



## Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015

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On behalf of:

Meath County Council

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## Preamble

The Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013 (hereafter referred to as the CDP) was adopted on the 2nd of March 2007. It identified Gibbstown (Baile Ghib), Carnaross, Carlanstown, Clonard, Crossakiel, Donacarney, Donore, Drumconrath, Gormanstown, Julianston, Kentstown, Kilbride (Dunshaughlin Electoral Area), Kildalkey, Kilmainhamwood, Kilmessan, Mornington, Moynalty, Rathcairn and Rathmolyon as Villages and specified that the future development of all villages shall be subject to the adoption of Local Area Plans which will replace the existing plans for the villages.

Gibbstown is one of two Gaeltacht areas in County Meath. The Irish Language is the definable characteristic of the Gaeltacht community. It is the verbal expression of the people's communication and has survived through the generations in oral and written form. Like many minority languages it is under threat as a community language by the predominant international languages and popular cultures. Other strands of Gaeltacht culture include music, dance, storey telling, drama, sports and festival celebrations. While some of these traditions continue to thrive others are under threat, particularly if the population of the Gaeltacht area declines.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a Development Plan involving a Gaeltacht must include an objective to protect *'the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht, including the promotion of Irish as a community language'*. This objective is incorporated in the Meath County Development Plan 2007 - 2013 and is the underlying goal of this Local Area Plan.

The CDP also envisages that these villages *'are intended to act as nodes for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services. It is envisaged that the future growth of these villages should be curtailed and safeguarded so that they do not act as catalysts to facilitate continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City in particular, or other Large or Moderate Towns. The villages located close to the Metropolitan Area or other Large or Moderate Growth Towns and close to significant public roads are particularly under pressure in this regard. Such*

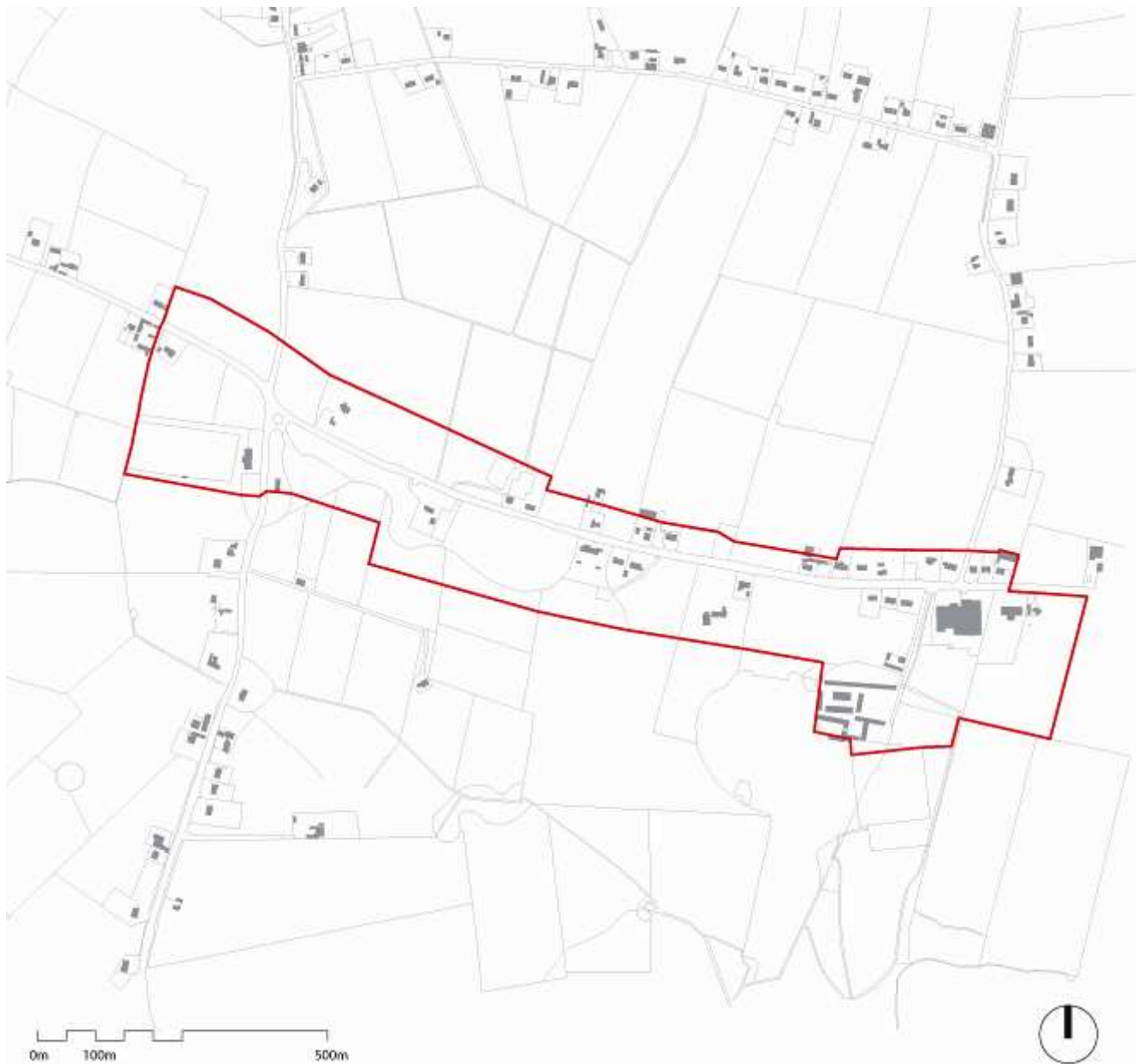
*villages are largely a reflection of their existing status and the nature of their development to date, witnessing the emergence as dormitory villages. The future development of Villages will be predicated more closely to local rather than regional growth which has taken place over the past decade.'*

The CDP including Variation No. 2 of the CDP adopted in February 2008 sets the context for the preparation of a Local Area Plan (LAP) for Gibbstown. This Local Area Plan builds on the broad policy objectives contained in the CDP by providing a more detailed and comprehensive planning framework to guide the future development of the village.

This Plan consists of this written statement and the attached maps, and shall be known as the Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015. Once adopted, the Plan shall remain in effect for a period of six years from the date of adoption or until it is the subject of an amendment, a review or a revocation by the Council. It will be subservient to the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, which is the primary planning document in the County. The Meath County Development Plan takes precedence over the Gibbstown Local Area Plan in the event of any conflict arising between the contents of the two documents.

In accordance with Section 20(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 pre-draft public consultation took place in two phases with the publication of an issues paper and the holding of a public consultation event in Gibbstown.

A notice was published in the Meath Chronicle. This notice advertised the Planning Authority's intention to prepare the Gibbstown LAP and that an Issues Paper would be available for public inspection for a period of five weeks until the 16th of January 2009. The notice also invited written submissions from interested parties and members of the public on what matters should be addressed in the LAP. 18 no. submissions were received in response to the Issues Paper. All submissions and observations received by the closing date were taken into account in the preparation of the Draft LAP.



Gibbstown Village Boundary

The Planning Authority held a public meeting in the Gibbstown National School, Scoil Ultain Naofa on the 7th of January 2009 to gather the views of local residents on how they would like to see their village develop in the future. Further comments/submissions were received as a result of this public consultation and these were also considered in the preparation of the Draft Gibbstown LAP. The Draft LAP was on display for a period of six weeks from the 2nd of March to the 13th April, 2009.

On the 28th of February 2009 a notice was published in the Meath Chronicle advertising the display of the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan and inviting written submissions from interested parties and members of the public on the Draft LAP. 9 no. submissions were received and these submissions were taken into consideration by the Local Authority in amending the Plan.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June a notice was published in the Meath Chronicle advertising the display of the amendments to the Draft LAP from the 8<sup>th</sup> of June to the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2009 and inviting submissions from interested parties and members of the public on the Draft LAP as amended. A further 7 no. submissions were received.

All mapping and diagrams throughout the document are orientated in the direction of true north. None are to scale but contain an indicative scale bar for guidance only. Where there is any apparent conflict between the text and illustrations, the text shall be the interpretive determinant.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Statutory Context

#### 1.1.1 *Scope of the Local Area Plan*

A Local Area Plan (LAP) consists of a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies including details of community facilities and amenities and standards for the design of proposed development. This Local Area Plan will also include objectives for the protection and enhancement of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the area. Upon adoption, a LAP shall have statutory effect as provided for by the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

#### 1.1.2 *Likely Significant Effects on the Environment*

A LAP shall contain information on the likely significant effects on the environment arising from the implementation of the Plan. However the carrying out of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is not mandatory under the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 for the Gibbstown LAP as it has a population of less than 10,000. A screening exercise was carried out to assess the likely impacts that the implementation of the proposed Plan and associated amendments would have. Following the screening of the Draft Gibbstown LAP and associated amendments it was determined that a SEA was not necessary. The screening reports are contained in Appendix I.

#### *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.

There are no SACs or SPAs in Gibbstown or adjoining or in close proximity to the settlement. An Appropriate Assessment Screening of the Draft LAP and associated amendments was undertaken. The associated screening reports are included in Appendix II. 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, no further assessment of this type was necessary.

### 1.2 Policy Context

The planning context for Gibbstown is defined by a hierarchy of plans, policies and guidelines which operate at national, regional and local levels and include the National Spatial Strategy, the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a Development Plan involving a Gaeltacht must include an objective to protect 'the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht, including the promotion of Irish as a community language'.

#### 1.2.1 *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities*

In December 2008, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published guidelines for Planning Authorities entitled Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas. These guidelines outline best practice and advice in relation to the sustainable development of existing urban areas. Planning Authorities are required to have regard to these guidelines in the performance of their functions. The guidelines are accompanied by a best practice Urban Design Manual which provides guidance to Planning Authorities on the standards of urban design that should be achieved in new urban developments.

### 1.2.2 County and Local Policy

Meath County Development Plan 2007

The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 is the key contextual planning policy document informing the preparation of the Gibbstown LAP.

Gibbstown is one of two settlements in County Meath that has been officially designated a Gaeltacht by the Department of Community, Rural, and Gaeltacht Affairs. The Gibbstown Gaeltacht occupies a distinctive position in terms of the cultural and linguistic heritage of the county. It is an obligation on Planning Authorities to include objectives in the development plan for the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht area including the promotion of Irish as the community language.

The CDP states that in the preparation of the LAP for Gibbstown the following principles will be taken on board:

- To recognise the economic, social and cultural importance of the Irish language in Gaeltacht life,
- To identify methods whereby the Irish language can be preserved, and
- To plan an efficient system whereby the aspects of the Gaeltacht environment can be assessed and protected as part of the planning process, including the use of language conditions.

The CDP designates Gibbstown as one of 19 villages in the County. These villages are intended to act as:

*'Nodes for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services. It is envisaged that the future growth of these villages should be curtailed and safeguarded so that they do not act as catalysts to facilitate continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City in particular, or other Large or Moderate Towns. The villages located close to the Metropolitan Area or other Large or Moderate Growth Towns and close to significant public roads are particularly under pressure in this regard. Such villages are largely a reflection of their existing status and the nature of their development to date, witnessing the emergence as dormitory villages. The future development of Villages will be predicated more closely to local rather than regional growth which has taken place over the past decade.'*

Under its designation as a Village, the previous Development Plan for Gibbstown was re-adopted pending the preparation of this Local Area Plan. The previous Development Plan for Gibbstown identified a development area boundary and land use zoning objectives and specific objectives for lands identified within this boundary.

Variation No. 2 of the CDP adopted in February 2008 establishes an Order of Priority for the release of lands with a residential land use zoning objective. It is intended that these lands are released in two phases, 2007-2013 and post 2013. Phase 1 and Phase 2 lands in Gibbstown have been identified under this variation.

### 1.3 The Challenge

The challenge is to produce a LAP that will form the basis for a consensus between the Planning Authority, the public, landowners, developers and all interested parties, as to how development should proceed to achieve the development objectives for Gibbstown, in a manner that protects and enhances its linguistic and cultural distinctiveness, while also providing for development which is physically, economically and socially sustainable. The challenge is also to produce a document, which facilitates the creation of a built environment that is attractive and physically distinctive as a Gaeltacht village for those who will live and work as well as visit Gibbstown.

A further challenge is to provide a document that is sufficiently prescriptive to achieve these objectives while allowing for flexibility to account for economic and social changes that may occur over the Plan period. This LAP is a subsidiary document of the CDP 2007-2013, which is the primary document.

### 1.4 Objectives

The main objectives for the LAP are essentially derived from the CDP and are as follows:

- To ensure the continued survival and promotion of the Irish Language as the spoken language of the Gaeltacht community.
- To facilitate the protection and promotion of all aspects of the Gaeltacht's cultural identity.
- To promote development that protects and enhances the linguistic and cultural heritage of Gibbstown.

- To accommodate population growth in accordance with the levels of growth provided for by Table 6 of the County Development Plan through the implementation of the policies contained in Variation No.2 of that Plan and to cater primarily for the needs of the local population.
- To facilitate population growth that will sustain and promote the development of the community and its economy in a way that is language and culture friendly.
- To provide opportunities for expansion of the employment base of the village, and to ensure that new employment contributes to the Irish language and culture.
- To provide a robust urban design framework that reflects the village's Gaeltacht distinctiveness.
- To provide for a good social mix including the provision of residential units which cater for the requirements of different user types.
- To provide amenity and open spaces at appropriate strategic locations which would be of a high design quality and that promotes community participation.
- To develop an appropriate movement network for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and motorists.
- To ensure adequate provision of appropriate commercial, community and educational facilities to serve existing and future residents and that are language and culture friendly.

## 2.0 Context

### 2.1 Strategic Context

Gibbstown is located in the centre of County Meath in the Navan Electoral Area. Gibbstown is one of two Gaeltacht areas in County Meath. Gibbstown is located on the R163 (Slane / Kells Regional Road) approximately 7km northwest of Navan Town.

### 2.2 Key Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends

The statistics available from the Central Statistics Office and illustrated here reflect the 2006 census of population of the Domhnaigh Phadraig electoral area unless otherwise stated. This area exceeds the village study area but gives an indication of trends in the area.

#### 2.2.1 Population

The Gaeltacht areas in Meath had a combined population of 1,591 persons in 2002, representing an increase of 13% from the 1996 Census. The population in 2006 comprised 1,670 persons representing a population increase of 5%. County Meath experienced an overall population increase of 21.5% in the 2002-2006 period. The 2006 census of population recorded a population of 842 persons within the Domhnaigh Phadraig electoral division. The 2006 Small Area Population Statistics for Gibbstown indicate a population of 72 persons and 20 households. This equates to an average household size of 3.0 persons per household. Gibbstown represents 4% of the overall Gaeltacht population, which reflects the rural settlement pattern of the Gaeltacht.

#### 2.2.2 Irish Language

The number of persons aged 3 years or over identified by ability to speak Irish comprises 54% of the population in the Domhnaigh Phadraig Electoral Area. This compares to 61% of the population in the overall Meath Gaeltacht area, and 69% of the population in the total Gaeltacht areas in the country.

#### 2.2.3 Recent Development

The most recent development to have occurred in Gibbstown comprises one-off dwellings. Earlier development in Gibbstown includes smaller vernacular cottages, large one-off bungalows and

houses constructed in a mixture of styles and materials and

industrial development adjacent to the historic Gibbstown Demesne.

#### 2.2.4 Employment Context

The NIRSA socio economic profile of the county indicated that both Gaeltacht areas are significant industrial employment locations, relative to their size and rural nature. The work force in the Meath Gaeltacht areas is predominately employed in skilled work. Almost 70% of persons over 5 years of age stated travel distances of 0-14km to school, work or college. Approximately 30% of the population who stated distance travelled to school, work or college travelled over 15km. The nature of employment and travel distances in the Domhnaigh Phadraig electoral area suggests a high employment to population ratio within reasonable proximity of the village area.

#### 2.2.5 Education

There is one primary school in Gibbstown, Scoil Ultain Naofa, which is centrally located within the Development Plan boundary. A second primary school is located at Oristown outside the Development Plan boundary. There may be potential to increase the capacity of the Gibbstown primary school, subject to demand. The nearest secondary level schools are located at Kells and Navan and are approximately 6km and 8km from the village respectively.

### 2.3 Historical Context

#### 2.3.1 Cultural / Gaeltacht Heritage

Gibbstown was designated a Gaeltacht in the 1930's when migrants from Mayo, Kerry, Donegal and Cork Gaeltachts settled in the area. The migration to the Gibbstown Gaeltacht took place as a result of the Irish Land Commission's work in relieving congestion along the Atlantic Coast. Sufficient land was not available convenient to these congested areas and suitable estates were more readily available in the east of Ireland. In 1937, fifty two families in all, eighteen from Mayo, sixteen from Kerry and thirteen from Donegal settled in the townland of Gibbstown and in 1939, five families from Kerry and four families from Donegal settled in Clongill. These families amounted to a total of 373 persons. The identity of the Gaeltacht has been difficult to preserve. Due to

the small size of the community it is difficult to support a wide range of services performed

in Irish. Consequently bilingualism has become a practical necessity.

### 2.3.2 Historical Context - Physical Development

Historically Gibbstown was defined by Gibbstown Demesne. The village developed adjoining the former Gibbstown Demesne in the 1930's. The demesne comprised Gibbstown House, a farmyard and attendant grounds, including an extensive walled garden. Gibbstown House was demolished in 1965 leaving an extensive farmyard complex of stone and brick buildings, a walled garden and a number of entrances to the demesne. A formal entrance feature exists to the west of the village, comprising the historic entrance to the demesne, and minor entrances to the farmyard including an entrance to the east adjoining the existing industrial area. The developments in the 1930's comprised one-off land commission dwellings arranged in a dispersed pattern. These dwellings are distinctive and characteristic of the Gaeltacht area.

## 2.4 Natural and Built Heritage

### Natural Heritage

Gibbstown is located in the North Navan Uplands as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment of the CDP 2007-2013. This landscape is flat, an extension of the river plains of the Blackwater and Boyne respectively. Overall the landscape character area is in a degraded condition. It comprises of a mixture of pasture and arable fields that have been enlarged by the loss or removal of traditional boundaries, now often consisting of post and wire or timber fences and drainage ditches along road corridors.

The area is well served by transport routes and infrastructure because of its proximity to Navan and Kells. The N52 and several regional roads traverse this character area. Road corridors often have quite an open character but hedgerows are usually well maintained. The tertiary roads around Gibbstown in the southern part of this area are more enclosed by trees.

A review of the Meath County Landscape Character Assessment of the area is summarised in Table 1.

The Landscape Character Assessment refers to the village of Gibbstown and notes that:

*'A medium to large village within 5km of Navan comprised of a long ribbon of buildings along the road corridor. Gibbstown is part of a Gaeltacht and flanks LCS's 3 & 5. The village centre is not well defined but is a mix of small vernacular cottages and large one-off bungalows and houses with a mix of styles and materials. Potentially attractive but slightly degraded wooded setting. Vernacular character could potentially be lost.'*

*Mature and attractive trees are located around the village, in particular the group of trees at the entrance to the village from the west, and groups of trees within the former Gibbstown Demesne, which contribute to the visual qualities of Gibbstown'.*

Key recommendations identified within the assessment and applicable to Gibbstown include the promotion of the Gaeltacht around Gibbstown as a cultural resource and to promote links between other Gaeltachts including Gibbstown.

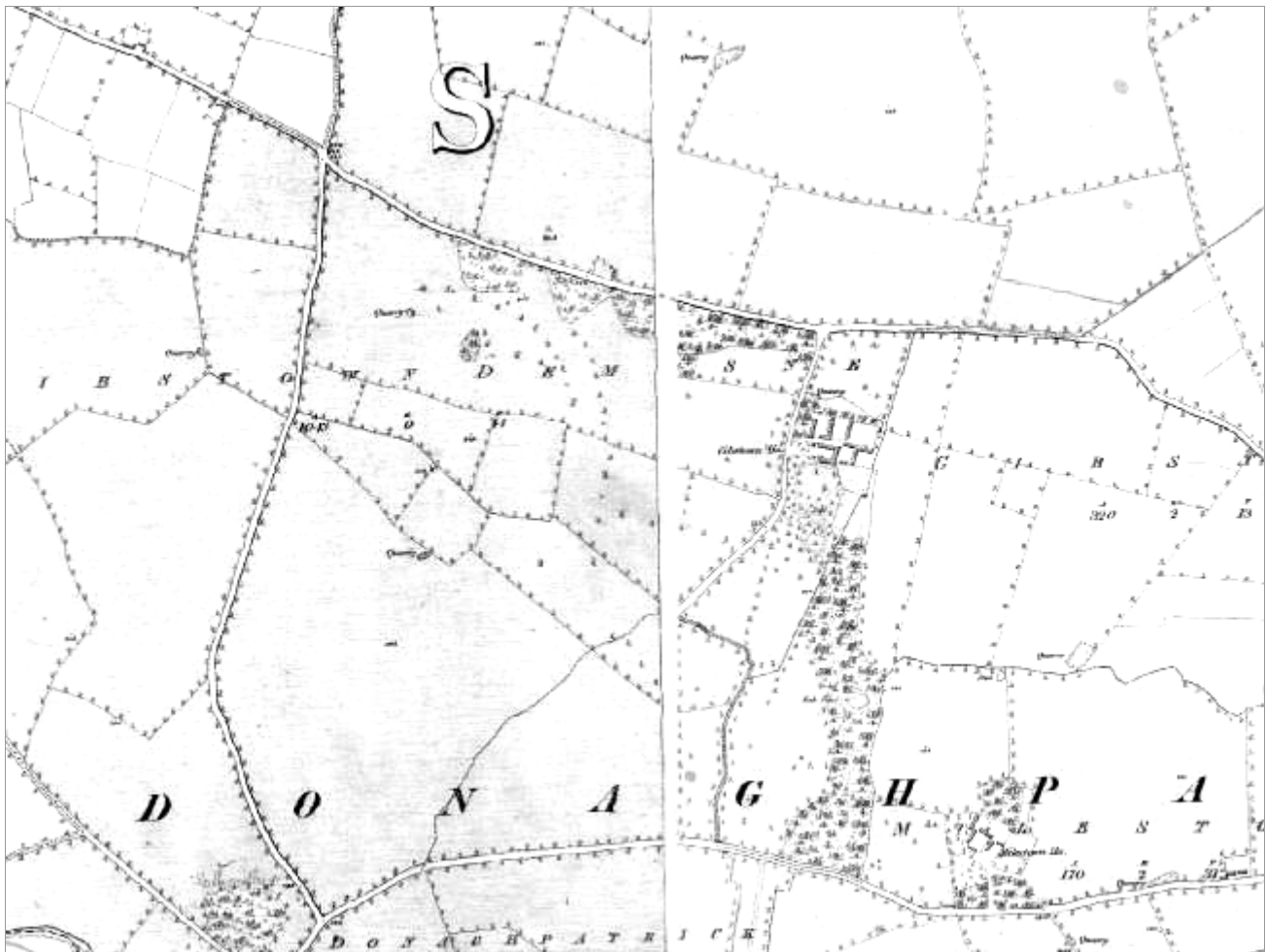
There are no existing or candidate / proposed Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) within the immediate vicinity of the village.

### Built Heritage

The CDP 2007-2013 contains a record of protected structures for County Meath. Those identified in Gibbstown are listed in Appendix III of this document. These structures include the Gibbstown Estate circular entrance feature to the former Gibbstown House to the west of the village, and Gibbstown farmyard and buildings to the south of the village. A cottage is protected within the village boundary, and a number of cottages are also protected outside the village development boundary, detailed as the Gibbstown Demesne cottages in the Development Plan.

Landscape Character Type	North Navan Lowlands Character Area Lowland Landscape
Landscape Character Area	Moderate Value
Landscape Sensitivity	Moderate Sensitivity
Landscape Capacity	High potential capacity for visitor facilities and conversion of existing buildings, roads and railways and Biomass and Forestry Medium potential capacity for large farm buildings and multi house developments, Underground Services and Wind Turbines Low potential capacity for One-Off Houses
Visual Amenity	No particular view points identified
Landmarks	No landmarks identified
Prehistory Landscape	Number of registered monuments proximate to the village
Protected Churches	No protected churches identified
Medieval Landscape	No medieval landscape
18th and 19th century structures	Site of 18th and 19th century protected structures
Topography	Located in the 50 - 100m contour
Geology	Shales with interbedded limestone or sandstone
Soils	Derived from mainly acidic parent materials
Hydrology	P/E Generally Unproductive except for Local Zones
Land Use	Natural Grassland
Ecological Sites	None
Settlement Type	Village
Tourist Attractions	None / Area / Features with potential to be developed as tourist attraction to south west of village

Table 1 Landscape Character Assessment



19<sup>th</sup> Century Historical Map



Gibbstown Demesne Entrance



Gibbstown Demesne Gate Lodge

## 2.5 Land Uses

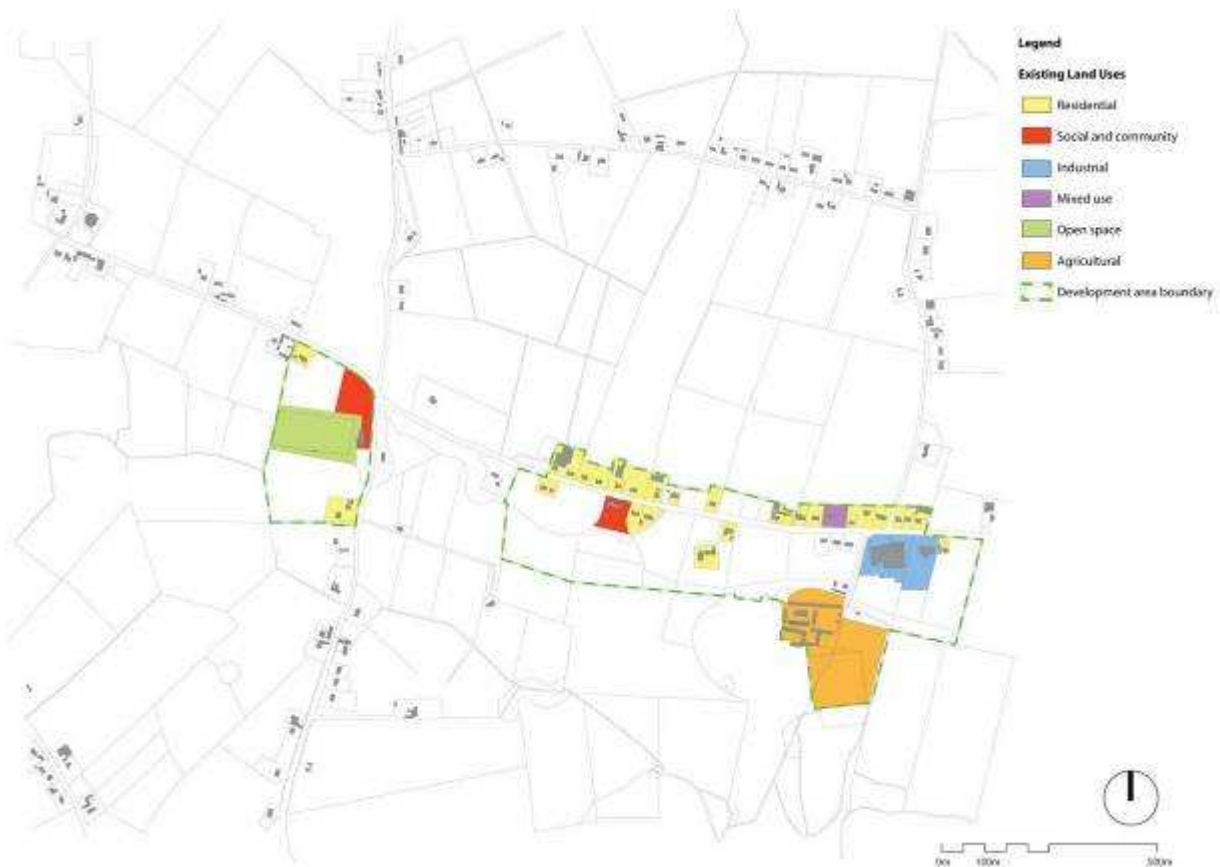
The principal land uses in Gibbstown comprise local service and employment uses, educational and residential uses. Local services include the Daybreak grocery shop. Engineering Design Services Industrial Unit, Timoney Technology Ltd. and Adtec Aerauto Ltd. are located to the east of the village. A number of businesses are located outside the village development boundary, including a local public house at Oristown and adjoining St. Catherine's Church and other various commercial activities to the east of the village at Donegal Road.

Residential uses are located within and adjoining the village development boundary. These mainly comprise historic cottages associated with Gibbstown Demesne and more recent one-off houses in the form of ribbon development. Permission was previously granted for a group of dwellings within the village boundary, however, only two of these have been constructed.

Gibbstown benefits from active community participation and is served by the Oristown R.C. Church to the west of the village outside the development boundary, the Community Hall (Halla Baile Ghib), the Wolfe Tone Football and Hulling Club and GAA grounds. A cemetery is located adjoining the Community Hall and the GAA Grounds. Gibbstown primary school, Scoil Ultain Naofa is located centrally in the village.

There are no defined public amenity areas. The historic entrance to the Gibbstown Demesne and the Demesne farmyard buildings to the south east of the village are an important historical and cultural asset to the area.

The principal land uses surrounding and adjoining the village comprise lands used for agricultural purposes.



Existing Land Uses

## 2.6 Movement and Access

The village of Gibbstown is defined by a through road, connecting Kells to the west and Kilberry and Slane to the east (R163 Regional Road), with intersecting local roads to the east and west of the village respectively. The village is convenient to the Dublin-Cavan National Route (N3).

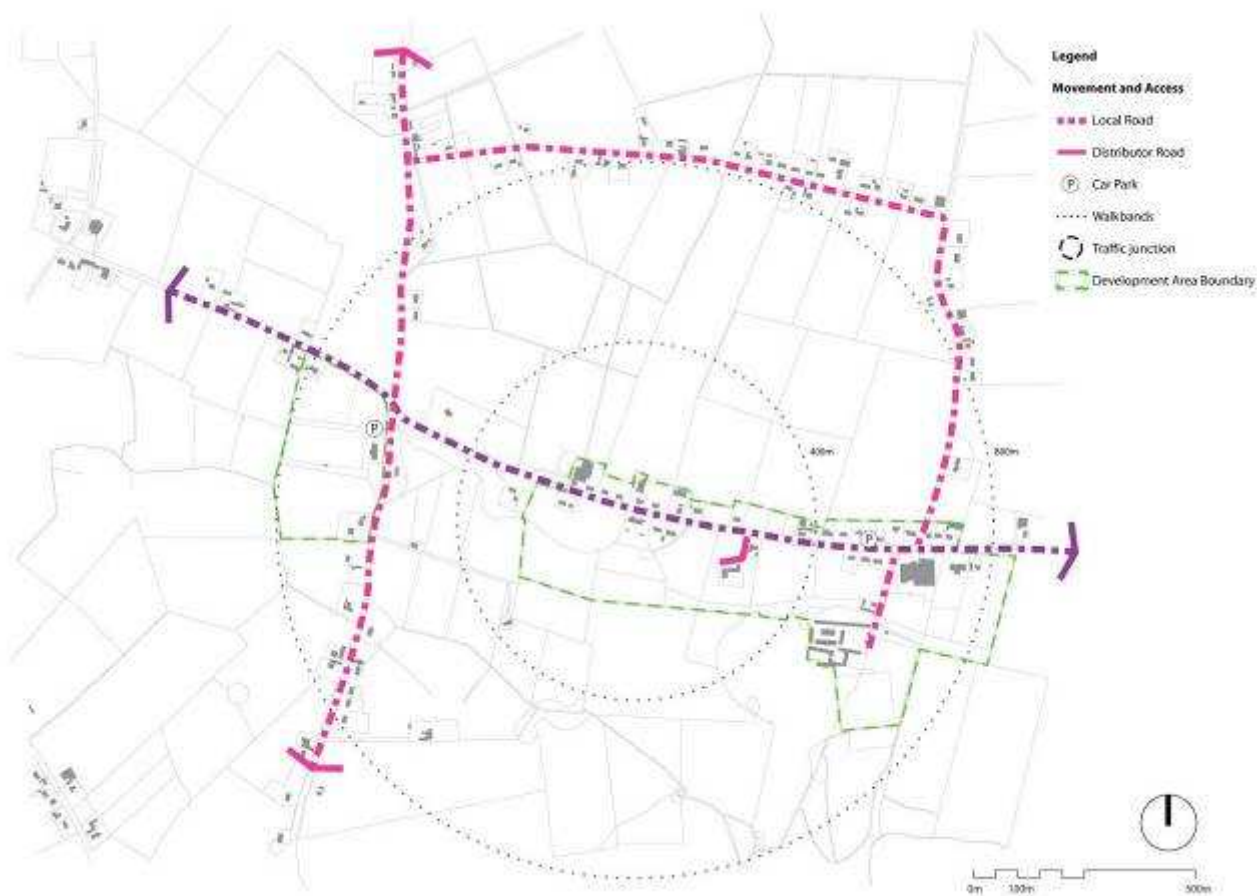
The R163 experiences high levels of through traffic. Gibbstown is served by a poor level of public transport. Bus Eireann operates a bus service along the R163. Principal bus services are provided from Kells and Navan to Dublin.

The built up area of Gibbstown is contained within a 400 metre walkband and includes employment, residential and educational uses.

However, these uses are dispersed within this walk band. The community facilities, the community hall and GAA grounds, are located within an 800m walk band or ten minute walk of the village centre.

Pedestrian facilities are poor within the village. There are no footpaths to connect the various land uses. The dispersed nature of uses and lack of footpaths create a poor pedestrian environment.

Off street parking is provided at the local shop and at the community hall. The roadside area is used for parking at the cemetery and GAA fields. Roadside parking also occurs at the primary school. Residential private parking is generally provided off street and to the front of dwellings.



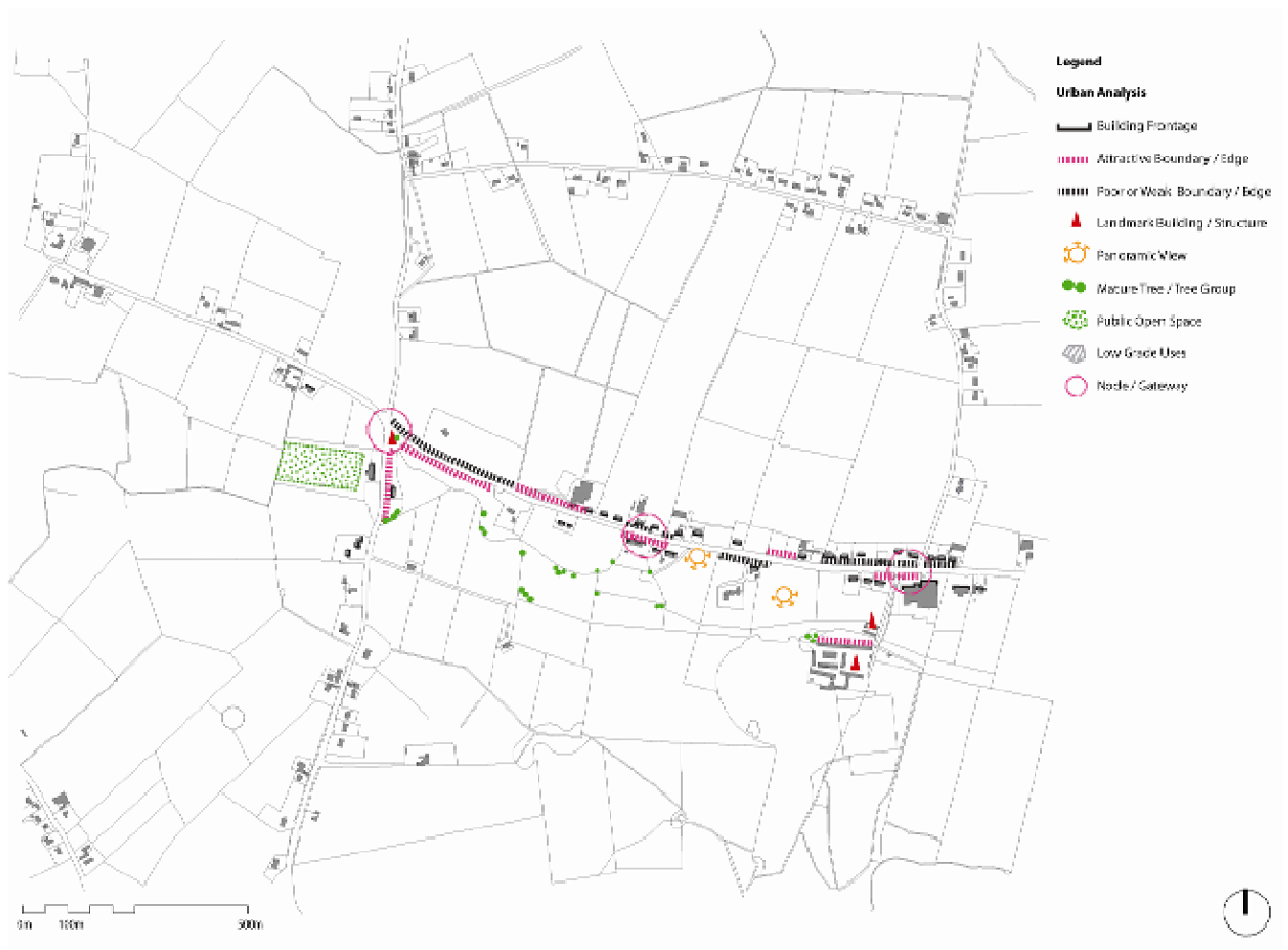
## 2.7 Urban Analysis

Gibbstown comprises three distinct areas as follows:

Character Area 1	Historic Entrance to Gibbstown Demesne
Character Area 2	School and Residential Cluster
Character Area 3	Gibbstown Demesne Farm Buildings / Industrial Area

Each of these areas is analysed in the following sections with respect to the following urban design considerations:

- Condition of streets, buildings and frontage
- Interaction of streets with adjoining spaces, including their linkages to other spaces / places
- Vibrancy of the street and urban space
- Function and usage of the area
- Attractiveness of each street and space and contribution to security and vitality of the area
- Ease of movement through the area



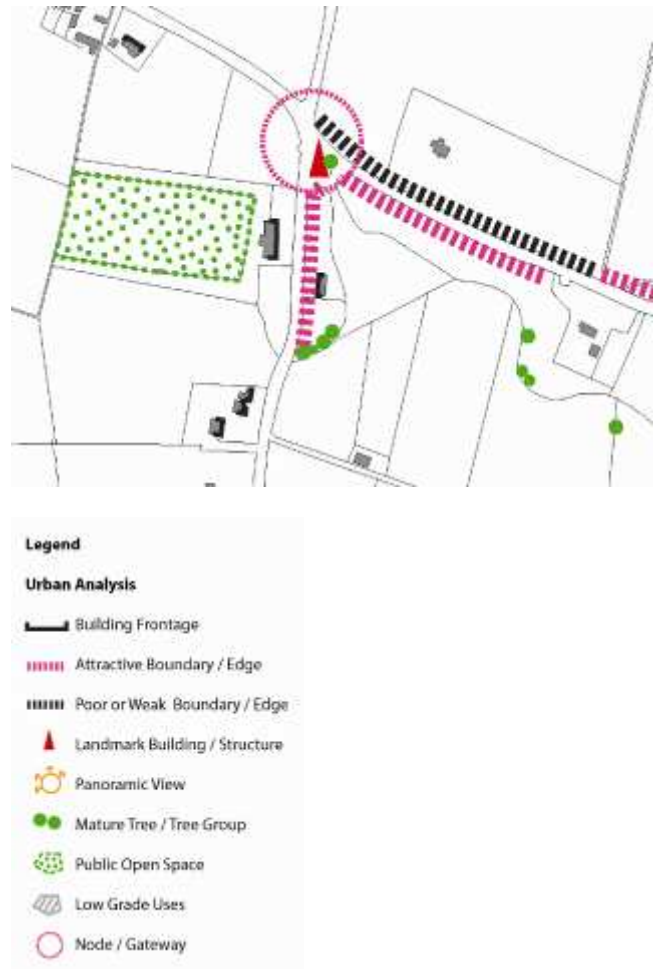
Urban Analysis

## Character Area 1      Historic Entrance to Gibbstown Demesne

This character area comprises the community uses and the historic entrance to Gibbstown Demesne.

### Urban Analysis

- Intact and unique boundary treatment with protected railing and entrance gates, circular entrance feature and mature trees retaining original character.
- Boundary walls to cemetery, community hall and GAA fields.
- Open landscape character between community uses and beginning of village structure.
- Distinctive cross road structure giving strong sense of place.
- Poor pedestrian environment.
- Active community use.



Character Area 1



Entrance Feature to Gibbstown Demesne



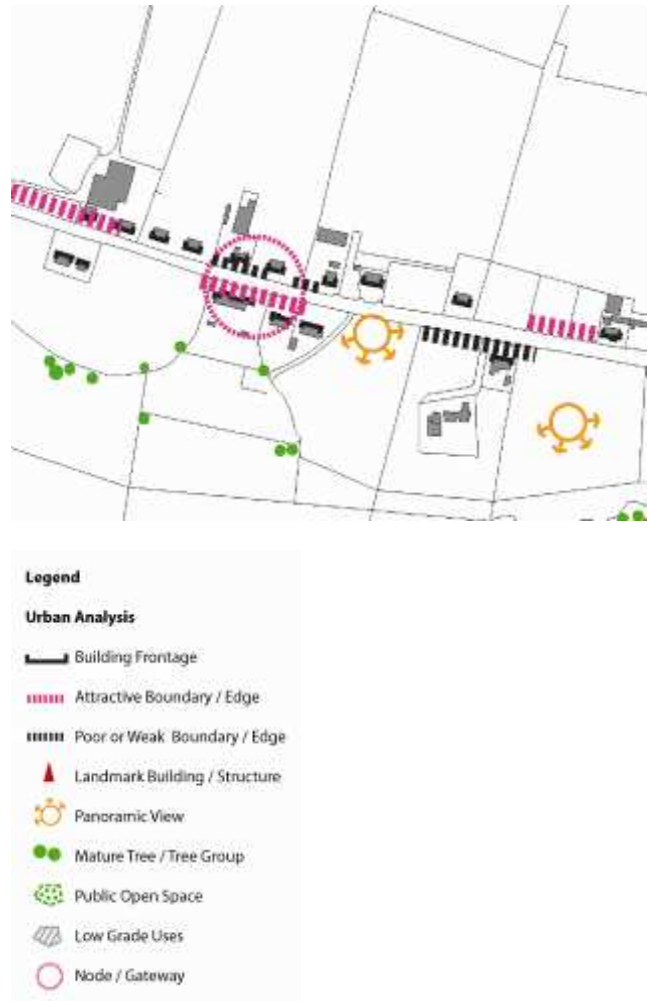
Community Hall

## Character Area 2      School and Residential Cluster

This character area is centrally located within the village. It comprises the primary school and a number of one-off dwellings and farm buildings. The close alignment of the school to the roadway and positive boundary treatment creates a sense of enclosure at this location.

### Urban Analysis

- Positive boundary treatment combining rail, wall and trees / hedges.
- Poor / deteriorating boundary treatment to north side of road.
- Positive visual presence of school to road creating an identifiable sense of place.
- Attractive views southwards and distant views of trees.
- Poor pedestrian amenity.



Character Area 2



Panoramic View South from R163



Primary School

### Character Area 3      Historic Demesne / Farm Buildings

This character area is located to the east of the village and demarcates the entrance to the village from the east. It is characterised by a mix of uses, including industrial and residential uses. It comprises the historic Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings, whose presence on the main road is modestly marked by historic entrance gates. There are no visible remnants of a second historic entrance to the demesne.

#### Urban Analysis

- Industrial development dominates the visual environment.
- Industrial development creates a strong boundary to the road, and creates a sense of place.
- Poor boundary treatments / definition of edge to north and south of R163.
- Historic entrance to farm building complex deteriorating.
- Farmyard cluster unique historic structure.
- Poor visual presence of farm buildings and connection to main road.
- Poor pedestrian amenity.



Character Area 3



Gibbstown Demesne Farmyard Buildings



Industrial Development

## 2.8 Services and Utilities

### 2.8.1 *Waste Water Collection and Treatment*

There are no waste water treatment facilities in the village, and as such the village currently relies on individual septic tanks. There are no current proposals for the installation of waste water treatment infrastructure in Gibbstown. This condition threatens the quality of existing water supplies.

### 2.8.2 *Water Supply*

Water supply is from the Navan & Meath Water Supply Scheme which is currently being upgraded and augmented. Post 2013 additional water supply will be available but there is a constraint in the water main link from Navan to Gibbstown. Currently there are no proposals to increase the size of the watermains from Navan to Gibbstown.

### 2.8.3 *Flooding*

The Office of Public Works have prepared flood hazard mapping for the country. Flood hazard maps are used to indicate areas of land or property that have historically been flooded or that are considered to be at risk from flooding.

No incidents of flooding in Gibbstown have been recorded on the OPW flood hazard maps. However areas liable to flooding in extreme weather conditions are identified to the east of the village. These areas are outside the village development boundary.

### 2.8.4 *Other Utility Services*

#### *Waste Management*

The nearest recycling centre in County Meath is located in Kells. Domestic and commercial refuse collection services are provided by private operators. There are a number of waste collection services in the county.

#### *Telecommunications*

Broadband is available in Gibbstown. However, this service is intermittent and unreliable.

## 3.0 Strategy

### 3.1 Vision

The vision for Gibbstown is as follows:

*'To promote the development of the village in a manner that protects and enhances its linguistic and cultural distinctiveness, while also providing for development which will allow Gibbstown to develop in a sustainable manner, as an attractive place to live, work, recreate and visit, reflecting its Gaeltacht distinctiveness'.*

In order to facilitate the delivery of the vision for Gibbstown, linguistic and cultural heritage, land use, movement and access and natural and built heritage strategies have been identified. These strategies are augmented by policies and objectives and are described in the following sections.

### 3.2 Linguistic and Cultural Heritage Strategy

The linguistic and cultural heritage strategy for Gibbstown seeks to protect and enhance the status of the Irish language as the spoken language of the community. The strategy also seeks to facilitate the protection and promotion of all cultural aspects of the Gaeltacht area including its rich musical, sporting, dancing and storey telling heritage. This strategy will be supported by objectives to provide for the development of a concentrated and vibrant Irish speaking population which supports local educational and cultural activities based on the Irish language and traditions. Furthermore this strategy seeks to prioritise employment and enterprise services and facilities which are based on the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht and provide local employment opportunities for the people of Gibbstown.

### 3.3 Land Use Strategy

The land use strategy for Gibbstown seeks to provide for *'distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community facilities'* in accordance with the Meath CDP 2007-2013. This strategy includes modifications to the land use zoning objectives of the previous Gibbstown Development Plan.

The development plan boundary is modified to comprise of three distinct zones. Community and recreational uses are proposed to the west including existing residential areas, and a consolidated village centre is proposed to the east. The boundary to the east is increased to facilitate additional industrial zoned land to the north of the R163.

Variation No. 2 of the CDP 2007-2013 provides for an additional 35 no. residential units in Gibbstown village. The residential land use zoning comprises of A1, A2 and A5 land use zoning objectives. Land Use Zoning Objective A1 reflects existing residential areas, located principally to the north of the R163. Land Use Zoning Objective A2 provides for new residential areas adjoining existing residential areas to the north of the R163, and on lands to the east of the village. Land Use Zoning Objective A5 provides for low density residential development to be in accordance with Action Area Plans. These residential areas are to the south of the R163. The action area plans are proposed to ensure coordinated and appropriate development given the proximity of the lands to the historic Gibbstown Demesne. Low density residential development is proposed to provide a sustainable alternative to one-off housing and to retain the overall rural character of the area. It is proposed that these areas can intensify in the future to ensure the sustainable use of serviced land.

The B1 Land Use zoning Objective for village centre uses is relocated westward. This is to facilitate village centre uses facing the R163. The village centre should seek to meet the social and community needs of the existing and future population while creating an identifiable and legible centre for the village.

An additional E1 Land Use Zoning Objectives for industrial use is provided to the north of the R163. This is to facilitate further industrial / employment generation. It is located proximate to the existing E1 Land Use Zoning Objectives to facilitate consolidated industrial development.

New F1 Land Use Zoning Objectives for recreational amenity is proposed to the south of the village in the form of a linear park / green route. This is to provide a buffer between new development areas and the historic Gibbstown Demesne and also to enhance the amenity of the village. New F1 Land Use Zoning Objectives are also proposed to the south of the GAA fields to facilitate the expansion of the GAA fields.

The G1 Land Use Zoning Objective for community uses have been retained. The green belt objective is also retained at the entrance to the historic Gibbstown Demesne.

### 3.4 Movement and Access Strategy

Sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling shall be prioritised within the village through the development of new footpaths along the R163 and along the proposed new linear park / green route to the south of the village. The new linear park / green route will connect new residential areas and industrial uses to the east, the historic farmyard buildings, the school and thence to the GAA field and community building via the former entrance to the Gibbstown Demesne.

Connections between the R163 and the proposed linear park / green route are promoted to enhance the overall permeability of the area through new residential areas and the new village centre. Connections are also promoted to enhance the accessibility and visual presence of the historic farm buildings and to enhance development opportunities.

Access locations are promoted in new residential areas to the north to facilitate potential development in the future and beyond the life time of this plan, and to allow for future village consolidation.

### 3.5 Natural and Built Heritage Strategy

Gibbstown comprises several natural and built features worthy of protection. These features include those contained on the record of protected structures and those identified in the Meath County Landscape Character Assessment.

The natural and built heritage strategy seeks to ensure that a green edge is established along the proposed new linear park / green route to the south of the village to protect the setting of the historic Gibbstown Demesne and to contribute to the overall amenity of the proposed linear park / green route. These proposals shall include objectives for existing and new boundary treatments.

Buildings or structures which have not been identified on the record of protected structures but have a strong vernacular character should also be protected and preserved as part of any development proposals.

## 4.0 Policies and Objectives

Policies and objectives have been identified for Gibbstown village with respect to language and culture, land uses, movement and access, built and natural heritage, design standards and services and infrastructure. These policies and objectives seek to provide for the delivery of the strategies described in section 3.0 over the life time of this plan.

### 4.1 Language and Culture

The language and culture policies and objectives for Gibbstown provide for the protection and enhancement of the linguistic and cultural distinctiveness of the area. These policies and objectives are described below with respect to employment, community infrastructure, population/residential development and Gaeltacht identity. A number of these policies overlap with Land Use and Natural and Built Heritage policies and objectives, with the emphasis here on the protection of Linguistic and Cultural heritage.

#### 4.1.1 Economic Development

The principal economic language and culture policies seek to encourage and support various initiatives, including building initiatives that will promote employment in the area and that contribute to the promotion of Irish language and culture, whilst providing sustainable employment.

**LCHP 1** To encourage employment and enterprise development within the village that is language and culture friendly.

**LCHP 2** To recognise that new commercial developments could damage the use, visibility and status of the Irish language and to reduce / prevent their impact.

**LCHP 3** The Planning Authority will in general, and subject to the provisions of the Development Plan, be favorably disposed to applications for economic developments of the following type:

- Language teaching resources
- Recreational facilities through Irish
- Community centres that support the use of the Irish language
- Educational facilities e.g. third level etc.
- Tourism which is language and culturally centred
- Gaeltacht offices for the purpose of providing services through Irish for the Gaeltacht community
- Business which is language centred e.g. translation / communication services

**LCHP 4** To co-operate with Údarás na Gaeltachta and other relevant bodies and agencies in developing sustainable and Irish language based economic uses in the Gaeltacht area.

Language and culture objectives that promote economic development and which provide for linguistic and cultural heritage protection and promotion include:

**LCHOBJ 1** To require that a 'Language Impact Study' be carried out before any application for commercial development is considered in the area. Such a study, by reference to its linguistic background of intended users or occupants, or identification of its relationship with linguistic or cultural development objectives of groups associated or charged with the development of Gaeltacht areas will need to provide that a given proposal will have a positive impact upon the promotion and use of Irish as the language of the community.

**LCHOBJ 2** To provide for appropriate language and culturally centred development within the appropriate land use zones within the village.

**LCHOBJ 3** To assist in assessing the impact of new commercial uses / developments upon the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht, all planning applications for commercial developments will be referred to the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and Údarás na Gaeltachta management for comment and these comments shall be taken into account and such account shall be demonstrated in the making of decisions in all such planning applications.

#### 4.1.2 Community Infrastructure

The principal community infrastructure policies are to encourage and support community organisations in energising local people and in delivering services and opportunities that promote and enhance the language and culture of the area.

**LCHP 5** To support community organisations in delivering services which promote and protect the distinctive language and cultural traditions of the area.

**LCHOBJ 4** To provide for the development of community and recreational facilities on lands in the village core and adjoining the primary school that are language and culturally centred.

#### 4.1.3 Population / Residential

The principal population policies are to ensure that the existing population can continue to exist and thrive as a distinctive cultural community. New residents should predominately be prepared to integrate with the Irish speaking culture to ensure the protection of the language and culture of the area.

Residential development which is unrelated to the Irish language and culture is not encouraged.

**LCHP 6** To ensure that the resident population is of a sustainable number to protect and promote the linguistic and cultural distinction of the area.

**LCHP 7** To recognise that new residential developments could damage the use, visibility and status of the Irish language and to reduce / prevent their impact.

**LCHP 8** To identify methods whereby the Irish language can be preserved.

**LCHP 9** To plan an efficient system whereby aspects of the Gaeltacht environment can be assessed and protected as part of the planning process including the use of language conditions.

Language and culture objectives that promote residential / population objectives include:

**LCHOBJ 5** To require that a 'Language Impact Study' be carried out before any application for housing (single and multiple housing developments) is considered in the the area. Such a study, by reference to its linguistic background of intended users or occupants, or identification of its relationship with linguistic or cultural development objectives of groups associated or charged with the development of Gaeltachts areas will need to provide that a given proposal will have a positive impact upon the promotion and use of Irish as the language of the community.

**LCHOBJ 6** The Local Authority will review the use of potential Language Clauses that will apply to applicants for permission for residential developments and potential Language Conditions that may be applied to permitted residential developments.

**LCHOBJ 7** To assist in assessing the impact of new residential development upon the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht all planning applications for residential development, both single and multiple house developments will be referred to the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and Údarás na Gaeltachta management for comment and these comments shall be taken into account and such account shall be demonstrated in the making of decisions in all such planning applications.

#### 4.1.4 Gaeltacht Identity

The principal Gaeltacht identity policies are to ensure that new development will make a positive contribution to the physical environment and to ensure that new development will protect and enhance the existing physical attributes and characteristics of the Gaeltacht, in contributing to creating a distinctive identity.

**LCHP 10** To ensure that all new development will enhance the visual character of the area and contribute to the creation of a particular identity for the area.

**LCHP 11** To encourage architectural styles that complement local tradition such as the 'Land Commission house' and the Clachan Dwelling cluster. A contemporary interpretation of indigenous traditions is encouraged.

**LCHP 12** To promote the creation of a distinctive village identity in new development areas and in the public realm.

The local objectives to promote the protection and enhancement of a Gaeltacht identity are as follows:

**LCHOBJ 8** New developments will be required to set out a design statement to accompany planning applications outlining how the development contributes to the creation of a particular Gaeltacht identity.

**LCHOBJ 9** To promote the provision of signage in Irish in the Gaeltacht with respect to the following:

- Entry and exit points to the village with explanatory details of the cultural significance of the areas to visitors.
- The provision of all commercial signage in Irish.
- In association with the relevant professional and vocational groups, that auctioneers and other temporary signs are in Irish.

**LCHOBJ 10** To promote the use of consistent and contemporary public street furniture, seating, lighting, litter bins etc. within the village settlement to create a coherent and consistent identity within the village.

#### 4.2. Land Use

The land use policies and objectives for Gibbstown provide for the protection and development of existing and new residential areas, mixed residential and business uses, industrial and related uses and community and recreational uses. These policies and objectives are described in detail in the following sections and should be read in conjunction with the

land use zoning matrix and map (Appendix IV) and the language and culture policies and objectives.

#### 4.2.1 Residential Uses

The principal residential land use policies seek to protect existing residential areas within Gibbstown whilst providing for the sustainable growth of the village. These policies include:

**LUP 1** To provide for the local housing need of Gibbstown village.

**LUP 2** To ensure the development of sustainable residential communities located within close proximity of employment, service and recreation uses.

**LUP 3** To achieve a balanced and indistinguishable mix of social and affordable housing throughout the village.

**LUP 4** To implement the policies of the rural settlement strategy of the County Development Plan 2007-2013, including the reservation of between 25-30% of all new multi house developments, being developments in excess of four houses, for persons native to Co. Meath or those who by virtue of their employment require to live in the urban centre. The remainder of the houses shall be provided for local growth only. The reservation of 25-30% of multiple housing units for local derived needs shall include the 20% reservation for social and affordable housing needs.

**LUP 5** To provide a balanced mix of housing typologies suitable for a variety of household types.

**LUP 6** To deliver high quality residential development that respects and enhances the character of the village and contributes to the creation of a village identity.

**LUP 7** To promote infill residential development to the north of the R163.

**LUP 8** To protect the integrity of the Green Belt from inappropriate residential development.

**LUP 9** To ensure that a high standard of design be incorporated into future residential developments in line with the recommendations of the 'Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2008' and the accompanying best practice 'Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide' adopted by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in December 2008. Applications for four or more dwellings shall be accompanied by a landscaping plan and a design statement. Furthermore, regard shall be had to the use of local materials and house styles in designing all future residential developments.

The specific requirements set out in Section 5 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 and the Meath Housing Strategy shall apply in terms of the provision of social and affordable housing in the LAP area.

LUP 10	To ensure that up to 20% of any land zoned solely for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be made available for the provision of social and affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2006 and the County Housing Strategy.
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Land use zoning objectives which provide for the development of residential uses within the village include:

LUOBJ 1	To provide for detached family homes on residential zoned lands to the north of the village.
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LUOBJ 2	To provide for low density housing to the west of the industrial area to conform with the existing pattern of development to the north.
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LUOBJ 3	To provide for low density clustered development to the east and west of the primary school.
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LUOBJ 4	To provide for town house typologies adjoining the proposed village centre.
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LUBOJ 5	To ensure all new residential development to the south of the village adjoining the proposed F1 Land Use Zoning objective overlook proposed F1 Open Space.
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LUBOJ 6	Planning applications for individual one off rural dwellings in the Green Belt will be assessed on their merits for compliance with the CDP rural housing policy.
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#### 4.2.2 Village Centre Uses

The village has a poorly defined village centre. A village centre is proposed to give a sense of place and identity, and to generate a mix of uses that will enhance the local services in the village.

LUP 11	To protect the existing residential function of the village.
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LUP 12	To provide for the development of new services and facilities within the village centre including small-scale retail, commercial and office uses creating an identifiable village centre / focus.
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LUP 13	To facilitate appropriate employment and enterprise uses within the village centre and the industrial area.
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Objectives which seek to protect and enhance the service function of Gibbstown village centre are as follows:

LUOBJ 7	To provide for the development of commercial, retail and residential uses on lands fronting onto the southern side of the R163 with access to be provided to the Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings.
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LUOBJ 8	To encourage the restoration of the Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings for appropriate commercial / educational / residential uses.
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#### 4.2.3 Industrial and Industry Related Uses

The existing industrial developments are a significant driver of Gibbstown's economy and an important source of local employment. This plan seeks to provide for the intensification of the industrial area for small scale businesses which compliment the Gaeltacht status of the area subject to the protection and enhancement of the adjoining historic buildings at Gibbstown Demense to the south of the industrial

area. The plan also provides for additional industrial zoned lands to the north of the R163, to the east of the village.

**LUP 14** To provide for the sustainable development of industrial and related uses and the creation of employment opportunities within Gibbstown village.

**LUP 15** To protect the built and natural environment of Gibbstown from the potential impacts of industrial development including visual, water, air and noise pollution.

**LUP 16** To protect existing residential areas from the potential impacts of industrial development including visual, water, air and noise pollution.

Specific objectives for the development of industrial and related uses in Gibbstown include:

**LUOBJ 9** To provide for the sustainable consolidation of the existing industrial area.

**LUOBJ 10** To facilitate employment creation through the development of industrial / enterprise uses, while protecting the setting of the Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings to the south.

**LUOBJ 11** To facilitate employment creation through the development of industrial / enterprise uses, while protecting existing adjoining residential areas.

#### 4.2.4 Community and Recreational Uses

Existing community and recreational uses within Gibbstown include the GAA fields, the community hall and the school, and the landscape setting of

Gibbstown Demesne which provides visual amenity to the village.

As Gibbstown develops existing community and recreational facilities and amenities should be enhanced to meet the needs of the existing and future population.

**LUP 17** To support the provision of and access to a range of community and recreational facilities and amenities.

**LUP 18** To ensure community and recreational facilities are developed in tandem with residential and mixed use development.

**LUP 19** To promote a high standard of well designed, high-quality, inclusive open spaces within residential areas.

**LUP 20** To enhance the existing landscape setting of the Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings.

There are several opportunities within Gibbstown to enhance the existing provision of community and recreational facilities and amenities. These opportunities are reflected in the objectives below:

**LUOBJ 12** To promote the enhancement of the existing community hall to the west of the village.

**LUOBJ 13** To provide for the expansion of Gibbstown primary school and associated play areas and complimentary community uses.

**LUOBJ 14** To facilitate the expansion of the existing playing fields to the west of the village.

**LUOBJ 15** To facilitate the restoration of the Gibbstown Demesne farm

buildings and to promote access to and the appreciation of the complex.

**LUOBJ 16** To promote the development of an attractive, overlooked and accessible linear park / green route for the purposes of visual amenity, the protection of the setting of the farm buildings, and the provision of passive recreation to the south of the village.

#### 4.2.5 Broad Land Use Layout

A broad land use layout including land use zoning objectives for Gibbstown is appended (Appendix IV). The extent of lands zoned is as follows:

Village Centre Uses	1.8ha / 4.3acres
Existing Residential Areas (A1)	8.3ha / 20.5 acres
New Residential Areas (A2)	2.6ha / 6.4 acres
Institutional Complex (A3)	5.2ha / 12.8 acres
New Residential Areas (A5)	6.2ha / 15.2 acres
Industrial and Related Uses	3.4ha / 8.4 acres
Community Uses	4.6ha / 11.4 acres
Open Space	9.9ha / 24.6acres

### 4.3 Movement and Access

The movement policies and objectives seek to promote sustainable travel patterns and modes of transport. These policies and objectives are described below with respect to public transport, pedestrian and cycle movement, vehicular traffic, and car and bicycle parking.

#### 4.3.1 Public Transport

Gibbstown is poorly served by public transport at present. However, there may be potential for improved public transport services over the life time of this plan, or potential for the development of private shuttle bus services to Kells or Navan where access to public transport services is greater.

**MP1** To facilitate the development of improved public bus connections to nearby towns.

**MP 2** To facilitate the development of private bus connections to nearby towns.

To facilitate bus services to the village designated pick up and drop off points should be developed as part of any future environmental improvements within the village centre.

**MOBJ 1** To develop pick up and drop off points for buses within the village centre.

#### 4.3.2 Pedestrian and Cycle Movement

All new development within the village should prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement. Pedestrian and cycle networks should be safe, direct and well connected to surrounding areas. In this regard the following policies have been identified.

**MP 3** To develop a network of safe, direct and well connected footpaths and cycle routes.

**MP 4** To require that all pedestrian routes provide for universal accessibility.

**MP 5** To require the provision of good public lighting standards on all routes.

**MP 6** To provide for traffic calming measures on the R163 through the village.

The following objectives have been identified to promote pedestrian and cycle movement and to facilitate the development of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure within the village.

**MOBJ 2** To develop a continuous footpath from the village centre to the industrial estate to the east, and connecting the school, GAA grounds and the church to the west along the northern side of the

R163 with road crossings at locations to coincide with community / employment uses.

**MOBJ 3** To provide a green pedestrian route to the south of the village along the alignment of existing hedgerows where possible as part of the proposed linear park to the south of the village to be provided in tandem with any new developments at this location.

**MOBJ 4** To provide for pedestrian connections between the proposed linear park and the R163 through new development areas in tandem with any new developments at these locations.

#### 4.3.3 Vehicular Movement

Vehicular access to and from the village centre should be safe, direct and well connected. Streets and lanes should be developed in favour of roads and should have a character which compliments that of the village centre.

**MP 7** To establish a hierarchy of safe, well connected and attractive streets and lanes which compliment and contribute to the development of an identifiable character for the village.

**MP 8** To promote the development of spaces within new development areas which encourage reduced speed.

With respect to vehicular movement and access within the village, the following objectives have been identified.

**MOBJ 5** To develop a new street to the south of the village adjoining the proposed linear park.

**MOBJ 6** To provide vehicular access to lands to the north of the R163 to allow for further future development.

**MOBJ 7** To provide vehicular access to the lands to the south of the R163 that is residential and village center zoned land to allow access to the proposed linear park / green route, and the existing Gibbstown farm buildings.

#### 4.3.4 Car and Bicycle Parking

The car and bicycle parking requirements for new development shall be consistent with the CDP. On-street car parking within the village centre should be structured and landscaped as part of any future environmental improvements. Off-street car parking should be absorbed within development parcels and screened from the public realm.

Bicycle parking facilities should also be provided within the village centre.

**MP 9** To facilitate vehicular access to the village centre through the provision of on-street and off-street car parking facilities in accordance with the requirements of the County Development Plan.

**MP 10** To encourage shared parking facilities between community uses.

**MP 11** To mitigate the visual impact of car parking through the development of well designed, detailed and landscaped car parking areas.

**MP 12** To provide bicycle stands within the village centre to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport.

The desired location of car parking within the village varies from site to site. However, the following

objectives should be noted with respect to the sites identified below.

MOBJ 8 Car parking within the proposed residential area to the east of the village should be provided on-street in structured parallel car parking spaces and off-street behind the building line.

MOBJ 9 Car parking within the industrial area should be provided off street and absorbed within the industrial development site as part of any future development proposals.

MOBJ 10 Car parking within the proposed residential area to the south of the R163 and between the proposed village centre and industrial area should be provided on-street in structured parallel car parking spaces and off-street behind the building line.

MOBJ 11 Car parking on village centre zoned lands should be provided in structured parallel car parking spaces along the proposed access road and within the site to the rear of proposed buildings.

MOBJ 12 Car parking within the proposed residential areas to the south of the R163 in the form of clustered developments to the west of the village centre and to the east and west of the school should preferably be absorbed within the site to ensure the development of attractive shared courtyard spaces.

MOBJ 13 Car parking for existing and proposed community uses including the community hall, GAA grounds and cemetery to use shared parking areas.

#### 4.4 Natural and Built Heritage

The character of Gibbstown is largely derived from its natural heritage and historic built heritage. This heritage should be protected and enhanced for the enjoyment of future generations.

The County Development Plan includes several buildings and fixtures located within the village on the record of protected structures which are described in Appendix III. It is the objective of the council to protect these structures and fixtures and to promote appropriate uses which provide for their repair and maintenance in the longer term.

It is proposed that actions to prevent further deterioration of the Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings and associated grounds are actively pursued and that public access to the site and awareness of its heritage is promoted.

No monuments or places of archaeological interest have been identified within Gibbstown. However, it is the policy of the Council to ensure that all archaeology including undiscovered archaeology is protected in accordance with current best practice standards and guidelines.

Whilst a tree survey of Gibbstown has not been undertaken, it is noted that there are several mature trees which contribute significantly to the landscape setting of the village. It is an objective of the Council to protect, repair and enhance the natural heritage of Gibbstown including mature trees and hedgerows and traditional field boundaries.

NBHP 1 To provide for the protection of recorded and potential archaeology within Gibbstown village.

NBHP2 To provide for the protection and promote the use and enhancement of structures in Gibbstown included on the record of protected structures.

NBHP 3 To promote the repair and maintenance of existing buildings of architectural merit in accordance

with the DoEHLG guidelines for architectural heritage protection.

**NBHP 4** To protect mature trees and hedgerows which make a significant contribution to the landscape setting of Gibbstown.

**NBHP 5** To protect remnants of the demesne railings to the north and south of the R163.

**NBHP 6** To provide for the protection of established field boundaries and hedgerows.

With respect to the natural and build heritage of Gibbstown the Council has identified the following objectives.

**NBHOB 1** To protect the landscape character of the green belt between community uses and the village.

**NBHOB 2** To enhance the landscape setting of Gibbstown through the planting of native trees and hedgerows within and surrounding the village.

**NBHOB 3** To promote the restoration, enhancement and use of protected structures.

#### 4.5 Design Standards

Gibbstown village has a dispersed built fabric and retains a rural character, with nodes of development at the existing industrial area, the Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings and at the school.

In order to enhance this fabric, policies and objectives with respect to the built form of the village have been identified.

##### 4.5.1 Building Typologies

New buildings within the village centre and the proposed residential areas should be of a form and scale that reflects the vernacular of Gibbstown.

Infill sites to the north of the R163 should comprise detached dwellings, retaining access and views through to protect visual connections to the rural hinterland. New residential areas located between the industrial area and the green belt to the south of the R163 will be the subject of action plans. The areas to the east and west of the school should be designed as clustered development areas with varied building alignments comprising gable and parallel configurations of simple building forms. Town house dwelling typologies are suggested adjoining the village centre.

The area between the industrial area and the village centre should be designed to be consistent with the traditional building alignments of the adjoining dwellings to the north. The area to the east of the existing industrial area should be designed as low density residential development to retain the rural character of the village.

New industrial and industry related buildings to the east and north of the village should be clustered within the industrial sites and should be of a form and scale which is neither overbearing nor visually intrusive.

**DSP 1** To protect the traditional building typologies of the Gibbstown farm buildings.

**DSP 2** To provide for infill development to the north of the R163 that respects the scale and massing of adjoining dwellings.

**DSP 3** To provide for residential housing typologies which are of a form and scale that is in keeping with the village, comprising one storey and a half Land Commission type dwellings and two storey farm house buildings. Dwellings to be in appropriate configurations to their location.

**DSP 4** To provide for new industrial building typologies which are

visually unobtrusive and of a form and scale that does not injure the rural character of the village.

**DSP 5** To promote innovative architectural design in the development of new and existing buildings.

With respect to new residential areas, the following specific objectives have been identified.

**DSOBJ 1** To promote the development of detached family homes which reflect the traditional building form of the Land Commission Dwelling, comprising single storey and one and a half storey dwellings to the north of the R163.

**DSOBJ 2** To facilitate the development of town houses adjoining the village centre and overlooking the R163 and the proposed linear park to the south.

**DSOBJ 3** To provide for the development of a variety of housing typologies in clustered configurations on lands to the south of the R163, to the east of the industrial area, and to the east and west of the school.

**DSOBJ 4** To provide for the development of detached dwellings in configurations that align with the existing adjoining dwellings on lands between the proposed village centre and the industrial area.

#### 4.5.2 Residential Density

The residential density of newly developed lands should be arrived at with respect to qualitative standards such as appropriate building scale and form and design standards. Notwithstanding this, the absence of key infrastructure in Gibbstown and in particular a waste water treatment plant will limit the number of units that can be developed on any one

land parcel until such time as this infrastructure has been enhanced.

In this regard, it is proposed that lower residential densities of between 15-20 residential units per hectare should generally be achieved in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas. However, lower residential densities which seek to provide a sustainable alternative to one-off rural housing will also be promoted.

**DSP 6** To promote residential densities which respect the character of the village whilst providing for the sustainable use of land and services and sustainable travel patterns.

**DSP 7** To provide for low density residential development on infill sites.

**DSP 8** To provide for low density residential development in new residential areas, which provide a sustainable alternative to rural housing, and which allow for sustainable future intensification.

**DSP 9** To ensure that qualitative design standards are not compromised by quantitative density standards.

With respect to the residential density of individual land parcels within the village, the following objectives have been identified.

**DSOBJ 5** To provide for the development of detached family homes of 6 units / ha (2.5 units / acre) or as appropriate on infill sites (A2 zoned lands).

**DSOBJ 6** To provide for the development of detached family homes of 6 units / ha (2.5 units / acre) or as appropriate on residential lands

(A5 zoned lands) in accordance with action plans.

**DSOBJ 7** To provide for the future intensification of residential sites in A5 residential cluster areas when infrastructure becomes available.

**DSOBJ 8** To require Action Plans for A5 residential areas to illustrate intensification potential.

**DSOBJ 9** To provide low density residential development on lands to the east of the existing industrial area to protect the rural visual amenity of the village.

#### 4.5.3 Building Height

Buildings in Gibbstown generally range from one to two storeys in height with the exception of the industrial buildings. The human scale of traditional buildings should be retained and reflected in development proposals. As such, the eaves or parapet level of new buildings should generally be no greater than 5 metres unless a worthy architectural intention has been demonstrated. In accordance with the County Development Plan, three storey duplex units will not be permitted within the village.

**DSP 10** To retain and reflect the human scale of traditional buildings within the village centre.

**DSP 11** To allow for increased building height where a worthy architectural intention has been demonstrated.

**DSP 12** To prohibit the development of three storey duplex units within the village in accordance with the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

Proposed building heights within individual sites should conform with the following objectives.

**DSOBJ 10** To retain and respect the established eaves lines of the existing building stock within the village centre.

**DSOBJ 11** To encourage dwellings of a scale that reflects the vernacular of the 20th century houses of the Land Commission tradition, and 18th and 19th century farm buildings such as those at Gibbstown Demesne.

**DSOBJ 12** To promote the development of two storey buildings at the village centre to create a sense of enclosure and identity.

**DSOBJ 13** To promote the development of low rise dwellings ranging between one and one and a half storeys on remaining residential zoned lands.

#### 4.5.4 Building Lines and Street Frontage

The building line refers to the edge created by the principal elevation of a building. A continuous building line along street elevations provides for high levels of enclosure to the street and the public domain. Within the village core on lands zoned village centre, new buildings should provide for a continuous building line. These buildings should also achieve active frontage at street level with a fine urban grain and a variety of small scale uses.

Within new residential areas the building typologies proposed are detached in form, and the appropriate building line relates to the front garden / boundary treatment in general. Front gardens / boundaries in clustered housing areas should be continuous, and preferably planted with indigenous hedges. Dwellings should adopt a logical arrangement, but may present 'gable on' or linear aligned facades to the front of the residential plots.

The following objectives have been identified in order to address site specific conditions around the village.

DSOBJ 14 To promote the development of a continuous building line and active street frontage in the village centre.

DSOBJ 15 To encourage the development of a continuous front boundary line of indigenous hedge planting or railing consistent with the historic railings of the demesne in residential areas to the north of the R163.

DSOBJ 16 To encourage the development of a continuous front boundary line of indigenous hedge planting / masonry wall / rails in clustered housing areas and new housing areas to the south of the R163.

DSP 13 To provide for high quality private open space in accordance with the design standards for residential development contained in the Meath County Development Plan.

DSP 14 To provide for adequate safe, attractive and usable public open space within residential developments.

DSP 15 To provide for public open space to enhance the recreational amenity of the overall village.

The following objectives have been identified in order to address site specific conditions that relate to open space.

#### 4.5.5 Private and Public Open Space

The provision of high quality private open space is an important aspect of good residential design. In Gibbstown dwellings are generally detached on large plots and benefit from private open space to the front and rear. These spaces should be designed to maximise privacy, amenity and security in accordance with the design standards for residential development described in the CDP. Public open space within residential developments should be accessible, of a functional form and layout and well overlooked by buildings. These spaces should include level areas of sufficient size to accommodate informal sports activities for children.

In accordance with the Meath County Development Plan, a minimum rate of 15% of the total site area of residential development shall be reserved for public open space. The Plan proposes the development of a linear park to the south of the village as public open space. This area of public open space will contribute to the rate of public open space required on individual sites. Where residential developments are close to existing facilities or natural amenities or where in the opinion of the Planning Authority it would be in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the Planning Authority may require a financial contribution towards the provision of public open space or recreational facilities in the wider area in lieu of public open space within the development.

DSOBJ 17 To promote the development of a linear park to the south of the village associated with new developments, that is fully accessible to the public, overlooked and that will provide for a continuous pedestrian route along the southern boundary of the village with connections to the R163 through new development areas.

DSOBJ 18 To promote the development of a village space adjoining the proposed village centre that will increase visual connections and access to the historic Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings.

#### 4.5.6 Materials and Finishes

Stone, brick and rendered walls, pitched slate roofs and timber sash windows and doors are the principal materials that were traditionally used in the Gibbstown farm buildings. More contemporary dwellings including the Land Commission dwellings comprise rendered walls, pitched slate roofs and timber windows and doors.

These materials are still relevant today and their application to infill buildings and new streets and new residential areas should be kept simple and in keeping with local tradition. However, pastiche references to traditional building decoration such as ornate plasterwork should be avoided.

With respect to the repair and maintenance of existing buildings, the Planning Authority will seek to implement the guidelines for architectural heritage protection prepared by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Where new buildings are proposed, the innovative use of materials and in particular locally sourced and sustainable building materials is encouraged.

**DSP 16** To encourage the use of local and sustainable building materials which reflect local tradition and craftsmanship within the village centre.

**DSP 17** To provide for the innovative use of building materials and finishes which respect and enhance the character of the village.

#### 4.5.7 Architectural Design

The built form policies and objectives described hereto are intended as good practice guidance rather than prescriptive standards. It is recognised that through innovative architectural design alternative building forms and finishes can make a positive contribution to the character of the village. The Council will consider innovative design proposals where architectural excellence is demonstrated.

**DSP 18** To actively promote innovation and design excellence in the preparation of development proposals.

#### 4.5.8 Hard and Soft Landscaping

The quality of the public realm can be significantly enhanced through the development of well designed and landscaped public space. It is the policy of the Council to encourage the use of high quality materials and finishes throughout the public domain to include paved footpaths and attractive and contemporary lamp standards, street furniture and signage.

Footpaths should be continuous, generous in width and provide for universal accessibility throughout the village.

Existing boundaries including boundary walls, railings, hedgerows and mature trees should be maintained, repaired and enhanced where necessary. New boundaries should seek to continue the tradition of railing and local stone wall construction to the front of buildings and fronting onto public space. Alternatively, indigenous hedgerows are encouraged. New boundary treatments should be continuous and coherent.

**DSP 19** To promote the use of high quality materials and finishes within the public realm.

**DSP 20** To provide for the protection, repair and enhancement of existing boundaries.

**DSP 21** To encourage the use of local materials and native trees and hedgerows where new boundaries are proposed.

**DSP 22** To promote the coordinated and coherent provision of street furniture including lamp standards, litter bins, bicycle stands and signage.

With respect to existing public open space and boundaries, the Council proposes the following specific objectives.

**DSOBJ 19** To promote the enhancement of the existing boundary treatments to the north of the village where new developments have occurred and where the boundary is eroded and discontinuous.

**DSOBJ 20** To encourage the development of a continuous and coherent boundary wall / hedge along the southern side of the R163.

#### 4.5.9 Sustainable Design

Development proposals should seek to minimise the embodied energy and energy requirements of new and existing buildings. Building materials should be sourced locally and should ideally come from renewable sources, have a long life span and require low maintenance.

New buildings should be designed and orientated to maximise upon solar gain and to achieve a high energy performance rating. Renewable energy technologies such as solar water heaters and photo voltaic panels are also encouraged.

The Council also promotes innovative and environmentally sustainable design proposals which seek to reduce demand on public water supplies such as the collection of rain water as second class water for flushing toilets, secondary washing and garden irrigation.

New buildings should be easily adapted to meet the changing requirements of different users during the lifetime of the building and the life cycle of its occupants.

DSP 23 To promote the use of locally sourced and renewable construction materials.

DSP 24 To encourage the use of environmentally sustainable building designs and technologies such as the passive house and renewable energy sources.

DSP 25 To promote building solutions which reduce demand on natural resources such as water.

DSP 26 To provide for the adaptability of buildings in accordance with the loose fit, long life principle.

DSP 27 To provide for the intensification of residential building plots in clustered housing areas.

#### 4.6 Services and Infrastructure

The provision of key services and infrastructure, and in particular the absence of a waste water treatment plant and the limited supply of public water, is the greatest constraint upon the development of Gibbstown village. The augmentation of services and infrastructure must occur in tandem with the development of the village.

##### 4.6.1 Waste Water Collection and Treatment

There are currently no plans to develop a waste water treatment plant. A waste water treatment plant may be provided should significant development be proposed. This plant would be best located on the lands south of the village. It is the policy of the Council to investigate the feasibility of providing a waste water treatment plant at Gibbstown in conjunction with major landowners / developers.

SIP 1 To provide an adequate waste water collection and treatment facility to provide for the existing and future population of the village in accordance with the projections in Table 6 of the County Development Plan, the Water Framework Directive 2000 and the Water Services Investment Programme as finances permit.

SIP 2 To identify suitable locations for a new waste water treatment plant as necessary.

SIP 3 To reserve all wastewater capacity in the first instance for community uses and employment generating uses.

SIP 4 To facilitate the connection of dwellings currently operating on septic tank systems to any new public sewerage system.

##### 4.6.2 Surface Water

Surface water generated by new developments should not be permitted to enter the waste water collection system. Permeable ground surfaces are

encouraged within new residential areas. The Planning Authority also promotes the collection, attenuation and treatment of storm water run-off from roads and paved areas below ground in storm water attenuation cells. The Planning Authority shall consider the feasibility of developing attenuation cells at appropriate locations such as the proposed linear park to the south of the village.

**SIP 5** To promote the use of permeable surfaces where hard landscaping is proposed as the ground finish.

**SIP 6** To encourage the development of attenuation cells for the collection, attenuation and treatment of surface water run-off within new developments.

#### 4.6.3 Water Supply

Post 2013 increased water supply will be available, but supply is constrained by the existing link from Navan to Gibbstown. There are currently no proposals to upsize the watermain from Navan to Gibbstown. The long term development of new housing within the village will be contingent upon the augmentation of the existing water supply. In the short term the implementation of water conservation measures should be undertaken to protect the water resource.

**SIP 7** To facilitate the provision of an adequate water supply to Gibbstown.

**SIP 8** To encourage water conservation measures which reduce demand on existing water supplies.

**SIP 9** To reserve all water capacity in the first instance for community uses and employment generating uses.

#### 4.6.4 Flooding

Whilst the underlying causes of flooding, heavy rain and high sea levels, are essentially uncontrollable, the factors affecting the extent and severity of

flooding can be addressed. The most influential of these factors is development.

It is the policy of the Council to seek that development is not subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding nor be the cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations.

**SIP 10** To seek that development is not subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding nor be the cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations.

**SIP 11** To require all significant developments impacting on flood risk areas to provide a Flood Impact Assessment, to identify potential loss of flood plain storage and how it might be offset in order to minimize impacts on the river flood regime.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government have prepared Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities on The Planning System and Flood Risk Management. The Council will seek to identify areas at risk of flooding and to ensure that development within these areas comply with the Draft Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and any subsequently adopted guidelines.

**SIP 12** To identify any areas that are at risk of flooding and to ensure that development at such areas comply with the Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities, The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and any subsequently adopted guidelines.

#### 4.6.5 Other Utility Services

##### Waste Management

Waste will be managed in accordance with the provision of the Waste Management Plans for County Meath. In order to promote the sustainable

management of waste a suitable Bring Bank facility is proposed within the village.

SIP 13	To identify appropriate sites within Gibbstown village for the provision of a Bring Bank recycling facility.
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#### *Telecommunications*

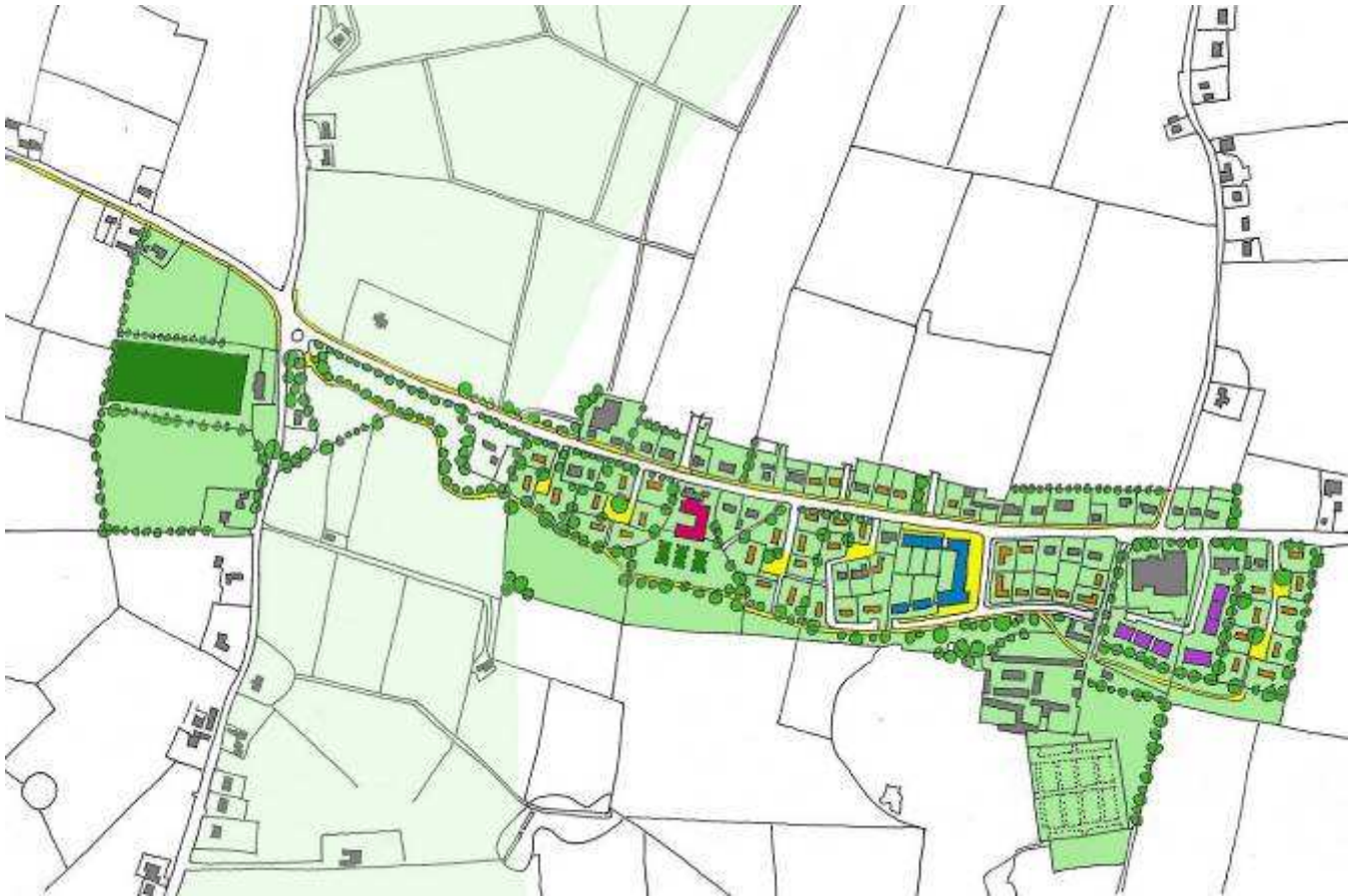
A Broadband Strategy for County Meath has been published. In accordance with this strategy, the Local Authority is determined to take advantage of the supportive position that the Government has adopted to ensure that broadband infrastructure is made widely available throughout the county.

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the provision and enhancement of broadband services in Gibbstown and to enable lower income households to avail of broadband infrastructure.

SIP 14	To actively promote e-inclusion in Gibbstown through the planning process and by supporting strategies to encourage and enable lower income households to avail of modern broadband infrastructure.
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## 5.0 Master Plan

The Gibbstown master plan is illustrated below. The master plan shows a new linear park, connecting spaces / streets, appropriate building forms and landscape proposals. The masterplan is indicative only and is intended to provide design guidance with respect to the built form and layout of the village.



Indicative Master Plan

## 6.0 Phasing and Implementation

### 6.1 Opportunity Sites

There are several sites within the village that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the development of Gibbstown, and to enhance and promote its Gaeltacht distinctiveness.

The Gibbstown Demesne farm buildings represent a significant development opportunity. The development of the farm buildings has both tourism employment and residential potential. Access to the demesne is poor and the buildings have a poor presence within the village. The development of lands to the north of the farm buildings / between the R163 and the farm buildings could significantly enhance accessibility to the farm complex and provide a positive link between the buildings and the village centre.

There is potential to develop a new village centre and to create a legible village space that would give Gibbstown a strong sense of place and identity. The lands to the east and west of the school have the potential to development as residential clusters, each with a unique character.

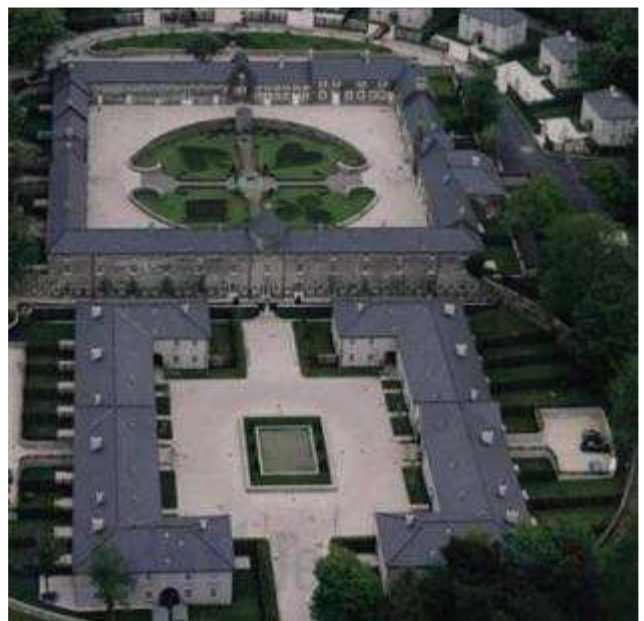
Additional design guidance has been prepared with respect to these sites and is described in the following sections.



Gibbstown Demesne Farm Complex and Walled Garden

### *Gibbstown Demesne*

The configuration and form of the Gibbstown farm buildings are unique and particular. The variety of building forms including linear spaces, cellular spaces and former dwellings lends itself to a variety of uses. Appropriate uses include small enterprise, tourism, interpretative centre, arts / craft opportunities, educational uses and potential associated residential uses. Development within the farm building complex should focus on the restoration and protection of the existing buildings, with minimal intervention in the building fabric. It is proposed that access is enhanced utilising the existing entrance to the west, and a proposed new access from the north reinstating a historic entrance to the farm buildings.



New Residential Accommodation at Headfort Demesne

### *Village Centre*

These lands are centrally located within the village. The lands front onto the R163. The development of these lands should seek to establish an attractive and identifiable village centre whilst respecting the innate characteristics of the existing buildings in the village.

The development proposals for these lands should seek to:

- Provide for a mix of uses and active ground floor frontage facing the road,
- Establish a continuous building line and a strong sense of enclosure along the road, and
- Buildings should respect the scale and massing of existing buildings within the village.

A two storey terrace is considered appropriate providing a strong urban edge and creating a potential village space and enclosure. Parallel on street car parking and a landscaped urban space could occur to the front of new buildings. Access to the retail units and off street car parking could also be provided to the rear of the terrace.



Village Centre



Potential Residential Clusters



Cluster housing loosely arranged around a courtyard

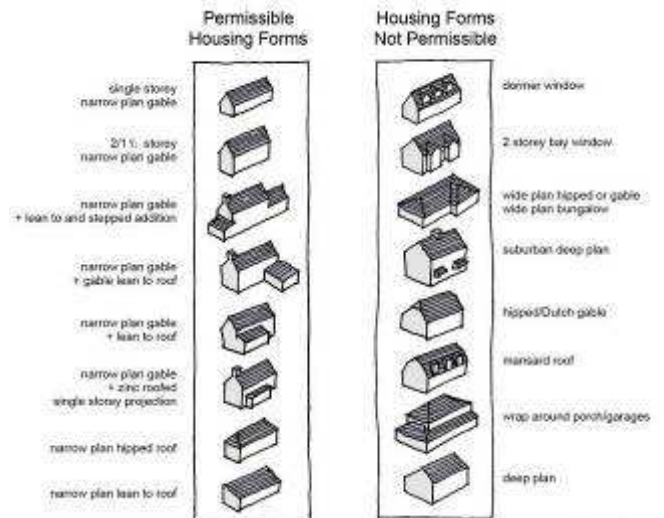
### *Residential Clusters*

There are two potential residential cluster sites in the village to the east and west of the school provided for by the A5 Land Use Zoning Objective. The development of these sites under the provisions of an action area plan will ensure coordinated development within the context of the existing road network and land uses, and will ensure an overall coordinated design approach. The new residential area to the east of the village has also the potential to develop as a residential cluster.

These areas should seek to achieve clustered development that retains a rural character in a village context. It is proposed that these areas would develop at a low residential density initially, with the potential to intensify in the future. Public open space is proposed to the south of the residential clusters to contribute to the development of a continuous linear park to the south of the village.

The key components are:

- Single storey to one and half storey dwellings.
- Vernacular building forms as illustrated (Appropriate Dwelling Forms).
- Provision of a central courtyard space providing access to each dwelling.
- Shared surface with traffic calming measures.
- High quality landscaping including courtyard ground finish and boundary treatment.
- Boundary treatment to comprise walls / hedgerows of indigenous plants to be planted at the earliest possible stage of development.
- Dwelling arrangement that would facilitate intensification in the future.
- Render finished, natural slate roofs, and timber windows and doors.
- Action Area plans to accompany development proposals for these areas should illustrate the manner in which intensification could occur, to ensure coordinated development.
- Action Area plans to illustrate connections to the proposed linear park and connections between varying land ownerships.
- Linear park to the south with potential connections to adjoining lands to east and west.
- North south connections to be provided through cluster areas, connecting the proposed linear park to the R163.



Appropriate Dwelling Forms

## 6.2 Phasing

The Planning Authority will promote development in a rational and sequential manner in order to ensure essential facilities such as adequate waste water treatment infrastructure and public water supply are in place. The Planning Authority will also take into consideration the existing and proposed provision of social infrastructure including educational, recreational and amenity facilities and employment opportunities when assessing development proposals.



Indicative View towards Residential Cluster

The development of new residential areas should be concentrated in the centre of the village. Phase 1 development is promoted at the village centre. The remaining residential zoned lands within the village shall be released for development as part of Phase 2 only i.e. post 2013, and subject to the criteria identified for the release of residential zoned lands described in Variation No. 2 of the CDP.

Development is contingent upon the development of a waste water treatment facility and the provision of adequate water supply. The Planning Authority reserves the right to refuse planning permission for development on the basis of a lack of adequate water and / or waste water infrastructure. However, the Planning Authority will not prohibit one-off housing type development in the village on this basis.

The current Order of Priority for Gibbstown is illustrated below.

### 6.3 Contributions

In order to facilitate Local Authority investment in key infrastructure development contributions shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of Part III, Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as adopted by Meath County Council.

The Local Authority will also consider the preparation of a supplementary contributions scheme in order to expedite the delivery of critical infrastructure such as the provision of waste water treatment facilities.

### 6.4 Monitoring and Review

In order to ensure that the development strategies described in Section 3.0 are being delivered in accordance with the policies and objectives of this plan, the Council, through the day to day activity of its development management function will monitor the implementation and phasing of the Gibbstown LAP. A periodic review will be undertaken in order to assess the implementation of the plan and any environmental effects that may arise from the plan.



## Appendices

Appendix I	Draft Gibbstown LAP & Amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Reports
Appendix II	Draft Gibbstown LAP & Amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports
Appendix III	Existing List of Protected Structures in Gibbstown
Appendix IV	Land Use Matrix and Zoning Map
Appendix V	Persons, Bodies and Agencies having made a Pre-Draft submission on the preparation of the Gibbstown LAP
Appendix VI	Persons, Bodies and Agencies having made a submission on the Draft Gibbstown LAP
Appendix VII	Persons, Bodies and Agencies having made a submission on the Amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP

## Appendix I Draft Gibbstown LAP & Amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Reports

### Gibbstown Local Area Plan

#### Screening Report to Establish Requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment

For submission to:

Environmental Protection Agency  
Mr. Tadhg O'Mahony  
Regional Inspectorate  
Inniscarra  
Co. Cork

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government  
The Manager  
Development Applications Unit  
Dun Sceine  
Harcourt Lane  
Dublin 2

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resource  
Mr. John Wayne  
Assistant Principal  
Co-ordination Unit  
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Sheridan Woods  
Architects + Urban Planners  
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Dublin 7

## **1.0 Introduction**

Sheridan Woods Architects + Urban Planners have been retained by Meath County Council to prepare a Local Area Plan for Gibbstown, Co. Meath. In accordance with the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) and the SEA Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004), Sheridan Woods are currently screening the proposed Gibbstown Local Area Plan in order to establish whether the proposed Gibbstown Local Area Plan (LAP) would have significant effects on the environment and to assess if the Gibbstown Local Area Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Section 3.4 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines states that screening (i.e. 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 Gibbstown is below 10,000 persons, the purpose of this report is to determine if the Local Area Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment i.e. screen the LAP. In preparing the report reference has been made to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08. Reference has also been 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 2004.

## **2.0 Policy Context**

Objective SS OBJ1 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 states that Local Area Plans shall be prepared for the urban centres contained in Table 7 of the Development Plan, which include Gibbstown.

According to the settlement hierarchy for County Meath set out in the County Development Plan, Gibbstown is listed as a 'village'. The Development Plan states that settlements designated as 'villages' are intended to act as nodes for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services. Their future growth should be curtailed and safeguarded so that they do not act as catalysts to facilitate continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City in particular, or other Large or Moderate Growth Towns. The future development of villages will be predicated more closely to local rather than regional growth.

## **3.0 Location / Context**

Gibbstown is located in the centre of County Meath in the Navan Electoral Area. Gibbstown is one of two Gaeltacht Areas in County Meath. As such, the village has a strong linguistic and cultural heritage which warrants special consideration in the preparation of a Local Area Plan for the village. Gibbstown is located on the R163 (Slane / Kells Regional Road) approximately 7km northwest of Navan Town. Gibbstown is identified in Map 1 Settlement Hierarchy of the MCDP 2007 – 2011 (Appendix B). A location map, current land use zoning map and photographic images of Gibbstown are appended and referred to in the text.

Gibbstown is a medium sized village comprising a long corridor of ribbon development along the R163 road. The village centre is not well defined and comprises a mix of small vernacular cottages and large one-off bungalows and houses constructed in a mixture of styles and materials. The village is set in a potentially attractive but slightly degraded woodland setting. The main elements which make up the village include the cemetery, community hall and GAA playing fields to the west, Gibbstown National School to the centre of the village and an industrial estate and the remains of Gibbstown Demesne to the east of the village. The village is illustrated in the appended photographic images (Appendix D).

Gibbstown village is located within the Domhnaigh Phadraig electoral division. The 2006 Census of population recorded a population of 842 persons within this electoral division. The 2006 Small Area Population Statistics for Gibbstown indicate a population of 72 persons and 20 households.

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

Annex II of the SEA Directive sets out the criteria for determining the likely significant 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:

- The Characteristics of the proposed Local Area Plan
- Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed LAP

These are considered here:

##### 4.1 The characteristics of the proposed Local Area Plan

##### 4.1.1 *The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions by allocating resources*

Gibbstown is identified as a village in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. As such, Gibbstown is intended to act as a node for 'distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services'.

The proposed Gibbstown LAP will provide detailed planning and development guidance for the proper and planning and sustainable development of Gibbstown Village including land use, transport and linguistic, cultural, natural and built heritage objectives and design guidelines. The Plan will encompass an area approximately 42 hectares in size as defined by the existing land use zoning map and boundary for the village (Appendix C). In accordance with the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, the proposed LAP will provide for development which is appropriately scaled and reinforces the character of the settlement.

In this regard, we note the Settlement Strategy for the county. The settlement strategy for County Meath as contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 seeks to locate residential growth in the county in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines. The primary tenet of the adopted County settlement strategy is to channel residential development into the three settlements of Navan, Dunboyne / Clonee / Pace Rail corridor and Drogheda Environs. As a result, the development of the small growth towns and key villages in the County will need to be slowed dramatically and will be more closely linked to local growth rather than to regional growth. 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. In the case of Kells, Trim, Dunshaughlin and the Small Growth Towns, Key Villages and Villages, the residentially zoned land bank in these areas was reviewed to ensure that only the quantum and scale of projected residential development contained in Table 5 (Population & Household Projection for the Plan Period) and Table 6 (Location of Household Growth 2006 - 2013) will take place. This is to ensure that the Development Plan accords with the policy framework contained in both the NSS and RPG's.

Variation No. 2 (Order of Priority) of the Meath County Development Plan manages the release of residentially zoned lands to ensure that the quantum and scale of residential development that will take place in urban centres interlocks with the quantity of residential units in Table 5 and Table 6 previously referred. Variation No. 2 of the MCDP indicates that the number of units permissible for release in Gibbstown is 35 units for the plan period. The Development Plan prioritises village centre consolidation and residential zoned land adjacent to the village centre for release in Phase 1 (2007 – 2013). Remaining residentially zoned lands will be released in Phase 2 (Post 2013) (Appendix D). The Local Area Plan will provide planning and development guidance that will conform with the County Settlement Strategy, and the Order Of Priority identified in the Development Plan.

#### *4.1.2 The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy*

The proposed Gibbstown LAP will operate at a local level and as such will generally be influenced by rather than influence other plans and programmes. The Plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 and all other policy documents, strategies, guidelines, directives, conventions etc. which are relevant to the setting of environmental protection objectives.

#### *4.1.3 The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development*

The proposed Gibbstown LAP will include environmental objectives pertaining to the sustainable use of land, sustainable modes of transport, protection and conservation of built heritage, sustainable urban and building design, and water and waste infrastructure. The principles of sustainable development will underpin the objectives of the plan.

#### *4.1.4 Environmental problems relevant to the proposed Local Area Plan*

The environmental problems relevant to the proposed Gibbstown LAP are the sustainable use of land and mix of land uses, the promotion of sustainable modes of transport, the protection of built and natural heritage, the provision of the necessary water and waste water treatment infrastructure and flooding.

We note that EirGrid have broadly identified 3 no. alternative routes for a 400kv Meath to Cavan powerline. This project is currently at the public consultation stage. One of the proposed routes passes to the east of Gibbstown Village ([www.eirgrid.ie/EirgridPortal/uploads/Meath-Cavan%20Power%20Line/Map%203.pdf](http://www.eirgrid.ie/EirgridPortal/uploads/Meath-Cavan%20Power%20Line/Map%203.pdf)). Accordingly, the proposed Gibbstown LAP objectives will provide for the possibility of same and the need to ensure sustainable development within the context of the proposed powerline.

There is no public waste water treatment plant in Gibbstown. Developments in Gibbstown operate on private septic tanks / treatment systems. There is limited potential to provide a public waste water treatment plant in the village.

#### *4.1.5 The relevance of the proposed Local Area Plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water pollution)*

The proposed Gibbstown LAP will be consistent with the objectives of Community legislation and shall seek to ensure the implementation of same with particular reference to energy conservation, transport policy, natural resources, waste-management and water protection and management.

### **4.2 Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed LAP**

#### **4.2.1 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects**

No significant negative environmental effects are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed LAP. The LAP will seek to consolidate development at Gibbstown in order to ensure the efficient use of land and the promotion of sustainable modes of transport. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the proposed LAP will have a positive environmental impact on the Village.

#### **4.2.2 The cumulative nature of the effects**

The cumulative nature of the effects of the proposed LAP is positive, comprising of the consolidation of development, the promotion of sustainable travel patterns through the provision of a mix of uses within a concentrated area, the protection of built and natural heritage, and the promotion of efficient and sustainable water and waste management.

#### **4.2.3 The transboundary nature of the effects**

No transboundary effects are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed LAP.

#### 4.2.4 *The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)*

No risks to human health or the environment are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed LAP. The proposed LAP will have a positive effect on the quality of life of the local population through the provision of high-quality residential, working and recreational environments and through the preservation and promotion of linguistic and cultural heritage.

#### 4.2.5 *The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)*

The LAP area encompasses approximately 42 hectares. The Small Area Population Statistics for Gibbstown as extrapolated from the 2006 census of population recorded 72 no. persons and 20 no. households resident in the village of Gibbstown. In accordance with the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, the Plan will provide for development which is appropriately scaled and reinforces the character of the settlement and will be predicated more closely to local rather than regional growth which has taken place over the past decade. Accordingly, a significant population increase is not proposed. As previously noted a projected 15 no. additional households in Gibbstown are identified in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 for the period 2006 to 2013. The Order of Priority for the development of residential lands has also been identified in Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 as noted (Appendix D) which provides for the logical growth of the village.

#### 4.2.6 *The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:*

##### 4.2.6.1 Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage

Gibbstown is one of two designated Gaeltacht areas in County Meath. The village has a strong linguistic and cultural heritage which it is an objective of Meath County Council to protect and enhance as part of the proposed Gibbstown LAP. The Meath County Development Plan seeks *“the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht including the promotion of Irish as the community language, where there is a Gaeltacht area in the area of the development plan.”*

##### NHA's, SACs, SPAs

It is noteworthy that the study lands do not include any areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. There are no Natural Heritage Area(s), Special Area(s) of Conservation, Candidate Special Areas of Conservation(s) or Special Protection Area(s) in the study lands.

The River Blackwater, a candidate SAC is located approximately 2km south of the village.

There are several attractive and mature trees and hedgerows located within the village of Gibbstown. The proposed LAP will contain objectives for the protection of same.

##### Conservation and Heritage

##### Protected Structures & National Monuments

There are no archaeological monuments located within the proposed LAP boundary or within the immediate vicinity of the village recorded on the record of sites and monuments.

The village of Gibbstown has developed on the grounds of Gibbstown Demesne. The main house, built in the mid 19th century was burnt out in 1912 and rebuilt by J.F. Fuller in the same year. The building fabric was subsequently dismantled in 1965 and purchased by the monks at New Mellifont, who intend to reconstruct the entire building. An impressive farmyard complex and entrance gates associated with the demesne remain today. There is also a cottage in the village.

Reg No	Structure	Street/Townland	Building Type	Description
MH017-138	Gibbstown Estate-Circular Entrance Feature	Gibbstown Estate	Demesne feature	The gates of the now demolished Gibbstown House
MH018-100	Gibbstown farmyard and buildings	Gibbstown Demesne	Farmyard	Gibbstown House was demolished in 1965 leaving an extensive farmyard complex of stone and brick buildings which are now protected
MH017-143	Gibbstown Demesne Cottages	Gibbstown Demesne	House (detached)	Detached three-bay two-storey red brick house, built c. 1889, with gabled central breakfront. Pitched slate roof with red brick chimneystacks, timber barge boards and cast-iron ridge cresting. Former Gatelodge to Gibbstown House.

#### *Architectural Conservation Area*

There is no Architectural Conservation Area designated in Gibbstown. The village contains a number of protected structures including structures and fixtures associated with Gibbstown Demesene. The proposed LAP will seek to protect and conserve the architectural heritage of the village and to enhance its environmental setting.

#### *Protected Views and Prospects*

According to the landscape classification included in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, Gibbstown is situated within the lowland landscape area which mainly comprises of agricultural land. This character area is considered to be of 'moderate value', 'moderate' sensitivity.

There are no protected views or prospects which affect Gibbstown.

#### 4.2.6.2 Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values

With regard to soil quality, noise, air and water quality, no environmental quality standards or limit values have been exceeded within the proposed LAP boundary. We note that no incidents of flooding have been recorded within the proposed LAP boundary. Notwithstanding this, there are areas to the east and south of the village and outside the village boundary which could be liable to flooding in extreme weather conditions. These lands would benefit from Arterial Drainage Works which will need to be reflected in the Gibbstown LAP. These lands are illustrated in Appendix F.

#### 4.2.6.3 Intensive land-use

As previously noted, the proposed Gibbstown LAP will provide for development which is appropriately scaled and reinforces the character of the settlement. The character of Gibbstown is that of a loosely organised traditional Irish village. In this regard, it is proposed that the intensity of development arising from the proposed LAP will seek to consolidate the urban form of Gibbstown at an intensity which reflects the scale of the existing settlement. Accordingly, the value of the receiving environment will be retained and enhanced by the proposed LAP.

The public water supply to Gibbstown is from the Navan & Mid Meath Water Supply Scheme, which is currently being upgraded and augmented. Post 2013 additional water supply will be available but the constraint is the link from Navan to Gibbstown. Currently there are no proposals to upsize the water mains from Navan to Gibbstown. Future development will be contingent upon the sustainable provision of water.

There is no waste water treatment plant located in Gibbstown. Existing buildings operate on individual septic tank / waste water treatment facilities. New development will be contingent upon the provision of sustainable waste water treatment facilities in Gibbstown.

4.2.6.4 The effects on areas or landscape which have a recognised national, Community or International status  
As previously noted, the proposed LAP area does not comprise any Natura 2000 Sites, i.e. a National Heritage Area (NHA), a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a Special Protection Area (SPA). The River Blackwater is a candidate SAC and is located approximately 2km south of the village

## **5.0 Conclusion**

On evaluation of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations, it is considered that the proposed Local Area Plan 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 LAP will ensure that Gibbstown will be developed in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner fully consistent with the policy and objectives prescribed in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. In view of this, it is considered that a strategic environmental assessment is not required in respect of the proposed Local Area Plan. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of issues which will be considered during the preparation of the Local Area Plan and where appropriate, included in the objectives/policies of the Local Area Plan. These are outlined in the attached Appendix (Appendix A).

## **6.0 Recommendation**

It is not considered necessary to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the proposed Local Area Plan for Gibbstown.

# Amendments to Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan

## **Screening Report to Establish Requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment**

For submission to:

Environmental Protection Agency  
Mr. Tadhg O'Mahony  
Regional Inspectorate  
Inniscarra  
Co. Cork

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government  
The Manager  
Development Applications Unit  
Dun Sceine  
Harcourt Lane  
Dublin 2

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resource  
Mr. John Wayne  
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29 – 31 Adelaide Road  
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Prepared by:

Meath County Council  
Planning Department  
Abbey Mall  
Abbey Road  
Navan  
Co. Meath

Sheridan Woods  
Architects + Urban Planners  
42 Arran Street East  
Dublin 7

## 1.0 Introduction

This SEA screening report has been prepared by Sheridan Woods Architects + Urban Planners on behalf of Meath County Council and with respect to the proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015.

Following consideration by the Elected Members of the First Manager's Report on Submissions received under Section 12(4) of the Planning and Development Act, 2002 it is proposed to amend the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015. The proposed material amendments are described below. In accordance with Section 14G of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 *'information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the proposed variation or modification will also be available for inspection'*. In this regard, the proposed amendments are screened here with respect to the criteria identified in Annex II of the SEA Directive for determining likely significant environmental impacts.

This screening report should be read in conjunction with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening of the Gibbstown Local Area Plan undertaken in February 2009 and included in Appendix I of the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan.

## 2.0 Proposed Material Amendments

The proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 comprise the zoning of 1 no. parcel of land (measuring 2.157 ha and currently located within a proposed green belt between the cemetery to the west of the village and the built up area of the village) land use zoning objective A1 *'To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities'*. These lands comprise the attendant grounds associated with 1 no. dwelling located to the west of the village centre.

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

Annex II of the SEA Directive sets out the criteria for determining the likely significant environmental effects. The proposed LAP has already been assessed against the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. The proposed material amendments are now considered within the context of this assessment. The most relevant considerations are:

- Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected

These are considered here:

### 3.1 Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected

#### 3.2.1 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects

No significant negative environmental effects are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015. The proposed material modifications seek to protect and enhance the residential amenity of the lands associated with the existing dwelling at this location.

#### 3.2.2 The cumulative nature of the effects

The cumulative nature of the effects of the proposed material amendments is an increase in lands zoned A1 *'To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities'*. Under this land use zoning objective additional residential development is permitted. This development would be contingent upon the provision of adequate services including waste water treatment facilities and water supply. The intensification of lands in areas where these essential services are provided or are proposed is considered appropriate. Given the location of the proposed A1 zoned lands it is not likely that in excess of 1 no. additional house would be developed at this location. As such, the open character of the area would be retained.

### *3.2.3 The transboundary nature of the effects*

No transboundary effects are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed material amendments.

### *3.2.4 The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)*

No risks to human health or the environment are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed material amendments. The proposed material amendments will provide for the protection and enhancement of an existing dwelling and as such will have a positive impact on the development of the village.

### *3.2.5 The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)*

The Draft LAP area encompasses approximately 39 hectares. The proposed material amendments comprise the inclusion of an additional 2.157 hectares. As such, the geographical area and population affected by the proposed material amendments is considered marginal.

### *3.2.6 The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:*

#### *3.2.6.1 Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage*

The lands associated with the proposed material amendment do not comprise a National Heritage Area (NHA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a Special Protection Area (SPA). The River Blackwater, a cSAC is located approximately 1.5km south of the village.

The lands associated with the proposed material amendment do not comprise an architectural conservation area, protected structures, monuments or any features of built or natural significance.

#### *3.2.6.2 Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values*

With regard to soil quality, noise, air and water quality, no environmental quality standards or limit values have been exceeded within the lands associated with the proposed material amendment. We also note that no incidents of flooding have been recorded on said lands.

#### *3.2.6.3 Intensive land-use*

The lands associated with the proposed material alteration currently comprise the curtilage associated with 1 no. dwelling located within proximity of the village centre. The proposed land use zoning objective for these lands seeks to ensure the intensification of same will protect and enhance the amenity of these lands. The proximity of said lands to future services within the village will provide for the sustainable use of proposed physical and social infrastructure.

#### *3.2.6.4 The effects on areas or landscape which have a recognised national, Community or International status*

As previously noted, the lands associated with the proposed material alteration do not comprise a National Heritage Area (NHA), a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a Special Protection Area (SPA).

The Blackwater Valley within which Gibbstown is located is described as having a very high value landscape character of high sensitivity within the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The proposed material alteration will provide for the protection and enhancement of these lands.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

The screening report indicates that given the location, scale and condition of the receiving environment of the lands associated with the proposed material alteration, and the nature of the proposed land use zoning objective for said lands, no likely significant environmental effects are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed material alteration. As such, a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Gibbstown Local Area Plan as amended is not considered necessary. This is subject to the agreement of the designated environmental authorities.

Sheridan Woods Architects + Urban Planners

**27 May 2009**

## Appendix II Draft Gibbstown LAP & Amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports

### Gibbstown Local Area Plan

#### Screening Report to Establish Requirement for an Appropriate Assessment

For submission to:

Environmental Protection Agency  
Mr. Tadhg O'Mahony  
Regional Inspectorate  
Inniscarra  
Co. Cork

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government  
The Manager  
Development Applications Unit  
Dun Sceine  
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The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resource  
Mr. John Wayne  
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Prepared by:

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Abbey Mall  
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Co. Meath

Sheridan Woods  
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## 1.0 Introduction

This screening report has been prepared in order to establish whether the proposed Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 requires an Appropriate Assessment. An Appropriate Assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) in order to assess plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites.

This report describes the relevant provisions of the EU Habitats Directive, the methodology used in screening the Gibbstown Local Area Plan, the characteristics of the plan and relevant Natura 2000 sites. This report also identifies assessment criteria for the purpose of completing a 'Screening Matrix' and a 'Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix' in accordance with the EU Habitats Directive.

### Terms of Reference

Appropriate assessment is provided for by Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

*'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national 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'.*

Article 6(4) of the Directive states:

*'If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest'.*

## 2.0 Methodology

The methodology used in screening the Gibbstown Local Area Plan has been derived from the Guidance Document on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites prepared by the European Commission in November 2001. This methodology comprises the following four steps:

- Describe the project or plan and the description and characterisation of other projects or plans that in combination have the potential for having significant effects on Natura 2000 sites;
- Determine whether the project or plan is directly related with or necessary to the management of Natura 2000 sites;
- Identify the potential effects on Natura 2000 sites;
- Assess the significance of any effects on Natura 2000 sites.

### 3.0 Brief Description of the Plan

Gibbstown is a small village located approximately 7km northwest of Navan, Co. Meath (Appendix A). The village largely came into being when the Land Commission allocated families from congested areas in Mayo, Kerry, Donegal and Cork houses and landholdings in Gibbstown. The population of Gibbstown is estimated at approximately 72 persons.

The Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015 will provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of Gibbstown during the lifetime of the plan. The LAP consists of a written statement comprising a vision for the village and supporting strategies, policies and objectives. The LAP will also comprise supporting mapping and drawings identifying land use zoning objectives with respect to lands within the village boundary, movement and access objectives, protected structures and trees to be preserved, an indicative masterplan and design guidelines. The LAP will review and augment the existing Development Plan for the village (Appendix B).

The policy context for the Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015 is derived from the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 and associated Variations. The CDP identifies Gibbstown as one of 19 no. villages and states that these villages 'are intended to act as nodes for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services. It is envisaged that the future growth of these villages should be curtailed and safeguarded so that they do not act as catalysts to facilitate continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City in particular, or other Large or Moderate Towns. The villages located close to the Metropolitan Area or other Large or Moderate Growth Towns and close to significant public roads are particularly under pressure in this regard. Such villages are largely a reflection of their existing status and the nature of their development to date, witnessing the emergence as dormitory villages. The future development of Villages will be predicated more closely to local rather than regional growth which has taken place over the past decade.'

The County Development Plan provides for the development of 35 no. additional households in Gibbstown during the lifetime of the plan. An order of priority for the development of residential lands has also been identified in Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 (Appendix C) and identifies 2 no. phases for the development of residential zoned land with respect to the logical growth of the village.

The Gibbstown Local Area Plan will build on the broad policy objectives contained in the CDP by providing a more detailed and comprehensive planning framework to guide the future development of the village. In accordance with the County Development Plan, the LAP will provide for development which is appropriately scaled and reinforces the character of the settlement.

The Gibbstown LAP is described in the following sections with respect to the headings identified in the Guidance Document on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites.

#### *Size, scale, area, land-take etc.*

The boundary of the Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015 will largely be consistent with the existing development boundary for the village (Appendix B). The area encompassed by this boundary comprises approximately 39 hectares.

The scale of development provided for by the LAP must reinforce the character of the settlement and as such is of a low density and intensity.

#### *Plan Sector*

The Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015 seeks to facilitate the social, economic and cultural development of the village by providing for local housing demand and employment opportunities whilst protecting and enhancing the village environment and promoting environmental sustainability. The Plan will be used with respect to the development management of the village.

#### *Physical changes that will flow from the project or plan*

Minor modifications to the existing land use zoning objectives for the village are proposed including an increase in village centre zoned lands and a reduction in residential zoned lands.

The principal physical changes which may arise from the LAP are as follows:

- An identifiable village centre comprising local services and facilities
- Low-density cluster housing surrounding the village core
- Additional educational facilities adjacent the existing primary school
- Environmental improvements within the village including new footpaths and landscaping
- A linear park connecting Gibbstown Demesne to the east of the village to the cemetery and playing fields to the west of the village

These changes are considered positive in nature providing for the logical growth and consolidation of the village's urban structure and the development of local commercial and community facilities. Whilst some of these changes will require excavation works, it is noted that given the distance (1.5km) of the relevant lands from the nearest designated site (River Blackwater candidate SAC) it is not likely that these works would give rise to any significant adverse impact on the site.

#### *Resource requirements*

The additional households and commercial uses provided for will require the provision of waste water treatment facilities and the augmentation of the existing water supply. The Plan states that all development will be contingent upon adequate infrastructure being in place in order to provide for development.

In this regard it is noted that the public water supply to Gibbstown is provided by the Navan and Meath Water Supply Scheme which is currently being upgraded and augmented. Post 2013 additional water supply will be available but there is a constraint in the water main link from Navan to Gibbstown.

There is currently no waste water treatment plant in Gibbstown. New development will be contingent upon the provision of a public waste water treatment at a suitable location adjoining the village. This plant should provide for the connection of existing dwellings operating on individual septic tanks to the new sewage scheme which would have a positive impact on the environment.

#### *Emissions and waste (disposal to land, water or air)*

No significant emissions are anticipated as an outcome of the LAP. As previously noted, the connection of existing dwellings to a new Sewerage Scheme will provide for the connection of existing and new dwellings to the scheme and as such will provide for a reduction in waste discharges to land.

At present, the nearest recycling centre in County Meath is located in Navan. The Draft LAP will seek to identify suitable locations for recycling facilities within the village of Gibbstown. Domestic and commercial refuse collection services are provided by private operators. There are a number of waste collection services in the county.

#### *Transportation requirements*

There are no significant transportation requirements associated with the LAP. The LAP promotes sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling and provides for the enhancement of existing and development of new walking and cycling routes. New streets and design guidance for same are provided where new residential areas are proposed. The consolidation of residential, employment, service and recreation / amenity uses within the village will provide a sustainable alternative to dispersed settlement patterns which are highly car dependent.

*Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc.*

It is not possible to determine the duration of construction or operation of uses provided for by the LAP. Notwithstanding this, the scale of proposed development is such that it is not anticipated that development would occur for a period any greater than one year. It is intended that all new development would have a long life cycle and will be designed in accordance with the loose fit, long life principle. The plan does not propose the decommissioning of uses.

*Plan implementation period*

The lifetime of the Gibbstown LAP will span a six year period from 2009-2015.

*Distance from Natura 2000 sites or key features of the site*

The nearest Natura 2000 site is the River Blackwater, a candidate Special Area of Conservation, and is situated approximately 1.5km south of the village.

*Cumulative impacts with other projects or plans*

The Gibbstown LAP is one on 19 local area plans being prepared for villages in County Meath. It is not anticipated that the Gibbstown LAP in conjunction with any other project will have any significant adverse impacts on Natura 200 sites.

#### 4.0 Relationship between the Plan and Natura 2000 sites

The River Blackwater, which is located approximately 1.5 kilometers to the south of the village, is the nearest Natura 2000 site to Gibbstown. The Gibbstown LAP will contain policies and objectives to protect the natural environment of the village.

Site Code	Site Name
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC

##### *River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC*

This site comprises the freshwater element of the River Boyne as far as the Boyne Aqueduct, the Blackwater as far as Lough Ramor and the Boyne tributaries including the Deel, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers. These riverine stretches drain a considerable area of Meath and Westmeath and smaller areas of Cavan and Louth. The underlying geology is Carboniferous Limestone for the most part with areas of Upper, Lower and Middle well represented. In the vicinity of Kells Silurian Quartzite is present while close to Trim are Carboniferous Shales and Sandstones. There are many large towns adjacent to but not within the site. Towns both small and large, include Slane, Navan, Kells, Trim, Athboy and Ballivor.

The site is a candidate SAC selected for alkaline fen and alluvial woodlands, both habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive – Atlantic Salmon, Otter and River Lamprey.

The main areas of alkaline fen are concentrated in the vicinity of Lough Shesk, Freehan Lough and Newtown Lough. The hummocky nature of the local terrain produces frequent springs and seepages which are rich in lime. A series of base-rich marshes have developed in the poorly-drained hollows, generally linked with these three lakes. Open water is usually fringed by Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Common Club-rush (*Scirpus lacustris*) or Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and this last species also extends shorewards where a dense stand of Great Fen Sedge or Saw Sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) frequently occurs. This in turn grades into a sedge and grass community (*Carex* spp., *Molinia caerulea*) or one dominated by the Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*). An alternative direction for the aquatic/terrestrial transition to take is through a floating layer of vegetation. This is normally based on Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and Marsh cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*). Other species gradually become established on this cover, especially plants tolerant of low nutrient status e.g. bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.). Diversity of plant and animal life is high in the fen and the flora, includes many rarities. The plants of interest include Narrow-leaved Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza traunsteineri*), Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), Cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*), Frogbit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*) and Least Bur-reed (*Sparganium minimum*). These species tend to be restricted in their distribution in Ireland. Also notable is the abundance of aquatic Stoneworts (*Chara* spp.) which are characteristic of calcareous wetlands.

The rare plant, Round-leaved Wintergreen (*Pyrola rotundifolia*) occurs around Newtown Lough. This species is listed in the Red Data Book and is protected under the Flora Protection Order, 1999, and this site is its only occurrence in Co. Meath.

Wet woodland fringes many stretches of the Boyne. The Boyne River Islands are a small chain of three islands situated 2.5 km west of Drogheda. The islands were formed by the build up of alluvial sediment in this part of the river where water movement is sluggish. All of the islands are covered by dense thickets of wet, Willow (*Salix* spp.) woodland, with the following species occurring: Osier (*S. viminalis*), Crack Willow (*S. fragilis*), White Willow (*S. alba*), Purple Willow (*Salix purpurea*) and Grey Willow (*S. cinerea*). A small area of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) woodland is found on soft ground at the edge of the canal in the north-western section of the islands. Along other stretches of the rivers of the site Grey Willow scrub and pockets of wet woodland dominated by Alder have become established, particularly at the river edge of mature deciduous woodland. Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Birch (*Betula pubescens*) are common in the latter and the ground flora is typical of wet woodland with Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Yellow Iris, Horsetail (*Equisetum* spp.) and occasional tussocks of Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*).

The dominant habitat along the edges of the river is freshwater marsh - the following plant species occur commonly here: Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Canary Reed-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Marsh Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*) and Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*). In the wetter areas of the marsh Common Meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) is found. In the vicinity of Dowth, Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), a scarce species mainly confined to marshy areas in the midlands, is common in this vegetation. Swamp Meadow-grass (*Poa palustris*) is an introduced plant which has spread into the wild (naturalised) along the Boyne approximately 5 km south-west of Slane. It is a rare species which is listed in the Red Data Book and has been recorded among freshwater marsh vegetation on the banks of the Boyne in this site. The only other record for this species in the Republic is from a site in Co. Monaghan.

The secondary habitat associated with the marsh is wet grassland and species such as Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*), Silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) are well represented. Strawberry Clover (*Trifolium fragiferum*), a plant generally restricted to coastal locations in Ireland, has been recorded from wet grassland vegetation at Trim. At Rossnaree river bank on the River Boyne, is Round-Fruited Rush (*Juncus compressus*) found in alluvial pasture, which is generally periodically flooded during the winter months. This rare plant is only found in three counties in Ireland.

Along much of the Boyne and along tributary stretches are areas of mature deciduous woodland on the steeper slopes above the floodplain marsh or wet woodland vegetation. Many of these are planted in origin. However the steeper areas of King Williams Glen and Townley Hall wood have been left unmanaged and now have a more natural character. East of Curley Hole the woodland has a natural appearance with few conifers. Broad-leaved species include Oak (*Quercus* spp.), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Willows, Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Horse chestnut (*Aesculus* sp.) and the shrubs Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). South-west of Slane and in Dowth, the addition of some more exotic tree species such as Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), and occasionally Lime (*Tilia cordata*), are seen. Coniferous trees, Larch (*Larix* sp.) and Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) also occur. The woodland ground flora includes Barren Strawberry (*Potentilla sterilis*), Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) and Ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), along with a range of ferns. Variation occurs in the composition of the canopy, for example, in wet patches alongside the river, White Willow and Alder form the canopy.

Other habitats present along the Boyne and Blackwater include lowland dry grassland, improved grassland, reedswamp, weedy wasteground areas, scrub, hedge, drainage ditches and canal. In the vicinity of Lough Shesk, the dry slopes of the morainic hummocks support grassland vegetation which, in some places, is partially colonised by Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) scrub. Those grasslands which remain unimproved for pasture are species-rich with Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) commonly present. Fringing the canal alongside the Boyne south-west of Slane, are Reed Sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*), Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) and Meadowsweet.

The Boyne and its tributaries is one of Ireland's premier game fisheries and it offers a wide range of angling from fishing for spring salmon and grilse to seatrout fishing and extensive brown trout fishing. Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) use the tributaries and headwaters as spawning grounds. Although this species is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive. Atlantic Salmon run the Boyne almost every month of the year. The Boyne is most important as it represents an eastern river which holds large three-sea-winter fish from 20 –30 lb. These fish generally arrive in February with smaller spring fish (10 lb) arriving in April/May. The grilse come in July, water permitting. The river gets a further run of fish in late August and this run would appear to last well after the fishing season. The salmon fishing season lasts from 1st March to 30th September.

The Blackwater is a medium sized limestone river which is still recovering from the effects of the arterial drainage scheme of the 70's. Salmon stocks have not recovered to the numbers pre drainage. The Deel, Riverstown, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers are all spring fed with a continuous high volume of water. They are difficult to fish in that some are overgrown while others have been affected by drainage with the resulting high banks.

The site is also important for the populations of two other species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, namely River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) which is present in the lower reaches of the Boyne River while the Otter (*Lutra lutra*) can be found throughout the site. In addition, the site also supports many more of the mammal species occurring in Ireland. Those which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book include Pine Marten, Badger and Irish Hare. Common Frog, another Red Data Book species, also occurs within the site. All of these animals with the addition of the Stoat and Red Squirrel, which also occur within the site, are protected under the Wildlife Act.

Whooper Swans winter regularly at several locations along the Boyne and Blackwater Rivers. Parts of these areas are within the cSAC site. Known sites are at Newgrange (c. 20 in recent winters), near Slane (20+ in recent winters), Wilkinstown (several records of 100+) and River Blackwater from Kells to Navan (104 at Kells in winter 1996/97, 182 at Headfort in winter 1997/98, 200-300 in winter 1999/00). The available information indicates that there is a regular wintering population of Whooper Swans based along the Boyne and Blackwater River valleys. The birds use a range of feeding sites but roosting sites are not well known. The population is substantial, certainly of national, and at times international, importance. Numbers are probably in the low hundreds.

Intensive agriculture is the main landuse along the site. Much of the grassland is in very large fields and is improved. Silage harvesting is carried out. The spreading of slurry and fertiliser poses a threat to the water quality of this salmonid river and to the lakes. In the more extensive agricultural areas sheep grazing is carried out.

Fishing is a main tourist attraction on the Boyne and Blackwater and there are a number of Angler Associations, some with a number of beats. Fishing stands and styles have been erected in places. The Eastern Regional Fishery Board have erected fencing along selected stretches of the river as part of their salmonid enhancement programme. Parts of the river system have been arterially dredged. In 1969 an arterial dredging scheme commenced and disrupted angling for 18 years. The dredging altered the character of the river completely and resulted in many cases in leaving very high banks. The main channel from Drogheda upstream to Navan was left untouched, as were a few stretches on the Blackwater. Ongoing maintenance dredging is carried out along stretches of the river system where the gradient is low. This is extremely destructive to salmonid habitat in the area. Drainage of the adjacent river systems also impacts on the many small wetland areas throughout the site. The River Boyne is a designated Salmonid Water under the EU Freshwater Fish Directive.

The site supports populations of several species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive, and habitats listed on Annex I of this directive, as well as examples of other important habitats. Although the wet woodland areas appear small there are few similar examples of this type of alluvial wet woodland remaining in the country, particularly in the north-east. The semi-natural habitats, particularly the strips of woodland which extend along the river banks and the marsh and wet grasslands, increase the overall habitat diversity and add to the ecological value of the site as does the presence of a range of Red Data Book plant and animal species and the presence of nationally rare plant species.

## 5.0 Screening Matrix

This section describes the individual elements arising from the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on Natura 2000 sites. These impacts are assessed with respect to the assessment criteria identified in the Guidance Document on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites.

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.

No individual elements likely to give rise to impact on Natura 2000 sites have been identified.

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

### *Size and Scale*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

### *Land-Take*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their land take shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

### *Distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their proximity shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

### *Emissions (disposal to land, water or air)*

As previously noted, the connection of existing dwellings to a new Sewerage Scheme will have a positive impact on the environment.

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from disposal to land, water or air shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

### *Excavation Requirements*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

### *Transportation Requirements*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

### *Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc.*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their duration of construction, operation or decommissioning etc. shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

#### *Other*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:

#### *Reduction of habitat area*

No projects giving rise to reduction of habitat areas for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

#### *Disturbance to key species*

No projects giving rise to disturbance to key species for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

#### *Habitat or species fragmentation*

No projects giving rise to habitat or species fragmentation of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

#### *Reduction in species density*

No projects giving rise to a reduction in species density of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

#### *Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)*

No projects giving rise to a reduction in water quality of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

#### *Climate change*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse climatic changes in Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

#### *Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site*

No projects giving rise to interferences with key relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

#### *Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site*

No projects giving rise to interferences with key relationships that define the function of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

#### *Loss*

Not applicable

#### *Fragmentation*

Not applicable

*Disruption*

Not applicable

*Disturbance*

Not applicable

*Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.)*

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

## 6.0 Finding of no significant effects matrix

This section comprises the completion of a finding of no significant effects matrix as described in the Guidance Document on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites.

Name of Plan or Project

Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015

Name and Location of Natura 2000 sites

Site Code	Site Name
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC

*Is this project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites (provide details)?*

The proposed LAP includes objectives which seek to ensure that development in Gibbstown does not have a significant adverse impact on the sites outlined above.

*Are there any other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the sites (provide details)?*

A draft Development Plan has been prepared for Navan (2009-2015) and a draft local area plan has been prepared for Kells. It is not anticipated that plans for these settlements will have a cumulative impact on Natura 2000 sites.

The assessment of significance of effects

*Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination with other projects or plans) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site*

It is not anticipated that the Gibbstown LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) is likely to affect Natura 2000 sites.

*Explain why these effects are not considered significant*

Not applicable

*List of agencies consulted*

SEA screening letters were sent to the following:

- The Manger, Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG), Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2.
- Co-Ordination Unit, Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (DCMNR), Leeson Lane, Dublin 2.
- Tadhg O' Mahony, Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork

*Response to consultation*

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

The submissions made by the Department with respect to the Gibbstown SEA Screening report and include the following comments with respect to nature conservation and built heritage:

- Depending on the policies of the LAP there is potential for significant impact on the environment through impact on the river Boyne and its tributaries as a result of waste water discharges and / or water abstractions
- It is noted that development will be contingent on water supply and wastewater treatment being available
- The Plan should be screened for Appropriate Assessment
- Potential impacts on archaeological heritage arising for the LAP can be dealt with in the normal planning process

- A new local area plan could have a significant effect on the architectural heritage of each locality
- Opportunities exist to consolidate the built form of the village and reinforce its individual sense of place and identity within the county at large
- Architectural Heritage does not solely comprise Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and the Departments Guidance on architectural heritage should be taken into consideration when assessing same
- New development should enhance the local environment and contribute to creating a place of distinction
- An architectural framework should be prepared for the delivery of same
- All existing features of built heritage should be engender an evolving new identity as a familiar and recognisable place
- Opportunities exist to identify additional structures of architectural merit other than those identified on the Record of Protected Structures

#### *Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources*

The submissions made by the Department with respect to the Gibbstown SEA Screening report are as follows:

- With respect to the protection of water quality and fishery status of the receiving waters, the status objectives set out in the Water Framework Directive should not be compromised as a result of the LAP
- Any development proposed on foot of this LAP shall be considered premature until suitable sanitary services infrastructure (incl. treatment plant capacity) is in place to take and treat satisfactorily the anticipated increased loading (both organic and hydraulic) that are expected as a result of the population increases projected in the LAP

#### *Environmental Protection Agency*

The submissions made by the EPA with respect to the Gibbstown SEA Screening report are as follows:

- Provisions should be made in the Plans for the incorporation of the specific objectives and measures set out in Draft Eastern River Basin District (RBD) River Basin Management Plan
- The Plan should implement and include, as appropriate, the relevant recommendations set out in The Provision and Quality of Drinking Water in Ireland – A report for the Years 2006-2007
- It is noted that the Navan and Mid Meath Public Water Supply is currently on the EPA's Remedial Action List
- This Plan should ensure the supply of safe drinking water in the Plan area
- Specific policies and objectives regarding the provision of adequate and appropriate wastewater treatment to service lands should be included within the Plan
- Water conservation measures should be included within the Plan
- The Plan should include a clear policy and objective for the protection of groundwater resources and associated habitats and species
- Consideration should be given to policies and objectives regarding the enforcement of Planning Conditions related to installation, operation and maintenance of septic tank systems and the connection of all dwellings within the Plan area to a wastewater treatment plant when available
- Appropriate zoning of lands and restriction of use should apply in areas liable to flooding
- Provisions should be made to Climate Change and the likely increased risk of flooding arising from predicted changes in weather
- The Plan should provide for protection, management and as appropriate enhancement of existing wetland habitats where flood protection/management measures such as arterial drainage works are necessary
- Measures to promote the use of adequate and appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should be included within the Plan
- Where zoning/rezoning lands the adequacy of existing water supply/wastewater treatment facilities should be assessed
- The Plan should contain a clear policy to protect non-designated habitats, species and local biodiversity features including rivers, hedgerows, individual trees, streams and grassland etc.

- The Plan should provide for the enhancement of local features of biodiversity value where opportunities arise
- Infill development should be encouraged over the development of greenfield sites
- The Plan should provide for promotion, where appropriate, of the use of renewable energy systems (e.g. solar, wind, geothermal etc.) within the Plan area and energy conservation within buildings
- The Plan should provide for sustainable modes of transport
- All water services authorities wastewater discharges, including surface (or storm) water discharges will be subject to new regulations
- Zoning for development should be linked to availability of waste water infrastructure and capacity
- Opportunities for waste prevention should be maximised
- Where development is proposed within the Plan area, considerations should be given to the implementation of an integrated approach to waste management
- Appropriate density and height restrictions should apply to ensure that the landscape characteristics of the Plan area and the adjoining lands are not adversely impacted.
- Consideration should be given to the requirement for an appropriate visual impact assessment for any proposed development with potential to impact adversely on the landscape character of the Plan area and adjoining lands
- The Plan should ensure provision of adequate and appropriate amenity to serve both the existing community and likely future increases in population
- The plan should provide for adequate and appropriate cycleway and footpath networks along with adequate relevant signage
- The Plan should promote the protection of existing natural and cultural heritage resources in the area as a local amenity and educational resource

*Data Collected to carry out the assessment*

*Who carried out this assessment?*

Sheridan Woods Architects & Urban Planners

*Sources of Data*

Existing Records

*Level of Assessment Completed*

Desktop Study

*Where the full results of the assessment can be accessed and viewed?*

This document contains the full results of the Appropriate Assessment Screening exercise.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Following a review of the draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 in accordance with the 'Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43', a Screening Matrix and Findings of Significant Effects have been completed.

This screening report was carried out to ascertain if the Plan is likely to have significant adverse effect on Natura 2000 sites and as such the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment. The Plan has been formulated to ensure that developments and effects arising from permissions based upon the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) do not give rise to significant adverse effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

This screening report finds that the Gibbstown Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) does not require further appropriate assessment.

**Sheridan Woods Architects + Urban Planners**

02 April 2009

## Amendments to Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan

### Screening Report to Establish Requirement for an Appropriate Assessment

For submission to:

Environmental Protection Agency  
Mr. Tadhg O'Mahony  
Regional Inspectorate  
Inniscarra  
Co. Cork

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government  
The Manager  
Development Applications Unit  
Dun Sceine  
Harcourt Lane  
Dublin 2

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resource  
Mr. John Wayne  
Assistant Principal  
Co-ordination Unit  
Elm House  
Earlsvale Road  
Cavan

Minister for Communications Energy and Natural Resources  
Head Office  
29 – 31 Adelaide Road  
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Prepared by:

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## 1.0 Introduction

This screening report has been prepared in order to establish whether the proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 require that an Appropriate Assessment of the plan should be carried out. An Appropriate Assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) in order to assess plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites.

This report describes the relevant provisions of the EU Habitats Directive, the methodology used in screening the proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan, the proposed material amendments to the plan and relevant Natura 2000 sites. This report also identifies assessment criteria for the purpose of completing a 'Screening Matrix' and a 'Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix' in accordance with the EU Habitats Directive.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Gibbstown Local Area Plan Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared in May 2009 and included in Appendix III.

### 1.1 Terms of Reference

Appropriate assessment is provided for by Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

*'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national 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'.*

Article 6(4) of the Directive states:

*'If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest'.*

## 2.0 Methodology

The methodology used in screening the proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 has been derived from the Guidance Document on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites prepared by the European Commission in November 2001. This methodology comprises the following four steps:

- Describe the project or plan and the description and characterisation of other projects or plans that in combination have the potential for having significant effects on Natura 2000 sites;
- Determine whether the project or plan is directly related with or necessary to the management of Natura 2000 sites;
- Identify the potential effects on Natura 2000 sites;
- Assess the significance of any effects on Natura 2000 sites.

### 3.0 Description of the Proposed Material Amendments

The proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 comprise the zoning of 1 no. parcel of land (measuring 2.157 ha and currently located within a proposed green belt between the cemetery to the west of the village and the built up area of the village) land use zoning objective A1 '*To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities*'. These lands comprise the attendant grounds associated with 1 no. dwelling located to the west of the village centre (Appendix I).

#### *Size, scale, area, land-take etc.*

The boundary of the Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015 encompasses an area of approximately 39 hectares. The proposed material amendment comprises the zoning of an additional 2.16ha of land '*To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities*' and is considered marginal in the context of the overall plan.

#### *Plan Sector*

The Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015 seeks to facilitate the social and economic development of the village by providing for local housing demand and employment opportunities whilst protecting and enhancing the village environment and promoting environmental sustainability. The Plan will be used with respect to the development management of the village. The proposed material amendments include land use zoning objectives for lands currently located outside and proximate to the village centre and will provide for the proper and sustainable development of said lands within the context of the village.

#### *Physical changes that will flow from the project or plan*

Minor physical changes are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed land use zoning objective for the lands associated with the material amendment. These changes will be positive in nature.

The principal physical changes which may arise are as follows:

- Environmental improvements to the setting of the existing 1 no. dwelling.
- Potential intensification of the site to comprise an additional dwelling house within close proximity of the village.

#### *Resource requirements*

All development within Gibbstown will be contingent upon the provision of adequate resources including water and waste water infrastructure. The intensification of land within proximity of future infrastructure where capacity is available is considered positive. It is noted that the intensification potential of lands associated with the proposed material amendments is considered marginal given the size and location of the relevant lands.

#### *Emissions and waste (disposal to land, water or air)*

No significant emissions are anticipated as an outcome of the proposed material amendments. The connection of the existing and potential proposed dwellings to a future village waste water treatment plant is considered an improvement on the current use of individual septic tanks.

#### *Transportation requirements*

There are no significant transportation requirements associated with the proposed material amendment. The relevant lands are located within walking distance of the services and amenities of the village and as such provide for sustainable trip patterns.

#### *Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc.*

It is not possible to determine the duration of construction or operation of uses provided for by the proposed material amendment. Notwithstanding this, the scale and nature of the relevant lands is such that it is not anticipated that development would occur for a period any greater than one year. It is intended that all new development would have a long life cycle and will be designed in accordance with the loose fit, long life principle.

*Plan implementation period*

The lifetime of the Gibbstown LAP will span a six year period from 2009-2015.

*Distance from Natura 2000 sites or key features of the site*

The nearest candidate Special Area of Conservation is the River Blackwater, situated approximately 1.5km south of the village. There are no Natura 2000 sites located within the village boundary.

*Cumulative impacts with other projects or plans*

The village of Gibbstown is one of 19 villages for which local area plans are currently being prepared. These local area plans seek to establish *'Nodes for distinctive quality driven residential development and essential local commercial and community services. It is envisaged that the future growth of these villages should be curtailed and safeguarded so that they do not act as catalysts to facilitate continuing expansion of the outer suburbs of Dublin City in particular, or other Large or Moderate Towns. The villages located close to the Metropolitan Area or other Large or Moderate Growth Towns and close to significant public roads are particularly under pressure in this regard. Such villages are largely a reflection of their existing status and the nature of their development to date, witnessing the emergence as dormitory villages. The future development of Villages will be predicated more closely to local rather than regional growth which has taken place over the past decade.'*

It is not anticipated that the Gibbstown LAP including the proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP will contribute to the cumulative impacts of these plans on Natura 2000 sites.

#### 4.0 Relationship between the Plan and Natura 2000 sites

The River Blackwater, a candidate SAC, is located approximately 1.5km south of the village. A map showing the location of Natura 2000 sites with respect to Gibbstown is appended (Appendix II).

Site Code	Site Name
2299	River Boyne and River Blackwater

##### River Boyne and River Blackwater

This site comprises the freshwater element of the River Boyne as far as the Boyne Aqueduct, the Blackwater as far as Lough Ramor and the Boyne tributaries including the Deel, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers. These riverine stretches drain a considerable area of Meath and Westmeath and smaller areas of Cavan and Louth. The underlying geology is Carboniferous Limestone for the most part with areas of Upper, Lower and Middle well represented. In the vicinity of Kells Silurian Quartzite is present while close to Trim are Carboniferous Shales and Sandstones. There are many large towns adjacent to but not within the site. Towns both small and large, include Slane, Navan, Kells, Trim, Athboy and Ballivor.

The site is a candidate SAC selected for alkaline fen and alluvial woodlands, both habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive – Atlantic Salmon, Otter and River Lamprey.

The main areas of alkaline fen are concentrated in the vicinity of Lough Shesk, Freehan Lough and Newtown Lough. The hummocky nature of the local terrain produces frequent springs and seepages which are rich in lime. A series of base-rich marshes have developed in the poorly-drained hollows, generally linked with these three lakes. Open water is usually fringed by Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Common Club-rush (*Scirpus lacustris*) or Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and this last species also extends shorewards where a dense stand of Great Fen Sedge or Saw Sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) frequently occurs. This in turn grades into a sedge and grass community (*Carex* spp., *Molinia caerulea*) or one dominated by the Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*). An alternative direction for the aquatic/terrestrial transition to take is through a floating layer of vegetation. This is normally based on Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and Marsh cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*). Other species gradually become established on this cover, especially plants tolerant of low nutrient status e.g. bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.). Diversity of plant and animal life is high in the fen and the flora, includes many rarities. The plants of interest include Narrow-leaved Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza traunsteineri*), Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), Cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*), Frogbit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*) and Least Bur-reed (*Sparganium minimum*). These species tend to be restricted in their distribution in Ireland. Also notable is the abundance of aquatic Stoneworts (*Chara* spp.) which are characteristic of calcareous wetlands.

The rare plant, Round-leaved Wintergreen (*Pyrola rotundifolia*) occurs around Newtown Lough. This species is listed in the Red Data Book and is protected under the Flora Protection Order, 1999, and this site is its only occurrence in Co. Meath.

Wet woodland fringes many stretches of the Boyne. The Boyne River Islands are a small chain of three islands situated 2.5 km west of Drogheda. The islands were formed by the build up of alluvial sediment in this part of the river where water movement is sluggish. All of the islands are covered by dense thickets of wet, Willow (*Salix* spp.) woodland, with the following species occurring: Osier (*S. viminalis*), Crack Willow (*S. fragilis*), White Willow (*S. alba*), Purple Willow (*Salix purpurea*) and Grey Willow (*S. cinerea*). A small area of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) woodland is found on soft ground at the edge of the canal in the north-western section of the islands. Along other stretches of the rivers of the site Grey Willow scrub and pockets of wet woodland dominated by Alder have become established, particularly at the river edge of mature deciduous woodland. Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Birch (*Betula pubescens*) are common in the latter and the ground flora is typical of wet woodland

with Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Yellow Iris, Horsetail (*Equisetum* spp.) and occasional tussocks of Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*).

The dominant habitat along the edges of the river is freshwater marsh - the following plant species occur commonly here: Yellow Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Canary Reed-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Marsh Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*) and Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*). In the wetter areas of the marsh Common Meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) is found. In the vicinity of Dowth, Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), a scarce species mainly confined to marshy areas in the midlands, is common in this vegetation. Swamp Meadow-grass (*Poa palustris*) is an introduced plant which has spread into the wild (naturalised) along the Boyne approximately 5 km south-west of Slane. It is a rare species which is listed in the Red Data Book and has been recorded among freshwater marsh vegetation on the banks of the Boyne in this site. The only other record for this species in the Republic is from a site in Co. Monaghan.

The secondary habitat associated with the marsh is wet grassland and species such as Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*), Silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) are well represented. Strawberry Clover (*Trifolium fragiferum*), a plant generally restricted to coastal locations in Ireland, has been recorded from wet grassland vegetation at Trim. At Rossnaree river bank on the River Boyne, is Round-Fruited Rush (*Juncus compressus*) found in alluvial pasture, which is generally periodically flooded during the winter months. This rare plant is only found in three counties in Ireland.

Along much of the Boyne and along tributary stretches are areas of mature deciduous woodland on the steeper slopes above the floodplain marsh or wet woodland vegetation. Many of these are planted in origin. However the steeper areas of King Williams Glen and Townley Hall wood have been left unmanaged and now have a more natural character. East of Curley Hole the woodland has a natural appearance with few conifers. Broad-leaved species include Oak (*Quercus* spp.), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Willows, Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Horse chestnut (*Aesculus* sp.) and the shrubs Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). South-west of Slane and in Dowth, the addition of some more exotic tree species such as Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), and occasionally Lime (*Tilia cordata*), are seen. Coniferous trees, Larch (*Larix* sp.) and Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) also occur. The woodland ground flora includes Barren Strawberry (*Potentilla sterilis*), Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) and Ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), along with a range of ferns. Variation occurs in the composition of the canopy, for example, in wet patches alongside the river, White Willow and Alder form the canopy.

Other habitats present along the Boyne and Blackwater include lowland dry grassland, improved grassland, reedswamp, weedy wasteground areas, scrub, hedge, drainage ditches and canal. In the vicinity of Lough Shesk, the dry slopes of the morainic hummocks support grassland vegetation which, in some places, is partially colonised by Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) scrub. Those grasslands which remain unimproved for pasture are species-rich with Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) commonly present. Fringing the canal alongside the Boyne south-west of Slane, are Reed Sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*), Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) and Meadowsweet.

The Boyne and its tributaries is one of Ireland's premier game fisheries and it offers a wide range of angling from fishing for spring salmon and grilse to seatrout fishing and extensive brown trout fishing. Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) use the tributaries and headwaters as spawning grounds. Although this species is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive. Atlantic Salmon run the Boyne almost every month of the year. The Boyne is most important as it represents an eastern river which holds large three-sea-winter fish from 20 –30 lb. These fish generally arrive in February with smaller spring fish (10 lb) arriving in April/May. The grilse come in

July, water permitting. The river gets a further run of fish in late August and this run would appear to last well after the fishing season. The salmon fishing season lasts from 1<sup>st</sup> March to 30<sup>th</sup> September.

The Blackwater is a medium sized limestone river which is still recovering from the effects of the arterial drainage scheme of the 70's. Salmon stocks have not recovered to the numbers pre drainage. The Deel, Riverstown, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers are all spring fed with a continuous high volume of water. They are difficult to fish in that some are overgrown while others have been affected by drainage with the resulting high banks.

The site is also important for the populations of two other species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, namely River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) which is present in the lower reaches of the Boyne River while the Otter (*Lutra lutra*) can be found throughout the site. In addition, the site also supports many more of the mammal species occurring in Ireland. Those which are listed in the Irish Red Data Book include Pine Marten, Badger and Irish Hare. Common Frog, another Red Data Book species, also occurs within the site. All of these animals with the addition of the Stoat and Red Squirrel, which also occur within the site, are protected under the Wildlife Act.

Whooper Swans winter regularly at several locations along the Boyne and Blackwater Rivers. Parts of these areas are within the cSAC site. Known sites are at Newgrange (c. 20 in recent winters), near Slane (20+ in recent winters), Wilkinstown (several records of 100+) and River Blackwater from Kells to Navan (104 at Kells in winter 1996/97, 182 at Headfort in winter 1997/98, 200-300 in winter 1999/00). The available information indicates that there is a regular wintering population of Whooper Swans based along the Boyne and Blackwater River valleys. The birds use a range of feeding sites but roosting sites are not well known. The population is substantial, certainly of national, and at times international, importance. Numbers are probably in the low hundreds.

Intensive agriculture is the main landuse along the site. Much of the grassland is in very large fields and is improved. Silage harvesting is carried out. The spreading of slurry and fertiliser poses a threat to the water quality of this salmonid river and to the lakes. In the more extensive agricultural areas sheep grazing is carried out.

Fishing is a main tourist attraction on the Boyne and Blackwater and there are a number of Angler Associations, some with a number of beats. Fishing stands and styles have been erected in places. The Eastern Regional Fishery Board have erected fencing along selected stretches of the river as part of their salmonid enhancement programme. Parts of the river system have been arterially dredged. In 1969 an arterial dredging scheme commenced and disrupted angling for 18 years. The dredging altered the character of the river completely and resulted in many cases in leaving very high banks. The main channel from Drogheda upstream to Navan was left untouched, as were a few stretches on the Blackwater. Ongoing maintenance dredging is carried out along stretches of the river system where the gradient is low. This is extremely destructive to salmonid habitat in the area. Drainage of the adjacent river systems also impacts on the many small wetland areas throughout the site. The River Boyne is a designated Salmonid Water under the EU Freshwater Fish Directive.

The site supports populations of several species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive, and habitats listed on Annex I of this directive, as well as examples of other important habitats. Although the wet woodland areas appear small there are few similar examples of this type of alluvial wet woodland remaining in the country, particularly in the north-east. The semi-natural habitats, particularly the strips of woodland which extend along the river banks and the marsh and wet grasslands, increase the overall habitat diversity and add to the ecological value of the site as does the presence of a range of Red Data Book plant and animal species and the presence of nationally rare plant species.

## 5.0 Screening Matrix

This section describes the individual elements arising from the proposed material amendments (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on Natura 2000 sites. These impacts are assessed with respect to the assessment criteria identified in the *Guidance Document on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites*.

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.

The potential intensification of the lands associated with the proposed material amendment will generate an increase in water supply demand.

Water supply to Gibbstown is from the Navan Water Supply Scheme which sources its water from the River Boyne.

However, it is noted that it shall be a policy of the proposed LAP *'to ensure that the provision of future public water supplies does not have a significant adverse affect on protected areas including candidate SAC's and that development on a designated SAC or those proposed to be designated is permitted only where an assessment carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and National Parks & Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG, indicates that it will have no significant adverse effect on such an area, in compliance with HER POL 10 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 and Article 6 of the Habitats Directive'*.

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

### *Size and Scale*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). In this regard it is noted that the additional 2.16 ha of A1 zoned lands 'to protect and enhance the residential amenity of existing residential communities' do not include lands associated with or proximate to Natura 2000 sites.

### *Land-Take*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their land take shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that development arising from the proposed amendment would not provide for a land-take from Natura 2000 sites.

### *Distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their proximity shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendments (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). We note that the River Blackwater, the nearest Natura site to the village, is located approximately 1.5km south of the village.

### *Resource Requirements*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their resource requirements shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendments (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). Any potential intensification of the identified lands will be subject to the availability of adequate resources

including water supply and waste water treatment facilities in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Draft Gibbstown LAP 2009-2015.

*Emissions (disposal to land, water or air)*

There is no waste water treatment plant in Gibbstown. Development within the village will be contingent upon the construction of same. The plan will have a positive impact insofar as opportunities to connect existing dwellings operating on individual septic tanks to the new system will be provided for. Discharges from any new plant to the River Blackwater will be monitored by Meath County Council in conjunction with the EPA.

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from disposal to land or air shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendments (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Excavation Requirements*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their emissions shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). Development arising from the proposed material amendment includes the intensification of the lands to provide for an additional dwelling house. Any excavations that may occur associated with the proposed material amendment are not considered significant.

*Transportation Requirements*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that the proximity of the proposed A1 zoned lands to the village centre and any intensification of said lands that may subsequently arise will provide for sustainable trip patterns given proximity to services and facilities within the village.

*Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc.*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their duration of construction, operation or decommissioning etc. shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is not anticipated that the construction of development that would arise from the proposed amendment would last longer than one year given the nature of development that would be permitted in accordance with this zoning objective.

*Other*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:

*Reduction of habitat area*

No projects giving rise to reduction of habitat areas for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that the proposed A1 zoned lands are not located within or proximate to the boundary of Natura 2000 sites.

*Disturbance to key species*

No projects giving rise to disturbance to key species for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that the proposed A1 zoned lands are not located within or proximate to Natura 2000 sites.

*Habitat or species fragmentation*

No projects giving rise to habitat or species fragmentation of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that the proposed A1 zoned lands are not located within or proximate to Natura 2000 sites.

*Reduction in species density*

No projects giving rise to a reduction in species density of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that the proposed A1 zoned lands are not located within or proximate to Natura 2000 sites.

*Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)*

No projects giving rise to a reduction in water quality of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). The Council in conjunction with the EPA shall monitor the discharge from any new waste water treatment plant and the water quality of the River Blackwater in this regard.

*Climate change*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse climatic changes in Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). Any intensification of the lands identified will be subject to the Planning Authorities policy to promote sustainable development including the use of renewable energy.

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

*Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site*

No projects giving rise to interferences with key relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that the proposed A1 zoned lands are located over 1.5 km from the nearest Natura 2000 site.

*Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site*

No projects giving rise to interferences with key relationships that define the function of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the proposed material amendment (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects). It is noted that the proposed A1 zoned lands are located over 1.5 km from the nearest Natura 2000 site.

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

*Loss*

Not applicable

*Fragmentation*

Not applicable

*Disruption*

Not applicable

*Disturbance*

Not applicable

*Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.)*

No change to water quality of the River Boyne is anticipated. Notwithstanding this, Meath County Council in conjunction with the EPA will monitor the water quality of discharges from any new Waste Water Treatment Plant in Gibbstown and the water quality of the river Blackwater.

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

Not applicable

## 6.0 Finding of no significant effects matrix

This section comprises the completion of a finding of no significant effects matrix as described in the *Guidance Document on the Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites*.

*Name of Plan or Project*

Proposed material amendment to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015

*Name and Location of Natura 2000 sites*

Site Code	Site Name
2299	River Boyne and River Blackwater

*Is this project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites (provide details)?*

The proposed LAP includes objectives which seek to ensure that development in Gibbstown does not have a significant adverse impact on the sites outlined above. In particular, development in Gibbstown will be contingent upon adequate waste water treatment and water supply infrastructure. The proposed material amendments provide for marginal intensification of lands within close proximity of the village centre subject to the provision of adequate infrastructure.

*Are there any other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the sites (provide details)?*

Local Area Plans are currently being prepared for 19 villages in County Meath. It is not considered that the proposed amendment, in isolation of or in conjunction with the Gibbstown LAP and other LAP's will impact upon Natura 2000 sites.

### The assessment of significance of effects

*Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination with other projects or plans) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site*

This proposed material amendment has been formulated to ensure that permitted uses, developments and effects arising from same do not give rise (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

*Explain why these effects are not considered significant*

Not Applicable

*List of agencies consulted*

- The Manager, Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG), Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2.
- Co-Ordination Unit, Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (DCMNR), Leeson Lane, Dublin 2.
- Tadhg O' Mahony, Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork

*Data Collected to carry out the assessment*

*Who carried out this assessment?*

Sheridan Woods Architects & Urban Planners

*Sources of Data*

Existing Records

*Level of Assessment Completed*

Desktop Study

*Where the full results of the assessment can be accessed and viewed?*

This document contains the full results of the Appropriate Assessment Screening exercise.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Following a review of the proposed material amendments of the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 in accordance with the 'Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43', a Screening Matrix and Findings of Significant Effects have been completed.

This screening report was carried out to ascertain if the proposed material amendments to the Draft Gibbstown Local Area Plan 2009-2015 are likely to have significant adverse effect on Natura 2000 sites and consequently the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment. The proposed amendment has been formulated to ensure that developments and effects arising from permissions based upon the proposed amendments (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) do not give rise to significant adverse effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

This screening report finds that the proposed amendment to the Gibbstown Local Area Plan does not require further appropriate assessment.

Sheridan Woods Architects + Urban Planners

**29 May 2009**

## Appendix III Existing List of Protected Structures in Gibbstown

Reg. No.	MH017-138
AIS	R
Structure	Gibbstown Estate – Circular entrance feature
Street/Townland	Gibbstown Demesne
Town	Gibbstown Demesne
Building Type	Demesne Feature
Description	The gates of the now demolished Gibbstown House



Reg. No.	MH018-100
NIAH No.	
Structure	Gibbstown farmyard and buildings
Street/Townland	Gibbstown Demesne
Town	Gibbstown
Building Type	Farmyard
Description	Gibbstown House was demolished in 1965 leaving an extensive farmyard complex of stone and brick buildings which are now protected



Reg. No.	MH017-143
AIS	R
Structure	Gibbstown Demesne Cottages
Street/Townland	Gibbstown Demesne
Town	Gibbstown
Building Type	House (detached)
Description	Detached three-bay two-storey red brick house, built c. 1889, with gabled central breakfront. Pitched slate roof with red brick chimneystacks, timber barge boards and cast-iron ridge cresting. Former Gatelodge to Gibbstown House.



## Appendix IV Land Use Matrix and Zoning Map

The land use zoning matrix for Gibbstown has been taken from the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The land use zoning matrix is intended to provide guidance to potential developers with respect to uses that may or may not be permitted within a zoned area. The Zoning Matrix illustrates the acceptability or unacceptability in principle of various uses for the zoning objectives below.

- 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
- A3 To conserve and protect the character and the setting of institutional complexes and heritage buildings in residential redevelopment and infill proposals in accordance with an approved framework plan
- A5 To provide for low density residential development in accordance with action area based planning and individual dwelling design
- B1 To protect and enhance the special physical and social character of existing town and village centres and to provide for new and improved town centre facilities and uses
- E1 To provide for industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure
- F1 To provide for and enhance open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities
- G1 To provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities

A = Will Normally be Accepted

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.

O = 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.

X = Will Not Normally be Permitted

Development which is classified as not normally 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 land use zoning objectives will be considered on their merits.

However, an indication that a proposal would be 'permitted in principle' from the matrix should in no way be taken to imply 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 such as density, building height, design standards, traffic generation etc., are also relevant in establishing whether or not a development proposal would be acceptable in a particular location.

## Land Use Matrix

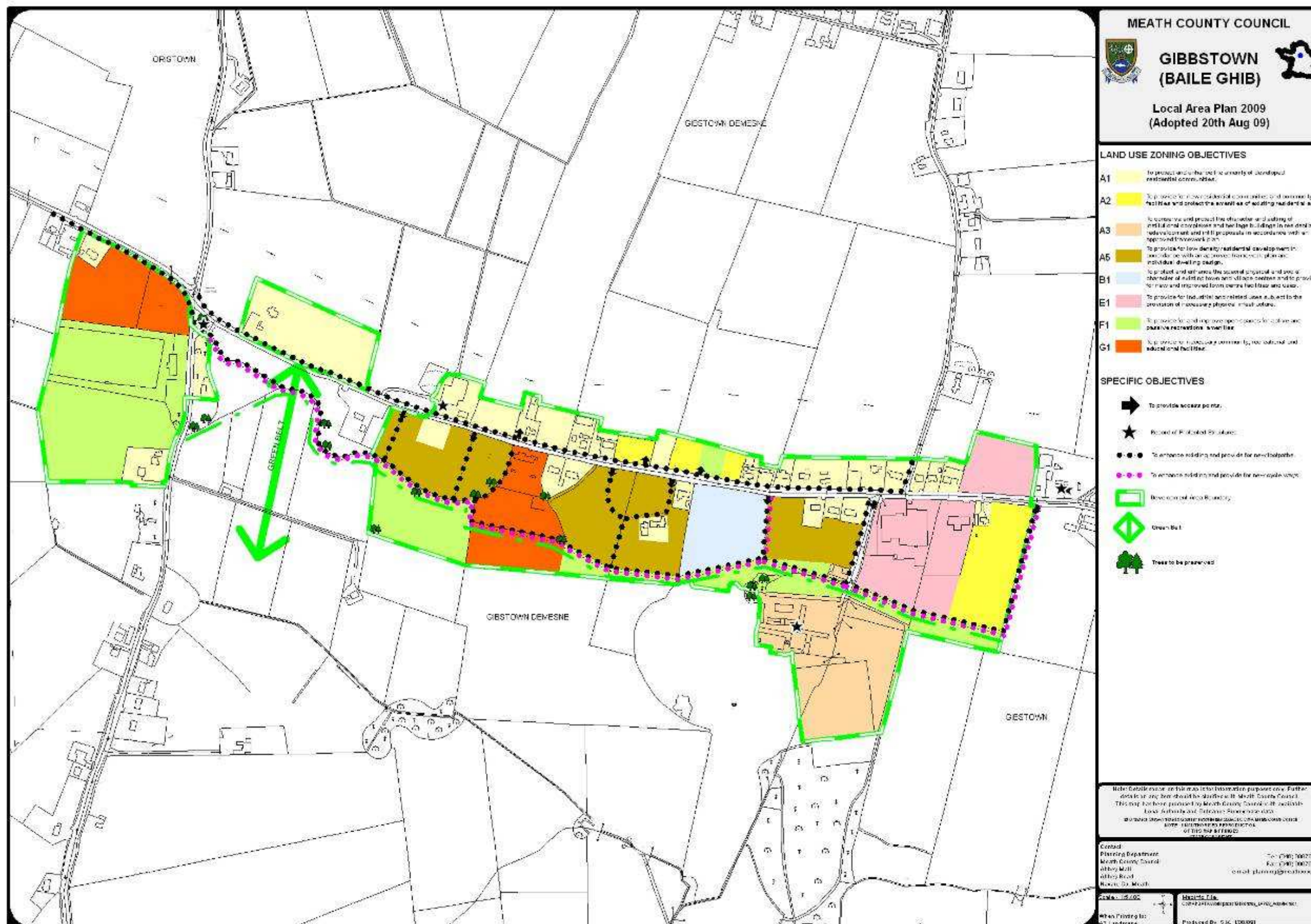
Use Classes	A1	A2	A3	A5	B1	E1	F1	G1
A.T.M. (In Commercial Premises)	A	A	X	A	A	X	X	X
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Adverts	O	O	X	O	A	A	X	X
Outdoor Advertising Structures	X	X	X	X	O	A	O	X
Agri-Business	X	X	X	X	O	A	X	X
Amusement Arcade	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
B&B	A	A	A	A	A	X	X	X
Bank / Financial Institution	X	O	X	O	A	X	X	X
Betting Office	X	O	X	O	A	X	X	X
Bring Banks	A	A	A	A	A	A	O	O
Car Park (Commercial)	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Caravan Park	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Car Dismantler / Scrap Yard	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Cash & Carry	X	X	X	X	O	A	X	X
Casual Trading	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A
Church	X	O	X	O	A	X	O	A
Cinema	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	A
Community Facility / Centre	O	A	O	A	A	X	O	A
Conference Centre	X	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
C&D Waster Recycling Centre	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Creche / Childcare Facility	O	A	O	A	A	O	X	A
Cultural Facility / Use	O	O	O	O	A	X	O	A
Dance Hall / Night Club	X	X	O	X	A	X	X	X
Doctors / Dentists*	O	O	O	O	A	X	X	O
Drive Through Restaurants	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Education	O	O	A	O	A	X	X	A
Energy Installation	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Enterprise Centre	X	O	X	O	O	A	X	X
Fuel Depot – Domestic	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Fuel Depot – Petroleum Products	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Funeral Home	X	O	X	O	A	X	X	A
Garden Centre	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Guest House	O	A	A	A	A	X	X	X
Halting Site / Group Housing	O	A	O	A	X	X	X	O
Health Centre	O	O	O	O	A	X	X	A
Heavy Goods Vehicle Car Park	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Home Based Economic Activities	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Hospital	X	O	O	O	X	X	X	A
Hostel	X	O	O	O	A	X	X	X
Hotel / Motel	X	X	A	O	A	X	X	X

Use Classes	A1	A2	A3	A5	B1	E1	F1	G1
Industry – General	X	O	X	X	X	A	X	X
Industry – Light	X	O	X	O	X	A	X	X
Leisure / Recreation	X	A	O	O	A	X	O	A
Library	X	X	O	A	A	X	X	A
Motor Sales / Repair	X	O	X	X	O	A	X	X
Offices < 100m <sup>2</sup>	X	X	O	O	A	X	X	O
Offices 100 to 1000m <sup>2</sup>	X	X	O	X	A	X	X	X
Offices > 1000m <sup>2</sup>	X	A	X	X	A	O	X	X
Open Space	A	X	A	A	A	O	A	A
Park and Ride	X	O	X	X	X	A	X	X
Petrol Station	O	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Plant & Tool Hire	X	O	X	X	X	A	X	X
Public House	X	A	X	O	A	X	X	X
Public Services	A	X	A	A	A	A	A	A
Civic & Amenity Recycling Facility	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	A
Refuse Transfer Station	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Residential	A	A	A	A	O	X	X	X
Residential Institution	O	O	A	O	O	X	X	O
Restaurant / Café	X	X	O	X	A	O	X	O
Retail Warehouse	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Retirement Home	O	A	O	A	X	X	X	A
Science & Technology Based Enterprise	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Shop – Local**	O	A	O	A	A	O	X	X
Shop – Major	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X
Shopping Centre	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X
Sports Facilities	O	O	O	O	O	X	A	A
Take-Away	X	X	X	X	A	X	X	X
Telecommunication Structures	X	X	X	X	A	A	O	O
Third level Educational Institute	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	A
Tourism Complex	X	X	O	X	A	X	A	A
Transport Depot	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Veterinary Surgery	O*	O*	X	O*	A	X	X	X
Warehouse	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Water Services***	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Wholesale Warehousing	X	X	X	X	O	A	X	X

\* 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

\*\* A local shop is defined as a convenience retail unit of not more than 200 sqm in gross floor area

\*\*\* Refers to public utility installations



## Appendix V Persons, Bodies and Agencies having made a Pre-Draft submission on the preparation of the Gibbstown LAP

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Submission Made By</b>
001	Sean Boyle & Assoc. on behalf of Prolan Ltd (Order of Priority)
002	Sean Boyle & Assoc. on behalf of Prolan Ltd (Zoning)
003	Joan Crosbie, OPW Engineering Services, 17 – 19 Lower Hatch Street, Dublin 2
004	Shirley Kearney Dept Education & Science
005	Ciaran McGloughlan
006	Michael Mac Giolla Chearr
007	Tomas O'Maonaile & Michael Munnelly
008	Maria Keegan
009	Pat Dunne on behalf of Thomas Egan
010	Alison Keane McFaddan
011	Teresa Halloran, Development Applications Unit, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government – Architectural Heritage
012	Michael Mc Cormack National Roads Authority
013	Scoil Naomh Ultan
014	Anraí Mac Garaidh
015	John & Kathleen O'Dwyer
016	Údaras Na Gaeltachta
017	Frances Heaslip Department Communication Energy and Natural Resources
018	Teresa Halloran, Development Applications Unit, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government - Natural Heritage

## Appendix VI Persons, Bodies and Agencies having made a submission on the Draft Gibbstown LAP

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Submission Made By</b>
001	Teresa Halloran, Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2
002	Seána McGrearty, Coordination Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Elm House, Earlsvale Road, Co. Cavan
003	Michael Owens, Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork
004	Shirley Kearney, Department of Education and Science
005	Tomás Ó Maonaile & Michael Munnelly
006	Frances Heaslip, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
007	John O' Dwyer, Gibbstown, Navan, Co. Meath
008	Patrick O' Sullivan, Spatial Policy, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
009	Michael McCormack, National Roads Authority, St. Martin's House, Waterloo Road, Dublin 4

## Appendix VII Persons, Bodies and Agencies having made a submission on the Amendments to the Draft Gibbstown LAP

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Submission Made By</b>
001	Ian Lumley, Heritage Officer, An Taisce
002	Erica O' Driscoll, National Roads Authority
003	Teresa Halloran, Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
004	Patrick O' Sullivan, Spatial Policy Section, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
005	Shirley Kearney, Higher Executive Officer, Forward Planning, Department of Education & Science
006	Cian O' Mahony, Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Protection Agency
007	Seana McGearty, Coordination Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources