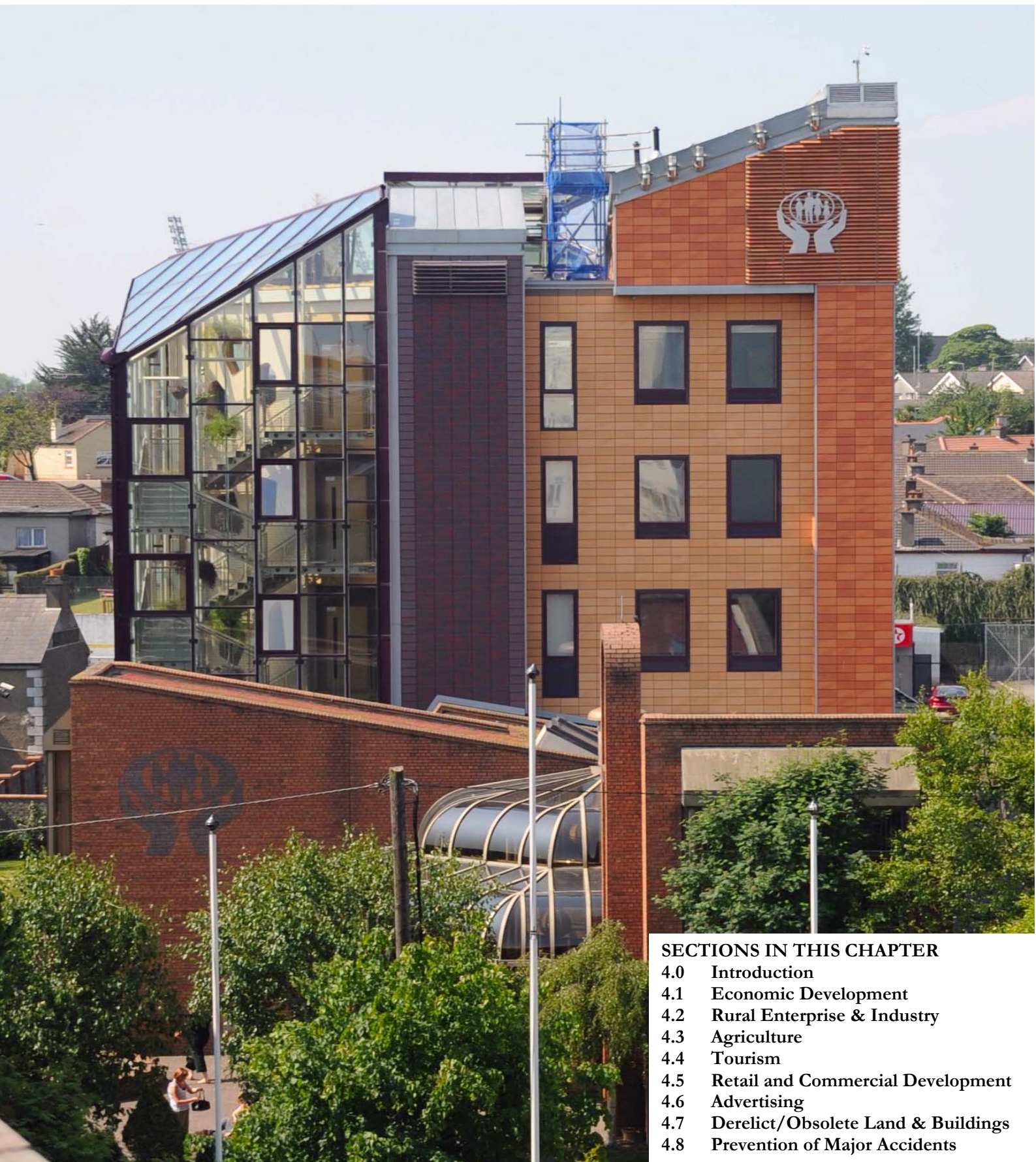


CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



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4.0 Introduction

The 2006 Census carried out by the Central Statistics Office in April 2006 found that 12,367 persons were at work in Navan (aged 15 and over). This figure represents a 35.1% increase over the figure of 9,149 recorded at work by the 2002 Census. Employment in manufacturing accounted for 16.7% of the total employed, with wholesale and retail applicable to 14.8% and the construction industry accounting for 10.1% of employment. The next largest employment category was health and social work, which 8.9% of Navan respondents stated as their line of work. The above figures show in particular the importance of the manufacturing and construction sectors to the residents of the town. The two sectors combined provide employment to approximately 26.8% of those in work. These figures should be cautiously welcomed as the construction and manufacturing industries have proven to be somewhat volatile and vulnerable to external shocks. In terms of unemployment 1,067 persons were classified as unemployed in Navan by the 2006 Census having lost or given up their previous job. A further 194 were looking for their first job.

When groups such as the retired or students are discounted it is evident that Navan enjoyed a high rate of employment in 2006 however in line with national trends the rate of unemployment is likely to be much higher now given the global economic difficulties that emerged in 2008. As previously mentioned a large quantum of employment is in industries which have not historically offered the greatest level of job security given their dependence on the central economy for growth. It shall be the challenge for the planning authorities to attract more sustainable forms of employment to Navan over the plan period to stimulate economic growth locally and to counter existing unsustainable commuting patterns.

Over the period of the 2003-2009 Development Plan the Mullaghboy Industrial Estate, the IDA Business Park and the Beechmount Home Park have developed to provide additional sources of employment for Navan. The primary role of the Planning Authorities in relation to employment creation is to ensure that sufficient serviced land is made available at suitable locations for economic activity throughout the plan period. The need to identify further lands to facilitate the employment requirements of the town's growing population will be closely monitored over the life of the Plan.

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, as well as the Meath County Development Plan, designate Navan as a Large Growth Town within the primary dynamic cluster of Navan, Trim and Kells. The Guidelines state "It is envisaged that, principally, the Large Growth Towns are most likely to be successful in attracting a concentration of major employment-generating investment and should have the greatest accessibility/connectivity and will therefore require a location on a main radial/orbital intersection and high quality rail service." Notwithstanding the success of the IDA Business Park and as with other centres in County Meath, employment generating development has not kept pace with the level of residential development in the town. A key issue to be tackled in Navan is the creation of a sustainable settlement in accordance with the Regional Planning Guidelines, i.e. a balance of residential and other uses including employment generating uses.

4.1 Economic Development

The resident population in Navan is an important locally available resource in terms of furthering the economic development of the town. A survey of Meath commuters was carried out in November 2003. The results of the survey indicated that a large number of commuters (91 %) who live in Meath wish to find work in their locality and that this labour pool contains an extensive range of experience and skills making it attractive to potential employers particularly in the areas of IT and financial services. A joint initiative was set up between the Economic Development Unit of Meath County Council and the County Enterprise Board to promote investment and job creation in Meath. The Meath Skills Database was launched in December 2004. It is generated through commuters who register on the website www.workinmeath.ie. At present, there are in excess of 3500 commuters registered with website.

Navan accounts for approximately 33% of total registrations received so far. The group registrations display the same skills sets as the full database: i.e. 19% work in the financial services/insurance sectors; 17% work in IT/Software; the predominant age is 26 - 30; a high level of educational qualifications are held; and the predominant income brackets are €31-45K and €15-30K.

It is evident from an analysis of the Meath Skills Database (MSD) that:

- (a) People in Meath want to stop commuting.
- (b) People in Meath are highly skilled and qualified in high-knowledge/skills employment sectors.

The evidence from the Meath Skills Database has influenced the economic development policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council to seek investment from high skilled/knowledge-based sectors such as Financial Services, IT, Software and Administration, as well as from the more traditional Logistics, Distribution and Light Manufacturing sectors.

The Economic Development & Innovation Unit of Meath County Council continues to work with the Meath County Enterprise Board in ensuring that the Meath Skills Database remains a valuable tool in demonstrating the diverse skills available to businesses seeking to invest in Meath. The Meath Skills Database will be updated in 2009 to reflect the changing circumstances in which many commuters may find themselves.

The Economic Development & Innovation Unit based at Innovation House, Railway St., Navan is also working hard to ensure that Meath is fully considered by those who are considering locating or relocating their business. A range of promotional material has been produced and a number of initiatives have been developed. These include the Meath Business Property Website – www.meathbusinessproperty.ie – a website dedicated to informing potential investors as to the kind and number of available business properties throughout County Meath. The Economic Development & Innovation Unit is also working with the Council's Community & Enterprise Section with a view to improving the appearance of business parks and industrial estates in the county. The Economic Development & Innovation Unit also provides support to those businesses that have selected Meath as their business location of choice. Advice and assistance is also provided through the planning process, if required. The Meath Business Directory will also go live in early 2009, where all Meath businesses will have access to a free listing service for their business.



Economic Development and Innovation Unit provides free expert advice to potential investors

Positives for Navan in terms of employment creation include:

- Broadband is available via the Metropolitan Area Network scheme for Navan commissioned in 2007.
- Wide presence of skilled labour as evidenced by the MSD.
- Attractive cost environment relative to urban cost levels (e.g. land costs, building costs, salary costs).
- Excellent accessibility when the M3 Motorway is delivered.
- Excellent accessibility when the Navan – Dublin Railway line is delivered and the prospect of the delivery of the Dublin Outer Orbital Road (DOOR) in the longer term. This will assist in attracting businesses requiring a good profile in respect of access and proximity to strategic route corridors.
- Further evidence from the MSD suggests that commuters from adjacent counties such as Cavan, Louth and Westmeath would find it attractive to switch their employment location to Meath, and Navan would obviously be very attractive to them. Therefore it could be said that Navan could play a regional role as an employment location of choice for high skilled/knowledge based businesses who are anxious to set up a regional operation which is removed from Dublin without being in a remote/far removed location.
- The success of the Navan IDA Business Park, Beechmount Homepark and Mullaghboy Industrial Estate which has recently expanded.

Key Economic aims of the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015:

- Ensure sufficient lands are available to cater for employment generating uses.
- Consolidate and build on the success of the existing IDA Business Park at Athlumney Beechmount Home Park and Mullaghboy Industrial Estate and identify suitable additional areas to accommodate employment generating uses as the need arises.
- Assist in releasing suitable lands for employment generating uses where barriers currently exist.
- Encourage environmental improvements in the town centre area which will assist in generating a ‘feel good factor’ in the town which will have a positive impact on potential employers/employees locating in the town.
- Continue to improve the piped infrastructure serving the town.
- To cooperate with and facilitate subject to proper planning, organisations involved in job creation.
- Realise the relocation of unsuitable land uses from the town centre to more appropriate and accessible locations on appropriately zoned land.



St Mary's Credit Union

The joint councils will seek to promote the economic development of Navan in order to maximise opportunities presented by the identification of Navan as a Large Growth Town forming part of a Primary Dynamic Cluster. The Development Plan clearly identifies land for industrial and commercial development which is capable of generating the requisite level of job creation needed to provide local employment opportunities for Navan's growing population and support the growth and development of Co. Meath in general. It is important that a range of locations are identified to meet the practical needs of users and thereby encourage diversification of the local economy and to ensure that it is more resistant to adverse changes in the structure of employment activity.

The Planning Authorities are limited in its actions in support of economic development, which will be determined in the first instance by market forces, and secondly by agencies with a remit for specific intervention in this area. The Planning Authorities can assist the development of all economic sectors by the implementation of policies relating to:

- The provision of an adequate and efficient transportation system
- The zoning of sufficient and appropriately located lands for industrial and commercial development
- The provision of sanitary services and other urban infrastructure
- The provision, in conjunction with other agencies, of enterprise centre provision and training provision related to small and medium sized enterprises (SME) such as Navan Enterprise Centre
- The zoning of adequate residentially zoned lands and the creation of an attractive urban domain to facilitate residency of the projected labour force
- Developing the public realm and amenities of Navan so that the quality of life of employees and residents can be improved.

Employment and enterprise land uses have been provided for at a number of strategically identified locations within the context of the balanced development of Navan, to the north, west, south west and south east of the town. Navan IDA Business Park has been a relative success over the lifetime of the previous Development Plan with a survey of the park in February 2008 revealing only one vacant unit and establishing that over 650 people are employed in the park and the adjoining civil service office building on the Forfás Rd. The development of a new purpose built office for Quinn Direct Insurance has the potential to double the level of employment within the Business Park over the period of the Development Plan. It is considered that a more than adequate quantum of land remains available within the Business Park to provide for substantial additional employment creation over the lifetime of the Plan.

Large areas of land have also been identified at Clonmagaddan, Mullaghboy and Knockumber to provide for industrial and office development. A linear tract of land has also been identified at Knockumber to specifically provide for small and medium sized industries of a local nature (including entrepreneurial start up businesses) and will allow for the displacement of non compatible and industrial uses from the town centre and other locations. Beechmount Home park has evolved over the lifetime of the Development Plan from a furniture manufacturing centre to largely a retail showcase centre for home furnishing. The Planning Authorities will continue to support the development of Beechmount in this manner supporting both manufacturing and retail uses related to home furnishings. The opening to traffic of the M3 Motorway incorporating its bypass of Navan, is likely to provide an additional stimulus to aid the development of commercial and industrial land uses in the town over the period of the Navan Development Plan 2009-2015.

Small tracks of lands zoned for E1 'Industrial Use' are also identified off the Kells Road at Liscarton and Whistlemount.

The Meath Motorway Interchanges study which it is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 to undertake, will examine the two interchanges on the M3 Motorway serving Navan and it will inform the type and scale development that will be permitted adjacent to these important transport nodes to ensure that the economic potential of this infrastructure is utilised while ensuring the transport function of this infrastructure is not undermined.

Policies

In terms of Economic Development, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

ECON DEV POL 1 To facilitate and encourage the development of Navan as a 'Large Growth town' in the hinterland of the Metropolitan Area of the Greater Dublin Area and as the economic driver for Co. Meath.

ECON DEV POL 2 To encourage the development of Navan as a dynamic economic cluster with Trim and Kells.

ECON DEV POL 3 To support the activities of agencies involved in the promotion of employment generating opportunities in Navan including the Meath County Enterprise Board, Enterprise Ireland and the Industrial Development Agency (IDA Ireland).

ECON DEV POL 4 To ensure that an adequate quantity and range of land is available for industrial development and that the appropriate infrastructure including roads, sanitary services, energy supply and telecommunications, training infrastructure and housing is provided.

ECON DEV POL 5 To encourage local/small scale offices in neighbourhood centres.

ECON DEV POL 6 Where industrial sites are developed adjacent to residential areas and community facilities, buffer zones shall be provided as well as adequate screening in the form of planting, landscaping and mounding as appropriate.

ECON DEV POL 7 To apply a flexible approach to the zoning of entrepreneurial start up business and small scale industrial and employment generating activities, where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use would have minimal impact on adjoining uses, primarily residential property.

ECON DEV POL 8 To encourage the integration of employment locations with other land uses and the transportation network, and in particular, ensure that the location of employment intensive land uses are located in proximity to existing and planned strategic routes, where public transport is viable.

Objectives

In terms of Economic Development, it is an objective of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

ECON DEV OBJ 1 To zone suitable lands to facilitate employment generation and to facilitate the development of employment creating land uses at these identified locations in accordance with the principles of proper planning.

ECON DEV OBJ 2 To provide sites for the relocation of non compatible town centre commercial uses on a site zoned for E4 Industrial Use (See Zoning Objectives Maps).

ECON DEV OBJ 3 To provide for small and medium sized industries to develop on lands zoned for E4 Industrial Use (See Zoning Objectives Maps).

ECON DEV OBJ 4 To provide for the continued development of Beechmount Home Park as a furniture showcase centre by supporting both manufacturing and retail uses related to home furnishings. Manufacturing and retail uses which are not directly related to the furniture trade shall only be facilitated in the case of an extension to an existing authorised use.

ECON DEV OBJ 5 To provide for light industrial and industrial office type employment at Mullaghboy Industrial Estate and to facilitate the expansion of existing authorised uses/developments where necessary and appropriate.

4.2 Rural Enterprise & Industry

Industrial development and enterprise should normally be located within appropriately zoned and serviced industrial or employment generating lands. It is accepted that there are certain limited categories of enterprise that may have specific locational requirements that can more readily be accommodated outside of industrially zoned lands. Where no other suitable alternative sites for the location of such enterprise use are available in designated areas, the Planning Authority will consider employment generating uses in the countryside that are sympathetic to the surrounding area and which do not degrade amenity. Proposed expansions will be considered on their merits having regard to the other policies contained in this Development Plan and the proposed planning and sustainable development of the area.

In terms of rural enterprise and industry, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council;

RURAL ENT POL 1 To ensure that both rural and urban areas play their roles in driving the development of the Town in a balanced and sustainable way.

RURAL ENT POL 2 To normally permit development proposals for the expansion of existing industrial or business enterprises in the countryside where the resultant development is of a size and scale which remains appropriate and which does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area; and the proposal demonstrates that it has taken into account traffic, public health, environmental and amenity considerations and is in accordance with the policies, requirements and guidance contained in this plan. In all instances, it should be demonstrated that the proposal would not generate traffic of a type and amount inappropriate for the character of the access roads or would require improvements which would affect the character of these roads.

RURAL ENT POL 3 To permit development proposals for industrial or business enterprises in the countryside only where, the proposed use has locational requirements that can only be accommodated in a rural location and this has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, the resultant development is of a size and scale which remains appropriate and which does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area; and the proposal demonstrates that it has taken into account traffic, public health, environmental and amenity considerations and is in accordance with the policies, requirements and guidance contained in this plan. In all instances, it should be demonstrated that the proposal would not generate traffic of a type and amount inappropriate for the character of the access roads or would require improvements which would affect the character of these roads.

RURAL ENT POL 4 To encourage new and high quality investment in the tourism industry in Navan with specific reference to leisure activities (golf, equestrian, walking, cycling, angling, outdoor pursuits and family orientated activities).

RURAL ENT POL 5 In the development of tourist facilities, regard will be had to the landscape's ability to accommodate such development.

RURAL ENT POL 6 To encourage proposals to reinstate, conserve and / or replace existing ruinous or disused dwellings for holiday homes subject to normal planning considerations relating to design, safe access the provision of any necessary wastewater disposal facilities.

RURAL ENT POL 7 To accommodate small scale enterprises, such as the renovation of barns, outhouses or other existing structures and the construction of one or two holiday homes for short term rental (less than 3 months at any one time to any person / family) associated with an existing permanent residence or active farm / agri-tourism enterprise. It shall be a condition of permission that such holiday homes be retained within the ownership of the complex / permanent dwelling and shall not be sold to form a separate permanent residence.

RURAL ENT POL 8 To consider the provision of caravan and camping sites at suitable locations where they are consistent with the Settlement Strategy for the Town and to ensure a high standard of layout, design and amenity in such proposals.

RURAL ENT POL 9 To ensure that development for aggregates / mineral extraction, processing and associated concrete production does not significantly impact on the following areas:

- 1) Existing & Proposed Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);
- 2) Special Protection Areas (SPAs);
- 3) Existing & Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs);
- 4) Other areas of importance for the conservation of flora and fauna;
- 5) Areas of significant archaeological potential;
- 6) In the vicinity of a recorded monument, and;
- 7) Sensitive landscapes.

RURAL ENT POL 10 To ensure that extractive industries do not adversely affect the environment or adjoining existing land uses and are carried out in such a manner so as to minimise detracting from the visual quality of the landscape.

RURAL ENT POL 11 To promote forestry development of an appropriate scale and character whilst ensuring that the development does not have a negative visual impact on the countryside or cause pollution or degradation to wildlife habitats, natural waters or areas of ecological significance.

4.3 Agriculture

Agriculture has traditionally been the most important contributor to the rural economy of Co. Meath. While it is now providing less employment, it still remains important as a significant source of income and employment in rural areas of Navan. The provision of well located structures and facilities necessary for good and environmentally sound agricultural practice shall be supported by the Planning Authority. The suitability of a given proposal will be determined by the following factors:

- The provision of buildings to a design, materials specification and appearance and at locations which would be compatible with the protection of rural amenities;
- The comprehensiveness of information in relation to waste management with particular emphasis on developments within existing farm complexes having regard to the potential cumulative effects;
- The availability of an effective means of farm waste management to ensure nutrient balancing between application of farm wastes to land and the balanced uptake by agricultural use of land;
- The availability of measures to ensure good supervision in relation to the management of farm wastes including ownership of spreadlands or control of same through agreements capable of effective enforcement, and;
- Whilst the Planning Authority recognises the primacy in use terms of agriculture in rural areas and that the presence of individual housing should not impinge unduly on legitimate and necessary rural activity, regard should be had to the unnecessary proximity of major new farm complexes to existing residential development.

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

AGRI POL 1 To encourage and facilitate agricultural diversification into agri-businesses such as organic foods, rural tourism and small to medium sized enterprises subject to the retention of the holding for primarily agricultural use and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

AGRI POL 2 To facilitate the development of agriculture while ensuring that natural waters, wildlife habitats and conservation areas are protected from pollution.

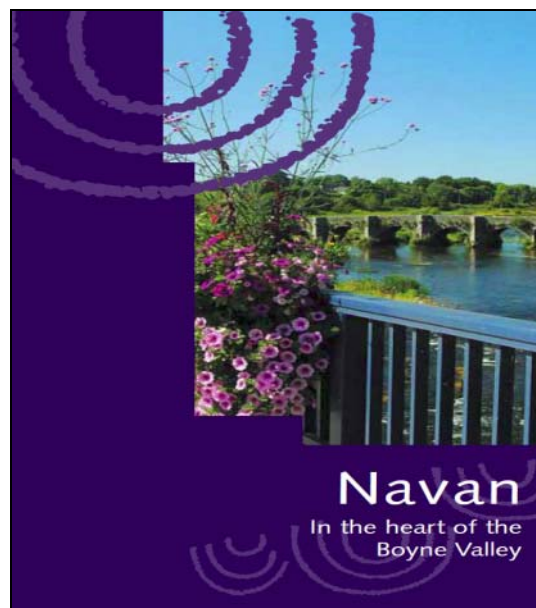
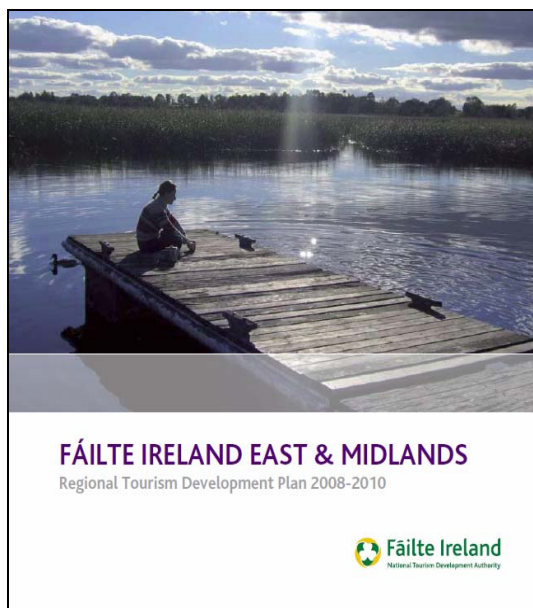
AGRI POL 3 To protect agricultural or agri-business uses from unplanned and / or incompatible urban development.

AGRI POL 4 To protect and enhance the visual qualities of rural areas through the sensitive design of necessary development.

AGRI POL 5 To resist proposals to remove woodland, boundary trees or hedgerow planting, where such planting is of benefit to the visual and ecological amenity of an area.

4.4 Tourism

Meath experienced an increase in overseas visitor numbers of 21% to 117,000 in 2005 (96,000 in 2004). This represents €34m in revenue from overseas visitors. In relation to domestic visitors, Meath is part of the larger East Coast and Midlands Region which has its own tourism Development Plan. The region had 900,000 domestic trips in 2005.



The Meath County tourism strategy entitled ‘Ireland’s Heritage Capital, Marketing Tourism in Meath, 2005-2010’ identifies heritage as the County’s Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and the County is accordingly branded as “Ireland’s Heritage Capital”. While Navan does not benefit directly from the presence of a major heritage tourism attraction, it is well placed in the centre of the County between the major heritage sites of Newgrange, the Hill of Tara, Sliabh na Calliagh, Slane, the Battle of the Boyne visitors centre, as well as Trim and Kells Heritage Towns.

Navan is a lively market town offering a wealth of attractions and activities. Suitable for both adult groups and families, there is something for everyone to enjoy. There are two existing hotels in the town and 2 no. additional permitted hotels. The ‘Leisure Link’ leisure centre offers a swimming pool, gym and an aqua slide. Visitors can take a leisurely stroll through the medieval streets of Navan town or wander down to the Ramparts for a scenic river walk. For a sporting break, there is high quality golf course, horse racing and fishing on the banks of the famous River Boyne. For evening entertainment, the numerous pubs and good food restaurants offer a warm, traditional welcome and ‘ceol agus craic’ to patrons. The new Meath Arts Centre provides a 320 seat theatre with café/bar facilities and state-of-the-art visual art galleries and exhibition spaces. For children and the young at heart there are playgrounds and fun centres.

However, tourism development is not currently meeting its full potential in Navan given the quality of nearby heritage sites and the range of facilities and attractions in the town. The Planning Authorities will seek to improve the appearance of the town centre, by carrying out environmental improvements and ensuring appropriate management over new development, in order to strengthen and improve the character of Navan. New development in the tourism sector should respect the existing character of the town and its surroundings. This will enable tourism facilities to be provided in appropriate locations that will not have a detrimental impact on the town or its residents. A map is provided overleaf which outlines the location of some of the local tourist attractions in Navan and its immediate environs.



Tourism Map of Navan

Meath County Council and Meath Tourism commissioned a Meath Needs Analysis in 2006 which compares the principal towns in Meath with similar size towns in Ireland in terms of their tourism potential and offering. A comparative analysis of Navan and Athlone and Tralee was carried out in the needs analysis in the following categories: transport/access, physical infrastructure, supply of quality food and drink establishments, leisure facilities, retail; specialists high value consumer products and services, environmentally friendly tourist attractions, tourism training facilities; entertainment, culturally enriched attractions, heritage attractions, activities, festivals and town brand marketing.

Opportunities for Navan are identified and include:

- Navan-Dublin Rail link to be established.
- Improvement in local bus service regularity.
- Establishment of a branded festival for the town.
- Development of bridle paths/cycleways and walkways.
- Development of more weather independent facilities.



Navan Racecourse

Policies

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

TOU POL 1 To promote and encourage the development of Navan as a tourism gateway to Meath in co-operation with Meath Tourism, Fáilte Ireland and other relevant agencies.

TOU POL 2 To promote the development of tourism in Navan in a sustainable manner and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourism facilities, subject to location, siting and design criteria while safeguarding the protection of the built environment, including archaeological heritage, of Navan in co-operation with Meath Tourism, Fáilte Ireland and other relevant agencies.

Objectives

In terms of Tourism, it is an objective of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

TOU OBJ 1 To promote a tourist signage strategy for Navan in conjunction with Meath Tourism.

TOU OBJ 2 To promote and maintain the amenity of the Slí na Sláinte walking route in Navan and the Ramparts walking route.

TOU OBJ 3 To facilitate the improvement of existing sign posted walking/cycling routes within the town and environs and where possible develop new ones.

TOU OBJ 4 To promote the development of a range of high quality tourist accommodation and ancillary facilities, especially those facilities which provide conference and leisure facilities.

TOU OBJ 5 To encourage and promote festivals and other appropriate cultural events.

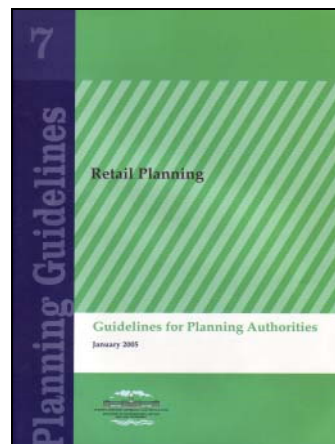
TOU OBJ 6 To encourage the removal of unsightly elements at historically sensitive locations within the town such as inappropriate advertising, poles, wires and antennae.

4.5 Retail and Commercial Development

4.5.1 Background

The Retail Planning Guidelines (2005) require that the following be included in all Development Plans:

- Confirmation of the Retail Hierarchy, the role of the centre and size of the main town centre;
- Definition of the boundaries of the core retail area;
- Broad assessment of additional floor space requirements;
- Strategic guidance on location and scale of retail development;
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage improvement of the town centre, and;
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.



4.5.2 Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016

The Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area was made jointly in mid 2008 by the Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities and runs to the year 2016. The purpose of the retail strategy is to guide the formulation of local retail planning policy across the seven local authority areas that form the Greater Dublin Area, i.e. Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, Fingal, South Dublin, Meath, Kildare and Wicklow. The Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities decided to undertake a review of the 2001 Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy due to the many policy, economic and population changes that had taken place in the intervening period since 2001. At a national and regional level new policies were adopted which impact on the Retail Strategy including inter alia, the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS), the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016 (RPGs), the National Development Plan 2007-2013 (NDP) and the revised Ministerial Retail Planning Guidelines issued in 2005.



The Strategy aims to set out a co-ordinated, sustainable approach to the assessment and provision of retail services within the Greater Dublin Area so that:

- Adequate and suitable provision is made to meet the needs of the growing and changing population, both overall and locally, and provide for healthy competition and consumer choice.
- Retail in suitable locations is provided, integrated within existing growth areas and public transport investment.
- Significant overprovision, which would place more marginal locations under severe pressure and undermine sustainability driven policies aimed at revitalising town centres is avoided.

The strategy advises that in preparing their Development Plans, Planning Authorities should:

- Be cognisant of the need to provide spatially appropriate, sustainable high quality retail; take account of the retail market locally and nationally;
- be aware of new retail trends, technologies, efficiencies and innovations;
- take account of the broad forecasts for additional retail floorspace and how the retail sector is likely to want to respond to that demand over the plan period, by reference to location; encourage retail in town centre locations and restrict retail outside of town centre locations;
- in recognising the role of retail as a key engine in town centre life, encourage the provision of retail along public streets with a mixed use context and requiring high quality urban design- giving legibility and sense of place to neighbourhoods and districts - in proportion to the order of service provided;
- identify a range of suitable sites on which the demand for development might best be met, with particular emphasis on the improved public transport links as noted in Transport 21;
- assess the role and impact of significant proposed expansions of retail in the Plan area, on movement, within the context of a strategic transport assessment which would consider both road capacity and access to public transport,
- assess the effectiveness of previous development plan policies aimed at enhancing the vitality and viability of individual centres and updating of policies as a result, where necessary;
- improve access to town centres by facilitating opportunities for public transport, cycling and walking; while also ensuring that sufficient car parking is available for necessary car borne shopping;
- designate core areas primarily for shopping uses and secondary areas for shopping and other retail service, commercial and residential uses and set out policies for the appropriate management of both types of area;
- undertake regular health check assessments; include criteria-based policies to provide developers with information on how to present a comprehensive retail case.

The strategy recognises the important role that retail services play in Navan by designating the town as a Level 2 County Town Centre. The strategy states such centres should offer the widest access to shopping activities for the greatest number of people, but states that it will be difficult for Navan to realise its full commercial potential until it's traffic problems are addressed by the provision of the M3 Motorway. The Strategy illustrates the high level of retail expenditure leakage of 40% to adjoining Counties (2% decrease from 2001) and recognises that the development of Navan as a key destination will require flexibility in bringing forward key sites within the town core area. It will also necessitate encouragement of the provision of high quality retail units to provide for the needs of modern retailers and to facilitate the provision of a good mix of retail offer to the local and surrounding population.

The Retail Strategy also recommends greater intensification of development within the existing urban fabric and on opportunity sites and through the redevelopment of the central car parking areas. This would ensure that retail and other town centre uses are retained within the town centre rather than dissipated to more peripheral areas, thus avoiding the possibility of displacement of the prime shopping focus from the existing core retail area and so ensuring its continued viability and vitality.

4.5.3 Meath County Retail Strategy 2003

The Meath County Retail Strategy, 2003 was prepared in accordance with the retail planning guidelines, 2000. These guidelines assisted Planning Authorities in their assessment of retail planning applications and the formulation of retail policy in development/local area plans until they were revised in 2005. The objective of the guidelines is to ensure that the optimum location for new retail development is established which is accessible to all sections of society and is of a scale which allows the continued prosperity of traditional town centres and existing retail centres.

Navan is a Level 2 County Town Centre in the GDA hierarchy. The County Retail Strategy states “in the early years of the Strategy, there is scope and potential for additional retail floorspace to be located in and around the core retail area. Taking a longer term view, and one that goes to and beyond 2011 – the timescale of the County Retail Strategy, it has to be recognised that Navan is set to become an even more major town in both the GDA retail hierarchy and national settlement hierarchy. The existing town centre will be too small to accommodate the quantum and quality of retail floorspace that is needed to support what will be in essence a small city in the national context. Land requires to be identified for an expansion of the town centre.” Navan has a relatively high market share of retail expenditure in that it attracts a large proportion of people living in Meath, particularly from the north and west of the County. However it has a more limited penetration across the GDA due to the proximity of the Blanchardstown Centre, Dublin City and Drogheda.

Amongst actions identified for Navan, the County Retail Strategy advocates the following:

- Achieving consolidation and intensification of retail development and other town centre uses should be a priority over the period of the Retail Strategy to 2011.
- Provision of prime pitch locations at the heart of the town centre to attract brand name national and international comparison multiples.
- Forward planning in respect of the development of Navan into a city and regional capital over the period to 2016. Decisions today must therefore not compromise what will be required to sustain and expand the town centre over the years that follow.
- Provision of neighbourhood centres to serve residential communities where appropriate.



Navan Shopping Centre

Navan has a relatively compact town centre and retail core formed by Trimgate St., Market Sq. Ludlow Street and Kennedy Road along with the purpose built shopping centre. The retail core provides a wide variety of higher/middle comparison goods in a range of retail outlet sizes. Shopping provision in the town is based on a hierarchy of centres. The current retail hierarchy in Navan is as follows:

- Navan Town Centre (including Navan Shopping Centre)
- Neighbourhood Centres (Blackcastle, Beechmount, Bailis)
- Local Corner Shops and Forecourt Outlets

Navan Town Centre

The town centre area of Navan covers a large area. The core retail area of Navan as defined in the County Retail Strategy includes parts or all of Trimgate Street, Market Square, Ludlow Street, Watergate Street, Kennedy Road, Navan Shopping Centre and Kennedy Place. The retail mix in the town centre is varied with nearly every retail need being accommodated. Despite the success of Navan Shopping Centre, the main traditional shopping streets of Navan have not lost any of its commercial strength. Trimgate Street and Market Square along with Ludlow Street and to a lesser extent Watergate Street and Railway Street, contain thriving retail and commercial sectors. This area, from which the bulk of the towns commercial business is conducted and where the majority of shops are located, largely coincides with the basic linear form of the medieval town core. These streets contain a range of commercial uses, including convenience and comparison retail outlets, offices, public houses and restaurants, financial and personal services. There is limited vacancy and dereliction along the main streets, which indicates the strong demand for town centre commercial and retail space. The limited vacancy, which does occur, is around Market Square and Ludlow Street.

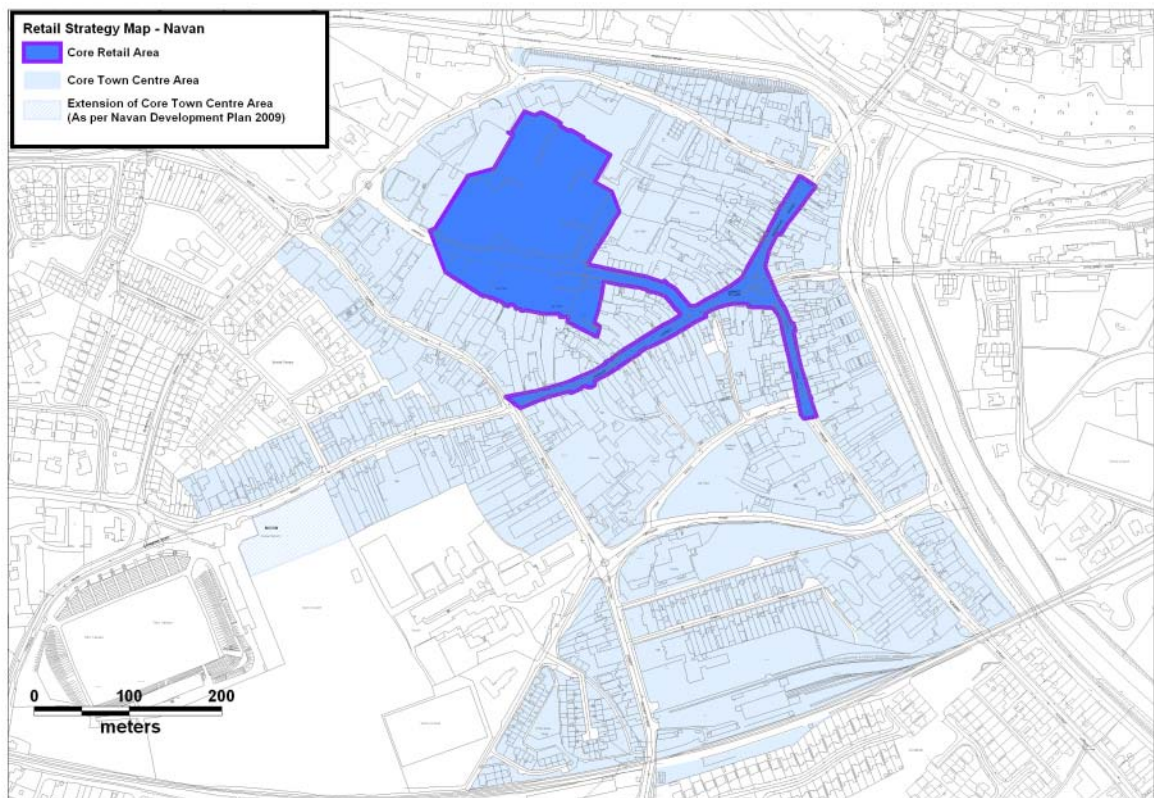


Figure 4; Navan Core Retail Area

Like most county towns, there is a good range and diversity of other town centre functions and activities. It is a busy and vibrant centre, but as highlighted in the *'Navan Integrated Development Framework Plan'* and the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area there is scope for improvements in terms of the range, quality and quantum of retail floorspace and other town centre activities plus the general environment of the centre. There is little representation of international multiples or designer outlets and the town centre is dominated by traffic flows and surface parking. Reorganisation and management of car parking in the town centre could further enhance the attractiveness for shopping. In order to encourage investment in the town centre and to improve retail conditions, the environmental upgrading of the town centre must continue as a priority. Measures such as traffic management, traffic calming, parking, improvements to street pavements, the urban townscape and landscape, and environmental improvements should be implemented.

The maintenance of the town centre as the primary location for comparison shopping is a central objective of Navan Town Council's and Meath County Council's retail policy and developments, which militate against this policy, will not normally be permitted. The town centre will be protected as the principle shopping area and out of town shopping other than small scale local shopping will not be generally accepted as it is considered that it would undermine the role of the town centre. This policy is discussed in more detail under the 'Sequential Approach' outlined below.

Navan Shopping Centre

Navan Shopping Centre forms the town's major retail focus. The proximity of the centre to the N3 and the Navan Inner Relief Route Phase 2A ensures vehicle accessibility to the centre for the residents of Navan and for those within the surrounding retail catchment to the north and west of the town in particular. The Shopping Centre, opened in 1981, currently comprises of approximately 19,045 sq. m. (205,000 sq. ft.) gross floor area. The development of the Shopping Centre has offered a wide range of retail services under one roof and resulted initially to a shift in customer patterns away from the traditional town core. The relocation of Navan Post Office and the opening of the Credit Union at Kennedy Road further exacerbated the situation. The centre has been extended and refurbished in the past number of years to include the addition of two multi-storey car parks and the major expansion of the main anchor drapery and grocery tenants, namely Penny's, Dunnes Stores and Tesco respectively and also the addition of Marks and Spencers. 6 screen multiplex cinema have also been added to the centre. The range of retail and service functions contained in the centre include convenience goods, clothing, specialist goods, household goods, entertainment services and other financial and personal services. The successful operation of the centre and the increased demand is borne out not only by demand for increased space in the last number of years and lack of vacancy, but also by the increases in the numbers of shoppers recorded by the Shopping Centre management. The Shopping Centre suffers from traffic congestion problems at peak shopping hours and Navan Town Council and owners of the centres are working at resolving these problems.

Definition of Navan's Core Retail Area & Town Centre

Figure 4, above identifies the Core Retail Area of Navan and identifies the potential for expansion. The Core Retail Area consists of the Navan Shopping Centre and Kennedy Road, Trimgate Street, Market Square, the south-western end of Watergate Street and the northern end of Ludlow Street. This remaining area of Navan Town Centre includes Abbey Road (including St. Ultan's Terrace), the remainder of Watergate Street and Ludlow Street, Timmons Hill, Bridge Street including the frontage of the N3 Inner Relief Road, the Fair Green, Circular Road, Railway Street and Brews Hill. 1 The Core Retail Area is normally defined as the area including and immediate to the 'prime pitch'. That is the area that achieves the highest rentals, best yields, is highest in demand from operators, is overwhelmingly retail floorspace and has the highest footfall of shoppers.

In order to meet the aims of the *'County Meath Retail Strategy'*, the Navan Development Plan has adopted the *'Sequential Approach'* on the preferred location for future retail development. The *'Sequential Approach'* defines that the preferred location for future retail development, where practicable and viable, is within Navan town centre. Where it is not possible to provide the form and

scale of development that is required on a site within Navan town centre, then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre so as to encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes. An edge of centre site is taken to be one, which is within an easy and convenient walking distance from the primary shopping core of the town centre, i.e. 300-400 metres from the edge of the Core Retail Area. Only after having assessed the size, availability, accessibility and feasibility of developing both sites and premises, firstly within Navan town centre and secondly on the edge of the town centre, should alternative out of centre sites be considered where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of town centre sites which are suitable, viable or available. In adopting the '*Sequential Approach*', Meath County Council and Navan Town Council will reinforce the role of the town centre and succeed in sustaining and enhancing its performance.

Strategic Guidance on the Location of Retail Development

The '*County Meath Retail Strategy*' provides a strategic policy framework for the spatial distribution of new retail development in Navan. Navan has potential for expansion of the town centre on sites and areas adjacent or close to the existing centre. Site appraisals indicated a range of suitable locations similar to those identified in the '*Integrated Development Framework Plan*', namely within the existing town centre, the Fair Green, and the lands around the proposed public transport interchange. To sustain the strength of the town centre it is important that town centre development/expansion, as far as is practicable, moves sequentially across this area and that all proposals ensure a continuum and real linkage.

The long-term expansion of the town centre is envisaged towards the proposed integrated public transport interchange. This area is currently characterised by under utilised industrial and commercial uses, which could be better utilised as an extension of the commercial and retail development of the urban core. It is intended that this area would also be served in the longer term by rail infrastructure, a feature that must be maintained for possible future use. It proposes the creation of a new attraction pole (retail, business and an element of residential) around this bus and rail station, which together with the existing Shopping Centre will establish the broad axis in which most densification and mix of uses should occur.

Shopping is only one of the attractions of the town centre. The above addresses the retail component of the equation. In Navan, this must be pursued in conjunction with a significantly enhanced public realm that establishes a sense of place, which embraces and celebrates the strong history and heritage in the town. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Integrated Development Framework Plan.

Strategic Guidance on the Scale of Retail Development

The strength and importance of Navan within the County is fundamental to the competitiveness of Meath regionally and against neighbouring counties outside of the GDA. To accord with its role as a major centre within the GDA hierarchy, Navan should continue to be predominantly a comparison shopping based centre although convenience will remain an important element in the overall role and attraction of the town.

At present, Navan has a relatively limited range of high street brand name national and international comparison multiples and this is the market sector that it should seek to attract in order to stem the flow of this expenditure from the town and county to other centres. The potential operators will require prime pitch locations at the heart of the town centre. The potential already exists for this to be achieved through greater intensification of development within the town centre, through the redevelopment of the central car parking areas that dominate the heart of the centre and the designated town centre expansion area. This will ensure that retail and other town centre uses are retained within the town centre rather than dissipated to more peripheral areas which could result in the displacement of the prime shopping focus and impact on the vitality and attraction of the existing core retail area. Achieving consolidation and intensification of retail development and other town centre uses within this area should be a priority over the period of the '*Meath County Retail Strategy*' to

2011. It is acknowledged that the achievement of consolidation and intensification objectives has associated traffic, car parking and other transportation issues, which will need to be addressed in parallel. Nonetheless, these transportation issues must not be allowed to constrain major town centre development as this will effectively result in Navan failing to achieve its potential or sustain its existing competitiveness.

The scale of retail development at the identified Neighbourhood Centres should be linked to population size and potential in each sector.

Policies

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

RET DEV POL 1: To promote and encourage major enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace and town centre functions in Navan in a southerly direction towards the proposed central interchange in order to sustain its competitiveness and importance as a designated County Town Centre and 'Level 2 Centre' in the Greater Dublin Area.

RET DEV POL 2: To protect and enhance the vitality of Navan Town Centre and promote this area as the main commercial core where an appropriate mix of commercial, retail, recreational, civic, cultural and residential uses are provided.

RET DEV POL 3: To adhere to the provisions of the Sequential Approach to retailing and the application of retail thresholds to proposed development in line with the requirements of the Retail Planning Guidelines

RET DEV POL 4: To ensure that lands adjacent to and extending from the town centre are protected from development that would compromise the longer term town centre expansion proposals being realised.

RET DEV POL 5: To promote the continued development of the town centre in a manner which provides permeability between the existing town centre and designated expansion areas.

RET DEV POL 6: To encourage a range of shopping facilities in Navan town Centre

RET DEV POL 7: To facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for retail in Navan

RET DEV POL 8: To site retail development in locations that encourage multi-purpose shopping, business and leisure trips on the same journey

RET DEV POL 9: To encourage and support the enhancement of the retail offer of Navan while respecting the heritage value of the town.

RET DEV POL 10: To encourage and support proposals for the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and vacant properties in the town centre with due cognisance to the sequential approach.

RET DEV POL 11: To support proposals for new retail and other mixed use development in the town centre where the proposal:

- Is compliant with the sequential approach to retailing;
- Is well located, convenient, attractive and has safe pedestrian linkages;
- Provides or is in close proximity to adequate parking (including cycle parking);
- Provides adequate facilities for the recycling of waste packaging generated by the proposal, including a bring centre where required;
- Has negligible impact on existing urban residents;
- Has due regard to the heritage value of Navan.

RET DEV POL 12: To continue to improve and expand the environmental improvement and urban design schemes in the town centre in order to enhance the attractiveness of the main shopping area, and the vibrancy and vitality of the central core.

Objectives

In terms of Retail, it is an objective of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV OBJ 1: To assess the provision of new retail development in accordance with the sequential test as outlined in the County Meath Retail Strategy.

RET DEV OBJ 2: To examine alternative options for the provision of car parking other than surface car-parking and to ensure provision is made for cycle parking in major retail developments.

RET DEV OBJ 3: To seek the removal of inappropriate and unauthorised advertising signs, sandwich boards, satellite dishes and shop front shutters from buildings within the town centre.

RET DEV OBJ 4: To seek the removal of all unauthorised advertising/satellite dishes from the approach roads and central area streets in order to improve the appearance of Navan.

RET DEV OBJ 5: To initiate enforcement proceedings where an unauthorised use or unauthorised development occurs.

RET DEV OBJ 6: To promote the development of a discount retail outlet off the Trim Road.

4.5.4 Retail Warehousing/ Retail Parks

Navan currently has two retail parks located off the Kells and Athboy roads respectively. Retail warehousing trades in bulky goods^[2] such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods, garden products and DIY items. The Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005 recognises that retail warehousing development cannot be readily accommodated within town centres due to their size and servicing requirements and the need for extensive car parking. Retail warehousing at appropriate locations to serve the future needs of Navan and its hinterland will be encouraged subject to proper planning.

Retail warehousing should be restricted to truly 'bulky goods', otherwise it could have a damaging material impact on the commercial viability of the Navan Town Centre. In order to reduce the adverse impact of car traffic, it is considered appropriate to group retail warehousing on a single site to facilitate multiple shopping trips using a shared or communal surface car park. There is a large area of land has been specifically identified adjoining the Athboy Road for retail warehousing development. Part of these lands immediately to the south of the motorway interchange at Knockumber are designated for the purposes of a Framework Plan (FP 5 refers). Chapter 3 details the requirements of this Framework Plan.

Policies

In terms of Retail Warehousing, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV POL 13: To encourage the provision of retail warehousing at appropriate locations and appropriate scale having regard to the 'Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area' and the 'County Meath Retail Strategy',

^[2] As defined by the Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005

RET DEV POL 14: To restrict retail warehouse development solely to the sale of 'bulky comparison goods.

Objectives

In terms of Retail Warehousing, it is an objective of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV OBJ 7: To ensure that sufficient lands are identified to meet the needs for retail warehousing floor space in Navan.

4.5.5 Local/Neighbourhood Shopping Facilities

(Also refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.12)

Navan has developed in a relatively compact form, there are however residential areas on the periphery which are served by local shopping facilities in the form of a local/corner shop or a neighbourhood centre. Some of Shops in neighbourhood centres perform a key function locally providing services including convenience shopping, video/DVD rental, laundry, hairdresser, takeaways etc. The aim of providing such shopping facilities locally serve catchment areas within approximately 800 metres is to reduce the necessity to travel by car to the town centre to avail of basic services and thereby ensure reduced traffic congestion and improved sustainability. Neighbourhood Centres have been established at Blackcastle, Bailis and Beechmount. Areas where the development of neighbourhood shopping facilities will be encouraged, are identified on the accompanying Development Objectives Map

Objectives

In terms of Local Shopping Facilities, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV OBJ 8: To designate specific Neighbourhood Centres (at the indicative locations identified on the Development Objectives map) within major residential areas, to enable convenience needs to be better met locally and to encourage the provision of local convenience shops in residential areas where there is a clear deficiency of retail provision, subject to the protection of residential amenity.

4.5.6 Petrol Filling Stations

Petrol filling stations are a growing sector in retail in Ireland as the retail offer of some forecourt shops have expanded extensively in the recent past. Ministerial retail guidance indicates that the retail use of a site as a petrol filling station, depending on the scale of such convenience store, can adversely impact on traditional retail outlets such as local corner shops. The Retail Planning Guidelines state that the size of a shop associated with any petrol filling station should take account of the following factors:

- Large stores tend to attract additional custom which can lead to additional car borne trips primarily for shopping purposes;
- Large numbers of parked cars in station forecourts can cause disruption and queuing for those simply wishing to use the petrol pumps, and;

- The preferred location for retailing is in town centres, not isolated sites outside these preferred locations (sequential approach/test).

Notwithstanding the above, a shop of up to 100m² (net) retail floorspace is considered acceptable when associated with a petrol filling station. Above this threshold, the sequential test approach will be applied. Guidelines on specific requirements for Petrol Filling Station proposals are set out in Development Management Guidelines section of this development plan. Such developments are also subject to the provision of the Dangerous Substances (Retail and Private Petroleum Stores) Regulations 1979 to 2006, as may be amended.

4.5.7 Discount Food Stores

Discount food stores of up to 1,500 sq. m. gross have a potential role in extending the choice of retailing, particularly for certain sectors of the community. Their customer catchment and retail offer is different to the mainstream superstores and supermarkets and their trade draw will be different. They provide a specialised form of predominantly convenience shopping. Discount food stores can effectively anchor smaller centres or local neighbourhood centres as well as complementing existing convenience shopping outlets. Proposals for such developments will be considered in relation to the provisions of the plan concerning the design, layout and impact of retail developments. Applications for discount food stores must demonstrate that they will not have a significant negative impact on the commercial draw of the town centre and its continued viability and vitality as per the Sequential Test.

Policies

In terms of Discount Food Stores, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV POL 15: To facilitate the provision of discount food stores in suitable locations subject to the appropriate protection of the vitality and viability of the town centre and the need to confine their use to the sale of largely convenience goods.

RET DEV POL 16: To ensure that the design of discount food stores is of high quality which respects the heritage value and visual integrity of Navan.

Objectives

In terms of Discount Food Stores, it is an objective of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV OBJ 9: To promote the development of a discount food store off the Trim Road on the lands designated for the purposes of FP 7 (Please refer to Development Objectives Map).

RET DEV OBJ 10: To consider discount food stores proposals of an appropriate scale as part of the convenience shopping component being provided at proposed Neighbourhood Centres.

RET DEV OBJ 11: To promote the development of a discount foodstore off Brews Hill on lands designated for the purposes of FP1.

4.5.8 Fast Food Outlets/Takeaways/Betting shops/Nightclubs & Licenced Premises

Take-aways, betting shops, nightclubs and licenced premises can generate noise, odour and litter, and can cause disturbance to nearby residents, particularly late at night. The following factors will be taken into account in the assessment of development proposals for such outlets:

- The need to retain, protect and strengthen the retail and general variety and multi-use function of the area;
- The adequacy of existing facilities in the locality;
- The cumulative effect of the proposed development on the amenities in the area, and;
- The effect of the proposed development on the existing mix of land uses and activities in the area.

4.5.9 Access and Facilities in Shopping Centres

Access requirements for people with disabilities must be incorporated into the design of shops used by the general public. The criteria necessary for people with disabilities is set out in the Building Regulations 1997 to 2008, Part M, and the National Disability Authority document 'Building for Everyone.' The latter document states;

"If we believe in building for everyone, then it is unacceptable that a woman should suffer disadvantage because she is pregnant, a child because of being small or older people simply because they are elderly. It is equally unacceptable that people should be disadvantaged because of their impaired sight, hearing or mobility. It is particularly unacceptable when the disadvantage suffered is the result of carelessness or thoughtlessness, and is entirely avoidable."

Policy

In terms of Access and Facilities in Shopping Centres, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV POL 17: To require adequate provision to be made in new shopping developments for the following;

- Access and facilities for people with disabilities including car-parking spaces;
- Secure parking for cyclists, and;
- Support facilities for shoppers in general and for people with children in particular, with regard to the provision of toilets and other facilities including baby changing / feeding and crèche facilities.

Policy

In terms of Non Retail Uses, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

RET DEV POL 18: To strengthen the shopping function of Navan, non-retail uses at ground floor within the core retail area will be discouraged in order to protect the vitality and viability of this area.

4.5.10 Assessment of Retail Development

Every applicant must demonstrate that any retail proposal complies with the policy direction of the Development Plan. All applications for significant retail developments should be assessed against a range of criteria. The County Retail Strategy identifies significant as 1000 sq.m. gross floor area for convenience development and 2000 sq.m. gross of comparison development. This criteria will include:

- Testing the proposal against the sequential approach;

- The potential impact on Navan town centre;
- The ability of the proposal to deliver linkages to the town centre;
- The baseline data and capacity impact assessment is fit for the purpose and is transparent;
- That there is a demonstrated need for the development;
- The relationship of the proposal to any development plan allocation;
- Contribution to the existing town centre;
- Contribution to site/ area regeneration;
- Quality of access by all modes of transport;
- Role in improving competitiveness of the county;
- Extent to which it may be necessary to consider imposition of restrictions on range of goods permitted for sale, and;
- Any other development plan allocation.

In order to protect the retail viability of Navan Town Centre and to maintain the visual character of its streets it is necessary to control the amount of non-retail floorspace at ground level.

4.6 Advertising

Inappropriate advertising signage can detract from a streetscape. The heritage and architectural qualities of Navan and the Navan ACA within the town centre necessitates strong policy direction in the development plan for the control of advertising signage.

Policy

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

ADV POL 1: To encourage the use of quality advertising signage which complements the built form of Navan. There will be a presumption against the use of plastic and/or illuminated signage.

Objective

In terms of Advertising, it is an objective of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

ADV OBJ 1: To develop an advertising signage strategy for Navan.

4.6.1 Shopfronts

Shopfronts make a major contribution to the visual amenities of a town and many have strong heritage value which should be preserved. New shopfront design must respect the scale and proportions of the streetscape by maintaining the existing grain of development along the street and respecting the appropriate plot width. Generally, individually mounted lettering or hand painted lettering is required. Letter design should be simple and legible. If shop lights are used, the arms should be short and the hoods of the lights treated to match with the background. The choice of materials should compliment the character of the building and integrate with the overall visual unity of the street scheme. Timber window frames are appropriate in traditional context and also work

well when combined with stone. External roller shutters will not normally be permitted within the town centre and will normally only be considered in industrial type settings.



Traditional Shop Front

Policies

In terms of Shop Fronts, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

SHOP FR POL 1: To encourage the use of hand-painted fascia lettering and logos in a style and colour that harmonises with the shop and helps portray its use, and to encourage the use of roller shutters located behind the line of glazing in shopfronts.

4.7 Derelict and Obsolete Land and Buildings

The Planning Authorities will examine joint public/private commercial ventures that facilitate the development or refurbishment of derelict or obsolete sites, including the use of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 as amended by the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Policies

In terms of Derelict and Obsolete Land and Buildings, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

DER POL 1: To implement the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended) and regulations made thereunder to prevent or remove injury to amenity arising from dereliction.

DER POL 2: To identify and secure the redevelopment of obsolete areas, including areas of backland, derelict sites and incidental open spaces.

4.8 Prevention of Major Accidents

The Seveso II Directive 96/82/EC as amended by Directive 2003/105/EC is concerned with the prevention of major accidents that involve dangerous substances and the limitation of their consequences for humans and the environment. It applies to establishments where dangerous substances are produced, used, handled or stored. The "European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations" S.I No 74 of 2006 transposes this Directive into Irish law.

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) has been designated as the central competent authority for enforcement of these regulations. There are currently no Seveso II sites within the Navan Development Plan boundary. Unlike the earlier Seveso I Directive (82/501/EEC), Seveso II includes provisions relating to land use planning. Article 12 of the Directive requires member states to ensure that the objectives of preventing major accidents and limiting the consequences of such accidents are taken into account in land use policies and other relevant policies.

Section 10(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended sets out a list of mandatory objectives to be included in a development plan. One of these objectives that must be included is the control, having regard to the provision of the Major Accidents Directive and any regulations, under any enactment, giving effect to that Directive, of:

- Siting of new establishments;
- Modification of existing establishments, and;
- Development in the vicinity of such establishments;

for the purposes of reducing the risk, or limiting the consequences, of a major accident.

In establishing whether the Regulations apply to a particular establishment, the primary criteria to be assessed is whether dangerous substances are present in quantities equal to or in excess of those listed in the First Schedule of the Regulations. There are two tiers of industries; lower and upper tiers, depending on the quantity of substances used, handled or stored on site. The regulations require different duties of operators for lower and upper tier establishments. Lower tier establishments are required:

- To notify the HSA and the local Planning Authority of their existence and provide information in relation to;
 - inventories of dangerous substances;
 - type of activity in operation, and;
 - the surrounding environment of the establishment.
- To take all necessary measures to prevent the occurrence of a major accident and to limit the consequences of any accident for people and the environment;
- To prepare and implement a major accident prevention policy;
- To take action in the event of a major accident, and;
- To maintain a register of notifiable incidents.

The obligations on upper tier establishments include those set out above for lower tier and in addition:

- To produce a Safety Report;
- To prepare an internal emergency plan;
- To provide information to those responsible for off-site emergency plans, and;
- To provide information for the safety of the public.

Policies

In relation to the Prevention of Major Accidents (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) legislation, it is the policy of Meath County Council and Navan Town Council:

SEVESO POL 1: To comply with the Seveso II Directive in reducing the risk and limiting the

potential consequences of major industrial accidents.

SEVESO POL 2: To require planning permission for the modifications of existing establishments where the nature and quantity of dangerous substances handled, used or stored on existing sites is to be altered.

SEVESO POL 3: To ensure that land use policies must take account of the need to maintain appropriate distances between future major accident hazard establishments and residential areas, areas of substantial public use and areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest.

SEVESO POL 4: To have regard to the advice of the Health and Safety Authority when proposals for new SEVESO sites are being considered.

Development Assessment Criteria

In the assessment of planning applications for new development involving hazardous substances, the Council will have regard to:

- The SEVESO Directive and Major Accident Regulations;
- HSA generic land-use planning advice;
- Potential adverse impacts on public health and safety, and;
- The need to maintain appropriate safe distance between residential areas, areas of public use and areas of particular natural sensitivity.

