

2.7 Urban Structure

2.7.1 Introduction

The character and shape of Navan is a product of history and is a result of a combination of the natural features of the rivers, its topography, the street and lane layout, development pressures and infrastructural provision. Navan has traditionally been a relatively compact town with its neighbourhoods within walking distance of the town centre. Increased dependence on the private car and zoning of extensive areas for residential development has allowed the town to spread and to sprawl somewhat into the surrounding countryside.

A Strategy of enhancing the compactness of the town will produce a number of benefits:

- A more compact form of development ensuring access to, and provision of, services and reduced the need to travel and reliance on the private motor car,
- A compact urban form will reduce vacancy and under use,
- A compact town will protect the rural landscape, retain agricultural land and protect the environmentally sensitive rural habitat.

2.7.2 Context

The importance of Navan in the past was largely due to its position controlling the crossings of the Rivers Boyne and Blackwater. The town of Navan has developed from the original medieval “Y shaped” cluster of streets around the Market Square of Trimgate Street, Ludlow Street and Watergate Street and Timmons Hill (Athlumney Road) which reflects the location of the town at a crossroads. From this original “walled enclosure”, the town developed with smaller streets and laneways branching off the principal streets in all directions. The urban concentration was to the south of the confluence of the rivers with small sub centres across both bridges, related to industrial activity in the mills located on the banks of both the Boyne and Blackwater Rivers. Since the 1950’s suburban development spread predominantly northwards towards Blackcastle.



The Rivermill Apartments

The discovery of lead and ore deposits close to the west of Navan in the 1970’s and the subsequent establishment of Tara Mines Ltd. led to the growth of the town. With the growth in mining came the expansion of the town’s traditional manufacturing industries of furniture and carpets. Allied to the development of the industrial sector was the need to expand the commercial centre of the town. A major change to the town centre took place in the late 1970’s with the opening up of Kennedy Road and its gradual transformation into

a busy commercial sector, Navan Shopping Centre having established in 1982. The demand for housing increased in line with the growth in population and resulted in new developments on the outskirts of the town on most approach roads.

More recently, with the positive effect of the ‘Celtic Tiger Economy’, the town has continued to expand at an unprecedented rate. This growth has occurred with significant areas of housing to the east together with the development of a Business & Industrial Park at Johnstown, to the south along the Trim Road at Balreask Old and to the north at Abbeylands, Clonmagadden and Blackcastle Demesne.

As the town has grown and continues to grow in that cycle, the commercial functions at the centre have enlarged and the residential function has declined. This transition has resulted in the disuse of premises, vacant sites and an uneasy match of form and function as businesses take over former residences. The creation of new frontages onto Kennedy Road has resulted in the decanting of some economic activity from the older streets such as the relocation of the Post Office and the development of the Credit Union. Nonetheless, new enterprises, assisted by the urban renewal incentives, have helped to fill the vacancies. As the town has spread into the suburbs, some commercial activity followed, initially of limited scope. However, there are a number of neighbourhood centres and local shops of sizeable scale now developed, and permitted, which should redress this phenomenon. Whilst a number of educational facilities are located outside of the immediate town centre, Navan remains a highly centralised town in that virtually all commercial, institutional, administrative and recreational functions are located in the town centre.

2.7.3 Townscape Characteristics

There is no singular characteristic for Navan but rather a mix of several

- The strong ‘Irish town’ of the older streets – Trimgate St., Watergate St. & Ludlow St. all converging on Market Square and leading outwards to the smaller scale Academy St., Railway St. Canon Row, Timmons Hill, as well as Flower Hill and Timmons Hill (Athlumney Road),
- The modern road dominated sectors of Kennedy Rd., Circular Rd., the Inner Relief Road (Dublin Road) and various Local Distributor Roads,
- The River Valley, the Blackwater converging with the Boyne & Navigation Canal, mostly green slopes and tree lined ridges and old industrial buildings,
- Housing estates of varying periods merging into an extensive area.



The Railway Viaduct

The visual perception of the town is one of

- Landmarks – church towers, railway viaduct, mottes, castle, bridges and mills,
- A strong sense of place – created by the older street and land patterns,
- Barriers – the Inner Relief Road separates sectors of the town from each other,
- Formlessness – of much recent development, particularly of a residential and commercial nature,
- Striking absence – of a major civic space or park,
- Gateways – to the town from various approaches, some marred by dereliction,
- Rivers – the Blackwater & Boyne are largely hidden, inaccessible to residents and separated from the town centre by the dominant Inner Relief Road.

2.7.4 Townscape Management

The historic flair of Navan rests largely upon the survival of the medieval street and lane pattern and the remaining stock of traditional buildings. It will be the future challenge of Navan to retain and enhance the visual appeal of the townscape, while permitting the modern uses necessary to ensure its vibrancy. However, most of the historic buildings have been altered in recent years and not always in a sympathetic manner. A general lack of maintenance is evident on some town centre streets, particularly above ground floor level where there are high levels of vacancy and under utilisation.

In order to address these issues, there is a need for comprehensive townscape management, which requires a number of objectives;

- Maintaining existing uses and attracting new ones to the town centre,
- Respecting the historical and traditional context, that contributes to Navan's character,
- Promoting the right balance between conservation and redevelopment,
- Enhancing the townscape through pedestrianisation and other environmental improvements such as the placing underground of electricity cables, improvements in street lighting, paving and public art,
- Protecting key buildings of the town's architectural heritage, through the Register of Protected Structures,
- Protecting and enhancing key streetscapes and elements of townscape, primarily through Architectural Conservation Areas.



Street Furniture at Navan Town Council

2.7.5 The Town Centre

The town centre, which comprises essentially the Navan Town Council Area, contains the greater proportion of Navan's archaeological, cultural and historic heritage, the shopping, commercial and administrative core, and key community and residential uses.

The centre has seen significant changes since the 1980's. The population decline, which arose from the process of suburbanisation, is being steadily redressed. Apartment development in the town centre (The Rivermill Apartments, The Steeples, The Lyric Cinema) and other infill residential development has revitalised the activity level of the town centre. The role of Urban Renewal Schemes in assisting and continuing this process will be examined in Section 2.8 and Appendix VII. The commercial core of the town centre has been resuscitated by the ongoing development of the Navan Shopping Centre and associated multi storey car parking facilities. A significant number of vacant and derelict sites within the centre have been or are being redeveloped. The physical environment of the centre has been improved by the Local Authorities programme of urban renewal and accompanying investment initiatives.

The attractiveness of Navan's town centre as a shopping and commercial area arises from its compact nature, the level of permeability offered by the medieval street and lane networks and the wide mix of activities to be found in a relatively small area. The Planning Authorities views the town centre as a place where people should have the widest variety of shopping, entertainment, cultural and leisure facilities, a place where people can walk safely and feel secure, while enjoying a pleasant environment and experiencing the heritage of architecture and urban space. The town centre offers opportunities for investment and urban renewal that is in keeping with the historic fabric.



The Lyric Cinema, Brews Hill-readapted as apartment development

Policies

In terms of the Town Centre it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To consolidate and reinforce the economic, cultural, social and environmental strengths of Navan's town centre, while addressing those constraints which hinder its well being and sustainable development,
- To maintain and enhance the role of the town centre as the dominant commercial and retailing area of Navan,
- To maintain and enhance the environmental quality and physical appearance of the

town centre, in terms of the built environment, urban spaces, streets and laneways, in order to create an attractive and user friendly environment,

- To encourage a diversity of uses in the town centre, recognising the needs of those who shop, work, live and socialise in the town centre.

2.7.6 Vibrancy and Vitality

The Strategy of maintaining and enhancing the role of the town centre will be pursued by maintaining and developing policies to help existing uses, by regenerating the historic centre, by encouraging conservation and urban renewal activities, by managing and controlling traffic, and by co-ordinating the Town & County Council's activities with private initiatives, with the objective of maintaining and enhancing the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre. Many of the policies relating to the town centre area will also apply to the town as a whole, or are specified in other parts of the Plan e.g. Retail Strategy, Traffic Management Proposals, etc.

Policies

In terms of Vibrancy and Vitality it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council;

- To control the spread of uses which could lead to a reduction in the attractiveness of, and the retailing function of, the principal shopping streets,
- To ensure a vibrant mix of retail, service uses, employment uses, community and cultural facilities, natural features and civic buildings in the town centre,
- To encourage activities that enliven the evening economy, including cultural and entertainment uses,
- To control the extent of retail and office developments, of a type and scale which are appropriate to the town centre, outside the central area (the Business & Industrial Park and identified Gateway sites being the exception to this policy with regard to office development),
- To protect established residential areas in the central area from encroachment by commercial development and associated activities by the introduction of 'Housing Protection Areas',
- To improve the vitality of the town centre by encouraging a mix of upper floor uses including inner urban living such as apartments over shops and commercial uses,
- To incorporate public art and high quality urban design, street furniture and landscaping, etc., into pedestrianised areas,
- To ensure effective pedestrian linkages between the proposed public transport interchange and the existing town centre,
- To ensure that refurbishment and redevelopment proposals contribute to the environmental quality, and are in keeping with the character of, the central area, and do not result in damage to the town's archaeological or architectural heritage,
- To facilitate the development of an accessible town centre with particular reference to persons with disabilities, pedestrians and cyclists and to improve the availability of public transport, and short, medium and long stay car parking facilities,
- To retain and enhance the existing street pattern, to encourage the retention and refurbishment of existing buildings of character, and to continue to upgrade the physical environment of the town centre's streets and urban / civic spaces.



Vivaldi's Shopfront, Ludlow Street

These policies will be implemented through the following mechanisms:

- i. The retail function of the town's principal streets will be protected and permission, including change of use applications, will not normally be granted for non-retail uses on the ground floor of properties on these streets. The principal streets consist of Trimgate Street, Preston Place, Market Square, Kennedy Road, Watergate Street and Ludlow Street,
- ii. The provision of amusement arcades shall be strictly controlled and shall not be permitted on the ground floor frontage of town centre streets,
- iii. An undue proliferation of takeaway outlets will not be permitted in any particular area. Regard will be had to the impact of such outlets on the amenities and civic dignity of the area. Free standing takeaways not attached to a restaurant will not normally be permitted,
- iv. Taxi / Hackney offices will not be permitted where they are likely to cause traffic congestion or traffic hazard or where they would injure the amenities or civic dignity of the area,
- v. In considering proposals for public house / restaurants or the enlargement of existing public houses / restaurants, the following criteria will apply:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the amenities of the area, including residential amenity,
 - The effect of the proposed development on the existing mix of land uses and activities including the retail function, in the particular locality,
 - The size, scale and location of existing licenced premises / restaurants in the vicinity,
- vi. Permission will not normally be granted for office developments for the provision of financial and professional services to the public in suburban areas, other than where of appropriate scale in neighbourhood centres, and the conversion of residential properties in the suburbs for use by such offices will not be permitted,
- vii. In order to maintain existing residential communities in the central area, permission will not normally be granted for the conversion of residential properties to non residential use,
- viii. Permission will not normally be permitted for development which would preclude the reuse of upper floors by eliminating separate access,
- ix. The provision of improved facilities for cyclists through the development of a network of cycle ways, and the provision of secure cycle parking where permissions are being granted for commercial, residential or institutional developments in the town centre,
- x. The provision of adequate parking facilities for short-term shopping, business and

- leisure use and the discouragement of commuter parking,
- xi. The provision of a town centre network with facilities for people with disabilities and/or mobility impairment,
 - by the provision of disabled driver parking bays,
 - by the control of street furniture, mobile display signs and goods displayed on footpaths,
 - by the provision of tactile surfacing, ramps and kerb dishings, and
 - by the provision of improved facilities on buses and taxis,
 - xii. Where development proposals are received which are considered, due to their location, scale or characteristics, to be a significant proposed addition to the urban fabric or be likely to have significant effects on the urban environment, the relevant Planning Authority may require the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed development.

Navan Town Council intends to continue the programme of urban renewal and environmental improvements in the town centre. It is an objective to implement the Navan Integrated Area Plan for urban renewal with assistance provided under the Urban and Village Renewal Operational Programme of the National Development Plan.

The Planning Authorities will through the implementation of the policies outlined above, and by means of the policies outlined in relation to the Protection of the Heritage, the Architectural Conservation Areas, the Retail Strategy and the Traffic Management Plan seek to ensure the continued viability and vitality of Navan's town centre.

2.7.7 Expansion of the Town Centre

With the expected growth of Navan as a Primary Growth Centre in the Hinterland of the Greater Dublin Area, additional demand will arise for retail space and the subsequent enlargement of the town centre. The topography of the town, in particular the presence of the Rivers Blackwater & Boyne, will naturally encourage growth of the town in a southerly or westerly direction. The *'Integrated Development Framework Plan'* proposes that the centre of Navan expand towards the new central rail and bus station to the south of the existing town centre. However, the exact location of the proposed bus and rail station will be subject to confirmation from a Rail Alignment & Feasibility Study. The *'Integrated Development Framework Plan'* proposes the creation of a new attraction pole (retail, business and an element of residential) around this rail and bus station, which together with the existing Shopping Centre will establish the broad axis in which most densification and mix of uses should occur.

In the shorter term, there are a number of areas quite close to the town centre, which are suitable for regeneration and the expansion of the core functions of the town. The triangle of land framed by Carriage Road, the Dan Shaw Road and the Trim Road is currently occupied by a series of under utilised and dilapidated industrial and commercial uses that could accommodate significant expansion of the town centre functions. In order to pave the way for its development over subsequent Development Plan periods, it is proposed to facilitate the relocation of the industrial and commercial uses from this triangle of land to a site identified for E3 Industrial Use off the Athboy Road (see Development Objectives Map). This area of industrially zoned lands will have a qualified objective to facilitate the displacement of non compatible town centre industrial uses.

The existing town centre should also be densified, in order to include a larger share of residential use than at present, building on the success of the Urban Renewal initiatives. This would provide the area with full day generation of activity in a quality urban landscape, which is the key for the success of a new or existing neighbourhood. Several opportunities exist in specific areas of the town centre such as the area surrounding Navan Shopping Centre, the Fair Green, River Valleys and the extensive backlands onto the N3, which will in time be reclassified upon completion of the M3 Motorway and completion of the Local

Distributor Road network. There are considerable backlands to the rear of buildings on Trimgate Street, Railway Street & Ludlow Street that are under utilised considering their development potential in a town centre location. The integration of residential with retail and business uses will be promoted in Navan as this tradition has lost its importance as new provision of retail and housing is done in a horizontal rather than a vertical segregation. New infill developments must try and integrate vertically these complementary uses.



Navan Shopping Centre

In order to enhance the attractiveness of the core of Navan, the traffic volumes that at present pass through its inadequate road network will have to be substantially reduced. The Local Authorities are committed to the implementation of Traffic Management Strategy, in addition to the overall Road Infrastructure improvements outlined in Section 2.2.

2.7.8 Navan Railway Station Area

The identification of the Integrated Public Transport Interchange would open up considerable development opportunities for the expansion of the town centre functions. The influence of this interchange would extend beyond the immediate location of the rail and bus station in terms of land use and mobility permutations.

The *'Integrated Development Framework Plan'* highlighted the need for a detailed Rail Alignment & Feasibility Study to be carried out to determine the exact alignment into the town and confirm the optimum location of the rail and bus station. Following from the completion of this Alignment & Feasibility Study, it is recommended that the areas of influence of the transport interchange should be the subject of a specific planning and implementation process (See Development Objectives Map). The Local Area Plans for these two potential areas of influence will determine the most suitable use of land in terms of building densities, heights and layout.

As a result of the critical need for these steps to be taken first, it is not expected that significant redevelopment initiatives will be undertaken in the immediate aftermath of the adoption of this Development Plan. Furthermore, the provision of the rail line from Navan to Dublin is not expected to occur during the lifetime of this Development Plan. In the interim period, prior to the delivery of a rail link to Navan, uses which acts as attractors and which can establish the area as a second anchor node of the town centre will be promoted. There is already demand in Navan for a second retail centre, which use is not dependent on the provision of rail and could be developed in the short term and act as a catalyst for other development in the area not reliant on rail.

Significant densities can be applied to the areas of influence of the integrated train and bus station, with imaginative solutions to accommodate different uses, such as retail, business, residential and public transport. The advantage of locating higher density development around public transport interchanges is that more public transport users will have their origins and destinations within walking distance from public transport. This area must include an appropriate mix of uses that promotes activity throughout the day, rather than concentrated activity in peak hours. The public transport function of the area, together with the provision of employment will generate demands for extended peak hours. Cultural and leisure uses such as cinemas, art centres, health and fitness clubs, etc. will generate early morning, evening and late evening demands that will counter balance the higher levels of demand of morning and evening peaks. A retail element will increase the levels of demand throughout the day, mainly between the two peak periods.

Objectives

In terms of the provision of a Rail Station, it is an objective of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To prepare a detailed Rail Alignment & Feasibility Study in conjunction with Iarnrod Eireann and Bus Eireann, to identify the rail alignment and optimum location of the Central Rail & Bus Station,
- To prepare a Local Area Plan for the area of influence of the transport interchange. The Local Area Plan for this area will determine the most suitable use of land in terms of building densities, heights and layout.

2.7.9 The Fair Green

The Fair Green area contains many of town's historic buildings: the St. Mary's Churches, the Infirmary and the Spawell, all important elements of Navan's heritage. The Fair Green has a proud tradition as an open trading area, which tradition is continued every Friday. The general appearance of the Fair Green is bleak, dominated by the hard landscape of the surface car parking area, which detracts from the setting of the historic buildings. Circular Road has a severance effect on the Fair Green Area and separates the area from the urban parkland developed around the Library and St. Finian's Terrace. The topography of the Fair Green area slopes naturally from east to west towards the River Boyne.



The Infirmary

The Fair Green Area will become a more important civic space joining the existing town centre with the new development surrounding the proposed rail and bus station. Navan Town Council prepared a Framework Plan to determine how to respond to pressures for the development of this site. The objectives of the Framework Plan sought to;

- Preserve the use and character of the Fair Green as a public gathering place,
- Strengthen the enclosure of the Fair Green by the surrounding civic buildings,
- Remove the more unsightly aspects of the general area.

The main elements of the Fair Green Re-development Plan seeks to transform the area by creating a new Public Park, through the device of connecting the matching road levels at St. Finian's Terrace, across the Valley in which Circular Road runs to the Fair Green. This will remove the dominance of traffic on Circular Road, which will run beneath the new public park via an underpass. The new park will also link part of the town and existing public buildings, such as the County Library and County Council Offices, and in the future, the proposed rail and bus station to the heart of Navan town.

The commercial prospects of the town will be enhanced through the unobtrusive provision of up to 500 spaces in an underground or subterranean car park, accessed from Circular Road and the Fair Green. There are advanced plans to build an Arts Centre/Theatre, with seating capacity for 350 people and a new Court building for Navan, wrapping around the existing Library building. It is proposed to create a new street at the rear of the new buildings, fronting the Park and Circular Road and to link the Infirmary site to Bedford Place.

The County Infirmary, dating from the 1750's, makes a very significant contribution to Bridge Street. Of particular importance is the relationship, which the front boundary wall, gate piers, railings, small raised external entry courtyard and original façade have with the street. It is considered that the retention of all of these external elements, along with the five bay façade and inserted plaque are essential to retain the character of this area of Navan. The restoration of the Royal Academy School, located to the south east of the Fair Green will create another important vista of an historic building of National Architecture significance from the Park and other vantage points within the redeveloped Fair Green.

The Fair Green Redevelopment Plan requires significant traffic management and calming to reduce the severance effect of Circular Road, to include the provision of additional crossing points. The layout of the redeveloped Fair Green must also take into consideration the inclusion of attractor uses, taking advantage of the strong public transport role envisaged. The creation of additional linked pedestrian routes through the northern and southern parts of the Fair Green in conjunction with regrading would negate the severance impact. It is suggested that the majority of the existing surface car parking be removed and replaced with a landscaped area available for markets stalls, which area could be made available for parking on Sundays and evening time.

Objectives

In terms of the Fair Green it is an objective of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To promote and facilitate the redevelopment of the Fair Green as a new civic amenity and gateway to the town centre,
- To provide in the layout for the inclusion of attractor uses, such as cultural and community buildings, taking advantage of the strong public transport function envisaged,
- To ensure pedestrian permeability to allow optimum usage of the area by pedestrian movements between the existing town centre and the proposed area of town centre expansion around the rail and bus station,
- To introduce traffic management and calming measures to reduce the severance effect of Circular Road to include the provision of additional crossing points,
- To replace the majority of the surface car parking area with a landscaped area available for markets stalls, which area could be made available for parking on Sundays and

evening time. The displaced car parking can be accommodated by a subterranean car park,

- To ensure that the redevelopment potential of the Fair Green is materialised particularly the area around the Infirmary. The redevelopment of this area would require sensitive design due to the contextual sensitivities of the historic buildings.

2.7.10 Kennedy Road / Navan Shopping Centre Precinct

Traditionally, the buildings on Trimgate Street, Canon Row and Watergate Street backed onto the Shopping Centre / Kennedy Road precinct. The 1994 Urban Renewal Scheme has resulted in significant redevelopment of these backland areas with commercial uses dominated and limited infill residential development. This influence extended beyond the designated area with the development of the Multi Storey Car Park and Multi Plex Cinema.

While the Shopping Centre provides a reasonable choice of shopping, the overall district is quite poor in visual design quality. The extensive surface car parking area located either side of the functionally designed shopping centre is visually dominant, is bleak and its featureless aspect makes for an unpleasant environment. The shops surrounding the main shopping centre building are discordant in design terms and there is a general lack of coherence to the overall area.

A design solution is required to improve the areas visual appearance and to consolidate the strong retailing trade that takes place. The challenge is to transform the existing Shopping Centre and Kennedy Road developments to meet their function as a town centre rather than as a shopping centre precinct. The degree of pedestrian permeability through this area is impressive and serves as an important link between the Shopping Centre and the traditional retailing streets. However, pedestrians have to compete for space with motor cars and their movements are ill defined. The limited mix of land uses in the area also needs to be redressed to improve vibrancy and passive security outside of the opening hours of the Shopping Centre.



Kennedy Road-dominated by surface car parking

The Abbey Road frontage currently comprises of a wall with limited landscaping to soften the impact of the extensive surface car parking area. Again, a design led solution is required in the form of a strong urban edge with landscaping and the possibility of an urban space in front of a redesigned entrance to the North Mall.

Policies

In terms of Kennedy Road it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council to:

- Encourage new development to create a tighter and more compact urban form appropriate to its town centre location,
- To replace or displace the extensive surface car parking areas with multi storey car parks, thus releasing land for civic space and additional development land,
- Encourage frontage development onto the new civic space,
- To encourage a greater mix of uses in new development to the area, such uses which would add vibrancy and life to the area outside of the opening hours of the Shopping Centre. Appropriate uses are considered to include residential, leisure / recreational, community building, cultural uses, restaurant and public houses.

Objectives

In terms of Kennedy Road it is an objective of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council to:

- To facilitate and promote the creation of a Major Civic Space, inclusive of an element of car parking at Kennedy Road in place of the existing surface car parking area,
- To ensure that the design of the Civic Space improves the degree of pedestrian permeability linking the Shopping Centre to Trimgate Street and Canon Row,
- To improve the urban form and definition along Abbey Road so as to create a streetscape more appropriate for a town centre location.

2.7.11.1 Blackwater Riverfront

As stated previously, the urban form of Navan is quite unique, having developed at the confluence of the Rivers Boyne & Blackwater. At present, the Blackwater river banks are not maintained with few paths and limited crossings. There are also derelict mills along these river banks, a reminder of Navan's proud industrial heritage. The present state of dilapidation of these buildings detracts from the beauty of the river valleys. However, this riverside area, due to its neglected natural environment and presence of empty structures and lack of coherent building styles, is in a current state of obsolescence.

An Action Area Plan 'Riverside Action Area Plan' (1997) was prepared for this area by Planning Consultants Brady Shipman Martin on foot of a specific objective in the Navan Development Plan 1996 (U.D.C Edition). It put forward a number of recommendations to improve and upgrade the area. However, such recommendations were not realised and the condition of the Blackwater Riverside Area has further deteriorated from that studied by Brady Shipman Martin in 1997. It is anticipated that through its inclusion in the Navan Development Plan, a series of measures, many of which broadly emulate those put forward in the Riverside Action Area Plan, that this area will be revitalised and enhanced and its amenity value realised.

The Blackwater riverside locations in Navan are currently an under utilised resource but have excellent development potential due both to their proximity to the town centre and also by virtue of their natural visual amenities. The River Blackwater offers the possibility for development on both the north and south bank and would redress the severance effect that the Rivers, in conjunction with the Inner Relief Road, have on the town. The natural topography of the north bank of the River Blackwater would allow buildings of differing heights at appropriate locations stepped into the landscape.

Northern Banks of the Blackwater

- The redevelopment of these areas for mixed use development, mainly residential and office uses, with some limited retail in the form of small local shop units. Having

regard to the high profile nature of these sites, these areas are also suitable for restaurant, public house, cultural or community uses.

- The potential of these sites for dramatic landmark development should be encouraged which could in time become a point of reference for Navan. Innovative high quality architecture taking due cognisance of aspect and orientation allied to the careful choice of textures, materials and finishes will be encouraged in this area as the form of development is not confined by any existing development.



Spicer's Mill

Southern Banks of the Blackwater

- The redevelopment of these areas for similar uses although of a much lower scale than on the northern bank. The redevelopment should provide high levels of open space to maintain views too and across the river.
- The most appropriate areas for the introduction of new build on the southern banks of the Blackwater would be adjoining the Inner Relief Road Bridge.

The definite identity and sense of place so typical of this stretch of the Blackwater will be an inducement for those seeking to site a project in an attractive location, close to and yet removed from the town centre. This is in line with securing new enterprises to diversify the town's economic base. The redevelopment / upgrading of this area will also help consolidate lower Flower Hill business premises, some of which are in a transitory phase. However, this must be balanced against the competing needs of the public, particularly with regard to public access and open space.

2.7.11.2 Valley Concept

A combination of objectives is warranted for the Blackwater Riverside Area, so that it combines both economic and recreational activity and becomes the location for contemporary enterprise as well as for relaxation and enjoyment. It is appropriate that successors be found for the dilapidated industrial buildings on the river banks in keeping with modern needs and forms. Equally, the valley here has previously been used as a recreational outlet and should recommence that role for residents and visitors alike.

Environmental upgrading is required for the Blackwater valley having regard to the natural characteristics of the place and the basic needs of the public. A variety of experiences can be suitably developed in different parts of the valley, such as:

- the grassy slopes on the south facing slopes near New Lane,

- tree groves to the south of Silverlawns,
- wild meadows with grasses and flowers,
- shrubbery & flowers as wild life habitats,
- the Town Park,
- removal of present litter and debris,
- elimination of eyesores and reshaping of earthworks,
- upgrading of approaches.

2.7.11.3 New Gateway Sites

There are a number of sites in the Blackwater Riverside Area, which represent gateway sites. These sites are identified on the Development Objectives Map. A high quality of urban design and innovative architectural design solutions will be sought at these locations.

Site No. 1

Location	Intersection of Phase 2 of the Navan Inner Relief Road with the Rathaldron Rd.
Zoning	To provide for visitor and tourist facilities.
Acceptable Use	Suitable for a high profile hotel with associated leisure facilities and car parking facilities.
Acceptable Height	Due regard required to the existing scale of development in the general area and the need to protect the view particularly over the western boundary of the subject site.

Site No. 2

Location	Elliot's Mill, Mill Lane.
Zoning	Mixed Residential & Business Use.
Acceptable Use	Office type development with the possibility of cultural facility at bottom floor to take full advantage of the view of the weir. Upper floors of residential would be encouraged.
Acceptable Height	The topography of this subject site presents an opportunity to create a dramatic development particularly desirable for gateway developments. A development of up to eight storeys in height could be assimilated into the landscape at this location.



Elliot's Mill

Site No. 3

Location	Existing Navan Town Council Car Park Area, Navan Inner Relief Road
Zoning	Mixed Residential & Business Use.
Acceptable Use	Office type development or a mix of office with upper floors of residential in one building maximizing impressive views of the Blackwater River.
Acceptable Height	This site is elevated and restricts the height, bulk and massing of any new development to ensure views to the River Blackwater.

Site No. 4

Location	The former Abbey Road National School, Navan Inner Relief Road
Zoning	Mixed Residential & Business Use.
Acceptable Use	Office type development or a mix of office with upper floors of residential, maximizing impressive views of the Blackwater River.
Acceptable Height	Whilst not as elevated as Site No. 3, the height, bulk and massing of any new development must not impede unnecessarily views to the River Blackwater.

Site No. 8

Location	Balmoral Industrial Estate, Navan Inner Relief Road
Zoning	Mixed Residential & Business Use.
Acceptable Use	The site is sufficiently large to allow a good mix of residential and commercial (non-retail) uses applicable to its edge of town centre location. Within the curtilage of the site, along the south banks of the River Blackwater there is an existing stone building where could be incorporated into the conversion and adaptation scheme. An appropriate use at this location would be a restaurant, which could develop with dual frontage thus, maximising the amenity value of the river.
Acceptable Height	The topography of this subject site presents an opportunity to create a dramatic development particularly desirable for gateway developments.

Site No. 9

Location	Existing industrial buildings, north and south of Mill Lane, adjoining lower Flower Hill
Zoning	Mixed Residential & Business Use.
Acceptable Use	Mix of residential and commercial (non retail) / tourism uses including refurbishment of Darker's Mill (Site No. 5), provision of small scale offices or craft workshops and showrooms with pedestrian access to river.
Acceptable Height	Must take cognisance of existing form onto Lower Flower Hill and the presence of a Protected Structure, but at certain locations on the northern side of Mill Lane, it presents an opportunity for dramatic development having regard to the presence of Blackwater Heights development that effectively forms the skyline.

2.7.11.4 Buildings for Conservation and Adaptation

These buildings are proposed protected structures and present their own challenges and opportunities. Some are good examples of traditional industrial stone buildings and could be the subject of Conservation and Adaptation Schemes (See Development Objectives Map)

Site No. 5

Location	Mill Lane Water Mill (Darker's Mill), Mill Lane
Description	Detached 1-plan three storey water mill with sluice and mill wheel, c. 1820. This stone building which commands a significant presence along the waterfront is currently disused and derelict. The external shell of the building could be retained with internal modifications.
Zoning	Mixed Residential & Business Use.
Acceptable Use	The refurbishment of the mill would be ideal for their conversion into residential units. Other appropriate uses would include office or cultural use, hostel or other visitor related activity. The Planning Authority will be quite flexible in terms of accommodating an appropriate use that would facilitate the retention and survival of this structure.

Site No. 6

Location	Blackwater House, off N3 Inner Relief Road
Description	Detached seven-bay two-storey house c.1785, with single storey extension to the rear c. 1885. It is currently derelict with door and window openings boarded up. Externally it is structurally sound.
Zoning	To provide for visitor and tourist facilities.
Acceptable Use	Possible appropriate uses for this site would include a small hotel, hostel or other visitor related facilities such as a café, restaurant, exhibition and cultural events, etc.

**Blackwater House****Site No. 7**

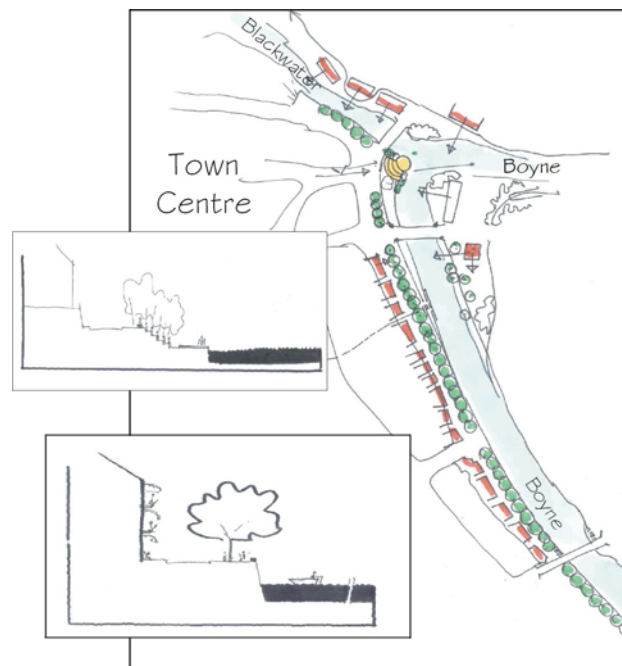
Location	Spicer's Mill, off N3 Inner Relief Road
Description	Detached eleven-bay six-storey water mill, 1783 with five-bay five-storey and six-bay six-storey extensions. Externally it appears to be sound and is partially still in use.
Zoning	To provide for visitor and tourist facilities.
Acceptable Use	The refurbishment of the Mill and its adaptation into a modern use setting would include a third level educational facility or ancillary function, civic building for cultural or other purpose, select residential or tourism related complex, hotel, a leisure centre, conference centre, or a specific proposal such as a National / Regional Furniture Institute. The Planning Authority would be quite flexible in terms of accommodating an appropriate use that would facilitate the retention and survival of this impressive structure.

2.7.11.5 Amenity Areas

Traditionally, the 'Mollies' area was a place for recreation by the public. Swimming was once popular here, but changing times and creeping obsolescence have discouraged general use except by a few curious walkers. The overgrown nature of the main walkway from Mill Lane and of the high level walkway which was the historic Navan to Kells route, the development of the Blackwater Bridge and Inner Relief Road and the evidence of anti social behaviour at this location, further discourage widespread use by the public. Nonetheless, the river system through Navan offers an obvious opportunity of providing a stimulating outdoor natural environment for mainly passive recreation. The recreational activities provided for along the River Blackwater would complement the development of the Town Park to the north-west which can cater for both passive and active recreational pursuits.

There are a number of amenity areas proposed in the Blackwater Riverside area to be developed for primarily recreational purposes. These are mainly passive recreational areas with associated pedestrian linkages. The most extensive of these amenity areas is a pocket park proposed for the area of the south bank of the river bounded by the N3 and Pollboy Bridge, east of Site No. 4. The development of a pocket park at this location would require the felling of overgrown hedgerows and trees to maximise its amenity potential and accessibility as well as exposing the attractive view of Mill Lane Water Mill from the south of the town. In addition there are numerous locations along the Blackwater Riverside which, if upgraded are idyllic for picnicking and other passive recreational activities.

Figure 1: Developing the amenity potential of the Riverside Areas



There are a series of walkways proposed for the Blackwater Riverside Area to enhance the amenity value of the area and facilitate its enjoyment by the public. This will involve the reinstatement of existing neglected and overgrown walkways including the high level walkway as well as the development of additional routes. The overgrown nature of the existing walkways and surrounding areas requires extensive urban landscape works to be carried out, including the reinstatement of suitable surfaces, tree planting or tree felling as

appropriate.

Objectives

It is an objective of Navan Town Council & Meath County Council to prepare Action Area Plans for the following areas:

AAP 1: Area east of the Navan Inner Relief Road Phase 2A and including the Rathaldron Road, Lower Flower Hill and the N3 Inner Relief Road.

AAP 2: Area west of the Navan Inner Relief Road Phase 2A and including the area south of Silverlawns as far as the proposed Town Park, Balmoral Industrial Estate and the N3 Inner Relief Road.

See Section 3.4.3 for more details on the preparation of the above Action Area Plans.

2.7.12 Design Statements

For sensitive sites and town centre development proposals, applicants will be required to provide a short written statement setting out the design principles adopted as well as illustrative material in plan and elevation. The Design Statement is intended to assist officials, adjoining property owners and members of the public to get a better understanding of the approach to the design and to provide evidence of the level of design appreciation behind the application. For all infill developments, the applicant will be required to show elevations of buildings on either side and submit photographs of the streetscape within which the development is proposed. For larger schemes, the applicant may be required to provide an urban design framework plan, action area plan or Masterplan, as determined by the Planning Authority. Photomontages, 3 D images or models and townscape views illustrating the design proposal may also be required.

Policy

In terms of Design Statements, it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To require the submission of a design statement with all major developments and proposals for sensitive and key landmark sites. (See also Section 4.1.1)

2.7.13 Public Realm

It is accepted that streets and public places in the town centre suffered historically from long periods of under financing, which resulted in generally poor standards of materials, design and maintenance. Litter and dirty streets also detract from the positive image of the town. The Local Authorities, with the assistance of the Urban Renewal Schemes, have made great strides towards improving the public realm and general appearance of the town during the lifetime of the previous Development Plans.



Street Lighting, Athlumney

To continue this good work, a set of basic principles to guide choice of design and materials to be used in street paving, lighting and street furniture are proposed.

These are:

- Elements of the public realm should be designed in an integrated way,
- The design should, where possible, be unique to Navan, aware of the past but not imitating it slavishly;
- Simple robust design will complement rather than compete with its surroundings,
- Design should vary within a consistent framework to reflect the functions of different spaces,
- Attention to detail is essential at survey, design and construction stages,
- Ease of maintenance is a priority,
- Design and materials must demonstrate long term cost effectiveness and sustainability.

Implementation and maintenance of schemes using these principles will allow the public realm to complement rather than detract from the built fabric of the town.

It is considered that the Local Authorities should prepare a Town Centre Lighting Strategy, developed around five keys strands:

- Street Lighting – to improve the quality of vehicle and pedestrian lighting, and to create a visual distinction from other areas of the town,
- Façade Lighting – to promote simple façade uplighting through the area,
- Buildings within the Historic Centre – to illuminate key buildings and public spaces as a series of co-ordinated scenes and vistas,
- Gateways – to highlight bridges and principal entry points,
- Views – to illuminate important buildings and landmarks outside of the Historic Centre visible from the principal routes.

An implementation programme should be carried out in conjunction with an overall programme of public lighting improvements already underway.

Objectives

In terms of the Public Realm, it is an objective of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To ensure that elements of the public realm are designed in an integrated manner,
- To implement a Town Centre Lighting Strategy.

2.7.14 Treatment of Gateway / Landmark Sites

The *Navan Urban Economic Development Study* (1996), identified the elements of Navan that required upgrading and revitalisation. One of these elements was the critical gateways or entry points to the town. The Study identified a number of these key gateways: on the Navan Inner Relief Road at junctions with Academy Street, Circular Road, Timmons Hill, Poolboy Bridge and Kells Road, and at the Railway Crossings at Railway Street and Commons Road.

The *Navan Integrated Development Framework Plan* expanded on the number of key gateway sites in Navan as their brief covered a wider geographical area. The *Integrated Development Framework Plan* identified a number of additional gateway sites at the intersection of the proposed Local Distributor Road and the Slane Road, at the intersection of the Inner Relief Road Phase 2A with the Windtown Road, at the Balmoral Industrial Estate, on the Athboy Road at Mullaghboy, on the Trim Road at Beechmount and at Kilcarn.

In addition, the Development Plan proposes additional Gateway Sites or sites suitable of accommodating a Landmark Building at the intersection of the link road from the N3 Inner Relief Road with Abbey Road, at the Development Plan boundary on the Kentstown Road, at the intersection of the Local Distributor Road with the Kingscourt Road, at the Roundabout at the Round O Public House and at the intersection of the Abbey Road with Canon Row. All of the proposed sites are included on the accompanying Development Objectives Map.

It is accepted that other 'Gateways' or sites suitable for 'Landmark Buildings' have already been developed, with a varying degree of success, and that certain sites are more suitable for pieces of art and sculptor set in a landscaped civic space than being suitable of accommodating a landmark building. These include the sites at the Kilcarn and Athboy Road Interchange, Athlumney & Poolboy Bridges respectively.



Permitted Gateway Development on existing Crannac Site

The majority of the identified sites are situated at critical road junctions and intersections. The sites are highly visible and as such, it is essential that they are designed to the highest standards, as their development will set the tone for the town, and influence the public perception of it.

It is the policy of the Planning Authorities that the identified 'Gateway' sites should be upgraded and revitalised. The majority of the identified gateways are capable of being marked by the presence of business or residential development with a notable architectural input and of a scale befitting its location.

Objectives

In terms of the Gateway Sites, it is an objective of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To ensure the high quality design and architectural treatment of key landmark sites as identified on the Development Objectives Map.

2.7.15 Housing Protection Areas

The zoning function of the Housing Protection Areas is to ensure that housing is not lost to other purposes. Within these areas, land that is not in use or was last used for residential purposes may only be used as such.

These measures are intended to ensure that:

- Property owners do not act on the assumption that their property will be converted to

- other uses and hence neglect to maintain it,
- Land values are based on housing values and are thus not so high as to make housing redevelopment prohibitively expensive.

Within the Housing Protection Areas, the potential for redevelopment for housing must be a priority and measures to ensure the provision of infill housing on cleared sites, and of individual houses on small derelict lots, will remain a priority.

Most of the areas zoned as Housing Protection Areas are on secondary streets and more suitable to terraced housing than apartments. In these circumstances, apartments will either not be permitted at all, or allowed only on a small scale on sites difficult to develop for terraced housing purposes for physical reasons.



St. Finian's Terrace

The following areas are included as Housing Protection Areas

St. Finian's Terrace	St. Benildus Villas	Connolly Avenue
Woodlands	Mellows Terrace	Parnell Park
St. Patrick's Terrace	Emmet Terrace	O'Growney Terrace
Abbeylands/NewLane	St. Ultan's Terrace	

Policy

In terms of the Housing Protection Areas, it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To ensure that the areas identified as Housing Protection Areas and illustrated on the Objectives Map are not lost to other purposes.

2.8 Urban Renewal and Regeneration

The Planning & Development Act 2000 requires local authorities, in preparing their Development Plans to include objectives for the development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration. To assist in this obligation, the joint Planning Authorities will endeavour to carry out an extensive survey of areas that require urban renewal, updating the building survey carried out as part of the Navan Integrated Area Plan. The building survey carried out during the preparation of the Navan Integrated Area Plan will form the basis for this section of the Navan Development Plan.

2.8.1 Background and Context

Appendix VII: Background to Urban Renewal and Regeneration provides a detailed analysis of the past 10 years of the Urban Renewal Designated Schemes, as applicable to Navan. The 1994 Urban Renewal Designated Area Scheme resulted in significant redevelopment of the town centre namely Trimgate Street, Watergate Street, Ludlow Street and Timmons Hill, as well as the properties to the rear of these principal streets. The beneficial effects of the Navan Urban Renewal Scheme, in terms of the physical development of the town, in the designated and adjoining areas is clearly evident. The Navan Urban Renewal Scheme was the catalyst for extensive redevelopment and refurbishment of the built form of the town centre. Significant investment by Navan Town Council in the infrastructure and environmental quality of designated and adjoining areas took place.



Metges Lane-Successful Urban Renewal

2.8.2 Navan Integrated Area Plan

Whilst, the town benefited from the streets that successfully secured designation, there remained widespread dereliction on Lower Flower Hill, New Lane and along the rivers in both directions with concentrations of obsolescence at Academy Street, along Railway Street, adjoining the Fair Green. The 1999 Urban Renewal Scheme introduced Integrated Area Plans (IAP's) as the means to a more focused, sustainable approach to urban renewal designation. Tax incentives were now directly linked to objectives as set out in an IAP. Meath County Council in conjunction with Navan U.D.C. produced an Integrated Area Plan for Navan in March 1998.

The overall strategy of the IAP is to encourage regeneration of this area in a sustainable way, building on the area's strengths through sustained economic and social development. The IAP targeted a total of 13 Sub Areas which encompasses an area of 14.85 hectares (36.7 acres). Of the 14.85 hectares covered by the IAP, a total of 5.47 hectares of land was designated for tax incentives under the Navan Urban Renewal Scheme of 1999. The sites proposed for designation in the Navan Integrated Area Plan are outlined in Appendix VII.

The IAP however was not solely tax incentive driven and a programme of parallel actions were planned and to date have in part been implemented by Navan Town Council and Meath County Council. The principal actions that have been implemented to date include;

- the enhancement of housing estates that the Councils have responsibility for, inclusive of related open space, with a major remedial works programme underway for Claremont,
- the securing of the RAPID Programme for 14 estates in Navan, a state sponsored initiative aimed at revitalising neglected areas through planning, investment and development,
- an appropriate Company structure has been established to progress the Enterprise Centre,
- infrastructure work has continued at the Business Park,
- upgrading of Commons Road & Brews Hill,
- rejuvenation of Market Square,



Pollboy Bridge Viewing Point

- provision of long stay car parks chosen at the edge of the town centre locations,
- traffic calming measures in the town centre,
- provision of a public transport system for the town,
- completion of a new waste water plant,
- a sculpture and viewing area are being developed at the confluence of the two rivers.

The uptake of development within the areas that successfully attained tax designation status has been slow to date when compared to the uptake of the previous Designated Area Scheme.

Contributing factors include:

- Difficulties in site assembly with multiple ownership particularly along the Mollies area,
- Elimination of the double rent allowance for commercial / industrial development,
- Absence of residential investor allowances and double rent allowances, although

residential investor allowances were re-introduced in December 2001 in the Budget of that year,

- Issue of attractiveness of owner occupier residential incentives, given that the price differential between a town centre apartment and a conventional suburban dwelling is not significant.

The 1999 Urban Renewal Scheme has been extended and will continue up to 31st December 2004 subject to certain conditions having been met by the end of July 2003. The Planning Authorities will through the implementation of the Integrated Area Plan and the policies outlined below, seek to ensure the continued regeneration of the central fringe areas and sub centres.

Policies

In terms of the Navan Integrated Area Plan, it is the policy of Navan Town Council & Meath County Council:

- To continue to pursue the achievement of the objectives and strategies of the Navan Integrated Area Plan,
- To ensure that developers have regard to the provisions of the adopted Navan Integrated Area Plan,
- To continue to promote the 1999 Designated Area Scheme and any subsequent schemes,
- To ensure the co-ordination of the scheme with other development incentive schemes,
- To implement control in the design of developments so as to ensure that new developments are complimentary to, and take into account existing and adjacent neighbourhoods and streetscapes.

2.8.3 Development & Renewal of Areas in Need of Regeneration

The process of urban growth and development is continuous, and considerable progress with the renewal of obsolete areas has been recorded over the past 9 years since the advent of the Urban Renewal Schemes. It must be remembered however, that some areas that have been rejuvenated still contain parts that need to be redeveloped. The *Navan Integrated Area Plan* examined the extent of Urban Decay / Obsolescence within the Central Town Area in 1998 and presented a strategic plan for urban renewal which the Local Authorities have, and continue to implement with vigour. The Section of this Development Plan dealing with '*Navan Integrated Area Plan*' identified the areas that have and will benefit from urban renewal designation. However, of the successful areas, only the Enterprise Centre and the Leisure Complex are considered to no longer to be categorised as areas in need of regeneration.

The areas identified in the IAP that were unsuccessful in attaining designated status remain in a state of urban decay and obsolescence. The unsuccessful Sub Areas identified in the IAP and which related to existing built areas are the New Lane Area, Academy Street – Bridge Street, Blackwater Valley and Beechmount Sub Centre. The other unsuccessful Sub Areas related to the provision of new Sub Centres at Proudstown and Athlumney. The Shopping Centre at Beechmount Sub Centre has been redeveloped and improved by private initiatives whilst an alternative site for a neighbourhood centre at Bailis has gone through the Planning process. An alternative to the proposed Sub Centre at Proudstown is planned in the Clonmagadden Valley Strategic Development Zone Planning Scheme.

The New Lane Area was described as an area in transition with a mix of residential, mainly in New Lane & Flower Hill, and light industrial / warehousing to New Lane. The building survey identified the stock as been in mainly fair condition, with some buildings in poor condition. There was also premises identified as vacant onto Flower Hill. The need for intervention was highlighted as the area is in steady decline as more premises become

vacant and no new investment is made.



Kennedy Road Surface Car Parking Area

The Academy Street – Bridge Street Area is seen as a critical gateway into the town with dual frontage onto the Inner Relief Road and Circular Road. The backlands fronting onto the N3 Inner Relief Road are either largely undeveloped and vacant or where developed, derelict and obsolete. These centrally located sites offer an opportunity to extend the town centre functions southwards in a development mix and provide an exciting entrance to the town. The need for intervention arises due to the lack of dynamism in this part of Navan and the need to de-congest the town centre.

The Blackwater Valley Area identified 3 key sites in the River Valley, all locations of 19th Century industrial activity. These structures varied from being in partial use, to mainly derelict and partial obsolescence. The general area has become derelict with the buildings generally underused due to obsolescence and the need for financial incentives to accomplish comprehensive upgrading. Each site has a unique riverside setting suitable for prestige projects attracted in part by the potential quality environment. This area has been the subject of more detailed analysis in Section 2.7.11.

It is considered that the Local Authorities will have to become more proactively involved in the Compulsory Acquisition of sites in areas of obsolescence and urban decay where private enterprise has baulked at the task of acquisition.

In general, the Planning Authorities will continue to encourage private enterprise to take part in the redevelopment of obsolete areas, by the location in such areas of commercial or office development where appropriate, and by the erection of dwelling units or by any other manner consistent with the objectives of the Navan Integrated Area Plan and this Development Plan. The Planning Authorities will also endeavour to incorporate into the redevelopment proposals for any obsolete area, any buildings of a substantial nature, the retention of which, would not be inconsistent with the redevelopment of the area.

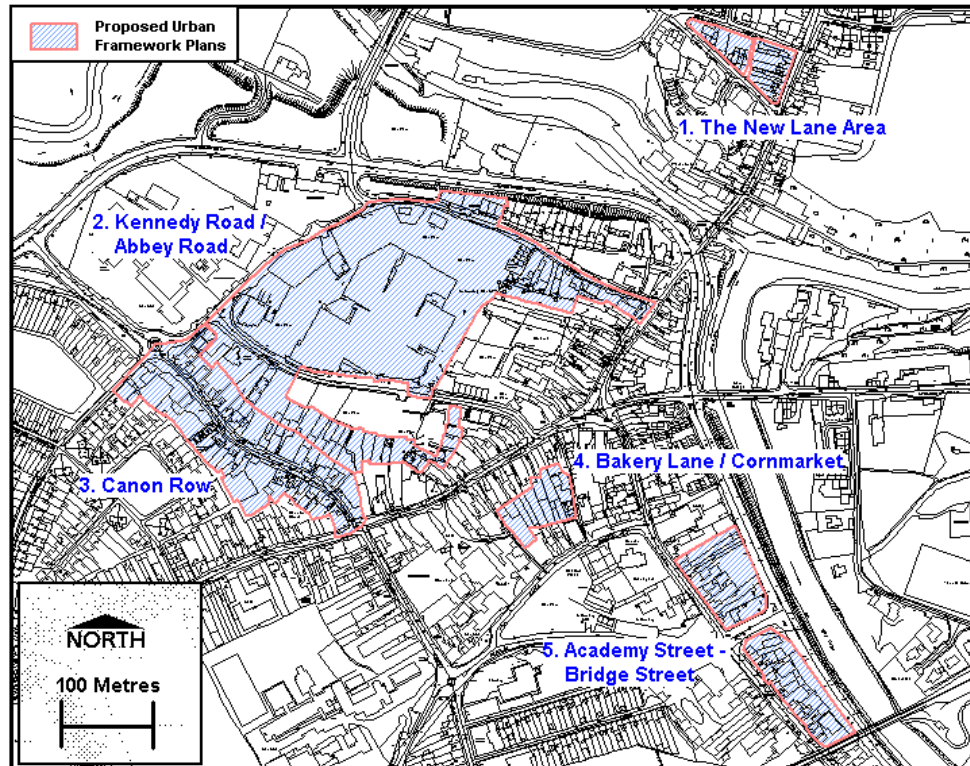
2.8.4 Urban Renewal Framework Plans / Development Briefs

From the sites identified in the preceding Section, there are a number of sites that are in multiple ownership, or which display certain constraints in relation to car parking, access or which require a particularly sensitive approach to their design and layout due to the presence of, or proximity to, Protected Structures.

In addition to the sites identified in the Integrated Area Plan, two other sites are proposed

as requiring Urban Renewal, namely Canon Row and Kennedy Road. Whilst Canon Row is in a central town location, it has limited retail and commercial uses at present. It is characterised by a mix of building forms, with notable gaps in the streetscape. There are a number of obsolete properties and inappropriate uses along this street and others which, constitute under development.

Map No. 11: Proposed Urban Framework Plans



It is proposed to create a Civic Space at Kennedy Road, see Section 2.7.10. Whilst the achievement of this objective would be welcomed, it is considered necessary to examine the building form that will frame this public space. The existing building frontage is formless, with a mix of materials and finishes.

For these reasons, a number of sites have been identified for the preparation of 'Development Briefs' or 'Urban Renewal Framework Plans', which seek to establish a co-ordinated approach to the redevelopment of sites and offer a guide to potential developers and landowners as to the sites redevelopment potential. These briefs and plans may also provide the basis for compulsory acquisition i.e. the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers in the public interest.

These identified sites focus on the town centre, since it is not considered appropriate to divert the focus of renewal upon outer area localities when several sites are in need of attention. Their identification in this context does not necessarily make them suitable only for built development, but merely acknowledges they are suitable for re-use of some description, be it for business, residential, retail use or civic, cultural or environmental amenity.

The sites are as follows and are not prioritised;

1. The New Lane Area,
2. Academy Street – Bridge Street,
3. Bakery Lane / Cornmarket,
4. Canon Row,
5. Kennedy Road / Abbey Road.

The Blackwater Valley will be the subject of two separate Action Area Plans. The area of influence of the proposed rail and bus station will be the subject of a Local Area Plan. Both of these areas would otherwise be included in this category.

2.8.5 Derelict Sites

In addition to the areas defined as obsolete, there are a considerable number of small sites spread throughout the town centre which may be considered ‘derelict’, and which are not being developed by private enterprise. Such areas present an “unkempt” and poor image of Navan and it is the policy of the Planning Authorities to secure the redevelopment of these sites by the procedures available under the Derelict Sites Act and by Compulsory Acquisition.

The definition of a “Derelict Site” has been widened under the Derelict Sites Act of 1990 to include structures which are dwellings that detract from the amenity, character or appearance of land in the neighbourhood to a material degree. A Register of Derelict Sites should be maintained which includes the determination of the market value of each derelict site. Owners of sites included in the Register are required to pay a levy each year it remains derelict of 3% of the market value of the site in the first year and increasing up to 10% in subsequent years as decided by the Minister for Environment & Local Government.

The Planning Authorities will carry out a survey of all properties with a view to identifying the sites coming within the definition of derelict sites. This will provide the basis for updated and renewing the existing Derelict Sites Register. The target is to secure the improvement or redevelopment of such sites within the term of this Development Plan. The initial area to receive attention will be the Town Council Area and identified Sub Areas outside of the Town Council Area included in the Navan Integrated Area Plan.

Policies

In terms of Development and Renewal of Areas in Need of Regeneration, it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To ensure the improvement and screening of neglected sites, and the renewal, repair and / or maintenance of structures,
- To acquire obsolete areas within the town or so much of such areas as may be necessary to secure the satisfactory redevelopment of the areas using their powers under the 1990 Derelict Sites Act and the 1982 Litter Act, where appropriate,
- To encourage and promote the development of infill and derelict sites, obsolescent land, and the creation of access to landlocked development land,
- To consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers, where necessary, in order to secure appropriate and integrated development.

Objectives

In terms of Development and Renewal of Areas in Need of Regeneration, it is an objective of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To promote the urban renewal and regeneration of those sites identified on the Development Objectives Map,

- To prepare, as resources permit, site development briefs and urban renewal framework plans for those sites identified under Section 2.8.4 and as indicated in the Development Objectives Map,
- To survey all properties within the Town Council Area and identified Sub Areas outside of the Town Council Area included in the Navan Integrated Area Plan with a view to identifying the sites coming within the definition of derelict sites,
- To update and renew the existing Derelict Sites Register for Navan and to create a combined Navan Derelict Sites Register to correspond with the Navan Development Plan Envelop,
- To secure the improvement or redevelopment of such Derelict Sites within the term of this Development Plan,
- To prepare and implement additional environmental / civic improvement programme in line with that included in the Integrated Area Plan,
- To prepare and implement a Village Enhancement Scheme for Johnstown Village,
- To upgrade the existing pedestrian link between the Slane Road and the Blackcastle Neighbourhood Centre,
- To prepare and implement Environmental and Enhancement Schemes for both Beechmount and Mullaghboy Industrial Estates.

2.9 Tourism

The location of Navan set in the area of outstanding natural beauty of the Boyne Valley and at the confluence of the River Boyne & Blackwater, favours well for tourism. The tourism sector of Navan has improved over recent years. The town offers a number of attractions and facilities from shops, cinema, pubs, hotels and restaurants to golf courses, horse racing, and the Rivers Boyne and Blackwater. It is located in close proximity to the renowned historical site of 'The Hill of Tara' and to Slane which plays hosts to the world famous rock venue, Slane Castle. It is also strategically located in the centre of the other major tourist attractions in the County such as Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth, Trim Castle, Bective Abbey, and Kells. Nonetheless the product base itself is weak and Navan lacks a clear and strong image as a tourist destination. In their "*Tourism Development and Marketing Action Plan for County Meath 2003*", Meath Tourism Ltd. states that for Navan to reach its full potential, it needs to examine the possibility of further investment from a tourism perspective. They recommend investment in the following sectors:

- Large base hotel accommodation: 3 and 4 star ratings,
- Large scale hostel accommodation-upper end of the market,
- B & B accommodation,
- Weather independent facilities,
- Marked and signed cycling routes and cycle hire outlets,
- Co ordinate attractions and activities,
- The development of walks and improvement of existing ones (such as the 8 km Boyne Navigation Tow Path from Navan to Slane),
- Develop village tourist services in suburban areas (e.g. Johnstown),
- Water sports along the rivers,
- Evening and Night activities,
- Tourist niche focused on the town's furniture industry.

Navan lacks an image or theme in terms of tourism promotion despite its appeal. There is a lack of opportunity for visitors to spend money in the town, outside of the obvious domain of pubs, accommodation and restaurants. In general, there appears to be a need for greater diversity and an improvement in quality. The development of a number of attractions in the area of arts and culture or festivals would reinforce Navan's role in the area of tourism and develop a sense of image for the town.

Policies

In terms of Tourism it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To encourage the improvement and future development of the tourism product base in Navan, in co-operation with Meath Tourism, Dúchas, Bord Fáilte, and other relevant bodies, through,
 - a) the implementation of the *‘Tourism Development and Marketing Action Plan for County Meath’*,
 - b) the development of tourist related services,
 - c) the protection and enhancement of the towns natural and man made amenities,
- To promote Navan as the Arts, Culture and Sporting capital of the county,
- To ensure that future development of tourism is carried out in a sensitive and sustainable manner,
- To promote a clear and strong image for Navan, and an awareness of its qualities as a tourist destination,
- To rejuvenate the Rivers Boyne and Blackwater as an asset for the county’s tourism product,
- To promote the development of water based sporting activities on the rivers Boyne and Blackwater,
- To encourage the development of Navan as the primary location for night life and good dining experience in County Meath,
- To support the development of weather independent facilities for families,
- To encourage the establishment and improvement of walkways and cycleways and the implementation of accompanying interpretive and information signage in an attractive and well designed manner,
- To encourage the formation of additional hotels preferably of three and four star quality, similar to the Jury’s Inn type model,
- To support the establishment of village tourist services for the Johnstown area, which would cater for tourism and visitor needs (accommodation, restaurants, pubs etc),
- To encourage additional high quality B&B facilities (approved by Bord Fáilte) and town center tourist accommodation,
- Support and promote, with the co-operation of landowners, public access to heritage sites and features of archaeological interest.

2.10 Arts

Through the appointment of a County Arts Officer and the development of an Arts Development Plan, Meath County Council and Navan Town Council have affirmed their belief in the importance of arts to individuals and communities, and its provision as an important aspect of Local Government service to the community. The First *‘County Arts Development Plan’* provided a strategic framework through which local arts developments in the County could be implemented. It has been successful in many ways, such as providing a structure and focus for progress and development of the arts in the county and thereby creating a viable and sustainable arts environment. Actions included the provision of a series of cultural events, facilitation of arts-in education and youth activities, expansion of the nature of assistance to the arts and funding structures to local groups, organisations and individual artists, an increase in awareness of the arts and implementation of the DoEHLG Art Scheme.



Public Art, Railway Street

In terms of infrastructure, the lack of facilities is being addressed by the planning of a municipal arts facility as a partnership between Meath County Council, Navan Town Council and Navan Civic Trust. Preparation is underway for the next County Arts Development Plan, which will facilitate further the advancement of arts and culture in the town over the period 2003 to 2006. Consideration will be given to the very specific needs of the Navan artistic community and audiences in the preparation and development of this plan.

The planned Arts Centre will be developed as part of the Fair Green Civic Space Regeneration Project. This is an integrated project at the Meath County Library Headquarters site in Navan consisting of arts facilities, an upgrade of the county library and a courthouse. Navan native Pierce Brosnan has agreed to be the patron of the new theatre and arts centre for the County. It is a much-needed facility for both those in the performing arts and patrons in the town. It is envisaged that Navan based professional Theatre Company 'Bare Bodkin' could act as an anchor tenant for the facility along with Ballet Ireland, the national professional ballet company based in County Meath. Consideration will be given to the progression of the design and planning of the arts centre for Navan under the forthcoming County Arts Development Plan. This facility is proposed to be completed by 2005 and will cater for the entire county. It will be partially funded by the Arts and Cultural Capital Enhancement Support Scheme and the remainder by local and voluntary contributions.

Policies

In terms of the Arts it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To continue to enhance the range and quality of arts provision in Navan town and its environs,
- To endeavour to create increased opportunity for arts activities in Navan and an environment in which they can develop,
- To endeavour to ensure that all sectors of the community have access to and can participate in, as wide a range of art forms and events as possible,
- To continue to recognise the importance of the arts in areas of personal development, community development, employment and tourism and to endeavour to create opportunities in each of these areas,
- To continue to provide financial Assistance to the Arts (under the Arts Act 1973) as

set out in Council adopted Guidelines for such Assistance and to endeavour to expand the nature of this Assistance to the Arts,

- To recognise the arts as an economic, social and employment resource.

Objectives

In terms of the Arts it is an objective of the Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To pursue the development of a civic cultural facility i.e. the proposed Arts Centre in the town as part of the Fair Green Civic Space,
- To provide practical advice and assistance to persons in Navan, who wish to carry out or initiate arts activities,
- To assist with the strategic planning for the development and expansion of professional arts in Navan whilst at the same time recognising, and supporting amateur arts in the Town.

2.11 Social Cohesion

Sustainable development necessitates that adequate consideration be attributed to social equality, and cultural identity. Meath County Council and Navan Town Council are dedicated to promoting local public participation in all issues that affect their area. The joint Local Authorities seek to create partnerships, between themselves, the local community groups and relevant agencies as a basis for the formulation of local area plans or action area plans, which reflect the real needs of the community. Navan Town Council and Meath County Council are devoted to maintaining good working relationships with voluntary groups and organisations within the Town, and supporting efforts by communities to provide and improve facilities and amenities in their local areas.

Meath County Council and Navan Town Council are committed to developing a society based on equality, inclusion and participation for all, with each individual having a right to live their life in a pleasant, safe environment with access to necessary services, facilities to fulfil their aspirations and potentials.

Policies

In terms of Social Cohesion it is the policy of Navan Town Council and Meath County Council:

- To promote social inclusion and equality for all in society,
- To encourage and assist physical, social and community development programmes,
- To promote local self-sufficiency, including the public participation in developing Local Agenda 21 process and to encourage the provision, through local enterprise, of appropriate community and recreation facilities.