

Planning Report to accompany the planning application for development proposed at Former Spicer's Bakery, Ramparts Car Park and Andy Brennan Park, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath.



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Section One Introduction and Project Background

Navan is the county town and administrative centre of County Meath. With a population in excess of 30,000¹ it is the largest town and the principle employment and service centre in the County. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy has designated Navan as a Key Town. This planning application is seeking approval from An Bord Pleanála in accordance Section 177AE of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2022 and refers to the following areas in Athlumney, Navan: the former Spicers Bakery; the Ramparts car park and Andy Brennan Park. The area is circa 300m from the town centre and marks the start/end of the Ramparts walk along the River Boyne/Boyne Navigation.

Meath County Council was successful in obtaining URDF funding in 2018 for the Navan Land Activation project which provided funding for the purchase of the former Spicers Bakery site and 4 derelict terraced dwellings which front onto the R153 Kentstown Road at Andy Brennan Park. The Andy Brennan Park and Ramparts car park were already in Meath County Council ownership. An integrated approach to the redevelopment of the Council's lands at this location was considered to be the best method of ensuring a comprehensive scheme could be delivered. The Council's key objectives were to provide amenity and recreational facilities to serve Navan's growing population. In order to ensure a plan led approach to redevelopment, Paul Hogarth and Company Landscape Architects were commissioned to prepare an Overall Concept Master Plan. The masterplan explored the potential of Meath County Council's entire land holding and also examine the potential of linkages from the Council lands to the existing pathway network in the Ramparts area which is in the ownership of An Taisce. This application is seeking planning permission for a first phase of development, later phases will include the restoration of the former Spicers Bakery and could include restoration of the Boyne Navigation /canal basin at the rear of the application site, pathway upgrades (both subject to land owner agreement and availability of funding) which will support and compliment the works detailed in this application.

The Spicer family were very successful millers and bakers who influenced the life of Navan for circa 178 years. The former Spicers Bakery is part of a mill development dating from c.1820-1830. John Spicer III bought the site in 1899. Additional buildings were added over the years as the Spicers business evolved. The site operated as a bakery from the late 19th century to its closure in 2012. The site quickly fell into dereliction and became the focus of antisocial behaviour and suffered a fire in a substantial section adjacent to the headquarters of Navan Silver Band in 2017. The decision by Meath County Council to seek funding to purchase the complex of buildings recognises the importance of the former Spicers Bakery as a heritage asset and its strategic location in the context of Navan town centre. This application is accompanied by a Conservation Management Plan and a Desk Based Archaeology Review and Assessment which discuss conservation and archaeological matters in detail.

The Boyne Navigation Company began the construction of the Boyne Canal in about 1748. The company went into liquidation in 1913, the Spicer family bought the canal in 1915. It was donated to An Taisce in 1969. The Boyne Navigation originally came through Andy Brennan Park. The Boyne Navigation including Lock 19, Metges Lock and in-channel River Boyne weirs and mill races were removed and the area infilled by the OPW as part of the Boyne Drainage Scheme in the 1980. Andy Brennan Park opened in 1995. The 'Is Feidir Linn' play area in the southern section of the park opened in 2012.

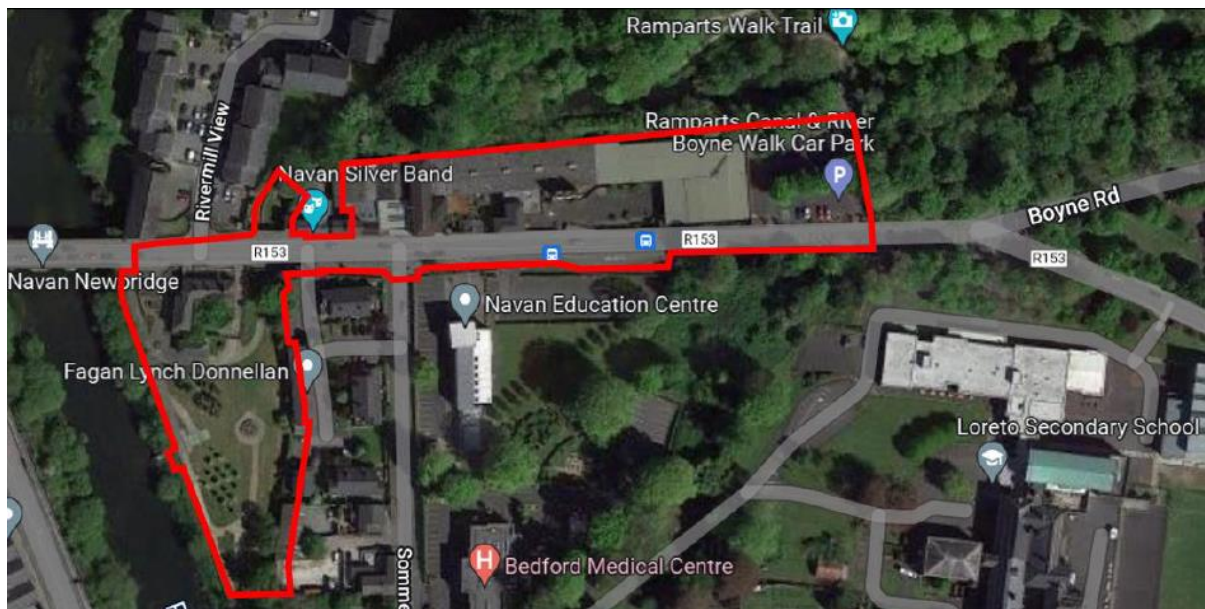
¹ Census 2016

The park has failed to reach its potential as a public amenity given its accessible location. The lack of footfall in the park has resulted in a significant level of antisocial behaviour occurring in the area which has compounded the undesirability of the park as a place to recreate. The application proposes a comprehensive redesign of the park to create an active urban park with a stepped plaza entry way facilitated by the removal of the 4 derelict properties fronting onto the Kentstown Rd.

The River Boyne and River Blackwater functions as an important amenity for Navan and the wider county. Riverside areas in the town have potential to be a valuable amenity resource and present a significant opportunity to create a network of green spaces in the town linking communities with amenity facilities. The redevelopment of the Spicers complex, ramparts car park and Andy Brennan Park will provide opportunities for active and passive recreation. The conversion of the bakery office to a coffee shop will provide a focal point for residents and visitors. The preservation of the former Spicers Bakery will safe guard the building to enable a future sustainable use to be identified which will be subject to a further approval process.

Meath County Council in partnership with the NTA has under taking a significant programme of investment in public realm and sustainable transport measures in Navan. These include implementing the Navan 2030 project. The revitalisation of this area will compliment works undertaken to date and will enhance quality of life for the residents of the town. The redevelopment also presents an opportunity for Navan to position itself as an attractive place to live, but also as an authentic historical town that can offer a compelling tourism experience. Improved public realm will emphasize the historic form of the town and enhance the experience of the visitor to the town.

Section 2 Site Location and Description



The application site of circa 1.7 ha is located in Navan at Newbridge Athlumney on the R153 Navan to Kentstown Road south east of the confluence of the River Boyne and Blackwater. Several habitats occur within the application site boundaries:

- Depositing/Lowland rivers (River Boyne);

- Amenity Grassland (with ornamental planting – Andy Brennan Park);
- Stone walls and other stone-work;
- Buildings and Artificial Surfaces;
- (Mixed) Broadleaved Woodland; and
- Hedgerow/Treeline/Scrub

The site comprises of the following:

The Former Spicers Bakery



Former Spicer's Bakery

The former Spicers Bakery and complex of buildings is bounded to the south by the Kentstown rd, to the west by Navan Silver Band headquarters, to the east by the Ramparts car park and to the south by the canal basin associated with the Boyne Navigation. The site comprises of warehousing/sheds/open yard areas constructed in the 1980s, the former bakery protected structure with associated historic yard/courtyard, two storey house and single storey cottage and the two- storey bakery office situated on an irregularly shaped rectangular site of approximately 0.46 ha (1.1 acres) with extensive road frontage.



Interior of former spicers bakery



Former spicers bakery, courtyard view



Interior of warehouse

- **The Ramparts Car Park**

To the north of the car park is the canal basin and pathway to the ramparts walk, to the south is the Kentstown road and footpath, to the west is the open yard and warehousing and to the east is part of the Ramparts. The car park currently has 52 spaces. A cycle parking stand to accommodate 9 bikes and a car park of 64 spaces is proposed. The width of and sight lines at the entry and exit points are very restricted at present. There are a number of trees in the car park which have outgrown their current location, please refer to the arborist report which accompanies the application for further details in this regard. The area of the Ramparts along the River Boyne is an important amenity for the town of Navan. The environmental quality of this area is extremely high, the principal contributor being the natural woodland on both sides of the canal along the towpath. The Ramparts provides an opportunity to access a natural environment removed from road traffic and the built-up area of the town. The existing carpark facility at the ramparts is in use all year round. The redesign of the car park including the entry and exit points will improve safety for all users. The redesign will facilitate views from the road and footpath into the Ramparts area which will assist with passive surveillance of the area.



Ramparts Carpark

- **Andy Brennan Park**

Andy Brennan Park is a triangular piece of land in use as a park bounded to the north by the Kentstown road, to the south by an existing cottage, to the west by the River Boyne and to the east by Sommerville Apartments and Fagan Lynch Donnellan Accountants. The site is occupied by an Irish Water pump station which comprises of a pump house building and underground services with a number of access chambers. These assets will remain in situ, the Council has engaged with Irish Water regarding the details of the proposed development. In 2012 Navan Town Council developed 'Is Feidir Linn' play area. This unique play area, which is fully accessible to children with disabilities, was developed in partnership with Navan primary schools and was the first such project of its type in Ireland. The park has failed to reach its full potential as a public amenity area. This park is currently underutilised as few residents or visitors make use of the amenity. The lack of passive surveillance and visibility of the park has resulted in anti-social behaviour in the park.



Andy Brennan Park

South west of Spicer's Mill and north of Andy Brennan's Park is a row of 4 derelict terrace dwellings, 2 storeys in height, with dwelling to the west consisting of a large rear extension. In recent years these properties were unoccupied and fell into a derelict state of repair. Consequently, the derelict properties became attractive to those carrying out anti-social behaviour, and people perceived the area and the adjoining Andy Brennan Park as unsafe and not an inviting amenity area. Their condition is unsightly at an exit/entry point in the town.



4 no. Derelict Terraced Dwellings

Section 3 Development Description

The proposed development consists of:

- Preservation works to the former Spicers Bakery (Protected Structure RPS no. 90881);

These comprise of the removal of 20th century additions on the site, infilling of ground floor openings to western and eastern elevations. Windows and doors above ground floor will be temporarily protected to keep the building wind and air tight.

The party wall between the Navan Silver Band and the two- storey town house will be made good as a priority work.

The steel frame and block external wall that forms the boundary between the Silver Band and the Spicers Bakery buildings will be temporarily retained and will form part of later discussions for use of the Bakery building. The roof will be removed, concrete coping with be installed in order to provide for dispersal of rainwater. Existing wall will be braced in accordance with structural engineers requirements.

- Change of use and extension of the existing office building into café/retail use with a stepped plaza, covered band stand, access paths, associated site development, services and internal alterations.

A later single storey extension to the existing building will be removed and the original building restored in accordance with Departmental best conservation practice. An single storey glazed extension of 65 sqm is proposed to be added with a bin store to the east of the building which will be

screened. This building when redeveloped will be visible from all directions, the design solution presented addresses this future visibility.

- Redevelopment of the existing Ramparts carpark area access points, with 64 car parking spaces and a bike stand which can accommodate 9 no. bikes.
- The redesign of Andy Brennan Park to comprise of:

Demolition of the 4 terraced dwellings fronting the Kentstown rd to provide a public plaza, with stepped integrated seating areas, active urban park, bike stand to accommodate 11 no. bikes.
- Upgrade of the underpass of Somerville bridge (Protected Structure RPS no. 90878), and to provide mobility upgrades to the existing steps to enhance links to Ramparts off the Athlumney Road. Somerville Bridge has been widened and lowered since it was first built in 1792. The parapets and associated stepped access are of the 1930s.
- All associated site development works, landscaping, services, piped infrastructure and ducting, changes in level; site landscaping and all associated site development and excavation works above and below ground.

The application is accompanied by the following documentation:

- Natura Impact Statement, NIS
- Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)
- Ecological survey report
- Invasive Species Management and Control Plan
- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report
- Arboricultural information
- Architectural Design Statement
- Archaeology Report
- Bat Survey
- Conservation Management Plan
- Outline Construction Management Plan
- Outline Construction & Demolition Waste Management Plan
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Engineering Services Report
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The application will complement the existing provision of recreational facilities in Navan. It will provide a focal point at the end of the Ramparts Walk and will stimulate the regeneration of this area. The proposal includes two plazas and a covered band stand given that the headquarters of Navan Silver Band is adjacent to the site. The reimagined Andy Brennan Park will provide opportunities of active recreation, more passive recreational activity can be accommodated at the Ramparts/Spicers side of the development. The application is supported by a detailed Conservation Management Plan prepared by Hall Black Douglas Conservation Architects. The application is accompanied by a Design statement prepared by thepaulhogarthcompany. This sets out the landscaping strategy and rationale for same, this is a critical component of the scheme as one of the Council's key objectives is to increase passive surveillance of both the Ramparts area and Andy Brennan Park. Landscape species have been carefully selected in conjunction with the arborist. Future uses are suggested for the active urban park, in order

to accommodate changing trends in this use type, post approval each element of the active urban park will be designed in greater detail, this process will include consultation with relevant community groups.

The scope of the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration project is to create a safe, attractive and environmentally sympathetic canal and river side walking and cycling route in tandem with the sensitive restoration of the Boyne navigation route. The proposed greenway scheme would extend from Andy Brennan Park to the main gates at the Oldbridge Estate. Work is ongoing in on this project which will complement the proposals contained in this application.

Section 4 Planning History

| Application Ref No. | Site Address | Description | Decision | Appeal |
|---------------------|---|---|------------------------|--------|
| 21/1553 | Convent Road, Athlumney, Navan, Co. Meath | The development will consist of demolition of an existing dwelling (134m2) and the provision of a new 2 storey replacement dwelling (263m2) with attached garage (68m2), inclusive of all associated site works, drainage works and modification to existing site entrance. NOTE: A Natura Impact Statement has been submitted with the application. | Granted 12/10/2022 | N/a |
| P817006 | Athlumney Road, Navan | PART 8 DEVELOPMENT - Provision of new cantilevered pedestrian and cycle bridge immediately to the south of, and contiguous with, existing "New Bridge" – Protected Structure. The works will also include replacement of footpaths provision of shared footpath/cycleway, lighting, and boundary wall adjustments on the R153 Kentstown road and provision of pedestrian crossings and pavement adjustments at the junction of the R147, and ancillary works. | Approved 07/12/2017 | n/a |
| NA/140618 | Convent Road, Navan, Co. Meath | Extension of Duration of Planning Permission Ref. No. NT70048 - Mixed Use, Construction Of three buildings | Granted 05/09/2014 | n/a |
| NT/130037 | Somerville Bridge, Athlumney, Navan, Co Meath | the proposed development will consist of the removal of existing boiler house, construction of a new entrance lobby to side of existing band hall, amendment to street facing roof profile, construction of new single storey toilet block to rear, general renovation of band hall including repair/renewal and/or replacement works where necessary to older element of band hall property | Granted 04/10/2013 | n/a |
| TP4/87 | Somerville Bridge, Athlumney, Navan, Co Meath | change of use of domestic dwelling to band rehearsal hall in conjunction with construction of new band hall | Granted n/a | n/a |
| NT/70048 | Convent Road, Navan, Co Meath | Application for the demolition of 3 no. existing derelict houses and associated sheds and the construction of a mixed-use development in 3 blocks totalling 51 no. apartment, 1 no. coffee bar/lunch bar and 2025sq.m of office space. Block A comprises of 51 no. apartments including 14 no one bed units, 25 no. units two bed units, 12 no. three bed units and 2 no. office units totalling 920 sq.m. Block A 3 storeys along convent road, Block B, 4 storeys along convent road and 6 stories at river frontage. Block C, 2.5 storeys. The development will be served by 168 underground parking spaces located on 2 levels and 17 visitor surface parking spaces totalling 185 car parking spaces. Development will include construction of residential courtyards, and associated balconies, terraces, landscaping and associated site works. Rubbish store and any associated plant | Granted 04/08/2009 | n/a |

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|--|--|---|--|--|
| | | rooms/storage units are located at underground parking level. The development will facilitate the extension of the existing public linear park along River Boyne. | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|

Section 5 Planning Policy

5.1 National Planning Framework and National Development Plan

The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2018-2040 is the overarching planning strategy document in Ireland and is underpinned by the current National Development Plan. The primary purpose of these national policies is to guide development and investment in Ireland. The NPF is the *Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040*. It is a requirement for these overarching policies to be considered at a regional and local level by taking account of the general context set out by the NPF. This consideration allows for decision-making to be properly aligned with planning, that can assist in achieving the ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) identified in the NPF.

The NPF aims to create a single vision, a shared set of goals for every community across the country. These goals are expressed as NSO’s. The following NSO’s are considered relevant to the proposed project.



NSO 1 – Compact Growth

Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. All our urban settlements contain many potential development areas, centrally located, and frequently publicly owned, that are suitable and capable of re-use to provide housing, jobs, amenities and services, but which need a streamlined and co-ordinated approach to their development, with investment in enabling infrastructure and supporting amenities, to realise their potential. Activating these strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development, is a top priority Combined with a focus on infill development, integrated transport and promoting regeneration and revitalisation of urban areas, pursuing a compact growth policy at national, regional, and local level will secure a more sustainable future for our settlements and for our communities. To secure the delivery of this objective, one funding mechanisms established is the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF).



NSO 7 - Enhanced Amenity and Heritage

This will ensure that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It will require investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. It also includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism, and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place.

- *The Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Funds will support transformational public realm initiatives to give city and town centre areas back to citizens, encouraging greater city and town centre living, enhanced recreational spaces and attractiveness from a cultural, tourism and promotional perspective.*
- *We will conserve, manage and present our heritage for its intrinsic value and as a support to economic renewal and sustainable employment.*
- *Open up our heritage estates to public access, where possible.*
- *Invest in and enable access to recreational facilities, including trails networks, designed and delivered with a strong emphasis on conservation, allowing the protection and preservation of our most fragile environments and providing a wellbeing benefit for all.*

Chapter 4 of the NPF acknowledges the importance of making urban places stronger. Accordingly, the NPF aims to enhance people’s experience of living, working, and visiting urban places throughout Ireland. In addition, the National Policy Objectives (NPO) set out in Chapter 4 of the NPF strongly encourage Ireland’s urban places to become more attractive and liveable.

The following series of NPO’s are considered supportive of the proposed project.

NPO 4 *Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.*

NPO 6 *Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.*

NPO 7 *Apply a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with a particular focus on:*

- *Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities;*

NPO 26: *Support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan, through integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policy.*

5.2 Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy (RSES)

There are three regional assemblies in Ireland, namely; the Southern, Eastern and Midlands and Northern and Western regions. These regional assemblies have a primary function to identify regional policies and coordinate initiatives that support the delivery of national planning policy. The primary driver for this, is the implementation of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES). The RSES provides regional level strategic planning and economic policy in support of the implementation of the NPF and provides a greater level of focus around the NPOs and NSOs of the NPF.

The RSES for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) sets out a framework to direct future growth of the region over the medium to long term. The RSES is a strategic plan and investment framework to shape the future development of the region to 2031 and beyond. The following are the key themes in the RSES: Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action and Economic Opportunity. The Strategy sets out 16 Regional Strategic Outcomes (RSOs), which are aligned with international, EU and national policy and which in turn set the framework for city and county development plans. Those considered most relevant to the project are detailed below:

- **RSO 2 Compact Growth and Urban Regeneration** *‘Promote the regeneration of our cities, towns and villages by making better use of under-used land and buildings within the existing built-up urban footprint and to drive the delivery of quality housing and employment choice for the Region’s citizens. (NSO 1)*
- **RSO 4 Healthy Communities:** *Protect and enhance the quality of our built and natural environment to support active lifestyles including walking and cycling, ensure clean air and water for all and quality healthcare and services that support human health. (NSO 10)*
- **RSO 5 Creative Places:** *Enhance, integrate and protect our arts, culture and heritage assets to promote creative places and heritage led regeneration. (NSO 5, 7)*
- **RSO 10 Enhanced Green Infrastructure:** *Identify, protect and enhance Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services in the Region and promote the sustainable management of strategic natural assets such as our coastlines, farmlands, peatlands, uplands woodlands and wetlands. (NSO 8, 9)*
- **RSO 11 Biodiversity and Natural Heritage:** *Promote co-ordinated spatial planning to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of our protected habitats and species including landscape and heritage protection. (NSO 7, 8)’*

Navan is identified as a Key Town in the RSES. Key towns are defined as *‘Large economically active service and/or country towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres’* Navan’s designation as a Key Town presents a unique opportunity for the town to grow on a sustainable platform of regeneration assisted by multi-modal access. It is a key principal of the strategy to;

- *promote the regeneration of cities, towns, and villages by making better use of under-used land and buildings within the existing built-up urban footprint.*
- *Enhance, integrate, and protect our arts, culture, and heritage assets to promote creative places and heritage led regeneration.*

RSES states that *‘Key parts of the town (Navan) have suffered from under-investment and have high levels of vacancy will be targeted for renewal and regeneration’.*

The RSES identifies regional assets, opportunities, pressures and aims to provide appropriate policy responses in the form of Regional Policy Objectives (RPO). The following series of RPO’s are supportive of the proposal;

- RPO 4.43:** *‘Support the implementation of the Public Realm Plan ‘Navan 2030’ to make the town a more attractive place to live, shop, visit, and do business.*
- RPO 4.45:** *Support the extension of the Boyne Greenway to include Navan to promote sustainable transport choices and as a recreation asset for the town, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.*
- RPO 6.12:** *Local authorities shall include objectives in development plans and local area plans supporting emphasis on placemaking for town centres, for example through inclusion of a Placemaking Strategy for towns and implementation of Town Centre Renewal Plans.*
- RPO 6.14:** *EMRA will support the use of targeted financial incentives to re-establish the dominant role of town centres provided for in planning policy to encourage a greater take up of town centre development opportunities for retail, residential, commercial, and leisure uses.*
- RPO 6.15:** *Support the preparation and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans within the Region to underpin the overarching regional tourism brands and to deliver greater tourism benefits and to promote the natural and cultural assets of the Region.*
- RPO 6.21:** *EMRA will work with local authorities and Fáilte Ireland to identify destination towns within the Region for the prioritisation of investment and supports to drive tourism growth in the Region, to spread the benefit of tourism throughout the Region and to encourage the increase of tourism product development.*
- RPO 7.15** *Local authorities shall take opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenities and to enhance the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where flood risk management measures are planned.*
- RPO 7.26** *Support the development of guidance for assessment of proposed land zonings in order to achieve appropriate riparian setback distances that support the attainment of high ecological status for waterbodies, the conservation of biodiversity and good ecosystem health, and buffer zones from flood plains.*
- RPO 9.11** *Local authorities shall support the preparation of Design Guidelines to provide for improvements in the appearance of streetscapes and for revitalising spaces for example with cost effective, temporary uses that build on the longer-term vision for space.*
- RPO 9.14:** *Local authorities shall seek to support the planned provision of easily accessible social, community, cultural and recreational facilities and ensure that all communities have access to a range of facilities that meet the needs of the communities they serve.*
- RPO 9.17:** *To support local authorities in the development of regional scale Open Space and Recreational facilities particularly those close to large or growing population centres in the Region.*
- RPO 9.27** *EMRA will support local authorities to work with local communities to promote historic towns in the Region in the practice of heritage led regeneration, to promote the*

sensitive and adaptive reuse of historic building stock and industrial structures where appropriate, and to strengthen their capability to draw down European and national funding.

RPO 9.30: *Support the sensitive reuse of protected structures.'*

The proposed project is considered fully compliant with the identified RSO's and RPO's outlined above.

5.3 Town Centre First Policy (TCF)

"The Town Centre First policy aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community".

The TCF Plan focuses on the sustainable and adaptive reuse of existing assets and increasing the energy efficiency of individual buildings, including the thermal upgrading of the historic building stock. The sustainable growth of towns can support these goals through the reuse/ repurposing of vacant and underutilised building stock and provides opportunities to support local skills and craftsmanship and encourage community led initiatives and engagement. Given the concentration of historic assets/brown field sites in the urban core of our towns, there is the potential for jobs-rich investment in these existing assets.

5.4 Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027

County Development Plans are the most important Corporate policy document produced by any Local Authority. These plans have significant citizen input and set out a Council's development priorities over a 6-year period in the context of the National Development Plan, National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 was adopted on 22 September 2021 and took effect on 03 November 2021. Further details can be accessed at: www.meath.ie.

The County Development Plan (CDP) sets out the following vision:

'To continue to support the creation of socio-economically progressive vibrant, dynamic, and healthy communities throughout the County and ensure that future growth is based on the principles of sustainable development that delivers a high -quality living and working environment that meets the needs of all residents, in accordance with National and Regional Guidance.'

CS OBJ 4: *'To achieve more compact growth by promoting the development of infill and brownfield/ regeneration sites and the redevelopment of underutilised land within and close to the existing built-up footprint of existing settlements in preference to edge of centre locations.'*

CS OBJ 6: *'To support the economic growth of Meath as set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy for County Meath 2014-2022.'*

CS OBJ 19: *'To implement an Active Land Management Strategy in relation to vacant land in settlements within County Meath and to maintain and update as required a Vacant Sites Register to ensure efficient and sustainable use of the County's land resources in accordance with the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 as well as the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.'*

Chapter 4 sets out the Council's economy and employment strategy which includes the Council's tourism strategy.

ED OBJ 22 *'To seek to maximise the tourism potential of the significant tourism hub within the Boyne Valley region which includes the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, the Battle of the Boyne Site at Oldbridge, the Boyne River, and the coastal area of East Meath stretching from Mornington to Gormanston whilst ensuring the environmental protection of sensitive and protected coastal habitats and landscape.'*

ED POL 42 *'To facilitate the development of tourism infrastructure such as accommodation, restaurants, car and coach parking and toilet facilities in the designated hubs throughout the County.'*

ED POL 45 *'To encourage new and high-quality investment in the tourism industry in the County with specific reference to leisure activities (including walking, cycling, angling, equestrian and family focused activities) and accommodation in terms of choice, location and quality of product.'*

ED POL 62 *'To support developments which will enable and encourage countryside recreation and an increased appreciation of the natural environment, through facilitating the development of community walks, off road trails / rural trail developments, parks and other outdoor amenities and recreational infrastructure. All proposals will require screening to determine if a full Appropriate Assessment of the likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites, is required.'*

ED OBJ 78 *'a) To promote and develop the upgrade of the towpaths along the Ramparts at Navan to Stackallen.*

b) To deliver the Boyne Greenway from Oldbridge to Navan via Slane in conjunction with the NTA, Fáilte Ireland and all relevant stakeholders and subject to obtaining all relevant assessments and consents.

c) To deliver the Royal Canal Greenway as part of the Dublin to Galway Greenway project in co-operation with Waterways Ireland, and neighbouring Local Authorities and all relevant stakeholders, and subject to obtaining all relevant assessments and consents.

d) To deliver the Lakelands Greenway (Navan-Kingscourt–Monaghan) in co-operation with Irish Rail and neighbouring Local Authorities and subject to obtaining all relevant assessments and consents.

The delivery of these Greenways and the upgrade of these towpaths will be subject to the outcome of the Appropriate Assessment process.'

Chapter 7 sets out the Council's community building strategy, which has the following vision:

'To enable our communities to have sufficient resources to support economic, social and environmental wellbeing, the creativity to flourish, and the strength to be resilient. This will in turn support the creation of a vibrant, sustainable, and competitive economy, based on shared goals and collaboration between statutory, community, voluntary, environmental and private sectors.'

Sporting, leisure and recreational facilities are essential to promoting good health, social cohesion, a sense of community and enhancing quality of life and well-being, provision of these facilities is a key issue for Development Plans. The following are considered the most relevant policies and objectives.

- SOC POL 31** *'To support the implementation of the Healthy Meath Strategy 2019-2021 in consultation with the relevant agencies and authorities.'*
- SOC POL 32** *'To encourage and support local sports, community groups and other groups in the provision and development of outdoor and indoor sporting and community facilities.'*
- SOC POL 34** *'To cater for the sporting and recreational needs of all sectors and ages of the community and promote the integration of those with special needs into the sporting and recreational environment. '*
- SOC POL 36** *'To ensure that new leisure facilities, where possible, are located in proximity to public transportation routes and where they can best meet the needs of the community that the facilities are intended to serve.'*
- SOC POL 37** *'To facilitate the development of children's play areas and playgrounds in proximity to existing and proposed neighbourhoods, where feasible.'*
- SOC POL 38** *'To promote the development of a wide variety of high quality accessible open space areas, for both active and passive use, and formal and informal activities in accordance with the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy and the standards set out in Chapter 11 Development Management Standards and Land Use Zoning Objective taking into account any environmental sensitivities including likely significant effects on European Sites (SACs and SPAs).'*
- SOC POL 39** *'To protect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites during the identification of suitable sites for recreation, in particular in terms of their design and use.'*
- SOC OBJ 7** *'To implement the recommendations of current and proposed Meath County Council Play Policy in conjunction with all relevant agencies.'*
- SOC OBJ 14** *'To examine existing public open spaces and carry out improvements where necessary to increase their usefulness as recreational spaces.'*
- SOC OBJ 15** *'To ensure public open space is accessible and designed so that passive surveillance is provided.'*
- SOC OBJ 16** *'To provide multifunctional open spaces at locations deemed appropriate providing for both passive and active uses'*
- SOC OBJ 17** *'To ensure permeability and connections between public open spaces including connections between new and existing spaces, in consultation to include residents.'*
- SOC POL 52** *'To continue to enhance the range and quality of arts infrastructural provision in the County and to support the ongoing development of cultural infrastructure throughout the County in particular those parts of the County where such provision has been identified as an enabler for growth in the creative industries sector.'*

SOC POL 54 *'To promote the provision of public art, including temporary art and sculpture, through such mechanisms, as appropriate.'*

Chapter 8 sets out the Council's Cultural and Natural Heritage strategy. The following are considered the most relevant policies and objectives.

HER POL 14: *'To protect and conserve the architectural heritage of the County and seek to prevent the demolition or inappropriate alteration of Protected Structures.'*

HER POL 15: *'To encourage the conservation of Protected Structures, and where appropriate, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and sites in a manner compatible with their character and significance. In certain cases, land use zoning restrictions may be relaxed in order to secure the conservation of the protected structure.'*

HER POL 16 *'To protect the setting of Protected Structures and to refuse permission for development within the curtilage or adjacent to a protected structure which would adversely impact on the character and special interest of the structure, where appropriate.'*

HER POL 17 *'To require that all planning applications relating to Protected Structures contain the appropriate accompanying documentation in accordance with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011) or any variation thereof, to enable the proper assessment of the proposed works.'*

HER POL 18 *'To require that in the event of permission being granted for development within the curtilage of a protected structure, any works necessary for the survival of the structure and its re-use should be prioritised in the first phase of development.'*

HER POL 24: *'To encourage appropriate change of use and reuse of industrial heritage structures provided such a change does not seriously impact on the intrinsic character of the structure and that all works are carried out in accordance with best conservation practice, subject to compliance with normal planning criteria.'*

HER POL 25 *'To protect and enhance the built and natural heritage of the Royal Canal and Boyne Navigation and associated structures and to ensure, in as far as practically possible, that development which may impact on these structures and their setting be sensitively designed with regard to their character and setting. Development of the project will be subject to the outcome of the Appropriate Assessment process.'*

HER OBJ 26 *'To require an architectural / archaeological assessment, as appropriate, which references the Meath Industrial Heritage Survey and other relevant sources, for all proposed developments on industrial heritage structures or sites.'*

HER POL 31: *'To ensure that the ecological impact of all development proposals on habitats and species are appropriately assessed by suitably qualified professional(s) in accordance with best practice guidelines – e.g. the preparation of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Natura Impact Statement (NIS), species surveys etc. (as appropriate).'*

- HER POL 32** *‘To permit development on or adjacent to designated Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves or those proposed to be designated over the period of the Plan, only where the development has been subject to the outcome of the Appropriate Assessment process and has been carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, in consultation with National Parks and Wildlife.’*
- HER OBJ 33** *‘To ensure an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directives (92/43/EEC) and in accordance with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009 and relevant EPA and European Commission guidance documents, is carried out in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary for the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site(s), either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the site’s conservation objectives.’*
- HERR POL 36** *‘To consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and take account of their views and any licensing requirements, when undertaking, approving or authorising development which is likely to affect plant, animal or bird species protected by law.’*
- HER OBJ 35** *‘To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory avoidance or mitigation, on plant, animal or bird species protected by law.’*
- HER POL 38** *‘To promote and encourage planting of native hedgerow species in new developments and as part of the Council’s own landscaping works.’*
- HER POL 40** *‘To protect and encourage the effective management of native and semi-natural woodlands, groups of trees and individual trees and to encourage the retention of mature trees and the use of tree surgery rather than felling, where possible, when undertaking, approving or authorising development.’*
- HER POL 42:** *‘To promote the preservation of individual trees or groups of trees as identified on the Heritage Maps in Volume 2 and to manage these trees in line with Arboricultural best practice.’*
- HER POL 43** *‘To promote best practice in the control of invasive species in the carrying out its functions in association with relevant authorities including TII and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.’*
- HER POL 44** *‘To require all development proposals to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species on proposed development sites and (if necessary) require applicants to prepare and submit an Invasive Species Management Plan where such a species exists to comply with the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015.’*
- HER POL 47** *‘To protect the ecological, recreational, educational, amenity and flood alleviation potential of navigational and non-navigational waterways within the County, towpaths and adjacent wetlands.’*
- HER OBJ 40** *‘To work in partnership with Waterways Ireland and relevant stakeholders to encourage best practice biodiversity management of canal and towpath habitats.’*

HER POL 51 *'To preserve and protect for the common good, existing public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility as identified in Appendix 12 and Map 8.61- 8.6.24.'*

HER POL 55 *'To recognise the economic, social, environmental and physical value of Green Infrastructure.'*

Chapter 11 contains details of the development management standards and land use zoning objectives. The following are considered the most relevant objectives.

Public Lighting

DM OBJ 3 All public lighting proposals shall be in accordance with the Council's Public Lighting Technical Specification & Requirements, June 2017, and the Council's Lighting Policy, December 2017, (or any updates thereof)

DM OBJ 9 A separation distance of 5 metres between the lighting column and the outside of the crown is required for the lighting to work as designed. Trees or vegetation shall not be planted within 7 metres of a public light column.

DM OBJ 10 The design of all new development shall take into consideration the layout of the proposed public lighting column locations and the proposed landscape design. Both layouts should achieve the metres separation between all trees and public lighting columns.

Trees and Hedgerows

Trees and Hedgerows are an important consideration with all developments, and it is considered that the retention of trees and hedgerows should be considered as part of any relevant planning application (Please refer to policies contained in Section 8.9.7 Woodlands, Hedgerows and Trees in this regard)

DM OBJ 11: Existing trees and hedgerows of biodiversity and/or amenity value shall be retained where possible.

Boundary Treatment

DM POL 9: *'To support the retention of field boundaries for their ecological/habitat significance, as demonstrated by a suitably qualified professional. Where removal of a hedgerow, stone wall or other distinctive boundary treatment is unavoidable, mitigation by provision of the same boundary type will be required.'*

Car Parking

DM OBJ 89: *'Car parking shall be provided in accordance with Table 11.2 and associated guidance notes.*

Restaurants – 1 per 5 sq.m dining area.

The standards set out in Table 11.2 shall apply to all new developments, be it new construction or a new extension or a material change of use of existing buildings.

Accessible car parking spaces shall be provided at a minimum rate of 5% of the total number of spaces, for developments requiring more than 10 car parking spaces, with a minimum provision being one space (unless the nature of the development requires otherwise). Such spaces shall be proximate to the entry points of buildings and comply with the requirements of the building regulations.

Age Friendly car parking spaces should generally be provided, where possible, in all developments.

DM OBJ 90: *'The dimension of parking bays shall comply with table 11.3'*

Table 11.3 Car Parking Bays

| | |
|---|--|
| Parking dimensions (Perpendicular to Kerb) | 5.0m x 2.5m |
| Where space is adjacent to a wall or other obstruction | 5.0m x 2.75m |
| Parking dimensions (Parallel to Kerb) | 6.0m x 2.5m |
| Accessible Parking Bay to comply with Building Regulations. | 5.0m x 2.5m + 1.2m to the sides and rear of each space |
| Loading Bay | 6.0m x 3.0m |
| Circulation Aisles | 6.0m in width |

DM OBJ 92 *'Loading bays shall be located and designed to prevent any obstructions to traffic circulation and to accommodate vehicular manoeuvring on site.'*

EV Charging Points

DM OBJ 94: *'All car parks shall include the provision of necessary wiring and ducting to be capable of accommodating future Electric Vehicle charging points, at a rate of 20% of total space numbers.'*

DM OBJ 95: *'In any car park in excess of 20 spaces where public access is available, four fully functional charging points for Electric Vehicles shall be provided in accordance with IEC 61851 Standard for Electric Vehicle Conductive Charging Systems.'*

Cycling Parking

The council will require an appropriate amount of cycle parking facilities to be provided with new development.

DM OBJ 96: *To require the provision of cycle parking facilities in accordance with the Design Standards for New Apartments (March 2018) and Table 11.4 Cycle Parking Standards.*

DM OBJ 97: *Cycle parking facilities shall be conveniently located, secure, easy to use, adequately lit and well sign posted. All long-term (more than three hours) cycle racks shall be protected from the weather.*

DM OBJ 98: To establish and implement Cycle Parking Standards for new developments in the county.

As stated in Table 11.4 Cycle Parking Standards for 'other developments';

- 1 bike space per car space, or 10% of employee numbers in general.

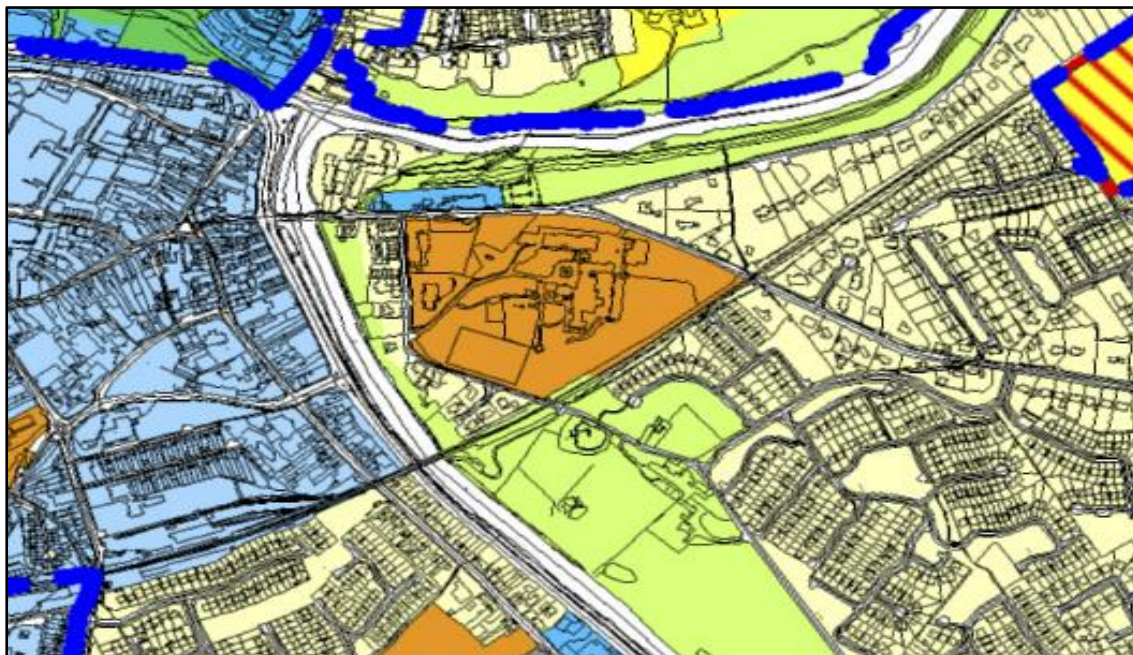
5.4.1 Land Use Zoning

The site has H1, C1 and A1 land use zoning objectives.

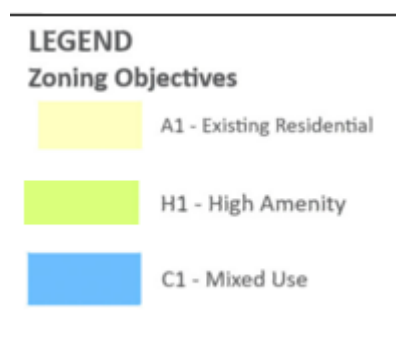
H1 – High Amenity, with an objective to protect and improve areas of high amenity. (Andy Brennan Park and Ramparts Car Park)

C1 – Mixed Use, with an objective to provide for and facilitate mixed residential and employment generating uses. (Former Spicers Bakery complex).

A1- Existing Residential with an objective to protect and enhance the amenity and character of existing residential communities. (derelict dwellings)



Figur-1 Extract of Land Use Zoning Map for Navan



The land uses permitted and open for consideration on H1, C1 and A1 zoned lands are included in table below.

Table 1 Permitted and Open to Consideration Land Uses

| Zoning | Permitted | Open for Consideration |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| H1 – High Amenity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycleways / Greenways / Trail Development • Land & Water Based Recreational Activities • Open Space • Cultural Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiosk • Restaurant • Tea Room • Sensitive re-use of existing structures |
| C1 – Mixed Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B & B / Guest House • Bring Banks • Childcare Facility • Children Play / Adventure Centre • Community Facility / Centre • Convenience Outlet, Cultural Facility • Education (Primary or Second Level) • Education (Third Level) • Enterprise Centre • Health Centre • Healthcare Practitioner • Home Based Economic Activities • Hotel / Motel / Hostel • Offices 1,000m² • Service Station • Place of Public Worship • Pub • Residential / Sheltered Housing • Restaurant / Café • Utilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betting Office • Car Park (incl. Park and Ride) • Cinema • Conference/Event Centre • Dance Hall / Night Club • Drive Through Restaurant • Funeral Home • Garden Centre • Hospital • Industry – Light • Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities • Motor Sales / Repair • Offices >1,000m² • Plant & Tool Hire • Research & Development • Retirement Home / Residential Institution/Retirement Village • Science & Technology Based Enterprise • Shop • Supermarket • Take-Away / Fast Food Outlet • Telecommunication Structures • Veterinary Surgery • Wholesale Warehousing / Cash and Carry |
| A1 - Existing Residential | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Sheltered Housing • B&B/ Guest House • Community Facility/ Centre • Home Based Economic Activities and Utilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring Banks • Convenience Outlet • Childcare Facility • Haling Site • Healthcare Practitioner • Leisure/ Recreation/ Sports Facilities • Bar • Retirement Home • Residential Institution |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retirement Village and Veterinary Surgery |
|--|--|---|

The proposed development is compliant with the relevant land use zoning objective as set out above.

5.4.2 Flooding

The CDP states that planning applications will be assessed in accordance with ‘The Planning and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities’. It notes that ‘The Council will ensure that only developments consistent with the overall policy and technical approach of these Guidelines will be approved and permission may be refused where flood risks to the development, its occupants or users and adjoining property remains. The policies in respect of flooding include:

INF POL 18 ‘To have regard to the ‘Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (DOEHLG/OPW, 2009) through the use of the sequential approach and application of the Justification Tests for Development Management and Development Plans, during the period of this plan.’

INF POL 20 ‘To ensure that a flood risk assessment is carried out for any development proposal, where flood risk may be an issue in accordance with the ‘Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ (DoECLG/OPW, 2009). This assessment shall be appropriate to the scale and nature of risk to the potential development.’

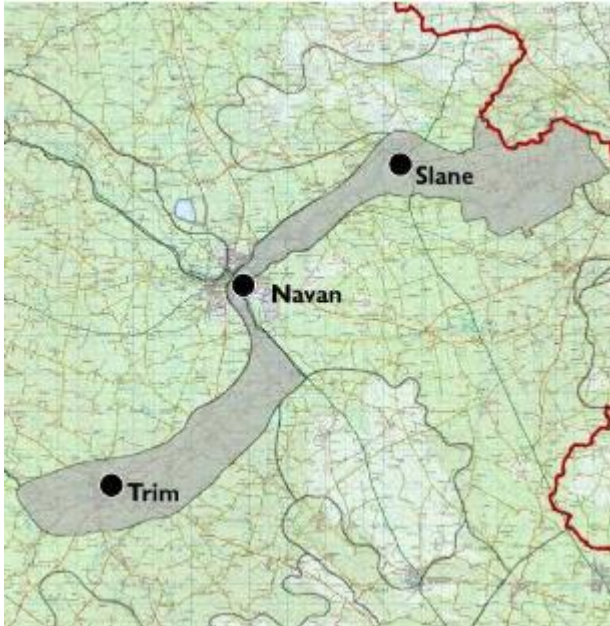
Part of the proposed development site is located within Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B

| Flood Zone | Description |
|--------------|---|
| Flood Zone A | Where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding) |
| Flood Zone B | Where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding) |

A site-specific flood risk assessment accompanies the planning application.

5.4.3 Landscape Character Assessment

The application site is located within the LC 5 Boyne Valley in the Meath LCA.



LCA 5 Boyne Valley, (Source: Meath CDP 2021-2027)

The LCA extends over a large land area and included the western edge of Navan. The landscape characteristics are as follows:

Landscape Value: Exceptional

Landscape Sensitivity: High

Landscape Importance: International

5.4.4 Cultural Heritage

The application site is not located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), the Navan Historic Core (ACA) is circa 300m to the west. There are a number of Protected Structures identified within 1km of the centre of the study area (Highlighted in green), these structures are shown in red (national Monuments) and blue (Protected Structures) in Figure 1.

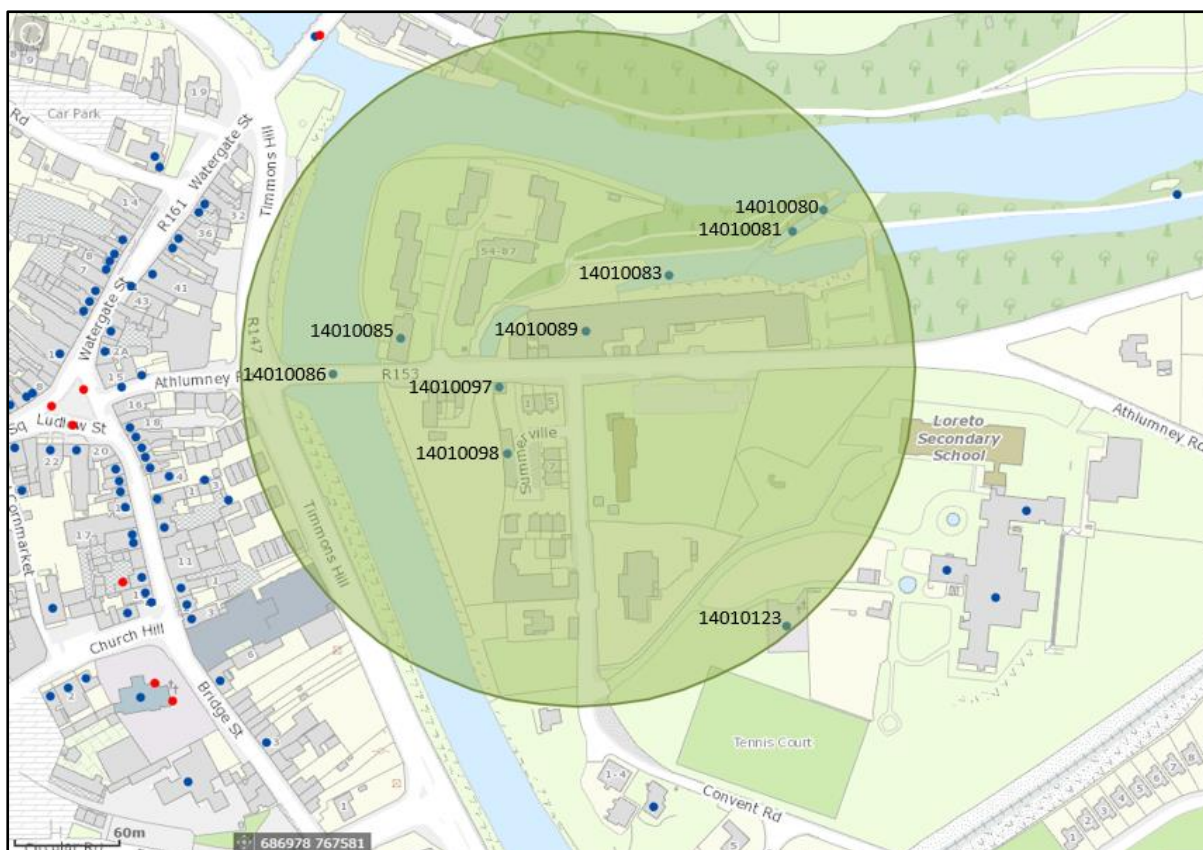


Figure 1 Overview of Recorded Monuments and Places and Protected Structures (Source: Historic Map Viewer, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media)

The details of protected structures located within approximately 1km of the study area are set out Table 1.1 below.

| Original Use | Existing Use | Reg. No. | Description |
|-------------------|--------------|----------|---|
| Graveyard | Graveyard | 14010123 | Graveyard with limestone statue of St. Joseph and rows of cast-iron grave markers, dating from c.1900. Bounded by wrought-iron railings. |
| Building Misc. | Office | 14010098 | Detached seven-bay two-storey former outbuilding, c.1870. Exposed rubble façade with flush brick window surrounds and rusticated door openings. Refurbished and extended as offices, c.1995. Double-pitched roof, projecting eaves course, natural slates, Velux rooflights, brick chimney stack, artificial slate to extension. Exposed rubble limestone walls, painted nap rendered to extension. Flush brick surrounds to window openings, limestone door case, uPVC casement windows, timber doors. |
| Gate Lodge | Office | 14010097 | Detached two-bay two-storey over basement former gate lodge, c.1870, with exposed rubble façade. Arched gateway attached with single and pair of wrought-iron gates, c.1870. Refurbished as offices, c.1995. Double-pitched roof, artificial slates, projecting eaves course, Velux roof lights. Exposed rubble limestone walls. Stone cills and rough-dressed stone flat arches, uPVC casement windows, timber door, iron security grill to basement window. Jostle stone, remnants of rubble stone quay wall to south adjoining former canal. |
| Somerville Bridge | Bridge | 14010087 | Double arch bridge over navigation channel, with three inscribed plaques, built 1792, widened 1936. |
| Bridge | Bridge | 14010086 | Six arch road bridge over river, built 1752, with cutwaters and coursed rubble masonry parapet walls. Ashlar and rubble stone walls. Semi-circular and segmental arches with dressed ashlar voussoirs. |

| | | | |
|--------------|------------|----------|---|
| Mill (Water) | Apartments | 14010085 | Detached nine-bay four-storey former water mill, c.1850. Exposed rubble façade with brick dressings to openings. Retaining cast-iron waterwheel. Converted into apartments, c.1996. Double-pitched roof, natural slates, decorative clay ridge tiles, aluminium ogee gutters. Exposed rubble limestone walls with dressed quoins, metal tie bar plates. Stone cills, flush brick surrounds to window openings, uPVC casement windows, external fire escape, ground floor openings altered. Mill race reclaimed and landscaped, remains of iron sluice gate and 5M diameter iron waterwheel to south-west. |
|--------------|------------|----------|---|

| | | | |
|-------------|--------|----------|--|
| Warehouse | Bakery | 14010089 | Detached six-bay four-storey former corn store, c.1860, with exposed rubble façade. Now in use as bakery. Double-pitched and hipped roof, natural slates. Coursed rubble, whitewashed walls. Sash and casement windows, flush brick surrounds to openings, segmental arches to reveals internally. |
| Harbour | n/a | 14010083 | Remains of canal harbour, built 1792, now partly filled in. |
| Ruxton Lock | n/a | 14010081 | Canal lock, built 1792, with ashlar limestone walls and remains of timber lock gates. Closed in 1932 and mass concrete walls built across lock. Ashlar limestone walls. |
| Bridge | Bridge | 14010080 | Humpback single arch bridge over canal, built 1792, with scroll ended and coursed rubble parapets and inscribed plaques. Inscribed oval plaques - 'Ruxton Lock Richard Evans Engineer 1792'. Rubble limestone haunching and abutments. Elliptical arch with dressed limestone voussoirs. |

5.4.5 Archaeology

An Archaeological assessment prepared by Niall Rycroft accompanies the application which confirms that the subject site lies outside the Historic Town of Navan and does not include any known archaeological site or monument. Section 6.3 of the report recommends the following Archaeological strategy:

- *'A full record of all buildings, walls and components prior to demolition.*
- *The site should be thoroughly trial trenched to assess for any archaeological or historical remains and these should be assessed for preservation in situ or preservation by record.*
- *The location of the large gravel quarry to the east of the original Spicers Site and the Ramparts Carpark will have removed much of the archaeological potential – but the pit may have been filled with items from Navan town which may include intrinsically interesting material.*
- *There may also be dredging material on the site.*
- *The level of preservation of the old Metges Lock and mill races in the area of Andy Brennan Park is not known. This area should be assessed to see how much survival there is.'*

5.4.6 Views and Prospects

A list of relevant protected views and prospects are highlighted in figure 2 and detailed in table 2.1

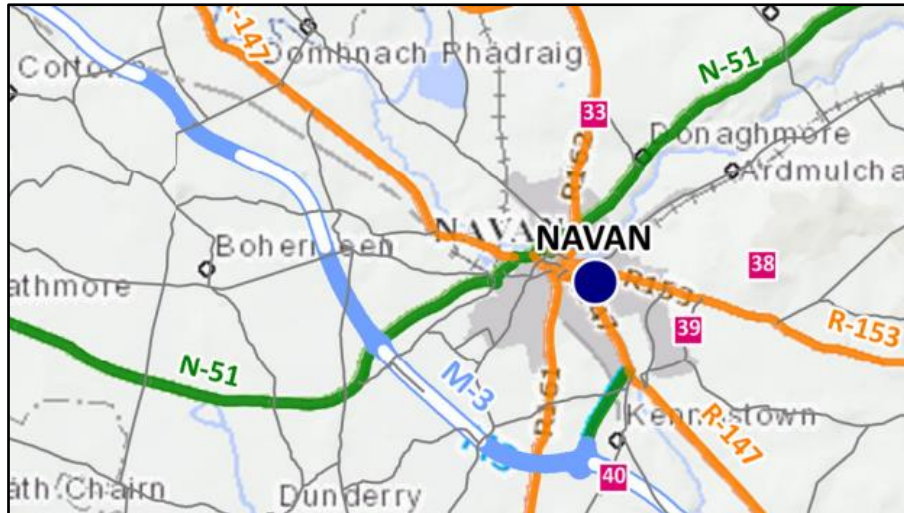


Figure 2 Identified Views & Prospects (Source: Meath CDP 2021-2027)

| View Ref. No. | Location | Description | Significance |
|---------------|---|--|--------------|
| 33 | At Proudstown Crossroads on R162 | Extensive eastward view to distant location across settled landscape. Dense urbanisation on right hand side of view. More open but still undeveloped left-hand side. | Local |
| 38 | At Carne Hill on county road to north of Casey's Crossroads on R153 | Southwest view to very distant horizon across settled landscape with visual settlement, infrastructure, and housing on the outskirts of Navan. | Local |
| 39 | At Johnstown on county road to south of Casey's Crossroads on R153 | Extensive view to north-east across working landscape with visible infrastructure (powerline, major road) and scattered residential development. | Local |
| 40 | On road to south of Cannistown Church and M3 | Extensive view mainly to southeast and south over settled landscape with infrastructure (motorway), powerlines, playing fields and houses. | Local |

Table 2.1 Most Relevant Protected Views and Prospects as shown in County Development Plan

The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on any of these protected views.

5.4.7 Tree Preservation

The CDP has identified series of trees or groupings of trees as being of particular importance or value to an area. As a means of protecting these areas of planting, Tree Preservations Orders (TPOs) have been made for a number of sites.

There are no trees within the site or the immediate surrounding areas that are subject to statutory trees preservation orders in the current CDP. The CDP identifies a Stand of mature coniferous and deciduous trees along the Ramparts, south of the River Boyne as trees to be preserved. These are outside the application site boundary. The application is accompanied by detailed Arboricultural information.

'Navan's location in the rich landscape of the Boyne Valley provides a unique setting and natural heritage for the town. An important feature of natural heritage is the River Boyne and River Blackwater candidate Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area.

It is an objective of this Plan to protect the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and SPA, to preserve the character of the Historic Core Architectural Conservation Area, and to protect and enhance character and setting of Protected Structures in accordance with County Development Plan policies and objectives.

The town also benefits from a historic building fabric that is a reminder of its industrial and manufacturing heritage.

The conservation of the town's heritage is a complex challenge that required a balance being achieved between conservation and the facilitation of necessary development to meet the present and future needs of the people.

Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces that intersperse the town. It includes open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees, natural heritage, and the open countryside. The Ramparts along the River Boyne is an example of green infrastructure in Navan.

There is significant opportunity to create a network of green spaces in the town which would provide a means of linking communities with amenity facilities, it is an objective of this plan to prepare a green strategy for Navan.'

'Navan 2030', which is an integrated public realm and movement plan for the town seeks to make a positive improvement to the public realm of the town. One of the objectives of the strategy is to improve the connections between the historic and more modern streets and create an environment where people can enjoy the urban core.

In addition to supporting improvements to the public realm a strong emphasis is also being placed on creating an attractive urban environment where there is a strong sense of place. New buildings and spaces should make a positive contribution to the character and identity of Navan.'

Section 5.1.2 addresses urban regeneration and active land management. Through the implementation of the Active Land Management Strategy and the progression of projects funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund the Council is taking a proactive approach to urban regeneration. Part of this Active Land Management Strategy is to regularly monitor vacant sites and support the regeneration of areas in the town that have experienced decline and a lack of investment. The plan positively supports the appropriate redevelopment of vacant and underutilised land and properties in the town.

It is the policy of the Council;

- NAV OBJ 4** *'To support the progression and delivery of projects funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, including:*
- *The Flowerhill Regeneration Project*
 - *The Land Activation Scheme*
 - *The County Hall Regeneration Project including the restoration of St. Patrick's Classical School.'*
- NAV OBJ 29** *'To promote Navan's heritage value and streetscape character to continually improve the visitor and resident's experience of the town centre. '*
- NAV OBJ 30** *'To support and facilitate the wide range of improvements to the accessibility, environmental quality and amenity of Navan Town Centre under the 'Navan 2030' initiative. '*
- NAV OBJ 31** *'To support and facilitate the delivery of the Boyne Greenway within the town area and integration with associated amenities and connections to the urban form.'*
- NAV OBJ 32** *'To support the provision of access and facilities for active recreation and water sports on the River Boyne. The delivery of such proposals will be subject to the outcome of the Appropriate Assessment process. If adverse effects on European Site integrity are identified, alternative locations, procedures and/or designs will be developed to ensure that proposals will not adversely affect the integrity of European Sites, either alone or in-combination with any other plans or projects. If, despite the implementation of mitigation measures, there remains a risk that the proposals will adversely affect the integrity of any European Sites, the project will not be progressed unless an alternative solution can be implemented which avoids/reduces the impact to a level that the integrity of the European Site(s) is(are) unaffected. The proposals must also assess the impact of increased visitor numbers and activity on European sites as well as the potential for introduction of invasive species via active recreation/water sports. It is reasonable to assume that at the detailed design stage any potential for a project element to impact on European Sites could, and will, be resolved through the exploration of alternative locations or designs whilst still fulfilling their function/role.'*
- NAV OBJ 34** *'To promote the preservation of individual trees or groups of trees or woodlands identified on the Heritage Map for Navan (Map no.22b) and to manage these trees in line with Arboricultural best practice.'*
- NAV OBJ 35** *'To support the appropriate provision is made for additional education, health and recreation facilities in advance of residential population growth.'*
- NAV OBJ 38** *To implement the 'Navan 2030' Public Realm Strategy and support the progression and delivery of projects funded by the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, including:*
- *The Flowerhill Regeneration Project*
 - *The Land Activation Scheme*
 - *The County Hall Regeneration Project including the restoration of St. Patrick's Classical School.'*

5.6 Navan 2050

The 2050 vision for Navan is a living document and sets out the strategic long-term plan for the town. The Strategy highlights what differentiates Navan from other towns of its size and presents how the town can transform to become exemplary in its function as an environmentally sustainable and compact Key Town in the region through progressive forward planning and appropriate investment.

5.7 Other relevant documents

- Healthy Meath Plan, 2019-2021

The plan sets out the following vision: *'Meath is a place where nurturing healthy communities is at the heart of all development and decision making and where individuals are supported to make healthy choices for themselves and their families.'*

Priority 1: Healthy Planning and Living Environment

Actions include the development of walking and cycling facilities

Priority 2: Community Connectivity

Priority 3: Healthy Lifestyle

Priority 4: Education, Information and Awareness

Priority 5: Working in Partnership

Responses to surveys carried out as part of the preparation of the Healthy Meath Plan confirm that the majority of respondents see a county that will have greater provision of green space and amenities with people having a healthier diet and participating in more physical activity.

- Local Economic and Community Plan, 2016-2021

The Meath Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) was established in 2014 to develop, coordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. One of the primary functions of the LCDCs is to develop, implement and monitor a six-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for the Local Authority administrative area. Central to the Meath LECP 2016-2021 is the understanding that economic, local and community development is mutually supportive in building sustainable communities with strong local economies. The purpose of the LECP is therefore to identify objectives and implement actions to strengthen and develop both the economic and community dimensions of the County over a six-year period.

The Plan is based on and seeks to progress the following values:

- Community;
- Community development;
- Equality and Human Rights;
- Sustainability;

- Sense of Place;
- Partnership.

The Development Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plan effectively operate along parallel and supportive lines. The LECP provides a supporting framework for economic and local community development of Meath, whereas the County Development Plan provides an overarching strategy and statutory policy support for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County at a spatial level. Consequently, the statutory policies and objectives of the County Development Plan must be complementary to and consistent with the high-level goals and objectives of the LECP.

The LECP sets out five goals:

- To promote and secure the wellbeing of all people and communities in the County.
- To stimulate and support a dynamic competitive economy to best meet the needs and aspirations of the people and communities in the County.
- To build and enable the resilience of all people and communities in the County.
- To stimulate and empower a flourishing for all people and communities in the County.
- To develop and implement ongoing renewal in public sector bodies that addresses how they fulfil their mandates and work with other stakeholders.

The LECP is being reviewed at present.

- [Meath Economic Development Strategy 2014–2022](#)

The Strategy, which is currently under review, sets out a range of measures aimed at accelerating the economic transformation, revitalisation and sustainable development of Meath.

Section 6 Traffic and Transportation

The application is seeking permission to redesign and extend the Ramparts car park. New entry and exit points will be provided. This car park will provide sufficient car and cycle parking to cater for demand generated by the Ramparts walk, the redevelopment of Spicers and Andy Brennan Park. The application provides for 2 pedestrian crossings encourage pedestrian permeability between the lands and the car park.

The existing car park has a total of 52 car parking spaces. 64 carparking spaces are proposed. A bike stand to accommodate 9 bikes is also proposed.

The application is accompanied by a Traffic Impact Assessment prepared by O'Connor, Sutton Cronin which examines construction and operational impacts. The assessment concludes that the impact of the development on the local road network can be considered to be negligible and no remedial or mitigation measures are needed.

Section 7 Site Services

The application is accompanied by an Engineering Services Report prepared by O'Connor, Sutton Cronin which addresses Surface Water Drainage; Wastewater Drainage and Potable Water Supply. The report should be read in conjunction with the accompanying set of Civil Engineering design drawings. As stated earlier in this report the IW asset in Andy Brennan Park will remain in situ, access required by IW has been accommodated in the proposal.

Surface Water

There is no evidence that existing buildings, hardstanding areas or landscaping areas currently discharge surface water into either a local storm water network or a local combined network. There is no apparent treatment nor attenuation facilities in place. In the absence of surface water runoff infrastructure on the existing site, the runoff is believed to pond in the natural depression and is allowed to infiltrate naturally in the ground or find its way into the River Boyne located immediately adjacent, possibly by overland flow.

As part of the proposed development, a new surface water network will be constructed to manage all surface water onsite. The proposed development is to be served by a sustainable drainage system which has been designed to allow for an additional 20% increase in rainfall intensity, to allow for Climate Change projections, in 2 catchments as set out in Figure 3.3 - Proposed Surface Water Drainage Strategy. The system has been designed to restrict flow to greenfield run off rates. An outfall with a non return valve is proposed north of the Ramparts car park and at the southern boundary of Andy Brennan Park, representing a significant improvement to the current situation.

Wastewater

The proposed development works does not include any works to upgrade or expand the wastewater network. The existing Bakery office is understood to have an existing wastewater connection to the public sewer. A new Pre-Connection enquiry is being submitted simultaneously to the Irish water to secure/maintain the wastewater connection for this building.

Water Supply

The proposed development works does not include any works to upgrade or expand the potable water network. The existing Bakery office is understood to have an existing connection to the watermain. A new Pre-Connection enquiry is being submitted simultaneously to the Irish water to secure/maintain the wastewater connection for this building.

Flooding

As set out at Section 5 above part of the site is located within Flood Zone A and B. The Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment prepared by O'Connor, Sutton Cronin notes that there are no reports of flooding on the application site, however there are reported instances of flooding in the vicinity of the site relating to the Rivers Boyne and Blackwater. The assessment is carried out in full compliance with the requirements of "The Planning System & Flood Risk Management Guidelines" published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in November 2009. The buildings are located within Flood Zone B, while the Amenity Open space is located within Flood Zone A. Therefore, each element of the proposed development is considered to be compatible with table 3.2 of the OPW's "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management". Pluvial and groundwater flooding will be managed through the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in Section 5.3 of the SSFRA.

The report concludes that that the site is at risk of flooding from external sources, the proposed uses are in accordance with the OPW guidance and are therefore acceptable. The report recommends that all drainage infrastructure is designed and installed in accordance with the relevant standards.

Section 8 Environmental Assessments

As the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and SPA directly adjoins the application site, Forest Environmental Research and Services Ltd. (Fers) were commissioned to prepare the following reports:

- Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of the overall master plan lands
- Ecological Surveys of the overall master plan lands
- Alien Invasive Species Management Plan of of the overall master plan lands
- A stage one and stage two Appropriate Assessment of the proposed development.

8.1 Ecological Impact Assessment & Ecological Surveys

The EclA identified the ecological constraints and concluded as follows: 'Given the ecological sensitivity of the location and the international ecological importance of the lands in question and associated ecological corridor and habitats, virtually any aspect of development of the lands has the potential to impact on the ecological/biodiversity resource present. The ecological constraints can only be identified through a wholistic, comprehensive assessment of the ecology of the lands in question and habitats adjacent.'

The EclA concluded that the following surveys should be undertaken within the appropriate ecological window:

- Terrestrial flora and habitat survey to include qualitative and quantitative assessments;
- Aquatic flora survey to include the Boyne Navigation Canal as it occurs in the lands and the River Boyne as it occurs adjacent;
- Survey and mapping of any Alien Invasive Plant Species (plant species listed in Part (1) of the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations of 2011;
- General bird survey;
- Kingfisher survey;
- Non-volant mammal survey;
- Otter survey;
- Bat survey

During the period June – August 2022, these surveys (with the exception of bat surveys, which were undertaken by Dr Tina Aughney) were undertaken by FERS Ltd.

The summary of the results are as follows:

- There are no terrestrial or aquatic Flora Protection Order plant species or Red Data List species present within the Masterplan area;
- There are significant populations of two plant species listed in Part (1) of the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations of 2011 (as amended);
- The woodland habitat and riparian corridor are important with regard to the local avifauna resource; Both the River Boyne and the Boyne Navigation Canal are utilised by Kingfisher, with Kingfisher observed utilising both habitats;

- Virtually no signs of non-volant mammals were observed (including trail camera footage) – this is likely owing to the high levels of human use, high levels of dog activity and likely high levels of domestic cat activity; and
- Although no otter was observed during targeted surveys, otter is certain to utilise both the river habitat and Boyne Navigation Canal habitat and the terrestrial habitat adjacent, although activity is curtailed by human and dog presence.

The primary constraints (bats notwithstanding) regard potential impacts on water quality, spread of Japanese Knotweed and/or Himalayan Balsam, and disturbance of fauna – in particular Otter and Kingfisher.

8.2 Alien Invasive Species Management Plan

The aims of the Alien Invasive Plant Species Management and Control Plan are:

(1) To eradicate from the proposed Masterplan area the population of Fallopia japonica present prior to any works being undertaken in order to prevent its' spread/dispersal from the current locations;

(2) To eradicate the current population of Impatiens glandulifera from the site prior to any works being undertaken. Unfortunately, the complete eradication of this species is not possible owing to a continuous "seed rain" from populations upstream. A management protocol to control this species within the Masterplan area must, therefore, be established to prevent further spread of this species within the Masterplan Area;

(3) To prevent the export of propagules of any species of plant listed on Part (1) of the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations of 2011 (as Amended) to the Masterplan Area (and in particular F. japonica and I. glandulifera).

The management plan recommends that the proposed development site is the subject of a comprehensive monitoring program for invasives post development.

8.3 Appropriate Assessment

The EclA and ecology surveys informed the preparation of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.

The NIS concludes as follows:

'In order for AA to comply with the criteria set out in the Habitats Directive and the Planning and Development Act 2000, an AA undertaken by the Competent Authority must include an examination, analysis, evaluation, findings, conclusions, and a final determination.

Following the identification of a potential impact(s) upon one or more Natura 2000 sites through an Appropriate Assessment Screening exercise, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment of the proposed development has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC). The information to enable the Competent Authority to perform its statutory function in this regard is presented within this NIS.

Following an examination, analysis, and evaluation of the relevant information, and applying the precautionary principle, it is the professional opinion of the author of this report that there will be no

adverse impact on the integrity of any of relevant Natura 2000 sites, assuming the implementation of all mitigation/preventative measures as outlined.

Consequently, there will be no risk of adverse effects on Qualifying Interest habitats or species, nor the attainment of specific conservation objectives, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, for the relevant Natura 2000 sites. The ecological integrity of the Natura 2000 sites concerned (connected with qualifying interests for which the sites have been designated) will not be significantly impacted.'

8.4 Bat Assessment

Dr Tina Aughney has prepared a Bat Assessment based on detailed field work which comprised of day time walkabout surveys and inspections of trees, buildings, structures and other likely roost sites, dusk, dawn and walking transect surveys. A passive static bat detector survey was also carried out with 6 static units deployed, Figure 5 refers. Dr Aughney surveyed the entire masterplan lands as is reflected in her report. Five species of bat were recorded in the area surveyed.

The assessment notes:

- a) Bat usage of the buildings within Spicer's Bakery;
- b) Bat usage of Terrace Houses and pump house;
- c) Bat usage of Andy Brennan Park;
- d) Bat usage of area of the Ramparts adjacent to the proposed development area.

Section 5 addresses impact and proposes mitigation measures including requirements for NPWS Derogation Licences in the case of removal of any roots in buildings proposed for demolition. Alternative roosting sites will be required. Demolition will be required to be carried out under supervision by a bat specialist outside the months May to August. Monitoring is recommended post-construction works.

8.5 Arboricultural Documentation

Charles McCorkell, Arboricultural Consultancy prepared the following documents:

| Document | Reference | Location |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Tree Schedule | 220427-PD-10 | Appendix A |
| Tree Work Schedule | 220427-PD-12 | Appendix A |
| Tree Survey & Constraints Plan | 220427-P-10 | Appendix B |
| Tree Removals & Protection Plan | 220427-P-11 | Appendix B |

93 individual trees, 12 groups of trees, one hedgerow, and one shrub group were surveyed. Of the 105 survey entries recorded, 26 trees and groups were assessed as being of moderate quality and value (B Category), 73 trees and groups were assessed as being of low quality and value (C Category) and six trees were assessed as being of poor quality (U Category).

The proposed development will require the removal of 36 trees, two tree groups, and the partial removal of two tree groups. Of the 40 survey entries proposed to be removed or partially removed, four trees are of moderate quality and value (B Category), 34 trees and groups are of low quality and value (C Category), and two trees are of poor quality (U Category).

The report concludes: *'The trees to be retained as part of the development can all be successfully protected by using robust fencing measures that comply with the recommendations outlined within BS 5837:2012. Details of the tree protection measures required during the development are shown in the Tree Removals & Protection Plan at Appendix B. The loss of trees required to facilitate the development will have some impact on the character of the local landscape; however, the proposal presents a good opportunity to regenerate the visual amenity value of the local area through structured tree planting and landscape enhancements.'*

8.5 EIA Screening Report

EIA Screening was carried out and concluded that an EIAR of the proposed development is not required as the proposed development does not fall within a category of development listed in Schedule 5 of Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022.

Section 9 Conclusion

The proposed development is consistent with National, Regional and local planning policies as set out above and gives effect to and facilitates the implementation of planning policy in the Meath County Development Plan.

The proposed development will remove dereliction and will strengthen and develop the area's existing riverfront heritage assets, environmental resources and social amenities into a dynamic range of vibrant and attractive parkland facilities, ecological protected areas and unique attractions for residents and visitors.