





comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

Kentstown Local Area Plan

2009 - 2015

Adopted 20th August 2009

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Plan

The Kentstown Local Area Plan (LAP) 2007 – 2013 has been prepared by Meath County Council, it aims to respond to the development pressures facing the village and the need to provide a positive framework for the future growth, sustainable development and improvement of the village that is consistent with the policies and objectives contained in Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. It is a key objective of the LAP that it satisfies the needs, aspirations and requirements of the local community and other stakeholders as far as they relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Kentstown is located in the administrative area of Meath County Council and is ranked as a 'village' in the County Settlement Hierarchy as set out in the County Development Plan 2007-2013. The village functions primarily as a residential centre and has a limited service role. The village is a relatively small one and is characterised by recent ribbon development and residential developments. There are five protected structures within the village.

The settlement has experienced considerable development pressure in recent years as a result of its location within close proximity to the Greater Dublin Area and other large towns along the eastern seaboard of Ireland. Pressure for more suburban forms of residential development has increased significantly bringing with it a number of changes to the local community and character of Kentstown.

1.2 Kentstown Village Context

Kentstown had a population of approximately 912 people in 2006. As recorded in the 2006 Census this compares to a population of only 333 in 1991 i.e. a population increase of almost 200% in 15 years. Although located in a rural setting Kentstown is strategically placed between the N2 and N3 and therefore has excellent road links to the Greater Dublin Area.

County Meath and Kentstown have seen significant residential development in the last decade and this has resulted in a significant increase in demand for services infrastructure. Despite some investment, the lack of capacity in both water and waste water infrastructure will restrict further development in the area.

The village is linear in character having been developed around crossroads at the junction of the R150 and R153. Kentstown does not have a defined village centre and contains only one convenience store and a public bar.

1.3 The Plan Area

The boundary of the LAP (Map 1.1) area has been delineated in order to:-

- encompass the anticipated development envelope required for Kentstown and its wider hinterland area for the 6 year plan period and therefore the future development of the village.

- to ensure that village growth occurs in a sustainable manner and that new development contributes towards the consolidation of the village rather than its continuous outward spread, in order to promote the efficient use of land and of energy, to reduce pressure for one-off housing on rural lands, to minimise unnecessary transport demand, encourage walking and cycling and to enhance the existing built environment; and
- to enhance the character of Kentstown and make provision for future community infrastructure for the village.

1.4 The Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Plan is as follows:-

- to interpret national, regional and local planning policy and relate it to the Plan area;
- to give guidance on the nature (type), location, scale, form and design of development that is appropriate to this locale and which may possibly be accommodated within the Plan area as well as the infrastructure necessary to service it;
- to set out a common vision or strategy for Kentstown that is generally supported by the local community and that provides a positive framework for guiding private development and public investment in the village;
- to encourage a sustainable level of development that is appropriate to the character and role of Kentstown allowing the enhancement of the village, services, facilities and amenities and in particular addressing the community infrastructure deficit in Kentstown; and
- to identify those aspects of the receiving environment which are at risk from unplanned inappropriate development and to establish policies and actions to protect and enhance those aspects of the environment.

1.5 The Objectives of the Plan

The objective of the Local Area Plan is to create a sustainable settlement strategy that will:

- accommodate local development needs without having adverse impacts on the environment or the existing local community;
- strengthen Kentstown's village centre to cater for the local population;
- protect and enhance the cultural and natural assets and heritage of the area; and
- ensure the community infrastructure deficit is addressed in the village.

1.6 The Legal Status of the Plan

The Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) provide the legislative basis for preparing a Local Area Plan (LAP). The Act promotes sustainable development and the need to balance social, economic, environmental and cultural considerations in the planning process. It requires public consultation to be undertaken as an integral part of the preparation of a LAP.

A LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan and in this regard, the Proposed LAP for Kentstown is consistent with the objectives of the 2007–2013 Meath County Development Plan. In its making, it has also had regard to other relevant planning and environmental policy and legislation including European Union directives, Ministerial guidelines and other national, regional and county plans and policies. The LAP has also taken into account the outcomes of the Pre-Draft Public Consultation workshop that was carried out in September 2008.

Once adopted, Kentstown LAP will provide a statutory framework for guiding development and decision-making on planning applications and Council activities in the area covered by the LAP. It is a legal document that will remain in place for a period of six years. When making a planning decision, the Planning Authority and An Bord Pleanála are required to have regard to the provisions of an adopted LAP.

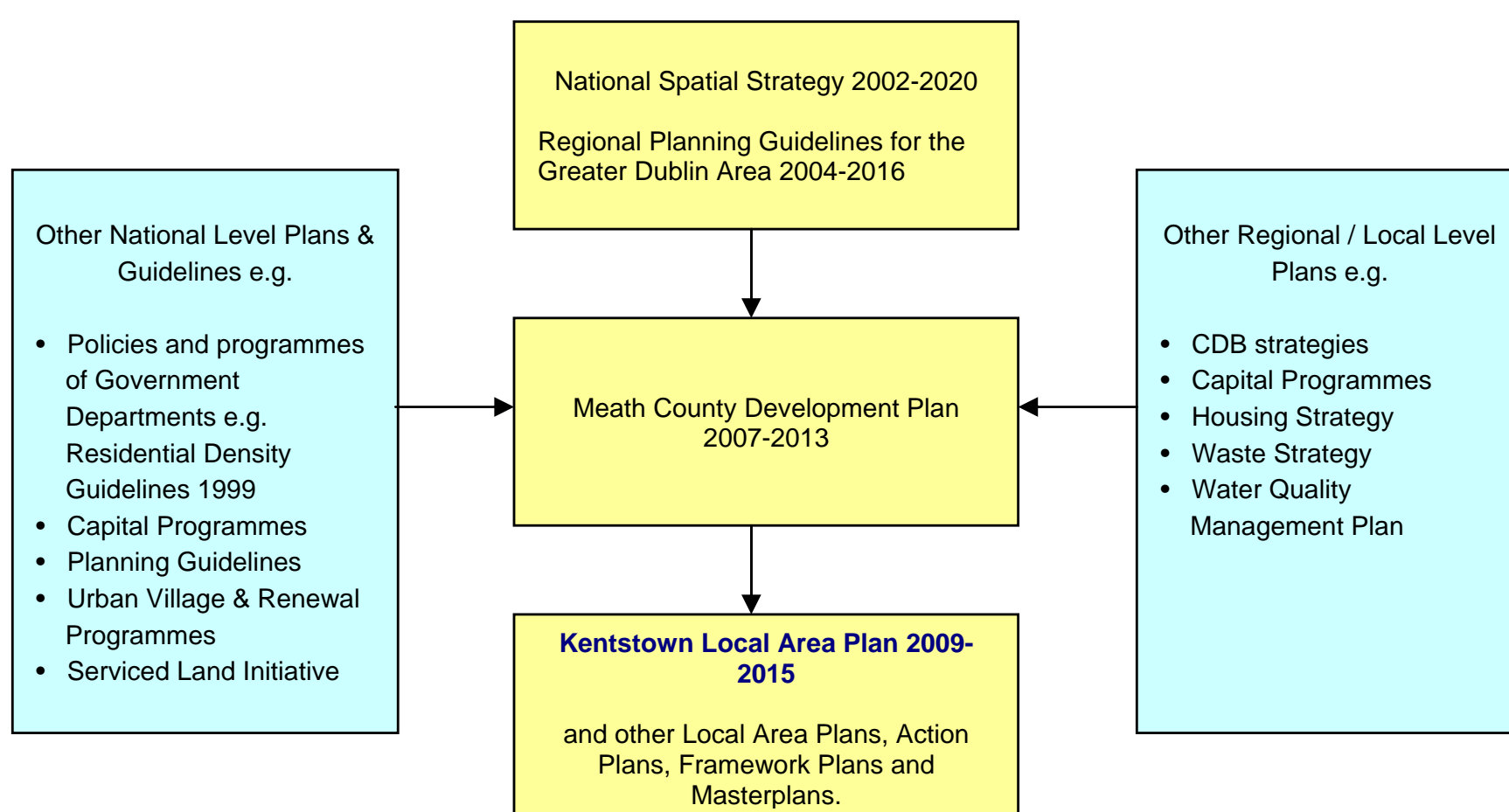
The LAP will help to ensure that the development pressure in Kentstown is appropriately managed, that development occurs in a sustainable manner in accordance with a common strategy for the area, and that it is in the interests of local residents and other stakeholders in the area.

1.7 The Plan Hierarchy

The planning context is the platform on which a Local Area Plan stands and so the Kentstown Local Area Plan must be designed with a clear understanding of the goals of, and interaction with, local plans and government policy. It must be consistent with national and regional planning guidance and with local development plans that are currently in place.

Table 1.1 shows the links that the Local Area Plan will have with other plans and the planning context within which it will sit. The LAP will form a component within a vertical hierarchy of spatial plans from the National Spatial Strategy, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. It will also be informed horizontally by other relevant plans, strategies and programmes at national, regional and local levels such as for example, the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997) and its 2002 review, Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005, Residential Density Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1999, Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines 2008, and accompanying Urban Design Manual.

Table 1.1: Kentstown Local Area Plan – Links with other Plans and Government Guidelines



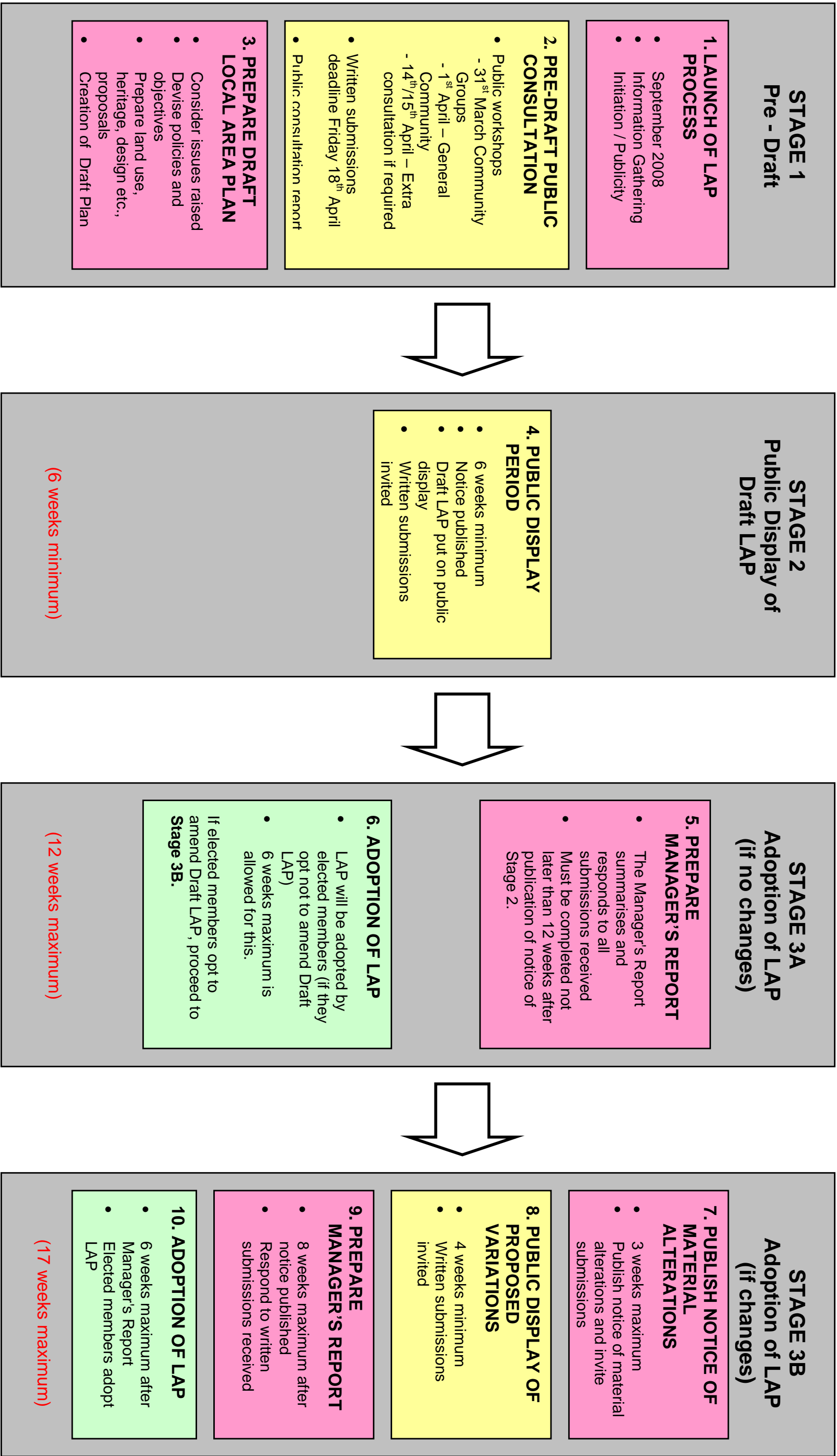
1.8 The Plan Preparation Process

A Local Area Plan is a legal document and must be prepared and adopted in a particular manner and within a strict timescale as set out in Part II Section 20 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended).

The overall process of preparing a LAP can be split into four main stages of action as shown in Figure 1.1 overleaf. This illustrates the plan preparation process in blue, the key phases of the plan preparation process in grey, the key phases of public consultation in yellow, the technical steps in pink and the political adoption / material alteration steps in green. At the bottom of each stage, an indicative date is provided for the completion of the stage based on the statutory timeframes contained in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The preparation of a LAP has a pre-draft and post-draft phase and both phases must be accompanied by public consultation. A pre-draft public consultation process was undertaken to inform the preparation of the plan and to ensure that the local community and other stakeholders were consulted at an early stage and were able to have their say about the future of the area. This included a public exhibition, the submission of written comments and meetings with a number of community groups and other stakeholders in the area.

Figure 1.1: Timetable for the Preparation of Kentstown Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015



1.9 Public Consultation

A public exhibition evening was held in Kentstown on Tuesday 30th September 2008 at Kentstown National School. The purpose of the exhibition was to inform the local community about the Local Area Plan process for Kentstown (pre-draft stage) and to gain people's views, comments and aspirations for their area in order to inform the Draft LAP. Topics discussed were based on a Strategic Issues Paper (Fig. 1.2) that was issued in advance of the meeting.

The exhibition was open to all members of the community. The event was advertised in the local media and posters were placed around the hosting premises. In total approximately 45 people attended the event and their views were expressed both in person and on comment forms that were available both at the event and via the Meath County Council website. The purpose of the comment forms was to gain people's views on the positive and negative aspects of Kentstown and what changes, if any, they would like to see take place there. Although no comments forms were completed during the event, four forms were subsequently submitted to Meath County Council.

In addition 25 more detailed written submissions were received each expressing personal views on the future development of Kentstown. A report on the pre-draft submissions that were received was then prepared. All of the comment forms and written submissions have been given due consideration in the formulation of the Local Area Plan.

A total number of 25 submissions were made following the public display of the Draft Plan. A further 9 submissions were made in respect of the proposed amendments to the Draft Plan.

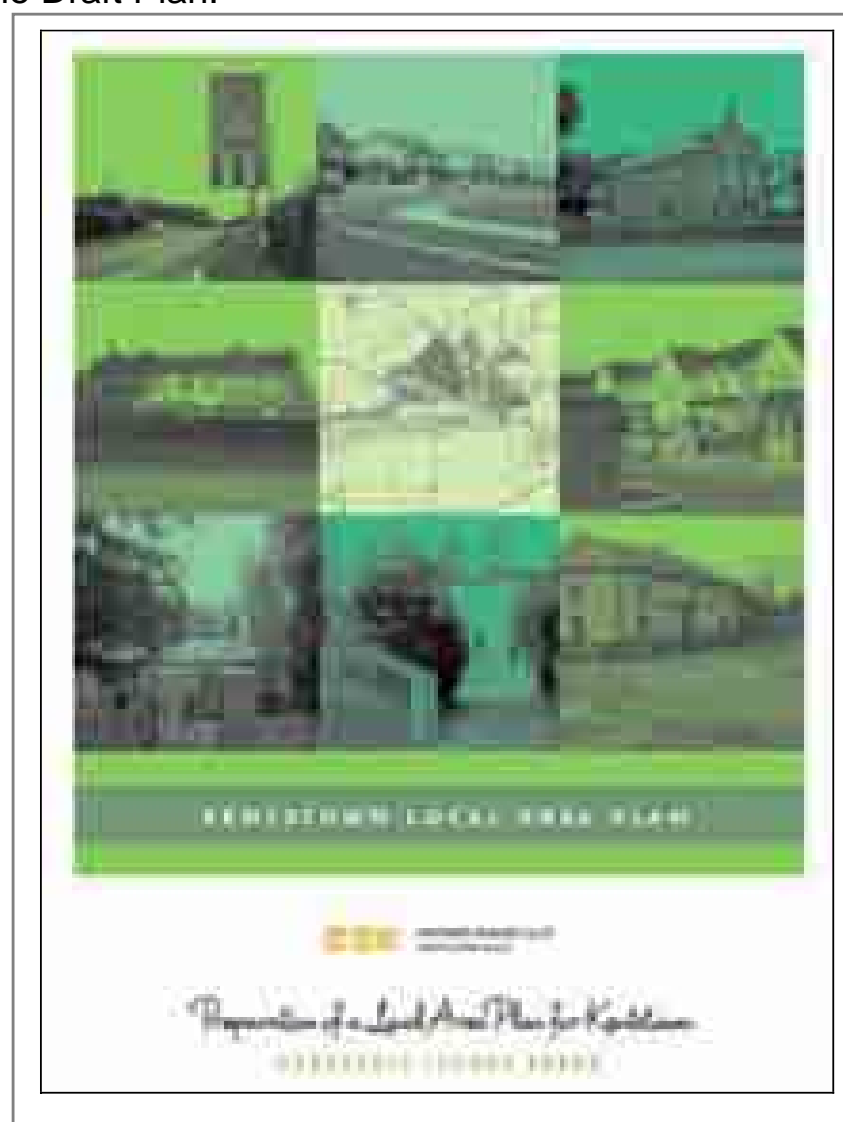


Fig. 1.2 Cover of Kentstown LAP Strategic Issues Paper

1.10 Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to insure that any negative effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

After close consideration of the receiving environment at Kentstown the Council determined that the implementation of the Local Area Plan would not have significant effects on the environment.

This was determined by carrying out a detailed SEA Screening Report which took into account the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004. These are the criteria required to be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise. Furthermore, the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government (DoEHLG) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were formally consulted to enable the planning authority to make an informed decision as to whether an SEA is required in this case or not.

Following the screening of the Draft Duleek LAP and associated amendments it was determined that a SEA was not necessary. The screening reports are contained in Appendix B.

Natura Sites

DoEHLG Circular Letter SEA 1/08 and NPWS 1/08 relates to the requirement to screen land use plans for potential impacts on designated Natura 2000 sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs)). An assessment of the plan is required if necessary. The circular states that an appropriate assessment means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, by a person with ecological expertise, of the potential impacts of the plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site (including Natura 2000 sites not situated in the area encompassed by the draft plan or scheme) and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The potential impacts of policies outside Natura 2000 sites, but potentially impacting upon them (known as 'ex site' impacts) must also be included in the assessment according to the Circular.

Although there are no Natura 2000 sites (SACs or SPAs) within Kentstown, adjoining it or in close proximity to it attention is afforded to the presence of the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (site code 004158) which is located approximately 17 km to the northeast of the village. This SPA comprises the estuary of the River Nanny and sections of the shoreline to the north and south of the estuary (c. 3 km in length). The associated screening reports are included in Appendix B. It was determined that the Draft LAP and associated amendments will

not have any potential impacts on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000, site and as a result further assessment of this type was not considered necessary.

1.11 Structure of the Plan

The Local Area Plan comprises of a Written Statement and Maps (including a zoning map).

Should a discrepancy exist between the Written Statement and the Maps, the Written Statement shall take precedence.

1.12 Plan Challenges

The challenge for Kentstown is to capitalise on the village's strengths and improve the social and physical infrastructure in the village. Development needs to be consolidated and growth directed to appropriate locations within the village envelope, allowing more sensitive areas and landscape features to be protected from undesirable development. The village should grow in a sustainable manner in partnership with the local community.

Residential development has taken place in Kentstown without commensurate development in community and social infrastructure. Furthermore, development has occurred without the physical development or definition of a village centre.

Other challenges to achieving the proper planning and sustainable development of Kentstown, many of which have been highlighted through the pre-draft public consultation process, which must be addressed through the LAP include the following:

- **significant population growth and development has taken place** in Kentstown in recent years, which is transforming the character of the area from a small village to a centre with increased residential development and population;
- the ongoing **pressure for further development in Kentstown**, at the expense of the provision of social and community infrastructure;
- the concerns of the local community regarding **the scale, extent, nature and design of recent development** in Kentstown and its relationship with existing residential development;
- the **lack of basic community infrastructure** such as amenity walks within the village making walking and cycling dangerous for many residents and thereby promoting dependency on the car; and
- that as a linear settlement at the junction of two regional routes (R150 & R153) **Kentstown is dominated by 'through traffic'**.

1.13 Policy Informants

This Plan has considered a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice in developing the policies and actions put forward in the LAP in order to guide the proper planning and sustainable development of Kentstown. The main informants relevant to the Draft LAP are as follows:-

- **Legislative Context** including the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended; the Planning & Development Regulations 2001; EU Directives, such as the Water Framework Directive 2000, and associated Irish legislation; Environmental Law, etc.
- **Strategic Planning Context** including national and regional plans, strategies and guidelines in particular guidelines: the Sustainable Development Strategy for Ireland 1997 and its 2002 review, the National Development Plan 2000-2006, the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, the National Biodiversity Plan 2002, the National Heritage Plan 2002, Sustainable Residential Development Planning Guidelines with accompanying Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (DoEHLG 2009), Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG 2007), Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG 2005), Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2005, Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2000, Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities – updated 2005, and Guidelines on Childcare Facilities 2001;
- **Public Consultation** including the input received through the public exhibition evening, written submissions, completed questionnaires; and from speaking with other stakeholders to inform the Plan;
- **Statutory Planning Context** including the need for compliance and consistency with the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013;
- **Best Practice** including innovative approaches to land use planning, village design, environmental management and service provision, best practice approaches to Local Area Plan preparation, policy formulation and the provision of local infrastructure, facilities and amenities; and
- **Principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

1.14 Implementation

The realisation of the policies and key actions set out in this Local Area Plan, over a period of time, will significantly benefit the village and ensure its orderly development and improvement.

The achievement of the key actions will be dependent on the availability of finance and the inclusion of them in the work programmes of the County Council and the responsible agencies.

This is intended to be an integrated plan, and the progression of formulating policies and designations from issues identified in the public consultation is the first step in enabling an integrated approach to implementation.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 National and Regional Planning Policy Context

2.1.1 The National Spatial Strategy

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) published by the Department of the Environment in 2002 provides a 20 year planning framework that is designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development between the regions and a better spatial distribution of population growth in Ireland. To achieve its objectives, the NSS identifies broad spatial development patterns for areas and sets down indicative policies in relation to the location of industrial, retail, residential and rural development, the location of services, tourism and Ireland's heritage. In doing so, the NSS adopts a hierarchy of development locations based around major centres that have, or have the potential to achieve, critical mass i.e. 'Gateways' with regional 'hubs' identified to transmit the driving force of the gateways. Critical mass relates to size and concentration of population that enables a range of services and facilities to be supported. This in turn can attract and support higher levels of economic activity and improved quality of life.

In the East and Midlands of Ireland the NSS designates Dundalk, Dublin and Mullingar as 'gateways' with Mullingar forming part of a 'linked gateway' with Athlone and Tullamore. Cavan is identified as a 'hub'. Other towns, villages and rural areas are identified in the NSS as having important roles that are to be fostered, developed and diversified to complement the functions of gateways and hubs.

In a rural context, the NSS outlines measures through which rural potential and alternative employment can be developed. These measures build upon local strengths in agriculture, enterprise, tourism, local services, and land and marine based natural resources. The NSS also identifies an important need to support the role of rural towns and villages at the local level, as a focus for investment, economic activity and housing development, which at the same time will support the vitality of wider rural areas.

2.1.2 Regional Planning Guidelines for Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the Greater Dublin Area 2004 - 2016 comprises the council areas of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Dublin City, Fingal and South Dublin in the Dublin Region and Kildare County Council, Meath County Council and Wicklow County Council in the Mid-East Region and give effect to the National Spatial Strategy at regional level. They act to strengthen local authority development plans by setting out broad regional planning objectives.

County Meath is identified in the 'hinterland' area outside the Greater Dublin metropolitan area. The proposed development path for the hinterland area has the objective of achieving, over a period of time, a number of large towns (or adjacent sets of towns), each complete with a high level of employment activities, high order shopping and a full range of social facilities. Ideally, such towns should be self-

sufficient with little or no commuting to the Metropolitan Area. Both Drogheda and Navan are identified as 'primary centres'.

The strategy for the hinterland concentrates on sustainable development. Amongst its objectives are that growth centres are to be self-sustaining and should function as focal points; residents of towns and villages should be employed locally and that there is a clear definition of the boundaries of urban centres to ensure a clear division between rural and urban areas.

2.1.3 Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009)

The Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government adopted planning guidelines entitled 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' in 2009. The Guidelines are intended to act as a blueprint for the future sustainable development of Irish cities, towns and villages in the coming years. They are focused on creating sustainable communities by incorporating the highest design standards and providing a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of essential infrastructure and services.

The guidelines recognise that the ever-expanding footprint of urban areas is not sustainable and in line with the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines, implements policies and practices that aim to consolidate urban areas by providing high-density residential development built to the highest possible standards in the right locations. Such locations are well-serviced in terms of public transport and community facilities.

The Guidelines have developed through recognition of the increased demand for housing throughout the country, brought about through the rapidly changing demographics and settlement patterns in recent years, which has led to a consequential pressure on existing infrastructure. In meeting new housing needs in the cities, towns and villages across the country over the next 20 years, the Guidelines aim to ensure that more and better suited accommodation for families is supplied, higher quality urban design is achieved and high standards in terms of environmental quality and energy efficiency are applied. Such development should be focused at locations that capitalise on current public transport facilities or future transport plans.

The objectives of the new Guidelines are to:-

- set out stronger planning requirements to facilitate the development of sustainable communities through strengthening planning and the provision of necessary support services and amenities;
- help achieve the most efficient use of urban land through housing densities that are appropriate to the location and availability of supporting services and infrastructure, particularly transport; and
- set high standards in terms of space and facilities to meet the needs of the Irish context.

Importantly, for the first time, the guidelines address specific issues and considerations for residential development not only in the larger urban areas but in small towns and villages. The key policy recommendations in the Guidelines in relation to Small Towns and Villages are that:-

- planning authorities should not consider extensive proposals for new development including residential development, in smaller towns and villages in the absence of an adopted local area plan;
- new development should contribute to maintaining compact towns and villages. "*Leap-frogging*" of development at some distances from the built-up area should be avoided;
- in central sites, densities of 30-40+ dwellings per hectare may be appropriate for mainly residential or mixed-use schemes;
- at edge of town centre sites, under controlled circumstances, densities of 25-30 dwellings per hectare with a variety of dwelling types will be appropriate;
- at edge of small town/village, under controlled circumstances, densities lower than 15-20 dwellings per hectare may be appropriate as long as such low-density development does not exceed 20% of the total new planned housing; and
- the scale of new development should be in proportion to existing development, and such development should provide for easy connectivity, especially by pedestrians and cyclists, to existing facilities.

The key policy recommendation in the Guidelines in relation to the role of Development Plans and Local Area Plans are that:-

- they should contain policies and objectives, which will underpin the creation of sustainable residential developments; and
- they should also include clear guidelines on implementation measures, particularly with regard to the phased and co-ordinated provision of physical infrastructure, public transport and community facilities.

2.1.4 Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2008)

The Guidelines are accompanied by 'Urban Design Manual - A Best Practice Guide' which illustrates how the guidelines can be implemented effectively and consistently across the different scales of urban developments around the country. The Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide is an invaluable source of information to those proposing a residential scheme as it sets out best practice advice and the key design considerations to take on board in ensuring well designed sustainable neighbourhoods that will stand the test of time.

2.2 Local Planning Context

2.2.1 Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013

The Meath County Development Plan is the overarching document for the County area including the district towns and other towns and villages in the settlement hierarchy. However, separate Local Area Plans have been prepared for the smaller settlements within the county including Kentstown. This LAP is consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan, and contains objectives for the zoning of land and objectives to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The County Development Plan establishes the strategic context in which the various Local Area Plans will be prepared.

Within the County Development Plan Objective **SS OBJ 1** states the need to,

‘Prepare Local Area Plans for the urban centres contained in Table 7 within 2 years of the adoption of this County Development Plan in accordance with the provisions of Sections 18 – 20 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 - 2006. These Local Area Plans will replace the individual Written Statements and Detailed Objectives for Towns and Villages contained in the 2001 County Development Plan.’

Table 7: Towns and Villages for which Local Area Plans will be prepared¹

Large Growth Towns	Drogheda (Environs)
Moderate Growth Towns	Dunboyne / Clonee / Pace Corridor, Dunshaughlin, Kilcock, Maynooth & Ashbourne,
Small Growth Towns	Duleek, Ratoath, Athboy, Oldcastle & Enfield
Key Villages	Slane, Ballivor, Longwood, Summerhill, Nobber
Villages	Baile Ghib, Carnaross, Carlanstown, Clonard, Crossakiel, Donacarney, Donore, Drumconrath, Gormonston, Julianstown, Kentstown , Kilbride (Dunshaughlin Electoral Area), Kilmainhamwood, Kilmessan, Mornington, Moynalty, Rathcairn & Rathmolyon, Kildalkey,

The Settlement Strategy identifies Kentstown as a ‘village’ within the hinterland area. As such it will be promoted as a node for distinctive quality residential development and essential local commercial and community services.

Kentstown is located within a landscape area designated as the ‘Central Lowlands’. Its value is classified as high. A detailed review of Kentstown’s natural heritage is included in Section 3.6.

Although Kentstown appears to be a relatively modern settlement it does contain some older buildings and has five protected structures. Kentstown’s built heritage is considered in greater detail in Section 3.6.

¹ Meath County Development Plan 2007 -2013 pg 59

As stated in the Meath County Development Plan² and from an assessment of planning permissions and built development, Kentstown has less than the requisite 50% headroom available during the County Plan period (up to 2013). ‘Headrooms’ are derived from Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) which contain household projections and allocations for each of the constituent Local Authorities within the Greater Dublin Area over the 8 year period (2002-2010). The RPGs and Draft Development Plan Guidelines will need to zone land for housing in excess of that strictly needed to cater for their allocated number of housing units. This headroom is required to ensure that an adequate supply of land becomes available for housing and that the market provides a locational choice to both consumers and the house building sector. As stated previously the accepted standard is 50%.³

Meath County Development Plan Variation No. 2 – Order of Priority

Kentstown is excluded from the County’s Order of Priority which is contained in Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan.

Variation No. 2 was prepared in accordance with **Settlement Strategy Strategic Objective 1** that states:

“The Planning Authority shall, within 6 months of the County Development Plan coming into effect, revisit all existing residentially zoned lands in the County as contained in Volume II of this County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, the Kilcock Local Area Plan 2003 and the East Meath Local Area Plans North & South 2005. All subsequent Framework Plans (to include Local Area Plans, Action Area Plans or similar Framework Plans) adopted pursuant to the adoption of the 2001 County Development Plan within individual towns and villages shall also be revisited. The Planning Authority shall identify and adopt by way of Variation to the County Development Plan an order of priority for the release of existing residentially zoned lands (i.e. phasing) that shall conform to the scale and quantum of development indicated in Table 5 and Table 6. The release of these existing residentially zoned lands shall be on the basis of the Criteria Determining the Release of Residential Lands as set out in Section 2.1.7. This shall also apply to the preparation of the new Kells & Trim Development Plans. This exercise shall not apply to Navan, Dunboyne / Clonee, Enfield & Ashbourne having regard to the preparation of Local Area Plans / Framework Plans which provides for the phasing of the residential landbank and / or by virtue of the limited remaining uncommitted residential landbanks.”⁴

² Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 pg 42

³ Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 pg 37

⁴ Meath County Development Plan 2007 - 2013 pg 56

3.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

3.1 Population, Village Growth and Development

3.1.1 Explanation of Format

This section of the Local Area Plan examines the existing situation in Kentstown in terms of village growth and development, and sets out a strategy for its future growth. The strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals through the application of Policies and Key Actions. The Policy and Key Actions for Kentstown are listed at the end of this section.

3.1.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the Policies and Actions of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **public consultation** including the input received through the public workshops, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with stakeholders;
- **analysis of demography and recent planning applications in Kentstown;**
- **Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kentstown, in particular Chapter 2 on Settlement Strategy and Chapter 5 dealing with the Housing Strategy;
- **national and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Residential Density Guidelines, Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development and accompanying Urban Design Manual etc;
- **principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.1.2 Existing Situation

Kentstown is a small village that due to its strategic location within County Meath and the Greater Dublin Area has seen an unprecedented level of population growth and new residential development occur over the last decade. This Local Area Plan provides guidance on the level of growth and development that is considered appropriate for the village, if its proper planning and sustainable development is to be secured.

3.1.2.1 Meath County Development Plan & Settlement Strategy

The Settlement Strategy set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 identifies a hierarchy of towns and villages with the aim of creating balanced and sustainable growth for the County, whilst still providing a varying range of

residential choices. It aims to locate population growth and channel development in line with the principles of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG).

The Development Plan primarily facilitates the accommodation of regional residential growth into the three designated centres of Navan, Drogheda and the Dunboyne/Clonlee/Pace Rail Corridor. In turn, the development of the designated small growth towns and key villages in the County will be slowed dramatically and will be more closely linked to local growth, rather than to regional growth, as has occurred over the past decade as a result of immigration. This will be achieved by reducing the projected growth rates of these centres from that experienced over the past few years and by ensuring that a proportion of new housing in multi-house developments are being reserved for locals only.



Plate 3.1.1: Maguire's Pub in Kentstown Village Centre

The Settlement Strategy identifies Kentstown as a '*village*', which falls sixth on the County's seven-tiered settlement hierarchy. Villages are defined in the Plan as nodes for '*distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services*'. It is anticipated that the future growth of villages should be curtailed and safeguarded so that they do not act as catalysts to facilitate continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin or adjacent large or medium growth towns. The future development of Kentstown will be linked more closely to local rather than the regional growth and in a manner which is appropriately scaled, and reinforces the character of the settlement, in accordance with the county Settlement Strategy.

Kentstown is excluded from the County's Order of Priority which is contained in Variation no. 2 of the County Development Plan. The Order of Priority controls the release of residentially zoned land through phasing (phase 1 2007-2013, phase 2 lands – post 2013), in the majority of the County's settlements. It is necessary because in those settlements, there are more than adequate lands, if released and serviced, to cater for the projected growth in households and population during the

County Development Plan period (up to 2013). However, the smaller centres of Kilmessan, Moynalty and Kentstown have less than the requisite 50% headroom⁵. It is therefore considered that the adequacy of the level of headroom in Kentstown be assessed in the context of the preparation of this Local Area Plan.

3.1.2.2 Growth and Development Trends

Population Profile

Explanation of the Area Assessed

The most recent census of population taken by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) was the 23rd April 2006 and the resultant data, now published was used to create the population profile of Kentstown. The CSO give population statistics for the village of Kentstown, which is located within part of Kentstown Election Division (E.D.). Demographic trends are analysed at state, county and local levels in this Local Area Plan for comparison purposes.

The 2006 Census of Population

The population change within Kentstown is recorded in Table 3.1.1 below.

Table 3.1.1 – Population Change
Population Change 1991 - 2006

	Kentstown	Kentstown (% Change)	Meath County	Meath County (% Change)	Ireland	Ireland (% Change)
Total Population 1991	333	-	105,370	-	3,525,719	-
Total Population 1996	324	-2.7%	109,732	4.14%	3,626,087	2.85%
Total Population 2002	355	9.5%	134,005	22.12%	3,917,203	8.03%
Total Population 2006	912	157%	162,831	21.51%	4,239,848	8.24%

Population in Kentstown has shown significant growth over the last census period 2002-2006 with the population growing from 355 persons in 2002 to 912 persons in 2006 – an increase of 557 people or +157%. Previous to this between 1991 and 1996 however, population in Kentstown actually decreased by -2.7% or 9 people, from 333 in 1991 to 324 persons in 1996. This was against the trend of the overall County where a growth rate of 4.14% was recorded during that same timeframe, a figure higher than the national population growth of 2.85% which occurred during that same time.

However, from 1996 to 2002, population in Kentstown grew showing a +9.5% growth rate in that 6-year period. While this was below the high rate of growth of

⁵ The RPGs and Draft Development Plan Guidelines indicated that Local Authorities will need to zone land for housing in excess of that strictly needed to cater for their allocated number of housing units. This 'headroom' is required to ensure that an adequate supply of land because available for housing and that the market provides a locational choice to both consumers and the house building sector. The accepted standard with regard to headroom is 50% which indicates that a Development Plan must ensure a 9 year supply of residentially zoned land.

22.12% which occurred in the County during that time, it exceeded the 8.03% national rate of population growth that occurred between 1996 and 2002. Nevertheless, the most significant level of population growth occurred in Kentstown between 2002 to 2006, where a growth rate of +157% was recorded during that short 4-year timeframe. This figure is well above that which occurred in County Meath during that time (+ 21.51%) and almost twenty times the level of growth which occurred in the State between 2002 and 2006. This is an unprecedented level of population growth for Kentstown.

Population Projections

The County Settlement Strategy calculates a projected county wide population growth rate in line with the principles of the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines for the period 2006-2013. Table 3.1.2 below presents the population projections for that period for the County as a whole broken down into its constituent years. The projected population growth for each year has then been applied to the settlement of Kentstown to estimate how the population is likely to grow over the next five years. The village's population is expected to exceed 1,000 residents in 2009 and by 2013 the population is projected to be 1,148.

Table 3.1.2 – Population Projections

Calendar Year	County Population Projection	County Projected % growth	Kentstown Population Projection	Kentstown Projected % growth
2006	160,779	-	912	-
2007	164,777	+2.49%	935	+2.49%
2008	171,008	+3.78%	970	+3.78%
2009	176,534	+3.23%	1,001	+3.23%
2010	181,935	+3.06%	1,031	+3.06%
2011	188,779	+3.76%	1,070	+3.76%
2012	195,495	+3.55%	1,109	+3.55%
2013	201,430	+3.04%	1,148	+3.04%

Source: Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

If the population of Kentstown grows in line with the overall level of growth projected for the County, it will continue to increase, but at a more moderate rate than has occurred during the previous County Plan period.

Planning History & Housing Demand

Kentstown has seen a significant number of planning applications for residential development in the last ten years. The majority of these have been along the approach roads leading to the village centre. There have also been a number of refused applications and these are concentrated at the edge of the settlement, to the northwest and northeast of the village centre.

Growth in Residential Development

The household and population distribution table shown below (Table 3.1.3) is extracted from Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 and was completed on 15th February 2007. The total number of units includes those which are under construction but not yet occupied as of that date.

Table 3.1.3: Household Distribution Table 2006-2013

Settlement	Planning Permission Granted – No Construction Started	Houses under Construction	Committed No. of Units (as of 15/02/2007)	Projected No. of H'holds 2006-2009	Projected No. of H'holds 2010-2013	Total 2006-2013	No. of Units to Meet H'hold Targets	Remain Undev. Resid. Zoned Land (Ha)	Density per hectare	Yield of Remaining Undev. Resid. Zoned Land
Kentstown	0	13	13	45	40	85	72	3	20	65

Source: Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

From February 2007 to the current time of writing (August 2009) permission has been granted for an additional 45 no. residential units in Kentstown.

Table 3.1.3 indicates that the projected number of additional households for 2006 – 2009 is 45 and from 2010 – 2013 a further 40. This equates to a projected number of 85 additional houses from 2006 – 2013. The yield of the remaining lands that are zoned for residential development is 65 units and this is 20 units less than the projected units up to 2013. Kentstown therefore faces a shortfall in land available for residential development.

The Regional Planning Guidelines and Development Plan Guidelines (DoEHLG, June 2007) indicate that Local Authorities will need to zone land for housing in excess of that strictly needed to cater for their allocated number of housing units. The Development Plan Guidelines state that sufficient zoned land should be provided to meet not just the expected demand arising within the development plan period of six years, but should also provide for the equivalent of 3 years demand beyond that date on which the current plan ceases to have effect. This 'headroom' is required to ensure that an adequate supply of land becomes available for housing and that the market provides a locational choice to both consumers and the house building sector. In this context, the accepted standard with regard to headroom is 50%, which indicates that a Development Plan must ensure a 9 year supply of residentially zoned land.

From Table 3.1.3 above it can be seen that the Kentstown has less than the requisite 50% headroom available during the County Plan period (up to 2013). This has been taken into consideration through consultation with residents, stakeholders and Councillors in the preparation of the Local Area Plan for Kentstown with the

appropriate amount of land (allowing for 50% headroom), zoned within the settlement limit. Refer to Section 3.2 for further information on land use zoning in Kentstown.

Existing Number of Houses in Kentstown

There are estimated to be around 323 no. existing dwellings in Kentstown (within the development boundary) in 2008. This figure was arrived at from an analysis of current O.S. Maps, analysis of the number of permitted units and from a walk-around and manual count of dwellings in the village.

Demand for Social and Affordable Housing in Kentstown

According to the Housing Section of Meath County Council, only 1 no. applicant is seeking social housing in Kentstown at the current time, while 7 no. applicants are seeking affordable housing units within the village.⁶

Household Size

Given that the 2008 population of Kentstown is estimated to be approximately 970 persons and the number of houses in the settlement is estimated at 323, an average household size of 3.01 is calculated for 2008. This is above the average household size of 2.74, which is recorded for the County in the County Development Plan 2007-2013. The County Plan estimates that the average household size in the County will fall to 2.69 in 2009, 2.645 in 2010 and down to 2.5 by 2013.

Recommended Level of Residential Growth over the Lifetime of the Local Area Plan

The new DoEHLG Guidelines for Planning Authorities entitled '*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*' identifies that smaller towns and villages (defined as settlements with a population ranging from 400 to 5,000 people) are a very important part of Ireland's identity, attractiveness and the distinctiveness of its regions.

The Guidelines acknowledge that many smaller towns and villages have experienced a wave of development in recent years, particularly residential developments. In many cases such development has brought positive benefits in the form of extra housing supply and enhancement of the viability of local shops and public services. In some instances it can be argued that the standardised design approach, which is often applied to housing developments, has had a detrimental impact on the character of small settlements which have grown slowly and organically over a prolonged period.

⁶ Information supplied by the Housing Section of Meath County Council, in Feb. 2009



Plate 3.1.2: Typical recent residential development in Kentstown

In order to manage the mounting pressure for this form of residential development in villages such as Kentstown, the Guidelines recommend that the scale of new development should be proportionate to existing development. It is generally preferable that growth occurs through the development of a number of smaller, well integrated sites within and around the village, rather than focusing on larger sites. For this reason, the guidelines recommend that for small towns and villages between 400 and 5,000 population, the planning authorities should only encourage individual residential proposals that would increase the housing stock of such urban areas by a maximum of 10-15% within the lifetime of the development plan or local area plan (unless the village has been designated as a growth centre in the development plan). As Kentstown has not been designated as a growth centre, individual residential proposals should not exceed a maximum of 10% of the existing housing stock, which equates to a maximum of 32 units in a single residential scheme.

New Residential Zoned Land

While the County Settlement Strategy requires that the future growth of villages such as Kentstown should be curtailed and safeguarded so that they do not act as catalysts to facilitate continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin, it is clear that Kentstown is deficient in the amount of residential zoned land available to cater for local need, over the lifetime and beyond, of the Local Area Plan. In this context lands are proposed to be rezoned to residential use in this Draft Local Area Plan to accommodate the projected level of population growth in Kentstown, up to the year 2021 (includes the 50% requisite headroom). For a more detailed justification regarding the quantum of new residential lands zoned in this Local Area Plan, refer to Section 3.2.3 where further information is provided.

It is also a requirement of the County Development Plan and therefore this Local Area Plan, as set out under Policy VGH POL 27 below, that 30% of any new multi-house developments, being developments in excess of 4 houses, shall be reserved for persons who are native to the County (being persons who have lived in the

County for at least 1 year) or those who by virtue of their employment require to live in the urban centre. This will ensure that the development of Kentstown is more closely linked to local growth, rather than to regional growth, in accordance with the policy provisions of the County Development Plan.

As noted previously, Kentstown has been omitted from Variation no. 2 County Development Plan as it states that there are limited lands available for residential development in the village. In this regard, Variation no. 2 requests that *'an order of priority be included in the Kentstown Local Area Plan'* (Variation no. 2, page 10). This means that the residential zoned lands in Kentstown will be phased (Phase 1 - 2009 - 2015, Phase 2 – 2015-2021) to help control the rate of development in the village and to prevent it from becoming overwhelming. Section 3.2 of this Local Area Plan contains further information on the phasing of residential lands in Kentstown.

The residential zoned lands in Kentstown are shown on the Land Use Zoning Map (Appendix I) of this LAP which also includes their phasing or 'Order of Priority'.

3.1.3 Village Growth and Housing Strategy

The Growth Strategy for Kentstown is to encourage growth that is consistent with the policy framework contained in the National Spatial Strategy, the Regional Planning Guidelines and with the County Settlement Strategy, as set out Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. Kentstown is classed as a 'Village' in the County Settlement Strategy and as such it should act as a node for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services. It is envisaged that the future growth of Kentstown should be curtailed and safeguarded. The future development of Kentstown will be predicated more closely to local rather than regional growth.

The quantum and scale of new development in Kentstown should be sufficient to accommodate local growth and local needs only. An adequate level and distribution of local services will be promoted including those associated with education, recreation, community facilities and those related to social and religious needs of the community. The village should grow in a sustainable manner with new development contributing towards the consolidation of the village, rather than its continuous outward spread, in order to promote the efficient use of land and of energy, to minimise unnecessary transport demand, encourage walking and cycling and to enhance the existing built environment. Ultimately the village should have a high quality, well designed, well landscaped and appropriately scaled environment that is in keeping with the existing character, amenity, environment, heritage and landscape of the village.

3.1.4 Village Growth and Housing Policy

VGH POL 1: Quality Residential Development

Future residential development should integrate visually with the existing character of Kentstown.

VGH POL 2: Growth of Kentstown

To ensure that the growth and development of Kentstown shall be directed to meet the needs of the local community in Kentstown and be in keeping with the existing character, amenity, heritage and landscape of the village. Growth of the settlement will be in accordance with the provisions of MCDP 2007-2013, in particular the County Settlement Strategy.

VGH POL 3: The Protection of Residential Amenity

To protect the residential amenity enjoyed by residents of existing dwellings in Kentstown. Any development proposed on adjoining lands to residential areas must not detract from residential amenity in terms of privacy, traffic, parking or visual intrusion.

VGH POL 4: Quality of Design

To ensure a high design standard in architecture, design, layout, provision of open space, landscaping and variation in house type and size in the new residential developments.

VGH POL 5: Mix of Dwelling Types

To require a good social mix in new residential developments providing a range of unit types/sizes to cater for a range of people including families, first time buyers, single people, the elderly etc.

VGH POL 6: Pedestrian and Bicycle Links

To encourage the provision of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle links between and within residential areas and the village centre.

VGH POL 7: The Scale of New Development should be in Proportion to Existing Development

The maximum size of any individual new housing scheme proposed in Kentstown should not exceed 32 dwellings during the lifetime of the Local Area Plan (2009-2015). This is in accordance with the recommendations of the DoEHLG Guidelines, given that the existing housing stock (2009) in Kentstown is estimated to be c. 323 units.

Rationale:

An additional 32 no. dwellings in Kentstown would increase the housing stock of the settlement by a maximum of 10% between 2009 and 2015. The provision of additional residential schemes over this figure is not considered appropriate in Kentstown, given the absence of a sufficiently developed urban structure and an inadequate level of services, amenities and infrastructure to cater for further significant development.

Restricting the maximum size of any individual new housing scheme proposal in Kentstown to 32 dwellings is therefore appropriate in this context and is in line with the recommendations set out in the DoEHLG Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development, 2008.

VGH POL 8: Provision of Adequate Infrastructure

Any housing scheme above 5 no. units shall be subject to the provisions of the County Development Plan 2007-2013 and the following additional provisions:-

- The necessary services, infrastructure and facilities must be in place to serve the additional housing prior to its construction.
- The increase must be considered in the context of the rate of growth of Kentstown in relation to the County growth rate and Kentstown's role in the settlement strategy.
- The additional housing must be well-located with respect to the services and facilities in the village centre, must comply with the land use zones set forth in the Local Area Plan and must contribute positively to the character of the existing environment.

VGH POL 9: Provision of Social and Affordable Housing

The Council require a 20% quota of social / affordable housing to be provided from each housing development within Kentstown, on lands zoned for residential use or mixture of residential and other uses. This requirement will be included as a condition of development, with the exception of an application for development of 4 or less houses, or for housing on land of 0.1 hectares or less as provided for under the Planning & Development (Amendment) Act 2002. Therefore all residential developments in excess of 4 housing units or any proposed site for residential development in excess of 0.1 hectares is to be subject to the provision of "Social/Affordable" Housing.

Note: Any social & affordable housing provided as part of a private housing development should be integrated with the private housing proposed. It is required that developers discuss the requirements of social and affordable housing provision in their schemes with the housing section of the County Council, prior to an application being lodged. It is important to ensure that it is carefully designed into the development from the outset to ensure good quality urban design and better community environments.

VGH POL 10: Master Plans for New Residential Development Schemes

To permit housing development on residentially zoned lands identified for Kentstown, subject to development being in accordance with an agreed master plan for the proposed site and all contiguous and neighbouring residential lands to be prepared by the developer(s)/applicant(s) to the agreement of the Council. A Master Plan will be required in the case of development comprising of 5 no. residential units or greater.

The master plan(s) must include provision for:

- a) the establishment of building design and urban design guidelines in compliance with the objectives of the LAP,
- b) appropriate facilities necessary to support the development provided through the inclusion of necessary childcare facilities and children's play areas in compliance the objectives of the LAP,
- c) priority of movement and accessibility throughout the development and connecting with adjoining urban areas, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists,

- d) incorporation of existing vegetation, hedgerows, trees and natural features into the proposed development,
- e) satisfactory mix of housing types and sizes, including affordable, family and adaptable housing, and
- f) singular access points onto the public road.

This policy will apply to all lands zoned A1, A2 or C1 in the Local Area Plan where residential uses are considered to be '*normally acceptable*' or '*open for consideration*'.

VGH POL 11: Provision of Schools

A planning application for substantial residential development (5 no. residential units or greater) in Kentstown, must be accompanied by a report identifying the demand for school places likely to be generated by the proposals and the capacity of existing schools in the vicinity to cater for such demand.

VGH POL 12: Footpaths and Cycleways

It is a requirement that all new residential schemes in Kentstown must be designed to incorporate footpaths and cycle ways that link dwellings within the scheme and also link the scheme to the village centre to encourage walking and cycling. Adequate cycle parking facilities in accordance with the standards set out in this Local Area Plan must also be adhered to.

VGH POL 13: Housing Layout

Within new housing schemes, pedestrian and vehicular movements should be convenient and safe. In addition, development should be so designed to ensure that the opportunities for crime and vandalism are reduced to the greatest possible extent, through the use of passive supervision.

VGH POL 14: High Quality Sustainable Residential Communities

The establishment and maintenance of high quality sustainable residential communities will be encouraged and regard should be had to the "Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities" guidelines of the DoEHLG, 2007. The Council wish to guide and control development in order to achieve the qualities in the design set out in the table below. The table includes the aspect of quality that is desired and a corresponding policy aimed at achieving it.

Table 3.1.4 Aspects of Quality

Aspect	Policy
Character A place with its own identity	To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.
Quality of the Public Realm A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas	To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.

Continuity and Enclosure A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished	To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development that clearly defines private and public areas.
Ease of Movement A place that is easy to get to and move through	To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.
Legibility A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand	To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.
Adaptability A place that can change easily	To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.
Diversity A place with variety and choice	To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.

VGH POL 15: Integration of New Social Housing

To integrate new social housing, should it be proposed, into the existing social and urban fabric of Kentstown.

VGH POL 16: Quality Design & Architecture

High standards of architecture, design and layout are required in all developments so as to ensure the creation and development of an attractive residential and employment environment. High standards of landscaping and amenity areas will also be required in order to promote the development of a sustainable environment capable of serving local needs.

VGH POL 17: Traffic Safety at Design Stage

Traffic safety should be considered at the design stage of any residential development and traffic calming taken into account so that remedial measures such as speed bumps and chicanes are not required. Design features should ensure that wherever possible appropriate traffic speeds are managed by the arrangements of buildings and spaces

VGH POL 18: Density

As set out in the County Development Plan 2007-2013, a maximum density of 35 units per hectare is permissible in Kentstown on greenfield sites within the LAP boundary. In general, densities and house types shall be compatible with established densities and housing character in the area.

In addition to this, appropriate residential density in the village core area will be determined by reference to the key principles of good urban design and in light of the recommendations set out in Government Guidelines including *'The Residential Density Guidelines, 1999'* and the *'Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential*

Development in Urban Areas, 2009' (DoEHLG), including the accompanying '*Best Practice in Urban Design Manual*', in conjunction with the following factors:-

- Existing densities in adjoining residential areas;
- Compliance with quantitative and qualitative development control standards;
- Capacity of the infrastructure to absorb the demands created by the development existing features on the site;
- Specified rear garden sizes;
- Proximity to points of access and to the public transport network;
- Existing topographical, landscape and other features on the site;
- The extent to which the design and layout follows a coherent design brief resulting in a high quality residential environment;
- The extent to which the site may, due to its size, scale and location, propose its own density and character, having regard to the need to protect the established character and amenities of existing adjoining residential areas.

The emphasis is on providing quality-housing environments based on innovation and a design led approach.

VGH POL 19: Public Open Space in Residential Environments

On green-field sites public open space should be provided at a minimum rate of 15% of the total site area. This allocation should be in the form of useable open spaces within residential developments.

In other cases (e.g. brownfield sites, backland sites etc.) public open space will generally be required at a minimum rate of 10% of the total site area.

Rationale:

The above standards are intended to work as safeguards in order to avoid over-development and to assist the planning authority in their assessment of planning applications. Public open space is one of the key elements in defining the quality of the residential environment. It provides passive as well as active amenity and has important ecological and environmental aspects. In calculating the area of the open space, the area of roads, grass margins, roundabouts, footpaths and visibility splays shall not be taken into account.

VGH POL 20: Design of Open Space

To require that the precise location, type and design of open space provision will be negotiated with developers according to the specific characteristics of the development, the site and its context. All open spaces proposed by developers should be designed and set out by suitably qualified landscape architects or similar design professionals so as to ensure a high standard with good design and layout.

The Council will normally expect all public open space provision to take account of the following general principles:

- Public open space should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way and designed as an integral part of the development, rather than as an afterthought.
- Wherever possible the majority of open space should be multi-functional. Areas providing for informal amenity and children's play can often successfully be combined.
- Public open space should be well designed from a visual perspective as well as functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings within the residential area.
- Attractive natural features should be protected and incorporated into open space areas.
- Public open space areas should be provided with a maximum amount of surveillance from dwellings within the development.

To ensure implementation of open space provision the Council will attach appropriate planning conditions to permissions, and where necessary will enter into agreements with developers. These will provide for the laying out and landscaping of open space areas in accordance with a detailed scheme to be agreed with the Councils.

Rationale:

Integrated pleasant, attractive and landscaped open space should form an intrinsic element of new residential development. It can be provided in a variety of ways e.g. open spaces both formal and informal, semi-natural areas such as wetlands, woodlands, meadows and green corridors, as well as formal gardens, and seating areas. The use of hard landscaping elements, such as paving or cobbled areas play an increasingly important role in the design and presentation of open space concepts.

VGH POL 21: Private Open Space

An adequate amount of private open space must be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling. In general the requirement will be **60 to 75 square metre** minimum for houses with **3/4/5 bedrooms** in order to ensure that most household activities are accommodated and at the same time offers visual relief, receives some sunshine and encourages plant growth.

The boundaries of rear gardens should generally be provided with a permanent durable barrier with a minimum height of 1.4 metres. Boundary fencing and walls shall be of a high quality design and reflect the character of the surrounding area. Unrendered block walls are not considered appropriate.

Where rear gardens back onto public areas, excluding a public roadway, this height should be increased to 1.8 metres.

The following open space requirements apply:

Private Open Space Requirements

Type of Unit	Required Open Space
3/4/5 bedroom houses	60-75 sq.m
1/2 bedroom houses	48 sq.m
1 bedroom apartments	6 sq. m.
2/3 bedroom apartments	8-10 sq.m

The DoEHLG guidance document entitled '*Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments*' (Sept. 2007) should be referred to in the case of any proposal including apartments.

VGH POL 22: Play Space

A standard of a minimum of 10 sq.m. of dedicated playable space per residential unit is to be provided as an integral part of each new development. This playable space can form part of the overall open space provision of a development but must be dedicated to play.

This space is to be distributed throughout the development and should take into account the presence or lack of existing off-site provision. The total space requirement should be broken down into the relevant typologies taking account of the maximum walking distances from residential units given below. All children and young people should have access to play space which should be within a reasonable and safe walking distance from home.

To ensure that children and young people are guaranteed this access to play space the following standards should be observed when new residential developments are being laid out:

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

VGH POL 23: Bin Storage Standards

Each residential unit is required to have adequate storage for three wheeled bins. Residential units with no rear access shall provide adequate storage for the bins to the front of the development, in contained units.

VGH POL 24: Separation Distance between Houses

A minimum of 2.3 metres shall be provided between dwellings for the full length of the flanks in all development of detached, semidetached and end of terrace dwellings. This area shall be equally divided between the dwellings so separated. Where garages are provided as single storey annexes to houses, the above separation distance may be reduced, providing a direct through access from front to rear of the dwelling is maintained.

A minimum of 22 metres, between directly opposing windows shall be observed. Where sufficient private open space is provided and privacy is maintained, this depth may be reduced for single storey dwellings.

VGH POL 25: Boundary Treatment of House Sites

Where the flank or rear boundaries of house sites abut roads, pedestrian ways or public open space, suitably designed screen walls 2.0 metres in height and built in accordance with I.S 325, shall be provided. Where concrete screen walls are proposed they shall be suitably rendered and capped in an acceptable manner that is consistent with the design/finish of the house.

VGH POL 26: Naming of Housing Developments

The naming of new residential development should reflect the local and historical context of its siting as far as possible, such as local names which reflect the landscape, its features, culture or history of the area in which the development is located. Also considered will be the names of historical persons associated with the area. The use of Irish names will be encouraged. The naming of residential developments shall be approved by the Council prior to the launching of any advertising campaign for a development.

VGH POL 27: Settlement Strategy

In Kentstown, 30% of all new multi-house developments, being developments in excess of 4 houses, shall be reserved for persons who are native to the County (being persons who have lived in the County for at least 1 year) or those who by virtue or their employment require to live in the urban centre. This will ensure that the development of Kentstown is more closely linked to local growth rather than to regional residential growth. The Planning Authority will apply the same requirements to an overall development whereby planning permission is sought initially for site development works and individual applications below this threshold are subsequently applied for.

3.1.5 Village Growth and Housing Key Action

Key Action VGH 1: Implement the Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy for Kentstown as set out in Chapter 5 of the Meath County Development Plan (MCDP) 2007-2013 will be implemented by the Council.

3.1.6 Village Growth and Housing Objective

OBJ VGH 1: No Pedestrian Access through 'Slán Duff View' to Adjoining Developments

To prevent an unacceptable level of movement through the 'Slán Duff View' residential estate, no pedestrian access will be permitted linking the estate with the lands to its north zoned for A2 – New Residential Development.

3.2 LAND USE DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1 Explanation of Format

This section of the Local Area Plan examines the existing situation in Kentstown in terms of land use development and sets out a strategy for its future growth. The strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals through the application of Policies and Key Actions. The Policy and Key Actions for Kentstown are listed at the end of this section.

3.2.1.1 Policy Informants

In devising an appropriate land use strategy for Kentstown, the Plan has been informed by a wide range of considerations, including the following:-

- **the existing character, amenity, landscape and heritage of Kentstown;**
- **the existing land use pattern, development trends and recent pressure for continued growth**, that has occurred in Kentstown in recent years largely owing to its location close to Dublin airport, Dublin City and Navan, its accessibility, unique historic character, setting and quality environment;
- **the nature, location, design and density of existing and recently constructed developments in the villages;**
- **the policy, objectives, land-use and development control provisions** of the Kentstown Urban Detail Map 17 (2001), the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, the Residential Density Guidelines 1999, Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines 2005, Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines 2008 by the DoEHLG, the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 and the Regional Planning Guidelines;
- **the input of the local community and other stakeholders** through the pre-draft public consultation process to include attendance at the public exhibitions, completion of questionnaires/leaflets, submissions made and discussions with individuals; and
- **the proper planning and sustainable development of the area**, in particular the need to provide sufficient lands in the Plan Area for the anticipated growth of the village to accommodate local need and associated land use developments, including community facilities, adequate infrastructure and services and local amenities.

In addition to this, the development boundary for the village has been designated taking into consideration the following factors:-

- **the need to provide a compact and accessible village** in order to promote the efficient use of land and of energy, to reduce pressure for one-off housing on rural lands, to minimise unnecessary transport

demand, encourage walking and cycling and to enhance the existing built environment, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development;

- **the need to encompass the anticipated development envelope required for Kentstown and its wider hinterland area** not only for the 6 year plan period but also for the medium to longer term growth of the village;
- **the need to accommodate the areas potential population growth and demand for housing;**
- **the need to offer locational choice and housing mix to serve local needs;**
- **the existing built environment and road structure;**
- **the desire to maintain and enhance the character of Kentstown;**
- **proximity to existing and potential community and commercial facilities;**
- **the level of existing or planned new infrastructure and services;**
- **existing permitted / committed development;** and
- **the need to provide consistency and continuity with the Plan area boundaries** delineated in the previous Kentstown Urban Detail Map 2001.

3.2.2 Existing Situation

Kentstown is a small village that has seen significant population growth and residential development occur in the past decade. This development has largely taken the form of low density residential estates, with houses being set in single plots with front and back gardens. This has caused the village to sprawl outwards from the crossroads at its core. However, the new residential development has not been accompanied by the provision of the necessary commercial, retail and community facilities required to serve a growing community.

The village currently only supports a single public bar (Maguire's Bar & Lounge) which functions as a key landmark in the centre of the village. As the village does not have a community centre or any form of youth facilities, the pub tends to function as the village's only real community meeting point.

Adjoining the pub to the rear is a small Londis grocery store which provides every day necessities. Both the pub and grocery store share a surface car park, which also accommodates some recycling facilities – some bring banks and clothing recycling facility. In addition to this, Kentstown has a Montessori School which is

located just southeast of the pub and shop, adjoining Churchfields residential development.

In terms of commercial uses, these are very limited in Kentstown. Reilly Agri Plant Sales and Hire and Kilmore Car Sales are located on the opposite side of the village crossroads fronting the Navan Road (R153) regional route. In addition to this there is Evan's Coaches, which is located off the main road.

Kentstown has two churches – St. Mary's Church of Ireland Church with historic graveyard and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church and graveyard (currently in use), which is located at the central crossroads. Remaining land use within Kentstown is largely residential comprising a mixture of low density residential estates (detached, semi-detached and terraced townhouses) and single dwellings set on large plots of lands, such as those which extend along the Leganara Road and along the Navan Road (R153).

Development Density

As noted above the density of development within Kentstown is low. Some of the more recent residential schemes have been developed at higher densities, but these remain relatively low with all houses 2-storey and provided with private outdoor amenity space. These residential schemes also contain small pockets of public amenity space.

Development Pattern

Kentstown is linear in form and developed around the junction of 5 intersecting roads. Rather than the settlement growing in a concentric manner around this junction development has occurred along these roads, and stretches out in an unsustainable manner, along the busy Navan Road and School Road (R153 and R150 Regional Routes), which connect Kentstown to Duleek and Ashbourne. Kentstown National School is located to the northeast of the village along the School Road and sits outside the current development boundary. Some distance to the west of the village is Somerville Demesne, which included the large late-Georgian house which gave rise to Kentstown village. Somerville Demesne is a proposed Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). The demesne also contains landscaped grounds which include areas of protected woodland, a walled garden and an ice house.

3.2.3 Land Use Strategy

The land use strategy for Kentstown is to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of Kentstown for the period 2009-2015, while also promoting the aims of national, regional and county policy and objectives. The County Settlement Strategy recommends that the future growth of the village should be curtailed and safeguard so that it does not act as a catalyst to facilitate the continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin in particular, or other Large or Moderate Towns.

Significant residential development has taken place in Kentstown over the past decade which is inconsistent with its role in the settlement strategy and out of step

with the level of services and facilities that are available within the village to serve an enlarged community. The land use strategy for Kentstown aims to address this imbalance by only zoning enough residential lands to accommodate the projected growth of the village during the lifetime of the Local Area Plan, while also allowing for 50% headroom, as recommended in the Regional Planning Guidelines and Residential Development Plan Guidelines (DoEHLG). This 'headroom' is required to ensure that an adequate supply of land becomes available for housing and that the market provides a locational choice to both consumers and the house building sector. It is a policy of the Council that new residential development will only be permitted on zoned lands in Kentstown at such a time as the wastewater and water supply infrastructure in Kentstown is upgraded and capacity increased.

In order to promote sustainable development, new development in Kentstown should contribute towards maintaining a compact settlement. This is reflected in the location and phasing of zoned lands as set out in this Local Area Plan and the retention of the same development boundary, as proposed in the County Development Plan.

Note: Justification for New Residential Zoned Land in Kentstown Local Area Plan

Kentstown has an estimated requirement of an additional 85 no. residential units over the lifetime of this Local Area Plan.⁷ Adding the required additional 50% headroom this equates an additional 42 residential units to this total - totalling 127 no. residential units. In 2007 the County Development Plan identified the lands zoned for residential development in the village could yield 60 residential units (using the CDP figure of 20 units per hectare), as set out in Table 6 of the County Development Plan 2007-2013. Since the publication of that table, 45 no. residential units have been permitted in Kentstown. Taking this figure from the required overall 127 no. residential units, leaves a further 82 no. residential units that are required in Kentstown.

The remaining residential zoned lands (1.5 hectares) in Kentstown (as identified on the Urban Detail Map 17 of the County Development Plan 2007-2013), have capacity to yield 30 no. residential dwellings (using the CDP figure of 20 units per hectare). Thus, there is requirement to make provision for a further 42 no. residential units in Kentstown, requiring an additional 2.2 hectares. This Local Area Plan makes provision for these additional residential zoned lands at the village core, as 'Phase 1' residential zoned lands. The remainder of these lands are designated as 'Phase 2' residential zoned lands and will be developed during the lifetime of the next Local Area Plan 2015-2021. It is anticipated these lands will be accessed via Glen Road.

However, it should be noted that given the current capacity problems experienced in Kentstown in respect of water services infrastructure, it is a policy of this Local Area Plan that new residential development will only be permitted on A1 and A2 zoned lands in Kentstown, upon such time as the wastewater and water supply infrastructure in Kentstown is upgraded and capacity increased appropriately (see policy LUD POL 1 overleaf)

⁷ Refer to Table 3.1.3: Household Distribution Table 2006-2013

3.2.4 Land Use Zoning

The land use zoning objectives for Kentstown are detailed below and are shown on the Land Use Zoning Map.

The following paragraphs define what is meant when a land use '*Will Normally be Acceptable*', when it is '*Open for Consideration*' or when it '*Will Not Normally be Acceptable*':-

- **Will Normally be Acceptable**

A use which will normally be acceptable is one which the Planning Authority accepts in principle in the relevant zone. However, it is still subject to the normal planning process including policies and objectives outlined in the Plan.

- **Are Open for Consideration**

A use which is open for consideration means that the use is generally acceptable except where indicated otherwise and where specific considerations associated with a given proposal (i.e. scale) would be unacceptable, or where the development would be contrary to the objective for a given area.

- **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 Planning 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 use zone objectives will be considered on their merits.

Please note that uses other than the primary use for which an area is zoned may be permitted provided they are not in conflict with the primary use zoning objective. The Zoning Matrix illustrates the acceptability or unacceptability in principle of various uses for each of the zoning objectives. The land use zoning matrix is intended to provide guidance to potential developers. It is not intended to supplant the normal planning process. An indication that a proposal would be '*permitted in principle*' from the matrix should in no way be taken to imply a granting of permission, or indeed that a planning application may be necessarily successful. Individual applications are a matter for the Planning Authority to decide and the final decision rests with them, taking into consideration the merits of individual cases and circumstances that may be relevant at a specific time or at a specific location.

The matrix relates to land use only and important factors including density, building height, design standards and traffic generation also shall be considered relevant in establishing whether or not a development proposal would be acceptable in a particular location.

3.2.5 Land Use Development Objectives

Table 3.2.1 outlines the use zone objective for each zoning category. Section 3.2.6 below outlines the uses that are (i) normally accepted (ii) open for consideration and (iii) will not normally be accepted for each of the land-use zonings outlined in Table 3.2.1 below. The land use zoning objectives contained in the Table 3.2.1 below are consistent with that contained in the 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan.

Table 3.2.1: Land Use Zoning Objectives for Kentstown

Use Zone Objective	Use Zone Objective
A1	To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
A2	To provide for new residential communities and community facilities and protect the amenities of existing residential areas in accordance with an approved framework plan.
C1	To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses in existing mixed use central business areas.
E1	To provide for industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
F1	To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
G1	To provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities.
H1	To protect the setting, character and environmental quality of areas of high natural beauty.

Explanatory Notes

A1 Zones

In A1 zones, the Planning Authority will be primarily concerned with the protection of the amenities of established residents. While infill or redevelopment proposals would be acceptable in principle, careful consideration would have to be given to protecting amenities such as privacy, daylight/ sunlight, aspect and so on in new proposals.

A2 Zones

The A2 zones are intended to be the main areas for new residential development. It is envisaged that in the interest of sustainability that the larger tracts of A2 zoned lands could accommodate ancillary uses such as employment generating uses, community facilities, local shopping facilities, etc. provided they are appropriate in scale and do not unduly interfere with the predominant residential land use.

C1 Zones

C1 zones have been identified to encourage mixed use development and for this reason it will be a requirement to include at least 30% of a given site area for commercial (non retail) development.

F1, G1 & H1 Zones

F1, G1 and H1 zones are self-explanatory and relate to community and amenity uses or designations. No residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.

E1 Zones

E1 zones provide for industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure. They allow the full range of industrial processes to take place within a well designed and attractive setting that provide employment opportunities. Non-industrial uses are limited to prevent land use conflicts.

It shall be the policy of Meath County Council to apply a more flexible approach to large scale office type development in excess of 200 sq.m. of gross floor area in significant areas (i.e. in excess of 3 hectares of land that is currently undeveloped, as is the case with the E1 zoned lands in Kentstown which are over 5 hectares) of E1 land use zoning objective under the following conditions:

- The preparation of a Framework Plan to ensure the provision of the necessary physical infrastructure, the appropriate density and design of layout and the interface between proposed uses and existing development;
- That all processes being operated in the vicinity of the site, similarly zoned E1, are classified as light industrial in nature, as defined in the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 - 2007, as amended;
- That the site is located adjacent to a public transport corridor and is served by an adequate road network; and
- That the application is accommodated by a viable mobility management plan which is to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and provides for the achievement of acceptable modal shares for both public and private transport within an appropriate timeframe.

No office shall be permitted on E1 zoned lands where the primary use of the office (or service) is provided principally to visiting members of the public e.g. solicitors, health clinic, accountants, etc.

Information on Framework Plans

The preparation of Framework Plans will assist in achieving quality developments in terms of, inter alia, urban design, structure, delivery of community/amenity facilities and permeability. This Local Area Plan identifies key sites that will require the

preparation of approved Framework Plans and subsequent planning applications will be required to adhere to the approved Plans.

The use of Framework Plans has not been confined to residentially zoned lands; Framework Plans have also been sought for lands intended for other uses. The Planning Authority considers Framework Plans as an effective means of guiding new development and providing essential social and infrastructure in a phased and sustainable manner.

Each Framework Plan shall consist of a written statement and a plan or series of plans indicating the objectives in such detail, as may determined by the Planning Authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies to include, inter alia, the following details:

- Proposals in relation to the overall design of the proposed development including maximum heights, external finishes of structures and the general appearance and design, including that of the public realm;
- The types and extent of any proposed development indicating how these uses integrate with surrounding development and land uses;
- Proposals in relation to transportation including public transportation and non motorised modes, vehicular roads layout and access arrangements, loading / unloading provision, the provision of parking spaces and traffic management;
- Proposals in relation to the provision of services in the area including the provision of waste and sewerage facilities and water, electricity and telecommunications services, oil and gas pipelines, including storage facilities for oil and gas;
- The facilitation of public access to the proposed amenity areas located within the Plan boundaries and beyond; and
- To make provision for sport and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of any proposals.

Land Use Zoning Matrix

A1: TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE AMENITY OF DEVELOPED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES

WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED: ATM (in commercial premises), B&B, bring banks, open space, public services, residential, water services***.

ARE OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION: adverts, community facility / centre, crèche / childcare facility, cultural facility / use, doctors / dentists*, education, guest house, halting site / group housing, health centre, home based economic activities, petrol

station, residential institution, retirement home, shop – local**, sports facilities, veterinary surgery.

WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE: abattoir, outdoor advertising structures, agri-business, amusement arcade, bank / financial institution, betting office, car park (commercial), caravan park, car dismantler / scrap yard, cash & carry, casual trading, cemetery, church, cinema, conference centre, C&D waste recycling centre, dance hall / night club, drive through restaurants, energy installation, enterprise centre, fuel depot – domestic fuel depot, petroleum products, funeral home, garden centre, heavy goods vehicle car park, hospital, hostel, hotel / motel, industry – general, industry – light, leisure / recreation, library, motor sales / repair, offices <100m², offices 100 to 1000m², offices >1000m², park and ride, plant and tool hire, public house, civic & amenity recycling facility, refuse transfer station, restaurant / café, retail warehouse, science & technology based enterprise, shop – major, shopping centre, take-away, telecommunication structures, third level educational institution, tourism complex, transport depot, warehouse, wholesale warehousing.

A2: TO PROVIDE FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PROTECT THE AMENITIES OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN APPROVED FRAMEWORK PLAN

WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED: ATM (in commercial premises), B&B, bring banks, community facility / centre, crèche / childcare facility, guest house, halting site / group housing, library, open space, public services, residential, retirement home, shop – local **, water services.

ARE OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION: adverts bank / financial institution, betting office, church, conference centre, cultural facility / use, doctors / dentists*, education, enterprise centre, funeral home, health centre, home based economic activities, hospital, hostel, hotel / motel, industry – light, leisure / recreation, offices <100m², petrol station, public house, residential institution, sports facilities, veterinary surgery.

WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE: abattoir, outdoor advertising structures, agri-business, amusement arcade, car park (commercial), caravan park, car dismantler / scrap yard, cash & carry, casual trading, cemetery, cinema, C&D waste recycling centre, dance hall / night club, drive through restaurants, energy installation, fuel depot – domestic, fuel depot – petroleum products, garden centre, heavy goods vehicle car park, industry – general, motor sales / repair, offices 100 to 1000m², offices >1000m², park & ride, plant and tool hire, civic & amenity recycling facility, refuse transfer station, restaurant / café, retail warehouse, science & technology based enterprise, shop – major, shopping centre, take-away, telecommunication structures, third level educational institution, tourism complex, transport depot, warehouse, wholesale warehousing.

C1: TO PROVIDE FOR AND FACILITATE MIXED RESIDENTIAL AND BUSINESS USES IN EXISTING MIXED USE CENTRAL BUSINESS AREAS.

WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED: ATM (in commercial premises), B&B, bring banks, church, community facility / centre, crèche / childcare facility, cultural facility / use, doctors / dentists*, education, guest house, health centre, hospital, hostel, hotel /

motel, library, offices <100m², offices 100 to 1000m², offices >1000m², open space, public house, public services, residential, restaurant / café, shop – local**, tourism complex, water services***

ARE OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION: adverts, outdoor advertising structures, agri – business, betting office, car park (commercial), cash & carry, casual trading, cinema, conference centre, dance hall / night club, drive through restaurants, enterprise centre, funeral home, garden centre, halting site / group housing, home based economic activities, industry – light, leisure / recreation, motor sales / repair, park and ride, petrol station, plant & tool hire, residential institution, retirement home, science & technology based enterprise, shop – major, sports facilities, take-away, telecommunication structures, third level educational institution, veterinary surgery, wholesale warehousing.

WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE: abattoir, amusement arcade, bank / financial institution, caravan park, car dismantler / scrap yard, cemetery, C&D waste recycling centre, energy installation, fuel depot – domestic, fuel depot – petroleum products, heavy goods vehicle car park, industry – general, civic & amenity recycling facility, refuse transfer station, retail warehouse, shopping centre, transport depot, warehouse.

E1: TO PROVIDE FOR INDUSTRIAL AND RELATED USES SUBJECT TO THE PROVISION OF NECESSARY PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED: adverts, outdoor advertising structures, agri-business, bring banks, cash & carry, energy installation, enterprise centre fuel depot – domestic, fuel depot – petroleum products, garden centre, heavy goods vehicle car park, industry – general, industry – light, motor sales / repair, park and ride, plant & tool hire, public services, civic & amenity recycling facility, refuse transfer station, telecommunication structures, transport depot warehouse, water services***, wholesale warehousing.

ARE OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION: abattoir, car park (commercial), car dismantler / scrap yard, C&D waste recycling centre, crèche / childcare facility, offices >1000m², open space, restaurant / café, retail warehouse, science & technology based enterprise, shop – local**.

WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE: ATM (in commercial premises), amusement arcade, B&B, bank / financial institution, betting office, caravan park, casual trading, cemetery, church, cinema, community facility / centre, conference centre, cultural facility / use, dance hall / night club, doctors / dentists*, drive through restaurants, education, funeral home, guest house, halting site / group housing, health centre, home based, library, economic activities, hospital, hostel, hotel / motel, leisure / recreation, offices<100m², offices 100 to 1000m², petrol station, public house, residential, residential institution, retirement home, shop – major, shopping centre, sports facilities, take-away, third level educational institution, tourism complex, veterinary surgery.

F1: TO PROVIDE FOR AND IMPROVE OPEN SPACES FOR ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATIONAL AMENITIES.

WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED: open space, public services, sports facilities, tourism complex, water services***.

ARE OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION: outdoor advertising structures, bring banks, caravan park, church, community facility / centre, cultural facility / use, leisure / recreation, telecommunication structures,

WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE: ATM (in commercial premises), abattoir, adverts, agri-business, amusement arcade, B&B, bank / financial institution, betting office, car park (commercial), car dismantler / scrap yard, cash & carry, casual trading, cemetery, cinema, conference centre, C&D waste recycling centre, crèche / childcare facility, dance hall / night club, doctors / dentists,* drive through restaurants, education, energy installation, enterprise centre, fuel depot – domestic, fuel depot – petroleum products, funeral home garden centre, guest house, halting site / group housing, health care, heavy goods vehicle car park, home based economic activities, hospital, hostel, hotel / motel, industry – general, industry – light, library, motor sales / repair, offices<100m2, offices 100 to 1000m2, offices>1000m2, park and ride, petrol station, plant & tool hire, public house, civic & amenity recycling facility, refuse transfer station, residential, residential institution, restaurant / café, retail warehouse, retirement home, science & technology based enterprise, shop – local**, shop – major, shopping centre, take-away, third level educational institution, transport depot, veterinary surgery, warehouse, wholesale warehousing.

G1: TO PROVIDE FOR NECESSARY COMMUNITY, RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES.

WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED: cemetery, church, cinema, community facility / centre, crèche / childcare facility, cultural facility / use, education, funeral home, health centre, hospital, leisure / recreation, library, open space, public services, civic & amenity recycling facility, retirement home, sports facilities, third level educational institution, tourism complex, water services***.

ARE OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION: bring banks, doctors / dentists*, halting site / group housing, offices <100m2, residential institution, restaurant / café, telecommunication structures.

WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE: ATM (in commercial premises), abattoir, adverts, outdoor advertising structures, agri-business, amusement arcade, B&B, bank / financial institution, betting office, car park (commercial), caravan park, car dismantler / scrap yard, cash & carry, casual trading, conference centre, C&D waste recycling centre, dancehall / night club, drive through restaurants, energy installation, enterprise centre, fuel depot – domestic, fuel depot – petroleum products, garden centre, guest house, heavy goods vehicle car park, home based economic activities, hostel, hotel / motel, industry – general, industry – light, motor sales / repair, offices 100 to 1000m2, offices >1000m2, park and ride, petrol station, plant & tool hire, public house, refuse transfer station, residential, retail warehouse, science & technology based enterprise, shop – local **, shop – major,

shopping centre, take-away, transport depot, veterinary surgery, warehouse, wholesale warehousing.

H1: TO PROTECT THE SETTING, CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF AREAS OF HIGH NATURAL BEAUTY.

WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTED: open space.

ARE OPEN FOR CONSIDERATION: community facility / centre, leisure / recreation, water services***.

WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE: ATM (in commercial premises), abattoir, adverts, outdoor advertising structures, agri-business, amusement arcade, B&B, bank / financial institution, betting offices, bring banks, car park (commercial), caravan park, car dismantler / scrap yard, cash & carry, casual trading, cemetery, church, cinema, conference centre, C&D waste recycling centre, crèche / childcare facility, cultural facility / use, dance hall / night club, doctors / dentists*, drive through restaurants, education, energy installation, enterprise centre, fuel depot – domestic, fuel depot – petroleum product, funeral home, garden centre, guest house, halting site / group housing, health centre, heavy goods vehicle car park, home based economic activities, hospital, hostel, hotel / motel, industry – general, industry – light, library, motor sales / repair, offices <100m², offices 100 to 1000m², offices >1000m², park and ride, petrol station, plant & tool hire, public house, public services, civic & amenity recycling facility, refuse transfer station, residential, residential institution, restaurant / café, retail warehouse, retirement home, science & technology based enterprise, shop – local**, shop – major, shopping centre, sports facilities, take-away, telecommunication structures, third level educational institution, tourism complex, transport depot, veterinary surgery, warehouse, wholesale warehousing.

Key

- * *Where this use would be ancillary to the use of the overall dwelling as a normal place of residence by the user of the office.*
- ** *As local shop defined as a convenience retail unit of not more than 200 square metres in gross floor area*
- *** *Refers to public utility installations*

Transitional Areas

While the zoning objectives indicate the different uses permitted in each zone, it is important to consider the use and scale of development located at the boundary of adjoining land uses zones. It is important to avoid developments at such locations, which would be detrimental to the amenities of the more environmentally sensitive zone. For instance, in zones abutting residential areas or the Architectural Conservation 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 those areas.

3.2.6 Land Use Development Policy

LUD POL 1: Restriction on New Residential Development on A1, A2 and C1 Zoned Lands

New residential development will only be permitted on A1, A2 and C1 zoned lands in Kentstown at such a time as the wastewater and water supply infrastructure in Kentstown is upgraded and capacity increased.

Rationale: The waste water treatment plant in Kentstown is currently inadequate to support any significant increase in new development. Current constraints in water supply also place constraints on additional large-scale development from taking place in the area.

LUD POL 2: Sequential Approach

To encourage the sequential development of the town core from the centre outwards, in order to ensure that the higher order facilities and the higher density development is located on the most central lands where possible, with optimum access and the highest level of services.

LUD POL 3: Adequate Land

To ensure that an adequate amount of land is included in the development boundary of the town to cater for its growth over the period of the plan and in accordance with the role of Kentstown in the County Settlement Strategy.

LUD POL 4: Adjoining Lands

To assess any new development having regard to the development potential of adjoining land.

LUD POL 5: Way Leaves

To preserve free from development the way leaves of all public sewers and public water mains.

LUD POL 6: Sustainable Servicing

To prioritise developments which demonstrate that they can be sustainably and cost-effectively serviced by public infrastructure. Where public infrastructure is generally unavailable, a high standard of private services may be considered subject to appropriate environment and amenity safeguards.

LUD POL 7: Home Based Economic Activity

The Planning Authority supports minor changes to allow for home based economic activity provided the use remains ancillary to the main residential uses; that the applicant continues to reside in the house and the use has no adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring dwellings.

In determining applications for developments involving working at home, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following considerations:

- The effect on the amenities of adjoining occupiers, particularly in relation to hours of work, noise and general disturbance;
- The nature and extent of the work;
- Anticipated levels of traffic generated by the proposed development; and

- Arrangements for the storage of refuse and collection of waste.

Note: Home-based economic activity is defined as small scale commercial activity carried out by residents of a house, being subordinate to the use of the house as a single dwelling unit and including working from home. The Planning Authority recognises that such arrangements can benefit individuals, families and the local community in addition to contributing to more sustainable land use patterns by reducing the need for commuting.

LUD POL 8: Fast Food Takeaways

To prevent an excessive concentration of takeaways in the village centre and to ensure that if proposed that the intensity of such a use is in keeping with both the scale of the building and the pattern of development in the area.

The provision of such facilities will be strictly controlled having regard to the following, where appropriate:-

- The effect of noise, general disturbance, hours of operation, litter and fumes on the amenities of nearby residents;
- The need to safeguard the character and vitality of the town core and to maintain a suitable mix of retail uses;
- Traffic considerations;
- Litter control;
- The number or frequency of such facilities in the area;
- The need to integrate the design of ventilation systems into the design of the building; and
- The Council will require, prior to granting of permission that appropriate cleansing/anti-litter measures be agreed with the Planning Authority.

3.2.7 Framework Plan Area

There is one Framework Plan area designated in this Local Area Plan (see zoning objectives map). The Planning Authority considers Framework Plans as an effective means of guiding new development and providing essential social and physical infrastructure in a phased and sustainable manner. The preparation of Framework Plans will assist in achieving quality developments in terms of, inter alia, urban design, structure, delivery of community/amenity facilities and permeability.

The Framework Plan shall consist of a written statement and a plan or series of plans indicating the objectives in such detail, as may be determined by the Planning Authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies to include, inter alia, the following details: Proposals in relation to the overall design of the proposed development including maximum heights, external finishes of structures and the general appearance and design, including that of the public realm.

Framework Plan Area 1 (FP 1)

This area relates to lands located south-west of the junction off the R150 and the R153 (approximately 4.64 hectares in area). These lands are subject to a specific development objective, whereby a 'Framework Plan' is required for the future development of these subject lands. The 'Framework Plan' shall be prepared in consultation with Meath County Council. The following uses will be considered on the subject site, subject to consultation and agreement with Meath County Council;

- Village Centre facilities
- Community Facilities
- Residential Development (subject to the order of priority)
- Amenity Walks
- Landscaped Village Green

The framework plan for these lands shall include, inter alia;

- A Design Concept for the Development Site
- High quality design throughout the development
- Mixture of proposed uses
- Quality Amenity Space
- A landscape plan for the development and landscape management plan
- Access Arrangements to the Site
- Details of pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the development scheme
- Examination of separation distances from development to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

3.3 VILLAGE CHARACTER AND DESIGN

3.3.1 Explanation of Format

This section of the Local Area Plan examines the existing situation in Kentstown in terms of village character and design and sets out a strategy for its future growth. The strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals through the application of Policies and Key Actions. The Policy and Key Actions for Kentstown are listed at the end of this section.

3.3.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the Policies and Actions of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **analysis the existing village character and main built heritage features in Kentstown;**
- **Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kentstown, in particular Chapter 8 dealing with Cultural, Heritage and Landscape Protection within the County and Chapter 10 on Development Management Guidelines and Standards;
- **best practice approaches to urban design** and general principles of good urban design including legibility, permeability, responsiveness, human scale, enclosure, site responsiveness etc;
- **national and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Consultation Draft Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development and accompanying Urban Design Manual, the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines and the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines both by the DoEHLG etc;
- **the need to accommodate additional growth** in accordance with the County Settlement Strategy balanced against the need to consider the optimum location and design of development;
- **public consultation** including the input received through the public exhibitions, written submissions, and completed questionnaires; and
- **principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.3.2 Existing Situation

Kentstown has developed around a central crossroads where two regional roads meet – the R153 (Navan Road) connecting Kentstown to Ashbourne and Navan, and the R150 (School Road) to Duleek. Two further local roads link off the crossroads also. The junction is therefore a busy one, with traffic often travelling at speed along the R153 between Navan and Ashbourne. It's location between these two larger settlements and employment centres along with its proximity to Dublin have made it a popular choice for people, particularly young families, to locate.

In recent years the village has developed rapidly with new housing spreading along both regional routes and local roads from the crossroads outwards. This has given the settlement a linear form along these routes, where it extends for approximately 0.85km along the Navan Road (R153), approx. 0.55km along the School Road (R150) and approx. 1.46km along the two local roads - Somerville Road and Leganara Road.

Landscape Character

The landscape area in which Kentstown is situated is generally characterised by rolling drumlins interspersed with numerous large estates and associated parkland.

The landscape character area in which Kentstown is located is classed as Type 6 – 'Central Lowlands' in the Landscape Character Assessment Document contained in the County Development Plan. It is considered to be an area of high landscape value of regional importance, but with medium landscape sensitivity.

There are no known ecological sites in, or immediately adjoining, Kentstown. with Balrath Woods pNHA, the nearest designated site to Kentstown is located some 0.7km to the northeast of the village edge.

Landscape character is considered in greater detail in Section 3.7.3.

River Nanny

The River Nanny flows through Kentstown and eventually into the River Nanny Estuary and Shore Special Protection Area, located approximately 17km to the east of the village.

3.3.3 Village Design Strategy

The Village Design Strategy for Kentstown aims to promote the development of a high quality, well designed, well landscaped and appropriately scaled environment that is in keeping with the existing character, amenity, environment, heritage and landscape of the village. The design of new development should be responsive to its contextual surroundings and interact appropriately between settlement and landscape always aiming to enrich the existing qualities of the village. High quality design, appropriate use of materials and quality layout will be essential in order to ensure that new development contributes positively to Kentstown and helps to create an attractive and sustainable settlement.

The Village Design Strategy for Kentstown seeks to ensure that all new development in Kentstown is carefully thought out and planned to facilitate the provision or improvement of key infrastructure or community facilities (e.g. extension/provision of footpaths, cycle routes and public lighting). It promotes the use of design principles and approaches that seek to create a high quality built and natural environment that are appropriate to the context and landscape setting of Kentstown. All designers of residential or commercial development within the Plan boundary are requested to submit a Design Statement to the planning authority with their planning applications. A Design Statement is an appraisal of the distinctive character of the area adjoining the proposed development site and must consider how the design and layout of the proposed development responds to, and preferably enriches that character. By explaining the proposal in more detail and setting out the design decisions that have been made, a proposal can be more easily appreciated and accepted.

3.3.4 Village Character & Design Policy

VCD POL 1: The Promotion of High Quality Development

To promote the development of a high quality, sympathetically designed, well landscaped and appropriately scaled environment that is in keeping with the existing character, amenity, environment, heritage and landscape of the village.

VCD POL 2: Quality in Design, Layout and Use of Materials

To promote a high standard in design, layout and use of materials in new developments at all times, development that is sensitive to its context and is sustainable will be encouraged.

VCD POL 3: Availability of Services, Infrastructure and Amenities

New residential development shall have a regard to the availability of services, infrastructure, recreational and community facilities required to serve such development.

VCD POL 4: Re-Use & Rehabilitation of Vacant or Derelict Buildings

To encourage the sympathetic re-use or rehabilitation of any attractive and historic vacant, abandoned or derelict buildings within the plan area and encourage their sensitive conversion to residential or tourist accommodation or other appropriate use.

VCD POL 5: Protected Structures

To protect the existing protected structures in Kentstown.

VCD POL 6: Adequate Car Parking Spaces

Adequate car parking spaces shall be provided in all new developments and the car parking standards set out in the County Development Plan and this Local Area Plan will apply to new developments within the village.

VCD POL 7: The Provision of Essential Facilities and Infrastructure

All new development in Kentstown shall be carefully thought out and planned to facilitate the provision or extension of footpaths, cycle routes and public lighting, that link the village centre and connect it to the adjoining residential and

employment areas. All new development must incorporate these facilities, where appropriate.

VCD POL 8: Design Principles and Approaches

To promote the use of design principles and approaches that will help to create high quality built and natural environments and that are appropriate to context and landscape setting of Kentstown. The following design principles will be promoted in Kentstown:-

a) Context-based design

New development should be responsive to its site context and be in keeping with the Village character, amenity, heritage, environment and landscape.

b) Quality Place-Making

Buildings and public spaces should be designed to create quality places that are suited to their context, that have a recognisable identity and that contribute to the creation of a high quality public realm.

c) Making Connections

Providing, maintaining or improving sustainable movement systems e.g. the roads, streets, footpaths, cycle routes, public transport routes, green corridors and systems for providing service utilities, all of which improve urban life, must be considered carefully and planned for in all new development proposals

d) Built Form

New development should seek to improve on the existing situation but at the same time be sensitive to its context and in keeping with the scale and character of the existing development, particularly Kentstown's protected structures.

e) Connectivity, Permeability & Legibility

Developments should provide for a high level of connectivity and permeability, to enable and encourage walking and cycling and to promote linkages between areas, together with an adequate level of legibility. The provision of basic facilities such as footpaths and cycle ways to allow walking and cycling to and between different parts of the Village must be considered in the layout of all new development proposals.

VCD POL 9: New Vehicular Accesses

Proposed vehicular access must not endanger public safety by giving rise to traffic hazard. The Planning Authority will take account of relevant considerations such as traffic levels, typical vehicle speeds and plans for re-alignment.

VCD POL 10: Building Materials & Finishes

High quality and traditional materials shall be used where possible, in any new development in Kentstown. This means using, where possible:-

- Materials that are relative to the local area - sourcing materials locally thus reducing transport costs;
- Natural materials or recycled materials;
- Windows and doors should be hard wearing timber;
- Openings should be simple and restrained;
- Slate roofs should be of a colour consistent with the Kentstown area.

VCD POL 11: Sustainable Design

New buildings should be sustainable in their siting, orientation, design and construction. Passive solar design techniques, high energy efficiency, low impact construction methods and the use of local building materials and craftsmanship can all help to ensure that new developments minimise their environmental impacts and long term costs, thus offering a more sustainable development solution.

VCD POL 12: Height Control of New Residential Development

Three storey duplex units will be permitted in Kentstown only where it is considered that the siting, layout, design and finishes used will not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area.

VCD POL 13: Building Widths

Building widths are encouraged to reflect vernacular forms with narrow floor plans that provide benefits in terms of dual aspect and views, solar gain, reduced ridge heights, less monolithic buildings, greater opportunities for creating enclosure, defined street edges, courtyards, etc.

VCD POL 14: Policy on Gap Sites / Infill Development

Investment in new or improved services in Kentstown shall be utilised properly through the prioritisation of development that either re-uses brownfield development land, such as sites in or adjoining the village centre, or appropriately located backland sites. Development of such sites will be subject to the relevant design standards and safeguards outlined in this Local Area Plan, where the protection of existing residential amenity will be paramount.

Rationale:

It is important that new development contributes to maintaining a compact village in order to prevent its continuous outward spread and encroachment into the rural countryside, which is unsustainable and would, in turn, lead to an uncoordinated and costly approach to the provision of social and physical infrastructure in Kentstown.

VCD POL 15: Pre-planning Meetings

To encourage pre-application discussions with potential applicants so that there is clarity regarding sequencing priorities of the development plan, the vision statement and priority (phasing) of the local area plan and how they relate to the applicant's land. The role of non-statutory design briefs or design statements (see Policy VDC POL 16 overleaf) should be agreed at this stage. Pre-application meetings should

also inform the quality, design and layout of any proposed development to ensure that it appropriately addresses the policies and objectives of the Local Area Plan.

Design Principles for New Development

VCD POL 16: Submission of a Design Statement

To encourage all designers of residential or commercial development within the Plan boundary to carry out an appraisal of the distinctive character of the area adjoining the site, and to consider how the design and layout of the proposed development responds to, and preferably enriches that character. This will form the basis of a design statement that should include or summarise the character appraisal and be submitted with a planning application. By explaining the planning proposal in more detail, setting out the design decisions that have been made, a proposal can be more easily appreciated and accepted.

Some information on how best to prepare a design statement is set out in the box below.

BEST PRACTICE INFORMATION SHEET – PREPARING A DESIGN STATEMENT

The design criteria set out in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Urban Design Manual 2008 – a best practice guide, provides a framework for the systematic appraisal for applications for residential development in urban areas and should be referred to in preparing a design statement. The core aim of the Guide is to provide developers, designers and planners with the information and backing they need to improve the design quality and sustainability of the development proposals that they are involved with and aid their process through the planning system.

In preparing a design statement the Urban Design Manual recommends that the following criteria should be considered and documented by the designer:-

- 1 **Context:** How does the development respond to its surroundings?
- 2 **Connections:** How well connected is the new development
- 3 **Inclusivity:** How easily can people use and access the development?
- 4 **Variety:** Does the proposed use, scale, materials and housing type complement those that already exist so that a balance is struck?
- 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 a people friendly place and spaces?
- 8 **Public realm:** How safe. Secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
- 9 **Adaptability:** How will the building/s cope with change?
- 10 **Privacy and Amenity:** How does the development provide a decent standard of amenity
- 11 **Parking:** How will the parking be secure and attractive
- 12 **Detailed design:** How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

The twelve elements are based on the known elements of successful places and all are explained in more detail in the Urban Design Manual which is available to download for free at the website for the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government at www.environ.ie Meath County Council refer applicants of all new development within Kentstown to refer to the Manual and to incorporate its recommendations, where appropriate, into the design and layout of buildings.

VCD POL 17: Building Lines

In considering the proper planning and sustainable development of an area when dealing with applications to carry out development, the Planning Authority will normally seek to ensure that development is not carried out in front of established building lines, or in a position which would be in conflict with a building line which may be determined, where proper planning and sustainable development would show such to be desirable. In deciding where a building line should be located, the form of development to which it is related will be considered.

VCD POL 18: Car Parking for Residential Development

Car parking spaces will be calculated on the basis of one/two spaces per dwelling unit depending on dwelling size, access to public transport and local facilities. These may be provided on site or on street. Appropriately designed on-street car parking will be encouraged so as to facilitate increases in residential densities at appropriate locations. This parking may be provided as a shared parking area or bay, which may be integrated into the overall development, or provided on-street where road widths are developed to adequate standards. In general, no more than 10-15 spaces will be provided in a shared parking cluster, in the interest of visual amenity. Within group parking areas, consideration will be given to the visibility of residents' cars (from their homes if possible), convenience, and the need to soften the impact of group parking by landscaping.

In some older residential areas, small front gardens and original features such as railings are characteristic of the overall development scheme, and in such areas on site car parking in front gardens/patios may not be permitted. Proposals for off street parking need to be balanced against loss of amenity (visual and physical) and will be considered in light of traffic flows and car parking in the vicinity.

Table 3.3.1 Car Parking Standards

Land Use - Residential	Car Parking Requirement
Dwellings	2 per conventional dwelling
Flats/Apartments	1.25 per 1 & 2 bedroom unit 2 per 3 - 4 bedroom unit In all cases, 1 visitor space per 4 apartments
Hotel Accommodation (excluding bars, functions rooms, etc.)	1 per bedroom
B&B/Guesthouse	1 per bedroom
Motel Accommodation	1 per bedroom
Hostel Accommodation	1 per bedroom or 1 per 10 beds
Self-Catering Accommodation	1 per unit
Institutions	1 per employee
Land Use - Employment	
Manufacturing Industry	1 per 50 sq.m. gross floor area
Warehousing	1 per 100 sq.m. gross floor area
Offices Land Use - Commercial	1 per 25 sq.m. gross floor area
Shops/Shopping Centres and Retail Warehousing	1 per 20 sq.m. gross floor area
Cash and Carry	1 per 50 sq.m. gross floor area
Banks	1 per 20 sq.m. gross floor area

Restaurants	1 per 5 sq.m dining area
Bars, Lounges, Function Rooms incl. such spaces in hotels	1 per 4 sq.m. of public area
Night Club/Dance Hall	1 per 4 sq.m. of public area
Service Garages	To be determined by the Planning Authority
Retail Outlets within Service Garages	1 per 10 sq. m of net floor area
Land Use - Health and Education Facilities	
Hospitals Schools 3 per classroom	1 per bed
Surgeries	2 per consulting room
Nursing Homes	1 per 3 beds and one space per employee
Colleges	To be determined by the Planning Authority
Land Use - Community Facilities	
Churches	1 per 4 seats
Libraries	1 per 20 sq.m. gross floor area
Cultural Buildings	To be determined by the Planning Authority
Crèches	1 per employee & dedicated set down area 1 per 5 children
Cinemas/Theatre	1 per 3 seats
Funeral Homes	1 per 5 sq. m. gross floor area
Community Centres/Halls	1 per 5 sq. m. gross floor area
Land Use - Sports Facilities	
Sport Clubs-including swimming pools tennis courts etc.	2 per court, 5 per 100 sq.m.
Golf/Pitch & Putt courses	3 per hole
Golf driving ranges	1 per 2m of base line/per trap
Bowling Alleys	5 per lane
Stadia	1 per 3 seats

Notes

1. In the case of any specific uses not listed in the above table, the Planning Authority will specify its requirements in relation to parking.
 2. The above car parking standards shall be applied at the discretion of the Planning Authority in the County's rural towns and villages having regard to the availability and adequacy of on street parking, existing or proposed off street parking to serve the development and the status of the town/village within the settlement structure of Meath.
 3. That the non-residential car parking standards are set down as "maxima" standards.
- Parking facilities for mobility impaired drivers and their vehicles shall be provided at the general rate of 2 per 100 spaces, such spaces shall be proximate to the entry points of the proposed buildings.
 - The parking standards shall be proximate to the entry points of the proposed buildings.
 - The parking standards for residential development will be reviewed in town centre locations and where innovative design principles are adopted. In such cases grouped parking will be encouraged.

VCD POL 19: Loading and Unloading

In all major developments of an industrial/commercial nature, developers will be required to provide loading and unloading facilities sufficient to meet the likely demand of such development. Off-street loading facilities shall be designed to conform to the following requirements:

Design Criteria:-

- Each required space shall be not less than 3.7m in width, 6m in depth and 4.3 m in height exclusive of drive and manoeuvring space and located entirely on the site being served.
- Loading spaces may be enclosed within a structure and must be enclosed if located within 15m of the curtilage of the building where the use involves regular night operation.
- There shall be appropriate means of access to a street or road as well as adequate manoeuvring space.
- The maximum width of driveway openings at the street boundary shall be 6 metres and the minimum width shall be 3.7 metres.

Loading facilities shall be provided and maintained so long as the use exists which the facilities were designed to serve. They shall not be reduced in total extent after their provision and all reasonable precautions shall be taken by the owner or sponsor of particular uses to assure availability of required facilities to the delivery and pick-up vehicles that they are designed to serve.

However, the Planning Authority may modify the requirements of loading and unloading facilities in any specific case where it appears that it would be in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the areas to do so.

VCD POL 20: Cycle Parking

Secure cycle parking facilities shall be provided in new office, residential, retail and employment generating developments. Bicycle racks shall be provided in all cases where the Planning Authority deems bicycle parking necessary. Such facilities should be within 25 metres of a destination for short-term parking, (shops) and 50 metres for long term parking (school, college, and office). Where stands cannot be provided on site, a contribution will be required towards the provision of public cycle stands by the Local Authority at the rate of €100 per space required. The number of stands required will be a third of the number of car spaces required for the development, subject to a minimum of one stand.

All long-term (more than three hours) cycle racks shall be protected from the weather. From a security viewpoint cycle racks should not be located in out-of-the-way locations.

All cycle facilities in multi-storey car parks shall be at ground floor level and completely segregated from vehicle traffic. Cyclists should also have designated entry and exit routes at the car park.

Cycle parking facilities shall be conveniently located, secure, easy to use, adequately lit and well posted. Weather protected facilities should be considered where appropriate. In addition, parking should be placed within a populated, well-supervised area, and monitored by CCTV where possible.

VCD POL 21: Advertising and Signposting

The Council will strictly control all advertising signs in relation to their location, design, materials and function, particularly in the village centre. Advertising shall be controlled as follows:

- Signs will not be permitted where they interfere with the safety of pedestrians, the safety and free flow of traffic or if they obscure road signs.
- Signs shall be sympathetic in design and colouring, both to the building on which it will be displayed and its surroundings.
- Signs shall not obscure architectural features or details.
- Signs will not be permitted above eaves or parapet levels.
- Traditional painted sign writing or solid block individual lettering will be encouraged as will traditional or wrought iron hanging signs. The use of neon, plastic, PVC, Perspex flashing, reflectorised or glitter type signs on the exterior of buildings or where they are located internally but visible from the outside will be prohibited.
- Projecting signs, banners and flagpoles will be restricted in size and number to prevent clutter.
- Temporary hoardings may be approved where they can be used for the screening of building sites or land, which is unsightly.
- Signs attached to buildings are preferable to those on freestanding hoardings.
- Signs shall not be permitted to project above the roofline of buildings.
- 'B&B' signage will be restricted to 1 sign per premises and no directional finger post signs will be permitted.

Rationale:

Advertising signs, separately, or more particularly in groups, can often be to detriment to visual amenities, and can detract from the appearance of an area or a building; this is especially so when they are out of scale and character with their surroundings. They can also be a major distraction to road users and frequently result in traffic hazard. It is important that the character and visual amenity of Kentstown village centre is maintained appropriately and enhanced.

VCD POL 22: Automatic Teller Machines

The Council 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.

VCD POL 23: Agricultural Developments

In the construction and layout of any agricultural buildings, it is required that buildings be sited as unobtrusively as possible and that the finishes and colours used will blend the development into its surroundings.

The Council will require that agriculture developments be constructed and located so as to ensure that there is no threat of pollution to ground or surface waters. In assessing planning applications for agriculture developments the Council will have regard to the European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations, 2006.

3.3.5 Village Character & Design Key Action

Key Action VCD 1: Protection of Trees

To protect and maintain the trees identified for preservation on the Land Use Zoning Map and located in the grounds of St. Mary's R.C Church (also known as The Church of the Assumption) and St. Mary's Church of Ireland.

3.4 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

3.4.1 Explanation of Format

This section of the Local Area Plan examines the existing situation in Kentstown in terms of community facilities and amenities and sets out a strategy for its future growth. The strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals through the application of Policies and Key Actions. The Policy and Key Actions for Kentstown are listed at the end of this section.

3.4.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the Policies and Actions of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **analysis of existing community facilities and amenities in Kentstown** and the demand for additional facilities;
- **Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kentstown, in particular Chapter 7 dealing with Social Strategy;
- **national and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Childcare Facilities Guidelines 2001 published by the DoEHLG and the Primary School Guidelines 2000 published by the Department of Education & Science;
- **public consultation** including the input received through the public exhibition exhibitions, written submissions to the pre-draft Local Area Plan, completed questionnaires, submissions on the Draft Plan and subsequent submissions on the amendments to the Draft Plan;
- **principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.4.2 Existing Situation

Overview

As noted in Section 3.3, Kentstown has a limited level of community facilities and amenities in relation to the population that resides there. Located within the heart of the village at its crossroads are a pub and lounge and a convenience store. Maguire's Bar & Lounge functions as a key landmark in the centre of the village and acts as the village's only real community meeting point. Its pool table is often used as a meeting area by the younger members of the community.

Adjoining the pub to the rear is a small convenience store. A surface car park serves the pub and shop and also accommodates some recycling facilities. The shop and the pub are the only real services contained in Kentstown to serve a relatively large population.

A key issue that came through via the public consultation exercise is the lack of community facilities currently available in the village to serve the growing population. A community hall with meeting rooms where various events, functions, entertainment etc. can be hosted and a place where community groups can meet, is seen as necessary by many members of the local community. A local community group in Kentstown is keen to source adequate funding and appropriate lands within the village on which to locate a new community facility.

The Role of the Planning Authority

The primary role of the Planning Authority in relation to the provision of community facilities is to reserve sufficient lands within the settlement centres to meet likely future demands for community infrastructure. A recurring problem with respect to the provision of this infrastructure is its timely provision in conjunction with new housing. The Local Area Plans will seek to resolve this current problem by linking the provision of community facilities to the wider development taking place in the village, particularly residential development.

Educational Facilities

Kentstown has one primary school – Kentstown National School, which is mixed. The school is located outside the current development boundary along the R150 regional route. In the 2007-2008 academic year the school served 206 children and enrolment has been increasing year on year for the last ten years. In October 2007, the Board of Management was granted permission to construct a temporary prefabricated building consisting of one classroom and a resource room plus ancillary site works adjoining the school (Planning reg. ref.: NA70339).

Parking facilities for the school comprises of some marked car parking spaces in a lay-by of the R150 (School Road), which is viewed with concern by some of the local community, who feel it is inadequate and dangerous. The School propose to purchase additional land and provide additional parking on the school site itself to alleviate current parking/traffic problems, as confirmed in a submission made by the school.

The school has a hard surface play area and also a small green playing field adjoining it. It currently employs 8 classroom teachers and 5 special needs assistants.

The population increased in Kentstown between 157% to 912 persons between 2002 and 2006. Using the national average of 12% of the population being of primary school attending age, this would provide an expected school population of 110. As per the 2006 census the population of the Kentstown Electoral Division was 1,727. This would give a primary school enrolment of 208. It is estimated that 85 new households will be constructed in Kentstown by 2013. This will see an increase of approximately 255 persons. Based on the Department of Education and Science's (DoES) criteria this increase will yield an additional 31 primary pupils and 22 post primary pupils by 2013. These numbers will equate the provision of an additional two classrooms.

It is confirmed by the DoES that the current Kentstown National School site can accommodate demand for school places for the duration of the new Local Area Plan for Kentstown, however site reservations need to be made in the Local Area Plan to ensure that this can take place. The Board of Management have confirmed that they propose to acquire additional land adjoining the school to cater for the existing students and any growth in population, associated with further proposed developments in the Kentstown area.

Childcare Facilities

Kentstown Montessori School was founded in 1997. The School is situated on the Somerville Road just approximately 200 metres from the village centre. The Montessori caters for children aged 2½ - 6 years old. The facility was originally sited at the local National School however in December 2003 they moved to a purpose built preschool building on Somerville Road. Kentstown Montessori School's new building was partly funded by the Irish Government - under the EOCP European Union Structural Funds and they offer before and after school care for school aged children.

In 2006, An Bord Pleanála overturned the decision of the planning authority by granting planning permission (NA/60104, PL 17.217989) for a new crèche with car parking facilities at a location approximately 0.5km from the village centre, on the western side of the R150, south of the existing Kentstown National School. The development is intended for the care of babies, toddlers, pre-school and after-school children. The site of the new crèche is located on an unzoned area outside the development boundary of the village.

Churches

There are two churches in Kentstown and they are both protected structures. St. Mary's Church of Ireland is the oldest of the two and was built c. 1795 and then remodelled c. 1850. It is located on Somerville Road and faces Kentstown Glebe House. The church is set in attractive grounds containing a number of mature trees, stone wall and gate enclosing the grounds and an historic graveyard to the rear.

The second church in Kentstown is The Catholic Church of the Assumption which is located at the T junction fronting the Navan Road that extends between Navan and Ashbourne. The church dates back to c.1844 and is a five-bay gabled hall with a handsome limestone gothic frontpiece. The church remains in active use today by the Kentstown Community and acts as a local landmark in the centre in the village.

Graveyard

There is an historic graveyard located to the rear of St. Mary's Church of Ireland. In May 2008 permission was granted (planning reg. ref.:NA70601) to extend the existing graveyard into an adjoining site.

The Church of Assumptions also has an adjoining graveyard which remains in use today.

Commercial Businesses

In terms of commercial uses, these are very limited in Kentstown. Reilly Agri Plant Sales and Hire and Kilmore Car Sales adjoin the village crossroads and front the Navan Road. In addition to this there is Evan's Coaches, which is located on Leganara Road. Maguire's Pub and the Londis foodstore are also located in the village.

Public Transport - Bus & Rail Services

Kentstown is not served by rail and is therefore reliant on bus services. Residents currently have access to 2 bus routes. The '188' links the village with Drogheda and Navan and can be used by commuters to link up with additional transport services available from these towns. The '107' bus also passes through the village and it links Kingscourt (Wishing Well) with UCD, Bellfield. This service calls at Navan and Ashbourne as well as the central Dublin stops of O'Connell Street, Bus Aras and St Stephen's Green.

Sports Facilities

Kentstown Rovers AFC soccer club and Knockharley Cricket Club are both located in close proximity to the village.

3.4.3 Community Facilities and Amenities Strategy

The Community Facilities and Amenities Strategy for Kentstown is:-

- to support the provision of an adequate level and distribution of community facilities and amenities that meets the needs of the local community as they arise and as resources permit;
- to have community facilities and amenities in appropriate locations that are easily accessible by the majority of the local community on centrally located sites (where possible);
- to promote community facilities and amenities that are clustered or linked together, where facilities are complementary and it is practicable to do so in order to allow for shared and multi-purpose use of facilities;
- to conserve and enhance the amenity of the River Nanny in Kentstown including the landscape, water environment and wildlife habitats and, where consistent with this, to encourage increased public access and provision of walkways;
- to support the upgrading and expansion of the Kentstown National School to accommodate increased pupil capacity, more expansive recreational facilities and improved access and parking facilities, when required;

- to co-operate with local community groups and to assist community initiatives where possible, in securing the development of community facilities in Kentstown.

3.4.4 Community Facilities and Amenities Policy

CFA POL 1: Community Facilities

To support the provision of an adequate level of community facilities and amenities in appropriate, accessible locations to serve the needs of the local community of Kentstown as the need arises and resources permit.

CFA POL 2: Co-operation with Community Groups

To liaise with community groups and to assist community initiatives subject to the availability of resources.

CFA POL 3: Conserve and Enhance the River Nanny

To conserve and enhance the amenity of the River Nanny in Kentstown including the landscape, water environment and wildlife habitats and, where consistent with this, to encourage increased public access and provision of walkways.

CFA POL 4: The Provision of Adequate School Facilities

To facilitate where appropriate the expansion of the Kentstown Primary School as and when necessary, to accommodate any growth in population. While the primary school is located some distance outside the development boundary of the Local Area Plan on unzoned lands, the Council will facilitate where possible, the expansion of the existing school and its facilities on adjoining lands, should this be required to accommodate any increases in enrolment figures in the future.

Rationale:

There is a projected 85 no. new households to be constructed in Kentstown by 2013 according to Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. This would see an increase of approximately 255 persons during that time. Based on the criteria of the Department of Education and Science, this would yield an additional 31 primary school pupils and 22 post primary pupils by 2012. These numbers will equate to the provision of an additional two classrooms. The Department has assessed the existing school site and deem it suitable for an extension and able to accommodate the demand for school places for the duration of this Local Area Plan for Kentstown.

CFA POL 5: Amenity Walks – Ancillary Development

To co-operate with local community groups, interested parties such as Failte Ireland, An Taisce, sports clubs and other appropriate organisations to protect the recreational potential of the River Nanny and lands adjoining it and to carry out appropriate developments where resources permit including the laying out, upgrading or maintenance of walks, bridle paths, access points, new access links and picnic sites in Kentstown, where no negative impact to the natural environment is inflicted.

CFA POL 6: Existing Facilities

To retain existing community facilities and prevent change of use or redevelopment, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the facility is no longer required and that the new use or development contributes to the community needs of the village.

CFA POL 7: Change of Use Applications from Residential to Health Care Facilities

To consider change of use applications from residential to health care facilities / surgeries only where the privacy and amenity of adjacent occupiers can be preserved and the proposal does not have a detrimental effect on local amenity by way of an increase in traffic, car parking or noise. The full conversion of semi-detached or terraced type dwellings will not be permitted.

CFA POL 8: Protection of Existing Leisure and Recreation Facilities

To protect leisure and recreation facilities from change of use or redevelopment to other uses unless an alternative open space or leisure facilities can be provided to serve the same area.

CFA POL 9: Improvement of Existing Leisure Facilities

To seek opportunities to improve the quality and capacity of existing community facilities and where appropriate, the Council will use its powers under the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, to require development levies to achieve the enhancement of existing facilities.

CFA POL 10: Provision of Sports and Recreation Infrastructure in New Residential Developments

In the case of large residential developments, developers are required to make appropriate provision for sports and recreation infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals. Such provision should include direct provision on or off site, or the payment of a development levy, to enable appropriate alternative provision to be made.

CFA POL 11: Provision of Community Facilities in New Residential Developments

To require as part of all new residential and commercial developments, and in existing developments where appropriate, provision to be made for facilities including community facilities and recreational facilities, and to seek their provision concurrent with development. The Planning Authority shall seek the efficient delivery of community and social facilities in Kentstown commensurate with the needs of the resident population and that these facilities are developed.

CFA POL 12: Dual Use of School Buildings

The dual use of school buildings will be promoted in Kentstown, where the usage does not conflict with the delivery of the education service (i.e. outside school hours and during school holidays).

Rationale:

The dual use of educational buildings can contribute to meeting the wider needs of the community, by helping to satisfy demand for a variety of activities. The DoEHLG Guidelines on Childcare Facilities recommend the use of school premises to cater for after school care and school authorities are encouraged to examine how they can help address this demand.

CFA POL 13: Children's Play Areas

A minimum of 400sq.m. of children's play area is required for a development of 40 dwellings or more (based on average occupancy of 2.9 persons per house). The minimum units of open space shall be 200 sq. m. with any one side being greater than 10 metres. No account will be taken of incidental open space such as grass margins, left over areas, nor any area due to its nature (e.g. marshy) or topography (slope) which is deemed unsuitable.

CFA POL 14: Adequate Church Facilities

To facilitate, where appropriate, the expansion of the graveyard at the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the provision of adequate car parking facilities as and when necessary, to accommodate the growth in population. The Council will facilitate where possible the expansion of church facilities on adjoining community zoned lands, should this be required to accommodate any increases in population.

3.4.5 Community Facilities and Amenities Key Actions**Key Action CFA 1: Provision of Community Facilities**

To support the Kentstown Community and Kentstown Community Centre Development Committee (CCDC) in an advisory role, to source funding and suitable lands on which to provide new community facilities e.g. sports pitch, tennis court, community hall.

Key Action CFA 2: Provision of a Bus Stop

To consult with Bus Eireann and encourage the provision of a public bus stop at Kentstown crossroads.

Key Action CFA 3: Provision of Footpaths

To investigate the possibility of providing a footpath on both sides of the road from the village centre to Kentstown National School to ensure maximum safety of school children and other pedestrians. The existing single footpath will be upgraded where necessary.

Key Action CFA 4: Traffic Study for Kentstown Crossroads

It is the intention of the Council to carry out a traffic study for Kentstown crossroads. The traffic study will be aimed at improving the flow of traffic into and out of the village and of improving the general safety of pedestrians, where possible. The traffic study will consider traffic calming and traffic control measures such as the insertion of traffic lights, speed signs, the creation of a traffic island and the insertion of a pedestrian crossing at the local shop and pub.

Key Action CFA 5: Car Parking at the School

To support the school where possible, in seeking to provide additional car parking in the existing school site, in order to alleviate current parking/traffic problems there.

Key Action CFA 6: Support for Community and Voluntary Organisations

To consult where possible with the numerous community and voluntary organisations which operate in Kentstown and to assist community initiatives subject to the availability of resources.

Key Action CFA 7: Sports and Recreation Facilities

To support the facilities of Kentstown Rovers A.F.C., its future upgrade, expansion or relocation and its aim to have an all weather sports facility located in Kentstown in order to provide an appropriate level of sports and recreational facilities to service the needs of the local community.

3.5 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

3.5.1 Explanation of Format

This section of the Local Area Plan examines the existing situation in Kentstown in terms of infrastructure and services and sets out a strategy for its future growth. The strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals through the application of Policies and Key Actions. The Policy and Key Actions for Kentstown are listed at the end of this section.

3.5.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the Policies and Actions of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **public consultation** including the input received through the public exhibitions, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders;
- **Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kentstown;
- **resources** that are available to Meath County Council to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and services;
- **national and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable;
- **best practice** including innovative approaches to sustainable drainage systems etc;
- **principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.5.2 Existing Situation

In relation to infrastructure the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 has set the following goal,

“To promote and facilitate the provision of the necessary infrastructure to fully accommodate the demand for economic development and future population increases in an environmentally sustainable manner”.

Water Supply

Kentstown is supplied with water from the East Meath Water Supply Scheme. There is a full upgrade planned to the East Meath Water Supply Scheme, as part of the Needs Assessment Investment Programme 2007-2009.’ Meath County Council has engaged consultants to carry out a ‘Preliminary Report’ on the proposed upgrade. The ‘Preliminary Report’ will be issued to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for their review. It is anticipated that the ‘Preliminary Report’ will recommend £170 million for the upgrade of the East

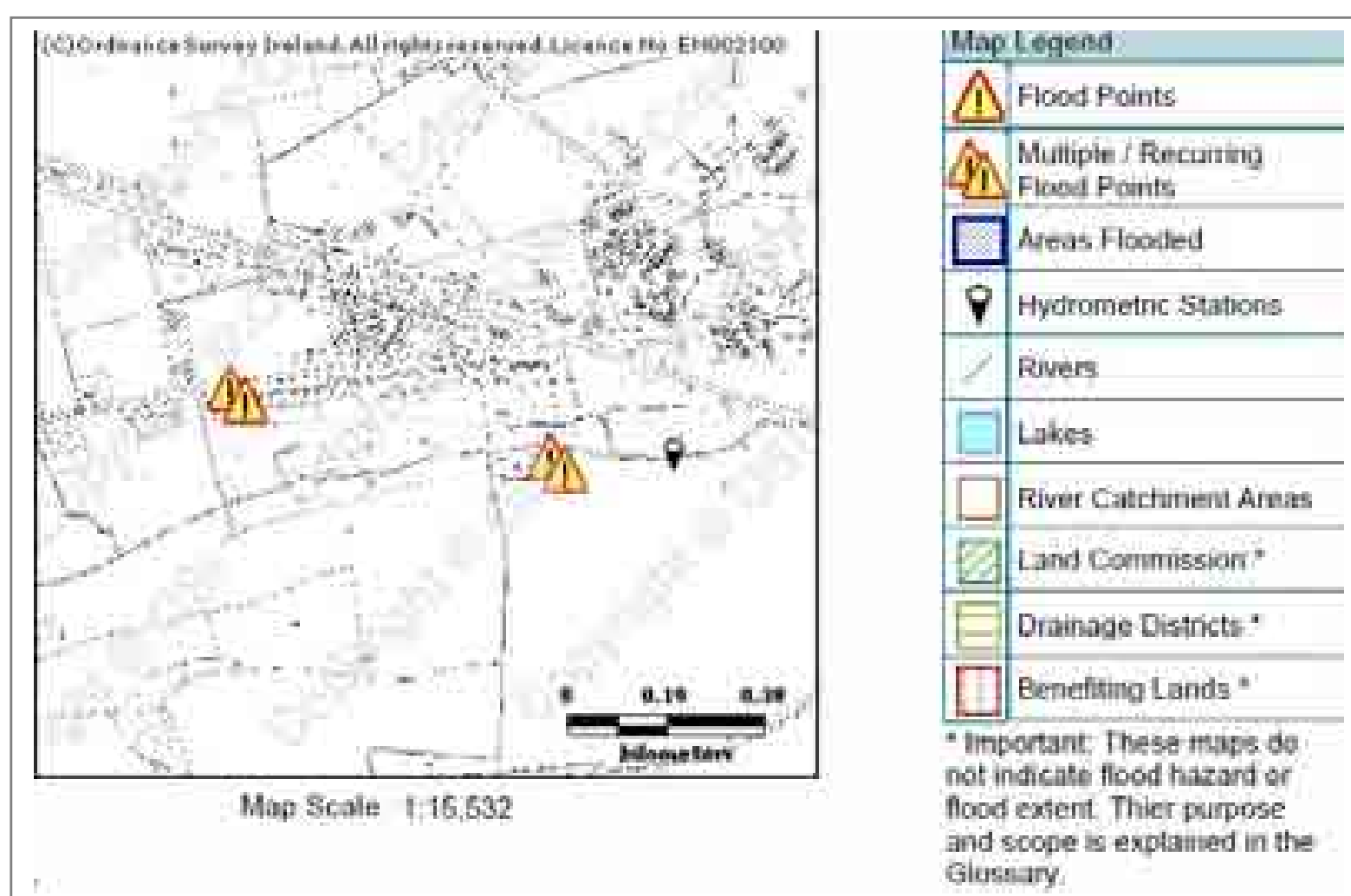
Meath Water Supply Scheme over seven separate phases/ schemes. It is envisaged the early schemes will come on line between 2010 and 2013. This will increase the provision of water supply in Drogheda and the Meath environs of Drogheda. This will result in additional water supply in Kentstown.

Water Quality

Generally, water quality in Meath is poorer in the south of the County, particularly on the outskirts of County Dublin. As such, water quality in Kentstown is relatively good and the Nanny is not identified in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 as having elevated levels of phosphorous.

Flooding

The River Nanny flows to the south of the village and the flood map for the village identifies flooding incidents to the south and west of the village. At Duleek the OPW have undertaken extensive remedial works to the Nanny and this may have consequential impact on the flow of the river at Kentstown.



Source: Office of Public Works (<http://www.floodmaps.ie/>)

Roads

Kentstown has developed around a 5-arm road junction and each of these roads is considered to be of a good quality. The junction of the R150 and R153 is due to be upgraded. The N2 road dissects part of the village and has a significant impact on those properties which lie adjacent to the road.

Footpaths

Within the centre of Kentstown, footpaths have not been provided and the quality of road surfacing is generally poor. Where recent residential schemes have been developed footpaths have been provided however the older areas of housing along the through roads are not served by formal footpaths.

Waste Management

In terms of waste infrastructure, the facilities in the region have grown significantly. Recycling is a key component of the strategy for a sustainable approach to waste management although there is no dedicated specialist facility in Kentstown. The village does however, have a number of bring banks and a clothing recycling facility located in the car park of Maguire's Pub and adjoining Londis store, which allow people to recycle certain household waste products. The nearest County Council recycling facility is in Navan. The Council also proposes to increase the number of sites and the diversity of materials accepted at Bring Centres, and to encourage the provision of Bring Centres in all new housing estates and rural areas. A kerb-side collection for separated waste materials has been introduced in urban areas within the County.

In the surrounding area there is a landfill site located at Knockharley, near Kentstown, off the N2 National Primary Road. It is a privately operated landfill under licence from the EPA. This regional facility has capacity for 25 years, accepting 130,000 tonnes per annum to 2008 and reducing to 88,000 tonnes per annum. Currently managed by Greenstar Holding, the dump has been operating in the face of considerable opposition from local residents in relation to the manner in which it is being managed. In the wider hinterland area, a site at Carranstown, Duleek has been approved by An Bord Pleanála and Environmental Protection Agency to cater for 150,000 tonnes per annum of the region's municipal waste. This is the subject of a judicial review to the Supreme Court.

Energy Conservation

The Planning Authority recognises the essential requirements for electricity production and distribution. The two main energy networks serving Co. Meath are electricity and gas. With increased residential development in the county and a drive for more industrial, commercial and employment generating uses, it will be important to ensure that the capacity of the energy networks is sufficient to meet these demands.

In relation to power generation, Meath is well placed to encourage and facilitate the development of power generation facilities in the county, for a variety of reasons, namely:

- the county's proximity to Dublin;
- the passage of a number of gas mains and trunk elements of the national grid through Meath, and;
- the availability of sites.

3.5.3 Infrastructure & Services Strategy

The Infrastructure and Services Strategy for Kentstown aims to provide sufficient infrastructure and services to accommodate the existing community and to remedy any inadequacies and deficiencies that currently exist. Appropriate infrastructure and services should also be provided to support new development in the Plan in a manner that is sustainable, efficient, cost effective, environmentally appropriate and that protects public health. Wherever practicable, services and infrastructure should be delivered in an integrated manner and should be planned and provided for in advance of development or in tandem with it. No significant new development should take place in Kentstown unless there are adequate levels of infrastructure and services available to support it – particularly in terms of waste water and water supply services.

3.5.4 Infrastructure & Services Policy

IS POL 1: Infrastructure and Services

Appropriate infrastructure shall be provided to cater for development proposals, with particular reference to sewerage services, water supply, surface water disposal, street lighting, and public footpaths. Priority will be given to the provision of adequate infrastructure in advance of any development.

Rationale:

There is a need to plan for and provide sufficient infrastructure and services to accommodate existing development in Kentstown as well as the future development and continued growth of the village in line with the provisions of the County Settlement Strategy.

IS POL 2: Cycle Paths in the Village

Meath County Council will investigate the possibility of inserting cycle ways alongside or incorporated with footpaths in the village area where appropriate.

IS POL 3: Cycle Lanes in New Residential Development

To require that cycle lanes be included in all new housing estates in Kentstown.

IS POL 4: Demonstration of Accessibility for Pedestrians and Cyclists

To require planning applications to demonstrate the development proposal's accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists in Kentstown.

IS POL 5: Adequate Infrastructure and Services

All proposals for new development must be accompanied by supporting information detailing how the development is to be served by:

- sewerage facilities
- water supply
- surface water disposal
- street lighting and
- public footpaths

IS POL 6: Flooding Impact

Development should not create or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

IS POL 7: Flooding along the River Corridor

To investigate any potential flooding issues associated with the river corridor and to restrict any form of development within the areas which are sensitive to the effects of flooding.

IS POL 8: Development in Flood Prone Areas

Development that is sensitive to the effects of flooding will generally not be permitted in flood prone or marginal areas. Appropriately designed development, which is not sensitive to the effects of flooding, may be permissible in floodplains provided it does not reduce the floodplain area or otherwise restrict flow across floodplains. (Examples of such development might include park areas, sports pitches, certain types of industry, warehousing, etc. designed to be flood resistant and/or insensitive). Such development, should only be permitted provided it incorporates adequate measures to cope with the ever-existent flood risk, e.g. adequate drainage systems, safety measures, emergency response facilities and/or warning and response systems and where it is considered that flooding would not result in significant hardship/financial loss or cost.

In areas at risk from flooding, a precautionary approach will apply and the methodology set out in the Planning Guidelines *'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management'* will be applied to development proposals.

Rationale:

The Flood Risk Management Draft Guidelines were published jointly by the DoEHLG and Office of Public Works (OPW) and aim to provide for comprehensive consideration of flood risk, both in preparing plans and in determining applications for planning permission. The core objectives of the Guidelines are to:

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding;
- Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface run-off;
- Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains;
- Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth;
- Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders; and
- Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management.

The Guidelines recommend the application of the sequential approach for taking account of flood risk. The sequential approach works by guiding development away from areas that have been identified through a flood risk assessment as being at risk from flooding. The Guidelines also outline details of a justification test which assesses whether a development proposal within an area at risk of flooding meets specific criteria for proper planning and sustainable development and

demonstrates that it will not be subject to unacceptable risk nor increase flood risk elsewhere.

With regard to project-level developments, the Guidelines require developers and their agents to:

- Carefully examine their development proposals to ensure consistency with the requirements of the guidelines including carefully researching whether there have been instances of flooding on specific sites or potential for flooding and declaring any known flood history in the planning application form as required under the Planning and Development Regulations 2006.
- Engage with the planning authorities at an early stage, utilising the arrangements for pre-planning application consultation with regard to any flood risk assessment issues that may arise.
- Carry out a site-specific flood risk assessment, as appropriate, and comply with the terms and conditions of any grant of planning permission with regard to the minimisation of flood risk.

Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) aim to identify, quantify and communicate to decision-makers and other stakeholders the risk of flooding to land, property and people. The purpose is to provide sufficient information to determine whether particular actions (e.g. approving applications for proposed development) are appropriate.

The purpose of a site-specific flood risk assessment is to assess all types of flood risk for a new development. FRAs identify the sources of flood risk, the effects of climate change on this, the impact of the development, the effectiveness of flood mitigation and the residual risks that remain after those measures are put in place. The responsibility to screen for and carry out a FRA lies with those proposing the development in consultation with the LA and emergency planners.

In addition to flooding from coasts and rivers, the Guidelines include advice on assessing flood risk from other sources, for example overland flow and areas prone to surface water flooding.

IS POL 9: Surface Water Run-Off

Development must so far as is reasonably practicable incorporate the maximum provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff. e.g.:-

- Hard surface areas (car parks, etc.), should be constructed in permeable or semi-permeable materials,
- On site storm water ponds to store and/or attenuate additional runoff from the development should be provided,
- Soak-aways or french drains should be provided to increase infiltration and minimise additional runoff.

IS POL 10: Development Adjacent to Watercourses

For developments adjacent to watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity any structures (including hard landscaping) must be set back from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel clearing/maintenance. A setback of 10m is required depending on the width of the watercourse. Development consisting of construction of embankments, wide bridge piers, or similar structures will not normally be permitted in or across flood plains or river channels

IS POL 11: Road Network

To exercise control over new developments requiring direct access to regional roads by restricting new access points to a minimum to preserve their strategic function and in the interests of traffic safety.

IS POL 12: Floodlighting

Proposals for lighting schemes shall include details of the size, type, siting and number of fixtures, as well as wattage, colour of light source, light pattern and potential impact on the building material. Proposals should demonstrate how lighting schemes would enhance and protect the character of an area or group of protected structures and/or co-ordinate with any adjacent lighting schemes. Powerful wide angled over lighting which can diminish the architectural features of a building or area will be discouraged

IS POL 13: Sustainable Drainage Systems

To implement SUDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) as the preferred solution for the disposal and treatment of surface water run-off for all proposed developments.

New developments will be required to adhere to the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage as part of their development proposals. Compliance with the recommendations in the Technical Guidance Document, Volume 2, Chapter 4 of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study shall be required in all instances. Also, in the design of new developments consideration should be given to incorporating some of the following measures:

- On site water ponds to store and/or attenuate additional runoff from the development should be provided
- Soak-aways or French drains should be provided to increase infiltration and minimise additional runoff
- Surface water run-off should be passed through a litter screen and petrol/oil interceptor before discharged off site to watercourses.

Attenuation measures should be designed such that the SUDS features will not overflow during a 30-year return period rainfall event. Overflow from the attenuation measures is to be retained within the site area up to the 100 year event.

IS POL 14: Transport and Traffic Assessments

To require developers to provide a detailed Transport and Traffic Assessment, as carried out by competent professionals in this field, where new developments in

Kentstown will have a significant effect on travel demand and the capacity of surrounding transport links. Where a Transport and Traffic Assessment identifies necessary on and off site improvements for the development to be able to proceed, the developer will be expected to fund the improvements by entering into a formal agreement with the Council. A Transport and Traffic Impact Assessment may be required as part of any development proposal which impacts on an existing junction of a National Route. Any additional works required as a result of the Transport and Traffic Assessment shall be funded by the developer.

Transport Assessment shall be carried out to assess the predicted impacts of a development in accordance with the guidelines given in the joint DoEHLG / Dept. of Transport / DTO publication "Traffic Management Guidelines", Section 1.11. The thresholds for Transport Assessment are as follows:

- Traffic to and from the development exceeds 10% of the traffic flow on the adjoining road;
- Traffic to and from the development exceeds 5% of the traffic flow on the adjoining road where congestion exists;
- Residential development in excess of 200 dwellings;
- Retail and leisure development in excess of 1,000 m²;
- Industrial development in excess of 5,000 m², and;
- Distribution and warehousing in excess of 10,000 m².

IS POL 15: The Provision of Appropriate Recycling Facilities

To require the provision of bring banks, bottle banks or other appropriate recycling facilities as part of the overall development in the case of commercial neighbourhood centres, educational, sports, and recreational facilities. The sites shall be made available to the Local Authority at the developer's own expense and will be maintained by Meath County Council or its agents.

IS POL 16: The Promotion of Energy Efficiency

To encourage planning applications for developments which maximise energy efficiency through their location, layout or design or which make appropriate use of energy conservation techniques, provided the development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties, or the amenities of the area. Development which is wasteful of energy in its location, layout or design will generally be resisted.

IS POL 17: Environmental Sustainability in Residential Development

To attain high standards of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability in residential development, including the following:

- 1) Bio-climatic site design;
- 2) Water Conservation;
- 3) Ventilation;
- 4) Energy efficient strategies for housing design;
- 5) Daylight analysis; and
- 6) High insulation standards.

IS POL 18: Accesses off the Road Network

To ensure that all development accessing off Kentstown's road network is at a location and carried out in a manner that would not endanger public safety by way of a traffic hazard.

IS POL 19: Buffer Zone at Wastewater Treatment Plant

To ensure that a buffer zone amounting to 10 metres is provided in around the wastewater treatment plant in Kentstown.

3.5.5 Infrastructure & Services Key Actions**Key Action IS 1: Additional Water Supply for Kentstown**

To actively pursue the provision of additional water supply for Kentstown to serve the existing population and any increases during the lifetime of the Local Area Plan.

Key Action IS 2: Upgrade of Waste Water Treatment Plant

To pursue the expansion in capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Plant in Kentstown in order to accommodate the current population and any population growth expected to occur during the lifetime of this Local Area Plan. It is recognised that Kentstown falls 6th in the hierarchy of the County Settlement Strategy and key infrastructural projects will be prioritised within the County in the order set out under the County Settlement Strategy.

Key Action IS 3: Sewer Connection to the School

To promote the provision of a sewer connection from the existing system to Kentstown National School.

Key Action IS 4: Footpaths and Public Lighting

To review the current status of public footpath and public lighting provision in Kentstown and to upgrade where necessary.

Key Action IS 5: Sommerville Road

To investigate the potential of closing to vehicular traffic the R59 County Road at the village centre to the Sommerville Estate (known locally as Sommerville Road) in order to increase the public amenity value of this area and increase resident and pedestrian safety.

Key Action IS 6: Works to the R153 and R150

To ensure the realignment of the R153 and R150 junction of the centre of the village in addition to minor works on the R153 is completed.

Key Action IS 7: Buffer Zone at Overhead Power Lines

To reserve a buffer zone of 23 metres adjacent to overhead power lines traversing the village as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Map.

Key Action IS 8: Provision of Footpaths

To provide footpaths at the following locations:-

- along the Leganara Road from the village centre as far as the E1 (industrial) zoned lands to the west of the village;
- along the Sommerville Road;

- along the local road that links Sommerville Road to the R150 - the School Road;
- along the R153 from the village crossroads to the end of the row of houses that front the road on its northern side.

3.6 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

3.6.1 Explanation of Format

This section of the Local Area Plan examines the existing situation in Kentstown in terms of environment and heritage and sets out a strategy for its future growth. The strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals through the application of Policies and Key Actions. The Policy and Key Actions for Kentstown are listed at the end of this section.

3.6.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the Policies and Actions of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **the main natural and built heritage features in Kentstown;**
- **legislative requirements and Policy Guidelines** including EU Directives, such as the Habitats Directive, Groundwater Directive and Water Framework Directive, and relevant Irish legislation and policy;
- **Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to Kentstown, in particular Chapter 8 dealing with Culture, Heritage and Landscape protection the County;
- **public consultation** including the input received through the public exhibitions, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders;
- **resources** that is available to Meath County Council to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and services;
- **national and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004 and the Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines both by the DoEHLG; and
- **principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.6.2 Built Heritage

3.6.2.1 Existing Situation

Overview

Built heritage includes both architectural heritage and archaeological heritage. Kentstown has a number of features of both architectural and archaeological heritage that form a part of the history, heritage, special interest and character of

the village. Historic structures can be read as historic evidence and can aid the understanding of past conditions of how society changes. They are a unique resource and expression of the richness and diversity of Ireland's past. The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2004) state that:-

*'The built heritage consists not only of great artistic achievements, but also of the everyday works of craftsmen. In a changing world, these structures have a cultural significance which we may recognise for the first time only when individual structures are lost or threatened. As we enjoy this inheritance, we should ensure it is conserved in order to pass it on to our successors.'*⁸

Chapter 8 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 provides for the protection of architectural and archaeological heritage in County Meath.

Architectural Heritage

The architectural heritage of County Meath is a unique and valuable resource that forms an important and irreplaceable part of the character and heritage of Kentstown. An Introduction to the Architectural Heritage of County Meath was published by the NIAH in 2002, and offers an illustrated introduction to the architecture of the county.

Part 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, makes provision of the protection of architectural heritage which includes a requirement to:

- *include in the development plan a Record of Protected Structures.*

In addition to this, the DoEHLG has issued guidelines for planning authorities in respect of Part 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 entitled Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004.

Record of Protected Structures - Explanation

A protected structure is a structure that the Planning Authority considers to be of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view. In County Meath these are afforded protection under the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The RPS may be amended by the addition of entries as part of the making of the County Development Plan or via Section 55 of the PDA 2000 (as amended) at any time during the life of the Development Plan.

A protected structure, unless otherwise stated in the RPS, includes '*any building, structure, excavation, or other thing constructed or made on, in or under any land, or any part of a structure*'. In relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, the meaning of the term 'structure' is expanded to include:

⁸ The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2004), para 1.1.1, pg. 13

- a) the interior of the structure;
- b) the land lying within the curtilage of the structure;
- c) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and
- d) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of the above structures.

Owners or occupiers of a protected structure can ascertain the specific details of the nature and extent of protection for each individual structure by seeking a declaration under Section 57 of the Act.

Under Section 54 (2) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) all works which would materially affect the character of a protected structure or a proposed protected structure, will require planning permission.

Record of Protected Structures

Currently Kentstown has a total of 5 no protected structures located within the development boundary for the settlement, which are listed in County Meath's Record of Protected Structures. Details of those protected structures are set out below.

1. **Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church** (also known as The Church of the Assumption)

RPS No.: MH032-103

NIAH No.: 14403201

Location: At the main crossroads in the Village Centre

Description: Detached gable-fronted church, built c.1844, with five-bay side elevations to nave, and having sacristy to the north. Dressed limestone entrance gable, with buttresses, string courses, plaques, castellations and pinnacles. Three Tudor arched door openings with traceried pointed-arched window above, having hood and label mouldings above. Pitched slate roof with bellcote to north gable. Roughly dressed stone walls to side elevations, with traceried windows set in pointed-arched openings with ashlar dressings. Ashlar limestone gate piers with cast-iron railings and double gates. Graveyard to the east. Plaque over front door reads: *'Erected A.D. 1844. Revd. J. Sheridan P.P.'*



Plate 3.6.1 -3.6.4: St. Marys RC Church, Kentstown

2. Saint Mary's Church of Ireland

RPS No.: MH032-120

NIAH No.: 14403202

Location: Somerville Road approx. 300 metres from village centre

Description: Detached church, built c.1795, and remodelled c.1850. Comprising of three-bay side elevations to nave with three-bay pinnacled tower to the west and with apsidal chancel to the east. Pitched slate roof. Roughly dressed stone walls, with string courses and plaques to tower. Paired round-arched windows with ashlar dressings. Rose window to chancel. Paired dressed limestone gate piers with cast-iron double gates and single pedestrian gates, set in rubble stone boundary walls. Graveyard to side.

The carved head stone in the surrounding graveyard add artistic interest to the site. Plaque reads 'Sir James Quayle Somerville Baronet built this Steeple Anno Domini 1797'.

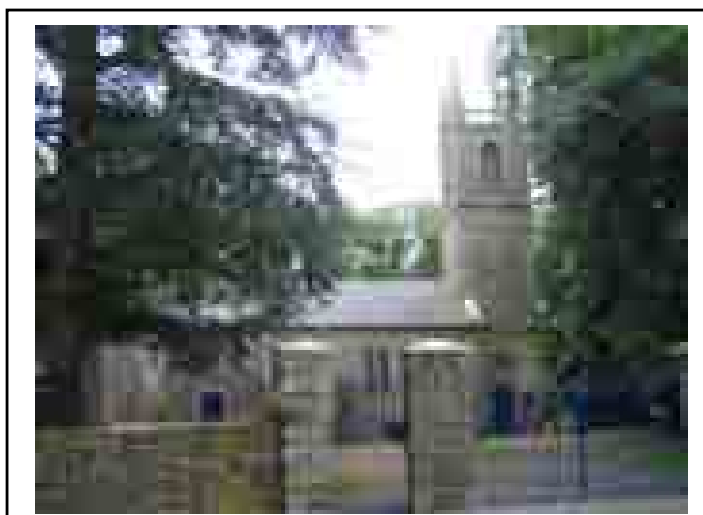
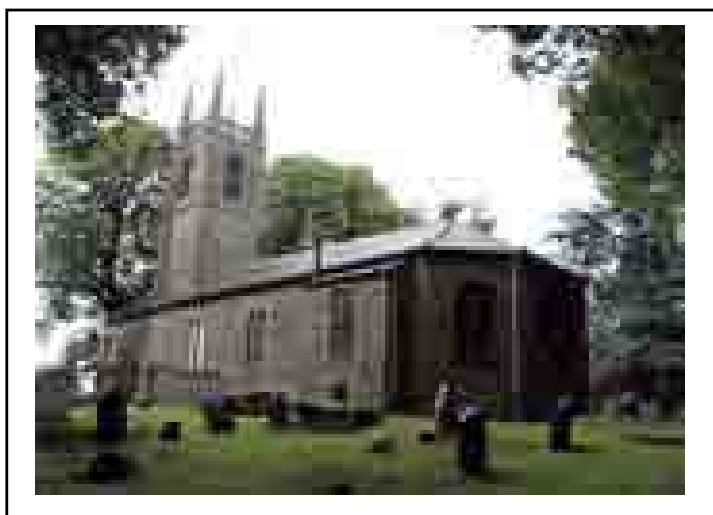


Plate 3.6.5-3.6.6: St. Marys Church of Ireland Church, Kentstown

3. Kentstown Glebe House

RPS No.: MH032-119

NIAH No.: 14403203

Location: On Somerville Road, opposite St. Mary's Church of Ireland

Description: Detached five-bay two-storey rectory over basement, built c.1820. Hipped slate roof with ashlar limestone chimneystacks. Roughly dressed stone walls with limestone string course between basement and entrance level. Timber sash windows with stone sills. Timber panelled door with flanking side lights and fanlight above, approached by limestone steps. Cast-iron double gates with ashlar limestone gates piers, set in rubble stone boundary wall. Three-ranges of outbuildings ranged around courtyard to the rear.

The architectural form of this rectory is enhanced by the retention of many interesting features and materials, such as the timber sash windows, ashlar chimneystacks and the timber panelled door. The related outbuildings to the rear and the piers and gates enhance the setting of the house.



Plate 3.6.7-3.6.10: Kentstown Glebe House

4. Detached House

RPS No.: MH032-118

NIAH No.: 14403204

Location: On the corner of Somerville Road

Description: Detached three-bay two-storey house, built c.1800, with single-storey porch. Hipped slate roof with red brick chimneystack. Rendered walls. Timber sash windows with stone sills. Outbuildings to the north.

The modest form of this house is enhanced by the retention of many original features and materials. Of particular interest are the timber sash windows which are set in small openings, which are representative of the vernacular tradition in Ireland. This house makes a positive contribution to the streetscape.



Plate 3.6.11-3.6.12: Detached House

5. Lions Mouth House Trough

RPS No.: MH032-122

NIAH No.: None

Location: Kentstown

Description: This is an old stone water trough shaped as a Lions Mouth and located within the grounds of a house. It is an unusual and historic feature of interest in Kentstown that is worthy of protection.

In addition to the above, there are a number of other protected structures, while not located within the settlement limit of Kentstown, are located in close proximity to the village. Those structures are listed below:-

Table 3.6.1 Protected Structures in Proximity to Kentstown

Name/Structure	Description	Location	Reg. No.	NIAH No.
Detached House	Staffordstown House – Detached mid 19 th Century house of three-bays and two-storeys over basement, adjoining a lower c18 reange.	Staffordstown, Kentstown	MH032-103	None
Medieval Church	Ruins of a medieval church and ruins of Church tomb.	Danestown, Kentstown	MH032-121	None
Danestown fort – Earthworks	Recorded Monument	Danestown, Kentstown	MH032-123	None
Somerville – County House	Detached house, c.1730, five-bay, three-storey, semi circular bow to s front, two storey stableyard, gateway lodge and walled garden.	Flemingstown, Kentstown	MH032-124	None

Somerville Demesne which contains Somerville House is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). A late Georgian house, it gave rise to Kentstown Village. Somerville was built by Sir James Somerville, who was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1736 and also served as MP for the city. The demesne contains landscaped grounds which includes areas of protected woodland, a walled garden, and ice house. Somerville Demesne is located outside the development boundary for Kentstown.

Archaeological Heritage

The archaeological heritage of an area includes monuments, places and artefacts either situated on land or under water. The archaeological heritage of County Meath is a critical element from the past which influences the character and heritage of its many towns and villages, including Kentstown.

Meath has a significant archaeological heritage, which provides a valuable cultural, educational and tourism resource. The County Development Plan 2007-2013

recognises the importance of preserving, protecting and fostering a greater public appreciation of the county's archaeological heritage.

Record of Monuments and Places

There are a number of monuments and places within Kentstown that are included on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) produced by the DoEHLG. These monuments and places are afforded statutory protection under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and the policies set out under Chapter 8, Section 8.3.2 of the County Development Plan 2007-2013. There are Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAP's) around the monuments and places in the RMP and these should be considered in any proposed developments in the vicinity.

In relation to development, as specified in the County Development Plan all development proposals within the Zones of Archaeological Potential or which relate to Recorded Monuments and Places must be referred to the National Monuments Advisory Service of the DoEHLG. In addition to this, Section 12 (3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 requires that any interference/work to a known archaeological site should be notified in writing to the Minister two months prior to the commencement of work.

Record of Monuments and Places in Kentstown

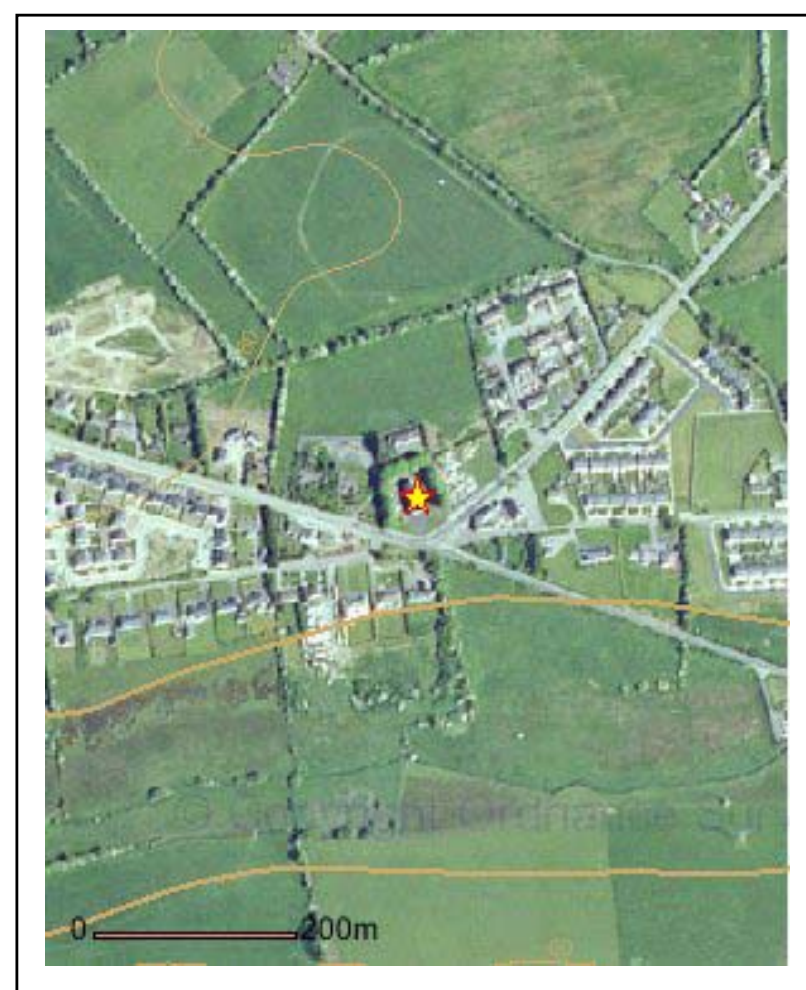
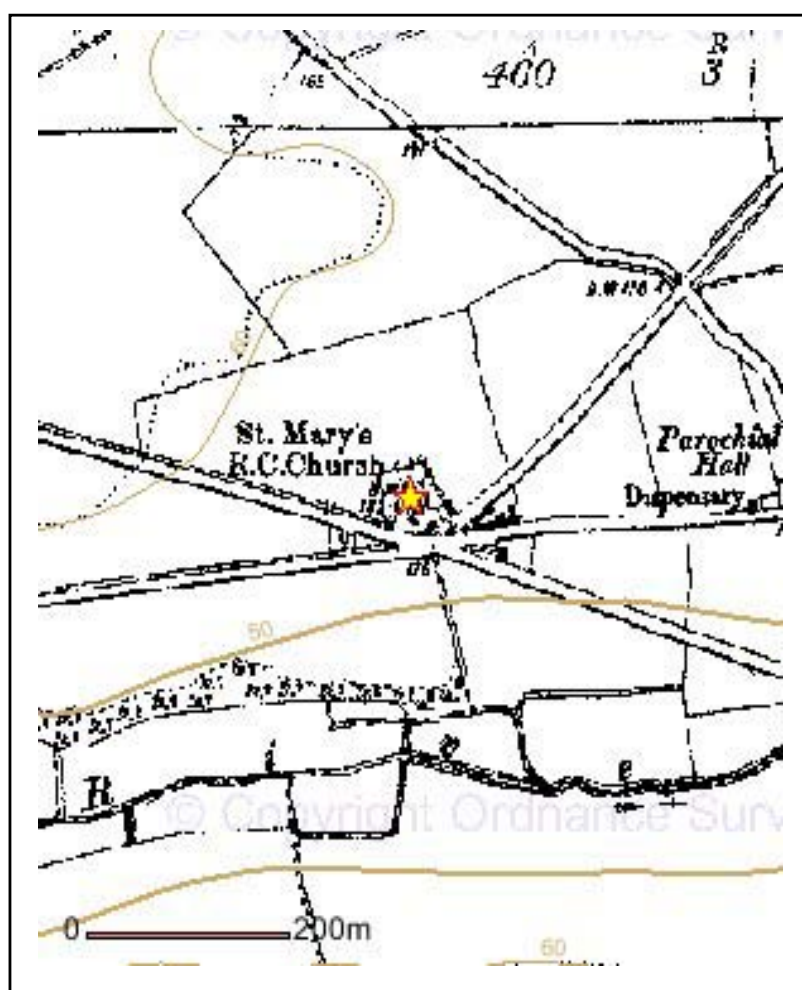
There are two items of archaeological interest located within the development boundary of Kentstown that are included on the Record of Monuments and Places. These are as follows:-

1. Font

SMR No.: ME032-005

Location: St. Mary's Catholic Church (Church of the Assumption), Kentstown

Description: Octagonal font, dated 1571, originally from Timoole (ME032-013----) now in St. Mary's RC church (Roe 1968, 69-72)



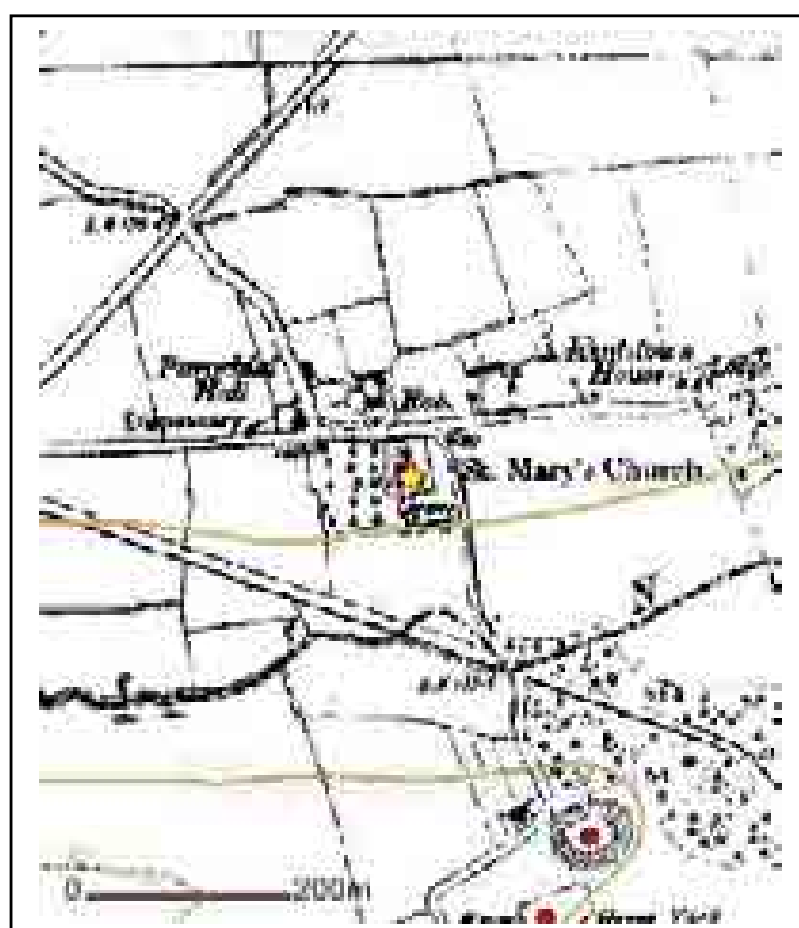
Maps 3.6.1 – 3.6.2: St. Mary's RC Church, Kentstown

2. Church

SMR No.:ME032-006

Location: St. Mary's Church of Ireland, Somerville Road, Kentstown

Description: No remains of church referred to in Dopping's Visitation Book of 1682-5. Mid-fourteenth-century effigy of Sir Thomas de Tuite in present church (Hunt 1974, 206-7, Pl. 113).



Maps 3.6.3 – 3.6.4: St, Mary's Church of Ireland, Kentstown

In addition to this there is a Ringfort (SMR No.: ME032-007) and the remains (faint traces) of a Medieval Church (SMR No.: ME032-008) located at Danestown, which are also on the Record of Monuments and Places. However, both these items are located outside the development boundary for Kentstown Local Area Plan.

3.6.2.2 Built Heritage Strategy

The Built Heritage Strategy aims to ensure that new development respects and is responsive to the historical and cultural heritage of the village and to secure the protection and enhancement of the archaeological and architectural heritage of Kentstown. This should be achieved by implementing the policy guidance contained in Chapter 8 of Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, by having regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004 produced by the DoEHLG and by ensuring that the relevant legislative provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (and as amended) that relate to architectural heritage and archaeology are implemented accordingly. These mechanisms should help ensure that aspects of Kentstown's unique history, built and cultural heritage, special interest and character of the village are maintained, for future generations to enjoy.

3.6.2.3 Built Heritage Policy

Architectural Heritage

EH POL 1: Record of Protected Structures

To protect the existing protected structures in Kentstown that are on the RPS for County Meath.

EH POL 2: Retention, Re-Use and Rehabilitation of Protected Structures

To encourage the sympathetic retention, reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures and their setting.

EH POL 3: Protection of Buildings on the RPS

To seek the conservation and protection of the buildings listed in the Record of Protected Structures.

EH POL 4: Works to Protected Structures

Any works or alterations to Protected Structures that will materially affect the character of the protected structure, its interior or the land or any structures within its curtilage, will require planning permission and should be subject to early consultation with Meath County Council's Conservation Officer and/or the Heritage Service of the Department of Environment, heritage and Local Government.

General Advice:

Generally, all repair and maintenance works should be carried out on a 'like for like' basis and in accordance with the Architectural Heritage Guidelines published by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, 2004. In addition, the Council will assess any application for redevelopment or infill for its contribution to the streetscape.

EH POL 5: Assessing Proposals to Protected Structures

To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2004 issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government when assessing proposals for development affecting a protected structure.

EH POL 6: Best Practice in Conservation

To promote the principles of best practice in conservation and the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques through the administration of the Conservation Grants Scheme funded by The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government.

EH POL 7: Regular Maintenance of Protected Structures

To provide assistance where possible to owners of protected structures in undertaking essential repairs and maintenance by the provision of relevant information.

EH POL 8: Attendant Grounds

To protect elements of designed landscapes of special interest located within the attendant grounds of Protected Structures, including boundary features.

EH POL 9: Architectural Impact Assessment

To require an architectural impact assessment/conservation method statement for developments within the grounds of country house estates/demesnes that contain Protected Structures.

EH POL 10: Alterations and Removal

To resist any unnecessary demolition or substantial modification of any building, group of buildings or item of architectural significance, which contribute to the built heritage of the village and which are included in the RPS, unless a conclusive case on technical evidence is made for its alteration or removal. A detailed justification as to the need for any such proposed works must accompany a planning application.

EH POL 11: New Works

To encourage that any new works contribute positively to the architectural and historic character of the area, its present and future life. In general, new development should relate closely to the established character of the village, respecting the disciplines of established building form, massing, height, alignment, orientation and window proportions.

EH POL 12: Consultation with the Conservation Officer of Meath County Council

Meath County Council will refer all planning applications involving protected structures to the Conservation Officer for their review.

Archaeological Heritage**EH POL 13: Sites of Established Archaeological Interest**

To safeguard the archaeological value of the sites (and their settings) in Kentstown that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (see section 3.6.2.1). In assessing proposals for development the County Council will have regard to the

recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

EH POL 14: Protect and Enhance Archaeology

To protect and enhance the archaeological sites and monuments (including their setting) in Kentstown including those that are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Meath or newly discovered sub-surface archaeological remains.

EH POL 15: Preservation In-Situ

To ensure the preservation in-situ, or preservation by record of:

- (a) The archaeological monuments in Kentstown which are included in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under section 12 of the National monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 and in the Urban Archaeological Survey of County Meath.
- (b) Any other sites and features of historical or archaeological interest.
- (c) Any subsurface archaeological features that may be discovered during the course of infrastructural/development works.

EH POL 16: Advice to Developers

To provide guidance to developers and property owners in Kentstown regarding the archaeological implications of a proposed development.

EH POL 17: Archaeological Assessment

To require an appropriate archaeological assessment to be carried out in respect of any proposed development likely to have an impact on a Recorded Monument, a Zone of Archaeological Potential, or their settings.

EH POL 18: Protection of Archaeological Material In-Situ

To ensure the protection of archaeological material in situ by ensuring that only minimal impact on archaeological layers is allowed.

EH POL 19: Archaeological Investigations and Recording of Sites

To require that sites of archaeological interest shall be subject to archaeological investigations and recording according to best practice, in advance of redevelopment where preservation in situ is not feasible.

EH POL 20: Development in the Vicinity of a Recorded Monument

To ensure that development in the vicinity of a Recorded Monument or Zone of Archaeological Potential does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature, and is sited and designed appropriately.

3.6.3 Natural Heritage

3.6.3.1 Existing Situation

Overview

The natural heritage of Kentstown includes a range of natural features and processes that make an important contribution to the environmental quality, landscape character, visual amenity, passive recreational amenity and ecological diversity of the village, as well as the public health of its inhabitants. All these aspects are considered in greater detail below.

Landscape Character

This landscape area in which Kentstown is located is characterised by rolling pastureland with drumlins including a well-managed patchwork of small pastoral fields, dense hedgerows and small areas of broadleaved woodland such as Balrath Woods and the woodlands of Somerville Demesne (both located just outside Kentstown).

Views within the area are generally limited by the topography and mature vegetation except at the tops of drumlins where panoramic views are available particularly on approach to the River Nanny.

Landscape Sensitivities

Kentstown is located within an area defined in the County Development Plan as the 'Central Lowlands' of the County where the landscape value is classified as high, but landscape sensitivity as medium. There are no key viewpoints identified either in, or towards Kentstown.

The River Nanny

The River Nanny flows through Kentstown and eventually into the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA, located approximately 17km to the east of the village. However, the River runs along the village's southern development boundary, where the topography of the landscape rises and as such the river is not instantly visible from the village. Whilst an important village feature the river does not currently contribute significantly to the identity or character of Kentstown although its banks are used by locals as an informal walking route. The river holds a small stock of wild trout is stocked annually with brown trout and also gets a small run of sea trout. It is often used for fishing or angling from May to October.

Development in Kentstown has not encroached on the river corridor and the lands that extend alongside it have remained for the most part, free from development. This has ensured the protection and enhancement of the River Nanny corridor and the natural habitats contained therein.

Trees

In Kentstown there are a number of attractive mature trees, both broadleaved copses and rows of pines that contribute much to the natural heritage and character of the area. These are primarily located within the church grounds of both St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church (or the Church of the Assumption) in the village centre and in the grounds of St. Mary's Church of Ireland on the Somerville Road. Retaining and protecting these trees is important and will be provided for in this Local Area Plan.

Topography

The topography of Kentstown is predominantly based on a 50-100m contour but with some lower areas based on a 0-50m contour. The most instantly noticeable change in topography is the rise of the lands to the rear of the houses which line the Leganara Road and which border the River Nanny and also the dip in the Navan Road (R153), just past the village centre.

Soils

Soils in Kentstown are largely mineral alluvium according to the Meath Landscape Character Assessment that is included as part of the 2007-2013 County Development Plan.

Ecological and Natural Designations

There are no known ecological sites in or immediately adjoining Kentstown. However, there is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) known as Balrath Woods (site code: 00 1579) located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village. Other designated sites which are not within the development boundary of Kentstown, but which are located in the surrounding area are set out in the table below:-

Table 3.6.2 Ecological and Natural Designations

Designation Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Kentstown (Km)
pNHA	001579	Balrath Woods	0.7
SAC	002299	River Boyne & River Blackwater	7.8
pNHA	001593	Thomastown Bog	4.67
pNHA	001578	Duleek Commons	7.6
pNHA	001576	Cromwell's Bush Fen	12.6
pNHA	001324	Jamestown Bog NHA	18.7
NHA	001592	Boyne Woods	8.5
SPA	004080	Boyne Estuary	16.7

As can be seen, the designated ecological sites in the area are located a significant distance from Kentstown Village.

Local Amenities

Local amenities relating to the natural heritage in Kentstown are limited. The grounds of both the churches which include attractive mature trees could be described as a local amenity. In addition to this, Somerville Road and Leganara Road, both local roads in Kentstown, the latter being tree lined are attractive routes to walk, given their rural character. The River Nanny can also be considered as a local amenity given that it is used by some as a walking route or for fishing.

3.6.3.2 Natural Heritage Strategy

The Natural Heritage Strategy for Kentstown seeks to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage of the village including its landscape character, open spaces, natural habitats, watercourses, mature trees and hedgerows, etc. The aim is to protect and conserve existing environmental designations, biodiversity within the plan area and on adjoining lands, landscape character areas and flora and fauna and to provide for the passive and active recreational needs of users. In addition, high quality landscaping and open space areas should be provided on developed lands to provide important visual relief from the built environment and recreational places for users of the development.

3.6.3.3 Natural Heritage Policy

EH POL 21: The Banks of the River Nanny

To protect the banks of the River Nanny in Kentstown and to provide and maintain a river walk along it, where possible, in conjunction with the relevant statutory bodies and voluntary groups.

EH POL 22: Development near to the River Corridor

To ensure the protection and enhancement of the river corridor and the natural habitats contained therein.

EH POL 23: Preservation of Existing Hedgerows and Mature Trees

To ensure the preserve existing hedgerows and mature trees which occur on development sites and roads. Provision should be made in the site layout for incorporating specimen trees that are in good condition.

EH POL 24: Protection of Open Space

The Planning Authority will not normally permit development which would result in the loss of public or private playing fields, parks, children's play space, amenity open space or land zoned for recreational or open space purposes. An exception may only be considered where one or more of the following requirements are demonstrably met:

- There is a clear excess of playing fields or open space provision within the area. This should take into account the long-term needs of the community, the type, recreational, amenity value and accessibility of such provision.

- Alternative compensatory provision is made which is both accessible to and of equal or greater quality and benefit to the community served by the existing open space.
- The continued use, proper maintenance and enhancement of the amenity/facility can best be achieved by the redevelopment of a small part of the site that will not adversely affect its overall sporting, recreational and/or amenity value of the facility.
- The site is indicated for an alternative use in the development plan.

Rationale:

Playing fields, parks, gardens and informal open spaces are not only important as a recreational resource but also provide valuable green areas for wildlife corridors and habitats, act as buffers between conflicting land uses, enhance visual amenity especially in developed areas and contribute to the health and quality of life of citizens. Only where it is clearly established that open space and playing fields are no longer required for their original purposes, and the County Council has considered the need for other forms of recreational and amenity open space in the locality will it permit alternative development proposals. Many existing areas of open space are of considerable value and are therefore worthy of protection in their own right.

EH POL 25: Development and the River Corridor

Proposals for developments which encroach on the river corridor must be accompanied by an assessment of the potential impact on natural habitats and the wider riparian environment.

EH POL 26: Protection of Features of Special Historic Interest in Kentstown

To discourage development that would lead to a loss of, or cause damage to, the character, the principal components of, or the setting of the special historic interest of any of Kentstown's important protected structures.

EH POL 27: Ecological Corridors

To encourage the creation, development and maintenance of ecological corridors, ecological stepping stones, green bridges, animal underpasses, eco-ducts and culverts, where appropriate in Kentstown.

EH POL 28: Development which May Impact on Rivers, Streams and Watercourses

To consult the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board and the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG prior to undertaking, approving or authorising any works or development which may impact on rivers, streams and watercourses.

EH POL 29: Run-off from Development

To require that runoff from a developed area will not result in the deterioration of the quality of downstream watercourses or habitats.

EH POL 30: Development Applications and the Landscape Character of Kentstown

In making an application, potential applicants should have regard to the landscape character area in to which the application site falls and to address the concerns of the Planning Authority at design and siting stage. Further details on the landscape character areas within the County, including Kentstown are set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

EH POL 31: Hedgerows and Trees

Where possible, existing hedgerows and trees should be retained, in particular those that form the boundaries of the development sites. Boundary hedgerows and trees which have to be removed must be replaced with a replacement hedge or indigenous trees and shrubs appropriate to the site conditions. Where possible hedges and trees should not be removed during the nesting season (March 1st to April 31st).

3.6.3.4 Natural Heritage Key Action

Key Action EH 1: Provision of a Linear Walkway

To secure the development of a formal linear walkway and amenity area along the banks of the River Nanny in Kentstown to increase the accessibility and amenity value of the river and its wildlife corridor. The Council will also seek to provide a pedestrian link to the river walkway from the village centre. These will be provided either through direct provision in association with individual development proposals or through the applications of development levies in accordance with the Planning Authorities approved contribution scheme.

3.7 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

3.7.1 Explanation of Format

This section of the Local Area Plan examines the existing situation in Kentstown in terms of economic development and tourism, and sets out a strategy for its future growth. The strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve particular goals through the application of Policies and Key Actions. The Policy and Key Actions for Kentstown are listed at the end of this section.

It is important to note that the Local Authority does not have a direct role or remit in economic development or job creation but has a role to play in promoting economic development by the provision of policies and infrastructure to enable such growth.

3.7.1.1 Policy Informants

In developing the Policies and Actions of this section a range of inputs, guidelines and best practice has been considered, in particular the following:-

- **existing employment sources and tourist attractions or potential in Kentstown;**
- **Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013** and its policies, objectives and proposals as appropriate to tourism within Kentstown, in particular Chapter 3 dealing with Economic Development and Chapter 6 on Rural Development;
- Meath Tourism Strategy 2005-2010;
- **resources** that is available to Meath County Council to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and services;
- **national and regional planning guidelines** which are applicable including the Retail Planning Guidelines by the DoEHLG;
- **public consultation** including the input received through the public exhibitions, written submissions, completed questionnaires and through speaking with other stakeholders;
- **principles of proper planning and sustainable development.**

3.7.2 Existing Situation

Employment

Kentstown has a very small service sector including only a pub and a local shop. There are also no significant industrial or service employers within the village and the majority of the recent residential developments are inhabited by workers who are likely to commute to work in the larger urban centres within the County or to Dublin. Reilly Agri-Plant Sales and Hire, Kilmore Car Sales and Evan's Coaches are located in Kentstown, but these would employ only a very limited number of local people.

In addition to this, there is a landfill site located at Knockharley, which is situated approximately 1.5km to the northeast of Kentstown. It has been operating since December 2004 and currently has planning permission to accept 132,000 tonnes of waste per annum and an EPA waste license to accept a maximum 200,000 tonnes per annum. Greenstar Holdings Ltd., the landfill operators, had a pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála in 2008 to determine whether a proposed increased rate of waste acceptance at the residual waste landfill site is considered a Strategic Infrastructure Development to be considered under the Strategic Infrastructure Act. On 10th July 2008, An Board Pleanála decided that the proposed development is 'strategic infrastructure' and in this regard, Greenstar intend to lodge a planning application to An Bord Pleanála to increase the tonnage levels permitted at the landfill site to 400,000 tonnes a year. This development may provide employment opportunities for Kentstown residents.

Outside the urban centre, agricultural employment is one of the main employers in the East Meath area. However, in recent years, along with national trends there has been a national decline in the total number of farms along with a decline in employment in agriculture. Agriculture is likely to a very limited role in the employment base of the village.

Tourism Development

Meath County is labelled as 'Ireland's Heritage Capital' given the wealth in built and natural heritage that it possesses, such as Slane Village and Castle Demesne, the Boyne Valley, Hill of Tara, Bective Abbey, Trim Castle, Kells Heritage Centre, and the Bru Na Boinne World Heritage site, to name but a few. However, by comparison, Kentstown as a settlement currently has a limited offer in terms of tourism products to attract visitors into the area.

Somerville Demesne, located just outside the settlement boundary of the LAP area is identified in the Meath County Plan 2007-2013 as having some tourist facilities with potential to develop further attractions. The potential of Somerville Demesne would undoubtedly benefit the local services and should encourage further tourism related facilities in Kentstown.

Although the village is not explicitly referred to in Meath's Tourism Strategy entitled, *'Ireland's Heritage Capital – Marketing Tourism in Meath, 2005 – 2010'*, it can still play a supplementary role in *"develop[ing] and implement[ing] a sustainable tourism*

policy.....and enhance the image of the Meath as Ireland's Heritage Capital"
(Meath Tourism and Meath County Council 2004).

3.7.3 Economic Development & Tourism Strategy

The economic development and tourism strategy for Kentstown is as follows:-

- to promote enterprise creation opportunities and encourage job/employment creation initiatives in line with the growth of Kentstown on appropriately zoned and serviced land;
- to encourage the upgrading and expansion of the existing local shop and services and the development of new local services in the village centre to serve local need, as appropriate and in accordance with Meath County Retail Strategy;
- to support Kentstown's position as a Level 5 settlement in the County Retail Strategy;
- to support and facilitate private and community initiatives for enterprise, tourism and employment where such proposals are compliant with the policies of the Local Area Plan; and
- To ensure a high quality urban environment and the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environments which are important heritage features of the village, in order to promote the tourism potential of Kentstown.

3.7.4 Economic Development & Tourism Policy

EDT POL 1: The Promotion of Enterprise

To promote enterprise creation opportunities and encourage job/employment creation initiatives in line with the growth of Kentstown and on appropriately zoned and serviced land.

EDT POL 2: Growth in Retail

To encourage the upgrading and expansion of the existing local shop and services and the development of new local shops and services in the village centre area to serve local need, as appropriate and in accordance with Meath County Retail Strategy.

EDT POL 3: Support of the County Retail Strategy

To support Kentstown's position as a Level 5 settlement in the County Retail Strategy. **Note:** Smaller village centres/crossroads in the County Retail Hierarchy are not centres where new large scale retail development is envisaged within the County. They are seen as areas suitable to accommodate rural shops (post offices, creameries, public houses, petrol filling stations etc.)

EDT POL 4: The County Tourism Strategy

The Council is supportive of Meath County Council's Tourism Strategy entitled *'Ireland's Heritage Capital - Marketing Tourism in Meath, 2005-2010'*

EDT POL 5: Promoting Tourism

To promote, encourage and facilitate the development of sustainable tourism in Kentstown through the conservation, protection and enhancement of the built and natural heritage, in order to maximise upon the economic benefits arising from the industry.

Note: Section 3.6 of this Plan sets out more specific policy and objectives of the Council in relation to the conservation of Kentstown's built and natural heritage.

EDT POL 6: Employment Growth and Promotion

To facilitate enterprise and employment and to co-operate with other agencies including the private sector in order to provide local employment opportunities in Kentstown which are in keeping with the size and growth of the village.

EDT POL 7: Re-Use of Historic Buildings to Promote Economic Development and Tourism

To encourage the reuse of Kentstown's historic buildings where they lie vacant or underused and recognise the contribution that they can make to economic development, tourism, education and the aesthetic qualities of Kentstown's landscape and village centre.

3.7.4 Economic Development & Tourism Key Action**Key Action EDT 1: Light Industrial Park in Kentstown**

To secure the development of a light industrial park on the area zoned E2 for the specific provision of sites for small indigenous starter/incubation units including the provision of necessary physical infrastructure and services including connection to Kentstown Sewerage Scheme, upon such time as the waste water treatment works is upgraded to accommodate additional population.

4.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR KENTSTOWN

4.1 Introduction

Kentstown is a village that has developed rapidly in recent years. The population in Kentstown has expanded significantly (157%) between the years 2002-2006. Despite this significant growth in population the village does not have a defined village core providing a range of services appropriate to the increased size of the village and its new population. There is one local convenience store and public house located at the cross-roads which currently service the local residential population. The church provides an additional focal point in the village located north-west of the cross-roads. The school is north-east of the village. Kentstown has a total of 5 no protected structures located within the development boundary for the settlement.

The provision of guidelines offers the opportunity to provide guidance for future development and in particular developing a quality village centre environment servicing the residential population. The Guidelines also offer an opportunity to improve the quality of future residential developments in the village.

4.2 Protected Structures

Protected Structures and their setting will be protected in Kentstown in line with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Their contribution to the built heritage and urban environment in the village is recognised and valued. Any development that may impact upon a Protected Structure will be required to submit an Architectural Impact Assessment in order to assess the potential impacts on the Protected Structure.

4.3 Demolition of a Protected Structure

Demolition of a Protected Structure can only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and it must first be removed from the Record of Protected Structures. Where partial demolition of a protected structure is proposed, the applicant should make a compelling case that the part to be demolished does not contribute in any way to the conservation or continued use of the whole structure. Where permission is sought to demolish such a building, the application must be accompanied by the following;

- a character impact statement which assesses the impact of the proposal;
- a report on the structural condition of the building, together with a survey, historical data (where available), drawings and photographs, sufficient to describe the features of the building;
- a report carried out by a competent and suitably qualified conservation architect will be required to accompany any such application. The Qualification grade of the Architect should be appropriate to the degree of significance of the building.

4.4 Alterations and Extensions to Protected Structures

Alterations and extensions to 'Protected Structures' that are visible from road level will be discouraged, unless it is demonstrated that the proposed extension would enhance the architectural or historic integrity of the Protected Structure. Proposals to extend a Protected Structure shall be required to demonstrate that:

- the extension is necessary;
- the new work involves the least possible loss of historic fabric and that important features are not obscured damaged or destroyed;
- the principal elevations of a structure are not adversely affected by new extensions;
- the design of symmetrical buildings or elevations is not comprised by additions that would disrupt the symmetry or be detrimental to the design of the protected structure; and
- the extensions are of a modern composition that complements the original structure in terms of scale, materials and detailed design.

4.5 Development on Lands Designated C1 (Land Use Zoning Objective) in the Village Centre

Lands located within the village centre with the land use zoning objective 'C1' are designated '*To provide for mixed residential and business uses in existing mixed use central business areas.*' The development of these lands offers the opportunity to provide a village core for Kentstown. Thus, it will be important the development of these lands offers a quality village centre environment. Meath County Council will assess all planning applications for new developments on lands designated as 'C1' thoroughly having regard to the following;

- scale of the proposed development- development should be appropriate to the scale of the existing village area;
- design & layout of the proposed development - the development should address the public road and have active street frontage encouraging pedestrian activity at ground floor level;
- impact on neighbouring residential development buildings;
- the creation of a new streetscape and building line;
- relationship of the proposed development with St. Marys' Roman Catholic Church (Protected Structure) located north-west of the village crossroads; and
- standard of design and finish including signage.

4.6 Development on Lands Designated as G1 (Land-Use Zoning Objective) in the Village Centre

Lands located within the village centre with the land use zoning objective 'G1' are designated *'To provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities.'* The development of these lands presents the opportunity to provide much needed community facilities in Kentstown Village, which can be enjoyed by all Kentstown residents. There is the potential to develop high quality community facilities which will further enhance the development a village 'centre' for Kentstown. Future applicants shall adhere to the general design principles set out below during the assessment of lands designated with the land use objective 'G1.'

- Access (both pedestrian and vehicular) to the proposed community facility development should be considered through the existing 'Churchfields' residential estate.
- The design and layout of the community facilities shall respect the existing residential amenity of the surrounding residential areas which adjoin the community development site
- The design and layout of the community facilities shall respect the setting of the St. Marys' Church (Protected Structure) located south of the proposed development site.

4.7 Residential Guidelines for Kentstown

Guidelines for future residential developments in Kentstown are intended to act as frameworks for future residential development within the village. Within the lifetime of this Local Area Plan there will be limited opportunity for further residential development owing to existing infrastructure constraints in the village and the position of the village in the county settlement strategy. Notwithstanding this, any future residential development in Kentstown will be required to comply with the Residential Design Guidelines, as outlined in Table 4.1 overleaf.

Table 4.1: Residential Design Guidelines for Future Development in Kentstown

Residential Design Guidelines

Residential dwellings should present a high-quality living environment for their future occupants, in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units, and the overall layout and appearance of the development.

Roads: New roads in residential areas should design in safety and play for children by incorporating traffic calming measures into the design and layout. Long straight stretches of road should be avoided at all times as this encourages speeding. Adequate road drainage must be considered as part of any residential development.

Public Open Space: This should be integrated into the overall layout of residential development and should take advantage of the existing landscape and allow for more passive use of open spaces. The recreational needs of new residents should also be taken into consideration and playgrounds for children and sheltered and landscaped areas for more relaxed recreational pursuits, incorporated in the layout wherever possible.

Open spaces in new development should be suitably proportioned. Narrow tracts, will not be acceptable. Smaller areas of useable open space and play grounds should be carefully sited within residential areas to be accessible and overlooked by dwellings so that the amenity is owned by the residents and is safe to use. Natural surveillance might be from windows of nearby houses or from people using the space or even drivers of passing vehicles. The feeling of safety generated by high levels of natural surveillance in public areas will encourage further use and participation in public life – which will itself reinforce high levels of surveillance. Policies VGH POL 19 and VGH POL 20 contained in Section 3.3 of this LAP set out the applicable standards in relation to public open space provision.

Dual Aspect: Dwellings should be pre-dominantly dual-aspect (with windows/openings on two or more elevations). Where single aspect dwellings are unavoidable, single aspect units should have a predominantly south facing aspect and north-facing elevations will not be permitted. Dual aspect homes provide residents with a greater level of amenity within their home. By ensuring that at least part of the unit receives direct sunshine for part of the day, this format reduces the need to make use of artificial illumination improving the standard of living inside the dwelling and uses less energy.

Roof Profiles: Over complicated or large roofscapes should be avoided. Simple roof forms perform better and are more aesthetically pleasing. Traditional local styles of roof profiles should be considered with pitched roofs between 35 and 45 degrees.

Roof Finishes: Roof materials should be consistent throughout a single scheme the use of traditional materials such as slate is recommended. Roof colour should be blue/black/grey, consistent with the Kentstown area.

Height: All dwellings in close proximity to one-another or within the same scheme should be of similar height and no one dwelling should tower above the other.

Sunlight: Development should be designed to allow the living or working space full exposure to sunlight, avoiding overshadowing.

Shelter: Dwellings should be located in the landscape to exploit the natural shelter of hills, ridges, topography and vegetation.

Boundaries: Local types of stone and/or hedgerows and tree stands in boundaries should be incorporated into the layout of the development. Existing trees and hedges should be used to 'fit' a house

next to another. Local plant varieties should be used to provide appropriate shelterbeds to help:

- shelter buildings from cold winds and driving rain,
- improve and soften the appearance of an area,
- encourage wildlife,
- add variety and interest to a development.

Contours / Topography: In order to ensure a layout that is sympathetic to landform, buildings should be parallel with the contours so that houses fit into the landform naturally. Excessive building up or digging into the landscape is not acceptable.

Privacy & Amenity: Good space standards, sound insulation and access to private open space are all important aspects that need to be provided in new dwellings in order to ensure adequate privacy and amenity standards. The existing landscape should be used to secure privacy. Additional planting may be necessary to create private space where natural features do not exist. Rather than establish a minimum window-to-window standard, the DoEHLG Urban Design Manual recommends that the aim should be to assess the impact on the privacy of the layout and home design based on:

- The site's location and residents expected levels of privacy.
- The size of the windows – both those overlooking and overlooked
- Changes in level between overlooking windows
- Ability to screen/partially obscure views through design or judicious use of planting.

Proportion: There should be a balance of proportion between the windows and doors throughout and space between dwellings should be maintained.

Entrances: Entrances should promote safety by being obvious and should be designed in a manner that utilises the assets of the area, such as natural planting and any indigenous stone. Traditional features are favoured rather than more modern high iron gates. Where there is an existing boundary feature, every effort should be made to retain it.

Bin Storage: Each residential unit must have adequate storage for three wheeled bins. Residential units with no rear access should provide adequate storage for the bins to the front of the development, in contained units.

Recycling: Recycling is important and a central facility should be located on site along with refuse bins. Space for composters should also be provided in the case of new residential development.

Public Lighting: Careful consideration to the location of the public and private lighting within a new residential development should be considered. Public lighting should provide a sense of security and increase safety for pedestrian, cyclists and car users.

Car Parking: Car parking should be planned in the layout of any development with facilities for both residents and visitors. Where car parking for dwellings is provided in on street form as opposed to being provided in front gardens; a landscaped strip of private garden space with a minimum depth of 1.5metres should be provided to the front of each house. Additional guidance on car-parking in general is provided under Section 3.3 of this Local Area Plan.

Gardens: Large areas of lawn should be avoided and tree and shrub planting considered instead. The garden should be considered as a productive element of rural living e.g. for growing vegetables. Linking a dwelling with its surrounding landscape is an important aspect in the layout of a new development in Kentstown. An effective rural garden layout and design will ensure that the dwellings and natural features compliment each other. Suburban layouts should be avoided e.g. hard kerbing.

Outbuildings & Garages: Outbuildings such as garages, gas and oil tanks, storage sheds should be designed to compliment houses and should be part of an overall scheme rather than an afterthought. They should be used to create a sense of enclosure and to help define spaces. The position of these structures should be considered at the outset of the design process.

Porches: Porches should be kept simple with fussy and over ornamental pseudo classical porches avoided. Porch design should be consistent with the design of the house. Porches should project from the building by at least as much as they span. Open porches are preferable to enclosed ones.

Extensions: Proposed extensions to buildings and boundary features such as front, rear and sidewalls, should use matching materials in a style to compliment the original building and adjacent boundaries. The total energy used in development should be minimised as far as possible to encourage sustainable development practices in line with government initiatives and current legislation. This should encourage the use of locally sourced, 'environmentally friendly' and energy efficient materials for construction as well as minimise running costs.

**APPENDIX 5a: LIST OF SUBMISSIONS TO KENTSTOWN LOCAL
 AREA PLAN 2009-2015**

List of Submissions Received Regarding Preparation of Kentstown Local Area Plan

1	Gary Matthews land at School Road Kentstown
2	Dave Varley & Marie Maguire
3	Tracy Armstrong Fenton Simons Associates on behalf of Kevin Purfield lands at Veldonstown & Kentstown
4	Gavin Lawlor Tom Philips & Assoc on behalf of James Carroll
5	Paschal Marry on behalf of Community Representatives on Knockharley Landfill Community Liaison Committee
6	Dara Mc Cormack
7	Fr Patrick Coyne
8	James Carroll
9	Christopher Cunningham
10	Patrick O Sullivan Spatial Policy Section
11	George Carolan Forward Planning Section
12	Thomas Byrne TD on behalf of Jimmy Mullen Kentstown Community Group
13	Frank Burke & Assoc on behalf of Sceles Ltd (c/o Mr Stan Cooney)
14	Ray White lands at Kentstown
15	Enda Shiels Allen & Shiels Architects on behalf of Caolac Monaghan
16	Robert Wall
17	Elizabeth Coveney
18	Teresa Halloran Development Applications Unit
19	Councillor Tommy Reilly
20	James Mullen Chairman of Kentstown Community Centre Development Committee
21	Patrick Finegan Daltonstown Balrath Navan
22	Declan Brassil & Co Ltd on behalf of Sean Finnegan
23	Austin O Driscoll on behalf of Kentstown National School
24	Teresa Halloran Development Applications Unit – Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report (22 nd & 23 rd October, 2008)
25	Teresa Halloran Development Applications Unit – Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report (dated 6.11.08).

List of Submissions received following Draft Display of the Kentstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015

1	Olivia Walsh Health & Safety Authority
2	Teresa Halloran, Development Applications Unit, Dept of Environ
3	Michael Owens, EPA
4	Patrick O'Sullivan, Spatial Policy, DOEHLG
5	Teresa Halloran (Different Submission)
6	Mr Michael Mc Cormack, NRA
7	Thomas Byrne TD
8	Frank Burke (Chartered Engineer) on behalf of Mr. John O'Reilly of Reilly Agri. & Plant Sales, Kentstown.
9	David Doyle on behalf of Kentstown Rovers Football Club
10	Patrick Finnegan
11	Richard Finnegan
12	Mark Hoey & Gemma Traynor
13	Patrick O'Sullivan, Spatial Policy Unit, DoEHLG
14	Aidan Lawlor on behalf of Kentstown Parish Support Group
15	Joe Casserly on behalf of Ray White
16	Frances Heaslip, Coordination Unit, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
17	Revd Fr Patrick Coyne.
18	Tom Phillips + Associates on behalf of Mr James Carroll,
19	Fergal O'Byrne, Meath Green Party
20	George Carolan, Forward Planning Section of the Department of Education & Science.
21	James Mullen Chairman Of Kentstown Community Centre Development Committee
22	Sean Boyle & Associates on behalf of Terence and Mary McDonagh
23	Denis O Mahony
24	Patrick O'Sullivan, Spatial Policy Unit, DoEHLG (further comments)
25	Simon Clear & Associates on behalf of Kevin Purfield

List of Submissions received following Draft Display proposed Amendments to the Kentstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015

Submission Number	Name	Contact Details
1	Ian Lumley	An Taisce Tailor's Lane Black Lane Dublin 8
2	Erica O'Driscoll	National Roads Authority St Martin's House Waterloo Road Dublin 4
3	Enda Shiels on behalf of Sean & Caolac Monaghan	Enda Shiels & Assocaites Cavan Road Virginia County Cavan
4	James Mullen	Chairman Kentstown Community Centre Development
5	Shirley Kearney	Department of Education
6	Simon Clear Associates on behalf of Kevin Purfield	3 Terenure Road West Terenure Dublin 6W
7	James Carroll	Veldonstown Brownstown Navan
8	Cian O'Mahony	EPA
9	Seana McGearty	Coordination Unit Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources Elm House Earlsvale Road Co. Cavan

APPENDIX 5b: ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING REPORTS

- **Screening for Appropriate Assessment on Draft Plan**
- **Screening for Appropriate Assessment on Proposed Amendments to Draft Plan**
- **Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment on Draft Plan**
- **Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment on Proposed Amendments to Draft Plan**

APPENDIX 5c: KENTSTOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN ZONING MAP

APPENDIX 5b: ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING REPORTS

- **Screening for Appropriate Assessment on Draft Plan**
- **Screening for Appropriate Assessment on Proposed Amendments to Draft Plan**
- **Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment on Draft Plan**
- **Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment on Proposed Amendments to Draft Plan**

SCREENING REPORT

ARTICLE 6(3) & (4) OF THE HABITATS DIRECTIVE 92/43/EEC APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT OF LAND USE PLANS

PREPARATION OF KENTSTOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN

MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Meath County Council intends to make a Local Area Plan for Kentstown under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended). The purpose of this screening report is to consider whether the proposed LAP is likely to impact on any designated Natura 2000 sites (normally called Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas) and to determine whether a full Appropriate Assessment is required.

Please note that a separate Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report was prepared in October 2008 and the relevant environmental authorities (the EPA and DoEHLG in this case) were consulted in considering whether the LAP required SEA. This current Screening Report refers only to potential impacts that may occur to any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the implementation of the new LAP, in accordance with the 1992 Habitats Directive.

2.0 DOEHLG CIRCULAR LETTER SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08

DoEHLG Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 was issued to all local authorities on February 2008. The letter refers to the recent ruling against Ireland in Case 418/04 EC Commission v Ireland and relates to Ireland's transposition and implementation of the Birds Directive 79/409/EEC, as well as its implementation of relevant articles of the 1992 Habitats Directive. The ruling, amongst other things, clarifies that Ireland has not correctly transposed Article 6 (3) and (4) of the 1992 Habitats Directive by not providing explicitly for appropriate assessment of land use plans, as opposed to projects (paras 222 to 234 of the ruling). The implications of the ruling are that any draft land use plan or amendment/variation to it, proposed under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), must be screened for any potential impact on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. The results of the preliminary screening will then determine whether or not a full Appropriate Assessment must be carried out.

The DoEHLG Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 requires that the screening should be based on any ecological information available to the authority and an adequate description of the plan and its likely environmental impacts. It also specifies that the results of the screening be recorded and made available to the public and the appropriate assessment, if required, published concurrently/jointly with the SEA of the plan.

3.0 FURTHER INFORMATION & MAPS

Enclosed with this Screening Report are the following maps and information:-

- Map A - Location Map for Kentstown
- Map B - Map of Kentstown showing the boundary of the proposed LAP area
- Map C - Kentstown Urban Detail Map 17 (from Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013)
- Map D - Map showing Kentstown in relation to the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF LANDS

Kentstown is located at a central geographical position within County Meath, approximately 11 km from Navan and a short distance from the main N2 transportation corridor to Dublin. The settlement of Kentstown has experienced significant population growth over the last census period 2002-2006 with the population growing from 355 no. persons in 2002, to 912 persons in 2006.

Kentstown is designated as a 'Village' in the Settlement Strategy of the County Development Plan and as such is defined as a node for *'distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services'*.

In terms of built heritage Kentstown has a number of protected structures as well as protected archaeological items on the Record of Monuments and Places. There are currently 4 no. protected structures in Kentstown and 2 no. recorded sites and monuments within the development boundary of Kentstown, with a further 2 located just outside the boundary at Danestown, according to the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). In terms of natural heritage within the Kentstown Local Area Plan there are no designated sites although there is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) known as Balrath Woods (site code: 00 1579) located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village, close to Flemingstown.

5.0 SCREENING GUIDANCE

The document prepared for the Environment DG of European Commission and entitled *'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC'* (School of Planning - Oxford Brookes University, 2001), sets out the methodology to be followed in the screening report.

Section 3.1 of the document advises on the general screening process while Annex 2, Figure 1 of the document provides a screening matrix with assessment criteria that should be used in the screening report. In accordance with this guidance, Annex 2,

Figure 1 has been used to produce this screening statement, as is set out in the Screening Assessment below.

6.0 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

6.1 Brief Description of the Plan

The Kentstown Local Area Plan will replace the written statement for Kentstown (which includes detailed objectives) and Urban Detail Map 17 (a land use zoning map for Kentstown) which was adopted as part of the County Development Plan 2001. It was readopted as part of the current 2007-2013 County Development Plan for a further two years pending the preparation and adoption of the new Local Area Plan for Kentstown. It is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 that all Local Area Plans will be prepared and adopted within the immediate two years preceding the adoption of the county plan. This is why the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Kentstown has now commenced.

The Local Area Plan will establish a land use framework for the sustainable development of the area, including the location, nature, size and operating conditions. The Local Area Plan will form a statutory document, conforming to the policies and objectives set out in the 2007-2013 County Development Plan and other relevant government guidelines and documents.

The Plan will identify the existing character of the area, set out a common vision or strategy for Kentstown that is generally supported by the local community and that provides a positive framework for guiding private development and public investment in the village. It will provide a means (via policies and objectives) to influence future development to create a sustainable environment. The overall aim will be to accommodate local development needs in an orderly and sustainable manner, whilst protecting the historic character of the village.

6.2 Brief Description of the Natura 2000 Site

Table 1 below shows the SPA designation of the River Nanny Estuary and Shore which may be potentially impacted upon as a result of the Kentstown LAP.

Table 1: Details of River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA

Designation Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Kentstown (Km)
SPA	004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore	17km (approx)

Although there are no Natura 2000 sites (SACs or SPAs) within Kentstown, adjoining it or in close proximity to it attention is afforded to the presence of the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (site code 004158) which is located approximately 17 km to the northeast of the village. This SPA comprises the estuary of the River Nanny and sections of the shoreline to the north and south of the estuary (c. 3 km in length). The estuarine channel extends inland for almost 2 km.

River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA– Description

The site comprises the estuary of the River Nanny and sections of the shoreline to the north and south of the estuary (c. 3 km in length). The estuarine channel, which extends inland for almost 2 km, is narrow and well sheltered. According to the site synopsis available on this SPA, sediments are muddy in character and edged by saltmarsh and freshwater marsh/wet grassland. The saltmarsh is best developed in the eastern portion of the estuarine channel, with species such as Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*) occurring.

Further up the estuary, the marsh habitats support species such as Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*). The shoreline, which is approximately 500 m in width to the low tide mark, comprises beach and intertidal habitats. It is a well-exposed shore, with coarse sand sediments. The well-developed beaches, which are backed in places by clay cliffs, provide high tide roosts for the birds. The village of Laytown occurs in the northern side of the River Nanny estuary.

This site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Black-headed Gull and Herring Gull. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands, and as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds. This is an important site for wintering waders, with nationally important populations of Golden Plover (1,759), Oystercatcher (1,014), Ringed Plover (185), Knot (1,140) and Sanderling (240) present (all figures are average peaks for the 5 year period 1995/96-1999/2000). The populations of Knot and Sanderling are of particular note as they represent approximately 4% of their respective national totals. Black-headed Gull (926) and Herring Gull (609) also occur here in significant numbers. A range of other waterbirds also occurs, including Cormorant (35), Brent Goose (145), Mallard (76), Grey Plover (55), Lapwing (1,087), Dunlin (721), Bar-tailed Godwit (59), Curlew (107), Redshank (150), Turnstone (59), Common Gull (66) and Great Black-backed Gull (70). The site is of most importance as a roost area for the birds but the intertidal flats also provide feeding habitat. Many of the birds also utilise the intertidal areas and beaches further to the north and south, and also the fields above the shore. The main threat to the wintering birds is increased levels of disturbance by beach users.

This site is of ornithological importance as it supports five species of wintering waterbirds in numbers of national significance. Two species using the site, Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit, are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

6.3 Describe the individual elements of the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the SPA.

It is not expected that the proposed Local Area Plan will cause any significant negative impacts on the River Nanny Estuary and Shore (site code 004158) as it is located approximately 17km away from the LAP area. However, the River Nanny borders the southern edge of the village for an extent of approximately 1.2km, and

marks the settlement's southern development limit. From there, it runs for approximately 17km to the northeast until it ultimately flows into the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA. Therefore potential exists for new development within the LAP area, particularly in close proximity to the River Nanny, to impact on the SPA further downstream. Section 6.4 reviews in more detail the likelihood of any direct, indirect or secondary impact occurring on the SPA, as a result of the Kentstown Local Area Plan.

6.4 Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the SPA.

It is noted that the River Nanny flows through Kentstown and eventually into the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA, located approximately 17km to the east of the village, which means that there is potential, all be it very limited, for any development in close proximity to that river to impact on the SPA some distance downstream. This would be an indirect impact of the plan on the SPA.

However, it should be noted that the current zoning map for Kentstown as set out by Urban Detail Map 17 (attached here in as Map C) shows the River Nanny running along the village's southern development boundary. The portion of lands with the LAP area, which run alongside the river at this location are zoned primarily as 'H1'- *to protect the setting, character and environmental quality of areas of high natural beauty* and 'F1'- *to provide and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities*. The river also runs along the boundary of a small area of greenfield land zoned 'G1'- *to provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities*. There is also a specific objective in the Urban Detail Map for Kentstown, to secure the development of a linear walkway and amenity area close to the banks of the River Nanny, although to date this has not been provided.

As such, development considered permissible on lands adjoining or near to the River Nanny in Kentstown is limited and will remain either as Greenfield, or used for outdoor recreational use. It is proposed in the Draft Local Area Plan for Kentstown to retain the same land use zonings along the extent of the River Nanny, to ensure it is protected from inappropriate forms of development. The Draft Local Area Plan for Kentstown will therefore inflict no changes to the River Nanny in terms of land use zoning and potential development along its course and the existing situation will remain. In addition to this, we stress that there is limited capacity in Kentstown at the current time to accommodate significant new residential development and in this regard, land use zoning within the settlement boundary, to accommodate new residential development, will be limited.

On top of this the Draft LAP will also contain clear policy to ensure the protection and enhancement of the River Nanny corridor and the natural habitats contained therein. Proposals for developments which encroach on the river corridor will be required to be accompanied by an assessment of the potential impact on natural habitats in the wider riparian environment. This in turn will influence the decision of the planning authority regarding such development. A setback of 10m from the edge of the watercourse will be required in the case of all development. In addition to this, development will be restricted within areas which are sensitive to the effects of

flooding, in accordance with the recently published '*Draft Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Public Consultation*' (Sept. 2008). All these factors are set up to protect the River Nanny from inappropriate forms of development and to protect the watercourse from pollution.

We refer also to the '*The Characterisation Report*' carried out by CDM (Sept. 2005), which is one of the project reports carried out as part of the Draft Eastern River Basin District Management Plan (published Dec. 08). The Characterisation Report is a detailed summary of the state of the waters in the Eastern River Basin District and includes a detailed analysis of the Nanny/Delvin Catchment Area. The report notes that the primary environmental driving force in the Nanny/Delvin Catchment Area is considered to be agricultural production, with up to 91% of the catchment be utilised for agricultural use. In this regard, agricultural runoff is the dominant cause of poor water quality in the catchment area. The Nanny/Delvin Catchment area contains 11 small urban centres and associated facilities (including Kentstown) which cover only 4% of the catchment. These urban areas are a source of urban stormwater runoff and pollutant loads, including combined sewer overflows, however, Kentstown is not noted to as a settlement which causes any significant pollutant problems.

The Characterisation Report notes that there are no significant water supply abstraction points from surface waters in the catchment area, the majority of potable water for the region is provided from an abstraction from the Liffey at Leixlip and at least 18 public and private groundwater locations. However no surface water bodies are considered to be at risk from abstraction pressures. We stress that Kentstown is served by the East Meath, South Louth and Drogheda Water Scheme where abstraction is taken from the River Boyne at Roughgrange via the canal intake, which is treated at Stalleen Water Treatment Works.

The Characterisation Report notes that the part of the River Nanny that runs through Kentstown is not likely to be at risk from any Waste Water Treatment Plants. We stress that this will remain the same throughout the lifetime of the proposed Local Area Plan, as no abstraction from the River Nanny or the provision of a new WWTP are proposed in Kentstown or its locality.

In this regard, there is limited chance of the LAP inflicting a significant negative impact on the River Nanny, which in turn means there is a remote chance of the LAP causing an indirect negative impact to the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA.

6.5 Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of the potential impact.

As the LAP is not expected to cause any potential impact on the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA., it will cause no changes to the Natura 2000 site. More specifically, there will be no reduction in habitat area; no disturbance of key species, habitat or species fragmentation; no reduction in species density; no changes in key indicators of conservation value and no climate change brought about to the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA as a result of the Kentstown Local Area Plan.

1.0 Introduction

Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive, compels competent authorities to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects. The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site, the competent authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

If the assessment concludes that the plan or project will have a negative impact on the site, it may only proceed and be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest as outlined in the Directive and the member state concerned shall take all compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 site is protected. The European Commission must be informed where this occurs. Meath County Council is preparing a Local Area Plan for Kentstown as required by the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, the parent policy document to the Local Area Plan.

The Draft Kentstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 and proposed amendments to the Draft LAP has been screened to ascertain if the Plan should be subject to an appropriate assessment as outlined in the Habitats Directive. The screening has had regard to the European Commission's guidance document entitled "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC".

The screening process has found that the Draft Kentstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 with proposed Amendments does not require an appropriate assessment as the implementation of the Plan would not be likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 site.

2.0 Description of Lands

2.1 Description of Lands

Kentstown is located at a central geographical position within County Meath, approximately 11 km from Navan and a short distance from the main N2 transportation corridor to Dublin. The settlement of Kentstown has experienced significant population growth over the last census period 2002-2006 with the population growing from 355 no. persons in 2002, to 912 persons in 2006.

Kentstown is designated as a 'Village' in the Settlement Strategy of the County Development Plan and as such is defined as a node for *'distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services'*.

In terms of built heritage Kentstown has a number of protected structures as well as protected archaeological items on the Record of Monuments and Places. There are currently 4 no. protected structures in Kentstown and 2 no. recorded sites and monuments within the development boundary of Kentstown, with a further 2 located just outside the boundary at Danestown, according to the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI). In terms of natural heritage within the Kentstown Local Area Plan there are no designated sites although there is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) known as Balrath Woods (site code: 00 1579) located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village, close to Flemingstown.

3.0 Screening Guidance

The document prepared for the Environment DG of European Commission and entitled *'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC'* (School of Planning - Oxford Brookes University, 2001), sets out the methodology to be followed in the screening report.

4.0 Screening Assessment

4.1 Brief Description of the Plan

The Kentstown Local Area Plan will replace the written statement for Kentstown (which includes detailed objectives) and Urban Detail Map 17 (a land use zoning map for Kentstown) which was adopted as part of the County Development Plan 2001. It was readopted as part of the current 2007-2013 County Development Plan for a further two years pending the preparation and adoption of the new Local Area Plan for Kentstown. It is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 that all Local Area Plans will be prepared and adopted within the immediate two years preceding the adoption of the county plan.

The draft Kentstown LAP was prepared and placed on public display from 23rd of February 2009 to the 6th April 2009 and a manager's report was prepared on the submissions received. The draft plan and manager's report were considered by the members of Meath County Council at a council meeting on 28th April 2009. Having considered the Draft Local Area Plan and the Manager's Report on submissions received as a result of the public display period, Meath County Council, on Monday 25th May 2009, resolved to amend the Draft Local Area Plan. . As a result of this, a number of material amendments have been proposed to the draft plan. These amendments include the following:

- Rezoning of lands located off R150 from A1 (residential) to G1 (community) to facilitate access to community lands to rear
- Zone previously unzoned lands off the Navan Road for A1 (residential) and H1 (protect environmental quality of areas) consistent with the development pattern in the area
- Amendment of policy relating to community and sporting groups in the area to make policy more robust and inclusive
- Insertion of objective to protect residential amenity of residential community at Slan Duff in the village
- Rezoning of lands located south-west of the junction off the R150 and the R153 from F1 (provide for an improve open space for active and passive recreational amenities) to C1 (mixed residential and business uses) A2 (new residential communities), F1 (provide for an improve open space for active and passive recreational amenities) and E1 (Industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure).
- Policy to facilitate the expansion of the church facilities

4.2 Brief Description of the Natura 2000 Site

Table 1 below shows the SPA designation of the River Nanny Estuary and Shore which may be potentially impacted upon as a result of the Kentstown LAP.

Table 1: Details of River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA

Designation Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Kentstown (Km)
SPA	004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore	17km (approx)

Although there are no Natura 2000 sites (SACs or SPAs) within Kentstown, adjoining it or in close proximity to it attention is afforded to the presence of the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (site code 004158) which is located approximately 17 km to the northeast of the village. This SPA comprises the estuary of the River Nanny and sections of the shoreline to the north and south of the estuary (c. 3 km in length). The estuarine channel extends inland for almost 2 km.

River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA– Description

The site comprises the estuary of the River Nanny and sections of the shoreline to the north and south of the estuary (c. 3 km in length). The estuarine channel, which extends inland for almost 2 km, is narrow and well sheltered. According to the site synopsis available on this SPA, sediments are muddy in character and edged by saltmarsh and freshwater marsh/wet grassland. The saltmarsh is best developed in the eastern portion of the estuarine channel, with species such as Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*) occurring.

Further up the estuary, the marsh habitats support species such as Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*). The shoreline, which is approximately 500 m in width to the low tide mark, comprises beach and intertidal habitats. It is a well-exposed shore, with coarse sand sediments. The well-developed beaches, which are backed in places by clay cliffs, provide high tide roosts for the birds. The village of Laytown occurs in the northern side of the River Nanny estuary.

This site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Black-headed Gull and Herring Gull. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands, and as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds. This is an important site for wintering waders, with nationally important populations of Golden Plover (1,759), Oystercatcher (1,014), Ringed Plover (185), Knot (1,140) and Sanderling (240) present (all figures are average peaks for the 5 year period 1995/96-1999/2000). The populations of Knot and Sanderling are of particular note as they represent approximately 4% of their respective national totals. Black-headed Gull (926) and Herring Gull (609) also occur here in significant numbers. A range of other waterbirds also occurs, including Cormorant (35), Brent Goose (145), Mallard (76), Grey Plover (55), Lapwing (1,087), Dunlin (721), Bar-tailed Godwit (59), Curlew (107), Redshank (150), Turnstone (59), Common Gull (66) and Great Black-backed Gull (70). The site is of most importance as a roost area for the birds but the intertidal flats also provide feeding habitat. Many of the birds also utilise the intertidal areas and beaches further to the north and south, and also the fields

above the shore. The main threat to the wintering birds is increased levels of disturbance by beach users.

This site is of ornithological importance as it supports five species of wintering waterbirds in numbers of national significance. Two species using the site, Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit, are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

4.3 Describe the individual elements of the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the SPA

It is not expected that the proposed Local Area Plan or proposed Draft Amendments to the LAP will cause any significant negative impacts on the River Nanny Estuary and Shore (site code 004158) as it is located approximately 17km away from the LAP area. However, the River Nanny borders the southern edge of the village for an extent of approximately 1.2km, and marks the settlement's southern development limit. From there, it runs for approximately 17km to the northeast until it ultimately flows into the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA. Therefore potential exists for new development within the LAP area, particularly in close proximity to the River Nanny, to impact on the SPA further downstream. Section 6.4 reviews in more detail the likelihood of any direct, indirect or secondary impact occurring on the SPA, as a result of the Kentstown Local Area Plan and the proposed Draft Amendments.

4.4 Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the SPA

It is noted that the River Nanny flows through Kentstown and eventually into the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA, located approximately 17km to the east of the village, which means that there is potential, all be it very limited, for any development in close proximity to that river to impact on the SPA some distance downstream. This would be an indirect impact of the plan on the SPA.

However, it should be noted that the current zoning map for Kentstown as set out by Urban Detail Map 17 (attached here in as Map C) shows the River Nanny running along the village's southern development boundary. The portion of lands with the LAP area, which run alongside the river at this location are zoned primarily as 'H1'- *to protect the setting, character and environmental quality of areas of high natural beauty* and 'F1'- *to provide and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities*. The river also runs along the boundary of a small area of greenfield land zoned 'G1'- *to provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities*. One of the proposed draft amendments to the LAP is to rezone a portion of the F1 lands to a mixture of uses which include) to C1 (mixed residential and business uses) A2 (new residential communities), F1 (provide for an improve open space for active and passive recreational amenities) and E1 (Industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure). However within the context of this site the F1 lands provide a buffer between the A2, C1 and E1 lands and the river. There is also a specific objective in the Urban Detail Map for

Kentstown, to secure the development of a linear walkway and amenity area close to the banks of the River Nanny, although to date this has not been provided.

As such, development considered permissible on lands adjoining or near to the River Nanny in Kentstown is limited and will remain either as Greenfield, or used for outdoor recreational use. It is proposed in the Draft Local Area Plan and the proposed Draft Amendments for Kentstown to retain the same land use zonings along the extent of the River Nanny, to ensure it is protected from inappropriate forms of development. The Draft Local Area Plan for Kentstown will therefore inflict no changes to the River Nanny in terms of land use zoning and potential development along its course and the existing situation will remain. In addition to this, we stress that there is limited capacity in Kentstown at the current time to accommodate significant new residential development and in this regard, land use zoning within the settlement boundary, to accommodate new residential development, will be limited.

On top of this the Draft LAP will also contain clear policy to ensure the protection and enhancement of the River Nanny corridor and the natural habitats contained therein. Proposals for developments which encroach on the river corridor will be required to be accompanied by an assessment of the potential impact on natural habitats in the wider riparian environment. This in turn will influence the decision of the planning authority regarding such development. A setback of 10m from the edge of the watercourse will be required in the case of all development. In addition to this, development will be restricted within areas which are sensitive to the effects of flooding, in accordance with the recently published *'Draft Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Public Consultation'* (Sept. 2008). All these factors are set up to protect the River Nanny from inappropriate forms of development and to protect the watercourse from pollution.

We refer also to the *'The Characterisation Report'* carried out by CDM (Sept. 2005), which is one of the project reports carried out as part of the Draft Eastern River Basin District Management Plan (published Dec. 08). The Characterisation Report is a detailed summary of the state of the waters in the Eastern River Basin District and includes a detailed analysis of the Nanny/Delvin Catchment Area. The report notes that the primary environmental driving force in the Nanny/Delvin Catchment Area is considered to be agricultural production, with up to 91% of the catchment be utilised for agricultural use. In this regard, agricultural runoff is the dominant cause of poor water quality in the catchment area. The Nanny/Delvin Catchment area contains 11 small urban centres and associated facilities (including Kentstown) which cover only 4% of the catchment. These urban areas are a source of urban stormwater runoff and pollutant loads, including combined sewer overflows, however, Kentstown is not noted to as a settlement which causes any significant pollutant problems.

The Characterisation Report notes that there are no significant water supply abstraction points from surface waters in the catchment area, the majority of potable water for the region is provided from an abstraction from the Liffey at Leixlip and at least 18 public and private groundwater locations. However no surface water bodies are considered to be at risk from abstraction pressures. We stress that Kentstown is served by the East Meath, South Louth and Drogheda Water Scheme where abstraction is taken from the River Boyne at Roughgrange via the canal intake, which is treated at Stalleen Water Treatment Works.

The Characterisation Report notes that the part of the River Nanny that runs through Kentstown is not likely to be at risk from any Waste Water Treatment Plants. We stress that this will remain the same throughout the lifetime of the proposed Local Area Plan, as no abstraction from the River Nanny or the provision of a new WWTP are proposed in Kentstown or its locality.

In this regard, there is limited chance of the LAP and the proposed Draft Amendments inflicting a significant negative impact on the River Nanny, which in turn means there is a remote chance of the LAP causing an indirect negative impact to the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA.

4.5 Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of the potential impact.

As the LAP and proposed Draft Amendments to the LAP are not expected to cause any potential impact on the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA., it will cause no changes to the Natura 2000 site. More specifically, there will be no reduction in habitat area; no disturbance of key species, habitat or species fragmentation; no reduction in species density; no changes in key indicators of conservation value and no climate change brought about to the River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA as a result of the Kentstown Local Area Plan.

4.6 Describe from the above those elements of the plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale of magnitude of impacts is not known.

As detailed above, there is potential for an indirect impact on a Natura 2000 site as the River Nanny flows along the edge of the area covered by the Kentstown Local Area Plan, which means that there is potential for any development in close proximity to that river to impact on the SPA downstream. It is considered that the potential of this impact occurring is very low given the distance of the SPA from Kentstown and also the preventative objectives and policies, including appropriate land use zoning, included in the Local Area Plan, as detailed in Section 4.4. It is therefore considered that there will be no significant impact on a Natura 2000 site or its conservation objectives as a result of the implementation of the Kentstown LAP and the proposed draft LAP amendments. .

5.0 Consultation

The specified environmental authority that should be consulted in relation to Article 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC is;

- The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG)

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department have a formal consultation role (through the Development Applications Unit (DAU)) as part of the screening and assessment process. Their advice and recommendations will be taken on board in considering whether full Appropriate Assessment is necessary or not for the proposed draft amendments to the Kentstown Local Area Plan.

Please note that the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) were consulted previously in considering whether the LAP required an Appropriate Assessment (they concluded the Draft Kentstown LAP did not require an Appropriate Assessment).

Please note that the EPA and DoEHLG were consulted previously in considering whether the LAP required an AA. They will also be sent a copy of this AA Screening Report alongside a copy of the proposed Draft Amendments to the LAP, once completed.

6.0 CONCLUSION

It is felt that full Appropriate Assessment does not need to be carried out for Kentstown LAP given the limited potential for the SPA to be negatively impacted upon, as a result of the policies and objectives that will be cited in the LAP. It is felt that no significant impacts are likely to occur to the SPA or its conservation objectives as a result of the implementation of the Local Area Plan. However, we will await the comments from the NPWS before making a final recommendation on whether full Appropriate Assessment is needed for the Kentstown LAP.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

To be made once comments received from the NPWS.

SEA SCREENING REPORT

PREPARATION OF KENTSTOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN 2008-2014

MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Meath County Council intends to make a Local Area Plan for Kentstown under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006. The purpose of this report is to consider whether the LAP requires Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL AREA PLAN

The purpose of the Local Area Plan is to guide the future growth and sustainable development of the village of Kentstown, in line with the new Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, which was adopted last year. The overall aim of the LAP is:-

- To give guidance on the nature (type), location, scale, form and design of development that is appropriate to its locality and which may possibly be accommodated within the Plan area as well as the infrastructure and facilities necessary to service it.
- To encourage a sustainable level of development that is appropriate to the character, heritage, amenity and strategic role of Kentstown that allows for the enhancement of the village character, services, community facilities and amenities.
- To ensure that a balance is struck between meeting the needs and demands of modern life but in a way that is sensitive and responsive to the past.

The Local Area Plan will remain in place for a period of 6 years from the date of its adoption.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF LANDS

Kentstown has developed at the crossroads of the R153 and R150 Regional Routes primarily to the northwest of the River Nanny. The R153 connects Kentstown to Navan while the R150 links it Duleek and also to N2 Slane and Dublin route. Both roads carry heavy volumes of traffic which inevitably pass through the village centre. This causes much traffic congestion and a subsequent reduction in the quality of the urban environment. It also reduces accessibility around and to the village centre for local residents also.

There is a landfill site located at Knockharley, which is situated approximately 1.5km to the northeast of Kentstown. It has been operating there since December 2004 and

currently has planning permission to accept 132,000 tonnes of waste per annum and an EPA waste license to accept a maximum 200,000 tonnes per annum. Greenstar Holdings Ltd., the landfill operators, had a pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála earlier this year to determine whether a proposed increased rate of waste acceptance at the residual waste landfill site is considered a Strategic Infrastructure Development to be considered under the Strategic Infrastructure Act. On 10th July 2008, An Bord Pleanála decided that the proposed development is strategic infrastructure and in this regard, Greenstar intend to lodge a planning application within the coming months, to An Bord Pleanála to increase the tonnage levels permitted at the landfill site to 400,000 tonnes a year.

Traffic congestion in the village has been exacerbated in recent years by the unprecedented level of population growth and significant new residential development that has taken place in Kentstown in the past 8 years or so. During the short 4-year period from 2002 to 2006, Kentstown's population has more than doubled, jumping from 355 persons to 912 persons – a growth of +157%. This far exceeds the potential population of 600 persons which was forecast to take place in Kentstown by 2011 (Figure 3 of Meath County Development Plan 2001-2007) and is largely attributed to recent immigration trends and the movement of resident populations from nearby centres of employment.

Given the village's fairly moderate population growth in previous years (pre-2002), Kentstown was promoted in the previous County Development Plan 2001-2007 as a strong local development centre in the Navan Development Area, seen as capable of accommodating a growth in population. A population of about 600 people in accordance with the 600 population equivalent (PE) of the new waste water treatment plant for Kentstown, with improved community facilities was promoted as the growth strategy for the area. However, given the unprecedented growth and the scale and extent of new residential development that has recently taken place in the village, policy now needs to move towards one of restraint, rather than the promotion of growth. Consolidation of the village and new development that accommodates local needs only will be a priority for Kentstown, if the proper planning and sustainable development of the villages is to be secured.

Community facilities and services in the village are limited. Currently there is just one pub and a local shop to serve the entire community. There is no community hall or other public facility in the village with only the pool table from the local pub available to young people, which is not ideal. The high level of population growth and new residential development that has occurred in the past has not been accompanied by a corresponding level of services and facilities to serve community needs.

The current 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan envisages the curtailment and safeguarding of future growth in Kentstown to ensure that it does not act as a catalyst to facilitate the continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City or other nearby employment centres including Navan and Drogheda.

Variation No. 2 (Order of Priority) of the County Development Plan 2008–2014

Meath County Council's recently adopted 'order of priority' (Variation No. 2 of the 2007-2013 County Development Plan), phases the release of existing residential zoned land in Meath's various settlements, in an effort to channel and focus future residential growth in the county. The overall objective is to avoid the rate of development from becoming overwhelming. However, Kentstown has been omitted from Variation No. 2 as it states that there are limited lands available for residential development in the village. In this regard, Variation No. 2 requires that an order of priority be included in the Kentstown Local Area Plan.

Variation No. 2 states that the extent of existing residentially zoned lands will be revised in the context of individual Local Area Plan or Development Plan review for each centre and does not necessarily preclude identifying additional zoning in specific locations where the Planning Authority is satisfied that a clearly established need for such zoning is evident. Such additional zoning, it states, may only be considered *'where the development of such lands for residential purposes would deliver an identified piece of critical and necessary social and/or physical infrastructure in conjunction with such development and may require such lands to be prioritized for development over existing residential zoned lands or that a corresponding amount of land has been dezoned'*.¹

This policy will have to be considered carefully and incorporated into the new Local Area Plan to be prepared for Kentstown.

4.0 FURTHER INFORMATION & MAPS

Enclosed within this SEA Screening Report are the following maps and information:-

- A location Map for Kentstown (Map A).
- An OS Map of Kentstown with the settlement boundary indicated with a blue line (Map B).
- Kentstown Urban Detail Map 17 extracted from Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 (Map C)
- Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 which includes the County Settlement Strategy can be viewed at the following website:
<http://www.meath.ie/LocalAuthorities/Publications/>

5.0 MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

Under SI No. 436 of 2004 Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental assessment) Regulations 2004 (Article 14A) where a Planning Authority proposes to make a Local Area Plan under Section 18, 19 & 20 of the Act it shall consider

¹ Variation No. 2 of County Meath Development Plan 2007-2013, pg. 10

whether or not the proposed local area plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment and in doing so, must take account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations.

In this regard, Section 6.0 below sets out the required report pursuant to Article 14A of the 2004 Regulations.

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Criteria for determining the likely significant environmental impacts (Schedule 2 (A) of SEA Regulations 2004)

6.1 Characteristics of the Plan

- (i) The degree to which the plan sets the framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.**

The Plan will establish a land use framework for the sustainable development of the area, including the location, nature, size and operating conditions. The Local Area Plan will form a statutory document, conforming to the policies and objectives set out in the 2007-2013 County Development Plan and other relevant guidelines and documents. The Plan will identify the existing character of the area, set out a common vision or strategy for Kentstown that is generally supported by the local community and that provides a positive framework for guiding private development and public investment in the village. It will provide a means (via policies and objectives) to influence future development to create a sustainable environment. The overall aim will be to accommodate local development needs in an orderly and sustainable manner, whilst protecting the historic character of the settlement.

- (ii) The degree to which the Plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy.**

The proposed Local Area Plan to provide a land use framework for the sustainable development of Kentstown will not affect other plans, but its policies and objectives will be set within the context of the 2007-2013 County Development Plan (in accordance with Section 19 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006) for which a full SEA was prepared and published. In its making, it will also have regard to other relevant planning and environmental policy and legislation including European Union directives, Ministerial guidelines and other national, regional and county plans and policies.

- (iii) The relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.**

Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000-2006, sets out the content of development plans. It states "*A Development Plan shall set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*" The current County

Development Plan 2007-2013 adheres to the principles of sustainable development in accordance with the requirements of the Act. The Local Area Plan will conform to the principles, objectives and policies of the County Development Plan and will, therefore, have a strong emphasis on promoting the sustainable development of the area.

(iv) Environmental problems relevant to the proposed Local Area Plan.

The lands in Kentstown are serviced by the East Meath Water Supply Scheme an expansion of which is planned for Kentstown. The expansion will ensure adequate water capacity is available to service the existing population and any future projected growth in Kentstown up to 2013 – during the lifetime of the LAP. In terms of foul water drainage, Kentstown sewerage treatment plant is currently at full capacity however, the County Development Plan only allows a limited amount of new housing to be constructed in the settlement up to the year 2013 – during the lifetime of the LAP. This infrastructure will be extended / upgraded in the order of priority set out in the County Settlement Strategy with larger settlements considered more suitable for residential development being prioritised for infrastructure upgrading.

Kentstown has developed at the crossroads of the R153 and the R150 regional routes. The R153 connects Kentstown to Navan while the R150 links it to Duleek and also to the N2 Slane and Dublin Route. Both roads carry heavy volumes of traffic which inevitably pass through the village centre. This causes much traffic congestion and a subsequent reduction in the quality of the urban environment. It also reduces accessibility in and around the village centre for local residents also. However, this busy junction is to be upgraded to ensure the safer movement of traffic into and through the village and to help alleviate some of the traffic congestion.

The landfill site located at Knockharley is situated approximately 1.5km to the northeast of Kentstown - outside of the development boundary of the village. While the site currently has planning permission to accept 132,000 tonnes of waste per annum, Greenstar - its operators, propose to lodge a planning application to An Bord Pleanála within the coming months, to increase the tonnage levels permitted at the landfill site to 400,000 tonnes a year. This is more than three times the current permitted tonnage and is likely to have negative impacts on the local environment. It is suggested by Greenstar however, that the proposed increase in tonnage would not alter the total amount of waste the facility could receive over its lifetime nor require any expansion of the facility. Instead, it would mean the landfill void would reach its maximum limit earlier and therefore close earlier.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be submitted along with the planning application for the increased waste tonnage at the landfill site and will be available for public viewing along with other relevant documents, once the planning application is made to An Bord Pleanála. The EIS will assess the environmental impacts likely to occur as a result of the proposal, including any impacts to lands in and around Kentstown and will be an important consideration for An Bord Pleanála when making its decision. An application for an EPA waste license will also have to be made by Greenstar, should it wish to increase the tonnage levels permitted at the Knockharley dump.

In addition to this, a high level of residential development has taken place in Kentstown during the lifetime of the previous plan for the settlement and all new development whether it is a single dwelling, a large residential scheme or improved/extended infrastructure or services, impacts on the environment to some extent. Similarly, any change to land use zoning has potential to impact on the environment. This will occur whether it is residential, commercial or infrastructural development that occurs on the zoned land; whether it is planned works carried out by the local authority in order to improve infrastructure or services in the town or it is individual development proposals from private developers that transpire from the zoning of land in the LAP. It would put pressure on the local environment and will have some impact on the current ecological status in the area. There is potential for habitat loss and loss of trees, hedgerows and other habitats that are rich in biodiversity. There are also a number of designated sites in and around the Kentstown area (as set out in Section 6.2 (vi) (a) of this Screening Report) that could potentially be impacted by any significant development in the area.

(v) The relevance of the LAP for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste management or water protection).

These plans and legislation are considered under the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, from which the Local Area Plan will derive its context. They will not therefore be specifically addressed within the Local Area Plan.

6.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EFFECTS AND OF THE AREA LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED

(i) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.

The implementation of the Local Area Plan may result in the permanent conversion of a portion of lands from greenfield or brownfield to new residential, recreational, community, commercial or industrial development. Any development or construction works has potential to impact on the local environment whether it is through the loss of habitat, trees, hedgerows and other habitats that are rich in biodiversity. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects depend on the zoning of the lands in question, the unique character and use of the lands to be developed (e.g. greenfield or brownfield, rural or urban), the form and methods of construction and the final use of the development.

However, with regards to positive effects, it is considered that the probability of these occurring is high through regeneration and an improved urban and living environment. It is expected that the effects will be permanent and therefore, irreversible, until such time that any new policies and/or objectives are identified in a revised LAP and/or County Development Plan.

(ii) The cumulative nature of the effects.

The Local Area Plan will focus on the principles of sustainable development and the considerations of the future, beyond the lifetime of the LAP nevertheless, the rivers and groundwater are potentially vulnerable to pollution via development, business or agricultural operations, which can contribute to transboundary pollution and which is a possible cumulative negative effect.

However, it is anticipated that for the most part, the cumulative effects on the environment will be positive as policy in the LAP will move towards restraint in terms of growth and development, rather than the promotion of growth as promoted in the previous County Development Plan 2001-2007. Consolidation of the village and new development that accommodates local needs only will be a priority in Kentstown, if the proper planning and sustainable development of the village is to be secured. The current 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan envisages the curtailment and safeguarding of future growth in Kentstown to ensure that it does not act as a catalyst to facilitate the continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City or other nearby employment centres including Navan and Drogheda.

With every development and redevelopment that does occur, it is expected that the area will be rejuvenated with an improved physical and visual environment and the promotion of a vibrant village centre and high quality residential development with appropriate community facilities to accommodate local people. New residential development will only be provided in line the necessary infrastructure, community facilities and amenities necessary to sustain it.

It is important to note however, that the zoning of land and construction of development in any case has potential to impact on the local environment whether it is through the loss of trees, woodlands, vegetation, hedgerows, and roosting habitats

etc., which are rich in biodiversity. Any loss of these habitats would have localised, significant environmental implications and may inadvertently impact upon a particular species of flora or fauna and in turn, impact upon other habitats in the area via loss of species. This is regrettably, a potential cumulative effect regardless of whether the Local Area Plan is implemented or not.

(iii) The transboundary nature of the effects.

Unfortunately, there is always potential for transboundary pollution if siltation/ run-off gets into rivers or ground water. While the EPA regulate and police activities that might otherwise cause pollution and the LAP will contain policy and objectives that will not permit the run-off of pollution into any water source, the individual actions of developers, business operators or homeowners cannot be controlled at all times and so there is potential for inter-county transboundary effects on the environment. This however, is possible whether the LAP is in place or not.

(iv) The risk to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).

The implementation of the Local Area Plan will not result in any risks to human health. Any future development in the area will conform to the Local Area Plan, of which the fundamental essence is to create a healthy environment in which people can live, work and spend leisure time.

(v) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effect (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).

It is considered that the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects on the proposed Local Area Plan will not differ significantly from those likely to arise in relation to the existing Kentstown Urban Detail Map 17 which is contained in the County Development Plan 2007-2013 (a copy of which is enclosed – see Map C). The majority of future development will be residential and necessary community, recreational and educational facilities and also for open space and active and passive recreational amenities. The magnitude of the zoning proposed in Kentstown will not differ significantly to the current zoning under the Kentstown Urban Detail Map 17.

The proposed LAP for Kentstown will therefore aim to reduce the level of unsustainable population growth that has occurred over the past decade in the area. The current 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan envisages the curtailment and safeguarding of future growth in Kentstown to ensure that it does not act as a catalyst to facilitate the continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City or other nearby employment centres including Navan and Drogheda. In this regard, policy in the Kentstown LAP will need to move more towards restraint, rather than the promotion of growth as was the case in the previous County Development Plan 2001-2007. Consolidation of the village and new development that accommodates local needs only will be a priority in Kentstown, if the proper planning and sustainable development of the village is to be secured.

(vi) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

a) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,

In terms of built heritage Kentstown has 9 no. protected structures and 2 no. recorded sites and monuments within its development boundary (Archaeological Survey of Ireland - ASI). There are another two sites located just outside the boundary at Danestown.

In terms of natural heritage, there is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) known as Balrath Woods (site code: 00 1579) located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village. Other designated sites which are not within the development boundary of Kentstown, but which are located in the surrounding area as set out in the table below:-

Designation Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Kentstown (Km)
pNHA	001579	Balrath Woods	0.7
SAC	002299	River Boyne & River Blackwater	7.8
pNHA	001593	Thomastown Bog	4.67
pNHA	001578	Duleek Commons	7.6
pNHA	001576	Cromwell's Bush Fen	12.6
pNHA	001324	Jamestown Bog NHA	18.7
NHA	001592	Boyne Woods	8.5
SPA	004080	Boyne Estuary	16.7

Kentstown has a strong network of well-wooded hedgerows in most parts and a range of mature broadleaved copses and rows of pines.

A number of mature trees – those located in and around the grounds of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church and also in Saint Mary's Church of Ireland Church are designated for preservation under the County Development Plan.

It is not anticipated that the value and vulnerability of the environmental or cultural assets in Slane will be negatively affected through implementation of the Plan, given their status and protection in the CDP.

b) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,

It is not expected that environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas will be affected as a result of the proposed Local Area Plan.

c) Intensive land use.

It is not expected that existing land use in the plan area will be intensified such that vulnerable areas will be significantly affected.

The Plan will aim to ensure that development or redevelopment in Kentstown is undertaken with due cognisance to its surrounding environment and that any development and intensification will sustain and improve on existing amenity.

(vii) The effects on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

The proposed National Heritage Area referred to as Balrath Woods (site code: 001579), which is located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village, will remain designated as such in the LAP and so will be protected from inappropriate forms of development.

There are no other areas or landscapes of national, European Union or international status that will be affected by the Local Area Plan. Other existing SACs, SPAs or pNHA are located (with the exception of Balrath Woods) at a distance of 4.6km or greater, away from Kentstown, as demonstrated in the table in Section 6.2 (vi) (a) of this screening report.

7.0 STATUTORY CONSULTATION

The specified environmental authorities that should be consulted in relation to Local Area Plans are;

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG)
- The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources

As the Proposed Local Area Plan will have no significant effects in relation to fisheries or the marine environment, the authorities that will be consulted are the EPA and DoEHLG under Article 14A(4) and 13A(4) of the Regulations.

8.0 DoEHLG CIRCULAR LETTER SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08

This DoEHLG Circular Letter relates to the requirement to screen Land Use Plans for any potential impacts on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites (normally called Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas). Where appropriate an assessment of the Plan must be carried out.

The circular states that an appropriate assessment means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, by a person with ecological expertise, of the potential impacts of the plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site (including Natura 2000 sites not situated in the area encompassed by the draft plan or scheme) and the development, where necessary, or mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The potential impacts of policies outside Natura 2000 sites, but potentially impacting upon them (known as 'ex site' impacts) must also be included in the assessment according to the Circular.

We confirm that there are no Natura 2000 sites (SACs or SPAs) either in Kentstown, adjoining it or in close proximity to it. The nearest to the village is the River Boyne &

River Blackwater SAC, which is located at a distance of some 7.8km from Kentstown. In this regard it is not considered that the proposed Draft LAP for Kentstown will have any potential impacts on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and it is therefore considered that no further assessment of this type will be required once the Draft Plan is completed.

9.0 DETERMINATION IN TERMS OF ARTICLE 13K

In terms of the provisions of Article 13K of the Regulations, following the appropriate consultation period the planning authority shall determine whether or not implementation of the Proposed Local Area Plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations (see 6.0 above) and any submission or observation received from the environmental authority (see 7.0 above).

The Planning Authority is not able at this stage to determine whether the implementation of the proposed Local Area Plan for Kentstown for the period 2008-2014 would have likely significant effects on the environment and will await the views of the environmental authorities before making a decision.

10.0 NOTICE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES

Notice is hereby given that Meath County Council intends to prepare a Local Area Plan for Kentstown.

The planning authority must determine whether or not the implementation of the Local Area Plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment and in doing so, it must take account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004.

A submission or observation in relation to whether or not implementation of the local area plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment may be made to Meath County Council within 4 weeks from the date of this notice (starting 6th October 2008)

Following the deadline for submissions the planning authority shall determine whether or not the implementation of a new Local Area Plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A and any submission or observation received by the Environmental Authorities in response to this notice.

All submissions or observations should be sent to Mr. Michael Griffin, Senior Executive Officer, Planning Department, Abbey Mall, Abbey Road, Navan, Co Meath.

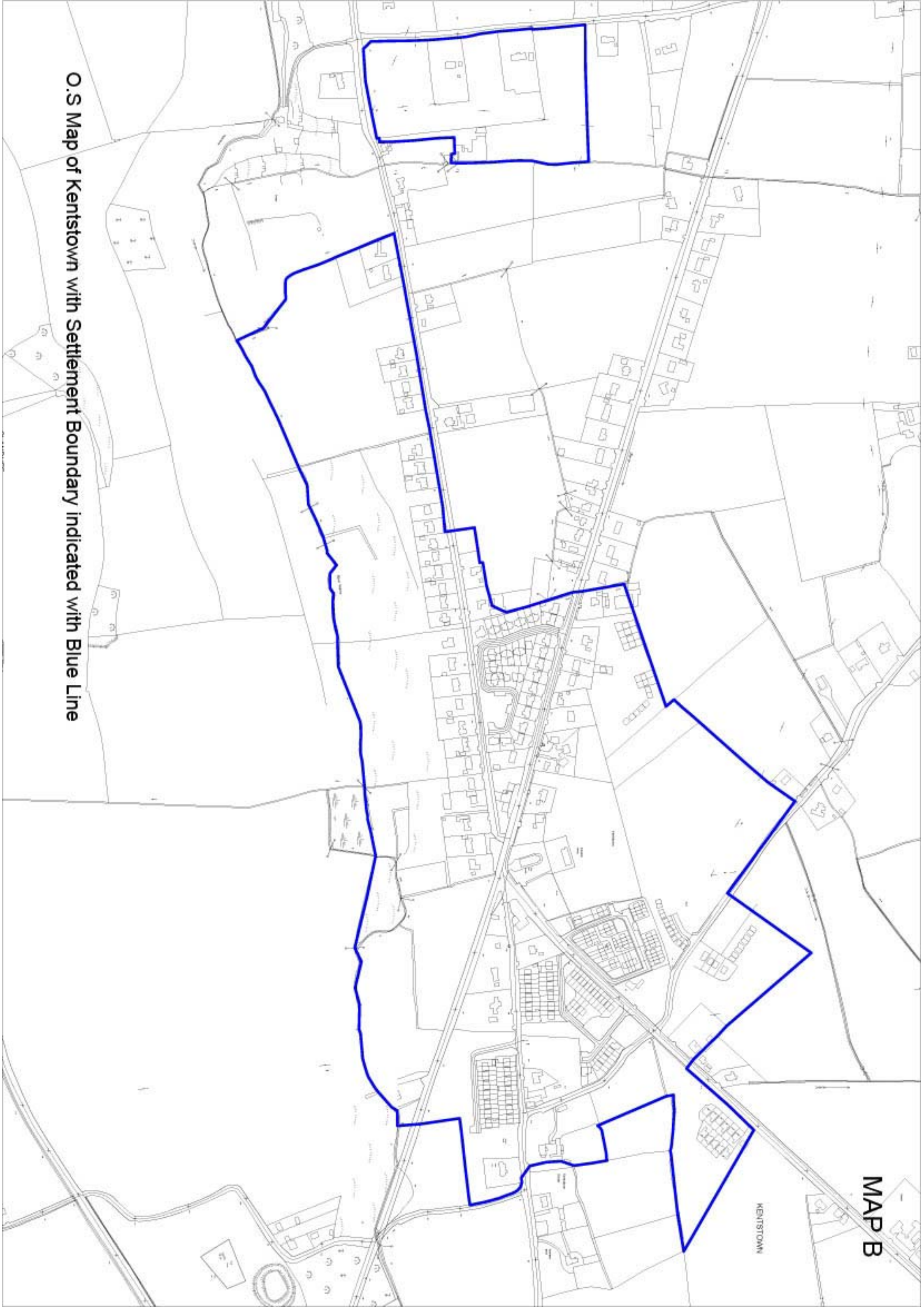
DATE: 6TH OCTOBER 2008

MAPS

Location Map for Kentstown

MAP A





O.S Map of Kentstown with Settlement Boundary indicated with Blue Line



MAP C

LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES

- A1** To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
- A2** To provide for new residential developments and to protect existing residential areas.
- A5** To provide for low density residential development in accordance with action area based planning and individual dwelling design.
- C1** To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses in existing second line central business areas.
- F1** To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
- G1** To provide for recreational amenity, recreational and educational facilities.
- H1** To protect the setting, character and environmental quality of areas of high natural beauty.
- E1** To provide for landscape and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- KT 1-8** Objective (see text)
- Trees to be preserved
- Listed Buildings or Structures
- Preserves of Importance
- Federation Walkways
- Major Avenues / New Roads
- Development Area Boundary
- Dark Ground
- Areas of Archaeological Interest

Note: Details shown on this map are for information purposes only. Further details on any item should be sought from Meath County Council. This map has been produced by Meath County Council with assistance from the Planning Department. Local residents and business owners have been consulted on the map. The map is subject to change without notice. The map is not to be used for legal purposes. The map is not to be used for legal purposes. The map is not to be used for legal purposes.

Meath County Council
Planning Department
Meath County Council
County Hall
Mulling Street
Meath, Co. Meath

Scale: 1:10,000
Meath County Council
Planning Department
Meath County Council
County Hall
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Strategic Environmental Assessment

Screening Report

**Kentstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015
Proposed Amendments**

Strategic Environmental Assessment-Report pursuant to article 14a of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004

1.0 Introduction

Meath County Council has prepared a draft Local Area Plan for the village of Kentstown a number of amendments have been proposed to the draft Plan following consideration of the Plan by the elected Members of Meath County Council. Consideration has been given to the likely environmental effects of implementing the draft LAP with the proposed amendments, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2004.

Section 3.4 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines states that screening (ie the process for deciding whether a particular plan other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA) is required in the case of Local Area Plans where the population is less than 10,000 persons. As the population of Kentstown is below 10,000 persons, the purpose of this report is to determine if the Kentstown Local Area Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment ie screen the LAP. In preparing this report reference was made to the Guidelines for the Implementation of SEA Directive as prepared by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government (2004) and in particular Schedule 2A of SI 436 of 2004.

2.0 Policy Context

The Kentstown Local Area Plan was designated in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 (Policy SS OBJ 1 of the county Development Plan refers). The existing written statement and detailed objectives for the town, inclusive of the accompanying map contained in the 2001-2007 County Development Plan, remain in force until the Local Area Plan has been prepared and adopted for the settlement.

3.0 Location and Physical Context

Kentstown has developed at the crossroads of the R153 and R150 Regional Routes primarily to the northwest of the River Nanny. The R153 connects Kentstown to Navan while the R150 links it Duleek and also to N2 Slane and Dublin route. Both roads carry heavy volumes of traffic which inevitably pass through the village centre. This causes much traffic congestion and a subsequent reduction in the quality of the urban environment. It also reduces accessibility around and to the village centre for local residents also.

There is a landfill site located at Knockharley, which is situated approximately 1.5km to the northeast of Kentstown. It has been operating there since December 2004 and currently has planning permission to accept 132,000 tonnes of waste per annum and an EPA waste license to accept a maximum 200,000 tonnes per annum. Greenstar

Holdings Ltd., the landfill operators, had a pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála earlier this year to determine whether a proposed increased rate of waste acceptance at the residual waste landfill site is considered a Strategic Infrastructure Development to be considered under the Strategic Infrastructure Act. On 10th July 2008, An Bord Pleanála decided that the proposed development is strategic infrastructure and in this regard, Greenstar intend to lodge a planning application within the coming months, to An Bord Pleanála to increase the tonnage levels permitted at the landfill site to 400,000 tonnes a year.

Traffic congestion in the village has been exacerbated in recent years by the unprecedented level of population growth and significant new residential development that has taken place in Kentstown in the past 8 years or so. During the short 4-year period from 2002 to 2006, Kentstown's population has more than doubled, jumping from 355 persons to 912 persons – a growth of +157%. This far exceeds the potential population of 600 persons which was forecast to take place in Kentstown by 2011 (Figure 3 of Meath County Development Plan 2001-2007) and is largely attributed to recent immigration trends and the movement of resident populations from nearby centres of employment.

Given the village's fairly moderate population growth in previous years (pre-2002), Kentstown was promoted in the previous County Development Plan 2001-2007 as a strong local development centre in the Navan Development Area, seen as capable of accommodating a growth in population. A population of about 600 people in accordance with the 600 population equivalent (PE) of the new waste water treatment plant for Kentstown, with improved community facilities was promoted as the growth strategy for the area. However, given the unprecedented growth and the scale and extent of new residential development that has recently taken place in the village, policy now needs to move towards one of restraint, rather than the promotion of growth. Consolidation of the village and new development that accommodates local needs only will be a priority for Kentstown, if the proper planning and sustainable development of the villages is to be secured.

Community facilities and services in the village are limited. Currently there is just one pub and a local shop to serve the entire community. There is no community hall or other public facility in the village with only the pool table from the local pub available to young people, which is not ideal. The high level of population growth and new residential development that has occurred in the past has not been accompanied by a corresponding level of services and facilities to serve community needs.

The current 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan envisages the curtailment and safeguarding of future growth in Kentstown to ensure that it does not act as a catalyst to facilitate the continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City or other nearby employment centres including Navan and Drogheda.

4.0 Criteria for Determining the likely significant environmental impacts (Schedule 2 (A) of SEA Regulations 2004)

Annex II of the SEA Directive sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects. The proposed LAP must be assessed against the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. The most relevant considerations are i) Characteristics of the Proposed LAP 2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed LAP.

4.1 Characteristics of the Proposed LAP and Proposed Amendments to the LAP

The LAP is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 2.1.9 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 (Policy SS OBJ 1 refers) and Variation No. 2 to the Development Plan. The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 adheres to the principles of sustainable development, in accordance with the requirements of Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006. The Local Area Plan will be consistent with the principles, objectives and policies of the Meath County Development Plan and associated Environmental Report and therefore will have a strong emphasis on promoting the sustainable development of the area.

The draft Kentstown LAP was prepared and placed on public display from 23rd of February 2009 to the 6th April 2009 and a manager's report was prepared on the submissions received. The draft plan and manager's report were considered by the members of Meath County Council at a council meeting on 28th April 2009. Having considered the Draft Local Area Plan and the Manager's Report on submissions received as a result of the public display period, Meath County Council, on Monday 25th May 2009, resolved to amend the Draft Local Area Plan. . As a result of this, a number of material amendments have been proposed to the draft plan. These amendments include the following:

- Rezoning of lands located off R150 from A1 (residential) to G1 (community) to facilitate access to community lands to rear
- Zone previously unzoned lands off the Navan Road for A1 (residential) and H1 (protect environmental quality of areas) consistent with the development pattern in the area
- Amendment of policy relating to community and sporting groups in the area to make policy more robust and inclusive
- Insertion of objective to protect residential amenity of residential community at Slan Duff in the village
- Rezoning of lands located south-west of the junction off the R150 and the R153 from F1 (provide for an improve open space for active and passive recreational amenities) to C1 (mixed residential and business uses) A2 (new residential communities), F1 (provide for an improve open space for active and passive recreational amenities) and E1 (Industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure).

- Policy to facilitate the expansion of the church facilities

4.1.1 Environmental considerations relevant to the Plan Area

There are a number of features of the built and natural environment which are subject to heritage and environmental designations in the study area as outlined below.

4.1.1.1 Conservation and Heritage

Protected structures

There are 5 no. structures in Kentstown which are registered as protected structures in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The Draft LAP with proposed amendments does not adversely impact upon the integrity or character of the protected structures.

Architectural Conservation Area

There is no Architectural Conservation Area designated in Kenstown.

National Monuments:

There are 2 historical site/monuments in Kentstown as identified in the Sites and Monuments Record for County Meath.

Natural Heritage Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas

In terms of natural heritage within the kentstown Local Area Plan there no designated sites. There is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) known as Balrath Woods (site code: 00 1579) located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village.

4.2 Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the Draft LAP with Amendments

4.2.1 The value and vulnerability of the area to be affected

a) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,

In terms of built heritage Kentstown has 5 no. protected structures and 2 no. recorded sites and monuments within its development boundary (Archaeological Survey of Ireland - ASI). There are another two sites located just outside the boundary at Danestown.

In terms of natural heritage, there is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) known as Balrath Woods (site code: 00 1579) located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village. Other designated sites which are not within the development boundary of Kentstown, but which are located in the surrounding area as set out in the table below:-

Designation Type	Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Kentstown (Km)
pNHA	001579	Balrath Woods	0.7
SAC	002299	River Boyne & River Blackwater	7.8
pNHA	001593	Thomastown Bog	4.67
pNHA	001578	Duleek Commons	7.6
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pNHA	001324	Jamestown Bog NHA	18.7
NHA	001592	Boyne Woods	8.5
SPA	004080	Boyne Estuary	16.7

Kentstown has a strong network of well-wooded hedgerows in most parts and a range of mature broadleaved copses and rows of pines.

A number of mature trees – those located in and around the grounds of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church and also in Saint Mary's Church of Ireland Church are designated for preservation under the County Development Plan.

It is not anticipated that the value and vulnerability of the environmental or cultural assets in Slane will be negatively affected through implementation of the Plan or the proposed amendments to the Plan, given their status and protection in the CDP.

b) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,

It is not expected that environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas will be affected as a result of the proposed Local Area Plan or the proposed amendments to the Plan.

c) Intensive land use.

It is not expected that existing land use in the plan area will be intensified such that vulnerable areas will be significantly affected by proposed amendments to the LAP.

The Plan will aim to ensure that development or redevelopment in Kentstown is undertaken with due cognisance to its surrounding environment and that any development and intensification will sustain and improve on existing amenity.

4.2.2 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects

The implementation of the Local Area Plan may result in the permanent conversion of a portion of lands from greenfield or brownfield to new residential, recreational, community, commercial or industrial development. Any development or construction works has potential to impact on the local environment whether it is through the loss of habitat, trees, hedgerows and other habitats that are rich in biodiversity. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects depend on the zoning of the lands in question, the unique character and use of the lands to be developed (e.g. greenfield or brownfield, rural or urban), the form and methods of construction and the final use of the development.

However, with regards to positive effects, it is considered that the probability of these occurring is high through regeneration and an improved urban and living environment. It is expected that the effects will be permanent and therefore, irreversible, until such time that any new policies and/or objectives are identified in a revised LAP and/or County Development Plan.

4.2.3 The cumulative nature of the effects.

The Local Area Plan and proposed amendments will focus on the principles of sustainable development and the considerations of the future, beyond the lifetime of the LAP nevertheless, the rivers and groundwater are potentially vulnerable to pollution via development, business or agricultural operations, which can contribute to transboundary pollution and which is a possible cumulative negative effect.

However, it is anticipated that for the most part, the cumulative effects on the environment will be positive as policy in the LAP will move towards restraint in terms of growth and development, rather than the promotion of growth as promoted in the previous County Development Plan 2001-2007. Consolidation of the village and new development that accommodates local needs only will be a priority in Kentstown, if the proper planning and sustainable development of the village is to be secured. The current 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan envisages the curtailment and safeguarding of future growth in Kentstown to ensure that it does not act as a catalyst to facilitate the continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City or other nearby employment centres including Navan and Drogheda.

With every development and redevelopment that occurs it is expected that the area will be rejuvenated with an improved physical and visual environment and the promotion of a vibrant village centre and high quality residential development with

appropriate community facilities to accommodate local people. New residential development will only be provided in line the necessary infrastructure, community facilities and amenities necessary to sustain it.

It is important to note however, that the zoning of land and construction of development in any case has potential to impact on the local environment whether it is through the loss of trees, woodlands, vegetation, hedgerows, and roosting habitats etc., which are rich in biodiversity. Any loss of these habitats would have localised, significant environmental implications and may inadvertently impact upon a particular species of flora or fauna and in turn, impact upon other habitats in the area via loss of species. This is regrettably, a potential cumulative effect regardless of whether the Local Area Plan or proposed amendments is implemented or not.

4.2.4 The transboundary nature of the effects.

Unfortunately, there is always potential for transboundary pollution if siltation/ run-off gets into rivers or ground water. While the EPA regulate and police activities that might otherwise cause pollution and the LAP will contain policy and objectives that will not permit the run-off of pollution into any water source, the individual actions of developers, business operators or homeowners cannot be controlled at all times and so there is potential for inter-county transboundary effects on the environment. This however, is possible whether the LAP is in place or not. The proposed amendments to the Draft LAP do not impact upon this situation.

4.2.5 The risk to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).

The implementation of the Local Area Plan and proposed amendments will not result in any risks to human health. Any future development in the area will conform to the Local Area Plan (as amended), of which the fundamental essence is to create a healthy environment in which people can live, work and spend leisure time.

4.2.6 The magnitude and spatial extent of the effect (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).

It is considered that the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects on the proposed Local Area Plan and proposed amendments will not differ significantly from those likely to arise in relation to the existing Kentstown Urban Detail Map 17 which is contained in the County Development Plan 2007-2013 (a copy of which is enclosed – see Map C). The majority of future development will be residential and necessary community, recreational and educational facilities and also for open space and active and passive recreational amenities. The magnitude of the zoning proposed in Kentstown will not differ significantly to the current zoning under the Kentstown Urban Detail Map 17.

The proposed LAP for Kentstown will therefore aim to reduce the level of unsustainable population growth that has occurred over the past decade in the area. The current 2007-2013 Meath County Development Plan envisages the curtailment

and safeguarding of future growth in Kentstown to ensure that it does not act as a catalyst to facilitate the continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City or other nearby employment centres including Navan and Drogheda. In this regard, policy in the Kentstown LAP will need to move more towards restraint, rather than the promotion of growth as was the case in the previous County Development Plan 2001-2007. Consolidation of the village and new development that accommodates local needs only will be a priority in Kentstown, if the proper planning and sustainable development of the village is to be secured. Thus the LAP and proposed amendments seek to consolidate and provide focus for Kentstown Village Centre.

4.2.7 The effects on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

The proposed National Heritage Area referred to as Balrath Woods (site code: 001579), which is located approximately 0.7km to the northeast of the village, will remain designated as such in the LAP and so will be protected from inappropriate forms of development. The proposed amendments to the LAP do not impact upon this situation.

There are no other areas or landscapes of national, European Union or international status that will be affected by the Local Area Plan. Other existing SACs, SPAs or pNHA are located (with the exception of Balrath Woods) at a distance of 4.6km or greater, away from Kentstown, as demonstrated in the table in Section 6.2 (vi) (a) of this screening report.

5.0 Conclusion

On consideration of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations (and as outlined in this Screening Report), it is considered that the draft LAP and the amendments proposed to the draft will not result in any substantial further impacts on the environment, beyond what was envisaged within the context of the Meath Development Plan 2007-2013. The Planning Authority is satisfied that the draft LAP and the proposed amendments to the draft ensures that the lands will be developed in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner fully consistent with policy and objectives contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. In light of this, it is considered that a strategic environmental assessment is not required in respect of the Local Area Plan or the proposed amendments to the Kentstown Local Area Plan. A number of environmental issues have been considered during the preparation of the Local Area Plan and where appropriate, included in the objectives/policies in various sections of the Kentstown Local Area Plan.

6.0 Recommendation

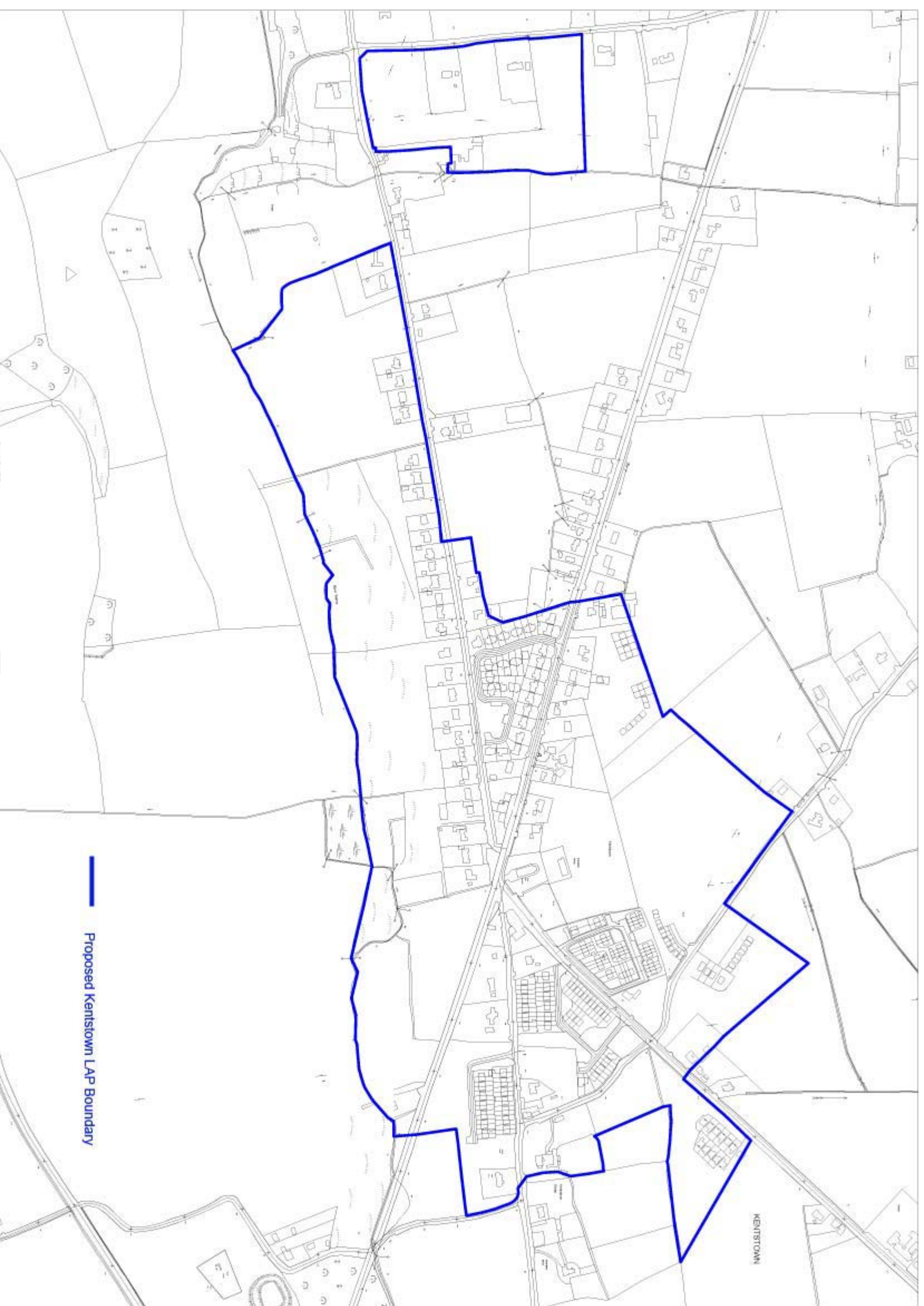
Having regard to the issues raised in this Screening Report, it is not considered necessary to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment on the draft Local Area Plan for Kentstown with proposed amendments.

MAPS

Map A- Kentstown Location Map



MAP B- Proposed Kentstown LAP Boundary





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STATE COFFINMENT

Museum, Co. Wick.

attorneys' fee

Prepared by: R.W. (RWB) Created by: C.G.

MAP D - Location of Kentstown in Relation to River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA

