

## CONTENTS

### CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1	Introduction .....	1
1.2	Scope of the Local Area Plan .....	1
1.3	Ashbourne Local Area Plan .....	1
1.4	Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment .....	2
1.5	Contents .....	3
1.6	Pre Draft Consultation .....	3
1.7	Draft Local Area Plan Public Consultation .....	3
1.8	Public Consultation Amendments to Draft Local Area Plan .....	3

### CHAPTER 2: ASHBOURNE IN CONTEXT

2.1	Location and Physical Context .....	4
2.2	Historical Context .....	4
2.3	Present Day Context .....	4
2.4	Urban Form .....	5
2.5	Population Context .....	5
2.6	SWOT Analysis .....	9
2.7	Vision .....	10

### CHAPTER 3: SETTLEMENT STRATEGY AND HOUSING

3.1	Introduction .....	11
3.2	Settlement Policy .....	11
3.3	Settlement Strategy .....	12
3.4	Land Use Zoning Objectives .....	14
3.4.1	Development Management Standards and Guidelines .....	15
3.4.2	Framework Plans .....	16
3.5	Housing .....	17
3.5.1	Introduction .....	17
3.5.2	Residential Development – Key Principles .....	17
3.5.3	Housing Strategy .....	19
3.5.4	Extensions .....	19
3.5.5	Family Flat Extensions .....	20

### CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

4.1	Introduction .....	23
4.2	Employment Context .....	23
4.3	Economic Development .....	24
4.4	Tourism .....	26
4.5	Retail and Commercial Development .....	27
4.5.1	Retail Warehousing .....	30
4.5.2	Local Shopping Facilities .....	31
4.5.3	Petrol Filling Stations .....	32
4.5.4	Fast Food Outlets/Takeaways .....	32
4.5.5	Non Retail Uses .....	33
4.5.6	Access and Facilities in Shopping Centres .....	33
4.5.7	Shopfronts and Advertising .....	34

4.6	Derelict and Obsolete Land and Buildings.....	34
CHAPTER 5: BUILT & NATURAL HERITAGE		
5.1	Introduction .....	36
5.2	Built Heritage .....	36
5.3	Protected Views and Prospects .....	36
5.4	Natural Heritage .....	36
5.5	Archaeological Heritage.....	37
CHAPTER 6: SOCIAL STRATEGY		
6.1	Introduction .....	40
6.2	Educational Facilities .....	40
6.3	Childcare Facilities.....	42
6.4	Healthcare Facilities .....	43
6.5	Recreational, Sport and Leisure Facilities .....	44
6.6	Open Space .....	46
6.6.1	Open Space Standards in Residential Areas .....	46
6.7	Library Facilities.....	48
6.8	Arts and Culture .....	49
6.9	Burial Grounds .....	50
6.10	Fire Service .....	50
CHAPTER 7: INFRASTRUCTURE		
7.1	Introduction .....	51
7.2	Transport .....	51
7.2.1	National and Regional Roads .....	52
7.2.2	Distributor and Local Roads.....	52
7.2.3	New Road Schemes and Proposed Works .....	52
7.2.4	Pedestrians and Cyclists.....	54
7.2.6	Public Transport.....	55
7.2.3	Parking and Loading .....	56
7.3	Street Furniture and Lighting .....	56
7.4	Keeping the Streets Clean .....	56
7.5	Water Supply .....	57
7.6	Sewerage Treatment and Disposal.....	58
7.7	Surface Water Management .....	59
7.8	Flooding.....	59
7.9	Telecommunications.....	61
7.10	Broadband .....	61
7.11	Solid Waste Collection and Disposal.....	62
7.12	Energy .....	63
CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING		
8.1	Introduction .....	64
8.2	Phasing.....	64
8.3	Contributions .....	64
8.4	Monitoring and Review .....	64

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening Documents
- Appendix 2 List of Persons who made Submissions during the consultation phases in the preparation of the Local Area Plan
- Appendix 3 Zoning Matrix

MAPS

- Land Use Zoning Objectives Map

## CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Scope of the Local Area Plan
- 1.3 Draft Ashbourne Local Area Plan
- 1.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment
- 1.5 Contents
- 1.6 Pre-Draft Consultation

## 1.1 Introduction

This Local Area Plan relates to the town of Ashbourne. Specific planning policy relating to Ashbourne is currently contained in the Detailed Objectives, Written Statement and Urban Detail Map for the town which was prepared for the Meath County Development Plan 2001 and which has been transposed to the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 pending preparation of a new Local Area Plan. It is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan (2007- 2013) that all Local Area Plans will be prepared within the immediate two years following the adoption of the County Development Plan (March 2007).

This Plan consists of a written statement accompanied by a zoning and objectives map. It will guide development in the area for 6 years from the date of adoption by Meath County Council, or until the Plan is varied or a new Plan is made.

## 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 2000-2006 and with the objectives of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013. 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 Ashbourne, 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 Ashbourne 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 maps illustrate a graphic representation of the proposals included in the Plan, indicating land-use and conservation designations together with various specific objectives. Survey maps may not always be entirely accurate, and in the case of conflicts between the maps and the statement, the statement shall supersede the maps.

The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 forms the key contextual document used in the preparation of this LAP. Meath County Council adopted the County Development Plan (CDP) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2007. The Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 sets out a vision, policy framework and specific objectives for future development in County Meath for a period of 6 years. 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 contents of the two documents.

#### 1.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is carried out in response to the requirements of the European Communities, Council Directive of 2001 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, Directive 2001/42/EC, which came into effect on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2004. The enabling statutory instruments (S.I's) which transpose this Directive into Irish law are the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I 435 of 2004), and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004). SEA outlines the environmental effects of implementing a Local Area Plan prior to its adoption; therefore SEA is carried out in respect of decisions yet to be made. Local Area Plans are required to undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment if they meet the set criteria included in Article 14B of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as inserted by Article 7 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, S.I. 436 of 2004.

The current population of Ashbourne and its environs, as per the geo-directory, is 12,153 persons. Article 14B of the Planning and Development Regulations applies to Local Area Plans for any area where the population is more than 10,000 persons and outlines the requirements in respect of environmental assessment. In these circumstances the Planning Authority shall carry out an environmental assessment as part of the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Ashbourne. The output from this, the Environmental Report, is available as a separate document to this Local Area Plan.

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 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 Ashbourne or adjoining or in close proximity to the settlement. It was not considered that the proposed Local Area Plan will

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 once the Plan is completed. (Appendix 1 contains a copy of the Appropriate Assessment screening documents prepared for the draft LAP and proposed amendments to the draft LAP.)

## 1.5 Contents

The Local Area Plan is structured in a manner which takes account 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 (as amended) and is set out in a sequential form dealing with context, settlement strategy and housing, economic development, heritage, social strategy, infrastructure and phasing and implementation.

## 1.6 Pre Draft Consultation

A period of pre draft consultation for the Ashbourne 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. 60 written submissions were made during this time. A public event was also held in the Ashbourne Civic Office on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2008. A list of those persons who made formal submissions during the pre draft consultation period is included in Appendix 2. The details of these submissions and the response and recommendation of the Manager to each of them can be found in the document 'Pre Draft Consultation Document Ashbourne Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015'.

## 1.7 Draft Local Area Plan Public Consultation

The Ashbourne Local Area Plan was placed on display from 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2009 to 6<sup>th</sup> April 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 88 written submissions were received. The details of these submissions and the response and recommendation of the County Manager can be found in the documents 'Manager's report on submissions received in respect of the Draft Ashbourne Local Area Plan 2009-2015' and 'Addendum to Manager's Report to the Members on submissions received in respect of the Draft Ashbourne Local Area Plan 2009 – 2015'. A list of those persons who made submissions on the draft Local Area Plan 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 29<sup>th</sup> June to 27<sup>th</sup> July. A total of 18 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 on the proposed amendments to the draft Local Area Plan is included in Appendix 2.

## CHAPTER 2: ASHBOURNE IN CONTEXT



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 2.1 Location & 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 & Physical Context

Ashbourne is situated close to the Meath-Dublin county boundary on the N2 National Primary Route, 23 km from Dublin City Centre, 19 km from Dublin Airport and 32km from Navan. It is located in the Donaghmore and Kilbrew Electoral Divisions which are within the Dunshaughlin Electoral Area.

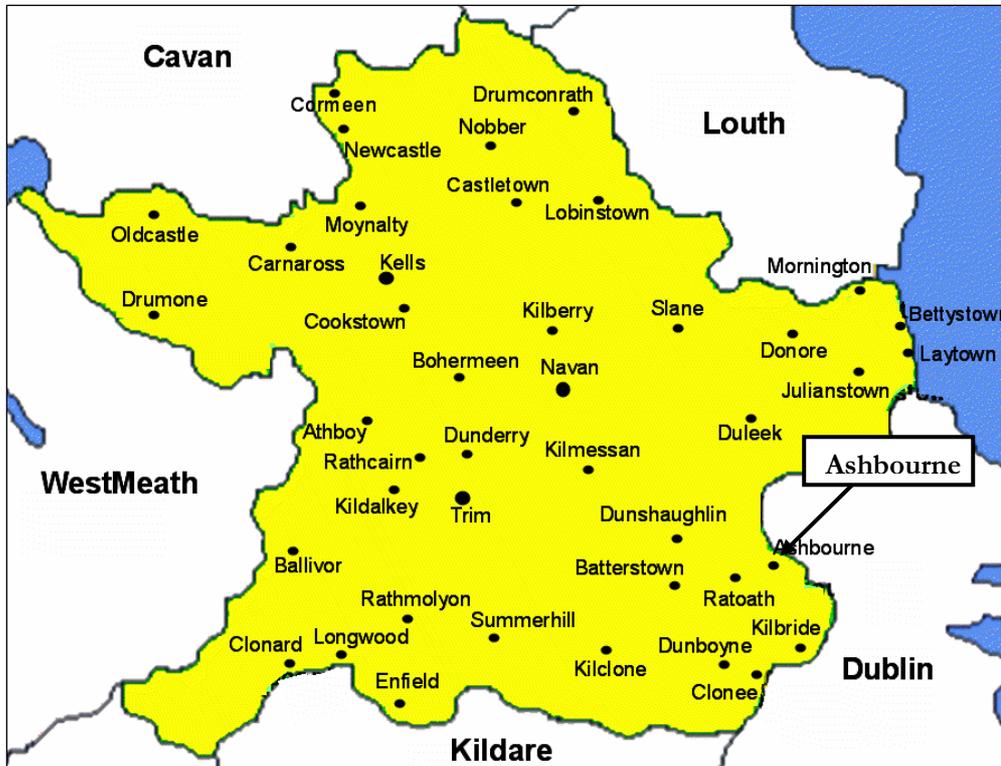


Figure 1: Map indicating the location of Ashbourne in Co. Meath<sup>1</sup>

### 2.1 Historical Context

The Gaelicised form of Ashbourne is Cill Dhéagláin meaning Church of Saint Declan. The earliest settlement in the site of modern day Ashbourne was known as “Cill Dheachlain” or Killelland, which gives its name to the present townland. In 1790 the Dublin Engineer Richard Bourne was commissioned to realign the mail coach road, acquired land and proceeded to develop it and subsequently renamed the settlement Ashbourne by adding the prefix “ash” to his surname. The village remained as a single street with some ribbon development until the 1970s. During the 1970s, a series of estates at the southern end of the town were built to a design for a “Garden City” by Geoffrey Copcutt.

### 2.2 Present Day Context

Ashbourne has undergone a rapid transformation in recent years, from a small village to become part of the commuter belt of Dublin. Ashbourne is now Meath’s second largest town after Navan and the largest town in the new Meath East Dáil constituency, which elects 3 TDs to the Dáil. This growth is a result of the rapid construction of several new housing schemes - most notably several apartment blocks scattered throughout the town

<sup>1</sup> Source: [www.goingout.ie/meath/meath.htm](http://www.goingout.ie/meath/meath.htm)

and a number of new housing estates. A series of shopping streets have been developed as part of a scheme focused on building a new retail centre for the town. Prior to this development, commercial development in the town was stifled given the fact that the town was bisected by a busy national primary route, the N2, on to which all commercial development was focused. This restricted the town's potential to attract high street retailers due to the lack of suitable sites and associated traffic hazards of the N2. Of the streets developed in Ashbourne's "new" town centre, Killeglad Street, has become a new commercial street containing a number of varied retail units along with a new library and council offices. Bridge Street, an existing street between the Broadmeadow River and the Ashbourne House Hotel, contained just three dwellings and no retail outlets eight years ago and now has five shops, a large hotel, apartments and a supermarket. This is typical of the rapid pace of development in Ashbourne throughout the past decade. A large retail unit has opened on the former Dardis & Dunns seed merchant site on the northern end of Frederick/Main Street as part of the Ashbourne Town Centre development and is accessible from both Frederick Street, across from Ashbourne's original Town Centre and Killeglad Square, linking the new retail area to the established town centre.

### 2.3 Urban Form

Ashbourne's urban form has been transformed over the past decade with the introduction of the new town centre and accompanying access routes. The town was further expanded with the construction of many new residential estates on the outskirts. The scale of the built environment is relatively mixed emphasising the division between the new and old developments. In older longer established sectors of the town, predominantly along the N2 two-three storey structures dominate, with red brick and plaster featuring largely. Recent development in the town have resulted in the introduction of modern architectural urban elements consisting of higher densities (4 storey) into the built environment, which complement the existing charm and character of the town.



Ashbourne Town Centre

### 2.4 Population Context

The standard source for population statistics is the census information published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). During the last recorded block (2002-2006), Ashbourne experienced significant population growth of 34%. During this period there was an

increase in the overall population from 6,362 persons to 8,528 persons. An Post Geodirectory data indicates that the current population of Ashbourne 12,153 persons.

Ashbourne is split between two Electoral Divisions with the bulk of the town located within the Donaghmore Electoral Division and the northern environs of the town situated within Kilbrew. It should be noted that the boundaries of both of these divisions extend beyond the development boundary for the town as defined in the map associated with this Local Area Plan. Some of the population characteristics of these two electoral divisions are outlined hereunder.

The population of the Donaghmore and Kilbrew Electoral Divisions is comparatively youthful when compared to the County and the State as a whole. The Donaghmore population has a greater proportion of the population aged between 10 to 29 years and a lower proportion of the population aged 65 and over while Kilbrew is notable for the significantly greater proportion of its population in the 25-34 age bracket (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Population distribution of Donaghmore, Kilbrew County Meath and the State**

Age	% of population within Age Range			
	Donaghmore	Kilbrew	Meath	State
00-04	6.9	7.9	8.7	7.1
05-09	6.6	6.3	7.9	6.8
10-14	7.2	5.8	6.8	6.5
15-19	8.3	5.8	6.5	6.9
20-24	9.7	7.8	6.9	8.1
25-29	9.3	15.3	8.7	8.8
30-34	8.6	12.8	9.5	8.2
35-39	8.3	8.4	8.8	7.6
40-44	8.1	6.9	7.7	7.1
45-49	7.0	5	6.4	6.5
50-54	6.8	4.1	5.5	5.8
55-59	5.3	3.9	4.8	5.3
60-64	3.3	3.5	3.8	4.3
65-69	1.7	1.5	2.6	3.4
70-74	1.2	1.9	2.0	2.8
75-79	0.8	1.2	1.5	2.2
80-84	0.5	1	1.1	1.5
85+	0.3	0.9	0.8	1.1

Table 2 below indicates the population of the Donaghmore and Kilbrew Electoral Divisions according to principal economic status. The majority of the population were classified as being at work with the percentage in this category slightly higher for Kilbrew. Donaghmore has a higher proportion of the population in the category of student. Sales workers and professional workers are the predominant industries that inhabitants of the Donaghmore Electoral Division are engaged in (see Table 3).

**Table 2: Population of Donaghmore and Kilbrew aged 15 years and over according to principal economic status**

	% of persons aged 15 years and over by principal economic status	
	Donaghmore	Kilbrew
At work	67.3	70.4
Looking for first regular job	1.0	0.9
Unemployed having lost or given up previous job	2.7	3.2
Student	11.2	7.8
Looking after home/family	9.9	8.8
Retired	5.4	6.5
Unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability	2.4	1.9
Other	0.1	0.5

**Table 3: Population of Donaghmore and Kilbrew according to occupation**

	%of population at work by occupation	
	Donaghmore	Kilbrew
Farming, fishing and forestry managers	0.7	2.8
Other agricultural workers	0.5	0.7
Manufacturing workers	12.2	12.2
Building and construction workers	9.2	9.5
Clerical and office workers	11.1	10.8
Administrative and Government workers	12.5	12.2
Transport workers	8.3	6.5
Sales workers	14.4	15.0
Professional workers	14	15.7
Services workers	9.8	9.4
Other workers	7.3	5.2

Census data also reveals that significant numbers of people in the Donaghmore and Kilbrew EDs are travelling more than 15km to work, school and college in comparison to County Meath and the State as a whole (see Table 4). However, a substantial portion of the Donaghmore population also travels a distance of 1 kilometre to school, college or work. This figure could be accounted for by the presence of the majority of Ashbourne town within the Donaghmore ED which contains primary and secondary schools in proximity to residential areas.

Data on the mode of transport to work, school and transport illustrates the reliance on the private car for travel to work, school and college and given the high percentage in the category of car driver, suggests a particular usage of the private car for travel to work (see

Table 5). There is also a significant proportion of people in the Donaghmore ED who travel to school, college or work on foot. As mentioned previously, the bulk of Ashbourne town is situated within the Donaghmore ED and this figure could be linked to the relative proximity between residential areas and schools and employment sources in the town.

**Table 4: Distance travelled to work, school and college**

	Distance travelled to school, college or work for persons aged 5 years and over (% of population)								
	0 km	1 km	2 to 4 km	5 to 9 km	10 to 14 km	15 to 24 km	25 to 49 km	50 km & over	Not stated
Donaghmore	0.7	16.1	11.8	5.1	9.3	27.3	13.5	1.9	14.3
Kilbrew	0.7	6.3	11.0	11.0	8.7	23.6	19.0	2.3	17.4
Meath	1	9	13.8	11.1	8.8	13.1	17.5	8.9	16.8
State	1	10.8	19.4	15.8	10.3	10.4	7.9	3.9	20.5

**Table 5: Means of travel to work, school and college**

	Means of travel for persons aged 5 years and over to school, college or work (% of population)								
	On foot	Bicycle	Bus, minibus or coach	Train, DART or LUAS	Motorcycle or scooter	Car driver	Car passenger	Other	Not stated
Donaghmore	20.9	0.8	11.9	0.2	0.8	45.1	12.7	6.5	1.1
Kilbrew	9.5	0.4	14.5	0.1	0.6	48.8	16.1	8.8	1.2

The Census 2006 found that the national average household size was 2.8 persons. The 2006 Census states that Meath County has 53,938 private households, with an average size of 3.0 persons, which is slightly above state average. The corresponding figures for Donaghmore and Kilbrew are 3.1 and 2.8 respectively.

It is not envisaged that the population of Ashbourne will continue to grow at the same rate experienced in recent years during the period of this Local Area Plan, due to restrictions in services provision, especially water and waste water infrastructure. It is hoped that this plan period will act as a time of consolidation, whereby it will be a primary objective of the LAP to further develop employment opportunities to support the new community and to capitalise on the strategic location of Ashbourne in a regional context.

The Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 has set out a settlement strategy which will affect household formation in Ashbourne up to 2013 (Table 6 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007–2013 refers). The strategy conveys the household and population distribution framework for each settlement centre (see Chapter 3). It is envisaged that future household formation will conform to the population target set out in County Development Plan.

## 2.5 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
- Vibrant town centre
- Third level institutes in neighbouring counties
- Attractive place to live
- Proximity to seaports and Dublin airport
- Presence of many support agencies to assist all sectors: Training; Marketing Product-Development; Management and Business Development and Financial assistance.

### Weaknesses

- Integration of new and old town centres
- Traffic and pedestrian safety
- Scale of new residential development
- Lack of community facilities
- Low level of foreign investment
- No third level centre
- Infrastructural constraints

### Opportunities

- Improve commercial and employment base
- Improve traffic calming and pedestrian safety
- Environmental enhancement
- Conserve and enhance the natural heritage
- Provide physical and social infrastructure linked to development
- Further education provision
- Local/regional construction projects
- Young, highly skilled labour force
- Pressures for strategic decentralisation by private sector firms from Dublin
- NDP infrastructure programme

### Threats

- Unrestrained growth
- Loss of town scale/character
- Competition from other GDA towns;
- Delays in provision of key items of infrastructure
- Lack of uptake of investment opportunities in tourism development
- Lack of entrepreneurship

## 2.6 Vision

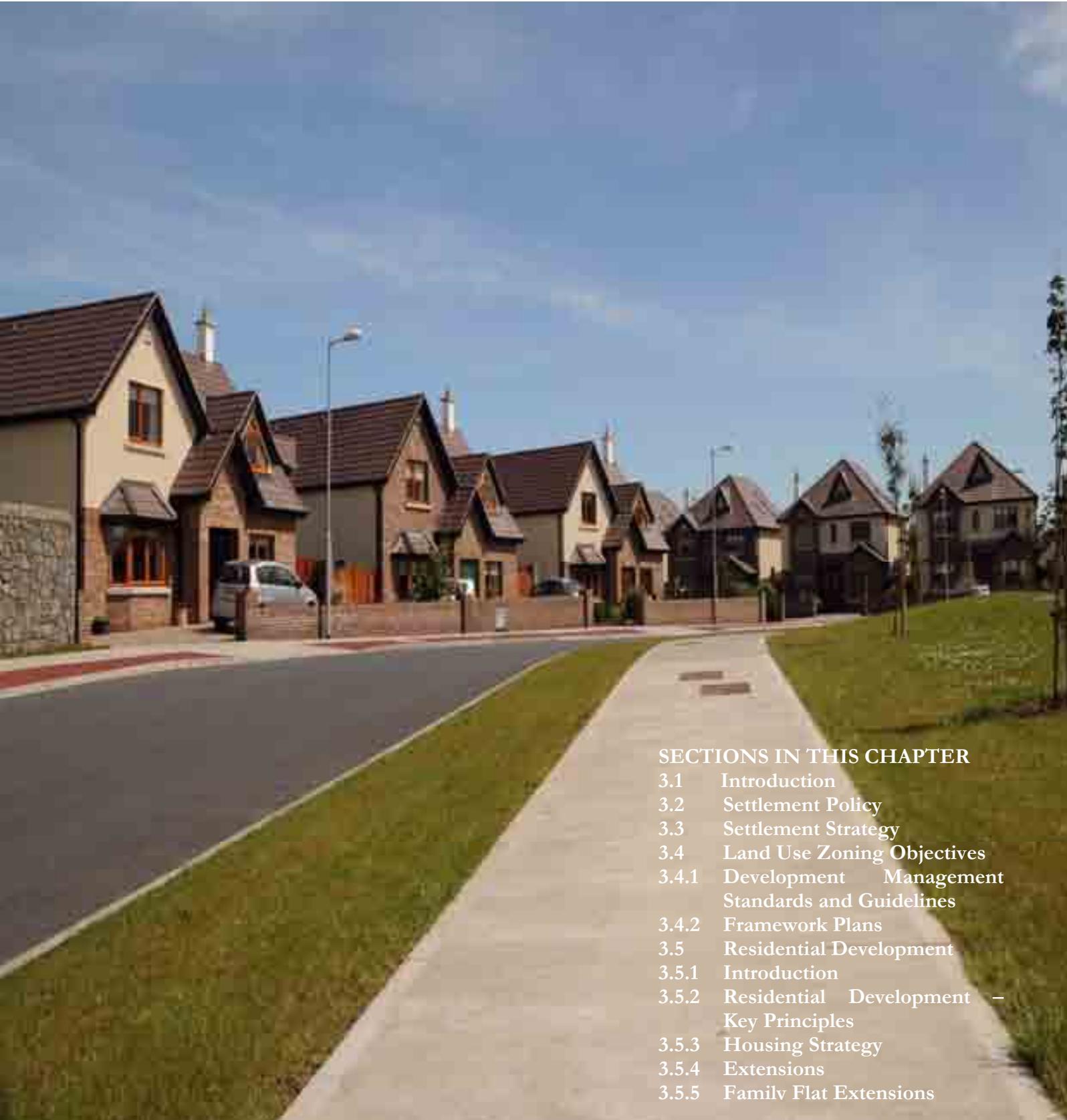
The overall vision for Ashbourne is to ensure that future development is sustainable. The provision of community facilities will be a key focus of this Local Area Plan as well as the creation and upgrade of recreation and leisure facilities. The establishment of new local based employment will be encouraged to meet residential growth. The Plan aims to ensure the continued vitality and viability of the town, preserving the existing high standard of retail services and encouraging the establishment of new neighbourhood/local retail services. The Plan will also ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural and built heritage of the town.

The settlement strategy will ensure that the Ashbourne Local Area Plan accords with the policy framework contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013.

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

Sustainability:	To provide and accommodate the social, cultural and economic development of the town without compromising such aims for future generations.
Competitiveness:	To promote Ashbourne as part of a dynamic economic cluster with Dunshaughlin and Ratoath.
Quality of Life:	To promote social, cultural and educational facilities/amenities and encourage the development of a vibrant community spirit.
Quality of Environment:	To protect and promote areas of quality built and natural environment through education and investment.
Social Inclusion:	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 Residential Development
  - 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 Ashbourne Local Area Plan sets out Meath County Council's strategic vision for the future development of Ashbourne 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 2007-2013.

### 3.2 Settlement Policy

The overall strategic settlement policy for Ashbourne is governed by the approach of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013. Ashbourne is designated as a Moderate Growth Town in the settlement hierarchy for the County. Moderate Growth Towns are envisaged as having an interacting and supporting role to their adjacent Large Town. In the case of Ashbourne, this role would be between the primary dynamic cluster of Ashbourne, Ratoath and Dunshaughlin with the Large Growth Town of Dunboyne/Clonee/Pace. The Development Plan states that it is critical that Moderate Growth Towns would develop in a self sufficient sustainable manner in the longer term and that the continued basis for their growth is that they do not become dormitory towns for the Metropolitan Area. In these instances, residential development would only be permitted if sufficient progress is made in providing employment, retail, social and community facilities within the settlement. In relation to Moderate Growth Towns in the Hinterland Area, such as Ashbourne, the Development Plan specifically states that their development must be closer aligned to significant growth in local employment opportunities.

The Development Plan elaborates on the future development role for Ashbourne. The town is considered to constitute a strategic location for additional growth on the basis of its proximity to Dublin (13 miles to O'Connell Street), its economic and employment base and its location on the N2 Finglas to Ashbourne Dual Carriageway. However, there remain significant water service constraints which require regional solutions and Meath County Council are dependent on adjoining Local Authorities to resolve these constraints. Further descriptive policy for Ashbourne states, having regard to the extent of committed residential development in Ashbourne, which the Planning Authority estimate to be 2,246 units, to desist zoning additional residential lands in the review of the Local Area Plan which can be released prior to the development and occupation of the majority (80%) of existing industrial and employment generating land uses and the completion of the Ashbourne Town Centre Redevelopment. It is considered that the completion of the Ashbourne to Finglas N2 Dual Carriageway offers significant employment generating potential for uses dependent on good access to the national primary road network and to the Dublin market.

Settlement Strategy Policy SP2 of the County Development Plan states *“To ensure that all of the Large Growth Towns and Moderate Growth Towns will in so far as practical be self sufficient incorporating employment activities, sufficient retail services and social and community facilities. Residential development will only be permitted if sufficient progress is made in providing employment, retail, social and community facilities within the settlement. The Elected Members of the Planning Authority shall resolve to agree a series of monitoring measures in this regard within 6 months of the adoption of this Development Plan. The Council will give consideration to the capacity of existing appropriately zoned, serviceable and undeveloped land to deliver sustainable mixed use communities in advance of zoning previously unzoned greenfield land for new development.”*

As mentioned above, Ashbourne is also identified as being within a dynamic cluster with Dunshaughlin and Ratoath (South-Meath Fringe). Five such clusters are identified across the County and these locations are where economic development is to be channelled in the first instance. A number of actions are identified to assist in reinforcing these centres as a dynamic cluster. Some of these specifically refer to Ashbourne while the Local Area Plan process is specifically identified as a mechanism for delivery of a number of the actions, including:

- Zone 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 Ashbourne, Dunshaughlin and Ratoath and to assist in marketing, creating critical mass and avoid duplication of necessary infrastructure and services.
- To carry out an examination of land uses at the existing roundabouts of Rath and Nine-Mile-Stone with a view to guiding and managing their future development in partnership with relevant stakeholders including the National Roads Authority. The examination shall be required to be cognisant of the need to safeguard the carrying capacity and current investment in the national roads network.
- Develop Ashbourne as a sub-regional shopping centre and to implement the County Retail Strategy with respect to this cluster.
- Enhance social infrastructure provision e.g. housing, health and schools.
- Create a self-sufficient critical mass ensuring adequate lands are zoned for a multiplicity of uses and that densities are appropriate to each location.

### 3.3 Settlement Strategy

Table 6 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 Ashbourne is included in Table 6 below.

**Table 6: Household Projections for Ashbourne**

Urban Centre	Planning Permission Granted – No Construct. Started	Houses Under Construct.	Committed No. of Units	Projected Number of H'holds 2006 - 2009	Projected Number of H'holds 2010 - 2013	Total 2006 - 2013	No. of Units to Meet H'hold Targets	Remain. Undev. Resid. Zoned Land (Ha)	Density per hectare	Yield of Remaining Undev. Resid. Zoned Land
Ashbourne	1,701	545	2,246	1,700	900	2,600	354	11	35	389

The 'Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2007) state that "planning authorities should take all reasonable steps to ensure that sufficient zoned residential land is available throughout the lifetime of the development plan and beyond to meet anticipated needs and allow for an element of choice. In particular, to ensure continuity of supply of zoned residential land, planning authorities should ensure that at the time they make a development plan, enough land will be available to meet residential needs for the next nine years. In this way, development plans will provide for sufficient zoned land to meet not just the expected demand arising within the development plan period of

six years, but will also provide for the equivalent of 3 years demand beyond the date on which the current plan ceases to have effect.”

The Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, through analysis of household projections and the take up of zoned land, considered the need for zoning of additional lands in the urban centres of the county beyond that shown in the zoning maps attached to the 2001 County Development Plan. The conclusion was that the majority of centres contained adequate lands, if released and serviced, to cater for the projected growth in households and population in the County. However, it was noted that additional lands may be required to be identified in Ashbourne to provide the headroom of 50%. Based on the figures in Table 6 including indicative density, it is estimated that an additional 4.5 hectares of residential zoned land would provide 50% headroom. The scope for additional zoning is therefore quite limited in Ashbourne in order for development to remain within the confines of the population and households projections contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013.

In order to provide adequate headroom, lands are zoned for residential use in Milltown, to the southeast of the town. These lands are contiguous to the existing development boundary for Ashbourne and are accessed from the R135. The development of these lands is linked to the delivery of necessary social and community infrastructure, namely the provision of a primary school on a site of 1.6 hectares and lands for recreational purposes. The development of these lands shall be undertaken in accordance with an approved framework plan which shall indicate the overall distribution of the uses on the site, building footprints, road and services layout (see also Section 3.4.2). The location of these lands is indicated on the zoning map (Framework Plan Area 2 refers).

Lands are also zoned for residential use adjacent to the Golfclub. A buffer zone has been provided along the eastern boundary of the residential zoned lands to the west of the Golfclub to prevent ball trespass. (SOC OBJ 12 refers). Additional residential lands are reserved to the northeast of the town adjacent to Archerstown Wood.

A small portion of residential lands are also identified to the north of St. Mary’s school. Existing residential areas to the south and south east of the town are recognised with an A1 zoning to protect and enhance the amenities of existing residential development.

### **Policies**

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

SS POL 1	To facilitate the continued development of Ashbourne as a Moderate Growth Town.
SS POL 2	To promote the development of Ashbourne in so far as is practicable to be self sufficient incorporating employment activities, retail services and community facilities.
SS POL3	Residential development in Ashbourne will only be permitted in accordance with Table 6 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013.

## Objectives

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

SS OBJ 1	To promote a more compact urban form in Ashbourne and to prevent urban sprawl.
SS OBJ 2	To provide sufficient and appropriately located lands for employment, commercial and community facilities in Ashbourne.
SS OBJ 3	To ensure the provision of adequate sanitary services and other urban infrastructure to cater for the growth in demand for such facilities.
SS OBJ 4	To encourage and promote integration and consolidation of the old and new sections of Ashbourne town centre.
SS OBJ 5	To promote the public realm and amenities of Ashbourne so that the quality of life for residents can be improved.

### 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 Ashbourne. The land use zoning categories used in this LAP are the same as those contained in the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013. The categories in place in Ashbourne are indicated below:

**Table 7: Land Use Zoning Objectives**

Use Zone Objective	Use Zone Objective
A1	To protect and enhance the amenity of developed residential communities.
A2	To provide for new residential communities and community facilities and protect the amenities of existing residential areas in accordance with an approved framework plan.
A5	To provide for low density residential development in accordance with an approved framework plans and individual dwelling design.
B1	To protect and enhance the special physical and social character of existing town and village centres and to provide for new and improved town centre facilities and uses.
B3	To protect, provide for and improve local and neighbourhood shopping facilities.
B4	To provide for the development of a retail warehouse park in accordance with an approved framework plan and subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
C1	To provide for and facilitate mixed residential and business uses in existing mixed use central business areas.
D1	To provide for visitor and tourist facilities and associated uses.
E1	To provide for industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.
E2	To provide for light industrial and industrial office type employment in a high quality campus environment subject to the requirements of approved framework plans and the provision of necessary physical infrastructure.

<b>F1</b>	To provide for and improve open spaces for active and passive recreational amenities.
<b>G1</b>	To provide for necessary community, recreational and educational facilities.

Reference should be made to the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 for the matrix of uses set out for each zoning category and the explanatory notes for each category. A copy of the zoning matrix is included in Appendix 2. The zoning matrix provides guidelines for assessing land-use compatibility. However, the suitability or not of individual proposals can only be evaluated on the basis of particular applications where the type, level and overall impacts of the scheme on the environment, residential amenity and traffic can adequately be assessed. However the zoning objectives do indicate the suitability in principal of definite uses in individual zones, and the unacceptability of others. Over a wide range of uses, the compatibility of the proposal to the zoning objective can only be assessed by the individual circumstances.

#### 3.4.1 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 2007 – 2013, 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 Ashbourne. 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.

Reference should also be made to other relevant sections of this Plan which refer to issues such as shopfronts and advertising, 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 and urban design for new development in Ashbourne.
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### 3.4.2 Framework Plans

There are five 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 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.

#### Framework Plan Area 1

This area relates to lands at Milltown encompassing the existing community centre and adjoining lands. It is intended that this area shall provide enhanced community facilities and residential development. The framework plan for these lands shall include inter alia:

- A comprehensive landscaping scheme.
- Details of overall site and building layout.
- Provision of adequate public lighting and footpaths throughout the lands
- High quality design, finish and layout.

- Infrastructural requirements including access for vehicle, pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities, car parking and vehicle turning.
- Types of uses to be accommodated on the lands including community facilities, open space and residential development.

#### Framework Plan Area 2

This framework plan relates to lands at Milltown to the south of Ashbourne and extends to 19.73 ha in area. It is intended that these lands shall provide a primary school site, lands for recreational purposes and residential development. The framework plan for these lands shall include, inter alia:

- Low density residential development with individual dwelling design on A5 zoned lands.
- A comprehensive landscaping scheme.
- Details of overall site and building layout.
- A mix of uses to include a primary school site of 1.6 hectares, 12.63 hectares of residential development and 5.5 hectares of lands for playing pitches and recreational lands to be available to the primary school and the general public.
- Provision of adequate public lighting and footpaths throughout the lands
- High quality design, finish and layout.
- Infrastructural requirements including access for vehicle, pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities, car parking and vehicle turning.

#### Framework Plan Area 3

This framework plan relates to lands at Ashbourne Business Park extending to 47.4 ha in area. It is intended that these lands shall provide for light industrial and industrial office type employment in a high quality campus environment. The framework plan for these lands shall include, inter alia:

- A comprehensive landscaping scheme.
- Details of overall site and building layout.
- Provision of adequate public lighting and footpaths throughout the lands.
- High quality design, finish and layout.
- Infrastructural and services requirements including access for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities, car parking and vehicle turning.
- Access via the existing entrance off the L5018 or utilising existing access points onto the national road network. Access arrangements shall be determined as part of the framework plan.
- Provision of a civic amenity site (objective ECON DEV OBJ9 refers).
- Provision of a machinery/storage depot of approximately 0.5 hectares/1 acre (objective ECON DEV OBJ10 refers).

#### Framework Plan Area 4

This framework plan relates to lands off the L5018 to the northwest of the Ashbourne Business Park. These lands extend to 32.7 ha in area. It is intended that these lands shall

provide for light industrial and industrial office type employment in a high quality campus environment. The framework plan for these lands shall include inter alia:

- A comprehensive landscaping scheme.
- Details of overall site and building layout.
- Provision of adequate public lighting and footpaths throughout the lands.
- High quality design, finish and layout.
- Infrastructural requirements including access for vehicle, pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities, car parking and vehicle turning.
- Access via the existing entrance off the L5018 or utilising existing access points onto the national road network. Access arrangements shall be determined as part of the framework plan

#### Framework Plan Area 5

This framework plan relates to lands extending to 9.82 ha east of the M2 bypass opposite Ashbourne Industrial Estate. It is intended that these lands shall provide for industrial and related uses subject to the provision of necessary physical infrastructure. The framework plan for these lands shall include, inter alia:

- High quality design, finish and layout with particular regard to visibility from the M2.
- A comprehensive landscaping scheme.
- Details of overall site and building layout.
- Provision of adequate public lighting and footpaths throughout the lands
- Infrastructural requirements including access for vehicle, pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities, car parking and vehicle turning.
- Access off the L5018

#### **Objective**

In respect of settlement strategy, it shall be an objective of Meath County Council:

SS OBJ 6: To prepare Framework Plans for lands designated FP1, FP 2, FP 3, FP4, and FP5 (as detailed above), in co-operation with relevant stakeholders, and to actively secure the implementation of these plans and the achievement of the specific objectives indicated below. Development of these lands shall only proceed on the basis of an agreed overall Framework Plan, the availability of water and waste water services and associated infrastructure including the phased provision of these services. The Framework plans shall be drawn up and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the approval of any applications on these lands. They will facilitate the integration of individual applications with the overall development objective for each area. It shall be a requirement of the Planning Authority that all development proposals are in accordance with the provisions of the Framework Plan.

## 3.5 Housing

### 3.5.1 Introduction

The Planning Authorities have a statutory obligation to ensure that sufficient land is zoned for all types of housing to meet the towns 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 Ashbourne 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 Moderate Growth Town under the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013. 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 2007-2013.

### 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 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 Ashbourne.

The successful design of a good quality sustainable housing protect depends on the balance struck between a range of factors as detailed below:

**Place:** Design that respects history, geology, and its natural landscape and encourages individual character of a development and a sense of belonging of development to a place. It discourages soulless, anonymous development.

**Public Space:** A recognition that the design of public area including ‘Street Furniture’, signage, and lighting, is as important as the design of private spaces, and any design shall have cognisance of this.

**Permeability:** Urban design in which blocks of buildings are fully permeated by an interconnected street network. This allows for ease of access and a greater spread of traffic movement and effectively discourages inefficient movement and an oppressive sense of impenetrability.

**Hierarchy:** A clear and legible ordering system which recognises a hierarchy between different types of buildings or roads and their individual parts.

**Longevity:** Design that creates streets and buildings that will cope with a variety of uses during their lifetime.

**Scale:** Towns and buildings which, whatever their size, relate to human proportions. A relationship between people and their built environment is encouraged whilst a feeling of being overwhelmed and alienated is discouraged.

**Enclosure:** Design which establishes a clear distinction between town and country, public and private space, thus encouraging appropriate activities within each where public area are suitably supervised by design. This encourages safe environments and the full and appropriate use of available space whilst discouraging wasteland and degraded no-go areas.

**Decoration:** Design that encourages visual identity and interest, as well as fine craftsmanship and discourages functional anonymity.

**Community:** Meeting people's needs, desires and aspirations and engendering civic pride. A proactive, holistic approach to planning is thereby encouraged whilst a reactive, piecemeal approach to planning and a compromised result is actively discouraged.

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 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas'. The Planning Authority will have regard to the contents of these documents 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 10 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013, ‘Development Management Guidelines and Standards’ and are applicable to Ashbourne.

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 2007 is incorporated into Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 (Chapter 5 refers). The Housing Strategy is a county wide strategy and therefore its contents are applicable to Ashbourne.

Section 96 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 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 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 of 20%. As per the County Housing Strategy, a ratio of 5% social housing and 15% affordable housing shall apply in Ashbourne.

### 3.5.4 Extensions

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

- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (1999) publication on ‘Residential Density – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ in considering the existing site density and remaining private open space.
- 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.
- 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 or sold, 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.

#### **Policies**

In terms of Residential Development, it is the policy of Meath County Council:	
RES POL 1	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
RES POL 2	To encourage the development of mixed and balanced communities to avoid areas of social exclusion.
RES POL 3	To achieve a mix of housing types and sizes in the consideration of individual planning applications for residential development and in development of the Council's own housing stock.
RES POL 4	To ensure that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are provided for in the design of layouts in residential areas.
RES POL 5	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.

RES POL 6	To have regard to the “Social Housing Design Guidelines” (DoEHLG 1999).
RES POL 7	To integrate new social housing into the existing social and urban fabric of Ashbourne.
RES POL 8	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.
RES POL 9	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.
RES POL 10	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.
RES POL 11	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.
RES POL 12	To require that 20% 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.
RES POL 13	<p>To require that developers comply with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, through the following options. For conventional housing development, the options available to satisfy the requirements of the Housing Strategy are:</p> <p>(a) The direct provision of the required number of housing units on the site which is the subject of the planning application to the Council on completion as determined in accordance with the Strategy, integrated as part of the overall development of a site;</p> <p>(b) The transfer of a portion of the site which is the subject of the planning application to the Council enabling the Council to provide the appropriate number of units thereon in satisfaction of the requirements of the Strategy;</p> <p>(c) The disposal of a number of fully or partially serviced sites within the site which is the subject of the 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 Strategy or</p> <p>(d) A combination of the doing of 2 or more of the options referred to in paragraphs (a) to (c) above.</p> <p>The other options provided for under the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2002 will only be accepted for apartments that do not have ground floor own door</p>

access and under exceptional circumstances for conventional housing developments at the request and prior written agreement of the Planning Authority. Where the transfer of land, serviced or partially serviced sites or of completed houses at a location other than where the scheme which is being developed, the location of same should be within the Dunshaughlin Electoral Area.

### **Objectives**

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

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| RES OBJ 1 | To ensure that future residential development in Ashbourne complies with Table 6 of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013.   |
| RES OBJ 2 | 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. |
| RES OBJ 3 | To achieve better and more appropriate mixes of dwelling size, type tenure and accessibility in all new residential development.   |
| RES OBJ 4 | To continue to implement the “Meath Local Authorities Action Plan Social and Affordable Housing 2004 - 2008” and any subsequent Action Plan adopted during the life of this Development Plan.  |

## CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Employment Context
- 4.4 Economic Development
- 4.4 Tourism
- 4.5 Retail and Commercial Development
- 4.5.1 Retail Warehousing
- 4.5.2 Local Shopping Facilities
- 4.5.3 Petrol Filling Stations
- 4.5.4 Fast Food Outlets/Takeaways
- 4.5.5 Non Retail Uses
- 4.5.6 Access and Facilities in Shopping
- 4.5.7 Shopfronts and Advertising
- 4.6 Derelict and Obsolete Land and B

## 4.1 Introduction

The expansion of the population in East Meath, albeit a commuter population to date, can also be seen as an important resource in the economic development of the sub-region. The Economic Development Unit of Meath County Council published findings of a survey of Meath commuters in November 2003 which indicated that a large number of commuters who live in Meath wish to find work in their locality and that this labour pool contains an extensive range of experience and skills making it attractive to potential employers. Subsequent to that survey a joint initiative was set up between the Economic Development Unit and the County Enterprise Board which is designed to promote the case for further investment and jobs in Meath. Unlike the expansion of residential development in East Meath, economic development in the sub-region has been slow and limited. However, a number of initiatives are being developed to try to increase the level of industrial and commercial investment in the area. There are new emerging opportunities that can facilitate economic development; these include the emergence of a skilled labour pool, new infrastructure and upgrades to existing infrastructure. The Planning Authority has and will continue to work closely with other bodies and organisations that can deliver economic expansion to East Meath.

Ashbourne is the largest town in Meath East and with its designation as a “moderate growth town” in the Development Plan, it is considered that the continual sequential growth of the town will sustain existing commercial enterprise and encourage inward investment, providing for future growth in employment and enterprise.



## 4.2 Employment Context

The Planning Authority aims to expand Ashbourne’s employment base and to take full advantage of the town’s strategic location on the N2 and its close proximity to Dublin city and Dublin airport. The plan aims to ensure that adequate lands are made available for commercial and employment generating uses. Over the past decade Ashbourne has expanded its employment base, helping to create a more sustainable community and a higher standard of living. The introduction of the new E1 and E2 industrial zonings in the last development plan as well as the creation of the new town centre have helped to create local employment. It is also considered that the completion of the Finglas to Ashbourne M2 Dual Carriageway offers significant employment generating potential for uses dependent on good access to the national primary road network and to the Dublin market.

Ashbourne has seen its town centre completely transformed within the past five years. A major town centre development by Nuas Developments provided for a Tesco

supermarket, retail units and Meath County Council civic offices, with a library and other community facilities. The entire development transformed the backlands which stretch down to the Broadmeadow River. It includes a riverside walk and also facilitated the erection of multi-storey apartment development in the centre of the town. Significant new convenience retail outlets have also opened in the town. The northern end of the town has also seen an explosion in housing development and a retail warehousing park has also been developed. This portion of the town has steadily crept out towards the roundabout linking to the M2 bypass.



Ashbourne Business Park developed from a greenfield site in 2002 into a major business park development with a large number of tenants. Primeline Logistics has a 25,000 sq.m. facility located in the park. In March 2008 planning permission was granted for the development of an office building in the park of over 5,500 sq metres. Ashbourne Industrial Estate has developed since the 1970's and is a significant employment base for the town with a number of manufacturing facilities based in the estate.

The Planning Authority acknowledges and supports the work of the Ashbourne Chamber of Commerce.

#### 4.3 Economic Development

As noted in Table 2 in Chapter 2, the majority of the population in the Donaghmore and Kilbrew Electoral Divisions, of which Ashbourne is part, were recorded as being in employment at the time of the Census 2006. However, statistics also showed that a significant portion of the population was commuting a substantial distance to access employment (see Table 4 in Chapter 2).

It will be a primary aim of the Planning Authority to attract sustainable forms of employment to Ashbourne to stimulate economic growth locally and to counter existing unsustainable commuting patterns. The economic development of Ashbourne 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 throughout the Plan area and the adequacy of employment generating land supply will be closely monitored throughout the Plan period.

The Local Area Plan clearly identifies the supply of land for employment generating industrial, enterprise and commercial development and will generate the requisite level of

job creation needed for Ashbourne's growing population. The quantity and take up of industrial zoned lands will be closely monitored during the lifespan of this Local Area Plan in order to ensure that a sufficient quantity of industrial zoned lands is available to meet demand.

Additional lands for industrial development are identified adjacent to the existing Ashbourne Business Park. The development of these lands shall also provide for a civic amenity site and lands (approximately 0.5 hectares/1 acre) for the use as a depot. These lands shall be subject to the requirements of a Framework Plan (FP 3 and section 3.4.2 refers) to ensure co-coordinated and integrated development.

Lands extending to 32.7ha in area have also been identified to the northwest of the Ashbourne Business Park to provide for E2 'light industrial use' subject to the requirements of a Framework Plan (FP 4 & and section 3.4.2 refers).

Additional lands (9.82 ha in area) have been identified immediately to the east of the M2 by pass for E1 Industrial Use subject to the requirements of a Framework Plan (FP 5 and section 3.4.2 refers).

A motorway interchange study is being carried out by consultants on behalf of Meath County Council and is nearing completion. The interchanges at Rath and Ninemilestone with the M2 bypass are included within the remit of this study. Meath County Council will have regard to the recommendations of this study in terms of identifying additional potential suitable lands for economic development in Ashbourne.

### **Policies**

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

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| ECON DEV POL 1 | To ensure that an adequate quantity and quality of zoned and serviced lands for employment generating uses are available to serve the local population.  |
| ECON DEV POL 2 | To encourage the development of Ashbourne as a Moderate Growth Town.   |
| ECON DEV POL 3 | To encourage local/small scale offices in neighbourhood centres.   |
| ECON DEV POL 4 | In the case of the development of industrial sites adjacent to residential areas and community facilities, buffer zones shall be provided as well as adequate screening in the form of planting, landscaping and mounding as appropriate.  |
| ECON DEV POL 5 | To apply a flexible approach to the assessment of entrepreneurial start up business and small scale industrial and employment generating activities, where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use would have minimal impact on adjoining uses, primarily residential property. |

### **Objectives**

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

ECON DEV OBJ 1	To support the activities of agencies involved in the promotion of employment generating opportunities in Ashbourne including the Meath County Enterprise Board, Enterprise Ireland and the Industrial Development Agency (IDA Ireland).
ECON DEV OBJ 2	To continue to improve the piped infrastructure serving the town.
ECON DEV OBJ 3	To build on and enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of Ashbourne in order to continue to attract further economic and employment generating investment.
ECON DEV OBJ 4	To consolidate the town centre of Ashbourne while at the same time ensuring it's vitality and viability.
ECON DEV OBJ 5	To 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 Ashbourne.
ECON DEV OBJ 6	To consolidate the centre of Ashbourne 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.
ECON DEV OBJ 7	To support the provision of broadband telecommunications in Ashbourne in order to facilitate working from home.
ECON DEV OBJ 8	To facilitate the development of new enterprise centre/incubation units to provide local based employment uses on lands zoned for E2 Light Industrial Use.
ECON DEV OBJ9	To provide for a civic amenity site at the expanded Ashbourne Business Park.
ECON DEV OBJ10	To provide for a machinery storage/depot at the expanded Ashbourne Business Park (approximately 0.5 hectares/1 acre).
ECON DEV OBJ11	The Rath and Ninemilestown Motorway Interchanges have been identified as key strategic Motorway Interchanges adjoining the existing urban area of Ashbourne town. It is an objective to capitalise on the strategic benefits of these interchange locations whilst ensuring that any future development here does not compromise the carrying capacity of the Motorway or the integrity of the surrounding rural landscape. In particular, the Motorway Interchange Study (now underway) will focus on the employment generating capacity of these interchanges. Subject to a positive outcome from this assessment, the Planning Authority undertakes to bring forward appropriate and immediate procedures to facilitate the sustainable development of these lands.

#### 4.4 Tourism

The quality and diversity of its heritage, rural landscape and the coastal belt means that County Meath as a whole has the potential to develop as a major tourist attraction. Tourism benefits the local community in terms of job creation and improved facilities which are also available to locals. The Meath County tourism strategy entitled “Ireland’s Heritage Capital, Marketing Tourism in Meath, 2005-2010” identifies heritage as the County’s Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Ashbourne provides a good base for exploring East Meath and the Boyne Valley as well as holding a strong historic past and these factors should be promoted more. The Planning Authority envisages a special role for tourism developments, especially the provision of accommodation. The general appearance of the town continues to be improved. An additional asset to the growth of the town as a tourist centre is the improved retail offer the town provides, thus increasing 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. 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 local community and remains viable in the long term. All 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.

#### 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, the protection of cultural and community environments in order to maximise upon the economic benefits arising from the industry.

#### 4.5 Retail and Commercial Development

The Retail Planning Guidelines (DoEHLG, 2005) 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, 2003 was prepared in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines. The Retail Strategy reinforces the role of town centres as places for work, shopping, services and living within the major centres of Navan, Ashbourne, Kells and Trim supported by the identification of a network of district and neighbourhood centres.

The rapid growth in population has seen major investment in the retail sector, most markedly in Ashbourne. Over the past 5 years, the town centre of Ashbourne has been totally transformed with many of the biggest names in the retail market opting to locate here. Recognising its importance in the overall settlement hierarchy of the county and welcoming the increasing growth in the retail sector, Ashbourne is classified as a Level 3 Sub-County Town Centre in the Greater Dublin Area retail hierarchy. The quantum, quality and range that both the existing and new town centre offers has resulted in Ashbourne becoming the second largest retail centre in the County after Navan. The Planning Authority recognise that future growth in convenience, comparison and retail warehousing, that meets the needs of the area including the Greater South Meath Fringe and local people, is an essential requirement in creating a sustainable urban settlement and will in turn reduce leakage of spend from the south of the County.

Ashbourne Core Retail Centre includes the majority of lands zoned to accommodate town centre uses on the east and west side of Frederick Street stretching from the Ashbourne Shopping Centre southwards and incorporating the New Ashbourne Town Centre. It is a policy of the Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013 “to promote and encourage continued enhancement and expansion of retail floorspace and other commercial development in Ashbourne to encourage its development as a self-sustaining key centre in the south of the Country” (Policy ED POL 35). The following objectives are also included in the Meath County Development Plan:

ED OBJ 6: To identify within major new residential areas locations for neighbourhood and district centres to enable convenience needs to be better met locally and thus reduce the need to travel to the town centre for the majority of shopping needs

ED OBJ 7: To identify potential edge-of and out-of centre sites for the towns retail warehousing needs within the Local Area Plan Process.

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

- Testing the proposal against the sequential approach.
- The potential impact on Ashbourne Town Centre.
- The ability of the proposed to deliver linkages to the town centre.
- The baseline data and capacity impact assessment is fit for the purpose and it's transparent.
- That there is demonstrated need for the development.

- The relationship of the proposal to any development plan allocation.
- Contribution to the existing town centre.
- Contribution to site/area regeneration.
- Quality of access by all modes of transport.
- Role of improving competitiveness of the county.
- Extent to which it may be necessary to consider imposition of restrictions on range of goods permitted for sale.
- Any other development plan allocation.

Meath County Council will continue to support the new Ashbourne Town Centre and will also encourage the continuation of Frederick Street as a location for retail development. The provision of linkages between the two areas is considered particularly important in order to attract increased footfall to Frederick Street and maintain its viability and vitality. Frederick Street currently has a large number of pubs, take-aways, betting shops and similar uses. It is not considered desirable for this trend to continue in the interests of maintaining a balance of uses in the street. The intensity of any such proposed use in Ashbourne must be in keeping with both the scale of the building and the pattern of development in the area.

The provision of takeaways, amusement arcades, night clubs and licenced premises will be strictly controlled, having regard to the following, where appropriate:

- Noise at the boundaries will be carefully monitored and noise insulation measures will be required at the time of the submission of the planning application. Other effects of the development on the amenity of nearby residents must be assessed prior to the granting of planning permission, i.e. general disturbance, hours of operation, car parking, litter and fumes.
- New buildings must be designed to prevent noise escaping and with adequate provision for refuse disposal, storage and collection.
- The number and frequency of such facilities in the area.
- The need to safeguard the vitality and viability of shopping areas in the town centre and to maintain a suitable mix of retail uses.
- An important consideration for the Local Authorities is the number and frequency of events in such facilities.
- Façade design will be carefully controlled by the Planning Authority and in particular the type and degree of advertising signage and lighting. The design shall respect the character of the street and the buildings.
- Locations for larger scale night-time uses, such as super-bars or night clubs, should, wherever possible, have good access to public transport at closing time. An efficient and regular public transport service should be encouraged to serve the town centre late into the night and contributions towards funding this can be sought from developers via appropriate conditions.

- The operators coming to a satisfactory arrangement with Meath County Council in relation to litter control prior to the opening of the premises.

### Policies

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

RET DEV POL 1	To promote and enhance the vitality of Ashbourne Town Centre and promote this area as the main commercial core where an appropriate mix of commercial, retail, recreational, civic, cultural and residential uses are provided.
RET DEV POL 3	To encourage the development of neighbourhood centres in residential areas.
RET DEV POL 4	To support proposals for new retail and other mixed use development in the town centre 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:

RET DEV OBJ 1	To seek the removal of inappropriate and unauthorised advertising signs, sandwich boards, satellite dishes and shop front shutters from buildings within the town centre.
RET DEV OBJ 2	To facilitate the integration of the new and old town centres in Ashbourne.
RET DEV OBJ 3	To examine alternative options for the provision of car parking other than surface car-parking and to ensure provision is made for cycle parking in retail developments.
RET DEV OBJ 4	To continue to support Frederick Street as a retail destination in Ashbourne.

#### 4.5.1 Retail Warehousing

Retail warehousing trades in bulky goods such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods, garden products and DIY items. The Retail Planning Guidelines, 2005 recognises that retail warehousing development cannot be readily accommodated within town centres due to their size and servicing requirements and the need for good car parking. Retail warehousing at appropriate locations to serve future needs of Ashbourne and its hinterland will be encouraged subject to proper planning. There is an existing retail warehouse park located on the northern side of Ashbourne town which has developed

on lands with a principal zoning for industrial use (E1). The zoning on these lands has been amended to reflect the established, permitted use.



### Policies

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

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| RET DEV POL 5 | To encourage the provision of retail warehousing at appropriate locations and appropriate scale having regard to the 'Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area' and the 'County Meath Retail Strategy'. |
| RET DEV POL 6 | To restrict retail warehousing development solely to the sale of 'bulky comparison goods'.   |

### Objectives

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

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| RET DEV OBJ 5 | To ensure that sufficient lands are identified to meet the needs for retail warehousing floor space in Ashbourne. |
|---------------|---|

#### 4.5.2 Local Shopping Facilities

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 or a neighbourhood centre. Shops in neighbourhood centres perform a key function locally providing services including convenience shopping, video/DVD rental, laundry, hairdressers, takeaways etc. The aim of providing such shopping facilities locally serving a catchment area within approximately 800 metres is to reduce the necessity to travel by car to the town centre areas to avail of basic services and thereby ensure reduced traffic congestion and improved sustainability.

### Objectives

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

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| RET DEV OBJ 6 | To identify within major residential areas, locations for neighbourhood and district centres to enable convenience needs to be better met locally and therefore reduce the need to travel to the town centre for basic convenience requirements. |
|---------------|--|

### 4.5.3 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 state that the size of a shop associated with any petrol filling station should take account of the following:

- Large stores tend to attract additional custom which can lead to additional car borne trips primarily for shopping purposes;
- Large numbers of parked cars in station forecourts can cause disruption and queuing for those simply wishing to use the petrol pumps, and;
- The preferred location for retailing is in town centres, not isolated sites outside these preferred locations.

Notwithstanding the above, a shop of up to 100m<sup>2</sup> (net) retail floorspace is considered acceptable when associated with a petrol filling station. Above this threshold, the sequential test approach will be applied. Reference should be made to Chapter 10 (Development Management Guidelines and Standards) of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 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) Regulations 1979 to 2006, as may be amended.

### 4.5.4 Fastfood 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, particularly 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 fast food outlets/takeaways, it is the policy of Meath County Council that:

RET DEV POL 7 Take away outlets will generally be facilitated in town centre locations subject to the following:

- The design including shop front, signage and lighting contributes 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.

#### 4.5.5 Non Retail Uses

In order to protect the retail viability of Ashbourne 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. The use of accommodation at upper floor levels for offices and associated uses will be encouraged.

#### **Policy**

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

RET DEV POL 8 To strengthen the shopping function of Ashbourne, 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.

#### 4.5.6 Access and Facilities in Shopping Centres

Access requirements for people with disabilities must be incorporated into the design of shops used by the general public. The criteria necessary for people with disabilities is set out in the Building Regulations 1997 to 2006, Part M, and the National Disability Authority document ‘Building for Everyone.’

The latter document states:

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

#### **Policy**

In terms of access and facilities in shopping centres, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

RET DEV POL 9 To require adequate provision to be made in new shopping developments for the following;

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

#### 4.5.7 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 advertising, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- ADV POL 1 To recommend the use of quality advertising signage to complement the existing character of the town. There will be a presumption against the use of plastic illuminated signage.
- SHOP POL 1 To encourage the use of hand painted fascia lettering and logos in a style and colour that harmonises with the shop and helps portray its use.
- SHOP POL 2 To encourage the use of roller shutters located behind the line of glazing of shopfronts.

#### 4.6 Derelict and Obsolete Land and Buildings

The Planning Authorities will examine joint public/private commercial ventures that facilitate the development or refurbishment of derelict or obsolete sites, including the use of the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 as amended by the Planning and Development Act 2000. 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 thereunder to prevent or remove injury to amenity arising from dereliction.
- DER POL 2 To identify and secure the redevelopment of obsolete areas, including areas of backland, derelict sites and incidental open space.

## CHAPTER 5: BUILT AND NATURAL HERITAGE



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Built Heritage
- 5.3 Protected Views and Prospects
- 5.4 Natural Heritage
- 5.5 Archaeological Heritage

## 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 future generations.

## 5.2 Built Heritage

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 Ashbourne adds strongly to its character, therefore it is very important that it is protected. There are no Architectural Conservation Areas in Ashbourne. Table 8 below details the Protected Structures located within the Local Area Plan boundary.

The current legislative context of protected structures set out in the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) specifies that where a structure is protected, the protection includes the structure and;

- (i) the interior of the structure
- (ii) the land lying within the curtilage of the structure
- (iii) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors
- (iv) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii)

All works which would materially affect the character of the protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, will require planning permission. Even relatively minor works to a building such as the removal of interior walls; the creations of wall openings or partitioning of rooms; works to roofs or railings; the replacement of materials etc., which are normally considered exempt under the provisions of the Act, are not so in the case of a protected structure. Planning permission must be sought in relation to almost all changes internally or externally to a protected structure.

Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) allows the owner or occupier of a protected structure to make a written request to the planning authority for a declaration as to the types of works the authority considers would or would not materially affect the character of the protected structure.

Declarations can be issued to permit specific minor works, including enabling works that, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, would not materially affect the character of the protected structure. A declaration will not exempt works that would have a material effect on the character of a protected structure. The issue of a declaration is a service that the Planning Authority provides to the owner or occupier of a protected structure in order to clarify for them their duties and rights.

As far as the demolition of a protected structure is concerned, the Act provides that permission may only be granted for the demolition of a protected structure or proposed protected structure in exceptional circumstances. Where a proposal is to be made to demolish such a structure, it requires the strongest justification before it can be granted permission and will require input from an architect or engineer with specialist knowledge so that all options, other than demolition, receive serious consideration.

Caution will be used when considering proposals to demolish parts of a protected structure and proposed protected structure as such parts may be of importance to the cumulative historic interest of a building. It is important to note that sometimes even earlier alterations to a protected structure may also be of interest and can comprise an irreplaceable part of a unique history and it is important to respect the contribution of different stages of historical development of a protected structure. In this regard, where partial demolition of a protected structure is proposed, the onus is on the applicant to make a case that the part – whether or not it is original to the structure – does not contribute to the special interest of the whole and that demolition is essential to the proposed development and will allow for the proper conservation of the whole structure. Demolition or removal of any part of a protected structure is therefore not something to be considered lightly.

**Table 8: Protected Structures within the Plan Area**

Reg. no.	Structure	Street/ Townland	Description
MH045-100	Church of the Immaculate Conception	Ashbourne	Detached gable-fronted church, built c.1882. Five-bay side elevations to nave, and apse to south-west with sacristy to south. Pitched slate roof with terracotta ridge cresting and ashlar limestone bellcote to entrance gable.
MH045-101	Parish Hall	Killegland	Detached four-bay single-storey parish hall, built c.1882, with gabled porch. Pitched slate and artificial slate roof with copper vents and red brick chimneystacks. Roughcast rendered walls with render plinth and render plaque.
MH045-102	Killegland Cemetery	Ashbourne	A cemetery with the ruins of a small stone church. This is a recorded monument.

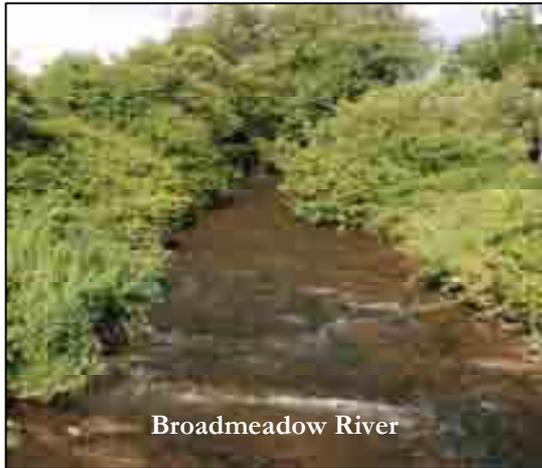
### 5.3 Protected Views and Prospects

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

### 5.4 Natural Heritage

Natural heritage comprises of native plants, animals and their habitats, geology, landscape, seascapes and inland waterways. The most significant natural feature in Ashbourne is the River Broadmeadow and its river valley. It flows through the Local Area Plan lands physically bisecting it. The Broadmeadow River rises in Meath at three different locations just east of Dunshaughlin, Fairyhouse and Cabinhill. These three branches all join to form

the main river confluence upstream of Ashbourne. The River continues to flow in an easterly direction from Ashbourne into Fingal and enters the Irish Sea at Seatown West just north of Swords.



Broadmeadow River

According to the landscape character assessment which is part of the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013, Ashbourne is classified as part of the Lowlands landscape type, known specifically as The Ward Landscapes. This contains a large area of pasture and arable farmland in the south east of Meath. Given the close proximity to the Dublin metropolitan area, this region has come under increased pressure during the last decade, thus threatening the rural character of the area. Ashbourne is located in a High Sensitivity region. The topography of the land lies between the contours of 50 and 100, dominated by syenite rock.

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.



Killegland Cemetery

## 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. There are five historical site/monuments in Ashbourne as identified in the Sites and Monument's Record for County Meath as detailed in Table 9.

**Table 9: Recorded Monuments**

Monument Number	Townland	Classification	Description <sup>2</sup>
ME045-001	Cookstown	Church	Grass-covered foundations of E-W building (int. L c. 14m, int. W c. 5m) with structure attached to W end probably a tower.
ME005-004	Killekland	Church	Described on 1837 OS 6" map as both 'grave yard' and 'fort'. Subcircular area defined by earthen bank with modern wall outside. Within are foundations of E-W building (dims. c. 21m by 5.5m).
ME045-005	Killekland	Castle Site	Some irregular mounds indicate site of castle.
ME045-040	Killekland	Kiln-corn drying	n/a
ME045-041	Killekland	Mill	n/a

### 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 strongly resist any demolition or substantial modification of any building included in the Record of Protected Structures or any building proposed to be included in the RPS.
- HER POL 4 To ensure that proposals to extend, alter, refurbish or change the use of a protected structure are sympathetic to it's essential character and in accordance with good conservation practice.

<sup>2</sup> Descriptions taken from Michael J. Moore (1986) 'Archaeological Inventory of County Meath' OPW

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 the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
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 plan area and to safeguard the integrity of their setting.
HER POL 9	To ensure that all development in the vicinity of archaeological sites and monuments are sympathetic with, and do not detract from, specified sites of archaeological significance.
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 and conserve the natural, built and archaeological heritage of Ashbourne, which contributes to the character of the village and it's landscape setting.

### Objectives

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

HER OBJ 1	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 2001-2007 as amended) and to have regard to the advice and recommendations of the Prescribed Bodies in relation to undertaking, approving or authorising development.
HER OBJ 2	To promote appropriate forms of development within Ashbourne in order to minimise adverse visual impacts within the landscape.

## 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
- 6.10 Fire Service

## 6.1 Introduction

It is accepted that social infrastructure forms an indispensable element of quality development. Meath County Council recognise the vital role that community infrastructure plays in the life of every town. The primary role of the Planning Authority in terms of social infrastructure is on 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 Authority as facilities in this manner can fulfil the various needs of the different sectors of the population. The social strategy of the Meath 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 Ashbourne Local Area Plan.

## 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 concur with this statement and will endeavour to facilitate the provision and enhancement of educational facilities in Ashbourne. 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.

There are currently 3 primary schools operating in Ashbourne, namely Scoil Mhuire (St. Mary's) and Scoil Nais Deaglain (St. Declan's NS) and one Gael Scoil; Gael Scoil Na Cille. All are currently operating at full capacity. There is currently 1 secondary school located in Ashbourne – Ashbourne Community School. Their current enrolment figure is 960, however it is noted that within 12 months they expect to be at full capacity which is 1000.

A site for a primary and secondary school in Killeglad were identified as part of the urban detail map for Ashbourne prepared in the County Development Plan 2001. The Killeglad Action Area Plan 2003 provides an overall context for the development lands in this area and also illustrates the location of the schools sites. It is noted however, that the site reserved for community use is insufficient in size to accommodate both a primary and secondary school. It is therefore considered appropriate to identify an alternative site for a

secondary school overtime the lifetime of the plan. The zoning map for Ashbourne will reflect the location of these sites. The Department of Education and Science have also advised that a site for a primary school in the area of 1.6 hectares should be reserved in addition to the sites previously reserved in Killelland. A site for this has been identified in the Milltown area. The development of the lands in this area shall be in accordance with an agreed framework plan to ensure the delivery of the school site. In addition, lands adjacent to St. Mary's National School have been zoned for community purposes to facilitate expansion of the school if necessary and other community uses.

It is an objective of Meath County Council to facilitate the provision of an additional post primary school in Ashbourne.



### **Policies**

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

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| SOC POL 1 | To ensure the provision of community, educational, cultural, recreational, and amenity facilities in tandem with residential, commercial and other development.   |
| SOC POL 2 | To co-operate with the Department of Education and School Management Boards in the provision of school places.  |
| SOC POL 3 | 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:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| SOC OBJ 1 | To zone sufficient lands at appropriate locations to cater for the needs of primary and post primary schools and education facilities in Ashbourne.  |
| SOC OBJ 2 | 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 the sustainable use of such infrastructure and community cohesion. |
| SOC OBJ 3 | To identify a site for the provision of a secondary school in Ashbourne over the lifetime of the Development Plan.   |
| SOC OBJ 4 | To facilitate the Department of Education and Science in the expansion of educational facilities in Ashbourne by making provision for such a site at Milltown.   |
| SOC OBJ 5 | To facilitate the provision of a primary school at Killekland.   |
| SOC OBJ 6 | To facilitate the expansion of St. Mary's National School.   |

### 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 care 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.

Meath County Childcare Committee "Strategic Plan 2007-2010 Embracing the Evolving Role of Childcare" states that in the Dunshaughlin Meath Electoral Area<sup>3</sup>, of which Ashbourne is part) there are a total of 60 providers (7 full day care, 35 sessional, 5 school age and 19 childminders); 39 of which are private providers and 2 community services. Within the Donaghmore ED, in which Ashbourne is located, there are no community services, only 7 self-employed services. This strategy notes that there is a need for more of an emphasis to be put on the increase in baby places and school age places to reflect the fact that 628 births were registered in 2003 in the Dunshaughlin/Ratoath/Dunboyne DEDs.

<sup>3</sup> This covers the south east area of Meath, including the towns of Dunshaughlin, Ashbourne, Ratoath, Dunboyne and Clonee.

### 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 Ashbourne 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” as pertinent to Ashbourne, 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 7 | To encourage the provision of additional full day care childcare places, drop in facilities and work place crèches.  |
| SOC OBJ 8 | 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 Health Care

Healthcare facilities provision in Ashbourne is chiefly the concern of the Health Service Executive-Northern Area, though a number of healthcare services are provided by the voluntary and private sectors. The role of the Planning Authority in healthcare provision is to ensure that sufficient lands are reserved in the Local Area Plan to accommodate the development of appropriate healthcare facilities to serve the residential population of the area. The Planning Authority also aids public health by endeavouring to deliver a quality built and natural environment through spatial planning policies which result in the delivery

of quality, useable recreational areas, improved pedestrian and cycle facilities, and the safeguarding of our water courses from pollution which could threaten public health.

Acute hospital services for Ashbourne are currently provided within County Meath at Our Lady's Hospital, Navan. Patients are also referred to specialist services in the various Dublin hospitals. The Planning Authority acknowledges that the HSE is progressing plans for a major new regional hospital in the North East, with Navan being identified as the preferred location. There are also a number private medical and care services operating in the town as well as a nursing home. In general, there is a move towards more community care based health services and the Health Care Executive operates a number of community care health centres, including one in Ashbourne.

### Policies

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

SOC OBJ 9 To encourage the upgrading and expansion of existing health services available in Ashbourne 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. Ashbourne is reasonably well provided for in terms of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. However taking account of the recent population growth in the town, further inward investment will be encouraged.

Given the youthful population in the town, further development of recreational facilities to suit these groups will be particularly encouraged. The provision of children's playgrounds, as part of residential developments which are geared towards families with children, and the provision of multi-purpose indoor facilities which have the potential to be used for a wide variety of activities, will be particularly encouraged.

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 Ashbourne 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.

Variation Number 5 which was made to the Meath County Development Plan 2007 – 2013 provided for the re-zoning of lands adjacent to the Ashbourne Community Centre from F1 (“to provide for and improve open space for active and passive recreational amenities”) to A2 (“to provide new residential communities and community facilities and to protect existing residential areas”) with a specific objective that a masterplan be prepared for the lands to address the type of development to be permitted on the lands, including community facilities, open space and residential development. The variation was made on the basis that the Ashbourne and District Community Council were proposing to re-develop the existing lands at the Community Centre to deliver a wider range of community facilities to serve the population of Ashbourne and that an element of housing was to be incorporated so as to ensure delivery of the project. This variation is reflected in the zoning map for Ashbourne. The lands at the community centre are included within Framework Plan Area 1, as outlined in Chapter 3 previously. It is intended that the development of these lands shall provide for an appropriate mix of residential and community development and open space.

Both the Rugby Club and the Golf Club lands are zoned for recreational purposes in the zoning map. A buffer zone has been provided along the eastern boundary of the residential zoned lands to the west of the Golf Club to prevent ball trespass. (SOC OBJ 12 refers)

The Council also supports the development of community managed gardens/allotments in close proximity to residential areas. Allotments and community gardens can have a number of benefits including promoting healthy lifestyles, providing an inexpensive and local source of food and promoting diversity.

### **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 Ashbourne.

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 including land banks within Local Authority ownership.

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 Ashbourne.

### Objective

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

SOC OBJ 10 To promote the use of existing recreational facilities in Ashbourne.

SOC OBJ 11 To encourage the existing level of high maintenance and use of the multi-functional Ashbourne Community Centre.

SOC OBJ 12 To provide a buffer zone (8 m in width) along the eastern boundary of the residentially zoned lands to the west of Ashbourne Golf Club.

SOC OBJ 13 To promote the development of allotments on suitable sites within Ashbourne which are accessible and available to the community.

## 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. Ashbourne benefits from the presence of the River Broadmeadow which acts as an amenity area 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 it’s quality.



Ashbourne Golf Club



Ashbourne GAA Grounds

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 development 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.

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. Minimum rear garden size shall conform to the recommendations of the Residential Density Guidelines for Local Authorities (or as otherwise updated by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government). Private open space to apartments should be as per the standards outlined in the document '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 Ashbourne.
- 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.
- SOC POL 17 To ensure that 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.

### **Objectives**

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

- SOC OBJ 14 To investigate the provision of riverside and pedestrian walkways in Ashbourne.
- SOC OBJ 15 To protect the existing walkways along the River Broadmeadow and provide and encourage further improvements along the banks of the river.
- SOC OBJ 16 To provide for passive and active recreational spaces in the vicinity of the Broadmeadow River.
- SOC OBJ 17 To require that public open space in residential developments shall be provided at a minimum rate of 15% of total site area. This shall include a minimum of 400 sq.m. of children's play area for developments of 40

dwellings or more, or where a development for less than 40 houses represents Phase 1 of a scheme likely to equal or exceed 40 houses.

SOC OBJ 18 To provide for playing pitches and recreational facilities at Milltown as part of Framework Plan 2.

## 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, Co. Meath. There are eleven other libraries located throughout the county and these offer a wide range of services. The Ashbourne library was opened in 2004 and is located in the Council's "One Stop Shop" within the newly developed town centre expansion in Ashbourne. The facility is a valuable resource for the community offering 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 18 To recognise the important role that the library service plays in the community and to facilitate the library service in enhancing it's service delivery to the public, subject to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

### Objective

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

SOC OBJ 19 To support the continued operation and development of Ashbourne library.

## 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.

### Policies

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

SOC POL 19	To facilitate the development of arts within the community, local culture and heritage and promote the continuation and development of arts within all education and training.
SOC POL 20	To promote the provision of recreation and entertainment opportunities, including events and festivals, using indoor and outdoor venues.
SOC POL 21	To continue to enhance and support the range and quality of arts provision in Ashbourne.

### Objective

In terms of arts and culture, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

SOC OBJ 20	To liaise with the County Arts Officer on any development proposal that is likely to have a significant impact on the arts in Ashbourne.
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### 6.9 Burial Grounds

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide for burial facilities, although the majority are provided 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 Rath, on the northern side of Ashbourne which has been developed by Meath County Council and which has capacity.

### Policies

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

SOC POL 22	To facilitate the provision of new (non-denominational) burial grounds and the extension of existing cemeteries as appropriate to cater for the needs of Ashbourne.
SOC POL 23	To protect the cultural heritage of graveyards and encourage their management and maintenance in accordance with conservation principles.
SOC POL 24	To encourage local community groups to develop, manage and maintain new burial facilities.

### 6.10 Fire Service

Meath County Council is the Fire Authority for the administrative area of County Meath. The central fire station is based at Abbey Road, Navan and there are six other fire stations located throughout the county including Ashbourne. During 2004, Meath County Council and Dublin City Council entered into an agreement whereby the Computer Aided Mobilization Project (CAMP) service will provide arrangements for the mobilization of Meath fire brigades. Deployment of fire appliances are therefore on a regional basis. The

Fire Service is an important life saving emergency service provided by Meath County Council. Under the Building Regulations, separate applications are sent to the Fire Authority to obtain a Fire Safety Certificate and this is obtained prior to construction.

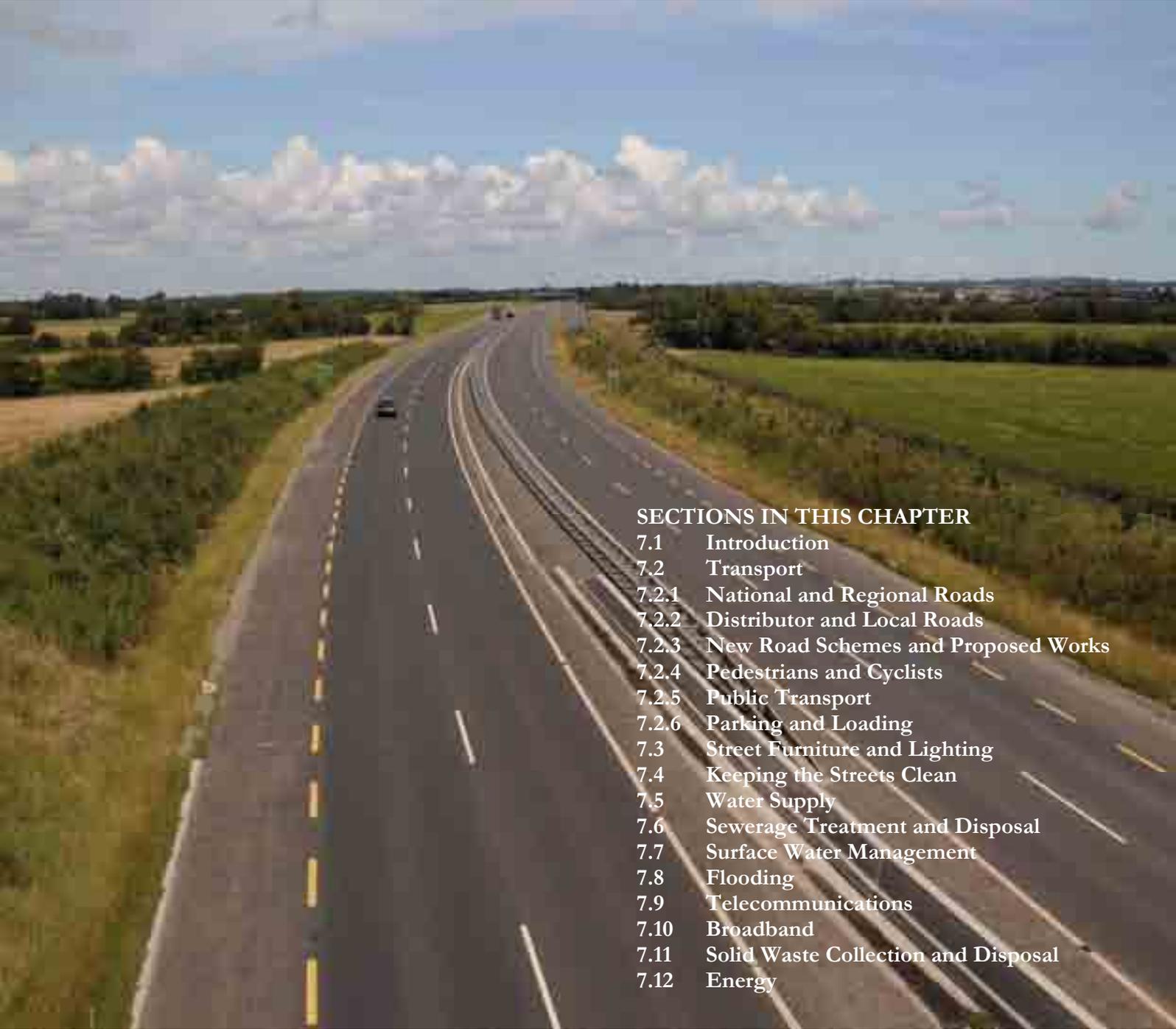
The Planning Authority shall aim to facilitate the Fire Service, and emergency providers, in the delivery of a first class fire service having regard to the following policies.

**Objectives**

In terms of fire service, it is the objective of Meath County Council:

SOC OBJ 21 To facilitate the expansion of the Fire Service as the needs arise subject to the proper planning and development.

## CHAPTER 7: INFRASTRUCTURE



### SECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER

- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Transport
  - 7.2.1 National and 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
- 7.6 Sewerage Treatment and Disposal
- 7.7 Surface Water Management
- 7.8 Flooding
- 7.9 Telecommunications
- 7.10 Broadband
- 7.11 Solid Waste Collection and Disposal
- 7.12 Energy

## 7.1 Introduction

The suitable provision of a full range of transportation services is critical if Ashbourne is to continue to develop as an attractive location for business and residential development. 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 Transport

Ashbourne is located on the N2 linking the North West of Ireland and Dublin. The provision of the Ashbourne bypass (west of Ashbourne from an interchange south of Ashbourne in the townland of Fleenstown to an interchange north of Ashbourne in the townland of Rath) has alleviated much of the traffic congestion in the town, creating a improved environment for pedestrians and cyclists and increasing the accessibility of Ashbourne for industrial and commercial development.

The growth in population and especially the increase in the number of vehicles on the roads is placing pressure on the critical road infrastructure. The pivotal location of Ashbourne within the County means that continual improvements to the existing road network are of critical importance to the economic development of Ashbourne and quality of life for the inhabitants of Ashbourne. The timely development of the road infrastructure is not just to provide the necessary capacity that will result as the town grows, but is as equally important to enable the appropriate enhancement of the public realm.

It is the aim of Meath County Council to create vibrant urban areas with good provision of public transport, reduced traffic congestion and an attractive urban centre, which is not dominated by the car. It is the main objective of the Planning Authority to create an integrated and environmentally sound system, giving particular emphasis to the following aspects:

- Maximising accessibility for all.
- Ensuring good choice of transport for all is available.
- Strong integration between transportation planning and land use planning.
- General reduction in the need to travel, especially by car, by land use planning which promotes a sustainable mix of uses.
- Optimum use of existing infrastructure by traffic management, prioritised bus operations, and reduced travel times by sustainable modes and reduced congestion.
- Ensuring car adequate parking provision is available for the use of public transport.
- Shift from car to more environmentally friendly modes of transport.
- Provision of future traffic and transportation needs in Ashbourne.

- Increasing the modal share of total travel with and around Ashbourne by walking and cycling.

The provision of the road infrastructure outlined in the Local Area Plan is necessary to ensure a fully integrated and successful development strategy. During the lifetime of this Local Area Plan, it is expected that significant progress will be made to the existing road network in line with the policies and objectives.



### 7.2.1 National and Regional Roads

The most significant roads project carried out in Ashbourne is the M2 bypass of the town. This has been constructed to the west of Ashbourne, with roundabouts linking the town at Ninemilestone to the south and Rath to the north. The road is a high quality dual carriageway and since the commencement of the preparation of the Local Area Plan, it has been re-categorised as a motorway. The bypass has significantly reduced the extent of through traffic in the town, positively impacting on the quality of the street while also improving the connections between Ashbourne and Dublin by reducing journey time.

### 7.2.2 Distributor and Local Roads

Over the previous plan period, a number of schemes have been carried out on the distributor and local road network in Ashbourne. These include the improvement and widening of Castle Street as a primary distributor route incorporating linkages to Killelland. Other road improvements include the widening and improvement of Hunters Lane, improvements to the Ballybin Road junction and provision of traffic signals at Rath Cross.

### 7.2.3 New Road Schemes and Proposed Works

There are a number of objectives in this Local Area Plan to improve the road network in Ashbourne. These include to upgrade and provide general environmental improvements including footpaths, cycleways and public lighting at Milltown Road, Race Lane, Ballybin Road to the N2 bypass, the junction of Castle Street with the R135 at the northern end and Rath junction. In addition, it is proposed to carry out improvements to Milltown Bridge and

to upgrade and widen Archerstown Road and improve the junction with Milltown Road. It is also an objective to investigate the provision of an eastern distributor route around the town.

To co-operate with Final County Council with regard to the provision of road links.

### **Policies**

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

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|-----------|--|
| INF POL 1 | To support major road improvements by reserving the corridors of any such proposed routes free of development, which would interfere with the provision of such proposals.   |
| INF POL 2 | To co-operate with the National Roads Authority and other Local Authorities.   |
| INF POL 3 | To regulate, control and improve signage throughout the town.  |
| INF POL 4 | To provide for the future transportation needs of Ashbourne in a sustainable manner.   |
| INF POL 5 | To integrate land use planning and transportation planning.  |
| INF POL 6 | To construct and complete local distributor road network and ensure its integration into the urban fabric.   |
| INF POL 7 | To establish a clear road hierarchy, in which each of the road links has a function and where the mixing of national, regional and local traffic is reduced to the minimum possible.   |
| INF POL 8 | Following the publication of the Traffic Management Guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and 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. |
| INF POL 9 | To require developers to provide a Traffic and Transport Assessment, as carried out by competent professionals in this field, where new developments will have a significant effect on travel demand on a National Road, having regard to the “Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines” published by the National Roads Authority in September 2007. Where a Traffic and Transport Assessment identifies necessary on and off site improvements for  |

the development to be able to proceed, the developer will be expected to fund the improvements by entering into a formal agreement with the appropriate Planning Authority. Any additional works required as a result of the Traffic and Transport Assessment shall be funded by the developer.

INF POL 10 To require noise mitigation measures to be implemented in any future planning applications within zones of influence of national roads or planned new national roads

### Objectives

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

- INF OBJ 1 To upgrade and to pursue general environmental improvements at Milltown Road.
- INF OBJ 2 To upgrade and to pursue general environmental improvements at Archerstown Road and the junction with Milltown Road.
- INF OBJ 3 To upgrade and to pursue general environmental improvements at Race Lane
- INF OBJ 4 To upgrade and to pursue general environmental improvements at Ballybin Road to the N2 bypass
- INF OBJ 5 To upgrade and to pursue general environmental improvements at junction of Castle Street with the R135 at the northern end.
- INF OBJ 6 To upgrade and to pursue general environmental improvements at Rath Junction
- INF OBJ 7 To provide for the improvement of Milltown Bridge.
- INF OBJ 8 To investigate the feasibility of providing an eastern distributor route.
- INF OBJ 9 To improve footpaths and cycleways on all existing roads.
- INF OBJ 10 To explore in conjunction with Fingal County Council road links to Fingal County over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan.

#### 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.

Existing pedestrian and cyclist facilities are very limited forcing 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. 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 respect of pedestrians and cyclists, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| INF POL 11 | To promote and facilitate the development of cycling and walking facilities in Ashbourne.                                     |
| INF POL 12 | To require that all new significant developments provide pedestrian and cycle facilities including secure parking for cycles. |
| INF POL 13 | To provide cycle ways, where appropriate, as part of all road improvement/redesign schemes.                                   |
| INF POL 14 | To prioritise the movement of pedestrian and cyclists in proximity to public transport nodes.                                 |

### **Objectives**

In respect of pedestrians and cyclists, it is an objective of Meath County Council:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| INF OBJ 11 | To ensure the development and link up of cycling and walking facilities throughout the town. |
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#### 7.2.5 Public Transport

The main type of public transport operating to and from Ashbourne is Bus Éireann services to Ashbourne – Ratoath – Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, operating mostly every two hours. A more frequent service operates to and from Ashbourne into Dublin city at very regular intervals accompanied by a less frequent service to Dublin airport. Dublin Bus also service Ashbourne via the 88n route – Westmoreland Street-Ashbourne with a Nitelink operating on Friday and Saturday nights.

The Planning Authority acknowledge that there will be an increased demand for external bus trips during the lifetime of this development plan, primarily to Dublin. Additional parking will also be investigated in close proximity to bus stops to ensure that these services are used to their full capacity and Meath County Council will continue to support the provision of an adequate public transport service in Ashbourne.

### **Policies**

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

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|------------|---|
| INF POL 15 | 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. |
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### 7.2.6 Parking and Loading

Parking facilities in Ashbourne have been greatly improved with the introduction of the new underground and surface car parking as part of the new town centre development. Park and ride facilities will be investigated during the lifetime of this plan.

#### **Policies**

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

INF POL 16 To apply the car parking standards as included in the Development Management Guidelines and Standards section of Meath County Development Plan 2007-2013.

INF POL 17 To promote where feasible and appropriate alternative options to surface car parking.

#### **Objectives**

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

INF OBJ 12 To investigate if additional surface car parking is needed in the town centre.

### 7.3 Street Furniture & 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. 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 respect of litter control, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

INF POL 18 To encourage the people of Ashbourne to enjoy a litter free environment through a partnership approach for the benefit of all who live, work and visit Ashbourne.

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

INF OBJ 13 To implement the Meath County Council Litter Management Plan 2006-2009.

## 7.5 Water Supply

Meath County Council is responsible for the provision of public water services in Ashbourne. Currently Ashbourne is served by the East Meath Regional Water Supply Scheme. The river Boyne at Roughgrange is the main source for the East Meath RWSS. The water is treated at Staleen Waterworks and is distributed to the Ashbourne area via Windmill reservoir. The Ashbourne part of the scheme is augmented from a groundwater source at Curragha. There is currently limited available capacity in the scheme.

A new regional scheme to serve East Meath, South Louth and Drogheda is at an advanced stage of planning. This scheme, which is included in the Water Services Investment Programme 2007-2009, is designated to meet the water supply needs for the East Meath, Drogheda and South Louth area up to the year 2026. While work on the overall scheme will be ongoing for a number of years it is planned to expedite some sections of the scheme as advance works. The completion date for the overall scheme is expected to be 2012. A new groundwater source at Rath has recently been made operational which links into the existing reservoir, providing an additional 500cu.m/day for Ashbourne.

It is considered that subject to works adequate services will be available in terms of water supply to cater for the projected level of residential and commercial/industrial development over the plan period.

**Policies**

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

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.

### **Objective**

In respect of water supply, it is an objective of Meath:

INF OBJ 14 To implement the Water Services Investment Programme 2007-2009.

## 7.6 Sewerage Treatment and Disposal

The waste water treatment plant in Ashbourne is operating at almost full capacity, with limited spare capacity of 2,000p.e. Construction of the Ashbourne/Ratoath/Kilbride Sewerage Scheme-Stage 2 is currently underway. 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. The unprecedented level of development that has taken place in these areas in recent years has placed a huge strain on the existing infrastructure. The new scheme will ensure that Meath County Council is equipped to cater for new development and the projection population while also meeting its obligations under EU Water Quality Regulations.

The Killelland waste water treatment works (5,000 p.e. membrane plant) was given consent to serve a very definite area of West Ashbourne and was given consent on the basis that it be operated for up to 10 years (c. 2015/2016) unless the area could be catered for in the public system sooner. The Phase 2 upgrade of the Ashbourne/Ratoath/Kilbride Sewerage Scheme is currently underway and will hopefully be operational by mid 2009 and by then the network rehabilitation contract for Ashbourne/Ratoath will also be complete. At that stage, the continuation of the usage of Killelland waste water treatment works will be reviewed to establish whether the West Ashbourne area can be accommodated within the public system.

### **Policies**

In respect of sewerage 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 Ashbourne to ensure that an adequate treatment capacity is available for the sustainable development of Ashbourne as finances permit.

INF POL 26 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.

## 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. Proposals for development within the Ashbourne LAP area should include surface water management proposals that are in accordance with the principles of SuDS.

### Policies

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

INF OBJ 15 To require all large scale developments to provide “Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems” (SuDS) as part of their development proposals.

INF OBJ 16 To ensure that development on newly zoned land is kept at an appropriate distance from stream and river banks and adequate protection measures put in place to protect the ecological value and water quality of watercourses.

## 7.8 Flooding

The First Schedule of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 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 (DoEHLG) has recently produced draft guidelines on “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management.” 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 the draft Guidelines pending publication of finalised guidelines.

Flood mapping as provided by OPW on the website [www.floodmaps.ie](http://www.floodmaps.ie) has been reviewed. Two flood incidents are recorded in the Killeland area relating to the River Broadmeadow. A flood risk assessment and management study is currently being carried out by Fingal County Council and Meath County Council. Ashbourne is within the study area. The objectives of the study include to identify existing/potential future flood risk areas. In this regard the Broadmeadow River is a priority to identify measures to manage flood risk and to prepare a flood risk management plan to include recommendations on development planning. The Planning Authority will have regard to the findings of this in the carrying out of its functions in the development management process.

### **Policies**

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

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| 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 DoEHLG or OPW in the assessment of planning applications.            |
| INF POL 30 | To implement the recommendations of the draft guidelines “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management” (DoEHLG, 2008), or their replacement, in the carrying out of development management functions. |
| INF POL 31 | To control development in the natural flood plain of rivers and to take account of any guidelines regarding flooding issued by the DoEHLG or Office of Public Works.                                    |

### **Objective**

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

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| INF OBJ 17 | 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 prevent impacts on the river flood regime. |
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## 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 the 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. However, exemptions exist under certain circumstances.

### Objective

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

- INF POL 32 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).

## 7.10 Broadband

High speed broadband is an important asset in order to attract inward investment into Ireland. 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 respect of broadband, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- INF POL 33 To implement the broadband strategy for Meath County Council as it relates to Ashbourne by supporting the roll out of broadband infrastructure in Ashbourne to serve the needs of business and residents.

### Objective

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

- INF OBJ 18 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.

Lands for a civic amenity site have been identified in the expanded Ashbourne Business Park. The provision of this facility shall take cognisance of the need to protect the amenities of adjoining residential development.

#### Policies

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

INF POL 34 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 county.

INF POL 35 To implement the policies and objectives of the Waste Management Plan for the North East Region.

INF POL 36 To promote and encourage the recycling of construction and demolition waste in accordance with approved construction and demolition waste management plans.

INF POL 37 To have regard to the Dublin Waste Management Plan 2005-2010 (and subsequent plans) and its objectives of preventing and minimising waste, maximising recovery through recycling and ensuring that such waste that cannot be prevented is disposed of without causing environmental pollution.

INF POL 38 To support the provision of a civic amenity site to serve Ashbourne.

#### Objectives

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

INF OBJ 19 To investigate and identify over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan an appropriate location for a civic amenity site to service both Ratoath and Ashbourne.

INF OBJ 20 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.

## 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 respect of energy, it is the policy of Meath County Council:

- INF POL 39 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 Council will require that all benign energy technologies are explored towards the achievement of increased sustainable energy use.
- INF POL 40 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 Ashbourne.
- INF POL 41 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 located underground with future capacity considered and appropriate ducting put in place.

## CHAPTER 8 – IMPLEMENTATION AND 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 Ashbourne 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 incomplete infrastructure provision, including social infrastructure.

## 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.