



Oldcastle Local Area Plan 2009-2015

**Adopted
24th July 2009**



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council



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Oldcastle Local Area Plan 2009-2015**

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PREAMBLE

The Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013 (hereafter referred to as CDP) was adopted on 2nd March 2007. It identified Athboy, Duleek, Enfield, Laytown-Bettystown, Mornington East, Oldcastle, Ratoath and Stamullen as Small Growth Towns and specified that their future development is to be subject to the adoption of Local Area Plans within 2 years of the adoption of the CDP. The CDP, together with Variation No. 2 adopted in February, 2008, sets the context for the Local Area Plan (LAP) for Oldcastle.

The Oldcastle Local Area Plan builds on the broad policy objectives contained in the CDP by providing a more detailed and comprehensive planning framework to guide the future development of the Town. Once adopted, the LAP will run for a six year period from 2009-2015.

In accordance with Section 20(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) pre-draft public consultation took place in two phases with the publication of a Strategic Issues Paper and the holding of a public consultation event in Oldcastle.

A notice was published in the Meath Chronicle in September, 2008. This notice advertised the Planning Authority's intention to prepare the Oldcastle LAP and that a Strategic Issues Paper would be available for public inspection for a period of five (5) weeks until the 28th September, 2008. The notice also invited written submissions from interested parties and members of the public on what matters should be addressed in the LAP. There were 24 no. submissions received in response to the Strategic Issues Paper. All submissions and observations received by the closing date were taken into account in the preparation of the Draft LAP and are listed in Appendix B.

The Planning Authority held a public meeting at the Napper Arms Hotel in Oldcastle on 1st October 2008 to garner the views of local residents on how they would like to see their Town develop in the future. Further comments/submissions were received as a result of this public consultation and these were also considered in the preparation of the Draft LAP.



The Draft LAP went on public display for a period of six weeks from 2nd February to 16th March 2009. A public notice advertising the publication of the Draft Plan, its availability for inspection and inviting submissions and observations from interested parties was published in the Meath Chronicle. Ten submissions were received during this public consultation period a list of which is provided in Appendix B. A Manager's Report was subsequently prepared outlining the Managers' response and recommendation which was presented to Meath County Council at a meeting on 6th April 2009. Having considered the Draft Local Area Plan and the Manager's Report on submissions received as a result of the public display period, Meath County Council, on 28th April 2009, resolved to amend the Draft Local Area Plan.

As the proposed amendments constituted a material alteration to the Draft Local Area Plan they were required to be placed on public display for a period of not less than 4 weeks in accordance with Section 20(3)(e)(i) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended. The proposed amendments were placed on public display from 11th May 2009 to 8th June 2009. A total of 5 no. written submissions were received during this time, a list of which is provided in Appendix B, with a Manager's Report prepared outlining the Managers' response and recommendation in relation to each submission. This Manager's Report was presented to Meath County Council at a meeting on 6th July 2009. The members had a further 6 weeks, from 6th July 2009 – 17th August 2009, to consider this Report.

Having considered the Manager's Report on the Proposed Amendments the Oldcastle Local Area Plan was adopted by the members at a meeting on 24th July 2009 in accordance with Section 20(3)(g)(ii) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended). During the entire plan-making process, the Council was restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area while also taking into account statutory obligations and any relevant Government policies and objectives in force.

All mapping and diagrams throughout the document are orientated in the direction of true north, none are to scale but contain a scale bar for guidance only.

Where there is any apparent conflict between the text and illustrations, the text shall be the interpretive determinant.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statutory Context

1.1.1 Scope of the LAP

A LAP consists of a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies, including details of community facilities and amenities and standards for the design of development and structures.

1.1.2 Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

A LAP shall contain information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan. However, the carrying out of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is not mandatory under the provisions of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004, for the Oldcastle LAP as it has a population of less than 10,000. A Screening exercise was carried out to assess the likely impacts that the implementation of the proposed Plan would have. The amendments to the Local Area Plan were also screened. These screening documents are contained in Appendix A.

Natura Sites

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

There are no SACs or SPAs in Oldcastle. There are, however, two Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity of the Plan area, Lough Sheelin Special Protection Area (SPA) and Lough Bane and Lough Glass candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). Having regard to these a screening process was carried out for both the Draft LAP and the proposed amendments. It was found that the Oldcastle Local Area Plan, 2009-2015 did not require an Appropriate Assessment as the implementation of the Plan as amended would not be likely to have significant effects on these Natura 2000 sites. These screening documents are contained in Appendix A.

1.2 Policy Context

The CDP forms the key contextual document used in the preparation of this LAP. The CDP designates Oldcastle as a Small Growth Town in the County. Section 2.1.8.3 of the CDP states.

“Oldcastle has developed on a more sustainable basis than any other town in the County predicated on a robust traditional manufacturing basis (furniture and engineering) but also with a strong service sector employment. Oldcastle is uniquely vibrant in the County from a commercial perspective in this regard. By virtue of its location removed from the Dublin Metropolitan Area and the continued water services infrastructural deficiencies, the town has not mushroomed by comparison to the towns of the east and south east of the County. The existing residentially zoned landbank is significant having regard to the recorded growth rate over the past inter censal period. The potential of the considerable backlands in the town should be afforded a priority over green field sites removed from the Town Centre and the main educational and recreational facilities of the town. It is not considered necessary to link the release of residential land to employment creation in Oldcastle such is the strength of the local industrial / manufacturing economy and service sector. However, the resolution of the water and waste water infrastructure deficiencies will continue to act as a constraint on development in the short term.”

The prioritisation for development of the above mentioned backland sites has been adopted as a key aim of this LAP with detailed development briefs provided in Section 8.

Variation No. 2 adopted in February 2008 establishes an order of priority for the release of lands with a residential land use zoning objective in Oldcastle for the period 2007-2013. This issue is addressed further in Section 4 of this LAP.

As noted in the CDP, see above, continued water services infrastructural deficiencies in Oldcastle have affected its past growth. Such infrastructural constraints must be addressed prior to any further development within the Town and all future development is predicated on the availability of services. Where water services become available over the lifetime of the LAP, priority will be given to employment generating and community uses.

1.2.1 National Strategic Policy

A number of National Policies and Guidelines informed the preparation of the CDP which was adopted in March, 2007. These Policies and Guidelines included *inter alia* the National Spatial Strategy, 2002-2020, the National Development Plan, 2007-2013 and Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, 1997, in conjunction with specific Planning Guidelines in relation to Retailing, Telecommunications, Renewable Energy, Built Heritage, Childcare, Sustainable Rural Housing and Quarries. Since the adoption of the CDP the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, in December 2008, adopted Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Consultation Guidelines for Planning Authorities. These Consultation Guidelines outline best practice and advice in relation to the sustainable development of existing urban areas. The Planning Authority is required to have regard to these Guidelines in the performance of its functions. The Guidelines were accompanied by a best practice Urban Design Manual, which provides guidance to Planning Authorities on the standards of urban design that should be insisted upon in new urban developments.

1.2.2 Regional Policy

As part of the preparation of the CDP the Regional context for each area was examined with regard had to the influence of Meath's location within the Greater Dublin Area and Mid-East Region. The key Regional Policy document examined was the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the GDA, published in July 2004. These Guidelines, had profound implications for the types of policies to be framed in the Development Plan and the long-term future of the County.

1.2.3 County and Local Policy

As stated above the County Development Plan is the guiding document for the preparation of the Local Area Plan for Oldcastle as provided for under Section 19(2) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). In this regard the LAP must adhere to and be in compliance with the policies and objectives adopted as part of the CDP. These policies and objectives include general policies in relation to factors which include *inter alia* infrastructure, recycling, provision of amenities and more specific policies on housing projections, heritage and landscape. Variations of the CDP, most notably Variation No. 2, must also be adhered to.

At a local level the Written Statement and Detailed Objectives of the previous CDP have been readopted pending the completion of the LAPs listed above. As part of the preparation of the Oldcastle LAP these statements and objectives were examined to determine progress to date. Once complete this LAP will fall as a sub-set of documents within the above context.

1.3 The Challenge

The challenge is to produce a LAP that will form the basis for a consensus between the Planning Authority, the general public, landowners, developers, businesses and all interested parties, as to how development should proceed to achieve the development objectives for Oldcastle, in a manner which is physically, economically and socially sustainable. The challenge is also to produce a document, which facilitates the creation of a built environment, which is attractive and distinctive and which creates a sense of place for those who will live and work in it as well as those who visit it.

A further challenge is to provide a document that is sufficiently prescriptive to achieve these objectives while allowing for flexibility to account for economic and social changes that may occur over the Plan period.

This LAP, upon adoption, will be a subsidiary document of the CDP, 2007-2013, which is the primary document. The CDP takes precedence over the Oldcastle LAP in the event of a conflict arising between the contents of the two documents¹.

¹ Except in the case of the Zoning Matrix contained in Section 4.7.4 below, which differs from the Zoning Matrix contained in Section 2.1.11 of the CDP.

1.4 Public Consultation

As stated above, pre-draft public consultation took place in Oldcastle as part of the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan process. Upon public display of the Draft Local Area Plan the statutory time frame as set out in the Planning & Development Acts commenced. This timeline is set out in Plate No. 1 below.

Plate No. 1 Statutory Timeline for the Preparation of a LAP

Time Frame	Progress of Statutory LAP Process
Week 1 ²	Draft Local Area Plan on display - submissions invited for a 6 week period
Week 6	Preparation of Manager's Report on submissions received - 6 week period
Week 12	Manager's Report given to Members for consideration - 6 week period
Week 18	LAP made unless Members decide to amend - 3 week period
Week 21	Notice of alterations published & submissions invited for a 4 week period
Week 25	Preparation of Manager's Report on submissions (alterations only) - 4 week period
Week 29	Manager's Report given to Members for consideration - 6 week period
Week 35	LAP made as per Manager's recommendation (or) Members make LAP contrary to the Manager's recommendations

1.5 Objectives

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

OBJ 1	To accommodate population growth in accordance with Table 6 of the County Development Plan through the implementation of the policies contained in Variation No.2 of that Plan and to cater for the needs of the local population by reserving 25% of all new multi-house developments, being developments in excess of 4 houses, for persons who are native to County Meath.
OBJ 2	To protect, while also offering opportunities to expand, the existing employment base of Oldcastle through the zoning of an adequate quantity and range of land and the provision of necessary infrastructure.
OBJ 3	To provide an urban design framework which will promote quality of design while also respecting the existing character of the Town and its Architectural Conservation Area status.
OBJ 4	To seek a balance and mix in the type and size of dwelling units in order to promote a social and demographic balance within the Town.

² Week 1 will be the beginning of the statutory process for the preparation of a LAP as outlined in Section 19 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended). This process will begin when notice is given about the Draft LAP being issued.

OBJ 5	To provide a range of high quality community, recreational and open space facilities in a clustered manner, which are easily accessible, are provided contemporaneously with new residential development and are provided in co-operation with local community groups and other stakeholders.
OBJ 6	To enhance the permeability of the Town through the improvement of the network for pedestrians and cyclists, the promotion of public transport and the management of motor vehicles.
OBJ 7	To maintain the successful mixed-use Town Centre of Oldcastle through a balance of retailing, commercial uses, housing, education and community facilities to serve existing and future residents.
OBJ 8	To resolve the infrastructural issues in the Town and to give priority to employment generating uses as services become available.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Description of the Area

Oldcastle is located to the North West of County Meath approximately 85 km from Dublin, 21 km from Kells, 11 km from Virginia and 11 km from Ballyjamesduff. The Town developed as a Georgian market town centred on a crossroads which forms the current Town Square. Development has radiated from the Square along the two regional roads, R154 and R195 which transverse the Town in east to west and north to south directions respectively.

The Square continues to form the commercial core of the Town supporting a wide range of retail, commercial and professional services, catering for the resident population, surrounding hinterland and passing trade. The Town is also uniquely vibrant in the County from a commercial perspective due to a robust traditional manufacturing base (furniture and engineering) and strong service sector employment.

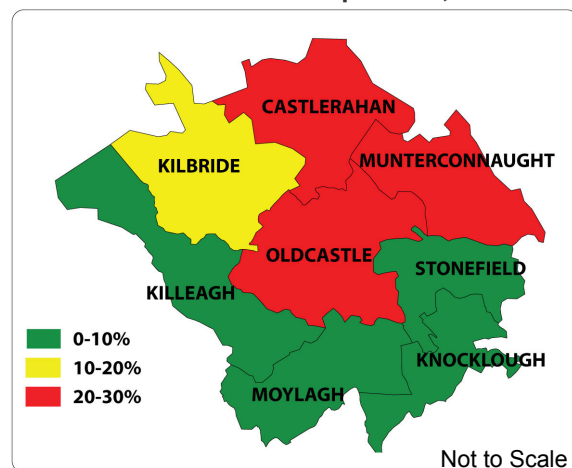
2.2 Key Demographic and Socio-Economic Trends

2.2.1 Introduction

The following information has been gathered primarily from the 2006 Census in order to identify the socio-economic trends within Oldcastle and its catchment area. This information has been analysed on an Electoral Division (ED) level and includes the EDs of:

- Oldcastle
- Moylagh
- Killeagh
- Stonefield
- Knocklough
- Munterconnaught
- Castlerahan
- Kilbride

Plate No.2 % Increase in ED Population, 2002-2006



The EDs have been analysed below based on the Oldcastle ED which covers the majority of the Town Centre boundary with the remaining 7 EDs making up the Hinterland Area. Of the 7 EDs within the Hinterland Area Moylagh, Killeagh, Stonefield and Knocklough are located in County Meath with Munterconnaught, Castlerahan and Kilbride located within County Cavan.

The Catchment Area as shown in Plate No. 2 comprises both the Oldcastle ED and the EDs contained within the Hinterland Area.

2.2.2 Population Context

Both the Oldcastle ED and the wider Hinterland Area experienced population growth over the past decade with the population of the Oldcastle ED growing by 20% over the period 2002-2006 and the population of the Hinterland Area growing by 12.6% over the same period. These growth rates, particularly in respect of the Oldcastle ED, broadly reflect the growth rate of County Meath over the same period which was 21.5% as shown in Table No. 1 below. As Oldcastle has been identified as a Small Growth Town where considerable, balanced development will take place it is envisaged that the population will continue to grow in line with that of the County.

Table No. 1 Population change between 2002 and 2006³

Area	Population 2002	Population 2006	Actual population change 2002-2006	Percentage population change 2002-2006
Oldcastle ED	1,858	2,230	372	20
Hinterland Area	3,423	3,915	492	12.6
Meath	134,005	162,831	28,826	21.5

A detailed breakdown of the population classified by age group is outlined in Table No. 2 below. In respect of the population of the Oldcastle ED area, the 25-44 years age cohort contained the highest number of persons, 32% of the population in line with the County and Hinterland Area figures. This 25-44 years cohort is most likely to generate household requirement with an additional 200 no. households projected to 2013 under Variation No. 2 of the Development Plan. This would cater for a population of about 560 people at an occupancy rate of 2.79 persons per household (p.p.h.), which was the occupancy rate in the 2006 Census.

Table No. 2 Percentage of total population classified by age group⁴

Age Group	0-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65 years and over
Oldcastle ED	21%	15%	32%	22%	10%
Hinterland Area	25%	12%	30%	21%	12%
Meath	23%	14%	35%	20%	8%

It is also evident from Table No. 2 that the percentage of the population classified as children of 18 years or younger within the Oldcastle ED is largely in accordance with that of the County at 26% and 29% respectively while the Hinterland Area at 35% is notably higher. Also 10% of the population of the Oldcastle ED and 12% of the Hinterland Area comprise of people over the age of 65. This compares to 8% of the population of County Meath.

Oldcastle is also unique in that its Catchment Area comprises an increasingly diverse community with foreign nationals representing 16% of the Oldcastle ED population. The level of representation by foreign nationals within the Hinterland Area at 6% is significantly lower.

2.2.3 Employment

Statistics available from the Central Statistics Office, illustrated below in Table No. 3, show that the labour force of the Hinterland Area at 58.87% is marginally below the State figure of 62.5% while Oldcastle ED at 64.88% labour force participation rate is above the state figure.

³ Census 2006, Small Area Statistics.

⁴ Census 2006, Small Area Statistics.

Table No. 3 Labour Force Participation Rate in 2006⁵

Area	Total Labour Force ⁶	Total Aged 15 Years & Over	Labour Force Participation Rate
Oldcastle ED	1,140	1,757	64.88%
Hinterland Area	1,818	3,088	58.87%
State	2,109,498	3,375,399	62.5%

Table No. 4 below shows that the percentage of people aged 15 and over who are classified as “at work” reflects the above participation rates with Oldcastle having 58.6% which is greater than the state at 57.2%. The percentage for the Hinterland Area also reflects the above participation rates and is below the state figure at 55%,

Table No. 4 Persons Aged 15 or Over at Work⁷

Area	Total at Work	Total Over 15	Percentage Persons over 15 at Work
Oldcastle ED	1,029	1,757	58.6%
Hinterland Area	1,698	3,088	55%
State	1,930,042	3,375,399	57.2%

In addition to the above level of employment, the level of unemployment in Oldcastle and its Hinterland Area was below 10% in 2006 as outlined in Table No. 5 below. This figure is comparable with the levels of unemployment within the County.

Table No. 5 Persons at work or unemployed in 2006⁸

Area	At Work	Unemployed
Oldcastle ED	1,029 (92%)	87 (8%)
Hinterland Area	1,698 (94%)	101 (6%)
Meath	78,437 (94%)	4,637 (6%)

In 2006, the majority of persons within Oldcastle and its Hinterland Area travelled to work or educational facilities by private motorcar. Within the Oldcastle ED 45% of persons travel between 1-9 km to work/school/college, however, within the Hinterland Area this is slightly less at 38% with the County figure lower again at 34%. The figures for long distance commuting of 25km+ are far less for the Oldcastle ED and Hinterland Area at 14% and 19% respectively than the County figure of 26%. This indicates that people within Oldcastle and its Hinterland Area are generally staying within the immediate area to go to work and school making its travel patterns more sustainable than that of the County. The Planning Authority will endeavour through this LAP to continue to facilitate the development of local enterprises which typify Oldcastle and support sustainable development.

2.2.4 Social Class

The census of population determines the social class of persons aged 15 years and over by the nature of employment undertaken. This is a useful guide to the principal types of occupation in which the population is employed or is capable of being employed.

⁵ Census 2006, Small Area Statistics.

⁶ Labour Force comprises persons at work, looking for their first regular job and those who are currently unemployed.

⁷ Census 2006, Small Area Statistics.

⁸ Census 2006, Small Area Statistics.

An examination of the Census data for Oldcastle shows that there is a reliance on manufacturing and to a lesser extent commerce related industries in the Catchment Area. The 2006 Census illustrated that c. 30% of the working population of the Oldcastle ED and c. 19% of the working population of the Hinterland Area were employed in manufacturing industries. In contrast, only c. 15% of the working population of County Meath was employed in manufacturing industries.

Table No. 6 below clearly shows that manufacturing is by far the biggest employer in the Oldcastle ED area. Table No. 6 also shows that commerce and trade within the Oldcastle ED area at 21% and 19% within the Hinterland Area is well below that of the County at 27%.

Table No. 6 Persons at work by industry in 2006⁹

Industry	Agriculture forestry & fishing	Building & Construction	Manufacturing Industries	Commerce & Trade	Transport and Communic- ations	Public Administ- ration	Professi- onal Services	Other
Oldcastle ED.	59 (6%)	132 (13%)	311 (30%)	218 (21%)	37 (4%)	25 (2%)	96 (9%)	151 (15%)
Hinterland Area	262 (15%)	237 (14%)	328 (19%)	317 (19%)	69 (4%)	54 (3%)	199 (12%)	232 (14%)
Meath	3,674 (5%)	11,010 (14%)	11,397 (15%)	20,985 (27%)	4,974 (6%)	4,335 (5%)	11,290 (14%)	10,772 (14%)

Table No. 7 further analyses the social class of the Oldcastle ED and the Hinterland Area against that of the County. Persons employed in the skilled manual and semi-skilled social classes make up the highest proportion of persons in the Hinterland Area at 33% which is slightly higher than the County figure of 30% but is significantly lower than the figure for the Oldcastle ED of 40%. Furthermore, in 2006 c. 38% of persons aged 15 years and over within the Hinterland Area were classified as skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled. The predominant social classes and skills base of the population within the Catchment Area reflects the predominance of manufacturing and trade industries within the Oldcastle LAP area.

Table No. 7 Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over classified by social class, 2006¹⁰

Social Class	Professional workers	Managerial & Technical	Non- Manual	Skilled Manual	Semi- Skilled	Unskilled	All others ¹¹
Oldcastle ED.	80 (4%)	469 (21%)	276 (12%)	563 (25%)	342 (15%)	106 (5%)	394 (18%)
Hinterland Area	179 (5%)	1,123 (29%)	566 (14%)	890 (23%)	410 (10%)	185 (5%)	562 (14%)
Meath	10,205 (6%)	1,592 (29%)	842 (17%)	1,453 (20%)	752 (10%)	291 (4%)	956 (13%)

The above statistics show that Oldcastle has a clear reliance on the manufacturing industry making this industry and its protection vital to the future prosperity of the Town. Existing industries must not only be protected but further manufacturing industries encouraged to locate within the LAP area. An integrated approach to land use planning and transport is thus vital and will aid the preservation and strengthening of manufacturing industries within the Town in order to maintain employment for the existing residents.

⁹ Census 2006, Small Area Statistics.

¹⁰ Census 2006, Small Area Statistics.

¹¹ All others gainfully occupied & unknown

2.3 Physical Development Trends

2.3.1 Urban Form

Oldcastle developed as a market town at the intersection of key transport routes. The central square forms the focus of the urban fabric and although there has been a proliferation of modern development in the fringe areas over the past two decades, much of the original fabric of the Town remains.

The Town evolved organically over time resulting in a disordered street layout and a proliferation of laneways. Notwithstanding this, the urban framework of Oldcastle is orientated around the Square, which is located on an elevated position and is visually prominent and offers views over the Town. Although the Square acts as junction for numerous vehicular routes, a sense of enclosure is created by the buildings that surround it, which define the area as a key functional space in the Town.

The urban form of the Town, which focuses on the central Square and the convergence of regional road arteries has resulted in vacant backland sites in close proximity to the Town Centre. These backland sites and the concentration of commercial uses in the Town Centre have lead to a fragmentation of the urban form of the Town towards the fringes, resulting in a noticeable transition between urban and rural at the town boundary.

2.3.2 Physical Development

1836 Ordnance Survey Datum

An examination of the 1836 Ordnance Survey map of Oldcastle, (see Plate No. 3), shows the Town developed around the Square located at the intersection of five roads. Development radiated from this central square along these roads but to different degrees.

Houses developed along the road to the east of the Town (R154) probably due to the free school and the Catholic Church being located in this area. Development also occurred to the south of the Town and it is likely that this is due to the road layout which allowed visual access to the Square. Development was more limited to the north east and west of the Town where the transition from the Town to the countryside was marked by one off housing along the approach roads. The transition between the Town and countryside was sharpest to the north of the Town (R195) where the built up area generally terminated and only a tanning yard was located further along this road. This was the first indication of industry on this road.

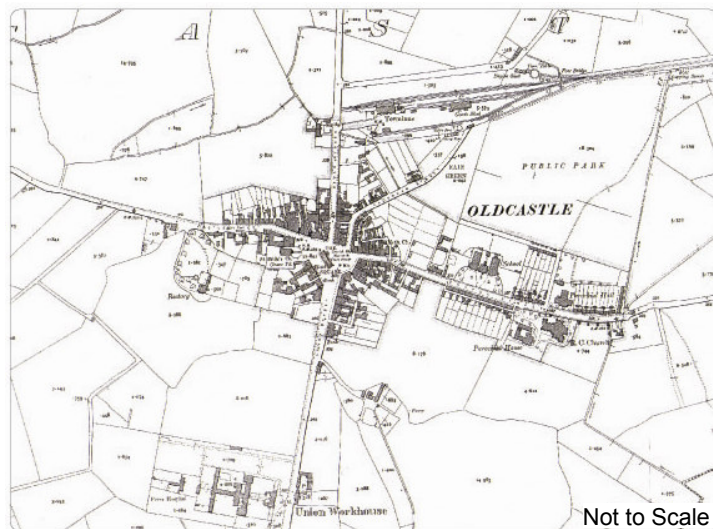
Plate No. 3 1836 OS Map of Oldcastle



1910 Ordnance Survey Datum

It is visible from the 1910 Ordnance Survey map of Oldcastle, (see Plate No. 4), that the period between 1836-1910 was a time of change within Oldcastle, the most noticeable change being the introduction of the railway line to Navan. The railway station was located to the north of the Town, dissecting the existing road to the north east and creating a large backland area. Several dwellings developed in this area to the south of the station, however, the train station acted as a physical barrier to further development to the north, with the exception of the tanning yard, which expanded and appeared to have been used as a blacksmiths at this time.

Plate No. 4 1910 OS Map of Oldcastle



Within the Town itself, lanes began to develop allowing access to the rear of buildings that fronted the Square. These lanes were mainly concentrated to the east of the Square and resulted in the development of the backlands in this area.

The Town developed further to the east with the construction of new dwelling units to the east of the school and the addition of a new Catholic Church and parochial house opposite the old Catholic Church. The Town, however, did not expand beyond its original boundary in this direction with a sharp transition remaining between the Town and the countryside to the east.

To the south of the Town the terrace of houses fronting the Square have been broken up with the removal of those to the very south, this resulted in the consolidation of the Square to the south. Beyond the Town boundary to the south of the Town the Union Workhouse and Fever Hospital were constructed, however, unlike the school and Catholic Church they did not result in further development locating in the area.

The Town maintained its urban footprint to the west with the rectory house acting as the boundary between the Town and countryside. The backlands at this location were also developed through the extension of existing buildings and without any additional lanes. Plots of lands are also clearly marked in this backland area implying a number of owners.

Current Ordnance Survey Datum

The current Ordnance Survey map of Oldcastle, (see Plate No. 5), shows that while the Town has developed in recent years it still maintains a relatively compact form. To the north of the Town the railway line has been removed and replaced with industrial units and a number of residential units constructed adjacent to, its former route. While the tanning yard/blacksmiths has been demolished this area has now become the location for a number of manufacturing industries which extend north of the Town. Ribbon development has occurred along the road (R195) heading north despite large areas of land remaining underutilised as backland sites both east and west of the road (R195). An examination of the distribution of the population growth of the Catchment Area (see Plate No. 2) from 2002-2006 reveals that the majority of the growth was concentrated in the Oldcastle ED and the EDs of Munterconnaught, Castlerahan and Kilbride which are located in County Cavan. The concentration of population growth to the north east of the Town may be attributed to the proximity of Virginia Town to this area, which creates a dumbbell effect between the two centres i.e Virginia and Oldcastle.

Plate No. 5 Current OS Map of Oldcastle



The Town has expanded to the east beyond the original boundary. While the key features of this area remain i.e. the Catholic Church and School, housing developments have occurred both north and south of the R154 on Greenfield sites. Part of the backland area to the south of the R154 has been developed for residential dwellings, however, a substantial backland area to the north of the road remains undeveloped.

The Town has developed to the south in a similar manner with large residential estates constructed both on greenfield and small backland sites. The old Union workhouse and Fever Hospital have been replaced by one such estate. Further residential development has been granted planning permission which will develop the lands to the west of the R195 and the south of the R154. In addition to this large scale ribbon development has taken place on the R195 south of the Town.

The Town has remained most compact to the west with the exception of a small residential development and the planned residential development referred to above. The field pattern has remained largely unaltered in this area, with small plots that are still undeveloped to date.

The Town Square has also changed with alterations made to accommodate vehicular traffic resulting in a decrease in the amount of usable public space within the Square. However, the buildings surrounding the Square have remained largely unchanged maintaining the sense of enclosure.

Over time areas of distinct uses have developed in Oldcastle including an industry cluster to the north and residential areas to the south. The Town has accommodated a range of new uses while also retaining many of its original land uses and has maintained its compact form. The clustering of uses and the continued maintenance of the compact form of Oldcastle will be encouraged as part of this LAP.

2.3.3 Land Ownership

The current land ownership patterns within the Town Centre are typical of those of most small Irish Towns. Plots are small in size and generally represent the original land holdings i.e. the dwelling unit/commercial units and associated open space. This land ownership pattern may make it difficult to consolidate backland sites the development of which is a key aim of this LAP. In order to address this issue Section 8.7 identifies 5 no. opportunity sites within the Town Centre and provides detailed development briefs outlining the type of development permissible on each site. These development briefs have regard to the existing land ownership patterns and encourage the consolidation or cooperation of land owners to develop these sites.

Moving further from the original Town Centre, plots are much larger in size resulting in fewer land owners owning strategically located lands in close proximity to the existing Town boundary. This ownership pattern will aid the rezoning and inclusion of additional lands within the Town boundary in future LAPs.

2.3.4 Open Space

The creation of high quality landscaped open spaces and the enhancement of existing spaces is integral to maintaining a high quality urban settlement. Open spaces enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, integrate urban settlements into the surrounding rural landscape as well as improving the townscape and contributing to a better quality of life for inhabitants of such areas.

Oldcastle Town Centre is currently deficient in passive recreational public open space. The Square represents a key open space area in the Town Centre which is under utilised and currently used for parking. The parking provision reduces permeability through this open space, thereby inhibiting the movement of pedestrians in the area and detracting from the visual prominence of the Square itself. Gilson Park to the east of the Town Centre represents the largest area of open space within the LAP area. The park forms part of a group of amenities at this location including a pitch and putt course and children's play area.

2.4 Town Centre and Commercial Development

2.4.1 Town Centre

Oldcastle has a relatively compact Town Centre despite notable expansion in the last 200 years. This traditional Town Centre must be maintained in conjunction with Oldcastle's strategic role as a location for businesses, shopping, services, culture, leisure, community and civic facilities. It is important that this range of services and facilities are provided within the Town to reinforce its designation as a Small Growth Town. In order to achieve this, a vibrant mix of uses must be promoted in the Town Centre which endorses the objectives of sustainable development as outlined by government policy, promotes vitality and diversity and reduces the need to travel great distances by private motor car.



2.4.2 Commercial Development

Oldcastle acts as a services centre for those residing within the Town and its extensive rural hinterland. Commercial activity within the Town has developed around, and remains focused on, the Square and the entrance roads. These roads have created a natural barrier to movement within the Square restricting permeability and producing a congested shopping environment that inhibits pedestrian movement.

There has been relatively little modern retail development in Oldcastle, when compared to other Towns in Meath, reflecting its relatively small size. Oldcastle is predominantly a comparison centre (c. 66% of trading floorspace), mainly independents, and would benefit from an additional range of retail services and some modern retail formats.

The Retail Analysis undertaken to inform this LAP indicates that Oldcastle primarily caters for top-up shopping with main food shopping carried out in larger centres. Travelling long distances for the weekly shop is unsustainable in terms of infrastructure and the environment. Meeting local food shopping need within Oldcastle is an aim of this LAP and this may require additional convenience floorspace subject to quantitative and qualitative standards.

In respect of comparison floorspace, the Analysis indicates that sufficient comparison floorspace exists up to 2010. However, it is also noted that Oldcastle is located at a nodal point in the roads infrastructure and serves the needs of both tourists and passive trade and that the demand for retail floorspace may be higher than that indicated in any retail assessment. In this respect reasonably scaled applications for additional retail floorspace that would increase competition should be considered on their individual merits. It is also envisaged that there will be a requirement to strengthen the comparison retail offer to ensure that retail expenditure is retained and inflow encouraged through tourist expenditure.

There are currently no Out-of-Town commercial developments in Oldcastle. Future retail provision should be provided in tandem with population growth and should in the first instance be focused on the existing Town Centre or the identified 'Opportunity Sites' proximate to the Town Centre. Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the Town Centre, then consideration may be given to a site on the Edge of the Town Centre¹² in the future.

2.5 Community and Educational Facilities

2.5.1 Health Services

Our Lady's Hospital, Navan is part of the Louth/Meath Hospital Group and provides a general acute hospital service to the catchment area of Meath and an orthopaedic service to the region as a whole¹³. The Irish health care system, however, has changed in recent years with a move towards more community care based health services providing care at a local level. In addition to the range of services provided by Our Lady's Hospital, Navan the Health Service Executive operates a number of community care Health Centres throughout Meath. Oldcastle accommodates one such community care Health Centre. Located on Church Street, the centre offers a range of services including *inter alia* general practitioner services, public health nursing, child health services, community welfare. The Centre also holds events to raise money for organisations such as the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and provides a blood transfusion service.

Oldcastle is also serviced by private practitioners and dental surgeons who operate from private premises not associated with the Health Centre. These services are dispersed around the Town but are largely confined to the built up area. Oldcastle is also serviced by pharmacies also located within the Town. Due to the central location of these facilities most areas can access them easily.

2.5.2 Community and Youth Centres/Venues

Within the Town the Show Hall and Masonic Hall provide venues within which the community/youth activities can take place. The space provided by the Health Centre is also utilised for community activities including the Oldcastle Active Retirement group, however, the lack of a town hall was raised at public consultation stage and will be addressed in Section 4 below.

Oldcastle and its environs also boasts a number of clubs including *inter alia*:

- Oldcastle GAA Clubs
- St Brigids Athletic Club
- Oldcastle United Football Club
- Oldcastle Basketball Club
- Loughcrew Archers
- Oldcastle Juv. GAA
- Oldcastle Community Games
- Oldcastle Ladies GAA

¹² As defined in the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2000 (as amended, in 2005).

¹³ http://www.hse.ie/eng/find_a_service/Hospitals/navan/

- Moylagh Racquetball Club
- Oldcastle Tidy Towns Committee

In addition to these venues and clubs amenity areas such as the Fairgreen Playground and the Oldcastle Pitch and Putt Course are also important resources and contribute to the overall community infrastructure of Oldcastle. As part of the public consultation phase requests were received from some organisations regarding the addition to the current range of community facilities. This issue will be addressed in Section 4 below.

2.5.3 Library Facilities

Meath County Council provides a library service throughout the County, including Oldcastle, which acts as a provider of information and education and as a venue for cultural events and activities.

2.5.4 Places of Worship

The townscape of Oldcastle could be said to be defined by the presence of the two churches within its centre, Saint Bride's Church of Ireland Church at the Square and Saint Brigid's Roman Catholic Church located on Chapel Street. Both of these structures are designated as Protected Structures under the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, and have been recognised as being of Regional Importance by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

2.5.5 Civic and Administrative Facilities.

For a town of Oldcastle's size it is well serviced by civic and administrative facilities. The Millbrook Road has come to act as a focus for these activities which in addition to the library also accommodates the fire station and credit union.

Oldcastle Credit Union is located directly adjacent to Oldcastle Library. The Credit Union has direct access to meeting room facilities contained within the library at first floor level. The Credit Union also offers its members access to the gymnasium, racquetball court, showers and sauna.

Oldcastle fire station is also located on the Millbrook Road adjacent to the Credit Union building and is one of just seven fire stations located strategically around the County, Oldcastle fire station was officially opened in 1981. According to a recent grading, Oldcastle provides a full range of facilities that are deemed to be necessary. Meath County Council is preparing a plan for the development and expansion of emergency services in the County in line with best practice and the Fire Service Change Programme.

2.5.6 Recycling Facilities and Civic Amenity Sites.

There are two bring banks within Oldcastle one located at Curran's Filling Station on the Dublin Road and the other at the Fire Station on the Millbrook Road. While the former accepts glass and cans, textiles can also be disposed of at the latter. In addition to these there is a recycling centre provided in Kells which accepts a wide range of goods.

2.5.7 Education Facilities

Oldcastle provides a range of educational facilities from crèche level to post primary schooling. The Town is catered for in terms of educational facilities by Gilson National School and St. Oliver's Post Primary School.

Gilson National School, established in 1829, accommodates 281 no. students both male and female. The school is currently over capacity with pre-fabricated units utilised to accommodate the additional pupils. While the school has a high percentage of foreign national pupils, c. 14%, this figure has fallen in recent years.

St. Oliver's Post Primary School also located within the Town is a new and modern school rebuilt in 2000 which is currently undergoing a four classroom extension. The school is part of the Meath Vocational Educational Committee (VEC) and currently accommodates 430¹⁴ no. students, both boys and girls. Of these 430 no. students only a small percentage are foreign nationals.

The rural hinterland surrounding Oldcastle is also served by a number of primary schools. Scoil Mhuire National School located in Moylagh just south of Oldcastle currently accommodates 102 no. pupils while Scoil Naisiunta Fiach, Ballinacree, Oldcastle, accommodate 71 no. students.

While there are no Third Level Colleges or Universities within Oldcastle or the surrounding area, a number of adult education courses are offered. County Meath VEC Adult Education Service through St. Oliver's Post Primary School provides learning opportunities for adults with a wide range of courses offered including *inter alia*:

- Computers for Beginners
- Spanish For Beginners
- Furniture Restoration
- Guitar For Beginners

Meath VEC also runs other courses outside St. Oliver's School including a computer literacy course held in Gilson House.

The provision of educational facilities plays a central role in supporting sustainable communities, the protection and creation of which is an integral part of this Local Area Plan.



¹⁴ Information supplied by St. Oliver's Post Primary School.

2.6 Historical and Archaeological Significance

The conservation and management of heritage is identified in the National Spatial Strategy, 2002-2020, as a benchmark pointing towards the fostering of sustainability. Heritage, in all its guises— landscapes, archaeology, buildings, rivers and lakes - contributes to the distinct identity, character and sense of place inherent in many Irish Towns. Conservation and management of heritage through existing legislation and in accordance with best practice, is considered to contribute towards the quality of life of each individual.

Oldcastle is of historical, architectural and cultural importance. This is evidenced by its distinct character and inherent qualities arising principally from the built heritage of the settlement and remaining archaeological features. The built environment of Oldcastle demonstrates the evolution of its residential, commercial and social development over time and shows the different building techniques and materials employed and the designs and styles of previous generations. A number of examples of traditional building forms remain including Gibney's shop and the Naper Arms hotel in addition to several traditional shop fronts e.g. McQuaids Pharmacy and Mullens Auction Room.

Development has influenced the current form of the Town and the relationship of buildings to the street edge illustrating how the Town has developed physically and economically. While there are a number of examples of modern interventions limited opportunity remains for further infill streetscape development along the principal streets due to the narrow plot widths and the requirement to retain a cohesive character. Development can have a positive impact and can conserve, enhance and provide a new use for older structures, however, unsuitable uses or developments which detract from the traditional streetscape may threaten the character of Oldcastle, particularly inappropriate alterations or demolition of existing structures. The cumulative impact of such proposals would have a negative impact on the character of the streetscape and undermine the role of Oldcastle as a historic service centre.

In order to achieve a balance between facilitating further sustainable growth and development within Oldcastle while ensuring that the existing heritage and tourist value of the Town is both maintained and enhanced, this LAP proposes to modify the Record of Protected Structures as outlined in the County Development Plan. This measure is outlined in detail in Section 6.

2.7 Landscape, Amenities and Natural Heritage

2.7.1 Landscape Character

Oldcastle is located in the uplands area of County Meath, some 100-150 metres above sea level. A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) was prepared as part of the County Development Plan, 2007-2013, which assessed each Landscape Character Area in the county for potential capacity to accommodate development. The following criteria were utilised in this assessment: Low, Medium, High. Oldcastle is located on the boundary between Landscape Character Areas 18 and 19.

Area 18 Lough Sheelin Uplands (Landscape Character Area 18)

This area is of regional importance and is considered to be of high value. The area includes the eastern shores of the lake which are also bounded by counties Westmeath and Cavan. The area of Ross including the headland is relatively low lying but highly visible from the lake. It is highly sensitive to development in particular urban development such as multi-house developments, roads, rail, cabling, and wind farms, masts, etc.

Loughcrew and Slieve na Calliagh Hills (Landscape Character Area 19)

This area is of international importance, and is of exceptional value, both from a visual as well as heritage perspective. It encompasses an upland area to the south of Oldcastle that contains significant archaeological remains and which offers commanding views over the surrounding region. The field pattern is notably open and frequently composed of stone walling.

2.7.2 Heritage Designations

Lough Sheelin Special Protection Area (SPA) is located 9km to the north west of Oldcastle while Lough Bane candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) is located 10km south of Oldcastle. The distance of these Protected Areas from Oldcastle places them beyond the scope of this LAP. However, the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment prepared as part of this LAP consider the impacts of future development within Oldcastle on the above conservation areas.

2.7.3 Habitats and Amenities outside Designated Sites

In addition to the two Landscape Character Areas, the Special Protection Area and the candidate Special Area of Conservation, Oldcastle also possess other unprotected natural heritage.

Trees and hedgerows provide a visual amenity within the Town and provide a home for wildlife. A key issue is to achieve their preservation in a viable way in the urban environment where they are conserved and appreciated and where they provide a migratory corridor for wildlife.

The natural heritage of Oldcastle includes the Public Park, trees, and hedgerows and uncultivated grassland. Of particular note are the groupings of trees that mark the southern, western and eastern approaches to the Town. These tree groups create 'green gateways' to the Town that contribute positively to the ambience of the Town.



There are also significant groupings of trees around the Gilson National School and St. Bride's Church adjacent to the Square. These trees function as a wildlife habitat, provide visual relief and are an important visual amenity for the town.

The Public Park, located in the east of the Town, is an important local amenity that adds significantly to the quality of life of Oldcastle. In addition, local amenities include Gilson Park GAA pitch and a pitch and putt course (located in the Public Park). These local amenities are well sign-posted from the Square; they are, however, somewhat removed from the Town Centre and not well served by pedestrian links.

2.8 Movement and Access

2.8.1 Existing Bus Services

Oldcastle is served by a poor level of public transport, which is solely reliant on bus services. Bus Éireann service 188 runs from Oldcastle to Kells via Virginia. Three busses depart Oldcastle daily from Monday to Saturday with one of these going on to Navan after stopping in Kells. A large number of onward services can be availed of in Kells and Navan including services to Dublin and Drogheda. The service from Oldcastle to Kells takes approximately 55 minutes each way.

Meath Accessible Transport Project is a Community Transport group operating in the Meath area that offers weekly services from Moylagh to Oldcastle via Knocktemple and from Ballinacree to Oldcastle via Ross and Mountnugent and a once monthly service from Oldcastle to Navan via Ballinacree and Moylagh.

2.8.2 Existing Road Access

Oldcastle's location in the west of the County results in it being served solely by regional roads, R154 and R195, with the M3 directly accessible via Virginia. The importance of these Regional Roads to the future development of Oldcastle is evident from the 2006 Census figures which shows that travel by private car was the most common mode of travel, with 46% of the people within the Oldcastle ED travelling between 0-9km to work, school and college.

2.8.3 Pedestrian and Cycling Facilities

Due to the historic layout of Oldcastle it is not particularly pedestrian or cycle friendly. While the majority of streets within the Town have footpaths on both sides there are still exceptions including:

- Park View,
- Cobblers Road,
- The southern side of the Cogan Road beyond the parochial house,
- A section of the western side of Cavan Street to the south of the St. Oliver's School,
- The northern side of Stoney Road
- A section of Railway Yard at its north eastern bend

In the most part the streets of Oldcastle are sufficiently lit to provide for safe pedestrian and cycle movement. The exception to this is Cobbler's Road where there is no street lighting.

There are currently no pedestrian crossings or cycle lanes within the Town an issue which will be addressed in Section 5 below.

2.8.4 Current Transportation Proposals

The current Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, contains the objective to upgrade, improve, strengthen and re-align the following sections of Regional Roads in Oldcastle:

- R154 Patrickstown-Oldcastle
- R195-24 Oldcastle
- R154-20 Oldcastle

The re-adopted Written Statement and Detailed Objectives also contain a number of transportation proposals which will be reassessed in Section 5.

2.9 Services and Utilities

2.9.1 Foul Water Infrastructure

Sewage from the town of Oldcastle is collected at the existing treatment plant, situated to the south west of the town, before discharging into the Inny River. Due to insufficient capacity (1,500 PE), the existing treatment plant is incapable of effectively treating any significant additional foul water. Ongoing operational works are currently underway as an interim measure in order to ensure an adequate level of service for the existing population. These works include works to optimise the day-to-day operation of the existing treatment plant and the construction of a storm water holding tank.

A new sewage treatment plant is currently at detailed design stage, the construction of which is scheduled to commence in late 2009, with an expected opening date in 2011. The new treatment plant will initially have a capacity for a population equivalent (PE) of 3,500 with a possible Stage 2 development to increase future capacity to 5,250 PE. The new treatment plant will be located on a green field site further away from the Town than the existing plant.

As part of this upgrade, new sewage infrastructure will be laid throughout the Town to serve the new treatment plant and development lands. This will represent a significant improvement in infrastructure with the spare capacity to accommodate the planned future growth in residential and commercial activities projected within this Plan and should be completed, in advance of the new treatment plant, by mid-2010.

2.9.2 Water Supply

The current water supply for Oldcastle is by abstraction, along with Kells, from Lough Bane. A new joint scheme is currently being proposed that will serve Kells and reduce demand from Lough Bane. Currently, however, there are limitations to the levels of water supply to Oldcastle. An assessment of future needs is to be carried out over the lifetime of this LAP and a proposal to upgrade the supply system will be designed according to the recommendations of this assessment.

2.9.3 Surface Water

The surface water system in Oldcastle is a partially separated system, with significant storm water currently entering the foul system at peak times. All recent housing developments, however, have separated systems discharging into adjacent water courses and all future developments are required to minimise such discharges through the use of SuDS.

2.9.4 Other Utilities

Oldcastle is currently not on the National Gas pipeline infrastructural network and there are no immediate plans to connect it. Oldcastle is provided electricity through a local 10kv line network that links into the 110Kv national grid. There is Broadband availability in Oldcastle through a number of service providers.

3.0 STRATEGY

3.1 Vision Statement

Arising from the analysis of the Town and guided by the local context, an exact and specific vision for the area has been formulated. The purpose of this Vision Statement is twofold: firstly, it will form the basis for a consensus between the Planning Authority, the public, landowners, developers and all interested parties, as to the future development of Oldcastle. Secondly, it provides clear guidance for policy creation.

“To capitalise on Oldcastle’s position as a historic employment and service centre for North Meath by providing a positive policy framework for economic growth and community development whilst preserving the built and natural environment and ensuring that development is both sustainable and of high quality.”

3.2 Core Aims

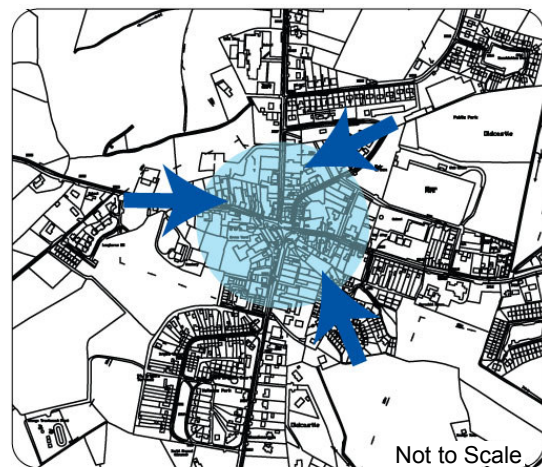
Further to the objectives set out in Section 1.4 and having regard to the Vision set out above, a number of core aims have been identified:

3.2.1 Land Use

1. To provide for a compact Town Centre.

As shown in Plate No. 6 the Town Centre of Oldcastle has remained relatively compact over the last 200 years with commercial development focused on the Square. This LAP aims to maintain this compact form and focuses development on the Town Centre through the utilisation of derelict sites.

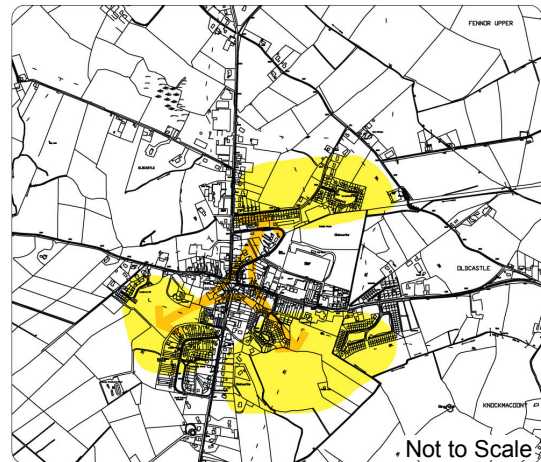
Plate No. 6 Town Centre



2. *To provide for phased release of residentially zoned lands in accordance with Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013.*

At present there are three distinct areas of residential development within Oldcastle as shown on Plate No. 7 Under Variation No. 2 of the CDP identified lands for Phase 1 release which can be developed between 2007-2013. Zoning of large areas of additional lands for residential development is not deemed necessary to accommodate household projections for Oldcastle within the period of this Plan. A small area of land to the south of the Cluin Loinn housing estate which will be accessed through this estate has been included in the Town Boundary and zoned for residential development.

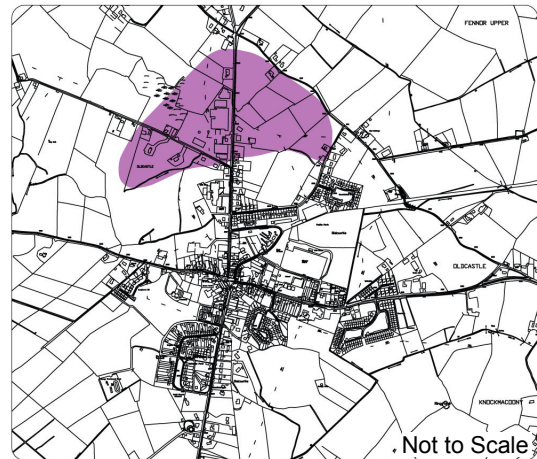
Plate No. 7 Residential Development



3. *To support and protect the existing economic base whilst seeking to diversify and encourage inward invest.*

As shown on Plate No. 8 economic development within Oldcastle is concentrated to the north of the Town. In order to protect these businesses and to allow the development of a range of other types of businesses. The promotion of this cluster of employment is a central aim of this Plan.

Plate No. 8 Economic Development



4. *To make appropriate provision for community and recreational development and encourage linkages between existing and new facilities.*

It is a key aim of this LAP to not only facilitate additional recreational and community facilities through the provision of appropriately zoned lands but to ensure that such facilities are located to provide maximum benefit to the community. Plate No. 9 shows the existing community, recreational and educational zoned lands to the east and west of the Town. In order

Plate No. 9 Recreational & Community Facilities



to maximise the amenity benefits of these lands linkage are required between these two areas. The creation of such links will also facilitate multi-campus use of these amenity areas.

3.2.2 Transportation Strategy

5. *To maximise on existing car parking solutions and to improve pedestrian permeability in the Town Centre.*

It is an aim of this LAP to facilitate the use of private vehicles in an efficient and equitable manner whilst encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport.

3.2.3 Built Heritage and Archaeology

6. *To seek to protect Oldcastle's existing and built and natural heritage through the correct application of appropriate policy tools.*

Oldcastle has a wealth of existing and built heritage which is recognised and protected by its Architectural Conservation Area designation and its extensive list of Protected Structures (See Appendix C). This LAP aims to utilise appropriate policy tools to ensure the continued protection of this heritage.

3.2.4 Infrastructure

7. *To resolve the current infrastructural deficits within the Plan period.*

Oldcastle has not expanded to the same degree as towns to the east and south east of the County partly due to infrastructural deficits which have restricted residential growth. Given the timeline of this LAP, 2009-2015, it is an aim of this Plan to resolve such issues to enable future growth within the Town.

3.2.5 Design

8. *Promote sustainable and innovative design which respects the context in which it is located.*

Having regard to Oldcastle's built heritage it is important that all development proposals are not only of a sustainable and innovative design but that they respect the character of Oldcastle.

POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGY

4.0 LAND USE

4.1 Residential Land Use Strategy

The overall strategy for residential development over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan is to provide for phased release of residentially zoned lands in accordance with Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013.

The Land Use Zoning Map sets out the general nature of land use for the area. Residential use is the most significant element and this is shown on Map No. 1. As this map illustrates, two different types of residential zoning are articulated as follows:

A1 - which provides for the protection and enhancement of the amenity of existing residential areas. This zoning implies that sensitivity is required in relation to planning those areas close to existing houses so that their amenities are fully protected and enhanced. This will involve consideration of appropriate density, height, private open space standards, overlooking and overshadowing issues.

A2 - which provides for new residential communities with ancillary mixed uses. Higher residential densities are also provided for. This zoning permits a greater variety of uses that will assist in achieving more mixed-use development in a sustainable manner and offers opportunities to create a unique sense of place.

Generally the objective is to provide a range of residential units, which vary in both size and type, to accommodate a broad population profile including young singles, couples, families with children and older people. In addition, it is a requirement of the CDP that residential development is linked to the needs of the native population. Policy HS POL 16 of the settlement strategy of the CDP states that:

"In Small Growth Towns, Key Villages 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."

4.1.1 Residential Development Policies

Based on Variation No. 2 (Table No. 6), the existing zoned lands, including those with the benefit of planning permission, will cater for up to 560 no. residential units in Oldcastle. This will comfortably meet the population targets set out in the CDP and it is considered that the lands, as phased in accordance with Variation No. 2 and the zoning of the small area of land to the south of the Cluain Loinn housing estate, are sufficient to meet the projected needs of the population.

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council to:

POL LU 1	Seek the integrated and balanced growth of the Town by 200 no. residential units by 2013. Post 2013, Phase 2 residential lands can be developed in accordance with Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan, 2007-2013 subject to available infrastructure. This policy is subject to any further alteration to Variation No. 2 or the CDP.
POL LU 2	Provide for the expansion of Oldcastle on lands close to the Town Centre, which may be developed with least infrastructural expenditure and which provide good access to the range of social, educational and economic facilities available in the Town.
POL LU 3	Encourage in-fill housing developments where appropriate, the use of under-utilised and vacant sites and vacant upper floors for accommodation purposes and facilitate higher residential densities at appropriate locations, subject to a high standard of design, layout and finish.
POL LU 4	Ensure that road infrastructure and other infrastructural improvements, community and recreational facilities match the needs of new residents. Housing development will be phased to correspond with the provision of these facilities and Variation No. 2 of the CDP.
POL LU 5	It is the policy of the Council to require that adequate childcare facilities are catered for in large residential developments at a rate of 1 no. childcare facility, with capacity for 20 no. children, for every 75 no. dwellings. However, depending on the circumstances, this requirement may be varied and, particularly in the case of smaller developments, the Council may require development contributions to enable appropriate provision to be made elsewhere.
POL LU 6	Access to the residentially zoned lands to the south of the Cluain Loinn estate shall be determined at the time of the making of any planning application for the development of these lands.

4.1.2 Social and Affordable Housing Policy

The County Housing Strategy (Section 5.10.15 of the CDP refers) sets out the methods for meeting the Part V requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) for social/affordable housing. The preferred options include:

- (a) The transfer of a portion of the site which is the subject of the planning application to the Planning Authority which will enable the Planning Authority to provide the appropriate number of units thereon in satisfaction of the requirements of the Strategy;
- (b) The direct provision of the required number of housing units on completion as determined in accordance with the Strategy, integrated as part of the overall development of a site;

- (c) The disposal of a number of fully or partially serviced sites within the site to the Planning Authority, which will enable the Planning Authority to provide the appropriate number of units thereon in satisfaction of the requirements of the Strategy;

Other Options will only be explored once the above options have been examined in detail and discounted for substantive reasons.

The County Housing Strategy, in respect of Oldcastle, indicates that there will be a requirement for 20% of all residential units to be available for social/affordable housing, on the basis of 3% social and 17% affordable. Social / Affordable housing must be provided in a form that is not distinguishable from other housing by reason of its visual appearance or design quality. Open space for amenity purposes will be required. Private gardens will be necessary for housing and communal private open space for town houses, duplexes and apartments. Private balconies would also be required for all apartments. A suitable children's' play space will be an essential component of those residential developments, which are primarily family orientated.

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council to:

POL LU 7	Seek a balance and mix in the provision of social, affordable and private housing and in the type and size of units in order to promote a social and demographic balance within the Town and to respond to the increasing trend towards smaller household sizes.
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4.1.3 Density Policy

The CDP projects a density of 25 households/Ha. Section 10.1.4.10 of CDP states:

“Three storey duplex units will not be permitted in villages and graigs. The Planning Authority will generally permit three storey duplex apartments in large growth towns, moderate growth towns, small growth towns and key villages only where, it is considered that the siting, layout, design and finishes used will not negatively impact on the character and the amenity of the surrounding area.”

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL LU 8	Overall, residential densities should reflect individual site characteristics, conform to the surrounding character of Oldcastle and protect the amenity of adjoining residential development. In accordance with Policy RES DEN 1 of the County Development Plan, residential densities of up to 35 no. units per hectare can be achieved in Oldcastle Town Centre and 25 no. residential units per hectare in the rest of the LAP area, subject to good design and site constraints. With regard to housing proposals comprising 15 or more units, a mix of house types and sizes should be provided with variety in design, within a unified concept.
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4.1.4 Residential Development Standards

An underlying objective of the Planning Authority is to achieve a high standard of design and layout of residential development in order to create high quality, sustainable and attractive areas to live in. All new developments shall meet the minimum low energy performance as a pre-requisite to receiving planning approval (a calculation report is to be submitted with the planning application). Each building's energy performance calculation will be demonstrated on the basis of a simple approved method carried out by a qualified or accredited expert. The standards set out in detail below shall be read in conjunction with Chapter 10 of the County Development Plan:

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council that:

POL LU 9	All new residential developments must comply with the standards set out in Table No. 8 and Section 8 of this LAP.
POL LU 10	All new developments should aim to achieve low energy performance in accordance with the Section 8 of this Plan.

Table No. 8 Residential Development Standards

Density	Overall, residential densities should reflect individual site characteristics, conform to the surrounding character of Oldcastle and protect the amenity of adjoining residential development. In accordance with Policy RES DEN 1 of the County Development Plan, residential densities of 35 no. units per hectare may be achieved in Oldcastle Town Centre and 25 no. residential units on the edge of the LAP area subject to good design and site constraints. With regard to housing proposals comprising 15 or more no. units, a mix of house types and sizes should be provided with variety in design, within a unified concept.
Separation Distance	All houses shall have minimum separation distance of 22 metres between directly opposing windows. This distance may be reduced for single storey dwellings where sufficient private open space is provided and privacy maintained. Windows should be sited to avoid views into new dwellings from other dwellings or from the street.
Private Open Space	All houses shall have an area of private open space, exclusive of car parking, to the rear of the building line and minimum rear garden size shall conform with the content of the Residential Density Guidelines. The private open space should be orientated to receive maximum levels of sunshine.
Parking Provision	Parking requirements will normally be of the order of 1-2 no. spaces per dwelling depending on dwelling size, access to public transport and accessibility to Town Centre facilities. With regards to apartment developments, visitor car parking will be calculated on the basis of 1 no. space per 2 no. apartments. The parking spaces may be provided on site or on street.
Cycle Parking	Secure cycle parking facilities shall be provided in new office, residential, retail and employment generating developments at a rate of one cycle stand per 3 no. parking spaces.
Screen Walls	Screen walls, 2.0 metres in height and constructed in accordance with I.S.325, shall be provided where the boundaries of the house site abut roads, pedestrian ways or open spaces, and where the areas of private open space provision are below the minimum standards.
Separation distance	A minimum distance of 2.3 metres shall be provided between dwellings for the full length of the flanks in all developments of detached, semi-detached and end of terrace houses.
Public Open Space	Public open space shall be provided for in residential development at a minimum rate of 15% of the total site area. In certain circumstances the Local Authority may seek financial contributions towards the provision of public open space in lieu of public open space provision within the proposed development. This public open space should be designed and located to ensure that visual and functional accessibility of the space is maximised and where passive surveillance of such spaces from adjoining dwellings can occur. In addition, such space should be of sufficient size and quality to support numerous uses such as children's play areas.
Height	The maximum height of apartment developments will be determined on a site by site basis by the Planning Authority. Some considerations that the Planning Authority will take into account when assessing proposals for high buildings include impacts on adjoining properties, visual impacts, impacts on the streetscape, landmarks, views and the scale of the proposed building in relation to surrounding open space. The Planning Authority will generally permit 3-storey duplex apartment units in Oldcastle only where it is considered that the siting, layout, design and finishes used will not negatively impact on the character and the amenity of the surrounding area.
Extensions	With regard to residential extensions, prescribed standards are outlined in detail in Sections 10.1.4.4 and 10.1.4.5 of the County Development Plan.
Mix Residential Units & Tenures	A mix of dwelling units and tenures will be encouraged by the Council in order to meet varied demand and create a cohesive and balanced community.

4.2 Retail

4.2.1 Strategy

Oldcastle is an important service centre for both those residing in the Town and in its hinterland. In order to reinforce the role of the Town Centre, retail led regeneration will be encouraged, particularly where it also provides for the promotion of tourism. In order to achieve this, the 'convenience' element and attractiveness of shopping will need to be enhanced, including improvements to parking and traffic calming measures. This will be necessary to ensure that expenditure leakage from Oldcastle does not increase, particularly for top-up shopping and lower/middle order comparison goods.

4.2.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL LU 11	To encourage the maintenance of a compact mixed-use Town Centre in Oldcastle, with a balance of uses that promotes movement and activity throughout the day and evening.
POL LU 12	To maintain existing commercial and retail development in the Town Centre and encourage the upgrading and expansion of such facilities to meet local need.
POL LU 13	To encourage the active use of first floors within the Town Centre for commercial and retail uses in addition to residential uses.
POL LU 14	To discourage non-commercial uses at ground floor level within the Town Centre and uses which detract from the historical character of the Town Centre (except where otherwise specified).
POL LU 15	To encourage environmental improvements to the public realm of the Town Centre in the form of convenient and safe pedestrian crossings and route ways, landscaping developments and high standards of design and finish in commercial developments.
POL LU 16	To consolidate the Town Centre through the promotion of the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail uses in line with the provisions of the Sequential Approach. The Council will utilise the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 to encourage the refurbishment of derelict properties.
POL LU 17	To have regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005 and the Meath County Retail Strategy, 2003, in the assessment of proposals for new retail developments.
POL LU 18	To ensure the provision of new retail and commercial development is appropriate in terms of mix and scale.

POL LU 19	To discourage uses which would negatively impact on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre through the displacement of retail uses.
POL LU 20	To assess thoroughly change of use applications in the Town Centre having regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Related uses already in the immediate area; · Scale of the proposed development; · Standard of design and finish including signage.

4.2.3 Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the objective of the Council:

OBJ LU 1	To maintain and encourage independent access to the upper floors of buildings in the Town Centre.
OBJ LU 2	To improve pedestrian access to the Town Centre through footpath upgrading, provision of dished kerbs and improved grading of surfaces.
OBJ LU 3	To encourage retail and commercial uses at ground floor level in premises fronting the Square.
OBJ LU 4	To accommodate retail development on the identified opportunity sites.

4.3 Employment Uses and Economic Development

4.3.1 Strategy

Oldcastle has a history of employment focused on the manufacturing industry as evident from the existing quantum of land zoned for industrial or related uses. The majority of these lands are located north of the Town in close proximity to the existing industrial cluster. A business park has also been developed in this area with a number of sites still available. Of the 13 ha zoned for employment purposes under the previous Development Plan, c. 10 ha remains undeveloped. Having regard to the nature of the main manufacturing industries in Oldcastle, the current economic climate and the rate of growth under the previous Development Plan, the remaining c. 10 ha is deemed sufficient to meet the industrial land needs over the life of this LAP. There are thus no further lands proposed for employment purposes.

An analysis of the Census data shows that while the percentage of persons aged 15 or over classified as “at work” in Oldcastle is above the State figure, there is a reliance on manufacturing and commerce related industries in the catchment area. In 2006 c. 30% of the working population of the Oldcastle ED and c. 19% of the working population of the Hinterland Area were employed in manufacturing industries. In contrast, only c. 9% of the Oldcastle ED and c. 12% of the Hinterland Area were employed in professional services. It is a strategy of this LAP to maintain the existing manufacturing base within Oldcastle while seeking to diversify into other areas and encourage inward investment.

4.3.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL LU 21	To protect existing industries while seeking to diversify the range of employment offer in Oldcastle.
POL LU 22	To ensure sufficient, appropriately located land is zoned for industrial development.
POL LU 23	To ensure that industrial development is undertaken in line with the provision of infrastructure.
POL LU 24	To promote linkages and synergies that positively support both new and existing businesses.
POL LU 25	To promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of appropriate tourism facilities, subject to location, siting and design criteria, the protection of environmentally sensitive area and areas identified as sensitive landscapes and other planning considerations.

4.3.3 Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the objective of the Council:

OBJ LU 5	To encourage a wide range of employment uses on lands zoned E1 north of the Town.
OBJ LU 6	To discourage the locating of any further employment uses to the south of the Town immediately adjacent to established residential areas.

4.4 Education Provision

4.4.1 Strategy

The Town is served by both a national school, Gilson National School and a secondary school, St. Olivers Post Primary school. St. Olivers is a VEC school which offers a range of adult education courses outside of school hours.

Variation No. 2 of the CDP allows for 200 no. additional households up to 2013 as Phase 1 development. Subject to infrastructural capacity it can be calculated that a maximum of 100 no. additional residential units could be accommodated between 2013-2015 having regard to current growth rates and construction timelines. At 2.99 persons per household¹⁵ this is a maximum increase in population of 897 no. persons. According to Departmental Guidelines 12% of the population at any given time is of primary school going age while 8.5% is of post primary school going age. This results in the possible addition of 108 no. primary school pupils and 76 post-primary school pupils.

At primary level the Department of Education states that each classroom will have 24 no. pupils thus an additional 4.5 classrooms may be required based on projected population figures. At present there are 281 no. pupils in Gilson National School which has a capacity of 240-250 no. pupils. The school is thus over capacity by 30-40 no. pupils and requires 2 no. additional classrooms to accommodate the current numbers. There is thus an overall possible requirement for 6.5 no. additional classrooms over the lifetime of this LAP. A school of this size would require a 1.9 ha site. Having regard to the location of the school within the curtilage of a protected structure an additional 1.9 ha is not available at this location. Lands have thus been zoned to the north east of the existing school which can accommodate a new school of this size and which also allows for future expansion. This land is adjacent to community and recreational facilities thus encouraging multi-campus use.

At secondary level there are no set standards which can be applied to calculate pupil to classroom ratios given the range of subjects offered and the different requirements of each. At present St. Olivers Post Primary School is being extended with the addition of an additional 4 no. classrooms which should meet requirements to 2012. This LAP thus ensures that lands are zoned to provide for expansion beyond 2012 if required. There is also enough land zoned G1, to provide for community, recreational and educational, to accommodate additional recreational pitches which were identified as required by St. Olivers.

The utilisation of existing school facilities and encouragement of multi-campus style school facilities is also a strategy of this Plan.

4.4.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL LU 26	To encourage multi-campus style school facilities.
POL LU 27	To support the clustering of educational, recreational, community and open space facilities where possible.
POL LU 28	To encourage the opening up of school facilities to the wider community provided it does not negatively effect existing amenity, traffic or the environment.
POL LU 29	To encourage linkages between existing educational facilities and existing and proposed community facilities through shared usage.

¹⁵ As per the Census 2006.

4.4.3 Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the objective of the Council:

OBJ LU 7	To co-operate with the Department of Education and Science in relation to matters relating to the future expansion of St Olivers Post Primary School and the siting and development of a new National School.
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OBJ LU 8	To support the provision of a playing pitch on lands zoned for educational purposes adjacent to St. Olivers Post Primary School.
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4.5 Amenity Open Space

4.5.1 Strategy

Amenity open space within the Town includes *inter alia*, a Public Park, Pitch and Putt course and Children's Playground. It is a strategy of this LAP to ensure that existing public amenity open spaces are maintained to a high standard while ensuring that privately developed amenity spaces also meet a high standard.

There are a number of notable trees within the Town which function as wildlife habitat, provide visual relief and are an important visual amenity. This Plan recognises three and promote a fourth of these tree groupings as "green gateways" to the Town which provide a visual frame to the main entrances and contribute to the character of the Town.

The Council will use their powers under Planning Legislation to preserve and maintain existing rights of way which contribute to amenity.

4.5.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL LU 30	To protect and maintain existing areas of public open space.
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POL LU 31	To facilitate the development of a range of usable play areas within existing developments and apply the CDP standards regarding same to proposed residential developments.
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POL LU 32	Developments that directly, or indirectly, harm the integrity of the Lough Sheelin SPA and the Lough Bane Candidate SAC, or which conflicts with the conservation objectives of these sites, will not be permitted.
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POL LU 33	To preserve and extend/enhance for the common good all existing public rights of way which contribute to amenity and to create new rights of way in the interests of amenity.
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POL LU 34	To protect, preserve and ensure effective management of trees and groups of trees considered to be of special amenity value and to prepare Tree Preservation Orders where considered appropriate.
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4.5.3 Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the objective of the Council:

OBJ LU 9	To ensure the preservation and protection of Gilson Park and to integrate Gilson Park and other open spaces within Oldcastle through an emphasis on pedestrian links.
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OBJ LU 10	To ensure the safety and security of the Fair Green Playground.
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OBJ LU 11	To improve links between the Town Centre and surrounding public open space areas.
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OBJ LU 12	To protect and encourage more intensive use of Gilson Park and other open spaces.
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OBJ LU 13	To maintain and protect existing trees and hedgerows where possible and facilitate a fourth "green gateway" to the north of the Town.
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4.6 Community Facilities

4.6.1 Strategy

As noted in Section 2.4 above, the Town of Oldcastle boasts a wide range of community facilities, including a Health Centre, Garda Station, Library, Credit Union, Gym and Fire Station, and is home to GAA teams, a soccer team, an athletic club, basketball club and a Tidy Towns Committee.

The core aim of this LAP is to make provision for high quality community facilities at appropriate locations and to encourage linkages between these new facilities and existing facilities. This connection is proposed through the redevelopment of opportunity site No. 5, which will form a new street and provide a linkage between the existing educational area to the west through to Gilson Park and to the community, recreational and open space zoned lands to the east. This will not only allow for multi-campus use but will also aid in the regeneration of the Cloughan Street area.

4.6.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL LU 35	To protect and maintain existing community facilities within the Town.
POL LU 36	To make appropriate provision for land use requirements for future community and recreational development including multi-use and clustering of such facilities.
POL LU 37	To encourage linkages between existing and new community and recreational facilities.
POL LU 38	To encourage the provision of quality affordable playschool and crèche facilities.
POL LU 39	To ensure that community and recreational facilities, including the Upper River Inny to the south of the Town, are linked into the surrounding environment through the provision of safe and high quality pedestrian and cycle links.
POL LU 40	To promote the development of multi-functional facilities which are flexible in design allowing for optimum usage.

4.6.3 Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the objective of the Council:

OBJ LU 14	To co-operate with the relevant statutory, voluntary and community groups in the provision of a multi-purpose Community Centre and an active recreational space at an appropriate location within the Town.
OBJ LU 15	To ensure that future residential growth in the Town will provide additional, or improve the quality and capacity of existing, leisure facilities.
OBJ LU 16	To seek the inclusion of bring banks, bottle banks or other appropriate recycling facilities as part of overall developments, with the sites made available to the Local Authority at the developer's own expense and maintained by the Council or its agents.

4.7 Zoning

4.7.1 Introduction

The CDP sets the overall criteria for zoning land, particularly residential land under Variation No. 2. This LAP addressed the land use zoning of lands within the designated boundary of Oldcastle. The purpose of this land use zoning is two-fold:

- It prescribes acceptable and non acceptable uses on particular lands and indicates the County Council's objectives for lands within Oldcastle.
- It protects the built heritage of Oldcastle by reducing potential conflict between new and existing uses and incompatible land uses.

Land use zoning can provide an overall indication of the acceptability of certain uses in particular areas. Regard will be had to development control standards and strategic policies set out in the County Development Plan and this LAP when assessing proposed developments. As part of such assessment other factors which include *inter alia* height, massing, density, services availability, visual amenity, will be examined and taken into account when establishing if the proposed development conforms to the proper planning and sustainable development of an area

4.7.2 Land Use Zones

The zonings contained in this LAP have been informed by the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, and the previous Written Statement and Detailed Objectives and accompanying Urban Detail Map for Oldcastle.

Seven land use zones are utilised in this Plan, see Table No. 9 below. Each zoning objective is represented on the zoning matrix by a letter(s) and on the Zoning Map (1) by a letter(s) and colour. The land use zones have been informed by activities within Oldcastle and are proposed as general guidelines and are not intended to be exhaustive.

4.7.3 Zoning Designations

The Zoning designations of this LAP are in accordance with the designations assigned in the County Development Plan, 2007-2013, Table No. 7a of the Settlement Strategy¹⁶. The designations are as follows:

¹⁶ Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, Pages 61-63.

Table No. 9 Land Use Zone Objectives

Use Zone Objective	Use Zone Objective
A1	To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
A2	To provide for new residential communities and community facilities and protect the amenities of existing residential areas in accordance with an approved framework plan.
B1	To protect and enhance the special physical and social character of existing town and village centres and to provide for new and improved Town Centre facilities and uses.
B2	To provide for major new Town Centre activities in accordance with approved framework plans and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
B3	To protect, provide and improve local shopping facilities in order to create and retain a vibrant and sustainable neighbourhood centre to serve primarily local needs.
C1	To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses in existing mixed use central business areas.
E1	To provide for industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
F1	To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
G1	To provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities.

4.7.4 Zoning Matrix

In Relation to the zoning matrix the County Development Plan states the following:

“Uses other than the primary use for which an area is zoned may be permitted provided they are not in conflict with the primary use zoning objective. The Zoning Matrix illustrates the acceptability or unacceptability in principle of various uses for each of the zoning objectives. The land use zoning matrix is intended to provide guidance to potential developers. It is not intended to supplant the normal planning process. An indication that a proposal would be ‘permitted in principle’ from the matrix should in no way be taken to imply a granting of permission, or indeed that a planning application may be necessarily successful. Individual applications are a matter for the Planning Authority to decide and the final decision rests with them, taking into consideration the merits of individual cases and circumstances that may be relevant at a specific time or at a specific location. The matrix relates to land use only and important factors 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 location¹⁷.”

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, it is still subject to the normal planning process including policies and objectives outlined in the Plan.

¹⁷ Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, Pg 65.

O = Are Open for Consideration

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

X = Will Not Normally be Acceptable

Development which is classified as not normally being acceptable in a particular zone is one which will not be entertained by the Planning Authority except in exceptional circumstances. This may be due to its perceived effect on existing and permitted uses, its incompatibility with the policies and objectives contained in this Plan or the fact that it may be inconsistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The expansion of established and approved uses not conforming to use zone objectives will be considered on their merits.

The zoning matrix for this LAP is shown in Table No. 10 below.

Table No. 10 Zoning Matrix

Use Classes	A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	C1	E1	F1	G1
A.T.M. (In Commercial Premises)	A	A	A	A	A	A	X	X	X
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Adverts	O	O	A	A	O	O	A	X	X
Outdoor Advertising Structures	X	X	O	O	O	O	A	O	X
Agri - Business	X	X	O	O	X	O	A	X	X
Amusement Arcade	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
B & B	A	A	A	A	X	A	X	X	X
Bank / Financial Institution	X	O	A	A	O	X	X	X	X
Betting Office	X	O	A	A	O	O	X	X	X
Bring Banks	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	O	O
Car Park (Commercial)	X	X	O	A	X	O	O	X	X
Caravan Park	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Car Dismantler / Scrap Yard	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Cash & Carry	X	X	O	A	X	O	A	X	X
Casual Trading	X	X	A	A	X	O	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A
Church	X	O	A	A	A	A	X	O	A
Cinema	X	X	A	A	X	O	X	X	A
Community Facility / Centre	O	A	A	A	A	A	X	O	A
Conference Centre	X	O	O	A	X	O	X	X	X
C & D Waste Recycling Centre	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X
Crèche / Childcare Facility	O	A	A	A	A	A	O	X	A
Cultural Facility / Use	O	O	A	A	O	A	X	O	A
Dance Hall / Night Club	X	X	A	A	X	O	X	X	X
Doctors / Dentists*	O	O	A	A	A	A	X	X	O
Drive Through Restaurants	X	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	X
Education	O	O	A	A	A	A	X	X	A
Energy Installation	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Enterprise Centre	X	O	O	O	X	O	A	X	X
Fuel Depot - Domestic	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Fuel Depot - Petroleum Products	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Funeral Home	X	O	A	A	X	O	X	X	A
Garden Centre	X	X	X	O	X	O	A	X	X
Guest House	O	A	A	A	X	A	X	X	X
Halting Site/Group Housing	O	A	X	X	X	O	X	X	O
Health Centre	O	O	A	A	A	A	X	X	A
Heavy Goods Vehicle Car Park	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Home Based Economic Activities	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Hospital	X	O	X	A	X	A	X	X	A
Hostel	X	O	A	A	X	A	X	X	X
Hotel / Motel	X	O	A	A	X	A	X	X	X
Industry – General	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Industry – Light	X	O	X	X	X	O	A	X	X
Leisure / Recreation	X	O	A	A	O	O	X	O	A
Library	X	A	A	A	A	A	X	X	A
Motor Sales / Repair	X	X	O	O	X	O	A	X	X

Offices <100m ²	X	O	A	A	A	A	X	X	O
Offices 100 to 1000 m ²	X	X	A	A	O	A	X	X	X
Offices >1000m ²	X	X	A	A	O	A	O	X	X
Open Space	A	A	A	A	A	A	O	A	A
Park and Ride	X	X	X	O	X	O	A	X	X
Petrol Station	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	X
Plant & Tool Hire	X	X	X	O	X	O	A	X	X
Public House	X	O	A	A	O	A	X	X	X
Public Services	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Civic & Amenity Recycling Facility	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	A
Refuse Transfer Station	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Residential	A	A	O	O	O	A	X	X	X
Residential Institution	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	X	O
Restaurant / Café	X	X	A	A	A	A	O	X	O
Retail Warehouse	X	X	O	O	X	X	O	X	X
Retirement Home	O	A	X	X	X	O	X	X	A
Science & Technology Based Enterprise	X	X	O	O	X	O	O	X	X
Shop - Local **	O	A	A	A	A	A	O	X	X
Shop - Major	X	X	A	A	A	O	X	X	X
Shopping Centre	X	X	A	A	X	X	X	X	X
Sports Facilities	O	O	O	O	X	O	X	A	A
Take-Away	X	X	A	A	O	O	X	X	X
Telecommunication Structures	X	X	A	A	O	O	A	O	O
Third Level Educational Institution	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	A
Tourism Complex	X	X	A	A	X	A	X	A	A
Transport Depot	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Veterinary Surgery	O*	O*	A	A	O	O	X	X	X
Warehouse	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	X
Water Services ***	A	A	A	A	O	A	A	A	A
Wholesale Warehousing	X	X	O	O	X	O	A	X	X

* Where this use would be ancillary to the use of the overall dwelling as a normal place of residence by the user of the office.

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

*** Refers to public utility installations.

5.0 TRANSPORTATION AND MOVEMENT



5.1 Transportation and Movement Strategy

The transport vision for Oldcastle is to ensure that, where necessary, the use of private vehicles is facilitated in an efficient and equitable manner whilst encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport including pedestrian and cycle movement.

In order to achieve this vision it will be necessary to provide for the improvement in parking and traffic movement within Oldcastle Town Centre. On-street parking, particularly long-stay parking, should be restricted where appropriate and directed toward existing car parks near the Town Centre.

Alternative and more sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling, will be encouraged by ensuring a safe and enjoyable environment is provided for these modes of travel.

5.2 Public Transport Strategy

Public transport in Oldcastle is limited to the Bus Éireann, route no. 188 that operates three times daily between Oldcastle and Kells, via Virginia. Improvements to this service could have the effect of encouraging the use of public transport for some journeys.

5.2.1 Policy

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL TM 1	To encourage the use of public transport where appropriate.
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5.3 Pedestrian and Cycle Movement

5.3.1 Strategy

An increase in pedestrian and cycle movements in Oldcastle would greatly benefit the settlement by reducing the number of trips made by private car and thereby reducing demand for parking spaces in the Town, improving local air quality and improving the health and wellbeing of the residents. Given the compact nature of the Town, much of its inhabitants are within walking distance of the Town Centre and thus there is potential for realising this strategy.

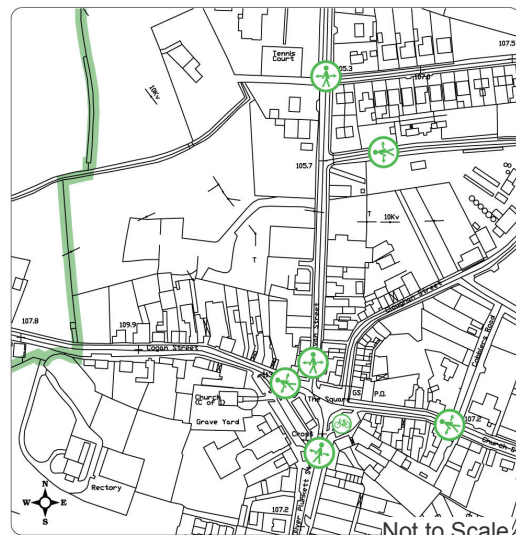
The improvement of the pedestrian and cycle network in the Town, making it attractive, convenient and safe to use, will encourage a shift from car journey's to pedestrian or cycle journeys. Improvements would include the provision of a well laid out and comprehensive footpath network, convenient pedestrian crossings, improved street lighting, cycle lanes and bicycle racks. Due consideration should be given to users with disabilities when providing an improved footpath network.

5.3.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL TM 2	To promote pedestrian movement in Oldcastle through the improvement of the footpath network and the provision of pedestrian crossings at convenient locations.
POL TM 3	To promote cycle movement in Oldcastle through the provision of cycle lanes and bicycle racks where appropriate.

Plate No. 10 Proposed Pedestrian Crossings



5.4 Vehicular Traffic

5.4.1 Strategy

The road network in the Town is dominated by the regional routes R195 and R154 that meet at the cross roads in the Town Centre. The R195, running north to south through the Town, is the busiest of the two roads. The flow of traffic moving along these roads is often hampered by cars making parking manoeuvres in the Town Centre. It is important to find a compromise between the free flow of traffic along these regional roads and the safety and convenience of Town Centre users. This can be best achieved through the control of the speed of traffic through the Town, the provision of convenient pedestrian crossings and the proper management of parking in the Town Centre.

5.4.2 Policy

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL TM 4	To ensure that traffic is reduced to a safe speed before entering Oldcastle.
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5.5 Car Parking

5.5.1 Strategy

Car parking is a problem in Oldcastle at present and should be addressed at the earliest possible juncture. Excessive on-street parking is disrupting the flow of traffic through the Town and is inhibiting access to the Town Centre. Meanwhile existing car parks are currently underutilised. Improving the pedestrian links between the Town Square and the car parks, particularly the Fair Green car park, would help to encourage usage of this car park and alleviate pressure for parking from the Town Centre. In conjunction with better organised on-street parking, this would ensure that traffic can pass easily through Oldcastle, whilst shoppers can easily access the Town Centre.

5.5.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL TM 5	To adopt and implement a parking plan for Oldcastle that would promote use of the existing car parks and ordered on-street parking where appropriate.
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POL TM 6	To implement the car parking standards as set out in Section 10.6 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2007 – 2013.
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5.6 Road Network

5.6.1 Strategy

A key element to achieving the proper planning and sustainable development of Oldcastle is ensuring that a proper road network is provided to allow access to potential development lands.

5.6.2 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL TM 7	To ensure that a suitable road network is provided to allow for ease of movement of traffic within Oldcastle both now and in the future.
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POL TM 8	To provide for the upgrading of regional roads within the LAP area.
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5.7 People with Disabilities

5.7.1 Strategy

Accessibility for people with disability should be considered when deciding the position of street furniture, dished footpaths at junctions, tactile paving surfaces and pedestrian crossings. Car parking provision should be provided for people with disabilities both in the case of on-street parking and in designated car parks and should be located in the most convenient locations for ease of use. The minimum criteria for such parking provisions are detailed in Building for Everyone (2002), published by the Disability Authority (2002), and have been adopted as part of the Meath County Development Plan, 2007 - 2013.

5.8 Specific Objectives

In order to achieve the above policies and the policies set out in the County Development Plan it is an objective of the Council:

OBJ TM 1	To provide for footpaths and street lighting on Cobblers Road.
OBJ TM 2	To provide for footpaths leading from Cloughan Street to Gilson Park, via the entrance to Fair Green Car Park.
OBJ TM 3	To provide for additional street lighting at the Southern end of Cloughan Street.
OBJ TM 4	To facilitate a new street linking Cavan Street, Cloughan Street and the Fair Green as indicated on the Specific Local Objectives Map accompanying this LAP.
OBJ TM 5	To provide for footpath improvement and additional street lighting at the Northern end of Cloughan Street.
OBJ TM 6	To provide for a footpath and additional street lighting to connect Mountdutton Close to Cavan Street.
OBJ TM 7	To facilitate a new street linking Cavan Street and Cogan Street to the west of the Town Centre to provide appropriate access to development lands.
OBJ TM 8	To extend the footpath on the southern side of Cogan Street to connect Loughcrew residential estate to the footpath network.
OBJ TM 9	To preserve access points for future development lands.
OBJ TM 10	To provide pedestrian crossings at points specified on the Specific Local Objectives Map accompanying this LAP.

OBJ MP 11	To provide a walking route to the north-east of Oldcastle as specified on the Specific Local Objectives Map accompanying this LAP.
OBJ MP 12	To provide cycle routes where possible.
OBJ MP 13	To provide cycle stands at points specified on the Specific Local Objectives Map accompanying this LAP.
OBJ MP 14	To extend the 50 and 60 km/h speed limit zones.
OBJ MP 15	To facilitate additional footpath and public lighting provision on the Kells Road over the life of the Local Area Plan.

6.0 BUILT HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

6.1 Built Heritage

The architectural heritage of the Oldcastle in conjunction with its archaeological potential and existing vistas contributes to the Town's special interest and enhances its tourist function while also impacting on the future growth and development of the settlement.

The policies and objectives contained in this Section of the LAP are in accordance with the provisions of the following:

- Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).
- Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2004.
- Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, 1999.
- Meath County Development Plan, 2007.

The County Survey carried out by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) in 2004¹⁸, has also been examined.

6.1.1 Strategy

It is a strategy of this LAP to protect Oldcastle's existing architectural and natural heritage through the correct application of appropriate policy tools including its Architectural Conservation Area designation and its extensive list of Protected Structures (See Appendix C).

6.1.2 Policy

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL HER 1	To protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Oldcastle and to ensure that new development makes a positive contribution to the historic character of the Town.
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6.2 Protected Structures

The Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, places 58 no. structures within the Development Boundary of Oldcastle on the Record of Protected Structures. Unless otherwise stated a protected structure on the Record of Protected Structures (hereinafter RPS) includes the interior of the structure, the land lying within the curtilage of the structure and any other structures and their interiors lying within the curtilage in addition to all fixtures and fittings which form part of the interior or exterior of such structures.

¹⁸ With the exception of Navan Town which was published in 2003.

A review of the Record of Protected Structures as detailed in the County Development Plan was undertaken including a review of the NIAH Survey of Oldcastle. The structures on the RPS have been re-assessed in the context of the review of the Oldcastle LAP to ensure that the strategy outlined above in respect of the built heritage and archaeology can be achieved over the lifetime of the LAP. It is not proposed to increase the current number of protected structures within Oldcastle but it is recommended that the following structures are altered or removed from the RPS¹⁹:

1. Oldcastle Fire Station (MH009-215)

It is considered that this structure is of limited architectural merit and does not rate strongly enough in any of the special categories of interest as set down in the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). It is a typical 1960's fire station of limited scale and technical interest and affording protective status to it may inhibit the future development of critical community facilities.

2. Castle Cinema (MH009-223)

The social interest of the structure as a former entertainment venue is noted, however, only the front façade of Castle Cinema makes a contribution to the streetscape of Oldcastle and requires protection. The remaining façades of the structure are of minimal architectural interest and it would be inappropriate to continue to conserve the site and its environs.

3. Masonic Hall (MH009-238)

In proposing to remove Masonic Hall from the RPS, it was considered that this modest building had limited architectural interest and that the carved stone wall plaque was the only significant feature of the main façade excepting the simple proportions of the structure.

4. Clarke's Cash and Carry (MH009-226)

A similar assessment to the Castle Cinema applies in respect of Clarke's Cash and Carry. It would be inappropriate to maintain the structure on the RPS on the basis of the front façade alone which was a typical garage design constructed in 1950. There are no fixtures or fittings, or any significant special interest to afford the building protective status.

5. Oldcastle Medical Hall (MH009-204) Terraced House

This structure has been significantly modified after the completion of the NIAH Survey in 2002 under Reg. Ref. KA20246. The implementation of this planning application resulted in an altered façade and internal works and it can no longer be held that the structure merits inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures.

All of the above structures are located within Oldcastle ACA as indicated in Meath County Development Plan, 2007. Planning Permission is required for all development within an ACA which would materially alter the external appearance of a structure. In order to achieve a balance between conserving the architectural heritage and facilitating economic growth and development within Oldcastle the structures detailed above are altered or removed from the Record of Protected Structures.

¹⁹ The Record of Protected Structures as listed in the County Development Plan remains in place unless altered under S.54 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

This measure will ensure that the requirement to provide for new uses/redeveloped sites located within the existing fabric of the Town can be delivered over the lifetime of the LAP while maintaining the overall heritage value of Oldcastle.

The amended structures on the Record of Protected Structures in respect of Oldcastle is illustrated below in Appendix C. The modifications to the Record of Protected Structures results in a reduction in the number of listings from 58 to 54. Appendix D explains the implications of a building being on the Record of Protected Structures for the public.

6.2.1 Policies

In addition to the comprehensive range of policies set out in the CDP, the Council will implement the following policies in respect of protected structures:

POL HER 2	To preserve and protect Oldcastle's built environment in terms of streetscapes, individual buildings and features of historical, architectural or artistic interest using the power vested in it by the Planning and Development Act, 2000, (as amended).
POL HER 3	To protect structures contained in the Record of Protected Structures and features that contribute to the character of Architectural Conservation Areas.
POL HER 4	It is the policy of the Planning Authority to ensure that proposals for material changes of use to Protected Structures are compatible with the essential character of the building and their setting.
POL HER 5	It is Council policy to encourage the rehabilitation, renovation and re-use of existing older buildings where appropriate, in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.
POL HER 6	It is the policy of the Council to retain historic items of street furniture wherever possible.
POL HER 7	To continue and develop the Council's advisory/educational role with regard to heritage matters and to promote awareness and understanding of architectural heritage.

6.2.2 Objective

In addition to the comprehensive range of objectives set out in the CDP, the Council will implement the following objectives in respect of protected structures:

OBJ HER 1	To review the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) as it relates to Oldcastle, and make proposals for additions, deletions and alterations as may be considered necessary for the appropriate protection of the built heritage of the Town.
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6.3 Oldcastle Architectural Conservation Area



Meath County Development Plan, 2007, designates an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in Oldcastle Town Centre which includes the principal streets of Cavan Street, Cogan Street, Church Street and Oliver Plunkett Street and incorporates most of the eighteenth and nineteenth century building fabric, the boundaries terminate where post war twentieth century development begins. The significance of structures within an ACA lies in their positive contribution to the streetscape and the character of an area and their protection relates to the external appearance of such areas or structures. The objective of the ACA designation is to guide change within an area and ensure that future development is carried out in a manner that is sympathetic to the special character of Oldcastle Town Centre.

The geographical extent of the ACA was agreed and adopted by the Planning Authority in March 2007 and the LAP has adopted the same ACA boundary. The extent of the ACA is defined as follows and illustrated on the Oldcastle Heritage Map:

- To the west, the ACA encompasses the streetscape on both sides of Cogan Street as far as the former RIC Barracks (beside the gates to the former Rectory), this house terminates the view from the Town looking west.
- To the north, the area includes a short stretch of Cavan Street, and a short stretch of Cloughan Street as it turns northeast.
- To the east, the boundary follows Church Street terminating at Cobblers Road on the north side, while extending further east on the south side of the street to include terraced and detached houses as far as the modern housing estate, Loughcrew View but falling short of the Gilson Endowed School and St. Oliver Plunkett Memorial Church.
- To the south, the ACA incorporates a substantial terrace to the south east as far as a pair of early twentieth century structures, the boundary is shorter at its south western boundary, this area of the boundary is defined by the beginning of the twentieth century fabric.

Appendix E examines the key characteristics of the Oldcastle ACA under the following headings:

- ACA Street Pattern
- ACA Building Types
- ACA Materials

Implications of the Architectural Conservation Area for the public and works requiring planning permission are also outlined in Appendix E.

6.3.1 Policies

In addition to the comprehensive range of policies set out in the CDP, the Council will implement the following policies in respect of the ACA:

POL HER 8	To support and encourage the refurbishment of buildings within the ACA in accordance with good conservation practice.
POL HER 9	To retain where practical any structure which contributes in a positive manner to the character of the ACA. Demolition of buildings that contribute to the character of the ACA will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
POL HER 10	To have regard to the recommendations contained in the ACA Character Appraisal.

6.3.2 Specific Policies

In addition to the above policies and the comprehensive range of policies set out in the CDP, specific policies are set out below to provide guidance on key issues arising in relation to development within the Town Centre.

Replacement Buildings

POL HER 11	Where replacement buildings are deemed acceptable to the Planning Authority, new buildings should take into account existing plots, where possible, in order to retain the existing grain, character and vibrancy of the Town Centre.
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Refurbishment / Alteration of Existing Buildings

POL HER 12	Retention of existing materials is preferable to replacement or alternatively as agreed with the Planning Department of Meath County Council.
POL HER 13	While not generally encouraged, where breaking through internally between adjacent buildings is required in the ACA, both fronts are to maintain an active function. Clear vertical distinction is required between distinct buildings.

POL HER 14	Alteration to the existing opening sizes and proportions, or for additional openings in traditional buildings within ACAs will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where they do not detract from the character of the area.
POL HER 15	External roller shutters will not be permitted within the ACA. Alternative methods of security should be used.

Materials and Roofscape

POL HER 16	Where new buildings or alteration is proposed at roof level, consideration should be given to the effect of the proposals on the character of the area with regard to roof shape, pitch, angle and length, and eaves details, such that they are in keeping with the character of Oldcastle ACA.
POL HER 17	Telecommunications equipment, ductwork, lift shafts, or other roof plant require planning permission. These should be sensitively located and must not adversely affect the character of the building or where appropriate the roofscape of the ACA.

Building Facades

POL HER 18	The stripping of render to expose the underlying stone is unacceptable generally and particularly within the ACA.
POL HER 19	Re-pointing of brick buildings require a method statement to be submitted to the Council as part of the planning application and may require a sample panel for assessment by the Conservation Officer.

Overhead Services

POL HER 20	The Council will facilitate where possible and support any initiatives to underground overhead services within the ACA.
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External Lighting

POL HER 21	All external lighting of buildings, trees and other feature illumination should be designed such that it does not contribute to general lighting, result in light pollution and negatively impact on the general rural character of the Town.
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Advertisement and Signage

POL HER 22	All external advertisements within the ACA require planning permission which should include details of the impact on the character of the building to which they are attached, on adjacent buildings and on the ACA in general.
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Shopfronts

POL HER 23	Traditional shopfronts should be repaired rather than replaced, with materials matching the original. The removal of existing traditional shopfronts will only be considered in exceptional cases. The Planning Authority may request a method statement with regard to extensive or complicated repair work to shopfronts in advance of works commencing.
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Application Assessment

POL HER 24	<p>In assessing development proposals within the Architectural Conservation Area the Planning Authority will have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Architectural Conservation Area in terms of the height, and massing of built forms, and the compatibility of design, materials, colour and finishes; (b) The impact of the proposed development on the character and integrity of the area and the approaches thereto, the Planning Authority will promote compatible uses within compatible forms of infill development; (c) The need to retain important architectural and townscape elements such as shopfronts, sash windows, gutters, down pipes and decorative plasterwork etc.
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6.4 Archaeological Heritage

There are two areas of archaeological potential that are also listed on the Record of Monuments and Places located within the functional area of Oldcastle LAP. These designations indicate that buried remains may be in existence at these sites, however, the full archaeological significance or interest of a particular site may be impossible to determine on the basis of features visible on its surface alone, if they exist. It is the objective of this LAP to continue to protect these sites.

1. St. Brides Church of Ireland (Sites and Monuments Record Number ME009-018)

This record incorporates the site and environs of the modern day site of St. Brides Church which is located within Oldcastle ACA. The National Monuments Service provides the following information on the structure as derived from the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Meath, 1987:

"Dropping's Visitation Book 1682-5 notes that the church was in ruins in 1641"

The presence of the disc-headed cross outside the Church is also noted.

2. Castle-Motte and Bailey (Sites and Monuments Record Number ME009-024)

This record is located to the south west of Oldcastle Town Centre but outside the ACA. The National Monuments Service provides the following information on the structure as derived from the published 'Archaeological Inventory of County Meath, 1987:

“Flat topped mound of earth (diam. of top 13m, diam. of base 25m, H 3m) with raised crescent-shaped bailey (W 16m) W- ENE”

It is the policy of the LAP to reaffirm the importance of the above sites as areas of archaeological potential and to require that any development proposals proximate to the sites submit a full Archaeology Assessment prior to the commencement of development.

6.4.1 Policies

In addition to the comprehensive range of policies set out in the CDP, the Council will implement the following policies in respect of Archaeology Heritage:

POL HER 25	To protect archaeological sites and monuments (including their setting) as recorded on the RMP or newly discovered sub-surface archaeological remains.
POL HER 26	To ensure that full consideration is given to the protection of archaeological heritage when undertaking, approving or authorising development in order to avoid unnecessary conflict between development and the protection of archaeological heritage.
POL HER 27	To favour the preservation <i>in situ</i> of archaeological remains or objects and their settings.
POL HER 28	To protect historical burial grounds within Oldcastle and encourage their maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.

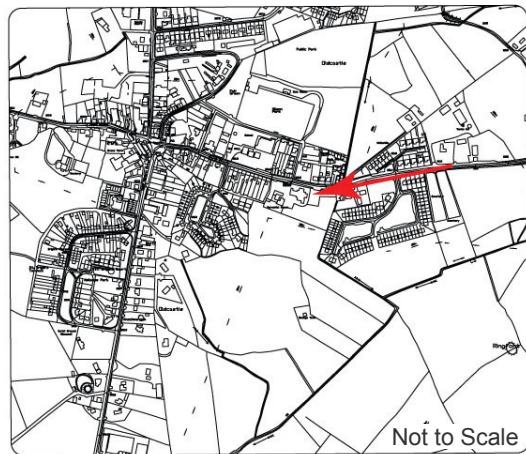
6.5 Views and Vistas

Oldcastle's townscape comprises a number of key vistas that are visually prominent on most of the approach roads entering the Town. The predominance of the market-house and limestone high cross in the Town Centre of the Market Square represents a key vista within the Town of Oldcastle. As mentioned above, the square is located on an elevated position within the Town and therefore there is a steep incline on all of the approach roads entering into the Town Centre where the market-house acts as an imposing feature. These vistas are framed by landmark buildings, the majority of which are ecclesiastical monuments and historic buildings. The most important of these views is the eastern approach to the Town and should, therefore, be protected:

1. View No. 1

This view is located on the approach to Oldcastle on the R154 where Saint Brigid's Roman Catholic Church on Chapel Street frames the view owing to a slight curve on the road. The steeple of the church pierces the skyline and creates an attractive image on entering Oldcastle from the east.

Plate No. 11 View No. 1



There are a number of wider views of the Town from the surrounding landscape that lie outside of the Plan area that should also be considered in respect of applications for development. These include views of the skyline of the town with the prominent form of the two churches dominating the skyline. The views of these churches should also be protected.

6.5.1 Objective

In addition to the comprehensive range of objectives set out in the CDP, the Council will implement the following objective in respect of views and vistas:

OBJ HER 2	It is a specific objective of the Council to maintain the views and vistas illustrated in Plate No. 11 whilst also allowing for proper planning and orderly development.
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7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE

As set out in Section 3.2, the overall strategy for infrastructure provision in Oldcastle is to resolve the current infrastructural deficits within the LAP period. The Water Services Investment Programme currently outlines a number of priorities for Oldcastle that are aimed at resolving the issues outlined in Section 2.9 of this Plan. Future development is predicated on the provision of water services with priority given to employment generating and community uses.

7.1 Water Supply

Water supply is a critical issue in Oldcastle, with current supply issues likely to inhibit growth over the lifetime of the Plan. Proposed works to the Oldcastle / Kells supply network will assist in alleviating some of the pressure on the Lough Bane source, although any spare capacity is likely to be diverted to Kells. A programme for upgrading the Oldcastle supply network is currently at the early stages of planning and it is expected that this will be implemented over the lifetime of this Plan.

7.1.1 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL INF 1	To utilise the existing water supply in an efficient and fair manner in the best interests of the sustainable development of Oldcastle.
POL INF 2	To reduce leakage and wastage from the water supply.
POL INF 3	To implement the Water Conservation Programme as set out in the CDP.
POL INF 4	To augment the existing water supply in accordance with the current Water Services Infrastructure Programme as finances permit.
POL INF 5	To encourage the use of grey water technologies in order to reduce the overall demand for water in Oldcastle.

7.2 Wastewater

The proposed wastewater treatment scheme has a stage 1 capacity of 3,500 p.e. with a potential stage 2 capacity of 5,250 p.e., although there are no immediate plans at present to go to this stage 2 capacity. The existing network is due to be upgraded in advance of this infrastructure becoming operational. An application for a Discharge Licence is to be lodged with EPA in early 2009 with the granting of the licence expected in late 2009.

7.2.1 Policies

In addition to the comprehensive range of policies set out in the CDP, the Council will implement the following policies in respect of wastewater:

POL INF 6	To provide an adequate waste water collection and treatment system to serve existing and future population in accordance with the projections in Table No. 6, Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan, the Water Framework Directive 2000 and the Water Services Investment Programme as finances permit.
POL INF 7	To restrict the development of temporary treatment systems to serve private developments, save where they may be used in an integrated fashion for a defined timeframe.

7.3 Surface Water Disposal

Surface water disposal from new developments will not be allowed into the wastewater collection system. Instead surface water will be treated or attenuated and disposed of by other means that will not cause flooding or surcharging of existing rivers and streams. With regard to pollution, this will include the use of silt traps and petrol interceptors, hydro brakes and other pollution control methods.

7.3.1 Policy

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL INF 8	To encourage the use of SuDS in private developments.
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7.4 Flooding

Recognising the need for an integrated, planned and sustainable approach to flooding, having regard to its impacts on and link to development, the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) addresses this issue. The First Schedule of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) indicates that Development Plans can include objectives regulating, restricting or controlling development in areas at risk of flooding (whether inland or coastal), erosion and other natural hazards.

7.4.1 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL INF 9	Development should not itself be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding nor should it cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations. Development that is sensitive to the effects of flooding will generally not be permitted in flood prone or marginal areas.
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POL INF 10	To require all significant developments impacting on flood risk areas to provide a Flood Impact Assessment, to identify potential loss of flood plain storage and how it would be offset in order to minimise impact on the river flood regime.
POL INF 11	Identify areas that are at risk of flooding to ensure that any development at such areas comply with the Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities, "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, September 2008 (or its replacement).

7.5 Waste Management

Waste will be managed in accordance with the provisions of the Waste Management Plans for County Meath/North East Region, an integrated waste management approach which utilises a range of waste treatment options to deliver effective and efficient waste services and ambitious recycling and recovery targets; in this regard, there is an existing bring bank at the eastern approach to the Town. In assessing planning applications, regard will be had to the waste produced by proposed developments including the nature and amount produced and the proposed method of disposal. Developments should ensure that production / disposal methods do not give rise to environmental pollution, result in undue loss of amenity or be detrimental to public health.

7.6 Telecommunications and Broadband

A Broadband Strategy for Meath County Council has been published and the Local Authority is determined to take advantage of the supportive position that the Government has adopted to ensure that broadband infrastructure is made widely available throughout the County. Broadband is available in Oldcastle through a Group Scheme.

POL INF 12	It is the policy of the Council to implement the Broadband Strategy and to continue to support the delivery of Broadband in Oldcastle.
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7.7 Electricity Networks

Electricity supply has not been identified as a constraint on development in the area.

8.0 DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN STANDARDS

8.1 Introduction

The standards set out in this Section are grounded on Chapter 10 of the Meath County Council Development Plan, 2007-2013. Furthermore, these standards have been informed by the guidance outlined in the Residential Density Guidelines, 1999, the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2008 and its companion document the Urban Design Manual, 2008. These standards are designed to act as a guide to the public in making an acceptable planning application to the Planning Authority and should be read in conjunction with the Development Standards contained in the County Development Plan.

8.2 General Design Standards

This LAP and the County Development Plan seek to provide a high quality built environment for both existing and prospective inhabitants of the Town. The Council will, therefore, require that all development proposals, including extensions to existing buildings, be of a high standard of design and layout. Development proposals will be expected to meet all of the criteria set out in Table No. 11 below.

Table No. 11 General Design Standards

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Must respond to local context, scale and character, in terms of siting, density, massing, the balance of solid to void, height, appearance, plot ratios, building lines and materials. In addition details of walls, gates, landscaping and paving will also be required. ii) Buildings and spaces should be designed to be permeable, legible, safe and respectful of amenities associated with adjoining properties. iii) Respect and enhance the Town Centre's distinctive character and historic environment. iv) Should be imaginative and visually attractive. v) Should not detract from the existing streetscape and/or landscape and should respect important views, landmarks or landscape features. vi) Space surrounding buildings should be utilised to provide opportunities to create attractive settings with hard or soft landscaping. vii) Relationship with existing buildings should allow for adequate daylight and sunlight to penetrate in and between buildings. viii) Provide distinctive exemplary quality contemporary architecture in key locations to provide new landmarks to reinforce the identity of the Town and improve legibility. ix) Should respect the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring buildings and those of future occupants and ensure their environments are not adversely impacted upon by noise and disturbance or by inadequate daylight, sunlight or privacy or by overshadowing. x) Should include measures that achieve sustainable design and construction methods. xi) Make best use of underutilised sites. xii) Provide active and attractive frontages to adjoining streets and spaces (active frontages add interest and vitality, blank frontages can be unattractive and detract from the character of an area). xiii) Enhance existing and proposed areas of open space provision. xiv) Permeability should be incorporated into development proposals, in particular large scale redevelopment proposals, to ensure pedestrians can access attractions and spaces easily on foot.

8.2.1 Policy

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL DS 1	The Council will require that all development proposals are accompanied by a Design Brief that demonstrates compliance with the criteria set out in 8.2 of this Plan.
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8.3 Respecting the Historic Urban Grain of the Town

Key historic buildings (such as the Churches) are positive landmarks that contribute to Oldcastle's identity, its townscape quality and legibility. It is imperative that adjoining development respects and enhances the character of such landmarks through sympathetic design, scale, massing, height and materials.

Conserving and enhancing the built environment also contributes to regeneration and sustainability objectives. Sustainable environmental quality means retaining and enhancing the high quality structures that comprise the built environment. This involves conserving and reusing buildings and ensuring that new development is attractive and designed to ensure continued and extensive use by all sections of the community. It can also contribute to regeneration by attracting businesses and generating inward investment, creating a sense of place.

8.3.1 Policy

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL DS 2	The Council promotes a scale, form and design of development adjoining protected structures and the Architectural Conservation Area that protects and enhances the heritage and urban form of the historic buildings whilst creating a distinctive sense of place.
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8.3.2 Objective

In addition to the objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the objective of the Council:

OBJ DS 1	It is an objective of the Oldcastle Local Area Plan to maintain important views and landmarks within Oldcastle.
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8.4 Landscape and Design

Landscaping is integral to assimilating new development into the landscape and in defining the character of an area. 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 space, 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.

8.4.1 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, the following policies will be pursued:

POL DS 3	The Council encourages the use of high quality landscaping as part of all development proposals, in particular large scale residential proposals and proposals impacting on sensitive landscapes and views.
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POL DS 4	All development proposals should seek to maintain and incorporate existing trees and hedgerows. Where this is not possible, justification for the removal of the vegetation should be provided to the Council as part of any planning application and this vegetation should be replaced elsewhere within the proposed development boundary.
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8.5 Urban Form

Oldcastle has a rich architectural heritage as outlined in the Architectural Heritage Section of this Plan (Chapter 6), however, much of the Town's form is diluted by suburban development and the subsequent emergence of underutilised backland plots. Whilst such development was previously acceptable and widespread throughout Ireland, changes in Irish society over the past 15 years have rendered the suburban development model redundant and fundamentally unsustainable. These suburban style layouts fail to address the street, are sometimes insular and devoid of identity, increase urban sprawl, produce segregated land uses that require significant levels of travel, result in infrastructure deficits and stifle increased densities on surrounding lands.

8.5.1 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL DS 5	The Council actively promotes development based on traditional urban towns with an active and interconnecting network of streets and spaces fronted by varied buildings of innovative design, and a mix of complementary land-uses together with primarily residential areas that are all in close proximity.
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In addition to an emphasis on high quality design, proposed developments must seek to create a distinctive sense of place that incorporates Oldcastle's history and setting. The aim is to create the ideal "place" where people feel safe and social interaction is promoted.

POL DS 6	Innovative development proposals seeking to consolidate the Town Centre and create distinct character areas, in particular through the use of backland areas in Oldcastle, will actively be encouraged by the Council.
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8.5.2 Objective

In addition to the objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the objective of the Council:

OBJ DS 2	<p>It is an objective of the Council to encourage the re-establishment of a high quality urban grain throughout the LAP area and the seamless integration of existing development into a unified urban form that supports sustainable communities. This will be achieved through seeking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensification of development at appropriate locations. • An emphasis on mixed land uses that are complementary and offer a greater diversity of land uses. • Increased accessibility to community, economic and recreational facilities. • Prioritising infrastructure provision before considering additional development. • High quality design that is innovative rather than repetitive. • The protection of amenity levels of adjoining development and the integration of new development with existing development by maximising permeability and connectivity. • The orientation of proposed buildings towards the street and areas of open space.
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8.6 Sustainability

Sustainable development is a key principle underpinning land use planning. The purpose of this Local Area Plan is to appropriately plan for the future of Oldcastle and ensure that development will not jeopardise the needs of existing and future residents of the Town. The Council seeks to promote environmental sustainability throughout the LAP area and encourages measures aimed at increasing energy efficiency and reducing environmental impacts resulting from new development. In this regard the following planning policies have been formulated:

8.6.1 Policies

In addition to the policies set out in the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, it is the policy of the Council:

POL DS 7	<p>The Council actively promotes more sustainable development throughout the LAP area by encouraging development proposals to achieve the following targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reduce overall energy use and maximise potential for renewable energy technologies. ii) Minimise waste production and promote re-use and recycling throughout the LAP area. iii) Conserve water resources by collecting, storing and recycling rainwater and using methods aimed at minimising water use. iv) Reduce the level of pollutants entering the environment arising from both existing and proposed developments. v) Maximise the use of materials from sustainable sources. vi) Ensuring high energy efficiency performance in all housing development.
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Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) comprise a wide range of measures used to attenuate water flow and reduce the level of pollutants in surface water runoff before it reaches a watercourse. SuDS can therefore reduce potential serious floods arising from storm events and protect the environment from harmful levels of pollutants.

POL DS 8

The Council encourages the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all forms of development and requires new large scale developments to incorporate SuDS as part of their development proposals.

The layout and design of buildings is integral in maximising energy efficiency and reducing environmental impacts. The sun represents the ultimate renewable energy resource and it is therefore paramount that layout and building designs are orientated towards maximising the solar gain. In addition, the sun can also be harnessed via the use of daylight, photovoltaic modules and active solar panels, thereby further reducing the environmental footprint of developments.

POL DS 9

Layout and building design of new developments should conform to the highest possible standards of energy efficiency as set out in Part L of the Building Regulations and should seek to maximise access to sunlight in order to utilise net solar gain.

Dual aspect dwellings improve the standard of living and use less energy by facilitating greater levels of sunlight penetration into habitable rooms increasing net solar gain and reducing artificial lighting usage.

POL DS 10

The Council promotes the provision of dual aspect homes as part of any proposed residential developments.

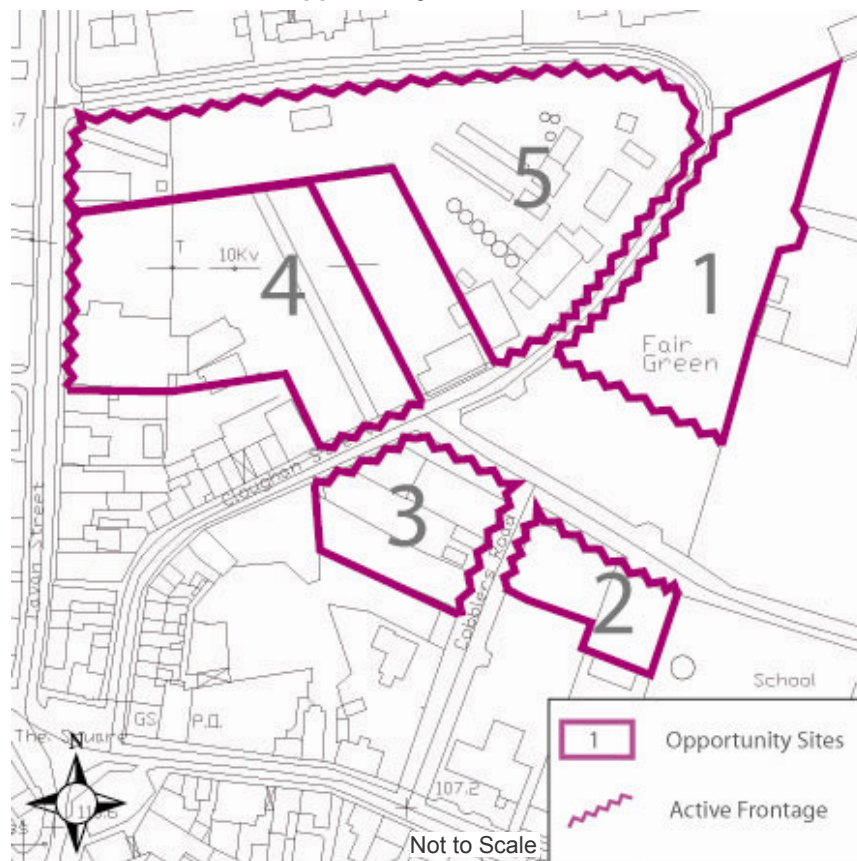
8.7 Opportunity Sites

This LAP recognises the need to capitalise on the physical assets of the Town Centre, including its historic environment and to encourage the high quality redevelopment of underutilised opportunity sites. The development of opportunity sites will enhance neighbouring premises and provide a new commercial impetus for the Town, whilst expanding on the range of attractions that the Town Centre has on offer. In addition, the redevelopment of the identified opportunity sites would allow for the enhancement and improvement on the existing urban grain of the Town, clustered around the Central Square. It will be essential that “best practice” urban design and sustainable development principles are incorporated into the proposed redevelopment of the identified opportunity sites.

The 5 no. opportunity sites illustrated on Plate No. 11 were identified owing to their location within the Town Centre and their potential for redevelopment to cater for additional Town Centre uses. It must be stressed that there is no statutory requirement for these lands to be developed within the lifespan of this Plan.

The 5 no. opportunity sites, should they be developed, will contribute to maintaining a compact Town Centre whilst also enhancing the economic vitality and viability of Oldcastle. The redevelopment of these sites is, however, key to the realisation of the strategy set out in Section 3 of this LAP. Individual design briefs have been formulated for each site with a view to providing guidance for proposed development. Overall, these opportunity sites possess potential for major new shopping and mixed-use developments that connect seamlessly with the existing streets and Town Centre while also increasing permeability within the Town.

Plate No. 12 The 5 No. Opportunity Sites within Oldcastle



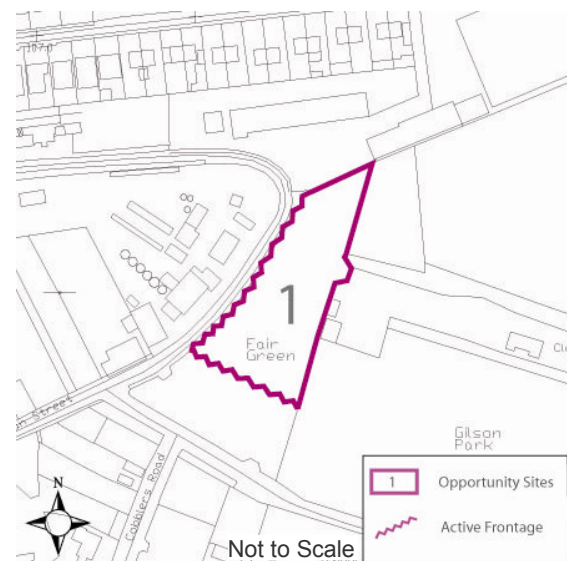
8.7.1 Design Brief Site No. 1

Site No.1 fronts onto Cloughan Street and is located immediately to the north of the public car park at Fair Green. The site is currently vacant but has the potential to be developed for leisure and retail uses with residential units on the upper floors.

Site Development Objectives

- A built environment that provides edge definition will be considered where it contributes to and enhances the existing open space provision;
- The redevelopment of this site necessitates the provision of high quality pedestrian linkages to the Town Centre;
- Any redevelopment of this site must embrace the amenity of Gilson Park while also creating an active street frontage.

Plate No. 13 Opportunity Site No. 1



Land Uses

Retail/ leisure/ residential uses are the primary uses that have been identified for the subject site. The commercial element should be concentrated along the street frontage adjoining the southern and western boundaries of the site, with an active frontage adjoining Gilson Park. It is envisaged that dual-aspect residential units will be accommodated in the upper floors providing passive surveillance into Gilson Park.

Height

Building heights on the subject site should not exceed 3 no. storeys in height in line with CDP standards.

Urban Design

It is essential that any development proposed on this site appropriately addresses the street and creates an active frontage which will enhance the area and strengthen links to the Town Centre. Development on the site must also address Gilson Park while respecting its amenity.

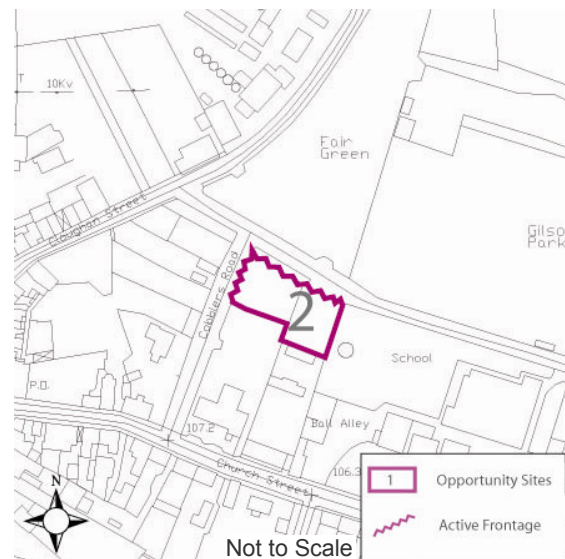
8.7.2 Design Brief Site No. 2

This site is located to the rear of the HSE Health Centre, adjoins Gilson National School and fronts onto the Fair Green and Gilson Park. This is a corner site and therefore any redevelopment proposals will be required to address Gilson Park and Cobblers Road. It is proposed to redevelop this site for residential uses such as town houses or similar that will overlook the Fair Green (including the designated children's play area) and Gilson Park, thereby increasing passive surveillance of these public open spaces.

Site Development Objectives

- It is essential that any building successfully addresses the Fair Green and Gilson Park by comprising an active frontage onto these areas of open space;
- Residential dwellings, such as townhouses or similar, on this site should be designed to overlook Gilson Park with own door access;
- Residential dwellings on this site should respect the residential amenity of adjoining properties.

Plate No. 14 Opportunity Site No. 2



Land Uses

Residential use is the principal use that has been identified for the subject site. Other land uses may be considered where they respect the scale and grain of the design brief.

Density

The site is strategically located within the Town Centre and is therefore suitable for higher density development such as townhouses or similar. All development proposals on this site will be subject to design considerations.

Height

The site's proximity to the Town Centre facilitates the provision of 2-3 storey own door access dwellings on this site or similar.

Urban Design

Any proposed redevelopment of the subject site must ensure that an adequate design response to the site's location opposite Oldcastle's principal areas of public open space is adopted.

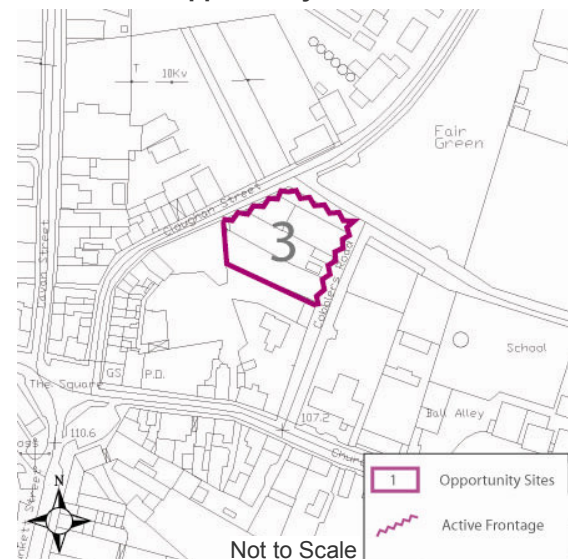
8.7.3 Design Brief Site No. 3

This corner site which fronts onto Cloughan Street and Cobblers Road is located adjacent to the existing Town Centre and opposite the Fair Green. The redevelopment of this site is pivotal to the overall regeneration of this area. The design of any proposed development must thus acknowledge the corner status of the site and seek to address the street frontage in an appropriate manner that will result in the enlivening of this area of the Town Centre.

Site Development Objectives

- Any proposed development will be expected to embrace the site's frontage onto the Fair Green and therefore active frontage shall be provided fronting this key area of open space in order to achieve passive surveillance of the children's playground and the public car park.
- Retail uses at ground floor level will create an active frontage that will encourage activity and subsequent passive surveillance of the community infrastructure.

Plate No. 15 Opportunity Site No. 3



Land Uses

Commercial and residential uses are identified for the subject site.

Density

The site is strategically located within the Town Centre and is therefore suitable for higher density development subject to design considerations.

Height

The site's proximity to the Town Centre facilitates the provision of 2-3 storey structures on the site.

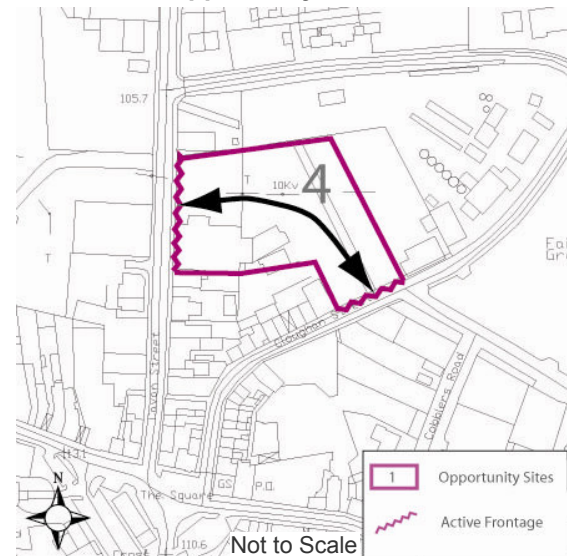
Urban Design

A fine urban grain comprising retail/commercial units will be encouraged on the site owing to its location within the Town Centre and in order to correspond with the prevailing urban fabric surrounding the site.

8.7.4 Design Brief Site No. 4

This site currently comprises dual frontage onto Cavan Street and Cloughan Street. At present vacant retail units front onto Cavan Street with undeveloped backlands located adjoining Cloughan Street. The Council will work with the land and property owners and developers to secure the comprehensive redevelopment of this site to provide a mixed-use development that will form an extension of the Town Centre uses. The development of this site is central to expanding Oldcastle's Town Centre to create a more attractive, vibrant Town that meets the needs of residents, commercial interests and visitors. Furthermore, the planned redevelopment of the site, in particular the provision of a new street, is key to the success of both the regeneration of this area and to the community and recreation strategy as it will link the Town Centre to the existing community infrastructure.

Plate No. 16 Opportunity Site No. 4



Site Development Objectives

- The provision of greater levels of permeability that facilitate improved access to the Fair Green and Gilson Park from the Town Centre;
- Any proposed development must seek to provide for a new internal street through the site with commercial and office ground floor units fronting onto this new internal route. The provision of a new street will create an integral linkage between Cavan Street and the range of community facilities at the Fair Green and Gilson Park, thereby enhancing permeability within the Town Centre and increasing the quality of life for inhabitants;
- Active frontages onto both Cavan Street and Cloughan Street;
- A predominance of retail related uses and office development on the ground floors of any development proposal;
- The provision of residential units in the upper floors of the proposed development;
- Measures will be required to protect existing residential amenity;

Land Uses

Retail, commercial and residential uses are the primary uses that have been identified for the subject site. The commercial development should be concentrated along the proposed internal street frontage between Cavan Street and Cloughan Street. The predominate use will be retail with own door office units encouraged to a lesser extent.

Density

The site is strategically located within the Town Centre and is therefore suitable for higher density development subject to design considerations and the protection of the existing residential amenity of residential properties located on Cloughan Street.

Height

The site's proximity to the Town Centre facilitates the provision of 2-3 storey buildings on the site with taller buildings close to the centre of the site subject to design and visual impacts.

Urban Design

It is essential that an internal pedestrian street is provided through the site as part of any development proposal. In addition, the utilisation of varying building heights will ensure that the development integrates with existing residential units on Cloughan Street and creates a coherent streetscape. A fine urban grain will integrate the new street into the existing townscape.

8.7.5 Design Brief Site No. 5

This site is distinct as it comprises of the Oldcastle Creamery which it is recognised is still operational. However, in order to protect the future development of this key area of Oldcastle, it is necessary to provide a brief for its comprehensive redevelopment should the opportunity arise within the life-time of this Plan. The brief will ensure that this strategic site is developed in a planned and appropriate manner.

The site has the potential to accommodate an extension of Town Centre uses, including large floorplate retailing, thereby not only maintaining the compact form of the Town Centre but also providing for future growth proximate to it.

Site Development Objectives

- The redevelopment of the site should act as a high quality expansion of the Town Centre facilitating the maintenance of a compact centre;
- The site has the potential to provide a mix of retail and residential uses or large floorplate retailing that would accord with the sequential test;
- Any development on the subject site must be primarily orientated towards Cloughan Street whilst also acknowledging the dual nature of this corner site. Parking must be located behind the building line and any redevelopment proposed should demonstrate how it addresses and contributes to the street and represents the optimal upgrading of the area.

Land Uses

Retail and commercial uses are the primary uses that have been identified for the subject site. The commercial development should be concentrated along the street frontage adjoining the northern boundary of the site and at the Cloughan Street frontage.

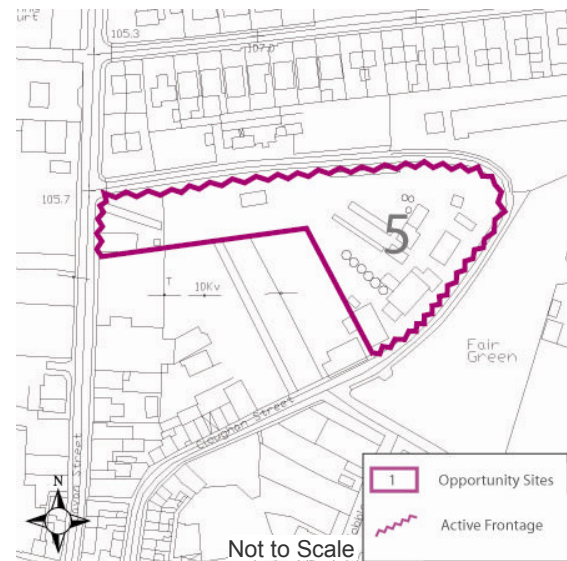
Height

The site's proximity to the Town Centre facilitates the provision of 2-3 storey buildings on the site with taller buildings close to the centre of the site subject to design and visual impacts.

Urban Design

It is envisaged that this site could accommodate a large floorplate retail unit given its existing use and layout. It is integral, however, that any development proposal addresses both Cloughan Street and the street forming its northern boundary while integrating with surrounding developments.

Plate No. 17 Opportunity Site No. 5



9.0 PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Introduction

The Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013, is the key document in relation to the implementation of this LAP. The responsibility for the implementation of policies and objectives contained within this LAP will be dependent on a number of possible sources, including Government Departments, Infrastructure Providers, Meath County Council and the Private Sector.

The actions required to facilitate the implementation of this Local Area Plan have been identified and the agents responsible for the respective actions also 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. Where appropriate, the Local Authority will seek financing from specified sources, both the public and the private sector.

The implementation of this Local Area Plan may be constrained by a number of elements, namely the 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 in advance.

Of particular relevance to Oldcastle in this regard is the upgrading of the water supply and wastewater infrastructure.

9.2 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 proposed development strategy and Variation no. 2 of the County Development Plan (as indicated on Map 1), and to ensure that essential facilities (such as road infrastructure, water, sewerage etc.) are secured and in place concurrent 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, development may be phased to tie in with these schemes or projects. The Local Authority reserves the right to refuse development on the grounds of it being premature pending the provision of necessary physical infrastructure or the provision of infrastructural capacities.

9.3 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 provision. The Development Contribution Scheme in accordance with the provisions of Part III, Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), has been adopted by Meath County Council, please refer to www.meath.ie or the offices of Meath County Council, County Hall, Navan, Co. Meath, for further details.

9.4 Monitoring and Review

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

**Appendix A: Environmental Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment
for the Draft Local Area Plan for Oldcastle and the Proposed
Amendments to the Draft Plan.**

Appendix B: Lists of Persons and Bodies who made Submissions.

Pre-Draft Submissions

Submission Number	Name and Address
1	Declan Brassil & Co. Ltd on behalf of Eunice McKenna
2	Declan Brassil & Co Ltd. on behalf of Lorraine Lynes
3	Damien Kevins, Clarendville, Oldcastle
4	Orlagh McHugh
5	Declan Brassil & Co Ltd. on behalf of MNM Partnership.
6	Declan Brassil & Co Ltd. on behalf of N & K O'Reilly
7	Declan Brassil & Co Ltd. on behalf of O'Reilly Newsagents
8	Tracey Holsgrove & William Lynch, Boolies, Oldcastle
9	Fore Enterprises Ltd. on behalf of RJVB Property Partnership
10	Fore Enterprises Ltd. on behalf of Oldcastle Chamber of Commerce
11	Sue Russell Chairperson of Women's Oldcastle Network on behalf of Le Cheile Arts Music Festival Committee, Teenage Kicks Youth Club, Active Retirement Group, St Brigdets Terrace Residents Association, St Brigets Court Residents Association, Women's Oldcastle Network, Agriculture Show, Loughcrew Residents Association and Mellows Park Residents Association.
12	Shirley Kearney on behalf of the Department of Education and Science
13	Harry Taggart, Oliver Plunkett Street, Oldcastle, Co. Meath
14	Ursula Farrelly Chairperson Oldcastle Tidy Towns
15	Allen & Sheils Architects on behalf of Peter Caffrey
16	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
17	John Hetheron on behalf of Oldcastle Soccer Club
18	Owen Smith regarding lands at the Millbrook Road, Oldcastle
19	Agnes Reilly, Coordination Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
20	Don Getty, Summerbank, Oldcastle, Co. Meath
21	Sue Russell Chairperson of Women's Oldcastle Network
22	Declan Brassil & Co Ltd on behalf of N & K O'Reilly regarding lands located within Casltecor Townland
23	Eugene Smith, The Dublin Bar, The Square, Oldcastle, County Meath
24	Development Applications Unit, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government

Submissions on Draft Plan

Submission No.	Name and Address
1	Joan Crosbie on behalf of the Office of Public Works.
2	Michael McCormack on behalf of the National Roads Authority.
3	Councillor Michael Lynch
4	Declan Brasil and Co. Ltd on behalf of N & K O'Reilly.
5	Allen and Shiels Architects on behalf of Mr. Peter Caffrey.
6	Catherine E. Kerins on behalf of the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board.
7	Shirley Kearney on behalf of the Department of Education.
8	Fore Enterprises Limited on behalf of the Oldcastle Chamber of Commerce.
9	Patrick O'Sullivan on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
10	Fore Enterprises Limited on behalf of the Oldcastle Chamber of RJVB Property Partnership

Submissions on Proposed Amendments

Submission No.	Name and Address
1	Oliver Foy, Cavan Street, Oldcastle, Co. Meath
2	Erica O'Driscoll, National Roads Authority, St. Martin's House, Waterloo Road, Dublin 4.
3	Cian O'Mahony, Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork.
4	Seana McGearty, Co-Ordination Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Elm House, Earlsvale Road, Co. Cavan.
5	Enda Shiels on behalf of Peter Caffrey, C/O Allen and Shiels Architects, Cavan Road, Virginia, Co. Cavan.

Appendix C: Record of Protected Structures

REG. No.	AIS	NIAH No.	STRUCTURE	STREET/TOWNLAND	TOWN	BUILDING TYPE	DESCRIPTION	Comment / Change
MH008-100	R	14400801	Ross House	Ross	Oldcastle	County House	Detached three-bay two-storey house, built c.1780, with pedimented dormer windows, and an Ionic portico. Stables, Outbuildings and Boathouse.	Outside LAP Boundary
MH008-101	R	14400805	Mill	Halfcarton	Oldcastle	Mill	Detached multiple-bay two-storey former mill, built c.1800, now disused. Pitched slate roof with roof vent. Rubble limestone walls. Ashlar limestone dressings to window and door openings. Ruined outbuilding to site. Includes all associated structures.	Outside LAP Boundary
MH008-102	R	N/A	Ballynacree Church	Moat	Oldcastle	Church (RC)	A modern single cell church of three bays.	Outside LAP Boundary
MH008-104	R	N/A	Castlecore	Castlecore	Oldcastle	County House	A mill owner's house of three-bays and three-storeys with stacks in the centre, dating c.1800. Very plain house in a good setting. There are well kept outbuildings to the rear and a walled garden to the east. The mill is to the East beside the road.	Outside LAP Boundary
MH009-105	R	14305018	Crossdrum House	Crossdrum Upper	Oldcastle	House (detached)	Detached three-bay two-storey over basement rendered house, built c.1800. Canted bay and single storey-return to rear. Segmental-arched door opening with tooled stone pilasters, Adams style fanlight and side lights. Incl. Outbuildings.	Outside LAP Boundary
MH009-110	R	14306011	Knockmaroon House	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	House	Detached irregular-plan two-storey rendered house, built c.1930, with single- and two-storey porches and return. Canted-bay windows to south-facing elevation with uPVC windows.	N/A
MH009-111	R	14306085	House	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Detached House	Detached three-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1910, with full height canted bay windows. Projecting porch with flanking pilasters, open pediment, replacement door, and sidelights.	N/A
MH009-112	R	14306086	Liss Cottage	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Outbuildings	Four-bay single-storey stone farm outbuilding, built c.1860, with segmental-arched chamfered limestone integral carriage arches, ventilation loops, and pitched slate roof. Three-bay single storey stone outbuilding to site.	Outside LAP Boundary
MH009-113	R	14306035	Oldcastle Cemetery	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Cemetery (R.C.)	Cemetery, established c.1895, with Celtic Revival high crosses and later polished grave markers. Rubble stone boundary walls with ashlar piers and cast-iron gates.	N/A
MH009-114	R	14306087	Bridge	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Bridge (railway)	Single-arch rock-faced limestone railway bridge with string courses and copings, built c.1880, carrying the road over the former railway track which is now disused.	N/A
MH009-200	R	143060063	Former RIC Barracks	Mount Nugent Road	Oldcastle	House (detached) / former	Detached three-bay two-storey former barracks, built c.1880, with projecting entrance porch. Cast-iron railings to front. Hipped slate roof with rendered chimneystacks and terracotta	N/A

						barracks	pots. Two-storey extension to rear.	
MH009-201	R	14306061	House 2	Mount Nugent Road	Oldcastle	House (detached)	Detached three-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1840. Limestone steps with cast-iron handrail, balusters, bootscraper and railings.	N/A
MH009-202	R	14306060	House	Mount Nugent Road	Oldcastle	House (detached)	Detached three-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1840. Round-arched door opening with stone architrave and replacement fanlight.	N/A
MH009-203	R	14306005	St. Bride's Graveyard	The Square	Oldcastle	Graveyard	Graveyard with marked interments from c.1725, with eighteenth- and nineteenth century stone grave markers to graveyard. The church is built on the site of a medieval church.	N/A
MH009-204	R	14306056	The Oldcastle Medical Hall	Castle Street	Oldcastle	Pharmacy	Terraced four-bay two-storey house, built c.1899, now also in use as shop. Shopfront with glazed timber fascia, acanthus console brackets and awnings. Replacement display window and door.	Proposed removal as altered under planning application Reg. Ref. KA20246
MH009-205	R	143060004	Saint Bride's Church of Ireland Church	The Square	Oldcastle	Church (C of I)	Detached Board of First Fruits church, built in 1816, three-bay hall with spire and pinnacles. Incl. Gates and Railings	N/A
MH009-206	R	14306055	Mullens	Castle St/ Lagan St	Oldcastle	Shop	Terraced three-bay three-storey house, built c.1910. Red brick facade with terracotta panels. Shopfront with Art Nouveau decorative details, inserted in 1927.	N/A
MH009-207	R	14306003	Co-Op building	The Square	Oldcastle	Shop	Pair of semi-detached two-bay two-storey houses, built c.1830. One of pair now also in use as shop. Hipped slate roof with carved timber eaves dentils and stone chimneystack.	N/A
MH009-208	R	14306054	Flower Shop/Restaurant	Castle St/ Lagan St	Oldcastle	Shop	Terraced three-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1870, with segmental arched integral carriage arch and render quoins. 19thC shopfront.	N/A
MH009-209	R	14306053	House	The Square	Oldcastle	Terraced House/Shop	Terraced three-bay three-storey rendered house, built c.1900, now also in use as shop.	N/A
MH009-210	R	14306007	Naper Arms Hotel	The Square	Oldcastle	Hotel	End-of-terrace five-bay three-storey rendered hotel, built c.1860, with single-storey Tuscan porch, and three-storey return to rear.	N/A
MH009-211	R	14306052	Gibneys	The Square	Oldcastle	Shop	Terraced six-bay three-storey building, built 1862. Decorative render surrounds with shell tympana to openings.	N/A
MH009-212	R	14306010	Creans	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Shop	End-of-terrace double-pile four-bay three-storey rendered house, built c.1840.	N/A

MH009-213	R	14306008	Bank of Ireland	The Square	Oldcastle	Bank/Financial Institution	End-of-terrace five-bay two-storey former house, built c.1900, with recessed roughcast rendered two-storey bay to south. Hipped and pitched tile roofs with red brick chimney.	N/A
MH009-214	R	14306009	Next Door	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Shop	Terraced two-bay three-storey rendered house, built c.1840, now also in use as shop. Limestone ashlar to ground floor, with string course above.	N/A
MH009-215	R	14306012	Fire Station	Millbrook Road	Oldcastle	Fire Station	Detached two-bay single-storey brick and roughcast rendered fire station, built c.1985, with square-profiled tower to rear. Projecting brick faced office bay to south, roughcast rendered garage bay to north. Pitched pantiles roofs.	Proposed removal as it is of limited architectural merit.
MH009-216	R	14306051	Gibneys	The Square	Oldcastle	House/Shop	Terraced two-bay three-storey house, built c.1870, with elaborate render surrounds to timber sash windows, and to timber panelled door.	N/A
MH009-217	R	14306071	Tuite's	Cavan Street	Oldcastle	Garage	Detached five-bay single-storey rendered garage, built c.1940, with pilasters, pediment and parapet. Square-headed openings with timber-battened doors, and steel pivot windows.	N/A
MH009-218	R	14306001	Market House (Gibneys)	The Square	Oldcastle	Shop	Detached five-bay two-storey former market house, built c.1740.	N/A
MH009-219	R	14306070	Forge	Cavan Street	Oldcastle	Forge	Detached gable-fronted single-bay single-storey former forge, built 1864. Horseshoe-shaped opening in gable wall with rock-faced voussoirs.	N/A
MH009-220	R	14306015	National Irish Bank	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Bank/Financial Institution	Semi-detached three-bay two-storey Italianate style ashlar bank, built c.1880, with two-storey brick return to rear.	N/A
MH009-221	R	14306016	Managers House	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	House (semi-detached)	Semi-detached three-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1880.	N/A
MH009-222	R	14306002	Cross	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Cross	Freestanding carved limestone high cross, erected 1961, with interlace, bosses, and house shrine shaped cap. Marble inlay to southern side with Irish inscription.	N/A
MH009-223	R	14306013	Castle Cinema	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Cinema	Detached two-bay two-storey cinema entrance block, attached to gable-fronted double-height auditorium, built c.1940, now used as a storage building. Two recessed doors with terrazzo steps, with concrete canopy above.	Proposed alteration to protect front façade only.
MH009-224	R	14306018	Eileen A. Brennan Solicitors	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Terraced House	Terraced two-bay two-storey rendered former house, built c.1900, pitched tile roof with rendered chimneystack. Modern timber shopfront inserted to ground floor.	N/A
MH009-225	R	14306020	In Town Records	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Shop	End-of-terrace seven-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1830	N/A
MH009-226	R	14306014	Clarkes Hardware	Oliver Plunkett St.	Oldcastle	Shop	Detached L-plan two-storey gable-fronted former garage, built c.1950, now in use as wholesale outlet. Cement rendered stepped-gable to front elevation, with concrete canopy. Pitched	Proposed removed as it is of minimal

							corrugated-iron roof.	architectural interest.
MH009-227	R	14306050	Herbstreit	The Square	Oldcastle	House/Shop	Corner-sited end-of-terrace four-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1890. Shopfront, c. 1910, comprising of panelled concrete stallriser, segmental-arched display windows with timber mullions, and timber fascia and cornice.	N/A
MH009-228	R	14306021	House	The Square	Oldcastle	Terraced House	End-of-terraced five-bay two-storey house, built c.1875, with vacant shop units to ground floor. Recessed bay to east with integral carriage arch having cut stone voussoirs.	N/A
MH009-229	R	14306049	Kerbing	Cloughan Street,	Oldcastle	Kerbing	Tooled limestone kerbs, gutters and drains, c.1830.	N/A
MH009-230	R	14306048	Garda Station	The Square	Oldcastle	Garda Station	Corner-sited end-of-terrace three-bay two-storey rendered former house, built in 1882, now in use as Garda station.	N/A
MH009-231	R	14306069	Chimney	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Chimney	Disused tapered chimney, built c.1880, with rock-faced ashlar and tooled coping.	N/A
MH009-232	R	14306022	The Dublin Bar	The Square	Oldcastle	Public House	Terraced four-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1920, also in use as public house.	N/A
MH009-233	R	14306073	Group of four houses	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Houses	One of a group of four detached three-bay single-storey roughcast houses, built c.1940. Central recessed porches with curved concrete canopies, flanked by bow windows. Hipped tile roofs and rendered chimneystacks.	N/A
MH009-234	R	14306023	Farrelly's	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Public House	Pair of former houses, built c.1900, now in use as seven-bay two-storey house and public house. Segmental-arched integral carriage arch to ground floor.	N/A
MH009-235	R	14306074	Outbuilding	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Outbuilding	Detached two-bay single-storey former railway station outbuilding, built c.1900, now used as domestic outbuilding. Red brick walls with yellow and vitrified brick courses and mouldings.	N/A
MH009-236	R	14306073	Group of four houses	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Houses	One of a group of four detached three-bay single-storey roughcast houses, built c.1940. Central recessed porches with curved concrete canopies, flanked by bow windows. Hipped tile roofs and rendered chimneystacks.	N/A
MH009-237	R	14306076	Former Railway Station	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Railway Station	L-plan five-bay single-storey railway station, built c.1880, with projecting terminating bay to west. Pitched and hipped roofs with red brick chimney. Timber porch canopy to four-bays, with cast-iron brackets.	N/A
MH009-238	R	14306047	Masonic Hall	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Masonic Hall	End-of-terrace single-bay two-storey rendered former Masonic hall, built c.1960, with recessed porch having timber double doors, tiling to step and cast-iron railings.	Proposed removal as it is of limited architectural interest.
MH009-239	R	14306075	Station Master's House	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	House	Detached three-bay two-storey former railway station, built c.1880, now in use as a house. Hipped roof with oversailing eaves and ashlar chimneystacks.	N/A

MH009-240	R	14306073	Group of four houses	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Houses	One of a group of four detached three-bay single-storey roughcast houses, built c.1940. Central recessed porches with curved concrete canopies, flanked by bow windows. Hipped tile roofs and rendered chimneystacks.	N/A
MH009-241	R	14306073	Group of four houses	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Houses	One of a group of four detached three-bay single-storey roughcast houses, built c.1940. Central recessed porches with curved concrete canopies, flanked by bow windows. Hipped tile roofs and rendered chimneystacks.	N/A
MH009-242	R	14306026	House	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	House	End-of-terrace three-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1840, with tooled stone dressings to openings. Square-headed windows have stone sills and timber singlesash windows.	N/A
MH009-243	R	14306044	Houses	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	House (semi-detached)	One of a Pair of semi-detached four- and three-bay two-storey roughcast-rendered houses, built c.1840, with segmental-arched door openings.	N/A
MH009-244	R	14306028	House	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	House (detached)	Detached three-bay two-storey rendered house, built c.1920. Segmental-arched openings with moulded architraves, stone sills, and replacement timber sash windows.	N/A
MH009-245	R	14306044	Houses	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	House (semi-detached)	One of a Pair of semi-detached four- and three-bay two-storey roughcast-rendered houses, built c.1840, with segmental-arched door openings.	N/A
MH009-246	R	14306077	Oldcastle CO-OP Creamery	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Warehouse	Detached four-bay single-storey former railway warehouse, built c.1880, now in use as shop. Snecked limestone facade with brick dressings.	N/A
MH009-247	R	14306041	Laurence Gilson Centre	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Community Centre (former School)	Detached five-bay two-storey over raised basement Palladian style school, built 1826, with links and wings to east and west. Incl. Gates and Piers.	N/A
MH009-248	R	14306083	Water pump	Oldcastle	Oldcastle	Water pump	Cast-iron water pump with timber casing, erected c.1870, with nozzle and handle. Casing is hewn from a single piece of timber. Now disused.	N/A
MH009-249	R	14306030	St. Brigid's Parochial House	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Parochial House	Detached L-plan two-storey building, built c.1900, with flanking single storey blocks. Hipped slate roofs. Roughcast rendered walls with ashlar limestone quoins.	N/A.
MH009-250	R	14306031	St. Brigid's Parochial House	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Parochial House	Detached three-bay two-storey rendered parochial house, built c.1900, with projecting single-storey porch and two-storey return.	N/A.
MH009-251	R	14306032	Saint Brigid's Roman Catholic Church	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Church (R C)	Detached cruciform-plan church, built in 1899. Three-stage bell tower and broach spire, c.1930, to north-west corner. Designed by W.H. Byrne and built by a Mr. P. Nolan. Includes Parochial House.	N/A
MH009-252	R	14306033	Double and Single Cast Iron Gates	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Gates	Two pairs of cast-iron piers with wrought-iron single and double gates, erected c.1900.	N/A

MH009-253	R	14306037	Street Light	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Lamp Standard	Pair of concrete lamp standards, erected c.1935, with over-hanging heads and cross bars.	N/A
MH009-254	R	14306036	Vent Pipe	Chapel Street	Oldcastle	Vent Pipe	Cast-iron vent pipe, erected c.1870, with fluted base, plain shaft and crown-shaped head.	N/A
MH014-100	R		Baltrasna House	Baltrasna	Oldcastle	Country House	The present house with its gable end is a fragment of an earlier 18th century house of 2 bays, 2-storeys, quoins and shouldered architraves on windows. Includes gates and Gate lodge (derelict).	Outside LAP Boundary
MH015-126	R		Newtown	Newtown	Oldcastle	House (detached)	An early 18th century house of 5 bays and 3 storeys. Includes of outbuildings and gates. Some of the original windows have been replaced with pvc.	Outside LAP Boundary
MH015-131	R		Belview House	Belview	Oldcastle	Country House	Georgian House from 1765. It has three bays and 2 storeys with sweeps and wings, which are particularly pleasing.	Outside LAP Boundary

Appendix D: Implications of the Record of Protected Structures for the Public

The protected structures listed in Appendix C will not benefit from the exempted development provisions under the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Therefore, any alteration, extension, demolition or otherwise within the curtilage of the building and that would materially affect the character of the structure, will require planning permission.

The owner or occupier of a protected structure may under Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) make a written request to the Planning Authority for a declaration as to the type of works the Authority consider would materially affect the character of the protected structure. This Section does not apply to proposed protected structures or those structures that are not protected structures but are located within Oldcastle Architectural Conservation Area.

In order to assist property owners in the upkeep of protected structures the Planning Authority will seek to provide grant aid through its administration of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Grants Scheme. The scheme will be advertised on an annual basis and applications will be prioritised on the basis of the Council's adopted 'Scheme of Priorities'.

Appendix E: Key Characteristics of the Oldcastle ACA, implications of the ACA for the public and works requiring Planning Permission.

Architectural Conservation Area Street Pattern

The street pattern of Oldcastle ACA reflects the pattern of growth since the eighteenth century and largely resembles the layout as it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Twentieth century structures have replaced a small number of nineteenth-century residential buildings and added much utilitarian structures to the edges of the Town, particularly to the west and north. The Town developed at the crossing of two routes as a market town with a market-house set within an irregular triangular-shaped Town Square. Four roads radiate from this square. The approaches and exits to and from the Town are largely defined by rubble stone walls, framed by mature trees. The Town Square is the highlight of this settlement and despite the poor appearance of the market house, it still retains the overall form and character. The streetscape of the four principal streets is currently made up of commercial and residential street-fronted buildings linked in terraces, two uniform terraces, a pair of early twentieth century buildings and the two landmark detached structures, the Church of Ireland and the Market-house.

There is no street furniture or historic paving materials remaining within the ACA, with the exception of a small stretch of cut limestone kerbing on Cloughan Street, on the east side corresponding to the stone terrace, complete with three carved limestone drains set into the pavement.

Architectural Conservation Area Building Types

There are 7 common building typologies found in the ACA of Oldcastle:

- 18th Century Market Building
- 18th and 19th Century residential terraces
- 19th Century detached residences
- 18th and 19th C commercial buildings
- Ecclesiastical buildings
- 20th Century commercial buildings
- 20th Century residential buildings

Architectural Conservation Area Materials

The predominant building materials are natural slate to the roofs with clay ridge tiles and cast-iron rainwater goods, the stucco fronted Gibney building has a very decorative cast iron ridge crest. A distinctive chimneystack appears on many buildings, comprising a rendered finish with tooled limestone capstone and matching stringcourse below.

While limestone ashlar walling makes a noticeable appearance, particularly at the Church of Ireland, the prevailing surface finish would have been lime render, now mostly replaced by painted cement render facades, although limestone sills are the norm and some limestone window surrounds remain extant. Apart from the usual replacement chimneystack, brick makes a rare appearance on the streetscape, the most attractive exception being Mullen's on Cogan Street, an unusual feature on this varied terrace with its full redbrick façade and terracotta panels, the other exception is the Bank of Ireland on The Square which retains only its upper floor of polychromatic brickwork. Decorative stucco facades dating from the late 19th C, have made their mark in the Town and add decorative sophistication to their terraces, these are usually older structures with a superficial Victorian makeover. Timber sliding sash windows are the standard mode of fenestration, while painted timber panelled doors and timber shop fronts are still in use. Good cast iron railings and gates can be observed at the Church of Ireland and at the former Rectory.

Implications of the Architectural Conservation Area for the Public - Works requiring Planning Permission

The objective of the ACA is to protect the special character of an area through rigorous control and positive management of any changes made to the built environment. Any development which would materially affect the character of an Architectural Conservation Area will require planning permission notwithstanding the exempted development provisions as provided for under the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001-2007. This includes works to the rear of the buildings, within backland sites and gardens, and to boundaries. Where development takes place without planning permission, the Council will require the owners or occupiers to restore the character of the building or site, if it is considered that the development is inconsistent with the character of the area.

In this respect, alterations to a structure within an ACA should not be carried out without prior consultation with the Planning Authority and in particular where it is considered that such an alteration would materially impact on the character of the ACA. The preservation of the character of the Town Centre ACA is essential to safeguarding the identity of the Town and maintaining continuity with its development history. The collection of buildings and spaces within the ACA represent a unique aspect of Oldcastle's architectural heritage and contributes to its overall attractiveness.