INTRODUCTION

One of the most important functions of Trim Town Council and Meath County Council is the making of a Development Plan for the town and its environs. Trim Town Council and Meath County Council officially start the preparation of the new Development for Trim on the 12th of November 2012. The next Development Plan will provide for the future planning and sustainable development of Trim up to 2020.

This Issues Paper is the first step in the preparation of a new Plan.

At this stage, we need to hear from you!

The Development Plan can help to create a more inclusive, attractive, competitive and safe town and environs. The success of the next Trim Development Plan depends on your active participation.

What is a Development Plan?

A development plan is a document which details the overall strategy of the Council (or in this case Councils) for the proper planning and sustainable development of an area and generally consists of a written statement and accompanying maps.

The plan usually includes the broad aims of the Planning Authority for specific topics, e.g. housing, infrastructure, community facilities, etc. which are reinforced by more detailed policies and objectives. A policy is an agreed position on a particular issue whilst an objective is a specific action or project which the Council(s) intends to accomplish over the lifetime of the plan. For example, it could be an aim of a development plan to support the provision of social infrastructure in the town. This could be accompanied by a policy to support the provision of educational facilities and an objective to provide a school on a particular site.

Why is it important?

The Trim Development Plan will provide the main public statement of planning policies and objectives for the town. The policies and objectives can be critical in determining the appropriate location and form of different types of development as the development plan is one of the factors against which planning applications are assessed. This could be for developments as diverse as a domestic extension, a manufacturing plant or a large scale shopping centre.

The objectives of the development plan are also used by Trim Town Council and Meath County Council to guide their activities. For example, the plan indicates the priorities for investment in infrastructural projects and council run services such as public housing, the fire service and libraries.

Similar to other corporate documents such as the Corporate Plan, it will indicate priority areas for action by the Councils such as focusing on attracting employment into the town or enhancing the town as a centre for tourism. This can guide the activities of the various sections of the Councils.
The next Trim Development Plan will be a key document for setting out a vision for how Trim should develop over the years 2014-2020. It is important that all groups and individuals who have an interest in the town, how it develops and what happens in it, have their views heard.

**Who is involved in making the plan?**

Trim Development Plan

The next Trim Development plan will be informed by the communities concerns and wishes, the Councillor’s opinions and the planners advice.

**Development Plan Review Process**

A development plan is in force for a period of 6 years. The process of reviewing the development plan must begin 4 years after the making of the last development plan. The current Trim Development Plan was adopted on 13th of November 2008, therefore the review process is now commencing.
A Progress Report was prepared in November 2010 and outlined the progress which had been made in securing the objectives of the Development Plan during the 2 years since the Plan had been adopted. This Progress Report can be viewed at


The Development Plan review process starts with a period of public consultation inviting submissions on strategic issues: policies and objectives which would deliver an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town. As stated in legislation, requests or proposals for zoning of particular land for any purpose will not be considered at this stage. Children or groups representing the interests of children may make submissions.

The review process lasts approximately two years. In addition to this stage of consultation, there will also be an opportunity to comment on the draft development plan and on any amendments that may be made to it.

**The Issues Paper**

The purpose of this Issues Paper is to describe some of the characteristics and features of Trim, recent trends in development and likely influences on the development plan. It is intended to stimulate debate and to encourage people to think about the town of Trim, what it represents and means to them, what are the important subjects that the next development plan should address and what are suitable policies and objectives that could be included in the plan. The paper is not exhaustive in terms of questions or issues raised, but is designed to act as a starting point. No decisions have been made to date by the Planning Authorities with respect to the likely nature of policies or objectives to be included in the next Trim Development Plan.

WE WANT YOUR OPINION
How to Make a Submission

Submissions can be made from the 12th of November 2012 to the 16th of January 2013. Submissions can be lodged with the Councils in one of two ways as detailed below. Please make your submission by one medium only i.e. hard copy or electronic, and include your name and address on a separate page to the content of your submission. This is to assist Trim Town Council & Meath County Council in complying with the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

- Email: trimdevelopmentplan@meathcoco.ie
- Post: Trim Development Plan Review, Forward Planning Section, Meath County Council Planning and Community Department, Abbey Rd, Navan, Co. Meath.

In respect of the making of submissions/observations please note the following:

- Submissions/observations regarding objectives and policies to deliver an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan may be made;
- Children or groups or associations representing the interests of children are entitled to make submissions or observations;
- The Planning Authorities intends to review the zoning of the area of the development plan for the purposes of developing objectives and policies to deliver an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan and the core strategy, and;
- Requests or proposals for the zoning of particular land for any purpose shall not be considered at this stage. (Any such submissions will be returned).

Meath County Council and Trim Town Council hereby invites any interested parties to make submissions in accordance with the foregoing in respect of the review of the existing Trim Development Plan and the preparation of a new Development Plan.

The deadline for receipt of all submissions is 4pm on the 16th January. Submissions received after this date will not be accepted.
POPULATION, SETTLEMENT AND HOUSING

Population Change 2006-2011

According to the Census 2011 the population of Trim has increased from 6,870 persons in 2006 to 8,268 persons in the 2011, an increase of 1,398 persons. This increase was accounted for largely by the growth in the environs which resulted in a population increase of 24.2 %. (See Fig 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 Census</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>% change 2006-2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Trim</td>
<td>1375</td>
<td>1441</td>
<td>741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trim Urban</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>1269</td>
<td>649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trim Rural*</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environs of Trim (Trim Rural)*</td>
<td>5495</td>
<td>6827</td>
<td>3351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 1 2011 Census Data
Electoral Division, etc. (*= part of ED)

Trim has a very young resident population, due to the amount of young families currently living in the town and environs. The largest cohort being the 25-34 age group accounting for 17.2% of the overall population. (See Fig. 2) In 2011, 8.7% of the resident population was aged 0 - 4 years and a further 12.19% of the resident population was aged 5 - 12 years coinciding with national school going age. The percentage of the resident population of secondary school going age was 7.42%.

Fig 2. 2011 Census Data for Trim by age cohort
Did you know that....?

Trim is designated as a Sustainable Moderate Growth Town

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the Greater Dublin Area 2010 include a population target for Meath of 195,898 people in 2016 and 210,260 people in 2022. This equates to a housing unit allocation of approximately 34,200 housing units over the period 2006-2022. According to the current RPG settlement hierarchy Trim is identified as a Sustainable Moderate Growth Town along with Ashbourne, Kells, Kilcock Environ and Dunshaughlin. (Navan, Drogheda environs, Dunboyne and Maynooth are the only settlements above Sustainable Moderate Growth Towns in the Hierarchy)

What does this mean for Trim?

According to the RPGs Sustainable Moderate Growth Towns should develop in a self-sufficient manner and levels of growth should be balanced to ensure that any increase in population will be in tandem with employment opportunities, capacity in physical and social infrastructure and will not be based on long distance commuting. Economic development and service provision in Trim will be an important factor in determining the appropriateness of new housing. Trim as a Sustainable Moderate Growth Towns need to provide a full range of services adequate to meet local needs, both within the town and in the surrounding rural catchment area, but not generate long distance travel patterns.

Settlement

The review of the 2007 – 2013 County Development Plan is at an advanced stage and the Proposed Amendments were on display from 12th of October until the 8th of November 2012. The Proposed Amendments to the Draft Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 contain a settlement strategy which is consistent with the settlement strategy contained in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010. A key element of the settlement strategy is the hierarchy of towns. The settlement hierarchy is important as it influences the investment programmes of various sections of the Council, such as Water Services, Roads etc. As stated above Trim is designated as a Sustainable Growth Town in the Settlement Hierarchy. In a time of scarce resources, it is important that investment will be targeted in the right places and that it will support and underpin the settlement hierarchy.

Objective SS OBJ 11 set out in the Draft Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 specifically relates to Sustainable Moderate Growth Towns (SS OBJ 11 refers) and seeks to ensure that:

'Moderate Sustainable Growth Towns develop in a self sufficient manner with population growth occurring in tandem with physical and social infrastructure and economic development. Development should support a compact urban form and the integration of land use and transport.'

DRAFT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN OBJECTIVE
Core Strategy

The Core Strategy in the Draft County Development Plan and Proposed Amendments outlines in detail the distribution of future housing units across the county including urban centres and the rural area.

What does this mean for Trim?

518 no. additional residential units are assigned to Trim up to 2019. On the basis of this household allocation, an area of 14.8 hectares of residentially zoned lands is required to accommodate the additional designated housing units. There is a resultant 96.9ha in excess zoned residential land which poses a number of questions in the review of the Trim Development Plan in terms of demand management techniques due to the extent of land zoned to accommodate residential development.

A number of options are available as set out in the Draft Meath Development Plan to address excess zoning in the Trim Development Plan. The Trim Plan must be consistent with the County Development Plan and its core strategy. These options include: the prioritising/phasing of development, alternative land use zoning objectives and/or discontinuing the land use zoning.

The appropriateness of each option shall be considered further in the context of the review of the Trim Development Plan taking into account flood risk assessment and the adequacy of services and facilities in Trim. It is likely that an approach combining phasing with de-zoning will be required in Trim.

What do you think?

What criteria do you think should be used to determine how housing is distributed in Trim?

Where should additional population be focused?

Of the 3 options available to the Planning Authorities to deal with the issue of over zoning for residential purposes which option or range of options is appropriate for Trim?
Housing

The growth in population in Trim recorded in the 2011 Census was matched by an increase in the quantity of house completions. However, there has been a significant decline in house completions in recent years and a total of 912 committed units with planning permission remained unbuilt as of December 2011. The type and form of housing available in the town needs to match the requirements of the population.

Average household size in Meath has fallen in recent years, from 3.47 in 1996 to 2.9 in 2011 with a greater proportion of households comprising of 1 or 2 people. This suggests that a range of house sizes is required that can accommodate the various households.

In addition to house size, future housing accommodation needs to be able to accommodate all sectors of society, and include provision for groups such as elderly persons or those with a disability, be it physical or intellectual. Social and affordable housing has been traditionally provided by Meath Local Authorities; through the building of housing by the authorities or the transfer of units from private housing schemes under the provisions of planning legislation. More recently, the voluntary housing sector (e.g. co-operative associations, community associations and voluntary housing associations) has been involved in this area.

The Draft County Development Plan contains a revised housing strategy. It seeks to address issues such as housing affordability, future need and availability of zoned land for housing, provision of social and affordable housing and housing mix.

What does this mean for Trim?

The development of Trim as a Sustainable Moderate Growth Town will require facilitating the development of new sustainable residential neighbourhoods in a sequential manner. The Department of Environment, Community & Local Government have published guidelines to assist Planning Authorities in this regard entitled “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas”. The development of housing introduces the challenge of how to effectively integrate new residents into existing communities and delivering a quality of life in terms of amenity, convenience and safety. Success in this can be affected by the pace of development, the quantity of development and the need to ensure supporting community facilities are available. New neighbourhoods should also be connected, legible, attractive, well designed with a variety of adaptable dwelling types / sizes and densities, providing a sense of place and a high quality public realm. New residential areas also provide the opportunity to minimise car based transport demand by providing a mix of appropriate uses at the right location.
What do you think?

How can we ensure that housing development in Trim occurs at the same pace as supporting services?

Do you think that housing development in Trim is meeting the requirements of all types of households?

Do you think there are any sectors of society whose needs have been overlooked in housing provision?

How best can housing for persons with specific needs be provided in Trim?

What do you think is the best way of delivering social and affordable housing?

What types of housing layout and design are appropriate for Trim, at what density and height?

How can new housing be integrated effectively into existing communities in Trim?

Has the designation of Framework Plans been successful in the delivery of integrated communities in Trim?
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Did you know that......?
3,298 persons in Trim are at work as per the 2011 census.

Did you know that......?
Trim is part of the Navan Core Economic Area with Kells and is designated as a District Employment Centres in the Draft Meath County Development Plan.

It is an aim of Trim Town Council and Meath County Council to promote sustainable economic development in Trim. This means that the Planning Authorities will facilitate land uses to nurture economic enterprise and allow it to function and expand as may be necessary, in such form and pattern that is sustainable in environmental, social and economic terms.

Trim as a Sustainable Moderate Growth town should develop in a self sufficient manner and levels of growth should be balanced to ensure that any increase in population will be in tandem with employment opportunities, capacity in physical and social infrastructure and will not be based on long distance commuting.

The continued basis for growth in Trim is that it does not become a dormitory town. This places a considerable challenge for the Planning Authority as the pace of economic development has slowed dramatically in recent years. Over the last number of years Trim, similar to many urban centres in the County, has developed more as a commuter centre rather than an employment centre. A key issue to be tackled in Trim is the creation of a sustainable settlement in accordance with the regional planning guidelines, i.e. a balance of residential and other uses including employment generating uses.

What the Regional Planning Guidelines Say...?

The Regional Planning Guidelines states that economic opportunities through good road connections, good social infrastructure and good local labour market should be capitalised on to attract a range of enterprises. Key sites and facilities should be identified that are fully serviceable and available for the encouragement of economic investment opportunities. This is the primary objective which will be pursued in the next Trim Development Plan.

Trim along with Kells is included as part of the Navan Core Economic Area in the Regional Planning Guidelines. The high end economic objectives for this area include:

- **Kells and Trim to develop as a tourism cluster with improvement in the connectivity between both centres identified for investment. Each town to develop a strategy for niche tourism as integral part of their overall development strategy e.g. culinary tourism, regional food hub, creative industries, etc.;**

- **Protection of the intrinsic built and natural heritage of Kells and Trim and their promotion as a basis of tourism must be dominant in the development strategies adopted for both “Heritage Towns”;**
What the Draft Meath County Development Plan says...?

Trim is identified as a ‘District Employment Centre’ in the hierarchy of economic centres in the County. District Employment Centres are towns which provide employment needs of urban areas as well as large rural hinterlands. Sectors targeted for Trim include innovation in indigenous enterprise and business start ups as well as Tourism, Manufacturing, Administration & Healthcare.

Employment and enterprise are provided for within a number of strategically located sites to the north, northeast, south and east of the town as identified in the current Trim Development Plan 2008-2014.

Trim has benefited from the Government's decentralisation programme with the new national headquarter offices of the OPW developed to the west of Emmet Street on the lands designated for town centre expansion. Employment and industry is also provided for in the Oaktree and Scurlockstown Business Parks. Furthermore commercial sites have been developed at the Motor Park off the Navan Road. The Knightsbrook and Trim Castle Hotels also provide significant employment in the town.

In light of the changing nature of employment throughout Meath, there are significant challenges ahead in planning for economic development:
• in sustaining the existing jobs in Trim;
• in identifying future employment sectors and opportunities for inward investment;
• in ensuring that the needs of employers and employees are met in order to facilitate future growth;
• and in ensuring that economic development is consistent with sustainable development.

The role of the Trim Development Plan 2014-2020

The Councils aim to facilitate economic development and employment generating opportunities throughout Trim town and environs up to 2020 and beyond.

This primarily requires:
• Land to be zoned in a range of sizes and locations as appropriate for employment use including industrial and commercial activity
• Facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure,
• Facilitate the implementation of local economic initiatives.

Meath County Council and Trim Town Council also works to promote County Meath as a potential location for economic development and liaises with other relevant organisations to achieve this. The establishment of an Economic Development and Innovation Unit within Meath County Council has been a key component in the Council’s strategy to facilitate and encourage business investment in the County.
Industrial and commercial developments can be imposing in scale and visually dominant. There is also a need to consider how to integrate these developments into their setting effectively so that they do not detract from the character of Trim and mitigate against other industries such as tourism or affect residential amenities.

**Tourism as an Economic Asset**

As highlighted in the Tourism Section, tourism is very important to Trim and has the potential to provide many economic benefits. The next Development Plan will support this sector and a significant focus of the next Development Plan should be to capitalise on this invaluable asset in the years ahead.

**Did you know that…….?**

Tourism is an invaluable asset and has the potential to provide many economic benefits from Trim and County Meath.

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**What do you think?**

What are Trim’s key drivers, strengths or competitive advantages which can be harnessed to increase employment growth in Trim and environs?

How can Trim be promoted in attracting inward investment in employment & enterprise? Can spatial planning facilitate this?

How important is it that we bring people and jobs together?

Are existing zoned lands adequately located and sized to attract inward investment?

How can a range of employment opportunities be provided locally so as to reduce the dependency on the car as a means of accessing jobs?

How should the Trim Development Plan successfully distribute commercial and industrial development, including small scale industrial projects, start-up units, etc. throughout the plan boundary?

How do we make industrial estates and commercial enterprises attractive in terms of design, layout etc.?

How can a range of employment opportunities be provided in Trim so as to reduce unemployment and reduce dependency on the private car?

Is the tourism industry adequately promoted in Trim?
Retail

Trim is the largest urban centre serving the south west of the county. The retail sector provides an important social and economic function within Trim in terms of serving residents, visitors and businesses, creating demand for potential local suppliers and creating local employment.

Trim is designated as a Level 3 Centre in the Retail Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and the Draft Meath County Development Plan. Level 3 centres are town and/or district centres and sub-county town centres.

The results of the Draft County Retail Strategy household survey demonstrate a high level of leakage of comparison goods expenditure from the County (58.9%) to competing centres such as Blanchardstown and Drogheda. The level of retail leakage from the Trim area outside of the County for comparison goods was also high at 54.2%. A challenge will be to reduce this figure, improving the range of shops in the county and encouraging people to shop locally which would keep money within the local economy and protect local jobs.

The core retail area in Trim is located south of the River Boyne and is focused on Market Street, Emmet Street and Castle Street and offers an attractive retail and pedestrian environment. A number of comparison, convenience and service retailers have developed along New Haggard Street to the north of the River Boyne and this area acts as a secondary retail core for the northern part of Trim town centre. Trim as a nationally recognised centre of heritage importance and important tourist destination within the GDA offers opportunities to potential retailers and investors.

A large area to the west of Emmet Street and Watergate Street has been identified as a suitable location to accommodate expansion of the town centre. The importance of creating strong linkages between the town centre expansion area, which includes the OPW offices, and the existing town centre is set out in the existing Trim Development Plan. There are a number of other edge of centre sites which could potentially accommodate additional retail development. The town centre expansion lands were identified in the Trim Development Plan 2002. No development has commenced in this location to date.

Trim is under provided for in terms of national and international convenience and comparison retailers. At present Lidl, Super Valu and Spar are the primary convenience retailers in the town. Kilkenny is the only national comparison retailer present in Trim town centre. As a Sub-County Town, a certain level of representation of national and international multiples would be expected.

There are low levels of vacancy in the town centre so it would appear that the town centre expansion area, to the west of Emmet Street and
What do you think?

- What is the appropriate form of large convenience retail outlets which should be accommodated in Trim? Is the retention of the traditional streetscape or large stand alone structures more appropriate?

- Are improvements necessary in the provision of retail services in Trim? If so, what kind of improvements?

- How can smaller scale local shops be protected in Trim?

- Are small medical, dental services etc. appropriate in residential areas?

Watergate Street, and other Opportunity Sites, will have to be brought forward if Trim is to significantly improve its retail offer in this respect.

There is an opportunity to expand the range of retail provision in Trim, particularly the provision of national and international convenience and comparison multiples, to increase the attractiveness of Trim and to ensure that it continues to operate as a Sub-County Town Centre.

Particular care is required to ensure that the design of any new retail developments is befitting as an expansion to a Heritage Town such as Trim.
HERITAGE AND TOURISM

The site of Trim was known from the earliest times as a fording point of the River Boyne at the upper limits of navigation. It is thought that the Watergate Street crossing is the original ford point. The first clear evidence of settlement is described in the Book of Armagh which details the foundation of a monastery by St Loman in 432A.D. The site of the castle was selected by Hugh de Lacy in 1172 during the Norman Conquest of Ireland and fortified. The earliest reference to Trim as a borough is in the early years of the 13th century and the castle was built in the first half of that century. Trim became Meath’s principle urban centre in the Anglo-Norman period and was regarded as the Norman Capital of Ireland. The dissolution of the Abbey and Friaries in 1539 and 1540 had far reaching impacts on the economic, social and political powers in Trim and by 1584 the town was a substantial and well-fortified city and recommended as the site for Trinity College. In the 18th century Trim acted as the county town for Meath and a thriving market centre until overtaken by Navan in the 19th century. At the beginning of the 19th century the plan of Trim had hardly changed from the pattern of the 13th century with the exception of an expansion to the south and the building of St Mary’s Catholic Church. The construction of Wellington Place in 1817 added a strong monumental element to the townscape.

In 1835 the corporation was replaced by town commissioners who brought about major improvements in the form and fabric of the town. In 1852/53, two major projects were commenced – the building of a Town Hall and installation of gas lighting. Trim did not grow to any great extent during the early 20th century. The workhouse was converted into a hospital and a number of large schools were established. The Garda Station, a protected structure was constructed in the late 1940s. In the latter half of the century small suburban districts were established along the Kells Road but the greatest changes in the town occurred as a result of the growth in the commuter hinterland of Dublin in the last 15 years.

What do you think?

How can we increase awareness, understanding and access to the heritage of Trim?

How does the designation of Trim as a Heritage Town affect the various strategies to be developed and contained in the Trim Development Plan?

How can we enhance heritage assets and local distinctiveness in Trim?
**Built Heritage**

**Did you know that….?**

There are two Architectural Conservation Areas in Trim and 82 structures on the Record of Protected Structures for the town.

Built heritage refers to all manmade features in the environment. The built heritage of Trim in terms of townscape/streetscape and the quality of individual buildings significantly contributes to the town’s special interest. A challenge for the years ahead is in maintaining the quality and special interest of this heritage. The provision of uses which will preserve historic buildings for the enjoyment of future generations whilst adhering to the land use zoning objectives is not often easy to achieve. A greater degree of flexibility may be required in the years ahead whilst ensuring that the special interest and character of the building is protected. Equally, inappropriate modern development can threaten and damage the character of Trim which may include demolition or the cumulative impact of new development in a historic area of the town.

**What do you think?**

Are the existing boundaries of Architectural Conservation Areas adequate to protect these areas or should they be revised? How can these areas be managed and enhanced?

Are there buildings or other structures we should be adding to the Record of Protected Structures?

What measures could we put in place to ensure the survival of our built heritage?

How can we encourage the re-use of redundant or derelict buildings?

**Natural Heritage**

Natural heritage in Trim includes a wide range of natural features that make an essential contribution to the environmental quality, ecological biodiversity, landscape character, visual amenity and recreational activities of the town. The River Boyne and Blackwater is a Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protection Area. It will remain an objective of the Planning Authorities to maintain, and where possible enhance, the conservation value and objectives of this site.

Landscape is a component of natural heritage and Trim benefits from dramatic landscapes with attractive vistas for example across the Porchfield towards Trim Castle and of Yellow Steeple. The management of features of the
There are 11 festivals held in Trim.

Trim Castle is the 8th most popular visitor attraction in the East and Midlands.

County Meath has been marketed as the Heritage Capital of Ireland for a number of years. Trim, along with Kells, are both designated as Heritage Towns in the county. Trim should therefore be a strong attractor of tourists due to its position relative to Dublin and its wealth of attractions.

In recent years, the tourism offer in Trim has expanded significantly particularly in the area of cultural events and festivals. Many of these directly capitalise on the links the town has to built heritage such as the Walled Town Heritage Fun Day, and with literature, for example, the Swift Satire Festival. Other activities blend tourism with heritage and economic development, for example the archaeological fieldschool at Blackfriary. A ‘Tourism Discussion and Action Plan’ has been prepared by Trim and the Upper Boyne Valley by Trim and District Chamber of Commerce which identifies aspirations and projects to develop tourism in the area including in relation to visitor attractions, marketing and visitor services.

It is important that the next Trim Development Plan provides support for what could be the most important economic sector in the town - tourism. It will remain a significant focus of the next Development Plan to build on the efforts of the public and private sectors in this area in the years ahead.
What do you think?

What can Trim do to attract and retain more domestic and overseas visitors?

Is there a need for more tourism facilities in Trim? If so, what types of facilities e.g. accommodation, touring caravan parks, campsites, activities, restaurants?

How do we ensure that policies in relation to tourism complement and comply with those relating to conservation?

How can the Trim Development Plan support tourism?
DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

Trim is a designated Heritage Town, with numerous structures on the Record of Protected Structures and with an Architectural Conservation Area. It is notable for the survival of medieval structures, most prominently, Trim Castle, which is the largest and most impressive Norman Castle in the country. The majority of commercial and residential buildings in the town core are two or three storeys in height, and plain and unadorned Georgian in style.

There is the potential to retain, and restore where necessary, the distinctive quality and historic character of the town, to ensure the architectural character is not eroded by the removal of traditional features.

Part of the challenge in facilitating development in a heritage town such as Trim is in assimilating new buildings, roads and other infrastructure into the urban environment without detracting from the distinctive character and built heritage of the area. If managed appropriately, new development can make a positive contribution and enhance the overall character and quality of the historic town and increase its value as a place to invest and live in, work and visit.

In addition, the quality of the built environment can affect the quality of life and health of residents of an area, for example by enabling people to walk or cycle through providing safe and direct footpath and cycleway routes or by designing in spaces for play areas in residential schemes. The planning process and in particular the development control process gives the Planning Authorities in Trim an active role in the creation of the built environment and a means of encouraging a high standard of design.

Urban Design

Urban design is concerned with the relationship of buildings to one another and to the spaces around them. Good urban design includes:

- Respecting the existing character;
- Creating a clear distinction between public and private spaces and ensuring that public areas are suitably supervised by adjoining buildings;
- Ensuring that an area is easy to navigate and is permeable;
- Facilitating diversity in terms of uses and appearance;
- Facilitating longevity, by designing streets and buildings that can be adapted to a variety of uses during their lifetime, and;
- Encouraging visual identity and interest and discourage functional anonymity.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government have produced guidelines on “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas” which includes a best practice urban design manual. A “Retail Design Manual” has been produced by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government as a companion document to their guidelines on retail planning. The manual, in conjunction with the guidelines,
provides guidance on meeting the needs of modern shopping formats while contributing to protecting, supporting and promoting the attractiveness of town centres. These will be important documents to take into account when developing design guidance for Trim.

**Architectural Design**
Well designed buildings are those which enhance their setting and which include longevity, adaptability and efficiency in their attributes. The architectural design of a structure should be appropriate to its context in Trim whether that is a suburban setting for a housing estate or a town centre commercial building.

The existing Trim Development Plan contains guidance on design in the urban area. The preparation of the new Trim Development Plan provides an opportunity to supplement and amend, if necessary, this guidance.

**Public Realm**
The term public realm broadly refers to the form and use of outdoor areas that are accessible to the public, such as streets, squares, paths, parks and car parks. The quality of the public realm can influence the atmosphere and attractiveness of a place. It can contribute to encouraging people to visit and spend greater lengths of time in a place. Trim is a service centre for its residents and for people in the surrounding area and it has great potential to increase its importance as a tourist centre. Having a high quality public realm in Trim could benefit the local economy. The

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**What do you think?**

What specific elements of Trim do you think create a sense of place?

How can the Trim Development Plan encourage good design and layouts in our town?

What do you consider the main issues to be in relation to the built environment, quality of design of buildings and public open spaces in Trim?

How can the Trim Development Plan promote improvement in the quality of the built environment?

How can the Trim Development Plan ensure that development is appropriate to its location?

What kind of guidance should the Development Plan contain in terms of urban and architectural design? Is the existing guidance provided adequate or are there specific areas which require amendment?
preparation of a new Development Plan for the town provides an opportunity to review the quality of the public realm in Trim and establish if it could be enhanced.

**What do you think?**

Do you think that Trim has an attractive urban realm?

What improvements, if any, do you think should be made to the urban realm in Trim?
COMMUNITY, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Community Facilities
Community facilities are vital to the life of Trim. Such facilities range from schools, libraries, childcare facilities, community centres, health centres, facilities for the elderly, facilities for persons with disabilities, arts and culture and open spaces. The rapid rate of population growth in Trim over recent years has put pressure on essential community infrastructure and it is critical that the future social needs of the town are addressed.

Trim Town Council and Meath County Council have a direct role to play in the provision of some aspects of community facilities, e.g. in the delivery of the fire service, the operation of libraries, increasing access to, awareness of and participation in the arts through the arts service of Meath County Council.

In other sectors, the primary role of the Councils is to ensure the reservation of sufficient lands to accommodate community and recreational facilities. This is done through consultation with the relevant authorities and Government departments which have direct responsibility for these areas, such as the Department of Education and Skills and the Health Service Executive. Consultation with these bodies will take place as part of the Development Plan review process. Community facilities are also provided by private operators for example crèches and the Knightsbridge Village complex.

Meath County Council has recently purchased the building of the old St. Patrick's National School on High Street with the intention of locating cultural/community uses on the site, such as a local museum, which could link to the adjoining library. The redevelopment of the site would be a valuable addition to the facilities in the town.

What do you think?

What do you think of the community facilities available in Trim?

How can we ensure that provision is made to facilitate current and future educational requirements?

What are the additional educational needs for Trim for both primary and secondary schools?

Are existing schools easily accessible to those attending them?

Where should new schools, if required, be located?

How can we encourage the multi use of existing school and community buildings?

Are there adequate and accessible health and childcare facilities in Trim?

How can community buildings be funded and delivered in this challenging economic climate?

Who should be responsible for managing community buildings?
Open Space and Recreation
The provision of good quality open spaces and recreation facilities is a key part of sustainable communities, and contributes to quality of life and personal health and well being. Facilities can range from open space in a housing estate to a purpose built sports facility. There is a continued need for additional facilities and improvements to existing resources to meet the needs of existing and future populations. Trim Town Council and Meath County Council are also supportive of private companies and community groups/clubs in the provision of facilities.

Trim benefits from a number of existing open space areas and recreational facilities, such as the Porchfields, Trim Aura Leisure Centre and Trim GAA grounds. The preparation of a new Development Plan for the town offers the opportunity to review existing facilities and determine if there is a need to improve these. In many instances, the provision of new or expanded facilities will be outside of the direct remit of Trim Town Council and Meath County Council or will require investment in a time of reduced resources. The issue of how best to secure, finance and manage both community and recreational facilities therefore needs to be addressed.

What do you think?
Is there an adequate quantity and quality of play areas, open space and recreational facilities in Trim?
Are the current standards for public open space provision associated with new residential developments appropriate?
How can we ensure that open space is located and delivery in a way that ensures it is capable of being easily reached on foot or bicycle?
Should we develop a strategy for managing our green infrastructure i.e. network of green spaces and natural heritage in Trim?
Are there sufficient recreational areas for younger people in Trim?
Where is the appropriate location for youth cafes, sports and assembly areas to meet the needs of younger people?
How can open space and recreation be funded, delivered and managed in this challenging economic climate?
Social Inclusion
Meath Local Authorities have developed an ‘Accessibility Implementation Plan 2008-2015’ with the objective of the Plan to ensure that people with disabilities can access the same level of services as all customers, where practical and appropriate.

Did you know that…..?
The Meath Care Portal website, established by Meath Local Authorities, provides a one stop resource for people with disabilities, for older people and for caregivers.

What do you think?
Are the needs of different cultural, ethnic, youth, elderly and disabled groups being accommodated in our community?
ENVIRONMENT

Trim benefits from having a high quality natural environment. The River Boyne is a recognised habitat area and the walkways along the river are also an asset for residents and visitors to the town. Combined with the network of hedgerows around Trim and green areas, they represent a valuable resource and their protection will be a priority for the Trim Development Plan.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Trim Town Council and Meath County Council are legally required to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Trim Development Plan 2014-2020. This process ensures a high level of protection of the environment and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of the plan with a view to promoting sustainable development.

This assessment will commence jointly with the review process of the Trim Development Plan and the report will be published in conjunction with the draft Development Plan.

**Habitats Directive**

The Trim Development Plan will also be subject to Appropriate Assessment, as required by the European Habitats Directive. Appropriate Assessment is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of the Plan, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites in view of the conservation objectives of the sites. The River Boyne and the River Blackwater is a Natura 2000 site, being both a Special Area of Conservation and a Special Protection Area. A Special Area of Conservation is largely concerned with habitats and wildlife. The River Boyne and Blackwater are designated for alkaline fen and alluvial woodlands habitats and Atlantic Salmon, Otter and River Lamprey. A Special Protection Area is concerned with birds and the River Boyne and River Blackwater are designated because they are a habitat for the kingfisher. Similar to SEA, the process of Appropriate Assessment will be ongoing throughout the preparation of the plan with reports published in conjunction with the draft Plan.

**Climate Change**

Climate change is a global issue and is the most significant environmental challenge facing us today. The Government have published “The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012”, which highlights climate change as an important challenge and policy issues that need addressing. In October 2012, the Government published ‘Towards a New National Climate Policy’, a policy analysis report prepared by the National Economic and Social Council which looks at options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

At a local level, Meath Local Authorities have published a “Climate Change Strategy and Energy Management Action Plan 2011-2012” which outlines that we ‘Think Globally, Act Locally’. This strategy aims to adapt behaviour to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase energy efficiency, and promote sustainable development.
Flooding
Flooding is a natural process that can happen at any time in a wide variety of locations. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of flooding. Development can also exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run off, altering watercourses and removing flood plains.

The EU Floods Directive and the ‘Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government/OPW 2009) are of major importance and Planning Authorities must implement these Guidelines. Flood risk is a key consideration in the preparation of the Trim Development Plan.

Water Framework Directive
The EU Water Framework Directive came into force in 2003 and applies to all water bodies and requires that we manage our water systems and protect water quality. The aim is to ensure that all natural waters (including rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater) achieve “good ecological” status by 2015. The Water Framework Directive will be implemented in Ireland, through River Basin Districts and River Basin Management Plans which have been prepared for each of these districts. The Development Plan is also a means of implementing the objectives of these plans.

Did you know that….?
Trim is in the Eastern River Basin District.

What do you think?

What in your view are the main environmental issues facing Trim?

How can the Trim Development Plan address climate change at a local level?

How can the Local Authorities manage pressure for development in areas at risk of flooding?

How can the Trim Development Plan contribute to improving and protecting the water quality of rivers and streams which flow through the town?

What methods should the Local Authorities encourage to maximise renewable energy provision, both for developments and individual homes?

How can biodiversity in Trim be maximised?
The proposal to establish Water Ireland will have implications for investment in the future provision of water and waste water infrastructure.

Did you know that……? 

On average each person in the Greater Dublin Region consumes 150 litres of water per day!

www.taptips.ie

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The provision of water, wastewater, waste management, energy and telecommunication infrastructure is critical to ensure the continued sustainable development of Trim.

The next Trim Development Plan must continue ensuring the provision of necessary infrastructural services to support development within the town and environs while also promoting health and safety and environmental protection.

The provision of water and sewerage investment should be related to the sequencing of residential lands and integrated with the provision of transport, schools, community, and leisure facilities.

Water Services (Drinking Water & Wastewater)

The Council's Water Services Programme 2010-2012 examines how and where the provision of public services (water and wastewater) should be provided and/or improved in the most cost efficient manner. EU Legislation (i.e. Water Framework Directive and Groundwater Directive) requires that we manage our water systems and protect water quality.

Water Supply

The water supply serving Trim is via abstraction from the River Boyne. The existing water treatment works was upgraded in 2007 to a design capacity of 22,500 pe. The Trim Water Supply Scheme also serves Summerhill and Rathmolyan. Current loading is estimated to be 17,500 pe.

Water Conservation, through active leakage control, demand management and pressure management, has played and will continue to play a major role in reducing the demand for potable water, thus facilitating additional developments and improving the level of service to existing developments in the county through the existing watermains networks. Significant progress has been made in Trim in recent years in reducing the extent of “Unaccounted for Water”.

Wastewater Treatment

The Wastewater Treatment Works in Trim was upgraded in 1998 to a design capacity of 12,000 P.E. Current loading is estimated to be 9,800 pe. Although there is significant capacity available at the Waste Water Treatment Works there are areas of constraint on certain sections of the sewer network. In particular, the Newtown Pumping Station would need to be replaced and expanded in order to facilitate the development of lands in its vicinity particularly in the Navan Road area.
Surface Water

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are effective technologies which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity. The objective of SuDS in new developments is to replicate, as closely as possible, the surface water drainage regime to the predevelopment ‘greenfield’ situation. It is a policy of Meath Local Authorities in the new Draft County Development Plan that new developments (including extensions) incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems as part of development proposals. A similar policy is included in the existing Trim Development Plan.

What do you think?

How can we ensure that we have water and drainage to promote the appropriate growth in Trim (industry, commercial, housing activity)?

What issues do you consider should be examined when providing water supplies i.e. groundwater supplies and supplies from our rivers?

How can we encourage water and energy conservation?

Waste Management

County Meath forms part of the North-East Region waste management area for waste policy. The current Waste Management Plan sets out regional objectives including waste prevention and minimisation, improved infrastructure for recycling and recovery of waste through the waste hierarchy. There is a large civic amenity centre in Trim in addition to numerous bring banks located throughout the town.

What do you think?

Are there adequate recycling facilities in Trim?

What measures can we use to reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling?

Communications

It is recognised that development and investment in telecommunications infrastructure is of major importance to Trim.

A Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) Broadband system to serve Trim was commissioned in 2007. The Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) enable telecommunications companies to provide cheap always-on
high-speed access to the Internet, a vital tool for industry and business to be efficient and competitive. It is also invaluable for educational institutes, health and research bodies and private consumers.

**Energy**

The supply of energy (gas and electricity) and the continued development of these networks is an important factor in the provision and location of employment in Trim. The Planning Authorities promote renewable energy options at suitable locations. The Councils continue to work alongside key energy providers in facilitating the provision of energy where feasible. Bord Gáis extended their services into Trim in 2000. ESB networks have plans in place to develop a new 110kV/MV substation which will reinforce the network around Trim and facilitate development in the area.

**What do you think?**

How can the Trim Development Plan ensure that the town is adequately serviced in terms of telecommunications infrastructure, including broadband?

Is the provision of broadband in Trim adequate? Can it be improved?

Where should antennae/masts be ideally sited?

Should we promote renewable energy? If so how should we do this?

How best can alternative forms of energy be promoted and developed in Trim?
TRANSPORTATION

Maintenance and delivery of an efficient, integrated and coherent multi-modal transport network is vital for Trim to ensure accessibility, improve connectivity and economic and industrial competitiveness and success.

Integrated Spatial Planning and Transportation

National and regional transport policy emphasises the need to reduce the demand for travel and the reliance on the private car in favour of public transport, cycling and walking. The concept of an integrated transport policy encompasses not only integration within and between different modes of transport, but also integration with environmental, social, recreational, economic, educational and health policies and objectives. No longer can the provision of transport facilities be considered or decided upon in isolation.

Public Transport

The main public transport services in Trim are public bus services related to the demand for commuter trips towards Dublin. Flexibus rural transport service, Meath's Accessible Transport Project also provides valuable public transport services in Trim.

Walking & Cycling

Walking and cycling are the most sustainable modes of transport and are an essential part of any integrated transport system. Therefore catering for needs of pedestrians and cyclists are very important with increased provision of cycle lanes and safer facilities for pedestrians imperative. 'Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future' policy document and the 'National Walking and Cycle Policy Framework' put forward proposals to address the needs of walkers and cyclists. The existing pedestrian and cycling facilities in Trim are generally of a good standard and high aesthetic quality.

Roads

Trim functions as a major transportation node in County Meath. Although not served by a national primary road, Trim is served by a number of good quality regional roads including the R154 Athboy - Dublin Road which links to the N3 national primary route, the R161 Navan - Kinnegad Road, the R160 Trim - Longwood Road, and the R158 Trim - Summerhill – Kilcock Road. Trim is therefore easily accessible by car from the surrounding hinterland and the development of the M3 motorway has also resulted in Trim being more accessible from the wider Greater Dublin Area. Trim is heavily reliant on the local road network for public and private transport as well as the movement of commercial goods.

The development of a distributor road (inner relief) road to relieve the town of traffic congestion and serve newer residential areas was identified in the Trim Development Plan 2008-2014. The proposed local distributor road network will link many of the radial routes in Trim to each other.
without having to pass through the town centre. It was envisaged that part of this route would be
developer driven and provided as part of Framework Plans. This objective remains outstanding.

The proposal to develop an outer orbital route (Leinster Outer Orbital Route) extending from
Drogheda to the Naas/Newbridge area via Trim is included as a key objective of the Regional
Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area. Its importance is given significant prominence
within the context of the sustainable regional planning strategy and the importance attached to
providing improved accessibility and connectivity between large growth towns in the Hinterland
Area. The NTA Draft Strategy recommends the finalisation of a preferred route corridor and its
protection from development intrusion.

**Car Parking**

Car parking is an essential element of overall landuse and transportation policy across Trim. The
supply and management of parking is central to the management of transport demand and has a
critical influence on mode choice for all journey purposes. Car parking standards are usually
applied with varying degrees of constraint, on the basis of defined locational factors such as
centrality and public transport accessibility. The introduction of paid parking has increased car
parking space availability in the town.

**Transport Plans**

The NTA’s draft Transport Strategy sets out the requirement to include in the Development Plan
an objective to undertake local transport plans for ‘Designated Towns’, as well as more detailed
local transport plans for ‘Designated Districts’. These plans will address the implementation of the
relevant measures contained in the NTA’s draft Transport Strategy. Trim is identified as a
Designated District and a transport plan will be prepared and integrated into the new Trim
Development Plan.

**What do you think?**

How can the Development Plan make sure that there is a better co-ordination between
landuse and transportation facilities in order to achieve more sustainable development?

How do we achieve greater linkages and permeability between existing and proposed
housing areas that also connect successfully into the town centre and into the environs?

Is public transport provision adequate in Trim and what improvements could be made?

What would encourage you to use walking and cycling as a means of transport?

How can the safety of vulnerable road users (cyclists and pedestrians) be improved?

How can the movement of goods and services, including heavy goods vehicles within the
town and environs be improved?

Where should park and ride facilities be located within the town?

Should parking standards for new developments reflect the need to reduce car
dependency?

Is there a requirement for a bypass of Trim, and if so how should this be provided and
financed?
Pre Draft Trim Development Plan 2014-2020
Public Notice

You are entitled to make an observation or submission in relation to the Pre Draft Trim Development Plan 2014 – 2020. This will be taken into consideration prior to the preparation of the Trim Development Plan, 2014 - 2020. Your comments will be duly considered by Meath County Council and Trim Town Council. (Please note this form is proposed for convenience only).

When completed it should be sent to: Forward Planning Team, Meath County Council, Planning Department, Abbey Mall, Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath marked “Pre - Draft Trim Development Plan 2014 - 2020” on or before 4.00pm on Wednesday 16th January, 2013.

In order to facilitate the plan preparation process, please make your submission as early as possible. Keep all submissions clear, simple and concise. A map should be enclosed where appropriate. Submissions do not have to be made on this Form. In either case, please state your name, address, and where relevant, the body or organisation represented.

Observations or submissions may also be made via email to trimdevelopmentplan@meathcoco.ie Submissions made via email must include the full name and address of the person making the submission and where relevant, the body or registration represented.

The Pre Draft Trim Development Plan 2014-2020 is available on Meath County Council’s website www.meath.ie
Email: trimdevelopmentplan@meathcoco.ie
or
Post: Trim Development Plan Review,
Forward Planning Section,
Meath County Council Planning &
Community Department,
Abbey Rd,
Navan,
Co. Meath

The deadline for receipt of all submissions is
4pm on the 16th January 2013
Submissions received after this date will
not be accepted.