



6 SPECIFIC POLICIES FOR CHARACTER AREAS

6.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this Local Area Plan, the overall plan area has been subdivided into a number of smaller areas, each of which has some defining characteristics relating to existing zoning, existing roads and other landscape features and natural barriers.

These areas are as follows:

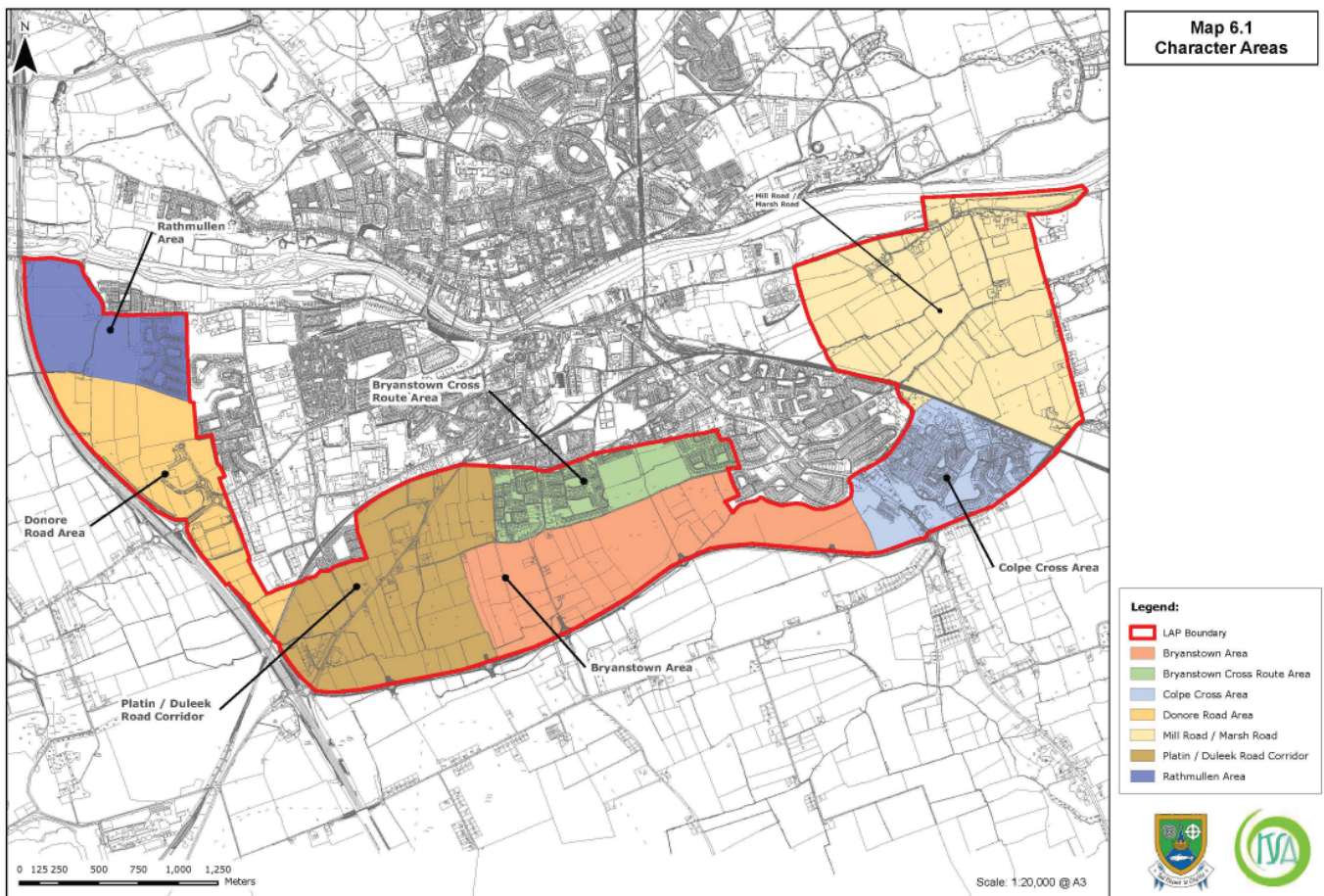
- Rathmullen Area
- Donore Road Area
- Duleek/Platin Road Corridor
- Bryanstown Cross Route
- Colpe Cross Area
- Bryanstown Area
- Mill Road/ Marsh Road Area

This section of the Plan contains a description and delineation of each the areas and a brief analysis of the land use characteristics. Specific policies for each of the areas identified are then set out.

Source of the areas identified in this chapter have been previously zoned for development and a substantial amount of development has taken place since the last plan was produced for the environs of Drogheda in 2001 (as part of the Meath County Development Plan, 2001).

The two areas which were not zoned for development under the previous plan, are the Bryanstown or 'hatched area' and the Mill Road/Marsh Road area. A specific objective for the provision of detailed Urban Design Framework Plans for these areas is required prior to development.

Map 6.1 shows the extent and delineation of the various character areas.



6.2 Rathmullen Area

6.2.1 Brief Outline of the Area

The Rathmullen Area is located on the western outskirts of Drogheda along the River Boyne. All lands in this area were zoned for new residential development under the 2001 Meath County Development Plan. The area is generally bound to the north by the River Boyne, to the east by existing built-up area of Drogheda ('Riverbank' housing estate), to the south by the IDA Business Park and other employment zoned lands and to the west by the M1 Motorway.

The area is the last undeveloped landbank between the western outskirts of the town and the M1 motorway which forms a natural barrier and stop to further development in a westerly direction. Further to this, the main battlefield site of the Battle of the Boyne is located to the other side of the Motorway. Parts of the battle site extend to the subject lands, eg King William's crossing point (see also Chapter 3 for details).

The lands are accessed from Drogheda by the Rathmullen road. The road splits in two strands, one runs in a northerly direction before turning west and crossing over the Motorway and the other runs north towards the Boyne before turning west and running parallel to the river. The current road network is insufficient to serve any new major residential development.

Some of the previously zoned lands in the Rathmullen area have been built up by residential development (Riverbank housing estate). The remainder of the area is in agricultural use at present and includes a number of farm buildings. A planning application for a large residential development comprising approximately 745 units was granted planning permission by Meath County Council in July 2007. This application is on appeal with An Bord Pleanála at time of writing.

The topography of the area slopes gently from south to north towards the river Boyne. The most northern extremity of the area drops sharply to the River Valley in a steep slope.

6.2.2 Policy Context

The specific policy context for the Rathmullen area is provided by the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area and the policies set out under the Meath County Development Plan. Other policies and objectives need to be taken into account such as the designation of parts of the areas adjoining the Rathmullen Area as areas of special amenity and or historical importance (see also Chapters 3 and 5).

The Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area sets out an Indicative Roll-Out of Development Land. Four periods of phasing have been identified under the Strategy, the Rathmullen Area is identified as the "Zoned Land (Core Area) – Period 1". As such, the area is identified as a landbank for the immediate phase of future development in the Greater Drogheda Area.

The area is also located adjacent the River Boyne. A special objective is provided in the Greater Drogheda Strategy for an amenity corridor along the Boyne, this includes the provision of a walkway/ tourist trail along the Boyne.

6.2.3 Key Issues

In summary, the key issues that need to be taken into consideration for the future of the Rathmullen Area are:

- To safeguard any future development in terms of impact on Boyne Valley, Battle of the Boyne site and Bru Na Boine world heritage site.
- To build on the tourist potential provided by the amenity of the Boyne Valley and in particular to liaise with Drogheda Tourism to facilitate a walkway along the Boyne.
- To address the current access constraints that exist in the area in terms of the substandard road infrastructure.

6.2.4 Development Framework

It is anticipated that the Rathmullen area will provide for the immediate residential expansion of Drogheda, subject to all requirements and safeguards for the sustainable development of the area, in particular the upgrading of the existing road network.

As can be seen from the zoning map, a buffer zone has been included (F1 zoned lands) to shelter the residential element from adjoining industrial and employment uses as part of the IDA Park. Further to this, a 50 metre setback from Motorway is retained as per the previous plan to shelter future development from the negative environmental impacts associated with the motorway.

Policy Objectives:

- RM1 To ensure orderly development of the Rathmullen area and to integrate future residential development with the existing built form. To provide adequate permeability and pedestrian linkages with adjoining residential areas.*
- RM 2 To ensure that new development in the area does not impact on the natural, built and archaeological heritage of the area. In order to achieve this, new development must be screened from the Battle of the Boyne site, and care must be taken to ensure that any new sewage treatment facilities do not impact upon the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC.*
- RM3 To ensure that the existing road network in the area is upgraded as part of any future development. A new access arrangement to the Rathmullen area from the Donore Road via the existing IDA business park should be explored.*
- RM4 To provide a walkway and cycle track along the river Boyne to link with a wider tourist trail proposed for this area and to be financed through local development*

contributions in this area. To consult with the relevant authorities in the implementation of this objective.

6.3 Donore Road Area

6.3.1 Brief Outline of the Area

The Donore Road Area is located to either side of the Donore Road when entering the town of Drogheda from the M1 interchange. The area comprises of the IDA business park which lies to the north of the Donore Road and a retail warehousing park to the south of the road.

The area generally stretches from its northern boundary with the residentially zoned lands at Rathmullen to its southern boundary which is made up of the railway line (freightline to Navan). The eastern boundary is formed by the Drogheda town boundary and the western boundary is provided by the M1 Motorway.

All lands in this area are zoned “E1 – To provide for industrial and related uses”. They provide a substantial employment landbank of approximately 75 hectares in total.

These employment zoned lands which are in the administrative area of County Meath form part of a wider employment area centred around the Donore Road which is predominantly located in Drogheda Borough Council area and which generally stretches between the Donore Road and the Navan Rail Line. The total area of Employment Zoned Lands in Drogheda Borough Council’s jurisdiction is approximately 65 hectares. The area contains a healthy mix of medium to large sized companies/employers mostly of an industrial/manufacturing nature.

The IDA Park, located in Co. Meath, has been developed by creating a road layout, services infrastructure and landscaping scheme of a high quality. To date, a number of planning applications for various office and other buildings have been granted in the area. However, at present there are only a limited number of businesses operating out of the estate and the vast majority of land remains undeveloped.

The retail park to the south of the Donore Road comprises of a number of retail warehousing outlets and has been developed over recent years. A new road network provides good accessibility to the overall area. A large tract of land to the rear of the retail park remains undeveloped.

6.3.2 Policy Context

The overall policy context provided by the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area, the Drogheda Borough Development Plan 2005-2011 and the Meath County Council Development Plan 2007-2011 sets out that the Donore Road area, including the IDA Business Park, is a key provider for local employment in Drogheda and surrounding area.

Given the anticipated population growth for Drogheda, it is a key policy objective outlined in the above documents to provide further local employment for future residents of the town and to decrease the dependence on Dublin as a key employment centre, thereby reducing the current unsustainable trends of long distance commuting to the capital.

In this regard, the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area aims to maintain a high jobs ratio for Drogheda which should not fall below 0.7 (it is estimated to be currently at a ratio of 0.79). The jobs ratio expresses the total number of jobs divided by the labour force. It is therefore a key objective of the policy context that the Donore Road area is instrumental in providing additional employment for Drogheda to cater for the substantial population increase anticipated for the town.

It is further a policy of the Drogheda Planning Strategy that a Park and Ride facility be provided in the area which should link with the town centre and the rail station via a shuttle bus. This shuttle bus would serve the dual function of getting people from the town centre and rail station to the Donore Road employment area as well as providing an opportunity for people to leave their cars on the outskirts of Drogheda to commute to the town centre and beyond via the rail station.

6.3.3 Development Framework

Given the importance of the Donore Road employment area and the IDA business park in providing local employment, its is an overriding objective of this Local Area Plan to safeguard the lands zoned for employment and to facilitate and encourage the location of new businesses to the area.

Notwithstanding the above, it is acknowledged that the Drogheda Retail Park forms an important function for the retail offer of the town and this is reflected in the zoning of the retail park to zoning objective B4 (‘To provide for the development of a retail warehouse park’ – please refer to zoning map).

Further to this, it is a specific objective of the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area that a Park and Ride facility be provided in the Donore Road Area. In this regard, an area at the back of the retail park has been identified as a suitable location for the future provision of a Park and Ride facility and associated feeder/ shuttle bus. In this regard, lands have been zoned to objective E3 (‘To provide for transport and related uses including the provision of park and ride facilities’) and further to this Local Objective DE2 refers (for specific local objectives see Section 5.13).

Policy Objectives:

DRA1 It is a key objective of the Local Area Plan to maintain the Donore Road Area as a key employment hub for the town of Drogheda.

DRA2 The lands directly adjacent to the west of the Donore Road Motorway Interchange should be subject to a detailed feasibility study to determine the future

potential of the area due to its strategic location adjacent the motorway interchange in line with Objective ED OBJ1 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013.

DRA3 *In zones of transition in the Donore Road Area, where E2 zoned lands adjoin existing dwellings, a landscaping buffer zone of 15 metres shall be provided along the boundary, as part of any planning applications to develop the E2 lands, in order to protect the visual and residential amenities of the residents.*

DRA4 *In accordance with the requirements of the National Roads Authority, no access should be permitted from the slip road which runs along the M1 Motorway between the Rathmullen/ Donore Road Interchange and Platin Road.*

6.4 Duleek/ Platin Road Corridor

6.4.1 Brief Outline of the Area

The area as described in this Local Area Plan as the Duleek / Platin Road Corridor stretches to both side of the Duleek/Platin Road and comprises a mix of land use zoning as established under the 2001 Meath County Development Plan.

There is a mix of established uses in the area, including car showrooms, factory/ warehousing, residential development and some established one-off housing. There is a lack of overall coherence to development in this area.

Two applications for residential development were recently granted permission. An application for 174 units to the north of the Donore Road and adjacent Matthew's lane was granted permission in 2007. An application for 575 residential units, a leisure centre, and 6 number retail units was also granted permission in 2007. This application also provides for an extension of the Bryanstown Cross Route to link with the Donore Road.

A large parcel of E1 zoned lands located to the north of the Platin Road form an extension of the Donore Road Industrial Park (located in Drogheda Borough Council). However, in terms of access the railway line provides a physical barrier between the two areas.

A large parcel of E2 zoned lands are located between the Bryanstown Area and the Platin Road. With the establishment of major new residential communities, this area would be in very close proximity to future residents at Bryanstown and could provide for local employment accessible by foot. This Local Area Plan has increased the amount of land zoned for E2 employment by decreasing the overall Bryanstown area as it was identified under the 2001 Meath development Plan.

6.4.2 Key Objectives

It is an objective of the Local Area Plan that the Duleek Road Area should develop in an orderly fashion. In this regard, it will be of particular importance to ensure that where future employment uses abut residential uses, particular care is taken in minimising any potential negative impacts on residential amenity.

In addition to this, future development needs to be well integrated and connected with existing development, in particular in terms of walking and cycling routes.

The large parcel of undeveloped E2 zoned lands to the south-east of the Duleek Road will in future be located adjacent the proposed park/open space at Bryanstown. In this regard, full use should be made of the recreational and amenity value presented by this park as a resource for future employees. It is considered in this regard that it would be desirable to attract higher intensity employment uses to this area which would be set in a high quality, campus style environment and which would generate larger numbers of employees than more traditional manufacturing uses.

In the area currently zoned for 'E1' type employment uses to the north of the Duleek Road, it is an objective of the Plan to examine the potential for a pedestrian crossing over the Navan Rail line to provide better access from the Duleek Road Area to the Donore Road Industrial Estate.

Further to the above, the Local Area Plan recognises the strategic importance of the landbank adjacent the Motorway Interchange for key economic and cultural uses of strategic benefit to County Meath which could not be accommodated on the existing zoned landbank. Specific policies for this area are outlined in Section 6.5 of the Local Area Plan.

Policy Objectives:

DPRC1 *The future built form on lands adjacent the proposed urban park at Bryanstown (as detailed in the Bryanstown Framework Plan) should be designed to provide an urban edge to the proposed park in terms of design, orientation and height of the buildings. Further to this, future development should provide for good linkages to the park for employees and other members of the public.*

DPRC2 *Future planning applications adjacent the Navan Rail line (Drogheda branch) should examine the potential for a pedestrian crossing over the rail line to provide for better access from the Duleek Road Area to the Donore Road Industrial Estate.*

DPRC3 *The Duleek Road Motorway Interchange has been identified as a key strategic Motorway Interchange adjoining the existing urban are of Drogheda town. Planning applications in these areas need to be assessed on their merit and in accordance with the*

policies of the Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013 in particular Objective ED OBJ1 (Section 3.1.8 of the Development Plan refers).

centre was granted planning permission by Meath County Council subject to a material contravention proceeding and was subsequently granted permission by An Bord Pleanála.

6.5 Bryanstown Cross Route

6.5.1 Brief Outline of the Area

This area is made up of a band of residential development which is located directly adjacent the Drogheda town boundary. This band of residential development forms part of a wider residential neighbourhood which is located to either side of the Bryanstown Cross Route. An application for approx. 400 residential units in the area was granted permission in 2007.

Access to the area is provided off the Bryanstown Cross Route and also by the Beymore Road which traverses the lands in a north-southerly direction.

At present, this area forms the last built up area of the town on its southern outskirts. Beyond this area, agricultural lands stretch to the Bremore Road.

The area lies directly adjacent the Bryanstown area policies of which are outlined in Section 6.7.

6.5.2 Development Objectives

A key objective for the Bryanstown Cross route area is to ensure that future development at Bryanstown can be linked through the area and connected and integrated with the town of Drogheda. In particular, pedestrian permeability in a north-westerly direction needs to be safeguarded.

In terms of overall urban design, it is an objective to provide a good integration and transition to the adjoining Bryanstown Area and in particular the residential communities planned for this area.

A number of dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes are proposed to traverse the area and to provide linkages with the town centre. These are to be provided in coordination with Drogheda Borough Council (see Map 5.1 for detail)

6.6 Colpe Cross Area

6.6.1 Brief Outline of the Area

The area referred to in this Local Area Plan as Colpe Cross extends to both sides of the Dublin Road/ R132 (old N1). The larger of the two areas to the north-east of the Dublin Road has been developed over recent years as a new residential community of approximately 1,200 units. This area, referred to as Grangerath, also provides for a new neighbourhood centre (under construction at time of writing). The neighbourhood

To the west of the Dublin Road, a new residential estate is under construction at time of writing. The residential development of some 165 units was granted planning permission under Reg. Ref. SA60649.

In effect, the Colpe Cross area is therefore fully developed and no development land remains in the locality.

6.6.2 Development Framework

The area of the neighbourhood centre granted permission by way of a material contravention of the Meath County Development Plan has now been rezoned to B3 *"to protect, provide for and improve local shopping facilities"*. An intensification or substantial expansion of the retail facilities at Grangerath is not considered appropriate. The role and function should be that of a neighbourhood centre to serve the needs of the immediate population in the area. Any potential future expansion of the retail base at Grangerath needs to be carefully balanced against the retail provision in other parts of the study area, in particular future proposal for Bryanstown and Mill Road/Marsh Road areas and existing provision in Drogheda town centre.

In the residential area to the east of the Dublin Road, linkages to the adjacent new development area of Bryanstown need to be safeguarded. In particular where cul-de-sacs front onto the Bryanstown landbank, it is an objective of the LAP that these will allow for permeability for pedestrians and cyclists to newly developing areas at Bryanstown.

In the longer term context of a potential future river crossing at Marsh Road and any new road proposals or road upgrades for the Mill Road and eventual linkage to the proposed M1-N1 link road, an upgrade and appropriate expansion of the link road from the Dublin Road to the Mill Road (currently forming the southern boundary to the Colpe Cross area) needs to be considered. However, any future road upgrades here need to be embedded in the wider context of development in the Mill Road/ Marsh Road area (refer to Section 6.8 below).

6.7 Bryanstown Area

6.7.1 Brief Outline of the Area

The Bryanstown Area is located to the south of the existing built up area of Drogheda. This area was identified in the 2001 Meath County Council Development Plan as being subject to an Action Area Plan. Such a plan was not prepared during the lifespan of the previous Development Plan. Under this current Local Area Plan, the lands at Bryanstown have been given definitive land use zoning objectives. However, it remains an objective of this Local Area Plan that an Urban Design Framework Plan needs to be prepared for this area prior to development taking place on the lands.

It should be noted that the overall area at Bryanstown which is subject to such a Framework Plan has been reduced to exclude the lands to the west of Bryanstown which are zoned *E2 – Light Industry* under this LAP.

The existing landscape of the Bryanstown area is generally undulating and the majority of lands in the area are in agricultural use. There are a number of mature hedgerows and trees which mark field boundaries throughout the area.

There are a number of one off dwellings and farmyards fronting the Bryanstown Road and the laneways to the north of the site. No significant historic or archaeological features have been recorded in the Bryanstown area.

The topography is generally falling from north to south towards the Lagavoreen watercourse.

The existing road network consists of the Dublin Road, Bryanstown Road and Duleek/Platin Road. Future possible connections can be provided to the Bryanstown Cross Route.

6.7.2 Compliance with the Development Plan

The Meath County Development Plan, 2007-2013 sets out that for certain areas the preparation of a framework plan will be required. The Plan further notes that each Framework Plan shall consist of a written statement and a plan or series of plans indicating the objectives in such detail, as may determined by the Planning Authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies to include, inter alia, the following details:

- *Proposals in relation to the overall design of the proposed development including maximum heights, external finishes of structures and the general appearance and design, including that of the public realm;*
- *The types and extent of any proposed development indicating how these uses integrate with surrounding development and land uses;*
- *Proposals in relation to transportation including public transportation and non motorised modes, vehicular roads layout and access arrangements, loading / unloading provision, the provision of parking spaces and traffic management;*
- *Proposals in relation to the provision of services in the area including the provision of waste and sewerage facilities and water, electricity and telecommunications services, oil and gas pipelines, including storage facilities for oil and gas;*
- *The element of residential development shall include proposals relating to the provision of amenities, facilities*

and services for the community including crèches and other childcare services, community and resource centres;

- *The facilitation of public access to the proposed amenity areas located within the Plan boundaries and beyond, and;*
- *To make provision for sport and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals.*

The Urban Design Framework Plan which is required prior to the development of this portion of the lands needs to take full account of the detailed objectives of the Development Plan in this regard.

6.7.3 Development Parameters

It is now a requirement of national policy that Local Area Plans which include substantial new development areas should provide a breakdown of future anticipated population and the associated services required in line with residential growth.

In this regard, the residential zoned landbank in the Bryanstown area extends to 82.3 ha. It can be calculated from the extent of the zoned lands that should these be developed at a density of 35 units to the hectare as an upper limit, this would result in development of potentially 2,900 units to be built on the lands. This, in turn, would equate to a population of approximately 8,400 persons (at an average household size of 2.9 persons per home).

Children of primary school going age are calculated as 12% of the overall anticipated population by the Department of Education and Science. The anticipated population of 8,400 persons equates to approximately 1,000 pupils at primary level. In this regard, two appropriately sized schools need to be provided.

Further to this, an indication of the requirements in terms of amenity and recreation requirements, community facilities, retail facilities, education and childcare facilities and other essential facilities for the anticipated population are set out hereunder. These all need to be incorporated in the detail to be contained in the Framework Plan for the area which is an objective of this LAP.

• **Open Space Requirements**

Section 7.8.4 of the Meath County sets out the open space requirements for new residential developments at 3.2 hectares per 1,000 population, which is further broken down into Children's Play Area, Urban Parks/General Amenity Space and Playing Fields.

The zoning for this area reflects these requirements of the Development Plan. In this regard, further detail for the form and function of the open space need to be contained in the Framework Plan. Generally, open space should be provided in the form of Urban Parks which are landscaped to a high standard and need to provide for both active and passive recreation space including the provision of children's playgrounds and playing fields.

• **Neighbourhood Centre**

Three locations for Neighbourhood centres and local service provision have been identified in the Bryanstown Area and this is reflected in the zoning map which identifies 3 areas of varying size zoned 'B3 – to protect, provide and

improve local shopping facilities'. The size and function of these centres shall be determined by the framework plan in line with a detailed assessment of the retail planning context and existing and planned retail provision in the wider vicinity.

- **Community Halls**

It is proposed that the provision of new school buildings should double up as providing for a community hall for the area which can be used during out-of school hours.

- **Civic Centre**

A location for a new civic centre shall be identified in the Framework Plan. It is envisaged that this building should be of a sufficient size and specification to provide for a variety of uses such as use as a theatre, cinema and general performance space as well as an assembly hall for other community events such as indoor markets, trade fairs and other. The possibility of providing a local library in the civic centre should be explored in conjunction with Meath County Council.

- **School Provision**

The need for appropriately sized schools to be located in the Bryanstown area has been recognised and is reflected in the land use zoning and specific objective DE10 for the area. In total two sites are provided. The smaller of the two sites shall accommodate a primary school and the larger of the two site shall provide for an education campus containing a primary school, post-primary school and associated adult education facilities.

In terms of the size of the schools to be provided, these have been calculated in line with The Department of Education's standards as follows:

Children of primary school going age are calculated as 12% of the overall anticipated population and classroom size is calculated at 25 pupils per classroom. The anticipated population of 8,400 persons equates to approximately 1,000 pupils at primary level. This in turns would require 40 classrooms in total. In this regard, two schools need to be provided – one school comprising 16 classrooms and one school providing 24 classrooms.

Children of post-primary school going age are calculated by the Department of Education as 8.5 % of the overall anticipated population. In this regard, it is calculated that the number of pupils at post-primary age will be approximately 700 pupils and a secondary school will need to be provided to cater for this anticipated demand.

It will be a requirement of the detailed phasing arrangements which need to be contained in the Framework Plan to provide these schools in line with and prior to the substantial occupation of residential units.

- **Childcare Provision**

Childcare provision in the Bryanstown area needs to have full regard to the provisions of the Department of the Environment's guidelines on childcare facilities (DEHLG, 2001). Design solutions and appropriate size of childcare facilities need to be determined by the Local Authority as part of all future planning applications.

- **Provision of a Local Bus Service**

The provision of a local bus route to service the Framework Plan lands is essential to the success of the new development area. This bus route needs to connect the Bryanstown Area with both the town centre and the rail station in Drogheda. An extension of the existing town services could provide for an interim solution.

6.7.4 Design Brief

The overall design brief to guide the provisions of the Framework Plan for Bryanstown needs to be developed in accordance with the built form recommendations as set out in the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area and the qualitative criteria set out under the Meath County Development Plan as well as best practice in planning and design of new urban communities. Particular regard has also needs to be had to the consultation draft guidelines '*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*' and the accompanying '*Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide*' published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government as well as the recommendations contained in the Draft Consultation Guidelines on "*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*".

The substantial size of the land bank at Bryanstown necessitates a more comprehensive layout and design approach than that which currently dominates the suburban landscape of Drogheda. Much of the current sub-urban environment is dominated by 'pod' development, i.e. pods of development parcels which are accessed off a main distributor road but which have little or no connection or link to each other.

This creates problems in terms of an over-reliance on private transport, a lack of integration with necessary facilities, discouraging walking and cycling, creation of sterile and under-utilised open space and a general sense of separation and segregation of places.

It is therefore necessary to depart from the traditional form of sub-urban development and to shift towards a design which is based on the neo-traditional urban model. Such a model would have as its key ingredients the use of the perimeter block as the basic urban form which will help to define streets and public spaces. Urban blocks should look outwards towards the street and the street itself should act as an urban stage between public and private realms. In essence the framework plan should provide for an interconnecting network of streets, urban spaces and parks making a lively and safe public realm. In addition, a range of building types should be provided to create a varied urban environment and a sustainable mix of uses providing all essential facilities locally and within walking distance.

6.7.5 Phasing of Future Development

In order to provide for the successful and timely delivery of all necessary community, social and services infrastructure, it is a requirement of this LAP that the proposed Framework Plan for Bryanstown needs to contain a stringent and comprehensive phasing arrangement for the simultaneous delivery of residential units and all associated services. This phasing arrangement shall be compliant with Table 6 of the County Development Plan and shall form an integral part of the implementation of the framework plan.

Policy Objectives:

- BA1** *The Bryanstown Area needs to be developed in accordance with an approved Urban Design Framework Plan to safeguard the proper and sustainable development of the area. The Plan needs to be developed in line with the requirements set out in Section 6.7 of the Local Area Plan.*
- BA2** *An upper limit of 35 units to the hectare shall apply to the Bryanstown area as a whole. However, this should allow for variations in development density within different areas of the Urban Design Framework Plan, e.g. provision of higher densities near neighbourhood centres.*
- BA3** *The delivery of adequate infrastructure services is a prerequisite to the development of the Bryanstown Area. In all instances, priority will be afforded to the development of employment and community services.*

6.8 Mill Road/ Marsh Road Strategic Land Reserve

6.8.1 Outline of Area

The Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area identified a strategic land reserve in the area generally referred to as the Mill Road/ Marsh Road district. This objective was further transposed into the Meath County Development Plan, 2007 – 2013 by identifying the area as capable of providing new residential communities (Policy Objective SSPOL4). The Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd area lies to the east of Drogheda town and generally stretches from the existing town boundary in an easterly direction beyond the railway viaduct. The area was not previously zoned for development.

No exact delineation of this area was given under the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area or Meath County Development Plan. The Local Area Plan has now defined the area as being bounded to the west by the existing town boundary, to the north by the Marsh Road and River Boyne and to the south by the Dublin Rail line. To the east, the area stretches toward the Mill Road, which is a key link road between the Colpe Cross Area and the Marsh Road (please refer to zoning map 5.3).

Directly adjacent the area to the west lies the Lagavoreen Wastewater Treatment Plant which services the entire population of Drogheda and some of the surrounding areas in East Meath. Further to this, two potentially hazardous operations are located in proximity to the Wastewater Treatment plant, the Flogas and Maxol Storage Depots. Both of these have designated zones of impact as outlined in the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2005-2011.

The area is generally in agricultural use and a number of small streams traverse the lands in an east-west direction. A string of one-off houses are located along the Mill Road. Drogheda Grammar School and Le Cheile Educate Together National School are also located in the area.

6.8.2 Existing Policy Context

The Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area which was jointly commissioned by Louth County Council, Drogheda Borough Council and Meath County Council has designated the Mill Road Marsh Road Area as a strategic land reserve. In this context, the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area recommends the following:

“The Strategy advocates that a key requirement is that zoning change here [in the Mill Road/ Marsh Road District] should not constitute a simple duplication of development options, which would be better allocated elsewhere and for which the objectives have already been provided. For example the development rationale of major new residential districts at the Northern Environs and at Bryanstown is dependent on thresholds of population to sustain related community, commercial and recreational facilities. The Strategy recommends that the integrity of those landbanks is not compromised by a process of additional zonings elsewhere.”

On foot of the recommendations contained in the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area, the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, includes the following objective relevant to the area:

SS POL 4

The preparation of the Local Area Plan for the Southern Environs of Drogheda shall have regard to and be influenced by the recently adopted Greater Drogheda Area Planning Strategy in the identification of additional significant lands for residential development and the identification of strategic infrastructural proposals. The strategic reserve at Bryanstown in addition to the lands between the Mill Road and the rail line have been identified for future residential development. The availability of adequate capacity in piped water services and roads infrastructure will be taken into account in the order of priority afforded to the release of residential lands. The preparation of the Local Area Plan shall take cognisance of the proposed Drogheda Traffic Management Study, and the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2005 – 2011.

The Development Plan has thereby clearly identified the lands between the Mill Road and the rail line for additional residential development.

6.8.3 Land Use Zoning Framework and Rationale

The lands at Mill Rd Marsh Rd have been zoned under this Local Area Plan. However, future development in the Area is subject to an Urban Design Framework Plan.

The zoning applied in the area has taken cognisance of the sensitivity of the Boyne River in terms of natural and heritage protection objectives and has therefore include an extensive belt of H1 zoned lands to act as a buffer between the river and future development areas.

Given the current availability of residential zoned lands in the overall southern Drogheda Environs, the overall residential landbank at Bryanstown was reduced and in addition, some of the lands at Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd were identified as White Lands. These lands are identified as providing for a strategic land reserve to ensure the consolidation of future development in the Drogheda Environs. In any future consideration of the White Lands which are located adjacent the Drogheda Sewage Treatment Plant, the implications of the location of these lands adjacent the sewage plant need to be taken into account. In this regard, it will be necessary to provide for an adequate buffer around the existing sewage treatment plant.

Some lands have also been identified for local employment by being zoned 'E2 – to provide for light industrial and industrial office type employment'.

A linear park has been identified along the existing stream to provide for the amenity of future residents.

6.8.4 Development Parameters

Children of primary school going age are calculated as 12% of the overall anticipated population by the Department of Education and science. The anticipated population of 4,000 persons equates to approximately 480 pupils at primary level. In this regard, one appropriately sized school shall be provided on the lands indicated and zoned G1.

A total of 35.9 ha have been zoned zoning Objective 'A2 – To provide for new residential communities' and 13.8 ha have been zoned 'A5 – to provide for low-density residential development'.

From these zoning objectives, it can be calculated that, at a maximum density of 35 units to the hectare, the A2 zoned lands could potentially result in approximately 1,250 units. This, in turn, would equate to a population of approximately 3,600 persons (at an average household size of 2.9 persons per home).

In addition, the lands zoned A5 could yield approximately 140 units (at a density of 10 to the hectare) and result in a population of approx. 400 persons (at household size of 2.9).

In total, the Mill Rd Marsh Rd lands could therefore potentially yield in the region of 1,390 units resulting in a potential population of 4,000 persons overall.

On this basis, the requirement for social infrastructure and service to be provided in the area can be calculated. These all need to be incorporated in the detail to be contained in the Framework Plan for the area which is an objective of this LAP.

- **Open Space Requirements**

Section 7.8.4 of the Meath County sets out the open space requirements for new residential developments at 3.2 hectares per 1,000 population, which is further broken down into Children's Play Area, Urban Parks/General Amenity Space and Playing Fields.

The zoning for this area reflects these requirements of the Development Plan. In this regard, further detail for the form and function of the open space need to be contained in the Framework Plan. Generally, open space should be provided in the form of Urban Parks which are landscaped to a high standard and need to provide for both active and passive recreation space including the provision of children's playgrounds and playing fields.

- **Neighbourhood Centre**

One location for a Neighbourhood centre has been identified for the Mill Rd Marsh Rd Area through land use zoning 'B3 – to protect, provide and improve local shopping facilities'. The size and function of this centre shall be determined by the framework plan in line with a detailed assessment of the retail planning context and existing and planned retail provision in the wider vicinity.

- **Community Hall**

It is proposed that the provision of the new school building (located beside the neighbourhood centre) should double up as providing for a community hall for the area which can be used during out-of school hours.

- **School Provision**

Children of primary school going age are calculated as 12% of the overall anticipated population and classroom size is calculated at 25 pupils per classroom by the Department of Education. In this regard, the anticipated population of 4,000 persons equates to approximately 480 pupils at primary level. This in turns would require 20 classrooms in total. In this regard, one school comprising 24 classrooms should be provided on the lands indicated and zoned G1. It is estimated that the increase in population is not substantial enough to warrant the provision of an additional secondary school. It is anticipated that the existing secondary school provision in addition to the new school being provided at Bryanstown will absorb the needs of children of post-primary school going age.

It will be a requirement of the detailed phasing arrangements which need to be contained in the Framework Plan to provide the primary school in line with and prior to the substantial occupation of residential units.

- **Childcare Provision**

Childcare provision in the area needs to have full regard to the provisions of the Department of the Environment's guidelines on childcare facilities (DEHLG, 2001). Design solutions and appropriate size of childcare facilities need to be determined by the Local Authority as part of all future planning applications.

- **Provision of a Local Bus Service**

The provision of a local bus route to service the Framework Plan lands is essential to the success of the new development area. This bus route needs to connect the Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd Area with both the town centre and the rail station in Drogheda.

6.8.5 Design Brief

The Framework Plan for Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd needs to be developed in accordance with the built form recommendations as set out in the Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area and the qualitative criteria set out under the Meath County Development Plan as well as best practice in planning and design of new urban communities. Particular regard has also needs to be had to the consultation draft guidelines 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual – A best practice guide' published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

The greenfield nature of the lands necessitates a comprehensive approach to the future development of the lands which should draw on best design practice. Some key pointers specific to the area would include as follows:

- The perimeter block shall be used as the basic urban form which will help to define streets and public spaces.
- Urban blocks should look outwards towards the street and the street itself should act as an urban stage between public and private realms.
- The framework plan should provide for an interconnecting network of streets, urban spaces and parks making a lively and safe public realm.
- A range of building types should be provided to create a varied urban environment and a sustainable mix of uses providing all essential facilities locally and within walking distance.
- The framework plan needs to ensure that the linear park is overlooked and an urban edge is created onto the park from surrounding areas, development should not turn its back on the park.
- The new distributor road should be designed as a boulevard with active frontages, off-street facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and mature planting.
- The neighbourhood centre and school site should be integrated in terms of how buildings relate to each other and create active street frontage. Parking should be provided behind buildings.

6.8.6 Phasing of Future Development

In order to provide for the successful and timely delivery of all necessary community, the Framework Plan for Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd needs to contain a stringent and comprehensive phasing arrangement for the simultaneous delivery of residential units and all associated services. This phasing arrangement shall be compliant with Table 6 of the County Development Plan and shall form an integral part of the implementation of the framework plan.

Policy Objectives:

MMA1 *The Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd Area shall be developed in accordance with an approved Urban Design Framework Plan to safeguard the proper and sustainable development of the area. The Plan needs to be developed in line with the requirements set out in Section 6.7 of the Local Area Plan.*

MMA2 *An upper limit of 35 units to the hectare shall apply to the Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd Area as a whole. However, this should allow for variations in development density within different areas of the Urban Design Framework Plan, e.g. provision of higher densities near neighbourhood centres.*

MMA3 *The delivery of adequate infrastructure services is a prerequisite to the development of the Mill Rd/ Marsh Rd Area. In all instances, priority will be afforded to the development of employment and community services.*

MMA4 *Future considerations of the lands adjacent the Drogheda Sewage Treatment Plant shall provide for an adequate buffer zone both to provide for a possible extension of the plant and to safeguard future development adjacent the plant from obnoxious smells and other potential side-effects.*

