

CHAPTER 2: NAVAN IN CONTEXT



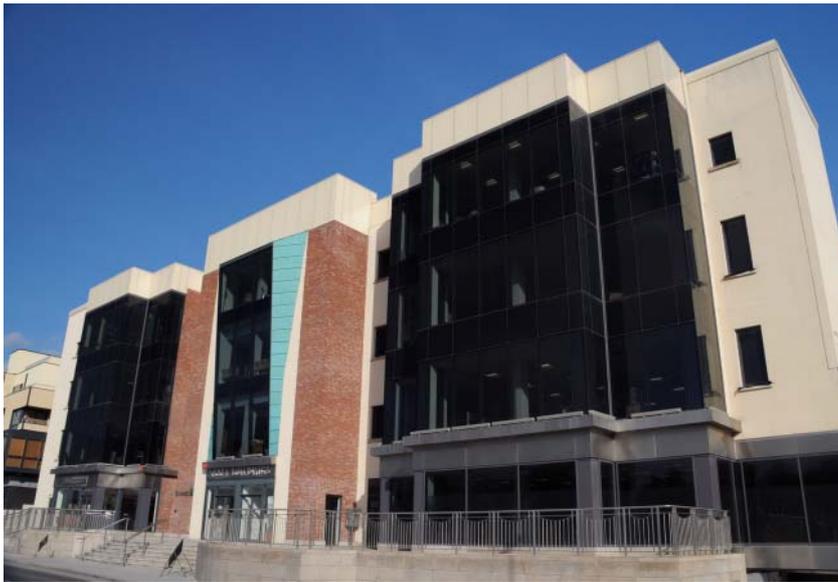
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2.0 Location & Physical Context

Navan is located approximately 45km north west of Dublin City Centre. It is the largest urban centre in County Meath. It is served by the N3 and N51 national roads. Several regional roads serve Navan including the R153 (Navan-Balrath); R161 (Navan – Kinnegad) and R162 (Navan-Monaghan). Another notable physical characteristic of the town is the presence of the River Boyne and River Blackwater, which flow directly through the town. The vestiges of Navan's history are clearly evident on the landscape with monuments such as Kilcarn Bridge, Athlumney Castle and parts of the Town Walls all clearly visible, which provides a sublime context for a modern expanding town. The quality and abundance of natural heritage including the Boyne and Blackwater also provides high amenity value serving as a marvellous setting for the town.

Navan is a main service centre, providing for the town's population and a large hinterland. There are a number of key land-use activities in Navan including the Courts Service which facilitates hearings of the District and Circuit Courts. The Health Service Executive oversees the operation of Navan Hospital which is a major employer and service provider for the town. Navan is also home to a range of criminal justice bodies, including the Probation Service at Athlumney House, which was officially opened on 31st October 2008 by the Minister for Justice, Dermot Ahern T.D. The Garda Civilian Human Resources Directorate, the Coroner's Service Implementation Team, Revenue Commissioners and the Property Services Regulatory Authority are also based in the town. Tara Mines, the largest zinc mine in Europe, is located just off the Kells Road on the north western fringe of the town. In addition, other significant land uses include educational, recreational, commercial and residential uses.



Offices of the Revenue Commissioners, Meath County Council and the Property Services Regulatory Authority

2.1 Historical Context

A small group of prehistoric objects suggests that the area where Navan stands was frequented during the Neolithic and Bronze Age period perhaps because of its suitability as a fording point. Other evidence suggests that the area was a settlement place for the Vikings. In the later middle ages the town was on the frontier of the Pale and so great was the risk of attack that the town had to be walled. As time progressed the town steadily developed to overtake Trim as the County Town.

Though much of the medieval architectural heritage did not survive the passage of time, there are a number of structures still evident in the town; the most notable include the following:

- Kilcarn Bridge, a bridge of eleven arches to which the main channel of the Boyne is confined to four large arches in the centre.
- Athlumney Castle, a three storey, four bay house attached to a tower house (1703). One of the more visible monuments today, it demonstrates the extensive and picturesque ruins of a spacious mansion in the style of domestic architecture which would have been prevalent in the 17th Century, combined with elements of fortification
- Navan Town, a walled area of 13 acres probably dating from the 15th century.



Kilcarn Bridge

2.2 Present Day Context

Today, many building influences from the 18th and 19th centuries, mostly Georgian in style are evident. Navan has a significant number of protected structures and archaeological sites. A portion of Navan town centre is also an identified Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), which is a statutory designation afforded to a place, area, group of structures or townscape, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. The narrow winding streets, consistent with its medieval origins, contribute to the notable character of the town as it is today. In the late 20th and early 21st century the development pattern has been mixed with substantial residential development in the environs of the town ensuring healthy population growth. This residential development has been complimented by significant commercial development in particular in the development of new neighbourhood centres and retail parks. A sizeable quantum of industrial land has also been developed at Mullaghboy Industrial Estate to the west of the town.

The challenge for Navan in the future is to achieve a balanced approach towards development, encouraging appropriate and sensitive new development in accordance with regional guidance which respects the town's architectural and natural heritage while at the same time creating a dynamic and successful town. The designation of part of Navan town centre as an identified Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), will help the Planning Authorities meet this challenge. The heritage value of the town and environs is an important element in the further enhancement of the tourism product in Navan and is also of high recreational, cultural, social and environmental importance. High quality architecture and urban design is a key component for successful new development in Navan. Therefore it is the intention of the Planning Authorities that all new development will compliment and respect the character of the town and its surrounding area.

2.3 Urban Form

Navan enjoys a relatively compact urban structure though it has expanded to a considerable degree in line with the major population growth experienced over the time span of the last Development Plan. The town straddles both sides of the River Boyne and River Blackwater, with development generally well balanced on all sides. In recent years the south eastern portion of the town, particularly around Athlumney/Johnstown, has experienced the most notable amount of new development. The scale of the built environment is generally low, predominantly single and two storey structures, though certain landmark buildings such as Navan Credit Union and the Academy Square apartments have raised the height profile in certain areas. More recent developments in the town such as the Solstice Arts Centre have resulted in the introduction of modern architectural urban elements into the built landscape, which complements the established charm and character of the town. Other notable new structures constructed in recent years include developments in the IDA Business Park, Navan Leisure Centre, extensions to Navan Shopping Centre, the redeveloped Dunnes Stores at Kennedy Place, office developments on Abbey Road and the major retail parks on the Kells and Athboy roads.

2.4 Population Context

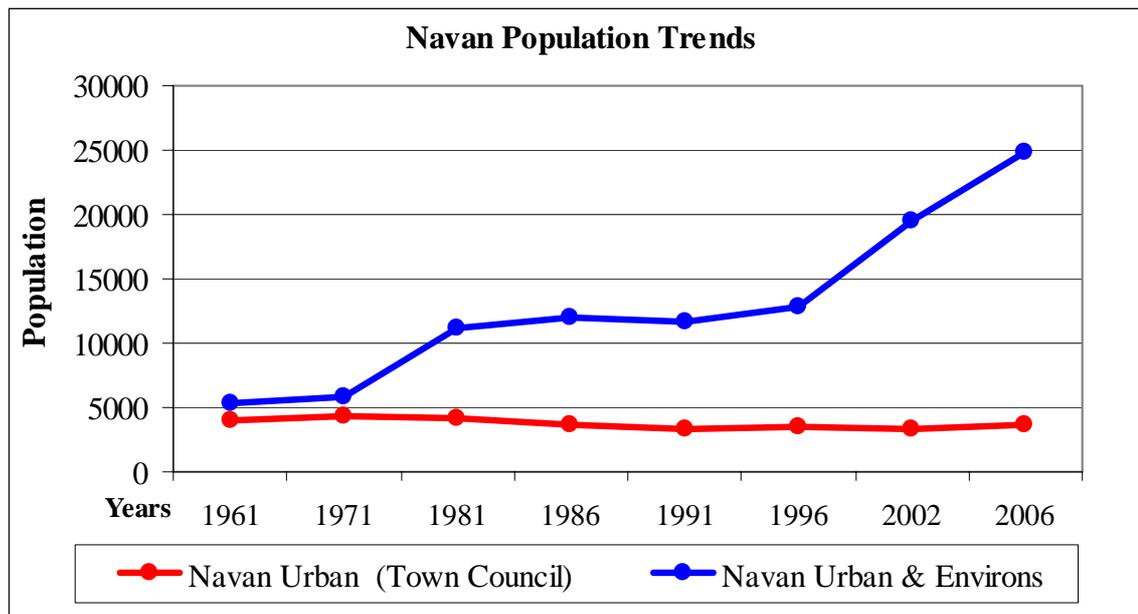
The standard source for population statistics is the census information published every 5 years by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Navan maintained steady growth at each census from 1961 to 1996 with a particular spurt of population growth evident in the 1970's. However it was the period from 1996 to 2006 that saw unprecedented growth which was amongst the highest experienced by any urban centre in the country. The population of the Navan Environs increased by more than 125% from 9,363 persons in 1996 to 21,141 persons by 2006. It is interesting to note that the population of the legally defined Navan Town increased by a much smaller proportion during this same period from 3,447 persons to 3,710 persons, an increase of 7.6%. Overall the Navan Town and Environs population increased by a phenomenal 94% between 1996 and 2006. An Post Geodirectory data would indicate that at the time of writing the current population of Navan is c.30,500 persons.

The next Census of Population which is due to be carried out by the Central Statistics Office in 2011 and published in 2012 will provide an up-to-date population figure for the Town midway through the life of this Development Plan. It is certain however that the population of the Town will exceed the population of the Environs for the first time in over 30 years in light of the Navan Town Boundary Alteration Order 2009, which substantially extended the boundary of the legally defined town.

Table 1; Population Trends in Navan from 1961 – 2006

CSO, Census of Population Statistics 1961 – 2006, for Navan, Co. Meath				
Year	Navan Urban Population (i.e. Town Council)	% Increase or Decrease	Overall Navan Population (incl. Environs)	% Increase or Decrease
1961	3998	N/A	5255	N/A
1971	4367	+9.2%	5907	+12.4%
1981	4124	-5.6%	11136	+88.5%
1986	3660	-11.3%	11929	+7.1%
1991	3415	-6.7%	11706	-1.9%
1996	3447	+0.9%	12810	+ 9.4%
2002	3406	-1.2%	19417	+51.6%
2006	3710	+8.9%	24851	+28%
Town Council Growth 1961-2006 = -7.2%			Overall Town Growth 1961-2006= 372.9%	

(Source: Central Statistics Office)

Figure 2; Population Trends in Navan from 1961 – 2006

2.5 Household Formation

Census 2006 found that the national average household size was 2.8 persons. The 2006 Census states that County Meath has 53,938 private households, with an average size of 2.99 persons, slightly above the state average.

The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 has provided a settlement strategy which will affect household formations in Navan up to 2013. The strategy sets out a household and population distribution framework for each settlement centre (Table 6). Table 6 of the County Development Plan provides details on the number of households permissible in each urban centre over the period up to the end of 2013. The table states that there is a total of 1,496 committed units, which are currently under construction or yet to be constructed. Applying an average household occupancy of 2.9 for that period, it is predicted that the population of Navan would be in the region of c. 35,000 people once all permitted developments in the town are constructed and occupied.

As of October 2008, 298 ha of land zoned for residential development in the Navan Development Plan 2003 -2009, remains available for development (this figure excludes lands zoned for C1 'mixed use' development). These lands would have a capacity for approximately 10,430 housing units based on the current permitted densities (i.e. 35 per ha). A further 18 ha has the benefit of planning permission granted but remains undeveloped. The current quantum of residential zoned lands in Navan could potentially accommodate approximately 30,000 new residents. It is therefore clear Navan can meet its Regional and County housing needs from existing zoned lands.

Having regard to the extent of committed residential development and estimated household targets the Planning Authority will undertake detailed phasing and prioritisation of the release of the remaining residential zoned land bank. Also, policies with regard to the release of subsequent phases of residential lands in Navan will be included in this Development Plan, which will meet agreed targets in relation to development and occupation of the substantial industrial and employment generating land banks identified in the Development Plan.

2.6 Employment Context

Over the period of the Navan Development Plan 2003-2009, a considerable number of jobs were created in Navan. After Meath County Council and Tara Mines, one of largest employment hubs in the town is the 100 acre IDA Business Park in Athlumney, on the eastern edge of Navan, accommodating 6 companies, with approximately 660 persons employed there as of February 2008, if one includes the office building adjoining the IDA Business Park accessed from off the Forfás Road.

A key step towards the implementation of many of the economic development policies in the previous Development Plan occurred in July 2007 when An Bord Pleanála upheld Meath County Council's decision to grant planning permission for 7,370 sq. m. of floor space to Quinn Direct, primarily for office and call centre use. This development which at the time of writing is nearing completion has the potential to double the amount of employment in the Navan IDA Business Park. However it should be noted that the park still has great potential to be further developed for employment creating purposes as disregarding lands that are already developed or to which planning permission has been granted but not yet constructed, over half of the land at the Business Park is available for development.

Mullaghboy Industrial Estate and Beechmount Home Park to the west of the town also continue to develop with a high uptake of units. The 2006 Census recorded 13,434 persons in Navan in the "Total at work and unemployed" bracket. 1,067 of these were unemployed which represents an unemployment rate of 7.9% which is a significant rate of unemployment. Notwithstanding this, the percentage figure is likely to be higher now as a result of the global economic difficulties that emerged in 2008. The 2006 Census recorded that that the majority of people in Navan worked in Clerical, Management or Government jobs followed by positions in the Professional, Technical and Health sectors. Sales and Commerce was the third biggest employment category. Significant numbers were also employed in Manufacturing and Construction.

It is recognised by the Planning Authorities that many people depend for their livelihood on industries which are susceptible to the negative effects of any down turn in the global or domestic economy. It is for this reason the Development Plan promotes enterprising land uses which could create employment. It is considered that major public investment programmes such as the development of a broadband municipal area network under the National Development Plan in five Meath towns including Navan, will make Navan a more attractive location in which to do business in the future.



Athlumney House, Navan,

2.7 Tourism Context

The location of Navan set in the Boyne Valley, an area of outstanding natural beauty and at the confluence of the River Boyne & Blackwater, favours well for tourism. The tourism sector in Navan has improved over recent years. The town offers a number of attractions and facilities from shops, cinema, pubs, hotels and restaurants to golf courses, horse racing, and the Rivers Boyne and Blackwater. It is located in close proximity to the renowned historical site of ‘The Hill of Tara’ and to Slane which plays hosts to the world famous rock venue, Slane Castle. It is also strategically located in the centre of the other major tourist attractions in the County such as Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth, Trim Castle, Bective Abbey, Kells and Slieve na Calliagh. Nonetheless Navan lacks a clear and strong image as a tourist destination.



Navan Racecourse

2.8 Social and Community Context

2.8.1 Education

The Meath County Development Board stress the importance of education and training to society in “Le Chéile – An Integrated Strategy for Meath to 2012” where they state “Meath’s future success depends on all elements of the educational system from pre-school through to Primary and Second Level to Third Level and continuing education. The upskilling of the County’s workforce will be vital to economic success.” Meath County Council and Navan Town Council fully concur with this sentiment.

However it should be noted that the physical delivery of educational facilities falls outside the remit of the Planning Authorities. This is the responsibility of central government and the Department of Education and Science in particular. Notwithstanding this, the Planning Authorities will endeavour to facilitate the provision and enhancement of educational facilities in Navan, acting in accordance with *‘The Provision of Schools and the Planning System’* a Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, the Department of Education and Science, and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, published in July 2008.

Primary Schools

Scoil Mhuire, Abbey Road

There are 12 no. primary schools in Navan as listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2, Navan Primary Schools

Primary Schools	Address
St. Oliver's Primary School	Blackcastle, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Paul's Primary School	Ratholdren Road, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Anne's Primary School	Church Hill, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Joseph's Primary School	Railway Street, Navan, Co. Meath
Scoil Mhuire Primary School	Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Scoil Eanna Primary School	Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath
Flowerfield Primary School	Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Ultan's Special School	Flowerhill, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Stephen's Primary School	Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath
Educate Together Primary School	Old Dan Shaw Centre, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Mary's Special School	Johnstown, Navan, Co. Meath
Scoil Naomh Eoin	Clonmagadden, Navan, Co. Meath

The majority of the above primary schools are operating beyond capacity, with limited opportunity to expand. Three of the schools (Scoil Naomh Eoin, Educate Together Primary School and St. Stephen's Primary School) are in temporary accommodation having only been established in recent years.

A planning application was received in April 2008 from the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Eoin for the provision of a new 2 storey school incorporating 16 No. classrooms with associated general purpose room, library and resource room, multi-purpose room, staff room, special tuition rooms and teacher's room. The Planning Authority of Meath County Council engaged in extensive pre-planning discussions with the applicants prior to the application being lodged. The application was granted in December 2008.

St. Stephen's Primary School currently occupies a building at St. Martha's College to the east of the town. The current facilities are unsuitable in the longer term and there is an immediate need for a purpose built permanent school at this location.

A more detailed analysis of primary education provision and future needs is provided in Chapter 8.

Table 3; Navan Post Primary Schools

Post Primary Schools	Address
Beaufort College	Trim Road, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Patrick's Classical School	Moatlands, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Michael's Loreto Convent	Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath
St. Joseph's Secondary School	Railway Street, Navan, Co. Meath

There are currently no definite proposals or plans for additional secondary school provision in Navan however, 2 no. sites have been identified in the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015 adjacent to St. Martha's College and Clonmagadden respectively. A more detailed analysis of post primary education provision is provided in Chapter 8.

2.8.2 Health Care



Bailis Resource Centre, Navan

Acute hospital services for Navan are currently provided at Our Lady's Hospital, Navan. Patients are also referred to specialist services in the various Dublin hospitals. Services at Our Lady's Hospital located on the Athboy Road include Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Anaesthesia. There is also a number ancillary medical and care services operating in the town, including dentists, physiotherapists, chiropractors and private medical practices.

Having regard to the existing and projected future population and having regard to the limited health services currently available in Navan, there is a growing need for new and expanded health care facilities, particularly primary health care services in Navan. The Planning Authorities acknowledge that the HSE is progressing plans for a major new regional hospital in the North East for which Navan is the recommended location. The Planning Authorities will co-operate with the HSE and other agencies in facilitating the provision of this and other health care services, and to this end, a number of specific objectives will be included in this Development Plan with regard to new and expanded health care facilities.

2.8.3 Recreational, Sport and Leisure Facilities and Open Space



Navan Race Course and Golf Course

Access to recreational facilities is essential to maintain a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a good quality of life. Navan is very well provided for in terms of outdoor recreational facilities. However increased investment will be required over time with regard to indoor recreational facilities given the growing population. At the time of writing the town had golf as well as pitch and putt facilities, modern GAA facilities, football and tennis grounds as well as a swimming pool, gyms and an indoor Karting centre. Navan also has a designated walking route and children's playground.

One should not overlook the important role that public and private open space in residential areas plays in people's everyday lives. Private open space usually provides a safe, enclosed area for the resident's personal enjoyment and relaxation, but it can also act as recreational and living space for children and pets respectively. Navan is not particularly well provided for in terms of public open space at present, but plans for a major new multi-million euro town park should assist in addressing this situation. During the last Development Plan period, a major upgrade was carried out at Kennedy Place and this site has great potential to be used for as a civic space for public events and performances.

2.8.4 Library and Arts Facilities



Navan Arts Centre and Library

It is recognised by the Planning Authorities that the library service plays a vital role in underpinning many cultural and educational activities in Navan. The Navan branch library located on Railway Street offers a wide range of services to the public of both an educational, cultural and entertaining nature. The library can be accessed by community groups and members of the public free of charge. Facilities and services include an exhibition and display area, a study area, a kid's zone, audio/visual facilities, internet access and local history room. The Meath library service recognises the importance of accessibility for all and so a range of books are available in large print and audio format.

The arts sector has experienced significant activity over the past 5 years, with capital investment and investment in programming and events. The most notable achievement has been development of the state of the art architecturally designed 'Solstice' Arts Centre on Railway St. The opening of a new arts centre for Meath in April 2006 is a clear expression of the local authorities belief in the importance of a living, expressive and diverse culture that enriches the lives of the people of Meath. Solstice is the first major cultural centre provided in the county and is already being recognised as the finest centre outside of Dublin. It maintains a diverse range of high quality programmes of particular local interest delivered to international standards. This centre has been developed at a cost of €13.5m which has been funded by a grant of €2.9m from the Department of Arts Sport and Tourism, some local contributions and the significant balance from Meath County Council and Navan Town Council.

2.8.5 Childcare Facilities

The Planning Authorities acknowledge the important role that childcare facilities play in enabling people to participate fully in society and their important contribution towards tackling social disadvantage. The availability of childcare facilities can enable people to access employment, education and social networks. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities in June 2001. The Planning Authority is obliged to have regard to these guidelines in the performance of its functions including the development management process.

According to the Meath County Childcare Committee's policy document 'Embracing the evolving role of Childcare, Meath County Childcare Committee Strategic Plan 2007-2010' there are currently 1,406 childcare places in Navan (Navan Urban and Navan Rural) which means that only 41% (3,415) of the projected 0-14 child population (2006) in this locality have access to childcare places.

There are substantially more sessional places than full day care places in both areas. Therefore, funding for full day care places is to be prioritised under the National Childcare Investment Programme. The provision of baby places is also a priority for Navan town as 610 births were recorded in 2003, with this figure increasing annually. School age childcare accounts for only 5% of the childcare provision in Navan indicating that such facilities are a priority for funding. In Navan, there is a total of 59 childminders catering for 112 children in the area. This is the highest number of childminders within the county. It will be important to continue to support these childminders.

2.8.6 Fire Service

Meath County Council is the Fire Authority for the administrative area of County Meath, including the Navan Town Council area. The central fire station is based at Abbey Road, Navan. There are six other fire stations located throughout the county at Ashbourne, Dunshaughlin, Kells, Nobber, Oldcastle and Trim. During 2004, Meath County Council and Dublin City Council entered into an agreement whereby the Computer Aided Mobilization Project (CAMP) service will provide arrangements for the mobilization of Meath fire brigades. Deployment of fire appliances is therefore on a regional basis. The Fire Service is an important life saving emergency service provided by Meath County Council. The Fire Service also has a responsibility in relation to fire safety standards in the design of new and improved buildings, changes of use and also in relation to the fire safety aspects of the daily use of buildings which are accessed by the public. Under the Building Regulations, separate applications are sent to the Fire Authority to obtain a Fire Safety Certificate and this is obtained prior to construction. The role and functions of the Fire Authority are intertwined with other core services of Meath County Council such as planning, housing, water services and roads;

- planning decisions can have a major effect on the risk level in a particular area;
- good housing maintenance practices can impact significantly on the level of chimney fires;
- the fire service's water supply requirements need to be taken into account in designing water supply systems, and;
- the quality of roads and traffic management systems can affect fire brigade incident response times.

It is important, therefore, for the benefit of the community, that there are effective working relationships and co-operation between the Fire Authority and the other Local Authority services on a continuous basis. For more information on Navan's Fire Service see www.navanfirebrigade.ie .



Navan Fire Station's Class B fire tender

2.9 Heritage Context

There were 187 structures considered to be of architectural, artistic and historic interest, protected in the Navan Development Plan 2003 - 2009. All Planning Authorities in accordance with Part II, Section 10 (f) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 are required to include in a Development Plan objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. These buildings and structures are compiled on a register known as the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The review of the Navan Development Plan will update the Navan Development Plan RPS having regard to:

- The DoEHLG National Inventory of Architectural Heritage for County Meath (NIAH) which surveyed County Meath and has recommended that all structures deemed of regional, national and international importance should be included as Protected Structures in the RPS.
- Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

The 2003-2009 Navan Development Plan identified;

- 187 Protected Structures
- 1 architectural conservation area
- 19 preserved views and prospects
- 1 candidate Special Area of Conservation
- 23 Historical Sites and Monuments

2.10 Piped Infrastructure

2.10.1 Water Supply

There is currently limited spare capacity available in the Navan water supply. However, a new Navan & Mid Meath Water Supply Scheme is at an advanced stage of planning and is included in the Water Services Investment Programme 2007-2009. This scheme has been designed to provide for the water demands for the Navan & Mid Meath area to the year 2026. The scheme has been broken into a number of contracts for ease of procurement.

2.10.2 Wastewater

The Navan wastewater treatment plant at Ferganstown has a design capacity of 40,000 p.e. The current loading is approximately 38,000 p.e. The plant has scope to treat 50,000 pe with little modification required to the plant. The treatment plant capacity could be expanded to cater for 60,000 p.e. by 2013, if the demand required, subject to the availability of funding. Construction work on the Johnstown/Kilcarn Sewer Improvement Works scheme has recently been completed. The pumping stations are now commissioned and fully operational. As well as addressing the previous environmental and public health problem of wastewater discharges to the Boyne flood plains, this scheme provides the required capacity for the high population growth areas of Kilcarn and Johnstown.

2.10.3 Surface Water Drainage

The recently published draft planning guidelines regarding 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' provide sound advice to Planning Authorities on how to minimize flood risk through the planning process including Development Plans. In addition, the First Schedule of the Planning and Development Act 2000 indicates that Development Plans may include objectives regulating, restricting or controlling development in areas at risk of flooding (whether inland or coastal), erosion and other natural hazards. In light of the above, the Planning Authorities have required that all developments incorporate 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems' (SuDS) as part of the development proposals. SuDS are effective technologies which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity. It is proposed to continue this policy of requiring SuDS proposals to accompany all appropriate developments in Navan.

2.11 Movement



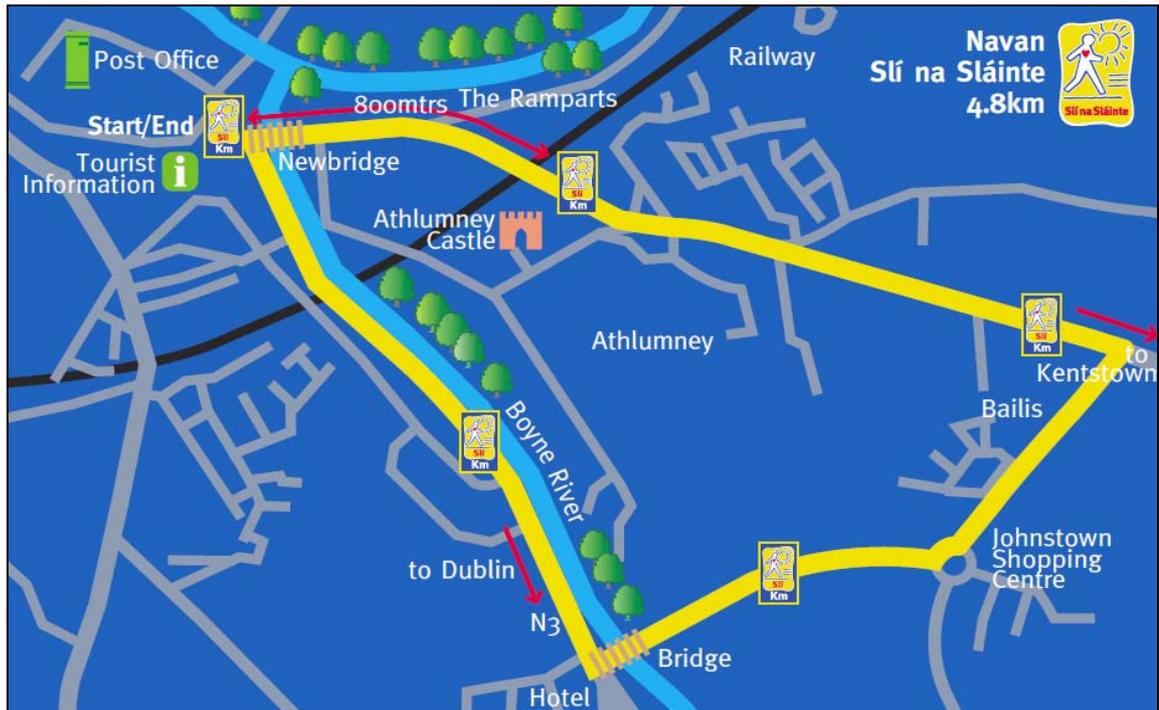
Navan Inner Relief Road Bridge

Navan functions as a major transportation mode in Co. Meath. The town is strategically located on the N3 National Primary Road which connects Dublin to Ballyshannon via Cavan. The N51 National Secondary Road passes through the town and connects Drogheda with Mullingar. Navan also is served by several regional roads, namely the R153, R161, and R162. The town experiences high levels of through traffic as a result. The town will greatly benefit from the construction of the M3 Clonlee to North of Kells Motorway Scheme which will provide a bypass for the town with a southern interchange accessible from Kilcarn with a northern interchange accessible from the Athboy road. The proposed future development of an Outer Orbital Motorway from Drogheda to Navan to Trim and on to the M7 motorway finishing near Naas will also significantly improve road access to Navan in the longer term.

During the term of the 2003 – 2009 Navan Development Plan, environmental improvements were carried out on many streets in Navan. Many of the footpaths in Navan have been upgraded with high quality paving. Road access has been improved with the development of new road and bridge schemes. Pay parking continued to remain in operation to discourage all day commuter parking and to encourage more people to travel to Navan for short stay retail and leisure visits.

Public bus services between Navan and Dublin are very good with Bus Eireann running over 50 buses each way per day. The company also operates a town bus service which services three different routes. The Flexibus rural transport service provides an excellent local service by linking Navan with the following local villages; Oldcastle, Bohermeen, Drumcondrath, Athboy, Trim, Ballivor, Summerhill, Longwood and Clonmellon. It is envisaged increased bus stop provision will be necessary in the town centre expansion areas as these areas develop. Navan is not served by an operational rail link, but Transport 21 does provide for the extension of the Clonsilla – Pace line to Navan by the end of this Development Plan. This is the subject of a current rail alignment study. The scoping phase is complete in which 8-9 route options were considered. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken on 2 routes at the time of writing. It is estimated that the feasibility study will take 1 year to complete. The target date for the delivery of this project is 2015.

Pedestrian permeability in Navan is currently considered to be reasonably good but certain areas will require ongoing improvement. There is a Slí Na Sláinte walking route through the town, Slí na Sláinte stands for 'path to health'. Developed by the Irish Heart Foundation, it's the outgoing way to make walking far more enjoyable. The identified route is outlined in the diagram below.



Navan Slí na Sláinte Route

However the situation is quite different for cyclists. The street pattern of the town makes the retro fitting of dedicated cycle ways difficult. In addition the current volumes of traffic do not contribute to a positive experience for cyclists in the town. However more recently developed outlying areas in the environs of the town could benefit from the introduction of a cycle lane network. The development of such would be undertaken by the Roads Department subject to funding.

Transport 21 includes the following provisions which are of some relevance in the context of transport in Navan:

- Provision for upgrading regional and local bus services. €9 Million per annum will be devoted to the Rural Transport Initiative (RTI);
- Completion of the M3 Motorway by 2010;
- A new rail service will serve Navan by 2015. Phase 1 will comprise of a spur off the Maynooth line to Dunboyne (2010). The second phase is an extension of this line to Navan;
- Planning studies are ongoing as to the feasibility of an Outer Orbital Motorway from Drogheda – Navan – Trim – Kilcock – Naas, linking the M1, N2, M3, M4 and M7 (also referred to as the Leinster Orbital Route).

