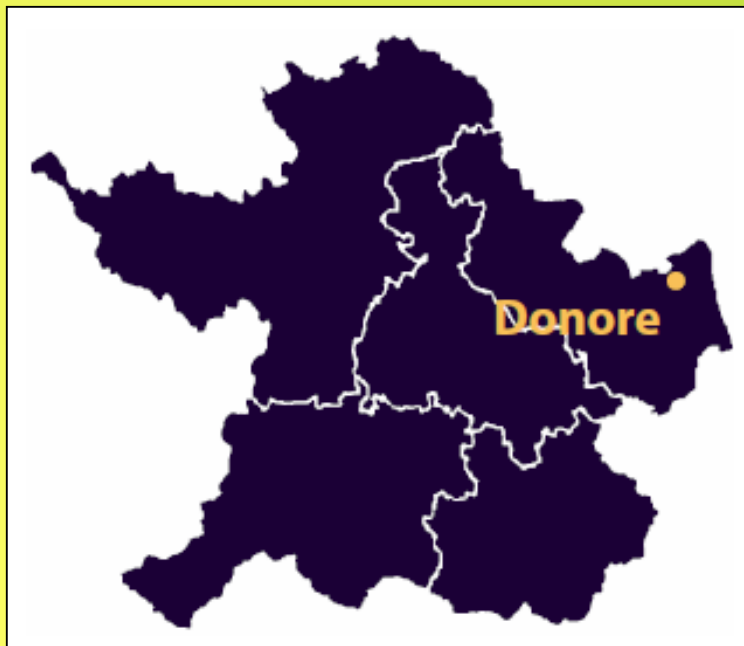


# Donore

## LOCAL AREA PLAN

2009-2015

Adopted on Monday, 06<sup>th</sup> July 2009



comhairle chontae na mí  
meath county council



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## **PREAMBLE**

The Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013 was adopted on 02<sup>nd</sup> March 2007. It identified Baile Ghib, Carnaross, Carlanstown, Clonard, Crossakiel, Donacarne, Donore, Drumconrath, Gormanston, Julianstown, Kentstown, Kilbride (Dunshaughlin Electoral Area), Kildalkey, Kilmainhamwood, Kilmessan, Mornington, Moynalty, Rathcairn & Rathmolyon as 'Villages' and specified that the future development of all nineteen villages would be subject to the adoption of Local Area Plans. These plans should be adopted within two years of the adoption of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The existing County Development Plan, in conjunction with Variation No. 2 adopted in February, 2008, set the context for this Local Area Plan for Donore Village.

This Local Area Plan builds upon the broad development objectives and planning policies outlined within the existing County Development Plan by providing a more detailed and comprehensive planning framework to guide future development proposals and the development of Donore Village.

This Plan consists of this written statement and the attached maps, and shall be known as the Donore 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. In short, the current Meath County Development Plan takes precedence over the Donore Local Area Plan in the event of any conflict arising between the contents of the two documents.

Within this document, references to 'the Plan' or 'this Plan' shall denote this Local Area Plan, save where the context requires otherwise. 'The Council' or 'the Planning Authority' shall signify Meath County Council.

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

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This Local Area Plan relates to the Village of Donore located to the north-east of County Meath. It provides a statutory land-use framework for the physical, socio-economic, cultural and recreational development of the Village. It promotes future development in a coordinated, planned and sustainable manner in order to conserve and enhance the established natural and historical amenities of the Village, as well as its intrinsic character. This Plan guides and regulates future development through land-use zoning objectives, planning policies and development objectives. Particular regard is also had to any natural landscape, archaeological and historical features of interest, open space needs and the existing topographical character of the area.

### **1.1 The Challenge**

The key challenge to producing this Local Area Plan was the need to create a consensus between the Planning Authority, the general public, landowners, private developers and all interested stakeholders, as to how the future development of Donore should be undertaken. The implementation of such a Plan would also need to be undertaken in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner. A further challenge was to provide a document that is sufficiently prescriptive to achieve the pre-determined development objectives and planning policies, while allowing for flexibility to account for economic and social changes that may occur over the Plan's timeframe. This Plan endeavours to create a built environment that is attractive and distinctive, and which creates a sense of place for those who both live and work within, as well as those who visit, the Village.

The major issues addressed in this Plan are as follows:

1. **Developing new Residential Communities:** Donore has experienced significant growth in its residential population in recent years. Further development and growth will need to take account of the Village's ability to grow in a sustainable manner without causing unacceptable impacts upon the surrounding environment or the character of the Village. This Plan endeavours to facilitate the continued growth of well designed, sustainable new residential communities, which are integrated with the existing Village's built environment.
2. **Built and Natural Heritage:** Donore has noteworthy buildings and structures. This Plan seeks to protect this important built heritage and the character it gives the Village.
3. **Built Form and Consolidation of the Village Centre:** The provision of a compact, vibrant and effective Village Centre is essential if Donore is to cater for its current and future population needs in a sustainable manner. This Plan provides a comprehensive villagescape plan addressing these issues.
4. **Community, Leisure and Recreation Facilities:** Community, leisure and recreational infrastructure play a vital role in the life of any town or village. Sufficient lands have been reserved for such infrastructure to accommodate both existing and proposed future populations.
5. **Communications and Infrastructure:** Communications and public utilities' infrastructure play an indispensable role in everyday life through the provision of a better quality of life for the residents of an area. They also act as an important incentive in attracting economic development and investment to an area. This Plan endeavours to adequately serve the Village in terms of public utilities infrastructure, such as communications, electricity, water supply and wastewater treatment.
6. **Transportation:** This Plan provides that as lands within the Village boundary are subject to development, development proposals should be closely linked to and integrated with the existing

Village, thereby encouraging more sustainable modes of transportation and greater permeability between adjoining land-uses.

7. Employment/Economic Development: Having regard to the nature, role, scale and location of the Village, the strategy for economic development in Donore must focus on the achievable delivery of local services and the promotion of tourism related businesses whilst not impacting upon the surrounding environment or landscape quality. For this reason, it was considered that enterprise and employment zoned lands would not be an appropriate land use within the Village. Planning Authorities are limited in their actions in support such economic development, which will be determined in the first instance by market forces, and secondly by agencies with a remit for specific intervention in this area. Notwithstanding this, Planning Authorities can assist the development of all economic sectors through the implementation of policies relating to:

- Facilitating the provision of an adequate and efficient transportation system,
- The zoning of sufficient and appropriately located lands for such uses,
- The provision of sanitary services and other urban infrastructure, and
- Developing the public realm and amenities of Donore so that the quality of life and amenities offered to employees, residents and visitors alike can be improved.

This Plan addresses each of these items.

## **1.2 Purpose of this Plan**

This Local Area Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Village going forward and will provide for an area specific focus, whereby a detailed assessment of local planning issues can be made and pursued with the benefit of local community involvement. This presents opportunities to set specific goals and development objectives that will seek to guide future development within the Local Area Plan's development boundary. The primary focus of this Local Area Plan is to plan for, and secure, an appropriate level of facilities and services for the Village and the surrounding community.

This Local Area Plan includes policies and objectives, as set-out in the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007, in respect of the following:

- Location, supply and zoning of lands for an initial six-year period, but with an additional longer-term focus in mind,
- The provision and location of land for residential, commercial, retail, open space, education/recreation uses or other as considered appropriate,
- Design, density and layout of future residential development,
- Protection of existing residential amenity,
- Infrastructural including environmental, sanitary, water, roads including cycling and pedestrian provision, and
- Amenity strategy including protected structures, architectural conservation areas, open space provision, and the protection of trees, stone walls, hedgerows, etc, if required.

In addition, this Local Area Plan will provide urban development design guidance. The Plan will also identify potential opportunity sites and areas for future development. The preparation of this Draft Local Area Plan has reassessed the development boundary, the land-use zoning map, and

the planning policies and development objectives for Donore contained within the Meath County Development Plan 2001-2007, which were later incorporated, unchanged, into the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. In short, all land-use zoning objectives, planning policies and development objectives were reassessed on the basis of the provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

### **1.3 Local Area Plan Content and Structure**

The Local Area Plan is prepared under a number of chapter headings, which are sequentially laid-out as follows:

- Chapter 1: Sets out the Local Area Plan Process to date, the development boundary and briefly outlines the Plan in the context of the screening process for the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan.
- Chapter 2: Sets out the planning policy context, a review of previous policies and objectives and possible future population levels.
- Chapter 3: States the vision for the Village, including the core development objectives and planning policies of this Local Area Plan.
- Chapter 4: Sets out the Village's strategic context, historical development, function and role within the County, and the Village's general built context.
- Chapter 5: Sets out the historical development and importance of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) World Heritage Site and the Village's siting with its landscape setting.
- Chapters 6-15: Sets out development objectives and planning policies in relation to numerous planning-related issues within the Village.
- Chapter 16: Provides an urban design analysis of the Village, which identifies both weaknesses in the villagescape and opportunities for environmental improvements.
- Chapter 17: Land Use and Zoning Objectives.
- Chapter 18: Phasing and Implementation.

### **1.4 The Local Area Plan Process**

A Local Area Plan follows a specific statutory process, which may take up to nine or ten months before it is finally adopted by the Council. A Draft Local Area Plan was initially prepared following a four stage process, specifically;

1. A survey and analysis of the existing baseline economic, physical and social fabric of the Village and its surrounding hinterland,
2. A pre-draft public consultation process that facilitated the identification of local community aspirations, concerns and issues, from both business and community groups, as well as from individuals through a public consultation event and written submissions to the Council during the identified pre-draft public consultation time period,
3. Consultation with local area Councillors, the internal departments of the Council, as well as local, regional and national level bodies, and

4. Consultation with various service providers such as the Gardaí, educational facilitators, public utilities providers, auctioneers and enterprise services were consulted, either through informal phone discussions or meetings during the preparation of this Plan.

#### 1.4.1 Pre-Draft Public Consultation

Consultation is a key element of any plan-making process. It was used to identify the key issues to be addressed during the preparation of this Local Area Plan, and in order to develop an overall vision for the Village. In accordance with Section 20(1) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007, pre-draft public consultation took place and involved the hosting of a public consultation event in Donore.

A notice was published in 'The Meath Chronicle'. It advertised the Council's intention to prepare a Draft Local Area Plan for Donore and that a public consultation meeting would be held in the Village on Thursday, 05<sup>th</sup> March 2009 from 7-9pm in Donore National School to garner the views of local residents on how they would like to see their Village develop in the future. The attendance at this consultation meeting was excellent with approximately 40-50 people present. The consultation was informal in nature and involved visual aids in the form of poster boards and comment form handouts. From this a number of issues warranting further attention were identified, specifically:

- Archaeological Heritage – the need to protect the existing heritage of Donore in any future developments.
- Landscape/Villagescape Improvements – the excellent work of the local community's various committees was commented upon in the general improvement in the appearance of Donore. However residents felt that the significant level of illegal dumping and littering within and surrounding the Village, the condition of the Village's four approach roads, the lack of a co-ordinated tourism signage scheme, the lack of pedestrian zebra crossings, the provision of allotments, and better standards of landscaping should all be addressed to improve the Village's public realm and appearance generally.
- Traffic – a significant number of comments related to the significant speed of traffic within the Village, congestion and safety at drop-off and collection times outside the local National School, the nature of traffic traversing the Village, specifically Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) from local quarries, factories and traffic avoiding the M1 Toll, were received. The general impact of increased traffic volumes and the nature of traffic using the Village were deemed to have a negative impact upon pedestrian safety in the Village.
- Recent Development – some of those in attendance felt that the design and material finish of a number of newly developed areas were not to an appropriate standard for a heritage Village such as Donore.
- Tourist Potential – a number of residents felt that the full potential of the "Tourism Route" that the Village is effectively on connecting the 'Battle of the Boyne' Visitors' Centre, located within Oldbridge House and Demesne, and the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre was not fully exploited and tourists should be encouraged to utilise the Village's many amenities whilst navigating between both heritage sites.



*Plate One: Photographs of local community members who attended the Pre-Draft Public Consultation Event held on Thursday, 05th March 2009 in Donore National Primary School'.*

Twelve Comment Forms were received at the Pre-Draft Public Consultation event and four Pre-Draft Submissions were received during the pre-draft public consultation phase that ended on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009. All of these submissions were considered in full in the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan. A list of all of the people who made a pre-draft submission is contained within Appendix A.

#### **1.4.2 Draft Public Consultation**

The Draft Local Area Plan for Donore was placed on public display from Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009 to Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009 in accordance with Section 20(c) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007. The aim of this consultation process was to enable the public and interested parties to give their observations on the Draft Local Area Plan.

A total of twelve written submissions were received. All of these submissions were considered in full in the review of the Draft Local Area Plan. A list of all of the people who made a draft submission is contained within Appendix A.

#### **1.5 Local Area Plan's Development Boundary**

The Council established a development boundary and a site zonings map for Donore during the compilation of the Meath County Development Plan 2001-2007, which was incorporated, unchanged, into the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

In relation to Donore Village, Policy SS POL 7 of the County Development Plan specifically relates to Donore Village and states that '*having regard to the extent of zoned land in Donore*

(12.21 hectares), the position of the village in the Settlement Strategy and the juxtaposition of the village in the buffer area of the World Heritage Site, to desist from zoning additional land in the preparation of the forthcoming Local Area Plan'. Therefore additional lands will not be zoned within this Local Area Plan and the Village's development boundary will not change from that contained within the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

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

A Local Area Plan must contain information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan.

### **1.6.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment**

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process is the environmental assessment of plans, programmes or strategies. It is the formal systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme. It seeks to provide high level protection to the environment; integrate the environment and sustainable development into planning processes generally; promote sustainable development; and promote a more open, transparent and evidenced-based planning system. The process is regulated by the EU's SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and SEA Regulations (S.I. 435 & 436 of 2004).

The carrying-out of a SEA is not mandatory under the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 for the Donore Local Area Plan as it has a population of less than 10,000. An SEA Screening Exercise was carried-out to assess the likely impacts that the implementation of the proposed Plan would have in accordance with Section 14A of Planning & Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004).<sup>1</sup> Given Policy SS POL 7 of the Meath County Development Plan prohibits the extension to the Village's development boundary and from rezoning additional lands, in conjunction with the fact that a full SEA was undertaken as part of the County Development Plan's preparation, this screening document concluded that an SEA was not required. The Screening Report is attached as Appendix B to this Plan.

Notwithstanding this, all future proposed development will have their environmental impacts individually assessed by the Council and may require an Environmental Impact Assessment of their environmental impacts to be undertaken and subsequently an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be submitted with such a planning application.

### **1.6.2 Appropriate Assessment**

The purpose of Appropriate Assessment (AA) of local authority plans is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European 'Natura 2000' sites is included as an integral part of the planning process at a local level. An AA refers to an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, of the potential impacts of a plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and the development where necessary of measures to preclude negative effects.

The impacts assessed must include the indirect and cumulative impacts of the plan, considered with any current or proposed activities, developments or policies impact on the site.

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<sup>1</sup> Screening is the technique applied to determine whether a particular Plan would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant a full SEA to be undertaken. The key indicator that will determine if a SEA is required of particular non-mandatory Plans, is if they are likely to have significant environmental effects on the environment or not.



While there is no national legislation or guidelines with regard to 'appropriate assessment', it is the current recommendation of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government that any land use plan is screened for any potential impact on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. In any case where, following screening, it is found that the Draft Plan may have an impact, a full 'Appropriate Assessment' must be carried out, as well as a full SEA.

The requirement for AA of plans or projects originates from Article 6 (3) and (4) of *European Union (EU) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora*, commonly known as the 'Habitats Directive', which is implemented in Ireland through the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations of 1997. The wording of Article 6 (3) of the directive is as follows:

*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.*

The wording of Article 6 (4) of the directive is as follows:

*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 a 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.*

In February 2008, the statutory requirement for an Appropriate Assessment of all land use plans was further emphasised by a Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Circular Letter (SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08). The Circular Letter entitled 'Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans' emphasises the fact that an Appropriate Assessment of the ecological implications of any plan or project is required, whether it is within or outside a designated site, if it may impact upon the conservation objectives of that site.

In May 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency circulated this letter as part of their guidance on the process to be employed in Strategic Environmental Assessment.

An AA Screening Exercise was carried-out to assess the likely impacts that the implementation of the proposed Plan on any Natura 2000 sites. The Screening Exercise found that there would be no indirect and cumulative impacts of the Plan on the integrity of any surrounding Natura 2000 sites. Therefore a full AA was not required. The Screening Report is attached as Appendix B to this Plan.



## 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

A consistent theme in all planning related documents is that of 'sustainable development' defined by the Bruntland Commission in the 1980s as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The Council supports this concept as advocated within planning policy nationally and it is a major component in the implementation of the Donore Local Area Plan.

Planning at this local level must be informed by prevailing planning policies and national best practice standards as established in national guidelines, reports and other documents. Therefore, the future economic, physical and social development of Donore must be considered in the context of, and be consistent with, the hierarchy of National, Regional and Local level plans already in existence. The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 has had regard to all such national, regional and local planning policy documents.

### 2.1 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013

The need for a Local Area Plan is prompted by the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. Policy SS POL 3 of the Plan seeks to '*review and prepare Local Area Plans for groups of related settlements which have economic, geographical or settlement hierarchical relationships in conjunction with local communities*'. As a result, Objective SS OBJ 1 of the County Development Plan aims:

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

The Meath County Development Plan sets out the contents required to be included in Local Area Plans within the County Area.

Donore has been identified as a 'Village' settlement within the Meath County Development Plan's Settlement Strategy and the Plan will be guided by this Strategy. As a result, all future development within Donore is guided by the County Development Plan's 'High Level Development Objectives' contained within Chapter 2.1.8. The primary principle of the Council's Settlement Strategy is to channel residential development into the three main settlements of Navan, the Dunboyne/Clonee/Pace Rail corridor and the Drogheda Environs. In relation to 'Villages' it states that:

*all of the above settlements 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.*

A key principle of the County Development Plan and the Local Area Plan for Donore will be to control the level of residential development in the Village outside of local need, and ensure that new development is appropriately located, contributes to the Village's consolidation and is

sympathetic to and respects the existing character in line with Policy HS POL 16 of the County Development Plan that states:

*the Rural Settlement Strategy states that in Small Growth Towns, Key Towns and Villages, between 25-30% of all new multi house developments, being developments in excess of four houses, shall be reserved for persons native to Co. Meath or those who by virtue of their employment require to live in the urban centre. The remainder of houses in such multiple house developments 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.*

In relation to Donore Village, Policy SS POL 7 of the County Development Plan specifically relates to Donore Village and states that '*having regard to the extent of zoned land in Donore (12.21 hectares), the position of the village in the Settlement Strategy and the juxtaposition of the village in the buffer area of the World Heritage Site, to desist from zoning additional land in the preparation of the forthcoming Local Area Plan*'. Therefore, the development boundary and the land-use zoning objectives for the Village outlined within Urban Detail Map 9 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 will remain unchanged and additional lands will not be zoned within this Local Area Plan.

It is intended that the Donore Local Area Plan will replace the written objectives and land-use zoning map adopted as part of the previous Meath County Development Plan 2001-2007 in March 2001 and re-adopted within the existing Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

#### 2.1.1 Criteria Determining the Release of Residential Land

Having regard to the provisions of the County Settlement Strategy, the County Development Plan provides that the release and development of residential lands shall be linked to the following criteria:

- The provision of necessary physical infrastructure, primarily the availability, in advance of development occurring, of capacity in water and wastewater infrastructure. The environment must be capable of absorbing the scale and quantum of development that is envisaged;
- Spare capacity in existing (and planned) social infrastructure, primarily national and second level educational facilities. The future planning of the Department of Education and Science of national and second level educational facilities shall also be taken into account. The development of additional residential lands shall leverage the necessary recreational and amenity infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the resident population. The proposed scale and quantum of development must reinforce the integrity and vitality of the local community and services that can be provided;
- A more sustainable economic base whereby a greater percentage of local persons are employed locally. This will require closer liaison between the County Enterprise Board, County Development Board, Economic Development & Promotion Officer and the Planning Department;
- To facilitate the realisation of objectives contained in existing Local Area Plans or existing Written Statement and Detailed Objectives for towns and villages (Volume II of the Meath County Development Plan) in relation to the delivery of identified critical and necessary social and/or physical infrastructure in conjunction with residential development. Priority of phasing may be given to such residential lands accordingly;

- The extent of existing residentially zoned lands will be revised in the context of the individual Local Area Plan or Development Plan review for each centre and does not necessarily preclude identifying additional zoning in specific locations where the Planning Authority is satisfied that a clearly established need for such zoning is evident. Such additional zoning may only be considered where the development of such lands for residential purposes would deliver an identified piece of critical and necessary social and/or physical infrastructure in conjunction with such development and may require such lands to be prioritised for development over existing residentially zoned lands or that a corresponding amount of land has been de-zoned;
- The Local Authority social and affordable house building programme, and;
- The efficient use of land by consolidating existing settlements, focusing in particular on development capacity within central urban areas through the re-use of underutilised lands and buildings as a priority, rather than extending green field development. This should also ensure that development is concentrated at locations where it is possible to integrate employment, community services, retailing and public transport. The order of priority for the release of residentially zoned land shall attempt to ensure that there is a sequential approach which downgrades the priority of outer suburban greenfield sites.

#### 2.1.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 - Variation No. 2

Section 19 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007, as amended by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002, requires that a Local Area Plan must be consistent with the policies and objectives contained within the relevant County Development Plan; being the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The Local Area Plan's stated policies and objectives must be explicitly linked to the quantum and scale of development envisaged for the settlement within the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The County Development Plan is thus the 'parent' document, which sets out the strategic framework within which all zoning and other objectives of the Local Area Plan must be formulated. For example, the zoning of lands for use solely or primarily as residential development should have regard to the Council's housing and settlement strategies.

Variation 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, adopted on 04<sup>th</sup> February 2008, varied the County's Settlement Strategy. It identified an 'Order of Priority' for residential zoned lands within a number of settlements, including Donore. The residential zoned lands are identified as Phase 1 and Phase 2 areas. Phase 1 relates to lands to be developed during the existing County Development Plan period up to 2013, while Phase 2 relates to lands to be developed post 2013. Variation 2 allocates a total of 34 additional dwellings to Donore over the period of the existing County Development Plan from 2007-2013 at a density of 20 dwellings per hectare.<sup>2</sup>

This allocation does not include two specific site types within settlements, which are subject to the 'Order of Priority':

- The Council does not intend to stifle the delivery of the local authority housing programme. Therefore, units to be developed by the Council for social and affordable housing will not be taken from the numbers allocated for Donore.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be borne in mind that a recent planning application for 30 no. dwellings to the north of the Village, which, following a refusal by the Local Authority, was the subject of a First-Party Appeal to An Bord Pleanála. Meath County Council Planning Reference SA/60033 and An Bord Pleanála Case Reference PL17 .217309 was granted planning permission by the Board, omitting 3 no. dwellings by condition. Construction on this site has, at the time of the Plan's preparation in Spring 2009, not commenced.

- The Planning Authority does not intend to stifle redevelopment of brown-field/infill/derelict sites and seeks to actively promote redevelopment of these lands. Therefore, units permitted on such sites will not be taken from the numbers allocated for Donore.

As a result of Variation 2, the future development of residential areas within Donore must be undertaken within this framework.

#### 2.1.2.1 Residential Implications of Variation No. 2

As noted above, the future population growth of the Village will be provided for in accordance with the provisions of Policy Pol SS 7 of the County Development Plan. It will also be provided for with regard to Variation No. 2 of the County's Settlement Strategy, which allocates 34 additional dwellings to the Village over the period 2007-2013; this figure does not include local authority housing programmes or residential developments on brown-field/infill/derelict sites.

At a density of 20 dwellings per hectare, these 34 dwellings equate to approximately 1.7 hectares of zoned residential land. It is standard practice to provide 50% more land than is needed to be zoned in order to allow for additional headroom. This will ensure that an adequate supply of residential lands will be provided, which will in turn allow for a choice of location and the potential non-release of lands over the Local Area Plan's timeframe. This would result in the need to zone enough residential lands within the Local Area Plan's development boundary to cater for 51 dwellings. At a density of 20 dwellings per hectare, this equates to 2.55 hectares of residential land. Variation No. 2 includes a 'Donore Residential Phasing Sequence' map which identified 13.56 hectares of remaining largely undeveloped residential zoned land; 4.55 hectares of which was identified for development before 2013, while 9.01 hectares was identified for development after 2013. 3.74 of the 4.55 hectares of land outlined as Phase One within Variation No. 2 remain undeveloped and continue to be zoned for residential development purposes, therefore sufficient lands are zoned within the Village to cater for the Village's future residential needs.

The realisation of these 34 dwellings would result in an additional population increase of approximately 85-92 persons over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan. The Village's population recorded in the 2006 Census of Population was 728 persons. This would result in a possible future population of 813-820 persons in the Village by 2013.<sup>3</sup> This would equate to an indicative increase in population of approximately 1.46-1.58% per annum over the period 2006-2013.

## 2.2 Review of Previous Plans' Planning Policies and Development Objectives

There has not been a previous Local Area or Development Plan prepared to specifically guide development proposals and population growth within Donore. All previous planning applications were assessed against the relevant Meath County Development Plan. The most recent Plan was the Meath County Development Plan, 2001-2007, which contained written planning policies, development objectives and a land-use zoning map with a defined development boundary for the Village. It was originally adopted as part of the Meath County Development Plan, 2001-2007 in March 2001 and was re-adopted unamended within the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013.

The preparation of this Draft Plan has included a review the planning policies and development objectives within the previous County Development Plan. This has identified areas that need

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<sup>3</sup> These figures are compiled using the predicted average household sizes for the period 2007-2013 outlined in Table 5 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. On 31st December 2009 the average household size is predicted to be 2.694 persons per dwelling, by 31st December 2013 this is predicted to fall to 2.5 persons per dwelling.

attention, any possible weaknesses, the levels of implementation and the overall success of the previous and current Meath County Development Plan's policies and objectives for Donore.

Significant progress has been achieved in respect of the ongoing implementation of the planning policies and development objectives contained within Volume II of the current Meath County Development Plan for Donore including the following:

- Specific Development Objective DN 1: To maintain a buffer zone between quarrying activities and land intended for residential purposes.
- Specific Development Objective DN 2: To preserve the Catholic Church as a protected structure due to its architectural and local historical value.
- Specific Development Objective DN 4: To develop mixed local authority affordable and private housing on lands to the west of St Mary's estate as part of an overall Action Area Plan.
- Specific Development Objective DN 6: To upgrade the sewerage treatment plant to cater for a population equivalent of at least 1000.

However, a number of the Policies and Objectives have not been fully or partially implemented, specifically:

- Specific Development Objective DN 3: To promote high quality low-density development in keeping with the predominantly low scale development in the village. Such development will be dependent on the provision of footpaths, lighting and road improvements on the Slane Road as far as the development boundary as well as a Central Village Park.
- Specific Development Objective DN 5: To extend the footpath in all directions as far as the village boundary.

The identified objectives that have not been fully or have only been partially implemented are addressed within this Local Area Plan. It is noted that the Planning Authority is not responsible for the direct provision of all the previously adopted objectives. The complete fulfilment of some objectives mentioned-above are based on a number of external factors such as market conditions, the release of zoned lands by landowners, private investment levels and external bodies.

The Donore Local Area Plan 2009-2015 is intended to replace and restate these written planning policies, development objectives and zoning map contained re-adopted within the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, as appropriate.

### **2.3 Local Area Plan for the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site**

The Village of Donore is located within the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site (refer to Map 8.4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013).



*Plate Two: The entrance to the Passage Tomb of 'Newgrange'. The photograph highlights the internationally renowned opening where sunlight enters the interior's corbelled chamber at the Winter Solstice above the passageway's entrance and also the highly-skilled intricate megalithic artwork adorning the kerbstones surrounding the base of the tumulus.*

In recognition of the unique significance of Brú na Bóinne and Objective HER OBJ 11 of the County Development Plan, it is now the intention of the Planning Authority to formally incorporate the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2002 into the County Development Plan and to prepare a Local Area Plan, in conjunction with Louth County Council, for the World Heritage Site. The preparation of the Local Area Plan, in conjunction with Louth County Council, would lend further support to the implementation of the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site Management Plan's recommendations.

This LAP is intended to establish a planning framework in which development proposals, including future land use zoning objectives in adjoining settlements, one off houses, agricultural developments, signage, telecommunication structures and antennae, all environmental issues within the area, etc, would be assessed against.



### 3.0 CORE STRATEGY

This Plan is the statutory Local Area Plan for Donore made pursuant to the provisions of Sections 18, 19 and 20 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007. It is also in accordance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC), the objective of which is to *'provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans'*.

The purpose of this Local Area Plan is to provide for a comprehensive yet flexible planning and development framework to promote and guide the planned and sustainable growth of Donore. The Core Strategy sets out the vision and overall planning policies and development objectives for the future development of the Village.

#### 3.1 The Vision for the Village

The amenity, heritage qualities and character of Donore are mainly derived from the undulating landscape surrounding the Village, as well as the Village's historical organic development at the junction of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone, Duleek and Slane/Stalleen Roads into the Village. The Village is focussed on St Mary's Roman Catholic Church and Parochial House dating from the mid-Nineteenth Century. It is an objective of the Council that this environment be conserved and enhanced through the sensitive treatment of any infill development, the conservation of important or key buildings and the encouragement of compatible developments and land uses within the Village's development boundary.



*Plate Three: Photograph of the Village Centre taken from the Village Graveyard's associated carpark to the east of St Mary's Roman Catholic Church facing west along 'Main Street'.*

At the same time, a clear division between the Village's built-up area and the surrounding countryside will be maintained through the strict control of urban generated ribbon development on the Village's four approach roads. This Local Area Plan will also aim to improve local public utilities services and infrastructure by catering for future development within the Village Centre

that is sensitive to the surrounding environment, in particular the setting of the Brú na Bóinne archaeological complex. This Plan will also ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural and built heritage of the Village.

The overall focus and vision for Donore is to consolidate and strengthen the Village, through the provision of a well-defined Village Centre area, as well as a range of land-uses to support the residential element of the settlement and its role as a convenience 'Service Centre' to the surrounding local area and an important settlement along the "Tourism Route" connecting The 'Battle of the Boyne' Visitors' Centre located at Oldbridge to the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre. This will also be complemented through the enhancement of the Village's street finishes, footpaths, green spaces and public domain generally, and the redevelopment of key Greenfield or neglected sites, as well as the re-use of any derelict buildings.



*Plate Four: The 'Battle of the Boyne' Visitors' Centre site centred upon Oldbridge House and Demesne.*

This Plan will endeavour to:

1. Provide for a high-quality landscape, both active and passive open spaces and include provisions to improve the public domain generally. It endeavours to create an area of high visual and environmental amenity by respecting river corridors and flood plain channels, varying contour levels, surrounding views, open spaces and natural features.
2. Provide for appropriate community, childcare, educational and recreational facilities.
3. Create unique, clearly identifiable and memorable areas consistent with, and protective of, the Village's existing character. This will be complemented by the creation of purposeful connecting routes, providing the maximum choice for people to decide how to undertake their journeys.
4. Create appropriate land-use planning conditions that will contribute to the creation of employment opportunities locally. This will be in co-operation with both the State's and the County's enterprise, development and tourism agencies.



5. Allow for an environment that is clearly understood and useable by the existing and proposed community, including employees, residents and visitors alike.



*Plate Five: The Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre footbridge over the River Boyne at Roughgrange connecting the Centre on the southern bank with the 'Core Area' of the Brú na Bóinne complex on the northern bank of the River Boyne.*

## **3.2 Core Policies**

### **3.2.1 Sustainable Development**

The core strategy for the Donore Local Area Plan is based upon the need to allow for the sustainable planning and development of the Village in line with Policy SS Pol 7 to create high-quality standards in the provision of future community facilities, employment and enterprise opportunities and quality residential areas. This Plan will also aim to cater for numerous transportation modes and the provision of adequate recreational amenities. This will only be

achieved sustainably through the protection of the natural environment and biodiversity level already in existence in the Village.

#### **Core Policy 1: Sustainable Development**

1. To adhere to the principles of sustainable development through the promotion of future development or redevelopment that makes a positive contribution to the development of Donore by recognising the importance of conserving and enhancing the quality of the Village's built and natural environment, while catering for the needs of all sections of the local community.
2. To contain new development within the development boundary of the Village thereby ensuring that the urban area can develop within a coherent built form thereby encouraging an efficient and balanced use of scarce land.
3. To sustain and enhance the role of Donore, in line with Policy SS Pol 7 of the County Development Plan, as both a community and commercial service centre for the surrounding rural hinterland and the "Tourism Route" on which it is located.

#### **3.2.2 Future Development Proposals**

This Local Area Plan includes guidelines on future development or redevelopment within the Village. They outline a broad approach to promoting development in a way that is consistent with the Plan's core development objectives and policies. In order to achieve these objectives, quality architectural design and site layouts are fundamental considerations to the overall development process. Future development proposals must also take account of any potential impact they may have upon the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

#### **Core Policy 2: Future Development Proposals**

1. To only consider development proposals that generally satisfies the following criteria positively:
2. To provide high-quality development in accordance with the provisions of this Plan and the Development Control Guidelines contained within the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013,
3. To protect and enhance, as appropriate, the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Village's physical character and the built and natural environment, as considered appropriate,
4. To respect and protect neighbouring properties' residential amenities, and finally
5. To promote the future development of the Village as a compact settlement with a pedestrian friendly environment, a legible and coherent physical form, and a variety of land uses and amenities.

High quality design has a significant positive impact upon the character and vitality of areas where it is achieved. This needs to be developed from understanding the local character of a place. This policy will ensure that the strategic objectives and key design principles are incorporated into the consideration of all planning applications. It is the policy of the Council to favourably consider forms of development only where it accords with the Land Use Zoning Map and associated urban design guidance and protects the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site. Any significant divergence from the guidance must adequately demonstrate how such divergences would be of greater benefit in achieving the strategic development

objectives for Donore and not negatively impact upon the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, as set-out in this Plan.

### 3.2.3 Land-Uses

The purpose of land use zoning is to indicate to property owners, developers and the general public, the types of development that are considered most appropriate in each zone. These zoning objectives allow any would-be developers to plan proposals with a greater degree of certainty. In the control of development, zoning seeks to delimit competing and incompatible uses so as to promote greater environmental quality and thereby rationalise the land-use pattern of an urban area. This land use zoning policy is intended to be used as a general guide to assessing the acceptability or otherwise of development proposals. The various land-use designations used within this Plan have been taken from the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

This Plan's Land-Use Zoning Map encourages a variety of land-uses in a manner that promotes the concept of a balanced residential community with an appropriate level of amenities, facilities and services to cater for the Village's needs. At the same time it aims to ensure that the Village's character is protected and retained for future generations. The Plan also aims to allow the Village to continue to function as a compact physical place with good accessibility levels and high quality public open spaces. The development of residential land will be carefully monitored by the Council to ensure that the overall requirements are being delivered during the lifetime of the Plan. The Plan may be modified in the future if considered necessary.

#### Core Policy 3: Land-Uses

To facilitate a variety of land uses within the Village's development boundary that can cater for the existing and future needs of the Village's population over the next six years and beyond. Proposed land-uses will have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the Village and respect the amenities of the neighbouring properties, and the character and visual appearance of the Village.

### 3.2.4 Local Area Plan Implementation

A key issue for a Local Area is the need for the Plan to be realistic, and ultimately to contain policies and objectives that are capable of being implemented within its lifetime.

#### Core Policy 4: Local Area Plan Implementation

To encourage and support initiatives, and private and public investment, which helps to facilitate and promote coordination between the various stakeholders, identified within this Plan, who are needed to implement the development objectives and planning policies contained within it. Every practical effort will be made in partnership with other statutory and voluntary bodies, local businesses, developers and the local community to ensure the Plan is successfully implemented.

### 3.3 Core Objectives

The objectives for this Local Area Plan are derived from the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, which emphasises that the development of settlements must be promoted in a strategically planned and sustainable manner.

This Local Area Plan builds upon the settlement strategy of the existing Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 by supporting and promoting the sustainable development of Donore as a self-supporting community, enjoying a good "quality of life" in terms of community, commercial, residential, recreational and social amenities, as well as public utilities' and

transportation infrastructure, while at the same time protecting the surrounding natural environment. The Council recognises that the Village must offer living and working conditions, as well as the community, educational and recreational opportunities of the highest quality in an attractive urban environment in order to achieve its stated objective of promoting a strategically planned and sustainable approach to any future development within the Village.

In order to achieve these aims, the following Strategic Development Objectives have been established to underpin this Local Area Plan. They are based upon the requirements of the Village as identified during the Steering Committee Meeting with the Executive held on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009, and build-upon the strengths of Donore, as recognised through the urban design assessment included in Section 17.0.

<b>SDO 1</b>	To promote a positive image of the Village through the support of the local community sector and through the encouragement of the development of community, cultural and social facilities, at an appropriate scale, at locations that are accessible to all members of the community.
<b>SDO 2</b>	To accommodate population and services growth in accordance with the levels provided for by Table 6 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 through the implementation of the policies contained within Variation No. 2 of that Plan and to cater primarily for the needs of the local population. This Plan will aim to provide a guide to any future development catering for the consolidation of the Village within its development boundary in an ordered and sustainable fashion in line with Policy SS Pol 7 of the Meath County Development Plan.
<b>SDO 3</b>	To expand upon the Village's growing role as a Service Centre for growing tourism market within the area, specifically along the growing "Tourism Route" that the Village is located along effectively connecting the 'Battle of the Boyne' Visitors' Centre, located within Oldbridge House and Demesne, and the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre at Roughgrange.
<b>SDO 4</b>	To identify areas that are at risk of flooding with a view to ensuring that any development on such areas complies with the Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities 'The Planning System & Flood Risk Management' published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, September, 2008, or their predecessor.
<b>SDO 5</b>	To upgrade existing public utilities' infrastructure in the Village and co-ordinate the delivery of new developments with the provision of new infrastructure. This will be mainly achieved by ensuring that additional local services and facilities in terms of community, educational, recreational and commercial provision are provided for in tandem with new residential development.
<b>SDO 6</b>	To retain and protect the vibrancy and primacy of the Village Centre area by controlling the location of appropriate Village Centre uses within the identified Village centre area and through the introduction of environmental improvements.
<b>SDO 7</b>	To continue to protect the existing residential amenity and unique character of the Village, through the provision of appropriate residential/infill development, which have regard to the scale, character, topography and amenities of the Village. This will also involve the consolidation of the existing retail land uses and existing commercial character of the Village.
<b>SDO 8</b>	To reserve land for the provision of active and passive open spaces to facilitate

	the development of playgrounds within existing and proposed residential developments in conjunction with Objective SOC OBJ 11 which aims to develop and implement a Play Strategy for County Meath in conjunction with the County Development Board and other agencies.
<b>SDO 9</b>	To create an appropriate transportation network for cyclists, pedestrians, public transportation users and motorists alike, at appropriate locations within the Village.

*Table One: Local Area Plan Core Objectives.*

### **3.4 Development Boundary**

The current Development Boundary for the Village was determined during the preparation of the Meath County Development plan 2001-2007. In determining the appropriate development boundary for the Village regard was had for the existing pattern of development within Donore, the previous adopted land-use zonings and the Village's position in the County's retail and settlement hierarchies. The Village's setting within the sensitive landscape associated with the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site is reflected in Policy SS Pol 7 of the existing Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, which prohibits any extension to the Village's development boundary or a revision of its land-use zoning objectives.

The future development of Donore will consolidate those lands within the Village Centre, specifically those backlands to the north and south of Slane/Stalleen Road and to the east of Duleek Road in a sensitive manner that will not negatively impact upon the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.



## 4.0 VILLAGE CONTEXT

### 4.1 The Village's Strategic Context

Donore is located to the east of the County in close proximity to the county border with County Louth. It is located within the 'Slane Development Area', along with other urban settlements such as Duleek, Julianstown and Slane.

From a strategic national context, the Village is located approximately 40km north of Dublin City Centre within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), between the M1 National Motorway and the N2 National Primary Routes, accessed from the Donore Road Interchange on the M1, approximately 3km to the east of the Village, and Slane Village, approximately 8km to the west of the Village, respectively. From a strategic regional context, the Village is situated approximately 18km from Navan, 4km from Drogheda and 18km from Balbriggan.

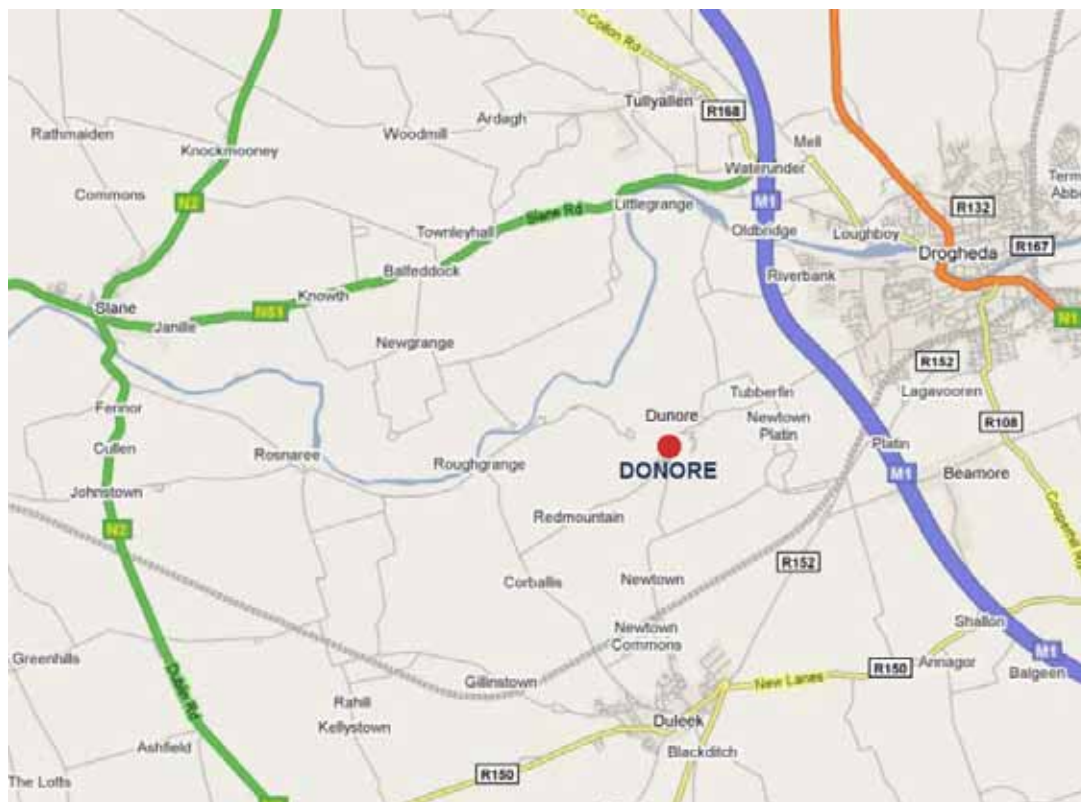


Figure One: Village Location Map.

The Village is located at the convergence of a number of Third-Class Roads providing Donore with good connections to the surrounding urban areas of Drogheda, Duleek, Navan and Slane.

As stated above, the contemporary Village form has largely evolved along the main approach roads into the Village, specifically the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone road to the north-east and the Slane/Stalleen Road to the west of the Village. The Village's Centre is centred upon the junction with the Duleek Road extending to the south of the Village. These routes are augmented by the Tubberfinn Road which connects with the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road and the Kellystown Road which connects with the Duleek Road to the north-east and south of the Village, respectively.

The function, role and overall size of the Village has largely been determined by its proximity to surrounding urban areas, specifically that of Drogheda.

#### 4.2 Historical Development of the Village

Donore Village developed in a sheltered and elevated site approximately 80m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) between the elevated 'Redmountain' and 'Donore Hill' areas in excess of 100m AOD to the south and north of the Village, respectively. This area appears to have been located on the periphery of Mid to Late Bronze Age (1500-500BC) transient settlements. The early name for the area, '*Dun Wabair*', suggests that its foundation dates from the Early Christian Period (400-1200AD) when a ringfort was more than likely located close to the area.

In 1203AD, King John of England granted the lands at '*Dun Wabair*' to the Cisterian Monastery at Mellifont, County Louth. The area became part of a large medieval estate, like much of the lower Boyne Valley. By 1539AD, there was a Church on the site and two 'messuages' (a dwelling-house often including outbuildings, an orchard, a court-yard and garden) and a cottage. This urban growth pattern is similar to that at Monknewstown. In 1622AD, the Church at Donore was in reasonable repair, but was later damaged as a result of the 1641 Rebellion. By 1654AD, there were three cottages and a farm house at Donore and by 1682AD the Church had been repaired.

The current form of the Village appears to have developed organically at the junction of numerous third-class roads over the course of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. Contrary to the population decrease experienced within the rest of the County in the decades following The Great Famine of 1845-1847, Donore began to increase in size largely due to the financial investment of a local landlord Sharman Crawford of Stalleen, a Member of the British House of Commons for Dundalk from 1835 to 1837. A Roman Catholic Church, St Mary's, was constructed after the 1840s and in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, a National School and a Parochial House were constructed beside it.



Figure Two: Historical Village Map 1842.

From 1851-1881, the number of houses in the Village increased by 50% from twenty-one to thirty-one and in the 1913 Map, a Village Centre is clearly legible.



*Figure Three: Historical Village Map 1913.*

Further Twentieth Century development within the Village was largely confined to extensions and infill developments. The extension of the Village along Slane/Stalleen Road to the entrance gates of 'Stalleen House', the construction of a larger National School along the Duleek Road, and the development of the 'St Mary's Villas' and 'St Mary's Cottages' local authority social housing schemes along the Duleek Road all mainly occurred in the aftermath of World War II from 1945 onwards.



*Plate Six: The residential development of 'St Mary's Villas' to the west of the Duleek Road.*



The Twenty-First Century saw the construction of three large residential developments; 'The Grange' to the south and east of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road, 'Murray's View', a private residential development of approximately ten land plots to the west of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road, nine of which have been developed upon, and the development of a series of Serviced Land Initiative sites by the Council, known locally as 'Stalleen', comprising of fifteen individual residential sites as well as the further infilling of the Slane/Stalleen Road with individual housing developments. There has been further renovation of the commercial properties within the Village, specifically 'Daly's Inn' Public House to the north of Slane/Stalleen Road and the construction of a significant mixed-use development encompassing convenience and comparison retail units, offices and residential units.



*Plate Seven: The recently constructed mixed-use development within the Village Centre encompassing convenience and comparison retail units, offices and residential units.*



*Plate Eight: 'Daly's Inn' Public House within the Village Centre.*

### 4.3 The Village's Topography

The Village's topography is summarised within the Landscape Character Assessment attached as Appendix VI of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. Donore Village is located within Landscape Character Area 5 or the 'Boyne Valley' which is deemed to have an 'exceptional' level of Landscape Value, a 'high' level of Landscape Sensitivity and an 'international' level of Landscape Importance.



*Plate Nine: The Boyne Valley, photograph taken approximately 1km to the south-west of Donore Village along the Kellystown Road facing north. The tumulus of 'Dowth' is clearly visible to the centre right of the photograph.*

The landscape of the Boyne Valley is characterised by a steep main river valley with areas of rolling lowlands and tributary valleys adjacent to the River Boyne. This landscape begins in Carbury in County Kildare and extends in a north-easterly direction to the Irish Sea at Drogheda in County Louth. The lowlands have an undulating landform with areas of wetland associated with the River Boyne, particularly surrounding the flat river plain in the narrow valley adjacent to Slane. The Boyne Valley is steeply sided with large rolling hills providing good vantage points and views across the Valley. Pasture farmland is predominant in the rolling lowland with areas of poorly drained marshland adjacent to the River Boyne. The LCA states that it '*is arguably the most significant and highly valued landscapes in the county because it contains the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site*'. It also states that '*due to the exceptional landscape value and high sensitivity of the Boyne Valley, this LCA has low potential capacity to accommodate multi-house residential developments. It provides the setting for historic features of international importance (Brú na Bóinne WHS)*'.

The LCA continues that the '*landscape settings for Newgrange ... and the Boyne Valley are all crucial to their appreciation and importance, and as such it is important that the character of these settings is preserved*'.

Regarding the area surrounding the Village, the LCA states that '*there is a quarry to the south west of Slane ... further mineral extraction in the area needs to be carefully sited due to extensive views of the uplands that are available on higher ground and within the Boyne Valley*'. The LCA concludes that Donore Village is '*critical to the setting of Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site and*

as such any development in Donore would need to be considered carefully'. The LCA also states that the potential carrying capacity of this landscape to carry further development is also limited.

The LCA contains a number of recommendations regarding the future preservation of this landscape character, specifically

Number	Recommendation Description
Recommendation 1	Preserve the Boyne Valley as a unique landscape setting for Trim, Slane, Navan and Newgrange, some of the most valuable historic assets in the County.
Recommendation 2	Maintain the viability of small scale farming which is complimentary to the landscape character and critical to maintaining the condition of features such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands.
Recommendation 8	Have regard to the fact that the entire River corridor is designated as an SAC and the stretch between Navan and Drogheda is also an NHA. Development should not conflict with the reasons for which these designations have been made.
Recommendation 9	When siting development have regard to the nature of views within this area: the river valley is narrow and high-sided so views along its length and across to either side are clear and often uninterrupted. Development on the skyline should be avoided unless it is demonstrated to have no adverse visual impacts that cannot be mitigated against.

As stated above, the Village's topography is characterised by its location on the elevated section of a tributary valley of the Boyne Valley situated between 'Redmountain' and 'Donore Hill' stretching in a north-west/south-east orientation. As a result of the Village's siting effectively on the ridge of this elevated valley, connecting both hills, it is visible from the surrounding area particularly from the Brú na Bóinne complex, notably from the Dowth and Newgrange tumuli.



Plate Ten: Photograph of the Village within the surrounding undulating landscape taken from 'Redmountain' facing north-east.

#### **4.4 The Village's Built Context**

As stated the Village has historically developed around the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone, Duleek and Slane/Stalleen Roads, with a significant level of infilling occurring in the form of large residential developments to the north and south of Slane/Stalleen Road and to the east of the Village. As a result, the Village possesses a relatively compact and legible Village Centre area encompassing the majority of the Village's most notable buildings; consisting mainly of commercial, institutional, residential and public buildings. In contrast, a much more loosely knit pattern of development consisting mainly of individual houses and medium to large-sized residential developments front onto the approach roads to the Village. There is significant scope for further infill development, particularly within the 'A5' zoned lands to the north and south of the Slane/Stalleen Road and the 'A5' and 'C1' zoned lands to the south-east of the Duleek Road.

#### **4.5 Key Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends**

There are no Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) available for the Village of Donore, aside from its overall population level. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) will not provide SAPS for a settlement centre with a population of less than 1,000 for privacy reasons.

The population of the Village was 334 persons in 2002 and 728 persons in 2006. This represented a significant increase in the population of the Village of 118% from 2002 to 2006. This figure will have increased substantially again as the recently constructed residential developments have since become largely fully occupied within the Village.



## 5.0 BRÚ NA BÓINNE

The term 'Brú na Bóinne', originates from early Irish historical sources and the Sixteenth Century's 'Annals of the Four Masters', and translates as 'the mansion' or 'palace of the Boyne' most probably relating to the presence of the three Passage Tombs of Dowth, Knowth and Newgrange.



*Plate Eleven: The 'Core Area' of the Brú na Bóinne complex to the north-west of Donore Village, photograph taken from the southern bank of the River Boyne facing north. The Passage Tomb of 'Newgrange' is clearly visible in the centre of the photograph and it is the most famous National Monument within the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.*

Although these tumuli are the most instantly recognisable monuments within the Brú na Bóinne complex, the area is of significant physical, geographical, archaeological and historical importance as it contains ninety-three Recorded Monuments, including passage tombs, henges, fulachta fiadh, cist burials, standing stones, ringforts, souterrains, granges, a medieval manorial village and associated field system, various 'Battle of the Boyne' landmarks, a regionally important demesne landscape and parts of the River Boyne's navigation system. The international significance of this area has only gradually been revealed through a process of discovery and research which began 300 years ago when the main passage tomb monuments were rediscovered from 1699AD. It is this continued use of the area that has led to the designation of the area as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

As previously stated, Donore Village is the largest population centre within the designated 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne complex. Future planned development within the Village must have full regard to its potential impact upon its setting within the wider landscape. This section aims to briefly outline the historical development and importance of Brú na Bóinne, and provide planning policies and development objectives relevant to Donore which will maximise the protection of its setting within the surrounding landscape.



*Plate Twelve: View from the top of the tumulus of 'Dowth' orientated in a south-eastern direction towards Donore Village. The Village is clearly visible being effectively sited upon an elevated ridge connecting both 'Donore Hill' and 'Redmountain' to the centre left and centre right, of the photograph, respectively. Stalleen House and Demesne, which had a significant impact upon the development of the Village through-out the Nineteenth Century is clearly visible in the centre of the photograph. The cooling and chimney stacks associated with Irish Cement's Platin Cement Works are also visible to the centre right of the photograph; the local availability of large deposits of limestone and shale, easy access to rail transportation and the proximity of the site to the major domestic markets stimulated cement manufacture at Platin from 1972 to the present.*

### **5.1 Historical Development and Importance of Brú na Bóinne and the Surrounding Area**

From an international perspective, the most important monuments are those associated with the group of visually impressive passage tombs, some with sophisticated art work, built by early farming communities around 3,800-2,500BC (the Neolithic Period) to the north-west of Donore Village. The largest of these tombs are Dowth, Knowth and Newgrange. These tumuli are the oldest surviving monuments in the area and dominate the ridge tops and south-facing slopes which run between the Rivers Boyne and Mattock. To date, thirty-one definite and nine possible passage tomb sites have been identified. The passage tombs most certainly had social, economic, religious and funerary functions for the local farming community or communities that constructed them.



*Plate Thirteen: The Passage Tomb of 'Knowth' to the centre left of the photograph with two smaller satellite passage tombs surrounding it to the centre and centre right of the photograph.*

Within a few centuries of the building of the passage tombs in approximately 2,000BC there was a renewed phase of monument-building in Brú na Bóinne. The peripheries of the larger passage tombs became a focus for intense ritual activity and subsequently larger ceremonial enclosures or henges for great public assemblies were constructed from stone, timber and earth.

There is some evidence of the existence of permanent communities south of the River Boyne in the Middle Bronze Age (1500-1200BC) in approximately 1,400BC following the recent discovery of fulachta fiadh, ancient cooking sites in the form of mounds of burnt stones with pits, in a naturally high basin above the south bank of the River Boyne at Sheephouse to the north of the Village. Two cist burials have also been discovered at Oldbridge also to the north of the Village.

In the Early Medieval Period (432-1169AD) Brú na Bóinne formed part of the petty kingdom or tuath of Brega ruled by the Aed Sláine dynasty. It had its royal centre at or near the passage tomb at Knowth. This was a strictly rural settlement dominated by the dispersed protected farmsteads known as ringforts associated with a farming economy. There are upstanding ringforts at Knowth and Newgrange, and levelled examples appear as crop-marks in Giltown, Oldbridge and Sheephouse. Subsequently, souterrains or subterranean structures constructed with dry stone walling and capped with large stone lintels, were built as refuges and as storage areas within the area. The souterrains found in Brú na Bóinne have similar beehive chambers.

In the Twelfth Century the Cistercians introduced a revolutionary scheme of land management into Brú na Bóinne which had previously been pioneered elsewhere in Europe. Their abbeys were designed to be self-sufficient entities and their estates were divided into farms or granges, each of which had their own nucleus of buildings and worked directly using lay brothers as labourers. Owing to their titles, medieval monastic farms were probably located at

Newgrange, Sheepgrange, Roughgrange and Littlegrange. Grange buildings were revealed during excavations on top of the passage tomb at Knowth. A series of low-lying enclosures north of the passage tomb may have been additional remnants of this medieval farm system and are now confined to three fields bordering a stream that runs into the River Mattock.

Following the Anglo-Norman arrival in Ireland from 1169AD, Anglo-Norman land division (1200-1450AD) resulted in manorial villages becoming the most common rural settlement form in medieval Meath. A manorial village is effectively an agricultural settlement without borough status but contains a church, and frequently a castle and mill. Dowth, the only manorial village in the Brú na Bóinne area, is well documented and clear evidence of it still survives. The parish Church and Towerhouse remain upstanding, and are associated with a sunken roadway and an early field system.



*Plate Fourteen: The area surrounding Dowth visible from Donore Village is a good example of the continual use of the site since human beings first inhabited the area. The photograph was taken from 'Dowth' looking east at the former Dowth manorial village. Dowth Towerhouse is the ancestral home of the Anglo-Norman family of Netterville. The Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, Hugh DeLacy, granted it to the Nettervilles in the Thirteenth Century. The sixth Viscount Netterville built Dowth Hall in the Mid-Eighteenth Century moving into the House in 1780. The Towerhouse's condition deteriorated and it became ruinous. It was subsequently bequeathed in 1826 by the Viscount along with its offices, garden and 24 hectares (60 acres) for the support of charitable institution for 'poor desolate widows and orphans'. The Towerhouse was modernised for their accommodation and a Widows' House was constructed. The Widows' House was replaced by the Netterville Charitable Almshouse in 1877 designed by George Ashlin visible to the centre left of the photograph. During the early 1960s the house was the headquarters and domestic base for the excavations at Newgrange. These excavations were run by Professor M.J. O'Kelly of University College Cork. The house was later converted into a guest house in 1998 and is now a private residence.*

The site of the 'Battle of the Boyne' took place in 1690AD and encompassed Donore Village, which is one of the landmark sites of this Battle. The Battle between two rival claimants of the English, Scottish and Irish thrones, the Catholic King James II and the Protestant King William



III with both Kings commanding their armies in person. William commanded 36,000 men while James commanded 25,000, the largest number of soldiers ever deployed on an Irish battlefield. William's camp was on the north side of the Boyne River, while James's was on the south side. English, Scottish, Irish, Dutch, Danish and Huguenots (French Protestants) made up William's army called 'Williamites' while James' men called 'Jacobites' were mainly Irish Catholics, reinforced by 6,500 soldiers sent by King Louis XIV of France. The 'Battle of the Boyne' is extremely significant as it was a European battle played out in Ireland with the British throne, French dominance in Europe and religious power in Ireland all being fought for.

Donore Village holds a significant position in this Battle King James set up his main headquarters in the Church on the summit of Donore Hill where some of the fiercest fighting during the Battle took place as the Williamites advanced to seize the high ground at Donore as the Jacobites regrouped close to the Village and retreated to Duleek. The Battle, won by William, was a turning point in Catholic power in Ireland and ultimately allowed for the Protestant Ascendancy to take root. The ruling ascendancy would continue to hold onto power until the two decades leading up to World War I in 1914.

In short, Brú na Bóinne is one of the world's most important archaeological complexes. It contains many outstanding archaeological features, notably its megalithic art, the large and varied grouping of monuments, and evidence of continuous settlement and activity in the area for over 7,000 years.

In 1987, in light of this importance, the Government commissioned a study of the planning issues involved in the Brú na Bóinne area. Following from this, the State approved the establishment of the 'Boyne Valley Archaeological Park' centred upon the passage tombs of Knowth, Dowth and Newgrange. This was established to protect the area from adverse development that could be detrimental to either the monuments or the setting of the monuments within the surrounding landscape. This complex is segregated into both a 'Core Area' and a 'Buffer Zone'. The 'Core Area' contains the main monuments within the area, specifically the passage tombs of Dowth, Knowth and Newgrange, while the 'Buffer Area' largely delineates those areas that are visually important to the setting of these monuments within the surrounding valleys. The core area of the Park is approximately 780 hectares in extent and the total area, which includes the buffer zone, extends to 3,300 hectares. Donore Village is located to the south of the River Boyne within the 'Buffer Zone'. Being the largest population centre within this area and being visible from a significant number of these monuments, development within the Village has the potential to have a significant impact upon their setting.

The Boyne Valley Archaeological Park designation was augmented in 1993 when, at the request of the Government, UNESCO designated Brú na Bóinne as a World Heritage Site, one of only three on the entire island of Ireland. This listing recognises the international importance of this cultural landscape and legally obliges the State to protect the area to the highest international standards.

To adhere to the requirements of the World Heritage Site designation, the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site Management Plan was prepared in December 2002 by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government following a detailed process of public consultation. The Plan sets out to address the many complex issues that may arise within the area. The aim of the Plan is to provide a clear strategy for managing the area so that priorities may be set that are achievable within given resources.

As stated in Section 2.3, it is now the intention of the Planning Authority to formally incorporate the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site Management Plan into the current County Development Plan through the preparation of a Local Area Plan for the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site, in

conjunction with Louth County Council. The preparation of this Local Area Plan would lend further support to the implementation of the World Heritage Site Management Plan's recommendations.

#### **Objective BB 1: Brú na Bóinne**

- a) To conserve, protect and enhance the character of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site through the undertaking of the following development principles in relation to development proposals within Donore Village:
  - 1. a Visual Impact Statement, photomontages and any additional information or visual aids required to clearly demonstrate that the design and siting of the proposed development will not have a negative impact upon the setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex or the high-quality landscape character of the Boyne Valley.
  - 2. appropriate mitigation against any potential negative visual impact.
- b) To ensure that development proposals involving mixed-use, commercial or more than 2 no. dwellings within the Village's development boundary within the Village's development boundary must be the subject of a Visual Impact Assessment to ascertain whether there are any visual impacts upon the 'core area' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site. In all such cases, the Council shall consult with the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government. Planning applications generally will be required to be accompanied by:
- c) To refuse planning permission for any proposed development where it would negatively impact upon the setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex or the high-quality landscape character of the Boyne Valley.
- d) To require all future planning applications to include high-quality landscaping plans and to cater for the appropriate enhancement of the Village's current level of landscaping, particularly for those areas to the west and north-west of the Village, as an integral part of any future development proposals.

#### **Policy BB 1: Brú na Bóinne**

- a) To protect the landscape setting of the national monuments within the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, development proposals involving mixed-use, commercial or more than 2 no. dwellings within the Village's development boundary must be the subject of a Visual Impact Assessment and must be accompanied by a Design Statement, Street Impact Assessment and Visual Impact Statement with photomontages or similar 3D material in order to assist the Planning Authority in determining whether there is any visual impact upon the Village's character or the 'core area' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- b) To preserve the setting and visual amenity value of the Brú na Bóinne complex and the high-quality landscape character of the Boyne Valley by strictly controlling any future development that would be detrimental to their continued preservation, conservation, setting or their visual amenity value.
- c) To require potential developers to consult with relevant agencies as early as possible (i.e. prior to lodging a planning application) to ensure that any heritage concerns are considered early in the planning application process and that any final planning application can be appropriately informed.

- d) To ensure that development proposals that may have a negative impact upon the landscape setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex or the high-quality landscape character of the Boyne Valley shall be referred to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government for observations and recommendations, and to have regard to such observations and recommendations in the assessment of development proposals.

## 6.0 RESIDENTIAL USES

### 6.1 Existing Residential Uses

As stated above a significant number of recent residential developments have been built within the Village in the past three decades, the earliest being 'St Mary's Villas' and 'St Mary's Cottages' at the junction of the Duleek and Kellystown Roads to the south of the Village. More recent residential developments includes 'The Grange' to the east of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road, 'Murray's View' to the west of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road and the Serviced Land Initiative sites to the south of Slane/Stalleen Road. The dwellings in these latter two residential developments are also individually designed. However they do not possess any purpose-built and designed open space areas.



*Plate Fifteen: The residential development of 'The Grange' to the south of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road.*

The site layouts of some of the older residential developments are not conducive to passive surveillance of internal pedestrian, cyclist, backyard or the internal open space movements or networks. However, these residential developments have effective paved pedestrian routes linked to the Village Centre, some of which are segregated from the road space from motorised vehicles.



*Plate Sixteen: The residential development known locally as 'Stalleen' to the south of the Slane/Stalleen Road.*

## **6.2 Future Residential Uses**

The Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that sufficient land is zoned for all types of housing to meet the projected housing requirements of Donore over the Local Area Plan's lifetime. This will ensure that any undue shortage of such land will not arise.

The aim of this Local Area Plan is to ensure that there is adequate land available in appropriate locations for housing, complemented by clear policies regarding any future development proposals to construct additional houses. The availability of housing, catering for a range of household needs, is important for sustaining communities within smaller urban settlements and enhances the quality of life for their occupants.

Ultimately, financial constraints will determine the rate of public sector house building, while, the demand and supply of new housing in the private sector is largely dictated by market forces. Residential development will be accommodated within the areas zoned for residential use and within the areas zoned 'C1' 'Mixed Residential and Business' uses where residential would be 'open for consideration'. It is not envisaged that any residential development within the latter zone would be in excess of 50% of the overall development within this zone. It is also noted that Variation No. 2 of the existing Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 explicitly states that any proposed redevelopment on brownfield Village Centre sites would not be taken from the number of houses allocated for Donore. It is proposed that an average of 20 dwellings per hectare will be required within residential areas.

As noted above, to allow for the potential non-release of lands and choice of location, in excess of 50% more land has been zoned than considered necessary for residential development. Taking this into account, this land bank will deliver Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan's 34 additional dwellings, which could realise a population increase of approximately 85-92 persons over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan, as outlined above. The realisation of these dwellings alone could result in a population within the Village of approximately 813-820 persons within the

Local Area Plan's six year lifespan. This would equate to an increase in population of approximately 1.46-1.58% per annum over the period 2006-2013.

#### Objective H 1: Future Residential Development

- a) To ensure the implementation of the Housing Strategy and to integrate housing provided under Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 into private residential developments in a layout that prevents segregation and promotes good design and layout.
- b) To carry out the Council's responsibilities under the Housing Acts and to provide Local Authority dwellings, affordable units, voluntary co-operative housing and private sites as the need arises and as finances allow.
- c) To ensure that future residential development shall involve the undertaking of a Visual Impact Assessment, and be accompanied by a Visual Impact Statement, photomontages and any additional information or visual aids required to clearly demonstrate that the design and siting of the proposed dwelling/s will not have a negative impact upon the high-quality landscape of the Boyne Valley, and more importantly the landscape setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex. In particular, photomontages shall be sited so as to show the visual impact, if any, that any proposed development may have on the setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex in order to prevent any inappropriate or avoidable impacts on the quality of that environment.
- d) To promote a high standard of architecture in the design of new residential developments and to encourage a variety of house types, sizes and tenure in individual schemes and varieties, interest and social mix in private and social housing developments.
- e) To ensure the necessary infrastructural investment to facilitate the overall level of housing output required to meet the current and anticipated levels of demand in a planned and coherent fashion.

#### Policy H 1: Future Residential Development

- a) To ensure that future residential development in the area is suitably located, designed and serviced to enhance the local environment and prevent any inappropriate or avoidable impacts on the quality of that environment. In compliance with Policy HS POL 16 of the settlement strategy of the Meath County Development Plan '*between 25-30% of all new multi house developments, being developments in excess of four houses, shall be reserved for persons native to County Meath or those who by virtue of their employment require to live in the urban centre. The remainder of houses in such multiple house developments 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*'.
- b) To require future residential developments to undertake a Visual Impact Assessment, and be accompanied by a Visual Impact Statement, photomontages and any additional information or visual aids required to clearly demonstrate that the design and siting of the proposed dwelling/s will not have a negative impact upon the high-quality landscape of the Boyne Valley, and more importantly the landscape setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex.
- c) To ensure that Donore avoids the monotony of urban sprawl, the excessive and



monotonous duplication of house styles within residential developments will be strongly resisted. The unique character, vernacular style and special setting of the Village mean that its capacity to absorb large-scale residential developments is limited. Future developments must have regard to the local setting and aim to create a sense of place and identity in any proposed future development.

- d) To encourage a strong mix of house types, tenures and sizes. This will cater for changing household sizes and compositions, and to provide for a social and demographic balance within the Village.
- e) 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, 2009' and the accompanying best practice 'Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide' issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in February 2008. Applications for residential development shall be required to be accompanied by a landscaping plan and a design statement. Furthermore, regard should be had to the use of local materials and house styles in designing all future residential developments.
- f) To encourage infill housing developments on appropriate sites where the proposals respect the existing scale and character of the area, and sufficiently protect the amenities of adjoining properties within the area. Proposed developments must have regard to the surrounding environment and the predominant design features, the existing residential density and the existence of particular elements within the Village, such as stands of trees, protected structures, view and prospects, and open space areas.
- g) Apartments are not considered to be an appropriate housing type within Donore and will not be permitted. In conjunction with Section 10.1.4.10 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 relating to the 'Height Control of Residential Development' three-storey duplex units will not be permitted in 'villages'.
- h) To prohibit development on designated areas of open space that form part of a site layout for previously permitted residential developments.
- i) To require the naming of residential developments to reflect local place names, language or topographical features as appropriate and to incorporate old names from the locality as far as possible.
- j) To promote energy conservation and renewable energy technologies, as outlined under Section 14.0 of this Plan, in all future developments. Such measures should be consistent with other policies in this Plan.
- k) To support the provision of adequate engineering, as well as social infrastructure, as an integral part of any future residential development by ensuring that the necessary services and utilities infrastructure required for such developments are provided in tandem with the construction of any future residential developments.

#### 6.2.1 Social and Affordable Housing

To achieve a fully integrated town or village, development is required to cater for people of different ages and income groups. The creation of separate enclaves of private, social and affordable housing should be strongly resisted. Settlements that provide a mix of residential types, both in terms of tenure and economic characteristics, produce enriched social settings. Therefore, every residential development which must comply with Section 96 of the Planning and

Development Acts, 2000-2007 shall be required to provide up to 20% of such developments for social and affordable housing purposes. The final ratio will be determined by the Council.

Donore has had a significant level of Local Authority social housing, specifically the residential developments of 'St Mary's Cottages', 'St Mary's Villas' and the recent Council development to the West of these residential developments along the Kellystown Road. This is considered to be a comparatively high level of provision in relation to the overall number of households in the Village. Ultimately, future private residential developments should be encouraged to provide for a broad mixture of household types.

It is also noted that the Local Authority owns additional lands for future residential development to the north-west of the 'St Mary's Cottages' and 'St Mary's Villas'. Plans for the development of these lands are currently pending.

#### **Policy H 2: Social and Affordable Housing**

- a) Encourage the integration of social and affordable housing units within private residential developments, which prevents segregation, and promotes good design and layout.
- b) 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 Developments Acts, 2000-2007 and the County Housing Strategy.

#### **6.2.2 Framework Plans**

The preparation of Framework Plans will assist in achieving quality developments in terms of, inter alia, urban design, structure, delivery of community/amenity facilities, permeability and accessibility. The use of a Framework Plan has not been confined to residentially zoned lands; Framework Plans have also been sought for lands intended for other uses. The Planning Authority considers Framework Plans as an effective means of guiding new development and providing essential social infrastructure in a phased and sustainable manner.

This Local Area Plan identifies a large or key site that will require the preparation of an approved Framework Plan: subsequent planning applications will be required to adhere to the approved Plan. Having regard to the preparation and approval of this future Framework Plan the Planning Authority considers that proposals with a resultant population of less than 2,000 persons, the approval of the Executive of the Planning Authority will be required. Framework Plans with a resultant population greater than 2,000 persons will be subject to a public consultation process and subsequently the approval of the Elected Members of the Planning Authority.

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

- Proposals in relation to the overall design of the proposed development including maximum heights, external finishes of structures and the general appearance and design, including that of the public realm;
- The types and extent of any proposed development indicating how these uses integrate with surrounding development and land uses;
- Proposals to avoid or minimise potential visual or landscape impacts on the Boyne Valley and the Brú na Bóinne complex;

- Proposals in relation to transportation including public transportation and non motorized modes, vehicular road layout and access arrangements, loading/unloading provision, the provision of parking spaces and traffic management;
- Proposals in relation to the provision of services in the area including the provision of waste and sewerage facilities and water, electricity and telecommunications services, broadband, oil and gas pipelines, including storage facilities for oil and gas;
- Any residential development shall include proposals relating to the provision of amenities, facilities and services for the community including a fully equipped Childrens' Play Ground;
- To make provision for sport and recreational infrastructure; and
- To make provision, where appropriate for educational facilities.

### Policy H 3: 'Cruicerath' Framework Plan

To prepare a framework plan for those lands to the east of the Duleek Road and bounded by 'The Grange' residential development to the east and St Mary's Roman Catholic Church and associated Graveyard to the north within 'Cruicerath'. This framework plan shall provide for both a low density residential development and additional village centre uses to include a crèche, or an additional community facility, and a "drop-off/collection" area for Donore National School and associated car parking facilities to serve the School. The Framework Plan shall comply with the requirements as detailed above and shall include an access road that connects to that within 'The Grange' residential development, a pedestrian and cycleway route linking back into the Village Centre, preferably segregated from motorised traffic, preserve and augment as much of the existing hedgerow along the eastern side of the Duleek Road as is possible, provide for a pedestrian crossing to the front of Donore National School, and contain high-quality useable open space areas within the Plan area. The development of this site may require the insertion of a roundabout along the Duleek Road to cater for safe access and egress arrangements, this should be located across from the access point to 'St Mary's Villas' to maximise its benefit for both areas. The release of these lands is subject to the 'Order of Priority' for residential zoned lands contained within Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development 2007-2013.

The future development of lands within this Framework Plan should also take cognisance of the following guidelines:

The future development of the 'C1' zoned lands should seek to complement the identifiable Village Centre area within Donore whilst respecting the inherent characteristics of the existing buildings within the Village. Future development proposals should seek to:

- Provide for a mix of uses and active ground floor frontages addressing Main Street,
- Establish a continuous building line within an accompanying strong sense of enclosure along the Village's Main Street,
- Provide for a fully equipped Childrens' Play Ground, a "drop-off/collection" area for Donore National School, associated car parking facilities to serve the School and a pedestrian crossing from the site to Donore National School.
- Buildings should respect the scale and massing of existing buildings within the Donore, be a maximum of two-storeys in height and ameliorate any potential visual impact they may have on the setting of the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site.

Parallel on street car parking and landscaped urban spaces could be inserted to the front of these proposed buildings. Access to the retail units and off street car parking could also be provided to the rear of the terrace, as is the case with the recent development at the junction of the Duleek Road and Main Street.

The future development of the 'A5' residential zoned lands within the Framework Plan area should be developed in a more rural manner than that of 'The Grange' and could involve the use of clusters of smaller residential areas that allow for the retention of a rural character given the Village's rural context.

The key components are:

- Single-storey to one and half-storey dwellings.
- Shared surface with inherent traffic calming measures.
- High-quality landscaping and boundary treatments:
  - Boundary treatments to comprise of stone walls of a rural nature / the retention and augmentation of existing hedgerows with indigenous planting.
- Vernacular building forms with plaster/render finishes, natural slate roofs, and timber-sash windows and doors.

## 7.0 COMMERCIAL, ECONOMIC AND RETAIL USES

### 7.1 Existing Commercial, Economic and Retail Uses

Donore is identified within the *County Retail Hierarchy* as a 'Level 5 - Smaller Village Centre/Crossroads'. In relation to such settlements, the existing Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 states that:

*Village centres play an important role in rural community life in the County. In general, they serve smaller catchment areas and have a more limited range and quality of retail floorspace than Small Town Centres. The retail offer within each of these centres is limited and as such the majority of retail needs are met in higher order centres in the County Retail Hierarchy. All of these centres would therefore benefit from an enhancement of their retail floorspace and specifically convenience floorspace in order that the daily needs of the villages and their catchments are better met.*

Donore has a small yet developing range of retail services with a growing level of comparison retailing having being developed in the past two years. Commercial development within the Village is dominated by the recently constructed part-two and part-three storey retail development to the south of the Slane/Stalleen and Duleek Road junction comprising of approximately 5 no. retail units at groundfloor level with offices and residential units above. At the time of the preparation of this Plan, only one of these units along the Duleek Road remains vacant.



*Plate Seventeen: The recently constructed mixed-use development to the south of the junction of the Duleek and Slane/Stalleen Roads.*

The only other additional commercial premise in the Village is 'Daly's Inn' Public House located within the Village Centre.

## 7.2 Future Commercial, Economic and Retail Development Uses

Donore's retail and commercial zone is based within the Village Centre area. Currently, the range of services provided within the Village is good. To provide for its growing population base, as well as the Village's role as a service provider for the surrounding rural area and the Village's location along an increasingly important "Tourism Route" between The 'Battle of the Boyne' Visitors' Centre located within Oldbridge House and Demesne, and the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre, the Village may need to expand upon its commercial and retailing functions in the future and may benefit from having a greater range and variety of such retail facilities.

Any future retail development within the Plan area should be directed to locate within the Village Centre thereby facilitating multi-purpose trips and reinforcing the commercial core. Any future expansion of the Village Centre area should include the change of use of the existing residential properties located on the northern and southern side of the Village's Main Street currently zoned land-use zoning objective 'C1' in order to retain the Village's Centre as the core retailing area. This would aid in the consolidation of the Village, and strengthen the existing retailing base.

Given the excellent condition and upkeep of the premises fronting on to Main Street and throughout the Village generally, it is not considered that there is any need to encourage the renovation of existing premises fronting onto the Village Centre. It is considered sufficient that the rate of maintenance evident within the Village be maintained.

The following policies are additional to the Council's policies regarding retail and commercial development within the existing Meath County Development Plan:

### Objective CER 1: Commercial, Economic and Retail

To facilitate the strengthening of the range and quality of the Village's retail offer to allow the Village to meet its local shopping needs.

### Policy CER 1: Commercial, Economic and Retail

- a) To maintain and improve the vitality and viability of the Village Centre as the centre of commercial and retailing activity within Donore, in order to ensure both a mixture and variety of local shopping, to serve the day to day needs of the local community. This should involve the redevelopment of those dwellings fronting onto the northern and southern side of the Village Centre's Main Street zoned land-use zoning objective 'C1', and the development of those 'C1' zoned lands along the eastern side of the Duleek Road, for retail and commercial uses.
- b) To encourage the use of materials and finishes that respect the established vernacular design traits of the surrounding properties in future commercial and retail developments; this includes roof pitches, façade and fenestration details, and building materials and finishes used.

#### 7.2.1 Shop-fronts

Shop-fronts are one of the most important elements in determining the character, quality and image of retail streets in any town and village. In order to increase the attractiveness of the Village, the Council will encourage good contemporary shop-front design which is complementary to the Village's existing character in new developments. The Council will actively discourage poor shop-front design which detracts from the villagescape such as the use of roller shutters and their associated boxes being placed on the exterior of shop-fronts.



#### Policy SF 1: Shop-fronts

To encourage good shop-front design that reflects the scale and proportions of the existing streetscape. The Council will seek to retain the remaining traditional shop-fronts of townscape importance.

#### 7.2.2 Street Furniture

Street furniture plays a vital role in helping to create an attractive, coherent and legible urban area. The Village possesses a fine water pump and some seating. A street furniture palette, reflecting the nature of the Village's various character areas and spaces, should be developed and designed to accommodate a wide range of functions. It should not be dominated by any one function and would aim to provide an improved public realm setting.

#### Policy SF 2: Street Furniture

To encourage the creation of a Street Furniture Palette to create an improved public realm setting within the Village that is appropriate given the Village's location within this important historical setting.

#### 7.3 Enterprise and Employment

Having regard to the nature, role, scale and location of the Village, the strategy for economic development in Donore must focus on the achievable delivery of local services and the promotion of tourism related businesses whilst not impacting upon the surrounding environment or landscape quality. For this reason, it was considered that enterprise and employment zoned lands would not be an appropriate land use within the Village. New build office units are available within the Village Centre for start-up businesses, supplementary to the existing provision, and are deemed to be a more appropriate form of employment generation within Donore than traditional industrial zoned lands given the Village's historical setting.

#### Objective EE 1: Enterprise and Employment

To permit economic and enterprise activities, including home-based activities, where, by virtue of their nature and scale, they can be accommodated without detriment to the amenities of the surrounding residential areas and will not impact upon the Village's character, the setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex or the surrounding high-quality landscape environment.

#### Policy EE 1: Enterprise and Employment

To promote balanced sustainable economic development within the Village; such development should not be detrimental to the amenities of the surrounding residential areas nor impact upon the Village's character, the setting of the Brú na Bóinne complex or the surrounding high-quality landscape environment.

#### 7.4 Tourism Development

The Boyne Valley surrounding Donore Village contains a high-quality natural heritage landscape and a significant level of man-made built heritage which attracts thousands of visitors each year to the area. The Planning Authority recognises the importance of tourism in the economic life of the County which offers a significant opportunity for increased expenditure, economic development and job creation in both Donore Village and the County in general.

The area's growing importance can be seen in the substantial investment in tourism infrastructure within the area in recent years. The Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre opened in 1997, while the Battle of the Boyne Visitors' Centre within Oldbridge House and Demesne opened in 2008 to expand upon and facilitate the tourism potential of the passage tombs of 'Knowth' and 'Newgrange', and the internationally important Battle sites from the Battle of 1690AD, respectively, in a sustainable and non-invasive manner. Currently, external consultants are completing a roadmap for the further development of tourism infrastructure associated with the Boyne Navigation to the north of the Village, which examines the potential to extend the Boyne Towpath from Slane to Drogheda. This will further solidify the area's attraction for tourism and leisure facilities.

Donore Village is in a strategic location to continue to capitalise upon its siting at the junction of a substantial number of routes serving the notable international heritage and tourist attractions arranged along this section of the Boyne Valley, specifically the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, the key 'Battle of the Boyne' sites and the partially restored Boyne Navigation. There is substantial scope for Donore Village to continue to function as an important gateway and base for tourism activities in the area. The Local Authority also recognises that Donore has considerable potential for the development of tourism and cultural uses, particularly the development of accommodation, entertainment and related tourist facilities to further expand upon the potential that this cultural heritage destination and area of local distinctiveness offers. This Plan acknowledges the importance of visitor experiences and impressions, whilst aiming to encourage tourism that is sustainable and environmentally friendly.

<b>Objective TD 1: Tourism Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To continue to support and encourage increased coordination, cohesion and linkages between agencies involved in tourism development e.g. Fáilte Ireland (East and Midlands Region) and Meath County Council.</li> <li>b) To support and promote sustainable tourism through the encouragement of development that enhances as well as protects the County's landscape, and other elements of the natural and built heritage.</li> <li>c) To work in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and other tourism organisations to promote and facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure supports for the further development of tourism.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective TD 2: Tourism Development</b>
To establish a ' <i>Tourist Signage Strategy</i> ' to include integrated directional and interpretive signage with a timeframe for implementation in the County, as well guidance for the appearance and location of these.
<b>Objective TD 3: Tourism Development</b>
To enhance both the public realm, streets, approach roads and general Village character within Donore in order to promote a quality host environment to facilitate the role of the Village as a tourist centre for the surrounding area.

<b>Policy TD 1: Tourism Development</b>
To continue to promote Donore Village as an important tourist centre within the surrounding area and to encourage, facilitate and capitalise upon the Village's location adjacent to notable

international heritage and tourist attractions arranged along this section of the Boyne Valley, notably the Brú na Bóinne complex.

**Policy TD 2: Tourism Development**

To review and co-ordinate the development of an integrated and well informed '*Tourist Signage Strategy*' for the Village of Donore in an attractive and well designed manner. This will be undertaken in conjunction with the Roads and Heritage Departments of Meath County Council, the Louth/Meath Economic Development and Tourism Committee, the National Roads Authority and the Heritage and Planning Division of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government in order to facilitate the development of tourism within the area.

**Policy TD 3: Tourism Development**

To enhance both the public realm, streets, approach roads and general Village character within Donore in order to promote a quality host environment to facilitate the role of the Village as a tourist centre for the surrounding area.

## **8.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES**

### **8.1 Existing Community Facilities**

The only civic and community facility in the Village is Donore National School. It does not have a community hall or related facility. The only additional facility is the 'Donore Rovers Football Club' based immediately to the east of the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre approximately 1.5 to 2km along the Slane/Stalleen Road to the west of the Village at Roughgrange.



*Plate Eighteen: Donore National School.*

Given Donore's current population, the level of civic and community facilities is insufficient to cater for the Village's future needs. If Donore is to experience future population growth, it is essential that sufficient community facilities are established, catering for all age groups.

### **8.2 Future Community Development**

Facilities for community development allow for social interaction and engagement, and are an important part of any village in Ireland. Building strong, inclusive communities is a key element in achieving sustainable development objectives, a core policy of this Local Area Plan. Sustainable communities require not only economic development, but also the provision of and access to community support, education and health services, amenities and leisure services and a good quality built environment. Communities also require opportunities to meet, interact and form bonds, which are essential prerequisites to the development of a sense of place and belonging.

The Primary School had a current enrolment figure of 149 pupils in the 2008/2009 school year with an expectant increase in enrolment levels for the 2009/2010 school year predicted to be

greater than 170 pupils. The current capacity and potential future demands on this facility have been considered during the preparation of this Local Area Plan.

The local community's effort to renovate the former National School adjacent to St Mary's Roman Catholic Church is commended and it is an objective of this Plan to promote its final inception as a Village Hall.



*Plate Nineteen: The former Donore National School within the grounds of St Mary's Roman Catholic Church.*

#### **Objective CC 1: Community Facilities**

- a) To promote and enable the development of community facilities, public services and support mechanisms in the Village, which can adequately serve the needs of the local population over the six year timeframe of this Local Area Plan and beyond.
- b) To promote the provision of community, cultural, recreational and amenity facilities in tandem with residential, commercial and other development.
- c) To ensure children have access to high quality play and recreation facilities.

#### **Policy CC 1: Village Hall**

To work in conjunction with the local community to continue to renovate the former National School within the grounds of St Mary's Roman Catholic Church to allow for its future use as a Village Hall to cater for the needs of the local community.

<b>Policy CC 2: Shared Use of Community and Educational Facilities</b>
To investigate, in co-operation with relevant agencies, the possibility of maximising the shared use of existing community and educational facilities for community and non-school purposes, where possible, to promote the sustainable use of such infrastructure and community cohesion.
<b>Policy CC 3: Phasing of Development</b>
To ensure the appropriate provision and phasing of amenity, community, cultural, educational and recreational facilities in tandem with commercial, residential and other such development.
<b>Policy CC 4: Improve Public Service Facilities and Infrastructure</b>
To support and facilitate the improvement of public service infrastructure and facilities in the area.
<b>Policy CC 5: Safer Routes to School</b>
To support the policies and recommendations outlined in the 'Safer Routes to School Initiative' (DTO 2005), to ensure adequate pedestrian access and safer routes to school throughout the Village.

### 8.3 Open Spaces and Community Amenities

Active and passive open spaces and facilities are an important component of any village or town and the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 explicitly sets out the manner in which residential developments must comply with open space standards.

Donore enjoys some notable environmental qualities within its vicinity, particularly the River Boyne Valley and the undulating hills surrounding its banks, specifically the 'Redmountain' to the south and 'Donore Hill' to the north of the Village. However, the Village itself is distinctly lacking in active recreational and community amenities; there are no significant or distinctive open spaces aside from the Village Graveyard, safe walking networks away from motorised vehicles or active areas of open space to maximise and appropriately utilise such natural and man-made environmental assets, settings and views.

Aside from this area, the only other public open spaces are those located within the older residential developments of 'St Mary's Cottages' and 'St Mary's Villas' to the south of the Village and within the recently constructed residential development of 'The Grange' to the east of the Village. These open space areas comprise of extensive grassed areas with some recent tree planting. However, these open space areas do not provide play equipment, children's play areas or all weather facilities and, due to the lack of pedestrian or cycle ways within the Village, are not interlinked in any cohesive manner. They provide only a minimal amenity value and the Village is in need of a larger more purposeful open space area or a linked series of open spaces with associated children's playground areas and civic amenity spaces.





*Plate Twenty: Open space areas interspersed within 'The Grange' residential development.*

These public open spaces are protected by policy SOC POL 45 of the existing Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, which states that:

*'No residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.'*

All current public open spaces have been zoned as 'Open Space' within this Plan to further protect their intrinsic value to the Village's population.

A football pitch is provided to the east of the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre and home to the 'Donore Rovers Football Club'. However it is approximately 2km from the Village and is outside of the Plan boundary being located at Roughgrange.

The possibility of safe walking and cycling routes have not yet been realised within the Village. A comprehensive open space network needs to be established within the Village, which also allows for unrestricted movement between such areas. This Plan endeavours to identify open space areas and connect these with one another via green linkages or upgraded Village footpaths. This will contribute to the overall balance between the built and natural environment, integrating existing and future residential development with the existing landscape, and providing important ecological and physical linkages within the Village.

One such proposal would be to utilise the access routes within the current and proposed future residential development areas to link into a cohesive walking route within the Village. This could effectively act as a circuitous amenity walking route in conjunction with the existing footpaths along the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone and Duleek Roads. Safe pedestrian walks have been identified within this Local Area Plan ensuring that Donore is both pedestrian friendly and permeable to its residents.

#### **Objective OS 1: Open Spaces and Community Amenities**

- a) To promote the development of a walking route through-out the Village that is interconnected and allows for a circuitous route to be developed. This walk will create a pedestrian friendly designated pedestrian linkage and safe walking route, the majority of which will be un-associated with motorised traffic. This walk includes:
  - A circuitous pedestrian walkway extending from the entrance to 'St Mary's Villas' to

the entrance to the residential development of 15 no. dwellings accessed from Slane/Stalleen Road, via the 'A2' residentially zoned lands to the west of 'St Mary's Villas' that is owned by the Council, to the entrance to the 'Grange' residential development along the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road through the residential development to its southern extremity, through the 'A5' residential zoned lands to the proposed access entrance to the lands along the Duleek Road and back to the entrance to 'St Mary's Villas'.

- b) To review and co-ordinate a signage programme for the Village of Donore in conjunction with the Village's strategic location in proximity to the 'Battle of the Boyne' Visitors' Centre at Oldbridge and the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre at Roughgrange with the Roads and Heritage Departments of Meath County Council, the National Roads Authority and the Heritage and Planning Division of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government.
- c) To allow for the development of a Village Park within the 'F1' zoned lands to the west of the Village.

#### **Policy OS 1: Open Space & Amenities**

To ensure that Donore is pedestrian friendly through the provision of designated pedestrian linkages and safe walking routes preferably not associated with motorised traffic.

#### **Policy OS 2: Active and Passive Open Spaces**

To provide areas of high-quality active and passive amenity that are well designed, interlinked with one another, suitably proportioned and accessible to the surrounding community. The development of open spaces will aim to enhance and protect natural features, and be set in safe and secure environments enjoyed by all sectors of the community.

#### **Policy OS 3: Open Space in Residential Areas**

To ensure that a minimum rate of 15% of the total site area shall be designated as 'Open Space' in new residential developments.

## **9.0 HERITAGE**

### **9.1 Existing Heritage**

As stated within this document, the built and natural heritage of Donore are important resources that must be protected and enhanced to add to the local sense of place and belonging, and also to increase the attractiveness of the area to tourists and visitors alike. The protection of these resources and presentation of their heritage value are key considerations in this Plan; all development objectives and planning policies have been formulated with a view to improving the overall quality of their context and setting.

#### **9.1.1 Archaeological Heritage**

The area within the Plan's development boundary does not contain any sites of archaeological interest and does not contain any identified items on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP). However, given the Village's location in the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, there is significant potential for future archaeological discoveries.

Archaeology is a non-renewable resource and is of great cultural and scientific importance. Development sites may include archaeological remains beneath the ground surface which may only be uncovered during development work. They must be investigated and recorded in detail. In relation to development proposals the planning authority will adopt a policy of archaeological monitoring which will be required on developments where the scale and nature of such developments may, in the opinion of the planning authority, have a negative impact on previously unknown archaeological features/artefacts.

The value of such archaeological sites and monuments in Donore is fully recognised by the Council. When considering development proposals the Council will have regard to the observations and recommendations of the Office of Public Works and the Heritage and Planning Division of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, as well as the views and concerns of other interested statutory bodies in assessing such planning applications.

In relation to archaeological assessment of sites, the Council may also require the developer to submit a report prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist on the archaeological implications of the proposed development. In appropriate circumstances, the Council when granting permission for development may impose conditions requiring the following:

1. Professional archaeological supervision of site excavations,
2. The funding by the applicant of any necessary archaeological assessment, monitoring, testing or excavation of the site and the submission of a report thereon, prior to the commencement of development, and
3. The preservation of all or part of any archaeological remains on the site.

Applicants are advised to consult archaeological maps, which are available for consultation from the planning authority, as well as the Environmental Parameters Map, in order to ascertain whether their site is located within a known area of archaeological potential. All Planning applications should have regard to the Heritage Council's 'Archaeology and Development: Guidelines for Good Practice for Developers, 2000'.

### Policy AH 1: Record of Monuments and Places

- a) To allow for archaeological assessment and examination to occur before any development may be undertaken, prior to a decision on an application or following a grant of permission. The Council may require an Archaeological Report outlining the archaeological implications of the proposed development. Where permission for such proposals is granted, the applicant will have due regard to the recommendations of the Heritage and Planning Division of the DoEHLG.
- b) To promote a presumption in favour of “preservation in situ” of archaeological remains and settings, in accordance with national policy, when dealing with proposals for development that would impact upon archaeological sites and/or features.
- c) To seek the publication of the results of any archaeological investigations carried out within Donore Village.

### 9.2 Built Heritage

There are a number of buildings and structures of historical significance within Donore. The Village has three structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) attached to the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 in accordance with the provisions of Section 51 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007 (see Appendix C for a full listing and description of each). This Local Area Plan also takes account of the structures recommended for protection within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) compiled in 2004 by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.



*Plate Twenty-One: Donore Parochial House: a Protected Structure.*

The continued protection of the built heritage of Donore is intrinsic to the sustained success and viability of the Village itself.

### 9.2.1 Current Protected Structures

There are three structures designated as protected structures in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, with a fourth 'Frank's Cottage', an important local landmark, located just outside of the Village boundary to the north-east. The County Development Plan details the Council's policies in assessing development proposals relating to such structures.

#### **Policy BH 1: Existing Protected Structures**

- a) To ensure the continued protection of the Protected Structures identified in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) appended to the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.
- b) To require planning permission for all works, both to the exterior and interior, which materially affect the character of a protected structure or any element of the structure that contributes to its special interest.

### 9.3 Natural Heritage

Under the Heritage Act, 1995, Natural Heritage is composed of native plants, animals and their habitats, geology, landscapes, seascapes and inland waterways.

The Village and the surrounding environs are characterised by significant environmental assets, none are designated at national or local level. The Village does not contain any Natura 2000 sites (i.e. cSACs, NHAs or SPAs), although as identified in the SEA Screening Report, the River Boyne cSAC is located in close proximity to the Village.

There is a diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats within the Donore area including hedgerow, grassland and woodland habitats. The protection of the natural environment of Donore is fundamental to the success of this Local Area Plan, as it provides the Village with its own unique identity and amenity background. Therefore it is vital to achieve the correct balance between protection of the natural environment and the future development of the Village.

This diversity is not under any significant threat. However, a sustainable approach to future development is needed to protect and conserve it. This should be complemented by a drive to consolidate the Village further, with a clear demarcation between rural and urban areas, and the protection of natural heritage features, such as hedgerows, individual trees, important stands of trees, and river and floodplain environments.

The Village is surrounded by open-cast quarries to the east and north. It is a policy of this Plan to retain a 'Greenbelt' between these quarries and the Village and to retain these lands to the east of the Village between the Village's development boundary and these quarries for a range of future community uses.

#### **Policy NQ 1: Neighbouring Quarries**

To retain a distinct 'Greenbelt' between the neighbouring quarries to the north and east of the Village, and the Village's development boundary in order to protect the Village's amenities.

### 9.3.1 Trees and Hedgerows

There are a number of tree groups within and around Donore that are worthy of protection. These are complemented by a limited number of hedgerows within the Village, due to significant field amalgamation within the surrounding area for tillage purposes in recent decades. These should be retained and incorporated where possible into any future development proposals within the Village (refer to the Environmental Parameters Map).

Hedgerows and mature trees can be multi-functional and have immense value to an area:

1. Flooding Control: root systems of hedgerows regulate water movement and help prevent flooding.
2. Disease Control: hedgerows help prevent the spread of airborne disease.
3. Water Quality: hedgerows trap silt and soil particles, which clog up fish spawning grounds if they enter watercourses.
4. Cultural/Historical: hedgerows are part of Ireland's cultural, historical and archaeological Heritage: Village boundary hedgerows are particularly important as they can often date from medieval times.
5. Wildlife: as the area of native woodlands in Ireland is significantly smaller than fellow European Union Members, hedgerows have become very important wildlife habitats. They provide food, shelter, and corridors of movement, nest and hibernation sites for many of our native flora and fauna.
6. Screening: hedgerows when incorporated into urban developments provide screening and can greatly enhance the scenic quality of the area.

The hedgerows surrounding and penetrating the Village provide the area with optimal wildlife corridors. Intermittent open spaces alongside these routes allow the opportunity for wildlife to migrate. In this way it is important for the various natural and semi-natural features and open space elements link wherever possible, thereby guaranteeing flora and fauna dispersal throughout the Village. This provides the Village with an attractive setting and allows for interaction between people and their surrounding natural environment. All the above components can assist in the integration of future development into the existing landscape while sustaining the natural visual image of the Village.

There are a limited number of trees that are worthy of protection within the Village's development boundary, these include a stand of Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) to the front of the National School, a deciduous tree to the front of the Roman Catholic Church most probably a Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), a range of trees mainly on the southern side of the Slane/Stalleen Road in individual front gardens comprising of mainly European Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), a deciduous tree, possibly European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) to the rear of the protected structure at the northern side of the junction of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone and Slane/Stalleen Roads and a range of tree species on the northern side of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road along the hedgerow comprising of mainly European Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

Complementing these mature trees and stands of trees are semi-mature trees within the numerous hedgerows surrounding the Village. These add to the character of the Village and for this reason should also be preserved through the identification of key hedgerows within the Village that contain a substantial number of tree and shrub species, and are therefore the most diverse hedgerow habitats.





*Plate Twenty-Two: A mature tree within Stalleen Demesne marking the western entrance to the Village along the Slane/Stalleen Road.*

The hedgerows that add to the Village's character within the Local Area Plan area are principally those along the approach roads and those surrounding agricultural fields mainly to the north of the Village (refer to the Environmental Parameters Map).

Development will not generally be permitted where it is likely to damage or destroy either trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or those which have a particular local amenity, nature conservation value or special interest, notwithstanding the fact that they are not listed for protection within this Local Area Plan.



Plate Twenty-Three: A mature hedgerow along the eastern side of the Duleek Road to the south of the Village.

#### Objective TH 1: Tree Protection

To protect the following tree stands within the Village as indicated on the Environmental Parameters Map:

1. A stand of Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) to the front of the National School,
2. A deciduous tree to the front of the Roman Catholic Church most probably a Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*),
3. A range of trees mainly on the southern side of the Slane/Stalleen Road in individual front gardens comprising of mainly European Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*),
4. A deciduous tree, possibly European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) to the rear of the protected structure at the northern side of the junction of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone and Slane/Stalleen Roads,
5. A range of tree species on the northern side of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road along the hedgerow comprising of mainly European Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

#### Policy TH 1: Tree Protection

To protect the significant tree stands within the Village as indicated on the Environmental Parameters Map.

#### Objective TH 2: Hedgerow Protection

To retain, where possible, the following hedgerows and incorporate them into future development layouts within the Village as indicated on the Environmental Parameters Map specifically:

1. Those hedgerows along the approach roads into the Village, specifically those hedgerows remaining along the northern section of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road, those to the east of the Duleek Road and those hedgerows fronting on to both sides of the Slane/Stalleen Road.
2. The various individual trees, shrubbery and hedgerows surrounding agricultural fields to the north of the Village as identified on the Environmental Parameters Map.

#### Policy TH 2: Development Proposals and Hedgerow Protection

To retain, where possible, significant hedgerows and incorporate them into future development layouts within the Village as indicated on the Environmental Parameters Map.

#### Objective TH 3: Removal of Hedgerows and Trees

To implement a presumption against the removal of both hedgerows and trees during the course of developments as the Council recognises the heritage and amenity importance of the County's hedgerow and tree resources.

#### Policy TH 3: Removal of Hedgerows and Trees

- a) To promote the protection and preservation of existing hedgerows and to encourage planting of native hedgerow species of local provenance.
- b) To encourage the retention, where possible, of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatments in rural areas. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, provision of the same type of boundary will be required of similar length set back within the site. This shall also relate to Road Improvements and Realignments carried out by the Local Authorities or other agents on their behalf.

#### 9.3.2 Significant Views & Prospects

The landscape of the Boyne Valley is characterised by a steep river valley with areas of rolling lowland adjacent to the River Boyne. It is arguably the most significant and highly valued landscape in the County as the presence of the River Boyne and the Brú na Bóinne complex to the north-west of the Village have endowed it with a number of notable views and prospects. These views and prospects of special amenity value and/or special interest include:

- 2 no. views to the west of the Village orientated to the north-west and the north-east, respectively, and
- 1 no. view to the north of the Village orientated to the west.

#### **Policy VP 1: Views and Prospects**

To preserve the visual amenity value of the designated viewpoints through restricting development that would represent a disproportionate visual effect on any available vistas.

#### **9.3.3 Natural Environment**

The continued protection of the natural environment in and around the Village is vital to the success of developing Donore sustainably.

#### **Objective NE 1: Natural Environment**

To ensure continued protection for the following natural environmental features and allow for these features to be integrated within the overall vision for the Village:

1. Mature tree stands,
2. Significant hedgerows,
3. Open space networks, and
4. Various walking routes.

#### **Policy NE 1: Natural Environment**

To ensure continued protection for the identified natural environmental features and allow for these features to be integrated within the overall vision for the Village.





Figure Four: Environmental Parameters Map.

## 10.0 MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

Good connectivity provides a town or village with an efficient and effective transportation system both within the settlement and to urban centres surrounding it.

### 10.1 Transportation

Donore is within easy reach of Drogheda, Duleek and Slane. A village of this size requires good transportation links to the surrounding urban areas in order to attract both future population and potential employment opportunities.

There are four main approach roads into the Village. The principal approach roads are from Drogheda, Duleek and Slane via a third-class network of roads to the north-east, south and west of the Village, respectively. The final approach route is gained from a smaller third-class road, the Kellystown Road, joining with the Duleek Road to the south of the Village. All of these routes converge in the centre of the Village at St Mary's Roman Catholic Church.



*Plate Twenty-Four: The Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Approach Road.*

Physically, these roads and the Village Centre itself are in a poor condition: this is particularly true of the north-eastern and southern approach roads from Drogheda and Duleek, respectively. The Local Authority is cognisant of the fact that the existing transport network requires upgrading in certain areas within the Village. Environmental improvements and traffic calming measures can facilitate an improved environmental quality within the Village. Such improvements would include upgraded pedestrian pathways, cycleways, textured surfacing, tactile paving (excluding tarmacadam) and improved road markings and signs for all users. These improvements can be appropriately progressed in conjunction with tree planting programmes for residential developments and various public improvement initiatives within Donore.



The principal entrance routes to the Village are not heavily trafficked given that they are third-class routes, although the constriction suffered at Donore National School along the Duleek Road during “drop-off” and “collection” times leads to daily congestion at peak use times. It is also noted that the Village is increasingly trafficked by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) utilising the Village’s Main Street as a connection between the M1 National Motorway and the N2 National Primary Road (thus avoiding the Drogheda Toll Bridge) and also by surrounding heavy industrial factories and plants.

In order to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety along the principal routes of Donore, it is important that public lighting needs are provided for to an adequate standard, particularly on access points which serve zoned lands. It is also of critical importance to the vitality and accessibility of Donore that permeability is enhanced between existing and future development proposals. The Local Authority supports the creation of priority integrated pedestrian and cycleway routes to facilitate the promotion of sustainable travel patterns within the Village area.

The environmental improvements promoted by this Local Area Plan for the Village Centre include the construction of pedestrian crossings, augmenting existing Village footpaths, the development of cycleways, and the use of textured surfacing, tactile paving (which does not include tarmacadam), and improved road markings for cyclist, pedestrian and motorised traffic. Improvements shall be required in tandem with the appropriate demarcation of areas for car parking, as well as tree planting and planter coordination initiatives within the Village Centre.

#### Objective T 1: Transportation

- a) To maintain, and improve, as required, the local road network to ensure a high standard of road quality and safety.
- b) To implement appropriate traffic calming and management measures in conjunction with any environmental improvements throughout the Village.
- c) To promote the provision of cycle and pedestrian priority routes.
- d) To improve roadside treatments in all new developments to include vegetative planting, preferably of indigenous hedgerow species, rather than rendered walls and fences, which can if un-maintained detract from the amenity of the area.
- e) To require the preparation of Mobility Management Plans for large scale developments, where appropriate.

#### Policy T 1: Transportation

- a) To reserve access points throughout Donore to allow development of appropriate vehicular routes to undeveloped zoned lands. Such access routes should be so designed to be overlooked and appropriately landscaped.
- b) To actively discourage the use of the Village’s road network by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) in conjunction with traffic calming measures and other environmental improvements.
- c) To undertake an overview of the level of signage within Donore, and where required, to augment signage. Suitable directional signage should be maintained along the Village’s approach roads.

## 10.2 Pedestrian and Cycling Facilities and Networks

It is essential to provide quality pedestrian permeability within Donore to promote ease of access throughout the area. Pedestrian comfort and quality access are essential to ensure the creation of a vibrant and safe area for workers, visitors and residents alike. As a minimum design requirement, quality pedestrian access will be required as an integrated feature of all development applications.

Pedestrian paths are provided mainly in the central area and within the recently constructed residential developments. Those footpaths that do exist tend to be of a high quality and appear to have been recently constructed. The Village Centre does not possess any pedestrian crossing points with associated dropped kerbs and is therefore difficult to traverse for the elderly, wheelchair users and pram users alike.

In accordance with National Planning Policy, a modal shift from the private car to public transportation, walking or cycling will be encouraged throughout Donore and therefore new developments should allow for direct cyclist and pedestrian access to and from the Village Centre. The relatively compact nature of the Village provides an excellent opportunity for the strengthening of pedestrian walk and cycling routes. Sufficient space should also be required for bicycle parking to the standards as outlined in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

As identified in Section 10.1, public lighting is not equitably distributed throughout the Village. In order to enhance the image of Donore as a permeable and pedestrian safe area, it is important that public lighting provision is reviewed and appropriate upgrading is made where required. Currently public lighting is required along the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone and Slane/Stalleen Roads to the Village's boundary.

<b>Objective PC 1: Footpath Improvement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To install a pedestrian crossing within the Village Centre area, preferably to the front of the 'Daybreak' convenience shop along the Slane/Stalleen Road.</li> <li>b) To install a pedestrian crossing to the front of Donore National School along the Duleek Road.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective PC 2: Footpath and Public Lighting Provision</b>
<p>To facilitate the provision of footpaths and public lighting in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To construct a footpath and public lighting along both sides of the Slane/Stalleen Road from the existing footpath point to the Village Boundary.</li> <li>b) To construct a footpath and public lighting along the northern side of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road from the existing footpath point to the Village Boundary.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective PC 3: Cyclist Facilities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To provide for an integrated network of cycleways throughout the Village where considered appropriate in order to promote more sustainable modes of transportation.</li> <li>b) To seek the provision of adequate bicycle parking facilities throughout the Village and within all new residential developments.</li> </ul>

**Policy PC 1: Footpath and Public Lighting Improvements and Provisions**

- a) To facilitate the upgrading and the provision of the identified footpaths and public lighting within the Village as outlined within this Plan.
- b) To ensure that new footpaths are constructed to safely link with approach roads with the Village Centre.

**Policy PC 2: Cyclist Facilities**

To facilitate and encourage cycling as a more convenient, popular and safe method of transport, through the designation of an integrated cycle network throughout the Village. This cycle network will link population, commercial and community facilities in a coherent and legible manner.

**Policy PC 3: Heavy Goods Vehicles Parking**

To investigate the provision of 'loading bays' within the Village's development boundary.

**10.3 Car Parking**

There are both public and private car parking areas within Donore, notably the off-street car park located to the rear of the recently constructed retail development at the junction of the Slane/Stalleen and Duleek Roads, the car park to the east of 'Daly's Inn' Public House and the gravel car park to the front of the Village's graveyard within the Village Centre. These spaces are used in conjunction with the significant level of delineated car parking spaces along the Village's Main Street and the Duleek Road. Overall, there does not appear to be an issue with regard to the availability of car parking facilities within the Village Centre area.

Donore National School contains a turning circle/drop-off and collection point that also functions as a car park for the staff and visitors of the School fronting onto the Duleek Road. This is not adequate to serve the needs of the school's employees and visitors, or the "drop-off and pick-up" demands of the parents. Currently, the surrounding area at school drop-off and collection times is subject to significant congestion and is a potential traffic hazard along the Duleek Road. A designated car parking area is required adjacent to the school.

**Objective CP 1: Car Parking**

- a) To identify further car parking bays along Main Street in conjunction with the environmental upgrade of the Village Centre itself.
- b) To provide a safe car parking facility adjacent to the National School to serve the collection and drop-off needs of the School.
- c) To examine the provision of additional off-street public car parking in the Village Centre and encourage the development of adequate parking to serve the Village Centre and community facilities.
- d) To provide adequate disabled car parking spaces at appropriate locations throughout the Village.
- e) To provide loading bays to serve the commercial and retail areas of the Village at appropriate locations.

**Policy CP 1: Car Parking**

To facilitate the upgrading and the provision of car parking spaces within the Village as outlined within this Plan.

**10.4 Public Transportation**

The provision of quality, attractive public transport services will help promote mobility management and aid an increased modal shift from car-based travel. Bus Éireann provides Donore with a bus service to Drogheda, Duleek and Navan. These routes offer a comprehensive all day service (Monday to Saturday) with a limited bus service on Sunday. Although there are no designated 'bus stops' in the Donore, services pick-up and drop-off passengers mainly outside 'Daly's Inn' Public House.

**Policy PT 1: Public Transportation**

To work in conjunction with Córas Iompair Éireann (CIE) to provide bus stops and accompanying shelters within the Village Centre to serve all bus users.

## 11.0 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Donore Village is not under severe risk of flooding due to its elevated topography. Furthermore, the closest river, the River Boyne, does not flow through the Village. As a natural phenomenon of the hydrological cycle, flooding is largely attributed to extreme rainfall events, of which a changing climate has demonstrated over recent times. Those areas that would benefit from flood alleviation works as identified by the Office of Public Works (OPW) are mapped on the Environmental Parameters Map.

Similar to other natural processes, flooding cannot be completely eliminated or prevented. However, its impacts can be minimised with proactive and sustainable management.

The management of flood risk to life and property in a manner which examines an entire catchment area, rather than an individual land holding, will facilitate sustainable development and is supported by the Local Authority. Catchment Management is of critical importance to reduce future flood damage thus reducing the potential economic and social costs attributed to flooding.

Future large-scale development proposals within the Donore Village boundary will be required to incorporate 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' (SUDS) as part of any development proposal.

SUDS are recognised as effective in the reduction of flood risk, the improvement of water quality and the enhancement of local biodiversity and amenity. A range of sustainable measures are available to effectively manage surface water drainage, which include (but are not limited to):

- Source control measures including recycling, e.g. use of "grey water" for irrigation of green spaces;
- Infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground including individual soakways and communal facilities;
- Permeable surface treatments that in suitable locations, allow rainwater and run-off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed; and
- Water attenuation ponds and storage tanks that can hold excess water after rain and that can be emptied gradually and in a controlled manner in drier periods.

It is considered that the physical nature of built environments with inherent impervious surfaces, including roads, car parks, buildings and their rooftops, could increase surface water run-off into local watercourses. Within the Village context, the extent of paved and other hard surface areas can reduce the capacity of underlying soil to absorb run-off and thus increase the risk of flash flooding. It is thus important to mitigate negative impacts arising from run-off that could alter the existing hydrology.

Development should be appropriately controlled along floodplain areas in order to provide suitable flood relief mitigation, as the alteration of natural flow patterns can often lead to problems elsewhere in a river's catchment area.

### Policy FRM 1: Flood Risk Management

- a) To assess all development proposals against the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government publication '*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities, September 2008*' or any such guidelines in force at the time of the making of an application.
- b) All proposals for development shall demonstrate the suitability of proposed surface water

outfalls to accommodate the proposed surface water discharge from a proposed development. The Council shall seek to restrict development that would result in adverse effects on existing storm water drainage or result in flooding.

- c) To encourage the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) both as a supplement to and as an alternative to surface water discharge from developments to existing drainage systems and water courses.
- d) In addition to these measurements, the Local Authority will aim:
  - To promote public awareness on maintenance of good water quality, reducing wastage of potable water supplies and encouraging good domestic practices, which prevent pollutants from coming into contact with rainfall and runoff.
  - To prevent alteration to natural drainage systems and in the case of development works, require the provision of acceptable mitigation measures in order to minimise the risk of excessive run-off, flooding and negative impacts to water quality (including erosion, run-off and sedimentation).
  - To maintain and protect natural forms of drainage control through preserving areas of woodlands, wetlands and areas of natural vegetation, where these help to regulate stream flows, recharge groundwater and mitigate pollutants.
  - To prevent the installation of non-porous hard standing in the front gardens of dwellings, thereby limiting the amount of run-off from such areas.



## 12.0 SERVICES AND UTILITIES

### 12.1 Waste Water Collection and Treatment

The Village is currently served by an existing Waste Water Treatment Plant located to the North West of the Village, along Slane/Stalleen Road, adjacent to the Southern banks of the River Boyne. The system is currently operating at capacity which is identified as being at 600p.e. (population equivalent). An upgrade of this facility is ongoing and anticipated to be completed by Spring 2010. This upgrade will facilitate further sustainable development within Donore and will increase capacity to 1,200p.e.

### 12.2 Surface Water

Currently the Villages surface water flows directly into the River Boyne. Future development proposals will need to provide attenuation of this water prior to discharge in line with the recommendations of the *'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems – Best Practice Manual'* undertaken by the CIRIA and the *'Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Consultation Draft Guidelines, 2008'* and any subsequent revisions.

### 12.3 Water Supply

Donore receives its potable water supply from an extraction point at 'Roughgrange' on the River Boyne. Drogheda Borough Council operate a storage reservoir to the South West of Donore Village. Existing water supplies to Donore are recognised as deficient. Secure potable water supply is required to protect public health and also to facilitate further development. The ability of the current system to supply an increased level of potable water is therefore limited, as it is currently operating beyond full capacity.

The East Meath, Drogheda & South Louth Water Improvement Scheme is listed in the current Water Services Investment Programme 2007-2013 as a key scheme in need of advancement to planning stage. A definite need has been identified for a new regional Water Supply Scheme to serve Drogheda and its surrounding urban areas. An upgrade in capacity of the current scheme is ultimately required to provide a consistent acceptable quality and security of supply, as well as to provide for the sustainable future growth of east Meath in general. The main focus of this scheme will involve upgrading the gravity main between the Stalleen Reservoir, on the hill to the south-west of the Village, and Drogheda.

#### Policy PU 1: Public Utilities

To endeavour to maintain and provide adequate potable water and wastewater treatment infrastructure that is sufficient to meet the development needs of the Village within this Plan period. The Local Authority acknowledges that there are significant constraints on the capacity of the existing infrastructure and may consider restricting development in circumstances where such infrastructure is inadequate.

### 12.4 Other Utility Services: Telecommunications, Antennae, Satellite Dishes and all Ancillary Structures

Other utility services, including telecommunications, broadband and electricity are also provided for within the Village. These services are supplied via telegraph poles and can detract from the streetscape and amenity of Donore. It is therefore an objective of the Local Authority that these cables should be placed underground by utilities operators, where possible.

The Council will consider applications for telecommunications masts and ancillary facilities only in appropriate locations.

**Policy TAS 1: Telecommunications**

To have regard to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government publication '*Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 1996*' and any subsequent amendments when assessing planning applications for telecommunication infrastructure.

**Policy TAS 2: Public Utilities Cables**

To promote the undergrounding of all public utilities' cabling infrastructure within Donore Village Centre in order to improve the existing and future streetscape setting.

**Policy TAS 3: Broadband**

To work in conjunction with public utilities' providers to increase broadband infrastructure and speed within the Donore area in tandem with future development.

### 13.0 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

All designs for new buildings should be founded on a sustainable ethos, manifest and measurable in the use of energy sources.

In this regard, the use of innovative materials and architectural designs to improve the environmental performance and energy efficiency of buildings will be encouraged (refer to Appendix D). In order to ensure a more sustainable approach to development, it is necessary to adopt a range of sustainable building requirements, to ensure energy efficiency, and healthy and low environmental impact buildings.

The Greener Homes Scheme is now available and is administered by *Sustainable Energy Ireland*, providing assistance to homeowners intending to purchase a new renewable energy heating system.

Funding is also available through the 'House of Tomorrow Projects' for the design and construction of clustered (minimum of 10 no.) dwellings of superior energy performance housing units.

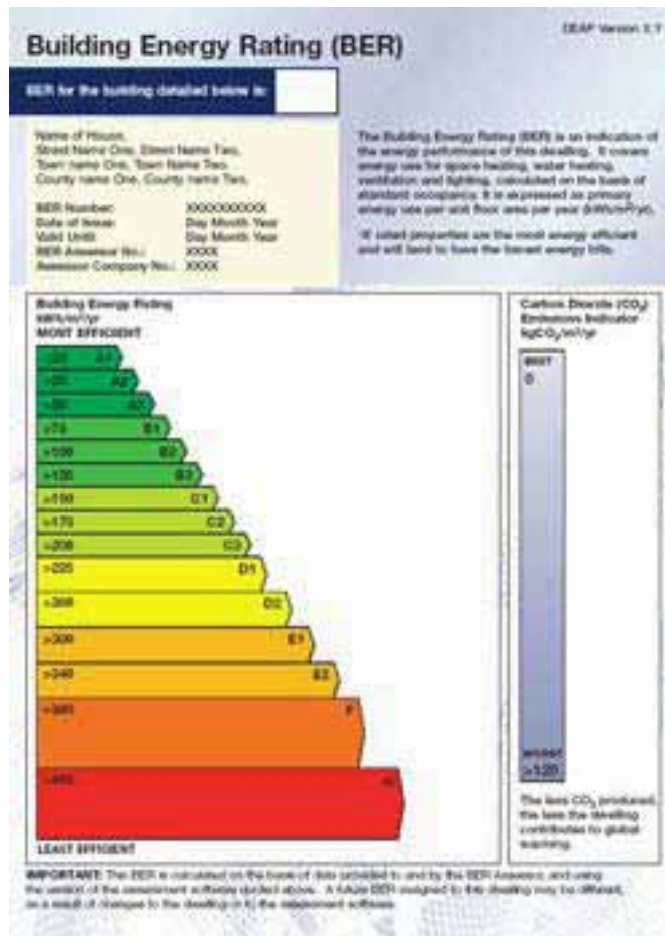


Figure Five: The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive.

**Policy E 1: Energy Efficiency**

To encourage all buildings to conform to Part L of the Building Regulations, 2008 with regard to the Energy Performance of Buildings and if possible incorporate renewable sources of energy. This requirement will ensure that the annual space and water heating energy requirements for all buildings will be reduced.

#### **14.0 WASTE MANAGEMENT**

It is noted that Donore does not have any recycling facilities; however it is considered to be within range of the Drogheda Recycling Centre and the Slane Bottle-Bank. Currently, the Village is served by private waste collection providers, which provide bins to cater for unrecyclable waste and dry recyclables. From 01<sup>st</sup> December 2009, this was augmented by a third bin collection catering for bio-degradable waste.

##### **Policy WM 1: Waste Management**

To examine the potential to provide a bottle bank in Donore, in consultation with the Council's Environmental Department. It is considered that 'Opportunity Site A', identified in the Urban Design Section, provides an opportunity to facilitate this civic amenity.

## 15.0 RE-USE AND REGENERATION OF DERELICT SITES AND BUILDINGS

By working with landowners, the Council has responsibility with regard to the re-use and regeneration of derelict sites and buildings, particularly given its powers under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990.

### Objective DSB 1: Derelict Sites and Buildings

To cater for the appropriate re-use, re-development and re-generation of derelict sites and buildings within Donore, specifically to re-use the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century former 'Cottier' and 'Labourers' cottages remaining within the Village: a good example of which is the former Cottage to the north of the Village along the northern side of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road.



*Plate Twenty-Five: A traditional 'Cottier' and 'Labourers' cottages to the north of the Drogheda/Mullaghacrone Road.*

### Policy DSB 1: Derelict Sites and Buildings

To promote the appropriate re-use, re-development, façade improvement and re-generation of derelict sites and buildings within Donore. The Council will use its powers, where appropriate, in considering such sites for inclusion in the Register of Derelict Sites.

## 16.0 URBAN DESIGN SECTION

The development guidance and standards outlined in this Section are complementary to the Development Management Guidelines & Standards in Section 10 of the current Meath County Development Plan. These standards have also been informed by national planning policy guidance contained within the Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2008 and the accompanying Urban Design Manual: A best practice guide, 2008, Part I and Part II. These standards are designed to act as a good practice guide for future planning applications within the County and should be read in conjunction with the Development Standards contained within the County Development Plan and this Plan.

### 16.1 Purpose of this Urban Design Strategy

The urban design strategy seeks to assist the planning process at pre-planning consultation stage and through the decision making process. It is therefore envisaged that the Urban Design Strategy will:

- Facilitate the improvement of the physical appearance and general environment of the Village.
- Foster the continued development of a compact Village form, through the development of suitable areas to the east of the Duleek Road, and to the west of the Village to the north and south of the Slane/Stalleen Road for the purposes of mixed use and low-density residential development, respectively, where pedestrian connections to surrounding lands can be achieved.
- Create new, enhance existing, and complete potential pedestrian linkages identified throughout the area, which will improve permeability between community, residential and amenity related uses.
- Promote well designed and highly considered architectural solutions to any interventions proposed within the Village Centre in order to enhance both the image and appearance of the area and protect the setting of the Boyne Valley and the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

This Urban Design Strategy for the Village aims to improve the urban form of the built environment and to highlight areas where enhancements and improvements could be made to both the built and natural environment.

### 16.2 General Urban Design Guidance

The most successful developments are those that are carefully integrated with their surrounding built environment complemented by the utilisation of the most appropriate building materials, finishes, forms and landscaping treatment. Each of these elements should relate to the existing built fabric and settlement structure of the Village.

#### Objective UDG 1: Urban Design Guidance

To require all new developments within the Plan area to contribute to the creation of high quality, functional and well designed environments. To achieve this, new development proposals within the Village shall be required to:

- a) Contribute positively to the existing streetscape or landscape qualities of the Village and its immediate surrounding areas, and should respect the important views, the setting of



national monuments and landscape features of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- b) Consider and reflect the physical, social and environmental context of the Village: proposed uses shall be compatible with the zoning objective, surrounding areas and the established character of the Village.
- c) Protect the Village's historic fabric and positively contribute towards its unique identity and character.
- d) Address amenity issues in respect of adjoining properties such as overlooking, scale and bulk and overshadowing of habitable rooms and private open space.
- e) Demonstrate a high quality of design, finishing and building materials used including landscaping.
- f) Contribute to improvements in public safety by enhancing natural surveillance, providing active street frontages, and by ensuring appropriate enclosure and overlooking of public open spaces generally. Lengths of blank facades and boundary walls facing public spaces shall not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances.
- g) Designed to be permeable, legible, safe and respectful of amenities associated with adjoining properties.
- h) Ensure that sustainable construction methods are used to minimise the use of energy and materials, and reduce pollution and waste levels generated from their construction and general upkeep.
- i) Require, in residential developments, buildings shall present a high-quality living environment for their future occupants, both in terms of the standard of individual dwelling units, and the overall layout and appearance of the development.

#### 16.2.1 Land-Uses

The existing land use survey identified a number of residential units within the Village Centre. Whilst it is accepted that most Irish towns and villages are characterised by residential uses fronting onto a main street, a level of commercial activity is also required to make such settlements viable and attractive places to live. They must therefore provide a level of commercial activity that satisfies a substantial portion of the daily shopping needs of their residents, subject to the settlement's position within the County's Retail Hierarchy.

In order to ensure that such possibilities can be realised, the level of residential versus commercial use should be monitored where "*living over the shop*" schemes should be promoted to ensure a non-residential ground floor use. Relaxation on development standards may be considered where appropriate backland development can provide alternative residential accommodation to secure on-street commercial activity.

#### Policy LD 1: Land-Uses

- a) To promote the demarcation and consolidation of the Village Centre area through the development of viable and feasible infill backland sites (refer to Figure Five), which identifies such an 'Opportunity Site A' within the Village Centre area.
- b) To encourage new developments or re-developments within close proximity of the Village Centre, particularly along Main Street to contain ground floor retail/commercial uses.

The future development of these Village Centre lands zoned 'C1' should seek to augment the identifiable Village Centre within Donore whilst respecting the inherent characteristics of the existing buildings within the Village. Future development proposals for these lands should seek to:

- Provide for a mix of uses and active ground floor frontages addressing Main Street,
- Establish a continuous building line within an accompanying strong sense of enclosure along the Village's Main Street,
- Buildings should respect the scale and massing of existing buildings within the Donore, be a maximum of two-storeys in height and ameliorate any potential visual impact they may have on the setting of the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site, and
- Site B should also provide for a Bring Recycling Facility to serve the Village's needs.

Parallel on street car parking and landscaped urban spaces could be inserted to the front of these proposed buildings. Access to the retail units and off street car parking could also be provided to the rear of the terrace, as is the case with the recent development at the junction of the Duleek Road and Main Street.

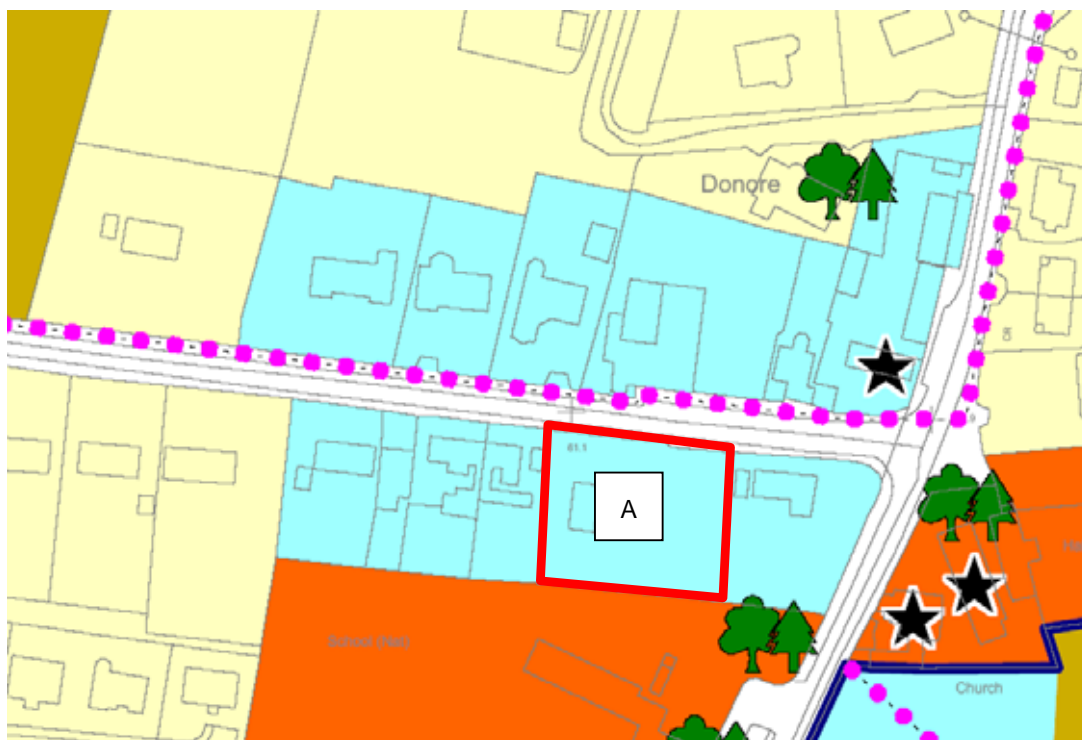


Figure Six: 'Opportunity Site A' within Donore Village Centre.



*Plate Twenty-Six: 'Opportunity Site A'.*

#### 16.2.2 Visual Impact and Building Heights

New development proposals within the Village must have regard to the existing building character and heights along Main Street. In this regard, no planning application for a building in excess of two-storeys will be permitted within the Village Centre. In accordance with the policies and objectives outlined in Section 5.0 of this Plan, development proposals involving mixed-use, commercial or more than 2 no. dwellings within the Village's development boundary must be the subject of a Visual Impact Assessment and must be accompanied by a Visual Impact Statement, photomontages or similar 3D material outlining the proposed development's potential visual impact upon the 'core area' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

This requirement seeks to ensure that any future proposed developments do not negatively impact upon the Village's character and the setting of the national monuments within the World Heritage Site.

#### **Policy VI 1: Visual Impact**

To protect the Village's character and the setting of the national monuments within the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, development proposals involving mixed-use, commercial or more than 2 no. dwellings within the Village's development boundary must be the subject of a Visual Impact Assessment and must be accompanied by a Design Statement, Street Impact Assessment and Visual Impact Statement with photomontages or similar 3D material in order to ascertain whether there is any visual impact upon the Village's character or the 'core area' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

#### **Policy BH 1: Building Heights**

To discourage any future developments in excess of two-storeys in height.

### 16.2.3 Landscaping Treatments

Landscaping is integral to assimilating new development proposals into receiving landscapes. The creation of a high quality landscaped area also facilitates the incorporation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) into developments. Appropriate landscaping can increase the quality of life of residents in an area, protect and enhance biodiversity, contribute to providing a visual link to the surroundings, enclose spaces, enhance the visual appearance of a development and provide suitable areas for social interaction and children's play areas. Where possible, existing vegetation, including existing trees and hedgerows, should be retained and incorporated into development proposals. Materials used in landscaping must also be appropriate, durable and of a good quality.

#### Policy LT 1: Landscaping Treatments

- a) To protect the character and setting of the Village, development proposals within the development boundary of the Village shall be required to be accompanied by a landscaping plan.
- b) To protect the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site and to enhance the amenity, ecological and environmental value of the Village, the planting of indigenous tree and hedgerow species will be encouraged along the Village's development boundary, particularly to the north-west of the Village facing the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### 16.2.4 Urban Grain

Although the Village contains a variety of building types and forms, the existing urban grain within the Village Centre area is relatively compact and should continue to be respected as it contributes to the Village's character. This can be achieved through the use of existing urban grain dimensions as a basis to guide new developments. Future development proposals should also address the existing urban grain through the use of facade design with variations in the facade composition to respect the traditional grain pattern of the Village and Irish village's generally.

#### Policy UG 1: Urban Grain

To protect the established urban grain and established building line within the Village Centre area.

### 16.2.5 Street Furniture and Illumination

Street furniture can enhance the image of the Village Centre for residents, workers and visitors alike and there are a number of public benches located within the Village Centre area. It is important that Donore continues to augment such provisions in order to provide for a high quality urban streetscape. With regard to the issue of street and building lighting, it is becoming general practice to provide A Dark Sky Policy to be established to all night-time illumination, existing and proposed. The following objectives are of relevance:

#### Objective SF 1: Street Furniture

It is an objective of this Local Area Plan to provide an appropriate level of Street Furniture including:

- adequate street lighting,

- public seating,
- litter bins,
- safety bollards,
- secure parking for bicycles, and
- local informational and tourism signage (with respect to identifying the location of the school, church, residential areas, the Brú na Bóinne Visitors' Centre and the Donore Rovers Football Club).

#### Objective I 1: Illumination

A Dark Sky Policy to be established to all night-time illumination, existing and proposed. Regarding the existing, it is proposed to phase the replacement of no-compliant units as these become available for repair or maintenance. The principles of Dark Sky lighting are:

- All units must be illuminated downwards.
- The general illumination of building is to be reserve of important public edifices. General illumination of residential facades is deemed inappropriate.
- Backlight signage shall be discontinued.
- Neon shall not be used externally except where part of the heritage of the buildings.
- All units shall have a 100% cut off (having a deep shade for the lamps and having no spill over 180 degrees (Horizon)).
- Lighting should be focused on the areas of need, paths, roads, etc, the areas of need, paths, roads, etc for safety. Low-level lighting bollards are particularly useful in this regard as they also avoid excessive glare in relation to pedestrian uses.

#### 16.2.6 Architectural Features

In order to ensure the continued protection of the Village's character, architectural treatment is of vital importance. Issues such as the relationship between the "solid to void" ratio (the exterior wall versus any openings including windows and doors), respecting the verticality of the existing urban grain of the Village and building features, such as chimneys, roofs, windows and doors are all extremely important.

#### Policy AF 1: Architectural Features

To ensure that any proposed developments respect the existing character of the Village a Design Statement will be required to accompany any significant development application in excess of four residential units or two commercial units. The typical content of a design statement will include, but not be limited to the following elements:

##### *a) Facade Treatments:*

1. To require a high "solid-to-void" ratio in all proposed buildings. The minimum recommended 'solid to void ratio' is to comprise a ratio of 2:5 of the façade. The maximum recommended void or glazed area is expressed as a ratio of 3:5 of the façade.
2. To require vertical window forms and treatments that shall be promoted to enhance a vertical

building emphasis.

*b) Roof Treatments*

1. To promote roof pitches between 30°-45° that shall span the shortest plan dimension to avoid excessively large roof spans.
2. To promote lean-to roofs to be of equal to or lower pitch than the main roof.
3. To encourage the use of gable and hipped roof styles to reflect the prevailing roof profile.
4. To retain existing chimneys, even if disused, and any new chimneys and repairs should match the original traditional details.
5. To avoid inappropriate and modern box eaves with deep projecting fascia, flat soffits and projecting barge boards.

*c) Facade Finishes and Building Materials*

1. To encourage only façade finishes and building materials within the Village Centre that both age and weather well.
2. To discourage buildings where the entire façade is glazed.
3. To encourage the re-use of appropriate building materials from buildings which have been unavoidably demolished.
4. The building materials specified below are considered to be the 'base materials' to be used in any proposed new building. The potential impact of the materials on the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site has been taken into consideration.

Exterior Walls	Roofs	Windows / Door
Cut Stone	Slate	Non-Tropical Hardwood Timber
Rubble Stone	Metal Sheetting with raised seams (Zinc, Copper, etc.)	
Render or Plaster		
Metal (Copper and Aluminium)		

*Table Two: Acceptable Building Materials and Finishes within the Village.*



## 17.0 LAND USE ZONINGS

The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 sets out the general context and the nature of land-use for those towns and villages outlined for the preparation of a Local Area Plan, including Donore. A Land-Use Zoning Map and Environmental Parameters Map have been prepared, which are to be read in conjunction with the following sections. Although some changes have been made to the zonings within the previous Land-Use Zoning Map for the Town, the quantum of zonings remains approximately the same.

The purpose of land-use zoning is to indicate to property owners, developers and the general public alike, the types of development that are considered most appropriate in each zone. In this context, zoning objectives allow a developer to plan proposals with some degree of certainty, subject to other conditions and requirements as set-out in the Plan. In the control of development, zoning seeks to delimit competing and incompatible uses so as to promote greater environmental quality and thereby rationalise the land-use pattern of an urban area.

All residential and other zoning objectives contained within this LAP are in accordance with the designations assigned within the current Settlement Strategy outlined in the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013. The Donore land use zoning designations are outlined in Table Three below.

Land-Use Zoning Objective	Description of Land-Use Zoning Objective
A1	To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
A2	To provide for new residential communities and community facilities and protect the amenities of existing residential areas in accordance with an approved framework plan.
A5	To provide for low density residential development in accordance with an approved framework plans and individual dwelling design.
C1	To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses in existing mixed use central business areas.
F1	To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
G1	To provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities.

Table Three: Donore Local Area Plan Land-use Zoning Objectives.

### 17.1 Land-Use Zoning Objectives Explanatory Notes

The following explanatory notes on the Plan's Land-Use Zoning Objectives have been taken from the current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

- In **A1 zones**, the Planning Authority will be primarily concerned with the protection of the amenities of established residents. Whilst infill or redevelopment proposals would be acceptable in principle, careful consideration is required for the protection of amenities such as privacy, daylight/ sunlight, aspect etc. in new proposals.

- The **A2 and A5 zones** are intended to be the main areas for new residential development. In all residentially zoned lands, no residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.
- In **C1 zones**, it is intended to provide for a mix of uses within current areas of established mixed uses.
- **F1, G1 and H1 zones** are self-explanatory and relate to community and amenity uses or designations. No residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.

## 17.2 Zoning Matrix

Each zoning category is highlighted within a Zoning Matrix, see Table Four, with particular land uses identified as 'normally permitted', 'not normally permitted' or 'open for consideration'.

Uses other than the primary use for which an area is zoned may be permitted provided they are not in conflict with the primary use zoning objective. The Zoning Matrix illustrates the acceptability or unacceptability in principle of various uses for each of the zoning objectives. The land use zoning matrix is intended to provide guidance to potential developers. It is not intended to supplant the normal planning process. An indication that a proposal would be 'permitted in principle' from the matrix should in no way be taken to imply a granting of permission, or indeed that a planning application may be necessarily successful. Individual applications remain a matter for the Planning Authority to decide, 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.

### **A = Will Normally be Acceptable**

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

### **O = Are Open for Consideration**

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

### **X = Will Not Normally be Acceptable**

Development which is classified as not normally being acceptable in a particular zone is one which will not be considered by the Planning Authority except in proven, 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 zone objectives will be considered on their merits.

Use Classes	A1	A2	A5	C1	F1	G1
A.T.M. (In Commercial Premises)	A	A	X	A	X	X
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	X
Adverts	O	O	X	O	X	X
Outdoor Advertising Structures	X	X	X	O	O	X
Agri - Business	X	X	X	O	X	X
Amusement Arcade	X	X	X	X	X	X
B & B	A	A	A	A	X	X
Bank / Financial Institution	X	O	X	X	X	X
Betting Office	X	O	X	O	X	X
Bring Banks	A	A	A	A	O	O
Car Park (Commercial)	X	X	X	O	X	X
Caravan Park	X	X	X	X	O	X
Car Dismantler / Scrap Yard	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cash & Carry	X	X	X	O	X	X
Casual Trading	X	X	X	O	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	X	A
Church	X	O	O	A	O	A
Cinema	X	X	X	O	X	A
Community Facility / Centre	O	A	O	A	O	A
Conference Centre	X	O	X	O	X	X

Use Classes	A1	A2	A5	C1	F1	G1
C & D Waste Recycling Centre	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crèche / Childcare Facility	O	A	A	A	X	A
Cultural Facility / Use	O	O	O	A	O	A
Dance Hall / Night Club	X	X	X	O	X	X
Doctors / Dentists	O	O	O	A	X	O
Drive Through Restaurants	X	X	X	O	X	X
Education	O	O	O	A	X	A
Energy Installation	X	X	X	X	X	X
Enterprise Centre	X	O	X	O	X	X
Fuel Depot - Domestic	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fuel Depot - Petroleum Products	X	X	X	X	X	X
Funeral Home	X	O	X	O	X	A
Garden Centre	X	X	X	O	X	X
Guest House	O	A	O	A	X	X
Halting Site/Group Housing	O	A	O	O	X	O
Health Centre	O	O	O	A	X	A
Heavy Goods Vehicle Car Park	X	X	X	X	X	X
Home Based Economic	O	O	O	O	X	X

Use Classes	A1	A2	A5	C1	F1	G1
Activities						
Hospital	X	O	O	A	X	A
Hostel	X	O	O	A	X	X
Hotel / Motel	X	O	X	A	X	X
Industry – General	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry – Light	X	O	X	O	X	X
Leisure / Recreation	X	O	O	O	O	A
Library	X	A	O	A	X	A
Motor Sales / Repair	X	X	X	O	X	X
Offices <100m2	X	O	X	A	X	O
Offices 100 to 1000 m2	X	X	X	A	X	X
Offices >1000m2	X	X	X	A	X	X
Open Space	A	A	A	A	A	A
Park and Ride	X	X	X	O	X	X
Petrol Station	O	O	X	O	X	X
Plant & Tool Hire	X	X	X	O	X	X
Public House	X	O	X	A	X	X
Public Services	A	A	A	A	A	A
Civic & Amenity Recycling Facility	X	X	X	X	X	A
Refuse Transfer Station	X	X	X	X	X	X

Use Classes	A1	A2	A5	C1	F1	G1
Residential	A	A	A	A	X	X
Residential Institution	O	O	O	O	X	O
Restaurant / Café	X	X	X	A	X	O
Retail Warehouse	X	X	X	X	X	X
Retirement Home	O	A	O	O	X	A
Science & Technology Based Enterprise	X	X	X	O	X	X
Shop – Local**	O	A	X	A	X	X
Shop - Major	X	X	X	O	X	X
Shopping Centre	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sports Facilities	O	O	O	O	A	A
Take-Away	X	X	X	O	X	X
Telecommunication Structures	X	X	X	O	O	O
Third Level Educational Institution	X	X	X	O	X	A
Tourism Complex	X	X	X	A	A	A
Transport Depot	X	X	X	X	X	X
Veterinary Surgery	O*	O*	O*	O	X	X
Warehouse	X	X	X	X	X	X
Water	A	A	A	A	A	A



Use Classes	A1	A2	A5	C1	F1	G1
Services***						
Wholesale Warehousing	X	X	X	O	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 square metres in gross floor area.						
*** Refers to public utility installations.						

Table Four: Land-Use Matrix.

## **18.0 PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **18.1 Introduction**

The success of this Local Area Plan rests with the degree of implementation that is achieved over its lifespan (six years). It is thus important for a plan to strive towards a higher standard in terms of economic gain, commercial success, environmental awareness and residential living. However the objectives in relation to these topics need to be realistic in terms of funding capabilities and implementation structures.

The funding of this Plan falls within the scope of three sectors: the national government, either directly or through the vehicle of Public Utilities' providers, the County Council and the private sector. The actions required to facilitate the implementation of the Local Area Plan, as well as the agents responsible for the respective actions have been identified.

The Local Authority will require developers to incorporate the objectives of this Plan, including those relating to the provision of physical and social infrastructure, into their individual development proposals. Existing objectives may also be implemented by means of conditions attached to a grant of permission on developers and their associated development proposals.

The implementation of this Local Area Plan may be constrained by a number of elements, namely the current economic climate, political support, allocated Local Authority funding, and the availability of funding from other sources. The nature of statutory Development Plans is such that no budget is agreed in advance and therefore no funding of projects or implementation of all objectives contained within the Plan is guaranteed. However, where appropriate, the County Council will seek financing from specified sources, both public and private sector, as well as from European Union (E.U.) programmes and grants.

### **18.2 Various Implementation Frameworks**

Additional National and E.U. level programmes include the National Lottery Facility Funding, E.U. Structural Fund, the E.U. Community Support Framework, as well as other funding mechanisms available from various government departments. Such bodies have varying criteria regarding the type of developments they fund and may be useful to consider in the achievement of development objectives.

#### ***The Community Grant Scheme***

This grant scheme is undertaken by Meath County Council and is intended to assist community-based projects under the following categories:

- General public interest
- Events
- Activities
- Cultural and heritage development projects
- Tidy Towns/Towns enhancement projects
- Maintenance of burial grounds

#### ***Various Governmental Departments***

Funding is available through various governmental departments such as:

- The Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism offers grants and funding through varying programs such the Sports Capital Programme, which is a National Lottery Funded programme that advertises on an annual basis and allocates funding to projects that are directly related to the provision of sport and recreational sport facilities.
- The Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs offers two schemes. One of which is an Equipment and Refurbishment Grant providing essential physical supports for the local community and voluntary sector, and the second scheme is an Education, Training and Research Grant aimed at enhancing the capacity of local communities.
- The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform operates the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme 2000-2007, which is in part funded by the European Union Structural Funds (ERDF and ESF). Grant schemes operated under this programme include:
  - Capital grants to community groups and organisations which operate on a “not for profit” basis for the establishment, upgrading and enhancement of childcare facilities;
  - Staffing grants to community groups and organisations which operate on a “not for profit” basis for childcare personnel in childcare services;
  - Capital grants for self-employed/private childcare service providers of up to €50,790 subject to a maximum of 65% of the total capital cost of the childcare project.

### ***EU Structural Funds***

This programme identifies a number of areas for funding, two of which are the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. There also exists a separate programme, which is co-financed by the structural funds called Community Initiatives. Such EU programmes can be a valuable source of investment, through which specific policies and objectives, as identified in this plan, can be implemented.

### ***Conclusion***

The above sections outline some of the programmes available to aid the implementation of the objectives of the Donore Local Area Plan. Various agencies, including voluntary groups, professional institutions, public and private bodies, and other organisations should be encouraged to participate whenever possible.

## **18.3 Phasing**

With regard to phasing, it is an objective of the Planning Authority to promote the implementation of the Local Area Plan in a rational and sequential approach that is in keeping with the ‘Order of Priority’ map for Donore, as identified in Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, the proposed development strategy, and to ensure that essential facilities, such as road infrastructure, water and sewerage networks, etc, are secured and in place in tandem with the proposed development projects.

The sequence with which these schemes are or will be advanced, determines the sequence and phasing of development. Within large scale developments, or where key infrastructure is proposed, developments may be phased to tie-in with these schemes or projects. The Local Authority reserves the right to refuse development on the grounds of prematurity, pending the

provision of necessary physical and social infrastructure or the provision of infrastructural capacities.

#### **18.4 Contributions**

It is considered reasonable that contributions be paid, towards Local Authority investment in the provision of infrastructure and services, by developers who benefit from such provisions. The Development Contribution Scheme in accordance with the provisions of Part III, Section 48 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007, has been adopted by the Council requiring the payment of a contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority.

#### **18.5 Monitoring and Review**

In order to ensure that the development strategy outlined in this Local Area Plan is being pursued, the Council, through the “day-to-day” activity of its development management function, will monitor the implementation and phasing of this Local Area Plan. A review will assist in assessing whether the objectives detailed in the Plan are being met.

## APPENDIX A

### Lists of Persons who made a Submission during the Pre-Draft Public Consultation Phase of the Local Area Plan's Preparation

Pre-Draft Comment Forms	
1	Frank Taaffe, Donore, Co. Meath.
2	Anonymous.
3	Mark Cassidy, 'The Grange', Donore, Co. Meath.
4	Gillian Victory, Staleen, Donore, Co. Meath.
5	Brendan O'Brien, 'Donore/Rosnaree Community Group' Tubberfinn, Donore, Co. Meath.
6	Maurice Stanley, Staleen, Donore, Co. Meath.
7	Carmel O'Brien, Parents' Assistant Treasurer, Donore, Co. Meath.
8	Fr J. Brogan, Donore Parochial House, Donore, Co. Meath.
9	Carmel Cluskey, 'Bloomsbury Cottage', Oldbridge, Co. Meath.
10	Michael and John Lawlor, Lawlor Farm, Donore, Drogheda, Co. Meath.
11	Mark Lawlor, Staleen, Donore, Drogheda, Co. Meath.
12	Frank & Paula Taaffe and Frank Godfrey, Donore, Co. Meath.
Pre-Draft Submissions	
1	Frank Godfrey, Former Mayor of Drogheda and Chairman of Louth County Council, 'Boyne Valley Cottage', Donore, Co. Meath.
2	Marcas Morrison, Staleen, Donore, Co. Meath.
3	Sinead Burke, 'Graigs Lane', Dunmoe, Navan, Co. Meath.
4	Ruth Daly, Principal, Donore National School, Donore, Co. Meath.

### Lists of Persons who made a Submission during the Draft Public Consultation Phase of the Local Area Plan's Preparation

Draft Submissions	
1	Frances Heaslip, Co-Ordination Unit, Department Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.
2	Michael Owens, Environmental Research Centre, Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Protection Agency.
3	Michael Mc Cormack, National Roads Authority.
4	Erica O'Driscoll, National Roads Authority.

5	Teresa Halloran, Development Applications Unit, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
6	Philip Earley, Co-Ordination Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.
7	Patrick O'Sullivan, Spatial Policy Section, Minister of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
8	Shirley Kearney, Forward Planning Section, Department of Education and Science.
9	Michael Cummings & Co. Ltd, on behalf of Mr Seamus Lappin.
10	Satellite Architects Ltd, on behalf of Soll Holdings (ROI) Ltd.
11	Malena McLoone, Vice Chair Parents' Council, Donore National School, Donore, Co. Meath.
12	Olivia Walsh, Health & Safety Authority.



## APPENDIX B

### Strategic Environmental Assessment: Screening Report



Draft Donore Local Area Plan 2009-2014

*SEA Screening Report*

for submission to:

*Environmental Protection Agency,  
Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and  
Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Meath County Council intends to prepare a Local Area Plan for the Village of Donore in accordance with Sections 18, 19 and 20 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007. The purpose of this report is to consider whether the Plan requires Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

In accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) an environmental assessment must be carried out for all plans and programmes which have the following purpose:

- Prepared for certain specified sectors (including land-use planning), and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or Annex II of the EIA Directive; or
- In view of the likely effect on protected sites, have been determined to require an assessment under the Habitats Directive.

According to the DoEHLG's (Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government) SEA Guidelines, 'in deciding whether a particular plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, regard must be had to the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive – which is reproduced in new Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as inserted by Article 12 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004'.

Regarding the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, EU Directive 2001/42/EC provides that SEA is mandatory for Local Area Plans for areas with a population of 10,000 or more. The 2006 Census records the population of Donore at 728 persons. It is thus clear that the population of Donore is not above the 10,000 person threshold and therefore does not fall within the mandatory national requirements for the preparation of an SEA for the Plan area.

Where the population involved is less than 10,000, the EU Directive requires 'Screening' of the Plan. The following Screening Report has been prepared in order to establish whether or not the preparation of the Donore Local Area Plan will have any likely significant environmental effects on the area, and as such, would therefore require the preparation of an SEA.

The current Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 Zoning Map, as well as an 'Order of Priority' map for Donore from Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 are attached as appendices.

### 1.1 Location

Donore is located in the east of County Meath, in close proximity to the county border with County Louth and Drogheda Borough Council. It is located within the 'Slane Development Area', along with other urban settlements such as Duleek, Julianstown and Slane.

From a strategic national context, the Village is located approximately 40km north of Dublin City Centre within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), between the M1 National Motorway and the N2 National Primary Routes, accessed from the Donore Road Interchange on the M1, approximately 3km to the east of the Village, and Slane Village, approximately 8km to the west of the Village, respectively.

From a strategic regional context, the Village is situated approximately 18km from Navan, 4km from Drogheda and 18km from Balbriggan. It is located at the convergence of a number of Third-Class Roads, specifically the Drogheda Road to the north-east of the Village, the Duleek Road to

the south of the Village and the Stalleen Road to the west of the Village. An additional Third-Class Road meets the Duleek Road to the south of the Village at 'St Mary's Villas' before entering the Village from the south. These routes provide Donore with good connections to the surrounding towns of Drogheda, Duleek and Navan.

Within the Plan's development boundary the Village's topography is characterised by its location within a minor valley stretching in a north-west/south-east orientation. This valley is situated between the 'Redmountain' and 'Donore Hill', both of which exceed 100m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), and connects the Village situated at 60-70m AOD with the River Boyne. As a result of the Village's siting on the ridge of the Valley connecting both hills, it is visible from the surrounding area, particularly from the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The function, role and overall size of the Village has largely been determined by its proximity to surrounding urban areas, particularly Drogheda. The Village currently functions as a local service centre catering for both the Village's residents and those from the immediate surrounding hinterland. While the historical attractions within the surrounding area bring tourist and visitors either to or through the Village, there are strong opportunities to increase this via the orderly, planned and sustainable development of the Village core and by appropriately located tourism based development.

Like the majority of urban settlements within the County, Donore has had a high rate of private house building. The level of housing units in Donore has grown to such an extent that the level of amenities, community uses and recreational facilities available within the Village to serve the local community remain underprovided. This is an important factor which will need to be addressed via appropriate objectives and policies within a Local Area Plan for the settlement.

A key principle of the proposed Local Area Plan for Donore will be to control the level of residential development in the Village outside of local need, and ensure that new development is appropriately located, contributes to the Village's consolidation and is sympathetic to and respects the existing character in line with Policy HS POL 16 of the County Development Plan that states:

*the Rural Settlement Strategy states that in Small Growth Towns, Key Towns and Villages, between 25-30% of all new multi house developments, being developments in excess of four houses, shall be reserved for persons native to Co. Meath or those who by virtue of their employment require to live in the urban centre. The remainder of houses in such multiple house developments 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.*

The Local Area Plan process will create a forum whereby the local community can get positively involved in the future planning and sustainable development of their area.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL AREA PLAN**

The purpose of the Local Area Plan is to guide the future growth and sustainable development of Donore, in line with the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The overall aim of the Plan is:

- To give guidance on the nature and type, location, scale, form and design of development that is appropriate to its locality and which may possibly be accommodated within the Plan area as well as the infrastructure necessary to service it.

- To encourage a sustainable level of development that is appropriate to the character, heritage, amenity and strategic role of Donore that allows for the enhancement of the village character, services, facilities and amenities.
- To ensure that a balance between satisfying the needs and demands of modern life are met in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the past.

## 2.1 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 Policies

The need for a Local Area Plan is prompted by the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. Policy SS POL 3 of the Plan seeks to:

*review and prepare Local Area Plans for groups of related settlements which have economic, geographical or settlement hierarchical relationships in conjunction with local communities'. As a result, Objective SS OBJ 1 of the County Development Plan aims 'to prepare Local Area Plans for the urban centres contained in Table 7 within 2 years of the adoption of this County Development Plan in accordance with the provisions of Sections 18 – 20 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 - 2006. These Local Area Plans will replace the individual Written Statements and Detailed Objectives for Towns and Villages contained in the 2001 County Development Plan.*

The Meath County Development Plan sets out the contents required to be included in Local Area Plans within the County Area.

Donore has been identified as a 'Village' settlement within the Meath County Development Plan's Settlement Strategy and the Plan will be guided by this Strategy. The primary principle of the Council's Settlement Strategy is to channel residential development into the three main settlements of Navan, the Dunboyne/Clonee/Pace Rail corridor and the Drogheda Environs. In relation to 'Villages' it states that:

*All of the above settlements 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 current County Development Plan also states that the release and development of residential lands shall be linked to the following criteria:

- The provision of necessary physical infrastructure, primarily the availability, in advance of development occurring, of capacity in water and wastewater infrastructure. The environment must be capable of absorbing the scale and quantum of development that is envisaged;
- Spare capacity in existing (and planned) social infrastructure, primarily national and second level educational facilities. The future planning of the Department of Education and Science of national and second level educational facilities shall also be taken into account. The development of additional residential lands shall leverage the necessary recreational and amenity infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the resident population. The

proposed scale and quantum of development must reinforce the integrity and vitality of the local community and services that can be provided;

- A more sustainable economic base whereby a greater percentage of local persons are employed locally. This will require closer liaison between the County Enterprise Board, County Development Board, Economic Development & Promotion Officer and the Planning Department;
- To facilitate the realisation of objectives contained in existing Local Area Plans or existing Written Statement and Detailed Objectives for Towns and Villages (Volume II of the Development Plan) in relation to the delivery of identified critical and necessary social and/or physical infrastructure in conjunction with residential development. Priority of phasing may be given to such residential lands accordingly;
- The extent of existing residentially zoned lands will be revised in the context of the individual Local Area Plan or Development Plan review for each centre and does not necessarily preclude identifying additional zoning in specific locations where the Planning Authority is satisfied that a clearly established need for such zoning is evident. Such additional zoning may only be considered where the development of such lands for residential purposes would deliver an identified piece of critical and necessary social and/or physical infrastructure in conjunction with such development and may require such lands to be prioritised for development over existing residentially zoned lands or that a corresponding amount of land has been dezoned;
- The Local Authority social and affordable house building programme; and
- The efficient use of land by consolidating existing settlements, focusing in particular on development capacity within central urban areas through the re-use of under-utilised lands and buildings as a priority, rather than extending green field development. This should also ensure that development is concentrated at locations where it is possible to integrate employment, community services, retailing and public transport. The order of priority for the release of residentially zoned land shall attempt to ensure that there is a sequential approach which downgrades the priority of outer suburban greenfield sites.

Regarding future residential zoned lands, the County Development Plan states that the extent of existing residentially zoned lands will be revised in the context of the individual Local Area Plan or Development Plan preparation for each centre and does not preclude additional zoning in specific locations where the Planning Authority is satisfied that a clearly established need for such zoning is evident. Such an established need can only be justified where the development of such lands for residential purposes would deliver an identified piece of critical and necessary social and/or physical infrastructure in conjunction with such development and may require such lands to be prioritised for development over existing residentially zoned lands or that a corresponding amount of land has been dezoned.

In relation to Donore Village, Policy SS POL 7 of the County Development Plan specifically relates to Donore Village and states that *'having regard to the extent of zoned land in Donore (12.21 hectares), the position of the village in the Settlement Strategy and the juxtaposition of the village in the buffer area of the World Heritage Site, to desist from zoning additional land in the preparation of the forthcoming Local Area Plan'*. Therefore additional lands will not be zoned within the Local Area Plan.

## **2.2 Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 – Variation No. 2**

In accordance with the County Development Plan policies outlined above, the Settlement Strategy has recently been reviewed, resulting in the adoption of Variation 2 of the Meath County Development Plan.

This variation was adopted in February 2008 having identified an 'Order of Priority' for residential zoned lands within a number of settlements, including Donore. The residential zoned lands are segregated into Phase 1 and Phase 2 areas. Phase 1 relates to lands to be developed during the current Development plan period (up to 2013); while Phase 2 relates to lands to be developed post 2013. Variation 2 allocates a further 34 additional dwellings to Donore over the period of the current County Development Plan from 2007-2013.

This allocation does not include two specific site types within settlements subject to such an 'Order of Priority':

- The Planning Authority does not intend to stifle the delivery of the local authority housing programme. Therefore, units to be developed by Meath County Council for social and affordable housing will not be taken from the numbers allocated for Donore.
- The Planning Authority does not intend to stifle redevelopment of brown field/infill/derelict sites and seeks to actively promote redevelopment of these lands. Therefore, units permitted on such sites will not be taken from the numbers allocated for Donore.

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002 requires that a Local Area Plan must be consistent with the policies and objectives contained within the relevant County Development Plan, being the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013; ultimately, the Local Area Plan's stated policies and objectives must be explicitly linked to the quantum and scale of development envisaged for the settlement within the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

## **2.3 Preservation of Brú na Bóinne and the County Development Plan**

Section 8.3.3.2 of the County Development Plan relates specifically to the Preservation of the Brú na Bóinne complex. Whilst the various archaeological monuments and wildlife sites and features are protected under separate legislation, the protection of the overall landscape and interpretation of various structures and features is largely the domain of the Development Plan.

The Development Plan seeks to protect the World Heritage Site and its hinterland in a manner that supports the maintenance and enhancement of its cultural landscape. In considering development proposals, both public and private, in such a sensitive archaeological context, the County Development Plan makes it necessary to consider the impact on the Protected Structures, and National Monuments and Sites, their setting and interpretation in the landscape, on wildlife designations, on the Landscape Guidelines, on the protection of the archaeological potential of the area including its setting and interpretation and on the protection of important views and aspects. The preservation of this important archaeological, cultural, mythical, landscape and amenity resource is ultimately intertwined throughout the County Development Plan.

In recognition of the unique significance of Brú na Bóinne, it is now the intention of the Planning Authority to formally incorporate the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2002 into the Development Plan and to prepare a Local Area Plan in conjunction with Louth County Council for the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site. The Brú na Bóinne landscape extends beyond the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site and indeed extends into Co. Louth and the preparation of the Local Area Plan would lend further support to the implementation of the World Heritage Site Management Plan's recommendations. Objective HER OBJ 11 of the County Development Plan aims to:



*'prepare a Local Area Plan (LAP) in conjunction with Louth County Council for the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site and environs. This LAP would establish a planning framework in which development proposals, including rural housing and intensive agriculture, would be assessed against. The preparation of the LAP would give effect to some of the objectives contained in the existing Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site Management Plan and the Boyne Valley Integrated Development Plan.'*

This LAP is intended to establish a planning framework in which development proposals, including future land use zoning objectives in adjoining settlements, one off houses, agricultural developments, signage, telecommunication structures and antennae, etc., would be assessed against.

## **2.4 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities September, 2008**

The Department of the Environment recently published *'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities September, 2008'*. These guidelines aim to integrate flood risk management into the planning process, to assist in the delivery of sustainable development. These guidelines aim to:

Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding by not permitting development in flood risk areas, particularly floodplains;

- Adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and then mitigation of flood risk as the overall framework for assessing the location of new development in the development planning processes; and
- Incorporate flood risk assessment into the process of making decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.

The River Boyne is situated to the North West of the Village. In relation to flooding within the area, the Office of Public Works has prepared National Flood Hazard Mapping which outlines flood history for the area. Three recurring events are listed within 2.5km of Donore Village. However, all of these areas are to the North and West of the Village and are outside of the Plan boundary. Aside from the above areas, there are no other areas identifiable by the OPW Flood Hazard Mapping within the Village area, which are liable to flooding.

Donore Village is 60-70m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), and as a result, there would not appear to be significant flooding issues within the Village; however the objectives and policies contained within the Department's Guidelines will be taken into consideration in full during the preparation of this Local Area Plan.

## **3.0 CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

### **3.1 Characteristics of the Plan**

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

As stated, the Local Area Plan's strategic objective is to provide a framework for the general development of the Plan area. The Plan will seek to provide guidance in the form of policies and objectives for the development of social, physical and environmental infrastructure in a

sustainable manner for Donore, provided development is of an appropriate scale, does not unduly interfere with the character and setting of the existing Village. Overall, the Plan will give a general indication of the preferred urban structure and layout for Donore.

The existing development boundary of the Village will also be the subject of a review by the Council as part of the Plan preparation. Any process for establishing a new development boundary will take into consideration a number of physical and policy issues. Physical considerations include the existing urban structure of the village; area topography and any resulting priority views and environmental features. Physical considerations are centred upon consistency with planning policies at national, regional and local level; anticipated population target; likely future development needs; and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in general.

Any review of the development boundary will also take into consideration the policies and objectives of the Meath County Development Plan, as varied. As stated, Variation 2 of the County Development Plan provides for a maximum of 34 additional residential units for Donore during the 2007 – 2013 period. Using the County Development Plan's average household size figure contained within Table 5, this would result in a population increase of 85-92 persons by 2013 (based on 2013 January and December average household size figures). The Plan will therefore be required to ensure sufficient residentially zoned land to meet this target. Additionally, the Draft Plan will seek to provide adequate levels of zoned land to ensure community and commercial facilities, and services are accommodated to sustain this target during the lifetime of the Plan.

Whilst considering and meeting the needs of the community the Draft Plan will have regard to the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment and assist in achieving the principles of sustainability. It is foreseen that all of these requirements can be easily accommodated for within the existing development boundary as a result of the fact that Table Six of Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan states that there are 12.21 hectares of remaining undeveloped residential zoned lands within the Village, which could accommodate for 195 dwellings. Ultimately, an extension to the Village's current development boundary is not required.

The Plan will also make provisions with regard to visual impact, design standards, services and the phasing of such development.

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

The proposed Local Area Plan aims to provide a land use framework for the sustainable development of Donore and will not affect other plans. However, the policies and objectives contained within it will be set within the context of the County Development Plan, in accordance with Section 19 (2) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007, for which a full SEA was prepared and published.

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

As stated, the Plan will be made pursuant to the provisions of Sections 18 to 20 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 and, therefore, policies and objectives of the Plan must be informed by the principles of sustainable development. As such, the Plan will seek to achieve development in a sustainable manner through the protection and enhancement of its natural, archaeological, social, economic and built heritage.

Through the policies and objectives of the Plan there are opportunities to conserve and protect the key environmental features of Donore. These opportunities will:

- Consolidate the expansion of the Village;
- Enhance linkages within the Village;
- Provide traffic calming measures and enhance pedestrian safety;
- Promote environmental enhancement with regard to features such as existing derelict sites and buildings and the upgrading and provision of future open spaces;
- Conserve and enhance the built heritage;
- Provide physical, social and economic infrastructure appropriate to the Village.

Section 10 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2007, sets out the content of development plans. It states 'a *Development Plan shall set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area*'. The current County Development Plan adheres to the principles of sustainable development in accordance with the requirements of the Acts. The Local Area Plan will conform to the principles, objectives and policies of the County Development Plan and will, therefore, have a strong emphasis on promoting the sustainable development of the area which seek inter alia;

- Land use zoning of areas for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, open space, community facilities or otherwise, or a mixture of those uses;
- Provision of infrastructure, including the promotion of public transport and road /rail development, energy, communications facilities, water supplies, waste recovery, disposal facilities, waste water services, etc.;
- Conservation and protection of the environment;
- Protection of structures and preservation of the character of Conservation Areas;
- The integration of social, community and cultural requirements with the planning and sustainable development of the area;
- The preservation of the character of the landscape including preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest;
- The renewal and development of areas in need of regeneration;
- Provision of traveller accommodation;
- Preserving, improving and extending amenities and recreational amenities;
- Major Accidents Directive (siting of new establishments, modifications of existing establishments, development in the vicinity of establishments);
- Provision of community services, including schools, crèches, childcare facilities and other educational facilities, and;
- Protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of Gaeltacht areas.

**(iv) Environmental problems relevant to the Plan**

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's (DoEHLG) Circular letter SEA 1/08 and the National Parks & Wildlife Service's (NPWS) Circular 1/08, both dated 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008, state that any draft land use plan (Development Plans, Local Area Plans,

Regional Planning Guidelines, schemes for Strategic Development Zones) or amendment/variation to a plan, proposed under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 must be screened for any potential impact on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites (being SACs, NHAs or SPAs).

The River Boyne and River Blackwater system is candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC). The River Boyne is located 1km north of the Village and is not located within the Plan's boundary. There were previously a number of Natural Heritage Area (NHAs) along this stretch of the River Boyne, these areas relate to alluvial deposits, wooded areas and wetlands along the River Boyne and have now been wholly subsumed into the cSAC designation. There are no Special Protection Areas (SPAs) either within the Plan area or in proximity to the Village.

Donore Village is also located within the 'Buffer Zone' for the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site. Brú na Bóinne was designated as a World Heritage Site in 1993 and is one of only three such sites on the island of Ireland. This listing recognises the international importance of this cultural landscape and legally obliges the State to protect the area to the highest international standards. The area is of significant physical geographical, archaeological and historical importance as it contains ninety-three Recorded Monuments, including passage tombs, henges, fulachta fiadh, cist burials, standing stones, ringforts, souterrains, granges, a medieval manorial village and associated field system, various 'Battle of the Boyne' landmarks, a regionally important demesne landscape and parts of the River Boyne navigation system. The international significance of this area has only gradually been revealed through a process of discovery and research which began 300 years ago when the main passage tomb monuments were rediscovered from 1699AD.

The Brú na Bóinne designation is largely centred upon the passage tombs of Knowth, Dowth and Newgrange. This was established to protect the area from development that could be detrimental to the monuments or the setting of the monuments within the surrounding landscape. This complex is segregated into both a 'Core Area' and a 'Buffer Zone'. The 'Core Area' contains the main monuments within the area, specifically the passage tombs of Dowth, Knowth and Newgrange, while the 'Buffer Area' largely delineates those areas that are visually important to the setting of these monuments within the surrounding valleys. The core area of the Complex is approximately 780 hectares in extent and the total area, which includes the buffer zone, extends to 3,300 hectares.

According to Section 8.3.3.2 of the County Development Plan the area surrounding the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site and the adjoining 'Battle of the Boyne' site are of regional to international amenity and heritage importance and contains areas of the highest visual quality in the county. This area is very sensitive to all categories of new development, particularly housing, large agricultural structures, extractive industries, coniferous afforestation and masts or other tall structures which impinge from outside the visual envelope along the valley. There are a large number of views and prospects that are sensitive to inappropriate forms of development. Three such views and prospects are located in the townlands within the general vicinity of the Village, VP 3, VP 7 and VP 8 outlined in Table 27 of the County Development Plan.

Donore Village is located to the south of the River Boyne within the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne complex and being the largest population centre within this area is increasingly visible from a significant area of the 'core area' of these monuments. Future inappropriately sites/designed development within the Village could have a significant impact upon their setting.

It is noted that population growth of recent years has put a strain on existing water and wastewater infrastructure throughout the County. The Local Authority is addressing infrastructural deficiencies in the north-east Meath area including Donore Village through the East Meath, Drogheda & South Louth Water Improvement Scheme.

In terms of water supply, Donore is served by the East Meath, South Louth & Drogheda Water Scheme. The main water source for the East Meath Water Supply Scheme is the abstraction from the River Boyne at Roughgrange via the canal intake, which is treated at Stalleen Treatment Works. Upgrading works to this system are planned specifically to facilitate an increase in capacity to serve Drogheda.

The Donore Waste Water Treatment Plant located to the west of the Village is currently being upgraded and its current capacity of 600pe (Population Equivalent) will be increased to 1,200pe. This is due to be completed for Spring 2010.

Ultimately, regarding wastewater treatment capacity and potable water supplies, there are no manifest strategically significant environmental problems identified within Donore.

The area is also served by a well-paved third class road network which is a main route from Drogheda to access the Brú na Bóinne Visitor's Centre on the southern bank of the River Boyne approximately 2 km to the west of the Village.

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

These plans and programmes are considered under the County Development Plan and will not be specifically addressed in the Local Area Plan. There exists facility for the adoption of policies and objectives arising, where necessary, from E.U. legislation via the statutory processes of; making of Planning Regulations and Material Variations of Development Plans. The Plan will therefore take into account all existing relevant environmental legislation and will accommodate any new legislation via the above processes. Any site specific issues will be addressed through the planning application process.

**3.2 Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area Likely to be Affected**

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

Generally, it is considered that the effects on the existing environment will be irreversible but acceptable within the context of the proper planning and sustainable development of the Village. In addition, development control provisions in the County Development Plan and the Plan, as well as the Planning & Development Acts and Regulations, will allow for the appropriate assessment of proposed developments on a case by case basis via the Planning Application process.

The policies and objectives of the Draft Donore Local Area Plan will seek to mitigate and reduce any adverse environmental impact resulting from development.

**(ii) *The cumulative nature of the effects***

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

However, it is considered that in the majority of cases that the cumulative effects on the environment will be positive and that development of Donore will be 'slowed dramatically' and more closely linked to local growth rather than regional growth, as has occurred in the past, as required under Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan. Projected growth rates for the settlement will be reduced from that experienced over the past few years and a proportion of new

housing in multi-house development will be reserved for locals only, as outlined in Policy HS POL 16 of the County Development Plan.

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

It is important to note however, that the zoning of land and construction of development in any case has potential to impact on the local environment whether it is through the loss of trees, woodlands, vegetation, hedgerows, and roosting habitats, etc, which are rich in biodiversity. Any loss of these habitats would have localised, significant environmental implications and may inadvertently impact upon a particular species of flora or fauna and in turn, impact upon other habitats in the area via loss of species. This is regrettably, a potential cumulative effect regardless of whether the Local Area Plan is implemented or not.

***(iii) The trans-boundary nature of the effects***

At this time, it is not foreseen that any extension to the existing Village development boundary will be required. Furthermore, through policies and objectives for appropriate design and siting of development within the Village, it is the aim of the Council to minimise any potential environmental effects, which may arise from development within the current Village boundary on the surrounding landscape. The policies and objectives of the Donore Local Area Plan will have no other national, regional or inter-county transboundary effects.

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

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

There are no designated SEVESO sites within or adjoining the plan area.

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

At present, the Village has a population of 728 persons as recorded by the 2006 Census of Population. It is an objective of the Plan to accommodate a further increase of 34 additional residential units up to 2013 in accordance with Table 6 and Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan. This would result in a population increase of 85-92 persons by 2013 based upon the County Development Plan's Table 5 population and average household size predictions for 2013. The implementation of the Plan will therefore increase the potential population of Donore over the plan period, however it is anticipated that this increase can be adequately accommodated within the existing development boundary. Therefore no significant alteration to the existing spatial extent is expected.

It is considered that the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects on the proposed Local Area Plan will not differ significantly from those likely to arise in relation to the existing Donore Urban Detail Map 9 from the County Development Plan. The majority of future development will be residential with lands set aside for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities and also for open space purposes comprising of both active and passive recreational amenities.

The magnitude of the zoning proposed in Donore will not differ significantly to the current zoning under the Donore Urban Detail Map 9. In addition to this, the order of priority for the Village, as



set out under Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan will be applied meaning that only a portion (approximately 66%) of the zoned residential lands will be available for development pre 2013, with the remaining 34% being released only post 2013.

The proposed Local Area Plan for Donore will therefore aim to provide more sustainable levels of population growth than has occurred over the past decade in the area. As stated in the County Development Plan, the development of 'Villages', 'Key Villages' and 'Small Growth Towns' are to be 'slowed dramatically' and more closely linked to local growth rather than 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.

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

- Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage:

While Donore has cultural heritage significance being located within the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne complex, the village contains only three protected structures, has no areas of archaeological interest, has no architectural conservation areas, and has no recorded sites or monuments listed on the Record of Monuments and Places.

Donore Village evolved in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries at the convergence of a number of Third Class Roads. In the latter half of the Nineteenth Century it expended further through the investment of local landlords. The latter half of the Twentieth Century and the first decade of the Twenty-First century saw a significant level of development within the Village comprising mainly of medium to large sized residential developments. Due to the fact that the Village is located within a minor valley between the 'Redmountain' and 'Donore Hill' there is a concentration of development on the slopes of both hills. Further development of this type should be avoided due to their size, within the context of the Village and their prominence in the landscape.

There are no areas within Donore Village that have been environmentally designated under EU legislation and, as such, must be preserved and protected. However, as identified above, the River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC is located in close proximity to the Village and the Village is within the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site.

Donore Village is located within Landscape Character Area 5 (LCA 5) or the 'Boyne Valley' within the Meath Landscape Character Assessment (MCLA) attached as Appendix VI to the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. It is therefore deemed to have an '*exceptional*' level of Landscape Value, a 'high' level of Landscape Sensitivity and an '*international*' level of Landscape Importance. The landscape in the Boyne Valley is characterised by a steep river valley with areas of rolling lowland adjacent to the River Boyne.

The MLCA states in regard to LCA 5 that it '*is arguably the most significant and highly valued landscapes in the county because it contains the Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site*'. It also states that '*due to the exceptional landscape value and high sensitivity of the Boyne Valley, this LCA has low potential capacity to accommodate multi-house residential developments. It provides the setting for historic features of international importance (Brú na Bóinne WHS)*'. The MLCA concludes that Donore Village is '*critical to the setting of Brú na Bóinne World Heritage Site and as such any development in Donore would need to be considered carefully*'.

Regarding the area surrounding the Village, the MCLA states that '*there is a quarry to the south west of Slane ... further mineral extraction in the area needs to be carefully sited due to extensive views of the uplands that are available on higher ground and within the Boyne Valley*'.

The MCLA contains a number of recommendations regarding the future preservation of this landscape character, specifically

1. Preserve the Boyne Valley as a unique landscape setting for Trim, Slane, Navan and Newgrange, some of the most valuable historic assets in the County.
2. Maintain the viability of small scale farming which is complimentary to the landscape character and critical to maintaining the condition of features such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands.
8. Have regard to the fact that the entire River corridor is designated as a cSAC. Development should not conflict with the reasons for which this designation has been made.
9. When siting development have regard to the nature of views within this area: the river valley is narrow and high sided so views along its length and across to either side are clear and often uninterrupted. Development on the skyline should be avoided unless it is demonstrated to have no adverse visual impacts that cannot be mitigated against.

The MLCA also states that the potential carrying capacity of this landscape to carry further development is also limited.

In order to reduce the impact upon heritage items within the Village and the visual impact of any new development on the Brú na Bóinne complex, the Draft Plan, in conjunction with the County Development Plan, will propose policies and objectives promoting such protection.

It is considered appropriate that the Council provide a policy within the Plan that will ensure all planning applications that may, due to their location, size or nature, have visual impact implications for the Brú na Bóinne complex should be subject to a Visual Impact Assessment.

In accordance with the EC Natural Habitats Regulations 1997, it is also considered appropriate that the Council provide a policy within the Draft Plan to ensure that an appropriate assessment of the implications of proposals on designated conservation sites is undertaken in respect of developments requiring planning permission.

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

The environmental policies and objectives to be contained within the Local Area Plan will seek to reduce the overall impact of future developments on the environmental quality of the Plan Area and the surrounding area. The policies and objectives contained within the Plan will be set within the context of the County Development Plan for which a full SEA was prepared and published.

#### **- Intensive land-use**

It is not expected that the intensification of existing land uses in the Plan area will be such that vulnerable areas will be significantly affected. It is considered appropriate that the Council provide policies which seek to reduce the potentially negative impact of increased land uses within the Village which is achievable through appropriate quality design standards and guidelines which shall be provided in the Plan through development briefs.

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

There are no such areas within the Plan area, although as identified above the River Boyne and River Blackwater is a cSAC located in close proximity to the Village and the Village is within the 'Buffer Zone' for the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The potential impacts on the setting of the 'Brú na Bóinne' Complex have been ascertained during the preparation of the County Development Plan for which a full SEA was prepared and published. In line with Pol SS POL 7 of the County Development Plan the development boundary of the Village will not be extended and the Plan will not contain any additional zonings to those contained within the existing County Development Plan.

#### **4.0 STATUTORY CONSULTATION**

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

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

Each of the above environmental authorities will be consulted under Article 14A (4) and 13A (4) of the Regulations.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

SEA is not mandatory for this Plan as its current and proposed population is less than 10,000, the threshold at which an SEA is deemed necessary. The value of the existing environment in the Plan area is such that the development resulting from policies and objectives within the Plan is unlikely to lead to significant negative environmental effects. The nature of the surrounding area, specifically the setting of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site, as well as the setting of the River Boyne and Blackwater cSAC located in close proximity to the north of Donore Village, in which Donore is an integral element, has been assessed during the preparation of the County Development Plan for which a full SEA was prepared and published. The development control provisions in the County Development Plan and the Draft Plan, as well as those inherent within the planning application process, arising from the Planning & Development Acts, 2000-2007 and Regulations, 2001-2008, will ensure the appropriate assessment of proposed developments on lands within the Donore area on an individual basis. Furthermore, the Council, in conjunction with Louth County Council, will shortly commence preparation of the Local Area Plan for the lands within the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site and those surrounding it which will address all environmental issues within the area.

#### **6.0 RECOMMENDATION**

Based on this screening process it is considered that an SEA will not be required for the proposed Local Area Plan in Donore.

Appropriate Assessment: Screening Exercise



Draft Donore Local Area Plan 2009-2014

*Appropriate Assessment Screening Report*

*Carried out under the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Meath County Council is preparing a Local Area Plan for the Village of Donore, Co. Meath as required by the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21<sup>st</sup> May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive, requires competent authorities to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.<sup>4</sup> The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project in view of any Natura 2000 site's conservation objectives.

The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) Circular letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 (dated 15 February, 2008) states:

*Any draft land use plan (development plans, local area plans, regional planning guidelines, schemes for strategic development zones) or amendment/variation to it proposed under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) must be screened for any potential impact on areas designated as Natura 2000 sites (normally called Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs)).*

Screening is further directed to be based upon any ecological information available to the authority and an adequate description of the plan and its likely environmental impacts, having regard to policies for future development. Where screening finds that the Draft Plan or amendment will have an impact on a Natura 2000 site an appropriate assessment of the plan must be undertaken.

As part of the process of preparing the Draft Donore Local Area Plan 2009-2015, hereinafter referred to as the Draft LAP, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Exercise must be carried out for the Plan. This document is provided as an appendix to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report for the Draft Donore Local Area Plan 2009-2015, but should also be read as independent of the SEA process.

While Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening addresses the potential effects that the Draft LAP might have on the wider environment, AA Screening is specifically focused on the impact of the Draft LAP (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites in the area of the Draft LAP or those that have the potential to be affected by it. The integrity of a Natura 2000 site relates to its ecological functions and the assessment of whether or not it might be adversely affected by the Draft LAP focuses on, and is limited to, the conservation objectives of the site.

The following are the stages in the Appropriate Assessment procedure:

1. Determining whether the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects – the screening stage,
2. Appropriate Assessment ascertaining the effect on site integrity,
3. Mitigation & alternative solutions – where there is a risk of the plan having adverse effects on the integrity of a site, there should be an examination of mitigation measures and alternative solutions.

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<sup>4</sup> Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) are collectively known as Natura 2000 sites.

The Draft LAP has been screened to ascertain if the Plan should be subject to an Appropriate Assessment as outlined in the Habitats Directive. The screening exercise has had regard to the European Commission's guidance document entitled '*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*'. In line with the suggested assessment methodology put forward by the Commission, a screening matrix and a finding of no significant effects matrix have been completed.

The screening exercise process has found that the Draft LAP does not require an Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken as the implementation of the Plan would not be likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 site.

## **1.1 Methodology**

The appropriate methodology for this study has been informed by '*Managing Natura 2000 Sites - The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC*' and has accordingly drawn on the methodology envisaged by EIA Directive 85/337/EEC with further guidance provided by '*Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*'.

Through this AA Screening the likely effects of the Draft LAP on Natura 2000 sites will be examined and it will be considered whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. This will involve:

1. determining whether the project or plan is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site.
2. describing the Draft LAP, and other plans or projects, that have the potential for having significant effects on Natura 2000 sites;
3. identifying the potential effects on Natura 2000 sites;
4. assessing the significance of any effects.

In the following section the Draft LAP will be assessed in terms of these four issues.

## **2.0 SCREENING MATRIX**

### **2.1 Brief Description of the Project or Plan**

The LAP is intended to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of Donore Village over the Plan's six year timeframe, specifically 2009-2015, unless amended. It consists of a written statement and maps which give a graphic representation of the planning policies and development objectives contained within the Plan.

The primary purpose of this LAP is to establish a land-use planning framework for the sustainable development of Donore Village in a co-ordinated and coherent manner that is respectful of the Village's existing character and size.

The overall goal of this LAP is to facilitate the development of Donore commensurate to its designation as a '*Village*' within the Settlement Strategy in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 and its location within the '*Buffer Zone*' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site. In accordance with Variation No. 2 (Order of Priority) of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, the Draft LAP will seek to promote the development of up to thirty-four additional

residential units up to 2013 with priority for development going to Village Centre consolidation sites.

Such an increase in the local population needs to be achieved in conjunction with the provision of an increase in local employment. The growth of Donore in line with these targets would achieve, inter alia, the following key policy objectives in line with the Development Plan:

- a strengthening of the service centre role of the Village both in terms of servicing its existing population but also that of its immediate hinterland.
- maintaining the vitality and viability of the existing Village and in particular ensuring the sustained provision of existing services, such as schools, shops, sports clubs, employment uses, etc, and
- the avoidance of unsustainable ribbon development along the entrance roads and the surrounding countryside through the designation of appropriately zoned lands adjacent to the existing Village and the efficient use of existing and planned for transportation and services infrastructure.

## 2.2 Brief Description of the Natura 2000 sites

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the boundary of the Local Area Plan.

### 2.2.1 The River Boyne and River Blackwater candidate Special Area of Conservation

There is a Natura 2000 site within close vicinity of Donore that could potentially be affected by the Plan; namely the River Boyne and River Blackwater candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC).

Site Code:	Site Name:
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater

The River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC is situated less than 1km to the south-west of Donore Village. Under the Habitats Directive Annex I habitats, and Annex II and Annex V species have been identified within the cSAC, along with migratory wildfowl listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive (NPWS).

### 2.2.2 Boyne Estuary Special Protection Area

Another site of indirect relevance to Donore is the Boyne Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) located to the east of the Village.

Site Code:	Site Name:
004080	Boyne Estuary SPA

This moderately sized coastal site, which is situated to the east of Drogheda, County Louth, comprises most of the estuary of the Boyne River. Apart from one section which is over 1km wide, its width is mostly less than 500m. The river channel, which is navigable and dredged, is defined by training walls, these being breached in places. Intertidal flats occur along the sides of the channelled river.

The site is of considerable ornithological importance for wintering waterfowl, with ten species having populations of national importance. Little Tern has bred in the recent past and could do so



again in the future. Of particular significance is that two of the wintering species, Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. Little Tern, which last bred successfully at the site in 1996, is also listed on Annex I of this directive.

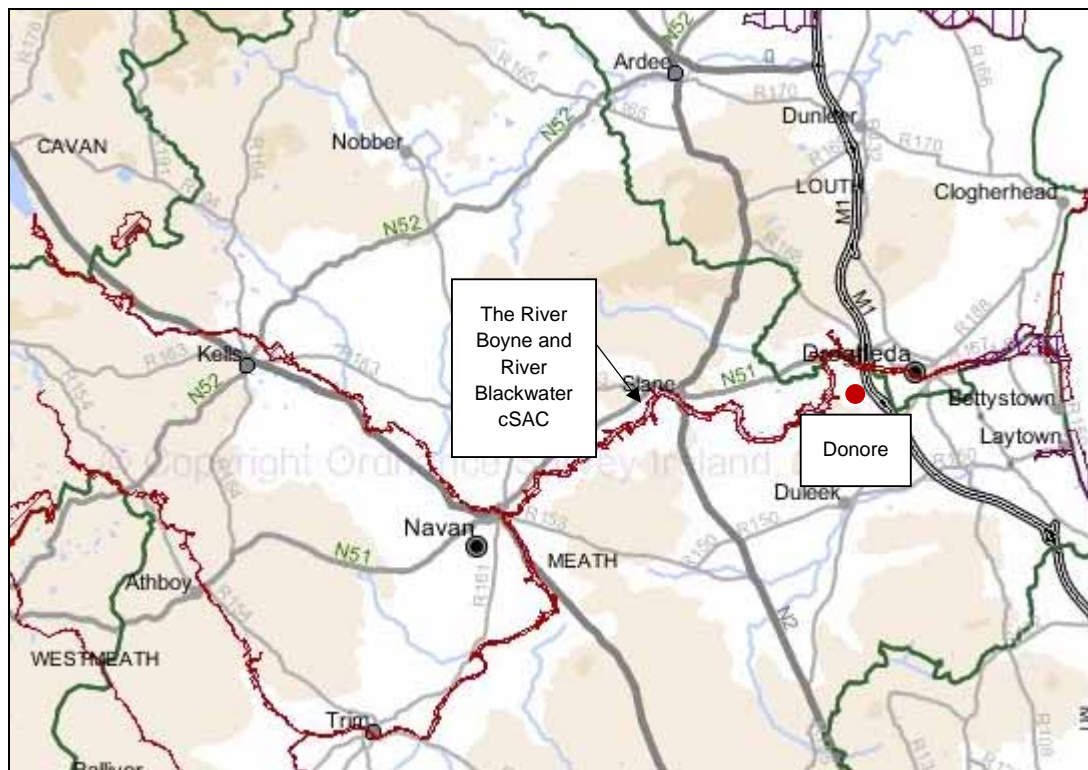


Figure One: River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC in relation to Donore Village.

### 2.2.3 Boyne Coast and Estuary candidate Special Area of Conservation

In association with the Boyne Estuary SPA site is the Boyne Coast and Estuary candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) also located to the east of the Village.

Site Code:	Site Name:
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary cSAC

The Boyne Coast and Estuary is a coastal site which includes most of the tidal sections of the River Boyne, intertidal sand and mud flats, salt marshes, marginal grassland, and the stretch of coast from Bettystown to Termonfeckin that includes the Mornington and Baltray sand dune systems.

The site is of considerable conservation as a coastal complex that supports good examples of eight habitats that are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive (estuaries, tidal mudflats, Salicornia mud, Atlantic salt meadows, Mediterranean salt meadows, embryonic shifting dunes, Marram dunes and fixed dunes) and for the important bird populations that it supports.

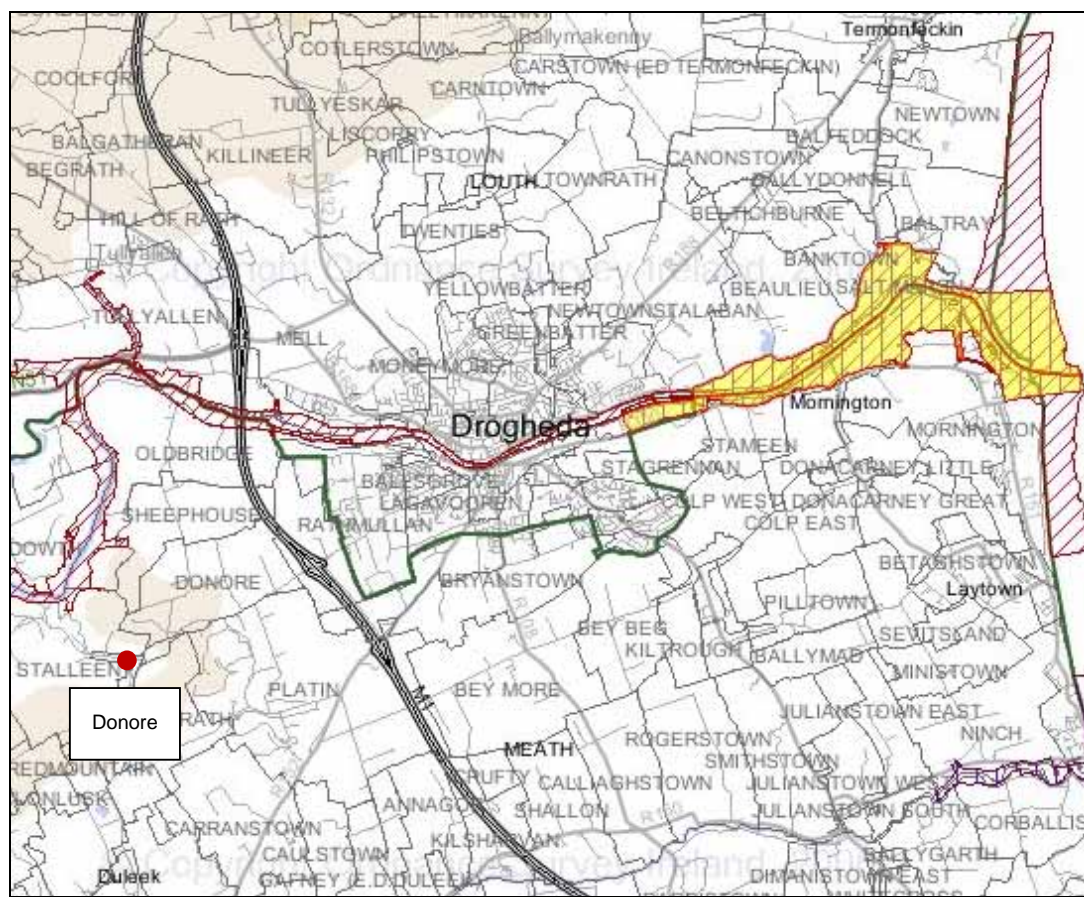


Figure Two: Boyne Estuary SPA in relation to Donore Village.

## 2.3 Assessment Criteria

### 2.3.1 River Boyne and River Blackwater cSAC

*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 sites.*

The LAP has been prepared to provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of this area over the lifetime of the Plan. The Plan provides for the orderly expansion of the Village within the context of being located within the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site. While the Plan envisages additional development in the context of the current size of the Village, the level of development is not significant in the wider context (in conjunction with Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, thirty-four additional dwellings are projected to be catered for up to 2013) and therefore is unlikely to generate significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:*

- size and scale;



No projects which would give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, arising from the size or scale of the project, is provided for in this Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

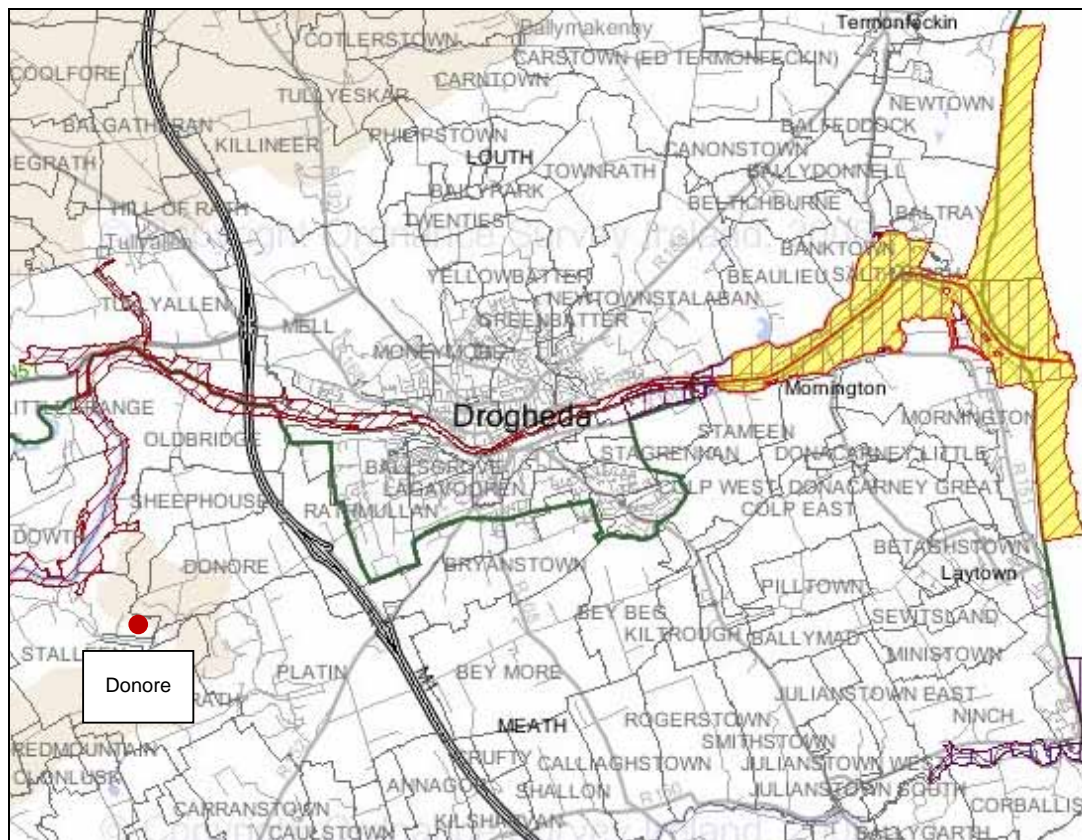


Figure Three: Boyne Coast and Estuary cSAC in relation to Donore Village.

- land take;

The Draft LAP provides for sufficient residential lands to meet the household projections for the Village as set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. Policy SS POL 7 of the County Development Plan specifically relates to Donore Village and aims to 'to desist from zoning additional land in the preparation of the forthcoming Local Area Plan'. As a result the Draft LAP has not extended the development boundary of the Village yet contains sufficient zoned lands for village centre, community and open space uses. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from land take shall be permitted on the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site;

The closest Natura 2000 site is approximately 1km from the Village. Given the distance involved and the limited extent of development proposed within the LAP, no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites having regard to its conservation objectives, arising from their proximity to the sites shall be permitted on the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- resource requirements (water abstraction, etc.)

Donore receives its potable water supply from an extraction point at 'Roughgrange' on the River Boyne. Drogheda Borough Council operates a storage reservoir to the South West of Donore Village.

The East Meath, Drogheda & South Louth Water Improvement Scheme is listed in the current '*Water Services Investment Programme Assessment of Needs 2007-2013*' as a key scheme in need of advancement to planning stage. A definite need has been identified for a new regional Water Supply Scheme to serve Drogheda and its surrounding urban areas. An upgrade in capacity of the current scheme is ultimately required to provide a consistent acceptable quality and security of supply, as well as to provide for the sustainable future growth of east Meath in general. The main focus of this scheme will involve upgrading the gravity main between the Stalleen Reservoir, on the hill to the south-west of the Village, and Drogheda.

Any increase in the rate of extraction from the River Boyne would be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) by the Council.

- emissions (disposal to land, water or air);

The Village is currently served by an existing Waste Water Treatment Plant located to the north-west of the Village, along the Slane/Stalleen Road. The system is currently operating at capacity which is identified as being at 600p.e. (population equivalent). An upgrade of this facility is currently being undertaken and is substantially complete. It is anticipated to be completed in Spring 2010. This upgrade will increase the unit's capacity to 1,200p.e.

Hypothetically any such additional projects would be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the pollution licensing regime of the Environmental Protection Agency. The relevant Planning Authority or An Bord Pleanála also has the power to refuse planning permission for development despite the issuing of an EPA license, under Section 99F of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992 (as inserted by Section 15 of the Protection of the Environment Act, 2003).

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

- excavation requirements;

Soils and rock are a natural resource and an important component of the local ecosystem. The policy provisions included within the LAP and the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 will ensure that no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Such projects would also be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

- transportation requirements;

The transportation policies of the Draft LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan.

- duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.;

The Draft LAP shall be adopted in mid-2009 and will remain in effect until 2015. The duration of the Plan is not relevant to the ongoing protection of the Natura 2000 sites. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from the duration of construction, operation, 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 the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from other considerations, 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 sites arising as a result of:*

- reduction of habitat area;

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

- disturbance to key species;

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

- habitat or species fragmentation;

No projects giving rise to significant habitat or species fragmentation in the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this 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 in the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this 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 significant adverse changes in key indicators of conservation value for the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- climate change;

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

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

- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this 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 significant interference with the key relationships that define the function of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this 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 sites (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.

### 2.3.2 Assessment Criteria Boyne Estuary SPA

*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 sites.*

The LAP has been prepared to provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of this area over the lifetime of the Plan. The Plan provides for the orderly expansion of the Village within the context of being located within the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site. While the Plan envisages additional development in the context of the current size of the Village, the level of development is limited in the wider context (in conjunction with Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, thirty-four additional dwellings are projected to be catered for up to 2013) and therefore is unlikely to generate significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:*

- size and scale;

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

- land take;

The Draft LAP provides for sufficient residential lands to meet the household projections for the Village as set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. Policy SS POL 7 of the County Development Plan specifically relates to Donore Village and aims to 'to desist from zoning additional land in the preparation of the forthcoming Local Area Plan'. As a result the Draft LAP has not extended the development boundary of the Village yet contains sufficient zoned lands for village centre, community and open space uses. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from land take shall be permitted on the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site;

The closest Natura 2000 site is approximately 1km from the Village. Given the distance involved and the limited extent of development proposed within the LAP, no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites having regard to its conservation objectives, arising from their proximity to the sites shall be permitted on the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- resource requirements (water abstraction, etc.)

Donore receives its potable water supply from an extraction point at 'Roughgrange' on the River Boyne. Drogheda Borough Council operates a storage reservoir to the South West of Donore Village.

The East Meath, Drogheda & South Louth Water Improvement Scheme is listed in the current 'Water Services Investment Programme Assessment of Needs 2007-2013' as a key scheme in need of advancement to planning stage. A definite need has been identified for a new regional Water Supply Scheme to serve Drogheda and its surrounding urban areas. An upgrade in capacity of the current scheme is ultimately required to provide a consistent acceptable quality and security of supply, as well as to provide for the sustainable future growth of east Meath in general. The main focus of this scheme will involve upgrading the gravity main between the Stalleen Reservoir, on the hill to the south-west of the Village, and Drogheda.

Any increase in the rate of extraction from the River Boyne would be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) by the Council.

- emissions (disposal to land, water or air);

The Village is currently served by an existing Waste Water Treatment Plant located to the north-west of the Village, along the Slane/Stalleen Road. The system is currently operating at capacity which is identified as being at 600p.e. (population equivalent). An upgrade of this facility is currently being undertaken and is largely complete. It is anticipated to be finalized in Spring 2010. This upgrade will increase the unit's capacity to 1,200p.e.



Hypothetically any such additional projects would be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the pollution licensing regime of the Environmental Protection Agency. The relevant Planning Authority or An Bord Pleanála also has the power to refuse planning permission for development despite the issuing of an EPA license, under Section 99F of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992 (as inserted by Section 15 of the Protection of the Environment Act, 2003).

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

- excavation requirements;

Soils and rock are a natural resource and an important component of the local ecosystem. The policy provisions included within the LAP and the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 will ensure that no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Such projects would also be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

- transportation requirements;

The transportation policies of the Draft LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan.

- duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.;

The Draft LAP shall be adopted in mid-2009 and will remain in effect until 2015. The duration of the Plan is irrelevant and not applicable to the ongoing protection of the Natura 2000 sites. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from the duration of construction, operation, 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 the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from other considerations, 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 sites arising as a result of:*

- reduction of habitat area;

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

- disturbance to key species;

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

- habitat or species fragmentation;

No projects giving rise to significant habitat or species fragmentation in the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this 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 in the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this 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 significant adverse changes in key indicators of conservation value for the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- climate change;

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

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

- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this 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 significant interference with the key relationships that define the function of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this 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 sites (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.

### 2.3.3 Assessment Criteria Boyne Coast and Estuary cSAC

*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 sites.*

The LAP has been prepared to provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of this area over the lifetime of the Plan. The Plan provides for the orderly expansion of the Village within the context of being located within the 'Buffer Zone' of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site. While the Plan envisages additional development in the context of the current size of the Village, the level of development is not significant in the wider context (in conjunction with Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, thirty-four additional dwellings are projected to be catered for up to 2013) and therefore is unlikely to generate significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:*

- size and scale;

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

- land take;

The Draft LAP provides for sufficient residential lands to meet the household projections for the Village as set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. Policy SS POL 7 of the County Development Plan specifically relates to Donore Village and aims to 'to desist from zoning additional land in the preparation of the forthcoming Local Area Plan'. As a result the Draft LAP has not extended the development boundary of the Village yet contains sufficient zoned lands for village centre, community and open space uses. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from land take shall be permitted on the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site;

The closest Natura 2000 site is approximately 1km from the Village. Given the distance involved and the limited extent of development proposed within the LAP, no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites

having regard to its conservation objectives, arising from their proximity to the sites shall be permitted on the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- resource requirements (water abstraction, etc.)

Donore receives its potable water supply from an extraction point at 'Roughgrange' on the River Boyne. Drogheda Borough Council operates a storage reservoir to the South West of Donore Village.

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Any increase in the rate of extraction from the River Boyne would be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) by the Council.

- emissions (disposal to land, water or air);

The Village is currently served by an existing Waste Water Treatment Plant located to the north-west of the Village, along the Slane/Stalleen Road. The system is currently operating at capacity which is identified as being at 600p.e. (population equivalent). An upgrade of this facility is currently being undertaken and is substantially complete. It is anticipated to be completed in Spring 2010. This upgrade will increase the unit's capacity to 1,200p.e.

Hypothetically any such additional projects would be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the pollution licensing regime of the Environmental Protection Agency. The relevant Planning Authority or An Bord Pleanála also has the power to refuse planning permission for development despite the issuing of an EPA license, under Section 99F of the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992 (as inserted by Section 15 of the Protection of the Environment Act, 2003).

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

- excavation requirements;

Soils and rock are a natural resource and an important component of the local ecosystem. The policy provisions included within the LAP and the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 will ensure that no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Such projects would also be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

- transportation requirements;

The transportation policies of the Draft LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan.

- duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.;

The Draft LAP shall be adopted in mid-2009 and will remain in effect until 2015. The duration of the Plan is irrelevant and not applicable to the ongoing protection of the Natura 2000 sites. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from the duration of construction, operation, 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 the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from other considerations, 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 sites arising as a result of:*

- reduction of habitat area;

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

- disturbance to key species;

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

- habitat or species fragmentation;

No projects giving rise to significant habitat or species fragmentation in the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this 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 in the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this 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 significant adverse changes in key indicators of conservation value for the Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- climate change;

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

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

- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this 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 significant interference with the key relationships that define the function of the Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this 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 sites (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.

### **3.0 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT MATRIX**

Name of project or plan:

Draft Donore Local Area Plan 2009-2015.

Name and Location of Natura 2000 sites:

There are no Natura 2000 sites within or immediately adjoining the Local Area Plan boundary. The closest Natura 2000 site is the River Boyne and River Blackwater candidate Special Area of

Conservation (cSAC) situated 1km to the north-west of Donore Village. Additionally, there are two other sites of indirect relevance to Donore being the Boyne Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and the River Boyne and River Blackwater candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) situated 7km and 8 km, respectively, to the east of Donore Village.

Description of the project or plan

As given in Screening Matrix Section 2.0 above page 3.

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

The Draft Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any Natura 2000 site but rather the future planning and development of Donore Village. The Plan includes robust and thorough planning policies and development objectives aimed specifically at protecting, conserving and managing in a prudent and sustainable manner Donore's natural and built heritage.

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

The Draft LAP is the only land use plan directly applicable to Donore Village. It is placed within a hierarchy of plans such as the National Spatial Strategy for Ireland 2002-2020 and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016. The Plan is a subsidiary document to the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, for which a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was prepared.

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

The assessment of significance of effects:

*Describe how the project of plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site*

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to their conservation objectives.

*Explain why these effects are not considered significant*

The policies and provisions of the Plan have been devised to anticipate and avoid the need for developments that would be likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site. Furthermore, such developments as will be permitted on foot of the provisions of this Plan shall be required to conform to the relevant regulatory provisions for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site.

Additionally, any developments permitted in accordance with this plan also have a legal duty to conform with the relevant statutory and regulatory provisions enacted for the prevention of environmental pollution and degradation or other effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives.



List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address

At the time of writing Irish legislation does not prescribe statutory consultees for the purpose of consultation on the appropriate assessment of land use development plans. However Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government states the Department should be consulted.

As part of the SEA of the Draft LAP, consultation occurred with the following prescribed bodies stating that a submission or observation in relation to the SEA process could be made to the Planning Authorities;

1. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG), Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2. (01 833 3190)
2. Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DoCMNR), Leeson Lane, Dublin 2. (01 678 3084)
3. Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork. (021 487 5540)

Response to consultation

The response from the Environmental Protection Agency in their correspondence reminded the Planning Authority of the potential need for appropriate assessment.

The response from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources did not refer to Appropriate Assessment in their correspondence.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government reminded the Planning Authority that appropriate assessment screening was required.

Data collected to carry out the assessment

Who carried out this assessment?

Meath County Council.

Sources of data

Existing records and information published by the NPWS and EPA.

Level of assessment completed

A desktop study was completed utilising existing information from the relevant state authorities.

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

The full results of the assessment can be accessed and viewed in this document which is available for public inspection at the offices of *Meath County Council's* Planning Department, Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Following the review of the Draft LAP 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 No Significant Effects Matrix have been completed.

This Screening Exercise was carried out to ascertain if the planning policies and development objectives contained within the Draft LAP were likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 site. If this were the case then it would be necessary to carry out Appropriate Assessment.

The Draft LAP has been formulated to ensure that developments and effects arising from permissions based upon this Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

This Screening Report finds that the Draft LAP does not require further Appropriate Assessment.

## APPENDIX C

### Protected Structures listed within the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013:

1	<b>Detached House</b>	Detached four-bay two-storey house, built c.1880, with gabled porch. Hipped slate roof with render brick chimneystacks. Rubble limestone walls with dressed stone quoins having red walls to porch.
2	<b>Donore Parochial House</b>	Detached three-bay two-storey parochial house, built c.1840, with gabled bay and gablet. Pitched slate roofs with red brick chimneystacks. Square limestone walls with carved limestone plaque.
3	<b>Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church</b>	Detached gable-fronted church, built c.1840, flanked by recessed bays. Four-bay side elevations to the nave, ashlar limestone gate piers surmounted by cast-iron finials, with pair of cast-iron gates. Former school to side.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Energy Efficiency: Some Renewable Energy Methods**

Passive solar architecture is a design approach rather than the active use of a specific technology or device. The fabric, orientation and layout of the building are manipulated to achieve maximum solar gains and minimise the need for artificial lighting, heating and ventilation.

Active solar technology involves the installation of a solar collector device, which is typically a metal box structure containing an absorber. The solar collector absorbs the sun's heat, which can in turn heat water for the building.

Solar energy can also be harnessed through the use of photovoltaic technology using semiconductor materials to convert sunlight to electricity. These can be integrated in building structures.

A green roof system is an extension of the existing roof which involves a high quality water proofing and root repellent system, a drainage system, filter cloth, a lightweight growing medium and plants. The benefits of this system are numerous including savings on energy heating and cooling costs, sound insulation benefits, potential to reduce or eliminate roof drains, potential to assist with storm water management, provision of amenity space, aesthetic appeal and improved air quality.

### ***Energy Efficiency Standards***

The following points should be incorporated into making the transition to 'greener' domestic building design:

The building regulations revised Part L came into effect in July 2006. The following are some points that will affect building of housing in the future:

- The building elements make-up and insulation should be observed to the current U-values as detailed in the building regulations.
- Any house over 100m<sup>2</sup> should have two independent heating zones. The zones can be (a) the living area and (b) the dwelling area. This will reduce heating the whole house while only a section is populated during certain times during the day.
- Hot water storage should be fitted with thermostatic controls that shut-off the supply of heat when the desired storage temperature is reached.
- Separate and independent time control for space heating and for heating of stored water should be provided.
- All hot water storage vessels, pipes and ducts should be insulated to prevent heat loss. It is preferable if the hot water storage vessel is the pre-insulated type.
- External floor, window and roof light openings should not exceed 25% of the floor area. Particular attention should be given to the orientation and type of the glazing as this affects solar overheating.
- Energy efficient light bulbs should be use in all fittings including fluorescent tube lighting in the kitchen.

- To avoid heat loss and local condensation problems, limit local thermal bridging. Details of how to limit this are described in the draft building regulations.
- The selection of heating sources should be given proper attention. Sources such as wood pellet boilers and heat pumps appear to be most appropriate sustainable heat sources in contrast to electric.