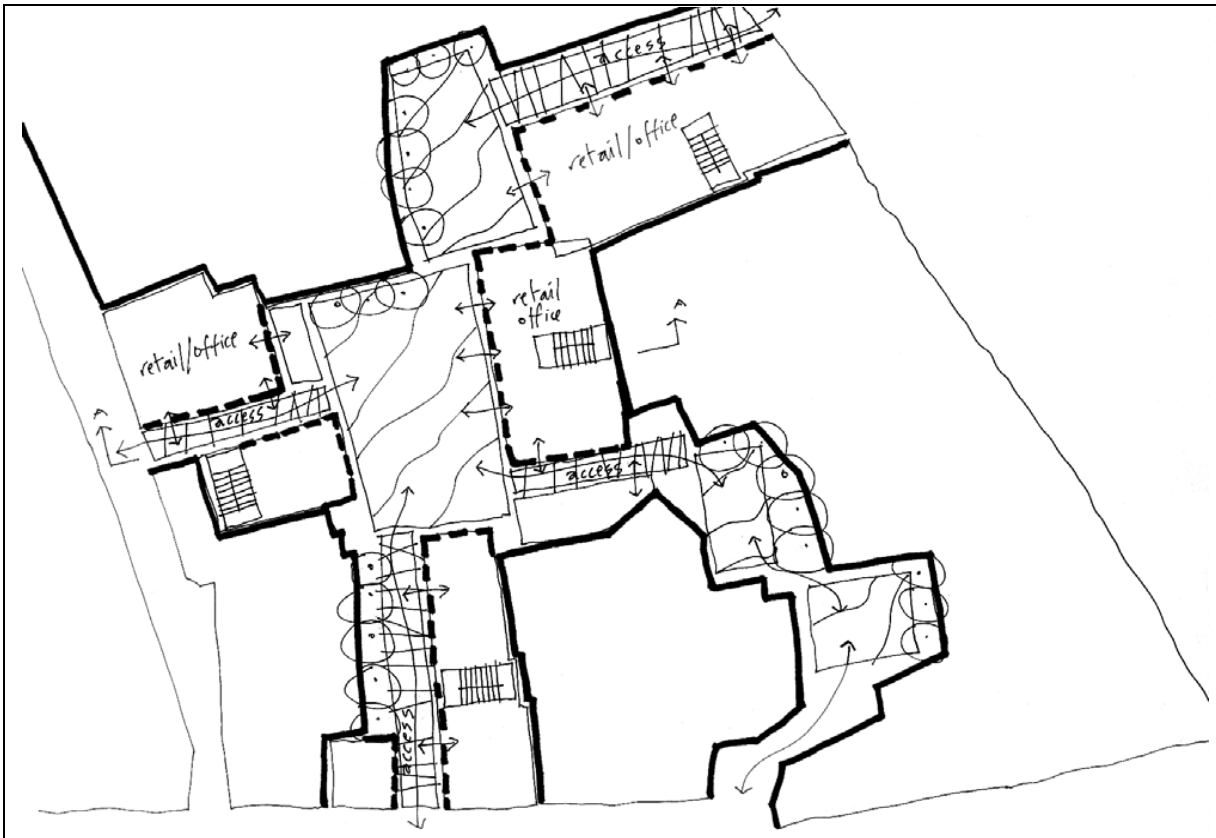
Located within Cultural Quarter

This site is located to the rear of Tullow Street, Charlotte Street and College Street and comprises a backland site suitable for infill development to consolidate the existing built form. The redevelopment envisaged in the Carlow 800 Report including an urban framework plan provides for a new linkage between College Street and Charlotte Street and a new public open space. The site has potential to accommodate residential/office/restaurant-café/retail uses. If redeveloped, the site has potential to contribute to the identity and functioning of the cultural quarter.

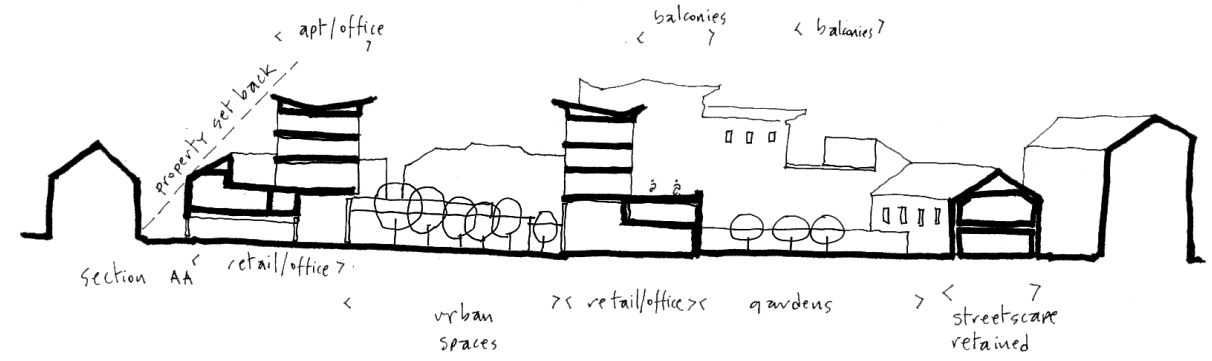
Aerial Photograph showing Stonemasons Site ↑



Proposed Block Pattern within Stonemasons' Site→



Proposed Site Layout for Stonemasons' Site



Proposed Section for Stonemasons' Site

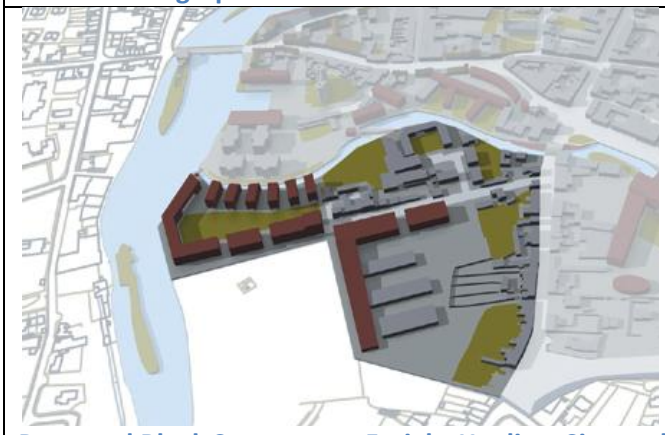
Opportunity Sites 6: Pembroke Road Site

Site Code: OP6

Zoning: Town Centre Description

Pembroke Road is characterised by large houses dating from the 1840s with classical proportions. Former industrial sites around Pembroke Road include Drummond's Seeds also known as Pembroke Nursery and a freight hauliers site which is unsuitable for such a central location given the associated access and traffic issues. This area of the town is disjointed from the traditional commercial core of the town centre by the River Burrin.

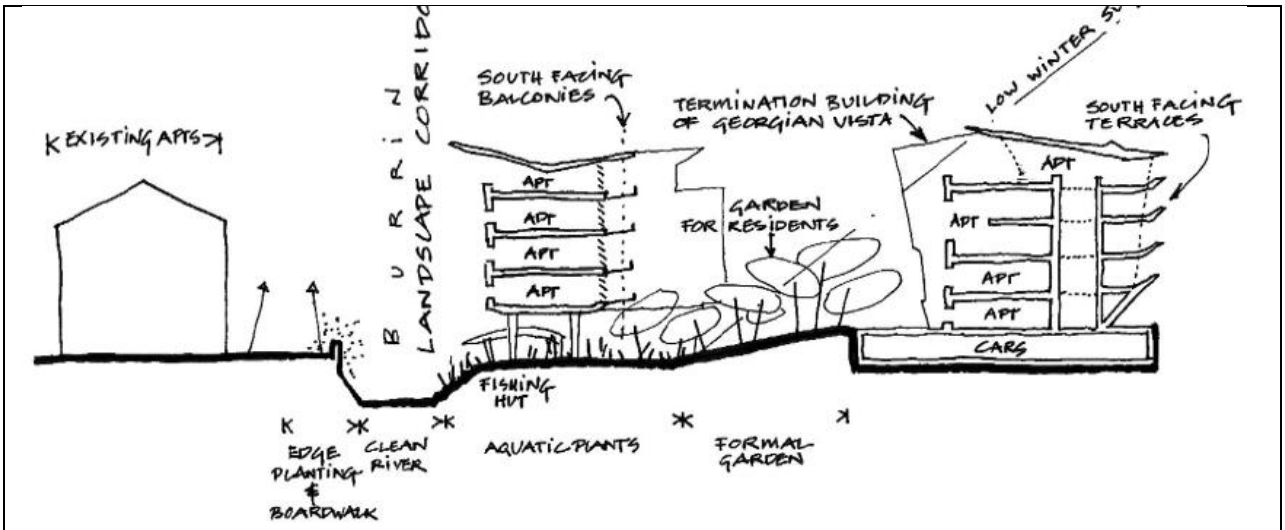
Aerial Photograph of Potential Infill Sites off Pembroke Road



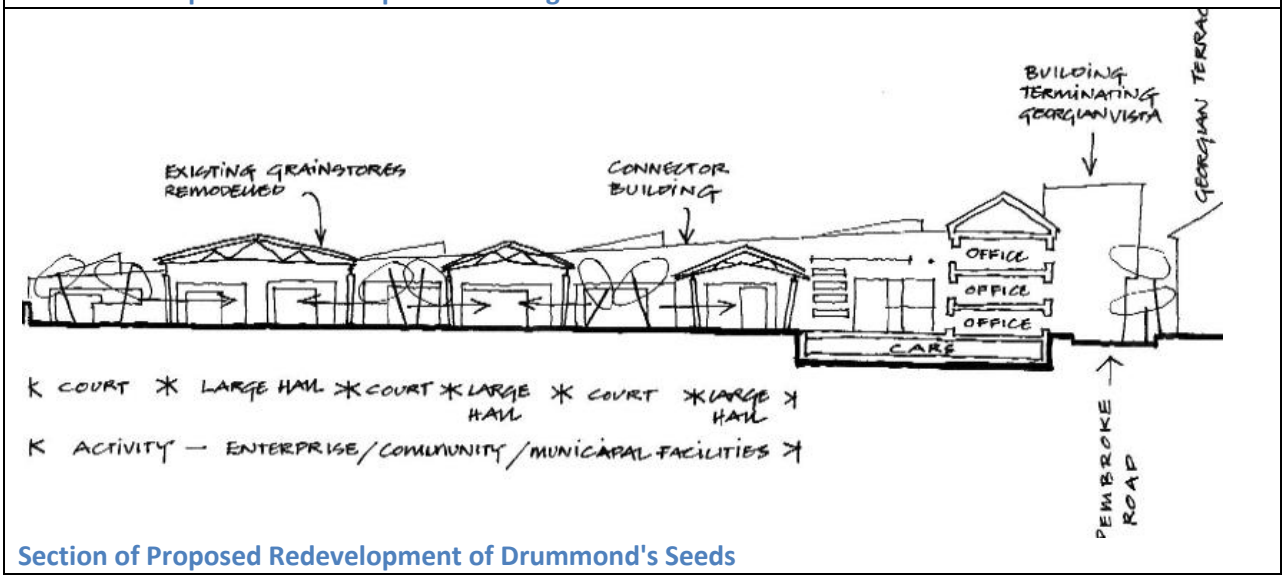
Proposed Block Structure to Freight Hauliers Site to the northwest and Drummond's Seeds to the southeast in red

There are opportunities to provide a walkway along the riverfront linking the Freight Hauliers Site to newly developed offices in and around Carlow Castle and Graiguecullen Bridge to the north. The redevelopment of this site should take advantage of the riverside location in terms of urban design. The Drummond's Seeds site has potential to provide large volume spaces and large floor plates suitable for many town centre activities. The site could potentially accommodate a variety of co-existing uses such as educational centers, start-units for light industry, multi-purpose community uses, artists' studios.

Part of this site (OP 6) is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments. This site is also adjoins a candidate Special Area of Conservation and Appropriate Assessment requirements must be considered as part of any redevelopment proposals.



Section of Proposed Redevelopment of Freight Hauliers Site



Section of Proposed Redevelopment of Drummond's Seeds

Opportunity Site 7: Regeneration of Marlborough Street, Graiguecullen

Site Code: OP7

Zoning: Town Centre

Description

Graiguecullen Village developed alongside Carlow Town at a crossing point on the River Barrow. Although locally it is considered separate to Carlow Town and the River Barrow creates a strong boundary between the two areas, the historic Graiguecullen Village functions as an urban quarter within Carlow Town Centre. This is reflected in the town centre zoning which extends across Graiguecullen Bridge and to include streets such as Marlborough Street and Bachelor's Quay.

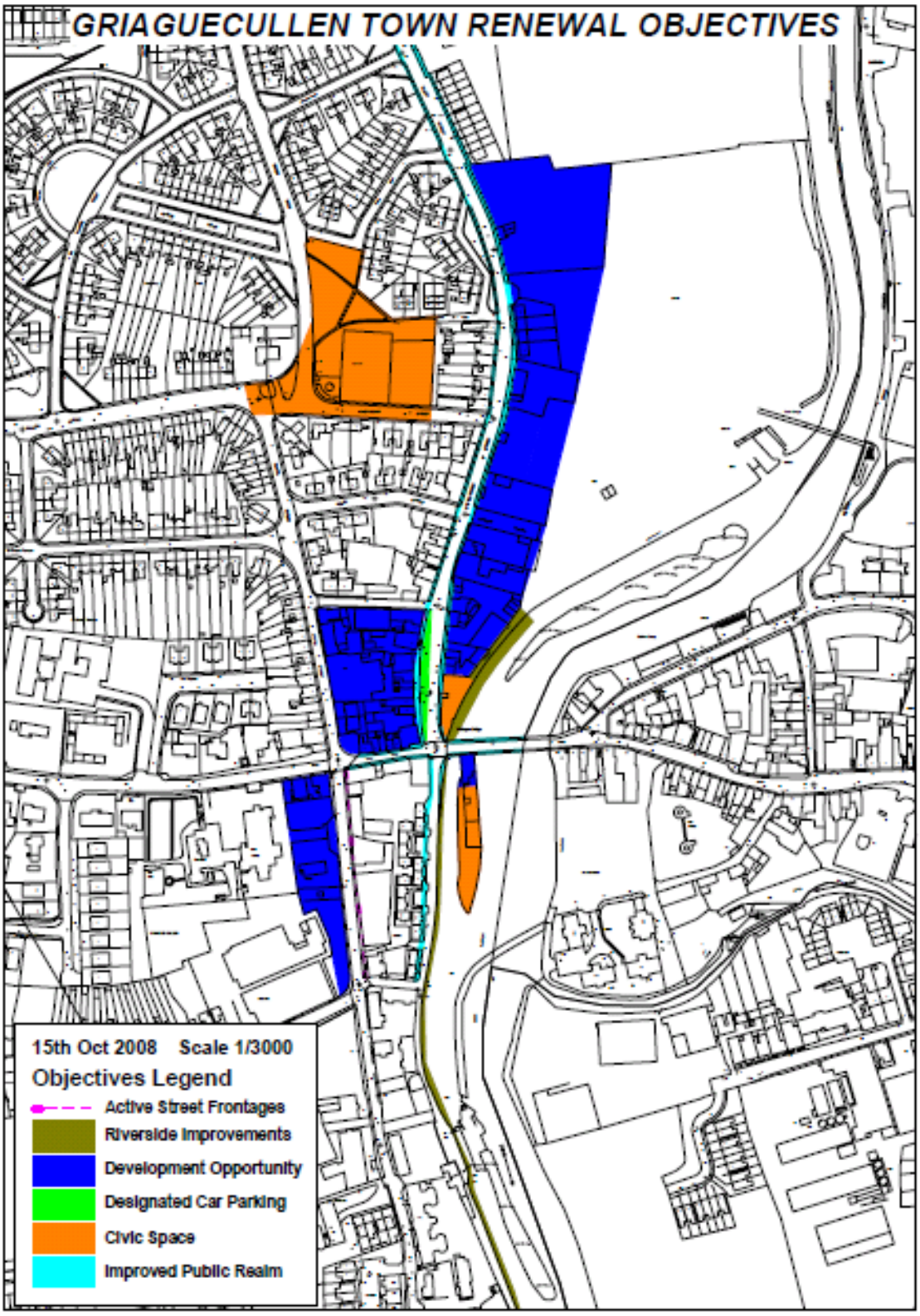
A number of recent public realm improvements and new infrastructure makes the renewal of the Marlborough Street area of Graiguecullen timely. These include:

(i) Town Park with playground, addressing the Barrow and containing a slip and marina for docking leisure crafts travelling on the Barrow

(ii) New pedestrian bridge linking Graiguecullen with the traditional commercial core of Dublin Street and Tullow Street

The renewal of Marlbrough Street has potential to create a central focus and strong identity associated with the historic core of Graiguecullen. Opportunities for employment uses in this area include tourism, leisure, catering and hostelry in support of waterways tourism. Works along Bacherlor's Quay and Marlborough Street should be designed to maximise interaction with the River Barrow.

Part of this site (OP 7) is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments. This site is also adjoins a candidate Special Area of Conservation and Appropriate Assessment requirements must be considered as part of any redevelopment proposals.


GRIAGUECULLEN TOWN RENEWAL OBJECTIVES
15th Oct 2008 Scale 1/3000
Objectives Legend
Active Street Frontages
Riverside Improvements
Development Opportunity
Designated Car Parking
Civic Space
Improved Public Realm

Opportunity Site 8: Upgrading of Barrack Street

Site Code: OP8

Zoning: Town Centre

Description

Barrack Street presents a number of opportunities for redevelopment of existing sites and improvements to the public realm. Despite the variety of land uses present in the town, there is a lack of an identifiable focus in the area. The renewal of this area offers potential to draw the shopping areas at Fairgreen, Carlow Shopping Centre and in the historic commercial core of Dublin Street and Tullow Street closer together and revitalise this area as an active quarter within the Town Centre.

Principal elements

Potential for high-density mixed-use development (not exceeding four storeys) in light of width of street and town centre location with commercial or retail uses to ground floor to ensure active frontages.

Address dereliction and underuse of existing buildings along Barrack Street.

Encourage pedestrian activity along Barrack Street

- Additional crossings across Barrack Street
- Moving existing crossing from corner of Kennedy Avenue and Barrack Street to outside the Entrance of the Fairgreen Shopping area
- Existing pedestrian crossing along Barrack Street should be widened
- Retain existing planting and provide new planting within public realm
- Renew and widen pavements to make Street more pedestrian friendly
- Greater pedestrian connectivity between Tullow St, Kennedy Avenue and the Fairgreen
- Overhead wiring to be placed underground

Provide cycle paths along Barrack Street

Revise vehicular traffic and parking arrangements including

- Channel vehicular traffic through Accommodation Rd and Bridge St into the existing access road to the east of the Fairgreen Shopping Centre and in turn into the proposed Eire Og Relief Rd.
- Retain Bus Stop in current position
- Additional Cul-de-Sac signs at the entrance to Little Barrack Street
- Additioanl layby spaces at Carpenter's Funeral Home
- Revise car parking arrangements

Potential for landmark buildings at following locations

1. *Intersection of the Kilkenny Rd and Little Barrack St*: An exciting and interesting building at this prime location adjacent to converging route ways would provide the ideal situation for a landmark building and provide not just a physical link but also a visual link along Barrack Street. This site is a prime example of an under-utilised but important urban space.

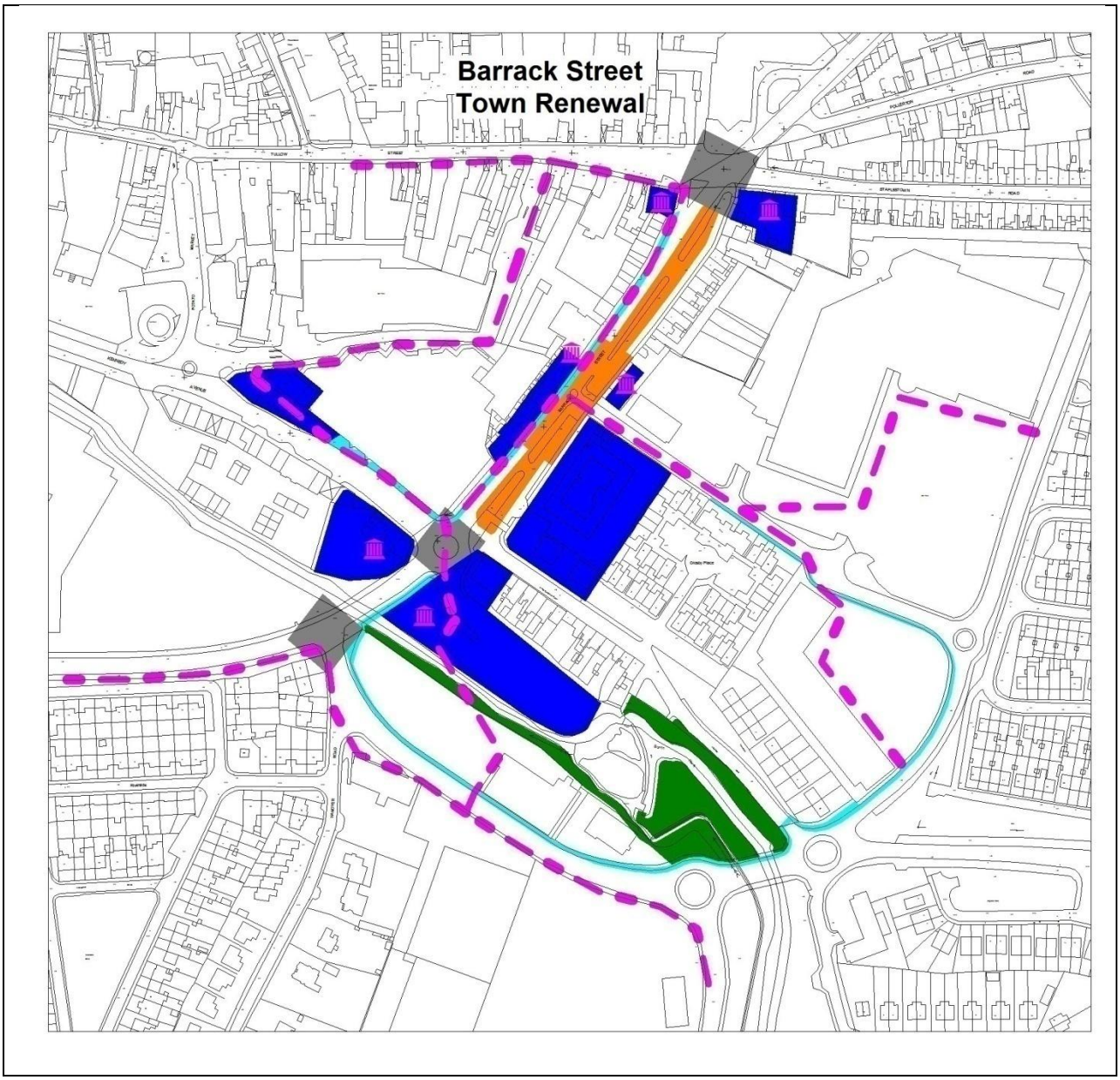
2. *Corner of Kennedy Avenue and Kilkenny Road (Walshe's*): A prime opportunity exists to continue an active street frontage and the provision of a landmark building on this corner site thus providing a more cohesive and consolidated entrance to Kennedy Avenue and Barrack Street. This site also provides the opportunity to clearly define where the core town centre begins and ends.

3. *East side of Barrack Street*: Where there are derelict buildings there is a need to attract prime development to the area.

4. *West side of Barrack Street*: This is an important streetscape on the outer perimeter of the core Town Centre. Through this initiative, Barrack Street would become another thriving street which is part of the Town Centre. Development of this side of the street should also consolidate the development of Shamrock Square.

5. *Ulster Bank, Potato Market and Kennedy Avenue*: The existing 2 storey building is at a prime location at these interconnecting roadways and also a prominent corner building. A new landmark building would help to define this corner and offer the opportunity to increase the density of the existing building.

Part of this site (OP 8) is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments.


Barrack Street
Town Renewal

Opportunity Site 9: Regeneration of Railway Station and Surrounding Area

Site Code: OP 9

Zoning: Town Centre and Business and Innovation

Description

The site presents the opportunity for the improvement of Carlow Railway Station and its surrounds to become an active economic quarter with strong connections to the Town Centre. The proximity of this area to the town centre and the availability of sustainable modes of transport within the area make it suitable for high-density residential development and labour-intensive employment uses, such as offices. There is a considerable bulk of land suitable for redevelopment, in particular to the east of the station. Lands to the west of the station are suitable for infill development and intensification of uses. Some sites to the west of the station already benefit form planning permission for infill residential development but construction works have not yet commenced.

The Railway Station functions as a gateway into the Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area and therefore careful consideration must be given to streetscape and public realm in the vicinity of the station and the connections with the town centre, the VISUAL and George Bernard Shaw Theatre and other areas.

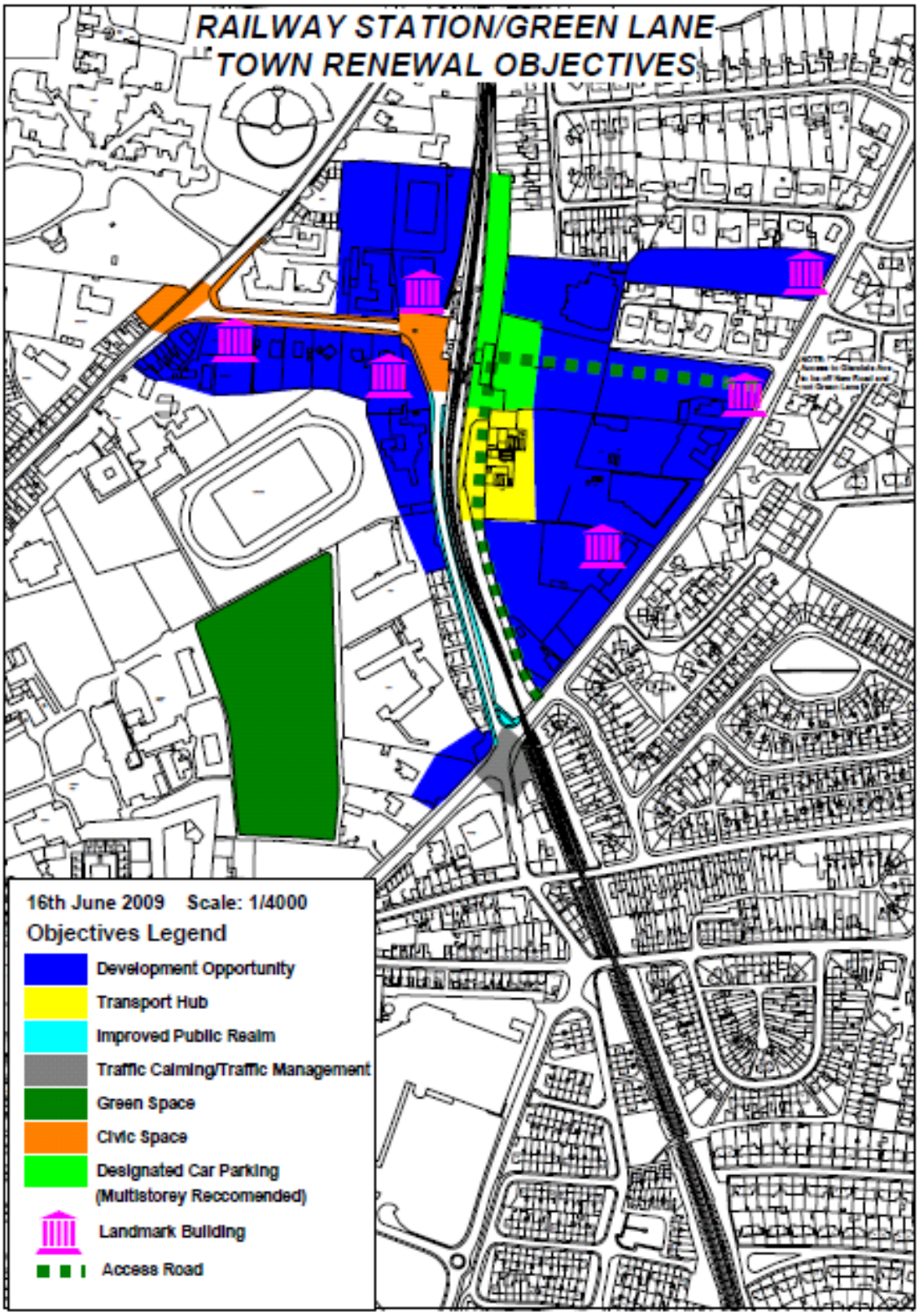
The continuing functioning of the railway station as a sustainable transport node must also be provided for. Adequate commuter and other car parking must be provided for in the immediate vicinity of the station. Currently parking is provided to the front of the Train Station. This area has potential to be revitalized as a plaza. The current quantum of parking and additional parking could be provided to the east of the station in multi-storey format and accessed by a new road from Green Lane. A universally-accessible lift and stair core is an essential improvement to the area. Integrated sustainable transport must also be provided for by way of cycle parking to the front of the station, a pedestrian-friendly public realm and bus lay-bys. Small-scale commercial uses such as shops or cafes support the functioning of the train station and surrounding area as a sustainable transport node and employment area.

The area is currently mixed-use in character with Carlow Brewing Company directly adjacent to the railway station, with railway customers currently using its parking area. There are 4 no. schools in the immediate locality of the station, Scoil Muire gan Smál, St. Josephs and Bishop Foley Schools all provide primary education with St. Mary's Acadamy CBS providing secondary education. A youth centre and parish owned lands are located to the east of the Railway Station. Industrial or enterprise uses include Sheehy Motors, a Topaz filling station, an ESB depot, an oil depot for several companies. The area also contains several B+B's, St. Catherine's Community Service, St. Vincent de Paul's hostel and dwelling houses.

Within this area are 3 protected structures, the railway station building, Bishop Foley School along Station Road and the Youth Centre which faces onto the railway line, accessed from Green Lane. The Railway Station would be deemed as the central and most prominent landmark within this area, which helps contribute to local identity.

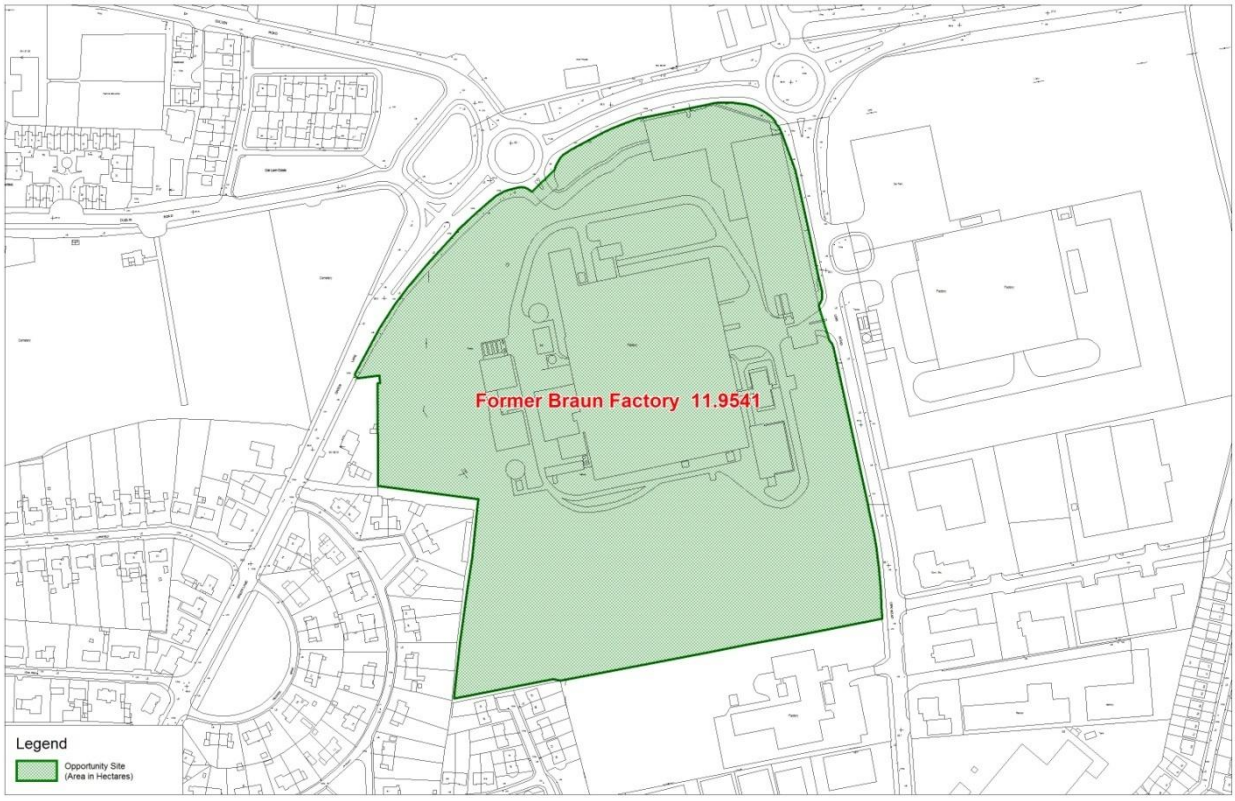
Principal elements:

- Support the retention of existing educational uses within this town centre area
- New multi-modal access from Green Lane
- Multi-storey parking to east of the station, along with bus lay-by spaces, and change of use of train station forecourt to plaza
- Universal access lift and stair core over railway lines
- Cycle parking to front (west) of station
- Retain taxi rank in current location
- Labour-intensive employment uses to east of station
- New residential development and community uses to west of station
- Acoustic fence and planted buffer to railway line
- Streetscape and new linkages between the train station and the town centre
- Streetscape improvements between train station and Barrack Street
- Retain community uses in the vicinity in light of their sustainable location


RAILWAY STATION/GREEN LANE
TOWN RENEWAL OBJECTIVES
16th June 2009 Scale: 1/4000
Objectives Legend
Development Opportunity
Transport Hub
Improved Public Realm
Traffic Calming/Traffic Management
Green Space
Civic Space
Designated Car Parking
(Multistorey Reccomended)
Landmark Building
Access Road

Opportunity Site 10: Former Braun Site, O'Brien Road

Site Code: OP10



Zoning: Industrial

Site Area (ha):

Comments:

- Currently vacant
- Potential for large-scale industrial development, site previously used for manufacturing
- Served by good quality road network (Northern Relief Road and O'Brien Road) and access arrangements
- Benefits from direct connection with fibre-broadband with potential to speeds of 20 mega bits per second
- No known contamination issues

Opportunity Site 11: Former Celtic Linen Site

Site Code: OP 11

Zoning: Town Centre

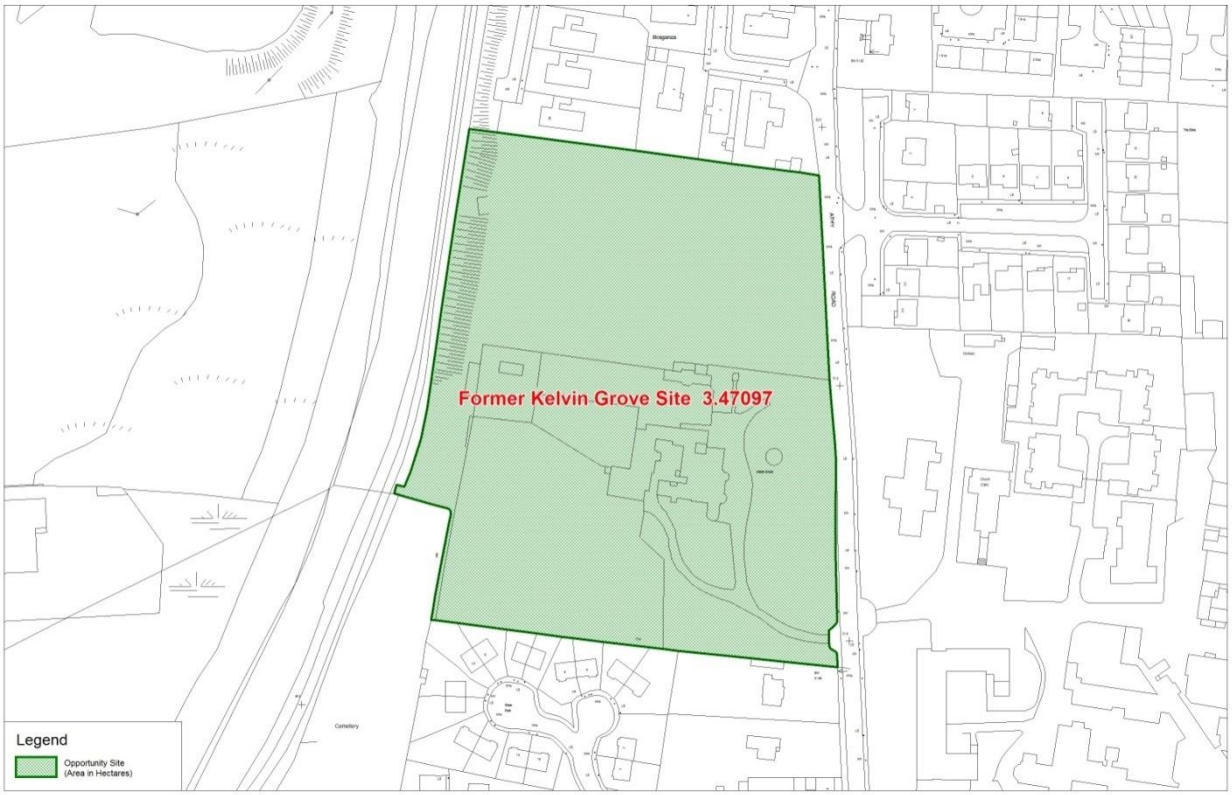
Site Area (ha): 0.45

Comments:

- Brownfield manufacturing site
- Clearance of ruinous structure required
- Suitable for mixed-use development commercial and residential development
- Adjacent to Natura 2000 Site: cSAC 002162
- No known contamination issues
- Serviced by new roads: Montgomery Street, Cox's Lane
- Served by Barrow Track
- Opportunity for well-designed scheme that addresses the River Barrow and takes advantage of open aspect
- This site is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments

Opportunity Site 12: Kelvin Grove Site

Site Code: OP 12



Zoning: Community

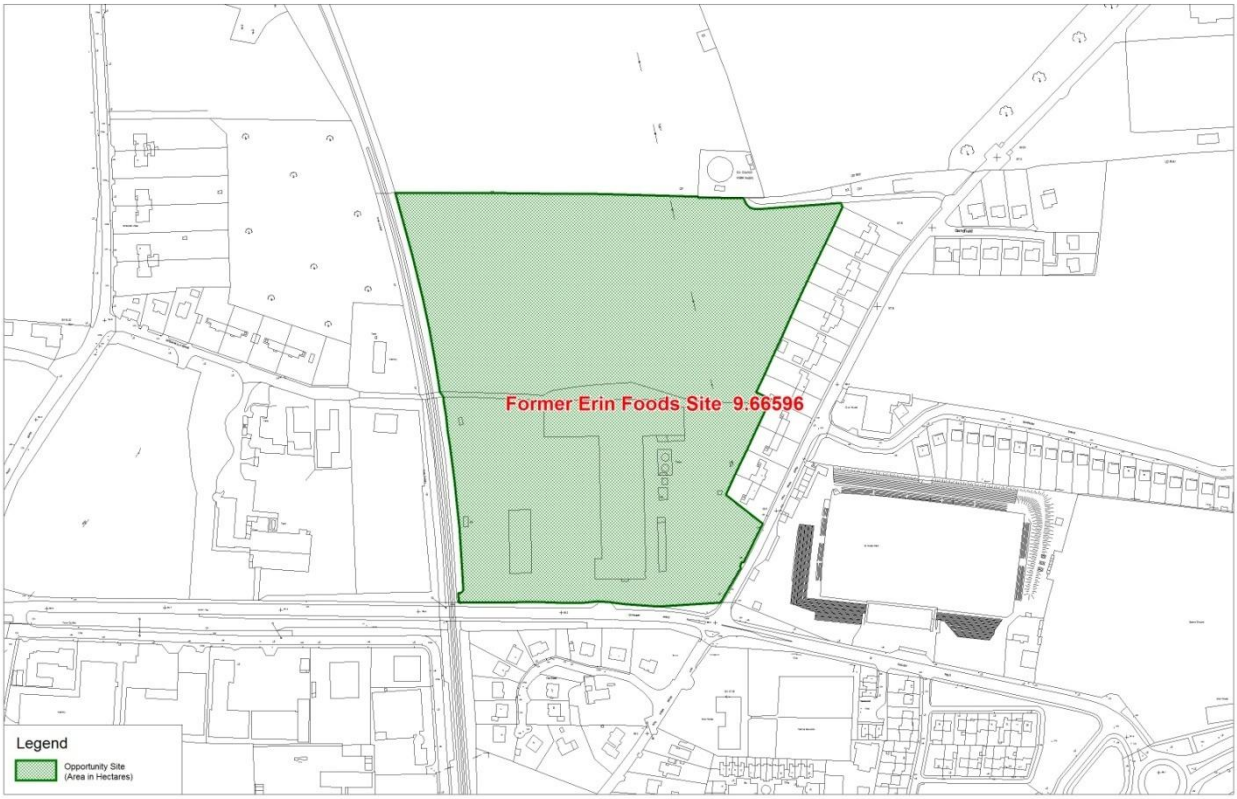
Site Area (ha): 3.5

Comments:

- Attractive site
- Suitable for campus or multiplex community services provision including education services Adjacent to Natura 2000 Site: cSAC 002162
- No known contamination issues
- Serviced by Athy Road
- Within walking distance of town centre
- Opportunity for well-designed scheme that addresses the River Barrow and takes advantage of open aspect
- This site is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments

Opportunity Site 13: Former Erin Foods Site

Site Code: OP13



Zoning: Enterprise and Employment

Site Area (ha): 9.6

Comments:

- Brownfield manufacturing site
- Building clearance and asbestos removal required
- Serviced by Northern Relief Road
- Serviced by open access fibre broadband with speeds of 20 mega bits per second
- Adjoins railway line

Opportunity Site 14: Former Lapple Site, O'Brien Road

Site Code: OP 14

Zoning: Enterprise and Employment

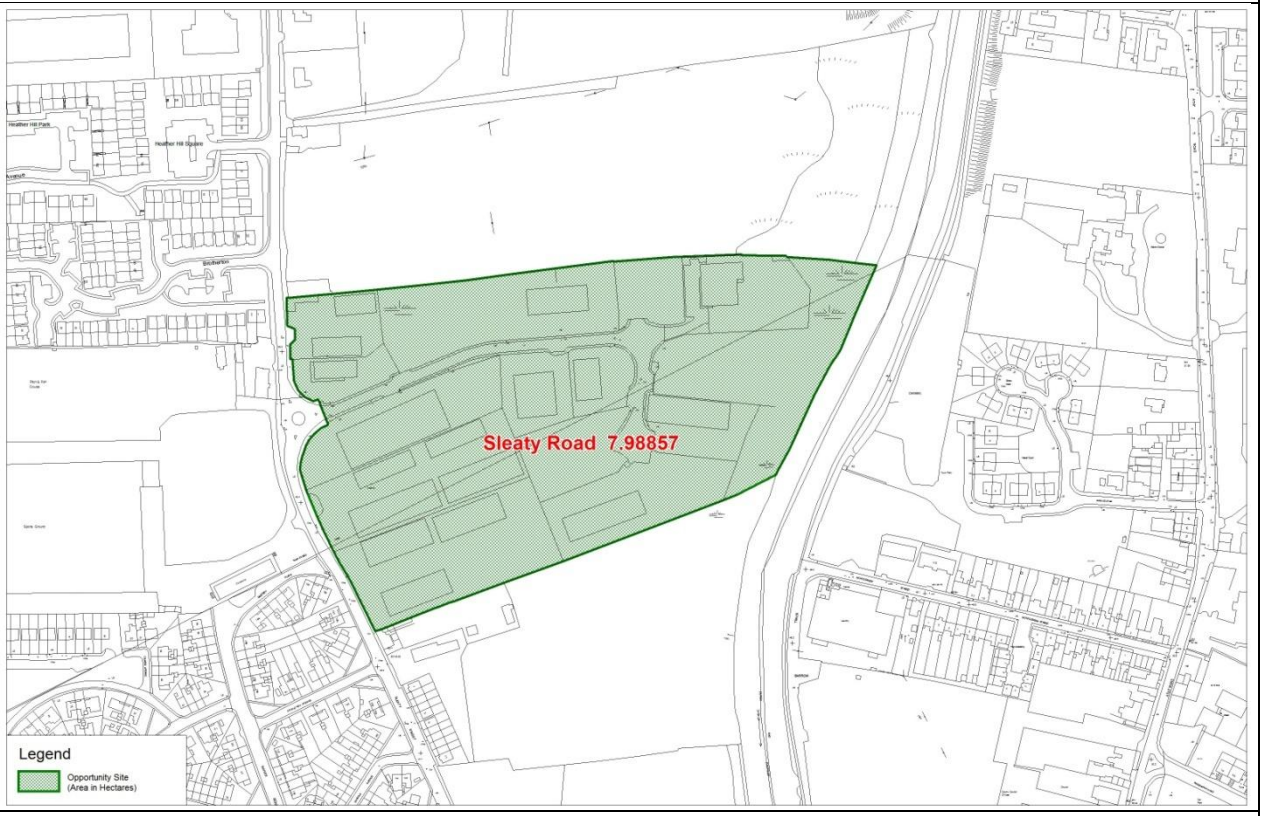
Site Area (ha):

Comments:

- Site currently partially occupied by Whitelight
- Potential for additional development to accommodate employment uses within the site
- Served by good quality road network (Northern Relief Road and O'Brien Road) and access arrangements
- Benefits from direct connection with fibre-broadband with potential to speeds of 20 mega bits per second.
- No known contamination uses
- Site close to Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding defences; culverted stream runs through the site

Opportunity Site 15: Barrowside Business Park

Site Code: OP15



Zoning: Retail Warehousing

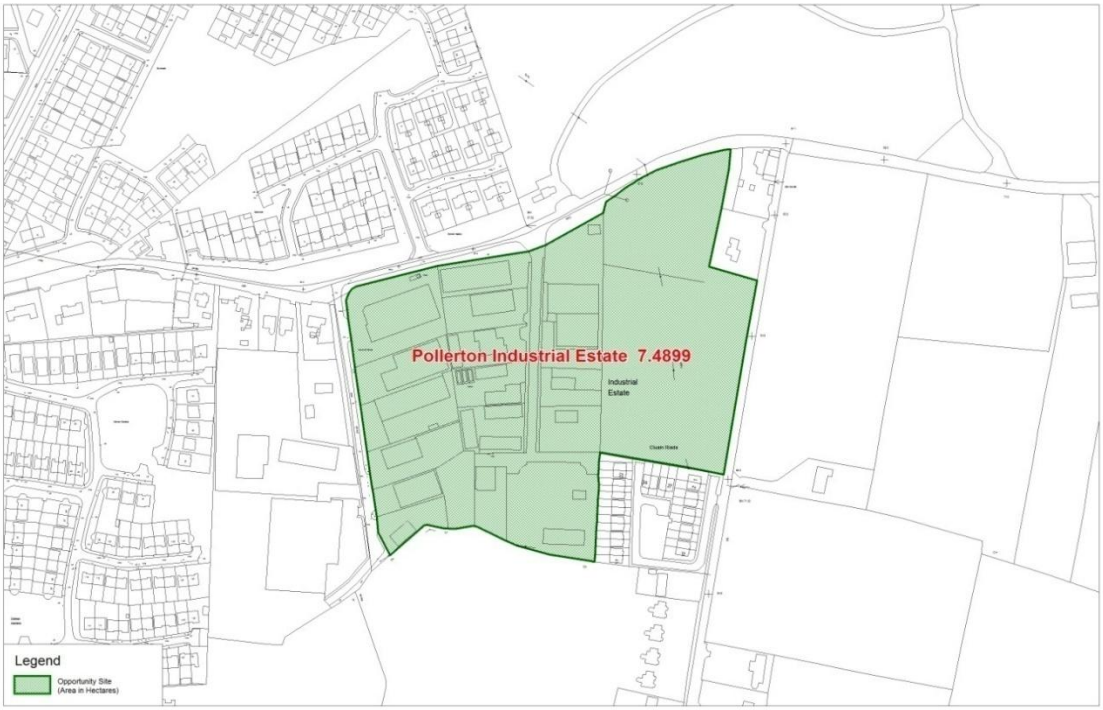
Site Area (ha): 7.9

Comments:

- Current retail of bulky goods on site, capacity for similar additional uses within site
- Boundary straddles Carlow Town Council and Laois County Council
- Benefits from direct connection with fibre-broadband with potential to speeds of 20 mega bits per second.
- Close to Northern Relief Road
- This site is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments

Opportunity Site 16: Kernanstown Industrial Estate

Site Code: OP16



Zoning: Enterprise and Employment

Site Area (ha): 7.5

Comments:

- Current uses include small-scale manufacturing, offices and bulky goods retailing
- Potential for more intensive use of lands, additional bulky goods retailing to be directed to other sites
- Site straddles Carlow Town Council and Carlow County Council boundary
- Serviced by newly-constructed Eastern Relief Road
- Benefits from direct connection with fibre-broadband with potential to speeds of 20 mega bits per second
- No known contamination issues

Opportunity Site 17: Former Greenvale site, off Athy Road

Site Code: OP 17

Zoning: Town Centre

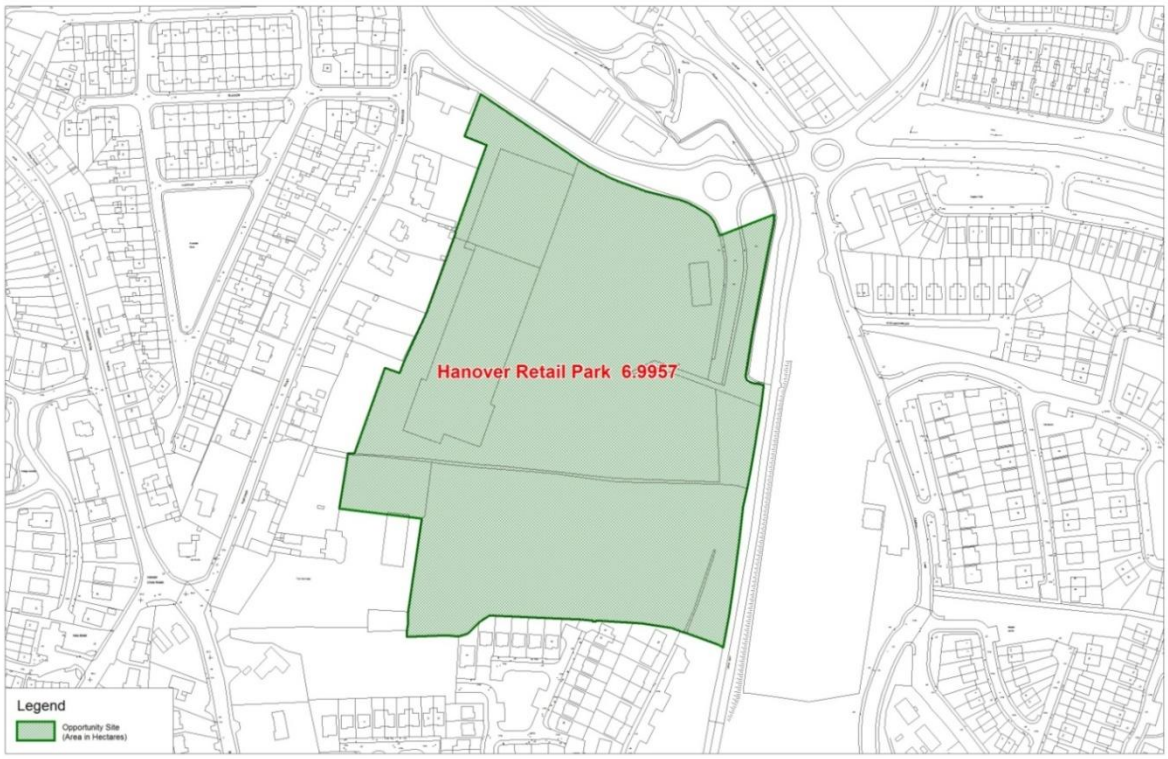
Site Area (ha): 0.46

Comments:

- Brownfield manufacturing site
- Clearance of ruinous structure required
- Suitable for mixed-use development commercial and residential development
- Adjacent to Natura 2000 Site: cSAC 002162
- No known contamination issues
- Serviced by new roads: Montgomery Street, Cox's Lane
- Served by Barrow Track
- Opportunity for well-designed scheme that addresses the River Barrow and takes advantage of open aspect
- This site is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments

Opportunity Site 18: Hanover Retail Park

Site Code: OP18



Zoning Town Centre

Site Area: 7 ha

Comments:

- Has planning permission for sale of bulky goods
- Also suitable for mixed-use development
- Large areas of surface car parking suitable for redevelopment and intensification of uses
- No known contamination issues
- Part of the site is located in Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences. Following the guidance of the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines", the application of the Justification Test and consideration of the flood defences, less vulnerable types of development are suitable on these lands; (less vulnerable types of development are described in the Flood Risk Guidelines and include retail, office use, playing pitches, showrooms and storage uses); residential uses may be acceptable to upper floors subject to emergency flood-risk management considerations. All development proposals will require an appropriately detailed flood risk assessment and management plan. This statement relates to flood risk considerations only; zoning, retail policy and wider policy considerations will be applied separately in relation to planning application assessments

Opportunity Site 19: Glanbia Site, Portlaoise Road

Site Code: OP19

Zoning: Enterprise and Employment

Site Area: 4.98 ha

Comments:

- Currently functions as farm shop and part of site used as depot, much of the site remains under-utilised previously used as grain depot
- Access from Portlaoise Road, close to Northern Relief Road (N80), site also fronts onto Church Road
- Site well-screened from surrounding area with belts of conifer trees along the road frontage
- Protected Structure Graiguecullen Church of Ireland contiguous to the east, any redevelopment must be sensitive to protected structure
- Timber yard, crèche, residential properties and Shamrock Business Park also adjoin site
- Site located in Flood Zone C (lowest flood risk category in Greater Carlow Graiguecullen Urban Area, less than 0.1% chance of fluvial flooding each year)
- Site suitable for range of commercial and enterprise uses

Opportunity Site 20: Sleaty Road District Centre and Carlow Business Park

Site Code: OP20

Zoning: District Centre, Enterprise and Employment

Site Area:

Comments:

- Site already largely developed containing a supermarket, hotel, pharmacy, doctor's surgery and indoor entertainment centre. Retail warehousing contiguous including car showrooms and NCT test centre
- District Centre benefits from direct connection with fibre-broadband with potential speeds of 20 mega bits per second
- Hotel and indoor entertainment centre directly accessible from Northern Relief Road; Supermarket, pharmacy, doctor's surgery and retail warehousing units accessible from Sleaty Road
- Opportunities relate to improvement of public realm in order to make the District Centre more welcoming and attractive to pedestrians and other users and opportunities to provide more direct pedestrian and cycle linkages between the Northern Relief Road and the District Centre
- Additional planting, the provision of cycle parking and dedication of additional space to pedestrians would improve the appearance of the area
- Potential for conversion of contiguous retail warehousing units to community or commercial (non-retail) uses that support the district centre

Opportunity Site 21: Former Greencore Site, Athy Road

Site Code: OP21

Zoning: Enterprise and Employment

Site Area (ha): 30.7

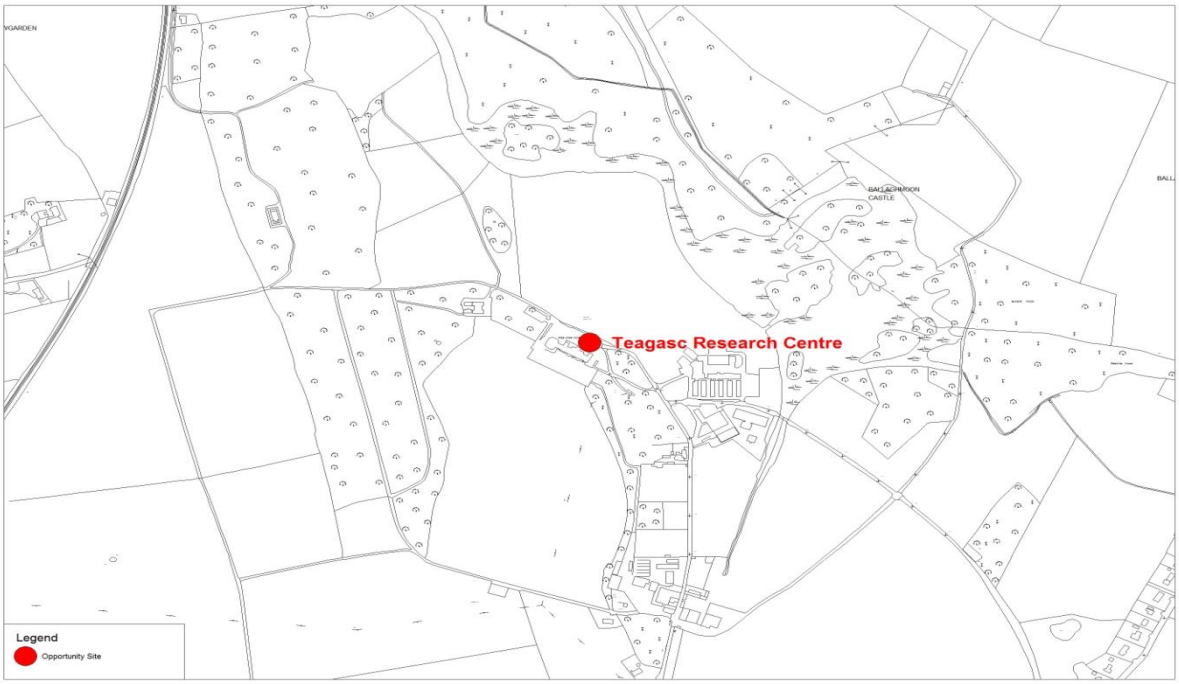
Comments:

- Vacant brownfield site
- Former industrial use for processing of sugar beet and sugar production
- Located on Athy Road (R417) in close proximity to Northern Relief Road and M9/N80 road network and Dublin-Waterford rail network
- Benefited from integrated pollution control license with assimilative capacity of 1000kg Biological Oxygen Demand(BOD)/day - providing for treatment of up to 36,500 population equivalent (p/e) at three times the dry weather flow at conventional urban wastewater regulation treatment norms of 25ml/l BOD and 35 mg/l suspended solids or up to 91,500 p/e at a higher performance bio-membrane standard of 10mg/l BOD and 10mg/l suspended solids at three time dry weather flow
- On-site water source used in manufacturing up to 1981 producing 4,545 cubic metres/day
- Potential for on-site management of storm water and rain-water harvesting using on-site lagoons
- Above ground installation (AGI) pressure reduction facility with a rated capacity of up to 500,000 cubic metres of natural gas/day
- Served by 10 KVA electricity lines terminating in two substations rated at 350 and 450 KVA respectively
- Open access fibre optic network along Northern Relief Road with speeds of 20 megabits per second
- Adjoins candidate Special Area of Conservation (site code: 2162)

- Potential decontamination issues
- Part of landholding within Flood Zone A – 1 percent or greater chance of flooding each year without flood defences, most of landholding within Flood Zone C – less than 0.1% chance of flooding each year.
- Landholding straddles boundary with County Laois; Laois lands unzoned
- Potential for use as Green Business Park as envisaged in Development Ireland's Green Economy (2009)

Opportunity Site 22: Teagasc's Oak Park Research Centre

Site Code: OP22



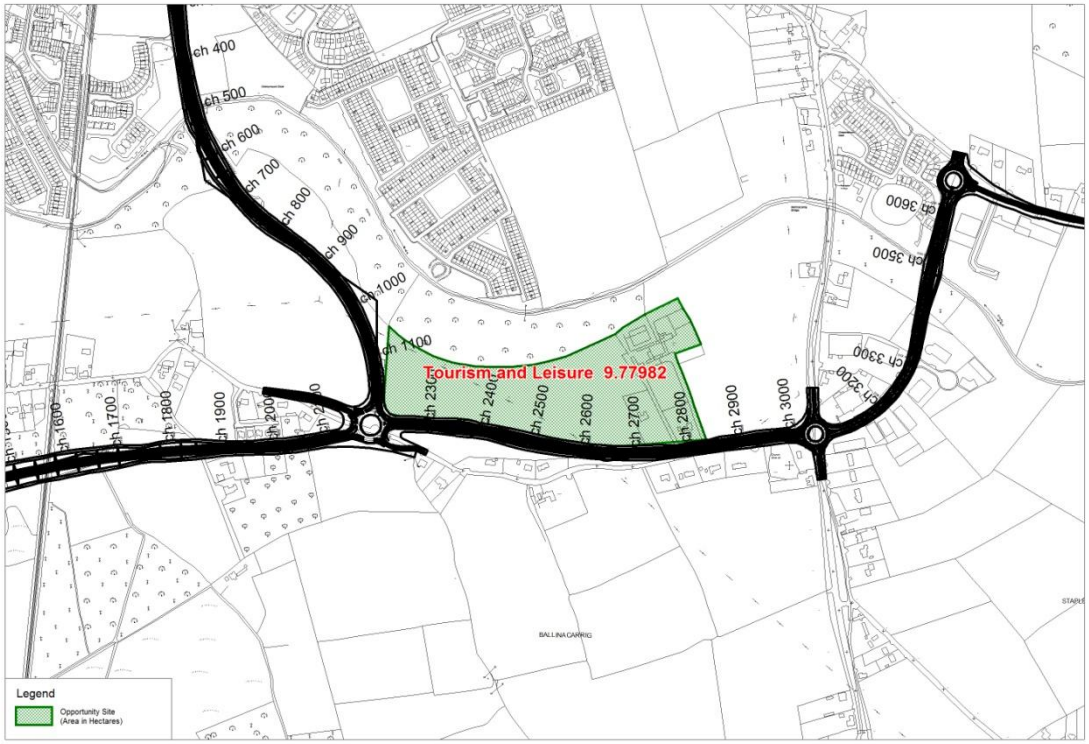
Zoning: Demesne Landscape

Comments:

- Zoning provides for research activities as well as protection of Demesne Landscape
- Current and Anticipated Uses:
  - (i) Teagasc Headquarters;
  - (ii) Teagasc Crops, Environment and Land Use Programme serving tillage sector and involving field and laboratory research;
  - (iii) Meterological Monitoring Station commissioned by Met Eireann to be used for daily forecasting
  - (iv) Planned National Bio-Energy and Industrial Biotechnology Centre by research consortium including Teagasc and supported by *South-East Bio-Energy Implementation Plan* (2008-2013), *South-East Regional Planning Guidelines* (2010), *Carlow County Development Board Strategy Review 2009-2012*, and *Towards 2030 Teagasc's Role in Transforming Irish Agri-food Sector and the Wider Bioeconomy* (2008)
- Potential for intensification of research activities having regard to scale of landholding, local infrastructure, third and fourth level education institutions and potential positive synergistic effects associated with research clusters
- Demesne landscape zoning applied to area to protect integrity of field research as well as protection of demesne landscape
- Demense landscape contains Oak Park Forest Park a high-order amenity area for the public, some private residences and is bounded by a train line to the west, farmland to the north and a golf course to the east
- Area located in Flood Zone C (less than 0.1% chance of fluvial flooding each year)

Opportunity Site 23: Ballinacarrig, Inner Relief Road

Site Code: OP23



Zoning: Tourism and Leisure

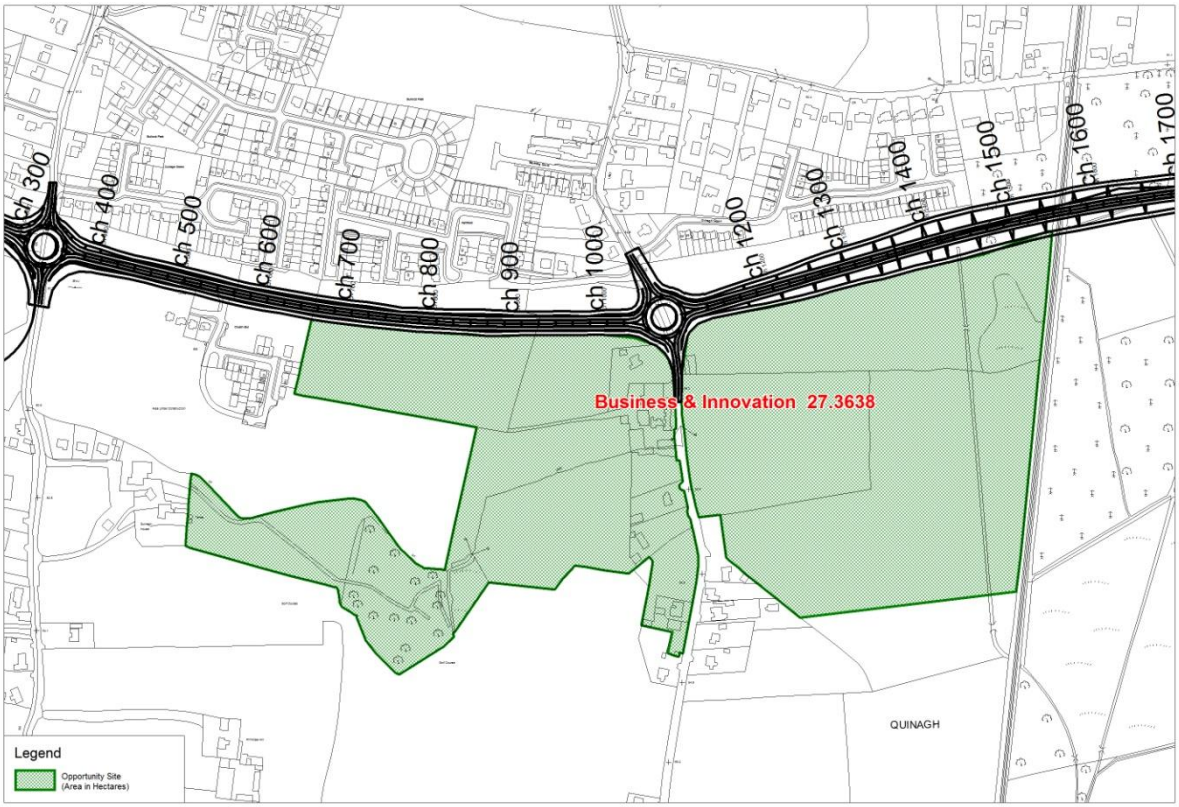
Site Area (ha):

Comments:

- Greenfield site
- Pleasant rural landscape adjoining River Burrin, to link in with riverside walking route and amenity/open space area
- Accessible location, close to N80 and approach to Carlow Town from the South-East; to be served by planned Southern Relief
- Opportunity for commercial activity with tourism or leisure

Opportunity Site 24: Quinnagh, Southern Relief Road

Site Code: OP24



Zoning: Business and Innovation

Site Area (ha):

Comments:

- Greenfield site with pleasant setting
- Served by proposed Southern Relief Road
- Potential for extension of open access fibre-optic broadband with speeds of 20 megabits per second from Carlow IT to opportunity site
- Close proximity to Carlow IT and Carlow VEC
- Potential for campus-based business park with good functional links to Carlow IT, taking advantage of graduate skill base and providing for expansion of enterprises currently using Carlow IT incubation units or for spin-out enterprises