

# Ratoath

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## LOCAL AREA PLAN

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2009 - 2015

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Adopted 24<sup>th</sup> July 2009



comhairle chontae na mí  
meath county council





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Land Use Zoning Objectives Map

*Fáilte chuig*

*Ráth Tó*

**WELCOME TO  
RATOATH**

**Meath**

Ireland's Heritage Capital

**SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Scope of the Local Area Plan
- 1.3 Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan
- 1.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment
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## 1.1 Introduction

This Local Area Plan relates to the town of Ratoath. Ratoath has undergone a rapid transformation over the past decade from a small village to become a significant urban centre in the commuter belt of Dublin. The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010 – 2022 (RPGs) now acknowledge the growing significance of the settlement. The RPGs state that the future development of Ratoath will be linked to that of Ashbourne and Dunshaughlin and should aim to capitalise on the synergy with those settlements. *“In particular, Ratoath has a large, well educated commuter labour force which is a valuable resource for future local economic development in a sustainable manner. It is important that Ratoath should become more self sustaining in terms of providing employment opportunities locally. Therefore, sustainable higher end economic investment opportunities consistent with the size of the town should be supported.”*

The Ratoath Local Area Plan sets down the policy framework for the future growth of Ratoath. It consists of a written statement accompanied by a zoning and land use objectives map. It will guide development in the area until 2015 or until the Plan is amended or a new Plan is made.

This LAP has been amended following the adoption of the Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019. Objective CS OBJ 2 required the Planning Authority *“To publish a variation to the Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019 within one year of the adoption of the Development Plan to introduce land use zoning objectives and an order of priority for the release of lands for Ashbourne, Drogheda Environs, Dunboyne/Clonee/Pace, Dunshaughlin and Ratoath. Following the making of this variation, the Planning Authority shall publish amendments to the Local Area Plans of Ashbourne, Drogheda Environs, Dunboyne/ Clonee/Pace, Dunshaughlin and Ratoath to ensure that they are consistent with the Development Plan, as varied, and particularly the settlement strategy, core strategy and household allocations outlined in Table 2.4”*.

To give effect to the requirements of CS OBJ 2 outlined above, Variation No. 2 to the Meath County Development Plan was made on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014. The Variation collectively forms Volume 5 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019 and is entitled *“Written Statement & Development Objectives for Urban Centres”*. Variation No. 2 includes land use zoning objectives and an order of priority for these settlements.

In relation to Ratoath, more specifically, the variation involved:

- i. introducing land use zoning objectives and an Order of Priority into the Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019 for the release of residential lands;
- ii. ensuring that only the quantum of land required to meet the household projections as set out in Table 2.4 in Ratoath is identified for release during the lifetime of the Meath County Development Plan 2013–2019. This will ensure consistency with the Core Strategy of the Meath County Development Plan 2013–2019;
- iii. reviewing the appropriateness of the nature, location and quantum of industrial and employment generating land use within Ratoath, and;
- iv. applying the land use zoning objectives contained in the Core Strategy of the Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019 to the land use zoning objectives map for Ratoath which are being incorporated into the Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019.

As part of the preparation of Variation no. 2 of the County Development Plan, an evaluation of existing residentially zoned land in Ratoath was carried out to establish an order of priority for the release of residentially zoned land. This culminated in an order of priority for the release of residential lands been introduced as part of that variation. Following the making of

Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan, the written statement of the Ratoath LAP has been amended to ensure consistency with the land use zoning objectives and Order of Priority for the release of lands. Variation No. 2 also included additional policies and objectives for Ratoath in relation to the order of priority or phasing of residential land use zoning objectives and the management of flood risk. All relevant policies and objectives now included in Volume V of the County Development Plan have been integrated into the amended LAP to ensure that the complete policy framework as applicable to Ratoath is presented in this LAP. The land use zoning objectives map included in this amended LAP is replicated from Volume 5 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013 – 2019 as varied and is entitled "*Written Statement & Development Objectives for Urban Centres*". Additional local development objectives have been included in the land use zoning objectives map now contained in the amended LAP. All subsequent references to land use zoning objectives and the land use zoning objectives map for Ratoath as contained in this LAP are qualified on this basis.

## 1.2 Scope of the Local Area Plan

This Local Area Plan is made in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2014 and with the objectives of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. The Act requires that Local Area Plans consist of a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the objectives in such detail as may be determined by the Planning Authority for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies including details of community facilities and amenities and on standards for the design of development and structures.

The challenge is to provide a Local Area Plan that will form the basis for a consensus between the Planning Authority, the public, landowners, developers and all interested parties, as to how development should proceed to achieve the objectives for Ratoath, in a manner which is physically, economically and socially sustainable.

A further challenge is to provide a document that is sufficiently prescriptive to achieve the objectives while allowing for flexibility to account for economic and social changes that may occur over the plan period and which facilitates the generation of a built environment which is attractive and distinctive and which creates a sense of place for those who will live and work in it as well as visit it.

## 1.3 Ratoath Local Area Plan

The Local Area Plan (LAP) is a statutory document, consistent with the objectives of Meath County Council, containing guidelines as to how the town and its environs should develop over the Plan period. The written statement contains analysis of statistics, projections and policy objectives. The Plan provides a framework for sustainability which preserves the natural and built heritage from damage caused by intensive development proposals. The Local Area Plan map illustrates a graphic representation of the proposals included in the Plan, indicating land-use and conservation designations together with various specific objectives.

As stated in the previous section, the land use zoning objectives map for Ratoath are now replicated from that contained in the County Development Plan 2013 – 2019, as varied. All subsequent references to land use zoning objectives and the land use zoning objectives map for Ratoath as contained in this Local Area Plan are qualified on this basis.

Survey maps may not always be entirely accurate, and in the case of conflicts between the map and the statement, the statement shall be considered the superior document.

The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 formed the key contextual document used in the preparation of this LAP. The Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 when adopted in 2009 set out to cover a six year period from 2009-2015. Meath County Council adopted a new County Development Plan (CDP) on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2012. The Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 sets out a vision, policy framework and specific objectives for future development in County Meath for a period of 6 years. Whilst the LAP was prepared and adopted in alignment and conformity to the 2007-2013 County Development Plan, the LAP was updated and amended following the adoption of the 2013-2019 County Development Plan. All other references to the 2007-2013 County Development Plan in this LAP were subsequently replaced. The policies and objectives of this Local Area Plan are consistent with those of the County Development Plan, being the primary planning policy document for the County.

A Local Area Plan (LAP) is a follow on of the County Development Plan at local level. The County Development Plan is the principal document and takes precedent over the LAP in the event of conflict arising between the provisions of the two documents.

Ratoath is designated as a Small Town in the County settlement hierarchy. The County Development Plan notes that Ratoath has experienced substantial growth in recent years and that the form of this growth is such that the town has developed almost as a suburb with no corresponding growth in employment generating uses other than small scale retail provision. In the short term, the priority is to encourage a more balanced town to develop with the expansion of social infrastructure and the promotion of local employment. Ratoath has been included in the RPGs as an employment base primarily because of its proximity to Ashbourne but also due to its educated resident workforce. This has been highlighted in the introductory section to this LAP.

The role of Small Towns is to largely facilitate local need. However Ratoath has also been identified as an employment base. The development of this town will be supported by the growth of the adjacent Moderate Sustainable Growth Town (Ashbourne) and Large Growth Town I (Dunboyne), in terms of large scale employment uses and it is also anticipated that the development of Small Towns will be more closely linked to local rather than to regional residential growth.

#### **1.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment**

A Local Area Plan shall contain information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was not mandatory for the Ratoath LAP as it had a population of less than 10,000. However, this population threshold has since been revised downwards to 5,000 population. A screening exercise was carried out to assess the likely impacts that the implementation of the draft Plan would have and the screening exercise indicated that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not necessary. Screening for SEA was also carried out for the proposed amendments to the draft Local Area Plan. This indicated that an SEA was not necessary for the amendments.

The screening documents were sent to the relevant prescribed bodies, namely the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Having referred to the comments received from these prescribed bodies and having regard to the above; Meath County Council concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not required for this Local Area Plan (Refer to Appendix 1 for SEA Screening Reports).

DoEHLG Circular Letter SEA 1/08 and NPWS 1/08 relates to the requirement to screen land use plans for potential impacts on designated Natura 2000 sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs)). An assessment of the plan is required if necessary.

The circular states that an appropriate assessment means an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, by a person with ecological expertise, of the potential impacts of the plan on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site (including Natura 2000 sites not situated in the area encompassed by the draft plan or scheme) and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. The potential impacts of policies outside Natura 2000 sites, but potentially impacting upon them (known as 'ex site' impacts) must also be included in the assessment according to the Circular. There are no SACs or SPAs in Ratoath or adjoining or in close proximity to the settlement. Appropriate Assessment screening was carried out both for the draft Plan and for the amendments to the draft Plan. It was not considered that the Local Area Plan would have any potential impacts on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site and as a result, it was considered that no further assessment of this type was required (Refer to Appendix 1 for AA Screening Reports).

#### **1.4.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment for Amendment No. 1**

The Planning Authority determined, using the screening criteria set out in Schedule 2A Planning & Development Regulations 2001-2013, the DoEHLG SEA Guidelines and Annex 2 of Directive 2001/42/EC, that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was required for the proposed draft amendment to the Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015. The output report produced from the SEA process, which included a formal scoping exercise in conjunction with the designated Environmental Authorities and adjoining Local Authorities, was prepared separately to the proposed draft amendment. The SEA continued during all stages of the consideration of the proposed draft amendment. The final SEA Statement is available on the Meath County Council website.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening was undertaken of the proposed draft amendment to the Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015, in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). It was considered that the proposed draft amendment is not predicted to have the potential to have a likely significant adverse impact on the key features or the qualifying interests of any Natura 2000 sites. It was noted that no changes to the existing land use zoning objectives from that previously assessed under Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan are being proposed as part of this process. A copy of this Screening Report is available for inspection and accompanies the proposed draft amendment.

### **1.5 Contents**

The Local Area Plan is structured in a manner which takes account of all the contents required for an LAP in the template adopted by Meath County Council as well as in the Planning and Development Act 2000 - 2014 and is set out in a sequential form dealing with Context, Strategic Policy and Housing, Economic Development, Social Strategy, Heritage and Phasing and Implementation.

### **1.6 Pre Draft Public Consultation**

A period of pre draft consultation for the Ratoath Local Area Plan was held from 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008 to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008, during which time submissions were invited from the public. A public meeting was also held in the Community Centre in Ratoath on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008. A list of those persons who made submissions is included in Appendix 2. The details of the submission and the response of the Manager to them are included in the document 'Pre Draft Consultation Document Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009 - 2015.'

## **1.7 Draft Local Area Plan Public Consultation**

The Ratoath Local Area Plan was placed on display from 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009 with submissions invited from the public during this period. The aim of the consultation process was to enable the public and interested parties to give their observations on the Draft Local Area Plan. A total of 92 written submissions were received. The details of these submissions and the response and recommendation of the County Manager can be found in the document 'Manager's report on submissions received in respect of the Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015' and 'Addendum to Manager's Report to the Members on submissions received in respect of the Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009 - 2015'. A list of those persons who made submissions is included in Appendix 2.

## **1.8 Public Consultation Amendments to Draft Local Area Plan**

Following a resolution by Meath County Council members, it was proposed to make amendments to the draft Plan. These were placed on public display from 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009 to 8<sup>th</sup> June. A total of 7 written submissions were received. A Manager's Report was again prepared on the submissions, summarising them and listing the Manager's response and recommendation to each. A list of those persons who made submissions is included in Appendix 2.



## CHAPTER 2 RATOATH IN CONTEXT



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

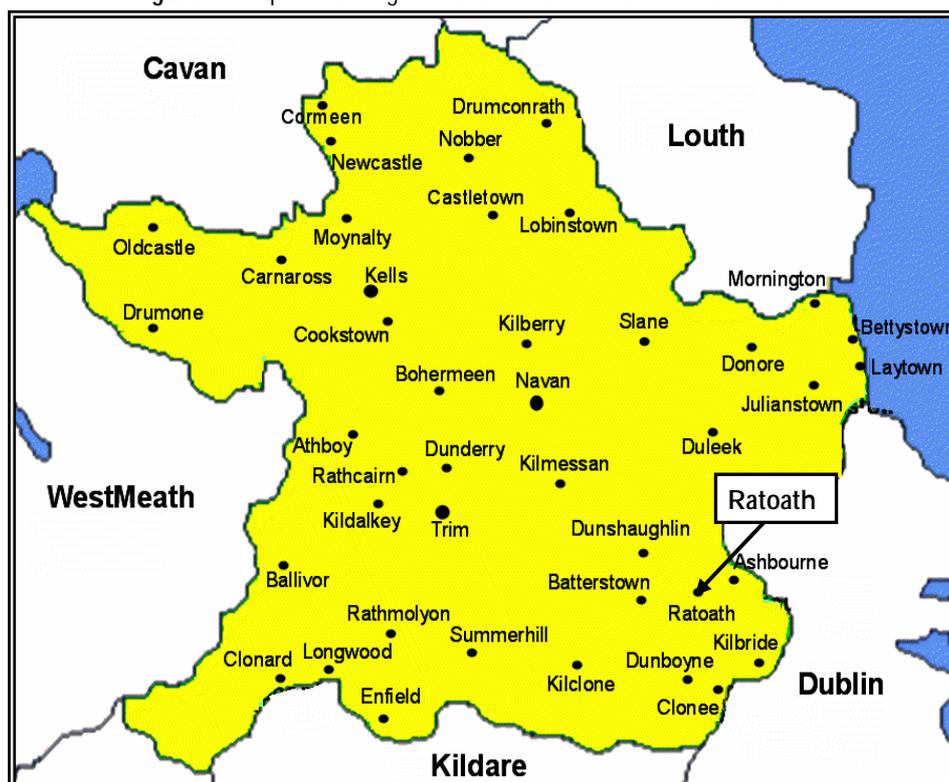
- 2.1 Location and Physical Context
- 2.2 Historical Context
- 2.3 Present Day Context
- 2.4 Urban Form
- 2.5 Population Context
- 2.6 SWOT Analysis
- 2.7 Vision

## 2.1 Location and Physical Context

Ratoath is situated in the south eastern corner of the county acting as a mid point between Dunshaughlin and Ashbourne, within the South Meath Fringe Corridor. It is located in the Ratoath Municipal District

Ratoath gives its name to a town, a townland, a parish and a barony. The derivation or meaning of the word is uncertain. Gaelicised forms of the name are Rat-tógh and Rath-tachatacta. It currently comprises of a compact linear town centre surrounded by growing residential estates.

Figure 1: Map indicating the location of Ratoath in Co. Meath



Source: [www.goingout.ie/meath/meath.htm](http://www.goingout.ie/meath/meath.htm)

## 2.2 Historical Context

The origins of Ratoath date from early Christian times. The establishment of a Norman settlement is indicated by the striking presence of the Moat and Bailey in the centre of the town. The enclosures associated with this settlement have given the centre of Ratoath its uniquely curved road pattern with an intricate network of laneways, many overgrown or derelict, connecting the original enclosures with areas to the north on the Curragha Road and the south on the Fairyhouse Road.

This development area, by virtue of its proximity to the Metropolitan Area of the City, its good road access to same and its attractive rural environs has resulted in the town becoming under extreme pressure for development with an ever extending population.

## 2.3 Present Day Context

Ratoath's narrow winding Main Street, consistent with its Norman history contributes to the notable character of the town as it is today. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century the

development has been mixed with substantial residential development in the suburbs leading to large population growth. However such residential growth has not been accompanied by commercial/industrial growth, resulting in large proportions of the community forced to commute, contrary to sustainable development guidelines. By encouraging local based employment the Plan will aim to ensure that Ratoath becomes a more sustainable town in the future.

## 2.4 Urban Form

Ratoath is comprised of a relatively compact linear town centre surrounded by growing residential estates. The scale of the built environment is generally low, predominantly two storey structures dominated by older buildings such as the Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church and the Grotto. Recent development in the town has resulted in the introduction of modern architectural urban elements into the built environment, which complements the existing character of the town. The most notable new structures include the Corballis Shopping Centre and the Ratoath Community Centre.

The main areas of existing housing are located:

- To the northwest of the town between the Dunshaughlin Road and the Skryne Road.
- To the southwest of the town between the Dunshaughlin Road and the Fairyhouse Road.
- On lands adjoining both sides of the Curragha Road.
- To the south of the Fairyhouse Road.
- In the Jamestown area.

The scale of residential development in Ratoath is relatively low, consisting mainly of two storey semi detached and detached structures.



## 2.5 Population Context

The standard source for population statistics is the census information published every 45 years by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). During the last inter censal period (2006-2011) Ratoath experienced significant population growth of 24%, with the population increasing from 7,249 persons to 9,043 persons. This followed the more exceptional growth experienced during 2002-2006, when the population almost doubled from 3,794 to 7249 persons. Over the longer 2002-2011 period, the population increased by 138.4%.

The population of Ratoath is comparatively youthful when compared to the County and the State as a whole, with a greater proportion of the population being aged between 0 to 14 years and 30 to 44 years and lower proportion of the population aged over 50 years (see Table 1). Ratoath had the highest proportion of young people aged less than 14 years in the country at 33% (the national average was recorded as 21.3%).<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1:** Population distribution of Ratoath, County Meath and the State (2011)

% of population	Ratoath	Meath	State
5-9 yrs	11.5	11.2	6.9
10-14 yrs	8.9	7.3	6.5
15-19 yrs	5.9	6	6.2
20-24 yrs	3.9	5.3	6.5
25-29 yrs	5.3	7	7.9
30-34 yrs	10.1	8.8	8.6
35-39 yrs	12	9.1	7.9
40-44 yrs	10.5	8	7.2
45-49 yrs	7.6	6.8	6.7
50-54 yrs	3.8	5.6	5.9
55-59 yrs	2.5	4.8	5.3
60-64 yrs	1.5	4.1	4.8
65-69 yrs	1.1	3.2	3.8
70-74 yrs	0.9	2.2	2.9
75-79 yrs	0.7	1.6	2.2
80-84 yrs	0.4	1	1.5
85 yrs & over	0.4	0.9	1.3

The Census data provides an indication as to the type and quantity of services that the contemporary community of Ratoath require.

While Ratoath experienced significant growth over the last number of years, it is not envisaged that the population will continue to grow at the same rate during the period of this Local Area Plan. It is hoped that this plan period will act as a time of consolidation, whereby it will be a primary objective of the Local Area Plan to develop employment opportunities. As well as trying to attract employment to the town itself, it is important to improve access to other employment centres such as Ashbourne, Dunshaughlin and Dunboyne.

The Census 2011 found that the national average household size was 2.7 persons. The 2011 Census states that Meath County has 62,201 private households, with an average size of 3.0 persons, which is slightly above state average. The corresponding figure for is 3.28 which is reflective of the household composition of which 62% comprise of 3, 4 or 5 person households.

The Meath direct household formation in Ratoath up to 2019 (Section 2.4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 refers). The strategy conveys the household and population distribution framework for each settlement centre (see Chapter 2). Future household formation will conform to the population target set out in County Development Plan.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Press statement Central Statistics Office 27<sup>th</sup> March 2013 accessed at [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)

## 2.6 SWOT Analysis

From the review of existing available data and literature, an assessment of the area and consultation with the public, representatives and the key shareholders, the following SWOT analysis has been undertaken.

Strengths:

- Proximity to Dublin
- Strong sense of community
- Historic core

Weaknesses:

- Parking
- Traffic congestion
- Traffic and pedestrian safety
- Scale of new residential development
- Inappropriate centrally located sites
- Lack of employment generating uses

Opportunities:

- Improve commercial and employment base
- Improve traffic calming and pedestrian safety
- Environmental enhancement
- Conserve and enhance the built heritage
- Provide physical and social infrastructure linked to development

Threats:

- Unrestrained growth
- Loss of town scale/character
- Incoherent growth of the town
- Reduced accessibility

## 2.7 Vision

Building upon the SWOT analysis, the overall vision for Ratoath is to consolidate and strengthen the town, provide for a defined town core and a small range of land uses to support the residential element of the town. Specific emphasis is placed on retaining the character of the town and encouraging compatible newer developments and land uses within the town while at the same time curbing ribbon development, improving local services and infrastructure and maintaining a clear and definite division between the town and countryside. The plan also aims to ensure the continued vitality and viability of the town and the protection and enhancement of its natural and built heritage.

The vision of Ratoath in the new Local Area Plan will be based on the following principles:

<b>Sustainability</b>	To provide and accommodate the social, cultural and economic development of the town without compromising such aims for future generations.
<b>Competitiveness</b>	To promote Ratoath as part of the Secondary Economic Growth Town of Ashbourne / Dunboyne

<b>Quality of Life</b>	To promote social, cultural and educational facilities/amenities and encourage the development of a vibrant community spirit.
<b>Quality of Environment</b>	To protect and promote areas of quality built and natural environment through education and investment.
<b>Social Inclusion</b>	To seek to redress social inequalities and social polarization, and engage the public at all possible times to seek consensus on planning for the future.

## CHAPTER 3: SETTLEMENT STRATEGY & HOUSING



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Settlement Policy
- 3.3 Settlement Strategy
- 3.4 Land Use Zoning Objectives
  - 3.4.1 Development Management Standards and Guidelines
  - 3.4.2 Framework Plans
- 3.5 Housing
  - 3.5.1 Introduction
  - 3.5.2 Residential Development – Key Principles
  - 3.5.3 Housing Strategy
  - 3.5.4 Extensions
  - 3.5.5 Family Flat Extensions

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Ratoath Local Area Plan sets out Meath County Council's strategic vision for the future development of Ratoath and includes the housing strategy for the plan period. Regard is had to the policies and objectives of the National Spatial Strategy, Regional Planning Guidelines and the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.

### 3.2 Settlement Policy

The overall strategic settlement policy for Ratoath is governed by the approach of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. Ratoath is designated as a Small Town in the settlement hierarchy for the County set out in the Development Plan. The County Development Plan outlines the varying characteristics of the Small Towns in Meath and has identified Ratoath as a dormitory town which facilitates commuters mainly to Dublin. The growth of such Small Towns in the short term should be prioritised to encourage a more balanced town to develop along with the expansion of social infrastructure and promotion of local employment opportunities. It is also important to note that Ratoath has been included in the RPG's as an employment base because of its educated workforce and as such other economic investment opportunities should be considered and supported where sustainable and in keeping with the size and services of the town.

The previous limits in terms of multi house developments are no longer included within the current County Development Plan. The housing allocations are outlined within the Core Strategy.

The broad approach of the Development Plan for Small Towns is to manage growth in line with the ability of local services to cater for growth and respond to local demand. Relatively small and locally financed businesses are expected to locate in Small Towns. However, other economic investment opportunities should be considered and supported where sustainable and in keeping with the size and services of the town. Retail is likely to be mainly in the convenience category, with a small supermarket and possible local centres serving only the town and its local catchment area.

In line with the guidance contained in the 'Sustainable Residential Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009), within all Small Towns no one proposal for residential development should increase the existing housing stock (including permitted units) generally by more than 15% within the lifetime of the Development Plan.

The Local Area Plan process is specifically identified as a mechanism for delivery of a number of actions, including:

- Zoning of sufficient lands for employment generating activities at suitable locations.
- Support provision of high quality business/office parks.
- Ensure adequate provision of incubator/start-up units.
- Identify and promote specific and unique roles for Ratoath as part of the Secondary Economic Growth Town of Ashbourne / Dunboyne and to assist in marketing, creating critical mass and avoid duplication of necessary infrastructure and services.
- Support and provide for enhancement and diversification of existing equine and related industry in Ratoath.
- Enhance social infrastructure provision e.g. housing, health and schools.
- Improve physical and communication linkages between Ashbourne- Dunboyne and Ratoath.

- Create a self-sufficient critical mass ensuring adequate lands are zoned for a multiplicity of uses and that densities are appropriate to each location.

The Meath County Development Plan acknowledges that the bloodstock industry plays a vital role in the economic and recreational development in the County and Ratoath in particular. Through the policies of this Local Area Plan, the Planning Authority will continue to support the bloodstock industry, in particular, the facilities at Fairyhouse and Tattersalls. The Development Plan also states that the development of employment generating uses in the urban area of Ratoath is a priority. The Local Area Plan seeks to provide for small to medium sized industries to develop in the vicinity of Raystown along the R125 Ashbourne Road in accordance with an approved Masterplan and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.

### 3.3 Settlement Strategy

The Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 sets out clear population projections for the County as a whole and various settlements therein which are in line with the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area. The growth projections for individual towns such as Ratoath are set within a clear settlement strategy. The Core Strategy contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 allocates 239 units (which include 50% headroom) to Ratoath over the lifetime of the Plan.

Table 2.4 of the Meath County Development Plan outlines the population distribution for the County over the lifetime of the Development Plan, including projected numbers of additional households for each urban centre. This references the quantity of existing residential zoned lands in each settlement and the available potential yield of units. An excerpt relating to Ratoath is included in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Household allocation for Ratoath as contained in Table 2.4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019

	Household Allocation 2013-2019	Av. Net Density Applicable Unit/ha	Quantity of Residential Zoned Land Required	Available Land Zoned for Residential Use (Ha)	Available Land Zoned for Mixed Use incl. Residential (Ha)	Total Available Zoned Land (Ha)	Deficit/ Excess (ha)
Ratoath	239	25	9.6	23.3	3.0	26.3	16.7

Table 2 also illustrates the extent of existing available residentially zoned land in comparison to the required amount to accommodate the household allocation. Ratoath, with an allocation of 239 additional household units, requires approximately 9.6 hectares of residential zoned land at a density of 25 units per hectare. At the time of preparing the County Development Plan, there were also extant permissions for a further 311 no. household units in Ratoath primarily in the Jamestown area.

It is clear from Table 2.4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 that there was a significant excess of residential zoned lands contained in the LAP for Ratoath as adopted in 2009 in comparison to that now required to satisfy the household allocation provided for in the 2013-2019 County Development Plan. At the time of preparing the County Development Plan 2013-2019, there remained approximately 26.3 hectares which could accommodate residential units, giving a surplus of 16.7 hectares of the amount now required.

This LAP is legally obliged to be consistent with the Meath County Development Plan, its core strategy and with the household projections and population growth contained therein. In

order to do this, an evidence based approach was developed to evaluate the land which benefitted from a residential land use zoning objective. The amended land use zoning objectives map has identified the lands required to accommodate the household allocation of 311 no. units provided for under the Core Strategy. This land use zoning objectives map is included under Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan 2013-2019. It should be noted that there is headroom included in the household allocations of 50% and thus there is no justification for the release of any additional lands over and above those specified in Table 2 above. The requirement for any further release of residential zoned land in Ratoath will be assessed following the making of the next County Development Plan in line with the population projections contained therein.

The location of which lands would be identified for release was determined through Variation No. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013- 2019. In determining the order of priority for the release of residential lands, a strong emphasis was placed on a sequential approach to development, in line with the guidance contained in Section 2.3.4 of the 2013-2019 Meath County Development Plan. The use of the Justification Test for lands identified as being at risk of flooding was not considered necessary in light of the extent and nature of alternative residential zoned land at a lower risk of flooding to accommodate the household allocation for Ratoath. The evaluation of the development areas therefore excluded those areas identified as being at risk of flooding. The evaluation also excluded all sites with the benefit of an extant permission in adherence to Core Strategy CS OBJ 6 of the County Development Plan 2013 - 2019.

The Planning Authority reviewed the appropriateness of the land use zoning objectives contained in the Ratoath LAP following the adoption of the 2013-2019 County Development Plan. This review resulted in lands previously identified as being available for residential development being re-categorised to A1 "*Existing Residential*" land use zoning objective. As a consequence of these revisions to land use zoning objectives, the surplus of residentially zoned land was revised to 5.76 hectares from 16.7 hectares. The remaining residential lands (primarily A2 "*New Residential*") will be developed on a phased basis as illustrated within the land use zoning map which accompanies this document.

The residential sites that were evaluated are detailed in Table 3. The location of these lands is illustrated on the maps in Appendix 2 to Volume 5 (Residential Land Evaluation Maps) of the Meath County Development Plan. An extract is included overleaf (Figure 2 refers).

The residential land evaluation that took place in Ratoath is based primarily on a sequential approach to urban expansion. This ensures that development will be directed in the first instance to lands closest to the town centre and adjacent to the built up area of the town. Appendix 2 includes a map which illustrates this sequential approach. The sites that were evaluated are detailed in Table 3 while Table 4 details the yield from lands included for release in Phase I. All other lands with the benefit of a residential land use zoning objective are identified as Phase II (Post 2019) and are not intended for release within the life of the County Development Plan.

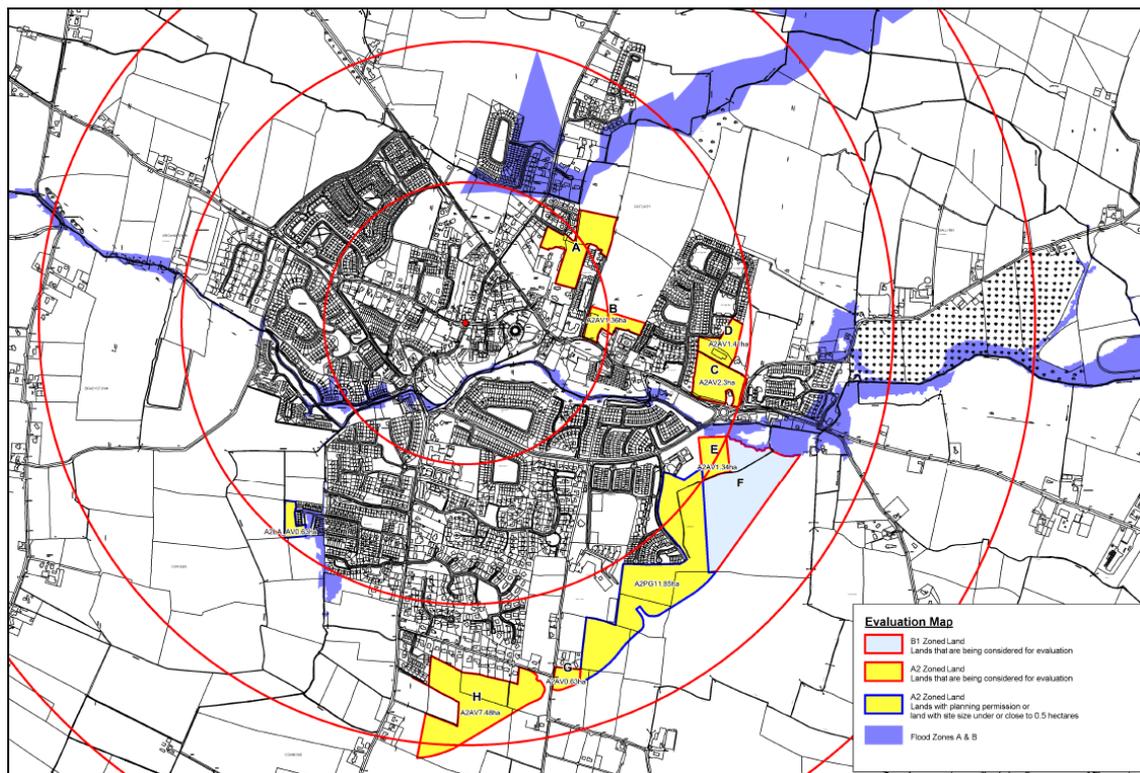
**Table 3: Residential sites for evaluation in Ratoath**

Site	Location	Hectares
A	West of R155 (northern side of Ratoath)	2.77
B	North of Main Street	1.36
C	North of R125	2.3
D	East of Fox Lodge Manor	1.41
E	South of R125	1.34
F	Framework Plan lands south of R125	7.64
G	South of Ratoath Community College	0.63
H	East of R155 (southern side of Ratoath)	7.48

The potential yield set down in Table 4 is based on a density of 25 units per hectare in accordance with the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (Table 2.4 refers). Each application for residential development will however be assessed on its own merits through the development management process. The total yield accruing from the sites ranked 1-5 is 239 no. units and the total area of available land is 10.16 hectares (based on 30% of the land in site F being available for residential purposes).

**Table 4: Residential Land Order of Priority**

Site	Zoning	Land Area (ha)	Density	Yield	Phase
A	A2 & A1	2.77	25	82	I
B	A2	1.36	25	34	I
C	A2	2.3	25	57	I
F	Framework Plan Lands	7.64	25	51	I
G	A2	0.63	25	15	I
D	A2	1.41	25	35	II
E	A2	1.34	25	33	II
H	A2	7.48	25	187	II



**Figure 2: Residential Evaluation Sites**

**Extant Planning Permissions**

Given the slowdown of construction in recent years and consequent substantial number of committed units yet to be built, applications for the extension of duration of permissions will need to be carefully considered to ensure that population growth in Meath is in accordance with the urban hierarchy and with the role and function of towns and villages set out in this settlement hierarchy. This occurs particularly in respect of the role of centres in accommodating local or regional growth and the need for towns and villages to grow in a self sufficient manner and not on the basis of commuter development.

In this regard, it should be noted that the current Regional Planning Guidelines were adopted in 2010, while a substantial number of residential units were permitted prior to that date. Consequently, significant changes have occurred since many of the committed units were granted permission in terms of regional and local policy. In situations where an application for residential development no longer complies with the policy of either document such that it would no longer be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, it may not be appropriate to extend the life of that permission.

There are a substantial number of extant planning permissions for multiple unit residential developments in various urban centres across the County. These are identified on Table 2.5 of the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan. An extract from Table 2.5 as relevant to this Local Area Plan is provided. It is likely that some of these extant planning permissions will wither over the life of this plan or that some which will receive extension of durations pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 – 2014 may also not be constructed. The Core Strategy of the County Development Plan was developed on the basis that all of the 10,998 units which had the benefit of planning permission would be constructed over the life of the Development Plan. It is the intention of this Planning Authority therefore to include all lands which have the benefit of an extant planning permission for multiple unit residential developments as part of the lands identified for release for residential purposes within the life of the County Development Plan. For clarity, this shall apply to such sites with extant planning permission from the date of publication of the relevant amendment to this Local Area Plan. Applications which seek an extension to the appropriate period of planning permission pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 – 2014 shall be considered on this basis. No extension of duration permitted in relation to multiple residential unit developments shall extend the life of a planning permission beyond the 6 year period of the current Meath County Development Plan.

### Strategic Policy

- SP 1** To operate an Order of Priority for the release of residential lands in compliance with the requirements of CS OBJ 6 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 as follows:
- (i) The lands identified with an A2 "*New Residential*" land use zoning objective corresponds with the requirements of Table 2.4 Housing Allocation & Zoned Land Requirements in Volume I of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and are available for residential development within the life of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.
  - (ii) The lands identified with an A2 "New Residential" land use zoning objective but qualified as "*Residential Phase II* (Post 2019)" are not available for residential development within the life of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.
  - (iii) In accordance with the provisions of CS OBJ 6 (c) of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019, as varied, no extension of duration permitted for multiple unit residential developments pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 – 2014 shall extend the life of a planning permission beyond the 6 year period of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.

### Policies

In terms of the settlement strategy for the future growth of Ratoath, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- SS POL 1** To facilitate the continued development of Ratoath as a Small Town.

<b>SS POL 2</b>	To promote the development of Ratoath so far as is practicable to be self sufficient incorporating employment activities, retail services and community facilities.
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### Objectives

In terms of settlement strategy, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

<b>SS OBJ 1</b>	To promote a more compact urban form in Ratoath and to prevent additional urban sprawl.
<b>SS OBJ 2</b>	To provide sufficient and appropriately located lands for employment, commercial and community facilities in Ratoath.
<b>SS OBJ 3</b>	To ensure the provision of adequate sanitary services and other urban infrastructure to cater for the growth in demand for such facilities.
<b>SS OBJ 4</b>	The development of the lands immediately to the north of the by-pass zoned for mixed use development shall be on a phased basis. No commercial/residential development shall be provided on the B1 zoned lands prior to the delivery of the bypass (Please refer to zoning and objectives map).

### 3.4 Land Use Zoning Objectives

The purpose of land-use zoning objectives is to indicate the Planning Authority's intentions for lands located within the development boundary of Ratoath.

The land use zoning categories used in this LAP are the same as those contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. The categories in place in Ratoath are indicated overleaf:

**Table 5: Land Use Zoning Objectives**

Site Code	Objective
<b>A1 Existing Residential</b>	To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
<b>A2 New Residential</b>	To provide for new residential communities with ancillary community facilities, neighbourhood facilities and employment uses as considered appropriate for the status of the centre in the Settlement Hierarchy.
<b>B1 Commercial/Town or Village Centre</b>	To protect, provide for and/or improve town and village centre facilities and uses.
<b>D1 Tourism</b>	To provide for appropriate and sustainable visitor and tourist facilities and associated uses.
<b>E2 General Enterprise &amp; Employment (Category 3)</b>	To provide for the creation of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment through industrial, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing and other general employment/enterprise uses in a good quality physical environment.
<b>F1 Open Space</b>	To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
<b>G1 Community Infrastructure</b>	To provide for necessary community, social and educational facilities.

### 3.4.1 Permissible and Non Permissible Uses

This section provides guidance on the acceptability in principle of various uses for each of the zoning objectives. Uses other than the primary use for which an area is zoned may be permitted provided they are not in conflict with the primary use zoning objective.

Uses not listed under the permissible or open for consideration categories are deemed not to be permissible in principle and such uses will be considered on their individual merits. The expansion of established and approved uses not conforming to use zone objectives will be considered on their merits.

The guidance provided in this section is not intended to replace the normal planning process. An indication that a proposal would be 'permissible' within a particular land use zoning objective should in no way be taken to imply granting of permission, or indeed that a planning application may necessarily be successful. Individual applications are a matter for Meath County Council to decide upon, taking into consideration the wider policies and objectives which pertain to statutory land use planning including Development Management Standards and Guidelines, Ministerial guidance and the merits of individual proposals.

#### Permissible Uses

A "permissible use" is one which is generally acceptable in principle in the relevant zone, but which is subject to normal planning consideration, including policies and objectives outlined in the plan.

#### Open for Consideration Uses

An "open for consideration use" is one which may be permitted where Meath County Council is satisfied that the proposed development would be compatible with the overall policies and objectives for the zone, would not have undesirable effects on permitted uses, and would otherwise be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

#### Relaxation of Zoning Objectives for Protected Structures

Meath County Council actively encourages uses which are compatible with the character of Protected Structures. In certain limited cases, to ensure the long-term viability of a Protected Structure, it may be considered appropriate not to stringently apply generic zoning restrictions, including site development standards, provided the Protected Structure is being restored to the highest standard, the special interest, character and setting of the building is protected and the use and development is consistent with conservation policies and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

#### Transitional Zones

While the zoning objectives map indicates the different uses permitted in each zone, it is important to avoid abrupt transitions in scale and use at the boundaries of adjoining land use zones. In dealing with development proposals in contiguous zone areas, it is necessary to avoid developments which would be detrimental to the amenities of the more environmentally sensitive zone. For instance, in zones abutting residential areas, particular attention must be paid to the use, scale and density of development proposals in order to protect the amenities of these residential properties.

#### Explanatory Notes

In the listings which follow each zoning objective indicating whether certain uses are permissible or open for consideration, the following uses are defined hereunder:

- A Convenience Outlet is a single level store selling food and other convenience items with a net sales area of not more than 200 sq. m.

- A Health Care Centre is a stand alone premise (i.e. not connected with a dwelling) generally with multiple consulting rooms which may cover a variety of health disciplines.
- A Healthcare Practitioner is a practice operated by the owner/occupier of a dwelling and which is ancillary to the primary use of the dwelling as a normal place of residence. There is normally only one practitioner operating from the premises.
- Office uses referred to in the following sections exclude offices which provide a service for visiting members of the public e.g. solicitors, financial services, estate agents, etc. Reference to office in the following sections does not include office accommodation ancillary to the primary use e.g. office accommodation as part of a manufacturing facility.
- Supermarket: Single level, self service store selling mainly food, with a net retail floorspace of less than 2,500 sq. m. net.
- Superstore: Generally, single level, self service stores selling mainly food, or food and some non – food goods, with at least 2,500 sq.m. net retail floorspace but not greater than 5,000 sq. m. net retail floorspace and with integrated or shared parking.
- A Shop is a comparison retail outlet excluding retail warehouse units.

### 3.4.2 Land Use Zoning Categories

<b>A1</b>	<b>Existing Residential</b>
<b>Objective</b>	To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.

#### Guidance

In A1 zones, Meath County Council will be primarily concerned with the protection of the amenities of established residents. While infill or redevelopment proposals would be acceptable in principle, careful consideration would have to be given to protecting amenities such as privacy, daylight/sunlight and aspect in new proposals.

In all residentially zoned lands, no residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.

<b>Permitted Uses</b>
B & B / Guest House, Community Facility / Centre, Home Based Economic Activities, Residential / Sheltered Housing, and Water Services / Public Services.

<b>Open for Consideration Uses</b>
Allotments, Bring Banks, Convenience Outlet, Childcare Facility, Education (Primary or Second Level), Halting Site / Group Housing, Healthcare Practitioner, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Petrol Station, Public House, Retirement Home / Residential Institution / Retirement Village, and Veterinary Surgery.

<b>A2</b>	<b>New Residential</b>
<b>Objective</b>	To provide for new residential communities with ancillary community facilities, neighbourhood facilities and employment uses as considered appropriate for the status of the centre in the Settlement Hierarchy.

### Guidance

The appropriate density will be determined on a site by site basis having regard to the DoECLG Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban areas and the positioning of the Ratoath in the Settlement Hierarchy provided in the Core Strategy.

This Local Area Plan will seek to conserve and protect the character and setting of institutional complexes and heritage buildings in residential redevelopment and infill proposals, where deemed appropriate by Meath County Council. Meath County Council will be particularly concerned with the conservation of heritage buildings whose setting and architectural qualities are such as to demand much sensitivity in reuse or adaptation to new purposes. In some circumstances, it will be important that applications for proposals in such zones are determined in a Site Development Brief / Masterplan context. Said documents should be submitted in conjunction with any planning applications arising.

In all residentially zoned lands, no residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.

#### **Permitted Uses**

B & B / Guest House, Bring Banks, Community Facility / Centre, Childcare Facility, Convenience Outlet, Childcare Facility, Children Play / Adventure Centre, Education (Primary or Second Level), Halting Site / Group Housing, Home Based Economic Activities, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Residential / Sheltered Housing, Retirement Home / Residential Institution / Retirement Village, Water Services / Public Services.

#### **Open for Consideration Uses**

Allotments, Bank / Financial Institution, Betting Office, Caravan Park, Cultural Facility, education (Third Level), Enterprise Centre, Health Centre, Healthcare Practitioner, Hotel / Motel / Hostel, Offices <100sq. m., Offices 100 to 1000 sq. m. , Petrol Station, Place of Public Worship, Public House, Restaurant / Café, Supermarket, Shop, Take-Away / Fast Food Outlet, Veterinary Surgery.

#### **B1 Commercial / Town or Village Centre**

**Objective** To protect, provide for and / or improve town and village centre facilities and uses.

### Guidance

It is intended to accommodate the majority of new commercial and retail uses within lands identified for B1 land use zoning objective.

This section of the Local Area Plan establishes the general principle of use within a given land use zoning objective. Nothing in this section shall confer an expectation that a particular scale of retail outlet is permissible within Ratoath as other considerations as outlined in the Retail Strategy of Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (Chapter 4) will be taken into account by Meath County Council in the assessment of retail development proposals.

There shall be no restriction to the definition of office in B1 land use zones. Office shall include Class 2 and Class 3 as referred to in Part 4 Exempted Development – Classes of Uses contained in the Second Schedule of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

**Permitted Uses**

B & B / Guest House, Bank / Financial Institution, Betting Office, Bring Banks, Cinema, Community Facility / Centre, Conference/Event Centre, Convenience Outlet, Childcare Facility, Children Play / Adventure Centre, Cultural Facility, Dance Hall / Night Club, Education (Primary or Second Level), Education (Third Level), Funeral Home, Health Centre, Healthcare Practitioner, Home Based Economic Activities, Hotel / Motel / Hostel, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Offices <100sq. m., Offices 100 to 1,000 sq. m., Offices >1,000sq. m., Place of Public Worship, Public House, Residential / Sheltered Housing, Restaurant / Café, Supermarket / Superstore, Shop, Take-Away / Fast Food Outlet, Telecommunication Structures, Veterinary Surgery, Water Services / Public Services.

**Open for Consideration Uses**

Agri - Business, Amusement Arcade, Car Park (incl. Park and Ride), Drive Through Restaurant, Enterprise Centre, Garden Centre, Hospital, Motor Sales / Repair, Petrol Station, Plant & Tool Hire, Retail Warehouse, Retirement Home / Residential Institution / Retirement Village, Science & Technology Based Enterprise.

**D1 Tourism**

**Objective** To provide for appropriate and sustainable visitor and tourist facilities and associated uses.

Guidance

A D1 zone has been identified to provide for tourism type uses such as accommodation, and entertainment.

**Permitted Uses**

B & B / Guest House, Caravan Park, Children Play / Adventure Centre, Community Facility / Centre, Conference/Event Centre, Craft Centre / Craft Shop, Cultural Facility, Hotel / Motel / Hostel, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Restaurant / Café, Water Services / Public Services.

**Open for Consideration Uses**

Amusement Arcade, Cinema, Convenience Outlet, Childcare Facility, Cultural Facility, Dance Hall / Night Club, Offices <100sq. m., Public House, Shop, Telecommunication Structures.

**E2 General Enterprise & Employment**

**Objective** To provide for the creation of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment through industrial, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing and other general employment / enterprise uses in a good quality physical environment.

Guidance (General)

E2 lands constitute an important land bank for employment use which must be protected. The development of E2 lands seek to provide for the creation and production of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for industrial, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing and other general employment / enterprise uses in a good quality physical environment.

It shall be the policy of Meath County Council to apply a more flexible approach to large scale office type development in excess of 200 sq. m. of gross floor area in significant areas (i.e. in excess of 3 hectares of land that is currently undeveloped) of E2 land use zoning objective under the following conditions:

- The preparation of a Masterplan to ensure the provision of the necessary physical infrastructure, the appropriate density and design of layout and the interface between proposed uses and existing development. This document should be submitted in conjunction with any planning applications arising;
- That all processes being operated in the vicinity of the site, similarly zoned E2, are classified as light industrial in nature, as defined in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2013, as amended;
- That the site is located adjacent to a public transport corridor and is served by an adequate road network, and;
- That the application is accommodated by a viable Mobility Management Plan which is to the satisfaction of Meath County Council and provides for the achievement of acceptable modal shares for both public and private transport within an appropriate timeframe.

No office shall be permitted on E2 zoned lands where the primary use of the office (or service) is provided principally to visiting members of the public e.g. solicitors, accountants, etc.

Existing employment generating uses together with their expansion to an appropriate scale and size, consistent with the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and the National Transport Authority Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, shall be facilitated notwithstanding the category of settlement specified.

### Category 3 Lower Tiered Settlements (Small Towns & Villages as provided for in Core Strategy)

#### Guidance

Centres in this category such as Ratoath should cater primarily for small scale enterprise and manufacturing which focus on incubator units, workshops, creative industries, small businesses, repairs, warehousing, distribution, open storage and transport operating centre type activities. The development of inappropriate uses such as office based industry and retailing will not be accommodated in lower tier centres. It shall be a requirement of an applicant to demonstrate the suitability of a proposed heavy industrial use within such land use zoning objective to Meath County Council.

#### Permitted Uses

Agri – Business, Bring Banks, Builders Providers, Domestic Fuel Depot, Enterprise Centre, Enterprise & Business Start Ups, Factory Shop, Furniture Showroom (only where product displayed is manufactured on site), Go Kart Track, Industry – Light, Heavy Vehicle Park, Mart / Co-op, Motor Repair / Servicing, Plant & Tool Hire, Recycling Facility (Civic & Amenity), Telecommunication Structures, Transport Depot, Warehousing, Water Services / Public Services.

#### Open for Consideration Uses

Abattoir, Car Dismantler / Scrap Yard, Childcare Facility, Construction & Demolition Waste Recycling Facility, Garden Centre, Motor Sales, Veterinary Surgery, Waste Recycling / Transfer / Sorting Centre, Wholesale Warehousing / Cash and Carry.

#### F1 Open Space

**Objective** To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.

**Permitted Uses**

Car Park for Recreational Purposes, Craft Centre / Craft Shop, Community Facility / Centre, Cultural Facility, Cycleways / Greenways / Trail Development, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Playing Pitches, Water Services / Public Services.

**Open for Consideration Uses**

Allotments, Bring Banks, Childcare Facility, Place of Public Worship.

**G1 Community Infrastructure**

**Objective** To provide for necessary community, social and educational facilities.

**Permitted Uses**

Allotments, Car Park (incl. Park and Ride), Cemetery/Crematorium, Children Play / Adventure Centre, Childcare Facility, Community Facility / Centre, Cultural Facility, Education (Primary or Second Level), Education (Third Level), Health Centre, Hospital, Leisure / Recreation / Sports Facilities, Place of Public Worship, Playing Pitches, Recycling Facility (Civic & Amenity), Water Services / Public Services.

**Open for Consideration Uses**

Bring Banks, Funeral Home, Gymnasium, Halting Site / Group Housing, Healthcare Practitioner, Residential / Sheltered Housing, Restaurant / Café, Retirement Home / Residential Institution / Retirement Village, Telecommunication Structures.

**3.4.3 Development Management Standards and Guidelines**

The development management standards and guidelines applicable to this Local Area Plan are those set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019, being the parent document to this plan. Over the lifetime of this Local Area Plan, the Planning Authority will seek a high standard of design for new development, which makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and urban realm and which will provide a high standard of amenity in residential developments. Meath County Council will encourage innovative and well designed development that relates sensitively to the existing character of the area and which generates a sense of place, distinctiveness and quality.

New development should be consistent with good architectural standards and should respect the character, scale and layout of existing development in the town. The bulk and massing of new development should be sympathetic to historic development, street patterns and plot widths in Ratoath. Existing established building lines should be respected. Continuous enclosure should be provided to the streetscape with frequent doors and window openings. Layouts which result in the backs of buildings facing onto public spaces will not be acceptable. Building materials used should be durable and should be specified to a high standard of quality and finish. Contemporary design will be encouraged where it has been demonstrated that the surroundings and site context have been satisfactorily taken into account in the design process.

New development should be based on sustainable principles including passive solar design, sustainable use of materials, conservation of energy and water e.g. rainwater harvesting. In the interest of sustainability, town centre buildings should also be designed to accommodate a mix of uses, for example, in terms of floor to ceiling height and floor plate layout.

Reference should also be made to other relevant sections of this Plan which refer to issues such as shopfronts and advertising and open space.

## Policy

In terms of development management, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**DEV MAN POL 1** To seek a high standard of architectural design for new development in Ratoath.

### 3.4.4 Framework Plans

There are three Framework Plan areas designated in this Local Area Plan (see zoning objectives map). The Planning Authority considers Framework Plans as an effective means of guiding new development and providing essential social and physical infrastructure in a phased and sustainable manner. The preparation of Framework Plans will assist in achieving quality developments in terms of, inter alia, urban design, structure, delivery of community/amenity facilities and permeability.

Each Framework Plan shall consist of a written statement and a plan or series of plans indicating the objectives in such detail, as may be 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.
- To make provision for sport and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals.
- To make provision, where appropriate, for educational facilities.

The specific objectives for these areas as contained in Volume 5 of the County Development Plan 2013 – 2019, as varied, are repeated overleaf for clarity.

<b>FP OBJ 1</b>	<b>Framework Plan 1</b> To identify lands for commercial purposes on the R125 Ashbourne Road. This area shall provide for a mix of commercial and local retail services and include the reservation of a 1 acre site for an enterprise centre (of appropriate design) to be developed by Meath Local Enterprise Office. Any planning application made for development on these lands shall be accompanied by a Framework Plan detailing development proposals for the full extent of the lands. This shall include details of the overall site and building layout for the lands, building height and design principles, mix of uses for the site, traffic impact assessment and management proposals and service arrangements. The first phase of development with the exception of the residentially zoned lands shall
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include the construction of the adjoining section of the Ratoath Outer Relief Road. Notwithstanding the zoning matrix an enterprise centre and car sales/repair uses shall be permitted in principle, subject to compliance with relevant planning criteria, on the subject lands.

**FP OBJ 2****Framework Plan 2**

To identify lands at Raystown for general enterprise and industrial purposes to provide for small and medium sized industries to develop in accordance with an approved Framework Plan and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure (*'General Enterprise & Employment (Category 3)'* land use zoning objective applies). This area shall also include the reservation of a 1 acre site for the provision of a civic amenity site. Any planning application made for development on these lands shall be accompanied by a framework plan detailing development proposals for the full extent of the lands. This shall include details of the overall site and building layout for the lands, building height and design principles, landscaping, mix of uses for the site, traffic impact assessment and management proposals and service arrangements.

**FP OBJ 3****Framework Plan 3**

To identify lands off the Fairyhouse Road to provide for employment generating uses in accordance with an approved Framework Plan and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure (*'General Enterprise & Employment (Category 3)'* land use zoning objective applies). The development of these lands shall also provide for reservation of a 4 acre site for the provision of a swimming pool site and include the re-alignment of the Fairyhouse Road and provision of footpaths, cycleway and public lighting along the road frontage of the site. Any planning application made for development on these lands shall be accompanied by a Framework Plan detailing development proposals for the full extent of the lands. This shall include details of the overall site and building layout for the lands, building height and design principles, landscaping, mix of uses for the site, traffic impact assessment and management proposals and service arrangements. The development of these lands shall be on a phased basis with the reservation of the swimming pool site forming part of the first phase.

**3.5 Housing****3.5.1 Introduction**

The Planning Authority has a statutory obligation to ensure that sufficient land is zoned for all types of housing to meet the town's projected housing requirements over the lifetime of the plan and to ensure that an undue shortage/excess does not arise. In order to ensure a sustainable pattern of development, the future of Ratoath needs to address various opportunities and constraints presented by: the traditional settlement pattern, the existing settlement pattern, the natural environment, infrastructure and service provision, the projected population change for the settlement and its environs and recent housing building performance. Regard must be given to the role of the town within the local context and its status as a Small Town under the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. The current Settlement Strategy through the order of priority will ensure that only the quantum and scale of projected residential development will take place to ensure that the Local Area Plan accords with the policy framework contained in the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.

As per the policy direction prescribed in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019, it is imperative that the traditional character of Ratoath is respected and maintained. Ratoath is

not considered suitable for high density apartment developments which would be out of character with the existing built form.

### 3.5.2 Residential Development – Key Principles

The key principle which directs the housing policies in this plan is the delivery of high quality living environment in neighbourhoods with a range of housing types and sufficient community facilities to serve the needs of residents. Generally the objective will be to provide a range of residential units, which vary in both size and type, and an overall scheme design which can accommodate a broad population profile including single person households, couples, households with children, older people and people with a disability. The Planning Authority notes the provision of independent living units as part of the Steeplechase development and will encourage and support similar mixed forms of housing in developments, in the interests of creating mixed communities. The design and layout of overall schemes and individual units should aim to meet the requirements of lifelong living and at the design stage should take into account the need to ensure that units can be extended and/or adapted in the future.

The Council will require the provision of neighbourhoods rather than traditional housing estates. The neighbourhood concept is based on the principle that people should be able to find many of the requirements for daily living within easy reach of their home. It ensures that new housing and service provision, in the form of schools, shops, community and recreation facilities, are mutually supportive and provide for sustainable and pleasant living environments. There will therefore be a strong emphasis on a mix of uses, house types and layouts that facilitate streetscapes and open spaces that have natural supervision. The Council will require estate designers to use innovative scheme designs which contribute to the aesthetic value of Ratoath. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government have produced guidelines on residential development in urban areas. These guidelines include 'Design Standards for New Apartments', 'Best Practice Urban Design Manual' and the guidelines 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas'. The Planning Authority will have regard to the contents of these documents (or their replacements) in the assessment of applications for residential development. These documents set out, in many cases, minimum standards. In the interest of providing a high standard of residential development, Meath County Council will seek developments which exceed these minimum standards. A development which relies solely on only achieving the minimum stated standard will not be considered acceptable.

Well designed schemes can help to deliver more sustainable development through a more efficient use of land – a non-renewable resource, provision of a variety of housing choices and improved accessibility to local facilities and public transport. The fundamentals of good design are discussed in Chapter 11 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2013-2019 'Development Management Guidelines and Standards' and are applicable to Ratoath.



Open space for amenity purposes is a key component in residential schemes, contributing towards the recreational requirements of residents and enhancing the quality of the environment. Private gardens will be necessary for housing and communal private open space for town houses, duplexes and apartments. Private balconies would also be necessary for all apartments. A suitable children's play space will be a requirement for those residential developments which are primarily family orientated.

### 3.5.3 Housing Strategy

A Housing Strategy prepared under Part V of the Planning & Development Acts, 2000 to 2014 is incorporated into Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 (Chapter 3 refers). The Housing Strategy is a county wide strategy and therefore its contents are applicable to Ratoath. The Housing Strategy is contained within Appendix 4 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. It is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 to review the Housing Strategy two years after the adoption of the Development Plan.

Section 96 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2014 provides that the objectives of the Housing Strategy in relation to social and affordable housing shall be implemented by means of conditions attached to planning permissions for residential development. All residential developments in excess of 4 housing units or any site proposed for residential development in excess of 0.1 hectares on lands zoned for either residential use or mixed development including residential use is to be subject to the provision of "Social/Affordable" housing at a maximum requirement rate of 16%. The Council will require a 16% quota of social/affordable housing to be provided from each housing development within the County, on lands zoned for residential use or for mixture of residential and other uses. This is based on the calculation of social and affordable housing requirements. The ratio of social to affordable houses to be provided shall be assessed on a case by case basis, having regard to local housing needs, but at all times the 16% requirement shall be met.

### 3.5.4 Extensions

In assessing an application for a house extension, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:-

- High quality designs for extensions will be required that respect and integrate with the existing dwelling in terms of character, height, scale, materials used, finishes, window proportions etc.
- The quantity and quality of private open space that remains available to serve the house.
- Pitched roofs will be required except on some single storey rear extensions. Flat roof extensions visible from public areas will not normally be permitted.
- Impact on amenities of adjacent residents, in terms of light and privacy. Care should be taken to ensure that the extension does not overshadow windows, yards or gardens or have windows in the flank walls which would reduce a neighbour's privacy.
- Effect on front building line - extensions will not generally be allowed to break the existing front building line. However a porch extension which does not significantly break the front building line will normally be permitted. In terrace and semi-detached situations, extensions which significantly protrude beyond the front building line and/or along the full front of the house will not be permitted.
- In the case of single storey extension to the side of a house, the extension should be set back at least 150mm from the front wall of the existing house to give a more satisfactory external appearance.

- In some circumstances a gap of 1m to be retained between the extension and the neighbouring dwellings so as to prevent dwellings which were intended to be detached from becoming a terrace.
- Dormer extensions should not obscure the main features of the existing roof, i.e. should not break the ridge or eaves lines of the roof. Box dormers should be avoided.
- Front dormers should normally be set back at least three-tile courses from the eaves line and should be clad in a material matching the existing roof.
- Proposed side extensions must retain side access to the rear of the property where possible.
- Ability to provide adequate car parking within the curtilage of the dwelling house.

### 3.5.5 Family Flat Extensions

The creation of a family flat, generically referred to as a granny flat, to be occupied by a member of the occupant family is generally acceptable, provided it is not a separate detached unit, and it is possible to provide direct access to the remainder of the house. There shall be no permanent sub division of the garden/private amenity space. The flat shall not be let, sold, or otherwise transferred, other than as part of the overall property and shall revert to being part of the original house when no longer occupied by the family member. The design should ensure that the flat forms an integral part of the main dwelling unit capable of reintegration for single family use and from public view, retains the appearance of a single dwelling unit.

#### Policies

In terms of Residential Development, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

<b>RES POL 1</b>	To provide for the integration of new housing into the natural and built environment in a manner that makes a positive contribution to the overall environment in the locality.
<b>RES POL 2</b>	To encourage the development of mixed and balanced communities to avoid areas of social exclusion.
<b>RES POL 3</b>	To achieve a mix of housing types and sizes in the consideration of individual planning applications for residential development and in development of the Councils own housing stock.
<b>RES POL 4</b>	To ensure that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are provided for in the design of layouts in residential areas.
<b>RES POL 5</b>	To promote energy efficiency both during the construction phase and during the lifetime of residential development by sensitive design and layout taking into account topography, orientation and surrounding features.
<b>RES POL 6</b>	To have regard to the Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities' (DoECLG 2007).
<b>RES POL 7</b>	To integrate new social housing into the existing social and urban fabric of Ratoath.
<b>RES POL 8</b>	To support the concept of independent living for older people and people with disabilities and ensure where possible that housing for such groups is integrated with mainstream housing in their existing communities.

<b>RES POL 9</b>	To encourage the provision of adequate small, self contained living units within a complex of facilities for persons with special needs to maintain privacy and independence whilst having the protection of a more sheltered environment.
<b>RES POL 10</b>	To support proposals for day centres for people with special needs within, or close to, the town and neighbourhood centres, subject to normal planning requirements.
<b>RES POL 11</b>	To permit the suitable extension of existing dwellings to accommodate the elderly or people with a disability in the family home, subject to normal planning requirements.
<b>RES POL 12</b>	To require that 16% of land zoned for residential development or for a mix of residential and other uses, shall be made available for the provision of social and affordable housing. This figure may be modified in line with any revision to the Housing Strategy carried out during the period of the County Development Plan. Social and affordable housing units shall be indistinguishable from other units by virtue of design.
<b>RES POL 13</b>	<p>To require that developers comply with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 - 2014, through the following methods or by a combination thereof at the discretion of the Planning Authority. For conventional housing development, the options available to satisfy the requirements of the Housing Strategy are:</p> <p>(a) Financial contribution (as provided for under section 96(3)(b)(vi) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2014);</p> <p>(b) Direct provision of the housing units on completion as determined in accordance with the Strategy, integrated as part of the overall development of a site;</p> <p>(c) The transfer of a portion of the site which is the subject of a planning application to the Council which will enable the Council to provide the appropriate number of units thereon in satisfaction of the requirements of the Housing Strategy or the disposal of a number of fully or partially serviced sites within the site to the Council which will enable the Council to provide the appropriate number of units thereon in satisfaction of the requirements of the Housing Strategy or the transfer to the planning authority of the ownership of any other land within the functional area of the planning authority</p>

### Objectives

In terms of residential development, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

<b>RES OBJ 1</b>	To ensure that future residential development complies with. Table 2.4 of the County Development Plan 2013-2019 and Strategic Policy SP 1 of this Local Area Plan.
<b>RES OBJ 2</b>	To ensure a holistic approach is taken in the design and planning of new residential areas, which incorporates the provision of essential and appropriate facilities, amenities and services so that viable communities emerge and grow.
<b>RES OBJ 3</b>	To achieve a better and more appropriate mixes of dwelling size, type tenure and accessibility in all new residential development.



## CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Employment Context
- 4.3 Economic Development
- 4.4 Tourism
- 4.5 Retail and Commercial Development
  - 4.5.1 Retail Warehousing
  - 4.5.2 Petrol Filling Stations
  - 4.5.3 Fast Food Outlets/Takeaways
  - 4.5.4 Non Retail Uses
  - 4.5.5 Shopfronts and Advertising
- 4.6 Derelict and Obsolete Land and Buildings

## 4.1 Introduction

The County Development Plan designates Ratoath as a Small Town, which gives it the primary economic aim of facilitating local needs, thus building sustainable communities. Sustainable development requires local job creation which will improve the quality of life of the residential population of Ratoath by reducing the dependence on commuting for employment. Notwithstanding the success of the bloodstock industry, as with other centres in County Meath, employment generating development has not kept pace with the level of residential development in the town. A key issue to be addressed in Ratoath is the creation of a sustainable settlement in accordance with the County Development Plan, i.e. a balance of residential and other uses including employment generating uses.

Notwithstanding the designation of Ratoath as a Small Town, the RPG's have identified Ratoath as having a unique role having regard to its well educated resident workforce. The RPG's has linked the development of Ratoath to the Secondary Economic Growth Town of Ashbourne and Dunbooyne and indicates that it should aim to capitalise on the synergy with those settlements. The RPG's particularly outline that *"it is important that Ratoath should become more self sustaining in terms of providing employment opportunities locally. Therefore, sustainable higher end economic investment opportunities consistent with the size of the town should be supported"*.

The goal of the Economic Strategy of the current County Development Plan seeks *"to build on and enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of County Meath in order to make it one of the country's prime locations for indigenous and foreign economic and employment generating investment"*.

Table 4.2 of the County Development Plan sets out the hierarchy of economic centres and targeted sectors to be pursued for each settlement. In Ratoath, manufacturing, the equine industry and possibly office based industry using a highly qualified resident labour force are the sectors which have been highlighted.

## 4.2 Employment Context

Over the past decade Ratoath has expanded its small scale retail provision which has helped to create minor employment growth. The introduction of the Corballis Shopping Centre which currently contains a varied mix of services (Shabby Chic, Lilly's pharmacy, La Bucca restaurant, Bank of Ireland and Spar) as well as neighbourhood centres such as The Centre Point (Ratoath Books, Silk Ginger, Lyk Nu, Home 2 Home Design and Coyotes Spa) have helped to create local employment. The Planning Authority acknowledge and support the work of the Ratoath Chamber of Commerce who have introduced the "Ratoath Is Alive Campaign" which promotes awareness of businesses in Ratoath and simultaneously helps these businesses to build a loyal customer base. The bloodstock industry is a major asset for the Ratoath area and it will be an objective of the Planning Authority to support the existing facilities at Fairyhouse and Tattersalls. The Local Area Plan also aims to ensure that adequate lands are made available for commercial and employment generating uses.

Table 4.6 below indicates the population of Ratoath according to principal economic status. 65.1% of the population were classified as being at work with 7.3% being unemployed having lost or given up their previous job. The age profile of Ratoath is evident with 10.8% of those over 15 stated as being in full time education with only 5% having retired. The unemployment rate is significantly less than that for the county as a whole which was recorded at 11%. Commerce and trade along with professional services are the predominant industries that inhabitants of Ratoath are engaged in (see Table 7). It is also notable that almost half of persons at work (47.2%) are classed as Managers, Directors and Senior Officials, Professional Occupations or Associate Professional and Technical Occupations. This compares to 34.2% in Co. Meath and is again reflective of the educated nature of the resident labour force.

**Table 6:** Population of Ratoath aged 15 years and over according to principal economic status

Category	% of labour force
At work	65.1
Looking for first regular job	0.7
Unemployed having lost or given up previous job	7.3
Student	10.8
Looking after home/family	6
Retired	5
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	1.8
Other	0.2
Total aged 15 years and over	100

**Table 7:** Population of Ratoath according to industry

Category	% of persons at work according to industry
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.22
Building and Construction	2.2
Manufacturing industries	4.7
Commerce and trade	13.1
Transport and communications	6
Public administration	3.4
Professional services	8.7
Other	4.9

Census data reveals that significant numbers of people in Ratoath are travelling under 15 minutes to work, school and college (see Table 8) noting the considerable number of children of school going age within Ratoath. The proximity of Ratoath to Dublin city may well account for the time spent travelling to work or education in comparison to other centres in the county. Data on the mode of transport illustrates the continued reliance on the private car and given the high percentage in the category of car driver, suggests a particular usage of the private car for travel to work. There has been a significant increase in the numbers walking which has grown from 12.55% in 2006 to 20.7% in 2011. Cycling has also increased although absolute numbers still remain low. Encouragingly, the numbers driving to work has reduced from 53.33% to 48.4% over the same period. The Census information suggests that the employment base in Ratoath needs strengthening to reduce the need of residents to travel significant distances for employment purposes.

**Table 8:** Percentage population aged 5 years and over by journey time to work, school or college

% population aged 5 years and over by journey time to work, school or college	
Under 15 mins	31.4
¼ hour – under ½ hour	25
½ hour – under ¾ hour	20.8
¾ hour – under 1 hour	9.3
1 hour – under 1 ½ hours	7.9
1 ½ hour and over	1.5
Not stated	4.1

**Table 9:** Means of travel to work, school and college

Means of Travel	% On foot	% Bicycle	% Bus, minibus or coach	% Train, DART or LUAS	% Motorcycle or scooter	% Car driver	% Car passenger	% Other	% Not stated
<b>Ratoath</b>	20.7	1.8	6.6	0.6	0.4	48.4	14.1	5.5	1.9

### 4.3 Economic Development

It will be a primary aim of the Planning Authority to attract sustainable forms of employment to Ratoath to stimulate economic growth locally and to counter existing unsustainable commuting patterns. The economic development of Ratoath will be promoted in order to create a more sustainable community whereby people can reside close to where they are employed. Sufficient lands will be zoned for employment generating development and the adequacy of employment generating land supply will be closely monitored throughout the Plan period.

The Economic Development Strategy of the County Development Plan facilitates a more diversified economic base, a focus on cost competitiveness and productivity and a choice of investment locations. The Strategy advocates the development of a number of key strategic, integrated and specialised employment centres, which provide different types of functions to each other. This Strategy is presented in Table 4.2 of the County Development Plan. Ratoath is identified as a District Employment Centre with the sectors identified to be encouraged in Ratoath being manufacturing, equine industry and possibly office based industry using its highly qualified resident labour force. Objective ED OBJ 1 of the County Development Plan seeks the identification of areas for different types of employment generating uses consistent with Table 4.2 and the application of the land use zoning objectives contained in Section 2.9.4 which are repeated in this Local Area Plan.

This Local Area Plan clearly identifies the supply of land for employment generating industrial, enterprise and commercial development which will assist in generating the requisite level of job creation needed for Ratoath's growing population. It is important that a range of sites are identified to meet the practical needs of users and encourage diversification of the local economy and thereby ensure that it is more resistant to adverse changes in the structure of employment activity. The Planning Authority will also support the re-location of non-compatible town centre uses to other more suitable sites, which would result in increasing the availability of lands within the town centre for more appropriate uses. In this regard, the Planning Authority will particularly encourage the re-location of the existing Suzuki garage and petrol station on the Main Street. (See also Section 4.5.2, Objective PET STAT 1)

Section 4.3 (Employment Sectors) of the County Development Plan recognises the importance of the equine sector to the future development of Ratoath. A local objective supporting the continued development and expansion of equine related activities in Ratoath is included in the County Development Plan as follows:

*"To support and provide for enhancement and diversification of existing equine and related industry in Ratoath centred around Fairyhouse Race course and Tattersalls".*

The purpose of such local zoning objectives within a broad zoning category allows the Council to seek to achieve a special objective specific to an area. Their application is limited to a handful of incidences.

Lands for general enterprise and employment use have been identified on the Fairyhouse Road. It is envisaged that a mix of employment uses would be provided on these lands and that they would also facilitate the re-location of non-compatible commercial uses from the

town centre. Park and ride facilities should also be provided on these lands as part of their development.

A second area of identified for general enterprise and employment (E2 "General Enterprise & Employment" land use zoning objective) has been identified on the Ashbourne Road. It is intended that a mix of uses would be provided on these lands, primarily industrial, manufacturing and other employment / enterprise uses to include start-up and incubator units. It is an objective that the development of these lands would include the re-alignment of the R125 in the vicinity of the site and the provision of public lighting, footpaths and cycleways along the road frontage of these lands. Any planning application for development within these lands should be accompanied by a Masterplan as detailed in Objective ECON DEV OBJ 9.

Lands for commercial purposes have been identified on the Ashbourne Road (Framework Plan Area 1 refers). It is considered that this site would be suitable for employment intensive uses such as office type development. The Planning Authority will require that a framework plan accompanies any planning application made for development on these lands detailing the overall site and building layout, building height and design principles, phasing, mix of uses for the site, traffic impact assessment and management proposals and service arrangements (see also Section 3.4.4). Public lighting, footpaths and cycleways shall be provided on all roadways provided as part of the development of the lands. It is intended that the area will provide for a mix of commercial and local retail services and to include the development of an enterprise centre (of appropriate design). Given the prominent location of these lands on a key approach to the town, it is considered that this site should accommodate a landmark building. However, the design of such a landmark building should taken cognisance of the nature and characteristics of the urban form in Ratoath and should be suitably designed for a town of its nature and function in the settlement hierarchy for the County. The release of these lands for development shall be linked to the delivery of the proposed by-pass linking the R125 and the R155. The first phase of development on these lands shall include for the construction of the by-pass adjacent to these lands.

A second proposed local zoning objective in the County Development Plan seeks to provide for small and medium sized industries to develop in the vicinity of Raystown, Ratoath. The specific objective seeks

*"To provide for small and medium sized industries to develop on the R125 Ashbourne Road in accordance with an approved Masterplan and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure. This area should have a particular focus on providing incubator units and facilities for start up industries. It is intended that the area will also include the provision of a civic amenity site. Meath County Council will require that a Masterplan accompanies any planning application made for development on these lands detailing the overall site and building layout, building height and design principles, landscaping, phasing, mix of uses for the site, traffic impact assessment and management proposals and service arrangements. Public lighting, footpaths and cycleways shall be provided on all roadways provided as part of the development of the lands."*

These lands have been identified with an E2 'General Enterprise & Employment' land use zoning objective qualified by the Local Zoning Objective contained in the County Development Plan (Framework Plan Area 2 refers).

Further lands have been reserved for employment generating uses off the Fairyhouse Road (E2 'General Enterprise & Employment' land use zoning, Framework Plan Area 3 refers and also includes the adjoining community 'G1' Community Infrastructure zoned lands). It is intended that the area will provide for light industrial development and also include the reservation of lands for a swimming pool and include the re-alignment of the Fairyhouse Road and

provision of footpaths, cycleway and public lighting along the road frontage of the site. The Planning Authority will require that a framework plan accompanies any planning application made for development on these lands detailing the overall site and building layout, building height and design principles, landscaping, phasing, mix of uses for the site, traffic impact assessment and management proposals and service arrangements. Public lighting, footpaths and cycleways shall be provided on all roadways provided as part of the development of the lands.

The Planning Authority is satisfied that sufficient lands have been identified for different types of employment generating uses consistent with Table 4.2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and the application of the land use zoning objectives contained in Section 2.9.4. of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. The Planning Authority is equally satisfied having regard to the absence of local employment opportunities that no review was required regarding the appropriateness of the nature, location and quantum of industrial and employment generating land use in Ratoath.

### Policies

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

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>ECON DEV POL 1</b> | To ensure that an adequate quantity and quality of zoned and serviced lands for employment generating uses are available to serve the local population.  |
| <b>ECON DEV POL 2</b> | To encourage local/small scale offices in the identified neighbourhood centres off the Ashbourne Road (FP OBJ 1 land refers).  |
| <b>ECON DEV POL 3</b> | In the case of the development of enterprise and employment sites adjacent to residential areas and community facilities, buffer zones shall be provided as part of any development as well as adequate screening in the form of planting, landscaping and mounding as appropriate.    |
| <b>ECON DEV POL 4</b> | To apply a flexible approach in the assessment of entrepreneurial start up businesses and small scale industrial and employment generating activities, where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use would have minimal impact on adjoining uses, primarily residential property. |

### Objectives

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

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>ECON DEV OBJ 1</b> | To support the activities of agencies involved in the promotion of employment generating opportunities in Ratoath including the Meath Local Enterprise Office, Enterprise Ireland and the Industrial Development Agency (IDA Ireland). |
| <b>ECON DEV OBJ 2</b> | To support the Fairyhouse Racecourse complex as a key contributor to the economic sector in Ratoath and to facilitate and support its continued expansion and diversification.   |
| <b>ECON DEV OBJ 3</b> | To support the Tattersall's complex as a key contributor to the economic sector in Ratoath and to facilitate and support its continued expansion and diversification.  |

<b>ECON DEV OBJ 4</b>	Encourage environmental improvements in the town centre area which will assist in generating a “feel good factor” in the town thus creating a positive impact on potential employers/employees locating in Ratoath.
<b>ECON DEV OBJ 5</b>	Continue to improve the piped infrastructure serving the town.
<b>ECON DEV OBJ 6</b>	To consolidate the centre of Ratoath as the focal point of the town for cultural, social and retail facilities and to encourage the provision of new retail uses subject to adequate access, car parking and environmental improvements in the town centre.
<b>ECON DEV OBJ 7</b>	To provide lands for the relocation of non compatible town centre commercial uses in a site zoned for E2 “ <i>General Enterprise &amp; Employment (Category 3)</i> ” land use zoning objective applies (see Zoning Objectives Map).
<b>ECON DEV OBJ 8</b>	To identify lands for industrial purposes including start up and incubator units on the Ashbourne Road. The development of these lands shall include the re-alignment of the R125 and provision of footpaths, cycleway and public lighting along the road frontage of the site.
<b>ECON DEV OBJ 9</b>	To support the provision of broadband telecommunications in Ratoath in order to facilitate working from home.

#### 4.4 Tourism

The Planning Authority acknowledges the important contribution to the economy that income derived from tourist activity holds. Tourism benefits the local community in terms of job creation and improved facilities which are also available to locals. Ratoath has a range of tourism assets including the Fairyhouse Cookery School, Tattersalls International Bloodstock and the Venue Theatre. It is also an historic town with strong Anglo-Norman links resulting in a wealth of richness in terms of the built and natural heritage. Located just outside the town is one of Ireland’s most famous horse racing tracks, Fairyhouse racecourse, where the Irish Grand National is held annually in Easter.

The Meath County tourism strategy entitled “Ireland Heritage Capital, Marketing Tourism in Meath, 2005-2010” has been recently updated with the “Past Now Future” Meath Tourism Strategic Review 2005 – 2010 and Strategic Plan 2011-2013. It continues to identify heritage as the County’s Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Heritage was adopted into the Meath Tourism brand. As outlined in Chapter 5 Ratoath has unique heritage assets which add to the tourism product. The Planning Authority will seek to improve the appearance of the town, by carrying out environmental improvements and ensuring appropriate management of new development, in order to strengthen and improve the character of Ratoath.

It is the opinion of the Planning Authority that there is scope for Ratoath to increase promotion of its unique tourism assets and the Planning Authority will support the development of the town’s tourism potential. The Planning Authority especially envisages the provision of tourist accommodation in the revitalisation of Ratoath. The general appearance of the town continues to be improved; however an impediment to the growth of the town as a tourist centre includes the limited retail offer which affects the town’s attractiveness as a tourist destination.

The Planning Authority will also have due regard to the impact of tourism on the environment and on local communities. Tourism can damage and destroy the assets it seeks to exploit, in particular through excessive visitor numbers, inappropriate development and pollution. New development in the tourism sector should respect the existing character of the town and its surroundings. This will enable tourism facilities to be provided in appropriate locations that will not have a detrimental impact on the town and its residents. The Planning Authority aims to ensure that the relationship between tourism and the environment must be managed in a way that tourism continues to support the local community and remains viable in the long term.

### Policy

In terms of tourism, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**TOU POL 1** To promote, encourage and facilitate the development of the tourism industry through sustainable means, including the conservation, protection and enhancement of the built and natural heritage and the protection of cultural and community environments in order to maximise upon the economic benefits arising from the industry.

### Objectives

In terms of tourism, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**TOU OBJ 1** To support the expansion of the retail offer in Ratoath in order to enhance the attractiveness of the town as a tourist destination.

**TOU OBJ 2** To support the Tattersalls complex as a key contributor to the tourism sector in Ratoath.

**TOU OBJ 3** To support the Fairyhouse Racecourse complex as a key contributor to the tourism sector in Ratoath.

**TOU OBJ 4** To promote the development of high quality hotel and ancillary facilities, especially those facilities which provide conference and leisure facilities on lands at Newtown to the south of Ratoath.

## 4.5 Retail and Commercial Development

The Retail Planning Guidelines (DoECLG, 2012) require that Planning Authorities incorporate policies for retail development in Development Plans. The objective of the guidelines is to ensure that the optimum location for new retail development is established which is accessible to all sections of society and is of scale which allows the continued prosperity of traditional town centres and existing retail centres.

The Meath County Retail Strategy (2012) was prepared in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines and is incorporated in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. Ratoath is designated as a Level 4 Small Town Centre in the County Retail Hierarchy. It is noted that the Meath County Retail Strategy does not provide any specific retail policies for Level 4 Small Town centres such as Ratoath. However, it does indicate that in some small towns in the County, such as Ratoath, there is a clear need to enhance the convenience retail offer. The scale of such provision should however, be cognisant of the retail role and function of such centres within the retail hierarchy.

Retail provision in Ratoath is primarily focused along the linear Main Street. This has a traditional village character with contemporary additions. A typical range of retail and retail service outlets are represented here including takeaway, newsagent, public house, hairdresser,

pharmacy, butcher, bookmaker, credit union, hardware, household etc. Vacancy levels in the traditional town centre are low with the exception of one large vacant site, which is currently surrounded by hoarding.

A new retail development on the approach to the town called the Corballis Neighbourhood Centre accommodates a Spar. In addition there is a Supervalu and a small Tesco Metro. However, considering the population of the town there is scope for further convenience offer in order to improve competition and choice. It is envisaged that there is significant leakage of expenditure to Ashbourne in this regard.

The town centre has an attractive ambience and streetscape with traditional shop fronts and a good quality public realm.

Appropriate sites for convenience development in the town centre may be constrained due to the traditional layout and existing land use pattern. In this regard, appropriate edge of centre sites may be appropriate for such development subject to the sequential test. The lands identified within the FP OBJ 1 lands are considered a viable option in this regard.



In recent years the outskirts of the town have become submerged in residential development. This unsustainable development also occurred in many instances with the absence of local shopping facilities. Such facilities should take the form of a local/corner shop.

Every applicant must demonstrate that any retail proposal complies with the policy direction of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and County Meath Retail Strategy. All applications for significant retail developments should be assessed against the range of criteria specified in the County Retail Strategy. The County Retail Strategy defines significant as 1,000 sq. m net floor area in out of centre or edge of centre locations

As already outlined above, the central area of Ratoath is constrained in terms of availability of specific sites to expand the retail and commercial functions of the town. In order to facilitate further development of these sectors, and to particularly encourage additional commercial development such as to strengthen the employment base of the town, the Planning Authority proposes to zone additional lands for B1 land use zoning objectives purposes, i.e. local and neighbourhood shopping facilities, on the Ashbourne Road to the southeast of the Ballybin Road roundabout (see also Section 4.2). It is intended that the area will provide for a mix of commercial and local retail services.

## Policies

In terms of retail development, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

<b>RET DEV POL 1</b>	To promote and enhance the vitality of Ratoath Town Centre and promote this area as the main commercial core where an appropriate mix of commercial, retail, recreational, civic, cultural and residential uses are provided.
<b>RET DEV POL 2</b>	To encourage and support proposals for the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and vacant properties in the town centre with due cognisance to the sequential approach.
<b>RET DEV POL 3</b>	To encourage the development of retail facilities of a local nature in residential areas (subject to the protection of residential amenity) and therefore reduce the need to travel to the town centre for basic convenience requirements.
<b>RET DEV POL 4</b>	To support proposals for new retail and other mixed use development in the town where the proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is compliant with the sequential approach to retailing;</li> <li>• Is well located, convenient, attractive with safe pedestrian linkages;</li> <li>• Provides or is in close proximity to adequate parking (including cycle parking);</li> <li>• Provides adequate facilities for the recycling of waste packaging generated by the proposal, including a bring centre where required;</li> <li>• Has negligible impact on existing urban residents;</li> <li>• Has due regard to the designation that the town holds.</li> </ul>

## Objectives

In terms of retail development, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

<b>RET DEV OBJ 1</b>	To encourage alternative options for the provision of car parking other than surface car-parking and to ensure provision is made for cycle parking in retail developments.
<b>RET DEV OBJ 2</b>	To seek the removal of inappropriate and unauthorised advertising signs, sandwich boards, satellite dishes and shop front shutters from buildings within the town centre.

### 4.5.1 Retail Warehousing

Retail warehousing trades in bulky goods such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods, garden products and DIY items. Ratoath currently does not have any retail warehousing parks. As per the Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area and the Meath County Retail Strategy, Ratoath is not designated as a suitable location for retail warehousing units as this type of development is not of the appropriate scale for the needs and size of Ratoath.

### 4.5.2 Petrol Filling Stations

Petrol filling stations are a growing sector in retail in Ireland as the retail offer and some forecourt shops have expanded extensively in the recent past. Retail guidance indicates that the retail use of a site as a petrol filling station, depending on the scale of each convenience store, can adversely impact on the traditional retail outlets such as the local corner shop.

The Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) state that a shop associated with any petrol filling station should not exceed 100m<sup>2</sup> (net) retail floorspace. Above this threshold, the sequential test approach will be applied i.e. the retail element of the proposal shall be assessed by the Planning Authority in the same way as would an application for retail development (without petrol/diesel filling facilities) in the same location.

Reference should be made to Chapter 11 (Development Management Guidelines and Standards) of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 in relation to guidelines for the design of petrol stations. Such developments are also subject to the provision of the Dangerous Substances (Retail and Private Petroleum Stores) (Amendment) Regulations 2012, as may be amended.

There is currently a petrol station/car sales showroom (Suzuki premises) located in Ratoath town centre. As stated previously, the Planning Authority supports the re-location of non-compatible town centre uses to other more suitable sites, which would result in increasing the availability of lands within the town centre for more appropriate uses. In this regard, the Planning Authority will particularly encourage the re-location of the existing garage and petrol station on the Main Street.

### Objective

In terms of petrol filling stations, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**PET STAT 1** To facilitate the relocation of the existing Suzuki garage on the Main Street to a more appropriate zoned site for such use.

### 4.5.3 Fast Food Outlets/Takeaways

'Take-aways' can create noise, odour, litter and are often an area where youths choose to gather, thus resulting in general disturbance to nearby residents, particular late at night. The following factors will be considered in the assessment of development proposals for fast food/takeaways outlets:

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

### Policy

In terms of take away outlets, the following is the policy of Meath County Council:

**RET DEV POL 5** Take away outlets will generally be facilitated in the town centre locations subject to the following:

- The design including shop front, signage and lighting contributes to and complements the existing building in the town centre;
- Proposal for 'take away' food as part of a sit down restaurant will be considered against the likely impact on local amenity, litter generation and noise. Opening hours of these premises shall be strictly controlled.

#### 4.5.4 Non Retail Uses

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

##### Policy

In terms of non retail uses, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

<b>RET DEV POL 6</b>	To strengthen the shopping function of Ratoath, non-retail uses at ground floor within the town centre will not be encouraged in order to protect the vitality and viability of the primary retail area.
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#### 4.5.5 Shopfronts and Advertising

Shopfronts make a major contribution to the visual amenities of a town and many have strong heritage value which should be preserved. New shopfront design must respect the scale and proportions of the streetscape by maintaining the existing grain of development along the street and respecting the appropriate plot width. Generally, individually mounted lettering or hand lettering is required. Letter design should be simple and legible. If shop lights are used, the arms should be short and the hoods of the lights treated to match with the background. Shopfront design for new buildings should be of a contemporary nature. The colour schemes used should be simple and should not conflict with adjoining buildings. The choice of materials should complement the character of the building and integrate with the overall visual unity of the street scheme. Timber window frames are appropriate in traditional context and also work well when combined with stone. External roller shutters will not normally be permitted with the town centre and will normally only be considered in industrial type settings.

Inappropriate advertising signage can detract from a streetscape and from the character of the area. The Planning Authority will require a high standard of design in signage applications. Signage design should reflect the scale and façade of the building on which it is located.

While the Planning Authority is cognisant of the desire of retail and commercial multiples to adopt a standard approach to shop fronts and signage design, in the interests of promoting a high quality urban realm, the Planning Authority will encourage a site specific design for same.

##### Policy

In terms of shopfronts and advertising, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

<b>SHOP POL 1</b>	To require the use of quality advertising signage to compliment the existing character of the town. There will be a presumption against the use of plastic illuminated signage.
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<b>SHOP POL 2</b>	To encourage the use of hand painted fascia lettering and logos in a style and colour that harmonises with the shop and helps portray its use.
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<b>SHOP POL 3</b>	To encourage the use of roller shutters located behind the line of glazing of shopfronts.
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#### 4.6 Derelict and Obsolete Land and Buildings

The Planning Authority will examine joint public/private commercial ventures that facilitate the development or refurbishment of derelict or obsolete sites, including the use of the

Derelict Sites Act, 1990 as amended by the Planning and Development Act 2000-2014. Meath County Council has also appointed a derelict site officer whose primary goal will be to assess and manage derelict sites throughout the county.

### **Policies**

In terms of derelict and obsolete land and buildings, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- DER POL 1** To implement the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended) and regulations made there under to prevent or remove injury to amenity arising from dereliction.
- DER POL 2** To identify and secure the redevelopment of obsolete areas, including areas of backland, derelict sites and incidental open space.



## CHAPTER 5: BUILT & NATURAL HERITAGE



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Built Heritage: Architectural Conservation Areas, Protected Structures
- 5.3 Protected Views and Prospects
- 5.4 Natural Heritage
- 5.5 Archaeological Heritage
  - 5.5.1 Recorded Monuments

## 5.1 Introduction

Both natural and built heritage form an important part of our cultural identity. The physical survivals of our past are to be valued and protected as a central part of our common heritage. Their presence adds to the quality of our lives, by enhancing the familiar and sustaining the sense of local distinctiveness, which is an important aspect of the character and appearance of our towns, villages and countryside. The Planning Authority considers it desirable that buildings and features of historic, architectural, archaeological, social or cultural importance are protected for the enjoyment and benefit of current and future generations.

## 5.2 Built Heritage: Architectural Conservation Areas, Protected Structures

Built heritage refers to all manmade features in the environment including buildings and other structures such as bridges, wells, archaeological sites, field boundaries and pumps. The built heritage of Ratoath adds strongly to the character of the streetscape, therefore it is very important that it is protected. Ratoath is not currently designated as an Architectural Conservation Area. However, there are 10 structures in Ratoath which are registered as protected structures in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and these act as focal points for the town. The Protected Structures are listed below:

**Table 10: Protected Structures in Ratoath**

Ref. No.	Structure	Building Type	Description
MH044-301	Park House	House	Detached three-bay two storey house, built c. 1900, with flat-roofed central porch. Hipped slate roof with red brick chimneystacks. Modern extension to rear. Red brick outbuildings to rear.
MH044-302	Detached House	House (detached)	Detached three bay two storey Tudor style house, built c. 1890, with gabled breakfront bay to the north-west. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystacks. Roughcast rendered walls.
MH044-303	Holy Trinity Parochial House	Parochial House	Detached three-bay two storey parochial house, built c. 1869. Hipped slate roof with cresting and red brick chimneystacks. Roughcast rendered walls with red brick string courses.
MH044-304	Holy Trinity Parochial House Outbuildings	Outbuildings	Detached six-bay two storey outbuilding, built c.1870. Hipped slate roof. Squared stone walls. Timber sash with yellow brick dressings and granite sills. Timber battened doors with yellow brick dressings.
MH044-305	Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church	Church (R.C.)	Detached church, commenced c. 1820, remodelled and rebuilt c. 1868 and c. 1874.
MH044-306	Grotto	Grotto	Freestanding Marian grotto, built c. 1955. Comprising of niche with a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary with canopy above, set against mosaic screen wall, set on mosaic platform and steps, bounded by wrought-iron railings.
MH044-307	Ratoath Church of Ireland	Church (C of I)	Detached square-profile three-stage castellated and pinnacled Church of Ireland church tower, built c. 1817, with the ruins of the church walls to the east.
MH044-308	Water pump	Water pump	Cast-iron water pump, c. 1870, with foundry mark, banded shaft, fluted neck, cap and spout, and curved pumping handle.
MH044-309	Ratoath Glebe House	House (detached)	Detached five-bay two-storey over basement former rectory, built c. 1813, with flat-roofed central porch. Multiple-bay two-storey outbuildings to south.
MH044-310	Ratoath Manor	Nursing Home	Detached seven bay two storey former house, built c.1780, with two -bay full height bow to rear elevation. The former seat of J.I. Corballis.



### 5.3 Protected Views and Prospects

There are no protected views or prospects which affect the plan area.

### 5.4 Natural Heritage

Natural heritage is composed of native plants, animals and their habitats, geology, landscape, seascapes and inland waterways. The Broadmeadow River which flows through the town is an important natural heritage asset to Ratoath. The group of preserved trees on the Main Street helps to create a unique setting emphasising the town's rural background.

It is noteworthy that the study lands do not include any areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. There are no Natural Heritage Area(s), Special Area(s) of Conservation, Candidate Special Areas of Conservation(s) or Special Protection Area(s) in the study lands.

### 5.5 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage includes structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, movable objects, monuments of other kinds as well as their contexts where in land or underwater. County Meath has an abundance of archaeological heritage. The origins of Ratoath date from early Christian times. The establishment of a Norman settlement is indicated by the striking presence of the Moat and Bailey in the centre of the town. The enclosures associated with these settlements have given the centre of Ratoath its unique curved road pattern with an intricate network of laneways, many overgrown or derelict, connecting the original enclosures with areas to the north on the Curragha Road and to the south on the Fairyhouse Road.

#### 5.5.1 Recorded Monuments

There are 4 historical site/monuments in the area as identified in the Sites and Monument's Record for County Meath as detailed below:

**Table 11: Recorded Monuments in Ratoath**

Monument Number	National Grid Reference	Classification	Description
ME044-005	30192/25188	Cross Site	Market cross damaged in 1922; in 1932 cross commemorating Eucharistic congress was erected on site, which was removed c.1972.
ME044-006	30222/25202	Church Site	"Holy Trinity Church". Dopping's Visitation Book 1682-5 refers to church. Nineteenth century church remains on site. Late thirteenth or early fourteenth-century effigy and seventeenth-century cross in graveyard.
ME044-00701	30212/25186	Motte and Bailey	Flat-topped earthen mound (diam. of top 20m, diam. of base 62m, H11m) with remains of fosse and rectangular bailey to SE. Fragments of font (1572) outside nearby RC church.
ME044-034	30197/25193	Town/Font	Octagonal font (diam.0.44m, H0.2m) with biconical stem outside RC church and close to motte (1657).

The town core forms part of an area of Archaeological Interest.

### Polices

In terms of heritage, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- HER POL 1** To seek the protection of all structures (or where indicated parts of structures) which are included in the Record of Protected Structures.
- HER POL 2** To safeguard the character and setting of protected structures through the control of design of new development in the vicinity, by the control of the change of use of adjacent land to ensure that there is no material impact and by the preservation of trees and other features where appropriate.
- HER POL 3** To resist the unnecessary alterations of protected structures.
- HER POL 4** To ensure that proposals to extend, alter, refurbish or change the use of a protected structure are sympathetic to its essential character and in accordance with good conservation practice.
- HER POL 5** To encourage the retention of existing natural features in development proposals.
- HER POL 6** To protect from damage archaeological sites and monuments located in the Plan area in consultation with the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- HER POL 7** To secure the preservation of archaeological monuments included in the Record of Monuments as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and of sites, features and objects of archaeological interest generally.
- HER POL 8** To preserve and maintain the existing archaeological monuments within the study area and to safeguard the integrity of their setting.

<b>HER POL 9</b>	To ensure that all developments in the vicinity of archaeological sites and monuments are sympathetic with, and do not detract from, specified sites of archaeological significance.
<b>HER POL 10</b>	To ensure when undertaking or permitting development, that loss or damage to existing trees is minimised.
<b>HER POL 11</b>	To protect, preserve and ensure the effective management of trees and groups of trees, considered to be of special amenity value as indicated on the Zoning Map for Ratoath.

### Objectives

In terms of heritage, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

<b>HER OBJ 1</b>	To ensure that all development proposals affecting sites specified in the Record of Monuments and Places, Zones of Archaeological Potential and Protected Structures are referred to the Prescribed Bodies (as set out in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2013 as amended) and to have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Prescribed Bodies in relation to undertaking, approving or authorising development.
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## CHAPTER 6: SOCIAL STRATEGY



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Educational Facilities
- 6.3 Childcare Facilities
- 6.4 Healthcare Facilities
- 6.5 Recreational, Sport and Leisure Facilities
- 6.6 Open Space
- 6.6.1 Open Space Standards in Residential Areas
- 6.7 Library Facilities
- 6.8 Arts and Culture
- 6.9 Burial Grounds

## 6.1 Introduction

It is accepted that social infrastructure forms an indispensable element of quality development. Meath County Council fully concurs with the Regional Authorities viewpoint on this issue and recognise the vital role that community infrastructure plays in the life of every town. The primary role of the Planning Authorities in terms of social infrastructure is the reservation of sufficient lands to accommodate social, community and recreational facilities. These facilities should be accessible where possible by sustainable modes of transport. The provision of multi-functional open/recreational spaces and community facilities is the approach recommended by the Planning Authorities as facilities in this manner can fulfil the various needs of the different sectors of the population. It is an aim of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 that adequate lands are identified for sports, recreational and leisure uses at appropriate locations in Ratoath. More generally, the social strategy of the County Development Plan supports the provision and even distribution of social infrastructure facilities to meet the needs of the County's population in liaison with other statutory, voluntary and community groups. The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Education and Science published a code of practice for the delivery of schools in the planning system in 2008 entitled 'The Provision of Schools and the Planning System: A Code of Practice For Planning Authorities, the Department of Education and Science and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.' The document sets out best practice approaches that should be followed by planning authorities in ensuring that the planning system plays its full part in facilitating the timely and cost-effective roll-out of school facilities by the Department of Education and Science and in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The contents of this document will influence the Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015.

## 6.2 Educational Facilities

The Meath County Development Board stress the importance of education and training to society in "Le Chéile – An Integrated Strategy for Meath to 2012" where they state "Meath's future success depends on all elements of the educational system from pre-school through to Primary and Second Level to Third Level and continuing education. The upskilling of the County's workforce will be vital to economic success". Meath County Council fully concurs with this statement and will endeavour to facilitate the provision and enhancement of educational facilities in Ratoath. However it should be noted that the physical delivery of educational facilities falls outside the remit of the Planning Authority; it is the responsibility of central government and the Department of Education and Science in particular. 'Meath in Transition: A Review of Le Cheile – An Integrated Strategy for Meath to 2012', incorporating Action Plan 2005-2008' sets out actions in Education, Training and Human Resources.



There are currently 2 primary schools operating in Ratoath, namely Ratoath Junior and Senior Schools and St. Paul's. Ratoath Senior NS is currently operating at full capacity housing 486 pupils in the 2012/2013 academic year. There is availability in St. Paul's with the enrolment figure for the 2012/2013 school year at 626 while the full capacity figure is 720. There is 1 secondary school located in Ratoath – Ratoath College. Their enrolment figure for the 2012/2013 school year was 934 pupils; the full capacity is 850 students. Planning permission was granted to construct a two storey extension to provide 25 new teaching spaces, special needs unit and associated site works in 2013. This will extend the capacity of the school by an additional 458 students and 33 staff members. The Department of Education and Science have advised that an additional primary school site should be reserved in Ratoath to cater for expected growth in student numbers. Lands adjacent to the existing secondary school are identified for this purpose. The Planning Authority will also facilitate the provision of a Secondary Gael Scoil to serve both Ratoath and Ashbourne. This is likely to be provided in Ashbourne where there is a bigger catchment area.

### Policies

In terms of educational facilities, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>SOC POL 1</b> | To ensure the provision of community, educational, cultural, recreational and amenity facilities in tandem with residential, commercial and other development.  |
| <b>SOC POL 2</b> | To co-operate with the Department of Education and Science and School Management Boards in the provision of school places.  |
| <b>SOC POL 3</b> | To implement the Code of Practice for 'The Provision of Schools and the Planning System' prepared by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Department of Education and Science in order to facilitate the timely and cost effective roll-out of school facilities by the Department of Education and Science and in line with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. |

### Objectives

In terms of educational facilities, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>SOC OBJ 1</b> | To zone sufficient lands at appropriate locations to cater for the needs of primary and post primary schools and education facilities in Ratoath.  |
| <b>SOC OBJ 2</b> | To investigate, in co-operation with relevant agencies, the possibility of maximising the shared use of existing educational and community facilities for community and non-school purposes, where possible, to promote sustainable use of such infrastructure and community cohesion. |
| <b>SOC OBJ 3</b> | To facilitate the provision of a site for a Secondary Gael Scoil to accommodate both the Ratoath and Ashbourne areas.  |
| <b>SOC OBJ 4</b> | To facilitate the Department of Education and Science on the provision of a primary school in the residential suburbs of Ratoath by making provision for such a site at Glascarn Lane adjacent to Ratoath College.   |

## 6.3 Childcare Facilities

The provision of childcare facilities in various forms is recognised as a key piece of social infrastructure required to enable people to participate more fully in society, particularly in accessing employment, education and social networks. Childcare facilities also provide valuable

employment opportunities and can act as an important focal point for communities. In addition, and most importantly, early years' childcare and education through formal childcare provision plays a crucial role in the holistic development of the child in terms of early education, socialisation and development of practical life-skills.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published Childcare Facilities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities in June 2001. The Planning Authority is obliged to have regard to these guidelines in the performance of its functions including the development management process.



Childcare facility in Ratoath

### Policies

In terms of childcare facilities, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- SOC POL 4** To encourage and promote the provision of childcare facilities in Ratoath in accordance with national policy and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government document 'Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities.'
- SOC POL 5** To seek to realise the objectives of the "Meath County Childcare Committee Strategic Plan 2007-2010" or any subsequent Strategic Plan as pertinent to Ratoath, to ensure the balanced provision of quality childcare facilities throughout the town.
- SOC POL 6** To consider childcare needs in future framework plans and all residential planning applications.
- SOC POL 7** To permit childcare facilities in existing residential areas provided that they do not have a significant impact on the character or amenities of an area, particularly with regard to car parking, traffic generation and noise disturbance. Where proposed facilities relate to properties which have been designed and built as dwellings and are surrounded by other houses, a significant residential element should be retained.

### Objectives

In terms of childcare facilities, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

- SOC OBJ 5** To encourage the provision of additional full day care childcare places, drop in facilities and work place crèches.

**SOC OBJ 6** To encourage the provision of childcare facilities in tandem with proposals for new residential developments. Generally, one childcare facility with places for 20 children shall be provided for each 75 family dwellings. The Planning Authority will encourage developers of new residential developments to provide purpose built facilities and to consult with the Meath County Childcare Committee on how best to meet the childcare needs of the area.

#### 6.4 Healthcare Facilities

Acute hospital services for Ratoath are currently provided within County Meath at Our Lady's Hospital, Navan. Patients are also referred to specialist services in the various Dublin hospitals. There are a number of private medical and care services operating in the town as well as a nursing home. The Regional Planning Guidelines indicate that a HSE study found Navan to be the most suitable location for a new Regional Hospital.

Having regard to the existing and projected future population and having regard to the limited health services currently available in Ratoath, there is a growing need for new and expanded health care facilities, particularly primary health care services in Ratoath. The HSE have 2.5 acres of lands in their ownership on the Ashbourne Road in Ratoath which can accommodate future health care services. The Planning Authority will co-operate with the HSE and other agencies in facilitating the provision of health care services. It is a stated objective in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 to co-operate with the Health Service Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies in the provision of appropriate health care facilities and to ensure that adequate lands and services are available for the improvement, establishment and expansion of health services.

#### Policies

In terms of healthcare facilities, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**SOC POL 8** To facilitate the provision of health services in suitable locations and in accordance with the zoning matrix. Such health services should provide safe links for pedestrian movement, good access and adequate planning facilities.

**SOC POL 9** To co-operate with the Health Service Executive (North East) and other statutory and voluntary agencies in the provision of adequate health care facilities for all members of the public.

#### Objectives

In terms of healthcare facilities, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**SOC OBJ 7** To encourage the upgrading and expansion of existing health services available in Ratoath to cater for the current and projected population needs.

#### 6.5 Recreational, Sport and Leisure Facilities

Access to recreational facilities is essential to maintain a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a good quality of life. Developing strong, inclusive communities is a key element in achieving sustainable development objectives. Communities require opportunities to meet, interact and form bonds, essential prerequisites to the development of a sense of place and belonging. Ratoath is reasonably well provided for in terms of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, for example the pitch and putt course, athletics grounds, the GAA and soccer grounds.

With regards to indoor facilities, the recently opened community centre is well utilised at all times of the day hosting various events and classes. The Venue Theatre is another asset Ratoath

has to offer. It presents music, dance, puppetry, multimedia, clowning and comedy ranging from amateur to professional. However, taking account of the population growth of the town, further development of recreational facilities will be encouraged.

There is a growing need in Ratoath and residential areas in particular for multi purpose type buildings which can be used by community groups/residential associations etc. This can be accommodated in a multifunctional manner sharing a building with perhaps a childcare facility. The existing Ratoath Community Centre is a prime example of this type of facility.

There are a number of existing children's playgrounds in Ratoath, e.g. in the Steeplechase residential development. As the town continues to develop, there will be a need to provide additional facilities of this nature. It is an objective to promote the development of an additional playground as part of a riverside park along the Broadmeadow River.

Meath Local Authorities have produced a play policy for 2008 – 2012 which provides a comprehensive framework for the development of children's play in the County. The Vision outlined in the Policy is "*to provide quality, accessible, age appropriate and safe play opportunities and to ensure the play needs of every child in Meath are met*". Although Ratoath was not specifically identified as a settlement with a gap in the provision of playgrounds, the continued provision of play facilities will be encouraged, particularly in new residential areas which are geared towards families with children.

The GAA lands, soccer grounds and pitch & putt club all benefit from existing land use zoning objectives. It is considered that current access arrangements to the soccer grounds and pitch and putt club would benefit from improvements and it is therefore proposed to include a specific objective for upgrading of the access. The rugby club is located on lands situated to the north of the town. It is proposed to zone these lands for recreational activity in acknowledgement of their established use. In order to improve accessibility for pedestrians to these lands, it will be an objective of this Plan to provide footpaths and public lighting from these lands to the built up area of Ratoath. In addition, it is an objective to upgrade the entrance to the Rugby Club by re-locating it further to the south of the existing entrance. Additional lands for community facilities have been identified on the Fairyhouse Road, adjoining the existing development boundary for the town.

### Policy

In terms of recreational, sport and leisure facilities, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- SOC POL 10** To support and encourage local sports and community groups in the provision, expansion and development of outdoor and indoor community facilities and where appropriate encourage the input of a third party.
- SOC POL 11** To encourage and support the work of community groups in Ratoath.
- SOC POL 12** To ensure that provision is made for such community facilities as is deemed appropriate in consultation with local interested parties and to assist in the provision of community and resource centres by identification and reservation of suitable sites.
- SOC POL 13** To encourage the development of children's playgrounds in proximity to existing and proposed residential areas.
- SOC POL 14** To encourage and support the provision of additional youth facilities in Ratoath.

### Objective

In terms of recreational, sport and leisure facilities, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

- SOC OBJ 8** To promote the use of existing recreational facilities in Ratoath.
- SOC OBJ 9** To investigate the provision of new recreational facilities and to identify additional lands to facilitate the expansion of existing recreational facilities.
- SOC OBJ 10** To support the provision of public lighting and footpaths between the rugby club grounds on the R155 as far as the built up area of Ratoath.
- SOC OBJ 11** To support the provision of improved access arrangements to Ratoath pitch and putt and soccer grounds.
- SOC OBJ 12** To provide for passive and active recreational spaces in the vicinity of the Broadmeadow River.
- SOC OBJ 13** To develop additional recreational facilities for teenagers and in this regard to explore the provision of a skateboard park and graffiti wall.
- SOC OBJ 14** To reserve lands (4 acres) off the Fairyhouse Road for the provision of a swimming pool as part of FP OBJ 3.

## 6.6 Open Space

The availability of appropriate amounts of high-quality open space is essential for building sustainable communities. Such areas provide active recreational areas as well as contributing to the local environment by accommodating biodiversity and wildlife features. Public open space must be carefully designed as an integral part of the layout including access points which should be addressed at initial design stages. Public open space is ideally provided in the form of a hierarchy of spaces, ranging from town parks to smaller spaces serving residential areas. Ratoath benefits from the presence of the River Broadmeadow which has the potential to act as an attractive amenity feature in the centre of the town. There is an existing walkway alongside part of the river. The objectives of this Local Area Plan will seek to protect this walkway and further enhance its quality.

Private open space acts as recreational and living space for children and pets respectively as well as providing a safe, enclosed area for the resident's personal enjoyment and relaxation.



### 6.6.1 Open Space Standards in Residential Areas

Public open space within residential developments should be designed so as to complement the residential layout and be informally supervised by residents. The spaces should be visually and functionally accessible to the maximum number of dwellings. The landscape design of open spaces, including the retention of existing features such as an important stand of trees, stream or rock outcrop, must be incorporated into the initial design process. Where such features are being retained, they should be situated in open space to ensure their visual setting and protection. The design and layout of the network of public open spaces should take into account, and make provision for, the need for level areas of sufficient size to accommodate informal sports activities for children. Narrow tracts of open space, which are difficult to manage, are not acceptable.

Public open space shall be provided for in residential developments at a minimum rate of 15% of total site area. A variety of types and sizes of open spaces should be provided to cater for the active and passive recreational needs of children and adults of all ages. A minimum of 400 sq. m. of children's play area is required for a development of 40 dwellings or more (based on average occupancy of 2.9 persons per house). No account will be taken of incidental open space such as grass margins, left over areas, nor any area due to its nature (e.g. marshy) or topography (slope) which is deemed unsuitable.

The location, siting and design of the open space will have regard to the following:

- Be well designed and of a high visual standard so that it is functional and accessible to all.
- Provide for the retention of existing natural features.
- Include proposals for drainage and landscaping of the public open space.
- Houses shall not be permitted to back onto open spaces.
- Provide high levels of natural surveillance and overlooking by as many houses as possible.
- Be provided with a boundary fence / wall where such open space is adjacent to a main access road or Local Distributor Road.

The use of hard landscaping elements such as paving, cobbled areas, etc. should play an increasingly important role in the design and presentation of open space concepts. Hard play areas such as all weather surfaces should also be taken into account when designing new proposals.



Playground in Steeplechase

In all residentially zoned lands, no residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.

All houses should have an area of private open space, exclusive of car parking, to the rear of the building line.

The minimum area of private open space to be provided shall be in accordance with Table 12 below. It should be noted that housing developments which provide private open space at the minimum standard throughout the scheme will be discouraged.

**Table 12: Minimum Private Open Space Standards for Houses**

House Type	Minimum Area of Private Open Space to be Provided
One/two bedroom	55 sq.m
Three bedroom	60 sq.m
Four bedrooms or more	75 sq.m

Private open space to apartments should be as per the standards outlined in the document ‘Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments’ (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government).

**Policies**

In terms of open space, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**SOC POL 15** To ensure that high quality open space is provided to serve the active and passive recreational needs of the population of Ratoath.

**SOC POL 16** No residential development shall be permitted on lands that are subject of a deed of dedication or identified in a planning application as open space to ensure the availability of community and recreational facilities for the residents of the area.

**Objectives**

In terms of open space facilities, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**SOC OBJ 15** To investigate the provision of riverside and pedestrian walkways in Ratoath.

**SOC OBJ 16** To promote the development of a playground in the vicinity of the River Broadmeadow.

**SOC OBJ 17** To provide and encourage further improvements along the banks of the River Broadmeadow.

**SOC OBJ 18** To develop a system of linear parks and waterfront amenity areas with walkways and cycleways, subject to the availability of resources, along the banks of the River Broadmeadow.

**6.7 Library Facilities**

The Planning Authority recognise the vital role that library facilities play in enabling people to participate fully in society as well as underpinning cultural and educational activities. The main County Meath Library and headquarters is at Railway Street, Navan. There are eleven other libraries located throughout the county and these offer a wide range of services, however there is currently none in Ratoath. Library services are available in Dunshaughlin and Ashbourne, with the library in Ashbourne having a strong membership base from Ratoath.

The Ashbourne library offers the full range of library services including adult and children's fiction and non fiction books, foreign language books, internet access, exhibition space and meeting rooms which are host to book clubs and are available for community use.

### Policy

In terms of library facilities, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**SOC POL 17** To recognise the important role that the library service plays in the community and to facilitate the library service in enhancing its service delivery to the public, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

## 6.8 Arts and Culture

The role of arts and cultural facilities is very important to the artistic, social and general quality of life of residents, contributing to personal and community development but also to employment and tourism as they attract visitors and investment to the area. Arts and cultural facilities can include community and arts centre, museums, theatres and music venues and often libraries.

The Arts Development Plan for County Meath sets out measures to further formalise support structures and create opportunities for the arts. It aims to increase access to all sectors of the community, encourage and increase awareness and interest in the arts as well as increasing participation.

Ratoath benefits significantly from the presence of the Venue Theatre in the town. The Theatre provides a wide variety of events, including comedy shows, drama, pantomime, and musical concerts. A number of cultural based activities are available in Ratoath and run from the Community Centre, and include the 'Four Forks' drama group and the 'Ratoath Musical Society'.



### Policies

In terms of the arts and culture, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**SOC POL 18** To continue to enhance and support the range and quality of arts provision in Ratoath.

**SOC POL 19** To liaise with the County Arts Officer on any development proposal that is likely to have a significant impact on the arts.

**Objective**

In terms of the arts and culture, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**SOC OBJ 19** To continue to support the Venue Theatre and to encourage the existing level of high maintenance and use of the multi-functional Ratoath Community Centre.

**6.9 Burial Grounds**

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide for burial facilities, although the majority are provided presently by religious bodies. However changes in society have resulted in Local Authorities providing multi-denominational graveyards in their jurisdiction. It is also important from a planning point of view that graveyards are protected for their heritage and cultural merits. There is an existing burial ground in Ratoath which has capacity.

**Policies**

In terms of burial grounds, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**SOC POL 20** To facilitate the provision of new (non-denominational) burial grounds and the extension of existing cemeteries as appropriate to cater for the needs of Ratoath.

**SOC POL 21** To protect the cultural heritage of graveyards and encourage their management and maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.

**SOC POL 22** To encourage local community groups to develop, manage and maintain new burial facilities.



# CHAPTER 7 INFRASTRUCTURE



## SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Transport
  - 7.2.1 Regional Roads
  - 7.2.2 Distributor and Local Roads
  - 7.2.3 New Road Schemes and Proposed Works
  - 7.2.4 Pedestrians and Cyclists
  - 7.2.5 Public Transport
  - 7.2.6 Parking and Loading
- 7.3 Street Furniture and Lighting
- 7.4 Keeping the Streets Clean
- 7.5 Water Supply
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- 7.7 Surface Water Management
- 7.8 Flooding
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## 7.1 Introduction

The suitable provision of a full range of infrastructural services, including transport, water, waste water, telecommunications, waste disposal and energy is critical to support the continuing development of Ratoath and in particular, to make the town an attractive location for economic development. The policies and objectives of this Local Area Plan will seek to facilitate the timely provision of such services to the town.

## 7.2 Transport

The location of Ratoath at the junction of the R155 and R125 regional roads and the increasing use of this road network as an outer orbital route for Dublin City has resulted in significantly increased traffic and particular HGV traffic passing through the centre of the town. In line with trends for increasing car ownership and economic development, it is anticipated that these levels will rise. In addition increasing traffic levels between the R155 and Ashbourne using the Ballybin Road and connecting Ratoath with Ashbourne has recently created a new traffic “desire line”.

The growth in population and especially the increase in the number of vehicles on the roads are resulting in pressure on road infrastructure. The pivotal location of Ratoath within the County and its proximity to Dublin means that improvements to the existing road network are of critical importance to the economic development of Ratoath and the quality of life for its inhabitants.



The Planning Authority recognises that the current trends in transportation are unsustainable, in particular the relentless increase in private car traffic. The Planning Authority is strongly committed to the promotion of sustainable means of travel including public transport, walking and cycling, and the encouragement of modal change from private car use to these means. Through planning for transport development, the Council will ensure that the needs of people with differing abilities are taken into account. The integration of land use and transportation policies underpins the transportation strategy as outlined below.

### 7.2.1 Regional Roads

Ratoath has an advantageous location in respect of the regional and national road network. As previously stated, it is situated at the junction of the R125 and R155 regional roads, which link to Ashbourne and Dunshaughlin and put the town within easy reach of the N2 and N3 National Primary Routes. While in the recent past, these transport links have served to enhance the town as a commuter destination, it is hoped that over the lifetime of the plan, they can be used to enhance the town's attractiveness as a location for economic development.

The traffic patterns outlined in Section 7.2 have resulted in significant volumes of vehicles passing unnecessarily through the town. This can have a negative impact on the attractiveness of the town centre and the degree to which it is pedestrian and cycle friendly. It is an objective of the Planning Authority to put in place mechanisms which will relieve the historic central area of Ratoath from these pressures.

Over the previous plan period, works have been carried out to the Regional Roads around Ratoath. These include realignment and upgrading of the R125 from the town as far as the GAA football pitch to include provision of roundabouts which serve residential areas. A new link roundabout has also been constructed at the junction of the R155 to Ratoath and R154 (to Trim) with the N3.

### **7.2.2 Distributor and Local Roads**

Local roads also pass through Ratoath with distributor roads serving the internal fabric of the town. Over the previous plan period, a number of schemes have been carried out on this network. This includes the provision of roundabouts on the Fairyhouse Road. The Skryne Road, from the town as far as the Steeplechase development, has been upgraded with improvements carried out to the carriageway, public lighting and provision of footpaths and cycleway. The R125 between the Ballybin Road and the town has been realigned and upgraded.

During the last plan period, a link road has been constructed between the Dunshaughlin Road and the Skryne Road. This road helps to alleviate traffic congestion in the town centre. The Planning Authority will be supportive of similar, appropriate schemes given the contribution they can make to reducing traffic flows through the town, creating a more pleasant and attractive town centre.

In addition, during the last plan period, a link road has been constructed between the R125 Ashbourne Road and the R155 Fairyhouse Road. The Ballybin Road roundabout, where this link road connects the R125, has been upgraded and traffic signals have been put in place at the junction of the link road at Meadowbank with the R155.

Works have been carried out to the junction of Glascarn Lane with the R155. The R155 from Glascarn Lane to the town has also been upgraded to include footpaths and lighting however some elements remain to be finalised, including the junction of St. Oliver's Park with the R155. It will be an objective of this Local Area Plan to complete this scheme.

### **7.2.3 New Road Schemes and Proposed Works**

There are a number of objectives in this Local Area Plan to improve the local road network in Ratoath. These include to reserve and protect from development the bypass corridor from the R155 Fairyhouse Road to the R125 Ashbourne Road, with the aim of securing a southern bypass of the town between these roads. It is intended that this road will be developer driven, constructed in tandem with development occurring in the vicinity. There is an extant planning permission which provides for the construction of this roadway to adjoin Glascarn Lane as part of a residential development.

It is also an objective to upgrade the junction between the R155 and R125 in the town to include for carriageway narrowing, provision of dedicated and priority marked turning lanes and integration of pedestrian crossing needs.

As stated in Section 6.5, it is an objective to upgrade the existing access to the Ratoath Harps football club and pitch and putt course on the Skryne Road and to provide public lighting and footpaths between the rugby club grounds on the R155 into the town.

A further objective of this Local Area Plan will seek to provide traffic calming measures along the R125/Main Street to control traffic speed, particularly along curved sections of the road network. In terms of road improvements, it is an objective of the Planning Authority to improve the R125 between the Ballybin Road and the Kilbride Road, including the Kilbride junction and to realign the junction of the R125 and the Inner Relief Road and provide access to the backlands.

The objectives relating to roads are illustrated on the zoning map accompanying this plan.



Roundabout in Ratoath

### Policies

In terms of transport, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- INF POL 1** To support major road improvements by reserving the corridors of any such proposed routes free of development which could interfere with the provision of such proposals.
- INF POL 2** To regulate, control and improve signage throughout the town.
- INF POL 3** To provide for the future transportation needs of Ratoath and environs in a sustainable manner.
- INF POL 4** To integrate land use planning and transportation planning.
- INF POL 5** To construct and complete the local distributor road network and ensure its integration into the urban fabric.
- INF POL 6** To establish a clear road hierarchy, in which each of the road links, has a function and where the mixing of regional and local traffic is reduced to the minimum possible.
- INF POL 7** To provide additional road capacity, subject to environmental and conservation considerations, in order to remove the volume of through traffic from the Main Street and to improve circulation throughout the town.
- INF POL 8** Following the publication of the Traffic Management Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government/Department of Transport/Dublin Transportation Office, it shall be part of the standard requirement for planning applications that Transport Assessments, undertaken by and at the expense of the developer, shall be carried out to assess the impacts of developments in accordance with guidelines given in the "Traffic

Management Guidelines”, Section 1.11. Table 1.4 lists thresholds above which a Transport Assessment is mandatory. The Transport Assessment will be assessed by the Planning Authority and any additional works required as a result of the Transport Assessment shall be funded by the developer.

### Objectives

In terms of transport, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

- INF OBJ 1** To improve the accesses to the Ratoath Harps football club and the pitch and putt course on the Skryne Road. (SOC POL OBJ 11)
- INF OBJ 2** To reserve and protect from development the bypass corridor from the R155 Fairyhouse Road to the R125 Ashbourne Road.
- INF OBJ 3** To proceed with detailed design and construction of the junction between the R155 and R125 roads at Ryan’s shop providing for carriageway narrowing, provision of dedicated and properly marked turning lanes and integration of pedestrian crossing needs.
- INF OBJ 4** To provide traffic calming measures along the R125/Main Street to control traffic speeds particularly along curved sections of the road network.
- INF OBJ 5** To realign and upgrade the entrance to St. Oliver’s Park.
- INF OBJ 6** To improve the R125 between the Ballybin Road and the Kilbride Road, including the Kilbride junction.
- INF OBJ 7** To realign the junction of the R125 and the Inner Relief Road and provide access to the backlands.
- INF OBJ 8** To prepare a traffic management plan for Ratoath taking account of mobility impaired parking, cycling facilities, long stay and general car parking requirements.

### 7.2.4 Pedestrians and Cyclists

The European Charter of Pedestrian Rights states that: “*The pedestrian has the right to live in a healthy environment and to freely enjoy the amenities offered by public areas under conditions that adequately safeguard both physical and psychological well-being.*” In order to achieve sustainability, walking and cycling must be encouraged. The compact nature of the historic core of Ratoath means that improvements to pedestrian facilities in this area to make the town centre a safer and more pleasant place in which to walk would in turn increase the number of people who would rather walk than drive.



Existing pedestrian and cyclist facilities are very limited forcing such people to share road space with other road users. This has the effect of discouraging cycling and walking as modes of transport as it poses an increased road safety hazard to both the pedestrian and the cyclist. It is considered that retro fitting cycle ways into a town with an existing streetscape character such as Ratoath would be problematic due to the narrowness of the older streets however where this is deemed feasible it shall be investigated further. There is also a lack of bicycle parking facilities in Ratoath. The Council shall ensure that cycle parking facilities are provided for in new developments along with cycle lanes in any new access roads.

### Policies

In terms of pedestrians and cyclists, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

<b>INF POL 9</b>	To promote and facilitate the development of cycling and walking facilities in Ratoath.
<b>INF POL 10</b>	To require that all new significant developments provide pedestrian and cycle facilities including secure parking for bicycles.
<b>INF POL 11</b>	To provide cycle ways, where appropriate, as part of all road improvement/redesign schemes.
<b>INF POL 12</b>	To prioritise the movement of pedestrian and cyclists in proximity to public transport nodes.
<b>INF POL 13</b>	To promote an attractive public realm of pedestrian footpaths/cycleways, street furniture and quality public lighting.

### Objectives

In terms of pedestrians and cyclists, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

<b>INF OBJ 9</b>	To ensure the development of cycling and walking facilities at strategically located points throughout the town.
<b>INF OBJ 10</b>	To provide public lighting and footpaths between the rugby club grounds on the R155 as far as the built up area of Ratoath (SOC OBJ 10).

### 7.2.5 Public Transport

The main type of public transport operating to and from Ratoath is Bus Éireann services to Ashbourne–Ratoath–Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, operating mostly every two hours. A more frequent service operates to and from Ratoath into Dublin city at very regular intervals. There is also a Dublin-Dunshaughlin-Navan Nightrider in operation, also at regular times. The 109A from Kells to Dublin Airport / DCU also serves Ratoath.

The Planning Authority acknowledges that there will be an increased demand for external bus trips during the lifetime of this Local Area Plan, primarily to Dublin. The provision of park and ride facilities will also be encouraged at exact locations on the outskirts of the town. Additional parking will also be investigated in close proximity to bus stops to ensure that these services are used to their full capacity.

Ratoath is not served by an operational rail link. However consideration should be given to increased bus provision to the nearest station, M3 Parkway, and provision should be made for additional park and ride facilities which will encourage increased use of rail services by commuters to Dublin. In this regard, the Planning Authority has identified sites at the GAA grounds on the R125 and on the Fairyhouse Road for park and ride facilities.

## Policies

In terms of public transport, it is the policy of Meath County Council

**INF POL 14** To co-operate with relevant transport bodies and authorities to support and encourage the provision of safe and suitable locations for bus services including bus shelter provision at bus stops.

## Objectives

In terms of public transport, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**INF OBJ 11** To promote the provision of a Park and Ride facility and long stay car parking in Ratoath on the identified E2 'General Enterprise & Employment' zoned lands on the Fairyhouse Road and at the site of the GAA grounds on the R125.

**INF OBJ 12** To liaise with Bus Éireann and individual landowners to establish a bus bay and shelter/passenger information point on the Main Street, on the Fairyhouse Road and on the Ashbourne Road.

**INF OBJ 13** To liaise with Bus Éireann and/or private bus operators to seek the provision of a bus service from Ratoath to the M3 Parkway rail station.

**INF OBJ 14** To support and encourage the provision of safe and suitable locations for bus and taxi services.

### 7.2.6 Parking and Loading

Parking facilities in Ratoath have become a serious problem in recent times. It is the intention of Meath County Council to adopt a strict parking and loading policy for all new developments in Ratoath, the former being in accordance with current standards in the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. Due to the lack of existing surface space within the town centre, the option of underground car parking will be investigated during the life time of this plan. Additional car parking spaces adjoining bus stops will also be sought as well as the option of park and ride facilities as mentioned previously. There is currently no park and ride facility serving the town. The provision of a park and ride facility will be encouraged in the town. A specific objective in this regard is included in the public transport section above.

## Policies

In terms of parking and loading, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**INF POL 15** To apply the car parking standards as included in the Development Management Guidelines and Standards section of Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.

**INF POL 16** To promote where feasible and appropriate alternative options to surface car parking.

**INF POL 17** To facilitate the needs of mobility impaired persons through the provision of adequate suitable parking.

### Objectives

In terms of parking and loading, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- INF OBJ 15** To promote, where feasible and appropriate, alternative options to surface car parking.
- INF OBJ 16** To promote the development of a public car park to the rear of the Catholic Church and to upgrade pedestrian lanes and integration of pedestrian lanes between this and the central part of Ratoath to provide pedestrian access.

### 7.3 Street Furniture and Lighting

Street furniture can include refuse bins, seats, signage posts, bollards, flower pots and telephone booths. Both existing and new furniture and lighting should complement the character and form of the streetscape, by means of an appropriate design style. Achieving this can enhance and add to the town's tourism potential and the urban environment in general.

### 7.4 Keeping the Streets Clean

The Planning Authority believes that litter greatly reduces the appeal of a town and discourages people from making return trips. If necessary, private enterprises shall place public litter bins outside their premises and any such litter bins shall be in keeping with the character of the area by means of appropriate design and styling to be agreed with the Planning Authority.

### Policies

In terms of litter control, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- INF POL 18** To encourage the people of Ratoath to enjoy a litter free environment through a partnership approach for the benefit of all who live, work and visit Ratoath.
- INF POL 19** To require the provision of public litter bins where there is a risk in the opinion of the Planning Authority that a development would result in increased levels of litter on the public road or street.

### Objective

In terms of litter control, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

- INF OBJ 17** To implement the current Meath County Council, Litter Management Plan 2006-2009 and subsequent replacement Litter Management Plans.

### 7.5 Water Supply

Ratoath is currently served by the East Meath Regional Water Supply Scheme (RWSS). The River Boyne at Roughgrange is the main source for the East Meath RWSS. The water is then treated at Staleen waterworks and is distributed to the Ratoath area via Windmill Hill reservoir. The scheme is augmented from a groundwater source at Curragha and more recently Rath. The commissioning of the Dunshaughlin water treatment plant in April 2012 has reduced the demand on the East Meath Regional Water Supply by c. 500cu.m/day hence freeing up capacity to help supply Ashbourne and Ratoath. Notwithstanding the foregoing and progress made in relation to water conservation measures, there is limited capacity available in the scheme and ensuring security of supply to Ratoath is an ongoing challenge.

Irish Water, the new public utility, has been established and is now responsible for the provision of public water supply, delivered through service level agreements with Local Authorities future capital investment in water services will be overseen by Irish Water.

Notwithstanding these changes, the Local Authority considers that there will be sufficient water supply to cater for any future growth in residential and commercial activities within the plan period.

### Policies

In terms of water supply, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>INF POL 20</b> | To continue in conjunction with Irish Water the development and upgrading of the water supply system so as to ensure that an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of piped water of suitable quality is available for the sustainable development of the town in accordance with the sustainable structure identified in this Plan. The Planning Authority, in collaboration with Irish Water, shall ensure that development is linked to the availability of an adequate and appropriate drinking supply. |
| <b>INF POL 21</b> | To promote in conjunction with Irish Water public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, businesses and industries.  |
| <b>INF POL 22</b> | To implement in conjunction with Irish Water the Water Conservation Programme, in order to conserve valuable resources by reducing wastage.   |
| <b>INF POL 23</b> | To utilise the existing water supply in an efficient and fair manner and in the best interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.  |
| <b>INF POL 24</b> | To ensure that all drinking water complies with the European Union Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC as given effect in Irish law by the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007, as may be amended.   |

### Objective

In terms of water supply, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>INF OBJ 18</b> | To facilitate the implementation of Irish Water's current and subsequent Capital Investment Plans. |
|-------------------|--|

## 7.6 Sewerage Treatment and Disposal

Construction of the Ashbourne/Ratoath/Kilbride Sewerage Scheme - Stage 2 is complete and has approximately 8,000 p.e. capacity available to serve the combined settlements. The objective of the scheme is to improve the overall wastewater collection and transfer facilities for Ashbourne, Ratoath, Kilbride and environs with due regard to the future physical development strategy for the area. The Scheme has been designed to provide a modern, efficient and effective wastewater collection and transfer system for the immediate and long-term requirements of the development areas of Ashbourne, Ratoath and Kilbride.

Wastewater from Ashbourne/Ratoath/Kilbride is currently discharged to the Greater Dublin Drainage (GDD) network's '9C' sewer at Mulhuddart and from there flows to the wastewater treatment plant at Ringsend. However, the '9C' sewer conveying the wastewater from Mulhuddart to Ringsend is currently nearing capacity and the Ringsend Waste Water Treatment Plant is operating above capacity. The duplication of the '9C' sewer is included in

Irish Water's current Capital Investment Plan and an extension of the Ringsend Waste Water Treatment Plant has already commenced.

In addition to the new trunk sewers, the elimination of surface water and infiltration from the foul sewer network is an essential element of the new scheme. The elimination of surcharges and overflows from the sewer networks will assist in improving the water quality in the Broadmeadow River thereby enhancing the amenity value of the river as it flows through Ratoath and Ashbourne. The elimination of the surface water and the control of the storm water flow provide additional capacity in the existing foul sewer network to cater for further development in the region while the absence of surface water from the foul sewer system will lead to more efficient and more economical operation of the pumping stations on the scheme. The reduction in the hydraulic load will greatly reduce the ultimate treatment costs.

### Policies

In terms of sewage treatment and disposal, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**INF POL 25** To continue the development and upgrading of the waste water system servicing Ratoath in conjunction with Irish Water to ensure that an adequate treatment capacity is available for the sustainable development of Ratoath as finances permit. The Planning Authority, in collaboration with Irish Water, shall ensure that development is linked to the availability of adequate and appropriate waste water treatment.

**INF POL 26** To ensure that all new developments have and are provided with separate foul and surface satisfactory drainage systems in the interest of public health and to avoid the pollution of ground and surface waters.

### Objective

In terms of sewage treatment and disposal, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**INF OBJ 19** To seek the provision of screening of the existing sewerage treatment plant by Irish Water through landscaping proposals.

## 7.7 Surface Water Management

Rainfall on a greenfield site is either absorbed into the ground or runs off slowly to the nearest watercourse. With development, much of the area becomes impermeable with runoff being piped to the nearest watercourse or storm drain. Thus both the volume and the rate of runoff can dramatically increase, which may lead to flooding or increased overflows from combined sewers, neither of which is acceptable. It is the policy of the Council to prevent flooding caused by poorly drained runoff. In order to do this, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be incorporated into developments in order to reduce and ultimately prevent flooding. SuDS are effective technologies which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity. It is proposed to continue this policy of requiring SuDS proposals to accompany all large-scale developments in Ratoath.

### Policy

In terms of surface water management, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**INF POL 27** To ensure that all new developments have and are provided with satisfactory drainage systems in the interest of public health and to avoid the pollution of ground and surface waters.

## Objectives

In terms of surface water management, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**INF OBJ 20** To require all large scale developments to provide “Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems” (SuDS). in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works for new developments (including extensions). Regard should also be had to Section 3.12 of the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Volume 6 which sets out the requirements for new developments to allow for Climate Change.

## 7.8 Flooding

The First Schedule of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 - 2014 indicates that development plans can include objectives regulating, restricting or controlling development in areas at risk of flooding (whether inland or coastal), erosion and other natural hazards. The OPW is charged at a national/central government level to monitor and address situations pertaining to flooding.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has produced guidelines on “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, 2009.” The Guidelines set out a sequential approach to managing flood hazard and potential risk. The key principles of this are:

1. Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding;
2. If this is not possible, consider substituting a land use that is less vulnerable to flooding.
3. Only when both avoidance and substitution cannot take place should consideration be given to mitigation and management of risks.

The Guidelines state that inappropriate types of development that would create unacceptable risks from flooding should not be planned for or permitted. Exceptions to the restriction of development due to potential flood risks are provided for through the use of a Justification Test, where the planning need and the sustainable management of flood risk to an acceptable level can be demonstrated.

It is the intention of Meath County Council to adhere to the principles outlined in these.

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment & Management Plan undertaken as part of Variation No. 2 of the County Development Plan indicated that the majority of lands identified for development in Ratoath were not at risk of flooding. Exceptions to this related to lands primarily in the vicinity of Moulden Bridge arising from fluvial flooding from the Broadmeadow River. The affected undeveloped lands were rezoned as part of the variation to the County Development Plan to ensure that water compatible development only was allowable of such affected lands. Where existing development is identified through the flood risk mapping of being at risk of flooding, these areas have been identified on the land use zoning objectives map (affects G1 ‘Community Infrastructure’ land use zoning objectives south of the R125 and existing residential developments to the west of the town (Somerville)). Defences in the Somerville Estate provide protection only up to the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (Flood Zone A) but remain identified within Flood Zone B. All land use zoning objectives have had regard to the findings of the Flood Risk Assessment and have been amended accordingly.

Applications for further development within lands identified with A1 ‘Existing Residential’, B1 ‘Town Centre’ and G1 ‘Community Infrastructure’ land use zoning objective and identified within an interface with Flood risk Zones A & B should be managed in line with the policies (WS POL 29 to 36 inclusive) of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.

In addition, within areas of existing development, proposals for extensions and minor works should also be considered under Section 5.28 of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines.

Significant lands to the south of Ratoath (in the vicinity of Fairyhouse Racecourse and Tattersalls) are zoned for D1 'Tourism' and incorporate equine uses. A small watercourse passes alongside the northern boundary of this area and does not significantly impact upon the zoned land. Flood risk should be managed by the application of the sequential approach and appropriately detailed Flood Risk Assessment at development management stage, as required.

The FEM FRAMS highlighted possible risk from conveyance/blockage from the R125 Bridge and a culvert on the tributary of the Broadmeadow River. Any Flood Risk Assessments undertaken in this area at development management stage should include consideration of the residual flood risk related to blockage.

Reference should also be made to volume V of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 for applicable policies and objectives relating to flood risk management in the LAP area.

### Policies

In terms of flooding, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- INF POL 28** To require that new development should not itself be subject to an inappropriate risk of flooding nor should it cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations.
- INF POL 29** To control development in the natural flood plain of rivers and to take account of any guidelines regarding flooding issued by the DoECLG or OPW in the assessment of planning applications. In particular, to implement the requirements of '*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' (DoECLG/OPW, 2009), or their replacement, in the carrying out of development management functions and in the preparation of any Framework Plans required during the period of this Plan.
- INF POL 30** To manage flood risk and development in Ratoath in line with policies WS 29 – WS 36 inclusive in Volume I of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.
- INF POL 31** Where existing development in the development envelop is at potential risk of flooding (A1 "*Existing Residential*", B1 "*Town Centre*" & G1 "*Community Infrastructure*" land use zoning objectives refer) as identified on the land use zoning objectives map, any significant extensions/change of use/reconstruction shall be subject to an appropriately detailed Flood Risk Assessment in line with the policies (WS POL 29 - 36) contained in Volume I of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019.
- INF POL 32** Any future planning applications lodged with respect to the area to the east of Ratoath (Framework Plan 1) bordering the River Broadmeadow shall be accompanied by an appropriately detailed Flood Risk Assessment. The Flood Risk Assessment shall clearly assess flood risks, management measures and demonstrate compliance with "*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities*" (November 2009). The Flood Risk Assessment shall consider the Sequential Approach within the subject site and would typically involve allocating water compatible development within Flood Zones A and Zone B. Buildings should be sited at an appropriate finished floor level, which should be above the 1 in 100 year flood level, with an

allowance for freeboard and climate change. Any Flood Risk Assessments carried out shall include for consideration of the residual flood risk related to blockage from Moulden Bridge.

**INF POL 33** Development located in areas with the benefit of existing flood defences as identified on the land use zoning objectives map shall be limited to extensions, change of use and reconstructions.

**INF POL 34** Any amenity walkways proposed along the Broadmeadow River shall be subject to the undertaking of an appropriately detailed Flood Risk Assessment which will inform the necessary planning consent and which should not generally increase existing ground levels within these flood risk zones.

#### Objective

In terms of flooding, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**INF OBJ 21** To require all significant developments impacting on flood risk areas to provide a Flood Impact Assessment, to identify potential loss of flood plain storage and how it would be offset in order to minimize impact on the river flood regime and to show that the development would not give rise to flooding on the application site or any surrounding lands.

**INF OBJ 22** To seek to implement the recommendations of the Fingal East Meath Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (FEMFRAMS) as applicable to the River Broadmeadow to include, inter alia, that the existing culverts of the river and associated tributary through Ratoath, and in particular at Moulden Bridge, are maintained and kept clear of obstructions at all times.

### 7.9 Telecommunications

Satellite dishes and telecommunications apparatus, if badly sited, can be visually obtrusive and affect the character and appearance of historic buildings and townscapes. Therefore, it is important in the interest of townscape to ensure that future telecommunications and related development does not have a detrimental impact on the appearance or character of the town. The erection of domestic antennae and satellite dishes is restricted by the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001-2013. However, exemptions exist under certain circumstances.

#### Objective

In terms of telecommunications structures, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**INF OBJ 23** To have regard to the following in considering proposals for the development of telecommunications masts, antennae and ancillary equipment:

- (a) The visual impact of the proposed equipment on the natural, built and historic environment.
- (b) The removal or modification of features of architectural / archaeological importance.
- (c) The impact any such development may have on protected structures or their setting.
- (d) The potential for co-location of equipment on existing masts.
- (e) The Department of the Environment and Local Government "Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (July 1996) and Circular Letter PL07/12 issued on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

### 7.10 Broadband

High speed broadband is an important asset in order to attract inward investment into Ireland. As the private sector was failing to invest at the level necessary to keep pace with the

demand for broadband, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources regional broadband programme was put in place. One element of the programme is addressing the telecommunications infrastructure deficit by building high speed, open space broadband networks, in association with the local and regional authorities, in major towns and cities.

The success of the first phase of the Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) programme has led to a second phase of projects, for broadband provision in over 90 towns with a population in excess of 1,500 people. Ratoath is one such town. MANs have been completed in 94 towns to date.

It is the intention of the Planning Authority to encourage the roll out of broadband services in the County and in this regard, it shall be an objective that all planning applications for significant new development shall provide for the delivery of broadband infrastructure in line with each phase of development.

### Policy

In terms of broadband, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**INF POL 35** To implement the broadband strategy for Meath County Council as it relates to Ratoath by supporting the roll out of broadband infrastructure in Ratoath to serve the needs of business and residents.

### Objective

In terms of broadband, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

**INF OBJ 24** To require that all planning applications for significant new development provide for the delivery of broadband infrastructure in tandem with each phase of development.

## 7.11 Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Development will generate demand for domestic and commercial waste disposal and collection services. The construction phases of developments will also produce significant volumes of waste. Developers are obliged to submit a construction and waste management plan prior to the commencement of any proposed construction activities. All waste material generated during both the construction and operational phases of development must only be collected by appropriately licensed waste contractors and disposed of in licensed waste facilities.

Meath County Council recognises the importance of providing bring bank and civic amenity sites at accessible locations. In particular, there is a recognised need for such facilities in the Ashbourne / Ratoath / Dunshaughlin area. It is a policy of this Local Area Plan to support the provision of facilities to address this need.

### Policies

In terms of waste management, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

**INF POL 36** To promote education and awareness on all issues associated with waste management, both at industry and community level. This will include the promotion of waste reduction by encouraging the minimization, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste within the country.

**INF POL 37** To implement the policies and objectives of the Waste Management Plan for the North East Region.

<b>INF POL 38</b>	To require the provision of bring banks, bottle banks or other appropriate recycling facilities as part of the overall development in the case of new and extended shopping centre developments and commercial neighbourhood centres, educational, sports, and recreational facilities. The sites shall be made available to the Local Authority at the developer's own expense and will be maintained by the local authority or its agents.
<b>INF POL 39</b>	To promote and encourage the recycling of construction and demolition waste in accordance with approved construction and demolition waste management plan.
<b>INF POL 40</b>	To support the provision of a civic amenity site to serve Ratoath.

### Objectives

In terms of waste management, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

<b>INF OBJ 25</b>	To reserve lands (1 acre) off the Ashbourne Road for the development of a civic amenity site as part of FP 2.
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### 7.12 Energy

The Planning Authority support national and international initiatives for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases and encouraging the development of renewable energy sources. New technologies have enabled the development of sustainable energy sources. These include wind, biomass and waste, solar, hydro, combined heat and power, geothermal heat transfer, etc.

The Planning and Development Regulations 2007 and 2008 exempted a range of micro renewable technologies from the need to apply for planning permission. On top of this the Council will seek to promote all appropriate technologies through the development management process. Developments should strive to attain high standards of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, including bioclimatic site design, water conservation, ventilation, energy efficient strategies for housing design, daylight analysis and high insulation standards.

### Policies

In terms of energy, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

<b>INF POL 41</b>	To promote energy efficient solutions to fulfil the energy requirements of development. In deciding applications of medium to large scale residential, commercial and industrial development the Councils will require that all benign energy technologies are explored towards the achievement of increased sustainable energy use.
<b>INF POL 42</b>	To support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity supplies and associated networks to serve the existing and projected residential, commercial, industrial and social needs for Ratoath.
<b>INF POL 43</b>	To locate service cables, wires and piping, including electricity, telephone and television underground, where possible, and that existing overhead cables and associated equipment should be progressively be located underground with future capacity considered and appropriate ducting put in place.



## CHAPTER 8 IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Phasing
- 8.3 Contributions
- 8.4 Monitoring and Review

## **8.1 Introduction**

The function of this Local Area Plan is to guide development in Ratoath over the next six years. The Council have a key role in ensuring that policies and objectives contained in the Local Area Plan are achieved. However the achievement of these is dependent on the financial and human resources of the Council and in many circumstances is also reliant on co-operation and provision of services and facilities from other state bodies and the private sector. While Meath County Council will make every effort in facilitating the provision of social, community and transport infrastructure and facilities, it is not in all instances the direct provider of such services. Meath County Council will require developers to incorporate the objectives of this plan, including those relating to the provision of physical and social infrastructure, into their individual development proposals. Other objectives, particular key physical infrastructural elements will require government funding and support.

It is the nature of Local Area Plans that no budget is agreed in advance and therefore no funding of projects or implementation of all objectives contained within the plan is guaranteed in advance. However, the Local Authority intends to exercise all their legal powers to ensure that objectives are implemented. This includes using compulsory acquisition powers where necessary to facilitate site assembly or to secure the realisation of objectives contained in this Local Area Plan.

## **8.2 Phasing**

It is an objective of the Planning Authority to promote the implementation of the Local Area Plan in a rational and sequential approach that is in keeping with the proposed development strategy, and to ensure that essential facilities (such as water, road infrastructure, sewerage etc) are secured and in place concurrent with proposed development projects. The Local Authority reserves the right to refuse development on the grounds of inadequate infrastructure provision.

## **8.3 Contributions**

It is considered reasonable that contributions be paid towards Local Authority investment in the provision of infrastructure and services, by developers who benefit from such provision. A development contributions scheme for the County has been prepared and adopted by Meath County Council and will be applied in respect of applications for development in this area.

## **8.4 Monitoring and Review**

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

**APPENDIX 1**

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND  
APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING  
DOCUMENTS**

# **Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015**

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

### **Screening Report**

**Prepared by  
The Forward Planning Dept.,  
Meath County Council**

**August 2008**



**comhairle chontae na mí**  
*meath county council*



## **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

### **Report pursuant to article 14 a of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Meath County Council proposes to prepare a Local Area Plan for the village of Ratoath, Co. Meath. As such consideration has been given to the likely environmental effects of implementing the Local Area Plan, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2004.

Section 3.4 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines states that screening (i.e. the process for deciding whether a particular plan other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental affects, and would thus warrant SEA) is required in the case of Local Area Plans where the population is less than 10,000 persons. As the population of Ratoath is below 10,000 persons, the purpose of this report is to determine if the Ratoath Local Area Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment i.e. screen the LAP. In preparing this report reference was made to the Guidelines for the Implementation of SEA Directive as prepared by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government (2004) and in particular Schedule 2A of SI 436 of 2004.

#### **2.0 Policy Context**

The Ratoath Local Area Plan was designated in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, Policy SS OBJ 1 refers. The existing written statement and detailed objectives for towns and villages inclusive of the accompanying book of maps contained in the 2001-2007 County Development Plan shall remain in force until individual Local Area Plans have been prepared and adopted for each designated settlement.

#### **3.0 Location and Physical Context**

Ratoath is situated in the south eastern corner of the county acting as a mid point between Dunshaughlin and Ashbourne, within the South Meath Fringe Corridor. Ratoath forms part of the Ashbourne, Dunshaughlin Ratoath Cluster. The village comprises of a compact linear town centre surrounded by growing residential estates. The scale of the built environment is generally low, predominantly two storey structures dominated by the older building such as the Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church and the Grotto. Recent development in the village have resulted in the introduction of modern architectural urban elements into the built environment, which complement the existing charm and character of what already exists.

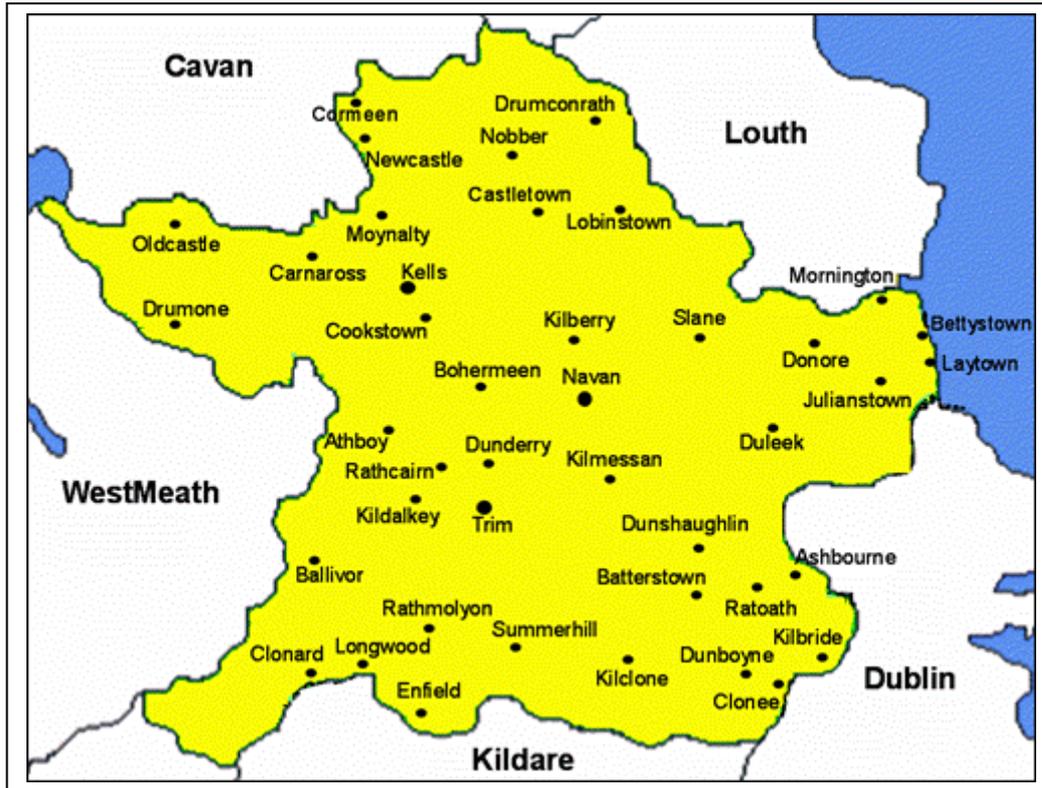


Figure 1: Map indicating the location of Ratoath in Co. Meath

(Source: [www.goingout.ie/meath/meath.htm](http://www.goingout.ie/meath/meath.htm))

As per the 2006 CSO Census the population of Ratoath in 2006 was recorded at 7,249 persons. An Post Geodirectory data indicates that the current population of Ratoath is 8,207 persons.

#### **4.0 Criteria for determining the likely significant environmental impacts (Schedule 2 (A) of SEA Regulations 2004).**

Annex II of the SEA Directive sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance environmental effects. The proposed LAP must be assessed against the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. The most relevant considerations are 1) Characteristics of the Proposed LAP and 2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed LAP.

#### **4.1 Characteristics of the Proposed LAP.**

The proposed LAP is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 2.1.9 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, Policy SS OBJ 1 refers and Variation no. 2. The lands the subject of this LAP are identified for development by way of their development boundary in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. (Please refer to attached zoning map). The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 adheres to the principles of sustainable development, in accordance with the requirements of Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2006. The Local Area Plan will be consistent with the principles, objectives and policies of the Meath County Development Plan and associated Environmental Report and therefore will have a strong emphasis on promoting the sustainable development of the area.

Variation no. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 relates to an Order of Priority which was adopted for the release of existing residentially zoned lands (i.e. phasing) that shall conform to the scale and quantum of development indicated in Table 5 and Table 6. (Please refer to attached Order of Priority Map) The number of units indicated to meet household targets in Ratoath is 61 (discounting planning permission was granted for 282 residential units to Sherwood Builders (Planning ref. no. DA 70037) on zoned lands located in Jamestown). The release of any further lands in Ratoath will be reliant on the availability of water and waste water infrastructure.

The existing effluent loading from Ratoath is 5,700 P.E. and treatment is at capacity. Similarly, there is no spare water supply capacity. Therefore, having regard to this and the criteria for release of lands and remaining zoned lands available for development, the priority in Ratoath over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan is town centre consolidation. Remaining lands will be developed post 2013 on a phased basis.

#### 4.1.1 Environmental considerations relevant to the Plan Area

There is a no. of features of the built and natural environment which are subject to heritage and environmental designations in the study area as outlined below.

##### 4.1.1.1 Conservation and Heritage

###### Protected structures

There are 10 no. structures in Ratoath which are registered as protected structures in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 as detailed below:

	<b>STRUCTURE</b>	<b>STREET/ TOWNLAND</b>	<b>BUILDING TYPE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
MH044-300	Detached House	Ratoath	House (detached)	Detached five-bay single-storey house, built c. 1800, with gabled central porch. Hipped corrugated fibre cement roof with a red brick chimneystack. Roughcast rendered walls, rendered to porch. Timber sash windows.
MH044-301	Park House	Ratoath	House	Detached three-bay two storey house, built c. 1900, with flat-roofed central porch. Hipped slate roof with red brick chimneystacks. Modern extension to rear. Red brick outbuildings to rear.
MH044-302	Detached House	Ratoath	House (detached)	Detached three bay two storey Tudor style house, built c. 1890, with gabled breakfront bay to the north-west. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystacks. Roughcast rendered walls.
MH044-303	Holy Trinity Parochial House	Ratoath	Parochial House	Detached three-bay two storey parochial house, built c. 1869. Hipped slate roof with cresting and red brick chimneystacks.

				Roughcast rendered walls with red brick string courses.
MH044-304	Holy Trinity Parochial House Outbuildings	Ratoath	Outbuildings	Detached six-bay two storey outbuilding, built c.1870. Hipped slate roof. Squared stone walls. Timber sash with yellow brick dressings and granite sills. Timber battened doors with yellow brick dressings.
MH044-305	Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church	Ratoath	Church (R.C.)	Detached church, commenced c. 1820, remodelled and rebuilt c. 1868 and c. 1874.
MH044-306	Grotto	Ratoath	Grotto	Freestanding Marian grotto, built c. 1955. Comprising of niche with a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary with canopy above, set against mosaic screen wall, set on mosaic platform and steps, bounded by wrought-iron railings.
MH044-307	Ratoath Church of Ireland	Ratoath	Church (C of I)	Detached square-profile three-stage castellated and pinnaced Church of Ireland church tower, built c. 1817, with the ruins of the church walls to the east.
MH044-308	Water pump	Ratoath	Water pump	Cast-iron water pump, c. 1870, with foundry mark, banded shaft, fluted neck, cap and spout, and curved pumping handle.
MH044-309	Ratoath Glebe House	Ratoath	House (detached)	Detached five-bay two-storey over basement former rectory, built c. 1813, with flat-roofed central porch. Multiple-bay two-storey outbuildings to south.
MH044-310	Ratoath Manor	Ratoath	Nursing Home	Detached seven bay two storey former house, built c.1780, with two –bay full height bow to rear elevation. The former seat of J.I. Corballis.

Architectural Conservation Area

There is no Architectural Conservation Area designated in Ratoath.

Protected Views and Prospects:

There are no protected views or prospects which affect the subject lands.

National Monuments:

There is 4 no. of historical site/monuments in the area as identified in the Sites and Monument's Record for County Meath as detailed below:

Monument Number	National Grid Reference	Classification	Description
ME044-005	30192/25188	Cross Site	Market cross damaged in 1922; in 1932 cross commemorating Eucharistic congress was erected on site, which was removed c.1972.
ME044-006	30222/25202	Church Site	“Holy Trinity Church”. Dopping’s Visitation Book 1682-5 refers to church. Nineteenth century church remains on site. Late thirteenth it early fourteenth-century effigy and seventeenth-century cross in graveyard.
ME044-00701	30212/25186	Motte and Bailey	Flat-topped earthen mound (diam. of top 20m, diam. of base 62m, H11m) with remains of fosse and rectangular bailey to SE. Fragments of font (1572) outside nearby RC church.
ME044-034	30197/25193	Town/Font	Octagonal font (diam.0.44m, H0.2m) with biconical stem outside RC church and close to motte (1657).

The village core forms part of an area of Archaeological Interest.

#### NHA’s, SACs, SPAs

It is noteworthy that the study lands do not include any areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. There are no Natural Heritage Area(s), Special Area(s) of Conservation, Candidate Special Areas of Conservation(s) or Special Protection Area(s) in the study lands.

## **4.2 Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed LAP**

### 4.2.1 The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected.

#### a) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage

As noted above the plan area contains cultural heritage, in the form of Recorded Monuments and Protected Structures. Detailed policies and objectives are prescribed in the County Development Plan 2007 which relate to the protection of the built and natural heritage. These objectives will be fully adhered to in the LAP.

With respect to the Recorded Monuments, detailed archaeological investigation will be required at application stage to determine the extent of resource areas and associated buffer zones and ensure their preservation.

With respect to the 10 no. protected structures, the LAP will ensure that the character and settings of these structures are retained, respected and protected. Meath County Council’s Conservation Officer will be consulted with respect to any developments which would have the potential to affect the protected structures.

#### b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit value:

It is anticipated that environmental quality standards will not be exceeded and that the value of the area will not be limited as a result of the LAP implementation.

#### c) intensive land use

The LAP Plan will ensure that the redevelopment and development of this area is undertaken with due cognisance to its surrounding environment and that any

development and intensification will sustain and improve on existing amenity. The plan will improve public realm through encouraging the redevelopment of the brown field sites to provide a mix of uses and create vitality.

#### 4.2.2 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.

It is considered that there will be no significant negative effects on the implementation of LAP. However, with regard to positive effects, it is considered that the probability of these occurring is high. It is expected that the effects will be permanent and therefore irreversible, until such time that any new policies and/ or objectives are identified in a revised LAP.

#### 4.2.3 The Cumulative nature of the effects

No notable cumulative negative effects are anticipated given that the LAP will focus on the principles of sustainable development. It is anticipated that the cumulative effects on the environment will be positive and that with every development and redevelopment, the area will be rejuvenated with an improved physical and visual environment.

#### 4.2.4 The Transboundary nature of the effects

It is not anticipated that the Plan will have any national, regional or inter-county transboundary effects.

#### 4.2.5 The risk to human health and the environment

The implementation of the Local Area Plan is not likely to result in any risks to human health with the inclusion of appropriate health and safety measures being introduced. Any future development in the area will conform to the LAP, of which the fundamental essence is to create a healthy environment for people to live, work and recreate.

#### 4.2.6 The magnitude and special extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be effected).

The Plan area comprises of approximately 283.5 ha. A population of 7,249 persons were recorded in the 2006 Census. As per the geo-directory, there is currently a population of 8207 persons residing in the village. Having regard to table 6 and Variation no. 2 (outlined above) of the Meath County Development Plan, it is not expected that the resident population of the Plan area will increase significantly relative to its existing population over the lifetime of the LAP.

#### 4.2.7 Effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, Community or International protection status

As noted above, there are no landscape features within the Plan boundary which have a recognised European and international protection status.

### **5.0 Conclusion**

On consideration of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations, it is considered that the proposed LAP will not result in any substantial further impacts on the environment, beyond what was envisaged within the context of the Meath Development Plan 2007-2013. The Planning Authority is satisfied that the LAP will ensure that the lands will be developed in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner fully consistent with the policy and objectives prescribed in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. In view of this, it is considered that a strategic environmental assessment is not required in respect of the proposed Local Area Plan. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of issues which will be considered during the

preparation of the Local Area Plan and where appropriate, included in the objectives/policies of the LAP. These are outlined in the attached Appendix.

**6.0 Recommendation**

It is not considered necessary to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the proposed Ratoath Local Area Plan.

## **APPENDIX 1**

Some of the issues to be considered in the preparation of the Ratoath Local Area Plan include the following:

- Drinking Water
- Water Treatment Infrastructure
- Water Quality
- Bathing Water
- Flooding
- Biodiversity and Designated Sites
- Climate Change
- Soil and Contamination
- Energy/Energy Conservation
- Traffic Management
- Human Health/Quality of Life
- Cultural heritage
- Landscape/Townscape
- Environmental Policies and Objectives set out in the Meath County Development Plan.
- EIA
- Urban Waste Water Discharge Licensing
- Waste Management

# **STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

## **Screening Report**

### **Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 Proposed Amendments**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment-Report pursuant to article 14a of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004**

**1.0 Introduction**

Meath County Council has prepared a draft Local Area Plan for the village of Ratoath, Co. Meath. A number of amendments have been proposed to the draft Plan following consideration of the Plan by the elected Members of Meath County Council. Consideration has been given to the likely environmental effects of implementing the draft LAP with the proposed amendments, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2004.

Section 3.4 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines states that screening (i.e. the process for deciding whether a particular plan other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA) is required in the case of Local Area Plans where the population is less than 10,000 persons. As the population of Ratoath is below 10,000 persons, the purpose of this report is to determine if the Ratoath Local Area Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment i.e. screen the LAP. In preparing this report reference was made to the Guidelines for the Implementation of SEA Directive as prepared by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government (2004) and in particular Schedule 2A of SI 436 of 2004.

**2.0 Policy Context**

The Ratoath Local Area Plan was designated in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 (Policy SS OBJ 1 of the County Development Plan refers). The existing written statement and detailed objectives for the town, inclusive of the accompanying map contained in the 2001-2007 County Development Plan, remain in force until the Local Area Plan has been prepared and adopted for the settlement.

**3.0 Location and Physical Context**

Ratoath is situated in the south eastern corner of the county acting as a mid point between Dunshaughlin and Ashbourne, within the South Meath Fringe Corridor. Ratoath forms part of the Ashbourne, Dunshaughlin Ratoath Cluster. The village comprises of a compact linear town centre surrounded by growing residential estates. The scale of the built environment is generally low, predominantly two storey structures dominated by the older building such as the Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church and the Grotto. Recent development in the village has resulted in the introduction of modern architectural urban elements into the built environment, which complement the existing charm and character of what already exists.

As per the 2006 CSO Census, the population of Ratoath in 2006 was recorded at 7,249 persons. An Post Geodirectory data indicates that the current population of Ratoath is 8,207 persons.

**4.0 Criteria for determining the likely significant environmental impacts (Schedule 2 (A) of SEA Regulations 2004).**

Annex II of the SEA Directive sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance environmental effects. The proposed LAP must be assessed against the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. The most relevant considerations are 1) Characteristics of the Proposed LAP and 2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the proposed LAP.

**4.1 Characteristics of the Proposed LAP.**

The LAP is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 2.1.9 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 (Policy SS OBJ 1 refers) and Variation No. 2 to the Development Plan. The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 adheres to the principles of sustainable development, in accordance with the requirements of Section 10 of the

Planning and Development Act 2000-2006. The Local Area Plan will be consistent with the principles, objectives and policies of the Meath County Development Plan and associated Environmental Report and therefore will have a strong emphasis on promoting the sustainable development of the area.

Variation no. 2 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 relates to an order of priority which was adopted for the release of existing residentially zoned lands (i.e. phasing) that conforms to the scale and quantum of development indicated in Table 5 and Table 6 of the County Development Plan. (Please refer to attached Order of Priority Map.) The number of units indicated to meet household targets in Ratoath is 61 (discounting planning permission was granted for 282 residential units to Sherwood Builders (planning ref. no. DA70037) on zoned lands located in Jamestown). The release of any further lands in Ratoath will be reliant on the availability of water and waste water infrastructure. The existing effluent loading from Ratoath is 5,700 P.E. and treatment is at capacity. Similarly, there is no spare water supply capacity. Therefore, having regard to this and the criteria for release of lands and remaining zoned lands available for development, the priority in Ratoath over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan is town centre consolidation. Remaining lands will be developed post 2013 on a phased basis.

The draft Ratoath LAP was prepared and placed on public display from 14th January 2009 to 18th March 2009 and a manager's report was prepared on the submissions received. The draft plan and manager's report were considered by the members of Meath County Council at a council meeting on 28th April 2009. As a result of this, a number of material amendments have been proposed to the draft plan. These include minor mapping alterations, e.g. zoning open space areas within residential areas for recreational and amenity purposes. More significantly, there are no additional residential zonings from the draft plan. In addition, the proposed amendments include the zoning of extra lands for industrial uses. These lands are subject to Framework Plan requirements.

#### **4.1.1 Environmental considerations relevant to the Plan Area**

There are a number of features of the built and natural environment which are subject to heritage and environmental designations in the study area as outlined below.

##### **4.1.1.1 Conservation and Heritage**

###### Protected structures

There are 10 structures in Ratoath which are registered as protected structures in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. The Draft LAP with proposed amendments does not adversely impact upon the integrity or character of the protected structures.

###### Architectural Conservation Area

There is no Architectural Conservation Area designated in Ratoath.

###### Protected Views and Prospects

There are no protected views or prospects which affect the subject lands.

###### National Monuments

There are 4 historical site/monuments in Ratoath as identified in the Sites and Monuments Record for County Meath. The village core forms part of an area of Archaeological Interest. The Draft LAP with proposed amendments does not adversely impact upon the historical site/monuments.

###### Natural Heritage Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas

It is noteworthy that the lands do not include any areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. There are no Natural Heritage Area(s), Special Area(s) of Conservation, Candidate Special Areas of Conservation(s) or Special Protection Area(s) in the subject lands.

## **4.2 Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the Draft LAP with amendments.**

### ***4.2.1 The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected.***

#### a) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage

As noted above the plan area contains cultural heritage, in the form of Recorded Monuments and Protected Structures. Detailed policies and objectives are prescribed in the County Development Plan 2007 which relate to the protection of the built and natural heritage. These are reflected in the policies contained in Chapter 5 of the draft Local Area Plan which relates to built heritage.

With respect to the Recorded Monuments, detailed archaeological investigation will be required at application stage to determine the extent of resource areas and associated buffer zones and ensure their preservation. Applications concerning recorded monuments and the zone of archaeological potential will be referred to the prescribed bodies and regard will be had to their comments in the course of the development management process as per the policy of the draft Local Area Plan.

With respect to the 10 protected structures, the LAP will ensure that the character and settings of these structures are retained, respected and protected. Meath County Council's Conservation Officer and the prescribed bodies will be consulted with respect to any planning applications which would have the potential to affect the protected structures as per the policy of the draft Local Area Plan.

#### b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit value:

It is anticipated that environmental quality standards will not be exceeded and that the value of the area will not be limited as a result of the implementation of the draft LAP with amendments.

#### c) intensive land use

The amendments proposed to the draft Local Area Plan do not propose new residential zonings from the draft plan. There is an increase in the quantity of industrial zoned land as a result of the proposed amendments. The LAP Plan will ensure that the redevelopment and development of the area is undertaken with due cognisance to its surrounding environment and that any development and intensification will sustain and improve on existing amenity. The plan will improve the public realm through encouraging the redevelopment of the brown field sites to provide a mix of uses and create vitality (e.g. Policy ECON DEV OBJ 8 which encourages the relocation of noncompatible town centre commercial uses).

### ***4.2.2 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.***

It is considered that there will be no significant negative effects on the implementation of the draft LAP with proposed amendments. However, with regard to positive effects, it is considered that the probability of these occurring is high. It is expected that the effects will be permanent and therefore irreversible, until such time that any new policies and/or objectives are identified in a revised LAP.

### ***4.2.3 The Cumulative nature of the effects***

No notable cumulative negative effects are anticipated given that the Draft LAP with proposed amendments focuses on the principles of sustainable development. It is anticipated that the cumulative effects on the environment will be positive and that with every development and redevelopment, the area will be rejuvenated with an improved physical and visual environment.

**4.2.4 The Transboundary nature of the effects**

It is not anticipated that the Plan will have any national, regional or inter-county transboundary effects.

**4.2.5 The risk to human health and the environment**

The implementation of the Local Area Plan is not likely to result in any risks to human health with the inclusion of appropriate health and safety measures being introduced. Any future development in the area will conform to the LAP, of which the fundamental essence is to create a healthy environment for people to live, work and recreate.

**4.2.6 The magnitude and special extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be effected).**

The Plan area comprises of approximately 283.5 hectares. A population of 7,249 persons were recorded in the 2006 Census. As per the geo-directory, there is currently a population of 8207 persons residing in the village. Having regard to Table 6 and variation no. 2 (outlined above) of the Meath County Development Plan and the proposed amendments to the draft plan, it is not expected that the resident population of the Plan area will increase significantly relative to its existing population over the lifetime of the LAP.

**4.2.7 Effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised National, Community or International protection status**

As noted above, there are no landscape features within the Plan boundary which have a recognised European and international protection status.

**5.0 Conclusion**

On consideration of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations, it is considered that the draft LAP and the amendments proposed to the draft will not result in any substantial further impacts on the environment, beyond what was envisaged within the context of the Meath Development Plan 2007-2013. The Planning Authority is satisfied that the draft LAP and the proposed amendments to the draft ensures that the lands will be developed in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner fully consistent with the policy and objectives prescribed in the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. In view of this, it is considered that a strategic environmental assessment is not required in respect of the Local Area Plan. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of environmental issues which have been considered during the preparation of the Local Area Plan and where appropriate, included in the objectives/policies of the LAP.

**6.0 Recommendation**

Having regard to the forgoing, it is not considered necessary to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment on the draft Local Area Plan for Ratoath with proposed amendments.

# Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

of the

Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015

Prepared in conformance with Article 6(3) of Council Directive  
92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and  
of wild fauna and flora, as amended

April 2009



comhairle chontae na mí  
*meath county council*

## 1.0 Introduction

Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive, compels competent authorities to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

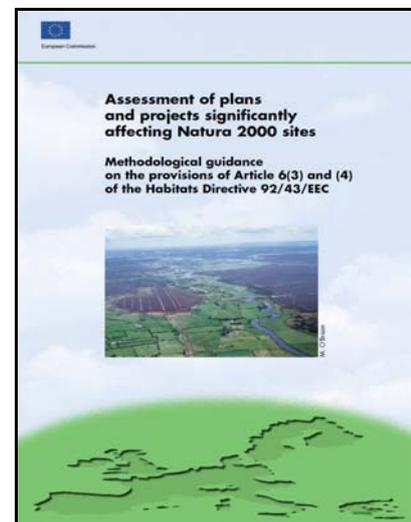
The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site, the competent authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

If the assessment concludes that the plan or project will have a negative impact on the site, it may only proceed and be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest as outlined in the Directive and the member state concerned shall take all compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 site is protected. The European Commission must be informed where this occurs.

Meath County Council are preparing a Local Area Plan for Ratoath as required by the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, the parent policy document to the Local Area Plan.

The Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 has been screened to ascertain if the Plan should be subject to an appropriate assessment as outlined in the Habitats Directive. The screening has had regard to the European Commission's guidance document entitled "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC". In line with the suggested assessment methodology put forward by the Commission, a screening matrix and a finding of no significant effects matrix have been completed.

The screening process has found that the Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 does not require an appropriate assessment as the implementation of the Plan would not be likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 site.



## 2.0 Overview of Proposed Local Area Plan

It is an objective of the current Meath County Development Plan (2007- 2013) to designate Ratoath as a 'Small Growth Town' and to prepare a Local Area Plan for the settlement. It is a further objective of the Meath County Development Plan that all Local Area Plans will be prepared within the immediate two years following the adoption of the County Plan (March 2007).

The draft Local Area Plan has been prepared in order to set out a comprehensive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Ratoath over the period of 2009 to 2015.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the requirements for the preparation of a Local Area Plan. Section 19(2)(as amended by the Planning and Development Act 2002) states that *"a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan."* The Local Area Plan is therefore a subsidiary document to the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 and compliance with the policies and objectives in the County Development Plan is required for development in Ratoath.

As stated, Ratoath is a Small Growth Town. It is also identified as forming part of a dynamic cluster with Ashbourne and Dunshaughlin. Small Growth Towns are to provide primarily residential roles with a strong commercial and industrial presence. The future development of Small Growth Towns should be predicated more to local growth than to regional growth. Relatively small and locally financed businesses are expected to locate in Small Growth Towns however other economic development could be permitted. Retail is likely to be mainly in the convenience category. Small Growth Towns would be likely to contain facilities such as a primary and/or secondary school as well as a health clinic. The County Development Plan states specifically in relation to Ratoath, that the further development of residential areas must be managed and that the Planning Authority shall desist from zoning additional significant areas of residential land unless under exceptional circumstances and where a reciprocal rebalancing of existing zoned lands has taken place elsewhere. With the exception of the possible delivery of the identified bypass (northern option), no additional residential land shall be identified for residential purposes during the life of the County Development Plan (2007 – 2013). The land required to release this piece of critical infrastructure shall be prioritised over existing residentially zoned lands. The policy of the County Development Plan is that the remainder of the residential land bank shall be phased and released on the basis of agreed employment generating targets locally and the delivery of identified critical social infrastructure.

The draft Local Area Plan is based on the household projections contained in the Meath County Development Plan. The projected number of households for Ratoath during the period 2006 to 2013 is 650.

The Local Area Plan is comprised of a written statement which is divided into 8 chapters, namely:

1. Introduction
2. Ratoath in Context
3. Settlement Strategy and Housing
4. Economic Development Strategy
5. Built and Natural Heritage
6. Social Strategy
7. Infrastructure
8. Implementation and Monitoring

The Plan is also accompanied by a land use zoning and objectives map.

The draft Local Area Plan contains general policies relating to the protection of natural heritage and the need for adequate proposals for infrastructure and services to support development. These include:

HER POL 5: To encourage the retention of existing natural features in development proposals.

HER POL 10: To ensure when undertaking or permitting development, that the loss or damage to existing trees is minimised.

HER POL 11: To protect, preserve and ensure the effective management of trees and groups of trees, considered to be of special amenity value as indicated on the Zoning Map for Ratoath.

INF POL 20: To continue the development and upgrading of the water supply system so as to ensure that an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of piped water of suitable quality is available for domestic, commercial, industrial, fire safety and other uses for the sustainable development of the town in accordance with the sustainable structure identified in this Plan and as finances permit.

INF POL 21: To promote public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, businesses and industries.

INF POL 22: To implement the Water Conservation Programme, in order to conserve valuable resources by reducing wastage.

INF POL 23: To utilise the existing water supply in an efficient and fair manner and in the best interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

INF POL 24: To ensure that all drinking water complies with the European Union Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC as given effect in Irish law by the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007, as may be amended.

INF POL 25: To continue the development and upgrading of the waste water system servicing Ratoath to ensure that an adequate treatment capacity is available for the sustainable development of Ratoath as finances permit.

INF POL 27: To ensure that all new developments have and are provided with satisfactory drainage systems in the interest of public health and to avoid the pollution of ground and surface waters.

INF OBJ 20: To require all large scale developments to provide "Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems" (SuDS) as part of their development proposals.

INF POL 30: To control development in the natural flood plain of rivers and to take account of any guidelines regarding flooding issued by the DoEHLG or OPW in the assessment of planning applications.

There are no policies in the draft Local Area Plan which directly relate to Natura 2000 sites as there are no such sites within or abutting the plan area. The policies of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 in relation to such sites include:

HER POL 3: To require any planning application that proposes development within or adjacent to the area designated as a cSAC, SPA or pNHA illustrated on Map 8.3 to be accompanied by an ecological impact assessment, assessing the impact of the proposal on these areas with conservation designations. The Ecological Impact Assessment will be forwarded to the National Parks & Wildlife Section of the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government for their comments prior to the making of a decision by the Planning Authority.

HER POL 8: To maintain, and where possible enhance, the conservation value of the cSACs, as identified by the Minister for the DoEHLG, and any other sites that may be proposed for designation during the lifetime of this Plan.

HER POL 9: To have regard to the views and guidance of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG in respect of proposed development where there is a possibility that such development may have an impact on candidate or designated Special Areas of Conservation.

HER POL 10: To permit development on a designated SAC or those proposed to be designated over the period of this plan, only where an assessment carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and National Parks & Wildlife Service of DoEHLG, indicates that it will have no significant adverse effect (such as disturbance, pollution or deterioration of habitat quality) on the protected area.

HER POL 11: To prohibit any development that would be harmful or that would result in a significant deterioration of habitats and/or disturbance of species.

HER POL 12: To have regard to the views and guidance of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG in respect of proposed developments where there is a possibility that such development may have an impact on candidate or designated Special Areas of Conservation.

HER POL 13: To permit development on a designated SPA or those proposed to be designated over the period of this plan, only where an assessment carried out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and National Parks & Wildlife Service of DoEHLG, indicates that it will have no significant adverse effect (such as disturbance, pollution or deterioration of habitat quality) on the protected area.

The County Development Plan is the primary planning policy document for this area and its policies are also applicable within to the Ratoath Local Area Plan area.

## 2.0 Overview of Applicable Natura 2000 Site

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the boundary of the Local Area Plan or abutting the boundary.

Sites of indirect relevance include:

1. Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA (where the Broadmeadow River which passes through Ratoath enters the sea).
2. Malahide Estuary cSAC (where the Broadmeadow River, which passes through Ratoath, enters the sea).
3. River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (as the Boyne is the main source for the East Meath Regional Water Supply Scheme which provides the water supply to Ratoath).
4. South Dublin Bay SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (as treated wastewater from Ratoath is ultimately discharged to Dublin Bay via the treatment plant at Ringsend).

Summary information on these sites is provided below which has been taken from the website of the National Park and Wildlife Service. The full site synopses are available on the website [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie).

**Site Name:** Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA

**Site Code:** 004025

**Description:** This site is situated in north Co. Dublin, between the towns of Malahide and Swords. Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA is a fine example of an estuarine system, providing both feeding and roosting areas for a range of wintering waterfowl. The lagoonal nature of the inner estuary is of particular value as it increases the diversity of birds which occur. The site is of high conservation importance, with an internationally important population of Brent Goose and nationally important populations of a further 12 species. Three of the species which occur regularly (Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit and Ruff) are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

**Site Name:** Malahide Estuary SAC

**Site Code:** 000205

**Description:** Malahide Estuary is situated immediately north of Malahide and east of Swords. It is the estuary of the River Broadmeadow. This site is a fine example of an estuarine system with all the main habitats represented. The site is important ornithologically, with a population of Brent Geese of international significance.

**Site Name:** River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC

**Site Code:** 002299

**Description:** This site comprises the freshwater element of the River Boyne as far as the Boyne Aqueduct, the Blackwater as far as Lough Ramor and the Boyne tributaries including the Deel, Stoneyford and Tremblestown Rivers. The site is a candidate SAC selected for alkaline fen and alluvial woodlands, both habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The site is also selected for the following species listed on Annex II of the same directive – Atlantic Salmon, Otter and River Lamprey.

**Site Name:** South Dublin Bay SAC

**Site Code:** 000210

**Description:** This site lies south of the River Liffey and extends from the South Wall to the west pier at Dun Laoghaire. It is an intertidal site with extensive areas of sand and mudflats, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. This site is a fine example of a coastal system with extensive sand and mudflats, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. South Dublin Bay is also an internationally important bird site.

**Site Name:** North Dublin Bay SAC

**Site Code:** 000206

**Description:** This site covers the inner part of north Dublin Bay, the seaward boundary extending from the Bull Wall lighthouse across to the Martello Tower at Howth Head. This site is an excellent example of a coastal site with all the main habitats represented. The holds good examples of ten habitats that are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive; one of these is listed with priority status. Several of the wintering bird species have populations of international importance, while some of the invertebrates are of national importance. The site contains a numbers of rare and scarce plants including some which are legally protected. Its proximity to the capital city makes North Dublin Bay an excellent site for educational studies and research.

**Site Name:** South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA

**Site Code:** 004024

**Description:** The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA comprises a substantial part of Dublin Bay. It includes the intertidal area between the River Liffey and Dun Laoghaire, and the estuary of the River Tolka to the north of the River Liffey, as well as Booterstown Marsh. A portion of the shallow marine waters of the bay is also included. The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA is of international importance for Light-bellied Brent Goose and of national importance for nine other waterfowl species. As an autumn tern roost, it is also of international importance. Furthermore, the site supports a nationally important colony of Common Tern. All of the tern species using the site are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, as are Bartailed Godwit and Mediterranean Gull.

The publication 'Water Quality in Ireland 2004 – 2006' (Environmental Protection Agency, 2008) provides information on the quality of lakes, rivers, estuarine and coastal waters and groundwater over the stated period. Information for the areas listed above is as follows:

Broadmeadow Estuary Inner: Eutrophic  
 Broadmeadow Estuary Outer: Intermediate  
 Broadmeadow Estuary Adjacent Coastal: Unpolluted

Liffey Estuary: Intermediate  
 Dublin Bay: Unpolluted  
 Dublin Bay Adjacent Coastal: Unpolluted

The report stated specifically in relation to the Liffey Estuary and Dublin that "*The present assessment of the Liffey estuary would appear to confirm that water quality in the estuary continues to improve with only phosphorus levels in winter marginally exceeding the set criterion. Since the 1995-1999 period the trophic status of the estuary has improved from eutrophic to intermediate in 1999-2003 and in the current assessment period.*" Furthermore, "*The observed improvement in water quality in the Liffey estuary is clearly a result of the installation of significantly upgraded treatment facilities at the Ringsend WWTP, though further investigation is still required to track the change in nutrient levels as the full effect of the plant is realised.*" BOD concentrations in the area were generally low. Some high values were recorded. However these were generally restricted to 2002. It is stated that "*data collected since then indicate a decline in BOD values both within the lower estuary and particularly in the vicinity of the Ringsend discharge – again indicating an improvement in the quality of the discharge at this point. The reduction in organic loading from Ringsend, as indicated by declining BOD values, is also reflected in the considerable improvement in the bacteriological quality of the Liffey estuary and bathing areas within the Dublin Bay area.*" Finally, the report notes one potentially negative aspect of water quality trends, namely the reoccurrence of opportunistic macroalgae in the Tolka estuary and along the south Dublin seashore which can have a negative impact on marine benthic fauna.

The latest EPA Q-value report for Hydrometric Area 08 which includes the Broadmeadow River (sourced directly from the Environmental Protection Agency) found that Ratoath Stream (formerly Ratoath Branch of the Broadmeadow) continued to be in poor ecological condition with a decline in quality noted. Sewage was suspected to be the cause of this.

The EPA website ([www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)) provides access to the ENVision services, an online mapping database. This provides information in respect of water quality which is detailed below for the Natura 2000 sites listed:

Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA: Water quality in Broadmeadow Water is stated to be eutrophic.  
 Malahide Estuary SAC: Water quality in Malahide Bay is stated to be intermediate  
 River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC: Water quality at the Boyne Estuary is listed as "intermediate status". Water quality in the River Boyne west of Donore and at Slane village is stated as "moderate status".  
 South Dublin Bay SAC: Dublin Bay is stated to be unpolluted.  
 North Dublin Bay SAC: Dublin Bay is stated to be unpolluted.  
 South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA: Dublin Bay is stated to be unpolluted.

### 3.0 Screening Matrix

#### Assessment criteria

*Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.*

The Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 has been drafted to provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of this area over the lifetime of the plan. The Plan provides for the orderly expansion of the town in terms of additional population, industrial, commercial development, social facilities and protection of heritage. The plan does not concern the management of any Natura 2000 sites and the plan area does not abut or contain any Natura 2000 sites. The policies of the plan are unlikely to generate significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:*

*- size and scale:*

No projects which would give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, arising from the size or scale of the project, shall be permitted on the basis of this Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- land-take:*

The draft Ratoath Local Area Plan provides for the orderly expansion of the town in accordance with the policy direction of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013. The proposed LAP zones limited additional lands for residential, employment, commercial development and community facilities. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from land take shall be permitted on the basis of this Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site:*

There are no Natura 2000 sites within or abutting Ratoath. The closest Natura 2000 site is approximately 20 kilometres from Ratoath (Broadmeadow Estuary). Given the distance involved, development in the area, subject to the policies of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives.

*- resource requirements (water abstraction etc.):*

Water is abstracted from the River Boyne to serve Ratoath as part of the East Meath Regional Scheme. The allocation of water services to Ratoath will be considered as part of the overall water supply requirements in the East Meath and South Louth areas. It is not proposed under this LAP to

increase the rate of abstraction from the River Boyne. Any such development by the Local Authority would be subject to an appropriate assessment in the form an Environmental Impact Assessment.

*- emissions (disposal to land, water or air):*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from their emissions (disposal to land, water or air), shall be permitted on the basis of this LAP (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- excavation requirements:*

Soils and rock are a natural resource and an important component of local ecosystem. The policy provisions included in the Plan and the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 will ensure that no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- transportation requirements:*

The transportation policies of the draft Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan.

*- duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.:*

The Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan shall be adopted in mid 2009 and will remain in effect until 2015. The duration of the plan is not applicable to the ongoing protection of any Natura 2000 site. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc., shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- other:*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from other considerations, shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:*

*- reduction of habitat area:*

No projects giving rise to a reduction of habitat areas in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- disturbance to key species:*

No projects giving rise to significant disturbance of key species in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- habitat or species fragmentation:*

No projects giving rise to habitat or species fragmentation in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- reduction in species density:*

No projects giving rise to a reduction in species density in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- *changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.):*

No projects giving rise to significant changes in key indicators of conservation value in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- *climate change.*

No projects likely to give rise to significant change in the climatological conditions experienced in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:*

- *interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site:*

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the structure of any Natura 2000 site, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- *interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.*

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the function of any Natura 2000 site, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:*

- *loss:*

N/A

- *fragmentation:*

N/A

- *disruption:*

N/A

- *disturbance:*

N/A

- *change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.).*

N/A

*Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.*

N/A

#### **4.0 Finding of No Significant Effects Report Matrix**

Name of project or plan

Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015

Name and location of Natura 2000 site

There are no Natura 2000 sites within or adjoining the Local Area Plan boundary. Sites of indirect relevance include the Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA (where the Broadmeadow River which passes through Ratoath enters the sea), Malahide Estuary cSAC (where the Broadmeadow River

enters the sea), River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (as the Boyne is the main source for the East Meath Regional Water Supply Scheme which provides the water supply to Ratoath) and South Dublin Bay SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (as treated wastewater from Ratoath is ultimately discharged to Dublin Bay via the treatment plant at Ringsend).

#### Description of the project or plan

The draft Local Area Plan has been prepared in order to set out a comprehensive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Ratoath over the period of 2009 to 2015. It is an objective of the current Meath County Development Plan (2007- 2013) to designate Ratoath as a 'small growth town' and to prepare a Local Area Plan for the settlement to assist it to development in a self-sufficient, sustainable manner.

#### Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?

The Draft Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any Natura 2000 site but rather the future planning and development of Ratoath. The Plan does however contain robust and thorough provisions to protect and enhance the natural heritage of Ratoath.

#### Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?

The Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 is the only land use plan directly applicable to Ratoath town. It is a subsidiary document to the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 and is placed within a hierarchy of plans such as the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016 and the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020.

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

#### The assessment of significance of effects

*Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.*

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

*Explain why these effects are not considered significant.*

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

In addition, it should be noted that any developments permitted in accordance with this plan also have a legal duty to conform with the relevant statutory and regulatory provisions enacted for the prevention of environmental pollution and degradation or other effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives.

#### List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.

At the time of writing Irish legislation does not prescribe statutory consultees for the purpose of consultation on the appropriate assessment of land use development plans. However Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government states the Department should be consulted.

As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015, consultation occurred with the following prescribed bodies - stating that a submission or observation

in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, could be made to the Planning Authorities;

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 833 3190

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCMNR), Leeson Lane, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 678 3084

Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork. Tel: 021 487 5540

The prescribed authorities were also informed of the preparation of the draft Ratoath Local Area Plan.

*Response to consultation.*

The response from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (dated 26<sup>th</sup> June 2008) stated that the Department had no comment to make at that time but state as a prescribed environmental authority for the purposes of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) that they should have more detailed comments to make at a future date as the SEA process continues.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, in a response dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009, referred to the additional lands zoned in the draft Local Area Plan and compatibility with Retail Planning Guidelines, the County Development Plan and the Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy. The Department expresses concern regarding the scale and location of newly zoned lands. The Department noted that an Appropriate Assessment had not been carried out. The commitment of Meath County Council to the protection of the architectural heritage of the town as set out in the draft plan is welcomed.

The response from the coordinate unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources dated 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009, states that Policy 25 in relation to sewerage treatment and disposal needs to be strictly adhered to as it is noted that the waste water treatment plant in Ratoath is currently operating at full capacity. It is noted that in terms of surface water disposal, there is a requirement to incorporate SUDS into all new large scale development proposals.

The response of the Environmental Protection Agency dated 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009 advised that the criteria listed in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 should be taken into account in determining whether the plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. A number of issues were outlined which should be considered during the preparation of the plan. It was advised that other correspondence from the EPA should be reviewed during preparation of the Local Area Plan. This includes correspondence which highlights the view of the EPA that there exists the possibility for the occurrence of significant cumulative environmental effects due to the proximity of and interaction between the many Local Area Plans currently being prepared in County Meath. The submission advised of the EPS's online interactive GIS map viewer, ENVision, as a source of environmental information and data. A number of documents were listed in the submission, to which account should be taken, where appropriate. It is stated that in proposing and amending the Plan, and any related amendments, variations thereof, adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Plan. The submission refers to the responsibilities and obligations of Meath County Council in relation to national and EU environmental legislation and states that the Plan should provide for the inclusion, where appropriate, of the policies and recommendations of the Meath County Development Plan (and associated SEA and Appropriate Assessment) and the Regional Planning Guidelines. Finally, the submission advises of the requirements to give notice to other statutory bodies.

*Data collected to carry out the assessment*

Who carried out the assessment?

Meath County Council.

Sources of data

Existing records and information published by the NPWS and EPA.

Level of assessment completed

A desktop study was completed utilizing existing information from the relevant state authorities.

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?

The full results of the assessment can be accessed and viewed in this document which is available for public inspection at the offices of Meath County Council's Planning Department, Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath.

## **Appropriate Assessment**

## **Screening Report**

## **Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 Proposed Amendments**

## 1.0 Introduction

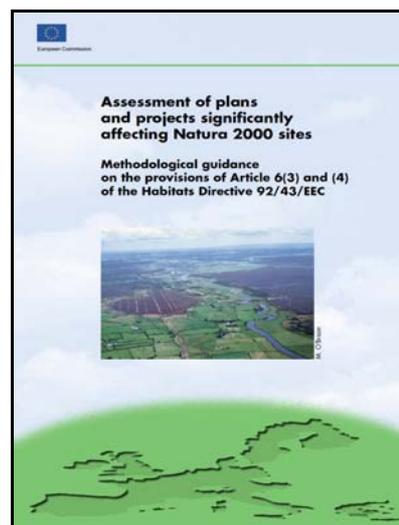
Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive, compels competent authorities to undertake an appropriate assessment of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

The assessment examines the implications of proceeding with the plan or project in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site, the competent authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

If the assessment concludes that the plan or project will have a negative impact on the site, it may only proceed and be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest as outlined in the Directive and the member state concerned shall take all compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 site is protected. The European Commission must be informed where this occurs.

Meath County Council is preparing a Local Area Plan for Ratoath as required by the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, the parent policy document to the Local Area Plan.

The Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 and proposed amendments to the Draft LAP has been screened to ascertain if the Plan should be subject to an appropriate assessment as outlined in the Habitats Directive. The screening has had regard to the European Commission's guidance document entitled "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC". In line with the suggested assessment methodology put forward by the Commission, a screening matrix and a finding of no significant effects matrix have been completed.



The screening process has found that the Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 with proposed Amendments does not require an appropriate assessment as the implementation of the Plan would not be likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 site.

## 2.0 Overview of Proposed Local Area Plan

It is an objective of the current Meath County Development Plan (2007- 2013) to designate Ratoath as a 'Small Growth Town' and to prepare a Local Area Plan for the settlement.

The draft Local Area Plan has been prepared in order to set out a comprehensive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Ratoath over the period of 2009 to 2015.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the requirements for the preparation of a Local Area Plan. Section 19(2) (as amended by the Planning and Development Act 2002) states that *"a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan."* The Local Area Plan is therefore a subsidiary document to the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 and compliance with the policies and objectives in the County Development Plan is required for development in Ratoath.

As stated, Ratoath is a Small Growth Town. It is also identified as forming part of a dynamic cluster with Ashbourne and Dunshaughlin. Small Growth Towns are to provide primarily residential roles with a strong commercial and industrial presence. The future development of Small Growth Towns should be predicated more to local growth than to regional growth. Relatively small and locally financed businesses are expected to locate in Small Growth Towns however other economic development could be permitted. Retail is likely to be mainly in the convenience category. Small Growth Towns would be likely to contain facilities such as a primary and/or secondary school as well as a health clinic. The County Development Plan states specifically in relation to Ratoath, that the further development of residential areas must be managed and that the Planning Authority shall desist from zoning additional significant areas of residential land unless under exceptional circumstances and where a reciprocal rebalancing of existing zoned lands has taken place elsewhere. With the exception of the possible delivery of the identified bypass (northern option), no additional residential land shall be identified for residential purposes during the life of the County Development Plan (2007 – 2013). The land required to release this piece of critical infrastructure shall be prioritised over existing residentially zoned lands. The policy of the County Development Plan is that the remainder of the residential land bank shall be phased and released on the basis of agreed employment generating targets locally and the delivery of identified critical social infrastructure.

The draft Local Area Plan is based on the household projections contained in the Meath County Development Plan. The projected number of households for Ratoath during the period 2006 to 2013 is 650.

The Local Area Plan is comprised of a written statement which is divided into 8 chapters, namely:

9. Introduction
10. Ratoath in Context
11. Settlement Strategy and Housing
12. Economic Development Strategy
13. Built and Natural Heritage
14. Social Strategy
15. Infrastructure
16. Implementation and Monitoring

The Plan is also accompanied by a land use zoning and objectives map.

The draft plan was placed on display from 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009 to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009 and a manager's report was prepared on the submissions received (92 in total). The draft plan and manager's report were considered by the members of Meath County Council at a Council meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2009. As a result of this, a number of material amendments have been proposed to the draft plan on foot of this. These include minor mapping alterations, e.g. zoning open space areas within residential areas for recreational and amenity purposes.

They also include the zoning of extra lands for industrial/employment generating uses. More significantly there are no additional substantial residential zonings proposed.

The draft Local Area Plan contains general policies relating to the protection of natural heritage and the need for adequate proposals for infrastructure and services to support development. These are not altered by any of the proposed amendments. They include:

HER POL 5: To encourage the retention of existing natural features in development proposals.

HER POL 10: To ensure when undertaking or permitting development, that the loss or damage to existing trees is minimised.

HER POL 11: To protect, preserve and ensure the effective management of trees and groups of trees, considered to be of special amenity value as indicated on the Zoning Map for Ratoath.

INF POL 20: To continue the development and upgrading of the water supply system so as to ensure that an adequate, sustainable and economic supply of piped water of suitable quality is available for domestic, commercial, industrial, fire safety and other uses for the sustainable development of the town in accordance with the sustainable structure identified in this Plan and as finances permit.

INF POL 21: To promote public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, businesses and industries.

INF POL 22: To implement the Water Conservation Programme, in order to conserve valuable resources by reducing wastage.

INF POL 23: To utilise the existing water supply in an efficient and fair manner and in the best interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

INF POL 24: To ensure that all drinking water complies with the European Union Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC as given effect in Irish law by the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007, as may be amended.

INF POL 25: To continue the development and upgrading of the waste water system servicing Ratoath to ensure that an adequate treatment capacity is available for the sustainable development of Ratoath as finances permit.

INF POL 27: To ensure that all new developments have and are provided with satisfactory drainage systems in the interest of public health and to avoid the pollution of ground and surface waters.

INF OBJ 20: To require all large scale developments to provide "Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems" (SuDS) as part of their development proposals.

INF POL 30: To control development in the natural flood plain of rivers and to take account of any guidelines regarding flooding issued by the DoEHLG or OPW in the assessment of planning applications.

There are no policies in the draft Local Area Plan or the proposed Amendments to the Draft LAP which directly relate to Natura 2000 sites as there are no such sites within or abutting the subject lands.

## 2.0 Overview of Applicable Natura 2000 Site

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the Draft Local Area Plan lands or the lands subject to the proposed Amendments.

Sites of indirect relevance include:

1. Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA (where the Broadmeadow River which passes through Ratoath enters the sea).
2. Malahide Estuary cSAC (where the Broadmeadow River, which passes through Ratoath, enters the sea).
3. River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (as the Boyne is the main source for the East Meath Regional Water Supply Scheme which provides the water supply to Ratoath).
4. South Dublin Bay SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (as treated wastewater from Ratoath is ultimately discharged to Dublin Bay via the treatment plant at Ringsend).

## 3.0 Screening Matrix

### Assessment criteria

*Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.*

The Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 and proposed amendments has been drafted to provide a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of this area over the lifetime of the plan. The Draft Plan with the proposed amendments provides for the orderly expansion of the town in terms of additional population, industrial, commercial development, social facilities and protection of heritage. The plan does not concern the management of any Natura 2000 sites and the plan area does not abut or contain any Natura 2000 sites. The policies of the Draft Plan with the proposed amendments are unlikely to generate significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:*

*- size and scale:*

Given the limited additional land zonings contained in the Draft Plan and the proposed amendments and the policies of the Draft Local Area Plan considered in conjunction with those of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, no projects which would give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, arising from the size or scale of the project, shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft Plan or amendments to the Draft Plan. (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- land-take:*

The draft Ratoath Local Area Plan provides for the orderly expansion of the town in accordance with the policy direction of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013. As per the proposed amendments, there would not be any expansion of the residential zonings in the town and additional industrial zoned lands would be included as an amendment to the draft. The plan also includes zoned land for commercial development and community facilities. The plan represents a restrained extension to the existing development boundary of the town. In these circumstances, no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from land take, shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft Plan or amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site:*

There are no Natura 2000 sites within or abutting Ratoath. The closest Natura 2000 site is approximately 20 kilometres from Ratoath (Broadmeadow Estuary). Given the distance involved, development in the area, subject to the policies of the Draft Plan with the proposed amendments (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives.

*- resource requirements (water abstraction etc.):*

Water is abstracted from the River Boyne to serve Ratoath as part of the East Meath Regional Scheme. The allocation of water services to Ratoath will be considered as part of the overall water supply requirements in the East Meath and South Louth areas. It is not proposed under the Draft Plan or the amendments to the Draft Plan to increase the rate of abstraction from the River Boyne. Any such development by the Local Authority would be subject to an appropriate assessment in the form of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

*- emissions (disposal to land, water or air):*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from their emissions (disposal to land, water or air), shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft Plan or amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- excavation requirements:*

Soils and rock are a natural resource and an important component of local ecosystem. The policy provisions included in the Plan and the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 will ensure that no projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- transportation requirements:*

The transportation policies of the draft Local Area Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft Plan or amendments to the Draft Plan

*- duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.:*

The Ratoath Local Area Plan shall be adopted in mid 2009 and will remain in effect until 2015. The duration of the plan is not applicable to the ongoing protection of any Natura 2000 site. No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc., shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft Plan or amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- other:*

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives, arising from other considerations, shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft Plan or amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:*

*- reduction of habitat area:*

No projects giving rise to a reduction of habitat areas in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- disturbance to key species:*

No projects giving rise to significant disturbance of key species in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- habitat or species fragmentation:*

No projects giving rise to habitat or species fragmentation in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- reduction in species density:*

No projects giving rise to a reduction in species density in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.):*

No projects giving rise to significant changes in key indicators of conservation value in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- climate change.*

No projects likely to give rise to significant change in the climatological conditions experienced in any Natura 2000 site shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:*

*- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site:*

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the structure of any Natura 2000 site, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*- interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.*

No projects giving rise to significant interference with the key relationships that define the function of any Natura 2000 site, having regard to their conservation objectives, shall be permitted on the basis of the provisions of the Draft LAP or the amendments to the Draft Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

*Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:*

*- loss:*

N/A

*- fragmentation:*

N/A

*- disruption:*

N/A

*- disturbance:*

N/A

*- change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.).*

N/A

*Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.*

N/A

#### **4.0 Finding of No Significant Effects Report Matrix**

Name of project or plan

Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 with proposed amendments.

Name and location of Natura 2000 site

There are no Natura 2000 sites within or adjoining the Draft LAP boundary or the lands which are the subject of the proposed amendments. Sites of indirect relevance include the Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA (where the Broadmeadow River which passes through Ratoath enters the sea), Malahide Estuary cSAC (where the Broadmeadow River enters the sea), River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (as the Boyne is the main source for the East Meath Regional Water Supply Scheme which provides the water supply to Ratoath) and South Dublin Bay SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (as treated wastewater from Ratoath is ultimately discharged to Dublin Bay via the treatment plant at Ringsend).

Description of the project or plan

The draft Local Area Plan and proposed amendments has been prepared in order to set out a comprehensive framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of Ratoath over the period of 2009 to 2015. It is an objective of the current Meath County Development Plan (2007- 2013) to designate Ratoath as a 'small growth town' and to prepare a Local Area Plan for the settlement to assist it to development in a self-sufficient, sustainable manner. Amendments have been proposed to the draft LAP which was prepared; the most significant of which include proposed new industrial zoning. No additional residential zonings are proposed.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?

The Draft Plan with proposed amendments is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any Natura 2000 site but rather the future planning and development of Ratoath. The Plan does however contain robust and thorough provisions to protect and enhance the natural heritage of Ratoath.

Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?

The Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009-2015 with proposed amendments is the only land use plan directly applicable to Ratoath town. It is a subsidiary document to the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 and is placed within a hierarchy of plans such as the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016 and the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020.

The Plan has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

The assessment of significance of effects

*Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.*

The Draft Ratoath LAP with proposed amendments has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

*Explain why these effects are not considered significant.*

The Draft Ratoath LAP with proposed amendments has been formulated to ensure that development arising from planning permissions granted in accordance with the provisions of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to its conservation objectives.

In addition, it should be noted that any developments permitted in accordance with this plan also have a legal duty to conform with the relevant statutory and regulatory provisions enacted for the prevention of environmental pollution and degradation or other effects likely

to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives.

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.

At the time of writing Irish legislation does not prescribe statutory consultees for the purpose of consultation on the appropriate assessment of land use development plans. However Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government states the Department should be consulted.

As part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Draft Ratoath Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015, consultation occurred with the following prescribed bodies - stating that a submission or observation in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, could be made to the Planning Authorities;

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG), Dún Scéine, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 833 3190

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCMNR), Leeson Lane, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 678 3084

Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork.  
Tel: 021 487 5540

The prescribed authorities were also informed of the preparation of the draft Ratoath Local Area Plan.

*Response to consultation.*

The response from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (dated 26<sup>th</sup> June 2008) stated that the Department had no comment to make at that time but state as a prescribed environmental authority for the purposes of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) that they should have more detailed comments to make at a future date as the SEA process continues.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, in a response dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009, referred to the additional lands zoned in the draft Local Area Plan and compatibility with Retail Planning Guidelines, the County Development Plan and the Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy. The Department expresses concern regarding the scale and location of newly zoned lands. The Department noted that an Appropriate Assessment had not been carried out. The commitment of Meath County Council to the protection of the architectural heritage of the town as set out in the draft plan is welcomed.

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outlined which should be considered during the preparation of the plan. It was advised that other correspondence from the EPA should be reviewed during preparation of the Local Area Plan. This includes correspondence which highlights the view of the EPA that there exists the possibility for the occurrence of significant cumulative environmental effects due to the proximity of and interaction between the many Local Area Plans currently being prepared in County Meath. The submission advised of the EPS's online interactive GIS map viewer, ENVision, as a source of environmental information and data. A number of documents were listed in the submission, to which account should be taken, where appropriate. It is stated that in proposing and amending the Plan, and any related amendments, variations thereof, adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Plan. The submission refers to the responsibilities and obligations of Meath County Council in relation to national and EU environmental legislation and states that the Plan should provide for the inclusion, where appropriate, of the policies and recommendations of the Meath County Development Plan (and associated SEA and Appropriate Assessment) and the Regional Planning Guidelines. Finally, the submission advises of the requirements to give notice to other statutory bodies.

*Data collected to carry out the assessment*

Who carried out the assessment?

Meath County Council.

Sources of data

Existing records and information published by the NPWS and EPA.

Level of assessment completed

A desktop study was completed utilizing existing information from the relevant state authorities.

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?

The full results of the assessment can be accessed and viewed in this document which is available for public inspection at the offices of Meath County Council's Planning Department, Abbey Road, Navan, Co. Meath.



**APPENDIX 2**

**LIST OF PERSONS WHO MADE SUBMISSIONS DURING  
THE CONSULTATION PHASES IN THE PREPARATION  
OF THE LOCAL AREA PLAN**

**Persons who made written submissions during the pre draft consultation period of the Ratoath Local Area Plan**

<b>Submission No.</b>	
1	Moulden Bridge Residents
2	Ratoath Rugby Club
3	A C Paul Ent Ltd on behalf of McGettigan Construction Ltd
4	Eastern Regional Fisheries Board
5	Michael P O Grady & Assoc on behalf of George Williams Ratoath
6	Luc Hemeryck re Ratoath Community & Enterprise Park
7	Marie Byrne SEO Environment Fire & Emergency Meath County Council
8	Fergal Mc Girl on behalf of JP Molloy
9	Fergal Mc Girl on behalf of Leo McGirl
10	Fergal Mc Girl on behalf of JP Molloy
11	National Roads Authority
12	AOS on behalf of Broad Meadow Management Ltd
13	Anna Maria & Malachy Harney, Glascarn Fairyhouse Ratoath
14	Frank Burke on behalf of Mary Shaffrey & Marie Logan
15	Mary Shaffrey, Irish Street, Fairyhouse, Rd Ratoath
16	Co Ordination Unit Dept of Communications Energy & Natural Resources
17	David Duignan Architects on behalf of Glade Court Ltd
18	GVA Planning on behalf of Tesco Ltd
19	Brona Darby on behalf of Ratoath Pitch & Putt Club, Skryne Rd, Ratoath
20	Ratoath GAA Club Sean Eiffe Park Brownstown Ratoath
21	Ratoath Harps Football Club
22	Remax/Derek Lattimer & Assoc on behalf of Gerard Geraghty
23	Tom Phillips & Assoc on behalf of Michael Ryan and Des Doherty
24	Keith Simpson & Assoc on behalf of Philip & Gerard Byrne
25	Fenton Simons on behalf of Ellier Developments Ltd
26	Mc Gill Planning on behalf of Noel Conway
27	Declan Brassil & Assoc on behalf of McGarrell Reilly Homes
28	Stephen Little & Assoc on behalf of Rybo Partnership
29	Caroline Gray General Manager of Fairyhouse Racecourse Ratoath
30	Michael Mc Loughlin Area Representative – Labour Party
31	Sheridan Woods on behalf of Woodgreen Builders
32	Fenton Simons on behalf of Mr Paddy Lyons of Coney Ltd & Breffni

	Ltd
33	Fenton Simons on behalf of Mr Gerard Geraghty
34	Gerard Geraghty
35	Senator Dominic Hannigan
36	Grainne Mallon on behalf of Mr James Gallagher
37	Cllr Nick Killian
38	Ciaran Buckley Ballybin Ashbourne
39	Joe Lawless Swimming Pool Committee Ratoath
40	Michael Ryan
41	Orlaith Masa Cunnane Stratton Reynolds on behalf of Paul O'Brien, Joe McNamara & Robert Butler
42	Ian McGrandles Tiros Resources Limited
43	Michael Lysaght on behalf of Miriam McGowan
44	Cllr Nick Killian on behalf of Mr Frank Heston
45	Derek Maguire Financial Architects Ltd

**Persons who made written submissions during the consultation period of the draft Ratoath Local Area Plan.**

<b>Submission No</b>	
1	George Williams, Ballybin, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
2	Cllr Nick Killian, Ballybin, Ratoath, Co. Meath
3	Cllr Nick Killian, Ballybin, Ratoath, Co. Meath
4	Cllr Nick Killian, Ballybin, Ratoath, Co. Meath
5	Fenton Simons Associates on behalf of Ellier Developments
6	Coiste Bunaithe Ghaelscoil Ráth Tó (Establishing Committee, Gaelscoil Ratoath)
7	AC Paul Enterprises on behalf of McGettigan Construction Ltd.
8	Tiros Resources Limited on behalf of Tattersalls Ireland Ltd
9	Eastern Regional Fisheries Board (ERFB)
10	Sarah Jane Patten, 25 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
11	George Patten, 25 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
12	Mrs Imelda Gorman, Ballybin, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
13	David Cullen, 58 Meadowbank Hill, Ratoath
14	Fenton Simons on behalf of Coney Properties Ltd and Breffni Ltd.
15	Kieran & Angela Forde, 1 Coil Beag, Ratoath, Co. Meath
16	Derek Staunton, 65 Jamestown Park, Ratoath, Co. Meath
17	Michael Conolly, 33 Foxlodge Road, Foxlodge Woods, Ratoath, Co. Meath
18	Mark Woods, Brownstown, Ratoath, Co. Meath
19	Gerry Doody, 29 Jamestown Park, Ratoath, Co. Meath
20	Pat Naughton, 31 Steeplechase Woods, Ratoath, Co. Meath
21	Jimmy Colfer, Kilrue Lane, Kilbride, Kilbride, Dublin 15
22	Peter Gerrard, 64 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
23	Luke Robinson, 12 The Old Mill, Ratoath, Co.Meath
24	Vincent Kavanagh, 69 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
25	Colm Cummins, Lagore Road, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath
26	Paul Phillips, 4 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
27	Mark Fagan, 19 The Road, Foxlodge Woods, Ratoath, Co. Meath
28	Darragh O'Neill, 12 Cherry Tree Drive, Clonee, Co. Meath
29	Martin O'Toole, 43 Woodlands, Ratoath, Co. Meath
30	Willie Creagh, Ballymore, Ratoath, Co. Meath
31	Damien & Susan Ward, 69 The Old Mill, Ratoath, Co.Meath
32	Ritchie Smith, 42 The Old Mill, Ratoath, Co.Meath
33	Cllr Nick Killian, Ballybin, Ratoath, Co. Meath

34	Ratoath Pitch & Putt Club (Bróna Darby, Club Secretary
35	Cllr Nick Killian, Ballybin, Ratoath, Co. Meath
36	Desmond Brady (Brady's Garage) Main Street, Ratoath, Co. Meath
37	Gary & Hazel O'Connor, Oaklands, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath
38	Rita Burtenshaw, 67 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
39	Brian Conway, Quarryland, Dunboyne, Co. Meath
40	Johnny Brady
41	Sean McIntyre, 120 Meadowbank Hill, Ratoath, Co.Meath
42	Barry Breen, Fleenstown, The Ward, Co. Dublin
43	Mark Flood, Dunshaughlin Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
44	Michael Phillips, 29 Corballis Demesne, Ratoath, Co.Meath
45	Martin Gilette, Greenpark Lane, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath
46	Martin Woods, Curragha Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
47	Paul Harris, 36 Coill Beag, Ratoath, Co. Meath
48	Mervyn Ennis, Breifne, Dunshaughlin, Co.Meath
49	Stephen McCormack, Donaghmore, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
50	Cllr Nick Killian, Ballybin, Ratoath, Co. Meath
51	Una Brennan, Ratoath Pitch & Putt Club, Ratoath, Co. Meath
52	Patsy McCabe, Skreen Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
53	Ken Brennan, Skryne Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
54	Martin Lynch, Dunshaughlin Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
55	Patricia [surname illegible] , Cookstown, Ashbourne, Co. Meath
56	Joe Lawless, Swimming Pool Committee, c/o 89 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
57	Brian McCabe, Skreen Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
58	Mr Padraig Halton, Lagore Cross, Ratoath, Co. Meath
59	Pat Naughton, 31 Steeplechase Woods, Ratoath, Co. Meath
60	Pd lane Associates on behalf of Luc Hemeryck, Ardbraccan Glebe, Ardbraccan, Navan, Co. Meath.
61	Noel Farrelly, Curragha Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
62	Ken Fitzsimons, 7 The Gardens, Foxlodge Woods, Ratoath, Co. Meath
63	Ritchie Elliot, 64 The Old Mill, Ratoath, Co. Meath
64	Ian Capriani, 42 Clonkeen, Ratoath, Co. Meath
65	George Williams, Ballybin, Ratoath, Co. Meath
66	Mary Shaffrey, Ongenstown, Bohermeen, Navan, Co. Meath
67	Deaton Lysaght Architects on behalf Miriam McGowan
68	Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, County Cork
69	Derek Boyle, 38 Sommerville Glebe, Kentstown, Co. Meath

70	Kieran Walsh, 114 The Old Mill, Ratoath, Co. Meath
71	Patrick & Margaret Dolan, The Commons, Fairyhouse Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
72	Ratoath Harps, Skryne Road, Ratoath, Co. Meath
73	Cunnane Stratton Reynolds on behalf of Paul O'Brien, Joe McNamara and Robert Butler.
74	Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
75	National Roads Authority
76	Stephen Little & Associates on behalf of the Rybo Partnership
77	Tom Philips & Associates on behalf of Michael Ryan, Edoxtown, Tara and Des Doherty, Robertstown, Ashbourne.
78	Alan Murphy, 89 Jamestown, Ratoath, Co. Meath
79	Mary Quigley on behalf of Clonkeen Residents Association, Fairyhouse Road, Ratoath
80	Donnie Wiley, 47 Meadowbank Hill, Ratoath
81	Moulden Bridge Residents Association
82	Eoin O Ceilleachair, Sheridan Woods on behalf of Woodgreen Builders
83	RPS Planning & Environment on behalf of the Carey Group.
84	Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
85	Declan Brassil & Company Ltd on behalf of Patrick & Marie Ryan, Fox Lodge Ratoath
86	Debbie Whelan, 9th Meath Scout Group
87	Derek Latimer & Associates on behalf of Gerard Gerraghty
88	Cllr Nick Killian on behalf of the Everard family
89	Laurence Fagan, 43 Meadowbank Hill, Ratoath, Co. Meath
90	Tony Murphy, President, Ratoath Rugby Club
91	Department of Education & Science
92	Pauline Byrne

**Persons who made written submissions during the consultation period for the proposed amendments to the draft Ratoath Local Area Plan**

<b>Submission No</b>	
1	National Roads Authority, St. Martin's House, Waterloo Road, Dublin 4.
2	Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Inspectorate, Inniscarra, Co. Cork.
3	Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Elm House, Earlsvale Road, Co. Cavan.
4	Aidan Gleeson, Ardillgan, Raystown, Ashbourne.
5	Eugene Gleeson, Raystown, Ashbourne. Co. Meath.
6	Michael Gleeson, Cloonmore, Raystown, Ashbourne.
7	Cunnane Stratton Reynolds on behalf of Paul O'Brien, Joe McNamara and Robert Butler.



## **Land Use Zoning Objectives**



**RATOATH**  
**Local Area Plan 2009-2015**

**Land Use Zoning Objectives Map**

Incorporating Amendment Number 1  
made on the 2nd of March 2015

**LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES**

- A1  To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
- A2  To provide for new residential communities with ancillary community facilities, neighbourhood facilities and employment uses as considered appropriate for the status of the centre in the Settlement Hierarchy.
- B1  To protect, provide for and / or improve town and village centre facilities and uses.
- D1  To provide for appropriate and sustainable visitor and tourist facilities and associated uses.
- E2  To provide for the creation of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment through industrial, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing and other general employment/enterprise uses in a good quality physical environment.
- F1  To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
- G1  To provide for necessary community, social and educational facilities.

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

-  Local Area Plan Boundary
-  Area subject to preparation of Framework Plan
-  Residential Phase II (Post 2019)
-  Multiple Residential Development Granted Planning Permission.
-  Interface with Flood Risk Zones A & B
-  Major Distributor Road (Indicative Alignment)
-  Access Points
-  Pedestrian Walkways
-  Trees to be preserved
-  Protected Structures
-  Areas of Archaeological interest
- FPOBJ1** Specific Development Objectives (see text)

Note: Details shown on this map is for information purposes only. Further details on any item should be clarified with Meath County Council. This map has been produced by Meath County Council with available Local Authority and Ordnance Survey base data.  
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Scale -  
Not to scale

Mapinfo File:  
O:\Mapdata\Planning\Forward\_Planning\Development\_Plans\Adopted County Development Plan 2013\Local Area Plans

Produced By: S.K [10/14]

