

CHAPTER 8



CHAPTER 8 Settlement Plans

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8.1 Aim

To create a network of attractive, liveable towns and villages in the County with increased levels of population, employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity which support a high quality of life and well-being.

8.2 Settlement Hierarchy Overview:

The Core Strategy sets out the settlement hierarchy for the County, which is founded on an asset-based approach to spatial development, identified and built on a combination of the social, economic and natural assets that are available within each settlement, in order to determine an overall growth strategy and its position on the settlement hierarchy.

Table 8.1 Settlement Hierarchy

Settlement Typology	Settlements	Role
Regional Growth Centre	Athlone	Regional Growth Centres are large towns with a high level of self-sustaining employment and services that act as regional economic drivers and play a significant role for a wide catchment area.
Key Towns	Mullingar	Large economically active service and/or county towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres.
Self-sustaining growth towns	Castlepollard	Self-Sustaining Growth Towns with a moderate level of jobs and services – includes sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining.
	Kilbeggan	
	Kinnegad	
	Moate	
Self-Sustaining Towns	Killucan /Rathwire	Self-Sustaining Towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted ‘catch up’ investment to become more self-sustaining.
	Rochfortbridge	
Towns and villages	Clonmellon	Towns and villages with local service and employment functions
	Delvin	
	Tyrrellspass	
Rural (Serviced)	Ballinalack	Villages that provide a level of service to their local area.
	Ballymore	
	Ballynacarrigy	
	Castletown-Geoghegan.	
	Collinstown	
	Glasson	
	Milltownpass	
	Multyfarnham	

Policies and objectives specific to each individual settlement are contained within each individual Settlement Plan. Each settlement is defined by a development boundary wherein development of lands within this boundary/envelope will be prioritised. A number of “consolidation sites” which comprise of a mix of both brownfield and greenfield lands have been identified in the settlements. The Council will favour and promote the development of such sites for residential, community, and, if deemed appropriate, mixed use purposes or a combination thereof. The scale and nature of development permissible for the settlement shall be commensurate with its position in the Settlement Hierarchy and shall be consistent with relevant Core Strategy Policies. Development proposals shall be required in their layout and design to respect and reinforce the character of the individual settlement.

8.3 Self-Sustaining Growth Towns

Self-Sustaining Growth Towns are towns that contain a reasonable level of jobs and services which adequately caters for the people of its service catchment. This may include sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links, which have capacity for continued commensurate growth. These towns offer potential for regional economic growth and can accommodate average or above average growth to provide for natural increase, service and/or employment growth where appropriate, in accordance with the Core Strategy. Not all towns that exists at this settlement level perform the same functions with some towns operating as commuter towns whilst others function more sustainably. Key priorities for Self-Sustaining Growth Towns are consolidation coupled with targeted investment where required, to improve local employment, services and sustainable transport options and to become more self-sustaining settlements. The Core Strategy has identified four towns within the county as self-sustaining growth towns, namely Castlepollard, Kilbeggan, Kinnegad and Moate.

8.3.1 Castlepollard

8.3.1.1 Location and Context

Castlepollard serves as the principal town in the northern part of the County and is located close to Counties Meath, Cavan and Longford. The town is located 20km north of Mullingar and 97km west of Dublin. It is served by a good quality road network, three regional roads converge in the centre of the town; the R394 from Mullingar to Finnea which links to the N55, the R195 to Oldcastle, and the R395 from Delvin to Edgeworthstown which links to the M4 and N55. According to the 2016 census, the population of the settlement was 1,163 residents, up 11.6% from the previous census and significantly greater than the county average of 3% for the same period. Further development should recognise the ageing population of the town with 16.2% of the population over the age of 65 when compared to the county average of 12.8%.

8.3.1.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

Castlepollard, is a traditional market town. The town's origins can be traced back to Nicholas Pollard, an English Army captain from Devonshire, who built a small castle at Rathyoung named Castle Pollard. The town was developed under a charter from King Charles II and is therefore referred to as a planned town, built between 1803 and 1839 around a triangular central green flanked on all sides by Georgian buildings which were originally used for business and residential use. A number of these buildings are Protected Structures within the designated Castlepollard Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). These buildings are of considerable architectural merit and the planned design of the market square provides Castlepollard with its most distinguishing feature.

8.3.1.3 Social Infrastructure

Castlepollard possesses a range of services including, hotel, library, social, community and recreational facilities, nursing home and retailing. There are three schools located within the town, two National Schools and one Secondary School. Castlepollard Community College Secondary School currently caters for in excess of 270 post-primary students. There are also a number of sporting clubs in the town including soccer, GAA hurling and football and boys and girl scouts. In recent years the town has been subject to a public realm enhancement scheme, comprising of upgraded pedestrian infrastructure and surface water alleviation works, which have served to enhance the attractive traditional character of the town.

8.3.1.4 Physical Infrastructure

Castlepollard is served by an existing wastewater treatment plant and sources its water from Lough Lene through the Castlepollard High Level Water Supply Scheme.

8.3.1.5 Function & Vision

Castlepollard is recognised as the main service centre in North Westmeath. It is designated as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town in the Core Strategy and thus is an important economic driver for the region. Opportunity exists to increase the economic profile of the town by zoning additional lands for employment use and by maximizing the potential of the strategic location of Castlepollard as a tourist base for local attractions such as Tullyally Castle, Fore Abbey, Mullaghmeen Forest and Lough Lene.

Regeneration opportunities also exist in Castlepollard in tandem with placemaking measures to visually enhance the public realm and historic character and setting of the town.

Castlepollard - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.1	Promote the development of Castlepollard as a driver of economic growth for the North Westmeath region and fulfil its role as a designated Self-Sustaining Growth Town.
CPO 8.2	Support the expansion of a range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.3	Engage with the community and relevant stakeholder to promote and support the regeneration of Castlepollard through identification of significant regeneration projects along with associated funding streams including the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.
CPO 8.4	Provide for the creation of sustainable communities in Castlepollard by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, enterprise and employment, community, recreational and tourism uses.
CPO 8.5	Continue to promote the tourism potential of Castlepollard by supporting tourist related development and enhancement of existing amenities.

8.3.1.6 Economic Development

Employment sectors in Castlepollard primarily consist of plastic engineering, education, retail and commercial services. Census 2016 indicates that the largest percentage of the workforce in Castlepollard were employed in professional services at 23.5%, followed by commerce and trade and manufacturing industries. Mergon International, a manufacturer of molded parts, is one of the key employers in the town.

Lands have been identified at Innova Business Park, Water St, to capitalise on the potential of established leading engineering industries at this location and encourage the development of an ecosystem that supports smart specialisation cluster development and sustained economic growth. This in turn will promote innovation and entrepreneurship and enhanced employment opportunities. Further lands have been identified to the east of the town in order to complement the existing Manor Village retail development which has the potential for a new enterprise centre anchor. These lands have been identified with the aim of facilitating the diversification of the local economy into sectors such as precision farming, biotechnology, food and beverage products, low carbon construction and rural resource-based enterprises. There is also potential for the development of incubator and e-working hubs at this location.

Castlepollard - Economic Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.6	Support the consolidation and growth of existing enterprises and the development of employment opportunities within the town and encourage the smart specialisation approach to development which involves the clustering of distinct industrial sectors.
CPO 8.7	Facilitate the establishment of new enterprise and employment uses on lands identified for employment purposes.
CPO 8.8	Provide for the establishment of an enterprise centre to the east of the town on the Oldcastle Road to support the existing Enterprise Centre at Innova Business Park (See Map 3).
CPO 8.9	It will be a requirement for all new enterprise development to be located within a landscape network and demonstrate high quality architectural built form that contributes to a positive sense of place and distinctiveness.

8.3.1.7 Tourism

The significant tourism potential of this area is widely recognised due to the unique cluster of noteworthy heritage sites and visitor attractions within a small geographical area, coupled with an exceptional picturesque landscape of hills and limestone lakes. Alignment with Ireland's Ancient East tourism brand is required to maximise the potential of existing attractions. At present there is no strong marketing link promoting these attractions in North Westmeath, which would entice visitors to come to the area for a multi-day trip. Storytelling is at the core of Ireland's Ancient East brand and the North Westmeath area can make a significant contribution in this regard, given its connection to many compelling Irish legends, intriguing folklore and quirky stories that are connected to its visitor attractions. An opportunity exists to group together these attractions within the vicinity of Castlepollard as part of a broader tourism package, based on the concept of a North Westmeath Tourism Cluster.

Potential exists for the development of a heritage interpretation and storytelling centre within the town, which could also act as the visitor services hub for the North Westmeath Tourism Cluster. The creation of stronger linkages between attractions, activities, visitor services and accommodation are critical to increasing visitor dwell time and encouraging multi-day visits to the County with resulting economic benefit.

Castlepollard - Tourism Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.10	Support the development of a Collaborative Marketing Plan to define and brand the North Westmeath Tourism Cluster concept, in line with the Ireland's Ancient East brand and Westmeath County Council Tourism Strategy.
CPO 8.11	Support the provision of tourist accommodation and associated services in Castlepollard.
CPO 8.12	Assess the feasibility of creating a heritage interpretation and storytelling centre within Castlepollard, as a visitor services hub for the North Westmeath Tourism Cluster.

8.3.1.8 Sustainable Communities

Castlepollard provides an attractive place to live, rich in natural beauty and amenity. Significant residential development in Castlepollard in recent years has resulted in a population increase of 30% since the 2002 census. Opportunity exists to accommodate the future needs of the town in a consolidated fashion which will assist in the delivery of sustainable communities comprising of a mix of housing types, densities and tenure. An emphasis is therefore placed on building communities with a high standard of design, around the principles of place-making, green infrastructure, permeability and connectivity alongside the integration of community and recreation facilities.

The development strategy for Castlepollard is to support new housing and population growth, consistent with the Core Strategy, facilitating compact growth together with providing a viable alternative to rural one-off housing within the surrounding countryside. Provision is made in the plan in accordance with RPO 4.78 of the RSES, for the development of serviced sites to create 'build your own home' opportunities within the existing footprint of Castlepollard. In this regard, a tract of land has been zoned for residential use on the Collinstown Road with an objective to provide self-build plots.

The plan promotes the development of green infrastructure networks both within the settlement and to adjacent tourist amenities. New development proposals will have to demonstrate how they contribute towards the creation of Green infrastructure networks, in particular the development of green routes through the town with connections to the Village Green, Kinturk Demesne and Tullynally Castle.

Castlepollard - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.13	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing and Core Strategy.
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CPO 8.14	Require that an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential developments to meet the needs of the population of Castlepollard.
CPO 8.15	Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area.
CPO 8.16	Work with Irish Water and landowners in providing for serviced sites for residential development within Castlepollard (See Map 3).
CPO 8.17	Require proposals for new development to integrate with existing Green Infrastructure networks and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.
CPO 8.18	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.
CPO 8.19	Support the provision of a high quality, public open park within the village on the Mullingar Road with pedestrian access from Pakenham Road and the Finnea Road and a link with the former Kinturk Demesne (See Map 3).
CPO 8.20	Promote cycling and walking within the community through the implementation of a walking/cycling strategy and improved walking/cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.

8.3.1.9 Commercial & Retail Development

In 2016, Castlepollards total net retail floorspace was recorded at 865m² within the County Retail Strategy, which represented an 83% increase from that recorded in 2007. This increase in retail floorspace was primarily as a result of development of the Tesco Express anchored Manor Village scheme which provides an important retail function to the town and its rural hinterland.

The town provides a range of local services meeting the day to day convenience needs of its catchment population. Potential exists within the town to enhance comparison retail offer. The town is recognised as an important economic driver for the provision of goods and retail services and the provision of new commercial and retail development within the vicinity of Market Square is encouraged. The County Retail Strategy defines the type and quantum of retail development suitable for Castlepollard. In this regard, it identifies that large convenience and middle order comparison, specifically tourism related/niche comparison and small-scale bulky goods floorspace is appropriate at this location.

Castlepollard - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.21	Sustain and enhance the retail and services offer of Castlepollard Town Centre in line with the County Retail Strategy.
CSO 8.22	Support commercial opportunities within Castlepollard town centre which harness the potential of its tourist assets and tourism profile.
CPO 8.23	Reinforce the centre of Castlepollard as the priority location for new commercial and retail development, with emphasis on quality of design, positive contribution to the existing streetscape and protection of existing heritage assets.
CPO 8.24	Support the provision of mixed-use developments in the town centre which create opportunities to live, work, shop, etc. within the town and reduce the propensity to travel by private car.
CPO 8.25	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach prescribed in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

8.3.1.10 Regeneration

A number of key sites exist within the settlement which present the potential for physical and social regeneration with the support of private and public-sector expertise and investment, including NPF and European funding. In particular the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund operated by the Department of Rural and Community Development is available to support coordinated and integrated projects between government departments, state agencies, local authorities, other public bodies and communities, which will have an impact on sustainable economic and social development in rural areas.

Accordingly, the potential for better use of under-utilised and vacant sites and buildings within the existing built-up footprint of Castlepollard to drive the delivery of quality housing, services and employment opportunities, in tandem with supporting social infrastructure is promoted. Three specific Opportunity Sites have been identified for comprehensive redevelopment or refurbishment of existing brownfield/infill lands over the lifetime of the plan. The redevelopment of these sites presents an opportunity to contribute to Castlepollard's rejuvenation and revitalisation and in contributing to the overall improvement of the public realm and visual amenity.

In this regard proposals for strategic brownfield and infill sites should be accompanied by a site brief and/or masterplan that sets out a phased programme for the regeneration of the site and demonstrates how the proposal will comply with National Guidelines that seek to achieve sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

Opportunity Site 1 - Former Community School site in Water Street

This site comprises of the former Westmeath Vocational Education Committee Technical School in Castlepollard, which is currently vacant and situated in a prime location to the north east of the town centre. The site is rectangular in shape with a site area of circa 0.7 hectares, bounded on the north and east by public roads, to the south by a residential housing estate and to the west by Killafree cemetery. Site is zoned “Consolidation Site” and has potential access onto Water Street and College Heights Road. This existing vacant and underutilised town centre site has the potential to provide a suitable mix of uses including new residential development, that will harness its prime location in the town centre. The development of such a strategic site, having regard to its proximity to adjacent primary school and within the town centre will aid in increasing the vibrancy and vitality of Castlepollard town centre.

Opportunity Site 2 - Kinturk Demesne (St Peters Centre)

To the south of the town stands Kinturk House, the Georgian period Pollard residence which incorporates gated entrances, landscaped grounds with walled gardens, an extensive complex of outbuildings, in addition to a hospital and church. The overall complex consists of 15 protected structures and a land area totalling 12 hectares which are zoned “Community, Educational & Institutional”. Historically, Kinturk House and gardens were extensively linked to the town, including a direct private access to the adjacent Church of Ireland grounds. Many of the buildings are now vacant and underutilised. The potential for development or reuse within the spheres of health care, education, training, enterprise, state services, tourism, sport and recreation should be further explored in the context of regeneration of this Opportunity Site. Any potential alternative uses within this complex should have regard to the requirement to respect the architectural and cultural heritage value of its context and be compatible with surrounding uses in the area. In consultation with the Local Authority, the preparation of a mothballing plan by the owner will be supported in order to safeguard and promote its reuse.

Opportunity Site 3 - Former Market House, Village Green

Standing on the green within Castlepollard is the Market House, it consists of an early nineteenth-century civic building, which retains its importance to the streetscape and is an integral element of the history of Castlepollard. It is a feature building in the town and, as such, is vital to the understanding and appreciation of the planned urban form of Castlepollard. It's use as a multi-function public building has varied over the years, originally a market house and courthouse to latter use as a town hall, fire station and library. This strategically located property is currently underutilised and provides an opportunity for regeneration to provide a focal point in the village green and will enhance vibrancy and vitality in Castlepollard town centre. The provision of a civic community hub at this location would serve in providing an opportunity to enhance social/tourist infrastructure provision within the town.

Castlepollard - Regeneration Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.26	Support the redevelopment of identified Regeneration/Opportunity Sites in the town (See Map 3).
CPO 8.27	Encourage the appropriate reuse and regeneration of Kinturk Demesne (St Peter's Centre) with an appropriate development that contributes positively to the character of the town having regard to its architectural and cultural heritage value (See Map 3).
CPO 8.28	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of the Market House to a public/community/commercial/retail usage which will provide an opportunity to capitalise on its central location (See Map 3).
CPO 8.29	Continue to identify sites in a poor state of repair or neglect under the Derelict Sites Act and support their regeneration.
CPO 8.30	In consultation with the Local Authority, support the preparation of a mothballing plan by the owners of the protected structure in order to encourage the safeguard and reuse of the structure.

8.3.1.11 Placemaking

Castlepollard provides the focus for a wide range of activities that contribute to a sense of place and identity. This town plays an important economic, social and cultural role with the main priority of consolidation in the existing centre and support of the existing businesses and activities, in order to maintain vibrancy. The centre of Castlepollard has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area due to its setting and townscape which are of special interest. Castlepollard can build on its strengths and sense of identity by the development of a Creative Placemaking Strategy supporting an actions-based programme for the most effective presentation, management and development of the town. Enhancement works have the potential to provide for the revitalisation of the core area and to provide social and environmental benefits to the local community and visitors to the town. It will also encourage economic growth and act as a catalyst in assisting with the revitalisation of existing building stock along the approach roads and within Market Square and provide a pedestrian bias within the town. The strategy will provide guidance and a suite of proposed interventions that will have a transformative impact on the town of Castlepollard. Particular attention should be focused on the following:

- Preparation of Integrated Traffic Management Strategy.
- Development of safe and secure pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure links to key community services, schools, amenities and local attractions, so to enhance pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- Establish key town entry points to strengthen the 'announcement' of Castlepollard.
- Provision of street furniture and additional planting which are age and disability friendly.
- Creation of a dedicated bus lay-by area for pick-ups/drop offs, complete with bus shelter.

- Support the development of looped walking routes within the locality, e.g. Old Road walking route.

Castlepollard - Placemaking Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.31	Support the preparation and implementation of a Place-making/Public Realm Strategy for Castlepollard over the plan period.
CPO 8.32	Ensure that the town centre is accessible to all members of the community, including people with mobility issues, the elderly and people with young children.
CPO 8.33	Actively engage with the community, developers and other agencies to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal and regeneration of the public realm in Castlepollard.

8.2.1.12 Heritage

The town has an attractive and distinctive built form and the distinctive Town Core has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area to protect its character and retain the setting of the Protected Structures. The special architectural character of Castlepollard derives from the relationship of the buildings surrounding the central green and the visual amenity of the open area itself. The buildings, which mostly date to the first quarter of the eighteenth century, do not form a homogenous whole, but share a style and form which has been diluted over the years, while nonetheless preserving something of the original character and scale. Of particular significance is the treatment of the two northern corners of the square. The awkward convergence of Pakenham Hall Road and Green Street at the northwest corner is probably a function of the town's earliest layout, where evidence of early seventeenth-century urban development is rare outside of the traditionally 'planted' areas. The several approaches to the village green have a separate, though connected relationship with the central core. Vistas of the green and its surrounding buildings are to be had from a distance on approach, with a strong and distinctive architectural presence at the corners. Of particular note are the town's carriage arches and distinctive cut stone door surrounds. Taken together, Castlepollard's special character encapsulates a history played out in its architecture and plan form, and in the almost total survival of its historic built fabric.

Castlepollard - Heritage Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.34	Protect and maintain the Architectural Conservation Area in Castlepollard and the buildings within the ACA and resist development proposals that would undermine the setting and interpretation of any structure located within the ACA.

CPO 8.35	Prioritise the enhancement of the streetscape and heritage assets of the town centre particularly within the ACA, to continue environmental improvements, to sustain and improve its attraction for living, working, visiting and investment.
CPO 8.36	Require works within the Architectural Conservation Area in Castlepollard to be carried out in accordance with the “Statement of Character” prepared for the ACA.
CPO 8.37	Reopen historic connection incorporating the re-instatement of a pedestrian footpath from the rear of the Church of Ireland grounds on the south side of the square to the parklands and gardens of Kinturk Demesne (See Map 3).
CPO 8.38	Create a dedicated Castlepollard Heritage Trail incorporating the surrounding hinterlands to promote local history and cultural heritage.

8.3.2 Kilbeggan

8.3.2.1 Location & Context:

Situated on the River Brosna in the south of the County approximately 31km from Mullingar, Kilbeggan is located in close proximity to the M6 motorway and is well served with transport links to the main service centres of Mullingar, Athlone and Tullamore. According to the 2016 census, the population of the settlement was 1,288 residents, up 7.4% from the previous census and greater than the county average of 3% for the same period. Census data between the period 2002 and 2016 disclosed that the population of the town has increased by 98%, compared to the county average of 23.5%. This growth in population reflects the town's attractiveness in terms of its proximity to the previously designated linked gateway of Athlone/Tullamore/Mullingar, and to Dublin by way of the M6 motorway.

8.3.2.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

The name of Kilbeggan is derived from the Church of St Bécán, a sixth century monastery built close to the River Brosna. Kilbeggan was an important market town in the nineteenth century to the surrounding agricultural community. The town started producing whiskey in 1757 and a distillery was erected along the Brosna River (present day Kilbeggan distillery) supported by a number of flour mills. A branch of the Grand Canal located to the east of the town closed in 1961. Kilbeggan is a planned town, arranged along a main thoroughfare that widens towards the centre to form the Market Square. Buildings along its extent are typically two and three storeys in height with narrow burgage plots. The traditional building form and layout of the centre of the town remains substantially as it was in the late 18th and 19th centuries, with more recent developments, primarily located along its southern and eastern approach roads. The authenticity of Kilbeggan's setting, built form and layout is a key factor in attracting both residents and visitors to the town.

8.3.2.3 Social Infrastructure

Kilbeggan serves as the retail centre for a larger rural catchment area and provides a range of services, social and community facilities, including a Garda Station, Post Office, Medical Centre, Creches and pre-school, Churches, retail shops and public houses within the town. The structure of the settlement is well defined, with retail and commercial uses primarily located within its town core, educational, institutional and community uses generally to the east; and the Distillery and other industrial uses to the west. Kilbeggan sports and recreational facilities comprise of GAA, handball, astro-turf pitch, tennis courts, soccer, pitch and putt, running track, private gym, children's playgrounds and Kilbeggan racing course. The town is served by a Primary and Secondary School located on adjacent sites. In 2019, Scoil an Chlochair Primary School had an attendance of 575 student while Mercy Secondary School Kilbeggan had 598 pupils. Planning permission has been approved for a new Secondary School on lands located to the east of the existing school site, which will consolidate the provision of educational facilities at this location.

8.3.2.4 Physical Infrastructure

Kilbeggan is served by an existing wastewater treatment system located on the western side of the town next to the River Brosna, water is sourced from the Mullingar High Level Water Supply Scheme. Kilbeggan is strategically located on a major inter-urban transport route and has good quality public transport and road links to Dublin. Kilbeggan to Dublin is served numerous times daily by several public

and private bus operators, neighbouring towns of Athlone, Mullingar and Tullamore also have good bus connections.

Westmeath County Council has secured €500,000 Outdoor Recreation Funding for the proposed development of a greenway along the Grand Canal spur from Kilbeggan to Ballycommon in Offaly which is part of a joint venture with Offaly County Council. In recent years, the Council secured funding of €1.5m million to undertake comprehensive public realm enhancement works along the Main Street comprising of upgrading of pedestrian footpaths and crossings, undergrounding of telecommunication cables, new public lighting, surface water alleviation works, all of which serve to visually enhance the attractive traditional character of the town. The opening of the motorway immediately to the south of Kilbeggan has resulted in a substantial reduction of through traffic along the Main Street. Further opportunity exists to capitalise upon the above works to redefine how the street and existing public spaces are used to best serve residents and visitors alike and to focus on regeneration of the existing building stock within the town core.

8.3.2.5 Function & Vision

Kilbeggan is designated as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town in the Core Strategy and thus has an important economic focus, providing retail, residential, service and amenity functions for locals and the rural hinterlands and supporting the upper tiers of the Settlement Hierarchy. Opportunity exists to enhance the level of jobs and services in the town, given established employment base and having regard to capitalising upon developing Kilbeggan as a tourist base for local attractions such as Kilbeggan Distillery and Kilbeggan Racecourse. Consolidated growth within the development footprint, regeneration, supporting local employment, expansion of services to meet the needs of residents and visitors together with measures to visually enhance the public realm and historic character and setting of this settlement will be key in realising the potential of Kilbeggan as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town.

Kilbeggan - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.39	Promote the development of Kilbeggan as a driver of economic growth in the area and fulfil its role as a designated Self-Sustaining Growth Town.
CPO 8.40	Support the expansion of a range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.41	Engage with the community and relevant stakeholders to promote and support the regeneration of Kilbeggan through identification of significant regeneration projects along with associated funding streams including the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.
CPO 8.42	Provide for the creation of sustainable communities in Kilbeggan by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, enterprise and employment, community and recreational uses.

CPO 8.43	Maximise the potential of developing Killbeggan as a tourist destination by facilitating the expansion of tourist attractions and developing a coordinated tourism product based on existing amenities within the town and its rural environs.
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8.3.2.6 Economic Development

Kilbeggan has an established industrial base in the town. Dawn Meats to the south west of the town is one of the larger employers with in excess of 200 employees. The 2016 census informs that in excess of 43% of the population from Kilbeggan are engaged within office-based activity (including 'Professional Services' (16%), 'Commerce and Trade' (22%) and 'Public Administration' (5%)), while 27% are involved in manufacturing industries and 22% in Commerce and Trade.

Lands are identified for employment purposes on the Moate and Clara roads, at Aghamore Industrial Estate and Midlands Gateway Business Park so as to capitalise on the potential of established leading industries at these locations and encourage the development of an ecosystem that supports smart specialisation cluster development and sustained economic growth. Additional lands are also identified south of the town with access onto the Tullamore Road. This in turn will promote innovation and entrepreneurship and enhanced employment opportunities. In addition, the plan provides for a new access road from the Moate Road to Midlands Gateway Business Park given the narrow alignment of existing local primary road L-1223. These lands have been identified for the purpose of facilitating diversification of the local economy into sectors such as precision farming, biotechnology, food and beverage products, low carbon construction and rural resource-based enterprises.

Given the established nature of existing premises within the industrial estates, the Council will support the upgrade, retrofitting and enhancement of existing buildings, particularly in the context of achieving energy efficiency and reducing carbon footprint.

Kilbeggan - Economic Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.44	Support the consolidation and growth of existing enterprises and the development of employment opportunities within the town and encourage the smart specialisation approach to development which involves the clustering of distinct industrial sectors.
CPO 8.45	Facilitate the establishment of new enterprise and employment uses on lands identified for employment purposes.
CPO 8.46	Facilitate the development of a new link road from Midlands Gateway Business Park to the Moate Road (See Map 5).
CPO 8.47	Require all new enterprise development to be located within a landscape network and demonstrate high quality architectural built form that contributes to a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness.

CPO 8.48	Support the upgrade, retro-fitting and environmental enhancement of existing industrial premises in the town.
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8.3.2.7 Sustainable Communities

Kilbeggan is a sought-after location given its proximity to the M6 motorway. There has been a 98% increase in population in the town since 2002. This plan acknowledges the importance for Kilbeggan to consolidate and ensure the delivery of sustainable communities comprising of a mix of housing types, densities and tenure of a high standard of design with a strong emphasis on the principles of place-making, green infrastructure, permeability and connectivity alongside the integration of community and recreation facilities.

The development strategy for Kilbeggan is to support new housing and population growth, thus providing a viable alternative to rural one-off housing within the surrounding hinterland and contributing to the principal of compact growth. Lands have been appropriately zoned in the Plan for new residential development. Provision is also made in accordance with RPO 4.78 of the RSES, for the development of serviced sites to create 'build your own home' opportunities within the existing footprint of Kilbeggan. In this regard, a tract of land has been zoned for residential use on the Streamstown Road with an objective to provide self-build plots.

New development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they contribute towards the creation of green infrastructure networks. The provision of a new town park to act as an amenity area is imperative, in addition to the provision of walks and links to the town centre and key regeneration sites.

Kilbeggan - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.49	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing and Core Strategy.
CPO 8.50	Require that an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential developments to meet the needs of the population of Kilbeggan.
CPO 8.51	Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area.
CPO 8.52	Work with Irish Water and landowners in providing for serviced sites for residential development within Kilbeggan (See Map 5).
CPO 8.53	Support the provision of an easily accessible public park, complete with recreational and amenity facilities within the confines of the town (See Map 5).

CPO 8.54	Require proposals for development to demonstrate how they integrate/respond to Green Infrastructure and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.
CPO 8.55	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.
CPO 8.56	Promote cycling and walking within the community through the implementation of a walking/cycling strategy and improved walking/cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.

8.3.2.8 Commercial & Retail Development

There are a significant number of large employers in Kilbeggan: Kilbeggan Distillery and Racecourse are important to the local economy. In 2016, Kilbeggan's total net retail floorspace was recorded at 610m² with no additional floorspace provided since 2007. There is an opportunity for Kilbeggan to enhance its retail offer, particularly but not exclusively in the convenience area, in order to serve the needs of those in the town and its rural hinterland. Re-use of vacant buildings and the redevelopment of backlands sites for retail purposes will be a priority given the limited potential for retail development around Main Street. Backlands to the north of the junction at Main Street/Dublin Road and Tullamore Road, offers the potential for retail development with linkages to Main Street.

The plan will support the town as an important economic driver for the provision of goods and retail services and encourage the provision of new commercial and retail development within the vicinity of the town centre. The County Retail Strategy defines the type and quantum of retail development suitable for Kilbeggan. In this regard, it identifies that large convenience and middle order comparison, specifically tourism related/niche comparison and small-scale bulky goods floorspace is appropriate at this location.

Kilbeggan - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.57	Sustain and enhance the retail and services offer of Kilbeggan Town Centre in line with the County Retail Strategy.
CPO 8.58	Reinforce the centre of Kilbeggan as the priority location for new commercial and retail development, with emphasis on quality of design, positive contribution to the existing streetscape and protection of existing heritage assets.
CPO 8.59	Support the provision of mixed-use developments in the town centre which create opportunities to live, work, shop, etc. within the town and reduce the propensity to travel by private car.

CSO 8.60	Support commercial opportunities within Kilbeggan town centre which harness the potential of its tourist assets and tourism profile.
CPO 8.61	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach prescribed in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

8.3.2.9 Tourism

Kilbeggan hosts several key regional tourist attractions. In this regard, Kilbeggan Distillery is the third major tourist attraction in the County and is the only sample left in Ireland of a typical small pot distillery. Kilbeggan Racecourse is 1km north of the town and is Ireland's only All National Hunt Racecourse, the racecourse holds eight one-day race meetings annually with annual attendances of up to 40,000 people.

Opportunity exists to strengthen the commercial base of the town centre around these tourism related assets in addition to the creation of increased connectivity between the attractions and the town centre, particularly around enhanced racecourse linkages.

There are also a number of existing and proposed walking/cycling Greenway developments around Kilbeggan which offer further tourism potential. The Grand Canal connects Dublin City to the River Shannon with a Grand Canal spur from Ballycommon in County Offaly to the Canal Harbour located to the southeast of Kilbeggan. The 'Royal Canal to Grand Canal' greenway link has obtained planning permission and also has funding secured to provide a link south of Kilbeggan to Ballycommon. A long-distance National Waymarked Way exists from Mullingar to Kilbeggan titled the "Westmeath Way", however this is fragmented and requires some work to re-route and upgrade. There is potential to re-route the "Westmeath Way" from Aghyrassy along the River Brosna to Lilliput linking up with the existing "Westmeath Way" as far as Dysart. A new extension to the walkway along the Dysart River will provide for a connection to the "Old Rail Trail" greenway at Barrettstown.

In addition, potential exists for a cycle link from Kilbeggan to the "Old Rail Trail" greenway in Streamstown, providing a cycle connection to Mullingar and Athlone.

Other tourist attractions within the locality include fishing on the River Brosna, New Forest Golf Course, Ardan Woods Reserve, Long Hill Esker Walk and the site of a 6th century monastery founded by Saint Colmcille at Durrow Abbey. The Council will look favourably on sustainable tourism developments and especially on supporting tourism infrastructure and improved linkages to the town.

Kilbeggan - Tourism Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.62	Continue to promote and harness the potential of Kilbeggan as a tourist destination.
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CSO 8.63	Support and enhance the tourism offering of existing attractions such as Kilbeggan Distillery, Kilbeggan Race Course, the former Canal Buildings and associated tourism attractions.
CPO 8.64	Support the delivery of better pedestrian linkages between the racecourse track and the town (See Map 5).
CPO 8.65	Develop activity-based tourism and use the marketing momentum behind Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands to integrate its Tourism services into a strong and coherent offer that will build growing visitor numbers.
CPO 8.66	Facilitate the development of a walking and cycling route along the Grand Canal Branch from Kilbeggan to Ballycommon, Co. Offaly (See Map 5).
CPO 8.67	Support the re-route and upgrade of the Westmeath Way walking trail, bringing it off-road and connecting to the Old Rail Trail at Dysart, ensuring its status as an accredited National Waymarked way.
CPO 8.68	Seek to facilitate the development of an off-road cycling link from Kilbeggan to the Old Rail Trail at Streamstown (See Map 5).

8.3.2.10 Regeneration

Regeneration within the settlement presents the potential for physical and social renewal with the support of public-sector expertise and investment, including NPF and European funding. In particular the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund operated by the Department of Rural and Community Development plays an important role and is available to support coordinated and integrated projects between government departments, State agencies, local authorities, other public bodies and communities, which will have an impact on sustainable economic and social development in rural areas.

Accordingly, the potential for better use of under-utilised and vacant sites within the existing built-up footprint of Kilbeggan to drive the delivery of quality housing, services and employment opportunities in tandem with supporting social infrastructure is promoted in the Plan. One specific Opportunity Site has been identified for comprehensive redevelopment or refurbishment of existing brownfield lands and infill site over the lifetime of the plan. The redevelopment of this site presents an opportunity to contribute to Kilbeggan's rejuvenation and revitalisation and to contribute to the overall improvement of the public realm and visual amenity.

In this regard proposals for strategic brownfield and infill sites should be accompanied by a site brief and/or masterplan that sets out a phased programme for the regeneration of the site and demonstrates how the proposal will comply with National Guidelines that seek to achieve sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

Opportunity Site 1 – North of Main Street.

This opportunity site comprises a large parcel of lands located along the north side of Main Street and with frontage also onto the Mullingar Road. These existing vacant and underutilised town centre lands were previously utilised for commercial, residential and agricultural uses. This site has an area of circa 3.5 hectares and lands have multiple land use zonings within this plan. The site offers the potential for the delivery of a mixed-use scheme to strengthen the commercial base of the town, together with the provision of residential development, taking advantage of the site's prime location in the town centre with potential pedestrian and vehicular connections to the Main Street and Mullingar Road.

Kilbeggan – Regeneration Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.69	Support the redevelopment of identified Regeneration/Opportunity Sites in the town (See Map 5).
CPO 8.70	Support the consolidation of Kilbeggan Town Centre through encouraging the re-use and regeneration of lands and buildings along Main Street, with the key priority being the development of opportunity sites and ensuring their connectivity to the Main Street.

8.3.2.11 Placemaking

Kilbeggan provides the focus for a wide range of activities that contribute to a sense of place and identity. This town plays an important economic, social and cultural role with the main priority of consolidation in the existing centre and support of the existing businesses and activities, in order to maintain vibrancy. The town centre has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area given the architectural merit of many of the buildings and overall design of the town, the aim of which is to retain the overall special historic and architectural character of the area. Whilst much work has been done in partnership with the local community there remains considerable opportunity to enhance the town by promoting visual enhancement of buildings, streetscape and public realm elements. Kilbeggan can build on its strengths and sense of identity by the development of a Creative Placemaking Strategy supporting an actions-based programme for the most effective presentation, management and development of the town. Enhancement works have the potential to provide for the revitalisation of the core area and to provide social and environmental benefits to the local community and visitors to the town. It will also encourage economic growth and act as a catalyst in assisting with the revitalisation of existing building stock along Main Street/Market Square and provide a pedestrian bias within the town. The strategy will provide guidance and a suite of proposed interventions that will have a transformative impact on the town of Kilbeggan.

Particular attention should be focused on the following:

- Development of safe and secure pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure links to key community services, schools, amenities and local attractions, so to enhance pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- Street Enhancements works along with additional street furniture and tree planting.
- Town Enhancement Scheme to promote the visual enhancement of existing streetscape to include vacant and derelict sites, building facade, repainting and rejuvenating and upgrading buildings.
- Establish key town entry points to strengthen the 'announcement' of Kilbeggan.
- Provision of a safe and secure walk/cycle route from Canal Harbour to the Town Centre.
- Provision of pedestrian link from the "Westmeath Way" at Kilbeggan Distillery, with the construction of two bridges across the Mill Race and River Brosna, to join up with the Main Street at Kilbeggan Bridge.
- Provision of a pedestrian walk from Kilbeggan Bridge south along the River Brosna as far as the M6 motorway and create a looped link eastwards adjacent to the motorway to join up with the Relic Road.
- Development of a linear biodiversity amenity area on the "Westmeath Way" along the River Brosna corridor on the link from Coola Mills to Kilbeggan Distillery.
- Establishment of a heritage/cultural museum and a tourist information point.
- Reopening of the Kilbeggan branch of the Grand Canal.
- Support the development of sporting facilities.

Kilbeggan - Placemaking Policy Objectives

It is Council policy objective to:

CPO 8.71	Support the preparation and implementation of a Place-making/Public Realm Strategy for Kilbeggan over the plan period.
CPO 8.72	Ensure that the town centre is accessible to all members of the community, including people with mobility issues, the elderly and people with young children.
CPO 8.73	Actively engage with the community, developers and other agencies to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal and regeneration of the public realm in Kilbeggan.
CPO 8.74	Prioritise the improvement of the streetscape and heritage assets of the town centre, to continue environmental improvements, in order to enhance the towns attractiveness for residents and visitors.
CPO 8.75	Support the upgrade, retrofitting and visual enhancement of properties in Kilbeggan town centre.

8.3.2.12 Heritage

The town has an attractive and distinctive built form and has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) to protect its character. The special architectural character of Kilbeggan derives from the specifically urban form of the central market square and the ever-changing form and height of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century buildings which line both sides of the long Main Street. The market square, actually a rectangle bisected by the Main Street, may have been laid out as early as the 1620s and all of the buildings addressing the square are of some distinction. Of particular significance is the former Market House occupying a corner plot, testament to the economic prosperity and confidence enjoyed in Kilbeggan in the early nineteenth century, when Kilbeggan was one of the more important market towns in the Midlands. The other corners are strongly expressed with the *Saddler's Inn* adding particular interest in its arrangement of low round-headed window opes to both elevations. Also, of note is the pair of houses at the north-western angle, the former *Bank of Ireland*, a late nineteenth-century building with subdued classical detailing, purpose built to designs by Millar and Symes.

The majority of buildings on the Main Street date to the prosperity enjoyed at the turn of the nineteenth century and most retain their primary architectural form with relatively little modern infill. The roof heights and plot widths vary considerably adding interest and character which repays further examination in terms of the architectural detailing. The taller buildings all retain their Georgian hierarchical fenestration with smaller opes under the eaves where there is a particular variety of doorcase types present. Facing one another, the *Garda* barracks, formerly the RIC barrack is a fine example of its type where the *Olde Volunteer* (now a *Londis*) is possibly the oldest occupied structure in the town and has historical associations with the 1798 Rebellion. Where most of the structures display Georgian elevations, there is a suspicion that earlier fabric may survive within and the array and variety of chimney stacks suggest that the *Olde Volunteer* may not be unique in this regard. Next door, a terrace of three early nineteenth-century houses with an integrated carriage arch contribute to the streetscape with an attractive mid-twentieth tiled mosaic shopfront being the last survivor of several similar shopfronts in the town.

Both main approaches to the town are dominated by significant structures, with the picturesque distillery and its waterwheel and chimney to the west and a former hotel executed in a subdued Tudor Gothic style with a curvilinear frontage to the east. This was more than likely built to cater for the canal trade, where the Grand Canal (Kilbeggan Branch), was constructed between 1830-36. This is an important architectural link to an almost forgotten past. Kilbeggan's special character is thus associated with its status as an important nineteenth-century market town anchored by the market square, however there are strong hints of its earlier origins throughout.

Kilbeggan - Heritage Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.76	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Kilbeggan and ensure their protection.
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CPO 8.77	Require, where appropriate, the submission of a comprehensive tree survey with any application on landscape where mature trees are a feature.
CPO 8.78	Protect and maintain the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in Kilbeggan and the buildings within the ACA and resist development proposals that would undermine the setting and interpretation of any structure located within the ACA.
CPO 8.79	Require works within the ACA in Kilbeggan to be carried out in accordance with the “Statement of Character” prepared for the ACA.
CPO 8.80	Promote the use of conservation grants by the owners of derelict Protected Structures in the town centre.
CPO 8.81	Maintain the amenity character and appearance of the sites and buildings within the Town. The Council will continue to identify and register buildings which are in a derelict state of repair.
CPO 8.82	Support the re-development of Coola Mills in accordance with best conservation practice (See Map 5).

8.3.3 Kinnegad

8.3.3.1 Location & Context:

Strategically located at the junction of the M4 and M6, Kinnegad has witnessed a significant increase in population in recent decades. In 2016 the population of the town was 2,745 which represents an increase of 22% from the 2006 census. The town has a younger population than the county average, with only 6% of the population of Kinnegad over 65 compared to the county average of 19.7%. With 64% of the population of working age, significant opportunity exists to develop the economic base of the town and thus help Kinnegad to realise its role as a self-sustaining growth town.

8.3.3.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

The Irish place name for Kinnegad is *Cionn Átha Gad*, which has been translated as “the head of the Ford of withes”. The Ford referred to is the present day River Kinnegad, which since 1543 has marked the boundary between Westmeath and Meath. This suggests that the settlement began life as a crossing point over the river. The town developed a very strong transport sector in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as it provided a stagecoach resting place on the Dublin to Athlone Coach Road. The linear form of the settlement is largely dictated by the road network within the town, in particular the former N4 Primary Road, now the R148 Regional route.

8.3.3.3 Social Infrastructure

Kinnegad serves as the retail centre for a larger rural catchment area and possesses a range of services, social and community facilities, including a Garda Station, Post Office, Bank, Credit Union, Primary Care Centre and health services, Creches and Churches, retail shops, public houses and a hotel within the town. St Etchens Primary School is the sole school located within the town centre, with almost 600 pupils. There are also several active sporting and recreation clubs and facilities in the town. In recent years, the provision of a playground together with public realm improvement works in the vicinity of the church has increased both the amenity value of town and visually enhanced the existing streetscape.

8.3.3.4 Physical Infrastructure

Kinnegad is served by an existing wastewater treatment system located on the eastern side of the town next to the Kinnegad River, water is sourced from the Mullingar Regional Water Supply Scheme. The town is well served by the national bus network, with an hourly service to Dublin, Longford and Maynooth operated by Bus Éireann. Commuting statistics from the 2016 Census show that 43.4% of commuters undertake journey times greater than 30 minutes from Kinnegad. 30.3% undertake journey times of less than 15 minutes. Opportunity therefore presents to reduce existing levels of car dependency and thereby lessen carbon emissions, by expanding the employment base in the town in the medium to long term and by promoting the use of existing public transport services in the immediate future in tandem with the provision of a new park and ride facility in the town, which will provide commuters with a transitional alternative to travelling to work by car.

8.3.3.5 Function & Vision

Kinnegad is designated as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town in the Core Strategy and thus is an important economic driver for the County. The function of Kinnegad is to perform important retail, residential, service, amenity and employment functions for local rural hinterlands and to support the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, in particular the key town of Mullingar.

The vision for Kinnegad is to facilitate its continued growth as a self-sustaining town. This will involve capitalising on the town's strategic location, availability of suitably zoned lands and its skilled working population to create a sustainable employment base in the town. Opportunity exists for the regeneration of a number of under-utilised brownfield and infill sites in the town centre together with measures to visually enhance the existing streetscape and public realm. Such measures will increase the attractiveness and vitality of the settlement. Provision of social and community infrastructure to meet the needs of existing rapidly expanding population and future residents is a priority.

Kinnegad - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.83	Promote the development of Kinnegad as a driver of economic growth in the County and fulfil its role as a designated Self-Sustaining Growth Town.
CPO 8.84	Facilitate the expansion of the range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.85	Support the regeneration of infill and brownfield sites in the town core and seek to achieve sustainable compact mixed-use development at these locations based upon the principles of good urban design and place-making.
CPO 8.86	Provide for the creation of sustainable communities in Kinnegad by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, enterprise and employment, community and recreational uses.
CPO 8.87	Support the provision of a "Park and Ride" facility together with dedicated bus pick-ups/drop offs complete with bus shelter on lands adjacent to the Kinnegad Plaza Service Station (See Map 7).

8.3.3.6 Economic Development:

Kinnegad has historically been a service centre for the surrounding hinterland, with employment sources within the settlement largely dominated by commercial and service providers. According to the 2016 census, there were a total of 1,019 resident workers and a total of 398 jobs in the town. Tesco Ireland and Lagan Cement Ltd., a cement works manufacturer located approximately 3.5km southwest of Kinnegad, are the two dominant employers in the town. On further analysis of those at work, it is recorded that 50% of the population of the town are engaged in office-based activity (including 'Professional Services' (23%), 'Commerce and Trade' (25%) and 'Public Administration' (6%).

Census 2016 indicates that high levels of commuting are a notable factor within Kinnegad, with 43%

of the population travelling to school, college or work having a commute time between 30 minutes and in excess of one hour daily.

For Kinnegad to develop as a self-sustaining growth town, there is a need to establish an employment base in the settlement in order to provide for sustainable local employment offer. The town is ideally situated in this regard given its strategic location with easy access to the M4 and M6 motorways, availability of suitably zoned lands and skilled population.

In order to increase the economic profile of the town, a prominent land bank to the west of Kinnegad in close proximity to the motorway has been zoned for Enterprise and Employment use. Such lands can accommodate a range of enterprise uses ranging from incubator units to second site facilities of scale. Given the strategic location of these lands adjacent to the motorway, within close proximity of Dublin, it is considered that they offer an optimum location for enterprise facilities including transport related enterprise. In addition, further opportunity exists for enterprise development within the identified regeneration sites in the town in addition to the backlands area south of the Main Street. Potential also exists for the development of e-working hubs and enterprise space at this town centre location.

Kinnegad - Economic Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.88	Prepare and implement an Economic Development Strategy for Kinnegad.
CPO 8.89	Support the consolidation and growth of existing enterprises and development of employment opportunities within the town.
CPO 8.90	Promote and support the establishment of new enterprise and employment uses on lands identified for these purposes.
CPO 8.91	Support the town of Kinnegad as a suitable location for second site and relocation opportunities for enterprise development.
CPO 8.92	Require all new enterprise development to be located within a landscape network and demonstrate high quality architectural built form that contributes to a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness.

8.3.3.7 Sustainable Communities

Kinnegad has experienced rapid population growth over a 20-year period and opportunity now exists to consolidate and ensure the delivery of sustainable communities in tandem with employment opportunities, services and supporting social infrastructure. Accordingly, new residential development should focus on building communities with a high standard of design, underpinned by the principles of placemaking, green infrastructure, permeability and connectivity together with integration of community and recreation facilities.

The development strategy for Kinnegad is to support new housing and population growth, thus providing a viable alternative to rural one-off housing within the surrounding hinterland and contributing to the principal of compact urban growth. Provision is made in the plan for the development of serviced sites to create ‘build your own home’ opportunities within the existing footprint of Kinnegad. The addition of a new library together with an associated educational facility on the site of the former National School is a very positive development along Main Street, which will add further vibrancy to the town centre. Further emphasis should be placed on making provision for additional social infrastructure to meet the needs of both existing residents and new communities. In this regard, provision is made for a town park and playground to serve the needs of both residents and visitors, together with provision of a community centre to further augment recreational provision in the town.

St. Etchens Primary School occupies a central and considerable landbank along the Mullingar Road. The plan supports the consolidation of future educational facilities at this location. Given current enrolment levels, it is anticipated that a need may arise for a Secondary School to serve the town. Lands have been suitably zoned in this regard. It is further noted that opportunity exists for sharing of recreational facilities between St. Etchens and Kinnegad GAA.

Having regard to the established pattern of residential development in Kinnegad which is located immediately east, west and south of St. Etchen’s Primary School, it is considered that an opportunity exists to develop a network of green routes through existing adjacent residential areas to connect to both the school site and Kinnegad GAA. This would encourage students to walk or cycle to school, thereby reducing car dependency and CO2 emissions.

Kinnegad is also a popular destination for walkers with a road and nature trail known locally as “An Boreen Brádach” which semicircles the town to the north over a distance of approximately 5km. This walkway provides a valuable amenity to the residents of Kinnegad and therefore the plan supports enhancing connectivity to same.

Kinnegad - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.93	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing and Core Strategy.
CPO 8.94	Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area.
CPO 8.95	Require proposals for new residential development to demonstrate how they integrate the principles of Green Infrastructure into their scheme.
CPO 8.96	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.
CPO 8.97	Provide for a community centre to serve the needs of the town (See Map 7).

CPO 8.98	Support the development of a Secondary School on lands adjacent to St. Etchens Primary School (See Map 7).
CPO 8.99	Support the development of a network of green routes to connect adjacent residential estates with St. Etchens School complex and Kinnegad GAA.
CPO 8.100	Support the development of a looped walking/cycling routes within the locality, including the enhancement of “An Boreen Brádach,” walking/cycle route and encourage increased connectivity to Kinnegad Town Centre.
CPO 8.101	Support Kinnegad as an Age Friendly Town and ensure that new developments are designed to meet the needs of older Persons.
CPO 8.102	Support the development of housing for Older Persons within Kinnegad and its environs.
CPO 8.103	Support the construction of a link road between the Killucan Road L1015 and the roundabout at the junction of the R446-2 and N4-1120, thereby creating a bypass of the Main Street, Kinnegad (See Map 7).

8.3.3.8 Commercial & Retail Development

Kinnegad is the third largest retail centre in the County according the County Retail Strategy, providing a total quantum of retail floorspace of 3,061m², almost double that which prevailed in 2007 (1,532m²). Since then two significant retail developments have opened, namely Aldi food store and Kinnegad Plaza Service Station, providing a gross floor retail area of 1757m² and 1414m² respectively. Whilst such developments have improved the convenience offer in the town, there is a need to enhance both the comparison and service offer. Opportunity exists to re-use vacant buildings on Main Street for retail and commercial purposes. In order to consolidate retail activity in the town core, larger retail proposals should be located within the mixed use and expanded town centre zoning to the south of Main Street. In this context, the provision of new and enhanced linkages from the Inner Relief Road to the Main Street is of utmost importance in sustaining the vitality and viability of Kinnegad. The upgrading of existing premises and visual enhancement of the streetscape will also be supported in order to enhance the retail environment of the town.

The County Retail Strategy defines the type and quantum of retail development suitable for Kinnegad. In this regard, it identifies that large convenience and middle order comparison, specifically tourism related/niche comparison and small-scale bulky goods floorspace is appropriate at this location.

Kinnegad - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.104	Sustain and enhance the retail and services offer of Kinnegad town centre and facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the commercial and retailing industry, in line with the Westmeath County Retail Strategy.
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CPO 8.105	Reinforce the centre of Kinnegad as the priority location for new commercial and retail development, with quality of design, positive contribution to the existing streetscape, and integration/linkage with the town core being the key underpinning principles in the expanded mixed-use town area.
CPO 8.106	Support the provision of mixed-use developments in the town centre which create opportunities to live, work, shop, etc. within the town and reduce the propensity to travel by private car.
CPO 8.107	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses.
CPO 8.108	Support the development of under-utilised lands between the Inner Relief Road and the Main Street with appropriate mixed-use development with pedestrian/vehicular links to the Main Street (See Map 7).
CPO 8.109	Support the upgrade, retrofitting and visual enhancement of existing commercial properties in Kinnegad.

8.3.3.9 Regeneration

A number of key sites exist within the settlement which present the potential for physical and social regeneration with the support of private and public-sector expertise and investment, including NPF and European funding. In particular the €1bn Rural Regeneration and Development Fund operated by the Department of Rural and Community Development plays an important role and is available to support coordinated and integrated projects between government departments, state agencies, local authorities, other public bodies and communities, which will have an impact on sustainable economic and social development in rural areas.

Accordingly, the potential for better use of under-utilised and vacant sites and buildings within the existing built-up footprint of Kinnegad to drive the delivery of quality housing, services and employment opportunities in tandem with supporting social infrastructure is promoted. Three specific Opportunity Sites have been identified for comprehensive redevelopment or refurbishment of existing brownfield lands and infill sites over the lifetime of the plan. The redevelopment of these sites presents an opportunity to contribute to the rejuvenation and revitalisation of Kinnegad, improve the public realm and increase the vitality and viability of this self-sustaining growth town.

In this regard, proposals for strategic brownfield and infill sites should be accompanied by a site brief and/or masterplan that sets out a phased programme for the regeneration of the site and demonstrates how the proposal will comply with National Guidelines that seek to achieve sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

Opportunity Site 1 – South of Main Street.

This opportunity site comprises of a strategic landbank in the town core located to the south of Main Street, with frontage onto the old Galway Road. The site was previously in use as a tannery. It comprises several vacant buildings on brownfield lands which are zoned “Mixed Use” and “Expanded

Town Centre". The site offers the potential to strengthen the commercial base of the town and presents an opportunity to introduce a modern development scheme onto the Main Street and associated backlands thereby improving the vitality and viability of the town centre. The site has the potential to enhance employment opportunities within the town core, thereby increasing the sustainability of the settlement.

Opportunity Site 2 – Former National School Site, Main St.

Situated to the west of the town and north of the Main Street sits the former "Old National School" building and associated "Principal's House". These buildings have considerable architectural merit, contribute positively to the existing streetscape and accordingly are included on the Record of Protected Structures. This site presents an opportunity to address existing social infrastructure deficit in the town through the development of a library and educational campus to support the social and educational needs of the existing population and new communities. Given the existing protected structures on site, the redevelopment of this site should be carried out in accordance with best conservation practice. This will ensure the preservation and continued use of existing architecturally significant buildings at this location and increase pedestrian footfall along Main Street. Westmeath County Council in partnership with Longford Westmeath Education & Training Board (LWETB) have been successful in their initial application for Rural Regeneration and Development Funding (RRDF) to provide a state-of-the-art Library and Education Centre on these lands.

Opportunity Site 3 – Town Park & Community Facilities.

Opportunity exists for the development of a Town Park, children's playground and community facilities on a site of 1.48 hectares at a strategic location in the core area of the town. This site currently contains a public carpark fronting onto the Main Street, open lands to the rear which were formerly a pitch and putt course and later a soccer pitch, and a community hall and former children's playground fronting onto the old Galway road.

This existing community hall building, no longer in use, is in a dilapidated condition and is not conducive to the identified future needs of the community. Each of the three distinct elements has a specific zoning compromising of "Mixed Use", "Open Space" and "Community, Educational and Institutional". The development of a Town Park and community facilities at this location will provide for enhanced social infrastructure, whilst also allowing for a meeting place for passive and recreational purposes within the town as well as greater connectivity to and within the town core. The Council is committed to pursuing Rural Regeneration Development Funding for the provision of a town park and community facilities in Kinnegad.

Kinnegad - Regeneration Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.110	Support the redevelopment of identified Regeneration/Opportunity Sites in the town.
CPO 8.111	Promote the consolidation of Kinnegad Town Centre through encouraging the re-use and regeneration of existing buildings and under-utilised brownfield and backlands for

	commercial development with the key priority of ensuring connectivity to the Main Street (See Map 7).
CPO 8.112	Provide a new library and education centre on the site of the former “Old National School” and “Principal’s House” building (See Map 7).
CPO 8.113	Support the provision of an easily accessible public park, complete with recreational and amenity facilities within the confines of the town centre (See Map 7).

8.3.3.10 Placemaking

Kinnegad provides the focus for a wide range of activities that contribute to a sense of place and identity. This town plays an important economic, social and cultural role with the main priority of consolidation in the existing centre and support of the existing businesses and activities, in order to maintain vibrancy. Kinnegad can build on its strengths and further enhance its sense of identity by the development of a Creative Placemaking Strategy supporting an actions-based programme for the most effective presentation, management and development of the town. Enhancement works have the potential to provide for the revitalisation of the core area and to provide social and environmental benefits to the local community and visitors to the town, encourage economic growth and act as a catalyst in assisting with the revitalisation of existing building stock along Main Street and provide a pedestrian bias within the town. The strategy will provide guidance on a suite of proposed interventions that will have a transformative impact on the town of Kinnegad.

Particular attention should be focused on the following:

- Preparation of a Public Realm & Environmental Improvement Strategy.
- Development of safe and secure pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure links to key community services, schools, amenities and local attractions, so to enhance pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- Street Enhancements works consisting of widening of footpaths and the provision of new paving, along with additional street furniture and tree planting.
- Establish key town entry points to strengthen the ‘announcement’ of Kinnegad.
- Support the provision of a link to the “Old Bog Road” at Cloncrave, in addition to links to the Kinnegad River.
- Support the establishment of a river side walk and river side biodiversity amenity area.
- Provide a dedicated safe pedestrian/cycling link from Kinnegad along the Killucan Road past Kinnegad Juniors soccer complex to the junction with “An Boreen Bradach”.

Kinnegad - Placemaking Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.114	Support the preparation and implementation of a Place-making/Public Realm Strategy for Kinnegad over the plan period.
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CPO 8.115	Provide for tree planting to the south of the Inner Relief Road and along both sides of the local road serving Kinnegad Plaza (See Map 7).
CPO 8.116	Actively engage with the community, developers and other agencies to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal and regeneration of the public realm in Kinnegad.
CPO 8.117	Ensure that the town centre is accessible to all members of the community, including people with mobility issues, the elderly and people with young children.

8.3.3.11 Heritage

Much of the heritage features associated with Kinnegad relate to built elements, with several fine examples of architectural heritage. The NIAH classifies 11 structures, buildings or complexes worthy of regional status for protection in the settlement. The layout of these structures largely reflects the historic settlement form of Kinnegad, with most of the structures located on the Main Street. Of particular note are the remains of the multi-arch road bridge over the Kinnegad River, built circa 1665.

Three arches of the seventeenth Century Bridge survive to the southeast side of the bridge, with a modern concrete span to the northwest built circa 1936. This bridge that straddles the border of Westmeath and Meath offers an interesting architectural fragment of considerable historical merit, and an important element of the transport and civil engineering heritage of Westmeath.

There are a number of archaeological sites in the surrounding area, predominately in the southern environs of the town ranging from raths or ringforts to enclosures and earthworks. Approximately 4km north of the town lies the Special Area of Conservation and proposed Natural Heritage Area of Mount Hevey Bog which comprises of a raised bog that includes areas of both high bog and cutover bog with the Dublin-Sligo railway running through the northern part of the bog isolating two northern lobes. The proposed Natural Heritage Area of the Royal Canal bounds the bog to the north.

Kinnegad - Heritage Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.118	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Kinnegad and ensure their protection.
CPO 8.119	Support the development of a dedicated Kinnegad Heritage Trail incorporating the surrounding hinterlands to promote local history and cultural heritage.

8.3.4 Moate

8.3.4.1 Location & Context:

Moate is located in the south west of the County close to the boundary with County Offaly, 12km east of Athlone and 33km south of Mullingar. The former Dublin to Galway route (R446) bisects the town with the new M6 bypassing the town to the south. In 2016 Moate had a population of 2,763 people. During the period 2006-2016 the population of the town increased by 46%, compared to a 12% increase in the population of County Westmeath over the same period. This growth in population is as a result of Moates strategic location and proximity to Athlone and other Midland centres of employment.

8.3.4.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

The name Moate (*An Móta*) refers to the Anglo-Norman Motte-and-Bailey castle situated to the south of the town, of which the Motte remains. Moate Castle, on the opposite side of the Main Street, is the oldest surviving building in the town, and remains inhabited today. It was built in the sixteenth century as a tower house and was extended and adapted in the eighteenth century. A Quaker family purchased the castle in the mid-seventeenth century and established the modern market town, bringing industries such as a tannery, a large linen industry from local flax, brewery, distillery and a coachbuilders, which attracted workers and traders who built houses and shops. The Quakers left a lasting impression on the town, including a walled cemetery and a meeting house in the castle grounds, which were developed in 1680s, and continued in use until 1931. The urban character of the town is dominated by its wide Main Street, which confirm its historic links as an important market town. The layout and form of the town has not altered much since the early twentieth century. The town in the past experienced traffic congestion, however, the M6 motorway provides an opportunity to re-sculpt the Main Street/Church Street vicinity reinforcing the areas role as the hub of the town.

8.3.4.3 Social Infrastructure

Moate serves as the retail centre for a larger rural catchment area and provides important educational and community functions which extend beyond Moate's retail role. Several institutional uses located on or near Main Street and Church Street serve a wide area. These include Moate Public Library, Tuar Ard Arts Centre, Moate Business College, a youth centre, Men's Shed, and the Moate Museum. There are three schools in the town, two primary schools and one secondary school, in addition to Moate Business College. In 2019, St. Brigid's Primary School had an enrolment number of 243 pupils and Oliver Plunkett Primary School on the Lake Road had an enrolment of 98 boys, while Moate Community College in Church Street had student attendance of 810 pupils. Moate Business College offers a wide variety of PLC courses to both school leavers and mature students, this school is currently running 17 full-time courses and caters for almost 500 full-time students.

In recent years there have been several positive developments in the town including, the development of a Biodiversity Park at Dún Na Sí, public realm improvement works, development of a Library in the former Courthouse and completion of the provision adjacent to the former Midland Great Western railway of the Old Rail Trail Greenway, which forms part of the National Cycle Network. All of these developments serve to enhance the considerable offerings in Moate.

8.3.4.4 Physical Infrastructure

Moate is served by an existing wastewater treatment plant with the town served by the Mullingar High Level Water Supply Scheme, which has been recently upgraded.

The opening of the motorway immediately to the south of Moate has resulted in a substantial reduction of through traffic along the Main Street. Further opportunity exists to redefine how the street and existing public spaces are used to best serve residents and visitors alike and to focus on regeneration of the existing building stock within the town core.

Located on the N6, the town has strong transportation links by road and is centrally positioned between Galway and Dublin. It is well served by national and regional bus networks. Bus Eireann, Citylink, Flagline and Carrolls Coaches link Moate to several towns and cities around the country including Dublin, Galway, Athlone, Tullamore, Mountmellick and Roscrea.

8.3.4.5 Function & Vision

Moate is designated as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town in the Core Strategy and thus has an important economic focus performing important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for local rural hinterlands and supporting the upper tiers of the Settlement Hierarchy. Opportunity exists to improve upon the moderate level of jobs and services in the town and to facilitate its continued self-sustaining growth. Building on recent population growth, opportunity exists to consolidate growth within the development boundary of the town and to provide for supporting social and community infrastructure to meet the needs of existing and future residents. Further opportunity exists to increase the economic profile of the town by zoning additional lands for employment use and by maximising the potential of the strategic location of Moate. The realisation of regeneration opportunities in Moate, in promoting the creation of local employment, expansion of services to meet the needs of residents and visitors, together with measures to visually enhance the public realm and historic character and setting of this settlement, will be key in realising the potential of Moate as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town.

Moate - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.120	Promote the development of Moate as a driver of economic growth in the area and fulfil its role as a designated Self-Sustaining Growth Town.
CPO 8.121	Support the expansion of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.122	Through the engagement of community and wider private and public sector support and investment funds, including the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, promote and support the regeneration of Moate through identification of significant regeneration projects

CPO 8.123	Provide for the creation of sustainable communities in Moate by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, enterprise and employment, community and recreational uses.
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8.3.4.6 Economic Development

Moate has historically been a service centre for the surrounding hinterland, with employment sources within the settlement largely dominated by commercial and service providers. There are 1,151 resident workers in Moate with 559 available jobs within the town. In excess of 54% of the population are engaged within office-based activity (including 'Professional Services' (24%), 'Commerce and Trade' (23%) and 'Public Administration' (7%), while 12% are involved in manufacturing industries.

Lands are zoned to the east of the settlement for Enterprise and Employment use at Moate Business Park to capitalise on the potential of established leading engineering industries at this location and encourage the development of an ecosystem that supports smart specialisation, cluster development and sustained economic growth. This in turn will promote innovation and entrepreneurship and enhance employment opportunities. In addition, the plan provides for the zoning of additional enterprise and employment lands adjacent to Moate Business Park. These lands have been identified to facilitate the diversification of the local economy into sectors such as precision farming, biotechnology, food and beverage products, low carbon construction and rural resource-based enterprises. Consideration will also be given to the development of incubator and e-working hubs at this location.

Moate - Economic Development Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.124	Support the consolidation and growth of existing enterprises and the development of employment opportunities within the town and encourage the smart specialisation approach to development which involves the clustering of distinct industrial sectors.
CPO 8.125	Facilitate the establishment of new enterprise and employment uses on lands identified for employment purposes.
CPO 8.126	Require all new enterprise development to be located within a landscape network and demonstrate high quality architectural built form that contributes to a positive sense of place and distinctiveness.

8.3.4.7 Sustainable Communities

This plan acknowledges the importance of consolidation in Moate to ensure the delivery of sustainable communities comprising of a mix of housing types, densities and tenure of a high standard of design and with an emphasis on the principles of placemaking, green infrastructure, permeability and connectivity alongside the integration of community and recreation facilities.

The development strategy for Moate is to support new housing and population growth, thus providing a viable alternative to rural one-off housing within the surrounding hinterland and contributing to the principle of compact growth. Provision is made in the plan in accordance with RPO 4.78 of the RSES, for the development of serviced sites to create ‘build your own home’ opportunities within the existing footprint of Moate. In this regard, a tract of land has been zoned for residential use on the Cartonkeel Road with an objective to provide self-build plots.

Given Moate’s key role in the provision of education and the anticipated population growth within this locality, lands to the south of Church Street and adjacent to Moate Community Centre are zoned for educational purposes.

New development proposals will have to demonstrate how they contribute towards the creation of green infrastructure networks, in addition to the provision of appropriate linkages to the town centre and key regeneration sites.

Moate - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.127	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing and Core Strategy.
CPO 8.128	Require that an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas to meet the needs of the population of Moate.
CPO 8.129	Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area.
CPO 8.130	Support the development of a Primary School on lands adjacent to the Community Centre on Church Street. Development proposals on land identified as being at risk of flooding shall be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009 (See Map 9).
CPO 8.131	Work with the Irish Water and landowners to provide serviced sites for residential development within Moate (See Map 9).
CPO 8.132	Require proposals for new development to integrate with existing Green Infrastructure networks and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.

8.3.4.8 Commercial & Retail Development

Moate is identified as the fourth largest retail centre in the County Retail Strategy with a total quantum floorspace of 2,074m² in 2016, unchanged from 2007. Reflecting the strong population growth Moate has experienced since 2006, there is potential for the town to improve its convenience offer,

particularly considering its role and importance to its rural hinterland. Given its proximity to Athlone, it is envisaged that Moate should focus on growth of its independent comparison retail offer with scope for expansion of the tourism related offer. Lands fronting onto Main Street and Toorard Road which extend to the rear of St Patrick's Church are identified as a Regeneration Site suitable for retail development and mixed-use development in this regard. While steps have been taken to enhance the town's public realm, there is potential for the enhancement of the heritage streetscape and a prioritisation of pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure and accessibility on Main Street/Church Street, in particular at the Tuar Ard Art Centre and Moate Community School.

The plan will support the town as an important economic driver for the provision of goods and retail services and encourage the provision of new commercial and retail development within the vicinity of the town centre. The County Retail Strategy defines the type and quantum of retail development suitable for Moate. In this regard, it identifies that large convenience and middle order comparison, specifically tourism related/niche comparison and small-scale bulky goods floorspace is appropriate at this location.

Moate - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.133	Support the vitality and viability of Moate and facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the commercial and retailing industry in line with the Westmeath County Retail Strategy.
CPO 8.134	Reinforce Moate Town Centre as the priority location for new commercial and retail development, with quality of design, integration and enhanced linkages being the key underpinning principles of an expanded mixed-use town core.
CPO 8.135	Support the provision of mixed-use developments in the town centre which create opportunities to live, work, shop, etc. within the town and reduce the propensity to travel by private car.
CPO 8.136	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach.

8.3.4.9 Tourism

Moate has a number of tourist attractions, building on the historic and cultural heritage of the area such as Tuar Ard Arts Centre, Moate Museum and Dún na Sí Amenity and Heritage Park. In addition, the town and its hinterland have many natural and built heritage features which attract visitors to the area. Important habitats within the immediate locality consist of Natural Heritage Area (NHA) at Ballynagrenia and Ballinderry Bog and proposed Natural Heritage Area at Ballynagarbry esker which forms part of the extensive Mount Temple Esker System.

The Old Rail Trail Greenway which officially opened in October 2015 runs along the former Mullingar-Athlone railway line and comprises the Westmeath section of the Dublin–Galway Greenway. This greenway extends from the existing Royal Canal Greenway in Mullingar to the town of Moate before arriving in Athlone and significantly enhances the tourist offering in Moate. Several existing and proposed looped walking/cycling routes within the immediate vicinity of Moate offer the potential for related tourism development. Moate Railway Station, originally dating from 1857 forms an access point to the Old Rail Trail Greenway, with the remaining station structures and lands offering potential to enhance the visitors experience by way of the provision of supporting facilities.

The town has strong connections with the Quaker movement and many of the buildings in the town remain from that time including the Castle and the graveyard.

Moate - Tourism Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.137	Continue to encourage tourism related development in Moate.
CPO 8.138	Support activity-based tourism and use the marketing momentum behind Ireland's Hidden Heartlands to integrate its Tourism services into a strong and coherent offer that will build growing visitor numbers.
CPO 8.139	Support the development of Moate Railway Station as a tourist facility along the Old Rail Trail Greenway (See Map 9).
CPO 8.140	Support the development of a Quaker Tourist Trail within the town to promote local history and cultural heritage.

8.3.4.10 Regeneration

A key site has been identified within the settlement offering the potential for physical and social regeneration with the support of public-sector expertise and investment, including NPF and European funding. In particular the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund operated by the Department of Rural and Community Development plays an important role and is available to support coordinated and integrated projects between government departments, state agencies, local authorities, other public bodies and communities, which will have an impact on sustainable economic and social development in rural areas.

The potential for better use of under-utilised and vacant sites and buildings within the existing built-up footprint of Moate to drive the delivery of quality housing, services and employment opportunities in tandem with supporting social infrastructure is promoted. One specific regeneration site has been identified for comprehensive brownfield and infill redevelopment over the lifetime of the plan. The redevelopment of this site presents an opportunity to contribute to Moate's rejuvenation and revitalisation and to contribute to the overall improvement of the public realm and visual amenity of the town.

In this regard, proposals for strategic brownfield and infill sites should be accompanied by a site brief and/or masterplan that sets out a phased programme for the regeneration of the site and demonstrates how the proposal will comply with National Guidelines that seek to achieve sustainable compact development and to integrate principles of good urban design and placemaking.

Opportunity Site 1-South of Main Street.

This opportunity site comprises a c.3.5 hectares parcel of land located along the southern side of Main Street and with frontage onto Toorard Road. These existing vacant and underutilised town centre lands were previously used for commercial and residential purposes and are identified for “mixed use” and “expanded settlement centre” zoning uses. The site offers the potential for redevelopment of mixed and commercial uses which would strengthen the commercial base of the town, in addition to residential units, harnessing the site’s prime location in the town centre. Potential also exists for pedestrian and vehicular connections to the Main Street, Toorard Road and the Community Centre.

Moate - Regeneration Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.141	Secure and promote the consolidation of Moate Town Centre through encouraging the re-use and regeneration of lands and buildings along Main Street, with the key priority being the development of opportunity sites and ensuring their connectivity to the Main Street.
CPO 8.142	Support the redevelopment of identified Regeneration/Opportunity Site in the town (See Map 9).
CPO 8.143	Continue to identify sites in a poor state of repair or neglect under the Derelict Sites Act.

8.3.4.11 Placemaking

Moate provides a wide range of activities that contribute to a sense of place and identity. This town plays an important economic, social and cultural role with the main priority of consolidation in the existing centre and support of the existing businesses and activities, in order to maintain vibrancy. Moate can build on its strengths and sense of identity by the development of a Creative Placemaking Strategy to deliver an actions-based programme supporting the most effective presentation, management and development of the town. Enhancement works have the potential to provide for the revitalisation of the core area and to provide social and environmental benefits to the local community and visitors to the town. It will also encourage economic growth and act as a catalyst in assisting with the revitalisation of existing building stock along Main Street and provide a pedestrian bias within the town. The strategy will provide guidance and a suite of proposed interventions that will have a transformative impact on the town of Moate.

Particular attention should be focused on the following:

- Development of safe and secure pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure links to key community services, schools, amenities and local attractions, so to enhance pedestrian and cycle permeability.
- Establish key town entry points to strengthen the 'announcement' of Moate.
- Street Enhancements works consisting of widening of the footpaths and the provision of new paving, along with renewed street furniture and planting.
- Reorganisation and reduction in car parking along the main street and replacement with off-street parking.
- A Town Enhancement Scheme to oversee the improvement of buildings and streetscapes to include vacant and derelict sites, building facade, repainting and rejuvenation of buildings.

Moate - Placemaking Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.144	Support the preparation and implementation of a Place-Making Strategy for Moate over the plan period.
CPO 8.145	Ensure that the town centre is accessible to all members of the community, including people with mobility issues, the elderly and people with young children.
CPO 8.146	Actively engage with the community, developers and other agencies to secure resources for the enhancement, renewal and regeneration of the public realm in Moate.
CPO 8.147	Prioritise the enhancement of the streetscape and heritage assets of the town centre, to continue environmental improvements, to sustain and improve its attraction for living, working, visiting and investment.

8.3.4.12 Heritage

The town has an attractive and distinctive built form and has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) to protect its character. The special architectural character of Moate can be discussed in two discrete areas, the Main Street and the Newtown. While the settlement has medieval origins, the evidence for which is hidden from the street frontage, the instigator of the modern town was the Clibborn family and they converted to Quakerism in the late seventeenth century. To a certain extent this has left its architectural mark on the town which as early as 1709 was described by Thomas Molyneux as 'a pretty clean-built town of a different air from the generality of Irish villages'.

The generous width of the Main Street is announced from the east after a narrow approach, where a large hipped roof Georgian house dominates the vista westwards. The Georgian idiom continues on either side of the street with an interesting selection of three-storey houses with varying window types, including occasional Venetian patterns and good doorcases with fanlights. A subtle variation of the ridge lines adds further interest to the assemblage. The former courthouse by John Hargrave, now

the library, is the most important public building in the town and has an unusual bow-fronted design which makes a bold architectural statement despite its being recessed from the street frontage.

The Newtown is contemporary with the late Georgian ambiance of the Main Street but remains a separate architectural entity. A pair of elegant houses, which retains their early form, character and fabric announce the assemblage and dominate the streetscape to the south of the suburb. Further on to the right, a fine terrace of four late Georgian houses terminates at a half-hipped, five-bay, three-storey over basement residence, where the Carmelite monastery at the end of the terrace, despite later nineteenth-century additions, is significant.

Taking both areas together, Moate presents as a coherent early nineteenth-century market town of some significance, with a rich architectural heritage reflecting this former function.

Moate - Heritage Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.148	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Moate and ensure their protection.
CPO 8.149	Support the development of a dedicated Moate Heritage Trail incorporating the surrounding hinterlands to promote local history and cultural heritage.
CPO 8.150	Protect and maintain the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in Moate and the buildings within the ACA and resist development proposals that would undermine the setting and interpretation of any structure located within the ACA.
CPO 8.151	Require works within the ACA in Moate to be carried out in accordance with the "Statement of Character" prepared for the ACA.

8.4 Self-Sustaining Towns:

With regard to Self-Sustaining Towns, the focus will be on driving investment in services, employment growth and infrastructure whilst balancing housing delivery. These are settlements which have undergone rapid commuter-focused residential expansion over the recent decade, without equivalent increases in jobs and services. Population growth in these towns shall be at a rate that seeks to achieve a balancing effect and shall be focused on consolidation and inclusion of policies in relation to improvements in services and employment provision. The Core Strategy has identified two towns within the County as self-sustaining towns, namely Killucan/Rathwire and Rochfortbridge.

8.4.1 Killucan-Rathwire

8.4.1.1 Location & Context:

Killucan and Rathwire are located adjacent to each other in the east of the County, approximately 12km east of Mullingar and 69km west of Dublin City Centre. The settlement is on the R156 Regional Route to Mullingar and local roads to Kinnegad and Raharney. It occupies a picturesque setting amongst undulating hills with an abundance of mature trees and hedgerows in the locality.

Killucan–Rathwire performs important local level residential, retailing, social and leisure function for the wider rural hinterland. This settlement has a population of 1,370 as of the Census 2016, an increase of 11.7% and is one of the fastest growing settlements in the County since 2011. The settlement has also a younger population than the county average, with 15% of the population over 65 compared to the county average of 19.7%.

8.4.1.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

Killucan-Rathwire has a lengthy settlement history, as indicated by the presence of an ancient *rath* or ringfort built, according to legend, by the chieftain Guaire, which gives Rathwire its name. A motte and bailey called *Rathwire* was erected by Hugh de Lacy in the area, the foundations of which are still evident today. The origins of the name Killucan are uncertain, but it is suggested to have been derived from *Cill Lucaine*, Church of Lucaine, with Lucaine believed to have been a sixth century abbot who founded an abbey in the area, which was destroyed by forces belonging to Cromwell.

Killucan initially grew around the Abbey, developing largely in a linear fashion along the routes into the village with a pronounced central core. The settlement form of Killucan was also greatly dictated by the large land holding of the Church of Ireland in the village. It became a principal Market town and it is from this period that the majority of buildings of architectural and historical importance were formed.

Rathwire developed directly below the motte of Hugh de Lacy to the east, initially comprising of a Main Street with the most notable building being St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

The village expanded with dispersed linear development occurring on the T-junction of the Main Street and the Riverstown/Killucan road. In recent years the east of the village has undergone significant development in the form of a number of residential estates, which has altered the settlement form of Rathwire.

8.4.1.3 Social Infrastructure

Community services within Killucan-Rathwire centres include a Garda Station, Primary Care Health Centre, Post Office, GP Service, Nursing Homes, Crèche, Religious Services, Men's Shed, Workman's Club, Community Centre and Recycling Facilities. Killucan Park has tennis and basketball courts. The Killucan GAA club and community hall is newly built and provides excellent multi-use community facility for all residents in the locality. St Joseph's Primary School opened in 2015 and has a current enrolment of 276 children. Columba College currently has 186 post primary students and is located in Killucan and serves as a post-primary school for the wider catchment of the town. Columba College also provides adult education courses in the form of PLC, notably nursing and business-related courses. In recent years, there has been a number of positive developments in the town including, a new public park, complete with picnic areas, tennis and basketball courts and enhanced traffic and pedestrian improvement works, all which have enhanced the attractiveness of the settlement.

8.4.1.4 Physical Infrastructure

Killucan-Rathwire is served by an existing wastewater treatment plant within the town and by Mullingar High Level Water Supply Scheme.

Bus Eireann provides a commuter service from Killucan to Dublin. The County Council is keen to promote and support the development of public transport initiatives in keeping with the principles of Smarter Travel. In this regard, the re-opening of Killucan train station which is located 2km from the settlement is supported. In addition, the Council supports the provision of adequate car parking facilities at the station.

Killucan-Rathwire - Infrastructure Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.152	Actively seek the re-opening and use of Killucan Station on the Dublin – Sligo rail line together with the provision of a car park and park and ride facilities to serve same.
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8.4.1.5 Function & Vision

The function of Killucan-Rathwire is to provide local residential, retail, services and community facilities to residents and the wider rural hinterland. The Plan provides an opportunity to promote consolidation of the settlement, enhancing service provision and employment opportunities together with a focus on regeneration of vacant buildings and sites in the settlement.

Killucan-Rathwire - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.153	Promote commensurate population, service and employment growth to enable the settlement to fulfil its role as a self-sustaining town.
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CPO 8.154	Expand the range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.155	Make provision for sustainable communities in Killucan-Rathwire by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, commercial, community and recreational uses.
CPO 8.156	Support the regeneration of existing under-utilised and vacant buildings and sites to enhance service provision and economic opportunities.

8.4.1.6 Sustainable Communities

Due to its innate charm and character, Killucan-Rathwire has established itself as an attractive destination in Westmeath. The town has experienced consistent population growth since 1996 and an opportunity now exists to accommodate the future needs of the town in a consolidated fashion. This will ensure the delivery of sustainable communities comprising of a mix of housing types, densities and tenure. An emphasis is therefore placed on building communities with a high standard of design and having regard to principles of place-making, green infrastructure, permeability and connectivity alongside the integration of community and recreation facilities.

Killucan-Rathwire hosts a number of age friendly services such as two nursing homes, a Health Centre, GP Services and social and community facilities. In order to build upon this age friendly concept, lands have been zoned to the west of the Church of Ireland for residential use. Given the proximity to the adjacent nursing home, the Church and existing services within the centre of Killucan, it is considered that this site presents an opportunity for 'Housing for Older Persons' such as sheltered accommodation/independent living units. In this regard, there is potential to provide vehicular and pedestrian access from this land bank to the south onto the R156. Any development at this location should have regard to the need to protect the setting and integrity of the adjacent Church.

Opportunity also exists to deliver a linear biodiversity park along the banks of the Riverstown River and would form part of a looped walkway/cycle route to Killucan-Rathwire and other attractions within the locality. In order to enhance the provision of amenities in the town, the Plan provides for a park and playground in Rathwire. The park should be designed to cater for the needs of Older Citizens. The Plan promotes the development of green infrastructure networks both within the settlement and to the rural hinterlands. New proposals will have to demonstrate how they incorporate the principles of Green infrastructure into their development.

Killucan-Rathwire - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.157	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing and Core Strategy.
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CPO 8.158	Require that an appropriate mix of housing types, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas to meet the needs of the population of Killucan-Rathwire.
CPO 8.159	Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area.
CPO 8.160	Support the development of street enhancements works, widening of footpaths, public realm improvements and landscaping within Killucan-Rathwire.
CPO 8.161	Support the development of housing for Older Persons (See Map 11).
CPO 8.162	Require proposals for development to demonstrate how they integrate/respond to Green Infrastructure and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.
CPO 8.163	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.
CPO 8.164	Ensure that the landscape setting between Killucan and Rathwire is maintained in order to protect the distinct identity, character and form of both settlements (See Map 11).
CPO 8.165	Support the development of a riverside walk and biodiversity area along the Riverstown River (See Map 11).
CPO 8.166	Support cycling and walking within the town through improved walking/cycling infrastructure, both within the settlement and its hinterlands.
CPO 8.167	Support the provision of a Village Park and playground in Rathwire.
CPO 8.168	Promote Killucan-Rathwire as an Age Friendly Town and ensure that new developments are designed to meet the needs of Older Persons.
CPO 8.169	Support the creation of a pedestrian/cyclist route from Killucan/Rathwire to the Royal Canal Blueway at Thomastown (See Map 11).

8.4.1.7 Commercial & Retail Development

Killucan-Rathwire provides a range of local services in meeting the day to day needs of its catchment population. There is modest retail offer in the town with 151m² retail floorspace currently available. Opportunity exists for the town to enhance its retail offer to meet the needs of existing residents and the rural hinterland. The optimum location for new retail development is within the core areas of Killucan and Rathwire. In this regard, the Planning Authority will look favourably upon the re-use of existing vacant buildings and sites for retail purposes. The County Retail Strategy identifies the need for local level convenience and comparison, including tourism related/niche comparison offer in the town.

Killucan-Rathwire - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.170	Sustain, enhance and consolidate the retail and services offer within the core areas of Killucan-Rathwire and harness and develop the potential of heritage and tourism assets.
CPO 8.171	Support the provision of mixed-use developments in Killucan-Rathwire which create opportunities to live, work, shop, etc. within the town and reduce the need to travel by private car.
CPO 8.172	Encourage high quality design and the creation of permeability through the provision of enhanced linkages as part of any expanded mixed-use town core.
CPO 8.173	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail, services or other town centre uses.

8.4.1.8 Tourism

Killucan and Rathwire are located within a very rich natural environment making it easy to access rivers, canals, lakes, bogs and many more leisure activities. The presence of the Royal Canal Greenway/Blueway to the south of the town provides opportunities for recreation and tourist related initiatives, connecting the settlement with a much larger amenity base. Considerable potential exists to develop water-based activities in the area such as angling, boating, cruising etc. Killucan-Rathwire is an ideal location to develop canal related amenities and tourist accommodation.

Killucan-Rathwire - Tourism Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.174	Harness the tourist potential of Killucan-Rathwire given its proximity to the Royal Canal Greenway/Blueway and its high-quality natural environment.
CPO 8.175	Support the provision of tourist accommodation and associated services in Killucan-Rathwire.
CPO 8.176	Support the creation of Green Routes for locals and visitors to the town and the surrounding countryside.

8.4.1.9 Heritage

Much of the heritage features associated with Killucan-Rathwire concern built and archaeological elements. There are numerous fine examples of architectural heritage, with the NIAH classifying 24 structures, buildings or complexes worthy of regional status in the area. The former Market House together with St Etchén's Church of Ireland are the two most prominent buildings in the town. The

former Market House occupies a high-profile position on the streetscape. The Planning Authority would support the regeneration and re-use of this building to enhance the employment and service profile of the settlement. In this regard, consideration could be given to developing a digital hub at this location, enabling residents to work in the town, thereby minimising need to travel.

Killucan-Rathwire also possesses a rich natural heritage, with a landscape character particularly distinctive and visually appealing. The topography of the area consists of a relatively flat but mildly rolling agricultural terrain with a number of mature trees and hedgerows segregating the landscape. A significant number of native mature trees are also present in the village area and especially around the lands of the Glebe and the Vestry which are deemed worthy of protection on account of their character-enhancing attributes. There is also a grouping of mature trees at the entrance to the St. Camillus Nursing Home and a copse of trees on the site of the Motte erected by deLacy that make a positive contribution to the surrounding landscape and are considered defining elements of the settlement that should be protected. The open landscape and trees provide an important visual break between Killucan and Rathwire and provide an attractive landscape feature that adds character to this self-sustaining town.

Killucan-Rathwire - Heritage Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.177	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Killucan-Rathwire and ensure their protection.
CPO 8.178	Support the development of a dedicated Killucan-Rathwire Heritage Trail incorporating the surrounding hinterlands to promote local history and cultural heritage.
CPO 8.179	Protect existing native mature trees on lands at the Glebe and Vestry, entrance to St. Camillus Nursing Home and on the site of the Motte, due to the significant contribution they make to the character of the settlement (See Map 11).
CPO 8.180	Require development proposals in the vicinity of mature trees to be accompanied by a comprehensive tree survey.
CPO 8.181	Support the regeneration and re-use of the former Market House to enhance the employment and service profile of the town (See Map 11).

8.4.2 Rochfortbridge

8.4.2.1 Location & Context:

Rochfortbridge performs important local level residential, retailing and community functions to residents and the wider rural hinterland. The town, proximate to the M6 motorway and with excellent connectivity to both Dublin and the wider Midlands, had a recorded population of 1,473 as of the Census 2016, representing a marginal decrease in population since 2011. In contrast, during the period 1996-2002 the population of Rochfortbridge grew by 90%. Census data from 2016 indicates that Rochfortbridge has a younger population than the county average, with 11.7% of the population are over 65 compared to the county average of 19.7%.

8.4.2.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

Rochfortbridge has evolved from a river crossing over the River Derry, where the original bridge was called “Beggars Bridge”. The town was developed by Robert Rochfort, MP for Westmeath from 1692 to 1707, and grandfather of Robert, the 1st Earl of Belvedere. The development programme of the town commenced circa 1700, with Rochfort financing and building a new bridge over the River Derry, hence giving the village its name, Rochfortbridge. The settlement form of Rochfortbridge is largely dictated by the existing road network, in particular the old N6 Primary Road, now the R446 Regional route. The R446, which forms the Main Street of Rochfortbridge, amasses a wide streetscape on both ends of the town, whilst the traditional town centre is characterised by a finer urban grain.

8.4.2.3 Social Infrastructure

Rochfortbridge possesses a range of services including retailing, Post Office, Garda Station, Health Centre, Crèche and Childcare Facilities, Churches and Parish Hall. There are two schools located within the town, Scoil Chroi Naofa National School with 242 children enrolled in 2019 and St Joseph's Secondary School which currently caters for 850 post-primary students. There are also a number of sporting clubs including soccer, GAA Club with a grass pitch, walking track and 3 all-weather astro-turf pitches, boxing club and martial arts. In recent years, there has been a number of positive developments in the town including, enhancement of the amenity area, traffic and pedestrian improvement works in the vicinity of the Primary School which serve to enhance the attractiveness of the town. In 2016, 38.5% of the population aged 5 years and over in Rochfortbridge undertook journeys to work, school or college of less than 15 minutes. 32.3% undertook journeys of more than 30 minutes. Rochfortbridge secondary school is an educational hub for the surrounding hinterlands and beyond. Approximately 55% of all students in the town walk to school.

8.4.2.4 Physical Infrastructure

Rochfortbridge is served by an existing wastewater treatment plant located to the southeast of the town. Potable water is sourced from the Mullingar Regional Water Supply Scheme. The town is strategically located on a major inter-urban transport route and has good quality public transport and road links to Dublin. Rochfortbridge to Dublin is served numerous times daily by several public and private bus operators.

8.4.2.5 Function & Vision

The function of Rochfortbridge is to provide local residential, retail, education and community facilities to residents and the wider rural hinterland. The Plan provides an opportunity to promote consolidation of the settlement, enhancing service provision and employment opportunities together with a focus on regeneration of vacant buildings and sites. New services and enterprises should be directed towards vacant buildings and sites within the town. The Plan also places a renewed focus on community building.

Rochfortbridge - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.182	Promote commensurate population, service and employment growth to enable the settlement to fulfil its role as a self-sustaining town.
CPO 8.183	Expand the range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.184	Make provision for sustainable communities in Rochfortbridge by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, commercial, community and recreational uses.

8.4.2.6 Economic Development

Significant opportunity exists to develop the economic base of the town thus allowing the settlement to become more self-sustaining. In order to increase the economic profile of the town, lands to the southeast of the settlement in close proximity to the motorway have been zoned for Enterprise and Employment use. Such lands can accommodate a range of enterprise uses ranging from incubator units to second site facilities. Given the strategic location of these lands adjacent to the motorway, it is considered that they offer an optimum location for enterprise facilities including transport related enterprise.

Rochfortbridge - Economic Development Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.185	Support the establishment of new enterprise and employment uses on lands identified for employment purposes (See Map 13).
CPO 8.186	New enterprise development should be located within a landscape network and demonstrate high quality architectural built form that contributes to a positive sense of place and distinctiveness. Development proposals on land identified as being at risk of flooding shall be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009.

8.4.2.7 Sustainable Communities

Due to its proximity to the M6 motorway, Rochfortbridge has become a popular place to reside in. Opportunity exists to accommodate the future needs of the town in a consolidated fashion and to provide the necessary community infrastructure to meet the needs of both existing and future residents. The delivery of sustainable communities will involve providing a mix of housing types, densities and tenure. Emphasis should be based on providing a high standard of design and incorporating the principles of place-making, green infrastructure, permeability and connectivity alongside the integration of community and recreation facilities.

Opportunity exists for the provision of a linear biodiversity amenity area along the banks of the Derry River, development of a new town park, and provision of looped walks and cycle links to the town centre and to adjacent rural amenities. The plan promotes the development of green infrastructure networks both within the settlement and to the wider countryside. New proposals will have to demonstrate how they incorporate the principle of Green infrastructure into their development.

The town could benefit from additional environmental and public realm enhancement works in order to revitalise the town centre, the plan includes policies in this regard.

Rochfortbridge - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.187	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Strategy and Core Strategy.
CPO 8.188	Require that an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas to meet the needs of the population of Rochfortbridge.
CPO 8.189	Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area.
CPO 8.190	Require proposals for development to demonstrate how they integrate/respond to Green Infrastructure and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.
CPO 8.191	Support the development of street enhancements works, widening of footpaths, public realm improvements and landscaping within the settlement.
CPO 8.192	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.
CPO 8.193	Encourage the provision of vehicular and pedestrian links from St Joseph's Secondary school to the R400 Mullingar Road (See Map 13).

CPO 8.194	Support the establishment of a riverside walk and riverside biodiversity amenity area along the Derry River (See Map 13).
CPO 8.195	Support the development of a Village Park which is age friendly, safe and secure (See Map 13).
CPO 8.196	Provide for the expansion of the playground, town park and attendant lands in the town centre for recreational use (See Map 13).
CPO 8.197	Support cycling and walking within the community through improved walking/cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.
CPO 8.198	Promote the development of ecological sustainable peatways, as an alternative visitor experience within the peatlands surrounding Rochfortbridge, with potential to link into the wider Strategic Greenway Network of National and Regional routes.

8.4.2.8 Commercial & Retail Development

The County Retail Strategy states that net retail floor space in the town is 160m². The town provides a range of local services meeting the day to day needs of its catchment population. Rochfortbridge provides an opportunity for an enhanced retail offer, to serve the needs of the town and its rural hinterland. There is development potential within the town centre on Main Street, in addition re-use of vacant sites and buildings for retail purposes will also be a priority. The plan will support the re-use of existing vacant sites and buildings for retail, commercial, employment and community use.

Rochfortbridge - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.199	Sustain, enhance and consolidate the retail and services offer of the town.
CPO 8.200	Reinforce the centre of Rochfortbridge as the priority location for new commercial and retail development, with quality of design and integration/linkage being the key underpinning principles in the expanded mixed-use town core.
CPO 8.201	Support the provision of mixed-use developments in the town centre which create opportunities to live, work, shop, etc. within the town and reduce the need to travel by private car.
CPO 8.202	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, with due cognisance given to the Sequential Approach prescribed in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

8.4.2.9 Heritage

Much of the heritage features associated with Rochfortbridge concern built and archaeological elements. There are numerous fine examples of architectural heritage, with the NIAH classifying 13 structures, buildings or complexes worthy of regional status in the settlement. Of particular note is Derrygreenagh Park, a Bord na Móna housing development which was designed by the renowned Architect and Town Planner Frank Gibney. In recognition of its character and significant architectural heritage, Derrygreenagh Park is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area in this Plan.

There are also a number of archaeological sites in the surrounding landscape of the settlement, the most visible of these being the remnants of a *rath* or ringfort in a field surrounded by a copse of mature trees to the south of the town centre. There are a number of mature native trees present in the town which are important features of the streetscape of Rochfortbridge and are deemed worthy of protection on account of their character enhancing attributes. These include a grouping of nine trees on a walled embankment on the R446 western approach into the town centre and a large and distinctive tree located at the north eastern end of the town centre opposite Bagnall's Shopping Centre.

Rochfortbridge - Heritage Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.203	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Rochfortbridge and ensure their protection.
CPO 8.204	Require development proposals in the vicinity of mature trees to be accompanied by a comprehensive tree survey.
CPO 8.205	Retain and protect the existing grouping of native mature trees on the walled embankment which align the R446 western approach into the town centre and the large elm tree situated opposite the retail centre, on account of their character-enhancing attributes for the settlement (See Map 13).
CPO 8.206	Retain and protect trees of amenity value located within the grounds of the Mercy Convent (See Map 13).

8.5 Towns & Villages

Towns and Villages as identified within the Settlement Hierarchy of the Core Strategy provide important local level residential, retailing and community functions to the rural hinterland. The development strategy for these settlements is to provide for sustainable live-work patterns to strengthen same and to improve local employment, services and sustainable transport options to enable the towns and villages to become more self-sustaining.

Emphasis will be placed on maintaining the town and village as a service centre, by way of orderly consolidation and expansion of services that supports the upper tiers of the urban hierarchy. Accordingly, the settlement strategy aims to provide for vibrant and viable settlements provide a range of jobs, services and housing choice commensurate with their position on the hierarchy. The Core Strategy has identified three towns within the county as Towns and Villages, namely Clonmellon, Delvin and Tyrrellspass.

8.5.1 Clonmellon

8.5.1.1 Location & Context:

Clonmellon is located on the N52 in the north of the County in close proximity to the Meath County border, approximately 30km northeast of Mullingar, 11km northwest of Athboy and 68km northwest of Dublin. In 2016, the population of the town was 664 which represents an increase of 4.7% from the previous census, which is slightly higher than the county average of 3% over the same period.

8.5.1.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

Clonmellon was built in the late eighteenth century by Sir Benjamin Chapman and abuts the Killua Castle estate where he resided. By 1837 Clonmellon was established as a market town. The settlement has a distinctive broad Main Street with focused activity on the Market Square. This wide urban form is consistent with the design of market towns and villages throughout the country. The extended street vista is broken by its topography with the Main Street rising to a point approximately halfway along its length. Clonmellon has largely maintained its historic linear urban form. The east of the Clonmellon is characterised by impressive two storey, three bay buildings with modern housing developments located at the western end of the village and an infill scheme offset south of the Main Street.

8.5.1.3 Social Infrastructure

Clonmellon hosts the following community infrastructure and services including the Primary School, Playground, Community Centre, Men's Shed, Cafe and the Credit Union. In addition, there is a wide range of community, voluntary, arts and sporting clubs active in the settlement, including Coder Dungeon, Clonmellon Active Retirement and St Vincent de Paul, sporting clubs including St Paul's GAA Football Club, St Pauls/Delvin Ladies Football Club, Clonmellon & Crossakiel Gun Club, and Clonmellon Indoor Bowling. The latest enrolment statistics from the Department of Education and Skills indicate that the local primary school, Cluain Maolain National School had 231 pupils enrolled in 2019.

8.5.1.4 Physical Infrastructure

Clonmellon is served by an existing wastewater treatment plant located to the northeast of the town. Water is supplied from the Northwest Water Supply Scheme.

Bus Eireann provides a commuter service from Clonmellon to Dublin City, and there is also a local link service to Navan and Mullingar.

8.5.1.5 Function & Vision

Clonmellon performs important local level residential, retailing, social and leisure functions to the wider rural hinterland. The vision for Clonmellon is to enhance the level of jobs, services and residential development in the town through consolidated growth within the existing urban footprint. This will involve supporting regeneration of existing vacant buildings and under-utilised sites to provide residential, local services and local employment opportunities. In addition, the plan supports measures to visually enhance the public realm and historic character and setting of Clonmellon.

Clonmellon - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.207	Promote residential growth, local employment, services and sustainable transport options in Clonmellon to enable the village to become more self-sustaining.
CPO 8.208	Expand the range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.209	Make provision for sustainable communities in Clonmellon by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, commercial, community and recreational uses.

8.5.1.6 Sustainable Communities

Due to the accessibility of the village to existing centres of employment, Clonmellon has become a popular place to reside in. The development strategy for Clonmellon is to support new housing and population growth, thus providing a viable alternative to rural one-off housing within the surrounding hinterland and contributing to the principle of compact urban growth.

The plan supports the provision of a new village park for existing and future residents. Emphasis is also placed on the provision of green routes within the village and to nearby amenities such as Killua Castle. New development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they contribute towards the creation of green infrastructure networks.

Clonmellon - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.210	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing and Core Strategy.
CPO 8.211	Require that an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas to meet the needs of the population of Clonmellon.
CPO 8.212	Require proposals for development to demonstrate how they integrate/respond to Green Infrastructure and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.
CPO 8.213	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.
CPO 8.214	Support cycling and walking within the village through improved walking/cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and to areas of interest and attractions including Killua Castle.
CPO 8.215	Support the development of a Village Park in the village and amenity area which shall be age friendly, safe and secure (See Map 15).

8.5.1.7 Commercial & Retail Development

Clonmellon provides a range of retail and other local services, meeting the day to day needs of its catchment population. There is a modest retail offer of 225m² of floor space provided for in the village. Opportunity exists to increase the retail profile of Clonmellon. In this regard, consideration should be given to the re-use of vacant sites and buildings for retail purposes. The County Retail Strategy identifies the need for local level convenience and comparison, but not excluding tourism related/niche comparison offer in the village.

The Market Place/Square occupies a prominent site in the village. Considerable potential exists to develop this site and associated building as a tourism hub for nearby attractions, as a farmer's market or creative/digital hub for local employment opportunities.

Clonmellon - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.216	Sustain, enhance and consolidate the retail and services offer within the core of Clonmellon.
CPO 8.217	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of the Market Square to a public/community/commercial/retail usage which will provide an opportunity to capitalise on its central location (See Map 15).

CPO 8.218	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, having due cognisance to the Sequential Approach prescribed in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.
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8.5.1.8 Heritage

The designation of much of the settlement core as an Architectural Conservation Area owes much to the quantity and quality of architectural heritage on offer in Clonmellon. Approximately 1.2km east of the village centre is Killua Castle, the ancestral home of the Chapman Family built c.1780 in a gothic revival fashion. In addition to the Castle, the site hosts a number of demesne-related structures and follies of significant architectural heritage. It is further noted that Ballinlough Castle is located approximately 5km south of Clonmellon.

Approximately 1km to the southwest of Clonmellon is the proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) of Lough Shesk, which forms part of the River Boyne and River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation (SAC) site.

Clonmellon - Heritage Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.219	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Clonmellon and ensure their protection.
CPO 8.220	Support the development of a dedicated Clonmellon Heritage Trail incorporating the surrounding hinterlands to promote local history and cultural heritage.
CPO 8.221	Protect and maintain the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) in Clonmellon and the buildings contained therein. Development proposals that would undermine the setting and interpretation of any structure located within the ACA will not be permitted.
CPO 8.222	Support the undertaking of environmental and public realm enhancement works to and initiatives to visually enhance the streetscape and existing built form.

8.5.2 Delvin

Location & Context:

Delvin is located to the north east of the County at the intersection of the N52 linking Dundalk with Mullingar and the N51 from Navan. The village is situated approximately 20km northeast of Mullingar, 22km southwest of Kells and approximately 31km west of Navan. In 2016 the population of the town was 740 which represents an increase of 6.2% from the 2011 census.

8.5.2.1 Historical Context & Settlement Form

The name Delvin derived from the Irish name *Dealbhna*, an ancient Irish tribe that had territory in Meath, Connacht and Munster. The village developed around the manorial castle of Gilbert de Nugent, an associate of Hugh de Lacy, first English Viceroy to Ireland, who also owned the neighbouring Castle of Clonyn situated a few hundred metres from the village centre. Both castles are now in ruins. The village has a largely linear structure along the N52. The village centre contains a compact urban grain, with terraced two storey structures varying in bays of two and three. The urban fabric of Delvin's previous role as a market town is evident in the wide Main Street.

The southern part of the village centre is dominated by the impressive ruins of Delvin Castle and St. Mary's Church. Both structures form an impressive gateway into the village from the N52 route to the south, enriching the character of the village on its approach. The impressive Church of the Assumption on the northern end of the settlement assumes a prominent location and elevation in the village. The R395 approach road into the village is characterised by Clonyn Castle estate walls lined with mature trees which add to the character and significantly enhance the entrance into the village.

8.5.2.2 Social Infrastructure

Delvin has a number of facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: Shops, Post Office, Restaurants, Garage, Garda Station, Pubs, Health Centre, Pharmacy, and Credit Union. Delvin also hosts a range of community, voluntary, arts and sporting clubs, including Playground, 3rd Westmeath Delvin Scouts, Delvin/St Pauls Ladies Football, Delvin Bowling Club, Delvin Celtic AFC, Delvin Friendship Club, Delvin Historical Society, Delvin Hospice Homecare, Delvin Vintage Club, Inland Bikers (MCC), and Taekwondo.

There are two schools in Delvin, Scoil Earnáin Naofa and St Mary's School in Southhill, approximately 1.4km east of Delvin, which caters for children aged between 5 and 18 who have learning difficulties and children with autism. The latest enrolment statistics from the Department of Education and Skills indicate that SN Scoil Earnáin Naofa had 116 pupils enrolled in 2019 while St Mary's School had 24 pupils enrolled during the same term.

8.5.2.3 Physical Infrastructure

Delvin is served by an existing wastewater treatment plant and a public mains water supply. Bus Eireann provides an hourly commuter service from Delvin to Dublin City, and also operates bus service to Mullingar, Galway, Athboy and Dundalk. Local link provides a weekly bus service to Mullingar.

8.5.2.4 Function & Vision

Delvin performs important local level residential, retailing and community functions to the wider rural hinterland. Employment sources in Delvin are largely dominated by commercial and service providers, with agriculture a strong employment source in the rural hinterland. Delvin Mart gives local employment and generates economic activity in this sector.

The vision for Delvin is to enhance the level of jobs, services and residential development in the town through consolidated growth within the existing urban footprint. This will involve supporting regeneration of existing vacant buildings and under-utilised sites to provide residential, local services and local employment opportunities.

Delvin - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.223	Promote residential growth, local employment, services and sustainable transport options in Delvin to enable the town to become more self-sustaining.
CPO 8.224	Expand the range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.225	Make provision for sustainable communities in Delvin by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, commercial, community and recreational uses.

8.5.2.5 Sustainable Communities

The development strategy for the town is to support new housing and population growth, thus providing a viable alternative to rural one-off housing within the surrounding hinterland and contributing to the principle of compact urban growth.

Policy supports the provision of a new village park to act as an amenity area, this plan also identifies future works consisting of the development of looped walks and cycle links to the town centre and outer amenities/attractions. New development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they contribute towards the creation of green infrastructure networks.

Delvin - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.226	Promote residential growth, local employment, services and sustainable transport options in Delvin to enable the village to become more self-sustaining.
CPO 8.227	Require that an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas and in appropriate brownfield/infill areas to meet the needs of the population of Delvin.

CPO 8.228	Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites for residential uses within the footprint of the existing built-up area.
CPO 8.229	Require proposals for development to demonstrate how they integrate/respond to Green Infrastructure and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.
CPO 8.230	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.
CPO 8.231	Support cycling and walking within the community through improved walking/cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.
CPO 8.232	Support the development of a Village Park and Amenity Area which shall be age friendly, safe and secure (See Map 17).

8.5.2.6 Commercial & Retail Development

Delvin provides a range of retail and other local services to meet the day to day needs of its catchment population. There is a modest retail offer in the settlement with 349m² of retail floorspace identified within the County Retail Strategy in 2016. Further opportunity exists to enhance the retail profile of Delvin. In this regard, the Council will favour the re-use of vacant buildings and under-utilised sites for retail and commercial purposes.

The County Retail Strategy identifies the need for local level convenience and comparison, including tourism related/niche comparison offer in the town.

Delvin - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives	
It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:	
CPO 8.233	Sustain, enhance and consolidate the retail and services offer within the established core of Delvin.
CPO 8.234	Support the vitality and viability of Delvin and facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the commercial and retailing industry, as prescribed in the Westmeath County Retail Strategy.
CPO 8.235	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach prescribed in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

8.5.2.7 Heritage

Much of the heritage features associated with Delvin and its surrounds concern built and archaeological elements. Delvin village centre contains many fine examples of built heritage, with the NIAH classifying ten buildings within the village as being of regional importance. The nearby Clonyn

Castle is also afforded a regional status due to the Gothic Revival castle's importance as being one of the last great Victorian country houses to be built in Ireland. Of National status of importance are St. Mary's Church of Ireland and the Church of the Assumption. The first on account of its historic record, with elements of archaeological significance due to the presence of pre-1700 fabric, with the later transept designed by the noted ecclesiastical architect, Joseph Welland c.1860. Similarly, the Church of the Assumption, a highly accomplished Early French Gothic-style church built circa 1873 to designs by the noted architect G.C. Ashlin. Aside from Delvin Castle and a Motte located to the east behind the Main Street, there are numerous archaeologically significant elements throughout Delvin and its environs. In terms of natural heritage, approximately 2km east of Delvin village centre lies the Stonyford River, a tributary of the River Boyne/River Blackwater Special Area of Conservation.

Delvin - Heritage Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.236	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Delvin and to ensure their protection.
CPO 8.237	Support the development of a dedicated Delvin Heritage Trail incorporating the surrounding hinterlands to promote local history and cultural heritage.
CPO 8.238	Retain and protect existing Clonyn Estate wall and mature tree line along the R395 approach into the village (See Map 17).
CPO 8.239	Support environmental and public realm enhancements in the town together with measures to visually enhance the built form and streetscape.

8.5.3 Tyrrellspass

8.5.3.1 Location & Context:

Tyrrellspass is located 80 km from Dublin and is situated in the south of the County on the R446 (formerly N6) road. The village has two distinct features, which differentiate it from other villages of linear layout, the green to the centre and the castle to the west. The layout of the village is pleasant with a mature green occupying the prominent central space and many fine late 18th century buildings that front onto the green. According to the Census of Population 2016 Tyrrellspass village had a population of 483 people, which represents a marginal decrease in the population from the previous census.

8.5.3.2 Historical Context & Settlement Form

Tyrrellspass is a village, which is rich in history, remnants of which survive in the form of the built environment. Tyrrellspass gets its name from having been for many centuries the residence of the family of Tyrrell, whose castle lies to the west of the village. The castle guarded the only possible road leading to Athlone from the east, with boglands stretching to the north and south. It was here in 1597, during the Nine-Year War, that Tyrell and his ally Owny M'Rory Oge O'Connor, defeated the Elizabethan army led by Sir Croniers Clifford.

Over time the land in the vicinity came into the possession of the Rochfort family. It was this family, primarily under the auspices of the Countess of Belvedere, that formally re-designed and built the village that is seen today, with many fine late 18th century dwellings fronting onto a formal green.

8.5.3.3 Social Infrastructure

Tyrrellspass has considerable social and community assets including a School, Churches, Nursing Home, Childcare Facilities, Health Centre, Chemist and Post Office. In addition, there are Community groups and activities including Active Retired, Youth Club, Community Alert, GAA, Tidy Towns, Art Club, Bowling Club, IFA, Golf Society, Gun Club, Athletic Club and Gardening Club.

The latest enrolment statistics from the Department of Education and Skills indicate that the local primary school, St Anne's National School had 134 pupils enrolled in 2019.

8.5.3.4 Physical Infrastructure

Tyrrellspass is served by an existing wastewater treatment plant located to the north of the town. Water supply is provided by the Mullingar Water Supply Scheme. The village is strategically located on a major inter-urban transport route and has good quality public transport and road links to Dublin. Tyrrellspass to Dublin is served numerous times daily by several public and private bus operators.

8.5.3.5 Function & Vision

Tyrrellspass performs important local level residential, retailing and community services to the wider rural hinterland. Opportunity exists to enhance the level of jobs and services in the village by consolidating growth within the existing urban footprint. The plan supports measures to support local employment opportunities and an increase in services, together with measures to visually enhance the public realm and historic character and setting of this settlement.

Tyrrellspass - Settlement Plan General Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.240	Promote residential growth, local employment, services and sustainable transport options in Tyrrellspass to enable the village to become more self-sustaining.
CPO 8.241	Expand the range of services and facilities available to residents and the wider rural hinterland.
CPO 8.242	Make provision for sustainable communities in Tyrrellspass by identifying sufficient land for new development, in particular housing, commercial, community and recreational uses.

8.5.3.6 Sustainable Communities

The plan supports new residential development which should respect the character and form of this heritage village. The development strategy for Tyrrellspass is to support new housing and population growth, thus providing a viable alternative to rural one-off housing within the surrounding hinterland and contributing to the principle of compact growth. Building sustainable communities will comprise of developing a mix of housing types, densities and tenure. High quality design, incorporation of the principles of place-making, green infrastructure, permeability and connectivity alongside the integration of community and recreation facilities will be paramount.

This plan also supports the development of a new village park and amenity area, provision of a car park at St Stephen's Church Graveyard, development of looped walks and cycle links to nearby amenities such as Cloncrow Bog.

Tyrrellspass - Sustainable Communities Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.243	Provide for new residential development in accordance with the requirements of the Housing and Core Strategy.
CPO 8.244	Require that an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size is provided in all new residential areas to meet the needs of the population of Tyrrellspass.
CPO 8.245	Require proposals for development to demonstrate how they integrate/respond to Green Infrastructure and contribute to the development and protection of overall Green Infrastructure assets.
CPO 8.246	Provide for the expansion and development of educational, social, community and recreational facilities in the settlement.

CPO 8.247	Support the development of a Village Park and Amenity Area to serve the village which shall be age friendly, safe and secure (See Map 19).
CPO 8.248	Support the development of green walking and cycling routes within the village and to the rural hinterlands including areas of interest and attractions.
CPO 8.249	Support the development of a Car Park at St Stephen's Church Cemetery (See Map 19).

8.5.3.7 Commercial & Retail Development

Tyrrellspass provides a range of retail and other local services, to meet the day to day needs of its catchment population. There is a varied retail offer in the settlement with 635m² of retail floorspace identified within the County Retail Strategy in 2016. Further opportunity exists to enhance the retail profile in the village. In this regard, the Planning Authority will look favourably upon the re-use of vacant sites and buildings for retail purposes.

The County Retail Strategy identifies the need for local level convenience and comparison, but not excluding tourism related/niche comparison offer in the town. These policies generally regard the provision of small-scale retail and commercial development outlets which size and scale would be consistent with that of the village.

Tyrrellspass - Commercial & Retail Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.250	Sustain, enhance and consolidate the retail and services offer within the central area of Tyrrellspass.
CPO 8.251	Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of derelict land and buildings for retail and other town centre uses, with due cognisance to the Sequential Approach prescribed in the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

8.5.3.8 Heritage

The village has an attractive and distinctive built form. Accordingly, the Village Green and existing buildings framing same have been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), in order to protect its character and existing Protected Structures located therein. The special architectural character of the Village Green ACA derives from the curvilinear arrangement of early nineteenth-century buildings which line the central crescent, dominated by St. Sinian's Church of Ireland, which takes full advantage of a small hillock. The crescent itself is large enough to accommodate the planting which does not act to obscure vistas across to the buildings. These for the most part retain their Georgian form and where there is an ostensible homogeneity across the assemblage, especially expressed in the three-bay arrangement of the houses on the western side, it is broken up by the former Courthouse and Schoolmaster's House, both of which are atypical additions to what is a small town.

Elsewhere the Georgian idiom is continued on the Main Street, with sufficient detailing surviving, especially in the doorcases, to add interest and variety. *Browne's On The Green* has an added significance where it addresses both the crescent and the Main Street and has managed to retain most of its fenestration.

Belvedere Orphanage to the northwest of the settlement consists of a residential scheme of architectural merit and accordingly has been designated as an ACA.

Tyrrellspass - Heritage Policy Objectives

It is a policy objective of Westmeath County Council to:

CPO 8.252	Promote and enhance existing archaeological, built and natural heritage elements associated with Tyrrellspass and ensure their protection.
CPO 8.253	Support the development of a dedicated Tyrrellspass Heritage Trail incorporating the surrounding hinterlands to promote local history and cultural heritage.
CPO 8.254	Protect and maintain the Architectural Conservation Area's (ACA's) in Tyrrellspass and the buildings within the ACA's. Development proposals that would undermine the setting and interpretation of any structure located within the ACA's will not be permitted.
CPO 8.255	Require works within the ACA's in Tyrrellspass to be carried out in accordance with the "Statement of Character" prepared for each ACA.

8.6 Rural (Serviced)

Rural serviced settlements, as identified in the Settlement Hierarchy of the Core Strategy, provide important local level residential, retailing and community functions to their associated rural hinterlands. In these areas, emphasis is placed on maintaining towns and villages as local service centres by way of orderly consolidation and expansion of services. The Core Strategy of the Plan seeks to support the sustainable development of these rural areas by encouraging sustainable levels of growth at appropriate locations, providing an alternative in terms of housing choice in the form of vibrant rural communities. The Core Strategy has identified eight settlements within the county as Rural (Serviced), namely Ballinalack, Ballymore, Ballynacarrigy, Castletown-Geoghegan, Collinstown, Glasson, Milltownpass and Multyfarnham.

8.6.1 Ballinalack Village

Location:	Located 15 Km to the west of Mullingar on the N4 Dublin to Sligo Road.
Population 2016 Census:	600 persons.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: – Pub, Shops, Post Office, Service Stations with retail offering along with an Auto Maintenance Business.
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by an existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water supply available.

Ballinalack is a village of rural character situated in a high-quality landscape adjacent to the River Inny. It is characterised by traditional road frontage development onto the Dublin to Sligo N4.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- Enhanced settlement structure by way of improved local service provision.
- Provision of housing and commercial development within the village core.
- Undertake a programme of Environmental and Public Realm enhancement, promote a pedestrian bias in the settlement and visually enhance the approach roads into the settlement.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Support public realm enhancement works which distinguish core area of village by way of paving, street lighting, parking, undergrounding of cables, street furniture, planting etc.
- Support the provision of high-quality open space within Ballinalack Village, including where possible recreational access to the River Inny.

Development and Design

- Support the provision of new small-scale retail and commercial outlets of a range and type consistent with the scale of the village and located in Mixed Use zoning.

Community/Social

- Support the creation of walking routes within the village, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the village, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions including local waterways.

8.6.2 Ballymore Village

Location:	Located 26km to the west of Mullingar on the R390 Athlone to Mullingar Road.
Population 2016 Census:	483 persons.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of social and community facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: Shops, Post Office, Garage, Garda Station, Pubs, Health Centre, Community Hall, Playground, Religious Services, Agricultural Supplies Store, Funeral Parlour/Undertakers and GAA grounds.
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by an existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water Supply available.

The settlement has a fragmented urban structure, being primarily comprised of two loose linear elements extended east to west over approximately 1.6km. The resultant villagescape is very intermittent in nature. A number of developments have occurred on the R390 approach into Ballymore, both on the western and eastern sides.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- The creation of a more coherent settlement to maintain and improve local service provision, in particular community facilities.
- Provision of a number of small in-depth housing schemes and commercial developments within the village core.
- Consolidated enhancement of the village settlement form to engender a sense of place and identity supplemented by public realm enhancement works.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Public realm enhancement encouraged to strengthen core area of village by way of paving, public lighting, street furniture, planting etc.
- Support the protection and enhancement of stone walls, green space and mature trees along the R390 route to the west of Ballymore.

Development and Design

- Support the provision of housing commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.
- To permit the provision of small-scale retail and commercial development of a range and type consistent with the scale of the village and located within lands zoned for Mixed Use.

Community/Social

- Support the provision of a public park and amenity area.
- Support the creation of walking routes to areas of natural amenity and historic interest.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the village, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.

8.6.3 Ballynacarrigy Village

Location:	Located on the R393 and situated 15km northwest of Mullingar.
Population 2016 Census:	277 persons.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of social and community facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: Shops, Post Office, Pubs, Community Centre, CCE (Comhaltas), Library, Childcare, Playground, GAA Pitch, Boxing Club, Garda Station, Health Centre, Tennis and Squash courts and School.
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by an existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water supply available.

Ballynacarrigy is a small, historic settlement closely linked to the Royal Canal since its opening in 1817. Its form is largely compact and features mainly characteristics of its previous role as a Market Town, evident by its Main Street and a partially enclosed area of public realm at the western end of the Main Street.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- The creation of a more coherent settlement to maintain and improve local service provision, including enhancement of the Canal Harbour with potential for tourist related development.
- The provision of housing and commercial development within the village core and promotion of the occupation of Ballynacarrigy Business Park.
- Consolidated enhancement of the village form to engender a sense of place and identity supplemented by public realm enhancement works.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Enhancement of public realm to strengthen the core area of the village by way of paving, street lighting, undergrounding of cables, street furniture, planting etc.
- Enhance connectivity to the Royal Canal Greenway

Development and Design

- Support the provision of housing commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.
- Promote and facilitate development and occupation of Ballynacarrigy Business Park.
- Promote and facilitate development of the harbour and associated buildings for tourist related activities.

Community/Social

- Support the provision of a public park and amenity area.
- Support the creation of walking routes linking to the Royal Canal Way.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the village, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.

8.6.4 Castletown-Geoghegan Village

Location:	Located in the south west of County and situated 14 km from Mullingar.
Population 2016 Census:	141 persons.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of social and community facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: Pubs; Shop; Post Office; Primary School; Church, Playground; GAA Club, CARA, CCE (Comhaltas), MACRA, Coursing and Gun Club.
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by an existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water supply available.

The village is mainly linear, with some clustering at the crossroads and junctions at either end of the settlement, which is rural in character. As a medieval settlement, Castletown Geoghegan still contains one of the more imposing Motte and Bailey structures in Ireland and a graveyard dating to around 1400. This graveyard is historically important as it has members of the Geoghegan family buried there.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- Creation of a more coherent settlement to maintain and improve local service provision.
- The provision of housing and commercial development within the village core and support the expansion of commercial development at Mount Druid.
- Consolidated strengthening of the village form to engender a sense of place and identity, supplemented by public realm enhancement works.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Support public realm enhancement works which provides traffic control and distinguish core area of village by way of paving, street lighting, parking, undergrounding of cables, furniture, planting etc.

Development and Design

- Support housing commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.
- Support tourism and commercial related development associated with the Mount Druid complex.
- Support the development of a cycling link to the Old Rail Trail at Castletown Station.

Community/Social

- Support the development of community facilities, including the provision of a public park and amenity area.
- Support creation of walking routes within the town, its hinterlands and at local areas of interest and attractions.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the town and surrounding areas.

8.6.5 Collinstown Village

Location:	Located on the R395, 7km southeast of Castlepollard and 20km north of Mullingar.
Population 2016 Census:	356 persons.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of social and community facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: Shops, Post Office, Pubs, National School, Creche, Church, Community Hall. GAA Club, ICA, Lough Lene Anglers, Playground, Pitch and Putt, Set Dancers, Residents' Association, Senior Citizen Committee, Social Dancing, Youth Group and Tidy Towns.
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by an existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water supply available.

A former Market Square dominates the core of Collinstown and offers an attractive public area through its green spaces and mature trees. A large and impressive elm tree within this area acts as a strong focal point for the centre of Collinstown, which, along with a freestanding cast-iron "cow tail" water pump erected circa 1885, adds considerable character to the village centre. Much of the core of the village is characterised by traditional, vernacular buildings providing an appropriate mix of residential, commercial and social uses with more recent infill housing around the old Market Square.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- Facilitate improved local service provision.
- The provision of housing and commercial development within the village core.
- Consolidated strengthening of the village form to engender a sense of place and identity, supplemented by public realm enhancement works.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Support public realm enhancement works such as paving, street lighting, parking, undergrounding of cables, furniture, planting etc.

Development and Design

- Support the provision of housing commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.
- Support the development of small-scale retail and service provision of a range and type consistent with the scale of the village.

Community/Social

- Support the creation of a walk from the village to Lough Lene, subject to environmental assessment.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.

8.6.6 Glasson Village

Location:	Located to the west of the County situated on the N55, 8km north-east of Athlone.
Population 2016 Census:	207 persons.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of social and community facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: – Shops, Pubs, Restaurants, B&B's, Garda Station, Childcare, Health Care, Heritage Centre, Golf, Boating, Fishing and Angling, GAA
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by a connection to Athlone Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water supply available.

Glasson village developed as an estate village in the 1760s at the edge of the Waterstown House and Demesne. The existing village structure is linear in form with a built edge along Main Street and old stone walls on the opposite side of the street, creating an attractive streetscape. The terrace of buildings along the southern stretch of Main Street is noted as being of particular architectural merit given its contribution to the streetscape value of the north-south axis.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- Facilitate improved local service provision.
- The provision of housing and commercial development within the village core.
- Expand on the village's tourist appeal given the village's proximity to Lough Ree.
- Undertake a programme of Environmental and Public Realm enhancement, promote a pedestrian bias in the settlement and visually enhance the approach roads into the settlement, to be enabled by a future N55 by-pass.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Support public realm enhancement works which distinguish core area of village by way of paving, street lighting, parking, furniture, planting etc.
- Investigate the potential for a pedestrian and cycling path to connect the villages/rural nodes of Ballykeeran, Glasson and Tubberclair by means of a feasibility study.

Development and Design

- Support the provision of housing commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.
- Support the provision of new retail and commercial outlets of a range and type consistent with the scale of the village and located in Mixed Use zoning.

Community/Social

- Support the creation of pedestrian/heritage walks from the village to the countryside and Lough Ree.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.
- Enhance access to Lough Ree lakeshore and adjoining areas.

8.6.7 Milltownpass Village

Location:	Located in the southeast of the County situated on the R446 (former N6), 15km south of Mullingar.
Population 2016 Census:	300 persons.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of social and community facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: – Pub, Primary School, Church, Community Centre, Playground, Scouts and GAA Club along with a light industrial and employment base.
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by an existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water supply available.

Milltownpass is a small settlement with traditional street frontage, bisected by the R446. Milltownpass has a charming village streetscape and a number of high-quality vernacular structures within the settlement.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- Creation of a more coherent settlement to maintain and improve local service provision.
- The provision of housing and commercial development within the village core.
- Consolidated enhancement of the village settlement form to engender a sense of place and identity supplemented by public realm enhancement works.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Support public realm enhancement works which distinguish core area of village by way of paving, undergrounding of cables, street lighting, parking, furniture, planting etc.

Development and Design

- Support the provision of housing commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.
- Support the provision of new small-scale retail and commercial outlets of a range and type consistent with the scale of the village and located in Mixed Use zoning

Community/Social

- Support the creation of walking routes from the village to the surrounding countryside.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the town, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.
- Support the development of a village park and amenity area.

8.6.8 Multyfarnham Village

Location:	Located 12km northwest of Mullingar and 8km southwest of Castlepollard.
Population 2016 Census:	420 persons which represents an 11.7% increase since 2011 census.
Key Social/Community Facilities	A number of social and community facilities serving the village and its hinterland including: – Bars, Shops, Restaurants, Primary & Secondary School, Nursing Home, Church, Community Centre, Garda Station, Playground and GAA Club.
Wastewater Treatment:	Served by an existing Wastewater Treatment Plant.
Water Supply:	Public Water supply available.

The village of Multyfarnham has evolved around its wide Main Street and the four principal roads to Crookedwood, Coole, Ballynafid and Bunbrosna. The crossing on the River Gainne informed the layout of the village. The core of the village is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) with traditional village buildings, primarily terraced, contributing to the strong village character of Multyfarnham.

Priorities for the Village in this plan include the following:

- Facilitate improved local service provision.
- The provision of housing and commercial development within the village core.
- Consolidated enhancement of the village settlement form to engender a sense of place and identity, supplemented by public realm enhancement works.

Policy Objectives:

Public Realm

- Support public realm enhancement works which distinguish core area of village by way of paving, street lighting, parking, furniture, planting etc.
- Protect and maintain the buildings within the ACA and resist development proposals that would undermine the setting and interpretation of any such structure.

Development and Design

- Support housing provision commensurate to its position in the settlement hierarchy.
- Support the provision of new small-scale retail and commercial outlets of a range and type consistent with the scale of the village and located in Mixed Use and Expanded Settlement Centre zoning.

Community/Social

- Support the creation of enhanced pedestrian walking links within the village, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.
- Support creation of cycling infrastructure within the village, its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions including local waterways.

8.7 Rural Remainder

This settlement category includes established Rural Villages of Ballinagore, Coole, Finnea, Raharney, Rathowen and settlement Nodes as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy of the Core Strategy.

These Rural Villages provide important local level residential, retailing and community functions to their associated rural hinterlands. In these areas, emphasis is placed on sustaining vibrant rural communities, reversing rural decline, regeneration and renewal will be the Council's priority in accordance with the National Planning Framework. Rural villages settlement plans contain a village/development boundary with a single zoning identified as 'Self-Sustaining Rural Consolidation'. This zoning provides for a mix of development types that supports the sustainable growth of the rural area and community as part of existing established village settlements. Development on these lands can include a range of uses that are considered to have the potential to improve the rural fabric of the settlement and its surrounding area.



WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae na hIarmhí

www.westmeathcoco.ie
A Westmeath County Council Publication

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